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briefly

Home Office closed for the July 4th holiday

IMPERIAL, Pa. — The SNPJ Home Office will be closed Tuesday, July 4, in celebration of Independence Day. Normal office hours, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., will resume Wednesday, July 5. We wish all SNPJ members and friends a happy and safe Independence Day.

Lodge 165 members transferred to Lodge 729

IMPERIAL, Pa. — Effective May 1, 2023, all members of SNPJ Lodge 165 in Wickhaven, Pa., have been transferred to SNPJ Lodge 729 in Yukon, Pa. We thank the Lodge 165 officers for their years of service to their Lodge and the Society, and we thank the officers and members of Lodge 729 for accepting the transfer. All Lodge 165 members have received letters detailing the transfer to Lodge 729, along with contact information for Lodge 729 Secretary/Treasurer Joann Krance.
KAREN A. PINTAR
SNPJ National Secretary/COO

Your pageant donations support SNPJ tradition

IMPERIAL, Pa. — The Miss SNPJ Pageant Booster Fund is accepting donations. There are numerous costs associated with the pageant, and your donations, both large and small, are truly appreciated to help defray those costs. Please make checks payable to SNPJ, noting “Miss SNPJ Pageant” on the memo line, and mail your donation to Slovene National Benefit Society, Att’n. Miss SNPJ Pageant Booster Fund, 247 West Allegheny Rd., Imperial, PA 15126.

THE DEADLINE

The next two *PROSVETA* issue dates are July 3 and Aug. 1. All material must be received by noon on Monday, June 19, for the July 3 issue, and by Monday, July 17, for the Aug. 1 issue. If you're concerned about making the deadline, send an e-mail to prosveta@snpj.com or submit your material via the publications area of our website, snpj.org.



Gina Marie Lorenzato
Born May 10, 2022
Euclid, Ohio, Lodge 158

Loyalites Lodge 158 members welcome Gina Marie “Gigi” Lorenzato as the newest addition to their Lodge. Gina Marie is the daughter of Samantha (Volpe) Lorenzato (158) and Evan Lorenzato (6), and the granddaughter of Laurie and Johnny Lorenzato (6), and Gregory (158) and the late Gina Volpe (158). We welcome Gina Marie to the Society and extend our best wishes to her entire family.



follow SNPJ on
Facebook!

Save the dates and join in the excitement of **Slovenefest** 40TH ANNUAL July 7-9, 2023

hosted by the
SNPJ Recreation Center
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e-mail: snpj@snpjrec.com • online schedule: www.slovenefest.com

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65th Miss SNPJ Pageant

FEATURED IN
Pittsburgh
Magazine
AS ONE OF THE
“TOP 10 THINGS TO
DO IN JULY”

PERIODICAL MATERIAL

Three contestants join the Miss SNPJ Pageant field



ANNA MACK
Lodge 138, Strabane, Pa.

by COURTNEY KOENIG
Fraternal Director

IMPERIAL, Pa. — With just over a month remaining until the 40th annual Slovenefest, the SNPJ Fraternal Department is pleased to introduce three entrants in the 65th Miss SNPJ Pageant: Anna Mack (138), Morgan Sinan (782), and Michelle Von Merta-Sustarich (304).

Anna Mack is a member of Lodge 138 in Strabane, Pa. She is the daughter of Melissa Stanish and the late Ronald Mack, and the granddaughter of Stefani and Michael Stanish.

A 2023 graduate of Canon-McMillan Senior High School with high honors, Anna has been involved in the Gay Straight Alliance and the National Art Honors Society, and served as treasurer of the Art Club. She has always been



MORGAN SINAN
Lodge 782, Glenshaw, Pa.

an aspiring artist, whether that be painting, drawing, writing, crocheting, and almost all other mediums in between.

Anna has completed many hours of art-related community service over the past two years, including painting the windows at a local hospital, doing crafts with kids, and painting faces at various events.

While in high school, Anna was a member of the track and field team for the past two years and has flourished with her teammates. Even though she joined the team late in her high school career, she worked hard and made strides in her times, and was one of the top four sprinters to qualify for the outdoor WPIAL (Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League) championships.



MICHELLE VON MERTA-SUSTARICH
Lodge 304, San Francisco

Anna runs the 100 and 200 sprints, and the 4x100, 4x200 and 4x400 relays. She was a member of the WPIAL championship 4x200 team during the 2023 indoor track season, earning several medals.

This fall, Anna will be attending Chatham University to study mathematics with a minor in economics. After completing her dual math degree, she plans to take her certifications to attain an actuary license. As a result of her hard work and dedication during her high school track career, she has also signed on to the Chatham University women's track and field team.

Anna has been a member of SNPJ Lodge 138 since 2017. She has participated in numerous

SEE PAGEANT CONTESTANTS
ON PAGE 13

A full slate of events for Heritage Center Weekend

by KATHY PAULENICH (776)
SNPJ Heritage Center Director

BOROUGH OF SNPJ, Pa. — What a great day we had on May 6 when SNPJ Heritage Center Committee members met in person to finish planning for the summer season.

We had some great new ideas for purchases. The shelves were restocked with noodles, *napolitank* wafer cookies, vegeta, chocolate candy bars, unicorn fruit-filled hard candies, roasted peppers, tea, *čevapčiči* seasoning, sea salt, and

mild *ajvar*. We will also have a new T-shirt design ready for Slovenefest. Don't forget to check out the glassware that was new last year, along with the cookbook direct from Slovenia that has been a big seller for several years now.

We have onesies and bibs available for babies, as well as T-shirts and stuffed animals for toddlers and children. We will also have ballcaps and denim-color sweatshirts in stock. We are working on a long sleeve shirt that will hopefully be ready by Slovenefest.

Be sure to check out the Heritage Center Gift Shop several times this summer. The Heritage Center will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. every Saturday from May 27 through Sept. 2.

The annual Heritage Center Weekend will be held June 9-11 this year. On Friday, June 9, Patty C and The Guys will be performing in the Gostilna from 8 to 11 p.m. Come out and support the band by arriving early for dinner

SEE HERITAGE WEEKEND
ON PAGE 10

PROSVETA

ENLIGHTENMENT

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Lodge 581 raising funds to sustain Troha Music Scholarships

by MARCIA KLANCER BLEGGI
Lodge 581 Secretary/Treasurer

ST. MARYS, Pa. — SNPJ Marketing Manager Gina Wise arrived at the North Central Pennsylvania Slovenian Polka Boosters dance in Kersey, Pa., to share information about SNPJ insurance and investment products with attendees. More than 80 dancers arrived to enjoy the entertainment provided by the Dick Tady Orchestra, and were greeted with Gina’s smiling face.

Gina spent the entire afternoon informing people about SNPJ and life insurance products. She also danced a few dances with Lodge members and made new friends in Northwestern Pennsylvania. We thank Gina for making the long trip to Elk County.

SNPJ Region 1 Vice President Maury Sinan Jr. extended an invitation to attend a Region 1 polka dance on April 23. SNPJ Lodge 581 officer John Troha accepted the invitation and made the two-hour-and-40-minute journey south to Yukon, Pa. As John explained of his excursion, “What a

wonderful time – beautiful music and fantastic food in such an impressive venue as the Yukon Slovenian Hall, along with all of the kind, welcoming people who attended!

“I didn’t know anyone when I entered, but by the time I left, I had made friends with many kind, fun people; many of whom knew my mom and dad, which brought back so many fond memories. Maury and the members of SNPJ Region 1 surely know how to throw a great polka party.”

Maury permitted John to display and sell his collection of Slovenian Zippo lighters, which consists of five different models, including those decorated with the SNPJ logo, the Slovenian flag, the Croatian flag, the Polka Hall of Fame logo, and several other accordion-themed and button box-themed lighters.

John will donate the proceeds of the sale to the Jerry Troha Music Scholarship sponsored by Lodge 581 and the North Central Pennsylvania Slovenian Polka Boosters. The Zippos can be purchased from Lodge 581.



SNPJ Marketing Manager **GINA WISE** is flanked by St. Marys, Pa., Lodge 581 President **PAT MOORE** [left] and Secretary/Treasurer **MARCIA KLANCER BLEGGI**.

On May 9 and May 24, Lodge officers attended the awards programs at two local high schools to award the annual Jerry Troha Memorial Scholarships. The two area graduates will also be congratulated during one of the polka dances in June. The dances will be held at the Wildwoods in St. Marys from 2 to 5 p.m. on June 11 and June 25.

The drag races at the St. Marys

Municipal Airport will be held on Father’s Day, June 18, during which Lodge 581 members will direct the parking for this big event. All monies earned by the Lodge will be added to the Jerry Troha Scholarship Fund.

We welcome volunteers to assist with the parking. Contact Lodge Secretary/Treasurer Marcia Klancer Bleggi at (814) 335-4983 for more information.

Fontana Lodge 723 schedules a visit to The Living Desert in Oct.

by PAMELA PANDZA
Lodge 723 Vice President

FONTANA, Calif. — The April 13 SNPJ Lodge 723 meeting was conducted at Napoli Restaurant in Loma Linda, Calif., under the gavel of President Sherri Black. Members braved the congested traffic routes in order to gather to conduct business, as well as break bread in fraternal spirit. It was nice to see members John Viencsek, Linda Costell, Jeff Snow, and guest Jean Turnbull join us after a hiatus.

The heart of the agenda involved a review of issues regarding our correct status as a Lodge no longer affiliated with a hall. We also were updated on the array of donations the Lodge has made and the notes of appreciation that have been received. Treasurer Frank Rote reprised his “*Stari Čebelar*” (Old Beekeeper) tune on the button box which he had performed for the University of Riverside Bee Research team earlier in the day.

Secretary Diana Rote’s prompt attention to documents due to SNPJ Headquarters earned the Lodge a \$300 award. A \$200 donation was authorized to the SNPJ Young Adult Waterwheel Project.

It was decided that our Lodge would sponsor an autumn field trip to The Living Desert in Palm Desert, Calif., on Saturday, Oct. 21. The Living Desert is a park with plants, animals, and a veterinary research facility that gives space to the animal species in an atmosphere less like the confines of a zoo. Animal talks are scheduled throughout the day, and popular spots are the giraffe feeding area, the new rhino habitat, and the Australia exhibit.

Lodge 723 member admissions will be subsidized by the Lodge; guests are welcome on their own dime. More information will come, but do “pencil in” Oct. 21 on your calendar.

Anyone from SNPJland planning a California vacation at that time would be welcome to join us. I wouldn’t be surprised if plans don’t evolve to include a restaurant

stop after the Living Desert rendezvous. During the April meeting, we all smiled as we recognized the 100th birthday of Jacob “Jake” Chesnic on May 30. Jake served as the president of SNPJ Lodge 723 and the Slovene Hall Board while living in Menifee, Calif. He is now a resident of South Bend, Ind., where he only several years ago stopped doing his own yard work. One hundred years equals “*sto let*.” Congratulations, Jake!

At the meeting, Julianne Wood announced her retirement as the administrator of our SNPJ Lodge 723 Facebook page. Member Bojan Šavrič expressed that he would explore maintaining the social media site, and from the look of things he has begun the job with gusto. Make certain to check it out and learn about Lodge activities, along with Slovenian connections throughout the world.

As an addendum to our alliance with the UCR Center for Integrative Bee Research (CIBER), further bee-related information has come our way. As it turns out, May 20 is International Bee Day. The proposal for the United Nations’ recognition was made by Slovenia in 2017 to coincide with the birthday of the pioneer of beekeeping, Anton Janša, who was born in Breznica on May 20, 1734. Janša was educated as a painter, but was employed as a teacher of apiculture at the Habsburg Court in Vienna, Austria.

The theme of 2023 International Bee Day was “Bee Engaged In Pollinator-Friendly Agriculture Production;” a webcast was presented May 19. Find more information at fao.org/world-bee-day, or visit ciber@ucr.edu.

On another subject, I am still collecting your Slovene Hall memories. A short write-up or lasting impressions you hold are welcome. Please send your recollections to slowcrow@msn.com.

Currently, the next Lodge 723 meeting is scheduled Thursday, Oct. 12, starting at 6 p.m. at Napoli Restaurant.



SNPJ Lodge 34 members hosted the Indianapolis SNH dinner in March, preparing and serving the meals.

SNH dinner on the Indy Lodge 34 agenda in June

by JERRY WATSON
Lodge 34 Secretary/Treasurer

INDIANAPOLIS — *Dober dan!* On March 10, Lodge 34 members held their first quarterly meeting of 2023 at the Slovenian National Home (SNH), located at 2717 West 10th in Indianapolis.

Our meeting was conducted during the Friday night dinner at the SNH. Lodge 34 was sponsoring the dinner by providing, preparing, serving and cleaning up. It’s a big undertaking, but our Lodge members are glad to do it.

We served gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches cooked to order; creamy tomato soup, pie and cookies complemented the dinner. Many thanks to Jozef Watson, our chef for the meal. We had many happy customers, and all proceeds were donated to the SNH.

Jozef and I represented Lodge 34 in the SNPJ National Bowling Tournament. We

were fortunate to be paired with Strabane, Pa., Lodge 138 members Jeff and Jason Cadez (both great bowlers!) for the team event. Jozef rolled a 682 series in singles with a high game of 275. It was a great time!

We were able to enjoy the SNPJ Recreation Center, and the dinner served in the Gostilna was exceptional. The homemade klobase was wonderful; in fact, I bought two pounds to take home and enjoy with my family. We encourage all SNPJ bowlers to participate in next year’s tournament.

The Lodge 34 second quarterly meeting is planned Friday, June 30, at the SNH starting at 7 p.m. The meeting will include our Lodge event, hosting the Friday night dinner. We will be serving Mary’s famous chicken salad on croissants. This is a special activity, so please try to attend to support our Lodge and the SNH.

Up-and-Coming...

A look at events planned by the Slovene National Benefit Society

- JUNE 4 Family Fun Day at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio, hosted by the Miss SNPJ Pageant Commission. Entertainment features the Garrett Tatano Band.
- JUNE 9-11 SNPJ Heritage Center weekend at the SNPJ Recreation Center. For more information phone the SNPJ Recreation Center toll-free at 1-877-767-5732 or e-mail snpj@snpjrec.com.
- JUNE 16-18 ... SNPJ Young Adult Conference at the SNPJ Recreation Center, Borough of SNPJ, Pa. For registration and event details contact the SNPJ Home Office at 1-800-843-7675.
- JUNE 18 SNPJ Loyalites Lodge 158 Father’s Day Picnic at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio. The gates open at 1 p.m.; music by the Garrett Tatano Band starts at 3 p.m. Dads in attendance will receive a free drink/sandwich ticket.
- JUNE 25 Pretty In Pink fundraiser hosted by the Westmoreland County Federation of SNPJ Lodges; 2-6 p.m. at the Yukon Slovenian Hall, Yukon, Pa. Music by the Polka Classics. For details contact Lois Denning at (412) 554-7404.
- JULY 7-9 The 40th Slovenefest and the 65th Miss SNPJ Pageant at the SNPJ Recreation Center. For more information phone the Recreation Center toll-free at 1-877-767-5732.
- JULY 15 SNPJ Lodge 643 Picnic in the Park, 1-3 p.m. at Tod Park, Girard, Ohio. Entertainment features Anthony Culkar; food provided. For more information phone Ray Kovac at (330) 824-2154 or Kathleen Seifert at (330) 883-2513.
- JULY 16 Cleveland Federation/SNPJ Farm Board picnic at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio.
- JULY 30-AUG. 5 Family Week at the SNPJ Recreation Center, Borough of SNPJ, Pa. For more information phone the SNPJ Recreation Center toll-free at 1-877-767-5732 or e-mail snpj@snpjrec.com.
- JULY 30 SNPJ Farm Ladies Auxiliary annual picnic at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio. Music by the Don Wojtila Band. Breaded pork chop dinners available from the kitchen. For more information contact Gerri Trebets at (440) 796-5148.
- AUG. 6 American Slovene Day hosted by the Westmoreland County Federation of SNPJ Lodges; 2-6 p.m. at the Yukon Slovenian Hall, Yukon, Pa. Music by the Skovenski Band. Food and refreshments available for purchase. For additional information contact Lois Denning at (412) 554-7404.
- AUG. 19 SNPJ Lodge 786 Polka Cruise from Newport Harbor, Calif. Includes a cruise around Newport Harbor on a privately chartered ship, lunch, beverages, and music provided by local talent. Reservations required by July 19. For more information contact Lodge 786 Secretary Teresa Koci at (949) 246-1983 or Fred Mlakar at (949) 654-8229.
- AUG. 20 SNPJ Utopians Lodge 604 annual picnic at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio. Music by The Zolkas. Homemade food, strudel and more. For details contact Gerri Trebets at (440) 796-5148.
- OCT. 1 SNPJ Lodge 142 Clambake at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio. Entertainment by DJ Marcus Smith.

Have something for

Up-and-Coming?

Lodge/Organization _____

Type of Event _____

Site _____

If a concert or dance, who is performing? _____

Date _____

Time _____

Who to contact _____

Phone () _____

E-mail _____

Complete and return to:

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Slovene National Benefit Society National Board Minutes

Meetings held Jan. 10 and Feb. 13, 2023, via conference call, and March 24, 2023, at the SNPJ Home Office, Imperial, Pa.

Minutes of the Conference Call Meeting of the Slovene National Benefit Society National Board held Jan. 10, 2023

The meeting was called to order by President EVANISH at 1 p.m. with 13 National Board members and one Young Adult Representative on the call. Bro. Don SRNICK was absent from the meeting. President EVANISH explained that one purpose of this phone call meeting today is to discuss terminating the SNPJ Employees Defined Benefit Pension Plan. On the call for this discussion were Sara DeFilippo and Beth Milanovich from our pension actuarial firm, DBZ, Inc.; our Society actuary, Joseph Steimla; and our independent auditor, Leo Hannah from H2R.

Sara DeFilippo began the presentation to the Board, explaining how a defined benefit plan works. She stated that SNPJ took gradual steps over the years to limit the liability of the plan to the Society. To terminate the plan, it must be fully funded – and in a low interest rate environment, this would result in a much higher cost to the Society, while in a higher interest rate environment, such as we are experiencing now, the cost is lower to the Society. Questions by Bro. Maury SINAN.

Sara DeFilippo explains the summary and the attachments that have been provided to the Board. The proposed date of the termination is 3/31/2023, and a resolution stating such must be approved by 1/31/2023 and letters sent to all affected participants in the plan. The termination needs to be filed with the PBGC. She reviewed the liabilities as of the assumed payout date of 11/1/2023; however, we won't know the total liability until all participants elect an option. Questions and comments by actuary Joe Steimla and Bro. SINAN. Sara DeFilippo then explained the summary of fees from DBZ for doing the termination process, filings and paperwork.

Independent auditor Leo Hannah spoke on the benefits of termination of the plan to the Society. He talked about cash flow and complimented Bro. Lawrence for the cash flow projections he provided. Mr. Hannah stated that he felt that based on those projections, the Society would not have to sell any bonds to cover the cost of plan termination. Bro. Robert LAWRENCE explained the cash flow projections he provided.

A motion is made by Sis. Joanna BAKER, second by Bro. Rick HERVOL, to approve the resolution to terminate the plan following the timeline provided by DBZ, Inc. The executives cannot vote on this motion. The motion is approved unanimously by the remainder of the Board members.

President EVANISH thanked Sara, Beth, Leo and Joe for being on the call, and for their presentations and comments to the Board. With no objections, the Board went into Executive Session.

With no objections, the Board came out of Executive Session. President EVANISH stated that the next topic is the TEL program for 13- to 17-year-old members. There are currently only 18 elected TEL delegates. President EVANISH explained the promotion of TEL through Facebook, secretary mailings and *PROSVETA*. The numbers are not sufficient to hold the program.

Comments by Bro. Jason CADEZ, Sis. Tina RIGLER, Young Adult Representative Justin RIGLER, Bro. Fred MLAKAR, Bro. SINAN, Sis. Tracey ANDERSON, Sis. BAKER, and Sis. Karen PINTAR.

A motion was made by Bro. SINAN, second by Bro. CADEZ, to extend this discussion and the deadline for TEL to Feb. 13, 2023, while also having the Young Adults put together some type of program for assisting with TEL. Motion approved.

President EVANISH presented the Resolution adopted at the last Convention regarding the Young Adult Conference for 18- to 30-year-old members and a surrogate delegate being elected as a regular delegate of another Lodge. The Lodge would have to approve the surrogate delegate representing their Lodge as a regular delegate.

A motion is made by Sis. RIGLER, second by Sis. ANDERSON, to pay the full amount of travel costs, etc., to any surrogate delegate who is elected as a regular delegate of another Lodge, while any remaining surrogates would still be reimbursed half of the travel costs. Discussion by Sis. PINTAR, Sis. RIGLER, and Young Adult Representative Bro. RIGLER. Motion approved.

The next National Board conference call will be held Monday, Feb. 13, 2023, at 1 p.m.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:28 p.m. by Bro. Roger CLIFFORD, second by Bro. CADEZ. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,
KAREN A. PINTAR, FLMI, CCP, AIAA
National Secretary/COO

Minutes of the Conference Call Meeting of the Slovene National Benefit Society National Board held Feb. 13, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. by President EVANISH with 14 National Board members and one Young Adult Representative on the call. President EVANISH brought up the discussion on the TEL program. He pointed out the costs involved with the program, the clearances that would be necessary for counselors, the additional insurance coverage that would be needed for this, and the overall risk and liability with hosting the program.

Discussion and comments by Bro. Fred MLAKAR, Sis. Tracey ANDERSON, Sis. Joanna BAKER, Bro. Maury SINAN, Bro. Jason CADEZ, Sis. Karen PINTAR, Bro. Don SRNICK, and Sis. Tina RIGLER.

With the low interest in the program by those in that age group of 13- to 17-year-olds, and the risks and liability involved with hosting the program, the Board determined that we would not hold the TEL program. We will work on focusing on family-oriented programs that would involve families with their teens, as well as focus on building the Young Adult Conference (YAC) program.

President EVANISH stated that Fraternal Director Sis. Courtney Koenig will connect with Bro. Justin Rigler in regard to this year's YAC. President EVANISH initiated discussion about the Executive Compensation Committee. This committee must be approved and

appointed by the SNPJ National Board, excluding the Executive Committee. They are responsible for the evaluation of the National President, and the policy on this process was explained. Sis. ANDERSON explained the process of self-evaluation, goals, and the meetings held by the Executive Compensation Committee both with the National President to discuss the results of the evaluations, and amongst themselves as a committee.

The National President evaluates the National Secretary and National Treasurer, and reports on these evaluations to the Executive Compensation Committee. The committee then discusses the evaluations and their recommendations with the National Board, exclusive of the Executive Committee, at the March National Board meeting.

A motion is made by Bro. Rick HERVOL, second by Bro. SINAN, to keep the committee of Sis. Tracey Anderson, Bro. Roger Clifford and Bro. Ken Zakraysek the same. Bro. Roger CLIFFORD recommends that Sis. Anderson remain on the committee as a Finance Committee member, to keep Bro. Zakraysek as an Audit Committee member, and that he would step aside in favor of a Regional Vice President on the committee.

Bro. CLIFFORD amends the motion, second by Bro. HERVOL, to add Bro. Sinan to the committee to replace Bro. Clifford. The amendment to the original motion is approved. The motion as amended is approved.

Bro. CLIFFORD brought up the suggestion to donate some monies to the Turkey earthquake relief effort. A motion is made by Bro. CLIFFORD, second by Bro. CADEZ, to donate \$1,000 through the Brother's Brother Foundation toward this relief fund. Motion approved.

Motion by Sis. RIGLER, second by Sis. BAKER, to adjourn at 2 p.m. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,
KAREN A. PINTAR, FLMI, CCP, AIAA
National Secretary/COO

Semiannual Meeting of the Slovene National Benefit Society National Board Friday, March 24, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 11:20 a.m. with 14 National Board members and one Young Adult Representative in attendance. All rose to give fraternal greetings.

A moment of silence was held for all members deceased since the last meeting, and special mention was made of the passing of former Region 2 Vice President Bro. James Curl in October 2022.

President EVANISH conducted the installation of National Board members.

President EVANISH appointed Brothers Don Srnick and Maury Sinan to serve as vice presidents of the meeting with no objections. The Time of Sessions was approved as 11:20 a.m. to 5 p.m. with lunch from 12:30 p.m. to 1 p.m., with no objections.

Sis. Justina RIGLER motioned, second by Bro. Rick HERVOL, to approve the Order of Business. Motion approved.

President EVANISH reported that a Board education session was conducted by attorney Todd Martin from 9 to 11:10 a.m. today prior to the start of the meeting.

President EVANISH introduced Courtney Brophy from Wellington Management Company, our asset management firm. Courtney explained the three-person relationship team that is used for SNPJ, and she introduced Liz Kleinerman who joined us by video conferencing. Liz discussed the current market conditions and reviewed the Society's portfolio performance for the year.

President EVANISH thanked Courtney Brophy and Liz Kleinerman for their presentation.

President EVANISH continued the meeting, reminding all to be tactful and considerate when speaking. With no objections, the Board accepted all reports.

National President's Report March 2023

Fraternal greetings, Brothers and Sisters. Welcome to our semiannual National Board meeting as we report and discuss the operation of our fraternal organization. We look forward to a positive and informative meeting with a valuable exchange of ideas for the benefit of the Society.

Retiring National Board member Bro. Jim Curl, who was recognized for his service during the Convention, sadly passed away on Oct. 15, 2022. In addition to his 30 years on the Board, he served SNPJ on the local level for seven decades, including SNPJ Sygan Lodge 6 as treasurer, president and secretary, also being recognized as a top SNPJ sales agent. He also served as the SNPJ Recreation Center director and on the Recreation Center Committee since 2003. It was great to work with Bro. Curl all of these years.

In July, upon the Executive Committee's recommendation, the Board approved to upgrade our current computer system as opposed to going into a new system. After working with our IT consultant and discussions with various insurance administration vendors, we determined that the best approach and most cost-efficient plan would be to upgrade the current system that we have using Illumifin, previously known as Genelco. There is a cost savings to upgrade the system as opposed to migrating to a completely new system, and also much less of a learning curve for all system users.

National Secretary/COO Karen Pintar is the leader on the computer system migration and upgrade project. She has put a tremendous amount of effort and work into making sure that it goes well. Karen participates in the biweekly project meetings with the Illumifin team and our IT consultant. This is in addition to her regular duties.

Convention

The Society's 32nd Quadrennial Convention, held Aug. 15, 2022, took place at the SNPJ Recreation Center, Borough of SNPJ, Pa. A total of 129 delegates and National Board members participated in the proceedings which were completed in one day.

The delegates are to be commended for being an important part of the National Legislative Body of our fraternal benefit society. The body carried out the responsibility of amending and approving the bylaws of the SNPJ, as well as electing the National Board that will

serve our Society for the next four-year period.

The convention officers included Chairman Bro. Joseph C. Evanish, and Vice Chairs Sis. Tracey Anderson and Bro. Rick Hervol. The most demanding job during the Convention was that of the recording secretary. Sis. Karen Pintar did a commendable job. The sergeant-at-arms was Bro. Ken Vogrig (138).

All officer and Board reports were presented and accepted. Our Society's key consultants addressed the delegation. These included Andrew Paone, CFA, managing director with Wellington Management, the firm that serves as the Society's asset manager; consulting actuary Joseph Steimla; and Leo Hannah, CPA and partner with H2R, the Society's independent auditing firm.

Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia Alenka Jerak greeted the delegation and extended appreciation to SNPJ for all of the support, especially during Slovenia's declaration of independence in 1991. On behalf of the Slovenian government, she presented me with the Memorial Medal which was awarded for contributions to the American recognition of the independent and sovereign Slovenia. In 1991, I led SNPJ's efforts for this cause. She also recognized Joe Valencic (5) who previously received this honor.

Retiring National Board member Bro. Ken Anderson was recognized for his service to the Society. He served a term as a Regional Director and as a member of the Finance Committee since 1999, for a total of 28 years on the National Board.

Retiring National Board member Bro. Jim Curl was also recognized for his service to the Society. He served on the SNPJ National Board for 30 years as a Regional Vice President. Both Ken and Jim received standing ovations from the delegation.

The Convention committees did an exceptional job preparing and presenting their reports to the Convention. Those committees are as follows:

The Bylaws, Resolutions and Compensation Committee, comprised of Bro. John Baselj (6), Bro. Jason Cadez (138), Sis. Daniella Volpe (158), Sis. Kathy Loudon (358), and Sis. Kaitlyn Chiappetta (559).

The Credentials Committee, comprised of Bro. David Sankovich (770), Sis. Wendy Kinney (106), Sis. Alyssa Urban (715), Sis. Rhonda Tesauro (603), and Sis. Jojo Braun (6).

The Tally Committee, which included Bro. Frank Wright (6), Sis. Dawn Klasnick (626), Sis. Meredith Maresch (449), Bro. Ed Robich (31), and Sis. Donna Sebusch (576).

The Young Adult delegates representing the SNPJ Young Adult Conference were Justin Rigler (449) and Jerome Petukauskas (33). Justin is serving as the Young Adult Representative to the National Board for this year.

The Executive Committee and Home Office staff worked diligently preparing all that was necessary for an organized an efficient Convention. Delegates were provided with the information necessary to perform the task of the Convention. I thank officers National Secretary/COO Karen Pintar and National Treasurer/CFO Bob Lawrence for their hard work to ensure that the arrangements were successful.

We also thank the Home Office staff for their help preparing all the necessary materials for the delegation. The successful efforts of Executive Assistant Peggy Cushman and Office Manager Ruth Wright, who also set up and staffed our onsite Convention office, were greatly appreciated.

There is a significant amount of work that goes into preparing for a Convention, and Sis. Pintar led the organizational efforts of most of it, including the travel, lodging and food service arrangements. Our SNPJ shuttle driver, Frank Wright, did a great job taking care of our delegates, along with a limo service. Kathy Paulenich, Cathy Kalenits, Amy Mavrich and Kathleen Sinan assisted with the microphones during the meeting.

Our SNPJ Recreation Center staff and management, who include Director David Jones, Sue Krispinsky, Gary Ehasalu and Sue Zarella, did a commendable job preparing the facility for the Convention.

The Sunday reception at the Heritage Pavilion was a great success. This was a traditional picnic/dance with food prepared by Jones Catering with Strabane klobase.

Bro. Marty Kumer (715) got the last word of the Convention, although not by giving his usual articulate speech, but by leading the delegation in song to the lyrics of The Beatles "All You Need Is Love." It was a fitting ending with a wonderful message, in which he also provided a polka-beat version.

Marketing

For the year 2022, the Society issued a total of 304 policies. The life insurance face amount for the year totaled \$5,694,145. The life insurance in force is now \$248,578,291. There were 222 new members enrolled during the year, compared to 226 the previous year. First-year annualized premium experienced an increase over the previous year. Annuity premium decreased to \$5,437,038 for 2022, compared to \$9,343,487 in 2021.

During this period, a personnel adjustment in the Sales Department took place. Currently, the sales function is being overseen by Marketing Manager Gina Wise. She does an excellent job working with and supporting the agents and agencies promoting the sale of SNPJ products. She has also taken on the duties of writing the *PROSVETA* insurance column "We've Got You Covered."

Gina continues to promote all aspects of the SNPJ through social media, enhancing our overall presence. Information about life insurance and annuities is consistently posted, along with SNPJ events and activities. She communicates regularly with agents, and provides updated promotional materials to agents, Lodges, members and potential members. Gina also stepped up to take charge of our Slovenefest membership booth during the weekend.

The rising interest rates had an effect on the annuity rates, including the guarantee rate. The minimum guarantee rate was adjusted from 2.0 percent to 3.0 percent on Jan. 1, 2023, for new issues.

The Lodge Bonus Program includes an incentive for new member enrollment. For every 10 new members enrolled, a Lodge receives a \$100 bonus. Congratulations to the following Lodges who earned bonuses: Lodge 31, Sharon, Pa.; Lodge 106, Imperial, Pa.; Lodge 603, Samsula, Fla.; Lodge 715, Universal, Pa.; Lodge 782, Glenshaw, Pa. Lodge 6, Sygan, Pa., and Lodge 138, Strabane, Pa., both received \$200 bonuses for enrolling 26 and 23 new members respectively.

Fraternal Department

We experienced more participation in fraternal events during this

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

six-month period. This includes national and regional events, as well as local Lodge activities.

The activity portion of the Lodge Bonus Program continued in 2022. Lodges that sponsor and report on at least four activities, one of which is a community service or charitable benefit project, are designated as a Gold Activity Lodge and received a \$300 reward. Lodges that sponsor and report on at least two activities are designated as a Silver Activity Lodge and received a \$200 reward.

Congratulations to the following Lodges for earning the Gold Level for Activity in 2022, thus earning a reward of \$300: Lodge 1, Chicago; Lodge 2, La Salle, Ill.; Lodge 6, Sygan, Pa.; Lodge 8, Chicago; Lodge 34, Indianapolis; Lodge 106, Imperial, Pa.; Lodge 138, Strabane, Pa.; Lodge 142, Cleveland; Lodge 158, Euclid, Ohio; Lodge 218, Denver; Lodge 223, Greensburg, Pa.; Lodge 225, Girard, Kan.; Lodge 358, West Point, Ohio; Lodge 449, Cicero, Ill.; Lodge 518, Melvindale, Mich.; Lodge 559, Chicago; Lodge 576, Cleveland; Lodge 581, St. Marys, Pa.; Lodge 603, Samsula, Fla.; Lodge 643, Girard, Ohio; Lodge 677, Detroit; Lodge 723, Fontana, Calif.; Lodge 729, Yukon, Pa.; Lodge 745, Grass Valley, Calif.; Lodge 776, Borough of SNPJ, Pa.; Lodge 782, Glenshaw, Pa.; and Lodge A01, Sewickley, Pa.

Congratulations to the following Lodges for earning the Silver Level for Activity in 2022, thus earning a reward of \$200: Lodge 564, Detroit; Lodge 689, Helper, Utah; Lodge 715, Universal, Pa.; Lodge 721, Aliquippa, Pa.; and Lodge 771, Hillsville, Pa.

All Lodges will receive a Lodge Activity Reporting Form in the fall of 2023, to be completed and returned by Jan. 15, 2024.

The Miss SNPJ Pageant Commission did an excellent job hosting the return of the Miss SNPJ Pageant during Slovenefest this past July. The commission improved the efficiency of the weekend program, which was well coordinated and planned. There were six contestants, with Madison Sinan, a member of Lodge 782, Glenshaw, Pa., being crowned Miss SNPJ 2023. Madison also was named Miss Activity and Miss Talent. Lanie Maresh (449) earned the runner-up titles to Miss Activity, Miss Talent, and Miss SNPJ. Cara Fabian (218) was named Miss Fraternalism.

SNPJ Family Week was also successful this past summer. The SNPJ Recreation Center staff did great job managing a fun weekend for all of the families that participated.

National SNPJ Days held Labor Day weekend saw good participation in the National Balina Tournament and National Beanbag Tournament. The National Golf Tournament was also held. The SNPJ National Athletic Board members, tournament leaders and volunteers made these tournaments successful.

For the 2022 National Golf Tournament, played at Stonecrest Golf Course, there were 11 men's teams, 46 individual men, and four individual women competing, resulting in a Society remuneration of \$658. The National Balina Tournament hosted 13 men's teams and 10 women's teams, resulting in a remuneration of \$644. The National Beanbag Tournament had 24 co-ed teams and 10 women's teams competing, resulting in a remuneration of \$476.

Publications

The SNPJ news source, the *PROSVETA* publication, is designed and managed by Editor Jay Sedmak. *PROSVETA*, which remains a monthly publication, is also available online. At present, approximately 950 members receive e-mail notifications that the current *PROSVETA* issue is available online. We certainly appreciate the contributions from our scribes who promote and report on SNPJ activities and events in their respective areas.

Following the 32nd Quadrennial Convention held in August, Jay completed the "Convention Proceedings and Reports of National Officers" books, as well as the Society's Articles of Incorporation/ Bylaws/Resolutions books, both of which were printed prior to the end of the year.

The Miss SNPJ calendar, which was reintroduced for 2023 when the Miss SNPJ Pageant was reinstated and held during Slovenefest in July, was also completed during this period. Along with the calendar, he also designed the Miss SNPJ Pageant brochures that will be mailed to all eligible female members (ages 18 to 28) in March/April 2023.

Throughout the period, Jay started the preliminary promotional work for Slovenefest, updating the flyers, the sponsor invitations and the online Slovenefest performance schedule, as well as the flyers and forms required for the "Make It, Bake It, Grow It" Crafters Bazaar.

He also coordinated the repair and painting of the SNPJ Home Office exterior in July, working with the contractor and crew to ensure completion of the project in a timely manner with limited disruption to the staff and routine office deliveries.

The five SNPJ websites (snpj.org, snpjrec.com, alpineroom.com, slovenefest.com and snpjheritage.org) continue to be hosted and supported by 3Seed Marketing, Design & Interactive. Jay updates and revises the websites on a regular basis.

Industry

The Society stays in tune with the fraternal industry through a network of local, state and national trade affiliates. This includes Executive Committee participation in the Fraternal Societies of Greater Pittsburgh (FSGP), the Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance (PFA), and the American Fraternal Alliance (the Alliance).

The Executive Officers continue to be active in the FSGP, and regularly attend the luncheon meetings that are held throughout the fall, winter and spring. The FSGP meetings include representatives of several fraternal headquarters or having a presence in Western Pennsylvania.

The Alliance Executive Summit meeting, which I attended, took place in person in September. This meeting gives us the opportunity to network with our fraternal benefit society peers, receiving valuable industry information. The Executive Summit took place in Washington, D.C., which also allowed for important visits with members of Congress, where we had the opportunity to promote the fraternal cause and help to retain our tax exemption. These were very successful visits.

I attended the Life Insurance Council (LIC) CEO Forum in August. LIC, a council of LOMA, serves the small to mid-size insurance company sector. The Alliance supports the LIC and offers discounted registration fees for its member fraternalists to some of the key webinars/meetings. The forum offers an excellent opportunity to network with peers and receive updates on strategies in the insurance industry.

Slovenia

SNPJ maintains a good relationship with Slovenian dignitaries, including the Consul General's office in Cleveland (Consul General Alenka Jerak) and the Embassy in Washington, D.C. We also work

closely with Pennsylvania Honorary Consul in Pittsburgh Petra Mitchell. Both Alenka and Petra attended Slovenefest, with the Consul General being a key speaker for the Miss SNPJ Pageant program.

Dr. Jure Žmauc, chairman of the Slovenian American Business Association (SABA), organized the visit of another Slovenian business delegation to the United States. I was happy to receive and meet with this group at our Home Office in September.

Jure also brought another gostilna chef from Slovenia, hosted by the SNPJ Slovenian Heritage Center Committee. This took place in October at the SNPJ Lodge 106 Hall in Imperial, Pa., coordinated primarily by Heritage Center Committee member Tracey Belle. It was very well attended and quite successful.

Conclusion

The Home Office management and staff are a dedicated group of people who work hard for the Society, supporting our membership on both the business and fraternal sides. We also appreciate the dedication of our Lodge officers for their contributions to the success of the Society.

The Society is fortunate to have an experienced COO and CFO. National Secretary/COO Karen Pintar and National Treasurer/CFO Robert Lawrence continue to do an excellent job for the SNPJ.

Executive Assistant Peggy Cushman continues to do a good job supporting the Executive Committee, handling regular projects and duties. She has been exceptional in taking on additional duties as necessary.

We look forward to beginning this term in a positive fashion. Congratulations to all Board members upon being elected to serve for the next four-year term. May our discussion and decisions provide for a strong and positive atmosphere for the good of our SNPJ.

Fraternally,

JOSEPH C. EVANISH, FLMI
National President/CEO

National President's Report

President EVANISH highlighted his report, stating that Sis. Pintar is the project manager for the system conversion; sales and new member growth have been flat for 2022; Marketing Manager Sis. Gina Wise has been doing very well in this position; and reported that he, Gina, and the consultant, who is the interim sales director, have been working on short- and long-term initiatives. He reported that Gina has been doing a great job with social media communication on Facebook and LinkedIn, and that a Fraternal Director, Sis. Courtney Koenig, has been hired.

Discussion on the report by Sisters RIGLER and Tracey ANDERSON. Motion was made by Bro. HERVOL, second by Bro. Ken ZAKRAYSEK, to approve the report. Motion approved.

National Secretary's Report
for the period July 1 through Dec. 31, 2022

Fraternal greetings, Brothers and Sisters, and welcome to the semi-annual meeting of the SNPJ National Board.

The following report relates to the activities and business conducted through the office of the National Secretary for the period shown above. Additional information is included, where appropriate, for the entire year 2022.

SNPJ HOME OFFICE
Personnel

The Home Office employs 11 full-time individuals at the end of 2022, including the three executive officers, and one part-time individual. We continue to actively look for one additional full-time employee and one part-time employee for the insurance administration area.

Our longtime employee in policy services, Cynthia Mitchell, retired during the period after almost 29 years of service with the SNPJ. Her contributions to the Society and her knowledge of her job were invaluable to the Society over these many years. We wish her good health and happiness in her retirement.

Insurance Administration

The individuals in administration have been very busy over the last six-month period. As a result of the roll out of new annuity products with new guaranteed and current interest rates, a lot of testing had to be done to verify interest rates on the new policies, check that commissions were being paid properly, and a variety of other testing procedures that occur with every new plan code that is instituted.

In addition to their normal job processes, they comply with quarterly audit requests for information from our annuity reinsurer, they assisted with the Convention prep work, and provided the necessary information to our independent auditor's December review of work processes and functions.

As we prepare for the upgrade to the new insurance administration system and the shift in job responsibilities for certain individuals, we have been focused on the re-distribution of work processes among employees while still recruiting for another full-time employee.

IT Department

There has, of course, been a lot of activity in this area. We negotiated and signed the contract for the upgrade to the insurance administration system by the end of September 2022. Once that was finalized, the work on the system began in earnest. Our IT consultant and I work almost daily on this upgrade, and we hold biweekly meetings with the team from our software provider.

Since we will be hosting the majority of our computer operations off-site in the future, preparations are being made to set up servers and the necessary equipment at the host environment for both the insurance administration software as well as the accounting software used. We also signed on for a perpetual license for the accounting system that will allow us to use the current accounting software for as long as we want to.

In addition, the work has been started to implement a new Synology device for our network infrastructure upgrade. Prior to the end of the year, we worked on the implementation of the Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) to the insurance administration software with our managed services company so that our members' data would have an additional level of security. By installing this, we were also able to keep our cybersecurity insurance premiums at a reasonable level.

During this period, several of us have begun using Microsoft Teams as a collaboration tool with plans to have all employees trained in the use of this.

We are working on the planning process for the transition of the e-mail from the current provider to Microsoft Outlook, and plan to have that process completed sometime in 2023.

LODGES AND LODGE SECRETARIES

Lodges

As of Dec. 31, 2022, there are 71 Lodges. There was one Lodge merger during the last six months when Lodge 107, St. Louis, merged into Lodge 34, Indianapolis. We thank the longtime officers of Lodge 107 for the many years of service that they dedicated to the Lodge and to our Society, and we thank Lodge 34 officers and members for accepting them in a merger.

The top five Lodges in New Members for the year 2022 are:

Lodge	City/State	New Members
6	Sygan, Pa.	26
138	Strabane, Pa.	23
106	Imperial, Pa.	18
31	Sharon, Pa.	17
715	Universal, Pa.	17
603	Samsula, Fla.	16

The top five Lodges in Membership are:

Lodge	City/State	Members	Insurance in Force
138	Strabane, Pa.	2,168	\$20,481,856
6	Sygan, Pa.	1,793	\$20,227,662
584	Milwaukee	1,368	\$20,167,235
158	Euclid, Ohio	1,305	\$11,306,409
106	Imperial, Pa.	1,117	\$13,063,757

MEMBERSHIP

On Dec. 31, 2022, the active membership of the Society is:

Adult	27,031
Youth	1,733
Total	28,764

This is a decline of 615 members for the year 2022.

Membership Statistics

Members as of Jan. 1, 2022	29,379
Increase by:	
New Members	222
Reinstated	4
Total Increase	226
Decrease by:	
Deaths	442
Cash Surrenders	177
Expired	90
Canceled	42
Lapsed	40
Matured	20
Pending Maturity	21
Pending Death	9
Total Decrease	841
Members as of Dec. 31, 2022	28,764

INSURANCE IN FORCE

Life Insurance

As of Dec. 31, 2022, we have 31,564 life insurance policies in force representing \$242,781,832 of life insurance in force.

Policies on Jan. 1, 2022	32,266
Increase by:	
Issued & Paid	214
Reinstatement	8
Total Increase	222
Decrease by:	
Deaths	517
Cash Surrender	190
Canceled	37
Expired	92
Matured	37
Lapsed	51
Total Decrease	924
Policies as of Dec. 31, 2022	31,564

Annuities

Annuities on Jan. 1, 2022	3,973
Increase by:	
Issued & Paid	90
Total Increase	90
Decrease by:	
Cancel After Issue	1
Surrender	103
Death	142
Total Decrease	246
Annuities as of Dec. 31, 2022	3,817

Accident & Health

As of Dec. 31, 2022, we have 2,329 A&H policies remaining on our books.

A&H Policies on Jan. 1, 2022	2,629
Increase by:	
Reinstatement	9
Total Increase	9
Decrease by:	
Expired	162
Canceled	75
Deaths	72
Total Decrease	309
A&H Policies as of Dec. 31, 2022	2,329

CONVENTION 2022

Of course, on Aug. 15, 2022, we held the 32nd Quadrennial Convention at the SNPJ Recreation Center. There was a lot of preparation and arrangements involved with hosting a successful Convention. Thanks to those who assisted me from the Home Office to ensure a smooth and efficient Convention.

The evening before the start of the Convention, we hosted a welcome party for all delegates to the Convention. This was a fun evening of fraternalism with excellent Eastern European food selections provided by Jones Catering, along with excellent music provided by the Polka Classics. Much thanks to the Recreation Center staff for handling all of the arrangements, set up, etc., for this great evening.

The Convention opened with 129 voting delegates – 114 delegates and 15 National Board. There were two Young Adult Representatives in attendance as well, with a voice and no vote. A number of discussions were held throughout the day, bylaws and resolutions voted on, regions realigned, and National Board members elected. Parting gifts were presented to Region 2 Vice President James Curl, retiring from the National Board after 30 years of service, and to Finance Committee member Kenneth Anderson, retiring from the National Board after 28 years of service.

The Convention ended on a very happy note as delegates sang along with Bro. Marty Kumer who led us in "All You Need Is Love."

NATIONAL SECRETARY’S REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Following the Convention, the minutes were sent out to all delegates. Some corrections/suggestions were received, and we held the meeting of local delegates to approve the minutes.

I filed the Society Bylaws with the Pennsylvania Insurance Department in October, and approval was not received until after year end.

FRATERNAL EVENTS

I continue to serve as Lodge president of SNPJ Lodge 6, Sygan, Pa.

In July, I handled the passes once again for Slovenefest and assisted in various areas during that weekend. I assisted the newly formed Miss SNPJ Pageant Commission with any questions they had prior to and during that weekend. They did a commendable job handling the Miss SNPJ Pageant, and I look forward to their continued involvement in this event.

In October I was able to attend the Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance meeting, along with Brothers Evanish and Lawrence. There were a number of interesting speakers and great discussion among our fraternal leaders.

I continue to attend the luncheons sponsored by the FSGP and appreciate the speakers who present during these.

CONCLUSION

I was saddened at the passing of Region 2 Vice President Jim Curl in October. Jim was certainly one of the most dedicated fraternalists and promoters of polka music that I have had the privilege of knowing. He volunteered many, many hours of service to SNPJ Lodge 6 and the SNPJ Recreation Center, as well as being a 30-year member of the National Board. I was honored to deliver a eulogy for such an exceptional fraternalist and longtime friend.

Thanks to our Home Office managers and staff for the excellent customer service they continue to provide to our membership.

I thank National President Evanish and National Treasurer Lawrence for their work on reviewing the information for the upgrade to our computer system and their valuable input on the project. It is an honor and privilege to serve with such professionals and fraternalists.

I look forward to a productive National Board meeting.

Fraternally,

KAREN A. PINTAR, FLMI, CCP, AIAA
National Secretary/COO

National Secretary’s Report

Sis. Karen PINTAR highlighted her report, explaining the various projects that have been worked on and processes implemented, such as the multi-factor authentication, the plan code updates for the annuities, as well as the fund updates for the changed interest rates on annuity products. She reported on training the staff in the use of Microsoft Teams, the transitioning of the servers, the updated program information for the RMDs to align with the Secure Act changes and the replicated database, and the contract negotiations that took place with the software provider.

Discussion by Bro. ZAKRAYSEK and Sis. RIGLER. Motion by Bro. Roger CLIFFORD, second by Bro. HERVOL, to approve the report. Motion approved.

President EVANISH then introduced Leo Hannah of H2R, our outside auditor, for his report. Leo introduced Cara Colavita as the lead on this audit. Leo stated that they issued a clean opinion on the audit; assets are up \$1.1 million, annuity considerations were down about \$3.89 million; the cost of the software conversion brought revenue down for the year. He stated they reviewed the financials during the course of their audit and the processes of the employees; he reviewed the liabilities and surplus with the Board. Leo thanked the officers and staff at the Home Office for providing all of the information necessary to conduct the audit.

National Treasurer’s Report
March 2023

Fraternal greetings, Brothers and Sisters.

Financial results show continued growth in assets while surplus decreased for the year 2022. The Society’s assets increased \$1.2 million, or 1.0 percent, from year-end 2021 to total \$128,754,673. There were no significant changes to the Society’s assets from year-end 2021. Fixed income securities and cash totaling \$121,514,703 represent 96.6 percent of the Society’s total invested assets. Real estate holdings, which includes the Home Office and the SNPJ Recreation Center, totals \$1,918,963, representing 1.5 percent of invested assets. The remaining 1.9 percent of invested assets is comprised of certificate loans, mortgages, and other invested assets.

The Society experienced a \$140,916 loss from operations before refunds and capital gains and losses in 2022. Net income for the year after refunds and after realized capital gains and losses was a loss of \$229,300. Gross income for 2022 totaled \$12,791,577. The Society experienced a 42 percent decrease in annuity premium from the prior year. With short-term rates dramatically increasing, annuity considerations decreased as short-term investment offerings were very competitive. Life insurance premium was flat from 2021 to 2022. Gross investment income increased 1.7 percent from the prior year.

Insurance and annuity benefit claims increased 21 percent from 2021 to 2022. Death benefit payments on life insurance increased significantly by \$331,370, or 20 percent, from 2021 to total \$2,013,608. Annuity benefit payments increased by 22 percent over last year. General and fraternal expenses increased \$258,336, or 13 percent, from 2021 to 2022. Costs associated with the conversion of the insurance administration software system accounted for the increase. Insurance taxes, license and fees increased \$54,899, or 40 percent, over 2021 due to the increase in the cost of the Pennsylvania Insurance Department five-year examination over the prior examination cost.

The Society’s surplus position decreased \$943,490, or 7.0 percent, from year-end 2021, totaling \$12,054,723 as of Dec. 31, 2022. A major factor for the decrease is the accounting for the computer conversion cost. The contract with the software company was executed in 2022, and the total cost of the conversion project is reflected as a decrease to surplus. Also affecting surplus is the transition of the Asset Valuation Reserve (AVR) to more granular reserve factors which is acting to increase the ultimate reserve to be carried on the Society’s balance sheet. As of Dec. 31, 2022, the Society’s asset-to-liability ratio is 110.3 percent.

Following are financial statements and a summary of the investment transactions for the period.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT J. LAWRENCE
National Treasurer/CFO

Summary of Investments Purchased:
July 1-Dec. 31, 2022:

Name & Description	Cost	Par Value
Bond Purchases: U.S. Special Revenue	\$285,000	\$285,000
Bond Purchases: Industrial	2,106,959	2,200,000
Total Purchases 7-1-22 through 12-31-22	\$2,391,959	\$2,485,000

Summary of Investments Disposed Of:
July 1-Dec. 31, 2022:

Name & Description	Consider-ation	Par Value	Book Value
Bond Disposals: U.S. Governments	\$922,512	\$922,511	\$869,784
Bond Disposals: U.S. Special Revenue	774,073	773,720	798,976
Bond Disposals: Industrial	1,111,851	1,119,504	1,186,176
Mortgage Payments	12,944	12,944	12,944
Total Disposals 7-1-22 through 12-31-22	\$2,821,380	\$2,828,679	\$2,867,880

SEE FINANCIAL SUMMARIES
ON PAGE 6

National Treasurer’s Report

Bro. Robert LAWRENCE highlights his report by explaining the operations loss due in part to the increase in death claims of \$331,000 and the cost of the computer upgrade of \$250,000. He also pointed out that the Society paid the Pennsylvania Insurance Department \$244,000 for the cost of the five-year examination. The change in surplus was also directly related to the cost of the computer upgrade.

Actuary Joe Steimla explained how surplus was affected by the cost of the computer upgrade.

Motion by Bro. Jason CADEZ, second by Sis. Joanna BAKER, to approve the report. Motion approved.

President EVANISH introduces Joseph Steimla, the Society actuary. Joe talked about the increase in death claims and its effect on income, the interest rate increase and its effect, and stated that the valuation interest rate is 4.25 percent and anything credited over that amount has to be reserved at a higher amount. He explained how selling more business helps with this. He reviewed the Asset Adequacy Analysis provided to the Board and explained the various scenarios involved in testing.

Finance Committee Report
July 1 through Dec. 31, 2022

Fraternal greetings and welcome to the semiannual National Board meeting, Brothers and Sisters of the Slovene National Benefit Society.

The Finance Committee continues to follow the Rules of Procedure approved by this Board to promote an efficient investment and monitoring of our Society’s funds. Our bond maturity distribution at Dec. 31, 2022, compared to Dec. 31, 2021, was as follows, along with a listing of the SNPJ portfolio by investment category:

As of Dec. 31, 2022		Dec. 31, 2022		June 30, 2022	
Less than 1 Year	\$9,660,999	8.0%	\$8,514,811	7.0%	
1 to 10 years	35,217,645	29.0%	37,647,301	30.9%	
10 to 20 years	45,969,075	37.9%	43,298,058	35.6%	
Over 20 years	30,417,327	25.1%	32,313,176	26.5%	
Total Bonds	\$121,265,046	100.0%	\$121,773,346	100.0%	

	Market Value	Statement Value	Allocation	Yield
Corporate Bonds	\$73,597,407	\$83,442,907	66.30%	4.58%
Taxable Municipal	28,191,874	30,334,245	24.10%	4.75%
Commercial MBS	2,270,314	2,466,598	1.96%	4.49%
Agency CMOs	1,523,034	1,567,151	1.31%	4.59%
Asset Backed Securities	1,464,453	1,649,709	1.25%	2.47%
Agency CMBS	866,385	884,249	0.70%	4.32%
Non-Agency CMOs	505,364	552,144	0.44%	6.17%
Agency Passthroughs	356,700	368,040	0.29%	3.88%
Total Bonds	108,775,531	121,265,043	96.36%	4.58%
Common Stock	945,494	945,494	0.75%	6.50%
Other Assets	546,508	571,229	0.45%	6.06%
Mortgages	206,811	206,811	0.16%	2.75%
Real Estate	1,918,963	1,918,963	1.52%	4.69%
Cash & Certificate Loans	944,316	944,316	0.75%	3.00%
Total Invested Assets	\$113,337,622	\$125,851,856	100.00%	4.59%

**Any difference in totals is due to rounding.*

Portfolio Risk Analysis

Date	Duration	Avg. Rating	Book Yield	Market Yield
Dec. 2017	8.48	A	4.75	3.51
Dec. 2018	8.11	A	4.64	4.18
Dec. 2019	8.66	A	4.51	3.11
Dec. 2020	9.44	A	4.74	2.19
Dec. 2021	9.37	A	4.52	2.56
Dec. 2022	8.14	A	4.58	5.58

Wellington Management Company, LLP, continues to monitor the portfolio and manage the assets within the guidelines set forth by the Finance Committee and approved by the National Board. The Finance Committee works with the asset manager to determine appropriate risk measures for the portfolio with the goal of optimizing the portfolio yield while maintaining a high quality portfolio and matching the Society’s liability cash flow needs. The low interest rate environment over the past decade made it very challenging when trying to cover current contract guarantees without taking on excessive amounts of risk.

During 2022, Treasury yields increased substantially. While yields increased across all maturities, shorter maturity US Treasury bonds saw a more dramatic increase, shocking the market. The benchmark 10-year Treasury rate, which was at 1.52 percent at the end of 2022, increased to 3.96 percent on Dec. 31, 2022, while the two-year Treasury yield increased from 0.73 percent at year-end 2021 to 4.73 percent as of Dec. 31, 2022.

During the six-month period, the book yield on the portfolio increased slightly, from 4.57 percent as of June 30 to 4.58 percent as of Dec. 31, 2022, while maintaining an S&P weighted average quality rating of A. The effective duration of the portfolio as of year end is 8.1 years.

Investment yields on purchases made in the second half of 2022 averaged 5.26 percent. Investment purchases for the six months had an 18-year average life with an average S&P credit quality of A.

Our committee extends best wishes to former Finance Committee member Bro. Ken Anderson who retired from the National Board at the end of 2022 after serving 24 years on the Finance Committee. He also served a term as a Regional Director prior to serving on the Finance Committee.

Following is a summary of transactions for the period of July 1 to Dec. 31, 2022:

	Par	Cost	Rating
Purchases: 7/1-12/31	\$2,485,000	\$2,391,958	A
	Par	Consideration	Gain/Loss
Disposals: 7/1-12/31	\$1,535,947	\$1,530,706	(\$5,116)

SNPJ FINANCE COMMITTEE
RICHARD HERVOL, Committee Chairman
ROGER C. CLIFFORD, Committee Member
TRACEY ANDERSON, Committee Member
JOSEPH C. EVANISH, Committee Member
ROBERT J. LAWRENCE, Committee Member

Finance Committee Report

Bro. Rick HERVOL, chairman of the Finance Committee, presented the report. Bro. LAWRENCE mentioned the multi-asset income fund that the Society invested in, and how it initially paid a monthly income of six percent but is now paying between seven and eight percent.

Motion was made by Sis. BAKER, second by Bro. Maury SINAN, to approve the Rules of Procedure of the Finance Committee and the Statement of Investment Policy. Motion approved.

Motion was made by Bro. CADEZ, second by Bro. Fred MIAKAR, to approve the report. Motion approved.

SNPJ Audit Committee Report
July-December 2022

Date of Report: March 23, 2023

Fraternal greetings, SNPJ Executive Committee, SNPJ National Board and SNPJ members.

The Audit Committee met in the Home Office March 22-23, 2023, for their semiannual meeting. The semiannual review consisted of routine documentation review and interviews with the Executive Committee.

Routine Oversight Report Reviews

The following were reviewed for the period July through December 2022:

- Review necessary invoices
- Receipt review of Executive Committee and National Board members
- Review checks over \$20,000

Note: These reviews were done at the SNPJ headquarters by committee members Joanna Baker, Vincent “Babe” Baselj and Ken Zakraysek; all was found to be in order.

SNPJ Financials

As with most fraternal, because of the current financial environment we are holding our own; however, revenue is down, death claims were up by \$300,000 this year, and there was also an increase in computer-related expenses and fraternal expenses. Operational expenses are over and above what we’re bringing in, mostly due to the computer upgrade. We also had the expense of the National Convention in 2022, which isn’t an annual expense. We’ve done a good job of cutting costs, but some were unavoidable. The Recreation Center is trending up, which we expect to continue, as events and weddings are up considerably this coming season.

Charter Review

The committee completed their review of the charter and recommends the following change to be consistent with the current bylaws: Under “Committee Composition,” wording be revised to read: “An Audit Committee consisting of three (3) members elected by the National Legislative Body, of whom one shall be chairman elected by the committee.”

Pension Plan

In previous years, the Board has approved actions to reduce or limit the cost and liability of the Employees Pension Plan. Generally, higher interest rates decrease the cost to terminate a defined benefit pension plan. Interest rates have increased significantly in recent months providing a better opportunity to consider termination. In January, the elected Board decided to move ahead with terminating the plan. It is understood that this will not affect the benefit amounts for all pensioners and participants.

IT

The IT upgrade to the insurance administration system is still ongoing, to be completed in the fall of 2023. Secretary Pintar is our project manager and is meeting with the Illuminifin project team biweekly to make sure all SNPJ systems are covered and that the project is successfully completed.

Executive Committee Meeting

On Wednesday, March 23, 2023, the Audit Committee met with the Executive Committee as a group to discuss any common issues such as status of weddings and events, solar farm, needed maintenance, etc.; also, sales, RBC, the pension plan, and current and anticipated future expenses. President Evanish will go over these items in more detail for the Board.

Lodges and Membership

New membership is about the same as last year. An insurance sales and distribution consultant has been engaged to help review our sales and distribution process, and offer initiatives to help improve sales and new member growth. He is serving as the “Interim Sales Director” and working closely with President Evanish and the marketing manager.

Annuity interest rates and minimum guarantee rates were adjusted upward due to the significant increase in market interest rates.

SNPJ Recreation Center

The committee reviewed the SNPJ Recreation Center Committee audit report which covered 2022. This is an audit of the internal control procedures at the SNPJ Recreation Center to ensure that proper procedures are being followed.

The Forest Management Plan prepared by the forester generally describes how the property could be managed to properly harvest timber while promoting and sustaining quality forest for years to come. If managed appropriately, another harvest would be timed 10-15 years from now. The first timber sale is taking place in the first quarter of 2023.

The Recreation Center has engaged an engineer to advise on how best to address maintenance requirement needs and upgrades to the waste treatment plant. To mitigate well pump failures, well system projects are being addressed.

There will be a reduction in the property assessment due to our appeal. This was after a significant increase.

The Recreation Center was host to the Convention. Slovenefest returned after two years and was very successful.

FINANCIAL SUMMARIES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Slovene National Benefit Society

Balance Sheet as of Dec. 31, 2022

Assets:	12/31/2022	12/31/2021	Change
Bonds	\$121,265,043	\$119,035,631	\$2,229,412
Common Stocks	945,494	18,287	927,207
Mortgage Loans	206,811	231,532	(24,721)
Real Estate	1,918,963	1,972,172	(53,208)
Cash and Short Term Investments	249,660	2,672,284	(2,422,624)
Certificate Loans	694,655	710,901	(16,246)
Other Invested Assets	571,229	576,220	(4,991)
Investment Income Due & Accrued	1,476,533	1,405,724	70,808
Premiums Due	26,790	23,511	3,279
Amounts Recoverable From Reinsurer	1,399,494	939,583	459,911
EDP Equipment and Software	0	0	0
Total Admitted Assets	\$128,754,673	\$127,585,846	\$1,168,826
Liabilities:			
Reserve for Life & Annuity	\$109,604,762	\$108,859,422	\$745,340
Reserve for Sick & Operation	116,203	126,903	(10,700)
Liability for Deposit-type Contracts	337,969	386,320	(48,350)
Life Claims	360,028	371,232	(11,204)
Accident & Health Claims	16,645	15,914	731
Refund Payable	90,041	86,373	3,668
Premiums Received in Advance	43,420	48,075	(4,655)
Amounts Payable on Reinsurance	13,650	15,896	(2,245)
Interest Maintenance Reserve (IMR)	383,421	503,879	(120,458)
Expenses Due & Accrued	237,344	495,603	(258,258)
Unearned Investment Income	13,618	14,089	(471)
Total Remittances & Items Not Allocated	3,975,044	2,339,172	1,635,872
Asset Valuation Reserve (AVR)	999,803	887,603	112,200
Write In for Liabilities	508,000	437,152	70,848
Total Liabilities	116,699,949	114,587,633	2,112,316
Surplus	12,054,723	12,998,213	(943,490)
Total Liabilities & Surplus	\$128,754,673	\$127,585,846	\$1,168,826
Cash Flow:			
Cash in transit and in banks 12/31/2021.....			\$2,672,284
Premiums Collected Net of Reinsurance		7,017,454	
Net Investment Income		5,448,242	
Proceeds from Investments Sold, Matured or Repaid		5,755,344	
Miscellaneous Income & Other Cash Provided		1,588,959	19,809,999
			<u>22,482,283</u>
Benefit Payments		10,045,213	
Commissions & Expenses Paid		2,848,391	
Cost of Investments Acquired		9,205,958	
Refunds Paid		84,716	
Net Other Cash Applied		48,350	22,232,628
Cash in transit and in banks 12/31/2022.....			<u>\$249,655</u>

Slovene National Benefit Society

Summary of Operations for the period ending Dec. 31, 2022

Description	2022	2021	Change
Life Premium	\$1,630,167	\$1,627,608	\$2,559
Annuity Considerations	5,410,620	9,296,573	(3,885,954)
Accident & Health Premiums	15,158	17,524	(2,366)
Total Premium & Annuity Considerations	7,055,945	10,941,705	(3,885,761)
Gross Investment Income	5,735,175	5,637,700	97,475
Investment Expense	(497,284)	(493,591)	(3,692)
Net Investment Income	5,237,891	5,144,109	93,782
Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve	117,686	147,008	(29,322)
Expense Allowances on Reinsurance Ceded	363,724	377,112	(13,389)
Miscellaneous Income	16,331	275,739	(259,407)
Total Income	12,791,577	16,885,673	(4,094,096)
Death Benefits	2,013,608	1,682,238	331,370
Matured Endowments	50,753	90,264	(39,511)
Annuity Benefits	7,059,957	5,811,684	1,248,273
Operation, Accident & Health Benefits	16,397	17,865	(1,468)
Surrender Benefits	421,871	316,216	105,655
Interest on Certificate Fund	8,827	9,685	(858)
Increase in Life Reserves	398,292	704,145	(305,852)
Increase in Annuity Reserves	347,047	5,188,455	(4,841,408)
Increase in Health Reserves	(10,700)	(11,485)	785
Commissions	159,586	182,646	(23,061)
General & Fraternal Expenses	2,275,431	2,017,095	258,336
Insurance Taxes, Licenses & Fees	190,922	136,023	54,899
Increase in Loading on Uncollected Premium	502	176	325
Total Expenses	12,932,493	16,145,008	(3,212,515)
Net Gain from Operations Before Refunds	(140,916)	740,665	(881,581)
Refunds to Members	88,384	84,638	3,746
Net Gain Before Realized Capital Gain/(Loss)	(229,300)	656,027	(885,327)
Net Realized Capital Gain/(Loss)	0	0	(0)
Net Income	(\$229,300)	\$656,027	(\$885,328)

Surplus Account:	12/31/2022	12/31/2021
Surplus, Dec. 31, previous year	\$12,998,213	\$11,934,301
Net Income From Operations	(229,300)	656,027
Change in Net Unrealized Gains/(Loss)	(72,949)	(721)
Change in Non-Admitted Assets	(529,041)	447,228
Change in Asset Valuation Reserve	(112,200)	(38,622)
Net Change in Surplus for the Year	(943,490)	1,063,912
Surplus as of Statement Date	\$12,054,723	\$12,998,213

Slovene National Benefit Society

Detailed Financial Report for the six months ending Dec. 31, 2022

Description	2022	2021	Increase/ (Decrease)
Life Premiums			
First Year Premium	\$85,367	\$108,044	\$(22,677)
Renewal Premium	1,653,403	1,638,603	14,800
Single Premium	80,799	52,745	28,054
Refunds Applied to Paid-Up Additions	79,285	74,352	4,933
Less: Reinsurance Premiums Paid	(268,687)	(246,136)	(22,551)
Net Life Premiums	1,630,167	1,627,608	2,559
A&H Premiums			
Sick Benefit Premium	6,326	7,429	(1,102)
Operation Premium	8,832	10,096	(1,264)
Total A&H Premiums	15,158	17,524	(2,366)
Annuity Considerations			
Annuity - First Year	3,911,322	7,945,771	(4,034,448)
Annuity - Renewal	1,425,716	1,297,716	128,000
Deposit Administration Contract	100,000	100,000	0
Less: Reinsurance Premium - Annuity	(26,418)	(46,913)	20,495
Total Annuity Considerations	5,410,620	9,296,573	(3,885,954)
Total Premiums & Annuity Considerations	7,055,945	10,941,705	(3,885,761)
Gross Investment Income			
Interest on Bonds	5,546,290	5,504,015	42,274
Dividends on Stock	41,018	231	40,787
Interest on Mortgage Loans	5,838	6,802	(963)
Interest on Cash and Short Term Investments	10,344	129	10,215
Income on Real Estate	102,770	96,800	5,970
Interest on Certificate Loans	28,914	29,723	(809)
Total Gross Investment Income	5,735,175	5,637,700	97,475
Less Investment Expense			
Home Office: Deprec., Insur., Tax, Utility & Other	156,272	145,735	10,537
Rec Center Depreciation & Real Estate Expenses	74,803	71,246	3,556
Management, Custodial, Banking & Other Fees	133,567	149,658	(16,092)
Salaries, Benefits & Board Travel - Investment	132,642	126,952	5,690
Total Investment Expense	497,284	493,591	3,692
Net Investment Income	5,237,891	5,144,109	93,782
Amortization of IMR	117,686	147,008	(29,322)
Expense Allowance for Reinsurance Ceded	363,724	377,112	(13,389)
Total Aggregate Write-In for Misc. Income	16,331	275,739	(259,407)
Total Income	12,791,577	16,885,673	(4,094,096)
Death Benefits			
Death Claims	2,168,636	1,793,525	375,111
Reinsurance Recovered	(155,028)	(111,287)	(43,741)
Total Death Benefits	2,013,608	1,682,238	331,370
Total Matured Endowments	50,753	90,264	(39,511)
Annuity and Pension Benefits			
Pensions Paid	205,451	207,540	(2,089)
Annuity Benefits	13,461,057	12,537,131	923,926
Reinsurance Recovered on Annuity	(6,606,551)	(6,932,987)	326,436
Total Annuity and Pension Benefits	7,059,957	5,811,684	1,248,273
Operation, Accident & Health			
Sick Benefit Claims	7,539	7,589	(50)
Operation Claims	8,802	10,220	(1,418)
Waiver of Assessment	56	56	0
Total Operation, Accident & Health	16,397	17,865	(1,468)
Total Surrender Benefits	421,871	316,216	105,655
Interest on Certificate or Contract Fund	8,827	9,685	(858)

DETAILED FINANCIAL REPORT

CONTINUES NEXT COLUMN

Description	2022	2021	Increase/ (Decrease)
Increase in Reserve for Life, A&H & Annuities			
Change in Reserves - Life	398,292	704,145	(305,852)
Change in Reserves - Annuities	347,047	5,188,455	(4,841,408)
Change in Reserves - Accident & Health	(10,700)	(11,485)	785
Total Increase/(Decrease) in Reserves	734,640	5,881,114	(5,146,475)
Commissions			
Life Commissions	99,977	106,148	(6,171)
Annuity Commissions	53,704	71,118	(17,414)
Campaign Awards	5,905	5,380	525
Total Commissions	159,586	182,646	(23,061)
General Insurance & Fraternal Expenses			
Rent	90,000	90,000	0
Salaries & Wages	691,330	684,848	6,483
Director/National Board Fees	28,800	27,925	875
Employee Benefits	276,076	279,587	(3,511)
Employee Education Expenses	748	375	373
Legal Fees and Expenses	38,759	21,693	17,066
Medical Examinations/Underwriting	7,862	7,350	512
Actuarial and Auditing Fees	159,134	150,471	8,663
Travel Expenses	37,052	20,062	16,990
Advertising/Promotional Items	17,709	18,840	(1,131)
Postage and Telephone	66,994	66,316	678
Office Supplies, Printing & Stationery	33,643	29,113	4,530
Computer Supplies, Equipment & Depreciation	430,191	171,048	259,143
Machine Service, Repairs & Rentals	8,887	9,418	(531)
Books and Periodicals	1,476	1,836	(360)
Bureau and Association Dues	10,908	11,109	(201)
Insurance and Surety Bonds	35,177	34,265	912
Sundry General	10,580	10,607	(27)
Donations - Charitable	8,017	3,435	4,582
Sales Department	2,700	3,336	(636)
Publication: PROSVETA	148,168	136,003	12,166
Quadrennial Convention	14,911	33,287	(18,376)
Athletics	13,406	5,928	7,478
Miss SNPJ Pageant and Travel	5,184	663	4,521
Youth/Young Adult Programming	14,133	10,315	3,818
Lodge and Secretary Awards	47,647	48,785	(1,138)
Fraternal Expense - Other	75,938	140,481	(64,543)
Total General and Fraternal Expenses	2,275,431	2,017,095	258,336
Insurance Taxes, Licenses & Fees			
State Insurance Department Licenses and Fees	123,588	70,210	53,378
Employment Taxes	67,334	65,813	1,521
Total Insurance Taxes, Licenses and Fees	190,922	136,023	54,899
Aggregate Write-Ins for Deductions	502	176	325
Total Expenses	12,932,493	16,145,008	(3,212,515)
Net Gain from Operations Before Refunds	(140,916)	740,665	(881,581)
Refunds to Members			
Refunds Paid in Cash	7,343	7,839	(497)
Refunds Left to Accumulate at Interest	2,352	2,346	6
Refunds Applied to Paid-Up Additions	78,690	74,453	4,237
Total Refunds to Members	88,384	84,638	3,746
Net Gain Before Realized Capital Gain/(Loss)	(229,300)	656,027	(885,327)
Net Realized Capital Gains/(Losses)			
Gain on Disposal of Investment	5,314	5,075	239
Loss on Disposal of Investment	(8,086)	(4,408)	(3,678)
Amortization of IMR (Transfer to IMR)	2,772	(667)	3,438
Total Net Realized Capital Gain/(Loss)	0	0	(0)
Net Income	(\$229,300)	\$656,027	(\$885,328)

NATIONAL BOARD REPORTS

CONTINUE NEXT PAGE

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Election of Committee Chair

The committee re-elected Joanna Baker as the chairman for the current four-year term.

Conclusion

The Audit Committee would like to thank the executives and Home Office staff for their assistance during our meetings. Their contribution is invaluable, and all needed information and documentation was obtained.

**All items in this report are fully explained in the individual executive officers' reports. Please refer to those for further details.*

***All committee members approved this report.*

Faternally,

SNPJ AUDIT COMMITTEE
JOANNA BAKER, Chairperson
VINCENT BASELJ, Member
KEN ZAKRAYSEK, Member

Audit Committee Report

Sis. Joanna BAKER, chairwoman of the Audit Committee, presented their report. She spoke on what they updated in the Audit Committee Charter, reviewed the Forestry Plan at the Recreation Center, commended Sis. Pintar for her role as project manager for the computer upgrade, and thanked the executive officers on behalf of the Audit Committee for all of their work.

Questions and discussion by Sis. RIGLER and Young Adult Representative Justin RIGLER.

Motion by Bro. CLIFFORD, second by Bro. HERVOL, to approve the report. Motion approved.

SNPJ Scholarship Committee Report
March 2023

The following report covers the period of July 1 through Dec. 31, 2022. Payment for the second installment of the 2021-2022 academic year included 28 awards. This group encompassed 27 Academic and one Joseph C. Umcek Jr. Activity scholarships.

Listed below are the names of the students who received awards during the last six months of 2022:

Name	Lodge	Name	Lodge
Caitlyn Conroy	1	Brendan Schmidt	225
Calvin Norsworthy	6	William Dodson	274
Jenna Palmer	6	Phillip Yuhas	274
Colten Phillips	31	Klaudia Kovac	518
Blake Bebar	41	Alaina Norrito	518
Austin William-Ayers	41	Danielle Norrito	518
Kaytee Bartley	89	Laura Norrito	518
Emily Patosky	106	Tyler Mouthey	584
Emily Cipriani	138	Naomi Fry	665
Robert Lawrence	138	Giovanna Varlotta	715
Storie Poness	138	Michael Varlotta	715
Lindsey Thomas	138	Andrew Atkinson	719
Katarina Lidrbaugh	158	Madalyn Ankeny	749
Troy Heatwole	174	Graden Snyder	776

Scholarship Fund Donation & Award History

Years	Donations	Awards
1960-1979	\$75,448.09.....	\$146,797.81
1980-1999	\$595,765.01.....	\$1,185,150.00
2000-2019	\$1,283,463.11.....	\$937,360.00
2020-Present.....	\$20,980.72.....	\$94,350.00
Totals	\$1,975,656.93.....	\$2,363,657.81

Scholarship Fund Financial Report

Beginning Balance (as of July 1, 2022)	\$556,506.72
Donations.....	\$1,945.98
Investment & Other Income	\$7,296.76
Total Income	\$9,242.74
Awards.....	\$15,750.00
Investment & Other Expense	\$9,079.45
Total Expenses	\$24,829.45
Ending Balance (as of Dec. 31, 2022)	\$540,920.01

We continue to receive donations from our members as honors and memorials to their loved ones. We are most appreciative for all contributions, and we extend our sincere thanks to all who contributed to this most worthy cause which benefits so many of our young adults.

SNPJ SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
JOSEPH C. EVANISH, Chairman
KAREN A. PINTAR
ROBERT J. LAWRENCE

Scholarship Committee Report

President EVANISH presented the report. Motion made by Sis. ANDERSON, second by Bro. SINAN, to approve the report. Question by Sis. RIGLER. Motion approved.

SNPJ Heritage Center Report
March 2023

The 2022 season started with a teleconference call meeting on Jan. 15 with the planning of our summer season. We were excited to meet and discuss events as our busy season returned this year with Covid under control. We continued meeting via teleconference call on March 5 and April 9 since Director Kathy Paulenich spends the winter months in Florida as a snowbird until the beginning of May. This method of meeting has worked for the committee.

The main point of discussion at our January meeting, and continuing in March, was to update two museum displays. Sue Mals, Ed Robich and Tracey Belle volunteered to work on these displays. The corner display next to the Frank Yankovic display was dismantled and updated with the beautiful Slovenian paintings that were donated to the Heritage Center. We also added a few more donated Slovenian items. On the other display, in the hallway, we downsized the accordion display and added a bee display in the other half. A World Bee Day banner was printed, along with bee information and items, to honor World Bee Day on May 20. We are also working with the SNPJ Recreation Center staff on a fire pit and seating in memory of the late Kevin Richards.

We have discussed the possibility of using a tablet or square for credit card usage in the gift shop; we're not sure of the wi-fi capabilities or if these would be reliable for gift shop sales, especially during Slovenefest. Discussion is ongoing, and we are hoping technology

can be updated at the Recreation Center in the near future to accommodate this usage.

Continuing our teleconference calls, we discussed the EU Open House in Washington, D.C., our Heritage Center Weekend and Slovenefest. Patty Candela and Ed Robich expressed their desire to return to the Slovenian Embassy for the EU Open House on May 14. Patty also played her button box to entertain the people coming through the line. This is always a great event to showcase our Heritage Center, plus advertise for Slovenefest and SNPJ. We received a thank you from the embassy staff and Ambassador Kajzer for our participation, and an invitation to return in the future.

Our Heritage Center Weekend was planned June 10-12. We kicked off the weekend with Patty C and The Guys playing in the Gostilna from 8 to 11 p.m. on Friday, June 10. Saturday was a full day, with a balina tournament organized by Denny Brand; the winners received a T-shirt from the gift shop. A new event was planned for the late afternoon, a Paint and Sip led by Sarah Loudon in the Wine Room. This activity was very well received by those in attendance, and requests were made to repeat the activity in 2023. The annual Sunday picnic was held in the Heritage Pavilion from 1 to 6 p.m. with the Ron Likovic Band alternating with the Western Pa. Button Box Club. This was a free-admission dance, but we did ask for a monetary donation at the door instead of doing a gift shop basket drawing. We did have a 50/50 drawing. All committee members were present at the picnic, and they helped with the drawing, sales of gift shop items, and with the donation box at the door.

Ed Robich, Tracey Belle and Kathy Paulenich, along with Cathy Kalenits, took the traveling museum and items from the gift shop to the Simply Slavic Festival in Youngstown, Ohio, June 17-18. This is always a great local festival to advertise Slovenefest and the SNPJ Recreation Center.

The Heritage Center Committee met in person on May 21 as we had to schedule committee members to work during Heritage Center Weekend, on Saturday work days, and during Slovenefest. We then finalized our speakers for the "Closer Look at Slovenia" program during Slovenefest. Tracey Belle and Mary Jo Hartman contacted the speakers and arranged the order of speakers on Saturday and Sunday. We had a few problems with the internet connection over Slovenefest weekend, making it difficult to present some of the programs, but overall the presentations were well received and we did the best we could. After the meeting, we stocked the shelves and did some cleaning in preparation for opening day, Memorial Day weekend.

We were asked to recognize the first elected SNPJ Heritage Center Committee with a plaque. After some discussion, we decided that instead of a plaque, we would print a sign of recognition, frame it, and hang in the gift shop at the entrance.

Our summer activities continued with a wine and cheese reception on Wednesday, Aug. 3, during Family Week. We also opened the gift shop for sales. Ed Robich and Kathy Paulenich took the traveling museum and gift shop items to the American Slovene Day picnic in Cheswick, Pa., where we met up with Pittsburgh-area committee members Sue Mals, Joan Gaspersic, Tracey Belle and Mary Jo Hartman. We are always appreciated at this event for spending the day with fellow Slovenians.

The Heritage Center Gift Shop and Museum closes its doors Labor Day weekend, but committee members participated in several more events in the fall. Kathy Paulenich and Ed Robich traveled to the Johnstown (Pa.) Slavic Festival on Sept. 17 with our traveling museum and gift shop items to sell. Again, we were thanked for our participation in this festival.

The Gostilna Chefs Dinner is a very successful event that started a few years back. Jure Žmauc contacts a chef from a gostilna in Slovenia to travel to the U.S. to prepare a Slovenian dinner. They first plan a dinner at the Slovenian National Home on 65th St. in Cleveland; the second dinner is sponsored by the Heritage Center at the SNPJ Lodge 106 Hall in Imperial, Pa. Tracey Belle handled the organization of the dinner, with help on the day of the dinner from Joan Gaspersic and Mary Jo Hartman. Sue Mals had a few gift shop items to sell. Thank you to Darryl and Frank Valencic for the music before and after dinner. We had 80 reservations for this dinner, which all in attendance enjoyed.

Our last event for 2022 was the return of the Christmas party at the SNPJ Recreation Center on Nov. 27. Mary Jo Hartman volunteered to handle the crafts for this event, with help from her husband Paul, and daughters Betty and Kristina.

The Heritage Center Committee met in person on Oct. 1 to finalize the fall events and begin planning for the 2023 season. We continue to generate sales via mail order throughout the year, and in the gift shop during the summer months. We thank Sue Zarella and Sue Krispinsky for helping us in the off-season.

Facebook continues to be an important way of communicating to SNPJ members and Slovenians. Patty Candela handles this account; Tracey Belle keeps an eye on our gmail account. Kathy Paulenich continues writing articles for PROSVETA to keep members informed about Heritage Center activities.

Heritage Center Committee members should be commended for their work and effort in the success of the gift shop and museum. The committee also continues to develop ideas and events that encourage participation from both youth and adult members.

In closing, we thank Recreation Center Director David Jones for working with Heritage Center Committee members to plan and implement various activities. Here's to a great 2023 season of activities!

Respectfully submitted,

SNPJ HERITAGE CENTER COMMITTEE
KATHY PAULENICH, Director
JOAN BARBISH GASPERSIC, Secretary
ED ROBICH, Treasurer
TRACEY BELLE
PATTY CANDELA
MARY JO GERMOVSEK HARTMAN
SUE MALS

Heritage Center Committee Report

President EVANISH presented the report. Motion made by Bro. HERVOL, second by Bro. CADEZ, to approve the report. Question by Sis. RIGLER. Motion approved.

Region 1 Vice President's Report

Fraternal greetings, Brothers and Sisters of the SNPJ National Board. This report covers the period of July 1 through Dec. 31, 2022. As of Dec. 31, 2022, there are 20 Lodges with 6,814 active members, comprised of 6,413 adults and 401 youth members, in Region 1. There were 48 new members, 27 adult and 21 youth, in 2022. Eleven Lodges produced at least one new member: Lodge 715, Universal, Pa., added seven adult and 10 youth members; Lodge 782, Glenshaw, Pa., with nine adult and two youth members; and

Lodge 749, Johnstown, Pa., with five adult and one youth member; were the most productive.

Congratulations to the following Gold Activity Lodges, earning a \$300 bonus in 2022: Greensburg, Pa., Lodge 223; St. Marys, Pa., Lodge 581; Yukon, Pa., Lodge 729; and Glenshaw Lodge 782.

Congratulations to the following Silver Activity Lodge: Universal Lodge 715.

Congratulations to the following for New Member Enrollment of 10 or more new members and a \$100 award: Universal Lodge 715 with 17, and Glenshaw Lodge 782 with 11.

We have had a decrease in membership largely due to deaths. My focus over the next year will be to support the Lodges with ideas and suggestions to add members. Our region goal is 100 for 2023. This is an average of five new members per Lodge.

The last six months of 2022 have been very busy and refreshing as SNPJ activities are back in full motion. From Slovenefest to Lodge Christmas parties, SNPJ fraternalism is alive and well.

My family and I attended Slovenefest. My wife Kathleen and three daughters volunteered to cover the admission gates, and I am proud to say our daughter Madison participated in the Miss SNPJ Pageant and was crowned Miss SNPJ 2023. It was a great weekend, seeing family and friends come together again.

We attended the Strabane Lodge 138 annual Duck Race on July 16. It was nice to see this event so well attended. Hats off to Lodge 138 for putting on a great annual event.

On July 30 I held the Herminie, Pa., Lodge 87 reorganization meeting with the support of National Secretary Karen Pintar. We supervised the election of new officers and gave guidance on the next steps. My thanks to the new Lodge 87 officers and to Sis. Pintar for the support.

I hosted our Lodge 782 regular meeting and annual member breakfast on Aug. 13. The breakfast has become a looked-forward-to event. It came at the perfect time, with the 32nd Quadrennial Convention set for Aug. 15. I have attended all meetings held by Lodge 782 in 2022 and hold the office of vice president. I have reached out to Lodges via e-mail and calls letting them know I am available to attend events and meetings.

On Aug. 14 I attended the National Board meeting held at the Recreation Center. A lot of topics were discussed on what a great job the young adults did at the Young Adult Conference and how we can support them.

Attending the 32nd Quadrennial Convention was an honor and a privilege. It was great to meet some of the Lodge delegates from Region 1. The retirement of Region 2 Vice President Jim Curl and Bro. Marty Kumer, a longtime delegate, was heartfelt. Their years of service to the SNPJ shows the bond and meaning this organization has endured with so many. As Marty said, or I should say *sang*, "All you need is love." What a fitting end to a well-planned and executed Convention.

I attended National SNPJ Days Sept. 1-3. Our Glenshaw Lodge 782 served breakfast sandwiches, coffee and juice at the National Balina Tournament. This has become an annual event, starting in the barn with a full-blown breakfast buffet over seven years ago. Miss SNPJ Madison Sinan (782) helped with the 50/50 drawing and sold tickets in support of Lodge 782. We had a few winners from Region 1 in the National Bean Bag Tournament: Jacob Oliver (782) and Mary Sinan (782) won the co-ed division. There were several Brothers and Sisters participating, and the games went on into the late afternoon and evening. How nice to see this wonderful fraternal event back in motion.

On Sept. 9 I attended the Yukon Lodge 729 annual Community Picnic at the local VFW park. What a wonderful event! Well over 150 people attended, and more food than you can imagine. From the music to the food to the conversations, this was a highlight to the second half of 2022. The event is based on donations; everybody brings a covered dish, and the Lodge supplies the meats and condiments. One of the best parts was seeing so many children playing outside. This was a well-planned, giving, fraternal event. I sure hope to be invited again in 2023. Great job, Yukon Lodge 729!

I attended the meeting to approve the 32nd Quadrennial Convention minutes on Oct. 6 at the SNPJ Home Office in Imperial, Pa.

On Oct. 9, Kathleen and I attended the Westmoreland Federation of Lodges dance at the Slovenian Hall in Yukon. It had been many years since I was at the hall. Linda Pocratsky gave me a great tour of the wonderful club and hall. We shared some ideas on how to attract more members and exchanged contact information. We also discussed holding a Region 1 dance there in the spring. The dance was well attended, and the Federation did a wonderful job.

With sadness, Kathleen and I attended the funeral of Region 2 Vice President Bro. James Curl on Oct. 17. It was always a pleasure talking with Jim. He had so many stories and ideas/suggestions. He was a true fraternal Brother and loved the SNPJ dearly.

I attended the Westmoreland Federation meeting hosted by Greensburg, Pa., Lodge 223 on Oct. 24. It was informative, with ideas suggested on how to engage members and questions on specific topics. The work of officers and members has kept SNPJ fraternalism going in the Westmoreland Federation. We discussed the plan for a Region 1 members and friends free dance. The suggestion was made to hold the dance at the Yukon hall and have it at one of the Lodges in the Westmoreland Federation. I look forward to working with the Federation on future events and supporting them any way that I can.

On Oct. 27 I attended the Gostilna Chef Dinner with my wife Kathleen; daughter Megan; and cousin Pam Ianoti, the president of Herminie Lodge 87, and her husband John; held at Imperial Lodge 106. The meal was impressive. It was nice to sit and converse with two KSKJ board members. Great job to the Heritage Center Committee for planning and executing the dinner so well.

On Nov. 26 I attended the Cleveland Polka Hall of Fame Annual Awards Show with my wife Kathleen and Miss SNPJ Madison Sinan. We had a wonderful time. Madison and Kathleen sold out of drawing tickets for the Miss SNPJ basket while I enjoyed meeting and greeting people at the entrance to the ballroom. It was good to see Region 3 Vice President Bro. Don Srnick and Region 6 Vice President Bro. Fred Makar. This was our first year attending, and we plan to attend in the future. Once again, a well-planned and executed event by the Polka Hall of Fame!

I was happy to put on my red suit and snow-white beard to attend the SNPJ Recreation Center/Heritage Center annual children's Christmas party on Nov. 27. Kathleen and our daughter Morgan helped with the children's activities as I prepared to listen to all the wishes and give out gifts to the good boys and girls in attendance. Once again, fraternalism prevails and the kids' Christmas party is back. The Recreation Center staff and Heritage Center Committee do a fantastic job and should be commended.

I attended the Glenshaw Lodge 782 Christmas party with my family

REGION 1 VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

on Dec. 28. It was nice to see everyone, and as always we enjoyed their company.

I have a few specific goals to complete over the next six months, January to June:

1. Hold a free-admission Region 1 Member Appreciation Dance; the date is set for April 23 at the Yukon Slovenian Hall. I would like to see this become an annual event.
2. Visit St. Marys Lodge 581. The Lodge is always so very active and they submit great articles to *PROSVETA*.
3. Set up a lunch with the Johnstown area Lodges, working with National Board member Bro. Ken Zakraysek to arrange this.
4. Work with Region 2 Vice President Bro. Jason Cadez on a Region 1 and Region 2 joint activity, possibly a Pittsburgh Pirates game.
5. Work with Lodges to improve membership, possibly a membership drive month. All Lodges bring in at least three new members.
6. Foster Lodges on how they can achieve Gold and Silver level activity bonuses.

Over the last six months I have attended several National Board conference calls and had conversations with Lodge officers and members. I worked with the Herminie Lodge 87 officers on ideas and suggestions for fraternal activities and support. I also attended several SNPJ activities and have met wonderful people.

It is a privilege to serve as the Vice President of SNPJ Region 1. My best fraternal wishes to all.

Fraternally,

MAURICE SINAN
Region 1 Vice President

Region 1 Vice President's Report: Bro. Maury Sinan

Motion made by Sis. RIGLER, second by Bro. Don SRNICK, to approve the report. Motion approved.

Region 3 Vice President's Report

Fraternal greetings, Brothers and Sisters of the SNPJ National Board.

As of Dec. 31, 2022, there are 13 Lodges in Region 3 with a total membership of 5,692 – 5,326 adults and 366 juveniles. We had 28 new members, 10 adults and 18 juveniles.

I attend all Lodge 158 meetings as Lodge president. Our meetings are held the second Thursday of the month, every month. I also attend all SNPJ Farm Board meetings as vice president. Our meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of the month, every month, at 6 p.m., except when there is a Federation meeting, then the meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. I attend all Cleveland Federation meetings as a representative. Federation meetings are now held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, as scheduled, starting at 5:30 p.m. right before the Farm Board meeting.

As most of you know, after 42 years I retired from Lincoln Electric in Euclid, Ohio, seven years ago. Since then, Sue and I have been so active I am ready to go back to work for a rest. We do everything from playing balina and bowling (machine bowling format), going to concerts, assisting in running the SNPJ Farm, canoeing, attending high school reunions, attending baseball games, and much, much more. Life is good! Now on to my report...

On July 4, our season continued at the SNPJ Farm with the annual 4th of July picnic dance hosted by radio personality Val Palowski. We had no picnic dance the weekend of July 8-10 because we all attended Slovenefest at the Campsite. I'm soglad it's back in full swing.

Sue and I had our annual canoe trip with fellow Loyalites and relatives Dan, Diane and Anna Horabik from July 14-16. One of our very own Loyalites members, Michael Verch, was married on July 23 and had his reception at the SNPJ Farm. We wish Michael and Shea many years of happiness.

On July 31 we held a tribute to the Wojtila family at the SNPJ Farm celebrating over 50 years of music. It was a big success with 500-plus people in attendance. I want to personally thank Don and the entire Wojtila family for letting the SNPJ Farm keep all the profits from this event. I would also like to thank my sister, Jane Monreal Srnick, and the Monreal Srnick Funeral Home for being our corporate sponsor of that event.

On Aug. 8, Cleveland Federation President Joe Valencic called a meeting of all elected Lodge delegates attending the SNPJ Convention. It was the best Federation meeting to date, with almost every Lodge represented.

We attended a memorial service for Eileen Markusic at her home in Richmond Heights, Ohio, on July 23. Eileen was a lifetime member of Loyalites Lodge 158. Rest in peace, Eileen.

All Cleveland SNPJ Lodges sent their representatives to the SNPJ Recreation Center on Aug. 14-15 for the 32nd Convention. It was great seeing so many old friends and making a few new ones. I ran for the office Region 3 Vice President and was unopposed.

From Aug. 21-26, Sue and I attended Trailer Court Week at the Campsite. Best week ever! We love all our fellow campers – the Vortex rules!

Aug. 26 was the date of the Loyalites Lodge 158 picnic at the SNPJ Farm. Unfortunately, we had a very low turnout. We'll make up for that this year on June 18 at our Loyalites Father's Day picnic and dance featuring the Garrett Tatano Band.

On Aug. 27 we attended a memorial for a past president of the Euclid Slovenian Men's Club and lifetime friend Kevin Kahl held at the SNPJ Farm. Rest in peace, Kevin.

Aug. 28 was the Ladies Auxiliary picnic and dance at the SNPJ Farm, another great turnout. Aug. 30 was the very last banquet for the Recher Hall Balina League as Recher Hall in Euclid has been sold.

The annual Labor Day dance was held Sept. 5 at the SNPJ Farm, hosted by radio personality Val Palowski. Val continues to host three dances a year at the Farm, and I thank her for keeping our Slovenian culture alive and well.

On Sept. 6 I hosted my second Slovenian Heritage Night at the Captains Stadium in Eastlake, Ohio. This event was sponsored by SNPJ and Monreal Srnick Funeral Home. Monreal once again handed out free T-shirts to everyone who attended, which was approximately 200 people. Thanks to all who helped me that day, and to all who attended. Thank you as well to Patty Candella, Anthony Culkar and TJ Likovic for playing Slovenian music at the front gate as our people arrived. The first pitch was thrown out by Patti Hlebak Miskulin and Sue Srnick.

On Sept. 10 I attended my 50th high school class reunion – how did that happen?

Lodge 142 held a very successful picnic/clambake on Sept. 11, and the Polka Hall of Fame held their annual Sausage Festival at the SNPJ Farm on Sept. 14 with over 1,100 people in attendance.

On Sept. 16, Sue and I and about 30 of us from the Campsite went to Jergels night club in Pittsburgh to see one of my favorite bands, Here Come the Mummies. What a blast! Thank you to Jill Yingling for getting us a reserved section to party in together.

The Grape Festival at the SNPJ Farm, which always has a good turnout, was held Sept. 25.

On Sept. 29 I helped my sister, Jane Monreal Srnick, organize a celebration of her funeral home's 130th anniversary. Once again, a big thank you to Jane for sponsoring so many Slovenian events in our area.

Oct. 29 was the date of the SNPJ Farm Halloween party, and it turned out great for its first year back in many years. We had a good crowd and a great band, Stratford Hill. We will be holding the Halloween party again on Nov. 4, 2023.

On Nov. 12 we started something new at the SNPJ Farm, "Friends-giving." Our hosts were Loyalites members Jake Godic and John Harwood. They prepared and provided the main course, turkeys. They also provided a DJ and had cornhole inside the hall. This will now be an annual event, and all are welcome.

Sue and I went on another church tour, this time to St. Stanislaus in the Polish area of Cleveland, on Nov. 17. If you haven't taken a tour of an old church in your area, I highly recommend it; it is fascinating.

On Nov. 19, Sue and I went on the Lodge 576 gambling bus trip to Toledo, Ohio. They had a full bus and everyone had a great time.

Tony and Jeff Fortuna; my brothers, Jim and Phil; Phil's grandson Landon and I performed "Vadnal Tribute" music at the Polka Hall of Fame dance on Nov. 26, and also the next day, Nov. 27, for the Awards Show. The Polka Hall of Fame presented my late father, Bill Srnick Sr., with the Lifetime Achievement Award. In addition, my brother, Bill Srnick Jr., received the Trustee Award. Thank you, Polka Hall of Fame.

Lodge 158 held its annual Christmas party on Dec. 4. Once again, it was very well attended. All Lodges are welcome to participate.

We enjoyed another bus trip on Dec. 18, this time with the Irish side of the family, as Celtic Nations of Lake County hosted a bus trip to Erie Pa., to see a live show at the Erie Station Theater. We ended the year celebrating the holidays with my family.

Special note: Rest in peace to my cousins, Tim Srnick and John Potocnik, who passed away within the past six months. Both were musicians, and they were always involved in our Slovenian traditions. Love you and miss you!

Once again, to all Lodges in SNPJ Region 3, I would love to attend one of your monthly meetings to discuss your Lodge and what we can do to keep our Slovenian Society going. Please call me at (440) 283-9373.

Fraternally submitted,

DON (Srnick) SRNOVRSNIK
Region 3 Vice President

Region 3 Vice President's Report: Bro. Don Srnick

Motion made by Bro. MLAKAR, second by Bro. HERVOL, to approve the report. Motion approved.

Region 4 Vice President's Report

Fraternal greetings! This report covers the period from July 1 through Dec. 31, 2022.

This is my last report as Region 4 Vice President. At our National Convention last August, a decision was made to consolidate regions, and Region 4, which only had five Lodges, was eliminated. The three Michigan Lodges have been moved to Region 3 to join the Ohio Lodges, and the Indiana and Florida Lodges will remain in the newly-defined Region 4 with the Illinois and Wisconsin Lodges. I was elected to another term on the National Board as a member of the Finance Committee, and will continue to represent the members of my former region and all members of the SNPJ.

The one-day, well run Convention was held on Aug. 15, 2022, at the SNPJ Recreation Center. It was wonderful to hear the younger delegates participate in the discussions. A motion was passed to have a Fraternal Director hired within six months, and I'm happy to report that former Miss SNPJ Courtney Koenig has been hired to fill this part-time job. Courtney already has a proven track record with her work on the Miss SNPJ Pageant, and she has a wealth of experience with the fraternal activities SNPJ provides.

At the request of the delegates, a question and answer session was added to the agenda. It gave the delegates an opportunity to get answers, raise concerns, and present improvement ideas. I believe the Q&A session should be on the agenda of all future Conventions. Finance Committee member Ken Anderson and Region 2 Vice President Jim Curl announced their retirements from the National Board and were honored for their many years of service to the SNPJ. The meeting had a surprise ending with the delegates singing "All You Need Is Love" led by Marty Kumer. It was fun!

In October, I was saddened to hear that Jim Curl had passed away. I would like to extend my sympathies to his family. Jim was a hard-working, devoted SNPJer, and he will be missed by many. I'm so glad that Jim was able to attend the Convention to receive his accolades.

In November, St. Louis Lodge 107 was merged into Indianapolis Lodge 34. In addition, Region 4 gained 31 new members in 2022 to end the year with 2,120 members (2,018 adults and 102 juveniles); this is an increase of 202 members. Congratulations to Samsula, Fla., Lodge 603 for receiving a \$100 bonus award for enrolling 16 new members, and to all five of the Region 4 Lodges for receiving activity awards and enrolling new members last year.

Here are some highlights of the region's activities during this period:

- Lodge 34 members sponsored a krofe table at the Slovenski Festival and hosted dinners to benefit the Slovene National Home.
- Lodge 518 participated in several fundraising walks, had a picnic with Slovenian food, made scarves for Operation Gratitude to support our troops, and made fleece blankets for children via Project Linus.
- Lodge 564 and Lodge 677 members participated in the SNPJ Golf League, joined together for a potluck picnic, supported a CROP Hunger Walk, and held a Christmas party with bowling and pizza.
- Lodge 603 collected gift cards, furniture, toys and household items for Hurricane Ian victims in the Samsula area where damage was extensive, and held the "Christmas on the Farm" parade and a lasagna dinner.

- Samsula Youth Circle 57 held a Halloween party complete with a spook house, games, costume contest and cake walk; donated Thanksgiving baskets to 19 families; gave gifts to 17 veterans; participated in the Lodge 603 Christmas parade; and hosted their annual Christmas party and program.

The region's members also continue to participate in many national SNPJ activities, including Slovenefest, Family Week, National SNPJ Days, Slovenian Heritage Weekend, and the national golf, balina and bean bag tournaments.

Stay safe and stay well!

Fraternally,

TRACEY L. ANDERSON
Region 4 Vice President

Region 4 Vice President's Report: Sis. Tracey Anderson

Motion made by Sis. RIGLER, second by Bro. SINAN, to approve the report. Motion approved.

Region 5 Vice President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Executive Committee and National Board, fraternal greetings! The following is my report for the period of July 1 through Dec. 31, 2022.

I have attended Chicago District Federation meetings and all scheduled Lodge meetings.

On July 8-10 I attended the Miss SNPJ Pageant and the 39th Annual Slovenefest with family and friends from Lodge 449. It was a beautiful weekend and the weather was great. Congratulations to Miss SNPJ Madison Sinan (782) who also won the titles of Miss Activity and Miss Talent, and to Cara Fabian (218) who won the title of Miss Fraternalism. Representing Region 5 and Lodge 449 was Lanie Maresch, who was selected first runner-up to Miss SNPJ, Miss Activity and Miss Talent. During the program on Sunday, I had the honor of announcing the first runner-up to Miss SNPJ.

On Aug. 14 I attended the National Board meeting. All officer and committee reports were given and approved. The Young Adult Representative, Justin Rigler (449), was also present and reported for the young adults. He informed the Board of the service projects and activities the young adults participated in over the weekend, and what they discussed at their conference.

On Aug. 15 I attended the 32nd SNPJ Quadrennial Convention. During the Convention I was re-elected Region 4 Vice President. There was a shift in the regions, so my new region is now Region 4 which encompasses the Lodges within the states of Illinois, Indiana, Florida, Kansas and Wisconsin.

I would like to thank everyone for re-electing me to this position. It was a pleasure meeting all of you at the Convention, and I look forward to the next four years of moving forward in the Society, and hopefully growing our membership and continuing with the great fraternal benefits that we offer to both the youth and adults of our Society. I was glad to see so many young adults who were elected by their Lodges in attendance at this Convention.

Many SNPJ members from several area Lodges attended the annual Slovenian Catholic Center picnic held in Lemont, Ill., on Aug. 14. I was able to attend the annual Honey Picnic on Aug. 28.

The Chicago District Federation held its annual cultural event on Aug. 21. This event promotes a gathering of members from the area Lodges. The event was a viewing of "Polka, The Movie" shown by Joe Valencic (5) from Cleveland. The movie was the story of Slovenian music in the United States. Members were in attendance from Lodges 1, 8, 449 and 559.

In addition to the movie, a short program was held. We were delighted to have Cecilia Dolgan (576) join us and sing some familiar tunes, accompanied by Vince Rigler (449) on the button box accordion. Since Miss SNPJ was not able to attend, we were glad to have Lanie Maresch (449), first runner-up to Miss SNPJ, in attendance. Lanie was presented with a gift from the Chicago Federation.

I was able to attend the concert of the Megaron Chamber Choir from Slovenia that was held Sept. 26 at St. Joseph's Church in Joliet, Ill. The choir consisted of more than 40 young adults who sang several Slovenian songs.

Many SNPJ members attended the Slovenian Catholic Center 27th anniversary on Nov. 13. The program featured the children from the Slomšek Slovenian School.

On Dec. 3, the Chicago District Federation of SNPJ Lodges held its annual Christmas party at the Slovenian Catholic Center in Lemont with members and friends in attendance from Lodges 1, 8, 449 and 559. I was the emcee and arranged the games and prizes for both the youth and adults. Ed Dabrowski (449) took photos with Santa and was able to print and hand them out to everyone in attendance. Youth members from Lodges 1 and 449 performed their talents, and the youth were treated to lunch and a gift. Also in attendance was Consul General Alenka Jerak from Cleveland. During the program, Marianne Murray was recognized for her 35 years of service to the Federation and presented with flowers.

Congratulations to Lodges 1, 2, 8, 225, 449 and 559 who reached the Gold Level for Activity in the 2022 SNPJ Lodge Bonus Program. I enjoy seeing the many pictures and articles in *PROSVETA* informing us of the many different types of activities that are being held by all the Lodges.

In Region 5, we had a total of six new members for the year 2022, which is far less than last year. Congratulations to Lodges 225 and 584 for attaining new members. I hope that more Lodges will be able to increase their membership this year.

In anticipation of the return of the TEL program (for youth members ages 13-17), I contacted Lodge secretaries and members to explain the program and to submit the names of any youth members who would like to attend. Unfortunately, this program was canceled due to lack of interest, and due to compliance and regulatory considerations.

This concludes my report for the past six months. I am looking forward to 2023 in moving forward with new ideas to bring in more members, and building on the existing programs with more participants.

Fraternally,

JUSTINA M. RIGLER
Region 5 Vice President

Region 5 Vice President's Report: Sis. Tina Rigler

Motion made by Sis. ANDERSON, second by Bro. ZAKRAYSEK, to approve the report. Motion approved.

Region 6 Vice President's Report July through December 2022

Fraternal greetings from the far West. This report summarizes Region 6 achievements and activities for the second half of 2022.

REGION 6 VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Region 6 was proud to be represented in the 2022 Miss SNPJ Pageant by two beautiful and worthy young members: San Francisco Lodge 304 Secretary Michelle Jessica Von Merta-Sustarich, and Cara Fabian of Denver Lodge 218. Our hearty congratulations to Cara who was crowned Miss Fraternality, and to our new Miss SNPJ Madison Sinan who resides in Colorado and is participating in Lodge 218 events. We look forward to their continued involvement and leadership in SNPJ.

Congratulations also go to California Lodges 723, 745 and 786 for winning gold activity bonuses, and to Helper, Utah, Lodge 689 for winning silver.

With my accordion in the overhead compartment, I flew to Pennsylvania in August to represent Region 6 at the 32nd Quadrennial Convention where I was re-elected and made music when the business was finished. I thank you very much for your support and for listening. After consolidation and reorganization of regions, the western Lodges now comprise Region 5, which I will represent for the next four years. I also continue to serve as president of Lodge 786.

Price, Utah, Lodges 757 and 113, and Helper Lodge 689 teamed up again for their 39th Utah Slovenian Day picnic, the proceeds of which are used to support local charities.

Gold Country Lodge 745 held their annual summer picnic and Christmas party. Their exemplary community service efforts included donating 11 pints of blood to the greater Sacramento area blood bank, and a monetary donation to the California State Park Foundation.

Orange Coast Lodge 786 held a summer *čevapčiči* social and a Christmas party.

Fontana Lodge 723 elected a new slate of officers and began reorganizing in the wake of the sale of the Fontana Slovene Hall.

In closing, I offer my heartfelt condolences to the family of Bro. James L. Curl who served our Society so well for so many years. I will miss his steady presence and wise counsel on the National Board. And I look forward to working with the new Board members as we move forward to keep SNPJ strong and vibrant.

Fraternally,

FREDRICK J. MLAKAR
Region 6 Vice President

Region 6 Vice President’s Report: Bro. Fred Mlakar

Motion made by Bro. SRNICK, second by Bro. CADEZ, to approve the report. Motion approved.

SNPJ Recreation Center Committee Report
March 2023

This report covers the second six months of 2022. Our key full-time staff members include Director David Jones, Operations Manager Sue Krispinsky, Maintenance Manager Gary Ehasalu, and secretary Susan Zarella. Director Jones, our key staff members, and the part-time and seasonal staff do a commendable job operating our facility.

Cabin rental income experienced an increase over last year; however, still below pre-pandemic levels. Family Week was successful. Other groups also help with cabin revenue.

The SNPJ Convention was hosted at the Recreation Center in August. There were 129 delegates and Board members who took part in the meeting. Several delegates stayed onsite in the cabins and their trailers. The meals and social events supporting the Convention went well. We thank the Recreation Center management and staff for doing a great job. Jones Catering did an excellent job providing the necessary food for the group. A major donation to the Cabin Renovation Fund of \$25,000 was received during the Convention from SNPJ Lodge 41 in memory of Lodge President William Volker, as presented by Lodge Secretary/Treasurer JoAnn Raspotnik.

It was good to see the full return of our National SNPJ Days on Labor Day weekend this year. The SNPJ Slovenian Heritage Center covers the cost of entertainment. The Sunday picnic is a free-admission event. This, and all of the sporting events, were well attended and successful throughout the weekend.

Slovenefest was brought back for 2022 after being canceled for two pandemic years. We appreciate all of the hard work from volunteers and the staff. Kathy Paulenich did a good job putting together the entertainment. Ruth Wright was very instrumental in coordinating craft vendors for the weekend. Slovenefest cannot be successful without the nearly 100 volunteers. Director Jones, management and staff did a commendable job organizing the weekend after a two-year hiatus. Vesper Energy gave a \$5,000 Supreme sponsorship. Slovenefest was profitable and successful for the Recreation Center.

Director Jones brought back a variety of entertainment on Friday nights throughout the season in the Gostilna, with bingo on Saturday nights. The Gostilna and Tiki Bar increased revenue over 2021; however, still lower than previous levels.

Pool admissions increased over last year. However, the cost to operate the pool increased much more than the admission revenue increase. The manpower cost has escalated.

Operations Manager Sue Krispinsky continues to do a great job managing the wedding events. Jones Catering also does an excellent job providing quality food and service for weddings and fraternal events. The Heritage Pavilion is experiencing more bookings for weddings with the addition of the restrooms. The wedding business was stronger and experienced an increase over the previous year.

Well failure occurred on July 11, causing an emergency water shutdown of the trailer court and cabins. Things were re-opened on July 15. The emergency repair of the well came in at a cost of \$9,815.49 from Dillan Well Drilling. The consensus between management and the engineer to help resolve the reoccurring problem of replacing the Goulds 150H liquid-end of the well operation is to install a soft start control to prevent the pump from starting at full speed in response to lower water pressure. A Dillan Well Drilling soft start control proposal of \$5,167.50 was approved to be installed by year-end. It was also agreed to get further information on the pitless adapter replacement proposal from Dillan. We did receive an \$800 community grant from Vesper Energy for this project.

Heritage Pavilion Restrooms: The National Board approved \$127,750 plus a \$20,000 contingency for a total of 147,750. Currently, the expenditure is \$145,595, which includes the original base of \$127,750 plus \$12,756 for additional fixtures, water line, sanitary line, drain line to the building and pavilion, and electrical service. It also includes an additional \$5,089 for HVAC to the bridal suite. Some of the line that was installed was originally going to be completed by the Recreation Center. The restrooms were operational for Slovenefest.

During the weekend of July 23, several volunteers from the trailer court completed a number of projects. These included painting the

mini-putt, re-doing the balina court playing surfaces, removing brush behind the lake, power washing the playground, etc. The committee very much appreciates these successful volunteer efforts. At different times during the season there were a number of volunteers who helped with special projects, or just lent a hand or their expertise, which we greatly appreciate.

A mid-year re-assessment of the property was done in 2021 which resulted in an increase to our property taxes where the assessment increased from \$3,160,200 to \$3,641,400 on the main parcel. This was appealed and will result in a reduction from the re-assessed amount of \$3,641,400 to \$3,262,700. We received this notification on Oct. 21, 2022.

The committee engaged a forestry consultant to prepare a forest management plan for the property. The plan generally describes how the property could be managed to properly harvest timber while promoting and sustaining quality forest for years to come. If managed appropriately, another harvest would be timed for 10-15 years from now. It was decided to proceed with the plan utilizing the forester who will manage the lands in accordance with accepted forestry best management practices.

The committee conducted a review of the internal control procedures at the SNPJ Recreation Center. This continues to be a normal business practice by the committee to ensure that proper procedures are being followed.

While we experienced an improvement financially over the previous year, lingering effects of the pandemic were still felt. Revenue was still down from 2019. The following is a summary of the year-end financial report for the year 2022:

Total Revenue.....	\$1,062,723
Total Expenditures	(\$1,251,653)
Net Loss.....	(\$188,930)

A detailed financial report is attached. It is noted that \$128,875 of miscellaneous income was received due to the employee retention credit (ERC) which was part of the CARES Act. This reduces the net loss above and is shown in the profit and loss statement. SNPJ's CPA auditing firm, H2R, was helpful in applying for this funding. The 2023 budget is also included as an attachment.

Honorary committee member Jim Curl, who passed away on Oct. 15, 2022, will be missed. He was a former director, a committee member since 2003, and a 30-year SNPJ National Board member. His contributions over the years to the Recreation Center are immeasurable.

We are very proud of our facility and property. Everyone is encouraged to take advantage of our beautiful SNPJ Recreation Center as we continue promoting our fraternal activities and programs.

SNPJ RECREATION CENTER COMMITTEE
JOSEPH C. EVANISH, Committee Chairman
DAVID CUSHMAN
JERRY R. HLEBAK
CATHY KALENITS
RONALD CADEZ
JOHN BASELJ
DAVID SKRAJNER
VINCENT BASELJ, Honorary Member

SNPJ Recreation Center Financial Report
as of Dec. 31, 2022

	Revenue	Expense	Profit/(Loss)
Cabins	\$96,928	\$60,257	\$36,671
Events	\$48,393	\$22,474	\$25,919
Gostilna Dining	\$38,375	\$38,403	(\$28)
Gostilna	\$70,377	\$57,555	\$12,822
Tiki Bar	\$39,638	\$20,026	\$19,612
Pool	\$17,812	\$38,422	(\$20,610)
Slovenefest	\$90,895	\$47,770	\$43,125
Trailer Court	\$149,240	\$13,286	\$135,953
Wedding/Banquet	\$489,405	\$278,250	\$211,155
Misc. Revenue	\$21,660	\$3,947	\$17,713

Overhead Expenses			
Salary & Wages		\$251,663	
Utilities		\$108,898	
Real Estate Taxes		\$94,174	
Insurance		\$113,674	
Depreciation		\$938	
Maintenance		\$49,576	
Office & Administration		\$43,326	
Major Maintenance Projects		\$9,015	
Total Overhead Expenses			(\$671,264)
Totals	\$1,062,723	\$1,251,653	(\$188,930)

SNPJ Recreation Center 2023 Budget

	Revenue	Expense	Profit/(Loss)
Cabins	\$110,000	\$55,000	\$55,000
Events	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Gostilna Dining	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$0
Gostilna	\$75,000	\$60,000	\$15,000
Tiki Bar	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Pool	\$20,000	\$40,000	(\$20,000)
Slovenefest	\$95,000	\$50,000	\$45,000
Trailer Court	\$150,000	\$15,000	\$135,000
Wedding/Banquet	\$510,000	\$280,000	\$230,000
Misc. Revenue	\$30,000	\$2,000	\$28,000

Overhead Expenses			
Salary & Wages		\$260,000	
Utilities		\$110,000	
Real Estate Taxes		\$90,000	
Insurance		\$120,000	
Depreciation		\$1,000	
Maintenance		\$50,000	
Office & Administration		\$43,000	
Major Maintenance Projects		\$20,000	
Total Overhead Expenses			(\$694,000)
Totals	\$1,115,000	\$1,271,000	(\$156,000)

SNPJ Recreation Center Committee Report

President EVANISH presents the report. Motion is made by Sis. ANDERSON, second by Bro. HERVOL, to recess as the SNPJ National Board and reconvene as the SNPJ Recreation Center Committee. Motion approved.

President EVANISH highlights some maintenance issues regarding the well, including the soft start control and pitless adapter, discussed the valves in the water tower, and explained that the hot water pipe in the basement of the main building will be replaced. He briefly reviewed the Forestry Management Plan, reported that the Recreation Center received the employee retention credit, and provided an update on the community solar project.

Discussion by Bro. SINAN, Young Adult Representative RIGLER, and Bro. HERVOL.

Motion by Sis. ANDERSON, second by Bro. HERVOL, to recess as the SNPJ Recreation Center Committee and reconvene as the SNPJ National Board. Motion approved.

Motion made by Bro. SINAN, second by Bro. CADEZ, to give the Executive Committee the authority to enter into a new lease for the solar project with proper legal review. Motion approved.

Motion made by Bro. HERVOL, second by Sis. ANDERSON, to use the money received from the Forestry Management project toward the repairs to the well and the waste treatment plant, and any remaining monies to be used for the Cabin Renovation Fund. Motion approved.

Motion made by Bro. CADEZ, second by Sis. BAKER, to approve the budget for the Recreation Center. Motion approved.

Young Adult Representative’s Report

Young Adult Representative Justin RIGLER presented the National Board with a report on the Young Adults. He reported that the Young Adults have been meeting via Zoom and Discord over the last six months to discuss Lodge affairs and enjoy games. Reported that he selected the WaterWheel Foundation for the YAC 2023 humanitarian project. The Young Adults would also like to make this donation in memory of the late Bro. Kevin Richards, as well as dedicate some type of memorial to him at the Recreation Center. The Young Adults have planned to complete projects around the Recreation Center, working with the director and maintenance manager.

Discussion on the report by Sisters RIGLER, ANDERSON and PINTAR, and Bro. CADEZ.

General Business

Executive Compensation Committee

Motion was made by Sis. ANDERSON, second by Bro. HERVOL, to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing executive compensation. Motion is approved. The Executive Committee and the Young Adult Representative left the meeting.

The Executive Committee and Young Adult Representative returned, and a motion was made by Sis. ANDERSON, second by Bro. HERVOL, to come out of Executive Session. Motion approved.

Sis. ANDERSON reported that the National Board approved a five percent increase for each member of the Executive Committee retroactive to Jan. 1, 2023. The Board also approved a \$10,000 bonus to Sis. Pintar for the additional work as project manager on the computer conversion: \$5,000 to be paid now, and \$5,000 to be paid at the completion of the project.

Heritage Center Committee Election

The Board had all of the applicants' information for those who wished to obtain a position on the Heritage Center Committee. A motion was made by Sis. RIGLER, second by Sis. ANDERSON, to elect all candidates to the committee. Motion approved.

Dividend

A motion was made by Bro. HERVOL, second by Sis. BAKER, that the dividend currently being paid on products remain the same. Motion approved.

Employees 401(k) Plan Discretionary Contribution

Motion was made by Bro. HERVOL, second by Bro. CLIFFORD, to approve a 3.0% discretionary contribution to the 401(k) plan for 2022. Discussion by Bro. SINAN, Sis. PINTAR and Bro. LAWRENCE. Motion approved.

National Athletic Board Per Diem

A motion was made by Sis. BAKER, second by Bro. HERVOL, to increase the National Athletic Board per diem to be the same as the National Board per diem at \$325 per meeting. Motion approved.

Convention Site 2026

A motion was made by Bro. SINAN, second by Bro. CADEZ, to hold the 33rd Quadrennial Convention at the SNPJ Recreation Center on Aug. 17, 2026. Motion approved.

Corporate Governance Annual Disclosure Report

A motion was made by Bro. CLIFFORD, second by Bro. ZAKRAYSEK, to approve the report. Motion approved.

Appointment of Society Actuary and Independent Auditor

A motion was made by Bro. CLIFFORD, second by Sis. BAKER, to approve the appointment of Society actuary Joseph Steimla and independent audit firm of H2R. Motion approved.

New Business

A motion was made by Sis. BAKER, second by Sis. RIGLER, that in light of the stringent child protection laws and as recommended by attorney Todd Martin, the Board develop a policy to require parent/guardian supervision for the Society, all Lodges, and all Federations regarding youth activities hosted by any of those groups. Motion approved.

Miscellaneous

Discussion on the fees charged by the Pennsylvania Insurance Department for the five-year examination by Bro. MLAKAR, Bro. CLIFFORD, Sis. PINTAR and Bro. LAWRENCE.

Approval/Adjournment

A motion is made by Bro. CLIFFORD, second by Bro. HERVOL, to hold the next semiannual meeting of the National Board on Sept. 22, 2023. Motion approved.

A motion is made by Bro. CADEZ, second by Sis. BAKER, to adjourn the meeting at 4:35 p.m. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

KAREN A. PINTAR, FLMI, CCP, AIAA
National Secretary/COO

SNPJ National Board

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

JOSEPH C. EVANISH, National President/CEO
KAREN A. PINTAR, National Secretary/COO
ROBERT J. LAWRENCE, National Treasurer/CFO

AUDIT COMMITTEE

JOANNA BAKER, Chairwoman
VINCENT BASELJ
KENNETH J. ZAKRAYSEK

FINANCE COMMITTEE

RICHARD HERVOL, Chairman
ROGER C. CLIFFORD
TRACEY ANDERSON

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

MAURICE M. SINAN Jr., Region 1
JASON J. CADEZ, Region 2
DONALD F. SRNICK, Region 3
JUSTINA RIGLER, Region 4
FRED MLAKAR, Region 5

SNPJ Heritage Center Commmittee hosting Heritage Weekend at the Rec Center

HERITAGE WEEKEND
FROM PAGE 1

and then staying for the music. Saturday will be a busy day. A balina tournament organized by Denny Brand will start at 10 a.m. in the Balinarena. Saturday afternoon activity features a Paint and Sip organized by Sarah Loudon starting at 4 p.m. in the Barn.

Sarah's art project is a 9"x12" wooden sign with your choice of sayings to stencil on the sign: "Dobrodošli," "SNPJ Is My Happy Place," "My Roots Are In Slovenija," or "Famous Last Words – Hold My Beer and Watch This." The cost of this project is \$10 for the sign, stencil and paints. We will also have a small container of cheese, crackers and olives, along with a beverage, available to purchase for \$5.

Those who attended the Paint and Sip last year enjoyed this activity, and we're hoping a few more participants will attend. We have limited this activity to 32 participants.

Saturday evening activity features bingo in the Gostilna. Bingo winners will receive a small prize from the Heritage

Center Gift Shop. Don't forget to visit the Gift Shop, which will be open from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, June 10.

All Heritage Center Committee members will be attending the picnic in the Heritage Pavilion on Sunday, June 11. Entertainment features the Frank Stanger Band alternating with the Western Pa. Button Box Club from 1 to 6 p.m.

Committee members Kathy Paulenich, Joan Gaspersic and Ed Robich will be at the entrance to welcome you as we ask for a monetary donation to help defray some of the cost of the entertainment; Patty Candela and Sarah Loudon will be selling 50/50 drawing tickets; Tracey Belle, Sue Mals and Lynn Romeo will be selling items from the Gift Shop at the rear of the pavilion; and last, but not least, Mary Jo Hartman and Kristina Hartman Lickert will have games for elementary school-age children set up near the picnic tables behind the pavilion starting at 1 p.m.

Food and drinks will be available for purchase in the pavilion; dinners will be available for purchase in the Gostilna in

the main building.

The following weekend is the Simply Slavic Festival in Youngstown, Ohio. The festival runs from 5 p.m. until midnight on Friday, June 16, and continues Saturday from noon until midnight.

Committee members Kathy Paulenich, Ed Robich, Tracey Belle, Lynn Romeo and Sarah Loudon will be working shifts at this event, selling items from the Gift Shop in the Marketplace and displaying our traveling museum in the ethnic tent. The festival includes musical entertainment and, of course, wonderful food and drinks available for purchase. Youngstown is centrally located between Pittsburgh and Cleveland, so it's not far to travel.

I hope you have your reservations made for Slovenefest weekend. Slovenefest is only a month away now, and plans are being finalized. Check the Slovenefest website, www.slovenefest.com, for details.

The year marks the 40th anniversary of Slovenefest. If you attended the first Slovenefest, you can appreciate all of the

changes that have occurred over the years. You will only see my smiling face at the admission gates on Friday as I have decided to devote more time to the Heritage Center.

Maury and Kathleen Sinan have so kindly volunteered to be in charge of the gates on Saturday, with Dave and Kathy Skrajner taking over the gates on Sunday. You'll find Cathy Kalenits helping at the gates on both Saturday and Sunday.

Since we'll be celebrating the 40th anniversary of Slovenefest, I mentioned in the May *PROSVETA* issue that we should gather 40 button box players to mark the anniversary. I'm looking to hold this gathering late Saturday afternoon in the jam tent or in the tent outside the Heritage Center. Look for the signs.

The presenters for the "Closer Look at Slovenia" program are just about lined up for Saturday and Sunday. A group of dancers and musicians from Slovenia will be performing in the Heritage Pavilion all weekend, and several group members will be speaking as they explain the traditional

costumes they will be wearing. Their director will tell us about traveling in Slovenia.

Joey Miskulin will speak about performing with Riders In The Sky and producing a CD in Slovenia; Sarah Loudon will offer a make it/take it project; Mary Jo Hartman will give tips on the genealogy archives in Ljubljana and Maribor; Alenka Jerak, the Slovenian Consul General from Cleveland, will talk about her duties; and Olivera Baumgartner from Kollander Travel will talk about travel plans. I'm still working on one or two additional presenters.

Looking ahead to August, the Heritage Center will again host a wine and cheese reception during Family Week at the Recreation Center on Wednesday, Aug. 2. This is always an enjoyable event as we greet the families who return

each year for their weeklong vacation. Many Family Week participants shop in our Gift Shop, and we appreciate their generosity. It's always our pleasure to welcome them back.

Most of the Heritage Center Committee members will attend the American Slovene Day Picnic scheduled Sunday, Aug. 6, at the Yukon (Pa.) Slovenian Hall. We will display our traveling museum, plus offer items from the Gift Shop for purchase.

I'm looking forward to another great summer of fraternalism with awesome polka music wherever I venture. Let's keep that music flowing by attending as many events as you can at the SNPJ Farm, at the SNPJ Recreation Center, or at other festivals in your area. I hope to see you during Heritage Center Weekend at the SNPJ Recreation Center!

Support the Rec Center Cabin Renovation Project



by JOSEPH C. EVANISH
SNPJ National President/CEO

IMPERIAL, Pa. — For many years, SNPJ members have enjoyed the unique and truly remarkable facility that is the SNPJ Recreation Center. The experiences and countless memories that have been made there are treasured by thousands. The Recreation Center is now more than 50 years old and, as with so many things, time, along with wear and tear, have taken their toll.

The large upper cabins, situated opposite the lake along Martin Road, are some of the first structures that were built on the property. Cabins #1 and #2 have already been completed. The budgeted cost to complete one cabin was \$28,000. There are a total of 24 large cabins and 12 motel units as part of this project. It will take a significant amount of capital to finish this project, and will likely take years to complete. The more donations we receive, the quicker we can complete the project. Since this is not a cultural or educational

(scholarship) cause, but rather, recreational in nature, contributions are not considered tax deductible.

We encourage Lodges, Federations, members, friends and other organizations to contribute. Several have already contributed. While we do offer "Club Level" recognition, all donations will be listed in *PROSVETA*.

Donors at the following Club Levels will receive their name on a plaque inside the corresponding cabin: Bronze Level, \$1,000; Silver Level, \$5,000; Gold Level, \$10,000; and Platinum Level, \$25,000.

Donation checks can be made payable to "SNPJ." Please indicate "Cabin Renovation" in the memo area. Provide your name and address, and the acknowledgment name and address if the donation is made in memory of someone.

Send your donation to Slovene National Benefit Society, 247 West Allegheny Rd., Imperial, PA 15126. All donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance for your support!

Rec Center Cabin Renovation Donations for the months of March-April 2023

Dave & Jeanne Cvetas (106), Juno Beach, Fla.. \$50
In memory of Josephine Bole

Dave & Jeanne Cvetas (106), Juno Beach, Fla.. \$50
In memory of James L. Curl

Helen E. Rehar (749), Johnstown, Pa. \$50

David & Peggy Cushman (138), Houston, Pa... \$50
In memory of Michael Progar

Amy D. Mavrich (138), Canonsburg, Pa. \$20
In memory of Joseph E. McGarry

Amy D. Mavrich (138), Canonsburg, Pa. \$20
In memory of Michael Progar

SNPJ Membership Anniversaries June 2023

80-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
2	Mary A. Plantan	198	Anton P. Slemec
6	Carl Skerl		

70-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
6	Janice E. Barzanty	581	Robert Udovic
41	Joan T. Cain	584	Joe Fisher
274	John Yuko	584	Joseph R. Januzzi
559	Ronald Bellettini	715	Robert A. Samsa

60-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
2	Elizabeth Gunderson	584	Robert M. Sinko
6	Nino Petrocelli	604	Sandra Kiehl
8	Michael R. Fleischhacker	643	Jerald Majovsky
34	Eugene M. Jercinovic	665	Roy E. Olson
113	Vicki V. McAdams	665	Joseph D. Lavrich
218	Lloyd D. Hren	715	Charles T. DiNunzio
223	Mary M. Pelesky	729	Frank J. Kostello
254	Joyce Schellhammer	749	Lawrence Langerholc
559	Gerald F. Norieko	749	Jacqueline A. Roman
559	Kenneth Krebel		

50-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
2	Mary K. Lohrenz	559	Deborah A. Biros
2	Daniel J. Browning	562	James D. Ducker
6	William A. Kravanja	564	Gary L. Blazic
6	Beth M. Jenkins	564	Pamela L. Slowikowski
33	Richard J. Sumrak	564	Karla M. Wood
106	Terry J. Sherockman	564	David D. Domutz
138	Alan E. Zuzek	576	Phil Krajec
138	James J. Cadez	581	Linda M. Payne
138	Donna J. Leban	584	Dana M. Jessen
142	Janet A. Pasicznyk	603	Janny R. Barnes
158	Karen A. Godec	603	Ronald A. Likar
218	Dorothy A. Prelc	604	Sharon M. Sledzik
223	Jeanne M. Noga	715	Ronald E. Pivrotto
223	James U. DiAndreth	721	Steve Borato
225	Darrel J. Yankovich	723	Mary J. Liebers
254	Stanley M. Zelek	723	Frank F. Perkovich
274	Sherry G. Keenan	749	Robert R. Meyers
304	Jan K. Tomsic	770	Harold R. Cunningham
518	Cynthia K. Nelson	771	Stanley W. Arent

PROSVETA Crossword

Graduation (#0623) by StatePoint Media

ACROSS

- Like a bug on windshield noise
- G-man
- Type of race
- Late actor Ledger
- Waikiki necklace
- Group of lions
- Knight's shiny garb
- Ensign, for short
- One to beat
- *Graduation proof
- *"School's Out" singer
- An indigenous person in Laos
- 6-shooter
- Founder of People's Republic of China
- Porous rock
- *MFA or BA
- Comrade in arms
- Be inclined
- Had in mind
- Was a passenger
- Ventricular beater
- Same as ayah
- _____ Trick, rock band
- Nicholas II, e.g.
- Initiation ceremony, e.g.
- "Pollock" actor Ed
50. Foolish one
- Ever, to a poet
53. "House of Gucci" star

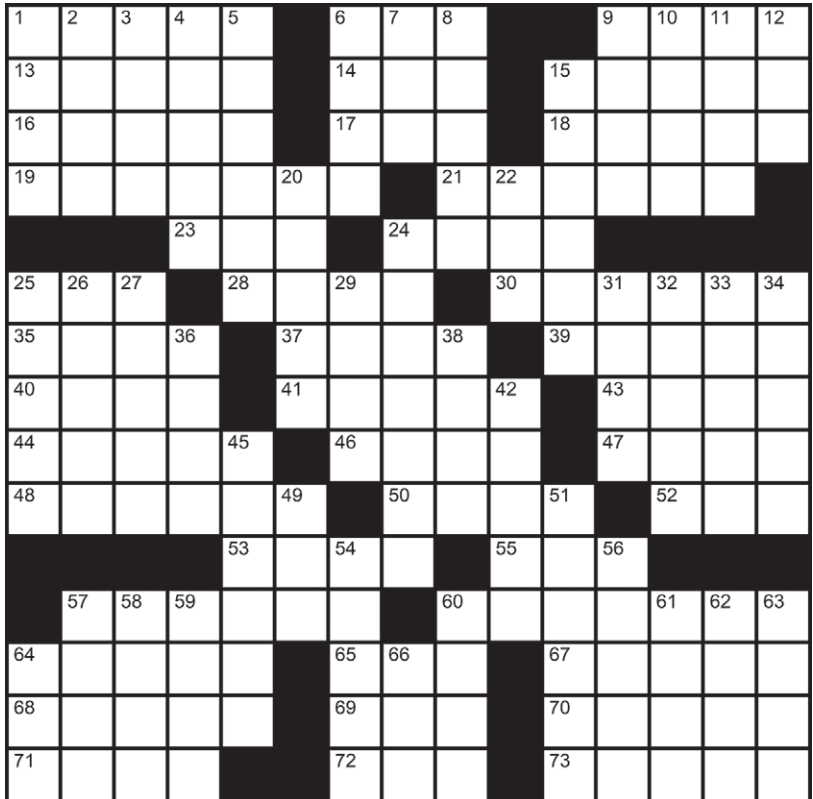
55. Masters Tournament peg
- *Mortarboard attachment
- *"No more _____, no more books"
64. Fancy boat
- Mozart's "L' _____ del Cairo"
- Arm bones
- Orderly arrangement
- Granola grain
- Gustatory sensation
- Lord Byron's composition
- Dashboard unit
- Weasel's aquatic cousin

DOWN

- Herring's cousin
- "Frasier" actress Gilpin
- Bulb holder
- Coral reef island
- Neck cavity
- Pestilence pest
- Even, to a poet
- "Saturday Night Fever" music genre
- Type of coffee maker
- Gauche or Droite in Paris
- Month of Purim
- Styling product
- For the time being, Latin (2 words)
- Cave opening
- Like Hemingway's certain man on sea

24. Type of rummy
- *One in "Pomp and Circumstance" series
- Hello to Israel
- Kamakawiwo'ole
- Ahead in years
- *"You have brains in your head, you have _____ in your shoes"
- Cleats to soccer player
- China grass
- Related on mother's side
- Olden days anesthetic
- *School _____, which is about 180 days
- No-win situation
- Old-hat
- Wilbur's home
- *Famous frat house
- Adjective in sheet music
- Low light
- Enthusiastic approval
57. Tropical edible root
- Land measure
- A fake
- Beaten by walkers
- Research facil.
62. It's better than never?
- Tiresias in "Oedipus Rex"
- Small dog's bark
- *Gown's companion

The solution to puzzle #0623 will run in the July 3 issue.



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by GINA WISE
SNPJ Marketing Manager

What I didn't know then

Several years ago I heard one of my favorite speakers/authors, Joyce Meyer, say: “We live life forward, but we understand it backwards.” I never found this to be truer than when I was thinking about my deceased grandfather recently and the monthly outings we used to take together.

After Grandpap gave up his driver's license, and before I was old enough to obtain mine, we would take the bus into town each month so that he could do his banking.

Grandpap wasn't a rich man. He did, however, work long hours in a coal mine to support his wife and five children. When he retired, he received a pension and Social Security.

I enjoyed being with him, but other than the lunches we shared, it was a boring day for a kid. We typically went to three banks. At each one, as soon as we got in the door, he would motion for me to take a seat on the bench or an empty chair, and he would go meet with a bank representative. My purpose on these trips was just to be there in case any health issues arose, or he got confused about where to go. He had a heart condition, and my family didn't like the thought of him going alone.

I remember complaining to my parents after an exceptionally long day waiting for the bus to bring us back home, “Why does Grandpap have to go to three banks; can't he just use one like you do?”

It wasn't until many years later that I put it all together. Grandpap was born in 1899. He was 30 years old when the Great Depression began. He was just trying to protect his money from the bank failure and turmoil he and his family experienced all those years ago.

Fast forward to 2023, and with the current economic climate you might be feeling like you want to protect the money that you have, too. I get calls from members and non-members asking if we are FDIC insured. My answer is always the same: SNPJ is not a bank.

As an insurance company, SNPJ is self-insured, and we maintain enough assets to cover our liabilities as they come due. As of our Dec. 31, 2022, financial reporting statement, we have \$110.33 in assets for each \$100 of liabilities. Our ratio received a FAVORABLE rating when compared to 25 leading life insurance companies used in the report.

If you are looking for a way to safeguard your money, you could diversify a portion of your portfolio to an SNPJ annuity. Our annuities are safe, long-term savings vehicles that provide safety, growth and income. You deposit a portion of your money with us, we re-invest it, we pay you interest on it, and we safeguard your principal.

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Slovenian aerospace companies visit the U.S.

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (STA)

— In late April, a delegation of 10 Slovenian aerospace companies visited the U.S., presenting their businesses at the Space Symposium Conference held in Colorado Springs.

As part of the conference which, according to the Slovenian Economy Ministry, featured some 18,000 participants, the companies were presented in a joint display. Company representatives also held meetings with U.S. aerospace companies and institutions.

The Slovenian delegation – led by Tanja Permozer, director of the Slovenian Space Office, which operates within the Economy Ministry – held a meeting with representatives of Axiom Space, a company that is building the first private space station and which launched the first private mission to the International Space Station last year.

Permozer also held talks with Colorado Lieutenant Governor Dianne Primavera, to whom she presented the ministry's plans for supporting further development of the Slovenian space program. “While some Slovenian companies are already successfully collaborating with the U.S., there are many more opportunities for strengthening cooperation in this field,” Permozer was quoted as saying by the ministry.

Prior to the conference, the Slovenian delegation visited the Space Information Sharing and Analysis Center (Space ISAC) in Colorado Springs. The main mission of Space ISAC is to provide members and global space programs with timely and accurate information, via data sharing and analysis, to manage risk, especially the risks related to cybersecurity. “As Space ISAC is continuously expanding its network of members, they invited the [Slovenian] companies to join in,” according to the Economy Ministry.

The Slovenian delegation continued its tour of the U.S. by visiting the research center at the University of Colorado Boulder in Denver.

Maribor Police HQ home to bee colonies

MARIBOR (STA) — In mid-April, the first “Slovenian police bees” flew out to gather nectar and pollen in Maribor City Park after the rooftop of the city's police headquarters provided a new home to four bee colonies.

“Bees are not only a common sight in village meadows; they are also welcome in cities, making their homes on the roofs, terraces, balconies and gardens of public and private buildings, and on the roofs of police organizations abroad, so we decided to invite four bee colonies to our rooftop,” the Maribor Police Department announced.

The Maribor Police Department erected the beehive on the roof of their building near the City Park. The hive honors the beekeeping tradition in the region and draws on the expertise of beekeepers within the police force. “The project strengthens cooperation among our employees, as well as with police organizations and retired colleagues, many of whom have actively contributed to the project,” a department representative said.

“This honey story is much more than just an act of social responsibility for Maribor Police officers. Bees teach us about cooperation and mutual assistance; values that have brought together police department employees, our retired colleagues, family members, and members of professional organizations,” said Maribor Police Department Director Donald Rus, who is a beekeeper himself.

Members of the Alojz Greif Hoče Beekeeping Association were also involved in the project, helping to construct the beehive and contributing materials and expertise. Painted by a retired Maribor Police Department employee, the beehive panels depict police work in a lighthearted manner.

New nature park opens in the Ljubljana Basin

LJUBLJANA (STA) — In early April, the Slovenian government established a new nature park in central Slovenia. The park encompasses the Češniške Gmajne and Prevojske Gmajne forests, which are among the last naturally-preserved, continuous lowland forests in the Ljubljana Basin and home to species that are nearly extinct elsewhere in Europe.

The new nature park spans 411.36

hectares (1,016 acres) of land in the Domžale and Lukovica municipalities. According to information provided by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, the area is highly biodiverse, and its habitats offer shelter to species that are either endangered or protected in Slovenia and Europe.

The area includes less common wetland ecosystems, the largest of which is the floodplain of the Rovščica stream, a prime area for black elder growth. It also boasts three transitional mires – a very rare habitat in Slovenia – and several smaller wetlands.

The nature park will help preserve the continuity and complexity of lowland forests in wetlands, maintain the area's biodiversity, and protect the area's flora and fauna. Developmental goals include promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, enabling people to visit and experience what the park has to offer, curbing any negative environmental impacts, and allowing for future research and educational activities.

Protective measures will be introduced to ensure the continuation of forest, pond and agricultural land management by limiting construction and other acts affecting nature, such as deforestation and pollution.

Ljubljana hosting its first ballet festival in June

LJUBLJANA (STA) — The Cankarjev Dom cultural center and the Ljubljana Opera and Ballet House will host the Plesne Noči (Dance Nights) in late June, the first of what they hope will become an annual, international ballet festival.

This year's Plesne Noči will be dedicated to Rudolph Nureyev, who died 30 years ago. Running from June 22-26, the festival will feature dancers from the Ljubljana and Maribor ballet ensembles, as well as guest performers from Sofia, Bulgaria, and Belgrade, Serbia.

Uršula Cetinski, director of the Cankarjev Dom, has attributed the idea for the festival to the fact that creativity is peaking for Slovenia's two most successful ballet ensembles, the Ljubljana Opera and Ballet and the Maribor National Theatre. In addition, the demand for tickets to “Giselle” staged at the Cankarjev Dom in January indicates that “audiences are thirsty for art,” Cetinski said as she introduced the festival to the press.

The festival will include a performance of “Don Quixote” by the Sofia Opera and Ballet; the triptych “Myth, Rain Dogs, Aperture” by the Maribor National Theatre ensemble; and a ballet production inspired by “Ko To Tamo Pjeva” (Who's Singin' Over There?), a cult Yugoslav film from 1980, performed by the Belgrade National Theatre. The festival will close with the Ljubljana Opera and Ballet House ensemble performing “The Great Gatsby.”

Film award now honors both Badjura filmmakers

LJUBLJANA (STA) — The Metod Badjura Award for lifetime achievement in film has been renamed the Milka and Metod Badjura Award in an effort to rectify the often overlooked contribution of Milka Badjura as a pioneer of Slovenian cinema and the joint creative power of the Badjura couple, distinguished by their creativity, perseverance and passion for cinema.

The renaming was promoted by a number of expert bodies and individuals, and has now been approved by the council of the Slovenian Film Centre to “reunite the most important Slovenian filmmaking couple, whose work often cannot be treated separately.” It also “symbolically affirms Milka Badjura as a deserving Slovenian filmmaker and gives her a rightful place in the history of Slovenian cinema,” the Slovenian Film Centre wrote.

The Metod Badjura Award for outstanding achievements in the field of film was first awarded by the Slovenian Filmmakers' Association in 1973. Since 1995 it has been awarded for lifetime achievement in filmmaking; the ceremony takes place each year during the Slovenian Film Festival.

Milka Badjura (1902-1992) was a Slovenian film editor and director who belonged to the pre-war pioneering generation of filmmakers and is considered to have laid the foundations of

Slovenian film production. Prior to the Second World War, she and her husband, Metod Badjura, made around 30 short films, mainly ethnographic and cultural films, as well as the feature film “The Slopes of Triglav” (*Triglavске strmine*). The Badjuras also deserve credit for producing the first film footage of ski jumping in Planica (1934).

As a movie editor, Milka Badjura contributed to a number of award-winning films directed by her husband. She was involved as editor on 13 additional feature films after her husband's death, including the classic “Vesna” (1953). She also directed a few movies, and received the Prešeren Fund Prize in 1968. Before retiring, she worked as film editor at TV Slovenija.

Alma Karlin Hall opens in Cankarjev Dom Centre

LJUBLJANA (STA) — A new venue named for author and globetrotter Alma Karlin (1889-1950) opened at the Cankarjev Dom Arts and Congress Centre in mid-April. The new 400-square-meter (4,300-square-foot) hall with panoramic views of Ljubljana will be intended for art exhibits, small theatrical events, concerts, and literary evenings, Cankarjev Dom Director Uršula Cetinski said.

Construction of the new hall, which cost more than a half million euros (\$552,000), excluding furnishings, was seven years in the making, mainly due to fundraising. “Originally, the space was a terrace that was closed in with windows in 2008,” Cetinski told the press prior to the opening ceremony. “A year ago, this was an empty space with no wiring, no heating, and no equipment for sound, video, light[ing], so the project was not really a renovation, but actually construction,” she added.

This new addition increases the number of stages in the 36,000-square-meter (387,500-square-foot) Cankarjev Dom, Slovenia's largest arts and cultural centre, to seven, and it is the first hall in the center to have been built in an environmentally-friendly manner, Cetinski said.

Architecturally, the hall was inspired by an original idea of Edvard Ravnikar. Ravnikar designed the Cankarjev Dom, which was completed in 1982. The architect of the new hall selected only sustainable and environmentally-friendly materials and elements – the chairs, for example, are made from recycled plastic bottles.

The hall opens up into a modern interpretation of the *agora* [an open public space], which together with the round stage pays tribute to the antiquity and theater of ancient Greece.

The opening ceremony was attended by President Nataša Pirc Musar and Culture Minister Asta Vrečko, both of whom lauded the decision to dedicate the hall to a woman. President Pirc Musar noted Karlin's fascinating life story and achievements: “An admirer of various cultures and an opponent of totalitarian ideologies, at the beginning of the 20th century Karlin was the first woman to travel alone and see a great deal of the world,” the president said as she recalled that the author and researcher had penned more than 20 books describing her travels.

New Amazon Prime series filmed in Slovenia

LOS ANGELES (STA) — Two of Slovenia's most popular tourist destinations, Kobarid and Bovec, are featured in a new spy/thriller series, “Citadel,” airing on Amazon Prime. The first two episodes of the series aired April 28.

With a production cost of \$300 million, “Citadel,” Amazon's second-most-expensive series to date, was filmed in Slovenia, England, Spain, Morocco, and the U.S. The series is produced by Joe and Anthony Russo, creators of Marvel's “Avengers: Endgame” and “Captain America: The Winter Soldier.”

“The production team selected Bovec and Kobarid because both are surrounded by mountains, Kanin and Stol, respectively,” according to *thecinematicoholic.com*, a film and entertainment website.

The plot of “Citadel” revolves around a spy couple, portrayed by Richard Madden and Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who are forced to erase their memories to stop an antagonist intelligence agency, Manticore, from establishing a new world order. The series' first season includes six 40-minute episodes.

The articles comprising this feature have been reprinted with permission from the Slovenian Press Agency (STA).

SNPJ fraternal sympathies

Sis. BETTY JANE DUMBOVICH • LODGE 89 •

MIDWAY, Pa. — The members of Lodge 89 sadly report the Oct. 30, 2022, passing of Sis. Elizabeth “Betty” Jane Waltl Dumbovich, 94, a lifelong resident of Slovan, Pa., in The Donnell House, Washington, Pa.

Sis. Dumbovich was born May 7, 1928, in Slovan, a daughter of the late Frank and Josephine Lawrence Waltl. A graduate of the former Union High School in Burgettstown, Pa., she also completed beauty school and worked as a beautician in Pittsburgh before starting her family.

A 76-year SNPJ member, she was an active parishioner of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Burgettstown, where she was a member of the Christian Mothers and Catholic Daughters. She enjoyed celebrating Halloween, many good (“bad”) jokes, and cooking and baking for her family.

Her beloved husband of 72 years, Joseph Matthew Dumbovich, whom she married June 14, 1949, preceded her in death on June 8, 2021.

She is survived by her six children, Joe (Jeanne) Donovic, Darlene (Lloyd) Duran, Robert (Mary) Dumbovich, Ali (Craig) Tomich, Judy (Bob) Allison, and Mark (Susan) Dumbovich; 11 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren.

Deceased, in addition to her parents and husband, are a granddaughter, and a brother, Frank “Wenty” Waltl Jr.

Private services for Sis. Dumbovich were held at Lee & Martin Funeral Home, Burgettstown. Interment was in the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies, Cecil Twp., Pa.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 89 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we offer our condolences to Sis. Dumbovich’s family, relatives and friends on their loss.

Sis. ANNA M. MOORE • LODGE 87 •

HERMINIE, Pa. — The members of Lodge 87 sadly report the Jan. 18, 2023, passing of Sis. Anna Mae Moore, 89, of Carmichaels, Pa. She was a 71-year SNPJ member.

Sis. Moore was born April 8, 1933, in Cumberland Twp., Greene County, Pa., a daughter of the late Iva and Katherine Sibenick Obrovac.

Anna Mae was always an outgoing and friendly person. She met the love of her life,

James, who everyone called “Spider,” in school. They were in the same graduating class, the Cumberland Township High School class of 1951. After graduation, they were married Jan. 31, 1952, and spent 68 years together until Spider’s passing on Dec. 21, 2020.

Anna Mae was hired by the Carmichaels Area School District in 1969 as the federal funds secretary. She later worked for roughly 20 years as the secretary under Dolores Zoldos, the first female school superintendent in Pennsylvania.

Anna Mae and Spider made their home in Fairdale. The mailing address is Carmichaels, but Anna Mae always called their neighborhood Fairdale. The name was a remnant of the time when the original Greene County Fair was held a block from where Anna Mae and Spider resided. When Carmichaels lost out to Waynesburg, Pa., in a bid to become the county seat, the fair was moved to Waynesburg. Today, the location in Carmichaels where the fair was formerly held is known as Wana B Park.

In the summer months, Anna Mae could be seen ziping around the yard doing one of her favorite activities, cutting the grass on her riding lawn mower. When she wasn’t doing that, she was tending her tomatoes that she canned each year.

The outdoors were probably her favorite place to be. She and Spider enjoyed golfing and participating in the golf league at Carmichaels Golf Club. They were Pittsburgh Steelers season ticket holders through the 1970s and ’80s, and they also spent a lot of time attending and watching Pittsburgh Pirates games. It was no surprise that they enjoyed America’s pastime as a favorite hobby since Spider was once a member of a Pirates minor league affiliate.

But it was trips to the beach each summer that were most important to Anna Mae and Spider. It was at Virginia Beach that they were able to spend time with their family; their grandchildren, in particular.

She and Spider also enjoyed eating out and always liked the chance to dance the polka. Assuredly, Frankie Yankovic was a favorite for dancing, but she was known to be a fan of Elvis and Freddy Fender when it came to listening to music.

She is survived by her son, James E. (Shirley) Moore Jr. of

Waynesburg; two grandchildren, Ashley Moore (fiance Brandon) and Shirley (Josh) Cook; two great-grandchildren, Ivie and Gabriel Cook; and a son-in-law, Gary Billetz.

Deceased, in addition to her parents and her husband, are a daughter, Elaine Marie Billetz; and a sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Rich Prodan.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 87 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we extend our condolences to Sis. Moore’s family, relatives and friends on their loss.

Sis. MARY L. SNYDER • LODGE 106 •

IMPERIAL, Pa. — The members of Lodge 106 sadly report the March 23, 2023, passing of Sis. Mary Lou (Barwell) Snyder, 87, a Moon Twp., Pa., resident since 2003, formerly of Coraopolis, Pa.

Sis. Snyder was born Nov. 13, 1935, in Library, Pa., one of three children born to the late George W. and Sara V. (Lewis) Barwell.

On April 15, 2015, she was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Robert W. “Sparky” Snyder, whom she married Dec. 30, 1955. She was also preceded in death by two grandsons, Kirk and Neil; her brother, George Barwell; her brother-in-law, Chuck Werme; and her cherished dog, Bubba.

Mary Lou was the beloved mother of Dawn (Robert) Millorino, Tim (Sue) Snyder, Mark (Barbara) Snyder, Kelly (Ron) Giannandrea, and Tami (Jay) Chamberlain; and well-loved grandma to Tim and Kristin Snyder, Mark Snyder, Courtney and Adam Biancucci, Jenna and Dave Lucci, Amber and Ben Muti, Nick and Kaitlin Giannandrea, Leah Giannandrea, Mallory and Michael Williams, Cory and Danielle Chamberlain, Mikayla and Michael Latimer, Zach Millorino, and Melissa and Matthew Angelo.

She was the cherished great-grandmother of Dominick, Jordan, Peyton and Addison Biancucci, Mylee and Lainey Snyder, Chase, Dylan, Avery, Bradley and Emery Williams, Easton Mastermonico, Mattea Lucci, and Levi Angelo; the sister of Betty Werme; and sister-in-law of Barbara Barwell.

She was fondly known as “Grandma Lou” to many, especially the little ones for whom she provided day care.

In addition to her SNPJ

membership, she was also a member of Mooncrest Baptist Church and Riverdale Presbyterian Church, the Coraopolis Moose, GBU, and Valley Vets.

Mary Lou was loving and kind, and always had a sense of merriment. She and Sparky hosted epic parties for Christmas Eve, along with many other celebrations.

She very much enjoyed their camping friends at Sandy Lake. Everyone, including neighbors and friends, were included in their open-door policy. She had the wonderment of a little kid and brought joy to many with her seasonal decorations.

Services for Sis. Snyder were held March 27 at Copeland Funeral Home, Coraopolis.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 106 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we extend our condolences to Sis. Snyder’s family, relatives and friends on their loss.

BRO. MICHAEL PROGAR • LODGE 138 •

STRABANE, Pa. — The members of Lodge 138 sadly report the April 12, 2023, passing of Bro. Michael Progar, 56, in Canonsburg (Pa.) Hospital.

Bro. Progar was born Aug. 13, 1966, in Canonsburg, a son of the late Louis and Dolores M. “Dolly” Raciborski Progar Sr.

Michael was larger than life, and many referred to him as a gentle giant. Having lived his entire life in Strabane, he could often be seen at SNPJ Lodge 138, where he was a lifelong member. The club will certainly need to adjust their Bud Light orders moving forward.

He was also a member of the Canonsburg Sportsman’s Association.

After graduating from Canon-McMillan High School in 1984, Michael enlisted in the Navy. He went to Hull Maintenance Technician “A” School. He served in multiple locations until 1988 and kept in touch with his Navy brothers regularly. He earned a Sea Service Deployment ribbon and a Navy Achievement Medal, and served on the USS Waddell.

He was an HVAC installer at McKean Plumbing and Heating for more than 20 years.

In the summer, you could find Michael at the SNPJ Recreation Center, where he had a trailer. He loved going on golf cart rides, hanging out at the Tiki Bar and in the Gostilna, and just spending time with friends. That’s



Bro. MICHAEL PROGAR (138)

where he met the love of his life, Amanda Stincic, whom he married Aug. 24, 2019. While it took Michael and Amanda longer to find each other than they would have liked, they certainly packed a lot of love and adventure into their short years together.

Michael played balina in the SNPJ Lodge 138 league. He loved to hang out with family, cook – including his famous stuffed green beans – and he loved to joke. Michael always had a smile on his face, and he was a wonderful husband, family member and friend to so many.

Left behind to cherish his

memory, in addition to his wife, are his in-laws Maureen and Edward Stincic, David and Rachelle Schlunt, and niece Lilly Schlunt; nephew Patrick (Brittany) McGeever; great-nephews Patrick and Wyatt; and many friends.

With his passing, Michael was reunited with his parents and his brother, Louis Progar Jr., in heaven, perhaps giving new meaning to the polka “In Heaven There Is No Beer.” He was the last of his immediate family.

A Catholic Blessing service for Bro. Progar was held April 17 in Salandra Funeral and Cremation Services, Inc., Canonsburg. Full military rites were accorded by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 191 Honor Guard and the United States Navy.

The family suggests memorial contributions be made in Michael’s name to SNPJ Circle 19, c/o SNPJ Lodge 138, 269 Latimer Ave., Strabane, PA 15363.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 138 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we offer our sympathies to Bro. Progar’s family, relatives and friends on their loss.

In Loving Memory

BABCOCK GRANT

April 10, 1929 – July 10, 2016

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Former President & Secretary of Lodge 689

So very loved and deeply missed by Shelly, Dave, Gaye and families

DEATHS REPORTED For the month of April 2023

LODGE	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	CITY, STATE
A01	James A. Wiedl	04-05-2023	West Pittston, Pa.
A02	Arthur P. Muchow	02-04-2023	Freedom, Pa.
6	Lawrence E. Zani	11-22-2022	Lancaster, Ohio
6	Patricia L. Urbanic	12-09-2022	Pittsburgh, Pa.
8	Dorothy D. Ray	03-04-2023	Homer Glen, Ill.
41	Beverly L. Visnic	01-25-2023	Jeannette, Pa.
106	Eileen K. Leopold	01-09-2023	Baden, Pa.
106	Mary L. Snyder	03-23-2023	Aliquippa, Pa.
106	L. Judith Heck	04-12-2022	Coraopolis, Pa.
138	Michael Progar	04-12-2023	Strabane, Pa.
142	Raymond Mersek	09-27-2021	Willoughby Hills, Ohio
158	Christine Hoffman	12-25-2021	Chardon, Ohio
254	Carol E. Derner	03-18-2023	Lebanon, Pa.
265	Joanne P. Hixenbaugh	01-28-2023	West Palm Beach, Fla.
277	Bernard S. Leko	03-30-2023	Struthers, Ohio
518	Thomas Kubala	03-08-2023	Grosse Ile, Mich.
559	Betty Nadvornik	06-16-2022	Braidwood, Ill.
576	Thomas F. Scheid	10-15-2022	Willowick, Ohio
581	Sheryl L. Sirianni	02-01-2023	Kane, Pa.
643	Michael S. O'Connor	02-26-2023	Largo, Fla.
643	Nancy J. Niemczura	04-04-2023	Hudson, Ohio
665	Dorothy Ferlan	10-30-2022	Gibsonia, Pa.
677	Rose Tait	11-04-2022	Silver Springs, Fla.
729	David A. Boniella	03-31-2023	Belle Vernon, Pa.
749	Sylvia L. Latchney	01-06-2023	Johnstown, Pa.
749	Eugene J. Kramer	04-09-2023	Johnstown, Pa.
776	Anna M. Feltes	11-09-2022	Greensburg, Pa.
782	Eileen Romano	11-07-2022	Glenshaw, Pa.

KAREN A. PINTAR
National Secretary/COO

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Proud of your SNPJ membership? Then you owe it to yourself to delve deeper into SNPJ history through the pages of *An Inspired Journey – The SNPJ Story: The First One Hundred Years of the Slovene National Benefit Society*. This richly-illustrated chronicle of SNPJ history compiled and written by SNPJ Publications Editor Jay Sedmak is available for purchase.

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PROSVETA 2023 Publication Dates

JANUARY 2023							MAY 2023							SEPTEMBER 2023						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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FEBRUARY 2023							JUNE 2023							OCTOBER 2023						
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APRIL 2023							AUGUST 2023							DECEMBER 2023						
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30														31						

Publication dates are highlighted in black boxes; deadline dates are circled. The deadline for submissions is noon on the dates circled above. Submissions may be mailed to PROSVETA, 247 West Allegheny Road, Imperial, PA 15126; faxed to (724) 695-1555; e-mailed to prosveta@snpj.com; or submitted via the Publications section of the SNPJ website, snpj.org.

Miss SNPJ Pageant field grows to five with the addition of three new contestants

PAGEANT CONTESTANTS

FROM PAGE 1

activities over the years, including dressing as a duck for the Lodge 138 Fourth of July parade float and Annual Duck Race, and dressing as the Easter Bunny for the Youth Circle 19 Easter party.

She has spent a lot of time participating in and assisting with Circle 19 activities. She has made costumes and props for the Circle Christmas shows, participated in bowling, worked at a snow cone booth during the Duck Race, set up for Circle parties, and helps

serve during the Lodge's 200 Club. You can also find Anna working in the Lodge 138 kitchen.

Our fourth contestant is Morgan Sinan, a member of SNPJ Lodge 782 in Glenshaw, Pa. She is the daughter of Kathleen and Maurice Sinan (782), and the granddaughter of Angela "Fran" (87) and the late Maurice Sinan Sr., and Richard and Valerie (782) Kelly. She is the great-granddaughter of late former SNPJ National Board member Frank D. Gradisek (87).

Morgan currently resides in

Erie, Pa., where she is earning her Bachelor of Science degree in cybersecurity with a minor in innovation and creativity at Gannon University. At Gannon, Morgan is a member of the women's soccer team; the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC); the Cyber Defense Club, where she holds the position of vice president; and works with the University Advancement Office. She also serves as the social media and fundraising coordinator for the Gannon University women's soccer team.

Morgan competes at the semi-professional level with the Erie Commodores UWS women's soccer team. As the starting goalkeeper, Morgan helped the Commodores place third in the Eastern Conference during the team's inaugural season. Through the Commodores, she has had many opportunities to volunteer, including coaching a weekly clinic for children from the community.

Morgan graduated from Seneca Valley High School in Harmony, Pa., with high honors and recognitions from the National Honor Society and Science National Honor Society. While at Seneca Valley, she was a member of the Key Club, Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD), Spark, and the Society of Women for Excellence in Engineering and Technology (SWEET).

She was also a longtime member of the Seneca Valley Band program, participating in the wind ensemble, jazz ensembles, and percussion ensemble. Morgan also had the opportunity to participate in the Seneca Valley Architecture, Construction and Engineering externship. She was among the few students selected to help with the new elementary school development process.

Throughout high school, Morgan has earned soccer, basketball, and track and field accolades on the local and national stage. Personal honors include the Big 56 First Team, All-Section, All-WPIAL,

Tri-Athlete Award, and Tri-State Orthopedics Player of the Month recognition (in November 2018 and October 2019). As team captain and starting goalkeeper for Seneca Valley, Morgan helped lead the Raiders to multiple winning seasons, a WPIAL championship, section championships, and the PIAA (Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association) quarter-finals.

A lifetime SNPJ member, Morgan has been an active member of SNPJ and the overall Slovenian community. She attended her first Slovenefest, in 2002, in a stroller. Growing up, she participated in Youth Circle 36 bowling at SNPJ Lodge 6 in Sygan, numerous other Lodge and Circle activities, as well as the annual SNPJ Youth Roundup, Young Adult Conference and Family Weeks. During the 2022 Young Adult Conference, Morgan was elected alternate delegate to the 2022 SNPJ Quadrennial Convention.

She has regularly attended Slovenefest; National SNPJ Days; Heritage Center events; SNPJ Trailer Court picnics; Westmoreland Federation of SNPJ picnics in Evanstown, Pa.; and Slovene Days at Kenywood Park in Pittsburgh. She has volunteered for many activities, including Slovenefest, National SNPJ Days, Heritage Center dances, SNPJ Christmas parties, Young Adult Conferences, and the first annual SNPJ Region 1 Members, Family and Friends Appreciation Dance. Morgan even had the opportunity to share her drumming skills with the SNPJ community on stage with the Eddie Rodick Orchestra during Fraternal Weekend in 2013.

Growing up in a family of proud Slovenians, Morgan absorbed years of stories and knowledge about her family's Slovenian heritage. In 2018 and 2023 she had the opportunity to travel to Slovenia with her family to see Kamnik, the town the Gradiseks are from, and trace more of her Slovenian heritage with her family.

The fifth pageant entrant, Michelle Jessica "Mije" Von Merta-Sustarich, is a third-generation Slovenian-American who is currently serving her fourth consecutive term as secretary of SNPJ Lodge 304 in San Francisco. She is the daughter of Mark Sustarich and Linda Lou Von Merta, and the granddaughter of Virginia and Rudolph Sustarich, and Robert and Barbara Von Merta.

Mije recently graduated from the University of California Berkeley with a bachelor's degree in molecular and cellular biology-biochemistry. She is proud to announce that through the American Slovenian Education Foundation (ASEF), she has accepted a summer-long fellowship through which she will be participating in cancer research at the National Institute of Biology in Ljubljana, Slovenia – only returning to the U.S. this summer to compete in the Miss SNPJ Pageant.

In addition to serving as the secretary of SNPJ Lodge 304, Mije has volunteered for the Lodge 304 annual Pust (blood sausage) dinner since she was a child, and this year she helped organize the first Pust dinner held since the Covid lockdown, which attracted a turnout of more than 150 attendees. She also helped arrange a "Slovenian" NBA basketball night for Lodge 304, contributed articles to PROSVETA, served as a delegate to the SNPJ Young Adult Conference, and participated in Slovenefest as a contestant in the 2019 and 2022 Miss SNPJ Pageants. She was recognized as runner-up to Miss Activity in the 2019 Miss SNPJ Pageant.

Mije is also a member of the Slovenian Progressive Home of San Francisco. Through Club Slovenia, she is currently enrolled in Slovenian language courses, and has a long history of attending Slovenian Mother's Day celebrations, teas, Christmas parties, Slovenian Statehood Day celebrations, and other Slovenian get-togethers.

Aside from her educational and cultural pursuits, Mije is

literally a fighter and personal trainer. She has been competing in the martial arts of Muay Thai for more than 12 years with World Team USA, holds accreditation from the Thailand Ministry of Education for her accomplishments in the sport of Muay Thai, and currently holds the title of "Kru."

She is also a multi-certified personal trainer through the National Academy of Sports Medicine, holding the following certifications: Nutrition Coach, Weight Loss Specialist, Corrective Exercise Specialist, Performance Enhancement Specialist, and Physique and Bodybuilding Coach. Her specialties include training clients with goals of learning Muay Thai, weight loss, general fitness, injury prevention/recovery, and disability management.

Mije's passion for fitness has led to various jobs working as a fitness model for brands such as the National Academy of Sports Medicine, FitBit and Gatorade. Throughout her eight-plus years of modeling, her work has expanded to include acting and allowed her to become an internationally published, national award-winning cover girl for publications that include *Isabella Magazine*, *Malvie*, *Edith Magazine*, *Like a Lion Magazine*, *Intra Mag*, *Elan Vital Magazine*, *Ethereal Magazine*, and several others.

We welcome Anna, Morgan and Michelle, and wish them the best in the 2023 Miss SNPJ Pageant.

The pageant program will begin at noon in The Alpine Room on Saturday, July 8; everyone is invited to attend. The crowning of Miss SNPJ 2024 and her court will take place in The Alpine Room starting at noon on Sunday, July 9, during which a special ceremony will be held to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the Miss SNPJ Pageant. You won't want to miss seeing many former Miss SNPJs as they are recognized.

I look forward to seeing everyone at Slovenefest 2023!

SNPJ Recreation Center 2023 Fraternal Events Schedule

June 9-11	SNPJ Heritage Center Weekend
June 16-18	SNPJ Young Adult Conference
July 7-9	SLOVENEFEEST 2023
July 30-Aug. 5	SNPJ Family Week
Sept. 1-3	National SNPJ Days

For event information, contact the SNPJ Recreation Center by phoning 1-877-767-5732 or e-mailing snpj@snpjrec.com.

Pretty In Pink

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY
FEDERATION OF SNPJ LODGES
PRESENTS...**

**SUNDAY JUNE 25, 2023
2 PM to 6 PM**

**YUKON SLOVENIAN HALL
YUKON, PA**

**Benefit Dance
Music by "Polka Classics"**

Food, Beverages, Chinese Auction, and Door Prizes!

Contact Lois Denning at (412) 554-7404 for more information.
All proceeds benefit local cancer patients.

SNPJ Scholarship Award Program

A potential benefit of \$3,200 for Society members

ELIGIBILITY:
To be eligible for an SNPJ Scholarship, the student must meet the following requirements:

- Be an SNPJ member for at least two years
- Have a \$5,000 minimum permanent life insurance policy in place (\$2,000 if purchased prior to January 1996)
- Enroll as a full-time (at least 12 credit hours) or part-time (at least 6 credit hours) student at an accredited college, university or trade school

TYPES OF SCHOLARSHIPS: All requirements **MUST** be satisfied in order to qualify for the following scholarships:

REGULAR:

- Member for at least 2 years
- \$5,000 permanent insurance (\$2,000 if purchased prior to 1996)
- 1040 Tax Form (*income level not to exceed \$20,000 per dependent/per family*)
- Maintain 2.5 GPA (out of 4.0) or above
- Annual SNPJ-Approved Activity

ACTIVITY (JOSEPH C. UMECK):

- Member for at least 2 years
- \$5,000 permanent insurance (\$2,000 if purchased prior to 1996)
- Extensive SNPJ Activity*
- Maintain 2.5 GPA (out of 4.0) or above
- Age 30 or under

ACADEMIC:

- Member for at least 2 years
- \$5,000 permanent insurance (\$2,000 if purchased prior to 1996)
- Maintain 3.2 GPA (out of 4.0) or above
- Age 30 or under
- Annual SNPJ-Approved Activity

Full-Time Student

- Attend school as a full-time student
- Minimum of 12 credit hours/semester

Part-Time Student

- Attend school as a part-time student
- Must declare a major (six to 11 credit hours/semester)

SNPJ Approved Activity: Participation at social and athletic events, attend the SNPJ Young Adult Conference, attendance or service at meetings and conferences, attend or volunteer at special Lodge events, write an article to be published in *PROSVETA*, participate in an SNPJ athletic tournament (bowling, golf, balina, bean bag toss, etc.), help organize a youth activity at your Lodge, hold an office in your Lodge, work as a counselor for Youth Roundup (must be interviewed and selected by Fraternal Department), volunteer to work during Slovenefest at the SNPJ Recreation Center, participate in an SNPJ-organized activity, perform community service on behalf of SNPJ (must be approved by Fraternal Department), recommend a new member to SNPJ.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

1. Carefully review all SNPJ scholarship requirements.
2. Select the scholarship type for which you qualify.
3. Complete the scholarship application and deliver to your Lodge secretary for signatures.
4. Return the signed application, along with the following items, to the SNPJ Home Office by the August 1st deadline:

- Copy of your last grade report or transcript (Transcripts do not have to be originals, but must show student name, semester, GPA, and number of credit hours completed).
- Short essay about fraternalism, the principles of SNPJ, and how they work in our Society and its Lodges.
- Brief history of your life, high school accomplishments, past awards and achievements, and college plans.
- Copies of your parents' and your 1040 tax forms for the previous year (if applying for the SNPJ Regular Scholarship).
- Copy of the Lodge secretary's letter (if applying for the SNPJ Activity Scholarship).

Please make sure all of the applicable items listed above are included when mailing your application. Failure to provide all required information at one time may result in denial of your application.

- **PAYMENT SCHEDULE:**
- **Full-time Students:** Payments of \$400 each installment are made twice a year (first installment: February/March; second installment: August/September) totaling \$800 per year. Applicants will receive payments for not more than eight (8) installments which may include graduate school.
- **Part-Time Students:** Payments of \$200 each installment are made twice a year totaling \$400 per year. Part-time applicants who have declared a major shall receive payments equivalent to the TOTAL amount the full-time student receives for a maximum of 16 semesters.
- Selection of students to receive the scholarship awards will be based on evidence of the applicant's school record, personality, character, SNPJ Approved Activity, the applicant's need for financial aid or academic achievement, and on the recommendation of the local Lodge of which he/she is a member.

Applications, renewal forms and the SNPJ Scholarship Program brochure are available online at <https://snpj.org/membership/scholarships/>

Applications for SNPJ Scholarship Awards should be sent to the National President

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS AUGUST 1 of each year. RENEWAL DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 1 and AUGUST 1. Mail to:

Joseph C. Evanish, National President/CEO
SLOVENE NATIONAL BENEFIT SOCIETY Scholarship Committee
247 West Allegheny Rd. • Imperial, PA • 15126-9774.

After a busy spring, Samsula Lodge 603 taking a break through the summer

by JEANNETTE HUMPHREY
Lodge 603

SAMSULA, Fla. — SNPJ Lodge 603 members gathered on April 3, and again on May 3, for covered dish meals followed by business sessions.

Lodge Vice President Jerry Hafner presided over the April 3 meeting. Following Lodge reports, a moment of silence was observed in memory of Howard L. McCallister.

Youth Circle 57 Assistant Director Cindy Griswold gave a report, announcing that Bike Week in Samsula, hosted at our Lodge hall, benefited the Circle treasury, and that the St. Patrick's Day dinner dance brought in additional funds for the Youth Circle.

A letter from National Secretary Karen Pintar indicates that Lodge 603 had attained the gold level in the SNPJ Lodge Bonus Program, netting \$300 for our treasury. We always appreciate this award, all donations, and the volunteers who serve our Lodge.

We welcomed Hannah Jones as a new Lodge member. She donated \$50 to our Lodge in memory of her husband, Bob Jones. Congratulations to Hannah on joining our fraternal Society!

Lodge members voted to donate \$100 to the Miss SNPJ Pageant Booster Fund. A thank you note from Linda Serro of Estero, Fla., who served as Miss SNPJ 1967, was read during our May 3 meeting.

The Daytona Beach Polish Club continues to meet twice a month on Sundays, serving a meal and hosting a polka dance at our Lodge hall. Anyone who would like to attend the dance is welcome to join in from 2 to 4:30 p.m. for a donation of \$15 per person.

Youth Circle 57 members and their directors, Ashley Merson and Cindy Griswold, enjoyed an Easter party, at which they made crafts and decorated cookies. Each Circle member received an Easter basket filled with treats and small gifts. The Circle donated \$200 to the Lodge 603 Scholarship Fund.

During the May 3 business session, President Connie Massey announced that Janny Barnes and Ronald Likar are 50-year SNPJ members. In July, Alan Ledger and Stuart Sixma will receive their 50-year certificates. Anna Williams was recognized as a 70-year member in May, and Mildred Meckas will be receiving her 70-year award in July.

The members of the Lodge 603 Scholarship Committee, Connie Massey, Ruth Benedict and Jeannette Humphrey, reported that Kaley Slucher will be receiving a \$500 scholarship for continuing education. In my opinion, Kaley submitted one of the best applications to receive the scholarship. She wrote about her years as a member of Youth Circle 57, the benefits that SNPJ has to offer its members, and a history of our Society.

Circle 57 members will be hosting a Father's Day breakfast from 9 a.m. until noon on Sunday, June 18. Please



During their annual Easter party, SNPJ Youth Circle 57 members decorated cookies, made Easter crafts and received Easter baskets from the Circle directors.

Sept. 11 starting at 6:30 p.m.

The new roof has been installed on the Lodge hall, and it looks great. It's comforting to know that there are no more roof leaks on the building. Painting and repairs are required inside the building to repair the Hurricane damage. If you would like to assist, contact

Hall Manager Cindy Griswold at (386) 689-9454.

During the May meeting, thanks were extended to Ruth Benedict for donating the pizza that was served along with the covered dishes brought by members.

Until next time, see you at the Lodge hall!

SNPJ Region 1 Members, Family and Friends Appreciation Dance draws a crowd to Yukon Hall



SNPJ members and friends packed the Yukon Slovenian Hall on April 23 as they enjoyed the first annual SNPJ Region 1 Members, Family and Friends Appreciation Dance which offered free admission to all attendees.



by MAURY SINAN (782)
SNPJ Region 1 Vice President

YUKON, Pa. — *Hvala vam!* Thank you to everyone who supported the first annual SNPJ Region 1 Members, Family and Friends free dance. It was a wonderful time, and we couldn't be happier with the fantastic turnout. We really packed the Yukon Slovenian Hall!

Special thanks to the Yukon Slovenian Hall for use of their wonderful hall; to Linda Pocratski, and Joann and Larry Krance; to Sharon Ujcich and the American Slovene Hour, Prime Time Polkas with Jerry Zagar, and Steve Novosel and the Polka Palace radio show; to SNPJ Marketing Manager Gina Wise; and to the Polka Classics and Dink Makowski.

Many thanks as well to Grandma Fran Gradisek Sinan for making 23 poticas (all sold!); to my wife, Kathleen Sinan, for making some awesome *kremšnita* (four, with 36 pieces each); to Aunt Florence Gradisek and Aunt Gina Gradisek; to Pam and John Ianito; and to Morgan Sinan and Josh Gannoe – along with many others!

The only negative was there were no leftovers; all of the food went: 50 pounds of pork, 10 pounds of Slovenian sausage, 15 pounds of Slovenian potato salad, four trays of huluski, two trays of mashed

potatoes, 10 dozen rolls from The Donut Chef, 23 poticas, 36 pieces of *kremšnita* (Lake Bled cake), eight dozen chocolate chip cookies, and two trays of apple crisp.

Proceeds from the event were distributed to the seven Lodges and the Westmoreland Federation who put together baskets for the basket drawings; each will be receiving \$60 from the proceeds: Irwin/Pleasant Valley Lodge 41, Herminie Lodge 87, Greensburg Lodge 223, Pittsburgh Lodge 665, Yukon Lodge 729, and Glenshaw Lodge 782.

A \$250 donation will benefit the Westmoreland Federation Pretty In Pink fundraiser, and a \$100 donation will be made to Yukon Silverstars Lodge 729.

Another great event is planned at the Yukon Slovenian Hall on June 25 when the Westmoreland County Federation of SNPJ Lodges hosts the annual Pretty In Pink fundraiser to benefit the American Cancer Society. Entertainment features the Polka Classics. For event details, contact Lois Denning at (412) 554-7404.

Don't forget to review the "Up-and-Coming Events" calendar on page 2 of each *PROSVETA* issue for a great SNPJ fraternal gathering near you.

Fraternal thanks – we look forward to seeing you at an SNPJ event soon!

ANNOUNCE IT

The Eagle Scout rank for Lodge 218 member

DENVER — On June 22, 2022, SNPJ Lodge 218 member Edward "Beau" Tomsic earned his Eagle Scout rank. He is a member of Troop 88 in Parker, Colo.

Beau is the son of Ann and Don (218) Tomsic of Parker, grandson of the late Edward and Elizabeth Tomsic (218) of Denver, and great-grandson of the late Edward and Mary Tomsic of Walsenburg, Colo.

Only five percent of youth entering Boy Scouts achieve the rank of Eagle. What makes his accomplishment even more special is that Beau, whose motto is "Adapt and Overcome," is a person with autism.

For his Eagle project, Beau worked with Parker Parks and Recreation to install six mile marker posts along their new East/West Trail.



Denver Lodge 218 member **EDWARD "Beau" TOMSIC** earned his Eagle Scout rank in June 2022.

Submitted by BONNIE LEHNERZ, Lodge 218 President

Tee it up with the Polka Hall of Fame in August

by JOE VALENCIC (5)
Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame

CLEVELAND — Get back in the swing at the third annual Polka Golf Outing, a fundraiser for the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame, on Saturday, Aug. 19, at St. Denis Golf Course in Chardon, Ohio. This outing is a four-person scramble with live polka music.

Enjoy 18 holes of golf

with a cart, beverage tickets, snacks and soda, plus a barbecue chicken breast and pulled pork dinner. If your team outscored the rest, you'll earn a prize! Everyone will have a chance to go home a winner with drawings and goody bags.

Sponsor a hole or the beverage golf cart and earn a sign or banner for name recognition. Donate a prize

basket or a stand-alone drawing item to show your support for the Polka Hall of Fame. Make a monetary donation and your name can be added to a basket or drawing prize. Sponsors and donors receive mentions at the course, on Polka Hall of Fame Radio and in publications.

St. Denis Golf Course will test your skills. The course is located at 10660 Chardon


Road (Route 6), west of Chardon, between All Souls and Auburn Road.

Check-in and lunch are at 11:30 a.m., followed by a shotgun start at 1 p.m. Entries are limited, so register today. The cost is \$115 per person; \$460 per foursome.

Golfers and sponsors can contact Joe Wojtila at (440) 487-0118 or Dave Skrajner at (216) 401-8817.

PROSVETA Crossword MOTHER'S DAY (#0523) solution

R	A	M	P			S	A	T			C	P	A		
P	R	E	Y		N	A	S	H		A	F	O	U	L	
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cook eat slovenia

This keepsake Slovenian cookbook, published in English, is available for purchase through the SNPJ Slovenian Heritage Center

\$37⁰⁰ each
includes postage

Return completed order form with full payment to:
SNPJ Heritage Center • 270 Martin Rd. • Enon Valley, PA 16120

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____ Number of copies _____

Make check or money order payable to **SNPJ Heritage Center**

2023 Miss SNPJ Pageant Official Entry Form

Entrants must be between the ages of 18-28 by July 7, 2023, and an SNPJ member in good standing for at least three months.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE () _____

E-MAIL _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

SNPJ LODGE NUMBER _____

PARENTS' NAMES

GRANDPARENTS' NAMES

I will compete in the Miss SNPJ talent competition
☐ YES ☐ NO

Type of talent _____

(NOTE: Talent is not necessarily proficiency on a musical instrument or singing ability. Creativity is encouraged. Everybody has a talent.)

ENTRIES ACCEPTED BY E-MAIL ONLY
E-mail the completed entry form, along with a clear, color photo, to the Miss SNPJ Pageant Commission
missSNPJlegacy@gmail.com

In your e-mail, please describe any school honors you have received, and any organizations, clubs and activities you are/were involved with. Be sure to include specific SNPJ Lodge, Youth Circle or Federation activities.

Pageant Entry Deadline: June 7, 2023

For more information contact Pageant Director Courtney Koenig by phoning 724-825-8180