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# Zarja

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Volume 86 Issue 6  
November/December 2014

## The Dawn



Ljubljana Market:  
The flowers bought  
for the 85th Anniversary  
celebration of  
*Zarja - The Dawn*  
in Slovenia.

# Zarja - The Dawn

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DIRECTOR OF DESIGN: **Bonnie Pohar Prokup**

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## Communications for the next issue of publication

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

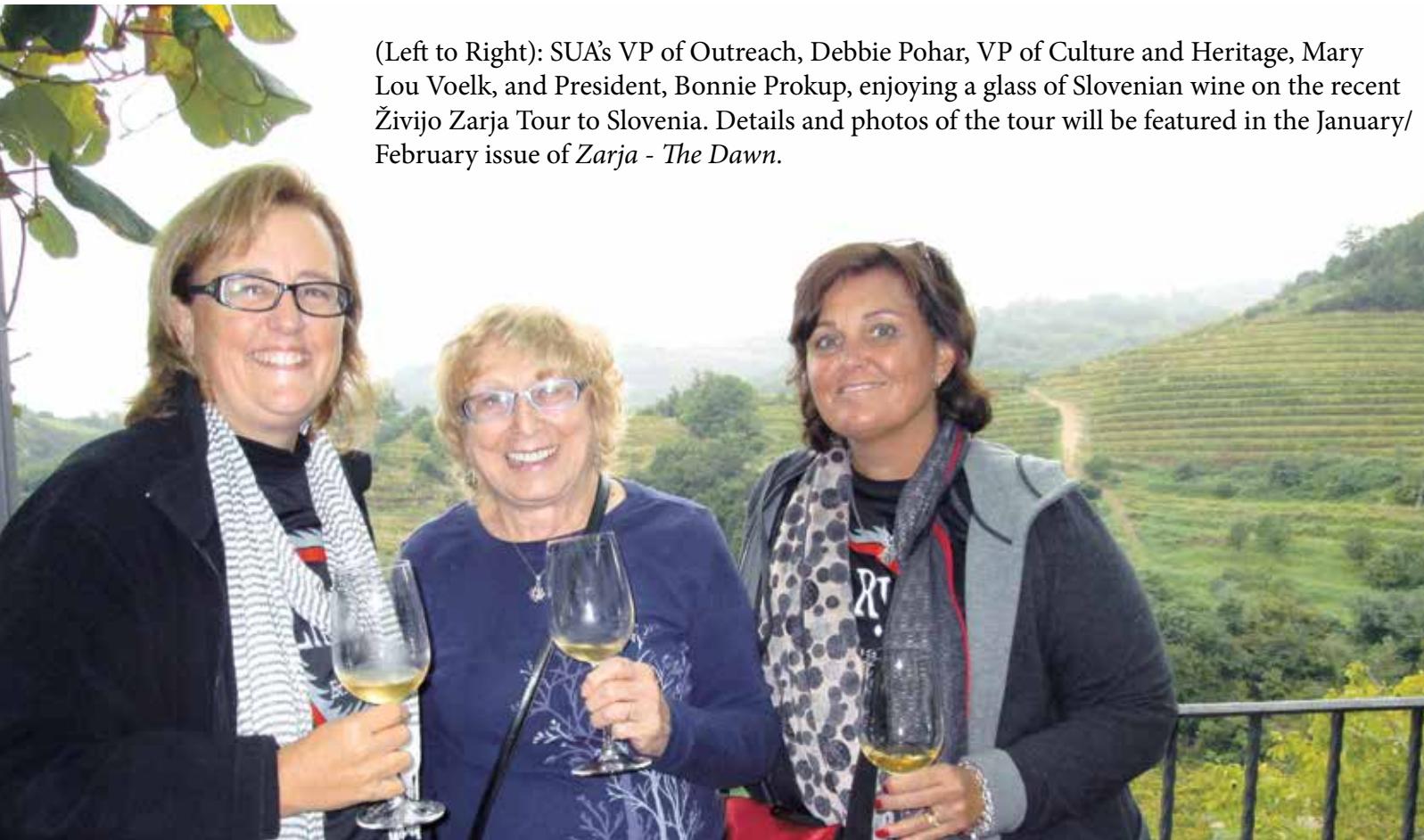
## Submission Guidelines

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

Go Digital: We regret that we can no longer return submitted materials. It is best to e-mail your photos. Use a 3.2-megapixel (or better) camera set for the highest picture quality, and attach your photos as jpeg files. If you have an old photo that is irreplaceable, please make a good-quality copy to share with us. (Scanned copies must be a resolution of 300 or higher.)

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

(Left to Right): SUA's VP of Outreach, Debbie Pohar, VP of Culture and Heritage, Mary Lou Voelk, and President, Bonnie Prokup, enjoying a glass of Slovenian wine on the recent Živijo Zarja Tour to Slovenia. Details and photos of the tour will be featured in the January/February issue of *Zarja - The Dawn*.



# President's Message



Greetings:

Having completed our transition to 501(c)(3) status, we have started a strategic plan. Our first step was the “get to know our members” survey in the last *Zarja* (if you have not yet completed the survey, you can still do so). The next step is to learn what the Branches see as their priorities at the Member Representatives’ annual meeting in November. Change is an exciting, challenging, and difficult process – we look forward to collaborating with every one of you to maintain and sustain the heritage of our organization and prepare for the future, “***Slovenia - yesterday, today, and tomorrow.***”

The Membership Campaign, “Show the Love for SUA,” is off to a great start. Let’s keep this going and double our efforts. The holidays are a perfect time to recruit a new member. Keep in mind that a SUA membership may make a great Christmas gift. Please help SUA by recruiting one or more members. We need this to keep our dream alive. Remember there are incentives for you to do so. For every new member, whether it’s an adult or junior member, your name will go into a drawing for a chance to win \$150 or \$100 in cash. The SUA member who recruits the most new members will receive \$100. Who wants to participate? We hope YOU do! Simply fill out the application inside this issue of *Zarja* or download a copy from our website at [www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org). Write your name on the bottom of the application for your chance to win. The more members you recruit, the more chances you have to win!

Another way to help SUA is to enter our “April’s Showers of Wishes” raffle. Our wishes are many and so important to running a professional, successful organization. Our members have been so generous in the past, and we hope you’ll consider helping SUA once again. We wish you luck, too! If games of chance do not interest you, all donations are gratefully accepted, and are tax deductible. Thank you for any consideration to our requests to help strengthen our beloved SUA.

Thank you for all the wonderful comments we received on the last issue of *Zarja*. We had so much fun creating that issue and really appreciate your feedback. It keeps us motivated!

SUA’s 27<sup>th</sup> National Convention is getting closer. I hope to see all of you there. It’s going to be a great time with many more special Slovenian experiences!

Enjoy your holiday season. May it be filled with family, friends, and love.

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

# Welcome to Our New Members

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Ellis, Christine, 109  
Kochmann, Todd, 109

# SUA Donations Thank You!

**\$100 Donation**  
Brandt, Chloe, 2, +Dolores Nauheimer  
  
**\$50 Donation**  
Zaverl, Albin, 35, *Zarja* - Lake Bled Prints Sold  
Lamm, Dorothy, 50, *Zarja*  
Branch 89, +Paula Mavec  
Hansen, John, +Paula Mavec  
Friends at Soy Capital Bank, +Paula Mavec  
  
**\$40 Donation**  
Yentes, Donna & Family, +Paula Mavec  
  
**\$30 Donation**  
Warlow, Philip, +Paula Mavec  
Forbes, Kathleen, +Paula Mavec  
  
**\$25 Donation**  
Bayuk, Edward, 102, SUA  
Bratina-Burns, Ludmila, 30, +Illy Bratina  
Hull, Mara Cerar, 50, SUA  
Kurnick, Agnes, 13, SUA  
Vaughn, Mary, +Paula Mavec  
  
**\$10 Donation**  
Hartmann, Lillian, 43, +Michael Hartmann  
  
**\$5 Donation**  
Korringa, Marielle, 20, SUA

## FIND YOUR SLOVENIAN ROOTS!

... maybe you don't know where to begin ...  
... maybe you have hit that proverbial brick wall ...



Contact us:

Slovenian Genealogy Research Center

6415 St. Clair Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103

E-mail: [sgsi.rc@gmail.com](mailto:sgsi.rc@gmail.com)

Phone: 1.440.655.3954

Website: [www.sloveniangenealogy.org](http://www.sloveniangenealogy.org)

*Our mission is to help you!!!!*

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2014**

BRANCH 43 of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to host an election day bake sale at South 88th Street School in Milwaukee. Call Jan Gehm at 414.321.1413 for drop off sites.

## **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2014**

BRANCH 93 of New York, New York, to celebrate Martinovanje at St. Cyril's after Mass. RSVP to Liz or Tanya. Bring coats to donate to NYC Cares.

## **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2014**

BRANCH 99 of Lemont, Illinois, to host a Genealogy class at 2:00 p.m. in the small hall of the SCC. Learn how to start and what to do with your family's history.

## **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2014**

BRANCH 93 of New York, New York, to meet at the Hoboken Historical Museum for a lecture on "The Immigrant Experience, Ellis Island 1892-1924" - the exhibition itself runs through December 23, 2014.

## **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2014**

BRANCH 50 of Euclid, Ohio, to host their Christmas Luncheon at 1:00 p.m. at the Dubrovnik Gardens in Eastlake.

## **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2014**

BRANCH 47 of Garfield Heights, Ohio, to host a catered Christmas Celebration at the Valley View Community Center on Hathaway Rd. at 12:30 p.m. Bring a dessert and \$10 gift exchange. Call Debbie Duris at 330.467.2281 for more information.

## **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2014**

BRANCH 1 of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, to host their annual Christmas Party at the K.C. Hall.

## **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2014**

BRANCH 99 of Lemont, Illinois, to host their Annual Cookie Sale from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the SCC lobby. Drop off at 11:00 a.m. or call Mary Mavec at 815.723.9003 for other arrangements.

*November/December 2014*

## **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2014**

BRANCH 20 of Joliet, Illinois, to host Christmas Party at 1:00 p.m. at St. Joseph's Park. There will be an appetizer pot luck and optional \$10 gift exchange.

## **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2014**

BRANCH 43 of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to host Sylvestrovanje (St. Sylvester's Day) and Spravanje (Reconciliation) at the Wisconsin Athletic Club, 1939 S. 108th St. in West Allis from 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. The cost is \$25 and includes food, snacks, soda, music, favors, and door prizes. A cash bar will be available. Complimentary champagne toast at 5:00 p.m.

## **SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2015**

BRANCH 43 of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to host annual Po Bozicna Zabava at Aliota's Restaurant on Highway 100 in Wauwatosa.

## **THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2015 –**

## **SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 2015**

**27th SUA NATIONAL CONVENTION to be hosted by BRANCH 99 of Lemont, Illinois. Convention will be held at the Chicago Marriott Naperville hotel with side trips to the Slovenian Union of America Heritage Museum, Slovenian Catholic Mission, Slovenian Catholic Center, and Lipizzaner Horse Performance. Special activities include Slovenian fashion show, Potica Contest, Apron Contest, Auction, Polka Lessons, Beehive Tour and Presentation, and more.**

**Hotel reservations can be made at a later date. The convention is open to all Branch delegates, members, and guests of all ages.**





# SUA NATIONAL CONVENTION

**June 18-21, 2015**

**Chicago Marriott Naperville Hotel, Naperville, IL  
Slovenian Catholic Center, Lemont, IL**

## ***National Convention Scheduled for Next Summer Many Fun and Exciting Activities are Being Planned***

### **National Convention Scheduled for Next Summer**

Branch 99 in Lemont, IL, is busy preparing for the upcoming National Convention scheduled for June 18-21, 2015. The Convention is open to all members and guests, and will be held at the Chicago Marriott Naperville Hotel with the last day held at the Slovenian Catholic Center in Lemont, Illinois. We are confident that attendees will experience a rewarding, entertaining, and educational Convention with much to share with fellow Branch members upon returning home. Exciting activities are being planned and we are striving to keep our Slovenian heritage alive and dominant throughout the weekend.

Since SUA only meets once every four years for a National Convention, it is important to make the event relevant to the interests of all our Branches. Besides the business portions of the convention, attendees will have several opportunities to experience Slovenian culture, traditions, music, dance, and of course food!

### **Many Fun and Exciting Activities are Being Planned**

The Convention is not all business. Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in many activities including



***Decorative Beehive Panel***

a celebration at the SUA Home Office/Heritage Museum in Joliet, IL, a Lipizzan stallion performance, Slovenian fashion show, Potica contest, Apron contest and auction, Polka lessons, Beehive tour and presentation, tour of the Slovenian Catholic Center and grottos, Slovenian art show, entertainment, and more!

### **Chicago Marriott Naperville Hotel Offers Many Amenities**

The Chicago Marriott Naperville Hotel is located in Naperville, Illinois, and offers free shuttle service to the beautiful downtown Naperville area. The relatively new hotel offers great room designs, indoor swimming pool



***Chicago Marriott Naperville Hotel***

with patio area, full-service restaurant and lounge, room service, free fitness center, free parking, complimentary in-room coffee and newspaper, and a wide variety of meeting space for meetings and social events. The hotel also cultivates its own beehives on the roof of the hotel and produces their own signature honey. MaryAnn Basso, Sales and Catering Coordinator of the hotel, says the following about their beehives. "On the roof of our hotel we house five beehive colonies, each named after a team member's child. With us since the hotel opened in 2012, our bees work hard to produce the best, truly local, honey featured throughout our menus. We harvest upwards of 1,000 lbs. of honey each year. Our culinary and pastry teams present the honey in practical and delicious ways for your guests to enjoy. The honey is also used to create the hotel's signature wedding cake flavor, the "Honey Cake with Honey Mousse."

The hotel is offering special pricing of \$104.00 per night which includes a free, full breakfast for all guests staying in the room. Reservations can be made early next year.

### Slovenian Catholic Center and Grottos

On the last day of the convention, we plan to co-host an outdoor Mass and a walking tour of the grottos on



*Slovenian Catholic Center*

the grounds of the Slovenian Mission Church located in Lemont, Illinois. Attendees can also enjoy a Slovenian picnic, a Slovenian Art Show, and tour at the Slovenian Catholic Center, which is also located on the grounds.



*Miniature Lake Bled in Lemont*

### Member Representative(s) - Delegate(s) from your Branch

Your Branch should have elected its Member Representative (Delegate) in 2013 prior to the first Member Representative teleconference. The Member Representative also serves as the Branch Delegate to attend the National Convention. While all are welcome and encouraged to attend the important business meetings, only the Member Representative(s) sent by the Branches may vote on matters presented to them. Serving as a Delegate is an important, rewarding, and educational experience. They are to come prepared to represent the interests of her/his Branch, take part in all meetings and activities at the Convention, and return to their Branch to give a full report to those that were unable to attend. Branches with a membership of 200 or less can select one (1) Member Representative. Branches with a membership over 200 members can select two (2) Member Representatives. Members of each Branch may also elect an alternate(s) - and are encouraged to do so - to serve in the Member Representative's stead if necessary. **It is important to review carefully the sections of the SUA Corporate Bylaws relating to the Member Representative position – Article II Members, Section 2.3 thru 2.15.** When selecting a Member Representative or alternate, keep in mind a few qualifications. Does this person have enthusiasm for their Slovenian heritage? Do they support the purpose of SUA? Do they understand the organization and its programs? Are they reliable? Are they a good communicator? Candidates must also be at least 18 years old and have paid their annual dues.

## More Convention Information in Future *Zarja – The Dawn* Issues

Watch future *Zarja* issues for more information, registration form, and details.

If you have questions, please contact Julie Lajoie, Convention Chairperson, at [jamp817@comcast.net](mailto:jamp817@comcast.net) or 630.854.5400.

# SWU Scholarship Foundation

*CELEBRATING 65 YEARS OF FINANCIALLY ASSISTING STUDENTS*

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

**ATTENTION: HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS, COLLEGE STUDENTS, and ADULTS ATTENDING COLLEGE or TECHNICAL SCHOOLS during 2015-2016.**  
**QUALIFICATIONS OF APPLICANTS HAS BEEN REVISED**

In April 2015 a number of \$2,000 and \$1,000 awards will be offered to high school seniors and those attending college full time during the 2015-2016 academic year. Also, \$500 continuing education scholarships will be offered to those adults returning to a technical school or college part- time in order to update a current occupation or to enter a new career.

The ruling that an applicant must be a member of the Slovenian Union of America (SUA) for three years prior to application HAS BEEN WAIVED. An applicant for a SWU Scholarship will now only need to apply for a one year membership in the SUA; payment prior to January 31, 2015, will be necessary. Applicants must be of Slovenian descent, whatever the percentage.

Application forms and information are available at the new SWU Scholarship Foundation website [www.swusf.org](http://www.swusf.org)  
DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION IS MARCH 1, 2015.  
E-mailed materials are not acceptable.

**SWU SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION  
ANNOUNCES NEW CORPORATE SECRETARY**

With regret we have accepted the resignation of Patricia Figurowski from her position as the SWU Scholarship Foundation's Secretary. She has been a fine supporter and did much promotional work during the past five years of her service.

Diane Hohenwater, a member of Branch 20 – Joliet, IL, has agreed to serve as the new SWU Scholarship Foundation Corporate Secretary. She is an active member of Branch 20 and is currently their Recording Secretary and *Zarja* reporter. Diane and her husband, George, have been married for 26 years. They are the parents of Brett and Scott and the proud grandparents of Kylie. Diane enjoyed being involved in her sons' education and volunteered in their grade school classrooms. Diane is looking forward to her new position with the SWU Scholarship Foundation.

**EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN  
SLOVENIA – DURING THE 1940s**

Mrs. Josephine Janezic, author of "Pepca's Struggle" and a World War II survivor has graciously shared memories of her educational experiences as a young student and that of her sister-in-law, Matilda "Tillie" Janezic. A 1940 copy of Tillie's report card, featured here, discloses the extensive variety of subjects required by the government's educational program at that time. School children of all ages, beginning in first grade, were taught and evaluated on 20 different subjects; each class at a beginner's level



and then rapidly progressing in each subject matter to the gymnasium level. Those students who wanted to become professionals, such as teachers or physicians, needed four more years of schooling. If the family belonged to the Communist Party, higher education was free of charge. Other students had to pay for the same privilege.

The Slovene school system was under socialist rule in the 1940s; it remains diligent today, integrating reform following decades under socialist regimes.

Slovenes of past generations were well known for their extremely high literacy rates. Currently, Wikipedia reports Slovenia holding a 99.7 % rate of literacy.

On Tillie's report card each subject is listed first in Italian and then in Slovenian because of the locality in which she resided. Subjects taught from grade 1 through gymnasium years are as follows:

1. Religion
2. Slovenian Language
3. Serb-Croatian Language
4. German Language
5. History
6. Geography
7. Architecture
8. Geometry
9. Correspondence and Bookkeeping
10. Botany & Zoology
11. Hygiene
12. Knowledge of Technical Fields
13. Government Affairs
14. Art – Sketching, Drawing
15. Calligraphy
16. Stenography-Typing
17. Home Economics
18. Music
19. Physical Posture (student must sit with both feet on floor and hands behind back so lungs expand for greater oxygen intake)
20. Conduct – evaluating gait, sitting position, behavior, and speech.

#### A NOTE TO SLOVENIAN GENEALOGISTS

Nine years ago, while writing the "Ask Toncka" column for *Zarja*, I suggested to readers to look for their family surnames in the Slovenian telephone book and try writing to those living in ancestral towns or cities. NINE years ago, I sent out 14 letters. One response came back about a year later. It was a family chart from the Ljubljana Archives, mailed from Velenje. Now, NINE years later, I received a detailed letter from a Casl family researcher, who just received my letter from a cousin. He responded in great detail in English. DO NOT GIVE UP!



*The Officers and Trustees of the  
Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship  
Foundation send our best wishes for a  
Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year!*

For information on the SWU Scholarship Foundation or to send greatly appreciated donations contact: Mary Turvey, Director, 4 Lawrence Drive, Marquette, Michigan 49855 or [mturvey@aol.com](mailto:mturvey@aol.com) or Marge Church, 1028 Skyland Drive, Macedonia, Ohio 44056 or [yemec1@windstream.net](mailto:yemec1@windstream.net). Check out our new website [www.swusf.org](http://www.swusf.org).

## Scholarship Donations

### \$270 Donation

Branch 3 - Pueblo, Colorado - Donors are Norma Becco, Annette Sabo Charron, Margret Cullen, Andrea DeGarbo, Francesca DeGarbo\*, Gianna DeGarbo\*, Mitzi Drobnick, Agnes Glavich, Barbara Greenwood, Eileen Kaplan, Mary Frances Kelley, Madeleine and Jerica Khosla, Judy and Kathy Kochevar, Bernice Krasovec, Josephine Krasovic, Marilyn Kristan, Halcyon Mathis, Angela Mock, Marie Mutz, Gertrude Pachek, Angela Perez\*, Linda Secora, Betty Skull, Mildred Stogfac, Ann and Judy Yengich

### \$100 Donation

Rose A. Arthmire +Joseph and Antonia Ozanich

### \$50 Donation

Debbie Pohar\* +Paula Mavec

*\*denotes past SWU scholarship recipient*

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

# Antonja Arrives in LaSalle

by David Sodac, of Branch 89 Oglesby, IL

The train pulled away from the Cleveland station and Antonja attempted to settle into the cadence of the clacking wheels as she ventured some additional 500 miles further into America's Heartland through Ohio and into Illinois. Instead of enjoying the scenery, she found her anxious thoughts wandering into the reality of her present life's situation. So much had happened to her in such a short time. Antonja had reluctantly left behind her innocent youth in the hills of the Gottschee village of Neulag. She struggled emotionally, separating from her recently widowed mother and younger brothers who had moved on from their home to live temporarily with relatives in the village of Ratje. She found herself still struggling with the untimely death of her beloved father, who had passed away just nine months earlier. It seemed that all of her life's predictable routines, comforts, and the familiarity with her homeland were yanked away and Antonja was left dangling as if an uprooted sapling.

Antonja had voyaged some 4,200 miles across the tumultuous waters of the Atlantic Ocean to the Port of New York at Ellis Island. From there she had boarded a train and finally arrived at the Union Passenger Train Station in Cleveland, Ohio. She remained in Cleveland at the home of her Uncle Stefan Oberstar and Aunt Ursula for a visit of several weeks, and during that time gathered her courage to face the man who had given her cause to come to Cleveland in the first place, his suggestion of marriage. Dependent on how this introductory meeting turned out, she'd either remain in Cleveland or begin planning another journey further west into Illinois.

The meeting with him was uncomfortable and emotionally straining. The man who so desired to marry a young woman from his home village wasn't at all what she imagined. He was considerably older than her. Maybe she simply didn't perceive herself as ready for marriage, as she was just turning 16 in a few weeks. As there was no promise of marriage on her behalf, and out of necessity to distance herself from this uncomfortable and embarrassing situation, the planning of another trip began. Antonja worked brief-

ly as a servant in a boarding home to earn enough money to purchase a one-way ticket to Chicago with a change of trains to LaSalle, Illinois. There her plan was to stay with another clustering of relatives who had immigrated and settled into the Illinois River Valley of LaSalle County in the late 1800s. There would also be loads of new cousins that had been born to these families; cousins she had never met. This new chapter in her voyage of life would have to offer some assurances of stability.

The Rock Island Lines locomotive finally chugged into its heavily trafficked LaSalle depot that was showing wear from heavy use. The Rock Island Railroad was in the middle stage of replacing this old, wooden, passenger depot with a new brick and stone building, expected to be completed within the year. As the train deposited its riders onto the wooden-plank platform, the engine stacks eerily belched swirls of cotton-white steam that enveloped the debarking passengers. In the midst of the billowing steam stood an anxious Antonja Papež. A fog in her mind began to settle over her thoughts with the uncertainties of this next stop in America. She eagerly searched the awaiting crowd for a welcoming face of an uncle she wasn't quite sure she would recognize. She was only two years old when Uncle John emigrated from Slovenia and had arrived in America back in 1886.

John Oberstar also was furtively combing the crowd of



*Rock Island Lines Train Depot*

passengers for a young woman who might match the written description given him by his sister. He eyed her hesitantly and then approached Antonja to introduce himself; then welcomed and embraced her. He offered to carry her tightly grasped baggage and they began the walk up what was referred to as the “Rock Island Hill” to the home of his sister, her Aunt Francis [Oberstar] Meglen.

Francis had emigrated from the home village of Prevol in early 1891 to join her brother in LaSalle, Illinois. She met, courted, and married coal miner, John Meglen, by the end of that same year. At the time, they had four children under the age of nine, and one on the way, along with taking in a few boarders that helped to make ends meet. Antonja would be a great help to both of these young families. The Meglens resided just a two block walk, east of the train depot at 225 Wright Street. The walk to where Aunt Francis was waiting took them through the booming business district that was rapidly developing to serve the railway and mining industries. Uncle John Oberstar’s young wife, Annie, didn’t accompany him to the station, as she was too occupied at home, attending to their five little boys under the age of seven. Both her Uncle’s and Aunt’s families lived within four blocks of each other. Antonja felt most welcome and comfortable in this new American environment. She missed her brothers tremendously back in the village of Ratje, but helping tend to the younger cousins in LaSalle made her feel needed and useful. Some of the uncertainties and apprehensions of arriving in a foreign country like America could be allayed, as she now had family surrounding her once again. This chapter in her life was beginning with a much better scenario than her experience in Cleveland.

Within blocks of the residential area near where Antonja was beginning to settle in, the coal mining and industrial district was thriving. Numerous coal companies were choosing the region for its vast deposits of zinc ore and availability of coal needed to manufacture the ores. The LaSalle Coal Company, the Illinois Zinc Company, and Matthiessen and Hegler Zinc were all competing for eager, strapping, young workers. Hundreds of Slovenian immigrants from the Dolenjska Region (Lower Carniola) were enticed by the plentiful job opportunities awaiting them. Many of them were single, young men crowded into boarding houses surrounding these mining companies. Within the vicinity of Antonja’s residence was a young man by the name of Matevz “Mat”

Banko. Mat had immigrated to America in 1886 to join his older brother, Jakob, with the promise of a coal mining job in LaSalle. Jakob had left the family village of Hinje, in the Province of Carniola, of the Austro-Hungarian Empire two years earlier. The two brothers had been living in a boarding room on Second Street up until Jakob met, courted, and married a young, 16 year old Amelia Jurčič in April of the preceding year. With the birth of their infant daughter, they moved into a larger rental, accompanied by Mat Banko.

Mat had been keeping a watchful eye on the newcomer to the neighborhood, Miss Antonja Papež. They would occasionally strike up conversations, and Mat finally suggested escorting her to an upcoming dance. Antonja, somewhat embarrassed, politely refused his invitation sharing that she didn’t have any dancing shoes that she could wear. Being determined, Mat approached Antonja and asked her again to the dance, but this time brought with him a new pair of shoes wrapped in paper. Antonja was so taken with the thoughtfulness of the shoes, and of the man who offered them, that she finally accepted his invitation to the dance. Their courtship blossomed and Mat proposed marriage two months later. Her uncle, John Oberstar, accompanied the young couple to the County Court House in nearby Ottawa, Illinois, to obtain a marriage license on July 28, 1900, John signed the consent for his young niece to marry. The marriage ceremony took place on August 6, 1900 in the rectory of St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, in LaSalle witnessed by their friends, Matthew Urbanic and Joanna Kostolik.



*Young Antonja, shortly after her marriage to Mat Banko.*



*Young Mat Banko in 1899, standing up for his brother's wedding a year before he married Antonja Papez.*

Coal mining played an integral role in the early history and settlement of the Illinois, Fox, and Vermillion River communities. The first discovery of abundant coal in the North American continent in the State of Illinois was attributed to the explorers Father Louis Hennepin, Louis Joliet, and Pierre Marquette. They found the land was blessed with plentiful coal seams and outcrops. The industry of coal mining developed into the California gold rush of the Midwest. Coal mine companies sprouted up all around the river banks and bluffs of LaSalle County, and heavily competed for workers. Housing settlements and camps were often used to entice miners to come work for them. Some of these miner camps built company stores that offered groceries and necessary goods to help maintain the families in the mining towns. The coal mining industry also significantly shaped the lives of the young Banko family. The LaSalle County Carbon Coal Company purchased a mineshaft in the little



**LaSalle County Carbon Coal Company's Joneville Mine #1**

area with a bend in the road along the way from LaSalle, across the Illinois River and near the hill towards today's city of Oglesby. It was called the Jones Mine named after O. L. Jones. Consequently, a small company town emerged around the area and was called "Jonesville." Nearby were also the mining settlements of Crocketville and Piety Hill that were constructed to serve the families of the miners.

The young Mat Banko family moved into one of the Coal Company owned, four room accommodations on Piety Hill. Five young Banko children were quickly born to Mat and Antonja during those years: Matt (1901), Joe (1902), Albina (1904), Nellie (1906), and Marie (1908). The dangers of working in a mine operation were always present. Conditions were brutal. The mines in this area were hundreds of feet underground and miners often crawled on their bellies. Mat suffered an injury while working in mine No. 1 on September 25, 1909, as falling rock injured his thigh and laid him up to recuperate. He was 33 years old and should have been in his prime. He was fortunate to survive. Two additional Banko children were eventually born on Piety Hill, Tony (1911) and Rose (1913). With the birth of each new child, any available living space in the tiny four, room house was consumed. Almost every other year a new Banko brood

member was being enrolled in the nearby Columbus School that was built to serve the miners' community. The older boys were soon old enough to do some "odds and ends" work to bring in some additional income to help fill the coffers of the growing family. The Mining Companies were offering boys, the ages of 10 to 15 years, 10 cents an hour to do various chores above ground, like pulling in the coal carts.

On September 3, 1915, Mat and Antonja had saved and scraped the \$575 to purchase their own building lot within the newly offered Carbon Coal Company's housing subdivision in Crocketville. Purchasing the property meant the Banko family would move from Piety Hill to the edge of the newly incorporated city of Oglesby, two miles from where they currently were renting. They immediately began construction of a one-story, framed home on this property. The lot offered plenty of land to surround their home with the fruit trees, chickens, geese, and vegetable gardens to feed their growing brood. The living space also offered three bedrooms, one for the three boys and one for the four girls, as well as a small parlor and an eat-in kitchen. Antonja was also pregnant with child number eight and gave birth in late June to Helen in their new home. Years of breathing the limited air mixed with the black, mine coal, dust affected many a miner. Mat Banko wasn't an exception to this miners' asthma known as "black lung disease." For years he exhibited the symptoms of chronic coughing and difficulty with breathing. By the summer of 1917 it caught up to him, Mat no longer was able to work the mines, his body was racked by the constant wheezing and coughing spells. He stayed around the house and tended to the younger children, while Antonja sought needed income by taking in laundry, enlisting the help of her daughters, Albina, Nellie, Marie, and Rose.



**Antonja standing at the house they built in Crocketville (Oglesby) in 1915, two years before her husband died leaving her a widow with eight children.**

By late August of that summer, Mat was attended to regularly by Dr. Charles E. Coleman of Oglesby, in attempts to ease his discomfort. September 3, 1917, at 9 p.m.,

Mat expired, leaving behind a grieving Antonja, and eight stunned children. A Peru undertaker, Louis M. Ptak, readied the body for viewing in the parlor of the Banko family's two year old home. Mat was dressed in his black suit and laid out in a \$100 wooden casket, set on cloth-covered boards in the family's parlor. Funeral candles were set behind the casket. Fellow miners and their families streamed into the home to pay their respects and offer their condolences to the shocked family.

Following the viewing, the casket was taken by a horse-drawn hearse traveling down the hill and through the mining community of Jonesville, where Mat worked for so many years, and then wound up the hill to St. Roch's Catholic Church. In the months that



*Marie Banko is the communicant in the front row on the left. She is pictured with her brothers and sisters, as well as her Meglen cousins, her mother standing in the back row, and her grandmother, Mary Popish, standing next to her. This photo was taken two years after her father, Mat Banko, died, when her grandmother arrived to help take care of the family.*

followed his burial in the St. Vincent's cemetery in LaSalle, the miners continued their help to the family, bringing food staples, supplies, and offering support. In addition to her laundry work, Antonja took on cooking meals in a miner's saloon next door, to help make ends meet. Sixteen year old Matt, and Joe at age 15, began working fulltime in the Cement Mill in nearby Portland to contribute needed income for living expenses. Albina, Nellie, and Marie were paid with pennies to stay after school hours to work sweeping the floors, cleaning chalkboards, and readying the Columbus School's classrooms for the next day. Times were quite tough for the Banko family; everyone



*Photo of Mat one year before he died due to complications of Coal Miner's Black Lung disease.*

had to squeeze out an extra ounce of time and energy to help. Antonja was relieved when she received word from her mother, Mary Papež (Popish), that she would be arriving by train from Aspen, Colorado, to help the struggling family in any way that she could. She would remain as a support to the Banko household for nearly two years.

Slightly less than one year from the date of Mat Banko's passing, Antonja would be required to petition the Probate Court to administer her husband's late estate for the collection of all assets.

Mat had not left a will. This grieving family of nine was in jeopardy of losing everything. During the proceedings, Antonja was finally awarded a \$500 widow's pension and each of the eight children, all under the age of 18, were awarded \$100. That following April, the courts required that the house and property were to be sold at a public sale. The public notices were posted in the local newspaper and the court appointed a Guardian ad litem to watch out for the welfare of the eight Banko children during the process. Finally, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 1919, the day of the house sale arrived and all bids were accepted at 1:30 pm. Antonja's bid of \$1,200 to retain her family home was deemed the highest offer received. She settled the purchase of the home two days later with the amount of the court-ordered widow's award she received for herself, and also that of her eight children.

The Banko family could now pick up the pieces of their lives, free of fear from losing their home, property, and all its assets. Antonja would continue on her course for family survival. Through example and insistence, she would instill in all of her children the importance of following through on personal responsibilities, commitment to family, and looking out for one another... in good times and through bad times. This once frightened and unsure 16 year old immigrant girl, who arrived at the train station in LaSalle 19 years earlier, no longer had reason to fear. With the grace of God, the strength of family, and a zest for life, she could conquer all adversities.

# Salute 2014

August 14-15, 2014 Ely, Minnesota  
Vermilion Community College

## The Slovenian Heritage - Its Contribution to Minnesota History

*The weddings - each a visual document in Minnesota history, each life influenced directly or indirectly by Monsignor Joseph F. Buh, Patriarch of the Duluth Diocese, Vicar General. Monsignor Buh is buried in Calvary Cemetery, Duluth, MN.*

On display at Salute 2014 were the 400 wedding posters contributed by SUA members and non-members alike. More amazing were the several hundred Minnesotan-Slovenian Americans who participated in the preservation project.

It was an immense and intense project; open an e-mail, and on the desktop, a wedding couple looking outward at the world. Each poster became a "ceremony of its own," each poster a visual document in Minnesota history.

A vanguard, a Slovenian missionary, Fr. Pierz, was recruited by the new Minnesota Territory. His mission field was the whole of Minnesota, north of the Twin

Joseph and Josephine (Josefa) Markovic Mestnick

DOB: March 1883      DOB: April 1, 1885 Slovenia  
DOD: September 17, 1907      DOD: March 7, 1942, Gilbert, MN

Joseph died in a Malta Mine accident;  
his third child, John was born on April 23, 1908.  
This is the first of three marriages for Josephine.



Holy Family Catholic Church

Fr. Mathias Bilben  
Eveleth, MN

October 24, 1904

Witnesses:  
John Zupancic & Mary Skof (Zupancic)



Cities. In 1864, Fr. Joseph Buh arrived to assist Pierz who was now 79 years of age. For the next 24 years Buh served as missionary, teacher, and advocate to the native Indian people.

In the late 19th century, iron ore was discovered in an area now known as the Iron Range; its deposits the largest and richest in the world. Unskilled workers were recruited throughout Europe; among them were thousands of Slovenians. Buh, upon request of the bishop, pulled up stakes in central Minnesota. As towns sprang out of the wilderness, he established mission churches throughout the area.

*Fr. Joseph Buh, his parish, the entire Iron Range, his parishioners, his own Slovenian countrymen - for 20 years Buh served in the mining towns on the Iron Range.*



Predestined, preordained, a phenomenon; "But who can say when one deals with a man whom people felt touched beyond the things of time in his ministry." \*

As the towns grew, more Slovenian priests arrived - Fr. Mathias Bilban, Fr. Joseph Ferjancic, Fr. John Jershe, Fr. Aloysius Pirnat, Fr. John Schiffner, Fr. Francis Sedej, Fr. Andrew Smrekar, Fr. John Tscholl...

Monsignor Joseph Buh - a spiritual force, visionary, a humanitarian. Monsignor Joseph Buh - his footprints left behind as a guiding path for all time.

#### *Credits:*

An endearing project of Frances Kovatovich of Gilbert, the lady with a passion, her efforts were phenomenal from the onset of the preservation project.

Accolades to the church secretaries who paged through records, deciphering Latin, Slovenian, and flourished English letters of yesteryear:

St. Anthony Church, Stefanie Scharber  
Resurrection Church, Vickie Flannigan  
St. Joseph Church, Shirley Vertachnik  
Holy Spirit Church, Mary Mohar  
East Range Catholic Parishes, Joan Willett

#### *Monsignor Joseph F. Buh Exhibit:*

*St. Anthony Church, Diocese of Duluth, Ely-Winton Historical Society*

*\*Masinagians; A biography of Monsignor Joseph F. Buh, 1972*

*Sister Bernard Coleman, O.S.B. & Sister Verona LaBud, O.S.B.*

#### **Exhibit:**

Roger's Printing of Ely; WELY; Ely Echo; Frank Deyak, Debbie Voelk Good, Pat Sayovitz Koski, Frances Kovatovich, Mary Kovatovich, Mary Jane Kriznar, Jim and Ruth Lah, Dolly Kastelec Shober, Margrette Theno Newhouse, Mary Ann Vranasich Palmer, Cecilia Rolando, Rea Theno Rossi, Shirley Schwagal Theobald, Margaret Sweet, Robert Vessel, Judy Pucel Zupancich, and the hundreds who contributed their family weddings.

**Digital copies of the weddings will be placed in the following repositories:**

**Ely-Winton Historical Society  
Iron Range Historical Society, Gilbert, MN  
St. Louis County Historical Society, Duluth, MN  
Slovenian Union of American, Joliet, IL  
National and University Library,  
Ljubljana, Slovenia**

*I continue to receive wedding photos. If you were born, raised, lived, or were married in Minnesota, send in your photo with any data you have. I will continue making up the posters as long as I continue receiving them. All information will be sent to the repositories listed above. This includes date of birth, place of birth, date of marriage, witnesses, date of death, etc.*

Mary Lou Deyak Voelk  
[ottolou@gulftel.com](mailto:ottolou@gulftel.com)  
251.968.4364

# Rose Marie Jisa

## *Tribute to Long-Time Members*

by Patricia Budzilek

The 19<sup>th</sup> was the coldest, snowiest day in February, 1936, when Rose Marie was born to Frank and Mary (Zgonc-Steber) Macek in New Middletown, Ohio. She was the third of three daughters, and two years after her birth her brother, Frank, arrived. Life was difficult for the Macek family during the Great Depression due to a lack of job opportunities for Rose Marie's dad. However, in 1940, he found a job in Youngstown, Ohio, and moved the family to a small enclave of Slovenians, four streets called "Avon Park," located just outside the city of Girard, Ohio. It was reminiscent of villages found in Slovenia; 45 of the 50 houses were occupied by Slovenian families.



Priority one for Mom and Dad, after food, clothing, and shelter, was giving each of the children music lessons. Music, particularly Slovenian music, was the order of the day. Rose Marie played clarinet and drums, and at the age of 12, once had a paying job playing the drums with her sisters at a wedding shower. As an eight year old, Rose Marie joined SNPJ Circle #7, where she learned to sing in the Slovenian language. She often sang duets with her best friend, Louella Mihelich, at programs and special events.

Rose Marie's most significant memory of Circle #7 was learning the fundamentals of "Robert's Rules of Order,"

which taught her how to properly conduct a meeting; training she used throughout her life. She served as an officer in many organizations, from college alumnae clubs to educational organizations to community service organizations, and currently is President of the Slovenian Genealogy Society International, Inc. (SGSI). At the suggestion of her mother, she entered the first Miss SNPJ Contest in Chicago in 1956. She placed 7<sup>th</sup> out of 32 contestants, and because of this experience was asked by her SNPJ Lodge to chair the Miss SNPJ Contest at the National SNPJ Days in Girard a few years later.

All the Macek children were good students. Rose Marie received scholarships, including one from the Slovenian Women's Union, which helped her as she attended Kent State University, studying to become a teacher. She transferred to Youngstown State University and taught full time during her senior year while completing her bachelor's degree in 1958. Rose Marie's post-graduate education followed, which included a Master's Degree in Education from

## ***“I am truly blessed to be able to do what I can for my fellow Slovenians through genealogy!”***

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Kent State, and doctoral work in Educational Administration at the University of Akron. She was chosen as a Fellow for the I/D/E/A Academy at Fellows at Stephens College in Missouri during the summers of 1975, '76, and '77.

In 1960, Rose Marie and her family moved to the Cleveland area where she worked for 28 years during her professional career as a teacher, department head, supervisor, and secondary curriculum director for the Parma City School District. During this time she was named Business Educator of the Year in 1978 by the Ohio Business Education Association, and was listed in *Who's Who of American Women*. During the 1980s she was also an adjunct assistant professor at Cleveland State University. After retiring in 1992, Rose Marie and her late husband, Jack, moved to Bonita Springs, Florida, where she started her own business as an independent contractor providing administrative support to local businesses.

During her working years Rose Marie was active in various professional organizations where she was called on to speak at local, state, and national conferences. In addition, she became active in the Kiwanis Club, the Rotary Club, and the Chamber of Commerce. Rose Marie always wanted to know more about her Slovenian heritage and in 1988 attended a program sponsored by Cleveland's "Slovenian Art Guild" which featured the founder of the "Slovenian Genealogy Society International," Al Peterlin. At the end of his presentation he asked for volunteers to help with the Society and she volunteered and since that time she has been "hooked."

In 1994, Rose Marie and her daughter traveled to Slovenia and attended the University of Ljubljana's summer school program (Poletna Sola) to learn the Slovenian language and to begin a search for her family. Her dad, Frank Macek, was born in Crni Vrh near Skofja Loka and her mom's dad, John Zgonc-Steber, came from Velike Bloke in Notranjska, the home of cross country skiing. Even today, a pair of hand hewn skis made by her great-grandfather Zgonc hangs on the wall of the Gostilna Miklavcic in Velike Bloke.

Rose Marie was very successful in finding her ancestors in Slovenia. On her paternal side, she learned while working with Slovenia's "Slovensko Rodoslovno Drustvo" that she is linked to more than 4,000 people, beginning with her 5<sup>th</sup>

great-grandfather who was born in 1656! On her maternal side, she found relatives she never knew she had and has since made them lifelong friends.

In 1997, while living in Florida, Rose Marie was responsible for the formation of the Florida chapter of the Slovenian Genealogy Society. After her husband died in 1998, she returned to Cleveland and decided to devote the remainder of her volunteer life to "being Slovenian." She joined the Jadran singing society, and resumed her love of polka dancing along with her activities with the SGSI, where she founded and became the Ohio Chapter's first President. Rose Marie then became the International SGSI President in 2007; a position she still holds. Since that time she has devoted her life to the promotion of her Slovenian culture, Slovenian genealogy, and the SGSI.

When she heard of the possibility of holding dual U.S. - Slovenian citizenship, Rose Marie was most interested. After completing the rigorous application process and having it accepted by the Slovenian government, she was sworn in as a Slovenian citizen by Slovenian Counsel General Jure Zmauc with her family as witnesses. Rose Marie is sure that her grandmother Zgonc-Steber and her mom would be so happy to know that she is officially a Slovenian citizen.

In conclusion, Rose Marie states, "There are no words that can adequately describe how I feel about being of Slovenian descent. Where else could I experience eating foods that satisfy my innermost culinary desires (struklji, potica, gibanica), dancing to music that brings tears to my eyes (the wonderful harmony and lilting melodies of our Slovenian waltzes and the adrenalin raising, wild pace of our Slovenian polkas), and, of course, finding friends who share my love of being Slovenian? It goes without saying that I am truly blessed to be able to do what I can for my fellow Slovenians through genealogy!"

Rose Marie is the mother of two children, Lorri (Jerry) Kaup, and Larry Krepansky (Carolyn), grandmother of seven, and great-grandmother of six. She loves playing the button box and performing with her accordionist friend, Vern Corbin, at the Central Florida Accordion Club activities.

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

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



# Slovenian Union of America

## Branch Reports

### BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

**Contact Information:** Mary Ann Schellinger  
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This summer was quite busy for all of our members but “especially” so for two families.

In June, Dick Jelovnik and five of his children (Mary, Peggy, Susan, Kitty, and Jim) traveled to Slovenia. Although their trip was quick, it was “magnificent, terrific, and we want to go back” as was quoted by one of his children. Renting a car and traveling around the countryside, they visited the village of Melise where Dick’s father was born. A highlight of this was visiting with his cousin, Anna



*Dick Jelovnik and his cousin Anna Kuznar.*

(Prislan) Kuznar, and many other family members. No trip to Slovenia would be complete without seeing the castle in Postojna and standing on the green grass in the valley of Logarska Dolina, with mountains in



*Dick Jelovnik with his family in the valley of Logarska Dolina.*

the background tipped in snow. Enjoying the local food, dancing in a gostilna, listening to music on the Dragon Bridge in Ljubljana, and of course toasting with a Lasko pivo are just some of the memories that all were able to bring back to their homes in the states.

I had family visit us from Velenje, Slovenia. Sonja and Sergej (Kuka) Jamnikar were with us for two weeks. In addition to visiting family and seeing local sights in the area, they were able to see our Slovenian church, Ss Cyril & Methodius, and visit the Greendale Cemetery. I explained to them the importance of the Prisland gravesite. They were especially interested in touring the full cemetery and



*Mary Ann Schellinger, Sonja, and Kuka at Union Square in San Francisco.*

looking at the various Slovenian names and shared with us the regions that the people came from. I gave them a copy of Marie’s “Slovenia to America” and they were very thankful for this. In addition to being in Sheboygan, we went to visit our youngest son and Branch member, David, in San Francisco. We did typical “tourist stuff,” such as visiting the Golden Gate Bridge, Union Square, China Town, and more.

So, whether it is having visitors here from our “home land” or going back to Slovenia, it is important for all of us to keep our Slovenian heritage alive.

MARY ANN SCHELLINGER

**BRANCH 2 - Chicago, Illinois**  
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Congratulations to the staff of *Zaria* for the really unforgettable 85th Anniversary issue of the magazine!

The sun was shining for our annual Zveza Day Picnic in Lemont, which was held on a beautiful Sunday in July. Thanks to our members, their families, and friends who helped by donating prizes, food, bakery items, liquid refreshments, and most important - their time and energy. It's because of you that the picnic was so successful.

This year's Honey Picnic to benefit the Franciscan Fathers was held on July 24. It is the only fund-raiser that the Franciscan Fathers host and, as in the past, our Branch generously donated the door prizes for their raffle table.

The Member of the Year dinner was celebrated at Greco's restaurant in Willow Springs. I was honored to be the recipient of both this award and also some lovely gifts. I thank everyone who enjoyed the dinner and the day with me.

Some of our members attended the Grape Harvest Festival Dance (Branch 20 - Joliet). It's always a good time to go to the traditional fund-raisers of our fellow SUA Branches!

Our condolences to the family of Gloria Schiffler who passed away unexpectedly in August. She was a gifted athlete who won numerous awards for speed skating, marathon racing, and various other sporting events throughout her long life. She will be missed, but leaves behind wonderful memories. A reminder to keep our ailing members and all those who serve our country in your prayers.

Enjoy the upcoming holidays, everyone.

JUDY STOLL



*Branch 2 members at Greco's restaurant honoring Judy Stoll as Member of the Year.*  
*Standing: Deborah Morris, Dolores Puhek, Genevieve Buol, Judy Stoll (Member of the Year), Henrietta Gorski, and Michelle Sarbarneck.*  
*Sitting: Lorraine Ovnik, Judy Ovnik, Mary Podder Jennie Kovacic, and Elsie Wojdula.*

**BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado**  
**Contact Information: Annette Charron**  
**amtcharron@yahoo.com**

Of interest to Slovenians in the Pueblo area was the 4th annual Pueblo Sister Cities International taste event held on Saturday, September 6, at the El Pueblo Museum. Maribor, Slovenia, is one of Pueblo's sister cities. The celebration featured food and entertainment from a variety of ethnic groups in Pueblo.



*Jay Skul and Gary Kleinheim performing Slovenian music at the 4th annual Sister Cities International Taste event.*

The annual Slovenian dinner at St. Mary Help of Christians Church took place on Saturday, November 1. Branch

3 members were busy preparing strudels, potica, sarma, and other delicacies for the annual event. A limited number of tickets were presold after Mass on Sundays at St. Mary's in the weeks prior to the dinner.

Monthly meetings for Branch 3 will resume on Tuesday, October 7, in St. Mary's church hall. Tuesday, November 4, is the date of the November meeting. The annual Christmas luncheon is scheduled for Tuesday, December 2, and all are welcome.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON  
& BARBARA KARLINGER

## BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

### Contact Information: Phyllis Fon

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Greetings! Did you stop by the Slovenian Festival this year? If you didn't, you missed the chance to meet Dr. Božo Cerar, the Slovenian Ambassador! Joe Lambert, president of our Slovenian National Home, welcomed Dr. Cerar and presented him with a bag full of Indiana goodies. Dr. Cerar spoke of the importance of keeping our Slovenian heritage and traditions alive and continued through our families. He enjoyed meeting many of our members, and graciously stood for many pictures! Hvala lepa to all our members who shared their "Hoosier Hospitality!"



SUA members "Polka Pete" and Mary Barbarich dancing to Polka tunes at the Slovenian Festival in Indianapolis.

Our Slovenian Festival is a long-standing Labor Day weekend tradition with most of our families. Back in the day, it was just called "the picnic," sponsored by our Slovenian National Home. It was the last "hurrah" of summer, as the first day of school soon followed. The older Slovenians at the picnic, our grandparents who came from Slovenia to Indy in the late 1800s, would sit and visit with friends, and generally just watch all the comings and goings around them. Their families would surround them, with much talking and singing, accordion playing, and polka dancing! Men would be pitching horseshoes or tossing balinca balls, while the women would be keeping an eye on all the young children running around picnic tables loaded with food! Poticas and strudels, sausages and hams, deviled eggs and potato salad, tins of fresh potato



SUA members Dave and Linda Rusie, Larry Fon, Dr. Cerar, and Steve, Phyllis, and Anna Fon at the Slovenian Festival.

chips (Remember Charlie's Chips? Best Ever!)... these were the foods that made picnics so memorable. Each Slovenian lady had their own trademark food that they shared. But it was the traditional Labor Day gathering of the entire Slovenian community, brought together by the one common bond of our Slovenian heritage, that made these picnics so special. Thanks to those who continue to



SUA member Joe Lambert greeting Slovenian Ambassador Dr. Cerar at the Slovenian Festival.

bring us this special picnic, year after year!

Seems the minute the picnic is over, we are in holiday mode! Thanksgiving and Christmas fly by, and we are on to a New Year in what feels like a split second! Take some time this year to slow down, enjoy visiting with family and friends, reach out to someone with a letter in a Christmas card, bake and share some holiday treats with a neighbor, but most of all, take time for yourself!

Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, Best Wishes for a Healthy and Prosperous New Year, from your favorite officers.

MARY, KAREN & PHYLLIS

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

Happy Holidays! What a wonderful time of year. We have so much to be thankful for this year - our families and friends, and especially the ladies who attend and support our Branch 13. One of these ladies is Virginia Sustarich. On November 1, we wish Virginia a very happy, happy 90th birthday! Another one of our special ladies is Agnes Leach. Christmas day she will celebrate her 93rd birthday. This deserves a champagne toast!

Happy 35th wedding anniversary to Michele and Denny Twers! It was such a beautiful wedding at the Church of the Nativity, in San Francisco on November 24, 1979, with all of Michele's and Denny's families in attendance. Michele's parents, Josephine and Vince Aiuto, were so proud of their beautiful daughter and handsome new son-in-law, Denny. Josephine was president of our Branch for



***Michele and Denny Twers***

over 30 years. Michele was a teenager when her Nana Katie Judnich enrolled her. It seems like Michele has been treasurer ever since. How time flies and 35 years later... congratulations Michele and Denny and many more years of love and happiness!

Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year, 2015.

MOREEN SPENCER

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

**Contact: Marjorie Mitchell**

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Well, Summer 2014 is over and Autumn is just beginning. Here's hoping the cooler weather will bring with it renewed vigor and enthusiasm for the days ahead. Our first meeting of the new season was well represented with 14 members attending. A hearty WELCOME to new member, Chris Deckinga!

Continuing with our Branch's decision to pay tribute to our 1920s gals, who are now enjoying their "golden years," we feature Genevieve Rossi Marco, born in 1921. Gen has been a member for quite some time. After graduating high school at age 15, Gen traveled by streetcar to work for Progressive Cleaners in the Grand Crossing neighborhood.

At age 21 she worked at Charles A. Stevens, an upscale store on Chicago's State Street working as a cashier in the "tube room" (in those days women weren't allowed to work while pregnant). During the war years Gen worked at Youngstown Sheet and Tube in Indiana Harbor.



***Gen Marco***

In 1946 Gen married Dominic Marco, who had returned from Army service. They had four children, Mickey, Eddie, Pat (Pascal), and Mary Ann. After her youngest settled in school, Gen was offered an opportunity to work in the school cafeteria at St. Francis DeSales Elementary School, where she spent 28 years working alongside parent volunteers and friends feeding the lucky children some of the finest lunches in Chicago.

Gen is the proud grandmother of 10, and great-grandmother of 16. Her son, Pat, now living in Arizona, recently became a successful author with one book published and a second one now ready at the publisher. I have read his first book, "Identity Lost," which is a gripping, suspense novel set in the Chicago area.

DOLORES KRAL FRANKO

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

**Contact Information: Diane Hohenwater**  
**[dhohenwater@comcast.net](mailto:dhohenwater@comcast.net)**

We would like to thank everyone who helped make our 35th Grape Harvest Festival Dance in September a success, especially those hard-working people who come out on Saturday morning to decorate. We appreciate your support!

We are sad to announce the passing of members Adrianna Vidmar, Christine Jurkas, and Helen (Lukancic) Valerugo. Two other members are mourning the loss of their husbands; Nicki Blowers' husband, Edmund, and Lucille Dragovan's husband, William, recently passed away. We extend our sympathy to all these families.

Our November meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 18, at 6:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Park. We will be electing our 2015 officers, so please plan to attend.

*Helen Valerugo, my Aunt Bobby, passed away the 11th of August on the feast day of St. Clare. She passed peacefully with her sisters by her side after a battle with uterine cancer. She loved your organization. You brought her much joy.*  
*Thank you, Steve Lukancic*

Our junior members will be wished a happy St. Nicholas Day on December 6 when a card and small monetary gift is mailed to them. This is a simple, but important, tradition.

Our Branch will celebrate Christmas on Sunday, December 21, at 1:00 p.m. at St. Joseph Park. Last year we started a new tradition - an appetizer potluck, to which everyone attending brings an hors d'oeuvre. This can be as simple as picking up something at your grocery store. Desserts and drinks will be provided. We also will have an optional \$10 gift exchange. Join us for a fun, relaxing afternoon and get in the Christmas spirit!

Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 18, when we will hold our Installation of Officers at 1:00 p.m. Our officers will provide a buffet dinner, and all members and guests are welcome to attend.

Everyone from Branch 20 would like to wish all SUA members a very happy and healthy Thanksgiving and Christmas season!

DIANE HOHENWATER

### BRANCH 23 - Ely, Minnesota

We had a busy summer. In June, the Branch started preparing for a visit from the Slovenian Ambassador, Dr. Božo Cerar. Dr. Cerar's visit was precipitated by the exhibition of Albin Zaverl's (an Ely native) art exhibit on May 14 at the Slovenian Embassy in Washington, D.C. The ambassador wanted to meet Mr. Zaverl who lives in Virginia, Minnesota. Miro Medved, the honorary consulate of Slovenia in Minneapolis, was instrumental in arranging the details of Ambassador Cerar's Visit.

The Branch, with the help of Branch 35 - Aurora, organized and hosted a reception and dinner on July 11 for Dr. Cerar. The reception was held at the Vermilion Community College. We decorated and provided refreshments for the event. About 75 people enjoyed the reception. After a formal presentation of the "Key to the City of Ely" by Mayor Ross Peterson, the Ambassador spoke. He then mingled with the crowd, who draw their connection with Slovenia.



*"Singing Slovenians": Bernie Barich, Mike Weinzierl, Dr. Cerar, Miro Medved, and Albin Medved.*

For the dinner the Ambassador was boated across White Iron Lake to Creek Ridge Lodge, the lodge owned and operated by Kathy Udovich. Over 160 people attended the dinner. All who attended enjoyed food and fine fellowship. When the Ambassador spoke at the lodge, he was visibly moved. He said, "I am going to start where I should end with these words: I'll be back!" After many pictures, the Slovenians of Ely and the Ambassador, with the help of the Barich Brothers polka band, sang as only Slovenians do.

On August 5 at the Branch's monthly meeting, we had a Slovenian Christmas food tasting. Yes, we said Christmas. Mary Lou Voelk hosted the tasting at Albin and Albina Medved's lovely lake home. Ms. Voelk is in charge of preparing the Christmas section of the next Slovenian Union's cookbook. The cookbook will feature Slovenian cuisine for different holidays and celebrations. Branch members enjoyed an enhanced meeting; the food was phenomenal!

On August 13, we helped sponsor the 3rd annual celebration of Slovenian Culture. This year featured a celebration of Slovenian Marriage in Northern Minnesota. The wedding photo collection is of Slovenian Americans who have been born, raised, lived, or married in Minnesota. Mary



*Sitting: Ruth Lah, Marguerite Shavor, Rea Rossi, Julia Puzel, Virgie Ivancich, Bonnie Nissen, Jerry Petrich, Mary Jo Pouchnik, Barb Hiltbrunner, and Albina Medved.*  
*Standing: Jim Lah, MaryLou Voelk, and Dottie Shober.*

Lou Voelk conceived this idea last year. She put a call out for wedding pictures of Slovenian marriages. The response was overwhelming. She received nearly 400 wedding photographs. Ms. Voelk then digitized them with graphic borders. She researched the biographical information, which she added to each template. They were displayed in Ely for three days and are now part of the local historical society archives. In digital form they will be archived with the Ely-Winton Historical Society, Iron Range Historical Society, St. Louis County Historical Society, Iron World Discovery Center, and the National and University Library in Ljubljana, where they then will be exhibited as a virtual exhibit.

Along with the celebration of marriages there was a celebration of Monsignor Buh, the Patriarch of the Duluth Diocese, and Patriarch of Ely's own St. Anthony de Padua Church. After that we gathered back at the Udovich's Creek Ridge Lodge, for a Slovenska Misa - prehranjevanje, pitje, petje.

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#### BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

##### Contact Information: Loretta Story [9\\_lives@att.net](mailto:9_lives@att.net)

Greetings to all! Hoping everyone had an enjoyable summer and is looking forward to the holidays, which will soon be upon us.

Our Branch is pleased to celebrate the 100th birthday of Minnie Carter. Many women in our area remember Minnie working for many years in the OB department of St. Mary's Hospital. She lovingly cared for the newborns in the nursery. In 1961, when Minnie was 46, she was encouraged to join, what was then the SWUA, by two of her



*Minnie Carter*

friends, Mrs. Sherman and Mrs. Strukel. Minnie attended the meetings faithfully until poor health no longer allowed her to attend. She is a resident of Heritage Health, where she will be celebrating with family and friends on her birthday, September 27. Her address is: Minnie Carter, Rm. 150, 1445 Chartres Street, La Salle, IL, 61301.

It is with sadness that we remember Antoinette (Toni) Essl, who passed away August 18 of this year, shortly after turning 90. May her soul rest in peace.

On August 12, members and guests of our Branch traveled to SUA's Heritage Museum in Joliet, where several members of Branch 20 warmly welcomed us. It was the first visit to the Museum for some of our group and they, along with the rest of us, were quite impressed with both the Museum and the hospitality. We were greeted with a welcome sign, music, and refreshments. We then went across the street to St. Joseph's Church and were given a brief history of that beautiful Church. After a few prayers, taking a few pictures, and singing Cescena Si Marija, we then proceeded to Merichka's and feasted on the famous "Poorboy" sandwiches. (Needless to say, our little bus was filled with the smell of garlic on the way home.) Our last stop was a short tour of St. Joseph's Park and Cemetery. It was a wonderful day spent with good friends making pleasant memories.

With Thanksgiving and Christmas fast approaching, may your holidays be filled with love, joy, and peace, and a New Year filled with health, hope, and happiness.

LORETTA STORY

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#### BRANCH 35 - Aurora, Minnesota

##### Contact Information: John Stark

[johnks6@yahoo.com](mailto:johnks6@yahoo.com)

Our Branch resumed our meetings in September, after taking the summer off. Our first meeting was on September 7 with 13 members present. It was nice to see former SUA Regional President, Rose Ribich, at our meeting, following some medical issues. A speedy recovery goes out to



*Branch 24 members and guests who traveled to SUA's Heritage Museum in Joliet.*

Barabara Urick and Joanne Plevell following knee surgery.

Helen Simonich, a member of our Branch residing in Illinois, had visitors from Minnesota and Florida - two nieces and three nephews. She had an enjoyable visit.

We are very happy to welcome two new members, Rosemary Norha and Heidi Furry.

We had some discussion about organizing bus transportation for all Minnesota Branch members to attend next year's National Convention in Lemont, Illinois. They could start the coach bus in Ely and pick up members all along the way into the Twin Cities. Bernice Ceglar, Francis Kovatovich, and Rose Anttila will be checking with local bus companies to find one that will give a very affordable rate and safe ride, so Minnesota will be well represented at the Convention. We are hoping other Branches in Minnesota will read this and contact John Stark, our Branch president, to let him know they have members interested. It will be fun to have many of us on the bus, and we won't have to worry about driving. We are hoping to get at least 50 to go to the Convention. Let's go Minnesota and represent all the fine Slovenes who live here! Zivijo!

We also decided to include more activities at our meetings. Our November meeting will have a Sarma-making demonstration, and some tasting I am sure. Martina (Mihelich) Michaels will show us how to make it. Please let any of our officers know if you have anything you would like to learn how to make or do.

As I write this, there is a fall feeling in the air and the flowers have lost their former beauty. Everything we enjoyed, when summer finally arrived in July, is sadly coming to an end.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!  
MARLYS RABB

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**BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin**  
**Contact Information: Jan Gehm**  
**414.321.1413/[twogames@wi.rr.com](mailto:twogames@wi.rr.com)**

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Can you believe that Thanksgiving is upon us? Where did 2014 go? I'm sure everyone is already planning for 2015 events, and especially looking forward to attending the National Convention in Naperville, Illinois.

Several of our Branch 43 members enjoyed playing balina in the SNPJ League from May thru August. Branch members and teammates, Jan and Tom Gehm and Tillie Skusek, along with friend James Nacker, played very well and placed 2nd in the league. Good Bowling!

Congratulations to Branch member, Stanley Vidmar, who was recently honored by the USPEH Organization. Stanley was instrumental in getting the balina courts built in Veterans Park in West Allis and has worked diligently in the Slovenian community promoting our Slovenian culture. He is a hard-working member of SNPJ, the USPEH Organization, and a former member of the Uspeh Chorus. A plaque bearing his name will be placed in Veterans Park

at the balina courts.

Condolences are sent to the family of Helen Otto, who passed away this summer. May she rest in peace.

November 4 is Election Day. Remember to vote! Remember also that our Branch will have a bake sale at the South 88th St. School in Milwaukee. Please help us make this a successful one by baking your favorite breads, muffins, cakes, pies, or Slovenian treats. Everything will be most welcome and appreciated. Please call Jan Gehm at 414.321.1413 for drop off sites.

Congratulations to member, Jim Luzar, who recently scored a hole-in-one on the 16th hole at Nagawaukee Golf Course.

There is no meeting in November due to the holiday, so join us on Wednesday, December 3, for the last meeting of the year. The location is the Constitution Room in the West Allis Library and the time is noon. Come to enjoy a delicious lunch served prior to our business meeting and also to partake in Slovenian fellowship.

Looking ahead - New Years Eve! Sylvestrovanje (St. Sylvester's Day) and Spravanje (Reconciliation) will be celebrated on December 31, at the Wisconsin Athletic Club, 1939 S. 108th St. in West Allis, WI, from 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. At 5 p.m. (midnight in Slovenia) there will be a complimentary champagne (alcohol and non-alcohol) toast. The cost is \$25, which includes food, snacks, soda, music, hats and favors, and door prizes. There will be a cash bar. Mark your calendars and enjoy the evening with us! This event was lots of fun in 2013.

Our annual Po Bozicna Zabava will be held January 10, 2015, at Aliota's Restaurant on Hwy. 100, just south of W. Burleigh in Wauwatosa. Mark your calendars and plan on enjoying the afternoon with us.

I know this is a bit early, but from our Branch to yours, "Zelimo vam vsem skupaj blagoslovljene bozicne praznike." To all of you we wish a blessed Christmas Holiday.

MICI BREGANT

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**BRANCH 47 - Garfield Heights, Ohio**  
**Contact Information: Debbie Duris 330.467.2281**

Happy Holidays! Eight members attended our meeting on Saturday, September 6, at Panera Bread in Solon. It is always fun to reconnect and share past memories.

We are sad at the passing of one of our dear members, Millie Stautihar. She will be missed and always remembered for all of her wonderful baked goods and hard work. Our prayers are with her family.

Our next meeting will be our Christmas Celebration on Saturday, December 6, at the Valley View Community Center on Hathaway Rd. The meeting will begin at 12:30 p.m. Please call President Debbie Duris (home 330.467.2281) if you plan to attend as this meal will be catered and we need an accurate count. Bring your favorite dessert and a gift valued at \$10 for the gift exchange.

I will gladly share any of our members' activities. Just call me on my cell 330.730.8951 or e-mail me at [kjferrante@gmail.com](mailto:kjferrante@gmail.com) and I will include it in the next Branch report. Wishing everyone a delicious Thanksgiving, blessed Christmas, and a "Happy New Year" with your family and friends!

KATHLEEN FERRANTE

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

**Contact Information: Rick Tomsick**  
**440.655.6735/[ricktomsick@gmail.com](mailto:ricktomsick@gmail.com)**

Greetings from the "5-0" on America's North Coast, Cleveland, Ohio! Best wishes to Ivanka Matic, who just returned from a Bishop Baraga pilgrimage with her daughter, Vesna, who is visiting this month. The ladies went to Marquette and were able to see Bishop Baraga's house and the church where his tomb is laid (St. Peter's Cathedral) and memorial in L'Ance. Ivanka writes that, "We enjoyed the trip very much and thought of all of you. Just for good measure we lit candles along the way!"

Well, folks, the holidays are upon us, and I'm pleased to announce our annual Christmas luncheon will be held at 1:00 p.m. at the Dubrovnik Gardens in Eastlake on December 4.

I am remembering our nation and the blessings we have, as I write this short message on the anniversary of the horror of September 11th. Let's each remember to keep one another and all members of Branch 50 and all of the SUA in our prayers. Please write to me at [ricktomsick@gmail.com](mailto: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).

That's all for now. Many thanks to everyone for all you do in SUA!

RICK TOMSICK

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#### **BRANCH 55 - Girard, OH**

**Contact Information: Monica Selak**  
**[mselak3@gmail.com](mailto:mselak3@gmail.com)**

Warm wishes from Girard, OH! Another autumn season has come and gone and the holidays are quickly approaching. No doubt many of you are busy preparing holiday meals, decorating the home, and enjoying time with loved ones.

In Branch 55 news, we will again be celebrating our annual holiday party along with members of AMLA Lodge 42. Details are pending at this time. Please contact Maria Selak at 330.539.5893 for more information.

In other news, one of our youngest Branch members, Rogan Selak, son of Mark and Molly Selak, recently started preschool. He is very much enjoying it!

Wishing you all a happy and healthy holiday season! Veseli Bozic in Sreenco Novo Leto 2015!

MONICA SELAK

#### **BRANCH 89 - Oglesby, Illinois**

**Contact Information: Jim Ebner**  
**815.883.3268/[deadendbluff@yahoo.com](mailto:deadendbluff@yahoo.com)**

Our Branch has now completed its usual "meeting free" summer schedule. Two of our members journeyed to Lemont to enjoy their large festival in August. They had a great time and we could only imagine the flavors generated by the open charcoal pits as we viewed the pictures of hogs and lamb being roasted at this outdoor venue.

Branch 89 swung back into action at noon on Sunday, September 7, with our annual potluck. Prayer of Thanksgiving was led by our Chaplain, Julie Harbeck, followed by a prayer for safe travel for those soon to be leaving for Slovenia. The Branch provided fried chicken from Delaney's Family Restaurant, with members furnishing a wide variety of delicious side dishes and desserts. Three guessing games and a 50/50 raffle were held. How many marbles in a pint jar? (Winner of homemade, cherry pie - Mitzi Banich.) How many marbles in a quart jar? (Winner of homemade, chocolate chip cookies - Tiger Fox and Annabelle Bryant.) What was the total dollar amount of the coins in a pint jar? (Winner of a homemade, cherry pie - Tiger Fox.) The 50/50 Drawing? (Winner - Elizabeth Fox.) The group sampled a bottle of homemade wine, with lots of extra laughter coming from the table where all the winners were seated!

Looking thru old picture albums provided many pleasant memories. Out-of-town member, Mary Alice Corbitt, solved the mystery of one unidentified lady in these pictures. Not only was she able to identify this lady, but she also was able to explain how she is related to that family! Old pictures are precious links to our past! Think twice before discarding! Our thanks to all involved for their efforts in preserving these pictures and working toward placing them in the proper family albums!

President Barbara Bruch made announcements regarding the upcoming trip to Slovenia, which includes two sets of sisters from our Branch: Barbara Bruch and Betsy Wroblewski, and Janice Ernat and Barbara Lyons. Branch members have been given a local, treasured recipe for Slovenian smoked sausage. Prayers were given for member Karen Taylor, and our October meeting will feature the Rosary being said for the deceased members of our Branch. Thanks to all who travelled so far to share this time together, and best wishes to all, near and far.

JIM EBNER

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

**Contact Information: Elizabeth Gross**  
**718.335.8459/[Lizg669@gmail.com](mailto:Lizg669@gmail.com)**

For the first time (in recent years anyway) we had a special Children's Program in September! It was complete with singing "Mojster Jaka" ("Brother John" or "Frère Jacques"), a cupcake frosting/decorating station, an art

station for budding Maksim Gaspari's, a table with Slovenian children's books for browsing - with a special effort to promote SUA's Forget-Me-Not books! The children were delighted with a storytelling/reading of Bogdan Grom's PIKAPOLONICA. To keep the teenagers and adults en-



gaged, we had the "Kaj sem? What am I" questions from the Pristava event of Cleveland, Ohio, with a prize to the most erudite. Mia Branc prepared a super-yummy lunch to make the event a complete success!

We're celebrating Martinovanje on November 9 at St Cyril's after Mass. If you're in town and would like to join us, please let us know - we need to be sure we have enough goose (and wine)! Once again, we'll be collecting any coats you're no longer using and donating them to NYC Cares.

On November 16 there's a lecture at the Hoboken Historical Museum on "The Immigrant Experience, Ellis Island 1892-1924" - the exhibition itself runs through December 23, 2014. A number of our Branch members are looking forward to attending, as they had grandparents who came to America from Slovenia at that time.

Our Branch received a 2<sup>nd</sup> grant from the Republic of Slovenia's Office for Slovenians Abroad for "Slovene Conversation Online-Pogovorna slovenščina preko interneta (2014)," and we will be completing six new lessons this fall with a dozen participants, using the GoToMeeting internet platform. The lessons are developed and taught by Maria J. Rode, Senior Librarian Emerita, Stanford University, and Joan Walker, M.A., with assistance from Maria Polajner Whitmire, M.S.W. - Mia Rode and Ria Whitmire are native Slovenes and Joan Walker teaches English as a Second Language on the internet at Live American English. Our thanks to our funders and to all our participants and volunteers - hvala!

ELIZABETH GROSS

**BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois**  
**Contact Information: Jana Hlade**  
**[jmhlade@hotmail.com](mailto:jmhlade@hotmail.com)**

Happy Fall! We hope you had a fun Halloween and are enjoying the fall colors.

Thank you to all who attended the Member Brunch held in September at the Slovenian Catholic Center (SCC). This appreciation lunch was free to members and catered by our member, Lillian Cepon. Thank you, Lillian, for a wonderful lunch, and also thank you to Slavica Sovan, Julie LaJoie, and MaryAnn Partyka for organizing the event.

Unfortunately, our annual Bunco event, usually held in October, was cancelled so our Branch could spend more time planning next year's National Convention. We will continue with the Bunco event again next year. Also, the Ijmoht (Slovenian stew) culinary class was cancelled in August due to lack of students.

Join us on November 16 for a Genealogy class at 2 p.m. in the small hall of the SCC. Learn how to start and what to do with your family's history. We will also discuss the National Convention and elect the 2015 officers. Light refreshments will be served.

The annual cookie sale will be on December 14 from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the SCC lobby. Please drop off bakery by 11:00 a.m. that morning or contact Mary Mavec at 815.723.9003 for special arrangements.

Plans for SUA's 27th National Convention hosted by our Branch are underway. Look inside this issue for details!

Wishing you a very Happy Thanksgiving and blessed holiday season!

JANA HLADE

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**BRANCH 100 - Southern California**  
**Contact Information: Jean Koci**  
**[949.495.0097/ajkoci@cox.net](mailto:949.495.0097/ajkoci@cox.net)**

As I write this column it is September 1 and we, in Southern California, are celebrating the Labor Day Holiday. However, we really don't expect summer to end quite yet, as September and October tend to be warm months out here in the West. Folks are still vacationing and spending time at the beach and having picnics and barbecues with family and friends.

Plans are being made for our Christmas luncheon and notices will be sent out with the time and date sometime soon. It is always an enjoyable time as members gather together and catch up on the news and activities of family and friends.

I had a pleasant e-mail from Estelle Brennon, who is a member of our Branch, but lives in Las Vegas. She is interested in taking part in our Christmas party and also hopes to come with her daughter for our next cooking class. I guess we must have something good to offer when it encourages a participant from at least four hours away to want to take part! We do have a number of members

and friends who travel between an hour and two hours to attend, which I believe is remarkable. Thank you, Estelle, for your interest, and I sincerely hope to see you soon!

The past few months have been difficult ones for quite a number of our active members who are experiencing illness, surgeries, accidents, and other difficulties. Please remember in your prayers the following: Anne Kapel, Paul Jensen, Frances Ambrozich, Dorothy Jerneycic, Rosemarie Black, and any others for which I may not be aware.

I am looking forward to another session of the online Slovenian Language Class organized by Tanya Vajk and the other very talented women who give so much in this project... Mia, Ria, and Joan.

May the upcoming Christmas season be a blessed one for you and yours!

JEAN KOICI

### BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin

Jackie Smith, SUA Regional President of Wisconsin, visited Willard, WI, on August 24, 2014. Jackie and her friend, Jerry Floryance, attended the Holy Family Parish bazaar and chicken dinner, and met with six members of Branch 102. Over a delicious dinner of breaded chicken, mashed potatoes, dressing, corn, coleslaw, ham, and (of course) potica, Jackie and Branch 102 members compared notes on Branch activities and meetings and travel to Slovenia.

Branch 102 members Candy Johnson, Megan Johnson, Sarah Trunkel, and Ruth Zwig went on the Zivijo Zarja Tour. To say they were excited for the trip was an under-



Front row (left to right): Jackie Smith, Sarah Trunkel, and Candy Johnson.

Back row (left to right): Jerry Floryance, Megan Johnson, Ruth Zwig, Kay Kesel, and Mike Sixel.

November/December 2014

statement!

At the September 6 meeting, Branch 102 honored Meda Krempasky with the Member of the Year honor. A second generation member, Meda has belonged to Branch 102 for almost 20 years. She is always supportive of our bake sales by contributing her dessert bars. Congratulations to Meda from Branch 102; we are happy you are one of us!

BONNIE BRIERTON

### BRANCH 108 - Olney, Maryland

Contact Information: Bernadette Fitzsimmons

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

Our long distance member, Fr. Peter Rožič, keeps in touch with news and updates. His latest news concerns



Fr. Rožič at Lake Bled for the Half Marathon and Family Run with ASEF.

the formation of the American Slovenian Education Foundation (ASEF), an initiative that provides scholarship grants for Slovenian and American students for study abroad programs. Late this summer, ASEF sponsored at Lake Bled in Slovenia, a Half Marathon and Family Run. Our very own Fr. Rožič participated and shared great photos of the event, including him at Lake Bled. The ASEF program began with a West Coast Chapter; there are plans now to expand to an East Coast Chapter in late 2014. On October 2 a reception was hosted by the Embassy of Slovenia to inaugurate the ASEF East Coast Chapter. You are invited to join and support ASEF at [www.asefund.org](http://www.asefund.org) and at [www.facebook.com/asefund](http://www.facebook.com/asefund).

Our oldest Branch 108 member, Charlie Koiner, is a local farmer at Koiner Farm in downtown Silver Spring, MD. Vse najboljse, happy 94th birthday, in November to

Charlie. He has been gardening on a one-acre land plot since 1979, growing hundreds of pepper and tomato plants from seed, and other greens such as collards, lettuce, mâche, onions, and radishes. He also grows a variety of fruits, from concord grapes, gooseberries, currants, figs, and pears, as well as an assortment of herbs. Charlie and his daughter, Lynn, the VP of Branch 108, sell their bountiful fruits and vegetables at the local farmer's market from May to October. Also, we extend congratulations to Charlie and Lynn, who are well known "best of show" ribbon winners at the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair, for their variety of vegetables and fruits they enter in various categories. The Fair is the largest in the state of Maryland, which takes place annually in August.



*Charlie Koiner working on his local farm.*

As we enter the Season of Advent, in anticipation of the Feast of St. Nicholas, and the birth of Jesus, let us pray for peace in our families, communities, and especially among nations.

BERNADETTE K. FITZSIMMONS

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

**Contact Information: Norm Setnicker**

**651.777.6106/[normas188@msn.com](mailto:normas188@msn.com)**

With the onset of the fall colors in Minnesota, Branch 109 SUA (Twin Cities Slovenians) enters upon its 10 year anniversary (2015). Ironically, some of our members actively participated in the Centennial celebration of St. Stephen, Minnesota, July 19-20. St. Stephen, which is located in central Minnesota near St. Cloud, is the oldest Slovenian community in the United States. To mark that celebration, the Slovenian ambassador to the United States, Dr. Božo Cerar, was the Grand Marshall in the nearly two hour parade. Miro Medved, the honorary Slovenian consul for Minnesota, accompanied him. Flag bearers during the parade were TCS President, John Zakelj, and Michael Koski, Board member TCS and chairperson for the Festival of Nations. Our own members, Sue Rademacher and Marge



*Ambassador Dr. Cerar and Honorary Consul Miro Medved*

Pryatelj, dressed in their "narodna nosa" and gave the parade watchers a glance at some real Slovenian ethnicity. Sue just returned from Slovenia, where she and her husband, Dave, visited relatives, and Marge helped organize the St. Stephen celebration, including the palachinka breakfast on Sunday.



*Sue Rademacher in Narodna nosa.*

August 15, a dozen members traveled to Ely, MN, to view the Slovenian Wedding Exhibit, which was organized by Mary Lou Voelk, SUA Vice President of Culture & Heritage. The Exhibit was designed to document the Slovenian-American influence in Minnesota for the past 3-4 generations since the first Slovenian immigrants arrived. Each of the 300 photos included the names of bride and groom (including bride's surname), DOB and DOD, along with town, church, date, and officiate. This information was a treasure trove for anyone interested in Slovenian genealogy. Mary Lou also made arrangements to have digitized copies preserved in the SUA, Ely-Winton Historical Society, Iron Range Historical Society, and St. Louis County Historical Society. Mary Lou worked tirelessly on this project, and on behalf of the Branch 109 - TC Slovenians, we are eternally grateful - Hvala lepa.

Within the exhibition there were at least four TC Slovenian members who were celebrating or recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary - Jim Smrekar, Mary Ann Palmer (Vranesich), and Norm and Mary Ann (Koroshec) Setnicker. Happy 50th!!

One week after Salute 2014 "It's Who You Are," our Branch 109 *Zarja* reporter, Norm Setnicker, "Born in America with Slovenian Parts," achieved his dual citizenship with the Republic of Slovenia. A celebration was held at the home of Honorary Consul, Miro Medved.

In closing, President John Zakelj and the TC Board presented the yearly program agenda for 2014-2015. It has a kaleidoscope of presentations ranging from Gardening in Slovenia, Slovenian photo contest, History of Slovenia, Oral History of Yul Yost and Mimi Manning (TC members), Slovenian Strudel-Baking Demo, Martinovanje Celebration, Regions of Slovenia, Slovenian Music presented by Hank Thunander, and "How my Mom and Dad met Freedom," (Silvester Vicić).

"Drži smehlaj se" - Keep smiling.

**NORM SETNICKER**  
"Born in USA with Slovenian Parts"

# Food Celebration *Nadevana Paprika*

This summer has produced a bounty of beautiful peppers in our garden at home. To celebrate this fantastic fruit (yes, it's a fruit in the botanical sense), and to get everyone in the mood for fall, this submission is dedicated to the art of stuffed peppers. The ways to stuff a pepper are countless. Recipes with various nuances exist throughout Europe – the Italians include breadcrumbs, the Hungarians serve them with sour cream, and the Spaniards often use fish in their stuffing. However, stuffed peppers go well beyond European borders and are a staple of the local cuisines in places as disparate as Mexico and India, Turkey and Iceland.

This recipe is an all-around winner. It highlights the peppers' sweet and savory qualities, has a stuffing that is robust, but not heavy, and is a visual delight to present to anyone arriving at the dinner table. It can be made with one or multiple colors of bell peppers, as long as they are roughly of the same size and thickness and not too large. This is key!

What is presented here is called *Nadevana Paprika*, but if you don't have these exact ingredients, a myriad of substitutes are typically available in the basic American pantry, and we've noted some of those below. *Dober tek!*

## Ingredients

6 medium-size bell peppers  
1 cup beef, cooked (cuts like chuck or a mixture of chuck and sirloin work well)  
1 cup short grain rice  
2 tablespoons onion, grated  
2 tablespoons bread crumbs  
1 cup tomato puree  
2½ tablespoons butter, melted  
¾ cup beef stock  
salt and pepper to taste

*Serves 6 as a lunch entrée or 3-4 for dinner.*

## **Step 1: Prep the peppers**

Pre-heat oven to 350°.

Parboil the rice by bringing a medium-size pot of water to a boil. Add the rice and cook for 5 minutes. Note that the water level must generously cover the rice. Drain and set aside.



*Fresh*



*Boiled*



Boil a large pot of water, adding a couple large pinches of salt. Cut out tops of the peppers, remove the seeds, and place in boiling water. Cook for 10 minutes.

## **Step 2: Make the stuffing**

While the peppers are boiling, brown the ground meat in a pan. Once finished, mix the meat, rice, bread crumbs, half of the tomato puree, and grated onion. Grated onion should not be substituted with any other form of chopped onion. It does not produce the same result!

Season with salt and pepper.

### Step 3: Stuff, bake, and serve

Melt the butter and spread it along the bottom of a baking dish (one that will comfortably hold the peppers without either squeezing them too tight or leaving them so loose that they will move about while in the oven). Arrange the peppers in the dish and add the rest of the tomato puree on top.

Pour the stock over the peppers. Beef or veal stock is traditional, but vegetable or chicken stock could be used to create a lighter version. Bake for 40-50 minutes at 350° and halfway turn peppers for even browning.



Test the peppers for doneness and once they are soft enough to pierce easily, but firm enough to maintain form, remove them from the oven and let rest.

Garnish with a little sour cream, if desired.

*Serve warm accompanied by a thick slice of bread.*





**Slovenian Union of America**  
**“April’s Showers of Wishes” Drawing**  
*April 2015 Fund-Raiser*

**CASH PRIZES TOTALING \$2,790**

**Daily Drawings at \$60**

**April 5 and 30 at \$130**

**April 1 and 15 at \$200**

**Top Seller Prizes:**

1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$130

2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$90

3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$50

**\$10 PER ENTRY**

How the fund-raiser works: Each day in the month of April, 2015, one (1) winner will be chosen to win the listed cash prize for that day - \$60, \$130, or \$200.

The month of April has much to celebrate - including April No Fool’s Day, Easter Sunday, Help with Tax Day, and the last day before May’s flowers. The winners chosen on April 1 – “April No Fool’s Day” – and April 15 – “Help With Tax Day” – will win \$200 each. The winners chosen on April 5 – “Easter Sunday” – and April 30 – “Here Come May Flowers” – will win \$130 each. In addition, the top sellers (1st, 2nd, and 3rd place) will win \$130, \$90, and \$50 respectively. A minimum of 300 entries must be sold. It’s a WIN opportunity for everyone!

**\*\*\*\*\*Good Luck!\*\*\*\*\***

Your “April’s Showers of Wishes” drawing entry will be eligible for all daily drawings in the month of April, 2015. Sellers of the winning entries will receive \$10.00 as an award for their selling efforts. The daily drawing amount and the seller’s \$10.00 prize will be mailed to the winners of record the next business day. Winners will be notified by e-mail, if provided, and their names posted on the SUA website: [www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org).

*The following entry form should be printed clearly and accompany your \$10 entry fee.*

*Detach at perforation*

**Entry Form (Please Print Clearly)**

**Entrant’s Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Seller’s Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch Number and Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail completed form and \$10 check payable to SUA to:

Denise P. Bartlett  
SUA Director of Special Projects  
7902 West Howard Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53220-1612  
Phone: 414.327.4990 or [denisepbartlett@wi.rr.com](mailto:denisepbartlett@wi.rr.com)

# “April’s Showers of Wishes” Drawing

## April 2015 Fund-Raiser

SUA has been fortunate over the past couple of years in having some decade-long wishes realized. Being recognized as a 501(c)(3) organization was a wonderful occurrence after so many actual hours and monies were spent to make it a reality. Now it’s time to concentrate on the many needs of our organization. Our members

have been so generous over the years in helping us to produce memorable National Conventions because of our successful raffle fund-raisers and we hope you’ve had some fun in doing so. **Won’t you help us once again?** Our needs and wishes are many. Our National Officers over many decades have donated many hours and items to get us where we are today – but some things are financially out of reach at this time. Of course we would have liked to procure them all yesterday and it is unrealistic to fulfill all our wishes at once – but we can try. Any profits from our fund-raiser could help us procure many of the following needs (wishes):

**Slovenian Heritage Items**  
**Heritage Programs**  
**Updated Telephone Conferencing System**  
**Updated Computer System**  
**Membership Database**  
**Software**  
**Laptop Computer**  
**Heritage Museum & Home Office Spring Cleaning**  
**Renovated Restroom**  
**Carpet Replacement**  
**Off-Site Record Retention**  
**Home Office Building Repairs**  
**Lighting/Fixtures**  
**Slovenian Cookbook Production**

All members’ donations are now tax-deductible, however, raffle entries are not. Your \$10 entry will make you eligible for cash prizes each day in April, 2015. The National Board will determine which of the “wishes” will be met from the fund-raiser earnings. However, if raffles are not of interest to you, any donations that you are willing to make towards a particular “wish” would be gratefully received. Thank you and **GOOD LUCK!**

Denise P. Bartlett, SUA Director of Special Projects

**Need additional entries? Copies accepted. Have questions? Contact Denise P. Bartlett at:  
Phone: 414.327.4990 or [denisepbartlett@wi.rr.com](mailto:denisepbartlett@wi.rr.com)**

How Does the Fund-Raiser Work? Everyone participating in the “April’s Showers of Wishes” Fund-Raiser has the chance to win cash prizes. Each day in the month of April, 2015, one winner will be chosen to win the listed cash prize for that day - \$60, \$130, or \$200. In addition, each day the person or Branch that sold that day’s winning ticket will win \$10. The daily winner and seller can be one and the same and win both prizes. In addition, the top sellers (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>) will win \$130, \$90, and \$50 respectively. **\$\$\$\$\$**

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