

SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER

“NAŠ SLOVENSKI DOM” ESTABLISHED 1995



GLASILO SLOVENSKEGA DOMA IN SKUPNOSTI V LEMONTU!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we enter the Christmas season, I hope each of you can slow down, even just a little, and reflect on what a truly blessed year we are wrapping up. This is a special time as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and look ahead with hope to the promise of a new year. I wish you a meaningful time with your families and some well-deserved rest as we prepare for another exciting year ahead.

This past quarter was full of energy and activity, thanks to our incredible leaders and volunteers, who brought so many wonderful events to life, including:

- Slomšek Slovenian School 2025-26 School Year Commencement
- Mission Sunday Mass & Lunch
- 30th Anniversary of the Dom & 100th Anniversary of Ameriške Brezje — What a fantastic celebration!
- Šola Trunk & Treat
- Praznik Pošasti (Festival of Monsters) Halloween Party
- 2026 Center Vision & Planning Session for Young Adults
- Sports Klub Pub Crawl in Downtown Lemont
- Sveti Miklavž
- 2025 Festival of Lights



Thank you to all our volunteers and partner organizations who made these events such a success. Your dedication truly keeps our community thriving.

Beyond our events, the Board Team has also been busy working behind the scenes. Over the past quarter, we:

- Launched new Instagram and YouTube channels, and added updated anniversary photos to our website.
- Introduced a new weekly email, “This Week at the Dom (and Beyond)”, sent weekly on Tuesday or Wednesday.
- Upgraded our copier and brought newsletter production in-house while reducing costs.
- Booked our first wedding at the Dom under our new Wedding & Shower offering.

Looking ahead, please mark your calendars for these upcoming Quarter 1 events—we hope to see you there!

- Saturday, January 10 – Sports Klub Texas Hold’em Tournament
- Sunday, January 11 – Šola Winter Olympics
- Sunday, February 8 – Koline Dinner (Second-Largest Fundraiser / Volunteers needed)
- Wednesday, February 18 – Ash Wednesday Mass (11:00 AM)
- Saturday & Sunday, February 21-22 – Slovenian National Ski Jump, Iron Mountain, MI
- Friday, February 27 – Lenten Fish Fry
- Saturday, February 28 – Sports Klub Trivia Night
- Friday, March 27 – Šola/SCC Egg Coloring for Palm Sunday
- Sunday, March 29 – Palm Sunday Luncheon

Please remember that Fellowship Lunches are held every week after the 11:00 AM Mass at the Dom. Everyone is invited to enjoy a delicious meal prepared by Ljuba Novak and her wonderful team.

We are also excited to welcome several new members to our team:

- Janez Arko, Newsletter Editor
- Ed Burjek, Volunteer Philanthropy Officer (more details coming in our next newsletter)
- Nandi Marcic and Kevin Loftus, Architecture & Design Team

Do you have a skill to share or a few hours to spare? We are always looking for volunteers, including help with:

- General Manager support for the Dom
- Promotions & Publicity Chair
- Website Manager
- Friends of St. Mary’s (FOSM) volunteers
- And many other roles

To get involved, please visit www.slovenian-center.org and click on Volunteer, or feel free to email me directly. Thank you all for your continued support.

We wish each of you a joyful & safe Christmas season and all the very best in 2026!

Warm regards,

Tony Vukšinič

President, Slovenian Catholic Center
president@slovenian-center.org



Blessing of the candles/ throats – On Sunday, February 1st there will be a blessing of the candles (which are usually blessed at the feast day of the Presentation of the Lord – February 2nd) and the blessing of the throats (St. Blasé blessing, Feb. 3rd) during the 11:00 AM mass.

Lent – starts with Ash Wednesday, February 18. During the 11:00 AM Holy Mass ashes will be distributed. Every Sunday there will be devotions of the Stations of the Cross at 1:30 in the afternoon. Non-perishable food will be collected in the church for the local Food Pantry.

Friday, March 27th - making of the 'butarice' in the Dom. Please, come and help! All proceeds will go to the missions.

Palm Sunday – March 29th – 11:00 AM – Blessing of the 'butarice' and other greenery will be in front of the Dom. A procession to the church will follow. During the mass the solemn reading of Jesus' passion according to Matthew will be read.

Holy Thursday – April 2nd - Jesus' last supper, the solemn mass will be at 7:00 PM, followed by a holy hour with Jesus in the 'jail'.

Good Friday – April 3rd – The celebration of the Lord's Passion will be at 7:00 PM.

Holy Saturday-Vigil of Easter – April 4th – Food will be blessed at 2:00 PM (e.g. bread, meat, colored eggs, horseradish, and 'potica'-walnut cake). At 7:00 PM there will be a special liturgy followed by a gathering in the Dom.

Easter – April 5th – 11:00 AM solemn mass of Easter Sunday – Jesus' resurrection.



Retreat House: Come out for the Festival of Lights the weekends before and after Christmas. We added a sixth level of track to the LG train display for this year. Weekends are pretty much booked for next year except for July, August, and December. The Retreat House is now hosting parish staff and youth ministry days of reflection during the week. The schedule is available at www.baragasmrh.com.

Slovenian Genealogy Society: Volunteers finished inputting over 1500 index cards that were kept by the Slovenian Catholic League that included information on families who emigrated from DP camps in Austria, Italy, and Germany to the United States. We have quite a few members of our parish who have family members in this database. Go to the SGSI website (www.slovenianguenealogy.org) to get information on accessing this database.

Bishop Baraga Society: Fr. Jaklič's 1951 Baraga biography, Frederick Baraga, Missionary Bishop, was translated into English and is now available through the Bishop Baraga Society in Marquette for \$22 plus shipping. You can order by calling (906-227-9117). Copies are available at the Retreat House for purchase. According to Alojz Rebula, one of the foremost Slovenian Catholic intellectuals, this is the most extensive Baraga biography ever written covering his life in Slovenia, as well as his contacts in the Austrian Empire, in addition to his missionary work. Fr. Jaklič was a WWII refugee who went first to Argentina. He was then recruited by Škof Rožman and the Diocese of Marquette, MI in the mid 1950's to work on the Baraga Cause. In the mid 1960s, he retired to Milwaukee where he served as a chaplain at a nursing facility until his death.

Adult Slovenian Language Class: There are two classes. The Monday class is for those with some knowledge of Slovenian, and the Wednesday class is for beginners. Call Dcn John P. Vidmar if you have an interest. Both classes use the Lončar & Gobetz Slovenian Language Manual textbook.

Hope's On the Way: Thanks to all that helped this year. About 3,000 buckets of cleaning supplies were shipped using St. Mary's as well as the St. Alphonsus (Lemont) staging site. Last month HOTW sent over 500 buckets to Jamaica alone. HOTW accepts cash donations as well as cleaning supplies (www.hopesontheway.net). We recruit through parishes and youth organizations. Contact Dcn. Vidmar if you have volunteer candidates.



KOLINE ~ SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH, 2026

We are pleased to announce that we will be holding our annual KOLINE on SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8th!

The donation for the luncheon is: \$40 for adult members 19 years and older \$15 for students ages 11 – 18 Children ages 10 and under are free



Reservations are due at the Center by Sunday, February 1st. A \$5.00 charge will be added per person for late reservations.

Reservations — KOLINE 2026

Reservation Contact Name: _____

Contact phone #: _____

Contact email: _____

	First/Last Name	ADULT 19 years + \$40	STUDENT(S) Ages 11-18 \$15	CHILDREN Under 10 FREE
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
	TOTALS			

METHOD

OF PAYMENT:

CASH: \$ _____

CHECK: # _____ Amount: \$ _____

CREDIT CARD: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Credit Card 3 Digit Code: _____

Billing Zip Code: _____

Signature: _____

Please indicate with whom you would like to be seated. We will do our best to accommodate seating requests, provided all parties have a paid reservation by the designated due date. Seating preferences cannot be guaranteed for reservations made after the due date.

We strive to make all of your events enjoyable and kindly ask that all reservations for “reservation required” events be made directly with the Center.

Online reservations through our website, www.slovenian-center.org, are preferred, as tickets may be purchased there. We will also continue to accept reservations via email, phone message, and our drop box. This process allows our reservationists to efficiently complete seating arrangements and coordinate with our caterers.

Please direct all emails, texts, and phone calls to the Center. If you have questions or need to modify an existing reservation, kindly email secretary@slovenian-center.org or call 630.243.0670.

Slomšek Slovenian School Announcements: Exciting Happenings and Upcoming Events

The Slomšek Slovenian School began the fall semester with 25 enthusiastic students, marking a strong start to another year of learning, friendship, and cultural connection. From the very first day of classes, students came together to learn the Slovenian language while strengthening their sense of belonging within the Slovenian community.

One of the highlights of the semester was our Trunk-or-Treat event held on the last Sunday of October. Families and community members decorated a wide variety of creative trunks, and with beautiful weather and engaging activities, students enjoyed a festive afternoon filled with laughter, fun, and togetherness.



This semester also introduced an exciting new project—decorating a Christmas tree at Brookfield Zoo to proudly showcase Slovenian heritage and cultural pride. Students painted their own versions of traditional Slovenian wooden plates and crafted candies inspired by old-fashioned designs, bringing historic traditions to life through hands-on creativity. The tree also included various Coats of Arms from municipalities across Slovenia, representing the richness and diversity of our homeland.

Through these activities and other performances such as the SCC Anniversary, the first semester celebrated learning, creativity, and community, while giving students meaningful opportunities to share and take pride in their Slovenian heritage.

The semester was nearing an end with a special program and the celebration of Sv. Miklavž on December 7. Students proudly demonstrated what they had learned by singing songs, playing bells to Majhen deček (The Little Drummer Boy), and performing dances for families and friends. A highlight of the program was the student play, “Warmer Days Are Ahead”, written by teacher, Martin Puc. The story followed children searching for warmth, only to find that no one they encountered—not a skier, a talking tree, a bear, or even a snowman—could help them. In a delightful twist, the Slovenian dragon appeared, using his fire to warm everyone, much to the audience’s enjoyment.

The semester ended with a Christmas party filled with creativity and fun. Students made snow globes decorated with images of Bled, played games, and enjoyed time together, celebrating the friendships formed throughout the semester.



Come one, come all! If there is snow on the ground, join us on Sunday, January 11, for sledding following the regular fellowship luncheon (approximately 12:45 pm). A great opportunity to have fun, make friends and great memories!

As we begin our second semester on Sunday, January 25, we warmly invite new children to join the Slomšek Slovenian School, whether they are able to attend weekly or once a month. For questions about the school or to learn more about volunteering opportunities, please contact Mojca Anaya at 847-207-0963 or email slovenianschool@gmail.com.

Lastly, a heartfelt thank you goes to our Slovenian friend Bobby Zalokar, who generously donated his time and materials to create beautiful birdhouses that were sold during several of our events this past semester. These birdhouses not only supported our school but also provided families with another meaningful way to spend time together, painting and creating memories with loved ones. We are truly grateful for his generosity and support.





Palm Sunday Preparation



Families, children and adults are invited to color eggs for our Palm Sunday/Cvetna nedelja luncheon and hall decorating for Easter! These fun and meaningful activities will take place Friday, March 27th starting at 6 pm. Pizza/salad will be provided to keep everyone fueled and happy. Looking forward to an evening of fun and community!



Butarice Preparation



Butarice-making will begin at 9:00 am Saturday, March 28th. A light lunch will be served for all in thanks for your time and effort.

“Butarice” - Butarice/butare are bundles of greenery, flowers & painted wood curls. While some people also add oranges and apples, we modify our Butarice with ribbons instead of painted wood curls. In tradition with our Slovenian heritage, people come to church on Palm Sunday/Cvetna nedelja with these butarice where they are then blessed.



Adding Life & Beauty

ADOPT

A PLOT

Through Gardening!



SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER

S E R V I N G O P P O R T U N I T Y

If you have a servant's heart and a willing spirit – please join our team to build and care for our community through God's creation.

- * Adopt a specific plot for maintenance – you choose the time weekly.
- * Share a plot with a sibling, friend, or your kids/grandkids, etc.
 - Slovenian Catholic Center, Retreat House, Grotto, Rosary Valley
 - Plots will be designated around the Slovenian Lemont property for volunteers to “take on” ownership of maintenance with weeding, trimming, watering, and clean-up as needed, about 1 hour a week per area.
- * **WATER BRIGADE** – Memorial Day to Labor Day
Come **ONCE** a week to water new plantings and potted plants.

Join our team – contact Olga Kastelic Voss for more info
630-660-8086 o_voss@msn.com

Slovenian Sports Klub Nation!



The Slovenian Sports Klub has not one, but TWO exciting events planned for January and February!
Texas Hold'em in January and Trivia Night in February!



Back by popular demand are our
SSK Texas Hold'em tournament and LCR (Bring your singles.)
on Saturday, January 10, 2026!

Last year we had a 3-generation family participate. Thank you, Pecharich family! Let's keep the connection going!

Don't let the 2-time Hold'em champ, Kevin Egan, win again! Let's knock him out of this one!
For more information, see the ad below or contact Tony Gregorich: Spice.guy56@yahoo.com



SSK's Texas Hold'em
SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2026
 SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER - LEMONT, IL

REGISTRATION - 5:00PM PLAY - 5:30PM
 \$60 BUY-IN ; \$40 REBUY WITHIN 1ST HOUR
 CASH PRIZES AWARDED BASED ON # OF PLAYERS
 MUST BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OLD TO PARTICIPATE

FOR THOSE NOT PLAYING POKER,
 THE BAR WILL BE OPEN FOR OTHER
 GAMES/SOCIALIZING (LCR-BRING SINGLES!)

NO OUTSIDE DRINKS, PLEASE. DRINKS/PIZZA WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

SSK TRIVIA NIGHT

We will be holding a fun night of trivia on Saturday, February 28th, at 5:30 PM at the Slovenian Catholic Center in Lemont. Come join us! See details in the flyer below.

Brush up on your Slovenian trivia as Tony and Kristin always sneak in a few Slovenian related questions!

Which Slovenian Hall of Famer will they feature this year?



SSK'S
TRIVIA
NIGHT

• Doors open at 5:30pm
• Play begins at 6pm

Sign up an
entire table of 10 for \$100
or an individual for \$15
Ages 12 & Up

Cash prizes to the top teams!

Feel free to bring snacks for your table.
No outside drinks, please.
Drinks will be available for purchase

For more information, contact:
llini2240@gmail.com OR
Kristin.louapre@nationalvanlines.com

SATURDAY, FEB 28, 2026	SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER 14252 MAIN ST. LEMONT IL, 60439
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Our longest running event returns in
June. Winter will be over before you
know it!

Think Summer!



SSK Annual Softball & Golf
Tournaments
& Music Festival Weekend

SAVE
THE
DATE

JUNE 26-28
2026

Pub Crawl Recap

Last, but not least, our annual pub-crawl, the night after Thanksgiving, was a ton of fun! Thanks to The Burjek Collective band for entertaining us! We had a great turnout!



If you would like more information about these events or would like to be added to our email list, please send an email to sloveniansportsklub@gmail.com or access our Facebook page. Search under Chicago Slovenian Sports Klub.

Article written by Jeanie Gregorich

SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER~PO Box 634 ~ Lemont, IL 60439

Membership

Thank you for supporting our Slovenian Catholic Center! We very much appreciate your contributions in prior years, and hope you will renew your membership. Please return the completed form and payment, or apply online at www.slovenian-center.org. If you are not a member but would like to keep receiving our newsletter, please return the form confirming your contact information.

Membership Year: _____

Name: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Dependent Children: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Membership Type:

☐ Individual Membership - \$50

☐ Senior Membership - \$35

☐ Family Membership - \$100

Total donation: \$ _____

Method of payment:

☐ Cash

☐ Check #: _____

☐ Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

3-digit verification code: _____ Billing zip code: _____

Signature: _____

Slovenska Mladinska Skupina Marela

On behalf of SMS Marela, we wish everyone a very Happy and Healthy New Year, 2026! We hope everyone has a blessed Christmas season.

The past few months didn't allow for much of a rest for the group. On September 28th, we hosted our first ever, Filane Paprike (Stuffed Peppers) Luncheon! Thank you to everyone who supported this event. We were so pleased that our lunch SOLD OUT and we received many compliments on how delicious the lunch was.

October brought us to the final celebration of 100 years of Maria Pomagaj and celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Slovenian Catholic Center. We were honored to participate at mass and the cultural program following. Meeting Skof Anton Jamnik from Ljubljana was certainly a highlight for the group.

In November, we celebrated our annual Friendsgiving dinner and expressed how grateful we are to be together, have the relationships that we created, and look forward to embarking on new adventures next year.

Our annual bake sale on December 7th turned out to be another resounding success! Each member baked over 40 pieces of bakery, cookies, cakes, brownies, etc., so we had a plentiful table for our fundraiser! Once again, the community rallied and we sold out! Thank you so much to everyone who supports this group!

As always, we welcome anyone who may be interested in joining our group, to come check us out. Please contact [Nada Petrovic](#) at 630-863-5648 or any member of Marela!



More from Marela!



Dear Members of the Slovenian Community in Illinois,

I thank you sincerely for inviting me to contribute this message to your community newsletter. It is a great pleasure and honor to introduce myself and share a few words with you. I work at the Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Slovenians Abroad, where I am dedicated to supporting and strengthening the ties that connect Slovenians around the world. I am responsible for cooperation with Slovenian communities in the United States and Canada, and I also advise individuals who are considering or already planning a move to Slovenia, as well as those who wish to collaborate with Slovenia in any way. This mission is not only part of my professional role – it is something I feel deeply connected to on a personal level.

Some years ago, I also spent a period of my life living abroad. Although I was still very close to Slovenia geographically, the experience gave me meaningful insight into what it means to be away from home. Even a short distance can make you look at your culture, your language, and your roots in a new way. For me, it was a reminder of how important a sense of belonging is – and how strong the connection to Slovenia remains, no matter where we live. Every time I meet Slovenians around the world, I am reminded of how deeply our stories connect us – no matter the distance.

This is something I truly admire in Slovenian communities abroad. The way you preserve traditions, language, and identity while building your lives far from Slovenia is inspiring. Communities like the Slovenian Catholic Center in Illinois play an essential role in keeping our heritage alive across generations, and I deeply appreciate your dedication. Even across oceans and continents, it is comforting to know that the Slovenian heart beats just as strongly in your community as it does at home. Thank you for carrying a piece of Slovenia with you and for keeping it alive in your daily lives.

At our Office, we work closely with Slovenian organizations around the world to provide information, support, and opportunities for cooperation. My personal experience abroad has strengthened my commitment to ensuring that Slovenians living outside Slovenia feel connected, supported, and valued – and to reminding you that you are always warmly welcome at home, in Slovenia. This country is always your home – not only in geography, but in spirit.

I look forward to building a warm and meaningful relationship with your community and to exploring new ways for us to stay connected – through culture, shared projects, and the stories that unite us.

With heartfelt greetings,

BARBARA PALČEC

OFFICE FOR SLOVENIANS ABROAD

Spoštovani,

Z jesenskim obdobjem sem na Uradu Vlade RS za Slovence v zamejstvu in po svetu prevzela področje Združenih držav Amerike. Moja sodelavka Jasna vas je o tem že obvestila, želela pa bi se vam oglasiti še osebno – predvsem z željo, da nadaljujemo dobro, odprto in zaupljivo sodelovanje.

Veselim se, da bomo skupaj ohranjali in krepili vezi s slovensko skupnostjo v ZDA ter iskali priložnosti za projekte, ki bogatijo naše povezovanje. Kot vaša nova kontaktna oseba sem vam na voljo – tako za vsa vprašanja in tudi za kakšne pobude, predloge ali informacije, ki jih potrebujete.

Zavedam se, da je sprememba odgovorne osebe včasih lahko majhna nepričakovana novost, posebej če ste bili vajeni dobrega sodelovanja z mojo predhodnico. Na uradu se področja občasno prerazporedijo zaradi potreb dela in tekočih projektov – sama sem doslej pokrivala druga območja in zdaj z iskrenim veseljem prevzemam vaše. Verjamem, da bomo s sproščeno in odprto komunikacijo lepo nadaljevali skupno pot ter ohranili dobro sodelovanje na način, ki vam najbolj ustreza.

Vnaprej se veselim priložnosti, da vas spoznam tudi osebno – v živo ali na daljavo. Prosim, da me kontaktirate, če boste karkoli potrebovali.

Prijazen pozdrav iz deževne Ljubljane,

BARBARA PALČEC

REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA

URAD VLADE RS ZA SLOVENCE V ZAMEJSTVU IN PO SVETU

Government's Office for Slovenians Abroad

Sektor za Slovence po svetu

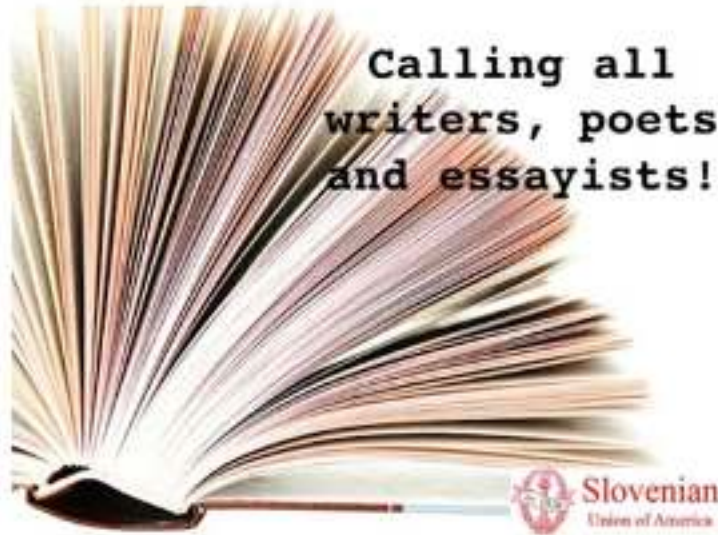
ASEF Fellowship

Last year, I received the ASEF fellowship, which provides housing and a living stipend for a 10-week research visit or internship in Slovenia. I am working on my PhD in Management, so I was paired with a faculty member in that field at the University of Ljubljana. He welcomed me to the university and introduced me to the whole group of Management faculty and PhD students, some of whom I am still collaborating with. I also met several lifelong friends through the ASEF fellowship—students from Slovenia, as well as those from Cleveland, Colorado, Argentina, and California. We traveled around the country together—my favorite place was the Soča river. Another highlight of the summer was climbing Mt. Triglav with my dad, other relatives, and members of the SSK community from Chicago. I also got to connect with my dad's relatives who live in Slovenia and even went on vacation with them in Croatia. I spent the time on the beach reading *Alamut*, the most popular Slovenian novel. Additionally, I applied to several research conferences across Europe and presented my dissertation research in Athens, Copenhagen, and Oxford, enriching my European experience. Overall, it was the most magical summer of my life.



Submitted by: Genevieve “Vivi” Gregorich

Read more about ASEF Fellowship Program at <https://asef.net/event/asef-junior-fellow-genevieve-gregorichs-research-visit-and-academic-journey/>.



The Slovenian Union of America Presents The Eighth Annual Slovenian Literary Award

For nearly a century, the Slovenian Union of America has been dedicated to preserving the legacy of our Slovenian heritage. Writing has played an essential role in sustaining our culture and our communities. The SUA Slovenian Literary Award honors those who continue this vital tradition.

Accepting Submissions from November 1, 2025 - January 31, 2026 at 5 pm EST

Applicants may submit work through the SUA website:

<https://slovenianunion.org/literary-award/>

- Open to first time writers as well as published authors
- Open to all genres of creative writing
- Short stories, novels, poetry, memoir, creative nonfiction & personal essays are welcome.
- Work must be in a digital format that can be submitted electronically.
- Original work only. No AI.
- Work must be submitted in English.
- Translations accepted only if you are the author of the original work.
- Up to 3 submissions per writer (but only one may be book-length.)
- Applicants may live anywhere but must have a connection to Slovenian culture or heritage.
- Individual writers only, 18 years and up. SUA membership is *not* required.
- Works are judged blind by a committee that includes writers.
- Winner will be celebrated at the SUA Centennial Convention July 30-August 2, 2026.

For more information, please contact: slovenianliteraryaward@gmail.com

2023 Slovenian Literary Award Winner - Julia Petrich

Julia N. Petrich, daughter of Joseph and Pamela Petrich, has a passion for reading and writing and was winner of the 2023 Slovenian Union of America (SUA) Literary Award, which was presented to her during the 2023 SUA Convention in Pueblo Colorado. Julia's writings are inspired by family memories, stories and history. Julia's grandparents Frank Petrich and Julia Brencic emigrated from Slovenia after World War II, met in Chicago, and were married at St. Stephen's Church in 1951. Her father previously said that "Her vision of my father's experience in 1942 while at the Rab concentration camp is haunting, and fortunately for our family we are here because he survived."

Julia provided the following background in an article in the Fall 2023 Zarja - The Dawn SUA publication: "My grandfather, Frank Petrich, was born in Forest City, Pennsylvania in 1921, but when he was still an infant, his family returned to Slovenia. He grew up in Lipsenj in Cerknica. When he had just turned 21, he was taken to the concentration camp on Rab, an island off the coast of Italy. He was also a prisoner of two more Italian camps, Gonars and Renicci. After these camps, he was on the run at various times in war-torn Italy. In 1947, he was able to get his papers and secure passage back to the United States. His story is different from some others since he was a US citizen behind enemy lines, and his focus was always to return to the States." The photos are of Frank's family in Lipsenj around 1916, Frank at the start of his trip back to the US in July 1947 on a US military ship, and Julia and her father at the SUA convention.



My Vacation on the Island Rab *for F.P. (1921–2010)*

Bread, 150g 100g 50g
Rice, 66g 33g
Tomatoes, 15g
Meat, 50g 25g, 2x 1x a week
Cheese, 20g, 5x a week

A gruel so thin
you can count the grains

If lucky a boiled potato
or at least the peels

A lone barrel of water to share
our dysentery our lice
our diminishing will

They know an ill
prisoner is a quiet one

The soldiers' daily calls mark
the passage of time —
Everyone out, even the dead!

What crime do we pay for? Our birth
in the wrong place?

The sun presses
down on this dry patch
as I watch my withered
weathered countrymen

Do I look better or worse
than they do?

We are cut by the salty night air
our useless bodies wracked by cold
wind and the merciless hunger
and spreading diseases

Should I be whispering
my prayers too?

As I nod off and I dream
I dream of death and when I wake
I see it coming true

So I keep watch — and try
not to gawk as my compatriots die
A pile of coffins every day

They are with God now
so long as he's still taking us

Blessing or curse
I won't die here
My dreams are portents

I see this island — no longer ugly
with suffering and hate but a paradise
of shimmering white stone buildings
surrounded by warm shallow seas

Again we will call it Felix
The Happy Island

Vacationers will visit its towns and beaches
dip in the waters and picnic in the parks
eat delicate ruffled cakes of marzipan
on sun-soaked terraces

Few will know or remember
the guard towers the barbed wire
and the death will be a distant memory
abundant crops will grow here

Then I see me — an old man withered
weathered but aged
in a pristine hospital bed

flanked by my progeny
a set of foreign strangers
that somehow came from me

But until then, I remain firm
I have souls to keep safe now
and the rousing promise of a new
country I'll soon call home



SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER

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PHONE: (630)243-0670
EMAIL: SECRETARY@SLOVENIAN-CENTER.ORG
WEB:WWW.SLOVENIAN-CENTER.ORG



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sat & Sun, Dec 20th & 21st 2025.....Festival of Lights
Thurs, Dec 25.....Christmas – CENTER CLOSED
Wed, Dec 31.....New Year's Eve
Sat, Jan 10thSports Klub - Texas Hold'em
Sun, Jan 11thŠola Winter Olympics
Sun, Feb, 8th Koline Dinner
Wed, Feb 18th Ash Wednesday Mass
Sat & Sun, Feb 21st & 22nd Slovenian National Ski Jump, Iron Mountain, MI
Fri, Feb, 27th Lenten Fish Fry
Sat, Feb 28th Sports Club - Trivia Night
Fri, Mar 27th Butarice Day & Šola/SCC Sponsored Egg Coloring for Palm Sunday
Sat, Mar 28th Butarice Day
Sun, Mar 29th Palm Sunday Luncheon
Sun, April 5th Easter Sunday Mass - 11am
Sun, April 26th SCC Appreciation Celebration & Annual Meeting
Sun, May 17th Last Day of Slovenian School / Year-End Performance
Sun, Jun 21st Father's Day Picnic (Hosted by PSK)
Fri/Sat/Sun, June 26th/27th/28th Sports Klub Sports & Music Weekend
Sun, Aug 9th The SCC BIG Picnic
Sun, Aug 30th Honey Picnic
Sat Oct 10th..... 2026 Octoberfest (Tentative)
Sun, Oct 11th Mission Dinner
Sun, Oct 25th Fall Festival/Šola Trunk & Treat
Sun, Nov 8th SCC 31st Center Anniversary Dinner
Fri, Nov 27th 2026 Center Young Adult Vision & Planning Session
Fri, Nov 27th Sports Klub Pub Crawl – Downtown Lemont
Sun, Dec 6th Sveti Miklavž
Fri/Sat/Sun, Dec 18th/Dec 19th/20th 2026 Festival of Lights
Thur, Dec 24th Christmas Eve Mass (Center open after Mass)

A Message from the Newsletter Team

Naj vam božični duh prinese veselje in srečo. Lepe pozdrave vsem in vse najboljše. Vesele božične praznike in srečno novo leto.