



Slovenski Dom Newsletter

Volume 13, March 2015

www.SlovenskiDom.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Slovenian community has its established roots here in Toronto and spread its branches out to the surrounding communities where our young families in their turn raise their families. Every once in a while, an event or celebration of Slovenian culture or heritage draws people back to its roots. This is the work of Slovenski Dom, inviting and encouraging our people to share in the **Slovenian** spirit and to celebrate our culture and heritage.

Slovenski Dom has been busy this year once again reaching out to both young and old. There were many events organized this year that drew people from all reaches of our community:

- a) Our display of Slovenia-themed flags, pins and heritage items at Slovenski Dan celebrations in July 2014 at the "Slovensko Letovišče" was very popular;
- b) We had a very successful member appreciation **BBQ** in mid-July near Sutton;
- c) Randy and Oscar worked with Simon on delivering a **seminar in Ljubljana** this past August to assist individuals considering emigration to Canada;
- d) The Christmas banquet has regularly been well received and this year's was no exception. The banquet is just one venue where Slovenski Dom showcases talented young people of various disciplines. We are continually on the lookout for aspiring young talents in the making.
- e) A seminar presented by the Slovenian Ambassador to Canada, Dr. Cencen, was arranged at Dom Lipa in early February 2015;
- f) SloveniaFest, a celebration of our culture, complete with traditional food, music, displays and movies, was held on March 7, 2015 in the church hall on Browns Line. Congratulations to Oscar for obtaining the provincial grant that helped SloveniaFest happen.

We are active on the internet at www.slovenskidom.com. The website, to be really useful, needs YOUR participation and the participation of everyone with an affinity for Slovenia and things Slovenian. Registration is simple and free of charge to **anyone**. Currently, among other things, it has a listing of coming (and past) events and contact information for members of the Board should you need it. We also have a Facebook page which gets some good traffic. Visit that to see the fun we sometimes have!

For your information, the Potica Challenge has been put on hold because it was felt we had exhausted our pool of competitors. However, we see a need for Slovenian Baking and Cooking classes. Easy to talk about but complicated to organize. The board is exploring options to fill this need.

It has been a cold, dark and sometimes sad winter this year. We have bid too many sorrowful goodbyes to once vibrant members of our Slovenian community, some taken from us much too early. While the onset of the winter was unseasonably warm, the New Year brought with it blasts of cold and snow, sometimes bright and sometimes chillingly dark. This winter's cold has been as unceasing as our desire to preserve our cultural roots.

May the love and peace associated with the Christmas spirit keep us warm throughout the year. Let's continue celebrate our culture and heritage with families and friends as much as possible. With Easter blessings and spring's hopes around the corner, let's celebrate the good within each of us and usher in the spring with a promise to maintain a spirit of cooperative friendship and generosity among us, in the Slovenian cultural community and beyond. Cheers! Srečno, zdravo in zadovoljstva polno leto!

Majda Resnik, President

SLOVENIAFEST March 7, 2015

The first SloveniaFest held on Saturday, March 7, 2015 at the Marija Brezmadežna church hall on Browns Line in Etobicoke was a wonderful success. People of all ages enjoyed the free food, creative and informative displays and lively chatter while the children played, created art and/or watched a movie.

We were honoured with a most friendly and engaging visit by Dr. Cencen, Slovenia's ambassador in Ottawa, who with his wife and daughter milled comfortably about the hall. Irena Gril, who also came from the Slovenian embassy in Ottawa was most pleased by the turnout. John Doma, Slovenia's honorary consul in Toronto, too was delighted with the turnout and with the quality of the event.

Due to the generosity of our sponsors, we were able to provide 400 free



meals, prepared by Ana Sikič and her team, that included hot dogs and fries for the younger crowd and a choice of Slovenian-style goulash and polenta or smoked sausages and sauerkraut for the rest of us.

"Kekec," a Slovenian film, was shown to the children early in the afternoon. This was followed by a visit from Kurent and Teta Kunigunda, a comedy skit by Daniela Bajec. Johnny Smrekar played Slovenian music on his accordion. Later we presented a viewing of Slovenski Dom's film, "Canadian-Slovenian Roots." The entertainment was well-received.



A heartfelt thanks to the sponsors of SloveniaFest who helped make it happen:

*Province of Ontario,
Canadian Slovenian
Chamber of
Commerce,
Canadian Slovenian*

*Historical Society, Kompas Express, Krek Credit Union,
Nahanni Steel Products, MVP Roofing, PRESKOK, Slovenia
Credit Union, TGM Moulds, XVIDA, Condu Electric and
Slovenski Dom.*

Thank you to the artists who shared their creative spirit: Lučka Koščak (sculptures), Elena Opara and Luisa Klopchich (paintings), Nightfire by Emma (pottery) and Daniela Bajec (paintings, community art board, comedy sketch). The volunteers who helped all day were amazing: Ana and Marek, Rachel, Tasha, Stephanie, Miro, Natasha and Marie, Randy, Boris, Borut, Nora, Carol and Majda. Oscar's planning team of Simon and Janko kept things flowing smoothly.

Finally and most importantly, a HUGE, HUGE THANK YOU to Oscar Koren for initiating, networking, organizing, managing and overseeing the production of SloveniaFest from start to finish. Without his vision and creative energy there would not have been such a celebration. SloveniaFest enlivened the Slovenian community spirit. Someone told us that he "had nothing to complain about." Yeah, Right ON! Another guest suggested "We should have something like this every year!"

Maybe ... just maybe next year?

Majda Resnik

CHRISTMAS BANQUET "BOŽIČNICA" November 29, 2014

This season's Christmas banquet was held on Saturday November 29, 2014 at Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal parish hall in Etobicoke. The food was excellent and plentiful, the music was lively and the company was entertaining. The evening started with appetizers that introduced a sumptuous

dinner (prepared by *Family Catering*), followed by the lively music of *The Golden Keys* and topped off with a late night sweet table laden with Family Catering's cold meats and fruit plus a colourful variety of desserts by *The Cake Collective*.

Thank you to our table sponsors without whom the banquet's success would not be possible:

*Just Aluminum and Glass
Anthony Klemenčič
Krek Slovenian Credit Union
Nahanni Steel Products
Slovenia Credit Union
Trillium Lane Realty.*



The annual RAFFLE, held towards the end of the evening, was filled with anticipation to see who would win one of the more valuable prizes such as an iPad or Notebook, a case of Laško, a litre of brandy, etc. (to name only a few of the prizes). Much appreciation is extended to the donors of the raffle prizes, which were numerous and of exceptional quality:

*Bank of Montreal, Condu Electric, Maria Davis,
Emilian Jewellery, Family Catering, Teresa Gomes,
Boris Grmek & Gwen Fawthrop, Peter and Kathy Henkel, Just
Aluminum & Glass, Anthony Klemenčič, Lali Klopčič,
Oscar Koren & Nora Burnett, Krek Slovenian Credit Union,
Borut Lapajne, Monica Lapajne, Nahanee Steel Products, Karl
Oseli, Slovenia Credit Union, Dušan Strah, TD Bank, Zlatorog
Laško Pivo and an anonymous donor.*

Once again Slovenski Dom granted **Support Awards** this year to both DOM LIPA and SLOVENSKA ŠOLA in appreciation of their work and presence in our Slovenian community.

This year's **exceptional volunteer** was **Carol Seljak**. As a board director, Carol is very actively engaged, constructive and industrious. Carol can be counted on to complete whatever task she has agreed to do, whether it's pushing a pencil, a keyboard or a broom.

The annual **Post-Secondary Scholarship** honoured 2 recipients this year, **Kristina Kajin** and **Natasha Milavec**.



Happy Guests: Dylan Sadavoy, Eve Nopper, Jaden Nopper

We had a good turnout and everyone had a lot of fun. Thank you to Boris and Borut for taking the lead; to Oscar, Carol, Carlye & Johnny, Randy, Jak and Peter for their efforts before, during and after the evening; to Simon for his lively MC work; to our volunteers John B. and Susan D. for their individualized participation. It's a good team that presents this annual Christmas social! Next year's banquet will be held on Saturday, December 5, 2015. Come and join us for another memorable Božicnica featuring a return visit by the incomparable Walter Ostanek.

Majda Resnik

IN MEMORIAM

Rest in peace dear friends,
your legacy will go on
in the hearts and minds of our community

Frank Gormek was a founding father of Slovenski Dom and an active member throughout its history. He passed away in May 2014. Frank was a man of many talents, of vision and energy and an unstoppable zeal for fitness and the natural environment. With his passing we have lost another of our Slovenian veterans, staunch defenders and protectors of our Slovenian heritage and cultural identity. On *September 20, 2014* we gathered at the Frank & Lela memorial chapel in Bancroft to salute the memory of Frank Črtomir Gormek.



The day was a mix of sun and showers. Undeterred by the rain, family and friends shared their memories of this dynamic, creative and patriotic Slovenian. A band of hunters saluted Frank with a 3-shot volley from the chapel atop the hill overlooking the valley below.

We spread some of his ashes over the hillside into the wind. Some of his ashes were nestled under the young oak tree

planted in his memory. The rest of his ashes will be sent to his native Slovenia, his final resting place. Our sincere condolences have been extended to his son Peter and his family. Rest in peace, dear Frank! You were one of a kind.



Maria Kastelic, beloved wife of the late John Kastelic (Vice-President and member of the Board of Directors and various committees throughout his membership), passed away peacefully on August 1, 2014 in her 83rd year. Her family was among the founding members of Slovenski Dom.

In the last week of November 2014, Slovenski Dom lost two members of its extended family. **Mary Skubic Stefanyk**, mother of our member Amanda, passed away Tuesday evening following a brief and unexpected battle with cancer. Mary was a vibrant loving woman who was a great friend and supporter of Slovenski Dom activities. Early on the Wednesday morning, member Carol lost her mother, **Valerija Seljak**, following a brief illness. Mrs. Seljak, a woman of constant generosity as well as deep Christian devotion, had lived a long and active life in our Slovenian community. Our most sincere condolences go out to Amanda and Carol and their families on their losses. May your mothers rest in peace!

In December 2014, we extended our most sincere condolences to the families and friends of the Mihevc and Brunšek families who lost their sons, **John Mihevc** and **Danny Brunšek**, to cancer that month. Their families were not Slovenski Dom members but their associations in our Slovenian community run deep.

On January 18, 2015, another lifelong friendly acquaintance of Slovenski Dom and its members passed away. **Andy Pahulje** was a member of the men's choral group, "Fantje na Vasi," which maintains a Slovenski Dom membership.

*Rest in peace, dear friends!
Your legacies will go on, with your families
and in the hearts and minds of those of us
who care about our Slovenian culture.*

SCHOLARSHIPS 2014

This year's scholarship recipients were two lovely young women fully deserving of their awards. **Kristina Kajin** is currently enrolled at University of Toronto in her FIRST YEAR of a HUMANITIES program. **Natasha Milavec** is currently enrolled at the University of Toronto in her 4th year of a CONCURRENT TEACHER EDUCATION program. Both young women have been actively engaged in both the Slovenian cultural community at Marija Brezmadežna s

čudodelno svetinjo (Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal) and in their home communities. Both young women have demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities. Both of them love and value their Slovenian heritage and intend to share it whenever and wherever they can. Kristina has done a lot of



Majda Resnik, Natasha Milavec, Kristina Kajin, Simon Pribac

teaching and organizational work with both the Mladi Glas dance group and a school for the performing arts in her home community. Natasha not only has extensive volunteer experience with youth and the socially marginalized in Toronto, she has also done summer volunteering in Bosnia and Peru. Slovenski Dom is honoured to count these exceptional young people among our post-secondary scholarship recipients. Congratulations to Natasha and Kristina! The girls are wished much success in the achievement of their personal and career goals. We hope, too, to continue to benefit from their involvement in our Slovenian community.

Majda Resnik

MEMBERS' BBQ

A member appreciation picnic, the Slovenski Dom Members' BBQ, was held on Sunday July 20, 2014. Disregarding the overcast skies and intermittent rain, about 40 of us took the drive to the Dresar Family farm in Pefferlaw. We were rewarded for our optimism with a wonderful time!



There was an abundance of friendly chatter and catchup, good food and drink aplenty, the heartwarming sounds of three Slovenian musicians with accordians, plenty of shelter from the rain, a game or two of badminton and a wagon ride around the property. A HUGE thank you to the Dresar family for hosting the BBQ at their farm! It was such a pleasure connecting with

our members at such a relaxed event. As one member so succinctly put it, "We don't need things, we just need each other." A special thank you to all who made the event possible!



We hope to organize a similar BBQ this coming summer and are looking forward to an even larger turnout and much more friendly chatter!

Majda Resnik

SEMINAR AT DOM LIPA Slovenia as a member of the EU

On February 13, 2015, Slovenski Dom and Dom Lipa hosted a seminar presented by Dr. Marjan Cencen, Ambassador, Republic of Slovenia. The title of the seminar was, "Slovenia as a Member of the EU - Opportunities and Challenges."

The seminar was well attended by residents of Dom Lipa, members of Slovenski Dom and a number of people interested in knowing the current state of Slovenia as it makes the transition to a market economy and an open society. The Ambassador was introduced by John Doma, Honourary Consul General, Republic of Slovenia.



Dr. Cencen, John Doma

Dr. Cencen presented convincing arguments that by joining the EU, Slovenia receives far greater benefits from the EU compared to the obligations that the EU requires from Slovenia. Since joining the Schengen Area in 2007, Slovenians can travel throughout Europe without a passport. They use a single currency, the EURO which means they no longer have to change money when they cross a border. They can work and study throughout Europe without a work visa and there are now approximately 500 Slovenians employed by the European parliament in Brussels. As part of its foreign policy, Slovenia is involved in decision making of the EU and held the Presidency of the EU Council for the first half of 2008.



This is a much abbreviated synopsis of Dr. Cencen's excellent presentation, which the audience received with great enthusiasm and interest. Following the presentation there was a lively question and answer period.

Thank you Dr. Cencen for letting us spend a wonderful Friday afternoon learning about Slovenia, its foreign policy and its economy.

Oscar Koren

SLOVENIAN LANGUAGE Maintenance Tutorials

Slovenski Dom of Toronto is pleased to be able to offer Slovenian language maintenance tutorials designed to provide students who already have some previous knowledge of Slovenian an opportunity to maintain and advance their skills in that language. Every Language Maintenance Tutorial (LMT) is instructed by a qualified Slovenian tutor and meets students via telephone or Skype for ten (10) sessions of thirty (30) minutes each over the course of a semester. For information about fees and registration contact Oscar Koren at 905-669-2365 or by email to okoren@sympatico.ca. Unfortunately, LMTs cannot assist in satisfying a language requirement for those without previous knowledge of the Slovenian language and should not be considered as a substitute for any regularly offered, Slovenian language courses.

As a minimum, basic knowledge of the Slovenian language is a prerequisite for acceptance as a participant in the Slovenian language maintenance tutorials.

Who are the tutors?

The tutors may be based in Slovenia or Canada as well as elsewhere but the availability may be limited. Students will be assigned a tutor on first come - first served basis. Students who prefer a tutor from Slovenia will have to use Skype to communicate. Students who prefer a Canadian tutor will be able to use the telephone or, if a local tutor is available, to meet in person. In a typical semester, students will have the option of meeting with the tutor weekly, bi-weekly or monthly.

Registration

Registration for interested students opens on April 15, 2015 and will remain open until June 15, 2015. For more information about the registration process, please contact Oscar Koren at okoren@sympatico.ca.

Registration for Slovenians who are interested in becoming tutors will continue until July 1, 2015. For more information about becoming a tutor, please contact Darja Antolin at darja.antolin@gmail.com.

Oscar Koren

Exceptional Volunteer Award

Slovenski Dom Exceptional Volunteer Award Recipients

2000	Janez Kastelic
2001	Peter Pavlin
2005	Jožica & Stanko Sajnovic
2006	Mary Sirk, Nora Burnett
2007	Frank Gormek, Oscar Koren
2008	Majda Resnik
2009	Nada Music
2010	Nellie & Tony Bavdek
2011	Randy Dresar
2013	Tony Muc
2014	Carol Seljak

The Slovenski Dom Exceptional Volunteer Award was established in 2000 to recognize the enormous voluntary contributions that a number of Slovenski Dom members have made to the organization. A nominating committee including the previous year's recipient, if any, may nominate the following year recipient (if one is identified).

Since its establishment in 2000, more than a dozen members have received this Award.

Editor's NOTE: The names of the 2005 Awardees were inadvertently omitted in last year's Newsletter. Slovenski Dom sincerely apologizes for any concerns the omission might have caused.

VOLUNTEERING with Slovenski Dom

Are you interested in helping to preserve and promote Slovenian cultural heritage? Do you have an affinity for things Slovenian? **JOIN US!** Share your ideas and energy with us and our partners in the GTA Slovenian community.

All ages welcome

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2014

Two new members joined *Slovenski Dom* in 2014. They are Toni Kranjc and Tasha Murgel. Welcome! We are honoured to have you on board.

A message to current Slovenski Dom members:

If you value your Slovenian heritage and love Slovenian cultural traditions, please consider sponsoring members of your family to help maintain and build on the traditions of our Slovenian culture in Toronto and beyond. A lifetime membership, payable only once, is fully refundable. The support of our membership allows your board of directors to promote our Slovenian culture and support the institutions that provide academic and social support in our community. Your membership allows Slovenski Dom to provide opportunities for

social and cultural growth in our Slovenian community. Enclosed in the spring mailout is a Slovenski Dom Membership Application.

CANADA'S ANTI-SPAM LEGISLATION

Effective July 1, 2014

The legislation requires your consent for various kinds of electronic communications. At the end of June 2014, we sent out an email notice to the members who had shared with us their email addresses. The information contained in that email appears below.

As you may be aware, Anti-Spam Legislation came into effect July 1, 2014. As a member of Slovenski Dom who has shared with us your email address, Slovenski Dom must confirm your consent to continue to receive electronic messages from Slovenski Dom.

Slovenski Dom values your support for and continued interest in Slovenian cultural heritage.

If you have not already done so, **please** let us know by email or regular mail if you agree to continue to receive notices from Slovenski Dom. **If you wish to be removed** from our current database for electronic messages **please also advise us** accordingly. If at any time you wish to resume receipt of electronic notices you may advise us accordingly.

By default, the Slovenski Dom Annual Newsletter will continue to be delivered to your home address via Canada Post. To save on cost and environmental impact Slovenski Dom will also be happy to send future editions of the Newsletter by email alone. Please advise us accordingly.

events was the 2014 "Božičnica" held for the second time in the Church Hall on Brown's Line last December. As always, those of us who attend the event come away very thankful to the Board, all the volunteers, musicians, cooks, servers and staff for their exemplary dedication and efforts on our behalf. The recent SloveniaFest attests to the vitality and enthusiasm of the current Board and roster of volunteers. A year ago, Slovenski Dom was on the verge of making a major break with the past by actively exploring the conversion of the Pape Avenue Hall and other assets into another property hopefully better situated to accommodate the current membership and possible future members. Unfortunately the plans did not materialize. As a result, Slovenski Dom, as do all the other clubs and organizations in the Slovenian-Canadian community, continues to tussle with questions about how to advance their desire to nurture Slovenian language, culture and heiritage in Canada. It still remains a possibility that Slovenski Dom will, as I speculated last year, step forward and continue its well established leadership role in the Slovenian community by offering its assets as a core contribution toward a new cooperative and consolidated Slovenian-Canadian Foundation dedicated to the broader community rather than just a select few.

As Editor of the Slovenski Dom Newsletter one of the greatest challenges facing me is trying to devise a means for obtaining articles to use in the newsletter that reflect the interests and values of the membership of Slovenski Dom. Luckily, in the past, interesting and amusing submissions have materialized almost out of thin air and almost always at the last minute - just on the cusp of sending the newsletter off to the printer. My hope with these comments is to prompt YOU, as a member of Slovenski Dom or someone who is somehow interested enough in Slovenski Dom and things Slovenian to have read the newsletter to this point, to pick up a pen or tickle a keyboard and even NOW, early in 2015, to share with us and the broader community something that interests and amuses you for inclusion in the 2016 edition!

Tony Muc, Editor



Craftsman Alert

Slovenski Dom has received the gift of an old Slovenian "kolovrat" that is in need of repair and restoration. It is a family heirloom that was brought to Canada from Slovenia in the mid-1950's. Do you have an interest in restoration of old furniture or tools? Contact Oscar Koren at 905-669-4838 for details.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Well, it is now seven years into my tenure as editor of the Slovenski Dom Newsletter. How time flies! With Majda Resnik continuing to keep a steady hand on the rudder the Board has continued to organize and deliver much appreciated events, programs and services to the Slovenian community in the GTA and beyond. As usual one of the most successful and effective

PROGRAM FOR 2015

Currently scheduled events are shown below.
For other events and activities yet to be scheduled visit the Slovenski Dom web site SlovenskiDom.com for updates.

Annual General Meeting	Sun., Apr. 26, 2015
Environmental Day with STZ	Sat., May 13, 2015
Cultural Exhibit, Slovenski Dan	Sun., Jul. 2, 2015
Members' Barbeque	Sun., July 12, 2015
Christmas Banquet	Sat., Dec. 5, 2015
