



Jednota

THE UNION

USPA#273500 ISSN1087-3392



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Volume 118

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2009

NUMBER 5798



L-R Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt, National Vice President Andrew R. Harcar Sr. and National Treasurer George F. Matta go over the Membership and Marketing statistics for 2008.

FCSU Board Holds Annual Meeting in Independence, Ohio

The Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union held their annual meeting on Friday and Saturday, March 13 and 14, 2009, at the Home Office in Independence, Ohio.

President Andrew Rajec presented his annual report on the status of the society. Reports were also given by the National Chaplain, Rev. Thomas Nasta; National Vice

President Andrew R. Harcar Sr., Executive Secretary Kenneth Arendt, National Treasurer George Matta, Fraternal Activities Director Susan Ondrejco, Chairperson of Auditors Karen Hunka, General Counsel Gary Matta, and others. An Auditor's report was given by Edward Mertz of Hosack, Specht, Muetzel and Wood. An actuarial report was given by Edward DePersis of Bruce and DePersis. Larry White gave an Assets Managers report to the board.

Members are encouraged to read the various reports and minutes from this important meeting and take an interest in the society. Remember, this your society. The president's report and executive secretary's report appeared in the April 1st issue.

Andrew R. Harcar Sr., National Vice President

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Message from the President *New Ideas*

Dear Members:

As you know in 2008 we began sending the Jednota to all our members or families in our membership. Since that time we have been tracking the letters and notes sent by members who are declining to receive the newspaper. That some decline is not surprising, the numbers and reasons are.

It appears that we need to do something to enhance the Jednota so that more people will actually want to read it.

Therefore I am asking you, our members, to write, fax, mail or call me personally, or to our editor, Anthony Sutherland, with ideas on how we can make our newspaper more appealing and want you and your family members to read it. Whether it be adding a cross-word puzzle, an opinion



Andrew M. Rajec

continued on page 3



“Park 2 Annuity”— Now Paying 4.25%

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Please contact your Branch Officer or the Home Office for applications
Visit our web site at FCSU.com

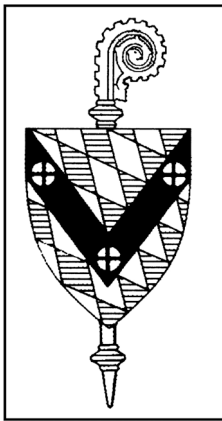


FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, KENNETH ARENDT:

The First Catholic Slovak Union 2009 International Golf Tournament will be held jointly with the Slovak Catholic Sokol on August 14-16, 2009 at the Clarion Oaks and Hi-Level Golf Resorts in Clarion, Pennsylvania. We are very excited at this opportunity to have a historic social event with the Slovak Catholic Sokol. We encourage all our members to get involved and come out and support this event. We are asking all our branches to consider being a sponsor for one or more of your members so they may participate in this exciting event. We look forward to seeing everyone on August 14th. Mark your calendars!

Registration entry form and further information detailing the packages available will be in the next issue of the Jednota Newspaper and on our Website.

Insights and Viewpoints



St. Vincent Archabbey — Homilies Father Campion P. Gavaler; Father Demetrius R. Dumm O.D.B.

May 10, 2009

Fifth Sunday of Easter

John 15:1-8

Gospel Summary

In this passage from the Last Supper Discourse (13:31-17:26), Jesus reveals to his disciples and to us that he is the true vine planted and cared for by his Father.

We are the branches, depending on Jesus for life just as branches depend on the vine. "Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing." Separated from Jesus we cannot bear fruit: like a useless branch we are cut off and soon wither.

To be certain that we have some sense of how radical the gift of sharing his life is, Jesus adds two astonishing statements. If we ask for anything, our Father will give it to us because of the communion of life. It is as though his own beloved Jesus were asking. "Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me," Jesus prayed before restoring his friend Lazarus to life (Jn 11:42). Further, if we bear much fruit from the new Christian life that we have been given, the Father will be glorified in us as he was through Jesus.

Life Implications

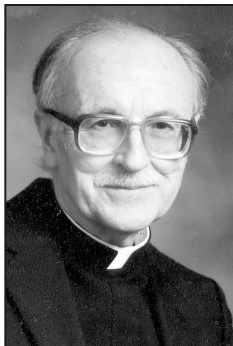
At our Eucharist today we hear the gospel as the Christians of John's community at the end of the first century heard it, not with the incomplete knowledge of the disciples before Jesus' death, resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit. We have heard the complete good news beginning with the response of Jesus to the question two disciples asked, "Rabbi, where are you dwelling? Jesus said to them, Come, and you will see" (Jn 1:38-39).

Throughout the Last Supper Discourse, Jesus reveals that he dwells in the Father and the Father dwells in him. And he reveals further that he dwells in us and we dwell in him like a vine and its branches. John's placement of the "vine and branches" saying in the context of the Last Supper reminds us of what Jesus said after feeding a large crowd with bread and fish: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me" (Jn 6:56-57).

If we had only the image of the vine and branches, we might draw the conclusion that our finite human life is totally absorbed by infinite divine life. Rather, the good news is that the communion of life in Christ is a communion of love. "As the Father loves me, so I love you. Remain in my love" (Jn 15:9). Life in Christ is a gift freely given, and a gift freely accepted. Tragically, because there is freedom, the life and love of Christ can be rejected.

The fearful possibility of separation from Christ is a consequence of freedom. It is the possibility of seeking an illusory life that the world separated from God offers. The archetypal figure of the disciple Judas, who succumbed to greed in betraying Jesus, is a graphic reminder of that possibility for all of us. We are meant to live in the peace and joy of the Easter gospel, however, not in fear and uncertainty.

"Without me you can do nothing," Jesus tells us. But with him we can do anything. If we



Campion P. Gavaler,
O.S.B.

remain in his life and love, we can ask anything of the Father and it will be given. Mindful that Jesus out of love for us, and that his Father might thereby be glorified, did not ask to be saved from his hour of suffering (Jn 12:27). We too will always ask to live in his truth and love. In confident hope that the supreme grace of remaining in Jesus will always be given, we can keep his commandment to love each other as he loved us. Thus, the Father's goodness will also be revealed in us for his honor and glory. "And the way we know that he [Jesus] remains in us is from the Spirit he gave us" (Reading II, 1 Jn 3:24). In this knowledge of faith and hope is our peace and joy.

May 17, 2009

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

John, 15: 9-17

Gospel Summary

This gospel passage is filled with beautiful statements about the ever popular subject of love. Jesus tells us that the Father loves him, and that he in turn loves us, and that we should love one another. Perhaps we have heard these sentiments expressed so often that we no longer realize how profound and dramatic they really are.

When Jesus says that the Father has loved him, he is correcting a very common concept of God. Many people at that time (and perhaps ever since) pictured God as someone very transcendent and therefore very distant from them. He was surely all-powerful but, like most powerful ones, he seemed to be cruel as well. Is God not in some way responsible for famine and natural disasters? Does he not at least permit the death of young parents and innocent children?

But Jesus tells us that he knows God much better than we do. As eternal Word, he dwells in the lap of his heavenly Father (John 1:18). This is body language, which tells us that Jesus hears the very heartbeat of his Father. He assures us that God is a loving Father who wishes only good for us. Most of all, he knows that this loving Father offers us a love that can enliven and nurture and energize us, just as the sun energizes plants and trees.

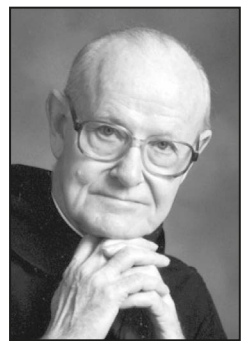
Jesus invites us to experience and to trust this life-giving love, to live in the presence of it, and to yearn for it, just as the sunflower follows the sun across the sky in our human gardens. Then we will know how to become sunshine in the lives of others. We will also know how to deal with mysteries in our lives. We will also want to share our treasures with others and thus become part of that divine love that overcomes all darkness and evil.

Life Implications

The implications of this vision of reality are not hard to see. Most people who do not love, or do not love enough, are usually persons who do not feel that they themselves are loved. It is futile to tell people that they must love others when they have not really been made free to love by experiencing love in their own lives. Too often it is a case of impoverished people trying desperately to give more than they have.

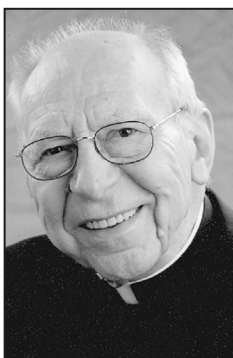
That is why it is so important to hear and to trust the words of Jesus about the love of the Father for us. This love is found in Jesus himself, who gave his life for us, but it is also found everywhere in life: in loving family and friends, in the blessings and successes of life, in every flower and gentle breeze.

Today's gospel challenges us to acknowledge the dark evil in life but it asks us to notice especially the luminous good that is also there. And as we pay attention to the good in life, we will be able to let the evil go by or, at least, to keep it in its place, which is never at the center of life. This is exactly what Jesus did and, with him, we too need to feel the warmth of the Father's love and to share that warmth with all whom we meet in life.



Demetrius R. Dumm
O.S.B.

Reflections on Our Christianity Msgr. Edward V. Rosack



Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians-3

"For these reasons, my brothers, you whom I so love and long for, you who are my joy and my crown, my dear ones, to stand firm in the Lord." (Philippians 4:1)

However, not all is harmony within the Philippian congregation. There are two women who are quarreling with each other. So intense have their differences become that these have been brought to the attention of Paul. Paul responds: "I plead with Evodia just as I do with Syntyche: come to some mutual understanding in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, too, my dependable fellow worker, to go to their aid; they have struggled at my side in promoting the gospel along with Clement and the others who have labored with me, whose names are in the book of life." (Philippians 4:2-3)

"Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and in petitions full of gratitude. Then, God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

"Finally, my brothers, your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true, all that deserves respect, all that is honest, pure, admirable, decent, virtuous or worthy of praise. Live according to what you have learned and accepted, what you have heard me say and seen me do. Then will the God of peace be with you." (Philippians 4:8-9)

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JEDNOTA

(ISSN 1087-3392)

Catholic Bi-Weekly Issued 26 Times Annually

Publisher and Proprietor

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION of the United States of America and Canada

FCSU Corporate Center

6611 Rockside Road

Independence OH 44131-2398

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: UNITED STATES - \$25.00 All other countries - \$30.00

PRINTED AT: SUSQUEHANNA PRINTING, 1 East Main Street, Ephrata, PA 17522

Telephone: (717) 944-0461 Fax: (717)944-3107

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to:

Jednota, First Catholic Slovak Union, 6611 Rockside Road, Independence, OH 44131-2398

Periodical Postage paid at Cleveland, OH 44131 and additional mailing offices

Message from the President

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column, a youth section, a young adult section, a teenager section etc.

My phone # is 1-800-JEDNOTA (1-800-533-6682), Fax # 216-642-4310. My E-mail address is: PRESIDENT@FCSU.COM

My Address is: Andrew M. Rajec, President
First Catholic Slovak Union
6611 Rockside Road Suite 300
Independence, OH 44131

I am anxious to hear from you.

Fraternally,

Andrew M. Rajec, President



From the Desk of the Executive Secretary, Kenneth A. Arendt

The New Jersey Fraternal Congress offers a Youth Volunteer Award Program to deserving young students from a member society, based on their volunteer achievements with the society as well as the community at large.

This year, thanks to the generosity of the Recreation Farm Society, each award winner will receive \$500 with an additional \$500 award to their designated charity. The number of awards will be based upon the proceeds of our Convention Ad Book.

The deadline for submitting applications is September 1, 2009 postmark. The Youth Volunteer Award Committee of the New Jersey Fraternal Congress will make the selection of the award recipients and all decisions are final. The award recipients will be announced at the 76th Annual New Jersey Fraternal Congress Convention to be held at the Hilton Casino Resort in Atlantic City, New Jersey on October 8 & 9, 2009.

Rules/Regulations/Requirements

Applicant Must:

1. Be a resident of New Jersey and a member of a Fraternal Benefit Society that is a member of the NJFC
2. Be between the age of 16 and 22 at the time of application
3. Obtain a recommendation letter from your Fraternal Benefit Society
4. Sign the *Statement of Application* printed on the bottom of the award application
5. Return the complete application and letter of recommendation, postmarked no later than September 9, 2009

Please contact the Home Office at 1 (800) 533-6682 for an application if interested.

NEWSPAPER DEADLINES

All copy is due by 4:30 P.M., THE MONDAY BEFORE THE ISSUE DATE, unless otherwise stated below because of special holiday scheduling. Copy that is not received by this deadline will not necessarily appear in the following Wednesday's issue.

Issue Date	Copy Date
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13	MONDAY, MAY 4
WEDNESDAY, MAY 27	MONDAY, MAY 18
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10	MONDAY, JUNE 1

Correspondents who are announcing upcoming events should remember that the JEDNOTA is printed EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY, and should take into account the extra time lost in the postal system. Therefore, please plan to have your announcements to us in ample time for them to be printed and received by the readership.

Send all copy (English AND Slovak) to:
Anthony Sutherland, Editor; editorjednota@yahoo.com
"JEDNOTA"
1001 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057-4835
FAX: (717) 944-3107

From the Desk of the Executive Secretary, Kenneth A. Arendt

Indiana Fraternal Congress presents the Adult and Youth Fraternalist of the Year Award to one adult and one youth for their outstanding volunteer contributions to their lodge, society and community each year. We encourage any member who knows an individual who has made outstanding contributions this year and is a resident of Indiana review the qualifications for nomination. Please contact the Home Office for an application. All nomination forms must be postmarked no later than July 20, 2009. Please send completed packets to:

Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.
First Catholic Slovak Union
508 James Street
Streator, Illinois 61364

ELIGIBILITY:

- Anyone between the ages of 12-22 may be nominated for the youth award. Those ages 23 and older may apply for the adult award. Both groups of nominees must be members of an Indiana fraternal benefit society for at least 2 years.
- Nominees will be judged on activities completed within the last 12 months.
- Individuals who are compensated by their society for their volunteer efforts are not eligible to receive an award.
- The adult and youth awards can be won only once by an individual. However, a society is eligible to nominate an individual not selected in a previous year.
- The program will be administered by the IFC Adult and Youth Fraternalist of the Year Committee.
- A qualified panel of independent judges will choose the winners. The decisions of the judges will be final.
- Each member society is eligible to submit three adult and youth nominations each year.

AWARD DESCRIPTION:

- An engraved plaque will be presented to the adult and youth honorees at the annual meeting of the Indiana Fraternal Congress in August, 2009. Travel, lodging and meal expenses for the honorees will be paid by the sponsoring societies.
- A \$100 check will be awarded on behalf of each honoree to the nonprofit, charitable organization of their choice.
- Media information regarding the honorees will be distributed by the IFC Adult and Youth Fraternalist of the Year Committee.

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**FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION
OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA**

Insights and Viewpoints

Reflections on Our Christianity

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"It gave me great joy in the Lord that your concern for me bore fruit once more. You had been concerned all along, of course, but lacked the opportunity to show it. I do not say this because I am in want, for whatever the situation I find myself in I have learned to be self-sufficient. I am experienced in being brought low, yet I know what it is to have an abundance. I have learned how to cope with every circumstance- how to eat well or go hungry, to be well provided for or go without. In him who is the source of my strength I have strength for everything." (Philippians 4:10-13)

"Nonetheless, it was kind of you to want to share in my hardships. You yourselves know, my dear Philippians, that at the start of my evangelizing, when I left Macedonia, not a single congregation except yourselves shared with me by giving me something for what it had received. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent something for my needs, not once but twice. It is not that I am eager for the gift; rather, my concern is for the ever-growing balance in your account. Herewith is my receipt, which says that I have been fully paid and more. I am well supplied because of what I received from you through Epaphroditus, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God." (Philippians 4:14-18)

"My God in turn will supply your needs fully, in a way worthy of his magnificent riches in Christ Jesus. All glory to our God and Father for unending ages. Amen." (Philippians 4:19-20)

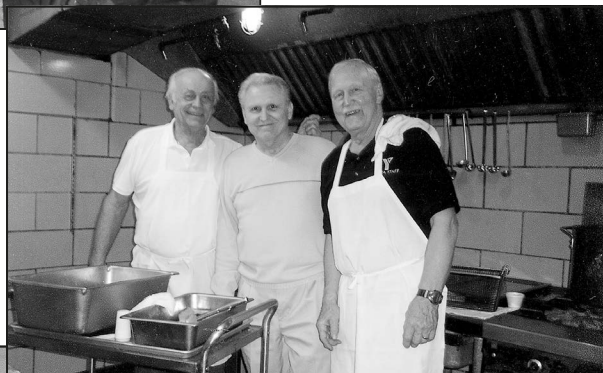
"Give my greetings in Christ Jesus to every member of the church. My brothers here send you theirs, as do all those who believe, particularly those in Caesar's service. May the favor of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen." (Philippians 4:21-23)

From Paul, in prison



National President Andrew Rajec enjoys the company of Joseph Petrasek, President of Branch 553 and his wife Cecilia.

National President Andrew Rajec (center) greets some of the kitchen help, George Kacsanek, Branch 553 Treasurer, and Leonard Gmerek.



Idka Rajec, wife of Andrew Rajec and Greg Petrasek, Branch 553 Vice President and President of the Rev. Stephen Furdek District.

On the Road with Our President

On Friday, March 20, 2009, my wife and I traveled south to Akron, Ohio and ate one of the best fish dinners available in the State of Ohio.

The dinners are prepared by members of Branch 553 and are held in the Slovak J Club, 485 Morgan Avenue, Akron, Ohio every Friday from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. They also have a spaghetti dinner on Wednesdays.

I would like to thank Joe Petrasek and his wife Cecilia, Greg Petrasek, George Petrasek, Leonard Gmerek and all the workers and members of Branch 553 for their hard work and hospitality.

Andrew M. Rajec, National President

Apostleship of Prayer Intentions for May 2009

General Intention

Lay Vocation Promoters. That the laity and Christian communities may embrace their responsibility for promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

When Jesus looked out at the crowds and saw them like sheep without a shepherd, he was moved with compassion. He asked his disciples to "ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest" (Matthew 9:38).

Vocations to the priesthood and religious life come from God, but God always works through human instruments to accomplish his purposes.

Aware of our need today for good shepherds to continue the work of Jesus among us, Pope Benedict asks us to pray that we may all take seriously our responsibility to create what he has called a "culture of vocations."

We will know we have built a culture of vocations when becoming a priest or religious is seen as something more worthwhile and praiseworthy than pursuing or achieving wealth, prestige, or pleasure.

We are praying for ourselves this month- that we may encourage and value those in our own Christian communities who are called to religious vocations.

Most of all we need to encourage vocations at home. As families have become smaller, some parents discourage their children from pursuing a vocation. It's natural to want grandchildren, but parents ought to be just as delighted when God calls a child to the priesthood or religious life. Last October the Church beatified Louis and Zelig Martin, all of whose children entered religious life, including St. Therese, co-patron of the Apostleship of Prayer.

Young people in our own communities continue to respond to the love of God in Christ. Let's encourage them to explore how God is calling them to share that love with others. Let's pray that laity and Christian communities throughout the world may promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

To learn more about promoting vocations in your parish, visit the web site of the Serra Club, www.serraus.org/

Reflection. How can you help build a "culture of vocations" in your community? In your home?

Mission Intention

A Missionary Church. In response to the Lord for the gift of faith, may the younger Catholic communities generously participate in the universal mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Just as vocations come from God, so does faith. Despite the rampant skepticism of our age, many people continue to believe the Gospel and believe in Jesus Christ. Many new churches have arisen and grown large, for example, in India and across the African continent. These are among what the Pope calls the "younger Catholic communities." He asks us to pray this month that they will join us in proclaiming the Gospel to the whole world.

Sometimes we in the older churches tend to forget that proclaiming the Gospel is an integral part of our new life in God. Evangelization is not something invented by a marketing department in the Vatican. Jesus himself asked his followers to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth. And he promised that he himself would be with us in this effort until the end of the world.

Evangelization is integral to our faith. God is Love, and by nature love reaches out to others. Jesus himself showed us how to do it. When we encounter those who are hurting, love should move us, as it moved him, to reach out to help, to heal, and to speak of God's love.

Pope Benedict has pointed out that spreading the Gospel is primarily and historically the work of priests and religious. And, indeed, we have seen many priests from places like India and Africa serving in parishes throughout our country. Their missionary presence testifies to the health of the emerging churches around the world, proclaims that we are a universal Church, and reminds us that we are not sufficient in ourselves. The parts of the Body of Christ need one another.

"I see the dawning of a new missionary age," said Pope Benedict on Mission Sunday in 2008, "which will become a radiant day bearing an abundant harvest, if all Christians and missionaries and young churches in particular respond with generosity and holiness to the calls and challenges of our time." So let us gather to pray, like the Apostles in the upper room, "together with Mary, the Mother of Jesus" (Acts 1:14). "We, too," the Pope conclude, "need to be transformed and guided by the spirit."

Reflection. How can you welcome or support a missionary from one of the younger churches?

Reminder...

Please send all articles for publication (both English and Slovak) to Jednota Estates, 1001 Rosedale Ave, Middletown, PA 17057. Fax 717-944-3107. Email editorjednota@yahoo.com.

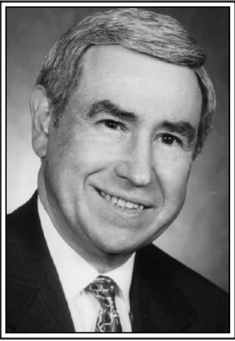
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MONEY MANAGEMENT

& TAX TIPS

By **Joseph T. Senko**

Certified Public Accountant
Certified Financial Planner
Personal Financial Specialist
(AICPA)



Five Ways to Save on Energy Costs

The average American household spends \$1,900 a year on energy bills, according to the government's Energy Star program. Whether you're preparing for the heat of summer, the frigid temperatures of winter, or looking to lower your gasoline expenses, there are many practical ways to cut down on costs. The tips below will help you save money and do the earth a favor by cutting greenhouse gas emissions too.

Conduct an Energy Audit

Conducting a home energy audit can help you identify problems that could be costing you money, such as drafts that let in cold air, insufficient insulation; poorly maintained heating and cooling equipment; or inefficient lighting. The U.S. Department of Energy's Web site (www.energy.gov) has instructions for conducting an energy audit. If you'd like to bring in an expert, many electric or gas utilities offer these audits for free or at a reasonable charge.

Adopt Environmentally Friendly Ideas

If you conduct a home energy audit, you may find that you can cut costs by taking easy, money-wise steps that cut power usage. For example, simply unplugging appliances when not in use will lower energy consumption. Many appliances draw energy even when not in use. Another good idea is to close the blinds in the summer time to keep out the sun's heat and to open them in the winter to let in natural warmth.

Pick the Right Appliances

If you look for the Energy Star label when selecting energy-using products, you're likely to use less power, save money, and help the environment. These products, made by many manufacturers, all meet energy-efficiency specifications set by federal government agencies. There are Energy Star-qualified products in a wide range of categories, including household appliances, heating and cooling equipment, home electronics, and office equipment. Find more information on the Energy Star label online at www.energystar.gov.

Turn Off the Lights

This easy step will make a real difference in reducing your energy bills and helping the environment. Many people remember to turn off lights in unused rooms in their homes, but this step is sometimes forgotten in an office. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, most energy used in an average commercial building is for lighting. Get in the habit of turning off lights at lunch or in empty offices and conference rooms.

Perform Regular Car Maintenance

Your home and office aren't the only places where smart steps will cut energy or fuel costs. It's possible to save \$100 a year on gasoline by keeping your car engine tuned up and your tires properly inflated.

Coming Events

May 3

-The Msgr. John E. Rura District's Semiannual Meeting at 11:00 a.m. in the upstairs room of Msgr. Komar Hall of Holy Family Church, 2806 Parkway Avenue, Linden, New Jersey.

May 3

-A meeting of the Rev. Stephen Furdek District at 1:00 p.m. at St. Charles Parish Activity Room, 5891 Ridge Road, Parma, Ohio.

May 3

-The Rev. John J. Spitzkovsky District's Semiannual Meeting at 1:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Sorrows Benedictine Convent, 5900 West 147th Street, Oak Forest, Illinois.

May 3

-The Michigan District's Semiannual Meeting at the Tatra Hall, 2636 6th Street and Sherman Boulevard, Muskegon Heights, Michigan. Dinner at 12:00 noon followed by the Meeting at 1:00 p.m.

June 7

-The Msgr. Stephen Krasula District's Semiannual Meeting at 1:00 p.m. at Most Holy Trinity Church Parish Hall, Yonkers, New York.

June 7

-The Frank T. Holly Jr. District's Semiannual Meeting at 1:00 p.m. at K2 Engineering, 234 Pittsburgh Street, Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

WPSCA Annual Spring Meeting

Western Pennsylvania Slovak Cultural Association will hold its 9th Annual Spring Meeting on Sunday, June 14, at 2p.m. at the Czechoslovak nationality room in the University of Pittsburgh Cathedral of Learning. This year's speaker is Karen Melis who will discuss the basics of DNA testing as it applies to genealogy. She will discuss what DNA testing is and isn't, the testing methods, process and Interpretation of results and answer questions or concerns. She will also speak about the advantages of a geographic DNA project and some interesting findings about the Zamagurie Region DNA Project. A lucky volunteer from the audience will be selected to demonstrate how a DNA kit is administered and the results provided in six to eight weeks free.

In 1998, Karen began a journey to learn about her Slovak ancestry from the Zamagurie Region. What started as a desire to know who her ancestors were and where they came from grew into more than an interest, but a passion. For over 10 years, she has documented her direct and collateral lines, building on the family relationships through a set of villages. The results went well beyond the genealogy and researching of her family tree. By observation, she could not only identify who was related to whom, but also noted patterns of birth and marriages, the effects of catastrophes and plagues in the villages, how marriage partners came from "just over the mountain," and how some surnames migrated or stayed for generations in the Zamagurie Region. Further, she could trace emigration patterns from these villages to Passaic, Chicago and especially Pittsburgh, where her own ancestors migrated.

Mrs. Melis earned degrees in Chemical Engineering and Biology from the University of Pittsburgh. She was also a post-baccalaureate student in the Russian and East European Studies Certificate program. After being awarded the Thomas Kukucka Memorial Scholarship, she continued her Slovak studies at the Studia Academica Slovaca (SAS). Presently, she lives in Butler, PA with her husband, Terry. They have two children who are also studying for advanced degrees.

The meeting is open to the public. Admission is free. Following the business meeting, there will be a social hour with snacks and drinks in Room 1228.



Kayla Bench prepared clothing for shipment.



Matthew Bench helped with the inventory.

Sister Cities Second Shipment

The Youngstown Spisska Nova Ves Sister Cities program has continued in efforts to provide new clothing as well as educational material for deserving families in Slovakia. The latest shipment consisting of fourteen large boxes also included an assortment of animated musical stuffed animals. It is anticipated that the toys with English lyrics will stimulate an early interest in the English language. Receiving the shipment for distribution to the families in Levoca and surrounding villages was Ing. Jana Maciakova, President of Centrum pre Komunitne Planovanie a Rodinu (The Center for Community Planning and Families) in Levoca. This organization is staffed entirely by unpaid volunteers.

Responsibility for the project was once again assumed by Sister Cities Board member Jim Bench and his wife Kay. Both are active members of Branch 181 in United, Pennsylvania. They were assisted by grandchildren Kayla and Matthew Bench, also members of Branch 181.

The clothing and related materials were purchased at various outlets at substantially reduced prices and the costs were underwritten by The Sister Cities Program. Plans are ongoing for a third shipment in late spring or early summer. Financial support by The First Catholic Slovak Union is greatly appreciated by the Sister Cities Program. Any FCSU branches or individual branch member wishing to assist or contribute to Sister Cities may do so by contacting Youngstown Sister Cities Program, P.O. Box 5500, Poland, OH 44514, Phone: 330/757-7286. You may also visit the website at www.youngtownsistercities.com.

The officers and board members receive no form of remuneration or expense money, therefore, all contributions are applied directly to organizational functions. Sister Cities is recognized as a charitable organization under 501c (A) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

*Editor's Note: James M. Bench is a Member of the Supreme Court of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

James M. Bench

Report of the National Vice President

Reverend Father, President Rajec, and members of the Board of Directors...

As always, I want to start off my report by thanking the Membership and Marketing Committee which is comprised of Brothers Andrew Rajec, Kenneth Arendt and George Matta, for all the time and effort they spend with me on the problems and solutions that concern membership and marketing. Each member is very concerned with the growth and success of our society.

MEMBERSHIP

As you will see, the First Catholic Slovak Union had another good year. 2008 insurance sales (face value) increased 31% over 2007 sales. Our annuity procurement in 2008 doubled over 2007. Even though our sales are good – it is not good enough to stop our declining membership. Why? - For different reasons – We had 883 members pass away last year and only 804 new members were signed up.

I think the biggest problem we have now is member's cash surrendering their policies in. The majority are youngsters who become owners of their policies (which were bought by mom and dad or grandma and grandpa) after the death of their loved ones.

I would like everyone to read the article "I Surrender" in the February 18, 2009 issue of the Jednota. It was written by our President Andrew M. Rajec. He hits the nail right on the head.

The Membership and Marketing Committee knows that our existing recommenders can't keep up with the declining trend. For this reason, we are actively recruiting insurance agents in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Ohio. We will then branch out to other states.

In January of 2009 we hired an in house agent to help us with agent recruitment as well as servicing our inactive branches.

We will go over this and many other items when we get into the marketing segment of our board meeting.

Our existing sales force is doing an outstanding job for the First Catholic Slovak Union, our insurance in force increased by nearly 2 million dollars. The Membership and Marketing Committee would like to express their sincere thanks to those recommenders who consistently recommend new or increase business during our campaign.

Now for the last years "Top Guns" ... Our societies "Best of the Best".

Congratulations to the society's TOP 15 Producers' by **Amount of Insurance Sold** for the 2008 Membership Campaign:

1. John A. Jurcenko
2. Sophie B. Pipak
3. George A. Sprock
4. Dorothy J. Petrus
5. Michael E. Lako
6. Michael J. Slovenkai
7. Frances Tarquinio
8. Joseph F. Minarovich
9. Audrey J/ Balazik
10. John J. Loftus
11. Sabina Sabados
12. Florence K. Matta
13. Joseph E. Rura
14. Joseph M. Bugel
15. Jacquelyn Bobby

Congratulations to the society's TOP 15 Producers by **Amount of Annuity/IRA/Park Money_brought in** for the 2008 campaign:

1. Kenneth A. Arendt
2. George A. Sprock
3. George F. Matta
4. Robert J. Kopco
5. Thomas M. Hricik
6. Albert R. Valo
7. Leslie C. Stianche
8. Al Tipul
9. Russell K. Wonsock
10. Robert T. Soltis
11. Michael Leo Koval
12. John P. Marflak
13. Rosemary Deliman
14. Thomas W. Hudak
15. Bernard J. Shara

Congratulations to the society's TOP 15 Insurance/Annuity Producers by **TOTAL POINTS** for the 2008 membership campaign.

1. George A. Sprock
2. Dorothy J. Petrus
3. Kenneth A. Arendt
4. Joseph F. Minarovich
5. Sophie B. Pipak
6. Michael E. Lako
7. James R. Marmol
8. Albert R. Valo
9. George F. Matta
10. Robert J. Kopco
11. John A. Jurcneko
12. Thomas M. Hricik



Andrew Harcar
National V. P.

13. Edward P. Palushock
14. Leslie C. Stianche
15. Al Tipul

Congratulations to the society's TOP 15 Producers by the **Number of Policies Sold** for the 2008 campaign:

1. Dorothy J. Petrus
2. George A. Sprock
3. Joseph E. Rura
4. Audrey J. Balazik
5. Frances Tarquinio
6. Florence K. Matta
7. Jacquelyn Bobby
8. Joseph J. Yuros
9. Joseph F. Minarovich
10. Albert R. Valo
11. Michael E. Lako
12. Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.
13. Josephine E. Gerba
14. John A. Jurcenko
15. James R. Marmol

To each and everyone who signed a member and/or sent in an Annuity/IRA/Park Money contract for the year 2008, my heartfelt thanks and congratulations for a job Well Done!

Marketing

This past year the Membership and Marketing Committee:

- Maintained great interest rates on our annuities. Our rates are now well above the banks, savings and loans and many fraternal.

- On April 20, 2008 – the Membership and Marketing Committee held a sales seminar at the Bishop Connare Center in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Members from the George Onda District were invited to attend.

- On June 1st – a sales seminar was held by the Membership and Marketing Committee at St. John Nepomucene Church Parish Hall in New York City. Recommenders from the Msgr. Stephen Krasula District and the Msgr. John E. Rura District were invited to attend.

- On July 17th – (In 2007, the Executive Committee of the First Catholic Slovak Union made a decision to increase the visibility of the organization by having it's officers attend the various Slovak Festivals and other events around the country). In keeping with this program, the FCSU set up a booth at the annual Slovak Day held in Kennywood Park, near Pittsburgh, on Thursday July 17th. Copies of Jednota newspapers and information on FCSU products were distributed. The annual event draws large crowds each year from Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and West Virginia.

- On August 3rd – The Executive Committee set up an informational booth at the Annual FEST Celebration held at the Center for Pastoral Leadership in Wickliffe, Ohio. Jednota newspapers and pamphlets on FCSU products were passed out.

The FEST was a day-long celebration of catholic faith, families, music, games, prayer, mass and fireworks that was open to the public without admission charge. It brought together over 25,000 catholic teens and families from around the eight counties of the Diocese of Cleveland.

- On August 17th – the FCSU Membership and Marketing Committee held a sales seminar at the St. Charles Catholic Church Parish Community Center in Parma, Ohio. The sales seminar was available to all branch officers, district officers and recommenders in the Reverend Stephen Furdek District 10.

- On August 31st – National Officers of the First Catholic Slovak Union attended the annual Cleveland Slovak Radio Club Festival held at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Parma, Ohio. The First Catholic Slovak Union operated a booth at the festival where information was provided on the FCSU and its insurance and annuity products.

- The Senior Promotion Program ran from October 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008. The Senior Promotion Plan was directed to all current members between the ages of 55 and 80. Each member in this age group could purchase the amount of whole life insurance that a \$200.00 annual premium will purchase, based on their current age. To help offset the cost for the first year, a special fraternal dividend equal to 50% of the first year premium, amounting to \$100.00 was provided to each participating member.

- On September 28th – FCSU officers set up a booth at the New Jersey Slovak Festival. The festival was held at the New Jersey Arts Center in Holmdel, New Jersey. Despite the inclement weather, an estimated crowd of over 5,000 attended the event.

- On October 12th – The Membership and Marketing Committee held a seminar at Holy Trinity Church Hall in West Mifflin, Pennsylvania. Officers and Recommenders from the Pittsburgh District were invited to attend.

- On October 13th – The Membership and Marketing Committee held a seminar at St. Mary's Nativity School hall in Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

continued on page 7

Report of the National Treasurer

Reverend Father, President Rajec, and Brothers and Sister Officers:

I am pleased to report that all the financials and other reports as required by the various states where the First Catholic Slovak Union is licensed to do business have all been properly filed by March 1, 2009.

During the past year, we heard how the practice of subprime mortgages was having a devastating effect on the U.S. Economy, but as the year progressed, we realized that the economies through out the world were being affected. Our Society was not immune to the widespread drop in the stock market as well as the bond market. The Securities Valuation Office (SVO) of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, which establishes the rating and market value on Securities owned by insurers, established the rating on the big three automakers at bankruptcy status 6, on December 26, 2008, which means that instead of being carried at book value, as has been the practice and is done for all bonds owned, now must be carried at market value, resulting in the Society suffering some reduction in its surplus. Fortunately, the reduction in surplus was lower due to operation profits generated during the year, investment reserves released, and stable amount of surplus, the effect on the Society's financial statement was lower than many other Fraternal and Insurers.

The society had enjoyed an increase in Surplus for the past several years, unfortunately, due to the most severe meltdown and its harsh effect on the U.S. Economy, our surplus dropped slightly over \$4,000,000. However, surplus remains over \$9,000,000 and the solvency ratio is a healthy 104.75.



George F. Matta
National Treasurer

These capital losses, both realized and unrealized were partially offset by the release of the Asset Valuation Reserve (AVR) totaling \$2,202,503. This is the reason the Asset Valuation Reserve was established to offset a drop in valuations on securities owned as was experienced in 2008.

In 2008, \$285,614 of prior years' bond/preferred stock profits were included as a part of income. This amount was released from the Interest Maintenance Reserve. The IMR requires that most profits or losses realized when bonds or preferred stocks are matured, called, or sold, must be placed in this reserve and amortized to the original maturity date of the security. The Society primarily holds bonds for income and does not actively trade, although the FCSU has on occasions accepted profitable tender offers that we felt would improve the Societies portfolio. The total IMR is now \$2,639,478, a portion of which will provide average annual income to the Society of approximately \$132,000 for the next 20 years.

In the year 2008, the Society purchased almost \$22,000,000 of securities, while over \$31,600,000 of Securities were matured, called or sold resulting in a large cash balance of \$23,200,000. The challenge continues to find replacement bonds of equal value and the best interest rates available. As a result of the volatility of the market in 2008, the investment committee chose to be very selective in our purchases, in spite of the low interest rates paid on money market accounts and Treasuries.

INVESTMENT INCOME:

Investment income continues to provide the strength for the Society. Following is the investment income enjoyed during the past four years:

2005	\$12,055,609
2006	\$11,746,609
2007	\$12,364,669
2008	\$12,339,378

PREMIUM INCOME:

	LIFE INSURANCE	ANNUITIES/IRA	TOTALS
2005	\$1,292,597.00	\$6,303,640.00	\$7,596,237.00
2006	1,356,060.00	3,369,327.00	4,725,387.00
2007	1,455,479.00	4,238,394.00	5,693,973.00
2008	1,465,268.00	6,560,316.00	8,025,584.00

I believe that our loyal Recommenders, Sales Agents and Office Personnel have done an outstanding job in the improvement of the results of 2008. We encourage you all to continue to provide us with the same effort in 2009.

As I reported in my January Report, the Executive Officers, with the concurrence of the entire Board of Directors, interviewed four money managers to assist us to evaluate our portfolio to identify potential weakness with the large amount of money we accumulated from maturities and calls of our bonds and the erratic behavior of the market. We felt it prudent for us to seek assistance in avoiding unforeseen pitfalls. It is for that reason that the investment committee agreed to use the services of Applied Quantitative Solutions.

Respectfully submitted,
George F. Matta
National Treasurer
March 9, 2009

BALANCE SHEET:

Cash & Short Term				
Investments	\$ 28,138,640	14.00%	\$ 12,472,896	6.13%
Investments	158,324,975	78.70%	173,196,904	86.02%
Investment in Stocks	9,842,565	4.90%	12,152,666	5.96%
Other Assets	4,771,350	2.40%	5,832,769	2.86%
Total	\$201,077,530	100%	\$103,655,235	100.00%

Bonds make up 79.7% of the investment portfolio. The percentage drop was mostly due to the lower values, required by the Securities Valuation Office, on the big three in the auto industry. Investment grade bonds are 88.1% of the bonds owned. Preferred stocks dropped to 4.4% of the portfolio, but helped the strong investment income return. Common stocks represent only 0.6% of the invested assets.

The Society has a \$2,500,000 decrease in total assets from \$203,655,235 to \$201,077,530. The continuing lower marketplace bond interest rates experienced throughout the year and the concerns of the subprime crisis held down market value on bonds and preferred stock.

Unrealized capital loss resulted from the change in Annual Statement value of Ford Motor, General Motors, GMAC and Lehman Brothers Bonds. The loss in value was over \$5,000,000. A GMAC Preferred Stock resulted in almost \$105,000 loss. Surplus note bonds which were carried at market value had an unrealized capital loss of over \$936,000. The total unrealized capital losses were almost \$6,800,000. A portion of this loss may come back as the economy improves and market values recover.



Report of the National Vice President

continued from page 6

• During November 17-21 – The First Catholic Slovak Union held a successful Membership Meet aboard Royal Caribbean's "Majesty of the Seas". Eighty-four members and their guest enjoyed a four night Bahamas Cruise.

On Wednesday evening, the ship gave us a complimentary use of their Chorus Line Theatre to hold our awards night.

The top award for insurance and the Most Policies Sold in 2007 went to Dorothy Petrus. Roger Soltis captured first place in Annuity/IRA Procurement. First place in Total Points went to Florence Matta. Congratulations for a job done!

• The Home Office can now accept credit card payments for insurance premium. We accept Visa, Mastercard and Discover.

• On August 1st – The FCSU started offering AD&D (Accidental Death and Dismemberment) Program. With this new program, if a new member or a member (ages 30-65) is issued a minimum \$10,000 Whole Life, a 20 Pay Life, or a *Single Premium Policy after August 1, 2008, the FCSU will include, as a fraternal benefit, a single \$25,000 accidental death benefit at no additional charge for as long as a premium is paid (*Single Premium policies are only eligible for the first 5 years).

• The Membership and Marketing Committee made it easier and quicker to complete a physical exam for insurance. The FCSU hired Portamedic (an outside medical company) with whom we have a contract to do medical examinations. They will come to your house to give an exam or if you prefer, you could go to one of their locations.

vertising for agents in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. In 2009, we will advertise in Ohio and Florida.

Activities

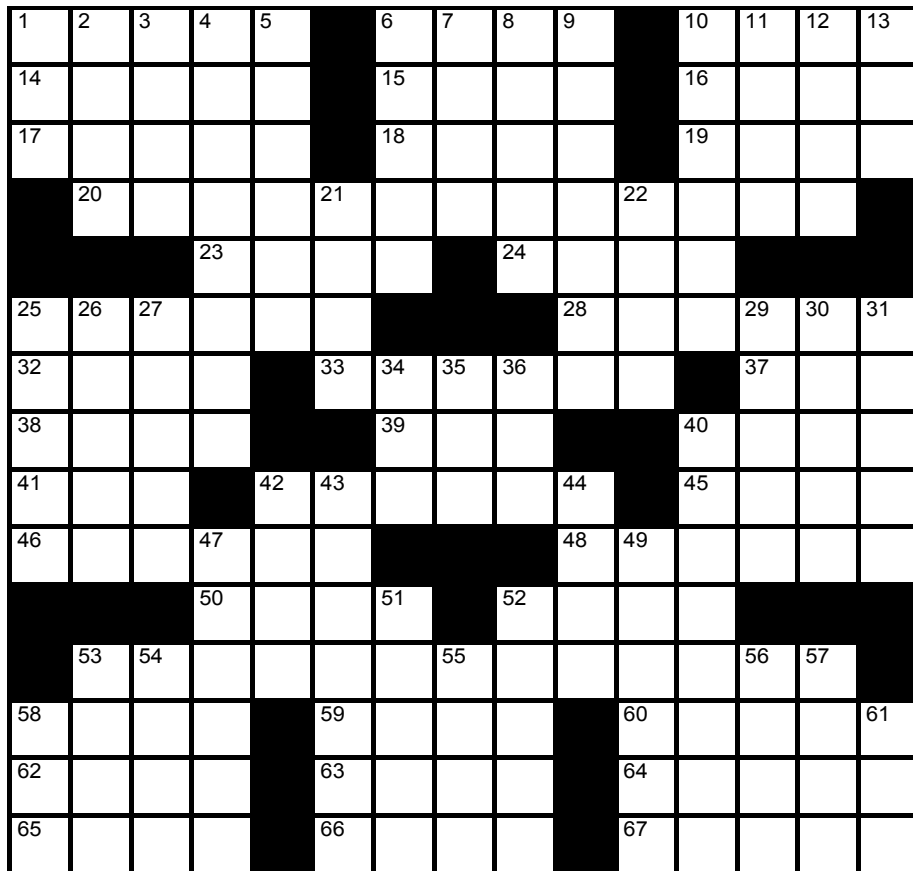
Some of my activities in the year 2008 were: Attended all monthly executive committee meetings as well as meetings called by the president. Letters concerning Marketing/Seminars were sent to the recommenders. Wrote articles pertaining to insurance and had them published in the Jednota. From April through December "Top Guns" were sent to the printer. I attended various branch and district meetings and/or social functions; I am a Director in the Illinois Fraternal Congress and attended their annual meeting at Lisle, Illinois; a Director in the Indiana Fraternal Congress and attended their meetings; attended Bruce and Bruce Seminar in Pittsburgh; attended the National Fraternal Congress meeting in Washington DC.; and represented the society at Indiana Slovak Day in Merrillville, Indiana. I also attended and chaired 5 seminars in the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey; and informed all Regional Directors of their district insurance and annuity production on a quarterly basis. I also chair the Membership and Marketing Committee.

At this time, I personally want to thank our Executive Committee and the Board of Directors for their help and encouragement and many thanks to the branch and district officers for their untiring commitment to our society. Last, but not least, I want to express my sincerest thanks to our home office staff for the excellent help and cooperation given to me throughout the year.

Until next time
Good Luck and God Bless,
Andrew R. Harcar, Sr.

• The Membership and Marketing Committee, due to declining membership, started ad-

Jednota Crossword Puzzle



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Across

- 1 Irritate
 6 *National Treasure* star Nicolas
 10 Punches
 14 Race horse
 15 Solo
 16 Arches National Park state
 17 Pointer
 18 Beloved
 19 Dusty pink
 20 Affiliations
 23 Kentucky or Texas town
 24 Not that
 25 Fragrances
 28 Branch of physics pertaining to light
 32 Zest
 33 Attributes
 37 Brazil, for one
 38 Conclusions
 39 Beard of grass
 40 Hair style
 41 Up (Prefix)
 42 Affix
 45 Centavo
 46 Legitimate
 48 Worshipped
 50 Jacob's brother
 52 Mooring space
 53 Soothsayer
 58 Anjou
 59 Jackknife or full gainer, e.g.
 60 Carpenter's tool
 62 Fem. suffix
 63 Component
 64 Red lead, e.g.
 65 Tormentor
 66 Decades
 67 Man-made fiber

Down

- 1 Numbers man (Abbr.)
 2 Body covering
 3 Pinnacle
 4 Emotions
 5 Fallible
 6 Spanish city
 7 Mars (Prefix)
 8 Goliath
 9 Hearing range
 10 Magistrate
 11 Upon
 12 Freshwater fish
 13 Haggard novel
 21 Exam
 22 Diet target
 25 Pilfer
 26 Arrowroot
 27 Empower
 29 Gather
 30 Jinx
 31 Remained upright
 34 Knock
 35 Reverence
 36 Lodge
 40 Stroke
 42 Danube country (Abbr.)
 43 Enthusiastic approval
 44 Valley
 47 Polecat
 49 *Gunsmoke* name
 51 Link
 52 Halts
 53 Celebrate
 54 Grains
 55 Equal
 56 Malevolent
 57 Make over
 58 Ginger
 61 Nimoy, for short

See Solution on Page 18

Scholarships Available for Study in Slovakia

The Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic has announced the 2009 Government Scholarship Program. The Scholarship Program provides for University study in the Slovak Republic in Slovak language (both Undergraduate and Graduate), including one year preparatory language training at Comenius University in Bratislava.

The Government Scholarship program is specifically intended to provide University education opportunities for Slovaks living abroad. As a result of that, Slovak organizations in the United States have a unique opportunity to influence candidate selection because the Ministry of Education requires any candidate to be endorsed by the local Slovak organization.

Candidates may select any study program of their interest at any accredited university in Slovakia. Please be advised that medical sciences, dentistry and pharmacy are not recommended in 2009 by the Ministry of Education.

Candidates must submit their applications to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic by May 30, 2009. Applications received after May 30, 2009 will not be accepted. Candidate may also apply individually-directly to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs-OKUD, Hlboka cesta 2, 833 36 Bratislava. The Slovak Embassy is willing to provide assistance in submitting applications, however, be advised that the deadline to submit applications at the Embassy is May 1, 2009. The Slovak Embassy is located at 3523 International Court, NW, Washington, DC 20008. For more information contact Michal Pavuk, First Secretary at 202/361-8315 or at Michal.pavuk@mzv.sk.

Slovak Self-Taught

By Slavo Moravek

With the Doctor

How are you?	Ako sa máte	(Yako sa máŤYe)
What ails you?	Čo vám je?	(cho vÁm je)
What is the trouble?	Čo sa stalo?	(cho sa stalo)
Is your stomach out of order?	Či vás bolí žalúdok?	(chi vÁs bolee zYaloodok))
How is the sick man?	Ako sa má chorý?	(Ako sa má Xoree)
How is the sick woman?	Ako sa má chorá?	(Ako sa má XorÁ)
Do you feel very bad?	Cítite sa veľmi zle?	(tseetYitYe sa velYmi zIYe)
I have a terrible headache	Strašne ma bolí hlava	(strashnYe ma bolee hlava)
Where?	Kde?	(kdYe)
Show me your tongue	Ukážte mi jazyk	(ukÁzYte mi Yazik)
I feel very weak	Cítim sa veľmi slabo	(tseetYim sa velYmi slabo)
I broke my arm	Zlomil som si ruku	(zlomil som si ruku)
She is burnt	Popálila sa	(popÁlYila sa)
He has a severe cold	Je silne prechladený	(Ye silnYe preXladYenee)
He must stay at home	Musí ostať doma	(musee ostatY doma)
She has a high fever	Má veľkú horúčku	(mÁ velYkoo horoochku)
Is he very sick?	Je veľmi chorý?	(Ye velYmi Xoree)
Is he better?	Je mu lepšie?	(Ye mu lYepshYe)
He has sore eyes	Bolia ho oči	(bolYYa ho ochi)
Have you a sore throat?	Bolí vás hrdlo?	(bolee vÁs hrdlo)
Cough, cough again	Kašlite, kašlite zase	(kashliYitYe, kashliYitYe zase)
Fever and ear-ache	Horúčka a bolenie ucha	(horoochka a bolenYye uXa)
Do you want to see the doctor?	Chcete vidieť doktora?	XtsetYe vidYetY doktora)
He must go to the hospital	Musí ísť do špitála	(muse eestY do shpitÁlYa)

If each member would sign up just one new member,
 we could double our Society immediately

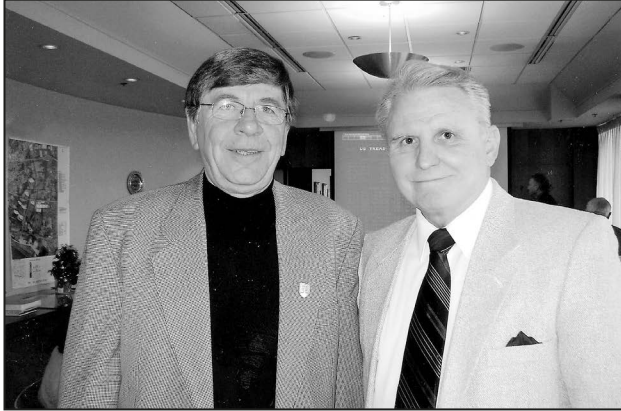
THINK ABOUT IT!

FCSU Board Holds Annual Meeting in Independence, Ohio

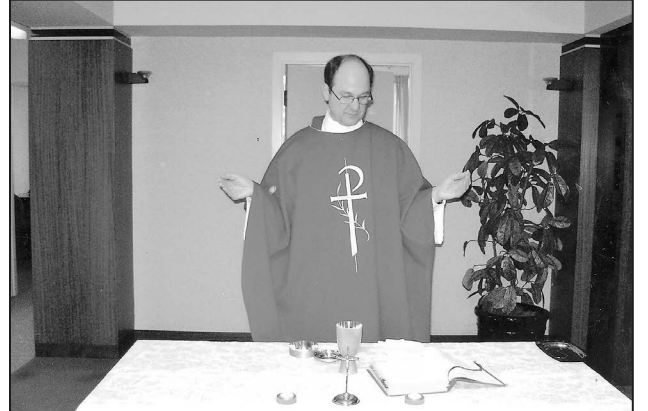
continued from page 1



L-R National Chaplain Rev. Thomas A. Nasta, Regional Director (Region 3) Carl Ungvarsky, Regional Director (Region 2) Damian Nasta, and Regional Director (Region 6) Henry Hassay.



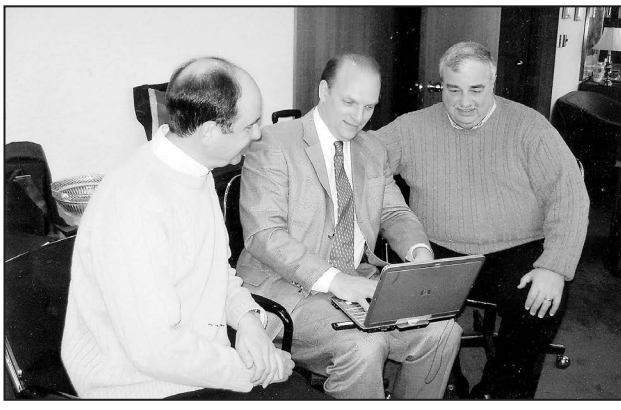
Regional Director for Canada Milos Mitro and National President Andrew M. Rajec



Rev. Thomas A. Nasta offered Mass for Board Members.



Fraternal Activities Director Susan Ondrejco and Chairperson of Auditors Karen M. Hunka



General Counsel Gary J. Matta (center) goes over his report with National Chaplain Rev. Thomas A. Nasta and Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt.



L-R National Vice President Andrew R. Harcar Sr., Regional Director (Region 1) Joseph Minarovich, and Regional Director (Region 8 & 9) Milos Mitro



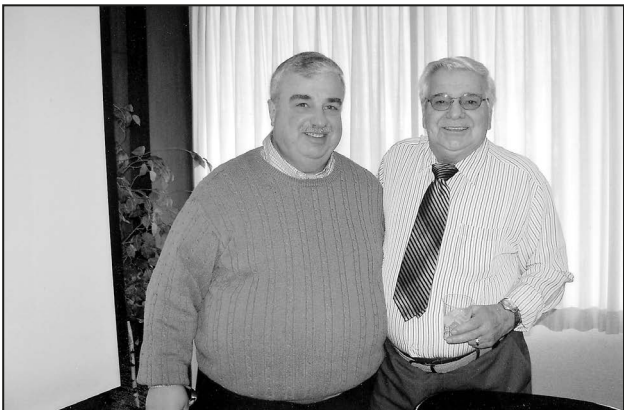
L-R Outside Auditor Edward Mertz from Hosack, Specht, Muetzel and Wood, and Edward DePersis of Bruce & DePersis actuarial firm.



L-R Regional Directors Henry Hassay, George Sprock and Rudolf Glogovsky



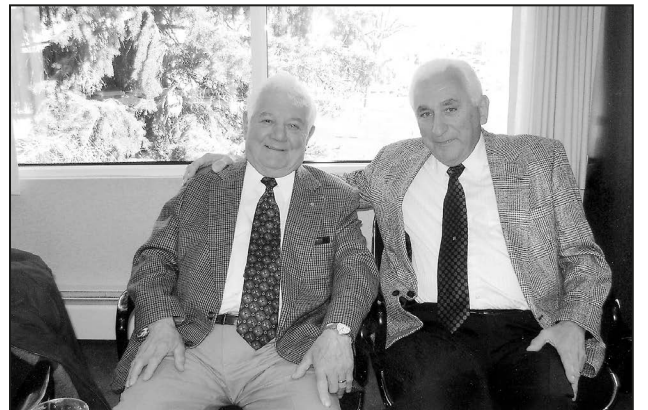
Regional Directors Damian Nasta and Rudolf Glogovsky



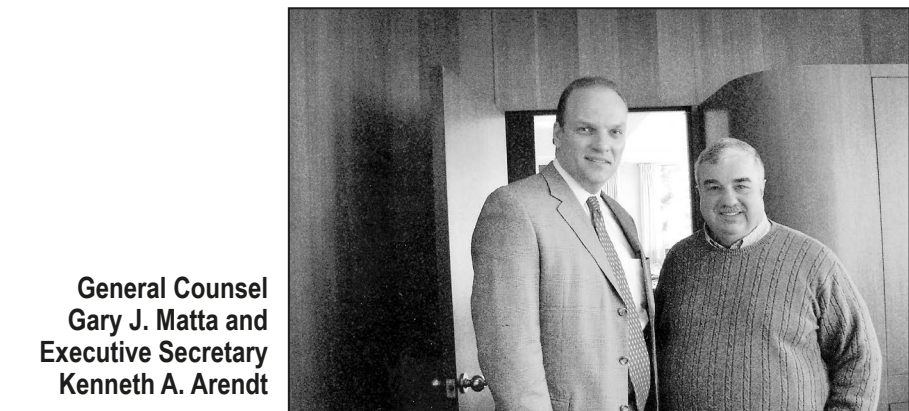
Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt and Regional Director George A. Sprock



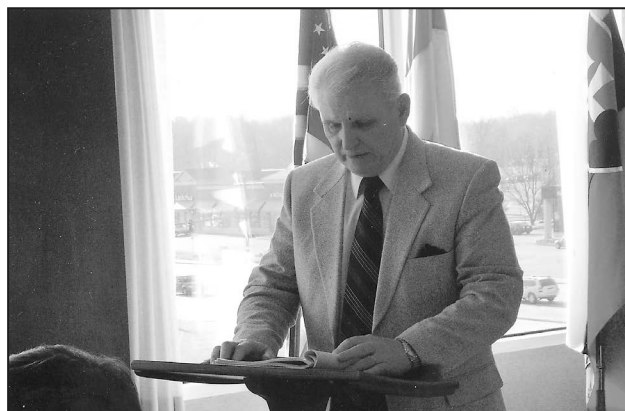
Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt presents reports of the Executive, Pension and Scholarship Committees to the board.



Regional Directors Joseph Minarovich and Henry Hassay



General Counsel Gary J. Matta and Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt



National President Andrew M. Rajec gives his annual report to the board.

The 2009 Annual Slovak Mass and Easter Customs Program in Pittsburgh

Michael J. Kopanic, Jr., Ph.D.

Every year, Slovak Americans have an opportunity to attend the only Slovak Mass offered in the Pittsburgh area. Mass is offered at Prince of Peace parish, which uses the ornate St. Adalbert Church, the former Polish American church. The parish is a conglomeration of seven local parishes on Pittsburgh's Southside, where St. Matthew's Church was the Slovak parish among these. The Mass is followed by a traditional Slovak Easter breakfast at the parish hall. The events always take place the Saturday before Palm Sunday, known now as Passion Sunday, which was April 4th in 2009.

When entering the church, youth dressed in traditional Slovak *kroj* (folk costume) greet the faithful and hand out a song sheet and booklet with the liturgy of Holy Mass entitled "Klaniame sa, vdaku a chvalu vzdavame Panovi a Bohu nasmu" (We worship, give thanks and praise to the Lord our God). There is also an accompanying brochure with Slovak prayers, blessings for foods, and a summary of Slovak customs about the various foods. The brochure also lists the vendors and craft demonstrations at the parish hall after the Mass.

The Holy Rosary in Slovak

The church ceremonies began with a Slovak American nun leading the recitation of the Holy Rosary in the Slovak language, accompanied by the Sorrowful Mysteries. After reciting the Rosary, Father Peter Haladej celebrated Holy Mass Slovak. Rev. Haladej, who is a native of the Diocese of Košice, Slovakia, currently serves at St. Christine Church on the west side of Youngstown, Ohio.

The Mass intention was offered for the living and deceased members of the parish Cultural Diversity Committee, and for Irene Pisciaričik, who passed away on September 25, 2008. Irene was "an enthusiastic and committed volunteer" for the Slovak kitchen of the parish for many years. According to the program, "she breathed life into those early mornings as we rolled dough and discussed plans for our next activity."

Holy Mass in Slovak

Holy Mass began with the solemn processional hymn *Radostou oplývám* (I am filled with joy). Following Scripture readings in Slovak and an English language sermon, the congregation sang the Offertory hymn *O jak sa sladko spieva* (Oh How Sweetly She Sings), which pays tribute to the trials and sufferings of the Virgin Mary.

The ushers collected for two causes, one for the Mass celebrants and the parish ministry, and a second collection benefiting two charities in Slovakia – the orphanage in Ružomberok, ministered by the Sisters of St. Francis, and the Balicka Institute, a school for disabled children in Prešov in eastern Slovakia.

Following the Offertory, Hosannas echoed in Slovak. It was wonderful to hear in the Slovak language the Consecration of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The *Otče náš* (Our Father) resounded loudly, and it seemed most everyone present knew it well. At Holy Communion, the congregation joined in the mellow hymn *Ježiš, Ježiš, prid ku mne* (Jesus, Jesus, Come to Me), which captures the love that Slovaks have for the Lord. A Meditation song followed, *Kde je Ježišu* (Where is Jesus), which seeks Jesus, but yet shows the heartbreak that sinners have due to their hurting their Savior, who suffered the indignity of a death on the cross.

For the final hymn, the congregation joined in singing *Srdce puka* (The Heart Bursts), which recalls the sorrow associated with Jesus' painful death for us sinners. The second verse of the hymn reminds one again of the painful drama that the Virgin Mary went through in witnessing and enduring her Son's cruel torture and death.

The Slovak hymns of passion are quite moving and spare no details in describing the sacrifice of Jesus' last days and crucifixion. The extreme sadness of these songs could bring tears to one's eyes as recall His suffering for the sins of mankind. But the very solemnity and moving nature of Slovak songs makes the joy of Easter Day and His Resurrection all the greater.

The Slovak Easter Breakfast

After the moving spiritual experience of participation in Slovak Mass, the congregation headed several blocks away to the parish hall for a light Slovak Easter Breakfast. The meal was provided at no cost to the congregation, but donations helped pay for the meal and using the church facilities. Many ladies, including Mrs. Zatak and her husband, worked very hard to make everything just right. Father Haladej said a short prayer, and all then enjoyed a simple meal which included an Easter egg, a slice of *šunka* (ham), *klobasa* (smoked sausage), *paska* (Easter bread), *hrudka* or *syrek* (cheese), *chren strúhaný* (grated horseradish), *maslo* (butter), *sol* (salt), and some *koláče* (nut and poppy seed rolls) for dessert.

The program explained the significance of each food according to Slovak religious customs. In Slovak, Polish, Carpatho-Rusyn and Ukrainian families, the mother always loaded a wicker basket of these foods on Holy Saturday, and would take them to the church for the priest to bless. The foods always tasted wonderful because devout Christians observed a fast from many meats and sweets for Lent.

The traditional *paska* is a sweet Easter bread with much butter and eggs, symbolizing Christ, who is our Bread of Life. *Paska* comes in a round form and has a golden crust, and often traditionally had a cross or some other symbol of Christ on it. A braid of dough would give it the appearance of a crown. In the ancient Slavonic language, the letters "XB" were used, meaning "Christ is Risen."

Šunka (ham) was the traditional main dish on most Slovak and Slavic tables on Easter Day. It symbolized the "great joy and abundance of Easter."

Klobasa or *Kolbassi* (smoked sausage) was a tasty and spicy treat to remind one of the Lord's generosity and kindness. Some Slovaks also included *slanina* (smoked bacon)



Greeters in Slovak Costumes

in their Easter meals, as a sign of God's mercy to sinners.

Hrudka or *syrek* (a special homemade Easter cheese) is a unique Slovak dish. I remember my mother mixing milk, eggs, and other ingredients, putting it in a sheet, and then hanging it to drip-dry until much of the watery part drained off. Then she shaped into a ball and later cut it up, with each of us in the family having a taste. It has a mildly sweet taste and is supposed to symbolize the moderation that Christians should observe in all they do.

Hrin consists of *chren* (grated horseradish) mixed with *strúhané repy* (grated red beets). These were to remind one of Christ's passion, especially because of the red coloring. But a bit of sugar reminds one of the Resurrection.

Maslo (butter) was typically melted and molded into religious shapes such as a Cross or a Lamb, symbolizing Christ's the Sacrificial Lamb. It was to remind us of the goodness of Christ that we should always keep in mind.

Sol (salt) was a staple in every Slovak diet. The condiment was to remind of our Christian duty to be mindful of others, loving our neighbor.

No celebration of the Resurrection would be complete without the well-known Easter egg (*pysanka*). It was hard-boiled and decorated with brilliant colors to recall the new life we acquire through Christ. Slovaks and other Slavs spent many long hours decorating these with symbols and marking made from beeswax and other dyes.

Thus these were the items that went into wicker basket that was covered with a linen cloth and decorated with a bright ribbon and taken to the church for a blessing. During the blessing, a decorated candle was also typically placed in the basket and lit. In wine-growing regions, families would often include a bottle of wine as well.

At the parish hall, those who wished to purchase Slovak specialties could take advantage of a bake sale which offered *koláče*, *paska*, *klobasa*, and other Slovak delicacies.

EXHIBITS

The exhibits at the Easter Breakfast included displays of a variety of Slovak-American items as well as imported Slovak books, cards, crystal, dolls, pottery, embroideries, etc.

Some exhibits showed actual crafts being made and some offered the opportunity to purchase them. Larry Kozlowski demonstrated how to make *pysanky*, the colorful Easter eggs with the intricate details of traditional Slavic motifs. Sharon Tyborowski Hachman showed visitors how to weave palms. Mary Gido demonstrated a bobbin used in making lace. Anne-Marie Zerishnek spun thread. Carol Lako displayed Morena Dolls, the traditional symbols of winter, which young girls threw out and burned in Slovak villages at this time of year. Tina and Sarah Neilson and Katya Zatek hosted displays of paper roses, which Slovaks skillfully craft from plain paper. Bill Kurtek exhibited and sold some traditional *bahniatka* (pussy willow branches), which Slovaks traditionally used on Palm Sunday instead of palm, which were not available in Slovakia. Anne-Marie Zerishnek offered some displays of traditional Slovak spinning thread. The Western Pa. Slovak Radio Committee staffed by Sue Ondrejco and her daughter Sue showed some materials from the National Slovak Society Museum and some unique gifts from Slovakia. Finally, Joe Armata put together a fantastic array of *kroj* from the village of Dobrá Niva, a village just south of Zvolen in central Slovakia.

A few vendors such as Larry Koslowski, Allison Broughton, and Pete Wenc also offered items such as books, badges, and a variety of gifts for sale. The Barlicka Center from Prešov, Slovakia sent some very unique greeting cards for purchase.

Besides the many displays, this was also a time to meet old friends and find new ones, and the annual event is well worth a visit when it occurs next year the week before Easter.

The Holy Rosary, Slovak Mass and the light Slovak Easter breakfast serve an important purpose in keeping alive our Slovak traditions and customs. It is important to bring also the youth to such events, so that they too will learn and pass on the rich customs of our ancestors. For these are what make us who we are – Catholics and Slovaks. *Za Boha a národ* (For God and nation).

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

**BRANCH 1-
CLEVELAND, OHIO**

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 1, held a meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2009. A business meeting was held followed by the election of officers. The following officers were elected to serve in 2009-2010: John M. Golias, President; Andrew Hudak, Vice President; Marie A. Golias, Recording Secretary; Mary Dubber, Treasurer; and Richard Korecho and Joseph Hornack, Trustees.

The next scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 9, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in Saint Cyril School Hall, 12608 Madison Avenue. All members are encouraged to attend.
Mary Dubber

**BRANCH 5P-
EXETER, PENNSYLVANIA**

The St. John the Evangelist Society, Branch 5P, will hold its Quarterly Meeting on Sunday, May 17, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. at the home of President Leonard J. Zavada, 141 Second Street, Wyoming, Pennsylvania. General topics submitted by members present at the meeting will be addressed and discussed. Member will be given the opportunity to participate and refine their sales approach in regard to prospective members, improve sales and service and contact after the sales, and last but not least, eliminating "orphan" policyholders who are often forgotten and ignored.

See you on May 17th.

Leonard J. Zavada, President

**BRANCH 40-
STREATOR, ILLINOIS**

The St. Clement Society, Branch 40, is offering scholarship to their members. The society will give one \$500.00 scholarship for a college student and one \$250.00 scholarship for a private grade school student. These scholarships are funded solely by Branch 40, not the Home Office.

For more criteria and an application, please call Theresa at 815/672-6142 (leave

message) or email her at ttegraves@mchsi.com for an electronic application.

Applications must be postmarked by May 15, 2009.

Andrew R. Harcar Sr.

**BRANCH 55-
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 55, will hold a Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, May 3, 2009, after the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene Church, 4th and Brown Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Reports on branch activities, the District meeting and plans for the year will be discussed. Refreshments will be served. For further information please call the president, Helena T. Gaydos at 610/356-7956 or the secretary, Josephine E. Gerba at 215/637-6530.

Josephine E. Gerba, Secretary

**BRANCH 199-
HOSTETTER, PENNSYLVANIA**

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 199, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 14, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Francis Pipak. A good turnout is requested.

Sophie Pipak

**BRANCH 166-
BINGHAMTON, CAPITAL AREA, PEEK-
SKILL, POUGHKEEPSIE, AND SYRACUSE,
NEW YORK**

The St. Joseph the Guardian Society, Branch 166, will hold its Semiannual Meeting and Dinner on Sunday, May 24, 2009, at 1:15 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, 14 St. Cyril Avenue, Binghamton, New York. On the agenda will be a discussion of the District meeting and branch business. Members are encouraged to attend. Please call Sue Gabriel at 607/729-8034 or Arlo Meeker at 607/775-4896. Hope to see you at the meeting.

Arlo Meeker, President

**BRANCH 233-
BROCKPORT, PENNSYLVANIA**

The St. George Society, Branch 233, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, May 17, 2009, at 2:00 p.m. at the residence of Irene Halko, Route 219 by the Brockport Post Office in Brockport, Pennsylvania.

Irene Halko, President

**BRANCH 731-
YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO**

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 731, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, May 17, 2009, at 12:30 p.m. at Saint Matthias Church Rectory, 915 Cornell Street, Youngstown, Ohio. Our summer activities will be the main topic of discussion.

James Bobby, Recording Secretary

**BRANCH 743-
STERLING HEIGHTS/DETROIT, MICHIGAN**

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 743, is sponsoring a Detroit Tiger Baseball Game outing on Tuesday, August 4, 2009 at 7:05 p.m. against the Baltimore Orioles. Members will be in section 213 (upper deck-1st base side). This is also a Tiger promotion night, and the first 10,000 fans get a Tiger 2009 All-Star poster. The individual price for each ticket is \$15.00, however your cost will be only \$8.00. We have initially ordered only 40 tickets for this promotion. Therefore, there is a limit of 4 tickets per household. The deadline for ordering tickets is June 18. All purchases up to 40 tickets will be honored. If we do not sell all the tickets we will

contact all ticket purchasers after June 18 affording them the opportunity to increase their purchase. However, there will be no refunds after June 18. Tickets will be mailed to you the first week in July. Send your check payable to FCSU-Branch 743 before June 18 to: Joseph C. Rimarcik, 42909 Sussex Park Dr., Sterling Heights, MI 48314-3087. Be sure to include your phone number and email address when ordering. Go Tigers!

Joseph C. Rimarcik, President

**BRANCH 746-
LINDEN, NEW JERSEY**

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 746, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, May 3, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. in the upstairs meeting room of Msgr. Komar Hall at Holy Family Church, Linden, New Jersey. The agenda will include planning for the summer picnic, as well as finalizing plans for the September bus trip to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The district meeting will follow at 11:00 a.m. Lunch will be served after the District meeting.

Mary J. Kapitan, Secretary

**BRANCH 853-
ELLSWORTH, PENNSYLVANIA**

The Holy Name of Jesus Society, Branch 853, will hold its next meeting on Saturday, May 30, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. at the McDonalds in Charleroi, Pennsylvania. All members are urged to attend.

Monica Rodacy-Boone, President

SPECIAL REMINDER

There has been a change in our address. The new address for sending all articles is Jednota Estates, 1001 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057. Please do not use the old 1011 Rosedale Avenue address. You may continue to send by fax at 717/944-3107 or by email at editorjednota@yahoo.com. Thank you.

**FROM THE DESK OF THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:**

The First Catholic Slovak Union is pleased to announce that it can now accept credit cards for Insurance premium payments.

*Annuity payments cannot be made with credit cards.

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6611 Rockside Road
Independence, OH 44131-2398



FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION ANNUITY & IRA INTEREST RATES
EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2009

The annual yield on existing Flexible Premium Deferred Annuities & IRA's is 4.75% (4.641% APR)

The annual yield on a new "Park 2 Annuity" is 4.25% (4.162% APR)

The annual yield on a new six year Fixed Rate Annuity & IRA is 4.25% (4.162% APR)

The annual yield on accounts with the "Cash Interest" Option is 4.50% (4.402% APR)

The annual yield for new Settlement Options is based on 4.25% (4.162% APR)

If you have any questions about our annuities or IRA's, please contact the Home Office by calling 1-800-533-6682, or your Local Branch Officer.

Kenneth A. Arendt, National Secretary

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Features of the Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity include:

- The FCSU guarantees your deposits will accumulate interest at no less than 3.0%.
- Your annuity continues to accumulate interest after you have stopped contributing and have begun to receive retirement income. The interest rate you receive on your annuity after settlement will never be less than 3.0%.
- Death Benefit-If you die prior to settlement, your beneficiary receives the full cash value of the annuity. If you die while receiving retirement benefits, the value of your remaining guaranteed benefits will be paid to your beneficiary.
- Withdrawal Privileges-Since annuities are meant to be long-term investments for providing retirement funds, funds withdrawn during the first six years of your contract are subject to an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge. You may withdraw 10% of your 'beginning of the year balance' with no FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge.
- Your interest will be added to your account. You may, however, elect to have your interest paid directly to you on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually basis. This is called an Interest Option and the interest rate is slightly lower than if you left your interest to accumulate.
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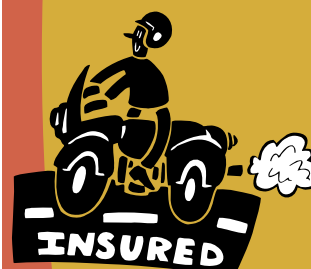
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Principal Sum	Single	Family
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*Single Premium Policies are eligible for the first 5 years
**Insurance is underwritten by Federal Insurance Company, a member insurer of the Chubb Group of Insurance Companies. Exclusions may apply. Insurance may not be available in all jurisdictions.

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

MSGR. JOHN E. RURA DISTRICT-NEW JERSEY

The Msgr. John E. Rura District will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, May 3, 2009, at 11:00 a.m. in the upstairs meeting room of Msgr. Komar Hall of Holy Family Church, 2806 Parkway Avenue in Linden, New Jersey. Branch 746 will be the host. Branch secretaries are asked to call Mary Kapitan at 732/225-2658 with the number of members who will be attending. On the agenda will be the election of officers. Please join us. Lunch will be served following the meeting.

Mary J. Kapitan, Secretary

REV. STEPHEN FURDEK DISTRICT-OHIO

The Rev. Stephen Furdek District will hold a meeting on Sunday, May 3, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. at St. Charles Parish Activity Room, 5891 Ridge Road, Parma, Ohio. Please contact Secretary Linda Hanko via email at lhanko@neo.rr.com; by phone at 330/706-0151; or via mail at 1473 Ries St., Barberton, OH 44203, and let her know the number of members from each branch who plan to attend.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Linda M. Hanko, Secretary/Treasurer

MSGR. STEPHEN KRASULA DISTRICT-NEW YORK

The Msgr. Stephen Krasula District will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, June 7, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. at Most Holy Trinity Church Parish Hall, Yonkers, New York. On the agenda will be a financial report and a discussion of activities and other business. We urge all District branches to send representatives to this meeting. All members of the FCSU are also welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served by host Branch 41, Yonkers, New York.

Henrieta H. Daitova, Secretary-Treasurer

PITTSBURGH DISTRICT-PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 60 will host the Father's Day Brunch on Sunday, June 21, 2009, at St. Barnabas in Swissvale. Branch 2 will handle the ad booklet.

The Annual Meeting is planned for Sunday, November 29, 2009 at Holy Trinity in West Mifflin. Branch 628 will be the host.

The officers of the Pittsburgh District would like to welcome Karianne Barnes as the new District vice president. We also wish all FCSU members a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Margaret A. Nasta, Secretary

REV. JOHN J. SPITKOVSKY DISTRICT-ILLINOIS, INDIANA AND WISCONSIN

The Rev. John J. Spitkovsky District will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, May 3, 2009, at Our Lady of Sorrows Benedictine Convent, 5900 West 147th Street, Oak Forest, Illinois. A period of refreshments and fraternal fellowship will begin at 1:30 p.m. The meeting will start promptly at 2:00 p.m. All branches are requested to send delegates and all Jednota members are welcome to attend. Attendees will enjoy a delicious dinner. If you plan to attend, please call District 2 Spiritual Advisor Dorothy Jurcenko at 773/763-0810 to let her know so adequate food and beverages will be available.

Robert Tapak Magruder, Recording Secretary

MICHIGAN DISTRICT-MICHIGAN

The Michigan District will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, May 3, 2009, at the Tatra Hall, 2636 6th Street and Sherman Boulevard, Muskegon Heights, Michigan. Our day will begin with dinner at 12:00 noon followed by the business meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Branch 595 is hosting this meeting. Please call Lou Kollar by April 25, 2009 at 231/755-3314 with the number of delegates who will attend from each branch.

Spring should be here by then so let's make it a good turnout. Remember, Branches must attend these meeting in order to qualify for the Branch compensation from the Home Office.

Anna Magusin, Secretary

FRANK T. HOLLY JR. DISTRICT-UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The Frank T. Holly Jr. District will hold its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, June 7, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. at K2 Engineering Co., 234 Pittsburgh Street, Uniontown, Pennsylvania. District branches are encouraged to send representatives to the meeting. District activities and insurance programs will be discussed.

Barbara Ann Holly, Secretary

Wishing

Oh, to reach for a star,
Too high for a mortal to touch.
Quickly, a wish is made from afar.
Likened to a jewel with brilliance as such;
The brightest sparkle catches one's eye,
Dancing and shimmering amidst the hue;
Casting a momentary spell on high,

Hoping one's wish may come true
Without even the slightest negative thought.
But what is one to do?
Knowing only too well, that what
He giveth, He also taketh.
Ann M. Madigan, Br. 240P, Taylor, PA

From the Desk of the Executive Secretary to All Members:

The First Catholic Slovak Union is pleased to announce that in spite of the financial turmoil on Wall Street, our policy holders enjoy the peace of mind that comes from dealing with a company that has been in business for 119 years with surplus in excess of \$9 mm. And although 2008 was a difficult year of historic proportions, our investment strategy has never been to employ leverage, speculation or risk that has buried some of our larger competitors.

We are also pleased to announce that while literally hundreds of financial institutions line up at the treasury looking to shore up their balance sheet with our hard-earned dollars, FCSU can go about business without government help. We intend to do just that. Our investment portfolio continues to produce income at a rate that allows us to credit our members among the highest interest rates in the annuity business while providing our policy holders the convenience of flexibility and the peace of mind that goes with security.

The unprecedented economic climate resulted in a necessary restructuring on the Society's investment procedures. The prevailing investment philosophy for the Society as well as with other fraternal and insurers was the purchase of quality securities with attractive interest rates. Little trading was involved as the purpose was to hold investments for the income until maturity. With the volatility of the marketplace experienced in the past several years, this type of investment technique is no longer possible. Therefore, the Society has investigated and engaged an asset manager to assist the Society in the analysis of securities owned, purchase selection and necessary repositioning of the portfolio. This should strengthen the investment portfolio and performance as we move forward.

But the message of 2008 was not lost or overlooked by us. We have taken the lessons learned to redouble our efforts to manage risk and to balance that against our expectation of a fair return. We hope the message of 2008 was not lost on you either. The returns of the financial markets and stock markets in particular have shown that they come with significant risk. Perhaps now is the time to limit risk and consider the security we can offer for your investment in us. We are confident in our ability to meet the promises in all of our certificates now and in the future and we point with pride to our long, sound service to our members and the public sector. We take our responsibility to protect your money seriously. We always will.

Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary



Study Slovak Language this Summer

The University of Pittsburgh has announced its Summer 2009 Slovak Language Program. The university will sponsor a 6-week program in Pittsburgh followed by a 4-week program in Bratislava. There will be Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Intensive Slovak in Pittsburgh June 8 to July 17. The intermediate level Slovak (after the 6 week Pittsburgh course) will be held in Slovakia July 20-August 14.

These courses are open to students of any age, including juniors and seniors in high school, undergraduate and graduate students, as well as persons of any age not currently enrolled in a college or university. Students must be 18 to participate in the abroad program. Partial scholarships are available. The Pittsburgh courses carry six college credits (4 additional credits for study in Slovakia). The classes meet Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Upon completion of the Pittsburgh program, students in beginning and intermediate Slovak may opt to continue their studies in Slovakia for a total of ten college credits. Those with an intermediate-level knowledge of Slovak may participate in the 4-week program only (for four college credits) without having to complete the Pittsburgh program.

Cultural excursions in Slovakia are an integral part of the program. In Bratislava during the program students will tour many sites of interest. The long trip around Slovakia at the end of the program has included such places as the High Tatras, and Kosice.

For further information and applications visit the website at <http://sli.slavic.pitt.edu/> or contact Christine Metil at 412/624-5906 (email Slavic@pitt.edu).



Beatles Revival Band from Slovakia Announce Two Pennsylvania Shows

"The Backwards," a Beatles revival band from Kosice, Slovakia will make two stops in Pennsylvania during their 2009 U.S. tour. Shows include Johnstown on May 17 and McKeesport on May 19, 2009.

Aces and Slovak Café will host the first Pennsylvania show on Sunday, May 17 at Aces Banquet Hall, 316 Chestnut Street, Johnstown. Doors open at 5:00 p.m. for social hour with the show beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The "Western Pennsylvania Slovak Cultural Association" (WPSCA) will host the second show at the McKeesport Palisades on Tuesday, May 19. Social hour begins at 7:00 p.m. with the performance starting at 8:00 p.m. The Palisades is located at 501 Water Street, McKeesport.

Both shows are open to all ages. Anyone under 21 must be accompanied by an adult.

Admission to both shows is \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door. Tickets for students ages 10 to 21 are \$8 per person. To reserve or purchase tickets call Palisades at 412/370-2971 or WPSCA at 412/531-2990, or email a request to slovakcafe@yahoo.com.

Annual Statement for the year 2008 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**
ASSETS

	Current Year			Prior Year
	1 Assets	2 Nonadmitted Assets	3 Net Admitted Assets (Cols. 1 - 2)	4 Net Admitted Assets
1. Bonds (Schedule D).....	158,324,977		158,324,977	173,196,904
2. Stocks (Schedule D):				
2.1 Preferred stocks.....	8,636,877		8,636,877	11,022,040
2.2 Common stocks.....	1,205,686		1,205,686	1,130,626
3. Mortgage loans on real estate (Schedule B):				
3.1 First liens.....	2,140,379		2,140,379	2,261,390
3.2 Other than first liens.....			0	
4. Real estate (Schedule A):				
4.1 Properties occupied by the company (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	1,234,889		1,234,889	1,288,418
4.2 Properties held for the production of income (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	963,543		963,543	973,785
4.3 Properties held for sale (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	562,675		562,675	562,675
5. Cash (\$.....23,237,354, Sch. E-Part 1), cash equivalents (\$.....0, Sch. E-Part 2) and short-term investments (\$.....0, Sch. DA).....	23,237,354		23,237,354	7,383,627
6. Contract loans (including \$.....0 premium notes).....	788,998		788,998	746,501
7. Other invested assets (Schedule BA).....	1,512,791		1,512,791	2,449,543
8. Receivables for securities.....			0	
9. Aggregate write-ins for invested assets.....	0	0	0	0
10. Subtotals, cash and invested assets (Lines 1 to 9).....	198,608,169	0	198,608,169	201,015,509
11. Title plants less \$.....0 charged off (for Title insurers only).....			0	
12. Investment income due and accrued.....	2,404,672		2,404,672	2,558,414
13. Premiums and considerations:				
13.1 Uncollected premiums and agents' balances in course of collection.....	23,684		23,684	36,412
13.2 Deferred premiums, agents' balances and installments booked but deferred and not yet due (including \$.....0 earned but unbilled premiums).....			0	
13.3 Accrued retrospective premiums.....			0	
14. Reinsurance:				
14.1 Amounts recoverable from reinsurers.....			0	
14.2 Funds held by or deposited with reinsured companies.....			0	
14.3 Other amounts receivable under reinsurance contracts.....			0	
15. Amounts receivable relating to uninsured plans.....			0	
16.1 Current federal and foreign income tax recoverable and interest thereon.....			0	
16.2 Net deferred tax asset.....			0	
17. Guaranty funds receivable or on deposit.....			0	
18. Electronic data processing equipment and software.....			0	
19. Furniture and equipment, including health care delivery assets (\$.....0).....	11,331	11,331	0	0
20. Net adjustment in assets and liabilities due to foreign exchange rates.....			0	
21. Receivables from parent, subsidiaries and affiliates.....			0	
22. Health care (\$.....0) and other amounts receivable.....			0	
23. Aggregate write-ins for other than invested assets.....	29,674	29,674	0	0
24. Total assets excluding Separate Accounts, Segregated Accounts and Protected Cell Accounts (Lines 10 to 23).....	201,077,530	41,005	201,036,525	203,610,335
25. From Separate Accounts, Segregated Accounts and Protected Cell Accounts.....			0	
26. TOTALS (Lines 24 and 25).....	201,077,530	41,005	201,036,525	203,610,335

Annual Statement for the year 2008 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**
LIABILITIES, SURPLUS AND OTHER FUNDS

	1 Current Year	2 Prior Year
1. Aggregate reserve for life certificates and contracts (Exhibit 5, Line 9999999) (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....	179,732,000	176,127,000
2. Aggregate reserve for accident and health contracts (Exhibit 6, Line 16, Col. 1) (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....		
3. Liability for deposit-type contracts (Exhibit 7, Line 14, Col. 1) (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....	1,501,974	1,572,184
4. Contract claims:		
4.1 Life (Exhibit 8, Part 1, Line 4.4, Column 1 less sum of Columns 9, 10 and 11).....	300,000	250,000
4.2 Accident and health (Exhibit 8, Part 1, Line 4.4, sum of Columns 9, 10 and 11).....		
5. Refunds due and unpaid (Exhibit 4, Line 10).....		
6. Provision for refunds payable in following calendar year-estimated amounts:		
6.1 Apportioned for payment.....	400,000	400,000
6.2 Not yet apportioned.....		
7. Premiums and annuity considerations for life and accident and health contracts received in advance less \$.....0 discount; including \$.....0 accident and health premiums (Exhibit 1, Part 1, Col. 1, sum of Lines 4 and 14).....	307,942	311,333
8. Contract liabilities not included elsewhere:		
8.1 Surrender values on canceled contracts.....		
8.2 Other amounts payable on reinsurance including \$.....0 assumed and \$.....0 ceded.....		
8.3 Interest Maintenance Reserve (IMR, Line 6).....	2,639,478	3,726,188
9. Commissions to fieldworkers due or accrued-life and annuity contracts \$.....0 ; accident and health \$.....0 and deposit-type contract funds \$.....0.....	8,157	3,425
10. Commissions and expense allowances payable on reinsurance assumed.....		
11. General expenses due or accrued (Exhibit 2, Line 12, Col. 7).....	89,226	87,700
12. Transfers to Separate Accounts due or accrued (net) (including \$.....0 accrued for expense allowances recognized in reserves).....		
13. Taxes, licenses and fees due or accrued (Exhibit 3, Line 8, Col. 6).....	23,542	8,865
14. Unearned investment income.....		
15. Amounts withheld or retained by Society as agent or trustee.....	5,824,275	4,609,041
16. Amounts held for fieldworkers' account, including \$.....0 fieldworkers' credit balances.....		
17. Remittances and items not allocated.....		
18. Net adjustment in assets and liabilities due to foreign exchange rates.....	10,000	50,000
19. Liability for benefits for employees and fieldworkers if not included above.....		
20. Borrowed money \$.....0 and interest thereon \$.....0.....		
21. Miscellaneous liabilities:		
21.1 Asset valuation reserve (AVR, Line 16, Col. 7).....	235,339	2,437,842
21.2 Reinsurance in unauthorized companies.....		
21.3 Funds held under reinsurance treaties with unauthorized reinsurers.....		
21.4 Payable to subsidiaries and affiliates.....		
21.5 Drafts outstanding.....		
21.6 Funds held under coinsurance.....		
21.7 Payable for securities.....		99,501
22. Aggregate write-ins for liabilities.....	905,000	814,992
23. Total liabilities excluding Separate Accounts business (Lines 1 to 22).....	191,976,933	190,498,071
24. From Separate Accounts statement.....		
25. Total liabilities (Lines 23 and 24).....	191,976,933	190,498,071
26. Aggregate write-ins for other than liabilities and surplus funds.....	0	0
27. Surplus notes.....		
28. Aggregate write-ins for surplus funds.....	0	0
29. Unassigned funds.....	9,059,592	13,112,264
30. Total (Lines 26 through 29) (Page 4, Line 47) (including \$.....0 in Separate Accounts statement).....	9,059,592	13,112,264
31. Totals (Lines 25 + 30) (Page 2, Line 26, Col. 3).....	201,036,525	203,610,335

Annual Statement for the year 2008 of the **FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA**
SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

	1 Current Year	2 Prior Year
1. Premiums and annuity considerations for life and accident and health contracts (Exhibit 1, Part 1, Line 20.4, Col. 1).....	8,025,584	5,693,973
2. Considerations for supplementary contracts with life contingencies.....		
3. Net investment income (Exhibit of Net Investment Income, Line 17).....	12,053,864	12,064,200
4. Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve (IMR, Line 5).....	285,614	300,469
5. Separate Accounts net gain from operations excluding unrealized gains or losses.....		
6. Commissions and expense allowances on reinsurance ceded (Exhibit 1, Part 2, Line 26.1, Col. 1).....		
7. Reserve adjustments on reinsurance ceded.....		
8. Miscellaneous Income:		
8.1 Income from fees associated with investment management, administration and contract guarantees from Separate Accounts.....		
8.2 Charges and fees for deposit-type contracts.....		
8.3 Aggregate write-ins for miscellaneous income.....	63,352	28,603
9. Totals (Lines 1 to 8.3).....	20,428,413	18,087,245
10. Death benefits.....	2,685,825	2,394,166
11. Matured endowments (excluding guaranteed annual pure endowments).....	1,588	2,208
12. Annuity benefits.....	8,773,933	6,299,856
13. Disability benefits and benefits under accident and health contracts, including premiums waived \$.....0.....		
14. Surrender benefits and withdrawals for life contracts.....	661,047	456,455
15. Interest and adjustments on contract or deposit-type contracts funds.....	244,648	218,064
16. Payments on supplementary contracts with life contingencies.....		
17. Increase in aggregate reserve for life and accident and health contracts.....	3,602,000	3,667,000
18. Totals (Lines 10 to 17).....	15,969,041	13,037,749
19. Commissions on premiums, annuity considerations and deposit-type contract funds (direct business only) (Exhibit 1, Part 2, Line 31, Col. 1 less Col. 5).....	85,734	97,579
20. Commissions and expense allowances on reinsurance assumed (Exhibit 1, Part 2, Line 26.2, Col. 1 less Col. 5).....		
21. General insurance expenses and fraternal expenses (Exhibit 2, Line 10, Cols. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6).....	2,551,320	2,287,897
22. Insurance taxes, licenses and fees (Exhibit 3, Line 6, Cols. 1, 2, 3 and 5).....	75,924	75,113
23. Increase in loading on deferred and uncollected premiums.....		
24. Net transfers to or (from) Separate Accounts net of reinsurance.....		
25. Aggregate write-ins for deductions.....	(79,320)	211,844
26. Totals (Lines 18 to 25).....	18,602,698	15,710,182
27. Net gain from operations before refunds to members (Line 9 minus Line 26).....	1,825,715	2,377,063
28. Refunds to members (Exhibit 4, Line 17, Cols. 1 + 2).....	398,195	461,771
29. Net gain from operations after refunds to members and before realized capital gains (losses) (Line 27 minus Line 28).....	1,427,520	1,915,292
30. Net realized capital gains (losses) less capital gains tax of \$.....0 (excluding \$.....(801,096) transferred to the IMR).....	(1,162,863)	(194,342)
31. Net income (Lines 29 + 30).....	264,657	1,720,950
SURPLUS ACCOUNT		
32. Surplus, December 31, previous year (Page 3, Line 30, Col. 2).....	13,112,264	11,555,594
33. Net income from operations (Line 31).....	264,657	1,720,950
34. Change in net unrealized capital gains (losses) less capital gains tax of \$.....0.....	(6,772,727)	2,984
35. Change in net unrealized foreign exchange capital gain (loss).....	40,000	(45,000)
36. Change in nonadmitted assets.....	3,894	(15,159)
37. Change in liability for reinsurance in unauthorized companies.....		
38. Change in reserve on account of change in valuation basis, (increase) or decrease (Exhibit 5A, Line 9999999, Col. 4).....		
39. Change in asset valuation reserve.....	2,202,503	152,294
40. Surplus (contributed to) withdrawn from Separate Accounts during period.....		
41. Other changes in surplus in Separate Accounts statement.....		
42. Change in surplus notes.....		
43. Cumulative effect of changes in accounting principles.....		
44. Change in surplus as a result of reinsurance.....		
45. Aggregate write-ins for gains and losses in surplus.....	209,000	(259,398)
46. Net change in surplus for the year (Lines 33 through 45).....	(4,052,673)	1,556,671
47. Surplus December 31, current year (Lines 32 + 46) (Page 3, Line 30).....	9,059,592	13,112,264

REMEMBER OUR DEPARTED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

**Adele LeBuffe Gregos
Branch 856
Washington, D.C.**

Adele LeBuffe Gregos, a member of Branch 856 in Washington, D.C., died October 8, 2008. She was born in Washington, D.C. on January 22, 1924. On June 2, 1949, she married Andrew K. Gregos in Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Gregos worked as a professional musician and teacher of piano and accordion. She was a member of the American Federation of Musicians. She was also a member of the Miniature Art Society of Florida, World Federation of Miniaturists, West Pasco Historical Society, and Catholic Daughters of America.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by two sons, Noel of Silver Spring, Maryland, and Eliot of Dunedin, Florida; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated on October 10, 2008, at Light of Christ Catholic Church.

Memorial donations may be made to the Hospice of Florida Suncoast.

Katherine Nowatkoski

Sister M. Emerita Cherniga, SS.C.M.

Sister M. Emerita (Theresa Cherniga) died Friday, March 20, 2009, at the Emmanuel Center, Danville, Pennsylvania. She was born July 5, 1920, in Turiany, Slovakia, the daughter of John and Elizabeth (Sofranko) Cherniga. She entered the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius from Holy Ghost Parish in Olyphant, Pennsylvania, on March

29, 1943. She was received as a novice on October 7, 1943, and professed on August 13, 1945.

Sister Emerita ministered in the culinary department of the congregation's large institutions, Immaculate Conception Orphanage, Middletown, the Villa Novitiate, St. Cyril Academy and St. Methodius Convent for 45 years. She also served at St. Patrick Convent, Charleston, South Carolina; St. Joseph Convent, Hazleton, Pennsylvania, St. John Convent in New York City, and Sacred Heart, Wilkes-Barre. She was noted for her exceptional talent in baking.

Assigned to General Duties at St. Methodius Convent in 1997, she retired to Maria Hall in 2006 and later to Emmanuel Center.

Sister Emerita was preceded in death by her parents and a sister, Mary Anne Cherniga. She is survived by a sister Helen Cherniga of Olyphant; two brothers, John of Olyphant, and Joseph of Fort Walton Beach, Florida; and two nephews, Michael Cherniga of Tallahassee, Florida, and John Cherniga of Satellite Beach, Florida.

On Monday, March 23, 2009, the transferal rite and recitation of the Rosary took place in Maria Hall at 9:00 a.m. with the Wake Service at 11:00 a.m. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 1:30 p.m. that day at the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius with the Rev. Gerard Heintzelmann as celebrant and homilist and the Rev. Lawrence Nwabueze as concelebrant. Burial was in the Sisters' cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, Villa Sacred Heart, Danville, PA 17821.

**Concetta Smith
Branch 484
Graceton, Pennsylvania**

Concetta "Connie" (Valore) Smith, 73 of Homer City, Pennsylvania, died Friday, March 27, 2009, at Indian Haven, Indiana, Pennsylvania.

She was born February 5, 1936, in Slickville, Pennsylvania, a daughter of Domenick Sr. and Rosario "Sarah" (Casisi) Valore.

She was a member of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish and the Ladies Altar and Rosary Society. She was also a member of the Red Barn Sportsman Club, the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary and Branch 484 of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

Mrs. Smith was employed by the Robertshaw and Campus Sportswear plants in Indiana, PA and retired from the Homer-Center School District.

She is survived by three children: Deborah and husband Greg Fletcher of Homer City, Christine "Tina" and husband Barry Jones of Coral, Pennsylvania and Edward Smith of Herndon, Virginia; five grandchildren, Crystal Cowoski, Mary Beth Fletcher and Nick, Eric and Katie Jones; two sisters and a brother, Mrs. Michael (Mary) Curto, Rocco Phillip Valore and Mrs. Harold (Katherine) Ray, all of Greensburg, Pennsylvania; beloved friends, Mary Jean, Rita and Kathy; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband Joseph "Whitey" Smith; and six brothers, Christopher, Domenic, Joseph, William, Charles and Orlando.

Friends were received at the C. Frederick Bowser Funeral Home, Homer City. A Mass

of Christian Burial was held Monday, March 30 at Our Lady of Assumption Church, Lucernemines Site, with the Rev. Terry Hercik as celebrant. Interment was in St. Francis Cemetery, Coral. Grave site prayers were also conducted by Branch 484.

Joseph E. Rura

**Mary E. Schutz
Branch 382
Jersey City, New Jersey**

Mary E. Schutz, 92, died November 11, 2008, in Clearwater, Florida. She was the wife of the late Ernest Schutz.

Mrs. Schutz was born March 28, 1916, in Guttenberg, New Jersey, a daughter of the late John and Julia (Stracar) Lackovic. In addition to her husband and her parents, she was predeceased by two sons, Ervin and Walter; a grandson, Walter Jr.; three brothers, Ernest, John and Justin; and a sister, Evelyn Sheridan. Survivors include a grandson, Stuart Schutz; two sisters, Emelia Dudsak of Pennsylvania and Henrietta Dugan of Florida; and many dear nieces and nephews.

Mary loved her Slovak heritage. The JEDNOTA newspaper was of special interest to her. She would often discuss articles from the paper with her family. Members of the Dudsak and Lackovic families were all members of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

Burial took place in Holy Cross Cemetery in North Arlington, New Jersey. May she rest in peace.

Emelia Dudsak and Henrietta Dugan



The Slovak Honorary Consuls and the Slovak Embassy staff gather outside the Embassy at the conclusion of their meeting.

Honorary Consuls Meet

All 12 Slovak Honorary Consuls in the United States held a conference at the Slovak Embassy in Washington, DC. The two day session included speakers from U.S. Commerce Department, Slovak Ministry of Economy, Slovak Commercial and Economic Section from New York, U.S. Department for Homeland Security and several staff members from the Slovak Embassy. The Consuls were informed how to better represent Slovakia in the fields of culture, education and economy. Ambassador Burian also held a reception for the group at his residence in McLean, VA.

The reception included a meeting with the Executive Committee of Friends of Slovakia to discuss areas of expanded cooperation. It was agreed that FOS would keep the Consuls informed of their Washington, DC events, including programs with Washington think tanks that might be viewed on the internet in order to make their activities more accessible to actual and potential Friends of Slovakia across the country. The Consuls were also briefed on the wide range of FOS activities including the Slovak Scholars program, the availability of bronze plaques on the FOS Wall of Honor and plans for participation with the Slovak Embassy in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in November.

Answer to Puzzle

Solution to Puzzle from page 8

C	H	A	F	E		C	A	G	E		J	A	B	S		
P	A	C	E	R		A	R	I	A		U	T	A	H		
A	I	M	E	R		D	E	A	R		R	O	S	E		
	R	E	L	A	T	I	O	N	S	H	I	P	S			
			I	N	E	Z			T	H	I	S				
S	C	E	N	T	S				O	P	T	I	C	S		
T	A	N	G			T	R	A	I	T	S		N	U	T	
E	N	D	S			A	W	N				A	F	R	O	
A	N	O				A	P	P	E	N	D		P	E	S	O
L	A	W	F	U	L						A	D	O	R	E	D
			E	S	A	U				S	L	I	P			
			F	O	R	T	U	N	E	T	E	L	L	E	R	
P	E	A	R			D	I	V	E		L	E	V	E	L	
E	T	T	E			I	T	E	M		O	X	I	D	E	
P	E	S	T			T	E	N	S		N	Y	L	O	N	

Useful Websites

- www.skonline.sk
- www.travelguide.sk
- kosice.region.sk
- www.slovakia.org
- www.vtaty.sk
- www.tatry.net
- www.hotel-net.sk
- www.skonline.sk
- www.kultura.sk
- www.snm.sk
- www.savba.sk
- www.government.gov.sk
- www.snd.sk
- www.stv.sk
- www.nbs.sk

- Slovakia Travel Guide
- Hotel and Spa Guide
- Kosice-City Travel Guide
- Bratislava-Information about the City
- Useful Information about the High Tatras
- Complete Information on Tatra Region
- Tourist Accommodation
- Slovakia On-Line (general information)
- Slovak cultural calendar
- Slovak National Museum
- Slovak Academy of Sciences
- Government of the Slovak Republic
- Slovak National Theater
- Slovak Television
- National Bank of Slovakia

News From Slovakia

UVK Confirms Gasparovic's Victory

Ivan Gasparovic will remain Slovakia's president after a victory over Iveta Radicova in the second run-off round of the presidential elections on Saturday, April 4.

On a turnout of 51.67 percent (2,242,162 people), the incumbent Slovak President beat his opponent by 55.53 percent (1,234,787 votes) to 44.46 percent (988,808 votes), Central Electoral Commission (UVK) announced recently.

In the first round on March 21, 2009, the turnout reached 43.63 percent (1,875,629 people). Gasparovic obtained 46.7 percent or 876,061 votes, Radicova had 38.05 percent, or 713,735 votes and non-parliamentary Conservative democrats (KDS) candidate Frantisek Miklosko was supported by 5.41 percent or 101,573 votes.

Fourth came non-parliamentary Free Forum (SF) candidate Zuzana Martinakova with 5.12 percent (96,035), followed by LS-HZDS nominee Milan Melnik (2.45 percent, or 45,985 votes), civil candidate Dagmar Bollova (1.13 percent, or 21,378 votes), and Milan Sidor, who is backed by the Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS) with 1.11 percent, or 20,862 votes).

TASR

Archbishop officiates at Mass Attended by President

St. Martin's Cathedral in Bratislava was the venue for a Catholic Mass on Easter Sunday, which was also attended by recently re-elected President Ivan Gasparovic and his wife Silvia.

Bratislava Archbishop Stanislav Zvolensky noted in his sermon that the victory of Jesus Christ over death offers any believer the chance of continuing life after death.

He further pointed to the greatness of God's mercy and that Easter is a chance to switch from blame to forgiveness...coming to terms with one's life and spiritual restoration.

"On Easter, the Church heralds to people that real liberation from blame is not merely a legend but that Jesus Christ with his death and crucifixion cleansed condemnation for all these people who believe in him."

The Mass included supplications and prayers for all nations and their leaders, sufferers and the sick and brotherly love among people.

TASR

Most Slovaks Spending Money More Carefully

Slovaks are more cautious about making large purchases than in the past, according to a recent survey.

According to the survey, only 27 percent of those questioned think that this is a good time to make large purchases, such as household appliances and electronics. People are reconsidering such moves and are postponing them.

If Slovaks had to reduce their spending, they would first give up visiting cafes and restaurants, with holidays and traveling in second place. Next they would forego new household appliances and electronics, followed by reductions in leisure activities. The items they could cut down on least of all would be food and ordinary travelling expenses.

The survey also shows a more moderate approach to debts. Slovaks have reduced spending on luxury items, and are no longer motivated to splash out thanks to a loan with favorable conditions. The global economic crisis has caused people to worry about their future, leaving the majority expecting to have worse living standards over the next 12 months. Only as many as 5 percent of those questioned expect their financial situation to improve, while 12 percent don't expect any change.

TASR

Slovakia's Main Challenge is to Overcome Crisis

Slovakia's main challenge at the moment is to overcome the economic crises and help the Government to tackle its effects, said President Ivan Gasparovic in a recent speech.

According to the president, the Government's efforts to deal with the crisis are sending out positive signals to the public. Gasparovic also believes that Slovakia, whose economy and banking sector has remained relatively healthy even during the crisis, will be able to bolster its international status. At the same time, Slovakia has to carry out responsible economic and social policy, he noted.

"Slovakia, as a solid part of international structures and an export-oriented economy, can't avoid the negative effects of the crisis, but it is able to moderate them. It has a duty to join multi-lateral processes aimed at healing economic conditions, and to adopt measures at the state level," said Gasparovic.

The president also noted that in order to deal with the crisis, Slovakia has to play an active

part in the European Union and other international organizations.

Gasparovic noted that today's world is interconnected, a fact that could lead to social and political destabilization during crises. "It may even disrupt the global balance of power. It's a threat to the entire international system," he said.

Gasparovic also reproached the Western media for sweeping reports about Central and Eastern Europe. "The level of progress isn't the same in all countries of the region... some of them are being damaged by this kind of reporting," he said.

TASR

Unemployment in Slovakia Stood at 8.7 Percent in 4Q08

Slovakia's unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2008 fell to 8.7 percent or 234,400 people compared to 10.3 percent in the same period of 2007, the Statistics Office said.

The average figure for the whole 2008 was 9.6 percent or 257,500, down from 11 percent in 2007.

Most of the jobless, 84.3 percent, were people who have only completed secondary-school or even lower-level education.

TASR

Dzurinda Hits Out at Government's handling of Crisis

Slovakia's political opposition heaped criticism on the Robert Fico government for its handling of the global financial crisis on the country's reluctance of the ruling coalition to consider opposition-proposed solutions.

After failing to see its proposal for a special parliamentary debate on the ways to mitigate the crisis, former premier and SDKU-DS chairman Mikulas Dzurinda said Fico is failing to grasp the nettle and this is costing people their jobs.

Dzurinda said his two governments had led Slovakia out of a deep financial and economic trough in 1999 and ushered in the humming economy which was growing by 10 percent. The measures which helped Slovakia in those days were bold and dynamic, just like the Government should be adopting today, he said.

Seconding him was SDKU-DS deputy chairman Ivan Miklos who describe government measures as not going far enough. "Government doesn't have measures nor does it want to debate them," he added. He commended Fico's resolve not to widen the state budget deficit but voiced his concern about the premier being able to make good on his promise.

TASR

Lost of Foreign Markets Slovakia's Biggest Problem

The Slovak Council for Economic Crisis in its existing measures fails to address support for exports, said Slovak Trade and Industry Chamber (SOPK) chairman Peter Mihok.

He said that the main problem for Slovak companies is their losses of foreign markets, and the small domestic market can't substitute for this shrinkage. Mihok said that anti-crisis measures that focus on the domestic market can "optionally" do something, but will never compensate for downfalls in exports.

SOPK is set to prepare pro-export proposals to be presented at the next Council meeting. These should include production financing, presentations abroad, participation at fairs, and effective business representation abroad via the Slovak state offices there.

Mihok also noted that 80 percent of the Slovak GDP is created by exports, and that even a 10-percent fall would be very damaging. Meanwhile, in estimating the first two months of this year it appears the drop is more like 20 percent.

Part of the problem is the Slovak industrial structure, said Mihok. SOPK wants to facilitate the start-up of innovative companies gaining access to so-called risk, or start-up capital. The objective of this would be to help business areas that are new to Slovakia. He said that there is know-how and ability in the country, but that it lacks capital.

The Council and the Government should, according to Mihok, start to pay attention to education and applied research. He said that only companies that are prepared for after-the-crisis developments can succeed.

Also in this respect he said that the development program linked to the drawing of the EU funds must be changed, because it was prepared in 2006, while the Slovak economy has entirely different priorities now. Mihok wants this year to initiate talks with other countries focused on how to change these priorities, instead of waiting for the EU to begin such a process.

The Government's anti-crisis measures are standard, said Mihok, as they are similar to measures being adopted by other countries. He noted, however, that it doesn't mean that all of them are good. The country should focus on measures that are general in the scope of their effect, and don't provide advantages to individual sectors or companies, according to Mihok.

TASR

Trnavská automobilka uvádza na slovenský trh nový model

Trnava (TASR) - Osobný automobil Citroën C3 Picasso uviedla 26. marca trnavská automobilka PSA Peugeot Citroën v Trnave oficiálne na trh v SR. Vozidlo sa bude vyrábať výlučne na Slovensku a ročne vyrobí asi 110,000 áut tohto typu. Citroën C3 Picasso predstavil trnavský výrobný závod ako koncernovú novinku v polovici uplynulého roka. V súčasnosti denne vyrába 362 kusov tohto typu vozidla z celkového denného objemu 850 áut. V januári vyrobili viac ako 2,400 kusov Citroën C3 Picasso, vo februári 6,500. Zostatok dennej produkcie tvorí Peugeot 207. Za celý uplynulý rok vyšlo z výrobných liniek automobilky 186,397 osobných vozidiel.

Podľa slov generálneho riaditeľa PSA Peugeot Citroën Slovakia Jeana Moura sa výroba Citroën C3 Picasso v krátkom čase dokáže podriadiť požiadavkám trhu a proporcionálnu produkciu môže producent zmeniť podľa odbytu koncernovej novinky. Generálny riaditeľ Citroën Slovakia Cédric du Chene dodal, že vo všetkých krajinách, kde zatiaľ model Citroën C3 Picasso uviedli, predaj prekročil predpokladaný dopyt. Primátor Trnavy Štefan Bošňák informoval, že Citroën C3 Picasso je historicky druhé vozidlo, ktoré sa vyrába výlučne v Trnave. "Prvým bola za socializmu všeobecne známa Škoda 1203, ktorú robili v bývalých Trnavských automobilových závodoch," povedal Bošňák.

Automobilka v Trnave je technologicky najmodernejšou v skupine PSA Peugeot Citroën. Skupina od roku 2003 investovala na Slovensku viac ako 800 miliónov eur (24.1 miliardy Sk). Trnavský závod patrí k pilierom slovenskej ekonomiky, je jedným z najväčších exportérov v SR. V trnavskom regióne je najväčším zamestnávateľom, pracuje v ňom viac ako 3,000 pracovníkov.



Slovensko si bude voliť europoslancov

Bratislava (TASR) - Slovenskí europoslanci dúfajú, že k júnovým voľbám do Európskeho parlamentu (EP) pristúpia Slováci zodpovedne a ich účasť bude vyššia ako v roku 2004. Vtedy totiž o 14 europoslancov rozhodovalo len 16,96 percenta voličov a účasťou tak Slovensko skončilo na poslednom mieste spomedzi vtedajších 25 krajín EÚ. Naopak, na Malte prišlo k volebným urnám viac ako 80 percent ľudí.

"Nie je to naozaj na chválu," komentoval europoslanec Peter Šťastný (SDKÚ-DS). Tvrdí, že voliť členov do EP je nielen právo, ale aj čiastočná povinnosť voči demokracii a ďalším generáciám. "Myslím si, že Slováci dnes vedia, že obrovský progres, ktorý sa spravil, bol vďaka členstvu, vďaka vstupu do EÚ. Patrí sa participovať na budovaní demokracie, na budovaní konkurencieschopnej a silnej Európy," komentoval bývalý hokejový reprezentant. Svoje šance obhájiť svoj post vidí reálne a optimisticky. "Som podstatne lepšie informovaný, lepšie postavený, ďaleko lepšie prepojený," zhodnotil sám seba.

Aj europoslankyňa Irena Belohorská (ĽS-HZDS) si želá väčší záujem o eurovoľby zo strany Slovákov. "My sme boli poslední. Takže by sme chceli, aby sa situácia neopakovala," povedala s tým, že každý z kandidátov na post europoslancu sa bude snažiť vyčerpať do minúty svoju predvolebnú kampaň. "Pre nás, europoslancov končí EP 5. mája. Od 5. mája bude dostatok príležitostí stretávať sa s občanmi," dodala Belohorská, ktorá si chce takisto svoju stoličku europoslankyne obhájiť.

Volebnej účasti v júnových eurovoľbách sa obáva aj predseda Národnej rady SR Pavol Paška. Konštatoval, že všetci sa po prezidentských voľbách pokúsia mobilizovať elektoráty tak, aby bol výsledok do EP transparentný a aby pritiahli viac voličov. "Vzhľadom na štruktúru EP pôjde o klasický hodnotový zápas - ľavica a pravica, liberáli, konzervatívci, ľudovci. Takže by možno bolo dobré, keby sme to voličovi ponúkli, aby pochopil, že EP má svoju určitú vnútornú konzistenciu, ktorá má výrazný hodnotový rozmer," upozornil šéf parlamentu. Podľa neho by sa mali o prácu slovenských europoslancov viac zaujímať aj médiá.

V súčasnosti zastupuje SR v EP 14 europoslancov z piatich parlamentných strán. Zo strany SDKÚ-DS je to Milan Gaľa, Zita Pleštinová a Peter Šťastný, z ĽS-HZDS Peter Baco, Sergej Kozlík a Irena Belohorská, zo Smeru-SD Monika Beňová, Miloš Koterec, Vladimír Maňka, z SMK Edit Bauer a Árpád Duka-Zólyomi a z KDĽ Anna Záborská, Miroslav Mikolášik a Ján Hudacký. V laviciach EP bude od tohto roku sedieť o jedného slovenského zástupcu menej, teda 13. EP reprezentuje spolu 785 europoslancov z EÚ. Voľby do EP sa na Slovensku uskutočnia 6. júna.



Deň rodiny v Bratislave

Pokračovanie zo str. 24

Rokovania o možnosti partnerstva a spolupráce pri cestovaní rodín na toto podujatie sa uskutočňujú.

Ďalšie subjekty, ktoré sa na organizácii podujatia podieľajú: Asociácia centier pre rodinu; Bratislavské kultúrne a informačné stredisko Hlavné mesto Bratislava C.A.R.D.O. Domka eRko; Fórum kresťanských inštitúcií Fórum života; Klub mnohohodných rodín Manželské stretnutia; Nadácia Jozefa Murgaša Návrat; OZ Rodinka.sk; OZ Christ-Net.Sk; Slovenská rada rodičovských združení; Slovenský skauting; Slovenský Orol; Spoločnosť pre rodinu a zodpovedné rodičovstvo; Úsmev ako dar; Združenie kresťanských seniorov Slovenska;

Podujatie má svoju internetovú stránku www.familyday.sk alebo www.denrodiny.sk; Kontaktné osoby: Monika Jucková, Katarína Hulmanová; Telefón: 0905647258, 0903783229; E-mail: juckovam@orangemail.sk, info@fki.sk; Viac info bude priebežne doplnené na webe: www.familyday.sk (www.denrodiny.sk),



FOTO TASR – Henrich Mišovič

V obci Veľký Lapáš pri Nitre pred 20 rokmi založila pani Aurélia Šranková folklórny súbor Rapkáčik. Každoročne na Veľkonočný pondelok sa chlapi oblečú do krojov a po omši sa vyberú vyšibať a vyoblievať dievčatá zo súboru. 13. apríl 2009, Veľký Lapáš



Účasť delegácie SR na summite EÚ - USA v Prahe

Minister zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky Miroslav Lajčák sa ako člen delegácie vedenej predsedom vlády Slovenskej republiky Robertom Ficom 5. apríla 2009 zúčastnil na summite medzi EÚ a USA v Prahe.

Vrcholná schôdzka predstavovala prvé stretnutie v tomto formáte s prezidentom USA Barackom Obamom. Jej cieľom bolo výmena názorov na prioritné otázky transatlantického partnerstva: hospodársku a finančnú krízu, energetiku, klimatické zmeny a boj proti terorizmu s osobitným zameraním na Afganistan, pričom partneri prediskutujú svoje stratégie k ďalšiemu postupu.

Rokovanie ministrov zahraničných vecí EÚ s americkou šéfkou diplomacie H. Clintonovou bolo okrem Afganistanu venované tiež aktuálnemu vývoju vo Východnej Európe, na Západnom Balkáne a na Blízkom východe.

Tlačový a komunikačný odbor Ministerstva zahraničných vecí SR



Vítazi Festivalu vedy a techniky postúpili na súťaž v USA

Bratislava (TASR) - Výhercovia národnej súťaže Festival vedy a techniky (FVaT) 2008, v ktorej súťažili žiaci a študenti so svojimi vedeckými projektmi, budú reprezentovať Slovensko na dvoch medzinárodných podujatiach v USA. Informovala o tom výkonná riaditeľka Asociácie pre mládež, vedu a techniku - AMAVET Gabriela Kukolová.

Olympiády Sweep Fair v dňoch 15. až 20. apríla v Houstone v štáte Texas sa zúčastní dvojica študentov z Gymnázia v Liptovskom Hrádku, 18-ročný Roman Hapčo a 19-ročná Nikola Chaloupková. Slovensko budú reprezentovať s projektom Metodicko-praktická príručka o povrchových a pitných vodách. Ten sa zaoberá vytvorením tejto príručky, ktorá má slúžiť ako učebná pomôcka pre žiakov základných škôl a žiakov prvých a druhých ročníkov stredných škôl, pričom má obohatiť hodiny ekológie a urobiť ich zaujímavejšími. Spomínaná olympiáda je pripravená pre všetkých mladých vedátorov vo veku do 20 rokov, študujúcich na strednej škole.

Súťaže Intel ISEF v dňoch 8. až 15. mája v Rene v štáte Nevada sa z Gymnázia sv. Tomáša Akvinského v Košiciach zúčastnia 18-ročný Tomáš Sabadoš a 19-ročný Michal Síkora s projektom Tečenie magnetických kvapalín s voľným povrchom. Skúmajú v ňom tečenie magnetickej kvapaliny s voľným povrchom, formovanie kvapiek a vplyv magnetickej kvapaliny otvorom v širšej nádobe a vplyvu magnetického poľa na rozpad súvislého prúdu kvapky. Na túto súťaž vcestuje aj Martin Paňko študent Gymnázia z Exnárovej ulice v Košiciach s projektom Počítačová simulácia avaskulárneho rastu tumoru s chirurgickou terapiou, ktorý sa zaoberá navrhnutím diskretného matematicko-fyzikálneho modelu malígneho biologického tkaniva na celulárnej a extra celulárnej úrovni, pričom účelom modelu je skúmanie rastu planárneho, "in vitro" tumoru na kvantitatívnej a kvalitatívnej úrovni. Intel ISEF - veľtrh International Science and Engineering Fair je najväčším podujatím v oblasti vedy, kde sa svetu predstavujú najnádejnejší mladá vedci a vynálezcovia.

Ako Kukolová pripomenula, Festival vedy a techniky je už roky jedinečnou prehliadkou výsledkov vedeckovýskumnej práce mladých ľudí. Z množstva projektov vyberá komisia zložená z odborníkov tie najlepšie a najzaujímavejšie. Súťaž je určená pre mladých ľudí vo veku do 20 rokov, respektíve pre všetkých záujemcov do doby zloženia maturitnej skúšky. "Na Festival vedy a techniky prijímajú pozvanie aj predstavitelia našich partnerských organizácií z Francúzska, Belgicka, Španielska, Českej republiky, Poľska či Maďarska, čím sa vytvárajú dobré podmienky na výmenu skúseností a nadväzovanie priateľstiev medzi mladými ľuďmi," uviedla.

Vranovský kostol povýšený na Baziliku minor

6. septembra 2008 pri príležitosti 3-stého výročia slzenia obrazu Panny Márie so súhlasom pápeža Benedikta XVI., uskutočnila sa povznášajúca slávnosť konsekrácie udelenia titulu Bazilika minor kostolu Narodenia Panny Márie vo Vranove nad Topľou.

Kulmináčnym bodom slávnosti bola pontifikálna sv. omša za účasti kardinála Jozefa Tomku, dvoch sídelných biskupov košickej diecézy s arcibiskupom Alojzom Tkáčom, generálnym vikárom prešovského gréckokatolíckeho arcibiskupstva, veľkého množstva kňazov, klerikov, rehoľných sestier z celého regiónu, mestskej správy a oblastných reprezentantov civilných inštitúcií s prevelkým zástupom ľudí z blízka i ďaleka aplaudujúcich na slávu a vďaka Svätému Otcovi.

K zväčneniu tejto pamätnej a historickej udalosti vydali vkusnú liturgickú brožúru s príležitostnou dokumentáciou a historickým prierezom vranovského kostola z pera o. Leandera T. Pietrasa, OSPPE.

Farský Kostol Narodenia Panny Márie vo Vranove nad Topľou má za sebou vyše 550-ročnú históriu. Jej začiatky sa spájajú s rádom františkánov, ktorí ešte pred rokom 1440 mali vo Vranove kláštor. Zemepán Juraj Bátorí okolo roku 1540 ich prinútil odísť z Vranova a jeho vdova Eufrozína Drugetová v roku 1580 kostol odovzdala do používania spoločenstvu evanjelikov. V tom čase vranovskí katolíci mali k dispozícii farský Kostol sv. Štefana v južnej časti mesta.

Od roku 1672 užívateľmi postfrantiškánskeho kostola sa stali rehoľníci rádu pavlínov, o príchod ktorých do Vranova sa zalúžila grófka Mária Esterháziiová, vdova po Jurajovi Drugetovi. Jej úsilie bolo korunované súhlasom diecézneho jágerského biskupa Františka Szegedyho aj ostrihomského arcibiskupa Juraja Szelepcsényiho a 13. 7. 1673 zavŕšené dekrétom cisára Leopolda I.

Pôvodne gotický sloh si kostol zachoval do 18. apríla 1718, kedy spolu s celým mestom vyhorel. Renovačné práce boli začaté až r. 1735. Zrenovovaný kostol 21. septembra 1756 konsekroval jágerský biskup František Barkóci. Interiér kostola bol vtedy prestavaný v barokovom slohu. V jeho priestoroch zanechal svoje dielo vynikajúci maliar európskeho formátu Ján Lukáš Kracker (1717 – 1779), ale z jeho fresiek po ďalšom požiari r. 1873 ostali len fragmenty. Zachovalo sa však veľké sochárske a rezbárske dielo košického majstra Jozefa Hartmanna (1719 – 1764): hlavný oltár, kazateľnica a tri bočné oltáre.

Do nadstavby hlavného oltára bol vkomponovaný obraz Panny Márie (54,0 x 41,5 cm) Tematicky tento obraz zdôrazňuje panenské materstvo Božej Matky a typologicky patrí do skupiny eleuzijs (milujúcej) s viditeľnými prvkami hodegetrie (ukazujúcej cestu). Poškodený text pod obrazom (v preklade) znie: Obraz Milostivej Panny Márie krvavo slziacej na Kalvárii.

Osobne na vranovský kostol mám neodnateľné spomienky. Moju rodnú obec Čemerné od Vranova delila rieka Topľa. Akoby bola prilepená na mesto. V mládežníckych rokoch chodili sme na omšu do Vranova. Keď nebola tuhá zima aj na roráty a Polnočnú. V mojom pokročilom veku v duchu vidím sa stáť pred oltárom počas omši s mojimi rovesníkmi. Na ľavej strane chlapi a na pravej dievčatá. Tam som prijal sviatosť birmovky. Žiaden div ni diaľava a dlhá časová odluka nevytreli z mojej pamäti spomienky na vranovský kostol súčasne oživené touto pamätnou udalosťou. Z ďalekej Kanady pripojujem sa k zástupu veriacich a radujem sa s radujúcimi.

Štefan Hreha
Montréal, QC



Nový internetový portál : Kultúrny profil Slovenska

Bratislava (TASR) - Na príprave textov, ktoré sa nachádzajú na novom internetovom portáli Kultúrny profil Slovenska, sa podieľalo 40 odborných autorov. Na prezentácii stránky 31. marca to uviedol riaditeľ úseku automatizácie a integrácie Univerzitetnej knižnici v Bratislave Alojz Androvič. Práve odovzdávanie pripravených textov patrilo podľa neho k jedným z najväčších problémov pri práci na danom projekte. Ako vysvetlil, keďže ide o expertov z rôznych kultúrnych oblastí, ktorí mnohokrát aj šéfuju rôznym inštitúciám, pre ich zaneprázdnenosť sa čakalo na materiály aj 10 až 11 mesiacov. Niektorých autorov museli preto nahradiť inými odborníkmi. Napriek tomuto faktoru to termín spustenia portálu neohrozilo a pre verejnosť je prístupný v čase, v akom sa plánovalo.

Vtedajšia projektová manažérka za ministerstvo kultúry Soňa Čermáková-Uličná dodala, že práce sa dostali do trojmesačného sklzu tiež pre objektívne technické problémy. Upozornila, že v čase plánovania financovania projektu nebolo zrejmé, že pôjde o dvojjazyčný portál, keďže všade vo svete ho majú jednotlivé štáty iba v angličtine. Na realizáciu projektu podpísalo ministerstvo kultúry trojročnú zmluvu s British Council, ktorá končí v novembri 2010. Androvič upozornil, že je nastavená tak, aby projekt pokračoval a bol trvalo udržateľný. Náklady Britskej rady predstavujú na trojročné obdobie sumu 36,000 libier (33,448 eur). V uplynulom roku vyčlenilo ministerstvo kultúry na tento účel 92,943 eur (2,8 milióna Sk). Vzhľadom na problémy s dochvilnosťou autorov, s dodaním textov a korektúrami sa minulo len 38,884 eur (1,171,410 Sk), pričom časť ušetrených peňazí sa presunula na tento rok. Na udržanie aktuálnosti 7500 stránok textu a 3000 kontaktov by malo ísť 50,288 eur (1,515 milióna Sk) a univerzitná knižnica očakáva, že na tento účel bude na budúci rok potrebovať približne 11,000 eur (331,386 Sk).

Vašu pozornosť si dovoľujeme upriamiť na nový internetový portál: Kultúrny profil Slovenska, ktorý sprevádzkovala Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave a British Council s podporou Ministerstva kultúry Slovenskej republiky.

Portál je dvojjazyčný slovenský a anglický a nachádza sa na vlákne: www.slovakia.culturalprofiles.net



Kostol Narodenia Panny Márie vo Vranove nad Topľou.



FOTO TASR – Pavol Ďurčo

V priestoroch Budatínskeho hradu sprístupnili výstavu pod názvom Ukryté v drôtenej sieti – veľkonočné kraslice zdobené drôtom. Návštevníci výstavy budú mať do 20. mája 2009 možnosť uvidieť takmer 350 odrôtovaných vajíčok z rúk 25 autorov zo Slovenska a Čiech. Časť výstavy tvoria aj kraslice aj zo zbierok Považského múzea v Žiline.

Výstava Ukryté v drôtenej sieti prezentuje 350 odrôtovaných vajíčok

Odrôtované kraslice z rúk 26 autorov zo Slovenska a Českej republiky prezentuje výstava Ukryté v drôtenej sieti, ktorú 8. apríla otvorili vo výstavnej miestnosti Považského múzea (PM) v Žiline v areáli Budatínskeho hradu. Hlavným zámerom výstavy takmer 350 odrôtovaných vajíčok je podľa kurátorky a etnologickej PM Kataríny Kendrovej predstaviť súčasné podoby opletania kraslic drôtom. Odrôtované vajíčka sú podľa kurátorky výstavy umelecky najpôsobivejšie a zároveň technicky najnáročnejšie. „Spojenie dvoch tak odlišných materiálov ako je pevný drôt a jemná škrupina si vyžaduje nielen trpezlivosť, ale aj mimoriadnu zručnosť. Dnešní remeselníci využívajú pri zdobení vajíčok najmä textilné techniky. Najrozšírenejší je slučkový výplet, odvodený od princípu šitej čipky, ale vajíčka zobia aj paličkovanou čipkou či háčkováním. Do drôtených sietí často vkladajú staré drotárske a moderné abstraktné a figurálne motívy,“ dodala Kendrová.

Mnohoraké podoby zdobenia vajíčok drôtom si priaznivci ľudového umenia môžu na pôde Považského múzea pozrieť opäť po 16 rokoch. „Hoci ich múzeum zrealizovalo už štyri, dve z nich boli nainštalované v zahraničí,“ spresnila Kendrová. Dodala, že výstava Ukryté v drôtenej sieti je sprístupnená do 20. mája 2009.

Gorazd Zvonický

Kňaz Tiso

Blahoslavený, kto sa nezaknísal
a stál jak Tiso, keď dopíjal kalich
a zatváral svoj mučenícky misál.

Ó, aprílové mraky! ... Vietor hnal ich
nad naše duše... Kto stál hromozvodom
v tom hromobití veľikášov malých? ...

Kňaz Tiso! On bol sviecou pred národom,
hromničkou svätou, z ktorej na smrť chorý
nespúšťa zrak... Bol jeho jasným bodom,

o ktorom sa dnes doma nehovorí,
ani nenačím, lebo do srdca vrastá,
je teplom krbu, vatrou na pohorí.

I zaprisahám otcov na kríž: Sčasta
čítajte jeho závet pred obrazom,
nech vaše deti sajú jak med z plásta

protíliek na lož, súcit voči plazom
a lásku k pravde o zhanenej snahe,
že bol nám otcem, sprievodcom a kňazom
a čistou žertvou za Slovensko drahé!

Novomenovaný trnavský arcibiskup Róbert Bezák

Banská Bystrica (TASR) – Novomenovaný trnavský arcibiskup Róbert Bezák je presvedčený, že menovanie pápežom Benediktom XVI. je božia výzva aj pozvanie a verí, že ľudia v Trnave ho prijmu. V súčasnosti správca farnosti na banskobystrickom sídlisku Radvaň potvrdil, že rozhodnutie z Vatikánu ho prekvapilo a keby vedel o viacerých kandidátoch, asi by zvažoval, či to prijme. “Nepokladám sa za niekoho, kto sa mohol sám dostať k podobnému úradu. Nemal som možnosť rozhodnúť sa inak,” reagoval páter Bezák na skutočnosť, že Arcibiskupský úrad v Trnave bude riadiť kňaz zo sídliskovej farnosti a inej diecézy. Novomenovaný arcibiskup však spresnil, že väčšie skúsenosti má z pôsobenia v Bratislave v rokoch 1993 až 2005, kde bol predstaveným rehole Redemptoristov aj viceprovinciál rímskokatolíckej viceprovincie Redemptoristov na Slovensku. V tom období vyučoval tiež morálnu teológiu na teologickom inštitúte v Badíne pri Banskej Bystrici a na teologickej fakulte Trnavskej univerzity. V rokoch 1996 – 2002 bol aj predsedom Konferencie vyšších rehoľných predstavených na Slovensku.

“Keď som v roku 2005 skončil svoje funkčné obdobie provinciála a dlhšie som nemohol byť, mal som túžbu si vydýchnuť a utiahnuť sa do ústrania. Tak som sa dostal na mariánske pútnické miesto Staré Hory, ktoré spravujú Redemptoristi,” objasnil páter Bezák svoju kňazskú zmenu do Banskobystrickej diecézy, kde od roku 2008 pôsobí ako správca 12-tisícovej farnosti, ale tiež aj ako vikár viceprovinciála rímskokatolíckej viceprovincie Redemptoristov v Bratislave. Podľa pátra Bezáka prostredie v novom pôsobisku mu nebude cudzie, keďže ako predstaviteľ reholi mal možnosť už dávnejšie sa stretávať s cirkevnými predstaviteľmi arcidiecézy. Predpokladá, že oporu nájde aj u viacerých spolužiakov zo študentských čias v Bratislave, ktorí pôsobia v Trnavskej arcidiecéze a podobne ako on, už majú za sebou 25 rokov kňazskej služby s bohatými skúsenosťami v pastorácii. “Verím, že stále sú to moji priatelia,” dodal v súvislosti s novým pôsobiskom.

Doterajší najvyšší predstaviteľ rímskokatolíckej cirkvi v Trnave Ján Sokol bol menovaný za trnavského arcibiskupa 26. júla 1989 a uvedený do úradu 10. septembra 1989. V sobotu 18. apríla arcibiskup Sokol oznámil v katedrále sv. Jána Krstiteľa, že pápež Benedikt XVI. ho menoval za apoštolského administrátora Trnavskej arcidiecézy na obdobie, dokedy nový arcibiskup kánonicky neprevezme svoj nový úrad.



Umelkyňa slovenského pôvodu Ľuba Greguš Mason na jazzovom festivale v Paname

V dňoch 12. – 17. januára 2009 sa konal v Panama City, Panama džezový festival, ktorého sa zúčastnilo okolo 10,000 záujemcov. Na tomto podniku slovenská muzikálová sálica na Broadway – New York Ľuba Greguš Mason za veľkého nadšenia prítomných predstavila svoje druhé CD-čko Krazy Love.

Dostali sa nám do rúk viaceré noviny, letáky, brožúrky a magazíny z tohto podujatia. Všetky na predných stranách s fotografiami opisovali Ľubkiné úspešné predstavenie. Obecenstvo ju búrlivo pozdravovalo a volanie a tleskanie nemalo konca. Po predstavení jej mnohí gratulovali, kládli otázky a chceli čo najviac vedieť o jej kariére a plánoch do budúcnosti. Možno si len domyslieť, asi koľko času strávila v takomto veľkom zhromaždení obdivovateľov a koľko autogramov musela podpísať.

Ľubka sa teší, že si mohla vydať druhé CD-čko. Sama si napísala slová i hudbu a ohodnotenie kritikov je dosiaľ veľmi dobré.

CD Krazy Love predstavuje kontemporary jazz, ktorý je „prikorený do brazílskej chuti. Téma piesní je vybraná z Ľubkiného života, z chvíľ šťastných i menej šťastných. Lyrické komponovanie priťahuje pochvalu mnohých pre jej vnútornú odlišnosť. Má kapacitu prekvapiť a uspokojiť mnohých kritikov. Päťčlenná latinská hudobná skupina, kombinácia ohňa a ľadu zvyšuje prirodzené hviezdnych nocí šepotu lyriky. Krazy Love je preplnená citovými piesňami milencov, čo prezrádza Ľubkin rozdielny štýl. Jej hlas poskytuje kvalitu a rytmus, čo poslucháč rád počuje.

Dostali sme niekoľko hodnotení kritikov, spomenieme aspoň niektoré. Elizabeth Ahlors v Cabaret Reviews analyzuje Ľubkin cukrový a kontrolovaný hlas, ktorý má schopnosť naplniť príbytok každého z nás. Jej piesne pozdravujú romantiku domova so spomienkami. Mnohé melódie sa odzrkadľujú v harmónii Východnej Európy pomešané brazílskym rytmom. Jej školenie, skúsenosť, odborná znalosť a jej talent omráčia vďačných poslucháčov.

Kritik C.W. Ross v C.W.'S Place hodnotí vynikajúcich hudobníkov ako Renato Neto (piano), Marko Costa (bubon) a hlavne Ľubkin manžel, národný umelec Ruben Blades. Niet pochýb, že s týmto veľkým talentom hviezda tohto muzikálneho predstavenia je pi. Mason s jej hodvábnymi a vyhladenými vokálnymi chords, ktoré prúdia jemne a voľne a majú chuť otepleného medu.

CD Reviews/ Permalink – Jan. 19, 2009:

Divadelná aura prezrádza značný úspech, ktorému sa pi. Mason tešila na Broadway: Chicago, Jekyll & Hyde, How to Succeed in Business & etc. Osem jej vlastných skladieb tvoria jasný a osobný nápev, ktorý sa opakuje v melódii a naberá bohatosti v neuveriteľnom výkone hudobníkov. Manželom pi. Mason je Ruben Blades, Latin superstar. Spolu spievajú exquisite duet „And it is with you I go“. Horúci titul piesní zarezáva do všetkého a ukazuje komplexnosť moderného vzťahu ako tému a prezentuje ju ako vzrušujúcu žiadosť chladným brazílskym spôsobom. Toto je len niekoľko málo hodnotení kritikov. Pisateľ má ich viac.

Ďalšie úspešné predstavenia mala 14. a 15. marca 2009 v štátoch Costa Rica a v Paname za veľkej účasti obecenstva. Prichodí nám úprimne blahoželať Ľubke k úspechom a želať jej mnoho ďalších do budúcnosti. Ľubka nám priblížila nielen svoju tvorbu, ale aj pohľad na svoje slovenské korene a kľúč k úspechu v showbiznise v Amerike. (CD Krazy Love je k dostaniu: Luba Mason.com; Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com)

Milovník spevu a hudby



Predseda I. Zboru Slovenskej ligy, Milan R. Dait počas slávnostného príhovoru. Sediaci zľava: otec Štefan Chanas, Michal Zákutný, Nina Holy, Jozef Bilík.



Usporiadatelia Oslavy slovenskej štátnosti spolu so zástupcami slovenských spolkov. V prvom rade zľava: Emil Pavelek, Henrieta Daitová, Nina Holy, Marta Catalano a Jozef Juráši; zadný rad zľava: Michal Zákutný; kaplán Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého, otec Štefan Chanas; Milan R. Dait; Jozef Bilík; Anna Korčák a Jozef Korčák.

Oslava slovenskej štátnosti v New Yorku

Prvý zbor Slovenskej ligy v New Yorku za spolupráce Slovenskej ligy v Amerike, Spolku sv. Štefana a Spolku sv. Matúša Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty; Slovenského katolíckeho sokola a ostatných slovenských organizácií usporiadal 15. marca 2009 Oslavu slovenskej štátnosti spojenú so spomienkou na slovenského básnika Andreja Žarnova. Toho roku sa oslava niesla v duchu 70. výročia vzniku Slovenského štátu ako aj 16. výročia vyhlásenia samostatnej Slovenskej republiky 1. januára 1993.

Oslava začala slovenskou svätou omšou v Slovenskom kostole sv. Jána Nepomuckého v New York City obetovanou za prvého slovenského prezidenta Slovenského štátu, Dr. Jozefa Tisu. Podujatie pokračovalo o 1:00 hodine odpoľudnia v spoločenskej hale kostola, kde program modlitbou otvoril otec Štefan Chanas. Známý slovenský spevák Jozef Ivaška, najprv zaspieval americkú a slovenskú hymnu v doprovode vedúceho hudobnej skupiny Kontakty Jozefa Jurášiho a neskoršie spestril kultúrny program svojimi peknými piesňami. Hlavný príhovor patrilo predsedovi Zboru Milanovi Daitovi. Prvú časť prejavu venoval historickému prehľadu udalostí, ktoré viedli k 14. marcu a potom aj k 1. januáru 1993. Druhú časť venoval k nedeľným narodeninám básnika Andreja Žarnova, bojovníka za slovenské práva a štátnosť. V ďalšom programe vystúpila Henrieta Daitová s prednesom básni „Slovenská modlitba“ od Andreja Beniaka a „Moja vlasť“ od Andreja Žarnova. Program uzavrela tajomníčka SLVA, Nina Holá, ktorá svojím krátkym príhovorom zhodnotila podujatie a poďakovala usporiadajúcim organizáciám, hlavnému rečníkovi, účinkujúcim a všetkým Slovákom z New Yorku, New Jersey, Connecticut a Pennsylvánie za hojnú účasť.

Henrieta H. Daitová
tajomníčka I. Zboru SLVA



Oznámenia spolkov a okresov

Polročná členská schôdza Okresu Msgr. Štefana Krasuľu IKSJ

Oznamujeme všetkým členom, že polročná členská schôdza Okresu Msgr. Štefana Krasuľu, Spolok č. 16 Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty sa bude konať v nedeľu dňa 7. júna 2009 o 1:00 odpoľudnia v osadnej hale Slovenského kostola Najsvätejšej Trojici v Yonkers, N.Y.

Prosíme predsedov všetkých spolkov, ktoré patria do nášho Okresu, aby láskavo poslali čo najviac delegátov. Upozorňujeme, že aj nedelegáti sú vítaní.

Program schôdze bude zameraný na prípravu plánu činnosti na budúce obdobie a taktiež finančná správa. Po schôdzi sa bude podávať občerstvenie, ktoré pripravia členovia Spolku č. 41 v Yonkers, N.Y.

Ostávam s kresťanským pozdravom

Henrieta Daitová, tajomníčka

Krátko správy zo Slovenska

Napriek svetovej hospodárskej kríze jedna z piatich najväčších stavebných spoločností na svete - CREC prejavila záujem o financovanie veľkých infraštruktúrnych projektov na Slovensku. Jej zástupcovia a slovenskí manažéri stavebných podnikov a predstavitelia zainteresovaných rezortov rokovali v druhej polovici marca v Bratislave. Čínska spoločnosť CREC hľadá priestor a možnosti na trhu pre uplatnenie svojich firiem v Európe, zvlášť na Slovensku. Zvažujú účasť na investovaní projektov v segmente výstavby diaľnic, mostov a tunelov, uviedol Prezident Zväzu stavebných podnikateľov Slovenska (ZSPS) Ján Majerský.

Na novej linke medzi hlavným mestom Slovenska a Popradom začne lietat' päťkrát do týždňa slovenská letecká spoločnosť Danube Wings. Lety z Bratislavy do Popradu bude prevádzkovať v utorok, stredu, štvrtok, piatok a v nedeľu. Nie je to však jediná novinka na vnútroštátnej leteckej doprave. Duel nováčika s harcovníkom budú medzi sebou zväzovať čoskoro aerolínie SkyEurope a Danube Wings medzi Bratislavou a Košicami. Cestujúci medzi oboma mestami si budú môcť vybrať z ponuky 31 letov týždenne.

Textilný a odevný priemysel zažíva najhoršie časy za posledných 15 rokov. Späťnosť niektorých firiem s automobilovým priemyslom a predaj výrobkov najmä do zahraničia ho vŕhajú do ešte hlbšej krízy. Podľa výkonného riaditeľa Asociácie textilného a odevného priemyslu Dušana Gajdúška (59) kríza prečistí odvetvie a ostanú len odolné a kvalitné firmy so zázemím a reputáciou. Od októbra do decembra 2008, keď sa začali prejavovať dosahy krízy, poklesol počet pracovníkov v rezorte o vyše 3,000. V súčasnosti pracuje v odevných a textilných firmách približne 37,000 osôb. Stále je to 6.8 percenta zo všetkých ľudí zamestnaných v spracovateľskom priemysle, povedal Dušan Gajdúšek.

Napriek tomu, že forint voči euru sa posilnil, veľa slovenských občanov nakupovalo na sviatky v maďarskom Komárome. Na slovenskej strane v Komárne vďaka nedávnomu znižovaniu cien niektorých tovarov bolo tiež takmer zaplnené parkovisko jedného z obchodných reťazcov. V Komárome na parkovisku obchodného domu, hneď za hraničným mostom, bolo iba každé deviate až desiate auto maďarské, ostatné boli zo Slovenska, z okresov Komárno, Nové Zámky, Levice aj Dunajská Streda. Mnohí cestu cez dunajské mosty do Komáromu za nákupom absolvovali pešo.

Pokračujúca nákupná turistika Slovákov do okolitých krajín deformuje podľa Zväzu obchodu a cestovného ruchu (ZOCHR) SR domáce podnikateľské prostredie. Následkom veľkých nákupov občanov SR v Poľsku, Maďarsku a Česku je aj pokles tržieb slovenského maloobchodu. Napriek tomu, že v januári Slovensko zaznamenalo mierny nárast tržieb v potravinách a celkový prepád tržieb bol 3.3 %, vo februári bol prepád už o 10.3 % a v marci sa odhaduje asi o 15 %. Z pohľadu redukcie tržieb najhoršie je na tom čierna a biela technika. Príčinou tohto stavu je podľa generálneho sekretára ZOCHR Jozefa Orgonáša "devalvácia okolitých mien a nižšia daň z pridanej hodnoty (DPH), ktorú má Rakúsko vo výške 10 %, Česko 9 % a Poľsko 7 %". Niektoré čerstvé tovary sa v týchto krajinách, a to vo viacerých obchodoch v pohraničí, predávajú s iba s 3-% DPH.

Dve lietadlá Airbus A320 budú lietat' do celého sveta z bratislavského letiska. Firma SingleAir dokúpila do svojej flotily dva stroje A 320 na lízing a bude ich využívať na charterové lety. "Lietadlo má 180 miest, je širšie s väčším komfortom," povedal riaditeľ spoločnosti Ľubomír Hlaváč. Stroje majú síce vyše desať rokov, ale stále sú považované za najnovšie typy. Prišli z Portugalska. Prvými pasažiermi boli nedávno členovia talianskeho orchestra, ktorí leteli z Neapola do Atén, a potom Slováci cestujúci do Egypta.

Šrotovné, zdá sa, rozbehlo okrem predaja nových áut aj obchodovanie s náhradnými súčiastkami, vrakmi na zošrotovanie či s dokladmi o zošrotovaní. Podľa informácií sa s autami odovzdanými na zošrotovanie obchoduje už aj načierno. Ide o vozidlá, ktoré sú v dobrom technickom stave. Mohli by sa vyvážať z niektorých šrotovísk napríklad na Blízky východ. Spracovatelia naopak tvrdia, že sa obchodovať s autami odovzdanými na zošrotovanie nedá. To, že šrotovné naštartovalo obchodovanie so starými autami, či súčiastkami, potvrdil majiteľ online serveru Radim Smečka. Pokusy predat' autá zo šrotovísk majiteľia bazárov zatiaľ nezaznamenali.

Globálna hospodárska kríza postihla ako prvé aj slovenské opatrovatel'ky v Spojenom kráľovstve. Podľa vyjadrenia Juraja Zervana, veľvyslanca vo Veľkej Británii a v Severnom Írsku je práve Spojené kráľovstvo najviac krízou postihnutou krajinou. Krajina má viac ako dva milióny nezamestnaných a tak aj mnohí Slováci sa pre stratu zamestnania vracajú domov. Príčiny treba hľadať vo vysokých cenách nájomného, potravín, dopravy a ostatných životných nákladov. "Odhadujeme, že na Slovensko sa pre krízu vrátilo niekoľko tisíc ľudí a ďalší ešte pribudnú. Naša krajanská organizácia Slovenský kruh vo Veľkej Británii na pomoc týmto ľuďom rozbieha spoluprácu s agentúrou u nás doma, ktorá pre nich bude hľadať umiestnenie tak, aby po návrate nastúpili priamo do nového zamestnania", dodal slovenský veľvyslanec.

Blýska sa na lepšie časy. Do priemyselného parku v Kechneči prídu ďalší investori. Miesto Molexu prídu dve firmy, zástupcovia americkej spoločnosti Crown

Holdings, Inc., a čoskoro odštartujú výstavbu nového závodu, v ktorom sa budú vyrábať plechovky. Veľmi nádejne vyzerajú rokovania aj s ďalšími dvoma firmami zaoberajúcimi sa high-technologiami, ktoré by mali prísť do Molexu, informuje starosta Kechneca J. Konkoly.

Telefonovanie za cenu 13 centov za minútu hovoru do všetkých sietí ponúka od stredy 15. apríla mobilný operátor T-Mobile. Jeho najnovší produkt, predplatená karta Easy Naj nemá byť reakciou na ponuku operátora Telefónica 02, ktorý má program s rovnakou cenou. Riaditeľka consumer segmentu v T-Mobile Eva Micháleková konštatovala, že novou ponukou chce operátor "osloviť rodiny s deťmi" a "karta Easy Naj je preto ideálna". Kartu môžu využívať len noví zákazníci mobilného operátora a dostať sa k nej dá prostredníctvom špeciálneho kupónu, ktorý mobilný operátor rozpošle svojim existujúcim zákazníkom. Novým mesačným programom je paušál Relax Naj, pri ktorom je tiež cena za minútu hovoru do všetkých sietí 13 centov.

TASR a slovenské časopisy



50. výročie kňazskej vysviacky otca A. Pestuna, S.D.B. na Slovensku

S radosťou oznamujeme, že náš kňaz Father Alojsius Pestun S.D.B. sa dožíva krásneho jubilea 50. rokov kňazskej vysviacky. Slávnostná koncelebrovaná sv. omša z tejto príležitosti sa bude konať na Slovensku v sobotu 13. júna 2009 o 10:30 hodine v kostole Krista Kráľa v Šulekove (pri Trnave). Na toto jubileum pozývame všetkých kresťanov z USA, ktorí budú v tom čase na Slovensku.

Obetavý kňaz Father Pestun S.D.B. je dobre známy v slovenskej komunite v Kalifornii. V tom čase slúži ako výpomocný kňaz v kostole Corpus Christi v San Francisko. Odtiaľ už vyše dvadsať rokov, zakaždým šesť hodín jazdy jedným smerom, dochádza slúžiť slovenskú svätú omšu do Los Angeles.

Pripájam sa k funkcionárom Okresu Princa Pribinu s prianím, aby Všemohúci Pán Boh doprial otcovi Alojsiusovi Pestunovi S.D.B. hojné Božie požehnanie, veľa sily a dobrého zdravia, aby mohol ešte dlhé roky slúžiť slovenskej komunite.

Paul Skuben, predseda



FOTO TASR - Milan Soukup

160. výročie úmrtia kňaza, básnika a prekladateľa Jána Hollého (1785-1849) si pripomenuli v sobotu 18. apríla 2009 v obci Madunice pri Trnave. Víkendové akcie venované významnej osobnosti nášho národného obrodovania pripravili pod záštitou poslanca Národnej rady Slovenskej republiky a trnavského župana Tibora Mikuša spoločne Trnavský samosprávny kraj, obce Madunice, Dobrá Voda a Trnavské osvetové stredisko. Slávnostnú svätú omšu v Kostole Narodenia Panny Márie v Maduniciach celebroidal arcibiskup Ján Sokol. Na pietnej spomienke sa zúčastnil tiež štátny tajomník Ministerstva vnútra Slovenskej republiky Vladimír Čechot, Stanislav Bajaník za Maticu slovenskú a ďalší hostia. Na snímke arcibiskup Ján Sokol (druhý sprava) pred pamätníkom Jána Hollého v Maduniciach.



Ivan Gašparovič sa stal víťazom prezidentských volieb



FOTO TASR - Pavel Neubauer

Staronovým prezidentom SR bude najbližších päť rokov súčasná hlava štátu Ivan Gašparovič. Víťaz druhého kola prezidentských volieb získal 1,234,787 hlasov, čo predstavuje 55.53 percenta. Protikandidátka Iveta Radičová stratila na svojho súpera 11.07 percenta, keďže získala 988,808 hlasov, teda 44.46 percenta. Vyplýva to z oficiálnych výsledkov, ktoré 5. apríla zverejnila Ústredná volebná komisia. Na snímke prezident Ivan Gašparovič s manželkou Silviou pózuje s tortou po znovuzvolení na post hlavy štátu v jeho volebnej centrále v Limbachu 5. apríla 2009.



Deň rodiny v Bratislave

Mottom stretnutia je: *“aby deti otcov mali, aby mali mamy” Príd' to povedať nahlas!*

Hlavné mesto SR Bratislava, Bratislavské kultúrne a informačné stredisko a takmer 20 subjektov, medzi ktorými sú najmä občianske združenia zamerané na rodinu a mládež, pripravujú na sobotu 16. mája 2009 veľké verejné podujatie Deň rodiny alebo Family Day 2009. Podujatie sa uskutoční v Bratislave na Námestí SNP.

Sobotné popoludnie 16. mája sa stane na Námestí SNP v Bratislave miestom stretnutia rodín z celého Slovenska. Popoludnie plné hier a zábavy ocenia najmä deti, ktoré budú mať možnosť vyskúšať si rôzne tvorivé aktivity a zmerať si sily v netradičných súťažiach. Organizátori nezabúdajú ani na mládež, pre ktorú bude pripravená primeraná dávka hudby a zábavy. Toto podujatie bude vyjadrením podpory prirodzenej rodine založenej na manželstve 1 muža a 1 ženy.

Organizátori chcú poukázať predovšetkým na dôležitosť: autonómie rodiny-princípu subsidiarity rodičia sú tí, ktorí majú prirodzené právo na výchovu; úlohu manželstva - manželstvo je ideálny priestor pre rozvoj dieťaťa, pre vzájomnú lásku a dôveru medzi partnermi. V hlavnom programe vystúpia súrodenci Jendruchovcí, Mária Podhradská a Richard Čanaky, Close Harmony Friends, Festa Beng a Peter Cmorík. Svoj názor a podporu prirodzenej rodine prídu vyjadriť viaceré osobnosti z rôznych sfér života na Slovensku. Okrem toho budú na námestí a v okolí rôzne sprievodné aktivity. Výtvarnej stránky podujatia sa ujala akademická maliarka Iva Štrbová, ktorá navrhla aj logo podujatia. 15. máj je medzinárodný deň rodiny. To je dôvod, prečo sa organizátori rozhodli aj na Slovensku pritiahnúť pozornosť práve v tento deň k téme rodina. Celoslovenský charakter podujatia chcú dosiahnuť aj prostredníctvom spolupráce so ZSSK (Železničná spoločnosť Slovensko) a ŽSR.

Pokračovanie na str. 20

Francúzsky prezident by mal tento rok zavítať na Slovensko

Paríž/Bratislava (TASR) - Francúzsky prezident Nicolas Sarkozy by mal tento rok prísť na návštevu Slovenska. Ministri zahraničných vecí SR Miroslavovi Lajčákovi to 15. apríla na rokovaní v Paríži potvrdili francúzski predstavitelia. Samostatnú SR dosiaľ žiadny francúzsky prezident nenavštívil. Šéf slovenskej diplomacie sa na pracovných rokovaní stretol so svojim rezortným partnerom Bernardom Kouchnerom, štátnym tajomníkom rezortu pre európske záležitosti Brunom Le Mairom a diplomatickým poradcom francúzskeho prezidenta Jeanom-Davidom Levittom.

Témou rokovaní bola aj príprava nadchádzajúcich májových osláv 90. výročia úmrtia generála Milana Rastislava Štefánika, na ktorých sa podieľa aj francúzska strana. Partneri hovorili aj o možnostiach rozšírenia dvojstrannej spolupráce, najmä v oblasti energetiky, a to s dôrazom na jadrovú energiu.

Slovensko a Francúzsko majú podpísanú dohodu o strategickom partnerstve. Slovenský minister hovoril s francúzskymi predstaviteľmi aj o európskych témach, ako je potreba prijatia Lisabonskej zmluvy, vyriešenie otázok fungovania EÚ, či program tzv. východného partnerstva, ktorý sa oficiálne začne začiatkom mája. Pozornosť venovali aj svetovej finančnej a hospodárskej kríze, vývoji situácie po summitoch G20 a NATO, či vzťahoch medzi EÚ a USA. Rokovania v Paríži predstavujú ďalšiu zo zoznamovacích ciest ministra Lajčáka od jeho nástupu do funkcie koncom januára 2009. Po Francúzsku, na začiatok mája je plánovaná návšteva USA.

Moja mama

*Ďakujem Ti Pane Bože, že najkrajšia,
a najlepšia žena na svete, bola moja „Mama“.
Po Bohu, bola prvá, čo život mi dala.
Láska ku mne, bola tým najkrajším darom,
jej náruč, bola mojim chrámom.*

*Ten vrelý bozk, bol prejavom čistej lásky,
keď pohladila moju tvár, upravila vlásy,
privinula na jej zlaté, materinské srdce,
uložila do postielky, urobila na čelo krížik,
zaspievala uspávančku, odovzdala do Božej vôle
a poprosila môjho Anjela strážcu,
by chránil ma od všetkého zlého,
najmä od nepriateľa Cirkvi, diabla zradcu.*

*Šepotom tiško priala: spi sladko moje srdiečko,
spi s anjelíčkami, kým nevyjde ranné slniečko.*

*Neviem, čo ešte viac, mi mohla dať...?!
Ďakujem, tisíckrát ďakujem, Všemohúcemu Bohu,
že mi dal do daru „Moju Zlatú Mamu“.*

Jozef Smák