



SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER

"NAŠ SLOVENSKI DOM" ESTABLISHED 1995



GLASILO SLOVENSKEGA DOMA IN SKUPNOSTI V LEMONTU!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear SCC Family,

I hope you had a chance to attend one of our events this past quarter. Our team of volunteers worked hard to put together an incredible lineup, including:

- Palm Sunday Luncheon & Town Hall Meeting
- Appreciation Dinner/ Annual Meeting & Award of Distinction Presentations to Slavko & Slavica Sovan and Mr. & Mrs. Fritz
- End-of-Year Performance by Šola
- Celebration of the 100-Year Anniversary of Maria Pomagaj
- Father's Day Picnic hosted by Prekmurje Social Club
- Sports Weekend of golf, softball, and a music extravaganza hosted by the Sports Klub

It's been a very busy and exciting quarter for our Slovenian community!

Thank you to all our volunteers and organizations for your hard work in bringing these events to life!

Looking Ahead

Beyond these recent events, we are actively planning for the future. Some key updates:

- New Board Members: We've welcomed 12 new Board members for 2025. Thank you to both new and current members for helping lead our Dom into the next period of growth.

continued on next page ->



- **Website & Branding Refresh:** Phase 1 of our newly refreshed website and updated branding is nearly complete! Visit us at <https://www.slovenian-center.org> (starting on July 1st) and check out our new logo designed by **Katie Burjek**



- **Technology Enhancements:** We've implemented Square for electronic payments (credit cards, Apple Pay, etc.), and introduced DonorPerfect, Constant Contact, and SignUpGenius to improve operations and volunteer engagement.
- **Rental Process Improvements:** Updated pricing for weddings and showers; identified sales coordinators; new direct email for reservations: reservations@slovenian-center.org and upgraded our offerings and services. If you have an event coming up, please let us know.
- **Facility Improvements:** Partnering with a design firm for a long-term Dom refresh focusing on the Large Hall and Bathroom projects

Upcoming Events

- **SCC Annual Picnic & \$10,000 Raffle - Sunday, August 10th.** Get ready for the BEST day of your summer! Bring your family and friends for great food, live music from Ansambel Veseljaki, and a chance to win \$10,000—our largest fundraiser of the year!
- **St. Mary's Honey Picnic - Sunday, August 24th.** Annual Picnic fundraiser hosted by the Franciscan Fathers in Lemont.
- **Our Dom's 30th Anniversary Celebration - *NEW DATE!* Sunday, October 19th.** Please mark your calendar for this special event as we honor the builders who brought the Dom to life 30 years ago. Let's celebrate our proud history and look forward to a bright future together.

Volunteer With Us!

Have a skill or a few hours to spare? We need:

- Grass cutters
- FOSM (Friends of St. Mary's)
- Bricklayers (for tuckpointing)
- Architecture and design professionals
- And many other roles

Visit <https://www.slovenian-center.org> (refreshed website once launched) and click the Volunteer button to sign up! Thank you again for your continued support and to all the volunteers who make the Dom possible. If you're not yet involved—this is your invitation to join us!



Warm Regards,
Tony Vuksinic
SCC President
anthony.vuksinic@gmail.com



S U S SLOVENSKO VERSKO SREDIŠČE **SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC MISSION**

August 10 – Slovenian Catholic Center Pilgrimage & Picnic

Mass will be held at the Lourdes grotto at 11:00am with devotions to Mary immediately following. See information regarding the picnic in this newsletter.

August 24 - Honey Picnic

Blessing of the newly renovated sidewalks in the Valley of the Rosary in honor of the 100 years anniversary of Ameriške Brezje will take place during the Honey Picnic. Holy Mass will be held at the grotto with devotions to Mary immediately following. This picnic will be a fundraising pilgrimage of the Franciscan Monastery for the upkeep of the grounds. Dinner will be served at the picnic area, along with a homemade bakery sale and honey sale. Donations of bakery, especially homemade, are greatly appreciated!

September 21 - Slomsek Sunday

Blessed Anton Martin Slomsek, a patron saint of the Slovenian Catholic Mission and namesake of our Slomsek school, will be celebrated on his feast day, September 21st.

100 Year of Ameriške Brezje Lemont; this property was bought as a farm in 1923. The first Franciscans moved here one year later. In 1925, the first wooden structure, including a monastery and a church, was erected along Main Street and a picture of Marija Pomagaj was placed above the side altar (now on the main altar of the church in the monastery). 100 year anniversary was honored this year on June 1st with rector of the National Shrine of Marija Pomagaj in Brezje, Fr. Robert Bahcic. We will also celebrate this anniversary with the bishop from Ljubljana, Most Reverend Anton Jamnik, on **October 19**.



100 Years of Ameriške Brezje

1925-2025



First Slovenian pilgrims to Mary Help of Christians in Lemont on May 24, 1925



A postcard depicting the first Franciscan monastery in Lemont.

Lemont, Illinois



100 years of Ameriške Brezje

The replica from the National Shrine, Brezje, Slovenia, of the Marija Pomagaj - Mary Help of Christians - painting was solemnly installed in Lemont on May 24, 1925, and that coinciding with the first organized Slovenian pilgrimage to the Lemont shrine. On June 14 of that same year, the first Franciscan monastery and church building along the Main Street were formally blessed and opened for use. Lemont also became the administrative center for the Slovenian Franciscans-Commissariat of the Holy Cross.

In the year 1924, a significant development took place in the spiritual and cultural life of the Slovenian immigrant community in the United States with the establishment of a temporary wooden Franciscan monastery and church in Lemont, Illinois. Constructed with financial and material contributions from the laity—primarily Slovenian and Slovak emigrants—the project symbolized both a religious sanctuary and a communal center for a population striving to preserve its identity in a foreign land.

On September 2, 1924—Labor Day—the cornerstone of the monastery and church was ceremonially blessed during a public gathering that marked the first pilgrimage to the site. The event was organized by Fr. Kazimir Zakrajšek and supported by parishioners from St. Stephen's Parish, Chicago, alongside with Slovak and other volunteers from Chicago and Joliet. The Mass of the blessing was celebrated by Fr. Matija Šavs, assisted by priests Viktor Blahunka and John Plaznik, with the participation of Franciscan seminarians studying at St. Bonaventure University in New York. In the afternoon, the cornerstone was blessed by Msgr. Bobal, a Czech priest serving in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The ceremony was also attended by the mayor of Lemont at the time, Mr. Francis Keough.

On October 1, 1924, Fr. John (Janez) Kapistran Ferlin arrived from Sveta Gora, Slovenia. He assumed the role of local superior (guardian) and brought with him a replica of the image of Marija Pomagaj - Mary Help of Christians, painted by Fr. Blaž Farčnik. The image was installed and blessed on December 1, 1924, in a modest chapel adjacent to the monastery's veranda. Fr. John Ferlin also brought from Slovenia a start of the Franciscan bees in Lemont—a Carniolian queen bee.

The monastery was canonically established as a religious house on May 29, 1925, by official charter issued by the Minister General of the Franciscan Order, Fr. Bernardin Klumper. During its years of operation—from 1924 to 1940—the wooden monastery housed over thirty Franciscans, serving both spiritual formation of the seminarians and community needs. It functioned as a private Franciscan college for Slovenian and Slovak seminarians. On the morning of June 14, 1925, Msgr. Blahunka, a well-known Slovak priest, celebrated Mass. Msgr. Rempe, a delegate of the Chicago Archbishop (and later cardinal) Mundelein, blessed the first chapel and monastery along the Main street. Msgr. Rempe gave a speech in English, Fr. Kazimir Zakrajšek in Slovak, and Fr. Benvenut Winkler in Slovenian. The event was attended by many people of Slovenian, Croatian, Slovak, and other nationalities, as well as many priests, officials, and residents of Lemont. On this occasion, the Franciscans published a brochure about the blessing of the first monastery and the church.



Slovenian Consulate News

The Slovenian Consul, Suzana Cesarek, has committed to being at one of our fall events, either the October 19 Celebration or the November Annual SCC Anniversary Dinner. The consulate has received new mobile equipment which will permit the issuance of passports and visas away from the Cleveland office. They are testing it right now. Consul General Suzana Češarek offered to have her consular hours in Lemont on July 26, 2025 (time TBD). Anyone who is interested can contact sloconsulate.cleveland@gov.si for an appointment.

Questions about Slovenian citizenship, passports, and other consular inquiries? Visit the links below!

English: <https://www.gov.si/en/representations/consulate-general-cleveland/consular-information-of-the-consulate-general-cleveland/>

Slovenian: <https://www.gov.si/predstavnistva/generalni-konzulat-cleveland/konzularne-informacije-generalnega-konzulata-cleveland/>



Retreat House News

Most of the weekends in 2026 are now booked except for July, August, and December. The retreat house is expanding into weekday events. Volunteers have attacked the clump of growth across from the back parking lot that has caused cases of poison ivy. Thanks to Olga Voss and other volunteers who have brought a burst of color to the front of the retreat house.



Slovenian Genealogy Society News

The data entry of the index cards listing the names of Slovenian Post WWII refugees to the USA is almost completed. In the near future, the SGSI will report how this database can be accessed. The USA accepted about 100 Slovenian refugee priests between 1947 and 1959. Many of these did not come through the Slovenian Catholic League but through dioceses. Another database is being built of these names that will be available soon.



Bishop Baraga Association

Baraga Days this year are on Labor Day Weekend in Houghton, Michigan at St. Ignatius Church. Monsignor Anton Rezek was pastor here from about 1900 until his death in 1943. He wrote the History of the Diocese of Sault St. Marie and the Marquette Diocese along with an extensive biography of Bishop Frederick Baraga. This is the last chance to organize a bus from Chicago. If you are interested, call Decon Janez P. Vidmar, 708-204-4390. Related to this, the Diocese of Duluth has started the canonization process for Monsignor Joseph Buh, a missionary to the Ojibwe Indians in Minnesota, and considered to be the founder of the Diocese of Duluth. He was instrumental in the founding of KSKJ in 1884. On June 9th, his mortal remains will be brought to the Cathedral of the Holy Rosary in Duluth for re-interment to make it available for veneration. He was one of about 20 Slovenian priests who followed Baraga to America.



The Prekmurje Social Club of Chicago presents the

Sunday June 15, 2025

St. Mary's Picnic Grounds

14246 Main St., Lemont, IL 60439



Schedule of Events

11am Outdoor Slovenian Mass (weather permitting) at
the Lourdes Grotto of the Slovenian Catholic Mission
1:30pm Lunch & Drinks available for purchase up on the hill

Polka music for your dancing pleasure

2:30pm Čevapčići available for purchase

For Children:

Water fun (don't forget bathing suits and towels)

Volleyball and Bags

Kids Games and Races



SCC ANNUAL PICNIC

\$10,000 RAFFLE

Please join us... Sunday, August 10th, 2025

Plus 27
additional
prizes
in amounts of
\$1000
\$500
\$100



**Thank you for your past
and continued support!**

**Please contact the SCC if you are
interested in making a sponsorship
donation.**

BBQ Lunch:

Lamb

Pork

Chicken

Čevapčići

Hot Dogs

Bakery Tent

Beer Tent

Fully Stocked Bar

Dollar Raffle
BIG Raffle

Bocce Ball

Bags & Volleyball

Children's Games

Slovenian School Project Tent

Playground

& more....

Live Music

Open Pavilion Dancing

11:00 A.M. MASS AT GROTTA
(WEATHER PERMITTING)

12:00 P.M. PICNIC "ON THE HILL"

1:00 P.M. SLOMŠEK SLOVENIAN
SCHOOL PROJECT

4:00 P.M. \$1 DOLLAR RAFFLE

5:00 P.M. \$10,000 GRAND PRIZE
RAFFLE DRAWING



SCC, PO Box 634, Lemont, IL 60439 ~ secretary@slovenian-center.org ~ 630-243-0670

**Enter Now!**Entry form for Raffle
August 10th, 2025

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Send to: Slovenian Catholic Center
P.O. Box 634, Lemont, IL 60439

Final mail pickup Sat. Aug. 10th

Your official ticket will be issued and mailed to you upon receipt of check or money order and completed form.
Inquiries: Contact the SCC (630) 243-0670 or Email: secretary@slovenian-center.org**Raffle Prizes***Grand Prize***\$10,000***Plus*One \$1,000, Sixteen \$500
and Ten \$100\$50.00 per ticket
donation**Enter Now!**Entry form for Raffle
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donation



SMS MARELA (SLOVENSKA MLADINSKA SKUPINA MARELA)

Marela has been very busy since we last checked in. We helped to set up the annual Palm Sunday Easter brunch that the Center hosts as well as participated in Palm Sunday procession and mass for the Slovenian Catholic Mission.

We answered a call from Urad Vlade RS za Slovence v Zamejstvu in po Svetu and the request to record a video in celebration of Slovenia's dan drzavnosti on June 25, 2025. We recorded a new waltz to the song Slovenija Odkot Lepote Tvoje, by Ansambel Avesenik, which is the theme for this year's celebration. Our video has been successfully accepted and will be streamed in Nova Gorica on June 22, 2025. It was great fun and an honor to be invited to participate in this event.



We welcomed two new members to our group, Thomas Rozman and Alex Sutton. They are both enjoying learning about Slovenian culture, our support of the SCC and church as well as other community events.

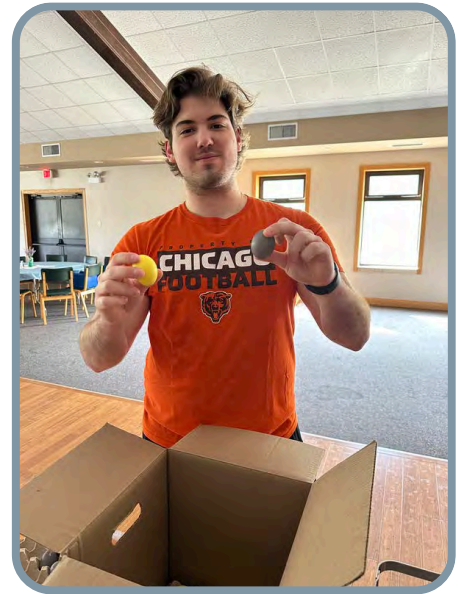
Our senior members are busy planning some new and unique fund-raising events and looking forward to our summer performance schedule. Please watch for our annual Backyard Barbecue which we will host in July!

As always, we welcome anyone of Slovenian descent, 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!





ŠOLA UPDATES

Slomšek Slovenian School concluded its school year on Sunday, May 18th. Our students participated in mass reading petitions, presenting an offertory gift, and singing after Communion. Our year-end program brought much laughter during our “television” performance of Family Feud: Sovan’s vs the Magajne’s. Of course you can’t have a television show without commercials. Mama Mojca’s Cooking promised all our aches and pains, from bending down to play balina and holding up tarok cards, would go away. And life will be so much sweeter if we only have Slovenian Honey. The program also included singing and dancing, including a dance to Slovenija, od kot lepote tvoje, which will be included in Slovenia’s video montage during their Welcome Home celebration in June. Be on the lookout for the video link to the montage, which will be shared in the coming weeks after the June unveiling in Slovenia.

Of course we couldn’t finish the school year without some more fun! After the program, students, families, and the entire Slovenian community in attendance, enjoyed making ice cream sundaes and hanging out together.

Our heartfelt gratitude to all the parents who have committed their time and energies to our šola. There are so many great activities and clubs from which to choose, which can make it difficult to juggle time for šola. Whether rain, snow, or shine, we’ve loved seeing the smiles of all our students during Sunday morning classes!

And a special shout out to the Slomšek Slovenian School staff: Maja Magajne (srčki), Andrea Boltežar (school age), Urška Magajne (school age), Millie Hozjan (singing), Teya Magajne (dancing), Martin Puc (performance coordinator), Sofia Magajne (srčki backup), and Mojca Anaya (school coordinator).





Plans for the 2025-2026 school year are already underway! If you know of someone who would be interested in joining our Sunday morning school, please reach out to Mojca Anaya at 847-207-0963. And don't forget to come visit the Slomšek Slovenian School tent at this year's SCC Picnic and Raffle, Sunday, August 10th! We will be available to answer any questions you may have regarding our school, and we will have a fun project for kids! We look forward to seeing you there!





4th Annual Grape Harvest:

Slovenian Polka Festival

Saturday,
September 6th

Rivals Park
Haunted Trails Family
Entertainment Center
1423 N. Broadway, Joliet

Save the date for
the 4th Annual
Grape Harvest
Festival!

More information to follow.

* LIVE MUSIC * SMOKIES * BEER & WINE * STRUDELS & POTICAS * CULTURAL EXHIBITS *

JOLIET AREA
HISTORICAL MUSEUM



Slovenian Sports Klub Nation!



New Officers

Breaking news! Please join us in congratulating our new SSK officers that were elected on 5/22/25!

President: Charlie Buh

Vice President: AJ Vuksinic

Treasurer: Jake Gregorich

A big thank you to our outgoing officers, Jake Gregorich (President), and Mike Breszach (Treasurer). We appreciate all your hard work!

Trivia Night Recap

The SSK hosted a challenging, but fun, Trivia Night on March 22nd with 7 teams participating. Congrats to the top two teams that won cash prizes, most of which was very generously contributed back to the SSK! A big THANK YOU to Tony Purkart and Kristin Louapre for all their hard work in organizing this event.

1st place team members: Front Row: Mike & Vicky Herold, Brian & Tina Ruda, Liz Dierking. Back Row: Anna Marie Sever, Ante Dukic, Dan Dierking, Herman & Suzy Simrayh.

2nd place team members: Wanda Jozwik, Ed Jozwik, John Zefran, Melissa Zefran, Christian Gregorich, Ralph and Myra Ferri, Chuck Zempich and Angela Prieto.



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ->

**36th Annual Softball, Golf, and Music Festival****June 27th- 29th**

We hope you will be able to attend our upcoming golf outing and softball tournaments the weekend of June 27th-29th. Details are below.

Annual SSK Golf Outing – Friday, June 27th – REGISTER BY JUNE 12 – for a scheduled time slot. After 6/12, registrants will be assigned tee times as available. Registration open until the day of the event.

Location: Stony Creek Golf Course in Oak Lawn, IL

Time: Shotgun start at 3pm. \$75 per person includes 18 holes of golf with a cart. Format is a 4-man scramble with winners' names going on the Sports Klub trophy. A scramble format means players of all levels are welcome!

Handicaps will be assigned. There will also be mini golf for adults and kids (pay as you go). The Clubhouse will be open for socializing and cards during the golf tournament. We welcome everyone to just come and hang out! No need to register for the mini golf, or card playing. Please contact Olga Voss (630-660-8086) to sign up as a team or as an individual for the regular golf, or for more information.

**36th Annual SSK Softball Tournament – June 28th & 29th – Co-ed Softball Tournament & Music Festival**

We're always looking for more players! Even if you don't play, come out to socialize, play bocce ball, enjoy the playground, play volleyball, play pickleball, and take in the beauty of the grounds of St. Mary's. Once again, donations of potato salad, pasta salad, green salad, or finger desserts are appreciated! Simply bring them to the hut anytime Saturday or before noon on Sunday. Thank you in advance! For information on playing, contact Jake Gregorich. (jakobgregorich@gmail.com).

**Bonfire and live music – Saturday, June 28th**

Join us Saturday night around 8pm for a bonfire and live music by The Otter Limits. New this year – We will have a Bacci's Pizza food truck near the hut from 5-8pm. Get it while it's hot!

Sunday Lunch “On the hill” at Noon

Immediately following the 11am mass at the outdoor grotto. Softball semi-finals and championship games to follow immediately after lunch.

Sports Equipment Check-out

The Slovenian Sports Klub now has a storage shed for sports equipment. If you'd like to play pickleball or Nine Square while you're on the grounds of St. Mary's, please ask one of our members to get the equipment out for you! The pickleball courts are drawn on the south side of the Center's parking lot, and in the parking lot to the east of the Retreat House. Better lines will be painted sometime this year!

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



Adding Life & Beauty **ADOPT A PLOT** Through Gardening!



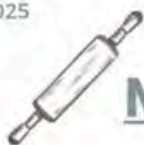
SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER

SERVING OPPORTUNITY

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



Make Your Own Breskova Pita !



Ingredients:

3 eggs
½ cup sugar
1 package of vanilla sugar (or 1 tsp. vanilla extract)
½ cup milk
¼ tsp. salt
½ cup oil
2 cups flour
2 ½ tsps. baking powder
about 2 cups preserved sliced peaches

Step By Step:

1) Butter a 9 x 13" baking dish. Line the bottom with parchment paper. Set aside. Preheat oven to 325F degrees.

2) Slice homemade peaches. Set aside.

3) In a large mixing bowl start by whisking; eggs, sugar & vanilla together. Next add the milk, oil and salt. Mix until well combined. Last we add the flour and baking powder. Mix until all well combined and there are no lumps!

4) Pour batter into the prepared baking pan. Add the sliced peaches on-top. Bake for 40-45 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cake cool for at least 30 minutes before serving. Cake can be covered and stored at room temperature for up to 3 days.



Recipe thanks to
Michelle Pusic Ryall

Facebook Page:
Slovenska Kuhinja





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: _____

I would like to receive a membership card ☐ Yes ☐ No

** Membership cards will be distributed at the Member Appreciation Dinner. If you are unable to attend, it will be mailed to you **

I would like to receive the quarterly newsletter ☐ Mail ☐ Email



SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC CENTER

P.O. BOX 634
14252 MAIN ST.
LEMONT, ILLINOIS 60439
PHONE: (630)243-0670
EMAIL: SECRETARY@SLOVENIAN-CENTER.ORG
WEB:WWW.SLOVENIAN-CENTER.ORG



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UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Sun, June 15.....Father's Day Picnic (hosted by PSK)
- Fri - Sun, June 27th - 29th.....Sports Klub Weekend (Golf & Soccerball)
- Sun, Aug 10.....SCC BIG Picnic & Raffle
- Sun, Aug 24.....Honey Picnic & Blessing of the new Rosary Valley walkways
- Sun, Oct 5.....Slomšek Slovenian School 2025-26 school year begins
- Sun, Oct 19..... ***NEW DATE!*** SCC 30th Anniversary & 100 Year "Ameriske Brezje"
Anniversary Celebration Mass & Dinner
- Sun, Oct 26.....Trunk or Treat
- Sun, Dec 7.....Sveviti Miklavž
- Sat & Sun, Dec 20th & 21st 2025.....Festival of Lights
- Thurs, Dec 25.....Christmas – CENTER CLOSED
- Wed, Dec 31.....New Year's Eve