



# Catholic Fraternal Bi-Weekly

# Jednota

THE UNION

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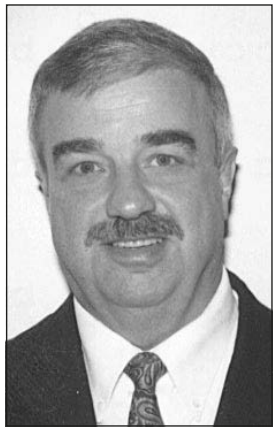
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Volume 117

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2008

Number 5771

*From the Desk of the Executive Secretary ...*



Kenneth A. Arendt

## IRA MARKETING BULLETIN

### Traditional and Roth IRA Contribution Limits Increase Effective January 1, 2008

The Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 made some significant changes with regard to IRA Annuities. Effective January 1, 2008, the maximum contribution to a Traditional and Roth IRA is increased to \$5,000.

- (a) Traditional IRA - provides for contributions that are tax deductible (for qualified taxpayers) and distributions which are taxable;
- (b) Roth IRA provides for after tax contributions (for qualified taxpayers) and distributions which are non-taxable.

1. The increase is effective on amounts credited for the year 2008 and after. The maximum contributions for the year 2007 remain at \$4,000 even if the actual contribution is made in 2008.
2. As in the past, persons age 50 and over can make annual extra \$1,000 catch-up contributions and their maximum is \$6,000 beginning in 2008. This limit is applicable to each individual who reaches age 50 or greater by the end of the taxable year.
3. A regular contribution may be made each year up to the maximum contribution limit or 100% of compensation, whichever is less. This means that if actual compensation earned is less than \$5,000, or \$6,000 for person age 50 to 70, in a year, then the IRA maximum contribution allowed, is actual compensation.

These maximum contribution limits apply through 2008 and will automatically increase beginning in January 1, 2009.

There is no change in 401(k) or 403(b) contribution caps which remain at \$15,500 and \$20,500 for persons age 50 and over. SIMPLE remains at \$10,500 and \$13,000.

Eligibility to make contributions to the traditional and Roth IRA's remain the same as in the past. The excise tax penalties also remain the same as in the past. Briefly, some of the basic rules are:

#### Traditional IRA

1. A portion or all of the contribution can be deducted from income, depending on whether the contributors participate in an employer sponsored retirement plan or earned less than \$53,000 for individuals beginning in 2008. Deduction is prorated if income is between \$53,000 and \$63,000.
2. For married tax payers filing a joint return, the contribution can be deducted from income if the contributors earned less than \$85,000. Deduction is prorated if income is between \$85,000 and \$105,000.
3. Contributions cannot continue the year the owner turns age 70 1/2 or in subsequent years.

4. Income tax on the contribution amounts and interest earnings are deferred until the benefits are paid.
5. At age 70 1/2, distributions must begin.
  - a. Failure to take required distributions can result in very large penalties.
  - b. The 2001 tax law changes have reduced the Required Minimum Distribution amounts.

*continued on page 3*



L-R: Mrs. Obsitnik, Ambassador Obsitnik, Slovak President Ivan Gasparovic, Mrs. Gasparovicova during the Credentials Ceremony.

## Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik Living The American Dream II

By John Karch

In the first article of Vincent Obsitnik, the new U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia (JEDNOTA, December 26, 2007), we briefly covered his official appointment by President George W. Bush (September 7), his biography, the Hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (October 17), his Senate's Confirmation two days later, the Swearing-in Ceremony of the Slovak-born Ambassador at the State Department (November 9), departure with his wife Annemarie for Slovakia on December 5, arrival in Bratislava the next day, the Credentials Ceremony December 12 at the Presidential Palace with President Ivan Gasparovic, and the meeting with Prime Minister Robert Fico on December 17. During December 18-26 the Ambassador and Annemarie visited eastern Slovakia. Essentially, the article focused on

*continued on page 8*

## FCSU Reintroduces Senior Promotion Program

The Officers and Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union will introduce a number of programs in the coming months for the benefit of our membership. Back by popular demand is our Senior Promotion Program. This program will be available from October 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008.

#### Initial Program (Current Members)

The Senior Promotion Program is directed to all current members between the ages of 55 and 80. Each member in this age group, subject to current reasonably good health, may purchase the amount of Whole Life insurance that a \$200.00 annual premium will purchase, based on their current age. See the attached Life Insurance Chart. To help offset the cost for the first year, a special fraternal dividend equal to 50% of the first year premium, amounting to \$100, will be provided to each participating member. This means that if each member takes advantage of the Society's offer, they will not only increase their family's life insurance protection, but will receive a generous fraternal dividend.

#### Application

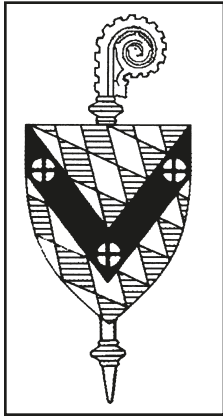
As part of the effort to encourage as many members as possible to take advantage of

*continued on page 3*

## Inside

Editorial/Commentary.....	2
Branch Announcements.....	9
Obituaries .....	10
FCSU Financial/Minutes.....	6, 7
Slovak.....	15-20

# Insights and Viewpoints



## St. Vincent Archabbey — Homilies

Fr. Campion P. Gavaler, O.S.B. and Father Demetrius R. Dumm, O.S.B.

February 3, 2002

### Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

#### Gospel Summary

The eight Beatitudes of Matthew's gospel open his lengthy Sermon on the Mount. They are especially noteworthy because they strike the keynote for all that follows in that Sermon. Moreover, the first Beatitude strikes the keynote also for the seven Beatitudes that follow.

The decisive word in this first Beatitude is the word, "poor." Its meaning is derived

from a Hebrew word meaning "an afflicted one." It was first applied, therefore, to those Jews of the immediate pre-Christian era who were economically and politically powerless but who continued to hope in God even though he seemed to have abandoned them. They were often poor in an economic sense but their more basic poverty was in terms of power and control.

Jesus makes the daring statement that these downtrodden ones should in fact be declared blessed, i.e. fortunate. What could possibly justify such a radical and apparently nonsensical conclusion? Jesus certainly does not intend to bless powerlessness as such. However, he does affirm the blessedness of those who, because they are powerless, are saved from the illusion that worldly power can in fact give them (and us) us the only truly important and lasting gifts, such as, love, happiness and life itself. Being delivered from that disastrous illusion, they are called blessed or fortunate because they are then free to turn to God, who is ready and willing to give them the Kingdom. Matthew specifies this as poverty "in spirit" because it is essentially an attitude of humility and trust in the presence of God.

#### Life Implications

The ideal presented here must not be mistaken for an unhappy passivity or timidity in the presence of the challenges of this life. Rather, it liberates us from self-centered and self-serving efforts, which will ultimately prove unproductive, so that we may be present to others in a loving, caring and helpful way. This is summed up neatly in the seemingly paradoxical but very true statement, "The only gift we can keep is the one we give away!" Or, in gospel language, "What profit is there for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life" (Mark 8:36)?

The remaining seven Beatitudes are really echoes of this primary one. Those who "mourn" are those who dare to become vulnerable through loving...and thereby find the secret of happiness. The "meek" renounce power and violence as a means of acquiring happiness...and thus are candidates for true happiness. Those who "hunger for justice" have a passion for the reforms that will enable everyone to live and dream. Those who are "merciful" renounce anger and vengeance as they offer forgiveness. The "clean of heart" are the sincere and truthful ones who reject all that is mere sham and pretense in life.

The "peacemakers" promote forgiveness and reconciliation as the only sure way to peace. And those who are "persecuted" are those who persevere in the pursuit of these ideals in spite of ridicule from others who seem to be the wise and prudent ones. Thus, the Beatitudes represent a program for true holiness and happiness through the wisdom of the gospel rather than through the misguided wisdom of purely secular philosophy.



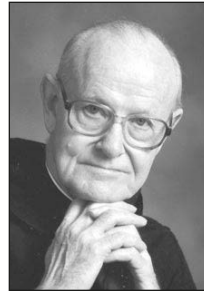
## Genealogy Society Plans Mini-Conference in Chicago

The Czech and Slovak American Genealogy Society of Illinois will sponsor its 2008 Mini-Conference on Saturday, March 29, 2008, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of LaGrange, 150 South Ashland and West Elm Avenues, La Grange, Illinois. The theme of this year's conference is "Emigration-Immigration of the Czechs and Slovaks into Illinois." Featured speakers are William Galush, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus at Loyola University, and Malynne Sternstein, Ph.D., Assistant Professor at University of Chicago, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. They will discuss Eastern European migration from 1840 to 1920. After lunch, a panel of émigrés who arrived after World War II to 1948 will share their immigration experiences of the Old Country and the United States.

Registration will take place in the Fellowship Hall (Lower Level), which has a handicap entrance. The cost is \$35 for members and \$40 for guests. A catered ethnic-style meal is included in the workshop fee. The deadline is March 15, 2008. Refunds will not be given after this date. For further information, please contact Dolores Duy at 630/906-8175, e-mail dolly1939@aol.com, or Evelyn Fergle at CZECHKEF@aol.com. Please make your checks payable to CSAGSI and mail to: CSAGSI, P.O. Box 313, Sugar Grove, IL 60554-0313.

**IT'S TIME YOU GET INVOLVED —  
ATTEND LODGE MEETINGS!**

### Matthew 5:1-12



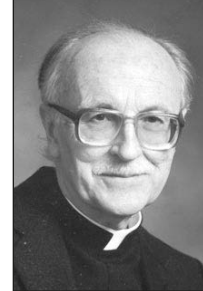
Demetrius R. Dumm,  
O.S.B.

### First Sunday of Lent

#### Gospel Summary

In this brief passage Matthew captures the essence of the trials Jesus would endure and over which he would triumph throughout his life.

The tempter urges Jesus to turn stones into loaves of bread. Jesus rejects the temptation to reduce his divine mission to satisfying immediate, temporal needs. The tempter then suggests that Jesus prove he is really the Son of God by jumping off the parapet of the temple: God would send his angels to save him. Jesus rejects the temptation to put God to a test. Finally, Jesus rejects the temptation to idolatry, even if that worship would enrich and empower him with all kingdoms of the world.



Campion P. Gavaler,  
O.S.B.

February 10, 2008

### Matthew 4: 1-11

Matthew is affirming that Jesus remains faithful to his deepest personal truth, revealed when he came up from the water of baptism and the Spirit of God came upon him: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Mt 3:17).

#### Life Implications

The Letter to the Hebrews can help us discover a crucial life implication of this gospel: Jesus is truly one of us. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet never sinned." (4:15).

Jesus, enduring his trial of faith in the Garden of Gethsemane, knew that the three disciples who were with him would soon be tempted to abandon their trust in God. Jesus, in "sorrow and distress," realized that it was through prayer that he would remain faithful in his trust. That is why, able to sympathize with their weakness and ours, he said to them and says to us now: "Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test" (Mt 26:41).

With gratitude we welcome the good news that we are not alone in our test of faith, whatever it may be. Because the Holy Spirit also came upon us when we came out of the water of baptism, each of us is truly beloved son or beloved daughter. Through this divine grace we can live in hope of sharing the faithfulness and triumph of Jesus. "For the sake of the joy that lay before him he endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God." (Heb 12:2).

## 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 Deadline
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6	MONDAY, JANUARY 28
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20	MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5	MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25

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

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# FCSU Reintroduces Senior Promotion Program

*continued from page 1*

this offer, the normal full length application (AJ-2) will not be required for the members participating in this program. Applicants will be required to complete the much shorter (SF-1) Application. Normal underwriting will be waived except for serious illnesses, injury, or medical conditions, which required medical treatment or hospitalization in the last five years. This is not a guaranteed issue program. The FCSU may require the applicant to take a physical exam and /or provide additional medical information.

### New Members

The FCSU has adopted the theme of full family participation. As part of this promotion, persons aged 55 to 80 who are not currently a member of the First Catholic Slovak Union may elect to participate in this program and will receive a special first year allowance of \$50.00. New members will be enrolled using the normal (AJ-2) application and be subject to normal underwriting rules. This is each member's opportunity to encourage enrollment of brothers, sisters, relatives, children, friends and others who should be part of our Jednota family. Make certain to contact these individuals who should share in the benefits of fraternal membership and protection.

Please allow sufficient time for your branch proposer or secretary to contact you (up to thirty (30) days.) If contact is not made by November 2007, please contact your branch proposer, branch secretary or the Home Office at 1-800-533-6682.

In the coming months, additional programs directed to various groups of members will be introduced. Watch for announcements in future issues of our JEDNOTA.

## FCSU SENIOR PROMOTION AMOUNT INSURANCE - PER \$200 ANNUAL PREMIUM WHOLE LIFE INSURANCE 2007

SCHEDULE 1			SCHEDULE 2		
AGE	MALE NON SMOKING	FEMALE NON SMOKING	AGE	MALE SMOKER	FEMALE SMOKER
55	6,498	7,927	55	4,988	6,928
56	6,175	7,413	56	4,760	6,605
57	5,922	7,145	57	4,598	6,359
58	5,677	6,885	58	4,439	6,122
59	5,438	6,627	59	4,282	5,893
60	5,204	6,380	60	4,129	5,671
61	4,979	6,135	61	3,981	5,456
62	4,762	5,898	62	3,839	5,247
63	4,554	5,666	63	3,702	5,043
64	4,353	5,438	64	3,571	4,845
65	4,157	5,216	65	3,444	4,652
66	3,958	4,999	66	3,317	4,465
67	3,784	4,788	67	3,193	4,283
68	3,604	4,581	68	3,069	4,105
69	3,428	4,379	69	2,946	3,932
70	3,257	4,182	70	2,824	3,766
71	3,091	3,990	71	2,704	3,606
72	2,933	3,804	72	2,588	3,451
73	2,780	3,622	73	2,474	3,301
74	2,632	3,445	74	2,365	3,158
75	2,490	3,275	75	2,253	3,018
76	2,352	3,109	76	2,146	2,883
77	2,221	2,948	77	2,043	2,751
78	2,095	2,791	78	1,943	2,623
79	1,975	2,638	79	1,848	2,497
80	1,866	2,577	80	1,758	2,378



## IRA Marketing Bulletin

*continued from page 1*

### Roth IRA

1. A non-income-deductible contribution can be made if earnings are less than \$159,000 jointly; even if either spouse is a member of an employer sponsored retirement plan (for single persons the amount is \$101,000); contributions are allowed after age 70 1/2 if contribution is made from earned income.
2. All interest earnings are accumulated tax deferred.
3. All qualified distributions are 100% tax free.
4. Contributions can continue as long as one spouse works.
5. No required minimum distributions at any age.

**Very Important** - IRA Trustees will have to report required distributions to the IRS. This report will be on the form used to notify IRA owners of their year end balances.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

### RE: 2008 JEDNOTA ISSUE DATES & DEADLINE DATES

As we have previously announced in the 1st quarter of 2008 we are increasing the number of our members who will be receiving the Jednota newspaper by almost 100%. In order to keep our overall costs in line we must reduce the number of issues from 26 per year to 21. The size and quality of the paper will remain unchanged.

The reasons for the changes are simple. The Jednota is our primary communication to our members. Many of our members hardly know we exist. If you are a member who has not been receiving the newspaper we welcome you.

We want to communicate with our members.

However, since the newspaper is now on the internet at [www.FCSU.com](http://www.FCSU.com), if you do not need an actual newspaper and would rather get it off the internet **call us at 1-800-JEDNOTA (1-800-533-6682) or e-mail us at [FCSU@aol.com](mailto:FCSU@aol.com)** to remove your name from our mailing list.

If you have any questions, suggestions or ideas please call (1-800-JEDNOTA) or e-mail at [FCSU@aol.com](mailto:FCSU@aol.com) to President Andrew Rajec or Executive Secretary Ken Arendt.

ISSUE DATE	DEADLINE	ISSUE DATE	DEADLINE
January 9	(December 28)	July 9	(June 27)
January 23	(January 14)	August 6	(July 28)
February 6	(January 28)	September 3	(August 25)
February 20	(February 11)	September 17	(September 8)
March 5	(February 25)	October 1	(September 29)
March 19	(March 10)	October 15	(October 6)
April 16	(April 7)	October 29	(October 20)
April 30	(April 21)	November 12	(November 3)
May 14	(May 5)	November 26	(November 17)
May 28	(May 19)	December 10	(December 1)
June 11	(June 2)		

*The five issues eliminated are:*

April 2, June 25, July 23, August 20 and December 24.



On behalf of the Officers and Board of Trustees of the Jednota Benevolent Foundation, Inc., congratulations to the 2007 Jednota Benevolent Foundation, Inc. Scholarship Award recipients. Each student will receive a one-time check for \$500.00. The following is the list of the students selected:

Kayla Christine Bench	Derry, Pennsylvania
Anne Marie Boran	Hamburg, Pennsylvania
Thomas E. Kocis	S. Connellsville, Pennsylvania
Amber S. Kozell	Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Brittany Matta	White Oak, Pennsylvania
Alexandria C. Muzika	Uniontown, Pennsylvania
Genevieve Ann Pecharka	Meadow Lands, Pennsylvania
Mary Ellen Pecharka	Meadow Lands, Pennsylvania
Heather Sabo	Akron, Ohio
Jennifer Uhrin	Morgantown, West Virginia

We want to thank all the applicants who participated in the program and most especially the scholarship committee for their efforts and support in making the difficult decision of selecting the winners. We wish each and every participating applicant the best of luck in their future endeavors.

## 9th Consular Tour to Slovakia

Honorary Slovak Consul Joseph Senko will be conducting his 9th Consular Tour to Slovakia and the Czech Republic from July 4 to July 19, 2008. Joe is including the best of his previous eight tours in this upcoming event. Some of the highlights include a wine tasting, a spa treatment, visit to a Christmas ornament factory, attending a folk wedding ceremony, rafting, a tour of the U.S. Steel plant, and the annual folk craft festival in Kezmarok. In addition to a full day tour of Vienna and of Prague, the tour will also include visits to Trnava, Piestany, Banska Bystrica, the High Tatras, Cicmany, Levoca, Bardejov, Presov and Kosice.

The tour includes all quality hotels, daily breakfast and dinner, air-conditioned bus, English speaking guide and musical folk entertainment. The price including airfare from New York is \$3,887 per person (double occupancy). If you are interested in obtaining a more detailed itinerary or if you have questions, call Joe Senko at 412/531-2990 or e-mail him at [jtsenko@aol.com](mailto:jtsenko@aol.com).

**STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION of the "JEDNOTA"**  
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Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
NONE	

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# MONEY MANAGEMENT & TAX TIPS

By Joseph T. Senko

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

## Six Tips to Help Seniors Out of Debt

Rising healthcare costs, insufficient retirement benefits, and longer life expectancies are just a few of the reasons that more seniors are turning to credit cards to meet everyday living expenses. But running up debt can lead to trouble, especially if one is living on a fixed income. Here are six tips to help seniors stay out of debt.

### Never Too Old to Budget

A budget is an invaluable tool for managing money at any age. Budgeting helps because decisions are made in advance as to how much to spend in each budgeted category. Also, seniors should take any money saved by curtailing spending and put it into an emergency fund to cover unpredictable expenses. This way, they won't have to resort to credit cards to cover these costs.

Seniors unfamiliar with a budget should try to keep track of everything they spend for a month or two. This will help determine if they are spending too much in an area that can be scaled back, such as eating out. Keep in mind that budgeting isn't only about eliminating the extras, it's also about becoming a smarter consumer and finding ways to save. For example, seniors should take advantage of senior citizen discounts offered by hotels, restaurants, and retailers.

### Get a Part-time Job or Delay Retirement

If a senior is doing all he or she can to cut expenses, but still can't make ends meet, a part-time job is a consideration. If still working, and in good health, pushing back retirement by a year or two may also help. This will provide time to earn some more that can be saved. Also, by holding off on collecting Social Security, a senior will be eligible for a larger monthly payment when he or she does retire.

### Debt Reduction Plan

Any senior with a lot of debt should negotiate with each lender for a lower interest rate, then develop a plan to pay off either the accounts with the highest interest rate or the ones with the lowest balances. They should pay off as much as possible each month, and not fall into the trap of paying only the minimum payment.

### Borrow Against Home Equity

Cash-strapped homeowners who qualify may want to look into a reverse mortgage. A reverse mortgage converts equity in a home into cash.

The appeal of a reverse mortgage is that, unlike a home equity loan, the homeowner doesn't need substantial income to qualify. The loan comes due when the borrower no longer occupies the home as a principal residence. The repayment amount can never exceed the value of the home, but remember, with a reverse mortgage the equity in the house continues to decrease unless the home's value grows at a higher rate. If you have the loan for a long time, or if your home's value decreases, there is danger of completely depleting the equity.

### Tap Your Life Insurance

A cash surrender loan may be a viable option for seniors who hold a permanent life insurance policy with a substantial cash value. A policyholder can take up to 80 percent of the cash value available in the form of a loan on your Jednota policy. Bear in mind, if you choose not to repay the money, the death benefit of the policy is lessened by the amount of the outstanding loan plus accrued interest.

### Ask for Advice and Guidance

Seniors that are having financial problems should not be too proud or embarrassed to admit it. Many seniors face these problems. They can talk to family members and ask for help in investigating financial, medical, food, and housing assistance programs, plus many senior citizens centers offer information and assistance in these areas.



From the desk of the Executive Secretary –  
**Visit our web site! www.fcsu.com**

**Exciting News** – The Jednota Newspaper (English and Slovak sections) is now on our web page and for your convenience 4 back issues and the current issue are maintained on the web page at all times. If you missed an article or looking for a recipe you need only to go to the web site

Branch and District Officers announcements are now on the web page and listings of all activities for the various regions.

If you are looking for forms or applications you may find those also on the web site.

We encourage our branch and district officers to use this means of keeping in touch with their branch members and announcing events. The email address is fcsu@aol.com if you wish to send your information to the home office.

We will continue to update the web page, please check for announcements such as our special 2% bonus now being offered through our annuity program, special offers on our insurance products, trips to Slovakia, and our Alaskan Cruise Membership Meet.

# Pittsburgh Slovaks Perform at St. Mary's Parish

On Saturday January 5, 2008, the Pittsburgh Slovaks and the Junior Pittsburgh Slovaks performed the Epiphany Celebration at St. Rita's Parish in Munhall Pennsylvania. It was an impressive and entertaining performance from the youngest of the juniors members to the elders who have shared their lives to continue the awareness of our Slovak heritage.

The Pittsburgh Slovaks and the Junior Pittsburgh Slovaks are of Slovak decent and perform traditional Slovak songs and dance in greater Pittsburgh area. It is also a group that enjoys friendships as well performing together. On May 16, 17, and 18 they will begin their summer performance schedule at the Conventional Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at the 52st Annual Pittsburgh Folk Festival.

**Monica Rodacy-Boone**



The Children sing Silent Night at the conclusion of the Epiphany Celebration show.



Pittsburgh Slovaks sing during the program at St. Rita's Church in Munhall, Pennsylvania.



In the portrayal of St. Nicholas visiting the homes the night before his feast of December 6, the children of the Jr. Pittsburgh Slovaks encircle St Nicholas.



Junior Pittsburgh Slovaks pose at their Halloween party.

## FLEXIBLE PREMIUM DEFERRED ANNUITY FLEXIBLE PREMIUM DEFERRED ANNUITY/IRA

**Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity – Currently Earning 5.00% (4.879 APR)**

Under the Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity, you may make periodic payments into an annuity fund that accumulates interest at, or greater than, the guaranteed rate. You can open the account with as little as \$500.00 and make additional deposits (\$25.00 minimum) as your financial situation allows. Additional deposits are not mandatory.

At the retirement age you choose, the funds accumulated in the Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity may be withdrawn using any of the FCSU's lump sum or periodic income settlement options.

### 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.
- Even though you may not incur an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge, withdrawals before age 59 ½ may be subject to a federal tax penalty.
- Tax on the interest earned is deferred until the annuity funds are drawn.
- Also available in a Traditional IRA or Roth IRA (subject to IRA Guidelines)

*From the desk of the ...*

## EXECUTIVE SECRETARY **Exciting news!!**

Now you are able to receive life insurance quotes on all our products from our website!! Our website address is [www.fcsu.com](http://www.fcsu.com). To assist you with quotes, click on quotes and then follow the directions, fill in the blanks and you will immediately know the information you are seeking. All Branch Officers, Recommenders and Proposers should take advantage of this useful tool available to everyone now.

If you have any questions, please contact our Home Office at 800-533-6682.

# MINUTES OF THE SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE USA AND CANADA SEPTEMBER 14 –15, 2007 HOME OFFICE • INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

**FIRST SESSION**

Friday Morning, September 14, 2007

**OPEN MEETING**

President Andrew Rajec called the meeting to order and asked Reverend Thomas A. Nasta, Chaplain, to offer the opening prayer. The President asked Susan Ondrejco, Fraternal Director, to lead the Board in singing the National Anthems of the United States, Canada, the Slovak Republic and the Pledge of the Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary, read the roll call with the following members present:

Rev. Thomas Nasta, National Chaplain;  
Andrew M. Rajec, National President;  
Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., National Vice President;  
Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary;  
George F. Matta, National Treasurer;  
Karen M. Hunka, Chairman of Auditors;  
Susan M. Ondrejco, Fraternal Activities Director;  
Gary J. Matta, General Counsel;  
Joseph F. Minarovich, Regional Director, Region 1;  
Damian Nasta, Regional Director, Region 2;  
Carl Ungvarsky, Regional Director, Region 3;  
George Sprock, Regional Director, Region 4;  
Regis P. Brekosky, Regional Director, Region 5;  
Henry Hassay, Regional Director, Region 6;  
Rudolph Glogovsky, Regional Director, Region 7;  
Milos Mitro, Regional Director, Regions 8 & 9.

**PRESIDENT'S WELCOME**

The President read his welcome to the Board of Directors.

**READING OF THE CALL**

The Executive Secretary then read the Call to the Semi-Annual Meeting.

**PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA**

President Rajec presented the agenda for the Semi-Annual Meeting and asked for its acceptance. A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Joseph Minarovich to accept the agenda and allow the President to change the order of the agenda if necessary. Motion carried.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY BOARD OF DIRECTORS (TELE-CONFERENCE) MEETING JUNE 16, 2007**

A motion was made by Joe Minarovich and seconded by George Sprock to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

**APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES**

The President appointed the following committees for the meeting:

DONATIONS COMMITTEE

George Matta  
George Sprock

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

Reverend Thomas Nasta  
Henry Hassay

**FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR SECOND QUARTER 2007****EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The Executive Secretary reported that one of our staff members has retired. He also reported that we filled the open position at the Death Claims Department and we hired a new IT (information technician) person. At this time the Executive Secretary introduced all the Home Office employees to the Board of Directors.

**Mid-year 2007 Financial Report**

Kenneth A. Arendt presented the second quarter Financial Report and answered the Board Members' questions. The Society has reached the highest levels of surplus in its history. He stated that his report would be published in our Jednota newspaper very shortly.

**2008 Budget Proposal**

The Executive Secretary presented the proposal for 2008 Budget and asked the Board of Directors to review this for our Board meeting in December.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer George F. Matta presented his report to the Board of Directors and answered the Board's questions.

The Treasurer stated in his report that we are keeping with FCSU investment policy which is proving to be very successful. The Treasurer also reported that the Executive Committee is constantly monitoring the housing and mortgage situation and what effect it may have on our current bonds holdings.

A motion was made by Regis Brekosky and seconded by Rudolph Glogovsky to accept the Executive Secretary's and Treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried.

**MEMBERSHIP AND MARKETING**

The Vice President updated the Board of Directors on retention of JEP policies. These are the policies where the first year's premium was waived as a fraternal benefit. He stated that the renewal rate was about 70%.

Seminars

The Vice President also updated the Board of Directors about seminars held this year. So far we had 9 seminars and there are 3 more planned.

Branches

The Vice President also reported that there are 274 branches, 93 of which qualify for the 2006 stipend. He asked the Board of Directors to get more involved and come forward with suggestions how to improve our Branch activities.

**RECESS OF SESSION**

At this time the Board of Directors adjourned for Mass and lunch.

**SECOND SESSION**

Friday Afternoon, September 14, 2007

Open Meeting

President Andrew Rajec opened the afternoon session with a prayer and call to order. The Executive Secretary stated that all members are present.

The Vice President continued with his Membership and Marketing report.

Agents

The Vice President led a discussion about the production of our recommenders and individual agents.

The Vice President discussed the current status on hiring of an In-house agent. He stated that this will be discussed after the first of next year.

Advertising and Jednota Newspaper

The Vice President stated that after the first of the year we will start our new marketing plan with our Jednota newspaper going to every household.

He stated that we are currently sending a prepaid postcard questionnaire to our new members asking how they heard about us (thru Branch Officers, newspaper, other...)

The Vice President also stated that we are mailing these questionnaires also to those who recently applied for insurance and our annuity products. This survey will help us with our future marketing strategy.

He also stated that we are in contact with several companies that could provide physicals and blood work if needed for our new applicants. This will be discussed at our Executive Committee Meeting in January.

The Vice President stated that we are also bringing back our Senior Promotion Program starting October 1, 2007 with the recommenders and independent agents. On November 1, 2007 we will advertise this product in our Jednota newspaper and a notice will be sent out to our current members. The program will last until March 31, 2008.

The Vice President also mentioned that we are continuously sending some type of advertisement in all mailings (premium notices, paid up additions notices etc.)

The Vice President asked George Sprock, Regional Director for Region 4, to come forward and presented him with numerous awards for being one of the top insurance and annuity sales agents. He recognized Mr. Sprock for constantly being in the top ten in annuity and insurance sales. The Board of Directors also congratulated Mr. Sprock on his outstanding performance.

A motion was made by Joseph Minarovich, seconded by George Sprock to accept the Vice Presidents' report as presented. Motion carried.

**FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR REPORT**

The Fraternal Activities Director gave her report on the Bowling and Golfing tournaments and answered the Board's questions. She also discussed the procedures for the reimbursement of Regional picnics.

The Fraternal Activities Director discussed the highlighting of the activities of some of the Branches in our Jednota newspaper, so other Branches can use some of their ideas.

The Fraternal Activities Director also stated that the Sports Committee will have a meeting in near future to select the sites and dates for tournaments in 2008.

The Fraternal Activities Director also stated that she will meet with other Fraternal Activities Directors to discuss the possibility of having some joint ventures.

A motion was made by Henry Hassay and seconded by Fr. Thomas Nasta to accept the Fraternal Director's report as presented. Motion carried.

**REGIONAL DIRECTORS' REPORT**

The President reviewed the changes in duties and responsibilities of Regional Directors in the present Bylaws that were passed at the last FCSU Convention.

At this time the President asked each Regional Director to give a short verbal report about Branch activities within their Region.

**GENERAL COUNSEL'S REPORT**

The General Counsel gave a report on his research regarding the possibilities for foreign citizens becoming members of the FCSU. He said that foreign citizens can obtain membership thru the Home Office and could be placed possibly in a Branch within the US or in the Home Office Branch.

A motion was made by Rudolph Glogovsky and seconded by Henry Hassay to accept the General Counsel's report as presented. Motion carried.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to conduct for today, a motion was made by Henry

*continued on page 7*

# MINUTES OF THE SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*continued from page 6*

Hassay, seconded by Damian Nasta, to adjourn. Motion carried. Reverend Thomas Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

## THIRD SESSION

Saturday Morning, September 15, 2007

## OPEN

President Andrew Rajec called the meeting to order at 9:25A.M. Father Thomas Nasta led a prayer.

## ROLL CALL

The Executive Secretary stated that all members are present and went over the meeting schedule.

## JEDNOTA ESTATES

The President informed the Board of Directors about the Listing Agreement for the Printery building. He said that the previous Listing Agreement expired and we did not renew. Presently we are looking for a rental agent for the Printery Building.

The President also updated the Board of Directors about the rental vacancy in the Harrisburg-Middletown area. The President also stated that the new Rental Agreement would require placing a sign that faces the turnpike. He feels that this will bring better attention to our property.

The President also reported that he asked the General Counsel about people hunting on our property and placing a "No hunting" sign on our property. The General Counsel stated that he looked into this matter and FCSU will follow the proper procedure about posting a "No hunting" sign.

The President updated the Board about the research on the artesian wells on our property. He said he would contact the city and ask for help with locating these wells.

The President asked Regis Brekosky, President of Jednota Properties, for an update on Building # 2 in Middletown. Mr. Brekosky updated the Board on the progress of the new roof going on Building # 2, the upkeep of landscaping, and about the progress on the new lease for our tenants.

## SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

The Executive Secretary gave a report to the Board of Directors about the winners of the FCSU's 2007 Scholarship winners.

He informed the Board that a notice was sent to all individual winners and also to their respective High Schools.

The Executive Secretary also stated that the applications for the 2008 Scholarships are being prepared and the following will be done to inform all the eligible members:

- 1) an ad will be placed in our Jednota newspaper
- 2) the application form will be placed on our website

The Executive Secretary also updated the Board regarding the Jednota Benevolent Foundation Scholarship. He said that a notice was in the Jednota newspaper and on the website and that applications are currently being sent. The judges will determine the winners in December.

## STATE LICENSES

The President has been in contact with Ed DePersis regarding this matter. He will update the Board of Directors as more information becomes available.

## BRANCH AND INDIVIDUAL TRANSFERS

The President said that we have a set procedure in place for all Branch and individual transfers. He also stated that we had our summer intern physically locate active and non-active Branches on big wall map. This will help dramatically when we start the merging process. This is a spring 2008 project.

He also stated that Rudolph Glogovsky sent a questionnaire to all Branches within his Region to obtain information about the status, finances, and physical location of the Branches etc. This information will be helpful during the merging process.

The President asked the other Regional Directors if they would do the same within their Regions.

## REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES

### Report of Donations Committee

George Matta gave a report of the Donations Committee. All requests were reviewed and acted upon. A motion was made by George Matta and seconded by Damian Nasta to accept the recommendations of the Donations Committee as presented. Motion carried.

### Resolutions Committee

Father Nasta read the report of the Resolutions Committee. A motion was made by Rudolph Glogovsky and seconded by Damian Nasta to accept the Resolutions Committee's report as presented. Motion carried.

## SOCIETY'S PENSION PLAN

The President read a letter sent by David Chang of Bruce & Bruce, the Society Actuary, regarding changes required in our current Pension Plan. The option FCSU offers now is no longer available due to provisions of the Federal Pension Protection of 2006. A new vesting provision must be adopted, but the new vesting schedule must be slightly more favorable than the present.

A motion was made by Rudolph Glogovsky and seconded by Damian Nasta to accept the recommendations as presented. Motion carried.

## CHAIRMAN OF AUDITORS REPORT

Karen Hunka presented her report and answered the Board's questions.

She said that she is still working on establishing a new auditing process.

A motion was made by George Matta and seconded by George Sprock to accept the report as presented. Motion carried.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Father Thomas Nasta informed the Board that his archdiocese requires a liability insurance coverage for all non-church related activities at his church.

The Executive Secretary informed Father Nasta that all FCSU sponsored events are covered under FCSU's blanket liability coverage. The Executive Secretary will present him with the Certificate of Insurance which he can present to his archdiocese.

The President asked the Regional Directors for a list of potential individual sales agents in their Regions so we can contact them.

### Payment of bills associated with the annual board meeting

A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Milos Mitro to pay all the bills associated with the meeting. Motion carried.

## ADJOURN

There being no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Henry Hassay and seconded by Damian Nasta to adjourn. Motion carried. Reverend Thomas Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec  
National President

Kenneth A. Arendt  
Executive Secretary

## In Appreciation

*Mary Ann Doucette (Hackova), President of the Canadian Slovak League, in her English and Slovak articles Honoring the Pioneers of the CSL – Uctenie si priekopnikov KSL (KS Nov. 24, 2007) cited the names of 23 meritorious recipients to whom the League, at its gala banquet held in Toronto on October 20, 2007, celebrating the 75th anniversary of the CSL and 65 years of the continuous publication of the Kanadsky Slovak, granted its Jubilee Trophy for their untiring work on behalf of the CSL and its ideological aims. The names cited included my own, and for this recognition I express to the CSL, its Executive and the Preparatory Committee my heartfelt appreciation, wishing this Canadian Slovak national institution every possible success in the years ahead.*

*In celebrating this important milestone of our pioneering history in Canada, in my sentimental journey to the yesteryears I would like to augment the aforementioned list of names with the names of other prominent individuals who contributed to the development of our organization. Those who came after them seated themselves, as it were, behind the festive table. Without their hard work and perseverance our Slovak social and fraternal undertakings would have been, in my humble opinion, impossible. They merit our honorable recognition.*

*Pavol L. Sabo (Winnipeg), considered to be, with Kucera and Rondos, cofounders of the CSL, was one of the first to call for the establishment of an independent Slovak League in Canada (today's CSL).*

*Pavol Blaho (Montreal). During the war years, he was President of the largest branch of the CSL as well as its Executive Officer. He was also Vice-president of the Slovak Publishing Co. which published the weekly Slovak v Kanade, and President of the first Press Committee of the Kanadsky Slovak. He was, throughout his life, an active participant of Slovak life in Canada.*

*Stefan Jesenak (Oshawa). Founder of the Oshawa branch of the CSL and Member of the Executive Committee. He was a regular contributor to Slovak newspapers and helped to organize other CSL branches in southern Ontario. On one such trip, he and his companion nearly lost their lives in a car accident.*

*Jozef Tokar (Toronto). Founder of the Toronto branch and of the first District Assembly of the CSL. Member of the Central Assembly and as such organizer of the Slovak Days in Southern Ontario. Defender of Slovak Identity in Canada.*

*Michal Cano and Jozef Siksa (Thunder Bay). Michal Cano was, for many years, Treasurer of the CSL and main proponent of the League's aims. Jozef Siksa was the founder of the CSL branch in Thunder Bay and for many years he served as its President as well as the League's Executive Officer. He was also the producer of stage plays and an occasional speaker.*

*Jan Ivan (Welland). Founder of the Welland branch (and of the others) of the CSL and its President for many years. He was a member of the Executive Committee and an influential Slovak national advocate.*

*May their names, and the many sacrifices they made on behalf of the CSL, be remembered by our new generation of Canadians of Slovak origin.*

Fraternally,  
Stefan Hreha  
Montréal, Québec

# Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik Living The American Dream II

*continued from page 1*

the Obsitnik history and family

## U.S. Ambassadors

The 1815 Congress of Vienna institutionalized international diplomacy. In 1924 the U.S. Congress passed a law placing appointments on a merit system, and in 1954 vested the Ambassadors with authority to coordinate all diplomatic, economic, informational and military assistance activities.

## Senate Committee Hearings

The October 17 Hearing by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was held in the Senate Dirksen Office Building on Capitol Hill. We should be mindful that the nominees and the Senators were well prepared for this Hearing. The appointees were steeped in information through their own background and briefings by State, coming to this meeting with a prepared statement on important current bilateral and multi-national issues. The Senators have their own staffers and draw on the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress.

The Chairman of this Committee on Nominations was Senator Robert Casey (D-PA). They considered three nominees: Daniel V. Speckhard, to be Ambassador to Greece; Thomas F. Stephenson, to Portugal, and Vincent Obsitnik, to the Slovak Republic. Chairman Casey opened the Hearing by saying that the Committee “will consider the nominations of three key U.S. Ambassadorships in Europe.” He “congratulated” the three on their “nominations” and expressed the “gratitude of the Senate at your willingness to engage in public service on behalf of the nation.”

Obviously mindful of their posting in countries which are members of NATO and the European Union (EU), Chairman Casey then said that “The relationship we have—the transatlantic relationship, while somewhat neglected in my judgment in recent years, remains paramount to our national security interests. Greece, Portugal and Slovakia are all NATO allies, and NATO continues to bind the U.S. together with its partners in Europe, it still constitutes the most important Alliance for the United States, and

NATO today plays a critical role in supporting our objective in Afghanistan for a representative government that can exert sovereignty and ensure that al Qaeda never again uses its territory as a launching pad for terrorist activities and acts.

NATO, along with the European Union, continues to facilitate the consolidation of democratic reforms and economic prosperity in Eastern Europe. We stand together with our European allies against any effort by Russia to intimidate its neighbors or otherwise engage in hostile acts.”

Senator Casey continued “So there’s a broad agenda for the U.S. and Europe to undertake together in a spirit of cooperation and partnership. And of course, Greece, Portugal and Slovakia will play crucial roles in the evolution of the transatlantic alliance in coming years. So it is especially important that the U.S. be represented by our finest public servants in Athens, Lisbon and Bratislava.”

Chairman Casey noted that Slovakia is a recent addition to NATO, having only entered the alliance in 2004 and said that “Today Slovakia is governed by a ruling coalition that is quite outspoken in its criticism of U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. and Slovakia must continue to cooperate on a range of issues ranging from energy security in Central and Eastern Europe to the final status of Kosovo.”

The Senator added that “My home state of Pennsylvania happens to be one of those states that can boast the largest population of Slovak Americans in the United States. And, I might add, so is our nominee. Mr. Vincent Obsitnik can speak the language and possesses a special understanding of the Slovak culture. He’s uniquely qualified to make an immediate and positive impact on popular perceptions in Slovakia of the United States and the actions we undertake. . . . I look forward to hearing your views and how you intend to serve as Ambassador of our great nation.”

## Obsitnik’s Statement

In his Statement to the Senate Committee, Ambassador-designate Obsitnik opened with a “thank you for the honor to appear before you as President Bush’s nominee to represent the United States in Slovakia” and to “express my appreciation to the President and Secretary Rice” for their “confidence” in him. “With me today is my wife, Annemarie, whom I would also like to thank for her support and encouragement throughout our over forty-six years of marriage and the raising of our four sons.”

Beginning his short comments on his background (see the first article), he revealed that “Without doubt but with humility, I would like to say that I have been privileged to live the American dream.”

Following a brief sketch of his background, including his birth in Slovakia and early years in his second “roots” in Nanty-Glo, PA, the designated envoy presented his views before the Committee. Wisely, he preceded his intentions with “if confirmed.”

## U.S.-Slovak Relations

“With both countries members of NATO, U.S.-Slovak relations are defined to a large extent by our common membership in NATO and by the fact that Slovakia is part of the EU. One of our key challenges is to underscore to the Slovak Government and its people that, as allies with shared values and thriving democracies, our national interests largely coincide. In recent years, the strength of our partnership has, and is being tested by, a variety of factors: membership in the EU has opened new horizons to Slovak citizens for work, travel and study; a new leftist coalition government in Slovakia has taken slightly different directions than the previous government; and our foreign policy, in particular the Iraq War, has caused disagreement. Despite our differences, I believe that the U.S. and Slovakia can, and must work together on our disagreements thus maintaining our strong relationship.”

## Reaching Out Personally

“My number one priority will be to foster and sustain such a relationship by reaching out personally to the Slovak government and its people to explain the U.S. perspective, to promote U.S. policy interests, remind young people of our common history and the support

we provided under communism, and to ensure that American good will is understood. In addition, I will continue to support our Embassy’s efforts to expand academic, scientific and cultural exchange, all of which will serve to bring our peoples together.”

## Visa-free Travel

“One of the difficult issues that affect U.S.-Slovak relations is the issue of visa-free travel. Slovakia is working constructively to meet the list of requirements that will enable it to join the Visa Waiver Program. Should I be confirmed, one of my priorities will be to assist efforts of the Slovak government to meet the VWP standards as soon as possible. In my public outreach, I will reinforce the Administration’s commitment to facilitating safe and visa-free travel between our two countries. Such a development will enhance understanding between our peoples and serve our bilateral relations.”

## Defense and Security

“In the area of defense and security, Slovakia has been a proud EU and NATO member since 2004, with all that this implies in privilege and obligation. As such, it has approximately 525 troops deployed overseas in NATO, EU and UN missions. Slovakia has joined us and sacrificed with us in the war on terror. Its troops have been deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in Kosovo. Should I be confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to continue strong Slovak and U.S. cooperation in the fight to prevent terror and to encourage the Slovak Government to further deepen its commitment to NATO by increasing its participation in NATO missions, particularly in Afghanistan.”

## Limited Grants

“Slovakia has a unique set of experiences in democratization and economic reform that its vibrant and talented NGO communities are now sharing with countries in transition from Ukraine to Belarus to Cuba and the Balkans. Consistent with our transformational diplomacy goals, we will continue to support this community effort with the Embassy’s own limited grant-making program.”

## Slovak Economy

“On the economic front, Slovakia’s economy is the fastest growing in Europe with a growth rate of 9.4 percent in the second quarter of 2007. Economic reform and a corresponding influx of foreign investments have led to impressive growth, a dramatic decrease in unemployment, and a healthy macro economy that has put Slovakia on target to adopt the EURO on January 1, 2009.”

## Corruption

“Corruption continues to be a problem. Just recently the Embassy co-hosted an anti-corruption conference that was opened by the Prime Minister of Slovakia, Mr. Robert Fico. I will work diligently with our Slovak partners on anti-corruption initiatives and efforts, not only to their benefit but to the benefit of American businesses.”

## Post-Statement Questions

After the nominees concluded their statements, the Committee Senators asked questions. Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC), Ranking Member of the European Affairs Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations, asked each of them for a brief comment on “things we need to do in each of your respective countries that might help develop the respect of other countries and cooperation, in addition to what we are doing.”

Vincent Obsitnik said that in addition to the ongoing efforts of the Embassy “to reach out to the Slovak people” his background and ability to speak the language “should give me some leverage to meet people very directly, which I plan to do.” Also, he would be “very visible in the country to explain U.S. policy, to make them understand that our policy really is for the benefit of Slovakia as well. . . . We’re not looking to take anything out of the country for our own interest. . . . we are there to work with that country.”

With my unique background, I can add a lot to that and add to all the efforts that are currently going on in the embassy with such things as public diplomacy, ensuring that all the people in the embassy get out and have contacts with the local people to make sure that they understand America at every level.”

In response to Chairman Casey’s request to comment on how EU membership has impacted Slovakia’s economy, Mr. Obsitnik thought that “The economic impact from joining the EU has been tremendously positive. There’s no question about that.” He continued: “It’s opened the markets to them that were not there before. They’re a member of the EU family of nations, and they’re working cooperatively together. It’s done nothing but help that economy.”

## Question of Effectiveness

Senator Casey’s final question was, beyond nominee Obsitnik’s “tremendous experience” as a Naval Officer, as a citizen, and as a businessperson, what can he point to in his employment history, and his life story that would help him be “an effective Ambassador to Slovakia, beyond the obvious ties of your ancestry?” The Ambassador-to-be responded that beyond knowing the country, the people, and their history, he dealt with the international community in South America, in the Far East, he had responsibilities with IBM in international manufacturing and was involved with developing countries, negotiated with them regarding manufacturing operations and doing business there. That experience, he said, “has been tremendous and gives me a good sense of understanding what developing countries need and what directions they need to go in.”

Relative to his experience at IBM during the Cold War years, he “picked up a good sense of geopolitics of the world in terms of the threat, of responses by America to that threat. That will help me very well to explain our foreign policy and our point of view to the Slovak people.”

## Visit Nanty-Glo

The PA Senator gave himself ten seconds, saying he “wasn’t aware of the Nominee’s roots—Nanty Glo”—in western Pennsylvania? “Nanty Glo, yes sir,” said Mr. Obsitnik. “Cambria County, right?” asked Sen. Casey. “Cambria County, yes sir,” replied Mr. Obsitnik. “And how long did you live there?” asked the Senator. “We lived there about eight years—1938-1946 and then the great Garden State of New Jersey attracted us away.” (Laughter) Sen. Casey then said “I have to ask you today—your confirmation will not be dependent upon this, but I’d ask you to come back to Nanty Glo, PA, if you can.” Mr. Obsitnik: “Thank you, I will.”

## BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Branch 3 — MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

The SS. Cyril and Methodius Society, Branch 3, and the St. Joseph the Guardian Society, Branch 226, will have a Palm Sunday Mass and Breakfast on Sunday, March 16, 2008, at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, 1315 Second Street N.E., Minneapolis, Minnesota. The 9:00 a.m. Mass will be offered for the living and deceased members.

A breakfast with fellowship will take place in Father Dargay Hall after the liturgy.

**Joseph Matlon, Publicity Chairman**

### Branch 5, 240, 263 & 419 — OLYPHANT, NANTICOKE, DUPONT, AND WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA

Branches 5, 240, 263 and 419 will hold a joint Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2007, at 12:00 noon at the home of Joe Obester, 500 Brown Street, Apt. 316, Duryea, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be a discussion of branch business followed by the election of officers for the coming year. All members are urged to attend. A buffet will be served following the meeting. All members are urged to attend.

**Joe Obester, Financial Secretary**

### Branch 75 — SHAMOKIN, PENNSYLVANIA

The Assumption of the B.V. M. Society, Branch 75, held its Semiannual Meeting on Sunday, December 9, 2007, at the residence of President and Financial Secretary, Ronald M. Anderson, 8 South Shamokin Street, Shamokin, Pennsylvania.

President Anderson opened the meeting with a prayer. Recording Secretary Christine Anderson read the minutes of the previous meeting, which were accepted as read. Mr. Anderson gave the Financial Secretary's report. A motion to accept the report was made by Mark C. Gilger and seconded by Christine Jacoby. As of December 1, 2007, the Society's net worth was \$9,868.23. Christine Jacoby read the Auditors' report. A motion to accept the report was made by William J. Gilger, Jr. with a second by Christine Anderson. The Auditors' report was in agreement with the Financial Secretary's report.

A motion was made by Christine Jacoby to retain all officers for the coming year. The motion was seconded by G. Stephen Jacoby. The following officers will serve in 2008: Ronald M. Anderson, President and Financial Secretary; Mark C. Gilger, Sr., Vice President; Christine Anderson, Recording Secretary; William J. Gilger, Jr., Treasurer; Christine Jacoby, G. Stephen Jacoby and Mark C. Gilger, Sr., Auditors; and George Dorko, Fraternal Activities Director.

Local lodge due notices were mailed December 3, 2007. The annual donation of \$75.00 to the Mother Cabrini Youth Center was unanimously approved following a motion by William J. Gilger, Jr., and seconded by Mark C. Gilger, Sr. President Anderson subsequently motioned for an additional \$25.00 donation be made to the Mother Cabrini Youth Center in memory of Mr. William J. Gilger, Sr., who served Branch 75 for many years as its financial secretary. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Christine Jacoby with a proper second being made by Mark C. Gilger, Sr.

**Christine Anderson,  
Recording Secretary**

### Branch 89 — MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

The Knights of St. Mary and St. Joseph Society, Branch 89, will hold its Annual Meeting and Election of Officers on Sunday, February 10, 2008, at 12:30 p.m. at The Grecian Inn, 14375 West Capitol Drive, Brookfield, Wisconsin. A complimentary luncheon will be served. Guests will pay for their own lunch. On the agenda will be the election of officers. All members are urged to attend. Please call Michael Novak at 414/445-5382 by February 6, 2008 if you plan to attend.

**Michael Novak, President**

### Branch 89 — MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

The Knights of St. Mary and St. Joseph Society, Branch 89, will hold an Easter Duty Mass and Breakfast on Sunday, March 16, 2008. Mass will be celebrated at 9:00 a.m. in St. Margaret Mary Church, 3970 North 92<sup>nd</sup> Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Immediately after the liturgy, breakfast will be held at The Grecian Inn, 14375 West Capitol Drive, Brookfield, Wisconsin. The breakfast is complimentary for members. Guests will pay for their own breakfast. Please contact Mike Novak at 414/445-5382 by March 12, 2008, with the number of people attending.

**Michael Novak, President**

### Branch 162 — UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wendelin Society, Branch 162, will hold its Quarterly Meeting on Sunday, March 16, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. in the third floor meeting room of the Meridian Point Apartments, Confer Vista Road, Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Branch activities will be discussed. All members are invited to attend.

**Dolores Marmol, Secretary**

### Branch 181 — UNITED, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 181, will hold its first meeting of the year on Saturday, February 2, 2008, immediately after the 5:00 p.m. Mass in the Formation Building on St. Florian Church grounds. All members are welcome to attend. For more information call 724/423-4278.

**G. Kovacina, Recording Secretary**

### Branch 254 — PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wenceslaus Society, Branch 254, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 10, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. at the Eat' N Park Restaurant, Chartiers Avenue, McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the 2008 agenda and elect new officers. All members are invited to attend. Refreshments will be served.

**Albina Senko, Financial Secretary**

### Branch 450 — CLEVELAND, OHIO

The St. Joseph the Guardian Society, Branch 450, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 10, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. at the home of Jozef Valencik, 13501 Park Drive, Brook Park, Ohio. The election of officers will be held at this time.

**Margaret Valencik, Financial Secretary**

### Branch 553 — AKRON, OHIO

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 553, will hold its annual Ash Wednesday Special Dinner on Wednesday, February 6,

2008, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Slovak J Club, Akron, Ohio. The dinner will consist of pirohy, halusky, salad, and bread and butter. The cost is \$6.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children. Take-out orders will be available for a small extra charge. The Slovak J Club volunteers will serve this delicious meal. Come and enjoy the meal and fellowship.

**Linda M. Hanko, Recording Secretary**

### Branch 644 — MCKEES ROCKS, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 644, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. at the Slovak-American Citizens Club, 332 Helen Street, McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania. We will have the election of officers for the year 2008, presentation of the yearly audit, and a discussion on ways to increase membership in our branch. Remember, this is "Your Branch", and it is in your best interest that you attend this meeting. Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

**Michael R. Jablonsky, President**

### Branch 682 — YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The St. George Society, Branch 682, will hold a meeting on Friday, January 25, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at the Materials Research Center, Struthers, Ohio. On the agenda will be a branch audit and a discussion of activities for 2008. All members are invited to attend. The following officers were elected to serve in 2008: Andrew J. Hirt, President; Andrew M. Hirt, Vice President; Joseph G. Bialik, Recording Secretary; Joseph T. Scavina, Financial Secretary; Milan J. Krivan, Treasurer; Emery Stanchin, Robert Franko and Thomas Morella, Auditors; and John Bialik, Sergeant at Arms.

**Joseph T. Scavina, Financial Secretary**

### Branch 731 — YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 731, has scheduled its Saint Joseph Feast Day Liturgy on Sunday, March 2, 2008, at 11:30 a.m. at Saint Matthias Church, Cornell Street, Youngstown, Ohio. Following the liturgy, there will be a lunch with door prizes. All members are invited to attend. Please confirm your reservations prior to February 17, 2008 by calling Millie Leskovyansky at 330/782-3219 or Theresa Smrecansky at 330/629-9178.

Members of Branch 731 elected officers for the year 2008. Officers were administered the oath of office by Msgr. Peter M. Polando. The following officers will serve in 2008: Millie Leskovyansky, President; Grace Kavulic, Vice President; James Bobby, Secretary; Jackie Bobby, Financial Secretary; and Ed Walko and John Kavulic, Auditors.

**James Bobby, Recording Secretary**

### Branch 743 — DETROIT AND STERLING HEIGHTS, MICHIGAN

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 743, will celebrate the feast day of St. Joseph on Sunday, March 16, 2008, with a Slovak Mass at 11:30 a.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, 41233 Ryan Road, Sterling Heights, Michigan. Refreshments including coffee and Slovak baked goods will be served in the Social Hall following the liturgy. A Branch meeting will take place in room 118 at 1:00 p.m.

All members and their families are invited to attend this annual celebration of St. Joseph Day and enjoy fellowship with other members. Any member who has recently moved or requires branch services should contact the branch secretary Joseph C. Rimarcik, 42909 Sussex Park Drive, Sterling Heights, MI 48314-3087 or phone 586/254-0225.

**Joseph C. Rimarcik,  
President & Financial Secretary**

### FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY

## FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION ANNUITY & IRA INTEREST RATES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2008 THRU MARCH 31, 2008

**The annual yield on existing Flexible Premium Deferred  
Annuities & IRA's is 5.00% (4.879% APR)**

**The annual yield on a new "Park 2 Annuity" is  
4.75% (4.641% APR)**

**The annual yield on accounts with the "Cash Interest"  
Option is 4.75% (4.641 APR)**

**The annual yield for new Settlement Options is  
based on 4.50% (4.402% APR)**

*If you have any questions about our annuities or IRA's,  
please contact the Home Office!*

**1-800-533-6682**

*Kenneth A. Arendt, National Secretary*

## REMEMBER OUR DEPARTED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

### Joseph Ferkovic Branch 615 Detroit, Michigan

Joseph Ferkovic, 79, a prominent Slovak American leader in Michigan, died Friday, December 28, 2007.

Mr. Ferkovic was born October 13, 1928, in Trnava, Slovakia. After grade and junior high school, he attended a military high school in Turciansky Sv. Martin, and graduated in Trencin. He worked briefly for the Department of the Interior in Bratislava. Deciding on a military career, Mr. Ferkovic then entered the Military Academy in Hranice.

Mr. Ferkovic left Czechoslovakia in 1949 after the communist seizure of power. After a short stay in Linz, Austria, he emigrated to Caracas, Venezuela in 1950. He married Margaret Sandor, a native of Bratislava, on September 6, 1952, in Caracas.

In 1954, Mr. Ferkovic came to the United States. He worked as a salesman for Century Company and later became office manager for Tropiccream Company of New Orleans. He later settled in Detroit, Michigan and remained in the Detroit area until his death. He retired from Chrysler Corporation after 34 years of service.

Mr. Ferkovic has a long and distinguished record in Slovak American life in the Detroit area. He served as president for many years of the St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 615 of the First Catholic Slovak Union, and Branch 34 of the Slovak League of America. He also served as director of the Slovak Radio Hour in Detroit for almost 20 years and was an active member of the Slovak World Congress. A Third Degree member of the Knights of Columbus, he served as Fraternal Counselor for the Independent Order of Foresters, Great Lakes Division. Using the pen name of "Jozo Trnavcan, Mr. Ferkovic edited a Slovak newspaper and was a regular contributor to a number of Slovak publications. He served as an interpreter and translator in five languages.

Mr. Ferkovic is survived by his wife, Margaret Ferkovic; a son, George Ferkovic; a daughter, Mary (Christopher) Griebe; three grandchildren, Stephanie Ferkovic, and Patrick and Kristin Griebe; a sister, Anna Takac of Slovakia; and nieces and nephews in Slovakia.

Friends were received at the Sterling Heights Chapel of E.J. Mandziuk & Son Funeral Directors. A Funeral Mass was offered in SS. Cyril and Methodius Church in Sterling Heights. Interment was in Resurrection Cemetery.

### Sister Mary Louis, SS.C.M.

Sister Mary Louis, SS.C.M. (Cecelia M. Keltos), 77, died January 7, 2008, at Maria Hall in Danville, Pennsylvania. She was born August 7, 1930, in Binghamton, New York. She attended SS. Cyril and Methodius School and St.

Patrick Academy in Binghamton and graduated from St. Cyril Academy in Danville.

Sister attended Marywood University, Scranton and received a B.S. in Home Economics and Dietetics from Seton Hill College in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. She did her Dietetic Internship at Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio.

On February 1, 1949, she entered the novitiate in Danville, and was received as a novice on August 11, 1949. Sister Mary Louis was professed on August 9, 1951.

Sister ministered in dietary/food services in several large institutions, Villa St. Cyril in Highland Park, Illinois; St. Benedict's Nursing Home and Rehab Center, Niles, Illinois; St. Cyril Academy, Maria Joseph Manor and Maria Hall, Danville. For four years Sister Mary Louis was assigned to a local convent, St. Joseph's in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. In 2003-2004, Sister was missioned to Holy Trinity Parish in Binghamton, where she ministered to the sick and the elderly and participated in the Renew program.

Sister Mary Louis is survived by three brothers, Francis of Commack, New York; the Rev. Adam Keltos, O.F.M. Conv. of Syracuse, New York, and Cyril of Binghamton, and several nieces and nephews.

The transferal rite and recitation of the Rosary took place at 8:30 a.m. at Maria Hall on Thursday, January 10, 2008, followed by a Wake Service at 11:15 a.m. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 1:30 p.m. in the Basilica of SS. Cyril and Methodius. The main celebrant and homilist was Sister's brother, Father Adam Keltos, O.F.M. Conv. Concelebrants were the Rev. Albert Oldfield, Rev. Amrhein, O.F.M. Conv., and the Rev. Raynald Yudin, O.F.M. Conv. Deacon Adrien Picard assisted at the altar. Also present at the funeral were two other Conventual Franciscans, Brother Edward Falsey and Brother Joseph Freitag.

Memorial donations may be made to the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius, Villa Sacred Heart, Danville, PA 17821-1698.

### Paul Malosh Branch 240P Taylor, Pennsylvania

Paul "Potsey" Malosh of Taylor, Pennsylvania, died Friday, December 21, 2007, at his home.

Born August 20, 1948, in Scranton, Pennsylvania, son of the late John A. and Margaret Zahornacky Malosh, he was a 1966 graduate of St. Patrick's High School and served four years with the Air Force. In 1999, he retired from Tobyhanna Army Depot, where he worked as a forklift operator. He was a lifelong member of St. John the Baptist Church, where he served as an usher.

Paul loved to play golf, watch football and baseball and then discuss the games with his brother. Paul had a big heart and his

nieces and nephew were the center of his life. When they were growing up, he never missed any of their activities.

Surviving are two brothers, John and wife, Ann, of East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, and Andrew and wife, Marie, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; four nieces, Megan, Mary and Melanie Malosh, all of Feasterville, Pennsylvania; and Linda Mitchell and husband, Mark, of Cedar Rapids; a nephew, John Malosh and wife, Teresa, of Marmaroneck, New York; a great-niece; a great-nephew; an aunt, Agnes Kandra of Trenton, New Jersey; and many cousins.

He was also preceded in death by a nephew, Mark Malosh.

Friends were received at the Semian Funeral Home, Taylor. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in St. John the Baptist Church by Rev. Francis L. Pauselli, pastor. Interment was in the parish cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to St. John the Baptist Church, 312 Davis Street, Taylor, PA 18505; St. Matthew Church, 200 Broadhead Ave., East Stroudsburg, PA 18301; or the donor's favorite charity.

**Stephen J. Kavulich**

### Sophie Mraz Harrison Branch 240P Taylor, Pennsylvania

Sophie Mraz Harrison, 87, formerly of Old Forge, Pennsylvania, died Monday, Decem-

ber 24, 2007, at the home of her daughter. Her husband, Edward, died December 31, 1977.

Born in Taylor, she was the daughter of the late George and Anna Podracky Mraz. For more than 30 years, Sophie lived in New Jersey and worked and retired from Burrough's Corp., where she was a supervisor in the electronics division. She was a member of St. John the Baptist Church, Taylor.

Sophie enjoyed fishing, and when she no longer could fish, she enjoyed watching her great-grandson fish. All of her life, she was there for her family and would help in any way that she could. Her grandchildren and great-grandson were the center of her life.

Surviving are a daughter, Elaine Wilkinson and husband, Gerald; a granddaughter, Charlene; a grandson, Gary; and great-grandson, Joshua.

She was also preceded in death by several brothers and sisters.

A private funeral was held from the Semian Funeral Home, Taylor followed by a Mass of Christian Burial in St. John the Baptist Church, celebrated by Rev. Francis L. Pauselli, pastor. Interment was in the parish cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. John the Baptist Church, 312 Davis St., Taylor, PA 18505.

**Stephen J. Kavulich**

## “Park 2 Annuity” — Now Paying 4.75%

Under the “Park 2 Annuity”, you make a one-time deposit of at least \$1,000.00 into an annuity fund that accumulates interest at a guaranteed rate for two years. Additional deposits are not allowed.

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- Withdrawal Privileges—Funds withdrawn during the first two years are subject to an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge. The charge is 6% the first year and 5% the second year. You may, however, withdraw up to 10% of your ‘beginning of the year balance’ with no FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge.
- Even though you may not incur an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge, withdrawals before age 59 ½ may be subject to a federal tax penalty.
- Tax on the interest earned is deferred until the annuity funds are drawn.
- The minimum deposit is \$1,000.00.

Please contact your Branch Officer or the Home Office for applications.

**2008 International  
Tournaments**

**Bowling  
April 25-27**

**Wedgewood Lanes ~ Youngstown, Ohio**

**Golf  
July 12-13**

**Tam O'Shanter ~ Canton, Ohio**

## REMINDERS

Please send all articles for publication (both English and Slovak) to Jednota Estates, 1011 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057.

Readers are reminded that all address changes for the JEDNOTA newspaper must be done at the Home Office in Independence, Ohio. If you have an address change, a cancellation or wish to receive the paper write to: First Catholic Slovak Union, FCSU Corporate Center, 6611 Rockside Rd., Independence, OH 44131-2398. Phone 1/800-JEDNOTA.

# Fašiangy (Shrovetide-Pre-Lenten Carnival Time)

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

Fašiangy is the Slovak word for the carnival of events associated with Shrovetide, or the French equivalent "mardi gras." It marks a time of celebration, a way to make merry during the cold winter, and an outlet to get rid of some cabin fever.

Since many Slovaks traditionally hailed from villages, they often would be cooped up in small house for many weeks during the long, cold winters. Officially, fašiangy started as soon as the Christmas season came to a close, just after the Feast of the Three Kings (January 6). But the bulk of the merrymaking occurred starting usually in February on the last Thursday before Lent, Fat Thursday (tucný stvrtok). The exact date varied on the Christian calendar because Lent and Easter are moveable holy days, tied to the lunar calendar.

During Fašiangy, all would feast before the solemnity of Lent; people viewed it as a necessary ritual that also prepared them for the new growing season they looked forward to. In the towns, the guilds would host Fašiangy costumed parades, as well as singing and dancing and performing various feats of bravery, which displayed the mastery of their trades. All aimed to release their pent up energy before Ash Wednesday (Popolcová streda), which marks the start of fasting and a 40 day end to all the merrymaking.

In general, the fašiangy celebrations in Slovakia lasted from the Thursday before Lent until Tuesday, and often the celebration continued through Ash Wednesday morning. Many weddings occurred on the weekend, for Christian marriages were prohibited during Lent.

Consuming huge amounts of food and drink were very much part of fašiangy customs in Slovakia. The tables were filled with various drinks, such as whiskey, brandy, wine, and beer. In previous centuries, Slovaks also imbibed the much-loved medovina, an alcoholic beverage made from fermented honey. In their homes, women baked meat (if available), bravcová huspenina (a pork jelly), fried šišky (filled pastries) or pampuchy (a kind of fritter, often from potatoes, since the Slovak diet was rife with potatoes). This was the last time before Lent that people could fry foods with animal fat, for only butter or oil could be used during Lent. So much of the food was very fattening. But no worry – the Lenten fast put them on a diet soon after.

As part of the celebration, a jovial group of costumed and masked youths strutted from house to house playing music. They dressed up as outrageous characters, such as a slameník (strawman), bakus (Bacchus-the Roman god), kurina baba (an old lady), a koza (goat), a medved' (bear) and especially

turon (an ox or some other type of cattle). The turon was formed when a young man would hoist a companion on his shoulders, cover them selves with a large sheet or blanket, and place a sewn head of an ox or bull with bells on the head of the guy on top. Then the group of masked marauders would saunter around the village and go from house to house. As they made their rounds, they would throw some manure on the way in order to leave a sign of their passing by, and the team leader would strike up some hearty and jovial folk songs. When they went into someone's home, they might carry some cow dung, which they claimed was cattle blood. This was not meant to be an insult; rather, Slovaks interpreted this as fortuitous, for this was a sign they would enjoy the fruits of cow manure – a bountiful harvest.

During the visits, spirited youths sang songs to the unmarried young maidens. The hosts would offer their entertaining visitors slanina, i.e., smoked bacon, smoked meats, and other treats that were prohibited during Lent. Some of the young men dressed in drag as women and parodied and mimicked members of other ranks in society. For example, they might wear an animal skin, or some of them would dress like a zobrák (beggar) in torn up pants, shirt, and stuff themselves with straw. The dressed up youths would frolic about clumsily, stagger, slide, and fall on the ground in front of the onlookers. The goofiest and most humorous character of group was often named Kubo or Starý, just as in the Bethlehem (jaslickáre plays from the Christmas season.

The young merrymakers also might each be equipped with a branch, a basket, and one in the group would be sure to play a harmonika (accordion in English) or a simple instrument resembling what we know as a harmonica. They would sing ludicrous songs and shout out ludicrous and humorous sayings and speeches. At the various homes they visited, they would collect eggs, bacon, and a few coins. In some villages, a home or the local krcme (taverns) would roast a pig and have a live band, which would be paid for with the money and goodies which the youths had collected.

Women also participated in the festivities. They would visit several homes, usually where some priadky (spinning) was taking place. (Spinning thread and making clothing were some of the main jobs women performed during the winter time. It was also done in groups, so it was a chance for women to socialize.) There they would drink "na vysoký l'an," i.e., literally, for tall flax, a main material for their work. In order to ensure that the flax grew long, the women would pull the hair of the lady whose was

longest. Then they would jump up from their benches and dance.

Women and men also used fašiangy to apply some social pressure to the unmarried maidens. They joked about those girls who had not yet found a husband, especially the older girls. For instance, the ladies might sing a song that this girl thought she was too good for any of the eligible bachelors. Thus fašiangy reinforced the strong belief in marriage as a necessary and desired institution which all should aspire to.

Another aspect of fašiangy was dedicated to honoring the deceased. Ancient pagans wore masks to remember their connections with their past. Pagan Slavs had burned their dead and smeared ashes on their heads to symbolize the continuity of spirit between them and their ancestors. The custom was later Christianized and became known as Popolec (The Day of Ashes) or Popolcová st-

reda (Ash Wednesday). When the ceremony was moved to the Halloween period, the masks remained, but the church modified the commemoration by replacing it with "All Saints Day," followed by "All Souls Day" in November.

Fašiangy served a social purpose, for believers needed to vent their emotions before the six week fasting during Lent. The tradition of Carnival time still exists in some villages, even though the local Matica Slovenska (Cultural Society) often helps host the event. Even in some towns, a procession still occurs, and while it has its modern day additions, the events help retain the historical folk memory of what their Slovak ancestors did. It also gives people a good excuse to eat, drink and be merry.

But one might add, one can appreciate the celebration of Fašiangy more if the Lenten fast, abstinence, and prayer are observed.

## COLLEGE CORNER

### Building A Better College Application

(NAPSA)-When it comes to the college admissions process, well-traveled students might have a world of advantage. That's the word from education experts who say college applicants with international travel experience gain additional consideration over other students with similar academic credentials.

"Grades are just one factor college admissions officers look at when assessing applicants," explains Debra Latta, Principal, State College Area High School, State College, Pa. "They're also looking for well-rounded students who are involved, socially aware and who show potential to succeed in life. That's where international travel comes in."

Latta recommends People to People Student Ambassador Programs, which provide international educational opportunities to 5th through 12th grade students.

The journeys offer hands-on cultural experiences, unique behind-the-scenes access to fascinating people and places, and amazing outdoor adventures. Whether they find themselves rappelling down castle walls in Scotland, visiting Anne Frank's house in Amsterdam or meeting world leaders, student ambassadors broaden their horizons while learning what it means to be a global citizen. In addition, students can earn transferable high school and college credit through the program.

Latta offers these additional



**People to People Student Ambassadors meet with the Queen of England during a British and Irish Heritage journey.**

tips for impressing the admissions committee:

- **Be an Early Bird:** Get involved in school activities, your community and cause-related global initiatives as soon as possible.
- **Flex Your Passport Muscle:** Participate in an international journey and promote and describe the experiences in college essays.
- **Get Behind a Cause:** Find a social issue that you are passionate about and get behind it.
- **Leave Your Backyard:** Don't turn your back on academic opportunities across the country or across the world.
- **Spring Break to Colleges:** Start visiting colleges on your junior year spring break.
- **Power in Numbers:** Apply to more schools (experts recommend eight to 10) to keep a range of colleges open and to evaluate the best scholarship options.

To learn more, visit [www.studentambassadors.org](http://www.studentambassadors.org).

## Milwaukee Fasiangy

The Milwaukee Fasiangy or Pre-Lenten Dance will be held Saturday, February 2, 2008, at 6:00 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3200 South 103<sup>rd</sup> Street (103<sup>rd</sup> and Oklahoma Avenue), Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Slovak food will be available. The Chicago band, Gadzove, will be playing Slovak music for your enjoyment. The Tatra Slovak Dancers will have a performance at 7:30 p.m. We are inviting all members of the Knights of SS. Joseph and Mary Society, Branch 89, to attend. For more information, contact Betty Valent at 414/425-6137, Emily Kosso at 414/464-1063, or Annie Simone at 414/462-3773.

# News From Slovakia

## Kubis Meets New U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia

Slovak Foreign Affairs Minister Jan Kubis met Vincent Obsitnik on Friday, December 28, 2007 for the first time since he became U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia.

Kubis praised the level of mutual relations between the two countries, confirmed their strategic nature, and expressed hope that the relations would be further deepened, especially in economic areas.

According to the Slovak Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesman Jan Skoda, Kubis pointed out the importance of continuing in the process of Slovakia's inclusion in the visa-free program with the United States.

Obsitnik introduced the blueprint of his diplomatic mission in Slovakia, and familiarized the ministry with his priorities. These should include the visa issue and the support to economic development of less developed parts of Slovakia, especially in the eastern part of the country. The two officials also discussed issues regarding current international and political development in the area of the western Balkans, including the Kosovo issue, U.S. anti-missile shield, and the situation in the Russian Federation.

TASR

## Slovaks Concerned about Increased Criminality after Schengen Entry

Nearly half of Slovaks over 15 years of age don't expect any significant change in their lives following Slovakia's entry to Schengen (opening of the borders), according to a survey carried out by KMG agency in early December on the sample of 1,002 people.

However, Slovaks are most concerned that the free movement of persons will enable criminals, refugees, or even terrorists to enter Slovakia more easily.

Asked, "what the accession to Schengen will bring you personally?", 44.8 percent of respondents answered that in principle nothing will change. Banska Bystrica region (54.2 percent), and Zilina region (51.7 percent) showed even more people felt they would be largely unaffected by Schengen.

The second most frequent response (27 percent) was the concern that it will be much easier for criminals to come to Slovakia. These concerns were registered mainly with people with university education (36.8 percent), while those who had the fewest concerns about their security were people with the lowest education (18.6 percent).

The fact that traveling will become even more free was appreciated by 26.9 percent of respondents (31.7 percent of men and 22.4 percent of women). A total lack of interest in this historical event was expressed by 12.8 percent of respondents, represented mostly by Bratislava citizens with lower education.

The survey also shows that the positive or negative perception of the opening of Schengen zone isn't influenced by the income of the household. The target group were citizens equally spread according to age groups, gender, education, the size of the town, and regions of Slovakia.

TASR

## TASR Brings New Products, Videonews for First Time in its History

Tlacova agentura Slovenskej republiky (TASR-SLOVAKIA) has published on its web page [www.tasr.sk](http://www.tasr.sk) a part of a video recording from the New Year's speech by President Ivan Gasparovic.

"TASR launches its new product 'videonews' with an excerpt from the Slovak president's New Year's speech," said TASR General Director Jaroslav Reznik. "During the upcoming weeks we will process videonews on a trial basis."

"Our project will use domestic news but also videonews from AFP (France). We are intensively working on dynamic graphics that should be launched in January," Reznik said.

According to him, in 2007 the agency carried out a comprehensive revitalization project, reducing the number of employees by one third, implementing new technologies, moving to new premises, launching a revamped news web and starting to offer a whole range of new products such as the weekly 'topic star', which looks at single issues in greater dept. Also featured in 2007 was the expansion of the audio service by 40 percent, and a massive expansion of the photo service. What's more, in January TASR will launch another product-Slovak language without errors. It is designed to clarify some of the many common pitfalls in the use of Slovak internationally regarded as among the world's most difficult languages.

"Our objective is to bring fast, actual and unbiased information in written, audio, pictures and graphic form. All that with the emphasis on public interest and with an awareness of our social responsibility," he said.

TASR

## Some Restrictions of Bank Services Expected after Changeover to the Euro

Slovakia's changeover to the euro, officially set for January 1, 2009, may restrict some banking services early that year, former central bank vice-governor Elena Kohutikova, said recently. Kohutikova, who was in charge of preparations for the euro, said that some bank machines as ATMs could malfunction at the turn of 2008-2009. "Of course, there are risks that we will have to make allowances for, for example, in that bank machines will not dispense euros after midnight. We have to be prepared for such scenarios rather than face the risk that some particular facility will fail," she said.

She expects the banks to resume operation of all their services no later than January 5, 2009.

TASR

## Slovakia Has One of the Lowest Birthrates in EU

Slovakia has one of the lowest birthrates in the European Union (EU), while it is about average when it comes to the number of marriages and divorces, the Demographic Research Center said at a recent press conference.

At the same time, Slovakia has one of the highest death rates in Europe, especially for males. It also has a small natural and overall population growth, and a young age structure.

It is expected that in the future people will continue to put off parenthood until later in life, which will raise the average age when women have children.

A deterioration in natural population growth factors will be reflected in an eventual gradual fall in population and an acceleration of population aging, which by 2025 will be one of the fastest rates within the EU.

Population loss should be partly compensated for by immigration. It is assumed that in the next 18 years the number of people in Slovakia won't change in any significant way, with the population increasing by 120,000. Slovakia's current population is around 5.4 million.

TASR

## Nearly Half of Internet Users in Slovakia Browse Online Every Day

Nearly half of Slovaks with access to the internet (42 percent) browse on line every day, outnumbering their Hungarian and Polish counterparts in this respect, according to an international survey published recently by the GfK agency.

As many as 70 percent of Slovak users write e-mails nearly every day, 63 percent search for up-to-date information, while 39 percent visit chat rooms.

The survey of 13 countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)- Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Russia, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine and Bosnia and Herzegovina- further showed that 37 percent of people with online access in Slovakia use the internet only a few times a week, while 9 percent use it only a few times per month.

In the survey, which put Slovakia in fourth place in terms of internet penetration, the Nuremberg-based GfK contacted 1,000 respondents in each country via its subsidiaries.

TASR

## YOUTH ROUND-UP

*If you know of a young Jednota member who has recently graduated, received a special award, been confirmed or made a First Holy*

*Communion, achieved a sports or scholastic "first" or in some other way has something to be proud of, send in the details and a photo, if available, to our "Youth Round-Up" column. Parents, grandparents, friends, and neighbors are all eligible to "brag" about those special youngsters in their lives. The only stipulation is that the young person must be a member of the FCSU. Be sure to include the Branch to which he or she belongs when you send in your write-up to 1011 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057. We look forward to hearing from you!*

# A Slovak Boy Describes His Days as a Caddie at Shaker Heights Country Club

**By Frank M. Stipkala**

For the first eleven years of my life, I lived within the "walls" of my Slovak neighborhood in Cleveland, Ohio. But my life changed the day a friend asked me to join him as a caddie at Shaker Heights Country Club, about nine miles from home.

I left my comfort zone with great trepidation, as I began my venture into this new world consisting of wealthy men and women, and young boys who like myself, were there to earn enough money to pay for their schooling and books, put food on the table at home, and help pay the monthly rent.

To get to the country club, I boarded a rapid transit car, which dropped me off at the second hole of the course. It cost me a dime to ride each way, but as I grew older I began hitch-hiking and usually got a ride within minutes of sticking out my thumb.

My mom made sure I left home with a brown-bag lunch: two sandwiches, a pickle, a yellow pepper, and either an apple or banana.

The first person I met was the caddie master, a tall gray-haired man named Tom Butcher. After giving me some tips about caddying, he assigned me a number, 148, which meant that before I could get a loop (be assigned to carry a golf bag), 147 caddies with lower numbers would go out first. This didn't deter me, because I surmised that if I worked hard and made a good impression on Mr. Butcher, the following summer he would give me a lower number. My strategy worked. Now my number was 48, only 47 caddies would be in front of me. Most days, I got to caddie 18 holes in the morning and 18 holes in the afternoon. My take-home pay was about \$3.00 a day, which was quite good for a 12-year old boy. My parents were thrilled that little Frankie was making so much money. Since my parents had taught us to be frugal, it was easy for me to save enough money to pay for my schooling, and have some left over for clothing, shoes, and other essentials.

Most caddies played cards, ping-pong, basketball, or smoked cigarettes. I was too busy carrying golf bags, so to this day, I'm as lousy card player, don't smoke, and never could make a basketball team. However, caddie I could. By the time I was 17 years old, I had worked my way up to be the Number 1 caddie. Since I was first to get a bag, now it was possible to caddie 45 holes a day. A few times, I caddied 54 holes, which meant that I made three 18-hole trips around the course- a total of approximately 15 miles- carrying about 30 pounds of golf bags and clubs on my shoulders.

My college tuition was about \$480 a year, plus books, but thanks to my caddying, I made enough money to pay my way through college, and have spending money left on the side.

## On the Golf Course

My first exposure to incentive capitalism was the day I was assigned to caddie for Harold Barber. First thing he did was put a quarter in my hand, saying: "Caddie, if you don't lose one ball, the quarter is yours. But if you lose a ball, you've got to give me

the quarter back to me." I didn't lose a ball that day or any other day that I caddied for Mr. Barber. My eyes never left him once he started swinging his club. I learned early on that excellence and hard work can translate into dollars earned.

Although most of the men I caddied for were millionaires, they had their penny-pinching quirks. One man named William Ganson Rose attached an 18-inch string to two golf tees so that, after teeing off, the golf tee in the ground would merely dislodge from the turf. Mr. Rose never lost a tee all the times I caddied for him. In contrast, I lost an average of six golf tees every time I played a round of golf. Now I know why Mr. Rose became a millionaire while I remained a "thousand-aire."

Mr. Rose's playing partner was Miller France, a man who spent most of his time examining the condition of all the trees on the golf course. Back then, there was a terrible sickness called "Dutch Elm Disease" and, since many of the trees at Shaker Heights Country Club were Elm trees, Mr. France had many trees to examine. Even the famous "David Livies Elm", named after a deceased popular club pro, and growing in the left rough on the 18th hole, was smitten by Dutch Elm Disease. By the end of the summer in 1944, all the elm trees were being cut down. This broke Miller France's heart. Every time I see an elm tree nowadays, my thoughts go back to Shaker Country Club and the perseverance Miller France displayed towards those dying elm trees.

Also a member of that foursome was a tall, respected man named Lester Chadwick who always wore a Jungle Jim straw hat. What made him an oddity was that he played only with irons, no woods. Based on his size, you'd expect Mr. Chadwick, who was president of The Perfection Stove Company, to belt a golf ball 250 yards. He teed off with a 2-iron. But before he swung the club, he hooked up a metallic chain, which he attached to both arms, just above the elbows. This prevented what golfers refer to as a "flying left elbow." Unfortunately, M. Chadwick had a hard time breaking 110.

One of the nicest men I caddied for was a lawyer named Frank Pelton. He had been shooting his age for many years and I had the privilege to carry his golf bags when, at age 79, he shot 79. He wasn't a long hitter but his drives always split the fairways. The 15th hole at Shaker is 440-yard par-4, with a diagonal creek fronting the green. Mr. Pelton never tried to reach the green in two, rather he played his second shot short of the creek, an area all Shaker members refer to as "Pelton's Corner." Then he'd pitch 40 yards onto the green and 9 out of 10 times, make the putt for a par-4.

Probably the greatest shot I ever witnessed took place on that same 15th hole. I was caddying for an accountant named Frank O'Donnell. He banged out a drive about 220 yards on a Sunday morning and ended up at the exact spot where he had to debate whether to pitch the ball to Pelton's Corner or go for the green. I told him to "go for it." He took out a 3-wood, peered into the mist, waggled the club several times,

and let fly a well hit ball. It disappeared into the morning haze. As we crossed the bridge, I tried to spot the ball, but it was nowhere in sight. His playing partner, Walter Rector, said: "Boy Frank, you really hit that one on the screws, it must be over the green." I laid my bags down alongside the green and prepared to hunt down the "pill." As I walked by the pin, I glanced down and, there, nestled at the bottom of the cup, was a ball- a Spalding Dot- the ball that Mr. O'Donnell had hit into the murky sky. I yelled: "It's here...in the cup...you made a 2 on a par-4." No one else ever eagled that hole again and only a handful of golfers ever even birdied the hole. When I told that story to my caddie friends, they didn't believe me because, even to this day, the 15th hole at Shaker is considered to be one of the toughest par-4s in the district. But I was there as a witness to golf history.

The other spectacular shot occurred during a tournament that featured top amateurs, including Arnold Palmer, who was stationed in Cleveland with the U.S. Coast Guard. Playing the 280-yard 10th hole at Shaker, Palmer drove the green on the fly, his ball ending up 10 feet from the cup. With some Coast Guard buddies cheering him on, Arnie stroked a curling left to right putt into the cup for an eagle 2, the only eagle I ever saw on that hole in my 13 years at Shaker.

Back in the 40's, nearly all golfers were smokers, even the women. Because she was a good tipper, I enjoyed caddying for an elderly lady named Zoe Lankin. On the first tee, Ms. Lankin put two boxes of Parliament cigarettes into her golf bag with the command that I opened the pocket of the golf bag on every other hole, so that she could pull out her cigarettes and light up a Parliament. That was my first run-in with a chain smoker.

There were about five women who shot in the 80s regularly. One of them was an attractive lady named Mary Ann Findlay. Because I had the knack of choosing the proper club for her to hit into the green, she always asked me to caddy for her in the club championship. I didn't disappoint her. The Findlay-Stipkala team won two club championships and was runner-up another time.

When I was 11 years old, the Shaker caddie master announced that he needed about 10 caddies to go to The Country Club, because a major women's tournament would be held there the next day. We were promised a ride there and back, because the course was out in the "sticks", and there was no public transportation in the area. I was in the last group to tee off and, by the time we finished, I discovered that my driver had left without me. I panicked, because I was 15 miles from home and I had no idea which way to go to get back to Cleveland. Fortunate for me, a boy who lived around the corner from me, Bob David, who was a grass cutter at the course, was getting off from work and heading home. "Hey Bob," I yelled, "my driver forgot about me and I have no idea how to get back to Buckeye Road." He laughed. "Just follow

me," he said. We walked a short distance to Shaker Boulevard and began hitch-hiking. In minutes, a car stopped and picked us up. About half an hour later, we were back in home territory. I often wonder what would have happened to this frightened 11-year old boy if friend, Bob David, had not come to rescue me!!!

No one practiced frugality more than Max Kneisel, because he played golf with only three clubs: Driver, Mid-Iron and Putter. He never took a caddie. Every evening, he took the rapid from downtown Cleveland, got off at Lynnfield, got his three clubs from the locker room and proceeded to play a quick, solo 9 holes. Caddies gave him the nickname, "Three-Club Kneisel", which he rightly deserved.

I loved shagging balls for club pro, Al Lesperance, not because I got paid 50 cents for about 45 minutes work but, by sneaking up close to M. Lesperance, and the person receiving the golf lesson, I literally received dozens of free golf lessons. The golf tips paid off later on when I played on my high school and college golf teams.

Shaker Heights Country Club was not visited by top pros and amateurs, but I did get to see Betty Hicks, Patty Berg, Betty Jamieson, Peggy Kirk, Nancy Lopez, Carol Deringer, Jimmy Thompson, and Skee Regal, among others.

Caddies Day was our big moment of the year as we got to play 18 holes of golf, then went to the members' dining room and had a 5-course meal. The highlight of the evening was the awarding of prizes to outstanding caddies. One year, I received a beautiful, red, Roadmaster bicycle. Thereafter, I often pedaled my bike to the golf course, a nine-mile ride which took about 30 minutes to complete.

Members had the option of grading a caddie in five categories ranging from Outstanding to Poor. The only time I received a Poor rating was the time I caddied for Gus Ayres, a man who played only with irons. A gruff guy who never spoke to his caddies, Mr. Ayres plopped his ball into the creek on Shaker's par 3 165-yard 11th hole. I retrieved the ball and put it down behind the creek for Mr. Ayres to hit. The shot to the green was about 25 yards so he took a 9-iron from his bag and dubbed it into the creek. I jumped down, and threw the ball back to Mr. Ayres. Once again, he aimed and dubbed it into the creek. I jumped into the creek for a third time and threw the ball at his feet to hit again. "I don't like that sneer on your face, caddie," scolded Mr. Ayres. I may have been exhausted by all the jumping up and down into the creek, but I never scowled at Mr. Ayres' shot-making, or lack of. At any rate, he finished the hole with an 11. The next day the caddie master pulled me aside and asked me what happened out on the course which prompted Mr. Ayres to give a poor grade. When I explained the 11th hole fiasco, the caddie master smiled and walked away. What he was thinking but couldn't say was: "Anyone who hits four consecutive shots in the water deserves a scowl. Forget it, Frank."

*continued on page 14*

# A Slovak Boy

*continued from page 13*

Shaker Country Club had its share of celebrities. The most notable was Newton D. Baker who was Secretary of War for Woodrow Wilson in World War I. His home was behind Shaker's 11th hole and everyday, Mr. Baker could be seen, bent over, tending to his garden. He wasn't a golfer but his wife, Ida, loved playing with the ladies every Tuesday (Ladies Day). Another celebrity was Mayor Van Aken, the Mayor of Shaker Heights. Also, Everett Rhodes Castle, who wrote articles for Saturday Evening Post.

The assistant pro, Ken Darnier and I had become good friends, so when an opening occurred in the pro shop, I elected to give up caddying temporarily, and help out with the pro shop. My job featured bringing each member's clubs from a 20-foot high storage rack when they came in to play a round of golf. Then, when they finished their rounds, I had to wash their clubs and return them to the storage rack.

I also learned to restring and regrip golf clubs. When the pro and assistant pro went to lunch or dinner, I had to fill in as a salesman in the pro shop, selling golf balls, tees, clothing, bags and even clubs. About the only thing I didn't do was give golf lessons.

I had the opportunities to rub elbows with certain members who wanted me to make adjustments on their clubs. One such man, Forrest Baster, was in our shop almost daily trying to adjust his putter's length and trajectory. He couldn't believe that, perhaps he was responsible for his lousy putting. In his mind, it was the putter that was at fault.

With the arrival of Tiger Woods on the links, and the introduction of souped-up ball and clubs, the 300-yard drive has become commonplace. But back in my caddie days, any one hitting as ball 300 yards was considered superman. Such a golfer was Earl Hoyt, a gangling 6'4 guy with a vice-like grip. Shaker's first hole measures 380 yards and Hoyt would pound his drive within 60 yards of the green leaving behind him with a half 9-iron to the green. For those of us who regularly saw members hitting woods, or a 2-iron at best, into the pin, Hoyt made the game look ridiculously easy. Shaker's 14th hole, at 550 yards, is one of the most challenging in Cleveland, but Hoyt would easily reach the green with a drive and a 4-wood. Remember this was in the 1940s when many golfers were still using hickory-shafted clubs.

After caddying for 10 years, the Shaker greenskeeper, Colin Smith, asked me to fill a vacancy in his department. I thought a change would be good, so I spent the summer cutting greens, tees and creek beds, raking sand traps, and filling ball washers with soap. The most challenging part of the job was learning to cut greens in a straight

line. If a green was flat, there was no problem, but more than half of the greens had slopes on them. I discovered quickly that a 125-pound mower wants to follow the contour of the green, rather than the straight line I was trying to execute. If any lines on the green looked wobbly, Mr. Smith would issue his reprimand. But by summer's end, my greens cutting had become so straight that Mr. Smith asked me to come back the following summer.

Next to caddying, hunting for golf balls was my favorite pursuit. Used two techniques: the first was to wait for a large rainfall, then get to the course at the crack of dawn and walk the full length of the creek through the entire golf course. The rain would wash away big globs of moss, which snared errant golf shots. There, lying on the bottom of the creek, were dozens of golf balls. By the time I walked the 2 and one half miles of water, my pockets were bulging with golf balls. Fortunately, I brought along a shag bag which could accommodate up to 100 golf balls and, many times, it would be full to the top.

Fall was my favorite time for hunting balls, because the entire course was covered with leaves which trapped many off-target shots. I discovered, to my surprise, that when a strong wind came up, it blew all the leaves off the golf course exposing dozens of balls. It was easier than picking mushrooms. Now you know why Frank Stipkala never had to purchase a golf ball.

In my second year of caddying, all of us caddies received a special thank you for our good services- a boat ride aboard the S.S. Theodore Roosevelt to Cedar Point which at that time, was the Disneyland of the East. It was a huge ship and, for a kid who had never traveled more than a few miles from home, the 75-mile boat ride to Cedar Point, which took about 2 and one-half hours, made me feel like Ferdinand Magellan. The caddie master gave us tickets for certain rides and some money for refreshments, so we galloped from ride to ride, as our time was limited, and in between rides we feasted on hot dogs, soda pop, and salt water taffy.

The best thing that came out of my caddie career was the 4-year, half tuition college scholarship that was granted to me by the Cleveland District Golf Association for being an outstanding caddie. Without that scholarship, I would have ended up as a blacksmith's helper, just like my dad, at Ohio Forge Company. He always told me that when he retired, I could take his place. No thanks, Dad. Because of the game of golf and my hard work as a caddie, I was able to move up the economic ladder and enjoy a 35-year career with the American Red Cross.

## Allentown Parish Plans Events

St. John the Baptist Slovak Catholic Church will sponsor a "Buffet Breakfast" on Sunday, February 3, 2008, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the church Social Hall, 924 North Front Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania. Donation is \$6.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children

St. John the Baptist Church will also sponsor a "Meat Bingo" on Sunday, February 17, 2008, at the church Social Hall. Doors open at 12:00 noon, bingo starts at 1:00 p.m. Donation is \$5.00 plus specials. Refreshments will be available. For information call Bill Drost at 610/432-3505 or Helen Fiala at 610/434-8614.

## 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Slovak Catholic Federation SS. Cyril & Methodius Appeal

When our ancestors came to these shores more than a century ago, they brought with them few monetary assets. However their most precious possession was their faith. The seeds were nurtured by the Slovak priests who came with the immigrant people and helped build our Slovak Catholic Fraternal, Religious Communities of men and women and nearly 300 Slovak Parishes. Today in response to this legacy, the Slovak Catholic Federation will sponsor the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual SS. Cyril and Methodius Appeal. The Church in Slovakia has enjoyed a great renaissance since the fall of Communism in 1989. We in America and Canada take pride in the fact that the Slovak Catholic Fraternal, our Parishes and individuals of Slovak ancestry have responded generously to assist the Church in our ancestral homeland. The 2008 Annual Appeal begins during the month of February, in the Churches of Slovak Descent across the United States and Canada and will continue to the end of the year.

The 2007 Appeal collected \$63,629.51. Since its inception, this Appeal has raised over \$2 million dollars.

Funds raised from this collection will aid priest-graduate students studying at the Pontifical College of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Rome, Italy. After ordination and some years of priestly experience, priests are sent to Rome for graduate studies in order to return to Slovakia and join the theology faculties of the Seminaries in Slovakia. A percentage of the Appeal will also benefit those religious congregations represented in the Conference of Slovak Religious. Such congregations in Slovakia include: Vincentian Sisters (Ruzomberok); Dominican Sisters (Dunajska Luzna); School Sisters of St. Francis (Zilina); Daughters of St. Francis (Bratislava-Prievoz); Sisters of the Order of St. Basil (Secovce, Presov); the Franciscan Fathers (Bratislava); and the House of Benedict (Bacurov).

The Slovak Catholic Federation was founded in 1911, under the spiritual leadership of Rev. Joseph Murgas, founding Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Slovak Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The purpose of the Slovak Catholic Federation is to federate individuals of Slovak origin under one banner, for cultural, religious and educational needs

In our Church today, we are encountering situations where churches of Slovak ethnic background have either been merged or closed. Because of this reality the monies raised for this Appeal come from both the collections taken in Slovak parishes as well as other parishes and individuals.

Your tax deductible donation made out to the Slovak Catholic Federation, noting for the Annual Appeal, can be sent directly to the National Secretary/Treasurer of the Slovak Catholic Federation: Dolores M. Evanko, 173 Berner Ave., Hazleton, PA 18201.

**Rev. Andrew S. Hvozdic**  
National First Vice President  
Appeal Coordinator



## Introducing Genealogist Michael Razus

Michael Razus of Presov, Slovak Republic, is a researcher of Slovak genealogy and Carpatho-Rusyn genealogy. His specialty is Eastern Slovakia. His services include: archival research, ancestry tours, relatives search, photo and video portfolios, and translating and interpreting. If you have Slovak or Carpatho-Rusyn roots and want to know more he is ready to assist you with your research.

For more information, contact Mgr. Michael Razus, Magurska 5, 08001 Presov, Slovak Republic, E-mail: [michal.razus@zoznam.sk](mailto:michal.razus@zoznam.sk).

### *From the Office of the Vice President*

The Membership and Marketing Committee of "FCSU Life" is offering agent contracts to anyone in the following states who has a "state department of insurance producer's license" (state license) and wishes to sell our insurance and annuity products.

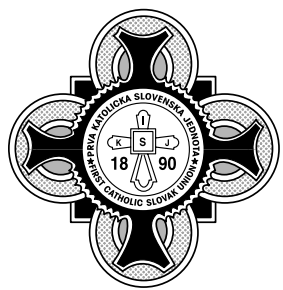
**Colorado**  
**Connecticut**  
**Florida**  
**Illinois**  
**Indiana**

**Massachusetts**  
**Michigan**  
**Minnesota**  
**Missouri**  
**New Jersey**

**New York**  
**Ohio**  
**Pennsylvania**  
**West Virginia**  
**Wisconsin**

*Please send your resume and copy of your state license to:*

**Andrew R. Harcar Sr**  
National Vice President  
First Catholic Slovak Union  
6611 Rockside Road  
Independence, OH 44131



# Katolícky fraternalistický dvojtýždenník

# Jednota



O. Štefan Furedek  
Náš zakladateľ

ÚRADNÝ ORGÁN PRVEJ KATOLÍCKEJ SLOVENSKEJ JEDNOTY V SPOJENÝCH ŠTÁTOCH A V KANADE

Volume 117

STREDA, 23. JANUÁR 2008

Číslo 5771

## Novoročný príhovor prezidenta Ivana Gašparoviča

Drahí spoluobčania,

už po tretí raz sa vám z tohto miesta - prostredníctvom rozhlasu a televízie - prihovám na Nový rok, pritom vám vinšujem zdravie, šťastie, spokojnosť v rodinách aj na pracoviskách, viac radosťi zo života, ako ste jej mali doposiaľ.

Všeličo sa tohto roku zmenilo, i za posledné desaťročia. V mnohom nepochybne k lepšiemu. Žijeme slobodnejšie, odvážnejšie. Ale, žiaľ, niekedy k sebe navzájom aj akosi chladnejšie, nevšímavejšie. Ešteže ten chlad zmierňuje teplo Vianoc a Nového roka, ktoré zostali na Slovensku najkrajším obdobím. Aby

v nás pretrvalo teplo domova, jeho rodinného krbu, za to patrí naše poďakovanie najmä tým, ktoré nás ochrannou rukou, svojou láskou a starostlivosťou sprevádzajú celý život. Naše mamy, staré mamy, manželky.

Rodina, rod, národ, Slovensko. Štyri slová, štyri hodnoty, ktoré si zachovávame v najhlbšej úcte. Nepochybujem, že aj vy. Dlhé historické obdobie trvalo, kým sme sa stali štátotvorným národom, vďaka čomu máme samostatnú a suverénnu Slovenskú republiku. A dnes si môžeme pripomenúť deň jej vzniku, navyše i jej dnešné pätnáste narodeniny. A právom sa pri tejto príležitosti pýtame: je taká, akú sme si ju predstavovali? Akú sme ju chceli mať? Pre niekoho áno, pre niekoho nie. Určite niekto má aj iný pohľad. Ale z našich úspechov v ekonomike a hospodárstve mám dobrý pocit. Stále nie sme spokojní - a právom! - s úrovňou sociálnych istôt, zdravotníctva, vzdelávania, justície, ale ani s úrovňou starostlivosti o najstaršiu i najmladšiu generáciu. Aj napriek tomu, že sa v každej z týchto oblastí, ako zvykneme hovoriť, lady pohli.

Urobme všetko, aby sa tieto lady nezastavili, neprivedili nám zátarasy a zbytočné straty. Ani v tomto období. Aby stranícke záujmy neprevládli nad záujmami občanov nášho štátu. Aby sa k nám nevrátili spôsoby a prostriedky, ktoré sme odmietli. Formovanie politickej kultúry, jej písaných i nepísaných pravidiel presahuje hranicu pätnástich rokov existencie štátu.

*Pokračovanie na str. 17*

## Slovensko končí na poste nestáleho člena BR OSN

New York/Bratislava (TASR) – Slovensko 31. decembra 2007 končí svoje historicky prvé dvojročné pôsobenie na poste nestáleho člena Bezpečnostnej rady OSN. K prioritným témam, v ktorých sa Slovensko angažovalo, patrili reforma bezpečnostného sektoru, nešírenie zbraní hromadného ničenia a riešenie budúceho štatútu Kosova. SR predsedala BR OSN vo februári 2007 a viedla výbory pre otázky nešírenia zbraní hromadného ničenia, či pre revíziu mandátov. Šéf slovenskej diplomacie Ján Kubiš zhodnotil členstvo Slovenska v orgáne OSN, ktorý má na starosti globálnu bezpečnosť a mier, ako veľmi úspešné. "Pôsobili sme tam veľmi dobre, konzistentne a vyvážené. Napríklad aj v sporných otázkach sme nachádzali zlatú strednú hodnotovú cestu," uviedol minister pre TASR. Aktivity Slovenska podľa Kubiša vysoko hodnotili aj členovia Európskej únie a NATO. "Dokonca vyslovili

lútosť nad tým, že odchádzame z Bezpečnostnej rady a nemyslím si, že je to len diplomatická zdvorilosť," dodal.

Slovensko podľa neho vystupovalo z principiálnej pozície člena euroatlantických štruktúr, ale zároveň obhajovalo svoje štátne záujmy. Aj podľa veľvyslancu SR pri OSN Petra Buriana si Slovensko svojím pôsobením v BR OSN získalo rešpekt a kredit aktívneho člena, ktorý uplatňoval "principiálnu a hodnotovo orientovanú zahraničnú politiku". "Slovenská republika vstupovala do Bezpečnostnej rady s ambíciou aktívne prispieť k riešeniu globálnych otázok mieru a bezpečnosti a dokázať, že i pomerne malá krajina môže náročné úlohy, ktoré vyplývajú z členstva v BR OSN, vykonávať profesionálne a zodpovedne. Toto sa nám v plnej miere podarilo," uviedol pre TASR Burian. Okrem Slovenska končí dvojročný mandát v BR OSN aj Peru, Kataru, Ghane a Konzskej republike.

## Bez morálneho správania sa niet pokoja

Už tradične sa 1. januára v Konkatedrále sv. Martina v Bratislave konala za účasti popredných cirkevných i štátnych predstaviteľov Slovenskej republiky slávnostná svätá omša. Hlavným celebrantom a kazateľom bol kardinál Jozef Tomko. Spolu s ním koncebroval svätú omšu bratislavsko-trnavský arcibiskup Mons. Ján Sokol, pomocný biskup Mons. Stanislav Zvolenský a ďalší kňazi. Medzi hosťami nechýbal ani tento rok prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič, ako aj zástupcovia vlády SR, Národnej rady SR i viacerí veľvyslanci.

### Kolíska života a lásky

"Dnes cirkevne slávime Pannu Máriu Bohorodičku a na začiatku občianskeho roka si pripomínáme pätnáste výročie trvania Slovenskej republiky, pričom nezabúdame, že je to aj Svetový deň pokoja. Tri skutočnosti, ktoré však spája jediný spoločný obsah: pokoj," načrtnol tému svojej kázne kardinál Tomko. V nej sa zamerával na obsah posolstva Benedikta XVI. na tému, ľudská rodina, spoločenstvo pokoja.

Práve prirodzená rodina ako intímne spoločenstvo života a lásky, založené na manželstve medzi mužom a ženou, je prvé miesto "humanizovania" osoby a spoločenstva, je kolískou života a lásky. Právom sa teda rodina uznáva za prvú prirodzenú spoločnosť. Keď sa hovorí, že rodina je prvá a životná bunka spoločnosti, tvrdí sa podľa kardinála čosi podstatné. "V zdravej rodine zažívame skúsenosť základných zložiek pokoja: lásku medzi súrodencami, autoritu rodičov, láskavú službu slabším členom, vzájomnú výpomoc v prípade potreby, ochotu navzájom sa prijať a odpúšťať si. Kde inde by sa člen rodiny naučil lepšie ochutnať vôňu pokoja?" zvýraznil potrebu zdravého rodinného života kardinál Tomko.

Rodina je podľa neho prvou a nenahraditeľnou vychovávateľkou k pokoji. Práve preto, že jej povinnosťou je vychovávať svojich členov, "rodina je nositeľkou osobitných práv. Samotná Všeobecná deklarácia ľudských práv, ktorá predstavuje výdobytk právnej spoločnosti a má vskutku univerzálnu hodnotu, tvrdí, že "rodina je prirodzenou a základnou jednotkou spoločnosti a má nárok na ochranu spoločnosti a štátu".

### Agentúra pokoja

Kardinál doslova od citoval z dokumentu Benedikta XVI.: "Preto ten, kto sa stavia proti inštitúcii rodiny - hoci i nevedome -, oslabuje pokoj v celom spoločenstve,

*Pokračovanie na str. 18*

## Vyhlásenie vlády k 15. výročiu vzniku SR

Martin (TASR) – Životná úroveň na Slovensku už nikdy nesmie klesať a to ani pri rozhodovaní o zavedení eura, alebo napríklad pod vplyvom globalizácie. Je to jeden zo záväzkov osobitného vyhlásenia, ktoré vláda SR prijala na svojom slávnostnom zasadnutí 2. januára 2008 v Martine pri príležitosti 15. výročia vzniku republiky. V tomto oficiálnom dokumente, ako konštatoval na brífingu premiér Robert Fico, zvýraznila úlohu ľudí, ktorí sa najväčšou mierou zaslúžili o to, že SR má dnes dobré hospodárstvo a je plne akceptovaná v zahraničí. Za to, čo ľudia urobili v prospech Slovenska, má vláda voči nim aj určité záväzky. Poukázal najmä na článok Ústavy SR číslo 55, kde sa hovorí, že SR má síce trhovú

ekonomiku, ale tá musí byť aj sociálna a ekologicky orientovaná. Ďalší záväzok má vláda voči histórii. Bude rozvíjať "rozumný historizmus" ako súčasť oficiálnej politiky. Nechceme dovoliť, aby sa slovenské dejiny vyľudňovali, pretože sú plné osobností a udalostí, zdôraznil Fico. Vo vyhlásení sa takisto zdôrazňuje potreba rozširovať vzdelanostnú, kultúrnu a spoločenskú elitu z ľudí každodennej praxe. V krátkom čase vláda prijme niekoľko programov, ktoré sa budú týkať najmä stredoškólkov, aby ešte pred maturitami mohli bez obmedzenia sociálneho zázemia získavať vedomosti aj na významných školách v zahraničí a pritom sa naučiť dobre aj cudzí jazyk, dodal premiér.

# Slovenská liga v Amerike v zápase za slobodné Slovensko

*Pokračovanie zo str. 16*

Pri dnešnej slávnostnej príležitosti, by som chcela pripomenúť, že pod všetky tieto počiny, ktoré tvoria 100 ročnú históriu Slovenskej ligy sa podpísali aj jej miestne zbory, bez ktorých by Slovenská liga nemohla dokázať to, čo dokázala. Prichodí mi preto vzdať hold záslužnej práci jubilujúcemu 1. Zboru Slovenskej ligy v New Yorku. Netrúfam si tu hovoriť o celej 90 ročnej histórii, bohatej na obdivuhodné vlastenecké i kultúrne počiny, len v krátkosti by som chcela spomenúť jej kroky k naplneniu cieľa, ktorý si vytýčila a tým si uctiť pamiatku všetkým, ktorí stáli pri jej zrode.

New York patrí k najstarším prisťahovaleckým centráram Slovákov na východe Ameriky, takže v časoch, keď sa formoval organizovaný zápas za slobodu Slovenska počas prvej svetovej vojny, v New Yorku žila už národne uvedomelá Slovač, ktorú pomáhali formovať lídri krajských spolkov a organizácií, ako aj krajská tlač (dokonca až dva tu vychádzajúce v tom období slovenské denníky (Newyorský denník a Slovák v Amerike). Po prijatí Daxnerovho návrhu na zakladanie zborov Slovenskej ligy na 9. Kongrese Ligy v roku 1915, newyorskí Slováci boli prví, ktorí prijali túto výzvu za svoju národnú povinnosť v znamení hesla, "Kto je za národnú svornosť, ten nech vstúpi do zboru Ligy", s ktorým zvolával krajanov do 1. zboru jeden z prvých činiteľov, Ján Baran. Z prvých zápisníc Newyorského zboru SLvA sa dozvedáme, že členovia zboru SLvA sa stretávali v New Yorku v Sokolovni na Východnej 71 ulici a už na prvých schôdzkach organizovali finančné zbierky pre Slovensko. Pre vojakov na bojiskách v Európe posielali balíky so šatstvom a potravinami. Odozvou návštevy M. R. Štefánika v New Yorku a v septembri 1917 jeho vystúpení v Carnegie Hall, podľa správ z tlače bolo, že v New Yorku pod vedením 1. Newyorského zboru Slovenskej ligy sa za nedlhý čas vyzbieralo 25 tisíc dolárov na zaopatrienie čl. legionárov, bojujúcich na fronte.

Prvé roky činnosti Newyorského zboru Slovenskej ligy sa spájajú s menom jeho zakladateľa, oravského rodáka, Mons. Štefana Krasuľu, (v máji 2007 sme si pripomenuli 120. výročie jeho narodenia), ktorý zastával popredné miesto v národnom živote Slovákov nielen v New Yorku ale v celej slovenskej Amerike. Z postu činiteľa ústredia Ligy a predsedu NY zboru bol pri všetkých národných manifestáciách Slovákov v Amerike. Národnú misiu na východe Ameriky zohral s rovnakou obetavosťou aj rev. Ján Kubašek jeden zo signatárov PD. Z prvých činiteľov, ktoré stáli po boku Rev. Krasuľu nemožno nespomenúť také mená, ako novinár a prvý zapisovateľ zboru Karol Štiasny, miestopredsedu zboru Ján Baran, ale aj Gustáv Košík, Ján Králik, Eduard Kováč. Po nich preberali žezlo potom ďalší obetaví pracovníci na národa roli dedičnej, medzi nimi Ján Horecký, Petronella Kriváňošová, Michal Havaš, Mary Koval Robinson, Rudolf Greguš, Thomas Durdík, Juraj Kantor, Anton Brchnel až po súčasných.

História 1. Newyorského zboru SL je spojená s desiatkami ak nie stovkami mien horlivých národných pracovníkov. História tvorili nielen lídri, aj jej rádozí členovia, ktorí si popri tvrdej práci v drôtovniciach, priemysle, obchode, prispeli každým svojim dielom k jej činnosti, organizovali prednášky, rozširovali slovenskú tlač a agitačnú literatúru. Newyorské slovenské ženy, organizovali zbierky pre dobrovoľníkov v légiách, plietli svetre, posielali balíky s potravinami, liekmi.

Mnohí z radov zaslužilých členov 1. zboru SLv New Yorku sa slobody Slovenska nedožili. Všetci však verili, že ak nie oni, dožijú sa vytúženého cieľa ich nasledovníci. Pán Boh doprial dožiť sa slobody Slovenska našej generácii a Vám, ktorí ste tu dnes prítomní a ktorí si uchováate Slovensko hlboko v srdci, lebo ste boli vychovávaní v úcte k svojej starej vlasti. Po vzore Vašich predchodcov, Vašou obetavou prácou v 1. Zbore SL sa staráte o to, aby sa tieto vzácne poklady ducha preniesli aj na ďalšie generácie, ktoré, aj keď sa nenaucia slovenskú reč, verím, že si zachovajú slovenskú spolupatričnosť. Všetkým Vám, drahí krajanovia, za Vašu prácu pre národ patrí hlboká poklona, úcta a vďaka.

Dr. Ľubica Bartalská

## Terchovské Vianoce v opere

V novej budove Slovenského národného divadla (SND) v Bratislave sa pred Vianocami na veľkej scéne opery vo sviatočných krojoch predstavilo asi 120 Terchovcov viacerých generácií. Speváci, muzikanti, vinšovníci a koledníci vystúpili s veľkolepým dramaturgicky koncipovaným pásmom s množstvom multimediálnych prvkov i rekvizít. V úvodnom obraze sa predstavili koledníkmi z 19. storočia, ktoré sa v rukopisnej podobe neznámeho kantora zachovali v Kostole sv. Martina. Oživil ich Rudolf Partnčíak s terchovským Obývačkovým orchestrom. Nasledoval filmový dokument zo zasneženej Terchovej i pohyblivého dreveného betlehema, ktorý je dielom terchovských majstrov rezbárov. Potom zaplnili scénu všetci účinkujúci s jasličkovou pobožnosťou, ktorú v roku 1975 inicioval niekdajší správca

farnosti Jozef Šabo SVD. Odvtedy táto tradícia v obci pretrváva. Na scéne sa objavil aj terajší správca farnosti Ján Halama, ktorý položil Jezuliatko do jasiel a prihovoral sa divákovi. Nechýbali terchovské koledy za sprievodu terchovského orchestra zloženého z domácich muzík pod vedením Alojza Muchu a Jána Rybára. Až potom sa prišli Jezuliatku pokloniť betlehemci a traja králi.

Dlhotrvajúci potlesk bol bodkou za terchovskou vianočnou operou. O jedinečný vianočný dar v novej budove SND sa dramaturgicky, scenáristicky, prípravou a réžiou zaslúžil Rudolf Partnčíak. Možno povedať, že nová operná scéna v Bratislave sa zaskvela jedinečnými umeleckými hodnotami, s akými sa často nestretávame.

Katolícke noviny

# Slovensko sa pripravuje na vstup do eurozóny

Bratislava (TASR) – Cieľ zaviesť euro na Slovensku od 1. januára 2009 stanovila stratégia prijatia eura v SR, schválená vládou ešte v septembri 2004. Podrobný proces príprav na tento rok upravil následne Národný plán zavedenia eura v SR z júla 2005. Koncom septembra toho istého roka potom Slovensko vstúpilo do mechanizmu výmenných kurzov ERM II, čím spravilo prvý krok k splneniu požadovaných maastrichtských kritérií. V máji tohto roka by mali byť známe správy Európskej komisie (EK) a Európskej centrálnej banky (ECB) hodnotiace pripravenosť Slovenska na vstup do eurozóny. Zo strany komisie bude nasledovať návrh rozhodnutia a uskutočnia sa tiež konzultácie s Európskym parlamentom (EP). Definitívne rozhodnutie Rady EÚ o zavedení eura v SR a stanovenie konverzného kurzu sa očakáva v júli. Už mesiac po určení

definitívneho kurzu vznikne pre slovenské subjekty povinnosť zobrazovať všetky ceny tovarov a služieb duálne v slovenských korunách aj eurách, a to až do konca roka 2009. Po vstupe SR do eurozóny v predpokladanom termíne 1. januára 2009 začína krátke 16-dňové obdobie duálneho obehu, kedy sa budú v hotovosti rovnocenne používať slovenská koruna aj euro. Po tomto čase pôvodná slovenská mena definitívne zanikne. Výmenu korunových bankoviek a mincí budú odo dňa zavedenia eura povinné uskutočňovať Národná banka Slovenska (NBS) aj všetky komerčné banky pôsobiace na území SR. Komerčné banky budú slovenské mince vymieňať počas prvého polroka po zavedení eura a výmenu bankoviek do konca roka 2009 NBS bude slovenské mince vymieňať počas obdobia piatich rokov po vstupe do eurozóny a bankovky bez časového obmedzenia.

## Pieseň Najkrajší kút v širom svete je moja rodná zem

Bratislava (TASR) – Do dejín slovenskej populárnej hudby sa zapísala spevohra Hrnčiarsky bál z autorskej dielne skladateľa Gejzu Dusíka a libretistu Pavla Braxatorisa. Práve na jej premiére v roku 1956 v Košiciach po prvý raz verejne odznel hit Pieseň o rodnej zemi, známejší pod názvom Najkrajší kút v širom svete. Dlhoročným kultovým interpretom Piesne o rodnej zemi je operný spevák a súčasný šéf Opery Štátneho divadla v Košiciach Peter Dvorský. Pieseň spieval v Bratislave v novembri 1989 počas Nežnej revolúcie. Peter Dvorský ju má v koncertnom repertuári dodnes a Najkrajší kút bodoval aj v televíznej súťaži Hit storočia.

Námetom opery Hrnčiarsky bál je

láska mladých ľudí a spor dvoch malokarpatských hrnčiarskych majstrov, zasadený do obdobia slovenského národného obrodovania v polovici 19. storočia. Po premiére v Košiciach uviedli operetu v Bratislave a na ďalších slovenských a českých scénach. Podľa informácii odborníkov ju inscenovali aj v Štátnom divadle operety v ukrajinskom Kyjeve.

Dusík napísal 12 operiet, v roku 1944 Tajomný prsteň, v roku 1954 Zlatú rybku a po nej Hrnčiarsky bál. Gejza Dusík je zakladateľom slovenskej operety, slovenského tanga a autorom tanečných piesní. Kultúrna verejnosť si minulý rok pripomenula 100 rokov od jeho narodenia v obci Zavar.

## ČAS

Vieš aký poklad skrýva v sebe čas? –  
V náručí matky blaženej chvíle, –  
mladických túžob sny roztomilé, –  
rodinných slasť čarovné doby  
za každú cenu na svete ktoby  
zmora večnosti nechcel vyzvať zas?!

Vieš aký poklad skrýva v sebe čas? –  
Za biedny groš čo sa chlap nadrtí! –  
A hľa, muž, Krésus pracuje k smrti ...  
"Vezmite moje striebro i zlato,  
mesiac života dajte len za to",  
z jeho modrých úst slabý chraptí hlas.

Vieš aký poklad skrýva v sebe čas? –  
Bezbožník v pekle hrozne sa mučí ...  
"Minútu dajte!" peklom tak hučí,  
Minútu dajte" znie v každú stranu,  
"blaženú večnosť kúpim si za ňu," –  
"Minútu mi daj! dušu moju spas!"

Poklad, čas, nesie darom nový rok,  
Dar tento vzácny každý uvíta.  
O, kiež nebude hrivná tá skrytá!  
Čuj neba, zeme vážneho hlasu –  
Použi dobre drahého času.  
A tak požehná Boh každý tvoj krok.  
Štefan Furdek

Jednota Kalendár 1898

# Slovenská liga v Amerike v zápase za slobodné Slovensko

**Prvý zbor Slovenskej ligy v New Yorku oslávil svoju viac ako 90-ročnú existenciu v sobotu 10. novembra 2007 v spoločenskej hale Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého. Slávnostný príhovor, ktorý následne uverejňujeme, predniesla riaditeľka Odboru kultúry v Úrade pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí Dr. Ľubica Bartalská, ktorá je aj uznávanou historičkou Slovákov v diaspore a tiež autorkou viacerých kníh.**

Vážené dámy, vážení páni, prinášam Vám pozdravy zo Slovenska a vrelé pozdravy od pracovníkov Úradu pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí. Dovoľte, aby som sa poďakovala organizátorom za možnosť stretnúť sa s Vami pri takejto vzácnjej príležitosti jubilea 1. Zboru Slovenskej ligy v New Yorku.

Slovenská liga v Amerike si v máji 2007 pripomenula 100 rokov činnosti, 100 rokov aktivít za udržanie slovenského života v Amerike, dlhé desaťročia zápasov za dôstojný a slobodný život Slovákov a Slovenska. Ako sa podieľali americkí Slováci pod vedením Slovenskej ligy na slovenskom živote v starej vlasti? Vráťme sa na chvíľu do histórie a pripomenutím jej významných etáp, vzdajme hold všetkým statočným predstaviteľom a členom Ligy, ktorí po celý čas verili, že príde čas, keď sa program Slovenskej ligy naplní.

Koncom 19. storočia, keď slovenské spolky v Amerike už stáli na pevných základoch a slovenskí vystaňovalci si začali pod vedením hrstky uvedomelej slovenskej inteligencie a za účinnej vlasteneckej výchovy v krajanskej tlači v Amerike uviedomovať svoju identitu, z domova prichádzali neradosné správy o národnostnom útlaku Slovákov a prenasledovaní slovenských národovcov. S cieľom upozorniť americký svet na potláčanie základných ľudských práv národov žijúcich v Uhorsku, Slováci v Amerike začali organizovať protestné zhromaždenia, prednášky, finančné zbierky pre Slovensko na podporu národného života.

Čoraz naliehavejšia potreba pomoci Slovákom v starej vlasti si vyžadovala svoj program, a spoločný postup. Katolícky kňaz, novinár a spisovateľ Štefan Furdek zvolal v apríli 1907 do Pittsburghu redaktorov krajanskej tlače, aby pripravili Národný kongres, ktorého programom bude založenie národnopolitickej organizácie, suplujúcej aj činnosť na Slovensku zatvorenej Matice slovenskej.

V novinách Jednota, z mája 1907 Štefan Furdek pozýva na kongres Slovákov v Amerike týmito slovami: "Krajania, čo najsrdečnejšie zveme Vás na Slovenský kongres do Clevelandu, ktorý je vecou celého národa. Účelom Slovenského kongresu je zvoliť Národný výbor, ktorý má pôsobiť pre dobro Slovákov v kraji i v Amerike. Slovenská emigrácia s uspokojením môže hľadiť na svoju minulú národnú činnosť. Naše zorganizované národné robotníctvo číta už skoro sto tisíc členov. Je to armáda, s ktorou počítať musí i silnejší nepriateľ. Naše národné časopisy šíria vzdelanosť, osvetu a národné povedomie i v najodľahlejších kútoch veľkej Ameriky, kde žije duša slovenského vystaňovalca. ... Konajte svoju povinnosť. Ako dieťa zákonom božím viazané pomáhať rodičom svojim tak i my, vinou tyrana od matkinej hrudy odsotení americkí Slováci konáme len našu svätú povinnosť, keď pomáhamo brániť bičovanú mať našu - dedovizeň predkov našich. Splaťme dlh Slovensku." V práci za národ nesmú nás deliť hranice politické, ani náboženské. Slovák katolík, Slovák evanjelik, Slovák kalvín, staňme si do jedného radu, podajme si bratsky ruky a s nezlomnou odvahou, láskou k spoločnému rodu tesne vedľa seba kráčajme cestou, posiatou síce trnám, ale na konci malé červánky ukazujú už teraz zoru vychádzajúceho slnka slobody pre národ slovenský v starom kraji!"

Čoskoro po založení Slovenskej ligy pod vedením prvých predsedov Štefana Furdeka a Petra Rovniánka podnikli prvé kroky na pomoc Slovensku. Liga dala už v roku 1907 vytlačiť pol milióna jednocentových známok s nápisom Slovenský brat objím si mať, ktoré Slováci v Amerike lepili na obálky zasielané rodinám na Slovensko, pokiaľ neboli v Uhorsku zhabané a 50 000 25 centových mincí s portrétom Pavla Mudroňa s nápisom Za tú našu slovenčinu, aby zo získaných peňazí podporila Slovensko, pomohla väzneným slovenským národovcom.

Prezvala organizovanie zbierky pod názvom "Za tú našu slovenčinu," odhlasovala finančnú zbierku vo výške 7 tisíc dolárov na podporu kultúrneho a politického zápasu na Slovensku.

Slovenská liga v Amerike sa v rokoch prvej svetovej vojny stala nositeľkou národného zápasu a pod jej egidou sa združila celá slovenská Amerika. V septembri 1914 Ivan Daxner ako zástupca Ligy vypracoval Memorandum Slovenskej ligy v Amerike vydané menom amerických Slovákov, ktorého text bol vytlačený v piatich jazykoch a rozposlaný maďarskej vláde, členom amerického kongresu, senátorom a guvernérnom nielen v rámci Ameriky, ale do celého sveta. V texte Memoranda čítame: "Žiadame pre slovenský národ úplnú samosprávu a voľnosť sebaurčenia tak na politickom, ako aj na kultúrnom a hospodárskom poli."

Po tomto počíne Slovenskej ligy nasledovali ďalšie akcie, ktoré nastolili požiadavku sebaurčovacieho práva pre slovenský národ. Počas prvej svetovej vojny na návrh Slovenskej ligy, po dlhých úvahách a diskusiách prevahu získala koncepcia federatívneho štátu Čechov a Slovákov. VIII. Kongres Slovenskej ligy (22. 2. 1915) schválili návrh "ísť s Čechmi ako rovný s rovným".

O pol roka neskôr dňa 22. októbra 1915 v Clevelande Slovenská liga v Amerike uzavrela s Českým národným združením Clevelandskú dohodu, ako základ spoločnej revolučnej akcie, ktorá deklaruje: "Spojenie českého a slovenského národa vo federatívnom zväzku štátov s úplnou národnou autonómiou, s vlastným snemom, štátnou správou, úplnou kultúrnou slobodou, teda aj s plným právom užívania slovenského jazyka, s vlastnou finančnou a politickou správou, so štátnym jazykom slovenským."

Počas 1. svetovej vojny sa Slovenská liga v Amerike aktívne zapojila do organizovania dobrovoľníkov z radov Slovákov a Čechov v Amerike v zahraničnom

odboji vo Francúzsku. V júni 1917 prichádza v tejto veci do USA M. R. Štefánik, ako zástupca Národnej rady československej, aby z poverenia francúzskej vlády vymohol u americkej armády súhlas na ich účasť. Prihlásilo sa okolo 3 000 Slovákov a Čechov, neamerických občanov, ktorí odchádzali na front do Európy. Slovenské ženy v Amerike organizované v ženskej odbočke Včielky a v americkom Červenom kríži realizovali zbierky pre legionárov, posielali pre nich balíky so šatstvom a jedlom.

Koncom mája 1917 SLvA zorganizovala spolu s Čechmi tzv. Milióndolárovú zbierku na podporu zahraničnej politickej akcie a vojenský fond, ktorá trvala až do roku 1920 a vytýčenú cieľovú sumu zozbierala.

Po Clevelandskej dohode nasledovala Pittsburská dohoda, ktorú počas pobytu T. G. Masaryka v Amerike, v tom čase ako predstaviteľa Čsl. národnej rady v Paríži podpísali v Pittsburghu dňa 30. mája 1918 zástupcovia Slovenskej ligy v Amerike so zástupcami ďalších slovenských a českých organizácií, ktorá sa mala stať základným dokumentom pri vzniku spoločného štátu Čechov a Slovákov.

Nerešpektovanie Pittsburskej dohody po vzniku ČSR v roku 1918, a napokon aj jej nezakotvenie do Ústavy ČSR v roku 1920 viedlo Slovenskú ligu v Amerike k ďalším zápasom o riešenie slovenskej otázky. Najviac protestov zaznelo k čoraz radikálnejšiemu presadzovaniu pojmu "československý národ", čo prevažná väčšina Slovákov v Amerike nemohla pripustiť.

Jasnejšie stanovisko o plnení programu Pittsburskej dohody vo vtedajšej ČSR mala priniesť cesta delegácie amerických Slovákov do Československa v roku 1938 pri príležitosti 20. výročia uzavretia Pittsburskej dohody, vedená novým predsedom Pavlom Hletkom. Po návrate delegácie do Ameriky vychádzajúc zo skúseností a stretnutí s najvyššími vládnymi orgánmi ČSR viedli Slovenskú ligu k podpore slovenskej autonómie. Na októbrovom kongrese v roku 1938 prijala Slovenská liga v Amerike vznik autonómie ako nevyhnutný krok a napokon podporila v marci 1939 aj vznik Slovenského štátu.

Vedenie Ligy po vzniku Slovenského štátu, počas krušných vojnových rokov muselo v Amerike čeliť mnohým obvineniam, že podporujú fašistický štát, čo Liga rezolútne odmietala a v ďalších rezolúciách, deklaráciách a na osobných stretnutiach obhajovala pred najvyšším fórom vo Washingtone D.C. slovenskú štátnosť, ako jediné možné riešenie v zložitej medzinárodnej situácii v Európe. V rokoch druhej svetovej vojny deklarovala Slovenská liga zároveň aj americké vlastenectvo a plnenie si vlasteneckých povinností voči novej vlasti.

Po roku 1945 sa Slovenská liga v Amerike aktivizovala v pomoci pre slovenských utečencov, ktorí sa sústreďovali v utečeneckých táborech v Rakúsku, Nemecku. Okrem hmotnej pomoci sa Liga obracala so žiadosťou na amerických zákonodarcov, aby sa exulantí mohli dostať do bezpečia.

Po roku 1948 si Slovenská liga plnila ďalšie povinnosti voči slovenskému národu. Bola to úloha oboznamovať svet o príkoriach páchaných v krajinách, ktoré sa dostali do sovietskeho orbitu. S veľkým rozhorčením prijímala slovenská Amerika v 50. rokoch správu o prenasledovaní cirkvi na Slovensku, zatýkaní kňazov, rušenie rehôľ a vydávali ďalšie memorandá a žiadosti. V roku 1954 Slovenská liga pripravila vo Washingtone DC konferenciu s účasťou členov kongresu a predstaviteľov ďalších stredo európskych národov a exilov, na ktorej žiadali, aby predložili Organizácii Spojených národov na vyšetrovanie všetky zločiny, páchané komunistickým režimom.

Program Slovenskej ligy zostával nezmenený ani po 50 rokoch jej účinkovania protesty koncipované Slovenskou ligou pokračovali aj v 70. rokoch 20. storočia.

V roku 1968 Liga s rozhorčením prijala správu o vstupe sovietskych vojsk do ČSR a zorganizovala desiatky manifestácií a petícií. Iniciovala založenie Amerického fondu pre slovenských utečencov s pobočkami v jednotlivých štátoch USA a pod egidou tohto fondu poskytovala na pomoc novým slovenským utečencom.

V roku 1989, roku významných politických zmien, pádom komunistického režimu SLvA sústredila svoje sily na účasť v demokratizačnom procese novej spoločnosti. Dňa 1. januára 1993 bola delegácia Slovenskej ligy v Amerike prítomná na slávnostnom zasadnutí parlamentu v Bratislave a stala sa svedkom dlho očakávanej udalosti, vyhlásenia samostatnej Slovenskej republiky. Prvým krokom bolo vytvorenie Fondu pomoci pre samostatné Slovensko. Slovenská liga na 31. kongrese v novembri 1993 v rezolúcii deklaruje: "Sme rozhodnutí ostať v úzkom vzťahu s domovom a ochotne budeme plniť úlohu sprostredkovateľa s americkým svetom. Je nám príkazom trvať na zásade vernosti Bohu a národu, nemeniteľnému programu Slovákov v Amerike. Zdôrazňujeme preto našu odhodlanosť pomáhať a ostať vernými myšlienke slovenskej štátnosti."

Stovky článkov, desiatky kníh, pamfletov a memoránd, prednášok a rezolúcií vyšli nielen zo Slovenskej ligy ale aj z ďalších organizácií amerických Slovákov v záujme slovenskej samostatnosti, záujme pravdy, v záujme hľadania dôstojného miesta pre Slovensko na mape Európy i sveta a zozbierali sa na tieto ciele medzi slovenskou Amerikou tisíce dolárov. Mnohí z lídrov Ligy namiesto získania lepšej existencie, ktorá bola motiváciou odchodu väčšiny Slovákov z vlasti, sa vzdali tohto amerického sna a doslova sa upísali práci pre národ súc presvedčení o tom, že ich práca je zmysluplná a ich cieľ sa naplní.

Žiaľ, na Slovensku sa dlhé roky tieto aktivity amerických Slovákov zatajovali. Prakticky dve generácie Slovákov počas komunistického režimu neboli vychovávané v národnom duchu a o pomoci slovenskej Ameriky sa nedozvedeli ani z učebníc ani sa o tom nehovorilo v médiách a nepísalo v tlači. Je pre Slovenskú ligu zadosťučinením, že v poslednom desaťročí sa jej dostáva pocty, ako tomu bolo aj počas pobytu delegácie Slovenskej ligy na Slovensku v máji tohto roku, keď bola prijatá najvyššími štátnymi predstaviteľmi, prezidentom Slovenskej republiky a na pôde parlamentu. Je našou povinnosťou, aby sme činnosť a záslužnú prácu jej protagonistov neustále pripomínali na Slovensku a to nielen pri jubileách, ale vždy a všade tam, kde sa hovorí a píše o našich národných dejinách. Pretože, americkí Slováci sa svojou účasťou v tomto zápase za slobodu starej vlasti sa stali spolutvorcami našich moderných Slovenských dejín.

# Novoročný príhovor prezidenta Ivana Gašparoviča

*Pokračovanie zo str. 20*

Ide o nepretržitý dialóg medzi občanom a tými, ktorým delegoval moc, medzi ústavnými inštitúciami a politickými stranami a z tejto pozície chcem všetkým vyzvať: Správajme sa a konajme v mene pravdy, slušnosti a názorovej tolerancie. Vyzývam politické strany ku korektnému politickému zápasu, ktorý nepresiahne hranice parlamentu. Slovensko čakajú nové politické, ekonomické a sociálne výzvy. Sústreďme sa na ne a nie na samoučelný politický zápas.

Dobrého a dobre fungujúceho štátu nikdy nie je dosť. Je ako strecha rodinného domu. Je ako spoločný stôl, za ktorý si sadajú najbližší. Ale na slovenskom stole sa od Štedrej večere až po Troch kráľov vždy prestieralo v rodinách o jeden tanier navyše. Myslelo sa na tých, ktorí by mohli prísť alebo ktorí už nie sú medzi nami... Tento princíp hlbokej ľudskej spolupatričnosti, úcty k človeku by som uvítal aj ako celospoločenský dôkaz vyspelosti občianskej, sociálnej, mravnej, teda predovšetkým vyspelosti kultúrnej, ľudskej. Bez tejto vyspelosti totiž ťažko môžeme očakávať v štáte, v spoločnosti dobré právo a spravodlivosť, kultúru a mravnosť politiky, ekonomiky a dôstojný život. Štát patrí nám všetkým, vážení občania, všetci ho spolutvoríme. Jeho sila - ako nás na to upozorňuje z hĺbky dejín Svätopluk - vyvíera z našej spoločnej vôle. Ak ju budeme zbytočne triešťať, lámať prúty, oslabíme sami seba - to je môj novoročný odkaz politickým stranám, ktorým delegujete vlastnú moc! Iste uznáte, vážení spoluobčania, že jeden nemôže urobiť za všetkých to, čo musí urobiť každý sám. Ako človek i občan. Zostať za každých okolností - ako človek ohľaduplný a ako občan zodpovedný. Život i svet a ešte ďaleko od toho, aby boli takými, ako si ich predstavujeme. Po akých túžime.

Ako občan Slovenska som hrdý na to, že sme dokázali ako národ i štát prekonať bariéry, ktoré nám stáli v ceste. Keď sme sa 1. mája 2004 stali súčasťou Európskej únie - akoby sme doširoka otvorili všetky naše okná. Len pred pár dňami, 21. decembra minulého roka sme vstupom do schengenského priestoru doširoka otvorili aj naše dvere - spoločne s našimi susedmi i s celou zblížujúcou sa a integrujúcou sa Európou.

Chcem poďakovať, že Slováci vždy boli, vždy sa cítili ako prirodzená súčasť Európy. Európu považujeme za kolísku našej kultúry. Slovensko za svoj domov, vlasť, suverénny štát.

Môžeme byť oprávnené hrdí, že naša vlasť - Slovenská republika - je po krátkom období existencie moderným európskym štátom presadzujúcim spoločné hodnoty. Sme štátom, ktorý nielen na diplomatickom, ale aj bezpečnostnom poli aktívne berie na seba zodpovednosť za osudy ľudí, ktorí žijú v rôznych vojnovými zmietaných oblastiach sveta. Spolurozhodovanie Slovenskej republiky o celosvetových otázkach je veľkou morálnou výzvou, ako aj zadosťučinením našej 15-ročnej existencie. Je potvrdzením našej politickej vyspelosti a morálno-hodnotovej ukotvenosti v spoločenstve demokratických národov. Dnešná chvíľa má ešte jednu dôležitú príchut'. Pred pár dňami sme si pripomenuli tridsiate výročie ustanovenia slovenskej cirkevnej provincie - územno-správnej jednotky rímskokatolíckej cirkvi na Slovensku. Zdôrazňujem to preto, že aj táto historická skutočnosť nám v nemalej miere pomohla k voľbe samostatnosti a suverenity na vlastnom území, k ustanoveniu Slovenskej republiky.

Aby sme neobchádzali úctu k človeku a k svojej vlasti, musíme obnovovať cesty k sebe navzájom. Len cez takéto zomkynanie, upevňovanie nášho štátu budeme schopní odstraňovať aj prekážky, ktoré stoja medzi nami. Prekážky, o ktoré nestáli minulá generácia, o ktoré nestojíme my, ani naše deti a vnúčatá.

Ako prezident Slovenskej republiky si osobitne cením črtu Slovákov, ktorou je schopnosť presadiť sa v súťaži európskych národov. Ak tomu pridáme viac činorodosti, aktívny prístup k životu, ak podporíme riešenia, ktoré smerujú k zlepšeniu kvality života, verím, že zo Slovenska vytvoríme naozajstný domov. Úprimne ho želim vám všetkým bez rozdielu, ktorí na Slovensku žijete, vytvárame spoločné hodnoty. Spoločne odmietnime akýkoľvek extrémizmus, radikalizmus a xenofóbiu a vážme si mier a pokoj, v ktorom Slovenská republika žije už 15 rokov.

Drahí spoluobčania, ak som sa v dnešný sviatočný čas - a v súvislosti s 15. výročím vzniku Slovenskej republiky - rozhodol pripomenúť vám všetkým to, čo spája rodinu, rod, národ a národnosti do jednotného štátu a všetku nás ako štát do európskeho spoločenstva, urobil som tak preto, aby sme ráznejšie upriamili pozornosť na to, čo nám všetkým spoločne chýba - dobré medzilidské vzťahy, ľudská, človečenská dôstojnosť a dobroprajnosť. Záujem človeka o človeka! Do nového roku 2008 vám preto úprimne želim, aby ste v každý jeho deň stretli dobrého, šľachetného, žičlivého človeka. Aby ste sa tešili zo života.

Našej jubilujúcej Slovenskej republike želim, aby pracovití a tvoriví ľudia posilňovali a rozvíjali jej základy. Všetci jej ľudsky prosperujúcu budúcnosť.

A každému z vás, drahí spoluobčania, vinšujem do Nového roku - tak ako kedysi - veľa zdravia, šťastia a hojného božského požehnanja.

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## Zomrel Jozef Ferkovič

Známy aktívny činiteľ v slovensko-amerických kruhoch v Detroite, Michigan, Jozef Ferkovič zomrel 28. decembra 2007 vo veku 79 rokov.

Zosnulý sa narodil na Slovensku 13. októbra 1928 v Trnave. Po štúdiách základnej školy nastúpil do vojenskej strednej školy v Turčianskom Sv. Martine, ktorú ukončil v Trenčíne. Krátku dobu bol zamestnaný na Ministerstve vnútra v Bratislave. Za tým dal prednosť vojenskej kariére a nastúpil do Vojenskej akadémie v Hraniciach.

Po prevzatí moci komunistami v roku 1949 Ferkovič opúšťa Československo. Po krátkom pobyte v rakúskom Linze, v roku 1952 emigroval do Caracas, Venezuela. Tam sa 6. septembra 1952 oženil so Slovenkou pochádzajúcou z Bratislavy, Margaret Sandor.

V roku 1954 Ferkovič odchádza do Spojených štátov. Najprv pracoval pre Century Company ako predavač a neskôr sa stal riaditeľom úradu v Tropicream Company v New Orleans. Neskôr sa usadil v Detroite, Michigan kde pôsobil až do svojej smrti. Po 34. rokoch práce v Chrysler Corporation odišiel do dôchodku.

Jozef Ferkovič bol dlhoročným pred-

sedom spolku č. 615 Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty, Spolku č. 34 Slovenskej ligy v Amerike, aktívnym členom Svetového kongresu Slovákov a iných významných slovensko-amerických organizácií. Bol zároveň zakladajúcim členom Klubu priateľov Trnavy a pravidelným prispievateľom do slovenských časopisov pod menom 'Jozef Trnavčan'. Skoro 20 rokov pôsobil ako vedúci slovenského rozhlasového vysielania v Detroite. Pracoval tiež ako tlmočník a prekladateľ v piatich jazykoch.

Za nebohým smútia láskavá manželka Margaret Ferkovič, syn George, dcéra Mary (Christopher) Griebel; tri vnúčatá, Stephanie Ferkovič, a Patrick a Kristin Griebel; sestra Anna Takáčová zo Slovenska; netere a synovcovia na Slovensku.

So zosnulým sa prišli rozlúčiť početní priatelia v Sterling Heights Chapel u pohrebničky E. J. Mandziuk & Son. Pohrebna svätá omša bola obetovaná v kostole sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Sterling Heights. Pozostatky nebohého uložili na Resurrection cintoríne.

Češť jeho pamiatke.

## Prezident vymenoval nového slovenského veľvyslanca v Rakúsku

Bratislava (TASR) - Peter Lizák si 7. januára prevzal z rúk prezidenta Ivana Gašparoviča poverovacie listiny mimoriadneho a splnomocneného veľvyslanca SR v susednom Rakúsku. TASR informovala Kancelária prezidenta SR. Na diplomatickej misii vystrieda Jozefa Klimka.

Veľvyslanec Lizák bol jedným zo zakladajúcich pracovníkov Ministerstva zahraničných vecí SR (MZV). Je kariérnym diplomatom a do zahraničných služieb nastúpil začiatkom 90-tych rokov. Počas prístupových rokovaní Slovenska s Európskou úniou (EÚ) viedol na MZV odbor politických vzťahov s EÚ. V zahraničí doteraz pôsobil na slovenských veľvyslanectvách vo Švajčiarsku a v Rakúsku, bol stálym predstaviteľom SR pri Organizácii pre bezpečnosť a spoluprácu v Európe.

Prezident Gašparovič v rozhovore s novým veľvyslancom vyjadril presvedčenie, že v súvislosti s pristúpením Slovenska k Schengenskej dohode a zrušením hraničných kontrol sa ešte viac zintenzívnia bilaterálne vzťahy oboch krajín na všetkých úrovniach. Rakúsko patrí medzi najvýznamnejších obchodných partnerov SR a preto je možné očakávať aj dynamizáciu obchodnej spolupráce.



FOTO TASR - Miroslav Košířer

Národný bezpečnostný úrad (NBÚ) 15. januára v Bratislave vydal prvé dva cestovné pasy s biometrickými údajmi, a to podpredsedovi vlády a ministrovi vnútra SR Robertovi Kaliňákovi (vpravo) a riaditeľovi Národného bezpečnostného úradu Františkovi Blanáríkovi. NBÚ v systéme vydávania biometrických pasov plní úlohu overovateľa garanta originality vydaného pasu. Prevádzkuje certifikačnú autoritu, ktorá vydáva certifikáty pre overenie autenticity vydaného pasu. Prevádzka a systém vydávania certifikátov určených na tieto účely sa riadi štandardami, ktoré platia pre všetky členské krajiny Európskej únie (EÚ). Úradom vydaný certifikát dohodnutým spôsobom zasieľa Ministerstvo vnútra SR všetkým pasovým a colným orgánom členských krajín EÚ.

## Pod'akovanie Kanadskej Slovenskej Lige

Mary Ann Doucette (Hačková) predsedníčka Kanadskej Slovenskej Ligy (KSL), v anglickom a slovenskom článku Honouring the pioneers of the Canadian Slovak League - Uctenie si priekopníkov Kanadskej Slovenskej Ligy (KS 24. 11. 07), zverejnila mená 23. zaslúžilých ligárskych priekopníkov, ktorým KSL udelila Jubilejnú trofej za ich príkladnú prácu v záujme KSL a jej ideologického poslania, na oslavnom galabankete 75-ročného jubilea založenia KSL a 65 rokov neprestajného vychádzania Kanadského Slováka, uskutočnenom v Toronte koncom októbra minulého roku.

Medzi zverejnenými menami je aj moje, začo KSL, jej hlavnému vedeniu a Prípravnému výboru vyslovujem moju úprimnú a úctivú vďaku so žičením všestranných úspechov tejto národnej inštitúcii kanadských Slovákov do ďalších rokov jej tvorivej činnosti.

Pri tomto ojedinelom mílniku v našom kanadsko-slovenskom spoločenskom živote, v mojom sentimentálnom návrate do tých dávnych rokov našej prežitej pionierskej minulosti, chcel by som doplniť uvedený zoznam dodatočnými menami zaslúžilých činiteľov nášeho tunajšieho diania. Tí, čo prišli po nich sadli, takrečeno, za prikrýty stôl. Bez ich pričinenia a sebažertvy, podľa mojej skromnej mienky, náš národno-slovenský a organizačný život by tu bol takmer nemysliteľný. Preto si zasluhujú naše čestné uznanie.

**Pavol L. Sabo** (Winnipeg). S Kučerom a Rondošom je považovaný za spoluzakladateľa KSL. Jeden z prvých proponentov založenia samostatnej Slovenskej Ligy v Kanade. (Dnešná KSL).

**Pavol Blaho** (Montréal). Vojnový dlhoročný predseda najväčšieho zboru KSL a jej čelný funkcionár. Podpredseda Slovenskej vydavateľskej spoločnosti Slovák v Kanade. Dlhodobý predseda prvého Tlačového výboru Kanadského Slováka. Agilný národno-slovenský dejateľ.

**Štefan Jesenák** (Oshawa). Zakladateľ miestneho zboru KSL a jej hlavný funkcionár. Organizátor zborov KSL v Južnom Ontariu. Pri jednej takej organizačnej ceste so svojim spoločníkom skoro prišli o život pri havárii auta. Pravidelný dopisovateľ do slovenských novín. Rodoľub.

**Jozef Tokár** (Toronto). Zakladateľ miestneho zboru KSL. Člen Ústrednej správy a organizátor Prvého okresného zboru KSL. Iniciátor Slovenských dní v južnom Ontariu. Kliesniateľ národnej suverenity Slovákov a slovenskej identity v Kanade.

**Michal Caňo a Jozef Siksa** (Thunder Bay). Michal Caňo dlhoročný pokladník KSL a horlivý propagátor jej cieľov. - Jozef Siksa, zakladateľ miestneho zboru KSL a jeho dlhoročný predseda. Čelný funkcionár KSL. Divadelný režisér. Príležitostný režisér. Všestranný organizačný a národno-slovenský dejateľ.

**Ján Ivan** (Welland). Zakladateľ miestneho zboru KSL a jeho vedúci funkcionár. Dlhoročný hlavný úradník KSL a vplyvný národno-politický aktivista.

Nech ich mená a ich neobmedzená obetavosť ostanú v pamäti našich budúcich generácií Kanadčanov slovenského pôvodu.

S fraternalistickou úctou a vďakou,

**Štefan Hreha**  
Montréal, QC.

## Slovenský ples v New Yorku

2. februára 2008

Slovensko-americké kultúrne stredisko (SACC) v New Yorku usporiada 16. slovenský ples v sobotu 2. februára 2008 v New York Athletic Club, 180 Central Park South (na rohu 59. ulice a 7. Ave.) New York, N.Y.

Toto tradičné podujatie vie pritiahnúť slovensko-americkú verejnosť a záujemcov nielen z New Yorku, New Jersey a Connecticut, ale aj zo štátov Pennsylvania a Massachusetts. Z finančného zisku SACC poskytuje americké vysokoškolské štúdium slovenským študentom v Trenčíne a v Bratislave. Tento rok SACC poskytol štípendium štyrom študentom zo štípendijného fondu Dr. Jozefa Stašku. Toto by nebolo možné bez štedrosti a porozumenia členov SACC a priateľov. Každý príspevok na tento cieľ je vítaný a neoceniteľný.

Vstupné na ples je \$160.00 za osobu a \$95.00 pre študentov. Do tanca bude hrať Marek SOLTYS Orchestra. O 6.00 hodine bude koktail a o 7.00 hodine sa bude podávať hlavné jedlo. Výbor plesu sa postaral o hodnotné ceny do výhry, ktoré sa vylosujú počas večera.

Attire: Black tie alebo večerný oblek. Rezervácie: L'ubica Markovich (212) 781-5843 a Gitka Hlavinka (201) 242-0214. Šeky treba vystaviť na: SACC a poslať na túto adresu: SACC, c/o Stano Krčmar 33 Weasel Drift Rd, West Paterson, NJ 07424.

Konferenciou bude známa rozhlasová osobnosť Greg Whiteside.

Usporiadatelia srdečne pozývajú slovensko-americkú pospolitosť a priateľov. Toto stretnutie je nielen zábavné a spoločenské, ale aj národno-kultúrnym príspevkom do pokladnice slovenských hodnôt.

**Rudo L. Greguš**

## Bez morálneho správania sa niet pokoja

*Pokračovanie zo str. 20*

národnom i medzinárodnom, pretože oslabuje tú najdôležitejšiu, 'agentúru' pokoja.' A tak podľa kardinála všetko, čo vedie k oslabeniu rodiny založenej na manželstve muža a ženy, čo priamo alebo nepriamo prekáža ochote zodpovedne prijať nový život, čo bráni prednostnému právu rodiny niesť zodpovednosť za výchovu detí, predstavuje objektívnu prekážku na ceste pokoja. "Rodina potrebuje domov, prácu a spravodlivé ocenenie domácej práce rodičov, potrebuje školu pre deti a pre všetkých základnú zdravotnú starostlivosť. Keď sa spoločnosť a politici neusilujú rodinám v týchto oblastiach pomáhať, zbavujú sa základného zdroja, slúžiaceho pokoji."

Vo svojej úvahe neobišiel kardinál ani prostriedky spoločenskej komunikácie: "prevýchovné možnosti, ktorými disponujú, nesú osobitnú zodpovednosť za to, aby podporovali úctu voči rodine, prednášali jej očakávania a práva a predstavovali jej krásu." K tomu však podľa kardinála Tomka každý štát, a teda i naša mladá republika, potrebuje nielen dobrú ústavu, ale aj jej správnu aplikáciu a spravodlivé zákony. "Aj ľudský zákon má byť spravodlivý a má sa riadiť nie tlakom a silou jednej skupiny, ale etickým, mravným zákonom založeným na prirodzenosti vecí. Bez zachovávanía eticko-mravných noriem aj v technológii, biológii, ekonomike a politike ľudská rodina stratí kompas a začne sa rozbiť a vzájomne poškodzovať, ba aj ničiť. Bez morálneho správania sa niet pokoja ani ľudského pokroku!" uzavrel svoj príhovor kardinál Tomko.

Svätú omšu prenášali v priamom prenose z Konkatedrály sv. Martina v Bratislave dve televízie. Aj prostredníctvom nich mohol kardinál Tomko odovzdať všetkým na Slovensku osobitný pozdrav od Benedikta XVI. i jeho apoštolské požehnanie.

**Jozef Kováčik, Katolícke noviny**

## Prezident Gašparovič prijal predstaviteľov cirkví na Slovensku

Bratislava (TASR) – Prezident Slovenskej republiky Ivan Gašparovič prijal predpoludním v Prezidentskom paláci v Bratislave na tradičnom novoročnom stretnutí predstaviteľov cirkví a náboženských spoločností v Slovenskej republike. "Slovenskí duchovní predstavitelia sú v histórii slovenského národa okrem svojho prioritného poslania zapísaní ako významní cirkevní hodnostári, ktorí majú vo svojej skupine aj profesorov, vedcov, konštruktérov; sú to vychovávateľa, spisovatelia, publicisti, vydavatelia, ale aj lekári," povedal v príhovore Ivan Gašparovič, ktorý sa cirkvým predstaviteľom poďakoval za službu občanom, za všetky aktivity, ktoré cirkvi a náboženské spoločnosti na Slovensku s cieľom pomôcť bližným vykonávajú.

Prezident pripomenul prínos predstaviteľov cirkví pre národ, význam ustanovenia samostatnej slovenskej cirkevnej provincie, ktorá "v nemalej miere pomohla k voľbe samostatnosti a suverenity na vlastnom území". Katolícku cirkev zastupoval predseda Konferencie biskupov Slovenska Mons. František Tondra a vojenský ordinár

Mons. František Rábek. "Úlohou Cirkvi a náboženských spoločností v prospech spoločného dobra považujem za nezastupiteľnú," uviedol vo svojom príhovore spišský diecézny biskup Tondra, podľa ktorého "cirkvi nielen deklarujú, ale aj pastoračne vnášajú do života morálne zásady, bez ktorých žiadna spoločnosť nemôže existovať". Po skončení prejavov prezidenta SR Gašparoviča a zástupcov Katolíckej cirkvi, Evanjelickej cirkvi augsburského vyznania a Ústredného zväzu židovských náboženských obcí v SR sa prítomní presunuli do Kaplnky sv. Barbory, kde sa všetci prítomní pomodlili ekumenickú modlitbu za Slovensko.

Na stretnutí sa zúčastnil aj minister kultúry SR Marek Maďarič, riaditeľ cirkevného odboru ministerstva kultúry Ján Juraň, chargé d'affaires Svätej stolice Mons. Gianfranco Galione. Prítomní boli aj predstavitelia Pravoslávnej cirkvi, Reformovanej kresťanskej cirkvi, Cirkvi bratskej, Apoštolskej cirkvi a ďalších registrovaných cirkví na Slovensku.

**TK KBS**

## Dôležité oznámenie

Ako sme už predtým oznámili v prvom štvrtroku 2008 zvyšujeme počet našich členov, ktorí skoro stopercentne dostanú časopis JEDNOTA. Aby sme udržali v súlade naše celkové náklady musíme znížiť počet vychádzajúcich čísiel z 26 za celý rok na 21.

Veľkosť a kvalita časopisu Jednota zostane nezmenená.

Dôvod k týmto zmenám je jednoduchý. JEDNOTA je náš hlavný komunikačný prostriedok s našimi členmi. Mnoho z našich členov ani nevie, že vôbec existujeme.

Chceme komunikovať s našimi členmi. Odkedy je náš časopis na internete na [www.fcsu.com](http://www.fcsu.com), nietorí hádam dajú prednosť si ho prečítať na internete, miesto doručenia poštou. Ak sa rozhodnete pre JEDNOTU len na internete, oznámte nám to láskave telefonicky 1-800-JEDNOTA (1-800-533-6682) alebo e-mailom: [fcsu@aol.com](mailto:fcsu@aol.com) aby sme mohli vaše meno vyňať z nášho zoznamu Jednoty zasielanej poštou .

**FRATERNALIZMUS POSILŇUJE  
RODINU**

# Krátke správy zo Slovenska

**Výber** z najkrajších slovenských zachovaných hradov predstavuje publikácia Hrady - najkrajšie zrúcaniny. Spišský hrad, Muráň, Somoska, Divin, Lietava, Kapušiansky hrad, Strečno, Pajstun a iné pamiatky týčiace sa na kopcoch už zďaleka pútajú pozornosť návštevníkov. Niektoré sú čiastočne zrekonštruované, iné v dosť chátrajúcom stave. Každý hrad má vlastnú stáročnú pestrú minulosť. Ucelený historicko-súčasný pohľad na tieto kultúrno-historické opevnené a reprezentačné objekty bývania prináša nová publikácia. Autori do nej vybrali 33 podľa nich najkrajších zrúcanín z vizuálneho aj turistického hľadiska. Okrem všetkých prístupových ciest oboznamujú čitateľa s minulosťou objektu, terajším stavom, jeho okolím i povestami a legendami. Nechýbajú mapy, pôdorysy a dobové kresby či pohľadnice, ani množstvo aktuálnych farebných fotografií. Obálku zdobí litografia hradu Hrušov z roku 1845. Vyše 140-stránová kniha vyšla v rámci novej edície Kultúrne krásy Slovenska v bratislavskom vydavateľstve Dajama. Finančne ju podporilo Ministerstvo kultúry SR.

**Prezident** SR Ivan Gašparovič prijal 3. januára koledníkov Dobrej noviny z Hnutia kresťanských spoločenstiev detí (eRko) v Prezidentskom paláci. Prezident hnutiu odovzdal zároveň aj obálku s finančnou čiastkou zo svojho platu. Tento rok sa hnutiu eRko podarilo na celom Slovensku vyzbierať takmer 17 miliónov korún, z ktorých podporili 25 rozvojových projektov v piatich afrických krajinách. Dobrá novina je kolednícka akcia spojená so zbierkou pre africké krajiny, ktorú od roku 1995 organizuje eRko - Hnutie kresťanských spoločenstiev detí v spolupráci s katolíckymi farnosťami a Pápežskými misijnými dielami. Akcia prebiehala vo farnosťach na celom Slovensku a zapojilo sa do nej okolo 24,000 detí a dospelých.

**Matica** slovenská (MS) v Martine zriadila začiatkom tohto roka Národný inštitút slovenského jazyka a literatúry. Podľa riaditeľa Informačného ústredia MS Ľubomíra Kral'ovanského inštitút bude ústredným interdisciplinárnym vedeckým, odborným i organizačno-metodickým a dokumentačno-prezentačným pracoviskom MS a pripojených subjektov pre starostlivosť a aktivity v oblasti štátneho jazyka a slovenskej literatúry v širokej spoločenskej praxi. Povereným riaditeľom Národného inštitútu slovenského jazyka a literatúry sa stal prvý podpredseda Matice slovenskej Miroslav Bielik.

**Začiatkom** januára vyšlo prvé číslo časopisu pre teológiu, kultúru a spoločnosť - Nové Horizonty. Vychádza štvrťročne, má imprimatur spišského diecézneho biskupa Mons. Františka Tondru a je určený katolíckej inteligencii, kňazom aj laikom. Časopis chce ideovo nadviazať na úspešnú generáciu katolíckych intelektuálov, ktorí pôsobili na Spišskej Kapitule v medzivojnovom období, zvlášť na osobnosť rektora kňazského seminára Ferka Skyčáka. Na čele redakcie stojí zodpovedný redaktor, prof. Ján Duda. Časopis je rozdelený do niekoľkých sekcií. Editoriál, dokumenty a komentáre, štúdie, nasleduje rubrika aktuality, udalostí a názory. Poslednú časť tvoria recenzie. Časopis si môžete kúpiť v predajňach vydavateľstva Lúč v Bratislave a Nitre, alebo získať na adrese Klub priateľov Ferka Skyčáka, Spišská Kapitula 13, 05304 Spišské Podhradie, novehorizonty@gmail.com.

**Slovenský** betlehem získal striebornú medailu na 32. ročníku medzinárodnej výstavy 100 jasličiek, ktorá sa konala v dňoch 23. novembra až 6. januára v Ríme. Odborná porota ocenila v kategórii zahraničných betlehemov druhým miestom reliéfnu kompozíciu v dreve pochádzajúcu z rúk slovenského drevorezbára Vincenta Bandura. Expozíciu betlehemov slovenských umelcov v Ríme pripravilo slovenské veľvyslanectvo pri Svätej stolici v spolupráci s bratislavským Medzinárodným domom umenia pre deti Bibiana. Výstava sa konala pod záštitou prezidenta Talianskej republiky a patronátom Talianskej biskupskej konferencie.

**Miera** nezamestnanosti na Slovensku zostala aj v novembri 2007 najvyššia v rámci Európskej únie (EÚ). Podľa metodiky EÚ dosiahla 11 %. Medzimesačne klesla o 0,3% a medziročne o 1,3%. Najväčším problémom zostáva nezamestnanosť mladých ľudí pod 25 rokov. Tých bolo v novembri na Slovensku nezamestnaných 18,3%, čo je o 0,4% menej ako v októbri 2007 a o 5,4% menej ako v novembri 2006. V celej EÚ dosiahla v novembri miera nezamestnanosti 6,9%. Zostala teda na rovnakej úrovni ako v októbri. V eurozóne tiež zostala nezamestnanosť na októbrovej úrovni 7,2%. Medziročne klesla o 0,7%. Nezamestnanosť v USA predstavovala v novembri 4,7% a v Japonsku 3,8%. Najvyšší relatívny medziročný pokles zaznamenalo Poľsko (z 12,2% na 8,5%) a Bulharsko (z 8,2% na 5,8%). Informoval o tom štatistický úrad Eurostat.

**Za** posledných desať rokov zomrelo na Slovensku dvakrát viac novorodencov ako v Čechách. Navyše počas prvého týždňa života zomrie u nás rovnaký počet detí ako od siedmeho dňa života do 40. roku veku. Vyplýva to z Národného programu starostlivosti o deti a dorast v SR na roky 2008 až 2015, ktorý Ministerstvo zdravotníctva vložilo do pripomienkového konania. Materiál tiež poukazuje na fakt, že zo 66 novorodeneckých pracovísk v SR len 23 zdravotníckych zariadení ústavnej zdravotnej starostlivosti splnilo kritériá Svetovej zdravotnej organizácie a UNICEF-u (Detský fond OSN) na získanie certifikátu Mother and baby friendly hospital initiative (Nemocnica ústretová k matkám a deťom).

**Levočským** reštaurátorom sa v roku 2007 mimoriadne darilo. V roku 2007 vykonali reštaurátori práce za viac ako 20. mil. Sk. K finančne úspešnému roku prispela aj skutočnosť, že viacerí investori minulý rok uhradili faktúry za už skôr vykonané práce. V minulom roku levočskí reštaurátori ukončili aj obnovu sochy sv. Juraja z kostola sv. Jakuba v Levoči. Toto dielo sa považuje za jedno z prvých diel Majstra Pavla z Levoče. Viacerí vlastníci získali finančné prostriedky na

záchranu a obnovu kultúrnych pamiatok nielen od štátu, ale i z rôznych nadácií a grantov. Finančne najnáročnejšou akciou v minulom roku bola rekonštrukcia fasády Paláca Klobušických v Prešove, kde v súčasnosti sídli krajský súd. Ukončili tiež opravu kostola sv. Antona v Červenom Kláštore, ktorý bol po viac ako 50 rokoch prístupný verejnosti.

**Študenti** hlane tretích ročníkov stredných škôl budú mať možnosť stráviť ročný pobyt v zahraničí a následne pokračovať v štúdiu. O osobitnom štipendijnom programe, ktorý budú môcť využívať mladí ľudia bez ohľadu na rodinné zázemie, informoval 11. januára na stretnutí so študentami stredných škôl v Spišskej Novej Vsi predseda vlády Slovenskej republiky Robert Fico. Spresnil, že zámerom projektu, ktorý sa zatiaľ týka Anglicka, Francúzska, Nemecka a Ruska, je pomôcť mladým dokonale si osvojiť cudzí jazyk. Program by mal byť aktuálny od budúceho školského roka.

TASR a slovenské časopisy

## Podmienky vízového režimu

Bratislava (TASR) – Občania SR môžu bez víz cestovať do 83 krajín sveta, z toho 26 predstavuje krajiny Európskej únie. Naopak, povolenie na vstup si potrebujú zaobstarať pri ceste do 119 krajín sveta. Slovensko je podľa údajov Ministerstva zahraničných vecí SR voči ostatným krajinám o čosi menej ústretové. Od cudzincov vyžaduje víza v prípade 138 krajín. Vo väčšine prípadov (168) je vízový režim symetrický, teda Slováci majú pri cestovaní do cudzích krajín rovnaké podmienky ako ich občania. Vo zvyšných prípadoch je vízový režim asymetrický. Na Slovensko tak môžu cestovať bez víz občania napríklad USA, Kanady, zatiaľ čo Slováci víza do týchto krajín potrebujú. Opačne je to zasa v prípade Ukrajiny, kam môžeme cestovať bez zvláštneho povolenia.

Z amerického kontinentu nevyžadujú vstupné víza pre občanov SR krajiny ako Argentína, Brazília, Bolívia, Ekvádor, Chile, Kolumbia, Kostarika, Mexiko, Peru, či Venezuela. V Ázii sa bez víz Slováci zaoberajú v Izraeli, Grúzsku, Japonsku, Južnej Korei, Malajzii, Hongkongu, Singapure či na Fili-

pínach.

Víza nevyžaduje ani Nový Zéland. Z afrických krajín nie sú vstupné víza potrebné pri cestách do Juhoafrickej republiky, Maroka, na Seychelské ostrovy, Mauricius, v prípade organizovanej turistiky ani do Tuniska. Podľa informácie Ministerstva zahraničných vecí SR je dĺžka povoleného pobytu bez víz vo všeobecnosti 90 dní, respektíve tri mesiace, v niektorých krajinách je tento čas kratší. (Napríklad v JAR 30 dní, na Filipínach 21 dní, v Bruneji 14 dní). Niektoré štáty vyžadujú spätnú letenku, potvrdenie o ubytovaní - tzv. voucher alebo pozývaci list. Najvýraznejšie sa slovenská vízová politika zmenila pred vstupom do Európskej únie v máji 2004. Na základe tzv. Čiernej knihy sme zaviedli vízovú povinnosť pre občanov Ukrajiny či Ruskej federácie, naopak, sme ju v súlade s tzv. Bielou knihou zrušili voči občanom viacerých latinskoamerických krajín (napríklad Mexika, Uruguaja, Venezuela a Brazílie) a ázijských krajín Japonska a Singapuru). V súčasnosti sa slovenská diplomacia usiluje najmä o zrušenie vízovej povinnosti zo strany USA.

## Traja najvyšší ústavní činitelia spolu obedovali

Bratislava (TASR) – Najvyšší ústavní činitelia s manželkami sa 15. januára zišli v Prezidentskom paláci na pracovnom obede. Ako tradične hosťiteľom premiéra Roberta Fica a predsedu Pavla Pašku s manželkami bol prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič. Hovorili o situácii na Slovensku, vnútornej a zahraničnej politike, súkromí, jednoducho o všetkom. Hlava štátu podobne pozve aj dva bývalé prezidentské manželské páry Michala a Emíliu Kováčovcov a Rudolfa a Irenu Schusterovcov.



FOTO TASR - Pavel Neubauer

Zľava doprava predseda NR SR Pavol Paška s manželkou Janou Paškovou, prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič s manželkou Silviou Gašparovičovou a premiér SR Robert Fico s manželkou Svetlanou Ficovou na pracovnom obede v Prezidentskom paláci v Bratislave 15. januára 2008.