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Jednota

THE UNION

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Fr. Stephen Furdok
Our Founder

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

Volume 116

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2007

Number 5769

FCSU Reintroduces Senior Promotion Program

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

Initial Program (Current Members)

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

Application

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

New Members

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

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

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

continued on page 4



Department of State photo by Mark Stewart

Swearing-in of Ambassador Obsitnik by Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte and spouse Annemarie holding the bible.

Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik Living The American Dream

By John Karch

It took a thousand years by a long, tortuous road - foreign domination, the discovery of America, the establishment of the U.S., uprisings, revolutions and wars in central and eastern Europe, virtual cultural genocide in Slovakia, emigration of hundreds of thousands of Slovaks, more foreign control, depression, WW II, communist seizure of power, domination, its ultimate downfall, to Slovak independence - but still 15 more years for TASR, the Slovak Press Agency, to headline its story "Novy velvyslanec USA Vincent Obsitnik pricestoval na Slovensko."

On September 7 the White House Office of the Press Secretary announced that the President intended to nominate Vincent Obsitnik as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of

Slovakia (SR), citing his B.A. from the Naval Academy, M.A. from American University, and entrepreneurial experience, and serving as a member of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

Two days later, he was nominated to be the U.S. Ambassador to the SR. The next step was his appearance for a Hearing of Nominees before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations October 18. He read his prepared statement and answered questions asked of him by the Senators.

The Senate confirmed him on October 26.

The last requirement was the Swearing-in of Ambassador Obsitnik. This took place on November 9 at 3:00 P.M. in the Treaty

continued on page 4

Inside

Editorial/Commentary	2
Branch/District Announcements	5, 6
Obituaries	17, 18
Youth	14
FCSU Financial/Minutes	7-10
Slovak	19-20

IMPORTANT NOTICE

RE: 2008 JEDNOTA ISSUE DATES & DEADLINE DATES

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

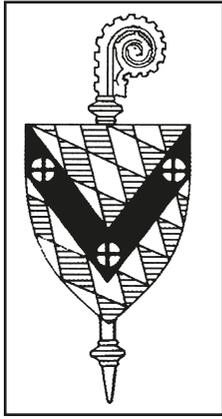
The reasons for the changes are simple. The Jednota is our primary communication to our members. Many of our members hardly know we exist.

We want to communicate with our members.

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

Publication dates on page 3

Insights and Viewpoints



St. Vincent Archabbey — Homilies Fr. Campion P. Gavaler, O.S.B. and Father Demetrius R. Dumm, O.S.B.

January 6, 2008

The Epiphany of the Lord

Gospel Summary

The arrival of wise men from the East at the court of Herod the Great with questions about the reported birth of a royal pretender could very easily have caused some consternation. Herod was very well aware of messianic pretenders and may have considered them a real threat to his power. However, in this gospel story, the symbolic message has completely eclipsed whatever historical kernel may have existed.

We know that Matthew, more than any other evangelist, is aware of the hopes of ancient Israel and he is, therefore, constantly alert to any opportunity to show that Jesus has fulfilled those expectations. Thus, for example, Jesus' lengthy sermon in Chapters Five to Seven is said to have taken place on a mountain, simply because Matthew wants us to recognize Jesus as a successor to Moses, who also proclaimed divine revelation from a mountain top.

In the story of the Magi, Matthew wants us to recognize in Jesus the new Solomon, whose reputation for wisdom was legendary. He too received a visitor from the East, the Queen of Sheba, who was said to have been "breathless" as she marveled at his wisdom and wealth (1 Kings 10:1-13).

This Epiphany story is, therefore, a celebration of the wisdom represented by Jesus—in his person and in his message. It is an unpretentious wisdom, because it is embodied in a tiny child, but it is in fact the only wisdom that will ultimately survive.

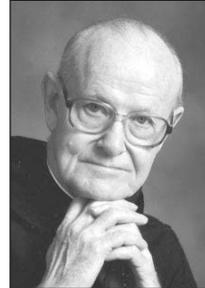
Life implications

The Magi represent secular wisdom, which is validated by success through a clever use of power. In this case, physical power is for controlling others, intelligence is for out-witting them, and wealth or political power is for amassing ever more wealth and influence. This wisdom is the centerpiece of today's dominant secular culture. It is not always a bad thing, but neither should it be dominant.

Jesus offers a radically different kind of wisdom, which declares that all forms of power must be in the service of love and that true success should be measured in terms of who has been liberated by unselfish love from the bondage of fear, guilt, low self-esteem and the like. Our real power is our freedom, and it is very tempting to use that freedom to dominate and control others. Jesus tells us that we should risk using freedom as he did—for loving and freeing and trusting and forgiving.

In fact, I have often wondered whether the first, and perhaps the only, question asked of us at the final judgment will simply be, "Did you let my people go?" The powerful and oppressive Pharaoh was an exemplar of secular wisdom; the God of Exodus and Jesus represent the far superior and enduring wisdom of love and liberation. We need to ask ourselves whether the net result of our actions and attitudes is to make others stronger and happier and more confident. The Wise Men offer gifts to Jesus because they recognize that the humble wisdom of Jesus eclipses all forms of merely human wisdom.

Matthew 2:1-12



Demetrius R. Dumm,
O.S.B.

January 13, 2008

The Baptism of the Lord

Gospel Summary

When Jesus presents himself for baptism, John the Baptist protests that he is not worthy to perform this ritual for one greater than himself. But Jesus insists and John relents. This insistence of Jesus seems to be based upon his desire to join all those in Israel, who are not just renouncing their sinfulness (which Jesus would not need to do), but are also declaring their readiness to receive the Lord in whatever manner he may wish to come. After all, the baptism of Jesus is not just an episode in his private life; it is the invitation of a whole people to accept God's initiative for salvation.

In Matthew's account of Jesus' baptism, only the consequences are actually described and they are very rich in symbolism. The opening of the heavens clears the way for God to re-establish contact with his Chosen People. Thus, the heavens are opened from the other side as God eagerly responds to the presence of his appointed Messiah.

"The Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him" is the signal for a new creation. This same "Spirit" had hovered over the deep in the original creation (Genesis 1:2); and a new beginning was signaled again to Noah when the dove returned to him after the flood (Genesis 8:11). This means that the coming of Jesus also represents a new beginning; in fact, history will never be the same again.

The nature of the new creation is revealed in the final climactic words from heaven. When Jesus is called God's "beloved Son," it means that this new world will be filled with the love of God, radiating from his Son, who will become, in a sense, the embodiment of God's love among us.

Life Implications

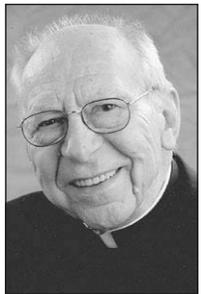
A Christian's baptismal experience is often little more than a report given by others about an event of one's infancy. If this is so, then our first task is to re-discover the meaning of this critical moment in our lives. We need to "claim" our baptism and make it operative in our adult experience. When we do so, we realize that the experience of Jesus belongs to us also.

At our baptism, God's heavenly realm is opened to us and the creative Spirit calls us to a new kind of life. The possibilities of this new existence are contained in the words of the Father, "You are my beloved Son," now understood as spoken to us also. For in our baptism we become children of God and thus join Jesus in the family of God.

This fact has two important consequences. First of all, we are told by God that we are his beloved children and this affirmation, heard throughout our lives, liberates us from the bondage of fear and guilt and doubt. Perhaps the most perfect prayer for Christians is, therefore, to ask God to tell us what we need to hear. His answer to each of us will be, "You are my beloved child." There are no words in this world that we need to hear more than these words!

To the extent that we are liberated by God's love, often expressed in the loving care of others or in the beauty of nature, we will then be able to make this love available to others in kindness and concern for their freedom and happiness. The more we listen to these loving words of God, and the more we respond by being loving persons, the more we will also fulfill our baptism and become one with Jesus in his journey to resurrection joy.

Reflections on Our Christianity Msgr. Edward V. Rosack



Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

End Times Part IV

"We would have you be clear about those who sleep in death, brothers: otherwise you might yield to grief, like those who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, God will bring forth with him from the dead those also who have fallen asleep believing in him. We say to you, as if the Lord himself had said it, that we who live, who survive until his coming, will in no way have an advantage over those who have fallen asleep. No, the Lord himself will come down from heaven at the word of command, at the sound of the archangel's trumpet; and those who have died in Christ will rise first. Then we, the living, the survivors, will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thenceforth we shall be with Lord unceasingly. Console one another with this message." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

"As regards specific times and moments, brothers, we do not need to write to you; you know very well that the day of the Lord is coming like a thief in the night." (1 Thessalonians 5:1-2)

"Look around you! You do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether at dusk, at midnight, when the cock crows, or at early dawn. Do not let him come suddenly and catch you asleep. What I say to you, I say to all: Be on guard!" (Mark 13:35-37)

"As for the exact day or hour, no one knows it, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but the Father only." (Matthew 24:36)

Despite the texts above, there have been many predictions regarding the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Here are some: Shakers- 1792, Millerites-March 21, 1843, Chuck Smith (?) - 1981, Edgar C. Whisenant-1988, Edgar C. Whisenant-1989, 1992, 1995, a Korean group-

continued on page 3

REMINDERS

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

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

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Reflections on Our Christianity

continued from page 2

October 28, 1992, Seven years before 2000-1993, Pastor John Hinkle-June 9, 1994, Stan Johnson-September 12, 1997, Marilyn Agee-May 11, 1998, 06/06/06, and the most recent one-September 2007.

Millennialists say that there will be the "Rapture" which may occur before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, half way through the Second Coming or after the Second Coming. This will be a 1,000 year physical reign of Jesus Christ here on earth during which there will be a total Christianization of all people, an earthly golden age, before the end of the world. The end will come only after this millennium (1,000). The word "rapture" comes from the Latin "raplemur," "caught up." (Koine Greek "harpazo," forcibly snatched away")

There is no such teaching in the Bible nor in the wirings of those who make up tradition.

Tribulation, another Protestant term, refers to Matthew 24:15-28. "...those days will be more filled with anguish than any from the beginning of the world until now or in ages to come," (vs. 21) and the Second Coming will follow. Those Christians who are caught up in the Rapture (who have trusted Jesus Christ as Lord and savior) will escape, be spared the Tribulation.

The Bible does not give any such dispensation.

The world will be destroyed at the Last Judgment. "The heavens and the earth will pass away but my words will not pass." (Matthew 24:35) "...know that I am with you always, until the end of the world." (Matthew 28:20)

"...keep your eyes open, for you know not the day or the hour." (Matthew 25:13)

Then, "What we await are new heavens and a new earth where, according to his promise, the justice of God will reside." (2Peter 3:13)

"Jesus must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration which God spoke of long ago through his holy prophets." (Acts 3:21)

Saint Augustine writes that the properties of the future world will be just as suited to the immortal existence of the transfigured body as were the properties of the corruptible existence to the mortal body.

The end of the world and its renewal brings to a completion the work of Jesus Christ. All the enemies of the Kingdom of God are destroyed.

Revelation 22:3-5 describes this new world, this New Jerusalem, as follows: "The throne of God and the Lamb shall be there, and his servants shall serve him faithfully. They shall see him face to face and bear his name on their foreheads. The night shall be no more. They will need no light from lamps or the sun, for the Lord God shall give them light, and they shall reign forever."

Friend . . .

By Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

"Think where man's glory most begins and ends, and say my glory was I had such friends." (William Butler Yeats)

A friend is a sunbeam that passes through contrary winds, soars over mountains, glides through valleys, to pass through the window without a sound and warm your heart.

A friend is one whose bond with you knows no inconvenience, no hesitation, no reluctance in freeing you from the splinters of your cross. He is one with whom you are comfortable, relaxed and joyful, and willing to share your joys, your sorrows and your anxieties, even as your friend is certain that he can do the same.

Being without a friend is like being in the midst of a crowd, no one of whom acknowledges your presence, sidestepping you as though you were an inanimate object, and moving on without a backward glance. There is not only loneliness but hurt as well.

Treasure your friends. Neglect them not. Take them not for granted. Use them not for personal gain for then you will betray the bond of friendship between you. The bond will rupture and the pain will endure beyond every tomorrow.

As you move in the circle of your life, look for the opportunity to open the door for the stranger you meet there, to assist the person with the package that slips from the hand, just to say good afternoon to one who walks alone in the midst of the crowd. You will warm that person's heart just as your heart was warmed by the sunbeam of your friend.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE FOR 2008

continued from page 1

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

FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION ANNUITY & IRA INTEREST RATES

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2008 THRU MARCH 31, 2008

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

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

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

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

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

1-800-533-6682

Kenneth A. Arendt, National Secretary

FLEXIBLE PREMIUM DEFERRED ANNUITY FLEXIBLE PREMIUM DEFERRED ANNUITY/IRA

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

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

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

Features of the Flexible Premium Deferred Annuity include:

- The FCSU guarantees your deposits will accumulate interest at no less than 3.0%.
- Your annuity continues to accumulate interest after you have stopped contributing and have begun to receive retirement income. The interest rate you receive on your annuity after settlement will never be less than 3.0%.
- Death Benefit-If you die prior to settlement, your beneficiary receives the full cash value of the annuity. If you die while receiving retirement benefits, the value of your remaining guaranteed benefits will be paid to your beneficiary.
- Withdrawal Privileges-Since annuities are meant to be long-term investments for providing retirement funds, funds withdrawn during the first six years of your contract are subject to an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge. You may withdraw 10% of your 'beginning of the year balance' with no FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge.
- Your interest will be added to your account. You may, however, elect to have your interest paid directly to you on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually basis. This is called an Interest Option and the interest rate is slightly lower than if you left your interest to accumulate.
- Even though you may not incur an FCSU Early Withdrawal Charge, withdrawals before age 59 ½ may be subject to a federal tax penalty.
- Tax on the interest earned is deferred until the annuity funds are drawn.
- Also available in a Traditional IRA or Roth IRA (subject to IRA Guidelines)

2008 International Tournaments

**Bowling
April 25-27**

Wedgewood Lanes ~ Youngstown, Ohio

**Golf
July 12-13**

Tam O'Shanter ~ Canton, Ohio

Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik Living The American Dream

continued from page 1

Room of the Department of State and was performed by the Deputy Secretary of State, John D. Negroponte, before invited family members, friends, and colleagues. The Swearing-in was the traditional, solemn ceremony, the Bible held by spouse Annemarie with his left hand on the Bible and his right upright as he voiced the oath.

With his wife, Annemarie, the Ambassador left the U.S. on December 5 and arrived in Bratislava the following day. They were met at the Austrian-Slovak border by Diana Strofova, State Secretary (Deputy) of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a U.S. Embassy Officer. The Ambassador thanked all for the "warm welcome" and said he is "excited" to be in Bratislava. On December 12, Slovak President Ivan Gasparovic received the "designated" Ambassador and Annemarie.

East Slovak Roots

The Ambassador's grandparents immigrated to western Pennsylvania in the late 1890s where his father was born in 1901. The following year, his parents returned to Slovakia where he grew up and married. "My parents (Michael and Suzanna) then decided," the Ambassador told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "that America was the country in which they wanted to live and raise their family and, in March 1938, two months after I was born, we immigrated to the United States. I give great credit to



Photo courtesy of Suzanna Obsitnik

Ambassador and Annemarie surrounded by sons from L-R: Vince, Jim, Steve and Paul.

my parents for the wisdom of this decision, especially at a time of approaching crisis and war in Europe." His birthplace was Moravany, near Michalovce.

The father, mother, and Vincent settled in Nanty Glo, PA, where his mother's sister resided. His father became a coal miner,

near Johnstown, until 1946 when, wanting to work above ground, the family moved to Linden, N.J. where both father and mother worked in a rug factory. The U.S. was still in a recession.

Education and Career

Vincent attended Linden High School, graduating with honors in 1955, despite working after school to help the family. He participated in track and played soccer. During 1955-59, Vincent attended the U.S. Naval Academy, graduating with honors. As Midshipman, he studied Russian and was President of the Russian Club as well as the Combined Language Club. He was awarded an Interpreter in Russian Certificate.

The new Ensign served five years in the Navy, first on a Destroyer in Norfolk, VA, then on a Submarine, out of New London, Connecticut. He was discharged as Lieutenant. In 1969 he received an M.B.A. from American University.

After his military service, he joined IBM, first in their Federal Systems Division, moving on to executive positions in the IBM World Trade Corporation, becoming President of Systems Development Division of UNISYS/LORAL Corporations, with responsibilities for Europe, Latin America and Asia. He became Vice President of LITTON/PRC INC., directing business expansion into European and Latin American markets. With this background, he started and became President of International Investments Inc., a consulting company working in the areas of joint ventures, technology licensing and privatization projects between the U.S. and Central Europe.

In 2001, he was appointed by President George W. Bush to the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, serving until July 2006. The purpose of the Commission is to be concerned about the

cultural heritage of Americans from Central and Eastern Europe. Through his leadership, two of the most endangered Greek Catholic wooden churches of Slovakia from the 17th and 18th century—St. Nicholas and St. Cosmos and Damian—have been restored.

He was also appointed by President Bush to a Presidential delegation in 2005 for the Austrian State Treaty Anniversary. The following year, he was appointed by the President to the U.S. Delegation to commemorate the 65th Anniversary of the Tragedy in Babyn Yar in the Ukraine.

Ambassador's Family

The future Ambassador met Annemarie when she was a student at the Connecticut College for Women. They married in September 1961 at St. George Byzantine Catholic Church in Linden. She taught in a primary school for a year, then devoted her full time to raising their four sons.

I am grateful to their eldest son, Vince (Vincent M.), for responding to my request for information about them and the Ambassador's two brothers and a sister:

Vincent M. (44), Veterinarian, earned his B.A. from the Univ. of Pennsylvania and D.V.M. from Tufts University. He owns two animal clinics, resides in Peach City, GA and is married with 5 children.

Paul (43), Marketing, Technology Company. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and received a M.B.A. from Harvard. He resides in Annapolis, MD, and is married with three children.

Stephen (40), Consultant, is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and received his M.B.A. from the Wharton School. He resides in Westport, CT and is married with two children.

James (37), Marketing, Technology Co. He earned his B.A. at Princeton Univ. and M.B.A. from the Wharton School. He resides in Moraga, CA, and is married with two children.

The Ambassador's two brothers and sister are: Michael, a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, owns a Hospital Supply Company, resides in Okemos, MI, and is married with 3 children; Thomas is an Investment Consultant who graduated from Rutgers Univ., resides in Zionsville, IN, and is married with two children; sister Mary Ann Cizmar resides in Essex Fells, N.J. and is married with four children.

According to Vince M. "All siblings and sons are Byzantine Catholics. My father and I have become very interested in genealogy and have traced our family roots back many generations to Slovakia. Tradition is very important to my parents and we have maintained many of the Slovak traditions in our family, especially during holidays. My father has maintained close contact with his relatives in Slovakia throughout his lifetime and has visited them regularly in the past. Our families all look forward to visiting them in Bratislava and to visiting our family in Eastern Slovakia." The Ambassador, his wife, and son Vincent are members of the FCSU.

FCSU Reintroduces Senior Promotion Program

continued from page 1

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

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

Introducing Genealogist Michael Razuš

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

For more information, contact Mgr. Michael Razuš, Magurska 5, 08001 Presov, Slovak Republic, E-mail: michal.razuš@zoznam.sk.

BRANCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Branch 2 — PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael the Archangel, Branch 2, will hold a Family Holiday Get Together on Sunday, January 6, 2008. All members are encouraged to make plans to attend. It will be free to members and will include refreshments and entertainment. More details will be sent to your homes or you may contact Recording Secretary Regina Ondrejco at 412/421-1204 for more information.

Hope to see many of you on Sunday, January 6, 2008.

Regina Ondrejco, Secretary

Branch 3P — HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 6P, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 30, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in Saint Joseph Church cafeteria, North Laurel Street, Hazleton, Pennsylvania. The election of officers for 2008 will be conducted followed by a short update on local branch activities. New ideas for branch activities will be entertained and any changes of address or beneficiaries can be submitted at this meeting. All members are encouraged to attend and get involved.

Mike Koval, Financial Secretary

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

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

Joe Obester, Financial Secretary

Branch 10 — OLYPHANT, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 10, held its Annual Meeting, Audit, and Election of Officers on Sunday, November 25, 2007, at the home of the Recording Secretary William A. Nalevanko, 405 North River Street, Olyphant, Pennsylvania. The following officers were elected to serve in 2008: Daniel Spegar, President; Gaza Mika, Vice President; William Spegar, Secretary-Treasurer; William A. Nalevanko, Recording Secretary; and Michael Antonik and Florence M. Nalevanko, Auditors. Donations in the amount of \$8,750 were approved for distribution in 2008 to the following: Michael Bosak Society, Slovakia; LaSalle Academy, Jessup, PA; Holy Ghost Church and the Lackawanna County Health Care Center, Olyphant; Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius Retirement Fund and Jankola Library and Archives, Danville, PA; Valley Community Library, Peckville, PA; Slovak Catholic Federation, Hazleton, PA; Alison Butash Scholarship, and St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen, Scranton.

Arrangements are being made for the annual Communion Breakfast on Sunday, June 22, 2008 following the 8:00 a.m. Mass in Holy Ghost Church. This Mass will be offered for all the living and deceased members of the Branch.

Finally, the officers and members of Branch 10 wish to extend best wishes to

everyone for a Happy and Holy Christmas Season and a Joyful New Year.

**William A. Nalevanko
Recording Secretary**

Branch 24 — CLEVELAND, OHIO

The St. Andrew Svorad Society, Branch 24, will hold a meeting on Sunday, January 20, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. at the Karlin Club, 5304 Fleet Avenue. On the agenda will be the election of officers and a discussion of the Senior Promotion Program. Refreshments will be served following the meeting.

Bob Kopco, President

Branch 35 — BRADDOCK, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael Slovak Society, Branch 35, will hold its Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 5, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. at the residence of Joseph Yuros, 15 Sumner Avenue, Forest Hills, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be officers' reports, a discussion of insurance marketing, and the election of officers for the new year. All members are urged to attend.

Joseph Yuros, Financial Secretary

Branch 38 — DUQUESNE, PENNSYLVANIA

The Holy Trinity Society, Branch 38, will hold its Annual Meeting on Friday evening, January 4, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of the Secretary/Treasurer, 3409 Eisenhower Court, White Oak, Pennsylvania. On the agenda will be officers' reports, financial reports, election of officers, and a discussion of branch activities for the year 2008. All members are urged to attend.

The officers of Branch 38 wish all of our members a Blessed and Healthy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Florence K. Matta, Secretary/Treasurer

Branch 40 — STREATOR, ILLINOIS

The St. Clement Society, Branch 40, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 16, 2007, at 3:00 p.m. at Chipper's Grill, 1733 North Bloomington Street, Streator, Illinois. If you plan to attend, please call Maria Harcar at 815/672-6682 by Friday, December 14, 2006.

Maria M. Harcar, Financial Secretary

Branch 45 — NEW YORK CITY

The St. Matthew the Evangelist Society, Branch 45, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 20, 2008, at 12:30 p.m. after the Slovak Mass at St. John Nepomucene Church, 66th Street and First Avenue, New York City. We urge all members to attend this meeting.

Maria Jurasi, Financial Secretary

Branch 228 — LORAIN, OHIO

The St. John the Baptist Society/Holy Trinity Society, Branch 228, held a meeting on Monday, December 17, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. at the American Slovak Club, 30th and Broadway, Lorain, Ohio. The annual election of officers and the bylaws review were held at this meeting. Three representatives were also selected to serve on the American Slovak Club Board of Directors.

Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month except during the months of January, February, July and August when no meetings are held. All meetings begin

at 7:00 p.m. and are held at the American Slovak Club.

There is a lot of activity going on in both the FCSU and the Slovak Club so come and join in the fun. Visit the websites for the FCSU at fcsu.com and the Slovak Club at americanslovakclub.com for an update. See you at the Club! Happy Holidays to all!

Thomas B. Zuffa, Recording Secretary

Branch 266 — HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA

The SS. Peter and Paul Society, Branch 226, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 30, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. in Saint Joseph Church cafeteria, 604 North Laurel Street, Hazleton, Pennsylvania. The election of officers for 2008 will take place. There will also be a discussion of branch activities for next year. Please spread the word so more of our members will attend and become more involved in branch activities. Please plan to attend.

Richard Lazar, Financial Secretary

Branch 278 — MIDDLETOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Peter Society, Branch 278, will hold a meeting on Monday, January 21, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at Seven Sorrows Church, 280 North Race Street, Middletown, Pennsylvania. All members are invited to attend. On the agenda will be a financial report, a discussion of activities for the coming year, and the election of officers.

Andrew Trojcek, President

Branch 313 — CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The St. John the Baptist Society, Branch 313, will hold its Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 5, 2008, at 11:00 a.m. at the Mother of Sorrows Convent, 5900 West 147th Street, Oak Forest, Illinois. On the agenda will be the election of officers and a discussion on ways to find new membership for the branch.

We are trying to locate the addresses for the following members: Kenneth W. Michalik, Charles Morince, Phyllis Morince, Barbara E. Perkins, Kimberly Rozema, Thaddeus Rozema, Robert Ruby, Josephine Ruzon, Angela Schandor, Lorna Talaby, and Sandra Tatkus. If you have an address or telephone number for any of these members please call Joseph Bugel at 708/349-7873.

**Joseph M. Bugel,
President-Financial Secretary**

Branch 320 — STOCKDALE, PENNSYLVANIA

The officers of the SS. Peter and Paul Society, Branch 320, wish to extend to all the members and their families our best wishes for a Healthy and Happy New Year.

Mary Anne Higginbotham, President

Branch 362 — BARTON, OHIO

Our Lady of Angel Society, Branch 362, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 13, 2008, at 12:00 noon at the home of John Wodarczyk, 70820 Crescent Road., St. Clairsville, Ohio. The election of officers will take place. All members are urged to attend.

John J. Wodarczyk, President

Branch 493 — CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The officer of the Assumption of the B.V.M. Society, Branch 493, would like to wish all our members a Vesele Vianoce (Merry

Christmas) and Stastlivy Novy Rok (Happy New Year). We welcome our three new members: Nancy Lutz, Don Cummings, and Kaitlyn Colby. Our junior members, under age 18, received a Christmas gift card.

Best wishes for the Year 2008!

**Robert Tapak Magruder,
Recording Secretary;
Edward Kedzuch, President;
Emil Rusinak, Vice President; and
Valerie Vesely, Recording Secretary**

Branch 565 — DONORA, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Dominic Society, Branch 565, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 30, 2007, at 1:00 p.m. at 522 Second Street, Donora, Pennsylvania. The election of officers will take place. Important business will be discussed. Refreshments will be served. All members are urged to attend.

Dorothy Rudinec, Financial Secretary

Branch 628 — HOMESTEAD, PENNSYLVANIA

The St. Michael the Archangel Society, Branch 628, will be held on Sunday, December 30, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. at 821 Laura Avenue, West Mifflin, Pennsylvania. The agenda will include a review of branch activities and the election of new officers for the New Year.

Sylvia J. Vehec, Recording Secretary

Branch 748 — NILES, MICHIGAN

The St. Nicholas Society, Branch 748, held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 16, 2007 at 807 Clay Street, Niles, Michigan. The election of officers took place at this meeting. Also on the agenda was a discussion of other business.

Henry Petruska, Secretary-Treasurer

Branch 762 — WHITING, INDIANA

The St. Joseph Society, Branch 762, will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 13, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. at the home of John Vrliek, 1234 121st Street, Whiting, Indiana.

John J. Vrliek, Financial Secretary

Branch 785 — TORONTO, ONTARIO

The St. John Society, Branch 785, will hold a joint Annual Meeting with the Msgr. Michael Shuba District on Sunday, January 13, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church Hall, Mississauga, Ontario. The election of officers will take place. All members are urged to attend.

Milos Mitro, Regional Director

A Prayer for the New Year

Give us through the coming year
QUIETNESS of MIND
Teach us to be PATIENT
And always to be KIND,
Give us REASSURANCE
When everything goes wrong
So our FAITH remains unfaltering
And our HOPE and COURAGE strong
And show us that in QUIETNESS
We can feel Your Presence near
Filling us with JOY and PEACE
Throughout the coming year.

POSEL

Color Your Day

Msgr. Edward V. Rosack

You've just awakened from a very good night's sleep and you stretch and you say, "That was great!" The morning sun brightens and warms your bedroom and you enjoy it so much. You go out to pick up the newspaper and you feel the morning breeze just before it brushes your cheek teasingly, and emotionally you are on the top of the world. What a great day is yours!

Then, as the sun rises above you, the gray clouds of irritation begin to flow over you brought on by some electrical/mechanical failure in the house, by a nauseating visit from some gloom and doom personality, by the cancellation of an event which you were really looking forward to attending.

The great day of yours is gone! The gray clouds were so oppressive that you cannot shake them and your day becomes a long one and nothing before you brings you any relief.

Wait!

The sun is still shining, the breeze continues to tease, and there's more to the day than the cancellation.

Stand up straight. Brush away the clouds that have irritated you and look, instead, to the opportunities yet before you, the opportunities to bring joy and happiness- and a smile- to those with whom you will share this day.

Color your day. Take not down yourself or others by your dark attitude. Close not your eyelids to the sun nor your face to the touch of mother nature brushing against your cheek.

Irritation in some form or another is a part of life and you may very well have been the pebble in someone's shoe as another journeyed through life. Don't limp beyond the pain of the irritation.

Color your day with words of encouragement for others, with a smile of recognition for the lonely, with a helping hand as one struggles to hold open the door and get through it with an armload of packages, with patience in the presence of a handicapped person, with courtesy in responding to telephone calls and to waitresses who struggle to serve you.

View others not as your slaves, nor as those beneath your sophistication, nor as nameless persons who were born into your service.

Act in these ways and you will bring a rainbow of colors to the hearts of all those whom you pass through the day and importantly to your own heart as well.

DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

REV. JOHN J. SPITKOVSKY DISTRICT — Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin

The Officers of the Rev. John J. Spitkovsky District would like to wish all our members a Vesele Vianoce (Merry Christmas) and a Stastlivo Novy Rok (Happy New Year). A big thank you to all our proposers who have signed up new insurance and annuity members in 2007. You are the ones who help keep our Society alive!

Best wishes for the Year 2008!

President John Jurcenko, Vice President Barb Fayta, Financial Secretary/Treasurer Art Fayta, Recording Secretary Robert Tapak Magruder, Spiritual Advisor Dorothy Jurcenko, Sgt. at Arms Mark Davis, Chairman of Auditors Joe Bugel, Auditor Shirley Uram, Auditor John Vrlík, Director of Fraternal Activities George Kelchak, Region VII Director Rudy Glogovsky, Vice President Andrew Harcar, and National President Andrew Rajec

MSGR. ANDREW HLINKA DISTRICT — Monongahela Valley, Pennsylvania

President Dorothy Petrus and other officers of the Msgr. Andrew Hlinka District wish their brothers and sisters of the First Catholic Slovak Union a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with good health, prosperity and much happiness.

Frances Tarquinio, Secretary

MSGR. MICHAEL SHUBA DISTRICT — Toronto, Ontario

The Msgr. Michael Shuba District will hold a joint Annual Meeting with Branch 785 on Sunday, January 13, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church Hall, Mississauga, Ontario. The election of officers will take place. All members are encouraged to attend.

Milos Mitro, Regional Director

REV. JOSEPH L. KOSTIK DISTRICT — Youngstown, Ohio

The Rev. Joseph L. Kostik District will hold a meeting on Tuesday, January 15, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Matthias Church Rectory. On the agenda will be the induction of the officers. There will also be a discussion of the District agenda for the year. The District is sponsoring the 2008 Jednota International Bowling Tournament to be held April 25-27, 2008, at Wedgewood Lanes.

Carlie Peshek, President

From the Desk of the Executive Secretary

HOLIDAY HOURS

The Home Office will be closed on the following days during the holidays:

New Years Eve ~ December 31, 2007

New Years Day ~ January 1, 2008



John Emerick with family. Front row L-R: Frank Pipak (brother-in-law), Sophie Pipak (sister), John Emerick, and Josephine Curci (sister). Back row are nephews John Pipak and Tom Pipak.

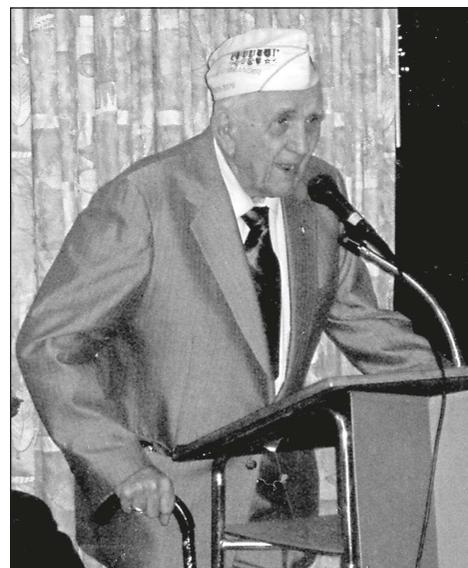
World War II Veteran and Death March Survivor John Emerick Guest of Honor at Vilija Dinner

At the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century our Slovak ancestors came to these shores. They came with their hats in their hands and all they asked was to be given the opportunity to be good American citizens. They worked hard and never asked for handouts. They built churches, schools and fraternal societies. When they joined the Jednota two of the conditions for membership included becoming an American citizen and to learn the English language

as soon as possible. Our ancestors loved America and to show their love they sent their sons and daughters to war to defend their new homeland. After the war, their sons and daughters served as peacekeepers. Many of these soldiers never came back from war and many others suffered unspeakable cruelty. The war against Japan was unusually horrible because the Japanese were so fanatical that they chose to become kamikaze troops. The Japanese believed it was an honor to die for the Emperor. There are many books written about World War II and the most tragic treatment was the battle for Bataan and Corregidor and the Bataan Death March.

It is with pride that I share with you information from our member of Branch 199 in United, Pennsylvania who served and survived this ordeal. At 90 years of age, John Emerick, a Slovak practicing Catholic, is living proof that God exist!

Mr. John Emerick of Finleyville, Pennsylvania, was the special guest of honor at the Annual George Onda District Vilija Dinner on Sunday, December 2, 2007, held at the Bishop Connare Center in Greensburg, Pennsylvania.



John Emerick speaks to the dinner attendees.

Mr. Emerick is a World War II veteran and survivor of the Bataan and Corregidor Death March. When John enlisted in the military on January 19, 1940 he weighed 180 pounds. John was captured and taken prisoner on April 9, 1942. At one point, his parents were told that he was killed in action. However, fourteen months later he was reported missing in action. John survived unspeakable cruelty during his many months of captivity. John's Liberation Day was September 18, 1945. At the time of his release he weighed 99 pounds.

John came back home to Norvelt, Pennsylvania and married Theresa Urban in 1945. John and Theresa were married 58 years when she passed away.

John's medals include three (3) bronze stars, a purple heart, three (3) presidential

continued on page 7

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2007

HOME OFFICE ~ INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

OPEN

President Andrew M. Rajec called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

ROLL CALL

Members Attending: Andrew M. Rajec, President
Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., Vice President
Kenneth A. Arendt, Executive Secretary
George F. Matta, Treasurer

ACCEPTANCE OF OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

The Executive Secretary presented the minutes of the October 2007 Executive Committee Meeting. A motion was made by Andrew Harcar and seconded by Kenneth Arendt to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

SALES

The Vice President led a discussion regarding the Monthly Sales Report and reviewed the District Sales Production Report and Individual Agents Sales Report and answered the Committee's questions.

The Vice President also reviewed our new Senior Promotion Program. He stated that a notice was sent to all recommenders and Branches to give them first the opportunity to contact members within their Branches. The program started on October 1, 2007 and as of November 1st, 2007 will be published in our newspaper and placed on our website. This promotion will run till end of March 2008.

The Vice President led a discussion regarding interviewing different companies who can supply us with physical exams and blood work for our potential members. This will be discussed at our January meeting.

The Vice President also gave a brief summary about the Seminar held in Boardman, Ohio. It was suggested to make personal contact with the attendees and ask for some feedback about this seminar.

The Executive Committee also discussed the possibility of offering a Postmortem Fraternal Benefit on all new insurance policies sold. This will be discussed in future as more information will be obtained.

The Vice President also informed the Committee that we will continue to send some kind of advertisement with each Branch mailing.

A motion was made by Kenneth Arendt and seconded by George Matta to accept the Vice President's report as presented. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S STOCK AND BOND REPORT

Treasurer George Matta gave a written report summarizing the investments for the month of October 2007 and answered the questions of the Executive Committee.

The Treasurer also reported that he is looking into possibility of foreign investments. He will update as more information becomes available. The Treasurer also presented the current offers for review by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee also reviewed the Quarterly Statement presented by our custodian Merrill Lynch.

A motion was made by Kenneth Arendt and seconded by Andrew Harcar to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Branch Mergers and Individual Transfers

The President reviewed our current merger policy and answered the Executive Board's questions. He also updated us about sending the newspaper to every member's household starting in January 2008.

MORTGAGES AND OVERDUE MORTGAGES

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

MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS

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

DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2007

Death Benefits & Accumulations	\$283,694.85
Cash Withdrawals & Accumulations	\$ 32,576.71
Matured Endowments & Accumulations	-0-
Trust Fund	-0-

The Executive Secretary also presented the Membership and Annuity Report. The Executive Committee reviewed the rest of the disbursements and the Executive Secretary answered their questions. A motion was made by Andrew Harcar and seconded by George

Matta to accept the Executive Secretary's Report as presented. Motion carried.

Digital Scanning

The Executive Secretary led a discussion that the Home Office developed an in-house processing program (digital scanning system) that is working very well. The Executive Secretary further stated that we have a contract with an outside company to convert the microfilm to CD discs.

A motion was made by Andrew Harcar and seconded by George Matta to proceed with the new digital scanning process. Motion carried.

FRATERNAL ACTIVITIES

The President stated that our Fraternal Activities Director had a meeting with a Fraternal Activities Director of another organization regarding joint events in 2008. He will update the Executive Committee as more information becomes available.

MISCELLANEOUS

The President informed the Executive Committee meeting that he will send a letter to Branches and will have an ad to be printed in our newspaper about the project with newspaper being sent to every member's household to improve our marketing strategy. He stated that he was invited to attend a mass to be served in memory of Dr. Jozef Tiso at the St. Andrew's Abbey on December 1, 2007. He said he would attend the mass celebration.

The President also updated the Executive Committee Meeting about meeting with other Fraternal Organization about having joint events in the future. He stated that our Director for Fraternal Activities, Susan Ondrejco, would meet with the Director of Fraternal Activities of the other Fraternal Organization regarding joint events in 2008. The President will update the Executive Committee as more information becomes available.

George Matta and Regis Brekosky attended the Pennsylvania Fraternal Congress and gave a report to the Executive Committee Meeting.

The President updated the Executive Committee on progress of the roof replacement on Building #2.

The Executive Secretary reviewed with the Executive Committee the holiday schedule of the Home Office.

REQUEST FOR ADS AND DONATIONS

Requests were reviewed and acted upon.

ADJOURN

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

The President closed the meeting with prayer.

Andrew M. Rajec

Kenneth A. Arendt

Coming Events

JANUARY

13 – The Msgr. Michael Shuba District's Annual Meeting at 1:30 p.m. at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church Hall, Mississauga, Ontario.

15 – A meeting of the Rev. Joseph L. Kostik District at 7:00 p.m. at St. Matthias Church Rectory, Youngstown, Ohio.

NEW
FOR 2007
HOLIDAY PARTIES

Any branch or region that holds a holiday party from November 15th to January 15th is eligible to receive \$2.00 per member for children age 10 and under who participate. To qualify, you must:

Register the event by having the host branch or district request a registration form from the Fraternal Activities Director.

234 Ilion St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15207
(412) 421-7967

Return the registration form to the Fraternal Activities Director by January 31, 2008.

John Emerick Guest of Honor

continued from page 6

unit citations, a P.O.W. Medal, and a Philippine Defense Medal. John served as the National Commander of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor.

John is a man of Slovak ancestry and a practicing Catholic who regularly attends St. Francis of Assisi Church in Finleyville. Thanks to the sacrifices of men such as John, we do enjoy a large measure of "Peace on Earth". John is living proof that God does exist!

Sophie Pipak

Statement as of September 30, 2007 of the

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE USA AND CANADA

ASSETS

	Current Statement Date			4 December 31 Prior Year Net Admitted Assets
	1 Assets	2 Nonadmitted Assets	3 Net Admitted Assets (Cols. 1 - 2)	
1. Bonds.....	173,888,794		173,888,794	162,016,069
2. Stocks:				
2.1 Preferred stocks.....	11,022,040		11,022,040	17,935,108
2.2 Common stocks.....	1,321,972		1,321,972	1,532,745
3. Mortgage loans on real estate:				
3.1 First liens.....	2,307,053		2,307,053	2,370,622
3.2 Other than first liens.....			0	
4. Real estate:				
4.1 Properties occupied by the company (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	1,301,801		1,301,801	1,341,948
4.2 Properties held for the production of income (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	983,408		983,408	1,012,278
4.3 Properties held for sale (less \$.....0 encumbrances).....	562,675		562,675	562,675
5. Cash (\$.....5,456,014), cash equivalents (\$.....0) and short-term investments (\$.....0).....	5,456,014		5,456,014	4,844,625
6. Contract loans (including \$.....0 premium notes).....	735,687		735,687	703,594
7. Other invested assets.....	2,389,580		2,389,580	2,441,458
8. Receivables for securities.....			0	
9. Aggregate write-ins for invested assets.....	0	0	0	0
10. Subtotals, cash and invested assets (Lines 1 to 9).....	199,969,024	0	199,969,024	194,761,122
11. Title Plants less \$.....0 charged off (for Title insurers only).....			0	
12. Investment income due and accrued.....	2,834,137		2,834,137	2,533,487
13. Premiums and considerations:				
13.1 Uncollected premiums and agents' balances in the course of collection.....	24,350		24,350	16,215
13.2 Deferred premiums, agents' balances and installments booked but deferred and not yet due (including \$.....0 earned but unbilled premiums).....			0	
13.3 Accrued retrospective premiums.....			0	
14. Reinsurance:				
14.1 Amounts recoverable from reinsurers.....			0	
14.2 Funds held by or deposited with reinsured companies.....			0	
14.3 Other amounts receivable under reinsurance contracts.....			0	
15. Amounts receivable relating to uninsured plans.....			0	
16.1 Current federal and foreign income tax recoverable and interest thereon.....			0	
16.2 Net deferred tax asset.....			0	
17. Guaranty funds receivable or on deposit.....			0	
18. Electronic data processing equipment and software.....			0	
19. Furniture and equipment, including health care delivery assets (\$.....0).....	14,186	14,186	0	
20. Net adjustment in assets and liabilities due to foreign exchange rates.....			0	
21. Receivables from parent, subsidiaries and affiliates.....			0	
22. Health care (\$.....0) and other amounts receivable.....			0	
23. Aggregate write-ins for other than invested assets.....	29,729	29,729	0	0
24. Total assets excluding Separate Accounts, Segregated Accounts and Protected Cell Accounts (Lines 10 through 23).....	202,871,426	43,915	202,827,511	197,310,824
25. From Separate Accounts, Segregated Accounts and Protected Cell Accounts.....			0	
26. TOTALS (Lines 24 and 25).....	202,871,426	43,915	202,827,511	197,310,824

Statement as of September 30, 2007 of the

**FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE USA AND CANADA
LIABILITIES, SURPLUS AND OTHER FUNDS**

	1 Current Statement Date	2 December 31 Prior Year
1. Aggregate reserve for life contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....	176,860,000	172,460,000
2. Aggregate reserve for accident and health contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....		
3. Liability for deposit-type contracts (including \$.....0 Modco Reserve).....	890,979	1,019,847
4. Contract claims:		
4.1 Life.....	300,000	300,000
4.2 Accident and health.....		
5. Refunds due and unpaid.....		
6. Provisions for refunds payable in following calendar year - estimated amounts:		
6.1 Apportioned for payment.....	380,000	320,000
6.2 Not yet apportioned.....		
7. Premiums and annuity considerations for life and accident and health contracts received in advance less \$.....0 discount; including \$.....0 accident and health premiums.....	293,328	265,626
8. Certificate and contract liabilities not included elsewhere:		
8.1 Surrender values on canceled contracts.....		
8.2 Other amounts payable on reinsurance including \$.....0 assumed and \$.....0 ceded.....		
8.3 Interest maintenance reserve (IMR).....	3,769,367	3,540,809
9. Commissions to fieldworkers due or accrued - life and annuity contracts \$.....0, accident and health \$.....0 and deposit-type contract funds \$.....0.....	3,689	2,532
10. Commissions and expense allowances payable on reinsurance assumed.....		
11. General expenses due or accrued.....	296,878	432,102
12. Transfers to Separate Accounts due or accrued (net) (including \$.....0 accrued for expense allowances recognized in reserves).....		
13. Taxes, licenses and fees due or accrued.....	23,205	23,205
14. Unearned investment income.....		
15. Amounts withheld or retained by Society as agent or trustee.....	4,607,522	4,381,480
16. Amounts held for fieldworkers' account, including \$.....0 fieldworkers' credit balances.....		
17. Remittances and items not allocated.....		
18. Net adjustment in assets and liabilities due to foreign exchange rates.....	5,000	5,000
19. Liability for benefits for employees and fieldworkers if not included above.....		
20. Borrowed money \$.....0 and interest thereon \$.....0.....		
21. Miscellaneous liabilities:		
21.1 Asset valuation reserve.....	2,536,873	2,590,136
21.2 Reinsurance in unauthorized companies.....		
21.3 Funds held under reinsurance treaties with unauthorized reinsurers.....		
21.4 Payable to subsidiaries and affiliates.....		
21.5 Drafts outstanding.....		
21.6 Funds held under coinsurance.....		
21.7 Payable for securities.....	99,501	99,501
22. Aggregate write-ins for liabilities.....	314,992	314,992
23. Total liabilities excluding Separate Accounts business (Lines 1 to 22).....	190,381,334	185,755,230
24. From Separate Accounts Statement.....		
25. Total liabilities (Lines 23 to 24).....	190,381,334	185,755,230
26. Aggregate write-ins for other than liabilities and surplus funds.....	0	0
27. Surplus notes.....		
28. Aggregate write-ins for surplus funds.....	0	0
29. Unassigned funds.....	12,446,177	11,555,594
30. Total (Lines 26 through 29) (including \$.....0 in Separate Accounts Statement).....	12,446,177	11,555,594
31. Totals (Lines 25 + 30).....	202,827,511	197,310,824

**YOUTH
ROUND-UP**

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

If you know of a young Jednota member who has recently graduated, received a special award, been confirmed or made a First Holy Communion, achieved a sports or scholastic "first" or in some other way has something to be proud of, send in the details

VISIT THE FCSU's WEBSITE

Home page at: <http://www.fcsu.com>

Send e-mail to the FCSU

at the following address:

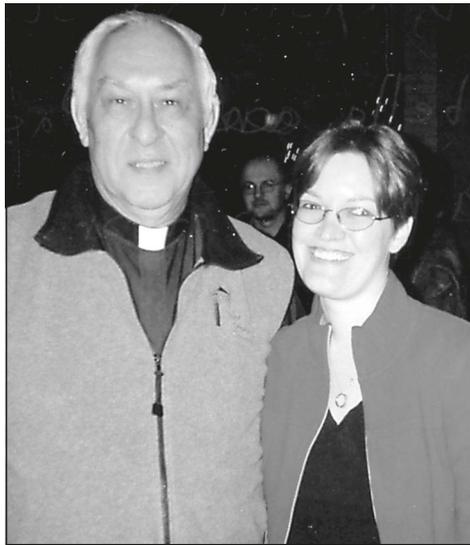
fcsu@aol.com

Statement as of September 30, 2007 of the

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK UNION OF THE USA AND CANADA

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

	1 Current Year To Date	2 Prior Year To Date	3 Prior Year Ended December 31
1. Premiums and annuity considerations for life and accident and health contracts.....	4,911,370	4,073,494	4,725,387
2. Considerations for supplementary contracts with life contingencies.....			
3. Net investment income.....	9,508,882	8,275,461	11,746,690
4. Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve (IMR).....	225,000	210,000	288,040
5. Separate Accounts net gain from operations excluding unrealized gains and losses.....			
6. Commissions and expense allowances on reinsurance ceded.....			
7. Reserve adjustments on reinsurance ceded.....			
8. Miscellaneous income:			
8.1 Income from fees associated with investment management, administration and contract guarantees from Separate Accounts.....			
8.2 Charges and fees for deposit-type contracts.....			
8.3 Aggregate write-ins for miscellaneous income.....	16,667	24,004	33,803
9. Totals (Lines 1 to 8.3).....	14,661,919	12,582,959	16,793,920
10. Death benefits.....	1,891,054	1,952,549	2,502,460
11. Matured endowments.....	2,208	9,092	9,092
12. Annuity and old age benefits.....	4,373,690	5,987,140	7,776,463
13. Disability, accident and health benefits, including premiums waived \$.....0.....			
14. Surrender benefits and withdrawals for life contracts.....	347,853	351,444	470,016
15. Interest and adjustments on contract or deposit-type contract funds.....	163,834	280,042	335,244
16. Payments on supplementary contracts with life contingencies.....			
17. Increase in aggregate reserve for life and accident and health contracts.....	4,400,000	1,310,000	1,531,000
18. Totals (Lines 10 to 17).....	11,178,639	9,890,267	12,624,275
19. Commissions on premiums, annuity considerations and deposit-type contract funds (direct business only).....	86,500	52,848	54,789
20. Commissions and expense allowances on reinsurance assumed.....			
21. General insurance expenses and fraternal expenses.....	1,813,829	2,199,203	2,588,945
22. Insurance taxes, licenses and fees.....	126,641	118,915	73,424
23. Increase in loading on deferred and uncollected premiums.....			
24. Net transfers to or (from) Separate Accounts net of reinsurance.....			
25. Aggregate write-ins for deductions.....	(288,486)	(129,645)	(346,290)
26. Totals (Lines 18 to 25).....	12,917,123	12,131,588	14,995,143
27. Net gain from operations before refunds to members (Line 9 minus Line 26).....	1,744,796	451,371	1,798,777
28. Refunds to members.....	330,270	223,824	309,671
29. Net gain from operations after refunds to members and before realized capital gains (losses) (Line 27 minus Line 28).....	1,414,526	227,547	1,489,106
30. Net realized capital gains (losses) (excluding \$.....0 transferred to the IMR).....	8,878	(216,195)	49,903
31. Net income (Lines 29 + 30).....	1,423,404	11,352	1,539,009
SURPLUS ACCOUNT			
32. Surplus, December 31, prior year.....	11,555,594	9,866,552	9,866,552
33. Net income from operations (Line 31).....	1,423,404	11,352	1,539,009
34. Change in net unrealized capital gains (losses) less capital gains tax of \$.....0.....	(173,700)	379,738	551,836
35. Change in net unrealized foreign exchange capital gain (loss).....		9,000	15,000
36. Change in nonadmitted assets and related items.....	(14,175)	74	84
37. Change in liability for reinsurance in unauthorized companies.....			
38. Change in reserve on account of change in valuation basis (increase) or decrease.....			
39. Change in asset valuation reserve.....	53,263	60,851	(431,991)
40. Surplus (contributed to) withdrawn from Separate Accounts during period.....			
41. Other changes in surplus in Separate Accounts Statement.....			
42. Change in surplus notes.....			
43. Cumulative effect of changes in accounting principles.....			
44. Change in surplus as a result of reinsurance.....			
45. Aggregate write-ins for gains and losses in surplus.....	(398,209)	660,237	15,104
46. Net change in surplus for the year (Lines 33 through 45).....	890,583	1,121,252	1,689,042
47. Surplus as of statement date (Lines 32 + 46).....	12,446,177	10,987,804	11,555,594



Father Francis Kub, Pastor of St. Simon's, with Laura Zbella, Pastoral Coordinator.



Slovak Republic natives Maria Lukasova and Ann Varak.



Robert Tapak Magruder and Valerie Vesely of Branch 493.



A student from St. Simon Slovak weekend language school recites a Slovak language poem he has memorized.

Thanks and Gratitude is Expressed Donors to the Centennial Drive of the Slovak League of America

The following individuals and organizations have very generously contributed to the Centennial Drive of the Slovak League of America. A civic and cultural federation of Americans of Slovak ancestry, the Slovak League was organized at Cleveland, Ohio in 1907. For a century, the Slovak League has championed the rights of our brethren in our ancestral home of Slovakia and has promoted the preservation of our Slovak culture and heritage here in the United States. Its heritage foundation and scholarship fund will support various cultural projects and assists young Americans of Slovak ancestry achieve their educational goals. Annual dues in the Slovak League are \$10.00 with Life Membership at \$200.00. Tax deductible donations made payable to the Slovak League of America may be made at any time.

Mimi Danihel, Los Angeles, CA.....	\$2,500.00
Dr. Jan Adan, Las Vegas, NV.....	\$500.00
Slovak Catholic Sokol, Passaic, NJ.....	\$500.00
Milan Cuba, Jersey City, NJ.....	\$500.00
First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association.....	\$500.00
Joseph J. Carnogursky, Boonton, NJ, In memory of Jakub and Alzbeta Carnogursky.....	\$300.00
Ladies Pennsylvania Slovak Catholic Union.....	\$250.00
Eileen S. Wilson, Stratford, CT.....	\$200.00
Matus Culen, New York, NY.....	\$150.00
Daniel F. Tanzone, Yonkers, NY.....	\$140.00
Branch 2, First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, Yonkers, NY.....	\$100.00
Branch 313, First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, Natrona, PA.....	\$100.00
Irene M. Matuschak, Uniontown, PA, In memory of Joseph and Anna Matasovsky.....	\$100.00
Martha Sipka Parry, Bronx, NY, In memory of Suzanna Sipka.....	\$100.00
William Faturik, New York, NY.....	\$75.00
Margaret Soska, East Vandergrift, PA, In memory of Dolores Soska.....	\$25.00
Carolyn Potanko, Pittsburgh, PA.....	\$25.00
Mary Ann Paff, Pittsburgh, PA.....	\$25.00

Thanks and gratitude go out to all our generous donors.

**Daniel F. Tanzone, President
Nina Holy, Secretary-Treasurer
Slovak League of America
205 Madison St.,
Passaic, NJ 07055
Phone: 973/472-8993 FAX: 973/669-8493 or 8483**



Noted Iconographer to Speak in Wilkes-Barre

The Slovak Heritage Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania will present a Lecture on Icons on Sunday, January 27, 2008, in Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Cathedral, North Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The lecture is set to begin at 2:00 p.m. and the public is invited.

Guest lecturer will be Raymond J. Mastroberte, well known iconographer for over 25 years, developing a mix of Byzantine and Russian styles. His lecture is entitled, "From Heaven to Earth, From Earth to Heaven...Perceiving Icons through the Eyes of Faith."

Mastroberte has produced thousands of pieces for homes, churches, chapels and exhibits in the United States, Canada, Mexico, France, Luxembourg, Italy, Vatican City, Russia, Bulgaria, Syria and Germany. A selection of his icons and other religious materials will be on display.

Educated and raised in both Roman and Greek Catholic traditions, Mastroberte has been surrounded by churches of various old world backgrounds such as Slovak, Hungarian, Carpatho-Russian, Polish, Ukrainian and German, and has made it a regular habit to visit these places of worship. Mastroberte visited the land of his Slavic heritage in 1979 and during his three-week stay in Slovakia, he was able to meet with relatives in Konus and Baskovce, north of Sobrance. While there, he visited many churches, which exhibit fine examples of iconography, such as the wooden Greek Catholic Church of St. Michael the Archangel in the village of Inovce, dating back to the early 19th century. A desire of his is to travel again to Slovakia for the purpose of painting churches and panels in the land of his spiritual and maternal roots.

The lecture by iconographer Mastroberte is open to the public, a freewill offering accepted. Further information and directions are available at the society's website www.shsnepa.org or by emailing shsnepa@verizon.net.

Stedry Vecer at St. Simon in Chicago

St. Simon the Apostle Slovak Parish in the Gage Park neighborhood on Chicago's South Side once again hosted a traditional Slovak Christmas Eve Dinner, known as Stedry Vecer or Vilija, on Sunday, December 9, 2007, in the church gymnasium.

The doors opened at 2:00 p.m. with the meal served at 3:00 p.m. Parish pastor Father Francis Kub recited blessings in Slovak and English before the start of the meal. Traditional Slovak Christmas Eve fare included oplatky with honey or garlic, kapustnica (sauerkraut soup), bobalky, fish, peas, potatoes, wine, fruits, nuts, and baked goods with coffee.

After dinner, the children of St. Simon's Slovak Language School entertained the attendees by reciting poems and stories in Slovak.

Two hundred and fifty one tickets were sold before the event, with more sales at the door. The friendly, jovial crowd was comprised of recent immigrants from the Slovak Republic, long time Slovak American parishioners of St. Simon's and other Slovak Americans and their friends from throughout the Chicago area.

In a touching gesture, Mexican-American teenagers from the parish helped clean up and brake down tables, and put away the chairs after the event. The neighborhood around St. Simon's is now predominantly Hispanic, as are the majority of the parishioners.

NEWSPAPER DEADLINES

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

Issue Date	Copy Deadline
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9	FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23	MONDAY, JANUARY 14
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6	MONDAY, JANUARY 28

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

Send all copy (English AND Slovak) to:
Anthony Sutherland, Editor
"JEDNOTA"
1011 Rosedale Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057-4835
FAX: (717) 944-3107

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Please contact your Branch Officer or the Home Office for applications

Stefan Hreha Honored by the Ethic Press Council of Canada

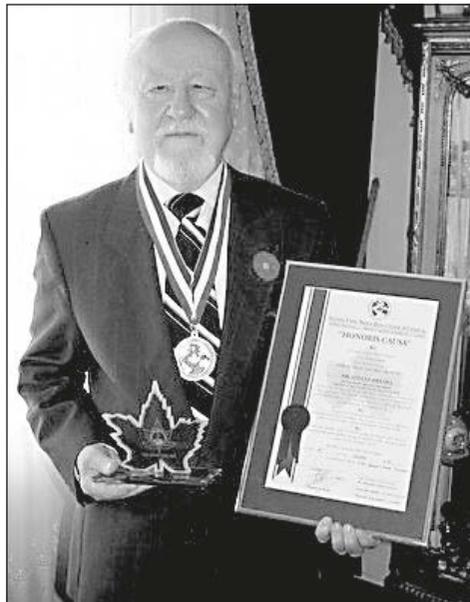
Steve R. Hreha

Stefan Hreha, founding editor of the Kanadsky Slovak, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada in a ceremony held on October 29, 2007 in the Legislative Building in Queen’s Park, Toronto. The award was presented by the Lt. Governor of Ontario, the Hon. David C. Onley, on behalf of the Council in recognition of his work for founding and successfully launching the Kanadsky Slovak in Montreal in 1942, as well as for his continued involvement with the newspaper as a contributing writer to the present day. The award was accepted by his son, Steve, on behalf of his father who was unable to attend due to his health.

In his opening address to the more than 120 invited guests in attendance, the Lt. Governor observed that “...ethnic and visible minorities in our society have looked to their own media for information about events in their communities and for news about what is happening in their countries of origin.” He went on to add: “Ethnic media can build bridges between communities, during times of crisis, when ethnic minorities turn to their own-language media for information...”

In 1940 Stefan Hreha left the newspaper Slovenske Bratstvo because of its financial instability to begin preparing the groundwork for a new newspaper to be published and financially backed by the Canadian Slovak League. More than eighteen months of work and preparation led to the adoption of a resolution, proposed by Stefan Hreha at the Convention of the CSL in Toronto in 1941, calling for the publication of the League’s own newspaper as its official voice. The first edition of Kanadsky Slovak appeared on March 5, 1942. The articles which appeared in these early editions appealed to a broad range of interests ranging from political commentary to social events. It was the secure and stable funding of the newspaper, as well as its editorial policy, which assured its ongoing success to the present day.

In conjunction with the newspaper, Andrej Kucera, founder and long-time president of



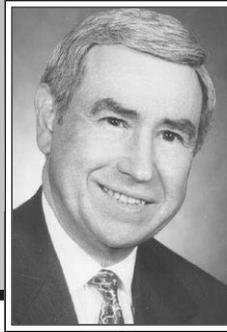
Stefan Hreha displays awards.

the CSL wrote, in one of his many articles, that: “Bro. Hreha was the founder and the first editor of Kanadsky Slovak to which he gave a solid foundation and financial stability, a fact that nobody can deny.”

In his welcoming address to the invited guests at the reception hosted by the Lt. Governor, Thomas S. Saras, President of the Council, said: “Freedom of expression and freedom of information are important pillars of a successful democracy and these are principles that are of the utmost importance to the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada.” Fidelity to these principles has characterized the first 65 years of the Kanadsky Slovak, the only Slovak weekly in North America to enjoy continuous publication since its first edition in 1942. The long history of Kanadsky Slovak is recalled in numerous newspaper articles and in the calendars, published by the CSL.

Among the guests attending the reception were Jan George Frajkor, Immediate-Past President of the Canadian Slovak League and former broadcast journalist with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and Dr. Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, Professor, International Studies Program, Glendon College, York University, Toronto, and Chairman of the Editorial Board of Kanadsky Slovak.

MONEY MANAGEMENT & TAX TIPS



By Joseph T. Senko

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



Seven Ways to Take Control of Your 2007 Tax Bill

Now is a good time to work on cutting your 2007 tax bill. Here are some strategies you can put into action to help you do it.

Take Retirement Saving to the Max

One of the best ways to trim your tax bill is to make the maximum allowable contribution to your retirement savings plan. For 2007, employees may contribute up to \$15,500 of their pre-tax salary to a 401 (k). Workers who will be at least 50 by the end of the year can contribute up to an additional \$5,000 per year. IRA contribution limits for the 2007 tax year remain at the 2006 level of \$4,000, or \$5,000 for taxpayers age 50 or older.

Defer Income

Income you don’t receive by December 31 isn’t taxed until the following year. Employees on salary don’t have much of a choice regarding when they get paid, but taxpayers who are self-employed, do freelance, or do consulting work have more flexibility. By delaying billing until late December, you can postpone receipt of income into next year. Keep in mind, this strategy only makes sense if you think you will be the same or a lower tax bracket next year.

Pay Some Bills Early

If you prepay certain 2008 bills in 2007, you may be able to write off a deduction earlier. For example, if you pay your January 2008 mortgage bill so your lender receives payment by December 31, you may deduct an extra month of interest in 2007. Paying state income taxes or property taxes early is another way to accelerate federal deductions if you aren’t subject to alternative minimum tax.

Take a Loss

If your portfolio experienced significant capital gains in 2007, consider whether it makes good financial sense to sell off some of the losers. You can use the losses to offset capital gains. If your capital losses are larger than your capital gains, you can deduct the capital loss against other income—up to \$3,000 in one year. Any additional losses can be carried over into subsequent years, when they can be used to offset future capital gains.

Go Green

Consumers who purchase and install specific improvements in their principal residence, such as exterior windows and doors; insulation to walls and ceilings; high-efficiency water heaters; furnaces and boilers, and central air conditioning units can receive a tax credit of up to \$500. But hurry—energy-efficient tax credits apply to improvements made between January 1, 2006, and December 31, 2007.

By Giving

Doing good for others can do good to your tax bill. Donations made before the end of the year are a great way to cut your 2007 tax bill. Keep in mind, however, that effective for 2007, all money contributions, regardless of the amount, require substantiation by a canceled check or a receipt from the charity. Previously, receipts were required only for contributions of \$250 or more.

Donate appreciated property or stock rather than cash and you may save even more by avoiding paying capital gains taxes. Just be sure you understand the rules, and give yourself plenty of time because it could take several weeks to transfer the stock or property.

Drain Your Flexible Spending Account

Do you still have money left in a flexible spending account? The IRS now allows companies to give employees a two-and-one-half month grace period to spend money set aside in a flex spending account, but not all businesses have adopted this extension. If you have money left that needs to be spent before December 31, don’t wait until the last minute.

From the Office of the Vice President

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

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

Shakespeare and Slovakia

By Jan Simko

I.

It happened on May 29, 1453: the Turks, under Sultan Mohammed II, had defeated the armies of the Byzantine Empire and, by occupying its capital, Constantinople (afterwards renamed Istanbul), had brought down this one-thousand-year-old empire. This epoch-making victory encouraged the Turks to push forward.

On August 29, 1526, under Suleiman the Magnificent, the Turks crushed the Hungarian army at the southernmost Hungarian city Mohacs on the Danube, where not only King Louis II but also more than 20,000 of his men had perished. He was the last Jagiellon, of Polish origin, on the Hungarian and Bohemian royal thrones.

II.

Since Louis had no offspring, it was in Bratislava (after January 1993 the capital of the Slovak Republic) that, on December 17, 1526, Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand (1503-1564), a Hapsburg, was elected King of Hungary and Bohemia. He had claimed the throne by right of his marriage to Anna, sister of Louis II. Since then, the thrones of Hungary and Bohemia became hereditary possessions of the Habsburg Archduchy of Austria.

Since another group of aristocrats had elected another pretender to be king of Hungary, Ferdinand's coronation was not only delayed but, eventually, made as much as impossible due to the traditional Hungarian coronation city having become occupied by the Turks. It was eventually Bratislava that was selected as the working coronation city. And it was on September 8, 1563, that Ferdinand's son, Archduke Maximilian, got the honor to be crowned there King of Hungary.

Let us be reminded that, since Slovakia had become part of Hungary after the Slovaks' defeat as far back as 907, a reference to Hungary usually includes Slovakia as well, but applicable only through the formation of Czechoslovakia in October 1918.

A richly illustrated book: *Korunovacie slavanosti Bratislava 1563-1830* (Coronation Festivities; Bratislava: Tatran 1996) by Stefan Holcik contains a very detailed description of the coronation ceremony. Two paragraphs deserve our particular attention (in translation):

"Between the Danube's main stream and the two small side streams a coronation mound was made ready... The King came there riding on horseback. He was handed a sword in a sheath. Maximilian then climbed up the mound on horseback, unsheathed the sword, and from his saddle swiped the sword towards the four corners of the world. While his swipes to the North, South, and West were barely noticeable, his swipes towards the East (where the Turks were; noted by J.S.) were very vigorous and challenging." (p.21)

At subsequent times, through 1830, ten more Habsburgs, and one queen, were crowned kings of Hungary.

The very detailed above account is of great significance for our purpose. The New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, edited by Horace Howard Furness (New York: Dover 1877, reprinted 1963; the largest single edition of *Hamlet*. Vol. I, pp. 357-358), includes a most striking note to Laertes's

following eulogy of his tragically drowned sister Ophelia:

A sister...

Whose worth...

Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections:... (IV.7.26-29).

In note 28, on p. 358, to this eulogy by Laertes, editor Furness quotes a most striking commentary printed in C.E. Moberly's 1873 "Rugby" edition of *Hamlet*:

"The allusion seems to be the coronation ceremony of the Emperor of Germany [Austria?] as King of Hungary; when on the Mount of Defiance, at Pressburg [that is, Bratislava; J.S.], he unsheathes the ancient sword of state, and shaking it towards North, South, East, West, challenges the four corners of the world to dispute his right."

An immediate question arises: "how might Shakespeare have learned of this coronation ceremony held in Bratislava? It must have been reported by none other than the reputed alchemist-scholar Dr. John Dee (1527-1609). As narrated in the Oxford Dictionary Biography (New York: Oxford University Press, 20040, VOL. 15, P. 669):

"He was present at the coronation of Maximilian II as king of Hungary at Pressburg in September 1563, and it was to Maximilian that his *Monas Hieroglyphica*, printed... at Antwerp, was dedicated on 14 February 1564... The *Monas* is an explication of 24 theorems of the symbol of the *Monas*... For Dee it was a powerful symbol both of creation and of the unity of science."

Between 1583-1589, Dr. Dee was touring Poland and Bohemia. This took place under the new ruler of the area.

III.

It was on September 25, 1572, that Bratislava was again the site of a royal coronation, that of Emperor Maximilian's first-born son Rudolf (1552-1612) as king of Hungary. On the death of his father in 1576, Rudolf was elevated to Holy Roman Emperor. His reign was a rather turbulent one, his religious orthodoxy as much as triggering a revolt in Hungary in 1608, after which he was compelled to resign in favor of his younger brother Mathias (1608-1619). Moreover, because of his neglect of official duties in favor of his hobbies, including alchemy, Rudolf was forced to give up, in 1611, also the Bohemian crown!

Let us pay special attention to what has been mentioned; namely, that: (1) due to having neglected his official duties partly in favor of, among others, his hobby, alchemy, (2) Rudolf was ousted from all positions of rule, (3) in favor of his younger brother (4) in—1611!!

For a Shakespearean, all these four key causes of Rudolf's ouster from the positions of political power and rule cannot but bring to mind one title, namely, Shakespeare's penultimate play, the romance *The Tempest* of exactly 1611!

What is highly intriguing is the similarity or as much as a near-identity of the two respective basic conflicts. The one is reality: Rudolf's ouster from political power in favor of his younger brother Mathias because of the former's neglecting his official duties in favor, partly of his hobby—alchemy, in the years 1608-1611.

The same or nearly identical main conflict lies also at the basis of the plot of *The*

Tempest. The play may have been performed on November 1, 1611, before King James I during the festivities at the occasion of the betrothal of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I, to the German Protestant Elector of the Palatinate. Later, in 1619, he was elected as Frederick V, King of Bohemia.

What is of the main concern for our further discussion is to find out about the fate of the conflict between the two brothers at odds in *The Tempest*; Prospero the ousted Duke of Milan versus his usurping brother Duke Antonio. While Prospero was "rapt in secret studies" (I.2.77), "thus neglecting worldly

ends, all dedicated/ To...the betterment of my mind" (89-90), false brother Antonio usurped the throne, ousting Prospero from political power. Cast adrift on a small boat, Prospero lands on an isolated Mediterranean island situated between Tunis and Naples. As chance would have it, after a severe sea storm, usurper Antonio and company are cast ashore on the very same island as Prospero! Using his magic power to heal old wounds, Prospero forgives usurping brother Antonio his "rankest fault" (v.1.152), asking for the restoration to his dukedom. True

continued on page 14



Attending the annual Fall Dinner-Dance are L-R Rudolf and Kveta Gaba, Helen Zakutny, Anna Korcak, Joseph Jurasi, Jozef Korcak, Emil Pavelek, Rev. Martin Svitan, Maria Jurasi, Maria Zakovic, Michael Zakutny, Zelmira Beckova, and Helen Brchnel.

New York Branch 45 Hosts Annual Fall Dinner-Dance

The St. Matthew Society, Branch 45 in New York City hosted its annual Fall Dinner-Dance on Saturday, October 20, 2007, at St. John Nepomucene Parish Social Hall. A good turnout of Jednota members and guests from the entire New York metropolitan area enjoyed the evening, which featured a wonderful dinner of traditional Slovak culinary specialties. Music for dancing and listening pleasure was provided by the popular Joseph Jurasi Orchestra.

During the dinner-dance, a special tribute was paid to a well-known Slovak couple, Antonia and Dusan Krajkovic who celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary. The couple was feted during the program. They received beautiful flowers and were showered with confetti to commemorate the happy event. All who attended this year's Fall Dinner-Dance had an enjoyable time.

The St. Matthew Society, established in 1891, is one of the oldest Slovak societies in New York City. In 1895, members of the society under the leadership of their president, Martin Challan petitioned the Archbishop of New York to establish a new Slovak parish in Manhattan. Archbishop Michael Corrigan gave permission and the new parish was founded under the patronage of St. John Nepomucene. Since then, St. John's has remained as the spiritual and cultural center of the Slovak community of New York City. The St. Matthew Society continues its support of the work of St. John Nepomucene Parish under the current leadership of the pastor, the Rev. Martin Svitan and the associate pastor, Rev. Stefan Chanas.



Joseph Jurasi

Antonia and Dusan Krajkovic.

Shakespeare

continued from page 13

to Shakespeare's philosophy of peaceful reconciliation, Prospero rejects the idea of revenge, as a stern message to humanity:

The rare action is

In virtue than in vengeance (v.1.27-28)

In Polonius's memorable words, namely, "By indirection find direction out" (Hamlet, II. 1. 66);

IV.

We have reached the main target of our intended inquiry:

Shakespeare's As You Like It and Slovakia

(1) It happened on about August 21, 1944, that is, during the last year of the bloody World War II, that Slovakia had been rocked by an anti-government uprising. It endured for two months, until being crushed in October. Those insurgents, who did not surrender but decided to fight on, retreated into the mountains and dense forests of central Slovakia. There they had to endure a biting sharp winter, while their properties were seized by the government.

These insurgents, who did survive through the end of the war in April-May 1945, were entitled to claim their seized properties to be returned.

(2) Those, unfamiliar with these facts of the painful recent European history, may be surprised when told that even slight modifications of these facts may result in a text strikingly reminiscent of the plot of the popular As You Like It (AYLI) written by Shakespeare 345 years ago, in a about 1599.

(3) Shakespeare's AYLI and The Tempest offer us an obvious testimonial of his keen interest in brotherly relations. Their analysis is not a flattering one at all: one brother intending to kill the other brother. Is it justifiable to classify as "comedy" a play, such as AYLI, where even as many as two murders of brothers by other brothers are contemplated, fortunately not carried out in the end?

(4) The realization of the existence of close parallels between the imaginary plot of AYLI and the military-political situation around the real historic Slovak National Uprising of 1944 corroborates my contention formulated in my article on this topic published in 1999 in the Almanac of the Slovak National Society of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In it, I put forward the argument that AYLI is to be classified as a primarily political play where all actions of the plot after the usurpation of political power by Duke Frederick and the exiling of the ousted Duke Senior and his followers are the result primarily of these political acts. The romantic entanglements between Orlando and Roselind and of other characters taking place in the Forest of Arden are the more interesting for occurring on the background of a dangerous, tense political situation created by the tense relations between the two antagonistic brothers of the ruling elite, Dukes Frederick and Senior.

Conclusions

The comparative study of some facts of Slovak history and of some parallel facts of Shakespeare's fictional plots makes of this juxtaposition of facts and fiction a most fascinating subject matter for the search of a deeper significance.



Annual Slovak Ball Set for February 2 at New York Athletic Club

The Slovak-American Cultural Center cordially invites you to attend the 16th Annual Slovak Ball on Saturday, February 2, 2008, at the New York Athletic Club, 180 Central Park South, New York City. Cocktails will begin at 6:00 p.m. followed by diner at 7:00 p.m. Music will be provided by the Marek Soltis Orchestra. Tickets to this black-tie preferred event are \$160 per person, and \$95 for students. Please make checks payable to S-ACC (Slovak-American Cultural Center), and send to: Stano Krcmar, 33 Weasel Drift Road, West Paterson, NJ 07424. For more information call Lubica Markovich at 212/781-5843, Gita Hlavinka at 201/242-0214, or Matus Culen at 914/738-9115.

The Slovak Ball has become a well-established traditional event attracting members of the Slovak-American community in the tri-state area and beyond. The proceeds of this event help make worthy contributions to American-Slovak relations in culture and education. This year, S-ACC has been able to provide four Jozef Stasko Scholarships at the City University in Bratislava. This institution is a branch of the City University of Bellevue, Washington. It provides an American college education at reasonable costs in both Trencin and Bratislava. All this would not be possible without the generosity of our members and friends.

Members of the Slovak community are invited to advertise in the Ball Bulletin, which will be distributed to all the guests at the Ball. Full-page ads are \$100; half page \$50; and quarter-page \$25. Please send your ad (camera-ready copy, business card, or your greeting) no later than January 11, 2008 to: Maria Dering, Ansonia Station, P.O. 230527, New York, NY 10023, or e-mail to: mariadering@earthlink.net.

From the desk of the ...

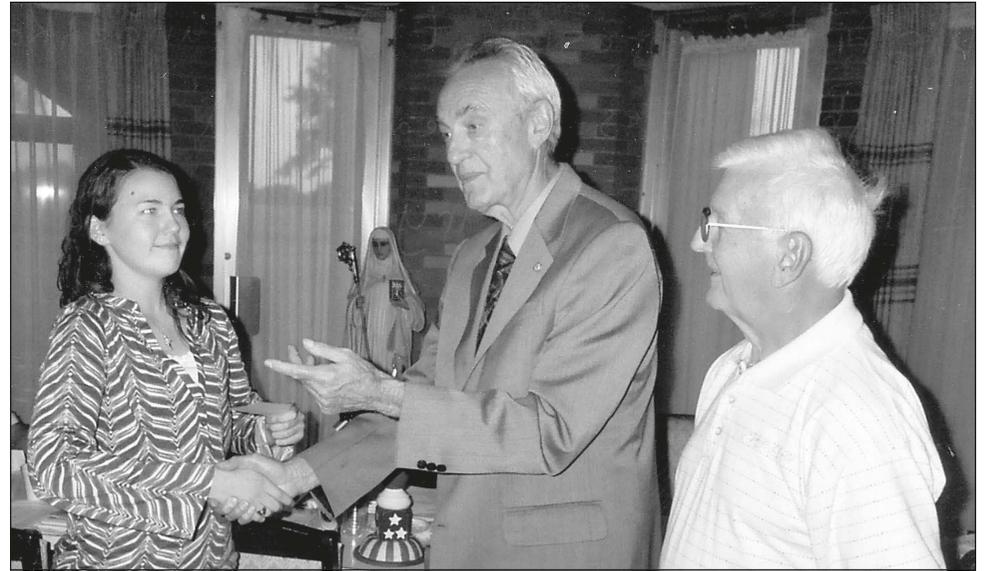
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY *Exciting news!!*

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

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

YOUTH

ROUND-UP



District 2 President John Jurcenko congratulates Andrea Coutu as District 2 Financial Secretary Art Fayta looks on.

Scholarship Winner

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Society, Branch 493 in Chicago, is very proud of its member Andrea Coutu. Andrea is a 2007 FCSU Scholarship Winner and was also awarded a \$100.00 college grant from the Bishop Stefan Moyses Scholarship Fund of the Rev. John J. Spitzkovsky District. The award took place at the District's Annual Meeting on October 21, 2007. Andrea is a freshman at Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois, where she is studying pre-law.



Branch 670 Member Recognized for Superior Academic Achievement



Michael Bedner

Michael Bedner, a junior at Ringgold High School, kept himself very busy this past summer! Because of the outstanding leadership potential and academic excellence that he has demonstrated in school and community activities, Michael was selected last fall to represent the Ringgold sophomore class at the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) PA - West Seminar held at W & J College on June 14-17. Michael joined more than 115 other "HOBY Ambassadors" from the state of Pennsylvania to enjoy a unique learning experience, which included panel discussions, leadership workshops, informal debates, and service projects, as well as off-site visits to many elite businesses in western Pennsylvania. Various dynamic leaders addressed the ambassadors regarding our changing world and the challenges future leaders will confront.

On July 8-17, Michael joined 400 high school students from around the country who are interested in a career in medicine to participate in the 2007 National Youth Leadership Forum (NYLF) on Medicine at Georgetown University. Throughout the ten-day forum, students were introduced to a variety of concepts in public health, medical ethics, research and general practice. Scholars engaged in a simulation using problem-based learning, an educational method in which students were presented a fictional patient's case history and had to diagnose and develop a treatment plan for the patient. In addition to visits to cutting-edge medical schools and clinical facilities, scholars had the opportunity to hear from and interact with leaders within the medical field.

Michael was also nominated and accepted for enrollment in the National Society of High School Scholars. Formed in 2002, the NSHSS recognizes academic excellence at the high school level and encourages members of the organization to apply their unique talents, vision, and potential for the betterment of themselves and the world. The announcement was made by NSHSS Founder and Chairman Claes Nobel, a senior member of the Swedish Nobel family. Membership in NSHSS entitles qualified students to enjoy a wide variety of benefits, including scholarship opportunities, academic competitions, free events, member-only resources, publications, participation in programs offered by educational partners,

continued on page 15

Foretelling fortunes in the New Year – Pranostiky

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

Trying to predict what will happen in a new year is a common custom in many lands, and Slovakia is no exception. Slovaks have what are called pranostiky, predictions for what will happen in the New Year based on weather and signs in the sky. One might compare the Slovak penchant for looking for clues to the future to a type of Farmer's Almanac, for Slovak peasants of the past were always trying to figure out ways to deal with a harsh life filled with the uncertainty of everything from weather to their family's health.



The former home of Dr. Kopanic's mother in Richnava, Spis.

Here are a few of the pranostiky which were commonly used in Slovakia during the days when many our ancestors lived there. They start with some forecasts based on New Year's Day phenomena, and continue as the month progresses to January 8.

January 1st

1. Aký je den Nového roka, taký bude celý rok.

Translation: Whatever it is like on New Year's Day, expect the same all year long

2. Na Nový rok blato, na Velkú noc sneh.

If there is mud on New Year's Day, there will be snow on Easter

3. Drobný hustý dážď bol predzvestou hustých, plných klasov.

A light and dense rain was a harbinger of plump and full ears (of corn).

4. Červené zore ráno na oblohe na Nový rok veštili víchrice, búrky, neúrodu a biedu.

A red morning star in the sky on New Year's portends hurricanes, storms, infertility, and poverty.

5. Jasná a tichá novoročná noc zvestuje nám dobrý rok.

A clear and quiet New Year's night is a sign that we will have a good year

January 2 and afterwards.

1. Keď je druhého jasno, bude dlhá zima, keď ale nesneží, nie je d'aleko jaro.

If second day of January is clear, it will be a long winter, but if it does not snow, spring is not far away.

2. Keď je druhého januára jasno, bude veľa ovociny.

If second day of January is clear, fruit will be abundant.

3. Tretí den jasný - mnohé búrky.

If the third day is clear – many storms will follow.

4. Štvrtý den' jasný, znamená mrákavý a nezdravý rok.

A clear day on the fourth means a cloudy and unhealthy year.

5. Je-li na Jména Ježiš hezký den, bude úrodný rok; je-li vítr, bude málo ovoce. (Czech)

If Jesus' Name Day (January 5) is nice, it will be a fertile year; if there is wind, there will not be much fruit.

January 6

1. Na Tri krále mnoho hviezd – mnoho zemiakov.

Many stars on the Feast of the Three Kings – many potatoes.

2. Na Tri krále zima stále.

On the Feast of the Three Kings, winter is constant.

3. Ak je na Tri krále jasno, zdarí sa pšenica.

If it is clear on the Feast of the Three Kings, it portends an abundant wheat harvest.

4. Trojkráľovú zimu vlk nezozerie.

Cold on the Feast of the Three Kings means the wolf will not be voracious.

January 8

Na svätého Severína vešia sa mäso do komína.

On St. Severin Day (January 8), hang some meat to smoke by the chimney.

This is just a small sample of the many Slovak sayings and proverbs about the New Year. They are abundant in Slovakia. An article in the Slovak Spectator noted that Slovaks have over 12,000 sayings, and most of them date from an early period of history, when they were mainly an agricultural people.

What is interesting about the pranostiky is the light they shed on the way Slovak peasants viewed the world. Superstition abounded, and they ascribed a special meaning to acts of nature and every out of the ordinary happening. Living near subsistence, the struggle to survive and endure hardships was constant. But reading them is a window into the mindset of our ancestors. And that is gratifying.



The Slovak upside down Christmas Tree at the Cleveland Play House.

Slovak Institute Displays Heritage at City Hall and Play House

The Slovak Institute and Research Library was asked by the mayor of Cleveland, Ohio, Frank G. Jackson, to display Slovak items in the rotunda of Cleveland City Hall. On November 2 the Slovak items went on display along with five other ethnic groups from the Cleveland area.

On November 10 the Slovak Institute decorated a Christmas tree in the halls of the Cleveland Play House. The tree will be on display until January 4, 2008. The Play House is open to visitors Monday through Friday and on weekends to patrons of the theater. This year the tree is an upside down tree and the only one of its kind on display in the Cleveland area. The upside down tree is one of the most unusual traditions of Eastern Europe. At one time it was found in many regions of Eastern Europe.

For more information on these displays contact the Slovak Institute & Reference Library at St. Andrew Abbey, 10510 Buckeye Rd., Cleveland, OH 44104, or visit the website at www.slovakinstitute.com

Branch 670 Member Recognized

continued from page 14

online forums, personalized recognition items, and publicity honors.

Michael maintains a 4.0+ GPA and is involved in the following activities: National Honor Society of Secondary Schools, Gifted Education at Ringgold (GEAR), Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS), Science Olympiad, Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair (PRSEF), the Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS) Tests of Engineering, Aptitude, Mathematics, and Science (TEAMS) competition, 'Pi Day' Math competition, Envirothon, PA Math League, Spanish Club, Ski Club, and the Varsity Swim Team. Michael is also active as an altar server and lector for Our Lady of the Valley Parish in Donora. Michael's deep interest in the field of medicine enables him to participate in the Volunteer program at Monongahela Valley Hospital, where he has completed over 400 volunteer service hours in the Coronary Critical Care, Progressive Care and Intensive Care Units. Michael was also nominated and selected to attend the Southwest Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center's 2006 Summer Health Career Academy at the University of Pittsburgh. He received his Lifeguard Training and First Aid certification in 2006 and is also certified in CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer. Michael is a substitute lifeguard at the Mon Valley Country Club and is a Junior Firefighter for the Carroll Township Fire Department. He will graduate from Ringgold in 2009 and plans to pursue a career as a cardiovascular surgeon. Michael is the son of John and Kim Bedner of Carroll Township and the grandson of Virginia Jeffrey of Eighty-four and John and Anna Marie Bedner of Donora.

FCSU 2007 Christmas Coloring Contest



The First Christmas Eve

© Russell E. Coate

'Twas the night before Christmas,
And all through the Inn,
Not a creature was stirring,
Except little Ben.

A trav'ler had told him
Of a beautiful sight -
A manger, a mother,
A babe born that night.

The story had touched him,
Sunk deep in his heart,
And he thought of it, pondered it,
Savored each part.

The trav'ler had told of
A very great star,
And wise men had seen it
From countries afar.

And shepherds abiding that night
With their sheep,
Had heard angels tell
Of the new babe asleep.

All had followed the star
To the manger of hay,
And shepherds and wise men
Had knelt down to pray.

For the poor little babe
Was a tiny new King,
Bringing hope and great joy
To the children of men!

The wise men had brought for Him
Myrrh, Frankincense, Gold,
And a shepherd boy offered
A wee lamb from his fold.

But what could a small boy
Like Ben give a King?
No rubies, no diamonds,
And he had no gold ring.

And none of Ben's own toys
Would do for a King,
Not the slingshot, the marbles,
The whistle, or string!

Ben slipped from his bed
And walked out through the yard.
The moon was aglow,
And how bright were the stars!

It seemed like the heavens
Were beaming with joy
At the news of the birth
Of the new baby boy.

Ben followed a path
To the back of the Inn.
"The Child lies back there,"
Said one of the men.

Then Ben saw the stable
In the dim lantern light.
He saw cattle and sheep there,
Bedded down for the night.

And there in a manger
Lay the new baby King,
With Mary and Joseph there,
Calm and serene.

Then Ben knew the gift
That he would impart,
And he softly whispered,
"I'll give you my heart."

Then he knelt by the manger
So crude for a King,
And worshipped the Holy One,
SAVIOUR OF MEN!



RULES

- Each age group is assigned a certain picture:
 4 - 6 year olds - picture C 7 - 9 year olds - picture A
 10 - 12 year olds - picture B
- Enlarged reproductions of picture A, B, or C will be disqualified.
- Children MUST be members in good standing of the FCSU in order to be eligible for prizes.
- Your child's completed entry form, colored picture, and a photo of your child to the Fraternal Activities Director must be postmarked by **January 2, 2008**.

Susan Ondrejco
234 Iilion St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15207

Please submit this form with your child's entry by January 2, 2008

PRIZES
 Winners in each age group will receive the following:
1ST PLACE
 Jednota Duffle Bag and \$25.00
2ND PLACE
 Jednota Duffle Bag and \$15.00
3RD PLACE
 Jednota Duffle Bag and \$10.00
HONORABLE MENTION
 \$5 Gift Card

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth: _____
 Certificate Number: _____ Regional Director: _____
 Street Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Email Address: _____

New U.S. Envoy to Slovakia Greeted in Cleveland

By Joseph J. Stipkala

On the rainy evening of November 15, 2007, Vincent Obsitnik, a longtime business executive from Northern Virginia who was recently confirmed as the new U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia, appeared at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Independence, Ohio and addressed about 35 people, including several businessmen but mainly Slovaks from the Cleveland area. His visit to Cleveland was coordinated by Dr. Edward Keshock, Honorary Consul for Slovakia in the State of Ohio, in cooperation with Jednota (The First Catholic Slovak Union) and also the Zenska Jednota (The First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association).

Dr. Keshock was the Master of Ceremonies who welcomed the new envoy and extended his congratulations. A proclamation was then read from Senator George Voinovich of Ohio by George Brown, the senator's Ethnic Outreach Representative. He was then followed by several speakers who also welcomed and congratulated the new Ambassador: August B. Pust, Ph.D., of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad (a recent colleague of Ambassador Obsitnik with the same U.S. Commission); Andrew Rajec, National President of Jednota; MaryAnn Johaneck, President of Zenska Jednota and Stephen Hudak, National Auditor for Zenska Jednota.

Other Jednota officials who were among those present were Andrew R. Harcar, Sr., National Vice President, and Kenneth A. Arendt, National Secretary.

Ambassador Obsitnik then addressed the group and gave a brief summary of his background. He said he is a person of Slovak heritage, speaks the language and is the first U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia with a Slovak background. He stated that he was born in Moravany near Michalovce, Slovakia. He is married to Anne Marie Harden Obsitnik. They have four sons and twelve grandchildren. He received his bachelor's degree from the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD and a master's degree from The American University, Washington, D.C. In his business career, he served as Director of Manufacturing for Latin America at the IBM Corporation; as President of the System Development Division at Unisys/Loral Corporation; Vice President of International Development at Litton/PRC Corporation. Most recently he was a Member of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad and in this capacity, functioned mainly in Eastern Slovakia with the purpose of restoring and preserving wooden churches as part of his efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of many thousands of U.S. citizens who trace their roots to that part of Slovakia.

Ambassador Obsitnik stated that he was very proud to have been named as Ambassador to Slovakia. It was "a dream come true," and he encouraged everybody there to follow his or her own dream. He said that he plans to travel throughout Slovakia to meet the people and to strengthen business, commercial, and educational ties and cooperation between the U.S. and Slovakia.



George Brown, Ethnic Outreach Representative from the office of U.S. Senator George Voinovich, reads a proclamation to Ambassador Obsitnik while Honorary Consul Edward Keshock, National President Andrew Rajec and Thomas Ivanec look on.



FCSU National President Andrew Rajec (right) presents a gift to Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik while Slovak Honorary Consul Edward Keshock looks on.

Congratulations, Ambassador Obsitnik!

The First Catholic Slovak Union and the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association jointly sponsored a lunch with Ambassador Obsitnik in the afternoon. Many of the group were also able to visit the FCSU Headquarters afterward.

More pictures in later issues.



The First Catholic Slovak Union and the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association sponsored a lunch for Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik at a local restaurant in Independence, Ohio. Several local representatives of the Slovak American community were invited to attend and meet the new ambassador.



L-R Ambassador Obsitnik, Janet Stipkala and Joseph J. Stipkala at Embassy Suites Hotel in Independence, Ohio

REMEMBER OUR DEPARTED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Frank E. Haynak
Branch 166
Binghamton, New York

Frank E. Haynak, 66, of Binghamton, New York, and longtime officer of the St. Joseph the Guardian Society, Branch 166, died Monday, December 10, 2007, at Lourdes Hospital after a brief illness.

Mr. Haynak was a retired teacher at the Windsor School District and was a member of St. James Church, St. Bonaventure Alumni Association and Jednota Branch 166.

He is survived by two daughters and one son-in-law, Denyse Haynak of Orange City, Florida, Christine and Bret Olsen of Cooperstown, New York; one sister, and brother-in-law, Joan and Anthony Russo of Binghamton, a special friend, Dawn McGovern of Johnson City, New York; a niece and nephew; and two great-nieces.

Friends were received at the Sedlock Funeral Home. A Funeral Mass was offered in St. James Church. Burial was at the convenience of the family. The family requests that memorial donations be made in his name to the American Cancer Society or Alzheimer's Research.

John R. Kubla
Branch 831
Tarentum, Pennsylvania

John R. Kubla, 26, of Lower Burrell, Pennsylvania, died Friday, September 28, 2007, as a result of a motorcycle accident.

He was born April 4, 1981, in Natrona Heights, a son of John Joseph Kubla of Lower Burrell, and Jacqueline Welch Kubla, of East Brady, and was a lifelong resident of the local area.

He was a steelworker for Allegheny Ludlum in Brackenridge.

He attended Westmoreland County Vocational Technical School for cabinetry.

He was a member of United Steelworkers of America and United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

He enjoyed all sports, carpentry, fishing and riding his quad.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by sisters, Stephanie (John) Yunt, of Natrona Heights, and Jennifer Kubla, of Norfolk, Virginia; a nephew, Kellen Yunt; his grandmother, Sylvia Grinder Welch, of Springdale; and his dog, Smokey.

He was preceded in death by his paternal

continued on page 18

REMEMBER OUR DEPARTED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS continued from page 17

grandparents, John and Anna Bursick Kubla Sr.; maternal grandfather, Robert Welch; and cousin, Patricia Ann Bozich.

Friends were received at the Rusiewicz of Lower Burrell Funeral Home. A Christian Funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Margaret Mary Church, Lower Burrell. Burial was in St. Mary Cemetery, Lower Burrell.

George Ocilka Branch 60 McKeesport, Pennsylvania

George E. Ocilka, 77, of Elizabeth Township, Pennsylvania, died Thursday, November 22, 2007, in Southwestern Nursing Center. He was born September 12, 1930, in Port Vue, son of the late George John and Mary Gajdzik Ocilka. He was a retired shipping foreman with U.S. Steel National Tube Works in McKeesport. He was a member of St. Michael Roman Catholic Church in Elizabeth Township. He was a 4th degree member of the McKeesport Knights of Columbus No. 915, former assistant Boy Scout Leader for Round Hill Troop No. 78, a member of Branch 60 of the First Catholic Slovak Union, the senior citizens group of St. Martin de Porres, Elizabeth, and Elizabeth Township.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Florence Balog Ocilka; three sons, George T. Ocilka of Briston, Virginia, David Ocilka of Bethel Park, and John Ocilka of Elizabeth; two sisters, Mary Golembieski of Glassport and Helen Kudla of Pittsburgh; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by siblings, Ann Matta and Michael Ocilka.

Friends were received at the Paul E. Bekavac Funeral Home, Elizabeth. A Mass of Christian Burial was offered in St. Michael Roman Catholic Church with the Rev. Rudolph Smoley as celebrant.

The officers and members of Branch 60 express their deepest sympathy to his family. May he rest in peace.

Margaret M. Perla

Helen Buzek Branch 60 McKeesport, Pennsylvania

Helen Buzek, 94, of McKeesport, Pennsylvania, died Monday, December 3, 2007, at Mt. Vernon of Elizabeth, Elizabeth Township. She was the wife of the late John M. Buzek, who died August 15, 1970.

Mrs. Buzek was born September 5, 1913, in Van Meter, Pennsylvania, a daughter of the late Charles E. and Mary Makosey Barno. She was a retired deli manager at Giant Eagle in McKeesport. She was the former owner of B&L Market in Versailles. She was a member of St. Martin de Porres Parish, CFU Lodge

146 of Versailles and its Pensioners, FCSU Branch 60, Versailles AARP, United Food Workers No. 424 and Christian Mothers of St. Martin de Porres Parish. She was also an avid pinochle player.

She is survived by a son, Robert Buzek of McKeesport; a daughter, Marlene Butler of McKeesport; a sister, Betty Casturo of McKeesport; six grandchildren, Cynthia Martin, Melanie Brown, Michele Bakker, Robert Buzek Jr., Timothy and Shawn Butler; nine great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; and nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by siblings, Ann Lesko, George Barno, Mary Hollis, James Barno, John Barno, Margaret Telesko, and Charles Barno.

Friends were received at the Daniel F. Bekavac Funeral Home, Versailles. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in St. Martin de Porres Church in McKeesport. Burial was in West Newton Cemetery in West Newton.

The officers and members of Branch 60 express their deepest sympathy to her family. May she rest in peace.

Margaret M. Perla

Mary A. Mazur

Mary A. Mazur, 88, died Thursday, November 29, 2007, at Pope John Paul II Rehabilitation Center in Danbury, Connecticut. She was the wife of Andrew J. (Andy) Mazur, who died in 2001. They were married 62 years.

Mrs. Mazur was born in Homestead, Pennsylvania, a daughter of the late Michael and Anna (Yuhás) Mráz. Mary's parents came to the United States in the early 1900s where the three oldest children were born. The Mráz family moved back to Czechoslovakia where Mary lived until her marriage to Andrew Mazur in Povlovce in 1938. Mary attended schools in Czechoslovakia. All three Mráz children returned to the United States to live the American dream.

Mary and Andrew Mazur settled in Brooklyn, New York and lived there until their fourth daughter was born when they moved to Danbury, Connecticut. Mary worked in the kitchen at the former Danbury Teacher's College (now WestConn) as well as Eastern States Foods where she worked in the kitchen of the former Perkin-Elmer. Mary retired in the 1980s from her position at Perkin-Elmer but then cooked for the priests at St. Gregory the Great Church.

Mary enjoyed cooking, specifically nourishing her family with her homemade specialties, gardening, traveling, watching the Lawrence Welk Show and spending time with her family and friends, especially her grandsons. She was a member of Saint Gregory the Great Ladies Guild, Germantown

Ladies Auxiliary and the First Catholic Slovak Union. Mary and her husband Andrew were proud charter parishioners of St. Gregory the Great Church and in their younger years volunteered their services for the church whenever they could.

Mary was devoted to her Roman Catholic faith until she was stricken with Alzheimer disease. Mary had a stroke in October 1995, which left her without speech.

In addition to her parents, Mary was predeceased by her brothers, Michael of Linden, New Jersey, John of Burgettstown, Pennsylvania, Andrew and Joseph of Slovakia; and a sister Ann of Slovakia.

She is survived by daughters, Mary E. Vostinar of Dumont, New Jersey, Helen A. Woodward and her husband, Dwight F., of Wausau, Wisconsin, Ann L. Morits and her husband, Randall J., of Tomahawk, Wisconsin, and Irene Mazur of Dover Plains, New Jersey; three grandsons, Andrew M. Woodward and his wife, Katie, Matthew Woodward

and his wife, Amy, all of Wisconsin, and Kevin Vostinar and his wife, Janet, of Henderson, Nevada; three great-grandchildren, Christopher Dylan Vostinar and Nicole Christine Vostinar and Andrew Joe Woodward; a sister, Elizabeth of Slovakia; a sister-in-law, Margaret of Burgettstown; and several nieces and nephews.

The family of Mary Mazur would like to thank the staff at Pope John Paul II Rehabilitation Center for their loving and compassionate care for Mary during the past five years. They will always be fondly remembered by Mary's four daughters and their families.

Friends were received at the Cornell Funeral Home, Danbury. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in St. Gregory the Great Church. Burial was in St. Peter Cemetery, Danbury. Memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Connecticut Chapter, 279 New Britain Rd., Suite 5, Kensington, CT 06037.



Frantisek Kostak, Slovak Man of Letters

Frantisek Kostak, well known Slovak poet and writer in exile, died October 20, 2007, in Port Reading, New Jersey. He was 80 years old.

Mr. Kostak belonged to that group of émigrés who fled their native Slovakia in the years after the communist seizure of power in 1948. He was born April 13, 1927 in Fridesovo near Mukacevo in Ruthenia and educated in schools in Slovakia. In 1949 he fled to the West, first to Germany, then to Australia. In 1958 he moved to the United States settling in New York and then eventually in Port Reading, New Jersey. From 1969 he was a supervisor at Republic Wire Company. He married the former Anna Didyk. The marriage was blessed with five children, Mirka, Ludmila, Francis, Gabriel and Victor.

Mr. Kostak began his literary career writing poems and political articles. He later published a play and several collections of poetry. Many of his poems and articles were published in the JEDNOTA newspaper and other periodicals in the West. He held membership in many Slovak organizations.

The post 1948 generation has lost another one of its members who kept alive the hope of freedom for their homeland in the decades of communist domination. May he rest in peace.

It seems that his daughter has inherited his poetic talents. The following poem was written by Mira Kostak in tribute to her father:

Stranger

By Mira Kostak

Nervous gray eyes betraying a vulnerable simplicity
Accidentally catch mine- and jet away.
Attempting casualness, he strolls into the living room,
Slippers shuffling about thought along the carpet,
Smoke from the pipe dragging behind like a reluctant memory;
Some remains to seal off the passageway between us.

I can only imagine where his thoughts may have led him-
To the father known only in childhood,
A man' wonderings filling in a child's understandings?
To the dying mother whose remarkable Slovak cheekbones
He has brought to a foreign land, a foreign time?
To the child only-brother
Resurrected from a creek in a battlefield
Leaving him, at seventeen, to face the war's memories alone?
Perhaps he is pondering a new poem,
Forming a familiar prayer for a crumbling past world
Nourished only by a poet's fertile imaginings,
Or humming silently a lullaby
Of sheep-covered hills and lily-banked rivers
Ebbing farther and farther away from recollection.
Does he think of me,
His even more foreign daughter,
Kidnapped by a new age of a new vision?

Homeless and alone in his house,
My father sleeps with his head hanging down on his breast.
Thinking that we are both orphans,
I tiptoe with much care
Past the beloved stranger.

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

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

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

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

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Nájdí si čas na modlitbu

MATKA TERÉZIA: MOJE TAJOMSTVO - MODLÍM SA, Lúč, Bratislava 2007

Kniha vychádza pri príležitosti 10. výročia úmrtia Matky Terézie. Spomíname si na ňu s neúfňajúcou vďakou a láskou, s prosbou o príhovor za nás u nebeského Otca. Nech jej slová i svedectvo života znovu vstúpia do nášho srdca.

V slovenčine doteraz nevyšla publikácia, ktorá by takýmto spôsobom predstavila Matku Teréziu. Kľúč k pochopeniu tejto knihy ponúka vydavateľstvo na zadnej strane obálky: "V tejto knihe nájdete modlitby Matky Terézie rozdelené podľa tém. Úvod k nim tvoria skutočné príbehy z jej života charakteristického hormóniou medzi modlitbou a činorodou láskou." Táto kniha sa nedá prečítať jedným dychom. Žiada si od čitateľa sústredenú pozornosť. Pozyva ho, aby po nej opakované siahol. Aby k nej prichádzal ako k studnici živej vody a znova z nej načieral. Prvé strany prinášajú zaujímavé príspevky, ktoré približujú Matku Teréziu prostredníctvom etáp jej života, dávajú možnosť zahĺbiť sa do tajomstiev jej apoštolátu lásky, ktorým naplnila "blahoslavenstvo" matky chudobných, do jej osobnej cesty svätosti. Čitateľ má príležitosť oboznámiť sa so vzťahom Matky Terézie k jej duchovnej patrónke sv. Terézii z Lisieux. Hneď po úvode sú dve závažné svedectvá pápeža Jána Pavla II. - homília prednesená počas eucharistickej slávnosti blahorečenia a príhovor pútnikom pri príležitosti be-

tifikácie Matky Terézie z Kalkaty (19. a 20. októbra 2003). Na slová Jána Pavla II. nadväzuje homília José Saraiva Martinsa, ktorú predniesol počas eucharistickej slávnosti na poďakovanie za blahorečenie Matky Terézie 20. októbra 2003.

V ďalšej časti publikácie nachádza čitateľ modlitby Matky Terézie rozdelené podľa tém. Väčšinu z nich uvádzajú konkrétne životné situácie Matky Terézie. Na ne nadväzujú modlitby. Modlitba bola najdôležitejším momentom v živote tejto apoštolky chudobných. Keď sa vrátila domov z národných prác alebo ciest po Indii či zo zahraničia, prvé kroky viedli do kaplnky, aby si kľakli pred eucharistickým Kristom, ktorému predtým slúžila v chudobných. Aj Matka Terézia zažila pokúšenia diavla - hodiny temna, ale nad tým všetkým žiaril eucharistický Kristus, kontemplácia a modlitba, sila modlitby. Výstižne to zaznamenávajú slová na zadnej strane obálky: "Ak sa naučíme modliť ako ona, možno bude pre nás ľahšie, aby sme milovali aspoň o trochu viac a lepšie. Aby sme milovali Pána cez blížnych, aj cez tých, ktorých je ťažké milovať." Matka Terézia vydala sama pozoruhodné svedectvo o sebe: "Pozri, čo som, Božia ceruzka. Kúsok ceruzky, ktorou Boh píše, čo chce."

Katolícke noviny

Sviatok Panny Márie Bohorodičky

(1. január)

Podľa záznamu v evanjeliu sv. Lukáša osem dní po narodení "obrezali chlapčeka a dali mu meno Ježiš" (Lk 2, 21). Túto udalosť si pripomínala Cirkev v dvoch sviatkoch: sviatok Obrezania Pána, ktorý sa už od 6. storočia tradične slávil 1. januára a sviatok Mena Ježiš, ktorý sa slávil v nedeľu medzi 1. a 6. januárom, alebo - keď v tomto rozmedzí nedeľa nebola - 2. januára. Sviatok Mena Ježiš bol veľmi populárny vo františkánskych komunitách už od polovice 14. storočia a jeho horlivým šíriteľom bol sv. Bernardín Siensky (1380 - 1444). Od 15. storočia sa slávil lokálne vo viacerých diecézach v Belgicku, Nemecku a vo Veľkej Británii. Jeho svätenie sa platnosťou pre celú Cirkev zaviedol pápež Inocent XIII. v r. 1721.

Ôsmy deň po Vianociach bol až donedávna známy ako sviatok Obrezania Pána. Pôvodne to však bol mariánsky sviatok, ako o tom svedčili vlastné modlitby (propria) pri sv. omši a pri liturgii hodín, v ktorých Cirkev vyzdvihovala a odvolávala sa na zásluhy Panny Márie. V Ríme sa tento sviatok slávil od 7. storočia a hlavné bohoslužby sa konali v chráme Santa Maria Antica, ktorý dal postaviť pápež Ján VII. (701 - 707), pôvodom Grék a vyznaním, "služobník Panny Márie".

Pri reforme cirkevného kalendára v r. 1969 sa tieto dva sviatky nahradili Slávnosťou Panny Márie Bohorodičky, ktorou si Cirkev pripomína dôležitú úlohu Márie v diele spásy ako Matky Syna Božieho a jej vyhlásenie za Bohorodičku (Theotokos) na Treťom ekumenickom koncile v Efeze (r. 431). Je oslavou materstva Panny Márie a téma bohoslužby dňa je vyjadrená slovami sv. Pavla "Keď prišla plnosť času, Boh poslal svojho Syna, narodeného zo ženy..." (Gal 4,4). Takto sa z tohto sviatku Pána stal sviatok Panny Márie. Bohorodička (gr. Theotokos, lat. Deipara) - titul, ktorým prvotná Cirkev poctila Pannu Máriu na konci 3. storočia. Vyjadruje sa ním skutočnosť, že Mária bola matkou Božieho Syna nielen ako človeka, ale aj ako pravého Boha. V 5. storočí sa v Cirkvi vyskytli pochybnosti o teologickej správnosti tohto titulu. Koncil v Efeze r. 431 odsúdil tento bludný názor a vyhlásil dogmu, že Panne Márii ako matke Bohočloveka Ježiša Krista názor Bohorodička právom patrí.

Ocenenie pre ministra

Jána Kubiša

Bratislava (TASR) - Ocenenie za významný prínos k rozvoju slovensko-amerických vzťahov udelila 10. decembra 2007 mimovládna a nezisková organizácia Priatelia Slovenska ministrom zahraničných vecí SR Jánovi Kubišovi.

Minister Kubiš poďakoval za ocenenie, pričom charakter slovensko-amerických vzťahov označil za strategický. Rovnako zdôraznil, že záujem o ďalšie posilnenie transatlantickej väzby bude pretrvávajúť aj naďalej.

Mimovládna nezisková organizácia Priatelia Slovenska vznikla v roku 2001 na podporu záujmov SR v Spojených štátoch amerických (USA). Je to lobistická skupina, ktorá sa snaží posilňovať priateľstvo a spoluprácu medzi USA a Slovenskom ako dvoma národmi, ktoré zdieľajú podobné hodnoty - slobodu, demokraciu a trhovú ekonomiku.

Záujem o zimné pobyty vo Vysokých Tatrách rastie

Vysoké Tatry (TASR) - Záujem o zimné pobyty vo Vysokých Tatrách v ostatných rokoch narastá. Podľa vykonaného riaditeľa tamojšieho Združenia cestovného ruchu (ZCR) Petra Chudého sú Tatry celoročným strediskom cestovného ruchu s dominanciou letnej a zimnej sezóny. Výsledky posledných rokov však naznačujú isté zmeny v doterajšej štruktúre ubytovaných návštevníkov v oboch špičkových sezónach roka.

V minulosti platilo, že 50% návštevníkov sa ubytovalo v Tatrách v letných mesiacoch (jún až september), 30% v zimných mesiacoch (december až marec) a ostávajúci 20% počas tzv. medzisezóny (jarnej v apríli a máji a jesennej v októbri a novembri). Po kalamite v Tatrách, teda od zimnej sezóny 2004/2005, sa začalo rozdelenie významu sezón meniť. Podiel letnej dosiahol 48%, zimnej 27% a medzisezóny 25%. V posledných 3. zimných sezónach došlo k nárastu počtu ubytovaných návštevníkov v Tatrách.

Tento trend je podľa riaditeľa ZCR spôsobený najmä predĺžovaním a zároveň skvalitňovaním podmienok v zimných sezónach, najmä vďaka značným investíciám do zasnežovacích systémov a modernizácií lanoviek a vlekov pre lyžiarov. "Tohtoročná zimná lyžiarska sezóna začala už 10. novembra na svahu Interski na Štrbskom Plese a má ambíciu trvať (ak to klimatické podmienky v Tatrách umožnia) až do 8. mája 2008, čo by bolo neuveriteľných 180 dní," zdôraznil Chudý. Zimná lyžiarska sezóna sa v ostatných rokoch už tradične začína na svahu Interski na Štrbskom Plese a končí 8. mája v Lomnickom sedle na Skalnatom Plese. Doteraz najdlhšia sezóna v Tatrách bola od 16. novembra 2002 do 9. mája 2003, a to 175 dní. Minulá sezóna, hoci začala už 11. novembra 2006 a trvala až do 8. mája 2007, bola dlhá "iba" 161 dní, pretože veľké oteplenie na prelome vlnaňajšieho novembra a decembra spôsobilo vyše dvojtýždňovú prestávku. Riaditeľ ZCR uviedol, že okrem takmer 300,000 ubytovaných hostí ročne navštívi Vysoké Tatry ďalších asi 1.5 milióna tzv. jednodňových návštevníkov. Až 65 z nich prichádza v letných mesiacoch. V ostatných 3 rokoch aj ich počet každé leto narastá. Rozdiely medzi hlavnými sezónami sa teda začali znižovať. Rezervy zatiaľ majú Vysoké Tatry v lepšom využití počas medzisezóny, čo by sa v budúcnosti mohlo zmeniť vďaka novovybudovaným kongresovým kapacitám i vodným svetom pri viacerých hoteloch.



Solisko vo Vysokých Tatrách

Robert Fico ocenil prínos MS pri vzniku samostatnej SR

Martin (TASR) - Predseda vlády Robert Fico vo svojom príhovore na 7. valnom zhromaždení Matice slovenskej (MS), ktoré sa konalo 16. a 17. novembra v Dome odborov v Martine, zdôraznil, že MS je významnou kultúrnou a vzdelávacou inštitúciou a ocenil jej prínos pri vzniku samostatnej Slovenskej republiky. "Vám by Slováci mali ďakovať za vlastný slovenský štát. Vďaka vám ho aj rozvíjame," konštatoval premiér. Podľa neho matičiarsky program má integračné úsilie. Zjednocuje slovenský národ, matičiari zohrávajú významnú úlohu pri výchove mládeže. "Nenechajme našu mládež počítať, podelme sa s nimi o city. Dajme si malý záväzok, že svoje deti aspoň raz vyvedieme na Kriváň a odtiaľ, aby videli Slovensko ako raj na zemi," povedal. Apeloval na matičiárov, aby nezabudli na južné Slovensko a prinášali tam slovenskú kultúru. Premiér podotkol, že význam MS potvrdzuje aj skutočnosť, že 2. januára 2008 bude v jej martinských priestoroch slávnostné zasadanie vlády pri príležitosti 15. výročia vzniku Slovenskej republiky.

Valné zhromaždenie MS tvoria delegáti - členovia výboru a dozorného výboru MS, miestne odbory, vedecké a záujmové odbory, odborné pracoviská a krajské rady MS. Účastníci zhromaždenia prerokovali okrem iného správu o činnosti za roky 2004-2007, hlavné smery ďalšieho rozvoja MS na roky 2007-2010 a zvolili nové orgány. O post predsedu MS sa uchádzali dvaja kandidáti - terajší predseda Jozef Markuš (1944) a Ľubomír Kral'ovanský (1966) z Martina. Dvojdnové valné zhromaždenie si zvolilo staronového predsedu Jozefa Markuša.

Liptovská Teplička Dedina roka

Liptovská Teplička (TASR) - Titul Dedina roka 2007 prevzala 22. novembra podtatranská obec Liptovská Teplička. Jej predstaviteľom ho odovzdal štátny tajomník Ministerstva životného prostredia SR (MŽP SR) Dušan Munko. Súťaže podobného druhu podľa Munka pomáhajú aktivizovať samosprávy, ale aj prezentovať ich činnosť. Dokazujú, že majú záujem na skvalitňovaní životného prostredia a vedia aj vypracovávať projekty pre získanie príspevkov z eurofondov. Súťaž Dedina roka zorganizovala Slovenská agentúra životného prostredia (SAŽP) v spolupráci so Združením miest a obcí Slovenska (ZMOS) a Spolkom pre obnovu dediny (SOD). Do tohtoročného štvrtého ročníka súťaže sa prihlásilo 20 obcí z celého Slovenska. Druhé miesto v nej obsadili Očová a Pruské. Hodnotila ich komisia zložená zo zástupcov MŽP SR, SAŽP, SOD.

Vydarené Mikulášske popoludnie v New York City

Motto: V dolinách keď za večera stíchnu zvonov hlas z neba na zem keď pozerá prevej hviezdny jas

nad snežnou sa Tatrou vznáša duch Svätého Mikuláša v každom roku raz ...



Farská rada pri Slovenskom kostole sv. Jána Nepomuckého a Spolok sv. Štefana č. 716 Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty v New York City usporiadali dňa 2. decembra 2007 o 1.00 hodine odpoľudnia v osadnej hale kostola tradičné Mikulášske popoludnie s Mikulášskou nádielkou a občerstvením. Deti sa tešili z darčiekov

o ktoré sa pričínili rodičia, starí rodičia, príbuzní, známi a hlavný duchovný kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého v N.Y. Martin Svitan.

V duchu Mikulášskej tradície sa niesol i kultúrny program. Vystúpili v ňom deti, ktoré s radosťou či už spievali, recitovali básničky, hrali na hudobných nástrojoch, alebo za tie menšie sa pričínili rodičia.

Vďaka za toto vydarené podujatie patrí predovšetkým tým, ktorí sa na jeho prípravu podieľali: Jozef a Anna Bilik, Milan a Henrieta Dait, Andrej a Serafina Šulák, Mária Božeková, Ján Škrkoň, Ladislav Korček so synom, samozrejme náš pán farár Martin Svitan a ďalší dobrovoľníci. Dúfame, že na budúci rok sa znovu na našom tradičnom Mikulášskom podujatí stretne v takomto počte, ako aj ďalšími novými návštevníkmi.

Henrieta H. Daitová,
tajomníčka Farskej rady
a Spolku sv. Štefana



Výbor Matice slovenskej zvolil nové predsedníctvo

Martin (TASR) – Výbor Matice slovenskej (MS) si 14. decembra na ustanovujúcej schôdzi po novembrovom Valnom zhromaždení MS zvolil na návrh predsedu MS Jozefa Markuša šesťčlenné predsedníctvo. Správcom MS sa na obdobie 2007 -2010 stal Ján Eštok, prvým podpredsedom Miroslav Bielik, podpredsedom Alexander Števík a členmi predsedníctva MS Alexander Lilge, Katarína Pacnerová a Július Zúbor. Podľa hovorca MS Stanislava Bajaníka prerokoval výbor MS aj prípravu slávnostného zasadnutia vlády SR v MS v Martine a celonárodného podujatia. Sme tu 15 rokov na Matičnom námestí v Martine pri príležitosti vzniku Slovenskej republiky, ktoré sa uskutočnia 2. januára 2008. Súčasne zasadal aj Dozorný výbor Matice slovenskej, ktorý s Výborom MS prerokoval viac aktuálnych otázok, dodal Bajaník.

Svätý Otec mladým:

Nech vo vás viera v Boha vzbudí nádej a pomôže vám zmeniť svet

Vatikán (TK KBS, RV) – Pri príležitosti 30. európskeho stretnutia mladých pod vedením komunity z Taizé, organizovaného v Ženeve na prelome starého a nového roka, adresoval pápež Benedikt XVI. mladým mimoriadny pozdrav. Vyzdvihol v ňom postavu brata Rogera, zakladateľa tejto komunity, ktorý sa stal pre státisíce mladých ľudí, ktorí prichádzali na pozvanie jeho komunity do malej dedinky v Burgundsku, vzorom jednoduchej, bezvýhradnej, inšpirujúcej kresťanskej lásky a zmierenia. Svätý Otec sa v posolstve mladým prihovril týmito slovami:

“Ste pozývaní kráčať po nových cestách nádeje, čerpať silu z Božieho slova a z dôverného vzťahu s Kristom. Len On nám ponúka kľúč od skutočnej nádeje, ktorá prevyšuje všetky naše malé nádeje, pretože nás orientuje k budúcnosti a k večnej blaženosti, v ústrety, ktorej kráčame každým dňom, každý osobne ale aj všetci spolu ako Cirkev. Nech vaša dôvera v Boha vo vás vzbudzuje nádej a pomáha vám zmeniť

svet, na základe evanjeliových hodnôt, predovšetkým na odpustení, ktoré je vrcholom lásky, pretože ten, kto odpušťa sa nezastavuje pri minulých omyloch, ale otvára sa pre novú budúcnosť. Hovorí sa, že pokoj je ovocím spravodlivosti, avšak ešte viac je ovocím odpustenia, ktoré spečatuje zmierenie medzi tými, ktorí si ešte včera vzdorovali alebo oponovali, a dovoľuje im kráčať spoločne.”

Stretnutie v Ženeve, ktoré bude od 28. decembra do 8. januára bude v poradí 30. európskym stretnutím mladých z komunity z Taizé. Po prvýkrát bude na švajčiarskej pôde, v meste, do ktorého siahajú počiatky komunity ešte predtým, ako sa brat Roger a jeho prví nasledovníci presťahovali do francúzskeho Burgundsku. Komunita z Taizé aj tento rok pozýva mladých, aby znovu objavili vieru v Boha, ktorá je prameňom lásky k blížnemu. Túto skúsenosť môžu mladí zakúsiť práve v zmierení a v spoločnosti, ponúkanom v Taizé.

Betlehemske svetlo pokoja a mieru žiarilo aj na Slovensku

Bratislava (TASR) – Betlehemske svetlo pokoja a mieru žiarilo aj tento rok vo viac ako 25 krajinách Európy, vrátane Slovenska. Svetlo z večného plameňa v Bazilike Narodenia Pána v Betleheme odpálila už 26. novembra 2007 Elizabeth Nemeč z Rakúska a začiatkom decembra ho v sprievode 380 pútnikov priviezla z Izraela do Viedne. Na Slovensku tento rok Betlehemske svetlo žiarilo od 15. decembra. Slovenskí skauti, tak ako po minulé roku, priviezli svetlo z Viedne do Bratislavy. V sobotu 15. decembra ho slávnostne privítali počas svätej omše vo Františkánskom kostole Zvestovania Pána v centre Bratislavy. Na záver bohoslužby ho posvätil františkánsky kňaz. Symbol pokoja a mieru z Betlehema sa takto dostal na Slovensko už po 18. raz. Po sv. omši 15. decembra večer skauti odniesli Betlehemske svetlo do susedného Kostola Najsvätejšieho Spasiteľa

(jezuitský kostol) a do kostola Nanebovzatia Panny Márie (Blumentál). V ďalších dňoch skauti svetlo distribuovali v jednotlivých mestách a obciach, do tisícok kostolov a farností, nemocníc, azylových domov, domovov sociálnej a opatrovateľskej starostlivosti v celej SR. Veriacim ho odpaľovali na predvianočných svätých omšiach a pobožnostiach alebo prinášali do domácností až do 24. decembra. Betlehemske svetlo skauti už tradične prinášajú aj prezidentovi Slovenskej republiky a na najvyššie položené pracovisko v SR - do Observatória Slovenskej akadémie vied (SAV) na Lomnickom štíte vo výške 2,632 metrov.

Tradicíu roznášania Betlehemskeho svetla z Baziliky Narodenia Pána iniciovali v roku 1986 zamestnanci rozhlasu v rakúskom Linzi a nadobudla už celoeurópsky charakter.

Putovanie za poznáním

V termíne 3. - 12. júla 2008 sa uskutoční putovný poznávací tábor pre slovenských stredoškôľakov zo zahraničia vo veku 14 - 18 rokov. Jeho plným gestorom je Úrad pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí (ÚSZZ), ktorý hradí všetky náklady spojené s pobytom na Slovensku.

Zámerom ÚSZZ je poskytnúť možnosť pobytu na Slovensku čo najširšiemu okruhu študentov z krajín, kde žijú slovenské menšiny. Krajania sa zoznámia s Banskou Bystricou, Hroncom, Čiernym Balogom, skanzenom Vydrovo, Bystrianskou jaskyňou, Hornou Lehotou, Detvou, Bojnícami a Bratislavou.

Hlavným cieľom podujatia je poznávanie kultúry svojich predkov: pamätných miest slovenskej histórie, galérií, múzeí, knižnej tvorby a prírodných zaujímavostí Slovenska, ako aj výmena vzájomných skúseností účastníkov tábora. ÚSZZ pozýva študentov a 1 dospelú osobu ako pedagogický dozor. Podmienkou účasti je znalosť slovenského jazyka na základnej komunikačnej úrovni.

ÚSZZ týmto oznámením chce zistiť záujem o toto podujatie, preto žiada jednotlivých záujemcov a spolky, aby informáciu o počte študentov a ich doprovoďte zaslali na adresu úradu do konca januára 2008. Na základe prejaveneho záujmu z jednotlivých krajských komunít a spolkov bude bližšie špecifikovať počet študentov z jednotlivých krajín. Adresa Úradu: Úrad pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí, Radlinského 13, 817 80 Bratislava, Slovak Republic; tel. číslo 011-421-2-5720 0512; e-mail: iveta.balogova@uszz.gov.sk

Anna Hurná na večnosti

Rady mladšej slovenskej emigrácie v Montreale rednú. Po dlhej a trápnej nemoci odišla od nás do ríše nenávratna roduverná a Bohabojná Slovenka, prikladná osobnosť v našom spoločenskom podnikaní - Anna Hurná. Pochádza z uvedomelej, spolkársky orientovanej slovenskej rodiny Jána Hurného a jeho manželky. Jej otec bol nekompromisným slovensko-národným dejateľom, prominentným jednotárskym činiteľom a prvým podpredsedom Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty pre Kanadu. Ako takým radí sa medzi zakladateľov miestneho čísla 784 Jednoty, cirkevnej osady sv. Cyrila a Metoda a agilných propagátorov cieľov a ideologického programu novozaloženej Kanadskej Slovenskej Ligy.

Anna Hurná sa narodila pred 81 rokmi vo východoslovenskej obci Dobrá nad Ondavou z rodičov Ján Hurný (1965) a matky Mária rod. Harvanová (1995). Jej rodná obec fakticky viac neexistuje. Bola zaliata vodnou nádržou Domaša. Do Kanady prišla začiatkom roku 1936 s matkou a staršou sestrou Máriou (Peltznerová) k otcovi, ktorý ich tu predišiel v máji 1927 s vlnou hromadného vysťahovalectva Slovákov do Kanady. Jej sestra predišla ju do večnosti pred niekoľkými rokmi v Calgary (Alberta), kde žila s manželom a svojou rodinou.

Po príklade svojho vynikajúceho otca, v pomerne mladom veku, aktívne sa zapojila do slovenského spolkárskeho a cirkevného života v Montreale. V svojom mládežníckom veku účinkovala v hudobnej kapele Jednota, ktorú tu založil jej otec. Za dlhé roky zastávala funkciu pokladníčky Jednoty, ako aj Ružencového spolku pri osade sv. Cyrila a Metoda. Ako aktívna funkcionárka Jednoty, brala účasť na



Anna Hurná (1926-2007)

početných konvenciách tejto organizácie ako delegátka. Pri príležitosti konvencie IKSJ v Montreale prvej zadržanej mimo hraníc USA, zásluhou jej otca, v Konvenčnom výbore utvorenom pre tento účel, zohrala dôležitú úlohu. Po graduácii v Darcy McGee High School, zamestnala sa v multinárodnej spoločnosti General Motors, odkiaľ po 30. rokoch odišla na penziu. Celý svoj život prežila v Montreale. Avšak dlhé mesiace tvrdej kanadskej zimy strávila na slnečnej Floride.

Zomrela vo štvrtok 11. októbra 2007 v St. Mary's nemocnici, zaopatrená cirkevnými sviatosťami. Pohreb mala v utorok, 16. októbra 2007 zo slovenského kostola, ktorý zbožne navštevovala od svojej rannej mladosti. Pohrebné obrady v kostole a cirkevné modlitby na cintoríne, v neprítomnosti Rev. F. Krušínského, správcu osady, vykonal mladý slovenský kňaz Rudolf Grega. Keďže zosnulá bola aktívnou členkyňou Ružencového spolku, svätý ruženec u pohrebníka a potom pri rozlúčke v kostole odriekla Adela Lašaniková, predsedníčka Spolku. Na jej poslednej ceste prišli ju odprevať početní priatelia a známi. Jej telesné pozostatky boli pochované v rodinnom hrobe na cintoríne Notre Dame de Neige. Smútia za ňou jej súrodenci v Calgary a široký okruh priateľov v Montreale.

Keď sa s ňou lúčime a dávame jej naše posledné zbohom, robíme tak vo vedomí, že vykonala tu dobrý kus záslužnej a Bohumilej práce pre udržanie slovenského dedičstva a národného povedomia v Kanade.

Pokoj jej kresťanskej duši a večné svetlo v nebeskej sláve!

Štefan Hreha
Montréal, QC.

Tradíciu Vianoc udržiavajú na dedinách folklóristi a učítelia

Zvolen (TASR) – Čaro vianočných tradícií sa uchováva dodnes najmä na slovenskom vidieku. Ešte stále existujú desiatky obcí, kde sa udržiavajú zvyky bez novodobých komerčných nánosov. Zvyky na dedinách prenášajú z generácie na generáciu hlavne vedúci miestnych folklórnych skupín, zariadení učítelia a vracajú sa k nim aj ľudia, ktorí sa po rokoch vrátili z mesta na "otcovskú hrudu". Tradícia vianočných zvykov je aj dnes živá vo viacerých dedinách na Slovensku, povedal etnológ Vojtech Majling. V Turčianskej Štiavici sa koná trh ľudových remesiel, v Detve je program malých koledníkov.

V Strelníkoch pri Banskej Bystrici boli už v polovici decembra Valašské Vianoce. Ide o predvianočné stretnutia, na ktorom horehronskí valasi predvádzajú pôvodné zvyky ovčiarov od Mítra do Troch kráľov. "V podkoniach sa nám tento rok podarilo zorganizovať aj stretnutie valachov v tamojšom kostole," pokračuje Majling. Pastieri prídu vo svojich tradičných odevoch na polnočnú omšu. Podľa etnológa mladým ľuďom treba neustále pripomínať spôsoby, ktorými žili obyvatelia Slovenska kedysi. "Vianoce nie sú len o materiálnych statkoch, obyčaje a zvyky sú hodnotami srdca," dodal.

Oznámenia spolkov a okresov

Členská schôdza spolku sv. Matúša č. 45 IKSJ v New York City

Oznamujeme členom spolku sv. Matúša č. 45 IKSJ v New Yorku, že naša členská schôdza sa uskutoční v nedeľu 20. januára 2008 o 12:30 hodine po slovenskej omši v osadnej hale Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého na Prvej Avenue a 66. ulici. Láskaivo žiadame našich členov na tejto schôdzi o hojnú účasť.

Mária Jurášiová, pokladníčka

Výročná schôdza I. zboru Slovenskej ligy v New Yorku

I. zbor Slovenskej ligy v Amerike pozýva všetkých členov, ako aj hostí na Výročnú členskú schôdzu, ktorá sa bude konať v nedeľu, 13. januára 2008 o 1:00 hodine popoludní v osadnej hale Slovenského kostola sv. Jána Nepomuckého 411 East 66th Street, New York City. Na schôdzi podáme správu o činnosti, finančnú správu za uplynulé obdobie a uskutočnime voľby do výboru I. Zboru Slovenskej ligy na rok 2008 ako aj predbežný plán činnosti na rok 2008. Očakávame, že na tejto schôdzi sa zúčastnia všetci členovia.

Ostávam s priateľským pozdravom

Milan R. Dait, predseda

V sobotu 2. februára 2008

V New York Athletic Club Slovenský ples

Slovensko-americké kultúrne stredisko (SACC) v New Yorku usporiada 2. februára 2008 v poradí už 16. Slovenský ples. Podujatie sa bude konať v New York Athletic Club, 180 Central Park South (na rohu 59 ulice a 7Ave.) New York, N.Y. Vstupné je \$160.00 za osobu, pre študentov \$95.00 Šek treba vystaviť na: Slovak-American Cultural Center (SACC) a poslať na adresu: Stano Krčmár, 33 Weasel Drift Rd., West Paterson, N.J. tel.: (973) 357-1209. Bližšie informácie poskytnú: Gita Hlavinka, tel. (201) 242-0214 a L'ubica Markovič tel.: (212) 781-5843. Do tanca a na počúvanie bude hrať kapela Express pod vedením Marka Soltisa. Koktail začína o 6. hodine. Black tie preferred. Máme potvrdenú správu, že na plese bude spievať známa americko-slovenská speváčka a herečka L'uba Greguš Mason. L'ubka hrala vo viacerých úlohách na Broadway a v posledných mesiacoch mala úspešné koncerty v San Franciscu, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York City a Edgewater v New Jersey. Konferenciárom bude známa rozhlasová osobnosť Greg Whiteside. Výbor očakáva reakciu do 15. januára 2008.

Slovenský ples to nie je len dobrá večera a tanec. To je aj oslava vzájomnosti, láska ku slovenskej kultúre, ku slovenským koreňom a oslava slobody a samostatnosti Slovenska. Je to aj fórum, ktoré chce oboznámiť nielen slovenskú ale aj americkú verejnosť, že Slováci sú národom vyspelým s bohatou kultúrou a históriou.

Vo chvíľach pohody a v povznesenej nálade si SACC bude spomínať na putá, ktoré medzi Slovenskom a zahraničnými Slovákami pretrvávajú. Hrdosť zo svojej je takým výrečným aktom ľudskej personaliti, že očakávať ju je tak prirodzené ako život.

Usporiadatelia plesu srdečne pozývajú slovenskú verejnosť na toto reprezentačné kultúrno-zábavné podujatie.

Rudo L. Greguš

Lekári sa vracajú zo zahraničia späť na Slovensko

Bratislava (TASR) – Na Slovensko sa už začínajú vracieť späť lekári a zdravotné sestry, ktorí odišli pred časom za lepšími podmienkami do zahraničia. Uviedol to 22. novembra na brífingu po 8. konferencii ministrov zdravotníctva Európy slovenský minister Ivan Valentovič. "Postupne odmeny za prácu rastú a ja už vidím tendencie, že najmä z Čiech sa nám vracajú lekári aj sestry", konštatoval Valentovič. Zároveň dodal, že hoci stále lekári odchádzajú situácia na Slovensku nie je "taká dramatická". Pripomenul, že klesá záujem o štúdium na zdravotníckych fakultách.

Podľa generálneho sekretára Rady Európy Terryho Davisa nie je s migráciou v Európe, ktorej bola konferencia venovaná, problém. "Aj do Veľkej Británie po otvorení hraníc prišlo obrovské množstvo zdravotníkov z

Poľska, ale postupne ten záujem opadol a všetko sa ustálilo. V Británii, ale aj vo Francúzsku je dosť lekárov, ktorí sú práve deťmi emigrantov, napríklad z Indie a Pakistanu," uviedol David.

S Valentovičom sa obaja zhodli na tom, že je zaujímavé, že poľské, ukrajinské a ruské zdravotné sestry sa neorientujú na krajiny, kde majú malú jazykovú bariéru, ale smerujú do anglicky či nemecky hovoriacich krajín. V tejto súvislosti David poznamenal, že Európska únia nemá žiadny špeciálny jazykový program, ktorý by pomáhal lekárom pracujúcim s emigrantmi prekonávať jazykovú bariéru. V súčasnosti v rámci Európy migrujú zdravotníci najmä z Čiech a Rakúska do Nemecka, zo Slovenska do Čiech a z Nemecka do Švédska.

Klenot do každej rodiny

Dňa 21. novembra 2007 sa v Klube slovenských spisovateľov konala mimoriadna udalosť - slávnostná prezentácia dvojväzkového diela Dr. Milana Vároša "Stratené slovenské poklady". Prvý diel s podtitulom: Osudy umeleckých pamiatok slachty a panovníkov a druhý: Osudy našich umeleckých diel a pamiatok (najmä v maďarských múzeách a galériách). Toto vzácne dielo nemalo by chýbať ani v jednej slovenskej rodine a malo by sa dediť ako ojazstý klenot.

Autor na osudoch umeleckých diel súčasne priblíži čitateľovi celú históriu slovenského národa. Táto kniha obsahom otrasie aj vlašného Slováka. Je to dielo, ktoré môže človek do seba nasávať ľúbo po kvapkách. V opačnom prípade by to bolo pre človeka jedom. Prečo? Tam sa čitateľ dozvie krutú pravdu o osudoch umeleckých skvostov, ktoré patria na Slovensko. Autor túto prácu venuje predovšetkým členom slovenskej vlády, poslancom, ministrom kultúry, historikom umenia v Maďarsku, vynikajúcim maďarským reštaurátorom a ďalším osobnostiam na ktorých si spomína.

Dielo je zároveň úžasná pastva pre oči. Na veľkom formáte A4 je na 560. stranách vyše 1,500 farebných obrázkov. No na vydanie tohto diela však nemal dostatok vlastných zdrojov. Našiel sa však človek z USA s veľkým srdcom, dlhoročný predseda Slovenskej ligy v Amerike, MUDr. Ľudovít Pavlo ako aj Matica Slovenská, ktoré dielo vydala.



Autor Milan Vároš pri venovaní knihy "Stratené slovenské poklady" rodine Birošovej.

prípadoch pýšia cudzie múzeá, galérie, kostoly a súkromné zbierky.

Milan Vároš vyzval aj môjho manžela Jozefa, aby priblížil osudy diel Slovákov v USA, pretože je známe, že mnohé slovenské kostoly sú už zatvorené a majetok v mnohých prípadoch predaný iným cirkvám. Jozef Biroš vyjadril obavu o kostoly svojho rodného mesta Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Ide o kostol zasvätený Božskému srdcu Ježišovmu, ktorý dal postaviť známy kňaz, vedec a maliar Jozef Murgaš. Dva prekrásne oltárne obrazy sú zatiaľ na svojom mieste. Ale dokedy? V súčasnej dobe sú už spojené tri kostoly do jednej farnosti a pán farár sa z fary odsťahoval. Kostol slúži len na nedeľňajšie bohoslužby a škola Jozefa Murgaša v jeho blízkosti je už zatvorená. A jej osud je už spečatený. Preto sa žiada minimálne zmapovať a zozbierať kultúrne diela Slovákov v USA pre budúce generácie a tým obohatovať širokú kultúrnu verejnosť Slovenska o diela, ktoré sú súčasťou Slovákov v zahraničí.

A teraz niečo o autorovi. Milan Vároš sa narodil v Bytči. Po skončení vysokej školy pôsobil ako redaktor v denníku Smena, odkiaľ ho v roku 1969 ako kritika politiky normalizácie vyhodili. Ako novinár však pracoval ešte intenzívnejšie, pod inými menami. Svedčia o tom diela, ktoré dnes vydáva.

V roku 1989, po politických zmenách, sa stal šéfredaktorom časopisu Život, ktorý sa stal najpredávanejším časopisom na Slovensku. Je autorom mnohých známych diel, jeho srdcovou záležitosťou bol Milan Rastislav Štefánik.

Amerických Slovákov bude najviac zaujímať jeho dielo "Putovanie za krajanmi". Tam som si objavila aj ja moju spolužiačku z gymnázia Aničku Ježikovou, teraz Dr. Pandulová-Sanchezová, ktorá ako prvá žena narodená na Slovensku dosiahla v USA hodnosť podplukovníčky letectva. Ako lekárka, patrí medzi najlepších odborníkov v oblasti rádiológie v USA. V tejto oblasti vydala niekoľko odborných kníh. Bola navrhovaná za veľvyslankyňu USA na Slovensku. Za toto dielo dostal Milan Vároš Cenu a čestné uznanie nadácie Jána a Betky Papánkovcov v New Yorku. Okrem toho získal mnoho domácich a zahraničných ocenení.

Milan Vároš sa rád pýši aj s listom Georgea Busha staršieho, bývalého prezidenta Spojených štátov, ktorý dostal po uverejnení reportáže o našom krajanovi Michalovi Strankovi, "Slovák na najslávnejšej snímke, známke a súsoší USA". Michal Strank padol ako dôstojník na japonskom ostrove Iwo Jima, kde vztýčil vlajku USA v r. 1945 a pochovaný je pri amerických prezidentoch na Arlington cintoríne vo Virginii.

Milan Vároš bol aj zakladajúcim signatárom Memoranda iniciatívy Zvrchované Slovensko z roku 1990.

A tak ako uverejnili Slovenské pohľady pri jeho sedemdesiatke: "Milan Vároš slúži nášmu národu, jeho dejinám, našej dedovizni."

Anna a Jozef Biroš



Prvý zľava: Autor Milan Vároš počas rozhovoru s predsedom Matice slovenskej Ing. Jozefom Markušom (prvý sprava). Zúčastnení rozhovoru Anna a Jozef Biroš (v prostriedku).

Štátne vyznamenanie apoštolskému nunciovi na Slovensku

Bratislava (TASR) – Prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič udelil 12. decembra v Prezidentskom paláci štátne vyznamenanie - Rad Bieleho dvojkríža II. triedy apoštolskému nunciovi na Slovensku Henrykovi Jozefovi Nowackému. Ocenenie dostal za osobitný prínos k rozvoju dvojstranných vzťahov medzi Slovenskom a Svätou stolicou a za príspevok k obnove duchovného života slovenského národa pri príležitosti ukončenia svojej diplomatickej misie v SR. "Som rád, že Vám osobne môžem odovzdať najvyššie ocenenie SR, ktoré sa udeľuje nie Slovákom, ale ľuďom, ktorí pre Slovensko urobili veľa," uviedol prezident Gašparovič počas slávnostného aktu. Zároveň skonštatoval, že práve Nowackého zásluhou sa zlepšovali vzťahy medzi Svätou stolicou a Slovenskom. Poďakoval mu aj za uskutočnenie tretej návštevy pápeža Jána Pavla II. na Slovensku v roku 2003. Nuncius Nowacký uviedol, že svoju misiu vždy považoval za službu k spoločnému dobru slovenského národa a sýtomnej cirkvi. Vyjadril presvedčenie, že Slovensko sa bude naďalej úspešne rozvíjať.



FOTO TASR - Miroslav Košířer

Prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič (vpravo) udelil štátne vyznamenanie - Rad Bieleho dvojkríža II. triedy apoštolskému nunciovi na Slovensku Henrykovi Jozefovi Nowackému (vľavo) 12. decembra 2007 v Prezidentskom paláci v Bratislave.

Prezident Gašparovič podpísal zákon o zavedení eura na Slovensku

Bratislava (TASR) – Prezident SR Ivan Gašparovič podpísal zákon o zavedení eura na Slovensku, tzv. generálny zákon, ktorý poslanci zákonodarného zboru schválili 28. novembra tohto roka. Splnenie jednotlivých ustanovení tejto novej právnej normy majú zabezpečiť plynulý a bezproblémový prechod zo slovenskej koruny (SKK) na spoločnú európsku menu - EURO. Ide o ustanovenia týkajúce sa duálneho obehu a oceňovania, pravidiel zaokrúhľovania cien pri prepočte zo SKK na EUR, či pravidiel výmeny pôvodnej korunovej hotovosti po zániku národnej meny - SKK.

Zákon zabezpečuje kontinuitu právnych vzťahov, čo predstavuje jeden z dôležitých princípov pri zavedení eura. Obsahom generálneho zákona nie je plnenie maastrichtských kritérií stanovených na zavedenie eura. Nespomína sa v ňom ani makroekonomická a menová situácia SR vzhľadom na prípravu jej vstupu do eurozóny.

Prostredníctvom generálneho zákona sa novelizujú aj ďalšie zákony. Ide hlavne o zmenu zákona o Národnej banke Slovenska (NBS) - jeho novelou sa kompetencie v oblasti meny a emisie bankoviek a mincí prenesú z centrálnej banky SR na Európsku centrálnu banku (ECB). Ďalej, generálny zákon je voči ostatným zákonom špecifický v určení časových termínov jeho účinnosti. To súvisí s tým, že účinnosť viacerých jeho ustanovení je viazaná na rozhodnutia európskych inštitúcií, ktoré sa ešte teraz nedajú presne určiť, týka sa to napr. rozhodnutia o stanovení konverzného kurzu a o určení termínu, kedy sa SR pripojí k eurozóne. Prvé ustanovenia generálneho zákona by mali byť účinné po podpísaní prezidentom SR od 1. januára 2008. Ďalšie začnú platiť odo dňa stanovenia konverzného kurzu, čo bude v lete budúceho roka. Zvyšné ustanovenia vstúpia do platnosti dňom zavedenia eura, čo je podľa plánu 1. január 2009.

Krátke správy zo Slovenska

Slovenské hospodárstvo rástlo v 3. štvrtroku rekordným tempom. Medziročný rast hrubého domáceho produktu (HDP) sa zrýchlil z 9.3% v 2. štvrtroku na 9.4%. Podľa informácií Štatistického úradu (ŠÚ) Slovensko patrí medzi najrýchlejšie rastúce ekonomiky strednej a východnej Európy. Slovenské hospodárstvo je 3. najrýchlejšie v Európskej únii po Lotyšsku a Litve.

Miera nezamestnanosti v Európskej únii dosiahla v októbri tohto roka 7.0%, čo v prvom prípade znamená rovnakú hodnotu ako v septembri a v druhom pokles o 0.1%. V októbri 2006 dosahovala miera nezamestnanosti v EÚ 7.8% a v eurozóne 8.0%. Vyplýva to zo štatistiky, ktorú zverejnil Európsky štatistický úrad Eurostat. Najvyššiu nezamestnanosť malo rovnako ako predchádzajúci mesiac Slovensko (11.2%) nasledované Poľskom (8.8%), na opačnom konci boli Dánsko (2.9%) a Holandsko (3.1%). Miera nezamestnanosti v USA dosiahla v uplynulom mesiaci 4.7% a v Japonsku 4.0%.

Slovenský školský systém dosiahol v medzinárodnom hodnotení krajín OECD PISA 2006 podpriemerné výsledky v porovnaní s priemerom vo všetkých troch oblastiach gramotnosti - čitateľskej, matematickej i prírodovednej. Informovala o tom Národná správa na internetovej stránke Štátneho pedagogického ústavu. Hoci Slovensko dosiahlo výsledky porovnateľné s rokom 2003, celkové hodnotenie týchto výsledkov v medzinárodnom kontexte sa však významne zhoršilo. "Štúdiá OECD PISA nemerajú, ako dobre učiteľia učili a žiaci zvládli učivo. Na základe výsledkov preto nemožno robiť závery o kvalite práce našich škôl alebo potenciáli ich žiakov. Správa hodnotí mieru, v akej žiaci disponujú istými zručnosťami považovanými za dôležité pre uplatnenie sa v spoločnosti, a zbiera informácie o faktoroch, ktoré môžu mať na ich rozvoj vplyv" uvádza sa v správe.

Pasy s biometrickými údajmi sa budú na Slovensku vydávať od budúceho roka. Vyplýva to z vládneho návrhu zákona o cestovných dokladoch, ktorú nedávno schválili poslanci Národnej rady SR. Digitálnu mapu tváre ako biometrický údaj budú nové pasy obsahovať od polovice januára budúceho roka. Z návrhu zákona vyplýva, že odtlačky prstov Slovenská republika navrhuje zaviesť od polovice roka 2009. Biometrické údaje sú pritom hlavnou požiadavkou USA pre zavedenie bezvízového styku so Slovenskom. Podľa návrhu zákona do nových pasov už nebude možné zapisovať deti. Nový zákon o cestovných dokladoch nadobúda po podpísaní prezidentom účinnosť 15. januára 2008.

Práce na komplexe Domu Božieho Milosrdenstva v Banskej Bystrici vrcholia. V novovybudovanom objekte, ktorý je jedným zo záverov diecéznej synody, do konca tohto roka ukončia vnútorné stavebné úpravy pre hospic, dom dôchodcov, dom sociálnych služieb a materskú školu, ako aj pre priláhlý kostol Božieho milosrdenstva a faru novozníkajúcej farnosti Banská Bystrica - Belveder. Kostol bude po otvorení sociálneho komplexu dostupný verejnosti. Slávnostné otvorenie Domu Božieho Milosrdenstva plánuje banskobystrický biskupský úrad, ktorý je investorom, na jar 2008. Má sa tak stať pri príležitosti výročia úmrtia Božieho služobníka a veľkého apoštola Božieho milosrdenstva, pápeža Jána Pavla II.

Spomedzi približne 1,500 profesorov na Slovensku patrí do medzinárodnej špičky 54. Z nich 19 pôsobí v Slovenskej akadémii vied a len 35 na vysokých školách. Najviac medzinárodne uznávaných odborníkov má Slovensko v chemických vedách - 21 a vo fyzikálnych vedách - 23 a väčšina z nich pôsobí na univerzitách. Vyplýva to z pilotného prieskumu Akademickej rankingovej a ratingovej agentúry. Sledujúc vývoj Slovenska v počte publikovaných vedeckých prác a citácií, predseda Výboru NR SR pre vzdelanie, mládež, vedu a šport a bývalý rektor Univerzity Komenského F. Devínsky konštatoval, že naša krajina výrazne stagnuje. "Za posledných desať rokov Česi zvýšili produkciu o 99.5 percenta, Rakúšanovia o 74 percent, Poliaci o 113.5 percenta a my o 14 percent. To znamená, že tu nemôžeme hovoriť o nejakom vývoji, po ďalších desiatich rokoch môže byť aj v mínuse."

Košický samosprávny kraj (KSK) získal vysoké ratingové hodnotenie od agentúry Moody s Investors Service (MIS). Analytickú hodnotiacu správu zobrali na vedomie poslanci KSK na rokovaní zastupiteľstva. "Pozitívny rating je dobrý signál pre našich partnerov a investorov. Kraj je dôveryhodný a finančne stabilný," reagoval predseda KSK Zdenko Trebula.

Slávnostným prípitkom oslávil nedávno v Bruseli minister vnútra Robert Kaliňák finálne schválenie rozšírenia schengenského priestoru o deväť nových krajín vrátane Slovenska. Ministri vnútra štátov Európskej únie definitívne potvrdili, že kontroly na hraniciach padnú v noci z 20. na 21. decembra. "Sen Slovákov o úplnej európskej slobode sa definitívne naplnil. Už nás nečakajú žiadne dlhé rady na hraniciach, ani žiadne ponižujúce procedúry pri cestovaní po Európskej únii a čo považuje za možno najpodstatnejšie, tak práve dnes padli posledné zvyšky železnej opony," uviedol slovenský minister. Vstup Slovenska do Schengenu šéf rezortu vnútra považuje nielen za vianočný darček občanom, ale aj za posledný krok k celkovej integrácii do EÚ.

O spolupráci v justičnej oblasti a modernizácii slovenskej justície hovoril minister spravodlivosti SR Štefan Harabin s veľvyslancom Švajčiarskej konfederácie v SR Josefom Areggerom. Minister pripomenul, že jednou z jeho priorít je zrýchlenie súdneho konania, ktoré napomáha k zvýšeniu dôvery zo strany zahraničných investorov. "Nie je možné, aby ľudia a firmy čakali aj päť rokov na verdikt vo svojom spore," zdôraznil minister.

Exprezident Rudolf Schuster sa prezentoval v Slovenskom technickom múzeu v Košiciach kolekciou vlastných fotografií z výpravy na Aljaške v lete 2005. Výsledkom expedície bolo okrem poznania prírody a ľudí vyše 4,200 fotografických záberov a 31 hodín videozáznamu. Hlavným stanom expedície bolo mesto Anchorage. Odtiaľ podnikali cesty napr. na ostrov Kodiak, kde žijú najväčšie medvede - grizly, alebo do národného parku Denali, okolo najvyššej hory severoamerického kontinentu - šesťtisícovky Mt. McKinley, na Aleutské ostrovy v Behringovom mori či za polárny kruh. Shuster sa cestovaniu a fotografovaniu venuje viac ako 40 rokov. Precestoval takmer celú Európu, americké kontinenty i niektoré krajiny Ázie a Afriky.

"**Zrušenie víz je prioritou**", zdôraznil v rozsiahlom rozhovore pre denník Hospodárske noviny nový americký veľvyslanec na Slovensku Vincent Obsitnik. Za jednu z najdôležitejších zmien pre Slovákov považuje pád železnej opony v roku 1989. "Bolo úžasné to vidieť. Pociťoval som šťastie za všetkých Slovákov, Čechov, Poliakov, či Maďarov. Bolo to pre mňa úžasné aj preto, lebo som pracoval v oblasti obrany asi dvadsať rokov a vtedy sme bojovali v studenej vojne. Vyvíjali sme systém pre prípad, že by sme museli čeliť existujúcej sovietskej hrozbe. Tvrdo sme na tom pracovali a zrazu tá hrozba neexistovala."

Výstavu diel Andyho Warhola s názvom Slovákov zo zbierok Múzea moderného umenia v Medzilaborciach, Slovenskej národnej galérie a Spoločnosti Andyho Warhola otvorili v polovici decembra v rímskom paláci Incontro. Ide o doposiaľ najkomplikovanejšiu prezentáciu diel tohto umelca zo slovenských zbierok v zahraničí. Na otvorení boli prítomná okrem slovenského veľvyslanca v Taliansku Stanislava Valla a riaditeľa Slovenského inštitútu v Ríme Miroslava Musila aj generálna riaditeľka SNG Katarína Bajcúrová, riaditeľka Múzea Andiho Warhola Valika Maďarová a kurátor Martin Cubjak.

TASR a slovenské časopisy

Príjemné dojmy z našej zábavy v New York City

Spolok sv. Matúša č. 45 IKSJ pri kostole sv. Jána Nepomuckého v New York City 20. októbra usporiadal pre širokú slovenskú i verejnú z blízkeho okolia tanečnú zábavu.

V tento večer sme spoločne oslávili aj 35. výročie sobáša manželov Antonie a Dušana Krajčovičových.

Chutné tradičné slovenské jedlá, nápoje, čerstvé koláče a veselá nálada pri slovenskej muzike, prilákalo nemalo vášnivých návštevníkov.



Zľava: Michael Zákutný, Mária Juráši, Div Telwala, Rev. Martin Svitan, Jozef Korčák.



Zľava: Ján, Michael Zihal, Kveta Gaba, Rudolf Gaba.



Katolícky fraternalistický dvojtýždenník

Jednota



O. Štefan Furelek
Náš zakladateľ

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

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Nový americký veľvyslanec má blízky vzťah k Slovákom

Obsitnik: Rozvoj východu Slovenska je v informatike

Košice (TASR) – Veľvyslanec USA v SR Vincent Obsitnik 18. decembra na stretnutí s primátorom Košíc Františkom Knapíkom potvrdil, že mesto by sa mohlo rozvíjať v oblasti informatiky. Zároveň ubezpečil, že Slovensko získa bezvízový styk s USA.

“Za jednu z takých oblastí, kde by excelencia vedela pomôcť a sprostredkovať isté kontakty, je práve oblasť informatiky, s ktorou pán veľvyslanec má skúsenosti vzhľadom na to, že niekoľko desaťročí pracoval v spoločnosti IBM. Presadenie tejto spoločnosti v podmienkach východu by mohlo byť zaujímavou investíciou,” povedal po stretnutí primátor Knapík.

V otázke odstránenia vízovej povinnosti pre Slovákov veľvyslanec upozornil na podmienky vyplývajúce z nového zákona. “Máme teraz nový zákon v Amerike, ktorý hovorí, že sú také podmienky, ktoré musíme uskutočniť my a také, ktoré musí splniť Slovensko. Budem na tom pracovať a mesačne sledovať vývoj na oboch stranách. Dúfam, že budeme úspešní,” povedal Obsitnik, ktorý sa k presnému termínu zrušenia vízovej povinnosti SR nevedel vyjadriť. “Mojím cieľom je, aby Slovensko malo bezvízový styk a bude ho mať,” dodal.

Nový americký veľvyslanec má k Slovákom a špeciálne k východu krajiny viac ako blízky vzťah. Pochádza z obce Moravany neďaleko Michaloviec a v Košiciach má rodinu. Ako sa priznal, na Slovensku už nebol viac ako tri roky, no na rodný jazyk nezanevrel a angličtinu vystriedal za slovenčinu. “Som narodený v Moravanoch, v dedine pri Michalovciach. Ideme tam na návštevu. Obšitníkovi pochádzajú z dediny Adidovce, to je obec za Humenným. V Košiciach mám vyše 85-ročnú tetu, otcovu sestru. Teším sa, že budeme spolu. Na Vianoce budeme v Košiciach i v Moravanoch,” spresnil svoje korene Obsitnik. Rád by navštívil aj Vysoké Tatry, ktoré sa mu veľmi páčia. “Bohužiaľ, nie som lyžiar. Kedysi som ním bol, ale po ťažkom úraze som to nechal,” dodal. Netají sa tým, že pozná spisovnú slovenčinu, i východoslovenské nárečie.

Veľvyslanec USA sa stretol aj s primátorom Prešova Pavlom Hagyarim, navštívil rodnú obec Moravany a Michalovce, Humenné a Adidovce. Oficiálny program na východe krajiny uzavrie stretnutím s košickým županom Zdenkom Trebuľom.

Vincent Obsitnik pricestoval na Slovensko 6. decembra, na poste amerického veľvyslancu nahradil Rodolpha Meakera Valleeho. Podobne ako Vallee, aj Vincent Obsitnik má dobré vzťahy s prezidentom Georgeom Bushom, ktorý ho na veľvyslanecský post poslal ako politického nominanta.

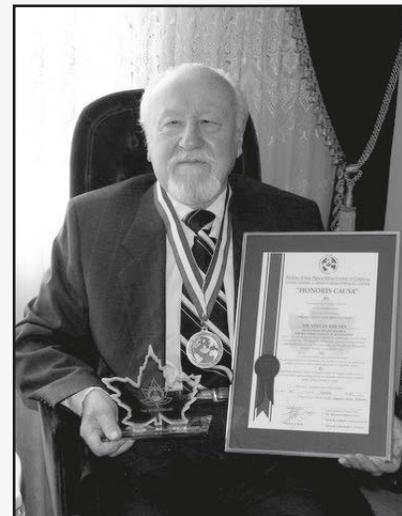


FOTO TASR - Milan Kapusta

Veľvyslanec USA v SR Vincent Obsitnik sa stretol s primátorom mesta Košíc Františkom Knapíkom 18. decembra 2007 v Historickej radnici v Košiciach. Na snímke uprostred Vincent Obsitnik, vľavo jeho manželka Annemarie E. Obsitniková a vpravo František Knapík počas odovzdávania spomienkových predmetov.

Štefan Hreha poctený medailou

Štefan Hreha, zakladajúci redaktor Kanadského Slováka, pri príležitosti 65. výročia neprestajného vychádzania týchto novín, v rámci Etnomédia týždňa, the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada, poctil ho medailou a zároveň mu udelil Čestné členstvo “Honoris Causa” Koncilu za jeho úspechy v žurnalizme, ktoré pre jeho vysoký vek a chatrné zdravie, z rúk guvernéra provincie Ontario prevzal jeho syn, Steve, na slávnostnej prezentácii v Legislatívnej budove v Quveen’s Park, Toronto, v pondelok 29. októbra 2007.



Štefan Hreha

Kremnická mincovňa vydala medailu s portrétom Matky Terezy

Kremnica (TASR) – Unikátnu medailu z rýdzeho zlata, s vyobrazením portrétu Matky Terezy vydala v týchto dňoch Mincovňa Kremnica. Zhotovili ju technológiou liatia formou vytaviteľného vosku. Jej autorom je popredný slovenský medailér Drahomír Zobek a ako uviedol, je to jeho prvá medaila zhotovená touto špičkovou technológiou. V porovnaní s klasickými razeňmi medailami je oveľa plastickejšia, bez limitujúceho konického obmedzenia. Plastika vystupuje takmer neobmedzene do priestoru. Autor priznal, že práce na realizácii tejto medaily mu trvali viac ako rok. Vydali ju v obme-

dzenej sérii. S 98-milimetrovým priemerom a rýdzosťou zlata 585/100 zhotovili päť medailí a s 49-milimetrovým priemerom deväť. Väčšiu medailu vydali aj v striebre, a to deväť kusov. Sú určené najmä pre zberateľov.

Zobek sa medailerskej tvorbe venuje 35 rokov. Je autorom nielen stoviek medailí, ale aj všetkých mincí slovenskej meny. V súčasnosti dokončuje kolekciu liatých medailí s tematikou slovenských svätci, podľa výtvarného návrhu akademického sochára Milana Ormandika. Zároveň pracuje aj na cykle medailí panovníkov korunovaných v Bratislave počas troch storočí.

Dôležité oznámenie

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

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