

# **Twin Cities Slovenians**

## **SUA Branch 109**

### **2022 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 and women of all ages as members. We invite you to join our 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, music food, language, literature and genealogy activities. Come and join us if you are of Slovenian heritage, wish you were, or are just impressed by this very small and beautiful country. There's plenty of potica, good will and fun to go around. Check us out at [www.twincitiesslovenians.org](http://www.twincitiesslovenians.org).

### **Programs and celebrations from September 2021 to August 2022**

**September 2021** - We were able to gather in-person as we had a belated Slovenian Independence Day celebration. Miro and Karen Medved hosted us for a wonderful afternoon of food, music and of course the balinanje (bocce) tournament.

**October 2021** - We continued with an in-person meeting as Norm Setnicker presented "Climbing Mount Triglav". The presentation included a video and a music video.

**November 2021** - We were scheduled to celebrate martinovanje in-person, but needed to cancel due to concerns over COVID-19, and an increase in cases.

**December 2021** - We did meet in-person, with appropriate guidelines and had a Christmas celebration. Mary Ann Palmer and Hank Thunander provided music and the opportunity for us to sing along. Good food and conversation were also a part of the celebration.

**January 2022** - Keeping with a recent tradition, our meetings in the "winter" months are Zoom Meetings. Joe Valencic joined us from Cleveland. His program was entitled "The Flavors of Slovenia". It was a wonderful opportunity to learn some new recipes.

**February 2022** - Sue Rademacher took us through the history of our cultural exhibits at the Festival of Nations. Under her leadership the branch used the Festival of Nations to promote Slovenia and the TCS. It was with great sadness that we learned there would be no Festival in 2022.

**March 2022** - Zoom allowed us to connect with a dear friend in Slovenia. Ksenija Renner-Sitar provided a quick update on what is going on in Slovenia. We were able to ask questions about a variety of topics.

**April 2022** - We were happy to be back in-person at the New Brighton Community Center. We recognized our Member of the Year (Jean Podominick). Donald LaCourse presented on "Costumes and Dances of Slovenia". Donald is a co-founder of the Ethnic Dance Theatre. He even managed to get us up on our feet and taught us a dance!

**May 2022** - Norm Setnicker presented "To Bee or Not to Bee" as we gathered in-person at the New Brighton Community Center. This was a timely presentation since World Bee Day is celebrated in May. TCS member, Paul VanDenMeerendonk, an avid beekeeper, answered questions and donated honey to each member that attended.

**July 2022 -** We had two opportunities to attend events of the summer. Ambassador Tone Kajzer joined us in Schroeder, MN as we dedicated an updated plaque on the Baraga Cross. The Slovenian group Krila was there to sing as well as the Singing Slovenes from Duluth. Thanks to Honorary Consul Miro Medved and his wife Karen for organizing this event.

The next day the singing group Krila gave a concert in St. Paul. Once again, special thanks to Miro and Karen Medved. Ambassador Kajzer attended this event and gave brief remarks. This was an honor and tremendous opportunity for members of SUA Branch 109.

**Looking ahead - 2023** Joe Valencic helped to kick off the new program year in September! We had a Zoom meeting in October (No room was available) with Tony Bombich on Slovenian genealogy. We will celebrate martinovanje in-person and have a Christmas gathering similar to last year in-person. There will be Zoom meetings in January, February and March, so weather will not be an issue.

## **Slovenian Language Study Group**

The language Class meets monthly beginning in September. Enrollment is now required and is limited to people who have been in the class before or who have a basic knowledge of the Slovenian Language. There is no class fee for TCS donating members. There is a \$20 fee for non-donating members. Information regarding this class is available on our website.

## **Website and Facebook**

Our website ([www.twincitiesslovenians.org](http://www.twincitiesslovenians.org)) contains important information and useful links. Program power-points are added to the website after the presentation is given to the group. TCS also has a Facebook page. This is a closed page and requires approval for access. The page contains photos from our events and other information.

## **Conclusion**

Thank you for making the Twin Cities Slovenians a successful organization. We look forward to in-person meetings and opportunities to get together. We can always use more volunteers. Specifically, we ask members to consider signing up to bring treats to our meetings. Members who do this do not need to pay the admission fee. We need help with the check-in process, and once again, members who sign up do not need to pay the admission fee.

On behalf of the TCS Board of Directors, I thank you for support of the Twin Cities Slovenians.

*Mike Koski*

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