

This Slovenian-American Roadside Chapel is devoted as a place for prayer and reflection as we honor and preserve our Slovenian legacy.

It is dedicated to the Slovenian immigrants and their descendants who have promoted their heritage and culture to ensure its longevity for future generation in the Illinois Valley.

Slovenian Union of America

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LAURIE LEHMAN



Afternoon Outing 12"x16" (scene of Piran, Slovenia)

Original Paintings of

Slovenia

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Zarja - The Dawn

EDITOR: Bonnie Pohar Prokup

DIRECTOR OF DESIGN: Debbie Pohar

CONSULTING EDITORS: Annette Charron and

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Communications for the next issue of publication

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

Submission Guidelines

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

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



THE STATE OF THE UNION

There is a premise that "when we inherit a cultural heritage from our ancestors, we thereby take on a commitment to preserve it for our descendants." - Brenda Loncar Just a Spoonful of Heritage...

The article by Breda Loncar in the October 2, 2019 *Slove-nian Times* hit home. One half of the front page was covered with word art: nouns, adjectives, adverbs, describing **POVERTY.**

Poverty: state of being extremely poor. Poverty: state of being inferior in quality or insufficient in amount.

As your president I am speaking of POVERTY as insufficient in amount as it pertains to **HERITAGE.**

At the June 2019 SUA National Convention, Regional Presidents/Regional Conventions were done away with. In September 2019, I received an invitation from Jackie Smith, Wisconsin Regional President who wrote, "If you would say a few words, that would be wonderful. Regionals have become low key events with less and less participation from branch members... we will not be having these regional meetings anymore. So sad, but we sure enjoyed the ride. Blessings to you in your role as National President in this most crucial time."

Former SUA National President Kathy Ferrante was keenly aware when she presented an idea: Unite all Ohio branches under a new branch number. A committee was formed, and a SUA Cultural Grant request was submitted to cover costs of mailing and meeting places. The result is a new branch, Northeast Ohio Branch 111. The Slovenian heritage lives in Ohio!

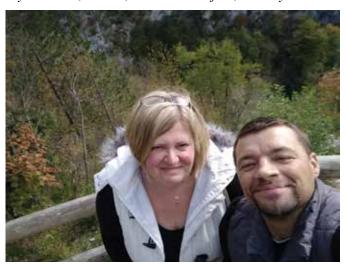
Betty Wiley of Branch 3, had received a recipe with photos for poprtnik from her distant cousin, Jože Skebe. Betty suggested Jože contact the SUA so that the recipe could possibly be published. This is the letter I received. Look for a sentence!

Dear Mrs. Deyak Voelk,

Ifelt very delighted when I read that you decided to publish the symbolism of our festive bread named poprtnik. Mrs. Wiley is my distant cousin. She visited us in the past year. After sending her an email with the photo of poprtnik, she asked me if I agreed with sending these photos to your editorial office.

The poprtnik, which is our festive bread is known only in some parts of Slovenia, a special creation for the Epiphany, which occurs on January 6. The tradition of baking poprtnik is disappearing nowadays. In many parts of Slovenia, especially cities, many people don't remember it anymore.

Poprtnik is traditionally baked in Dolenjska, the part of Slovenia where I live. When I was a child poprtnik was usually prepared by my aunt, my father's sister. My brothers, sisters, and all six of us, usually watched



Andreja Podpadec and Jože Skebe

SUA Collegiate Scholarship: For your journey down the education road. SUA Cultural Grant: For historical research; for sponsoring heritage activities.

For Applications: slovenianunion.org

our aunty when she prepared it. I always tracked the preparation of the bread from the beginning. I can still remember how every year I was especially attentive and observed making figures and decorating this festive bread. When I was a bit older, aunty allowed me to help her. Thanks to that, I can still remember this recipe. I guess this way my aunty succeeded in passing the recipe on and preserving the tradition of making poprtnik.

Parts of poprtnik need to be made at least one day before January 6. The preparation part ends on the morning of January 6 when the holy Three Kings come with presents for Jesus. Which means that preparation ends with the baking part. In the evening of the same day after the family prayer, poprtnik is cut into even parts and split



among all family members. At home, we baked it in a baker's oven – we named it 'krušna peč' – because of that poprtnik was even more delicious!

The symbolism of the division of this bread is in 'giving'. Just as the Three Kings gave presents to the newborn Jesus, the family members are given the gift of sweet bread on that day.



The shape of this bread varies from place to place. In Suha Krajina, a part of the Dolenjska region where I come from, the bread was usually baked in the form of a loaf and always decorated with figures. The more skillful ones make the holy cribs or birds while others made crosses or braids.



I baked two of them last year. The rounded one with the bird we ate last January 6, 2018; from the bread in the shape of the sun with the holy cribs in the middle, we ate only the rays. I saved the middle part with the cribs, and it is now dried. Let this tradition last for many years more!

With kind regards from our (your distant) homeland Slovenia, Jože Skebe and Andreja Podpadec

Today so much of family life is portrayed in the make-believe world of television. It is POVERTY staring us in the face. Words in Breda's column bring family to mind: baby, child, childhood, kindness, lifestyle, kid, hungry, undernourished, unhappy.

To children, storytelling, especially family stories and activities, are powerful. Kids are egocentric; they love stories that feature themselves in activities experienced with parents or grandparents. When traditions are celebrated, generations are connected. It means the enjoyment of spending time with loved ones and thinking and talking about those who shaped our lives. This is the reason we celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays. They become family rituals. Celebrating becomes a habit! Children love it, and they pick up on it.

Imagine, some 25 years after making poprtnik with aunty, Jože's letter and photos are being published in the magazine of the Slovenian Union of America! A spoonful of heritage accounts for a lifetime of memories. Many thanks to Jože for reminding us here in America that we must partake in keeping traditions if we are to maintain our Slovenian cultural heritage.

Let's Make Poprtnik

No need to make from scratch; use frozen dough or the bread maker.

Jože has bequeathed a wonderful recipe for making the figures! Just like Play Dough! A day or so prior to January 6, mix up the dough and make figures for the bread. Kids of all ages will enjoy!

Ingredients:

1 egg

2 tablespoons sugar

Flour to make a stiff/smooth pasta dough.

- Beat egg and sugar together; add flour.
- Knead till smooth.

Birds are made by pinching a small dough ball, to form a beak, and then using a fork to make the wings and tail. Place on paper toweling and let dry overnight.



Bread Maker Recipe:

Addie's Coffee Cake makes a great poprtnik!

Cake Ingredients:

All bread ingredients must be at room temperature!

7 ounces milk

1 teaspoon salt

1 egg yolk

1 tablespoon butter or margarine

21/4 cups bread flour

½ cup sugar

2 teaspoons dry yeast

- Add all cake ingredients to bread pan.
- Select "Dough/Pasta" setting on your machine and press Start/Stop.
- Grease a 9-inch round or 5x7-inch oblong cake pan.
- When cycle is through, remove dough and pat dough into prepared greased pan.
- Dampen the bottoms of the dried figures and place on the dough.

Topping Ingredients:

2 tablespoons of butter, melted ½ cup sugar 1 teaspoon cinnamon ½ cups pecans, chopped

- Drizzle melted butter over the dough.
- Mix sugar, cinnamon, and nuts; sprinkle over butter.
- Cover; let rise in warm place about 30 minutes.
- Bake in a preheated 375° oven for 20-30 minutes, until golden brown.
- Cool 10 minutes in pan on rack.

Powdered Sugar Glaze Ingredients:

1 cup sifted powdered sugar 1 tablespoon butter or margarine, softened 1 or 2 tablespoons water or milk ½ teaspoon vanilla

- In small bowl, combine all glaze ingredients and blend until smooth.
- Spread or drizzle glaze on slightly warm coffee cake.



cookie sheet.

Dampen the figures and place on the dough.

Use baking directions on the package.

You may choose to drizzle butter and sprinkle the cinnamon and sugar over the top. Be creative!

3 Winter 2019

Chalking the House:

Not only does poprtnik bread play an important role in Slovenian Epiphany traditions, but burning incense and sprinkling consecrated water around the home and/or chalking the door is also an important tradition. It marks the end of the Christmas season. The letters CMB represent the Three Wise Men: Caspar, Melchoir, and Balthasar. In Christian tradition, the Three Wise Men represented the pagan peoples of the East. CMB is also the abbreviation of the Latin phrase "Christus mansionem benedicat" ("May Christ bless this home").

Gather some chalk; any color will do. Gather your household, and say a prayer.*Take turns making the inscriptions. +20 CMB 20+.

*Loving God, bless this household. May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness, and abiding in your will. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen. Also say the Lord's Prayer.

The Linden Tree

Some 40 years ago, a linden tree was planted on the side of the Stonich Building. This area had become known as Slovenian Row in recognition of Slovenian immigrants who settled the area, a suburb within the city of Joliet. This tree had grown into a majestic Slovenian icon. Sad to say, it is dying. The trunk has rotted, and it is now leaning against the building.

In Slovenia the tree can be found in front of village churches, in castle yards, and in town squares marking the place where the village met on social occasions or on matters pertaining to community interests. Traditions go back as far as the Middle Ages. The beautiful aromatic yellow flower tea reports healing properties. As a child, I was given a cup of linden tea whenever I had a tummy ache. It worked!

In the 1980s a campaign entitled "Slovenia, My Country" was launched. Meant to enhance tourism, it led the people





down the path to independence. On the day the Republic of Slovenia proclaimed its independence on Republic Square (Tag republic) in front of the National Assembly building, a linden tree was planted.

Planning on a trip to Slovenia? Locations of ancient linden trees can be found on the Internet. Document the locations, and once in Slovenia stand beside this beautiful tree as those of yore, where once people sang and danced under the linden tree. Take photos. Our *Zarja* and SUA Facebook readers love photos!

While linden trees are known for having a long life, our tree has not lived but 50 years. Perhaps being in the middle of a city, surrounded by pavement, the tree has had a limited amount of moisture reaching the roots system. The tree grew, adding the massive amount of foliage, a canopy which prevented the rainwater from reaching the patch of ground beneath the tree. By the time you read this, the tree will have been removed. However, come next Spring, a new linden tree will be planted.

Melcome - Dobrodošli 002, Urbanski, Lenore 043, Gorenc, Frank 003, Albertolle, Raymond 100, Theresa, Anzur 020, Cerovac, Jenae 100, Zakrasek, Mary 020, Mutz, Richard 109, Henly, Susan 030, Knapic, Vlasta



Meet the newest members of the SUA National Board:

George Plautz, VP Marketing and Fundraising

I was born in Central Wisconsin, near the Slovenian farming settlement of Willard. I was not raised in the Willard environment, but my father was born there, so that is my connection. As an adult I worked for the Department of Justice in Washington DC for 32 years and retired to Valrico, Florida in 2006. I am active in the Gottscheers, SGSI, International, have written articles for *Zarja – The Dawn*, helped to photograph all the graves in the two cemeteries in Willard, and have submitted material to the Clark County Genealogy and Heritage website. My main interest is in Bela Krajina genealogy.



Mary Rizner Glaize Corresponding and Recording Secretary

Mary is from Forest City, Pennsylvania and currently lives in Orlando, Florida. She worked as a high school math teacher and software engineer in the modeling and simulation industry. Mary is retired and enjoys photography, indoor spinning classes, and riding bikes with husband, Jack. She likes to travel and has done both hiking and cultural trips, including New Zealand, Galapagos, Amazon rainforest, Machu Picchu, Europe, and many national parks in the US. She's always looking for interesting articles for the Slovenian Union of America Facebook page. Looking forward to hearing your story!

Richard Grill, VP of Home Office

Graduated St. Ignatius College Prep, Chicago, received Bachelor of Music in Organ Performance, DePaul University, Chicago and a Master of Music in Organ Performance from the Institute of Music. Mother Rose was a member of Branch 2, and sang in the Choral Club for many years. Employed at St. Paul Church, Chicago; St. Denis Church, Chicago; Our Lady of Angels Church, Cleveland; and St. Mary Church, Muncie, Indiana. Married to Mary Berna-



dette Moran in December 1967 until she died in December 2009. Graduate of the Ecclesiastical Lay Ministry Program of the Diocese of Lafavette, Indiana. Became substitute organist and then employed at

Grace Lutheran Church, Muncie. Member of American Guild of Organists, achieved degree of Colleague of American Guild of Organists (CAGO) and held offices of President (Dean) of Muncie Chapter. Member of Board of the Soup Kitchen of Muncie, Inc. Member of St. Lawrence Church, Muncie, and serve as member of Finance Committee, choir member, reader, and Eucharistic Minister. Also plays the organ for morning Masses and Saturday evening Masses at his parish. Recipient of award for lifetime accomplishment in the field of Education from Who's Who in America in 2018. Enjoys gardening, cooking, and baking. Hopes to continue the wonderful work accomplished in the Home Office and is looking forward to making the Home Office a mecca for persons of Slovene descent and a shrine of our culture. Joined Branch 5 several years ago and transferred to Branch 99 this past summer.

Richard Mutz, Membership Manager

Richard Mutz was born and raised in Joliet. He is a lifelong member of KSKJ and a graduate of both Joliet Catholic Academy and the University of St. Francis, where he studied Fine Arts and Business. After undergrad, Rick worked in a scientific research laboratory studying the behavior of spiders and playing darts before returning to the art world and completing his Master of Fine Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in Digital Media. After graduate school, he switched sides of the bar, and worked as a bartender at Bobby's Tap, before leaving for Rhinelander, Wisconsin to pursue a career in automotive sales management and musky hunting. Now back home in Joliet, Rick works

as a Real Estate Agent at Taylor Street Realty, is the proud foster parent of his puppy Smokey, and is the new Membership Manager at the Slovenian Union of America. He is also a new member of the Slovenian Union of America!



April Showers

Debbie Duris, elected president of the newly established Northeast Ohio Branch 111, has taken over the reins of our popular "April's Showers of Dollars" fundraiser. The monies received will benefit the 2023 National Convention that will be held in Pueblo, Colorado. The National Board and the 2023 convention committee **Thank You** for your support. Good luck to all!



May 27- June 6, 2020

The tour has a glowing itinerary, landscapes, coastlines, turquoise waters, mountain tops, and architecture. Add a glass of wine and delicious tastes interspersed with friendship and camaraderie. SUA escorts will accompany the tour. Read all about it in this issue of *Zarja*!

October 2-3, 2019 National Board Meeting

As there had been little time for the newly elected national board to meet during the convention, a date was scheduled for October 2-3, 2019 in Joliet. Also, too much time would have lapsed between the convention and annual springtime 2020 meeting. It was best the newly elected officers be in the building, becoming familiarized with the business issues of the organization. A major concern has been the condition of the bathroom. This building, the home of the SUA, cannot be open to the public. To put it simply, the bathroom is an embarrassment! The board is now moving on the project, estimates are now being accepted, and plans are going ahead to make changes. It will be a new bathroom with handicapped assessable stool, sink, and doorway. Membership is of great concern. The last topic on the meeting agenda was DISCUSSION. Area Illinois

SUA branches were invited to meet in a discussion session. This was followed by an ethnic supper of potatoes, sauerkraut, and sausage. It was fine dining in the "upper room." Richard Mutz, our new Membership Manager, was also present. The National Board will be scheduling an April 2020 board meeting followed by a meeting with Member Representatives.

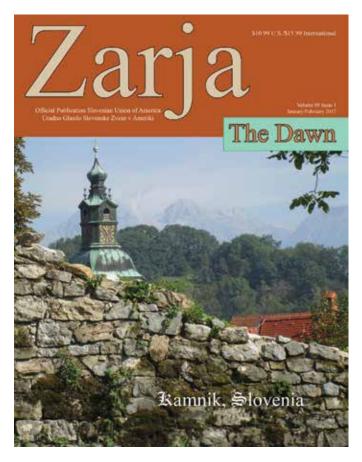
Literary Award

In this *Zarja* issue (page 32), check out the information regarding the 2nd Literary Award announcement. What is WRITING? "We write to be truly alive. Writing makes art out of everyday, ordinary moments." The committee awaits your submissions!

SUA Website from Annette Charron, VP of Outreach

A new Slovenian Union of America website is under construction and hopefully will be fully functional in early 2020. The website has a fresh new look and can be accessed by typing in "slovenianunion.org" in Google or your browser. We are busy updating and revising the various areas of the website. Under the membership area, the goal is to have an application and renewal process that will be simplified and include the ability to complete the new member or renewal application, to renew automatically (if desired), and to pay the annual membership fee online. The website will also enable individuals to honor a loved one with a SUA donation and/or to support one of SUA's current programs (Cultural Grant, Collegiate Grant, Building Renovations, etc.). Membership/Renewal Applications and donations will also still be accepted through the regular mail service.

The holidays are just around the corner. A subscription to Zarja - The Dawn is a gift that keeps on giving. I may add, gift giving brings new members into the SUA fold. In your



home it is a conversation piece to all who enter. A most treasured heirloom, *Zarja* is each day, a silent personal reminder of your Slovenian heritage.

To you and your family, a very happy and blessed holiday season and a New Year filled with raptures of hope, love and peace.

> to je to, Mary Lou Deyak Voelk, President Slovenian Union of America



\$200 Donation

Branch 109, Building Improvements

\$100 Donation

Carole L. Morris, 30, Building Improvements Connie Newberg, 23, Building Improvements Deborah Martincich, 20, +Theresa M Burns Jenae Cerovac, 20, Building Improvements Mary Lou Voelk, 23, Building Improvements Richard Grill, 99, Building Improvements Branch 23, Building Improvements

\$50 Donation

David Setnicker, 109, Cultural Grant

\$25 Donation

Catherine Joyce, 2, SUA

\$20 Donation

Jenae Cerovac, 20, SUA

\$10 Donation

Branch 43, Educational Grant +Lillian Gorenc

Proposed Elimination of Article VIII in SUA Corporate Bylaws

Concerning Regional Presidents and Regional Conventions

After much discussion the members of the SUA National Board (2015-2019) determined that the time had come for the elimination of the SUA bylaw requirement to have Regional Presidents and Regional Conventions. This decision was based on the inability to fill the President positions for all six (6) regions of the United States and the expense of requiring SUA branches to gather in their regions every two (2) years. This recommendation was presented to the Member Representatives (Member Reps) on June 15 at the 2019 National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio. After some discussion the Member Reps unanimously agreed with their advisory vote to eliminate the requirement. Due to the seriousness of this decision it was again discussed with the incoming 2019-2023 National Board at their October 2019 meeting in Joliet, Illinois. It was unanimously decided to again present this elimination to the Member Reps for their binding vote after a required six (6) month period following SUA's bylaws. Only the Member Reps may vote on this decision. Below is ARTICLE VIII, REGIONAL PRESIDENTS AND REGIONAL CONVENTIONS, SECTIONS 8.1 thru 8.6 that is proposed for elimination. Following ARTICLE VIII is ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS, SECTION 13.2 Bylaws which explains the procedure.

- Denise P. Bartlett, Bylaws Chairperson

ARTICLE VIII

REGIONAL PRESIDENTS AND REGIONAL CONVENTIONS SECTION 8.1 Regional Presidents

One Regional President, a member in good standing, shall be elected for each Region by the Members of the Branches constituting the Regions, as more fully described in Section 8.2. Regional Presidents shall have the duty to foster interest in the Corporation in their respective areas. They shall promote the development of the Corporation generally, and shall program activities on a region-wide level. In addition, they shall organize and preside over Regional Conventions.

SECTION 8.2 Regions

There may be six (6) regions, with each being entitled to one (1) Regional President. The regions may include:

- a) First (1st) Region: Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wash., D.C.
- b) Second (2nd) Region: Michigan and Ohio
- c) Third (3rd) Region: Illinois and Indiana
- d) Fourth (4th) Region: Wisconsin
- e) Fifth (5th) Region: Minnesota
- f) Sixth (6th) Region: California, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Oregon, and Washington

SECTION 8.3 Regional President Election

The Regional Presidents shall be elected at the biennial Conventions of their respective regions, which immediately follow the Corporation's National Convention. To be elected as a Regional President, an individual Member must receive a majority of the votes cast during the Regional Convention. All Regional President nominations shall be public. Elections may be by secret ballot if any Member so requests. If more than one (1) candidate is nominated, and if a majority is not achieved by any one (1) candidate, the two (2) nominees with the highest total vote shall be voted upon to decide the election. The election of each Regional President shall be delivered in writing to the National Corresponding/Recording Secretary.

SECTION 8.4 Regional Presidents Duties

The Regional Presidents shall send a report within two (2) weeks after their Regional Convention to the National President and Editor of *Zarja - The Dawn* for publication.

Each year the Regional Presidents shall submit a written report to the National President prior to the National Board of Directors' meeting. Regional Presidents shall strive to attend one (1) meeting of the individual Branches within their jurisdiction each year, and shall supervise all Regional membership campaigns. Regional Presidents shall attend the National Convention and shall present reports describing the activities of the Branches within their respective jurisdictions. In addition, they shall perform such other duties as may be required by law, by the Articles of Incorporation, or by these Bylaws, or which may be assigned from time to time by the National President and the National Board of Directors.

SECTION 8.5 Regional President Term of Office

The term of office of each Regional President shall commence on the first (1st) day of January of the year following the National Convention. Regional Presidents may serve for a maximum of two (2) terms, a term consisting of four (4) years each.

SECTION 8.6 Regional Conventions

To create additional interest, sociability, and to foster new ideas benefiting the welfare of the Corporation, Regional Conventions shall be held at least once every two (2) years in each region. Each Branch in a region shall send a Representative-at-Large. The Regional President shall preside over the Regional Convention and a Recording Secretary of the host Branch shall serve at each Regional Convention.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS, SECTION 13.2

Bylaws which explains the procedure.

SECTION 13.2 Bylaws The Bylaws of the Corporation may be altered, amended, repealed, or restated at any meeting of the Members, by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority of all votes entitled to be cast, provided that the proposed amendment has been included in the notice of the meeting, has been presented to the National Board of Directors no later than six (6) months in advance of the meeting to allow for Board review and distribution to all Members through the official publication, Zarja - The Dawn.

COME TOUR WITH US! The Slovenian Union of America I love Slovenian Union of America Out

Tour Highlights:

May 27 - June 6, 2020

- Accommodation at hotels, taxes, & luggage handling
- Professional English-speaking tour guide
- Deluxe motor coach
- · Breakfast daily
- Welcome to Slovenia dinner party
- Cooking class with dinner and drinks
- Two wine tasting experiences with traditional snacks
- Travel back in time on an old steam train through the Julian Alps
- Driving tour of the Goriška Brda area with famous WWII sites
- Goriška Brda regional gostilna dinner party
- Visit WWII Franja Partisan Hospital
- Walking tour of Piran
- Lunch on the Adriatic Sea

- Sunset boat cruise on the Adriatic Sea
- Gewerkenegg Castle
- Žlikrofi presentation and lunch at Kendov Dvorec Manor
- Walking tour of Ljubljana
- Meeting with genealogy expert Peter Hawlina and visit to the Archives
- Honey tasting & visit with a beekeeper
- Pogača demonstration and tasting
- Lamb roast picnic-style dinner in Zuzemberk
- Cable car to Velika Planina
- Lunch in a mountain hut
- Farewell to Slovenia dinner party with music & dancing
- Plus many more surprises!

Here's your chance to experience Slovenia with this custom-designed tour. Each destination was researched and chosen for its historical characteristics, captivating architecture, or the perfect ambiance.

The jewel of Europe awaits your visit. Century old buildings await to tell their stories. Walk the streets of beautiful old cities. Experience historic timeline events in their history. Mingle with the locals and sip their wines. Cruise the beautiful Adriatic, long known for its turquoise waters and the spectacular beauty of its coastline. See for yourself why Slovenia has been described as beautiful, magical, fairytale-like, addictive!

You will travel throughout in a deluxe motor coach viewing the diversity of this beautiful land. Your emotions will be in high gear as we sing, dance, and laugh. Your SUA escorts along with a professional tour director and bus driver will make for delightful days.

Be prepared to have a memorable tour!

Secure your spot now as we are limiting the number of participants.

Cost: \$2,580 per person (Land Only) based on two (2) in a room. Single Supplement - \$499

Call Olivera Baumgartner at Kollander Travel: 800.800.5981/216.692.1000 x 7007

or olivera@kollander.com for further information or to book this tour.

Day by Day Program

DAY 1, Wednesday, May 27

Let the celebration begin as we depart for lovely Slovenia.

DAY 2, Thursday, May 28: BLED

Upon arrival at the Ljubljana airport, we meet our Tour Director and Bus Driver and transfer to Hotel Park in Bled. The evening festivities begin during cocktail hour while we begin creating long-lasting friendships. The night continues with a delicious meal and of course live music. HOTEL PARK, BLED (D)

DAY 3, Friday, May 29: BLED

After breakfast our Tour Director will host an informational meeting for all those who need help on how to spend their free time in charming Bled. You have many choices including a visit to the fairytale Bled Castle, a pletna boat ride to the island, a walk around the lake, shopping, or a spa treatment at our hotel. In the early afternoon, we travel to Gostilna *Skaručna* for a highly entertaining **cooking class**. The chef will roll out

the red carpet as we are greeted with welcome drinks and his staff is ready to show us an amazing time. Get ready to prepare traditional Slovenian dishes with entertainment during the whole process. Our evening gets better when we enjoy the efforts from our labor which are paired up with delicious wines.

HOTEL PARK, BLED (B & D)



DAY 4, Saturday, May 30: BLED - GORIŠKA BRDA

After breakfast we travel back in time on an **old steam train** that takes us towards Goriška Brda along the Bohinj railway. With an accordion musician onboard, this will be an experience from another era. Later we will rejoin our bus as we make our way to Goriška Brda. On our trip around the Brda region, you will encounter a series of monuments and memorial plaques from WWII. We continue to Šmartno, situated in the geographical center of Brda. Gradnik, the local poet, compares the village with the eagle's nest resting on a place where the view stretches from the Nanos hill in the east to the Carnija Alps in the northwest, and from the Furlanija to the Adriatic Sea. We stop at *Hiša Marica* (Marica's House) for a special wine tasting from this region along with tasty snacks followed by a walking tour. This evening we have a special feast at a local gostilna before driving to the hotel in Goriška Brda.

HOTEL VENKO, GORIŠKA BRDA (B, S, WT & D)

DAY 5, Sunday, May 31: GORIŠKA BRDA - PORTOROŽ

Waking up in Goriška Brda will give you special energy for our next destination as we depart for Portorož where everyone will have free time on the Adriatic Sea. In the evening get ready to set sail on our **sunset cruise**. This incredible journey takes you up and down the Slovenian coast with snacks, music, and drinks.

HOTEL GH, PORTOROŽ (B & S)

DAY 6, Monday, June 1: PORTOROŽ - PIRAN

After breakfast, we have a short drive to nearby Piran. Our Tour Director will lead a walking tour of Piran (a beautiful city on the sea). Enjoy spectacular views from our seaside restaurant for lunch. The remainder of the day is yours to choose, whether it's more time exploring Piran or returning with the bus to Portorož to enjoy the hotel, its spa, or the city itself.

HOTEL GH, PORTOROŽ (B & L)

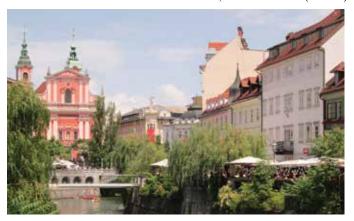


10 Zarja - The Dawn

DAY 7, Tuesday, June 2: IDRIJA - LJUBLJANA

After breakfast, we drive towards Idrija. First we visit **Franja Partisan Hospital**. After World War II, the hospital became a symbol of the partisan movement and its extensive and extremely well-organized medical activities. At Kendov Dvorec Manor, we will enjoy a *Žlikrofi* **preparation demonstration** and enjoy them after they are done for lunch. After that we visit **Gewerkenegg Castle**, built in the first half of the 16th century. Later we continue to Ljubljana. Tonight, we suggest a walk through the Old Town with dinner at one of the many restaurants along the beautiful Ljubljanica River.

CITY HOTEL, LJUBLJANA (B & L)



DAY 9, Thursday, June 4: LJUBLJANA - BELA KRAJINA

Today we head to Dolenjska and Bela Krajina region. Drive to Semič to visit **Sever Beekeeping** where we will learn about beekeeping and taste their honey. Stop in **Rosalnice** where Mojca, a charismatic lady of the house, will welcome you in the front yard of the family home. We will be able to enjoy a homemade feast in a homey atmosphere while she entertains us with a story of bread, life, and humor. Her house of good bread is not merely about food but adventure as well. Mojca will demonstrate the making of pogača, and we will be able to try it while still hot. We finish Bela Krajina with wine tasting at a local producer, then continue to Zuzemberk for a late picnic-style dinner with roasted lamb. Drive back to Ljubljana.

CITY HOTEL, LJUBLJANA (B, S, HT, WT & D)





DAY 8, Wednesday, June 3: LJUBLJANA

This morning we meet genealogy expert Peter Hawlina. He will get us started on our family search with a tour of the archives. Enjoy lunch in a gostilna followed by a walking tour of the city. Visit the most significant sights of the old city center: the picturesque Central Open-air Market and The Three Bridges (both designed by the famous architect Joze Plecnik), the Baroque Town Hall, and Robba's Fountain. Evening is at leisure to explore Ljubljana on your own.

CITY HOTEL, LJUBLJANA (B & L)



DAY 10, Friday, June 5: LJUBLJANA - VELIKA PLANINA

In the morning, we have free time to visit the local market and do last minute shopping. Later we depart to Kammik for our **cable car to Velika Planina**, which takes us amongst the green pastures of the mountain plateau in the heart of the Kamnik Alps. We will admire the unique architecture of the cottages which define Velika Planina and enjoy lunch in one of the huts. Drive back to Ljubljana for a free afternoon and, in the evening, enjoy a Farewell to Slovenia Dinner Party held in Ljubljana with music, dancing, and lots of tears of joy.

CITY HOTEL, LJUBLJANA (B, L & D)

DAY 11, Saturday, June 6

After breakfast, we say goodbye to Slovenia as we depart for home. (B)

Kollander World Travel 761 East 200th Street Euclid, OH 44119 Tel: + 1 800 800 5981 x7007 | Fax: + 1 216 692 1831 | olivera@kollander.com

Terms and Conditions

Final Payment Due - March 20, 2020

How to make a reservation. Please call Kollander World Travel at 800-800-5981 or 216-692-1000, or send an e-mail to kwt@kollander.com.

Kollander World Travel will be happy to quote airfare options from your preferred city. **Deposit & Final Payment:** A non-refundable deposit of \$350 per person is required at the time of booking. The deposit forms part of your final payment which is due 60 days prior to departure. If we do not receive final payment by the specified date, we reserve the right to cancel the reservation. In the case of billing errors, we reserve the right to re-invoice with correct pricing

Baggage Allowance: Baggage fees may apply. Check with your carrier for fees and size/weight of bags allowed. Due to the space restrictions aboard the motor coach the tour operator has requested that there be a limit of 1 suitcase weighing no more than 50 lbs. per person. Additionally, guests on tour should limit their hand luggage to a small carry-on piece and only those items needed during the day, since the overhead racks and/or under the seat storage only offer limited space. Every effort is made to ensure that baggage is properly handled. Kollander World Travel cannot be held responsible for damages, loss or theft of luggage or personal belongings. Optional travel baggage insurance is recommended and available through Kollander World Travel.

Passport Requirements: For international travel, US citizens require a passport valid for at least 6 months following their return to the United States. To apply for a passport, you can contact your local passport office. Non-US citizens should contact the appropriate consulate for information on all necessary documents.

Tour Price Excludes: Airfare, customs user fees, passports, all visa fees, optional tours, telephone, and fax charges, excess baggage charges, sundry tips, laundry, beverages and food not specified in the itinerary, portage at U.S./Canada airports, travel insurance, service charges except where indicated and all other items of a personal nature.

Refund and Unused or Amended Tour Arrangements: Unused hotel accommodations, tour features, or services are non-refundable and non-exchangeable. If changes are requested by the traveler(s), any additional expenses will be charged to the traveler(s). If a change of accommodations becomes necessary for any reason, hotel(s) substituted will be the equivalent of those listed in the itinerary. Single rooms may be available at a supplemental charge.

Cancellation Penalties: If you cancel your reservations, your right to receive a refund is limited as set forth in the following schedule. All requests for refunds must be sent to us in writing, and cancellation date will be determined by the date written notification is received. Charges for cancellations of the tour will be assessed by the participating tour

operators, and hotels as follows:

- After deposit U.S. \$350.00 per person;
- 60-30 days prior to departure 75% penalty per person
- 29 days or less prior to departure 100% penalty and no refund.

Once airfare is purchased, it is generally non-refundable and fees apply for any changes. Cancellation charges also apply to all accommodations and other travel arrangements.

Insurance. You may secure a policy for baggage insurance, as well as insurance against sickness or accident, trip cancellation and interruption through Kollander World Travel. Important terms concerning pre-existing medical conditions, which may not be covered, are described in the insurance brochure which will be sent for your review, or available on www.Kollander.com.

Revisions: A handling fee of U.S.D. \$50.00 per transaction may be charged for any alteration or revision after reservations are confirmed. A change of tour date or tour itinerary within 60 days of departure will be treated as a cancellation and new booking; regular cancellation fees apply.

Responsibility Clause. Kollander World Travel, Cleveland, Ohio (hereinafter referred to as "the Company") is responsible to you in making arrangements for travel and tour services as offered, including transportation, sightseeing and hotel accommodations. The carriers, hotels and other suppliers providing tour services are independent contractors and are not agents, employees or servants of or joint ventures with the Company. All certificates and other travel documents for tour services issued by the Company are subject to the terms and conditions specified by the suppliers and to the laws of the countries in which services are supplied. If the services included cannot be supplied or there are changes in an itinerary for reasons beyond the control of the Company, the Company will arrange for the provision of comparable services. The Company reserves the right to make changes in the itinerary whenever the Company deems it necessary to the comfort, convenience or safety of the travelers, and to cancel a tour at any time. If the Company cancels a tour, it shall have no responsibility beyond the refund of all monies paid to the Company by the tour participant. The traveler agrees that the Company shall not be liable for any damages, loss (including personal injury, death and property loss) or expenses occasioned by any act or omission of any supplier providing tour services or of any other person. No person, other than an authorized representative of the Company by a document in writing, is authorized to vary any term or condition, including any term or condition set forth in the preceding provisions.

NOTE: Terms and conditions are subject to change without notice.

For Reservations - please complete and return this coupon with deposit to:



KOLLANDER WORLD TRAVEL

761 East 200th Street / Euclid, OH 44119 Tel: (800) 800-5981 / (216) 692-1000 Ext: 7007 for Olivera olivera@kollander.com

I love	Slovenia Tour
I	May 27 - June 6, 2020

Enclosed is my deposit of \$350.00 per person per trip. I have agreed to the terms and conditions applicable to this tour package. PASSPORT REQUIRED. Signature: Your personal and/or bank check welcome. If paying by credit card, please circle: AMEX, VISA, DISCOVER, MASTERCARD Please send copies of your passports with deposit. Birth Date: Name as it appears on your passport: Birth Date: Name as it appears on your passport: Expiration Date: / CCV#_ Credit Card # Name on Card: Signature: Email: Address: City/State/Zip: My City of Departure is: Please advise of any requests: ■ Emergency contact: Phone# () YES, I will be purchasing travel insurance. () NO, I decline insurance protection Room type: \Box Double \Box Twin \Box Single Roommate name:

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Slovenian Union of America

"April's Showers of Dollars" Drawing



April 2020 Fund-Raiser

The monies received will benefit the SUA National Convention in June 2023. How the fund-raiser works: Each day in the month of April 2020, one (1) winner will be chosen to win the cash prize for that day - \$65 or \$200. In addition, the person who sold that day's winning ticket will win \$10. The daily winner and the seller can be the same person and win both prizes.

The winners chosen on April 1 ("April No Fool's Day"), April 12 ("Easter"), and April 30 ("Here Come May Flowers"), will win \$200 each. In addition, the top sellers (1st, 2nd, and 3rd places) will win \$150, \$100, and \$50 respectively. A minimum of 300 entries must be sold. This is a WINNING opportunity for everyone!

Good Luck!



Top Seller Prizes

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

		Ai	PRIL 2020)		
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 \$200 Prize	2 \$65 Prize	3 \$65 Prize	\$65 Prize	
5 \$65 Prize	6 S65 Prize	7 S65 Prize	8 \$65 Prize	9 \$65 Prize	10 \$65 Prize	11 \$65 Prize
12 \$200 Prize	13 S65 Prize	14 \$65 Prize	15 \$65 Prize	0.77		18 \$65 Prize
19 \$65 Prize	20 \$65 Prize		22 \$65 Prize			25 \$65 Prize
26 \$65 Prize	27 S65 Prize	28 S65 Prize	29 \$65 Prize	30 \$200 Prize		



Cash prizes totaling \$2,955

Your "April's Showers of Dollars" entry will be eligible for all daily drawings in the month of April 2020. 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. A complete list of winners will appear in a future issue of Zarja—The Dawn.

If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Duris at (330) 467-2281 or dcduris@gmail.com.

Thank you for your support!

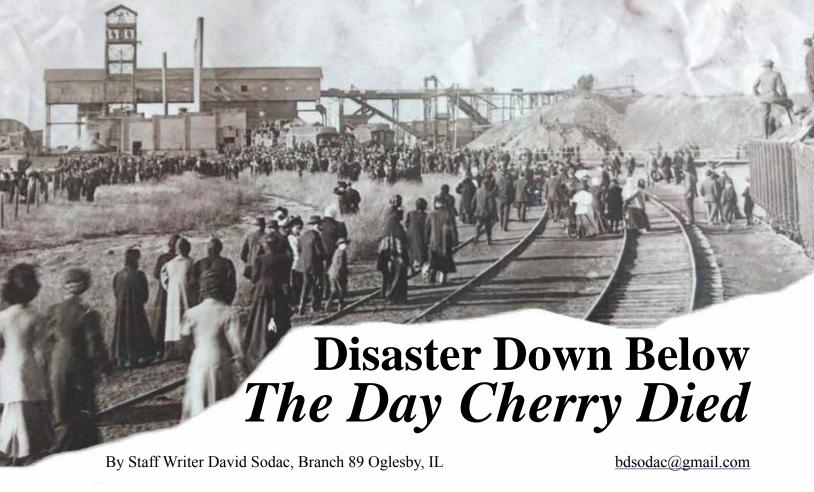
Entry Form (Copies Accepted) PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Entrant's Information:

Name:				
Address:	City:		State:	Zip Code: _
Phone:		E-Mail:	- C (A-	
Seller's Information:				
Name:				
Branch Number and Location:				
Address:	City:		State:	Zip Code: _
Phone:		E-Mail:		

Please complete form and mail with your check in the amount of \$10 payable to SUA.

Send to: Debbie Duris • 9167 Briarwood Road • Macedonia, OH 44056 • (330) 467-2281



Approximately one hundred miles southwest of Chicago, a few miles off of I-80 on Hwy 89, you will find the tiny town of Cherry, Illinois. One of our nation's worst mining disasters in history occurred in that town. At 1:45 p.m. on Saturday, November 13, 1909, the feared alarm warning all mine workers to abandon the site reverberated throughout the town. A fire was spreading out of control, with funnels of smoke billowing out of the air shafts. Knowing too well what the siren was signaling, loved ones and the town's people rushed out of their homes and places of business to anxiously watch and pray that their husbands, fathers, brothers, and friends would be safe from harm. Panic set in quickly. Two hundred fifty-nine men and young boys would die in that fire. The final toll was recorded as 259 killed, which left in its wake 160 widows and 470 children. Fifty-six of those who died were of Slovenian descent. The mining disaster became the third worst recorded fire in history.

Diane Data, of La Salle's SUA Branch 24, graciously organized a program on the unbelievable events that occurred in that tiny town. Diane had lived for over 30 years in the town of Ladd, just a stone's throw away from Cherry. Nearby SUA Branches were invited and participated in a special program that Diane facilitated at the Cherry Mine Disaster Museum. She discussed the history of bountiful coal that was discovered in 1905 by the St. Paul Coal Company, just a few miles outside of the village of Ladd. The coal mining in and around Bureau County was already

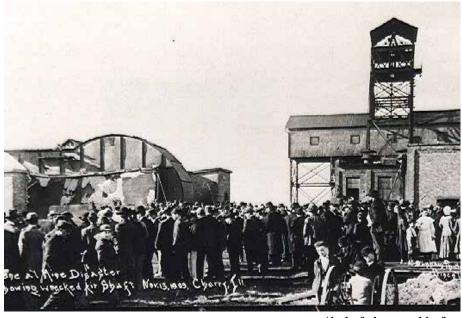
well connected to the Chicago & Northwestern RR; the New York Central RR; and the Chicago, Milwaukee, &



Diane Data sharing a historic book.

St. Paul RR. The new Cherry Mine operation would be easily accessed by the Chicago, Milwaukee, & St. Paul Company. The construction of the mining operations were carefully designed to showcase the latest in safety features. The underground facilities even provided electrical lighting. The developing town would be named for James Cherry, who would become superintendent of the mine. The St. Paul Coal Company not only developed the mine but built 125 company homes which, when combined with boarding rooms in some 200 private homes, would ultimately house up to 2,500 people. The tiny village consequently grew. The thirsty demands after working hours were also met with the springing up of 17 new saloons. By 1909, the mine was shipping out 300,000 tons a year to supply fuel for the company's railroad trains.

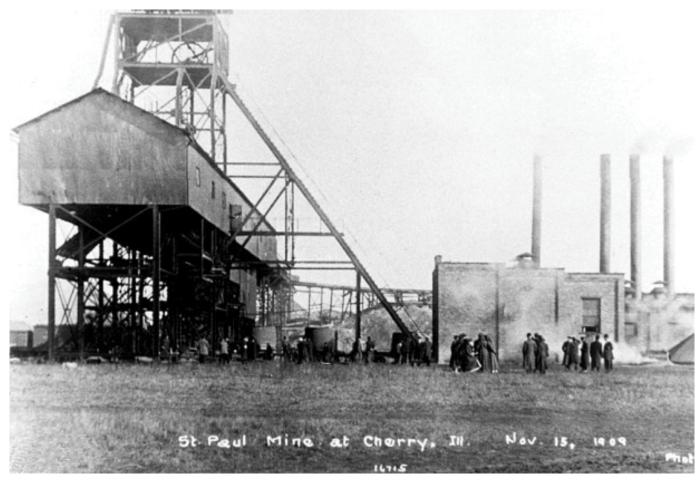
Despite being one of the safest and modern mining operations in the country, the electrical power in the two underground shaft levels had become inoperable. The replacement wiring was scheduled to be delivered the day of the fateful fire. In the meantime, the tunnels had to be illuminated by the old-fashioned kerosene torches and candles. Routinely, two men and a boy, called "cagers" were lowering a transport device called a "cage" (rectangular cart) down the shaft. The cage was filled with six bales of hay intended for the mules stabled in the lowest tier of the mine. The hay accidently was ignited by dripping kerosene oil used in the temporary wall torches. Flames flickered, and the fire grew. Attempts to douse the flames with buckets of water were unsuccessful. The cart of burning hay was pushed back up the air shaft to be extinguished, but the fire just raged. Finally the cart was sent back down to the third vein where the workers in that level were told to hook up the water hoses in attempt to put out the flames. While maneuvering the cage down, the flames ignited the overhead pine timbers. The coal vein then caught fire which produced a highly lethal, smoke called blackdamp. Blackdamp is a deadly mixture of carbon dioxide and nitrogen that consumes any oxygen in the air. The men would suffocate. The decision to evacuate the men from the shafts was made. The fire alarm was sounded at 1:25 p.m. Twelve men volunteered to lower the cages down into the main shaft in attempts to rescue the trapped miners below. Trip after trip they came up with survivors, exuberantly greeted by their loved ones. Eighty men were extracted from their coal tomb and brought to the surface in transport cages. Another 260 men remained stranded in the second level and 160 in the third level. On the seventh rescue descent, because of a mix-up in the signals in raising and lowering the cage, it was finally brought



Airshaft destroyed in fire.

Slovenian Miners Killed in Disaster

George Bakalar 25 John Cagoskey Cercovski 56 Joseph Chebuhar 32 Mike Cipola 40 John Debulka 27 Frank Geckse 20 Andrew Grehaski 49 Joseph Gulick 34 Mike Halko 28 Joseph Harpka 52 Dan Holofca (Halofcak) 45 John Hudar 45 John Kenig 42 John Kometz 53 Antone Korvonia 21 John Kranz 42 John Leptak 28 Andrew Lukatchko 35 John Maceoha 26 John Mayersky 39 Joseph Malner 39 Lewis Malner 19 Joseph Meicora 36 **Tony Meides 54** Joseph Mokos 43 **Hasan Mumetich 43** Matt Ondurko 26 Donaty Ossek 32 Martin Ossek 36 **Andrew Packo 37** Ben Pete 35 Joseph Prich (Pirh) 38 John Pshak 42 Frank Rittel 37 Paul Seitz 34 John Sestak 25 John Shemia (Shima) 40 **Antone Shermel 36 Andrew Siamon 24 Constantin Sopko 24** John Suffen 39 (Michael) John Suhey Jr. 17 Michael Suhey Sr. 44 John Stark (Jernel Lindich) 35 **Antone Yurchek 47 Thomas Zliegley 27** Pat Zeikell 28



St. Paul Mine in Cherry, Illinois.

to the surface. All the waiting crowd was horrified as the cage of courageous rescue men, all dead, were huddled together and aflame. Confusion, disorientation, and panic with the amassing smoke and flames would have made it impossible for the men to even reach the hoisting shaft. At 4:30 p.m., it was decided to seal the hoisting shaft in an attempt to extinguish the fire, leaving 385 men still trapped below. The fire had to be snuffed out before any further attempts to reach survivors could be made.

News of the fire disaster spread rapidly. Twenty-five to thirty thousand people from nearby towns, some of them anxious family members, many eager newspaper reporters, and thousands of stunned gawkers waited for a miracle to occur to save the lives of the entombed miners still held captive underground. A rope had to be stretched to keep the gawkers away from where the rescuers were working, and armed militia stood guard. State mine inspectors from all over the state were arriving to take charge of the rescue operations. Oxygen-breathing equipment was sent from Urbana, Illinois to be used for an exploratory descent search into the shafts. The heat and smoke was still too intense, so the search was suspended another day. The next day, a successful exploratory search was made and concluded that rescue operations could resume. But by Sunday evening, it was determined that the process of lowering a rescue bucket into the extreme heat and smoke was futile. The air shaft had to be sealed again. On Monday morning, attempts to send down a rescue cage were again met with active flames as the fire had rekindled and spread up the timbers. Again the rescue attempts were aborted, and the air shafts were sealed. The growing crowd of bereaved onlookers were becoming hysterical with grief.

The enormous crowd of family members and rescuers had to be addressed for their need of food and shelter. The tiny village couldn't provide for such numbers. The *Chicago Tribune* newspaper organized a massive campaign for an emergency shipment of supplies. Food staples from local



Temporary Morgue.

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grocers, meat butchering plants, and bread bakeries were donated for the cause and delivered by trains. Groups of nurses organized medical supplies and arrived at Cherry on trains. Freight cars of clothing and food supplies were loaded and delivered. Sleeping cars for rescuers and medical aides were shipped by train as well as freight cars of wooden coffins.



Vigil at the coffins.

Assuming that there was no possible way that men could still be alive, procedures to permanently smother the flames with water, chemicals, and tons of sand were begun. Preparations were being made for the recovery and identification of all the bodies. Sensing that the crowds would become more emotional and reactive once the removal of bodies began, additional regiments of the National Guard were organized to calm the growing hostility of the crowds. Fundraising shifted to benefit the families of the miners. Theatrical organizations throughout Chicago offered special benefit performances. Fundraising campaigns continued snowballing, and monies were coming in from organizations and cities all over the country. Over \$400,000 was raised for the families.

One week after the disaster, on Saturday, November 20, a final exploratory rescue party descended into the shaft to explore conditions when they heard noises from below. Twenty-one barely alive, trapped miners, who had safely sequestered themselves behind a makeshift barrier wall, had decided to make one last bold attempt to reach the surface. They were discovered by the search party! Twenty-one men miraculously staggered out of their coal mine tomb on their knees with their eyes closed to the blinding sun. They had survived entombment for eight days, huddled together in their small tunnel awaiting rescue, rationing water and what food they had remaining in their buckets. Days earlier, those same twenty-one men had been pronounced dead by all the mining experts in Illinois. Now, a frenetic waiting crowd erupted in a wild commotion of ecstasy. Hope was restored that more survivors amongst the anxious waiting miner families could be located. But, just when those hopes were rekindled, the sickening news came that the mine was again on fire, cutting off any hopes of further rescue work. Fire-fighting apparatus again had to be lowered, and floods of water were channeled into the mine. There would be no more miracle rescues come Monday morning. The Cherry mine would remain sealed until February 1, 1910. Mine inspectors gathered to open the main shaft that had been closed since Thanksgiving. Widows and loved ones stood stoically in deep snow, watching and waiting in silence. Recovery of the bodies was a difficult and slow process. Identifying the remains was even more challenging. Preparations for burial of the remains were initiated. On Sunday, September 18, 1910, the final body was discovered and brought to the surface.

Diane Data impressed upon us the public outcry over the tragedy and its eventual impact on legislation. The Illinois legislature passed stronger fire and safety regulations governing mines. They established what were known as the Illinois Workmen's Compensation Laws. These regulations eventually led to national requirements for safety in coal mines, as well as new regulations requiring training and certification for operators.

The remainder of the scheduled SUA agenda allowed the group to explore the displayed collections of newspaper articles on the disaster and the donated mining artifacts from miner families. The physical focal point of the Cherry Mine Museum filling the room is the realistic HO scale model display of the Cherry Mine as it looked in 1911. It was constructed by Ray Tutaj Jr. However, the most emotional impact of the visit was the haunting collection of hand scribbled notes that were found in the bowels of the mine. These notes were the farewell letters to their surviving loved ones written by the coal miners who believed their death was at hand. Here's one example:

Dear Wife and Children

I am now writing just before we all go. I know Maggie you will be in an awful state. I have been thinking of you Mag and the children. I loved my children and wife. But if it is Gods wish for us to go, God knows what is best. It is five o'clock Sunday morning when I am writing. Maggie I am praying to God and my Savior. Good-by wife and children. Be good to the children Maggie. Please give all the folks at home my best wishes. Maggie I wish you and the children to attend church and live good Christian lives, believe in God Maggie. From your Loving Husband TOM

An unexpected participant that had joined our SUA audience that day was Carmelita LaRocca Collins and her husband Peter who had traveled from Wilmington, Illinois. Carmelita is a granddaughter of Antenore Quartaroli, one of the 21 survivors that were rescued eight days after the onset of the fire disaster. Her grandfather had kept a written

diary of the actions and emotions of the 21 waiting miners, written in his native Italian language. Within hours of his rescue, thinking he soon would die, Antenore penned his final note to his wife:

Dear Erminia and son, now being half past one p.m. I am very hungry but suffering much more from thirst. I am very sure that my last hour has struck, and never will leave this grave, I beg of you not to think no longer of my death for

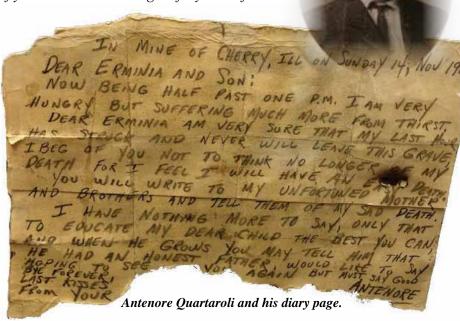
I feel I will have an easy death. You will write to my unfortuned mother and brothers and tell them of my sad death. I have nothing more to say, only that to educate my dear child the best you can, and when he grows you may tell him that he had an honest father, would like to say hoping to see you again, but must say goodbye forever, last kisses from your ANTENORE

As fate would have it, Antenore did see and hug his wife and son again. His diary would later be translated and incorporated into the book *Trapped: The 1901 Cherry Mine Disaster* written by Karen Tintori

and published in 2002. Karen Tintori so happened to also be a granddaughter of one of the mine disaster survivors. Her grandfather was John Tintori, an immigrant from Fanano, Italy. Karen had heard from her grandmother all of her life how fortunate she was that her grandfather had survived the disaster. As a journalist and writer, she felt compelled to author a book on the subject. Karen's grandfather, although never considered an over-indulgent drinker, by chance had a hangover the morning of that deadly inferno and failed to show up at work. If you are interested in learning more about the Cherry Mine Disaster,



SUA Group with Miner: (L-R) Delores Spelich, Lois Hollerich, Diane Data, Barb Krogulski, & DeAnn Pozzi.



please consider reading *Trapped* by Karen Tintori, *Black Damp* by Steve Stout, and *Fire Below* by R.G. Bluemer. All are available for sale online or at the museum. You are also encouraged to come visit the Mining Museum in Cherry and explore its invaluable donations of mining items from family members of the disaster. To check open hours or arrange a tour, contact DeAnn Pozzi, the museum curator. Her phone number is 815.263.4336.



Delores Spelich at the grave of her miner relative, John Leptak.

We concluded the afternoon activities by taking a short drive over to the Cherry Cemetery showcased by the spec-



Tombstone row.

tacular 14 ft. high granite memorial monument erected to the victims of that fateful disaster. We walked the cemetery rows of tall, weathered gravestones that were provided by the St. Paul Coal Company. We respectfully laid traditional fresh, red carnations at the gravestones of all the Slovenian men and boys who lost their lives in one of the deadliest coal mine fires in our nation's history.



Cemetery Mine Memorial.





Across America - Branch Reports

BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Contact information: Mary Ann Schellinger 920.457.7946/rhmas@yahoo.com

Branch 1 did not have any scheduled events during the summer. My youngest son, David, traveled to Slovenia in July to visit with family and friends. We were there for 3 weeks spending time in the cities of Ljubljana, Velenje, Sentjur, Celje, and Mozire. We visited the Beer Fountain in Žalec, did a zip line (the steepest one in Europe) in Planica,











and celebrated our American 4th of July with a traditional backyard barbeque. There were no fireworks, but we took along LOTS of red, white, and blue glow sticks to decorate the yard, and, of course, the kids. The highlight of the trip was attending the beer and flower festival in Laško where I had the opportunity to meet and talk with the President of Slovenia, Borut Pahor. What an amazing man as he took



time for everyone whether it was just to say "hi," shake a hand or pose for a "selfie."

With summer coming to an end, it is now time to look ahead toward the holiday season. Last year our President, Mary Sandwick, redid the words to the song "12 days of Christmas" in a Slovenian style. It was fun for the members to sing. Here is what she put together for us. We hope you will enjoy using it as much as we do.

12 DAYS OF SLOVENIAN CHRISTMAS

On the 1st day of Christmas my true love gave to me - a trip to Slovenia just for me

On the 2nd day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 2 olive trees, etc.

On the 3rd day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 3 rice sausages, etc.

On the 4th day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 4 poticas, etc.

On the 5th day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 5 SLOVENIAN FRIENDS, etc.

On the 6th day of Christmas my true love gave to me-6 cups of pink tea, etc.

On the 7th day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 7 accordions playing, etc.

On the 8th day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 8 apple strudels, etc.

On the 9th day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 9 polka dances, etc.

On the 10th day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 10 shots of slivovitz, etc.

On the 11th day of Christmas my true love gave to me - 11 klobase sausages, etc.

On the 12th day of Christmas my true love gave to me-12 bowls of salata, etc.

These are the basic words to the traditional song. So rather than repeating all the verses, I just put in etc. Hope you have fun with the song that our President, Mary Sandwick, redid for us in "the Slovenian style."

MARY ANN SCHELLINGER

BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

Contact Information:

719.569.7125/amtcharron@gmail.com

An important connection between Slovenia and Colorado was showcased on August 29 when three Blackhawk helicopters thundered onto the Pueblo Community College (PCC) campus carrying 22 ranking Slovenian officials including the Minister of Defense, Karl Erjavec. The minister said, "I am very happy to be here in Pueblo, here where there is a very strong Slovenian community, and also here with the family Erjavec. I am Erjavec, too." The minister shares the same family name as many Puebloans, including the co-author of this report, Barbara Karlinger, whose mother's maiden name was Erjavec. Also, the President of PCC is Patty Erjavec, who is married to Barbara's cousin. The Slovenian delegation also included Chief of Defense General Alenca Ermenc, who is the only female head of the military in NATO, and the Slovenian Ambassador to the United States, Stanislav Vidovič. The Pueblo delegation included Pueblo's mayor, Nick Gradisar, and Rudy Krasovec, Chairman of KSKJ, who are both of Slovenian descent.

The event included the planting of a linden tree, a national symbol of Slovenia, on the grounds of PCC's Gorsich Advanced Technology Center. The late Fritz Gorsich, a Puebloan of Slovenian descent, donated funds for the building of the center.

Annette Charron (SUA Vice President of Outreach)



Pueblo Community College President Patty Erjavec with Slovenia's Defense Minister, Karl Erjavec, during a tour of the college campus.

and M.T. Karlinger (Branch 3 Secretary and Barbara Karlinger's sister) were able to interact with two military leaders during the event, Major General Michael A. Loh, the Adjunct General of Colorado and a member of Governor Polis's cabinet, and Brigadier General Milan Zurman, Slovenia's Force Commander. Major General Loh explained that the State of Colorado has partnered with Slovenia for over 25 years through the State Partnership Program (SPP), which links the Colorado National Guard with the armed forces of Slovenia. The SPP includes 75 partnerships with 81 nations around the globe. The Colorado National Guard trains and is deployed with the Slovenian armed forces.



SUA Branch 3 members, Annette Charron and M.T. Karlinger, with Brigadier General Milan Zurman, Slovenia's Force Commander (center).

A Branch 3 casino fundraiser bus filled with over 50 passengers traveled to Cripple Creek on Sunday, October 6. Branch 3 members volunteered to prepare the food and worked to make the annual Slovenian Heritage Dinner held at St. Mary's on Saturday, November 2 a great success. The dinner was sold out, as usual, with over 300 attendees. A report on the dinner and photos will be in the next issue of *Zarja*.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON & BARBARA KARLINGER

BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

Happy New Year to all Branch 5 Members! Wow, "2020" sure snuck up on us! Weren't we just worrying about "Y2K" and the World Ending? In 6 short years, Slovenska zenska zveza Amerike/Slovenian Women Union/Slovenian Union of America will be 100 years old! Started as a platform to advocate the rights of Slovenian Women in America, SUA is now focused on preserving the Slovenian traditions, language, and cultures within the USA. The Zarja is a perfect guide for Slovenians in the US, as each issue of the magazine is a coast-to-coast map of people and events in each state which has an SUA branch. Just by

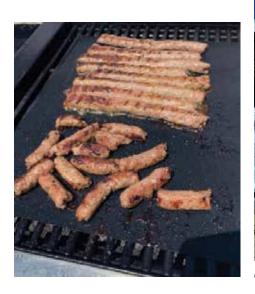
reading the branch reports, you can be transported to little areas of Slovenia within each state and meet the people who are striving to keep family traditions and customs alive! Better yet, plan on attending the picnics and festivals put on by your local Slovenian clubs. You're guaranteed a great time!

Speaking of sharing your Slovenian heritage, a group of Slovenians from Indianapolis recently took an Alaskan cruise, stopping in Skagway, Ketchikan, Juneau, and



Sailing Slovenians

Victoria, BC. One afternoon, on board the ship, their group, aka "The Sailing Slovenians", were playing balinca. They even taught other fellow cruisers the game. The last day at sea, a family was playing balinca and was overheard correcting fellow passengers that it was "balinca," not "bocce"! Several staff members aboard the ship were from Croatia and Serbia, engaging in conversation about their homelands and favorite foods, *knedeljni*, *krofi*, *potica*,



SLIP TX AF

Steve Fon, butcher for Mr Hog.

and more. They even met a staff member from Ljubljana! The week was superb, learning about the Tlingit people native to Alaska, and a wonderful opportunity to share their Slovenian heritage and connect with European staff... a great experience!

A huge "THANK YOU" to all who attended the SLOV-ENSKI FESTIVAL at the Slovenian National Home in



Ava and Nora, face paint.



Joe and Paul Lambert, sausage makers at Slovenski Festivities.

August! It was a beautiful day, with people inside and out, all enjoying the Slovenian foods and music! There was something for everyone, from face painting for the



kids, a beer garden, lots of tables for conversation, but best of all, family and friends from far and wide visiting in the Haughville neighborhood where it all began, so long ago! HVALA LEPA! 2020 date coming soon!!

What happens when you tell your grandchildren that you are going on vacation with them to Slovenia? They run and find your Slovenian cookbook Representative Sandy Rodeghero. Congratulations, Ohio branches, for putting on such a superb event!

Various members attended the KSKJ's 125th Anniversary celebration in Joliet on August 17, including a 4 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church, open house at the Ancel Center, and an evening reception on the rooftop of the Joliet Area Historical Museum. Earlier in the day, Georgene Agnich welcomed Alenka Jerak, Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia, and John Vidmar, Honorary Consul, to the SUA Heritage Museum for a brief tour before their attendance at the KSKJ events.



Alenka and Georgene at museum: Alenka Jerak, Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia, visits SUA Heritage Museum with Branch 20 member Georgene Agnich.

(courtesy Slovenian Consulate Cleveland)



Polka Music by POLKAMOTION at Slovenski Festival.

and pour over all the recipes and pictures, picking out what foods they will try first! This will be a fun trip, introducing them to people and places they have always heard about and connecting them with young cousins to continue the family ties that their great-great grandparents started all those years ago. Does your family keep in touch?

Stay safe and warm these winter months! Thinking of you all.

MARY, KAREN, & PHYLLIS

BRANCH 20 - Joliet, Illinois

Contact Information: Georgene Agnich 773.205.1326/jamesschaible1469@att.net

We extend our sympathy to the family of member Olga Sebalj, who passed away on August 22, 2019, and to the family of member John Lesnik, who passed away on August 15, 2019.

We kicked off our new year on September 17 with an enthusiastic appraisal of the Cleveland Convention presented by Vice-President Jeanne Warsaw and Member



Alenka at museum: Alenka Jerak and Georgene Agnich pose with Mary Setina statue outside the SUA Heritage Museum. (courtesy of Slovenian Consulate Cleveland)

KSKJ's 125th Anniversary Celebration

Alenka Jerak, newly-appointed Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia, was treated to a full display of Slovenian heritage in Joliet on Saturday, August 17, 2019. She had driven in from the Cleveland Consulate to attend the KSKJ's 125th Anniversary celebration, while allowing time on her agenda for a brief visit to the Slovenian Union of America (SUA) Heritage Museum as well. After a light lunch at Merichka's Restaurant with Illinois Honorary Consul John Vidmar, she and John arrived at the museum at 1:15 pm. She was impressed by the museum's artifacts, particularly the 1899 catechism written by Father Francis Sustersic, founder of St. Joseph Church in Joliet and of the KSKJ. Alenka graciously offered the services of the Slovenian Consulate to the members of SUA.

Alenka knew that Marie Cerne Prisland had been a member of KSKJ long before she founded the Slovenian Women's Union of America (known since 2011 as the Slovenian Union of America) in 1926. Indeed, Marie Prisland was the first woman to serve on the KSKJ National Board, elected in 1923 as Third Vice President. Having arrived from Slovenia in 1906 at the age of 15, Marie had settled in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, where she probably joined SS. Cyril & Methodius KSKJ Lodge #144, established in 1911. She became a charter member and the first secretary of the all-female Queen of May KSKJ Lodge #157, founded in 1925 in Sheboygan. Today, many SUA members are also KSKJ members.

Alenka and John left the museum at 2:15 pm for a meeting with KSKJ executives at their Joliet headquarters, returning downtown for the 4 pm Mass at St. Joseph Church in honor of the KSKJ. Father Richard Gielow, CM, who is KSKJ's Spiritual Leader, was the celebrant, assisted by Father Timothy Andres, pastor of St. Joseph Church, and Father Metod Ogorevc, pastor of the Slovenian Catholic Mission in Lemont. Zbor Spendov, the all-male a cappella singing group from the Slovenian Cultural Center in Lemont, sang beautiful Slovenian hymns throughout the Mass.



Zbor Spendov singing Slovenian hymns at St. Joseph Church. (courtesy of KSKJ Life)

Following the Mass, Alenka and many others toured the nearby St. Joseph Museum, curated by Ray and Annette Koncar of KSKJ Lodge #143, then made their way to the KSKJ 125th Anniversary reception at 6 pm, a few blocks away on the rooftop of the Joliet Area Historical Museum. Guests enjoyed drinks and hors d'ouevres, followed by pot-



Lemont dance troupe performs lively Slovenian dances. (courtesy of KSKJ Life)

ica, strudel, cake, and coffee. During the KSKJ's formal program, Alenka presented a congratulatory proclamation from the Republic of Slovenia to Rudy Krasovec, Chair of the National Board of KSKJ Life. When the program had ended, guests enjoyed several lively Slovenian dances performed by five Slovenian-costumed couples of Slovenska Mladinska Skupina Marela Dance Troupe of Lemont. Then, music for dancing was provided by "Ray Koncar and the Boys", featuring Slovenian songs played on the buttonbox that could be heard on the sidewalks below, as the evening ended and Alenka and the other guests departed this historic occasion in downtown Joliet.



Alenka Jerak, Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia, presents proclamation to Rudy Krasovec, Chair of National Board of KSKJ Life. (courtesy of KSKJ Life)

Diane Hohenwater, Mike Vidmar, and Georgene Agnich were guests at the October 2 meeting of the SUA National Board of Directors in Joliet to discuss necessary improvements to the Stonich building and how SUA will use its building in a changing world. We thank the Board for requesting input from our members on these important issues. All attendees enjoyed a delicious supper of Slovenian sausage, sauerkraut,



Member Judy Hann is the lucky \$300 Fall Raffle winner.

boiled potatoes, potica, and pumpkin bread afterwards. Congratulations to the following winners in our Fall Raffle whose names were drawn at our October 15 meeting:



Auditor Jo Lustik draws the \$300 winning Fall Raffle ticket as President Char Kobe presides.

(\$300); (\$200); and (\$100). At the meeting, we enjoyed a presentation by Cindi Biggar, Field Manager at the Senior Services Center of Will County, on "Benefits of Exercise in Preventing Falls In Senior Adults."

GEORGENE AGNICH

BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

Zivijo! Fall is in the air. On October 15, our branch took a trolley for a ride through Starved Rock State Park and the surrounding area to enjoy the fall colors before the leaves drop and the snow flies. We enjoyed lunch and desserts in the lodge afterward.

For years I lived near Cherry, Illinois and was aware of the history of the Cherry mine disaster where 259 miners lost their lives in November 1909. I had read an article which included the breakdown of the miners by nationality. When I saw "Slavs" from Austria, Yugoslavia, Croatia and read the names, I knew some of them were Slovenian names. After some research from the coroner's report and a visit to the new museum dedicated to the miners, I put together a program for our members. Please read David Sodac's informative article in this issue for the heart-wrenching story of these brave men who came to the United States for a better life. (Pages 14-19.)



Barb Krogulski placing carnations at the graves of Slovenian miners.

Over the summer we lost two longtime members of Branch 24. Donna Slatner of Peru and Dorothy Parola of Oglesby both were proud of their Slovenian heritage. Donna was an avid dancer in her younger years and is survived by two daughters and their families. Dorothy is survived by her daughter, Rosemary, who is also a member of our branch. She worked as an administrative secretary at our local junior college. We also mourn the passing of Martha



Branch 24 at Starved Rock State Park lodge.

Lushina's dear husband, Hank. Hank was a family man who loved to golf and tell stories. He is survived by five children, their families, and two sisters, Jackie Assalley and Betty Hurst, both of whom are members of Branch 24. Hank and Martha have visited Slovenia and the home of his family. Please keep these families in your prayers.

It has been a busy year for Branch 24. I'm wondering what 2020 will bring for us?

Dober Dan!

DIANE DATA

BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Contact Person: Jan Gehm 414.321.1413/twogames@wi.rr.com

Summer went quickly, and our members did enjoy the picnics at Triglav Park, an opportunity to attend outdoor Masses, partake of delicious food, and listen and dance to Slovenian music with many members of our Slovenian community.

We want to extend our sincere condolences to the many relatives and friends of longtime member, Lillian Gorenc, who passed away and to Joan Winkleski on the passing of her husband, Jim. We also send many thoughts and prayers for a quicker recovery for our branch president, Jan Gehm, and her husband, Tom Gehm. It's been way too long in the hospital and rehab facilities as they treat Jan's recent illness and Tom's recent injury. They have been missed at our gatherings. Also missed for quite a while are members Jack Kolesari and June Znidorka, both rebounding from their health concerns. All of the above are in our prayers for a complete return to good health.

On Sunday, October 13, we celebrated at the Genesis Restaurant on the occasion of our Wisconsin Regional Convention. It was a very pleasant afternoon in one way and sad in another. For the first time in many years we had representatives present from all three of our Wisconsin branches. Mary Ann and Bob Schellinger from Branch



Linda & David Abstetar and Jackie Smith at Regional Convention.

1 – Sheboygan were in attendance, along with Mary Urban from Branch 102 – Willard. Denise Bartlett, SUA's Director of Special Projects and our Branch 43 member, explained that it's probable that after their advisory vote at the National Convention, SUA's Member Representatives will vote to delete the Regional Presidents and Regional Conventions from a requirement in the bylaws. Great distances between branches is a major financial hindrance for compliance. Our branches in Wisconsin are quite far apart in distance, so we understand that this one may have been our last. Thanks to Wisconsin Regional President, Jackie Smith, and her committee for all their special touches that made our Wisconsin Regional Convention luncheon meeting truly memorable.

Our members are looking forward to our two Saturday events: a Martinovanje celebration on November 9 and our Christmas luncheon on December 7.

We send good wishes for happy holidays in 2019 to SUA's members across the USA and in Slovenia!

MICI BREGANT



Jackie Smith and Mary Ann Schellinger.



Branch 43 sending Congrats to Branch 1's Eagle Scout Mike at September branch meeting.

BRANCH 93 - New York, New York

Contact Information: Kathleen Simmonds 917.780.9412/kathleensimmo@gmail.com

Our September gathering of Slovenians in New York was very special. We were treated to a literary conversation with the fabulous Leonora Flis (Associate Professor of Literature, translator, literary critic, and author) and Miriam Drev (poet, novelist, critic, and literary translator of over 90 famous novels) who were visiting from Slovenia. Earlier that week, we also attended a book reading for Boštjan Videmšek's latest book *Dispatches from the Frontlines of Humanity: A Book of Reportage* where both Ms. Drev and Ms. Flis were on a panel discussing the principles and specifics of literalized reportage as it has developed over time and gained importance in the US and broader (including Slovenia).

Earlier in September, we listened to the smooth tunes of the Slavo Rican Assembly fresh off their European tour. The concert was set against the backdrop of the midtown Manhattan skyline at the Gantry Plaza State Park. Slovenian musicians Jan Kus and Jean Tetickovic are unbelievably talented, and if you haven't listened to them, please take the time. Combining music from the Balkans, Slavic folk songs, and the musical traditions of the Caribbean, the group's beats are seamless, edgy, and incredibly powerful.

We are absolutely thrilled to announce that one of our most active members in Branch 93, the extraordinarily talented Gaia Visnar, was nominated for Outstanding Actress in a Leading Role at the New York Innovative Theatre Awards for her work in The Seeing Place Theatre's 2019 production of *The Maids!* We had an amazing time watching her performance and couldn't be prouder! Her upcoming production of *Richard III* (where she will be portraying Lady Anne) will be co-produced by Identity



Gaia Visnar in her groundbreaking performance in The Seeing Place Theatre's The Maids.

Theater Company and Theatre Breaking Through Barriers. Follow @gaiavisnar for tickets and details.

Our Branch 93 Zarja Reporter, Kathleen Simmonds, also had a big month. Reversing Roe (a film which she Line Produced for Netflix) was nominated for two Emmy Awards, and her passion project, Woe is She, is also doing well on the international festival circuit with over 20 official selections, a nomination for Best TV Pilot, and a Runner-up Best Web Series award. Follow @woeissheseries for updates.

Remember as always that our Slovene Conversation Online is available to you. If you are interested in participating in the language classes, please contact Stephanie Owens at nycslovenianunion@gmail.com for information and details.

KATHLEEN SIMMONDS

BRANCH 100 - Southern California

Contact Information: Jean Koci 949.495.0097/ajkoci@cox.net

Greetings from So Cal!

We are having a great summer out West in So Cal. Some of the Koci family traveled to Slovenia and had a great



Milana and Aljosa Azman, cousins on my mothers side, with Jean Koci, Tim & Lisa Koci, Janet & John Lundgren, and Arnie Koci.



Koci/Lundgren families in Piran with Mojca Malik Sep '19.

time visiting with family and friends. A highlight was a program at the Philharmonic Concert Hall that featured our friends, the very talented Slowind Quintet. All those who attended are SUA members.

JEAN KOCI

BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Candy Johnson Candyjohnson1718@gmail.com

Branch 102 is taking this opportunity to highlight one of our junior members, Michael Brierton. Mike was honored on September 29, 2019, for earning the rank of Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America. To earn this rank, scouts must demonstrate leadership; earn a minimum of 21 merit badges; and plan, develop, and lead a community service project. Mike's project consisted of two phases to improve safety on Portage County snowmobile trails. The first phase involved identifying the roads the trail crossed and having road signs made and added to the stop signs at each crossing. This amounted to 102 road signs. The second phase was to resurface a decades-old bridge on the trail. A total of 196 man-hours was involved between the two phases of the project.





Mike also earned two special Religious Awards in a joint program with Boys Scouts of America and the National Catholic Committee on Scouting.

For his efforts, Mike received a certificate from Pope Francis (yes, THE Pope Francis), as well as a congrat-

ulatory letter from Stanislav Vidovič, the Slovenian Ambassador to the United States! In the letter, the Ambassador states, "Only the very best of young man can demonstrate a good



character, integrity, diligence, and leadership skills to receive such award." He went on to say, "As the Ambassador of Slovenia to the United States, I am especially honored to learn that you are also proud your ancestral homeland, which makes the melting pot of America what it is. This is clearly seen not only by your long-term membership of



the Slovenian Union of America, Branch 102 in Willard but also by your active participation in the group." (See back page of this issue for more information on Michael.) Branch 102 is so proud to have such an exemplary young man as a junior member!

CANDY JOHNSON

BRANCH 109 - Twin Cities (TC) of Minnesota

Contact Information: Elaine Barthelemy elaineab@yahoo.com

On a warm, sunny August afternoon, a large group of Twin Cities Slovenians gathered at the home of President Mike Koski for food, drinks, and conversation. Hank Thunander entertained us with Slovenian tunes on his accordion, and we welcomed familiar faces, including Dr. Ksenija Rener Sitar who is back from Slovenia for the months of August – October.

Ksenija is a professor of dentistry at the University of Ljubljana. In 2011, she worked at the University of Minnesota on a dentistry research fellowship. In her "spare" time, she started a Slovenian language class for adults in the Twin Cities area. Volunteers from Branch 109 have continued that class for the past 9 years on a much-reduced basis. This year, Ksenija returned with a full-time work schedule at the university, and still found time to reinvigorate the classes for adults and add weekly classes for children and teens. Her reputation and enthusiasm attracted our highest ever enrollment in language classes - over 30 adults and 8 children and teens.



Dr. Ksenija Rener Sitar, John Zakelj and Stefan Collinet-Adler.

Our September member meeting found Ksenija taking us into present day Slovenia as she talked about the current *Slovenian Economic and Political Environment*. Her topics ranged from the significance of the linden tree to the makeup of the government to issues of immigration and demographics (in 2050 there will be equal numbers of



Branch 109 members enjoying summer get-together.

active and inactive workers). Ksenija has become part of the Twin Cities Slovenians family, and we hope she will return again soon.

In September, Rick Pisa introduced and distributed the 2020 calendar full of gorgeous photos of our homeland, including a few taken by my sons and me on our trip to Slovenia in 2019. *Hvala*, Rick for facilitating this fundraiser for our branch.



Hank Thunander entertaining at our gathering.

At our October meeting Maria Stalzer Wyant Cuzzo and Sophie "Trix" Stalzer Wyant will continue the story of Gottschee between WWI and WWII. In November we return to the home of Karen and Miro Medved to celebrate *Martinovanje*.

Finally, huge thanks to Mary Ann Palmer for sharing her talent, effort, and time during her many years of leading us in Slovenian songs. Now she will be able to relax and lend her voice as new song leader, Miro Medved, steps into that role. We are fortunate to have so many wonderful singers in our group. *Hvala*, Mary Ann and Miro!

ELAINE BARTHELEMY

BRANCH 111 - NORTHEAST OHIO

Contact Information: Rick Tomsick 440.655.6735 Greetings from the new branch on America's North Coast! Branch 111, Northeast Ohio. We've got a lot of exciting information to report following the historic merger of our former Branch 50 and Branches 10, 40, 42, 47, 54 and 55 into a new Branch 111 on September 18, 2019. Our Branch President Rose Mary Toth was planning to fly in from her new home in Florida to chair the meeting in person but was unable to do so. However, she joined the meeting by teleconference on a speakerphone.

On a personal note, I'd like to offer my sincere gratitude to Rose Mary Toth for her years of service to Branch 50 and to the SUA and its predecessor organization. We have all benefited from her lifelong dedication to the organization and the principles for which it stands.

The idea for the merger came out of the national convention which was held here in Cleveland in June. My daughter, Johanna (the artist), got married at St. Vitus Church that same weekend, so I could not attend the convention. Father Boznar was the celebrant at the wedding Mass, which was very special and beautiful! Jo and her husband, Austin Schmid, are living in Colorado Springs, which by chance is near an area of strong Slovenian immigration in the previous century. She has already had the chance to visit some sites in Leadville, Colorado that are important to the Tomsick family and to many other Slovenians both here in northern Ohio and out West. I haven't been there yet to visit what was my grandfather's Gostilna and boarding house, but I am very excited that my daughter has already had the opportunity! I would love to hear more history about Slovenian settlement in Colorado and invite you to email me with any information you might have about your own families.

Our Branch 111 meeting and Christmas luncheon will be held at Dubrovnik Garden (34900 Lake Shore Blvd in Eastlake, Ohio) on Saturday, December 7 at 1:00 p.m. We're very happy that my brother, Joey Tomsick, will play the accordion for the luncheon once again. The cost of the luncheon is \$22. Our lunch will consist of soup, salad, two

meats, a starch, and dessert. To make your reservation, please mail your check for \$22, payable to **SUA Branch 111**, to arrive no later than **November 30, 2019** to Lynn McKittrick, 5521 Carol Jean Blvd., Garfield Hts., OH 44125-4159. To add to the festivities, please consider participating in "bring a gift – get a gift" with a value of \$10.

Make sure that the home office has your email address so that you can receive branch information and information about other events. You may also contact Debbie at 330.467.2281, or dcduris@gmail.com.

I enjoy hearing from our members around the country. During the convention weekend in June, my cousin Sandy Rodeghero and her husband, Dale, of Joliet, Illinois stopped by our house for a get-together after the wedding for out-of-towners. Sandy has been very actively involved (as has her mother, Dorothy Brown of Joliet) in the SUA for many years. What a delight to catch up with her and all the activity from the convention.

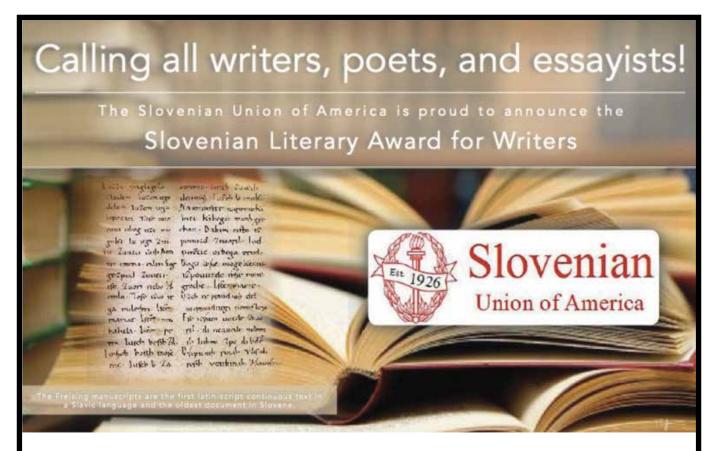
Please keep all members of Branch 111 and all of the SUA in your prayers, especially remembering the sick, and the poor souls in purgatory, and those they have left behind, to bring comfort and joy to all who mourn.

The best way to stay up to date with the SUA is on its Facebook page. I've been pleased to see some very beautiful content on the page. Please write to me at ricktomsick@gmail.com with any family news, and I will add you to our list of updates for the branch. I always like to hear from members near and far.

RICK TOMSICK



Members in attendance at the first meeting of Branch 111, Northeast Ohio. (Sitting left to right): Jane Mrowka, Kathy Wallace, Margarita Franchini, and Debbie Duris, our new Branch 111 President. (Standing left to right): Gerri Beha, Kathleen Ferrante (secretary), Cookie Maxin (vice president), Ivanka Matic (auditor), Ginger Kemmerling (auditor), Alice Signorelli, Lynn McKittrick (treasurer), Bernadette Blatnik, and Elizabeth Wallace.



The Slovenian Union of America Opens Submissions for the 2020 Slovenian Literary Award to Recognize and Promote Writers of Slovenian Heritage

The award is open to both first time writers, as well as published authors.

For nearly a century, the Slovenian Union of America has been dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Slovenian ancestry of its members. Writing has been a formative part of the Slovene heritage, and the SUA Slovenian Literary Award acknowledges those who continue this vital tradition. An award ceremony will be held in June 2020 to honor the award recipients for their literary contributions. The time and place will be announced at a later date.

Applicants are welcome to register, provide a 100-word biography, and submit their work here: https://slovenianunion.org/sua-literary-award

Accepting Submissions: November 1, 2019 - January 31, 2020

- All genres of creative writing will be considered Short Stories, Novels, Speeches, Personal Essays, Memoirs, Poetry, Manuscripts, Screenplays, and Academic Work.
- Musical compositions will not be considered.
- The award is not limited to English; both English and Slovene will be accepted.
- Works are judged on quality by a panel of writers and a committee.
- Applicants may live anywhere but must be of Slovenian heritage.
- Individual writers only (no groups) with up to three submissions per writer.
- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.
- Membership in SUA is not required.

For Press inquiries please email slovenianliteraryaward@gmail.com.



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KSKJLIFE.COM | 800.THE.KSKJ

KSKJ Life, American Slovenian Catholic Union, is an Illinois fraternal benefit society located at 2439 Glenwood Ave., Joliet, IL 60435. 2019-04-Z

Michael Brierton

Branch 102

Michael earned the rank of Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America and two special Religious Awards in a joint program with Boys Scouts of America and the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. NON-PROFIT PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID LASALLE, IL

"Only the very best of young man can demonstrate a good character, integrity, diligence, and leadership skills to receive such award. As the Ambassador of Slovenia to the United States, I am especially honored to learn that you are also proud your ancestral homeland, which makes the melting pot of America what it is. This is clearly seen not only by your long-term membership of the Slovenian Union of America, Branch 102 in Willard but also by your active participation in the group."

- Stanislav Vidovič, Ambassador of Slovenia to the United States

