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Table

# Zarja

Official Publication Slovenian Union of America  
Uradno Glasilo Slovenske Zveze v Ameriki

The Dawn



# Slovenian Union of America

431 N. Chicago St., Joliet, IL 60432-1703

TELEPHONE: 815.727.1926

WEB SITE: [slovenianunion.org](http://slovenianunion.org)

## 2015-2019 National Board of Directors

PRESIDENT: Mary Lou Deyak Voelk

(Branch 23) [ottolou@gulftel.com](mailto:ottolou@gulftel.com)

VP OF OUTREACH: Diane Hohenwater

(Branch 20) [dhohenwater@comcast.com](mailto:dhohenwater@comcast.com)

VP OF HOME OFFICE: Jan King

(Branch 50) [neighbor2slovenia@yahoo.com](mailto:neighbor2slovenia@yahoo.com)

VP OF CULTURE AND HERITAGE: Nancy Henkel

(Branch 89) [henkelnancy@aol.com](mailto:henkelnancy@aol.com)

VP MARKETING AND FUND-RAISING: Norm Setnick

(Branch 109) [normas188@msn.com](mailto:normas188@msn.com)

CORRESPONDING/RECORDING SECRETARY:

Catherine "Cookie" Maxin

(Branch 50) [cookie.maxin@gmail.com](mailto:cookie.maxin@gmail.com)

TREASURER: Robert Kuhel

(Branch 16) [rjkuhel@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rjkuhel@sbcglobal.net)

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SLOVENIAN UNION OF AMERICA

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# Zarja - The Dawn

EDITOR: Bonnie Pohar Prokup

DIRECTOR OF DESIGN: Debbie Pohar

EDITORIAL OFFICE: 3119 Carrie St., Peru, IL 61354

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## Communications for the next issue of publication

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

## Submission Guidelines

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

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

## The Slovenian-American Table

A cookbook that presents many of the favorite dishes that Slovenian immigrants brought with them to America, but with a modern flair. This book is more than a cookbook; it is a guide for today's American families to bring Slovenian heritage into their festivities, all with a modern American twist. This book takes you through a calendar year and offers primarily recipes, but also includes crafts, entertaining and decorating tips, a little background information of the holiday, and all with full-color pictures.



Mail your check to:  
**Slovenian Union of America**  
431 North Chicago St.  
Joliet, IL 60432-1703  
Attn: Cookbook

*\*Please include a phone number in case we have a question regarding your order.*

- OR - Call: 815.467.7619

- OR - E-mail:

[sua@slovenianunion.org](mailto:sua@slovenianunion.org)

**Cost: \$25.00 (includes tax)**

**Plus Shipping/Handling:**

1 Book - \$4.50

2-3 Books - \$6.00

4-5 Books - \$8.00

10 Books - \$14.00

22 Books - \$16.00





# Order Now as Holiday Gifts

## The Slovenian-American Table

### *From Chapter 11 The Christmas Season...*

There is no place like home for the holidays. It is aromas and tastes that are passed onto the next generation; they are the flavors that nourish our hearts and souls. Most Slovenian foods are made with simple ingredients, yet magically, the outcomes are mouthwatering. Recipes chosen for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were specifically chosen to be prepared in advance, reducing the stress of cooking, while allowing the flavors to "merry." Perhaps your family would consider adding several new flavors to your Slovenian family traditions.

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### Christmas Eve Menu

#### *Jota*

Bean, Potato, and Sauerkraut Soup

#### *Mlinci*

Dry Noodles

#### *Kumare v solati s kislo smetano*

Cucumbers in Sour Cream

#### *Hrutka*

Slovenian Egg Cheese

#### *Maslovník*

Butter and Flour Dish

#### *Vložene paprike*

Pickled Peppers

#### *Pečeni ocvirkovi krapci*

Crackling Biscuits

#### *Potica*

### Christmas Day Menu

#### *Goveja juha*

Beef Soup

#### *Svinjska pečenka*

Pork Roast

#### *Ocvrt piščanec*

Fried Chicken

#### *Krompirjeva solata*

Slovenian Potato Salad

#### *Fižolova solata*

Bean Salad

#### *Potica*

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*Božič*  
December 25  
Christmas

# President's Message...

To Members of the Slovenian Union of America and their Families,

November and December have arrived, a time for family celebrations and gift giving. Perhaps this is a time when we are closest to the realization of life. Families gather, they connect, laugh, reminisce, and exchange gifts. Bakers work overtime, preparing the cookies, pies, and of course the potica. Familiar aromas drift through the house; our sense of smell is heightened and then comes the call to the table. It is the greatest of legacies, enjoying the foods we grew up with.

On these special days, Thanksgiving, Advent, St. Nicholas Day, Christmas, Feast of the Three Kings, blessings be with you and your families.

**To keep members in the know, the highlights and decisions of the 1st meeting of the 2015 - 2019 SUA National Board are summarized:**

At the June 2015 Slovenian Union of America's National Convention, a new governing body was elected for 2015-2019. On August 11, 2015, at 8:30 a.m., the National Board meeting was called to order. For two days the conference table at the Home Office in Joliet became a worktable.

## On the Agenda:

Meeting with professionals retained by the SUA.

As a non-profit 501(c)(3), this Board is legally responsible for the organization. The SUA is required to file a Form 990 annually, providing information on our mission, programs, and finances. Our SUA's mission statement explains our charity's purpose, addresses why we exist, and what we hope to accomplish. Documenting income and expenses ensures that the SUA is operating within its budget.

Discussion with the CPA from our banking institution centered on SUA's financial accounting standards that must be adhered to. The board was in agreement; 2016 must show a balanced budget.

An in-depth study of the present insurance policy was conducted with the agent retained by the SUA. Going through it, line by line, the question was asked, "What claims are or are not covered by the policy? And what is the dollar amount?"

Prior to the meeting, the Board had requested of a local realtor, an update of the market analysis done on the SUA building 1½ years prior. Discussion centered around the selling prices and value of buildings in the surrounding area and the business climate of the downtown area located just a few blocks from the Home Office/Heritage Museum.

Several hours were dedicated to the legal process of updating SUA's bank accounts. It took a trip to the bank, to change the authorized signatures on the two checking accounts and safety deposit box. As the safety deposit box account was being closed and a new one opened, our National Treasurer, Robert Kuhel, gifted a \$2 bill and a gold coin to the contents.

## On the Agenda: Home Office

The Home Office and Heritage Museum have been staffed from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., 5 days a week, for several decades. During these years, visitor traffic has been low and during the ice, snow, and cold of winter, it is reduced even more. With the dissolution of the burial insurance policies held by members prior to 2000, clerical services are no longer needed. With these facts, it was the decision of the Board, beginning September 1, 2015; the Home Office/Heritage Museum will be open each Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Voice mail telephone messages (815.727.1926) and e-mail communications ([sua@slovenianunion.org](mailto:sua@slovenianunion.org)) will be answered in appropriate time.



On the Agenda: Charitable Acts

SUA, founded in 1926, is proud to introduce to all members its new Educational Grants, designed to help new college and vocational school students with their books, computers, fees, and other expenses usually not covered by general scholarships or offset by a scholarship. This is a streamlined application process through the SUA Educational Committee.

There will be a category appearing on the annual 2016 membership invoice. Watch for the application in the 2016 January/February issue of *Zarja - The Dawn*. Keep in mind that 100% of every dollar received by SUA for this purpose will go directly to the student's college or vocational school without any administrative expense. Opportunity for designated contributions to Educational Grants can be accepted now.

On the Agenda: *Zarja - The Dawn*:

Debbie Pohar and Bonnie Prokup have switched roles. They now have the appropriate titles for their energies. Bonnie, the Editor, supervises the writers, and reviews all articles for content prior to publication. Debbie, Director of Design, designs each page of *Zarja*.

In closing, I consider it the highest of honors to sit in this capacity, the president of the SUA. Sincere thanks go to the outgoing National Board for their valuable input during this transition time.

*Mary Lou Deyak Voelk*

## SUA Donations - Thank You!

### **\$100 Donation**

Gregorich, Nancy, 20, +Rosemary & William Gregorich  
Ahearne, MaryAnn, 93, +my mother, Mary Lesjak Link, & family

### **\$75 Donation**

Mosquin, Sonja, 93, SUA

### **\$25 Donation**

Williamson, Mary Jane Vidmar, 103, +Mary & John Vidmar  
Klein, Vicki, 24, +mother, Sally Strohmaier  
Bokar, Catherine, 20, Honor of mother, Margaret Bokar  
Marel, Joseph, 26, +wife, Eleanor Marel

### **\$10 Donation**

Barthelemy, Elaine, 109, SUA  
Breszach, L. Maria, 99, +Andrea Salamant  
Curtis, Joann Fabian, 13, +Anna Fabian  
Blasick, Elvie, 100, +Victoria & Paula Skarich

### **\$5 Donation**

Hartmann, Lillian, 43, SUA

### **Technology Donations**

#### **\$250 Donation**

Pohar, Barbara, 24, +husband, John Pohar, Jr.

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

Faas, Dolores, 30  
Bartlett, Denise, 43

### **Welcome to Our New Branch Members**

2, Gaber, Peter  
23, Shavor, Sydney  
24, Cinotto, Chloe  
30, Takher, Anne  
33, Ostrander, Dena  
43, Ujcich, Clare  
43, Ujcich, Emil  
50, Klepec, Anton  
99, Adamic, Sr. Cecelia  
99, Sila, Lee  
108, Novoselnik, Damjan

# *Slovenian Union of America*

## *2015-2019 National Board of Directors*

### **PRESIDENT**

**Mary Lou Deyak Voelk - Branch 23**



It began in Ely, MN. Mary Lou was the firstborn child to Frank and Mary Perovshek Deyak. Both of their families were Slovenian immigrants. From early on Mary Lou was aware and intrigued; she was Slovenian. Call it life in a Slovenian Diaspora. She loved the *Nova Doba*, spending time circling words she had heard in conversations. The anticipation of family gatherings every Sunday and holidays, and the aromas from the kitchen are some of her fond memories. Then came adulthood, marriage, and a move to a big city for Mary Lou, miles away from that Slovenian Diaspora.

Mary Lou and her husband, Gene Voelk, raised four children. Mary Lou went on to finish college, receiving a B.S. in Elementary Education and certification in Special Education from the University of MN - Duluth, and a Master's Degree in education and 60 post graduate credits from the University of Wisconsin - Superior. Teaching was/is an eye opener; being seeped in her own heritage gave Mary Lou insight, not only to the students she was teaching, but her own children. Mary Lou retired from the Duluth, MN, school district.

Mary Lou's interests are many: baking/cooking Slovenian food (of course), sewing, knitting, golfing, writing, reading, and travel. And then a call came from Bonnie Prokup – "Would you compile the survey results filled out by SWUA members?" Five months later, President Kathy Dorchak Ferrante requested that Mary Lou report

to the home office in Joliet. She arrived with a 49 page document, and departed for home with an appointed title, Director of Special Projects.

As for the SUA National Office and Heritage Museum/Library, it requires a hands-on approach; the work never ends, and it has required many extra days in Joliet. Realizing the value and vulnerability of our paper documents, Mary Lou initiated a scanning project. All documents through 1962 are now digitized. File cabinets contained over 900 issues of *Zarja - The Dawn*. Today, all issues of *Zarja* are available online from the National and University Library site in Ljubljana, Slovenia's capital. Anyone, anywhere, can log on and work on the indexing of these issues. *The Slovenian - American Table* book/cookbook was the culminating event!

To this office of presidency Mary Lou brings a passion instilled in her youth. It is her mission that this Slovenian Union becomes a visible Slovenian Diaspora in America.

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### **VP OF OUTREACH**

**Diane Hohenwater - Branch 20**



Diane Hohenwater, SUA's new Vice President of Outreach, of Channahon, IL, has also served as the organization's Database Manager since February. This job requires her to be responsible for processing all dues payments, keeping member information current, and providing the mailing list to the *Zarja* printer. She is the contact for those wishing to purchase copies of *The Slovenian - American Table* cookbook via mail order.

Diane is a member of Branch 20 in Joliet, IL, and has served as Branch 20's Recording Secretary since 2011 and its *Zarja* reporter since 2014. She has been very active in Branch events and was the Branch 20 "Member of the Year" in 2014. In addition, Diane is proud to be the Secretary of the SWU Scholarship Foundation.

Diane and her husband of 27 years, George, are the parents of two sons and have one granddaughter. Her hobbies include genealogy, scrapbooking, watching movies, and reading.

Since joining SUA in 2010, Diane has learned much about her Slovenian ancestry, including information on the lives of her great-grandparents, Anton Duša and Katarina Mihevc, who immigrated to the U.S. around 1900. Diane and her husband traveled to Slovenia in 2013, where she met a previously unknown cousin. She has also connected with Slovenian cousins in Michigan and Ohio.

Diane is excited to work with the other members of the new SUA Board of Directors in helping to advance the organization.

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## VP OF HOME OFFICE

**Jan King - Branch 50**



Jan is happy to be able to serve you, the member, and SUA for another four years in this position! The most important thing she can say about herself is that she believes in SUA and Slovenian heritage. She looks forward to hearing about your ideas on how to move ahead and keep SUA healthy and strong for our children and grandchildren. Jan states, "It's so important that they know where they came from."

Jan feels there are so many changes and distractions in today's society; it's easy for heritage and culture to be forgotten. She feels we need to strive to be great stewards

for SUA and our heritage, thereby keeping the "Gem of Europe" forever in our hearts and available to anyone who has interest in our heritage and culture.

Jan wants to enjoy these next four years together as, "We work together in honor and respect for those who came before – for our generation and for the future of all Slovenian-Americans and the Motherland herself." *Najlepša hvala!*

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## VP OF CULTURE AND HERITAGE

**Nancy Henkel - Branch 89**



After a trip to Slovenia in 1997, with her mother, her brother and his family, where they met some family, Nancy began researching her family history and got hooked on genealogy along the way. Nancy relates that Slovenia is a beautiful country and so diverse and she has enjoyed three trips there, hoping to return soon. All of her grandparents and one great-grandfather came from Dolenjska, near Novo Mesto and nearby Zuzemberk, between 1891-1907 to the same area in Central Illinois; strangely they did not know each other there. The men came to find work in the mines and mills; the young women joined their siblings. They never were able to return to their homeland and proudly considered themselves Americans, but never forgot their native homeland, family, or its traditions.

Nancy's childhood memories of being with her grandparents are many, but holidays are the most vivid with the Slovenian traditions and foods. Today, she still serves those holiday meals to her family, such as the Žegan meal specialties. She often makes potica and apple strudelj, using her Grandmother Supan's (Zupancic in Slovenia) recipes she brought from her mother's kitchen in Slovenia.



Her maternal grandmother, Aloisa Gergovich Kernz (Krnec in Slovenia), was a charter member of Branch 89 - Oglesby, IL, and its first Treasurer. Nancy joined in 1998 and has been active ever since, eventually serving as Branch 89's President, was a SWUA National Board Member during 2003-2007, and Co-Hostess for the 2007 SWUA National Convention held in Utica, Illinois. Nancy has also helped at the Heritage Museum in Joliet, designing some of the newer displays and photo work over the past years.

Nancy, and husband Bill, live in Peru, IL. They have two children, Doug and Denise, son-in-law DJ Duffin, and two teenage grandchildren, Cole and Jordan Duffin. She is active in her church and community. Nancy enjoys traveling, sketching, photography, genealogy, reading, and flower gardening as hobbies.

Nancy states, "I think the upcoming SUA National Board is going to be an interesting and dedicated team and I like that there are men serving this time. I think they will contribute much. I am proud to serve again and look forward to this term. SUA has come a long way and it helps all members to be proud of their heritage and it's culture."

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## VP MARKETING AND FUND-RAISING

### **Norm Setnicker - Branch 109**



Norm hails from Biwabik, MN, in the heart of Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range and traces his Slovenian ethnicity to his grandfather "Setnikar" and grandmother "Stepic" marriage in 1911. Norm and his wife, Mary Ann Koroshec Setnicker, just celebrated their 51st wedding anniversary and proudly say that their generation is the last of full Slovenian lineage in their family. They have four children and seven grandchildren, ages four to sixteen.

Growing up with parents who both spoke and understood Slovenian, Norm went to school with Slovenian refugees (DPs) and learned to appreciate the hardships that they endured after WWII. Families like the Medveds, Percics,

and Vidmars left a legacy of their ethnicity to their school and community.

Norm graduated as a teacher from St. Cloud State in 1963 with a double major in English and History. In 1968 he received his M.A. in 19th Century American History from the University of Minnesota. Norm taught for 34 years and retired in 1997. He points to some of the highlights of his career: semifinalist for Minnesota's Teacher of the Year in 1994, induction into Minnesota Softball Coaches Hall of Fame, a Coe History Fellowship to Stanford University, and member of the leadership team which introduced the Advanced Placement Program in American History and Macroeconomics to Tartan High School.

In 2005 Norm was one of the founding members of the Twin Cities (TC) Slovenians, Branch 109 of SUA/SWUA, and served as its president for five years. He has also been the *Zarja* reporter since 2005 and has been the writer for Minnesota's "Festival of Nations" brochures since 2008. This year marks the 10th anniversary of Branch 109 and Norm was the chief author of the history of the TC Slovenians. In addition to his contributions to Branch 109, Norm has been a delegate to the last three National Conventions and this past June both he and Bob Kuehl were two men elected to the seven member SUA National Board. Norm and Mary Ann have been to Slovenia three times - 1994 (found their relatives in Polhov Gradec, Velike Lasce, and Stari Trg pri Lozu), 1998 (Slovenian language school), and 2011 (Norm calls it the "Triglav Hiking Experience").

Norm is very active in Senior Softball and serves as deputy commissioner in the Roseville Senior Softball Association, serves on the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Senior Sports Association, and is also on the Board of the Original Hot Stove Baseball League in St. Paul. He is still actively playing on the Minnesota Masters AAA softball team, which has won two national championships, the last one in 2012 in Las Vegas. A highlight in Norm's softball/baseball career was Mary Ann surprising him for their 50th wedding anniversary by sending him to the Minnesota Twins Fantasy Baseball Camp in Fort Myers, FL, where he won the "Gold Glove Award" for the Defensive Player over age 55.

Norm looks forward to the challenges which await the newly elected officers of the SUA, and is confident that the leadership team headed by President Mary Lou Voelk will generate a renewed enthusiasm to the SUA membership.

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## TREASURER

### **Robert Kuhel - Branch 16**

Bob is a seasoned professional, having served as a chief financial officer at three Chicago non-profit hospitals, Catholic System of eight hospitals, Executive Director of a Hospital/Physician Limited Partnership, and is a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator. His management services include physician groups, nursing homes, and other allied healthcare organizations. Bob's experience and expertise





includes contract negotiations, creative problem solving, new business development, and an ability to work as a dynamic team player.

His professional stewardship and volunteering includes: 10 years with the American Cancer Society, Lake County Chair and Illinois Division Board member; 27 years with Catholic Charities as a Lake County Board Member and Finance Committee in the Archdioceses of Chicago; and 47 years as a member of the Healthcare Financial Management Association.

Bob is the current Treasurer of Bowen High School Alumni Association, Inc. (5 years), and current Treasurer with the Slovenian Genealogy Society International, Inc. (8 years). Besides his membership in SUA's Branch 16 - South Chicago, IL, Bob is also an active member with other Slovenian organizations - the Slovenian Benefit Society (SNPJ) Lodge #559, and the American Slovenian Catholic Union (KSKJ) Lodge #44.

Bob's roots to SUA, formerly SWUA, go back to his grandmother, Mary Kuhel, who joined SWUA Branch 16 in 1936. Most of her five daughters were members, as were many of her granddaughters and great-granddaughters, such as Lynn Zalokar of Branch 93 - New York City, NY.

In terms of genealogy, Bob traced his Slovenian roots back to as early as 1730 in Tomazja vas, Kostanjevica na krki, and Sentjernej. He found male surnames of Kuchel, Kuhel, Kuhelj, and female surnames of Sekula, Skal, Bambič, and Miklaush.

Last, but not least, Bob has lived with his wife, Donna, in Highland Park, IL, for the past 32 years.

## CORRESPONDING/RECORDING SECRETARY

**Catherine "Cookie" Maxin - Branch 50**



Cathy Maxin (Cookie) has been a member of SUA since 1991, and has been actively involved in the organization at many levels. She has served as Vice President of Branch 50 - Euclid, OH, since 2003, and as Ohio's Regional President from 2008-2009. Most recently, Cookie has served as Ohio's Regional Vice President from 2010-2015. Throughout all of those roles, Cookie has worked hard to strengthen the organization by continuing and improving Branch 50's annual Christmas party, and by participating in regional and national events. In 2004, Cookie traveled to Slovenia and took in the beauty of the country, including trips to Lake Bled, Piran, and Skofja loka. She was also able to experience first-hand the deliciousness of her Slovenian heritage, and still dreams of the *Kremna rezina* (Bled cream cake)!

In her professional life, Cathy has more than 34 years of experience working in the insurance industry, and currently serves as Assistant Vice President of Finance for AmTrust Financials. To friends and family, Cathy has always been known as "Cookie," a nickname her dad gave her as a child, that she more than lives up to with one of her favorite hobbies - baking! She makes beautifully decorated cakes and cookies, and many wait patiently all year for December when her trays of Christmas goodies appear. Cookie shows the love that is in every Slovenian through the many tasty treats that come out of her kitchen, including potica.

Cookie is a proud "Dog Mom" to two small pups, Honey and Frankie, and a beloved aunt to several nieces and a nephew. She loves to vacation and her favorite destination is Disney World, where she has been more than a dozen times! She is proud to be part of SUA, an organization that connects her with her heritage, her family history, and a wonderful community of Slovenians.

# SWU Scholarship Foundation

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*CELEBRATING 66 YEARS OF FINANCIALLY ASSISTING STUDENTS*

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

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## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS' ESSAYS Entitled

### “My Heritage and What It Means to Me” and each Benefactor’s BIOGRAPHY

**STEPHEN FON**, Brownsburg, Indiana

#### *Josef Princ Memorial Scholarship*

“My name is Stephen Fon; a much influenced Slovene from Indianapolis, Indiana. My family has played a huge part in my interest in my heritage. I am 100% Slovenian due to all of my great-grandparents immigrating to America from Slovenia. My grandmother, Mary Fon, traveled back to Slovenia 14 times, which has influenced me to travel there as well, twice! My family also use to own a butcher shop in Haughville, Indiana, where the main product was sausage; using a secret, Slovenian, family recipe, of course. Our family still gets together to make it a few times a year. In 2002, my parents, sister, and I went to Slovenia to personally meet with the mayor of Piran to complete the sister city agreements between Indianapolis and Piran. This really influenced my life because it made me a part of history in our culture. Throughout the rest of my life I will be keeping up with all of our traditions and never forget where I come from.”

*The JOSEF PRINC MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP is funded by his spouse, Rose Marie Princ. Josef was a native of Melika, Bukova, Illirska Bistrica, Slovenia, and graduated with an engineering degree from the University of Ljubljana. He continued his studies in Germany. After immigrating to the United States in 1957, he continued his studies and worked for Nichols Holmer Shield as their chief designer and acquired a number of patents. He also designed for Anderson Window Company. Josef loved being an American, although he was also very proud of his Slovenian heritage. Josef, now deceased, was a devoted supporter of the Slovenian Cultural Center in Lemont, Illinois.*



*Josef and Rose Marie Princ.*

**MEGAN HLADE**, Joliet, Illinois

#### *Rose Marie Princ Scholarship*

“My Slovenian heritage is very special to me. I am proud to be 100% Slovenian and enjoy all the traditions that I learned from my late grandmother, Paula Mavec. My grandmother loved her heritage and it was important to her that she taught us Slovenian traditions. I recall every Christmas my grandmother would have us walk through the house praying the rosary and blessing the house. It was something that I enjoyed participating in. I’ve also had the privilege to take a few cooking classes where my grandmother taught us how to make different Slovenian dishes. A big part of growing up, though, was spending time with my family. Every family party consisted of good food, potica, and my cousin playing the button box. Family parties also meant conversation, reminiscing, and having a good time. My family, immediate and extended, has always been particularly close. Without them I wouldn’t be the person I am today. They taught me everything I know about my heritage. To me, being Slovenian means food, fun, family, and love.”

*ROSE MARIE PRINC has been one of SWU Scholarship Foundation’s most benevolent supporters for a number of years. Her life has been devoted to education of young people. A native of Chicago, Rose Marie is a longtime member of St. Stephen’s Church, and Branch 2 - Chicago, IL. She graduated from St. Mary’s High School and Rosary College with degrees in History and English. She continued her studies at Loyola, DePaul, and Northwestern Universities and earned advanced degrees at the University of Chicago and Northern Illinois University. Rose Marie taught at Nazareth Academy and J. Sterling Morton High School for 27 years, and also served as its administrator for 14 years. Upon retirement Rose Marie*



served on the executive board, as well as the treasurer and president of the Retired Teachers Association. Rose Marie continues to teach classes and is active in numerous organizations in her community.

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**ELLEN KOCI**, Laguna Beach, California

***Jean Kurilich Memorial Scholarship***

"I am an active, lifetime member of the Slovenian Union of America (SUA) as well as the Slovenian National Benefit Society (SNPJ). Each year, we have traditional gatherings for the Harvest Festival, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other ethnic events. At these events, we have professional entertainment in the form of polka music from my uncles, my grandfathers, and family friends. Because of these numerous musical talents, my grandfather was even inducted into the Polka Hall of Fame. I remember my parents carrying me on the dance floor before I could even walk, and now dancing and music are a huge part of my essence. I also enjoy traditional cuisine, including rizot, blood sausage, strudel, flanciti, zgance, goulas, klobase, potica, and stuklej. Growing up, all the people in these groups were my "cousins," "uncles," and "aunts," and I made the same type of relationships with friends in school. As a nursing major at Saint Mary's College of Notre Dame in Indiana, I look forward to independence, but also to making new friends because I know my family and friends will support me in any situation, just as I will for them. I am extremely grateful to the SWU Scholarship Foundation for awarding me the Jean Kurilich Memorial Scholarship. My great-grandmother was one of Mrs. Kurilich's best friends, so it is a truly meaningful honor."

*JEAN KURILICH was born in Hudikonec, Slovenia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and she*



***Jean Kurilich as a young girl in Slovenia.***

*came to the United States in 1937. Because of family circumstances and events of history, she was unable to get the formal education she desired. However, she always encouraged others to study hard, so that they could go to college. Jean and her family settled first in Cleveland and later in Fontana, California, where she provided the most comfortable, loving home for her family and friends. A good*

*part of her life was spent with the KSKJ Lodge and the Slovenian Women's Union. She*

*worked hard within these groups, whether cooking for dinners, planning events, or holding a variety of offices. She was very proud of her heritage.*

**VALENTINA YAPEL RONNING**, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

***Frances Colnar Barman Memorial Scholarship***

"I love that I am half Slovenian, thanks to my pretty remarkable ancestors! Both my paternal great-grandfathers immigrated to the United States from Ig, Slovenia, near Ljubljana. My great-grandmother, Angel Zoitz Pavlich, was the first president of Branch 34 - Soudan, MN, and was instrumental in its organization. My great-grandmother, Barbara Adeline Pavlich Mustonen, was president and a reporter for *Zarja* for 20 years. My grandmother, Agnes Pavlich Yapel, also a longtime member of the SUA, worked hard to become a dental hygienist. I am following in her footsteps as I study to become a dentist at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI.

My Slovenian heritage and Catholic faith have been passed on down through the generations. I have grown up eating potica every holiday. At my wedding in 2013, I kept true to my heritage and had a beautiful Catholic Mass and reception, complete with traditional potica, apple strudel, polka music, and a "Where We Came From" display of wedding pictures including my Slovenian heritage. Today, I continue to grow in my Slovenian heritage and Catholic faith as a member of SUA's Branch 43 - Milwaukee, and St. Anthony's Catholic Church. I hope to someday pass on these traditions to my future children."

*FRANCES COLNAR BARMAN came to Cleveland, Ohio, as a young woman with her son, Anthony, after her soldier husband was killed during World War I. Her work as a seamstress and love of gardening, all skills she learned in Slovenia, helped her to make a good adjustment to the American way of life. In 1925, she married Joseph*



***Anthony Colnar and his mother, Frances Colnar Barman.***

*Barman. Frances was a dedicated worker and supporter of the Slovenian Women's Union of America. As a most knowledgeable gardener, Frances won many garden awards. Roses and dahlias were her specialty.*

**SEAN VOELK**, Seattle, Washington

***SUA Branch 2 - Chicago, IL, Scholarship***

Most of what I have learned about my own Slovenian heritage has come from my paternal grandmother, Mary Lou Voelk. She instilled many important values in my father, and therefore, my family and myself. These values are a large reason why my heritage is so important to me. It influences who I am and how I act. Because of this I think about my heritage often. Coming from such a respected and intelligent people, who value family, hard work, and resilience gives me pride in being myself. Moreover, it gives me confidence in carrying out everyday tasks, as well as achieving my long-term goals.

When I visited Slovenia for the first time, I immediately recognized an appreciation for education, tradition, and culture. I align very closely with these values, especially that of education and lifelong learning. I am so thankful for the generosity of the SWU Scholarship Foundation and SUA members and for their faith in me as a representative of the Slovenian-American community. The SWU Scholarship will help me greatly in pursuing my academic endeavors at Santa Clara University in California.”

*SUA's BRANCH 2 - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS Branch 2's origin began at St. Stephen's Church Hall on December 19, 1926, when Slovenian ladies, including Marie Prislend, Mrs. Dullard, and Mrs. Gottlieb, formally organized. Dues were 25 cents each month and in 1927 the Branch held an election of officers. Membership was comprised mostly of young, migrant, married women with families. Since that time hundreds of devoted Branch 2 men and women have worked tirelessly on fund-raisers, held special Masses and celebrations, and helped to preserve and update St. Stephen's Church, the well-known Slovenian church of Chicago. The Branch 2 members of today represent several generations of people who continue to preserve and treasure their rich Slovene ancestry.*

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**THOMAS FITZSIMMONS**, Gaithersburg, Maryland

***SUA Branch 20 - Joliet, Illinois, Scholarship***

“For as long as I can remember being Slovenian has been a part of my identity. My mother’s side of the family is 100% Slovenian and in turn, my brother, sister, and I are all second generation Slovenians in the United States. My family introduced me to, and kept me grounded in, my Slovenian heritage, and alongside English, I learned Slovenian as I grew up. As I began to learn more about my heritage, my mother and grandmother got me involved with the Slovenian community where I began to realize that my heritage was not only language spoken at home, or an amazing gourmet meal, but a loving, hard-working community that cared for and wanted to help me grow as a person, and to be aware of my Slovenian roots and traditions.

My Slovenian heritage has been a huge part of my life since childhood. I have warm memories from the St. Nicholas parties every year before Christmas, and feasting on the amazing Krajske klobase were always the highlight of the night. Every first Sunday of the month my family often attends Slovenian Mass at the Our Lady of Brezje Chapel at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington D.C. What makes the Masses held in that chapel truly special is the fact that they are carried out in mostly the Slovenian language, and the priest, Father Wadas, has been a family friend of ours for over 25 years. I have grown up in the Washington D.C. Slovenian community and participated in singing Slovenian songs at various functions. I also marched in the Gaithersburg St. Patrick’s Day parades to give SUA publicity, and to support my family and heritage. I’ve assisted with *Pustna Veselica* celebrations by helping with set up and take down, as well as attending Slovenian Embassy events like the EU Open House and other special events throughout the years. This involved setting up our Branch 108 - Olney, MD, display, and informing guests about Branch activities and Slovenian functions. I was proud to do a large sketch of Lake Bled for a high school drawing class my senior year, and to bring it framed to the Embassy of Slovenia EU Open House Day in May 2015, to share with others. I have attended the last three SUA National Conventions with my family - Starved Rock, IL, Milwaukee, WI, and Naperville, IL. I was pleased to meet Mrs. Mary Turvey, the SWU Scholarship Director, in person at this last Convention, and admired how personable and caring she was towards my siblings and me.

This warm and loving Slovenian family I’ve been a part of has allowed me to make great friends, brought me closer to my family background, and to shape me into who I am today. I am very thankful for receiving a scholarship to use toward my freshmen year at St. Vincent College in Pennsylvania. This means so much to me and I will always be grateful for this gift. My Slovenian heritage will stay with me for the rest of my life, and I intend to give back to the Slovenian community as I grow into adulthood, and to one day teach my children of this great heritage that has shaped me as a second generation Slovenian-American. I realize that our ancestors have sacrificed greatly so that we may reap the benefits and enjoy Slovenia’s beauty, traditional food, and independence from social, political, and religious oppression.”

*SUA's BRANCH 20 - JOLIET, ILLINOIS Josephine Erjavec and Emma Planninsek established SUA Branch 20 on June 11, 1928, in Joliet, Illinois. Over the years its members have actively participated in many ways, such as bowling teams, a competitive drill team called the Cadets, and a competitive baton twirling team. Branch 20 has hosted Slovenian Heritage Days and continues to hold a*



*Grape Harvest Festival Dance each autumn. Branch 20 awarded high school students its own scholarships from 1994 to 2013.*

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**MATTHEW FITZSIMMONS**, Gaithersburg, Maryland  
***Olga Dorchak Memorial Scholarship***

“Growing up as a second generation descendent of Slovenian immigrants, the significance of my heritage was instilled in me from a young age. My mother and grandmother introduced me to the Slovenian language before I ever learned English, and there were Slovenian publications and publicity material frequently found on the kitchen table for me to read. My mother brought me along on my first and only trip to Slovenia when I was only five years old, where I first met my extended Slovenian family! Despite my age at the time, I still have breathtaking memories of Lake Bled, the Skojanske jame (caves), in which I had no fear, and hiking trails in Triglav Park, where the Triglav mountain peak first appeared before my eyes.

During my years as a child, growing up among the Slovenian community in the Washington D.C area, I was brought along to countless Slovenian events. These included Christmas parties, Open House at the Slovenian Embassy, and monthly Masses at Our Lady of Brezje Chapel at the National Shrine in Washington D.C. I’ve even attended two National SUA Conventions and one KSKJ National Convention. Many of these events introduced me to delicious Slovenian food and my love of krajnske klobase and potica, that has no foreseeable end. Through these events I was introduced to a friendly and hardworking community, of which I am proud to call myself a member. My life has been filled with a strong faith, rich traditions, music, a great family and friends, and Slovenian ethnic foods and desserts that can’t be beat!

My mother and grandmother got me involved with the Slovenian Union of America (SUA), of which I have been a lifelong member, and also KSKJ. As an adult, I appreciate the generosity made possible by committed Slovenian organizations. I am extremely grateful for the SWU Scholarship awarded to me to be used toward my college tuition costs as I begin my junior year at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Through these Slovenian organizations, I’ve met many active members and have had the pleasure of collaborating with other young Slovenian-Americans to explore actions to be taken that would keep our Slovenia heritage alive and thriving for future generations. I’m thankful for these experiences, and it has inspired my resolve to continue contributing to Slovenian institutions as an adult. At the last National Convention in Naperville, IL, I was fortunate to have met Mrs. Mary Turvey, the Director of the SWU Scholarship Foundation, and to spend some time speaking to her. I was impressed by her interest and commitment to the success of the Slovene-American students.

As a child I came to see many of the Slovenian events that I attended with my family as something I could take for granted, however, as a Slovenian-American young adult my eyes have been opened. I now see how unique and incredible our heritage is and realize that it must be carried on in my generation. On a personal level this has already started through my involvement in the SUA Branch 108 - Olney, MD, and the KSKJ. I am excited to continue this cause in the coming years through showing my future children the value of our heritage and through taking on a more central role in Slovenian organizations and events, and one day again visiting the beautiful country of Slovenia.”

*OLGA DORCHAK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP “It is truly an honor to be able to establish a scholarship fund in our mother’s name for 2015 and 2016. This scholarship is more than money. It also represents the love and spirit that was always our mom. Mom maintained a home rich in Slovenian tradition.*



*She enjoyed attending many Slovenian activities and events at our local Slovenian Home in Maple Heights, Ohio. She was able to follow in her mother Jennie Gerk’s footsteps to become an active member of the SWUA Branch 47 - Garfield Heights, Ohio. Mom was a Branch president for many years.*

*Our mom loved anything Slovenian - music, food, wine, traditions, and mostly the people. This scholarship shows the love that so many family members and friends had for her. We are confident that she would have been overwhelmed knowing that a scholarship was given in her memory. We would like to thank everyone for your generous donations to make this scholarship a reality.”*

*- Kathleen Ferrante and Diane Fornaro*

## SUA Scholarships for 2016-2017

Visit our web page for more information -

<http://www.swusf.org>

Deadline March 1, 2016

The year of 2015 has been phenomenal! Due to your generosity, seven scholarships were awarded to students with bright futures. The SUA National Convention was personally rewarding when I met with many of you, wonderful new, and long time members of SUA. Then, to actually meet three of our current scholarship winners was a delight. Sharing my personal recollections of Grandmother Marie Prisland's early years as an immigrant, and also being able to pay tribute to early Slovene settlers by reviewing the history of the earliest Slovenian community of Calumet, Michigan, with the Convention attendees was rewarding. Slovenian Ambassador, Dr. Božo Cerar, spoke of Marie Prisland's War Effort Project in which medical supplies, food, and clothing was shipped to his native country in earlier times. Imagine, after all of these years, Marie's work is still remembered and appreciated!

It is with humble gratitude and heartfelt appreciation that the Officers and Trustees offer you a sincere thank you for your financial and verbal support this past year. May the New Year of 2016 bring each of you peace and hope as we live our lives in the love of the Lord.

- Mary Turvey, Director,  
SWU Scholarship Foundation  
[mturvey@aol.com](mailto:mturvey@aol.com)

## Scholarship Donations

### \$150 Donation

Mr. & Mrs. Ron Erjavec, +Mildred Pucel  
Jean Herbst, +her parents, Anna & Martin Juricic

### \$100 Donation

Vera Muir, +Mildred Pucel

### \$50 Donation

Carol Novak, +Mildred Pucel  
Ivanka Matic, +Frances Piletec  
Katie Gorton, "Celebrating the life of her mother,  
Hermine Dicke 1912-2010"

### \$25 Donation

Mr. & Mrs. George Singletary, +Mildred Pucel

### \$20 Donation

Andrea L. Demsar

### \$10 Donation

Branch 13 - San Francisco, CA, +Agnes Kurnick  
(Mrs. Kurnick was a devoted donor to the SUA Scholarship  
Foundation for many years.)



## St. Nicholas Honor Day

### *Honoring Our Volunteers*

St. Joseph Catholic Church, Gilbert, MN, December 6, 2015, at 10:00 a.m.  
Mass with Traditional Slovenian Music with Special Guest, St. Nicholas  
*All Are Welcome*

### Luncheon Following the Service

*Traditional Slovenian Food*

*Introducing Honorees*

SUA Member & One Invited Guest

### Following the Luncheon

*Tour of Snidarich Home - Christmas Is Coming*

Wine & Finger Food

SUA Member & One Invited Guest

*Proceeds to Charity*

Need Own Transportation - Directions Given at Church

## Reservations Required

**Luncheon: \$20 per Person**

**Luncheon & Tour: \$30 per Person**

### For Reservations Call:

Marlys Rabb: 218.229.3110 312 S. 2nd St. West, Aurora, MN 55705  
Bernice Ceglar: 218.229.2733 407 S. 3rd St. West, Aurora, MN 55705



## Slovenian Union of America

# "April's Showers of Dollars" Drawing

*April 2016 Fund-Raiser*

**CASH PRIZES TOTALING \$2,955**

**27 Daily Drawings at \$65**

**April 1, 15, and 30 at \$200**

### Top Seller Prizes:

1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$150

2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$100

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

**\$10 PER ENTRY**

How the fund-raiser works: Each day in the month of April, 2016, one (1) winner will be chosen to win the listed cash prize for that day - \$65 or \$200.

The month of April has much to celebrate - including April No Fool's Day, Help with Tax Day, and the last day before May's flowers. The winners chosen on April 1 - "April No Fool's Day," April 15 - "Help With Tax Day," and April 30 - "Here Come May Flowers" will win \$200 each. In addition, the top sellers (1st, 2nd, and 3rd place) will win \$150, \$100, and \$50 respectively. A minimum of 300 entries must be sold. It's a WIN opportunity for everyone!

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

Your "April's Showers of Dollars" drawing entry will be eligible for all daily drawings in the month of April, 2016. Sellers of the winning entries will receive \$10 as an award for their selling efforts. The daily drawing amount and the seller's \$10 prize will be mailed to the winners of record the next business day. Winners will be notified by e-mail, if provided, and their names posted on the SUA website: [www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org).

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

*Detach at perforation*

### **Entry Form (Please Print Clearly)**

#### **Entrant's Information:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Seller's Information:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# “April’s Showers of Dollars” Drawing April 2016 Fund-Raiser

## Slovenian Union of America

Need additional entries?

Copies accepted or contact Denise P. Bartlett at:

Phone: 414.327.4990 or [denisepbartlett@wi.rr.com](mailto:denisepbartlett@wi.rr.com)

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**28th National Convention - 2019 - Cleveland, Ohio**

### “April’s Showers of Dollars” DRAWING

*April 2016 Fund-Raiser*

[www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org)

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**2019 SUA National Convention.** SUA holds its National Convention every four years in host cities around the country. These gatherings are important not only to conduct SUA business but to have a forum for Branch Member Representatives to come together to give their reports, share their ideas, discuss concerns, and further cement their mutual love and respect for all things related to their Slovenian heritage. Our next SUA National Convention will be held in Cleveland, Ohio, in 2019.

Plans are underway to make this another memorable event. The successful completion of this “April’s Showers of Dollars” Fund-Raiser will provide monies to help defray the costs of conducting SUA’s National Convention. The Convention Committee strives to offer an affordable convention package to enable Member Representatives and members from every SUA Branch to attend. The entries make excellent gifts for the holiday season, birthdays, and to say “Thank You.”

**How Does the Fund-Raiser Work?** Everyone participating in the SUA “April’s Showers of Dollars” Fund-Raiser has the chance to win cash prizes. Each day in the month of April, 2016, one winner will be chosen to win the listed cash prize for that day - \$65 or \$200. In addition, each day the person who sold that day’s winning ticket will win \$10. The daily winner and seller can be one and the same and win both prizes.

The month of April 2016 has much to celebrate - including April No Fool’s Day, Help with Tax Day, and the last day before May’s flowers. The winners chosen on April 1, April 15, and April 30 will each win \$200. In addition, the top sellers (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place) will win \$150 and \$100 and \$50 respectively. It’s a WIN opportunity for everyone.

**Your Participation is Appreciated!**

**“Larger Prize  
Amounts This Year!”**

*Good Luck!*



# *She Caught My Eye*



by Zarja Staff Writer David G. Sodac  
of Branch 89 - Oglesby, IL  
E-mail: [bd sodac@gmail.com](mailto:bd sodac@gmail.com)

*Stephanie with Ambassador Dr. Cerar.*

Out of the corner of my eye I caught a glimpse of her determined movement through the animated and engaged crowd. She moved deftly, weaving her way from the back table to the front corner of the room. Once there, she stretched her frame to reach the ear of the party's entertainer, "the Accordion Boy from Illinois," and whispered a question. With a contagious smile spread across her face, he introduced her as Stephanie and that she had requested to sing along with him as it was one of her favorite songs. The microphone was handed to her and they began. Her voice was rich, appealing, and at ease; her body swayed in time with the lively tempo; her hands were dancing in the air; her expressive eyes were twinkling and the wide smile on her face quickly quieted the loud, mingling crowd as they all began to focus on the performance. Well into her golden years, she was a natural!

A scheduled singing performance by Stephanie Polutnik would again captivate a larger crowd's attention during the opening ceremonies of the 27th National Convention of the Slovenian Union of America held on June 18-20, 2015, at the Chicago Marriot hotel in Naperville, Illinois. While standing in front of scenes of immigrants arriving on America's shores, she belted out Irving Berlin's iconic song "God Bless America," complete with the introductory lyrics of ...*While the storm clouds gather far across the sea, Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free, Let us all be grateful for a land so fair, As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer.*

Stephanie feels strongly drawn to this hymn, "*This is exactly the way I feel about my America... God Bless*

her!” She captivated the audience with her stirring performance. There is no doubt that Stephanie has reasons to feel emotionally connected to these lyrics; she grew up in the era the song was written. There were storm clouds of war threatening her Slovenian homeland. Her family lived in a period of history wedged in between the aftermath of WWI and the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. There was much political uncertainty. The ethnic Slovenes were being absorbed by Yugoslavia, while the western section of the country was annexed under Italy’s control. On March 3, 1921, Stephanie’s father, Josef Turk, made the difficult decision to emigrate from the quaint village of Vrhnika, that offered stunning views of the Slovenian Alps, and seek a land that was free and filled with opportunities. Her father would join his brother, Anton, in Cleveland and labor in the heart of

the Slovene district on 66th Street. He would send for his wife, Marija (Jelovšik), and two daughters, Marija and Stephanja, once he was able to save sufficient money to purchase their passage to join him. Seven years later that day finally arrived on May 30, 1928. As a young girl at the impressionable age of eight, Stephanja, her older sister, and mother packed their bags and said their heartbreaking farewells to their adoring grandmother with whom they had been living. They boarded the S.S. Île de France anchored in the waters in the Port of Havre, France, to begin their reunion journey to America. Stephanja could hardly remember her father; it had seemed so long.

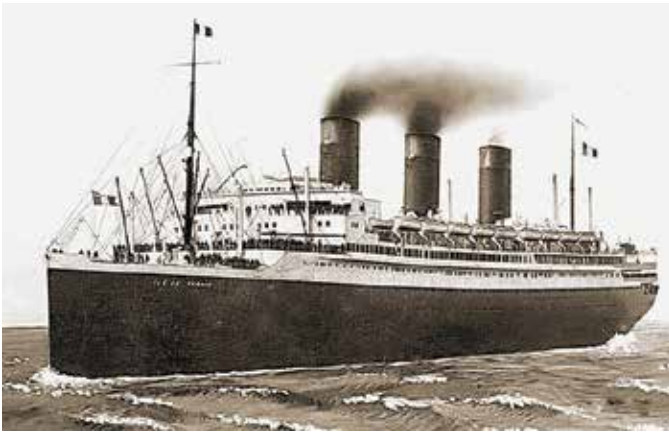
Stephanie recalled that there were about 25 Slovenians traveling aboard the ocean liner. She feels her family was very fortunate with their passage accommodations,



*The day that the Turk family left for America. It shows all the people waiting to get aboard. Mrs. Turk is in the front row with Stephanje in the middle and her sister, Marija, on the right of her.*



as they shared a cabin with another passenger off of the main deck. They even had a window with a view of the ocean. They would gather to hear an accomplished pianist playing Slovenian songs on a piano. Stephanie and



*The S.S. Île de France that brought the Turk family to America in 1928.*

her family helped lead the others in folk songs that her mother had taught them. It was a very moving experience, she said, as everybody began to cry and feel homesick about leaving their villages. They were all unsure of what would happen in a new country.



*Stephanja (left) and Marija in the village of Vrhnika.*

Stephanie will never forget the chance encounter aboard the liner when the S.S. Île De France passed the S.S. America ocean liner, traveling to Europe with American passengers onboard. As the two ships eased by each other, the horns blared, and the passengers ran wildly to the railings, waving and cheering to each other. She recalled, *“There were so many people leaning on the handrails on the one side of the boat, that I thought we were all going to tip over into the ocean. I’ll never forget that scene!”*

Fond memories from when the young Turk family had been living with her grandmother Helen in Vrhnika still flood her mind. The village was located on the Ljubljana River, 21 km from Ljubljana, and near the verge of the Slovenian Alps. Vrhnika is also known as the birthplace of Ivan Cankar, the famous liberal, political writer. She remembers being with her mother washing clothes in a nearby creek in a small meadow area that was fed by cascading water flowing down from the hillside that surrounded the meadow. In the meadow area were statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary and other Saints in wooden niches that people would venerate. While she was washing the clothes, she glanced up and saw King Alexander I (Ruler of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes) crossing right by them, riding on a huge, beautiful, white horse and flanked by two guards. She looked up and vividly remembers seeing his very shiny, black boots. In this same meadow area was a cobblestone pathway that wound up the hillside to where there was a huge mounted cross. Nearby was a large pot that she and her grandmother would fill with oil and light for the whole village to see. She idolized her grandmother, saying *“She was so sweet to me all the time. We did everything together. I missed her terribly when we left.”* Stephanie always sensed that she was her grandmother’s favorite. Sadly, seven months after Stephanie’s family had emigrated from Vrhnika, they received an announcement letter that her beloved grandmother had passed away in December. She recalled that the death announcement letter was edged in black ink as was the Slovenian tradition of that time.

Shortly after the Turk family reunited in America, they settled into their home in Girard, OH. They lived just a half block away from the Girard Slovenian National Home on N. State Street, which presented an easy opportunity for the Turk family to relax with fellow Slovenes, socialize, and enjoy polka music and dancing on Saturdays. Joseph Turk had a beautiful, full bass baritone voice, and soon the two Turk girls, Stephanie and older sister Mary, began performing with their father as the “Turk Trio” anytime a band was playing. They quickly became the crowd favorites. Stephanie shared that she always loved singing. When she sang and the crowd would

react and show appreciation, she would feed off of their approval and become more energized herself.

Marija Turk, Stephanie's mother, quickly became a member of Girard's Branch 55 of the Slovenian Women's Union of America and was an active member for years. When Stephanie turned 16, she was immediately signed up as well! Later, when Stephanie married and moved to Lorain, OH, she became an active member and officer of what was once the very vibrant Branch 40. Most recently, she was the recording secretary and reporter to the *Zarja* magazine, however, she said the Branch membership has dwindled to just four members and have very little to write about.

By the time of the 1940 census, the Turk family had increased in size with the births of two more daughters, Josephine (1930), and Veronica (1933). Stephanie would



*The Turk family photo (left to right), Mary, Vera, Josephine, and Stephanie, with parents, Mary Turk and Joseph Turk, in the front.*

later marry the love of her life, Michael John Polutnik of Lorain, OH, on October 21, 1944, while he was on leave from the service. They set up housekeeping in Lorain. Their firstborn child, Elaine, was born a year later and baptized on their 1st wedding anniversary. The young family expanded, adding sons, John and Michael. Soon after, the Polutnik family moved into their new home in Elyria, OH, and shortly after their youngest son, Robert, was born. Stephanie remains in that same ranch home to this day, enjoying her flowers in her small garden, watching the hummingbirds out her kitchen window, and seeing the squirrels in her backyard. She makes raspberry pies from her bushes.

At the age of 96, Stephanie continues to be energized by singing with a group that call themselves "Seniors Sing." She's definitely the matriarch of the group, and is expect-

ed to perform solos. They typically perform twice a week as they fulfill their engagement schedule at the local nursing homes and churches. This past February, an article appeared in the online newspaper, *Morning Journal*, featuring a headline entitled "Singing Seniors Sweeten Valentine Visits." She performed a deep-voiced solo rendition of "*Secret Love*" at the Bradley Bay Assisted Living Center in Bay Village on Valentine's Day. Stephanie was interviewed for that article and was quoted as saying, "*I love seeing and meeting people, and I'm just as happy as they are. When we sing it makes me feel good, just seeing all those smiling faces.*"

This past year has proven to be an extremely memorable one for Stephanie. On her 95th birthday last August 16, 2014, a surprise party was held at the classic Sterle's Slovenian Restaurant in Cleveland, OH. Extended relatives as far away as Florida and New York arrived to surprise the matriarch of their family. She's just so very proud of her four children, seven grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren, as well as all of her nieces and nephews. Then came her "breakthrough performances" at the SUA National Convention where she just couldn't help but jump in and sing on several occasions with polka accordionist, Eddie Korosa Jr., at Thursday's welcome session and with Vince Rigler during an entertainment



*Wedding photo, 1944.*



portion of the SUA Convention. Vince was quoted as saying, “*Stephanie not only sang and danced well, but she knew so many of those old-time songs that her mother taught her. You would never guess her age by the energy she exudes!*” Then came the honor of performing on the “National” stage, while singing for the opening of the 2015 SUA National Convention. On Saturday evening of the SUA Convention, Stephanie was introduced and posed for pictures with the Slovenian Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar, with whom she was quite impressed. She shared, “*Ambassador Cerar was very much a gentleman. He was so very nice! It was an honor for me to meet him.*”



*Stephanie belting out a polka with Eddie Korosa Jr.*

After the whirlwind activities of the SUA National Convention came to a close and Stephanie returned back to her ranch home in Elyria, Ohio, she resumed her busy routine. Due to years of habit, she stays up late at night to watch the 11:00 p.m. news, sleeps in until 9:00 - 10:00

a.m., and then delays the start of her day’s chores and cleaning activities by attacking the daily newspaper’s crossword and Sudoku puzzles over cups of coffee. Every Sunday, after attending Mass, her youngest son, Rob, joins her for dinner followed by their traditional three, highly competitive games of cribbage and attacking the difficult Sunday crossword puzzle. All three of her sons live in communities within a few miles of the homestead and she sees them frequently. Her daughter, Elaine Barthelemy, is the only Ohio escapee and lives in Apple Valley, MN. Elaine views her mother as a role model. She says, “*Mom’s always active, optimistic, and supportive of all her family members. She never com-*

*plains and always has excitement in her voice. I want to be like her when I grow up!*” If she really wants to be like “Grandma Stephie,” she’ll just have to be patient, as growing up in the Polutnik family may take awhile!



*Polutnik family photo (left to right) John, Elaine, Robert, Stephanie, and Michael.*



# The Definition of a Slovenian

- by Father Michael Monshau, O.P., Theology Professor  
at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome



*The Slovenian village of Gornja Lokvica, hometown of Jerry (Jernej) Mutz, Sr. (d. 1969). Almost a century after Mr. Mutz migrated from this scenic village to America, his descendants visiting from Joliet, Illinois, U.S.A. discovered their real cousins, as well as a house full of "cousins on loan" in this village.*

What are Slovenians like? In recent years, one easily comes across a bumper sticker, or other kinds of novelty memorabilia showing that the word "love" is fully contained within the word "Slovenian," as in sLOVENian. Today's P.C. Police seem to rule harshly against generalizing people along ethnic lines altogether, and yet, within the Slovenian-American community, we sometimes wonder, "How are we perceived by others?" "Are there characteristics or generalizations about us that ring true?" "What are Slovenians really like?" A little while ago, some of my relatives and I had an encounter with a family in Slovenia that helped us to answer that question.

I am a Dominican priest of Slovenian heritage from Joliet, Illinois. Several years ago, I was assigned to teach Spiritual Theology at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, my Order's central international university in Rome, and shortly thereafter, several of my family members, including my mother, Jeanette Mutz Ogary, announced their plans to travel from Joliet to visit me in Rome. With the competent planning of my brother-in-law, John Vowels, we decided to include a visit to Slovenia in our itinerary, since Italy and Slovenia share a common border and the trip would be manageable, to say nothing of exciting. We arranged to visit my Slovenian grandfather's home village and meet our cousins there. My aunt, Pat Mutz, maintains contact with our relatives in "the Old Country" and laid the plans for us to visit our cousins. We were all delighted at the prospect. It was early November.

In a rented car on a Sunday morning after Mass, the six of us Americans took off for the Slovenian border in pursuit of Gornja Lokvica, the village of my grandfather's birth. We were solely in possession of a map, the name of that

village (although we had no idea what the word "Gornja" meant) and our cousin's name, Martin Muc (Mutz), who still resides in my family's ancestral village. Off we went, driving far out of our way to investigate two other places called "Lokvica" before somehow arriving at the right village. Our next task was to find the home of Martin Muc in that very hilly, rural village that was bereft of familiar American street signs and house numbers. Our arrival was expected, of course, but as one mistaken turn built upon the other, we began to be conscious of the passing time. We must have been quite a sight, the six of us walking from one house to the next to study the front of the house in search of a house number or a family name, grumbling all the way about how they don't mark house numbers "the normal way" that we employ in the States!

Finally, a young man passing by in a very fashionable convertible must have realized we were lost and stopped to offer assistance. None of us could speak Slovenian and that was proving to be a real handicap. Nonetheless, we established that we were looking for the home of Martin Muc. Our young worthy declared that he knew the location of Martin Muc's house and would lead us there. In our van, we followed him and when we reached the designated house, he waved us off and continued on his journey. We pulled into the driveway and proceeded to climb out of the car, pleased to have finally reached our destination.

My first memory of that moment is one of observing the occupants of the house emerging from their home on a late Sunday morning, beholding six foreigners descending upon their home. Because our visit had been prearranged, I was somewhat confused by what I perceived to have been a surprised look on their faces. I felt sure they looked sur-



prised, as well as uncertain, but there would not have been any reason for that, so I told myself I must be mistaken.

We introduced ourselves to this family as their American cousins who had come to visit, and unfamiliar words like “*ameriški bratrance*” and “*sorodniki*” could be heard, although instead of statements, they sounded more like questions. Not “American cousins” as much as “American cousins?” Not, “our relatives,” but “*Naši sorodniki?* (Our relatives?)” Of course, we were not entirely oblivious to this, but we were confused. Was something wrong? Why did our cousins seem so surprised? After all, we were expected.

Quickly we were warmly welcomed into the home, the kitchen table was cleared and the stove lit. Within a few minutes, we were all seated at the table with our new cousins, drinking cups of hot coffee. Our hosts were gracious and kind, but somewhat reserved. A bottle of slivovka was produced and a large potica seemed to appear out of nowhere. That last item, potica, strongly suggested that we were home with our own, like nothing else could have, but still something didn’t feel quite right. As hospitable as they were, why had they seemed so surprised at our arrival? Cousin Martin seemed not to have been aware that he himself had communicated with my aunt about our visit by e-mail only a few days earlier.

Eventually, photograph albums of our host’s American cousins were produced and passed around. We also examined several photos of Americans displayed on the kitchen wall. We studied the photos, looking eagerly for familiar faces, places, or other clues that were recognizable to us, finding none. At first we were simply disappointed by this. My grandfather, Jerry Mutz, and his older brother, Joseph, had migrated to the United States, settling in Joliet, Illinois, around 1920. We knew that a third brother, one who had been born after the two elder brothers had left for America, and therefore a brother they had never met, had later migrated to Canada where we had cousins. We presumed these photos were from those Canadian cousins. But these photos made it seem as if the only American cousins our hosts knew were those of the Canadian branch. Where were the photos of our grandfather? Our uncle? Why did none of the photos from America feature familiar Joliet scenes in the background? Where was our beloved and historic St. Joseph Church in the wedding photos that were displayed?

Finally, two nieces arrived who had been summoned from another household. These girls were not yet finished with school and were studying some English, but not much. We continued to enjoy the coffee, the slivovka, and especially, the genuine Slovenian potica. The conversation was merry and there was much laughter. Eventually, I ended up sitting next to the girl whose English was the stronger of the two, and after examining yet another set of photographs containing completely unfamiliar faces, I leaned over to the young woman and quietly confided, “I am starting to

think that you are not our cousins.” She stopped me dead with her response. She said, “We don’t think you’re our American cousins either, but we can’t figure out who you are or what we should do with you!”

Suddenly my mind revisited the astonished look on their faces when the six of us unloaded from our rented van in their driveway, unannounced. My eyes caught those of my aunt, Pat Mutz, who had arranged this visit, and at that moment we silently acknowledged to one another that we had no idea where we were!

I don’t know where the idea came from, but suddenly I heard myself asking this new “cousin,” “Is there another Martin Muc in this village?” She replied, “Yes, there is. He lives on the far side of the village, but even though we have the same name, we’re not related.” I requested, “Can you call him and see if he might be our cousin?” She agreed and went to another room to accomplish her mission. Moments later, she returned to the kitchen, and announced to us in English, with a simultaneous Slovenian interpretation for the benefit of the others, “Your cousin, the other Martin Muc in this village, has been waiting for you for an hour, worried, and wondering where you are!”

We all broke out into laughter, so relieved that a solution for the confusing elements of the encounter was falling into place. Our real cousin was on the other side of the village! Our immediate task was to extricate ourselves graciously and quickly from the home of our “new cousins.”

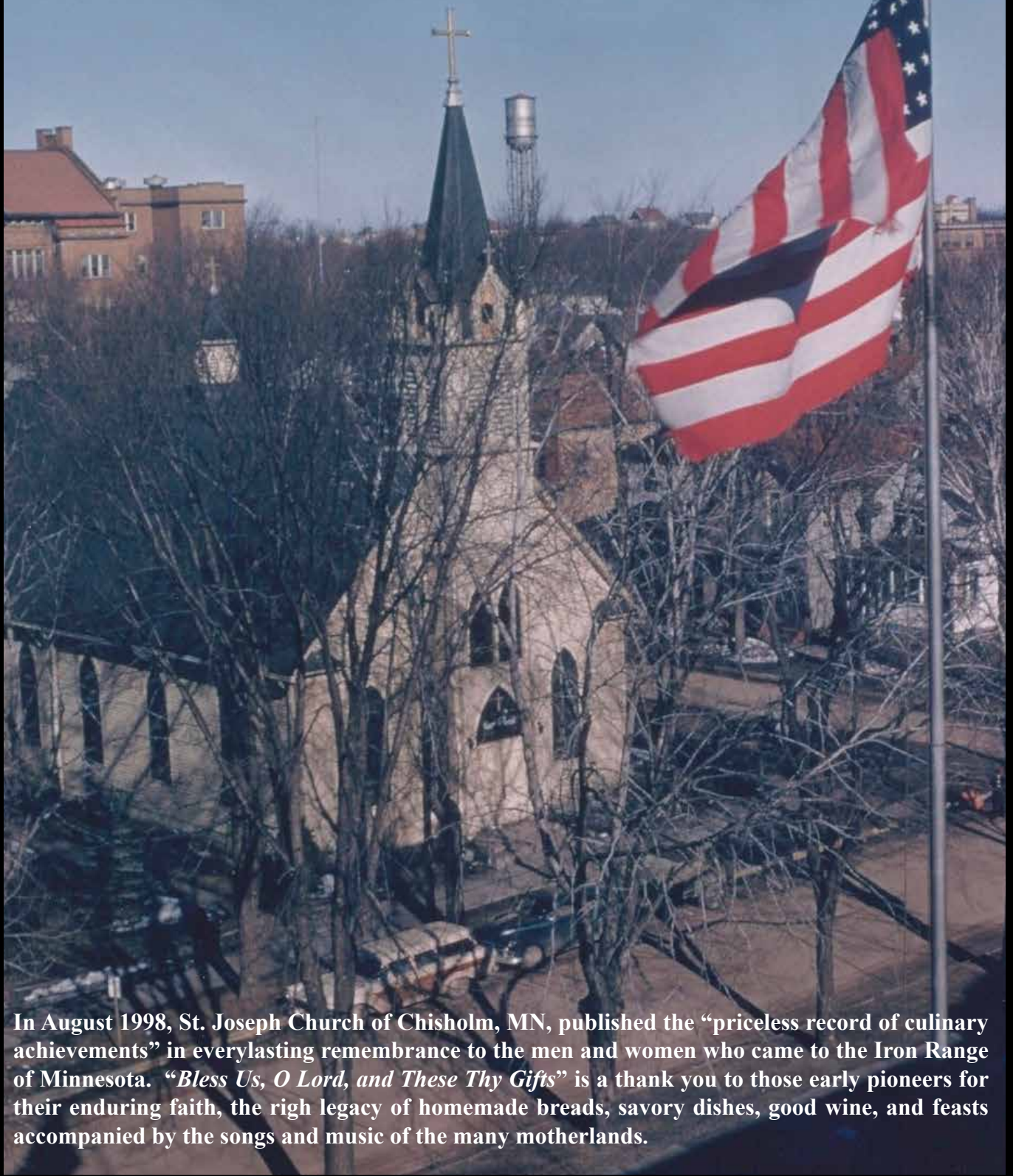
We had a perfectly delightful visit that day with our own cousins, Martin and his son, and Branka Muc, another cousin from nearby Semič. Every photo, story, and anecdote was familiar and beloved. We recognized all the names mentioned. There was Joliet’s beautiful monument to its Slovenian-American citizens, glorious St. Joseph Church, featured prominently in the sacramental photos. We were home!

Later, on the road to Venice, the next stop on our itinerary, we thought again about our visit with our “new cousins.” We realized that our unannounced visit had probably caused our first hostess to serve us her Christmas potica. The generous spending of time with mysterious strangers, the refreshments, the friendly conversation, and all said, the gracious hospitality we were shown, made us realize that if there is an answer to the question, “What are Slovenians like?” that answer would be formed by a description of the way we were treated by the wrong cousins that morning! The way we were treated reminded us that Slovenians are people who share hearth and home, even with strangers, and ask questions later. Whether we were in the home of our real relatives or not, when we were in the home of those gracious Slovenian people, their treatment of us led to our feeling of “Home Sweet Home.” And when you come down to it, that’s what Slovenians are really like!

# St. Joseph Church

Chisholm, Minnesota

*Established 1904*



In August 1998, St. Joseph Church of Chisholm, MN, published the “priceless record of culinary achievements” in everlasting remembrance to the men and women who came to the Iron Range of Minnesota. “*Bless Us, O Lord, and These Thy Gifts*” is a thank you to those early pioneers for their enduring faith, the rich legacy of homemade breads, savory dishes, good wine, and feasts accompanied by the songs and music of the many motherlands.



At the turn of the last century there were over 100 Catholic families living in the Chisholm, MN, area. The first recording of enduring faith was in 1903; the Altar and Rosary Societies held their meetings in the Hayes residence and later in the homes of the Marion, Cummings, and Morzele families.

*The Revered C.V. Gamache of Hibbing celebrated the first Mass on May 10, 1904, in the Central School House located on Central Avenue and Hemlock Street in Chisholm. At this Mass, Frank Dropp and Mary Sterle were united in marriage.*

Recognizing the needs of the community, Catholics in the Chisholm area sent a committee representing area nationality groups to petition the Most Reverend James McGolrick, the first Bishop of Duluth, of their intent to establish a parish. Serving on this committee were: Matt Matzele, John Bovitz, Jake Skala, Frank Jurkovich, M. J. Godfrey, M. F. Marion, J. J. Hayes, J. Couture, A. J. Bergeron, and Fred Hanley. Bishop McGolrick assigned Vicar General, Monsignor Joseph F. Buh, to organize St. Joseph Parish.

Construction of St. Joseph Church began in the fall of 1904, on three lots donated by Archibald M. Chisholm. He was a prospecting iron ore explorer and entrepreneur, after whom the city of Chisholm was named. The contractor, A. J. Bergeron, completed the church in time for Father Gamache, the priest from Hibbing, to celebrate the first Mass on Christmas Day.

*Donations for the new church were received from societies and clubs in the area: the Frederick Baraga Society, KSKJ Slovenian Catholic Union paid for the pulpit, the Blessed Virgin Mary altar was donated by the Slovenian Ladies, and the Slova Bogu Lodge contributed the baptismal font.*

On April 10, 1905, Reverend Michael Sengir, pastor in Virginia, MN, incorporated the St. Joseph Church. Legal incorporators, along with Bishop McGolrick, Vicar General Monsignor Buh, and Father Sengir, were: M. F. Marion, secretary; Matt Matzele, treasurer.

Reverend M. Bilban of Eveleth assumed the parish duties for part of 1905, followed by Reverend John Tscholl, who in May of 1906 became the first resident pastor. Father Tscholl resided with the Ludall family until 1908 when the stuccoed parish house was built. That same year the church was enlarged and bells were installed in the church tower.

*The first recorded marriage took place on October 8, 1905. United in marriage were Frank Perhaj and Mag-*

*dalene Pupich; witnesses were Tony Perhaj and Aloysia Krasovec.*

*The first Solemn Holy Communion was administered on Assumption Day, August 15, 1906.*

*The first recorded baptism was Raymond Boni Fugere, son of Joseph Henry Fugere and Ann Morin; sponsors were W. Heney and Lucy Mary St. Lawrence.*

From October 1910 to February 1911, Father Frances Saloven served as a substitute when Father Tscholl found it necessary to take leave because of illness.

*On September 2, 1912, Bishop McGolrick administered Confirmation to the first class of 145 parishoners.*

On September 15, 1911, Father John E. Schiffrer, a missionary priest, who had been serving among the Chippewa Indians in northern Minnesota, was appointed pastor of St. Joseph Church. He faithfully served the parish of St. Joseph for 55 years, until 1966. In 1951, he was elevated to the rank of Domestic Prelate with the of Title of Right Reverend Monsignor by his Holiness, Pope Pius XII.

During Father Schiffrer's years of service, the three lots behind the church were purchased from Raymond Maturi in 1941. The Ramponi property, on which the Parish Center was built, was purchased in 1946, with construction completed in 1949. The convent housing the Benedictine sisters, who taught catechetical classes, was constructed in 1952.

Today, St. Joseph Church stands proudly in the town of Chisholm, MN, now serving the descendants of the first builders of this church. The present pastor of St. Joseph Church is Reverend Fredrick Method who has been serving the St. Joseph Parish since 2007.

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The following is a listing of resident pastors of St. Joseph Catholic Church:

Rev. John Tscholl	1906 - 1910
Rev. Francis Saloven	1910 - 1911
Rt. Rev. Msgr. John E. Schiffrer	1911 - 1966
Rev. James Hayden	1966 - 1975
Rev. Cornelious Kelleher	1975 - 1986
Rev. David Tushar	1986 - 1990
Rev. Gerald LaPatka	1990 - 1993
Rev. Ron Gagne	1993 - 1995
Rev. Steven Daigle	1995 - 2002
Rev. Jon Wild	2002 - 2007
Rev. Fredrick Method	2007 - Current

# SALUTE to Slovenian-American Vocal Music 2015

-by Jim Lah and Mary Lou Deyak Voelk

It happened at the Vermilion Community College in Ely, MN, a Salute to Slovenian-American Vocal Music. Pat Koski of Ely opened the program singing a cappella, the “Domovina.” Then Chuck Debevec of Branch 109 - Twin Cities, MN, started his part of the program with a historical documentary and actual recordings. The documentary included three musical eras, each with their own artists, instrumentation, and musical style.

## *Acoustic period to 1925*

Milka Polančeva Schneid, a Croatian, recorded four songs on February 10, 1913, on the Columbia label, and was probably the first artist to record Slovenian songs in the USA. In January 1917, Slovenian Augusta Danilova and Milka Schneid, a singing duet, recorded 12 Slovenian folk songs on Columbia Records.

## *Electrical process 1925 - WWII*

It was the age of “New Process,” with microphones, electronic amplification, and electromagnetic recording. Introduced by Western Electric Company, fidelity was vastly improved. Slovenian singers, Mary Udovich and Josephine Lausche, accompanied by composer William Lausche on the piano, cause William’s recognition as establishing Cleveland as a leading American, old-time, ethnic, music center. Names like Simms Brothers, Anton Subelj, Adrija Singers, Emilio Blažević, Joe Perush, Rudy and Tony Deichman, and Frank Yankovic became popular.

## *Post-war period to 1958*

Frank Yankovic became known as the most influential artist.

After a time of socializing, the second part of the program began with a mini-presentation on the history of the Ely Slovenian (Church) Choir. Ron Forsman spoke on the history of the church choir, and how it evolved into a performing choir in the later years.



*Ron Forsman speaking on the history of the church choir.*

Joe Valencic, director of the National Cleveland Style Polka Hall of Fame, and in honor of the 100th birthday of Frankie Yankovic, presented a musical biography of the life and times of one of Cleveland’s greatest stars. Rightly called “The Polka King,” Frankie Yankovic is credited for taking the well-loved Slovenian polka, Americanizing it, and introducing it to main street culture. Did you know that “Just Because” was an obscure country-western tune recorded in one take? There was only a little studio time left. It became his second million-seller. Frankie’s most popular song had to be the “Blue Skirt Waltz.” Most will also remember “Hoop Dee Doo Polka” and “Who Stole the Kishka?” Joe also spent time honoring Johnny Pecon, who also played with Yankovic and whose 100<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated this year.



*Joe Valencic relating the biography of Frankie Yankovic.*



*Left to right: Mary Lou Deyak Voelk, Joe Valencic, Nadi Bajda, Albina Medved, Joe Jagunich Jr., Jim Lah, Rose Antilla, Chuck Debevec, and Albin Medved.*

The third part of the salute to Slovenian Vocal Music was a mini-presentation on the Slovenian Men Choraleers. Joe Mlakar Sr., in Chisholm, MN, established this group. The group informally gathered at the Slovenski Dom to sing songs of Slovenia. The members came from all over the Iron Range. The group sang for about 20 years and had a repertoire of over 120 songs.



No Salute to Slovenian Vocal Music could be held without a sing-along. With song sheets in hand, the audience, accompanied by accordion player Joe Jagunich Jr. (a child member of the Choraleers), were engaged in singing notable Slovenian folksongs.

The Salute continued into the evening, with a Slovenian sausage buffet at Creek Ridge Lodge, and for listening and dancing pleasure, the popular Barich Brothers performed for the audience. Other accordionists began appearing;



*Gathering around the Barich Brothers!*



*Mike Weinzierl on banjo, Bernie Barich on accordion, and John Barich on guitar.*

at one time nine button box players were accompanying the Barich Brothers on those favorite Slovenian melodies.

Thank you to Dave Marshall and Vermilion Community College, Ely Winton Historical Society, Chuck Debevec, Joe Valencic, Pat Koski, Albin and Albina Medved, Nadi Bajda, Rose Bajda Antila, Joe Jagunich, the Barich Brothers Orchestra, Kathy Udovich at Creek Ridge Lodge, SUA Branch 23 - Ely, MN, and to Hugo Mariuchi and team for recording this event for public access TV.



Card and letter from Albin Zaverl plus \$100 for the sale of four Lake Bled prints:

*"Being handicapped, I'm enclosing a little memento in appreciation. I keep trying to make these as thank you cards. I will be 95 on May 21, 2015. Thank you SUA and Zarja."*

***Thank you Albin,  
and a belated  
happy birthday!***

***- Mary Lou Deyak Voelk***

*Recently, Mr Zaverl's paintings (Old World Memories) hung in the Slovenian Embassy in Washington, D.C.*

***Wishing to have this postcard-size painting by Albin Zaverl?***

***Send in a donation to SUA, 431 N. Chicago St., Joliet, IL 60432-1703***

***and a print will be e-mailed to your desktop.***



# Slovenian

## Union of America

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### Branch Reports

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

Contact Information: Mary Ann Schellinger  
920.457.7946/[rhmas@yahoo.com](mailto:rhmas@yahoo.com)

While I was visiting family in Slovenia, 26 members from our Branch gathered for the annual SUA potluck at Ss Cyril & Methodius Fr. Cherne Hall on June 16. A wonderful sampling of American and Slovenian



*Dick Jelovnik & Ed Tesovnik enjoying slivovitz at annual potluck.*

dishes was available. Rice sausage, kransky, potato salad, smoked fish (caught by a Slovenian fisherman), and of course "pink tea" just to mention a few yummys. A guest, Sue Steffes, surprised everyone with slivovitz. It was also very special to have Amanda Kinney attend the gathering. She thanked the Branch members for their support in her nomination for the SUA scholarship to which she was a recipient last year. On the same day as the potluck, I was in Mozire enjoying coffee and krofi (famous large donut filled with warm marmalade) from Trojane. Sure wish we would be able to get some of those goodies in the states.

While in Slovenia for one month I stayed with nine families - a lot of moving around with suitcases. It is amazing that all the children are learning to speak English and are so excited about learning this new language. One of the most special memories of this trip was on June 27 when I was able to have coffee with Dr. Janez Bogataj in Ljubljana. He had been traveling to China, Brussels, and



*Mary Ann Schellinger and Dr. Janez Bogataj enjoying coffee in Ljubljana.*

Barcelona, so I was honored that he took the time to meet with me. We exchanged a few gifts and had an enjoyable hour just chatting.

On July 2, I was quite honored to attend a reception in Ljubljana, celebrating the 239th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Declaration of Independence. Brent R. Hartley, the Ambassador of the United States of America, hosted it. My cousin, Franjo Cesar, is a Command Sergeant Major in the Slovenian Army and I attended as his guest. In the true



*Sue Grasse, Aggie Gruenke, and Shirley Vertacic at the Slovenian church festival in Deland Park.*



celebration of an American picnic, we were served grilled mini-burgers, hot dogs, watermelon, blueberries, and of course, Coca Cola in traditional Coke bottles. On leaving the gala, all guests were given a little box of M&M's.

Returning back to Sheboygan in July, the festivities were not over. On July 12 our Slovenian church had their festival at Deland Park. Picnic attendees were blessed with sunshine, blue skies, and a beautiful view of Lake Michigan. The day started out with a Polka Mass to set the mood for fun, fellowship, and of course, food. Members of Branch 1 and also parishioners from the church made over 100 poticas for the event.

MARY ANN SCHELLINGER

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### **BRANCH 2 - Chicago, Illinois**

Contact Information: Judy Stoll

708.479.2864/[judithstoll@att.net](mailto:judithstoll@att.net)

The warm days are over, the leaves are off the trees, and I'm sure that snow is just around the corner. But we had a very eventful summer beginning with our annual Zveza Day Picnic on the beautiful grounds of the "Hill" in Lemont. The weather cooperated, the food was excellent, and the music (provided by Vince Rigler) was perfect. Dolores Puhek, who set up the very popular bag raffle with her sister, Gen Buol, did an outstanding job again this year. It takes a lot of time and energy to organize the picnic, so a big "thanks" to those who hosted the workers' pre-picnic luncheon, did the set up work, sold the raffle and food tickets, provided food, baked sweets, donated prizes, helped in the kitchen and bar, manned the bakery table, and did the clean up chores. We all did a great job!

It's a lot easier to be just a guest at a picnic, so that's why many of us attended the Honey Picnic in August. This special event is a fund-raiser for the Franciscan Fathers in Lemont and it is traditional for Branch 2 to provide the prizes and help with selling the cash raffle tickets. Thanks to Dolores Puhek, Gen Buol, and Mary Podder for their extra efforts on behalf of the Fathers.

Congratulations and best wishes to Kelly Kochniarczyk who graduated from the Chicago Fire Department Paramedic Academy. Mom and grandma Mary Podder are so proud of you!

Sadly, long time member, Mary Newbould, who lived in Florida, passed away after a long struggle with MS. Mary was the daughter of our past president, Jean (Daisy) Zeleznikar. We extend our condolences to her family.

Our next meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. on Thursday, September 17, at the Peaches and Pears restaurant, which is located at 6435 W. Archer Avenue in Chicago. We will be discussing plans for our Christmas get-together, the distribution of the picnic proceeds, and what the future holds for Branch 2. Contact me if you have any questions or comments.

JUDY STOLL

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

Contact Information: Annette Charron

719.569.7125/[amtcharron@yahoo.com](mailto:amtcharron@yahoo.com)

On July 12, Branch 3 sponsored a bus trip to the casinos in Cripple Creek, Colorado. The bus was full, and the successful event enabled the Branch to make a donation to St. Mary's Help of Christians Church's fund for the restoration of the church bells. Event participants enjoyed a beautiful summer day in Cripple Creek. In addition to trying their luck on the slot machines, some took walks around the picturesque town. Others enjoyed browsing in a variety of shops and learning about Cripple Creek's history in the local museums.

Monthly meetings for Branch 3 will resume in St. Mary's church hall. Our next meeting is on Tuesday, November 3. The annual Christmas luncheon is scheduled for Tuesday, December 1, and all are welcome.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON &  
BARBARA KARLINGER

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

Holiday Greetings to all Branch 5 Members!! Once the cool weather arrives in mid-September, I am ready for the holiday season, complete with all the wonderful comfort foods that go along with it!

Apple strudel and pumpkin pie, Christmas ham, warm potica, and homemade noodles in turkey broth soup... what a mix of American and Slovenian traditions! Just like our foods, our Slovenian-American families have adapted recipes and traditions to a way of life here in Indiana that is unique to each family. Attending church and sharing meals as a family is sometimes only done at holiday times, due to distances separating families, so it is important to keep Slovenian traditions and foods alive in your life, as well as your heart. Do you remember something you ate as a child, made by your grandmother, and the memories are so vivid you can still remember the aroma and taste? Take a moment and look online for Slovenian recipes, or order the new "*The Slovenian-American Table*" cookbook from SUA... bring your memories to life again, and pass them on to your families!

Congratulations to some volunteers from our Slovenian community who have taken on the task of baking potica for the holidays. These wonderful souls are trying to fill the gap left by the closing of Holy Trinity Church, and the subsequent disbanding of the "potica ladies." Limited quantities of poticas are available at the Slovenian National Home.

Branch 5 officers will once again be cooking a Friday night dinner at the Slovenian National Home. Please check the Nash website, and e-mails from us as to dates and times. Good food and good times always go hand and hand at the Nash.

Don't forget about the annual "SAUSAGEFEST" at the Slovenian National Home in January! Get your tickets

early, as this popular and tasty event usually sells out! Fresh, smoked, and blood sausage dinners will be available.

Several of our members have had recent surgeries, with long recovery times. Please keep them, and their families, in your prayers. Also, pray for the families who have lost loved ones this past year; the holiday season is always hard for those missing someone. Let these families know you are thinking of them with a card or a visit. Better yet, share a Slovenian treat you have made with them.

Happy Thanksgiving, and may many Christmas Blessings be with you this Holiday Season.

MARY, KAREN & PHYLLIS

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

Contact Information: Moreen Spencer

[spencermj1@aol.com](mailto:spencermj1@aol.com)

We want to wish a very special lady, Virginia Sustarich, a Happy 91st Birthday. She is special because she is related to all of Branch 13's Officers. We have another SUA member that celebrated a big birthday, Katie Pecavar. Katie and her husband, Frank, have a beautiful family that helped celebrate this great day.

On July 10, Branch 13 lost another dear member, Agnes Ansel Kurnick. Agnes was raised on Potrero Hill with her sister, the late Edythe Ansel. Agnes and her late husband, Edward, have three daughters, Joan Sefcik, Lynn Yager, Sandra Farrell, and 4 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. Agnes had been a member of SUA for many years, along with her daughters. Her family believes in education and has always donated to the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Fund.

Christmas is on its way. San Francisco is so fortunate that Santa arrives on the roof of the Slovenian Hall and comes down the stairs ringing a big bell. All the children and grown-ups are so excited to see him. Our wonderful Santa is Denny Twers, the husband of our SUA treasurer, Michele. Santa really starts the festivities for our Christmas Season.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year!

MOREEN SPENCER

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

Contact Information: Marjorie Mitchell

773.646.4392/[Dolores60617@yahoo.com](mailto:Dolores60617@yahoo.com)

With shorter days and cooler evenings, it's time to get out the sweaters and jackets for another season in the Chicago area.

During the summer months, we usually dispense with meetings. But news of the death of member, Mary Alkovich, on June 25, was noted. She was 95 years old.

Prayers go out to member, Helen Nowicki. She suffered a nasty fall at home, but is now recovering nicely. Hope she feels better soon!

Also noted was an outing of KSKJ members to Cellular Field to see the cross-town classic Chicago Cubs vs Chicago White Sox baseball game on August 16. A few SUA members accompanied them. An enjoyable pizza/chicken lunch was provided before boarding the bus to the ballpark. The White Sox took the honors on a 95+ degrees hot day.

Try to come out and join our monthly meetings, always held on the second Saturday of the month at 1:00 p.m. at St. George church basement. We continue to welcome the men members to our meetings. It's nice to have the male point of view on any subject.

DOLORES KRAL FRANKO

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

Contact Information: Diane Hohenwater

[dhohenwater@comcast.net](mailto:dhohenwater@comcast.net)

We are grateful to those who supported us by attending our 36th Grape Harvest Festival Dance in September. One of the highlights is always the annual Button Box Parade, which includes our current and past honorary mayors in a lively procession through St. Joseph Park Hall. We have a hard-working group of people who are dedicated to this traditional event.

Branch members and their guests are cordially invited to attend our Christmas party on Sunday, December 20. This will again be an appetizer potluck. Just bring your favorite snack, and we will provide dessert and drinks. If you wish, bring a \$10 wrapped present for the gift exchange. This is a great way to spend an enjoyable afternoon during the Christmas season.

Branch 20 mourns the loss of Mildred F. (Erjavec) Pucel, who passed away on May 30. Millie was the daughter of Slovenian immigrants, Joseph Erjavec and Josephine Setina. Like her parents and siblings, Millie devoted her life to her Slovenian Catholic heritage. She became a charter member of Branch 20, co-founded by her mother in 1928. In her youth she was a member of the Cadets drill team.



*Rudy and Millie Pucel*

She served as Branch 20 Vice President (1976-1985), as President (1985-1988), and was Mother of the Year in 1972. Millie was preceded in death by her husband, Rudy, and is survived by siblings, Jonita Ruth and Ronald Erjavec, four sons,





**Mildred F. (Erjavec) Pucel**

Christopher, Philip, Rudy, and Victor, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. All who knew and cherished her will miss Millie.

We wish you and your families a healthy and happy holiday season.

DIANE HOHENWATER

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**BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois**

Contact Information: Diane Data

[diane3121@comcast.net](mailto:diane3121@comcast.net)

The weather cooperated for our annual summer picnic in August. What a feast of fried chicken, sausages and sauerkraut, cabbage and dumplings, and homemade bread! A few of our members even tried recipes from the new “*The Slovenian-American Table*” cookbook - horseradish



deviled eggs and cucumber and radish salad, which were delicious. The dessert table was overflowing with potica, strudels, nut rolls, cakes, apricot kolacki, and brownies. Our member, Brian Benkse, and his friend, Jim, from their band, *Last Call*, entertained us with polkas and easy listening music. I assure you no one went home hungry. Every



year I’m excited to see the variety of Slovenian dishes that our members bring to share. Long passed Slovenian relatives would be happy to overhear the comments around the tables – “This tastes just like my grandmother’s strudel.” or “My mother used to make this all the time.” Well-done!

August 16 – The Feast of St. Roch was a special day for Branch 24. Our former Slovenian Church, St. Roch’s, was founded by Slovenian immigrants in 1900. In 1979, the parish closed when it merged with St. Joseph’s Parish in LaSalle, forming Resurrection Church. The statues and







**Branch 24 is so proud of our member, Bonnie Pohar Prokup, for her 16 years of service on the SUA/SWUA National Board (eight as National Secretary and eight as National President).**

**We applaud your many accomplishments for the SUA. Your love of your Slovenian heritage shows in all that you do.**

*Way to go Bonnie!*

furnishings of the church were either sold at auction or stored in a diocesan warehouse. But the statue of St. Roch and his dog, which were imported from France in the 1900s, were for an unknown reason, kept until recently in another local Catholic Church's basement.

Through a fortunate conversation, members of the Oklesen family became aware of the statue's whereabouts. Nephews of the Oklesen family used funds from their late uncles to restore and paint the statue. The original Oklesen family was 100% Slovenian and members of St. Roch's from the early 1900s.

Members of Branch 24 were honored to be a part of the Mass and Commemoration Event at St. Hyacinth's Catholic Church where the statue now has a new home in a special area of the church. Loretta (Ahcin) Story and I brought the gifts to the altar and Betty (Lushina) Hurst uncovered the commemorative plaques around the statue. Many Branch 24 members were in attendance as well as many Slovenians with a history at St. Roch's.

A set of three church bells, the largest weighing over 1,000

pounds, were removed from the tower of St. Roch's Church in 1988 and were sent out to be refurbished and were installed in a new tower at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in LaSalle. In order for future generations to know the history of these bells, Linda Struna proposed we put a plaque on the site stating where they came from - *"The bells on this site once rang in St. Roch's Slovenian Church in LaSalle, Illinois, and were moved here in 1988. Remembered by Slovenian Union of America BR 24 2014."* Again thinking of those long-passed Slovenian relatives, knowing that all the love and hard work they put into their Slovenian church has not been forgotten.

We are looking for a new president and vice president. Step up and take the challenge; we are all here to help and support you.

DIANE DATA

#### **BRANCH 33 - Duluth, Minnesota**

Greetings to all from Branch 33! A meeting was held on August 13 to discuss the possibility of having a joint



meeting with our surrounding area Branches to discuss SUA issues. Our Branch and Regional President, Mary Spehar White, contacted area Branches to get feedback on a joint meeting. The thought was to come together to discuss Branch struggles/issues and to share ideas on how we can make our own Branches stronger, which in turn would help the entire organization. The date was set for September 27 at Blackwoods Restaurant.

It is with heavy hearts that we remember our sister, Ruth Boben, who passed away in July. Ruth was a longtime member who was very involved in our Branch activities. A rosary was prayed during visitation before Mass and a special prayer was said for her before the ending of Mass. She will be sadly missed.

Our Branch would like to wish all a Happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas, and the blessings of the infant Jesus in the hearts of each one of you.

ANN MENART

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

Contact Information: Vida Lanari [vmlfjl@mchsi.com](mailto:vmlfjl@mchsi.com) or Tina Bajda [tinabajda1@gmail.com](mailto:tinabajda1@gmail.com)

Greetings from local Branch 35! We hope everyone enjoyed his or her summer. Our Branch has resumed its monthly meetings and looks forward to re-connecting with members on a regular basis.

This summer many of our Branch members attended the SUA National Convention in Naperville, Illinois. They participated in many activities and enjoyed socializing with members from afar. The new cookbook was also a big hit. Members have tried many recipes, noting a few of their favorites: čevapčiči, strudelj, štruklji, and Bela krajina bread.

On St. Nicholas day, December 6, we will honor St. Nick during a Polka Mass at St. Joseph's church



From left to right: Helen Frohna, Mici Bregant, Tom Gehm, Jan Gehm, Dr. Cerar, Denise Bartlett, Dolores Ivanchich, and Mark Frohna.



*The Mihelich sisters (Teresa, Vida, and Maria) at the National Convention.*

in Gilbert, accompanied with traditional Slovenian music. After Mass, members and guests are invited to enjoy a lunch of delicious Slovenian foods. Afterwards, members are invited for a tour of Johnny Snidarich's home, which will be festively decorated for the Christmas season. Members are looking forward to this event.

THERESA BAJDA MORAVITZ

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

Contact Information: Jan Gehm

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

Our April 22 (Earth Day) luncheon meeting had been dedicated to Earth Day and the West Allis Public Library recently acknowledged our monetary gift that was used to purchase five books relating to Earth Day. They will be placing a book plate in the front of each book listing our Branch's donation.

We had a hiatus of two months - July and August - from our Branch meetings. However, our members gathered together on August 2 and greeted other picnic lovers as they enjoyed a nice dinner and an afternoon of socializing and listening to music at Triglav Park in Wind Lake.

Helen Frohna, our Member Representative at the National Convention, met Slovenian Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar there and invited him to come to Milwaukee and see what

our Slovenian community has to offer. Lo and behold, shortly thereafter his office called to say he was coming! His four-day visit in mid-September was very enjoyable to Dr. Cerar and to all our members who got to meet and entertain him. His visit included Mass at St. John's Parish listening to their Slovenian choir, attending the *Vinska Trgatev* picnic at Triglav Park, viewing the large, Slovenian, music collection at UWM's Golda Meir library, a brunch at Helen's home, and more. We're sure he felt the love in our community's Slovenians.

Check your calendars for events happening through 2015. Our meetings are held at the West Allis Public Library and are preceded by a lunch at noon. We hope to see you on October 28 and December 2.

Plan now on attending our third New Year's Eve Party to be held at the Wisconsin Athletic Club in West Allis. This event has been a very pleasant way to celebrate and be home in time to watch the festivities on TV. At 5:00 p.m. (midnight in Slovenia) we have a champagne toast to ring in the new year. Party hats, horns, beads, food, drink, music, dancing, door prizes, and singing *Auld Lang Syne* make for a great party! Final plans have not as yet been worked out so watch for more information. Remember space is limited so get your reservation in early.

Congratulations to Branch member, Kristi Luzar, who was recently named the Executive Director of UEDA (Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin, Inc.) Kristi is the daughter of member, Jim Luzar, and the niece of our president, Jan Gehm. We wish you success and good luck in your new position, Kristi.

Wherever you are, wherever you go, BE SAFE!

MICI BREGANT

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

Contact Information: Debbie Duris 330.467.2281

Happy Holidays! Nine members attended our meeting on Saturday, September 5, at Panera Bread in Solon. It is always fun to reconnect and share past memories.

Our next meeting will be our Christmas Celebration on Saturday, December 5, at 1 p.m. at Maggiano's, 26300 Cedar Road (Beachwood Place). Please call President Debbie Duris (home 330.467.2281) if you plan to attend so she can include you in the reservation count.

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

Wishing everyone a delicious Thanksgiving, blessed Christmas and Happy New Year with your family and friends!

KATHLEEN FERRANTE

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#### **BRANCH 50 - Cleveland, Ohio**

Contact Information: Rick Tomsick

440.655.6735/[ricktomsick@gmail.com](mailto:ricktomsick@gmail.com)

Greetings from the "5-0!" Ivanka Matic was recognized on Baraga Day at St. Vitus Church for her wonderful efforts in connection with the cause of Bishop Baraga, now venerable. The diocese of Marquette, Michigan, maintains a wealth of important information about the "Snowshoe Priest" from Slovenia, including the following short bio: "*Born in Slovenia in 1797, Bishop Baraga came to the U.S. as a missionary to the Odawa and Ojibwa people of the*

*upper Great Lakes region in 1830. He traveled throughout the 80,000 square-mile territory by canoe, horse, snowshoe, and even dog sled. He was consecrated a bishop and appointed vicar apostolic of the Upper Peninsula in 1853. When the vicariate apostolic was established as the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie (now called the Diocese of Marquette) in 1857, Baraga served as its first bishop until his death in 1868. His work includes an Ojibwa-English dictionary, which is still in use today.*" I urge all to continue to pray for the cause of this exemplary priest's sainthood.

I've enjoyed an avocation in the study of the early church, and was privileged to present a paper at Oxford University last month on the theology of alienation suggested by



Tertullian, an early church father who wrote in ancient Carthage. My wife, Mery, and I had a superlative time in England, enjoying lots of local color and associating with some of the best minds in early church history (see photo above). Learning and teaching about the writings of the early church fathers is a field known as Patristic Studies. It's been a deeply rewarding experience for me personally and spiritually to be involved in writing in the field.

Our member, Joey Tomsick, popular nightclub entertainer and polka musician (and my little brother), recently turned





50! Sounds funny that my youngest brother is already 50. We surprised him at a wonderful party hosted by his wife, Lisa, at their local church hall. See the photo (page 32) of our dad, Ken Tomsick, Joey, and all of his brothers at that event. Joey's the one in the funny hat, and I'm the guy with the long hair.

Longtime member, Florence Stopar, passed away on September 6 after a stay at the local hospice. Our prayers and thoughts go out to her husband, Ray, who had visited Flo every day for the past several years at the Slovene Home for the Aged. (photo below of Ray and Flo in happier times).



Let's each remember to keep one another and all members of Branch 50 and all of the SUA in our prayers, especially remembering the dead and the poor souls in purgatory, and those they have left behind, to bring comfort and joy to all who mourn.

I always like to hear from members near and far. Please write to me at [ricktomsick@gmail.com](mailto:ricktomsick@gmail.com) with any family news and I will add you to our list of updates for Branch 50 (you don't need to be a member of Branch 50).

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

RICK TOMSICK

### BRANCH 89 - Oglesby, Illinois

Contact Information: Barbara Bruch  
815.339-2714/[barbarabruch@yahoo.com](mailto:barbarabruch@yahoo.com)

Our Branch has the best members. We really appreciate the work that Barbara Beer, Elizabeth Fox, and Annabelle Bryant did during the National Convention. They made all the beautiful, red carnation centerpieces for the Saturday night dinner and brought them to Naperville. Thank you so much! We also want to congratulate Rose Bell for winning third place in the potica contest. We know how good her potica is because she always donates a beautiful potica when we have our Slovenian Heritage Day.

Our Sunday, September 13, kick-off meeting was a big hit. Our President, Alice Ebner, and her husband, Jim,

cooked a Hobo dinner, complete with sausages, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, sweet corn, and onions. It was all cooked to perfection. We played guessing games. How many nails in the jar? Fran Morrison won an apple pie with her answer. Mitch Landgraff won another apple pie with the best guess of how much change was in the jar. Terry Kamnikar won the 50/50. Door prize winners were Mitzi Banich, who won an apple pie, and I won a bottle of Jim's homemade wine. What a nice day. We wish our out-of-town members could have been with us.

Another fun year is beginning with cooking demonstrations, *Martinovanje*, family history and genealogy, and Slovenian crafts. We plan to talk about recipes we have made from the new SUA cookbook. I made the čevapčiči and they were great. Everyone loves the new cookbook and we have sold a lot of them. Call or e-mail if you wonder about anything.

BARBARA BRUCH

### BRANCH 93 - New York, New York

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

Who called these the "lazy days" of summer? Branch members have been jet-setting all over the globe - a number of them even making it to Piran, Slovenia, for a wedding! For those left behind, Study-Buddy sessions for the hard-working Slovene language learners continued all summer long, contending with traveling drop-outs and vacationing teachers as best we could - we certainly didn't want to lose any of our painstakingly acquired skills through lack of use. We had

three groups, going from the Atlantic to the Pacific, that kept the momentum going all summer; but we really, really want to have our regular classes back! And we beg any of you that have young children or grandchildren, let them learn Slovenian now - they will thank you for it later!

A number of Branch mem-



*The Weird Tree: A Fairy Tale*

Poster by Eva Mlinar for the theatre play at Columbia University School of the Arts.  
(Directed by Peter Petkovšek)

bers went to the New York Fringe Festival's performance of "The Weird Tree," a Slovenian fairy tale beloved by director and playwright, Peter Petkovsek, as a child. It's the story of a tree so tall no one has reached the top, but in response to the king's challenge and the chance to win the princess's hand, many try. I won't give away the ending, but an ensemble of five acted, danced, and sang in this enthusiastically received avant-garde production. Peter Zargi from Ljubljana composed the music; check his web-site [www.soundcloud.com/funk-of-terror](http://www.soundcloud.com/funk-of-terror). Eva Mlinar, also from Ljubljana, did the graphic design. You can see her portfolio at [www.behance.net/EvaMlinar](http://www.behance.net/EvaMlinar).

We're planning for another Otroški dan (Children's Day) for September - we'll let you know how it went in the next issue.

ELIZABETH GROSS

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### BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois

Contact Information: Jana Hlade [jmhlade@hotmail.com](mailto:jmhlade@hotmail.com)  
Happy Fall! We hope you had a fun Halloween and are enjoying the fall colors. This past August, our Branch hosted a potica culinary class at the Slovenian Catholic



Center (SCC). It was wonderful to learn how to make this traditional Slovenian sweet bread. Thank you to Lillian Cepon and Mary Mavec for sharing their expertise and teaching this popular class.

On November 15 at 1 p.m. we will be having a Branch meeting in the library of the SCC. We will be holding officer elections and planning the following year. Some of the current board has been in position for over six years and have to step down. We would love to see some new, fresh faces representing Branch 99. Please consider attending this meeting to elect your new board members and offer some ideas for fun activities for next year.

We again will be hosting our

annual Cookie Sale on December 13 from 12 - 1:30 p.m. in the SCC lobby. Please drop off bakery by 11 a.m. that morning or contact Mary Mavec at 815.592.6679 for special arrangements. Thank you in advance for your holiday baking!



We were deeply saddened by the passing of **Joan Kaczmarek**. She

was an active member of our Branch, hosted a genealogy class for our members, and attended the National Convention as our Member Representative/delegate. Our prayers to her family. She is truly missed!

Wishing you a very Happy Thanksgiving and a joyous Christmas season!

JANA HLADE

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### BRANCH 100 - Southern California

Contact Information: Jean Koci

949.495.0097/[ajkoci@cox.net](mailto:ajkoci@cox.net)

A very special gathering of mostly Slovenians and Slovenian-Americans gathered in Santa Clara, California, on August 29 in honor of Fr. Peter Rožič, s.j. who was visiting the Silicon Valley. Fr. Peter had returned to Slovenia in February when he was assigned to work, once more, in Maribor and Ljubljana, both at the University and the Jesuit Community.



*Arnie Koci, Mary Lou Videgar, Jean Koci, Jože Fir, Jože Antolin, Par Antolin, Maria Fir, and Dorothy Jerneycic.*



Most of us had met Fr. Peter during his two-year term at Santa Clara University, where he had made many friends and had established an educational foundation. The ASEF (American Slovenian Educational Foundation) was created as an exchange program to give worthy students the chance to study with volunteer professors at



*Fr. Peter Rožič S.J.*

several universities in the U.S., and in Slovenia. Several Slovenian students were welcomed at Stanford, U.C. Berkeley, and the University of San Francisco for the second summer for sessions of 8 - 10 weeks each and were hosted by families who resided in those communities. The program will continue with American, and possibly ethnic Slovenian young adults from other countries, to study in Slovenia. Someday the dream of Fr. Rožič is to establish a Jesuit university in Slovenia. Perhaps some of these talented students will become the core of professors for such an endeavor. But for this particular weekend, the purpose was to attend Mass at the Jesuit Chapel on the campus of Santa Clara University and continue the celebration at the home of Jože and Patricia Antolin. Many SUA members, and others, joined together for a wonderful potluck meal with the hosts providing delicious klobase and potica. Guests brought a marvelous array of tasty dishes. It was good to see Mary Lou Videgar, Ana Fajnor and family, the Fir family, the Ravnik family, and other old friends who attended, and to meet many new people who are active in the Bay Area community, as well.

The Mass, of course, was presided by Fr. Peter and Lisa Videgar Lucas and various members of the choir, who sing at the Church of the Nativity on many Sundays in San Francisco, led Slovenian hymns. Lisa also provided music during the evening on her button accordion, along with Jože Antolin on the guitar. Many voices joined in on the old, traditional, folk songs throughout the evening.

My group from Southern California drove up for the day... about a seven-hour drive. It consisted of my husband, Arnie, son and daughter-in-law, Ken and Teresa, and dear friend and supporter of Fr. Peter, Dorothy Jerneycic. We had a beautiful drive each way, returning on Sunday. The highlight of my evening was being able to meet, in person, and have a wonderful chat with our amazing teacher of the Slovenian language, Mia Rode, who attended with her husband, Franc Rode. We talked a lot about the class and different ways in which the class might be helpful to the students, whether during the learning process or for times when they might be traveling in Slovenia. If you read this, Mia, please know that I truly appreciated the time you spent with me... showing me your great interest in what you are providing for those of us who have been taking advantage of this class. We also thank the other organizers and volunteers who work so hard to make it possible.

*Hvala lepa!* Wishing Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year Blessings to all!

JEAN KOCI

### BRANCH 108 - Olney, Maryland

Contact Information: Bernadette Fitzsimmons

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

Branch 108's oldest member, Mr. Charlie Koiner, will be celebrating his 95th birthday in November. *Vse najboljse za rojstni dan!* (Happy Birthday to you, Charlie!) Like a young gardener, he works daily on his one-acre farm in Silver Spring, plowing, pruning, and growing vegetables,



*Lynn Koiner with her "Best of Show" ribbon at the Montgomery County Fair in August, 2015.*

fruits, and herbs with the help of his daughter Lynn Koiner. The Koiners participated in the Montgomery County Fair, and won numerous ribbons for their garden bounty. Lynn won “best of show” for the wagon she creatively decorated with fruits, berries, and a variety of other homegrown goods. Congratulations to both Lynn and Charlie!

The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation has updated their online access to passenger data to include immigrants who arrived following WWII. In 1948 President Truman signed into law the Displaced Persons Act, which allowed displaced persons who had fought communism to immigrate to the United States as refugees. In August, following my researching and finding my father’s name handwritten and listed on Manifest No. 23, the manifest of in-bound passengers from September 1949, I was compelled to visit

Line	Name	Date of Birth	Sex	Age	Country of Birth	Port of Origin	Arrival Date	Remarks
1	KOVACIC, Erik	28	M	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
2	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	29	F	4	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
3	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	31	F	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
4	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	31	F	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
5	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	31	F	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
6	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	31	F	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
7	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	31	F	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
8	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	31	F	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
9	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	31	F	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	
10	KOVACIC, Elizabeth	31	F	3	Yugoslavia	Yugoslavia	SEP 19 1949	

Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty for the first time to experience the place where my father, Erik Kovacic, first walked on U.S. land. The feelings of emotion and majesty of this historical marvel was truly an unforgettable experience. For more information on how to access your ancestors’ passenger information, go to <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/>.

At the Ellis Island gift shop there is a cookbook for sale entitled, “*The Ellis Island Immigrant Cookbook*,” by Tom Bernardin. While thumbing through it, I found by surprise one recipe from Yugoslavia on page 207 submitted by Hermine Dicke of Madison, Wisconsin, with the following heading “*My parents, Marie and John Prisland, came to America through Ellis Island from Slovenia. My mother was an outstanding leader among the Slovenian women in the United States, having founded the Slovenian Women’s Union of America in 1926.*” The recipe for Ajmpren Cucumbers, which appears to be a delicious blend of cucumbers, potatoes, broth, vinegar, pepper, and bacon is included on the book page. Hermine stated at the end of the recipe, “*As children we were sometimes served a bowl of vegetable or milk soup with it.*” “*The Ellis Island Immigrant Cookbook*” is available - used - through Amazon and other book sellers at reasonable prices. It was heartwarming

to have found a little taste of Slovenia in this cookbook filled with immigrant recipes at the Ellis Island gift shop.

Members and friends of Branch 108, please check your e-mail for upcoming meetings. Best wishes to all for a beautiful fall and Christmas season celebrating Slovenian traditions and recipes with the help of the newest SUA cookbook, “*The Slovenian-American Table*” in chapters 8 – 11 that neatly summarizes occasions such as honoring the deceased, and *Martinovanje* (St. Martin’s Day). One of my favorite Slovenian recipes included in “*The Slovenian-American Table*,” that I fondly remember my mother making, is on page 93, *Pražen ali tenstan krompir* (fried potatoes). This is a very easy recipe to follow and can be served for breakfast, lunch, or dinner with a variety of other entrees. *Dober tek!*



BERNADETTE FITZSIMMONS

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

Contact Information: Norm Setnicker  
651.777.6106/[normas188@msn.com](mailto:normas188@msn.com)

Our first membership meeting on September 19 featured Ms. Megan Marsnik, author of an e-book entitled “*Underground*.” The story revolves around a Slovenian woman immigrant, named Katka, as she deals with the trials and tribulations connected to the violent Strike of 1916 on Minnesota’s Mesabi Iron Range. Megan grew up in the small town of Biwabik, which is the geographical focus of her novel. It is a piece of historical fiction told from Katka’s point of view and to give it more credibility, Megan mixes in some Slovenian words and phrases. Megan was able to share her Iron Range Slovenian background and how it impacted writing her first novel.

On September 28, the TC Slovenians hosted a lecture on the works of the well-known Slovenian architect, Jože Plečnik. Dr. Peter Krečič, a native Slovenian professor of design and architecture illustrated some of Plečnik’s major works, such as the University of Ljubljana Library, the Triple Bridge, and the Ljubljana Market place. The lecture was jointly sponsored by the UM and St. Thomas University. Thank you to Pat Dahl who helped in hosting



the event, and also hosted a “meet and greet” at her home.

Dr. Tea Rozman, Director of Green Card Voices and a member of the TC Slovenians, helped publish a “*Teaching Guide for Middle and High Schools: Voices of Immigrant Storytellers*.” One of our members, Mary Gorshe Manning, immigrated to the USA from Dolenja vas pri Ribnici, Slovenia, in the early 1950s. Mary was a displaced person following WWII and her oral history was recorded by Green Card Voices and became the subject of two lessons in this teaching guide. Immigration issues are the hot button issues, not only in Europe, but also as the 2016 Presidential Election unfolds. Green Card Voices records oral histories of different ethnic groups and the TC Slovenians are proud that one of their members, Mary Manning, was able to share her immigrant experiences and be a part of this innovative curriculum guide.

September also ushered in our 3rd annual Slovenian Calendar contest and fund-raiser. Rick Pisa, who heads the fund-raiser, solicits pictures of Slovenia that were taken by our members as they visited Slovenia. Members submit pictures, our Board picks the best 12-13, and the winners receive a prize. The winning pictures make up our 2016

Calendar. If any of our SUA Branches would like more detail, please e-mail or call Norm Setnicker.

October’s focus was on our 10th Anniversary Dinner of Branch 109. A buffet dinner was followed by a slide presentation highlighting our 10 year existence. Norm Setnicker, Mary Ann Palmer, and Mary Schwanke put together a TCS History - a 40-page book highlighting: Slovenian immigration patterns to the Twin Cities, Festival of Nations’ themes, Member of the Year, Early Beginnings, and “Members gone - but not forgotten.” The book features many colored pictures and will serve as a good record of our 10 years.

Our November meeting featured Liz Miller, our recording secretary, giving a slide presentation of the Slovenian celebration of *Martinovanje*. Liz’s presentation featured Slovenia’s wine-growing regions and the cultural traditions connected with this annual celebration. *Hvala lepa, Liz!*

*Vesele bozicne praznike!* HAPPY CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

NORM SETNICKER

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# Membership Application and Renewal

Slovenian Union of America

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

[slovenianunion.org](http://slovenianunion.org) [sua@slovenianunion.org](mailto:sua@slovenianunion.org) 815.727.1926

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

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

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

Dues are for January through December

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

Membership Renewal Notifications are sent annually in January

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please describe your Slovenian ancestry and provide SLOVENIAN SURNAMES

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

## Recommended by:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Dues Amount \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \_\_\_\_\_

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



# We would love to hear from you!

Send us your comments and a picture of a recipe, craft, or tradition that you followed from the new SUA cookbook – *The Slovenian-American Table*.

Send to [wprokup@aol.com](mailto:wprokup@aol.com).



*Dolly Shober's (Branch 23) grandsons getting a treat of Medanjaki – Cinnamon Honey Cookies.*



*Here is my first batch of sauerkraut from the cookbook! It tastes great!*

- Rose Anttila

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# Potica Recipe

## 1st Place at SUA's National Convention

*Made by Helen Coffelt Frohna  
Recipe from Her Mother - Mici Coffelt*

### Yeast Preparation:

2 packages dry yeast, or 2 oz. fresh yeast cake  
2 tablespoons sugar  
½ cup warm milk

Empty yeast into a small bowl. Add sugar and warm milk. Mix together, cover, set in warm place for 10 minutes or until frothy.

### Dough:

1 cup half & half (or whole milk)  
1 stick butter (salted or unsalted - your choice)  
1 cup sugar  
5 eggs, separated  
½ cup sour cream  
2 tablespoons rum  
6-7 cups flour  
2 teaspoons salt  
1 lemon rind, grated

In a saucepan, place half & half, butter, and sugar. Heat until butter melts. Separate eggs, beat yolks by hand, stir in sour cream along with rum.

In large mixing bowl, place 3 cups flour, salt, and lemon rind. Make a well in flour and slowly add the milk and yeast mixture. Mix first with a wooden spoon and then by mixer, adding remaining flour as needed. Turn onto table and continue kneading until fingers do not stick to dough.

Place in a bowl, cover tightly. Let rise for 1 hour or until it has doubled in size.

### Filling:

1 cup half & half (or whole milk)  
½ cup honey  
½ cup sugar  
½ cup brown sugar  
1 stick butter (salted or unsalted - your choice)  
2 - 12 oz. packages ground walnuts  
5 egg whites  
Optional: golden raisins that were soaked in rum

In a saucepan, place half & half, honey, both sugars, and butter. Heat until melted. Pour over the ground walnuts. Beat egg whites until stiff and fold into walnuts. If filling is too wet, add some crushed graham crackers.

After dough has doubled in size, roll out on floured cloth, spread the filling evenly over the entire dough. Spread raisins over the filling. Start at one end and tightly roll up like a jelly roll.

Grease pans (loaf or tube pan) and cut potica to desired sizes, placing roll in pan, seam side down. Let rise again until double in size, approximately 1 hour or so. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 45 minutes to 1 hour.

*Makes 4 – 10 inch loaves.*



*Helen Coffelt Frohna and her mother, Mici Coffelt.*



# Zarja Fest 2016 *Road Trip Through the Homeland!*

## **DAY 1: 15 September, THURSDAY**

**Departure from the United States to Vienna, Austria**

## **DAY 2: 16 September, FRIDAY – Bled**

We are met by our tour director and private bus at the Vienna airport and depart for Lake Bled, Slovenia. Enjoy the beautiful alpine scenery via Graz and Klagenfurt. Welcome dinner and music at a nearby restaurant. (D)

## **DAY 3: 17 September, SATURDAY – Bled**

Today enjoy the views of the lake from the top of Bled castle. We continue to Bled island that we will reach in a typical wooden “pletna” boat. On the island we will be greeted by the local ladies who will show us how they make potica. After a visit to the church, try the various kinds of potica just out of the oven. In the afternoon, we drive to Vila Podvin to enjoy a wonderful culinary experience. We are welcomed in the garden of the old homestead by the local market people. They will display their own homemade products for you to taste or buy. Later, watch a pottery and cooking demonstration and enjoy dinner prepared by one of the best Slovenian chefs, Mr. Uros Stefelin. (B, L, D)

## **DAY 4: 18 September, SUNDAY – Brezje**

After breakfast, our bus will take us to Brezje, to visit the most important Basilica and pilgrimage shrine in Slovenia. We will attend Sunday Mass and spend some leisure time there before stopping for a picnic lunch with local entertainment. Return to Bled for a free evening. (B, L)

## **DAY 5: 19 September, MONDAY – Karst Region**

Today we leave Bled and head to the coast. Visit the Skocjan caves that have been protected by the Unesco World Heritage since 1986. A guided visit will take us through the system of 11 interconnected caves marked by the flow of the Reka river. You will enjoy the sights of cascades and waterfalls, stone curtains, stalagmites, stalactites, and small lakes. We will continue to Pršutarna Lokev to sample and see how the typical prosciutto is made. Afterwards we will drive further into Karst region. Our next stop will be at nearby Stanjel, a typical Karst village. We continue to a nearby tourist farm for a late lunch. Then onto our hotel in Portorož with dinner on your own in one of the many seaside restaurants. (B, L)

## **DAY 6: 20 September, TUESDAY – Adriatic Coast Region**

In the morning visit the Secovlje Bay and the salt pans. Later embark your boat for a cruise along the Slovenian coast with a picnic lunch and music. Late afternoon enjoy a sightseeing tour of Piran, a town with all the preserved elements of a Venetian-style medieval town - narrow streets, city walls, many churches and squares. The most well-known is Tartini Square named after the famous violinist and composer, Giuseppe Tartini. Free evening in Portorož. (B, L)

## **DAY 7: 21 September, WEDNESDAY – Ljubljana**

After breakfast we visit the Koper wine cellar, the biggest wine producer of the coastal region in Slovenia. In their cellars you can admire the barrels that, until recently, were the biggest in Europe. Conclude the visit with a tasting of some of their excellent wines.

We continue on to Ljubljana and check into our hotel. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. (B, D)

## **DAY 8: 22 September, THURSDAY – Bela Krajina Region**

Today we will head to Bela Krajina, the most southeastern part of Slovenia, named “White March” after the birch trees. Many traditional instruments originate here, like tamburica and gudalo. We will first stop in a village of Radovica where in a wooden 18th Century house they reconstructed the old elementary school “Bistra buca” (Smart-head). In a humorous way the school master will teach you about the history of Bela Krajina. We will continue to the village of Veliki nerajec to visit the farmhouse of Mrs. Vera Vardjan. She will show you the typical instrument known as gudalo, how it is made and its musical sounds. Our last stop will be at the Cvitkovic family in Adlesici, where you will learn about the flax, how they grow it and how they turn it into lax linen. Another famous product of the area is “pisanice,” colored eggs; you will see how they decorate them. Last we come to Plesivica vineyards, close to Semic, where you will meet a new friend, Mr. Joze Sustaric, and enjoy a typical picnic lunch. Enjoy a free evening in Ljubljana. (B, L)

## **DAY 9: 23 September, FRIDAY – Skofja Loka ~ Kamnik**

Today we will visit Skofja Loka, one of the oldest towns in Slovenia. In the Middle Ages it developed as a trade center. We visit the old town and the castle which houses one of the finest Ethnographical museums. Our next stop will be in a nearby village of Pustal, visiting the homestead Nacetova domacija; typical of the 15th Century. You will also try some of their home-made specialties, like zaseka, klobasa, and homemade bread. In the afternoon we will head to Kamnik visiting gostilna Repnik where the representatives of the local culinary association will offer a cooking class for the group. They will show you how to prepare typical dishes of the Kamnik area with your assistance. Dinner with these dishes will follow with local entertainment. Return to Ljubljana. (B, L, D)

## **DAY 10: 24 September, SATURDAY – Ljubljana**

After breakfast we will enjoy a walking tour of Ljubljana. Visit the most significant sights of the old city centre: the picturesque central open-air Market, The Three Bridges, both designed by the famous architect Jože Plečnik, the Baroque Town Hall and the Robba's fountain. Rest of the day at your leisure. Dinner on your own and overnight in Ljubljana. (B)

## **DAY 11: 25 September, SUNDAY – Vienna**

This morning is a farewell to Ljubljana and Slovenia. We head to Austria and to our hotel in the Austrian capital. Later in the afternoon we will meet our local guide for a city tour: Visit the Hofburg Palace, once the home of the Habsberg emperors, and view the Belvedere Palace, Prater Amusement Park, the UN Buildings, St. Stephen's Cathedral, and other reminders of the city's imperial past. Conclude with farewell dinner at a local restaurant. Return to our hotel for overnight. (B, D)

**DAY 12: 26 September, MONDAY – Departure from Vienna -** Group transfer to Vienna airport for your flight home. (B)

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