

# Twin Cities Slovenians – SUA Branch 109 – Annual Report 2013 - 2014

[www.twincitiesslovenians.org](http://www.twincitiesslovenians.org)

The Twin Cities Slovenians (TCS) was formed in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul Minnesota, as Branch 109 of the Slovenian Union of America (SUA). TCS welcomes men, women and children as members. If you have Slovenian heritage or are a friend of the Slovenian culture we invite you to join our social group. Our goal is to honor our Slovenian heritage through the sharing of fellowship, culture, history, music, language, literature and genealogy activities. If you are of Slovenian heritage, wish you were, or are just impressed by this very small and very beautiful country, the Twin City Slovenians welcome your inquiry and membership. SUA 109 Twin Cities Slovenians - where there's plenty of potica, good will and fun to go around.

## Monthly programs and membership meetings every month except August:

- July 2013 – Joe Valencic presented his film "Polka! The Movie" with Hank Thunander – over 80 attended
- September – unveiling of 2013 – 2014 TCS “Lepa Slovenija” calendar / photo contest by Rick Pisa
- October – Martinovanje, traditional celebration for St. Martin’s day at home of John and Kathy Skubitz
- November – TCS began meeting in new location – New Brighton Community Center
- November – Slovenian National Costumes by Tea Rozman
- December – Slovenian missionary Frederic Baraga by Rev Michael Tegeder
- January 2014 – Chef’s tour of Slovenia by Lenny Russo, organized by Bob Grahek
- February – Prešeren Day poetry reading at Sleeper House with Dr. Seth C. Hawkins
- February - Travels in Slovenia by Isa Keller
- March – Slovenian Easter Egg-dyeing by Tea Rozman
- April – Festival of Nations prep and FON history slide show by Sue Rademacher
- April – Norm Setnicker recognized as TCS “Man of the Year” – presentation by Mary Ann Palmer
- May – Performance by singing group *Navihanke* from Slovenia, organized by Pat Dahl – over 100 attended
- May – Slovenian genealogy by Peter Hawlina and others, organized by Chuck Podominick
- June – Slovenian Independence Day Celebration and Annual Dinner at Miro Medved’s
- At most meetings, Mary Ann Palmer led the group in Slovenian singing, with Rich Samec on buttonbox.

## Festival of Nations – May 1 – 4, 2014:

- Beautifully decorated Slovenian booth presented the Slovenian National Anthem, Nobel Peace Prize nominee Pedro Opeka and local peace activist Karl Grahek in line with the overall Festival of Nations theme for 2014
- 40 volunteers built the exhibit and staffed the booth, dressed in traditional Slovenian costumes
- Handouts included an attractive and informative all-new brochure describing the Slovenians’ role in promoting “Peace among the People”
- The booth was enjoyed by thousands of people of all ages and provided a wonderful opportunity to interact with other cultures and traditions
- TCS Festival co-chairs: Sue Rademacher, Mike Koski and Marian Brezovec

## Publicity and Fundraising

- Major articles and regular updates by Norm Setnicker appeared in almost every issue of the *Zarja* magazine and the *Slovenian-American Times*
- *Slovenian-American Times* featured additional articles by TCS member Yul Yost
- Rick Pisa - second annual photo contest and 2014 “Lepa Slovenija” calendar
- John Skubitz - TCS fundraiser placemats
- Norm Setnicker - Slovenian wine for monthly fundraiser door prizes

## **Slovenian Language Study Group**

- Weekly Slovenian language study groups at St. Francis Cabrini Church: October - April
- Lead teacher Frank Medved and grammarian Joe Kuznik accommodated all skill levels
- Classes included conversations with visitors from Slovenia and many opportunities to become familiar with Slovenian culture and customs including Slovenian movie night at Pat Dahl's and sing-along with Bill Koncar
- About 15 regular attendees
- Class coordinator: Mary Kotchevar (kotc0006@umn.edu)

## **Website**

- Webmistress Mary Alice Schwanke completely revamped the website and kept it up to date to post announcements of events, pictures and useful links
- She also created a Facebook page for members and friends of the TCS where we can share pictures and useful information.

## **Maintaining Connections with Related Organizations**

- Norm and Mary Ann Setnicker represented TCS as official liaisons to Slovenian Union of America
- TCS supported the Friends of the U of M Immigration History Research Center; displayed placemats and calendar at IHRC Friends annual dinner 11/2/13
- Staffed a TCS table at Hennepin Co Family History Day – 10/26/13
- Supported SUA Scholarship Fund
- Made a significant gift from the Karl Grahek Memorial Fund to the Slovenian project that provides medical help to victims of landmines

## **Membership**

- Membership is separate for TCS and SUA; membership in one does not include membership in the other
- TCS Membership has increased from 8 in 2005 to 112 in 2014
- Jean Podominick, Membership Chair, issued a complete new TCS Member Directory January 2014

## **Volunteers Needed for 2014 - 2015**

- We need presenters who are familiar with any aspect of Slovenia: culture, tradition, geography, genealogy, cooking, history, you name it!
- People who can line up presenters and help set up programs
- A photographer and/or videographer to record presentations and other events
- Board members and new officers to run for election Fall 2014
- Volunteers to set up and staff the Festival booth April 29 – May 3, 2015
- Someone to act as TCS liaison to the U of M Immigration History Research Center
- People to work on fundraisers, including:
  - Sales and distribution of 2015 TCS Calendar
  - New fundraising ideas
- Volunteers to help with another performance of Navihanke or other major group from Slovenia
- To volunteer, contact John Zakelj, President at: zakelj@cs.com