

Twin Cities Slovenians

SUA Branch 109

Annual Report

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

Programs and celebrations September 2019 to August 2020

September 2019 - Rick Pisa unveiled the 2020 Calendar. This annual fundraiser supports a variety of TCS activities. Our speaker was Dr. Ksenija Renner Sitar who spoke about the economic and political environment in Slovenia. Ksenija provided an accurate picture. We appreciated her presentation and willingness to answer a broad variety of questions.

October 2019 - Rick Pisa presented Okus Slovenije – A Taste of Slovenia. The presentation included a beautiful slideshow of pictures of trips Rick made to Slovenia. There was a food quiz at the conclusion of the presentation.

November 2019 - We are grateful to Karen and Miro Medved for hosting our annual Marinovanje celebration. The food is outstanding and the program is well thought out. There was much singing and celebrating.

December 2019 - Officers were elected at the December meeting. Tea Rozman Clark and her daughters Sofia and Izabela presented Slovenian Summer Through Children's Eyes. The girls attended Slovenian World Congress Camps, mainly designed for Slovenians living abroad. The girls shared their experiences.

January 2020 - Snow and ice prevented us from meeting. It was better for us to remain safe at home, rather than risk travel on icy roads.

February 2020 - Our first meeting of the month of February was the annual cultural day celebration at the Julian H. Sleeper House and Slovenian Museum. Three members presented on their trips to Slovenia and special memories of the country.

At our regular membership meeting, Sue Rademacher spoke on the history of St. Stephen, MN. This is the earliest Slovenian settlement in the United States. Miro Medved spoke on the role of the Honorary Consul.

March 2020 – May 2020 – We cancelled our March, April and May meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Festival of Nations was cancelled for the first time in its 88 year history. We all tried to avoid the Three C's (Crowded places, Close-contact settings and Confined and enclosed spaces). Some decisions were made for us, as the New Brighton Community Center closed. This meant we had no meeting space. We were able to celebrate Slovenian Statehood Day virtually. Miro Medved and Mike Koski sent video greetings and congratulations. This was available for our membership to view.

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September 2020 thru May 2021

In-person meetings and gatherings for September 2020 through May 2021 have been cancelled due to COVID-19. However, we have replaced our in-person meetings at the Community Center with Zoom meetings in the comfort of your home. Our first meeting featured a video on Slovenia by Rick Steves and break-out rooms for socializing. A complete program schedule will be coming soon.

Slovenian Language Study Group

The fall language class had record participation with over 30 people. Ksenija Renner Sitar led the group in person and continued to host weekly classes via Skype when she returned to Slovenia. These classes continued during the pandemic. Much thanks goes to Frank Medved who served as the instructor for many years. Frank is assisted by John Zakelj, the online lesson facilitator, and by John Perhay, our Webmaster and technical guru. We are preparing for continued distance learning.

Website, Facebook, Newsletter

Our website (www.twincitiesslovenians.org) is managed by our Webmaster John Perhay. It is full of important information and useful links. Don't hesitate to check it out!

The Twin Cities Slovenians also has a Facebook page for members and friends of TCS. We share pictures from our events and other useful communication. This is a closed page, so please contact Mike Koski, John Zakelj or John Perhay for access.

Special thanks also goes out to Jean Podominick for producing a newsletter to keep us informed and entertained during this time of shelter in place.

Conclusion

Thank you to each and every member and friend of the Twin Cities Slovenians for helping to make our organization a success. COVID-19 will continue to impact us. It is still uncertain when we will return to in person meetings. However, we will continue to offer opportunities stay in touch with our Slovenian culture and remain socially connected. We will do what is best for our membership. It is important to avoid the Three C's: **C**rowded places, **C**lose-contact settings and **C**onfined and enclosed spaces. Be physically distant but remain socially connected!