

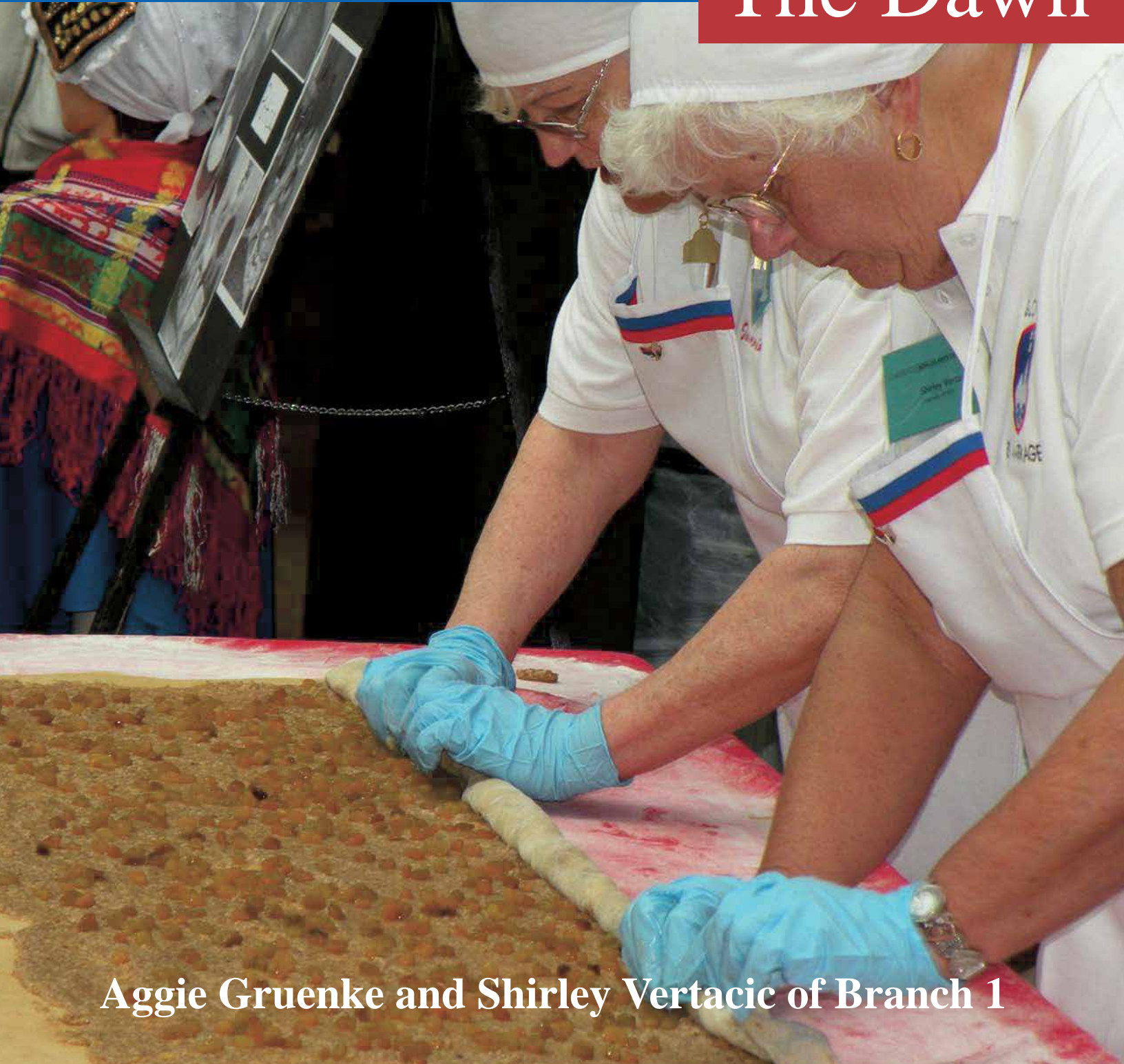
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# Zarja

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Uradno Glasilo Slovenske Zveze v Ameriki

Volume 85 Issue 4  
July/August 2013

## The Dawn



Aggie Gruenke and Shirley Vertacic of Branch 1

# ***Zarja - The Dawn***

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## **Communications for the next issue of publication**

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

## **Submission Guidelines**

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

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

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

# **President's Message**

Greetings:

I would like to start off with a HUGE thank you to everyone who has donated his or her Burial Insurance Policy back to SUA. This is greatly appreciated! As many of you know we operate on a very slim budget. Treasurer Carol Ryba does a fantastic job making sure every dollar spent is necessary and no cheaper option exists. The National Board donates most of their expenses getting to/from meetings, telephone, postage, ink, paper, etc. All of these little things make a difference and our books are starting to show it. We have come a long way!

Do you need to get motivated in your Branch or are you looking for ideas? If so, be sure to read all of the Branch reports. From the east coast to the west coast we have many exciting events happening.

Special congratulations to Branch 1 for their efforts at Family Festival. You can read more about this in their report. Also to Branch 109 for another spectacular year at Festival of Nations, and to Branch 93 for a successful practice run of the online language class that will soon be open to everyone.

Ryba's Reminders is an important article to read on the discontinuation of the Burial Insurance. If there are any questions, don't hesitate to ask. If you did not receive a survey via e-mail in regards to the 2015 National Convention, and would like to participate, please contact me at [wprokup@aol.com](mailto:wprokup@aol.com). The committee is looking for feedback from our membership.

Congratulations to all the graduates and to those who recently were awarded SWU Scholarships. We are very proud of you!

Please look at page 32! We are looking for volunteers to help make SUA bigger and better. If you can spare some time, please let me know. We especially need help with a Membership Campaign. In closing, thank you for your time, your membership, support, and let's keep the communication lines open. Your membership is very important to SUA!

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

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**The Slovenian Union of America  
has been approved to operate as a 501(c)(3)  
non-profit tax exempt organization!**

**All donations given to SUA  
are tax deductible.**



# SUA Donations

## Thank You!

### **\$100 Donation**

Ganster, Diana, 20, Zarja  
Gregorich, Nancy, 20,  
+Rose Mary and William Gregorich

### **\$75 Donation**

Morrissey, Janet, 100, +Mabel Sleyko  
Zakelj, John, 109, Honor of Jean Rolstad

### **\$25 Donation**

Blackford, Nancy, 50,  
+Ann Dekleva Stanonik, grandmother  
Gaber, Agnes, 2, SUA  
Govednik, Joseph, 13, SUA  
Kamin, John, SUA  
Radosevich, Zora, 33, +Margaret Lubina Radosevich  
Stumm, Dona, 99, +Dona Bucar Sye  
Williamson, Mary Jane Vidmar, 103, SUA  
Williams, Debra, 5, +Frances Yovanovich

### **\$20 Donation**

Dovnik, Karl Jr., 43, Honor of Rosalie Dovnik  
Marchiori, Emily, 24, +Julia Novak Kosem, my mother  
Sorensen, Valerie, 3, SUA

### **\$15 Donation**

Seehafer, Olga, 43, +Cecelia Marolt, my mother  
Springer, Martha Svete, 103, +Jane Barle Svete, Mary  
Oblak Barle & Frances Mavec Svete

### **\$10 Donation**

Branch 43, Heritage Fund +Ray Delopst  
Brady, Sharon, 24, +Helen Swietek  
Cummings, Sherrill, 20, +Ed Makovic  
Klun, Marie, 23, +Rose Kozar  
Potla, Roseanne Kirk, 50, +Anna Fortuna  
Ribich, Rosemary, 35, +Johanna Ribich Sever  
Simenz, Susan Marie, 1, +Anna Jeruc

### **\$5 Donation**

Ferguson, Michalene, 20, SUA  
Lenkaitis, Cathy, 24, +Helen Swietek  
Lenkaitis, Alex, 24, +Helen Swietek  
Lenkaitis, Adam, 24, +Helen Swietek

## Welcome New Members

1, Knop, Dione  
2, Ninneman, Liam  
3, Egan, Mary Lou  
3, Ellis, Mary L.  
10, Yassine, Carol  
13, Majerle, William J.  
30, Kiernan, Courtney  
30, Kiernan, Susan  
30, Pasich, Gwendalynn  
33, Kornmann, Jean  
43, Rojina, Ivanka  
50, Stupica, Samantha  
100, Martin, Dixon  
100, Sleyko, Steven  
103, Long, Allison  
108, Erbas Kelly, Nettie

## **'Bridge Widowers' Will Have Nothing on Slovenian Men These Next Weeks**

**KEEWATIN, Feb. 8. (Special)** – This is a friendly tip to Range Slovenian men.

If you come home and find there's no supper in the oven during the next few weeks; or you notice that those socks you've been wondering about are still unmended; or you learn that you're going to have to get lunch downtown occasionally — it'll be forgivable.

For Range Slovenian women are engaged in an honest-to-gosh contest this year.

They are carrying on an intensive membership drive, according to "The Zarja" Slovenian Women's Union of America, Branch 81.

The person procuring 300 members will receive a trip to Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, and back. The person who signs up 200 members will be given a one-way trip to Yugoslavia. A variety of cash prizes also are being offered.

The union locally is holding its monthly meeting Thursday at the village hall at 7:30 p.m., and there'll be a lot of comparing of notes on new memberships.

— *Tues., Feb. 9, 1938, The Hibbing Daily Tribune*

*Submitted by William Majerle, California  
formerly from the Iron Range area of Minnesota*



# Ryba's Reminders

by Carol Ryba - National Treasurer

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## DISCONTINUING BURIAL INSURANCE

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We want to thank all members who understand why SUA is discontinuing the Burial Insurance, but we also certainly understand why some members are disappointed in this decision. Based on the many telephone calls and e-mails which we have received, some of you did not understand the letter and some were not pleased with only receiving the actuarial value. We apologize that this article was not published prior to sending the Election Forms, but we did not receive approval and guidance from the Illinois Department of Insurance until after the last publication deadline.

Throughout this process we have been guided by our lawyers who have worked closely with the Illinois Department of Insurance. We know that change is always difficult, but it is necessary. The National Board is excited about preserving our wonderful Slovenian culture and heritage, which we believe should be our main purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We are the last Burial Insurance Society in the State of Illinois. It is also important to know that we are not an insurance company and we do not use an accounting firm to do all of the administrative work. If we chose to operate as two separate entities, it would be far too expensive for a benefit that only applies to half of our membership.

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Following are questions and comments which I will address:

**Question:** “Why will I only receive the certificate reserve value (actuarial)? I have been a member for many years and I paid more than the death benefit value.”

**Answer:** The annual dues are NOT for separate insurance premiums. The insurance is just an added benefit for being a member. In the insurance industry it is not unusual that when insurance is paid to the living policy holder, the death benefit value is not paid. The payment is always based on actuarial value.

**Question:** “How is the reserve value (actuarial) calculated?”

**Answer:** The Illinois Department of Insurance uses a complicated formula to calculate the actuarial value (reserve value) if a policy is cashed in before death. It is based on the age when the person joined SWUA; how

long the policy was in force, and more importantly, the life expectancy of a person. An actuarial computer program was provided to us by the Illinois Department of Insurance, and this is what was used to calculate certificate reserve values. Also the Department of Insurance has approved these amounts.

**Question:** “Why do I have a \$100 policy and why does my daughter have a \$300 policy?”

**Answer:** Again the amount of the insurance is based on their age when a person joined. These different policy values were always listed in our bylaws. Also, there were some promotions in the early years which are the reasons that some members had a rider of \$50 added. For example, we have a few members who have a policy in the amount of \$350. In the early years we also had “A” and “B” members. “A” members paid less in dues which was their choice. Therefore, many only have a policy in the amount of \$100 vs. \$300.

**Question:** “Since my insurance is cancelled, why should I continue my membership?”

**Answer:** The National Board of course is very concerned by this comment. We value each and every member and we would hope that those who consider cancelling their membership change their decision. The National Board is dedicated to preserving, educating, and experiencing our Slovenian culture and heritage which we believe is our main purpose. We will continue to work on all the scanning and indexing of our important valuable historical records, and we plan to seek grants which will be used to aid in these efforts.

**Notes Written on Returned Forms:** “NO, I want to keep my insurance; I want death benefit value not certificate reserve value.”

**Comment:** These choices cannot be honored. We are discontinuing the insurance and we have approval from the State of Illinois that we are only obligated to pay the reserve value.

We recognize that the insurance had a wonderful useful purpose in the 1930's, but in today's economy it really does not do much for a beneficiary. In fact, many beneficiaries do not even claim the insurance because they do not know it exists.

In conclusion, we know that many of you love your heritage and culture. This is why the National Board of Directors is involved and donates many hours of work. Our goal has always been to preserve our heritage. We chose to qualify as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization so we have possibilities for tax exemptions, grants, and donations. Many benefits will be available to us because we have qualified as a 501(c) 3 non-profit corporation. Per our attorney, qualifying for this status would have been highly unlikely if we remained in the insurance business.

### *History of the Burial Insurance through SWUA/SUA*

*In 1926 the Slovenian Ladies' Union of America was founded as a burial society and incorporated by the Illinois Secretary of State, but in 1933 it was re-incorporated by the Department of Insurance as the Slovenian Women's Union of America. Throughout these 80 years we were bound by the rules and regulations of the Illinois Department of Insurance.*

*At the 1999 Convention, delegates moved to eliminate issuing policies to new members. It had been 73 years since this insurance was initiated. The insurance, as written, was deemed to be out of date. The meager dollar amount had little relevance in today's world. SUA needed to be realistic!*

*Furthermore, a multitude of paper reports and financial statements needed to be filed each year and submitted to the Department of Insurance; each year it posed a significant cost, not including the time and labor to complete such reports.*

*At the 2011 Convention, it was voted upon and approved to eliminate the burial insurance. The most recent policies being issued to our young members would be active to the year 2070+ and beyond when medical advances and life expectancy were factored in. In addition, again it was the cost of filing to the Department of Insurance and the sum of human labor and time. The SUA needed to be realistic.*

*Since 2011, the entire process has been guided by a law firm in Chicago that specializes in non-profits. They have worked with the Department of Insurance to ensure the correct process. This burial insurance was the last of its kind in Illinois. Policy values came from the actuarial table provided by the Illinois Department of Insurance. Also factored into the value was the status of membership; at one time there were classifications, A or B member!*

*Throughout all these years, it was necessary to keep all insurance policies at actuarial value in our trust account. In hindsight, this insurance should have been dissolved decades ago. The recent board saw no alternatives; they faced the facts. The SUA, as it existed, needed to be dismantled and rebuilt. At the 1999 and 2011 conventions, the membership spoke, and the National Board listened and heeded. With the guidance of the Department of Insurance and a Chicago law firm, the National Board is assured proper procedures have been followed.*



# SWU Scholarship Foundation

by Mary Turvey, SWU Scholarship Director

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## *CELEBRATING 64 YEARS OF FINANCIALLY ASSISTING STUDENTS*

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

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### **SLOVENIAN WOMEN'S UNION SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION Announces 2013 Scholarships**

The Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation is pleased to present the scholarship winners of 2013. We thank SWU Scholarship Committee members most sincerely for their work, and salute our young scholars for their academic, civic, and community proficiency.

#### **JOSEF PRINC MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

of \$4,000.00 for a Graduate Student has been awarded to **DANIELLE VENTURI CAREY** of Glendale, Colorado. Danielle graduated from the Community College of Aurora, majoring in Equine Science, and will enter Texas Tech University's



Master of Occupational Therapy Program at the School of Allied Health Sciences. Danielle has managed the daily operation of a busy equine therapeutic riding center, serving 100 students and patients per week. She supervises a team of therapists and instructors as they maintain partnerships with special need schools and implemented individualized programs to meet their goals. Danielle has been the caretaker of an 18 year old girl with a spinal cord injury, organized a refugee children's clothing store beginning in 2009 to the present, volunteered at a pediatric therapy center under the supervision of an occupational therapist, and volunteers in the Saddle up Foundation. This program controls a horse during a therapy session to help stabilize the student and keep them safe. Franc Mostar of Ljubljana,

immigrant to Leadville, Colorado, and Marie Barbrovsec, born in 1864 in Ljubljana, are Danielle's earliest Slovenian ancestors, followed by the Horvat, Blatnik, Mostar, and Kastgelic families of Colorado. Her family has owned and bred quarter horses for over 30 years. Danielle is a member and certified instructor of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship from 2009 to present.

**BRANCH 2 - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS AWARD** of \$2,000.00 for a College Student was awarded to **JAMES KOCI**, Branch 100 - Southern California. James has graduated from Dana Hills High School, where he held a 3.98 GPA, ranking first in his class, and will study Physics at the University of Notre Dame. James is exceptionally well-rounded. He is a member of a long and diverse list of school clubs and is an outstanding athlete and a talented musician. As manager of a five-piece band, he serves as the group's lead guitarist, and songwriter. His band, "Numb Desire," plays at venues for private parties, school, and city functions and can be reviewed on the website: [www.numbdesiremusic.webs.com](http://www.numbdesiremusic.webs.com) and has recorded DVDs. James plays various instruments in other groups, and sings in his local church choir, where he also is an altar server. Community involvement activities include being a volunteer for the United States Geological Survey, Boy Scouts of America, American Mathematics Competitions, private tutoring in math and science (2009-present), an active SNPJ lifetime member, putting on performances for the Teen Experience Leadership Program, and has been a member of the Slovenian Union of America for the past seven years.





**JEAN KURILICH SCHOLARSHIP** of \$1,000.00 for a College Student has been awarded to **J A R E D MORRISSETTE**, Branch 99 - Lemont, Illinois. Jared is currently a student at the University of Illinois, Chicago, studying Mechanical Engineering. One of Jared's challenging courses, the class ME

250 Introduction to Engineering Design and Graphics, was a project-based design course which included an eight-week project in which students work to design and build a device to solve a specified problem. Jared's work placed him in the top 15% of the class. As a fortunate descendent of Slovenian ancestry, Jared is an active and knowledgeable participant in family Slovenian activities. He was able to travel to Slovenia and truly appreciates his heritage. Jared is interested in developing new environmentally safe methods of electrical power.

**JEAN KURILICH SCHOLARSHIP** of \$1,000.00 for a College Student has been awarded to **AMY KONCAR**, Branch 20 - Joliet, Illinois. Amy has graduated from Joliet Catholic Academy and will enter Fontbonne University to study Speech and Language Pathology. Amy holds a 4.7 GPA (which includes



several college courses) and a sixth place ranking in her class. As a member of the National Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society, and President of the Key Club, she has contributed well to the Academy. Amy visits the local nursing homes regularly, tutors students, and volunteers as a buddy for handicapped baseball. In addition, she is a member of KSKJ, the Slovenian Catholic Center, SUA's Branch 20, and involved with their events. Amy has chosen speech and language pathology as a major because of the joy she receives when she helps others.

**FRANCES BARMAN SCHOLARSHIP** of \$1,000.00 for a College Student has been awarded to **ALEX KOSSAKOSKI**, member of Branch 42 - Maple Heights, Ohio, residing in Walpole, New Hampshire. Alex will graduate from Fall Mountain Regional High School and plans to enter Sacred Heart University where he will major in Sports Management and Business Administration. Alex has been a member of Branch 42 for 18 years, and is a former resident of Maple Heights, Ohio. He is a member of the National Honor Society, Math Team, Interact, freshmen rugby, and baseball, which are some of his extra curricular activities. Interact is a chosen group of 12 students, nominated by teachers to do community services. Not only does Interact annually supply food baskets and catering dinners, but their biggest project is El Salvador, where they go for a week and build eight houses there each year. Alex says that Interact has been a giant influence on him and his goals for the future. Alex's number one goal is to graduate with a Master's Degree in Business Administration.



**FRANCES BARMAN SCHOLARSHIP** of \$1,000.00 for a College Student has been awarded to **MATTHEW FITZSIMMONS**, Branch 108 - Olney, Maryland. Matthew will be graduating from DeMatha Catholic High School and will enter the Catholic University of America in fall to study Biological Sciences and Music. Matthew has a love for music and science which is reflected in his school activities. He has held principal position in DeMatha's Wind Ensemble trumpet section and other community groups, and was recently awarded the 2013 John Philip Sousa Band





Award. He has consistently been selected, by audition, during all four years of high school to represent his school in the Maryland All-State Orchestra and Band trumpet section. He also participates in a Jazz Ensemble and Brass Ensemble for special activities at DeMatha's music program. Mathew shares his talent at special church services of various denominations, youth groups, and attended the March for Life in Washington, D.C. with his church youth group during the last two years. As a Boy Scout since elementary school, Matthew has worked hard through the ranks, and this year he became an Eagle Scout, earning scoutings highest rank. As a scout he served in leadership positions, and worked on various community projects. After all the religious oppression Matthew's grandfather experienced prior to leaving his beloved Slovenian homeland, throughout his life he said *"Knowledge and education are your greatest powers, for as long as you live. No one can ever take these away from you."* Mathew remembers his grandfather's words well.

#### **SWU SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION MERIT AWARD winners:**

BARBARA PROKUP, Branch 24 - LaSalle, Illinois, will graduate from Saint Bede Academy and will enter Saint Mary's College in fall, majoring in Occupational Therapy.

ANGELA PEREZ, Branch 3 - Pueblo, Colorado, will graduate from Pueblo South High School and enter Colorado State University in fall, majoring in Medicine/Microbiology.

KIRSTEN LOREK, Branch 14/50 - Euclid, Ohio, will graduate from Lake Catholic High School and will attend Duquesne University this fall, majoring in Athletic Training.

MEGAN JOHNSON, Branch 102 - Willard, Wisconsin, is attending the University of Wisconsin- Stout where she is majoring in Professional Communication.

### **Scholarship Donations**

#### **\$2,000 Donation**

Frances Reichelderfer funding of two Jean Kurilich Memorial Scholarships in memory of her mother.

#### **\$400 Donation**

Sean & Raeanna Tucker

#### **\$120 Donation**

Carl Megow, Jim Megow, Julie Jones, Kathleen Megow Boliou, Lois Megow, Eileen Imes Stansbury and Janice Imes Seitz, all loving nieces and nephews of Raymond Delopst, in their Uncle's memory.

#### **\$100 Donation**

Kirsten Lorek, SWU Scholarship Merit Award winner is contributing her 2013 Award to the SWU Scholarship Foundation.

#### **\$30 Donation**

Judith Rechlitz and Family

#### **\$20 Donation**

Branch 42 - Maple Hts, OH, +Mary R. Perko

For information, questions, and greatly needed contributions, please contact:

Mary Turvey  
4 Lawrence Drive  
Marquette, Michigan, 49855  
[mturvey@aol.com](mailto:mturvey@aol.com)

or Marge Church  
1028 Skyland Drive  
Macedonia, Ohio, 44056  
[yemec1@windstream.net](mailto:yemec1@windstream.net)

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# Membership Application and Renewal

Slovenian Union of America

(Formerly known as Slovenian Women's Union of America)

slovenianunion.org sua@slovenianunion.org 815.727.1926

**For RENEWALS use form at BOTTOM of this page**

☐ Adult Dues \$25.00 ☐ Adult Dues (International Address) \$35.00 ☐ Junior Dues (Birth to 18) \$5.00

If this is a gift and you agree to continue paying for this membership next year, please advise us of billing address:

Dues are for January through December

If you join after August 31 you will not be billed in January of the next calendar year

Membership Renewal Notifications are sent annually in January

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

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

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Branch Affiliation Number (if known)/Location \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_ Do you speak Slovenian? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your Slovenian ancestry and provide SLOVENIAN SURNAMES

\_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about us? SUA Member \_\_\_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer for the SUA. My area of interest or expertise is \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Tell a Friend!** If you wish SUA to send information to a friend or relative, please provide us with their name and address:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Member ID No. \_\_\_\_\_ (located on back cover)

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Mail to: SUA/SWUA, 431 N. Chicago Street, Joliet, IL 60432-1703

# Death of a Surname

By George Plautz, Zarja Staff Writer  
A Record of Immigration

Historians state that most Slovenians immigrated to the United States between 1880 and the end of World War I. At the rate I am discovering those with roots in Slovenia, I wonder if we will ever know how many immigrated. We continue with immigrants from Slovenia who settled all over America. By the 1870's, Illinois, Minnesota, and Iowa have burgeoning communities. Thank you to Terry Stacy, who consistently provides me with confirmation of dates from Crnomelj Parish records.

UPDATE: I have listed John and Jacob Gorse (Illinois) {Gorshe, Gorsche} in previous columns. Recently I received a series of e-mails from one of their descendants with new information. I was not aware that John and Jacob were brothers; their father's name is Stefan. John is supposed to have been born in Rucetna Vas, near Semic, in Crnomelj Parish, otherwise family lore states the birthplace is Semic. The new date for immigration for John is 1835; he was born September 10, 1814, he married Catherine Holser in 1843, in Hamilton, Missouri. John died April 11, 1890, or 1891. Jacob immigrated in 1845. John was a millionaire at the time of his death. He, his wife, and children were reburied in Hamilton, Missouri. One son, John, born about 1860, survived, changed his surname, and moved to the east coast. No one knows what happened to him. Albert James, according to cemetery records, born in Missouri, August 6, 1869, but in the 1870 U.S. Census, 1861; George, born 1865, died May 6, 1895; Joseph Clement, born August 9, 1864, died April 18, 1886.

1870-Sometime between 1870 and 1873, Martin Simonich (Simonich) arrived in America, originally settling in Bellville, Illinois, before settling in California. He was homesick for the hills of his homeland, so from Illinois he took a train with a companion and eventually walked to Porterville, Tulare County, California. There he met other acquaintances from Semic, as the area must have resembled his homeland. He married Anna Pezdirc on December 10, 1882, in Porterville. Martin was born in Semic Parish on March 30, 1849, and died on September 20, 1942, in Porterville. Anna was born November 3, 1853, in Slovenia, died November 24, 1924, in Porterville. Martin and Anna had the following children: Francis, born July 8, 1883, died May 28, 1937, in Porterville; Anna, born December 15, 1884, died June 20, 1973, in Porterville; Mary (Sister May Reginalda), born March 3, 1887, died January 17, 1974, in Santa Clara County, California; John, born January 31, 1889, married Elsie Jane Hechman, died March 15, 1974, in Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California; Martin, born August 3, 1892, married Katharine, died January 20, 1973, in Oakland County, California; Joseph, born July 17, 1895, died November 15, 1947; and Catherine, born June 17, 1898, married Martin Muller, died December 7, 1942, in Porterville. Martin was a farmer and rancher.

## Slovenian Pioneers to America 1840-1879

Thanks to a family researcher for submitting information about him and his family.

1870-Before or during this year, Andreas Perijon (Perion), born April 12, 1823, in Mavrlen house number 11, Crnomelj Parish, arrives in Clinton County, Iowa. His parents are Andreas Perion and Katharina Tabor. He married Maria Rom, the daughter of George Rom and Katharina Majerle. Mary was born February 9, 1832, in Bistrica house number 9, Crnomelj Parish, and the couple married in Crnomelj Parish on February 18, 1852. Mary was previously married to a John Lackner. Four sons arrived with them: John, born May 21, 1854, married Mary Smith, died February 26, 1910, in Woodbury, Woodbury County, Iowa; Andrew, born June 23, 1859, in Loka house number 16, Crnomelj Parish, married Elizabeth Carey in 1888, died April 13, 1934, in Edmunds, South Dakota; Jacob, born June 15, 1864, in Loka house number 16, no other information known; and Joseph, born March 20, 1867, in Loka house number 16, Crnomelj Parish, married Ella Murphy, died about 1954, probably in Iowa. Andreas farmed near Browns Township in Iowa. He and his wife had the following children after their arrival in America: Mary, born August 4, 1870, in Clinton County, Iowa, married Anton Fier, died November 3, 1935, in Charlotte, Clinton County, Iowa; Mathias Perion, born December 16, 1872, in Wright County, Iowa, married Mary Maurin, daughter of Josef Maurin and Maria Jerman, listed below, died January 8, 1959; and Peter Perion, born about 1878, he married Mary (Molly Ludwig), no other information is available.

1872-During this year Steve Jerman arrived in the United States and settled in Red Jacket, Houghton County, Michigan, according to the 1900 U.S. Census. He was born about 1851. His wife, Annie, was born about 1856. They had the following children: Annie, born about 1884; Maggie, born about 1886; Mannie, born about 1889; Steven, born about 1892; and Fred, born about 1897. I could find no records pertaining to this family after the 1900 U.S. Census.

June 4, 1873-On this date, Mathias Oman arrived in New York and then traveled on to Brockway, Minnesota. Mathias is the son of Gregor Oman and Katharine Kosir, born February 24, 1830, in 97 Vas of Gozd, Kranjska Gora, Slovenia. He married Mary Kozjek about 1865 in Slovenia. They were the parents of fifteen children, four who died in infancy. Mary Kozjek was born about 1843, and died about 1885. Their children are: John Ohman, born December 13, 1866, died March 13, 1936, in Little Falls, Minnesota; Andreas, born about 1870 in Slovenia, married Jennie; Mary, born about 1872 in Slovenia, died December 26, 1942; Joseph, born about 1875, married Mary Vouk, died June 7, 1931, in St. Cloud, Minnesota; Francis, born



about 1877, died May 24, 1990; Michael Ohmann, born September 6, 1879, in Albany, Minnesota, died May 29, 1966, in Butte, California; Joseph Ohmann, born February 7, 1875, in Albany, died June 7, 1931, in St. Cloud, Minnesota. There are many descendants of the Oman and Ohman (Ohmann) family who are tracing their family history.

July 21, 1873-On this date Michael Lorditch (Lovretic) arrived in America and settled in Johnstown's Cambria City section, with his second wife, Margaret Panjan. Michael's first wife died, and their daughter, Theresa, was born October 12, 1868, in Dragatus Parish, married Henry Gunselman, died February 14, 1920. Michael and Margaret had the following children: Michael, born about January 6, 1872, in Golek, Dragatus Parish, Slovenia, died August 16, 1956; Unnamed child, born 1873 in Slovenia, died October 2, 1879; Unnamed child born September 1875, died May 17, 1876; George, born April 12, 1877, died September 26, 1966; Mary, born May 5, 1879, married William Ritter, died about 1960; Margaret, born June 1881, married John Buchanan (Buchan), died April 9, 1937; Joseph, born April 12, 1877, died on September 26, 1966; and William, born September 19, 1885, died on December 22, 1968, in Ebensburg, Cambria, Pennsylvania. Johnstown was the place of death for most of the children. Michael was born on September 12, 1838, in the Bela Krajina region of Slovenia. His brother George preceded him in immigrating to Pennsylvania. Michael and Margaret were married on June 30, 1869, in Slovenia. Michael worked at the Cambria Blast Furnace, was a butcher, and worked for the Street Commissioner's Department. Michael died October 1909, in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Margaret Panjan was born in 1848 in Dragatus Parish and died May 3, 1936, in Johnstown. I'm grateful to Brian Posun for providing the background information on his ancestor.

1873-During this year Paul Blenkush arrived in Minnesota. Paul was born February 25, 1836, in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, and died after 1900 in Stearns County, Minnesota. Paul is the son of Caspar Blenkush and Mary Louticher, mentioned previously in this column. Paul married Mary Smoley, the daughter of Thomas and Maria Smoley, in Wald 11, Gozd, Kranjska Gora, on January 29, 1866. Mary was born about 1841 and died before 1896. Paul and Mary had the following children: Peter, born July 12, 1866, in Kranjska Gora, married Eugenia, died January 14, 1891, in St. Stephen, Stearns County, Minnesota; John, born May 26, 1868, in Kranjska Gora, died June 17, 1943, in Morrison County, Minnesota; Agnes, born January 1870, in Kranjska Gora, married Joseph Justin on February 25, 1889, in St. Stephen, died on February 20, 1962, in Oregon City, Oregon; Mary born about 1873 in Kranjska Gora, married Mathias Arm, died January 23, 1894, in St. Stephen; Paul Benjamin, born July 8, 1875, married Mary Peternell on May 29, 1901, in St. Stephen, died on January 11, 1961, in St. Stephen; Frank, born January 2, 1876, in St. Stephen, died on May 11, 1897, in St. Stephen; Emilie, born December 7, 1877, died April 12, 1895, in St. Stephen; Michael, born November 6, 1879, in Brockway Township, Stearns County, Minnesota, married Johanna Peternell, on July 17, 1899, in St. Stephen, died March 20, 1910, in Brockway Township;

and Matilda, born August 29, 1881, in St. Stephen, married Michael Joseph Ohmann, son of Michael Ohman and Mary Kozjek, died October 20, 1960, in Fresno, California. Paul and his brothers were farmers in Stearns County. As noted in this column many marriages occurred between the children of the immigrants, most of which came from the Kranjska Gora region. Many family members are researching their family history.

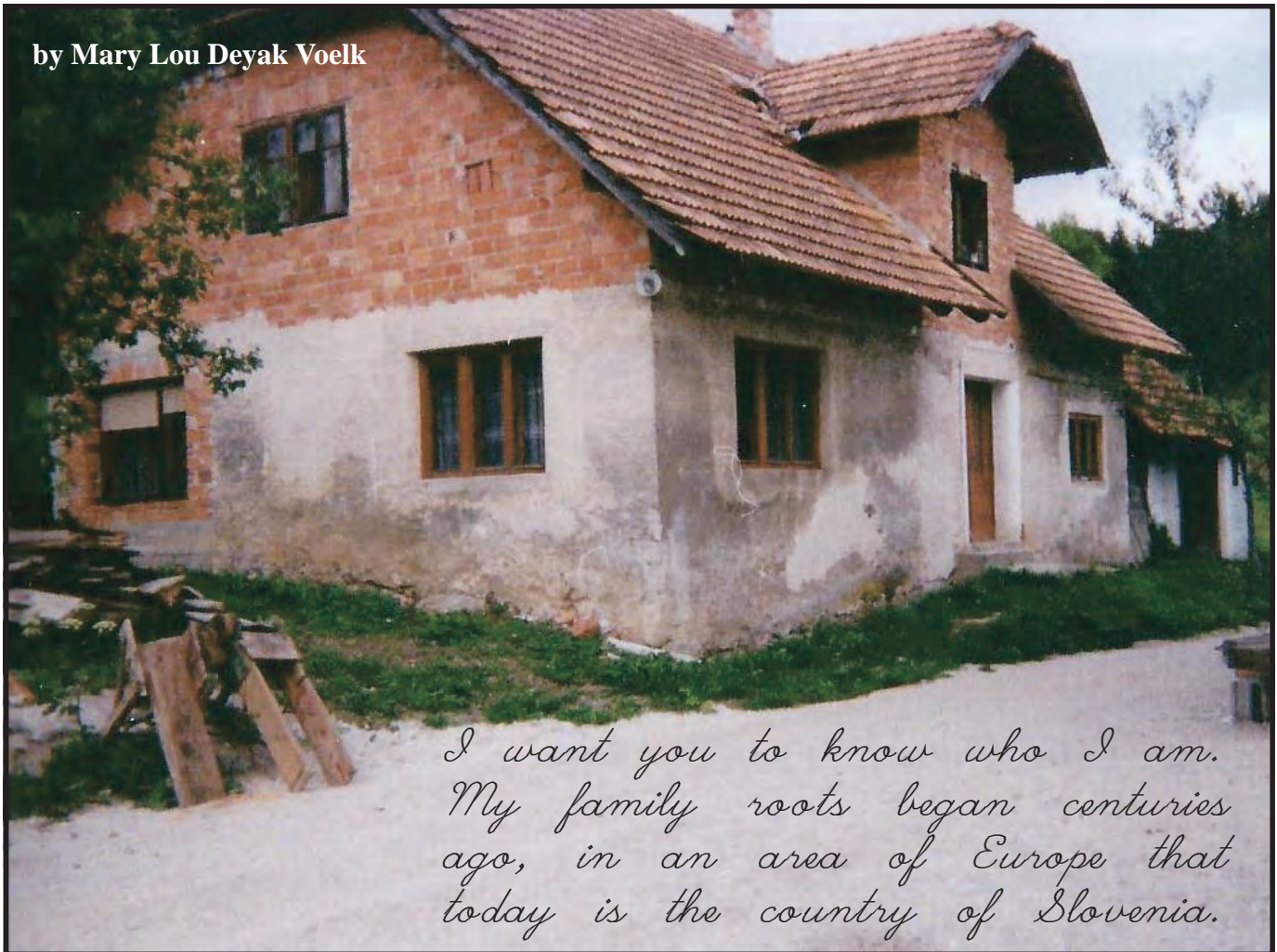
1873-During this year, Joseph Maurin settled in Clinton County, Iowa. Joseph was born December 23, 1852, in Loka, house number 8, Crnomelj Parish, Slovenia, to George Movrin and Anna Loser. Joseph came to Iowa to be with his sister, Anna Maurin, mentioned earlier in a column about George Teshak. Joseph married Maria Jerman in January 1880, in Sugar Creek, Clinton County, Iowa. Maria was born in August 1859. Joseph and Anna Maurin moved from Sugar Creek, Iowa, to Center, Lyon County, Kansas. They had the following children there: Joseph, born November 30, 1880; Mary, born September 1883, married Mathew J. Perion, son of Andrew Perion and Maria Rom, listed above; Anna, born June 1886; Katherine, born July 1889; Barbara, born July 11, 1891, married Albert Joseph Hahn, died in October 1978, in Clinton, Clinton County, Iowa; Rose Ann, born January 30, 1895, she worked as a maid in Davenport, Iowa in the 1930 U.S. Census; Lizzie, born April 1897, working as a servant for a private family in the 1920 U.S. Census; John George, born September 5, 1899, married Rose McDonald, died November 1963; Angelus, born about 1903, in Clinton County, Iowa. Joseph died before 1920; his wife, his son Joseph, and daughter Angelus, are found in the 1920 U.S. Census for Delmar, Clinton County, Iowa.

1873-During this year, Peter Dershay (Derzaj) arrived in America. According to the U.S. Census record in 1910, Peter, his wife Kate, and son John, were living in Forest, Lewis County, Washington. Peter was born about July 2, 1850, in Dragovanja Vas, house number 1, currently Dragatus Parish, Slovenia, and died on April 21, 1921, in Forest. Peter's parents were Michael Derzaj and Katharina Jelenic. Peter and Kate had eight children, of which two were living in 1910. Peter and Kate had two sons: Peter, born April 21, 1889, died March 28, 1907, in Chehalis, Lewis County, Washington; and John, born about 1892, died on November 15, 1927. A daughter, Mary Catherine, born February 4, 1888, married Peter Brannon, on September 3, 1907, in Seattle, died October 7, 1965. They had three children: Gladys (1907-13); William (1909-1997); Elizabeth (1912-?). John married Rose Dluhosh on November 22, 1916, in Chehalis. Rose was born June 21, 1895, died on October 19, 1996, in Thurston County, Washington. A son, Jack, was born April 25, 1921, and died on November 30, 1991, in Thurston. Jack was married on November 8, 1946, in Thurston, to Laverne Arlene Robertson. Laverne was born on May 29, 1927, and died on February 27, 2002. From public records, Jack Dershay and Laverne Robertson had a son. Peter was a farmer. Washington became a state in 1889; records before that period are hard to obtain.

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by Mary Lou Deyak Voelk



*I want you to know who I am.  
My family roots began centuries  
ago, in an area of Europe that  
today is the country of Slovenia.*

It came to Ann Vesel Niemela as she held her first great-grandchild in her arms, “At my 92 years of age, this child will never know who I am.” The result is a beautiful tribute written to her great-granddaughter, Delysia Dawn.

To quote Hermann Hes:

*“Without words, without writing, and without books there would be no history,  
there could be no concept of humanity.”*

*Dear Delysia Dawn,*

I am your great-grandmother, Ann Vesel Niemela, of Ely, Minnesota. I first met you on November 18, 2011, when my daughter, Judy, your great-aunt, and I traveled to St. Paul. Taking turns holding you made this a very special and memorable day. I am writing the family story; it is dedicated to you personally. I want you to know who I am. My family roots began centuries ago, in an area of Europe that today is the country of Slovenia.

#### **My Mother and Father:**

I now want to introduce you to my mother and father, Frances Čampa and Vincent Vesel, Sr. My mother, Frances, was the first born to Ignac and Agnes Lovšin Čampa from Jelovec, the village of Ribnica, the Province of Slovenia,

in the country once called Yugoslavia. The house where my mother was brought up was still there in 1980 when Judy and I visited, but it was in disrepair. It has since been torn down (pictured above).

Frances was a very ambitious and spirited girl. She went to school through the second grade, then stayed at home to shepherd the cows and help with the other children. She went barefoot during the winter. She would wait until the cows made a cow platter so she could warm her feet. I was told she developed a heart condition because of such hard living. When Frances was 12 years old, she begged her father to allow her to learn the dressmaker trade. She became an apprentice, lived at the dressmaker’s house,



and did chores for learning the trade. Frances had her own Singer sewing machine that Judy and I saw at my Aunt Ivanka's house when we visited Slovenia in 1980.

My father, Vincent Sr., went to school through the second grade. Before the age of 16, Vincent and his father, John Vesel,\* had toured the U.S. on bicycles. My father fell in love with America and knew he would return someday. Back in Yugoslavia, he met Frances. They were wed on May 29, 1911. Frances never let on how young she was when they were married. She always told us that if she had not married my father, some other girl would have gotten him.

*\*John Vesel was the person who carried and set up the cross on the old St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Ely.*

After their marriage Frances and Vincent Sr. lived above the home and store of his parents. Life was not to their liking. Frances found Vincent's mother to be prying and bossy. On the home front the threat of war was lurking. Young men were being conscripted into the army. My father wanted no part of the military. He was a lover, not a fighter; a Ribnican. The couple were ready to make the move to America.

My mother's Aunt Mary and her husband, Adolf Skule, of Denver, Colorado, became their sponsor. To help fund their trip to Denver, Frances' father gifted them \$200, but with a warning - "Do not expect any more money; this is your part of the family homestead and inheritance." They sailed aboard the St. Louis out of Antwerp, Belgium. Now in Colorado, my father got a job in the smelter in Leadville. My sisters Mary, Agnes, and Frances were born in nearby Denver.

### **Maternal and Fraternal Grandparents:**

Ignac Čampa, my maternal grandfather, also had come to America and had settled in Ely, Minnesota. He worked in the mines while boarding at the Zupancich home (later the Lesar home) in Chandler Location.\* This man lived quite a life. Periodically he would return to Slovenia, they say to make more children, and then back to Ely he would come. His wife, Agnes, my

grandmother, never came to America. Ignac did write to my mother, requesting she encourage Vincent to leave Colorado and make the move to Ely; there was work in the mines. Heeding their advice, my parents packed two trunks full of their belongings and hired a man with a horse and wagon to take them to the train depot. My father gave the man three silver dollars in payment. In Ely, they rented a unit in the Stradisher duplex in Chandler Location; the Dolenc family lived in the unit next door. I was born on April 15, 1919. My grandfather had waited until I was born and baptized before leaving for Slovenia. My mother begged him to get the rest of the family to America. She had saved money for fares and sent it to two of her sisters, hoping they would come. Both kept the money and refused to come. My father never returned to America. Upon his return to Slovenia, he invested his money in land in Jelovec. The valley became exclusively owned by the family.

*\*There were many family nicknames in Chandler. An explanation from Ed Gobetz: Such names were common among the rural areas of Slovenia. Names came from house names (domača imena), from residents of a particular household, or of previous residents, or names given by teasing neighbors, etc. Some are familiar, others have been lost to the ages. Most of the names below are phonetically written.*

*Kaj (Merhar family);  
Shimon (Simon Marolt family);  
Kvaso (Ann's father; kvas, yeast in Slovenian);  
Lachiska, Ann's mother;  
Kosmonkar (Marolt family down by Mizera's);  
Gretal (Priatelj family);  
Knatzoka (Mrs. Zimmermams);  
Slemenc (Perovshek, sleme, ridge in Slovenian)*



*Ann is on the chair in the center, Frances on the left, Agnes in the back and Mary on the right.*

John Vesel, my fraternal grandfather, also became a U.S citizen. He loved America; he roamed America, never settling in one spot. I have a copy of his citizenship papers. Periodically, he would return to Slovenia. His wife, Agnes Sterbenc Vesel, never left Slovenia; she remained in Sodrazica to care for their store. John died in a nursing home in Jugoslavia.

### **Life in Ely, Minnesota:**

My mother's apprenticeship as a young girl made her a contributing breadwinner for our family. She was able to design and sew dresses without a pattern. Women would bring their fabric; she would take the measurements and then page through the mail order catalog for just the right dress. Before long, a dress was created, 18-20 dresses a week. That meant sewing mostly at night when the day-work was over. She charged 75¢ for a housedress. We were never without good clothing or household items. She would rip old coats apart, wash and press the fabric, turn it inside out, and sew up beautiful coats. If my mother had fancy, silk material left, my dad would say, "make me a necktie," and she did. On Sunday morning he was always dressed in his best clothes for morning Mass. He stayed dressed all day, not doing any work on Sundays. We either had company or went visiting. If the Lodge had a picnic at Sandy Point, we were there all afternoon.

My mother also could knit and crochet. She knit socks, mittens, hats, and scarves. She would look at a picture of a doily in the newspaper and crochet one just like it. I have doilies that my mother made that I continue to use today. My mother was a great baker and cook, and she could economize in the process. She would make a bread raiser of krofe and six loaves of bread at one time. A bread raiser was a metal tub that sat on a kitchen chair; the dough was mixed and raised in it. The dough was then rolled out and cut into circles like a donut, raised again, deep fried, sugared, and served. Bread and butter was a great treat, and it became even greater when we were able to sneak into the pantry and drop our bread into the sugar box. Each day, we had nine people at our table, five girls, two boys, and my parents.

As our family grew, my father decided we needed a bigger house. Come summertime, we moved into the big shed. Construction began on an upstairs of the house in Chandler. We slept in the barn and cooked outside. My father hired a carpenter, Matt Rom, and a Finnish fellow. We moved into the house before winter. After work or on weekends, my father would put up the Upson board, and then would nail lats on the seams. My mother would varnish them. It took many years to get the house done. My parents did not like debt, but they did have a mortgage.

Four more children were born in Chandler Location: Vincent, Milly, John, and I. When Mary and Frances started school they knew no English, neither did the Finnish children or the few Italian children. The teachers must have had such a difficult time teaching. I had two great teachers in kindergarten, Miss Merrill and Miss Antila. Both had much patience. When I began kindergarten I cried so much. To

calm me down, they let me spend time with my sister in her 5th grade classroom.

My parents gradually began to learn the English language. My father went to night school so he could get his citizenship paper. Several years later my mother took night school classes and got her citizenship paper also. Now they could vote. My parents never missed an election. Candidates would have cars available for rides to the polls. They were picked up at their homes, driven to the polls, and returned home. The candidates paid for this service.

When I was young, there were very few vehicles. Grocers used a horse and buggy to deliver groceries during the summer and a horse and sled in the winter. Once a week the grocer would come to each customer's home to collect the orders. Deliveries were in the next day or two. That was the only way we could get 100 pound sacks of flour and other big items.

In the 1930's, flour and sugar were packed in 100, 50 or 25 pound cloth bags. Salt and corn meal came in smaller cloth bags. Once emptied, the bags were bleached, ripped apart, and made into dishtowels, bed sheets, and pillowcases for our beds. Fruit came in small and large crates. Peaches, pears, and plums were canned for the winter. A bushel or crate of apples was for after school treats or for school lunch. Many meals consisted of soup and vegetables; no food was ever wasted. We were always walking or running, we were all thin and in good physical shape.

If my mother needed a small item, she would send me to the grocery store. Everything was charged. The bill was paid on the day my father got his pay check from the mine. I also went to buy thread, buttons, bias tape, elastic, and other sewing needs for my mother. When I was older, she had me tie the threads on the dresses, iron, and fold them. Delivery day was Saturday. Whenever I brought Mrs. Jershe her dresses, she would give me a nickel tip. I never forgot her. In later years, my sister would marry her son, and so we were not only good friends, but related!

A coal heater kept us warm and a wood range was used to cook and bake our foods. There were many chores. The wood box had to be filled each day after school. Each day we would bring water from the well; there was no running water in Chandler Location. Two pigs were raised each year. Butchering occurred in winter. My father made blood sausage; the ham and polish sausages were smoked. Lard was rendered and stored in crocks in the cellar. Vegetable gardens were huge; cucumbers, corn, rutabagas, turnips, chives, and the list goes on. Vegetables were



preserved in jars and/or stored in the cool cellar. A copper boiler was used for canning. My father made a wooden rack for the bottles to sit on. Two-quart jars were used for canning 200 bottles of beans each year. During the summer I spent time picking berries. When we were older my brother, Vince, would take my sister, Milly, and me across Shagawa Lake in a canoe he had made one winter. He would drop us off in the morning and return around 4 p.m. We'd have our pails full of wild blueberries. My mother made pies and canned blueberries for use in the winter. One quart of blueberries made a big pie. We kids learned how to do everything, and later all enjoyed having a garden.

Holidays were very special times in our family. Special goodies prevailed; walnut and apple potica, krofe, turkey, and home-cured ham. Lent was the preparation for Easter. On Fat Tuesday special goodies were aplenty; pigs in the blanket and a big bread raiser of krofe, which we filled with jelly and dusted with sugar. The following day was Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent and a day without meat. Other fast days during Lent were called Ember Days\*, as was each Friday. On Friday evening, my parents attended the Stations of the Cross, which were conducted in the Slovenian language. Stations of the Cross for children were held on Sunday, as was catechism class. Holy Week was a busy time. It was church each day: Holy Thursday for the blessing of Holy Water, Good Friday for the kissing of the cross, and Holy Saturday for the blessing of the žegen basket.

My mother would pack one or two žegen baskets with ham, ham bread, horseradish, and colored hard-boiled eggs. We would color the eggs in the morning, which was always fun. Then it was the walk up the Chandler Stretch and Camp Street to St. Anthony Church for the blessing. At the same time, we bought incense and got our bottle of Holy Water, which was sprinkled around the home during summer thunderstorms.

My parents went to the late Holy Saturday Easter vigil and we kids went to church Easter Sunday morning. The girls wore their Easter bonnets, new dresses, and shoes. The boys wore suits and their new shoes. Unnecessary work was not done on Easter Sunday. In fact, no stores were open on any Sunday during the year. Mine workers worked five days with Saturday and Sunday off. On Easter Sunday, my father would line up some colored eggs and take some nickels out of his pocket. He'd pitch a nickel and if it landed in your egg, the nickel was yours. Easter Monday was a school holiday as well.

Thanksgiving was celebrated with a big turkey and many wonderful foods. Sometimes we raised a turkey, fattened

it, and then father readied it for the table. Christmas was another big holiday. My father went down by Shagawa Lake to cut down a tree. We decorated it with strings of candy and candy strawberries on a wire, along with decorative balls, birds, lights, paper chains, and decorations we made in school. We spent hours sitting on our stair case playing a guessing game, attempting to guess what tree ornament someone was thinking of. We could hardly wait for Christmas morning, usually getting up at 4 a.m., and then mother chasing us back to bed.

Birthdays were always special days in our house. It meant having a 3-layer cake. During summer, the ice cream wagon came through Chandler, yelling "ice cream." My mother would give us a big bowl and 50 cents, and the ice cream man would fill up the bowl. Once home we would all have ice cream and cake. We had to eat quickly since



*Art and Ann Vesel Niemela - July 12, 1948.*

there was no refrigeration. If we were too much to handle at home on a Sunday afternoon, my mother would give us each a nickel and send us uptown. We'd go to Buffalo's, buy a big ice cream cone, and then walk around town, window shopping. When we'd return home, my mother would say "Are you back already?" Every so often she needed some peace and quiet.

Mary and Frances quit school when they were 16 years old. They were not fond of school and my mother needed their help at home. Vince also quit school and got a job at the Zenith Mine, where my father worked. After John graduated from high school, he also went to work at the Zenith Mine. Mary, Frances, Agnes, and I did housework for the rich people, school teachers, superintendents, and bosses at the mines. Some were nice, but others were a pain. They couldn't do anything themselves, but they knew how to give orders. Through the years, my father worked in three Ely mines: Chandler, Pioneer, and Zenith. He retired from Zenith at age 65 and received a monthly pension of \$75 and an insurance policy. When he died at age 89, each of us - Mary, Frances, Agnes, Vincent, John, Milly, and I - got a small check for our share of the insurance.

Frances was the first of our family to marry. She and Veikko Maki were married on September 8, 1938. I was not at home at the time. I had gone to Duluth the prior week to work for Father Spain's sister, Florence Simard, who had just had her second baby. I thought it would be an adventure, but it turned out to be a bust. They paid me \$7 per week, plus room and board. I could do better at home and mother urged me to come home. People I had worked for in Ely kept asking when I was coming back. After Frances and Veikko were married they lived close to our house in Chandler. Their girls spent much time at our house. They were so cute and sweet. My mother died in August of 1944. On May 15, 1944, Mary and Tony Zavodnik were also married; they lived in Soudan, Minnesota. Vince missed our mother's funeral and Mary's wedding; he had been drafted into the Army. Agnes went to Minneapolis to work in an assembly plant during the war. She and Gordon Sunde were married on September 25, 1948. Milly and Frank Jershe were married on April 12, 1947, and lived upstairs in Grandma Jershe's house in Ely.

I married your great-grandfather, Art Neimela, on July 12, 1948. My father wanted us to live with him, but we choose to get an apartment. I did, however, do the washing and the cleaning for my father and brothers who were still home at the time. Vincent and Gertrude Zallar were married on October 21, 1950, and lived in Ely. John and Rosemary Bishoff were married on November 21, 1953, and lived with my father until they bought a farm a few years later. My father moved in with Frances and Veikko after he had his stroke. He died one day after his 80th birthday. Your great-grandfather and I had five children, Diane, John, Susan, Judy, and Linda. Your great-grandfather, Art Niemela, had only been retired a few years when he passed away in October, 1980. Your grandparents, John and Cynthia McMahon Niemela, had two children, Arthur and Frances. Frances married Christopher Loehr, and you, Delysia Dawn, are their first born.



*Grandmother Ann, granddaughter Frances, and great-granddaughter Delysia.*

In April 2013, I was 94 years old. I have been fortunate to have so many good years among family and friends, and residing in a town so rich in the history and traditions of my Slovenian ancestry. I give you my love; may the future be promising for you. Your heritage can never be taken from you, it belongs to you only. Cherish it.

*Your Great-Grandmother,  
Ann Vesel Niemela*



# Ember Days

Genesis 8:22

*"All the days of the earth, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, night and day, shall not cease."*

I had not thought of Ember Days for years, not until Ann Neimela mentioned it in our conversation. Then a call to Dolly Shober for a discussion. When it came to church going, we were a twosome. Dolly and I were born three days apart, and lived across the street from each other. "In those days" Ely had a 9:00 a.m. kids' Mass; adults had their own service(s). Kids coming via Lawrence Street and the Chandler Stretch would join ranks around the Depot, and then march the last three blocks to St. Anthony Church. Girls sat on the left; boys sat on the right. We could sit with our friends, scout the crowd for that certain someone we had a crush on that week, then loiter after Mass to find out what was new.

Never knowing what Ember Days were about, I began researching the internet. After extensive reading, a thunderbolt came onto me. Days. There, in my God's Corner, lay my missal from those early days when Dolly and I toted them to church each Sunday, pretending they were our Bibles. In this New Marian Missal, copyrighted 1961, I found the Ember Day Masses and readings!

First, some history. Embertide, known as Quatuor Anni Tempora (four seasons of the year), occurs four times a year, at the beginning of each of the natural seasons, with the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of the given week set aside as days of fasting and abstinence. The tradition goes back to the origins of Christianity. The Old Testament prescribes these days as the means of consecrating the year to God (Zechariah 8:19): "Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be seasons of joy and gladness, and cheerful festivals for the house of Judah: therefore love truth and peace."

Winter: Advent Embertide - Between the third and fourth Sundays of Advent after St. Lucia, d. 304 December 13

Spring: Lenten Embertide - Between the first and second Sundays of Lent

Summer: White Embertide - Named after Whitsunday, Feast of the Pentecost, between Pentecost and Trinity Sunday

Autumn: Michaelmas Embertide - Beginning on the Sunday after Holy Cross Day, September 14

The purpose was to thank God for the gifts of nature, to teach men moderation, and was a time to perform charitable acts. It was meant to focus on God through his marvelous creation. The dates can be remembered using an old mnemonic, "Lucy, Ashes, Dove and Cross."

Each Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday has their own proper Mass. In addition to the epistle reading, there

can be as many as five Lessons, all from the Old Testament. This particular Saturday of Ember Week Mass is taken from my 1961 Missal:

Introit Ps. 87.3 - Lesson Deut. 26.12-19 - Gradual Ps. 78.9, 10 - Epistle 1Thess. 5.14-23. - Tract Ps. 11.1, 2 - Gospel Matt. 17.1-9 - Offertory Ps. 87.2, 3 - Communion Ps. 7.2 - Lesson Deut. 11.22-25 - Gradual Ps. 83.10, 9 - Lesson 11 Mach. 1.23-27 - Gradual Ps. 89.13, 1 - Lesson Eccus. 36.1-10 - Gradual Ps. 140.2. Ps.89.13, 1

With the liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council, the celebration of Rogation Days (recitation of the Litanies) and Ember Days were removed from the liturgical calendar. It was left to the national Bishops Conference to implement in a way suitable to their country. As the Western world became more industrialized, these special days that focused on agriculture and the changes of the seasons seemed less relevant. However, a particular request of Paul VI asked that the celebration always include prayers for vocations. This was in keeping with tradition that the purpose of the celebrations are not only a bountiful harvest, but a petition "the master of the harvest send out laborers for his harvest (Luke 10:2)." In portions of Europe, parishes still celebrate these days.

The internet holds many sites on Embertide, however, I only quote one site. I found the information very educational, soul enriching, and with artwork that manifests each season. <http://www.fisheaters.com/emberdays.html>

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8:

*All things have their season,  
and in their times all things pass under heaven.*

*A time to be born, and a time to die.*

*A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which  
is planted.*

*A time to kill, and a time to heal.*

*A time to destroy, and a time to build.*

*A time to weep, and a time to laugh.*

*A time to mourn, and a time to dance.*

*A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather.*

*A time to embrace, and a time to be far from  
embraces.*

*A time to get, and a time to lose.*

*A time to keep, and a time to cast away.*

*A time to rend, and a time to sew.*

*A time to keep silence, and a time to speak.*

*A time of war, and a time of peace.*

- To je to, Mary Lou Deyak Voelk



# Marie Pivik

## Tribute to Long Time Members

Marie Pivik was born in Gore, Slovenia, near Idrija, the eighth of eleven children in the family of Joseph Novak, a photographer and tailor, and his wife, Ivanka Petkovsek. There always was much singing in the home, and members sang as they went about their work. Marie would sing as she sheared the sheep, washed and combed the wool, and then spun it into yarn.

It is not surprising that when she came to America she joined many singing groups - Triglav at the Dennison Slovenian Home, Glasbena Matica, Korotan, and St. Vitus Choir, and founded the West Park Singers. She recorded with Eddie Kenik, and also with the Don Slogar Orchestra, which was the first time Slak melodies were recorded in America. In 1970, Marie founded Circle #77, a SNPJ children's chorus, and was the only director the chorus ever had, until it disbanded in 1999. She now sings with the "Happy Timers," a button box group

Marie's father was an environmentalist before his time, as he provided the family with electricity in the 1950's using nature. His first project was a windmill which unfortunately blew away in a storm, and so he then dammed a nearby spring which produced electricity when he opened the dam and let the water pass through a generator (hydroelectric power).

Life in Yugoslavia was not easy for a strong, Catholic family during WWII and many family members suffered. They lived having little food and in constant fear of the combatants, but survived. As a small child Marie and some of her siblings trembled as they hid in a closet and watched as the Partisans had a gun pointed at their father's head, threatening to kill him. Fortunately, they left without harming him.

Marie's future husband, Rudy Pivik, was in the Merchant

Marines, and when his ship docked in Trieste he often took leave and traveled to Gore to visit his family there. In 1956, he met Marie at a wedding, and two and one-half months later they were married in Gore at St. Mary Magdalene Church, after which they came to America. Life was difficult for Marie, at 18 years old, as she had no relatives in Cleveland, knew little English, and lived in a neighborhood with few Slovenians. She persevered and became the mother of two children; a son, Frank, who has given her three lovely grandchildren - Frank, Corinne, and Eric; and a beloved daughter, Sonja, who is developmentally disabled. She later worked for United Airlines in their kitchen and then for six years in Washington, D.C. She traveled back



*Marie with the potica she presented to Presidential candidate, Bob Dole, and Dole eating her potica.*



and forth to Cleveland as part of the domestic department which was concerned with seeing that United airplanes were always clean, and supplied with the essentials needed for passenger comfort.

In 2001, Rudy and Marie attended a military reunion in Korea, where they did not find out until the next day, September 12, that the twin towers had been destroyed in New York City. It was a very emotional time for everyone as they sang "God Bless America." Their plane coming home was  $\frac{3}{4}$  empty!

Marie always worked hard in her effort to bring togetherness to the Slovenia people, and was chosen "Slovenian Woman of the Year" in 1980. She is a wonderful cook, known for her crackling and round poticas. Marie has catered dinners for over 150 people, making almost the entire dinner by herself! When presidential candidate, Bob Dole, came to Cleveland in 1996, Marie dressed in the traditional Slovenian costume, and presented him with a piece of her potica. It was an event chronicled in newspapers, both in Cleveland, and on the front page of "Nadilo" in Ljubljana, Slovenia. When Archbishop Rode from Ljubljana came to Cleveland for a visit, Marie was chosen to greet him on his arrival and present him with a bouquet of flowers.

Marie has visited Slovenia over 20 times and in 2005 sang with Korotan in Maribor. In 1999, she was fortunate enough to see Pope John Paul II when he visited there, and she presented a lace-trimmed, 15m long (16.4 yd) altar cloth for the altar at Maribor, which was then donated to the Pope. Over 70 children from the Idrija region had worked on the lace edging.



*Marie presenting to Archbishop Rode of Ljubljana (now Cardinal) a bouquet of flowers as she welcome him to Cleveland.*

Travel has been an important part of Marie's life as she has visited Bangkok, Singapore, Guam, Hawaii, Korea, Beijing, China, and Hong Kong, among other places. She loves to garden and has an award-winning yard filled with many beautiful flowers, along with a large vegetable garden.

Marie is active in many Slovenian organizations, including SUA Branch 50 - Euclid, OH, SNPJ #257, KSKJ St. Vitus #25, and Soca #26. She is truly a remarkable lady who once again has shown the strength of the Slovenian woman.

### **Tribute to Long Time Members**

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

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



*Interesting picture from Marie's archives - this is not a tree. If you look closely you will see that it is a person carrying a load of hay in Slovenia.*



# When In Slovenia...

by Mary Lou Deyak Voelk

*In the next several issues, I will be sharing with you several of my experiences while in Slovenia, April 14 - May 8, 2013: When In Slovenia; Wedding in Smlednik; Bobbin Lace in Polhov Gradec; A Penpal in Portoroz; The Opera Singer.*

An Overview:

When in Slovenia, recycle. It is a way of life in Slovenia. In all neighborhoods are a row of bins with colored lids. Yellow for plastic and aluminum, brown for compost, blue for paper, and green for bottles. In cosmopolitan areas, less functional appearing recycling containers, are ever present.



When in Slovenia, visit a grocery store. Cashiers sit; they do not stand. Bring your own bags and be prepared to bag your own groceries. Potica comes in many flavors! And bread!



Have you ever been in the check out line in the USA and the clerk must look up a produce number? In Slovenia YOU weigh the produce. Produce is identified with a number and a cost per unit. You place your selection on the scale and press the corresponding number. Out comes a UPC sticker with weight and price.

Check out the produce section for motovelec. It is Mirjam Hladnik's favorite. When I mentioned that I could find no translation, she brought out a poem which gave the clue, lamb's lettuce, corn salad, and rampion, among many others.

*Rampion*

*From: Red Under the Skin 1944, Natasha Saje*

*Let us praise this most polynomial  
of plants: In English it's lamb's lettuce,  
named perhaps for the delicate ear  
or tongue-like leaves.  
Imagine a small cat's paw  
or a spoon for demitasse.  
We also call it corn salad,  
growing, as it does protected  
from the sun between stalks.  
The French say mâche  
but also blanchette (little white)  
clairette (little light)  
doucette (little soft)*





*oreillete (little ear).  
In Latin, it's valerian,  
akin to catnip, the bellflower  
whose medicinal roots prevent spasms.  
One pays dearly for this plant  
because it's hard to clean, demanding  
a large tub of cool water and someone  
to lift it slowly  
many times, spurning  
the grass and grains of sand.  
But worth the trouble for its leaves smooth  
as mayonnaise, colored  
like clover, flavored of walnuts.  
To some it's salad, to others  
it's a fairy tale. The stuff  
Rapunzel's mother craved  
and that the old witch grew and guarded.  
The stuff an unborn child is bartered for.  
It recalls the persistence of desire.*

In the Brothers Grimm fairy tale "Rapunzel," rampion is the bargaining chip used; the newborn daughter for a serving of rampion.

Lamb's lettuce had its origins as a weed growing among the cereal crops in Europe. Its spoon-shaped dark, waxy leaves have a distinctive flavor, its name comes from a resemblance to the size and shape of a lamb's tongue. It can be used raw in salads or steamed and served as a vegetable. I absolutely am in love with motovelec! A motovelec Caesar salad in lieu of romaine? Google: [Lamb's lettuce seeds](#) for seed source. Google: [Lamb's lettuce nutritional value](#). You will thank me!

Čevapčići is readily available.



Looking for eggs? They are stacked on grocery shelves; they are not refrigerated. Break an egg and view a yolk so yellow/orange! Eating an egg will bring back memories of what an egg once tasted like.



Remember to cross only in the designated crosswalks, and only when the signal allows. Cycling is a means of transportation for all ages in Ljubljana. Bike lanes are designated; they can be part of the pedestrian sidewalk or an entire separate lane.

They are well marked for your protection, and theirs! Cyclists have the right of way, so always beware. It's amazing to see entire families cycling to a destination, even three year old children, whose ability to ride a bicycle will match any adult. Most amazing - peddling down the bike lane in downtown Ljubljana in high heels.

When in Slovenia, do stop for coffee and a krofe at a self-service shop. Take a seat and enjoy the passing foot traffic.





When in Slovenia, visit the Open Market. Do make it a point to purchase a baggie of sauerkraut! A most delicious snack with few calories; one of the best tasting sauerkraut I have eaten! Note: kiska repa is sour turnip. Notice the bottles of sauerkraut water on the left. Scenes such as this will remain a vivid memory!

When in Slovenia, do visit a cemetery. Carefully tended, each plot becomes a grieving canvas. Arrangements are indeed creative expressions, silent prayers of gratitude, for lives once lived.



When in Slovenia, see Slovenia via automobile. On an expressway or on a single lane country road, the majestic landscapes, the purity of nature; it goes on for kilometers. Homes of brick and stucco with Mediterranean style tile roofs, in nature's palette of colors, create uniformity throughout the country. Villages nestled into the foothills appear as outcroppings of nature. The iconic kozolec and hundreds of castles abound the country. Thousands of churches in Baroque, Gothic, and Romanesque styles rise up from as many villages and hamlets. Roadside chapels appear as miniature cathedrals along countryside roads. Even the nation's electric junction boxes are housed in traditional chapel style. Add the all-predictable tolling of the church bells noting the time of day. This audio counterpart amplifies what is before one's eyes. How to describe the scene? "Seeing is believing."

To je to,  
Mary Lou

# Calendar of Events

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 2013

Branch 99 of Lemont, Illinois, to host a Sarma and Slovenian Rizoto Culinary Class at 9:00 a.m. in the Slovenian Catholic Center kitchen. Cost is \$20 per person to attend. Contact [pmavec@live.com](mailto:pmavec@live.com) or 815.729.9787 to register. Space is limited.

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2013

Branch 35 of Aurora, Minnesota, to host the Minnesota State Convention. Coffee at 8:30 a.m., meeting at 9:00 a.m., Mass at 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner and program at noon. Everything will be held at Holy Rosary Catholic Church.

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2013

Branch 108 of Olney, Maryland, to celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington D.C. at 3:00 p.m.

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2013

Ohio Regional Convention – Mass at 10:30 a.m. at St. Vitus followed by brunch at St. Vitus Village.

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2013

Branch 1, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, to host Wisconsin Regional Convention.

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2013

Branch 47 of Garfield Heights, Ohio, to host a Christmas Luncheon at the Valley View Community Center at 12:30 p.m.

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013

Branch 43 of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to host a New Year's Eve Party and celebration of Spravanje (Reconciliation) and Silverstrovanje (St. Sylvester's Day) from 5:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Wisconsin Athletic Club. Contact Jan Gehm at 414.321.1413.



## First Midwest Bank

<b>Joliet</b> 50 W. Jefferson St. 1415 W. Jefferson St. 2801 W. Jefferson St. 230 N. Chicago St. 1301 N. Larkin Ave. 2300 Rt. 59	<b>Crest Hill</b> 16051 Weber Rd. <b>Lockport</b> 800 S. State St. <b>New Lenox</b> 1888 E. Lincoln Hwy.
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# Slovenian

## Union of America

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### Branch Reports

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#### **BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin**

Contact Information: Mary Ann Schellinger

920.457.7946 [rhmas@yahoo.com](mailto:rhmas@yahoo.com)

April was a very busy month for Branch 1. Mary Ann Schellinger, our Branch President, was honored as Member of the Year. Table decorations, door prizes, and the program focused on the theme of butterflies – suggesting that we should try to enjoy our lives rather than keeping too busy and letting our lives pass us by. Mary Jo Grabner shared some special photos from her 2012 visit to Slovenia. She entitled her presentation “Can You Imagine?”

The highlight of the month was Family Festival – Slovenia. It was a project in partnership with the John Michael Kohler Art Center (JMKAC). The Art Center has been hosting these cultural events since 2007, and this year’s festival featuring Slovenia had the largest attendance (over 400). Branch members worked on the project for over a year. On display were various items: Idrija lace, Rogaska crystal, memorial funeral candles, painted wooden plates, beehive panels, currency from 1996, and many Slovenian publications and books about the country. Mary Turvey shared information regarding SUA and the SWU scholarship program. Upon entering the facility, “travelers” were greeted by Angie Fritz who



*Julie Kinney working on the potato salad.*



*Mary Ann Schellinger & Angie Fritz.*

donned a traditional costume. Passports were issued and colorful stamps were put on the passports as “travelers” participated in various activities. It was great to see so many participating in the Slovene/English concentration card game using numbers and animals, making red tissue paper carnations, coloring hard-boiled eggs using Slovenian patterns, and making beehive panels. Dick Jelovnik, a local woodcarver, talked about his carvings while displaying wood items from Slovenia and also a crèche that he had made. The crèche is a very typical sight on properties as one travels throughout the smaller villages in Slovenia.





*Animal card concentration game.*



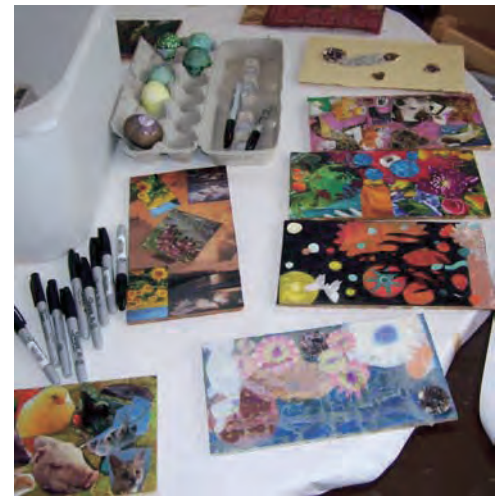
*Creche made  
by Dick Jelovnik.*



*Katie & Jim Gorton.*



*Tom Virant.*



*Beehive panels made by festival attendees.*



*Pauline Rupar and Mary Ann Schellinger.*



*Betty Repenshek, daughter Vicki Lindstrom,  
and grandson Alec Lindstrom.*

Aggie Gruenke and Tom and Shirley Vertacic did a potica demonstration. "Standing room only" wasn't even a close description to indicate how many people were attending this event. Mary Pat Ryan and Mary Ann Schellinger did story telling in Slovene and English using a children's book about a gigantic hen (Kokos Velikanka). This book was written by Desa Muck, one of the Slovenian authors who had visited Sheboygan a few years ago. Entertainment was provided by Branch 1 members Katie and Jim Gorton and Branch 43 - Milwaukee members, Dolores Ivanchich and Tony Gorenc. Music could be heard throughout the day whether it was Tom Virant on the button box, Alec Lindstrom on the piano, or traditional music in the background from Slovenian CDs. Of course, no Slovenian festival would be complete without the food. The week before the event Branch members donned their aprons to work with volunteers from the Art Center to put together the feast which included: kranjse klobase, potato salad, cucumber soup, cabbage, dumplings, flancati, vanilla ice cream drizzled with pumpkin oil, and of course potica. Not a crumb was to be found. Just as at the end of any Slovenian celebration, people gathered to sing songs and dance the polka while Mary Ann played the piano. We were honored by the presence of a special guest, Pauline Rugar, wearing her traditional Slovenian costume. At age 102, she is the oldest member of Branch 1. As people came up to talk to her, you could see a gleam in her eye and a smile on her face. She truly is an example of what it is to be "proud to be Slovenian and let our heritage shine."

BETTY REPENSHEK

### **BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado**

Contact Information: [amtcharron@yahoo.com](mailto:amtcharron@yahoo.com)

The regular monthly meeting was held on April 2, and Barbara Greenwood was the hostess. A memorial service was held for longtime member Dorothy Zakrasek who passed away recently.

On May 6, the annual Mother's Day luncheon was hosted by Branch 3. At the celebration Norma Becco was honored as our Member of the Year. Members brought door prizes, so everyone left with a memento. President Marge Cullen and Vice President Eileen Kaplan always prepare an interesting game for our celebrations, and the gems and flowers game associated with horoscopes was challenging. Marie Mutz was the prize winner for the game and won a beautiful bouquet of red carnations and baby's breath. Member Angela Mock brought as guests her daughter, Michelle Meegan, and her precious infant granddaughter, Natalie Meegan, making up a three-generation group. Unfortunately, Angela's mother, Mary Gersick, was unable to attend and expand the group to four generations. The recognition of mothers continued on May 12, with breakfast after the 8:00 a.m. Mass hosted by St. Mary's Holy Name Society.

Regular monthly meetings will be suspended over the summer months, so the next Branch 3 meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 1.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON &  
BARBARA KARLINGER

### **BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana**

Greetings! We are in the swing with all the summer sports - golf, t-ball, baseball, and of course, soccer! Wouldn't it be great if our new Indy soccer team ended up with a few Slovenian soccer players on the team?

Mary, Karen, and I would like to thank all our members who attended our SUA Member of the Year meeting and dinner at the Slovenian National Home in May! Although our meeting was very short, Jerry Watson was recognized and received a small gift, which he assured us would be spent at an Irish pub during his upcoming Ireland trip. Jerry's daughter, Kristina, is working a two-month job in Ireland, so what a perfect opportunity to travel! Also that night, member Martin Lambert was surprised when his family all showed up to celebrate his birthday! A great time was had by all!

We would like to thank all the members and their families

who came down and bought dinner that night. Mary, Karen, and I had great fun cooking and serving our wonderful roast pork dinner! All the dinners were served with much "love and laughter," and maybe a joke or two! We sold over 50 dinners that night, with the profits going toward the National Home. As usual, my favorites were all the wonderful desserts



*Junior member Jonathon Cline, son of Scott and Sara Cline, did a great job as ring bearer for a May wedding.*



donated by our members! Chocolate birthday cake, fresh strawberry cake, peach-up-side-down cake...oh my goodness, they were awesome! HVALA LEPA!

Congratulations go out to our members who were on the women's bowling teams at the recent KSKJ National Tournament held here in Indianapolis! First Place went to our 5-member team consisting of Sheryl Thorpe, Katie Poole,



*The women bowlers who took first place. Betsy Walker and Anna Fon designed their shirts, which were a major hit at the bowling alley!*

Betsy Walker, Sara Cline, and Anna Fon. Katie Poole and Betsy Walker also took the doubles trophy home! It is always great to see so many Slovenians together when the tournaments are here in Indy, and is always great fun!

KAREN, MARY & PHYLLIS

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

Summer in the San Francisco Bay Area is beautiful and busy. The annual Member of the Year luncheon on May 5<sup>th</sup> was a wonderful success. Thank you to all of our members and friends for supporting our Branch. Our June "Welcome to Summer" hot dog picnic meeting was great fun for all members who attended.

Grandma Virginia Sustarich and Aunt Ann Sustarich are so very proud of granddaughter Helen Sustarich. Helen graduated from high school with a full scholarship to college. Congratulations, Helen!

We want to wish a Happy Birthday to all of our summer birthday people. We especially want to honor and send

best wishes to Elizabeth (Betty) Doherty who will be 103 years old on August 16<sup>th</sup>. Betty has been a past officer and a member for 65 years. Happy Birthday, Betty, from Branch 13!

Have a great summer and we will look forward to seeing you at the September meeting.

MOREEN SPENCER

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

Contact Information: 815.439.0062

[patricia.schager@att.net](mailto:patricia.schager@att.net)

As we closed our year in May, Members of the Year Dennis Cohil and Jim Lilek were honored by the membership with a banquet and the entertaining St. Joseph Academy singing chorus. The "BOYS" have, over the years, helped in so many ways, even when we were known as the Slovenian Women's Union. To our guys - a big thank you from all your friends.

Also honored during the festivities was junior member, Amy Koncar. Amy is a student of Joliet Catholic Academy and was presented with a \$1,000 scholarship by the SWU Scholarship Foundation. She was recently honored at a Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce Top Students Banquet as one of 25 top students from the Academy.

Our Branch presented Hannah Singletary with a \$500 Continuing Education scholarship check. Hannah is continuing her education and heading towards her goal of working in the mental health field.

The Branch bakery sale in March was a huge success. Thanks to all who donated goodies and cash; we are now \$1,290.50 richer. And many,

many thanks to those who donated their time to help at the sale. We couldn't have done it without your smiling faces.

Kudos to long time member and friendly barber, Joe Babich. Joe and his Joliet shop are fondly known locally as "Banana Joe." He is hard at work as a Will County board member, and was recently elected president of the Will County Forest Preserve. Joe always has a great story to share and brings his barbering skills to residents at local nursing homes.

It is with sadness we announce the passing of member John O'Blak, member Mildred Briski, and John, husband of member Ardis Gregorash.

PATRICIA SCHAGER

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### **BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois**

Contact Information: 815.223.9596 [wprokup@aol.com](mailto:wprokup@aol.com)

In April we met at Starved Rock Family Fun for a Palincke demonstration by member Vicki Klein and her father, Art Strohmaier. Art, age 86, made enough for everyone to have



a feast with all kinds of interesting toppings. Art spoke about his Slovenian background and how he first learned from his mother how to make this when he was nine years old.

In May we attended our Annual Spring Luncheon at Mario's Maples. Our Junior Members and cousins, Josie Brady and Barbi Prokup, were recognized for their achievement. Josie is finishing up her first year at Aurora University, where she is a nursing student. Barbi graduated from St. Bede Academy and will attend St. Mary's next



*Barbi Prokup and Josie Brady.*

year. Both girls talked about how important their Slovenian heritage is to them. Barbi shared stories of her four visits to Slovenia and Josie ended by saying she can't wait to travel to Slovenia with her mother and cousins. We gladly said, YES!

Congratulations to Varsity Coach Bill Prokup, Asst. Coach Donny Baldin, players Barbi Prokup and Julia Pohar for their performance at State for softball. This is the first time in the history of Saint Bede Academy for a girls team to go to State.

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### **BRANCH 35 - Aurora, Minnesota**

Contact Information: 218.742.8049

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

Our branch is working on the Minnesota State Convention we are hosting on September 15. The schedule, as of May 5<sup>th</sup>, is as follows: Coffee at 8:30 a.m., meeting at 9:00 a.m., Mass at 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner and program at noon. We hope to have a great turnout. Everything will be at Holy Rosary Catholic Church. All Minnesota branches will be receiving information, so keep the date open.

Get well wishes go out to Helen Simonich, a long time member. We welcome back Alice Wilson, another long time member and officer, who has returned to Aurora.

Our Member of the Year dinner honored Bernice Ceglar. It was held on Sunday, May 5. We all had a wonderful time. Many relatives and friends of Bernice attended. The excellent buffet was prepared by the Deluxe Cafe.

Rose Anttila returned from the Embassy of Slovenia Open House held on May 11<sup>th</sup> in Washington, DC. Three of her sisters joined her once again for the strudel demonstration. Pictures and an article will be coming soon in *Zarja*.

MARLYS RABB

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### **BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

Contact Information: Jan Gehm, President

414.321.1413 [twogames@wi.rr.com](mailto:twogames@wi.rr.com)

Many thanks to our member, Milly Mursec, for teaching Slovenian 101, sponsored by the Slovenian Arts Program of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. She had a class of very eager students and hopefully the free classes will continue in October.

May 11, 2013, was a special day for Jan Gehm who is our "Member of the Year." Jan's family was there to celebrate as were many friends and SUA members. Father Peter Rožič was a special guest and gave the invocation. He entertained by playing the accordion for part of the sing-along, led by Tony Gorenc. Father Peter resides in Santa Clara, California, and is the Jesuit Legacy Research Scholar and Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Political Science at Santa Clara University. We extended a heartfelt "Thank You" to Father Peter for being a part of this special day.

Congratulations to Father Jože Gole who is celebrating 70 years in the priesthood. Father was recently honored by the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Holy Name Union at the 28th annual "Only Jesus" award Mass and banquet. The combined Uspeh Chorus and St. John the Evangelist Slovenian Choir were pleased to have been asked to sing some Slovenian hymns.



*Left to right: Rose Chepeck, Janice Gehm, Jackie Smith, and Mici Bregant.*

Mark your calendars for December 31, 2013. Our branch will host a New Year's Eve Party from 5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Wisconsin Athletic Club on Highway 100 just north of W. Lincoln Ave. We will celebrate Spravanje (Reconciliation). This is a beautiful custom of Slovenes to make all things right on the last day of the old year with family and friends. We will also celebrate Silvestrovanje (St. Sylvester Day). Slovenes celebrate on this day to honor St. Sylvester, one of the few popes who became a saint. Plans call for wishing everyone a Happy New Year at the same time that Slovenes do in Slovenia. All details have not been worked out, but watch for details in an upcoming *Zarja*, or better yet - come to our next meeting. Best wishes for a safe, relaxing, and happy summer.

MICI BREGANT

#### **BRANCH 47 - Garfield Heights, Ohio**

Contact Information: Olga Dorchak 330.468.7989

Greetings! What a wonderful turnout for our luncheon on Saturday, May 4th. Fifteen members enjoyed the food and friendship at Burntwood Tavern in Solon. It was wonderful to have so many attending.

Our next meeting will be on Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at Panera Bread in Solon. We hope many of you plan to be there.

I will gladly share any of our members' activities. Just call me on my cell 330.730.8951 or e-mail me at [kjerrante@gmail.com](mailto:kjerrante@gmail.com) and I will include it in the next Branch report. Have a great summer!

KATHLEEN FERRANTE

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

Contact Information: 440.655.6735

[ricktomsick@gmail.com](mailto:ricktomsick@gmail.com)

Greetings from the "5-0" on America's North Coast, Cleveland, Ohio. Mark Sunday, October 13, on your calendar for this year's Ohio Regional Convention. Planning is underway for this special event that will begin with a Slovenian Mass at St. Vitus Church at 10:30 a.m., followed by brunch (by Sophie's Catering) at the St. Vitus Village. Watch your mail for an announcement in August. Please let me know if you are able to get involved in the planning for this year's convention.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, September 18, at Euclid Public Library at 1:00 p.m.. We're always interested to hear from you whether the 1 o'clock time works for you. Perhaps we can schedule future meetings on different days or at times when more people can attend. I want to again express my gratitude to Jo Wutchiett for the amazing minutes she takes of our meetings!

At our April meeting, we celebrated birthdays for Pat Budzilek, Josephine Wutchiett, and Mary Klemencic. We welcomed our newest member, Lisa Mertel. Pat has been composing biographies of several of our active, longer-



Left to right: Maureen Podlegar, Joe Tomsick, Rose Mary Toth, and Pat Budzilek

serving members as part of a series to be printed in *Zarja*. Her enthusiasm for genealogy and ancestral history is catchy and we had a great chat recently about some of our possibly mutual ancestors in Poland that she has been researching.

I heard recently from Ray Stupar of Wickliffe, whose wife Florence is a Branch 50 member and currently residing at the Slovene Home for the Aged in Cleveland. I'm sure Florence would appreciate hearing from many of you. Prayers and best wishes continue to go out for Louise Trogia and Ann Arhar. Remember to keep all of our Branch 50 members, both living and deceased, in your daily prayers.

We had a super turnout for our Mother's Day luncheon on May 15<sup>th</sup> at Dubrovnik Gardens. I came with my dad, Ken Tomsick, and my brother and fellow member, Joe Tomsick, who entertained us with his button box music. Joe is the CEO of the Lake County Ohio Council on Aging. It was great to see Alma Eppick, who is 98 years of age and still driving, present at the luncheon!

Speaking of Joey Tomsick - Joey and his wife, Lisa, recently welcomed a new son, Ryan Joseph, who was baptized by Bishop Pevec in May. Ryan joins his sister, Faith, in their home in Concord, Ohio.



Alma Eppick





It was also great to see Ivanka Matic, who is doing well after her recent hospital stay. Her daughter, Vesna, a Branch 50 member, was in town to visit for a few weeks - all the way from Winslow, Arizona.

Maureen Podlogar reports that her grandson, John Jelinek of Hilliard, Ohio, will be confirmed this week and will be attending St. Charles School in Hilliard.

We are very proud to report that Madeline Darden, granddaughter of our president, Rose Mary Toth, is graduating from The Rochester Institute of Technology in the Physician Assistant-Bachelor of Science degree program with a concentration in Sociology and Anthropology. Madeline was recently honored as RIT's Outstanding Undergraduate Scholar. The selection for this prestigious award involves many criteria in addition to her stellar academic success, including creative work, civic activities, independent research, and her service on student committees. Madeline joins in the steps of her older sister, Jillian, a 2012 graduate of RIT, who is currently practicing as a physician assistant in Rochester.

Our member, Johanna Tomsick, recently committed to attend Boston College in the fall. Jo has been president of her Beaumont School class and has been instrumental in a number of extracurricular activities. She has earned highest honors in three consecutive National Latin Exams, which is a new record for Beaumont School students. Her artwork has won many awards regionally and nationally. In addition to all her accomplishments, Jo is an avid amateur astronomer and photographer.

I want to remind you to check in often on SUA's activities by going to the website at [www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org). Bonnie Prokup reminds me that SUA is always looking for volunteers who like to write, do research, or submit photographs. You can let her know at [wprokup@aol.com](mailto:wprokup@aol.com).

RICK TOMSICK

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

Contact Information: Jim Ebner 815.883.3268

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

Nancy Henkel, Cynthia Carus, and Mitzi Banich provided the delicious food of a traditional Žegen meal for our members at our April meeting.

Annabelle Bryant and Elizabeth Fox chaired the activities of our closing dinner, Sunday, May 5, at beautiful Starved

Rock Lodge Dining Room. Their exquisite brunch was enjoyed by a great turn-out, topped off with their "to-die-for" endless dessert tables. Recent flooding had rendered the lower parking lots unusable, causing all park visitors to use the Lodge parking lot and roadways. True Slovenian spirit prevailed; those fortunate to have a close parking space offering rides to the less fortunate, and some hardy souls choosing to make the long walks to their cars. Door prizes of orchid plants were won by Trudy Argubright and Rose Bell.

We will be taking a break before resuming our potluck in September.

Until then, best wishes to all, especially those who are far away! You are always in our thoughts!

JIM EBNER

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

Contact Information: 718.335.8459

[lgross@tstnyc.org](mailto:lgross@tstnyc.org)

While members were happy to catch the Slovenian entry at the Disappearing Act European Film Festival in New York in April - it was Martin Turk's "Feed Me With Your Words" (Nahrani me z besedami) that had intrigued viewers from Mumbai to Sao Paulo - what really had us excited was the Slovene Conversation Class that was coming to us via the Internet! Thanks to the Republic of Slovenia's office for Slovenians Abroad and Branch members Tanya Vajk, Ria Whitmire, and Joan Walker we had our pilot session in May with participants as geographically diverse and distant as Florida, California, Wyoming, and South Carolina joining a small group huddled in Sunnyside, Queens! Our teacher, Maria Rode, located in Los Altos, California, teaches a traditional Slovene classroom-based course in San Francisco, but is a firm believer that internet learning is the way of the future in education and she is genuinely interested in exploring this with us. We'll have another session in June, and then go full steam ahead in September.

If this is something you would be interested in trying, please send an e-mail to [vajkusa@aol.com](mailto:vajkusa@aol.com) and Tanya can give you details.

ELIZABETH GROSS



*Slovene conversation 2013-05-08. Photo credit: Bob Harley, location is Cafe Marlene, Sunnyside, NY.*



### BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois

Contact Information: Jana Hlade [jmhlade@hotmail.com](mailto:jmhlade@hotmail.com)  
Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July! Summer is in full swing and our branch has some fun summer and fall activities planned. Here is just a recap of the last few months - in March, the Pop Jazz A Capella Group from Slovenia, *Perpetuum Jazzile*,



performed at the Rialto Square Theater in Joliet, IL. Many of us attended and enjoyed the hip music and traditional folk songs from this very talented group. Also in March, we held a butara making and Slovenian egg decorating demonstration. We had a great turn out for this fun class. In April, we sadly had to cancel the Member Celebration party and will inform you when and if this celebration will



be re-scheduled. In June, we held a strudel and struklji class at the Slovenian Catholic Center (SCC). Thank you to Paula Mavec for her culinary skills!

Come join us on July 28<sup>th</sup> up on the hill of the SCC for a meet and greet and a Slovenian picnic! Festivities will begin after the 11:00 a.m. Mass. Then on August 31<sup>st</sup> at 9 a.m. you can learn how to make Sarma and Slovenian Rizoto in the SCC kitchen. Cost is \$20 per person, which includes all supplies, but space is limited. Contact Paula Mavec at 815.729.9787 or [pmavec@live.com](mailto:pmavec@live.com) to register.

This fall, our branch is hosting our annual Bocce Ball tournament and picnic on September 21 at 12 p.m. at the home of Paula Mavec at 903 Cassie Dr., in Joliet. Bring a dish to pass. Water and lemonade will be served – bring any other beverages you would like. RSVP to Paula Mavec, kids are welcome. Our 10<sup>th</sup> annual Bunco will be held on

October 27<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 p.m. Come have some fun and win great prizes!

We have begun to plan the 2015 National Convention and hope for the support of all our members. Watch future *Zarja* issues for more details. Enjoy your summer!

JANA HLADE

### BRANCH 100 - Southern California

Contact Information: Jean Koci [ajkoci@cox.net](mailto:ajkoci@cox.net)

April brought many of our Branch members and friends together twice this Spring. We especially enjoyed honoring Marcia Leathers as our “Member of the Year” on April 13<sup>th</sup>. The day had a rocky start when we arrived at the designated restaurant and found that they were not able to open because of a flood in the kitchen. With heads together and locals making recommendations, we quickly found an alternate location that proved to be a very nice solution to what might have been a disaster. We arrived at the Lotus Garden Chinese Restaurant and were welcomed to their lovely banquet room and proceeded to have a lovely afternoon.

Marcia and her brother, Larry, entertained us with music from “Fiddler on the Roof” to prove that Marcia and her family are finding traditions very important in their lives. We were happy to have Marcia’s daughter, Desiree, her son, Jesse, and his family in attendance, along with brother, Larry. Marcia read her short biography with her usual animation and it was fun and entertaining. Everyone enjoyed the great food and service at the Lotus Garden and we may go back for another event soon!

Another really nice gathering of some of our SUA members and friends took place on Sunday April 21<sup>st</sup>. We were honored with a visit from Father Peter Rožič, s.j. who happened to be traveling through Orange County during a trip to San Diego. He is a Post Doctoral Fellow at Santa Clara University near San Jose, CA. He is also a member of the SUA Branch 108 - Olney, Maryland, where



Marcia Leathers and her family at her “Member of the Year” luncheon.



*Fr. Peter Rožič, s.j. with Jean Koci.*

he joined while attending Georgetown University during the past few years. Father Peter had noticed the article about Father Joze Cukale, s.j. in *Zarja* recently and wanted to meet our family, because he had heard about this missionary during his studies in Slovenia. He also was hoping to meet some Southern California Slovenes.

About 20 members of our family, Slovenes, and friends from our church were able to come to our home where we enjoyed a lovely afternoon. Father Peter, a young and athletic Jesuit from Slovenia, spoke to us personally and spiritually. We found him to be a very warm and friendly person and we hope that we will have the opportunity to meet with him again very soon. He truly enjoyed the traditional Slovenian food, wine, and music by our local accordionists. He even was able to take a borrowed accordion “home” with him so that he can practice on it, as he hasn’t had his own instrument with him for a long time. Thanks to Fred Mlakar for his generosity! As is usually the case, while talking with other Slovenes, we find that we have mutual friends and acquaintances. This was case with Father Peter. The more we talked, the more we found that there are people and places that were familiar to both of us. It is a small world!

JEAN KOCI

### **BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin**

Contact: Karen Spires [kleespires@comcast.net](mailto:kleespires@comcast.net)

Greetings from Willard! Anyone coming home for a summer vacation? Greenwood’s Summerfest (formerly Dairy Days) will be the weekend of July 13th. Hoping to see many members in attendance.

Father Folmar, Pastor at Holy Family in Willard, retired in June. His retirement brings changes to our small parish. Willard, Greenwood, and neighboring Loyal now share a priest to meet the needs of parishioners. We wish him a peaceful retirement and a huge thank you for all he has done for the Branch and its members.

Congratulations to everyone celebrating summer birthdays and anniversaries. Junior member, Sandy Brierton, celebrated her First Holy Communion in May.

After taking the busy summer months off, Branch meetings start again on August 10th. Please come and share the fun as we plan our fall meetings.

KAREN HRIBAR SPIRES

### **BRANCH 108 - Olney, Maryland**

Contact Information: Bernadette Fitzsimmons

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

Branch 108 members are delighted to be planning their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on October 5, 2013, at 3:00 p.m., to be celebrated at The Embassy of Slovenia in Washington, DC. Mark your calendars and join us for an event you don’t want to miss in celebration of our milestone year. We look forward to having many members of the



Washington, DC, Slovenian community and their guests join us for the program, including a performance by the Slovenian musical group, “Megaron,” in this central location to both Maryland and Virginia.

A group of Branch 108 members recently met and attended an embassy event and art exhibit; it was a pleasure to mingle with guests, and as always to be treated to delicious potica, strudel, and Slovenian wine.

We have bid farewell to our Spiritual Advisor, Father Peter Rožič, Ph.D. following his graduation from Georgetown University, and wish him God’s blessings in all his future endeavors with Jesuit communities throughout the world. A safe and happy summer to all our members and friends until we meet again in September.

A Slovenian thought for this summer “Dobra misel – pol zdravja” (A good thought - worth half of your health).

BERNADETTE K.  
FITZSIMMONS



*Branch President Bonnie Brierton and her daughter, junior member Sandy Brierton.*

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

Contact Information:

Norm Setnicker

[normas188@msn.com](mailto:normas188@msn.com)

In Minnesota we did get the April showers with the May “late flowers” along with more May “snow showers.” Can summer be far behind? It seems “far behind!” Talking to “moj bratranec” from



# Festival of Nations



*Slovenian Classroom*

The Slovenian language has kept the nation alive and united it as a culture over centuries of domination and brutality. In fact more than 70% of Slovenes speak 3 languages or more. Slovenian like English is an Indo-European language. Slovenian-American children would recognize such phrases as "lahko noč" (good night), "kam greš" (where are you going), or "gremo domo" (we're going home).



*Ron Setnik Family - Generations of Tradition*

Slovenian style music especially folk music featuring the polka and the waltz have been a part of just about every Slovenian family. The diatonic accordion, "the button box" was a visible icon to many Slovenian families.

Matt Tribar, Lojze Slak, and Frankie Yankovic were household names in Slovenian music. Jokingly, as a Slovenian American teenager you would know the words of "moja dekle" (My Girlfriend) or repeat the refrain "Češčena si Marija" at a Slovenian funeral.



*Traditional Slovenian Cuisine*

Cuisine defines a culture and is based on tradition, geography, landscape and societal norms. Growing up in a Slovenian family meant eating how grandma cooked and to preserve this cooking tradition, Slovenian cookbooks tended to be passed from one generation to the next. Children grew up developing a taste for "kranjska klobasa" (Slovenian sausage), "krompir" (potatoes), "štruklji" (dumplings) or "krvovica" (rice sausage) just to name some common Slovenian dishes.



*Ben and Sam love Potica*

The signature dessert that has been identified with the Slovenian culture is "potica" (po teet sa) a based walnut roll filled with a variety of savory fillings such as honey, walnuts, cheese and raisins.



*Happy Children at Kurentovanje*

Slovenian celebrations, festivals and traditional religious holidays (Easter, Christmas) have had a strong influence on succeeding generations of Slovenian families. Pictured above are children participating in what Slovenians call "Kurentovanje" (koo ran tow von ye), a rite of spring and fertility which marks the beginning of Shrovetide (lent) with an extravagant parade of adults and children dressed in elaborate masks. The central figure of the carnival, the Kurent, is believed to chase away winter and with its supernatural powers usher in spring.



## Special Recognition

To Tom Moren who painted the "Easter Procession" - child carrying butarica. He copied from the original Maxim Gaspari, the famous Slovenian folk artist.

To Liz Miller who sewed and designed the costume on Sveti Miklavz.

To John Medved who designed the shingled lit soffet that gave our booth such a finished look.

No other booth looked as neatly done as ours.

*Zarja The Dawn*





*Gaspari Print - Holy Week Procession  
Families carrying Zegen Baskets*

Easter is undoubtedly the most important religious holiday within the Slovenian culture. Slovenian families on Palm Sunday would prepare a "butara" (an arrangement of greenery and ribbons) reminiscent of palms and carried by children to church where they were blessed by the priest. On Holy Saturday, day before Easter Sunday, families would prepare a "Zegen" basket consisting of such items as potica, ham, dyed eggs, and horseradish (each item having religious symbolism) and was carried to the church to be blessed. The family would then share the contents at breakfast on Easter Sunday.



*St. Nicholas Leading Children*

Winter (in Slovenian "Zima") celebrations began on St. Nicholas Day "Sveti Miklavž" December 6<sup>th</sup>. The custom was that St. Nicholas would be accompanied by devils that would reprimand bad children. He passed out gifts of candles and fruit to good children. On Christmas Eve the family would gather around the nativity set to pray. Each room was then blessed with holy water and then the family attended Midnight Mass.

#### THE SLOVENIAN NATIONAL HOME

Following WWII and the migration of native Slovenians to countries like Canada, Argentina, Australia and the United States, SLOVENIAN HOMES were built as cultural meeting places within Slovenian communities. These community centers fostered drama, song and socialization for Slovenian families. Moreover, some Slovenian population centers such as Cleveland, Milwaukee and Chicago had their own schools and churches which helped to bridge the cultural gap of Slovenian Americans.

Hopefully future generations of Slovenian Americans will continue to identify with these symbols of shared identity and be able to say that their lives have been shaped through this legacy of a rich Slovenian culture.



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:  
[WWW.TWINCITIESSLOVENIANS.COM](http://WWW.TWINCITIESSLOVENIANS.COM)

## CHILDREN, OUR PAST, AND OUR FUTURE



*Kurentovanje Parade*

The Slovenes today share a common culture characterized by its language, its cuisine, its music, and its traditions within their celebrations and holidays. Children are an important part of these traditions and celebrations as they carry the culture forward into the next generation.



*Child-led Easter Procession*

Maxim Gaspari, a Slovenian folk artist, popularized the culture through "postcard art" over the centuries. Whether the subject was national costumes, traditional holidays (Christmas, Easter) or a simple depiction of rural life, Gaspari presented these themes in "folkloric uniqueness" for generations to come.



*Christine Medved and Miro Medved with Sveti Miklavž on the right. Costume was sewn by Liz Miller.*



*The Rich Samec family:  
Rich, wife Jenna, Chloe and Maja joined by Tea Rozman (right) and her two children: Isabella and Sofia.*



Polhov Gradec, Slovenija, they are experiencing a late spring as well.

The spring meetings of the TC Slovenians in March, April, and May were all project orientated. Chuck Podominick's Slovenian genealogy workshop provided hands-on experience in locating "sorodnike" roots in Slovenia via the internet and the expertise of Jay Fonkert of the Minnesota Genealogy Society. Rich Samec related a personal genealogy story titled "Magic Moments" which told in vivid detail how he came "connected" with a variety of sorodnike.

Tea Rozman, our newest member and native Slovenian, had the members construct paper bag masks depicting the celebration of Kurentovanje - a rite of spring and fertility which marks the beginning of Lent, along with a parade of adults and children dressed in elaborate masks. The central figure of the carnival, the Kurent, is believed to chase away winter and with its supernatural powers usher in spring (see picture of Festival of Nations Exhibit). Making these masks and having them as part of our FON exhibit was a good "Slovenian bonding experience." Thanks, Tea, for heading that project.

May marked the culmination of planning and participating in the Festival of Nations - the largest project of the year. The theme, "Children, our Past and Our Future" depicted the Slovenian culture characterized by its language, its cuisine, its music, and its traditions within their celebrations and holidays. Children are an important part of these traditions and celebrations as they carry the culture forward into the next generation. Branch 109 printed 1,200 tri-fold colored brochures which explained how we pass on the Slovenian culture from one generation to the next. The centerpiece of the exhibit was an original painting by Tom Moren of Maxim Gaspari's (Slovenian folk artist) Child-led Easter Procession. John Medved designed a shingled, lighted soffit that gave our exhibit space a real finished look and a touch of good Slovenian workmanship. The TC Slovenians would like to thank the co-chairs - Sue Rademacher and Mike Koski - for the many hours they devoted to organizing and planning for the Slovenian exhibit.

With summer approaching - slowly - the Branch 109 Board is evaluating and recording meeting topics for next year - starting in September. In addition to singing the Slovenian version of Happy Birthday at our monthly meetings, we raffled off two bottles of Slovenian wine. This has proven to be a popular part of our meetings and will continue next September. Plans are in the works to sell Slovenian calendars using pictures taken by members who have recently visited Slovenia. This project is being headed by Rich Pisa. John Skubiz is working on designing Slovenian "placemats" again from members' pictures. Tea Rozman has mentioned the possibility of a "Narodna nosa" workshop (Slovenian regional costumes) along with making "butare" during Lenten season. We look forward to another

exciting year in Branch 109 - Twin Cities Slovenians. "drži smehljaj se" - Keep smiling.

NORM SETNICKER  
"Born in USA with Slovenian Parts"

## WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED?

**Looking for volunteers who  
love their heritage.**

*We need help in our Museum  
in Joliet, Illinois, with  
scanning, sorting, cleaning,  
and creating exhibits.*

### WANTED

**Heritage Museum Director**

**Membership Director**

**Online Newsletter Editor**

**Heritage Museum Librarian**

**Museum Window Dressers**

**Heritage Museum Cleaners**

***Zarja - The Dawn Writers***

# Our Readers Revisit Civilian Conservation Corps Experiences

David Sodac's article, "*Going Back Home to Camp Wilark: A Civilian Conservation Corps Story*," encouraged readers to respond with their own memories and recollections of family members who had experienced the CCC in the 1930's. The article appeared in the 2013 March/April Volume 85 Issue of *Zarja*. Several members and readers did either e-mail or mail their stories.

Barbara Bray Bruch of Granville, IL writes...

"My Dad, Robert Bray, wasn't a Slovenian but was married to one, my Mom. Robert Bray also experienced life in the CCC. He was stationed at Starved Rock State Park and later in southern Illinois. My father's father was dying from cancer in 1936 when my Dad was in CCC and the \$25 he sent home was used in part to buy morphine for the pain he was experiencing. I remember well, my Grandma Bray telling me that story and how hard life was during the Depression. There is a CCC Museum at Iron World in Hibbing, MN, that I once visited several years ago that was quite interesting. Your article has really motivated me to learn more about his CCC experience!"

William Conway of Bettendorf, IA writes...

"Dad's name was George Conway. He had lived in Dexter, IA. He was in his early 30s when he went into the CCC. I don't recall the exact projects he worked on, but I suspect he didn't stay long enough in the organization to complete much of anything. It's important to realize that he had already experienced a great deal of rules and regimentation as an 18 year old in the military. Then as a WWI veteran, at age 32, he wasn't willing to endure the restrictive rules of the CCC. I remember him mentioning that he didn't realize it was going to be run like the army when he initially joined. However, since unemployed Veterans were readily being accepted into the CCC, he enlisted. Men with military experience were expected to be role-models for the younger enlistees. Perhaps dad was more willing to put up with rules at age 18 in the military than at age 32 in the CCC. Sorry I don't have more, but I don't think he participated in it long enough to leave much of an impact on his life."

Theresa Marolt Wargo, of Lyndhurst, OH writes...

"Two of my older brothers enlisted in the CCC and served in Minnesota. They were John and Matt Marolt. My parents, Matt and Frances Marolt, were Slovenian immigrants who settled in Gilbert, Minnesota, a small town in the northern part of the state. They raised a family of 16 in Gilbert. John Marolt was assigned to a camp in Nevis, MN, while Matt Marolt ventured to his destination in Isabella, MN. On their occasional visits home, they would tell us about their work experiences. Being one of the youngest family members at home during those times, I don't recall many of the details. However, because the CCC fostered preservation and conservation, they did describe the projects that they worked on, which included planting trees, clearing underbrush from wooded areas, and fighting forest fires. In closing, I want to thank you for your most interesting article; it brought back many fond memories."

A satisfying epilogue to the original story is a letter received from Alan Maul, the Coordinator of the Oregon Forest History Center, under the Department of Forestry. Alan had wanted to share photos of the finished CCC display that now contained the artifacts and memorabilia of Matthew Sodac, on whose experience the original *Zarja* story was written. "Matt's spirit truly did return 'home' to Oregon's Camp Wilark as the title of the story had hoped."





# Miro Medved

## Branch 109 - Twin Cities Appointed: Slovenian Consulate in Minnesota

NON-PROFIT  
PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE  
PAID  
LASALLE, IL



*Slovenian Consulate in Minnesota, Miro Medved, and Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia, Roman Kirn.*

**M**onday, May 20, 2013, marked the opening of the Consulate of the Republic of Slovenia in the home of its new Slovenian Consul, Miro Medved. For some 50 members of the Twin Cities Slovenians, along with dignitaries from Minnesota, Miro's appointment marked a milestone in the growth of the Slovenian community in the Twin Cities.

The mayor of Roseville, Dan Roe, welcomed the guests and proceeded to point out how proud the community was in having the country of Slovenia represented by Mr. Medved and the Twin Cities Slovenians. Following his remarks, Mr. Dean Jilek, director of the Roseville High School Choir, "Good Pellas," sang a beautiful rendition of the Slovenian national anthem in Slovenian. Their pronunciation and diction were impeccable.

A little local "flavor" was added by Mr. Lenny Russo, Executive Chef and Proprietor of the Heartland Restaurant

in St. Paul. Mr. Russo recently returned from Slovenia where he was initiated into Slovenia's rich culinary tradition, along with its excellent variety of wines.

Our own U.S. Senator, Amy Klobuchar, with native roots from Ely, Minnesota, could not be in attendance, but sent her chief aide to read a letter honoring Mr. Medved. It was then time for H.E. Roman Kirn, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia, to highlight the event with his address stressing cooperation with the Slovenian community of Minnesota and the Republic of Slovenia. He further emphasized the hope of economic cooperation with Minnesota businesses, since Minnesota is the home of at least 10 "Fortune 500" companies.

The program concluded with the concert choir, "Good Pellas," singing Mr. Medved's favorite Slovenian folk song, "N'mav čez Izaro." It was time to celebrate with a Slovenian buffet dinner followed by "wine and song!" "Čestitke" Gospod Miro Medved!



*Mayor Dan Roe, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia, Roman Kirn, and Slovenian Consulate in Minnesota, Miro Medved.*