

# **Twin Cities Slovenians – SUA Branch 109 – Annual Report 2015 - 2016**

[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.

## **Programs and celebrations – August 2015 – August 2016 (average attendance about 50):**

- August 2015 – Joe Valencic and Hank Thunander presented a special program celebrating the 100th birthdays of Frank Yankovic and Johnny Pecon
- September – Megan Marsnik presented her book “Under Ground” and Rick Pisa presented the winners of the 2016 TCS “Lepa Slovenija” calendar / photo contest
- September – Dr. Peter Krečič made a special presentation about Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik; TCS member Pat Dahl organized a joint sponsorship with Milwaukee Slovenians, the U of M and St. Thomas
- October – We celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of TCS with a dinner at Gulden’s; Norm Setnicker developed a beautiful history booklet and PowerPoint presentation
- November – Liz Miller - “Martinovanje Traditions and Slovenian Wines”
- December – Rich Samec and his teen daughter Maja described their family's memorable visit to Slovenia, with musical accompaniment by Silvester Vicic
- January 2016 – “The Medved Family Story” by Frank and Miro Medved
- February – “Unusual Places to Visit in Slovenia,” by Dr. Seth C. Hawkins and members of the TCS Slovenian language study group, at the Julian H. Sleeper House
- February - “Folk Songs in Everyday Slovenian Life” by Cynthia Bradford and Chuck Debevec
- March – “Pechauer Journeys to Bela Krajina: Kruh, Čevapčiči in Vino” by Ruth and Marshall Pechauer
- April – Festival of Nations prep by Sue Rademacher, Mike Koski and Marian Brezovec; and Rademacher family trip to Slovenia
- April – Rick Pisa recognized as TCS “Member of the Year”
- May – “Slovenian genealogy” by Chuck Podominick
- June – Slovenian Independence Day Celebration sponsored by the Slovenian consulate at Miro Medved’s
- At most meetings, Mary Ann Palmer led the group in Slovenian singing.

## **Festival of Nations – May 5 – 8, 2016:**

- Beautifully decorated Slovenian booth presented the Ljubljana Zmaj (dragon), Zlatorog (the mountain chamois with the golden horn), and magical photos of Slovenia, in keeping with the “Fairy Tales” theme of the 2016 Festival of Nations
- Over 30 volunteers built the exhibit and staffed the booth, dressed in traditional Slovenian costumes
- Handouts included popular trading cards featuring the Zmaj and the Zlatorog, and an attractive and informative brochure titled “Folklore of Slovenia”
- 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 and Elaine Barthelemy appeared in every issue of the *Zarja* magazine and many issues of the *Slovenian-American Times*
- *Slovenian-American Times* featured additional articles by TCS member Yul Yost
- Rick Pisa - fourth annual photo contest and 2016 “*Lepa Slovenija*” calendar
- Norm Setnicker - Slovenian wines for monthly fundraiser door prize

## **Slovenian Language Study Group**

- Slovenian language study group met every other week at St. Francis Cabrini Church: October - April
- Lead teacher Frank Medved, assisted by John Zakelj, Isa Keller and Simona Pichler
- About 15 - 20 regular attendees
- Class coordinator: John Medved (jpmmedved@hotmail.com)

## **Website**

- Webmistress MaryAlice Schwanke kept the website up to date with schedules, pictures and useful links
- MaryAlice and John Zakelj maintained a Facebook page for members and friends of the TCS where we shared pictures from our events and useful information.

## **Maintaining Connections with Related Organizations**

- Norm and Mary Ann Setnicker represented TCS as official liaisons to Slovenian Union of America; when Norm became a national VP, Mike Koski was elected as TCS liaison
- TCS supported the Friends of the U of M Immigration History Research Center and Green Card Voices

## **Membership**

- Membership in national SUA includes membership in TCS; some choose to donate just to TCS
- TCS Members and donors have increased from 8 in 2005 to 121 in 2016
- Jean Podominick, Membership Chair, issued a new TCS Member Directory including member pictures

## **Governance**

- With leadership from Mary Ann Palmer, the board adopted its first set of operating guidelines
- Treasurer Mary Ann Setnicker completed monthly financial reports which were submitted to TCS board and National SUA to maintain our non-profit, tax-exempt status
- Secretary Liz Miller carefully maintained minutes of meetings and other records of the organization
- Rick Pisa led a committee which developed our first guidelines regarding TCS donations to other groups

## **Volunteers Needed for 2016 - 2017**

- Presenters for brief 5 – 10 minute presentations in February on Slovenian cultural figures and athletes
- A photographer and/or videographer to record presentations and other events
- Board members and new officers to run for election December 2016
- Volunteers to set up and staff the Festival booth May 2017
- To volunteer, contact John Zakelj, President at: zakelj@cs.com or Mike Koski, Vice-president at mhkoski@comcast.net