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# Zarja

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Uradno Glasilo Slovenske Zveze v Ameriki

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September/October 2013

## The Dawn



*Baptism of Jesus*  
by Lillian Brulc



# *Zarja - The Dawn*

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

Do you have something SUA-related you would like to share with readers, like an event you want to let people know about or an idea for an article? We would love to hear from you! Please e-mail the editor at [pohar4@aol.com](mailto:pohar4@aol.com). We reserve the right to edit any article submitted. It is preferable that you submit your idea for discussion prior to writing an article. Articles must be related to SUA events or members. The deadline for articles is the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month, 2 months preceding the issue. For example, articles for the November/December issue must be received by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.

## **Submission Guidelines**

Tell us how to reach you: Include your name, daytime phone number, e-mail address, and mailing address with each submission, including e-mailed submissions.

Go Digital: We regret that we can no longer return submitted materials. It is best to e-mail your photos. Use a 3.2-megapixel (or better) camera set for the highest picture quality, and attach your photos 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 (formerly the Slovenian Women's 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.



*Baking Bread*



*Bread for the Hungry*

**By Slovenian Artist: Lillian Brulc**

# President's Message

Greetings:

The busy time for all Branches are upon us with Regional Conventions happening in four of our Regions. Be sure to see the Calendar of Events in this issue to find out when and where your Convention is and about all the other exciting events taking place across the country.

Congratulations to SUA's Vice President of Culture and Heritage, Mary Lou Voelk, and her team of volunteers for putting on another successful "Salute ... The Cultural Expressions of Slovenia" on July 12, 2013, in Ely, Minnesota. A special thank you to Carol Ryba who is handling the large task of discontinuation of the Burial Insurance and to all our members for understanding why this once important feature of SUA/SWUA has to come to an end.

This issue of *Zarja -The Dawn* is filled with so much exciting news from our members! I encourage our readers to read it all the way through.

We are challenging each one of you to find a new SUA member. Consider giving a gift membership to a friend or relative. The future depends on our members. Can you help? Applications are in every issue of *Zarja* or can be downloaded from our website [www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org).

Sincerely,  
Bonnie Pohar Prokup  
National President  
[wprokup@aol.com](mailto:wprokup@aol.com)

**The Slovenian Union of America  
has been approved to operate  
as a 501(c)(3)  
non-profit tax exempt organization!**

**All donations given to SUA  
are tax deductible.**

## **SUA Donations - Thank You!**

### **\$1,500 Donation**

John L. Urh, 43, *See Page 35 for Details*

### **\$200 Donation**

Riddell, L. Lee, 93, SUA

### **\$100 Donation**

Augustine, Tony, 20,

Memory of all those who preceded us.  
Fox, Elizabeth, 89, +Carolyn M. Widmar

### **\$50 Donation**

Ahearne, MaryAnn, 93, +Mary Link  
Klobucher, Tom, 20, +John & Rose Klobucher

### **\$30 Donation**

Schutte, Pold, 23, *Triglav or Bust*

### **\$25 Donation**

Considine, Arlene, 109, SUA  
Dybul, Zenobia, 30, SUA  
Ferguson, Leslie, 20, SUA  
Griffin, John Jr., 13, +Patricia A. Coppinger-Griffin  
Hynek, Joan, 43, SUA  
Lilek, James, 20, SUA  
Tesch, Sandra Yadlosky, 23, +Bill & Jane Yadlosky  
Wegerson, Frank, 110, +Mary Merlock Wegrzyn  
Wojdula, Elsie, 2,  
+deceased Wojdula & Kroschel families

### **\$20 Donation**

Marchiori, Emily, 24, +Julia Novak Kosem  
Polzin, Christine, 102, +Josephine Bayuk  
Ryczek, Karen, 30, +Marie Prince Kovalik  
Vertacnik, Wendy, 5, +Emma Vertacnik

### **\$17 Donation**

Robertson, Jean, 43, *Heritage Fund*

### **\$15 Donation**

Blasick, Elvie, 100, +Eva Zarnow

### **\$10 Donation**

McDonald, Carol, 35, SUA  
Tomasich, Rose, 16, SUA

### **\$5 Donation**

Laposa, Josef, 5, +Janez Laposa, my grandfather  
Shavor, Marguerite, 23, SUA



# Ryba's Reminders

by Carol Ryba - National Treasurer

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## DISCONTINUING BURIAL INSURANCE

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### **Important Information for Branch Presidents**

Branch Presidents will soon be receiving information about electing Branch Representatives (Delegates) to participate in a telephone meeting later this year. Since we are now a 501(c) (3), we must follow the Illinois Not-for-Profit Act of 1986. This statute requires annual meetings, which can be satisfied via a telephone conference.

### **Christmas Wreath Fundraiser**

Regrettably I am unable to serve as chairperson for the fundraiser this year. Since I have been a staff of ONE with regard to discontinuing the Burial Insurance, I am in need of a vacation. Hopefully, we will sell Christmas products again in 2014.

### **Burial Insurance Certificate**

#### **Reserve Value Donations**

Thank you to those who donated the actuarial value of your burial insurance policy. It is very much appreciated because this donation will help us to continue to provide support for our cultural and heritage programs. A list of donors is published on the following pages. If your name is not listed in this issue it is because the signed form was received after the publication deadline. We will list additional donors in the next issue. Later this year we will also be sending each policy donor a thank you letter, which will serve as a receipt for tax purposes.

### **Other Donations**

Prior to the end of the year, all donors will be receiving thank you letters, which will be mailed as bulk mail so we can take advantage of the U. S. Postal Service non-profit mailing rates (18 cents vs. 46 cents)

### **Discontinuing Burial Insurance**

As we stated in the last issue of *Zarja*, we know that some members were disappointed in this decision, but after processing the returned forms and reading many comments, I am even more convinced that the 2011 National Convention delegates made the correct decision. Following are just a couple of reasons why I believe this.

Many family members had no idea their loved one had this small burial insurance policy, which is why we often would not receive claims. When I received a signed election form advising that their loved one had passed away, I advised the family that they should submit a claim for the death benefit amount instead of just electing to receive the actuarial value.

Many elderly members are in assisted-living facilities and have guardians or have given power of attorney authorization to a relative. Again, many of these individuals did not know about these small burial insurance policies.

### **Burial Insurance Letter and Election Form**

We apologize if the letter and form caused some confusion, but we had to follow the guidance of both our lawyer and the Illinois Department of Insurance, so unfortunately, one statement in the first letter about assuming a person would donate if he/she did not reply, apparently was misleading. The attorney actually wrote that sentence and in hindsight, I should have removed it. We needed proof that everyone received the letter, which is the reason we followed up with two additional letters.



# Burial Insurance Claim Donors - THANK YOU!

---

Adamic, Frances -  
+daughter, Barbara Baloh,  
and sister, Helen Grasser

Adkisson, Helen

Allen, Veronica

Allison, Alice

Ancel, Josephine

Androjna, Francka

Antolin, Ivanka

Anttila, Kyle

Anttila, Rose

Anzelc, Mary

Askew, Eleanor

Augustine, Jill

Ban, Dorothy

Banich, Mitzi

Barbarich, Mary

Behrman, Helene

Behrman, John

Bellis, Tanja

Belloli, Julie

Bender, Georgene

Berg, Theresa

Bergant, Diane

Birsa, Joann

Blanchard, Anne

Blatnik, Kristina

Bolek, Ludmilla

Boucher, Veronica

Bowers, Marion

Brady, Josephine

Brady, Sharon

Brann, Marceline

Breneman, Jill

Briscoe, Karen

Brockman, Mary

Brooks, Cheryl

Bruch, Kitty

Brunner, MaryAnn

Budzilek, Patricia

Buol, Genevieve

Burkhardt, Elizabeth

Burkland, Katharine

Burkland, Miriam

Burkland, Thomas

Burns, Theresa

Butterbach, Patricia

Carlson, Justine

Castora, Barbara

Centa, Helen

Cepon, Lillian

Chesko, Donna

Cimermancic, Frank

Cline, Sara

Collard, Cyrilla

Collins, Caitlin

Collins, Susan

Corp, Ann

Costell, Linda

Criss, Nancy

DeJule, Beverly

Delopst, Kenneth

Deptola, Anna

Dickinson, Carol

Dinquel, Elaine

Dorchak, Olga

Dragavon, Justine

Dragovan, Lucille

Drobnick, Julie

Dunne, Aloise

Eckert, Jeanette

Egly, Joan

Elioff, Mary

Elish, Jeannette

Erickson, Elizabeth

Erjavec, Ronald

Farrell, Sandra -  
Scholarship +father, Edward  
Kurnicki, and aunt,  
Edythe M. Ansel

Felbinger, Evelyn

Ferguson, William

Ferkul, Mary

Ferlic, Arredondo

Feroni, Olga

Ferrante, Kathleen

Ficek, Frances

Fink, Sandra

Fir, Marie

Fischer, Margaret

Fischer, Mary

Fisher, Don

Fitzsimmons, Juliana

Fitzsimmons, Matthew

Fitzsimmons, Thomas

Fooy, Anna

Fooy, Dori

Ford, Linda

Freiberg, Mary

Friedman, MaryAnn

Friesenhahn, Barbara

Frollo, Celeste

Gawlik, Margaret

Gehm, Janice

Gillen, Sharon

Glazer, Zory

Gobetz, Milena

Goergen, Carol

Goetz, Dana

Golobitsh, Anthony

Golobitsh, Madeline

Goss, Marilyn

Govednik, Jean -  
Museum - +mother,  
Johanna Govednik

Grabner, Mary

Grabner, Rogene

Grabowski, Josephine

Grahek, Dorothy

Gregorich, Mollie

Gremett, Diana

Grill, Stana

Grisham, Linda

Gulas, Maria

Hagan, Janet

Hall, Sky

Hanks, Jacqueline

Harley, Gabriella

Harwood, Elizabeth

Haug, Brianna

Haug, Maria

Helmer, Wanita

Henderson, Ina

Henkel, Nancy

Hennelly, Dolores

Herbst, Jean

Hernandez, Katrina

Herrick, Roberta

Herrick, Sandra

Hilton, Gail

Hiti, Mary

Hoag, Laverne

Hodgman, Vicki

Hodnik, Erika

Hodnik, Margaret

Holden, Corey

Holden, Kathleen

Holderbaum, Michelle  
 Horvatin, Robert  
 Houston, Betty  
 Hozzian, Jessica  
 Hutar, Angela  
 Icenhour, Mary  
 Inga, Joyce  
 Ivancich, Mychal  
 Ivancich, Steven  
 Ivancich, Virginia  
 Jagodnik, Nancy  
 Jamnick, Dorothy  
 Janchar, Jeanne  
 Jaras, Thomas  
 Jelinek, Albert  
 Jevac, Ernestine  
 Jex, Erin  
 Jordan, Marcia  
 Juvancic, Nettie  
 Kalcic, Diane  
 Kaprelian, Maxine  
 Karpan, Kathleen  
 Kemmerling, Anne  
 Kemmerling, Virginia  
 Kenner, Ashley  
 Kern, Sophia -  
     +husband, Richard Kern,  
     and cousin, Robert White  
 Kezele, Rose  
 King, Sarah  
 Klepec, Dolores  
 Kochevar, Eileen  
 Koci, Ellen  
 Koleno, Valerie  
 Kollander, Maia  
 Koncar, Amy - Scholarship  
 Koncar, Annette - Scholarship  
 Koncar, Dorothy  
 Koncar, John - Scholarship  
 Koncar, Margaret - Scholarship  
 Korsman, Jeanette  
 Korst, Joyce - Branch 20  
 Kozleuchar, Barbara  
 Krasovec, Bernice  
 Kravcar, Michael  
 Kuhar, Alice  
 Kunovar, Irene  
 Labernik, Jody  
 LaJoie, Julie  
 Lammi, Patricia  
 Lanari, Vida  
 Lawing, Rose  
 Lawler, Donna

Lawrence, Rose  
 Leffler, Gloria  
 Legan, Arlene  
 Leist, Melissa  
 Lemerande, Christine  
 Lenkaitis, Cathy  
 Leskovar, Corinne  
 Levar, Ann  
 Lewis, Dolores  
 Lilek, James  
 Limbach, Marcia  
 Lipic, Hilda  
 Lockard, Jenny  
 Lorek, Kirsten  
 Lorek, Lisa  
 Louch, Margaret  
 Lustig, Patricia -  
     +husband, Edward Lustig  
 Maceyko, Mary  
 Majkrzak, Sister Joan of Arc  
 Malensek, Anton  
 Malone, Nancy  
 Maloney, Mary  
 Mann, Jennifer  
 Maras, Marie  
 Markun, Ivanka  
 Marquardt, Darlene  
 Marquardt, Darrell  
 Marquardt, Lydia  
 Martin, Deanna  
 Mattson, Agnes  
 Mavec, Mary  
 Mavec, Paula  
 Mavetz, Mary  
 Mazi, Sophia  
 McArdle, Eleanor  
 McFarland, Margaret  
 Mehosky, Dorothy  
 Metesh, Bernice  
 Metesh, James  
 Michals, Martina  
 Mihelich, Pauline  
 Miller, Lizette  
 Minnick, Helen  
 Mlakar, Rosemary  
 Mlakar-Miller, Angela  
 Mohr, Molly  
 Morris, Carole  
 Morrow, Hermine  
 Mosnik, Gertrude  
 Muir, Vera  
 Mulvey, Anna  
 Mulvey, Maureen

Muren, Julia, 57-year member -  
     Family donated insurance  
     claim +Julia  
 Napier, Ruth  
 Nauheimer, Dolores  
 Nemanich, Carolyn  
 Nemanich, Jerelyne  
 Nething, Aimee  
 Newhouse, Margrette  
 Nikolic, Maria  
 Novak, Carol  
 Nuteson, Cecelia  
 Oberman, Janet  
 Oblack, John -  
     Family donated insurance  
     claim +John, who loved his  
     Slovenian heritage  
 Odorizzi, Irene  
 Oldenburg, Frances  
 Ostrander, Judith  
 Ovnik, Lorraine  
 Pakiz, Rose  
 Pakiz, Susan  
 Paulin, Maria  
 Pavlovic, Frances  
 Pawlicki, Clarice  
 Pedersen, Patricia  
 Pelander, Lois  
 Pell, Erika  
 Pera, Karen  
 Perez, Angela  
 Perme, Vida  
 Peters, Danielle  
 Petrich, Frank  
 Petrich, Helena  
 Petrich, Julia  
 Petrich, Katrina  
 Petrich, Rosemary  
 Petrich, Stephanie  
 Piletic, Frances  
 Piletic, Mary  
 Pipoly, Evelyn  
 Pivik, Marie  
 Plautz, George  
 Plecnik, Linda  
 Plut, Dolores  
 Pohar, Barbara  
 Pohar, Debbie  
 Poirier, Carole  
 Popich, Katherine  
 Potepan, Agnes  
 Povsic, Maria  
 Prey, Rose

Prhne, Melinda  
Prhne, Sally  
Price, Judith  
Prince, Sophie  
Prokup, Barbi  
Prokup, Bekki  
Prokup, Bonnie  
Pucel, Benjamin  
Pucel, Rachel  
Purkat, Jane  
Putzell, Victoria  
Pyszka, Rita  
Rabb, Marlys  
Rak, Gene  
Ramos, Mary  
Rastetter, Joan  
Ravnikar, Mary  
Regis, Dorothy  
Relien, Jennifer  
Renick, Marilyn  
Rogers, Mary  
Rooney, Marcella  
Rossi, Dorothy  
Ruggera, Frances  
Ryba, Carol  
Schiffler, Gloria  
Schmidl, Maxine  
Schmidt, Joleen  
Schmidt, Margaret  
Scholp, Elizabeth  
Schoonover, Andrew  
Schoonover, Barbara  
Schoonover, Madeline  
Schoonover, Valerie  
Schroeder, Kathleen  
Schroeder, Sharon  
Schwartz, Lynn  
Sefcik, Katherine  
Selak, Maria  
Skocaj, Albina  
Skul, Jenny  
Sleigh-Layman, Staci  
Smith, Dorothy  
Soltysinski, Jacqueline  
Sostakowski, Barbara  
Spagna, Jodi  
Spagnolo, Marcia  
Spinelli, Shirley  
Staut, Sophie  
Stebick, Rose  
Stebly, Katherine  
Steensland, Janet  
Steffen, Billie

Stoltz, Josephine  
Stratton, Lindsey  
Stropanik, Milena  
Sunkel, Arlene  
Suster, Patricia  
Swintosky, Beverly  
Swintosky, Dorothy  
Swintosky, Joann  
Swintosky, Laura  
Swintosky, Megan  
Tarizzo, Marilyn  
Teitelbaum, Mary  
Tella, Mary  
Terchek, Josephine  
Terselic, MaryLou  
Terselic, Nancy  
Tesovnik, Germaine  
Tezak, Ellen  
Tezak, Jessica  
Tezak, Kenneth  
Tezak, Kyle  
Thompson, Josephine  
Tiedmann, Marie  
Tomic, Amanda  
Tomic, Darla  
Tomc, Donna  
Tompa, Jozica  
Toth, Rose Mary  
Trebian, Kathleen  
Trombetta, Kathleen  
Trunkel, Joanne - Scholarship  
Tucker, Rae  
Ukovich, Bernadine  
Veit, Alice  
Vicich, Joyce  
Vidergar, Mary  
Vidmar, Marilyn  
Vidmar, Nicholas  
Voelk, Mary Lou  
Voelk, Maya  
Wagner, Amy  
Wagner, Denise  
Walker, Elizabeth  
Wallace, Elizabeth  
Walling, Margaret  
Welsh, Jessica  
Welsh, Max  
Widemshek, Frances  
Williams, Ann  
Williams, Debra  
Williams, Kirsten  
Wolf, Cecilia  
Wolf, Vangie

Wroblewski, Elizabeth  
Yack, Sharon  
Yankovic, Ida  
Yapel, Agnes  
Yattoni, Barbara  
Yemec, Mary Anne  
Yernatich, Margaret  
Yernatich, Yvonne  
Young, Elizabeth  
Yovanovich, Sue  
Zajec, Marilea  
Zakrajsek, Mary  
Zalar, Julia  
Zalokar, Lynn  
Zalokar, Mildred  
Zarich, Karen  
Ziegenhorn, Patrick  
Zobel, Krista  
Zorman, Estelle  
Zupancic, Ann  
Zupancich, Judith  
Zuponcic, Helen

## **SUA Branches Welcome Their New Members**

Johnson, Lena Rose, 3  
Kelley, Mary Frances, 3  
Matthews, Judith, 3  
Broswell-Skala, Vlasta, 33  
Bail, Barbara, 43  
Stager, Judith Manno, 71  
Katona, Georgina, 93  
Stonitsch, Elfriede, 93  
Walker, Joan, 93  
Goodwin, Katalin, 99  
Goodwin, Lori, 99  
Hernandez, Viviana, 99  
Smith, Janet, 99  
Finan, Peggy, 100  
Leathers, Jessica, 100  
Leathers, Robert, 100  
Gausman, Robert, 109  
Bush, Mary Jo, 110  
Woodard, Karen, 110

# SWU Scholarship Foundation

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*CELEBRATING 64 YEARS OF FINANCIALLY ASSISTING STUDENTS*

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**Mission: To generate funding to financially assist students with hope that they will promote and preserve Slovenian culture.**

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2013 SWU Scholarship Award recipients have submitted the following essays titled:

## ***MY HERITAGE and HOW IT RELATES TO ME***

### **MATTHEW FITZSIMMONS**

Branch 108 - Olney, Maryland

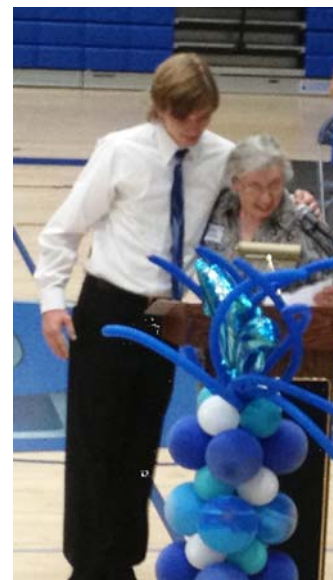
Since a very young age my Slovenian heritage has been an important aspect of my life. My mother was a first generation Slovenian-American who has been active in the Slovenian Women's Union of America (SWUA) all her life. She didn't hesitate at all to get my younger two siblings and me active in the Slovenian – American community from a young age by attending Slovenian Mass at the Our Lady of Brezje Chapel in Washington D.C. Before I knew it, I began volunteering for various SUA events such as parades and cultural gatherings; I started meeting many Slovenian - Americans from different parts of the country, and remember attending Camp Heritage 2007 with my family. Through a variety of events and at home, I learned about Slovenian traditions such as the baking of potica, flancati, and strudel, folklore, traditional costumes, and holiday traditions in celebrating Pust, Easter, and Svet Miklavz (the feast of St. Nicholas). My grandmother, Nika Kovacic, who grew up in Slovenia along with many other Slovenians, has taught me the most important aspects of my heritage that I know. Those bring the values of respect for our rich heritage through religious customs and warm hospitality among the people. As a young boy, every time I've visited friends and family of Slovenian heritage, whether in Canada, America, or Slovenia, my relatives and hosts always made me feel welcome and at home, and treated me like a member of the family with delicious food, memorable conversation, and gift mementos in remembrance of my stay. I strive to emulate these same values passed on to me by Slovenians who I've met that are important to my heritage.

*Matthew volunteered over 40 hours participating with the Academy of St. Cecilia Youth Orchestra's (ASCYO) trip to Colorado this summer, sharing the gifts of sacred orchestral music, playing solo trumpet, and with the orchestra in various Christian churches in the state.*

### **JAMES KOCI, Branch 100 - Fontana, California**

As a person of Slovenian heritage, my family's culture plays a big part in my life. I have grown accustomed to Slovenian foods, music, and even bits and pieces of the language. I enjoy playing bass in my grandfather and uncle's polka band, and I have even started learning a bit of banjo. I have spend many hours helping my mother and grandparents chop and peel apples for strudel for either family events or sharing at the Slovene Hall in Fontana, California. Although I may not be the best dancer, I certainly have enjoyed learning how to polka and waltz at many dances over the years. My personal favorite is the annual harvest festival. In addition to the many small connections to my heritage, I maintain family in Slovenia, family I have visited and some who have come to the states to visit me. I am proud to be a member of the Slovenian family.

*James helped and performed at the "Meet and Greet Father Peter Rožič S.J. Party" held on April 21, 2013.*



*James giving grandmother, Jean Koci, a big hug as she is presenting him his SWU Scholarship. James received his SWU Scholarship at the Dana Hills High School, California. Jean Koci, James' grandmother, and long time Recording Secretary, Branch Reporter, and chairwoman for a number of fund-raisers for Branch 100, presented James with his award. James' maternal grandmother, Rosemary Mlakar, has served as Secretary for Branch 100 for over 30 years and also as SWUA's Western Regional Representative for 12 years.*



**AMY KONCAR**, Branch 20 - Joliet, Illinois

I am blessed to have my Slovenian heritage as an integral part of my life. Throughout my life, I have awoken to my dad's button box playing, eaten blood sausage for breakfast, smokies, potica, and apple strudel for special occasions, and spent my summers at fairs, parties, or picnics filled with polka music. My family and I have kept our heritage a focal part of our lives and take pride in what it



*Amy receiving SWU Scholarship from Geri Pope. Amy received her SWU Scholarship at Branch 20's Annual Spring Banquet on May 21 in Joliet, Illinois. Branch 20's Scholarship Chairwoman, Geri Pope, presented Amy's award to her, along with a Branch 20 Continuing Education Award to Hannah Singletary, a physician assistant student. Two faithful bartenders of Branch 20, James Lilek and Dennis Cohil, were recognized for their years of service.*

means to be Slovenian. Throughout my life I have dressed in traditional Slovenian costume for many occasions, and never hide the fact that I love to polka. On occasion I've even played keyboard in my family's polka band. The best vacation of my life was to Slovenia where I met relatives from both sides of the family and enjoyed the sights and sounds and tastes of Slovenia first hand. Taking part in Slovenian traditions sets me apart from others and reminds me of my ancestors' wonderful homeland.

*Amy volunteered with the Joliet Park District's fundraiser "The Taste of Joliet."*

**ALEX KOSSAKOSKI**, Branch 42 - Maple Heights, Ohio

Whenever I visit my grandmother in Ohio, I always hear her telling my mom something secretive in Slovenian. I don't think I have the patience to learn a language like that, but just because I can't speak Slovenian does not mean its culture hasn't made me who I am today. My heritage has had a huge impact on me over the years, and I look forward to carrying on these values to the next generation. Hard work is something that has always been stressed in my house. Whenever I wanted to go play with friends, I always had to have my homework done first. Schoolwork always came first, because education is the key to a happy and successful life. Another important task is doing whatever your parents asked of you. No matter the difficulty, I always did these things without argument.

Family has been and always will be of the utmost value in our house. Without my family, I would be nothing. They give me the drive to accomplish everything I do. Through the good times and the bad, we stick together. It is going to be a big change leaving my home and family for college, but their support will be there, and that will get me through. To get to this point, on the edge of a giant step in my life, takes a lot of hard work. Not only by me, but everyone around me. My friends, my peers, but most importantly my family, these people are part of the mold that makes me who I am.

*Alex will be the announcer at the New England Regional Baseball Tournament, held for nine year olds. The tournament is five days in length and will be held in his hometown.*

*Alex's SWU Scholarship was presented to him at the Fall Mountain Regional High School in Langdon, New Hampshire. Few in attendance at the awards assembly had ever heard of "Slovenia." It was a good opportunity for promotion of our native land and cause.*

**JARED MORRISSETTE**, Branch 99 - Lemont, Illinois

I am proud to be Slovene and my heritage is an important part of my life. My grandparents, Albert and Paula (Bajda) Mavec, have taught me so much about the Slovenian culture. I have come to appreciate the many traditions they have shared with me - from eating and cooking all types of Slovene food, listening and dancing to polkas played by my cousin on the button box, playing an intense game of bocce ball, and celebrating the holidays with treasured customs. In traveling to Slovenia, and having the ability to meet my very large extended family, it was amazing to feel what a strong family connection we have and to get a sense of belonging. I am very blessed with what my grandparents have ingrained in me, as in overcoming hard times, the love and strength of family, the importance of traditions, and embracing my heritage. I hope to pass on who I am and what I have learned to my own children someday.

*Jared did 15 hours of fund raising for the Slovenia Missions - a project sponsored by the Slovenian Catholic League.*

**Merit Award Recipient Correspondence**

ANGELA PEREZ of Branch 3 - Pueblo, Colorado, has advised that her \$100 SWU Merit Award will help her with expenses at Colorado State University - Pueblo. Angela's goal is to be a pediatric physician. She states our generosity has inspired her to give back to the Slovenian Union like we have done for her.

KIRSTEN LOREK of Branch 14/50 - Euclid, Ohio, received and has given back her SWU Merit Award because she did receive an athletic scholarship to help with her expenses at Duquesne University this year. She would like to contribute toward future SWU Scholarship awards.

Currently the interest rates on educational loans have gone up considerably. Students are finding it much more difficult to finance college expenses. Due to the devoted support of many SUA members and friends, we are able to bring some help to those who are so deserving of our support. Many, many thanks to all of you who consider the SWU Scholarship Foundation.

- by Mary Turvey, Scholarship Director

For information, questions, and greatly needed contributions, please contact:

Mary Turvey, [mturvey@aol.com](mailto:mturvey@aol.com)  
4 Lawrence Drive, Marquette, Michigan, 49855

or Marge Church, [yemec1@windstream.net](mailto:yemec1@windstream.net)  
1028 Skyland Drive, Macedonia, Ohio, 44056

### Scholarship Donations

#### **\$1,720 Donation**

Family, friends, co-workers, and members of Branch 43 - Milwaukee, WI, in memory of their dear father, uncle, and friend, Raymond J. Delopst. In April 2014, a SWU Raymond J. Delopst Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 will be offered in his honor.

#### **\$50 Donation**

\*Dr. Dorothyann Zakrasek Lindes,  
+her parents, Nick Zakrasek, who died 1/9/13,  
and Dorothy Zakrasek, who passed on 3/14/13  
Lino and Ann Sergo, +Stephana Kobe  
Arlene A. Fajnor, +Pauline Buzan  
Raymond and Bonnie Scully,  
+Stephana Kobe who passed on 6/14/13

#### **\$25 Donation**

\*Lisa Vidergar Lucas, +Frank J. Vidergar

#### **\$20 Donation**

Joseph and Donna Haluscsak, +Aunt Stephana Kobe

#### **\$10 Donation**

Anonymous

\* Denotes past SWU Scholarship Recipient

***Hvala! Hvala! Thank you, kind donors for your support of our scholarship program.***

## Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Terry Hocevar

Terry Hocevar was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on July 6, 1913, and this year celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday with a 2-day celebration. The July 7th plans included a traditional Latin High Mass at Immaculate Conception Church.

Terry was born and grew up in the St. Clair Slovenian area where she still lives in the house that her father bought in 1906. The youngest of 13 children, she has many fond memories of all the changes that have occurred in the last 100 years. In her youth Terry took ballet classes and performed in 1935 at Severance Hall in Cleveland. She enjoys the opera and always attended the Metropolitan Opera when it came to the Public Auditorium in Cleveland, usually seeing all eight scheduled performances. Terry often performs her ballet moves and exercises to opera music! Her love of baseball and the New York Yankees is very strong and she still enjoys watching televised games throughout the season. When the Cleveland Indians were in the World Series in 1948, she attended every game played in Cleveland.

Terry was widowed after being married to Joseph Hocevar for 48 years, and is the mother of five children: Sr. Rosemary Hocevar, OSU; Lawrence; Thomas (deceased); Joann in South Carolina; and Kathe in New Jersey. Terry has an infectious and joyful personality, and that shines through to everyone she meets. Once you meet her, you won't forget her!

- by her son, Larry Hocevar



# Membership Application and Renewal

Slovenian Union of America

*(Formerly known as Slovenian Women's Union of America)*

slovenianunion.org sua@slovenianunion.org 815.727.1926

**For RENEWALS use form at BOTTOM of this page**

Adult Dues \$25.00     Adult Dues (International Address) \$35.00     Junior Dues (Birth to 18) \$5.00

If this is a gift and you agree to continue paying for this membership next year, please advise us of billing address:

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

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Please describe your Slovenian ancestry and provide SLOVENIAN SURNAMES

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How did you hear about us? SUA Member \_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_ Website \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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# Death of a Surname

By George Plautz, Zarja Staff Writer  
A Record of Immigration

## Slovenian Pioneers to America 1840-1879

I am dedicating this column in memory of two fellow genealogists and family historians, Jean Wessel Rolstad and Karl Grahek.

Jean Wessel Rolstad, besides working on her grandfather's (Kucler from Polhov Gradec) family history, also researched her father's family in Scandinavia. Jean was always there for you and we corresponded for years. We met once in Willard, WI, at its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007. She was adept at many things, contributing to numerous projects, some of those with the Twin Cities Slovenians. Jean and I became connected because her Kucler (Kutzler) grandfather was related to the Kutzler's of Waukegan, Illinois, one of whom married my cousin, Mary Plautz. I will miss Jean.

Karl Grahek asked for help in researching his family from Lokve, Slovenia. I was able to provide several family histories and found out he was related to my cousin, Tone Starc, of Gric, Slovenia, through Karl's Startz family in America. This is indeed a small world. Both Karl and Jean were dedicated to the exploration of their roots, embraced the culture of their mother country, Slovenia, and kept the memories of their Slovenian immigrant ancestors alive. That they have died ends a chapter in my life, and the realization that no one in my family will carry on the research I have done. It is indeed a small world for genealogists and historians.

Many people have heard of "Big Annie" of copper strike fame. Anna Klobuchar Clemenc Shaw was an American citizen, the child of George Klobuchar and Maria Adam. She led the strike parades, holding an American flag, standing out in front as she was six-feet tall. Annie has earned a place in the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1913 Copper Strike and Italian Hall disaster occurs this year. An exhibit will be held at the St. Ann's Heritage Center, in Calumet, Michigan. I have been working with Lyndon Comstock for several years on research of George Klobuchar and Maria Adam in Slovenia. Sadly, we have not found George's place of birth or baptismal date. In the mining records George stated his residence had been Crnomelj. However, when Lyndon sent me the death certificate of Maria Adam Klobuchar, I knew this would result in a connection. Maria Adam was the daughter of Franc Adam and Anna Jerman from Dolnja Paka house number 6 in Crnomelj Parish. I am related to the Adam and Jerman families and I was able to provide him with some distinct family lines. Lyndon Comstock has written a book entitled "*Annie Clemenc & the Great Keweenaw Copper Strike*." It is available at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) or a bookstore in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Following is a quote from his book, "For her service during the 1913 copper strike, Anna "Annie" Klobuchar Clemenc Shaws (1888-1956) is worthy of ongoing recognition as one of the most notable activists from a pivotal, early period

in the development of the U. S. labor movement, and within the history of the eastern European immigrant communities in the U.S. in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century."

June 4, 1873-On this date Gregor Smole (Smoley) arrived in New York on the ship "Samana," embarked from Glasgow, Scotland. Gregor was born March 1846, in Slovenia, to Gregor Smole and Maria Jakel. He married Ursula Blenkush, on April 27, 1873, in Wald 11, Kranjska Gora, Slovenia. Ursula was born on October 20, 1846, in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, to Casper Blenkush and Maria Louticher. Gregor died March 22, 1920, in Stearns County, Minnesota. Ursula died January 23, 1930, in St. Stephen, Stearns County, Minnesota. They had 12 children: Josephine Lucy, born 1873 in St. Stephen, married Frank Pappenfus; John Nicholas, born December 6, 1873, in St. Stephen, married Helen Schumer on May 20, 1901, daughter of John Schumer and Margarita Kozel, born November 27, 1879, in Minnesota, died August 24, 1959, in Ramsey County, Minnesota. John Nicholas died November 16, 1950, in St. Stephen. Next was Mary, born July 4, 1874, in St. Stephen, died January 26, 1948, in St. Stephen; Gertrude, born February 29, 1876, in St. Stephen, married John Peternell on November 21, 1898, the son of Thomas Peternell and Jera Lucks, Gertrude died May 28, 1964, in St. Otto's, Little Falls, Minnesota; Joannes, born June 22, 1877, in St. Stephen, died December 7, 1889, in St. Stephen; Helena, born December 27, 1878, in St. Stephen, date of death unknown; Regina Ursula, born October 30, 1881, in St. Stephen, married Frank Vouk on February 9, 1904, the son of Valentine Vouk and Johana (last name unknown), born August 23, 1866, in Minnesota, died January 6, 1930, in Stearns County, Minnesota, Regina Ursula died February 24, 1967, in St. Stephen; Gregor Anton, born June 11, 1883, in St. Stephen, married Mary Supan, the daughter of Andrew Supan and Rose Zemwa, Gregor Anton died February 11, 1956, in St. Stephen; Anna Maria, born April 10, 1885, in St. Stephen, married Frank Wimisky, then Anton Carol Sjogren, Anna Marie died October 1976, in St. Stephen; Agnes, born December 12, 1887, in St. Stephen, married Peter Schumer, the son of John Schumer and Margarita Kozel, Agnes died about 1972 in St. Stephen; Joseph Jacob, born July 24, 1890, in St. Stephen, married Wilhelmina Huschle, the daughter of Caspar Huschle and Mary Lumbach, Joseph Jacob died January 10, 1977, in St. Stephen; and Katherine, born March 13, 1892, in St. Stephen, married Bartel Supan, on October 21, 1912, the son of Andrew Supan and Rose Zemwa, Katherine died December 1983. The Peternell families mentioned above were covered in prior columns. The Schumer family was not listed; John arrived in 1867 and his family will be listed in the next issue.

May 26, 1874-On this date George Sterbenz, sailing out of Hamburg, Germany, on the ship "Silesia," arrived in Castle Garden, New York. He settled in Waterford, Iowa. His

brother, Michael Sterbenz, arrived before him and was profiled in an earlier column. George was born June 2, 1828, living in Unterradenze (Dolnji Radenci) house number 25, in Slovenia, at the time of his marriage to Maria Kapsch, about 1851. She was living in Bretterdorf (Deskova Vas) house number 1, Slovenia. They were farmers. George and Maria had six children, all born in Slovenia prior to George's arrival in America. George died March 23, 1904, and Mary died December 3, 1913; both are buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Sugar Creek, Iowa. Their children are: Katharina, born about 1852, married a Rozich in Slovenia and did not immigrate; Margaret, born January 1857, married Josef (Joseph) Sterk in Iowa, the son of John Sterk and Margaret (last name unknown), born about 1856 in Slovenia, Margaret died about 1845; Annie, born December 16, 1858, married Joseph Herwath in Sugar Creek, Clinton County, Iowa on April 9, 1888. He was born about 1853, in Otovec, Crnomelj Parish, Slovenia, the son of John Horvat and Margaretha Mulik, they had 10 children, Annie died May 10, 1902; George, born June 7, 1864, in Bretterdorf, married Margaret Rom Cicak, died March 11, 1917, in Clinton County, Iowa; John J., born June 6, 1869, married Mary Kotze on June 8, 1891 (1872-1893), one child, Mary, married Matt Gregorich, then John married Mary Ann Fuegen on April 27, 1904, they had 11 children, John died August 18, 1939, in Jackson County, Iowa; and Cecelia M., born August 20, 1873, married on October 23, 1901, in Clinton County, Iowa, to Jacob Stanisha, the son of John Stanisha and Agnes Gregorich, born July 12, 1873, in Slovenia, died 1962 in Iowa, they had five children, Cecelia died May 3, 1944, in Wyoming, Jones County, Iowa. Joseph Herwath (Annie's husband above) was the brother of John Herwath, who married Catharina Butala. They will be in next month's column.

July 18, 1874-On this date, Mateja (Mathias) "Matt" Movrin (Maurin) arrived in New York on the ship "Oder" from Bremen, Germany. Mateja settles first in Olathe and then Kansas City, Kansas. Matt was born February 14, 1854, in Gric house number 1, Crnomelj Parish, Slovenia. His parents were Jose Movrin and Margaretha Vertin. He married Lillian Green{e} on July 10, 1893, in Lenexa, Johnson County, Kansas, and died soon after 1930. Matt and Lillian had three children: Ruth Margaret, born July 17, 1894, in Kansas City, Wyandotte County, Kansas, she married William Pray about 1921, they had one child, they divorced, then she married John Arthur Lindsay, died on July 13, 1989, Kansas City, Clay County, Missouri, they had two children; Leo J., born February 16, 1898, in Olathe, Johnson County, married Lillian V. Hoskin on June 19, 1924, in Jackson County, Missouri, she died on March 29, 1945, in Illinois, they had one child that died young, Leo then married Elizabeth Margaret Hutton on August 20, 1946, in Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois, she was born on March 3, 1908, died June 7, 1993, in Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois, he died on January 10, 1988, in Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois; and Esther Myrtle, born March 27, 1901, in Kansas City, married Paul B. Capp about 1918 in Kansas, he was born April 17, 1897, in Illinois, died May 29, 1970, in Yucca, San Bernadin County, California, Esther died September 2, 1993, in Auburn, Placer County, California, they had two boys. Kansas is a hard state to crack on vital records due to their privacy laws, so we are missing dates in the family tree. Mathias had a brother Stefan, who lived in Olathe, Kansas, but to date, we have

found no trace of him in any census record. Mathias' brother, John, also immigrated much later, to the state of Washington. Mathias' sister is my great grandmother, Kata Movrin, who married George Plavec (Plautz). Mathias is one of my relatives and other descendants are also maintaining a family history.

July 29, 1874-On this day Martin Legat (Legatt) and his wife, Barbara, arrive in America. Martin was born October 29, 1838, in Grabce house number 12, Gorje, Slovenia to Blasius Legatt and Ursula Lespite Solacher. He married Barbara Kozel in 1867, born October 10, 1840, in Slovenia and died November 9, 1908, in Stearns County. Martin died May 30, 1917, in Brockway, Stearns County, Minnesota. Martin and Barbara had eight children: Andrew, born November 16, 1867, in Grabce house number 12, Gorje, Slovenia, married Agnes Bicek, born about 1886, died April 28, 1923, in Stearns County, Andrew died January 7, 1947, in Stearns County, Minnesota, they had six children; Mary, born October 28, 1869, in Grabce house number 12, Gorje, Slovenia, married Joseph Slivnik on January 10, 1898, in St. Stephen, born March 19, 1850, in Worcheiner 23, Villach, Bohinjjska Bela, Slovenia, died July 27, 1928, in St. Stephen, Mary died December 17, 1945, in St. Stephen, Stearns County, Minnesota, they had nine children; Johan, born May 10, 1872, in Grabce 12, Gorje, Slovenia, died about 1873 (?), in St. Stephen; Gertrude, born August 15, 1874, in St. Stephen, married Herman Frank Rheinhardt on May 6, 1895, in Stearns County, died April 17, 1941, in Olympia, Thurston County, Washington; John, born 1876, in Minnesota, married Gertrude Peternell, born about 1878; in Stearns County, died February 19, 1952, in Benton County, Minnesota, John died September, 17, 1944, in St. Stephen; Johanna (Sr. Barbara), born December 29, 1879, in St. Stephen, died December 18, 1952, in St. Louis County, Minnesota; Margaret (Sr. Eleanore), born January 3, 1881, in St. Stephen, died December 1, 1953, in St. Louis County; and Agnes (Sr. Amata), born January 24, 1883, in St. Stephen, died April 12, 1960, at St. Scholastica Monastery, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois. Joseph Slivnik and Mary Legatt are the parents of Gertrude Slivnik, who married Anton Gogala and is listed in a previous column.

1874-During this year, Primus Skumantz arrives in St. Anthony, Minnesota. Primus is born about 1849 in Slovenia, and wife, Gertrude John, was born about 1849 in Slovenia. Primus and Gertrude had seven children: Mathias, born 1874, married Florence, last name unknown, born about 1879 in Wisconsin, died on March 7, 1924, in Stearns County, Minnesota, they had five children; Christina Gertrude, born December 19, 1875, in Stearns County, married Frank Jurash in Stearns County, on April 21, 1896, died June 15, 1966, in Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, they had seven children; Mary born about 1878 in Stearns County; Johanna (Antonia) born about 1880 in Stearns County; Joseph, born about 1890 in Stearns County; Frances, born about 1892, in Stearns County; and Primus, born about 1896, in Stearns County. This family was listed in the 1895 and 1905 Minnesota state census. Primus, born in 1896, was living in St. Louis County, Minnesota, in the 1930 U.S. Census. I have not found anything more on the family, besides the two children with families.

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A large, light-colored wicker basket is the central focus, filled with lush green ferns. In the foreground, a bouquet of white and pink peonies is arranged. The basket sits on a grassy surface against a light-colored wall.

# Giving In to the Grave Groomer Gene

By David Sodac, Branch 89 - Oglesby, Illinois

**Some folks inherit their father's skill for craftsmanship, some an Uncle's easy-going temperament, others, their mother's green eyes; then there are those who are ill-fated to inherit their ancestor's compulsion for roaming cemeteries, walking amongst the headstones, decorating graves, all the while updating the dead about what's been going on since they'd passed! It seems I'm one who has this inherited "Grave Groomer" gene, or G3 as it's known in clinical jargon. The G3 traits are generally manifested at a late onset, usually well into adulthood. The tendencies are known to pass down from generation to generation, most likely through the maternal side of the family.**



## *The inherited gene has its early roots in ethnic Slovenian culture.*

Typically, the traits take on an obsessive-compulsive set of behaviors to groom gravesites and decorate them with flowers, familiar articles, statues, candles, angels, and more recently by enhancing the grave's night time visibility with solar-activated lighting and adornments. There can even be a competitive aspect to their grooming, with intent to outshine and make jealous the neighboring gravesites. Thankfully, my compulsions do not include decorating with solar embellishments, yet; although more recently there have been some conscious suppressing of those urges.

My maternal grandmother gave me my first real introduction to grave grooming on a grand scale during a weekend before "Decoration Day" in the late 60's. I was student-teaching in La Salle, Illinois, while completing my senior year of college at Northern Illinois University. I innocently stopped by to visit her after the school day was over, hoping to linger around long enough for a home-cooked meal. We visited for a while- she loved company - and then her expression became very serious; almost with a troubled bearing she asked me if I had the time to take her to the cemetery. At first thought, asking to be taken to the cemetery can be an alarming and somewhat ominous request, particularly given by one her age! I had to let that thought settle aside for a moment. But, she was too full of life, so I let that worry pass. Of course, I'd be overly joyed to help her out in any way! Her face lit up with a huge smile, she grabbed my cheeks and kissed me, and then got up from the table to get ready. She explained that we needed to go down into the cellar, which was accessed through a creaky, weather-worn, wooden, storm door; the kind you open and flap back the door to walk down a set of rickety stairs to reach a cellar storage room, all the while pushing away filigreed cobwebs to enter. She obviously had a very advanced case of G3. She had stashed dozens of peeling, pale green and ivory enamel-painted wicker baskets down in her musty, stone-exposed cellar. Some of these baskets housed sun-faded plastic flower arrangements, while others were lined inside with empty coffee cans waiting to be filled with fresh-cut peonies. "Gramma," as I called her, was then in her advanced 80's, and she had obviously been accumulating her decorations for years. She left me to gather what I could, while she went back up to select flowering heads from her deep, coral pink and bright, scarlet red peony bushes, wrapping the stems in wet



newspaper and placing them in quart jars. We both needed to make a couple of trips to load all the stuff into the trunk of my car and on the backseat. She showed amazing stamina. Gramma was a short-statured person, and after I helped her settle into the car, off we went with a major smile of contentment on her face.

Apparently, none of my aunts, uncles, or cousins, who lived in these surrounding communities, were offering to take

Gramma to the cemetery anymore (*well, cemeteries...as it turned out!*). Through the years she understandably wore out her welcome, which affected their willingness to do so. We managed to make it to most of them, both of us knowing that I could never turn down her request to visit yet another relative buried down the road, in yet again another cemetery. I had no idea there were so many cemeteries in La Salle County! Gramma took on a very serious and focused approach as we would arrive at each cemetery. She seemed to recollect fairly well which section within the cemetery we should be headed. She'd point out certain



headstones as a marker to find the one she wanted to visit. When she successfully guided me to a gravesite, we'd get out of the car, open up the trunk, and she would carefully select a particular flower basket that went to a particular relative's grave. Sometimes we prayed; I took her lead in that. Gramma must not have acquired the "grooming" aspect of the G3 trait, as we didn't wash any grave markers, or clip any weeds; just place the floral arrangement at the grave and talk with them for a while, usually in Slovenian, which I couldn't understand. At one relative's gravesite, she shook her fist and spoke in a harsh tone. I don't recall now who that was, but there had to be a story there! The whole cemetery encounter with Gramma was quite the learning experience for me. Our actions didn't seem to be unusual or morbid in any way. It was a comfortable, solacing thing to do. I felt a slight tingle of satisfaction at the time, but just didn't realize my own dormant potential until it surfaced much later in life. It became a late evening for both of us and we had to stop and eat, no home-cooked meal as I had hoped to finagle.

Our venture of visiting grave sites and placing flowers seemed such an accepted, expected, and traditional activity for what back then was called "Decoration Day." The use of the word "decorate" made sense; that's what you did; you decorated gravesites to honor those men and women who served in the military and gave their lives in battle. It actually was first proclaimed back in 1868, when Gen. John Logan, the National Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, placed flowers on the graves of both Confederate and Union soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA. The idea blossomed after WWI and seemed to evolve into honoring and remembering all fallen soldiers. Cemeteries started setting official dates for the spring "opening" of their cemeteries. The idea of cleaning up gravesites after the winter season, and of decorating them with flowers, seemed to evolve into an activity for all family members who had been laid to rest, not just for the military. The official name of Memorial Day was designated in 1967, and then the National Holiday Act of 1971 granted Memorial Day as a national three-day holiday weekend. Those of us over the age of 45, have the unique advantage of knowing this holiday as both Decoration Day and Memorial Day.

That May of 1969 was the only opportunity that I had to chauffeur Gramma around to the cemeteries, but it left an enduring memory. I always wondered, who took her around to scoop up all the flower containers we placed? Seven years later, I began visiting one of those same cemeteries biannually with my mother, following the death of my father in 1976. It was during these biannual visits that my G3 tendencies really began to emerge and honed my skills. The day would begin with my picking her up at her house

in Rock Island, Illinois. She'd have everything readied for the 80 mile trip to the cemetery, and all was conveniently set out on the back concrete stoop next to the graveled driveway. Waiting to be loaded into the trunk, was more than just the peach, silk, floral arrangement on a stand. There was always a jug of water, a scrub brush and cloth, a long-handled dandelion digger, a battery-operated, grass trimming shears, along with a pair of manual, hand-operated shears as a backup to the potential failed batteries, a small rake and trowel, a partial bag of "for sunny areas" grass seed, and something to eat and drink packed in a small cooler (*I'm not sure how long she thought we'd be staying in that cemetery!*). In case I didn't recognize my own repressed G3 skills, my mother added the statement of culpability when she said quietly, "*I just know that once I join them here (pointing to the plot between my father and brother), you'll just let our graves go to weeds.*" You have no idea how often I hear that statement haunting the recesses of my cluttered mind as I meticulously groom their graves for Memorial Day and Thanksgiving, every year since her death in 1997. On one particularly memorable cemetery visit, I learned one must set boundaries to keep their grave grooming actions in check. The sound of a gas-powered lawn mower was overshadowing the solitude of being in a cemetery; I glanced up and saw my mother jealously staring at the gentleman "skimming the surface grass" with his lawn mower blades, which would then carve an obvious shallow indentation over the cemetery plot. She then looked at me, smiled, and started to say something, when I instantly snapped, "*Don't even go there, mom!*"

With last year's post-Thanksgiving grave grooming road trip, I surprised myself (...and most likely my "watching-over mother") by purchasing a hanging Christmas basket with a silk arrangement of evergreen boughs and red poinsettias, which had a string of battery-operated white lights, arranged throughout the basket. The lights were set with a miniature timer and would go on at dusk and off three hours later. A marvel of modern technology, the timer would continue going on and off until the batteries needed to be replaced. That should outdo all the solar, battery lights circling the graves that seemed to be the rage of grave groomers over the last couple of years. After I affixed the basket onto a shepherd's hook over their headstone, I stood back to admire my choice of decoration and looked around and noticed we were the ONLY lit Christmas basket! I said out loud, "*There you go, mom; what do you think of your insensitive son now?*" Unfortunately, the unique timer-lighted Christmas basket didn't last very long hovering over their graves, as it caught somebody else's eye, too, and was stolen. I hope the batteries corroded the timer in the wet, snowy winter and it couldn't be used again!



Grave Grooming impulses don't just surface when you're slated to visit the cemetery; they can catch you off guard, anytime. While shopping at a local hardware store the other day, I caught a glimpse of a display out of the corner of my eye. It seemed to be beckoning me over to check out its' colorful display of solar, ground-stakes of hummingbirds, butterflies, and dragonflies. They were exquisite and not the cheap looking kind. The display sign promoted the items by saying that the solar lights will shine late into the dark of night. Each light used a solar panel located on the garden stake that featured a multi-color changing LED that charges up during the day and then rotates through the hues of red, blue, and green at night. If you bought three, you'd get a fourth for free to create your own butterfly garden. I recalled my battery-operated Christmas basket and how



that attracted the eye of some thief; these may prove better, as numerous neighboring graves used the same type of item. I could imagine how they'd look, strategically placed at the four corners of the grave stone, maybe at varying heights. Then just as quickly, I came out of that vision, laughed out loud, shaking my head as I pushed my cart away and escaped from the display. Oh, the hold the inherited Grave Groomer gene has over us once it manifests itself! I hope to keep those traits in check and just groom the graves, decorate with simple arrangements of seasonal flowers, and share with them what's been going on since the last time I visited. But, did you know that if you bought five of those LED solar-lighted butterfly stakes, they'd give you two free, for a total of seven to decorate with? That could really be stunning!

## SLOVENIAN IMMIGRANT LT. GENERAL FRANK GORENC APPOINTED COMMANDER of U.S. AIR FORCES in EUROPE and AFRICA

**SUA Branch 43 – Milwaukee, Wisconsin members, Tony Gorenc and Mici Bregant, are proud cousins of recently appointed 4-Star General and Commander of U. S. Air Forces in Europe and Africa, Frank Gorenc. Commander Gorenc also serves as Commander of NATO's Air Command.**

### **Tony shares his cousin Frank's family background:**

In 1958, my father, also named Tony Gorenc, went to Slovenia to visit the Gorenc family. The time spent with his brother, Stanley, Frank's father, is where the idea to immigrate was nurtured. The Gorenc family immigrants arrived in the U.S. in 1961 when Frank was four years old, along with his brother Stanley, eight years old, mother Frances, and father Stanley. The family is from the Dolenjska region of Slovenia, specifically Ribnica (mom) and Brezovica/Mokronog (father). Initially, upon arrival in the U.S. the family lived with my father, who then employed his brother as a tailor to help at "Tony's Tailor Shop." Frank's mother, a mid-wife, then took employment at Briggs & Stratton, a manufacturing company in Milwaukee.

Frank and Stanley were educated in Milwaukee. They were nominated, first Stanley and then Frank, to the Air Force Academy by then Wisconsin's U.S. Representative Clement J. Zablocki. The boys graduated from the Air Force Academy and on to very important and illustrious careers in the U.S. Air Force. Stanley is now a retired Major General. Due to his appointment, Frank is currently in the news worldwide. He will be based at Ramstein Air Base in Germany overseeing 35,000 Air Force personnel. Frank and Stanley are both role models for the extended Gorenc family, both in the U.S. and in Slovenia. We are all very proud of them.



Their achievements highlight the typical humble beginnings of our Slovenian forefathers. This all makes me want to shout out, "Zivijo-Zivijo Slovenci!"

*Tony Gorenc  
Branch 43 - Milwaukee, WI*



# Participation Invited in a Study of American-Slovenian Music

Rich Terselic and Chuck Debevec

Music has always been important to Slovenians, whether sung, played, listened to, or danced to. When Slovenian immigrants came to America they brought their folk, liturgical, and concert stage music to wherever they settled in their new country. However, the music didn't remain the same and evolved as a consequence of various influences; including interaction with the music of other ethnic groups, trends in American music, such as jazz, and the availability of musical instruments not previously used in Slovenian music. Dr. William Lausche, Anton Schubel, and Frank Yankovic are examples of persons who played key roles in the evolution. The music took on a distinctly American flavor that eventually found its way back to Slovenia, where it has had a dramatic impact.

A scientist, Mojca Kovacic, working in Ljubljana at the Institute of Ethnomusicology, is studying the Slovenian folk music tradition in America. We are proud to have been invited to participate in the design of the questionnaire to be used in the study. American-Slovenians of all ages are invited to participate. Persons of other heritages who have been influenced by American-Slovenian music are also invited to participate.

The primary means by which the study is being pursued is through the questionnaire. The questions seek to collect data about how the ties to our distinctive Slovenian heritage are maintained in America through music and:

- The relationship between American-Slovenians and their music.
- How American-Slovenian music is intertwined with American music.
- The impact Slovenian heritage has on an individual's overall taste in music.
- Individual experiences with music early in life and into adulthood.

***Zarja-The Dawn* readers are invited to complete the questionnaire on line.**

**It can be accessed by entering the following link into your browser:**

**<http://anketnik.zrc-sazu.si/index.php/858462/lang-en>**

If you are unable to complete the questionnaire on line, you can print off a copy. *Zarja* readers are also invited to forward the link to others, inviting them to complete the questionnaire and submit it. The extent of your contacts with American-Slovenian music is *not* important. That is, whether your contacts be great or small is not important. To the extent that completed questionnaires represent varying degrees of contact, the study will be enriched. A report describing the findings of the study will be prepared and will be available on line as well as shared with American-Slovenian publications.

**The study director welcomes comments, questions, and suggestions, and can be contacted by e-mail at: [mojca.kovacic@zrc-sazu.si](mailto:mojca.kovacic@zrc-sazu.si) or by mail:**

**Mojca Kovacic  
Institute of Ethnomusicology ZRC SAZU  
Novi trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia**

# 100th Anniversary of Holy Cross Slovenian Parish in Fairfield, CT

June 9, 2013, on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of Holy Cross Slovenian Parish in Fairfield, CT, KSKJ - St. Joseph's Lodge 148 organized a meeting with Republic of Slovenia Deputy Chief of Mission, Mrs. Ondina Bloka Drobnič, and the U.S. Representative for Slovenians Abroad, Mr. Ivan Kamin; participants included members of KSKJ, Anton Malensek, Tony Mravle, Mr. and Mrs. Drago Bizilj, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Suhadolnik, Julie Schneller; and Slovenes from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York - Tanya Vajk and Maria Whitmire (SUA Branch 93 - NYC), Dr. and Mrs. Tom Zargaj, Barbara Kamin, Robert Kokorda, Johnnie Chuma, Tanya Fensore, and Frank Fico, among others. Parishioners and friends enjoyed a banquet for over 200 people and also published a cookbook featuring many new "old country" treasured recipes.



*Jubileja Maša: Reverends Aloysius J. Hribšek, Milan Dimič, Bogdan Kolar, Michael Mendle, and James Oliver joined Pastor Alfred F. Pečarič, STL to concelebrate the Holy Liturgy.*

To order a copy of the Holy Cross Church Cookbook published for this occasion (\$15):

Contact Holy Cross Parish  
203.372.4595 or [holy\\_cross\\_church@sbcglobal.net](mailto:holy_cross_church@sbcglobal.net)

or

**Tanya Vajk**, Legal Secretary  
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP  
767 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10153  
[tanyavajk@weil.com](mailto:tanyavajk@weil.com) +1.212.833.3545 Direct  
Evenings and weekends  
[vajkusa@aol.com](mailto:vajkusa@aol.com) +1.917.687.9909 Mobile



*Back row: Dr. Tom Zargaj, Robert Kokorda, Mrs. Ondina Bloka Drobnič, Ivan Kamin, Johnnie Chuma, Albert Suhadolnik, Julie Schneller, and Tanya Fensore.*

*Front row: Barbara Kamin, Paula Zargaj, Anton Malensek, Tanya Vajk, Marie Suhadolnik, Maria Whitmire, Tony Mravle, and Frank Fiko.*

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*"Lake Bled, Slovenia" 15 X 30 inches*

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(218) 749-3377



*Artist will donate \$25 from each sale to Slovenian Union of America*



# Marjorie Church

## Tribute to Long Time Members

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**M**arjorie Church is well known to members of the SUA because of all the work she has done for the organization. Currently President of Branch 42 in Maple Heights, Ohio, she in the past has served as a National Auditor, and later a four-year term as a National Vice President. The achievement she is most proud of is her 20 years of service as Vice President and Treasurer of the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation. Her professional approach to promotional work, along with her computer knowledge, enabled her to set up detailed databases and create brochures that have contributed greatly to the success of the program. Her financial expertise has been of enormous help and all financial statements are balanced to the penny. She helped establish the SWU Scholarship Foundation's corporate status in 1998, and located a pro bono attorney to begin work on the tax exempt status of the Heritage branch of the SUA back in 1999.

Marge was born in Cleveland, Ohio, the daughter of Jacob Yemec, born in Trzin, Slovenia, and Maria Brodnik, born across the street from St. Vitus Church. She had two brothers, Jack H. (deceased), and Edmund. The family lived in Maple Heights, where her father learned the meat market/grocery business and opened a store on Miller Avenue. Later, with the financial assistance of an uncle, her father built a grocery store with living quarters above to accommodate the entire family, near the Slovenian Home on Stanley Avenue.

After graduating from Marymount High School in Garfield Heights, Marge attended the University of Dayton where she received an associate degree in Business. Employment followed as a stewardess for United Airlines, domiciled in Denver, Colorado. In future years, she continued her college education.

Colorado was Marge's home for 20 years, where she was employed by a condominium developer, part of the Hyatt Hotel chain. She married and moved to the mountains and embraced an active lifestyle there. In Georgetown, Colorado, she became a ski instructor at the Arapahoe Basin (avalanche territory), and a class B slalom racer, and then managed a newly built, oversized, A-frame ski lodge and restaurant, close to the Breckenridge, Colorado, ski area.

In 1980, Marge returned to Ohio to live with her mother, who now lived in Macedonia, Ohio, but Marge still maintained all her close ties to the



“Old Neighborhood” in Maple Heights. This provided a great opportunity for the two of them to “bond” and enjoy their common interests in classical music and gardening. A trip to Slovenia followed where Marge met both sides of her family, with her mother being the best translator. At this point Marge became a member of Branch 42 and immediately became active, eventually holding most Branch officer positions. Currently, she is President of Branch 42, but the membership has dwindled, and the remaining special ladies get together for lunches and a Christmas party.

Marge furthered her activities in the Slovenian community by becoming a director and recording secretary of the Slovenian National Home in Maple Heights until it closed. In 1992, her mother passed. This remarkable woman had been a charter member of Branch 42 starting in 1930, and at one time or another had held every elected position.

Marge attended the SWUA National Convention in San Francisco where she

was chosen to fill the position of interim director for the SWU Scholarship Program. Since that time 20 years ago, the scholarship program has become her major interest, helping it expand and enabling it to provide an excellent opportunity for young, adult members to obtain scholarship financial assistance in larger amounts. This is Marge's primary charity and she has donated to it on a regular basis and encourages others to do the same. Today, as a corporate officer (Vice President), she handles investments and marketing,

Marge writes, "I am very pleased and honored to have been invited to become an Associate of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Third Order of Saint Francis. I have been a member of the Associates since 2004 and have spent time in contemplation with the sisters in prayerful gatherings and convent events, sharing momentous celebrations and private times with them." They are located in Garfield Heights, Ohio, and on their 80 acre intergenerational campus property they operate Trinity High School, Marymount Hospital, Clare Hall for Retired Nuns, Marymount Convent, St. Joseph Village Rehab, Marymount Place for Assisted Living, a Child Care Center, and an Alzheimer's Center. They have completed all this through their extraordinary vision, individual skills, and many prayerful hours.

Today Marge also enjoys reading, choral singing, theater, movies, concerts, sightseeing, volunteer work, and dining out with friends. What a remarkable Slovenian woman this is! Marge has done many things in her life, from being far away from her Slovenian family, and coming back again and taking up where she and her mother left off. We especially congratulate her on becoming an Associate of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Third Order of Saint Francis, and wish all the best for her in this endeavor.

### **Tribute to Long Time Members**

Note: Please notify me if you would like to suggest a SUA/SWUA member to be profiled in this feature. Remember - they must have been active for many years, and are probably in their 80s.

My e-mail is [pbudzilek@oh.rr.com](mailto:pbudzilek@oh.rr.com).

## **WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED?**

**Looking for volunteers who  
love their heritage.**

*We need help  
in our Museum  
in Joliet, Illinois,  
with scanning,  
sorting, cleaning,  
and creating exhibits.*

## **WANTED**

**Heritage Museum Director**

**Membership Director**

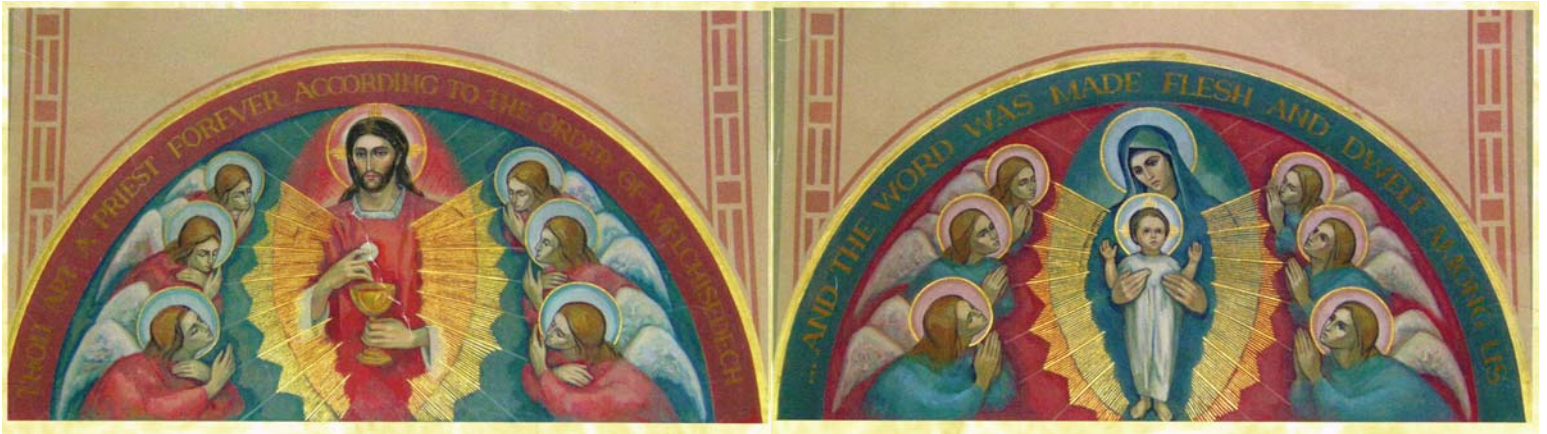
**Heritage Museum Librarian**

**Museum Window Dressers**

**Heritage Museum Cleaners**

***Zarja - The Dawn Writers***





*Lunettes above the sanctuary doors, St. Joseph Church, Joliet, painted by Lillian Brulc.*

# Portrait of a Slovenian Artist: Lillian Brulc, *Naj počiva v miru.*

*by Rev. Father Michael Monshau, O.P., Ph.D., S.T.L.*

*Professor of Theology at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (The Angelicum), Rome*

One of America's most profound artists and one of the Slovenian-American community's greatest treasures completed her earthly journey on November 14, 2012, just two days before her eighty-ninth birthday. Lillian Brulc, a native daughter of Saint Joseph Parish, Joliet, the daughter of Louis and Mary (Puschnik) Brulc, was a celebrated artist of international repute. Although her work can be found on every populated continent, she never strayed far from her Slovenian, Catholic, Joliet, neighborhood, family, and parish roots.

Louis Brulc, a public service laborer (now known as Commonwealth Edison), and his wife, Mary Brulc, a homemaker, were Slovenian immigrants who established their young family in the home on Summit Street in Joliet that continued to be Lillian's home the rest of her life. They had eight children before Mary died at the tender age of forty-four, leaving the older daughters (Frieda and Eleanore) to help their father raise the younger children, including Lillian. As Lillian's devoted sister, Lucille (Lucija) Dragovan recalls, "Frieda liked to teach us to draw, especially people, and that seems to have been the beginning of Lillian's [author's note: and Lucille's] career as an artist." Lillian attended the renowned Saint Joseph School of the Slovenian-American Saint Joseph Parish in



Joliet and then continued her education at Joliet Township High School. The record of her advanced schooling reveals highly impressive credentials: she took her undergraduate degree at Saint Xavier College (now University) in Chicago, followed by the distinguished Master of Fine Arts degree at the Art Institute of Chicago,



complemented by a Master's degree in Art History at the celebrated University of Chicago. Throughout her school years, Lucille recalls, pencil and tablet were never far from Lillian's reach. Dramatic arts, as well as the plastic arts, filled Lillian's young years.

As Lillian's formal art education neared its completion, it was her pastor at Saint Joseph's, Monsignor Matthias J. Butala, whose early recognition of her talents began to draw public attention to her work. Just as Lillian was completing her M.F.A. degree at the Art Institute of Chicago, Msgr. Butala gave Lillian her first major commission: to paint a large mural (four feet and five inches by twenty-four feet) on the front wall of each classroom in the spacious Saint Joseph Parish School. Since that time in 1953, each of the twelve classrooms features a mural created by Lillian to complement that stage of religious education appropriate to the grade level typically assigned to each particular classroom. For instance, the Kindergarten room shows a scene of Saint Michael and the Guardian Angels watching over small children at play. In the First Grade classroom, Lillian created a scene depicting Jesus and the little children reflecting the gospel event recounted in Luke 18:15-17, Matthew 19:13-15, and Mark 10:13-16. Sister Marlene Ambrose, another daughter of Saint Joseph Parish as well as a one-time teacher at her alma mater, was teaching Second Grade at Saint Joseph's during the time Lillian was creating those murals. Sister Marlene recalls, "I was especially pleased with the work Lillian executed in my classroom. In Second Grade I prepared the children each year to receive their First Holy Communion and that was the theme of our mural: the Saints of the Eucharist guiding a class of youngsters to the altar to receive Our Eucharistic Lord for the first time. It couldn't have been more fitting." Other murals represented the Mass (the Eighth Grade room), the descent of the Holy Spirit on Mary and the Apostles in the room which alternately housed either Fifth or Sixth Grade, the years when children received



Confirmation at that time, Our Lady of Fatima of the Rosary, Saint Joseph, Saint Therese, Saint Francis, Saint Don Bosco, and the Church Triumphant, Militant and Suffering. The school library featured a mural depicting the history of the written word.

Father Michael Monshau, O.P., a Dominican priest who attended Saint Joseph School and who is now on the



faculty of the Pontifical Angelicum University in Rome, remembers, “Those murals comprised a very significant part of the religious formation of the children who attended Saint Joseph’s. For many of us, the lessons learned from those visual bible and catechism lessons helped to form us in Christ. I always noted that when I spoke about those murals with Lillian, she seemed to deflect my enthusiasm for them. As some of her earliest and more unpolished efforts, I think she may have regarded these murals somewhat unfavorably herself, compared to her later more developed method, and so she was always a bit surprised when someone described how profoundly they had been influenced by those school murals. Nonetheless, they are what they are and they have accomplished their mission of forming souls in Christ for decades now.”

After the school murals, Msgr. Butala commissioned Lillian to paint the scene of the Baptism of the Lord in the baptistry of the Church as well as several other works in the sanctuary. Lillian produced a robust, even athletic-

looking Christ for the baptismal scene; Monsignor had envisioned something more classical. Lillian’s design won that argument and is still in place, but the parish still chuckles over the legends describing the banter between Lillian and the always-determined Monsignor over what Monsignor came to call “Our Football Jesus.”

Eventually, Lillian created her combination home/studio by extending the garage at the back of her family’s homestead. For the rest of her life, when not on the road, Lillian’s activities were centered in that studio home, while her close sister and professional colleague, Lucille Dragovan, occupied the main house of the family homestead with her family. Moving beyond her parish projects, Lillian travelled internationally, with a particular devotion to Slovenia, her ancestral homeland. Most of her career, Lillian preferred large works in oil paint; numerous churches feature her work. She also provided illustrations for books and various social justice fundraising projects; eventually she came to favor working in acrylics.

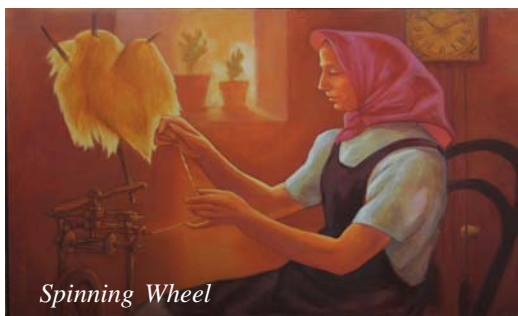


*Picnic on the Karst*

It seems impossible to catalogue a comprehensive list of Lillian's art as it exists today throughout the world, but a naming of some of her work surely stands as a worthy representative for all of her work. In particular, she is a legend among the parishioners of *Parroquia Cristo Redentor* (Christ the Redeemer Parish) in San Miguelito, Panama, for the murals she created for their innovative church that reflected the integration of their Central American heritage with their Catholic faith. That parish conducted a three-day celebration in honor of Lillian when they learned about her death. Lillian was also a featured artist in the Mary-Frances and Bill Veeck Gallery at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Wileen Dragovan, Lillian's niece (and Lucille's daughter), recalls that among Lillian's other projects, "She designed chapels at Divine Word Seminary, Techy, IL, and at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. She has murals at Saint Elizabeth Seton Church in Naperville, IL, and a free-hanging sculpture of the Crucifix at Saint Victor's Parish in Calumet City, IL. Although my mother was the main artist and designer, Lillian did a good deal of work for the 'Slovenia to America' murals that are on the walls opposite Saint Joseph's Church campus in Joliet."

Although Slovenian-American life wasn't necessarily the subject of most of her work, her life work reflected her faith-filled Slovenian heritage, and more than anything, she seemed to be contemplative. She was a lifelong student, especially of the scriptures, theology, and culture.



*Spinning Wheel*

She once attended the Catholic Theological Union's semester in the Holy Land. Father Edward Ruane, O.P., a former Provincial of the Chicago Dominican Fathers and fellow student of that same sabbatical program, recalls the depth of Lillian's biblical reflections. She was always ready to explain the theological or spiritual significance of some aspect of her work and was similarly eager to hear how the faith of others was stirred by various experiences.

Lucille Dragovan, remembering that her sister was recently working on a portrait of a bishop in Bermuda, knows that Lillian left some unfinished projects behind, and although Lucille and Lillian collaborated frequently in their projects throughout life, and Lillian asked Lucille to complete some of the projects that were unfinished



*This panel (one of six life-size panels) shows Sister Elizabeth Seton with two school children.*

as she neared the end of her life, Lucille notes that it would not do for her to do so. She replied, "Those unfinished projects must remain unfinished."

Lillian's health started to deteriorate a couple of years before her death, and several hospitalizations and short stays for rehabilitation, supplemented the loving care she received in her home during those two declining years from her sister, Lucille Dragovan, her nieces, Wileen Dragovan and Pat Rolih, and Angela Lukancic Zaida. When God called her to Himself on November 14, 2012, Lillian beheld for the first time, God's Perfect Beauty, which she had been attempting to capture with pen and brush for nearly a century. At that moment, one of the most splendid members of the Slovenian-American community, Saint Joseph Parish of Joliet, Joliet itself, the artistic community, Roman Catholicism, and of course, the extended Brulc family, moved into eternity. May God grant her eternal rest.



# Salute 2013 – The Cultural Expressions of Slovenia

## *Back to the Country of Our Ancestors*

Mary Lou Deyak Voelk, SUA's Vice-President of Culture & Heritage, with help from Branch 23 of Ely, Minnesota, presented *Salute 2013 – The Cultural Expressions of Slovenia* at the Vermillion Community College in Ely, Minnesota, on July 12, 2013.

The program consisted of a full day of exhibits and presentations. Exhibits included a display of button boxes by Margaret Sweet of the Ely-Winton Historical Society, the beautiful lace of Dolly Grahek by BeBe Lobe and Cecilia Rolando of Branch 23, a traveling exhibit of Father Baraga, and the artwork of the old country by Albin Zaverl by the St. Louis County Historical Society. Special guests included Mayor Russ Petersen and Miro Medved, Honorary Slovenian Consul of Minnesota.

The program opened with a historical timeline of Slovenia and poetry readings by the Lah and Omerza families,



*Botton Boxes of Rudy Jandrey, Adolf Levar, Frank Udovich, and Shirley Theobald.*

Slovenian travelogue, and Mary Lou herself gave a very interesting presentation of folk art, depicting beehive fronts. Mary Jo Pouchnik presented how to make apple potica the easy way. Joe Valencic, President of the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame told the story of the life of Bogdan Grom, an artist who once called Slovenia his home. The program wrapped up with the movie called *Shanghai Gypsy*, a Slovenian love story.







Artwork of the old country by Albin Zaverl.



The Lace Lady, Dolly Grahek, and Joe Valencic.



Left to right: Ray Marsnik, Pat Koski, and Mike Koski. The acappella trio singing those memorable Slovenian songs!

After a day of wonderful cultural expressions, a Slovenska Miza, (buffet), was held at Creek Ridge Lodge. The Barich Brothers of Ely played for the group of over 160 people while they feasted on blood sausage, polish sausage, potica, blueberry and apple strudel, to name a few. Music, dancing, and a sing-along ended the evening. The day brought us all back to the country of our ancestors and we look forward to this special day next year. A special thank you goes out to Mary Lou Deyak Voelk for all of her hard work in putting this day together.

*Mary Jo Pouchnik, Secretary, Branch 23*



Mary Lou Deyak Voelk and Mary (Lesar) Smuk.

September/October 2013

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*Mary Lou,*

*It was a pleasure to meet you. My mom, Mary (Lesar) Smuk, recognized you and your sister immediately and mentioned she babysat you girls. She was very pleased and happy to have conversations with you and your sister. The party was a huge success! Your husband is just as wonderful as you are! I am attaching the beautiful picture of you and my mom.*

*My two daughters, Becky (age 30) and Ashley (age 29), want to become members so I plan to fill out applications and keep the young generation going. They are proud of their Slovenian heritage, as we are.*

*Mary Lou (Smuk) Baltich*



# Calendar of Events

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## **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2013**

Branch 35 of Aurora, Minnesota, to host the Minnesota Regional Convention. Coffee at 8:30 a.m., meeting at 9:00 a.m., Mass at 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner and program at noon. Everything will be held at Holy Rosary Catholic Church.

## **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2013**

Branch 99 of Lemont, Illinois, to host Annual Bocce Ball Tournament and picnic at 12:00 p.m. at the home of Paula Mavec. RSVP to Jana Hlade at [jmhlade@hotmail.com](mailto:jmhlade@hotmail.com) or 815.439.1905. Kids welcome.

## **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2013**

Branch 20 of Joliet, Illinois, to host annual Grape Harvest Festival Dance. All are welcome to attend. Contact Jonita Ruth at 815.727.1926.

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2013**

Branch 108 of Olney, Maryland, to celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington D.C. from 3:00 p.m - 5:00 p.m.

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2013**

Branch 50 of Euclid, Ohio, to host the Ohio Regional Convention – Mass at 10:30 a.m. at St. Vitus Church followed by brunch at St. Vitus Village.

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2013**

Branch 20 of Joliet, Illinois, to host Illinois/Indiana Regional Convention along with their 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. Champagne breakfast at Ferdinand Hall at 8:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. Polka Mass at St. Joseph's. 1:30 p.m. Dinner and program at St. George Social Hall. Entertainment by A Cappella Group ZBOR

SPENDOV and ZADNJA KAPLJA. Additional music by Vince Rigler. Tickets are \$50.00 each. Contact Jo Lustik at 815.723.2777.

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2013**

Branch 1 of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, to host the Wisconsin Regional Convention at S.S. Cyril and Methodius Church. Mass begins at 1:00 p.m., followed by dinner, meeting, and entertainment. For more information contact Mary Ann Schellinger at 920.457.7946.

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2013**

Branch 99 of Lemont, Illinois, to host the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Bunco Event at the Slovenian Catholic Center from 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

## **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2013**

Branch 47 of Garfield Heights, Ohio, to host a Christmas Luncheon at the Valley View Community Center at 12:30 p.m.

## **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013**

Branch 43 of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to host a New Year's Eve Party and celebration of Spravanje (Reconciliation) and Silvestrovanje (St. Sylvester's Day) from 5:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Wisconsin Athletic Club on Highway 100, just north of West Lincoln Avenue. Contact Jan Gehm at 414.321.1413.



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# Slovenian

## Union of America

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### Branch Reports

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#### **BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin**

Contact Information: Mary Ann Schellinger  
920.457.7946 [rhmas@yahoo.com](mailto:rhmas@yahoo.com)

May was a memorable month where we honored our veterans, both living and deceased, on Memorial Day and also our mothers on Mother's Day. Marie Prisland, the founder of SWUA (now SUA), was given the recognition as the "mother of our organization." Members of Branch 1 planted perennial red carnations at her gravesite at the Greendale Cemetery.

On June 19<sup>th</sup> we gathered for a tasty potluck supper in Fr. Cherne Hall at S.S. Cyril and Methodius Church. A variety of wonderful dishes and desserts were served. What would a Slovenian potluck be without kranjska kielbasa, hren (horseradish), strudel, potica, and of course, the ever present pink tea? All who attended enjoyed the fellowship and food. Also, Mary Ann Schellinger, our Wisconsin Regional President, was doing a "Branch visit" at the potluck

meeting. She shared information received from S U A headquarters and presented our Branch with a "smiley" bowl from Slovenia with the inscription "Ljubim Te" (I love you). This will be displayed at the Branch meetings.



*Carnations at Marie Prisland's gravesite.  
Pictured: Board members - Marilyn  
Hendricks, Denise Schueffner, and Mary  
Ann Schellinger.*

We are preparing for the Wisconsin Regional Convention, which will be held on Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, at S.S. Cyril and Methodius Church. There will be a celebrated Mass at 1 p.m., followed by a catered dinner, business meeting, entertainment, and door prizes. Mark your calendar.

Our evening concluded with a reading of "Memories of Grandpa." Some members shared memories of their grandpa.

BETTY REPENSHEK

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

Contact Information: Daisy Zeleznikar 630.325.3965

Greetings! At our Father's Day and Flag Day meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup>, Father Ackerman opened the Sacred Heart Chapel (St. Stephen Church) for those who wished to pray for their loved ones. It was a very emotional experience. He told us he would have Mass for us when we had a need or wanted one for our Branch.

Our next meeting will be on September 15<sup>th</sup>. We will begin with a Mass for our members, thanking our Lord for the many blessings for both our living and deceased. Afterward we will have our meeting and refreshments.

The October meeting is cancelled. Instead, all members are invited to the Illinois-Indiana Regional Convention hosted by Branch 20 on Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with their 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. See *Zarja's* Calendar of Events for details. If interested, call Daisy at 630.325.3965.

Also, on October 27<sup>th</sup>, Branch 99 - Lemont will host their 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Bunco event from 2-5 p.m. at the Slovenian Catholic Center. All are welcome.

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, we are hosting a Mass for the safety of our troops, peace for our troubled world, and all our members of SUA who served in the military. To celebrate the end of fall, we ask members to bring to our meeting flowers, leaves, or anything fall-colored to decorate the tables. To make it more festive, we ask members to wear fall colors. Please bring a dish to pass.



Our Zveza Picnic was successful and we thank everyone who volunteered and came out for a good time.

For year 2014, we will not hold any meetings in the months of January or February because of uncertain weather. Our members had voted to cancel the meetings during these months. Please mark your calendars for these changes.

DAISY

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### BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

Contact Information: Annette Sabo Charron  
[amtcharron@yahoo.com](mailto:amtcharron@yahoo.com)

As is the custom in the summer months, Slovenian-Americans in Pueblo congregate at the Preseren Home. The home is situated in the beautiful Greenhorn Mountains outside of Rye, Colorado, and is about a 30-minute drive from Pueblo. The Preseren Club usually hosts two picnics during the summer – one in June and one in August. The June 2013 picnic was well attended, and in addition to many Branch 3 members, friends and relatives from other states, as well as from many places around Colorado, came to the event. The Preseren Home is a large 3-story building constructed in the 1920s as a meeting and recreation place for the Preseren Glee Club. On the first floor is a kitchen



*Preseren Home picnic area and bar by the creek - Rye, Colorado.*

and dining hall. This is where the kielbasa, Bojohn hamburgers, and strudels are sold on picnic days. Outside of the first floor is a large, covered patio filled with picnic tables. The corner of the patio has a bar with beer on draft and cocktails available. Adjacent to the patio are horseshoe pits and a playground. A beautiful, large dance floor takes up the entire second floor of Preseren Home. On Preseren picnic days there is always a live polka band. People of all ages have fun dancing the polka or watching others dancing to the great music. The general public does not access the third floor, but supposedly it contains sleeping accommodations for the official Preseren members (100

men of Slovenian descent – some of which are Branch 3 members). The Preseren Home includes many acres of surrounding land, and just below, via a short trail, there is a creek in which the young children love to wade. The area adjacent to the creek also has picnic tables under large shade trees, another bar for refreshments, and bathrooms. Next to the creek are trails leading into the mountains for those who want to hike. If you are ever in the Pueblo area in June or August, contact a Branch 3 member to see if they can get you tickets (which are free) to one of the summer picnics.

Monthly meetings for Branch 3 were suspended during the summer. The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 1, 2013, in the St. Mary's church hall.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON &  
BARBARA KARLINGER

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### BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

Contact Information: Phyllis [phylliswu5@aol.com](mailto:phylliswu5@aol.com)

Summer seemed to rush right along, as usual. Once July 4th is over, and the heat settles in, the days just fly by! Gardens are reaching their peak season, filled with beautiful flowers and luscious produce - there is nothing better than a fresh picked tomato, still warm from the garden! Sitting on hot bleachers, holding an umbrella for a little shade, watching Little League baseball, YMCA T-ball, and soccer are always favorite summer activities for many families, and ours is no different. This year we watched two of our young grandsons play soccer and T-ball, with some success and much laughter! It is even more fun to watch "mom and dad" - and remember when it was their turn out on the playing field. Where did the time go?

This summer I broke my foot! I have never broken anything, so becoming one of the "hobbling handicapped" is a very humbling and tiring experience. It gave me a new appreciation for those who, on a daily basis, deal with obstacles and pain, but continue to retain their independence.

I am not a  
p a t i e n t

person, so my family's sympathy lasted about 48 hours. Anyone who is, or has been, a "care giver", you are up for sainthood! If you know someone caring for a family member, give him or her a call or stop for a visit, drop off a dessert, or lend a hand.



*Member Chase Poole.*

Caregivers certainly have a “star in Heaven” awaiting them!

Watch your mail for dates and information on our annual “Koffee and Krofe” Sunday, starting with a Memorial Mass at Holy Trinity for all our deceased members, and on our holiday meeting. These dates are in October and November, and are always well attended and lots of fun!

May your autumn weather be cool and colorful!

KAREN, MARY & PHYLLIS

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

Congratulations to Jennifer Yager, a fifth generation member of Branch 13, on her recent marriage to Luke Metz. Jenny is the daughter of Lynn Yager and granddaughter of Agnes Kurnick. Agnes’ mother, Mary Ansel, was a long-time member, and great-great-grandmother Marija Kurnik was an early member of this branch, joining in 1928. Jenny’s and Luke’s wedding took



*Photo from Jenny and Luke’s Wedding.*

place on a beautiful weekend in lovely Carmel Valley, CA. The three year old ring-bearer, the groom’s nephew, carried a small baseball bat and a sign stating, “You hit a home run, Luke. Here comes your bride!” The couple resides in San Jose, CA. Thank you Aunty Sandra Farrell for the

beautiful article. Much love to Jennifer and Luke and this wonderful family from Branch 13.

MOREEN SPENCER

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

Contact Information: Marjorie Mitchell 773.646.4392

[Dolores60617@yahoo.com](mailto:Dolores60617@yahoo.com)

Our April meeting was a success, in that, with only 13 members attending, we collected household and personal items for donations to Haven House, a women’s shelter. Keeping with the “Spring Fling” theme, Alberta Corey presented all with flower seeds to add to the beauty of

May. Also Judy Machek, Denise Maloy, and Evelyn Driscoll were winners in the SUA’s Spring Fling drawing.

Our May get-together was our annual Mother’s Day luncheon. Twenty members and guests enjoyed lunch as we were entertained with music by Frank Yankovic. We honored our mother/member of the year – Marjorie Mitchell. Marj was married for 49+ years to her husband, Bob, who just recently passed away. She has been our hard working president for over six years. Before she took over, there were rumblings of dissolving the Branch for lack of interest and dwindling membership. Since she became President there has been a rise in membership and also an interest in attending meetings. Her active mind came up with our pot-luck salad luncheon, apple strudel demonstration, and we were the first Branch to work on the *Zarja* indexing project - all fun things to do on a Saturday afternoon. Bravo Marj! A good job well done! Marj attended St. George grammar school and her grandparents were founding members of St. George. She is also 50% Slovenian.

News of member Mary Therese Ehnat in the hospital/rehabilitation. Get well wishes go out to her with hope that all will be well. There are no meetings scheduled for the summer months of June, July, and August. We will meet next on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Happy Summer!!

DOLORES KRAL FRANKO

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

Contact Information: Patricia Schager 815.439.0062

[patricia.schager@att.net](mailto:patricia.schager@att.net)

Busy, busy, busy. Big September and October activities for us this fall. Our Branch is planning its 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration in conjunction with the Illinois/Indiana Regional Convention for Sunday, October 20, with a champagne breakfast at 8:00 a.m., followed by the Convention meeting, a Polka Mass at 11:30 a.m., dinner, and program with special music. Cost is \$50.00 for the Anniversary celebration. Call Jo Lustik at 815.723.2777 and see this *Zarja*’s Calendar of Events for more information.

Monthly meetings begin in September. A calendar of events and monthly meeting dates for the New Year were mailed to all members. Our annual Slovenian Grape Harvest Dance is Sunday, September 22. Look for more information on the inside back cover of this *Zarja* issue.

Branch officers and chairpersons met in early July to work out the details for the Grape Dance, anniversary celebration, and guest speakers for our monthly meetings. Pictured with notes, calendars, papers, pens, and delicious pizzas were Barbara DeLaney, Jonita Ruth, Diane Hohenwater, Pat Butterbach, Bea Nemanich, Jo Lustik, President Char Kobe, Jean Herbst, and Sandy Kehring. Not pictured, but also there, were Nancy Horwath and Pat Schager. A big thank you, ladies, for all your tireless time and gracious volunteering!





Just a little sidebar for the Anniversary Dinner - a beautiful, handmade Slovenian Doll will be raffled off during the dinner. She stands about 24 inches tall, dressed in traditional Slovenian costume, and would be a stunning addition for any Slovene at heart. Chances are being mailed to our members or available through the Branch, or by contacting member Jo Lustik at 815.723.2777.

Come join us for our fun, fall activities. We extend a warm welcome to fellow Branches and their families to our events. And a visit to the Heritage Museum, with its large assortment of all things Slovenian, including interesting and historical pictures and displays, is always a must.

With sadness, we report on the passing of member Margaret Pubentz. Please remember her in your prayers.

PATRICIA SCHAGER

### BRANCH 23 - Ely, Minnesota

We met on June 27<sup>th</sup> and discussed the support of the Ely Cemetery Committee. Members will continue to help pull weeds and grass at our cemetery garden plot. A table will be set up at the St. Anthony Youth Fall Festival to sell Slovenian Rags. The meeting ended with a number of members agreeing to help at the Salute 2013 – Slovenian Day at the college on July 12.

MARY JO POUCHNIK

### BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

Contact Information: Bonnie Prokup [wprokup@aol.com](mailto:wprokup@aol.com)

Members of Branches 24 and 89 - Oglesby had a wonderful time at our Annual Slovenian Picnic held at Starved Rock Family Fun. Guests were greeted with pogaca bread, made by Bekki Prokup who was home for the summer from Quincy University. That was only the beginning as each guest was asked to bring a Slovenian dish. You name it – it was there! What a spectacular feast. While visiting with friends we were entertained by a polka band. The evening was perfect.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, at Eureka Bank in LaSalle. We hope to see you there.

BONNIE

### BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Jan Gehm 414.321.1413

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

Our June 26th evening meeting was well attended and all enjoyed a delicious dinner prior to it. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by the singing of “SLOVENIA” in English, commemorating the 22nd Anniversary of Slovenia’s Independence on June 25th, and we also recited a prayer in Slovenian for our sick members.

Many thanks to member John Urh, who presented a check at this meeting for \$1,500 to Denise P. Bartlett for the SUA Heritage Museum in Joliet. There is much “love” in this Slovenian! John is the last surviving member of the St. George Society in Waukegan, started in 1906, and has given several donations to non-profit Slovenian organizations from the balance of their account. (*Editors Note: See page 35 for more details.*)

Best wishes and sincere congratulations to member Kathryn Elizabeth Kaye and Kyle Berlin who were married on June 22, at St. John the Evangelist Cathedral in Milwaukee. Kathryn is the daughter of Jim and Katherina Kaye, also a Branch member. May your future be filled with good health, joy, and God’s Blessings.



July 4, 2013, was a day of celebration for Rev. Dr. Jože Gole. It was this day 70 years ago that he was ordained a priest in Slovenia. Father Gole has been an active participant at Slovenian events for decades in the Milwaukee area. Our very best wishes are extended to him. May God hold you in the Palm of His Hand.

The Wisconsin Regional Convention will be held in Sheboygan on October 27, 2013. All events will be held at

St. Cyril and Methodius Church. We are hoping for a good Milwaukee representation.

Just a reminder to all to mark your calendars on December 31, 2013, and plan to attend our New Year's Eve Celebration, which will be held at the Wisconsin Athletic Club in West Allis. This is our first attempt at celebrating the beginning of a New Year - Slovenian Style, with a recognition of Spravanje (Reconciliation) and Silvestrovanje (St. Sylvester's Day). Please watch for more information, or come to our next meeting on Wednesday, Sep. 25, at the West Allis Library at noon.

MICI BREGANT

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

Contact Information: Olga Dorchak 330.468.7989

Greetings! Plan to attend our meeting on Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, at 1 p.m. at Panera Bread in Solon. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

I will gladly share any of our members' activities. Just call me on my cell 330.730.8951 or e-mail me at [kjferrante@gmail.com](mailto:kjferrante@gmail.com) and I will include it in the next Branch report. Have a beautiful autumn!

KATHLEEN FERRANTE

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#### **BRANCH 50 - Euclid, Ohio**

Contact Information: Rick Tomsick

[ricktomsick@gmail.com](mailto:ricktomsick@gmail.com)

Greetings from the "5-0" on America's North Coast, Cleveland, Ohio. Remember to mark Sunday, October 13, 2013, on your calendar for this year's Ohio Regional Convention. Planning is well underway for this very special event that will begin with a Slovenian Mass at St. Vitus Church at 10:30 a.m., followed by brunch (by Sophie's Catering) at the St. Vitus Village. Watch your mail for an announcement in August. Please let me know if you are able to get involved in the planning for this year's convention.

Our next monthly meeting will be Wednesday, September 18, 2013, at Euclid Public Library, at 1:00 p.m.

I want to remind you to check in often on SUA's activities by going to the website at [www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org). Bonnie Prokup, SUA National President reminds me that SUA is always looking for volunteers who like to write, do research, or submit photographs. You can contact Bonnie at [wprokup@aol.com](mailto:wprokup@aol.com).

RICK TOMSICK

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#### **BRANCH 55 - Girard, Ohio**

Hello from Girard, OH! Autumn has arrived once again. The leaves are changing colors and the crisp smell of fall is in the air. In Branch 55 news, members of our Branch teamed up with AMLA Lodge 42 this past August to enjoy a baseball outing at the Mahoning Valley Scrappers game. All in attendance had a great time.

September/October 2013

Shortly, members will be receiving information regarding the annual holiday party, which will be held in December. That's all the news for now. In closing, a short quote from Robert Browning: "*I trust in nature for the stable laws of beauty and utility. Spring shall plant and autumn garner to the end of time.*"

MARIA SELAK

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

Contact Information: Elizabeth Gross 718.335.8459

[lgross@tstnyc.org](mailto:lgross@tstnyc.org)

Almost 20 diligent students are determined to master that most difficult language - Slovenian! Through the sweltering days of summer they have been working steadily through the materials, so beautifully created by Mia Rode and Joan Walker with assistance by Ria Whitmire. You can read all about it in Tanya Vajk's article in this issue.

A few members were able to get to the Hoboken Film Festival which featured the documentary, "From Karst to Canyon: The Art of Bogdan Grom," directed by member Carole Ryavec. The artist, born in Trieste, Italy, to a Slovenian family, found the rocky Karst landscape at the Italian/Slovenian border to be a major influence on his



Joan Walker, member of Branch 93, with her husband Chris Jisi and Ambassador Kirn (right), at Ambassador's farewell reception.

concept of form, as did the rocks and shapes of the American West.

In June, many of us attended the Farewell Reception for Ambassador Roman Kirn at St. Cyril's. He is returning to Slovenia before taking up one final position before retiring.

A number of us attended a recital presented by Opera Slavica, featuring songs from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Poland, Serbia, and Russia. (They had hoped to find a Slovenian opera singer in New York City, but he or she is hiding their light under a bushel!) Opera Slavica provides singers, having no background in Russian, Czech, or Polish, with the knowledge and training to sing, read, and translate these languages to enable them to perform masterworks that are in existence, but are rarely presented. While 50 years ago, operas were frequently translated from their original language to the local tongue (Cleveland had many operas sung in Slovenian - but they had been translated from the Italian, French, etc.), now, with the



sub-titles translating, operas are being performed in the original language, and the singers must be up to the task.

The Slovenian community and UN delegation were on hand to welcome Croatia's accession to the European Union on July 1<sup>st</sup> at the concert and reception hosted by the Croatian Consulate at the Bohemian National Hall. The Croatian pianist, Javor Bracic, performed works by Haydn, Debussy, and Livadiae

Members enjoyed brunch at Anable Bar and Grill on the East River, watching boats sail by, kayakers madly paddling,



SUA-NYC at Anable Bar & Grill, Long Island City, NY. Clockwise from bottom left: Wesley Pulisic, Tatjana Trcek Pulisic, Adam Petrik, Liz Gross, Ria Whitmire, Joan Walker, Chris Jisi, and Tanja Makovec Petrik. (Photo by Tanya Vajk)

ducklings swimming, settling the world's problems - a perfect summer afternoon.

ELIZABETH GROSS

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### BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois

Contact Information: Jana Hlade [jmhlade@hotmail.com](mailto:jmhlade@hotmail.com)

Happy fall! My favorite time of the year. It's great to feel the cooler weather. On September 21<sup>st</sup>, join us for our annual Bocce Ball tournament and picnic at 12 p.m. at the home of Paula Mavec (903 Cassie Dr. in Joliet). Bring a dish to pass. Water and lemonade will be provided – bring any other beverages you would like. RSVP to Jana Hlade at [jmhlade@hotmail.com](mailto:jmhlade@hotmail.com) or 815.439.1905. Kids are welcome.

On Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, Branch 20 in Joliet will be hosting the Illinois-Indiana Regional Convention and celebrating their 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Reservations must be made by October 4th. If interested, contact Jo Lustik from Branch 20 at 815.723.2777.

Also, on Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, our Branch will host the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Bunco event at the Slovenian Catholic Center from 2-5 p.m. Note that this is a new time from previous years. We have some great new prizes and surprises in store, so come out for a great time and celebrate our Branch! More info to follow - so watch your mailboxes.

Thank you to Paula Mavec for teaching the Strudel and Strukljic culinary class in May. And thank you to Fani Fritz for showing her culinary talents and teaching us how to make Sarma and Slovenian Rizoto in August.



Please pray for our Vice-President, Paula Mavec (pictured above holding Ceresota flour bag), as she is battling cancer.

Enjoy the fall colors and have a Happy Halloween!

JANA HLADE

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### BRANCH 100 - Southern California

Contact Information: Jean Koci [ajkoci@cox.net](mailto:ajkoci@cox.net)

Branch 100 has not had an official gathering for the past couple of months, but that doesn't mean we have not seen each other and enjoyed some pleasant times together here in Southern California.



We are happy that our college students were home for the summer. Garret Jancich and Sara Lundgren worked at UCI with professors in their fields of study before returning to Cornell and the University of Chicago. We are also happy to say that James Koci received a very nice scholarship from the SWU Scholarship Foundation and will be attending Notre Dame University.

Our member and former scholarship recipient, Natalie Mlakar, was married in April in a lovely wedding celebration to Dennis Imhof of Germany. We congratulate the young couple and wish them many years of happiness.

Although not sponsored by the SUA, at least a dozen of Branch 100 members joined with family, friends, and members of SNPJ to welcome over 40 Slovenian gymnasts from Piran. The FLIP Acrobatic Club has come to Southern California about every four years for the past 16 years, and since that very first time they have wanted to return to have a beach party here on the Orange County coast. The Club entertained us with some of their dance acrobatic numbers and finished off with a medley of old Slovenian songs. While in Southern California, the troupe took part in a competition at Universal Studios where they won a Gold Medal in the USA Gymnastics National event. They have been touring Southern California as well as parts of Nevada and Arizona.

We have met several families of Slovenian descent recently and hope to enroll several new members in the next few months. It is always a pleasure to meet new people and find that they are really interested in their heritage.

Best wishes to members near and far... may September and October bring pleasant Autumn Days and good health to you and yours.

JEAN KOCI

## BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Karen Hribar Spires

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

Greetings from Willard! Hard to believe it is fall. The Willard area experienced a late start with fieldwork and planting crops this year. A flurry of activity in the fields in early July and unruly weather made for a short summer. Now Branch 102 is looking forward to our autumn activities, especially the Wisconsin Regional Convention coming up in October.

Best wishes to all Branch members celebrating birthdays. To our junior members beginning another year of school - study hard!

I think my news reporters, Bonnie and Sue, are quite busy right now, so please keep your eyes on the mail for a fall newsletter with upcoming meeting dates and location.

KAREN HRIBAR SPIRES

## BRANCH 108

Olney, Maryland

Contact Information: Bernadette Fitzsimmons

[bettekfitz@verizon.net](mailto:bettekfitz@verizon.net)

September is skipping by quickly, and it's hard to believe that our Anniversary celebration is only a few weeks away. All are cordially invited to the Branch 108 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration reception which will take place at the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, October 5, 2013, at 3:00 p.m. The Embassy has graciously agreed to host the event along with us for our special occasion, as well as welcoming the chamber choir.

We look forward to members, friends, and guests of Branch 108 attending, and members and friends of Branch 103 and KSKJ Lodge 257, both of Washington, D.C., and Slovenians of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area



*Embassy balcony on National Day of the Republic of Slovenia, June 25, 2013. Branch 108 members (pictured from left to right): Juliana and Thomas Fitzsimmons, Nika Kovacic, Lynn Koiner, Anne Stratton, Estelle Zorman, and Bernadette K. Fitzsimmons.*



joining our festivities. If you are a non-member, or an out of town SUA member, and want to be added to the SUA Branch 108 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration guest list, please send an e-mail to [Nuska.zakrajsek@gov.si](mailto:Nuska.zakrajsek@gov.si), with "October 5 INVITATION" in the subject line and request either an e-mail or printed invitation to be sent to your home address.

Branch 108 members gathered at the Embassy of Slovenia reception on June 25, 2013, for National Day of the Republic of Slovenia and Armed Forces Day, and bid farewell to Ambassador and Mrs. Kim. We were treated to traditional Slovenian cuisine and an exhibition of Slovenia's graphic designer, Milijenko Licul, depicting values and achievements in culture, arts, science, nature, the environment, and society. Included were exhibits of banknotes for Slovenia's former currency, prior to the 2007 adoption of the Euro.

Rising 4<sup>th</sup> grader, junior member Daniel Kokal Hester, will be attending the New Frederick Classical Charter School in fall. Last school year, his Designation Imagination Team, "Treasure Finders," received First Place in the Eastern Regional Competition and qualified for the state competition. Daniel and his mom, Lisa Kokal, and grandmother, May Kokal, traveled to Europe this past summer and visited France, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

BERNADETTE K. FITZSIMMONS

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

Contact Information: Norm Setnicker  
[normas188@msn.com](mailto:normas188@msn.com)

With the leaves beginning to turn in Minnesota, we look back at our last Branch meeting held on May 18<sup>th</sup> when the TC Slovenians hosted Professors Lawrence and Claire Martin. In 2012, some of our members attended the Baraga Cross Rendezvous where Professor Martin spoke about



*Susie and Yul Yost*

Bishop Baraga and his Ojibwe Prayer book, which included a collection of hymns. Claire Martin taught us one of these hymns - "Onaanigwendandaa" (translation - "Let us rejoice"). Both made a similar presentation at our May meeting where we sang "Zhawenimishinaam" (translation - "Have mercy on us"). And we thought learning the Slovenian language was tough!! Larry and Claire are in charge of the music program at the Church of Gichitwaa Kateri, an American Indian Catholic church in Minneapolis. The TC Slovenians are looking forward to Baraga Days, Oct. 5-6, which will be held in Duluth, Minnesota. This will be the first time Baraga Days will have been held in Minnesota.

The "lazy days" of summer included member Yul Yost hosting a garden party on June 27<sup>th</sup>. A TV segment of Yul's spectacular gardens was shot by Teri Knight, the host of Dig in Minnesota. Yul also played host to Susan Strgar, daughter of Franc Strgar, the Slovenian architect who helped design the St. Paul High Bridge. He presented Susan with a framed picture of the High Bridge. John Skubitz hosted a welcoming party for his Slovenian relatives who spent time with John and his family. The Singing Slovenes hosted a Polka Mass and wine tasting event in St. Stephen's, the oldest Slovenian community in Minnesota. Joe Valencic presented a Slovenian film, "Shanghai Gypsy," in Ely, MN, on July 12<sup>th</sup>, and then followed up with a presentation in Roseville, MN, titled, "Polka, The Movie." Valencic, President of the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum, is a Cleveland-based writer, historian, and filmmaker. Joe wrote and narrated the 90-minute film for TV Slovenia, under the direction of Dusan Moravec. Among the 20 personalities performing and appearing is Minnesota's own, Fr. Frank Perkovich, with his Polka Mass. Joe shared behind-the-scenes stories about the making of the film.

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, President John Zakelj and the TC Board discussed the meeting agendas for 2013-2014, along with preparations for a new Twin Cities Slovenians Directory. Jean Podominick, our Corresponding Secretary, volunteered to take on the project.

On a sad note, our sympathies go out to Jan Hahn and her family. Jan's mother, Sophie Marie Palcher, was 93 when she passed. Janette, or Jan as we in the TC Slovenian group call her, has been an active member of Branch 109-Twin Cities Slovenians.

Congratulations to Mary Ann Palmer and her husband, Otto, who recently celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. Mary Ann was one of the original organizers of Branch 109, serving as the first Secretary of our organization. We wish you and Otto many more anniversaries! "Drzi smehljaj" - Keep smiling

NORM SETNICKER

"Born in USA with Slovenian Parts"

# Slovenian Love and Generosity

## Benefits SUA

When a Slovenian is so proud and appreciative of his/her Slovenian heritage - they often strive to promote and share it. Here is an extraordinary example of one man's deep-seated love and determination to reach out to other Slovenians. John L. Urh, age 83, is 100% Slovenian and his wife of 62 years, Loretta, is 100% Polish. But John couldn't find a more supportive partner than Loretta in his efforts to spread his philanthropy to strictly Slovenian organizations. John has lived in Waukegan, IL, all of his life and was employed as an accountant for the U.S. Steel Corporation, located in Waukegan. The history behind John's generous monetary donations is very interesting.



*John Urh presenting a check for \$1,500 to Denise P. Bartlett, Director of Special Projects, and Jan Gehm, Branch 43 President.*

On September 28, 1906, 37 Slovenian men of the newly established Mother of God Parish in Waukegan, founded the non-profit "Knight's of St. George Slovenian Catholic Benevolent Society" in honor of Patron Saint George in Slovenia. The founders of the Mother of God Parish came to this area mainly from Vrhnika, near Ljubljana. They settled first on Market Street, and later moved up to the Tenth Street area. Many found employment at the American Steel and Wire Company - now U. S. Steel Corporation. The Knight's of St. George Society's first President was Michael Marinsek; years later, in January 1966, John became Secretary of the Society. At one time there were 140 members; John's dad and three brothers were also members. This was a men's organization providing small amounts of insurance for sickness and death. Small? For example, in 1978, the insurance was worth \$2 a day sick benefit and \$200 for a funeral. They dressed in full military-style uniforms, including sabers, and led by a Marshall on horseback, they paraded for all ceremonial occasions, including First Communions, Confirmations, and funerals. They also participated in the consecration of Ascension Cemetery in Libertyville.

In 2009, John Urh became the last surviving member of the Knight's of St. George Society with a responsibility

for the remaining funds. What to do? John then began his quest to help other Slovenian organizations. To date John has donated to: The Slovenian Catholic Center, Franciscan Fathers, Slovenian Catholic Mission, Slomsek Slovenian School, the Lipa Dancers - all organizations of Lemont, IL. The Milwaukee, WI, area has received John's donations also - the Slovenian USPEH Chorus, Slovenian Cultural Society Triglav, UWM - Slovenian Arts Program, and the Milwaukee Slovenian Retirees.

And now our SUA has been the recipient of John's thoughtfulness. John and Loretta are among the newest members of Branch 43 - Milwaukee, and drive the long distance from Illinois frequently to attend all Branch activities. In June, at a Branch 43 dinner meeting, John presented a check for \$1,500 to Denise P. Bartlett, Director of Special Projects, and Jan Gehm, Branch 43 President, for our SUA Heritage Museum in Joliet - one of the largest donations to date. This was met with a long round of applause by everyone in attendance.

Thank you, John, on behalf of all SUA members! Your generosity and thoughtfulness shows your Slovenian LOVE and proud ethnic spirit!! We are very appreciative!

*- by Denise P. Bartlett*



# Slovene Conversation on the Internet – A Slovenian Union of America Project

- by Tanya Vajk, SUA Branch 93-NYC



Photo credit: Slovene Conversation on the Internet - June 6, 2013 - [gotomeeting.com](http://gotomeeting.com) online preparation for second pilot session – iPad screenshot .

At our first Branch 93 meeting this year, Maria (Ria) Polajner Whitmire mentioned a grant application notice we received from the Office for Slovenians Abroad and that our members had repeatedly asked us to find a new teacher so we could resume Slovene classes. Ria suggested we apply for the grant, however, while the guidelines were translated into English, the application had to be written in Slovene. I had some grant writing experience and Ria spoke Slovene, so we got together for several weekends at her house and we wrote the application together - in Slovene. Members of the Slovenian Union of America's (SUA) National Board, especially Bonnie Prokup - National President, Carol Ryba - Treasurer, and Jan King - Vice President of Home Office, along with Branch 93's Vice President, Tanja Makovec Petrik, helped us design the project and complete the application.

We wanted to try something new, an internet-based class, hoping to appeal to a younger generation of students of Slovene. We also wanted to encourage conversation, because we felt that it would be relevant to the largest section of members: beginners, tourists, long-time students, and frequent travelers to Slovenia. Speaking a foreign language is simultaneously intimidating and essential - we end up speaking a few words in a foreign language if and when we want to communicate.

In early May, SUA received approval for a small grant from the Republic of Slovenia, and the project would have to be completed before the end of the year. We reached out to Maria Rode (Mia), who had been featured in *Zarja - The Dawn* for teaching Slovene in the San Francisco Bay Area, and to NYC member, Joan Walker, who had mentioned that she taught English as a Second Language on the internet and that she could help us set up the course on [gotomeeting.com](http://gotomeeting.com). We now had a team - Mia, Ria, Joan, and Tanya - and we started to work together live on [gotomeeting.com](http://gotomeeting.com) to design a 10-lesson plan. Mia and Joan are developing the syllabus and leading the online sessions; Ria and Tanya are coordinating the practice sessions.

We are developing short vignettes to introduce the participants to some of the fundamentals of the language, in the hope they will get a feeling for Slovene and want to study it more in depth in the future. Our sessions are free to participants and they interact live with the instructors and with each other, learning to use standard conversational phrases that one would hear any speaker use in day-to-day interactions in Slovenia. While the one-hour sessions are only a rudimentary introduction to Slovene, emphasizing pronunciation and articulation over grammar and vocabulary, our goal is to personalize the learning experience for each participant. For example, we developed a questionnaire to ask participants about their family names and origins in Slovenia, and incorporated their answers into our next session so that each person had a chance to practice the Slovenian pronunciation of their own names and towns and regions with the online group.

We set up two pilot sessions in May and June and scheduled practice sessions in the summer months. [Gotomeeting.com](http://gotomeeting.com) allows up to 25 participants to join online for each scheduled session - six of whom can share webcams at the same time (we rotate the webcams during each session). We have a full complement registered for the fall (September 14 through December 14, 2013), but we can open up a waiting list of up to six additional participants if you would like to join when there are available slots (if/when participants have scheduling conflicts).

Our hope is that this project will encourage other teachers and students of Slovene to organize and participate in Slovene language classes on the internet. Our goals for the project are:

1. Slovene - to teach a language spoken by our families and ancestors, and by over two million people today in Slovenia and throughout the world.
2. Conversation - to promote and encourage live interaction between participants and instructors in all the online sessions.
3. Internet - to offer a class that reaches beyond pre-set boundaries - we have participation from across the continent, from Alaska to California to Florida, up the East Coast and back to Wyoming, with ages ranging from pre-teens to mature adults, and with all levels of facility, from beginners to advanced students.

“Slovene Conversation on the Internet - *Pogovorna slovensčina preko interneta* (2013)” is funded through a grant from the Republic of Slovenia's Office for Slovenians Abroad, and organized by the Slovenian Union of America, Branch 93 - New York City. Our teachers are Maria J. Rode, Senior Librarian Emerita, Stanford University, and Joan Walker, who teaches English as a Second Language on the internet at Live American English, with assistance from Maria Polajner Whitmire. Mia Rode and Ria Whitmire are both native Slovenes. Our thanks to our funders and to all our participants and volunteers - *hvala!*

# **SLOVENIAN UNION OF AMERICA BRANCH 20**

## **34TH ANNUAL VINSKA TRGATEV GRAPE HARVEST DANCE FESTIVAL**

Joliet, Illinois....Vinska Trgatev is the Slovenian Grape Harvest Dance Festival that celebrates the annual fall harvesting of grapes. The tasting and evaluation of the first grapes is an important role which is carried out by the master or honorary “Mayor” of the event. When ascertained that the grapes are ripe, he or she orders the grape harvest to begin.

Witness grape gatherers chosen by the “Mayor” collect, weigh, measure the sugar content, grind, press the grapes and pour the juice into containers which is a great cause for celebration with polka music and dancing. Entertainment by the 2013 Chicago Music Award Winner for Best Polka Entertainer, Eddie Korosa, Jr. & the Boys from Illinois, will surely keep your feet moving and toes tapping.

Each Vinska Trgatev welcomes a new “Mayor” who is entrusted with the duty of presiding over the festivities and welcoming guests to a representation of a Slovenian village square at harvest time. A traditional grape arbor is built over the dance floor with suspended “candy” grape bunches. Attendees are encouraged to “steal the grapes”. However, if caught by the watchful “sheriff”, they may be fined by a “judge” or sent to “jail” which is all in good fun.

This year’s Vinska Trgatev “Mayor” is John Churnovic Jr.

**Celebrate Vinska Trgatev with the Slovenian Union of America Branch 20 on Sunday, September 22, 2013 at St. Joseph Park Hall.**

**Adult admission is \$10 and only available at the door; children 10 and under are FREE – so bring the family!**

**Doors open at 3 p.m., festival hours 4 to 8 p.m.  
Traditional Slovenian food will be available for purchase and a cash bar.**

***Proceeds benefit the Slovenian Union of America, Branch 20 Joliet.***

**For more information contact:  
Pat Schager  
Tel: 815.439.0062  
E-mail: [patricia.schager@att.net](mailto:patricia.schager@att.net)**



# Branch 108 Olney, Maryland Celebrates 10 Years

PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE  
PAID  
LASALLE, IL

All are cordially invited to Branch 108's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration reception which will take place at the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, October 5, 2013, from 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. The Embassy has graciously agreed to host our special occasion event along with us, as well as welcoming the Chamber Choir "Megaron" from Slovenia to be included in our program. We look forward to members, friends, and guests of Branch 108 attending and members and friends of Branch 103 - Washington, D.C., KSKJ Lodge 257 - Washington, D.C., and Slovenians of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area joining our festivities.

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*If you are an out of town SUA member or non-SUA member, and want to be added to the SUA Branch 108 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration guest list, please send an e-mail to [Nuska.zakrajsek@gov.si](mailto:Nuska.zakrajsek@gov.si) with "October 5th INVITATION" in the subject line and request either an e-mail or printed invitation to be sent to your home address.*

## Chamber Choir "Megaron"

Chamber Choir Megaron was founded by Damijan Moènik, composer and conductor, after several years of its singers already performing together in a variety of groups. The choir represents top musical talent of St. Stanislav's institution, selecting students by audition who previously received music education in five choirs of The Diocesan Classical Gymnasium Chamber Choir. Megaron has evolved into an excellent choir in the last 10 years, performing regularly in Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Slovakia, Poland, and Canada; the choir has gained an excellent reputation in Slovenia, throughout Europe, and abroad. Megaron Chamber Choirs have been awarded numerous prestigious national and international choral competitions. At the choral competition in 1995, "Naša pesem" in Maribor, it won a gold medal and was also presented with a special award for the best choir to perform for the first time in the competition. Also, in Maribor in 2007, the choir was awarded a silver medal. In 2010, the choir again competed in Maribor, "Naša pesem", and was awarded a gold medal. Later, in June 2010, it participated in choral competition KATHAUMWIX in Powell River (Canada) and won second place in the mixed choirs category and first place in the folk music category. Most recently, in Maribor in 2012, the choir won a gold medal award for the best mixed choir, as well as overall winner of the competition, and a special prize for the best performance of a romantic period composition.

