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Uradno Glasilo Slovenske Zveze v Ameriki

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October/November/December 2011

The Dawn

Sveti Miklavž



Featuring Christmas Breads

Zarja - The Dawn

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Communications for the next issue of publication:

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

SUA Gift Shop Items

These 10 dolls are awaiting adoption.

All have given names!

Once they are gone, there are no more!

Pick your doll from this photo!

A wonderful gift for someone special, and
that includes you also.

\$130 + S & H.

Embroidered cobbler aprons \$25

Embroidered tea towels \$12

"Slovenska Kuhinja"

(Slovenian Kitchen)



To the Membership

We received the following testimonial from a very generous "St. Nicholas" who is not a member but read the ad in *Zarja*. In 2010 he ordered 17 items and sent us the following note:

"Had to send you an E-mail to let you know how much each of the recipients appreciated receiving the beautiful evergreen centerpieces. Was so surprised that each person picked up the phone and made it a point to call and express their delight in receiving such a nicely crafted Christmas centerpiece, complete with scented candle.

Carol, you put the Happy in Holidays and the Merry in Christmas! And hopefully, through your dedication, lots more \$\$\$\$ raised for the Slovenian Women's Union. Even though you live in Florida (where it is always warm), I am still wanting to wish you Warm Wishes for this Christmas." - Joe C.

The Slovenian Union of America thanks Joe C. for his kind words and his very generous purchase in 2010. (See page 21 for this year's order form.)

As a young child, St. Nicholas was a frightening being to me. After hearing that some children received switches or pieces of coal in their stockings, I was relieved to know we didn't celebrate St. Nicholas Day at home. However, upon entering elementary school my vision of him changed completely. On St. Nicholas day, in the first grade, a huge stocking full of fruit was found hanging on the door. Across the hall, the fifth grade teacher of Belgium ancestry, had placed her wooden shoes in front of the door of her classroom and they were filled with wrapped candies. My opinion of St. Nicholas changed drastically. I saw him as a kindly, benevolent soul who treated every one in the classroom the same. Those of poorer families, those who were physically unattractive, those with learning disabilities, those who were suffering with family difficulties at home, all were recognized equally. During this Holy Season, let us in our hearts take on the spirit of St. Nicholas and radiate smiles, kind words of support, and perhaps even little gifts to all of those we meet, especially seeking out those with less. It will be the best Christmas ever! - Mary Turvey

Slovenian-American Small World Story

Sue (Nasenbeny) Byrne and Lynn Zalokar, both of Branch 93-NYC, are pictured at an Eastern Illinois University (EIU) alumni event in NYC this July. Sue is originally from Joliet, Illinois and is 3/4 Slovenian. Her paternal grandparents were both born in Slovenia and a maternal grandmother is 100% Slovenian. Sue has a B.A. degree from EIU (Journalism, Political Science) and a M.S. in Journalism from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Lynn and Sue had met at a previous EIU alum event several years ago, but it wasn't until Sue joined Branch 93 and showed up at the Branch 93 World Cup event in 2010 that they reconnected and realized they also share Slovenian ancestry!



Lynn Zalokar and Sue (Nasenbeny) Byrne

National President's Message

National Board of Directors Gathered for Four Days in August Meeting was very productive

Greetings,

I am very excited about the 2011 – 2015 National Board of Directors. What a team! We gathered for four days in August and had a very productive meeting. I can tell you that the bar is being set high and if we stay on track, 2015 will be another year for celebration. How exciting!

This team spent hours determining our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. We are starting off with the top three in each category and as we accomplish each task we keep moving down. The common thread was working closer with our branches and giving them tools to make improvements.

In the evenings we met upstairs where six of us slept. Even though the meetings were over for the day, SUA/SWUA business continued at night. We had many long talks, some excellent brainstorming and more importantly some team bonding. On one evening we had a crew from Branch 99 of Lemont come over for some Convention 2015 talk. From the planning that already took place that night, I can guarantee to our members that we are off to a fantastic start of what should be another outstanding National Convention; start packing your bags.



*SUA National Board Officers and
members of Branch 99, Lemont*



SUA Home Office Apartment in Joliet

We have appointed our three auditors and their complete bios will be featured in the following issue. I am proud to announce Paula Mavec, Branch 99 - Lemont as the First Auditor, Grace Doerk, Branch 20 - Joliet as Second Auditor and Alice Ebner, Branch 89 - Oglesby as Third Auditor. Welcome aboard ladies!

Making our dreams come true for SUA/SWUA takes a lot of helpers; can you be one of them? If you have any time to spare, we could use it! We don't care where you live. Living in an electronic world makes this possible. Please send me an e-mail if you would like to volunteer your time.

Thank you for your time! I hope you enjoy this issue.

Bonnie Pohar Prokup
National President
wprokup@aol.com

Thank You for the Following Donations

\$150 Donation

Anonymous, 103, Zarja

\$30 Donation

Shaw, Dorothy, 3, Zarja

\$25 Donation

Laskowski, Paula Uremovic, 20, +May Rose Uremovic

\$20 Donation

Stirnaman, Debbie, 20, +Frances Capitino
Pucel, Philip, 20, Zarja

\$10 Donation

Kriznar, Mary Jean, 23, Zarja
Tesch, Sandra Yadlosky, 23, +Jane Yadlosky
Stately, Joan, 109, +Mary (Verant) Kosluchar

\$5 Donation

Tesch, Carmen, 23, +Jane Yadlosky
Tesch, Laura, 23, +Jane Yadlosky
Pausic, Bonnie Lynn, 108, Honor of Ann Pausic,
Euclid, OH
Ruzic, Geraldine, 102, Zarja
Freiberg, Raymond, 43, Zarja

Welcome to Our New Members!

2, Sarbarneck, Michelle
2, Steinman, Joan
3, Shaw, Dorothy
20, Dodson, David
20, Plut, Victoria Ann
43, Freiberg, Raymond
43, Kramer, Monica
43, Shiflet, Ellen
99, Arko, Aggie
100, Brennan, Estelle
100, Del Nero, Kelsey

Calendar of Events

OCTOBER 2, 2011

Illinois/Indiana Regional Convention hosted by Branch 2 of Chicago, Illinois. Branch 2 will be celebrating Zveza's and Branch 2's 85th Anniversary in Chicago; this is where it all began. Come and help us celebrate with a big bang!

Ohio/Michigan Regional Convention Mass will be held at St. Vitus Church at 10:30 a.m. with dinner to follow at Sterle's Country House.

OCTOBER 9, 2011

Wisconsin Regional Convention hosted by Branch 43 at Klemmer's Banquet Hall. Contact Jan Gehm at 414.321.1413.

OCTOBER 30, 2011

Branch 99, Lemont, Illinois will host its annual Bunco Fundraiser at the Slovenian Catholic Center from 1-4 p.m. Entry fee is \$2 per person.

NOVEMBER 5, 2011

Branch 93, New York City will host a traditional St. Martin's Day meal, wine tasting, cooking demonstration and dancing. Contact lzalokar@yahoo.com.

NOVEMBER 19, 2011

Branch 99, Lemont, Illinois will host a Sarma (cabbage rolls) Culinary Class at the Slovenian Catholic Center kitchen. To register, contact Barb Block at barbandlarryblock@att.net or 630.379.6442. Space is limited. Cost is \$15 per person payable at the door.

DECEMBER 7, 2011

Branch 13, San Francisco, California will host their annual Christmas Party at noon at the Slovenian Hall. Contact President Doreen Sustarich at 415.468.5039.

DECEMBER 11, 2011

Branch 99, Lemont, Illinois will host its annual Cookie Sale from 12-1:30 p.m. at the Slovenian Catholic Center. Contact Mary Mavec at 815.723.9003.

DECEMBER 18, 2011

Branch 20, Joliet, Illinois will host its annual Christmas dinner/meeting at Truth Restaurant. Contact Jonita Ruth at 815.727.1926.

JANUARY 14, 2012

Branch 43, Milwaukee, Wisconsin will host its annual After Christmas Party at Alioto's Restaurant in Wauwatosa. Contact Jan Gehm at 414.321.1413.

2011 - 2015 National Board of Directors

VICE-PRESIDENT OF HOME OFFICE

JAN KING

neighbor2slovenia@yahoo.com



I was born 100% 2nd generation Slovenian in Euclid, Ohio. I lived in James City, Pennsylvania, close to my paternal grandparents. Grandma Rose made the best homemade bread and Grandpa Jacob kept busy tending his rabbits.

At 6, I moved to Kellogsville, Ohio. My Grandma Francis was the one who began to instill in me what being Slovenian was all about; polka/dancing, going to church, holiday customs, cooking, the proper way to clean (in particular a throw rug), tending to a garden's needs, bringing many gifts from the old country, along with many stories of her life in the old country. Grandpa John gave us money for snacks.

At 14, I moved to Ashtabula, Ohio. Due to the distance, I didn't spend much time with my grandparents in James City, but my Dad brought Grandma Francis from Euclid to visit us on the weekends and holidays.

I'm sad to say that during my early childhood, I did not learn the language. It somehow didn't seem important. I was often asked, "Where did you come from?", I answered "Slovenia." Then - "Where is that?" I had to explain where Slovenia was and I had no other nationality to claim. After answering this question so often, I would just say, "I'm a thoroughbred Slovenian and proud of my unique heritage!"

After high school graduation, I became a Navy wife and mother of two sons. I travelled a lot but settled in San Diego. I was fortunate to be a stay-at-home mom but I did go back to school and obtained a Degree in Administration of Justice. I've been an Escrow Officer, Office Manager, Bookkeeper, Title Researcher, and an AmeriCorp VISTA.

In 1994 I moved from California to Alaska. Most of my time in Alaska has been living remotely, with the exception of three years in Wasilla, one year in Slovenia and now in Anchorage. During this time I was blessed with a grandson and granddaughter!

In 2003, my four sisters and I made a decision to make a trip to Slovenia on the anniversary of our mother's death. Visiting the "motherland" had always been her dream, one that never came true for her, so we went in her place, taking her spirit and leaving a part of Mom in Slovenia. After this trip, I knew my roots! I made yearly trips; visiting relatives, travelling Slovenia, and eventually getting my Slovenian citizenship as a naturalized citizen! A requirement as a naturalized citizen was to belong to a Slovenian organization in the U.S.

I searched many Slovenian organizations in the U.S., and I chose SUA/SWUA. "Why," you may ask? SUA/SWUA reminded me of the journey my grandparents had to make by leaving the old country for the new. Here, there were Slovenes with open arms waiting for newcomers; letting them know there were communities where they could keep heritage/customs/culture alive, while becoming an American citizen. I felt SUA/SWUA also provided this community for newcomers.

My involvement with SUA/SWUA, began as a member, and then the Online Newsletter Editor for the past 7 years. As your newly elected Vice-President of Home office, I look forward to the challenge and opportunity of serving you, and connecting others with the "aura/feeling" that inspires and comes to life when you get a bunch of Slovenes together in one room to celebrate heritage and remember the stories of who we are!

Dear Members:

**The National Board of Directors will
be meeting in March. If you have
anything you would like to bring to
our attention please let me know by
sending your thoughts to
wprokup@aol.com.**

CORRESPONDING & RECORDING SECRETARY

KAREN TAYLOR WILLIS

kare@williscomputing.com



I'm so proud and honored to be re-elected as the Corresponding and Recording Secretary for the National Board of the newly named Slovenian Union of America and I want to thank everyone who helped make this possible. Being a board member has truly been a life-changing event for me in the most profound and amazing way. It's hard to express just how fortunate I feel about the opportunities this position has provided me in connecting with my Slovenian

heritage and our incredible Slovenian culture and community. This is something that would not otherwise be possible for me living in Champaign, Illinois.

My brother, Markie, (sorry Mark, but you'll always be "my little Markie") and I grew up being extremely close to our Slovenian grandmother and our mother, Valeria Novak Taylor. They instilled in me a love and zest for a Slovenian way of life with its food, wine, music and love of laughter. I remember cooking strudels and poticas alongside these two women as early as when I was just three years old. Later, when all my grade school friends were learning to

play the piano in Champaign (where my father, the best dad ever, was a professor), I was busy learning to play the accordion; something my friends still consider a great trivia subject.

The Slovenian Women's Union of America had always been a part of my grandmother's life, but my mother and I became more directly involved when we celebrated her 70th birthday with a SWUA trip to Slovenia to see the country of my mother's parents. There we embraced long lost family and the beauty of our homeland. Being a part of the SWUA has given us both a chance to continue this important connection in our lives.

I'm lucky to have a wonderful and supportive husband, Tymothé, who doesn't just tolerate the long hours and days away from home, but who also has learned to polka, loves Slivovitz, knows to look you in the eyes when you say "Na zdravje" and has just joined my own Branch 89 - Oglesby, Illinois.

I can't wait to see what the next four years will bring. I am lucky enough to serve with some of the most incredibly committed, passionate, hard-working, talented and selfless group of people I have ever met. I know it will be an extraordinary journey and I can't wait to get started.



2011 – 2015 SUA National Board of Directors

Bonnie Pohar Prokup – President, Debbie Pohar – Vice President of Outreach,
Jan King – Vice President of Home Office, Mary Lou Deyak Voelk – Vice President of Culture and Heritage,
Mary Carmody – Vice President of Marketing and Fundraising,
Karen Taylor Willis – Recording and Corresponding Secretary, Carol Ryba - Treasurer

SUA Scholarship Program

SLOVENIAN WOMEN'S UNION

SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

Celebrating its 63rd year of financially assisting students

Mission: To generate funding to financially assist young students,
with hope that they will promote and preserve Slovenian Culture

"My Slovenian Heritage and What It Means to Me" *essays of 2011 Scholarship Recipients*

STEVEN IVANCICH, Branch 23

"I get my Slovenian ancestry from my father's side of the family. My grandma has always talked about our Slovenian background and kept it in our lives through the years, from making cabbage rolls for a family dinner to bringing over potica during the holidays. I am very proud of my Slovenian heritage and enjoy learning more about it. I believe that your background should mean something no matter what the background is. Yes, I know that I am a true American but that doesn't mean I should forget where my roots came from. I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for those brave Slovenians who left their homes to come live in a strange new land called America. They worked hard to make it through and they kept their culture because it's one of the only things they had. That is why it is so important to keep these cultural things alive today: to honor our brave ancestors. I will always be an American, but it's good to look back every once in a while and remember where you came from."

GARRET JANCICH, Branch 100

"I have always been a huge advocate of cultural identity. If one allows their culture to have a prominent place in their life, I believe it can help them define their self-identity in a significant way. And that's what it does for me. It helps me create a sense of independent self as I connect with my Slovenian culture and allow it to influence me in whatever way I see fit. And that way results in constant cultural exposure through the arts, the food, and the spirit. Even as a teenager in this modern age, sitting in a hall with strudel in hand and polka music running through my ears brings a smile to my face. Simply put, being Slovenian, with all the singing, dancing and cooking that comes with it make me genuinely happy."

TOM KLUN, Branch 23

"Over the years, my Slovene descent has taught me that an individual's heritage involves much more than their ancestry. My Slovene heritage has served as the foundation for my life. The pillars of this foundation are relationships, traditions, and values. Slovene heritage has taught me to value my relationships with others. It has allowed me to enhance my personal qualities to become the best individual, friend, brother, and son. My heritage has taught me the art of preparing potica, the Žegen feast, and many other traditional foods. My background has made me a more complete individual; one who centers their life on family. I am bolstered by the trials and triumphs experienced by my ancestors, and now understand that even the greatest obstacles can be overcome. I sincerely appreciate the financial assistance from the Slovenian Women's Union of America. I look forward to utilizing this gift when I will be visiting Slovenia during my fall study abroad."

JOHN KONCAR, Branch 20

"Throughout my life, my Slovenian heritage has greatly shaped who I am today and who I will grow to be in the future. Growing up, I have been an active, life-long parishioner of St. Joseph's Church in Joliet, attended St. Joseph's grade school, took Slovenian classes as a child, and am a member of Slovenian organizations such as the SUA and KSKJ. On our family vacation to Slovenia in 2005, I visited the birthplace of my grandparents and great-grandparents, and met many of my relatives from both sides of the family. This served to deepen my love and appreciation for my Slovenian heritage. I have always actively sought after opportunities to promote the Slovenian culture. I currently play the drums in the *Ray Koncar and the Boys Polka Band* with my dad who plays the button box accordion. I love having this opportunity to entertain people and promote the music to which I have listened to since I was born, and have grown to love. As I get older I only want my heritage to remain an integral part of me."

MARGARET KONCAR, Branch 20

"My Slovenian heritage is an integrated part of my life. I have always enjoyed learning about my heritage and participating in cultural activities. The many traditions brought from the beautiful country of Slovenia to America are key components of my life and the person I am today. Culture is incorporated in every part of my life. On many occasions we make and eat the delicious food from Slovenia, such as potica, strudel, smokies, and krvavica. Listening to and sometimes even joining in, my family's polka band has been a fun and exciting experience. I love all aspects of my heritage from dressing in Slovenian costume to polka music to the delicious food. Special holiday traditions and ethnic foods that I have known and love my whole life are parts of my Slovenian heritage that I hope to someday pass on to my own children".

Past SWU Scholarship recipients: A registry of all SWU Scholarship winners is being compiled. Can you help us find addresses for the following SWU Scholarship recipients?

- 1974 - Patricia Graben (32) Euclid, OH
- 1977 - Patricia Davidson Porter (66) Cannon City, CO
- 1979 - Ann Marie Zak (50) Cleveland, OH
- 1985 - Patricia Gordon (45) Portland, OR
- 1987 - Melissa Murphy (77) Boswell, PA
- 1990 - Carrie Ann Peterson (79) Auburn, WA
- 1994 - Katrina Nemeth (73) Parma, OH
- 1995 - Jennifer Dickinson (50) Fruitland, ID
- 1996 - Jennifer Horvat (50) Euclid, OH
- 2000 - Jeanne Mirtel (101) Russell, OH
- 2002 - Gianna Rossi Hartman (16) Whiting, IN
- 2002 - Claire Blakeley (14) Mentor, OH

Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation Announces a New Graduate Scholarship Program

In honor of one of SWU Scholarship Foundation's generous benefactors, two new Graduate Scholarships are being made available for the 2012-2013 academic year.

ROSE MARIE PRINC Graduate Student Scholarship \$2,000

Open to applicants of Slovene descent, who currently are attending an accredited college or university, holding a cumulative GPA of 3.50, majoring in the field of Education. Applicants are required to provide a copy of a complete and certified college transcript, related standard admission test scores, and a letter of admission to the graduate program.

Mrs. Rose Marie Princ, a native of Chicago, is a graduate of St. Mary's High School and Rosary College with degrees in History and English. She continued her studies at Loyola, DePaul, and Northwestern Universities and earned advanced degrees at the University of Chicago and Northern Illinois University. She taught at Nazareth Academy, and J. Sterling Morton High School for 27 years and also served as its administrator for 14 years. Rose Marie's life has been dedicated to education of young people.

JOSEF PRINC MEMORIAL Graduate Student Scholarship \$2,000

Open to applicants of Slovene descent, who currently are attending an accredited college or university, holding a cumulative GPA of 3.50, majoring in Engineering, Science or Mathematics. Applicants are required to provide a copy of a complete and certified college transcript, related standard admission test scores, and a letter of admission to the graduate program.

Mr. Josef Princ, a native of Velika Bukovica, Ilirska Bistrica, Slovenia graduated with an Engineering Degree from the University of Ljubljana and continued his studies in Germany. After immigrating to the United States in 1957, he continued his studies and worked for Nichols Home Shield as their chief designer and acquired a number of patents. He also was a designer for Anderson Window Company. Josef and Rose Marie Princ were married for 36 years. Josef loved being an American although he was also very proud of his heritage.

For further information and applications for Graduate School Scholarships and for SWU College Scholarships, please contact Mary Turvey, mturvey@aol.com, 4 Lawrence Drive, Marquette, Michigan 49855 or Marge Church, yemec1@windstream.net, 1028 Skyland Drive, Macedonia, Ohio 44056.

SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

\$4,000 Donation

Rose Marie Princ to fund two 2012 Graduate Awards

\$400 Donation

Branch 3, Pueblo, Colorado including:

\$50 gift from the Simms, Snow and Simms family

\$20 gift from Katherine and Judy Kochevar

\$10 gift from each of the following: Norma Becco, Toni Carter, Annette Charron, Margaret Cullen, Andrea DeGarbo, *Francesca DeGarbo, Gianna DeGarbo, Mike DeGarbo, Patricia Derby, Mitzi Drobnick, Lillian Galich, Mary Gersick, Agnes Glavich, Barbara Greenwood, Eileen Kaplan, Barbara Karlinger, Jerica Khosla, Madeleine Khosla, Anna Knific, Bernice Krasovec, Josephine Krasovec, Charlene Leonard, Joan Martinelle, Christine Mascarenas, Marie Mutz, Josephine Perko, Alice Skerjanec, Elizabeth Skul, Diane Slaten, Bernadette Spinuzzi, Mildred Stofac, Ann Yengich, Rose Zupancic

\$200 Donation

Branch 14, Euclid, Ohio

In honor of its living and deceased members

\$50 Donation

Dorothy Matichich

In honor of her son, Michael Matichich's birthday

To all SWU Scholarship donors: Thank you for your continuing support of the scholarship program. As you ensure a young student's chance to enter college, remember too you are not only investing in a future leader, but also that the precious gift he or she receives can never be taken away. Your gifts of any amount are deeply appreciated.

For further information on 2011-2012 SWU Scholarships, please visit website: <http://www.swua.org> "scholarship" or contact Mary Turvey at mturvey@aol.com or Marge Church at yemecl@windstream.net.

Contributions, most appreciated, can be mailed to: Mary Turvey, Scholarship Director, 4 Lawrence Drive, Marquette, Michigan 49855.

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Celebrating our 100th Year!

Zarja Look Back

20 Years - December 1991

Independence for Slovenia and Croatia

The conflict is nowhere close to being over. Please do not give up on the telephone calls and the letters. Once isn't enough. We must continue to pressure our government and particularly our representatives and President Bush to support independence and now to come to the aid of Croatia as it struggles to maintain its independent status. If Croatia's efforts are not supported and they weaken, what will happen to Slovenia, which is at the border of the warring parties!

40 Years - December 1971

Woman's Glory - The Kitchen

New, revised edition is available for \$4. This edition includes 90 pages of new recipes, all kitchen tested.

60 Years - December 1951

SWUA celebrated its 25 Anniversary

On this anniversary Marie Prisland writes: We, Slovenian Women came to this country as complete strangers. Like all immigrants, we were very sensitive to our new environment and soon discovered that women all about us were struggling for a firm foothold in their new surroundings, seeking friendship and strength wherever possible. Since an individual's way is a lonely one, the struggle is hard; the logical solution is to unite with others who have similar ideas... My hopes and those of others were realized on December 19, 1926...

**The Slovenian Union of
America extends to the
Slovenian Genealogy Society
(SGSI) led by Al Peterlin a
huge congratulations
on 25 years!**

Slovenian Union of America

27th National Convention - 2015 - Lemont, Illinois

SLOVENIAN LEAP YEAR DRAWING

February 2012 Fund-Raiser

\$10.00 PER TICKET

CASH PRIZES TOTALING \$2,565

25 Daily Drawings at \$55

Feb 1st and 29th at \$110

Feb 8th and 14th at \$220

29 Daily Seller Prizes at \$10

Top Seller Prizes:

1st Place - \$110.00

2nd Place - \$70.00

3rd Place - \$40.00

Towards Convention Package

You are eligible for all daily drawings in the month of February, 2012. Sellers of the winning entries will receive \$10 as an award for their selling efforts. The daily drawing amount and the seller's \$10 prize will be mailed to the winners of record the next business day. Winners will be personally contacted and posted on the website. **For information on how Fund-raiser works, see next page.**

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

Detach at perforation

Entry Form

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 Location and Number: _____

Please send completed form (Print) and \$10 check payable to SUA/SWUA to:

Denise P. Bartlett
SUA Director of Special Projects
7902 West Howard Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53220-1612

Phone: 414.327.4990 or denisebartlett@wi.rr.com

Slovenian Union of America

27th National Convention - 2015 - Lemont, Illinois

SLOVENIAN LEAP YEAR DRAWING

February 2012 Fund-Raiser

www.swua.org

Need additional entries?

Contact Denise P. Bartlett at:

Phone: 414.327.4990 or denisebartlett@wi.rr.com

2015 SUA/SWUA National Convention. SUA/SWUA holds its National Convention every four years in host cities around the country. These gatherings are important not only to conduct SUA/SWUA business but to have a forum for branch representatives to come together to give their reports, share their ideas, discuss concerns and further cement their mutual love and respect for all things related to their Slovenian heritage. Our next SUA/SWUA National Convention will be held in Lemont, Illinois in 2015.

Plans are underway to make this another memorable event. The successful completion of this "Slovenian Leap Year Drawing" Fund-raiser will provide monies to help defray the costs of conducting SUA/SWUA's National Convention. The Convention Committee strives to offer an affordable convention package to enable delegates and members from every SUA/SWUA branch to attend. The entries make excellent gifts for the holiday season, birthdays, and to say "Thank You."

How Does the Fund-raiser Work? Everyone participating in the SUA/SWUA "Slovenian Leap Year Drawing" Fund-raiser has the chance to win cash prizes. Each day in the month of February, 2012, one winner will be chosen to win the listed cash prize for that day - \$55, \$110 or \$220. In addition, each day the person who sold that day's winning ticket will win \$10. The daily winner and seller can be one and the same and win both prizes.

Winners chosen on the 1st and 29th of February will win \$110 each. The month of February has long represented love and our beloved Slovenia is the only country in the world with "love" in its name. Thus, the names chosen on February 8th - Prešeren Day (Slovenian Cultural Holiday) and February 14th - Valentine's Day will win \$220 each. In addition, the top sellers (1st, 2nd and 3rd place) will win \$110 and \$70 and \$40 respectively towards their Convention package. It's a WIN opportunity for everyone.

Your Participation is Appreciated!

Good Luck!

C
U
T

H
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R
E

Membership Application

Slovenian Union of America

Slovenska Zveza v Ameriki

www.swua.org

swuhome@sbcglobal.net

815.727.1926

Yes! I want to join the SUA. I want to preserve and promote the legacy of our Slovenian-American heritage. As a member I will receive the publication, *ZARJA - The Dawn*; I can affiliate with branches and events across the country and best of all, I will come in contact with fellow Slovenians.

Choose type of membership:

☐

Adult, Annual Dues \$25.00

For January through December (If you join after August 30, you will not be billed in January of the next calendar year)

☐

Check here if this is a gift.

Provide recipients name/address below.

If you agree to continue paying for this membership next year, please provide your name/address/e-mail on the back of this form for billing purposes.

☐

Adult, International Address
Annual Dues \$35.00

☐

Junior (Birth through 17), Annual Dues \$5.00

Invoices are sent annually in January; dues notices in the amount of \$25.00/adult or \$5.00/junior will be mailed to the address of the member listed below in January of the next calendar year after joining, unless otherwise specified.

Please print the requested information below and send this application form with a check payable to:

Slovenian Union of America 431 North Chicago Street, Joliet, IL 60432-1703

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M _____ F _____

Street Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Date of Birth _____ Branch Affiliation Number (if known) _____ Location _____

Maiden Name _____ Do you speak Slovenian? _____

Please describe your Slovenian ancestry and provide **SLOVENIAN SURNAMES**

How did you hear about us? S.U.A. member _____ newspaper _____ website _____ other _____

I would like to volunteer for the S.U.A. My area of interest or expertise is _____

Applicant's signature _____ Date _____

Tell a Friend! If you wish us to send information to a friend or relative just fill in name and address here:

My friend's name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Orders must be received by SUA no later than **NOVEMBER 10** so that we have time to finalize the paper work. We are currently doing business as SUA, but checks must be made payable to SWUA until all legal papers have been filed. Please send payment to Carol Ryba at address listed on form. Prices and photos are printed on the back cover.

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[illegible]

Street Address 48 contiguous States only - No P.O. Boxes PLEASE

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City

State

Zip Code



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3305 Glenshane Way
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Provide E-mail address so we can send you a receipt.

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*A portion of this gift is the
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From: _____

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Congratulations Triglav Park on 50 Years



Death of a Surname

By George Plautz, Zarja Staff Writer

Slovenian Pioneers to America 1840-1879

A Record of Immigration

In the preceeding columns I have covered immigrants, who came to America for religious freedom, for business, mostly as merchants, then as saloonkeepers and boarding house operators in Chicago and Minnesota: they follow Bishop Baraga to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan copper mining communities and the missionaries, Father Pierz and Monsignor Buh, to Minnesota. These reasons to immigrate continue in the beginning of the 1860's. The next wave of immigration provides settlers, who begin farming communities in Iowa or in the villages of Brockway (St. Stephen in the woods) and Albany (Kraintown formerly St. Anthony of Padua) and also in Little Falls and Elizabeth, Minnesota. People will soon come in droves to work in mines. It is inspiring to see so many Slovenian descendants, who were the pioneers in their communities and were so successful serving in the political and business arenas. After the Protestants arrived in Georgia and missionaries began to come to the Midwest, most of the immigrants that come prior to 1860 are from Southeastern Slovenia (Bela Krajina) or German settlements (Gottscheers) above the Kulpa River in Southern Slovenia. In the mid 1860's, immigrants arrive from the villages of Gorje, Doveje and Bled in the Gorenjska (Upper Carniola) region of Slovenia and settle in Stearns County, Minnesota. Many of the families that arrive in Minnesota are related through marriages in Slovenia, making the small communities closely interwoven.

1859-During this year, sailing from Bremen, Germany, Peter Ruppe arrived in New York from the village of Stari trg ob Kolpi. He was born January 6, 1823, to parents Peter Ruppe and Maria Panian, he married Margaret Majerle in 1842, and died on April 20, 1899 in Hancock, Michigan. Children born to this couple were: Peter (arrived in the US in 1861), George, Joseph and John. Peter first moved to the Chicago area and was a peddler, who covered several states in the Midwest. He and Joseph Wertin met Bishop Baraga at a German tavern in Chicago. They complained about business being poor, the time being that the Civil War was underway. Baraga advised them to come to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, as there were opportunities there due to the opening of copper mines. Peter operated a general merchandise store in Hancock, Michigan, with Joseph Wertin. Together, they bought a mine, the Isle Royale, the shares were sold and eventually they separated their business enterprises. Peter operated a store in Hancock, on Fifth Street in Calumet, and in Baraga, selling general merchandise. In the 1870's, the store on Fifth Street in Calumet burnt down and Ruppe was the first one to rebuild his business. He was the second

millionaire of Slovenian descent. According to history books he owned over a thousand shares of Calumet and Hecla Company, at that time worth a thousand dollars each. He was elected mayor of Red Jacket in 1875 and at the same time was the fire chief; at some point he owned a bank in Calumet with another son. Peter Jr. worked with his uncle Joseph in Minnesota as a peddler and registered for the Civil War draft. Peter married Philomene Martz, and one of their children was Peter E. Ruppe, III, born April 1, 1876, who married Mary Safford on July 1, 1907 in Detroit. His son, from his second marriage to Antonette, is Philip Ruppe, a former congressman from Michigan, served in the House of Representatives from 1967-1976. Peter Jr. was the treasurer of the Calumet and Arizona, Lake Superior & Pittsburg and Calumet and Pittsburg mining companies and also two development companies controlled by the same people who owned the mines. This family continues to have descendants bearing the surname of Ruppe. However no one seems to have a full family tree of Peter Ruppe that is complete.

1859-During this year, sailing from Bremen, Germany, Joseph Ruppe arrived in New York from the village of Stari trg ob Kolpi. He is the brother of Peter Ruppe born in 1823 listed previously. Joseph was born February 2, 1842 and settled in St. Paul, Minnesota, as a peddler. On September 1, 1868 he married Margaretha Theissen and in the 1870 US Census his occupation is peddler. His obituary states that he arrived in Rush City, Minnesota by 1869. The following children were born to Joseph and Margaretha: Mary Susan (Mamie) born April 1, 1872, died February 8, 1911; Minnie born December 26, 1873, died May 22, 1969; Augusta "Gussie" Neily, born about 1876, died July 2, 1947; Joseph born June 1, 1879, married Marie Fahrenholz, died November 12, 1911; and George born July 16, 1802, died November 18, 1887. Joseph is mentioned as a farmer and merchant in Rush City, living there for the last 38 years before his death. His nephew, Peter Ruppe, attended his funeral. The Ruppes are buried in Calvary Catholic Cemetery, Rush City, Minnesota. Various researchers have incomplete family trees on this family, although male descendants still retain the name.

September 20, 1859 is the date Peter Maurin (Movrin) arrived in New York. He starts his career in Chicago with his brother Marcus, peddling, and follows his brother to Minnesota. Initially, the brothers peddled goods door-to-door from a base in Minneapolis before settling down in Cold Springs, Minnesota, operating a business they bought

from Jakob Movrin that they named Maurin Bros. Peter was a successful merchant; he owned land and had an interest in a grain elevator in Carlisle, Minnesota, dealing in grain futures. Peter was president of the first bank in Elizabeth. He served as President of the village board, Chairman of the village board, Postmaster for ten years, and was one of the organizers of the Catholic Church at Cold Springs. Peter's father was named Marcus and he is one of nine children born to his parents in Slovenia. He was born February 24, 1839 and died on August 12, 1914, in Elizabeth, Minnesota. Peter married Anna Kaus on July 27, 1868 in Lafayette, Minnesota. Peter and Anna had seven children: Emma A., born about 1871; Martha J., born about 1873; Marcus P., born February 7, 1876 in Elizabeth, Minnesota; Frank Joseph, born July 26, 1878; Antoinette J., born about 1881; and Henry F. Maurin born July 9, 1882. Following census records and family trees on Ancestry.com it is impossible to determine what happened to the female lines of Peter's family, however Henry became a successful businessman and office holder in Elizabeth, Minnesota. Joseph Marcus Maurin moved to Wakefield, Minnesota and worked in his father's store, while Marcus Peter Maurin moved to Colorado where he died on March 18, 1959. Peter and Marcus, the immigrants, also assisted their nephew, John Maurin, to settle in Minnesota. He, as many of the Maurins, went to Collegeville, Minnesota, for his education. Peter and Marcus were the uncles of John Vertin (Little Falls) and Mathias Vertin (Breckenridge), Minnesota, who are related to Joseph Wertin that settled in Hancock, Michigan and of which I wrote about in previous columns.

1861-During this year Joseph Peschel makes his way to Iowa. He settles in Sugar Creek, Iowa. Joseph was born July 4, 1836 in Bistrica 5, Crnomelj Parish in Slovenia to John Peschel and Maria Agnitsch and died on February 16, 1880 in Sugar Creek of dropsy. He marries Mary Strucel on April 8, 1874, in Sugar Creek. Mary is the daughter of Mathias Strucel and Maria Saitz. She was born on June 17, 1852 in Naklo 7, also in Crnomelj Parish. Joseph and Maria have four children: Anton, born January 6, 1874 and died June 16, 1909 in Sugar Creek; John, born January 4, 1876, married Elise Provo and died on December 18, 1942 in Ohio; Mary born August 10, 1878, married Anthony Verbanic and died in Ohio; Anna, born March 6, 1880, married Rudolph Verderber, and died on January 5, 1967 in Ohio. Two children were born to John and Elsie Peschel and one child was born to Anna and Rudolph Verderber. Joseph Peschel fought in the Civil War and received benefits after his death.

June 22, 1863 is the date John Preschern arrives in New York. He settles in Brockway Township, Minnesota. John is born about 1838 in Slovenia and died on November 11, 1911 in Sauk Rapids, Benton County, Minnesota. His wife is named Mary, and they have two children: Mary, born about 1883 in Minnesota, and John, born September 7, 1889 in Minnesota. It appears he died in Austria on December 9, 1969. The Preschern family moved from Brockway to Sauk Rapids before 1895. No more is known about this family, but there were several John Preschern's in Minnesota.

June 28, 1865, is the date Anton Kapus arrives in New York headed for Brockway, Minnesota. He was born in 1838 in Slovenia and died on March 23, 1891 in Brockway. He married Agnes Gogola on January 3, 1868 in Krain Township, Minnesota. They had the following children: Mary, born August 9, 1869, died August 28, 1901; Anton, born March 14, 1871, died May 20, 1944; Frank, born October 3, 1872, died March 4, 1930; John, born April 11, 1875, died April 11, 1909; Joseph, born February 12, 1877, died July 18, 1890; Johanna, born November 7, 1878, died May 6, 1960; Steven Albert, born September 30, 1880, died November 8, 1942; Agnes, born, August 11, 1882, died July 2, 1890; Louis, born June 14, 1884, died November 21, 1976; Andrew, born February 1, 1887, died May 9, 1956; and Joseph, born August 26, 1890, died September 18, 1938. Anton Kapus is mentioned in the book *Masinaigans*, written by Sister Bernard Coleman O.S.B., and Sister Verona LaBud O.S.B. A history of St. Stephens relates a story that Monsignor Buh arrived at the Kapus cabin in Minnesota one snowy night. As was the custom, anyone asking for lodging was never turned away. Once Monsignor Buh entered the house they realized he was a priest and wished him to take the bed (neighbor Andrew Weis was present) as beds were limited. When Monsignor Buh started speaking Slovenian instead of German, Anton was overjoyed; and the priest said Mass the next day at the home of Gregor Pogacnik. The Anton Kapus homestead is the current site of St. Stephen's church. A Kapus descendant maintains a family tree.

In the next column I will continue to write about settlers to the farms of Brockway and Albany, Minnesota and other places.

UPDATES: Regarding Jakob Rabic, as noted in my column for May/June 2011. I found one reference to this individual in the 1870 US Census for Hancock, Michigan. He was born about 1840, married to Mary and he works in the mines. His surname is spelled "Rabitch" in the census, but there are no other references to this version of the surname.

I received a letter from Mary Planton Bodling telling me about her Slovenian immigrant who came to Ohio in 1849 from Wales. Her ancestor was a Frenchman, by the name of Francis Planton, who stayed in Novo Mesto after the French left in 1813. He married and settled in Veliki Podljuben. A son, Francis, was born in 1815 and by the age of 19 he set out to see the world. He settled in Wales, marrying Ann Jenkins. Son, Thomas, and daughter, Caroline, were born to them in Wales. Life was not easy for them in Wales, so Francis and his wife, Ann, came to America, via Liverpool, in 1849. There they settled in Meigs County, Ohio, initially, where Francis worked in the coalmine. Four sons were born in Ohio. Mary is continuing her research of her family. This provides another ethnic identity for those who came from Slovenia, as the country itself was a melting pot of different nationalities somewhat like the United States.

To contact me: by mail: George Plautz, 1307 Dragon Head Drive, Valrico, FL 33594 or by email at doblice@gmail.com

Slovenian-American Achievers

Profiled in Ljubljana Exhibition

Slovenians in the United States have achieved recognition in every cultural expression, from literature, drama and film, to music, dance, sports and the visual arts. A selection of these remarkable individuals are profiled in a new Ljubljana exhibition, "Slovenian-American Achievers: Cultural Contributions to Two Homelands", on view through September in the Atrij Gallery of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU) on Novi Trg 2.

Many of the twenty-seven personalities on exhibit inspired creativity within their Slovenian communities. Others excelled at their crafts to attain national acclaim. Historical figures include Bishop Frederic Baraga, known as the Snowshoe Priest, author Louis Adamic and Marie Prislant, founder of the Slovenian Women's Union of



Marie Prislant, by Nancy Bukovnik

America. Today's achievers are represented by poet and author Anita Endrezze, dancer Tadej Brdnik, radio host Tony Petkovsek and wheelchair athlete Mark Zupan, among others. Displays feature books, recordings and artworks by these creative individuals. Visitors can listen to music by performers as varied as Micky Dolenz and the Monkees, opera diva Lucille Udovich, and American polka artists Frank Yankovic, Cilka Dolgan and Fr. Frank Perkovich.

Twenty years ago, the SWUA and Slovenian-American organizations rallied together to create United Americans for Slovenia to appeal to President George Bush and government officials to recognize Slovenia as an independent, democratic nation. This new exhibition pays tribute to the remarkable group with photographs and documents tracking the activities leading to U. S. recognition. Several SWUA members held leadership positions in the UAS. Cirila Kermavner served as the official SWUA representative.

The United Americans for Slovenia (UAS) joined Slovenians across the United States to help the homeland - the first time since World War II. The UAS was founded on July 1, 1991, when the Yugoslav Army attacked Slovenia to halt secession from Yugoslavia. For the next nine months, leaders representing 659 Slovenian-American lodges, societies, parishes and cultural halls, met to plan and implement communications and events to call attention to Slovenia's independence.

The Ljubljana exhibition documents the mailings, petitions, programs and phone marathons the UAS initiated. Photos



show UAS meetings with leaders, such as Senator John Glenn, Senator Robert Dole, and Governor George Voinovich, and the historic White House briefing for UAS representatives, the first time Slovenian-Americans were received in Washington as a group. Scholars in Slovenia have written much about the achievements of the UAS.

The exhibition has generated much interest among Slovenians and will travel to other locations across Slovenia. Curators for the exhibition are Cleveland historian and UAS communications director, Joseph Valencic and Dr. Mirjam Milharic Hladnik, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Slovenian Emigration Studies (ISI) at the Scientific Research Center of SAZU. The exhibition was planned in connection with the twentieth anniversary of Slovenian independence with the assistance of the Institute for Slovenian Emigration Studies (ISI) and of the Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Slovenes Abroad. For more information, check the ISI exhibition website: isi.zrc-sazu.si.

Tributes to Long Time Members

NEW – Our organization rests on the foundation of our long time members, those who have celebrated 50 years or more of membership and have generously volunteered their time and efforts to give the SUA the strength it has today. SUA's Pat Budzilek will be writing in each issue of Zarja and will feature one of these hard working members who gave so much. If you know someone who should be featured please send an e-mail with a short story and picture to wprokup@aol.com.

Alma Intihar Eppick

Alma Eppick was born in 1915 in Cleveland, Ohio, to Marie and Matt Intihar and will celebrate her 97th birthday on New Year's Day! This remarkable Slovenian lady has her grandson living with her and still does her own housework, cooking, and drives legally; seeing so well that she did not need glasses to pass her last driver's test. Her mental acuity is comparable to one half her age, and she still balances her own checkbook.

She married Edward Eppick in 1932 and has two children, six grandchildren, fifteen great grandchildren, and five great-great grandchildren spanning five generations. Unfortunately, she lost a daughter and grandson, four days apart last June.

She has been a member of the SUA since 1965, originally in Branch 32 where she held the offices of President and Secretary. When Branch 32

merged, she transferred to Branch 14 where her lifelong friend, Jenny Fitzhum, was President, and faithfully attended the Branch's Christmas and Mother's Day dinners. Her Slovenian heritage was always a part of her life, and recently she was honored for her 80 years of membership in SNPJ Lodge 53.

St. Christine's, where she helped make poticas, and St. Mary's (Collinwood) have been honored to have her as a parishioner over the years. She has traveled extensively and has visited most of the Holy Shrines of Europe.

Asked what is the secret to her long, productive life, she says that she lived a regular life, but was always active in athletic activities, from swimming to roller-skating. Alma proudly says that she takes no medications.



We congratulate Alma Eppick, this issue's Zarja honoree!

Branch Reports

Poročila Podružnic

BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Greetings! Our meeting on August 10th was fun-filled and interesting. We had the pleasure of hosting some members from Milwaukee's Branch 43 at the Pizza Ranch for our meeting and dinner. We welcomed Denise and Bob Bartlett, Jan and Tom Gehm and Mary Lou Voelk. Denise and Jan shared their experiences from the National Convention, and Mary Lou discussed the importance of carrying on our Slovenian heritage and traditions. Thanks to all of you for coming!

We were happy to meet Katie Gorton of Branch 1, who is the granddaughter of Marie Prisland. Katie was kind enough to give everyone in attendance three pictures of her grandmother. For those of you who aren't aware, Marie Prisland was the founder of SUA/SWUA. Thank you, Katie, for sharing your stories and the wonderful photos.



Katie Gorton's pictures of her grandmother, Marie Prisland

We are looking forward to our Craft Sale on November 13 and many members are busy sewing, knitting, and putting baskets together for the sale. Proceeds will be shared with families in need of help with their Thanksgiving dinner. I hope everyone will come down to Father Cherne Hall and support this very important fund-raiser!

CHERYL KOTNICK LOPOUR

BRANCH 2 - Chicago, Illinois

Thank you to everyone who attended the Zveza picnic July 19th at Saint Mary's in Lemont. It was a nice day and Vince Rigler entertained us with those beautiful Slovenian songs. We always enjoy dancing to them and singing along with him.

Come help us celebrate the 85th Anniversary of the SUA/SWUA where it all began on October 2, 1926 in Chicago. On the same date, October 2, but in 2011 the Illinois/Indiana Convention will be held. It starts with Mass at Saint Symphorosas (6135 South Austin Avenue, Chicago) followed by dinner and a meeting at Mayfield's (6072 South Archer Avenue, Chicago). Directions and a map will be sent to all members.

Our next meeting is on October 16. The Penny Social is on November 20, Junior Christmas Party is on December 3 and the Adult Christmas Party is on December 18.

DAISY

BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

Contact Information:

amtcharron@yahoo.com 719.696.8583

During the past few weeks, epoch-making events have occurred at St. Mary Help of Christians Church, a historically Slovenian parish in Pueblo, Colorado. One of the parish's former altar boys, Michael Benjamin Chrisman, was ordained a priest on June 10, 2011. On the previous day, the Slovenian Ambassador to the United States, Roman Kirn, planted a linden tree at the parish during his visit to Pueblo.

Father Michael was ordained at Sacred Heart Cathedral by Bishop Fernando Isern for the Diocese of Pueblo. Michael is the son of Douglas and Katherine Chrisman and the grandson of Bernice Krasovec. Katherine, Bernice and Father Michael's extended family are members and supporters of SUA. A poignant moment during his Thanksgiving Mass occurred when Father Michael presented two ornately boxed gifts to his parents. His mother received the cloth that he wiped his hands on after receiving the holy oil of ordination; his father was given the stole Father Michael wore when he heard his first confession as a priest. Father Michael told his parents that these items were to be buried with them. When they meet St. Peter at heaven's gate and are



Father Michael Chrisman and Bishop Fernando Isern

asked what they did for the church, the cloth and stole will be presented as their tickets to heaven because they gave their son to the priesthood. Father Michael is the first Slovenian young man from the parish to be ordained since the ordination of Father Daniel Gnidica in the mid-1900s. As a new priest, Father Michael will be based in Alamosa, Colorado and will serve the San Luis Valley in Southern Colorado.

Roman Kirn, the Slovenian Ambassador to the United States, made his first visit to Pueblo in early June. Pueblo community leaders and numerous Pueblo Slovenians greeted the ambassador at a breakfast at the Pueblo Convention Center. The official purpose of the ambassador's visit was to acknowledge National Day, the 20th anniversary of Slovenia's declaration of independence from the former Yugoslavia. A multitude of Slovenian families came to Pueblo during the late 1800s and the early 1900s to work in the deep mines of the Rocky Mountains

and the white-hot furnaces of Pueblo's CF&I Steel Mill. The descendants of these immigrants have maintained their Slovenian identities, and the ambassador remarked that the historic connection between Slovenia and the U.S. has encouraged and nurtured his young nation. After the breakfast, Kirn planted a linden tree in St. Mary's Help of Christians' prayer garden and toured the parish's Gornick Slovenian Library, which includes a museum and genealogy center. The Ambassador told the crowd that the linden tree is the national tree of Slovenia, and in small Slovenian villages the linden tree is a place where people gather to make important decisions. Kirn also traveled to other Colorado locations to plant linden trees as a sign of unity.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON &
BARBARA KARLINGER

BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

Merry Christmas! I love saying that, because it seems so many people have forgotten that it is a celebration of Christ's birth and not another holiday to spend way too much money on meaningless items for people we hardly know. With family and friends attending church together followed by feasting on foods that have been handed down from mother to daughter for generations and only prepared at Christmas time, some of my best memories are of conversations around the dining room table, recalling Christmas past and of family and friends long ago.

Sveti Miklavž...did you celebrate on December 6? I remember Mom putting out the tablecloth on the kitchen table and (to my mind) the biggest bowl in the house right in the center of the table! In the morning it would be filled with huge apples, oranges and chocolates. Little peppermint nougats (with striped red and white with green tree pictured in center) scattered the cloth! A mixture of walnuts, pecans and almonds were waiting to be cracked open and eaten as fast as Dad could crack them! What an exciting morning!

We continued the tradition with our own children. Our Betsy has the privilege of being born on December 6, so we never forget! They would put their shoes out in front of the fireplace before going to bed, and awaken to fruit, nuts and candies. Once Dad found coal in his shoes, and the girls have never let him live it down! I hope as they have children, they continue to hand down these and many other traditions to them!

Have a blessed and safe Christmas! We will see you all in the New Year!

KAREN, MARY & PHYLLIS

Do you want to receive the monthly SUA Online Newsletter?
Please e-mail: listoperator@swua.org to be on our list.

BRANCH 13 - San Francisco, California

Contact Information: 2324 Buena Vista Avenue,
Belmont, CA 94002 bchioldo@comcast.net

Congratulations to Diane Fabian Brahney and her husband Dennis on their 50th Wedding Anniversary on August 12th, and to Jackie Kambic Lowe and her husband Jerry on their 50th Wedding Anniversary on August 19th. Both couples were married at the Slovenian Church of the Nativity and their reception was at the Slovenian Hall in San Francisco. Both Diane and Jackie grew up on Potrero Hill that has been the Slovenian area of San Francisco for more than one hundred years. They were both beautiful weddings and I remember them with loving memories to this day. Congratulations and much love to both couples!

I am glad to report that our board member Virginia Sustarich is home and recovering well from a knee replacement. Get well soon Ginny; we all miss you!

I can't believe summer is almost over. But before it is, Branch 13 will host a day of remembering all of our good times and good friends in SUA. Everyone will be bringing memories of times gone by and we will honor those who have gone before us. I will report on the day in my next article.

We, on the Board, wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We will be having our annual Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 7th at noon at the Slovenian Hall. Please plan on attending! We would love to see you all. Call President Doreen Sustarich at 415.468.5039 and let her know you are coming.

BARBARA CHIODO

BRANCH 14 - Euclid, Ohio

Greetings once again from Branch 14. Our branch has a long and productive history, but now it is at a crossroads. Diane and Larry Varney, and Stana Grill are no longer able to be our leaders and we are looking for volunteers from the membership to take over their positions. We know that many of our members are older, not in the best of health, and do not live nearby, so it would not be easy for them to assume this responsibility. If you are interested in becoming our President or another officer, please contact me at 440.943.3623 as soon as possible.

If we cannot find anyone willing to lead us, we will merge with Branch 50 in Euclid, Ohio. This branch has almost 200 members and is led by President Rosemary Toth. Branch 50 meets at the Euclid Public Library on the third Wednesday of the month at 1 p.m. If a merger does take place, members will automatically be transferred to Branch 50, but if a member wants to be transferred to a different branch, she must write a letter to the Home Office in Joliet stating which branch she desires to join. In any case, please do not drop your membership as your burial insurance policy will no longer be in force.

I know we will miss our Christmas and Mother's Day Dinners, but possibly they can be continued under the sponsorship of Branch 50. Even if there are no dinners, Branch 50 will sponsor other activities than everyone will enjoy.

Have a blessed Christmas season. Na svidenje,

PATRICIA BUDZILEK

BRANCH 20 - Joliet, Illinois

Contact Information: patricia.schager@att.net

We had another successful Grape Festival to start things off in September. We had Eileen Kochevar preside as Honorary Mayor. She also plays accordion and button box. What a treat in the true Slovenian tradition.

Continuing highlights: we are always treated to special "treats" for our October meetings by our gracious hostesses. But this time members are in for a very, very special surprise. Don't miss this one!

In November we remember our American roots with family and friends during the Thanksgiving holidays, and in December we will have our Christmas dinner/meeting on December 18 at Truth Restaurant in Joliet.

Our Branch continues to remember and celebrate the feast day of St. Nicholas with the traditional gift giving to our youngest junior members. Junior members receive a special card with the legend of St. Nick, including a small monetary gift. It is important to our members to keep this tradition alive.

Remember setting out shoes for the gifts and the anticipation of what we would find in the morning of December 6? It was especially important to have a shoe that was large enough for all the fruit and candy we hoped to receive. Oranges were always a big treat and candy was always a treat, and we were appreciative of it all. If we were lucky, there might even be a shiny quarter to hunt for.

Wishing all a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year from Branch 20.

PATRICIA SCHAGER

BRANCH 23 - Ely, Minnesota

In August, a group of twenty plus members and guests met at the Grand Ely Lodge to enjoy each other's company and to talk about the changes that were made at the



Visitors from Biwabik Branch 39:
Rosie Ribich, Marie Vaida, Jeanne Korsman

National Convention in Milwaukee this past June. We were so pleased that our State President, Rosemary Ribich, and former National President, Jean Korsman, were able to be with us. There was some discussion on the Convention and also



John Pauchnik

some sharing of information as far as some of the plans that were being made for the Minnesota Days to be held in Ely on the 11th of September. The committee is hard at work planning a special day for all the members and friends that will be in attendance. We want to make it very special.

John Pauchnik played his accordion for us and the toes were tapping and he had the ladies singing. It was a fun afternoon. Thanks so much, John!

GERRY KLUN PETRICH &
DOLLY KASTELIC SHOBER

BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

Contact Information: 9-lives@att.net

Dober Dan! The summer came to a close with our annual picnic held at Pulaski Park on 5th Street in La Salle on August 17. As usual, the food was plentiful and delicious. Although we did not have a live band to serenade us, we did enjoy the polka CD's. So, between the good food, the music and the camaraderie, all had a good time.

I had the opportunity to attend the SCC Picnic in Lemont on August 14 and met several of my cousins from Chicago and Merrillville, IN. What a wonderful day it was! The outdoor Mass was very impressive and it was a joy to see so many familiar faces. The food was outstanding as was the live Polka band. We are fortunate to live so close to such a beautiful piece of land with its Church, Retreat House, Grotto, miniature replica of Lake Bled and, of course, the Slovenian Catholic Center, which celebrated its 20th anniversary, and which was built by donated materials and labor. Amazing!

With summer coming to a close, our regular scheduled meetings will resume and we hope for another year of blessings with our friendship and determination to keep our heritage alive. The gardens will soon be cleaned up and the flowers saying their last goodbyes and before you know it the snow will be falling. Not too soon, I hope.

May you all enjoy the blessings the Christmas season brings to us and may the new year bring new hope and peace for our world. Until next time, may your hearts be filled with peace and love.

LORETTA STORY

BRANCH 39 - Biwabik, Minnesota

Contact Information: rribich@northlc.com

218.865.6600

I hope everyone had a great summer, the leaves will soon be in full autumn colors. Personally, the summer passed too quickly here in the Northland. Boats must be stored, summer cabins vacated and the harvest will be in full swing. In fact, this report is somewhat difficult to write since it is for the last *Zarja* of the year, which means Sveti Miklavž and snow!

We lost a very dedicated member this month.

Many of you should remember Angeline Karish. Angie was a mainstay in our branch. Some called her the "spark-plug." Where there was action, there was Angie. She joined SUA in 1939 at the young age of 28 and she just passed her 100th birthday. She continued her membership faithfully all these years. She served as our branch reporter (having written reports in both English and Slovenian), our secretary and Minnesota Regional President. We should all have this longevity with our beloved organization. Zbogom, Angie; go with God.

Branch 23, Ely, MN invited members from our Branches 39 and 35 to their meeting this month. What a neat group we had for lunch at the Grand Ely Lodge. This will be the site of our MN Regional ZVEZA DAY on September 11th. We are so looking forward to another day of uniting with friends from all over the state. We will have an election of officers and hope to have volunteers.

Have a great holiday season and enjoy families and friends during the Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations. May the birth of our Savior bring joy, peace and happiness to all.

Marija Pomagaj Prosi Za Nas
ROSEMARY (SERTICH) RIBICH

BRANCH 40 - Lorain, Ohio

The convention is over and we must congratulate the new board, and extend our wishes for continued success for our organization as we forge ahead with a new name! From all reports it was a success in every sense of the word, and also socially. My daughter, Elaine Barthelemy attended as a non-delegate with a group from the Twin Cities, consisting of Nadi Bajda and her sisters. Their picture was in the *Zarja*, raising their glasses in a "na zdravje" at Triglav Park. She said everything was so well planned. She told of how much everyone enjoyed the presentation by "Perpetuum Jazzile." Even I can attest to that. The group came to Cleveland directly from Milwaukee. My son Michael and daughter-in-law JoAnne took me in to see the show – it was truly enjoyable!

Since then, I've had surgery - a total reverse shoulder replacement. I am now in therapy and it is going well.

One of our faithful members, Rose Jancar, is gravely ill in the hospital. We are praying for your recovery, Rose.

Although we are few in number, we all enjoy getting together for our monthly luncheons.

Thanksgiving and Sveti Miklavž will be here before we know it. We are all looking forward to the blessings of a beautiful Christmas, good health and happiness in the coming year 2012! That is my wish for all of our members!

STEPHANIE POLUTNIK

BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Jan Gehm 414.321.1413

twogames@wi.rr.com

As I write this article, I'm thinking, "Where did the summer go?" Now it's time to plan for the rest of the year and 2012. The only thing definitely planned at this time is our Po božična žabava (After Christmas Party), which will be held on January 14, 2012, at Alioto's Restaurant in Wauwatosa. Mark your calendars. More information will follow at our branch meetings.

Attendees are still remembering the National Convention held in Milwaukee and is evident by the many congratulatory messages that Denise P. Bartlett is still receiving. Thank you to all who took the time to send them.

The Wisconsin Regional Convention will be held in Milwaukee on October 9, 2011, at Klemmer's Banquet Hall and will be hosted by Branch 43.

Branch 1, Sheboygan, held their dinner/meeting on August 10, at a local restaurant. Mary Lou Voelk, Bob and Denise Bartlett and Tom and Jan Gehm attended the meeting and enjoyed the hospitality of the officers and members.

I am sad to tell you that since the last issue of the *Zarja*, we have lost three members of our branch - Doris Frahm, Anne Konczal and Theresa Merschnik.

Doris Frahm was an active member and officer of our branch for many years. On behalf of the officers and members sincere condolences are extended to her entire family.

Our deepest sympathy is sent to the family of Anne Konczal who passed away on July 30. Until Anne's failing health, she was a very active member and was the recording secretary and reporter for many years. Rest in peace, Anne. We'll miss you.

Theresa Merschnik passed away on August 13. May eternal light shine upon her.

Enjoy the rest of the fall season. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving and enjoy the holidays.

MICI BREGANT

Slovenian Union of America
"Keeping the Spirit Alive"

BRANCH 50 - Euclid, Ohio

Contact Information: 440.655.6735

ricktomsick@gmail.com

GREETINGS FROM THE "FIVE-O" on America's North Coast! As we prepare for end of the year, we wish all our members a very happy Thanksgiving. Hard to believe as always that the holidays will soon be upon us.

Once again, all eyes will be on Cleveland for the 50th Annual Polka Party hosted by Cleveland's Slovenian polka ambassador Tony Petkovsek. Many of our members will be attending this gala event and the many impromptu side offerings beginning on the night before Thanksgiving and continuing through the following Sunday. In August, our member Joey Tomsick and his polka band played for a special tribute to Tony that included a polka Mass (celebrated by Fr. Perkovich of Minnesota and Fr. Boznar) at St. Vitus Church, in honor of fifty years of radio broadcasting.

Yours truly, my wife and children (including members Zach and Johanna Tomsick) will be running a five mile "Turkey Trot" race in downtown Cleveland on Thanksgiving morning. The idea is to work off the big holiday meal before eating it! This has become a regular annual tradition in the Tomsick house.

We are excited about the upcoming Michigan and Ohio Convention to be held on October 2, 2011. Mass will be at St. Vitus Church at 10:30 a.m. (with Fr. Boznar and Bishop Pevec) and dinner to follow at Sterle's Country House, Family Style (the cost is \$24, which includes tax and tip). Please make arrangements to attend as soon as you can if you have not done so already. We look forward to seeing a few new faces this year, and of course the food and spiritual blessings will be wonderful! At our next Branch meeting we will make final plans for our Christmas party.

Please e-mail me at ricktomsick@gmail.com with any news, updates, accolades, upcoming events and the like, but keep in mind that we have about a two-month lag in reporting upcoming events.

RICK TOMSICK

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BRANCH 89 - Oglesby, Illinois

Contact Information: barbarabruch@yahoo.com or
815.339.2714

Greetings from Oglesby. Alice Ebner, Margie Walter, Mitzi Banich, Doris Ambrose, Flossie Argubright and I were guests at Branch 24's summer picnic. We got to taste štrukelji for the first time; thanks to Martha Lushina of Branch 24. We also enjoyed all the sausages and other Slovenian foods. Our branch is planning a visit to our president's home in October. Bridgit's husband, Mike Gunderson, is an excellent sausage maker and we will get to see how he does it. We are inviting Branch 24 to join us that day. We are also planning a goulash-making food demonstration for later in the year. Please write or call with any questions or suggestions for future programs. It is always a pleasure to hear from our members, especially those who live far away.

BARBARA BRUCH

BRANCH 93 - New York, New York

Contact Information: lgross@tstnyc.org

Branch 93 members were fortunate to see another a capella group from Slovenia in August, *Oktet 9* (eight young men and a young professor of music). The group was formed when they were all high school students in Gimnazija Celje five years ago. They had performances scheduled in other U.S. cities - we hope other SUA members were able to see them too. Here is their website (they are also on You Tube): www.oktet9.com. A few branch members also made their way to Glimmerglass Opera in Cooperstown, NY to hear Slovenian-American Anya Matanovič wow the audience as Micaëla in Carmen.

There was a lovely article about Slovenia in the *NY Times* travel section in August entitled "Slovenian Rhapsody." Here is the web address to read it: <http://travel.nytimes.com/2011/08/07/travel/in-slovenia-visiting-ljubljana-piran-and-maribor.html>.

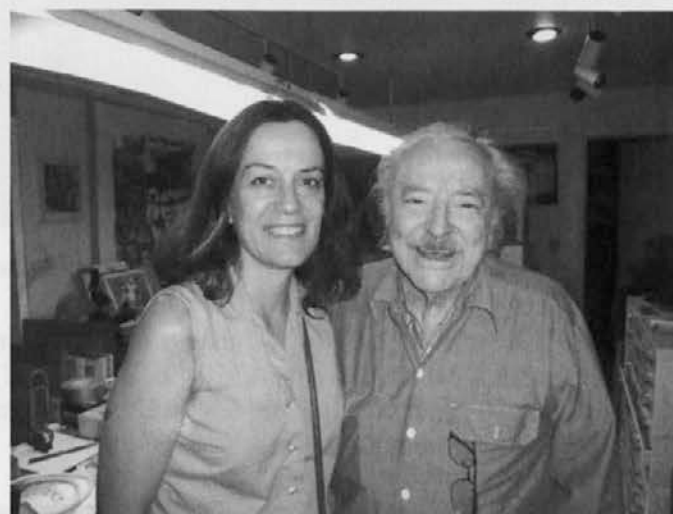
Jernej Mlekuz from the Institute for Slovenian Emigration Studies is doing research on kranjska klobasa in the U.S. He was in Cleveland and New York City in September. Speaking of food, we are planning a traditional St. Martin's Day meal (goose, mlinci* and sauerkraut) for Saturday, November 5th. There will be a wine tasting, cooking demonstration, dancing and games beforehand. Event details were sent to those on our yahoo group. If you are not on e-mail, and are interested in this or other events - please get in touch by phone.

Our Kulturni Dan/Slovenian Day of Culture event in February (most likely Saturday, February 4th) will also celebrate ten years since Branch 93 was reorganized. In 2002, Branch 93 was the Brooklyn branch (which was dormant; they had not been meeting) and there were just eight to nine members. We are now known as the NYC

branch, have 50+ members and hope for another ten years of success!

Our "Slovenian Heritage Weekend" is being planned for the spring at a new location just 45 minutes from NYC - Bailey Farms Retreat and Conference Center. Bailey Farms is a quick trip from NYC by suburban commuter train. We encourage Branch 93 members, as well as other SUA members, to attend. There will be authentic Slovenian meals, heritage activities, plus the camaraderie of Slovenians (and friends of Slovenia) in an idyllic setting. Here is the website: www.baileyfarms.org.

Bogdan Grom, the illustrious artist originally from Trieste (93 years old and still active in his craft), is offering a large



Lynn Zalokar and Bogdan Grom

donation of books to the SUA library. We are asking anyone making a car trip from the northern NJ area to the Chicago area to please assist in getting these books to Joliet. Here is Bogdan's website: <http://www.bogdangrom.com/>.

See our web-site www.swuanyc.org for current and past activities, or take a look at www.facebook.com (type in "SWUA"). Join our Yahoo group for notification of upcoming activities (e-mail: SWUABranch93NYC-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). We'll be updating our addresses to reflect the change from SWUA to SUA but these are still good for now. Not on e-mail? Call Branch 93 contact: 201.947.6336. Same number to suggest an event/lead an event or contact Lynn Zalokar at lzalokar@yahoo.com.

* *Mlinci* is handmade pasta that is flat, oven-dried, then broken into pieces and rehydrated in the cooking juices of braised meat.

LYNN ZALOKAR

BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois

Contact Information: jmhlade@hotmail.com

The fall season is upon us! My favorite time of year! Just a recap of the last few months. In July, we held the annual Summer Social and Bocce Tournament at Paula Mavec's home. Congrats to the winning team: Marty Mavec, Eric Celidonio, Tom Mavec, and Marko Mavec. Second place winners were Mark Hlade, Paula Mavec, Kyle Hlade, and Tony Kaluza. Thanks to everyone for attending this fun event!



Space is limited. Cost is \$15 per person, payable at the door. Please bring a 9x13 baking dish.

We are hosting our annual Cookie Sale on December 11, 2011 from 12-1:30 p.m. at the SCC. Bakers and quart-size tins needed! Drop off cookies at the SCC by 11 a.m. If you have any questions, contact Mary Mavec at 815.723.9003 or marymavec@live.com.



In August we held another Blueberry-Lemon Strudel culinary class. This strudel tends to be a favorite.

On October 30th from 1-4 p.m., we are hosting our annual Bunco fundraiser at the Slovenian Catholic Center (SCC). Entry fee is \$2 per person. Come join us for a fun event and possibly win some great prizes!



We will be having a meeting in January for the election of officers. Watch for the new calendar!

Lastly, our branch will be hosting the next National Convention in Lemont in 2015. We have begun brainstorming ideas and your input is very valuable. We will need much support from our branch members and hopefully assistance from all Illinois branches. Watch for future details!

Wishing you a very Happy Halloween, a Happy Thanksgiving and Blessed Holiday Season!

JANA HLADE



Coming up on November 19th at 1:30 p.m. is another culinary class. Learn to make Sarma (cabbage rolls) at the Slovenian Catholic Center kitchen. To register, contact Barb Block at barbandlarryblock@att.net or 630.379.6442.

BRANCH 108 - Olney, Maryland

Contact Information: Bettekfitz@verizon.net

At our last meeting, convention delegate Lynn Koiner, summarized the changes implemented during the voting for bylaw amendments and briefed us about the convention events. Bernadette Fitzsimmons presented a photo slide show of the convention filled with memories of wonderful convention activities to share with all our members that couldn't be in Milwaukee. Helen Sisto, our transplant member from Chicago who transferred to Branch 108 over five years ago to live close to her daughter in Rockville, MD, was delighted to hear that Dolores Puhek remembered her at the convention.

It was a pleasure for Bernadette and Lynn to meet new member, Frank M. Konchar, from Pennsylvania at the ZarjaFest completely by coincidence when they sat down at one of the tables to sample the wonderful spread of food, and Frank M. and Frank H. Konchar introduced themselves. It was Father's Day weekend and the two Frank's met in Milwaukee for a father/son weekend of tours, fun and SUA events that left them with everlasting happy memories.

Thanks to Marie Robinson who donated a few of her lovely original paintings to raffle off this past year and for the convention. She studied art and painting at the University of Maryland after retiring as a Program Analyst in the US Government and continues to create watercolor paintings to inspire our Slovenian ancestry. Bernadette presented Denise Bartlett, convention chairperson, with one of Marie's original watercolor works, depicting a Slovenian Mass in front of Our Lady of Brezje, the Patroness of Slovenia as a gift to raffle off for Branch 43.

We warmly welcome back our spiritual advisor, Fr. Peter, who returned to the Washington DC area to complete his graduate studies. He wishes all our members and friends many blessings of faith, hope, love and forgiveness during this season of Thanksgiving and Advent.

Vesele božične praznike in srečno novo leto 2012!

BERNADETTE K.
FITZSIMMONS

BRANCH 109

Twin Cities of Minnesota

With summer passing our Branch 109 looks towards the election of a new Branch President. John Zakelj has agreed to have his name placed in nomination. He has been a driving force in our Slovenian language lessons this past year and our upcoming 2012 calendar year. We welcome John's leadership



Marie Robinson's donated photos depicting devotion to Our Lady of Brezje

skills as we begin our new year in September.

Our new Board of Directors met in August and prepared the agenda for our membership meetings. Prior to our first meeting delegates will be attending the Minnesota Regional Convention hosted by our sister branch in Ely. Details of the National Convention held in Milwaukee will be the focus.

One of the main tasks will be to educate our members about the important Bylaws' amendments at the national level of the Slovenian Union of America. We hope that our membership will increase with the new SUA moniker.

NORMAN SETNICKER

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The Holiday Season Slovenian Style

by Mary Lou Deyak Voelk, Vice President of Culture and Heritage

The holiday season is almost upon us. November 27, 2011 marks the First Sunday of Advent, followed by St. Nicholas Day, December 6, 2011, Christmas and New Year's Day and the Feast of the Three Kings on January 6, 2012. Through tradition, ritual, bedtime stories and hugs, we learn to trust and hope. The following ideas are yours to put forth, thus making these special days a family tradition.

St. Nicholas (Sv. Miklavž) Day

St. Nicholas is not a common celebration in the USA. But talk with someone who remembers this special day and they tell quite a story. Frank Vovk, husband of President Anita Vovk, Branch 35 of Aurora, immigrated to the USA in 1949. He tells this delightful boyhood memory.

I come from the village of Slivnica, a few miles southeast of Ljubljana. On the eve before the Feast of St. Nicholas, the Slivnica village children would gather at the fire hall. All activity was centered around the unusual stage. It had a hole with a chute.

On this Eve night, Miklavž would enter the hall carrying his book, accompanied by two angels and two devils. He would pass out a few gifts and then move to the stage. As each stood before Miklavž he would find our name in his big book. There were a lot of feelings during those few seconds. What would be the verdict, good or bad? One would receive a piece of penny candy from the angel if the verdict was "good" and Miklavž would reassure us that the angels would protect us during the year. Of course there was ALWAYS one child who was bad, usually a 13 year old who knew what was going on! The devils came forward with chains, and then the "bad boy" was dropped into the hole that led to "you know where!"

I was a naive young lad when my 13-year-old cousin, who lived two doors down, was classified as being a bad boy. Wide eyed, I saw my cousin chained and then disappear down the hole. The next morning I was out playing. I heard the water pump and there I saw my cousin filling the kitchen bucket. How could it be?

Gripped with fear on seeing a ghost, I ran into the house to tell my mother. My mother responded, "oh, there were probably so many mean kids "down there", they let him go." The moral of the story: The next year rolled around, and despite my mother's promise, "I will protect you", no piece of candy in the world would entice me to stand before Miklavž. I was not going to gamble on being the next victim who went down the chute.

Back home I would put out the round straw basket before going to bed. The basket was used in forming the bread loaves and is still used today. If you were from a wealthier family, a china dish awaited treats from Miklavž. And likewise, what was in your basket in the morning depended on how rich you were. I usually got a pencil, an eraser, several notebooks for school, half of a St. John's Bread, one fig and slices of dried apples and pears. I will always remember watching in envy, as a school friend wound his toy train, and then seeing it wind its way around the track. Many years have now passed and today I chuckle at those memories. I know St. Nicholas Day is celebrated to honor a great Christian Bishop.

- Frank Vovk

Preparing for St. Nicholas Day

Now it is not intended that you replicate Frank Vovk's rendition of Miklavž. Here are some simple ideas that can lead to a yearly tradition in your home and/or at your December Branch meetings. It is yours to make it happen.

Set up the crèche minus the Infant.

Send an e-mail to friends and family; St. Nicholas ecards are free at this site: <http://www.123greetings.com>.

Plan a simple but special meal, one that will become a yearly tradition.

Give the house a festive look with a wreath on the front door, a table centerpiece with clementines (oranges), candy canes, nuts, any symbol of Sv. Miklavž. Add any Slovenian items/ornaments!

For each place setting, make a Bishop's Miter out of large paper/cloth napkins. Check out the following website: <http://www.brightsettings.com>. Scroll down to bottom and click napkin folding.

Let children of all ages color the Bishop stand up template and place with each table setting. For template see www.swua.org.

Tell a St. Nicholas story at the table.

Do an Internet search on 'Saint Nicholas folklore', great folktales for branch meetings.

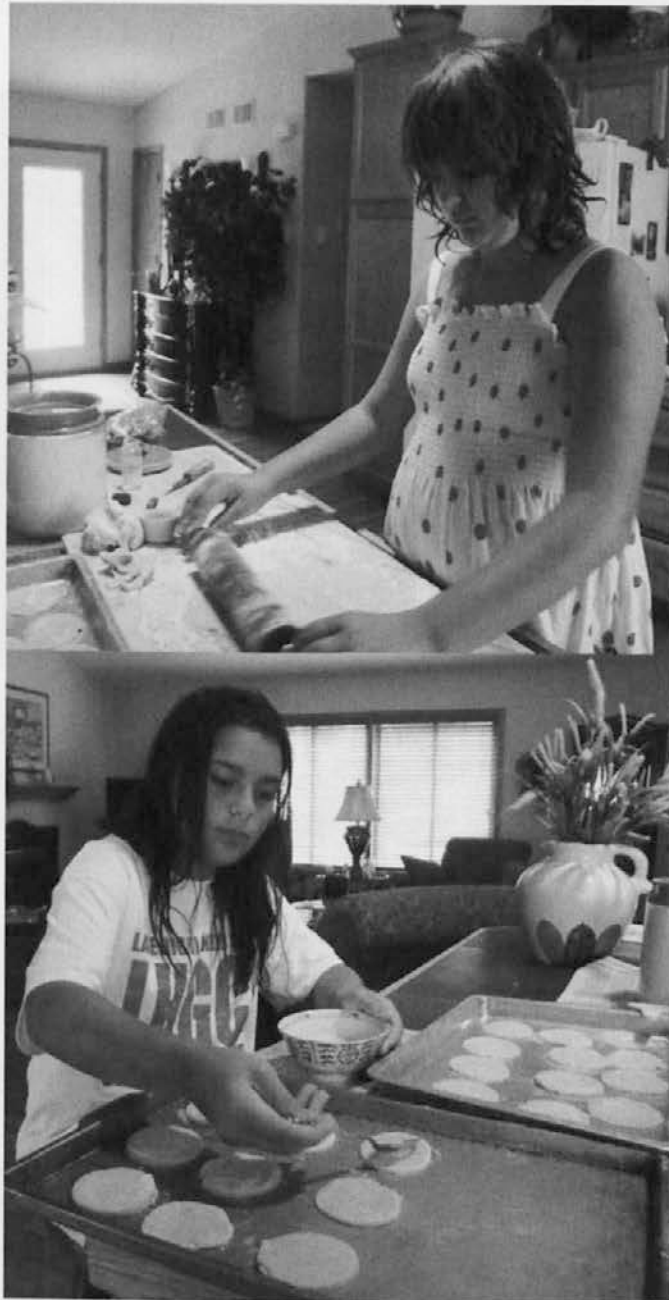
At the dinner table discuss how each can generate St. Nicholas generosity in 2012.

Prior to sitting down to the family meal, have everyone remove their shoes in an obscure place. During the reading of the St. Nicholas story, someone can be filling the shoes with a candy cane, a clementine or orange and some chocolate candies, all symbols of Sv. Miklavž.

Bake St. Nicholas cookies. A simple idea is round sugar cookies sprinkled with gold to represent the story of Sv. Miklavž and the dowry for three maidens. (See page 32 for recipe.)

*If you have a Sv. Miklavž memory,
please share it with us!*

Send your story to Mary Lou at ottolou@gulftel.com.



Top: Isabelle Luzar; Bottom: Abigail Voelk
Making St. Nicholas cookies

Bernice Krasovec, Branch 3 of Pueblo, Colorado has written a lovely book on St. Nicholas.

Cost: \$6.00 plus \$2.50 shipping & handling

If you would like it autographed, please include the name or names of the child. There are no taxes as the money goes to the Slovenian Library Fund of St. Mary's Church.

Make checks payable to: Bernice Krasovec
4730 Rosecrest Ct., Pueblo, CO 81005
Telephone 719.564.6779
E-mail: bkrasovec8@aol.com

Smoking the House

The famous Slovenian folklore artist, Maksim Gaspari, says it best through his beautiful artwork.

As tradition goes, setting up the manger called “jaslice” was central to the Slovenian Christmas tradition. The customary “God’s Corner”, with the cross suspended from the corner of the ceiling, was transformed into an elaborate depiction of the birth of Christ.

At dusk on Christmas Eve, the father led the entire family procession in the beautiful and solemn blessing of the house. The procession began at the “God’s Corner” and moved from room to room as they prayed the rosary. As the father incensed each corner of the room, the mother blessed items in the room used by family members in daily activities. This was to remind the family that all work of the day should be an offering pleasing to God. When all the nooks and crannies of the home had been blessed, the family placed the baby Jesus in the manger.



Maksim Gaspari painting

Preparing for Smoking the House

Plan a simple but special meal or treat that will become a yearly tradition.

Bake a Christmas bread using a favorite recipe, or the recipe from the cookbook “Taste Slovenia” by Dr. Janez Bogataj. (See page 32 for recipe.)

Design your family ritual for Smoking the House. It could be as simple as burning incense each Christmas Eve, find a prayer to your liking or write your own.

Purchase incense and attain holy water. Containers needed: a small fry pan for incense and a bowl for holy water and a sprig of palm or Christmas tree.

Plan a sing along of Christmas music; a DVD is always special.

Set up crèche minus the Infant.

If your family opens gifts on Christmas Eve, save it for last!

Start a new tradition: This idea is a takeoff on a German tradition of hanging a pickle ornament in an obscure place on the Christmas tree. The first to find it on Christmas morning gets a special gift. Ideas for an ornament could be any items picked up at the Ljubljana open market, such as the wooden Ribnica grouping, a lect heart, a piece of Idrija lace, or a Marija Pomagja icon. How about making a potica ornament? Glue a photo on a piece of wood and hang it from the tree.



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Blessing of the House

This blessing was traditionally done on New Year's Eve. The father of the home blessed the four corners of the house, and the area around the main door of the house. Above the door, written in chalk to provide protection against illness and misfortune for the coming year, was the following:

20 + M+G+B+12

This is to celebrate the coming of the Three Kings: Melchior, Gaspar and Balthasar in firm belief that the Christ child resides in their homes, and that the three Kings will come to visit the Christ child this Christmas season. The century and the decade, 2012, are written on either side of the initials of the Three King, adding crosses to separate each of them.

Blessings on you and your family during this holiday season.

To je to,

Mary Lou Deyak Voelk



Maksim Gaspari painting

God's Corner

January/February 2012 Issue of Zarja

It was many years ago that I saw a Christmas scene painted by the famous Slovenian folk artist, Maksim Gaspari, in *Zarja*. In the right top corner was a shelf. It was Corinne Leskovar who educated me on the Slovenian tradition of a God's Corner or nook in one's home. I became mesmerized by this tradition. As I traveled through Slovenia, my eye was out for those nooks! I shared this collection at the 2011 National Convention.

For the January/February 2012 issue of *Zarja*, we would like to publish pictures of your special nooks. Please E-mail your photographs to the Zarja Editor at pohar4@aol.com with a brief description of your God's Corner.



My most recent God's Nook can be found on my parent's wooden chest. The large Marija Pomagaj painting is a gift from Helen Lucancic Valerugo of Joliet, Illinois. Other items include a Lourdes candle from my late mother-in-law, folk art from a family in Slovenia, a wooden bowl from Slovenia, and the photo of our four grandchildren from Seattle - Connor, Joseph, Claire and Camille Voelk.

Slovenian Recipes for the Holiday Season

Christmas Bread

*Prepared by Dr. Janez Bogataj
with Mary Lou Dejak Voelk
and Jenka for the 2011
National Convention*

Ingredients:

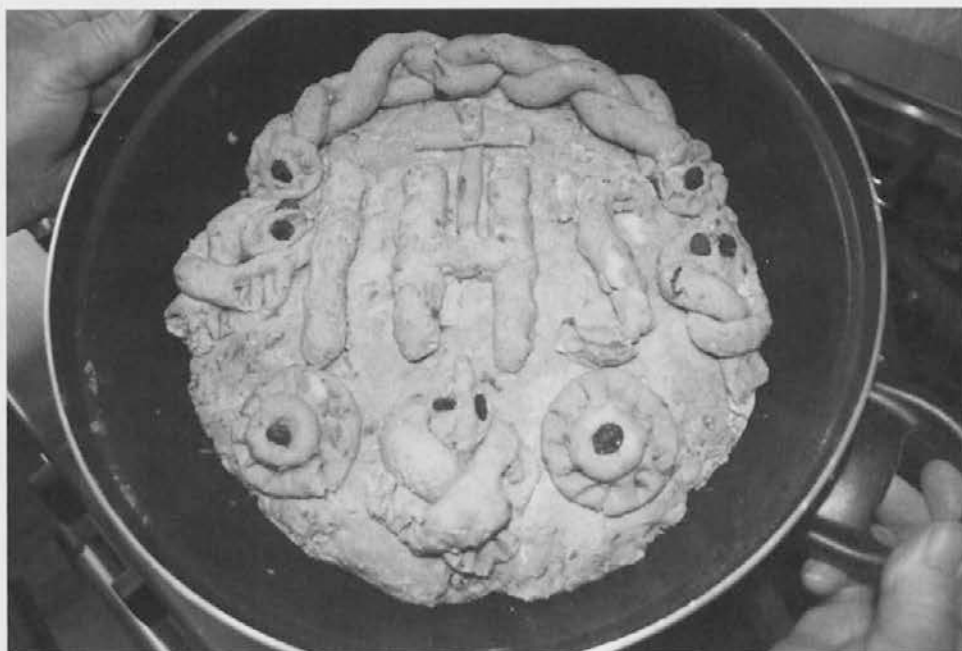
2 lbs. buckwheat flour
3 cups white flour
2 teaspoons sea salt
1¼ cup milk
1¼ cup water
1½ tablespoon sugar
5 packages yeast
1¼ cup diced dried fruit
(plums, pears and apples)
¼ cup raisins
1 egg

In a very large bowl, mix buckwheat flour, white flour and sea salt together and make a well in the center of the mixture - this is so you can add the wet products in the middle and can keep bringing the dry products in from the ring (outside of the well) as needed to form dough.

Mix ½ cup milk, ½ cup water, sugar and yeast, then add to the well of the flour mixture. Add ¾ cup warm milk and ¾ cup warm water and keep mixing. Start kneading, add additional 1½ cup of white flour add as needed. Add diced dried fruit and raisins.

Let raise one hour in a warm setting (the bread will rise to about 5 inches.) Then cut off about 3 cups of dough and set aside for decorations. (See decorating instructions on bottom of page 31.)

Bake in a 12 inch pan at 325° oven for 1 hour. After it has baked one hour, add 1 cup hot water, poured around the edge of the bread, continue baking for 15 minutes. Then using a beaten egg, brush the entire surface area of the bread and bake another 15 minutes.



Poprtnik

Recipe is on pages 54-55 in "Taste Slovenia" by Dr. Janez Bogataj.

Recipe conversions by Mary Lou Deyak Voelk.

Poprtnik is a richly decorated, symbolic food served during Christmas and Easter. Poprtnik originated in pre-Christian times and according to belief the bread possessed healing and magical powers. The first written records about this bread occurred in the 17th Century. The word "poprtnik" implicates that the bread is covered with a tablecloth and left to rest until consummation on festive days. (*Prt means tablecloth.*)

In the past, it was ritual that the bread was on the table for all three Christmases. The three loaves would differ by the flour used: buckwheat, wheat and rye flours. In northeast Slovenia, it was enriched with dry fruits and walnuts. The rich tradition of poprtnik has been kept until today, especially in the Kočevsko Region where there is an annual exhibition held in Velike Lašče. Pri Kuklju is a local gostilna where the event is held. Local women prepare over 40 different variations of this bread.



Sour Dough Starter:

2 oz. yeast (yes, 2 oz)

1 tablespoon sugar

½ cup milk

4 tablespoons white flour

Dough:

8 cups white flour

½ cup sugar

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons butter

2 cups milk

3 teaspoons salt

3 eggs

lemon zest

Mix yeast with sugar, milk and flour to make sourdough. Blend sugar and butter, add eggs and beat well. Add milk. Stir in flour and knead dough well. Let dough rise to double.

Put aside a small piece of dough for the braid and the ornaments. Form a loaf and place in a greased, round baking pan. Make ornaments and place on bread; to prevent them from falling off, brush the top of loaf with lukewarm water. Let decorated loaf rise.

Brush with beaten egg. Bake one hour in a 355° F oven. When done, remove from oven and cover with a tablecloth until cool. This keeps the moisture in the bread.

Decorating the Breads

Before adding any decorations to the bread dough, brush with water. Make dough initials I H S and place as seen in photo. Make a small crucifix and place above the H.

Birds

Make 3 birds. Use raisins for eyes.

Braid

With remaining dough, make a long, slender roll about 24 inches. Make two cuts about 22 inches long, leaving 2 inches from one end. This will help with the braiding. Starting just below the intact 2 inches, proceed to braid the 3 strips until the piece is completely braided. Place this on the bread.

Flowers

With leftover dough, make 2 or 3 little flowers. For each flower make a larger ball, slightly flattened, and place a smaller ball on top. Use a teaspoon handle, press around the dough to make petals.

Aunt Oooooie's Sugar Cookies

This is a 60-plus year old recipe from my aunt, the late Julia Perovshek Zgonc of Branch 23, Ely, Minnesota. Roll out, use the cookie cutter, gather the scraps and form another ball. A magic dough, a perfect Sv. Miklavž cookie. I call it Aunt Oooooie's Cookies.

Ingredients:

3 cups flour
½ teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 cup butter, slightly chilled (do not substitute)
2 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract (or your choice of flavor)

Mix together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add butter and mix as for pie crust until finely crumbled. Using a mixer: beat eggs, sugar and vanilla until very thick! Fold egg mixture into the flour mixture. Mix thoroughly. The dough will be very sticky! Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Divide dough into 4-5 smaller dough balls and cover with plastic wrap for 10 minutes; it is easier working with smaller batches of dough. Roll out on floured board, and cut with desired cookie cutters. Gather the scraps and form another dough ball, and continue rolling.

Bake at 400° for 7 minutes or until lightly brown. Bake only one pan at a time. Decorate and/or frost is your choice.

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SLOVENIAN CHRISTMAS TREE CONTEST in 2012

It's not too early to start thinking of Christmas 2012! That is right, the Zarja Team is already lining up an exciting list of themes for the year 2012 and one of them is for the November/December issue of Zarja. We want to see your Slovenian Christmas tree. So the perfect thing to do is create the tree – this year! When we say Slovenian Christmas tree that can mean anything. It could be a tree loaded with red carnations, crystal ornaments from Rogaska, pictures of your Slovenian ancestors, wooden collectables from Ribnica, and so much more. Use your imagination and creativity! Include your family and perhaps it will become a family heirloom. For further information email wprokup@aol.com.



Mary Lou Deyak Voelk



*Abigail Voelk, Allen TX and
Isabelle Luzar, Kenosha, WI*



Dr. Janez Bogataj

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