

Catholic Fraternal

Jednota

THE UNION

USPA#273500 ISSN1087-3392



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

Volume 132

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2023

NUMBER 6027

2022 Annual Report Of The Former Executive Secretary March 25, 2023

Reverend Father and Members of the Board of Directors of the First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States of America and Canada, it is my pleasure to present this 2022 report to you.

It has been my honor to serve as your Executive Secretary the last 28 years. The First Catholic Slovak Union held its 52nd Quadrennial Convention at the Holiday Inn Cleveland-South on July 30 – August 2, 2022. I was honored to be elected as the new President by the delegates. I appreciate their vote of confidence in me to lead the Society for the next 4 years. I look forward to working with the newly elected Executive Committee and Board of Directors. We will continue to move our Society forward.

The Society enjoyed continued successful operating results for the year 2022, as partially normal operations resumed to recover from COVID-19. Operating profits improved over 2021 results. The Society has enjoyed profitable operations for a number of years. Net gain from operations before capital gains amounted to \$3,473,008, and after dividend payments of \$435,949. Total asset value increased 7.1% (\$37,778,977) as reported on the Annual Statement. Realized capital gains were \$450,111 and unrealized capital losses were (\$1,648,565). Liabilities increased \$36,062,588 (7.4%) mainly resulting again from the large increase of Annuity Reserves, which came from over \$53,000,000 of Annuity Premium. Surplus increased 3.7%. Details follow:

Total Operation Gain and Capital Gains(Losses) for 2022	
Gain per Page 4, Line 31	\$ 3,473,008
Realized Capital Gains	\$ 450,111
Net Gain Page 4, Line 35	\$ 3,923,119

There were Deferred Capital Gains (IMR) of \$1,072,444.

The surplus increase of 3.7% was due to the operating gain, which was partially generated by the large production of Annuity premium. The premium funds were used to purchase additional assets. Unrealized gains/(losses) were as follows:

(a) Common Stock (Unaffiliated)	\$132,642
(b) Other Invested Assets	\$ (1,781,207)
	\$ (1,648,565)

The following additional items affected Surplus:

AVR Increase	\$ (547,955)
Accrued/Asset Adjustment\$	(9,660)

2022 Surplus Increase	\$ 1,716,939
2022 Surplus	\$48,374,546

Insurance in force decreased \$877,000 in 2022 (This is smaller than the five-year average decrease of \$1,121,800). Life insurance production remains a challenge for the future.

The Society investments emphasize Bonds (86.1%), Mortgages, and Other Invested Assets as its main investments. Other invested Assets include Hedge Funds, Strategy, and Situation Funds. The Society also purchases Preferred and Common Stocks, including Cash Equivalents.

The Society had \$27,510,188 of cash at the end of the year.

Continued on page 25

Inside	
Editorial/Commentary	2-3
Branch Announcements	22-23
District Announcements	24
Articles in Slovak/English.....	20

Message From The President

Dear Members,

Recent events in the financial markets have created concerns about the stability of global financial system. While these concerns are not unwarranted, they need to be considered in the context of the specific individual or financial institution.

The run at Silicon Valley Bank (SIVB) made headlines and rightly so – the largest failure since 2008. Upon further examination, we learned that depositors, mostly technology companies, were allowed to maintain balances well in excess of prudence – hundreds of millions of dollars from individual companies – that could be withdrawn immediately. When the deposits were withdrawn, the bank was forced to sell assets realizing losses that ultimately exceeded the bank's capital.

Why then do large, sophisticated institutions find themselves in such a position? Earnings. Earnings make stock prices rise. Frequently, executive pay at commercial institutions is tied to earnings or stock prices. This might explain why some commercial insurers offer rates seemingly too good to be true: rewards to executives are significant if things work out.

As a not-for-profit, the First Catholic Slovak Union does not offer such executive pay incentives opting instead to continue offering a fair and reasonable rate. This principle has served the organization and its members for 132 years and will continue to do so today and into the future. We would like to reassure our members that we are financially sound and your investments with the FCSU are safe.



Kenneth A. Arendt
President



FCSU April Rates

8 Year Flex Annuity or IRA	4.25%
6 Year Flex Annuity or IRA	4.00%
6 Year Fixed Annuity or IRA	4.50%
Park 2 Annuity (not available in the state of NY)	4.25%
Park Free Plus Annuity or IRA- 1st year guarantee (Park Free Plus max deposit \$25,000 per person)	2.80%
Settlement Options are based on an interest rate of (5 yrs +)	3.00%

Find an Annuity That's Right for You

Call us at 800-533-6682

FCSU Financial® First Catholic Slovak Union

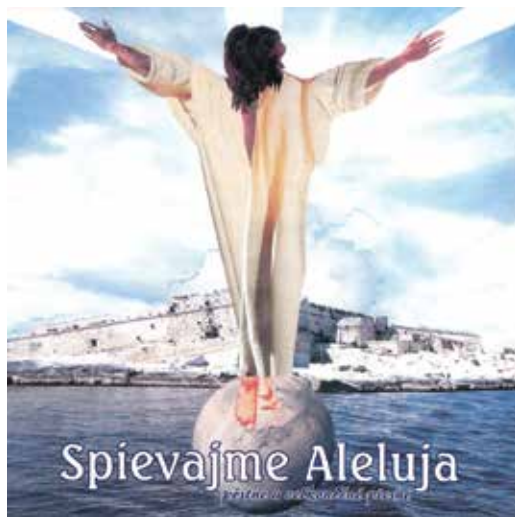
Contact your Branch Officer or the Home Office

6611 Rockside Rd, #300, Independence, OH 44131, annuity@fcsu.com, www.fcsu.com

Reflection

Alleluia! This is the joyous song with which we greet our Risen Jesus and each other on Easter. As the beautiful word of our hymn, Radujte sa Ó Kresťania," spoke to me in Slovak, I sought to translate them in poetic form in English for those among the Jednota readers who may not be that familiar with the Slovak hymn – or the Slovak language. Gratefully, in whatever language, we thank Jesus for His painful salvific gift of Self for our redemption. This gift we believe was nurtured and brought to fruition by His mother Mary. Now may the angels once again sing praise and call us to welcome Jesus triumphantly risen – and share His message of hope and mercy with all whom we encounter in our daily lives.

**Sister Maria Theresa Hronec,
SS.C.M.**



Radujte sa, Ó kresťania,
v srdciach vašich plesajte!
Z mŕtvých povstal náš Spasiteľ,
Aleluja spievajte.

Zbor:

Chvala Otcu i Synu,
tiež i Duchu Svätému.
Aleluja, aleluja,
Radosť tebe hriešnemu.

2. Utri slzy, ó Ježišu,
i Tvoju tvár krvavú,
Ukáž, ktorú si trápením
Kúpil prevelkú slávu.

3. Telo Tvoje, môj Ježišu!
jak slnko je zjasnené,
čo k spaseniu mojej duše
bolo ťažko ranené.

4. Raduj sa, ó Panna svätá,
Máš Synáčka živého,
Ktorého si tak bolestne
oplakala mŕtvého.

5. Vesel'te sa, ó angeli!
Kráľa svojho vítajte,
Aleluja nevinnému
Baránku zaspievajte.

6. Už je nádej naša silná,
že tiež nieky vstaneme
a že s Kristom, Spasiteľom
radovať sa budeme.

Be Glad, O Christians

1. Sing, rejoice, be glad, O Christians.
May your hearts with joy resound!
Christ our Savior has arisen.
Alleluia is our song.

Chorus:

Praise the Father and the Son,
Holy Spirit, three in One.
Alleluia, Alleluia.
Sinners, now, our joy is won!

2. Dry Your tears, O loving Jesus,
Wipe Your face all stained with blood;
Show us how Your pain and torture,
Rescued us with saving Love.

3. Now Your Body, my dear Jesus,
Shines transfigured as the sun.
You who bought my soul's salvation,
Paid the price as wounded One.

4. Now rejoice, O holy Virgin,
See your Son – He is alive!
You had mourned and wept so sadly,
When you held your lifeless Child.

5. Sing, rejoice, be glad, O angels!
Come to greet your glor'ous King.
Alleluia is the welcome,
To the spotless Lamb you sing.

6. Hope fulfilled has now been strengthened,
For we now we, too, shall rise.
And with Christ, our risen Savior,
With full joy we'll raise our cries.

Message from the National Chaplain

Our Church is in the midst of what is being called a Eucharistic Revival. The words themselves are self-explanatory.

- Eucharist – The Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus under the forms of bread and wine.

- Revival – To renew, to experience as if for the first time, to make alive again.

The Eucharistic Revival is being undertaken due to so many not completely understanding the true meaning of the Eucharist.

Some may question, "What does Eucharistic Revival have to do with Easter?" It has everything to do with Easter.

Mary Magdalene, Peter and the Apostles, and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus all saw the Risen Lord with their own eyes on the first Easter. They saw his glorified body. It so filled their being with overabundant joy and that experience led them to a memory they never relinquished.

We see for ourselves the glorified Body and Blood of Jesus at every Mass when the priest holds the Sacred Host and chalice above the altar at the Consecration. Whenever we receive Holy Communion we put into our mouths the glorified Body and Blood of our Risen Lord.

We are like the first witnesses to the Resurrection, for we see the glorified Body of the Risen Jesus. The Eucharistic Revival will really take hold within us when we become like those first witnesses, whose joy over seeing Christ raised from the dead influenced everything they said and did all the days of their lives.

I will remember all my fraternal brothers and sisters at my Easter Masses. God bless you always.



**Rev. Thomas Nasta
Chaplain**

**Fr. Thomas A. Nasta
National Chaplain**

SS. Cyril and Methodius Appeal

The Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal is in its 45th year raising money to assist the Pontifical Slovak College of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Rome with its day-to-day operations. The Appeal relies upon the generosity of individual donors in addition to collections taken up in personal parishes of Slovak ancestry. A direct mailing asking for donations was sent in January to local district and branch leaders from the four Catholic Slovak Fraternal Organizations, members of the Slovak Catholic Federation, clergy with Slovak ancestry, and previous donors.

As of April 1, the 2023 Appeal has received \$11,069 from 129 donors. Among the 30 donations received from Catholic Slovak Fraternal Branches and Districts, Branch 35, Branch 85, Branch 96, Branch 112, Branch 153, Branch 213, Branch 484, Branch 743, Branch 746, and District 16 of the First Catholic Slovak Union have donated a combined total of \$625. Donations to date have also been received from 1 parish, 23 clergy and religious, and 75 individuals. On behalf of the Pontifical College, thank you for your continued generosity and support.

All wishing to contribute to the 2023 Appeal are 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, 2023 will be credited toward the 2024 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

continued to page 3

NEWSPAPER DEADLINES

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

Issue Date	Copy Date
Wednesday, May 10, 2023	Monday, May 1, 2023
Wednesday, June 7, 2023	Monday, May 30, 2023
Wednesday, July 12, 2023	Monday, July 3, 2023

When submitting announcements for upcoming events, remember that JEDNOTA is printed MONTHLY, and time is lost in the postal system. Please plan to have your announcements to us in ample time for them to be edited and printed. **Please send all Branch & District announcements to branch@fcsu.com or district@fcsu.com.**

Send all copy (English AND Slovak) to:
Michael Kopanic, Editor; editor@fcsu.com
First Catholic Slovak Union, Attention "JEDNOTA"
6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131-2398
FAX: 216-642-4310

JEDNOTA

(ISSN 1087-3392)

Catholic Fraternal - Published Monthly
Publisher and Proprietor

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

FCSU Corporate Center

6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300

Independence OH 44131-2398

MICHAEL KOPANIC, Editor; editor@fcsu.com

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

PRINTED AT: SUSQUEHANNA PRINTING, 1407 Hempstead Road, Lancaster, PA 17602

Telephone: 216/642-9406 Fax: 216/642-4310

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to:
Jednota, First Catholic Slovak Union, 6611 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Independence, OH 44131-2398

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

Editor Letter, April 2023

Dear Fellow Fraternal Members and Readers,

April (*apríl* in Slovak, pronounced “aw-preel”) is the month of spring (*jar*, pronounced “yawr”) and new beginnings. Easter (*Veľká noc*) usually lies in this month, and newly blossoming flowers (*kvety*) give us a sense of hope as the winter has passed.

I would like to urge all of you to view the Global Slovak webinar “From Cradle to Grave,” for it captures some of the key features in the life cycle of our ancestors. If you missed it, just go to the site: <https://www.fcsu.com/events/>.

Again, I would invite readers to let me know any additional features in the newspaper, and I am grateful for your many letters and e-mails of support for my efforts to cultivate our faith and Slovak cultural heritage.

Remember too that on the Church calendar we continue to celebrate Christ’s resurrection until Pentecost (Turíce - Tour-ee-tseh). **Veselé veľkonočné sviatky!** [Veh-se-leh vell-ko noche-neh svee-aat-kee] - Happy Easter holidays!

Fraternally yours in the Risen Christ,

S krajanským pozdravom v zmŕtvychvstalom Kristovi,

Dr. Michael J. Kopanic, Jr., editor (redaktor)

editor@fcsu.com “For God and Nation” (Za Boha a národ).



**Dr. Michael J. Kopanic, Jr.
Editor**

SS. Cyril and Methodius Appeal continued from page 2

Chaplain of the Slovak Catholic Sokol and Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish, Harveys 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, Penndel, PA, serves as First Vice President of the Federation and is the Appeal Coordinator.

45th Annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

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
Penndel, PA 19047-4052

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.

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS MAY 2023

- 4 Br 200 – Meeting in Ford City, PA
- 6 Br 200 – Event in Ford City, PA
- Dist 17 – Meeting in Binghamton, NY
- 7 Br 7 – Meeting in Ramey, PA
- Br 23 – Meeting in Richland, PA
- Br 276 – Meeting in North Versailles, PA
- Br 731 – Meeting in Boardman, OH
- 12 FCSU Derby Hat Contest Deadline
- 15 Br 228 – Meeting in Lorain, OH
- 17 Br 682 – Meeting in Struthers, OH
- 18 Br 764 – Meeting in Warren, OH
- 19 FCSU National Bowling Tournament, Buffalo, NY
- 20 FCSU National Bowling Tournament, Buffalo, NY
- 21 Br 553 – Meeting in Akron, OH
- Br 628 - Meeting in Penn Hills, PA
- Dist 12 – Picnic in Charleroi, PA
- 22 FCSU April Puzzle Deadline
- 29 Home Office Closed – Memorial Day
- 31 Br 181 – Scholarship application deadline.

Second Sunday of Easter

Today is a day of many names. Properly speaking the second Sunday of Easter, yet in recent years it is also commonly called Divine Mercy Sunday. Further, it has traditionally been called Low Sunday, indicating its “lower” status in comparison to the Easter Sunday itself, coming at the end of the Easter Octave. Another name for this day is *Dominica in albis*; this refers to the ancient practice of those who were baptized on Easter returning to mass a week later in their baptismal albs and then taking them off and joining the rest of the congregation as full members of the community. Occasionally it also used to be called *Quasi modo* Sunday, because of the opening words of the entrance antiphon for mass today. Finally, it is called the Sunday of St. Thomas by many Eastern-Rite Catholics and Orthodox Christians, since the gospel account of “doubting Thomas” has long been read at mass and Divine Liturgy this day.

Six names for one day—it must be important! What these various names should call to our minds is the fact that this day is a critical part of the commemoration of the resurrection which we celebrate at Easter, and that this entire drama has attracted such attention from Christians through the centuries precisely because they long recognized it as the center of our faith. Easter, along with the Lenten season and Passiontide which lead up to it and the long Easter season which flows from it, is the hinge upon which our salvation turns and as such the Church has developed rites and practices over the centuries that express this importance and focus on its different dimensions.

On this great day the scriptures teach us that the earliest members of the Church were intensely conscious of the spiritual presence of the risen Lord in their midst, celebrating this presence constantly: “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42). By devoting themselves to “the breaking of the bread” they signaled that they understood that our Lord was as present to them in the Eucharist, although in a different way, as he had been during his earthly life.

This sense of God’s presence and in particular the presence of the risen Lord Jesus to the Church is underlined in the second reading, from the First Letter of Peter. There we hear: “Although you have not seen him you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, as you attain the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls” (1 Pet 1:8-9). Here again the presence of the Lord among the faithful, though invisible, is acknowledged profoundly and indeed leads us to rejoice in the salvation it has brought us.

The presence of the risen Christ to his people is even more dramatically described in the gospel story of St. Thomas. From childhood many Catholics have been taught to quietly pray “My Lord and my God” when viewing the elevated Eucharistic Host at mass; these words are taken from today’s reading (John 20:28). They proclaim Thomas’ heartfelt belief in the risen Lord, in spite of his earlier doubt. Here St. Thomas becomes a model for all of us as we keep in mind the promise “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed” (John 20:29), and together with the Psalmist (Ps 118:1) we say “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, his love is everlasting”!

Father Edward Mazich, O.S.B.



Stephen C. Matula SCHOLARSHIP



FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION announces
STEPHEN C. MATULA SCHOLARSHIP
for **5 college students** of Slovak heritage

Who can apply?

Applicants of Slovak heritage are eligible to apply as high school seniors, or during any year of **full-time enrollment** in an accredited College/University. Applicants can apply each year in college (up to 4 years).

Applicants must complete and sign an official Scholarship application obtained from a branch officer, the Home Office or www.fcsu.com and mail it to: Stephen C. Matula Scholarship, FCSU, 6611 Rockside Rd, #300, Independence, OH 44131. Applicants must provide a high-resolution headshot photo and also email it to scholarship@fcsu.com.

Winners will be chosen by the Scholarship Committee and checks will be payable to the winner's educational institution after submitting proof of college enrollment.

Winners must provide a report on their progress in college, including transcript and a summary of use of the funds by the end of the school year.

What to provide?

- Completed application
- Photo
- Official transcript
- Essay
- 3 Letters of recommendation
(obtained in the last 12 months)

5 scholarships
\$4,000 each

Deadline to apply June 2, 2023

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

For more info call us at 800-533-6682 ext. 114 or email scholarship@fcsu.com.



ANNOUNCING

Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship

- ✓ Are you a member of Branch 746?
- ✓ Are you currently accepted and/or enrolled in full-time college, post-secondary educational institution, or vocational school?
- ✓ Are you active in Branch 746 or want to become active*?

**If you answered YES to the above,
you may be eligible for a \$1,500 scholarship!**

For more information on the application criteria and requirements go to:
<https://www.fcsu.com/membership-benefits/scholarships/>

Apply by: June 30th

*Check out upcoming meetings and activities offered by Branch 746 in the "Announcements" section of the *Jednota* newspaper. We are meeting via Zoom which is an easy and fast way to get involved! We'd love you to join our meeting!

If you have any questions or just want to chat to see how you can become more involved in your branch feel free to contact Sabina at: ssabados@fcsu.com.



First Catholic Slovak Union Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship

The Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship was established to award a one-time \$1,500 scholarship to eligible First Catholic Slovak Union Branch 746 members to assist them with the educational pursuits. In order to apply, please complete the following steps.

The application deadline is **June 30th**. Scholarship awards will be announced by September 1st. Applicants who do not meet the minimum criteria will not be considered for a scholarship but are encouraged to re-apply at a future date.

Jednota Branch 746 Scholarship eligibility:

- Member of Branch 746 with paid up life insurance premium of \$5,000 or more;
- Of Slovak descent and Catholic faith;
- Currently accepted and/or enrolled in full-time college, another post-secondary educational institution, or vocational institution;
- High school senior student through junior year of college, post-secondary and/or vocational institution.

Application criteria:

Applicants will be required to describe accomplishments they believe would qualify them for recognition in general, and specifically, accomplishments in the areas of:

- Scholarship
- Leadership
- Service to school, church and community
- Involvement in Jednota Branch 746 (applicant should have attended at minimum one meeting and/or event in the current or previous calendar the year of application)

Applicants will be required to:

1. Submit a copy of your high school, college, or vocational institution transcript of grades;
2. Provide one (1) letter of recommendation authored by a teacher, counselor, administrator or an employment supervisor familiar with the applicant;
3. Compose an essay (minimum 250 words) describing your background; community involvement; scholastic excellence; leadership ability; and career objectives;
4. Submit a copy of paid-up life insurance of \$5,000 or more or letter from home office confirming such contract.

Submission details:

Complete scholarship application materials must be emailed to: JednotaBranch746@gmail.com by June 30th with "SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION" in the subject line. Only complete applications will be considered. If you have questions, please send your inquiries to the above address.

BRANCH 181 YOUTH MEMBER SCHOLASTIC ASSISTANCE

For the Fall 2023 school year, St. John the Baptist Society - Branch 181 of United, PA, will be offering scholarships to eligible high school senior members planning to attend college or career/technical school. These will be one-time scholarships selected by an independent panel that will evaluate each applicant. The number of scholarships awarded is dependent on the number of eligible applicants.

Scholarships of \$500.00 will be available on a one-time basis to be used for a college or trade school.



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SOCIETY- BRANCH 181 YOUTH MEMBERS

You may be eligible to qualify for a scholarship if you meet the following requirements:

- You are a member in good standing of The First Catholic Slovak Union, St. John the Baptist Society - Branch 181.
- You have been a member of Branch 181 for four years prior to applying with a minimum \$5,000 insurance policy.
- You are a high school senior preparing to graduate in 2023 and have applied for the 2023 Fall Term at a qualifying educational institution.

THESE SCHOLARSHIPS ARE SOLELY FUNDED BY YOUR LOCAL BRANCH 181 AND ARE INDEPENDENT OF THE FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION NATIONAL OFFICE.

To obtain an application and more information, please contact Vicki Hricik phone 724-547-0803 or email vickihricik@gmail.com.

***Applications must be postmarked by May 31, 2023 to be eligible.**



Western Pennsylvania Slovak Cultural Association

2023 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

WPSCA and the Stephanie Husak Scholarship Fund are offering a scholarship to study the Summer Language Institute (SLI) offered by the University of Pittsburgh in conjunction with Comenius University in Bratislava from June 5 through July or through August 11, 2023. WPSCA will award \$3,000 to go toward the costs of the program including transportation, tuition, as well as room and board to the successful candidate. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

Scholarship Requirements: Applicants must have Slovak heritage and must be an American college/university student. The scholarship recipient must apply to and be accepted into the program at the University of Pittsburgh. The scholarship application deadline is April 30, 2023. The complete application must be submitted in order for the application to be considered. For info, go to the website: <https://wpsca.org/slovak-language-classes/>

Submit completed application and associated materials to:

WPSCA
200 Cliff Mine Road
Park West Two
Pittsburgh, PA 15275
Or by email to: jtsenko@aol.com

Call for Articles for the 2023 Edition of "Dobry Pastier" (Good Shepherd)

The Slovak Catholic Federation is accepting articles for its 2023 edition of the "Dobry Pastier" (Good Shepherd). The Good Shepherd is a collection of literary articles submitted by contributing authors on all things Slovak, Catholic, faith, cultural and heritage, the arts, and personal essays or other topics the writer wishes to share with the readers. The Good Shepherd also serves as the only source for contact information for the Church in Slovakia, and those Slovak clergy and religious in the United States, as well as religious congregations, and places of worship. The articles come from authors in the United States, Slovakia, and the Slovak Diaspora from around the world.

Anyone wishing to submit an article for publication can submit their articles to Sister Barbara Sable, SSCM, Villa Sacred Heart, Danville, PA 17821, or barbarasable@hotmail.com. The Deadline for submitting an article is June 30, 2023. The articles submitted need to be double spaced, typed in doc format, and in Times New Roma font.

Any questions regarding the Good Shepherd, the articles, etc. can be sent to Michael Horvath, msjhm185@aol.com, Chairperson, Slovak Catholic Federation Communications Committee.

2023 Hockey Night in Cleveland with District 10

On Saturday, March 18, 2023, at 7:00 pm at Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse in downtown Cleveland, OH, District 10 of the First Catholic Slovak Union – including members and guests of Branches 1, 24, 228, 450, 553, and 855 - watched the Cleveland Monsters play the Belleville Senators. The FCSU Officers in attendance were National President Ken Arendt, Executive Secretary Kevin Collins, Region 6 Director Tom Ivanec, District 10 President Greg Petrasek, and Branch 450 President George Carny. Many who came to enjoy the night of fun fraternalism represented three-generations of membership in our Society including grandparents, parents and grandchildren.

We had a great time and a great turnout this year from all the branches in District 10. I personally want to thank the FCSU who continues to support this event and all 104 members and guests who attended 2023 Hockey Night in Cleveland. You made sure the event was another success!

**Submitted by Tom Ivanec,
Region 6 Director**



**WELCOME
TO OUR
JEDNOTA
FAMILY**

FCSU welcomes one of our youngest members, Thor Wyn Eriksen, Branch 320. Thor is the son of Morgan Bury-Eriksen and Maxwell Eriksen. Welcome to the First Catholic Slovak Union! Vitajte!



If you have a child or grandchild who recently became a member of the FCSU, please send us their photo to editor@fcsu.com so that we can feature them in an upcoming issue.

**Holly Workman, Br. 410,
to Perform with the
Hershey Symphony Orchestra**

Holly Workman of Mountville, PA, will be the guest soloist with the Hershey Symphony Orchestra on Saturday, April 28, 2023 at 8:00 P.M. for the Italian Accents Concert.

Holly began studying the violin at age four. She is a graduate of the PA Virtual Charter School and holds a Master of Music in Violin Performance and Literature and a Bachelor of Music in Applied Music (Violin Performance) with High Distinction from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY where she studied with Professor Renée Jolles. Holly is also a member of the Pi Kappa Lambda music honor society.

She was a violin fellow in the International Ensemble Modern Academy 2019/2020 and completed a Master of Music in Contemporary Performance at the Frankfurt Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst (Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts). She is currently pursuing a Doctoral of Musical Arts Degree in Violin Performance with Dr. Ari Streisfeld at the University of South Carolina School of Music where she is a fellow in the New Sounds Quartet, the studio TA, and concertmaster of the University of South Carolina Sym-



Holly Workman, violinist

phony Orchestra. Holly is the daughter of Greg and Dolly Workman, Mountville, PA and a member of the Branch 410, SS. Peter and Paul Society, Uniontown, PA, in the Frank T. Holly, Jr. District 10.

Submitted by Dolly Workman

**“Save the Date” for these
2023 Fraternal Events**

**FCSU National Picnic
Saturday, July 15, 2023**



**Location:
Knoebels**

391 Knoebels Blvd., Elysburg, PA 17824

**FCSU National Picnic
Saturday, July 29, 2023**



Location:

Wiegand Lake Park
9346 Kinsman Rd, Novelty, OH 44072

**2023 International Golf Tournament
August 18-20, 2023**



Location:

Kensington Golf Club
4171 Westford Place, Canfield, Ohio 44406

The Slovak Ball in New Jersey

The Slovak-American Cultural Center (S-ACC) hosted the 29th Annual Slovak Ball on Saturday, February 11, 2023, at The Royal Manor in Garfield, New Jersey. This year's event was a unique tribute to contemporary folk music in honor of Slovakia's 30th anniversary of independence. The 480 guests were treated to both contemporary and traditional performances of Slovak and Rusyn folk music by the charismatic Slovak singer, choreographer, Štefan Štec, accompanied by famed Slovak drummer and percussionist Martin Valihora and the outstanding Express Band led by Marek Soltis. The Grand Ballroom was decorated with traditional Slovak headpieces, "party" and men's hats from Zemplin and Tatry region representing Gorals, which transported attendees to the homeland - Slovakia. The evening started with a cocktail hour featuring traditional Slovak "Slivovica" and a variety of Slovak specialties, including open-faced sandwiches, "bryndzové halušky," and mini breaded cutlets. The night concluded with a midnight buffet featuring roast pig, potato pancakes, and all the fixings. Dancing continued until 2 am! The event was a huge success, all thanks to the hard-working volunteers of the S-ACC Board, First Catholic Slovak Union, and the Jednota members who always come to support the event. For more photos, videos, and the full concert, visit [SlovakAmericanCC.org](https://www.fcsu.com/community/fcsu-fun). For additional pictures, go to <https://www.fcsu.com/community/fcsu-fun>.

Submitted and written by Sabina Sabados
Photo credits: Jozef Pavlik



Region 1 members from Branch 45, 716, and 746 pictured with Kevin Collins, Executive Secretary, FCSU. A few members missed the photo – we will recreate again next year!



Frederik Koval and Julie Ann Gurega (District 16 President) enjoying the evening!



Picture left to right, top row: Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States Radovan Javorčík; FCSU Region 1 Director and President of S-ACC Sabina Sabados; Secretary of S-ACC Peter Krajnak; Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations - Miroslav Jenča; Dr. Andrea Mlynárová, Michaela Mlynárová (Branch 746); Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations Michal Mlynár; Slovak Ball Guest Star Performer renowned Rusyn singer Štefan Štec and his beautiful wife Dušana Štecová .



Ružena Goldenberg, Caitlin Goldenberg, and Luba Mason (Branch 45) the daughters and granddaughter of Rudolph and Ellen Gregus, long-time Jednota contributors and member of Branch 45.



That's a wrap! The special guest performer from Slovakia, Štefan Štec kept everyone on their feet for an hour straight singing his famous hits!



Pictured left to right: Lois Schmidt (Branch 746), Emil Filak (Branch 746), Emilia Filak (District 4 Vice President and Supreme Court member); Sabina Sabados (FCSU Region 1 Director), Tanya Pulver, S-ACC Treasurer (Branch 45); Rene Gurega (Branch 45), Marcus Gurega (Branch 45), and Peter Krajnak, S-ACC Secretary.



FCSU Executive Secretary Kevin Collins, FCSU Region 1 Director Sabina Sabados and Branch 746 Chaplain Fr. Peter Bujdos enjoying some Slovak slivovica at The Slovak Ball 2023! Na zdravie!



One lucky man among all these beautiful ladies from the Slovak community! Everyone was in high spirits toasting to the 30th anniversary of Slovakia's independence!

Jednota Sponsored a Webinar on Lifecycle Traditions in Slovakia

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

On March 23, 2023, the FCSU sponsored an online webinar from Global Slovakia entitled "From Cradle to Grave." The entertaining and informative presentation by co-director Dr. Gabriela Bereghazyová offered a glimpse of the traditional practices of Slovaks around the lifecycle of birth, childhood, marriage, and death. These are the very folk customs which many of our own ancestors experienced before they came to America and Canada.

Life for most people started and ended often in the same home, or the home of one's husband. They were born there and laid out in a home upon death. Funeral homes did not exist, and no one could afford such a luxury.

Folklore superstitions surrounded the birth of a new baby, and the birthing bed included white cloths from a dowry and ornamental decorations in red, the protective color. Only married women could assist with the birth of a child, usually a mother and/or mother-in-law. The father would only receive the baby with a kiss on the forehead, but only after the baby was cleaned and dressed in clean cloths. Babies were usually christened within a few days after birth, and it was the godmother who carried the infant to church, as godparents played an important role, and their responsibilities were taken seriously.



One thing questionable was the contention that Slovak Catholics did not have a mass at funerals, but just had a ceremony in the churchyard. I know from my research on the 1890s, Slovaks always had funeral masses in America, and it was a big affair. After reading and contacting History Professor Martin Javor and Slavomir Vojtilla, I found this not to be the case. If someone wanted a mass, both stated one could have one, and all their relatives going far back had a mass.

This is just a sample of some of the rich traditions explained in the webinar. To view the webinar any time, go to the website: www.tinyurl.com/49964mhf. Also remember that the "Great Lent & Easter Customs in Slovakia" may be viewed that was presented last year at this site: www.tinyurl.com/2zarc6ah.



Villa Sacred Heart
Danville PA

Summer Festival

Saturday
July 8th 2023
10:30 am - 5:00 pm

Baked Goods · Flea Market · Furniture
A Variety of Food Trucks · Art & Crafts
Bingo · Silent Auction · Books

Saturday Mass for Sunday 5pm in the Basilica
Villa Sacred Heart. 1002 Railroad St · Danville, PA 17821

Invitation to All FCSU Members to Attend Mass at the Chapel of Our Mother of Sorrows on September 23, 2023 in Washington, D.C.

Branch 856 would like to invite all Jednota members and Slovaks to come to Washington, D.C. to join The Most Reverend Larry J. Kulick, J.C.L., Bishop of Greensburg and FCSU Protector, in celebrating the 58th anniversary of our Slovak Chapel in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on September 23, 2023. The rosary will be said at 1:00pm followed by mass at 1:30pm.



For information regarding the Mass please contact Marion Mistrik at 301-654-3856 or Katherine Nowatkoski at 919-651-0363.

Organize your Branch or District to take a bus trip to Washington, D.C. with our help!

The FCSU Corporate Office will subsidize, up to \$500.00 for a bus trip organized by a branch or district who wishes to organize this trip for their members to join in this fraternal celebration.

For info regarding sponsoring a bus please call Barbara at 1-800-533-6682 ext. 122



Branch 716, Holy Palm Sunday

On Sunday, April 2nd, 2023, members of a branch 716 attended the Slovak Palm Sunday Holy Mass at St. John Nepomucene Church in New York City. Branch member Jan Lysak participated with parishioners of St. John Nepomucene in the Gospel "Pašie", of Christ's Passion. Following the Holy Mass, branch members as well as parishioners gathered at the event hall at St. John Nepomucene Church where lunch was served for attendees.

From Branch 716 we would like to wish our members as well as Jednota readers a blessed Holy Week and a blessed Easter.

With a heavy heart, we would also like to announce that our former Recording Secretary, Joan Mary Škrkon, at the age of 83, has returned to her heavenly home on March 23, 2023. A life so beautifully lived deserves to be beautifully remembered. Our thoughts and prayers are with her husband, Jan Škrkon, and their entire family.

Submitted by Emily Lysáková, Recording Secretary



Parishioners and Branch 716 member Jan Lysak (third to the left) reciting Christ's Passion.



(L-R) Branch 716 members Peter Gašpar, President Eva Lysakova, Emily Lysakova, Jan Lysak, Jan Škrkon, Maria Božekova, Anna Billikova, and Simona Lysakova.



Jan Škrkon with his life-long partner Joan Mary Škrkon.

District 9 Officers Elected



The Frank T. Holly, Jr. District 9 held its annual meeting on Sunday, March 12, 2023, at Caporella's Italian Restaurant. Elected to serve as officers are from left to right, Kathryn Baranek, Auditor; Patty Speshock, Vice President; James Marmol, President; Dolores Marmol, Treasurer; Tom Kocis, Auditor; and Barbara Holly, Secretary, along with John Tokarsky, National Treasurer who performed the swearing in of the District Officers. Photo by Patty Marmol.

Msgr. Andrew Hlinka District 12, 3rd Annual Picnic



Date: May 21, 2023

Time: 1pm-5pm

Location: Charleroi, PA

Cost: District 12 members – Free

Non-District 12 members - \$5

Fraternalism in Action:

- Bring at least 2 shelf stable food items, OR
- Donate at least \$3
- For the St Andrew the Apostle Food Bank

As we are enjoying the food, friends, and games at our 3rd Annual Picnic, let us remember and help others who are experiencing food insecurities at this time. Please be generous in your donations.

If you are new to attending events of the Hlinka District, please leave your reservation message at Hlinkadistrictsecretary@gmail.com with your name, branch number, phone number and how many people would attend. We will confirm your reservation.

Questions contact: Hlinkadistrictsecretary@gmail.com or 412-341-1577

We look forward to hearing from you.

Submitted by Monica Boone, Hlinka District Secretary

Spring Meetings in NJ of Branch 746 & District 4

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 746, met on Sunday, March 12, 2023, at Holy Family Church in Linden, New Jersey for their first meeting of the year to discuss activities for 2023 and recap successful activities organized in 2022. The branch organized and/or partici-

pated in a total of 19 activities which included organizing the 100th anniversary of Branch 746 in October 2022 with 140 people in attendance. Members look forward to another fun-filled year packed with fraternal activities!

Following the Branch 746 meeting Msgr.

Rura District of New Jersey, District 4 held its bi-annual meeting. The hosts were Branch 746 who arranged for the delicious luncheon with Slovak specialties catered by Julie and Stephen Rada. The agenda included the planning of 2023 activities and election of District Chap-

lain, Fr. Roman Palecko from Branch 746. The lucky winner from the 50/50 raffle was Jo Anne Peppe.

Submitted by Sabina Sabados, Branch 746



District 4 meeting was attended by members from Branch 132, 290, and 746.



**“THE MOST EXCITING TWO MINUTES IN SPORTS”
SATURDAY MAY 6th, 2023**

5th ANNUAL F.C.S.U. KENTUCKY DERBY HAT PHOTO CONTEST

Ladies & Gentlemen, Children of All Ages: Help us celebrate the 148th running of the Kentucky Derby by submitting a picture of yourself in your Derby Hat and attire!!!

Listed below are some suggestions, however the more creative the better chance of winning.

Ladies - examples:

- Babuška
- Pillbox
- Fascinator
- Beret
- Cocktail

Men - examples:

- Klobuk
- Fedora
- Bowler
- Cowboy
- Panama

HAT ENTRIES WILL BE JUDGED IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

FEMALE: 3 CATEGORIES: 40 – older; 16 – 39; 15 – younger

MALE: 3 CATEGORIES: 40 – older; 16 – 39; 15 – younger

FAMILY: 1 CATEGORY

PRIZES FOR EACH CATEGORY:

1st Place - \$250

2nd Place - \$150

3rd Place - \$75

WINNERS - To be Announced In Jednota

RULES:

1) All entries must be postmarked no later than Friday May 12th, 2023.

2) Contestant in Photo AND ALL Contestants in Family Photo must be:

- FCSUMembers in good standing to be eligible for prizes

3) **ENTRIES WITHOUT a Branch Number filled in will be disqualified.**

4) Contestant must be holding a current Jednota 2023 Newspaper in picture.

5) All pictures must be 8 x 10:

- Any other sizes will not be accepted.
- Pictures will not be returned.

6) Please write on back of the photo:

- Name
- (All family names must be written on back of Family Photo)
- Branch Number
- Entry Category

7) Mail to:

Joanne Fibbi
1741 Hempstead Ln
Pittsburgh, PA 15241

or email your high resolution picture to:
contest@fcsu.com

ENTRY FORM: _____

NAME: _____

Branch Number: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

CATEGORY:

If entering Family Category; please fill in rest of information below:

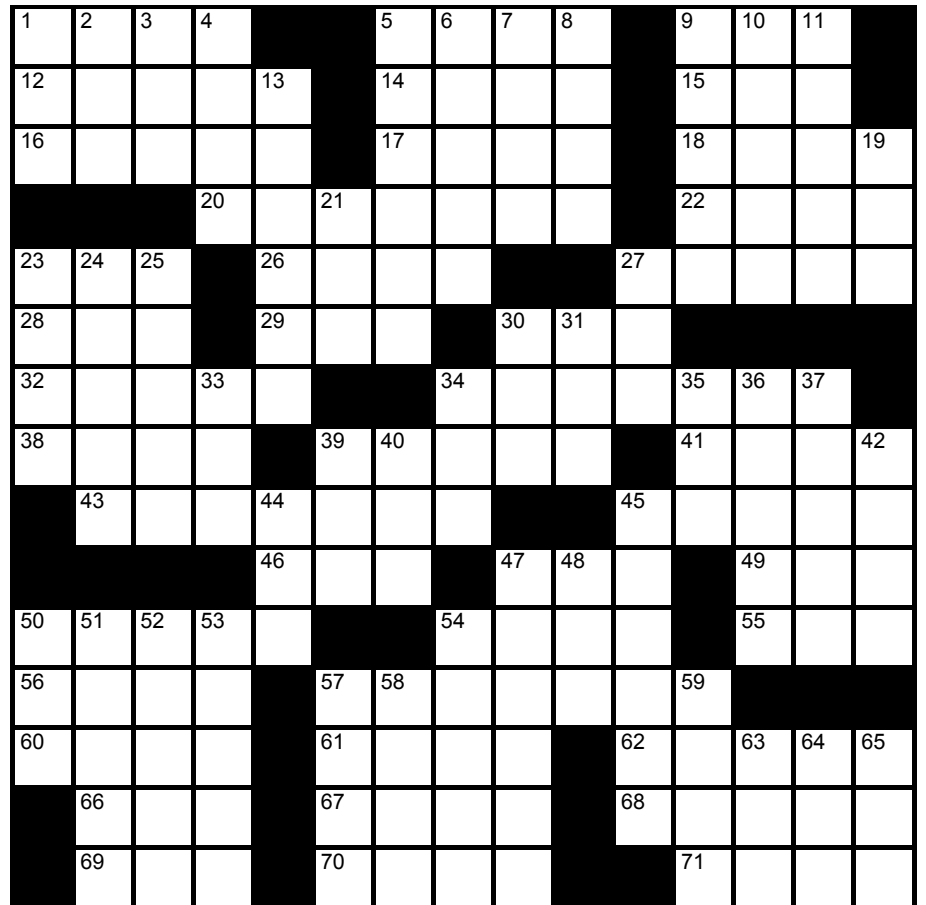
NAME: _____ **Branch Number:** _____

NAME: _____ **Branch Number:** _____

NAME: _____ **Branch Number:** _____

NAME: _____ **Branch Number:** _____

Jednota Crossword Puzzle



Copyright ©2023 Puzzle Junction.com

Across

- 1 Wows
- 5 Hightailed it
- 9 Signal at Sotheby's
- 12 Pandemonium
- 14 Stow, as cargo
- 15 King topper
- 16 Trunk
- 17 Yen
- 18 Field of work
- 20 Cop
- 22 Piqued state
- 23 Faint
- 26 Dash gauge
- 27 It's waiting to get out
- 28 Laudatory lines
- 29 Artist's asset
- 30 Milk supplier
- 32 Parachute material
- 34 Safe at the motel
- 38 Murdered
- 39 It may be perfect
- 41 Impecuniosity
- 43 Permissive
- 45 Large edible ray
- 46 Young fellow
- 47 Energy
- 49 Kind of tax
- 50 Baffled
- 54 Hamster's home
- 55 Guinness Book suffix
- 56 Night prowler
- 57 Cell phone accessory
- 60 Priests' vestments
- 61 Old 45 player
- 62 Take it easy
- 66 Loser at Antietam
- 67 Hawaiian strings
- 68 Busy places

- 69 Trauma ctrs.
- 70 Go well together
- 71 Spring

Down

- 1 Make a scene?
- 2 Journalist's question
- 3 Corn serving
- 4 Nothing special
- 5 Floodgate
- 6 Dry out
- 7 Head start
- 8 Big game
- 9 Model material
- 10 Cupcake topper
- 11 Casual attire
- 13 Mellow
- 19 Airport posting, in brief
- 21 Wray of "King Kong"
- 23 Gets into
- 24 Tennyson poem
- 25 Free-for-all
- 27 Game pieces
- 30 Germany's Dortmund-___ Canal
- 31 Lilliputian
- 33 Possess
- 34 Aardvark's tidbit
- 35 Squid's squirt
- 36 Needle
- 37 Legendary creatures of the Himalayas
- 39 Darjeeling, e.g.
- 40 Football lineman
- 42 Bad impression?
- 44 Variety
- 45 Lecture
- 47 Louisiana "county"
- 48 Bird-to-be
- 50 Jacuzzi
- 51 Gown fabric
- 52 Crayola color
- 53 Beer buys
- 54 Eating places
- 57 Fish bait
- 58 Scouting outing
- 59 Agitate
- 63 Bygone greeting
- 64 Yellow, for one
- 65 Sugar amt.

See Solution on Page 13

Fill out your Forms Online! Save your Time!

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

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

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

Okrúhle životné jubileum prof. M. Marka Stolárika, Br. 785

M. Mark Stolárik, emeritný profesor slovenských dejín a kultúry na Ottawskej univerzite a súčasný predseda Kanadskej slovenskej ligy, v tomto roku pri plnej fyzickej i mentálnej sile oslavuje významné okružle životné jubileum 80 rokov.

Marián Stolárik (meno Mark prijal až neskôr v Kanade) sa narodil v čase druhej svetovej vojny 22. apríla 1943 v Turčianskom Svätom Martine rodičom Imrichovi a Margite Stolárikovcom. V zime 1945 sa rodina pred

postupujúcim ruským frontom rozhodla uchýliť do Rakúska, kde zostala až do roku 1950. Malý Marián si Slovensko nepamätal a rakúska dedinka Auroldmünster, kde jeho šesťčlenná rodina zápasila o živobytie v jednoizbovom príbytku, sa mu stal domovom, kde prežil nejedno dobrodružstvo. Najprv tu navštevoval miestnu škôlku vedenú rehoľnými sestrami a roku 1949 ako šesťročný nastúpil do rakúskej školy.

V januári 1951 sa rodine napokon podarilo dostať do Kanady. Ich prvým domovom v tejto rozľahlej krajine sa stalo mesto Hull v provincii Quebec. Neskôr sa rodina presťahovala do hlavného mesta Ottawa v provincii Ontário, kde Marián na Ottawskej univerzite v roku 1965 absolvoval svoje bakalárske štúdium histórie cum laude a v roku 1967 v rovnakom odbore ukončil aj magisterské štúdiá. Jeho diplomová práca Uloha amerických Slovákov pri vzniku Česko-Slovenska, 1914 – 1918 (The Role of American Slovaks in the Creation of Czecho-Slovakia, 1914-1918) bola publikovaná aj v ročenke Slovak Studies.

Po absolvovaní magisterského štúdia Marián nastúpil na postgraduálne štúdiá na Minnesotskej univerzite v Minneapolise. Tu ešte roku 1963 jeho školiteľ prof. Timothy L. Smith založil prvý prístahovalecký archív v USA. Po úspešnej obhajobe dizertačnej práce Imigrácia a urbanizácia: slovenská skúsenosť, 1870 – 1918 (Immigration and Urbanization: The Slovak Experience, 1870-1918) v roku 1974 aj táto vyšla ako rovnomenná publikácia v roku 1989 v New Yorku.

Svoju plodnú profesionálnu kariéru M. Mark Stolárik nezačal v Kanade, ale v Spojených štátoch amerických. Tu v rokoch 1972 – 1974 prednášal v odbore história na Clevelandskej štátnej univerzite a od roku 1974 v rovnakom odbore a na rovnakej univerzite dva roky ako odborný asistent. Potom sa vrátil späť do Kanady, kde sa zamestnal v Národnom múzeu človeka (National Museum of Man), ktoré sa neskôr premenovalo na Kanadské múzeum civilizácie (Canadian Museum of Civilization). V Kanade navštívil mnoho slovenských komunit v Quebecu a Ontáriu, zozbieral početné artefakty týkajúce sa slovenskej histórie a kultúry a venoval ich Národnému múzeu človeka, Národnej knižnici a Národnému archívu v Kanade. Rovnako uskutočnil a nahral početné rozhovory so slovenskými priekopníkmi v Kanade, ako Jánom Frajkorom, Štefanom Hrehom, Štefanom Jesenákom, Herminou Kráľovičovou, Andrejom Potockým, Michalom Sinčákom, Jozefom Tokárom a ďalšími.

V roku 1977 počas svojho pôsobenia v Národnom múzeu človeka M. Mark Stolárik založil Spoločnosť pre slovenské štúdiá (Slovak Studies Association), združujúcu odborníkov v Severnej Amerike do jednej organizácie. Spoločnosť bola pridružená k Americkej spoločnosti na podporu slovanských štúdií (American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies) – od roku 2010 Spoločnosť pre slovanské, východoeurópske a euroázijské štúdiá (Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies). Spoločnosť pre slovenské štúdiá vydáva príležitostný informačný bulletin Newsletter, informujúci členov spoločnosti o jej aktivitách. Prvých desať rokov



Dr. M. Mark Stolárik

existencie organizácie, ktorá stále existuje, Stolárik pôsobil ako jej tajomník a pokladník a zároveň redaktor jej bulletinu Newsletter.

V roku 1979 sa M. Mark Stolárik opäť vrátil do Spojených štátov. Tu jeho kroky tentoraz smerovali do Pensylvánie, kde sa stal výkonným riaditeľom (neskôr predsedom) Balchovej inštitútu pre etnické štúdiá (Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies) vo Filadelfii. Bolo to knižničné, múzejné a vzdelávacie centrum

s úlohou zbierať, vystavovať a interpretovať hmotné artefakty, knižničné a archívne zbierky vo vzťahu k všetkým etnickým skupinám v Amerike. M. Mark Stolárik tu založil tri nové oddelenia, zvýšil počet zamestnancov zo siedmich na dvadsaťpäť a získal päťdesiat dobrovoľníkov. Za trinásť rokov Stolárik zozbieral niekoľko miliónov dolárov od rôznych jednotlivcov, korporácií a nadácií na zabezpečenie chodu a aktivít inštitútu. Správna rada inštitútu bola natoľko spokojná s jeho prácou, že mu ponúkla možnosť zotrvať na svojej pozícii až do odchodu do dôchodku. Počas svojho pôsobenia vo Filadelfii sa Stolárik zapojil do života tamojšej slovenskej komunity a spolu so svojou rodinou sa stali aktívnymi členmi slovenskej farnosti sv. Agnesy a sv. Jána.

Medzitým však slovenská komunita v Kanade a USA zozbierala 500 000 dolárov, ku ktorým kanadská vláda prispela ďalšími 400 000 dolármi, vďaka čomu mohlo vzniknúť miesto profesora slovenských dejín a kultúry na Ottawskej univerzite. Toto miesto bolo oficiálne založené na Katedre histórie Ottawskej univerzity v máji 1990. M. Mark Stolárik oň prejavil záujem a z konkurzu napokon vyšiel víťazne. V januári 1992 sa tak začalo jeho pôsobenie na mieste profesora slovenských dejín a kultúry na Ottawskej univerzite. Až do tohto roku na nej pravidelne vyučoval slovenské dejiny, dejiny Strednej Európy a dejiny prístahovalectva do Severnej Ameriky.

Okrem toho M. Mark Stolárik na Ottawskej univerzite založil Slovenský archív (Slovak Archives), ktorý uchováva zbierky týkajúce sa významných slovenských osobností Severnej Ameriky. Vďaka finančným zbierkam za posledných dvadsaťpäť rokov Stolárik na univerzite založil osem štipendijných fondov na podporu štúdia slovenských dejín. Fondy umožňujú realizovať výskum v Slovenskom archíve aj iným ako kanadským bádateľom a dovoľujú organizovať prednášky pozvaných hostí tak pre odbornú, ako aj miestnu slovenskú komunitu.

Počas svojho pôsobenia na Ottawskej univerzite prof. Stolárik zorganizoval niekoľko významných medzinárodných konferencií, na jednej z ktorých sa zúčastnil aj prezident Slovenskej republiky (2002). Referáty zo všetkých troch konferencií vyšli tlačou. Prof. Stolárik spolu publikoval desať kníh a desiatky článkov týkajúcich sa slovenských dejín alebo dejín prístahovalectva do Severnej Ameriky. Medzi jeho posledné knižné publikácie patrí kniha s názvom Where is my Home? Slovak Immigration to North America, 1870 – 2010 (Bern : Peter Lang, 2012), ktorá vyšla aj v slovenskom preklade Kde je môj domov? Slovenské prístahovalectvo do Severnej Ameriky (1870 – 2010) (Žilina: Žilinská univerzita, 2015).

Popri svojej vedeckej dráhe sa M. Mark Stolárik aktívne zapája aj do života slovenskej komunity v USA a Kanade. Okrem členstva v Prvej katolíckej slovenskej jednote, Národnom slovenskom spolku a v Slovenskom katolíckom Sokole je od roku 1958 aj členom Kanadskej slovenskej ligy (KSL). V roku 1993 bol zvolený za jej predsedu, pričom na tomto poste zotrval dve funkčné obdobia. V roku 1997 bol zvolený za predsedu 63. odboru KSL v Ottawe a v roku

continued to page 30

The Lifetime Jubilee of Professor M. Mark Stolárik, Br. 785

M. Mark Stolárik, professor emeritus of Slovak history and culture at the University of Ottawa and current president of the Canadian Slovak League, celebrates a significant 80-year birthday jubilee this year in good physical and mental health.

Marián Stolárik (he adopted the name Mark only later in Canada) was born on April 22, 1943, in Turčianske Svätý Martin to parents Imrich and Margita Stolárik during the Second World War. In the winter of 1945, the family decided to take refuge in Austria from an advancing Russian front and remained there until 1950. Little Marián did not remember Slovakia. In the Austrian village of Auroldmünster, his family of six struggled to make a living in a one-room dwelling. It became his home, a place of many adventures. There he first attended a local kindergarten run by nuns, and in 1949, at the age of six, he entered an Austrian school.

In January 1951, the family finally managed to reach Canada. In this vast country, the city of Hull in the province of Quebec became its first home. Later, the family moved to the capital city of Ottawa, Ontario, where Marián completed his Bachelor of Arts in History cum laude at the University of Ottawa in 1965 and his Master's degree in the same field in 1967. His thesis, "The Role of American Slovaks in the Creation of Czecho-Slovakia, 1914-1918," was also published in the yearly journal Slovak Studies.

After completing his master's degree, Marián began graduate studies at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. In 1963, his supervisor Prof. Timothy L. Smith founded the first immigrant archive in the USA. After a successful defense of his dissertation, Immigration and Urbanization: the Slovak Experience, 1870-1918 in 1974, a book with the same title was published in 1989 in New York.

M. Mark Stolárik began his prolific professional career not in Canada, but in the United States of America. Here he was a lecturer in history at Cleveland State University from 1972 to 1974, and after 1974 he worked at the same university for two years as an assistant professor. He then returned to Canada, where he was employed by the National Museum of Man, later renamed the Canadian Museum of Civilization. In Canada, he visited many Slovak communities in Quebec and Ontario, collected numerous artifacts related to Slovak history and culture, which he donated to the National Museum of Man, the National Library, and the National Archives of Canada. He also conducted and recorded numerous interviews with Slovak pioneers in Canada, such as Ján Frajkor, Štefan Hreh, Štefan Jesená, Hermina Kráľovičová, Andrej Potocki, Michal Sinčák, Jozef Tokár, and others.

In 1977, during his tenure at the National Museum of Man, M. Mark Stolárik founded the Slovak Studies Association, bringing together scholars in North America into one organization. The Society was affiliated with the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies – since 2010 renamed the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. The Slovak Studies Association publishes an annual newsletter informing members about its activities. During the first ten years of the organization's existence (it is still active), Stolárik served as its secretary and treasurer, as well as editor of its Newsletter.

In 1979, M. Mark Stolárik returned to the United States again. This time he moved to Pennsylvania, where he became executive director (later president) of the Balch

Institute for Ethnic Studies in Philadelphia. It was a library, museum, and educational center with a mission to collect, exhibit, and interpret material artifacts, library, and archival collections for all ethnic groups in America. He established three new departments here, increased the staff from seven to twenty-five, and recruited fifty volunteers. In thirteen years, Stolárik raised several million dollars from various individuals, corporations, and foundations to underwrite the Institute's operations and activities. Pleased with his work, the Institute's Board of Directors offered him the opportunity to remain in his position until retirement. During his time in Philadelphia, Stolárik became involved in the life of the Slovak community there and, together with his family, became active members of the Slovak parish of St. Agnes and St. John.

In the meantime, however, the Slovak community in Canada and the U.S. raised \$500,000, to which the Canadian government contributed an additional \$400,000, making it possible to create a position for a professor of Slovak history and culture at the University of Ottawa. This position was officially established in the Department of History at the University of Ottawa in May 1990. M. Mark Stolárik expressed interest in the position and succeeded in obtaining it. In January 1992, he commenced his tenure as Professor of Slovak History and Culture at the University of Ottawa. Through 2022, he regularly taught Slovak history, Central European history, and the history of immigration to North America.

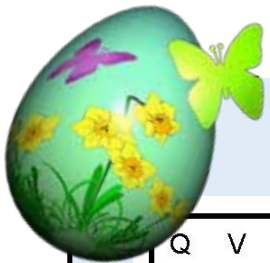
In addition, Stolárik founded the Slovak Archives at the University of Ottawa, which preserves collections related to important Slovak personalities in North America. Thanks to the financial contributions over the past twenty-five years, he established eight scholarship funds at the University to support the study of Slovak history. These enable non-Canadian researchers to conduct research at the Slovak Archives and provide funds for invited guest lectures from both the professional and local Slovak community.

During his time at the University of Ottawa, Professor Stolárik organized several important international conferences, one of which the President of the Slovak Republic (2002) attended. Papers from all three conferences were published. In total, Stolárik has published ten books and dozens of articles on Slovak history or the history of immigration to North America. His most recent book publications include a book entitled Where is my Home? Slovak Immigration to North America, 1870 - 2010 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2012), which was also published in Slovak translation as Kde je môj domov? Slovenské prístahovalectvo do Severnej Ameriky (1870 – 2010) (Žilina: University of Žilina, 2015).

In addition to his academic career, M. Mark Stolárik is actively involved in the life of the Slovak community in the USA and Canada. In addition to his membership in the First Catholic Slovak Unity, the National Slovak Society and the Slovak Catholic Sokol, he has been a member of the Canadian Slovak League (CSL) since 1958. In 1993 he was elected its President, a position he has held for two terms. In 1997, he was elected President of CSL Branch 63 in Ottawa and in 2016, he was re-elected President of the Canadian Slovak League, a position he still holds today.

M. Mark Stolárik has received several significant awards for his work. In 1992, he

continued to page 30



FCSU PUZZLE CONTEST ENTRY

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

“Happy Easter” Word List

Košík (<i>Basket</i>)	Easter
Velká noc (<i>Easter</i>)	Resurrection
Vajíčko (<i>Egg</i>)	Church
Kříž (<i>Cross</i>)	Miracle
Viera (<i>Faith</i>)	Sacrifice
Modlitba (<i>Prayer</i>)	Egg Hunt

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip code: _____

Email: _____

Branch #: _____ Phone: _____

RULES

All FCSU members are eligible to enter. Complete the word puzzle and email it along with your name, address, email and branch number to contest@fcsu.com or mail it to:

FCSU PUZZLE

6611 Rockside Rd, Independence, OH 44131

Entries must be received by **May 22, 2023**.

Five winners will be drawn from all correct entries.

Each winner will receive \$50.

April Puzzle Contest

Each month 5 winners of the FCSU Puzzle Contest will be announced in this section.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FEBRUARY CONTEST WINNERS:

Placida Bolinger	Br. 23K	Susan K. Owens	Br. 153K
Tom Ivanec	Br. 24K	Adriana Scally	Br. 450K
Albert Valo	Br. 587K		

KEEP PUZZLING!

FRATERNALISM IN ACTION

We've all heard the news of the catastrophic train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio. The residents there are desperate for clean drinkable water. Branch 855 member, Kelly Shedlock, suggested donating to a water drive led by Councilwoman Rachelle Tonsing held at the Garfield Heights Ohio Fire Station #1. Branch 855 wanted to support this worthy cause and donated 6 cases of water. We are proud to be a part of this community effort which collected over 1,000 cases of water for the residents of East Palestine, Ohio!

Submitted by Barbara Sutilla, President



(L-R) Barbara Shedlock, Ann Sutilla, Barbara Sutilla, Fire fighters



(L-R) Barbara Shedlock, Kelly Shedlock, Fire fighters

Answer to Crossword Puzzle

Solution to Puzzle from page 11

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

FCSU National Picnic, Frogbridge, NJ

Saturday | June, 24, 2023 | 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM



FCSU Members are Free
 Non-member guests: Adults \$20.00 / Children 4-10 - \$15.00/ Under 3 Free
 Register online at www.fcsu.com/events by **JUNE 3rd, 2023**
 Checks can be mailed to: FCSU EVENTS, FCSU 6611 Rockside Rd. Suite 300 – Independence, OH 44131
 Credit card payments can be made at: 1-800-533-6682 ext. 122



MENU

EVENT FAQ'S



OFF THE GRILL
 Angus Beef Hamburgers & Cheeseburgers
 All Beef Sabrett Hot Dogs
 Rubbed & Sauced BBQ Chicken
 Garden Burgers

SPECIALTY STATIONS
 Street Fair Sweet Sausage & Peppers
 Sautéed peppers and onions on a freshly baked hoagie roll
 Carolina Pulled Pork
 Smoked and rubbed with a sweet & tangy BBQ sauce, served on a traditional potato roll

CLASSIC, SPECTACULAR SIDES
 Dutch Oven Vegetarian Baked Beans
 Sweet Corn on the Cob
 Baked Mac & Cheese

And more....

- What should I bring?
Frogbridge provides all sporting equipment and towels. Bring your sunscreen and your sneakers.
- Guests are not permitted to bring liquor into the park.
- If it rains day will go on as planned, since your food and beverage area is tented.
- We have handicapped parking for anyone needing assistance, as well as golf carts driven by staff to help those with special needs.
- You can bring a stroller into the resort.
- We have changing areas in the bathrooms.
- There is plenty of shade and our pavilion area is tented.
- Due to the Board of Health, no pets are allowed!

SCHEDULE

12:00pm	Registration Opens
12:30pm – 3:30pm	Food Service
2:00pm – 3:00pm	Bingo
4:00pm	Mass
5:00pm	Park Closes

Planning to stay overnight? We have you covered!
 Book your room at the special group rate by June 3rd!
SpringHill Suites of Prussia for 159 USD per night
 875 Mancill Mill Rd
 610-783-1400
 Book your room at www.fcsu.com/events

Frogbridge Picnic address: 7 Yellow Meeting house Rd, Millstone Twp, NJ 08510

2023 FCSU National Picnic at Frogbridge Registration Form

Pre-registration required, no admission at the door. Rain or shine event , no refunds.

FCSU Members - FREE | Non Members: 4-10y. -\$15 Over 10y. - \$20

Please cut, fill out and mail the form along with a check to:
 FCSU, 6611 Rockside Rd, #300, Independence, OH 44131

CALL 800-533-6682 EXT.122 FOR CREDIT CARD PAYMENT.

Or register on www.fcsu.com/events by June 5th, 2023

Member's full name: _____ Branch #: _____ Email: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____

Guest Full Name	Member Y/N if yes, specify the Branch #	Email	Phone #	Non member over 10 y. (\$20)	Non-member 4-10 y. (\$15)	Total

2022 CHRISTMAS CONTEST WINNERS

Announcing the 2022 Gingerbread Contest Finalists

We are pleased to publish the much-anticipated results of our individual and group gingerbread contests. FCSU members of all ages showcased their skills, as they crafted an amazing array of Gingerbread entries.

This year's competition brought out an incredible display of creativity in the selection and use of edible components from vanilla wafers, cereal and pretzel sticks to peppermint, chocolate chips and blizzards of cotton candy and coconut snow. The artistry was equally impressive with decorations that were fun and festive, varying from an icy pond, to a melting snowman, and a colorful tribute to Slovakia.

Congratulations to all participants with our thanks for the holiday cheer! The top three finalists in each category are pictured here and will receive cash prizes.

Top 3 Finalists in the Group category.



1st Place

The Oros Family, Joseph, Donna, Matthew and Victoria, Branch 24

Top 3 Finalists in the individual category



1st Place
Michelle Vecchio,
Br. 35



2nd place

Brett and Juliana Oost, Br. 313



2nd place
Andrew Nasta, Br. 857



3rd place
Joe Oros, Br. 24



3rd place

Ken and Ethan Fibbi, Br. 587

2022 COLORING CONTEST WINNERS

REGION 1

Age Group 4-6



First Place
Benjamin
Ranahan
Branch 746



Second Place
Kellie Rose
Ranahan
Branch 746



Third Place
Reese Barone
Branch 19



First Place
Madison
Shenloogian
Branch 716



Second Place
Jack Ranahan
Branch 746



Third Place
Colin Ranahan
Branch 746



First Place
Kaitlyn
Shenloogian
Branch 716

Age Group 7-9

Age Group 10-12

REGION 2

Age Group 4-6



First Place
Rosie Herman
Branch 857



Second Place
Oliver Sterling
Branch 112



Third Place
Eva Sterling
Branch 112



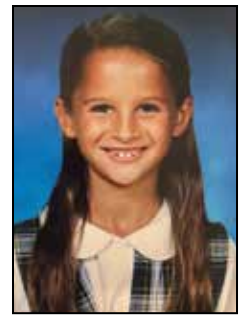
First Place
Olive Keller
Branch 796



Second Place
Oliver Herman
Branch 857



Third Place
Zoey Sterling
Branch 112



First Place
Stella Herman
Branch 857

Age Group 7-9

Age Group 10-12

REGION 3

Age Group 4-6



First Place
Jack Hammes
Branch 166



Second Place
Nora Hammes
Branch 166



Third Place
Grant Mylet
Branch 5



First Place
David Ehr
Branch 5



Second Place
Oliver Pechmann
Branch 166



Third Place
Zach Keiser
Branch 166



Age Group 7-9

Age Group 10-12



First Place
Nadia Pluto
Branch 173



Second Place
Leila Pluto
Branch 173



Third Place
Allison Ehr
Branch 5



First Place
Avelyn Kardohely
Branch 456

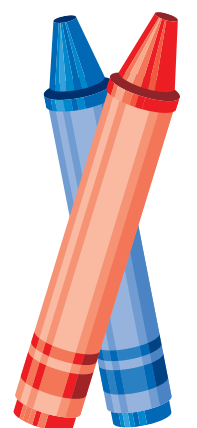


Second Place
Zuri Gordon
Branch 181



Third Place
Kylie Rush
Branch 670

Age Group 4 - 6



REGION 4

2022 COLORING CONTEST WINNERS

REGION 4

..... Age Group 7-9



First Place
Annalee Scaife
Branch 372



Second Place
Luke Petrus
Branch 670



Third Place
Maria Meyer
Branch 393



First Place
Sarah Rush
Branch 181



Second Place
Leolin Divonzo
Branch 456



Third Place
Tatum Krizman
Branch 853

..... Age Group 10 - 12

REGION 5

..... Age Group 4-6



First Place
Harper Pelikan
Branch 38



Second Place
Diana Zemelman
Branch 2



Third Place
Laura Kanczes
Branch 580



First Place
Braden Skoloda
Branch 254



Second Place
Alexa Lowe
Branch 200



Third Place
Miles Walsh
Branch 587

..... Age Group 7-9

REGION 6

..... Age Group 10 - 12



First Place
Lauralei Kroniser
Branch 38



Second Place
Kayla Fibbi
Branch 587



Third Place
Ethan Fibbi
Branch 587



First Place
Sophia Miller
Branch 900



Second Place
Ava Argoso
Branch 1



Third Place
Aria Petrinjak
Branch 731

..... Age Group 4-6

..... Age Group 7-9



First Place
Christian Scally
Branch 855



Second Place
Valerie Kandra
Branch 1



Third Place
Georgia Victory
Branch 553

..... Age Group 10 - 12



First Place
Josephine Brady
Branch 24



Second Place
Mary Wascovich
Branch 24



Third Place
Ethan Argoso
Branch 1



2022 COLORING CONTEST WINNERS

REGION 7

..... Age Group 4-6



First Place
Emma Harding
Branch 153



Second Place
Cole Krzan
Branch 40



Third Place
Atticus Whittington
Branch 40



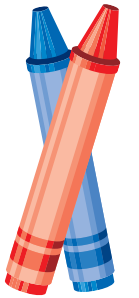
First Place
Makenna Urbanec
Branch 40



Second Place
Addison Urbanec
Branch 40



Third Place
Carolyn Riedmuller
Branch 313



..... Age Group 10-12



First Place
Jeremia Reyes
Branch 912



Second Place
Margot Mokosaik
Branch 153



Third Place
Juliana Oost
Branch 313

REGION 8

Age Group 4-6



First Place
Grace Oakes
Branch 785

Age Group 7-9



First Place
Maxim Kapitan
Branch 785



FCSU 2022 CHRISTMAS CONTEST WINNERS

Young at Heart Christmas Coloring Contest Winners



1st Place
Fred Kardoheley
Branch 456



2nd Place
Karen Dlugos
Branch 199



3rd Place
Paul Eugene Chismas
Branch 6

2022-2023 FCSU LOSER'S POOL

There were over 130 entries for the 2022-2023 Loser's Pool. Congratulations to George Carry for winning the event. This is the first time since the event started, that a Region 2 member did not win or tie for 1st place. There was a 3 way tie this year for 3rd place.

- The winners are as follows:
- 1st Place: George Carry (Region 6)
 - 2nd Place: Rusty Groner (Region 6)
 - 3rd Place: Danielle MacMath (Region 1)
 - 3rd Place: Melanie Malosh (Region 3)
 - 3rd Place: David Repko (Region 5)

George Carry will have his name added to the FCSU Traveling Cup. Thank you to everyone who participated in the event.

Farewell to Bishop Milan Lach

On Sunday, February 5, 2023, we said farewell to Bishop Milan Lach who is a member of the First Catholic Slovak Union Branch 450, and who has served us faithfully since 2017.

On January 23, 2023, the Holy Father appointed Bishop Milan Lach, S.J. to the office of Auxiliary Bishop of the Eparchy of Bratislava, Slovakia for Catholics of Byzantine Rite, transferring him from the office of Bishop of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma, Ohio.

Our Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma has been truly blessed by Bishop Milan's gift of self as he worked to strengthen and grow our Byzantine Catholic Church here in the United States. As our bishop, he often had to make difficult decisions, but like a true spiritual father, he did all for the love of the Church and for the salvation of souls. A beautiful Divine Liturgy was held at Dormition of the Mother of God Church in Cleveland, Ohio, followed by a dinner, at which around 272 people attended, hosted at the Social Hall at Holy Spirit Church in Parma, Ohio.

During the Farewell Dinner, Fr. Marek Visnovsky stated: "You are a man of principle, integrity, transparency, love and sometimes



Farewell dinner at Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic party center.

tough love, but you care for your people, the faithful, your eparchy, your priests and deacons."

Bishop Milan Lach addressed the audience with this request:

"Please pray for new priestly vocations; pray for the little boys that from them there might be holy priests. Pray for the small girls that they might be nuns, and we need nuns. Please pray for new vocations, and I assure you, if we believe that our prayer has the strength then God will send the courage and grace into the hearts of men, and they will say: Yes, I want to be a priest. It's not a job, it's a vocation. Do you know how this is different? It's like the marriage vocation: it's not your job that you wake up four or five times during the night because your baby is sick and crying; no, it's your vocation and this is different. So please live your vocation faithfully and you will be happy, I assure you. And this happiness will be radiant like a nuclear weapon. Because this is the light, not of yourself, but it's the light of Christ."

Bishop Milan, thank you for everything. You will truly be missed.

A Short Biography of Bishop Milan Lach

He was born on November 18, 1973, in Kežmarok, a town in the Spiš region of eastern Slovakia. He studied theology at the TF TU in Bratislava. Lach was ordained a deacon on 11 November 2000, and a priest on July 1, 2001, in the Cathedral of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Košice, both by the Eparchal Bishop of Košice, Milan Chatur.

From 2001 to 2002, he performed a civil substitute service in the Jesuit community in Košice and in 2003 he worked as a researcher at East-West Spirituality Center. From 2003 to 2004, he was appointed a head of the East-West Spirituality Center in Košice and at the same time he helped Christians and in the surrounding area of



(L-R) Bishop Milan Lach, Mrs. Idka Rajec and Mr. Andrew Rajec, President Emeritus

Košice.

In 2004, he began his studies at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, where he obtained a doctorate in 2009. In addition to his experience from the international academic environment, he has also gained experience in spiritual service as a helping hand at the Pontifical College of Russicum and as a spiritual assistant of the Federation of Scouts of Europe in Rome. He also co-authored with Vatican Radio.

After returning from studies in Rome in 2009, he worked as a director at the Center of Spirituality East-West. In addition to securing the scientific tasks of the center, organizing scientific conferences, building a library fund, and establishing contacts with other countries institute, he taught one semester at the Faculty of Theology of the Catholic University in Košice, where he also was a member of a theological journal Verba Theologica.



Bishop Milan Lach, SJ

He has been in the Society of Jesus in Slovakia since December 30, 2009. He was a provincial counselor and since January 1, 2012, a delegate for the formation of Jesuit scholastics.

He is fluent in Slovak and Italian, actively communicates in English and Russian and passively in French.

On April 19, 2013, Pope Francis appointed him as an Auxiliary Bishop of Prešov. He was ordained on June 1, 2013, in Lutiņa. Pope Francis appointed him Apostolic Administrator of the Eparchy of Parma for Byzantines in the United States on June 24, 2017. In June 2018, Pope Francis named him the Eparch of Parma. He assumed office one month later, on July 1. Finally, on January 23, 2023, Pope Francis name him as Auxiliary Bishop of Bratislava and titular bishop of Ostracine.

Source: Wikipedia, <https://tinyurl.com/2x-8zvkat>

Submitted by Miriam Visnovsky, Branch 24

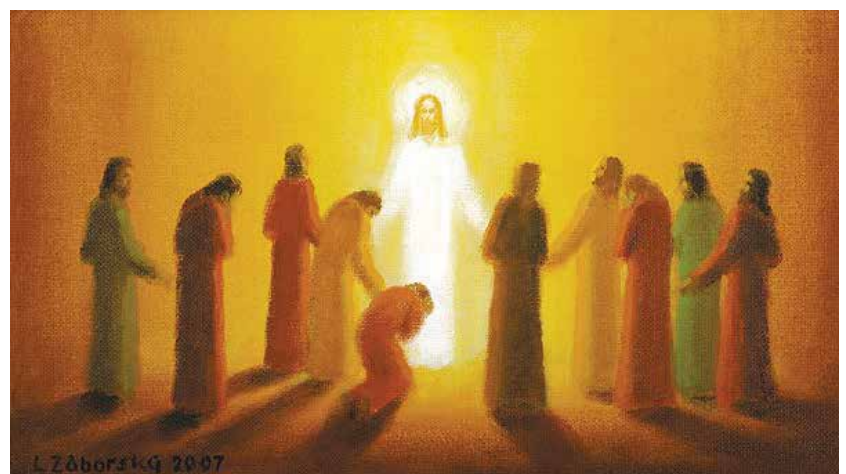


(L-R) Bishop Michael Botean, eparch in the Romanian Catholic Eparchy; Bishop Larry Kulick (FCSU Protector) Bishop of Greensburg; Bishop Milan Lach (Eparchy of Parma, Br. 450); Archbishop William Skurla, Metropolitan of the Byzantine Catholic Church in the USA; Fr. Marek Visnovsky (Br.24), Very Reverend, Mitered Archpriest.

Modlitba k Zmŕtvychvstalému (A Prayer to the Risen One)

Kriste, keby si nebol vstal z mŕtvych, neboli by sme teraz tu, nenašli by sme u teba odpustenie ani zmierenie – zdroje vnútornej obnovy a nového začiatku po každej porážke. Toto všetko uskutočňuješ ty v nás, aby bolo jasné, že to vyžarovanie nepochádza od nás, ale od teba, Zmŕtvychvstalého.

Christ, if you hadn't risen from the dead, we wouldn't be here now, we wouldn't find forgiveness and reconciliation in you-sources of inner renewal and a new beginning after every defeat. All this is done by you in us, so that it is clear that radiance does not come from us, but from you, the Risen One.



News from Slovakia - Správy zo Slovenska

Heger sa stretol so Zelenským, hovorili o pšenici i obnove Ukrajiny



Dočasne poverený premiér SR Eduard Heger (vpravo) a ukrajinský prezident Volodymyr Zelenskyy sa vítajú v Kyjeve v piatok 31. marca 2023. Foto: TASR - Úrad vlády SR (Acting Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Eduard Heger (right) and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy welcome each other in Kyiv on Friday, March 31, 2023. Photo: TASR - Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic).

Kyjev 31. marca (TASR) - Dočasne poverený premiér SR Eduard Heger sa v piatok v Kyjeve stretol s ukrajinským prezidentom Volodymyrom Zelenským. Hovorili o vývoze ukrajinskej pšenice aj o možnej účasti slovenských firiem na obnove Ukrajiny. Z Kyjeva informuje osobitný spravodajca TASR.

Zelenskyy sa Slovensku poďakoval za doterajšiu pomoc Ukrajine, pričom si podľa vlastných slov uvedomuje, že to pre slovenskú vládu nie je jednoduché.

Heger otvoril tému vývozu pšenice z Ukrajiny s tým, že treba nájsť spoločné riešenie, ako ju dostať do Afriky, a nie aby končila na európskom trhu a diskriminovala miestnych farmárov. Ukrajinský prezident na to reagoval, že sa bude rozprávať s obchodníkmi, aby nezneužívali situáciu.

Zelenskyy zároveň požiadal Slovensko o pomoc pri obnove niektorého zo zničených miest na Ukrajine. Mohlo by ísť o obnovu škôl či nemocníc. V tejto súvislosti uviedol, že Ukrajina privíta angažovanie sa slovenských firiem.

Témou rozhovoru boli aj dezinformácie a pôsobenie propagandy Ruska na Slovensku.

Heger met with Zelensky, they talked about wheat and the restoration of Ukraine

Kyiv, March 31 (TASR) - Acting Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Eduard Heger met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday in Kyiv. They talked about the export of Ukrainian wheat and the possible participation of Slovak companies in the reconstruction of Ukraine. TASR's special reporter reports from Kyiv.

Zelenskyy thanked Slovakia for the help Ukraine has received so far, while in his own words he realizes that it is not easy for the Slovak government.

Heger opened the topic of the export of wheat from Ukraine, saying that a common solution must be found to get it to Africa, and not for it to end up on the European market and discriminate against local farmers. The Ukrainian president responded by saying that he would talk to businessmen so that they would not abuse the situation.

At the same time, Zelenskyy asked Slovakia for help in rebuilding some of the destroyed cities in Ukraine. It could be the restoration of schools or hospitals. In this context, he stated that Ukraine would welcome the involvement of Slovak companies.

The topic of the conversation also covered disinformation and the influence of Russian propaganda in Slovakia.

Translated by Dr. Michael Kopanic

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

Rezort obrany: Prvé štyri stíhačky MiG-29 sú už na Ukrajine V priebehu nasledujúcich týždňov budú Ukrajine odovzdané ostatné lietadlá.

Bratislava, 23. marca 2023 (TASR) - Prvé štyri stíhacie lietadlá MiG-29 sú už na Ukrajine. Presun realizovali ukrajinskí piloti za pomoci slovenských vzdušných síl, ukrajinského personálu a ďalších zložiek, ktoré zabezpečovali bezpečnosť či potrebnú dokumentáciu. Ďalšie stíhačky Slovensko odovzdá Ukrajine v priebehu nasledujúcich týždňov. TASR o tom informovala hovorkyňa Ministerstva obrany (MO) SR Martina Kakaščíková.

“Ďakujem všetkým zapojeným zložkám za fantastickú profesionálnu prácu. Slovensko stojí na správnej strane a týmto gestom sme sa ako krajina zapísali veľkými písmenami do moderných svetových dejín, ktoré hovoria o včasnej pomoci, úprimnej solidarite a veľkosti národa,” uviedol dočasne poverený minister obrany Jaroslav Naď. Zopakoval, že Ukrajine poskytujeme pre Slovensko nepotrebnú techniku, ktorú si v našich podmienkach nevieme opraviť.

K odovzdaniu ďalších lietadiel neplánuje rezort z operačných dôvodov poskytovať žiadne konkrétne. Avizuje, že po bezpečnom odovzdaní ukrajinskej strane ich presun ihneď potvrdí.

Darovanie 13 stíhačiek MiG-29 a časti systému protivzdušnej obrany Kub je predmetom medzivládnej dohody medzi Slovenskom a Ukrajinou, ktorú schválila minulý týždeň vláda.



Na snímke rozlúčka so stíhačkami MiG-29 v priestoroch Leteckej základne Malacky-Kuchyňa (In the picture, farewell to the MiG-29 fighters at the Malacky-Kuchyňa Air Base.)

Department of Defense: The first four MiG-29 fighters are already in Ukraine In the coming weeks, the rest of the planes will be handed over to Ukraine.

Bratislava, March 23 (TASR) - The first four MiG-29 fighter jets are already in Ukraine. The transfer was carried out by Ukrainian pilots with the assistance of the Slovak Air Force, Ukrainian personnel, and other forces providing security and necessary documentation. Slovakia will hand over more fighters to Ukraine in the coming weeks. TASR was informed about this by the spokeswoman of the Slovak Ministry of Defense (MoD) Martina Kakaščíková.

“Thanks to all the forces involved for their fantastic professional work. Slovakia is on the right side and with this gesture we as a country have written big letters in modern world history, which speaks of timely assistance, sincere solidarity, and the greatness of the nation,” said the Minister in charge of Defense Jaroslav Naď. He reiterated that we are providing Ukraine with unnecessary equipment for Slovakia, which we cannot repair in current conditions.

For operational reasons, the ministry does not plan to provide any specifics on the handover of other aircraft. He announced that he will confirm their transfer to the Ukrainian side immediately after their safe handover.

The granting of 13 MiG-29 fighters and part of the Kub air defense system is the subject of an intergovernmental agreement between Slovakia and Ukraine, which was approved by the government last week.

Translated by Dr. Michael Kopanic

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.

Odpočinutie večné daj im, Pane, a svetlo večné, nech im sviati. Duše všetkých verných zomrelých, pre milosrdenstvo Božie, nech odpočívajú v pokoji. Amen
Eternal rest, grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Branch	Name	Branch	Name	Branch	Name	Branch	Name
002K	Elva E Silay	089K	Paula Orlando	292K	Thomas Hamzik	733K	Michael J Yagercik III
002K	James F Johns	102K	Joseph Semansky Jr	293K	Ruth Mary Utrata	746K	Edward Kovacs
002K	Julia D Mehal	112K	Susan E Kitlan	312K	Susan R Schmucker	746K	Iwanna Mary Beko
005P	John E Holcomb	122K	John Brenkus	320K	Harry Peterson	796K	Joseph Fatul
006K	Ronald D Pshak	152K	Helen Clare Keene	333K	Margaret Bunyak	831K	Eyvonne G Duffy
023K	Frances Stehnach	157K	Andrew D Maderic	367K	Mary Kubicar	831K	Jeffrey Parker
024K	Bernard J Weber	157K	Carl Simcoe	382K	Gerard Elias	831K	Joseph A Bodnar
024K	Roberta Depiero	157K	Joseph Bobalik	393K	Mary Bogley	844K	Gloria Jean Brissette
038K	Bernadette Franzetta	157K	Lloyd O Watts	429K	Charles Beblo	855K	Scott Chura
038K	Michael Soltis	165K	Helen Gill	450K	Edward Zurilla	900K	Janice Di Donato
038K	Richard J Ignat	166K	Robert J Kucko	450K	Joyce Grabowski Weber	900K	Joyce A Constant
040K	Marcia L Senate	169P	James L Schuster	465K	Clara Montini	900K	Nicholas Bolton
040K	Mary Ann Frances Woodward	173K	John S Ungvasky Jr	543K	Virginia Blazeniak	900K	Catherine C Lamczyk
040K	Roberta Koral	228K	John J Gluvna	553K	Andrew John Semancik	916K	Daniel Di Leo
040K	Ronald E Kreier	228K	John R Rakar	553K	Ronald E Prexta	924K	Daniel Di Leo
045K	Adele Angotto	254K	Andrew J Rojtas	615K	Rachel G Lemmon	926K	Debra J Gustafson
055K	Sarah Ann Velas Sutton	260K	Thomas L Buranich	618K	Mark F Pollock		
075K	William B Pennington	260K	Warren Carr	628K	Andrew R Getsy		
085K	Clement Kalafut	292K	Jeffrey J Skupien	670K	Charles F Johnson		
085K	Genevieve Kovalchik	292K	Joseph J Brutts Jr	682K	Mildred S Pavilonis		

* Processed in the month of March 2023

NEKROLÓGY – OBITUARIES

The Former Chaplain of the Akron Jednota Slovak Club Branch 553K, Fr. Ralph V. Coletta, Passed into Eternal Life on March 7, 2023

Fr. Ralph V. Coletta, a resident of Richfield, Ohio passed away peacefully into eternal life with our Lord Jesus Christ on March 7, 2023, at the Justin T. Rogers Hospice Care Center following a brief illness. Born July 5, 1935, in Akron, Ohio, he attended St. Bernard's Elementary School. For high school and undergraduate studies, he attended St. Gregory Seminary, Cincinnati; Borromeo College Seminary, Wickliffe; and St. Mary Seminary, Cleveland. In later years, he attended Kent State University and Ashland University, earning his graduate degrees.



al, and international current/historical news and events. When asked a question about many things, he would share his well-thought-out opinions with kindness and integrity. Adding to his thirst for learning, studying cultures and enjoying nature, Fr. Ralph loved to travel worldwide.

Fr. Ralph was ordained a Priest for the Diocese of Cleveland May 20, 1961, and dedicated his life to service of the faith community. As a man of great faith and devotion to our Lord, Fr. Ralph served at many parishes in the Dioceses of Cleveland, including: St. Clement, Lakewood; St. Martin of Tours, Maple Heights; Conversion of St. Paul Parish, Cleveland; St. Augustine Parish & Director, Diocesan Apostolate for the Deaf, Cleveland; St. Ambrose, Brunswick; St. Francis Xavier, Medina; pastor of St. Mary, Wooster; and pastor of St. John the Baptist, Akron.

Fr. Ralph had many spiritual leadership roles in his life. To list a few, he served the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community of Cleveland, the Vietnamese community of Akron, Chaplain of the Serra Club, Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus as a fourth degree and selected man of the year two times, Chaplain of St. Vincent de Paul, Chaplain of Jednota Slovak Club, Branch 553, and Chaplain of the Italian MSC Club of Akron.

Retiring from parish life in 2005, he continued to provide periodic priestly duties in area churches including St. Ambrose, St. Victor, St. Hilary, etc., and Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine/Regina Health Center in Richfield.

During his retirement, he strove to appreciate and cherish nature. A member of Ideas-tream Public Media, he filled his home with classical music throughout his day. As an avid reader, he enjoyed learning the history of all faiths. He also researched local, nation-

Fr. Ralph was more than an uncle to his family of 160 nieces and nephews who cherished and loved him. His joy was breaking bread and sharing intellectual/fun discussions around family tables. He administered the Holy Sacraments of Baptism, Holy Communion, Marriage, and the Anointing of the Sick, to many of his family members. Fr. Ralph was a kind and generous soul with a brilliant mind. He took care of others as an important personal mission. He walked with many through life's difficulties with faith, calm, patience, love, compassion, and insight.

Fr. Ralph was proud of his Italian heritage and loved his parent's hometown of Conversano, Bari, Italy and was devoted to Our Lady of Conversano.

He often said, "I prayed for calm and I was given the gift of calm." "Look out your window and see the many gifts that God has given you." "Let me teach you something." And finally, he defined a good deed as "Tutti Nice" and identified many relaxing days as "Lazy River."

He was a dedicated Priest, uncle, cousin, neighbor, and friend! We learned much about hope, prayer, and faith from him during his journey of life here on earth.

Fr. Ralph was preceded in death by his dear parents, Raffaele (Ralph) Coletta and Giovanna (Jenny) Mezzapesa Coletta and his five siblings: Angela Cutrone (Salvatore), Francis Tucci-Tricaso (Armond, Sam), Anthony Coletta (Helen), Rose LaGuardia (Joseph), John Coletta (Mary).

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Hilary Parish, 2750 W. Market St. Fairlawn, OH, on Saturday, March 25, 2023, with Bishop Michael G. Woost as the principle celebrant and Fr. Paul J. Rosing as the homilist.

The Interment for Fr. Coletta was at Holy Cross Cemetery Akron, OH.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in the name of Fr. Ralph V. Coletta for the care and needs of the vowed Religious and Clergy at the Regina Health Care Center 5232 Broadview Road, Richfield, OH 44286.

IRENE ANDREJKO, BRANCH 19 – BRIDGEPORT, CT

Irene Andrejko, age 92, left this world peacefully on December 13, 2022. She was the daughter of the late Kazimir and Mary Vizvary. Irene was born in Bridgeport Hospital on December 23, 1929. She attended Saints Cyril & Methodius School and Warren Harding High School until she had to leave to care for her Mother when she was just sixteen years old. When she was in her fifties, she worked at the Burndy Corporation in Milford for 5 years. Later in life, she resided at John B. Sliney Senior Living Center in Branford and then with her daughter and son-in-law in Milford.



Irene (Vizvary) lived on Holly Street in Bridgeport next door to Edward Andrejko, whom she eventually married and together they raised seven children. She was predeceased by him, her 3 sons Robert, John and Thomas, her grandchildren Michael & Jennifer, her brothers & sisters Victor, Joseph, John, Mildred, and Elizabeth and their spouses, and her live-in partner, Nicholas John Palumbo. She is survived by her 4 daughters, Beverly (Brent) Vogelbacher, Patricia (Dennis) Hackett, Mary (Paul) Krotki, and Jean (Kenn) Pudill, her daughter in law Susan Andrejko, her brother, Charles (Reggie) Vizvary and many nieces & nephews.

She was proud to leave behind a legacy of 16 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren, and one great, great grandchild who were so deeply cherished by her. She loved spending time with her family, sitting at the beach, dancing, and going to Cape Cod every year for 40 years.

Submitted by Jean Pudill

EDWARD J. KOVACS, BRANCH 746 – LINDEN, NJ

Edward Julian Kovacs, 91, of Glen Ridge, NJ passed away peacefully at home on Wednesday February 8, 2023.



Ed's kind and gentle spirit is carried on by all the women in his life who loved him fiercely: his wife and best friend of 57 years, Evelyn (née: Hollasch), his only daughter Cathy Kovacs, and his two beautiful granddaughters, Mikayla Flynn and Juliana Flynn (all of Glen Ridge, NJ), along with many nieces, nephews and dear friends.

Born October 20, 1931 in Linden, NJ to Michael Kovacs and Ethel (Karnay) Kovacs. Ed grew up with five brothers and sisters: Marion Kaus, Ethel Gspann, Michael Kovacs Jr., Father Anthony Kovacs, and Albert Kovacs – all who predeceased him.

Ed graduated Linden High School and shortly thereafter was drafted into the US Army, where he was stationed in Korea on the 38th parallel. He proudly served his country for two years. When the cease fire took place, Ed returned home and attended Newark College of Engineering.

Ed would eventually meet his sweetheart and soulmate Evelyn at a bowling meeting for the Catholic Singles Club of Union County in 1963. He often reflected fondly on their first date, where they went to see the play "South Pacific" at St. Benedict's Prep School. The two would marry in 1965, building a life together based on friendship, love, and a strong Catholic faith. Ed was a parishioner of St. Philip the Apostle RC Church in Clifton. Residing in Clifton since they got married up until the past year, Ed enjoyed life with Evelyn. Together they enjoyed traveling to 40 U.S. states and 12 countries, socializing, regular swims at the Boys & Girls Club, bowling leagues, card games with friends, puzzles, volunteering at the St. Philip Church carnival and other events as well as participating in social groups – Valley Seniors and Prime Timers. Even in the past year, Ed and Ev could frequently be spotted doing chair yoga together to keep each other going. Independently, Ed was a member of the St. Philip's Knights of Columbus.

Ed's professional career took him to Union Steel Company, Elizabeth Iron Works, and ultimately his 30-year tenure with Falstrom Co., a company that serves US Defense with solutions for electronic enclosures and electromechanical assemblies. Ed retired from Falstrom in 1996.

Ed's spirit of loving kindness was frequently

continued on page 24

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

All new **BRANCH** Announcements should be sent to branch@fcsu.com

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

AS OF FEBRUARY 15, 2023 THE FOLLOWING BRANCHES DID NOT MEET ALL OF THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THEIR 2022 BRANCH STIPEND PER BYLAW 4.05 FINANCIAL OBLIGATION & PER BYLAW 14.01 RULES GOVERNING LOCAL BRANCHES

Branch #	Branch #	Branch #	Branch #
003K	165K	417K	652K
003P	198P	429K	667K
004K	213K	456K	706K
007K	224K	465K	729K
075K	238K	472K	733K
083K	254K	517K	735K
085K	292K	543K	756K
086K	293K	571K	780K
096K	312K	580K	789K
102K	321P	581K	796K
108K	330K	584K	844K
122K	393K	618K	888K
132K	401K	633K	890K
157K	403K	638K	

BRANCH 7 – HOUTZDALE, PA

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Society, Branch 7, will hold a meeting on Sunday, May 7, 2023, at 8:30 A.M. at Holy Trinity Catholic Church Parish Hall, 52 Parish St., Ramey, PA 16671. All members are invited to attend the meeting.

Submitted by **Joseph C. Cervenak, President**

BRANCH 23 – JOHNSTOWN, PA

Branch 23 of Johnstown will hold its First Annual Branch Meeting on Sunday May 7, 2023. The meeting will take place at Denny's Family Restaurant in Richland on Theater Drive. The Meeting will start at 1:30 pm. Lunch will be served. All members of Branch 23 are welcome. We have a large Branch, and we are requesting and encouraging members to attend our meetings. If you have a policy, you are a member of a branch. At this meeting we will be discussing the great new rates FCSU is offering. We also would like to talk about what we can do this year as members. If you have any questions, please contact Theresa Cassat at 814-254-2532.

Submitted by **Theresa Cassat**

BRANCH 38 - WHITE OAK, PA

Holy Trinity Society, Branch 38 will hold a branch meeting on Thursday, April 20, 2023, at 7:00 pm. Attendees of this meeting will discuss possible Branch and District fraternal events for 2023. Our goal is to create a more unified environment.

Out of an abundance of caution and with concern for all our members, this Branch 38

meeting will be held virtually. Any member interested in attending this meeting should contact Logan Haselhoff, Branch President, by calling 412-956-9411 or emailing LHASELHOFF@gmail.com, to set up the virtual meeting invitation and details.

All Branch 38 members are urged to attend. Thank you for your continued support of Branch 38. Thank you for your continued support of Branch 38: Logan Haselhoff, President of Branch 38, Brittany Kowalski, Vice-President of Branch 38, Cathy Matta, Secretary/Treasurer of Branch 38. Please contact me with questions or concerns!

Submitted by **Logan Haselhoff**

BRANCH 45 – NEW YORK CITY, NY

The St. Matthew's the Evangelist Society, Branch 45, will hold a semi-annual meeting on Sunday, April 16, 2023, at 1:00 PM. On the agenda will be a discussion about planned activities and events. We urge all members to attend this meeting.

Submitted by **Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 60 - MCKEESPORT, PA

Branch 60 will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, April 23, 2023, at Bravo! Italian Kitchen (250 W. Bridge Street, West Homestead, PA 15120) at 1:00 p.m. On the agenda will be Officers' reports and upcoming events. All members are urged to attend.

Submitted by **Julie Perla, Branch Secretary**

BRANCH 112 – MAHANAY CITY, PA

A National Picnic sponsored by the FCSU will be held at Knoebels Amusement Park in Elysburg, PA on Saturday, July 15, 2023. Further details will be published in the JEDNOTA newspaper with regards to registration.

All Branch 112 members who have officially registered with the home office and in attendance will receive a \$25.00 stipend.

Looking forward to seeing you at the picnic.
Submitted by **Matthew Sterling, Secretary**

BRANCH 166 - BINGHAMTON, NY

Saint Joseph the Guardian, Branch 166 Happy Spring! There are a lot of exciting things happening this spring and summer! Our Semi-Annual Branch meeting will be held on Sunday, April 23, 2023, at 2:00 PM at St Cyril's Parish Hall, 148 Clinton St., Binghamton, NY. Lunch will be provided for members in attendance. Please RSVP by April 15, 2023. Come out for food, and fellowship and discover what's happening!

Submitted by **Judie Dendler, Secretary**

BRANCH 181 - UNITED, PA

Branch 181 members are invited to attend the dinner meeting at The Boulevard Restaurant on Saturday, April 29, 2023, at 5 pm. The Boulevard is located at 900 Towne Square Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601. Please RSVP by April 24 by calling Vicki Hricik at 724-547-0803 or Darlene Patty at 724-493-8712. Planning for the upcoming annual family picnic and other branch activities will be on the agenda.

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, June 25, 2023, for the Annual Family Picnic.

Please email Vicki at vickihricik@gmail.com to request a Branch 181 Scholarship Application.

Vicki Hricik, Recording Secretary

BRANCH 200 – FORD CITY, PA

With Spring in the air, flowers in bloom and the celebration of Easter 3 says ago, we are planning a combined event on Saturday, May 6th starting with Cinco de Mayo followed by the Kentucky Derby. Come out of hibernation for a good time. We look forward to seeing you.

The Board of Directors has open seats if you are interested in serving. All members are welcome to attend the meetings on the 1st Thursdays of every month except June & July. We are interested in hearing your ideas. You can also email me your ideas vschaub123@gmail.com.

In 2020 we had planned our 125th anniversary but due to covid, we delayed our plans to be held in October 2025 to celebrate 130 years.

Submitted by **Vicki Schaub, Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 213 - PITTSBURGH, PA

St. Michael the Archangel, Branch 213, will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, June 11, 2023. It will be held at 1:00 pm at 306 Barclay Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA. If planning on joining the meeting via phone, please contact weaz1958@aol.com.

The agenda will include all old, current, and new Branch business, officer's reports, and discussion of upcoming Branch and District events and activities.

Submitted by **Joe Belechak, Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 228 - LORAIN, OHIO

The St. John the Baptist/Holy Trinity Lodge Br. 228 will hold their next meeting on Monday March 20, 2023, at 7 P.M. IN-PERSON at the American Slovak Club on 30th and Broadway in Lorain, Ohio. Beginning in 2023, all quarterly meetings (March, June, September, and December) will be held in the IN-PERSON format at the American Slovak Club. All other monthly meetings will be held in the VIRTUAL format using the FreeConferenceCall.com Audio Conferencing service we have used since late 2020. All meetings will be conducted on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7 P.M. Please keep in mind that there are no meetings held in the months of January, February, July, or August. You may contact Lisa at 440-773-1442 for specific instructions to attend virtually if needed.

The branch will hold its annual election of officers and bylaw review during each December meeting. The exact date of this year's election meeting is December 18, 2023. At that time, we will also elect two (2) representatives to serve on the American Slovak Club Board of Directors.

The December 2022 election results for Branch 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 were each re-elected to a 1-year term expiring on December 31, 2023. For representatives to the American Slovak Club Board of Directors, Kathleen Trifiletti and Ryan Trifiletti were each re-elected to a 3-year term expiring December 31, 2025.

We respectfully ask all of our FCSU members to please pray to our Lord God to bless us all with His love, peace and mercy. May He unite the leaders of all nations to diligently work together for world peace.

Submitted by **Thomas B. Zuffa, Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 276 – MCKEESPORT, PA

The meeting scheduled for March is postponed. The next meeting will be held Sunday, May 7 at 1 PM at Eat & Park Restaurant on Route 30, North Versailles, PA, across from the post office and the Great Valley Shopping Center. We will hear reports from the treasurer and financial secretary and discuss district events. The fall meeting is planned for November 12.

Submitted by **Margaret Nasta, President**

BRANCH 313 - ORLAND PARK, IL

Happy Spring, Branch 313!! We would like to wish all of our members a blessed spring season. Our first Semiannual Branch Meeting for the 23rd year, will be held on Tuesday, April 25th at 11:30 AM.

continued on page 23

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

All new BRANCH Announcements should be sent to branch@fcsu.com

The meeting will take place at, "Southfork Family Restaurant" at the location: 14631 South LaGrange Road, Orland Park, Illinois 60462. A complimentary fraternal luncheon will follow the meeting. We encourage those attending to please wear a face mask during the meeting. Hand sanitizer will be available for use at the table. Members interested in attending this meeting, please contact Branch President, Marge Dickinson at 708 226 8157, by April 15th, to reserve a place at the meeting.

**Submitted by Jennifer Carlton,
Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 320 – ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP, PA

Summer Baseball. Any Branch 320 member interested in a baseball game this summer, please reach out to Frances Tarquinio, Financial Secretary, at 724-929-9788. We will be discussing the possibility of this event during our Spring 2023 meeting.

**Submitted by Mary Anne Higginbotham,
President**

BRANCH 484 - CORAL, PA

St. Joseph Society Branch 484 KJ, will hold its semi-annual meeting on Sunday, June 11, 2023, at 2:00 P.M., at Eat' n Park Restaurant, 2301 Rt. 286 South, Indiana, PA. All members are welcome. Discussions will include our branch's financial assistance to organizations, scholarship applicants, more advertising for members and the promotion of the FCSU's annuity rates, and any other business. We are looking forward to a great summer for all.

**Submitted by Monica Rura,
Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 553 – AKRON, OHIO

St. John the Baptist Branch 553 invites all members of the FCSU to mark your calendars for the following upcoming events and join us for fraternal fellowship:

Branch 553 Members Meeting

May 21 Sunday Branch Meeting – 2:00pm at the Slovak J Club – 485 Morgan Ave – Akron OH. First lodge meeting of the year – come to learn of all upcoming events

Slovak J Club – 485 Morgan Ave – Akron OH

Apr 19 Wednesday Stuffed Cabbage

Dinner – Served 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
(Reservations required – Call Club @ 330-786-9972 after 3:00pm)

July 23 Saturday Annual Kielbasa Open – get your 4 some together – details will follow in this publication at a later date.

FCSU National Events/Picnics
June 24 Frogbridge, Millstone Township, NJ

July 15 Knoebels Amusement Park, Elysburg, PA

July 29 Wiegand Lake Park, Novelty, OH
Aug 18-20 International Golf Tournament - Kensington Golf Club, Canfield, OH

Full details on the Picnic and Golf Tournament are published in this newspaper.

Hope to see you at these upcoming events.

**Submitted by Linda M Hanko,
Financial Secretary**

BRANCH 628 - W. HOMESTEAD, PA

The spring meeting for Branch 628 will be held on Sunday, May 21, 2023, at 2:00 PM at 141 Bellevue Drive, Penn Hills, PA. We will discuss upcoming activities of the district and our participation, as well as other events. If anyone has any questions, please send me a message at sjevec@aol.com.

**Submitted by Sylvia J. Vehec,
Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 682 – YOUNGSTOWN, OH

The next regular meeting for Branch 682 is scheduled for Noon on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at Materials Research Laboratories, 290 N Bridge St. in Struthers, OH 44471. The meeting will include discussion of sponsored projects/programs for the remainder of the year.

Submitted by Drew Hirt, President

BRANCH 716 – NEW YORK, NY

Branch 716 will also hold its first semi-annual meeting of the year 2023 on Sunday, April 23, 2023. The meeting will be held in person at St. John Nepomucene Church in New York, NY following the conclusion of the Slovak mass at 12:30 pm. The agenda will include organization, financial report updates, and discussion of future branch activities and any events. Refreshments will be provided at the meeting and all

members of Branch 716 are highly encouraged to attend.

Submitted by Emily Lysáková, Secretary

BRANCH 721 – BANNISTER, MI

Jednota Branch 721 will have its spring meeting on Sunday, April 23, 2023, at 2:00 pm at the Remenar Home located at 8977 So. Mason Rd, Bannister, MI. All members are encouraged to attend.

**Submitted by Joseph Beno,
Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 731 - YOUNGSTOWN, OH

Branch 731 will meet Sunday, May 7, 2023, at 5:00 pm. The meeting will be at Café 422, South Avenue, Boardman, Ohio. Ideas for summer events will be discussed.

**Submitted by Maura Blumer,
Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 746 - LINDEN, NJ

Members are encouraged to attend Friday Holy Masses at 7:00 PM (in Slovak) at Holy Family Church in Linden, NJ. Masses are offered for the intention of all Branch 746 members living and deceased as follows: May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th, August 4th, September 1st, November 3rd, and December 1st. October 6th mass is offered for blessings on Branch 746 on the occasion of its 101st Anniversary.

Branch 746 is offering a scholarship with a June 30, 2023, deadline for application. For further information, see the flyer in the Jednota issue and on the FCSU website, post-secondary educational institution, or vocational school, and are 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/>.

Submitted by Mary Kapitan, Secretary

BRANCH 764 - WARREN, OH

Branch 764 of Warren, Ohio will meet on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at Panera Bread, Elm Rd., Warren, Ohio. Come out and greet the newly elected 2023 officers; President, Rosemary Heald, Vice-President, Mae Stark, Treasurer and Financial Secretary, George Yuricek, Recording Secretary, Bill Hrusovsky, Auditors,

John Yuricek and Andy Prox. Also, assistance and ideas are requested for activities for summer and fall. Mark your calendar now. Further information available from Bill Hrusovsky, 330-372-1948, hruvovskyy@embarqmail.com.

**Submitted by Bill Hrusovsky,
Recording Secretary**

BRANCH 853 - CHARLEROI, PA

Branch 853 members are asked to put April 21 on their calendar for the branch to attend a 9am Mass at the Bentleyville, PA site of the St. Katharine Drexel Parish in memory of the departed FCSU Branch 853 members. Members will meet outside of the church at 8:50 a.m.

**Submitted by Monica Boone,
President**

BRANCH 855 - CLEVELAND, OH

Branch 855 is offering free tickets to its members for the all-new Tamburitzan Concert on April 23, 2023. The show will begin at 3:00 p.m. at the Breen Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of St. Ignatius High School in Cleveland, OH. The Tamburitzans are the longest-running multicultural song and dance company in the United States. Headquartered in Pittsburgh, the performers are full-time students who receive scholarships for their activities. For details on how to receive your free ticket through the branch, contact Branch 855 Fraternal Activities Director Stephanie Sutila at 440-409-9405 by April 10, 2023. Reservations required!

Submitted by Barbara Sutila, President

BRANCH 856 – WASHINGTON, DC

Plans for our mass in honor of our Slovak Chapel Our Mother of Sorrows at the shrine in Washington, D.C. in September 23, 2023. A light lunch will be served. For more information call Marion Mistrik at 301-654-3856 or Katherine Nowatkoski at 919-651-0363.

**Submitted by Katherine Nowatkoski,
President**

Cena Ondreja Štefanka udelená po 15. krát

V čase, keď na Dolnej zemi vidieť v záhradách i na poliach prvých poľnohospodárov a zima sa chystá svoje žezlo odovzdať jari, v slovenskom mestečku Nadlak, na území dnešného Rumunsku, začína hlasnejšie pulzovať slovenský život. Počas marca sa pripravuje jedno z najväčších podujatí Slovákov žijúcich v Rumunsku, ktorým je bez pochyb udeľovanie ceny veľikána slovenského hnutia v Rumunsku, spisovateľa, prekladateľa, šéfredaktora krajských časopisov a národovca – Ondreja Štefanka.

Keď Štefanko opustil hranice pozemského bytia, krajanovia premýšľali o spôsobe, ktorým by bolo možné naplniť jeho odkaz in memoriam, i o tom, ako by mu mohli pravidelne vzdávať úctu a pripomínať si jeho život i dielo. Keď sa ďalší rok stretol s rokom, Nadlak privítal prvých účastníkov odovzdávania ceny Ondreja Štefanka i prvých účastníkov medzinárodnej konferencie, ktorá sa zorganizovala za účelom naplniť Štefankov odkaz.

16. až 18. marca 2023 sa písal už 15. ročník podujatia, ktorému ani v tomto roku nechýbal punc výnimočnosti. Tohtoročnými laureátmi sa stali Katarína Mária Orbánová z Rumunsku, za príspevok k rozvoju, organizovaniu a

diverzifikovaniu kultúrneho života a spolkovéj činnosti v slovenskom zahraničnom svete a Mojmir Benža zo Slovenska, za príspevok k rozvoju a propagácii slovenskej literatúry tvorenej v slovenskom zahraničnom svete.

Po udeľovaní cien sa otvorila pracovná časť podujatia – vedecká konferencia, ktorá sa tento rok zamerala na tému Združenia, spolky, organizácie a inštitúcie dolnozemskej Slovákov. Za Maticu slovenskú príspevok pripravila riaditeľka Krajského múzea MS, Zuzana Pavelcová, na tému – Združenia, spolky, organizácie a inštitúcie dolnozemskej Slovákov v spolupráci s Maticou slovenskou. Počas dvoch konferenčných dní sa prezentovali viac ako štyri desiatky príspevkov hodnotiacich krajské spolkové aktivity a ich význam z najrozličnejších aspektov. Hlavným výstupom konferencie bude už tradične vedecký recenzovaný zborník. O tomto čase vyšiel práve ten z minulého roka, ktorí nesie názov ostatnej konferencie: Osobnosti dolnozemskej Slovákov v literatúre a umení.

Zuzana Pavelcová

Ondrej Štefanko” Prize Awarded for the Fifteenth Time

When the farmers work in the fields of the Lowlands (of the former Kingdom of Hungary where Slovaks lived), winter is handing over its scepter to spring. Slovak life starts to pulsate louder in the Slovak town of Nadlak, in what is now Romania. One of the biggest events for Slovaks living in Romania is the Ondrej Štefanko Award, which honors the nationalist writer, translator, and editor.

When Štefanko passed away, compatriots sought to fulfil his legacy in memoriam, and regularly pay tribute to commemorate his life work. Thus, a Ondrej Štefanko Award ceremony began at a regular international conference.

From 16-18 March 2023, the 15th event took place. This year's laureates were Katarína Mária Orbánová from Romania, for her contribution to the development and organization of the cultural life of Slovaks abroad, and Mojmir Benža from Slovakia, for his contribution to Slovak literature. Zuzana Pavelcová, Director of the Museum of the Matica slovenská, prepared a paper on the topic - Associations, societies, organizations, and institutions of the Lowland Slovaks. The proceedings of the conference will appear in an academic peer-reviewed publication. Last year "Personalities of the Lowland Slovaks in Literature and Art", was published.

Edited by Dr. Michael Kopanic

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

All new DISTRICT Announcements should be sent to these e-mail addresses: district@fcsu.com

DISTRICT 6 – PITTSBURGH, PA

The Pittsburgh District extends its condolences to the family and friends of Mary Belechak of North Versailles, PA who passed away on March 9, 2023, at 89. Mary was formerly of North Braddock. Mary and husband Joseph are members of Branch 213 and regulars at district meetings.

The Spring Business meeting will be held at Holy Trinity Hall of St Thomas the Apostle Parish, 529 Grant Avenue Extension, West Mifflin, PA on Sunday, April 30 at 1 PM. Branch 38 will host the meeting. We will discuss business matters and plan events for the spring and summer. The usual Fathers' Day Brunch has been cancelled. We are looking for suggestions for alternative activities. We also need a host for the fall meeting.

The FCSU has expanded its scholarship program. Tuition funding is available for grades 5 through 12, as well as college and trade school. Check the home page under Membership Benefits/Scholarships for forms and eligibility requirements.

Other announcements of local interest:

WPSCA: Meets at 7 PM first Mondays at the Mount Lebanon Public Library. Consider joining the organization and get their newsletter. May 1: New Slovak Citizenship Law; June 5: From Kosice to Kiev. Meetings resume in the Fall.

A scholarship is available for study at the Summer Language Institute offered by the University of Pittsburgh. Contact Joe Senko for details. Deadline: April 30.

Slovak Wine Tasting – Saturday, May 6. Contact Joe Senko for details.

Slovak Day at Kennywood: Thursday, July 20 – Slovak Mass, Slovak Food

Slovak Heritage Day at Pitt – Sunday, November 5 – 1-5 PM, performers, vendors, food – free admission
Slovak Radio Program – WPIT 96.5 FM/730 AM

As always, members are urged to check the Jednota for updates on FCSU business matters as well as social events and contests. 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. The district email contact is: manasta@verizon.net.

**Submitted by Margaret A. Nasta,
Secretary Pittsburgh District**

DISTRICT 7 - REV. JOHN MARTVON, PA

The Spring 2023 District Meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2023. Time is 1:00-4:00pm. The ladies of the church will be providing a hearty Slovak meal and dessert.

Meeting place is St. Bartholomew Pariah Hall at 185 Church Road, Wilmore, PA 15946.

Please come and join us with any questions or suggestions you may have. Also please let us know if you plan to attend so that we can be sure we have prepared adequately. You can contact either Peter Gerko (814.659.0976) or Ruth Gerko (814.533.1826). If we are not available to answer, please leave us a message.

Submitted by Ruth Ann Gerko

DISTRICT 8 - REVEREND STEPHEN FURDEK DISTRICT, PA, NC

The Reverend Stephen Furdek District, after considering several factors including attendance and cost of travel, will hold its spring biannual meeting via Zoom on Sunday April 16, 2023, at 1pm. This replaces the in-person meeting previously scheduled. Please email District Secretary, Jo Austin, for Zoom details: jeaustin89@gmail.com or call her at 315.391.0526.

**Submitted by Joanne Engle Austin,
Recording Secretary**

DISTRICT 10, REV. STEPHEN FURDEK - OH

District 10 will be holding our first meeting of 2023 on Sunday, April 30, at 2 pm. The Lorain Branch will be hosting this event at the American Slovak Club, 2915 Broadway Avenue, Lorain, OH 44055. All elected FCSU official are invited to attend and Branch members (District 10) are encouraged to attend. Please contact Linda Hanko @ 330-706-0151 or email me at LHanko@neo.rr.com with a headcount for each Branch and FCSU official that plan to attend to assist with refreshment preparations.

**Submitted by Linda Hanko,
Secretary/Treasurer**

DISTRICT 11 - MSGR. JOSEPH TISO, PA

Another meeting will be on Sunday June 25, 2023, at the CU Club 914 6th Ave. Ford City, Pa. 16226 at 2 pm.

Annual meeting Sunday November 12, 2023 @ Villa Blanca 2740 Leechburg Rd., Lower Burrell, 15068 @ 2pm. This meeting will be for the election of officers.

The District is planning the Annual Picnic for late July or early August watch for updates.

Please plan to attend the District meetings as everyone's input is important and welcomed. Be safe, be well. May God be with you always.

**Submitted by Karen Greggs,
Recording Secretary**

DISTRICT 14 - REV. JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT - YOUNGSTOWN, OH

SUBJECT: Revised Calendar Year District 14 Meeting Schedule

Following are the currently Scheduled District Meetings for Calendar Year 2023.

1. Tuesday, July 18, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.; Fireplace. (Semi-annual meeting).

2. Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at 6:00 P.M. (Annual Meeting for Election and Installation of Officers for 2024); Fireplace.

3. Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 6:00 P.M. (Short Meeting and Christmas Dinner); Location TBD.
* Date changes possible due to unforeseen complications.

Appropriate social distancing and masking Covid 19 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 fraternal activities.

Meetings will be held at The Fireplace 2075 E. Western Reserve Rd. Poland, OH 44514; unless otherwise specified, indicated, or announced. For further info, contact: John J. Leskovyansky, Jr., President (2023), Telephone (Home): (330) 549.3788; Cell: (330) 559.5981

**Submitted by John J. Leskovyansky, Jr.,
President**

DISTRICT 17, SAINT CYRIL & METHODIUS

DISTRICT – NY, PA

Saint Cyril & Methodius District 17 will hold its Semi-Annual meeting Saturday, May 6, 2023, at 2:00 PM at The Spot Restaurant 1062 Front Street Binghamton, NY. Members attending will have their meals covered by the district. All members are encouraged to attend.

Submitted by Morgan Dendler, Vice-President

DISTRICT 17, SS CYRIL & METHODIUS DISTRICT, NY & PA

DISTRICT 17 PLANS A SPRING EVENT on April 29, 2023, Saints Cyril & Methodius District 17 of Broome County in New York and Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties in Pennsylvania has planned its Premier Celebration of Spring Dinner and Social. The event is set for Saturday, April 29, 2023, at 4:00pm at Lucca Restaurant – 802 South Main St – Taylor, PA. The cost of the 3-course dinner is \$25.00 per person and offers a choice of two entrees – chicken piccata or baked haddock. Seating is limited. Reservations and pre-payment are required. Your check guarantees your reservation. To make reservations or for additional information contact District 17 Fraternal Activities Officer Elizabeth M. Slovenkai at 570-344-3854. Reservations close on Thursday April 20, 2023. Payment must be received by Monday, April 24, 2023. Checks should be made payable to: FCSU District 17 and mailed to Elizabeth M. Slovenkai –

505 Emmett St – Scranton, PA 18505-1016. Hope to see you all there!

**Submitted by Elizabeth M. Slovenkai,
Fraternal Activities Officer**

Matej Hrebenda-Hačavský, a Promoter of Slovak Culture in the 19th Century

On March 10, 1796, the national revivalist, book collector, bookseller and popular writer MATEJ HREBENDA-HAČAVSKÝ was born in Rimavská Píla.

He went down in Slovak history as a leading propagator of Slovak and Czech books. He connected the sale of books entrusted to him by publishers with instruction and national awareness, spreading culture and enlightenment. He convinced people that reading is not only the privilege of the rich and educated.

Matej could not go to school, so he educated himself. He had a visual defect since birth. He liked to read very much, but he could not read at night. He couldn't see. Therefore, when he could not see, he listened. He went from house-to-house, begging people to read to him. He also collected folk songs and fairy tales, which were written down by his assistant during his travels.

With a backpack of books, a stick in his hand and most often dressed in Rimava folk dress - this is how people met him more than a century ago on his wanderings not only in his native region, but also in other capitals and scattered lowland settlements.

He was known by the upper and lower class in larger and little villages. He was a friend of all good people. He walked in darkness and spread light. Matej Hrebenda was a public education worker, a national revivalist, a folk poet and a collector of national songs - a simple person who did not care much about his fame and honors. He lived a difficult life, he was chased by one misfortune after another, but despite his fate, he felt joy and happiness when he could help his nation. Because his father did not have a permanent job, he fell into poverty and stopped taking care of his

children. His mother died when he was ten years old. He began to lose his sight from early childhood, and at the age of fifteen, he could no longer read and write even during the day. Since he could not go to school, he educated himself. At the same time, he earned a modest living. Until the age of 20, he lived a large part of his life as a mendicant, later as a municipal herald in Krokav and Hačava, where he settled in 1829, and finally breathed his last on March 16, 1880.

As the dawn of better times, Matej Hrebenda welcomed the foundation of Matica slovenská (Slovak Cultural Society) and donated 16 volumes of valuable books to it a year after its foundation, and later donated another 10 volumes and several calendars. He had high hopes for the Slovak grammar school in Revúca. He dedicated all his savings and his entire library to it. It contained books that were published in Slovakia and Bohemia in the years 1848-1870. Unfortunately, these gems did not serve the national goal, because after the gymnasium was closed, they the Hungarian state seized them.

Throughout his life, he composed occasional and congratulatory verses - the first as a thirteen-year-old. Later he composed the first verses and rhymed congratulations for occasional anniversaries. His literary firsts were received favorably, so he embarked on folk verse with even greater enthusiasm. His poetry fulfilled a worthy social mission in its time. He also wrote his own biography. He traveled not only throughout Slovakia, but also Prague, Vienna, Pest, and the Low Countries. During his travels, he saved old books from destruction, sent them to schools and federal institutions, or delivered them to leading scholars. In this way, he saved many books and signifi-



cantly contributed to the building of libraries.

The years that have passed since the death of Matej Hrebenda have not diminished his importance. A grateful nation does not forget its great patriot. We can read about his fate in the novels of Vincent Šikula Matej and Ľud Zúbek. A tribute to Matej Hrebenda was also published for the blind. On the occasion of the centenary of his death in 1980, Hrebenda was declared a UNESCO jubilant.

In the middle of Hačava stands a dignified monument, which reminds that:

“... here he worked diligently, he worked for the nation, he added great love, much effort and perseverance, diligence to small forces, and so he accomplished great tasks...”

by Dr. Michael Kopanic

EDWARD J. KOVACS

continued from page 21

expressed in small gestures and there are a million little reasons for which he made a difference in the lives of so many. Always willing to help with a fix-it project or auto repair, Ed was extremely handy. Meticulous by nature, Ed always ensured that household maintenance updates were well documented and attended to and he was a stickler for vehicle emergency preparedness. Ed valued family and close friends, not speaking ill of people, as well as showing up for others to lend a hand of support. He was highly proficient at a much unfavorable, yet frequently needed task of untangling his wife's, daughters', or granddaughters' knotted necklace. He enjoyed watching a friend or family member participate in a sporting event or play and was often known for taking videos to capture the memories of those times.

One of the highlights of Ed's life were his two granddaughters, whom he absolutely cherished. He was an integral part of their upbringing, serving as their regular day-care, uber driver, teacher, and beloved pop-pop. He was a regular at the school Veterans' Day festivities, where he educated their classmates on the Korean War.

Ed's loving and observant granddaughters noted the unique and special way Ed said goodbye. "Bye now," was his phrase of choice, which later became the way they in turn began saying good bye to him. Ed's life was a gift, and he will be deeply missed. We know he is with us. And with that we say, "Bye, for now" – Ed, Dad, and Pop-Pop. We love you. God Bless, and rest in peace.

Visitors paid their respects at Allwood Funeral Home, 660 Allwood Road, Clifton, NJ, and a mass Saturday at St. Philip the Apostle Church in Clifton. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Edward J. Kovacs to www.koreanwarvetememorial.networkforgood.com.

Submitted by Cathy Kovacs

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT continued from page 1

2022 Common Stocks value is \$2,115,136 (0.4% of assets).

The Society is a member of the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) and has used funds available at very favorable interest rates to help generate investment income. The funds acquired through the FHLB are managed by the FCSU Executive Committee. During 2022, FHLB advances were \$20,512,100.

Since 2009, the Society has employed the services of AQS Asset Management, LLC, an investment management firm with experience with fraternal benefit societies, to assist in guiding its investment activity.

There are no known items which would cause the financial results to be inaccurate.

Financial Position:

Our 2022 premium income is broken down as follows:

Life Insurance	\$ 1,484,796
Annuities	<u>53,137,772</u>
Total	\$54,622,568

Investment income for 2022 is broken down as follows.

Investment Income for 2022:

Government Bonds	\$ 367,133
Bonds	22,296,936
Preferred Stock	245,206
Common Stocks/Un-Affiliates	67,492
Mortgage Loans	2,480,130
Real Estate	305,181
Certificate Loans	68,756
Short Term Investments	149,529
Write-ins for Investment Income	<u>0</u>
Total Investment Income	\$ 25,980,363

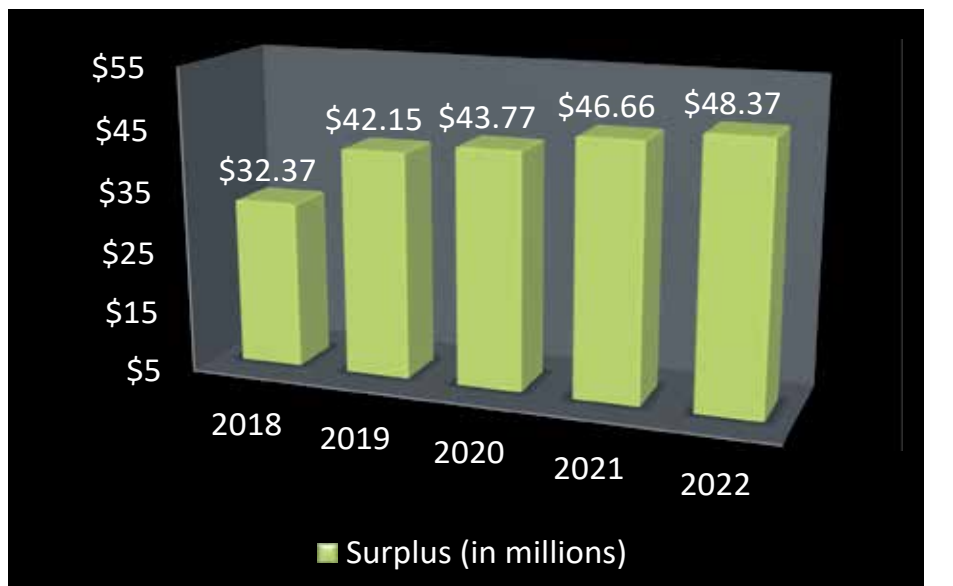
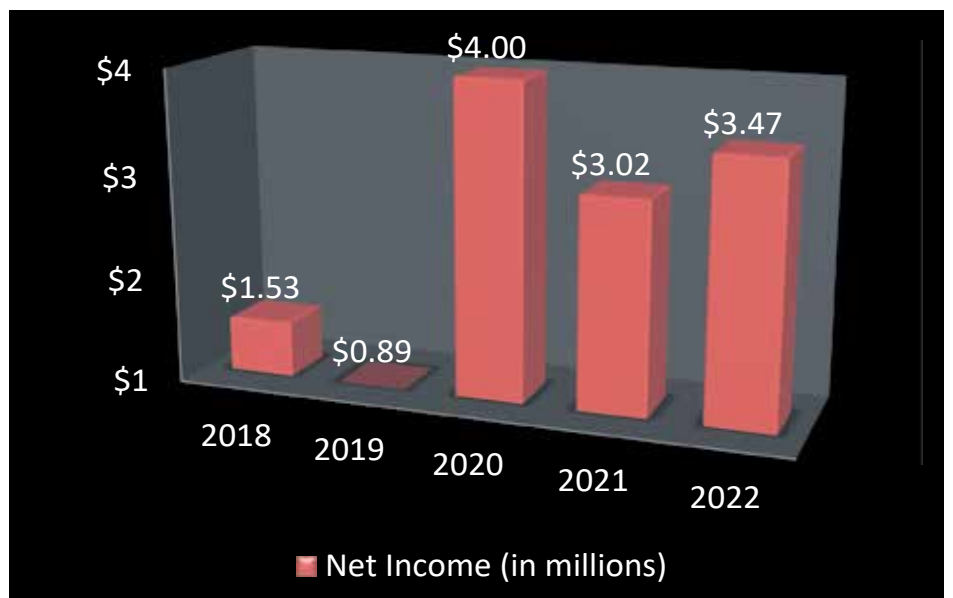
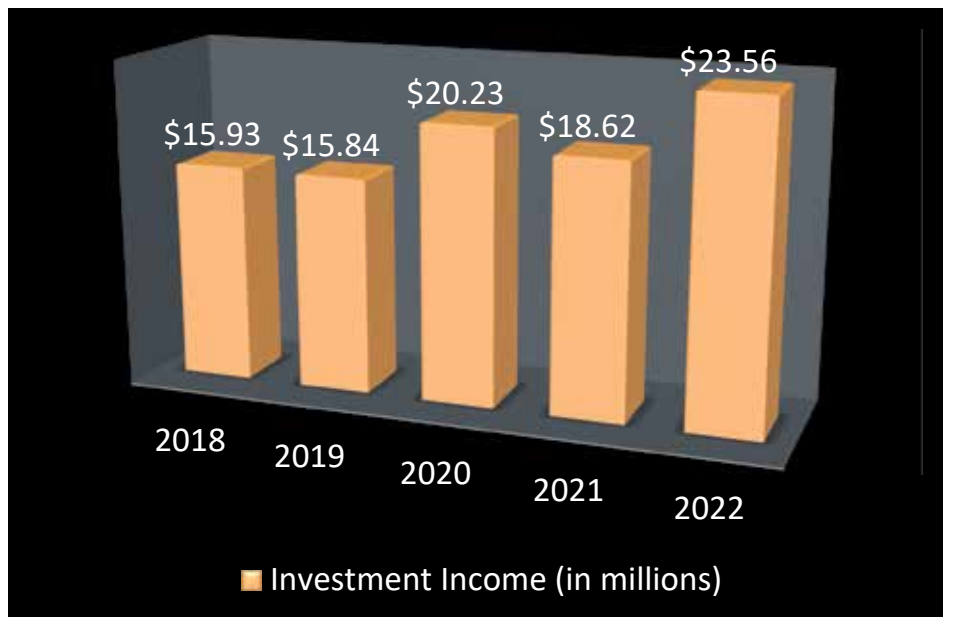
Investment Expenses:

Depreciation on Real Estate and Other Investment Expenses (Investment Taxes, License Fees, etc.)	(2,423,878)
Net Investment Income	\$ 23,556,485

Listed below is a five-year comparison of assets, premium income, investment income, net income and surplus.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Assets	387,320,134	416,524,510	457,648,477	530,937,088	568,716,615
Prem Income	12,068,358	18,944,367	46,423,786	92,488,251	54,622,568
Inv Income*	15,936,994	15,841,382	20,225,043	18,621,567	23,556,485
Net Income	1,534,236	891,852	4,001,829	3,022,244	3,473,008
Surplus	32,374,585	42,148,006	43,771,595	46,657,607	48,374,546

*This includes a one-time dividend of \$3,602,388 from Jednota holding company in 2020.



Financial Position:

Summary: Realized capital gains of \$450,111; plus, operating gains of \$3,473,006; less, unrealized losses of \$1,648,012; less \$547,955 of AVR increase; increased surplus by \$1,716,939.

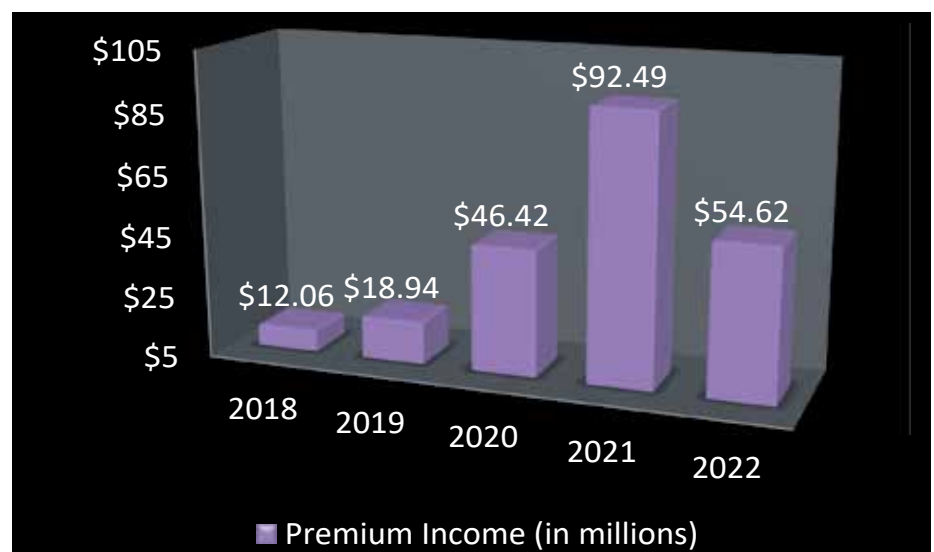
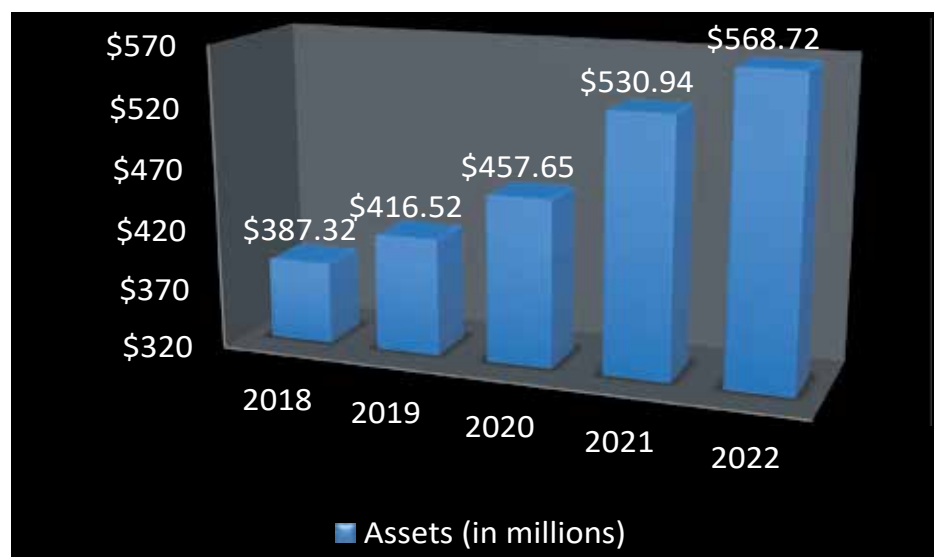
The Society's IMR (Interest Maintenance Reserve) now stands at \$818,116, and the AVR (Asset Valuation Reserve) is at \$4,272,163. The common stock and real estate components of the AVR are at maximum. Overall, the AVR is at 78.5% of total maximum.

The Society's solvency ratio is 109.3%. When the IMR and AVR are combined with surplus, the solvency ratio is 110.5% (consistent with prior years).

The Society experienced total premium income that was 40.9% lower than the previous year. Annuity premium income decreased 41.5% compared to the previous year. Investment income increased 26.5%

Bonds are 86.1% (-2.4%) of the Society's assets, with an average maturity of 11.5 years. The Organization enjoys excellent bond quality with 98.0% of the bonds in the two highest NAIC (National Association of Insurance Commissioners) rating classes. Preferred Stocks make up .7% of invested assets, and Common stock 0.4%, which serve to provide diversity and balance to the portfolio, as well as to provide the benefit of growth potential in the market. Other assets consist of mortgages (6.3%); and all others (6.5%), including cash on hand of \$27,510,198. About 8% of the cash is in Government securities.

continued to page 26



EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT continued from page 25

The most significant changes to liabilities were: policy reserves increased 10.3%; Deposit type accounts increased .1% (lower FHLB loans), IMR decreased 5.7%; AVR increased 14.7%; Funds held as Trustee increased 2.5%. The AVR increased 14.1% partially due to the Unrealized Gains and investment purchases. The AVR is 78.5% of the 2022 maximum. The Real Estate and Common Stock Equity component are at 100.0% of the 2022 maximums. Average lapse ratio is very favorable for the past 5 years. The Society enjoys loyal membership.

The Organization's total admitted assets are \$568,716,615, a 7.1% increase partially due to modest premium income production and higher annuity payments. Five-year asset growth is \$181,396,481 or 46.8%.

Operations:

Life premium income decreased 7.4%, led by a 10.8% decrease in Renewal Premium, and an 8.3% increase in first year premium. Annuity premium income decreased 41.5% and totaled \$53,137,772 versus \$90,884,800. Overall total premium income decreased 40.9%. Sales activity consists of contracted General Agencies, Independent Agents, and Member Agents. The Society is successfully active in recruiting agents and general agents. Investment income was 26.5% higher, in tune with efforts to keep up with the larger premium income. Total income for the year was 29.6% lower.

Total member benefits were 51.4% higher primarily because of a 66.4% increase in annuity benefits paid. There was a 4.7% decrease in interest paid; 13.7% decrease in Death benefits. Life reserve demand was 100.5% higher, and annuity reserve demand was \$46,252,356 (57.8%) lower, consistent with the lower annuity premium production and higher benefit activity. Total Operation Expenses were 6.2% higher. Commissions were 42.8% lower, reflecting the reduction in annuity premium production. General Expenses were 6.2% higher. Management must continue to monitor expenses, and expense levels in relation to income. Dividends to members were \$435,949 which is slightly higher level than the prior year. The Society realized a gain from operations of \$3,473,008, after payment of dividends. Realized capital gains were \$450,111.

Net Income was \$3,923,119. The AVR increased by \$547,955, primarily due to the growth in assets. Another factor was that the NAIC introduced Bond designation factors based on category designations, similar to the factors introduced previously in the AVR on Bonds owned by the Society.

There are no known trends which will cause future operation results to deviate materially.

Cash Flow and Liquidity:

The items which provide liquidity are \$27,510,198 of cash, \$575,278 of common stock, over \$21,000,000 of bonds maturing in less than one year; almost \$55,000,000 of premium income; and over \$23,556,485 of investment income. Expected outgo for benefit payments, commissions, dividends and expenses are about \$40,000,000, if the same amount of premium income and withdrawals are incurred in 2023. The Society enjoyed \$38,335,333 of positive operation cash flow in 2022.

The Society experienced slightly higher operating profits, which is consistent with the large premium increase and 2022 capital losses. Asset growth in 2022 was outstanding. The net investment rate of return, although somewhat affected by the lower interest rates available in 2022, will be at a higher level. The Society markets no other major interest sensitive product other than annuities.

There are no plans for any major expenses or outlays.

Risk Based Capital:

The Risk Based Capital (RBC) calculations indicate that total adjusted capital is \$52,646,709. This does not include the \$818,116 in the IMR. The total for 50% of the calculated RBC was \$6,127,515. The RBC ratio was affected by the inclusion of new bond calculation factors introduced in 2021 into the RBC calculation.

The Society had two Insurance Regulatory Information System ratios outside NAIC designated ranges; change in premium and change in reserving. The items have been covered in this report.

Total security trading activity was \$149,400,425 in 2022 (lower than 2021 activity due to lower premium income).

Insurance in Force:

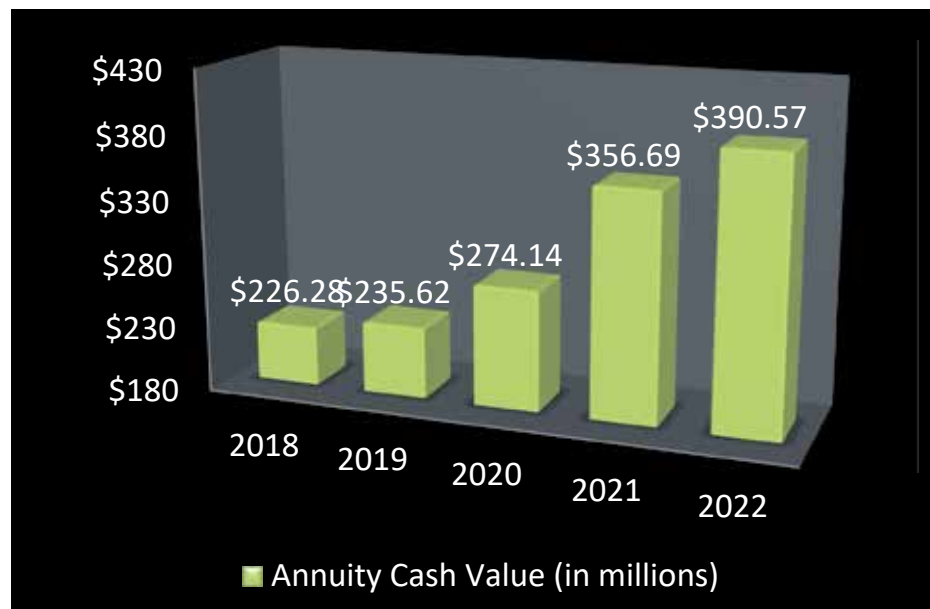
The Society recorded a decrease of \$877,000 in insurance in-force. Insurance in-force has decreased 1.7% since 2018.

Summary:

Our 2022 quarterly and year-end financial statements were compiled and completed on a timely basis and filed with the various states in which we are licensed to do business. We are continually in contact with the regulatory agencies of the various states regarding their requirements, which are constantly changing. We are in compliance with all of the states' and NAIC accounting regulations.

In 2022 we had a loss in insurance membership (death claims, cash withdrawals, expels, etc.) of 822 members compared to a loss of 827 in 2021. We had a decrease in the number of life insurance certificates of 910 in 2022 compared to a loss of 1,037 in 2021.

As of December 31, 2022, the Society had 7,997 annuity certificates. As of December 31, 2022, annuitant membership totals 5,561 annuitant members (this total does not reflect branch agreements). The total cash value of our annuity accounts for 2022 was \$390,570,778 compared to \$356,686,779 in 2021 (9% increase). In just the last 5 years, cash value of our annuity account has increased 42%. In 2018 assets totaled \$226,257,602



The First Catholic Slovak Union's insurance and annuity portfolio contains many products, which suit all insurance and annuity needs. The Membership and Marketing Committee, along with our actuarial firm, Miller & Newberg Inc., and our Financial Consulting Firm, ENDePersis Fraternal Consulting, LLC, continues to explore avenues to improve and enhance our existing products and develop new products.

The Home Office's expanded search for new independent insurance agents to sell our products has been successful. We have over 450 agents with signed contracts with our Society and they are making our products available to their clients. Our agents have access to our agent portal which allows them to view their client's accounts online. Our independent agents receive monthly emails on our annuity rates and insurance products.

We are licensed in 27 states. We are licensed in the following states: Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia, Virginia, and Wisconsin. This will provide an opportunity to market our insurance and annuity products and recruit new independent agents in these states. In 2023 we plan to explore the potential of being licensed in more states.

New insurance premium rates and insurance application forms have been generated to accommodate a newly updated mortality table that is used in the development of insurance products. The updated standard table - the 2017 Commissioners Standard Ordinary (CSO) Table - has been adopted by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) for use beginning in 2020. In 2021 we were required by the NAIC to update all our annuity suitability applications to be in compliance with the states we are licensed in. The new annuity applications are available on our website at www.fcsu.com.

The First Catholic Slovak Union, like other fraternal benefit societies and insurers, is mandated by the state (s) in which it operates to comply with these changes adopted by NAIC. Since the 1940s, the insurance industry by law has been regulated by the states in order to protect policy buyers. State regulations are designed to make sure insurance rates aren't too excessive; and they ensure insurance rates aren't so low that the insurer becomes insolvent and doesn't have the funds to meet their financial obligations to their insured. Insurance regulation also is in place to prevent unfair discrimination against policyholders based on factors unrelated to the risks insured.

In 2023 our marketing firm and Home Office staff will begin working on updating our presentation that will be used at our training seminars offered to branches and districts. These seminars will be designed to educate our branch officers, district officers and recommenders not only about our existing products but also our new products and ways to present them. We believe these seminars will help stimulate the growth of our Society, develop motivation and strengthen the relationship between the Home Office, our branches and recommenders. Our goal is to keep the lines of communication open among our branches, districts, recommenders and the Home Office. We encourage our district officers, branch officers and recommenders to personally discuss their thoughts and ideas with us. We hope to schedule seminars later in 2023. We are also working on developing virtual training seminars that will be available to our branches and districts.

Our highly qualified Home Office staff is available to answer any questions concerning rates, completing applications and any other questions regarding our insurance and annuity products. To better serve our members and to increase efficiency, we currently offer an automatic premium payment service, which enables our members to have their premium payments automatically deducted from their bank accounts. Automatic deposit for annuity checks is also available to our annuity holders. For the convenience of our members, we accept Visa and MasterCard for premium payments, loan payments and newspaper subscriptions. In 2022 we began offering online premium payments and annuity deposits.

Per state regulations, commissions will not be paid to non-licensed recommenders who sell insurance or annuity policies for the First Catholic Slovak Union, effective April 1, 2020. Only licensed agents will receive a commission. A \$25 referral fee will be paid to non-licensed recommenders for each insurance policy issued once underwriting is complete and the first-year premium has been paid. The referral fee applies to the following policies: Whole life or single premium whole life policies with a face amount of \$5,000 or more, Term policies with a face amount of \$25,000* or more excluding JEP policies.

A \$25 referral fee will be paid to non-licensed recommenders for each annuity policy once underwriting is complete and the policy has been issued. The referral fee applies to the fol-

lowing policies: Annuity policies with a deposit of \$2,000 or more.

In 2022 we continued to encourage our current recommenders to obtain their state insurance license. Generally, to obtain a full insurance license a person will be required to take an exam and must take continuing education classes to maintain the license. A full insurance license allows a person to solicit any amount of insurance or annuities with no restrictions. In some states a person may apply for a restricted fraternal license and not be required to take an exam or to take continuing education classes. A restricted fraternal license limits the amount of insurance or annuity products sold. We are offering an incentive plan to our recommenders and any member interested in representing the FCSU as a state licensed insurance agent an opportunity to do so with this incentive plan. The FCSU will pay ½ (one half) of the cost to obtain a life insurance/annuity license in your state. This includes the cost of the required courses and the license fee (the tuition and license fee varies by state). Based on productivity the FCSU will pay for ½ (one half) of the renewal. If you wish to become a licensed agent in your resident state, please contact the Home Office for further information.

Email has become one of the main ways to communicate with our members and as we expand our email base, we are reaching out to more members and providing up to date information. We use email to send out information on branch activities and meetings to our members. We are encouraging our members and officers to use e-mail when corresponding with the Home Office and to provide the Home Office with members email addresses so everyone is kept informed. Please email us at fcsu@fcsu.com.

Our in-house marketing team is working with Visia, a local marketing firm, to modernize our marketing efforts with innovative newspaper ads, promotions, and emails. Visia created 3 videos for the FCSU which include who we are, a product video, and an agent recruitment video. These videos are available on our website.

We have published more information concerning our products in our Jednota, our official organ, to better inform our members about our products. The Home Office worked hard to improve the appearance of our paper by adding color and additional articles to the paper. All articles should be sent to the Home Office or they may be emailed to our Editor Michael Kopanic at editor@gmail.com. In 2022 we continued sending out a monthly newsletter which highlighted our upcoming events, fraternal events, a link to our online Jednota newspaper, products, announcements and Slovak articles with the English translation.

In 2022 we continued to update our website, <https://www.fcsu.com/> so that when you visit it you will not only have the latest information regarding our insurance and annuity products but also information about what is going on in the FCSU (branch meetings, district meetings, etc.). We are encouraging all branches and districts to send information about their activities and branch/district announcements to branch@fcsu.com and district@fcsu.com. We will publish the information on our website and in the Jednota newspaper (English and Slovak sections). We also feature Slovak articles with the English translation. The current issue of Jednota is available on our website as well as issues dating back to 2006. The website contains links to Slovak news agencies, the Slovak Embassy and other interesting topics. We continue to offer insurance quotes on our website for the convenience of all our members.

We encourage members to use our online member portal which we launched in 2021. This allows members to create an account to log in and view all their active life insurance and annuity policies that they own. They can see their personal information, beneficiary information and values of each policy.

We are continually updating our computer system to be more efficient to ensure that it meets and exceeds all state and NAIC requirements. We strive to improve our Home Office operations and have taken every precaution to protect our members' financial information. We have installed anti-virus protection and firewalls along with Windows updates to guard us against any outside threats. We have purchased Cyber Security Insurance for the additional protection of our members. We test our system every year and have audits performed by outside firms.

In 2022 our outside auditors, Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood, conducted a remote audit. Their audits consisted of a complete review of our quarterly and year-end financial statements for period ending December 31, 2021 and our Home Office operations. As a result of these audits our Society received an excellent review. Our internal auditors performed several audits in 2022 and found everything to be in order. We have already scheduled several audits for 2023.

The Ohio Department of Insurance also completed their financial exam audit as required by every insurance company domiciled in the state of Ohio. They found everything to be in order and stated there were no violations of state regulations.

During 2022, we continued to merge inactive branches with active branches. This is an ongoing issue since many of our branch officers are unable to continue to service the members in their branches. In 2023 I am encouraging our Regional Directors to contact the branches in their region. The information we obtain will be used to find out how we can better serve our branches.

Per FCSU bylaws, branches are still required to meet the requirements set forth by our FCSU Convention to qualify for the branch stipend. We encourage our branch officers that if they are unable to perform their duties and cannot find anyone in their branches to take over their duties, to call the Home Office. We will try to merge them with an active branch. For those branches that do not wish to merge, the Home Office can offer you guidelines as to how you can meet the requirements and receive the stipend. Throughout 2022 the requirements for the financial obligations (bylaw section 4.05) has been mailed to all branch officers and published in the Jednota newspaper as a reminder of the expectations for each branch. The Board of Directors strongly recommended that branches hold in person or virtual meetings to help increase attendance. A virtual meeting will count as a meeting towards the branch stipend.

The FCSU has an outstanding scholarship program, which was expanded in 2022 to 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

More information regarding these scholarships will be available on our website and in the Jednota newspaper. Members may contact the Home Office for information concerning the scholarship program.

The Jednota Benevolent Foundation, which is separate from the Society's scholarship program, is available to any person pursuing post-secondary education. To be eligible for this one-time scholarship, the applicant must be of Slovak descent and Catholic faith. At this time, ten non-renewable scholarships in the amount of \$500.00 each are expected to be awarded.

One of the activities that the FCSU supports each year is the March for Life, which is held in Washington, D.C. in January. Members of our Society join with all others who respect the rights of the unborn. We sponsor and support local groups including the Slovak Radio Club, St. Andrew's Abbey, Slovak Catholic Federation, Slovak League and Slovak dance groups. We also donate to many other Slovak organizations along with local non-profit organizations. We will continue to explore possible joint adventures with other fraternal for the future.

As I have stated in the past, the economic success of our Society hinges on four factors: the effective sale and promoting of our insurance and annuity products to increase premium income; the effective management of our investment portfolio to increase our investment income; continuing to control our operating expenses; and also investigate new ways to attract new members. New members are vital to our growth.

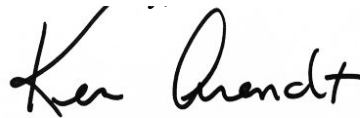
We have three National/Regional Picnics planned for 2023. Frogbridge in Millstone Township, New Jersey on June 24, 2023, Knoebels Amusement Resort in Elysburg, Pennsylvania on July 15, 2023 and Making Memories at Wiegand Lake Park in Novelty, Ohio on July 29, 2023.

As your Executive Secretary, I represented the FCSU on the Board of Directors of the Slovak Catholic Federation and Slovak League. I have attended and represented the Society at fraternal functions not only within our FCSU but also other fraternal societies. I represent the society at various branch and district meetings throughout the year. I also attend many seminars, including the American Fraternal Alliance Seminar, the AQS Symposium, and the ENDePersis Fraternal Consulting Seminars, which are always very informative regarding current insurance trends and pending state and NAIC regulations that might affect the FCSU. I am in constant contact with all state Departments of Insurance to ensure that FCSU is at all times in compliance with state regulations. We continue to exceed all state requirements.

My wife, Theresa, and I appreciate your trust and support as your Executive Secretary and as your newly elected President. I will continue to work and do my very best for our society. I will work towards a stronger society and address all issues with honesty and integrity. We are the First Catholic Slovak Union and I pray for our Society's continued growth. We have outstanding products with competitive rates and we all need to be involved in reaching new members and promoting our society.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of my fellow officers and board members who assisted me throughout the year. A special thank you goes to our highly qualified Home Office staff.

Fraternally,



Kenneth A. Arendt
Former Executive Secretary
President

To view the
Board of Directors reports,
please go to the following link:
[https://www.fcsu.com/about/
executive-messages/](https://www.fcsu.com/about/executive-messages/)

Report of the Vice-President

Dear Reverend Nasta, President Arendt, Executive Officers, and Board of Directors,

I am proud to present my annual report for the year 2022. This report will be divided into two parts, same as my 2021 report. The past year I have had the privilege of serving FCSU members in two roles. The two positions include National Fraternal Activities Director and National Vice President.

I was elected National Fraternal Activities Director at the 51st Quadrennial Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, August 4th-8th, 2018.

Due to the passing of our beloved Vice President, Mr. Harcar, I was elected by the FCSU Board to serve out his remaining term. This election was held at the FCSU Board of Directors meeting on September 17th-18th, 2021, in College Park, Maryland.

It was an honor to serve as the FCSU Vice President for the past 15 ½ months. (I was only receiving one income, while doing both positions, for the past year).

Highlights of National Vice President/Fraternal Activities Director:

After much planning we rolled out a marketing campaign in the 3 terminals of the Cleveland airport. Each terminal was identified by the type of flyer i.e.: family, business person, economy flyer, etc. Next, we identified the type of consumer for each terminal based on the airline, ie: Delta, American, Southwest, Spirit, Frontier, etc. At this time, we have 3 different terminal market strategies based on our target audience. We are in the process of looking at other airports throughout the country to rollout this advertising campaign.

The terminal billboards are updated as often as needed. One of the factors in changing the billboard is the changing of the rates.

Another avenue we began exploring for advertising is thru streaming tv. We have had multiple meetings with a national tv company that specializes in this field. At the present time we are working on the select cities to launch this marketing campaign based on demographics.

Late last year we also started on putting a program together to advertise during baseball games in the Cleveland and Pittsburgh market.

The 2022 year as National Fraternal Activities Director was very exciting with planning the convention with the home office. Lasts years convention was kicked off on the first night with a Monte Carlo Casino night. This included a special guest, an Elvis impersonator. The final night included a trip to Top Golf for much competitive but fun driving range competition.

Other events that were run for Fraternalism included:

March Madness
Kentucky Derby Hat Contest
International Bowling Tournament, Cleveland, OH.
Regional Picnic at Wiegands Lake Park, Novelty, OH.
Regional Picnic at Knoebels Amusement Resort, Elysburg, PA.
(this also included an early morning golf scramble at the resorts golf course)
International Golf Tournament, Treasure Lake, PA.

Loser's Pool
Christmas Coloring Contest
Adult Coloring Contest
Gingerbread House Contest

During the 2022 year there was much planning for the 2023 year. This included:

March Madness contest
International Bowling Tournament
International Golf Tournament
Regional Picnic at Frogbridge, Millstone Twp., N.J.
Regional Picnic at Knoebels Amusement Resort, Elysburg, PA.
Regional Picnic at Wiegands Lake Park, Novelty, OH.

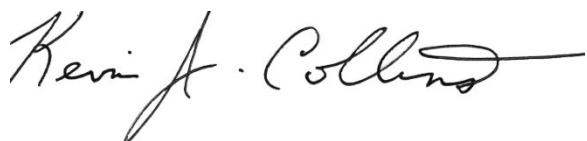
In addition, I also attended seminars held by AQS and DePersis throughout the year. I attended many FCSU District and Branch meetings, picnics, and holiday events throughout the states.

In closing I would like to thank the Board of Directors for electing me as Vice President. It was an honor serving in this position. I truly hope that I made the late Mr. Harcar proud!

As we move onto our new roles, I look forward to working with our new team. I am very honored and privileged to have been selected as the new Executive Secretary at the 2022 convention. These next 4 years will be exciting with the new programs we will be rolling out for the FCSU members. I look forward to seeing everyone and working with everyone in the near future.

Thank you FCSU Members, Board of Directors, and Executive Team for your time and support.

Fraternally Submitted,



Kevin J. Collins
Vice President/Fraternal Activities Director



Kevin Collins
Executive Secretary

Report of the Treasurer

Fr. Nasta, President Arendt, Members of the Executive Committee, and the Board of Directors,

I am pleased to present my report on the FCSU's finances and treasury operations for the year ended December 31, 2022.

Highlights

- Total assets increased by 7% to \$568,717,165 (2021 - \$530,939,088)
- Insurance and annuities sold was \$54,622,568 (2021 - \$92,488,251), down 41%
- Net investment income increased by 26% to \$23,556,485 (2021 - \$18,621,567)
- Net income for the year was \$3,923,119 (2021 - \$2,880,203), up 36%
- Surplus increased by almost 4% to \$48,374,546 (2021 - \$46,657,607)
- Reserves for life contracts increased by almost 8% to \$480,814,261 (2021 - \$446,187,350)
- Interest Maintenance Reserve (or IMR) increased to \$818,116 (2021 - \$142,354)
- Asset Valuation Reserve (or AVR) increased to \$4,272,163 (2021 - \$3,724,208)
- Average investment quality was 6.83 (2021 - 6.99) on the NAIC 20 scale and approximately 1.45 on the NAIC 6 scale (the lower the better) (meaning investment grades between A2 and A3 (the higher the better)).

The FCSU had another strong year, increasing its asset base, due mostly to policy and annuity sales, made possible by offering outstanding competitive products and retaining outside agents to sell them. This has led to sales to persons who would not normally be introduced to the FCSU's products.

With the current circumstances of higher interest rates, during the last 90 days of 2022 our trailing investment rate was approximately 7.32% (meaning we can roll over expiring and maturing investments into new ones yielding an average of 7+%).

IMR and AVR are liability reserves (or buffers if you will) to provide for changes in interest rates or asset valuations. These reserves are required by state regulators, are non-cash items and are added to or amortized accordingly.

Surplus was at 8.5% of assets, comparing favorably to other insurance companies and in some cases, much better.

The FCSU achieved a portfolio earning rate of approximately 4.92% at the end of 2022 (2021 - 4.57%). The FCSU achieved a 2022 average gross product margin of 1.38% (2021 - 1.16%). This margin allows the Society to maintain its current rates it pays on its annuities. Average gross product margin is the portfolio earning rate less the rates it pays out on its annuities and other products. And that margin allowed us to recently increase the rates on new annuities to remain competitive in the market.

As we all know, interest rates have been rather low for the past few years and have risen significantly during the year. The FCSU's investment policy is to invest mainly in interest and income bearing investments (meaning bonds, notes, asset and mortgage-backed securities and other loans) as opposed to common and preferred stock. All the FCSU's investments are in 100% compliance with the policy. Because of rising interest rates, net investment income increased and should continue to increase in the next several months as maturing and new investments will be reinvested at higher rates while keeping within our margin of safety, meaning we don't have to chase yield by investing in lower grade opportunities.

Most of our investments are currently tied up for longer terms. Most of our new investments tend to have shorter times to maturity. The FCSU's investment philosophy is to hold investments until maturity as opposed to active daily buying and selling. This allows us to lock in rates of return, irrespective of what the markets do. However, interest rate changes can cause unrealized gains and losses (another non-cash accounting number), because of changes in market values due to changes in yields, which does not matter so much as again, the FCSU tends to hold to maturity. Over time, unrealized gains or losses disappear at the time of maturity.

We have therefore been able to reinvest our cash at higher rates. Most of the FCSU's investments are in the \$1-3 million range with maturities ranging from 2 to 40 years. We generally look for investments with grades in the A's to high B's, anything lower is generally out of the question. This policy allows for a respectable comparative yield with lower risk.

The 2022 year continued to present challenges for most of us, both in the investment markets and the way we live. The COVID 19 pandemic and rising inflation continued to make life more difficult. Interest rates are rising to attempt to rein in inflation, but with limited success. The unemployment rate remains low. Inflation affects the Society by increasing our costs, however, we have budgeted for that and will not be a problem for us in the short term.

The FCSU's Executive Board and its Board of Directors are faced with constant reinvestment activity and having to make the decisions that move the FCSU forward and in the right direction. To assist with this, the FCSU engages professional asset managers (currently AQS Asset Management) to assist in locating new investment vehicles and sales and redemptions in its portfolio. AQS Asset Management specializes in managing portfolios for other small or fraternal insurance companies. I greatly appreciate their assistance and wise counsel in assisting us to make informed investment decisions.

In addition to these activities, part of my responsibilities are to oversee and make inquiries as to the FCSU's financial systems, controls, record keeping, compliance, risk management, strategic planning and cash management. I have found all of those to be more than satisfactory. I have also enquired as to adequate insurances and records being kept for the FCSU's fixed assets, which I also found to be satisfactory.



John V. Tokarsky
Treasurer

I have attended all Executive and Board Meetings of the Society in person or via teleconferencing as necessary. With restrictions on travel between the United States and Canada now having been lifted, I am now able to get out and about and meeting many of you. And I have been doing just that. In the past year, I have attended the picnic at Wiegand Lake Park in Novelty OH, the fun day at Knoebels Amusement Resort in Elysburg PA, participated in the International Bowling Tournament in Cleveland OH, the International Golf Tournament at Treasure Lake PA and attended District 3's Štedrý Večer anniversary celebration in Greenburg, PA. And I have more recently attended District 4's annual meeting in Uniontown PA.

In addition, I attended an investment symposium presented by our asset manager and the banquet at the convention of another fraternal society. These events allowed me to meet and introduce myself to other fraternalists.

I also continue to be active in my home Branch 785 and District 19 activities, acting as the District's Fraternal Activities Director, Financial Secretary and Treasurer. I am a member of the Branch's local bowling league and have participated in the International Bowling and Golf Tournaments for many years.

It is an honor for me to help lead this great fraternal of ours. Thank you to all the delegates and members who placed your trust in me as your National Treasurer. When I ran for this office at our 2022 Quadrennial Convention, I did so together with a slate of seasoned candidates in a total team approach.

And we are doing just that. A few projects are being started with the intention to improve the Society and your membership in it. You will see some changes and announcements in the months to come.

Any questions on our treasury activities or my report can be directed to me through the Home Office, and I will answer as best I can. Best wishes to everyone in the year to come.

Respectfully and fraternally yours,



John V. Tokarsky
National Treasurer

Report of the National Chaplain

Dear Board of Directors and Members of the FCSU:

It is an honor to be your National Chaplain. I was happy to be present for and to participate in several events in 2022.

I attended all four Board of Directors Meetings that were held either in person or virtually. Each session was opened and closed with a prayer and Mass was offered for the meetings held in person. National President Andrew Rajec extended the invitation for me to be present for the Executive Committee meetings in March and December. I also opened and closed those meetings with prayer.

I participated in the annual fraternal bowling tournament in Cleveland, OH and the golf tournament in DuBois, PA. I offered Mass for the participants at each event. I also celebrated Mass for our members at the two national picnics held during the summer at Wiegand Lake Park in Novelty, OH and Knoebels Amusement Park in Elysburg, PA.

At the suggestion of National Vice President Kevin Collins, I conducted a prayer service virtually on Holy Saturday whereby participating members could have their food for Easter blessed.

For the 52nd Quadrennial convention held in August at the Holiday Inn Cleveland South, Independence, OH, I was responsible for preparing and coordinating all liturgical celebrations. My duties at the convention included beginning and closing each session with prayer. The convention delegates chose me for another term as national chaplain. The Board of Directors met immediately after the convention, and I opened and closed that meeting with a prayer.

In January I attended the funeral service in January for the son of Regional Director Michael Lako. Later in June I went to Mountain Top, PA and concelebrated the Funeral Mass for Regional Director Emeritus Carl Ungvasky.

Regional Director Sabina Sabados invited me to attend the 100th anniversary celebration of Branch 746 in Linden, NJ. Chairman of Auditors Greg Maurer extended the invitation to me to attend the Greensburg District's annual Christmas Vilija. I was more than happy to attend these special events.

By virtue of my position as National Chaplain, I am an ex officio officer of the Slovak Catholic Federation and serve as its First Vice President. My primary responsibility in this role is to coordinate the annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal, which raises funds to support the operating costs of the residence for priests from Slovakia pursuing post-graduate studies in Rome. This Board meets twice a year and I gave an updated report on the Appeal at each meeting.

At the biennial meeting of the Conference of Slovak Clergy in Youngstown, OH in September I was chosen its vice-chair.

Each month I write either a faith formation article or spiritual message for the Jednota newspaper. I also have responded to correspondence sent to me.

May our Lord continue to bless the First Catholic Slovak Union.

Fraternally,
Reverend Thomas A. Nasta, National Chaplain

Minutes Of The Executive Committee Meeting Thursday, February 16, 2023 Teleconference

OPEN MEETING:

President Kenneth A. Arendt opened the meeting at 6:00 PM and asked Executive Secretary Kevin Collins to lead the prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Members attending: Kenneth A. Arendt, National President
Damian Nasta, National Vice President
Kevin J. Collins, Executive Secretary
John Tokarsky, Treasurer
Bradley Matta, Regional Director (by invitation of the President)

ACCEPTANCE OF THE JANUARY MEETING MINUTES:

The Executive Secretary presented the minutes of the January 21, 2023 Executive Committee Meeting. A motion was made by John Tokarsky and seconded by Kevin Collins to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

AQS MANAGEMENT, INC.:

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

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Investment Updates

The Executive Secretary submitted a written report to the Executive Committee Meeting on the investments and transactions with the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB), UBS, MAI Fund, and Clutterbuck Fund. The Committee discussed the report and the Executive Secretary answered the Committee's questions.

Financial Report

The Executive Secretary presented a detailed summary of the Financial Report for the third quarter of 2022 and answered the Committee's questions.

Portfolio Review

The Executive Secretary updated the Committee on the report from our portfolio custodian, Key Bank, found everything in order, and answered the Committee's questions. The President stated he will invite representatives from MAI, UBS and Clutterbuck to attend a future Executive Meeting to review our investment portfolios.

Mortgages and Overdue Mortgages

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

Monthly Disbursements

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

Death Benefits & Accumulations	\$	263,171.00
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations	\$	58,232.00
Matured Endowments & Accumulations	\$	0.00
Trust Fund	\$	0.00

The Executive Secretary also presented the Membership and Annuity Report.

The Committee reviewed the remainder of the disbursements and the Executive Secretary answered all questions.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Treasurer John Tokarsky presented his monthly report to the Executive Committee. Following the report, he answered the Committee's questions.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW:

Annuity Rates:

The Executive Committee decided the annuity rates will remain the same and be reviewed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES REPORT:

Executive Secretary Kevin Collins announced the many events that will be held in 2023. Mr. Collins stated that the bowling tournament will be held May 19-20 in Buffalo, New York, the golf tournament will be held August 19-20 in Canfield, Ohio, and three picnics are planned for Frogbridge in New Jersey, Knoebels Amusement Resort in Pennsylvania and Wiegand Lake Park in Ohio. All the information will be published in the Jednota and posted on our website.

SALES AND MARKETING:

The Home Office Marketing team will be working with Visia, our outside marketing firm, to develop marketing strategies to recruit more independent agents and expand marketing our products with advertising campaigns.

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 John Tokarsky and seconded by Kevin Collins to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Kevin Collins closed the meeting with prayer.

Kenneth A. Arendt
President

Kevin J. Collins
Executive Secretary

Minutes Of The Quarterly Meeting Of The Board Of Directors Of The First Catholic Slovak Union Of The USA And Canada December 10, 2022 Virtual Meeting

OPEN MEETING:

President Andrew Rajec called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked Reverend Thomas Nasta, National Chaplain, to lead the opening prayer and 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: Rev. Thomas Nasta, National Chaplain – present via telephone; Andrew M. Rajec, National President – present; Kevin Collins, National Vice President – present; Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary – present; John Tokarsky, Treasurer – present via telephone; Gregory Maurer, Chairman of Auditors – present via telephone; Sabina Sabados, Regional Director, Region 1 – present via telephone; Damian Nasta, Regional Director, Region 2 – present via telephone; Martha Zavada, Regional Director, Region 3 – present via telephone; James Marmol, Regional Director, Region 4 – present via telephone; Michael Lako, Regional Director, Region 5 – present via telephone; Thomas Ivanec, Regional Director, Region 6 – present via telephone; Timothy Graves, Regional Director, Region 7 – present via telephone; Milos Mitro, Regional Director, Regions 8 – present via telephone; Gary J. Matta, General Counsel – present via telephone.

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 SEPTEMBER 17, 2022:

A motion was made by Rev. Thomas Nasta and seconded by James Marmol to accept the minutes of the Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting held September 17, 2022. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President presented his final report to the Board of Directors then turned the meeting over to Vice President Kevin Collins.

AQS REPORT:

Larry White, representing AQS Asset Management, joined the meeting virtually. 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, Mr. White answered questions from the Board.

Mr. White led a discussion and review of our Investment Policy. Mr. White recommended to change the commercial real estate mortgages from 10% maximum to 15% maximum. A motion was made by Michael Lako and seconded by John Tokarsky to accept this change. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Executive Secretary's Report

The Executive Secretary presented a detailed summary of the Financial Report for the third quarter of 2022. After the Executive Secretary's report, he answered the Board's questions. The Executive Secretary stated that the 2022 third 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 is in order, and the Executive Secretary answered questions from the Board.

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.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Treasurer John Tokarsky gave a detailed update on the investments and answered the Board's questions. Each member of the Board received a copy of the presentation in advance for his or her review.

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 are 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.

PROPOSED BUDGET 2023

The Executive Secretary presented the proposed budget for 2023 and answered the Board's questions. A motion was made by Damian Nasta and seconded by Martha Zavada to accept the budget as presented. Motion carried.

FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES REPORT:

Vice President Kevin Collins announced the many events that will be held in 2023. Mr. Collins stated that the bowling tournament will be held May 19-20 in Buffalo, New York, the golf tournament will be held August 12 – 14 in Canfield, Ohio and three picnics planned for the summer at Frogbridge in New Jersey, Knoebels Amusement Resort in Pennsylvania and Wiegand Lake Park in Ohio. All the information will be published in the Jednota and posted on our website.

DONATION COMMITTEE:

All donation requests were reviewed and acted upon.

PAYMENT OF BILLS ASSOCIATED WITH THE QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING:

A motion was made by Thomas Ivanec and seconded by Timothy Graves to pay all the bills associated with the meeting. Motion carried.

ADJOURN:

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

Reverend Thomas Nasta closed the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec
President

Kenneth A. Arendt
Executive Secretary

Okrúhle životné jubileum prof. M. Marka Stoláríka

continued from page 12

2016 za opätovného predsedu Kanadskej slovenskej ligy, ktorým je dodnes.

Za svoju prácu M. Mark Stolárík dostal viaceré významné ocenenia. V roku 1992 mu Matica slovenská udelila striebornú medailu. V roku 1998 bol ocenený striebornou medailou Ministerstva zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky. V roku 2002 získal medailu prezidenta Slovenskej republiky. Napokon v roku 2013 mu Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí SR udelilo ocenenie Vyslanec dobrej vôle.

M. Mark Stolárík je ženatý s Anne Stolárík, rod. Ivančo z Oshawy a má dvoch synov Andreja a Matúša.

Jubilantovi želáme veľa Božích milostí, zdravia, spokojnosti a krásnych chvíľ strávených v kruhu rodiny a priateľov!

Štefan Kucík

Štefan Kucík is the author of *Podiel amerických Slovákov na autonomistickom hnutí na Slovensku (1918-1938)* [The Role of American Slovaks in the Autonomy Movement in Slovakia (1918-1938)].

The Lifetime Jubilee of Professor M. Mark Stolárík

continued from page 12

was awarded the Silver Medal by the Matica slovenská (The Slovak Cultural Society). In 1998, he was honored with the Silver Medal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic. In 2002, he received the medal of the President of the Slovak Republic. Finally, in 2013, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic bestowed on him the Goodwill Ambassador Award.

M. Mark Stolárík is married to Anne Stolárík (née. Ivancho) of Oshawa and has two sons,

Andrew (Andrej) and Matthew (Matúš).

We wish the jubilarian an abundance of God's graces, health, happiness, and the best of times among family and friends!

Štefan Kucík, is the author of *Podiel amerických Slovákov na autonomistickom hnutí na Slovensku (1918-1938)* [The Role of American Slovaks in the Autonomy Movement in Slovakia (1918-1938)], Matica slovenská, 2011.

Translated by Dr. Michael Kopanic, Jr.

Welcome to the American town of Slovak, Arkansas

By Zuzana Palovic and Deah Partak

Slovak, USA – The US State of Arkansas, which is situated on Quapaw native land, is known for many things: the only diamond-mines in the United States, Bill and Hillary Clinton, Johnny Cash, and college football, to name a few.

However, it also is the location of the only town in America named after Slovakia. Slovak, Arkansas (originally referred to a Slovactown), is an agricultural community founded in 1894 by the Slovak Colonization Company, in response to the poor working conditions in Pennsylvania's coal mines and steel mills.

This was during the Great Migration, when tens of millions of Europeans migrated to North America in search of work and improved living opportunities. Slovakia, then Upper Hungary, was no exception, and approximately one third of the nation travelled by boat to the US to meet the demands of the Industrial Revolution. They were promised streets paved with gold, but what they got was dirty and dangerous labor.

Still, Slovak farmers could earn up to ten times more than what they got in the "Old Country", and so they risked it all to survive.

From 1870 to 1920, some 750,000 Slovaks travelled across the ocean arriving on America's shores, desperate, but also determined. They worked, saved money, and hoped to return back to the homeland. About one third of them eventually did, but the greater majority stayed in North America with many longing to "re-create Slovakia" in the New World.

Community debate ensued and men argued that the fate of the Slovaks in America belonged in the countryside, far-away from the exploitation and wickedness of industrial city life. A "back to the farm" campaign was ignited, 3,000 acres of land were purchased in the prairies of Arkansas, and many families began to journey again to a new home.

Hardship awaited as the pioneers had to tame the vast, open, and wild prairieland that awaited them. The 7-foot-tall prairie grass was prone to fire outbreaks and the soil failed to grow the European crops they were skilled at farming. However, determined to survive and thrive, the families bailed and sold the prairie grass, which provided only minimal stability. Eventually, strife gave way to innovation when rice was seeded into the soil around 1904. The Arkansas clay basin, prone to natural flooding, proved compatible with the crop and a new industry was born.

Today, Arkansas is the largest rice producer in the United States. The state not only feeds America, but it exports its surplus to 50 other markets around the globe.

Fast forward to 2023, Slovak, Arkansas is home to around 80, mostly Slovak families, that are the descendants of those 19th century Slavic pioneers. Located some 50 miles east of Arkansas's capital of Little Rock, the unincorporated Slovak town is a nest of successful family



Najzaujímavejšie fakty o Slovensku, Source, Facebook, 25. august 2013.

farms, and a thriving duck hunting industry. The roughly three-month long duck hunting season generates over \$1 million a day in tourism revenue for the larger town of Stuttgart – which Slovak, is a part of.

But few have heard of this town with a rich history, and even fewer still in Slovakia itself.

The Cold War and the ideological divide that separated Central and Eastern Europe from the United States has a lot to do with it, but also, the lack of engagement between Slovakia, its government, and the American South in general. But Slovakia has much in common with rural America.

Driving across the sparsely populated flatlands of Arkansas, is reminiscent of southern Slovakia and its vast expanses of fertile farmland. The little American town of Slovak, steeped in a strong faith and hard work ethic, shares many similarities to Slovak villages. Here, most people are kin whether it be by blood or marriage, and being a good steward of the land is at the core of being a member of the community. Additionally, the Saints Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church forms the center of all community happenings and has been since the town's beginning over a century ago.

The current and past residents of Slovak, Arkansas make it a point to acknowledge their Slovak heritage, which includes kolaches (sweet cakes) and polka dancing, but also values that form the pillar of rural life: faith, family, and farming. For centuries upon centuries, Slovaks were an agrarian people, and although the magnetisms of city life pull young people into the capital, the vast majority of Slovaks continue to live a fairly traditional life today.

Similar values are embodied in Slovak, Arkansas, a community that does not shy away from celebrating its Slovak Heritage. An honor that is bestowed on their church is a stained-glass windows, vibrantly donning the Slovak Crest. The national insignia of Slovakia weaves its way into the American town's welcome sign, but also in the everyday items the community holds dear – coffee mugs, tee-shirts, and baseball caps, to name a few.

But it is the annual "Heritage Day Festival",



Highway to Slovak, Arkansas (Photo by Iveta Blahútová).



Celebrating Slovak Culture in Slovak, Arkansas.

that is the most colorful display of Slovak pride in the Grand Prairie. Established in 2015, after a descendant of one of the founding families returned from a trip to "the old country" eager to share their memories, the gathering was organized among plentiful of halušky, holubky, and kolaches, and has been going ever since.

This year's Heritage Day Festival (February 25), Slovakia-based non-profit, Global Slovakia joined the festivities to connect this fascinating community with the people of Slovakia with several projects on the horizon. Also in attendance was an independent documentary film crew and archivists there to capture this important part of American and Slovak history for the upcoming film "The Pioneers of Slovak, Arkansas."

Many of the residents who remember the original founding fathers and mothers have

passed away or are elderly. Men and women who still run the farms their great-great-grandparents bought have now reached levels of prosperity their forefathers could only have dreamed of. And yet despite reaching the "American Dream", they did not lose touch with their origins and Slovak roots.

Co-founded by Zuzana Palovic and Gabriela Bereghazyová, Global Slovakia is a Bratislava-based not-for-profit organization that seeks to promote Slovakia on the global stage. It regularly holds webinars on Slovak culture for the FCSU.

The article was first published by Kafkadesk.org on March 23, 2023, and is reprinted with permission of the author. On the web, see: www.tinyurl.com/4atdtrk.

Cardinal Koch in Slovakia for the Anniversary of Anti-Communist Protests



Cardinal Koch speaks at an Ecumenical Concert in Košice (Photo: Vatican News).]

Cardinal Kurt Koch laid a wreath at a service to commemorate the anti-Communist Candle Demonstration, which was organized by Catholic dissidents. Cardinal Kurt Koch was in Slovakia from March 27-30 for the anniversary of the anti-Communist Candle Demonstration.

The protest, organized on 25 March 1988 by Catholic dissident František Mikloško, was the first mass public expression of resistance to Communism in former Czechoslovakia since the 1960s, and was widely seen as a forerunner of the following year's Velvet Revolution, which brought the forty-year-long dictatorship to an end.

During his visit, Cardinal Koch – who is head of the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity – met with religious leaders from Slovakia's various Christian churches, as well as with political figures, including Slovak Prime Minister Eduard Heger.

The Cardinal's first stop in the country was the

eastern city of Košice, where he stayed for a day and a half. While there, he visited Orthodox, Latin Catholic, and Greek Catholic cathedrals, meeting with representatives from each of those Churches. Also on the agenda was a meeting with the mayor of Košice, as well as a visit to the Sanctuary of Klokočov and to the Museum of the Victims of Communism.

On March 29, Cardinal Koch travelled to the city of Prešov, and visited its university. While there, he also met with Metropolitan Ratislav, the Primate of the Czech and Slovak Orthodox Church, and with Prime Minister Eduard Heger. Following these meetings, he traveled to Bratislava, Slovakia's capital.

On March 30, the Cardinal participated in a ceremony for the 35th anniversary of the Candle Demonstration. The ceremony was introduced by Anna Záborská, a Slovak Member of Parliament and the government's religious freedom representative.

Cardinal Koch then attended a meeting of the

Slovak Ecumenical Council and a symposium on Jewish-Christian relations before travelling back to Rome.

The Candle Demonstration

On March 25, 1988, around 5,000 protestors gathered in Hviezdoslav Square in Bratislava with candles in their hands, protesting against the Czechoslovakian government's repression of the Church. The demonstration, which was peaceful, was violently suppressed by the police, who first used water cannons before attacking those gathered with batons and sticks. The protest - which Vatican Radio played a role in organizing - was a significant moment in Slovak history, often credited with influencing the following year's Velvet Revolution.

Source: Tulloch, Joseph, Vatican News, March 29, 2023. tinyurl.com/57357chv

One may read about Cardinal Koch's visit in Slovak at the this site: tinyurl.com/4s7cs74s

ARE YOU PLANNING ON PASSING YOUR ASSETS TO LOVED ONES?



Then consider

WEALTH TRANSFER Wealth management

through our Single Premium Whole Life Policy

Here are the benefits:

- ◆ Avoid income tax
- ◆ Avoid probate
- ◆ Cash value growth

Interested? Call 800.533.6682 today!



FCSU Financial - First Catholic Slovak Union
6611 Rockside Rd, #300, Independence, OH, 44131,
800.533.6682, www.fcsu.com, insurance@fcsu.com

