

# SNPJ Heritage Center readies for June Heritage Weekend, sets presentation schedule for Slovenefest

by KATHY PAULENICH (776)  
SNPJ Heritage Center Director

**BOROUGH OF SNPJ, Pa.** — Where, oh where, is summer? Here in the Pennsylvania/Ohio area, we're experiencing chilly, rainy weather this week. The furnaces are running to provide some heat in the early morning hours, but the picnics and festivals are keeping us happy with food, drink and polka music.

SNPJ Slovenian Heritage Center Weekend is scheduled June 6-8 at the Recreation Center.

We'll kick off the weekend on Friday night in the Gostilna with music by Patty Candela and The Guys from 8 to 11 p.m.

Saturday will be a busy day, offering a range of activities to choose from. A balina tournament is scheduled in the Balinarena starting at 9 a.m. Denny Brand is organizing the tournament and would like you to e-mail [dhbrand3517@gmail.com](mailto:dhbrand3517@gmail.com) with your four-man team.

In the afternoon, Maury Sinan and his wife Kathleen will demonstrate how to make the

famous *kremšnita* (Bled cream cake) in the dorm at the Trailer Court. Participation in this activity is limited to 12 people, so be sure to e-mail [maury@zoominternet.net](mailto:maury@zoominternet.net) if you are interested.

Finally, Heritage Center Committee member Sarah Loudon will host a paint-and-sip activity in the Wine Room starting at 6 p.m. Participants will be painting a suncatcher with your choice of design: a dragon, a carnation, or Lake Bled.

SEE HERITAGE WEEKEND  
ON PAGE 5

# Two contestants open the entries for the 2025 Miss SNPJ Pageant

by COURTNEY PABIAN  
Fraternal Director

**IMPERIAL, Pa.** — We are thrilled to introduce the first two entrants in this year's highly anticipated 67th Miss SNPJ Pageant! With the 42nd Slovenefest just around the corner, excitement is building, and we proudly welcome Alexis Trout (6) and Juli Kurta (715) to this cherished tradition.

Alexis "Lexy" Trout is a member of SNPJ Lodge 6 in Sygan, Pa. She is the daughter of Christine Wasky Trout, and the granddaughter of Robert and Margaret Wasky and the late Ira and Marilyn Trout.

Actively engaged with Christ United Methodist Church in Youngwood, Pa., Lexy enthusiastically participates in various youth groups, notably G-Force, where she contributes to impactful mission trips, aiding in home

reconstruction and community cleanup efforts.

With an impressive 11-year tenure as a competitive cheerleader, Alexis extends her passion for sports by volunteering as a student athletic trainer and team manager for her younger brothers' football and wrestling teams. Her dedication to wrestling since 2008 underscores her ongoing commitment to the sport.

Demonstrating a commendable work ethic, Alexis has been a valued member of the team at Moe's Southwest Grill since 2015 and is affectionately known within the community. As if that isn't already a huge commitment, she also works as a server and bartender at Paradise Island Bowl. Beyond her professional pursuits, Alexis finds solace in fishing and cherishes quality time with friends and family.

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ON PAGE 5



ALEXIS TROUT  
Lodge 6, Sygan, Pa.



JULI KURTA  
Lodge 715, Universal, Pa.

# Calif. SNPJ Day Revival celebrates the culture and music of Slovenia



The check-in volunteers for the California SNPJ Day Revival: (from left) DIANA ROTE, MARIE BAJC, ALYSSA KOCI and TERESA KOCI.

by TERESA KOCI  
Lodge 786 Secretary/Treasurer

**ORANGE COUNTY, Calif.** — On Saturday, April 12, at the Phoenix Club in Brea, Calif., Orange Coast Lodge 786 and Fontana Lodge 723 hosted the much-anticipated California SNPJ Day Revival, a heartwarming celebration of Slovenian music and fraternalism.

People from all over the state, including those who traveled from the Livermore (Marie, Sandi and Vivienne Bugar), Sacramento (Joe Mlakar) and San Francisco areas (Jože Antolin, Mary Lou Videgar, Lisa and Keith Lucas) made their

way to this vibrant gathering, along with those who traveled from as far as Chicago (James and Alyssa Koci) and Las Vegas, Nev., (Gary and Staci Ambrozich).

All four California SNPJ Lodges were represented at this incredible event, including San Francisco Lodge 304, which was represented by runner-up to Miss SNPJ 2025 Michelle Von Merta-Sustarich. The day was an unforgettable revival that rekindled old friendships and created many new ones.

SEE CALIFORNIA SNPJ DAY  
ON PAGE 7

# Pretty in Pink fundraiser heads toward its 14<sup>th</sup> year of support

by LOIS DENNING (41)  
Westmoreland Federation Treasurer

**YUKON, Pa.** — In 2025, the Pretty in Pink fundraiser hosted by the Westmoreland County Federation of SNPJ Lodges is celebrating 14 years of hope, compassion and unwavering support for local cancer patients.

Thanks to our incredible community of donors and volunteers, we have made a real difference in the lives of those fighting cancer. Our goal is to assist those going through treatment to remain in their homes by supporting them with needed essentials such as gas, groceries and assistance with utility payments, to name just a few.

We want to thank everyone who has attended this event in the past, and we encourage you to support this cause again. Just imagine what a grand display of support we would show to local cancer patients if everyone would bring one new person to Pretty in Pink this year! Many thanks to the local businesses that have supported this cause and continue to do so.

Mark your calendars for Pretty in Pink 2025 on Sunday, July 27, at the beautiful Yukon Slovenian Hall in Yukon, Pa. The time for this

SEE PRETTY IN PINK  
ON PAGE 7

Go GREEN...  
and help SNPJ save \$\$

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## briefly

### Lodge 225 schedules annual picnic for June 8

**GIRARD, Kan.** — SNPJ Lodge 225 members will hold their annual picnic on Sunday, June 8, starting at 12:30 p.m. at the Arma American Legion. All Lodge members and their guests are invited to attend.

LINDA SCALES  
Lodge 225 Secretary/Treasurer

### 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.

### Policy owners, register to access the SNPJ Portal

**IMPERIAL, Pa.** — The Home Office staff encourages all SNPJ members and agents to register for access to the online SNPJ Portal. The portal can be used by policy owners to review information about their SNPJ life insurance policies and annuities. Agents can use the portal to check on their existing business, pending policies and updates.

To register for the portal, you must access the SNPJ website, [snpj.org](http://snpj.org), and click on any of the "SNPJ Portal" links. You must be a policy owner or an agent to register for the portal. Once enrolled for the SNPJ Portal, members can access policy information that Home Office staff cannot provide over the phone.

We hope you enjoy your SNPJ Portal experience!

## THE DEADLINE

The next two PROSVETA issue dates are July 1 and Aug. 1. All material must be received by noon on Monday, June 16, for the July 1 issue, and by Monday, July 21, for the Aug. 1 issue. If you're concerned about making the deadline, send an e-mail to [prosveta@snpj.com](mailto:prosveta@snpj.com) or submit your material via the publications area of our website, [snpj.org](http://snpj.org).



### Beckham Progar

Born March 3, 2022

### Rozalia Granata

Born April 14, 2023

Strabane, Pa., Lodge 138

Lodge 138 welcomes cousins Beckham Progar and Rozalia Granata as the newest additions to the Lodge. Beckham is the son of Jaymes and Emma Progar (138). Rozalia is the daughter of Anna and Eric Granata (138). Beckham and Rozalia, both fifth-generation SNPJ members, are the grandchildren of James and Monica Progar (138), and the great-great-grandchildren of the late Jože Progar, a charter member of Strabane Lodge 138. We welcome Beckham and Rozalia to the Society and extend our best wishes to their entire family.



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**EDITOR:**  
**Jay Sedmak**

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**SNPJ Recreation Center**  
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**Enon Valley, PA 16120**  
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# With both Slovenefest and Family Fun Day on the schedule, July promises a busy month for the Miss SNPJ Commission

by KARA MARUSZAK (142)  
Miss SNPJ Commission

**CLEVELAND** — Summer is here, polka music is in the air, and the Miss SNPJ Commission has a full calendar of events!

In May, the commission hosted a table at the fifth annual SNPJ Farm Music Festival. The Music Festival is always a fun event to kick off summer and catch up with friends not seen since the prior year.

The Miss SNPJ Commission promoted its upcoming events, including the Miss SNPJ Pageant and Family Fun Day Picnic, and sold drawing tickets for a “money pot.” The basket was put together by Miss SNPJ 1995 Jennifer Skrajner Nekic and featured more than \$200 in gift cards and lottery tickets arranged in a beautiful hanging flower basket. The lucky winner was Jake Godec (158); all proceeds from the drawing benefited the Miss SNPJ Pageant Booster Fund.

Up next on our calendar is the 67th Miss SNPJ Pageant, which will be held during Slovenefest at the SNPJ Recreation

Center the weekend of July 11-13. The pageant competition will be held Saturday, July 12, and the 2026 titleholders will be announced Sunday, July 13. Both events will take place starting at noon in The Alpine Room, and we invite everyone to attend to support our young ladies and this wonderful tradition.

Finally, the Miss SNPJ Commission is hosting its third annual Family Fun Day picnic on Sunday, July 27, at the SNPJ Farm in Kirtland, Ohio. This year’s theme is “Under the Sea,” and we have a full day of fun planned for the whole family. It will be quite the “shell-ebration!”

The gates at the SNPJ Farm open at noon and music by the Don Wojtila Band starts at 1 p.m. Kids’ activities will also begin at 1 and continue throughout the afternoon with free crafts, an interactive bubble station, and a giant bubble show with Chelsie the Bubble Lady. Food will be available for purchase. Admission is \$5 for adults; children 16 and under admitted free of charge. We hope to see you there!



With assistance from Miss SNPJ Commission member **KARA MARUSZAK**, seven-year-old **EVELYN AURICH** (158) drew the winning ticket for the “money pot” basket during the SNPJ Farm Music Festival in May.

# Miss SNPJ 2025 shares memories as her reign nears its end

by ERIN LAWRENCE (138)  
Miss SNPJ 2025

**STRABANE, Pa.** — Welcometo part two of my year as Miss SNPJ 2025. I would like to take this opportunity to continue to unfold my adventures... before my reign comes to an end in the next month!

For me, 2025 began in the warmer part of the country, Samsula, Fla., as I attended the annual Florida SNPJ Days in February. I would like to thank Jeannette Humphrey for inviting me to celebrate with SNPJ Lodge 603.

Florida Days were such a wonderful experience – meeting new people, enjoying delicious meals, and dancing to polkas all day long. I also had the pleasure of selling door prize tickets with one of my new friends, Victoria Stein. The weather was just as beautiful as the people who were in attendance, and I appreciated the warm welcome I received from everyone.

Before I knew it, I was braving the cold again on March 1 at the 13th annual Kurentovanje Festival in Cleveland, where I walked along the parade route with SNPJ Lodge 142 members.

I want to extend a big thank you to Kara Maruszak for inviting me to this huge event that was overwhelmingly joyous to attend, despite the weather. I was delighted to see that the crowd was filled with attendees of all ages who are keeping this Slovenian tradition alive.

Last but not least, I was invited

to join SNPJ Region 3 members in Detroit for their Feather Bowling Tournament. I had never seen this sport before, but it was incredibly fun. Feather bowling, somewhat like balina, is played by rolling wooden disks (similar in shape to cheese wheels) toward a feather that sticks up at the end of the concave-shaped lane.

We all enjoyed a lovely dinner together after the games. Thank you, Tracey Anderson and the Lodge members, for inviting me. I enjoyed a fun-filled evening!

I could not be prouder to be part of an organization like SNPJ. This past year has given me some of my most cherished memories. It’s almost impossible for me to believe the 42nd Slovenefest is only a short month away, when I will be passing the Miss SNPJ legacy on to the next beautiful young lady.

If you or someone you know is eligible to compete in the Miss SNPJ pageant this year, I encourage you to send in your application by June 6! The pageant is an amazing weekend of camaraderie. The contestants form a tight bond and help prepare each other for the weekend events. Please, do not hesitate to reach out to SNPJ Fraternal Director Courtney Koenig with any questions you may have.

I hope to see all of you at Slovenefest the weekend of July 11-13, and I extend one last thank you for providing me with some of the most astonishing times of my life!



In February, Miss SNPJ 2025 **ERIN LAWRENCE** paid a visit to SNPJ Lodge 603 in warm and sunny Samsula, Fla., for Florida SNPJ Days, where she received a welcome gift from **JEANNETTE HUMPHREY** (603).



On March 1, just a week after her Florida trip, Erin had the opportunity to greet the kurent at the annual Kurentovanje Festival in Cleveland.

# Members can help SNPJ save by reading PROSVETA online

**IMPERIAL, Pa.** — In an effort to curb continually escalating postage rates, *PROSVETA* is asking all SNPJ members to evaluate the need of receiving the newspaper in its printed format. We’re also asking all members to provide us with an active e-mail address, and to consider receiving an e-mail link to the online *PROSVETA* issues.

There are numerous benefits to receiving *PROSVETA* online. First of all, the issues are posted to the SNPJ website, [snpj.org](http://snpj.org), a week or so prior to the publication date – no more waiting around for your mail carrier to deliver the current issue.

Secondly, archived issues are also available on the website. Click on the *PROSVETA* archive link and

you’ll have years worth of *PROSVETA* issues at your fingertips.

Third, and most importantly, by selecting to receive a *PROSVETA* e-mail reminder, you will help SNPJ save thousands of dollars in postage and printing expenses each year.

So what’s your first step to helping *PROSVETA* whittle away at mounting expenses? Send us your

e-mail address. Simply send an e-mail to [snpj@snpj.com](mailto:snpj@snpj.com) and include your name and the e-mail address at which you would like to receive the online issue reminder.

Still not sure? Do yourself a favor: Pay a visit to <https://snpj.org/membership/prosveta-publication/> and see for yourself the conveniences offered by the online *PROSVETA* issues.

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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# Up-and-Coming...

## A look at events planned by the Slovene National Benefit Society

- JUNE 6-8 .... 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](mailto:snpj@snpjrec.com).
- JUNE 13-15 .... SNPJ Young Adult Conference at the SNPJ Recreation Center, Borough of SNPJ, Pa. For registration and event details contact Fraternal Director Courtney Koenig at 1-800-843-7675 ext. 144, or e-mail [ckoenig@snpj.com](mailto:ckoenig@snpj.com).
- JUNE 29 ..... Loyalties Lodge 158 annual picnic at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio. Music by the Don Wojtila Band.
- JULY 4 ..... Annual Fourth of July dance at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio.
- JULY 5 ..... SNPJ Lodge 643 picnic at Tod Park, Girard, Ohio, in the large pavilion. Admission is free for Lodge 643 members, \$5 for non-members. Includes food and soft drinks. Music by Anthony Culkar and Wayne Golob from noon-3 p.m. For details contact Ray Kovac at (330) 824-2154 or e-mail [raykov29@aol.com](mailto:raykov29@aol.com).
- JULY 11-13 ..... The 42nd Slovenefest and the 67th Miss SNPJ Pageant at the SNPJ Recreation Center. For more information phone the Recreation Center toll-free at 1-877-767-5732.
- JULY 20 ..... SNPJ Farm/Cleveland Federation annual picnic at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio. Celebrating 50 years of the Jeff Pecon Band. Music by the Polka Classics featuring Brian O’Boyle.
- JULY 27 ..... Miss SNPJ Commission Family Fun Day picnic at the SNPJ Farm, Kirtland, Ohio. Music by the Don Wojtila Band.
- JULY 27 ..... 14th annual 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 Polka Classics. Door prizes, 50/50 drawing, and basket drawings. Food and refreshments available for purchase. For details contact Lois Denning at (412) 554-7404.
- JULY 27-AUG. 2 .... 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](mailto:snpj@snpjrec.com).
- OCT. 26 ..... Westmoreland County Federation of SNPJ Lodges Fall Dance at the Yukon Slovenian Hall, Yukon, Pa.; 2-6 p.m. Music by the Heritage Band; food and refreshments available. For more information contact Lois Denning at (412) 554-7404.



We've Got You COVERED



by DAVID GOMBKOTO  
SNPJ Sales Director

## Planning Ahead: The smart choice for young people

When most people think of life insurance, they picture a policy designed for older adults to provide for their family in case of unexpected loss. What often gets overlooked is the power and long-term benefit of purchasing life insurance early – especially in childhood or young adulthood – while individuals are healthy and insurable.

At SNPJ, we've seen firsthand the peace of mind and practical advantages that early life insurance brings to families. It's not just about planning for the worst. It's about building a financial foundation for the future and locking in affordability that lasts a lifetime.

### Affordable Protection When It's Needed Most

One of the strongest reasons to consider life insurance at a young age is cost. Premiums for young, healthy individuals – especially children – are significantly lower than for adults. A child's life insurance policy can often be purchased at a fraction of the cost, and that rate can be locked in for life.

This affordability makes it easier to build a long-term safety net. It also gives parents and guardians the opportunity to invest in their child's future financial security, ensuring they remain protected even as they grow, start a family of their own, or face unexpected health challenges later in life.

### Lifelong Membership and Community Support

When you buy a life insurance policy for your child through SNPJ, you're not just purchasing financial protection. You're also giving them access to lifelong membership in a fraternal benefit society rooted in heritage, values and community support.

Membership with SNPJ means more than just benefits on paper – it means connection, support and opportunity. From social and cultural events to educational aid and leadership development, SNPJ members are part of a close-knit community that cares.

### Overcoming the Misconception

We understand that some parents hesitate at the thought of insuring a child. It can feel uncomfortable – even morbid – to consider. But the truth is, children's life insurance isn't about expecting the worst; it's about planning for the future.

Beyond the emotional considerations, there are very practical ones: Insuring a child early guarantees they'll have coverage even if they develop a medical condition later in life that might otherwise disqualify them. It ensures their insurability when it may matter most. It's one of the rare opportunities where you can genuinely say, "I gave them a head start."

### Scholarships: Investing in Their Education

In addition to the protection life insurance provides, SNPJ also proudly offers scholarship programs to eligible members. Members who are full-time attendees of accredited colleges, universities or trade schools can apply for scholarships totaling up to \$4,000. Part-time students can earn up to \$2,000.

This is one of the ways SNPJ gives back to its members – not just in times of need, but in times of opportunity. Our scholarships help reduce the financial burden of higher education and allow young people to pursue their dreams with confidence.

For families, this means that a life insurance policy through SNPJ can be part of a larger plan to support their children – through education, financial planning and community involvement.

### Security, Stability and a Future of Possibilities

Purchasing life insurance for a young person is a proactive, loving decision. It's a way of saying, "I believe in your future." It's a gesture of care and protection that can have ripple effects for decades to come.

We believe in building that future together. Whether it's through our life insurance options, annuities, or our wide range of member benefits and programs, we are committed to supporting our members through every stage of life.

If you're a parent, grandparent or guardian considering life insurance for a child or young adult in your life, we encourage you to reach out. Let's talk about how SNPJ can help you protect what matters most – now and in the years to come.

For more information about life insurance policies or scholarships through SNPJ, visit our website or call the Home Office at 1-800-843-7675. Let's plan for tomorrow, today!

SNPJ does not provide tax, legal or accounting advice. Consult with a tax, legal or accounting professional regarding your specific situation.



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## Public agency to monitor the quality of patient care

**LJUBLJANA (STA)** — In late March, Deputy Prime Minister Matej Arčon announced that the Slovenian government had established the Public Agency for Quality in Healthcare, as intended in the Law On Quality In Healthcare. As Arčon explained, this agency will be an independent body that will systematically monitor the quality and safety of patient care.

"The agency is an important step toward improving the quality and safety of healthcare services in Slovenia; it will ensure systematic monitoring, control and improvement of healthcare quality," a government press release reads.

The agency will produce an annual report on healthcare quality, and keep records on the oversight carried out and the measures ordered. Apart from cooperating with international institutions in terms of healthcare quality, the agency will also conduct annual national surveys on patient experience and inform the public of the results of its work.

The agency will be run by a director, and its council will include seven members appointed by the government as proposed by the health minister, the Medical Chamber, the Nurses' Chamber, the health insurance fund, and agencies dealing with the protection of patients' rights. The director and council members will be appointed to five-year terms.

According to Deputy Prime Minister Arčon, the Public Agency for Quality in Healthcare is expected to have a staff of 16, mostly Health Ministry employees, but some new hiring is also planned. The agency will become operational once all appointed positions are filled.

## Slovenia arranging a 2026 Olympic house

**LJUBLJANA (STA)** — Slovenia will arrange a national house for the 2026 Winter Olympic Games in neighboring Italy, located in the center of Cortina d'Ampezzo, one of the host cities. The Milano Cortina Games are scheduled Feb. 6-22.

"Slovenia House will be located in the popular Janbo pub in the vicinity of the official fan zone and the national houses of other countries," the Slovenian Olympic Committee (OKS) announced after committee president Franjo Bobinac signed the contract in Cortina d'Ampezzo in late April.

The venue will be able to hold up to 250 visitors at one time and will be open to everyone, which the OKS says will make it "ideal for socializing, cheering for, and celebrating the achievements of Slovenia's athletes."

Similar to the 2024 Summer Olympic Games in Paris, Slovenia House in Cortina d'Ampezzo will also showcase Slovenia's culture, tourism and economy. "Slovenia House will be an excellent platform to bring together athletes, fans, and Slovenian and international partners, and to create new opportunities for cooperation and the promotion of Slovenian brands," Bobinac was quoted as saying.

"The Olympic Games are unlikely to be so close to Slovenia again anytime soon, so we expect a lot of Slovenian fans – and we want to impress foreign visitors with our energy and athletic accomplishments, our stories, and the beauty of Slovenia," he added.

Cortina d'Ampezzo is one of the host cities, along with Milan; the Olympic flame will burn in both cities. Competitions will be held in other venues across the Dolomites in Italy: in Livigno, Bormio, Predazzo, Tesero and Anterselva.

Due to the relatively long travel times between the Olympic venues, Slovenia will arrange reception points in Bormio and Predazzo to celebrate any medal victories. "Once the competitions are over, the plan is for medal winners to [visit] the Slovenia House in Cortina," Bobinac said.

## A new state-of-the-art greenhouse in Slovenia

**BELTINCI (STA)** — The Panvita agricultural-food group has launched production in Slovenia's most technologically-advanced greenhouse. Located in Nemšček, the new greenhouse is expected to grow some four million heads of lettuce per year.

The EUR 9 million (\$10.23 million) greenhouse uses a sophisticated cultivation system and movable growing areas. The microclimatic conditions inside the



greenhouse can be regulated for optimal growth and year-round vegetable production.

The greenhouse spans 21,000 square meters (5.2 acres) and offers nearly two hectares (approx. five acres) of growing areas. Maximum capacity is 360,000 plants and 260,000 seedlings.

In a press release, Panvita director Branko Virag was quoted as saying, "Starting production in the new greenhouse is an important milestone for Panvita, and it fulfills a commitment to invest in sustainable and innovative agriculture. The project does not only make locally grown, fresh and safe food more accessible, it also decreases import dependency and strengthens food security and self-sufficiency."

Panvita is one of the most important agricultural-food groups in Slovenia, employing 700 people and cultivating more than 3,500 hectares (approx. 8,650 acres) of land.

## Study of Lake Cerknica translated to Slovenian

**CERKNICA (STA)** — "The Wonderful Lake, or the Description of Lake Cerknica in Carniola" by Franc Anton von Steinberg, originally published in French in 1761, has been translated into Slovenian and published by the Cerknica Library and publisher Maks Viktor. According to the publisher, the book is one of the most significant scientific studies of 18th-century Slovenia.

The work is a summary of a more comprehensive book Steinberg wrote the same year in German on the intermittent Lake Cerknica, marking the first monograph about the lake. That piece, titled "A Comprehensive Report on Lake Cerknica in the Notranjska Region," was translated into Slovenian in 2015, the first major translation project launched by the library and publisher.

"Steinberg's monograph was so significant at the time that its summary was published in Brussels, in French, the same year it came out in Carniola," Maks Viktor director Tomaž Čeč told the press.

For centuries, Lake Cerknica was the best known natural phenomena in the Carniola region. It has been depicted on maps since the 16th century and was also mentioned by writers [...] in antiquity.

"The pair of Steinberg works were the most detailed and systematic display of the history, territory and way of life around Lake Cerknica after Johann Weikhard von Valvasor published 'The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola' in 1689," Čeč said.

He added that Steinberg's works still hold up to most standards of both literature and scientific research. Steinberg studied Lake Cerknica and its properties for 15 years, conducting many experiments, and understood its intermittency practically as it is still understood today.

Franc Anton von Steinberg (1684-1765) was an intellectual, cartographer and painter who spent his childhood in Cerknica. He worked various jobs for the Habsburg Empire, which included supervising roads and managing the Idrija mercury mine.

"The Wonderful Lake...", translated by Špela Žakelj, is the sixth translation of important historical works about Slovenia published by the Cerknica Library and Maks Viktor in the last 10 years. "The translations are largely funded by the library and the Cerknica municipality, while Maks Viktor mainly contributes knowledge in the creation of such complex books," library director Marija Hribar explained. The publishers are now planning to translate a 1551 work by George Wernher on the bodies of water in the region which will include the oldest map of Lake Cerknica.

In 2022, Cerknica paid tribute to von Steinberg's pioneering research by erecting a bust of the intellectual. Hribar said that by translating both of his books on Lake Cerknica (the originals of which are kept at the library) and unveiling the bust, they had finally paid the cultural debt to Steinberg.

## Piran square a Treasure of European Film Culture

**PIRAN (STA)** — A small but iconic square in the heart of Piran has become Slovenia's first location to be included among the Treasures of European Film

Culture, a list of symbolic places of European cinema compiled by the European Film Academy (EFA) to highlight the need to maintain and protect them.

1 May Square in Piran is best known to Slovenians for having been featured in the 1962 film "Our Car" by František Čap and in the iconic 1986 coming-of-age film "Summer in a Seashell" by Tugo Štiglic.

According to the Piran municipality, being added to the list reinforces Piran's status as "a modern... and attractive film destination of excellence. We are happy that [1 May Square] has now been recognized by the European Film Academy."

Most recently, Piran has been featured in a Netflix production starring Halle Berry and Mark Wahlberg; however, the former fishing town-come-top tourist destination has a rich filmmaking history. The Slovenian Film Centre (SFC) noted in a press release that there is hardly a street in the town that hasn't been captured on film. "In total, more than 50 films have been shot in and around Piran," the SFC wrote.

The film industry flourished in Piran after the Second World War, when a film studio was established in a former soap factory in the borough of Fornače, now best known for the town's main multi-story parking garage.

Film greats such as Orson Welles, Marcello Mastroianni, James Mason, Maximilian Schell, Sam Peckinpah, Klaus Kinski, Yves Montand, Alida Valli, Gillo Pontecorvo, George Hamilton and Peter Lawford all shot scenes in the Fornače studios.

In addition to 1 May Square, the EFA included 10 other locations on the Treasures of European Film Culture list this year, including the Liege-Guillemins train station in Belgium, the Salzburg summer riding school in Austria, and the historic Berghotel Schatzalp hotel in Davos, Switzerland.

## A Slovenian selected in first round of WNBA draft

**NEW YORK (STA)** — Ajša Sivka, a 19-year-old Slovenian, was selected by the Chicago Sky as the 10th overall pick in the first round of the 2025 WNBA draft. While she is the second Slovenian to be drafted by a WNBA team to date, she will be the first to actually play in the WNBA.

Sivka most recently played in the French league. The 6'3" forward also represented Slovenia in several international events. She helped Slovenia take a surprising gold medal in the 2023 FIBA U18 Women's European Championship and was named tournament MVP. She also played for the women's national team, the youngest participant in the 2023 EuroBasket.

"Forwards who can stretch the floor will always hold high value in this game, and that's exactly what Ajša Sivka provides," Sky General Manager Jeff Pagliocca said. "We're excited to land someone who is not only skilled, but has been playing at a high level professionally for years," he added.

After being drafted by Chicago, Sivka thanked her father. "[It was] because of him that I started playing. He has always been my idol," she told the crowd, which included her teary-eyed father.

Sivka is only the second Slovenian to be drafted by a WNBA team. Nika Barič was selected in the second round of the 2012 draft by the Minnesota Lynx, but never played for the team.

## Ljubljana tops European spring break destinations

**LJUBLJANA (STA)** — Slovenia's capital tops this year's list of Best European Spring Break Destinations compiled by the European Best Destinations website, which describes Ljubljana as a dream for travelers from all over the world.

The website notes the city's baroque districts and art nouveau buildings, labeling it one of the most romantic destinations in Europe. Ljubljana is as "beautiful and rich as Vienna, colorful and warm like a city in the Mediterranean." It is "traditional, historical, modern and creative," according to the site.

European Best Destinations named Ljubljana Europe's Best City Break Destination in 2023 and 2024, selected it as Europe's Best European Destination in 2022, as the European Best Green Capital in 2021, and as one of the safest European Christmas Destinations in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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



# SNPJ FRATERNAL HONOREES

Members celebrating 50, 60, 70 and 80 years with the Slovene National Benefit Society

by JOSEPH C. EVANISH  
SNPJ National President/CEO

Of the 2,000 life insurance companies and fraternal benefit societies operating in the United States, fewer than 100 have been in existence as long as the SNPJ. As a not-for-profit fraternal benefit society, we have successfully provided life insurance to our members since 1904, along with a full package of social, athletic and cultural programs, scholarships, community service projects, and much more. SNPJ also offers annuities that can be used for IRAs and Roth IRAs. Our more than 115 years of longevity and success have been made possible by the loyalty and dedication of our members. The SNPJ's engine may have been built and its direction set by its founders and subsequent leaders, but its path has been traveled, cleared and paved by our dedicated members. As a way to show respect and appreciation to our longtime and loyal members, we recognize membership milestones with

a custom gift. The years of membership are counted in terms of adult membership years, not including youth enrollment years. These milestones of recognition include 50, 60, 70 and 80 years of adult membership. We ask our Fraternal Honorees, once they have received their awards from the Society, to submit a short report on their past and present lifestyle, including their Lodge affiliation, hobbies and any other information that might be of interest to our readers. In acknowledging these dedicated members, it is our privilege to show respect for these honorees by offering our thanks and appreciation for the loyalty they have shown the SNPJ for so many years. In this small way, through our official SNPJ publication, we can etch their names even deeper into the archives of the Slovene National Benefit Society. On behalf of the entire membership, we extend our congratulations to those members reaching these anniversary milestones.

• Sis. **DOLORES B. LARSEN**, a member of Lodge 584 in Milwaukee, celebrated her SNPJ 60-year membership anniversary in October 2024. In a note of appreciation, she writes:

"My mother and father, both Slovenians, lived and worked in Milwaukee. As a family, my brother, Frank, and my parents, Frank and Sophie Bevsek, participated in the special Slovenian culture in our area.

"My father, a member of the Accordion/Polka Hall of Fame, was very active with weddings, festivals, and other musical and cultural events. One of the special events in my life was taking a trip to Slovenia with my parents to their homeland. A fantastic experience!

"At age 90, my mother was named Slovenian Woman of the Year to represent Milwaukee at a convention in Cleveland.

"I worked as a business manager at a school district for 27 years. My husband, Allan, was a teacher and coach. We have three children, a son, Alex, and twin daughters, Nicole and Alana. I currently live in Wisconsin Rapids. We love to travel, visiting Europe many times, Aruba every year, South America and Alaska.

"Thank you, SNPJ, for keeping our culture!"

**Sis. DOLORES B. LARSEN**  
Milwaukee Lodge 584  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI

• Gallup, N.M., Lodge 120 member Sis. **SHIRLEY ANN BAKER** celebrated her 70-year SNPJ member-

ship anniversary in March. She writes:

"I would like to say thank you to the SNPJ for the acknowledgement of my 70-year anniversary and the beautiful commemorative blanket. I'm proud to say that I've been involved in such a great organization for this many years.

"I'm a lifelong resident of Gallup, N.M., married and raised my family here. I retired from the Gallup McKinley County School system after more than 30 years.

"My dad immigrated from Kranj, Slovenia, and my mother immigrated from Škofja Loka, Slovenia. They ended up in this part of the country for the coal mines at the time. My immediate family consisted of my mom, dad and three brothers who all remained in Gallup as well and raised their families here.

"I am the last surviving member of my immediate family; however, I have three grown children, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, all of whom are members of the SNPJ.

"My mother was the charter secretary of our SNPJ Lodge 120 here, and when she passed I took it over and have been secretary of our Lodge since 1974. My children were all involved in the young adult movement, and my daughter Joanna went on to be elected as the chairwoman of the Audit Committee on the SNPJ National Board, currently serving.

"We are all very proud of our Slovenian heritage and very proud to be lifelong members of the SNPJ."

**Sis. SHIRLEY ANN BAKER**  
Gallup, N.M., Lodge 120  
Gallup, NM



Sis. DOLORES B. LARSEN (584)



Sis. SHIRLEY ANN BAKER (120)

## Official Proceedings

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting  
Dec. 10, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by President Evanish with Secretary Pintar and Treasurer Lawrence in attendance.

Approved the minutes of the Oct. 9, 2024, meeting.

Discussed meetings with potential new actuarial firms as our current Society actuary will be retiring.

Discussed marketing campaigns.

President Evanish reported he will attend the LIC CEO Forum and Annual Meeting in February in Florida.

Discussed meetings with iCover regarding our new illustration system.

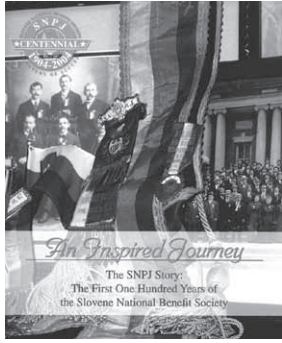
Reported that David Gombkoto was hired as sales director in November to replace Gina Wise, who retired from SNPJ on Nov. 15.

Reported that President Evanish signed a solar lease for the SNPJ Recreation Center with Solar Stone.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

**JOSEPH C. EVANISH**  
National President/CEO

**KAREN A. PINTAR**  
National Secretary/COO



## A CENTURY in the making

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.

**\$17.50 EACH** (INCLUDES POSTAGE)

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## Keep your e-mail address with the SNPJ Home Office up to date

**IMPERIAL, Pa.** — Does the SNPJ have your current e-mail address?

The SNPJ Home Office periodically sends out e-mails to advertise the many benefits we offer our members. You

can also receive information about our fraternal programs, events at the SNPJ Recreation Center, athletic tournaments, and product and annuity updates through this e-mail communication.

In order to receive this information, we need your current e-mail address.

If we don't have your e-mail address, we ask that you send an e-mail to the Home Office addressed to [snpj@snpj.com](mailto:snpj@snpj.com).

We will then be able to update your contact information.

We try to keep in touch with all of our members as often as possible, and e-mail is a very cost-efficient and timely way to deliver information.

## PROSVETA Crossword

At The Theater (#0625) by StatePoint Media

### ACROSS

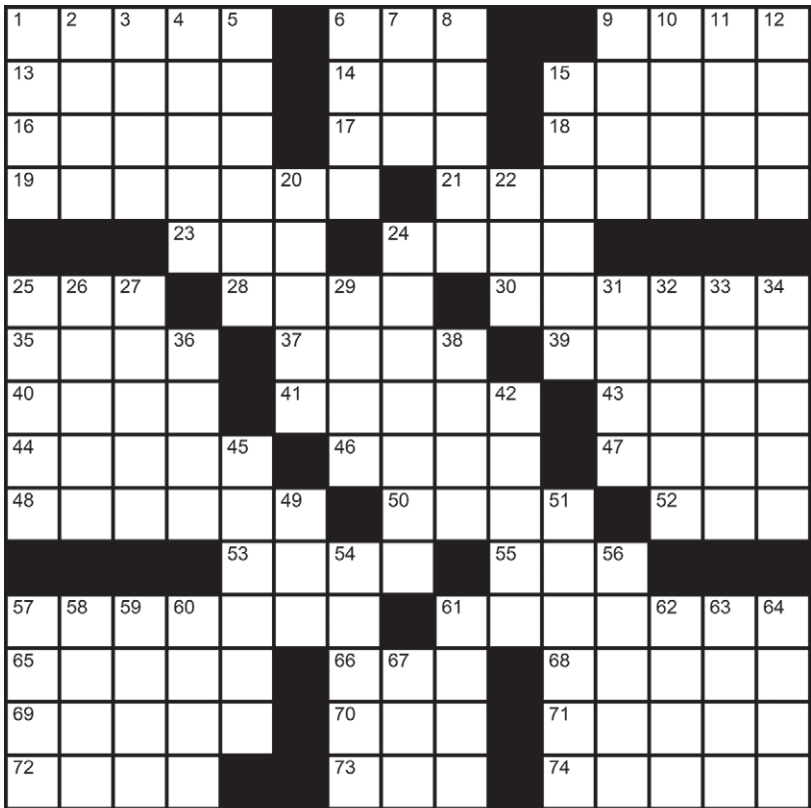
- Bottomless pit
- Paper or plastic one
- Mercantile establishment
- \*Ticket agent's cubicle
- Kimono sash
- Cautious gambler
- Tidal bore
- \_\_\_\_-been
- Get together
- \*Movie preview
- \*Daytime attraction
- Rubber substitute
- 1960s \_\_\_\_ boots
- Good times
- No problem
- \*Box \_\_\_\_
- Deli side
- Jerk, in Yiddish
- Cell dweller
- \*Common theater admonition
- Blows a horn
- Be inclined
- Community spirit
- Stuff for sale, sing.
- Not manual
- \*Traveling entertainer's helper
- Cutting tools
- "Rout what you \_\_\_\_"
- Sail holder
- Ostrich-like bird

### DOWN

- Drive a getaway car, e.g.
- Wild swine
- Vinaya workout
- Landing road
- Put on hold
- Physicist Niels
- Lawyers' grp.
- Contraption
- Adjective for #9 Across
- Blood-related
- Network of nerves
- Standing pose in #3 Down
- Postpone (2 words)
- E-wallet content

### 22. Don McLean:

- "A long, long time \_\_\_\_..."
- Simone Biles, e.g.
  - \*Theater guide
  - Mickey Mouse's pet
  - Alexander, for short
  - \*Opera or movie
  - Sheep's milk cheese
  - Intestinal obstruction
  - What contortion and contour have in common
  - Furnish with a fund
  - Who would
  - Creole cuisine staple
  - Waste conduit
  - Bribery, to a church official
  - ENT's first concern?
  - Afflicts with a blow
  - Symbol of slowness
  - Relating to uvea
  - Gallup's inquiry
  - Burden
  - Type of cotton
  - Native Egyptian, in Roman times
  - Expunge
  - \*At concession stand: "Anything \_\_\_\_?"
  - Not hot, at a coffee shop
  - Nonverbal OKs
  - Layer
- The solution to puzzle #0625 will run in the July 1 issue.**



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ANNOUNCE IT



Lodge 782 Siblings Receive Degrees

SNPJ congratulates **ADAM WADDING** (782), who received his Bachelor of Business Administration degree on Dec. 14, 2024, and his sister, **AMY WADDING** (782), who received her Master of Business Administration in December 2022; both having graduated from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas.

Adam and Amy's parents, Donald and Ramona Wadding, and their grandparents, Richard and Rose (782) Wadding, are proud of their hard work and their success in receiving their degrees.

PAGEANT ENTRANTS  
FROM PAGE 1

With a rich family tradition of SNPJ membership, Alexis has been actively involved in Lodge 6 since childhood, participating in bowling tournaments and recreational activities, and volunteering at numerous events. Lexy also competes in the dart leagues at Sygan Lodge 6 and is always ready to challenge anybody up at the board.

Alexis currently serves as a board member for the Sygan American Slovene Club (SASC), contributing to bingo events and nurturing a sense of community within the Lodge. For Alexis, SNPJ represents more than just a social venue – it's family to her, and she eagerly anticipates the Society's continued growth.

Our second entrant, Juli Kurta, is a member of SNPJ Lodge 715 in Universal, Pa.

She is the daughter of Roberta and the late John Kurta, and the granddaughter of Robert and Mildred Samsa.

A devoted community volunteer and a lifelong resident of the Pittsburgh area, Juli continues to make a meaningful impact through her commitment to youth programs and local service initiatives. She now brings that same passion and spirit to the stage as a contestant in this year's Miss SNPJ Pageant.

Juli was raised in Monroeville, Pa., and is a proud graduate of Gateway High School. Her high school years were filled with a strong blend of academics, music and leadership. She participated in both soccer and softball during her youth, and was an active member of the school's marching band for four years. She was a member of the color guard for one year before spending the

next three years as a member of the drum line.

She was also involved in student council throughout high school and served as president of her junior class.

Juli's commitment to her heritage and community is evident through her involvement with Universal Comets Lodge 715, where she is a lifelong member and currently serves as a Lodge auditor. In addition, she has represented her peers as a delegate to the SNPJ Young Adult Conference for the past two years, contributing her time and energy at the SNPJ Recreation Center during the Young Adult Conference and at the annual Slovenefest celebration.

Beyond her cultural engagement, Juli volunteers regularly at the Turtle Creek Food Bank, assisting with packing and distributing food boxes to those in need. She is also a social

member of the Turtle Creek Fire Department, where she helps coordinate events and support fundraising efforts.

Whether through cultural involvement, volunteering or leadership, Juli exemplifies the spirit of service and the importance of staying connected to one's community roots.

We proudly welcome Alexis and Juli as the first contestants in the 2025 Miss SNPJ Pageant, and we wish them the very best of luck.

The Miss SNPJ Pageant competition is scheduled to begin at noon on Saturday, July 12, in The Alpine Room. The weekend's highlight, the crowning of Miss SNPJ 2026 and her court, will follow at noon on Sunday, July 13, also in The Alpine Room. Everyone is warmly invited to attend and support this celebration of our Slovenian heritage and traditions. We'll see you there!

The 2025 Miss SNPJ Pageant opens with two entries

A full slate of events for Heritage Weekend, Slovenefest

HERITAGE WEEKEND  
FROM PAGE 1

The cost for the paint-and-sip is \$20, which includes the wine, snacks and suncatcher. Participation is limited to 30 people, so be sure to sign up Friday night. A sign up sheet will be posted on the board outside the Gostilna.

Saturday activities will conclude with bingo in the Gostilna starting at 8 p.m.

The Heritage Center annual picnic and dance will be held Sunday, June 8, in the Heritage Pavilion from 1 to 6 p.m. featuring the Frank Stanger Orchestra; the Western Pa. Button Box Club will perform during band breaks. We we be requesting donations at the door to help defray expenses.

Guest speaker Joe Valencic will present some of the events planned in the Cleveland area. Joe will have information to share at a table in the back of the pavilion, where Heritage Center Committee members will arrange a table of gift shop items available for purchase. We hope to have some of our new T-shirt designs on display.

Another June event to mark on your calendar is the Simply Slavic festival at the amphitheater in downtown Youngstown, Ohio, on June 13-14. Festival hours are Friday evening from 5 p.m. to midnight, and Saturday from noon until midnight. Many Slavic nationalities will be represented and displayed in the ethnic tent and at the marketplace; some may also be included in the entertainment.

SNPJ Heritage Center Committee members will have our traveling museum set up in the ethnic tent and items from our gift shop on sale in the marketplace.

Let's not forget Slovenefest weekend, July 11-13! The Heritage Center gift shop will be open on Friday from 5 to 8 p.m., on Saturday from noon until 6 p.m., and on Sunday from noon until 5 p.m. Items from the gift shop will be available on the patio at our Marketplace table on Saturday from noon until 6 p.m. and on Sunday from noon until 3 p.m.

We also invite you to attend the "Closer Look at Slovenia" presentations on the Heritage

Center patio on both Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m.

On Saturday, July 12, Sarah Loudon will present a make it/take it craft for children and adults, Joe Valencic will explain what a *kurent* is, and Lucija Lindav Heindel from the Cleveland Slovenian Consulate will discuss Slovenian travel and language.

On Sunday, July 13, Sarah Loudon will return to present the same craft (in case you missed it on Saturday), Betty Hartman will present a puppet show, and Kathy Paulenich will display the features of a button box. In addition, Selena Progar will host a baking demonstration in The Alpine Room starting at 2 p.m.

Before closing, I am pleased to announce that the SNPJ Heritage Center will be utilizing QR codes to view the displays in the museum. Committee members Tracey Belle and Sue Mals have been working very hard the past few months to design QR codes that display text or play audio.

We now have better Wi-Fi in the Heritage Center museum and gift shop which will allow you to use your smart phone to access the QR codes. The updated Wi-Fi also allows the use of Square for credit card purchases. Stop by the museum and gift shop during Slovenefest to experience these exciting improvements, of which we are very proud.



The choice of a dragon, carnation or Lake Bled suncatcher design is offered to participants in the Heritage Center Weekend paint-and-sip activity.

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 <b>MUST</b> be satisfied in order to qualify for the following scholarships:		
<b>REGULAR:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Member for at least 2 years</li><li>• \$5,000 permanent insurance (\$2,000 if purchased prior to 1996)</li><li>• 1040 Tax Form (<i>income level not to exceed \$20,000 per dependent/per family</i>)</li><li>• Maintain 2.5 GPA (out of 4.0) or above</li><li>• Annual SNPJ-Approved Activity</li></ul>	<b>ACTIVITY (JOSEPH C. UMECK):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Member for at least 2 years</li><li>• \$5,000 permanent insurance (\$2,000 if purchased prior to 1996)</li><li>• Extensive SNPJ Activity*</li><li>• Maintain 2.5 GPA (out of 4.0) or above</li><li>• Age 30 or under</li></ul>	<b>ACADEMIC:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Member for at least 2 years</li><li>• \$5,000 permanent insurance (\$2,000 if purchased prior to 1996)</li><li>• Maintain 3.2 GPA (out of 4.0) or above</li><li>• Age 30 or under</li><li>• Annual SNPJ-Approved Activity</li></ul>
<b>Full-Time Student</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attend school as a full-time student</li><li>• Minimum of 12 credit hours/semester</li></ul>	<b>Part-Time Student</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attend school as a part-time student</li><li>• Must declare a major (six to 11 credit hours/semester)</li></ul>	
<b>SNPJ Approved Activity:</b> 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 <i>PROSVETA</i> , 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, 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**



Sis. PEGGY ANN O'BRYAN • LODGE 138 •

**STRABANE, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 138 sadly report the Oct. 14, 2024, passing of Sis. Peggy Ann O'Bryan, 69, of Washington, Pa., in Townview Health and Rehabilitation Center, Canonsburg, Pa. She was a 52-year SNPJ member.

Sis. O'Bryan was born June 14, 1955, in Washington, a daughter of the late Robert E. and Alice G. (Barrows) Grimm. Peggy was a graduate of Washington High School and retired from Arc Human Services in Canonsburg, where she was employed as a caretaker.

Peggy loved her cats, Bear and Lucy. She enjoyed playing casino games and slots, playing Farmville on Facebook, and watching "Cooking with Brenda Gantt" on Facebook.

Surviving are five children: Bridget (Bill) Jackson, Alexis (Chris) Sanner, April (Rodney) Wayt, Rickie Kosek Jr. and Robert Kosek; five grandchildren; two sisters, Mary Alice (the late John) Woods and Donna Lee (Ron) Korba; an uncle and aunt, George and Peggy Barrows; longtime friend and father of her children Rick Kosek; and several nieces and nephews.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 138 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we extend our condolences to Sis. O'Bryan's family, relatives and friends on their loss.

Bro. TERRANCE KUHARCHEK • LODGE 749 •

**JOHNSTOWN, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 749 sadly report the Nov. 16, 2024, passing of Bro. Terrance M. "Terry" Kuharchek, 74 of Davidsville, Pa., at Cone-maugh Memorial Hospital, Johnstown.

Bro. Kuharchek was born Dec. 17, 1949, in Johnstown, a son of the late Peter and Hilda J. (Zambotti) Kuharchek.

He was a 1967 graduate of Conemaugh Township High School and Wake Forest University, where he played on the football team from 1967-1970. He was a proud member of the Wake Forest team that won the 1970 ACC Football Championship. He was an avid golfer and former member of the Windber Country Club.

A 56-year SNPJ member, Terry was also an auxiliary member of VFW Post 4200 in

Johnstown. He loved spending time with friends and family, especially at his family's former bar, Pete's Place.

He is survived by a son, Peter R. Kuharchek; a sister, Sonja Jenney; nephews Sean Jenney and Paul (Abby) Jenney; a great-nephew and great-niece, James and Sophia Jenney; his special friend, Nancy Hemric; and many other friends.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a brother, Peter C. Kuharchek; and a brother-in-law, Paul Jenney.

Services for Bro. Kuharchek were held Nov. 22 at George E. Mason Funeral Home, Inc., Davidsville. Committal followed in Grandview Cemetery, Johnstown.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 749 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we offer our condolences to Bro. Kuharchek's family, relatives and friends on their loss.

Sis. MARY PENABAKER • LODGE 564 •

**DETROIT** — The members of Lodge 564 sadly report the Nov. 20, 2024, passing of Sis. Mary Lucille (Dunjak) Penabaker at Serene Gardens, Grand Blanc Twp., Mich.

Sis. Penabaker was born July 6, 1930, in Detroit, a daughter of the late Stella and Steve Dunjak. When she was two, the family moved to the melting pot of Flint, Mich., where she graduated from Central High School in 1948.

Mary loved being a mother, her extended family, and making birthdays and holidays special. She was known for her cookies (Christmas cookies, especially), potato salad, pies and Easter brunch. Her flair for decorating was inspiring.

She was firm in her convictions and wasn't afraid to share them. Twenty-eight of her letters to the editor were published in *The Flint Journal* and she was asked by the Journal to be a guest writer, her column appearing on the front page in July 2005.

She returned to work at GM Service and Parts Operations later in life, and earned her associate degree in applied science-business data processing from Mott Community College.

Mary participated in the CRIM races for many years until her knee gave out. She volunteered at the Flint Institute of Music and the McLaren

Auxiliary, where she made many friends.

A 76-year SNPJ member, she was also a member of St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Church and the Croatian Club.

Mary traveled extensively with her lifelong friend, Marie. One of the highlights of her travels was visiting Croatia, where her mother was born, and meeting several cousins. She also connected with cousins in California who provided more information on the family history that she compiled and shared with her children, sisters and their families.

She is survived by her daughters, Cynthia (Steve) Nelson and Celeste (Terry) Creger; a son, Scott (Sun) Penabaker; and nieces and nephews who were dear to her.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a brother, Steve Dunjak; and sisters Nina Stimac, Ann Luketich and Katie Miller.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated for Sis. Penabaker on Nov. 26 in St. Robert Catholic Church, Flushing, Mich.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 564 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we extend our condolences to Sis. Penabaker's family, relatives and friends on their loss.

Sis. EVA P. CHUPINSKY • LODGE 138 •

**STRABANE, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 138 sadly report the Jan. 27, 2025, passing of Sis. Eva P. Chupinsky, 96, of Washington, Pa., in Hawthorne Woods Assisted Living. She was an 80-year SNPJ Lodge 138 member.

Sis. Chupinsky was born May 14, 1928, in Washington, the eldest child of the late Stephan and Mary (Kopcha) Petronka, immigrants from Europe. Eva graduated from Washington High School in 1945 and was very instrumental in coordinating the class reunions for many years after. Upon graduation, she worked for White Haines Optical company and the Teichman family.

Eva was a devoted wife for 73 years to the love of her life, Dr. John Chupinsky, whom she married July 15, 1951, in St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church, Canonsburg, Pa. She assisted Dr. John side-by-side as office manager at their dental office in the Trust Building until retiring in 1987.

She enjoyed many activities: painting, traveling and playing the balalaika, having had the

opportunity to perform on the Heinz Hall stage in Pittsburgh.

Eva was a lifelong, faithful member of St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church. She served as a committee member, taught Sunday school, served on the Altar Society, coordinated bake sales and church merchandise, and so much more.

More than anything, Eva was loved, and she loved all of her family and friends. She was the thread to all in so many ways. Eva was there for anyone who needed her. She never missed a birthday, anniversary or phone call.

She is survived by her husband, Dr. John Chupinsky; her only sister, Olga Povich of Houston, Pa.; and her younger brother, Nick Petronka, of Washington. Deceased, in addition to her parents, are her brothers, John, Frank, Pete, and baby brother Michael Petronka.

Funeral services for Sis. Chupinsky were held Jan. 31 in St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church. Interment followed in the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies, Cecil Twp., Pa.

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

Bro. HAROLD DALFOL • LODGE 89 •

**MIDWAY, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 89 sadly report the Jan. 31, 2025, passing of Bro. Harold F. Dalfol, 94, of Burgettstown, Pa.

Bro. Dalfol was born May 28, 1930, in Burgettstown, a son of the late Bruno A. and Giovanni "Jennie" (Colpo) Dalfol.

A graduate of the former Union High School in Burgettstown, he and his father co-owned B. Dalfol & Son, Inc., a stone and granite contracting company founded in 1960. In 1985, he and his wife Marie co-founded M.K.D., Inc., which specialized in commercial caulking. Both companies completed many projects in the Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia tri-state area.

A 76-year SNPJ member, he was also a proud member of the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 9 in Pittsburgh for 78 years.

In his free time, Harold enjoyed golfing, his poker club, traveling, and visiting the casinos with his wife.

His loving wife of 72 years, Marie Catherine (Baronick) Dalfol, whom he met in high school and married on Feb. 18, 1950, preceded him in death on June 29, 2022.

Surviving are his three children, Robert A. Dalfol Sr. (Patricia Aliff) of Weirton, W.Va., Sheree (James) Sciarretta of Burgettstown, and Sandra (Ron) Bondo of Cranberry Twp., Pa.; a daughter-in-law, Catherine Dalfol of Burgettstown; nine beloved grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Bro. Dalfol on Feb. 7 in Our Lady of Lourdes Church-St. Isidore the Farmer Parish, Burgettstown. He was laid to rest beside his wife in the church cemetery.

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

Bro. FRANK J. PROGAR • LODGE 106 •

**IMPERIAL, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 106 sadly report the Feb. 8, 2025, passing of Bro. Frank John Progar, 82, of Imperial, North Fayette Twp., at his home surrounded by his loving family.

Bro. Progar was born Sept. 23, 1942, in Imperial, the son of the late Alma (Bruno) Murdaca and Frank H. Progar. Frank graduated from West Allegheny High School and later met the love of his life, Judy. They were married in 1964 and built their life together on the family homestead.

Frank worked for Duquesne Light Company for 36 years as an automotive maintenance foreman, a career that aligned

perfectly with his lifelong passion for cars. From a young age he developed a love for automobiles while working alongside his father.

As a young man, Frank enjoyed drag racing, and later in life he took pride in showing his meticulously maintained car at countless car shows. His enthusiasm for cars wasn't just a hobby, but a central part of his life.

Frank was gifted with a talent for building and fixing anything. Whether it was a car, household project or lending a hand to someone in need, he had a knack for problem-solving and craftsmanship.

A 64-year SNPJ Lodge 106 member, he was also a lifelong parishioner of St. Columbkille Church in Imperial. He will be remembered for his infectious smile, kind heart, and unwavering willingness to help family, friends and neighbors whenever needed. Frank had a deep love for his family and was a dedicated friend to many.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 61 years, Judy (Tytke) Progar; his children, Dana Chavis and Frank C. Progar; his cherished grandchildren, Austin and Brandon Chavis; his niece, Kim Murdaca; an aunt, Marge Progar; and many cousins. Along with his parents, Frank was preceded in death by his stepfather, Dominic Murdaca; and his sister, Donna Murdaca.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Bro. Progar on Feb. 15 at St. Columbkille Church-St. Isidore the Farmer Parish. Burial followed in St. Columbkille Cemetery.

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

In Loving Memory

BABCOCK GRANT

April 10, 1929 – July 10, 2016

LORRAINE

January 26, 1930 – May 27, 2018

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 2025			
LODGE	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	CITY, STATE
A01	Charlene Pancirov Thomas	01-26-2024	Sewickley, Pa.
A02	Lillian Jahn	09-12-2023	Pittsburgh, Pa.
A02	Ralph R. Jahn	01-24-2025	Pittsburgh, Pa.
3	Lois J. DiBuono	02-15-2025	Johnstown, Pa.
3	Agnes Kordon	03-07-2025	Windber, Pa.
6	Walter F. Petkervich	08-14-2024	Vero Beach, Fla.
6	John M. Klemencic	09-03-2024	Virginia Beach, Va.
6	Lillian L. Rotella	03-03-2025	Bridgeville, Pa.
6	Myron A. Yeates	03-05-2025	Carnegie, Pa.
6	Sophie Pielin	03-19-2025	Pittsburgh, Pa.
41	Josephine I. Anweiler	03-15-2025	North Huntingdon, Pa.
87	David J. Ross	04-08-2025	Pittsburgh, Pa.
89	Harold Dalfol	01-31-2025	Burgettstown, Pa.
106	Ezio Vitucci	01-21-2025	Coraopolis, Pa.
106	Larry Joe Young	02-25-2025	Crescent, Pa.
106	Betty R. Balsinger	03-30-2025	Canonsburg, Pa.
117	Wayne T. Kosmerl	11-08-2024	Annapolis, Md.
126	Nancy R. Stislow	03-12-2025	Eastlake, Ohio
138	Carla J. Mankey	09-30-2024	Strabane, Pa.
158	Ralph H. Strnad	10-24-2020	Cleveland, Ohio
174	Carol A. Cekada	12-29-2024	Conemaugh, Pa.
174	Theodore J. Carrico	02-17-2025	Tire Hill, Pa.
223	Joseph Cvitkovic	02-16-2025	Scottdale, Pa.
225	Lewis Lee Burgar	11-10-2024	Arma, Kan.
225	Betty D. Waisner	11-13-2024	Overland Park, Kan.
358	Victor J. Chuck Jr.	11-28-2024	Lisbon, Ohio
562	Tyler A. Owens	06-07-2024	Cincinnati, Ohio
603	William F. Strickengloss	03-01-2025	Sebring, Fla.
629	Linda M. Grieco	03-17-2025	Titusville, Fla.
715	Marian L. Nixon	12-24-2024	Lower Burrell, Pa.
715	Jane Adamczyk	02-24-2025	Latrobe, Pa.
723	Charles A. Papenfus	02-13-2025	Fontana, Calif.
749	Richard Mostoller	03-21-2025	Johnstown, Pa.
749	Sara R. Zwick	03-23-2025	Scranton, Pa.
770	Shirley A. Puch	03-01-2025	Wellsville, Ohio
771	Judith F. Kinkela	03-13-2025	Lowellville, Ohio
776	Bradley M. Williard	03-20-2025	Westlake, Ohio
782	Rose M. Melle	03-11-2025	Mt. Holly Springs, Pa.
782	Nancy J. Hill	03-23-2025	New Wilmington, Pa.
KAREN A. PINTAR National Secretary/COO			

PROSVETA 2025 Publication Dates

JANUARY 2025

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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](mailto:prosveta@snpj.com); or submitted via the Publications section of the SNPJ website, [snpj.org](http://snpj.org).



# SNPJ Lodges 786 and 723 draw a crowd for the Calif. SNPJ Day Revival



(Clockwise, from left) **KRSTE PANDŽA, Alex Tomazin, SHERRI BLACK** and **PAM PANDŽA** enjoying the German cuisine at the Phoenix Club.



Old friends **Irena Petrač** (left) and former Lodge 786 Secretary/Treasurer **JEAN KOCI**.



**Slavko Mežek**, president of Kultura-Natura Slovenija, gave a detailed presentation about the organization.



(From left) Fontana Lodge 723 members **MARY LOU VIDERGAR, MARCIA LEATHERS** and **JOANNA FARRAGE**.



**Mike and MARIE BAJC** (786), as Mike took a break from capturing the event on photos and video.



SNPJ young adult members **ELLEN KOCI** (786), left, and **MICHELLE VON MERTA-SUSTARICH** (304) were among the sold-out crowd at the Phoenix Club enjoying the California SNPJ Day Revival.



The musicians performing for the California SNPJ Day Revival included (from left) **JAMES KOCI** on bass, **LISA VIDERGAR, Jože Antolin, JOE MLAKAR, Slavko Mežek**, and **FRED MLAKAR** on piano accordion.

## CALIFORNIA SNPJ DAY FROM PAGE 1

One of the highlights of the day was the special appearance of Slavko Mežek from Slovenia, who made California a stop on his long U.S. tour. Slavko, president of Kultura-Natura Slovenija, gave a detailed slide presentation about his organization's efforts to preserve Slovenian architecture (specifically, the *kozolec*, the traditional Slovenian hayrack) and many other historical structures.

A special thank you goes to Irena Petrač for hosting Slavko, and to Mike Bajc for utilizing his audio-video technical expertise throughout Slavko's presentation.

After the presentation, the crowd was treated to a powerful, toe-tapping performance from a talented group of musicians who played the classic Slovenian songs that attendees had been longing to hear. The event was graced by seasoned musicians who expertly performed these cherished tunes to a sold-out crowd.

Special thanks go out to the lead accordionists, Fred Mlakar, Frank Rote, Lisa (Vidergar) Lucas and Chris Thomas. They were joined by a stellar supporting lineup that included Joe Mlakar on banjo, Frank Zajc on drums, James Koci and Skip Svoboda on bass, and Jože Antolin on mandolin. Taking turns, they filled the room with vibrant music that had people on their feet dancing.

In a special moment of collaboration, Slavko Mežek, who was also a music teacher, joined Fred Mlakar at the microphone for the final set, during which they sang a few of the old Slovenian favorites.

This event wouldn't have been possible without the tireless efforts of many dedicated individuals and organizations. A big thank you to the officers and members of SNPJ Lodge 723 in Fontana who co-sponsored the event and provided many of the volunteers who helped make it a success.

We'd also like to extend heartfelt thanks to the following volunteers who also made the event a success: Marie Bajc, Diana Rote, Alyssa Koci, Phyllis Wood, Julianne Wood, Sherri Black, Ken Koci, Mary Lou Jensen, Pam Pandža and Cathy Udovch. Your dedication made this celebration possible, and we are incredibly grateful for your contributions.

Throughout the event, the Phoenix Club staff kept everyone well fed and hydrated with their delicious German cuisine, which added to the warm and festive atmosphere. The combination of great food, lively music and a strong sense of fraternalism made for a day that will long be remembered. Who's ready to come and dance again with us next year? We certainly are!

Mark your calendars for Sunday, Aug. 3, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. It's time to gather for our next exciting Lodge 786 event at the beautiful San Joaquin Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary, 15 Riparian View in Irvine, Calif. We are again hosting a barbecue potluck, meeting and nature walk at the rustic Duck Club, and we'd love to see you there!

Meet us in the rustic Duck House, where we're sure to enjoy this event comfortably no matter what the weather brings. Musicians are welcome to bring along their instruments since this house offers plenty of space for dancers.

We will again be serving the delicious main dish of barbecued *čevapčiči*, a Balkan-style sausage. The beverages and paper supplies will also be provided, courtesy of Lodge 786. We're asking attendees to bring a brunch/lunch side dish or appetizer to share. Please RSVP to Teresa by July 29 to help us estimate food and supplies.

Both members and guests are welcome to attend – the more, the merrier! The sanctuary is accessible to everyone, with handicap parking, bathrooms and picnic areas all close by and easily accessible.

After the meeting and potluck picnic, enjoy all that the San Joaquin Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary has to offer. This beautiful spot boasts a large grass area where kids can run and play, the Audubon house and a gift shop for those interested in learning more about local wildlife, and 12 miles of walking trails that wind through the sanctuary, offering views of more than 200 bird species.

To RSVP and for more information, call or text Teresa Koci at (949) 246-1983, or e-mail [teresamkoci@gmail.com](mailto:teresamkoci@gmail.com).

# Lodge 518 members display artistic talents for Cards for Hospitalized Kids

by **BILL KRZISNIK**  
Lodge 518 Secretary/Treasurer

**MELVINDALE, Mich.** — Lodge 518 members created more than 60 cards for the charity Cards for Hospitalized Kids.

Cards for Hospitalized Kids (CFHK) is a national charitable organization founded in 2011 by Jen Rubino, a high school student whose own experiences as a "hospitalized kid," undergoing 20-plus surgeries, inspired her to start CFHK to help others. Jen's experiences in the hospital showed her just how difficult it is to be a child or teen who is hospitalized and/or seriously ill. Hospitalized kids often feel forgotten, sad, lonely and isolated.

The mission of CFHK is to provide hospitalized children with hope and joy through colorful handmade cards with uplifting messages.



Lodge 518 members creating and displaying the cards they designed for Cards for Hospitalized Kids.

# Utah Lodges extend appreciation to the Slovenian National Home caretaker

by **JOANNE LESSAR**  
Lodge 757 Secretary/Treasurer

**PRICE, Utah** — Utah Lodges 113, 689 and 757 would like to recognize and commend Lodge 757 member Jeannette Kokal Marasco for her hard work and dedication in taking care of the Slovenian National Home located in Spring Glen, Utah.

The Martin Millarich fam-

ily deeded the former dance hall and bar to the Slovenian National Home in 1962. Over the years, several members of the Lodges have taken care of the building. Jeannette started taking care of the building in 2019 when the last member operating it passed away. Other Lodge members and friends step in when the building needs repairs.

Jeannette maintains the building and with the help of other members. She cooks delicious meals once a month on Sundays and feeds upward of 100 people. Keep up the good work, Jeannette!

The annual Slovenian Day Picnic, hosted by the three Utah SNPJ Lodges, uses the Slovenian National Home for activities.

# Lodge 581 generates teen participation

by **MARCIA KLANCER BLEGGI**  
Lodge 581 Secretary/Treasurer

**ST. MARYS, Pa.** — The SNPJ Lodge 581 Baking Day held in March was successful, earning almost enough money to cover the two Jerry Troha Scholarships.

Teen members Shawnee and Sundance Troha decided they wanted to help raise the money needed to cover the remainder of the scholarships. They spent a day learning how to bake potica, and their poticas were sold to complete the fundraising.

Both young men also showed up to help with the Jackson Road cleanup hosted by the Lodge. Their encouragement of other teens gave our cleanup crew an advantage by having many young people venture down the hillsides to pick up litter, especially tires.

Our older volunteers helped drive, cook, entertain and pick up things along the sides of the road, part of the plan to have all age groups working together, including Lodge 581 members, Friends of Jackson Road, members of the North Central Pennsylvania Slovene Polka Boosters, and PA Cleanways.

Lodge 581 is planning a music day at a nursing home in St. Marys later in the summer. Shawnee and Sundance are working to encourage students at their school to sign up as musicians.

The Lodge is hoping to have both adults and teens involved to bring an afternoon of music to the residents. To ensure enough musicians, Lodge 581 needs young people. We are counting on their help with the planning.

Through a Zoom class or-



Lodge 581 teen members **SHAWNEE** (left) and **SUNDANCE TROHA** preparing their poticas for baking.



Adults and teens worked together on the SNPJ Lodge 581 cleanup crew to collect waste along Jackson and West Creek Roads in St. Marys.

ganized by Lodge 581, fellow SNPJ members completed 30 Slovenian language classes by the end of April. Several of the participants are planning to visit Slovenia and hope to meet their Slovenian teacher.

The class continues to be a wonderful experience for both the students and their teacher, and sessions will begin again in September.

Lodge 581 and the North Central Pennsylvania Slovene Polka Boosters plan their joint picnic on Sunday, Aug. 17, at the Kersey Firemen's. Plan to attend for polka fun and great food.

For more information about SNPJ Lodge 581 activities, contact Lodge Secretary/Treasurer Marcia Klancer Bleggi at (814) 335-4983.

# Westmoreland Federation Pretty in Pink continues its support for cancer patients

**PRETTY IN PINK**  
FROM PAGE 1

year's event is 2 to 6 p.m. Food and refreshments will be available, along with our delicious homemade baked goods. Thank you to all the bakers who donate their desserts, all made with love.

We will have baskets galore

for our basket drawings. If you would like to donate a basket or gift card for the event, please contact me. All donations are appreciated!

On the bandstand, by popular demand we will have the Polka Classics playing all your favorites. Don't be shy – request a song or two!

The Westmoreland County Federation of SNPJ Lodges is honored to have hosted this event for the past 14 years. Everyone is invited! Join us for Pretty in Pink on July 27, and you will have the opportunity to meet and hear from cancer survivors who we have helped in their journey.



# Support the Rec Center Cabin Renovation Project



by JOSEPH C. EVANISH  
SNPJ National President/CEO

**IMPERIAL, Pa.** — SNPJ members have enjoyed the unique and remarkable place that is the SNPJ Recreation Center. Countless memories that have been made there are treasured by thousands. The Recreation Center is now going on 60 years old and thus, wear and tear has taken its toll.

The large upper cabins, situated opposite the lake, are some of the first structures built on the property. The renovations of cabins #1 and #2 were completed a few years ago. The 12 motel units were also completed. Cabin #15 was renovated during the offseason of 2023-2024, with plans to complete cabins #3-#7 before the 2024 season.

The cabins will be wrapped in a vapor barrier and vinyl sided. New windows and doors will be installed. On the interior, new flooring will be installed throughout. The bathrooms will have larger showers with new toilets and sinks. The kitchen sink area will be re-designed. A power vent will be installed at the roofline to draw out the heat, and wall air conditioners will be installed for those 90-degree, hot summer days.

There are 24 cabins, which leaves

16 more to do. The budgeted cost to complete one cabin exceeds \$30,000; thus, much more in the way of donations is needed. 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: 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 month of April 2025

Maury & Kathleen Sinan (782), Cranberry Twp., Pa. .... \$100  
*In memory of Marty Kumer and Anna Evanish*

Melanie Mikeska (715) and Kimberly Curtis, Gilroy, Calif. .... \$100  
*In memory of Katherine Mikeska*

The Mikeska family, Canton, Ohio..... \$100  
*In memory of Katherine Mikeska*

Stuart Rothman (358), Youngstown, Ohio ... \$100  
*In honor of Nathan & Corey Jania*

Vincent & Bev Baselj and family (6), Bridgeville, Pa..... \$50  
*In memory of Carl “Shorty” Skerl*

Vincent & Bev Baselj and family (6), Bridgeville, Pa..... \$50  
*In memory of Anna Evanish*

Donald & Barbara Miller, East Sparta, Ohio... \$30  
*In memory of Katherine Mikeska*

Kathy (Roginski) Labelle (33), East St. Paul, MB, Canada..... \$25  
*In memory of Anna Evanish*

Ron & Anna Luzar (604), Willoughby Hills, Ohio..... \$25  
*In memory of Linda Hlebak*

James & Monica Progar (138), Washington, Pa. .... \$25  
*In memory of Anna Evanish*

## Research project seeks your letters from Slovenia

submitted by  
JOE VALENCIC (5)  
President, Slovenian Union of America

**CLEVELAND** — Do you have old letters from Slovenia? Please share them. You may not be able to read Slovenian, but scholars in Slovenia can. Your letters are needed to collect the valuable stories about Slovenians in the U.S. and around the world.

Every letter contains history. You may not think your folks did anything special, but through their correspondence we learn of their joys and challenges, and how their families in Slovenia responded.

Saving letters to and from Slovenia is a new project led

by Dr. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik from the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU). Many Americans met her last year when she toured the U.S. with her new book, “Daring Dreams of the Future: Slovenian Mass Migrations.” She wrote the documentary film “100% Slovenian: The Stories of Slovenian Women in America.” She is with the Slovenian Migration Institute of the SAZU Research Center.

Dr. Milharčič Hladnik is a passionate researcher of the personal stories of Slovenian immigrants that letters reveal. She writes about the experiences of our predecessors and what we can learn from them. The Slovenia Letters project



Do you have old letters from Slovenia among your possessions? Dr. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik would like to hear from you.

is endorsed by the Slovenian Union of America.

You can share your letters by making copies or scans. If you don't need to hang onto them, donate your letters to the Slovenian Migration Institute. Dr. Milharčič Hladnik is coming to the U.S. in September 2025 and can meet with you

to learn more about your correspondence.

Are you interested in saving your Slovenian letters? Tell us where your letters come from, who wrote them, and when. Get in touch at [Mirjam.Milharcic-Hladnik@ZRC-SAZU.si](mailto:Mirjam.Milharcic-Hladnik@ZRC-SAZU.si) or contact me at [president@slovenianunion.org](mailto:president@slovenianunion.org).

## CHAMPIONS CROWNED AT THE BOLE BALINA BASH



The champions of the 2025 Bole Balina Bash, played May 10 at the SNPJ Recreation Center: (from left) **JOE FIUMARA** (277), **ANDY KRISPINSKY** (277), **KIM SKOVENSKI** (158) and **BRIAN SPIELER** (782). The team has now won three Bole Balina Bashes.

SNPJ Recreation Center 2025 Fraternal Events Schedule	
June 6-8	SNPJ Heritage Center Weekend
June 13-15	SNPJ Young Adult Conference
July 11-13	SLOVENEFEEST 2025
July 27-Aug. 2	SNPJ Family Week
Aug. 29-31	National SNPJ Days

### 81<sup>st</sup> SNPJ National Golf Tournament

at Rolling Acres Golf Course  
350 Achortown Rd., Beaver Falls, PA 15010  
Phone: (724) 843-6736 • [www.rollingacresgolf.com](http://www.rollingacresgolf.com)

**Saturday, Aug. 30, 2025**  
**Tee times start at 8:45 a.m.**

Individual Event	
Name	Lodge No.
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Team Event	
Name	Lodge No.
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Entry fee for team and individual events is \$65 per member. For individual event only, entry fee is \$60 per member. Entry fee includes greens fees, golf cart, prize fund.

Return this form, along with entry fees, to:  
**David Sankovich, SNPJ District 3 Athletic Director**  
P.O. Box 485, Bessemer, PA 16112  
e-mail: [david.sankovich@aol.com](mailto:david.sankovich@aol.com)

**Make checks payable to SNPJ**

ENTRY DEADLINE IS AUG. 16, 2025

The Home Office will verify all memberships. Complete tournament rules are available by contacting the SNPJ Home Office, 247 W. Allegheny Rd., Imperial, PA 15126

## SNPJ Membership Anniversaries June 2025

### 70-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
174	Diane M. Liska	603	Rose M. Sloan
174	Anna K. Tripoli	723	Frances Ooms
559	Gerald Bebar	723	Frank Bruce
603	Edward L. Smith		

### 60-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
2	Nancy K. Hannebaum	257	Joanne L. Yarnall
5	Douglas F. Elersich	277	Carol A. Quattro
5	Patricia A. Moss	518	Joyce A. Young
8	Linda S. Wortel	576	George Zorko
8	George L. Schultz	584	Robert S. Pagac
33	Edward Budkey	584	Bonnie L. Ostrander
89	Nancy E. Wildman	584	Michael A. Lenich
138	George D. Svitek	604	Frank P. Sorc
158	Marie J. DeBrody	665	Frank Polovich
174	George L. Ceglar	723	Albert J. Dugas
218	Robert Arko	745	Mary F. Saber
218	Robert G. Maifarh	786	Diane L. Amos

### 50-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
1	Susan E.	142	Cheryl A. Buday
	Prelesnik-Ables	153	Mary L. O'Reilly
1	Cathy M. Cainkar	158	Jackie Mantz
3	Sharon C. Paye	174	Kimberly A. Korber
6	Lori L. Main-Petach	174	Robert J. Katawczik
6	Shirley M. Hertzler	218	Vicki K. Febbraro
6	Susan H. Sullivan	225	James L. Giordano
6	Michael J. Suchoza	277	Donald J. Yallech Jr.
6	Lynn A. Neill	277	Daniel J. Pavlik
31	Kenneth A. Trontel	562	Andrew Felix
33	Janet R. Duzicky	584	Gary W. Jereb
33	Kenneth Yager	603	Marina L. Dyett
87	Sherry L. Guerrieri	604	Edward P. Cup
89	Ardeth E. Machak	715	Bette J. Beebe
106	Patricia A.	715	Randy L. DeMartini
	Rupnik-Rudy	723	Cynthia L. Korbar
126	Bonnie M. Pernel	745	Kathryn A. Allaman
126	Carla M. Bukovac	749	Lawrence W. Jones
138	Jeffrey J. Terpin	749	Regina A. Blasic
142	Gary J. Reiter		

## 2025 Miss SNPJ Pageant Official Entry Form

Entrants must be between the ages of 18-28 by July 11, 2025, 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 SNPJ Fraternal Director Courtney Koenig:  
**[ckoenig@snpj.com](mailto:ckoenig@snpj.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 6, 2025**

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

### cook eat slovenia

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

**\$40<sup>00</sup> each**  
includes postage

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Number of copies \_\_\_\_\_

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