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As we embark on a new year, the First Catholic Slovak Union Officers and Members of the Board of Directors extend their most sincere Fraternal Greetings and Best Wishes to all, with thanks for being loyal members.

- Rev. Thomas A. NastaChaplain
- Andrew M. RajecPresident
- Kevin J. CollinsVice-President
- Kenneth A. Arendt.....Executive Secretary
- John V. Tokarsky.....Treasurer

Message from the President

Happy New Year – Šťastný Nový Rok 2022

A brand-new year brings NEW Resolutions and ways we can make our lives better and avoid old weaknesses. Unfortunately, it's hard to "teach old horses new tricks" as the old saying goes.

Many of us should change our diets to include healthier foods and cut down on sweets (I love chocolate) and do more exercises. We know what we should do, but it's harder to execute.

On our spiritual life, many of us had the fortune to attend Catholic schools, but as time goes by our spirituality can lapse. How often do we recite the Rosary or attend week-day devotions? Maybe some New Year resolutions can address this.

On the temporal side, saving for the future



Andrew M. Rajec

should be on our to-do list. Providing for retirement or any unexpected events is wise. The FCSU provides insurance products and annuities that provide not only protection for ourselves and our families but also offer annuities to save for retirement.

Setting a good example for our kids by establishing and contributing to IRA or 401K plans in 2022 and beyond is only good sense.

In closing, I want to share a prayer for our entire Jednota Family for the New Year and wish you the best in 2022. Happy New Year. God Bless.

Andrew M. Rajec
National President



.....filled with FCSU Fun & Fraternalism!

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FCSU January Rates

8 Year Flex Annuity or IRA	3.70%
6 Year Flex Annuity or IRA	3.35%
6 Year Fixed Annuity or IRA	3.15%
Park 2 Annuity (not available in the state of NY)	2.25%
Park Free Plus Annuity or IRA- 1st year guarantee (new Park Free Plus max deposit \$25,000 per person)	1.75%
Settlement Options are based on an interest rate of	2.50% (5 yrs +)

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"Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." Rev. 21:5



January Reflection

Sister Maria Theresa Hronec, SS.C.M.

As we begin a New Year, I wish for you one blessed with God's own gift of peace. He can and wants to supply this gift. For us there remains the challenge of accepting each day as God sends or permits it. Within this span of time there are persons or circumstances bringing joys or sorrows, success or failures. Yet we are never alone. God is with us and He is in control. I find that trusting and turning to Him through the day does get me through. This peace is a gift of knowing I can rejoice and be grateful to a loving God who will always support me through each day. I pray He does so for you each day of 2022.

Translated by Sister Maria Theresa Hronec, SS.C.M., November 2021

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Vesel' Sa Ludske Stvorenie—prišlo k nám naše spasenie.
SBOR: Radujme sa,
Veselme sa
V tomto novom roku!</p> <p>2. Mesiáša narodenie—dosiahlo svoje splnenie.</p> <p>3. Panna z rodu kráľovského—počala Syna Božieho.</p> <p>4. Daj pre Tvoje narodenie,—Kriste, hriechov odpustenie.</p> | <p>1. Be glad, all people on the earth,
Our Savior came to give us great worth.
Chorus: Be glad, rejoice, yes, celebrate,
In this blessed New Year.</p> <p>2. Messiah's birth does now reveal
What prophecies had long concealed.</p> <p>3. Hail Virgin pure of royal race,
You bore God's Son by His divine grace.</p> <p>4. Given as gift, O Christ, your birth
Helped us to gain forgiveness on earth.</p> |
|--|---|

From the Desk of the Executive Secretary – February Holiday Hours



The Home Office will be closed on
Monday, February 21, 2022,
in observance of Presidents' Day.

NEWSPAPER DEADLINES

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

Issue Date	Copy Date
Wednesday, February 9	Monday, January 31
Wednesday, March 9	Monday, February 28
Wednesday, April 13	Monday, April 4

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:
Teresa Ivanec, Editor; fcsulifeeditor@gmail.com
First Catholic Slovak Union, Attention "JEDNOTA"
6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131-2398
FAX: 216-642-4310

January Message from the National Chaplain

Apostolic Letter issued Moto Proprio (on his own initiative) by Pope Francis instituting the Sunday of the Word of God

On September 30, 2019, the 1,599th anniversary of the death of Saint Jerome, Pope Francis issued an apostolic letter directing the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time to be celebrated as the Sunday of the Word of God. The Memorial of Saint Jerome was chosen as the day to publish the letter because Saint Jerome not only translated the original biblical texts from Hebrew and Greek into Latin, but he also is the source of many commentaries or explanations of several books of Scripture. This is a brief summary of the pope's letter.



Rev. Thomas Nasta

Pope Francis cites three sources for what he is to announce. The first is Saint Jerome, who wrote in his Commentary on the Book of Isaiah: "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." His second source is the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei verbum) from the Second Vatican Council, where, among other things, the importance of Scripture for the life of the Church is explained. The third is The Word of the Lord (Verbum Domini), Pope Benedict XVI's Apostolic Exhortation which emphasizes the use of Scripture in the liturgy.

Francis then writes "that the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the word of God." That particular Sunday is chosen because it occurs during the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

He encourages several practices to mark the occasion. Among them are the enthronement of the Sacred Text at Mass, a homily addressing the appropriate honor due to God's holy Word, and efforts to offer training for those reading the Scriptures at Mass to be "genuine proclaimers of the word."

Clergy are reminded that Sunday Mass is the only opportunity for many of the faithful to hear the Scriptures and have it applied in their lives. Therefore, homilies are to be well prepared and based on the Word of God. They are neither to be dull, long-winded, nor roam from topic to topic. The homilist who prays and reflects on the Scriptures can speak from the heart and thus reach the hearts of those who listen.

Francis notes the Holy Spirit was instrumental centuries ago when the sacred text was written and is effective today in those who hear God's word. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit continues today whenever the Scriptures are taught by the Church; when the Magisterium, or official teaching office of the church, interprets it; and whenever a believer makes it the norm of his or her spiritual life.

The Holy Father pinpoints two challenges Scripture offers. One is from Ezekiel, where the word of God is described as both sweet and bitter. Its bitterness comes from personal experiences of both the difficulties of our daily living of the Word and its rejection as meaningless for life. Its sweetness inspires us to share it with others and to announce its certain hope. The second is from the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man from the Gospel of Luke. The person who listens to Sacred Scripture is to be led to practice mercy.

The letter concludes with the pope's desire for the Sunday of the Word of God to be a means by which people become more familiar with Scripture for their daily living.

Fr. Thomas A. Nasta
National Chaplain

**If each member would sign up just one new member,
we could double our Society immediately
*THINK ABOUT IT!***

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FOS Celebrates 20th Anniversary with Dinner at Slovak Embassy

By Thomas W. Skladony*

Current and former directors of Friends of Slovakia (FOS), along with spouses and special guests, celebrated FOS' 20th anniversary on November 17, 2021, with a dinner at the Slovak Embassy in Washington, D.C. hosted by Ambassador Radovan Javorčík.

Earlier in the day, Beata Balogová, editor-in-chief of the Slovak daily SME, delivered the 2021 Czech and Slovak Freedom Lecture via live stream from Bratislava. After learning that Ms. Balogová would not be able to deliver her lecture in Washington, Ambassador Javorčík generously offered to host an event that would not only commemorate the anniversary but would feature a policy discussion of issues raised in the Freedom Lecture. In his welcome toast the Ambassador noted that while the dinner was taking place on the 32nd anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, the work of democracy building continues in Slovakia and elsewhere in Central Europe. Each generation must work to protect and expand the precious gift of freedom, he noted.

Distinguished guests included senior representatives of the International Republican Institute, National Democratic Institute, Congressional staff members, the Department of State desk officer for the Czech Republic and Slovakia, plus local arts leaders, business executives, and philanthropists. FOS special guests included founding directors Joseph T. Senko and Ambassador Theodore Russell, plus Andrew M. Rajec, president of the First Catholic Slovak Union, and his wife Idka.

Martin Bútora, Slovak Ambassador to the United States from 1999 to 2003 (and a driving force for the creation of FOS), sent a letter of congratulations that was read at the dinner by FOS Director Thomas W. Skladony. "In calling to mind these many accomplishments of the past 20 years, I do not mean to suggest that your work is done," Ambassador Bútora wrote. "History moves on, so that even as some issues are resolved, new challenges arise... I am especially pleased to know that one of the signature projects of Friends of Slovakia today is your series of international student summits focusing on key



Ambassador Javorčík delivering welcome toast at FOS-Embassy dinner

challenges to democracy, such as disinformation, freedom of the press, and upholding the rule of law."

In responding to Amb. Javorčík's welcoming toast, FOS Vice Chairman, Kenneth J. Bombara, congratulated Slovakia on its successes in becoming a key member of NATO, the European Union, and the Transatlantic community, while establishing a strong bond with the United States. He emphasized that the strength of the bond between Slovakia and the U.S. is rooted in the support of the Slovak American community as well as those individuals, professionals and organizations that consider themselves to be "Friends of Slovakia."

Fergus Shiel, managing editor of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, was the keynote speaker. He described the critical work performed by investigative journalists worldwide and the serious threats such journalists face, calling special attention to the 2018 murders of Slovak investigative reporter Jan Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kúšnírová.

Mr. Shiel praised the courageous response of Slovak journalists and civil society to these



FOS board members Cecilia Rokusek, Scott N. Thayer, Bibiana K. Popal, Lillian McEnany, Andrew P. Rajec, Joseph T. Senko, Sabina Sabados, Ambassador Radovan Javorčík, Martina Hrvolová, David P. Frankel, Kenneth J. Bombara, Roger Kodat, and Thomas W. Skladony



David Frankel (at right), founding director of FOS, introduces guest speaker Fergus Shiel

shocking crimes, which eventually led to resignation of prime minister Robert Fico and the trial and conviction of those responsible for the deaths of Kuciak and Kušnírová. FOS Director David Frankel moderated the discussion and a lively Q&A session.

"Friends of Slovakia is extremely grateful to Ambassador Javorčík for hosting us on this very special occasion," said Vice Chairman Ken Bombara, "It truly was a pleasure collaborating with the Ambassador and his hard-working team, and FOS dinner committee members Tom Skladony

and Martina Hrvolova, to organize this dinner and policy discussion, and we look forward to future collaboration in 2022 and beyond."

* Thomas W. Skladony is one of the founding board members of Friends of Slovakia and currently serves as Treasurer. (A video of the Czech and Slovak Freedom Lecture along with the text, as well as the text of the Bútora congratulatory letter can be accessed on the FOS website www.friendsofslovakia.org.)

SS Cyril & Methodius Appeal Continues in 2022

Thank you everyone who supported last year's Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal. It is with great pleasure to announce that 217 donors gave \$30,848.49 last year. Here is a breakdown of donors and the amount given:

Parish Collections	12	\$12,641.49
Slovak Fraternal Organizations (including Home Office donations).....	77	\$ 8,125.00
Clergy and Religious of Slovak Heritage	32	\$ 3,060.00
Individual Donations	96	\$ 7,032.00

A direct mailing for the 2022 Appeal has been sent to local district and branch leaders from the four Catholic Slovak Fraternal Organizations, members of the Slovak Catholic Federation, and previous donors. Your support is needed each year because money collected in the Appeal goes to help pay for the operating costs of the Pontifical College of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Rome, the residence of priests from Slovakia selected by their bishops to undertake graduate studies.

Anyone who wishes to contribute to the 2022 Appeal but did not receive a letter asking for a donation is asked to fill out the information in the box at the bottom of this article and mailing it along with your check payable to the Slovak Catholic Federation to the address provided. Donations in any amount are deeply appreciated and are acknowledged. Gifts received after November 30, 2022 will be credited toward the 2023 Appeal. Thank you again for your goodness and generosity.

The Slovak Catholic Federation was founded in 1911 by Rev. Joseph Murgas, founding Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Slovak Church, Wilkes-Barre, PA. The Federation brings together under one banner both individuals of Slovak heritage as well as Catholic Slovak Fraternal Organizations for cultural, religious and educational needs. Serving as Moderator is the Right Reverend Gary Hoover, O.S.B., Abbot of St. Andrew Svorad Abbey, Cleveland, OH. National President is Reverend Andrew S. Hvozdic, V.F., Supreme Chaplain of the

Slovak Catholic Sokol and Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish, Harvey's Lake, PA and Gate of Heaven Parish, Dallas, PA. Reverend Thomas A. Nasta, National Chaplain of the First Catholic Slovak Union and Parochial Vicar with Senior Priest status at Our Lady of Grace Church, Pennel, PA, serves as First Vice President of the Federation and is the Appeal Coordinator.

44th Annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal

Name _____

Address _____

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State _____ Zip _____

Amount \$ _____

Please make check payable to Slovak Catholic Federation and mail to:

Rev. Thomas A. Nasta, National First Vice President
Slovak Catholic Federation
Our Lady of Grace Church
225 Bellevue Avenue
Pennel, PA 19047-4052

District 3 Keeps Traditions Alive with 26th Annual Štedrý Večer

The George Onda District 3 held its 26th annual Štedrý Večer (in English, Christmas Eve) on Sunday, December 5, 2021 at the Christ, Our Shepherd Center in Greensburg, PA. There were 156 members and guests in attendance. The evening began with Mass celebrated in the Chapel by the Most Reverend Larry J. Kulick, Bishop of the Diocese of Greensburg. Assisting Bishop Kulick were Father Daniel Ulishney, Pastor of St. Mary Parish in Export, PA, and Seminarian Andrew Hamilton. Music for the Mass was provided by the Pittsburgh Slovaks under the direction of Sue and Rudy Ondrejco.

Following Mass, the attendees proceeded to the dining room to tables laden with fruit, nuts, wine and Oplatki with honey. The first star in the evening sky was spotted by ten year old Hunter Ryan Mohan, son of Lenny and Abby (Pipak) Mohan of Branch 199. Next was served the traditional meal of: mushroom/sauerkraut soup; baked fish; pagach; bobalki; pierogis; prunes; and peas. Dessert consisted of nut and apricot kolache.

Bishop Kulick presided as Master of Ceremonies which he has kindly done for many years as a Priest and then a Monsignor; this year we were honored to have him continue as our Bishop. He introduced the National Officers present: President Andrew M. Rajec and wife Idka; Vice President Kevin Collins; General Council Gary Matta; National Chairman of Auditors Greg Maurer; Supreme Court Member James Bench and wife, Kay; and Supreme Court Member and Director of Independent Agents Andrew P. Rajec. Also present were Mrs. Geraldine Hricik, wife of our deceased National President Emeritus and Mrs. Florence Matta, wife of our deceased National Treasurer Emeritus. Our Region 4 Director James Marmol and wife Patty were also introduced. The George Onda District Officers present were: President William Patty and Vice President Darlene Patty. Also in attendance was former National Chairman of Auditors, Karen Hunka, who is now a Missionary in Ghana, Africa.

Numerous beautiful door prizes were awarded. The group then returned to the Chapel for more singing and a presentation of the traditional Shepherd's Play by the renowned Pittsburgh Slovaks.

We truly love that this beautiful Slovak tradition is kept alive in our district and we encourage all to return, especially our youth so it may be preserved for years to come.

**- Submitted by Linda L. Gonta
Secretary, George Onda District.**



Photos courtesy of Beth Hricik Silva

District 3 Keeps Traditions Alive with 26th Annual Štedrý Večer



LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Fr. Ed Dougherty, M.M., The Christophers' Board of Directors

Learning to Trust in God

The 1943 film *The Song of Bernadette* opens with the quote, "For those who believe in God, no explanation is necessary. For those who do not believe in God, no explanation is possible." This line is derived from the teachings of Saint Thomas Aquinas, and it expresses such an important theme within the story that it is reiterated near the end of the film when the character of Abbe Dominique Peyramale, played by Charles Bickford, speaks these words to skeptics who cannot get beyond their doubts, despite the miraculous occurrences that have taken place in their humble town of Lourdes, France.

This struggle to believe in God and in his miraculous hand at work in the world around us is an enduring challenge that has been faced by people from all walks of life, and it is a challenge that even the saints have faced. In the Gospels, we see the Apostles themselves struggling with doubt, with perhaps the most famous story of doubt taking place when Thomas declares that he will not believe in the Resurrection until he sees Christ with his eyes and feels Him with his hands.

Christ's response to grant Thomas the proof he seeks demonstrates the reality of God's miraculous interventions in the world. This type of intervention is similar to what took place at Lourdes, where Saint Bernadette experienced visions of our Blessed Mother and then healing waters poured forth from a spring in the ground, where thousands of miracles have since taken place.

But we should also remember that, after dispelling Thomas' doubts, Christ said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." This is the challenge that most of us are faced with for the majority of our lifetimes. Even those who encounter the miraculous at some point in their lives must return to everyday reality where they might struggle to maintain faith in God. But we might also see this challenge as a gift because Christ is giving us the opportunity to exercise

faith in the same way we might exercise our brains or the muscles in our bodies. And when we exercise faith, we cultivate endurance that will prepare us to be tested.

The Christophers recently produced a prayer card on faith that is a beautiful meditation on the mindset that leads us to trust more fully in the providence of God. This prayer helps us to realize that, in order to cultivate our faith, we must first open ourselves to God and to realizing how He guides us through life experiences. And by exercising faith, especially in the most difficult times, we inspire others to face their own challenges and to cultivate faith within themselves.

As we start into this new year of 2022, one great resolution is to recommit ourselves to cultivating the faith within ourselves, our families, and our communities. When we do this, we will find a greater ability to see God at work in our lives and in the world around us, and we will need less explanation for those things that are inexplicable. This leads to wisdom and an understanding of how to cooperate with grace, even when we can't predict the outcome. It is this way of being that will inspire others in our families and communities to let go of doubt and move closer to the joy of knowing and believing in God.



The FCSU Celebrates Advent & Christmas Season in Slovakia with December Webinar

In the early evening of December 6, 2021 - an auspicious day in of itself! - many members throughout our Society explored the traditions, customs, and foods of the Advent and Christmas seasons in Slovakia. The live webinar was hosted by two leaders of the not-for-profit Global Slovakia - its Founder Dr. Zuzana Palovic and its Co-Director Dr. Gabriela Bereghazyova - and sponsored by the First Catholic Slovak Union. FCSU National Officers participating in the webinar included: National President Andrew M. Rajec, Executive Secretary Kenneth A. Arendt, Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados, and Region 6 Director Thomas J. Ivanec. Over 100 attendees in all joined the event to learn about and share stories about Slovak Advent and Christmas Customs.

Topics covered: how St. Nicholas Day, the day on which the webinar was held this year, is a very special pre-Christmas celebration in Slovakia. St. Nicholas (Mikuláš, in Slovak), derives from the legend of Nicholas of Myra, a bishop in 4th century Greece. He was known for selling off his own items and giving the money to the poor. Slovak customs related to the day of St Nicholas have been evolving for centuries, all relating to beliefs established by this legend - those of prosperity and the role of Mikuláš as a protector of the most vulnerable. Today in Slovakia, children look forward to the morning of December 6th when they find sweets and fruits in the boots they carefully cleaned the evening before and then placed under the window.

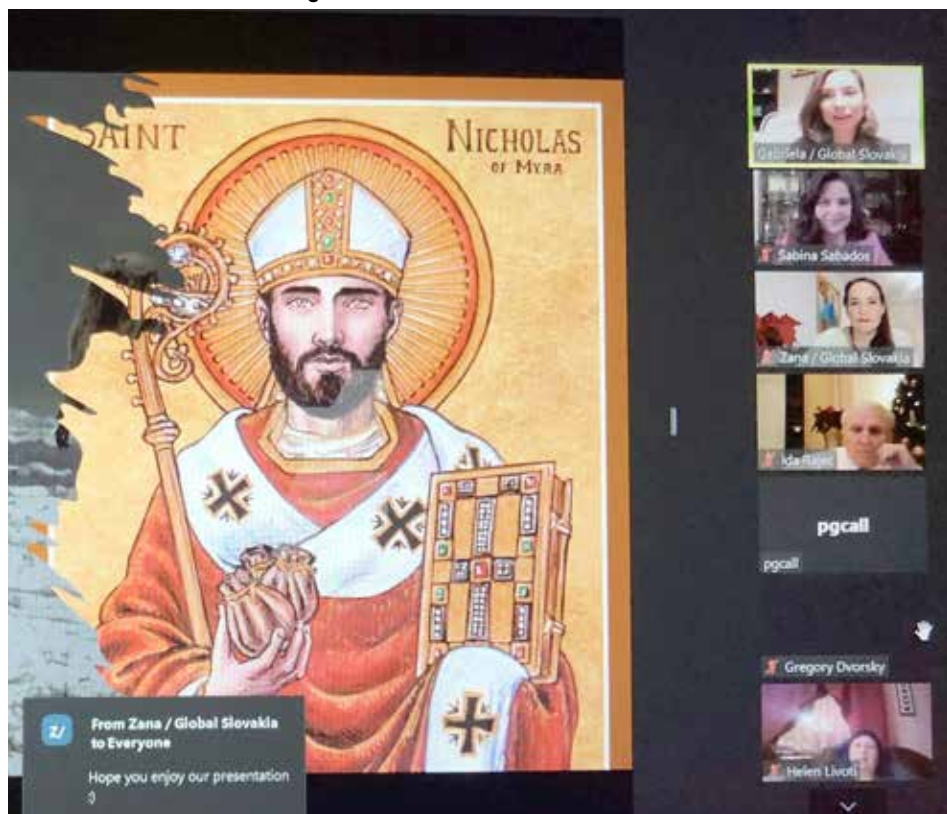
The webinar also examined Advent in Slovakia, how it is a season filled with traditions, age-old practices, rituals, stories, and special foods. Also discussed was how far from the hustle and bustle of commercial Christmas, Advent in the heart of Europe really has been, and remains today - in Slovakia and in many homes.

A recording of this webinar is available on the FCSU website at:

<https://www.fcsu.com/explore-christmas-customs-in-slovakia/>

Look for a webinar on the Easter Season in Slovakia in the coming months.

- Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director



Scenes from a Delightful District 14 Christmas Party

District 14, the Joseph L. Kostik District held its annual Christmas party on the evening of Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at Rachel's Restaurant in Austintown, OH. The festivities were beautifully coordinated by Branch 682's Suzanne Carney. In addition to a delicious meal, attendees enjoyed a 50/50 raffle and everyone went home with a great door prize. A great time was had by all!



(L – R) Branch 682 Treasurer Suzanne Carney with Branch 731 President Irene Makovec



(L – R) National Vice President Kevin Collins, District 14 President John Leskovyansky, and Region 6 Director Thomas Ivanec



Literally the "icing on the cake" to a delicious full course meal - a Slovak-style Merry Christmas dessert!



Branch 682 Vice President Barbara Hosa with the 50/50 raffle



Branch 259 Officers (L – R) Secretary Vivian Sedlacko, Vice President Rosemarie Yuhas, and President Eugene Yuhas



Branch 682 Members (L – R) Standing: Teri (Hirt) Aaron, President Drew Hirt, and Treasurer Suzanne Carney. Seated: Florence Hirt



Suzanne Carney draws attendee tickets for door prizes



Door prizes galore included two baskets of Slovak & Czech spirits donated by National Vice President Kevin Collins and Region 6 Director Thomas Ivanec

Branch 45 & 746 Learn About Science of Alcohol

On November 14, 2021, Jednota members from Branch 45 and 746 attended a "Science of Alcohol" presentation hosted by the Slovak-American Cultural Center as part of SACC's Science Lecture Series. In addition to a lecture, the event featured tastings of Slovak spirits, including Slovak vodka and the first-ever Slovak whiskey, samplings of artisanal klobasy, home-made "slane ty-cinky" (salt sticks) and other appetizers, as well as old-fashioned, in-person socializing.

The event was hosted by Wesmont Liquors G4 in Wood-Ridge, NJ, a Slovak family-owned state-of-the-art liquor store. If you live in New Jersey, please consider this distinctive liquor store your new one-stop shop for traditional spirits! This month Wesmont Liquors is launching delivery and shipping just in time for the holidays! In their large portfolio they also offer unique custom-made gift baskets for any occasion. The new store management is proud to present a variety of Slovak products to the Slovak-American community here in the US. At this unique store, customers can find a variety of Slovak products such as Goral Vodka Master, Familia Vodka Premium and the first Slovak Whiskey called Nestville. These products are produced in a historical town named Stara Lubovna located near the Tatra Mountains in Slovakia.

Interestingly, the town of Stara Lubovna received the official status of "Free Royal Town" in 1343, and with it, the right for citizens to manufacture spirits, thus beginning a tradition of distilling in the region. "Our spirits are made from wheat, corn and potatoes grown on our own land in Slovakia and from the mineral-rich water originating in the Tatra Mountains—some of the best water in Europe. Our products represent the culmination of a 700-year-old local tradition of distilling, together with the purest ingredients and modern manufacturing technology." Tourists can visit "Nestville Park" in Hniezdne, Slovakia (a 5-minute drive from Stara Lubovna) to experience the history, traditions and folk art of the local area as well as to appreciate an exhibition of modern distillation technology (<http://www.nestvillewhisky.sk/sk/navstivte-nas>).

What are the near-term plans for the business? "We continue to introduce new products, including the first Slovak whiskey, available in formats such as traditional, 3-year-old, 6-year-old, 9-year-old, single barrel, and flavored, a line of flavored vodkas including grapefruit, cranberry, lime and orange, fruit liqueurs, and an entirely new class of fruit-distilled spirits, sold under the label "1343." At Wesmont Liquors G4, we plan to expand the portfolio of Slovak products offered, including Slovak beer," explains Juraj Jaremko, the international brand ambassador for the Nestville portfolio. Check out Wesmont Liquors G4 website at www.wesmontliquorsg4.com or follow them on their social media account @wesmontliquorsG4 or stop by the spacious store in New Jersey to shop and attend a tasting.

Attendees of SACC's event were also treated to delicious samples of hand-crafted Slovak klobasy produced by a budding new business recently started by business partners Vladimir Burdelak and Elena Rodriguez.

- Submitted by: **Sabina Sabados**,
Region 1 Director





Branch 746 Members at the annual Lipka Academy Slovak Christmas Children's performance.



Students of Lipka Academy ages 3-17 along with the Director of Lipka Academy, Marianna Fecova (Branch 746 Member), Slovak teachers, Consul General Milan Vrbovsky, Mary Ann Ranahan (Branch 746 Treasurer), Joanne Tkach Polt (Branch 746 Vice President) and Emilia Filak (FCSU Supreme Court Member). Branch 746 presented the school with a donation of \$1,000 to continue their excellent work in teaching our future generation our beautiful Slovak language and traditions.



Proud graduating students of Lipka Academy receiving their diplomas accredited by the Slovak government.



The youngest students of Lipka Academy performing traditional Slovak Christmas songs.



(L – R) Milan Vrbovsky, Consul General of the Slovak Consulate in New York along with his son and Emilia Filak, FCSU Supreme Court member.

Vianoce v Lipke Academy Boli Opäť Čarovné

Vianoce- najkrajšie sviatky roka. Prinášajú so sebou ľudskosť, radosť, pokoj a predovšetkým lásku. Pre deti je to však aj obdobie darčiekov, na ktoré sa nesmierne tešia. Kto by už len nechcel obdarit' detskú dušu a vyčariť radosť v detských očiach?

To, že Vianoce nie sú len o darčekom, ale predovšetkým o ľudských hodnotách vedia aj deti v Lipke Academy. Po predchádzajúcom ťažšom roku pre nás všetkých priniesli radosť, vyčarili úsmev všetkým, ktorí sa vianočnej oslavy zúčastnili. Prvýkrát sme mali možnosť odovzdať právoplatné slovenské vysvedčenia študentom, ktorí v júni komisionálnou skúškou ukončili vzdelávanie v slovenskom jazyku v Lipke Academy po trinástich rokoch. Bola to slávnostná chvíľa pre nás všetkých a sme na nich veľmi hrdí.

Vianočná atmosféra, tajuplné čaro, vianočné piesne a kapustnica. To všetko sa dalo zažiť v Lipke Academy. Celý program sa niesol v slovenskom jazyku, nakoľko slovenčina je živým jazykom aj u mladej generácie žijúcej v USA a práve udržiavaním a pracovaním na jej zachovaní vďačíme aj členom Prvej Slovenskej Katolíckej Jednoty, Branch 746 na čele s ich regionálnou riaditeľkou Sabinou Sabados, ktorí nás finančne znovu podporili a aj vďaka nim máme možnosť rozvíjať a skvalitňovať výučbu slovenského jazyka. Vážia si našu prácu a veľmi im záleží na mladej slovenskej generácii vyrastajúcej v USA. Aj vďaka nim Lipka Academy má možnosť sa posúvať a rásť a poskytovať svoje služby všetkým, ktorí majú o udržanie jazyka záujem. Zo srdca im ďakujeme za finančnú pomoc, podporu a možnosť vždy ich

vidieť na našich vystúpeniach.

Svojou návštevou nás potešil aj generálny konzul v New Yorku Milan Vrbovský, ktorý ako novo- nastupujúci v úrade sa veľmi pekne prihovril všetkým prítomným. Už teraz sa tešíme na spoluprácu a na spoločné projekty, ktoré obohatia naše deti.

Vystúpenia sa zúčastnil aj miestny farár Mariusz Luksza, ktorý sa tešil z vystúpenia detí a udržiavania slovenského jazyka aj u najmladšej generácie. Sme mu vďační za túto možnosť patriť pod slovenský kostol Svätej Rodiny v Linden.

Veríme, že si každý odniesol len tie najkrajšie zážitky a že v tejto tradícii budeme v zdraví aj naďalej pokračovať.

S vďačnosťou a prianím zdravia všetkým,
Marianna Fecova- Lipka Academy

Christmas at Lipka Academy Was Magical Once Again

Christmas – one of the most beautiful holidays of the year. It brings with it humanity, joy, peace and above all love. However, it is also a time of gifts for children, which they are extremely looking forward to. Who wouldn't want to endow a child's soul and conjure up joy in children's eyes?

The fact that Christmas is not just about gifts, but above all about human values, the children at Lipka Academy also know. After the previous difficult year, they brought joy to all of us, conjured up a smile for all who attended the Christmas celebration. For the first time, we had the opportunity to hand over official Slovak certificates to students who completed their education in the Slovak language at the Lipka Academy in June after a commissioned examination. It was a festive moment for all of us and we are very proud of them.

A Christmas atmosphere, mysterious charm, Christmas songs and cabbage. All this could be experienced at Lip-

ka Academy. The entire program was held in Slovak, as Slovak is a living language for the young generation living in the US; a fact that we owe to the members of the First Slovak Catholic Union, Branch 746, led by their Regional Director Sabina Sabados, who have been maintaining and working to preserve it. They have again shown their support, and thanks to them we have the opportunity to develop and improve the teaching of the Slovak language. They value our work and care very much about the young Slovak generation growing up in the USA. Thanks to them, Lipka Academy has the opportunity to move forward, and grow and provide its services to all who are interested in maintaining the language. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts for their financial help, support, and the opportunity to always see them at our performances.

We were also pleased with the visit by the Consul Gen-

eral in New York, Milan Vrbovský, who, as a newcomer to the office, and very nicely addressed all present. We are already looking forward to cooperation and joint projects that will enrich our children.

The performance was also attended by Fr. Mariusz Luksza, a local priest who enjoyed the performance of children and the maintenance of the Slovak language even among the youngest generation. We are grateful for this opportunity to belong to the Slovak Church of the Holy Family in Linden, NJ.

We believe that everyone had only the most beautiful experiences at this event, and that we will continue this tradition in good health.

With gratitude and best wishes to all,
Marianna Fecova- Lipka Academy

2021 Vilija Celebration at St. Andrew Abbey of Cleveland

The Benedictine monks of St. Andrew Svorad Abbey in Cleveland, OH, in conjunction with the Cleveland Slovak Radio Club, hosted their annual Vilija on Sunday, December 5, 2021. Held in the cafeteria of Benedictine High School on the Abbey grounds, the Vilija featured a traditional meatless Christmas Eve "feast" of oplatky, mushroom soup, fish, green peas, bobalky, pierogi, and poppy seed and nutrolls. Food was prepared by members of the Radio Club, of which Henry Horvath (Branch 855) is president. The first course (mushroom soup) was served by the monks, most of whom are members of Branch 24. Ralph Szubski, the Accordion Man, provided music for dancing and listening pleasure throughout the day. After the meal, entertainment was provided by the Lúčina Slovak Folklore Ensemble of Greater Cleveland. The troupe performed dances from Slovakia. Lúčina's director is Thomas Ivanec, Region 6 Director and Fraternal Activities Director for Branch 24. Many members of the First Catholic Slovak Union attended the Vilija, including those in Branches 1, 24, 450, and 855. In addition, Branches 24 and 855 jointly sponsored a raffle with 10 prizes of \$100 each for winning tickets. All raffle proceeds went directly to support St. Andrew Abbey Monastery.

- Submitted by Region 6 Director
Thomas J. Ivanec



Lúčina Director, Branch 24 Fraternal Activities Director and FCSU Region 6 Director Thomas Ivanec introduces the Lúčina Slovak Folklore Ensemble of Greater Cleveland.



(L - R) Bro Gabriel, Fr. Michael, and Fr. Gerard, all Branch 24 Members, and of St. Andrew Abbey Svorad lead the crowd in singing Christmas hymns in Slovak and English.



(L - R) Branch 24 Maria Cvicela, Branch 450 Mike Anderko, and Branch 1 Jana Horvath take a break from preparing and serving the Vilija meal.



Branch 24 Miriam Visnovsky and Branch 450 Caroline Visnovsky



Branch 24 Auditors Joe and Sue Moynihan



Branch 1 Members (L - R): Nancy, Dolores, and Adam Hornack. Seated: Branch 1 Financial Secretary/Treasurer Mary Dubber

2021 Vilija Celebration at St. Andrew Abbey of Cleveland



Branch 24 Fr. Michael Brunovsky and Branch 855 Barbara Sutilla start drawing winners for the raffle.



Some of the Branch 855 Members in attendance (L – R): Barbara Shedlock, Kelly Shedlock, Branch President Barb Sutilla, Gary Hitsman, Branch Auditor & Slovak Radio Club President Henry Horvath, Branch 855 Treasurer Ann Sutilla, and Branch 855 Vice President & Slovak Radio Club Treasurer Karin Scally.



Branch 24 Donna Oros and Branch 450 and Slovak Radio Club Producer Milan Kolbusky



Branch 24 & Branch 855 jointly sponsored a money-tree fundraiser to benefit the monks of St. Andrew Abbey Svorad. (L – R) Lauren and Georgia, two of Santa's helpers, also received school credit for their volunteerism.



Three couples from Lúčina performed at the 2021 Vilija (L-R): Front Row, Branch 24 Anna Nosek, Branch 450 Caroline Visnovsky, Branch 24 Kristyna Nosek. Back Row, Branch 1 Adam Hornack, Branch 24 John Allen-McIntyre, and Branch 24 Vice President John Moynihan.



Branch 24 Treasurer Joe Oros and Branch 24 Member Johanna Oros



The 2021 Christmas Vilija was another well attended event, with some 200 tickets sold. Twenty-seven members of Branch 24 were among the attendees



Branch 24's Bill and Patty Allen



(L – R) Branch 855 Treasurer Ann Sutilla and Branch 855 President Barbara Sutilla were hard at work selling money-tree raffle tickets.

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRANCH 6 – STREATOR, ILLINOIS

The St. Stephens Society, Branch 06, will hold a meeting on Saturday, February 5, 2022, at 1406 N. Baker St., Streator, IL. The meeting will begin at 11:00AM. The agenda will be to elect delegates to the 52nd Quadrennial Convention to be held from July 30 – August 2, 2022. For more information, please call Paul Chismar at 815-822-8851.

Paul Chismar, Secretary

BRANCH 7 – HOUTZDALE, PENNSYLVANIA

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Society Branch 7 will hold a meeting on Sunday, April 3, 2022, at 9:00 AM at Holy Trinity Catholic Church Parish Hall, 52 Parish St. Ramey, PA 16671. All members are invited to attend the meeting.

Joseph C. Cervenak, President

BRANCH 23 – JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 23 will hold their 1st annual branch meeting on Sunday, April 3, 2022. The meeting place will be at Denny's Family Restaurant on Theatre Drive in Richland. The meeting will begin at 1:30PM. Please try to attend, as a Branch member you are welcome. It's always a pleasure to meet with fellow members of our Branch and share time. We come from good stock and it makes for a good time.

Voting for Delegates to attend the FCSU 52nd. Convention will take place at this meeting. The Convention will be held on Saturday, July 30-Monday, Aug 2, 2022 in Ohio. Other upcoming events will be talked about too. Please join us. If you have any questions, please call Theresa 814 254 2532

Theresa Cassat, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 24 – CLEVELAND, OHIO

Attention all Branch 24 members: the branch is starting a New Member Referral Program. Branch 24 is offering \$25 for each new member you refer who purchases an insurance policy or annuity through a licensed agent or the Home Office.

A new member is someone who does not already own an FCSU product. To learn how to participate in this program, please call Branch 24 Fraternal Activities Director Tom Ivanec at (440) 668-7797.

Tom Ivanec, Fraternal Activities Director

BRANCH 24 – CLEVELAND, OHIO

Branch 24 will hold a meeting on Sunday, February 20, 2022. This will be a hybrid meeting that starts at 1PM. Branch 24 members will meet in the Activity Center of St. Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church, 8111 Brecksville Road, Brecksville, OH. We will elect branch delegates to the FCSU 52nd Quadrennial Convention at this meeting. All COVID protocols in place at the time such as masking and social distancing will be observed at the in-person meeting. If preferred, members may participate in the meeting virtually.

Intent to Run for Delegate Required: We will compile a ballot of potential delegates prior to the meeting. Any eligible Branch 24

member who wishes to be on the ballot of potential delegates for election must email their name(s) to Branch 24 Secretary Anna Gibson prior to the meeting @ branch24fcsu@gmail.com.

Meeting RSVP Required: All members who plan to attend this meeting, either in-person or virtually, must call Branch 24 Fraternal Activities Director Tom Ivanec at 440-668-7797 by February 13, 2022 - either to make in-person reservations or get details on how to join the meeting virtually.

Note: should circumstances in February preclude a safe in-person gathering, the meeting will be changed to an all virtual meeting. If this happens, Branch 24 Secretary Anna Gibson will send an email to all branch members from whom we have an address from the most recent branch meetings. Also, please check the FCSU website closer to the meeting date and/or call Branch 24 Fraternal Activities Director Tom Ivanec at 440-668-7797 prior to the meeting.

Robert Kopco, President

BRANCH 35 – BRADDOCK, PENNSYLVANIA

St Michaels, Branch 35 will hold a virtual meeting on Sunday, February 20, 2022, at 1:00 PM. The agenda will include election of delegates for the upcoming 2022 FCSU National Convention. Branch members who are interested in attending the meeting are asked to call Janet Sullivan at (412) 824-4185.

Janet Sullivan, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 40 – STREATOR, ILLINOIS

Branch 40 will hold its annual meeting on January 16, 2022, at Chipper's Grill 1733 N. Bloomington St. Streator, IL at 2:00 PM. Please wear a mask and maintain social distancing. Election of officers will take place. Lunch will follow the meeting. In the event that state guide lines change and interfere with these plans we will schedule a zoom meeting. Please call (815) 672-6142 (leave a message) if you are able to attend by January 14, 2022.

Theresa Graves, Secretary/Treasurer

BRANCH 45 – NEW YORK, NEW YORK

The St. Matthew the Evangelist Society, Branch 45KSJ, will hold a meeting on Sunday January 23, 2022. We will meet in person at 1:00 PM after the Slovak Mass at St. John Nepomucene Church, 66th Street and 1st Avenue, New York City.

We kindly ask that all members attend this meeting.

Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary

ČLENSKÁ SCHÔDZA SPOLKU SV. MATÚŠA Č. 45 1KSJ V NEW YORK CITY

Oznamujeme členom nášho spolku, že sa uskutoční členská schôdza sv. Matúša č. 45 1KSJ v New Yorku v nedeľu 23. Januára 2022 o 13:00 hod po slovenskej svätej omši v Slovenskom kostole sv. Jána Nepomuckého na Prvej Avenue a 66-tej ulici. Láskaovo žiadame našich členov o účasť na tejto schôdzi.

Mária Juráši - pokladníčka

BRANCH 89 – MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

As an incentive to grow Branch 89, members who refer new branch members or add a new contract of their own are now eligible to receive a Branch award. Specifically, Branch 89 members who successfully refer new members can receive an award of up to \$100. Members that add a new contract of their own can receive an award of up to \$50. To be eligible for an award, new policies must be issued during the calendar year in which Branch 89 otherwise qualifies for an FCSU stipend under bylaw section 4.05. Award amounts will depend on the amount of the FCSU stipend for the year and the number of members qualifying for an award. Awards cannot be combined or multiplied and members are limited to one award per calendar year.

Contact Financial Secretary Nancy Carol Novak at 262-305-4041 or email "novakncp@charter.net" for more information or to request an award application.

Paul Novak, Secretary/Treasurer

BRANCH 153 – CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

St. Stephen Branch 153 will host its semi-annual meeting on Saturday, March 26 at 11:30AM. The meeting will be at Cucina Biagio 7319 West Lawrence Avenue, Harwood Heights, IL. At this meeting, we will elect 4 delegates and alternate delegates to the National Convention. Please call Dorothy Jurcenko at (708) 995 7378 before March 16 to reserve a place at the meeting.

Dorothy Jurcenko, Financial Secretary

BRANCH 162 – UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Wendelin Society, Branch 162, will hold its branch meeting on Sunday, February 27, 2022, at 9:00AM at the Dairy Queen Restaurant, 575 West Main Street, Uniontown, PA. Officers' reports will be given and upcoming branch activities will be discussed. The Donations Committee will make its recommendations, election of delegates to the 52nd Quadrennial Convention of the FCSU will take place, and Region 4 Director James Marmol will advise us of developments from the Home Office. Call Dolores Marmol at 724-437-4983 before February 20th if you and your guest wish to attend the meeting.

Dolores Marmol, Secretary

BRANCH 181 – UNITED, PENNSYLVANIA

Happy New Year Branch 181 members! Branch members are invited to attend the March 5, 2022 meeting after the St. Florian Parish 5PM Mass in the parish social hall. This will be combined with the George Onda District 3 meeting to be conducted first. Election of Delegates for branch members will take place for the upcoming FCSU 52nd Quadrennial Convention to be held July 30 - August 2, 2022. Delegate qualifications will be followed according to Bylaw 11.03 and Bylaw 11.04 which require members to be active in the branch one year prior to the convention and abide by the regulations of the branch. The annual family picnic scheduled for June and other branch activities will be discussed. Please

RSVP if you plan to attend by calling Vicki Hricik at 724-547-0803. Refreshments will be served.

CDC guidelines will be followed as needed.

Vicki Hricik, Secretary

BRANCH 228 – LORAIN, OHIO

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Lodge, Branch 228 will hold their next meeting on Monday, March 21, 2022 at 7 PM IN THE VIRTUAL FORMAT using the FreeConferenceCall.com Audio Conferencing service method as used for our 2021 meetings. Our meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month except for the months of January, February, July and August when no meetings are held. All meetings begin at 7 P.M. and will be held VIRTUALLY until further notice. Contact Lisa at 440-773-1442 for specific instructions to attend virtually.

The branch will hold its annual election of officers and bylaw review during each December meeting. The exact date for this year's election meeting is December 19, 2022. At that time, we will also elect two (2) representatives to serve on the American Slovak Club Board of Directors.

This past December's election results for Br. 228 officers were as follows: President - Luis Palos, Vice-President - Ryan Trifiletti, Financial Secretary - Lisa Trifiletti-Palos, Activities Director/Auditor - Theresa Arendt and Recording Secretary - Thomas Zuffa. Their terms expire December 31, 2022.

For representatives to the American Slovak Club Board of Directors, Ken Arendt and Theresa Arendt were each elected to a 3-year term expiring December 31, 2024.

Please continue to pray to our Lord God for a cure to all the problems of our world. And, remember to give thanks to God for all His blessings.

Thomas B. Zuffa, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 259 – STRUTHERS, OHIO

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 259, will hold a meeting on February 6, 2022, at 2:00 PM at 175 Harvey Street, Struthers, Ohio. We will conduct an audit and elect the delegates for the 52nd Quadrennial Convention (July 30th to August 2nd, 2022); and also discuss the activities for 2022. Members are invited and encouraged to attend.

On behalf of all the officers, we would like to extend our wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Vivian Sedlacko, Secretary

BRANCH 276 – MCKEESPORT, PENNSYLVANIA

Branch 276 met on Sunday, November 14 for the Fall meeting. Meetings for 2022 are planned for March 13, May 15, and November 13. The March meeting will be held at 1 PM at Eat & Park Restaurant on Route 30, North Versailles, PA, near Walmart and the Great Valley Shopping Center, unless the COVID situation requires postponement. We will hear reports from the treasurer and financial secretary. We will also discuss district events and the upcoming

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DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISTRICT 4 – THE MSGR RURA DISTRICT

The next semi-annual meeting of the Msgr. Rura District of New Jersey will be held on Sunday, March 20, 2022 in the downstairs meeting room of Holy Family Church (210 Monroe Street, Linden, NJ, 07036). The District Luncheon will be served at 2:15 PM. Okres meeting will follow. Convention delegate (and alternate) for the July 2022 Convention will be elected at this meeting. Kindly RSVP to Joanne Tkach Polt @ 732-762-3148 by March 9th if you plan on attending. Please bring non-perishable items for donation to a local food pantry.

Mary Kapitan, Secretary

DISTRICT 6 – THE PITTSBURGH DISTRICT

The Pittsburgh District met on Sunday, November 21, 2021 at the Holy Trinity Church Hall of St Thomas the Apostle Parish. The meeting was hosted by Branch 254 and members enjoyed a luncheon of stuffed cabbage and fried chicken. At the business meeting the current officers were re-elected for 2022. Branch 35 agreed to host the Spring, 2022 meeting at a date to be announced. Please be in touch if your branch would like to host Fathers' Day or the Fall meeting.

The 52nd Jednota Convention is planned for July 30 to August 2, 2022 at the Holiday Inn in Independence, Ohio. District president David Matta was elected district delegate. The district urges all branches to be sure to follow all by-laws as you elect convention delegates.

Other announcements of local interest:

- WPSCA: Postponed – contact Joe Senko for additional information. Consider joining the organization and get their newsletter.

- Slovak classes: Postponed – contact Joe Senko for additional information.

As always, members are urged to check the Jednota for updates on FCSU business matters as well as contests and tournaments. This is the time to be sure your beneficiaries are up to date. FCSU insurance information and forms can be found at www.fcsu.com. Many interesting Slovak-related links may be found at fcsu.com/resources.

Fraternally,

Margaret A. Nasta, Secretary
manasta@verizon.net

DISTRICT 7 – THE REV. JOHN MARTVON DISTRICT

District 7 will hold our 1st Annual Meeting on April 24, 2022. Branch 23 will be the host. This District meeting will be at The Bistro on Nees Avenue at the Clover Leaf in Geistown (Near OSheas Candy). The meeting is set to begin at 2PM. We would like to have our Branches come to let us know how you all are doing. Come and see what's happening in our District. We will need to discuss the upcoming Convention. The Convention will be held on Saturday, July 30 - Monday, August 2, 2022 in Ohio. All Branch members in our District are welcome to attend this meeting. We are still taking precautions concerning the Viruses. If you have any questions please call Theresa Cassat @ 814 254 2532.

Theresa Cassat, Vice President

DISTRICT 9- THE FRANK T. HOLLY JR. DISTRICT

The Frank T. Holly Jr. District of Uniontown, PA will hold a meeting on Sunday, March 6, 2022, at 1:00 -3:30 PM at Caporella's Italian Ristorante at 90 Pittsburgh Street, Uniontown, PA.

Election of officers will be on the agenda. Regional Director Marmol will be informing the members of Jednota upcoming events.

Members who attend will be asked to contribute \$5.00 toward their meal. Reservations need to be made by Wednesday, March 2, 2022, by contacting President James Marmol at 724-970-7642. All members are urged to attend.

Barbara A. Holly, Secretary

DISTRICT 10 – THE STEPHEN FURDEK DISTRICT

The first meeting of District 10 in the new year will be held on Sunday, February 27, 2022, at the Slovak J Club, 485 Morgan Avenue, Akron, OH 44311 at 3PM. This will be a hybrid meeting with members able to attend in-person or virtually. Please contact Tom Ivanec at 440-668-7797 for instructions on signing into the virtual meeting. Please email me at lhanko@neo.rr.com or call me at 330-706-0151 if you are planning to attend the meeting in person for the purpose of refreshments.

On the meeting agenda: the upcoming 52nd Quadrennial Convention, delegate requirements, and election of a delegate and an alternate to attend the Convention.

Look forward to seeing you at the meeting. Happy New Year from your District 10 officers. Wishing you a year of God's continued blessings on your home and family.

Respectfully submitted

Linda M Hanko, Treasurer and Recording Secretary

DISTRICT 11 - THE MONSIGNOR TISO DISTRICT

Attention Members of District 11: Election of Delegates to the 52nd Quadrennial Convention July 30 - August 2, 2022 will be held at the quarterly meeting on February 6, 2022 at the CU Club in Ford City, PA, at 2PM. Hope to see you there.

Karen Greggs, Recording Secretary

DISTRICT 12 – THE MONSIGNOR ANDREW HLINKA DISTRICT

Save the date:

March 27, 2022. Monsignor Andrew Hlinka District members save the date for the next district meeting.

More information in upcoming issues of THE JEDNOTA.

Happy New Year, 2022!

Monica Rodacy Boone
HlinkaDistrictSecretary@gmail.com

DISTRICT 14 – THE REV JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT

Following are the currently Scheduled District Meetings for Calendar Year 2022:

1. Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 6:00 P.M.; Fireplace
2. Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 6:00 P.M. (Semi-Annual Meeting); Fireplace
3. Tuesday, July 19, 2022 at 6:00 P.M.; Fireplace. (Convention Related Update)
4. Tuesday, September 20, 2022 at 6:00 P.M.; Fireplace
5. Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 6:00 P.M. (Annual Meeting for Election and Installation of Officers for 2022); Fireplace
6. Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 6:00 P.M. (Short Meeting and Christmas Dinner);

Location TBD

Appropriate social distancing and masking protocols will be followed as long as the Covid-19 issue remains. Dates and locations may change for the same reason. An Additional meeting might be scheduled if needed for convention or fraternal activities.

Meetings will be held at The Fireplace 2075 E. Western Reserve Rd. Poland, OH 44514; unless otherwise specified, indicated, or announced. Alternate location will be The Falcon Grille; 39 N. Canfield-Niles Rd., Austintown, OH 44515.

Sincerely,

John J. Leskovyansky, Jr., President
Home: (330) 549.3788
Cell: (330) 559.5981

DISTRICT 16 – THE MSGR KRASULA DISTRICT

The semi-annual meeting of District 16, the Msgr Krasula District, will be held on Sunday March 27, 2022, in the church rectory of St. John Nepomucene Church, NYC, immediately following the 10:15 AM Slovak Mass. Agenda will include financial matters, future activities and election of future delegates to Convention. All members are urged to attend. Some light refreshment may be served after the meeting.

Joan Skrkon, Recording Secretary

Fill out your Forms Online! Save your Time!



Now you can fill out the FCSU forms online at
<https://www.fcsu.com/forms>

Fill them out, print, sign and mail them to the Home Office.

Take advantage of our Faster, More Readable and
Time Saving Feature.

Attention:

New suitability forms



Dear Branch Officers/Members;

The NAIC has released new recommendations for our annuity suitability forms. These recommendations have been adopted by the State Department of Insurance.

According to the State Department of Insurance we can **NO LONGER** accept the old suitability form with new annuity applications.

Please disregard any old annuity applications.

For **NEW ANNUITY APPLICATIONS and SUITABILITY FORMS** go to our website www.fcsu.com/forms and download the entire application.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 800 533 6682.

Thank you,

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

The Impact of My Mother's Homeland: My Mother's Family (part 4)

**Michael J. Kopanic, Jr., Ph.D.,
University of Maryland
Global Campus**

Part 3 ended with my baba's death, and part 4 continues with my quest to learn more about Slovakia's culture, history, and the language.

Looking back, my baba's passing in 1977 represented a milestone in my life. I hoped I could still converse with my dzedo (grandfather), who was still living, but had lost his leg by this time. I was ever more motivated to learn the Slovak language all the more, and I wanted to be able to speak it fluently.

At Notre Dame, I exhausted the library in reading every book there about Slovakia and its people, and I developed an interest in immigration history while taking a Historical Methods course and wrote a paper on the historiography of Slovak immigration studies. Although I loved Notre Dame dearly, I decided to move on to the University of Toronto, where East Central European history was taught. I served as a Teaching Assistant in Western Civilization courses. Unfortunately, Toronto only taught the Czech language and I wanted to learn Slovak, so once a week, I worked with a private tutor, a recent immigrant from Slovakia. At the time, I did not realize how similar Czech and Slovak were, but I did not want to be speaking Czech to my parents or other older relatives.

Only those who never knew Slovak and then tried to learn it realize how difficult it is for an English-speaking person. The grammar is a monster to harness, unless one speaks it from childhood. Even then, it can be difficult for native Slovaks. Besides learning a different vocabulary, one has to adjust to seven different cases in which the ending of the noun, adjective, and verb all change, depending on the usage in a sentence. I know many people who tried to learn Slovak over several years and then gave up, or just knew a smattering of phrases after much effort. The one positive is that the pronunciation is the same once one learns it, and so it is easier to spell once one learns Slovak, as there are not loads of exceptional spelling exceptions as in English. Many foreigners have told me that English is much easier to learn than many other languages.

Thus when I transferred to the University of Pittsburgh in 1978, I was able to study Slovak, as the school tried continually to teach the language, even though there was no permanent position there yet. Pittsburgh relied on visiting professors such as František Galan, and later used Fulbright scholars whom I studied with, such as Verona Chorvathová to teach Slovak. A Slovak Studies Program with a regular professor was not established until Dr. Martin Votruba received an appointment in 1990, a position he held until his death in late 2018. Since then the university has filled the chair with temporary appointments of natives of Slovakia, Marcela Micháľková in 2019-2021, and at present Renáta Kamenárová.

While pursuing learning Slovak, another transformation in life happened when I courted my future wife, Rebecca, who was half Slovak and half Polish in ethnicity. The Slovak side dominated in her family because her Polish grandmother had died when her mother was 12 years-old, leaving her to raise her younger sisters in the tiny coal mining town of Glen Robbins, Ohio.



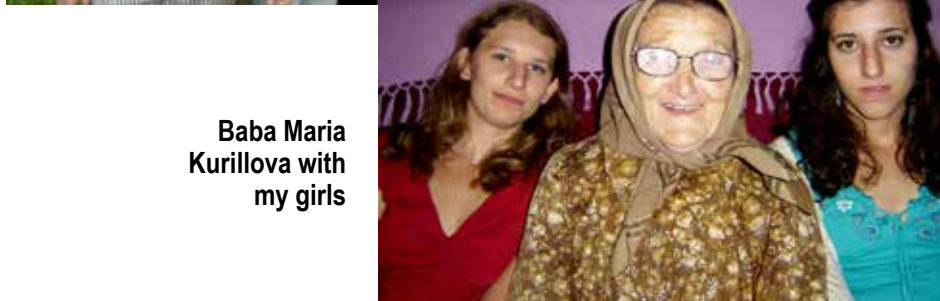
Together with the Jan Filip family in Spisske Vlchy.



A Christmas photo of the extended Kopanic family



The author with daughters Milenka and Erika with the Grondzak family in Harichovce



Baba Maria Kurillova with my girls

My wife's father was an ethnic Slovak and was raised in Central City, PA, another mining town with a sizeable Slovak population. He had met his future wife in New York City, where many second generation children of immigrants went to look for work during the latter stages of the Great Depression. After her father returned from the Pacific theater in World War II, they married and lived with his Slovak mother, who had moved to Youngstown, Ohio, where work was more plentiful. Thus my wife's baba taught her new daughter-in-law the Slovak language and many Slovak recipes.

During the summer of 1978, my wife and I spent the entire summer in Europe, and the climax of the trip for me was our 8-day visit to Czechoslovakia, which I described in a previous article. The experience of seeing a communist country firsthand was an eye

opener, as so many places were so dingy and dirty without private ownership. In the countryside, the world was somewhat different and many people owned their own homes rather than living in apartments as in Bratislava. The fact that my wife's relatives and had previously visited gave us someone to visit, spend time with, rest, and get acquainted with Slovak village life in the Spiš area of eastern Slovakia. Seeing my mother's village awed me and inspired me to want to learn more. The trip helped me realize that I had much more work to do, as I could not comfortably carry on a conversation in Slovak.

When we returned home, I realized that I wanted to spend rest of my life with my wife and left school, even though I had a Foreign Language and Area Fellowship. Academic jobs were hard to come by at universities.

I took some education courses and then taught high school at Culver Military Academy for a year, and my wife worked cataloging at the University of Akron library. Thus we started our life together in Akron, and I started teaching history part-time at the university, but in the winter of 1981, I would return to work on my Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh and continue a more intense study of history and the Slovak language.

While at the University of Akron, I was able to take a Slovak course with Rev. Bonaventure Babik. Ironically, the bishop appointed him as pastor at All Saints Church, a Polish Catholic parish in Canton, Ohio, rather than at the Slovak church. Father Babik taught the Slovak language once a week for Continuing Education. This helped keep alive my pursuit of learning Slovak and Fr. Babik offered many useful handouts.

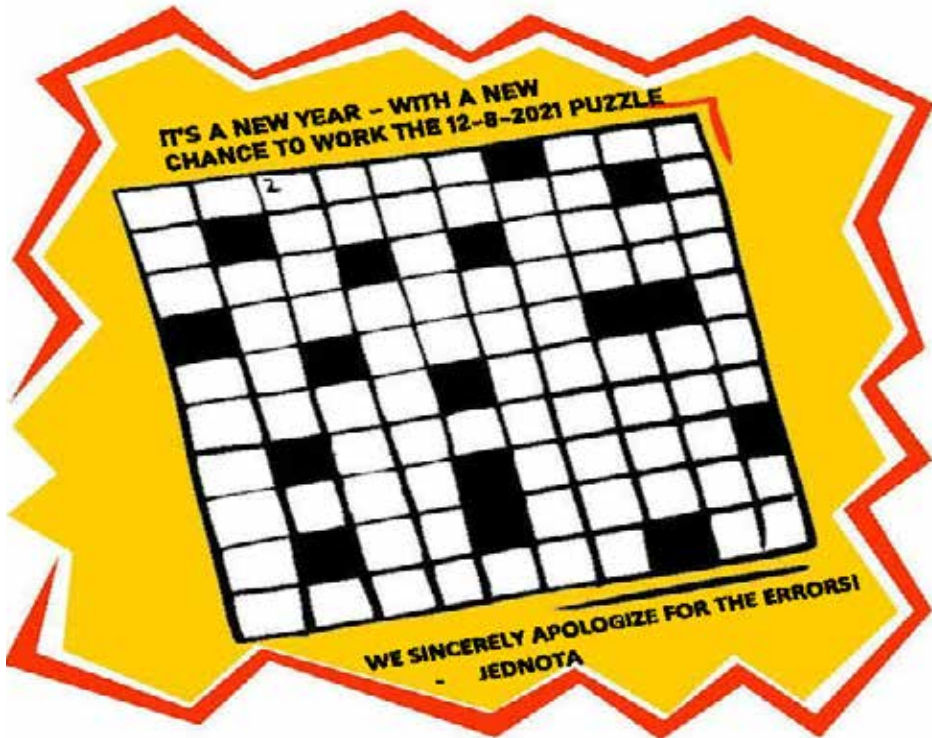
The Akron area also offered some Slovak cultural events as well, particularly in Barberton. I befriended Margaret Kluka, a member of the Barberton Slovak Chorus, and other Slovak-Americans whom I met in Father Babik's class. The big annual event which she worked to organize was the annual Vilija supper in Barberton. There I also had the opportunity to first see Slovak-American dance groups perform, such as the Lučina Folklore Ensemble from Cleveland, directed by Tom Ivanec, whom I have a lifelong friendship with. On another occasion, the Pittsburgh Slovaks put on a superb rendition of the Bethlehem play that is typical in Slovakia, done complete with lyrics in Slovak. Rudy and Sue Ondrejco directed the group and awed the audience with their performance. Both folk groups made a lasting impression on me and only increased my desire to learn Slovak.

Living in Slovakia

After studying Slovak again at Pittsburgh, I came to realize that one had to live in a culture to become fluent in the language. Upon passing my pre-dissertation doctoral exam, I succeeded in obtaining an International Research Exchange Grant to study in Slovakia and started my studies at the summer school in late July 1982. It included a section to study the grammar in the morning and afternoon lectures. The lectures at the summer school were quite intense, and a bit boring to a student who did not know Slovak well enough yet. But I obviously learned a little more gradually and had to become used to hearing the language used at regular speed.

After summer school, I spent a week with my wife's relatives, and that served to improve my conversation skill a bit. Upon returning to Bratislava, I began my formal research. I intently worked on my research in the State Archives and the Comenius University library, but I also focused on building my vocabulary and conversation skills. A weekly class with several other foreigners was the formal extent of my language classes during my year-long stay. I wrote down every new word I came across in a small pocket notebook and asked people questions about meanings when I did not understand something. Subsequently studying them and using new words in conversation helped. Meeting a few new friends helped with the language more than research, but they were also weary of the secret police

continued on page 26



Jednota Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20				21		22				23		24		
	25				26			27			28			
			29			30	31			32			33	34
	35	36			37				38					
39				40				41				42		
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		50			51	52			53			54	55	
56	57			58			59	60		61				62
63			64		65				66		67			
68					69						70			
71					72						73			

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Alka-Seltzer sound | 68 Decorated, as a cake | 39 More, in Madrid |
| 5 Flummox | 69 Social stratum | 40 Rice dish |
| 10 Computer image | 70 Overfill | 41 Sci-fi killer |
| 14 Identical | 71 Lymph bump | 44 Make public |
| 15 Cambodian money | 72 Cornered | 46 Eternal |
| 16 City near Lake Tahoe | 73 Common flag symbol | 49 Actress Vardalos |
| 17 Bandy words | | 51 Boot out |
| 18 Tablelands | Down | 52 Kind of panel |
| 19 Wings | 1 Attention getter | 54 Parade feature |
| 20 Cloak | 2 Drink, like a cat | 55 Seasonal visitor |
| 22 Common newspaper name | 3 Muscat resident | 56 Related |
| 24 Hurricane's center | 4 Dots | 57 City on the Brazos |
| 25 Devout | 5 Pitcher's asset | 59 Hillock |
| 27 Chips in | 6 Losing proposition? | 60 Lavish affection (on) |
| 29 Casual attire | 7 He loved Lucy | 62 North Sea feeder |
| 32 Kind of space | 8 Peruvian beast | 64 Horatian work |
| 35 Rural rtes. | 9 City near Düsseldorf | 66 Rocker Nugent |
| 37 Year abroad | 10 Hot temper | |
| 38 Docking facility | 11 Heavenly | |
| 39 ___ tai (drink) | 12 The "O" in S.R.O. | |
| 40 Male character in French pantomime | 13 It smells | |
| 42 Kitchen pest | 21 Stage signal | |
| 43 Light into | 23 Brown ermine | |
| 45 Consume | 26 Slowpoke | |
| 46 ___ provençale | 28 Where Switz. is | |
| 47 Pamper | 30 Suffix with serpent | |
| 48 Telling a fib | 31 Mushroom | |
| 50 Hillsides in Scotland | 33 Sicilian resort | |
| 53 Landed estates | 34 Bandicoot | |
| 56 Astonish | 35 Farrier's tool | |
| 58 Greenland sight | 36 Didn't follow orders | |
| 61 Put to rest | 38 Recurring theme | |
| 63 Send to the canvas | | |
| 65 "Silas Marner" novelist | | |
| 67 Geologic periods | | |



Is your FCSU profile up to date?

Help us serve you by making sure we have all your latest information on file - address, phone, email, beneficiary

Call the Home Office and Update Your Profile Today at: 1-800-533-6682 (JEDNOTA)

Or go to <http://www.fcsu.com/update-profile>

Publication Schedule for 2022	
Issue Date	Deadline to Receive Information
February 9	January 31
March 9	February 28
April 13	April 4
May 11	May 2
June 8	May 31 (Memorial Day, May 30)
July 13	July 5 (Independence Day, July 4)
August 10	August 3 (Convention, Aug 1 & 2)
Sept 14	Sept 6 (Labor Day, Sept 5)
October 12	October 3
November 9	October 31
December 14	December 5

See Solution on Page 20



AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Benevolent Foundation Scholarship 2021

☐ Jared Dubber	☐ Emily Januck
☐ Jennifer Estright	☐ Nicholas Lawson
☐ Corianne Holzman	☐ Patrick Monks
☐ Lauren Hradesky	☐ Robert Mullen
☐ Zofia Jagerova	☐ Luke Smearcheck



NEW SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES!

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION
helps its young members succeed through education by awarding over \$142,000 in scholarships each year.

RULES & REQUIREMENTS
Applicants must have: a minimum of \$5,000 of reserve insurance (Ordinary Whole Life, Twenty Pay Whole Life, or Single Premium Whole Life, NOT a JEP-JEP members as of December 31, 2021 are still eligible as long as they have been a member for 4 years); or minimum of \$500 in an annuity or Coverdell IRA with the FCSU for at least four years prior to April 1st of the year in which they are applying. Applicants are eligible to win once in each of the 5 categories.
All scholarship winners must maintain an active policy during their school years.
Applicants must submit an official Scholarship application obtained from a branch officer, the Home Office or www.fcsu.com and mail it to: Scholarship Program, FCSU, 6611 Rockside Rd. #300, Independence, OH 44131.
Winners will be chosen by the Scholarship Committee and checks will be made payable to the winners.

SCHOLARSHIP CATEGORIES

CATHOLIC GRADE SCHOOLS (5-8 gr)	\$500
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS	\$1,000
COLLEGES	\$1,500
GRADUATE SCHOOLS	\$1,500
VOCATIONAL/TRADE SCHOOLS	\$1,000

Find Scholarship Applications at WWW.FCSU.COM
(www.fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships)

Applications must be postmarked by **MARCH 31, 2022**
For more info call us at 800-533-6682

There's so much to do with the FCSU: benefits of membership



When you sign up for an FCSU insurance or annuity product, you become our member. Among the many great benefits of FCSU membership: the opportunity to participate in fun events, enter contests, apply for scholarships, and so much more. Just what you can do with the FCSU? Visit fcsu.com/community – and

JOIN US TODAY!

Participating In Our Jednota Memorial: A Great Start to the New Year!

If you haven't yet participated in the Jednota Memorial, consider purchasing a brick to honor those who served in any wars and also to honor and remember ancestors and family members who have made and make our Society great. Dedicated in September 2015 by the First Catholic Slovak Union for our members and their families, the permanent site of 1 1/2 acres is located in Middletown, PA. The land was once occupied by the Jednota Orphanage, purchased at the urging of our founder Fr. Štefan Furdek for just such a purpose.

All those who purchase a "brick" or "bricks" in the granite panels found throughout the Memorial will receive a photo of the panel on which their brick or bricks are mounted. If you haven't yet ordered your "brick" you can go to <https://www.fcsu.com/about/jednota-memorial/> to download your order form or call the Home Office at 1-800-533-6682.

This is another of the latest panels to be completed. To view more complete panels, or if you haven't yet ordered your "brick" you can go to www.fcsu.com to Jednota Memorial to download your order form. Or you can request an order form by calling the FCSU Home Office at 1-800-533-6682.



FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE UNITED STATES & CANADA JEDNOTA
Founded in 1870

JEDNOTA MEMORIAL, MIDDLETOWN, PA. Dedicated, 2015

12

IN MEMORY OF OUR BELOVED UNCLE FRANCIS J. LACHY

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY WIFE MARIA M. HARCAB. REST IN PEACE ICH LIEBE DICH MEIN LIEBLING

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY PARENTS MARGARET AND GEORGE DIMDAK

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY HUSBAND JOSEPH A. WALIKIS

DEDICATED TO THE LIVING AND DECEASED MEMBERS OF BRANCH 735K PORTLAND, OREGON ESTAB. 3/31/1919

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY BELOVED UNCLE GERALD AND MURIEL CARLTON BRANCH 313

FOREVER THANKFUL FOR STEPHEN AND LINDA GONTS BRANCH 1815J

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY PARENTS JOHN AND ELIZABETH HRONEC

IN MEMORY OF THE TOTH AND KRHLA FAMILIES

ANDREW & OLGA CAPKOVIC - FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS - MMAAK

JARKOLA LIBRARY GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY 1968-2018

IN MEMORY OF ALL THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE MEMBERS OF BRANCH 165K GOD'S BLESSINGS

IN LOVING MEMORY OF REV. FRANCIS G. LENDACKY, PASTOR OF ST. AGNES-ST. JOHN NEPOMUCENE SLOVAK PARISH AND CHAPLAIN OF BRANCH 55 IN GRATITUDE FOR HIS FAITHFUL SERVICE BY FCSU ST. JOSEPH SOCIETY BRANCH 55

GRATITUDE AND LOVING MEMORIES FOR FAMILY OF JOSEPH A. WALICK

REMEMBERING KORCHNAK FAMILY MEMBERS JOHNSTOWN PA

IN MEMORY OF THE DECEASED MEMBERS OF BR. 450 CLEVELAND, OH

IN MEMORY OF ANDREW J. HIRT BRANCH 682

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MARY KARCH XOXO

TOMANEK AND MASARYK FAMILIES DONATED BY LIEUT. PAUL TOMANEK

ST. MARTIN'S BR. 810 MONTREAL QC. CANADA DEC. 1936-NOV. 2018 DEDICATED TO LIVING AND DECEASED MEMBERS

IN LOVING MEMORY OF CHARLES AND BESS JURBIAK BRANCH 313

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MICHAEL & CATHERINE SKLEHAR FAMILY BR595

IN LOVING MEMORY OF GEORGE & DIKIE KREK ALLENTOWN, PA

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR BELOVED AUNT GERTRUDE P. STASH

FRANK J. SEMANCIK SUPREME AUDITOR MSGR. JOSEPH SEMANCIK

KEEP ON SINGING AND PLAYING THE BASS KEN JAVOR REST IN PEACE



March Madness 2022 ... at the FCSU

March Madness – one of the biggest, most exciting and most fun events in all of sports – has once again come to the FCSU!

General March Madness Rules

The NCAA Division I men's basketball tournament is a single-elimination tournament comprised of 68 teams that compete in seven rounds for the national championship. The final round is known as the Final Four, when only four teams are left.

The NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Committee selects, seeds and brackets the field for the NCAA Tournament. Then on Selection Sunday, a Selection Committee reveals the full NCAA tournament bracket, including all teams and all seeds.

In 2022, Selection Sunday is March 13th. The official bracket game of the NCAA will open immediately after the committee announces the field on Selection Sunday.

FCSU March Madness Rules

Note: the contest will take place online

1. Each entrant in the FCSU March Madness Contest must have an active policy and be a member in good standing with the FCSU.
2. 1 Entry per person ONLY.
3. Each Player must HAVE AND USE THEIR OWN EMAIL ADDRESS.
4. Each Player MUST FILL OUT AN ENTRY FORM.
5. After the office reviews your entry and you are ruled in good standing, an email will be sent to you to enter the pool. (The Email will be sent to the email address you provide. Print Clearly).
(One Email Address may only be used once for the contest).
6. Please CHECK YOUR EMAIL OFTEN. ALSO CHECK YOUR JUNK EMAIL.
7. Once you receive the email, follow the instructions to sign up on the game site.
8. Once you sign up on the game site, your account will automatically become FROZEN until start of competition. Your account will REOPEN on Sunday March 13th, 2022.
9. You must have your account set up by 5:00PM Thursday March 10th, 2022.
10. All pool rules will be listed on the Official Contest Site.

Entry Form: (All Information Must Be Filled In)
(MISSING INFORMATION WILL CAUSE DISQUALIFICATION TO CONTEST)
PRINT OR TYPE CLEARLY

NAME _____
 BRANCH: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 PHONE NUMBER _____ :
 EMAIL: _____
 (EMAIL CAN ONLY BE USED ONCE. No exceptions).

11. **Mail to:**
 Kevin Collins
 628 Heather Brite Cr.
 Apopka, FL 32712
 (More than 1 entry form may be mailed in an envelope).

MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN Tuesday March 1st, 2022
 And arrive in Office by 5:00pm Wednesday March 9th, 2022
 PLEASE PLAN AHEAD.



FCSU Officers gather round the newly arrived FCSU Traveling Cup (L – R) District 10 President Gregory Petrusek, Branch 553 President Debra Speck, Region 6 Director Thomas Ivanec, National Vice President Kevin Collins, and Branch 855 President Barbara Sutula



The Cup even made its way into the kitchen.

The FCSU “Traveling” Cup Challenge Continues In 2022 ...

Kevin Collins, National Vice President

Since we instituted the FCSU Traveling Cup Challenge in 2019, it's indeed been a challenge – and, with what's been going on in our world the past few years, not always in the way we intended. But never let it be said challenges keep down the will or spirits of our dedicated members! FCSU contests have continued and the names of overall winners of continue to be placed on the FCSU “Traveling” Challenge Cup.

As intended, the Cup itself is traveling around our Society, from winning Region to winning Region. Winners have been encouraged to take pictures with their families and FCSU fellow members, and send them to Jednota for publication and posting on the FCSU web. I'm sure we will see more coming from winners in our two most recent winning Regions 1 & 2 – as well as where the Cup just landed: Region 6 – where I just happened to have the good fortune to be on its arrival, helping out with District 10 activities at the Slovak J Club in Akron, OH!

FCSU March Madness Prizes

1ST PLACE:	\$1000.00
2ND PLACE:	\$ 750.00
3RD PLACE:	\$ 500.00
4TH PLACE:	\$ 250.00
5TH PLACE:	\$ 50.00

A JOINT FRATERNAL EVENT FOR FCSU, GCU, NSS & SCS MEMBERS

2022 NATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT

Brookgate Lanes

14950 SNOW ROAD
 BROOK PARK, OH
 216-676-4325

2022 NATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT
CLEVELAND, OH
FRIDAY, MAY 13 & SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2022

LODGING **CROWNE PLAZA**
 7230 Engle Road
 Middleburg Heights, OH 44130
 440-243-4040

Block Code: **SNB**

Rest in Peace, Our Departed Members

The First Catholic Slovak Union has a Mass said for each of our deceased members at St. Andrew Abbey in Cleveland, Ohio.

Branch	Name	Branch	Name	Branch	Name	Branch	Name
005P	William P Morris	153K	Helen Ahrens	367K	David L Kavlick	731K	Joseph J Pitko
005P	Evelyn Ostrowsky	153K	Joseph P Zmora	367K	Edward J Ziots	731K	John D Toker Jr
006K	Mary Yusko	157K	John E Vaughn	373K	Mary A Fidak	733K	Frank S McClellan
019K	Mary Daniel	162K	Edward R Molchan	382K	John Holup	743K	Edward Adam Bielicki Sr
019K	Michael Koritko	166K	Gerald Hovancik	419K	Rose Marie Strony	743K	David T Checkle
019K	Veronica R Malesky	166K	Robert M Prokop	456K	Carl G Rusnak	743K	Margaret Ferkovic
024K	Nicholas D'Amico	173K	Maureen Brek Mulhern	465K	Kenneth Towcimak	743K	Valentine W Pisarcik
024K	Joseph Sedlock	173K	James Joseph Sopko	510K	Jane Louise Arbet	746K	Doris C Balas
024K	John J Tomcisin	181K	Dale Bloom	553K	John S Head	746K	Claire Marie Counterman
040K	Cody J Graham	181K	William E Marcinik	553K	Orphy Klempa	746K	Kathryn B McCormack
040K	Anna B Stith	181K	Stephen J Mizenko	553K	John Anthony Kostelnik	746K	William Mucha
055K	Joseph C Simon Sr	199K	Donald Joseph Dlugos	553K	Thomas M Misanko	746K	Joseph J Policay
060K	William E Morris	199K	Timothy Stefanick	581K	Michael Benyo	796K	Antoinet Molchany
075K	Robert J Martalus	215K	Andrew Tutko	618K	Darlene D Lischner	796K	Paul Pristash
075K	Veronica S Sharpe	228K	Joseph J Marusin	618K	Richard A Smiley	831K	Edna M Dzugan
083K	Anthony Bebej	259K	Richard Wagner	633K	Patrick M Chamburs	855K	Mary Helen Lucas
108K	Michael Yatsko	276K	Vincent J Slavik	670K	Irene M Horn	900K	Kelli A Parker
112K	Irene M Collins	313K	Eleanor Ray	682K	Helen C Martin	904K	Nancy L Martin
122K	Theresa Dover	348K	Margaret J Anderson	716K	Mary Kubenik	916K	Robert E Ahlstrom
149K	Carl Andrew Rudella Jr	348K	Carol A Martin	721K	Andrew Hatta	918K	Susan M Koziak

* Processed in the month of Dec. 2021

OBITUARIES

Michael Charles Lako, son of Region 5 Director Michael Lako, Passed into Eternal Life December 25, 2021



Michael Charles Lako age 36, of Pleasant Hills, PA, passed away on Saturday, December 25, 2021. Michael was the beloved husband of Nicole (Smith) Lako; loving father of Violette and Francine Lako; cherished son of Michael E. and Carol (Kruly) Lako; brother of George (Astrid) Lako, Joanne (Jonathan) Roithner and Joseph (Chi) Lako.

A former UPS employee with Local 926 Teamsters, Michael was a very proud retiree of KML Carpenter Union, Local 432 and was a dedicated employee of MBM Contracting, Inc. He was a longtime member of the Pittsburgh Slovakian Dance Group, Auditor of St. Michael's Branch 2 of The First Catholic Slovak Union, and President of Leaf 161 of the National Slovak Society.

Donations may be made in Mike's name to ALS Association, Western Pennsylvania Chapter, 416 Lincoln Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15209 www.cure4als.org.

MARY PAULINE (TOMASCAK) DANIEL BRANCH 19 – BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT



Mary P. Daniel, 99 years old of West Palm Beach, FL, passed away on October 10, 2021.

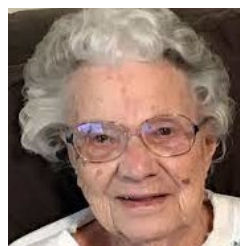
Mary was born in Brookfield, CT, on March 5, 1922. She was the daughter of Joseph J. and Elizabeth (Zehalka) Tomascak. Her brothers were Joseph J. Jr., Stephen I., and Francis P., all deceased. Also predeceasing her is son Anthony who passed away March 29, 2021. Surviving is her sister Frances Hosszu of Land O' Lake, FL.

Mary was married to John J. Daniel on October 11, 1947. She is survived by their son John J. (Eileen) Daniel; daughter Elizabeth Ann Daniel; granddaughter Linda Marie (Matthew) McNeill and great-grandson Timothy McNeill of Canisto, NY.

Mary was a member of the Council of Women in Connecticut and Our Lady Queen of the Apostles in Florida. She worked in St. Mary's Hospital dietary department until retirement in 1988, giving 18 years of service and 100 hours of auxiliary services. She also was an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion in nursing homes. She attended daily Mass until unable; then EWTN became her daily rosary with the Mercy prayers. Until her dying day, we prayed the rosary, with her leading. I now do so with her at graveside.

- Submitted by Elizabeth Ann Daniel

MARGARET JEAN HUSOVSKY ANDERSON BRANCH 348 – CLARKSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA



A sweet, kind, and gentle soul left this earth on October 21, 2021, and went to

her eternal home in heaven with Our Lord Jesus Christ. Margaret Anderson, 104, of Stonewood, WV, died peacefully at the home of her daughter, Patricia, with whom she resided. Margaret was the last surviving member of her immediate family, having been preceded in death by her parents, Andrew and Magdalene Husovsky; husband, Elmer (Tug) Anderson; brother, Andrew; two sisters, Mildred (Jim) Connell and Marian (Rex) Hunt; father-in-law and mother-in-law, William and Emma Anderson; and sister-in-law Cosby (Ray) Strittmatter; and nephew, Thomas Hunt.

Margaret was born in Clarksburg, WV, on October 15, 1917. She attended Holy Rosary Grade School and Washington Irving High School. After graduation she was employed by the Hazel Atlas Glass Co. It was here that she met her future husband, Elmer Anderson. They were married on July 3, 1941. The only time they were separated was while he was in the Army Air Corp and served in Europe and Africa for three years. Margaret and Elmer were happily married for 61 years. Margaret was very proud of her Slovak heritage. She loved polka music and making ethnic foods, such as perogies, halupki (cabbage rolls), and galettes. Margaret and her sister Marian loved making nut rolls for their church's bake sales. She was a member of Holy Rosary Catholic Church until it closed in 1984 and then became a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Stonewood. Margaret will always be remembered as a good friend and a loving and caring mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and aunt.

She is survived by three children and their families: son, David (Olga) of Stonewood; son, Richard (Carol) of Bridgeport, CT; and daughter, Patricia Anderson of Stonewood; five grandchildren: Martha (David) Bains of Homewood, AL, Dr. John D. Anderson and wife Dr. Andrea Greenfield of Bedford, NH;

Colonel Marie Anderson, JAG, serving in Stuttgart, Germany; Chris (Leigh) Anderson of Irwin, PA; and John B. (Allison) Anderson of Bridgeport; and six great grandchildren: Mallory, Lydia, Owen, Evan, Emily and Julie Anderson. She is also survived by several loving nieces and nephews and her loyal Golden Retrievers, Nellie and Macie.

- Submitted by her children

STEPHAN J. PATOPRSTY BRANCH 756 – OWOSSO, MICHIGAN



Stephan J. Patoprsty, age 94, died on September 20, 2021, in Okemos, MI.

He is survived by his wife of almost 71 years, Veronica (Ronnie) Patoprsty and his 6 children: Ann and Dave Pohl of Bloomfield Hills, MI; Bobbi (Barbara) and Sigma Alpha of Grand Junction, CO; Steve (Stephan F.) and Jennifer (Lahue) Patoprsty of Vienna, Austria; Sally and Rick Dishaw of Milford, MI; Jean (Scott) Jorgensen of Williamston, MI; Amy Schouman and Charles Schouman of Zeeland, MI. Grandchildren: David and Alyssa (Vermeulen) Pohl of East Lansing, MI; Susie Pohl of Knoxville, TN; Kauai (Alpha) and Adam Fitt of Grand Junction, CO; Cambria and Garrett Alpha-Cobb of Boston, MA; Carmel (Alpha) and Darrel Wilde of Houston, TX; Joseph Patoprsty of Austin, TX; Patrick and Kelly (Dykstra) Dishaw of Grandville, MI; Alex Dishaw of Belleville, MI; Daniel Jorgensen of East Lansing, MI; SSgt Michael Jorgensen of Crestview, FL; Stephanie Schouman of Portland, OR; Laura Schouman of Ann Arbor, MI. Great grandchildren: Ouray and Healy Fitt, Lincoln and

continued on page 19

Immigrant Sisters of SS Cyril & Methodius

It is no secret that immigrants have provided our nation with a strong and blessed support. Our Sisters who emigrated from central Europe have contributed mightily not only by their spiritual presence but also by the works they have performed in convents, parishes, schools, hospitals, homes for the elderly and by their very presence which has brought joy and comfort to all with whom they came into contact.

Sister Bernadette Marie Ondus, SSCM

Sister Basil



Maria Claire (Mary) Benko was born in Kubacký (Spišské Bystré), Slovakia, on April 16, 1906. She came from a large family of ten children, four boys and six girls. Mary, the third youngest, had a firm desire to become a Sister even though she had never met one. On one occasion she and some friends went to the city and tried to look into the window of a convent. At that very moment, however, a Sister left the building, forcing them to flee in terror. Never again did they attempt to catch a glimpse of a Sister. Evidently, though, the experience did not deter Mary from later pursuing a vocation to religious life.

She herself believed that her vocation came from the pages of THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST. In the 1978 Jubilee Booklet when she celebrated her Golden Jubilee, she recommended to the young the practice of spiritual reading. "The message of the faith may not be so clear to the young today, but 'the pull of Christ' is there for listening ears and courageous hearts,

impelled by love. He's in the Gospels. He's in the Tabernacle. He's in our fellow-Sisters. He's in our own heart. God assures us in Scripture: 'If with all your heart you seek Me, you shall ever surely find Me.' Now there's a worthwhile quest to pursue!"

Mary was an independent and resourceful individual and considers her coming to the U. S. at age 14 as a journey to the Promised Land. Never, however, did she lose her sense of rootedness in Slovakia. She preferred to speak in her native tongue, and could always be counted on to offer the *vinš* at the *Vilia* Supper. One of her most cherished memories was her visit to Slovakia—"Aká si mi krásna, ty rodná zem drahá..." "How beautiful you are, my dear homeland." Sister was also able to go to Rome in the Holy Year 1950 when Pope Pius XII declared the dogma of the Assumption.

When she came to the U. S. Mary lived with relatives in New York City. "All of us were members of the Third Order of St. Francis and we were faithful in cultivating our spiritual life. Both she and Sister Claudia began their commitment to God as Third Order Franciscans. Mary had a special devotion to the Eucharist in Mass and Benediction.

She was led to the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius on an auspicious occasion. Two SSCM's, Sisters Amabilis and Gabriel, went to New York City to see the newly built St. John Nepomucene Church. "When I met them, I knew that my vocation was with the SSCM's.

Since then I have not stopped thanking God for this precious grace." Meeting them provided a way for Mary and Helen Šipka (Sister Claudia) who also belonged to the Third Order, to respond to God's call. Since God has a sense of humor and provides surprises for those He has chosen to follow Him, the prelude to their entrance on July 6, 1925 was "a comedy of errors." First of all, Mary and Helen found they had to borrow money because the banks were closed. They paid Bohemian store owners for material for clothing and stayed up all night sewing. In Scranton they missed the train, but a helpful conductor stopped the train and got them a ride on the caboose of a freight car. Because they were so determined to get to Danville for their entrance date, they became separated from their trunks. (No doubt, the tale ended well although there is no record in any of our sources.)

Sister Basil accepted the fact that because of a lack of formal education she was prevented from becoming a teacher and spent all her religious life in domestic service. She was once described as "a perfectionist in paring." "It has been a joy for me to be an apostle in the kitchen, preparing meals, encouraging and helping others, faithful to prayer, promoting devotions like the message of Fatima, supporting all community projects. My community, the SSCM's, are a father and mother and friend to me."

In the tribute given when Sister Basil died, are the words, "She lived a life of simplicity and even austere poverty. She knew how to cash in coupons, get rebates and exchange proof of purchase symbols for merchandise. The gains from her legendary coupon-collecting were shared with the community and friends."

And speaking of friends, she is known for making friends in the places to which she was missioned and communicated with them even after she left the area. Sister Basil touched thousands of lives—parishioners in Shamokin and Lebanon and those in the thirteen other areas she served loved her and were reminded of God's love. The academy students, women retreatants, Middletown orphans, the Sisters in mission homes enjoyed the fruits of her labors and the meals she prepared and also benefited from the prayers and the sufferings she offered up.

Sister Basil prayed for perseverance, an increase of vocations, unity in the Church (a special intention among the SSCM's) and world peace. Sister was known to be very serious and often very intense, but she was also known for comical quips and sometimes comical actions. Interestingly enough, she did appreciate the things of this world. She kept not only her rosary in her habit pocket but also a deck of pinochle cards.

Sister Basil's death was a surprise because it came suddenly on October 30, 1988, after a party at which she had mentioned that she enjoyed the snacks so much she could have eaten more. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on the Feast of All Saints, November 1, by the Maria Hall chaplain, Father Edward Deller. Father Deller opened his homily with these words, "Having Sister Basil's funeral Mass on the Feast of All Saints immediately turns our minds heavenward where we are certain Sister shares eternal life with the saints." In the closing of her tribute to Sister Basil, Sister John Vianney, then General Superior, stated "It is the hope and prayer of all the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, her family and friends, that Sister Basil is now enjoying the glories and splendor of her final pilgrimage—the pilgrimage to our God of the unexpected, our God of surprise and that she is, with Mary and all the saints, tasting the joys which our Lord's resurrection and His Mother's Assumption promise to us all."

OBITUARIES

continued from page 18

Baby Alpha-Cobb, and Margot Pohl. He is also survived by his sister, Frances Birchner of New Lothrop, MI, many nieces and nephews, loved cousins as well as several relatives in the Bratislava area of Slovakia. He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Johanna Patoprsty, and his granddaughter, Kathryn Grace Jorgensen. Steve was born on July 27, 1927 in Owosso, MI. He grew up in Owosso and joined the US Navy during World War II, stationed on the USS Albany. After the war, he returned to Michigan State College where he earned an engineering degree. He continued in the US Naval Reserves. Over his 45+ years as an engineer, he worked at companies across Michigan and Indiana, including the MDOT Highway Department, Buick, US Rubber, Miratile, Blackmer Pump, Brunswick, and S.D. Warren. He was involved in the Professional Engineers Association for many years. He retired from the S.D. Warren Paper Mill in Muskegon in 1996. Steve and Ronnie moved to the Lansing, MI area in 1997. Steve was always passionate

about construction, and designed and built three homes for his family. He was involved in multiple volunteer activities where he thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to serve people in the community. He loved being very active with the West Shore Symphony, the USS Silversides Submarine, St. Francis de Sales Church in Muskegon as well as St. Martha Church in Okemos. He enjoyed volunteering in the archives at the Diocese of Lansing. St. Vincent de Paul Association, and working at the polls for elections. He was proud to have achieved the rank of 4th Degree Honor Guard in the Knights of Columbus, and extremely proud of being a Slovak American. He served as Branch 756 President for the Jednota for a number of years. He was very passionate about researching genealogy and traced his family and Ronnie's family back to the 1600's. He was in frequent contact with relatives in Slovakia and visited them numerous times. He spent three months in Sered' in central Slovakia, teaching English to middle school students.

- Submitted by Veronica Patoprsty

Servant Leadership Awarded in 2021

In 2021, the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville, PA awarded the Servant Leadership Award to 27 outstanding high school Juniors and Seniors from the Diocese of Harrisburg PA and the Diocese of Scranton, PA. The ceremony took place at the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville. Since 2003, the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius have honored nearly 1,300 teens in the Dioceses of Albany (NY), Bridgeport (CT), Charleston (SC), Chicago (IL), Gary (IN), Harrisburg (PA), Milwaukee (WI), Pittsburgh (PA), Scranton (PA), St. Louis (MO), Stratford (CT), Syracuse (NY), and Trenton (NJ) with the Servant Leadership Award.

The Servant Leadership Award recognizes distinguished high school Juniors and Seniors who are joyful witnesses, compassionate proclaimers, and enthusiastic builders of the Kingdom of God. The focus of the award is on teens who remain active in their faith and parish beyond Confirmation, and who actively in their parish, school and community.

Each teen was given the opportunity to select one person as a mentor who has encouraged them to generously use their time and talents as a follower of Jesus. The mentors selected were parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, youth ministers, scout leaders, Deacons, Sisters and Priests, who have been role models for the teens. Mentors recognized by the teens have made a difference in their lives by modeling servant leadership as a way of life in their family, parish, and community.

During the ceremony the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius also honored four adults who received the Father Matthew Jankola Lifetime Servant Leadership Award in the ministries of Evangelization, Education, Elder Care and Ecumenism. Father Jankola was a priest from the Diocese of Scranton who was instrumental in recognizing the need for Religious Sisters to educate children, and founded the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius in 1909.

The 2020 Father Matthew Jankola Lifetime Servant Leadership Awards went to: Evangelization—Sister M. Canice Adams, SS.C.M., co-director St. Francis Center at St. Helena Island, South Carolina; Education—Rev. Ray Carey diocesan priest for the Archdiocese of Portland, OR; Elder Care—Denise Toczylousky, Event/Activities Coordinator for the Maria Joseph Continuing Care Community; Ecumenism—Rabbi Daniel Swartz, spiritual leader of Temple Hesed in Wilkes Barre, PA.

- Submitted by Sister Carol Ann Terlicher, SS.C.M.

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

national convention.

Fraternally,

Margaret Nasta, President

**BRANCH 312 –
BAGGALEY, PENNSYLVANIA**

Branch 312 will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, January 16, 2022. The meeting will begin at 1:00PM at the home of Branch President Mark Smolleck, 1121 Monastery Drive, Latrobe, PA, 15650. On the agenda: election of branch officers and election of delegates to the FCSU Quadrennial Convention. For more information, contact Secretary/Treasurer Micki Smolleck at 724-539-8326.

We wish all our members a blessed Christmas and a Happy Healthy New Year.

**Michealene Smolleck,
Secretary/Treasurer**

**BRANCH 367 –
FAIRCHANCE, PENNSYLVANIA**

St. Joseph Lodge 367 will hold a regular meeting on Thursday, March 17, 2022, at 12:30 PM. The meeting will be held at the Mountain View Cafe 1618 Georges Fairchance Road, Smithfield, PA, 15478. Additional delegates and alternate delegates from our lodge will be elected to attend the 52nd convention of the FCSU in Independence, OH this summer. Any new ideas or donations will also be discussed. Members planning on attending please call Kathryn Baranek, Secretary 724-569-1006 or Audrey Balazik, President 724-438-3887.

Kathryn Baranek, Secretary

**BRANCH 382 –
SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA**

Saints Cyril & Methodius Society, Branch 382K, will conduct its Annual March Meeting on Sunday, March 6, 2022, in the VFW, 110 Chestnut Street, Dunmore, PA. Auditors will meet at 12:30 PM to check the books. Officers and members will gather for the business session at 1:00 PM.

The agenda will include reports of the executive officers and auditors. Members will also discuss future branch activities. Information from the home office will be disseminated. Election of delegates to the 52nd Quadrennial Convention of the FCSU will be conducted. The convention is scheduled for July 30 to August 2, 2022, in Independence, OH. A copy of the Annual Report to the Home Office will be presented.

Refreshments and socializing will follow. All members are urged to attend. Please contact Branch Vice President Elizabeth Slovenkai at 570.344.3854 by Tuesday, March 1, to confirm your attendance and to allow for arrangements.

In view of the continued Covid 19 pandemic and the omicron variant, we will follow Pennsylvania Department of Health guidelines: all in attendance must wear face masks and observe social distancing.

Frank M. Slovenkai, Jr. is branch president. Other officers include Michael J. Slovenkai, Sr., treasurer; Michael J. Czankner, recording secretary; and John J. Slovenkai, Sr., financial secretary.

**Elizabeth M. Slovenkai,
Vice President**

**BRANCH 401 –
EAST VANDERGRIFT, PENNSYLVANIA**

St. Anthony of Padua, Branch 401, in-

vites all branch members to attend the 2022 Semi-Annual Meeting at 2PM, on Sunday, March 6, 2022 at Stars Restaurant, 1612 Allison Ave, North Apollo, PA 15673. Election of Delegates to the 52nd Quadrennial Convention July 30 – August 2, 2022 will be held. Members are encouraged to attend as your input is vital and welcome.

Fraternally,

Kathy Froncek, Secretary

**BRANCH 410 –
UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA**

The SS. Peter and Paul, Branch 410, will hold a meeting on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at 1:30PM at the Highland House, 92 West Main Street, Uniontown, PA. On the agenda will be information regarding the FCSU's 52nd Quadrennial Convention which will be held in the Holiday Inn at Independence, OHIO from July 30 to August 2, 2022. Call for reservations by Monday, March 21, 2022, at 724-425-2576. All members are invited to attend.

Geraldine Buchheit, Secretary

**BRANCH 553 –
AKRON, OHIO**

Happy New Year from the Branch Officers. St. John the Baptist, Branch 553, will be holding the first meeting of the year on Sunday, February 27, 2022 at 2PM at the Slovak J Club, 485 Morgan Avenue, Akron, OH 44311. With the District 10 meeting to follow at 3PM. The meeting will be in person and virtual. If you are interested in attending virtually – please contact Tom Ivanec at 440-668-7797 for instruction on signing into the virtual meeting. The meeting will be to discuss the upcoming 52nd Quadrennial Convention and the requirements for delegates and selecting delegates to attend the convention. If you plan to attend in person, please email me at lhanko@neo.rr.com or call me at 330-706-0151. We need a head count for refreshment. Look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

Linda M Hanko, Financial Secretary

**BRANCH 682 –
YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO**

The next regular meeting for Branch 682 is scheduled for Noon on Friday, January 14th, 2022 at Materials Research Laboratories, 290 N Bridge St. in Struthers, OH 44471. The meeting will include the assembly of the branch annual report and discussion of sponsored projects/programs for the upcoming year.

Andrew Hirt, President

**BRANCH 716 –
NEW YORK, NEW YORK**

The St. Stephen Martyr Society Branch 716 will hold its semi-annual meeting on March 7, 2022, after the 10:15AM Slovak Mass in St. John Nepomucene Church Hall in NYC. The agenda will include a financial report, upcoming activities, and election of delegates to Convention. All members are urged to attend; refreshments will be served after the meeting.

**Joan Mary Skrkon,
Recording Secretary**

**BRANCH 731 –
YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO**

Saint Joseph Branch 731's annual Mass

honoring our Patron Saint Joseph will be on March 18, 2022 and the Mass dedicated to our deceased members will be on November 11, 2022. Both will be at The Cathedral of Saint Columba, 159 West Rayen Avenue, Youngstown, OH at 12:10PM.

We hope everyone has a healthy New Year.

James Bobby, Recording Secretary

**BRANCH 746 –
LINDEN, NEW JERSEY**

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 746, will hold its next meeting on Sunday, March 20, 2022 at 1:00 PM in the downstairs meeting room of Holy Family Church (210 Monroe Street, Linden, NJ, 07036). The meeting will be followed by a luncheon and the Msgr. Rura District meeting. The agenda will include election of delegates (and alternates) to the 52nd National Convention in Independence, OH. We will also be discussing future events for the branch. Kindly RSVP to Joanne Tkach Polt @ 732-762-3148 by March 9th if you plan to attend. Please bring non-perishable items for donation to a local food pantry.

Additional branch news:

Branch 746 members are encouraged to attend Friday Holy Masses at 7:00pm (in Slovak) at Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ offered for the intention of all Branch 746 members living and deceased. Masses will be offered in 2020 as follows: January 7th, February 4th, March 4th, April 1st, May 6th, June 10th, July 1st, August 5th, September 2nd, October 7th, November 4th, and December 2, 2022.

Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship deadline is April 30th. If you are currently accepted and/or enrolled in full-time college, post-secondary educational institution, or vocational school and active in Branch 746 or want to become active, you may be eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship. For more information on the application criteria and requirements go to: <https://www.fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships/>.

Mary Kapitan, Secretary

**BRANCH 764 –
WARREN, OHIO**

Branch 764 will hold a meeting at 10:00AM on February 2, 2022, at Panera

Bread, 3641 Elm Road Northeast, Warren, OH, 44483. On the agenda: discussion and planning of events for spring and finalization of delegate and alternates confirmation for convention. For more information, contact Bill Hrusovsky at 330-372-1948 or hrusovskyw@embarqmail.com.

William Hruskovsky, Secretary

**BRANCH 855 –
PARMA, OHIO**

Branch 855 will hold its first meeting of the new year on February 19, 2022, beginning at 10AM at Panera, 5090 Tiedeman Rd, Brooklyn, OH.

On the agenda: election of delegates to the 52nd Quadrennial Convention. All COVID protocols in place at the time such as masking and social distancing will be observed at this meeting. Note: Should circumstances in February preclude a safe in-person gathering, the meeting will be changed to an all virtual meeting or postponed. If this happens, an email will be sent to all branch members for whom we have an email address. Also, please check the FCSU website closer to the meeting date and/or contact me at fcsu855@gmail.com or 440-864-4744 prior to the meeting.

Barbara Sutilla, President

**BRANCH 856 –
WASHINGTON, DC AND AREA**

Branch 856 will hold their first meeting of the new year on March 5, 2022, all members are urged to attend. In keeping with the restrictions due to the Covid-19 and the safety of our members we will try to do lunch then have the meeting. This will take place at Tavira Restaurant 8401 Connecticut Avenue Chevy Chase, MD, 20815. This place all depends on another thing: WEATHER PERMITTING. If an in person meeting cannot be held, it will be done by ZOOM at the same day and time. At this meeting we will have an election of delegates to the 52nd Quadrennial Convention to be held in Cleveland, OH, from July 30th to August 2nd, 2022. For more information call Marion Mistrik at 301-654-3856 or Katherine Nowatkoski at 919-651-0363.

Wishing all a Merry Christmas and a Healthy Happy New Year.

Katherine Nowatkoski President

Answer to Puzzle

Solution to Puzzle from page 15

P	L	O	P		A	D	D	L	E		I	C	O	N		
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News From Slovakia

Vlhová vyhrala slalom Svetového pohára v Lienzi

Lienz 29. decembra (TASR) – Slovenská alpská lyžiarka Petra Vlhová zvíťazila v stredu na slalome Svetového pohára v rakúskom Lienzi.

Vlhová dokončila preteky s časom 1 minúta a 42,1 sekundy, čím predstihla Rakúšanku Katharinu Liensbergerovú o 0,51 sekundy a Švajčiarku Michelle Gisinovú o 0,68 sekundy.

Slovenská lyžiarka si tak pripísala 23. víťazstvo vo Svetovom pohári a 50. pódiové umiestnenie v sérii.



Petra Vlhová oslavuje víťazstvo v rakúskom Lienzi 29. decembra 2021. (foto TASR)

Petra Vlhova celebrating her victory in Lienz, Austria on December 29, 2021. (photo by TASR)

Vlhova Wins World Cup Slalom in Lienz

Lienz, December 29 (TASR) – Slovak Alpine skier Petra Vlhova won a World Cup slalom event in Lienz, Austria on Wednesday.

Vlhova finished the race with a time of 1 minute and 42.1 seconds, edging out Austria's Katharina Liensberger by 0.51 seconds and Switzerland's Michelle Gisin by 0.68 seconds.

The Slovak skier thus notched up her 23rd victory in the World Cup and 50th podium appearance in the series.

CoFoE: Slovensko má vplyv na tvorbu európskej politiky

Bratislava 20. decembra (TASR) – Slovensko má okrem priamych výhod z členstva v EÚ aj reálny vplyv na tvorbu európskej politiky, zhodli sa na nedávnej diskusii, ktorú zorganizovala televízia TASR v súvislosti s prebiehajúcou Konferenciou o budúcnosti Európy (CoFoE), slovenskí europoslanci Vladimír Bilčík, Michal Šimečka a Michal Wiezik

Poslanci tiež odpovedali na otázky študentov politológie z Univerzity Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre. Jeden zo študentov sa ich opýtal, ako by chceli „zmeniť euroskepticizmus“, ktorý v regióne panuje.

Wiezik vníma euroskepticizmus ako „veľký problém“ a pripisuje ho vplyvu dezinformačnej scény. „Euroskepticizmus nie je založený na objektívnych poznatkoch alebo objektívnych faktoch. V dnešnom svete je to veľký problém, pretože existuje preťaženie informácií a ľudia nie sú dostatočne schopní tieto informácie filtrovať a pristupovať k nim kriticky,“ povedal.

Šimečka uviedol, že mnohé tvrdenia, ktoré sa šíria cez internet, sú číry nezmysel. Na druhej strane Únia potrebuje kritiku, zdôraznil.

Bilčík uviedol, že nemá problém s kritikou EÚ, keďže vecnú kritiku považuje za dobrú. Ľuďom sa zdá, že Únia je pomalá a ťažkopádna. Je to úplne prirodzené, keďže existujúca demokracia je mimoriadne komplikovaná.

CoFoE bude zbierať pripomienky a nápady do jari 2022. Tie môžu viesť ku konkrétnym odporúčaniam pre reformu EÚ.



Illustration picture (photo by TASR)

Ilustračná snímka (foto TASR)

CoFoE: Slovakia Has Impact on European Policy-making

Bratislava, December 20 (TASR) – In addition to drawing direct benefits from its EU membership, Slovakia also has a real impact on European policy-making, Slovak MEPs Vladimír Bilčík, Michal Šimečka and Michal Wiezik concurred during a recent discussion organized

by TASR TV in connection with the ongoing Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE).

The MEPs were also answering questions posed by political science students from Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. One of the students asked them how they would like to “change the euroscepticism” that prevails in the region.

Wiezik views euroscepticism as a “big problem”, ascribing it to the influence of the disinformation scene. “Euroscepticism isn't based on objective knowledge or objective facts. This is a big problem in today's world, as there is an overload of information, and people aren't sufficiently able to filter and approach this information critically,” he said.

Šimečka stated that many claims that are being spread via the Internet are pure nonsense. On the other hand, the Union needs criticism, he stressed.

Bilčík stated that he has no problem with criticism of the EU, as he views matter-of-fact criticism as good. It seems to people that the Union is slow and ponderous. That's absolutely natural, as the democracy in place is extremely complicated.

The CoFoE will collect comments and ideas until the spring of 2022. These may lead to concrete recommendations for reforming the EU.

Parlament schválil štátny rozpočet na rok 2022 s deficitom 4,94 % HDP

14. decembra (TASR) – Parlament v tento deň schválil štátny rozpočet na rok 2022, za návrh hlasovalo 91 zo 146 prítomných poslancov.

V budúcom roku by malo Slovensko hospodáriť s deficitom 4,94 percenta HDP. Tohtoročný deficit sa odhaduje na približne 8 percent HDP.

V nasledujúcich rokoch sa predpokladá pokles deficitu verejných financií na 2,7 percenta HDP s vyrovnaným rozpočtom v roku 2024. Podľa Ministerstva financií na to sú však potrebné konsolidačné opatrenia v hodnote takmer 4 miliárd eur.

Štátny rozpočet podporili kluby OĽaNO, SaS a Sme rodina, proti hlasovali Smer-SD a krajne pravicová ĽSNS. Pokiaľ ide o nezávislých poslancov, podporili ich Jana Žitňanská, Alexandra Pivková, Miriam Šuteková, Ján Krošlák a Juraj Šeliga, pričom Jozef Šimko, Miroslav Kollár a Tomáš Valášek sa zdržali, ostatní hlasovali proti.

Celkové plánované príjmy verejnej správy na rok 2022 sú 44,2 miliardy eur a výdavky 49,4 miliardy eur.

Vo viacročnom rozpočte verejnej správy sa predpokladá, že hrubý dlh Slovenska bude kulminovať v rokoch 2021-22 na úrovni 61,5 percenta HDP, do roku 2024 potom klesne pod 59 percent HDP.

Podľa návrhu zákona o rozpočte sa v rámci plánu obnovy na roky 2022 – 24 očakáva vyčlenenie 4,59 miliardy EUR, pričom väčšina týchto zdrojov sa v budúcom roku vyčlení na ekologické hospodárstvo (454 miliónov EUR), vzdelávanie (323 miliónov EUR) a zdravie (218 miliónov eur).



Foto TASR Bratislava

Stock photo by TASR Bratislava

House Okays 2022 State Budget, With Deficit of 4.94% GDP

December 14 (TASR) – Parliament approved the 2022 state budget on Tuesday, with 91 out of 146 present lawmakers voting for the bill.

In the next year, Slovakia is supposed to run a deficit of 4.94 percent of GDP. This year's deficit is forecast to equal about 8 percent of GDP.

In the following years, the public finances deficit is prognosed to decrease to 2.7 percent of GDP, with a balanced budget to be achieved in 2024. In order to make that happen, however, consolidation measures worth almost €4 billion are needed, according to the Finance Ministry.

The state budget garnered support from caucuses of OĽaNO, SaS and We Are Family, with Smer-SD and far-right ĽSNS voting against. As for independent lawmakers, lending their support were Jana Žitňanská, Alexandra Pivková, Miriam Šuteková, Jan Krošlák and Juraj Šeliga, with Jozef Šimko, Miroslav Kollár and Tomáš Valášek abstaining and the rest voting against.

The public administration's total projected 2022 income stands at €44.2 billion and expenditures at €49.4 billion.

The public administration's multi-year budget expects the gross debt of Slovakia to culminate in 2021-22 at 61.5 percent of GDP, then drop under 59 percent of GDP by 2024.

According to the budget bill, the allocation of €4.59 billion is expected under the recovery plan in 2022-24, with the bulk of these resources earmarked next year for the green economy (€454 million), education (€323 million) and health (€218 million).



Vianoce, Vianoce prichádzajú

On Sunday, December 5th, 2021, Nicholas Day Eve, Branch 746 held their annual Christmas party at Luciano's Ristorante & Lounge in Rahway, NJ. The gathering began with a branch meeting where there was a recap of the year's activities and plans for 2022. Members were also informed about the upcoming convention. Members also remembered in their prayers dear family members and friends that had left an impact on our branch who met our Lord in 2021.

There was euphoria in the air as members greeted one another and wished each other a joyous Christmas! In 2020 our Christmas party was held virtually and although it was a lot of fun meeting in person is so much better! For the 2021 festivities, the Branch also had a surprise guest, a longtime member -- Sister Mary Ann Brezina, OP, a Caldwell Dominican Sister came to celebrate with us! Sister Brezina taught at St. Elizabeth School in Linden. As a child she had fond memories of attending Jednota meetings with her father, Stefan Brezina, who was President of Branch 381 located at Assumption Slovak Parish, Jersey City. Sister led Jednota members in a prayer and singing of her favorite Slovak song, "Ja parobek z Kapušán". A song from the Eastern Slovakia region.

Members enjoyed a delicious four-course delicious meal and after which there was a St. Nicholas raffle. Special thanks Patrik Feco, Svatý Mikuláš' special assistant, who distributing gifts! Santa's helper, Patrik, checked the "list" twice! After four hours of laughing, eating, and sharing good times with old friends – the celebration came to an end.

- Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Region 1 Director



(L – R) Viera Stretavska, Stephen Minarovich, Marianna Fecova, Jozefina Zentko, and Lois Schmidt modeling their new Christmas headbands!



Sabina Sabados with Patrik Feco who was an excellent Santa's helper (Svatý Mikuláš' special assistant)!



Gary Kapitan with Patrik Feco who check the "naughty list" twice! Gary was also the photographer for the day!



Joanne Tkach Polt (Branch 746 Vice President) pictures with Santa's helper!



Milka Choma (Branch 746 Auditor), Anna Balas (Branch 746 Auditor), Julie Rada and Maria Halama reminiscing about past Jednota events.



(L – R) Seated: Mary Kapitan (Branch 746 Secretary) and Sister Mary Ann Brezina. Standing: Sabina Sabados (Branch 746 President), and Mary Ann Ranahan (Branch 746 Treasurer).



Mr. and Mrs. Jan and Danka Mikulasko



Newest members Mr. and Mrs. Pavol and Jozefina Zentko with their presents from Svatý Mikuláš.



Mr. and Mrs. Milan and Eva Kohany enjoying the festivities.



Members Emilia Filak (Supreme Court member) and Anne Zofchak (lifetime members for 90 years).



Ked' už svoju lásku máš
When you already have your Love
Jerry Jaroslav Krúpa

Ked' hľadáme št'astie v živote,
 ked' hľadáme kvietok ten svoj,
 prejdeme mnohe lúky
 a tisíckrát pýtame sa kvietkov:
 Si ty, kvietok l'ubezný, si ty môj?

When we seek happiness in life,
 When we look for our own flower,
 We will cross many meadows
 And ask flowers a thousand times:
 Are you, my lovely flower, are you mine?

I povie kvietok premilený,
 ktorý už súdený nám bol byt'
 (jemne, tiško zašepká, iba lupienkami zašeľstí):
 Áno, ja som tvoj. My máme spolu žiť.

And the little flower will say,
 Who has already been destined for us
 (gently, quietly whispers):
 Yes, I'm yours. We spend our lives together

Kto by vtedy št'astím neplakal,
 svet nezobímal krásny?!
 Kto by nekľakol Bohu vd'akou?
 Ved' láska je báseň básni.

Who wouldn't cry then with happiness?
 Beautifully didn't hug the world?!
 Who wouldn't kneel thankfully before God
 Love is a poem of poems.

Ked' už svoju lásku máš,
 ten kvietok krehký,
 ked' si už toľkú cestu zašiel,
 miluj si ho a ochranuj!
 Ved' si ten pravý poklad našiel.

If you already have your love,
 that flower is fragile,
 When you have traveled so far
 Love him and protect him!
 You have found the real treasure.



The Slovak-American Cultural Center cordially invites you to:

The Slovak Ball 2022 on: Saturday, February 26, 2022
 at: The Royal Manor in Garfield, NJ

The black-tie affair will begin with cocktail hour at 7pm followed by served dinner, entertainment, and dancing. Premium open bar all night!

Tickets available via Eventbrite, PayPal or by check.

Buy early, limited tickets available!

For more information, visit:

SlovakAmericanCC.org



Most of us have become used to the fact that we carry a cell phone so that we can be reached immediately; in fact, it is expected that we do. But there is more: We have also come to understand that this device gives us access to an incredible number of audio-visual platforms that can completely take over our lives to the point of forgetting everything else: Consider the oft-published caricature of a family eating a meal where no one speaks because all are looking at or answering their cell phones Have we entered an era where our behaviour is defined and influenced by a new communications revolution?

The invention of the printing press around 1440 by Johannes Gutenberg in the German city of Mainz launched the communications revolution that we are familiar with by making information not only more accessible, but also recorded and remembered. The inventions that followed, namely the radio, television, and the internet, made this information amazingly ubiquitous and immediate and brought about a new communications revolution. What has this done to us? How have we, indeed how should we react to this new and overwhelming presence in our lives?

All living creatures communicate. Biologists tell us that even trees in the forest communicate. Humans developed the most sophisticated form of communication that has enabled them not only to pass on information, but also to express in detail and depth feelings and emotions. Social life and everything that flows from it, especially inventions, became possible because of this ability to communicate. But with this ability came the challenge of accuracy and veracity. It tested our individual reaction to information, or put another way, whether we told the truth as we understood it or whether we distorted the facts and lied. "Fake news" was not invented this century; it was always there. What accounts for this?

The answer is found in the way we process the information we receive. We all have an innate reaction to the world around us, a reaction that is fueled by experience, feelings, and emotions, but also by rationality. But rationality is a double-edged sword that can take the information and challenge it – it can offer arguments for or against – and thereby have an impact at the emotional level. This process, which is both individual and social, is the essence of politics and has been with us since time immemorial. Societies and even civilizations have risen and fallen on how information played out in the decisions leaders took. Is anything different today?

The change in the dissemination of information is what distinguishes our current reality from that of the past. We now face a test of rapidity and quantity that our ancestors and previous generations never did. Information overflow is a special challenge that they did not encounter because they usually had time to digest, even to discuss the information they received before turning to action. It seems that we no longer have this "luxury." If anything, we are now overwhelmed with information and challenged to deal with it; the question is whether we do so rationally and/or emotionally? The current pandemic brought home this dilemma very forcefully.

Our current communications allow decision makers and citizens to assess a situation in good time and to move quickly when rapid action is necessary to save property and lives. But they also allow opposing views, even misinformation and disinformation, to partake in this process, and to do so just as quickly. The challenge we face is what information to believe before we come to a decision. Since the pandemic began, we have been told that the best way to "beat" COVID is to get vaccinated. The rapidity with which vaccines were created and made available around the world is a story of incredible human ingenuity, international communication, cooperation, and good will, rarely seen in history. And yet, the merits of the science that brought these vaccines have been challenged and the information behind these challenges has been disseminated to such an extent that in many countries in Europe, Slovakia among them, there have been low vaccination rates and, as a result, the possibility of what may become a fourth wave of COVID infections. What accounts for such a mass reaction?

The incredible impact of current communications, it would seem, explains in great part the refusal to accept science-based recommendations by allowing the dissemination of a plethora of arguments to justify it. Contemporary communications have reinforced the tension between social and individual responsibility that has always existed when assessing information, resulting in new levels of confusion and uncertainty. Coercive, authoritarian, or totalitarian political systems can forcibly bend individual responsibility and enforce one officially sanctioned view, but democratic ones are reluctant, hesitant, and, in fact, generally unable to do so by law. This has resulted in an emphasis on individual rights as never before.

What aggravated this situation in democratic societies was the appearance of some sort of official sanction to the predominance of individual over social responsibility, of emotion over evaluation and reasoned judgment. On 20 January 2017, Donald Trump, the newly elected president of the United States began to use the social media to repudiate anything

he disagreed with: On the day of his inauguration, he claimed that the crowd present at his inauguration was the biggest ever in American history, despite evidence to the contrary. He gave "fake news" a level of legitimacy that it never had before. Many media reacted by contributing to this new polarisation. Will future historians not say that on this day, the communications revolution underwent a major modification? Did we enter an age not only of mass confusion, but of mass manipulation beyond anything that existed before, with as yet unforeseen consequences?

How future historians answer this question will depend on how each one of us acts and responds now and in years to come to this new communications world we live in. We now have more information available than ever before and that is a very good thing. Information is the best defence against manipulation. But we must also recognize and accept that, more so than before, we have a responsibility to evaluate this information, acknowledge the tension that exists between social and individual accountability, and, in the end, act accordingly. Perhaps, when evaluating information henceforth, we might consider the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!" If modern communications were to disseminate this message, then this might indeed help us to come to terms with the new communications revolution that we are experiencing. "Stay tuned!"

P.S. It might also help put a quick end to the pandemic.



I am Home, but Not for Long

On November 14, 2021, I boarded a plane for my trip back to the USA. It has been over 3 years since the start of my missionary journey. In August, 2018, I began my four-month formation program in Los Angeles, CA. Shortly after completion I flew off to Ghana to begin what has been an amazing journey.

Prior to leaving Ghana I watched as 30 exceptional girls from the class of 2021 graduated from St. Anne's Girls' Senior High School. I had the privilege of organizing their graduation ceremony. These girls were first year students when I arrived in January, 2019. It was a blessing to be able to watch as they went from giggly girls to serious young women. Many of the girls have shared with me their desire to be teachers, nurses, and lawyers. Two girls from the Home Economics class told me they plan on opening their own pastry shop. Accomplishing these goals will not be easy given the economic situation most are facing but I believe with God's grace anything is possible.

Here is a portion of the message I gave them before saying my good-byes:

Always remember your GOD!

Remember the Holy Spirit. He is with you, wanting to guide you. Pray to him.

Ask him for his assistance, especially in times of uncertainty.

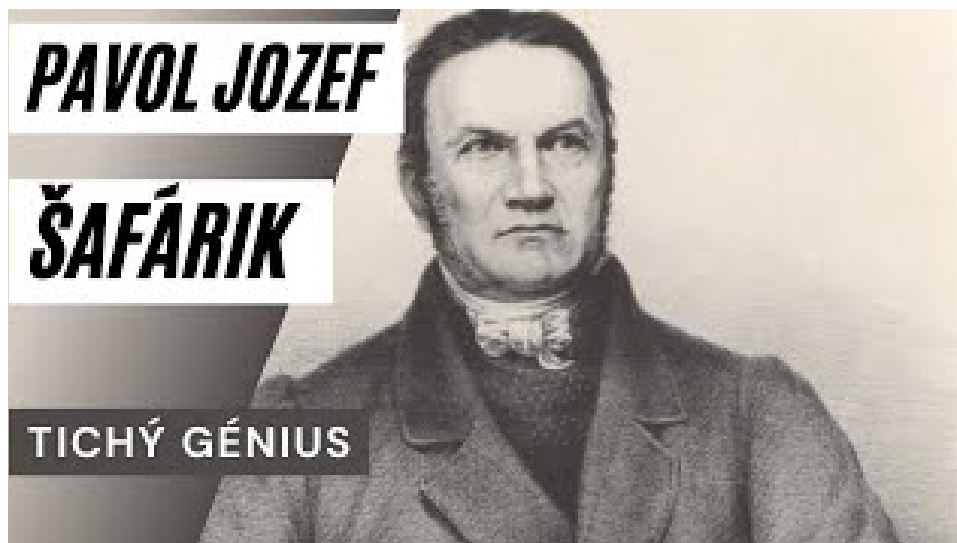
Remember God's son, Jesus, and how he lived his life here on earth. Whenever you are challenged to make a decision, especially one involving morality; right versus wrong, good versus bad, ask yourself "What would Jesus do?"

Also remember Mary, our Blessed Mother. No one has a more special connection to Christ, her son, than she does. Pray the rosary daily; not just in May and October. Carry it with you as much as possible. The rosary is powerful. It is a weapon in our battle with the evil one. When you feel tempted put the rosary in your hand, and ask that Mary will guide you.

I pray to God that I have made a difference in at least one of these girls lives. I have decided to extend my mission work for one more year. On January 19, 2022, I will once again board a plane. This will be the beginning of my fourth year as a missionary in Damongo, Ghana. I pray that my presence will have a positive influence on at least one more person with whom I will be living amongst.

- Respectfully submitted by **Karen M. Hunka, Branch 181, Former Chairman of Auditors**

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



Nový historický dokument približuje život a dielo Pavla Jozefa Šafárika, ktorý v roku 1827 navrhol založiť Maticu slovenskú, hoci sa jej vzniku nedožil. Ďalší online vzdelávací audiovizuálny dokument pre študentov i záujemcov o národné dejiny pochádza zo spoločnej dielne Matice slovenskej a Univerzity P. J. Šafárika v Košiciach. Pozrite si ho na Youtube profile TV Matica.

Informačné ústredie MS

A new historical documentary describes the life and work of Pavel Jozef Šafárik, who proposed the founding of the Slovak Matica in 1827, although he did not live to see it. Another online educational audiovisual documentary for students and those interested in national history comes from the joint workshop of Matica slovenská and P. J. Šafárik University in Košice. Watch it on the Youtube profile TV Matica.

MS Information Center

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8py78x>

YouTube video Pavol Jozef Šafárik, Tichý génius

Historický dokument približuje život a dielo Pavla Jozefa Šafárika najmä študentom

PhDr. Zuzana Pavelcová, Matica slovenská

Univerzita Pavla Jozefa Šafárika v Košiciach a Matica slovenská pripravili online vzdelávací historický dokument o Pavlovi Jozefovi Šafárikovi pre školy i záujemcov o národné dejiny. Dielo bude slúžiť aj ako reprezentačné video univerzity.

„Pracovať na novom historickom dokumente o Pavlovi Jozefovi Šafárikovi má pre Maticu slovenskú veľký morálny význam, keďže práve Šafárik v roku 1827 navrhol založiť Maticu slovenskú, aj keď sa jej vzniku nedožil. Internet sa pre mnohých študentov stal priestorom, kde získavajú informácie pre svoje štúdium, ale aj pre zvyšovanie svojho intelektuálneho potenciálu. Osvedčili sa nám voľne dostupné videá ako jedinečná vzdelávacia pomôcka. Preto tvoríme historické dokumenty o slovenských osobnostiach a udalostiach, vďaka ktorým si mládež lepšie osvoji dejinné súvislosti a podporí sa v nich kolektívna historická pamäť národa. Jednou z našich posledných tohtoročných tém je život a dielo Pavla Jozefa Šafárika pri príležitosti 160. výročia jeho úmrtia, preto sme prirodzene spojili naše sily s Univerzitou P. J. Šafárika pri vytvorení tohto unikátneho historického do-

kumentu,“ uviedol predseda MS Marián Gešper. Historický dokument Tichý génius Pavol Jozef Šafárik komplexne zobrazuje Šafárika ako slovenského básnika, historika, etnografa, slavistu, univerzitného profesora a zakladateľa vedeckej slavistiky.

Idea produkcie nového dokumentárneho filmu o živote a diele Pavla Jozefa Šafárika sa vo vedení UPJŠ v Košiciach zrodila pri príležitosti pripomenutia si šesťdesiateho výročia jej založenia v roku 2019. Jeho vznik bol naplánovaný na rok 2021, v ktorom si slovenská a česká odborná verejnosť pripomenula 160. výročie úmrtia P. J. Šafárika. Na príprave snímky s názvom Tichý génius Pavol Jozef Šafárik výrazne spolupracoval Ján Gbúr, profesor na Katedre slovakistiky, slovanských filológií a komunikácie Filozofickej fakulty UPJŠ v Košiciach, ktorý na základe najnovších výsledkov vedeckého výskumu diela rodáka z Kobeliarova vytvoril scenár dokumentu. Dokument bol vytvorený spolu s Maticou slovenskou, ktorá týmto nadväzuje na svoje predchádzajúce historické dokumenty venované významným slovenským osobnostiam a udalostiam.

„Odkaz Pavla Jozefa Šafárika naša univerzita hrdou reprezentuje od roku 1959. Tento dokument poukazuje na

význam jeho osobnosti, prínos pre slovenskú kultúru i jej ďalší historický vývoj a otvára cestu mladším generáciám k poznaniu Šafárikovho génia. Láska k poznaniu, zvedavosť a túžba prekonávať neznámo prostredníctvom poznania sú inšpiráciou a odkazom, ku ktorému sa univerzita nesúca meno po veľikánovi vedeckej slavistiky hlási,“ vyjadril sa profesor Pavol Sovák, rektor UPJŠ v Košiciach. Spoločne s predsedom Matice slovenskej Mariánom Gešperom odhalili v roku 2019 prvú bronzovú bustu Pavla Jozefa Šafárika v areáli univerzity.

Šafárik pochádzal z evanjelickej učiteľskej rodiny. Získal kvalitné vzdelanie na evanjelickom lýceu v Kežmarku a na univerzite v Jene. Bol riaditeľom srbského pravoslávneho gymnázia v Novom Sade, no významnejšie pôsobil neskôr v Prahe. Tu sa vypracoval na jednu z vedúcich osobností vedeckého života. Stal sa priekopníkom slavistiky a dôležitou postavou českého i slovenského národného obrodzenia. Jeho práce výrazným spôsobom prispeli nielen k etablovaniu slavistiky, ale aj k politickej emancipácii slovanských národov, keďže dal dovtedy len romantickej myšlienke slovanskej vzájomnosti vedecký základ.

Historical documentary brings the life and work of Pavel Jozef Šafárik in closer view, particularly for students

Dr. Zuzana Pavelcová, Matica Slovenská

Pavel Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and Matica Slovenská have prepared an online educational historical documentary about Pavel Jozef Šafárik for schools and those interested in national history. The work will also serve as a representative video of the university.

“Working on a new historical documentary about Pavel Jozef Šafárik is of great moral importance to Matica Slovenská, as it was Šafárik who proposed its founding in 1827, even though he did not live to see it. For many students, the Internet has become a place where they obtain information for their studies, but also for increasing their intellectual potential. Freely available videos have proven to be a unique educational tool. That is why we create historical documents about Slovak personalities and events, that will help young people better master historical context and will help support the collective historical memory of the nation. One of our last topics this year is the life and work of Pavel Jozef Šafárik on the occasion of the 160th anniversary of his death, so we naturally joined forces with P. J. Šafárik University to create this unique historical document,“ said MS chairman Marián Gešper. The historical documentary “Silent Genius Pavol

Jozef Šafárik“ comprehensively depicts Šafárik as a Slovak poet, historian, ethnographer, Slavist, university professor, and founder of scientific Slavonic studies.

The idea of producing a new documentary about the life and work of Pavel Jozef Šafárik was born under the leadership of UPJŠ in Košice on the occasion of commemorating in 2019 the sixtieth anniversary of its founding. Its creation was planned for 2021, in which the Slovak and Czech professional public commemorated the 160th anniversary of the death of P. J. Šafárik. Ján Gbúr, a professor at the Department of Slovak Studies, Slavic Philology and Communication at the UPJŠ Faculty of Arts in Košice, collaborated on the documentary on the basis of the latest results of scientific research into the work of a native of Kobeliarov, and significantly collaborated on the preparation of the film entitled Silent Genius Pavol Jozef Šafárik. The document was created together with Matica Slovenská, which builds on its previous historical documents dedicated to important Slovak personalities and events.

“The legacy of Pavel Jozef Šafárik has been proudly represented by our university since 1959. This document points out the importance of his personality, contribution to Slovak culture and its further historical development; and opens the

way for younger generations to learn about Šafárik’s genius. The love for knowledge, curiosity and the desire to overcome the unknown through knowledge are the inspiration and legacy to which the university named after the giant of scientific Slavic studies subscribes,“ said Professor Pavol Sovák, Rector of UPJŠ in Košice. Together with the chairman of Matica Slovenská, Marián Gešper, they unveiled the first bronze bust of Pavel Jozef Šafárik in 2019 on the university campus.

Šafárik came from an evangelical teaching family. He received a quality education at the Evangelical Lyceum in Kežmarok and at the University of Jena. He was the director of the Serbian Orthodox grammar school in Novi Sad, but he later worked more significantly in Prague. Here he developed into one of the leading figures in scientific circles. He became a pioneer of Slavic studies and an important figure in the Czech and Slovak national revival. His work significantly contributed not only to the establishment of Slavic studies, but also to the political emancipation of the Slavic nations, as it had hitherto given only a romantic basis to the romantic idea of Slavic reciprocity.

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Slovak Language Classes Online Spring 2022



Want to try learning Slovak online? Sokol MN is again offering Slovak and Czech language classes online in the Spring of 2022. Go to sokolmn.org to learn more or register for a class.

- Submitted by Michael Kopanic

The Impact of My Mother's Homeland: My Mother's Family (part 4)

continued on page 14

agents (Štátna bezpečnosť - State Security) following us.

I found it took about 5-6 months before I could speak Slovak fairly well and think in Slovak. I even experienced my first dream that was wholly in Slovak by December. Once I could converse more easily, the process of learning accelerated. But it was still a challenge to understand some of the heavy dialects when I visited in the countryside, and I never became fully comfortable with Czech, even though it was broadcast on mass media. But since Czechs had such an impact on Slovakia and I had to read some documents in Czech, I gradually learned some basic Czech.

Living in communist Czechoslovakia was an eye opener as to how a totalitarian system works with a monopoly of power controlled by one party. I also saw how people coped with their lack of freedom and relied heavily on close friends and relatives in a world when true trust of someone becomes a highly prized value. Knowing the language and exchanging ideas with trusted friends enabled me to understand how people developed their own networks to get by as best they could despite the overarching control of the communist system. While I learned a great deal and became frustrated with the bureaucracy there, it would still be one of the most memorable years in my life, even though being without my wife for most of the stay would take its toll.

Back in the USA

My newfound Slovak language skills would remain an integral part of my life after I returned to the USA in July 1983. While writing my dissertation preoccupied me over the next few years, I kept up my conversation skills by talking only in Slovak with my mother and father, even though they used the Spiš dialect. This aided my learning the dialect which my own ancestors had used and speaking it helped me feel closer to them.

Life changed again when my wife gave birth to our first child, Milenka Anna, in 1984. I loved her so much that I gave her that name, and from the very beginning, I decided to speak only in Slovak to her and any other children that followed. My daughter, Erika Elizabeth, was named after relatives from Slovakia. From an early age, I read to them from Slovak children's books, and urged them to talk in Slovak with each other. Since I worked only part-time at teaching and my wife worked full-time as a librarian, I was able to spend much more time with them than most fathers, and always felt very close to my daughters to this day, as we share the most precious gift I gave them from birth – the Slovak language.

While in Akron, I continued to be actively involved with the Akron-Cleveland Slovak community and became to be one of the hosts of the Slovak Radio Program on WAUP-FM, the station at the University of Akron. Frank (Fero) Vršan and I formed one of four teams that hosted the program. I regularly presented segments on Slovak history and culture, along with some Slovaks words and their translations. My children used to listen to my program on Sunday evenings, and I remember how they used

to dance, and sing Slovak songs. We also used to read each evening some Slovak children's books which I obtained from the Matica slovenská.

To reinforce the language and the Catholic faith, we attended Slovak masses at St. Matthias in Youngstown, Ohio when we were visiting relatives. I also urged my parents to speak with them in Slovak so that the language would flow naturally. When they were teenagers, I took my children on a three week trip to Slovakia where they could experience the language in our ancestral homeland. That was one of four overseas trips with them, where they also studied at the Slovak language summer school. We would also spend at least a week with relatives, whom they developed a genuine affection for.

Pursuing genealogy also became a passion and I would question my parents and older family members about their experiences in Slovak and the Slovak-American community. The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International offers webinars, useful literature and conferences to assist members working on family history. And sites like www.familysearch.org offer new opportunities to find materials on the internet. I have found that usually one member of an extended family takes a genuine interest in genealogy, and that is important so that the family history is not forgotten. Stories and old photos need to be found and explained. Visiting Slovakia can help reinforce interests in ancestral background and the culture.

After the fall of communism, I would travel to Slovakia every two or three years, but the Covid-19 virus has put a damper on reinforcing those personal connections. A 1997 trip with my parents and aunt to Slovakia provided me with further insights about the culture and my mother's own past. Today the internet provides ways to connect with family and friends, but nothing compares with being there in person to experience the culture. The longer there, the better.

Whether an appreciation for Slovak culture and the language continues in the family is up to the adult children. I taught my grandchildren the language and many songs, and it is up to them to carry on. We can expose them to the culture, and then they have to make their own decisions about how much they value faith, family traditions and ethnic heritage. Whom they marry can make a difference, as well as the friends they associate with. Being active with Slovak organizations and ethnic fraternal societies like the First Catholic Slovak Union can help, as well as regularly reading Jednota and other publications. The internet offers many ways to keep in touch with our ethnic heritage, including some great Slovak recipes. Sunday Slovak Masses can be viewed online anytime on Facebook on the site of TV Lux in New York City (https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=notif&v=4421946924575796¬if_id=1641136565165649¬if_t=live_video_explicit).

All we can do is try to nurture a love of Slovak culture through exposure and hope it takes hold into adulthood and continues in the family. The future of what we call a Slovak-American community depends up that, but its nature is surely changing over time.

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For assistance call us at

1-800-533-6682



Branch 716 Year-end Events



On Sunday November 14, 2021, the St Stephen Society Branch 716 held their annual meeting at St. John Nepomucene Church Hall. New board members for the branch were elected for the coming year.



On the following Sunday of November 21st, in St. John's Nepomucene's downstairs hall, Branch 716 celebrated two birthdays: that of long time member Henrietta Daitova and Josef Lukacovic as well . Branch 716 provided refreshments and cake for the occasions.



Then, on Sunday December 5th, the branch provided food and service to all parishioners present in the church hall of St. John Nepomucene to celebrate St. Mikulas-St. Nicholas day. President Jan Škrkon prepared traditional segedinsky gulyas, pork and sauerkraut goulash for everyone.

That same day the Branch also celebrated the birthday of long time member Andre Sulak.



- Submitted by Joan Skrkon, Branch 716 Recording Secretary



Pictured (L - R): Frank Marmol, Auditor; Dolores Marmol, Secretary; Patty Marmol, Treasurer; Joanne Marmol, Vice President; and Mark Marmol, President.

December Meeting of Branch 162

Branch 162 held their annual meeting on Dec. 12, 2021, at Bogey's Restaurant in Uniontown, PA and re-elected the current officers for the next year. The officers were sworn in by Regional Director and branch member, James Marmol. All the officers wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and look forward to seeing all the delegates at the upcoming convention.

-Submitted by Jim Marmol, Region 4 Director



(L - R) Jozef Korcak, Maria Jurasi, Anna Korcak, Maria Zakovic, Anton Kucharovic, Joseph Jurasi, Rev. Stefan Chanas, Daniel F. Tanzone and Antonia Krajkovic. Photo taken by: Zelmira Beckova-Kucharovic

Branch 45's December Meeting

The St. Matthew's Society, Branch 45, held an annual meeting on Sunday, December 5, 2021 at St. John Nepomucene Church in NYC. A group photo highlights the cheerful atmosphere in evidence among our members who enjoyed an exceptional lunch, along with fraternalism as branch members were finally able to meet in person.

- Submitted by Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary

2022 Branch 670 Scholarships Available for Qualified Members:

Apply Today!



Branch 670 of Donora, PA is excited to announce that it is accepting applications for its 2022 Scholarship Program. The committee will award, to the candidates who best satisfy the criteria up to three, onetime \$1000.00 scholarships. Any individual of Branch #670 that has had a policy for at least 4 years, is current in their premiums, is a high school senior and will attend an Approved Educational Institution is eligible to apply.

For applications, you may email your request or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Joe Matinko, 85 Crestline Ave., Charleroi, PA 15022 (email: matinko305@comcast.net)

ALL APPLICATION REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 31, 2022

Gala Evening in NYC celebrates UNs 76th, Papánek, and Dubček

On November 15, 2021 the Slovak Permanent Mission to the United Nations hosted a special Gala Evening at the Residence of the Permanent Representative of Slovakia. The Gala evening was a celebration of the 76th anniversary of the United Nations and commemorated the 125th anniversary of the birth and 30th anniversary of the death of Dr. Ján Papánek, the first Permanent Representative of Czechoslovakia to the UN, and one of the fourteen co-authors of the UN Charter. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth, another important Slovak was remembered, Slovak, Alexander Dubček. Both leaders dedicated their lives to the fight for freedom and democracy, but also to humanism, human dignity and service to the people. Their legacy is highly relevant also today at the UN. The core values and principles enshrined in the UN Charter remain highly relevant and need to be protected and developed.

Upon invitation of the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations, Ambassador Michal Mlynár and his wife Andrea Mlynarova, the Guest of Honour of the Gala Evening was the President of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, H.E. Abdulla Shahid. Sabina Sabados, FCSU Region 1 Director and moderator of the evening, read written messages from United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. António Guterres and former United States Secretary of State and former US Ambassador to the United Nations, H.E. Madeleine Korbelt Albright. Also in attendance was Archbishop Gabriele Giordano Caccia, Permanent Observer Of The Holy See To The United Nations as well as Fr. Stefan Chanas of St. John Nepomucene Slovak Church, and Pastor Michal Misina of Holy Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church who offered an invocation.

Diplomacy and culture together bring peace, mutual understanding and harmony. During the Gala Evening, the audience comprised of representatives of various countries and other dignitaries had the chance to listen to an amazing musical program performed by outstanding Slovak-American performers: Broadway star Luba Mason (Branch 45), pianist Eva Virsik, and violinist Filip Pogady, as well as young Spanish singer Daniel Del Valle Blanco.

Source: Slovak Permanent Mission to the United Nations



Photo Credits: Diana Cernak

[L – R] Luba Mason (Branch 45), Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations, Ambassador Michal Mlynár, Sabina Sabados (Region 1 Director, Branch 746), Filip Pogady, President of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, H.E. Abdulla Shahid, Daniel Del Valle Blanco, Eva Virsik, and Dr. Andrea Mlynarova.

For True Human Fraternity – January Reflection



We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family

Fraternity is a marriage of love and faith. It calls us to be compassionate and drives us forward to recognize our brothers and sisters to the fullest capacity regardless of religious, socioeconomic or other status. A call not only to recognize God given dignity but to honor it. In Galatians 5:13 Christ compels us to use our freedom to serve one another through love. A love that is made manifest in fraternal love and mutual respect.

Fraternity is a marriage of love and faith. It calls us to be compassionate and drives us forward to recognize our brothers and sisters to the fullest capacity regardless of religious, socioeconomic or other status. A call not only to recognize God given dignity but to honor it. In Galatians 5:13 Christ compels us to use our freedom to serve one another through love. A love that is made manifest in fraternal love and mutual respect.

In an introduction to A Document on Human Fraternity signed by Pope Francis in 2019, it reads, "Faith leads a believer to see in the other a brother or sister to be supported and loved. Through faith in God, who has created the universe, creatures and all human beings (equal on account of his mercy), believers are called to express this human fraternity by safeguarding creation and the entire universe and supporting all persons, especially the poorest and those most in need."

Practicing compassionate and true fraternity calls us to suffer with those who face persecution, poverty, and isolation. A call to be present to the body of Christ in a world rife with indifference. Let us pray that God enlivens our hearts and unites us in our common humanity.

- As posted on Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network <http://popesprayerusa.net/> by guest author Chenele Shaw. Chenele is a former youth minister and theology teacher and a current young adult trying to live her life for Christ, and currently working for the Diocese of Orlando.

Ohio Fraternal Alliance 2022 Scholarships



The Ohio Fraternal Alliance annually awards a college scholarship to a graduating high school senior up to \$500.

2022 Scholarship Applicant Must:

1. Be an Ohio resident and a current youth policy member of a fraternal society, or included in a family member policy that does not have youth policies belonging to the Ohio Fraternal Alliance.
2. Be a 2022 high school graduate.
3. Submit a minimum 150-word essay entitled: How I'm personally involved in my Fraternal Society & its Future.
4. Submit a list of the following activities: Church related activities, local community and volunteer activities, school activities/clubs.
5. Submit a letter of recommendation from a local Fraternal Society officer.
6. Send a completed application dated and submitted by April 1, 2022.

To obtain an application and mailing address, go to: <https://www.fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships/>

Your Phone Call Is Important to Us!



At the First Catholic Slovak Union, we take every phone call very seriously. Our goal is to deliver the best customer service possible – even in these challenging times.

Per current COVID-19 government guidelines and mandates, we remain closed to in-person visits with restricted hours for our Home Office employees that allow them to practice social distancing and other methods for ensuring their wellbeing.

Please take the following steps when you get our voice mail so that we can provide you with the level of service and attention you deserve.

1. Leave a brief reason for your call.
2. Be sure to state your full name, and spell your last name.
3. Along with your phone number, let us know the best time to contact you between the hours of 8:00AM and 4:30PM, M- F.
4. Remember that we can only discuss a contract or certificate with the owner or with permission from the owner.

MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE USA AND CANADA SEPTEMBER 17-18, 2021 COLLEGE PARK MARRIOTT HYATTSVILLE, MD

FIRST SESSION:

Friday, September 17, 2021

OPEN MEETING:

The Board of Directors Meeting is being held at the College Park Marriott in Hyattsville, Maryland in conjunction with the 56th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Shrine honoring Our Mother of Sorrows, Patroness of Slovakia, at the Chapel at the National Shrine on Saturday, September 18.

Reverend Thomas Nasta opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. by celebrating a Memorial Mass for our deceased officers and members who passed away in 2021.

President Andrew Rajec called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked Reverend Thomas Nasta, National Chaplain, to offer the opening prayer. The President asked Regional Director Sabina Sabados to lead the Board in singing the Anthems of the United States, Canada, Slovakia, and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

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

Reverend Thomas Nasta, National Chaplain – present;
Andrew M. Rajec, National President – present;
Andrew P. Rajec, Acting Vice President – present;
Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary – present;
James Marmol, Acting Treasurer – present;
Gregory Maurer, Chairman of Auditors – present;
Kevin Collins, Fraternal Activities Director – present;
Sabina Sabados, Regional Director, Region 1 – present;
Damian Nasta, Regional Director, Region 2 – present;
Martha Zavada-Wojcik, Regional Director, Region 3 – present;
Michael Lako, Regional Director, Region 5 – present via telephone;
Thomas Ivanec, Regional Director, Region 6 – present;
Timothy Graves, Regional Director, Region 7 – present;
Milos Mitro, Regional Director, Regions 8 – present via telephone;
Gary Matta, General Counsel - present.

READING OF THE CALL:

The Executive Secretary then read the Call to the Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING JUNE 19, 2021:

A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Gregory Maurer to accept the minutes of the Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting held June 19, 2021, as presented. Motion carried.

AQS REPORT:

Larry White, representing AQS Asset Management, Inc., joined the meeting by teleconference. Mr. White presented an extensive Investment Portfolio Transaction Report to the Board of Directors. Each member of the Board of Directors received a copy of the presentation in advance for his or her review. During and after the presentation, Larry White answered questions from the Board.

Mr. White also led a review of the current Investment Policy. Mr. White stated that due to current economic conditions, it is necessary to modify the Investment Policy and raise the limit for corporate investments from 75% to 80% and raise the limit for corporate investing for Rule 44A from 30% to 35%. A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Kenneth Arendt to accept Mr. White's changes to the Investment Policy. Motion carried.

Mr. White provided an explanation of the new investment opportunities that FCSU will be entering into and answered the Board's questions.

Mr. White stated that he will work with General Counsel Gary Matta to review investment contracts.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Acting Treasurer James Marmol gave a full written report on the investment update and answered the Board's questions.

PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA:

President Rajec presented the agenda for the Quarterly Meeting and asked for its acceptance. A motion was made by Timothy Graves and seconded by Andrew P. Rajec to accept the agenda and to allow the President to change the order of the agenda, if necessary, as he presents each item on the agenda with appropriate comments or recommendations. Motion carried.

The President stated that the vote for the Vice President and Treasurer positions will be held on Saturday, September 18, 2021. Regional Director Thomas Ivanec stated that since both candidates for Vice President are currently present that the Board should consider voting for the Vice President position on Friday, September 17, 2021. A motion was made by Kenneth A. Arendt and seconded by Michael Lako to vote for the Vice President position on Friday and hold the vote for the Treasurer position on Saturday. Motion carried.

The President stated that each candidate will be given 5 minutes to speak on their behalf before the vote.

RECESS OF SESSION:

The Board recessed for lunch.

SECOND SESSION:

Friday afternoon, September 17, 2021

OPEN MEETING:

President Andrew Rajec called the meeting to order and asked Reverend Thomas Nasta to offer the afternoon prayer. The Executive Secretary stated that all members were present.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Acting Vice President Andrew P. Rajec gave a production report on our agents to the Board of Directors. He stated we are still recruiting and adding new agents, and at present have 429 agents. The Home Office is sending the independent agents monthly updates on our products. The independent agents are also in frequent contact with Andrew P. Rajec, Director of Independent Agents.

The President stated that he is considering a membership meet to be held in 2022 for our agents and recommenders.

The President led a review of the current annuity interest rates. The rates will remain the same and be reviewed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT:Executive Secretary's Report

The Executive Secretary presented a detailed summary of the Financial Report for the second quarter of 2021. After the Executive Secretary's report, he answered the Board's questions. The Executive Secretary stated that the 2021 second quarter Financial Report will be published in the Jednota newspaper.

Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati

The Executive Secretary submitted a written report to the Board of Directors giving a complete update of the investments and all current transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati.

Portfolio Custodian

The Executive Secretary updated the Board of Directors on the report from our portfolio custodian, Key Bank. Everything was found to be in order, and he answered the Board's questions.

Investment Updates

The President and Executive Secretary led a review on the investments and transactions with the UBS Fund, MAI Fund, and the Clutterbuck Fund. Following the report, they answered the Board's questions.

PRESENTATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS:Executive Committee

The Executive Secretary gave a report on the Executive Committee Meetings. He stated that in accordance with the Bylaws of the First Catholic Slovak Union, the Executive Committee meets monthly and whenever else it is necessary to take care of the business of the Society.

Investments

All investments were made in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio and with the investment policy adopted by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee members work very closely with AQS Asset Management Company, and all investments are approved by a vote of at least three members of the Executive Committee.

Scholarship Committee

The Executive Secretary gave a report on the Scholarship Committee, which is comprised of three independent professional educators. Applications for the Jednota Benevolent Foundation scholarships are being received and they will be sent to the Scholarship Committee.

NEW LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAM:

The President and the Executive Secretary stated that a new life insurance program is being developed for all members who are under the age of 80. Each member will be mailed a life insurance offer with a reduced premium and liberal underwriting. This offer is only available until 12/31/2021. It will be advertised in the Jednota newspaper, in our monthly newsletter and on our website. The President encourages all members to take advantage of this offer.

The Executive Secretary stated that all our new insurance and annuity applications that have been approved by the states we are licensed in are available on our website. Please discard any old applications and use the new applications on our website. Anyone having any questions on the application is asked to please call the Home Office.

CONVENTION UPDATE:

The Executive Secretary stated that the estimated delegate count letter will be mailed out to the Branches that qualify to attend the Convention. The estimated delegate count will be based on the number of members as of 10/1/2021. The final delegate count will be based on the number of members as of February 1st of the Convention year.

The Executive Secretary stated that we will use electronic voting again for the motions and the election of officers.

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Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting

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The President stated he is working on the entertainment program.

The Executive Secretary stated he is working with the hotel on the audio visual contract.

DIRECTOR OF FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES REPORT:

Director of Fraternal Activities Kevin Collins updated the Board on the International Golf Tournament that was held August 6 – 8, 2021 at Treasure Lake Golf Resort in DuBois, PA with the Greek Catholic Union and the Slovak Catholic Sokol. Mr. Collins hopes to hold multiple golf tournaments in different regions in 2022. Other upcoming activities include the FCSU NFL's Losers Pool, a hunting contest, ugly sweater contest, Christmas decorating contest, coloring contest and March Madness.

Mr. Collins stated that the coloring contest winner will work with Regional Director Sabina Sabados in creating a Christmas card.

Mr. Collins stated that a Pen Pal program with people in Slovakia may be held.

Mr. Collins also stated he is working on activities for the 52nd Quadrennial Convention and will provide more details at the next meeting.

Mr. Collins stated that a FCSU regional picnic is scheduled for June 12, 2022 in Novelty, Ohio.

Mr. Collins is also looking into holding fraternal activities for all family members to include skiing and white water rafting.

The President stated that he is working on a matching funds program to help Branches promote fraternal activities and to help with fundraising. He hopes to have this available the first of the year.

CHAIRMAN OF AUDITORS:

Chairman of Auditors Gregory Maurer stated that due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic no internal audits have been conducted for 2021. He hopes to conduct an internal audit in the near future once the CDC restrictions are lifted.

ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT:

The President stated that the Board received the resumés of each of the candidates running for Vice President and Treasurer. The elected officers will hold this position until the Convention in 2022. The President allowed the Vice President candidates, Andrew P. Rajec and Kevin Collins to make their presentations to the Board and answer any questions. After their presentations, the Board voted by secret ballot. Regional Directors Michael Lako and Milos Mitro called General Counsel Gary Matta and Chairman of Auditors Gregory Maurer with their vote. Mr. Matta asked for a clarification of the vote for Treasurer since there are four candidates running. Mr. Matta stated that if no candidate received 50% or more of the vote, then a runoff vote should be held with the two candidates that received the highest number of votes.

RECESS OF SESSION:

The Board took a short break.

THIRD SESSION:

Friday afternoon, September 17, 2021

VOTE RESULTS:

General Counsel Gary Matta presented the results of the vote for the Vice President position. Kevin Collins was elected to serve the Vice President term until the Convention in 2022.

The President stated that the vote for Treasurer will take place on Saturday, September 18, 2021

DONATION COMMITTEE:

Regional Director Martha Zavada asked for clear guidelines to be set for donations. A motion was made by Reverend Thomas Nasta and seconded by Gregory Maurer that any donation over \$25,000 should be reviewed and acted on by the Board of Directors. Motion carried. Any donation under \$25,000 will be reviewed and acted on by the Executive Committee.

NEW SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS:

The President led a discussion on the new scholarship program that will begin in 2022. The program will include:

Catholic Grade School (grades 5-8)	\$500
Catholic High School	\$1,000
Colleges	\$1,500
Graduate School	\$1,500
Vocational/Trade School	\$1,000

Information regarding this program will be published in the Jednota newspaper, posted on our website, and mailed out to the branches.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The President asked the Board for ideas on promoting fraternal activities in Branches and Districts. He asked that they present their ideas at the next Board Meeting.

OATH OF OFFICE:

Reverend Thomas Nasta administered the oath of office to the newly elected Vice President Kevin Collins.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, Damian Nasta made a motion to adjourn for the day and Gregory Maurer seconded the motion. Motion carried. Reverend Thomas Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

FOURTH SESSION:

Saturday, September 18, 2021

OPEN:

President Andrew Rajec called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked Reverend Thomas Nasta to open the meeting with prayer and reflection.

ROLL CALL:

The Executive Secretary took a visual roll call. He stated that everyone is present. National Vice President Kevin Collins, and Regional Directors Michael Lako and Milos Mitro present via telephone.

DONATIONS:

The President stated that he received a proposal for financial assistance from the Slovak Mission in Chicago, a group of around 350 Slovaks in Chicago that have a Slovak Priest as leader. They are requesting that we invest in purchasing a place of worship. The President shared the proposal with General Consul Gary Matta for review. Mr. Matta stated that he has several questions that need to be answered. After they are answered, the proposal will be presented to the Board.

STATUS OF FRATERNAL SOCIETIES:

The President stated that at one time over 100 Fraternal Societies belonged to the American Fraternal Alliance. As of today only 65 Fraternal Societies remain. All Fraternal Societies are experiencing the same problems of getting new members. The President stated the importance of staying financially strong and getting new members. The President has asked the Board to come up with new ideas to promote fraternal activities and increase membership.

SLOVAK HISTORY:

The President stated that he spoke with Professor Mark Smolarik regarding Slovak history in Slovakia and North America. The Professor stated that he is available to come to a Board Meeting and present a lecture on the subject. The President will be in touch with him and invite him to a Board Meeting.

MUSEUM:

The President stated that the museum is currently on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic. The President has been in touch with the builder of the building and more information will follow.

JEDNOTA MEMORIAL:

The President stated he stopped and visited the Jednota Memorial in Middletown, PA. He met with the landscaper who maintains the grounds. The Memorial will be power washed, including the "doughboy" pedestal and the Memorial bricks. Some shrubs and flowers will be replaced as we are adding additional shrubbery. The 750,000 square foot D&H warehouse is almost finished and fits in well as a backdrop for the Memorial.

HEY, SLAVS:

The President gave a hand out on the history of "Hey, Slavs".

ELECTION OF TREASURER:

The President stated that the Board received the resumés of the four candidates running for Treasurer. The elected officer will hold this position until the Convention in 2022. General Counsel Gary Matta stated that if no candidate received 50% or more of the vote then a runoff vote should be held with the two candidates that received the highest number of votes. The President stated that each of the four candidates will be given five minutes to make a presentation to the Board and answer any questions.

Joseph T. Senko called into the meeting via telephone, gave his presentation and answered questions.

Paul Novak called into the meeting via telephone, gave his presentation and answered questions.

John V. Tokarsky called into the meeting via telephone, gave his presentation and answered questions.

James Marmol was present at the meeting, gave his presentation and answered questions.

After their presentations, a secret ballot was handed out and the vote took place. Regional Directors Michael Lako and Milos Mitro; and Vice President Kevin Collins called General Counsel Gary Matta and Chairman of Auditors Gregory Maurer with their vote.

RECESS OF SESSION:

The Board took a short break.

FIFTH SESSION:

Saturday afternoon, September 18, 2021

VOTE RESULTS:

General Counsel Gary Matta presented the results of the vote for the Treasurer position. John V. Tokarsky was elected to serve the Treasurer term until the Convention in 2022.

OATH OF OFFICE:

Reverend Thomas Nasta administered the oath of office over the phone to the newly elected Treasurer John V. Tokarsky.

EDITOR:

The President stated that he received a letter from the Jednota Editor Teresa Ivanec whereby she announced her decision to retire on January 31, 2021. The President stated that Mrs. Ivanec did an outstanding job as the Editor and that he will advertise in the Jednota for a replacement.

COVID-19 UPDATE:

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MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2021

HOME OFFICE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

OPEN MEETING:

President Andrew Rajec opened the meeting at 9:00 AM with prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Members attending: Andrew M. Rajec, President
Kevin Collins, National Vice President (via teleconference)
Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary
John Tokarsky, Treasurer (via teleconference)
Timothy Graves, Regional Director (by invitation of the President)
(via teleconference)

ACCEPTANCE OF THE OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES:

The President presented the minutes of the October 15, 2021 Executive Committee Meeting. A motion was made by Kenneth A. Arendt and seconded by John Tokarsky to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

AQS MANAGEMENT, INC.:

Larry White and Byron White, representing AQS Management, Inc., presented an extensive Investment Portfolio Transaction and Review Report via teleconference to the Executive Committee. Each member of the Committee received a copy of the presentation in advance for his review. Following the report, they answered the Committee's questions.

Mr. White also presented new investment opportunities that the Committee will review and take under consideration.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:Investment Updates

The Executive Secretary submitted a written report to the Executive Committee on the investments and transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB), UBS, MAI Fund, and Clutterbuck Fund. The Executive Committee discussed the report and the Executive Secretary answered the Committee's questions. The Executive Secretary presented a detailed summary of the Financial Report for the third quarter of 2021. After the Executive Secretary's report, he answered the Committee's questions. The Executive Secretary stated that the 2021 third quarter Financial Report will be published in the Jednota newspaper.

Portfolio Review

The Executive Secretary updated the Executive Committee on the report from our portfolio custodian, Key Bank, found everything in order, and answered the Committee's questions.

Mortgages and Overdue Mortgages

The Executive Secretary presented the report for the month of October for the Committee's review and answered its questions.

Monthly Disbursements

The Executive Secretary reported that the following disbursements were incurred and paid during the month of October:

Disbursements for the month of October 2021:	
Death Benefits & Accumulations	\$ 210,805.10
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations	\$ 58,141.63
Matured Endowments & Accumulations	\$ 0.00
Trust Fund	\$ 0.00

The President and the Executive Secretary also presented the Membership and Annuity Report. The Executive Committee reviewed the remainder of the disbursements and the President and the Executive Secretary answered all questions.

SALES AND MARKETING:

The President and Executive Secretary stated that the new insurance program was mailed out to all members in November. Members are given options to purchase additional insurance at a discounted premium rate. The program will run until December 31, 2021.

The President stated that since the Membership Meet is not being held this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, a Membership Meet will be held in 2022. He is looking into possible sites.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW:Annuity Rates:

The President stated that the annuity rates will remain the same and be reviewed at the next Executive Committee meeting. The Committee agreed.

CONVENTION:

The Executive Secretary stated that the Home Office staff is making preparations with the Holiday Inn – Cleveland South Independence, the host of our 52nd Quadrennial Convention. The President and Executive Secretary are working on the Convention Agenda and activity schedule. As more details are finalized, a report will be presented to the Board.

The Executive Secretary encourages all Branches and Districts to refer to Bylaw 11.03 and Bylaw 11.04 in preparation for the 52nd Quadrennial Convention. If they have any questions, they should contact the Home Office. The Executive Secretary stated that information regarding the estimated number of delegates will be based on the number of members as of October 1. The estimated delegate count letters were mailed out to the Branches who qualify to attend the Convention. The final delegate count will be based on the number of members as of February 1, 2022.

HOME OFFICE UPDATE:

The President and the Executive Secretary gave an update on the Home Office operations. The Executive Secretary stated that the Home Office is still following the recommendations of the CDC. The Office is open with limited hours to maintain day to day operations. Any guests are asked to call before visiting.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS:

The President stated that he is still encouraging Branches and Districts to hold either virtual or in-person meetings, and follow all the recommended CDC guidelines. Hopefully, conditions will improve.

MISCELLANEOUS:Scholarship:

The President stated that the new scholarship program for members will be available starting in December.

When all details are finalized, information regarding this program will be mailed out to the Branches, Districts and members and will be announced in the Jednota.

BRANCH REVIVAL COMMITTEE:

The President gave a brief summary of the Branch Revival Committee meeting that was held on November 4. The President asked the committee for ideas on how to attract new members and have Branches promote fraternal activities in their Branches.

LONG TERM PLANNING:

The President stated that he is in discussion with a consulting firm on long term planning for our Society. As more information is available he will present it to the board.

SALES AND INDEPENDENT AGENT RECRUITMENT:

Vice President Kevin Collins stated that he is looking into an agency to recruit independent agents. The Home Office will use email to recruit agents in the states we are licensed in. As more information is available he will present it to the board.

Vice President Kevin Collins stated he will work with the Home Office to develop training, recruitment and informational videos for the Branches and Districts.

REQUESTS FOR ADS AND DONATIONS:

Requests for donations and ads were reviewed and acted upon.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Kenneth A. Arendt and seconded by Kevin Collins to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The President closed the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec
President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting

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The President stated that he received a letter from our Medical Examiner Dr. Carl Ungvasky regarding the covid-19 vaccine. General Counsel Gary Matta stated that several legal issues may arise from a vaccine mandate. He has experience with many school districts in Pennsylvania regarding masks and the vaccine mandate. Mr. Matta stated that the Home Office is following proper procedures and that he does not feel it is necessary to mandate the vaccine for the staff. The Executive Secretary stated that there are several protocols in place for the Home Office staff. Temperature checks are performed every day, masks are to be worn in common areas, and everyone is to practice social distancing. The Office is frequently disinfected with disinfectant wipes. An unvaccinated employee exposed to the coronavirus is required to get tested before returning to work.

PAYMENT OF BILLS ASSOCIATED WITH THE QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING:

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

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Gregory Maurer to adjourn. Motion carried.

Reverend Thomas Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

The Executive Secretary stated that the bus to the National Shrine will be leaving at 12:30pm so the Board can attend the Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Andrew M. Rajec
President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

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December 31, 2022

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