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Zarja

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The Dawn



SWUA 80 Years

Special Anniversary Issue

In the Land of Gingerbread

Details on Back Cover

I have had the pleasure of reading *In the Land of Gingerbread* the 1st book from *Forget me Not...Spominčice*. For children and youth of all ages: if you've ever had longings to steal away (to Slovenia) this is THE book. Its rich, vibrant illustrations and whimsical pages will activate all your senses! Text is varied in size and color making each page delectable to the eye. A dictionary features gingerbread star cookies with Slovenian English words. Yes, I believe you can actually smell the gingerbread (*lect*) as you read of the adventures of Lisa and Crunchy.

Books mirror life, call it the immersion of self into the lives of the characters. Strangely, a good book never ends, even after the book is closed. *In the Land of Gingerbread* will do just that, it promises to revive your pride in our Slovenian ancestry, it promises to become your teacher, a travel guide of Slovenia, your dear friend.



With much pride I announce the Slovenian Heritage Museum as distributor of *Forget Me Not...Spominčice* in the United States. —
Mary Lou Voelk

Zarja - The Dawn

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Communications for the next issue of publication:

Do you have something SWUA-related you would like to share with readers, like an event you want to let people know about or an idea for an article? We would love to hear from you! Please e-mail the editor at pohar4@aol.com. We reserve the right to edit any article submitted. It is preferable that you submit your idea for discussion prior to writing an article. Articles must be related to SWUA events or members. The deadline for articles is the first day of the month preceding the issue. For example, articles for the March/April issue must be received by February 1st. Thank you.

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Welcome to Our Celebration

We're 80.....

.....WOW!

From the Editorial Staff

This is the eightieth year of the Slovenian Women's Union of America. Yes? Did I say 80 years? Anyone who is 80 years old or approaching 80, may stop as I have, at the thought of what it means to say e-i-g-h-t-y years.

First of all, it's two and a half generations! It's long in number but short in memory. It's a time for all those eyebrows-up looks! WOW! Can't believe it! If you are reading this and are 80 years old, you probably can't believe you have this connection with the Slovenian Women's Union of America, being born in the same year. If you are only half that age, you have lived in a world that has moved so rapidly it will be hard to realize that most of the changes have happened in your lifetime – the first half of 80 was slow, but the second half was FAST!

Think of a few of the things that we have lived through: Jitterbug Dancing, Home Freezers, the Bikini, Technicolor Movies, SUVs, Walking on the Moon, Frank Sinatra, Skyscrapers, Television, 747s, Shopping Malls, Marilyn Monroe, Computers, Self-service Gas Stations, the IPOD, Pizza! Do you think all this happened while you weren't looking? No, it all happened slowly and deliberately to all of us at the same time.

The more things change, the more important are the basics! But what are the basics? The basics are what we learned from our mothers, our grandmothers, at home. Contemplate that. For us, the most important "basics" came automatically with being born in our families with Slovenian ancestors. And, that is how SWUA began - with women who wanted to preserve the basics they came with in their hearts and souls, and it must have been a struggle to preserve their beloved traditions while living with the challenges of the new, unfamiliar world around them. Many authors have touched on this duality: Marie Prisland, SWUA Founder, in her book, *From Slovenia to America* and Irene Odorizzi, our first Heritage Director, in her book, *Footsteps Through Time*. (Books available at the Home Office), and the popular series of articles entitled *The Immigrant* Irene wrote for *Zarja*.

But, inexorably, slowly, the Slovenian ladies blended their old lives with the new. They also became aware of this

wonderful organization where there were local group activities for them, a publication, *Zarja*, they could read, and the new world opened up to them with sisters/friends they found at their own doorsteps, or in places all over the United States. Their basic heritage was still visible and active in their lives. And, do you know what? They began to have an identity.

The Slovenian Women's Union of America gave us that special gift – the gift of identity. It was our first purpose and it still is. It came naturally, but must have been difficult at times. They had to find their way through eight long decades to do it - and since the beginning, the SWUA, with strong officers and dedicated determination, has preserved our Slovenian identity. Thank you, founders, officers and members of the last 80 years!

Now comes the future. It is upon us. It challenges us. When you celebrate the past, you must think future. You can't wish for "80 more years" without a plan.

To help think of the future, we must reflect on just how the preservation of our historical identity was accomplished. Do you know what was the secret of our success? It was passing ahead love and dedication, not keeping it for ourselves. The same old basic love and dedication everyone talks about. We have passed it on to our children and grandchildren., not by words, but by deeds.

So, now that we know what it is, the only thing is to find the best way to keep doing it. Do you want new members who have a long future ahead of them? Open the doors at your meetings and let young people take office and get involved. Do you want to activate your junior members? PUT HERITAGE AND SLOVENIAN WOMEN'S UNION OF AMERICA IN THEIR VOCABULARY! Teach them while they are young and love to learn, such as reading Slovenian stories, singing songs, and speaking words, and please, include them in your gatherings.

Remember, today we begin another 80 years!
– Corinne Leskovar

ZD

National President's Message

"Happy 80th Anniversary"

Happy 2007 Everyone! This is an exciting year for the members of the Slovenian Women's Union of America—it's our 80th anniversary year! I can only imagine how proud Marie Prislant and the other founding sisters would be if they could see that we are still a successful, strong and vital organization celebrating our 80th anniversary.

Your National Board is planning an 80th Anniversary celebration at the National Convention at Starved Rock Park in Utica, Illinois. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this momentous event on Saturday, June 23rd, 2007. There will be entertainment, music, displays and speakers from Slovenia. Look in upcoming issues of *Zarja* for more information.

Since we are celebrating such an honored occasion I was trying to think of a way to inform you about what the organization is involved in. The following are vital activities to keeping our beloved SWUA moving forward. However many of these projects and ideas are also important hurdles and challenges we need to overcome to be a strong entity in the future:

- We are currently working to establish a 501 C3 status for our Slovenian Heritage Museum. This will allow tax exempt donations to be made to the Heritage account.
- The more information we accumulate in our Heritage Library, the more we become an important Slovenian Research Center. The scanning program of our membership and deceased records helps us to become a vital center full of many family genealogies.
- One of our largest hurdles is that we are facing a decline in membership as we continue to lose many of our aging members. We must consider new ways to enhance and entice new younger members to our organization. How can we pass down our treasured Slovenian customs and traditions without their involvement? Members are what keep us in existence—we will always need them.
- Another challenge we face - once younger members join, how do we keep them interested, increase their participation, and get them excited about learning more about the Slovenian Heritage? I think many of our branch leaders would love to have an answer to this question. It is something each branch is facing.

•We can always use more volunteers on many different levels. If you are unable to volunteer at the SWUA Home

Office/Heritage Museum, there are still ways you can assist us from your home. Think about what you are really good at or really enjoy doing. Possibly that talent can be useful to an activity we need and you will enjoy doing it at the same time. We are always looking for members that are computer savvy and knowledgeable in different areas. You never know - you can become a vital cog in the wheel to our future.

We are very fortunate to have and to have had so many dedicated and caring members. We didn't make it to our 80th Anniversary without them and you. While we were originally founded to support the Slovenian immigrant woman, I am confident that the founding members would approve of what we are doing and trying to accomplish in the 21st century. Our goal should always be to focus on our Vision, Mission and Purpose. Let's read through it:

Vision – To preserve the living spirit of the founders and past membership by promoting and nourishing the legacy left to us for future generations.

Mission – To reach individuals by uniting them through their common interest in Slovenian culture and traditions.

Purpose – To provide resources, communication, and foster friendships in honor of our cultural heritage.

I believe these important words speak to every one of us. It is now what we stand for and how we can move into the future to be able to celebrate many more anniversaries. I am proud to say that I have been a small part of this organization's past. I hope many of you share in my heart-felt thoughts. Let us all continue to work together, to overcome our hurdles and challenges to make this organization very successful for the future years to come.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our 80th Anniversary Celebration. It will be an event for all ages. Plan to share your time with SWUA members from all over the United States in June, 2007. This is an event you will not want to miss. Be a part of SWUA history – join us!

Love and Blessings,
Kathleen Ferrante

178 Gaylord Dr. Munroe Falls, OH 44262
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Kathleen Ferrante
National President



National Secretary News

Envisioning Our Future

I am encouraging everyone to take time with this special edition of *Zarja*. Please read all the articles, I am positive you will enjoy them. Many will bring back memories and many will get you thinking, what is our future?

One thing we know for certain is our future is different from our past. Just think why we were founded 80 years ago.... "To make the Slovenian Immigrant Woman more American." We empowered our ladies, helped them become U.S. Citizens, taught them how to be American and gave them something to be proud of. That was the beginning.

Now, 80 years later, we can say that mission was carried out – we succeeded! We are very American! So American that we now have questions about who we are and where we came from. Our second, third and fourth generations are proud of our immigrant ancestors, but now have questions. Questions that were not asked when our beloved immigrants were around. We are now faced with a culture that is disappearing before our eyes. Many of us can't speak the language. We only know a few customs, which include holidays, food, drink and music. The million-dollar question is "how much longer do we have?"

If you ask me I think we have time. I believe some things are going to change, starting off with the local branches. Over the years I've seen branches discontinue and I predict in the next 10 years many more will follow. The first ones that will break apart are the ones not recruiting new members. Recruiting new members is not about bringing up the numbers – it's all about breathing new life into a group. Each new member can offer something different and exciting. Many of the branches that are doing well are

those who are recruiting. From them they are finding new leaders to take over, new thoughts for a meeting and more importantly... help! Read some of the branch articles that talk of the energy of some leaders however, there is not enough interest in the branch to try something new. Yes, this is true. I see it and I hear it. But... this is not true across the board.

In the 12 years I've been involved with SWUA I can honestly say each year gets better and this is one of the best. I feel every time we turn a corner a new door opens for us. We have been working closely with the country of Slovenia – you can witness that yourself in the new *Zarja*. You will also see it at the National Convention in June 2007. I see it with many of our branches that are trying new ways of creating a more exciting branch meeting. Yes, some of our areas are definitely struggling. However we have plenty of branches across the country where there is a renewed interest in their heritage and belonging to this 80-year-old organization. These branches are not only recruiting but they are responding to our vision/mission/purpose. This is important! But more important will be the upcoming election at the 2007 National Convention. Who will take over? The new leaders of SWUA will help determine what exactly our future will be. We need to find progressive women/men like those ladies who created the SWUA 80 years ago. Of course it's a different mission, but in the end, it's all the same. It's all about keeping Slovenian-Americans together and "Keeping the Spirit Alive" Can we do it? I sure hope so. - *Bonnie Pohar Prokup*



Bonnie Pohar Prokup
National Secretary

8 Ways to Know You are Slovenian

1. Your grandmother always called you her little "ljubček"
2. You know the ingredients in blood sausage, but you still eat it and love it!
3. You know the difference between Slovenia and Slovakia!
4. You can pronounce POTICA.
5. You can drink slivovitz and don't shudder.
6. You are full of LOVE.... *It's in Every Slovenian!*
7. You love to party and drink wine.
8. The polka is the first dance you learned.



* These were consistent favorites taken from the survey of 2003 that was given to every member for feedback.

United States Senate Certificate of Recognition

Presented To The

SLOVENIAN WOMEN'S UNION OF AMERICA

Celebrating Their

80TH ANNIVERSARY

I am pleased to extend my warmest congratulations to the Slovenian Women's Union of America as they celebrate their 80TH Anniversary. Over the years they have preserved the mission set forth by their founders, promoting their rich Slovenian culture to each new generation, and extending friendship and assistance to all of their new members.

The Slovenian Women's Union of America connects Slovenian-Americans throughout the world by offering scholarship opportunities for high school seniors and adults who are considering returning to school; heritage activities and events; publication of their Bi-monthly magazine "Zarja, The Dawn"; genealogical searches; visits to the SWUA Heritage Museum in Joliet, Illinois; and helpful web links and on-line newsletter. Associates can also enjoy the friendship of others member, and their shared affection for all things Slovenian!

Again, congratulations to the Slovenian Women's Union of America on 80 years of excellence. Best wishes for many more years of success!

Sincerely,


George V. Voinovich
United States Senator





EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Washington, 3 December 2006

Dear members of the Slovenian Women's Union of America

It is with great honor and pride that I congratulate you on the upcoming celebration of the 80th Anniversary of your organization.

I want to thank the National President Ms. Kathleen J. Ferrente, the members of the National Board and all the members of numerous Branches across the country for work and dedication to preserve the links with Slovenia as a country and nation that you or your ancestors came from.

It was back in 1926 that your first President Marie Prisland declared a need for an organization which would foster ambitions of women of Slovenian birth and serve to them as an open forum. Ever since and for all these eighty years, the SWUA has been preserving the legacy of Slovenian traditions, heritage, culture and social life.

Slovenian Women's Union of America together with other Slovenian organizations in the United States is most meritorious that there still is Slovenianess very much alive in this country. American Slovenians and their organizations remain an important link between the United States and Slovenia. You are our friends in the United States, whom we can always turn to in need and whom we can always count and rely on. We appreciate and thank you for that.

Dear fellow Slovenians, members of the SWUA, on your solemn occasion and celebration I want to encourage you to continue the great work that you have been doing. I want to encourage the young members to continue the great work of their parents. To continue the vision of the organization "to promote and nourish the legacy left to us for future generations" as stated in the organization's documents. The Embassy of Slovenia in Washington and me as the Ambassador stand ready to help in your efforts.

Čestitke ob jubileju in uspešnem delu ter z najboljšimi željami za prihodnost,

Vaš

Samuel Žbogar
AMBASSADOR/VELEPOSŁANIK



From the Consul General of Slovenia, Cleveland

Drage rojakinje (in rojaki!),

Mislim, da je za vsakega posameznika 80. rojstni dan nekaj veličastnega. Poznam kar nekaj 80- in več-letnikov in z vsakim srečanjem posebej te ljudi bolj in bolj spoštujem. Spoštujem jih, ker celo sam pred polovico manjšim jubilejem opažam, kako je moje razmišljanje drugačno, treznejše od marsikoga, ki je mlajši – kakšna življenjska modrost se šele skriva v teh ljudeh. In ne le modrost, tudi svojevrstna pomirjenost, žlahtna polnost. Ob tem pa hkrati opažam tudi neizmerno voljo do življenja, gotovo večjo kot pri večini mladih, ki se tega, kar jim je dano – torej mladosti in zdravja, ne znajo prav veseliti.

Podobno je s Slovensko žensko zvezo. Je kot spoštovana gospa, ki so jo različni dogodki skozi osem desetletij utrjevali in je zato njena vsebina polna, prežeta z številnimi izkušnjami, bolečimi in radostnimi. V tem času je dokazala, da jo bolj kot vsa politika zanima predvsem dve stvari: spodbujanje medsebojnega prijateljstva in gojenje stikov z matično domovino – materjo (ali babico....) Slovenijo.

Tej žlahtni "gospel" gre zahvala za to, da se je slovenstvo v marsikaterem kraju v ZDA ohranilo do današnjih dni! Seveda pa je prav, da ne počivate na lovorikah – predvsem v vašem časopisu je že zaznati sveže moči in upam, da bo tako tudi v različnih lokalnih enotah Zveze. Edino na ta način bomo namreč lahko čez denimo 20 let Slovenski ženski zvezi z veseljem nazdravili ob njenem stotem rojstnem dnevu in ji zaželeli "še na mnoga leta"...

Še enkrat iskrene čestitke vsem članicam (in članom)!

Dr. Zvone Žigon, Generalni konzul,
s soprogo Ireno



Dr. Zvone Žigon and
Mrs. Irena Žigon

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, fellow Slovenians,
I believe that the celebration of an 80th birthday, for any individual, is a very special occasion, a glorious moment. I have quite a few octogenarian friends, family and acquaintances, and with every moment spent with them, my respect for this age abounds. While half this age, I also compare myself to those some years younger than I, and find that my thinking is often different - deeper and more sober. This gives me a profound appreciation of the life wisdom which must accumulate through 80 years of living.

In addition to abundant wisdom, a person, 80 years of age, often possesses and exhibits a unique blend of tranquility and sense of fulfillment, while also having unbelievable energy. This zest for life is decidedly greater than that of many youth, who are naturally, naively unaware of their own abundance, and sadly unable to enjoy it.

These octogenarian characteristics well describe the Slovenian Women's Union of America (SWUA). In SWUA, I see the characteristics of a well respected, mature woman, who, during her many years, endured difficulty and sadness and enjoyed happiness and achievement, all of which contributed to her strength. I see a substantive lady, rich in experience and love. In 80 years, she proved herself to be above any political agenda, and always clearly focused on two goals – developing bonds between Slovenian women and with the homeland of their Mothers and Grandmothers, Slovenia.

Today we thank this precious lady, Slovenian Women's Union of America, for the preservation of Slovenian identity across The United States of America, for 80 years.

Enjoy this milestone, but do not rest on your laurels! It is apparent in your publication, *Zarja, The Dawn*, that there is more to come from SWUA, with rich talents showcased by new, young contributors. If this invigoration continues in the lodges of SWUA, then we are sure to raise our glasses in a toast 20 years from now, and again and again...!

Dear fellow Slovenians, on the occasion of the 80th Anniversary of Slovenian Women's Union of America, I, again, sincerely thank you, and all the deceased members of your organization, for all that you have done to preserve Slovenian identity in The United States of America.

Please accept my warmest congratulations. Long live SWUA!

Dr. Zvone Žigon, Consul General of Slovenia, Cleveland
and wife, Irena

REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA

Urad Vlade RS za Slovence v zamejstvu in po svetu

Zorko Pelikan

državni sekretar

Ljubljana, 25. oktober 2006

Slovenian Women's Union of America

431 North Chicago St.

Joliet, IL 60432

ZDA

Drage rojakinje in rojaki,

v imenu Urada Vlade RS za Slovence v zamejstvu in po svetu ter v mojem imenu prejmite iskrene čestitke ob 80. obletnici obstoja in delovanja Slovenian Women's Union of America.

Ob visoki obletnici naj se Vam iskreno zahvalim za vse, kar ste v letih svojega bivanja v tujini naredili za svojo matično domovino. Zahvaljujem se Vam za vaš trud in prizadevanja, saj s svojim delom omogočate, da so slovenske skupnosti žarišče naše kulture in narodnega izročila. Vaše delo ni zaman, saj je zavedanje o lastnih narodnih koreninah pomemben del identitete in zavesti vsakega posameznika. Le na tak način boste še naprej lahko na svoj način predstavljali Slovenijo v svojem okolju in gradili mostove med kulturama, s katerima ste povezani - ameriško in slovensko.

Na Vas se obračam z željo in pripravljenostjo, da bi tudi v prihodnje dobro sodelovali in ohranjali vezi med matično domovino in Vami, ki ste si iz različnih razlogov poiskali drugi dom izven Slovenije. Naša skupna prizadevanja in delo sta zato toliko bolj potrebna, da bi vsi rojaki čutili čimveč "slovenske topline pod tujim nebom".

Še enkrat iskrena zahvala za vložen trud, kajti ključni dejavnik ohranjanja in krepitve slovenstva, ostajate še vedno Vi, drage rojakinje in rojaki.

Z željami, da boste lepo praznovali ter da boste uspešno nadaljevali z društvenimi dejavnostmi, Vas vse pristrčno pozdravljam.

S spoštovanjem,

English summary:

Accept the heartfelt wishes from the Republic of Slovenia on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the Slovenian Women's Union of America.

As you observe this great anniversary we thank you for all you have done for your homeland and for continuing in your efforts to preserve the beautiful Slovenian heritage that unites us beyond our borders.

We extend best wishes that you will successfully continue in the spirit of your Slovenian sisterhood.

With highest regards,

(signed) Zorko Pelikan, State Secretary of the Republic of Slovenia, Office for Slovenians Living Abroad



Zorko Pelikan
DRŽAVNI SEKRETAR



Zorko Pelikan
receiving
potica pin
from Mary
Lou Voelk.

Bylaws Amendments/Revisions

SWUA Bylaws Committee Request - The Members Speak - Bylaw Items to Consider

Every four years at our national convention we have the opportunity, after considerable review, to amend/revise our bylaws to reflect the intentions of the organized membership. The June 2007 National Convention is fast approaching - so it is time once again to hear from the membership regarding bylaws which may be problematic, outdated, vague or restrictive. A four person committee, chaired by Denise Bartlett, Nat'l 2nd Auditor, will be thoroughly reviewing current bylaws and all suggestions presented by the membership to improve SWUA's guidelines. It is suggested that all members become familiar with the SWUA bylaws. Your branch President and Secretary have copies. Members may also go to www.swua.org to print a 16 page copy. Chairwoman Bartlett is asking for feedback regarding suggested revisions. Members are urged to SPEAK UP. The committee will consider every submission of information before presenting suggested formal (final) bylaw changes for all members to read in the May/June '07 Zarja. Members are asked to review/consider/discuss ideas at their branch meetings and entrust the delegates at the June 2007 Convention to determine our governing rules with their vote.

THANK YOU to our members who have taken the time to send their thoughts and suggestions regarding specific bylaws. The bylaws committee hopes that all branches will follow the lead of Branches 14 and 32 in Ohio and Branch 35 in Minnesota that have asked their members in their Zarja Branch Reports to review our bylaws. We have received many interesting ideas from members young and old - some in stark contrast to others. While bylaws can be boring to some - it is obvious how important they are to many of our members who actually take the time to study them. Please don't assume that the committee has determined what bylaws need revisions. We're listening to our members and the members will vote to determine what changes will benefit our SWUA. If interested, review the

last three Zarja issues to read some of the ideas submitted so far. See below for additional member's suggestions. Have we heard from you, yet?

Items to consider from CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND REGULATIONS of the SLOVENIAN WOMEN'S UNION of AMERICA:

From pages 43 thru 55 of the blue (2003 Edition) SWUA Bylaws booklet (page 13 thru 16-Article X thru XVI of website copy)

Article X Official Organ 10.01 Should the wording be changed to read "Copies published shall be sent to each family of the association" rather than to each "member"?

10.06 The requirement that the Zarja shall be published in Slovenian should be eliminated.

Article XII Regional Conventions 12.01 Should regional conventions be held every other year - with yearly conventions optional? During Nat'l Convention years should regional conventions convene that year on the first day at the National Convention to enhance attendance?

Article XIV Branch Officers 14.01 Should there be term limits for branch officers as there are for National Officers?

14.05 and 14.06 Should the financial duties now required of the Branch Secretary be instead required of the Treasurer? Should the Branch Secretary duties include corresponding secretary responsibilities as directed by the Branch President? **14.13** Should this section stress that Slovenian heritage themes be promoted?

Article XVI General Robert's Rules of Order should be SWUA's Parliamentary authority.

These bylaw revision suggestions are of great importance and demand serious consideration. If you would like your opinion or ideas to be heard, please contact Denise Bartlett. Thank you.

Please send all correspondence to:

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Zimmer

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SWUA Scholarship Program

Celebrating 57 Years of Financial Assistance to Students

History of the Slovenian Women's Union's Early Charitable Functions

Marie Cerne Prisland, Founder of the Slovenian Women's Union of America in 1926 introduced her dream to establish a Scholarship Fund at the 1943 National Convention in



Marie Prisland, 1926

Pittsburgh. She wrote *"I was delighted when the delegates enthusiastically adopted my proposal that a fund be established to financially aid needy, young, and qualified students. To this fund was later added a benefit fund to extend help to war-torn people in native Slovenia. At the January 1944 Supreme Board Meeting, the bylaws founding this fund were finalized, setting a goal of*

\$10,000 to be divided: \$5,000 for scholarships and \$5,000 for Slovenian relief expenses. Through the sale of greeting cards, contributions from the branches and individual members and the formation of a Friendship Circle with \$20 memberships, the goal was attained 5 years later, with Zveza contributing the first \$200. Consequently, at the 1949 National Convention held in Pueblo, Colorado, the Scholarship Fund started to operate. It was the first of its kind among Slovenian organizations in America. Through the Benefit Fund, purchase of flour, sugar, coffee, lard, household articles, school supplies, medicine, hospital instruments, sewing machines, etc. were sent to various critical areas in Slovenia; actually with additional relief sent by the individual branches, a total of \$34,000 in commercial value in food and goods was sent to Slovenia during the postwar period. When in 1949 the announcement of scholarships was published in Zarja five boys and one girl applied. Three were selected for the 1949-1950 year on the basis of their high scholastic records and need of financial aid."



Slovenian Women's Club Red Cross Workers during World War I, Sheboygan, WI, an early Slovenian women's charity. Marie is 4th from right, 2nd row. (From Marie Prisland's personal collection)

From ancient times, the Slovenian people have placed high value on literacy and even during years of extreme deprivation, of war and foreign domination, the need to communicate and retain the original, pure Slovenian language was a major endeavor. When immigrants arrived in America, those who highly valued their own language, found themselves unable to communicate in English. Immediately many enrolled in "night schools" offered in many communities to help immigrants learn the English language.

One example of the frustration new immigrants found when trying to communicate with their English speaking employers is written in Marie Prisland's book *From Slovenia to America*, page 58:

"The immigrants studied the English language with pride and persistence, but nevertheless, there were many difficulties concerning the use of proper expressions. One immigrant felt that he should not work on Ascension Day, since it was a holyday. He deliberated a long time about how to tell this to his boss. Finally, with a bright face and with great eloquence, he said; "Mister boss, me no come work tomorrow. Jesus go upstairs."

57 Years ago the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Fund was established and since that time close to \$200,000 has been awarded to over two hundred students. This has only been possible due to the generous support and donations of members, friends, branches and fund raisers. YOU and YOURS have made the program what it is today. The Slovenian Women's Union of America takes pride in aiding the educational development of young men and women who are the future leaders of our American and Slovenian society.

Scholarship Program Becomes Tax Exempt

The vision of a long time SWUA member, a woman who devoted herself to education, Miss Anna Rose Smolich, brought the Scholarship Program to a new level when in 1997 the SWUA Scholarship Program was named a beneficiary of her estate, on condition that the Scholarship Program become a tax exempt entity. After extreme difficulty convincing the SWUA National Officers at that time of the need to establish a tax exempt status, the

Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation was formed as a corporation in December 1998 and federally approved as a 501(c)(3) in April of 1999. Contributions are now tax exempt, as well as charitable gift benefits from estate planning. During the 1999 SWUA National Convention bylaws were changed so that more than one member of a family can now receive a SWUA Scholarship and more than one member of a branch can receive an award in a given year.

With formation of the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation came appointments of four officers as required of 501(c)(3) organizations:

Mary H. Turvey, Branch 1, President and Director
M. Marjorie Church, Branch 42, Vice President
Mary Prislant, PhD, Branch 1, Secretary
M. Marjorie Church, Branch 42, Treasurer
Kathleen Wheeler, Branch 35, Trustee
Stan Kuhar, Branch 25, Trustee
Betty Ann Kolesari, Branch 43, Liaison Officer
(the current SWUA National Vice-President serves as the Liaison Officer)

Meetings are held at least once yearly via teleconference, and financial reports are filed annually with the Internal Revenue. The Foundation holds a portfolio of which only the interest is dispersed, making the Foundation a self-perpetuating entity, able to award scholarships indefinitely. However, due to this agreement, the SWUA Scholarship Foundation is limited to the number and value of yearly scholarships. In the past a minimal number of applications were received yearly. At a teleconference meeting held August 31, 2005, it was decided that awards should be available to all freshmen through senior college students, who are attending an accredited college, technical school, or university full time. Scholarships are named in honor of loved ones from \$1,000 donations. As a charity, the SWUA Scholarship Foundation not only provides tax relief to donors and those involved in estate planning, but is also a great investment in the future. WE WELCOME CONTRIBUTIONS!

Scholarship Committee

The SWUA Scholarship Committee, serving four year terms, is appointed at National Conventions. Each spring members evaluate all applications and rate them according to the following criteria: Financial need, Scholastic achievement, Autobiography, Civic, Religious and Community involvement, and promotion of Slovenian culture. It is not an easy task.

SWUA Scholarship Committee members who currently serve are: Marjorie Church, Milena Gobetz, Dorothy Jerneycic, Lisa McDonell, Rose Marie Princ, Andrea Selak and Janice Singletary

Application Procedure

Scholarship applicants must hold a four year paid membership in the SWUA, including year of application, prior to applying, and must be attending an accredited college or university, full time as freshmen through senior in status. Along with application forms which are available on <http://www.swua.org>, the following materials MUST be submitted: high school transcript, SAT and ACT scores, previous semester transcript, FAFSA (Financial Assistance for Students Association), financial statement from parents, letters of recommendation from a teacher and SWUA officer, small photo and brief autobiography, stating educational and personal goals. Deadline for applications is March 1 of each year.

Continuing Education Awards are available to those adults returning to a college or a technical school part time. See <http://www.swua.org>.

Scholarship Directors

Marie Cherne Prislant, 1949-1965



Marie Prislant, 1950

Marie Cherne was born June 21, 1890 and throughout her childhood years, lived in Rečica ob Savinji, Slovenia. She was raised by her grandparents, Josef and Jera Rosenstein in their home which was snuggled right up to a huge foothill of the Julian Alps. Cows grazed on those hills and as a young girl Marie used them as students for her "make believe" school. Her life long

quest for learning began there. Marie wanted to become a teacher but due to lack of financial resources, decided to come to America at the age of 16. While serving as a national officer of the KSKJ in 1926, Marie noted the many women's organizations for those of other nationalities existed. Slovenian women had none and Marie knew they needed to have their own community and needed help

blending into the American way of life. That year, Marie resigned from her position with KSKJ and organized the Slovenian Women's Union of America in Chicago, Illinois. She encouraged all members to go to night classes to learn the English language. She encouraged them to participate as she did, marching in the suffragette parades, doing volunteer work for the Red Cross, and helped them organize branches of the SWUA in many communities throughout the United States. In general, men were not pleased with her progressive ideas. They no longer were free to meet their immigrant friends at local saloons on branch meeting evenings and eventually found their wives voting independently in local and national elections.

Marie never tired of learning. She wrote, read, and communicated with old friends until the day she died, September 13, 1979. One of her dreams was to make certain the descendents of Slovenian immigrants would be able to achieve their goals in education.

Hermine Dicke, 1965-1991

Creator of Pots and Pans still enjoys planning the meals at her group home.



Hermine Prisland Dicke

Hermine Prisland Dicke, Director of the Scholarship Committee from 1965-1991, was dedicated to her dream for the Slovenian Women's Union of America to provide student scholarships. Hermine's interest in students also extended to the University of Wisconsin where she was Chairperson of the Madison Friends of International Students. We remember Hermine's elegant dinners at our home with students from countries such as Africa and Egypt.

Hermine started her career as a Registered Nurse and worked at the Sheboygan Clinic. Hermine also served the

community as president of the Catholic Women's League at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church in Madison. She was Editor of *Zarja's* Pots and Pans column for many decades. She included recipes that were true to Slovenian heritage and made each delicious dish many times for her family until she knew the instructions were precise. She and her husband, Robert created the cook book *Pots & Pans*, still available today. Copies of her cook book were recently given to her four granddaughters, Mary, Meg, Karen, Ann and grandson, Rob and so the legacy of Slovenian cooking continues for us all to enjoy and appreciate. Of particular note are the authentic recipes for *potica*, a Slovenian treasure that Hermine and her mother Marie made in our kitchen. This was an all afternoon and memorable event.



Mary and Katie, Hermine's daughters in Slovenia.

In 1969 we accompanied my grandmother, Marie Prisland, to see her home in Rečica, Slovenia. After wonderful dining in Ljubljana, we visited my great aunts, Francka and Jera (Gertrude), John Prisland's sisters. We were served cake at this visit and I remember a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe on their living room wall.

Hermine still reads *Zarja*, (without the need for glasses!). Here is a picture of her at age 94, attending her grandson Rob's wedding. If you would like to write to Hermine, her address is: c/o London Lodge, W9095 London Rd, Cambridge WI 53525. This Lodge is a group home owned



by Hermine's granddaughter, Meg Torrez. Hermine continues to enjoy helping to plan the menu for the meals at the Lodge. - *Mary Prisland PhD, Daughter of Hermine Dicke (also known as Mitzka, as my grandmother Marie Prisland called me.)*

Carita Girman, 1991-1995

Marjorie Church, 1995-1996

It happened when I took my mother to a Branch 42 meeting. Now 24 years later my affiliation with SWUA is very strong!



Marjorie Church

It has been a personal satisfaction to serve for and promote the Scholarship Program offered by the Slovenian Women's Union of America since 1995. I've been a local member of Branch 42 in Maple Heights OH since 1983 and served in some capacity to support my parents' heritage (Jacob and Mary (nee Brodnik) Yemec, the original was "Jemc", of the SWUA in our community, but also served the local Slovenian National Home as one of their directors for 12 years. Being involved re-emphasized my family's humble beginnings and by their example of volunteerism, I worked cleaning and washing floors, scrubbing kitchen pots and pans, painted walls, prepared programs, advertised and promoted the social activities all quietly and steadily to continue the tradition of the hard-working Slovenian. Also by my parents' example, all this was done with care and affection, not for the intention of remuneration, but of pride in my heritage.

As the years passed, I further became involved with SWUA on a national level and became a national auditor and later vice president as well as had the pleasure of serving as an interim Scholarship Director for one year, 1995-96 at which time Mary Turvey, granddaughter to Marie Prisland and niece of Hermine Dicke (Scholarship Director from 1965 to 1991) accepted the position as Scholarship Director. The focus then was on the future!

In 1997 our SWUA Scholarship Program became a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt entity, which is entitled the "Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation". In 1998 the Slovene Rest Home Association of Fontana, California gifted us with a wonderful check of \$100,000.00 with the agreement that the gift would be invested and only interest paid out in scholarship awards, thereby guaranteeing that the SWUA Scholarship Foundation will continue to function for years to come. Stocks and bonds were purchased and dividends and interest provided profit, which became available for awarding scholarships. The portfolio we held was doing well but in order to avoid administrative expenses and the fear of market drops, the decision was

made to dissolve the portfolio and purchase \$100,000 in CDs on a laddered basis. This financial change will make a specific amount of money available annually for scholarships.

This past year, we also opened applications to all college students, not just freshmen. The result has doubled the number of applicants but only limited funding for scholarships was available. There were eight well-qualified students who did not receive scholarships this past year.

The "sought after" donations from other organizations, members and friends via the tax exempt status, will open the doors to extending the range of scholarships offered for other educational endeavors to the many qualifying students who have financial need. This support would aid the scholarship program in the years to come and help develop continued interest in heritage and membership.

Little did I know that when I took my mother to her meeting of Branch 42 in Maple Heights, OH on one rainy night in 1983 that my affiliation with SWUA would be so long and strong! - Zbogom, Marge Church

Mary Turvey, 1996- Present



Mary Turvey

In 1995 Aunt Hermine Prisland Dicke wrote several letters requesting that I apply for the SWUA Scholarship Director's position. Marge Church was and is still working full time and unable to do all of the paper work involved. In 1956 I had received a SWUA Scholarship and felt I should take on this new job in appreciation, although I was heavily involved in family, genealogy and community work. As the new director, I began working with a checking

account of \$7,000 and \$11,000 in a CD. As many as 18 applications came in yearly, but we were only able to give three awards at the time. However, each Saturday was spent writing thank you letters to many SWUA members and friends who sent in donations. Without their financial and emotional support, I would never have survived. Then too, without the professional assistance of Marge Church for the past ten years, the scholarship program would not have developed into the successful entity it is today.

Now that the SWUA Scholarship Program has become a Foundation, financial worry is not as great although since the Foundation Officers decided to open up awards to college freshmen through seniors, the number of applications has increased drastically, yet the value and number of donations has declined. We love working with young people and wish to help them in any way possible. To see the Foundation increase its financial base, so that more students can be financially assisted is our goal and most certainly Marie Prislant's DREAM! With your assistance, this can happen. WE NEED YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

For four years, I wrote the "Ask Toncka" column of *Zarja* and after sending family charts to each branch, I was delighted to receive over 200 family charts, histories, photos, and stories. Each family record is now being indexed by its many surnames and all materials submitted will be photocopied and bound. The final product will be shelved at the SWUA Museum Library, Joliet, Illinois and will be entitled, "SWUA Family Records". The "Ask Toncka" column brought in many wonderful letters, requesting assistance and sharing information. Genealogy is one of my passions and I was happy to share.

Currently, although I spend lots of time with golf, genealogy, bird surveys, and researching ancient American diffusion and preservation of artifacts, my most precious hours are spent with my husband Dan, our four children, and especially our five grandchildren. We look to them to preserve and share our values and rich heritage.

- Mary Turvey

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ZARJA The Beginning of a New Dawn

Remembering Albina Novak

"Office of Zarja"

Was the sign on the door and in her heart!

She left an indelible mark on the Slovenian Women's Union – a National Officer for 43 years! There has not been another person who connected so closely with the membership of the Slovenian Women's Union as did Albina Novak.

Many will agree with this statement. Everyone who ever speaks of her in remembrance tells of her exceptional warmth, understanding and caring. She touched you in a natural way, as if her soul was smiling.

Albina Novak joined Branch 25, Cleveland, Ohio in 1928, soon after it was formed, the first Cleveland branch in the city proper. Other branches, 10, 14, 15, and 21, were formed earlier but they were located in the surrounding area before Cleveland organized its own branch of "Zveza" as it was known.

She was a member only two years when she was elected as a delegate to the 2nd National Convention in Sheboygan, Wisconsin in 1930 and there was elected to two positions on the Board of Directors, as an Auditor and as Chairman of the Educational Committee. They must have seen her potential right away.

And then, three years later in 1933, she became the third editor of Zarja, succeeding Julia Gottlieb (1929-1930) and Josephine Racic (1930-1933), a position she held for 19 consecutive years.

During that very early, and what were to be a historic times, the small group that brought this organization together worked mostly through correspondence and by writing in Zarja. They were three officers, Marie Prislant, President, Albina Novak, Editor and Josephine Erjavec, Secretary, young, energetic women who inspired many others to join them as they attempted to do an immense task, to unify Slovenian women in one organization. With these leaders, Zveza grew, aided by intelligent and diligent women such as Bara Kramar of San Francisco who organized 4 branches, Mary Otonicar of Cleveland who enrolled the most ever new members during her lifetime, more than 1,250, Elizabeth Zefran of Chicago whose activity in the Chicago area was unparalleled, Antonia Tanko Turek, an early Director of Sports (Bowling) and Frances Seitz of

Cleveland, an organizer among the young women when the first English-speaking branch, No. 50, was formed in 1931.

But, there were many more women, in all parts of the country where there were Slovenian communities: in Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Colorado, New York, all inspired by the leadership of our first officers. It was a big job and they enjoyed fantastic success - there were already 93 branches listed in the Roster in 1941.

There was great interest in marching drill teams, possibly because of the oncoming World War II era. Almost every branch organized a woman's Drill Team - young women doing drill formations and marching in parades, all dressed in different, colorful uniforms and they were spiffy! They held drill competitions yearly and traveled to compete in other cities. One of most memorable drill team events was the 6th Annual Field Day at Euclid Beach Park in Cleveland in 1942. (Uniforms and trophies from that era are on display at the Heritage Museum.)

The trend for two and three generational memberships began then also, and numbers reached 10,000, and climbed to 14,000 in the fifties. As the Editor of Zarja Albina had close touch with the branches where she used her exceptional leadership skills.

Albina was a promoter and activist for Slovenian culture. She saw a way Zveza could benefit from publishing books and one of the first she edited was the first Zveza songbook, "Zapojmo" (Let's Sing) in 1942 and she also arranged to have a songbook with notes, handwritten by Slovenian composer, Ivan Zorman, printed and distributed widely. Zveza capitalized on the popularity of Slovenian cookery



by publishing their very first cookbook in 1951, in observance of the 25th Anniversary. Albina edited it and entitled it "Woman's Glory, the Kitchen", the title taken from the popular cooking column in *Zarja* by Frances Jazbec of Branch 24.

At the National Convention in 1946 in Indianapolis, Albina was elected National President, retaining her position as *Zarja* Editor as well. There was no one seeking to replace her at that time, but four years later, the Board of Directors changed radically and Albina became National Secretary, and her daughter, Corinne became Editor. That year the Home Office moved from Joliet to Chicago.

She was a charismatic speaker and was always greatly enjoyed at events the branches held in various cities, motivating and encouraging the audience to join Zveza or perhaps buy one of our publications, or maybe join a forthcoming trip to Slovenia. She was also the spokesman for Zveza as newspapers and interviewers always sought her out when they heard about some coming event in their community. As a small child, I heard lots of her speeches and would listen as she made people laugh and applaud. There was always a smiling audience in the hall. Often, I would sit in back of the hall, waiting for her to finish speaking until later when I'd be carried home in her arms. She took me along traveling and visiting everywhere, so I was treated like their own "little Corinca" by the ladies I met, all over the country.

A strong visual memory of my mom at work is from my grammar school years; it is of our dining room table at home. This was her official office. She kept her piles of papers, reports and articles for *Zarja*, "gallies" of members'

The date was 1929 when the first *Zarja-The Dawn* came off the press. Envision those early days when one could see wagons full of *Zarja* being pulled down the street in Slovenian neighborhoods for door-to-door delivery. *Zarja* was the teaching tool that guided the Slovenian woman into the new society. Featured articles promoted house keeping, raising of a family and the importance of participation in civic and national affairs. *Zarja* was the full promoter of life long learning. Down the through the years, *Zarja* emerged as a strong voice, keeping sisters throughout America in touch.

Today our younger generation has become a mixture of heritages, most of the Slovenian neighborhoods and churches are gone. Once again, *Zarja* has shown its strength, following the vision, mission and purpose of SWUA, *Zarja* has become the communication agent that promotes culture, traditions and scholarships to our multigenerational, male, female organization. *Zarja* is the only magazine published primarily to preserve the ethnic culture of Slovenian-Americans.

mailing addresses to be corrected and letters to be written. Nearby was her typewriter. In the window of our front window was the sign "Office of Zarja" (for the mailman's benefit). At one point (1934-1946), the SWUA re-located the Editor's office to the American Home publishing building so mom had her own office for a while, away from home. That ended when the disastrous Ohio Gas Company explosion occurred in the St. Clair community and destroyed many homes and businesses.

Friendships were most important to her, and if possible, she would reciprocate in any way she could. Countless postcards, written in her perfect "palmer-method" handwriting were sent from all the places she visited, or she would remember a friend with a pretty handkerchief, just to let her know she was grateful for some small act.

Another of her loves was to visit Slovenia where she was born. She would work hard all year to be able to take a short holiday to her homeland. She escorted tours on ships and later, on airplanes – when people were not sure of traveling so far, but they had confidence that Albina would get them there and back safely. Many photo albums attest to the group trips and visits to the most beautiful parts of Slovenia.

Even long after she passed away, many of her Zveza colleagues told me how fondly they remember her and her generosity. She may have been poor in worldly things but she was rich in friends. Zveza was her life because she wanted it to be. Before I was born, she was an upcoming officer in another women's fraternal organization in Ohio. They asked her to choose between Zveza and them. She chose us. - Corinne Leskovar

Throughout its history, not one issue of *Zarja* failed to come off the press. *Zarja* has been the binding force for the Slovenian immigrant woman and for the organization and its members up to the present day. The emergence of technology has allowed *Zarja* to continue the high standards of publishing as well as adding color photography and articles by visiting writers from the Slovenia.

With the recent additions to the *Zarja* staff – a new beginning was created in the last six issues. New columns geared for today's Slovenian-American; The Path Taken, Men in a SWUA World, Kid Talk, Kids in the News, Discovering your Slovenian Roots, Genealogy by George, Entertaining with a touch of Slovenia by Jenka, special features and much more can be found in today's *Zarja*.

We have an exciting line-up planned for 2007. Be on the look out for activities, contests and other ways of participating. - Zarja Editorial Staff

Be a Part of SWUA History!

New Carnation Circle of Donors and Opportunity to Advertise Nationwide for our 80th Anniversary

The Slovenian Women's Union of America will be hosting the 25th National Convention and the 80th Anniversary Celebration to be held on June 21-24, 2007.

We need every member's support to help make it a successful event.

You can help in several ways. First, by attending, and second by purchasing an ad in the souvenir program booklet which will be the July/August 07 issue of *Zarja*. These ads will help defray the expenses.

Every convention has had a booklet over the years and enjoyed by all attendees on the Saturday evening banquet. This year marks the 80th Anniversary of our organization, so it will be a very special one. This time the program booklet will be available to all our members across the United States and our friends from Canada and Slovenia. This means that over 4,400 families will see your participation.

We are encouraging branches, individuals, businesses and families to consider purchasing an ad. It can be an advertisement for your business, remembering someone from your past, wishing your friends greetings, honoring someone you think is doing a great job, or just a congratulatory to an 80 year old organization! You choose! Pictures are welcomed but can not be returned.

If you want something simpler consider becoming a part of the Carnation Circle! This will be special to the July/August 07 issue of *Zarja*. For different amounts your name or family name will be listed in the level of your choice in this issue.

Every dollar goes directly to this upcoming celebration. The March/April issue will focus on this celebration and will have information on how you can be a part of it. Again, we encourage you and your family to attend perhaps one of the greatest moments in SWUA history!

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Your SWUA Web Site

News from SWUA.org

Eight Reasons to Give SWUA.org a Try

SWUA.org is a valuable resource for our organization and our members. You may not realize all that you can find at our Web site – things right at your fingertips:



Leslie Cummings
SWUA.org Editor

1 Doing a genealogy search? Check out our genealogy page to find names of Slovenian families, books, and member stories. You also find links to a wide variety of genealogy resources such as societies, forums, how-tos and software that can help you in your search to track down your family tree.

2 Sign up for our New Neighborhood e-newsletter and see past issues. Our monthly e-newsletter is a great way to find out what's happening in the organization as well as with local branches. You'll learn about upcoming events, great Web sites and things to see and do.

3 Read the latest news from the SWUA. Every month we post news items keeping members and Web readers informed of news happening within the SWUA and impacting members.

4 Learn more about our scholarship opportunities. We have member scholarships not only for children, but also for adults returning to school. If you're not eligible, you may know of someone who is. You can find out more and download application forms.

5 Those dreary winter months are a great time to indulge in a can't-put-down book. Why not click on our bookshelf and jot down the name of a book about Slovenia, its food, cooking or genealogy. There are also names of books on immigrant travels and history.

6 Warm up your kitchen with some traditional Slovenian cooking by visiting our recipe page. Whether it's dessert, an entrée or a side dish, you'll find something tasty to cook. While you're there – why not order a SWUA cookbook for yourself or for gifts.

7 On our links page, we have an extensive list of links to Web sites that have information about Slovenia, Slovenian news and Slovenian organizations. You'll also find an array of Web sites that allow you to stream, download or purchase Slovenian music. Listen while you're prepping that Slovenian meal.

8 Our Slovenian Heritage Museum Web page gives you a peek into our home base and museum offerings. You can learn about our displays, how to buy memorial plaques or buy some of our great SWUA items – shirts, cards, books and music.

**These pages are just a small listing of the many resources your can find at SWUA.org.
Visit our Web site – your resource – today!**

About the Editor: Cummings has been an SWUA member for five years. She has a degree in journalism and has been a writer/editor for more than 13 years. She has been writing for *Zarja* and SWUA.org for the past four years. You can reach her at lcc0920@ameritech.net with comments or questions.



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New Neighborhood

Your On-Line News Letter

I reviewed past articles from the New Neighborhood, to see where SWUA was, where it is today, and where the future of SWUA will be. To accomplish longevity as an organization, it requires dedication, caring, participation from it's membership, and, perservance, insight and wisdom from it's leaders, to know when to make changes to fit the times, and continue to have a vibrant, sustainable organization. I found interesting, colorful, hopeful, and worthwhile articles, yet I also noticed a decline in member submissions of articles to the Newsletter. This decline can impact the future of SWUA, if members aren't motivated to participate.

First, I'd like to address those memorable articles which connect our common Slovenian heritage. They were Marie Prisland's, *Slovenian Christmas Story*, when she described a Christmas season in her childhood, you could feel her wish to experience this memory and warmth again. Mary Lou Voelk's, *The Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin*, Mary Lou's projects show her heartfelt desire and dedication to inspire in the young people their knowledge and understanding of their Slovenian heritage. Mary Turvey's letters on her Grandmother, Marie Prisland, and by listening to her Grandmother tell of her journey to America, one can better appreciate her Slovenian heritage and understanding of the hardships of such a journey. Of interest as well, were, Women in Business; History and the "how to" of the Easter bundles or butara, and the different wedding stories, where each bride included something found in a Slovenian wedding.

On looking back, I saw that family played an important part in the involvement of the younger members of SWUA, i.e. the wedding stories, of Lynn and Bonnie, the wonderful story, *The Julian Alps*, by a young student, Sabina. This involvement reinforces the statements from the Joe Valencic lecture I attended earlier this month, that Slovene women are the keepers of history, heritage, and they are the ones who pass this legacy on to the next generation. Lynn, as New Neighborhood Editor, did her part in trying to get members involved with her creative, fun and motivating articles to inspire the older generation of members to tell the stories that would be passed to their children.

I find this similar tradition in Alaska with the different Native cultures. Elders and women of the village are given the task of passing along heritage and culture to the next generation. But a problem occurring in small rural villages, is due to lack of employment, young people are leaving

and going to Anchorage, where they become assimilated into a different culture. They lose their connection with heritage and culture, making the job of Elders harder to motivate them to remember. Also, as older members of SWUA pass away, this same loss of cultural connection for younger SWUA members will be lost, if the "Slovene spirit" is not instilled in the family unit. So too will our younger members leave, or not join, nor will they care what the SWUA stands for, or what it means to be an American Slovene. A good example of this is Branch 93. Their efforts for their innovative and creative ideas for branch events is to be commended, showing that we can be creative in the 21st century and still keep our heritage alive. If it's impossible to attend a meeting because of distance, the next best way to keep in touch is by email or an Internet Instant Messenger chat room. No member should feel left out or isolated from branch functions.

In keeping with the mission and purpose of the SWUA, I am on my own journey, from America to Slovenia, just the opposite of Marie Prisland. As a little girl, I too remembered the stories of my grandmother, Frančiška Demšar, of Žiri. Her stories were both happy and sad. Grandma always brought gifts from the "old" country and she instilled in me pride and honor for my Slovenian heritage. My other three grandparents, John Kovačič, of Rob and husband of Frančiška, Jakob Debevec, of Padež, and his wife, Teresia Batistič, of Ivanje Selo, also had their stories to tell. And because all of my grandparents were Slovenian, four years ago, I applied for, and was granted citizenship. I knew that one day I would come and live in Slovenia as a "resident" to better understand "first hand" what my grandparents felt when they came to the United States, and to better understand myself, along with fulfilling my mother's dream to come to Slovenia. *I am currently living in Slovenia and have enrolled in a Slovene language course that I hope will allow me to communicate on a deeper level with the people here.*

Finally, I believe the future of the SWUA is to understand "where" we came from, and as SWUA leaders, members, elders, and individual family units, it is our responsibility to motivate our young people and instill in them the pride, honor, and respect for their heritage, and to carry on the responsibility as the keepers of history for the next generation. I see the old "ways" of living here in Slovenia, but I also see tides of change. It's an interesting blend. I believe the strongest bond is the values given to the young by the family. Marie Prisland, as a woman and as founder of SWUA, knew and understood "where" she came from and realized the importance and value of passing down her knowledge, culture and heritage to her family. She knew this would "instill" and keep the Slovenian spirit alive for generations to come. - by Jan King, Branch 30

Kid Talk

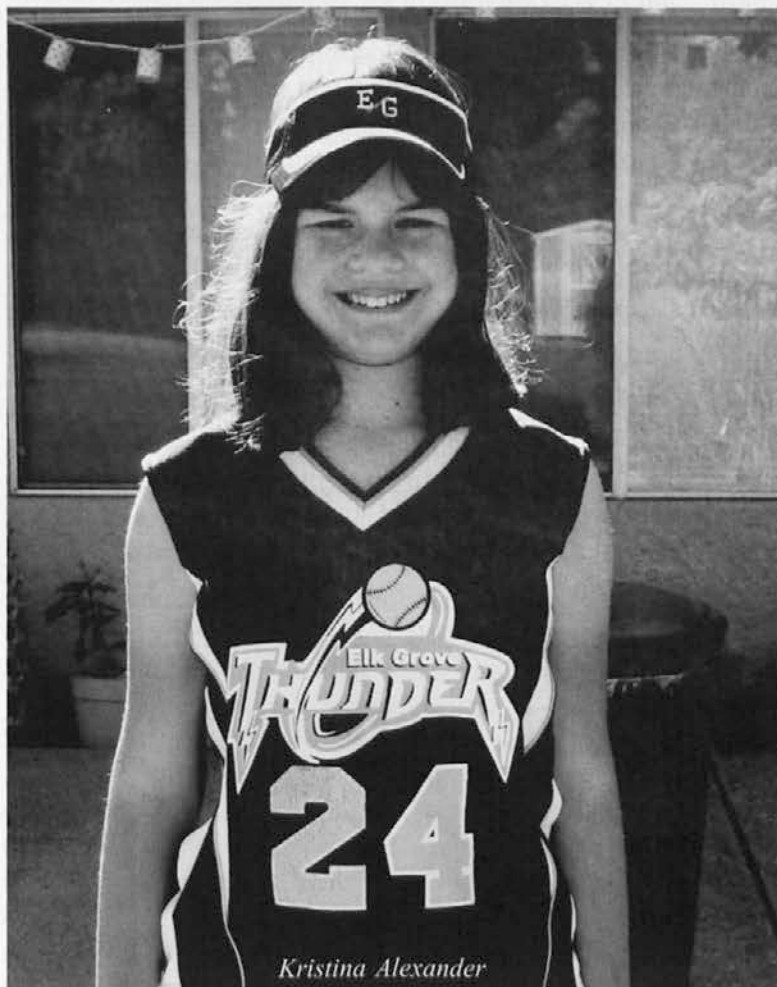
The Great-Great Grandchildren of Marie Prisland

Hi, this is Babs. In this special 80th Anniversary issue I thought it would be a great idea to see what the Great-Great Grandchildren of Marie Prisland (our founder) are up too. Emmie and Kristina sent in a picture and gave us some information on their favorite hobbies. If Kristina and I were to meet I am sure we would have a great time playing ball. It seems like she has the same schedule I do here in the Midwest.

My name is Emmie Mattson, I am 11 years old and live in Iron Mountain, Michigan. My Granny is Mary Turvey and my Great-Great Grandma was Marie Prisland. I have been figure skating since I was 6 years old. I have a coach that I practice with two times a week. I am working on my scratch spin and loop right now. I am also on a traveling basketball team called the Iron Mountain Hoops. During the winter I like to downhill ski and in the summer I like to swim.



Emmie Mattson



Kristina Alexander

My name is Kristina Alexander. I am 12 years old and live in Elk Grove, California. I am Marie Prisland's Great-Great Granddaughter! That makes me feel really special. I love playing fast pitch softball. I play for the Elk Grove Thunder competitive traveling team. We have played over 80 games this year including the state championship. I am a pitcher. I go to weekly pitching and hitting lessons with a really good coach. He has taught me different types of pitches like a fastball, changeup, riseball, dropball, curveball and screwball. I can throw 47 mph. My goal for next season is to top 50 mph. It will be a lot of work, but if I practice a lot I can do it. I also like to dance and am in the dance company at Dance Connection called J2. We got to perform at the state fair. I take classes in tap, jazz, and ballet. My schedule is pretty busy because of my activities: dance 2 days a week and softball 4 days a week.

Men in a SWUA World

80 Years an Amazing Base to Build a Future On

This year the SWUA will celebrate 80 years! WOW 80 years, that is an amazing number and an amazing accomplishment, but even more it is an amazing base to build a future on. Instead of looking back on the growth and accomplishments of the organization I want to look towards the future. What can I do to help and what can we as men do to help propel the organization and help it grow in numbers and in strength? Well, I have a few ideas.

First off guys, you have to join the SWUA and become recognized members. I know there are guys out there at a lot of the events helping out, be it with tables and chairs or helping an elder member to be transported safely or maybe on the clean up committee. Well, that is great but helping out and grabbing a plate of food (we all love the food) for your efforts is not enough. It's time to stop being behind the scenes and it's time to join and be accounted for, it's time to step up and put the \$20 down and become a member. I am a proud member of Branch 24.

The second step is to get involved and become an active member. Well guys, it's confession time for old Don, though I write for the *Zarja* and often discuss the Slovenian business and talk about the SWUA, heck I've even been to Slovenia. I am embarrassed to say that on a branch level I am not very involved. I really need to start going to meetings as often as I can and finding out more about what's going on in my Branch 24. So that is going to be my New Years resolution, to attend more meetings when I am able and to visit other branches before the National Convention rolls around.

The third step we need to take in the future is, after learning to become more of a part of SWUA, is to help lead, now I am not talking about taking over. I am talking about working along side the more than capable women who lead now and in keeping with the traditions and goals of the organization, use the leadership skills some have to help reach the goals. Those with the abilities and experience to help, must do so, they must step up and help lead. Such as,



Don Baldin, Branch 24

branch officers, convention delegates, national officers and who knows some day maybe even a national president. Now remember ladies, I am not taking over the SWUA, not at all, I am talking about working together and getting the "best people" in the leadership rolls may they be women, men, young or old. It doesn't and shouldn't matter as long as they are the right person for the job and what they can do to help further this great organization.

Ok men, there it is, the challenge we have towards the future. How do we do it? We start by leading by example and we recruit younger members both male and female.

Well that's it for me this time. Have a joyous and safe Holiday Season. If you have any thoughts or ideas on this article's subject please send via e-mail to me at Doomsports@aol.com. Until next time and as always, may good luck be yours and again congratulations to the SWUA on 80 great years!

- Don Baldin

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Living Your Legacy

The Genealogical Quest

Proud to be 80, yes we are!

This column is dedicated to the pursuit of genealogy.

We are a proud people, descendants of farmers and academics. Beginning in the middle of the 19th century our forefathers came to this country seeking the freedom from serving in a war they did not support, seeking economic independence, and looking for a quality of life which they did not have in Slovenia. Over time they became assimilated into the general population, and today many of us have only narrow ties to the homeland. When our people first came to this country they generally married their own people, but that changed significantly after World War II. Our people became further separated because of the strife and battles over wages and respect, causing Socialism to be a new battleground. In the beginning societies were founded to assist one in burial expenses, and other necessities of life. Many of these organizations have survived and along with churches, and cultural, social and educational groups, and more recently government representation, the Slovenian Diaspora is still visible. Today, the memories we in America have of our Slovenian culture are uniquely influenced by certain traditions. We memorialize certain food items, potica, klobase, strudel, to name a few, we dance to polkas played on accordians, we garden and plant fruit trees and enjoy certain festivities taught to us by our parents and grandparents in remembrance of their past lives. Unfortunately today, Slovenia does not share those memories. Today Slovenia has been groomed by a communist culture which has shaded the original foundation of a culture into something quite different. Our poignant memories of potica hold no meaning for them nor does folk music or home-crafts such as sausage-making down on the farm. They are modern and proud of it. They are highly educated. They are positioned to be a people of the future.

After hundreds of years Slovenia is emerging to be a frontrunner in the European Union. However, the American Slovenian culture of which the former immigrants were justly proud is fading into the melting pot of these United States. By the time we celebrate our 100th anniversary in 2026, we will be but a speck in the genetic soup pot that is America. Our experience in this New World is unique to us. It deserves to be remembered. Are we going to fade-away like the Anastazi Indian tribe? While we will always have a modern Slovenia that continues to grow and change, most of our flag bearers in these organizations in the U.S. will have passed on. How does one keep the memory alive?



George Plautz

I believe our organizations must come together and act as one. By that I mean networking together with our representatives here in the US from Slovenia to establish a National Museum of Slovenian Heritage. We need a place to store papers, photos, books, ephemera, museum quality crafts, clothing, and everyday objects which are now obsolete to preserve our heritage. We need people with technical and archival science training to work with these objects, to store and index, make our Slovenian press available to researchers, and work on national family trees to preserve our identity here in these United States of America.

The SWUA is in the forefront of advocating heritage preservation. A museum is maintained in Joliet; we are scanning in the old insurance records and creating an index of those records which will be available to all researchers, and we have a first class publication, the Zarja. Mary Turvey has been collecting family trees from SWUA members which can become the basis for a repository of family trees. But we ourselves as an organization (SWUA) are not going to make this happen. It will take an upswelling of support from all of us in the US who have a link to Slovenia, in concert with vision and leadership from the various organizations here and in Slovenia. I urge a vigorous letter writing campaign to the organizations that you belong to with your request that this issue be addressed by them.

Will we be celebrating our 100th Anniversary? The answer lies within you.- Adijo, George Plautz

Introducing a new column in Zarja for 2007.

Starting with the March/April issue of *Zarja*, **Family Connected** - stories of people who connect with families remaining in Slovenia, will become a feature article.

This column will present the story of families researching their Slovenian genealogy who connect with their families either here in the US or Slovenia and the story of their subsequent meeting. We are in search of such family stories for presentation in the column, along with any accompanying photos. If you have met family in Slovenia, or have had family visit you in America and wish to share your adventure, please contact Bonnie Prokup at wprokup@aol.com. A staff researcher and writer will work with the information provided.

The Path Taken...Dopoljena pot Johanna (Ivana) Lušina Artac

by Mary Lou Voelk

Upon leaving Ljubljana, and heading southwest toward Logatec, is the village of Sinja Gorica. This was the home of the Lušina family where Johanna (Ivana) was born November 15, 1888 and baptized November 16, 1888. Johanna was the seventh of ten children born to Jože and Franca Nagode Lušina.



Lušina house in Slovenia

Lusina siblings:

- Franca Lusina b. April 03, 1879; d. August 01, 1895 of Tuberculosis
- Ivana Lusina, b. April 09, 1880; d. June 09, 1887 of Scarlet Fever
- Janez Lusina, b. June 23, 1881; d. May 04, 1887 of Scarlet Fever
- Franca Lusina, b. October 25, 1882; d. June 07, 1887 of Scarlet Fever
- Marija Lusina, b. September 16, 1884; d. February 29, 1908 of Tuberculosis
- Jozef Lusina, b. April 13, 1886; d. September 20, 1888 of Diarrhea
- Johanna (Ivana) Lusina, b. November 15, 1888; d. December 07, 1969, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Jozefa Lusina, b. March 29, 1890; d. July 18, 1895 of Tuberculosis
- Antonija Lusina, b. December 28, 1893; d. April 11, 1982, Sterling, Illinois
- Ana Lusina b. July 6, 1896; d. September 9, 1897 of Childhood Epilepsy

Life was hard and then there was death. Between the years 1881-1897 mother Franca and 7 Lusina children passed away. Two of the children died two days apart, the other several weeks later, Mother Franca died on August 23, 1897 of tuberculosis.

In Slovenia, Johanna did housework. Her last residence before leaving Slovenia was Šmihel pod Nanosom. And so it came that, Ivana Lusina, age 18, left Slovenia. She left behind her father and two sisters, Antonija and Marija. On July 06, 1906, she sailed from the port of Bremen, Germany on the Grosser Kurfurst. Ivana arrived at Ellis Island on August 07, 1906 after a month long sail. Her sponsor in America was Anton Filko.

In Slovenia, her father Joze died on February 21, 1908 and her sister Marija died just 8 days after her father. Johanna's only surviving sister Antonija arrived in the United States on January 29, 1909. Johanna paid her passage, but Antonija reimbursed her fully.

Mihael (Michael) Artac, (b. September 29, 1878, Dol 24, pri Borovnici) and Johanna had lived but a few kilometers apart across the mountains, but met in Waukegan, IL. They were married on May 05, 1907 in the Mother of God Catholic Church, Waukegan. Fr. John Plevnik officiated and witnesses were Franciscus Brence and Maria Leskovec.



Michael Artac and Johanna Lusina Wedding



Church at Sinja Gorica, Slovenia

In Waukegan, two daughters were born, Jennie 1908 and Amelia 1909. In 1910 the family moved to Willard, WI but found it necessary to return to Waukegan when they ran out of money. The land agreement made with Ignac Cesnik Sr., the real estate agent, proved faulty; he did not deliver what had been promised.

Back in Waukegan, Michael worked in the wire mill and Johanna did dressmaking to earn enough money for their return trip to Willard, WI. Another daughter, Angeline was born 1911.

In February 1912, the family finally moved back to Willard. They traveled as far as Fairchild and then rode a rail handcar to Willard. John (Happy) Routar and Michael worked the handcar. Daughters Jennie and Amelia were tied on so they wouldn't fall off and Mother, Johanna, held baby, Angeline in her arms.

Back in Willard, the Lusina family joined other Slovenian families that had settled in this fertile farming area. Michael and Johanna purchased 60 acres of land northwest of Willard in the town of Hendren. They later bought 40 more acres. Michael, Johanna and children lived with the Kauchnick family for six weeks while their own home was being built. There were no roads to their farm; they needed to carry goods from Willard through the woods.

The family home had an attached barn where the only cow was housed. Jennie had some childhood memories, one time it rained so hard the cow and a calf had to be moved in to the house. Jennie remembers eating corn meal mush almost every night and skim milk poured over potatoes boiled in their jackets. The cream was sold and taken by train to Fairchild. For entertainment the children "picked stones". The three church picnics every summer were a fun fare for the children.

Two sons were born in Willard, Frank in 1913, and Ludwig in 1914. Michael and Johanna became American citizens in 1916. The children went to the North Willard School on Frank Kokaly's property. Jennie only knew Slovenian when she started school at the age of 7. Her first teacher was George Mc Cormack, who later became a doctor at the Marshfield Clinic.

On May 11, 1941, Johanna organized Willard Branch 102 of the Slovenian Women's Union of America with 35 charter members. Johanna was the secretary of the organization from 1949 to 1957. She held the office of president until 1963. Johanna was also a member and the treasurer of the women's KSKJ lodge and

Mary Help of Christians 174 from 1924 until her death in 1969.

Johanna's grandchildren found her comfortably predictable. She was always baking on a wood stove. Every trip to her house meant fresh homemade buns, sugar cookies that were cut in diamond shapes with the tool she used for tracing patterns, and of course, hot strudel. There was crackling bread and potica, not for special occasions, but for everyday eating. And of course, the ever present pot of coffee on the stove. Grandma made homemade grape wine from the vines she grew on her trellis. Her remedy for a long life was a shot of blackberry brandy before bed.

Johanna was a seamstress. She also crocheted, knit and embroidered. The products of her talents were the crocheted lace trim on the priests and altar boys vestments. She both sewed and crocheted cloths to cover the church altar. Her embroidered pillowcases were edged in crocheted lace edging. She sewed clothing for everyone in the family. We could always tell which presents were from Grandma as

Michael and Johana Artac 50th Anniversary 1957



the package always smelled from Grandpa's pipe tobacco. He smoked his pipe while she sewed.

There was always a bowl of Brach's pink or white mints on the coffee table. There was a big cuckoo clock from the Black Forest in Germany hanging on the wall of the kitchen. Grandma pulled on those long chains to wind the clock and we always waited in anticipation for that bird to come out.

Born of humble peasantry, Johanna Lusina experienced the tragic loss of so many family members. Miraculously, she survived the common incurable illnesses of that era and at 18 years of age she left her homeland. In America, Michael and Johanna went on to homestead a farm, raise their children and become proud members of the Willard Slovenian community. Their 1st generation born children went on to start families of their own. Jennie married Henry Igowski, Emily married Ernest Haug, Angeline married Ivan Ruzic, Frank married Mary Gosar, and Ludwig married Josephine Ticar.

Ludwig took over the family farm when Michael and Johanna moved into a small house in the town of Willard. Ludwig's son, Michael, is the 3rd generation to farm the original Artac homestead. The Artac family has farmed this land for 94 years, circa 1912-2006.

Michael and Johanna Lusina Artac were "two pioneering parents who tackled the forests and sod to make a beautiful farm" in Willard, WI, a town known as being the largest Slovenian farming community in the United States. And to future generations of the Artac family, Michael and Johanna have given a legacy, a noble work ethic and an enduring faith. Father Michael died in 1965 and mother Johanna died in 1969.

Genealogical research and family information was supplied by Mary Urban, granddaughter of Johanna Lusina Artac. While Mary does not live in Willard area, she is a member of Willard Branch 102. Mary is also an active member of the Slovenian Genealogy Society (SGS), the Lake County Illinois Genealogy Society (LCIGS) and keeps the Willard Holy Family and National Cemetery database updated on the Clark County internet site. She is the planner/organizer of the Waukegan Slovenian Genealogy Breakfast. Mary has built her tree in excess of 14,000 names. In addition, her involvement in these organizations has netted her an overwhelming collection of photographs. Many can be seen on her msn.com site. * Check out her web site for breakfast meeting dates.*

<http://groups.msn.com/Genealogy2000/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/genealogy2002/>

© Mary Lou Voelk

Gearing Up For The 80th

Thanks to this generous donation by Beverly and Bob Blaszkowski and Primož Petek, a Slovenian flag will fly at the 80th Anniversary and the 25th SWUA National Convention. After the convention it will be moved to the Slovenian Heritage Museum in Joliet, Illinois.



Beverly and Bob Blaszkowski, of Branch 33 in Duluth, received this flag from Primož Petek of Logatec, Slovenia. However the flag is much too large for their small flagpole. Bev and Bob donated the flag and list Primož Petek of Klub Grajski Park of Logatec as the donor.

In 2005, Bev's family story appeared in *Zarja*. For years she had searched for her father's Slovenian roots. This led her to Logatec and her dear Petek family.

Primož Petek owns and operates the Klub Grajski Park in Logatec, the park is all inclusive for family. The grounds include a children's playground, tennis, billiards, bowling, football, etc and a gostilna.

If you are in the area, stop by and greet Primož, and do thank him for the generous donation. Log onto Klub Grajski's website. The English version will be completed in the very near future www.grajskipark.net.

The Slovenian Heritage Museum and Research Library

Our Legacy for: Honoring the Past and Envisioning the Future

Founding and Dedication

Established in 1978 by Irene Odorizzi and dedicated in 1983 to preserve, protect and interpret the story of the Slovenian immigrant woman.

Festivals

Galas featuring Slovenian crafts, music, foods and dance in the late 70's and early 1980's were sponsored by Illinois, Minnesota and Ohio branches down through the years. Proceeds were used for benefiting remodeling of the museum floor space and archival needs

Human Effort

The dedication and passion of volunteers who set up a museum standard for cataloging artifacts: the making of a card catalog of books, which in turn could be indexed on library software

Monetary and Archival Donations

The gifts of moneys for library shelving, conference table and chairs, library software, acid-free storage for safe repositories and the Memorial Plaque. Donation of Slovenian artifacts and memorabilia throughout the years.

Library

Acquisition of 600+books from the Slovenian Library of Ely, MN. Dedication of the library in March 2001 and the donation of the cataloging software

Recorded Histories and Promotionals

"Golden Times" and "Footsteps Through Time" by Irene Odorizzi "Look Through My Eyes" by Mary Lou Voelk. Book and videos that document moments in history, and that rekindle the spirit and fortitude of the Slovenian immigrant.

Grants and Preservation of Archival Documents

Acquisition of funds from the Illinois Association of Museums and the Ministry of Slovenians Living Abroad of Slovenia; for the purchase of technology 2004, 2005: 2006, the PROJECT SCAN begins.

Envisioning the Future

"Forget Me Not" (Spominčice) - A series of bilingual children's literature books, by leading children's authors of Slovenia. First book to be released in early 2007 through the Slovenian Heritage Museum.

Volunteering at its finest, thank you!

The Doll Makers (Punčke Pripraviti) from Branch 1:

Agnes Gruenke, Julie Kinney, Cecilia Smolic, Agnes Wiltzius, Angie Fritz, Germaine Tesovnick, Ann Castellan and Amanda Kinney.

Using their combined skills and expertise, these seven ladies and a young girl (deklica) can produce one Slovenian doll in 3½ days. The first task is locating the necessary products and the sources for unique materials. Four sewing machines and one serger became permanent fixtures in the Gruenke dining room. The cutting and construction of each piece: blouse 2 hours, headdress 1 day, pinafore 3 hours, apron 2 hours, shawl 1 hour and slip 1 hour. Eleven year-old, Amanda Kinney, had the task of serging the slips. Finally, the doll is dressed, "dolloed" up and given a Slovenian name. Ex: Spela/Betty, Pavla/Paula, Dragica/Carol. The dolls are available from the Slovenian Heritage Museum gift shop. They represent volunteering at its finest, a true labor of love for your enjoyment. Cost is \$130 plus S&H \$10. Call the Museum: 815.727.1926

Patti and Joe Massucci of Katy, Texas graciously and generously donated/shipped a computer and printer to the SWUA museum when they heard our antiquated office computer refused to go on.

George Plautz: Data entry of deceased member surnames for genealogical research.

Diane Brahney: Computer relaying of messages

Carol Terlep, Carol Novak, Carol Ryba and Theresa Burns for 3 days of scanning documents at the museum. Earlier, Carol T. and Carol N. spent a day removing paper clips and rusted staples, readying the documents for scanning. Carol N. and Carol T. drove into the city, and Carol Ryba flew from Florida at her own expense. These are the most recent figures: 108 deceased members have digitized documents with approximately 7 pages per person; 788 pages have now been scanned which took 6½ days to accomplish. The goal is to scan documents through 1959 because of their deteriorating condition. The following listing gives an idea of the task ahead of us. In 1932 there were 41 deceased members for that year, 1933 - 51, 1940 - 82, 1941 - 113, 1952 - 128 and in 1953 - 144. The sum total of deceased members from 1928-1959 is approximately 3,000 or 227 deaths per year. To complete this goal will require 270 days of volunteering!

Have computer skills? You are needed! Contact Mary Lou Voelk 251.968.4364 or e-mail ottolou@gulfnet.com.

"Smuggler For The Pope"

by Mary Lou Voelk ©

As a child I would often say to my dad, "if Yugoslavia weren't so far away I would go there" My father's reply, "Frances, you will, you will, someday you will".

Let's go back in time, the 1950's.....

In Yugoslavia, Aloysius Stepinac, had been given the title of Cardinal by Pope Pius XII.

In America, Frances Yenke had decided to quit her job at United Airlines after 9 years in various capacities; ticket sales, radio operator and flight attendant. She had worn the complete uniform of hat, white blouse, skirt and pumps. Grooming classes had consisted of hair styling and nail polishing. To qualify initially for this job one had to be an unmarried female, weigh less than 118 pounds and be at least 5'7" in height. Such were the job descriptions in the 1950's!

The company presented her with a 30-day employee travel pass in 1954. She now had the golden opportunity to visit her father's relatives in Yugoslavia. And she remembered her father's words.

But there was a problem. Her husband, Aaron was in the Merchant Marines and he felt it unwise to travel to a communist country so soon after WWII. Grace Norton, a co-worker at United came to the rescue. She would be her companion, but asked for one favor. Could they visit Rome first?

Prior to leaving, a Croatian refugee, Ivan Ivankovich, asked Frances to look up Father Ivan Tomas in Rome. On November 14, 1954, Frances and Grace arrived in Rome and made contact with Father Tomas. Much to their discomfort, he wined and dined them during their entire stay. The night before leaving on the train for Yugoslavia, Father Tomas appeared at the hotel carrying a black briefcase.

These were the words spoken by Father Tomas. "Frances, I have the robe for Cardinal Stepinac in my briefcase,

These were the words spoken by Father Tomas. "Frances, I have the robe for Cardinal Stepinac in my briefcase, and we ask that you take it to him".

and we ask that you take it to him". Father Tomas cautioned not to talk to any one about the robe or the Cardinal. This would put family and the Cardinal in jeopardy. And so Frances put this caution out of her mind until.....

October 3, 1998.....On this day Frances heard that Pope John Paul II had beatified Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac. Memories of her 1954 adventure came flooding back, and she realized this story must be told. During the next several years, Frances documented her memories. There were nights she sat up in bed as other pieces of the story came to her. In the summer of 2006, *Smuggler for Pope* was published.

About now you may have several questions?

Who is the author, Frances Yenke Chilcoat?

Frances is a recent new member of Branch 13 after a friend bought her a membership. Frances was born to Ciril and Angela Bozner Yenke in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Thanks to her father's persistent teachings, she learned to read, sing and speak Slovenian. Frances resides with her husband Aaron in Burlingame, California. A few of her memberships include Our Lady of Angels Church, Burlingame, CA, Church of the Nativity, San Francisco, Club Slovenija at the Slovenian Hall, San Francisco, Croatian Slovenian United Foundation and St. Francis K.S.K.J. Lodge. Frances has many hobbies, but one specialty is oil painting, which has earned her special placements.

Who was Cardinal Stepinac?



Frances Yenke Chilcoat

Cardinal Stepinac was born of a Croatian peasant family. He was ordained into the priesthood, and became the Archbishop of Zagreb in 1937. During WWII, Stepinac never turned his back on refugees. He was a stout defender of human rights regardless of race, religion, nationality, ethnic group or social class. During the war he helped hide countless people in monasteries and other church property; some remained there throughout the war.

He stood for political freedom and fundamental rights and openly criticized the Nazis. Despite the demands of the Germans and Italians that he be removed from Office, Pope Pious XII refused. In 1943, the BBC and the Voice of America began broadcasting Stepinac's sermons to occupied Europe.

At the end of the war, Yugoslavia's new leader, Josip Broz Tito tried to persuade him to break from Rome. Stepinac refused and a demand was made for "full freedom for the human person and his inviolable rights, full respect for Christian marriage and the restitution of all confiscated properties and institutions". And so a mock trial was held, and Stepinac was found guilty of collaboration with the enemy during the war. He was sentenced to years of hard labor.

On 12 January 1953, he was created a cardinal. Pope Pius XII called him "an example of apostolic zeal and Christian strength". And so the question was, "how to deliver his red robe to Yugoslavia"?



Ciril and Angela Yenko and first daughter, Frances. Notice the black pig, the chicken and the rude hystic animal pen.

To order the book use the following order blank. For questions, please email Mary Lou Voelk: ottolou@gulftel.com.

Frances Yenko Chilcoat was one of our 2006 Garden Contest Winners.



Design plans for the garden-sized "kozolec" will soon be available for a small donation.

**Show us your SLOVENIAN Garden 2007
will soon be upon us.**

**Send in your photo and tell us
why you should win!**

**We will have all new categories for 2007. Watch for
details in future issues of Zarja.**

Because of You,
I will be able to defray some of the high cost of
printing this book. I thank you.
Frances Yenko Chilcoat

\$35.00 per book

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Honoring The Past....

Envisioning Our Future ©

By Mary Lou Voelk and Bonnie Pohar Prokup



It was called mass immigration. Slovenians left their country and their families in search of jobs. They were looking for the American dream! And for many it was just that, a dream. Life in America was difficult.

These newly arrived Slovenian immigrants usually followed those who came before. They moved into the "Slovenian" ethnic neighborhoods. These were safe places, a haven when one didn't know the language, or have a job. They built their lodges, and established their churches, one wouldn't miss a Slovenian picnic.



A little Slovenia ...or so they thought. These were the men and women who helped establish the new American society. One of those immigrant women was Marie Prisland, a visionary walking the sidewalks in a man's world, demanding women's right to vote.



Marie Prisland
1926

It was in 1926, she established the SWUA with written rules and by-laws. You see, this organization was meant for longevity. It was established about 6 years after women were given the right to vote.

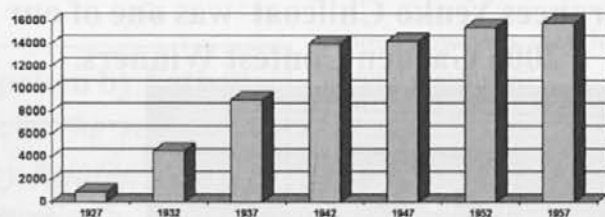
Membership was not easy. A woman had to be an American citizen and to become a citizen, a person needed to pass an English test. These Slovenian immigrant women became role models to children, to family and each other. The beginning of life long learning, empowerment for the Slovenian woman.

There was an added bonus as a member - SWUA was established as a burial society where upon death there was an insurance payment. As death was commonplace in the early 1900's imagine the dignity for these women, to have money for their burial.

So on went their hats and coats, they walked out the door, and straight to the "ženska zveza" meeting. They became leaders, and planners but most importantly they listened and learned from each other. Little did they realize these activities were instrumental in the building of a new society - the American society.

Zarja The Dawn...the magazine of the SWUA, this magazine? The binding force for the Slovenian immigrant woman. All members throughout this large country received and still receive this magazine. From this magazine they learned about raising children, learned the English language, how to coordinate and dress in style, they learned of and met sisters all across America. Most of all, the binding force for the Slovenian immigrant woman.

During this period of history the growth of SWUA climbed by leaps despite the great depression and WW2. Women managed to scrape together those few cents it took being a member of SWUA.



Number of Members through the early years.

Changes in America. Change has always been with us, but not with the speed that has occurred in the last 75 years. WW2 brought drastic changes. Women became the breadwinners, working outside the home, and keeping up the family. Returning GI's came home to marry their sweethearts. Other GI's came home with "war brides".....of French, English, Swedish heritage, the beginning of a noticeable assimilation. These new families needed homes, there was no room in the old Slovenian neighborhoods, so into the new world called suburbs they went, where people of all heritages became neighbors.

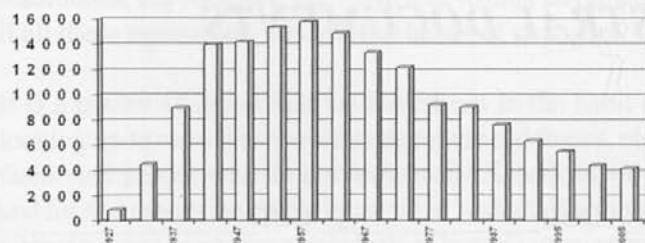
New inventions such as TV revolutionized American society. There was no need to leave home, to visit, to bowl,

and to attend a lodge meeting. Just sit in your easy chair and turn the dial.

And so it was affecting all organizations, and the SWUA was feeling these societal changes. There were also internal difficulties: an aging leadership, lack of vision, financial stress, first generation members dying. Assimilation. Lack of interest in a heritage organization.

America now had a citizenry who had become immersed into the American society. 1957 was the peak year for membership.

The decrease in membership in the following years corresponds with society changes that were heaped one atop another. Television and media, Dr. Spock, education of the masses, Korean and Vietnam wars, assassinations, birth control pill, women working outside the home, rock and roll to name a few.



Changes in membership 1927 - 2005

It was 1999. A new era for the SWUA with a change in leadership. Leadership that recognized the critical stage of the SWUA. Assimilation was on the move and our youth were of 2-3 generations removed. The SWUA had an aging membership, and they were passing away and so a mission statement along with a visionary and purpose statement was written, the burial insurance was cancelled as in today's world it had little or no affect on membership.

Our vision, mission and purpose. In keeping history alive the leadership recognized the hurdles the organization was facing in keeping the Slovenian heritage alive in America. So the questions are? How does one promote heritage in a country this large? The Slovenian American makes up less than 1% of the total population; with each passing generation assimilation continues.

Mass immigration occurred over 100 years ago, it is not relevant to the younger generations. Today's children are living in and have become part of a global society. And we must face these facts: the SWUA is a volunteer organization. An organization in financial stress. An organization without visible leadership for the future. An organization made up of an aging membership.

The facts we know. Today change is coming at us all at a rapid speed. No one is exempt today. A look into the future? 10, 20, 40, 50 years? What will our heritage be? In smaller towns across America the Slovenian neighborhood will be bygone pockets. In populations of large USA cities, it will dwindle drastically. Will all the Slovenian organizations exist, we hope so but it is up to each one of us. Perhaps we can outsmart "change" and be a leap ahead? By recognizing that the future is here! By becoming visionary in thought and bonding, a working partnership to keep this heritage aglow. It is all about preserving the Slovenian heritage on the world stage. Envisioning our future is the key to success - because the future is now!

Vision

To preserve the living spirit of the founders and past membership by promoting and nourishing the legacy left to us and future generations.

Mission

To reach individuals by uniting them through their common interest in Slovenian culture and traditions.

Purpose

To provide resources, communication, and foster friendships in honor of our cultural heritage.

Heritage Donations

Ohio Branches:

Donation from Heritage Festival \$517.55

Minnesota Branches:

Donation from the State Convention \$142.36

Vida Habjan \$25

Obtaining Ancestral Records

The museum has had requests for copies of the scanned records.
Simply fill out the form below and send to the museum.

A request for documents that have not been scanned will also be considered. As a search needs to be conducted there is a time factor. Please allow 3-4 weeks for these documents.

The documents include copies of:

- Application For Membership
- Cancelled checks, both sides
- IZKAZNICA, membership form with seal
- Uncertified genealogical copy of the original medical death certificate and/or
- NAZNANILO SMRTI (announcement of death)

PRODUCTS USED: Paper used in printing is bonded and will not yellow or discolor. Each sheet has a clearly visible watermark with a lifetime of 300 years if stored properly. Documents will be placed in an inert polypropylene protector that will not crack, scratch or tear.

If records cannot be found your payment will be returned.

For any questions please contact Mary Lou Voelk at:
251.968.4364
email: ottolou@cheqnet.net

REQUEST FOR ANCESTRAL DOCUMENTS

Please fill out as much information as possible

Name of Deceased: _____ DOB _____ DOD _____

Member of Branch # _____ City/State of Residence: _____

Your relationship to deceased member: _____

Any other information you wish to include: _____

Contact and Mailing Information

Mailing Address:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

e-mail _____ Cell: _____

Address: _____ City, State: _____ Zip: _____

I would like to have a family story appear in *Zarja/The Path Taken* _____ Yes _____ No

Send this form to:

SWUA
431 N Chicago St.
Joliet, IL 60432

Payment of \$25 is enclosed.

Signed: _____

Our Great Problem

By Ivan Zorman, Cleveland Journal, 1928

80 Years Later Our Goals Are the Same

Featured in the First Zarja in 1929

THE PROBLEM of uniting our younger and older Slovenes into a strong community force is one of paramount importance. A clear understanding by the younger generation of the stakes involved will help immeasurably in effecting this desired mutual understanding and cooperation.

It must be clear to our younger Slovenes that it is to their especial advantage to work hand in hand with their elders. If they seek to draw away from Slovene affairs and eventually lose all contact with them, what will happen? And when our older Slovenes pass on, who will assume the leadership of our National Homes, our banking institutions, our societies, etc.? Will it be to their advantage, if all these institutions fall into the hands of strangers?

It is a matter of regret that we have been in the habit of looking upon our older Slovenes merely as old fogies, old-fashioned people who do not understand American ways and for that reason have little in common with us. We should remember that most of our people were humble immigrants, who came here to seek better opportunities, better living conditions, greater happiness. Under the old Austro-Hungarian rule they had little opportunity for higher education, for advancement and for the comforts of life. Yet they brought with them to America qualities which have enriched American life. They brought their honesty, their industriousness, their thrift, their genial and quaint hospitality and their strong moral consciousness. These, then, are the Contributions to America.

Prominent Americans from all walks of life are deploring the too rapid Americanization of our foreign groups. They realize and we all should realize with them, that America, after all, is a composite whole of the many nationalities that have been brought together by a common lot, that of seeking better opportunities, greater happiness. Each of these peoples has contributed something to American greatness. Americanism, therefore, does not mean the whitewash of uniqueness; it does not mean a mold from which all shall come looking alike, feeling alike, and thinking alike. We may appropriately think of America as a mosaic made up of many stones and many colors blended into a rich harmony.

Our ignorance of Slovene culture is perhaps the greatest stumbling block in the path of our national and communal

activity. We lack Slovene pride. How can our younger Slovenes be proud of our great Slovene men, our leaders and heroes, if they do not know them? What lofty idealism and practical wisdom is to be found in the works of such men as Prešeren, Gregorčič, Levstik, Tavčar, Cankar, Krek and Zupančič! Is it really too late to urge upon our younger generation a detailed study of the works of these men, they should at least occasionally spend a few moments with them that they may capture more of the true Slovene spirit? Let them also consider the wholesome philosophy of the Slovene proverbs, and the intriguing beauty of the Slovene folk music.

And now a word concerning the Slovene language. Many of our younger generation assume the attitude that Slovene is a language to be used only in emergencies, to be more precise, a language to be used only when speaking to those of older Slovenes who speak little English. Otherwise it is repressive and melodious tongue! It is but necessary to take a cursory glance at a few stanzas or paragraphs of the works of our foremost poets and writers to prove this assertion. Let us be fair. Let us not judge our language by some lowly dialect; let us judge it by the works of Slovene literary art. The Slovene language and the Slovene spirit are one. Let us remember that we catch the spirit of a people in great measure from the language, which is a sort of monument, to which each forcible individual in a course of many hundreds of years has contributed a stone. Let us, therefore, respect the language of our fathers, let us employ it with pride and joy whenever the occasion presents itself.

Let us not speculate and worry about our third and fourth generations; let us take care of the present. It is now much too early to cast aside our language, our national traditions and traits. We need them and American needs them. If we combine these good Slovene traits with American ideals, we shall all become better Slovenes, better Americans and better men and women.

Beauty and Style

My, how the fashion has changed! Take a look at what Emma Shimkus of Branch 24, LaSalle, Illinois wrote when she was Zarja's fashion editor beginning in 1937.

FALL FASHIONS

Many of the readers will be asking this question: "What will my fall ensemble be?" It is not hard to find an answer to this question. Suits can be purchased in so many different styles that you will surely find one to suit your need.

The three-piece suit is again most popular. Some of these outfits are made with full-length reefer coats and others with three-quarter length collarless swagger toppers. The complete costume consists of either a dress and a long coat or a two-piece suit with an extra full-length coat to wear over your other

dresses. You can readily see that these suites are most economical and will give you much service, you can, with a few additional accessories change them into a new costume for each day in the week.

A brand new fall suit is made with a coat that covers the hips, and has brief wide lapels. The collarless lumber jacket, which ends at the waist, tops off some of the smartest satin top dresses to make a complete ensemble.

The dressy suit calls for a complete surprise, when you remove the jacket you find a chic looking dress with a lace yoke.

For cooler weather you may choose a lightweight woolen dress in any of the blue shades, rust, toast,

caramel, plum, muscatel or beige and top it off with an inexpensive fur jacket.

The high school girl will select a simple fitted jacket of velvet made with short sleeves to wear with a striped, plaid or plain colored skirt, for her basic outfit. This gives her an opportunity to create many costumes by the addition of sweaters and blouses.

A winter coat that will take you around the clock has straight but trim lines. The dressy type is made with fan-shaped fur collars. The untrimmed sport coat has built-up shoulders and a waistline slightly tapered that is flattering to any figure. These coats are available in any of the new fall shades.

The very newest fall dress is made with dolman sleeves, a bloused waist, with a rounded neckline, and a slim skirt.

Shoes fit the foot like a glove. Some of them have elastic inserts and pull on like a girdle. Many of the leading stores carry a line of shoes and bags to match.

The purchase of a new fall hat is a problem. Your hairdresser will have to change to the upward trend if you want to wear the small hat perched on top or over one side.

A Feature Page in Zarja in the 1940's.



Slovene Fashion Show in NYC, 2006

In October, Slovenian fashion designer Maja Ferme hosted the first independent fashion show held by any Slovenian designer in New York. Her collection, *The Nymph*, was displayed in The Midtown Loft on Fifth Avenue. The clothing line designed by Maja, could be described as ethereal and mystical; the clothing was made from natural materials, such as silk, chiffon, and satin and painted with light water colors.

This young Slovene designer first came to the U.S. in 2005 and she worked in New York as an intern for a successful design company Anna Sui. When we met after the show she told me that she was really lucky because her boss had fallen in love with Slovenia on her first visit and wanted to learn more from Maja about the country – what a coincidence! That gave a young intern an advantage before others so in her three months stay she was allowed to move from one department to another quicker than is generally the case. This enabled her to gain a lot of valuable experiences in the fashion industry. While working as an intern she discovered that the main difference between the Slovenian and the American approach in designing clothes was in the greater use of technology in the US. Most Slovene fashion designers still draw their sketches on the paper and it is usual also that they operate as a “one man band”, which means that they are not highly specialized to different work areas, as to choosing textile fabric, sewing, designing, and marketing the products, as is commonly practiced in the U.S.

Upon completing her internship Maja went back to Ljubljana, and started preparing for her first individual fashion show that would be held in the Big Apple. It took five months to put together her *Nymph* collection, clothing line defined by unique printing and hand works, where each piece is made thoughtfully and from the best natural materials. It took several days to perfect each unique dress. As Maja said, the inspiration for this collection came from water nymphs – Ondinas, because of the natural resources and diversity of water springs in Slovenia, she dedicated this collection to this ethereal and magical beings.



Photo:
Urban Modic

The designer Ferme is very passionate about the jewelry design. In 2003, she presented her first collection of jewelry, *Butterfly*, which was a tribute to this wonderful being of nature. The collection was commercially very successful. Sales channels are expanding in the capital city Ljubljana, Maribor and in Celje. In her latest fashion show in New York she

presented her latest collection of jewelry that she designed with collaboration of one of the Slovenian largest glass companies, *Steklarna Rogaška*. Maja creatively designed the jewelry that was later produced by this company. Her jewelry is made by the refined crystal and is precisely engraved and enhanced with splashes of gold and silver. The

jewelry matches some of the clothing. Maja credits her father for her desire to design jewelry, since he is in the business of buying and selling precious stones.

When Maja comes back to Slovenia in November, she will find a lot of new projects waiting for her. Maja and four other young fashion designers from all parts of Slovenia formed a group called *Galerija Mode* (Fashion Gallery) last year. This month they are moving from their former place in the old town of Ljubljana, the pretty medieval section, *Mestni trg*, to the newer part of the city centre which will be located in one of the main super stores *Nama*. Their studio will be placed on the first floor and will be specialized for luxury and formal dresses, graduate and wedding dresses, suits, and unique luxury underwear. Maja is one of those rare girls in the fashion industry that stayed firmly on the ground. She likes to talk to everyone and said that she would be happy if American Slovenians would drop by her store and say hello.

In the future, this young fashion designer would like to find some new contacts of sale outlets in the U.S., such as upscale boutiques and clothing stores. She is leaving the U.S. very tired, but full of enthusiasm. The working visit to New York was demanding for Maja, but she said that she loved every minute of her visit, and is very excited to have been given this great opportunity to show her fashion line in this one of a kind city in the world. You can check more about Maja and her *Nymph* collection on her web page: www.majaferme.com. - Natasa Bolce



Photo:Urban Modic

NATIONAL PRESIDENTS OF THE SLOVENIAN WOMEN'S UNION OF AMERICA

Marie Prisland (Founder)	1926 - 1946
Albina Novak	1946 - 1952
Josephine Livek	1952 - 1961
Antonia Turek	1961 - 1973
Mary Bostian	1973 - 1979
Mary Muller	1979 - 1987
Victoria Bobence	1987 - 1995
Jean Korsman	1995 - 1999
Kathleen Ferrante	1999 - 2007

NATIONAL SECRETARIES OF THE SLOVENIAN WOMEN'S UNION OF AMERICA

Julia Gottlieb	1926 - 1933
Josephine Racic	1933 - 1939
Josephine Erjavec	1939 - 1952
Albina Novak	1952 - 1970
Fanika Humar	1970 - 1976
Olga Ancel	1976 - 1995
Evelyn Majercik	1995 - 1999
Bonnie Pohar-Prokup	1999 - 2007

EDITORS OF ZARJA THE DAWN

Julia Gottlieb	1929 - 1930
Josephine Racic	1930 - 1933
Albina Novak	1933 - 1952
Corinne Leskovar	1952 - 2006
Debbie Pohar	2006 -

1926 NATIONAL OFFICERS

Marie Prisland
Julia Gottlieb
Matilda Duller
Frances Jazbec

2007 NATIONAL OFFICERS

Kathleen Ferrante	President	Josephine Janezic	WI State President
BettyAnn Kolesari	Vice President	Lisa McDonnell	MN State President
Bonnie Pohar-Prokup	Secretary	Debbie Pohar	Zarja Editor
Jonita Ruth	Treasurer	Corinne Leskovar	Consulting Editor
Beverly Menart	1 st Auditor	Mary Lou Voelk	Heritage Director
Denise P Bartlett	2 nd Auditor	Mary Turvey	Scholarship Director
Nancy Henkel	3 rd Auditor	Leslie Cummings	SWUA.ORG Editor
Genevieve Buol	IL/IN State President	Jerry Sherek	Webmaster
Olga Dorchak	OH State President	Jan King	Online Newsletter

Branch 1 – Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Founding Date: December 1, 1926 – Celebrating 80 Years!

The First Branch of the Slovenian Women's Union of America – Proud to be a Part of the First 80 Years!

Congratulations, Slovenian Women's Union, on your 80th Anniversary!

It's hard to talk about the future of SWUA Branch 1 without talking about the past. Many of our members are first, second and third generations of the charter members of SWUA. Many of us have fond memories of Marie Prisland and realize how she was a woman ahead of her time. Our branch also boasts several members of Marie Prisland's immediate family.

The SWUA began in Sheboygan, WI on December 1, 1926 and later that same month the national group was founded in Chicago. The 36 charter members were a group of women who wanted to learn English and were striving to become citizens of the United States. They were encouraged to foster American and Slovenian ideals and to participate in American civic affairs.

In those following years, in two short generations, we Slovenian women have become completely assimilated into American life. So much so, that the whole organization has changed and we are now a group of women and men striving to maintain our Slovenian traditions.

Our memories of the organization revolve around "Mother of the Year" programs with children in traditional costumes. Christmas parties were celebrated with potica and pink tea. Marie Prisland was always leading the way with her poems and programs. She wanted all of us to become strong leaders in our community.

Currently, Branch 1 has seen resurgence in interest in the SWUA. With open arms we have welcomed men into our branch and enjoy their presence and input at our meetings. We honor a "Member of the Year" every May. We still celebrate Christmas together. This year we had an 80th Anniversary brunch complete with kranskis (sausages), potica, apple strudel, pink tea and Slovenian music. This



2005 Christmas party (left to right) Secretary Angie Fritz, Treasurer Kathy Schroeder, Spiritual Director Fr. Glenn Powers and President Aggie Gruenke

special event took place at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Parish, our spiritual home for the past 80 years.



President Aggie Gruenke and Secretary Angie Fritz with a display of Slovenian items and memorabilia at a recent fund raising event. Visual displays like this have brought many new members to Branch 1.

The future can best be summed up in Marie Prisland's own words from our 50th anniversary in 1976. She wrote: "The challenge for the future is now ours. We pledge continuation of the work and enthusiasm begun by our mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers so many years ago. For future success and growth of the Slovenian Women's Union of America and in a spirit of hope, dedication and purpose, we go forth for a successful future."

We hope that our future is as bright as our past and present. "Keeping Our Legacy Alive" is a motto we live by every day. We look forward to the future, and know that Marie Prisland would be proud of us all. - Mary Jo Grabner



Marching through the streets of Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Branch 2 – Chicago, Illinois

Founding Date: December 1, 1926

SWUA and Branch 2 – Celebrating 80 Years of Slovenian Heritage.

In 1926, farsighted Chicago women who were co-workers of Marie Prisland organized the first branch of Slovenian Women's Union of America, following her inspired dream to have an organization for all the Slovenian and Croatian immigrant women to continue the traditions of their homeland and learn more about their new country. Branch 2 was formed on December 19th, the founding date of SWUA. It was located in a Slovenian neighborhood where the language could be used freely in stores owned by Slovenians, where Mass was celebrated in a Slovenian church and social activities included concerts and plays in the Slovenian language.

Now after celebrating 80 years, we are still keeping the Slovenian traditions intermingled with many



*Fran, Dolores and Aggie
100th Anniversary of St. Stephen's*

October: IL/IN Convention,
November: Penny Social,
December: Christmas Celebration.

Our branch annually supports the Franciscan Fathers in Lemont; Jesuits at St. Stephen's, Bishop Baraga Beatification, Misericordia home for the Mentally Challenged, Memorial Candle for deceased SWUA members at St. Peter's Church in downtown Chicago, SWUA Heritage Museum in Joliet and SWUA Scholarship Fund. Special contributions and accomplishments: Statue of St. Francis at St. Mary's Lemont and Conference table and chairs for National Home Office.



*Mary Foys Lauretig (Doll Lady) center left, Mary Piletic,
Branch 24, center right*

American traditions. At all our meetings and parties we sing beautiful Slovenian songs, button box music is played, and we serve pastries, which were taught to us by our mothers and grandmothers. Each month our meetings have a theme, such as: January: New Years Celebration, February: Mission Project and Valentine Days, March: St. Joseph and St. Patrick Table, April: Arrival of Spring, May: Member of the Year, June: American Flag Day, July: Zveza Piknik, August: Members work at the Franciscan Honey Picnic in Lemont, September: Bishop Baraga Days,

We encourage our young members to enroll their children in Zveza. Youngsters often attend meetings, they

help with decorating tables and cupcakes and are runners for our raffle prizes. Our future is in the hands of the young members and we strive to nurture their interest in their education and Slovenian heritage.



Picnic - Lemont, July

St. Stephen's neighborhood has become diverse and few Slovenians remain. With the many changes in our memberships; some of us are Slovenian by birth but we are all Slovenian by "heart". The Jesuits have replaced the Franciscans Fathers and they are very kind to us. We hope we will be privileged to operate our Branch 2 from St. Stephen's for many more years; where the Slovenian Women's Union of America started 80 years ago.
- Daisy Zeleznikar

Branch 3 – Pueblo, Colorado

Founding Date: December 19, 1926



Sister Act Three –Congratualtes SWUA and Branch 3 on 80 Years!

LONG BEFORE COLORADO WAS NAMED “COLORFUL COLORADO,” one city, Pueblo, seemed to attract immigrants from Slovenia. The center of the Slovenian hub was the spiritual connection, St. Mary Help of Christian Church.

One of the spokes of the church wheel was a group of women calling themselves, Slovenian Women’s Union of America Branch 3. Imagine being number three to jump on the bandwagon to be part of a unique Slovenian women’s organization that also provided a monetary certificate upon one’s demise.

In 1926, twenty-two charter members recognized the need to help each other in very important matters. Some members needed help with their English and some, instruction in earning their citizenship papers. It also was a social outlet from homemaking duties.

From year to year, without being aware of time, Branch 3 is on the 21st Century bandwagon. Now we try to learn Slovenian and appreciate the ethnic customs of our “Pioneer Sisters”.

Indeed, Sisters all are we! At a social gathering it was observed not only were there member sisters, but many



Margaret Cullen, President, Bernice Krasovec, Woman of Year 2005 and Email Reporter, Eileen Kaplan, Secretary/Treasurer.



*“Slovenian Heritage Day”
Pictured: Eileen Kaplan and Mildred Stofac*



*“Slovenian Women Feature An Apron Day”
Pictured: Katherine Kochevar, Dorothy Zakrasek, Mildred Stofac, Mary Gersick, Eileen Kaplan, Bernice Krasovec.*



Pictured: Josephine Krasovic, Agnes Glavich, Lillian Galich, Elsie Medonich, Stephanie Barnett, Pauline Pauchick, Margaret Cullen.

Front row Lillian (Glavich) Galich, Elsie (Glavich) Kocman, Agnes (Grande) Galich. Top Row: Eileen (Krasovec) Perez, Bernadette Krasovec, Katherine (Krasovec) Chrisman, Josephine (Grande) Krasovic, Ann (Grande) Yengich. Not pictured in the “three’s” Evelyn (Glavich) Mohorcich now deceased.

biological sisters as well. We call it our “Sister Act # Three”. What should we do? Take a picture, of course, of our true sisters holding their red carnations!

Business meetings have become somewhat parliamentary with a quorum check, but camaraderie is still the reason we meet. President, Margaret Cullen; Secretary/Treasurer, Eileen Kapan keep members informed of National

SWUA concerns. Member, Bernice Krasovec, volunteers as our Email contact. Interesting agendas and fellowship make members and their guests welcome to our socials and meetings. What a grand time we had at our apron theme meeting.

The national Scholarship Fund is our current focus. Several Branch 3 junior members have received scholarships. At the recent meeting it was decided, in lieu of a gift exchange at our annual Christmas Party, members would contribute \$10.00 to the National Scholarship Fund.

“Sister Act Three” will be playing nonstop in Pueblo as we extend our congratulations to SWUA on the 80th Anniversary...”Time” with its tick-tock-tick will continue to move SWUA forward.

- Eileen Kaplan and Bernice Krasovec

Branch 5 – Indianapolis, Indiana

Founding Date: January 15, 1927

Happy 80th Anniversary to SWUA and Branch 5!

Look at the picture of our founding ladies and read how the SWUA got started in Indianapolis. These ladies really depended on each other for support in the Haughville neighborhood and they looked out for each other. Holy Trinity Slovenian Catholic Church and School were the focal point of their lives, but I believe that one of the social highlights of their month was the SWUA meeting! I am sure that for many this was their only time away from the husband and family, and the only opportunity to socialize with fellow countrywomen. I think it was important for them to have their own insurance policy (very few women did!) and important for them to be able to discuss the changes in their lives in a new country.

I wonder if the founding sisterhood ever imagined where SWUA would be in 80 years? We still are involved in church, school and family matters, but now with so many women involved in careers and juggling time and travel, it is difficult to squeeze in one more meeting here and there, and yet...we do it. Why? Because what was important to them is still important to us. Keeping in touch with the Slovenian community. Our roots are alive and strong in our members, and it is important that we continue to keep alive the traditions and family connections. Today's members are involved in many Slovenian groups and have hosted or attended events involving many ties to Slovenia.



SLOVENIAN - LADIES - UNION No 5
INDIANAPOLIS IND.

Podr. Št. 5

First Row: Louise Zore, Jennie Vidmar, Mayme Vidmar, Mary Dugar, Anna Koren, Jennie Gerbech, Victoria Zore, Mary Turk and Mary Urbančič

Second Row: Julia Česnik, Anna Udovič, Ivana Božič, Mary Vidmar, Mary Donus, Mary Turk, Mary Mervar, Anna Traunar, Mary Turk

Third Row: Terezija Luzar, Terezija Česnik, Mary Kos, Anna Praprotnik, Josephine Mausar

We just celebrated the 100th Anniversary of our beloved Holy Trinity Church, hosted the Slovenian Ambassador and Consul General, and helped raise money for the restoration of churches in Piran and worked at



Consul General Dr. Zvone Žigon and Erna Trauner



Ambassador Samuel Žbogar greeted at airport by Josef Laposa and Stephen Fon

our Slovenian booth at the International Festival. We now have new members who are husbands and fathers and brothers of our members! What would those ladies think of us now? I think they would be very proud of the way we have kept their legacy alive and strong! Let's look forward to the next 80 years and hope those that follow us will continue to carry the SWUA torch proudly!

(This is a direct literal translation of the Slovenian text, written in our history book by the founder of SWUA Marie Prisland) *For the founding of this branch, Mrs. Mary Widmar took charge and assisting her was Mrs. Mary Dugar. They went around in the neighborhood and "agitated" among their countrywomen so that they establish their own branch. The meeting was held on the 15th of January, 1927 and signed up were 26 charter members. The following were elected to the committee: President, Julia Hoff, Secretary, Mary Dugar, Treasurer, Jennie Gerbek, Auditors, Mary Turk and Victoria Zore. In five months the president, because she was too busy, left her position and in her place was elected a strong and diligent Slovenian lady, Mrs. Ana Koren. The branch was honored by the fact that one of their charter members was named to the National Board of SWUA, namely Mrs. Mary Widmar as a National Auditor. Mrs. Jennie Gerbeck was elected to the National Board at the Third Convention.*

(From a book at the Haughville Library) *Most of them are in business for themselves, groceries, drygoods stores, bakeries and butcher shops, those not in business work in foundries in Haughville. Nearly all of them own their own homes. Houses are all fenced in, have beautiful gardens and grape arbors.*

The community has grown up around Holy Trinity Church the church is really the community center,

Branch 5 – Continued....



*"Old Timers" Polka Group
SWUA members
2nd from left, Paul Barbarich
4th from left, Pete Barbarich*

besides the church and school they have a larger church hall with bowling alleys, gymnasium, etc.

The Slovenians have numerous social and benefit societies, Holy Name society, St. Joseph's Society, St. Anna Society,

St. Louis Society, the Catholic Mothers society are connected with the church. Danica, Slovenski Bratje and Franc Prešeren societies are independent.

One of the most active organizations is the Slovenian Ladies Union (as we were first called). One of the unique features of this society is that they give each of their members a wedding present, a present every time they have a baby and for their silver wedding anniversary. During the last year Mrs. Koren, Mrs. Bajt and Mrs. Berbech received silver wedding anniversary presents.



*Elizabeth Fon
Scholarship Winner, 1998*

Branch 10 – Cleveland, Ohio

Founding Date: March 8, 1927

Eighty Years Old And Proud!

Congratulations Slovenian Women's Union of America on turning eighty years old. We in Cleveland, Ohio are very proud of this wonderful achievement.

Branch 12 - Milwaukee, WI

Founding Date: October 31, 1927

Preserving Our Slovenian Traditions for 80 Years!

From all the members of Branch 12 – we wish the Slovenian Women's Union of America best wishes for a future of continued success in growth and the preservation of our Slovenian traditions.

Branch 13 – San Francisco, California

Founding Date: October 30, 1927

Keeping Our Heritage Alive – 80 Years!

From your sisters on the West Coast – we wish the Slovenian Women's Union of America warm congratulations on 80 years of our Slovenian heritage. Best wishes for many more years of success and keeping our Slovenian heritage alive!

Branch 14 – Euclid, Ohio

Founding Date: October 31, 1927

Congratulations SWUA on 80 Years!

Branch 14 is not a very active branch. Our members are up in years and passing away. Our oldest member is Anna Gacnik who is over 100 years old.

We do not have monthly meetings but enjoy Mother's Day and Christmas dinners. Around 80 or so members and guests attend each event. A full course meal is served with raffles and many prizes.

Branch 14 pays the dues for members that are in nursing homes so their memberships are kept up. In 2006 we had 6 members who received 50 year pins. Our oldest member has been in SWUA for 77 years.

Thank you members and guest for our events, with your support Branch 14 can continue on. - Diane Varney

Branch 16 – South Chicago, Illinois

Founding Date: February 13, 1928

Promoting Our Slovenian Culture for 80 Years!

My how time goes by quickly. It seems like yesterday when we were celebrating 50 years. And now to think we have reached our 80th year. We have accomplished so much in 80 years but above all we have been great promoters of our Slovenian Culture. Our ancestors would be proud of us today. We have plenty to look forward to. Let's keep on promoting and look forward to the 100th anniversary. We can do it!

Branch 20 – Joliet, Illinois

Founding Date: June 11, 1928

The Best of Times!

In 2008, Branch 20 will be celebrating 80 years. We officially came onto the scene June 11, 1928. The founders were Josephine Erjavec from Joliet, IL and Barbara (Bara) Kramer of San Francisco, CA. With a current membership of well over 600, Branch 20 is largest of the branches and was from the beginning. For this reason, we have the privilege of being the only branch that sends 3 delegates to the National Convention. We owe this to some very dynamic member recruiters in the early years of the branch.

Branch 20 was very proud of the Championship Cadets – Junior and Senior Drill Teams; their skills brought many trophies to their credit. According to some, the time spent in the Cadets was the best time in their lives. The Branch 20 cadet captains were: Dorothy (Govednik) Mahan, Josephine (Mahkovec) Goron and Bea Metesh. They were organized in 1938 by Josephine Erjavec and Emma Planinsek.



Former Mayors of the Grape Festival: (left to right) Bill and Diane Govednik, Joe and Cele Wolf, Joe and Mary Babich, Ari and Frances Schultz, Benny and Theresa Papesh, Mildred Pucel - Toastmistress accompanied by son Chris, Chuck and Marge Franze, Ray and Annette Koncar, Tony Wolf and John and Sylvia Churnovic

Other activities that have been initiated by Branch 20 were the Baton Twirlers, a singing group, Sewing Circle and the Junior Slovenian Dancers from 1974 – 1978 entertaining the audience with their precision footwork.

Bowling was one of the longest running activities for our branch. It brought much entertainment and joy to the lives of those that participated in the teams. For 57 years from 1936, the bowling league rolled at the Rivals Bowling Lanes in Joliet until 1993 when the league disbanded, and the many enjoyable hours ceased to exist. The following members bowled the greatest number of years: Ann Sternisha – 43 years plus, Dorothy Horvat – 40 years plus, Vicki Bernickas – 35 years, Millie Briski – 30 years, and Ann Kobe – 20 years. The organizers were Jennie Benedick and Emma Planinsek. Jo (Ramuta) Sumic organized a four team league in 1937.

We have many activities on the agenda, one of which is the Member of the Year celebration. On the third Tuesday in

May, we honor our Member of the Year with a dinner banquet at St. Joseph Park Hall. Father Tom Paul reads a special tribute to Our Lady of Brezje. He has been our Spiritual Director since the year 2000. Father David Stalzer (deceased) served our branch in that capacity from 1979-2000. We present our Branch 20 Scholarship Awards at this time, also. Our first celebrant for Member of the Year in 1951 was Emma Planinsek. She served as branch president from 1935-1982. In the beginning, we had a smaller celebration, but now it has evolved into a dinner banquet with about 100 people in attendance. All who come are happy to be part of this delightful evening with the honored member.

In 1980, we saw the beginning of our highly successful Slovenian Grape Harvest Festival Dance (Vinska Trgatev), which carries on one of the many traditions of the homeland. Our first honorary mayor was Rudy Pucel now

deceased, (husband of Mildred Erjavec Pucel). For the past 26 years, this event has been held at St. Joseph Park Hall on the last Sunday in September with about 300 people in attendance. We have a money raffle, 50/50 drawing and other prizes from donations. Refreshments are available and cash bar. We do our decorating on Saturday and many of our men members come to help out with some of the heavier tasks. The hall is very attractively decorated with lights all around, red carnations and candles on the tables. It reminds you of a Slovenian nightclub with the polka music and dancing. All past honorary mayors are sent special invitations to attend the Grape Festival. They are invited to participate in the procession with button boxes playing Slovenian music. The mayor's program ends with wine and sharkel served to them. The biggest attraction at the festival is the arbor, suspended six feet above floor level and decorated with candy instead of grapes. During the festival, participants try to "steal" candy from the arbor and selected sheriffs must catch them, they are required to pay a fine before a judge or go to jail. In Slovenia, grape

harvesting calls for a yearly festival attracting large crowds as well as dignitaries from other European countries. The proceeds from this dance are used to pay dues for our members 85 years of age and over, and for the scholarship fund.

To help our members achieve their goal, and to increase Junior membership, Branch 20 offers three scholarships yearly; two of which are to qualified Junior members, a \$500 scholarship to a student in eighth grade going into a catholic high school, and another \$500 to a student already in a catholic high school for the following year. The third scholarship goes to an adult member wishing to continue their education. The adult education scholarship was initiated by Branch 20 in 1994, and is the first of its kind in the organization. The chairperson is our member William Burns.

About twelve years ago, we began our Calendar of Activities. The members receive it in the mail before the first meeting in September. All the coming events for the year are listed at the top of the page, and then every month gives detailed information about what is going on for the year. This way they know well in advance what will be going on, and can make plans accordingly.

We have a prominent author in our midst, Branch 20 member Marianne Wolf. Her new book "Joliet" is about the cultural history of Joliet. On the weekend of July 15 and 16, 2006, she was at the Slovenian Heritage Museum to personally autograph her book for the visitors that made the purchase. Refreshments were served. Her parents Joseph and Cele Wolf also are members. Her father along with his brother Tony, play the button box at various social events for our branch.

Branch 20 is a very active branch and we do a variety of things to keep the members interested. At our meeting, we have terrific guest speakers. We have a bakery sale every fall and a rummage sale in the spring. The St. Joseph Table in March is always a popular event and well-attended. We have the accumulating attendance award starting in September with a drawing every month through May. The name is picked from a list of local members. It begins with \$10 and goes up \$10 per month if the winner is not present at the meeting. If there are no winners the current year, it starts over the following September. In the last few years, we have been mailing a Halloween treat to the homes of the Junior members consisting of a card and money. To add to the spirit of season, we have an annual Christmas dinner usually on the third Sunday in December.



Grape festival 2006, Honorary Mayors, (first in line) Joe and Tony Wolf - 1995, John Churnovic - 2006, Ray Koncar - 2003, Chuck Franze - 1998

On the death of one of our members, a group of four representatives from the branch attend the funeral paying the final respect to their fellow member with the ceremonial prayer. A red carnation with the Slovenian ribbon is then placed alongside the deceased, and a special tribute is read. We serve as the honor guard at the church and cemetery.

The Sunshine Committee delivers a Valentine gift to member shut-ins around Valentine's Day each year in February. Theresa Burns is the chairperson. Jonita Ruth sends cards to members for a special anniversary, sympathy, baby arrival or get well. Jonita is our Sunshine girl and top-notch member recruiter for Branch 20. Our member Pat Figurowski manages the Magic Month Raffle Calendar for Slovenian Women's Union of America which goes out to all the members. Theresa Burns, Vicki Hodgman, Carol Novak and Carole Terlep, all Branch 20 members, lend their time and talent to the preservation of our Heritage Museum.

In October of 2003, Branch 20 celebrated their Diamond Anniversary - 75 years. We exceeded our goal of recruiting 75 new members commemorating the 75th anniversary. Our celebration was in conjunction with the IL/IN Regional Convention. It was a grand celebration beginning with breakfast and meeting in the early morning, and afterward Mass at the Historic St. Joseph Church across the street from our Heritage Museum. Dinner was at the St. George Social Hall with over 200 in attendance. The invocation for the banquet was given by Rev. James Radek, then pastor at St. Joseph Church. The Singing Slovenes from Duluth, Minnesota and the Croatian Kola Dancers provided exceptional musical entertainment. Our guest of honor was Reverend Frank Perkovich from Gilbert, MN and the originator of the Polka Mass. Our toastmistress Mildred (Erjavec) Pucel made the introduction. She has served as the toastmistress on many of these occasions.



75th Anniversary Committee: (Bottom Row) Charlene Kobe, Jonita Ruth, Pat Figuirowski, Agnes Dobczyk (Second Row) Barbara DeLaney, Sue Bartolme, Sister Marlene Ambrose, Jean Herbst, Heidi Domark (Third Row) Bernice Nemanich, Theresa Burns, Mary Kay Demick, Josephine Lustik

We have done very well in keeping our branch alive and active; of course, there is always room for improvement. The future

growth of Branch 20 is up to all of us to do our share in enrolling new members, and taking part in activities, coming to meetings and even bringing a friend along that would be interested in joining Slovenian Women's Union of America.

Our current officers are a very dedicated group and work hard for the good of the branch, and promoting our culture and heritage. They are as follows: Spiritual Adviser - Father Tom Paul, President - Char Kobe, Vice President - Agnes Dobczyk, Financial Sec/Treas - Jean Herbst, Recording Secretary - Vicki Hodgman, Zarja Reporter - Barbara DeLaney, Auditors - Mary Kay Demick, Jo Lustik and Bernice Nemanich, Sgts. At Arms - Thelma Minarich and Nancy Horwath

The original fourteen members who chartered Branch 20 in June 1928, would be amazed and proud of the Branch's accomplishments brought about by great devotion and good will during the past now almost 80 years. - Jo Lustik

Branch 23 – Ely, Minnesota

Founding Date: September 19, 1928

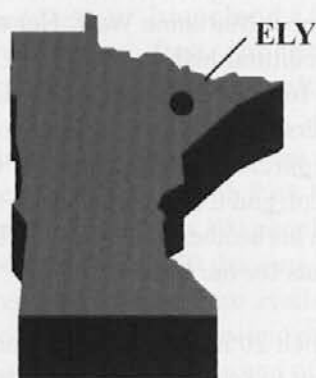
Congratulations to the SWUA for 80 Great Years!

Where we meet!



St. Anthony's Catholic Church

Where we live...



**Best Wishes
from all the
members of
Branch 23
Ely, Minnesota**

*Remembering our
deceased members*



**Planning for:
November Luncheon
Christmas Party
Member of the Year Dinner**

Enjoying our heritage



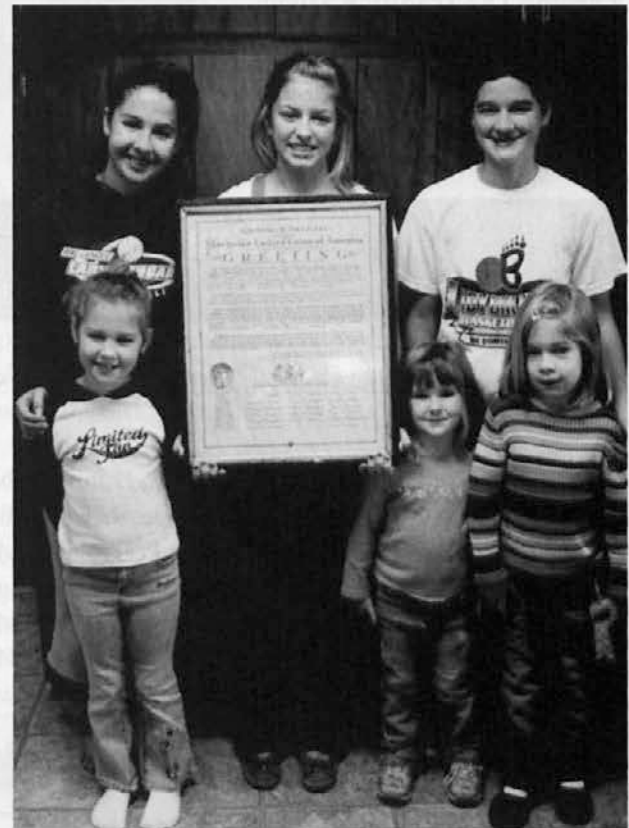
Sharing and caring for our members

Branch 24 – LaSalle, Illinois

Founding Date: October 17, 1928

*Far from home, all alone
As friends we gather near,
We meet as one and have some fun
Our numbers grow each year.*

*Now, eighty years have passed us by
And proudly still we stand,
The thread that has bound us together
Has strengthened throughout this land.*



Junior members holding the original charter of Branch 24

Dober Dan!

Congratulations SWUA on eighty years of existence. Eighty years of camaraderie, loyalty and dedication! What started as a group of women seeking companionship with those of their own kind in a land new to them, has turned into an amazing testament of valuing one's heritage.

The picture above shows several of our junior members holding the original charter of Branch 24 containing the signatures of seventeen members and was dated the 17th of October, 1928. There is no doubt that these women held the vision, mission and purpose that we do today. Even though times have changed through the years, and they have, we still meet, share, talk, laugh, cook, work, plan and pray with each other.

Our branch takes great pride in our history and is excited about our future. Our membership has increased over the last several years to 125 adult members and 20 junior members. It is in them that we place our hopes for a promising future for the SWUA.

Our annual Christmas Party, May Luncheon and June Picnic are three of the main events in our year. Our monthly

meetings are pleasant gatherings of the young and the older members who share their experiences. We incorporate the "Slovenian Touch" to all of our gatherings in order to keep alive the heritage we all share.

Our heritage is the thread that binds us together and we must and will continue to nurture it not only out of respect for those who have passed but especially for those of us now and those to come.

As I write this, names come to mind – too numerous to mention, but those reading will know who they are. Members who have given of themselves selflessly over the years for the good of this great organization. Many sacrifices have been made and need to continue to be made in order for the SWUA to flourish and grow. This is our challenge, and although it may be different than years ago we still have the same vision, mission and purpose that our founders did. We must meet this challenge and by doing so we have much to gain.

Again, congratulations SWUA! Until next time, may your hearts be filled with peace and love. - Loretta Story

Branch 25 – Cleveland, Ohio

Founding Date: November 22, 1928

Branch 32 – Euclid, Ohio

Founding Date: August 25, 1929

Keeping The Tradition Alive!

Our congratulations to the Slovenian Women's Union of America for keeping the Slovenian-American tradition alive. Here's to another 80 years!

A Milestone of Slovenian – American History

Congratulations, fellow sisters on reaching this awesome milestone. To think that 80 years have gone by and yet we have a bright future to look forward to.

Branch 33 – Duluth, Minnesota

Founding Date: October 4, 1929

78 Years of Slovenian-American History... and It Shows!

Helen Krall organized Branch 33 in Duluth, MN on October 4, 1929. There were seventeen members, Helen Krall, Mary Oblak, Ann Podgorsek, Mary Jancar, Anna Vesel, Johanna Blatnik, Mary Blatnik, Agnes Skull, Johanna Skull, Agnes Jerina, Kathryn Kervina, Mary Rot, Mary Schubitz, Mary Spehar, Mary Chernich, Mary Jaksha and Anna Mrak. These women laid the groundwork for the branch and instilled in their children and grandchildren the love of the Slovenian Women's Union of America and Slovenian culture and heritage. Many of our members are descendents of these fine women. Unfortunately the records of the early years were destroyed.

On September 14, 1969 we hosted the Minnesota Regional Convention and celebrated our 40th Anniversary with a banquet and entertainment. Four hundred people including the other MN branches attended this event. In May 1979 we hosted the National Convention which was also the year of our 50th Anniversary. Our two surviving charter members, Mary Schubitz and Ann Podgorsek were in attendance.

Ann Podgorsek passed away Sept 14 1980. She had been a past president of Branch 33 and a *Zarja* reporter and had served as a National Auditor from 1958 to 1973. Ann was always the promoter and recruiter of the Branch. She left a legacy of members, her sister-in-law, Suntina Spehar and Mary Spehar White along with many other members of the Spehar family. Mary Schubitz passed away March 19,

1981. She served as Branch Secretary for over 25 years. We were so fascinated by her skill in making bobbin lace, which she learned as a child in Slovenia.

We send a delegate to every national convention and have been doing fund raising to help defer expenses. Often times it has been a dinner, raffle bake sale or the continuing sale of Rada cutlery. For many years Rene Doble took on this project and now it is in the hands of Mary White.



Front row: Mary Schubitz and Mary Rot
Second row: Ann Podgorsek and Mary Jasha
40th Anniversary of Branch 33

Our junior members are usually treated to a party for Christmas, such as bowling or they receive a gift certificate. Previously we have had swim parties with lunch after. Some of our junior members participated in the 200th birthday celebration of Bishop Frederick Baraga. During the



*Liz Smolnikar and Frank Bucar
50th Anniversary of Branch 33*

procession they were dressed in Slovenian Costumes and carried actual artifacts, Bible, snowshoes, etc., that are housed here in the Historical Society. We have had a number of Scholarship winners over the years. A partial list is John Schubitz, Gary Peterangelo, Jerry Kosanovich, Stacey Radosevich, Mary Spehar, Barbara Bucar, Thomas Rzatowski, Denise Bucar and Elizabeth Spehar.

In June of 2003 we again hosted the National Convention. We had really good Slovenian entertainment. Frank Bucar, Frank and Sharon's son, and Bob Lagergren entertained on the cruise with accordion and button box music. The Singing Slovenes performed at the banquet. We also had the first Camp Heritage for junior members. In a short time they learned to make the St Nicholas cookies and the Lectova Srca and made a dough crèche. They also learned three Slovenian songs, which they performed at the banquet. A new addition to the convention was a silent auction. Eager bidders won many beautiful items.

In 2004 we celebrated our 75th anniversary with a Polka Mass, a banquet and entertainment by the Singing Slovenes. We also honored some of our 50-year members.

Many memories stand out over the years. In May 1967 our members joined with other Minnesota branch members on a trip to Washington, D.C. for the National Convention. Every convention makes good memories no matter where they are held.

In 1985 a group of us drove to Hibbing to participate in the Heritage Festival. We went up the day before with a station wagon loaded with four women, Delores Heski, Emily Skull, Tina Zupancic and Bev Menart, with loaves of potica, pans of strudel, and raffle prizes. I remember putting the fringe on an afghan on the drive up. Frank and Sharon Bucar and the KSKJ Slovenian Singers (now known as the Singing Slovenes) also performed along with other music groups. Frank and Sharon are members of our branch and do so much promoting Slovenian culture and heritage.

We took many bus tours as a group. We made several trips to Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada for their Folklorama, where we always went to the Slovenian Pavilion They had many displays of Slovenia and Slovenian things and good food

and entertainment. Due to the diversity of our membership we also attended other Pavilions such as Poland, Ireland, Asian, Native Canadian and others.



*Ruth Boben and
Dolores Heski*

Our membership has remained basically the same for a number of years. We lose some and then gain with new members.

A lot has changed over the years. Direct billing, our beautiful Zarja has moved forward, our scholarship fund and foundation has grown, and the happenings at the museum with the scanning of documents etc. I think our founding mothers/ women would be very proud in the strides we have taken.

Now we look forward to our National Convention in June 2007 in the historic Illinois River valley at Starved Rock Lodge. There is a lot of Slovenian history there. It will also be the celebration of the 80th Anniversary of The Slovenian Women's Union of America. A gala celebration will be held. See you there. - Beverly Menart



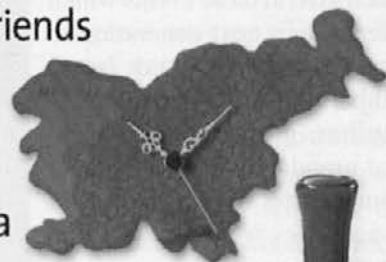
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Branch 35 – Aurora, Minnesota

Founding Date: October 21, 1929

Pošiljamo čestitke ljubim članicam S.Ž.Z.!
Congratulations, lovely members of SWUA!

The first meetings were held at the home of Mary E. Smolich, an active member for 62 years. Charter members were: President, Katarina Kastelic; Jennie Skubic, Secretary; Mary (Eli) Smolich, Treasurer; Mary Miklovich, Alojzia Shevlek, Katherine Kozel, Paula Plevell, Agnes Jager, Theresa Mihelich and Julia Skerbic as junior member.

Many worked hard to make a solid foundation. In the beginning, meetings, held on Sunday afternoons, were social and primarily meant for the women to leave home for a few hours. Later, meetings were held at the Slovenian Hall and presently at the Aurora Community Center.

During the early years, members would go door-to-door seeking donations of baked goods, (potica, krofi and flancati) and garden vegetables for the various salads for the State Convention. They cannot recall a person refusing to donate or help in any way. The State Conventions were anticipated by all members. After all, they would get to see Mitzi, Ivanka, Julka, Stefka and many of their other friends and relatives whom they were acquainted with from their Home Villages in the Old Country (Stari Kraj). In later years such as 1988 we hosted a beautiful convention with more than 300 attendees.

The women, with the help of their spouses, worked hard to put on "Veselica's" or fundraisers to help build their emergency fund and "Fun" money. Entire families participated in these events which fostered their next generation to become officers and loyal members. Today we still have a daughter, granddaughters and great granddaughters of several of our Charter Members. One of the activities we participated in was purchasing a brick that was given for the patio at the Aurora Community Center for Aurora's Centennial Celebration in honor of our SWUA. Ann Orazem was chosen to unveil the lovely "Pioneer" Memorial.

A very important member to the organization was our former Branch President, Anna Rose Smolich. She donated \$5,000 for Scholarships to the SWUA. Five lucky students would be the recipients of this award.

Not too long ago we hosted our 70th and 75th Anniversaries, all with a touch of Slovenia; from the music to the food everyone could feel their heritage surrounding them.

We participated in many great activities throughout the years. Some highlights are:

All-Slav days at Iron World in Chisholm, The Heritage Festival in Hibbing and the Fall Heritage Festival in Aurora. Here we displayed a Slovenian Christmas Tree, dressed in Narodna Nošas and we sang our Slovenian folk songs. We were also a part of the Dedication of the Slovenian Miner Memorial at Iron World in Chisholm and along with the all-Slav Club we put on a Grape Festival. Again with the all Slav Club we sponsored a concert in Aurora, featuring none other than the Lojze Slak Ansamble, from Slovenia.

Highlights each year include our Member of the Year celebration in May; in December our Advent Party followed by a lovely dinner. This year we will honor our 50-year members, Margaret Hodnik and Connie Menart. We also collect a sizeable amount of money at this meeting to present to our local nursing facility for the residents. Our August meeting is usually a catered luncheon and we are busy making plans for the State Convention.

Now we are approaching the 80th anniversary of this beautiful organization. Looking down the road, at least in our area,, because of the economy and lack of employment, our young have to leave to seek employment, leaving only elderly people to participate. I have tried to encourage the young who are left here to join but am not successful. We could do so many things if we have the help of

the young. I want this branch to be active, to be "alive". I will do anything if they are willing to participate. I'd love to take them all to Joliet to see the Museum. Here they would see how important their heritage is. Our Museum is getting better and better and so many are giving of their time to help our director make this a special place.

I'd like to see the youth have the opportunity to connect with Slovenians all over the world and be able to research Slovenian libraries and archives all over the world. I believe in the experience each Slovenian youngster and young adults would gain by a visit to Slovenia. Let's bring Slovenia to America and work to keep this organization and our heritage active and alive. - Anita Vovk

Branch officers left to right, Alice Wilsen, Dorothy Jamnick, Anita Vovk and Ann Orazem



Branch 35 members at our Member of the Year party for Betty Carlson, front row center.

Branch 38 – Chisholm, Minnesota

Founding Date: January 12, 1930

Hail to 80 Years!

Mary Smoltz Lenich and Anna Trdan organized our branch on January 12, 1930. Mrs. Lenich served as president and Mrs. Trdan as secretary for many years. There were 19 women present at that first organization meeting. The membership grew as the years went on, and by 1937 Branch 38 had 280 members. We honored the only living charter member, Mary Pahula at the state convention here in Chisholm in 1992.



(front row) Mary Pahula (back row) Jean Korsman, Veda Ponikvar, Gert Zakrajsek and Victoria (Torrie) Bobence, 1992 SWUA National Convention honoring MaryPahula as our only living charter member

In 1937, a group of 20 young members formed a marching unit, lead by Mrs. Mary Spenko. The local drum corps drill master, Royal Huber, agreed to be their drillmaster. He produced a polished group of cadets who won first place in the drill team competition, which was held in Chisholm during the National SWUA Convention in 1939. Also at that convention, the members planted a Balsam and Elm tree in Chisholm's Memorial Park. Mrs. Frank Fierst, of Chisholm, the oldest member attending the convention, and Frances Mollis, the youngest from Niles, Ohio, were honored as godmothers of the tree planting. Marie Prisland, National SWUA President, was in charge of the ceremony.

Chisholm also hosted a National Convention in 1983. At that time, the Slovenian Miners and Laborers Memorial was unveiled at Iron World. The sculpture was

commissioned by the SWUA and completed by Lillian Brulc of Joliet, IL. Father David Stalzer delivered the dedicating address.

The principle speaker at the convention banquet was Joan Mondale, wife of Walter Mondale, the then Vice-President of the United States.



Jennie Samsa, Anna Mahne and Mildred Bashel modeling their creations for our hat parade, 1988

Our branch thrived for many years with the leadership of ladies like Jennie Samsa and Frances Zalec. In May of 1990, we celebrated our 60th anniversary with a banquet at the Slovenian Home. Jennie and her crew, of course, catered the meal. Participants in that program were Father Frank Perkovich, Veda Ponikvar, Victoria Bobence, then National President, and Emily Skul, State President.

The ladies (and some men) of Chisholm and surrounding areas always looked forward to our Sunday afternoon card parties and luncheons. Our chicken soup and noodle sales became a yearly tradition on Election Day. Our members of the year were usually honored with a banquet and party that was open to the public.



Long time members: (front row) Jennie Samsa and Frances Setina (back row) Frances Zalec, Mildred Bashel, Mary Sinko and Teresa Gerzin at Frances Setina's 100th birthday celebration, 1988

We celebrated our 75th anniversary in 2005, and it was a great success. The polka mass was well attended and we served 187 people at the banquet which followed. We had hoped that by making our organization visible in the community, we would get more young people interested in joining us, but that did not help to increase our membership. It helps to know that we are not unique, as every organization in our area is having a problem

recruiting and keeping new members.

We are still continuing to be active, having our monthly meetings and holiday get-togethers, but unfortunately without an infusion of younger, new members we will no longer be active. - Charlotte Laurich

Branch 39 – Biwabik, Minnesota

Founding Date: February 1930

80 Years of Living Our Legacy

Branch 39 was organized in February of 1930. It was November of 1929 that Johanna Steblay Zallar, Anna Spehar and the Slovenian women of McKinley, Minnesota chartered Branch 36 of the SWUA. Upon hearing of their endeavor, Johanna Ribich Sever campaigned door to door to inspire the Slovenian women of Biwabik to join her in forming a branch of their own. Three months later, with 20 women, the Slovenska Ženska Zveza 39 was off and running.

These immigrant women had difficulties to endure when they arrived here. The men they married usually worked in the mines and many women lost their husbands in mine accidents or of the flu epidemic of 1918, leaving them widowed to raise young children alone. Winters were long and cold and there was no assistance from any source except from their fellow immigrants and neighbors. They organized to help each other in their need with funeral expenses and sharing food to sustain life. Social events and gatherings kept the women united and supportive of each other. Their friendships through this organization endured.

In 1932, several McKinley women joined with Branch 39 and in 1955, McKinley Branch 36 officially joined Biwabik. This combined branch sponsored many activities, social as well as fund raising for scholarships and church support. Johanna Steblay Zallar served as President of Branch 39 for more than twenty years.

Our unique branch has consolidated with four surrounding communities over the past several years. The loss of employment, relocation of members and also an aging population contributed to several branches becoming defunct. Our members were constant and supportive with ideas to welcome members of these branches to unite with us. Our 83 members now include Branch 31 of Gilbert and Branch 19 of Eveleth and Virginia. These members have contributed to the success and stability of our present branch. The longevity of service of the officers of these communities is truly remarkable.

There are several officers that we want to recognize for their loyalty to SWUA. From the original Branch 39 in Biwabik: Fran Sherek Anzelc - Charter President, 1930-32 and Branch President 1965-86, Secretary/Treasurer, 1949-65. Fran was an effective organizer of social events and projects including SWUA bowling competitions, strudel making lessons and fund raising. Her sense of humor was a delight at the monthly meetings. And Angeline Anzelc Karish - Recording Secretary: 1949-72, Minnesota Regional President.

From the former Branch Branch 31, Gilbert: Antoinette Lucich - Charter President, 1932-78 and Phyllis Lopp Kukar - Secretary/Treasurer (11 years). Phyllis was a niece to Antoinette (deceased) and still an active member of 39, as are her daughters, Margaret, Paula, and DeeDee. I must add that the 2005 Rose Marie Princ Scholarship was awarded to Phyllis' granddaughter, Lindsey Stratton, daughter of Margaret of Lodi, Wisconsin. This family is truly LIVING THE LEGACY.

Lindsey Stratton



Jean Korsman

From the current Biwabik, Branch 39: Jean Korsman - currently Minnesota Regional Vice-President (2003), Branch President 1990-95 and 1999-05, Minnesota Regional President 1991-95, SWUA National President 1995-99 and Zarja Food Editor 2004-05. Jean also collaborated with Rosemary Sertich

Ribich to edit the re-print of the 80th Anniversary Edition of *WOMAN'S GLORY - the Kitchen*.

From the former Branch 19, Eveleth: Mary Lenich our celebrity. Certainly we cannot forget the excitement when President Kennedy's sister, Mrs. Shriver sampled Slovenian potica while campaigning in Minnesota. She suggested it would be a good idea to have it served in the White House. Mrs. Mary Lenich, Eveleth, MN fulfilled Mrs. Shriver's wish. She baked, decorated and sent the potica to the White House for President Kennedy's inauguration. A picture of her potica is in the 1963, revised and enlarged *WOMAN'S GLORY* along with her recipe.

United (Zveza) in our beloved SWUA, is it a wonder we have sustained for 76 years, even though much has changed in our "modern" world of today?

Our focus as a branch is in constant change as we try to adapt to today's needs. Our membership is aging and we have a need of new young members with fresh ideas. We now have an emphasis on archival history that is a combined effort of our members under the direction of Secretary Vida Lanari and a Mother/Member of the Year embellishment

scrap booking project beautifully done by member, Phyllis Lamkin. We have sent documents to the Home Office in Joliet. We continue to have our gatherings and activities celebrating our Slovenian Heritage. Three major events of our branch include our Mother/Member of the Year dinner, our After Christmas dinner party and a fall organizing pot luck picnic. At present we are organizing a monthly event calendar to inspire attendance at our meetings. On our schedule for this year are presentations by our sister members, Vida Lanari, Maria Ferkul and Martina Michals who have recently returned from a trip to Slovenia. We are also looking forward to an egg decorating presentation by Carol Sherek.

In September 2007, our branch will host the Minnesota Regional Convention. This is an opportunity to invite guests and recruit new members. Time is stretched thin for most everyone and like many other organizations, membership tends to dwindle. In that case, we, too, may have to think about consolidation with other neighboring branches. We have sustained membership for 76 years in spite of difficult times and with prayers for guidance and support of our members we hope to continue "LIVING OUR LEGACY".

Special thanks go to our new Zarja team for their continued effort in making the *Zarja* a "first class" publication. - Rosemary (Sertich) Ribich

Branch 40 - Lorain, Ohio

Founding Date: April 21, 1930

Reaching 80 Years of Servicing Slovenian Communities!

Congratulations to the SWUA upon reaching 80 years of service to Slovenian communities throughout the United States. We owe a debt of gratitude to our pioneer Slovenian women who with tenacity and hard work founded the original branches, which after all these years, are still providing a link to our roots.

Plus a big vote of thanks to our current board and editors of *Zarja* who continue to work for the preservation and growth of this wonderful organization. Our best wishes to you from Branch 40 and may your efforts be blessed with success. Thank you! Happy Holidays and Love to all our members. - Stephanie Polutnik

Branch 42 - Maple Heights, Ohio

Founding Date: May 31, 1930

We congratulate you on this auspicious occasion!

SWUA has reached its 80th year of existence and the anniversary of its founding by Marie Prisland. In reading Branch 42's account of the history of SWUA written by Robert Kastelic some 17 years ago I was deeply moved by his observation of the organization's humble beginnings. He writes "*Marie Prisland, having recently emigrated from Slovenia, recognized the need for an organization of Slovenian women to continue the traditions and values learned in her homeland and to contribute to the rich panoply of American culture waiting to be developed in an industrial society such as the United States. Her wisdom steered the organization into a national movement of sisterhood dedicated to the family and the traditions of the Slovene nation under the auspices of Mary, the Mother of God. The dignity of motherhood and the role of the wife as a full partner in the service of mankind were to be emphasized. The feminism of this perceptive woman exists in stark contrast to the harsh tenets of feminism embodied in the present day goal of crass fulfillment. Her philosophy was to continue the love of family and religious faith as articles of a self-evident truth, a truth revealed and taught by the first missionaries. The emphasis must be on the family and its attendant ally, religious faith.*"

In my regular branch article activities I have often spoken of our early pioneer members and their families. Our present

membership for the most part are off-shoots of these same pioneers and we are all desperately trying to keep our branch going. Today's society is not conducive to achieve this as we continue to lose members via "the grim reaper". When the Maple Heights Slovenian National Home was sold we lost our Zveza stronghold and the last vestige of what was once was no more. The era of the family with all the married children living in close proximity no longer exists. We have become a mobile society and all fraternal are being affected by it.

As we face the uncertain future under the capable guidance of our loyal President, Marge Yemec Church, Branch 42 will continue to persevere as Mrs. Prisland and our charter members would have wanted us to. How can you help? Start by attending our meetings and lending your support with your presence. Here is an opportunity to exemplify the embodiment of what Bob Kastelic described as the Slovene girl: her Slavic heart, tender and sometimes melancholy but usually joyful and merry and often seen in the twinkle of her sparkling eyes.

To the National Board, the *Zarja* Staff and all branch members of SWUA we congratulate you on this auspicious occasion. May the spirit of Mrs. Prisland and all the founding sisters prevail for years to come. - Lil Sadowski

Branch 43 – Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Founding Date: June 4, 1930

Preserving Slovenian Culture for 78 years!



Mrs. Gertrude DeLopst, first President of Branch 43.

Branch 43 began in Bay View, WI, a suburb of Milwaukee. A group of Slovenian ladies gathered in each other's homes to knit, crochet, sew and embroider. These gatherings became so popular that they established a neighborhood social sewing club and met monthly at Mrs. Mary Bentz's home.

In 1930, Mrs. Barbara Kramer, of San Francisco, CA, attended the SWUA National Convention in Milwaukee, during which time she visited Mary Bentz. To her surprise, she found a group of very ambitious ladies enjoying their club day. Being impressed with their enthusiasm, she suggested they organize a SWUA branch. The ladies were all in favor and were proud to join such a prestigious organization. On June 4, 1930, Mrs. Kramer established Branch 43 with 13 members. Mrs. Gertrude DeLopst was the first elected president. It was said that Mrs. DeLopst measured her words and was always keenly respectful of everyone's wishes.



Early picture showing many original members.

The new branch prospered and one year later had a membership of 56 Slovenian and Croatian ladies from the Bay View area. The group needed a larger meeting place, and so began a sojourn from private home to back

rooms of various taverns and halls to church meeting rooms, culminating today in our present location, The Constitution Room of the West Allis Public Library, 7421 West National Avenue, West Allis, WI. Our regular meeting day and time is the 4th Wednesday of the month, at noon; however, in an effort to accommodate members who might not be able to attend at this time, we also have our apres Christmas party on a Saturday in January, our Sunday Brunch meeting in February, Member of the Year luncheon on a Saturday in May and our evening meeting in June. It is always a pleasure to see our younger members who are normally in

school and our many members who are usually at work. Various branch activities through the years have included style shows, card parties, musical entertainment, field trips and guest speakers.

Our meetings start with a prayer. We sing Happy Birthday in English and Slovenian and are currently endeavoring to teach everyone how to say "The Lord's Prayer" in Slovenian. The birthday people provide the lunch, with an assist from other generous members. We are fortunate to have many good bakers in our branch.

We value all our members, from our elders, with their treasure trove of knowledge and experience, to our junior members who are our future. Branch 43 is a member of the U.S.P.E.H. Organization (United Slovenes to Protect Our Ethnic Heritage), an umbrella organization of eight Slovenian entities. Some of our members are in the Uspeh Chorus singing group, some belong to the Slovenian Arts



September, 2006 meeting.

Council and some participate in the annual ethnic Folk Fair. All this makes for a rich, highly valuable diversity that profits our branch and helps keep Marie Prisland's

stated goal, "To encourage the growth of all non-members and members to the preservation of our Slovenian culture". - Yvonne Khaldy



Oldest member, Victoria Sporis, 105 years.



Newest member, Nathan James Relien, born 10/23/2006. He is the great great grandson of Gertrude DeLopst, first branch president.

Branch 47 – Garfield Heights, Ohio

Founding Date: June 17, 1931

Returning to Our Roots for Another 80 Years!

Our Branch was founded at a time when our fellow sisters were coming over from Slovenia. They had to learn English to become Americans. That was one of the principles that our founder Marie Prisland wanted for our Branches.

Our Branch is now trying to return to our roots in order to promote our heritage to future generations. We are now very proud to call ourselves Slovenians and Americans. Our branch is also very proud to have our current National

President, Kathleen Ferrante, as a member. Along with her, she has her mother as our Branch President, Olga Dorchak. Her aunt is Recording Secretary-Treasurer, Elsie Spellacy. She also has myself as a cousin and the Branch Reporter, Katherine Wallace. It is a pleasure to be able to say from the bottom of our hearts congratulations on observing the 80th Anniversary of a great organization as the Slovenian Women's Union of America. - *Katherine Wallace*

Branch 50 – Euclid, Ohio

Founding Date: September 15, 1931

Living our Heritage and Creating a Legacy for the Future!

As the momentous occasion of SWUA's 80th anniversary quickly approaches, we have a rare opportunity to reflect on the success of our own Branch 50 here in Cleveland, its colorful past and the promise of a bright future. Our success has both depended on and has influenced the broader Slovenian culture that thrives in northeast Ohio. We naturally take great pride in, and feel very blessed to have in our midst, the many cultural, artistic, and religious organizations in the Cleveland area that share as their focus the preservation of the Slovenian culture.

I thought this would be the perfect opportunity to catalog some of those organizations and to say a word about the influence that each has had on the others, as well as the

influence all have had on our younger generations. As we move forward in the "e-world" of instant communications that shrinks many thousands of miles to only a few keystrokes, we observe that this latter group, our offspring, are well positioned, using electronic methods so familiar to them, to carry on the business of communicating the culture of our ancestors. Yes, even this Grandmother makes use of these tools to stay relevant!

As I list many of the prominent organizations in northeast Ohio that come to mind, I will undoubtedly but quite unintentionally leave some out, and I apologize in advance if any particular association is omitted. Following are a few of the groups that we are fortunate to have in Cleveland:



SWUA National Convention 1987, Joliet, Illinois



Circle II Youth Chorus performs at Slovenian Heritage Festival, 2006

- Vibrant Catholic parishes such as Saint Vitus, Saint Mary of the Assumption, Saint Lawrence and Saint Christine Church, each of which continues to celebrate many aspects of our common religious heritage with their own choirs, Slovenian language Mass, pilgrimages and holyday and patronal feast liturgies. Plus Slovenian language schools at Saint Mary's School (Collinwood) and Saint Vitus (including adult learner classes) and genealogical societies.
- Musical and dance troupes that specialize in traditional music like Glasbena Matica, Zarja (this year celebrating 90 years of song), Jadran, Korotan, Kres folk dancers, the "Fantje na Vasi", SNPJ's youth "Circle 2" and the Slovenian Art Guild. In addition, we have a robust mix of polka bands playing what has become known as the "Cleveland style" polka, so much a part of our Slovenian-American culture that we have the National Cleveland-style Polka Hall of Fame in Euclid, which annually hosts a gala awards ceremony that has become a kind of "ethnic Oscar" awards show



Pictured is Phil Hrvatin, Branch 50 member who met Slovenian diplomats in the Oval Office.

attracting enthusiasts from the four corners of the world!

- Fraternal lodge associations and mutual benefit societies such as our own SWUA, and local branches of AMLA, SNPJ, KSKJ, each with their own regular organs (some of which have been publishing for nearly a century) and, of course, a weekly newspaper, the Ameriška Domovina.

- The network of Slovenian homes including Fairport Harbor, St. Clair, East 80th Street, Collinwood, Westpark, Holmes Avenue, and Recher Avenue in my own town of Euclid.



The kitchen volunteers at the Slovenian Heritage Festival, 2006

- Broadcast associations like the Slovenian Radio Club and our own WELW radio station that now is available throughout the globe on the Internet.
- Specialized "clubs" including the Pensioners Clubs at Holmes Hall and St. Clair, the Progressive Slovene Women of America, the Slovenian Workmen's Club, and the American Slovene Club.

As we at the Slovenian Women's Union of America move into this 21st century and begin our next 80 years we can pause to reflect on the amazing growth of all these organizations and express the hope that, especially because of the incredible technology available at our fingertips, all our groups will all continue to grow and flourish. Already, it is clear that each of our own branches has adapted to the "e-world" and learned to take advantage of the electronic systems that make these communications faster and more easily distributed with the press of a computer key! The most promising aspect of all is watching our offspring adapt the technology, which is so familiar to our youth, to the same great end of preserving this important culture of our ancestors. - Anne Tomsick

Branch 54 – Warren, Ohio

Founding Date: August 22, 1932

Supporting Our Accomplishments of 80 Years!

Congratulations to all the members of the Slovenian Women's Union of America for belonging and supporting

our organization. We have many accomplishments to be proud of and many to look forward to.

Branch 55 – Girard, Ohio

Founding Date: June 8, 1933

Keeping The Slovenian Spirit Alive!

Just seven short years after the foundation of the Slovenian Women's Union of America in 1926, several women gathered at the home of Matilda Cigolle in Girard, Ohio to establish Branch 55 of the Slovenian Women's Union of America. The founders of Branch 55 present at this first meeting held on June 8, 1933 included Katherine Anzicek, Mary Cekuta, Sophie Cekuta, Matilda Cigolle, Mary Gabrovsek, Clara Ganter, Frances Juvancic, Mary Cekuta Kristin, Theresa Lozier and Amalia Robsel. All of these women were committed to preserving and celebrating their Slovenian heritage within this small hometown community.

Over the course of several decades, Branch 55 grew in size and strength as women from around the area chose to become members of the organization. In addition to the meetings held each month and various small-scale activities like card parties and bake sales throughout the year, the members of Branch 55 elected to hold annual celebrations including a Christmas banquet in December and a Mother of the Year banquet in early spring, honoring one of the many remarkable women of this organization. These celebrations were not only opportunities to socialize and share special moments in each other's lives but also special opportunities to share in the collective Slovenian spirit.

In recent years, Branch 55 membership has notably declined, but this small organization of women tries to remain active in the community. Members work hard to keep the Slovenian culture alive in whatever way possible. Along with monthly meetings, Branch 55 members participate in fundraising activities like the signature "Pie in July" campaign lead by Maria Selak and Anka Krakora, contribute to the SWU Scholarship Fund, and attend the annual Christmas party, now celebrated with the American Mutual Life Association (AMLA) Lodge 42 in Girard, Ohio. The treasured Slovenian Spirit is particularly evident during this holiday festivity as members from both organizations participate in the singing of carols, the enjoyment of button box performances, and sharing of a delicious dinner and traditional Slovenian desserts. It is a wonderful time to celebrate a small but vibrant local Slovenian culture. As always, any ideas for future Branch activities are welcome!

As celebrations for the 80th anniversary of the foundation of the Slovenian Women's Union of America draw near, the members of Branch 55 would like to extend our congratulations to this wonderful organization. Prirčne Čestitke za 80 Jubilej Slovenske Ženske Zveze! Čestitke od 55 Girard, Ohio! - Monica Selak



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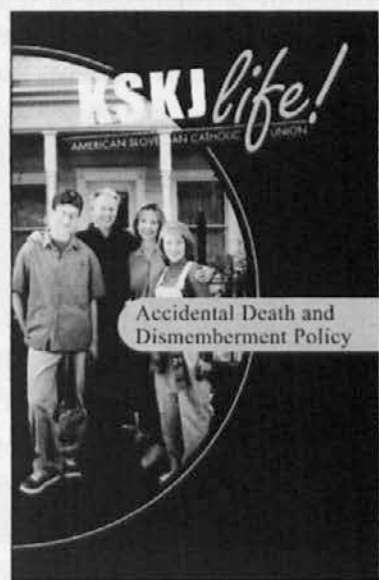
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Branch 89 – Oglesby, Illinois

Founding Date: May 9, 1938

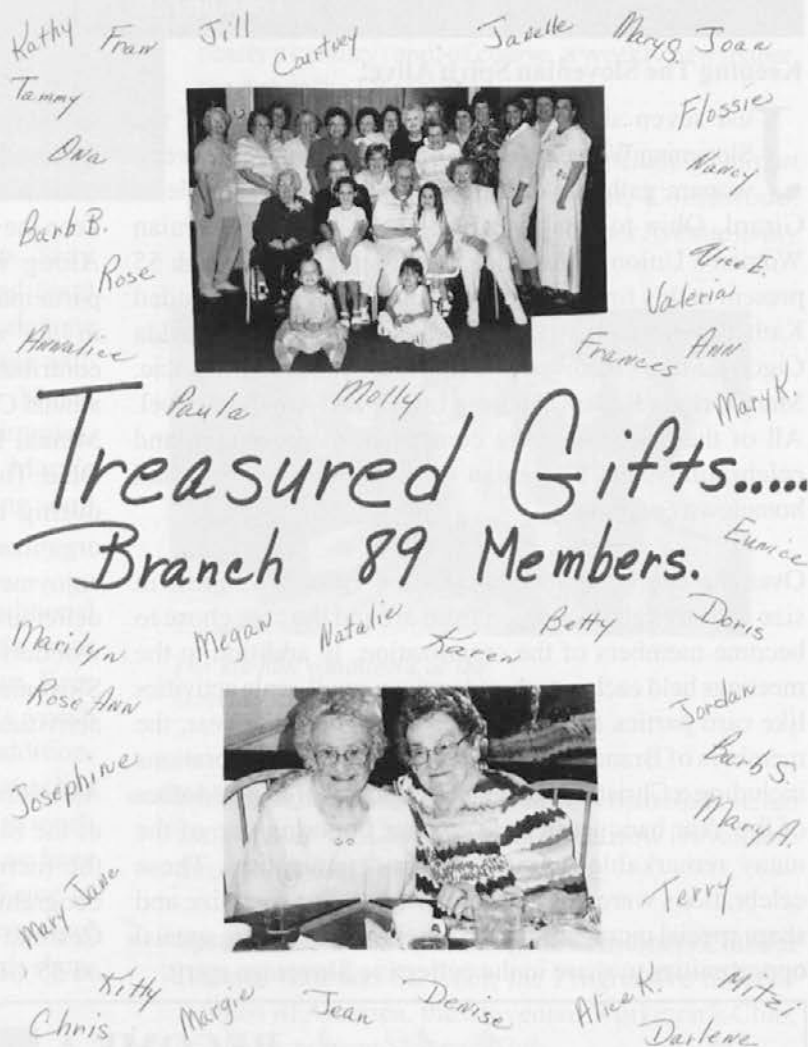
Planting Seeds and Having Fun with the Junior Members is the Plan for Branch 89!

A part of our legacy for the future defies the old cliché, “don’t look back”. The SWUA was formed on a strong foundation by our immigrant mothers and grandmothers looking back to their “Old Country” and bringing with them their faith, customs, culture, knowledge and strength to survive in a country they knew very little about. And so the Union of Slovenian Women would meet every month, sometimes every week, to speak their language and share stories of the changes taking place in their lives. The meetings were very important to them.

As descendants of this strong generation of Slovenians we are faced with a fast paced, ever changing world. How are we to keep our heritage alive? At Branch 89 we are going to reach out to our Junior Members; they are the key to our success.

Looking back on my childhood, my mother was very busy with our lives and it was my grandparents who planted some of the seeds of my heritage. My mother kept up the traditions that are a very important part of my life, but it was my grandparents that I watched weave baskets out of willow branches from the woods and plant, harvest, and preserve their huge garden. It was my grandmother I watched and studied baking potica and strudel in the kitchen that always smelled so good.

Branch 89 is very proud of our six junior members. We have reserved two Sundays in March, one for potica making and one to make strudel. We will give them a hands-on experience they will never forget. From grinding the nuts and peeling the apples to kneading, rolling, and stretching the dough and finally tasting the fruits of their hard work they will do it all. But the most important part of all will be spending time with them, planting seeds and having fun!



Branch 89 feels that learning the Slovenian language is a very important part of SWUA success. We are introducing simple phrases and words at each meeting and practicing them to become fluent. We have a tidbit of information about Slovenia at every meeting and this sparks discussion we all learn from. Being Slovenian is where our stories begin and cultivating true interest in our young members is our goal. We are excited to be co-hosting the 2007 National Convention and look forward to meeting members from other places and learning from them. - Branch 89

Branch 93 – New York City, New York

Founding Date: November 26, 1938

Descendants of Immigrants and Natives Building a Foundation in NYC!

On a cold Saturday winter afternoon almost four years ago my husband and I were rushing through deserted Washington Square Park in New York City's Greenwich Village. We were late for our first SWUA Branch 93 meeting to be held at the Cafe in the Washington Square Hotel. Only a few weeks earlier I had seen the SWUA brochure during a visit to the Slovene Consulate on 3rd Avenue and decided to take it home, only to displace it in piles of junk mail. As luck would have it, two weeks later I received the same brochure in a promotional mailing from the Consulate and this time decided to fill it out and send it in along with the dues. And now here I was rushing off to the first meeting really not knowing what to expect. Would these be elderly ladies sharing homemade strudels and gossiping over needlework like my grandmothers? Would they speak Slovenian? Am I crazy for doing this on a whim when I was never really interested in nationalism or customs and ways of old simply because I happen to be born into a particular ethnicity or in a particular country outside of the US?

Months later I would find out that this was in fact a big reorganization meeting for our branch and many people I met that day were in much the same situation as I. In fact, it was while waiting in the lobby of the hotel that we met another young professional couple, Vesna and Brandon, who also decided to come for the first time and find out about the organization. Moments later we met Lynn, who as always came with wealth of information and ideas and definitely looked like the one in charge. We all ordered tea and cookies and as we started to chat more people streamed in until we had to keep stringing little cafe tables together and leaning over to hear what people on the far end were saying. Eventually I met Tea, Adrienne, Andrea, Marta and a few more whose names escape me at the moment, persons with whom I would have many interactions over the next months and years.

We were chatting, laughing, getting to know each other and finding out about our varied backgrounds and diverse connections to Slovenia. The theme of the meeting was Slovenia's Kulturni Dan (Culture Day), a national holiday celebrated on the 8th of February which is also France Prešeren's birthday. Throughout the discussion we realized that number-wise we were roughly equally divided between descendants of Slovenian immigrants and native born Slovenians who had recently moved to the United States. This was also reflected in our views and understanding of

Slovenia and Slovenian language, as well as in what we perceived as significant parts of its history, culture, customs, in one word, our own Slovenian heritage.

Inevitably, life paths, experiences and memories of the old country between descendants and native ones are often very different and run parallel but that also does not mean that they would or must never cross. On the contrary, if anything we as a branch prove is that in order to truly live up to our organization's mission statement – *to reach individuals by uniting them through their common interest in Slovenian culture and traditions* – these paths must indeed cross and often do. It is not that one set is more valid than the other but rather that we can all expand our horizons by coming in touch with someone whose views and experiences are different from our own. For descendants it is important to remember that being Slovenian is not only about baking potica or dancing a polka in a national dress. Preserving memories and traditions is as important as keeping in mind that Slovenia is a living, breathing and ever changing entity. On the other hand, for new generations it is also important to understand that where we come from helps us understand where we are going and that our cultural or ethnic backgrounds should not limit us.

In many respects Branch 93 has succeeded in living out our mission to unite members *through common interests* relating to Slovenian culture. Over the last few years our meetings have included celebrating Slovenian and Slovenian-American heritage, through traditional events like Easter egg dying, potica and apple strudel baking demonstrations as much as reaching out to modern Slovenia, such as attending a concert given by famed Slovenian pianists Gorišek and Lazar, or the first ever New



Members of Branch 93

Egg Dying Party



York Slovenian Fashion Show by young Slovenian fashion designer Maja Ferme. We also learned how to tap into a larger Slovenian and Slovenian-American community in the Northeast by organizing events with help from the Slovenian Consulate. For example, a wine tasting event for which the Consulate generously provided its space and put us in touch with Mr. Emil Gaspari, whose company TriWines Inc. is an importer of Slovenian wines. We had more than 40 guests at that event including Slovenians and Slovenian-Americans and their friends, and for some this was the first taste of things Slovenian. In addition, a number of our members have written a variety of interesting stories for Zarja, sharing our experiences and tying our branch back to the entire organization.

Perhaps our most ambitious project was participation in the filming and eventual North American premiere screening of documentary *100% Slovenian* (*Američanke*). Branch 93 members and guests had the opportunity to hear two lectures by Dr. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik preceding the screening. She gave a wonderful presentation outlining common themes in her extensive body of research, while also offering insightful analysis and humorous anecdotes on the filming of the documentary,

including her fortuitous meeting with the director Hannah Slak, much of which she would later present in a series of articles for Zarja. Each of the two lectures (one held on a weeknight and the other on a Saturday afternoon in an attempt to allow attendance of as many people as possible) was attended by approximately 30 guests that ranged from members who were featured in the study and/or documentary, their friends and family, to those who heard about the event and attended it out of curiosity.

We were very happy that

Bonnie Pohar Prokup, SWUA National Secretary (visiting from Peru, Illinois) and Joe Valenčič from Cleveland, OH, attended and spoke during the introductory remarks. The event was not only successful but also made us all reflect on our own perceptions of what it means to be Slovenian or of Slovenian descent abroad.

But not all events need be this elaborate. One other perfect example was a recent get together for the screening of

Slovenian film *Rezervni deli* (*Spare Parts*), a daring, powerful and provocative film by Slovenian writer-director Damjan Kozole. Slovenian films can be found in local libraries or online bookstores and offer the chance to hear the Slovenian language (with English subtitles). Contemporary story lines put us into the present and not only offers a glimpse of life as it today in Slovenia but a chance to reflect on our own views and

the cultural and ethnic heritage we have in common. And of course, this is a great excuse for a fun filled afternoon gathering with friends over delicious food and great wine. What could be more Slovenian! For more about our past and future events please visit us at www.swuanyc.org. - Sonja Knevezic-Kong



Lecture series at Branch 93

Branch 99 – Lemont, Illinois

Founding Date: November 29, 2003

Zveza is 80- Branch 99 is 3!

Far apart in years - and yet, so close!

When the first Branch 99 was formed in Elmhurst, Illinois in 1940 it was in celebration of Marie Prisland's June

20th birthday. Though not large in number, they remained loyal and active for many years. Time passes... then, in November, 2003 a new group of Slovenian ladies met in



V-P Jean Gale shows the "SWUA badge" she inherited from her grandmother; a member of the original Br. 99

Lemont, Illinois with the express purpose of forming a new branch and it seemed so appropriate that we re-establish the number 99 seeing as we are neighbors to Elmhurst and already had a prospective member or two living there. One of them is Jean Gale, a lady who stepped right up to say her grandmother had been a member of the original Elmhurst group. Jean is now is our Vice-president. Other officers are Secretary Julie Partyka, a young lady who is particularly interested in activating our junior members and Tom Zakosek, Treasurer, who is proving he can hold his own with a whole female staff. Auditors are

Fran Schultz and Mihela Simrayh. We selected Mihela in 2005 and Fran in 2006 to be our honored Mothers of the Year of Branch 99!

Some of our activities!

Members in the Lemont-Chicago-Elmhurst area are interested in the preservation of our heritage and are excited that we are sponsoring baking classes that take place at the Slovenian Cultural Center where we meet.

So far we have had seven successful "culinary classes" for apple and cheese *strudel*, *krofi* (donuts), *flancati* (crispy pastry), Easter *menihi* (Little Monks), *krofki* (like *krofi*) and the latest was for *potica*, the most famous Slovenian nut bread. The students all claim to be learning a lot and the teachers are wonderful experts. Our community is proud that we are serving the Slovenians who want to learn another aspect of our heritage, so we hope to



continue in the coming year with more of culinary adventures!

One of the most beautiful events we plan with our junior members taking part is the annual Mother's Day celebration coinciding with the feast of Marija Pomagaj in May. It reflects on our religious traditions that began in the early 19th



Culinary class students, (left) Tom Zakosek and Denis Cohil, and (top) Patricia and Diane Weber

century at Brezje in Slovenia when the holy painting of the Blessed Mother was placed there. We revere the painting we have in our

church. Another reference to our traditions comes in December - it's Cookie Sale time when St. Nicholas (Sveti Miklavž) comes to visit the good children of the world.



Fran and Mihela

There's fun time for members and friends, too. In the fall we come together for our annual Bunco game party and social. Our member, Fran Schultz, and her daughters have undertaken this event to memorialize their mother/grandmother, Frances Zibert, one of the hardest workers of Branch 2, and, they are making it a tradition for Branch 99.

We all feel a great connection to our Illinois branches and now, with a new start at Branch 99, hope to help keep SWUA history alive. – Corinne Leskovar

Branch 100 – Fontana, California

Founding Date: March 7, 1957

Congratulations SWUA on 80 years of friendship and faith.

Branch 100 of Fontana and all of Southern California, sends best wishes to our sisters, brothers, and especially our junior members all over the country.

The SWUA has so much to offer to these youngsters with the scholarships, cultural and heritage information, books, films, and craft ideas that are available to them. Even the recipes are valuable to continue with the Slovenian traditions. In fact, food might be the easiest place to start, if you are attempting to gain some interest from your children and grandchildren.

My earliest recollections of the Slovenian Women's Union of America are the picnics that I attended in Lemont when I was a child in the 1940's. I loved that place and it was wonderful to see my mother meet with her old friends from St. Stephen's Church...friends that she had made when she first arrived in Chicago from her home in Slovenia. As I think back, I realize that those women who were the organizers of Ženska Zveza were very young at the time, only in their 20's and 30's. What dedication it must have taken for them, at that age, to establish such a wonderful society while still taking care of their young families! We should all be thankful to them for this. Today, we have another group of young women who are delving into the Slovenian culture, genealogy and traditions. We must work to help them and inspire our youngsters to take an interest if this valuable legacy is to grow.

After many years of active membership through the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's with May Masses, dinners, baking sessions and meetings, Branch 100 started to grow older. Families moved away from Fontana and it became more difficult to meet regularly. Membership is growing, however, and we continue to have a nice attendance at our luncheons and special outings, even though they are held less often. We miss the staunch



Mary Lou Jensen, VP and Dorothy Jerneycic, Member of Year 2006

members of the past who were so dedicated, but we welcome the newer members. We are very proud of our college students and junior members who are learning about their heritage through special projects and travel. The SWUA is helping them to achieve this. We are grateful for the opportunity and the advantages that this society has to offer. May the 80th Anniversary of the Slovenian Women's Union of America and the National Convention be a memorable time for all! - Jean Koci

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Branch 102 Willard, Wisconsin

Founding Date: May 11, 1941

Happy 80 Years SZZ!



Marie Prisland (L)
Johanna Artac (R)

Johanna Artac on May 11, 1941 with thirty-five members in Class A and one junior member organized Slovenska Ženska Zveza Branch 102. The first officers were: President-Mary Zupancic, Vice-President-Mary Zagar, Secretary-Mary (John) Lesar, Treasurer-Gertrude Godec and Auditors-Johanna Artac, Mary Laken and Mary Selesnik.

Meetings were held at members' homes and then later in the West Side Hall basement. After the new church was built in 1967, meetings have been held in the Parish Center. Through the years membership decreased due to deaths or members moving away to seek employment in distant cities. In 1960, membership dropped to 7 adults and 3 junior members. After the beginning of annual State Conventions, interest was again revived in the Slovenian heritage. Present membership is 49 adult and 2 junior members.

In spite of the small membership, in 1962, Branch 102 hosted its first State Convention on September 16th. Two large buses brought delegates and members from Wisconsin. Slovenian hymns were sung and the church bells chimed from the old Church tower as they did in far away Slovenia, much to the delight of the visitors.

Branch 102 has since hosted 8 conventions and will host again in September 2007. In 1983, Branch 102 sent its first delegate to a National Convention. Mary Staut attended this convention in Chisholm, MN and had represented our Branch at every convention until failing health prevented her from doing so.

Activities and fundraisers of Branch 102 are a Valentine's party, Palm Sunday bake sale, Mother/Member of the Year, plant sale in May, hunter's bake sale in November and a Christmas party in December. Many donations have been made through the years. These include a large wood statue of the Holy Family as a memorial to the new Holy Family Church and monetary donations to the Slovenian Chapel in Washington, DC, Slovenian Miners Memorial in Chisholm, MN, restoration of the Statue of Liberty, Bishop Baraga Association and many local donations.

Branch 102 takes pride in having three members who won scholarships. They are Aimee Staut in 1983, Christine Trunkel in 1992 and Charlene Herrick in 2002. The Branch has observed Mother/Member of the Year each May beginning with Johanna Artac in 1957. The latest Member of the Year in 2006 was her granddaughter, Patricia Sixel.

Outstanding members were our founder, Johanna Artac, members Mary Staut, Mary Djubenski and Josephine Artac. Mary Staut was instrumental in reviving the organization after its declining membership and lack of interest almost

caused it to disband. She will be remembered for her steadfast efforts in preserving the Slovenian traditions in Willard and surrounding areas. Mary demonstrated the art of making apple strudel to various organizations. She compiled several scrapbooks of the organization, which are now a valuable resource of information. Mary was a member of Branch 102 for 50 years. Mary Djubenski

served as Secretary-Treasurer for 29 years. She also kept up the Slovenian traditions, especially in baking poticas and apple strudels. She was a very efficient and devoted officer. Josephine Artac served as President for 34 years, taking the office after her mother-in-law Johanna Artac retired as President. Jo was a diligent worker for the Branch, often calling members to remind them of upcoming events such as meetings, bakes sales etc.

Present officers are President-Rose Pakiz, Vice-President/Reporter Agnes Debevec and Secretary/Treasurer-Sue Pakiz. Rose Pakiz also compiles scrapbooks of Branch 102. - Rose Pakiz



Josephine Artac(L) and Mary (Snedic) Djubenski (R), both served over 30 years as Officers of Branch 102.



Mary Staut (deceased) with husband Vitko.



Rose (L) and Sue (R) Pakiz. Also visible is the profile of Aggie Debevec

Branch 103 – Washington D.C.

Founding Date: November 14, 1965

Exhibiting their Desire to Keep Alive their Slovenian Heritage!

Sincerest and heartfelt congratulations to the Slovenian Women's Union of America on its 80th anniversary and to Branch 103 in Washington, DC, on its 41st. Both groups have faithfully and successfully followed the objectives formulated by Marie Prisland, foundress of SWUA - *"To unite the Slovenian women living in America, to assist in their social, moral, and intellectual education, to foster American and Slovenian ideals, to encourage participation in American civic affairs, to help members to become American citizens"*. Branch 103 had reason to contemplate these objectives on its recent anniversary when it took stock of its accomplishments over the past 41 years.

Branch 103 was founded in October 1965 by Irene Planinsek Odorizzi and consisted of eleven charter members. It grew through the years bringing the Slovenian people together in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area thus making possible the founding of several other Slovenian organizations - the KSKJ Bishop Baraga Society, the Slovenian Chapel Committee, the Slovenian Heritage Committee and the Washington Slovenian Choral Society. In recent years it has also been the source for several members who now make up one of the newest branches in the organization - Branch 108.

During the past 41 years, Branch 103 has sponsored, hosted or initiated many activities and contributed to numerous charitable causes, both Slovenian and non-Slovenian. These activities have included dinner dances or social evenings accompanied by Slovenian music with performances by SOCA Slovenian Folkloric Dance Company, Fantje na Vasi, Alpine Sextet, Zvon, Kres dancers, Operetta by a group from Toronto, LEK Choir and local polka dancers. Our most notable celebration was the 90th birthday of Senator Frank Lausche leading to the initiation of the Lausche Scholarship Fund. We also have our annual Member-of-the Year program, picnics, participation at the Virginia Folk Festival where members offered Slovenian food such as klobase, sauerkraut, flancati, potato salad to demonstrate

our Slovenian heritage to a wider audience, participation in the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival on the Mall, accompanied by demonstrations of Slovenian baked goods (recipes by members were featured in the cookbook that

was compiled), receptions for visiting dignitaries such as Archbishop Joseph Pogacnik and Archbishop Alojzije Vrhovec, and for SWUA members celebrating the dedication of the Slovenian Chapel at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, hosting the State Convention of SWUA members at Holiday Inn, organization of bus trip to the International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia, organization of art exhibits by well-

known artists Joseph Vodlan, Miro Zupancic, France Gorse and of talented Branch 103 members as well as sponsorship of contemporary sculpture exhibit by France Gorse, participation in the Cultural Program Committee, acting as delegates at each of the SWUA National Conventions, presentation of many speakers who spoke on a great variety of topics ranging from fishing on the high seas in relation to the speaker's trip to Russia to Slovenian folk songs to children with learning disabilities (several Slovenian Ambassadors to the U.S. were among the speakers) and demonstrations of Slovenian folk art such as egg decorating and coloring.



Members of Branch 103 at a meeting in 2004



Slovenian Chapel Dedication, (left-right) Bernadette Kovacic, Maria Mejac, Jim Chesnick, Nancy Terselic, Lydia Bevec and Helen Mejac

The branch, although small in number, has contributed more than \$13,000 to charitable causes (ranging from groups in the United States, Slovenia, India, Zambia, Thailand, Bosnia and Hungary to visiting dignitaries, etc.) from the proceeds of its annual dinner dances and social evenings. At its various functions, the branch has passed on its cultural traditions providing potica, strudel, krofe, flancati and other Slovenian delicacies and entertaining the audiences with Slovenian music and song. It has also engaged the younger members who have willingly helped in any way needed and participated in the branch's children's programs. We find our members special because of their hard work, loyalty, enthusiasm and eager

participation in all of the branch activities. They truly exemplify the basic concepts set forth by Marie Prisland 80 years ago and have consistently exhibited their desire to keep alive their Slovenian heritage. - Mary Lou Terselic and Mimi Mejac



Ambassador Samuel Zbogar, Mimi Mejac and MaryLou Terselic

Branch 108 – Olney, Maryland

Founding Date: November 16, 2003

Proud to be a Part of This Dynamic Growth!

Congratulations to SWUA on it's 80th birthday! We are delighted to be part of the dynamic growth and continued improvements by SWUA to provide members with new sources to help us in learning about the many facets of our Slovenian heritage and customs. May we continue to grow together in sharing our Slovenian spirit with family and friends today and in the future.

Branch 108 has brought together generations of women and men who have contributed their knowledge and resources for our collective success. Inactive SWUA members and dozens of new members have found their niche as branch officers, guest speakers and active members. Looking back on the last three years since the inception of our branch, members have expressed feeling empowered by our unique shared Slovenian heritage and opportunities to participate in a variety of programs and events. Many have enrolled their children and grandchildren to help further our collective successful efforts to increase SWUA membership and participation.

- Bernadette Fitzsimmons



St. Patrick's Day Parade, 2006



Children displaying their masks to the audience at the Pustna Veselica program.



Guess who is behind the mask?

Branch 109 – Twin Cities, Minnesota

Founding Date:

“Youngest Sister” Celebrates the 80th Anniversary of SWUA

The Twin Cities Slovenians (Branch 109) is the “youngest sister” of the 80-year SWUA. The TC Slovenians view themselves as somewhat unique being we are a Slovenian enclave within a largely urban population center of Minnesota. It is the gateway to the Slovenian areas of St. Stephen’s (oldest enclave in Minnesota) and to the ancestral home of Slovenians from the Mesabi Iron Range stretching from Ely to Chisholm.

Branch 109’s Slovenian fabric is closely knit with Slovenians who settled in Minnesota in the 1950’s as refugees from war torn Yugoslavia. Spital, Austria was the location of the refugee camp that spawned such names as the “Medved” and Percic families, which have become the backbone of the Twin Cities Slovenian Branch. Andrew Percic owns two restaurants- the Nectary and Bridgewood. We use these for our meetings and get-togethers. Miro Medved has hosted a number of Slovensko Petje and provided our group with the history of the Spital camp. Yul Yost, a native Slovenian has set the stage for our annual Bishop Baraga Picnic, which is held in Yul’s magnificent garden area in Roseville, Minnesota. Frank Medved and his wife, Mary have given us insight into the Catholic hierarchy of Rome where Frank’s boyhood friend in the Spital refugee camp, Franc Rode is a member of the College of Cardinals in Rome. These individuals’ contributions have provided the “glue” which ties our Slovenian traditions and culture together.

The other part of the TC Slovenian fabric consists of second generation Slovenians born and raised largely on the Iron Range and in the St. Cloud area, specifically St. Stephen’s. This group is comprised of homemakers, teachers, engineers and business people at various levels-many of whom have been to Slovenia as tourists, students, and researchers. Individuals such as Jerry Sherek, our TC webmaster; Mary Vidas, our first president who helped launch Branch 109; Seth Hawkins, who set up the Slovenian museum in St. Paul; Joe Kuznik, our language coordinator and Al Siftar, whose passion for Slovenian family history is contagious.

As we congratulate the SWUA on its 80th Anniversary, Branch 109 would like to be a part of an organization that bridges the cultural gap between the “old generation” and the “younger generation.” We also would like to see changes relative to the “gender gap” within the organization’s by-laws. We also see the SWUA as the liaison between Slovenian students in our public schools with those students from Slovenia- a “pen pal” concept. In this day and age of computers, text messaging, and e-mail, our organization should be the vehicle for sustaining our Slovenian heritage and culture with the “mother” country of Slovenia. We must actively market Slovenia on the world stage now that it has become a part of the European Union. - *Norman Setnickner*



Newly elected senator for US Congress from Minnesota, Amy Klobuchar (front) at a Slovenian picnic in Roseville, Minnesota at the home of Yul Yost where Amy gave a campaign speech in July of 2005. She is of Slovenian descent. Also pictured is SWUA web master (behind Amy's right shoulder) Jerry Sherek and Yul Yost behind her left shoulder.

Amy Klobuchar, the Fourth U.S. Senator with Slovenian Roots

Amy's great grandparents were immigrants from Slovenia. Her great grandmother came to Ely, Minnesota, from Ribnica and married another Slovenian immigrant who worked 1500 feet underground in the local iron mines, as did her Slovenian grandfather. To help pay for his college education, Amy's father Jim Klobuchar, too, ventured to work as a miner during his vacations. This experience helped inspire a lifelong respect for the sturdy immigrants and their descendants who built America the hard way, with pick and shovel, on 12-hour shifts in underground iron ore tunnels, and for their Slovenian wives who took care of large families, cultivated gardens and fields, canned vegetables and made, or helped make, blood and rice sausages and genuine meat “klobase.” And they made delicious strudel and potica. Indeed, potica was so important to the Klobuchar clan that Amy's father Jim repeatedly mentioned it in his newspaper articles and books. In one of his books he devoted a special chapter to “The potica makers,” where he explained how the word should be pronounced *po-TEE-tza*, and proudly assured us that his own mother was “one of the Michelangelos of potica making.” - *from an article by Edward Gobetz, Director, Slovenian Research Center*

SLOVENSKA BESEDA

Slovenska beseda,
tako lepa si,
tako moja si,
da bi na črko vsako
ti pripela cvet.

Ne, ni potrebno,
da na črki vsaki
ti cvet nosiš.

Brez cvetja ti
pojoča si,
kot zvon želja
z otoka blejskega
in žametna, kot vrtnica.

V dno duše me boli,
ker nekoč so te zaničevali,
te jezik hlapcev imenovali.

Zato prosim vas rodove,
ki prišli boste za menojo,
čuvajte jo, gojite jo naprej.
Naj od Triglava do morja
le beseda slovenska
dom ima.

Autorica te pesmi je Cvetka Jeraj iz Begunji na Gorenjskem, Slovenija. Je članica društva upokojencev Slovenije, LIKUS, ki vsako leto izdaja zbornik s prispevki svojih članov - Literatov.

You are beautiful,
You are mine,
Would like to pin a flower
On each of your letters.

No, it is not necessary
To have a blossom
on each of your letters.

You sing out
Without flowers
Like a wishing well
From Island Bled,
Velvety like a rose.

Deep down my soul aches
Because once you were despised
You were called
The Language of farmhands.

Therefore I beg all descendants,
You who will come after me,
Guard Slovenian word and make it grow.

From Triglav to the sea
May the home of Slovenian Language be!

The author of this poem is Cvetka Jeraj, from Begunje, Gorenjska, Slovenia. She is a member of the literary club, LIKUS. Her poems are published in their yearly publication.



Author, Cvetka Jeraj

WHAT IS A TRUE SLOVENIAN?

If it is true that love is found in every Slovenian, then it is true that love must be a definite requirement.

If it is true that pride in one's ethnic heritage stands out and can be seen in any crowd or gathering, then pride itself must be an asset.

If it is the caring for a fellow man, relative or friend or maybe for an unknown person or cause, and there is a willingness to sacrifice and help those less fortunate than yourself, then caring, too, becomes a needed characteristic in any great Slovenian.

If love of God, family, and country give you reasons to be grateful and alive, then surely our Heavenly Father, the lives we were given to share in family, and the freedom we possess in this great country are gifts to be treasured by all Slovenians.

If it is the kranjske klobase, kruh, vino and the potica and strudel that can fill an empty stomach and put a smile on any face, and a party out of any gathering, then tradition must also be an important aspect of being Slovenian.

If music, singing and dancing to the tunes of our well-known Slovenian musicians can fill your heart with joy, your voice with merriment and your feet to exhaustion, then music, too, must be a well-known attribution.

And, if love and caring, God and family, country, tradition, and music have made you a better person because of your Slovenian Heritage, then you, yourself, have answered the question, **WHAT IS A TRUE SLOVENIAN?**

- Joan Gorenc Hynek, Branch 43

ENTERTAINING...

With a touch of Slovenia

Happy 80th Anniversary SWUA. Many of the articles in this anniversary issue are discussing the changes that have occurred through the years and where we are going in the future. I would like to hope that the Christmas spirit is still alive in all of us just as it was 80 years ago. Those early Christmastimes through a World War and a depression were not easy, but somehow my parents always made sure that there was plenty of food, wine and, of course, chestnuts for everyone who came to visit. All were welcome to stop in for a little Christmas cheer and no matter how many people came there was always enough. May that same spirit of Christmas live forever in all of us.

- Happy Holidays Jenka



Chestnuts (kostonji) ready to be served!

Sweet Potato Orange Cups

For the Cups:

8 oranges

Prepare oranges by first slicing 1/8" off the bottom of each (this keeps them from rolling over). Flip the orange over, remove the top third, and scoop out and juice the flesh, reserving juice for the potato filling.

Filling (mashed together):

- 4 cups canned (or fresh) sweet potatoes, drained
- 1 cup fresh pineapple, diced
- 1 cup orange juice (from prepared orange cups)
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Mash the sweet potatoes and all filling ingredients together in a bowl. Fill the orange cups with potato mixture, then arrange on a baking sheet (cups may be assembled 1 day ahead). Bake 45 minutes at 375 degrees F., or until tops begin to brown.

Topping:

- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 1/2 stick unsalted butter (4 T.)
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 cup bourbon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Toast pecans in a sauté pan over medium heat for 2 minutes, or until aromatic. Add the next 4 ingredients; cook until syrupy.

Off heat, stir in bourbon and vanilla. Return to heat for 1 minute, then spoon mixture over the baked orange cups. *Yield: makes 8 cups*



Old Fashioned Bread Stuffing

1 pound hamburger
1 pound sausage
1 cup celery
½ cup chopped parsley
1 cup chopped onion (1 large)
¾ cup butter or margarine
1 tablespoon poultry seasoning
1 tablespoon salt
1 tablespoon black pepper
1 tablespoon sage
2 beaten eggs
18 cups dry bread cubes
1 to 1 ¼ cups chicken broth
½ cup butter, melted

Preheat oven to 325 F. In a large skillet cook meat, celery and onion in hot butter over medium heat until tender but not brown. Remove from heat. Stir in poultry seasoning, sage, salt and pepper. Place bread cubes in large bowl; add meat and onion mixture. Drizzle with enough chicken broth and melted butter to moisten; toss lightly to combine. Add parsley and eggs. Place stuffing in turkey. Bake turkey.

Cranberry Orange Relish

1 package (12oz) fresh or frozen cranberries
1 medium orange
¾ to 1 cup sugar
1 small can crushed pineapple
1 package of strawberry jello

Slice unpeeled orange into eighths; remove seeds. Place half the cranberries and half the orange slices in food processor container. Process until mixture is evenly chopped. Transfer to a bowl. Repeat with remaining cranberries and orange slices. Stir in sugar to desired sweetness. Add 1 small can crushed pineapple. Store in refrigerator or freezer overnight. Add 1 large package of strawberry jello, place in refrigerator until partially set. Add cranberry mixture to jello and place in crystal bowl for approximately 6 hours before serving. Yields about 2 ½ cups.



Curried Squash Soup

4 pounds butternut squash
1 large onion, diced
1 medium apple, peeled and diced
1 garlic clove, minced
¼ cup butter
2 teaspoons curry powder
½ teaspoon ground ginger
3 cups chicken broth
½ cup heavy whipping cream
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional

Cut squash in half; discard seeds. Place squash cut side down in a 15-inch x 10 inch x 1 inch baking pan. Add ½ inch of hot water to pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350 F. for 40 minutes. Drain water from pan; turn squash cut side up. Bake 20 – 30 minutes longer or until tender. Cool slightly.

Carefully scoop out squash into a blender or food processor; cover and process until smooth. Set aside.

In a large saucepan, sauté the onion, apple and garlic in butter until tender. Stir in curry powder and ginger; cook and stir for 1 minute. Stir in broth and pureed squash. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Add the cream, salt, pepper and cayenne if desired; heat through (do not boil). *Yield: 8 servings (2 quarts) Note: this can be made 1 day ahead of time.*

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In the Land of Gingerbread

published by Jana Bauer

The concept for these books began with 4 charming ladies, Kathy, Debbie, Bonnie and Mary Lou, coming through Brnik Airport one very cold January day with American suitcases full of great ideas. One lady, Mary Lou, and I sat into the wee hours of one night discussing how the Slovenian heritage could be promoted in our children and youth. How could we bring traditional Slovenian heritage into the modern age and make it meaningful in the minds and hearts of children? This was the birth of *Forget Me Not...Spominčice*.

Language is culture, take away the language and culture disappears. What more fitting than to write a book in two languages for children/youth! Who is not envious of children who with such ease can learn a foreign language! The *Forget Me Not...Spominčice* books are meant to instill pride in the beautiful Slovenian language and self-satisfying pride as children/youth learn English. For those children/youth of Slovenian ancestry, it is finding their roots, an enticing way to learn the language of their ancestors and to learn about Slovenia.

In the Land of Gingerbread is intended for ages 6-10 years. Future books may have a different age grouping in mind. It is the intent of **Sodobnost International** to publish at least 3 books per year, all to be written by noted Slovenian authors of children/youth literature. The books will be bilingual, of "Slovenian high quality" and centering on all that is Slovenian". The website is under construction. For example: *In the Land of Gingerbread* will have exciting activities; where to purchase cookie cutters, recipes, how to build and bake Slovenian houses from different parts of Slovenia and much much more. I encourage you to log on periodically for its debut at www.forgetmenotbooks.com. "Thank you to all who purchase any book in this collection. Consider each book a sweet smelling blossom."

- by Jana Bauer *In the Land of Gingerbread*

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In the Land of Gingerbread

by Jana Bauer

From the *Forget Me Not...Spominčice* series