A MESSAGE FROM KSKJ LIFE’S CHAIR OF THE BOARD:

KSKJ LIFE CELEBRATES OUR NEW SLOVENIAN FIRST LADY

On January 17, the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia and Sister Cities International hosted an Inaugural Gala in Washington, D.C., in honor of Melania Trump, the first Slovenian-American First Lady. She is only the nation’s second foreign-born First Lady. The first was Louisa Adams (England), the wife of John Quincy Adams, in 1825. The event was a remarkable evening of celebration, with ambassadors, diplomats, dignitaries, celebrities, and many Slovenian admirers. The following morning, the Washington Post headlines read, “Slovenians celebrate incoming First Lady Melania Trump.”

The night of celebration, held at the Organization of American States, featured traditional Slovenian cuisine including Kranjska klobasa, Slovenian dumplings, potica and a variety of Eastern European specialties. Of course, no traditional event is complete without the premium wines of Slovenia. A variety of red and white wines were enjoyed. A special treat was the smoother Slovenian Vodka.

Greeting guests as they arrived were accordion playing brothers Frank and Darryl Valencic from the Pittsburgh area who were decked out in their traditional Slovenian dress. Frank and Darryl are officers and members of KSKJ Life St. Jerome Lodge # 153 in Strabane, Pennsylvania, and did a warm job of welcoming guests. For the opening ceremonies, the United States Marine Chamber Orchestra performed the music and the Mood Swings band completed the evening with entertainment and dance selections.

Several national groups co-sponsored the event with the Slovenian embassy, including the Washington, D.C., Chamber of Commerce. There were over 30 ambassadors who served as honorary hosts, including the ambassadors from Afghanistan, Austria, and Mexico to name a few. Over 450 guests attended the event, including more than 40 diplomats, some staff of the Trump transition team and staff members of the Supreme Court.

KSKJ Life was invited by the embassy to attend and support this memorable event by serving as a key sponsor. During his opening ceremonial address, Ambassador Božo Cerar proudly recognized KSKJ Life as the oldest and largest Slovenian organization in America. Phil Hrvatin, Tony Mravle Jr., Dr. Jennifer Mravle and I had the unusual privilege of spending the previous morning at the embassy, meeting with the Ambassador and his staff. It was a most successful opportunity and we discussed a variety of issues tantamount to our common culture and interests.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
Sister Cities International President and CEO Mary D. Kane commented that her group traditionally holds one of the first inaugural galas held prior to each US presidential inauguration. KSKJ Life is honored to have had the opportunity to collaborate with the Slovenian embassy on this special occasion.

Slovenia has several formal Sister Cities relationships including Cleveland, Ohio, with Ljubljana, and Pueblo, Colorado, with Maribor. Donald and Shirley Anzlovar from the Pueblo Sister City commission were also in attendance. In addition, there are other sister city arrangements currently in the works. Mayor Srecko Ocvirk of Sevnica, the home town of Melania Trump and her family, provided a welcome video presentation to honor her. We were told that Sevnica is seeking to establish a relationship with a U.S. sister city.

The event was truly remarkable, and marked an historical event for all Slovenians. Ambassador Cerar said that “having a Slovenian in the White House will mean good things for relations between Slovenia and the United States.” We extend our best wishes to our new First Lady and look forward to a successful relationship.

RUDOLPH KRASOVEC
Chair of the Board

Sister Cities International Chairman, Tim Quigley (at podium) addresses the guests at the gala. Joining him on stage are KSKJ Life Chair of the Board Rudolph Krasovec and other major sponsors. (Photo courtesy of Patricia McDougall)
Organized November 4, 1906 and admitted to KSKJ Life on February 14, 1907, St. Genevieve Lodge #108 (The Slovenian Catholic Ladies’ Benevolent Society) came into being through the efforts of KSKJ Life Secretary Joseph Dunda. There were 12 charter members of this first ladies’ KSKJ Life lodge in Joliet: Mae Dunda, Mary Golobitsh, Ivanka Ogulin, Frances Oswald, Mary Grcar, Anna Horvath, Ann Strutzel, Agnes Pucel, Anna Simonich, Mary Pasdertz, Josephine Pasdertz and B. Culig.

It’s objective and purpose was to promote sisterly love and create a society fund by collecting initiation fees and monthly assessments in order to support sick members and their families and if there was a death of a loved one. Times were hard as the economic depression began to impact members. With support from all its members, various fundraising events were planned to get St. Genevieve’s lodge back on its feet financially. A booth was set up at the church fair and ladies’ card parties were held. Eventually, a bowling league and basketball team were formed. Christmas parties were held for the juvenile members as membership increased.

Over the years, Lodge #108 has been involved with several KSKJ Life functions and events including Matching Funds Events, Join Hands Day, bowling tournaments, basketball tournaments, Christmas parties, and more. The lodge also partakes in recognizing an officer as a Lodge Person of the Year. It most recently held a Matching Funds event to benefit Wreaths Across America, which allowed for the purchase of wreaths to be placed on Veteran’s Graves at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Illinois. Today, St. Genevieve Lodge #108 continues to flourish with more than 800 members.

Three of the charter members of Lodge #108 (left to right): Mae Dunda, Mary Pasdertz and Mary Golobitsh.

St. Genevieve Society in 1949.

KSKJ Life Chair of the Board, Rudolph Krasovec (left), with current Lodge #108 officers.

### 2017 LODGE ANNIVERSARIES

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I’d like to take this opportunity to express a heartfelt thank you to all of the lodges that participated in our second year of the Supporting Soldiers Campaign! Operation Care Packages is a charity that distributes items to troops stationed overseas. Soldiers often ask for new socks because they wear through them so quickly. We decided to focus on this useful item for this year’s campaign.

Your generosity never ceases to amaze me! A total of 24 lodges, plus the Home Office and TEACH (another non-profit organization) collected over 2,000 pairs of socks, additional toiletries and money at their holiday parties. We were also able to take advantage of the Charitable Giving Award that the Home Office introduced back in 2015. For each lodge that participated, the Home Office donated $50 to Operation Care Packages (for a total of $1,200). Direct member donations received were $646, which the Home Office matched; $1,292 was presented to this very deserving charity.

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<th>Total No. of Socks Collected</th>
<th>Amount of Member Donations</th>
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<td>2,450</td>
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Thank you to the lodges who also organized collection drives at your Christmas parties to benefit your community organizations. What a wonderful gift! We will choose another military-based charity for our Supporting Soldiers Campaign next Christmas season. Suggestions are welcome if you have a military-based charity in mind. Please email me at ampugel@aol.com.

Andrea Ostrowski, National Activities Director

MATCHING FUNDS UPDATE - LODGE #59

Sts. Cyril and Methodius Lodge #59 recently held a Matching Funds event in conjunction with Cathedral School’s 18th annual “Wish Upon a Star” Dinner Auction. The event was held on Saturday, November 5, 2016, at Barkers Island in Superior, Wisconsin. The theme for the night was “Through the Looking Glass” from Alice in Wonderland. The evening began at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour and silent auction. A dinner and live auction followed at 7 p.m. Many games could be played throughout the evening including “Queen of Hearts” and “52 card pickup.”

It was a wonderful evening with many fun silent auction items, including homemade jewelry, knitted items and special items like a finger print tree and bean bag toss made by children in different grades. In the live auction, there was even a picnic table decorated with “finger print ants” from all the children at the school. The evening included a wonderful chicken parmesan dinner and dessert. All who attended had a magical evening in the support of Catholic education.

Lodge #59 members Toni Britton, Jennifer Tanko and Stephen Tanko were on the planning committee for the auction. That evening Toni and Jennifer helped with games going on during the auction and Stephen was the Master of Ceremonies. Lodge #171 members from St. Elizabeth in Duluth also attended the event.

The dinner auction helps support the education of 150 students in grades K-8 at Cathedral school. Cathedral is a private Catholic school in Superior, Wisconsin. A Matching Funds check was presented on Wednesday, December 21, 2016, during the school Mass at Cathedral of Christ the King. The mass was attended by 150 students and about 100 parishioners.

Toni Britton

Planning committee.

David Britton, second-grader and Lodge #59 member, presents the Matching Funds check to Mr. Gerald Carr, principal of Cathedral School.
USF BROWN AND GOLD NIGHT
KSKJ Life was once again a proud sponsor of the University of St. Francis Brown and Gold Athletics Fundraiser, which was held on January 11 in Joliet, IL.

This year marked the 40th anniversary of the event that raises funds for the school’s athletics program. Guest of honor was David Ross from the 2016 World Series Champion Chicago Cubs.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL!
Join the conversation with other members on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram by using the hashtag #kskjlife.

NATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT
APRIL 21-23, 2017

Bertrand Bowling Lanes
2616 Washington Street Waukegan, IL 60085 | 1-847-244-1300

Hotel Info
Holiday Inn Express 611 Lakehurst Road Waukegan, IL. 60085.
For reservations, call 1-847-473-4400, and reference the KSKJ Life Bowling Tournament to secure the $104.99 rate. The deadline is April 7, 2017.

Friday Night Social
To held at the Holiday Inn Express beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Team Event
Saturday 2 p.m.

Singles & Doubles Event
Sunday, 10 a.m.

Entry forms and additional information can be found on the KSKJ Life website (kskjlife.com/athletics) and Facebook page (facebook.com/kskjlife).

ABC – EASY AS 1-2-3!
The ABC, Alternative Bowling Competition, is back for its fourth year. Youth members still have until April 30th to enter the ABC Bowling Competition. To register:
1. Go to the bowling center of your choice.
2. Bowl either straight bowling or bumper bowling.
3. After bowling, enter your information on the Athletics page of our website. You can bowl as many games during this time period as you like, but only submit your information one time.

Winners from each division will be randomly selected at the end of the tournament, based on the number of participants. Results will be posted on the website and in The Voice.

MEMBER MEMORIAL
Our prayers go out to the families of our recently passed members. Claims have been paid and a donation to the KSKJ Life Educational Grant Fund has been made on behalf of each.

DECEMBER 2016 & JANUARY 2017
William Bretz - Lodge #59, Buckeye, AZ
WilliamStarsinic - Lodge #42, Steelton, PA
Warren K. Albaugh - Lodge #74, Decatur, IL
Sharon D. Fultz - Lodge #20, Muskegon, MI
Rae L. Runner - Lodge #20, Portage, MI
Gale F. Payne - Lodge #20, Woodland, MI
Rachel Smart - Lodge #1, Chicago, IL
Zoua Yang - Lodge #236, Fresno, CA
Linda N. Lawler - Lodge #53, Markham, IL
Daniel C. Hoen - Lodge #79, Trevor, WI
Sandra L. Juno - Lodge #7, Pueblo, CO
Martin Hozjan - Lodge #170, Shorewood, IL
Beverly J. Whitson-Gaston - Lodge #215, Independence, KS
Frederick J. Doescher - Lodge #624, Biloxi, MS
Bonita L. Kozak - Lodge #29, St. Charles, MO
Virginia M. Hoblick - Lodge #146, De Leon Springs, FL
Richard S. Lewicz - Lodge #219, Toledo, OH
Marlene Carroll - Lodge #620, Scottsdale, AZ
Carl B. Rader - Lodge #115, Longton, KS
Donald A. Schoephorster - Lodge #52, Shools, IN
James A. Stagg - Lodge #169, Woooster, OH
James Matiijevich - Lodge #79, N. Chicago, IL
Phyllis Humphries - Lodge #20, Otseeo, MI
David R. Saunders - Lodge #624, Gulfport, MS
Bruce Mulbarger - Lodge #108, Lockport, IL
Richard L. Blatnik - Lodge #146, Parma Heights, OH
Edward Kolenc - Lodge #2, Joliet, IL
Rita Lovell - Lodge #115, Tonganoxie, KS
Raymond Kucic - Lodge #44, Crown Point, IN
Mary Gradisek - Lodge #63 Sandusky, OH
David D. LaBorg - Lodge #136, Ashland, WI
James C. Allen - Lodge #623, Providence, KY

IN MEMORY OF
Joel Pucek - Wadsworth, IL
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Grampovnik, $20
Joseph Pancar - Barberton, OH - Lodge #110
Brian Morgan & JohnDow Industries, $250
You're a chauffeur, short-order cook, homework maven, dryer of tears...also known as Mom. It's rewarding and tough, especially if you are your children's one and only. But, have you considered what would happen if you were no longer there to take care of them?

While nothing can replace you, having life insurance means that if something happened to you, your children would be OK financially. Protect the ones you love with life insurance. Learn more at kskjlfe.com.
**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2016 LODGE PERSONS OF THE YEAR!**

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<th>Name</th>
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Lodge #79 has submitted their nomination for Lodge Person of the Year. The honoree will be announced in an upcoming issue of The Voice.

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**LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS**

**REGION 1**

**PENNSYLVANIA, CONNECTICUT AND DC**

**LODGE #42**

STEELTON, PA

**LODGE UPDATE**

St. Aloysius Lodge #42 Children’s Christmas Party was held Dec. 10, 2016 at Hershey’s Chocolate World. Ten children attended the party. Activities for the children included creating their own chocolate bar, a chocolate tasting experience, a chocolate tour and a 4D Chocolate mystery movie. We also treated them to a nice lunch. They all seemed to have a good time.

Our Lodge Christmas Party was held on Jan. 14, 2017 and we collected socks for our Socks for Soldiers campaign. On Jan. 19, 2017 we had our installation of officers.

*Lodge members enjoying their Christmas Party at Hershey Park.*

There will be more information about upcoming events in the next issue of The Voice.

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**LODGE #257**

WASHINGTON, D.C.

**LODGE UPDATE**

As a part of the annual celebration of the feast of Saint Nicholas/Miklavževanje held by Lodge #257, the Bishop Baraga Society, on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2016, we also collected items for the Little Sisters
of the Poor in Washington, D. C. The Little Sisters of the Poor are an international congregation of Roman Catholic religious women founded in 1839 by Saint Jeanne Jugan.

Alongside a diverse network of collaborators, they serve the elderly poor in over 30 countries around the world. On Sunday, Dec. 18, 2016, Bishop Baraga Society members Bernadette Fitzsimmons, her son, Matthew; her daughter, Juliana; and Chris Bohince, along with Bernadette’s husband Tim, met several Little Sisters of the Poor who helped during our visit to their Jeanne Jugan Residence in Washington, D. C. They were very kind and grateful for our generosity and time spent distributing the donated gifts to their elderly residents.

In addition to toiletries, men’s gloves, hats, breakfast cereals, and a check representing cash donations collected at our St. Nicholas Celebration, lodge member Mary Lou Terselic and her husband, Rich, had provided 20 hand-knitted shawls donated by the prayer shawl ministry of their parish, St. Ignatius of Loyola Catholic Church in Ijamsville, Maryland. The residents were delighted to receive these gifts and enjoyed our visit a week before Christmas.

Chris Bohince, President

Lodge #257’s donations to the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Please call with reservations by January 30 and let us know how many will be attending. My number is 216-531-0230.

We had our belated annual meeting and Christmas Party on Sunday, January 8. We had to postpone our usual day in December due to the snow storm. We had our election of officers, and then had a nice turn out for the party. There was plenty of refreshments for all.

Please don’t forget about the dinner on February 5.

John C. Turek, Financial Secretary

MATCHING FUNDS BENEFIT DINNER

The annual St. Vitus Parish Palm Sunday benefit dinner will be held on April 9, 2017 in St. Vitus Auditorium, 6111 Lausche Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103. Dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sit-down or take-out dinners will be available. Cost is $15 per adult and $10 per child 12 years old or younger. Menu is to consist of roasted chicken, roast beef, homemade soup, potatoes, side veggie plate, salad, roll with butter and homemade pastry.

The designated charities are Joseph House of Cleveland Inc. (JHCI) and Migration & Refugee Services, Cleveland Catholic Charities. JHCI works with Migration & Refugee Services to resettle immigrants coming to Cleveland, Ohio with a secondary mission of JHCI to provide clothing to all new immigrants and neighborhood residents. For example, since April 2014, over 750 new refugees have benefited as well as 600 local residents. Over $80,000 has been spent to properly meet resettlement needs including remodeling a storefront and basement, replacing 36 windows, installing new heating and/or cooling systems, upgrading electrical wiring and panels, fixing drywall work, painting, repairing a two-section brick garage, and remodeling four of six apartments.

Expenses have been paid by Immaculate Conception, St. Paul Croatian, St. Vitus; and Divine Word Parishes and JHC, plus grants from The Frances & Jane S. Lausche Foundation, Richman Bros. Foundation, St. Mary Seminary Outreach Trust, Neighborhood Endowment Trust (diocese of Cleveland) and private individuals.

Hundreds of volunteer hours have also been provided via H2O (Lakewood, Oh.), St. Edward High School, St. Vitus and Divine Word Parishes, and local college
students. Michelle O’Donnell is director of operations at JHCI. JHCI is a bonafide 501(c)(3) organization. Michelle may be contacted at 216-431-7200 or email at josephhouseofcleveland@gmail.com for volunteer opportunities and other inquiries. The website of JHCI is www.josephhouseofcleveland.org.

The goal of the Palm Sunday event is to raise $20,000; $10,000 will be for ongoing support and the other $10,000 will be for remodeling a second storefront to expand distribution of clothing. A long-term goal is to have this site as an “East Side Catholic Center,” which could provide a food bank, hot meals, resettlement, distribution of clothing, English classes, and minor health care at one location. JHCI is located at 6104 St. Clair Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103.

It is accessible via public or private transportation. Direct donations for this event are to be made to “St. Vitus Church-JHCI,” c/o 6019 Lausche Ave., Cleveland, OH 44103. For additional information contact Stane Kuhar at 216-361-1444. All KSKJ Life members are cordially invited to this worthwhile charitable event.

Stane Kuhar

LODGE UPDATE

We had a nice turnout on a very wintry weekend for our Christmas Party at St. Mary’s. Thanks to our musical performers: Tina Rozman (violin); the Tomc Trio, consisting of Andy (bass) and sons Michael (keyboard) and Thomas (guitar) in their debut performance; and the St. Joseph #169 Clarinet Quartet—Phil Hrvatin, Marty Marsic, John Nemec and Michael Tomc. Our juvenile members led the group in singing, accompanied by Michael Tomc, and were rewarded with a visit from a gift-bearing Santa.

Tina Rozman plays a beautiful violin solo for #169 members at their annual Christmas party.

The Tomc Trio performs for the first time at the Lodge #169 youth and adult Christmas party on December 11.

Some members left with prizes from the door prize raffle and guessing games, and all left with a feeling of Christmas camaraderie. Thanks to the ladies who prepared the food and to the hall for a very nice afternoon gathering.

One more donation for St. Mary’s food bank at the Lodge #169 Christmas party.

MATCHING FUNDS

On March 1, our lodge will join the Holy Trinity sisters for their Ash Wednesday Fish Fry at Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine on Chardon Hill in Euclid. Dinners will be served from 4:30 to 6:45 p.m. Dinner tickets are $8.50 for adults.

There will be Mass with distribution of ashes at 5 p.m. in the chapel as well. Some of our members will be helping with food distribution, bussing tables, etc. Let me know if you are willing to help for an hour or so. The proceeds will be used for repair of the convent steps, one of several repair projects on the beautiful grounds of the shrine.

Our balinca league will be under way on February 2 at the Slovenian Workmen’s Home on Waterloo Road.

If you want to bowl in the National Bowling Tournament April 22-23 in Waukegan, Ill., or would just like to make the trip with us, let me know (216-541-7243; JanezNemec@aol.com). We’ll have a bus, and the cost will be minimal.

Lodge #169 scholarship applications are now available for high-school and college students of the lodge. Deadline for applications is April 30.

Our officers for 2017 include President Phil Hrvatin, Vice President Greg Clack, Financial Secretary Marty Marsic, Treasurer Cathy Clack, Fraternal Activities Coordinator John Nemec, and auditors John Hozjan, Nick Marsic, and Alex Clack. Officers were sworn in at our January meeting.

Anne Nemec has stepped down after serving more than 35 years as assistant and then financial secretary. Thank you for your countless hours of dedicated service in all facets of our lodge activities over the years! Anne is recovering from major back surgery and working on regaining mobility for her gardening while continuing work with St. Joseph Lodge and St. Mary’s Parish.

We send prayers and well wishes to all our members with health concerns. Spring is not far away!

John Nemec

LODGE #226

CLEVELAND, OH

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR 10
5:30 PM - Lodge #226 Board Meeting and Fish Fry at the Slovenian National Home

MARCH 26
Meadows Casino near Pittsburgh, PA
LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

TBD
April Lodge #226 Board Meeting and Fish Fry at the NASH on East 80th.

APR 9
Palm Sunday Fish Fry

MAY 6
Joining Hands Day and Lodge #226 Board Meeting

JUNE 11
Lodge #226 Board Meeting

JULY 9
Annual Multi-Lodge Picnic at Odd Fellows Park

OCT 14
Dinner Dance (Christ the King Athletic Club) at the Slovenian National Home

NOV 26
Christ the King Sunday and 50-year member Celebration and Dinner

DEC 3
Youth Members Christmas Party

LODGE UPDATE

Christ the King Lodge #226 recently held its January Board Meeting followed by the Annual Adult Party. During the meeting, the 2017 officers were sworn into office. Shown in the photo are:

- Ray Zak - President
- Chuck Potenga - Vice President
- Erika Kurbos - Financial Secretary
- Diane McClusky - Recording Secretary
- Carmen Federico and Bill Urban - Auditors
- Ron Zak - Fraternal Activities Coordinator
- Communications Director - Randy Zak
- Voice Reporter - Tamara Zupancic

- Youth Activities Committee Co-Chairs - Beth Paskey and Tamara Zupancic

Congratulations to all. We are looking forward to a fantastic 2017 filled with family, friends and fun!

Following are some photos of members enjoying our party:

Come shoot some hoops with Christ the King Lodge #226. You are invited to play basketball with Lodge #226 at St. Michael’s Woodside in Broadview Heights. We play on the following dates: February 4, 11 and 18 from noon to 1:30 p.m. Contact Ron Zak at 216-215-2163 for more information. We hope to see you there!

WE ARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Are you active on Facebook? So is Lodge #226! Like KSKJ Cleveland Lodge #226 to receive lodge updates and see photos of our events.
LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW OFFICERS FOR 2017:
• President - Tony Peskar
• Vice President – Greg Snyder
• Financial Secretary/Treasurer – Liz Jones
• Fraternal Activities Coordinator – Vicki Javor
• Membership Committee – Tony Peskar, Greg Snyder, Vicki Javor, Elaine Peskar & Liz Jones
• Recording Secretary – Elaine Peskar
• Auditors – Greg Snyder & Elaine Peskar
• Voice reporters- Elaine & Tony Peskar
Thank you to all who served as officers during 2016. We are greatly indebted for your dedicated service!

SLOVENIAN NATIONAL HOME EVENT - FREE TICKETS
In a continuing effort to promote business and support for the Slovenian National Home E. 80th (NASH), Lodge #150 will donate two tickets (each ticket admits one person) to each bi-monthly 50-50 Raffle (occurring the first Wednesday of the month, during the months of April, June, August and December). The next 50-50 Raffle in 2017 is scheduled for Feb. 1, 2017. These tickets will be made available every other month. Please contact us for your free tickets.

50-YEAR MEMBER DINNER
Our 50-year members recognition dinner is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, March 19. This year’s 50-year members are: Diane Debelak and Ann Marie Pelles. Congratulations Diane and Ann Marie!

UPCOMING DATES
FEB 26
Slovenian National Home E. 80th (NASH) Annual Shareholders Meeting at 1 p.m.
MAR 1
Ash Wednesday
MAR 19
50-Year Member Recognition Dinner
AUG 5
Porky Pig Tournament & Pig Roast
AUG 19
Saint Lawrence Feast Day Mass & Dinner @ Saint Mary’s

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• Vice President – Greg Snyder
• Financial Secretary/Treasurer – Liz Jones
• Fraternal Activities Coordinator – Vicki Javor
• Membership Committee – Tony Peskar, Greg Snyder, Vicki Javor, Elaine Peskar & Liz Jones
• Recording Secretary – Elaine Peskar
• Auditors – Greg Snyder & Elaine Peskar
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MAR 1
Ash Wednesday
MAR 19
50-Year Member Recognition Dinner
AUG 5
Porky Pig Tournament & Pig Roast
AUG 19
Saint Lawrence Feast Day Mass & Dinner @ Saint Mary’s

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK
Lodge #150 now has a new Facebook page to share lodge news, our event calendar, photos and other information. Check us out at: www.facebook.com/KSKJ150.
You do not have to be a Facebook member to view the page.

LODGE EMAIL ADDRESS
The Lodge #150 email address for Financial Secretary, Liz Jones, is: kskjlfe150@gmail.com.

REGION 4
JOLIET AREA

KSJK LIFE ILLINOIS FEDERATION
The next KSJK Life Illinois Federation meeting will take place on Friday, Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. at the Slovenian Cultural Center in Lemont (14252 Main St., Lemont). Refreshments will be served after the meeting, and all Illinois KSJK Life members are invited to attend.

LODGE #2
JOLIET, IL

LODGE UPDATE
St. Joseph’s Lodge #2’s installation of officer’s meeting and luncheon took place on Sunday, January 8 at St. Joseph’s Park, Joliet, IL. Newly elected officers were installed by out-going President Gregg Vershay. New officers for 2017 are:
• Ken Mihelich - Auditor
• Sylvia Churnovic - Fraternal Events Coordinator
• John Churnovic - Vice President
• Zach Pucel - President
• Lydia Marquardt - Financial Secretary/Treasurer
• Darrell Marquardt - Auditor
LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

The officers for 2017 were installed, and I would like to congratulate our appointed officers for the year as well.

- Lodge Membership Chair – Bill Colonna
- Sgt. At Arms – Louis Derlinga
- Spiritual Director – Deacon Frank Juricic

We acknowledged Thomas Caneva, Denise DeSanto, Angela Estey, Joan Kozar, Rudolph Mahalik and David Papesh for their 50-year membership. Entertainment was provided by Gary “Johnny O” Onate, a Frank Sinatra impersonator.

50-year members will be honored at a luncheon on St. Joseph's Day, Sunday, March 19. Members will celebrate with a 10 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church, then meet at Merichka’s Restaurant following the Mass. The cost for adult members is $10. Children 10 and under eat free from the children’s menu. The cost for non-members is $20 for adults and $5.95 for children. Please RSVP to Sylvia Churnovic by March 10 at 815-353-1161.

Newly elected president Zach Pucel and Regional Director Theresa Krampac presented Jodi Waternberg with the certificate for Lodge #2 – 2016 Lodge Person of the Year.

Newly elected officers of St. Joseph Lodge #2, Joliet, IL: Ken Mihelich, Sylvia Churnovic, John Churnovic, Zach Pucel, Lydia Marquardt and Darrell Marquardt.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, March 5 at 11:30 a.m. at St. Joe’s Park Hall. It’s that time of year again for the Annual Chili Cook-Off. If you have not already signed up to enter your crockpot of chili, please email me at rccklcalc@sbcglobal.net just so we can get an idea for the set up. Kathy Lovati was last year’s champion, so everyone needs to top her recipe! I don’t think I’ve tasted a chili yet that I haven’t liked; there are so many variations, and it’s fun to see what everyone enters as their favorite.

Karen Ramsak Colman, Reporter
LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

KSKJ Life would like to send condolences to the family and friends of Anton “Tony” Kaluza who passed away on Jan. 13, 2017. Tony was a long-time member of KSKJ Life Lodge #29, serving as a Lodge Officer for many years.

LODGE UPDATE
Thank you to everyone who came out to Crest Hill Lanes on Sunday, January 15 to enjoy a day of bowling and pizza for our annual Christmas Party. And thank you to Theresa Krampac, our Regional Director, who also came and donated four (4) $25 gift cards as door prizes. We collected over 70 pairs of socks and monetary donations for this year’s Supporting Soldiers Campaign, benefiting Operation Care Packages.

Congratulations to Margaret Koncar, our 2016 Lodge Person of the Year!

Part of what makes Margaret so unique and special is that she truly cares about others and wants to make a difference, and she has parlayed those values into her leadership for our lodge. She organizes events and invites others to them – people of all ages – because she values our organization and the great potential we have to make a difference for our members and local communities through the resources and programs available through KSKJ Life.

We’re thrilled to have Margaret continue providing

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR 9
Lodge Meeting 7 p.m. – Panera Bread Co., Plainfield, IL

APR 22-23
National Bowling Tournament, Waukegan, IL

MAY 11
Lodge Meeting 7 p.m. – Panera Bread Co., Plainfield, IL

MONTH OF MAY
Lemonade Stands to raise money for Feed my Starving Children

JUNE 17
Volunteer at Feed My Starving Children, Naperville, IL 2-4 p.m. (Join Hands Day Project)

JULY
Summer Social – TBD

SEPT 14
Lodge Meeting 7 p.m. – Panera Bread Co., Plainfield, IL

SEPT 23
Oktoberfest & Chili Cook-off, Van Horn Woods Pavilion #3, Plainfield, IL 2-5 p.m.

OCT 12
Lodge Meeting 7 p.m. – location TBA

NOV 30
Lodge Meeting 7 p.m. – location TBA *Annual Meeting/Election of 2018 Officers*

DEC 17
Christmas Caroling - Our Lady of Angels Home at 2 p.m. Lodge Winter Social immediately following at Starbucks Coffee, Jefferson St. Joliet, IL.

Baby Abigail Gruber enjoying her trip to the bowling alley.

Youth members from Lodge #143 are all smiles as they wait their turn to bowl.

Lodge #143 members Ivanka and Stan Markun catching up with Region 4/5 director, Theresa Krampac.

Congratulations to Margaret Koncar, our 2016 Lodge Person of the Year!

April Sleyko, Financial Secretary, presents the Lodge Person of the Year Award to Margaret Koncar.

Part of what makes Margaret so unique and special is that she truly cares about others and wants to make a difference, and she has parlayed those values into her leadership for our lodge. She organizes events and invites others to them – people of all ages – because she values our organization and the great potential we have to make a difference for our members and local communities through the resources and programs available through KSKJ Life.

We’re thrilled to have Margaret continue providing

LODGE #143
JOLIET, IL
leadership to our lodge and KSKJ Life, and we’re humbled to be able to honor her in this way. This recognition is very well deserved, and we’re looking forward to her continuing to contribute her leadership for years to come. Congratulations Margaret!

Our next meeting is March 9 at 7 p.m. at Panera Bread Co., Plainfield (corner of 59 and Caton Farm Rd.). If you can’t physically attend, you can join us via conference call. Please contact April with the call-in information at (aprilsleyko@gmail.com) or check our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/kskj143.

If, through oversight, I have omitted someone’s name from the thank-you list, I am sorry. Please know that your donation is appreciated. It takes many people to produce a successful event and we thank each one of you, whatever your part, for the success of this party.

Joanne Sierzega

**REGION 5**

**CHICAGO AND INDIANAPOLIS**

**REGIONAL NEWS**

Even though we had zero and sub-zero temperatures, 63 adults (41 from Lodge #1 and 22 from Lodge #170) and 16 children (15 from Lodge #1 and 1 from Lodge #170) attended St. Stephen Lodge #1 and St. Anne Lodge #170’s annual Christmas Party. Thank you to Luba and her kitchen crew for a delicious lunch of soup, salad, pork, Slovenian sausage and hot dogs. Thank you to Donna and Tom McNally and Don and Irene Sierzega for bringing the platters of homemade cookies for dessert.

Thank you to Santa (Pat Sierzega), to Mia Wagner who played Silent Night on the saxophone and to cousins Hailey Neetz, Aleah and Holly Richter, Lily Roskos, Luke Roskos and Abigail Michau for singing Jingle Bells for our entertainment.

Many door prizes were distributed. Thanks to the donations from Tom and Donna McNally; Don and Irene Sierzega; Joanne Sierzega; Region 5 director, Theresa Krampac; and the KSKJ Life Home Office (for the KSKJ Life ear bands and KSKJ Life tissue packets).

To members Jennie Kovacic and Judy Ovnik—thank you for your annual monetary donations toward the expenses of the Christmas Party.

To, through oversight, I have omitted someone’s name from the thank-you list, I am sorry. Please know that your donation is appreciated. It takes many people to produce a successful event and we thank each one of you, whatever your part, for the success of this party.

Joanne Sierzega

**LODGES #1**

**CHICAGO, IL**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**APR 11**
Lodge meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Cristo Rey High School, 22nd Place and Wolcott, Chicago.

**MAY 9**
Lodge meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Cristo Rey High School, 22nd Place and Wolcott, Chicago.

**JUNE 24**
Youth/Family Summer Social. More information at the May meeting and flyers will be sent.

**SEPT 17**
Lodge meeting at 11 a.m. at Slovenian Catholic Center, Lemont and Matching Funds dinner at 12:30 p.m., also at the center.

Dec 17
Lodge meeting at 11 a.m. at Slovenian Catholic Center, Lemont and annual Christmas party at 12:30 p.m., also at the center.

**LODGE UPDATE**

Our last meeting for 2016 was held on Sunday, December 18 at the Slovenian Catholic Center - 2 hours before the annual Christmas Party with Lodge #170. (Please refer to the article and pictures of the party under Region 5’s Regional News).

Election of officers was held at the meeting. A motion was made and seconded to re-elect the present officers.

There were no other nominations. The officers consented to serve and the motion was carried.

- President and Recording Secretary - Dawn Zamora
- Financial Secretary/Treasurer and Lodge Reporter - Joanne Sierzega
LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

- Fraternal Activities Coordinator - Patrick J. Sierzega
- Lodge Membership Committee-Chair - Tom McNally
- Spiritual Advisor - Rev. Blase Chemazar, OFM

Father Blase was not able to attend the Christmas party. He is our Lodge Person of the Year for 2016. Also, Father has been the lodge's spiritual advisor for 21 years and a KSKJ Life member for 87 years. The award certificates were mailed to him. Congratulations, Father, and thank you.

Congratulations to 2016 50-year members, Dolly Karasek and Lisa Penfield. Their certificates were mailed to them as they were not able to attend the party.

Wishing you good health in the new year and hope to see you at the April meeting.

Joanne Sierzega, Lodge Reporter

LODGE #44
S CHICAGO, IL

LODGE UPDATE
2017 is off to a steady and busy start. Lodge #44 has elected, or should I say re-elected, all of its officers for 2017. Voting took place at our annual Christmas Party which was full of food, music and dancing.

Our president, George Bozzetti, was presented with his Lodge Person of the Year certificate. Eddie Marco accepted the check on behalf of American Legion Illiana Post 220 that was generated from our Matching Funds event. We honored our three 50-year members, and presented Joe Putzell with his 50-year member award.

Stay tuned to our website and Facebook for more details and information on future events. If you have not done so, be sure to like St. Aloysius on Facebook, www.facebook.com/pages/KSKJ; we’re posting events and photos regularly so if you’re on Facebook be sure to check out our page! Nasvidenje!

Jennifer Velikan

LODGE #52
INDIANAPOLIS, IN

UPCOMING EVENTS
We hope all our St. Aloysius Lodge members are having a fantastic winter so far! Our weekly bowling league celebrated Christmas with another fun night at the bowling alley! Bowlers and guests both pitched in for a delicious meal. The lodge provided fried chicken while bowlers supplied sides and desserts. Thank you to bowling secretary Sara Cline for organizing the Christmas banquet and getting the chicken! All in attendance seemed to love the yummy food!

The National Bowling Tournament will be held April 22-23 in Waukegan, IL. Teams are beginning to form now. If you are interested subbing in our weekly league, or bowling in the National Tourney, please contact Athletic Director Ed Cottongim at ecottongim@schaefertech.us.

Stay tuned to our website and Facebook for more details and information on future events. If you have not done so, be sure to like St. Aloysius on Facebook, www.facebook.com/pages/KSKJ; we’re posting events and photos regularly so if you’re on Facebook be sure to check out our page! Nasvidenje!

Joanne Sierzega, Lodge Reporter

REGION 6
NE ILLINOIS & WISCONSIN

LODGE #53
WAUKEGAN, IL

UPCOMING EVENTS
FEB 12
Regular Meeting - 9:15 a.m.

MAR 12
Annual 50-Year Members and Lodge Luncheon Meeting – Noon

LODGE UPDATE
LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

The board of officers retained were re-installed at the January meeting. We enjoyed smokies and potica and were treated to polka music by Joe Juvan after a productive meeting!

Save the date of March 12. Bonnie Brook Clubhouse will be the venue for our annual 50-year members meeting. You are invited to join us for a delicious mid-day meal, fraternalism and catch up on lodge happenings. The cost for each member is $10; guests are welcome (cost of luncheon to be paid by the member). Members 12 years or younger are free. Call for details and to RSVP by March 6 to Sue Dolence at 847-662-0908 or to myself at 847-244-8949.

At this time, we are holding off on planning a Miller Park baseball outing this year because the cost of a Cubs game has gone up...Gee, I wonder why?! We would like to hear if you are interested in participating in this event at a cost of around $90-$100 per ticket. The ticket would include bus transportation, the ticket, food and beverages. We are also looking at planning a family day at the Kenosha Kingfish ballpark or a possible bus trip to a Milwaukee casino—or maybe both. Are you interested? Short of sending a survey to our members, we would like to hear from you about what you would like to do as a member of our lodge. As always, we welcome suggestions for the planning of a Matching Funds event for the year.

Please call Sue or myself to share your thoughts.

Victoria Drinka, Secretary

LODGE UPDATES

LODGE #65
MILWAUKEE, WI

Another year is over. I hope all had a wonderful holiday, and may 2017 be a happy and healthy year for all.

Our Christmas Party was enjoyed by all who attended. As usual, we had some nice entertainment. Our popular father-son duo, Joel Mouradian on piano and Jack on guitar, provided some holiday spirit. Callie Morzy played the piano and Charlotte Braun/Goeb sang her version of Jingle Bells. Before Santa arrived, Andrea Ostrowski read a Christmas story. Many thanks to all who brought snacks or cookies and to all who helped with the clean-up.

Although it was bitterly cold for our first meeting of the year, some brave members ventured out. Our new officers were installed by outgoing president, Mici Bregant. Our meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month in the rectory meeting room of St. John’s Church at 6:30 p.m. There’s room for you to join us and, of course, you would be very welcome.

Reminder: Start planning your teams for the Charles Mouradian/Debbie Nowak 9-Pin Tap Bowling Tournament, which will be held on April 30, 2017. Entry blanks will soon be available. Last year’s event was a huge success and we are hoping it will be even better this year. The alleys were full at last year’s tournament, so get your teams arranged now to avoid disappointment.

Join us for Slovenian Day of Culture on Feb. 12, 2017, at 2 p.m. at Village at Manor Park, 8536 W. Oklahoma Ave. Enter under the canopied entrance. This event is sponsored by the Slovenian Arts Council of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and our guest will be Joseph Valencic from Cleveland, Ohio, presenting an illustrated talk about Slovenians in American culture. Refreshments will be served.

Special greetings to all our sick and shut-ins.

Mici Bregant

LODGE #79
WAUKEGAN, IL

UPCOMING EVENTS

As each new year begins, so too do the fraternal events that our lodge has scheduled. Our first event takes place on February 18, where we’ll partner with St. Joseph Lodge #53 to host a Basketball & Volleyball competition at the Waukegan Field House. This competition is open to KSKJ Life members and non-members. Each team may have up to 3 non-members, so invite your friends to take part in this lodge event and learn a little about KSKJ Life and the products that can benefit your family.

One of our biggest events each year is our No-Tap Bowl and Matching Funds Prize Raffle, which is being held on Saturday, March 4. This will be the eighth consecutive year for this event, and we are proud to be partnering with “Waukegan to College” on this fundraising project. Waukegan to College creates brighter futures for students, families and communities by preparing students to enroll in and graduate from college.

You do not need to be a KSKJ Life member or even a bowler to participate, so please invite your friends and neighbors too, and come on out. Reservations for bowling are necessary, so please contact John Deram at 847-791-1663 or at kskjwaukeganathletics@yahoo.com by February 24 to reserve your spot. The price of bowling is $10 per person, which includes bowling, shoes and pizza. Bowling check-in begins at 6 p.m., with bowling starting promptly at 6:30 p.m. Note: our March lodge meeting will be held at 5:15 p.m. Please consider arriving a bit early that night to attend the meeting.

For the prize raffle to be a success, we need you! Would you consider donating a prize to the raffle? Handmade items, gift cards, sports-related items, show tickets, etc. are just a few ideas. If you live out of town and would like to donate, that would be great. Please contact Debbie Slater as soon as possible at dlater101@aol.com or 847-208-5613, and she will be more than happy to provide you with details surrounding the prize raffle.

A change in leadership has taken place in our lodge. For 2017, the slate of officers includes:

- President: David Bradley (previously Vice President)
- Fraternal Activities Coordinator: John Deram
- Financial Secretary: MaryLou Stefanick
- Vice President: Kathy Govekar (previously Treasurer)
- Treasurer: Hank Govekar (previously President)
- Recording Secretary: Vickie Hammergren
- Auditors: Barbara Marolt, David Hammergren, and Mary Ann Shinsky
- Sergeant at Arms: Dennis Mivshek
- Spiritual Advisor: Fr. James Merold
- Membership Committee: MaryLou Stefanick

We would like to thank Hank Govekar, who has served as lodge President since 2006, for his leadership. Best wishes to David Bradley, as he takes over the reins.

Our annual Join Hands Day event is tentatively
LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

We wish all of our members and friends a safe, happy and healthy new year. Hope to see you at an event real soon.

MaryLou Stefanick

Lodge #136
WILLARD, WI

LODGE UPDATE
Greetings from Willard.

On a blistery and snow-covered day, Lodge #136 had their annual meeting on Dec. 11, 2016, which started with the election of officers. The officers are staying the same, with Edward Bayuk as President, Edward Perko as Vice President, Lonna Rakovec as Financial Secretary, along with her duties as Voice Reporter, Joanne Trunkel as our Fraternal Activities Director and heading our Membership Drive, Melinda Deavers as Treasurer, Gene Rakovec as Recording Secretary, Jeremiah Rakovec as first Auditor, followed by Bethany Gosar and Bob Trunkel as second and third Auditors.

We also had our Christmas Party on Dec. 11, it started with a potluck lunch. Door prizes were given out, games with prizes were played, and carols were sung by the Christmas tree. Then Santa arrived to hand out a large bag of nuts, candy and fruit to the children and listen to their Christmas lists.

At our Jan. 8, 2017 meeting we gathered the socks that we had collected during December for Socks for Soldiers, with 81 pairs in all. What a generous time the Christmas season is.

We have set the date of the Hunting and Fishing Jamboree for March 12. Any Lodge #136 member may enter their 2016 game, so if you haven’t, please do so by calling Bob Trunkel at 715-267-7264. We have prizes for the Largest Buck, Doe, Bear, Duck, Goose and Fish. The fishing prizes are for only game fish for adult members and rough fish and game fish for our juvenile members. We will start with a potluck lunch with prizes and games to follow.

We are going to have our insurance agent come to Holy Family Parish on either February 26 or March 5 to talk to anyone interested in an insurance policy or annuity. So if you have ever been interested in putting a loved one in the lodge, this is a great opportunity to do so. The person does not have to be a Catholic, just a Baptized Christian. If you are interested in knowing more, you can get a hold of our agent Mike Miskowic at mmiskowic@hotmail.com or myself Lonna Rakovec at genelonnarakovec@gmail.com or 715-267-7105.

We would like to wish you all a very happy Valentine’s Day.

Lonna Rakovec, Financial Secretary

Lodge #144
SHEBOYGAN, WI

LODGE UPDATE
Our lodge had a busy first weekend of December. As you saw in The Voice from last month, on December 3 we had our Matching Funds project. Since then, Paige Fenske presented checks totaling $3,000. The Sharon Richardson Community Hospice could not have been more appreciative. They have had three young people pass within four months. They are looking into having memorials in memory of the children geared toward pediatrics.

Thank you note from the Holler family.
LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

Officers for 2017 are as follows:
• President—Pat Slapnick
• Vice President—Jim Noordyk
• Secretary/Treasurer—Tammy Miller
• Recording Secretary—Marian Burich
• Auditors—Diane Udovich and Jeff Udovich
• Activity Director—Ken Miller
• Special Events—Pat Slapnick
• Reporter for The Voice—Pat Slapnick

I want to thank Jeff Udovich for serving many years as Financial Secretary and Treasurer. Now he can mentor his sister.

We would sure like to see more members attend our meetings. We are always looking for new ideas for our lodge. If you have any interest in attending the 2018 Convention, you are required to attend four meetings in 2017. It will be held in Chicago, Illinois so you would not have to drive that far. Let’s have good representation.

Pat Slapnick

Officers for St. Stephen Lodge #197 recently presented a Matching Funds check for $1000 to Danna Gasperlin (center) of the St. Stephen Parish for their youth group. Funds were raised through a bake sale. Presenting the check are Jim Bisek and Carol Hlebain.

REGION 8
COLORADO, KANSAS, MONTANA & CALIFORNIA
LODGE #236
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
LODGE UPDATE
Santa visited the children at the historic Slovenian Hall in San Francisco on Sunday, December 4. He listened patiently to all requests and even joined us in singing “Sveta Noc.” Some members enjoyed our First Annual Ugly Sweater Contest, and prizes were awarded to Joseph Gremett and JT Lehane.

REGION 7
MINNESOTA & MICHIGAN
LODGE #59
ELEVETH, MN
LODGE UPDATE
Lodge #59 had a giving tree at Resurrection Church in December and collected gifts for those less fortunate.

IN MEMORY
Lodge #59 recently lost one of its faithful long-time members. John Postudensek was 104 years young when he passed away Dec. 22, 2016. He was a very dedicated member, even attending our dinner honoring our new 50-year members this last September. John held office for many years with Lodge #59 and also served as Vice President of the Minnesota Federation.

When he received his check because he outlived his policy, I remember he was very upset wondering why they were “kicking him out” of KSKJ Life. He was always in the kitchen helping with the breakfasts until he broke his hip and it became too difficult to move around. Even then, he would come for the church breakfasts and be our taste-tester. He was quite a man.

Born on the Fourth of July, he rode in many parades, up to this last year entertaining the crowds with singing. His daughter is our Rosemary Mattson, who is the reporter for our lodge and the past activities director.

He was an amazing man and dedicated to KSKJ Life.

Connie Menart

LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

it’s $8 for non-members. Please call Sharon Bucar at 218-626-1928 by Tuesday, February 14 if you would like to join in the fun. Dress warm and bring a dish to share during our social time. Coney’s, hot chocolate and apple cider will be provided.

LODGE #197
ST. CLOUD, MN
LODGE UPDATE
Some of our merry workers ready to deliver gifts. Left to right: Amy Brazerol, Gloria Leseman, Heidi Coldagelli and Barb Mavec. Not pictured are Tony, Connie and Jennifer Menart who helped coordinate this project.

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UPCOMING EVENTS
Our annual sleigh ride will be Saturday, February 18 from 1-3 p.m. at Countryside Rides (4488 West Lismore Road). There is no charge for members and
Dora Simenc (Sustarsic) was born in Menges, Slovenia on March 13, 1926. She was the third of four children raised in a home directly across the street from the church. Her father was a well-respected furniture maker and served as mayor of the town, while her mother operated a general store adjacent to their residence.

At the conclusion of WWII, civil war broke out in Slovenia, forcing the family to flee, leaving their home, farm lands, woodshop, store and belongings behind. They fled on foot to Austria over mountains and through partially constructed tunnels occasionally encountering sniper fire from the opposing partisans along the way. Once in Austria, the fleeing Slovenes quickly formed camps in open fields. These displaced persons camps quickly became communities complete with organizational structures and schools.

Dora, who had always been a good student, continued to excel and earn highest honors. It was at one of these camps that Dora first met Alex. After spending two years in the camps, the displaced Slovenes were to be returned to Yugoslavia. First on the returning trains were the young men and Domobranci, one of which was Dora’s brother, August. He and all those initially returned were tortured and killed by Tito’s forces.

Fortunately, word got back to the camps, from a couple who had escaped, in time to prevent additional train loads of Slovenes being returned and slaughtered. Shortly thereafter, Dora, her parents, and her sister (Mara) immigrated to the U.S. and settled with a cousin in Cherry Valley, New York while her brother Janez entered the seminary in Italy, later becoming a priest. While living on the east coast, Dora corresponded extensively with Alex, who had settled in San Francisco, through a lovely series of letters that the family still cherishes. Over the next two years, their relationship evolved and Ales proposed, by mail, and persuaded Dora to move to San Francisco.

Dora came with her parents and sister. Two months later, Dora and Alex were wed in the Church of the Nativity on October 20, 1951. Buying a home on Potrero Hill, Dora and Alex began a family, welcoming five children, seventeen grandchildren and now five great-grandchildren. Dora fulfilled the role of mother, homemaker and supporter of Alex and of his passion, liturgical music.

Hosting visitors, choir members and priests was a regular occurrence. She always did so with elegance, grace and humility. She enjoyed creating an environment for others to be comfortable and was happy to remain in the background, doing all of the hard work to make her guests comfortable. She was an extraordinary cook and her traditional Slovenian desserts were renowned.

Dora applied her scholastic talents in assisting her children in school and her husband in night classes. She entered the workforce when her children were of school age. Her hard work and intelligence were quickly recognized and she advanced from secretary to bookkeeper to controller over the course of her career, always though, putting family first and adjusting her work schedule accordingly.

If she wasn’t hosting guests, it seemed she was cooking for the family, cleaning, packing, sewing, helping; all offered in love and without complaint. Dora’s support, hard work and frugality enabled her children to pursue their interests and obtain quality college educations.

Through Alex’s many medical challenges that spanned five decades, Dora remained his devoted wife and the stabilizing force of the family. Throughout her life, faith was her highest priority and Dora demonstrated her faith through her actions and her genuine love of all with whom she interacted.

Her smile was ever-present and she retained her kind, caring demeanor to her final moment. She lived a remarkable life of love: love for her husband and family, love for the Lord, love for her fellow man. In return, she is so very loved.

Local Lodge News & Events

Left to right: JT Lehane, Joseph Gremett, Diana Fir Gremett and Andy Gremett.

Many socks were collected for our beloved members of the military, and we are grateful for all they do for us.

We hope that 2017 finds you happy and healthy.

Diana Fir Gremett

In Memory

On Jan. 3, 2017, St. Francis Lodge #236 lost one of its beloved members, Dora Simenc. Dora was a long-time KSKJ Life member and Lodge Officer. Her life was filled with humility, faith and love as evident by the biography below that was written by her family.

Dora Simenc.

Other News & Notes

Send in your Lodge Update

Remember to send in all lodge news and events to voice@kskjlife.com by the second Friday of each month. Additionally, feel free to submit feature articles of interest for consideration.
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Not FDIC insured. Not available in all states. Early withdrawals, and those made prior to age 59 1/2, may be subject to IRS penalty. We are not tax advisors – please contact a tax professional. KSKJ Life, American Slovenian Catholic Union, is an Illinois fraternal benefit society located at 2439 Glenwood Ave., Joliet, IL 60435.