

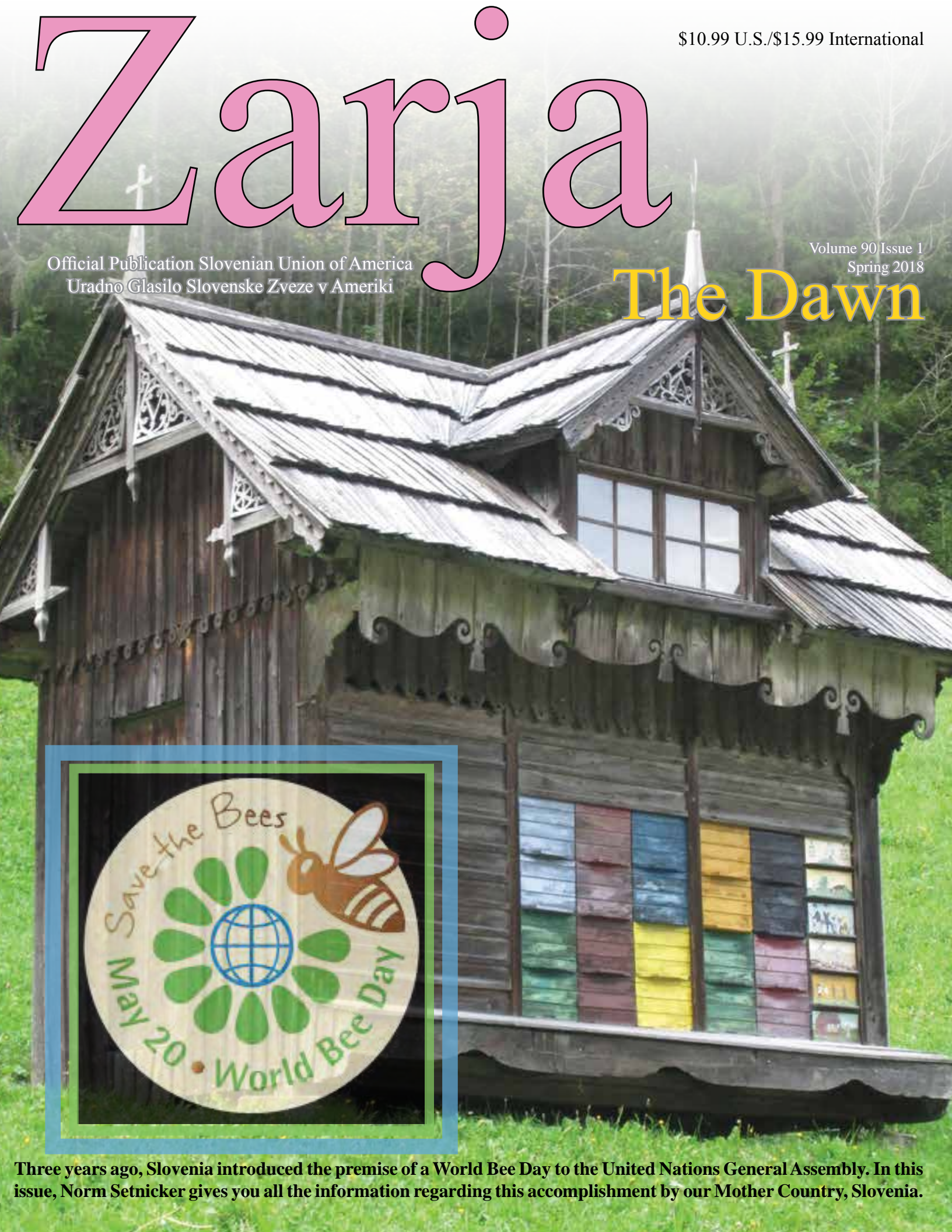
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Zarja

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Uradno Glasilo Slovenske Zveze v Ameriki

Volume 90 Issue 1
Spring 2018

The Dawn



Three years ago, Slovenia introduced the premise of a World Bee Day to the United Nations General Assembly. In this issue, Norm Setnickar gives you all the information regarding this accomplishment by our Mother Country, Slovenia.

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Flight Seeing in the Himalayas



The *Zarja* certainly “soared to greater heights” on Friday, October 13, 2017 when Frances Kovatovich took the latest issue on a flight viewing of Mt. Everest in the Himalayas. “I truly felt on top of the world when I had this honor.” Can you believe, Frances was assigned to seat 13 on Friday the 13th?

Zarja - The Dawn

EDITOR: **Bonnie Pohar Prokup**

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Communications for the next issue of publication

Do you have something you would like to share with readers? We would love to hear from you! Please e-mail the editor at wprokup@aol.com. We reserve the right to edit any article submitted. Articles must be related to Slovenia, SUA events, or members. The deadline for articles is the 10th day of the month, two (2) months preceding the issue. For example, articles for the Summer issue must be received by April 10. Thank you.

Submission Guidelines

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

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



THE STATE OF THE UNION

SUA National Board

Jennifer Koff has resigned from the position of National Corresponding/Recording Secretary due to a conflict of interest. We wish Jennifer well. Denise Bartlett has been appointed by the National Board to fill the posting for the next two years.

The position of VP of Outreach had not been filled. During the last election the names of persons submitted did not meet the deadline for filing. The National Board will be appointing a person to assume the role at the annual meeting in March 2018.

Attention Member Representatives: The annual meeting of the SUA National Board will take place on March 22-24, 2018. The meeting with the member representatives will be held on Saturday, March 23rd at 10 a.m. Be aware that there is a time change on March 11. As we have branches in each of the four time zones, please heed your time.

Eastern: 11 a.m. - Central: 10 a.m.

Mountain: 9 a.m. - Pacific: 8 a.m.

News from the Archivists.

Alenka Starman-Alic and Maja Povalej

In January 2018, Alenka and Maja made a public presentation on the archival work they had collected at the SUA home office during their October visit. People from the Ministry of Culture, the National and University Library, and the Ethnographic Museum attended. Look for an update on their report.

Georgene Agnich: Branch 2, Chicago

Thank you to Georgene Agnich and her husband Jim Schable for setting up the museum windows for the Christmas season. Georgene's spirit radiates the love she has for her heritage. The scenes brightened the whole of North Chicago Street. Georgene has that touch.

From Denise Bartlett: Branch 43 Milwaukee:

The Milwaukee Ethnic News

I was most impressed to read this on-line community publication. It fits right into the story line I once read, "without a heritage; adopt one or two, and celebrate them throughout the year."

Once a month, *Milwaukee Ethnic News*, a FREE online bimonthly publication publishes a listing of ethnic events in and around Milwaukee. The publication is managed by volunteer anthropologists whose purpose is to offer ethnic organizations and individuals the opportunity to share news and information about their cultures and the events! Subscriptions are free and arrive on your desktop in living color. If you are going to be in the area, it is a great means of finding what is going on in the area. Learning about those of another culture makes life "rich." It stimulates the mind and forces one to think in new ways. It fosters understanding and makes one a better citizen of this global world we are living in.

Congratulations to the staff of this beautiful newsletter.

To subscribe: JFLanthropologist@sbcglobal.net.

Frances Kovatovich, Branch 35

Tramburitza Extravaganza, September 15-18, 2017

Northeastern Minnesota's Branches, 35-Aurora, 33-Duluth, and 23-Ely, joined hands with the Croatian Fraternal Union, Lodge 238, of Gilbert, Minnesota to hop on the lodge sponsored bus to the Tamburitza Extravaganza held at the Westin O'Hare in Rosemont, Illinois September 15-18. The entertainment, hospitality, and food were superb. A few SUA members tried their hand at kolo dancing! It's all about keeping the heritage alive!



Back (left to right): Albina Medved, Angela Baraga, Dan Chad, and Johnny Snidarich. Front (left to right): Debbie Good, Leopolda Schutte, Frances Kovatovich, Jean Seline, Holly Baumgard, and Carrey Hart.

Seoul, Korea: December 4-8, 2017

At the twelfth UNESCO session at Jeju Island in Republic of Korea, the safeguarding committee announced that “Door-to-door Rounds of Kurenti” have been inscribed as a UNESCO intangible heritage.

“Door-to-door Rounds of Kurenti” is a Shrovetide custom practiced from Candlemas (February 2) to Ash Wednesday. Since the second half of the 20th century, Kurenti have made the rounds through the town of Ptuj.



Groups consisting of Kurenti and one or more devils run from house to house, form a circle in the yard, and jump around the landlord and his wife. According to their beliefs, the noisy bell-ringing and brandishing of the wooden stick will chase everything evil away and will bring happiness to everyone they visit. Householders offer them food and drink, and women give out their handkerchiefs as a sign of affection. The custom of breaking a clay pot by the landlady for thanking Kurenti at their very first annual round is still alive.

Kurent is the second Slovenian intangible piece of heritage to be inscribed on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In 2016 the Škofja Loka Passion Play was enlisted. Based on the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the play has been declared a living masterpiece of national importance. It is based on the ancient works of a Capuchin monk, Father Romuald (Lovrenc Marusič; 1676-1748). Written in 1721, it is the oldest Slovene dramatic text in existence. The enactment is performed as a procession in



- 2, Remitz, Carissa**
- 13, Popich-Hall, Grace**
- 23, Newberg, Brandon**
- 50, Beha, Geraldine**
- 50, Carmical, Joanne**
- 102, Berg, Jeanette**
- 109, Pechauer, Ruth**

the streets of Škofja Loka during Lent and Easter and involves more than 900 local performers and 400 volunteers from the community. Knowledge and skills are passed down from older to younger generations by families and craftspeople that assist in the production. Because of the complexity, it is played every 6 years. The last play was enacted in 2015 before tens of thousands of spectators. The next play will take place in 2021.

You are strongly urged to search: Škofja Loka passion play on YouTube. The film is historically informative and the scenes very vivid.

*May cultural heritage inspire and enrich you,
and enliven your daily life.*

I love simple statements; they are reflective and powerful. The statement above was found on a Slovenian web site. Let’s analyze this statement. We inherit the genes of our parents and ancestors, and at that same moment, we also inherit a cultural heritage. This innate inheritance of tangible and intangible genes gives us a lifelong identity while we are on this earth, which makes each of us a living masterpiece. Which brings us back to the statement above. How can cultural heritage inspire, enrich, and enliven our daily lives when we live in a society that is in a constant state of flux? We have the genes. All that we need is a place called HOME, a haven where we bond with those most dear to us, a place where traditions (music, culinary, arts, and knowledge) are forged in memory.

*If we do not know where we come from,
it is difficult to know where we are going.
The loss of this cultural or natural heritage
would be like amnesia.*

- from the United Nations, World Heritage Convention

As President of the SUA, my home is certainly enriched and enlivened with e-mail, phone calls, deadlines, ideas, and decisions. But my home, my haven, is a personal shrine to my existence. Dish towels and ceramic potica bakers from the Ljubljana market place, Slovenian crystal in the cabinet, God’s Corner in my office, artwork on the walls, a wedding photo of my Slovenian parents, cookbooks and delectable culinary delicacies in my wooden recipe box. They continually emit a credence to my identity. Most are subtle objects. A stranger coming into my house would not realize where they are, but, with one exception, the food set upon my table. Being in a Slovenian-American home is an example of how powerful “foodways” can be.

Studies of food reveal much about what we eat and our choices about food within a cultural milieu. Just last week while cleaning out files, I came upon the *Chicago Tribune* from 2006. On the front page of Section 7, titled “A Taste

Zarja - The Dawn

of Slovenia,” is a large photo of Maria Petek. Three more pages are dedicated to the culinary traditions and the food practices of her family.

Do you want to enliven your life? Try Maria’s recipe for Slovenian fried potatoes with mushroom gravy (*Krompir*). A simple recipe with simple ingredients, potatoes, onion, garlic, and oil, yet I always follow that recipe to a T. Do not skimp on the oil! When asked what I am cooking I reply, “Slovenian fried potatoes.” “Fried potatoes” are always prefaced with the word “Slovenian.” Mighty they are, even without the gravy. Make these several times a month to inspire, enrich, and enliven your daily life.

Slovenian Fried Potatoes with Mushroom Gravy

as written in the *Chicago Tribune*

Preparation time: 35 minutes

Cooking Time: 30 minutes

Yield: 6 servings

“Marie Petek serves her mushroom gravy alongside the potatoes; ‘not on top!,’ she scolds.”

6 medium russet potatoes, peeled

¼ cup vegetable oil

1 onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

½ teaspoon salt

Pepper, freshly ground

Mushroom gravy:

1 tablespoon butter

1 pound cremini mushrooms, sliced

1 teaspoon salt

Pepper, freshly ground

1 cup sour cream

Heat water to a boil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat; cook the potatoes until just tender, about 20 minutes. Remove potatoes from water; set aside to cool. Cut potatoes into slices.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat; add the onion and garlic. Add potatoes. Cook, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are lightly browned, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile for gravy, heat the butter in a large skillet over medium heat; add mushrooms. Cook, stirring occasionally until mushrooms soften, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat to a summer, season with salt and pepper; stir in sour cream. Cook 15 minutes. Serve with potatoes.

Nutrition information per serving: 373 Calories, 46% calories from fat, 19g fat, 7 g saturated fat, 22 mg cholesterol, 44 g carbohydrates, 1 g protein, 445 mg sodium, 5 g fiber.

Mighty they are, even without the gravy, a potato dish to inspire, enrich and enliven your daily life.

Dober Tek,

Mary Lou Deyak Voelk

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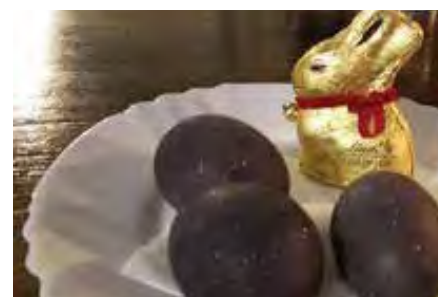
Thank you for your generosity.

Many donations continue to arrive in the mail and will be listed in the next issue.

Last year, my friend in Portoroz, Slovenia sent me a photo of her Easter eggs. I was amazed at the beautiful deep purple iridescent eggs that glistened. I followed her instructions and boiled them in red wine.

Instructions:

1. Boil eggs in deep red wine for 7 minutes.
2. Let them sit overnight in the wine.
3. *They glisten like diamonds!*



Slovenian Name for Easter, *Velika Noč*, Means “Great Night”

Customs and traditions during Eastertide and Easter from the regions of Slovenia would more than fill the 30+ pages of *Zarja*. Folklore and pagan customs form the basis of Easter traditions, especially the ecclesiastic liturgy of the Easter season.

The Slovenian name for Easter, *Velika Noč*, means “Great Night.” As Christ rose from the dead at night or at Sunday dawn, Slovenians perceived this as a “great night.” In the Prekmurje region, Easter is denoted as *letnice*, a term from *leto* (“year”), and a testimony to the importance of this spring festival which is the time of the spring equinox, a new cycle.

Palm Sunday is the beginning of Holy Week. Without access to palm leaves, Slovenians made their Palm Sunday procession into the church unlike no other using bundled spring greenery called *butare*. This custom dates back to the 9th century and most probably originated from a pagan custom that was practiced throughout medieval Europe. The most unique bundle is the “Ljubljana Bundle” made of dyed wood shavings and renowned as being one of a kind. Today the bundles are sold at the market.

Easter customs begin at the very moment when the mourning for Christ’s death on Good Friday is over. Bells in the church have “returned from Rome.” Throughout Slovenia, *pritrkovalci* (bell-ringers) from the bell towers produce unique melodies. A popular musical art that dates back to the 16th century, competition in this skill is well known and takes place throughout the country.

Holy Saturday is characterized by the blessing of the fire and is much alive in Europe and Slovenia. The priest blesses the fire and the people in front of the church; the blessed embers are taken home to heat the stoves and to light the candles. In some areas, the priest visits a particular house, and the neighborhood arrives to collect

the embers. In Kranj, the blessing takes place in the town square with people coming from near and far for their embers.

The most widespread custom is the ancient blessing of food (*žegen*), a custom that has not changed since the 16th century. Valvasor describes *žegen* in his famous book, *The Glory of Duchy of Carniola*: smoked pork, salted beef, hard-boiled eggs, and a cake made of fine white flour with special fillings and then rolled up. There are areas that are known for their specialty *žegen* dishes. The Prlekija region is known to include boneless meat, *ziti savec* (stomach meat), flower seeds, most often cloves, or even potatoes. The village of Fram may include the part of a pig’s head with ears. In the Štajerska region, a round loaf of milk bread from which a slice has been cut off would be placed on top of the baskets. Pumpkin and corn seeds would be added to bread symbolizing chicken feed, to prevent a fox from sleuthing hens. A stuffed stomach is a typical dish of the Celenjska and Notranjska regions although today a bladder is used, not a stomach. In Babno Polje, *budel* is added to the Easter basket: beaten eggs (up to 50) cubed bread, ham, onion, salt, and pepper are stuffed into intestines and cooked. *Budel* is eaten cold.

Good Friday remains a strict day of fasting, and in some areas this fasting continues through Saturday. Until just recently a “fast dish,” Alleluia Soup which includes the turnip peels, was eaten on Holy Saturday. It was intended to remind people of the severe hunger that plagued Carniola in 1529. In the April 1990 *Zarja* issue on page 16, Hermine Dicke, in her column “Pots and Pans,” writes about Mary Noson. Mary, who was born in Iška Vas, relates the village tradition of serving Alleluia Soup. People of the village would gather together and then proceed through the town, ending up at the church for the Easter Vigil Mass. Alleluia Soup was served after

returning home from the service.

The link between eggs and Easter in Slovenia was first reported as early as 1393 when a document from the former Dominican convent in Radlje stated that on Easter Saturday all nuns were given eggs. Valvasor, in his *Glory of the Duchy of Carniola*, made mention of “blessed eggs” dating from 1689. The unique regional designs, made from time-treasured methods using specialized tools make for quite impressive eggs. Slovenians even have their eggs blessed. Families have egg collections going back generations.

Helena Janežič of Slovenia describes the Easter traditions that prevail today: “Easter eggs are dyed on Holy Saturday. On this day the dyed eggs, ham, potica, and horseradish are brought to the church for a blessing of the Easter meal. Eggs are usually red and symbolize the blood of Christ, potica (the round one) symbolizes the crown of thorns, ham symbolizes the body of Christ, and horseradish the nails. In the evening, the Vigil Mass is celebrated. In the villages there are processions to the church early on the Sunday morning. Then comes the breakfast where you eat all the blessed food.”

This brings back memories of our childhood in Ely. Holy Week was a time when the house was cleaned from top to bottom. Curtains were washed and pinned onto stretchers! Good Friday was potica-making day. On Holy Saturday, Dolly Kastelec Shober and I would walk to the church toting the family *žegen* basket and wearing our new shoes and hats that were purchased just for Easter. The aroma in St. Anthony Church on Holy Saturday remains unforgettable! On Sunday morning, the basket sat on the table. We kids would be so intent on eating without having a crumb drop. It was blessed food!

A Happy and Blessed Easter to all!
Mary Lou Deyak Voelk

Annual Membership Drive

Slovenian Union of America, Inc

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Bring in 3 new members and get yours FREE.

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World Bee Day: “To Bee or not to Bee”

We all have heard the line from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: “To be or not to be, that is the question.” I recently came across an article titled “To Bee or not to Bee” written by Dejan Židan, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food. His article focused on a resolution that was introduced at the United Nations General Assembly. This resolution, presented by the Slovenian government in conjunction with the Slovenian Beekeepers’ Association for action to save the bees, convinced the world to declare May 20 as World Bee Day. Mr. Židan stated, “Bees and other pollinators finally have the place they deserve in view of their importance for the world and for humanity. This is just the beginning of the difficult process of the protection of bees and other pollinators.”

Why Slovenia might you ask? Here are some facts that were presented in the passage of this resolution:

1. Slovenians are a genuine beekeeping nation - five out of every one thousand of its residents engage in beekeeping.
2. Slovenia has gained international recognition for its unique beehive panels and the traditional architecture of its beehives. They have become “veritable” open-air galleries of folk art.
3. The Carniolan honeybee, an indigenous Slovenian subspecies “kranjska cebela” is regarded as the second most widespread subspecies in the world and is noted for its hard work, excellent sense of orientation, and docility.
4. Slovenia has been in the front ranks within the EU in raising awareness of the importance of bees in the lives of humans and the planet.

What is the significance of May 20? May is the month when bee activity in the Northern Hemisphere is in full swing. Spring planting illustrates the need for pollination of many plants. May 20 in Slovenia is known as the birthday of Anton Janša (1734-1773), the pioneer of modern beekeeping and the first teacher of modern beekeeping in the world.



Another question is why a World Bee Day is so important? Again quoting Dejan Židan, “The objective of the initiative is to contribute significantly to international cooperation in tackling global challenges in terms of global food security, eradication of hunger and malnutrition, and preserving the environment from further losses in biodiversity and degradation of ecosystem services.”

I also learned the following:

- *Bees pollinate over 170,000 plant species.
- *With 30,000 to 60,000 bees, a bee colony can be compared to a small city.
- *The queen bee is the only member of the bee family that lays eggs, producing 2,000 eggs in a day.
- *Honey bees’ wings strike 11,400 times per minute, causing the distinct buzz.
- *For a kilogram of honey, a bee must visit 4 million flowers and fly 4 times the distance around the world.
- *Slovenia is the only EU member state to have protected its nation’s bee, the Carniolan bee (grey bee). Its name is “Sivka.”
- *The Slovenian Ambassador to the U.S., Dr. Božo Cerar, pointed out that bees are responsible for one out of every three bites of our food.

Despite its size, Slovenia has stepped up on the world stage and is facing the challenges of dealing with the basics of a sustainable and sufficient food production which affects the whole world. Much of this article is based on the information brought forth by Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food.

- Norm Setnicker
Branch 109, Twin Cities Slovenians

SUA 2019 National Convention

Let's Sing in Beautiful Cleveland, Ohio!



The skyline of beautiful Cleveland, Ohio - the Slovenian capital outside of Slovenia! The Cleveland Highlight Tour will allow you to explore beautiful Cleveland, Ohio from the comfort of a chartered coach!

Join SUA from Thursday, June 13 to Sunday, June 16, 2019 at the Marriott Cleveland East in Warrensville Heights, Ohio! Plans for the 2019 National Convention are underway, and no detail is being overlooked in creating a memorable experience. The convention will highlight the musical traditions of Slovenia and will offer social gatherings, educational sessions, tours of Cleveland, and a celebration of our Slovenian heritage.

At the time of registration, convention attendees will be able to choose to add an off-site activity at an additional cost - the Cleveland Highlight Tour. Attendees who elect to include the Cleveland Highlight Tour will receive a boxed lunch on Friday and will board a chartered coach. The first stop will be a specially arranged tour of the Museum of Divine Statues in Lakewood, Ohio. This museum is dedicated to preserving Catholic heritage by restoring and displaying statues and artifacts. This unique museum is only accessed through arranged tours and is not open to the public - do not miss this rare chance to see beautifully preserved sacred Catholic art!



Take in the beauty of carefully restored Catholic artifacts on display at the Museum of Divine Statues.

The tour will then travel past the iconic West Side Market, the oldest indoor/outdoor marketplace in Cleveland, and past the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, which celebrates the contributions of musical artists in a unique architectural

structure. We will then cruise through the Cleveland Cultural Gardens, highlighting the Slovenian Garden, and will stop for a group photo in front of one of four "Cleveland" signs around the city. Finally, we will complete the tour in Euclid, Ohio where we will get off the bus to enjoy a film and tour at the Polka Hall of Fame.



Immerse yourself in the sights and sounds at the Polka Hall of Fame.

The planning committee is also exploring the possibility of offering an evening of dinner and entertainment at an area winery - so stay tuned to upcoming *Zarja* issues for updates!



Pause for a photo opportunity with new and old friends against the Cleveland sign.

re-connect with SUA members, and celebrate all of the reasons we are proud to be Slovenian. We can't wait to see you in Cleveland! Mark your calendars for Thursday, June 13 to Sunday, June 16, 2019.

This convention promises to be filled with exciting opportunities to explore Cleveland, meet and

Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation

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

**All correspondence, contributions, and comments are to be directed to:
Stan Kuhar, President Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation (or SWUSF)
6019 Lausche Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44103 or skuhar@hotmail.com**

SWUSF New Board of Directors

The Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation held its annual board meeting on September 12, 2017 in Cleveland, Ohio. At that meeting Mary Turvey, stated she had completed her tenure as president of the organization. During the timeframe, with great assistance from Marge Church, retired Vice President and Treasurer, the duo established the organization's tax-exempt corporation status in 1998, and generated funding through the generous donations from Slovenian Union members to award over \$68,000 to Slovene college students. A reserve account was also created to fund scholarships in the future. A slate of new officers and trustees to govern the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation was approved. They are as follows:

Stan Kuhar, President

I was born November 9, 1953 in Cleveland, Ohio the third of five sons to Luka and Jozefa Kuhar (nee Rebolj), Slovenian émigrés who arrived in America in 1950 after being in a displaced camp for Slovenian refugees among other individuals fleeing newly imposed Communist regimes in eastern and central Europe after WWII. Both of my parents are from the Gorenjska region, ata from a small village, named Bela pec (White Oven) and mama from Spodnji Brnik (Lower Brnik), which is currently the airport site for Slovenia.

My father was in the "King's Army", and as such opposed the Nazis and Communists/Partisans. He was captured by the Nazis, and spent approximately 18 months as a "Slave Laborer" in the Nazi camps, being worked to death. But he did survive and was able to flee to southern Austria to a displaced camp at the

end of WWII. My mother was also forced to flee Slovenia with her brother at the end of WWII. They too fled to a displaced camp in southern Austria. Unfortunately, my mother's brother, France, was part of the group of Slovenes who were returned to Slovenia by British troops, tortured and then killed in southern Slovenia in a place known as Kocevski rog. Between 10,000 to 12,000 Slovenians were killed in this place in the time span of two to three weeks, mainly for being practicing Catholics and opposed to the new Slovenian Communist Regime.

Ata and mama were married at the displaced camp in Spittal, Austria. The first Kuhar son Janez, was born there. He however did not live past two months due to lack of medications. By 1950, my parents were finally sponsored by a distant cousin of ata in Upper Minnesota, near Gilbert. They lived there for one year as prescribed by immigration laws at that time and then relocated to Cleveland, Ohio. My parents were both 38 years old.

In Cleveland, Ohio they would reside in the St. Clair Avenue neighborhood around St. Vitus Parish, a personal parish that was established by Slovenian immigrants in 1893. A few hundred Slovenian émigré families would settle there and at the sister parish Church of St. Mary of the Assumption in Cleveland. There would be four boys, each born one year apart: Lojze (Lou), Francisek (Frank), myself, and the youngest, Bogomir (Mirko).

I completed elementary school at St. Vitus School and then attended and graduated from St. Joseph High School. I was fortunate enough to have been nominated and accepted into the National Honor Society in high school. I then attended Cleveland

State University for the next two years and concluded my college studies at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. My degree was a bachelor of science in communications with a minor in business. I graduated cum laude. As a side note, three of the four sons graduated with college degrees and the fourth with an associate degree. The youngest, Bogomir, received a doctorate in pharmacy, quite a feat considering both my parents never attended high school.

The next 26 years I was employed in financial institutions with experience in corporate banking, retail banking, and also in small business credit underwriting. I was also able to successfully complete a para-financial planning program. In 2003 I was requested to become the parish finance director at St. Vitus Parish and have been in the position for the past 15 years.

I have been involved in the Milhevc Scholarship Program at St. Vitus School since 1989 and also served on an Ad Hoc Committee for American Mutual Life Association, an American Slovenian fraternal society in the USA. I have also served on three Cleveland Committees for Bishop Fredric Baraga Days in 1998, 2005, and in 2015. In addition, I was treasurer of the Slovenian American Council and served on the United for Americans for Slovenia Committee. I have served on both pastoral and finance councils at St. Vitus and I am a board advisor for Joseph House of Cleveland, Inc. a not-for-profit that settles immigrants coming to Cleveland, as well as clothing distribution to those in need. I am also the lodge president and reporter for St. Anne Lodge #4, AMLA.

I feel very humbled at the request to continue the great work of the SWUSF

and hope to continue the good that has been provided to many individuals to further their education. I hope to also continue to promote community service as part of this great program for the future generation. Mary Turvey has been a great role model for this program as well as all who have served in one or another capacity in this unique program.

Joseph Cannavino, Treasurer

Joseph P. Cannavino retired from General Commercial Corporation in 2007, where he served as the COO for seven years. Prior to joining General Commercial Corporation, Joe worked for the Cleveland Trust Company and Bank One for a combined 38 years. After leaving banking, he worked 18 months in England as SPL, Ltd.'s President.

Joe graduated from Cleveland State University in 1976, Magna Cum Laude with a degree in Business Administration and was awarded a CPA Certificate in 1985. Joe is currently Grand Knight of K of C Council #11831 and a Fourth Degree Knight. He loves golfing and traveling. He and his wife Margaret, now deceased, made several trips to Europe. Joe lives in Sagamore Hills, Ohio. He has a son, a married daughter, and three grandchildren.

***Margaret Fischer,
Recording Secretary***

Margaret Fischer was born June 27, 1953 in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. She is the daughter of Robert and Margaret Fischer and the granddaughter of John and our founder Marie Priland. "Margie" graduated from Kohler High School in 1971 and earned an Associate of Arts degree in Court and Conference Reporting from Kenosha Technical Institute in 1974. Since 1974, Margaret has been a freelance court reporter, working in both West Palm Beach, Florida and Atlanta, Georgia. She has worked on many high profile lawsuits and has gone on depositions all over the world. For the past 30 years Margie has owned and managed her own court reporting business, is a member of Georgia Court Reporters Association and Beta Sigma Phi. She resides with

her husband Jerry Appelbaum in Kennesaw, Georgia.

Joseph Zab, Trustee

Joe Zab has served as a trustee of the SWU Scholarship Foundation since 2010. His Slovene paternal grandparents immigrated to Cleveland in 1913. Joe is currently the Lead Director for the American Mutual Life Association (AMLA) and has served on its board of directors for 19 years, the past 14 years as Recording Secretary. During his tenure on the AMLA board, he has participated on various committees including bylaws, campaign, corporate governance, lodge manual, and scholarship. He also serves as the secretary of Lodge Slovene AMLA No.1, following his late father Joe L. Zab who served as lodge secretary for 51 years as well as Vice-President of Finance on AMLA's board for 26 years. Joe resides in Mentor, Ohio with his wife, Pam, and sons, Nathan and Jacob. He is a graduate of Case Western Reserve University with both B.S. and M.S. degrees in Mechanical Engineering and is employed by Guild International in Bedford, Ohio as Mechanical Engineering Manager.

Patricia Budzilek Gruden, Trustee

Patricia Gruden is a retired secondary Physics and Math teacher who has worked with many high school seniors who were applying to colleges and for scholarships, and learned that it is a very difficult time for them, especially when they are trying to write their essays. Pat currently is one of the people evaluating scholarship applications for the SWUSF.

Pat has been a part of many Slovenian activities and organizations including being the Vice-President of the "Slovenian American National Art Guild" where among other topics she introduced were bobbin lace lessons, and Slovenian Easter egg decorating lessons, bringing in local skilled artisans to demonstrate and teach, and from these presentations learned to do both herself. Some other Slovenian groups she is a part of are SNPJ#53, and SUA Branch 50 in Euclid, Ohio where she is treasurer.

Because of her work and advocacy for the developmentally disabled children and adults, she was the honoree in 2015 of Deepwood Foundation which supports these citizens in Lake County, Ohio. She has been an officer of the Deepwood parents group for many years. Pat enjoys writing and has contributed many articles to *Zarja*, a publication of the SUA, mostly biographies of Slovenian women, some of whom had fascinating lives as they were refugees from Communism after World War II. She is a frequent contributor to the *Slovenian American Times* writing timely featured columns and now the cooking column. Pat lives with her husband John in Mentor, Ohio.

Mary Lou Vidergar, Trustee

Mary Lou Vidergar of San Mateo, California, is a Slovenian-American and charter member of SUA Branch 100 in Southern California where she held office several times over the years including being its first recording secretary. She had also served as a member of the SWUSF Scholarship application evaluation committee. In 1986 she was honored as Branch 100 Mother of the Year. Mary Lou, a former administrative secretary was the wife of the late Frank J. Vidergar and the mother of Frank Jr. and Lisa. They both graduated from the University of Notre Dame, and Lisa was a recipient of a SWUSF Scholarship.

The family has always been deeply involved in everything Slovenian especially through music and their family polka orchestra. They were very active members of several Slovenian organizations where Mary Lou had many roles including that of SNPJ youth director in Fontana, California for ten years. Mary Lou, along with her husband, was a member of the Fontana Slovene Rest Home Board of Director for nine years. The efforts of that board resulted in a \$100,000 donation to the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation. She has always valued the opportunity to serve the Slovenian-American community and looks forward to doing so in this new capacity.



The Development of Slovenian Music III

By Rich Terselic

The two preceding articles in this series traced the development of Slovenian music from its origin in the culture of the people in their homeland to America. Once transferred, it became a part of the lives of the early immigrants in their homes, churches, and places of entertainment. This final article will cover the development from its “Golden Age,” that is, the 1920s-50s, to the present. What is written is based on both known history as well as the opinions of the author.

There was a rapid development of Slovenian music among the first generation immigrants who came to America in the 1880s-1920s. The credit for success and growth goes substantially to their children. Slovenian music quickly took on a new “flavor” based upon the influence of contemporary American music and advances in phonograph recording technology that made it available to a mass audience. Wherever Slovenians settled, their music took hold, sometimes on its own and aided by the influence of the music of other immigrant groups. Compared to the larger groups - Germans, Czechs, and Poles - Slovenians had a musical impact far out of proportion to their numbers.

It is reasonable to imagine the period from the 1920s-50s as being a “Golden Age” in Slovenian music development and influence. This covered all the public venues in which this music was found - in churches, performing halls, radio broadcasts, and phonograph recordings. Sadly, influences in American society contributed to a decline in the 1960s and afterwards. However, the growth in interest in “button box” music in the 1970s and after produced a rebound.

Growth in “Commercial” Slovenian Music

In the first article in the series, the term “commercial music” was coined to describe music someone paid to experience. During the 1920s-30s, individual musicians and groups formed and achieved popularity in communities across the country, the best known and most successful of which were Cleveland’s Matija Arko and his Hoyer Trio. Initially performing alone, and later as leader of the Trio, Arko achieved much through his musical composition, arrangements, phonograph recordings and performances in northeastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

By the late 1930s, West Virginia-born Frank Yankovic learned to play the button and piano accordions and demonstrated distinctive performing skill. With the encouragement of Cleveland Slovenian radio program announcer Martin Antoncic, Yankovic began producing recordings to feature on Antoncic’s programs as well as for sale. Yankovic played traditional melodies with accompanists referred to as “sidemen.” While the names of the band leaders received prominence, “sidemen” contributed importantly to the distinctive sound of a group. This was the case with the Hoyer Trio. Yankovic received early help with arrangements from Arko-developed material, as well as material composed by Joe Trolli.

Arguments persist as to the relative musical skills of Arko and Yankovic. Making comparison difficult, they performed in different historical periods in the development of the “Cleveland Style.”

The bulk of the polka performers who later gained prominence were men in their 20s and 30s. World War II military service took many of them away from their musical pursuits. Other wartime influences, such as gasoline rationing, also put a damper on attendance at local musical events. In addition to Yankovic, other polka musicians who would later achieve fame also served in the military, such as John Pecon. Musicians who didn’t serve in the military worked long hours in war production factories. This decreased their opportunity for performing.

Yankovic performed for his fellow U.S. Army colleagues, but frostbite of his hands almost brought an end to his performing days. Fortunately, he recovered, and returning to Cleveland, was ready to perform. Likewise, other returnees were also prepared to continue their musical pursuits.

Matija Arko supported himself and his family on the basis of differing musical-related pursuits, combined with periods of factory employment. In the post-WWII period, most polka musicians also had to work “day” jobs. Yankovic worked for a time in an automobile parts factory.

With the former military service men and women home, the “polka business” took on a new vibrance. New bands formed and local taverns and the network of Slovenian homes (“Doms”) provided employment opportunities. Yankovic owned a tavern, and later a steakhouse, and regularly scheduled polka bands to perform in them. Other taverns, such as “Tino” Modic’s, did likewise.

In the Cleveland area, several Slovenian-style bands formed, including those of John Vadnal, George Cook, Kenny Bass, Joe Princie, John Pecon, and Lou Trebar. In northeastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania, additional bands also formed. Polka musician and ethnic radio program host, Joe Godina, compiled a tally of 82 Slovenian and other nationality bands that formed in the western Pennsylvania area in the 1960s. He estimates that in the nearby Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area, at least another 100 bands were formed.

Promotion and Organization Are Needed

During the early period when Matija Arko’s commercial success was developing, little is known to the author about how he promoted his “business.” It is known that he had help in connecting with recording companies from music store owner Anton Mervar. While he could be contacted in person locally to arrange playing dates in the Cleveland area, it is unknown to the author how playing dates were arranged out of the area.

In the late 1940s and early 50s, individuals such as Fred Wolf had acquired radio stations or otherwise became involved with the business side of ethnic music. In addition, the firms who produced ethnic music phonograph records distributed catalogs and functioned in a promotional role. Ethnic radio shows also acted as promoters of musical groups and events. While some included free public service announcements of events, others charged.

In large and small cities, the support of local ethnic radio and television stations had an important role in promoting polka music and other events. For example, Cleveland area Slovenian heritage radio broadcaster, Tony Petkovsek, has been playing polka music on the air for more than 50 years. In addition to serving in this role, he also had a leadership role in founding the Cleveland Style Polka Hall of Fame and the organization of the annual Thanksgiving polka weekend. Persons in other cities filled similar roles, such as Eddie Blatnick in the Chicago area.

European ethnic music radio broadcasts have been negatively influenced by changes in that industry as well as changes in the concentration in groups to which programs were directed. For example, an enterprising individual

who lived in an area with a sizeable ethnic group population could buy air time on a radio station servicing that area, canvas local small businesses for paid commercials, and could produce a program, hopefully, with money left to reward his or her efforts. With the cost of air time greatly increased and the concentration of European ethnic groups declining, broadcasters have found it more difficult to afford being on the air. In some cities, the money to fund the purchase of air time has come through the formation of “radio clubs” to which donations have been solicited from listening audiences. While European ethnic radio has decreased, some areas of the country remain where it is economically feasible and audience interest remains high.

Beginning in the 1970s and in the decades that followed, new promotional approaches were introduced that became popular, including “polka tours” by the Europe-based Avsenik and Slak orchestras. U.S.-based tours involved group trips to Slovenia led by a polka band, such as that of Richie Vadnal. Such tours might be organized by travel agents, such as the Kollander agency in Cleveland, and were promoted on polka radio shows. In the case of the Vadnal tour, it was worthy of note that Slovenian-Americans brought with them a form of polka music that had evolved from what had originated in Slovenia. The polka tour was later supplanted by the polka cruise, following a similar theme but involving tours aboard cruise ships. One or more bands would accompany a tour with music supplementing other entertainment.

The Yankovic band performed extensively outside the Cleveland area, including the Midwest and western United States. An interesting question discussed in the Bob Dolgan book, *America’s Polka King (1)*, is why did Yankovic choose to do so? Was it to absent himself from the Cleveland area in order to give other bands “free reign?” One answer was that music became his primary source of income, and as father of several children, he needed to perform on a fulltime basis but could not do so in the Cleveland area. Joe Godina also provided another answer in noting that Columbia Records encouraged Yankovic to travel to increase his nationwide exposure. Benefits for doing so were that his performing style became more widely known, and he made valuable contacts in the entertainment industry on the West Coast.

New Technology Introduced

The 78 rpm phonograph record was the technology that led to the introduction of the first cycle of popularization of Slovenian music. In the years following WWII, new technologies were introduced, providing improved quality of sound reproduction and more convenient means of taking the music out of the home and permitting travel with the listener - the first of which was the auto radio.

The next new technology was the 33-1/3 rpm long playing (LP) record. While the larger diameter 78 rpm records were available prior to WWII, they did not capture consumer interest as far as ethnic popular music. The largest market penetration for the larger diameter disc was for classical music. Playing at a slower rotation, the 33-1/3 rpm records permitted inclusion of numerous selections on a side. Like 10-inch diameter 78s, they were still primarily limited to use in the home or at other locations through use of portable record players. Reel-to-reel tape decks later became available but were bulky and best suited to indoor use. To expand appeal to audiences, what was needed was playback equipment that could conveniently travel along with the listener.

An answer to the portability need came in the 1960s in the form of 8-track cassettes and players. 8-track players became available for use at home, in cars, as well as via battery-powered portable players. A single tape held as many selections as a standard LP phonograph record. Some brands of cars and trucks offered factory-installed 8-track players. However, the larger market for such devices was as players that could be installed in existing vehicles as additions to AM and FM radios.

The next introduction of technology was the smaller compact tape cassette. Like the 8-track, it could store as many selections as an LP but was smaller. By the late 70s and early 80s, the 8-track was supplanted by compact cassette players. The next technology involved the CD/DVD players. Technology continues to advance, and CD/DVD players are being replaced by a number of electronic devices that allow playing access to large music archives. Today, new cars may not even come equipped with CD/DVD players.

The Decline of American-Slovenian Music

In the decades following WWII, much changed in America that had a negative effect on American-Slovenian and other ethnic music. While scholars may debate the influences of individual items, the following changes likely played a role.

- **Suburbanization** Thousands of returning WWII military veterans married, formed families and bought homes in suburban areas, often with the benefit of GI loans but located away from the ethnic enclaves where the veterans had grown up. Many vets married persons of other ethnic heritages and, moving to suburbs, lost convenient connections to the places where they had been exposed to “their” music.
- **Highway Construction** The Eisenhower Interstate Highway Bill supported the construction of

new roads in urban areas, leading to demolition of formerly ethnic neighborhoods. This prompted moves to suburban areas and separation from the venues where polka music was popular.

- **The European Music “Invasion” and Popularity of Other Music Forms** Americans were changing in their preference for music forms. Elvis Presley, the coming of the Beatles, and the rise in interest in music forms such as country/western, also influenced a decline in interest in polka music. As America’s population grew, the music industry focused on promotion of the newer forms.
- **The Demise of Industries** The 1970s and 80s saw the demise of industries located in heavily ethnic neighborhoods, and their residents relocated. This negatively affected the venues where polka music had been popular.
- **Immigration Decline** Changes in American policy substantially stopped immigration after the 1920s, decreasing the flow of Slovenians to America. However, favorable treatment of Slovenian displaced persons following WWII led to a brief inflow of immigrants - with a dramatic positive influence on the Slovenian music scene.

While all of the above factors contributed to a decreased market for commercial American-Slovenian music, the decline was not consistent throughout the country. In some communities, former residents continued coming back to their previous neighborhoods. Also new venues were established in suburban areas that supported continued interest in commercial polka music, as well as in other forms. Joe Godina, cited earlier, is familiar with the sales of American-Slovenian recordings. He observed that in recent years, the sales of polka CDs has materially declined. Notwithstanding, recording artists value sales and continue to record and promote new issuances.

The Present Situation and Future Prospects

The Golden Age of commercial American-Slovenian music may have passed, but a renaissance is possible. Many of the artists that played important roles have died or retired. Many of the people who populated the audiences of

that age are now “Golden Agers,” for whom attendance at musical performances is more difficult. Whether there will be a viable market for the music depends upon artists creatively meeting a need as well as winning the interest of younger people. This requires tracking the nature of the need and creating products that attract customers. As noted earlier, one of the changes attracting new interest has been “button box” music. Another has been stylistic innovations that appeal to younger audiences, such as performed by Alex Meixner, Anthony Culkar, Joshua Kay, Aaron Dussing, and others.

Not mentioned in this discussion of “commercial” American-Slovenian music are the personal musical advances by individuals who have pursued musical training and have accomplished much. While intermarriage between American-Slovenians and persons of other heritages may hide their Slovenian names, accomplished persons can be found as members of popular and concert orchestras, as teachers of music, and in other roles in American music. One example of many that could be cited is Mike Pausic. Born in the Cleveland area, he pursued musical training with accomplished musicians in college and afterwards. He performed in Las Vegas for several years, and in 1985 joined the US Air Force Band in Washington, DC as a guitarist and vocalist. While there, he performed with their show band for every American president from Reagan to George W. Bush. Mike retired after 23 years.

What the future holds will be the product of creative artists who are willing to work.

Closing

The authors of the first two articles in this series sought to gain access to and preserve Slovenian music recorded on 78 rpm discs back to the early 1900s. While the effort was quite successful, the ability to widely share the music collected has been limited due to copyright issues. Hopefully, in the future an answer will be found.

A note of thanks to three expert observers of Slovenian music who provided helpful reviews: Charles F. Debevec, Joe Godina, and John Vidmar.

Bibliography

Dolgan, Bob; *America’s Polka King*; 2006; Cleveland, OH; Gray and Company; pg 166.

RETRACTION:

Development of Slovenian Music II in the Winter 2017 issue of *Zarja* contained two errors caused by the addition of commas during the editing process. The sentence including “with piano, accordion, banjo, and saxophone prominent.” indicates four instruments. It should read “with piano accordion, banjo, and saxophone prominent.” Similarly, the

sentence including “with its emphasis on piano, accordion, and brass instruments” should read “with its emphasis on piano accordion and brass instruments”. As this article is a historical documentation of Slovenian music, it is necessary to be accurate and to make this distinction. This distinguishes the guess that it may be a button box.



The Mystery of the Mežica Masterpiece!

By David G. Sodac, *Zarja* Staff Writer
Branch 89 Oglesby, IL bd sodac@gmail.com

SUA Branch 89 member Barbara Bruch loves exploring antique stores, flea markets, and garage sales often searching for household items and reminders that she recalls as a child visiting in her Slovenian grandparents' home. Generally, she finds the usual glassware, collectibles, handmade linens, and crafts. One day she discovered a bonanza! Hanging on the wall in a LaSalle antique shop was an original oil painting on canvas of what looked like a village scene out of the mountainous range of Slovenia! The painting was quite large, 3 feet by 5 feet, with an asking price of \$300. It reminded her of the murals one would find on the walls of the Slovenian Doms. She negotiated with the seller, agreed upon a price, rolled up her cherished find, and began thinking about where it should hang in her farmhouse in Granville, Illinois.

With some extensive research, she discovered the painting was of the Slovenian village of Mežica, a town and municipality in northern Slovenia near the Austrian border. Now, what are the odds of that! This treasured find came from a sale in Minnesota she was told by the proprietor of the antique store. Minnesota is a state rich in Slovenian tradition and heritage, so it would make sense that the mural once proudly hung on a wall in some Slovenian building or personal home.

The mural was painted in oils, signed by the artist Robert Clayton, and named "Mežica." We'd love to know the

history and purpose of this mural painting and where it must have proudly hung!

Mežica is a village hugging the Meža River in the former Slovenian province of Carinthia. The town, with a little over 3,000 in population, once prospered with the discovery of lead and zinc located under Mount Peca. The mining operations ended in 1994, but the mine offers some rather unique tourist opportunities if you are up for an adventure. You can ride your bike through the cavernous mountain and explore the abandoned and mysterious mining tunnels under Mount Peca. Bikers are equipped with helmets and flashlights and are safely guided from one valley to another on an almost 5-mile-long underground path. In addition, the mine tour options offer a unique experience in kayaking the underground labyrinth of crystal clear and magical underground caves.

With the tradition of developing miners, it makes sense why there would be Mežica villagers attracted to work the three iron mining ranges of Minnesota. Possibly, one or more of those Mežica immigrants commissioned this sentimental mural to hang in a hall or home? So, do any of our *Zarja* readers from Minnesota or around the country know of where this masterpiece once hung?

Please send me an email or write so we can publish a happy ending to this mystery!



Slovenian Union of America

“April’s Showers of Dollars” Drawing

April 2018 Fund-Raiser



The monies received will benefit the SUA National Convention in 2019. How the fund-raiser works: Each day in the month of April 2018, one (1) winner will be chosen to win the listed cash prize for that day - \$65 or \$200. In addition, each day, the person who sold that day’s winning ticket will win \$10. The daily winner and the seller can be the same person and win both prizes.

The winners chosen on April 1 - Easter Sunday, April 15 - “Help With Tax Day,” and April 30 - “Here Come May Flowers,” will win \$200 each. In addition, the top sellers (1st, 2nd, and 3rd places) will win \$150, \$100, and \$50 respectively. A minimum of 300 entries must be sold. It’s a WINNING opportunity for everyone!


Good Luck!



Top Seller Prizes

1st Place: \$150
2nd Place: \$100
3rd Place: \$50

APRIL 2018						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 \$200 Prize	2 \$65 Prize	3 \$65 Prize	4 \$65 Prize	5 \$65 Prize	6 \$65 Prize	7 \$65 Prize
8 \$65 Prize	9 \$65 Prize	10 \$65 Prize	11 \$65 Prize	12 \$65 Prize	13 \$65 Prize	14 \$65 Prize
15 \$200 Prize	16 \$65 Prize	17 \$65 Prize	18 \$65 Prize	19 \$65 Prize	20 \$65 Prize	21 \$65 Prize
22 \$65 Prize	23 \$65 Prize	24 \$65 Prize	25 \$65 Prize	26 \$65 Prize	27 \$65 Prize	28 \$65 Prize
29 \$65 Prize	30 \$200 Prize					



\$10.00 per entry

Cash prizes totaling **\$2,955**

Your “April’s Showers of Dollars” drawing entry will be eligible for all daily drawings in the month of April 2018. Sellers of the winning entries will receive \$10 as an award for their selling efforts. The daily drawing amount and the seller’s \$10 prize will be mailed to the winners of record the next business day. Winners will be notified by e-mail, if provided, and a complete list of winners will appear in a future issue of *Zarja*. **Thank You!**

If you have any questions, please contact Eileen Plese at (815) 725-5208 or sua@slovenianunion.org.

2018 Entry Form (Copies Accepted) • PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Entrant’s Information:

Name: _____ Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Seller’s Information:

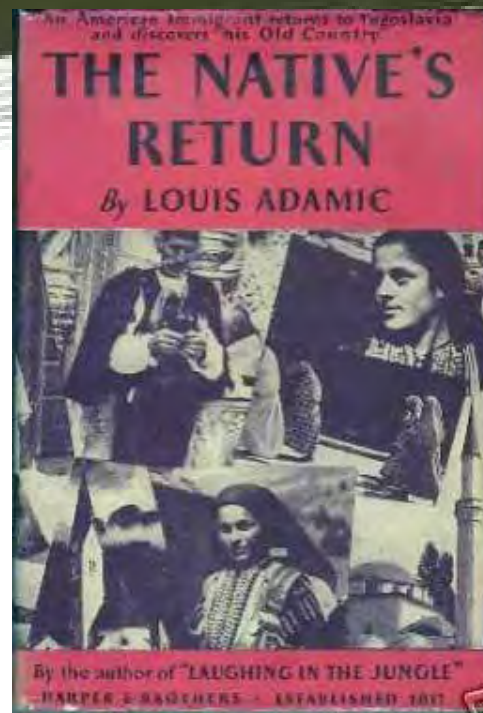
Name: _____
Branch Number and Location: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Please complete form and mail with your check in the amount of \$10 **payable to SUA**. Send to:
 Eileen Plese • 2225 Mason Avenue • Joliet, IL 60435-5425 • (815) 725-5208

Slovenian-American Author Louis Adamic

By Staff Writer David Sodac
Branch 89 Oglesby, IL bd sodac@gmail.com

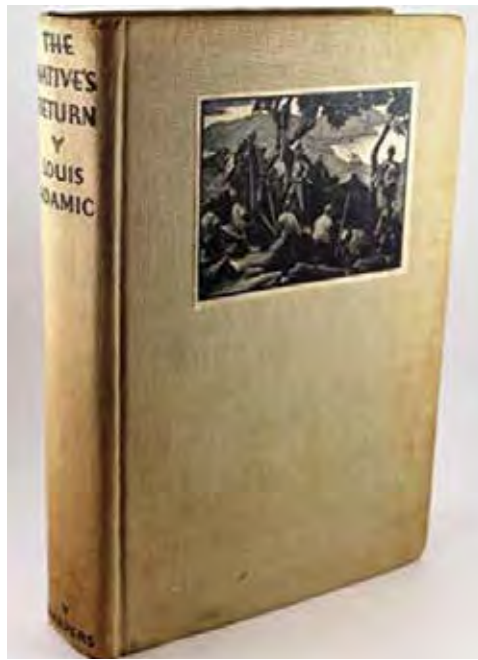
A while back, Lynn Zalokar of New York Branch 93 sent several informative e-mails urging me to write about one of our Slovenian immigrants who became a well-known and acclaimed Slovenian-American author. His name was Louis Adamic (1898-1951); he became one of the more prolific and popular writers in the 1930s and 1940s. One of his bestselling books was about his return to his home village in Slovenia after having been in America for 19 years. The book was titled, *The Native's Return* and published by Harper House in 1934. Many an immigrant from Slovenia would have had his books and gathered in their neighborhood Doms to discuss his writings over a few pivos. Lynn shared how thrilled she was when a friend located a very fragile copy of this book from the Brooklyn Public Library. The binding was in a delicate condition, the pages were somewhat brittle, and her fingers had unintentionally poked some small holes through a few of the pages. Despite its condition and not having been read since 1966 according to the checkout stamp, she



was delighted to finally read it. That motivated me to search for a copy of this book and decide for myself. The local public libraries didn't list him as an available author. Big box and online book sites didn't have his books either. So, I searched eBay and found his book and purchased it through an independent seller.

After the book arrived and I had a chance to check it over, I wrote back to the seller to share how pleased I was about the surprisingly good condition of the book and that it was even autographed by the author himself! I asked her how she happened to come by this book, hoping for some wonderful, heartwarming story. She responded that she had found the book at an estate sale in San Pedro, California, a Southern California port city with a large Slavic community. She had grown up there. Her father was of Norwegian descent and had played a prominent role in San Pedro's fishing industry, owning three fishing canneries there. She herself knew very little about Adamic. After doing some extensive research on Louis Adamic's life, it turns out that upon his return from the army after WWI, he finished his extended service at Fort MacArthur in San Pedro. He continued working there as a watchman and clerk in the pilot station office located on the breakwaters at the entrance to San Pedro harbor. He honed his writing skills and began submitting his short stories and articles to publishers, including the monthly literary magazine, *American Mercury*, known for its often-satiric commentary on American life, politics, and customs. He became very well known in the San Pedro area partially due to the notoriety of his somewhat controversial writings about the nearby city of Los Angeles. It just seemed so destined that my autographed copy of this book would make its way into my hands from the San Pedro area in which he loved and lived. I was absolutely thrilled!

He was born Alojz Adamič in Grosuplje Praproče, a small village southeast of Ljubljana, in what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Louis was born in the Praproče manor that had once been owned by the counts of Lichtenberg but had become a generational home for the Adamič family. Louis experienced his basic education at the village school and in 1909 entered the primary school in the capital city of Ljubljana. Adamic



described in several passages of his books that early in his third year he joined a secret students' political club associated with the Yugoslav Nationalistic Movement that had been gaining a grassroots hold in the South-Slavic provinces of Austria-Hungary. He was briefly jailed for his participation in a bloody demonstration in November of 1912. As a result, he was expelled from school and banned from further attendance at any government educational institution. He was later admitted to the Jesuit school in Ljubljana but was unable to bring himself to go. He would write in his 1932 novel, *Laughing in the Jungle*, "No more school for

me. I was going to America, I did not know how, but I knew that I would go." On December 16, 1912, the date recorded on his official ship manifest, at the age of 15, alone and unable to speak English, Louis Adamic left for the United States. He arrived at Ellis Island in New York Harbor on December 28, a wide-eyed kid anxious to make his mark on America.

It has been frustrating to piece together his early life in America. Given the documents that were available, even those with differing dates, the following gives us a snapshot into those early years. After processing through immigration in 1912, Adamic went to live with an uncle and worked odd jobs for a couple of years around New York City. He eventually found an opportunity for work at a Slovenian-American newspaper, *Glas Naroda* (The Voice of the Nation) translating English into Slovenian while taking English classes at night. He eventually rose



Birth home in Blato, Slovenia.

to the position of Assistant Editor with this paper, but lost his job in an argument with his boss. He then found part-time work doing various odd jobs working in construction, loading trucks, and sweeping the floors of a silk factory in New Jersey. By 1916, he had found his way to Boston, Massachusetts and found work as a part-time news correspondent. Now eighteen years of age, he chose to become an American citizen and applied for naturalization papers. World War I was raging across Europe, and Louis enlisted in the army to do his part. While receiving his basic military combat training in Camp Beauregard, Louisiana, he officially became an American citizen. He was soon deployed into action to the Western Front in France. After his troop was released to return, he was sent to Honolulu and from there eventually shipped to Ft. McArthur in San Pedro Harbor, California to



Young Adamic in 1928.

finish out his assignment. Adamic published original material in *Pearson's Magazine* while he was still in the army, but for his first few years in San Pedro he focused on translating the works of well-known Slavic authors, in particular, Ivan Cankar. In 1925 he became a clerk in the municipal port pilot's office, which allowed him more time to write. He became a regular contributor to several Haldeman Julius Publications and continued submitting his translations to *Our World*, *The Living Age*, and the Chicago Slovenian daily *Prosveta*. Louis began authoring his own experiences for submission to publicists as well. His most characteristic works were about the immigrants' experiences in America and intertwining his own memoirs. Louis Adamic vigorously championed the diversity of America's immigrants and their important contributions to the making of America.

In 1929 he became a freelance writer, moved to New York, and married Stella Sanders. His first two published books included *Dynamite - The Story of Class Violence in America* (1931) and *Laughing in the Jungle: The Autobiography of an Immigrant in America* (1932). Due to the popular success of these two books, he received the Guggenheim Fellowship award in 1932. The Fellowship would pay all transportation and living expenses incurred while visiting abroad in Europe for

one year. Their expectations would be a manuscript of his encounters and experiences. The Guggenheim Foundation certainly got what they expected out of Adamic's creative writing and year spent in South Central Europe. The result evolved into his third book, *The Native's Return* (1934). It was an immediate bestseller.

The Native's Return was indeed a fascinating read for me. One could sense what it was like for an immigrant to return to visit his former homeland after almost 20 years. His writing allowed the reader to grasp the feelings in his heart, thoughts, and reactions. Louis and Stella originally had not intended to spend much time in his native country; he worried that it would be somewhat awkward and possibly uncomfortable. He had become to think of himself as an American now: an American writer, writing on

American subjects for American readers. Consequently, he was a little anxious about this homecoming, but that would quickly change. Large, overflowing crowds warmly greeted him everywhere they went. He would write "The fact that I had written a few things in America, and received some recognition there, impressed my native countrymen much more than if I had come back say, a millionaire industrialist or a champion wrestler or pugilist. Hence all this publicity, this whirl of hospitality." He hadn't expected to end up writing about his native country. He had planned only a Sunday to visit his family and relatives in Blato, but that quickly changed. *Time* magazine wrote in its extensive review of his book, "Louis Adamic's was an exciting homecoming. He had not seen his parents, his nine brothers and sisters for 19 years. He thought of himself as completely 'Americanized.' But, Louis Adamic became again Loyze Adamich (Aloyz Adamič)." Instead of staying just the one Sunday, he and Stella would stay with his family for two months. Memories of his former years there would rush into his head everywhere he went; the astounding beauty of the countryside, the endearing charm of the people, the old folklore customs, and the deep pride they take in their culture. This book became not only a personal travel diary but also offered reflective insight into what made Adamic a notable American writer.

After the success of *The Native's Return*, Adamic followed up with the release of *Grandsons: A Story of American Lives* (1935). He and Stella then purchased Mountain View Farm, near Milford, New Jersey, which he expected to become his writing retreat. His writing continued and resulted in the publishing of several books: *Cradle of Life: The Story of One Man's Beginnings* (1936); *The House in Antigua* (1937); *My America* (1938); *From Many Lands* (1940 - for which he would be awarded the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for the most significant book on race relations); *Two-Way Passage* (1941); *What's Your Name?* (1942); *My Native Land* (1943); and *Nation of Nations* (1945).

His works didn't go unnoticed. He was constantly in demand as a lecturer at ethnic lodges, won numerous awards, had several bestsellers, and was a widely recognized public figure in the 1930s and 1940s. Adamic became an acquaintance and an occasional guest of both Presidents Roosevelt and Truman.

Adamic believed America had great potential but that strains between ethnic minorities and the status quo were nearing a major crisis. Starting in 1940, he was approached to be the editor of *Common Ground*, a magazine that analyzed the interracial culture of the United States. The quarterly was funded from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and was published by the Common Council for American Unity (CCAU). Its issues featured many articles by and about Japanese Americans, particularly about their wartime internment in prison camps and subsequent resettlement.



Always an intensely political man, Adamic agonized greatly over the disintegration and occupation of Yugoslavia in World War II, and he openly supported Josip Broz Tito's Communist movement both during and after the war. Most assuredly, Adamic's writings and lectures provoked the anti-Communist hysteria that was already spreading rapidly across America. After his last book, *The Eagle and the Root* (1950) was published, he became a target. He received death threats, was called a communist spy, and was hounded by the House Un-American Activities Committee.

On an early September night in 1951, firemen were called to his burning farmhouse in Milford, New Jersey. Adamic was found dead inside the house, shot to death by a bullet to his head with his rifle positioned across his lap. Many questions lingered about his death; whether he had committed suicide or was murdered remains a mystery.

While researching Louis Adamic, I was introduced to one of Slovenia's most knowledgeable persons on his life, Janja Zitnik Serafin PhD. She is a senior research fellow at the Slovenian Migration Institute of the Research



Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana. She was a wonderfully prompt, gracious, and a most helpful e-mail correspondent! She commented in the closing of one of her e-mails: "Adamic was a political maverick whose social engagement reached one climax after another throughout his writing career. With his literary and journalist work and with his public appeals and activities, he addressed virtually all the major political, ideological, social and moral dilemmas of his time." That's quite the accomplishment for a young boy, emigrating all alone from his native country to begin his American dream. Hvala also to Lynn Zalokar for introducing me to this fascinating man.



Slovenian Union of America

Across America - Branch Reports

BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Contact information: Mary Ann Schellinger
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On the eve of St. Nicholas, members of Branch 1 gathered at the KC Hall in Sheboygan. A surprise for all was a visit from Santa with one of his elves (a grandson of Branch President, Mary Sandwick). Each member received a little Christmas sock full of sweets.

A “tasty” Slovenian buffet was prepared by seven of our members to include traditional dishes such as struklje, žlikrofi, rice sausage and kransky. Ham, rolls, cole slaw, and Slovenian potato salad were also on the buffet table. Also pink tea was available to all who wanted to add a little color to their cheeks as they sampled potica and flancati from the dessert table.

A short meeting was held during which memory angels were presented to family members of Mary Kotnik and



After seeing Melania Trump’s recipe for star cookies in the last Zarja magazine, member Mary Ann Schellinger made a batch and shared some of the treats with Marilyn Hendricks. Not too many cookies were going to be left over for Santa on Christmas Eve.

Dick Jelovnik who passed away this year.

President Mary Sandwick led a sing-along with a Slovenian style “12 Days of Christmas.” The evening ended with a few Christmas carols. Some members of the Ss. Cyril & Methodius choir led the group singing “Silent Night” in Slovene.

MARY ANN SCHELLINGER

BRANCH 2 - Chicago, Illinois

Contact Information: Judy Stoll 708.479.2864

I hope everyone had a really nice Christmas. As you know, we had a long and record-breaking cold spell in January, so I hope all the snow is melted and the daffodils are popping up when you read this spring report.

Branch 2 celebrated the Christmas Holidays with a wonderful luncheon at Ignatz restaurant in the “old neighborhood.” Twenty-two members and friends enjoyed the good company, great food, and a bit of wine. About the only branch business was the decision to meet on Thursday, April 12 at Portellos on Harlem and Archer at 1 o’clock. Please call me if you need more information about our meeting.

2018 will mark some amazing birthdays for a few of our members. Daisy Zeleznaker will be 90 big ones, Elsie Wojdula will be 96, Elsie Ciszek will turn 98, and Mary Reich will reach 100 years young!

Let’s keep each other in our thoughts and prayers.

JUDY STOLL

BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

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November and December 2017 were filled with Slovenian celebrations in Pueblo. On November 4, Branch 3 member Bernice Krasovec was honored at the annual Slovenian Heritage Dinner. Bernice was instrumental in establishing the dinner as a yearly tradition at St. Mary’s. The annual St. Nick’s celebration was held at St. Mary’s on Saturday, December 2. Parishioners brought wrapped Christmas gifts for needy children to a Mass, which was followed by a klobase dinner and the appearance of St. Nick (Father Ben

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Bacino) for children of all ages. On December 5, Branch 3 members enjoyed mingling at their annual Christmas luncheon at Park East Restaurant. Madeleine Khosla distributed her donated goody bags filled with special treats.



Slovenian Heritage Dinner (from left): Father Richard Gielow, C.M., Katherine Krasovec Chrisman, honoree Bernice Krasovec, Eileen Krasovec-Perez, and Rudy Krasovec.



Gersick sisters with cousin at Branch 3 Christmas luncheon (from left): Betty Skul (from Pueblo), Patti Gersick Derby, Barbara Gersick Greenwood, and Angela Gersick Mock (all from Colorado Springs).

After lunch, branch members played a Christmas Carol game. Everyone left with a Santa gift since all 32 attendees participated in a gift exchange. Secret Santa gifts included bottles of wine, Slovenian cookbooks, candles, poinsettias, and other surprises.

Regular monthly Branch 3 meetings will resume in February; branch meetings take place in St. Mary's Church hall on the first Tuesday of each month at 12:30 p.m.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON &
BARBARA KARLINGER

BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

Greetings! Being bored this winter, I undertook the major task of going through boxes, organizing old pictures, throwing out unidentifiable things, and finding lost treasures! One box containing Branch 5 membership info caught my attention, causing me to pull out the old ledger book that in which past Recording Secretary/Treasurers kept entered all meeting info. Valuable information on Charter Members, birthdates from the 1880s, page after page of Haughville names and addresses from bygone days... now this is a treasure!

It was a time when the Treasurer would visit the members who couldn't attend a meeting, collecting monthly dues and yearly insurance payments. The Treasurer was the connection that kept the SWU organization alive! These visits were important in keeping the members involved, not just with SWU, but also with the Haughville community and with Slovenian women like themselves. The Treasurer would walk from house to house, collecting monthly fees from members, perhaps being the only visitor of the day for so many of the non-English speaking Slovenian women, taking time for a little coffee and cake, a little conversation, and a little socializing. The Slovenian National Home became the meeting place, 11:00 am on Thursdays, with a pitch-in lunch after the meeting. "The Nash" was within easy walking distance for the women, many of whom who never learned to drive, and close enough to just stop by even if you couldn't stay for a meeting. SWU meetings were very important in uniting the early Indianapolis Slovenian immigrants and in helping them adjust to their new country and environment!

Come out to Brownsburg on April 21-22 to the Brownsburg Bowl West for the annual KSKJ Bowling Tournament! Indianapolis is hosting this event, bringing Slovenians from surrounding states for a fun-filled weekend, starting on Friday night at the Slovenian National Home (2717 West 10th Street in Indianapolis). Join us for a meet-n-greet on Friday night, April 20, for food, fun and music!

The 100th Anniversary of the Slovenian National Home is in full swing, with many monthly activities scheduled! Thanks to all who attended our Sausage Fest in January and February Sister City event! Check the Nash website for additional events at sloveniannationalhomeindy.org.

The annual Slovenian National Home picnic is on Saturday, June 9 at the Clermont Lions Park, with a Polka Jam at the Nash on Friday night, June 8. Many families plan reunions at the festival. There are plenty of shelter houses and spaces for tents and chairs, so plan on bringing your family and friends to join in the fun! Food (sausage, sides, desserts) Drink (beer, wine, soda) Music (polka, polka, polka)!! Check website or call 317.632.0619 for more info.

Spring is just around the corner, so dust off your Easter bonnets and come join in the fun this year! Remember, SLOVENIA is in all of us!

MARY, KAREN & PHYLLIS

BRANCH 13 - San Francisco, California

Contact Information: Michele Twers
michele.twers@comcast.net

Happy New Year to all. May 2018 be the year that all your wishes come true. We ended the year with our Christmas Luncheon and the annual election of officers. The same slate of officers are re-elected for 2018: President Doreen Sustarich, Vice President Beverly Jackson, Secretary/Treasurer/Reporter Michele Twers, and Auditors Virginia Sustarich and Ann Sustarich.

In our January meeting we had a long discussion concerning our May Luncheon that has been an annual event for Branch 13 since 1973. In the beginning, we honored a member as Mother of the Year, and as years went by we started honoring all members of Branch 13 for their contribution to our society. We have decided that we no longer will be having our annual luncheon due to dwindling membership and participation and also the expense in putting this on. This was one of the hardest decisions that Branch 13 has had to make after 44 years. We are so sorry to see this end and want to thank everyone who has helped us over the years to keep this event going.

The closing of 2017 did not end well when the October 9 wildfires whipped around by powerful winds, devastating the Santa Rosa area in Northern California. Over 5,000 home and business were destroyed, and many thousands of people were displaced by this devastation. The flames were unforgiving throughout the city, torching block after block with little to salvage. One of the houses that was reduced to ash was the home of my husband Denny's brother, Fred. A neighbor was banging on his door at 1:50 a.m. Fred was told to get out since the flames were getting close. Fred was able to leave with only the clothes on his back, his dog, and car. Fred has been living with us ever since this terrible disaster. Denny and I are so grateful that Fred is alive and well and that everything he lost can be replaced.

For those of you who remember our late Vice President Agnes Petkovich Leach, she is now reunited with her son, Rev. Jerome Paul Leach who passed away on October 15. We send our sympathy to the Leach Family. Also, it is with much sadness that I report the passing of Dorris Christina Lovrin on December 26. Dorris was a long-time member for 51 years and was secretary for many years. Dorris leaves behind her three children, Mary Lovrin-Copp (Charles), John (Evelyn) Lovrin, and Thomas (Ericka) Lovrin, and also 12 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren. Dorris was a special lady and will be missed. Rest in Peace, Dorris.

Sending Birthday wishes to long-time member and former President Louise Petrusich who turned 96 years young on February 11, 2018. Also, wishes to all members who have birthdays in the months of January, February and March.

We would like to wish all a very blessed Easter to all. I would like to end this article by saying, *"Be thankful for each day and who you are, and always remember, sometimes things happen in life, and we just have to accept them."*

MICHELE TWERS

BRANCH 20 - Joliet, Illinois

Contact Information: Georgene Agnich
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We offer our sincere condolences to member Ron Erjavec in the loss of his wife, MaryLou, on November 21, 2017; to member Sharon Schroeder in the loss of her mother, member Marie Muster, who passed away on December 30, 2017; and to the family of member Lillian E. Stefanich, who passed away on January 3, 2018. We also offer our condolences to member Judith Hann in the loss of her husband, David Hann, Sr., who passed away on January 17, and to the family of member Lucille Dragovan, who passed away on January 17. A memorial to Lucille Dragovan's life as a Slovenian-American artist will appear in a future *Zarja*.

Spiritual Advisor Fr. Tom Paul conducted our Installation of Officers ceremony on January 21 at St. Joseph Parish Hall. Members enjoyed a buffet dinner prepared by our 2018 officers: Charlene Kobe - President, Jeanne Warsaw - Vice President, Robyn Coyne - Treasurer, Diane Hohenwater - Secretary, Josephine Lustik - Auditor, Jean Herbst - Auditor, Nancy Horwath and Sandra Kehring - Sergeants-At-Arms, and Georgene Agnich - *Zarja* Reporter. We then held our January business meeting.

Diane Hohenwater demonstrated how to make palačinke (Slovenian crepes) and served these delicious treats at our February 20 meeting.

We again held our annual St. Joseph Table, at which we also honored St. Patrick at St. Joseph Parish Hall on March 20. Members brought dishes to pass with the catered meat entree.

We are also reminded to participate in the "April Showers of Dollars" drawing to help raise funds for SUA's 2019 National Convention.



Our annual fundraising bakery sale will be Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25, in St. Joseph Church entrance before and after all Masses. Volunteers will phone members to request bakery donations; potica and štrudelj are very popular! Members who don't bake or who live too far away can send a cash donation to Josephine or Marla Lustik.

We said our sad good-byes to lifelong member Jonita Ruth, who has moved to Florida, at our Christmas Party at Merichka's Restaurant. Members of Jonita's family and Branch 20 attended a farewell party at her residence on December 29. We will miss Jonita and wish her the very best in her new home.

Please phone Pat Figurovski at 815.741.1863 with news of any members who are ill, hospitalized or having surgery or who are celebrating a special occasion or mourning the loss of a loved one so that Pat can send a card from Branch 20.

GEORGENE AGNICH

BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

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Zivijo! Greetings for a happy and healthy 2018! It's the season for making resolutions to lose weight, workout more, work less, etc. How about a resolution to be more involved in your Slovenian heritage and Branch 24? We have a new president this year, Shirley Eide. She is retired, has a new hip, and is ready to make this a great new year for Branch 24. Let's help her with that task. What activities will make you want to come to meetings? Do you have a unique idea for a fundraiser? Do you have the time to volunteer to take on an office position? Resolve to be a bigger part of Branch 24 in 2018.

I enjoyed reading the branch reports in the Winter 2017 issue of *Zarja*. So many branches are keeping their heritage alive by baking, cooking, movies, and get-togethers. My resolution for this year is to visit the Slovenia Embassy in Washington DC. I also would like to thank Mary Turvey for her 21 years as president of the SWU Scholarship Foundation. The work Mary has done to maintain this scholarship fund has certainly enriched the lives of many young people.

Our branch held our annual cemetery walk in early November at St. Vincent's Cemetery. We had a nice group including members of Branch 89 place candles and recite prayers at the graves of our departed loved ones. I have included a picture of the Slovenian flag that Jeff and Linda Struna had placed at his parents' gravesite. Along with Jeff and Brother Luke were Sharon Brady and Cathy Lenkaitis who helped with the procession through the cemetery. We gathered in early December for our annual Christmas party, which was organized by Mary Mecum, Linda Struna, and Liv Karun. The dessert was provided by Martha Lushina. Always a fun night to start our holiday season! Dober Dan!

DIANE DATA

BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Jan Gehm

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Our Branch celebrated Christmas with a luncheon at Alioto's Restaurant on December 2. After lunch, our 2017 Officers and Auditors were sworn in, agreeing to serve again in 2018. We appreciate their work and efforts in helping our branch to "keep our Slovenian spirit alive." All attendees enjoyed the delicious lunch, gift exchange, and the drawing for the always plentiful raffle prizes.



Branch 43 – Milwaukee, 2018 Officers & Auditors sworn in on December 2, 2017. (Left to right): Jan Gehm, Betty Ann Kolesari, Mici Bregant, Helen Frohna, Linda Abstetar, and Jack Kolesari. Not pictured – Tillie Skusek, Karen Janezic, & Joan Winkleski.

The branch calendar for 2018 is again filled with special activities. On Saturday, March 24, we will be assembling our butare at Triglav Park beginning at 10:00 a.m. We welcome anyone wanting to learn how to design these beautiful Slovenian keepsakes to come out for an enjoyable afternoon. Our Slovenian butare-carrying procession into St. John the Evangelist Church will be for the 8:30 a.m. Mass the next day, Palm Sunday. Many will be wearing their narodna noša, or a single red carnation. Mass will be



followed by a free-will pancake breakfast in the church's lower hall. All are welcome.

Our branch officers are making plans for our second Martinovanje celebration in November. Details will be announced in the next issue of *Zarja*. Our officers are also thinking ahead for a special event to celebrate Branch 43's 90th Anniversary in 2020.



Branch 43 – Milwaukee: Members and their entries in the Thanksgiving Centerpiece Art Contest.
Standing (left to right): Denise Bartlett, Janet Cerar, Tom Gehm, Diane Floryance, and Richard Floryance.
Seated (left to right): Karen Janezic, June Znidorka, Lillian Hartmann, and Winner - Rose Chepeck.

Several of our members have joined a newly formed Slovenian Social Club (SSC) that will meet every three months, also at the West Allis Public Library. Many friendships have endured for many decades through SUA's Slovenian gatherings. In addition to SUA, our Milwaukee community has seven Slovenian organizations and a Slovenian Arts Program under the auspices of the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. We are fortunate to have so many avenues of Slovenian culture and traditions. Some of our members belong to four or more Slovenian organizations. For more information about Branch 43's activities please contact our President Jan Gehm (see above).

We hope to see our members at our next luncheon meeting on April 25, our Member(s) of the Year (soon to be chosen) celebration in May, our June 27 dinner meeting, and the outdoor Mass and summer picnic at Triglav Park on August 5. Check your branch calendars for times and details. We wish all our sister branch members a Happy, Healthy, Slovene New Year 2018! *Srečno novo leto!*

MARY "MICI" BREGANT

BRANCH 47 - Garfield Heights, Ohio

Contact Information: Debbie Duris
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Greetings! Eight of our branch members had a delicious Christmas luncheon on Saturday, December 2 at Ho Wah Restaurant in Beachwood. It was quite a highlight to have three generations of the Wallace family present: Katherine Wallace, daughter Beth, and Katherine's son's daughter,

Rhiannon. We really missed those members that were unable to attend and hope to see them again in 2018.

Our 2018 luncheons will be held at a variety of restaurants starting with the gathering on Saturday, May 5 at Villa Toscano at 6200 Enterprise Parkway in Solon at 1:00 p.m. The Saturday, September 15 luncheon will be at Glenwillow Grill at 29765 Pettibone Road in Solon at 1:00 pm. The Christmas luncheon will be held at Lockkeepers at 8001 Rockside Road in Valley View on Saturday, December 1 at 1:00 p.m.

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

Wishing everyone a Happy and Blessed Easter. I'd love to share any member stories; call me on my cell 330.730.8951 or e-mail me at kj ferrante@gmail.com.

KATHLEEN FERRANTE

BRANCH 50 - Euclid, Ohio

Contact Information: Rick Tomsick
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Greetings from the "5-0" on America's North Coast! I'm writing from my cozy warm office high above Public Square in the Terminal Tower on a very frigid Friday afternoon in early January. I think it's only 3 degrees outside. Hopefully by the time you are reading this it will have warmed up a bit.

Rosemary Toth called me with the BIG news that our regular Branch 50 meetings will now be held at the Slovene Home for the Aged, beginning with our first 2018 meeting on Wednesday April 18, 2018 at 1 p.m. We are very excited to be welcomed for our Branch 50 meetings at this historic institution which is both easily accessible and a perfect fit for our Slovenian ethnic heritage. I've had many loved ones at the Slovene Home over the years and have always been impressed with the facility and the constant improvements and renovations they have made over the past 55 years. I'm looking forward to having meetings there, and who knows? Maybe some of the residents will want to join in with us.

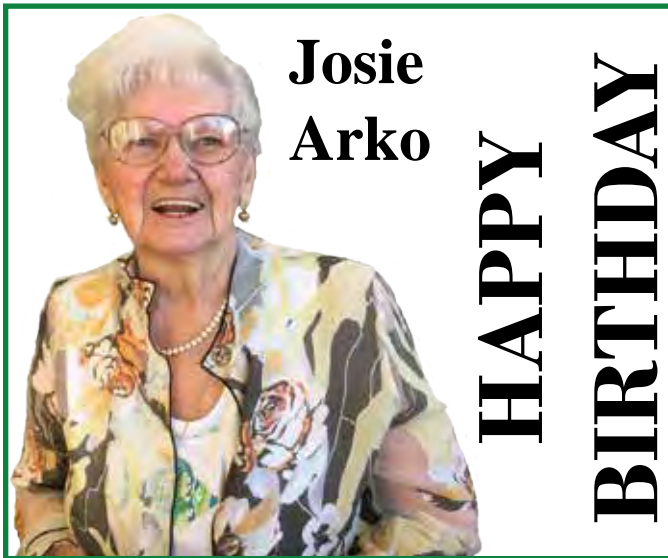
We did have a very nice turnout for the Christmas luncheon at Dubrovnik Gardens in late November. Rosemary mentioned how good the food and service was, and we have enjoyed going there for several years now. This year's party was especially noteworthy as we celebrated Josie Arko's 98th birthday.

Ivanka Matic kept me up to date on the Ohio area convention, which was held in October at Brewster's Bistro in Twinsburg, Ohio. These state conventions are a wonderful way for us to stay in touch with our fellow branches. Also, we're hosting the big national convention next year, so planning will get underway in the near future.

Sad news from my cousin and fellow SUA member Sandy Brown Rodeghero in Joliet as she told me that her Aunt Kaye Juricic passed away in mid-December. Please keep her family, all members of Branch 50 and all of the SUA

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in your prayers, especially remembering the sick and the suffering, the dead and the poor souls in purgatory, and those they have left behind, to bring comfort and joy to all who mourn.



The University of South Alabama honored Dr. Frank R. Urbancic the son of Branch 50 member Josephine Arko, brother of Branch 50 members Arlene Lessard, Geri Beha, and Joanne Carmical posthumously. Dr. Urbancic was honored for his leadership and contributions for over 20 years to the Accounting Department as Professor Emeritus and Department Chair. Family members were in attendance at the University's Anniversary Celebration in Mobile, Alabama on October 28, 2017. Dr. Urbancic passed away in 2013.

Please write to me at ricktomsick@gmail.com with any family news, and I will add you to our list of updates for Branch 50. (You don't need to be a member of Branch 50.) I always like to hear from members near and far.

RICK TOMSICK

BRANCH 89 - Oglesby, Illinois

Contact Information: Barbara Bruch
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At our November meeting we did something new. Everyone brought in their nativity sets. The crèche is an important part of Slovenian Christmas traditions and our members have kept it. There were many kinds and different ages, ranging from old and traditional to a modern north woods set that included a moose. We had a set carved in Slovenia, a set made by a member's mother years ago in ceramics; she had made a beautiful set for each of her children. One set was bought at our long-gone dime store in Oglesby, and there were stables handmade by members' husbands. One tiny set came from a trip to Italy and the Vatican. A member remarked that this was the first time her set had ever left her home. Every set held special and personal meaning. We had a good meeting that brought up a lot of memories, and I suggest that other branches do this at a meeting.

Spring 2018



Rose Bell with her old set from the Ben Franklin Store. And a tiny silver set from the Vatican belonging to Mitzi Banich.

We have interesting meetings planned for 2018, including a bobbin lace display in March and a struklje demonstration. Food meetings are always fun, and we hope to see you there.

BARBARA BRUCH

BRANCH 93 - New York, New York

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On Sunday November 12, our St. Cyril's Church in New York City was filled to the brim with Slovenian community members commemorating Martinovanje (the celebration of harvest, food, and wine) in the traditional way! Our incredible chef Mia Branc prepared delicious goose, red cabbage, mlinici, pork and chicken schnitzel, and mountains of incredible desserts, and the wine (provided by our Slovenian Grape Guru, Emil Gaspari) was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Congratulations to Father Krizolog and Aleks Jakulin for organizing such a successful event and to all of our community members who contributed their dancing and singing skills (and empty bellies!) for the occasion. This amazing event was even covered by a food blogger - visit www.eattheworldnyc.com for a full write-up and more incredible photos!

In December, St Cyril's was also lucky enough to host a beautiful banner display created by our friends in the Minnesota Branch of SUA. The very special banners representing Slovenian immigration in Minnesota since

1855 were an eye-opening and touching depiction of our Slovenian heritage. Thank you Minnesota members!



St. Cyril's Church in New York City was filled to the brim with Slovenian community members commemorating Martinovanje.
Photos by Lynn Zalokar

If you are visiting New York, please get in touch with us about some artistic events that we have coming up displaying the skills of some of our talented members - including photographer Eva Petrič. And Branch 93 is also very excited to announce our new Happy Hour for Young Professionals series! Watch out for more details in our newsletter!

KATHLEEN SIMMONDS

BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois

Contact Information: Jana Hlade jmhlade@hotmail.com

Hello fellow members! Happy Spring! After a very cold winter, a warm spring is truly appreciated.

This article will be brief. Our branch has been somewhat inactive, and the branch board members will be meeting to discuss any future events. If you have any ideas for activities, please contact Branch President Bill Zerial at billzer@sbcglobal.net or 312.208.5683 or myself.

We will keep you posted of any new events that our branch will be hosting, so watch your e-mail for future announcements.

Wishing you a very warm and happy spring!

JANA HLADE

BRANCH 100 - Southern California

Contact Information: Jean Koci

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We send our heartfelt thoughts to those who first suffered from terrifying fires a few months ago and are now dealing with floods and mud taking over their homes and communities in Southern California. We pray that you will get through the turmoil and losses that you have suffered in the best possible way.

It was an enjoyable holiday season here with our family and Branch 100 friends with students and young adults home celebrating some time off, most of them SUA members who have done well in school and are now making their way in the "real world."

The Christmas luncheon was well attended and fun in December; plans are being made for another cooking or baking class for the early spring. Teresa will send out notices as soon as a time and place are selected. Also, our spring luncheon is still in the planning stage. Whenever the date is selected, you can be sure that it will be a nice time to gather and meet with friends and extended families. Officers will remain the same for 2018. It was decided to not have a Member of the Year designated for 2018 because all of our hardworking members have been honored in recent years... so it will be a celebration for everyone who contributes so much on an ongoing basis. Thanks to all!

We send blessings for Easter and wish good health and happiness for our older members who may not get out very often.

We wish a safe and enjoyable trip to those who will be traveling on the Zarjafest Tour in May. We had seriously been thinking of going, but couldn't commit to it unless some of our younger family would travel with us, but none were available for this year... maybe next time will work better. *Na svidenje!*

JEAN KOCI



Jean Koci with her grandchildren who traveled with her to Slovenia in 2011, Garret Jancich and Sara Lundgren, the children of her two daughters, Carol Jancich and Janet Lundgren. All members of Branch 100.

Zarja - The Dawn

Donald Paul Kambic

May 18, 1924 - December 30, 2017

Condolences are offered to the family of Donald Kambic and the California community of members. Don grew up on the famous Potrero Hill in San Francisco. Don was drafted into the Army while still in high school and served in the 39th Infantry Regiment, taking part in the Battle of the Bulge. He was wounded during the war and was the recipient of a Purple Heart medal.

Donald taught English, French, German, and Social Studies in area public and private schools. His passion for genealogy and Slovenian history are made known in the book *The Slovenes of Northern California 1860- 2001*, published in 2001. Donald donated 15 of these books to the Slovenian Union of America. He also produced an unpublished manuscript on his father's contributions to building homes on Potrero Hill, *John Kambic A Pioneer in the Development of a San Francisco Neighborhood*.

In 2012 Don was inducted into the LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor at The San Diego LGBT Community Center. Don is survived by his adopted son, John Sucre, his sister Marie McHenry, and cousins. Donald was a member of Branch 100 of Southern California.

BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Candy Johnson
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Branch 102 met on December 2, and elected officers for 2018 (same as last year - President, Bonnie Brierton; Vice President, Theresa Zorman; Secretary, Candy Johnson; and Treasurer, Sue Pakiz). We selected the House of Mercy, a homeless shelter in Loyal, Wisconsin for our charitable contribution for the year. We also asked members to bring a household cleaning product, paper product, or personal care item to our next meeting to donate to the House of Mercy. We are hoping to loan a Slovenian costume to the Willard Historical Society to display in the museum in the Willard Athletic Club. Mike Sixel donated the costume to the club. The costume belonged to his mother-in-law, Josephine Artac, who was president of Branch 102 for many years. We will hold our annual bake sale on Palm Sunday weekend at Holy Family Church.

Winter has arrived in Willard, Wisconsin and with it the hibernation season. While the older members hibernate, junior members, Mike and Sandy Brierton, are busy as ever. Mike will be working on a Boy Scout Eagle project and attending Sea Base in 2018. Sandy just got done appearing in the stage play, *Madagascar*. She is trying out for the play *Mulan* shortly. As a treat for the branch members, Sandy sang her audition song, "Don't Stop Believing," after the meeting. She rocked it! Sandy also just got her snowmobile license. I don't think she ever just sits around doing nothing!

Mir in ljubezen vsem (Peace and love to all) - *Bog blagoslovi* (God Bless).

CANDY JOHNSON

Spring 2018

BRANCH 108 - Olney, Maryland

Contact Information: Bernadette Fitzsimmons
bettekfitz@verizon.net

Last November Branch 108 celebrated its 14th anniversary with a luncheon meeting and sharing of memories about Christmas potica traditions. It was also a pleasure to meet Angela Krulc's Slovenian Aunt Jo who joined us while she was visiting from Minnesota. Homemade dessert treats were shared by members: John Klansek made small packages of doughnuts based on his mother Mary Yurchak Klansek's sweet dough recipe, Nika Kovacic made her favorite oatmeal raisin cookies, and Bernadette Fitzsimmons made Slovenian Kolački cookies from *The Slovenian-American Table* cookbook. Towards the end of



the meeting we had a surprise visit by Candace Novoselnik. She is married to Slovenian-born branch member Damjan Novoselnik who recommended her to attend the meeting. We were delighted to meet Candace, to hear her speak Slovenian conversationally, and impressed by her sunny disposition and interest in everything Slovenian.

Elected officers for 2018 are as follows: Tanja Jolič Nelson, Secretary, Angela Krulc, Treasurer, Nika Kovačič, Auditor, Lynn Koiner, Vice President, and Bernadette K. Fitzsimmons, President. Special thanks to our new



**Branch 108 14th Anniversary Meeting - (left to right):
Tanja Nelson, John Klansek, Bernadette Fitzsimmons,
Candace Novoselnik, Teta Jo, Lynn Koiner,
Nika Kovacic, and Angela Krulc.**

officers for accepting their responsibilities to promote our Slovenian heritage in Maryland and beyond. Thanks to John Klanssek for his steadfast commitment and expertise as treasurer of our branch for the last 12 years.

In early December, several branch members were present for the Embassy of Slovenia Independence and Unity Day celebration where we enjoyed meeting Slovenians from the military and the business community. A wonderful Slovenian buffet, including krajnske klobase, and a variety of meats, salads, and cheeses were served. For dessert, potica and Kremšnite (Kremne rezine/Bled cream cakes) were enjoyed by all.



Embassy of Slovenia Independence and Unity Day Celebration - (left to right): Bernadette Fitzsimmons, Ambassador Stanislav Vidovic, Lynn Koiner, Nika Kovacic, Erika Roda, and her friend Sandy.

On February 11 our branch will meet in celebration of Pust and Prešeren Day. We look forward to future gatherings for branch luncheons, and embassy events later this spring. Happy Easter! *Vesela velika noč!*

Understanding Slovenian sayings by Bernadette:

Več ko ima leto dni, se v aprilu vreme spremeni. (In April the weather changes more than the number of days in a year.)

Maja mora biti tri dni mrzlo, če ni na začetku, je ob koncu tako. (In May it must be cold for three days, if not in the beginning, it is so at the end.)

BERNADETTE FITZSIMMONS



Here is a work of art by Maksim Gaspari, which appears to be depicting the Slovenian tradition of pecking at each other's Easter eggs. First egg cracked is out. It's only a guess, as the looks on the man's and the woman's faces appear more prayerful than playful. If I find out any more information on this painting, I'll let you know.

BRANCH 109 - Twin Cities (TC) of Minnesota

Contact Information: Elaine Barthelemy

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In Slovenia, Martinovanje (St. Martin's Day) celebrations are held around November 11 when winemakers celebrate with a feast for friends and relations during which the new "young" wines are tasted. Our Branch 109 Martinovanje celebration carried on that tradition with music, wine, and Kranjske klobase and a potluck feast for about fifty people at the home of Miro and Karen Medved. After the blessing of the wine, our favorite local group, The BriNotes, sang "Mi Slovenci vince ne prodamo" (which translates to "We Slovenians don't sell our wine since we ourselves know how to drink it very well") and then immediately moved



The BriNotes singing at our Martinovanje celebration.

to "En hribček bom kupil." Of course we all sang a few rounds of "Kol'ko kapljic tol'ko let" as we toasted the occasion. The BriNotes singers are Karen Medved, Miro Medved, Frank Medved, John Medved, Silvester Vivic, Tomaz Vrabec, Shahzore Shah, Victor Zupanc, and Adam Reinwald. Check out our Twin Cities Slovenians FaceBook page to see photos of this event and more.

My mother, Stephanie Polutnik, has always told us about her Decembers as a small child in Vrhnika, Slovenia when



Miro Medved, Elaine Barthelemy and Father Stiles who blessed the wine.

families would gather in a wealthy neighbor's dining room where Sveti Miklavž (St. Nicholas) would pay a visit. Branch 109 members got to see what this was like when Bina Medved (Ely, Minnesota Branch 23) brought amazing costumes for us to use for our December meeting. With little ones gathered around, Jim Lah told the story of Sveti Miklavž. Then down the aisle came Sveti Miklavž himself (Frank Medved) followed by members dressed like angels and devils.



St. Nicholas shares a special moment with the children.



Each child got a treat bag with an orange, an apple, and some hard candy, similar to the treats that my mother was given over 90 years ago. Enthusiastic strains of "Sveta noč" led by Mary Ann Palmer filled the meeting room along with more Christmas tunes. Finally, as we were leaving Mary Ann Setnicker, Cindy Gauthier, and Lizette Miller handed out special gingerbread cookies they had baked in the shape of Sveti Miklavž. Our December meeting was a lively, exciting time for all.

Spring 2018



Mary Ann Setnicker, Cindy Gauthier and Lizette Miller show their Sveti Miklavž cookies.

Composer, musician, conductor, and sound designer Victor Zupanc helped us explore the music of his Slovenian roots at our January member's meeting. For the past 26 years, Victor has been the Music Director at the Children's Theater Company in Minneapolis. In February Dr. Jay Ebben talked about his five months in Ljubljana in 2011 with his family on a Fulbright Scholarship and how he has returned each summer to teach in the Summer Economics Institute. His experiences informed his wonderful novel *Painted Hives* about a young college student who goes to Slovenia.

As I write this, our Minnesota Vikings have just beaten the New Orleans Saints in a heart-stopping "Miracle Finish" to advance to the NFC Championship Game in Philadelphia. No matter what may have happened in subsequent games, I must end this report with a hearty Skol, Vikings!

ELAINE BARTHELEMY



*I made my first ever potica today. I'm not scared anymore.
- Barbara Bruch, Branch 89 - Oglesby, IL.*

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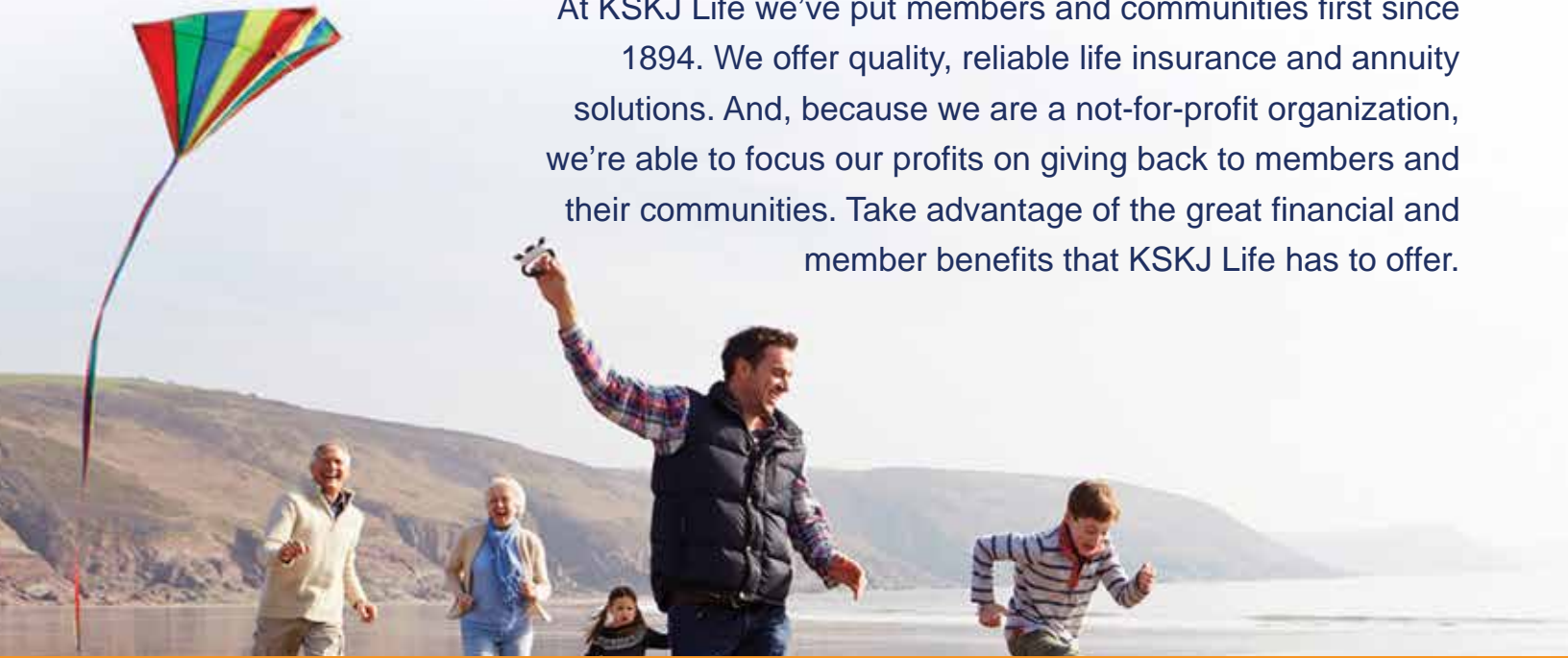
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Ljubljanske Butarice

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Slovenian Union of America 2019 National Convention Fund-Raiser

The Slovenian “Ljubljanske Butarice” as those found in the Ljubljana Market Place

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

**See page 9 of this issue of
Zarja - The Dawn for
sizes, price/S&H, and
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