

# History presented at the Utah Slovenian Day Picnic

by GAYE BABCOCK  
Lodge 689 Secretary/Treasurer

**HELPER, Utah** — On Aug. 9, a crowd gathered at the Slovenian Home in Spring Glen, Utah, to celebrate the 43rd Slovenian Day Picnic. Everyone in attendance enjoyed a lunch of authentic Slovenian dishes and baked goods.

During the festivities, a special presentation was made by Max Gorishek Morgan, M.D., the grandson of Slovenian immigrants. Dr. Morgan presented a historic banner made sometime between 1908 and 1912 to Joann Lessar, the secretary/treasurer of SNPJ Lodge 757 and a member of the Slovenian Home

SEE UTAH FRATERNAL HISTORY  
ON PAGE 5



Items donated by Dr. Max Morgan to the Slovenian Home in Spring Glen, Utah, include sashes, pins, a hat and a pennant that would have been worn or displayed by local lodge members of the three Slovenian fraternal societies – SNPJ, Sv. Barbara, and SSPZ.



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## briefly

### 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!

### Have you recommended a new member lately?

**IMPERIAL, Pa.** — Take advantage of SNPJ’s Recommender Program which offers members an enhanced benefit for encouraging family, children, friends and acquaintances to join SNPJ. The recommender will receive \$10 for each valid referral, and every valid referral earns the recommender one entry in the quarterly drawing for a chance to win \$100. Pay a visit to the SNPJ website, [snpj.org](http://snpj.org), to complete an online Recommender form and get a head start on your reward.

## THE DEADLINE

The next two *PROSVETA* issue dates are Nov. 3 and Dec. 1. All material must be received by noon on Monday, Oct. 13, for the Nov. 3 issue, and by Monday, Nov. 10, for the Dec. 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).



Photos submitted by SNPJ Region 1 Vice President Maury Sinan (782)

## The Fire Still Burns...

The SNPJ Heritage Center has completed the final step of remembrance with the installation of the Kevin Richards memorial stone near the fire pit overlooking the Recreation Center lake. The fire pit, which was completed last year, was Kevin’s favorite place to play his guitar and gather with his friends at the SNPJ Recreation Center. We miss Kevin, and will always remember him with this memorial. The Heritage Center Committee thanks Jennifer and Daren Fetcko of SNPJ Lodge 138, the owners of JD Engraving & Awards in Canonsburg, Pa., for making the plaque; and Recreation Center Director Jerry Volpe and Recreation Center Maintenance Director Larry DeAugustine for their help erecting the stone.



## For Miss SNPJ 2026, the title continues a family legacy

by ELLEN KOCI (786)  
Miss SNPJ 2026

**ORANGE COUNTY, Calif.** — As I look back on Slovenefest weekend, I am still in shock. Becoming Miss SNPJ 2026 feels like a dream I haven’t fully woken up from.

This year was already so meaningful because it was my very first Slovenefest, but to have it also mark the beginning of my reign is something I will never forget. Experiencing Slovenefest for the first time was incredible – the music, the polka dancing, the food, and the sea of people united by love for our Slovenian heritage. Being surrounded by so much culture and pride made me feel both humbled and inspired.

The moment I heard my name called is one I will carry with me forever. The wave of emotions that hit me – shock, gratitude, pride, and joy – overflowed in tears I couldn’t hold back. Looking out and realizing I had just been chosen to carry this legacy left me speechless.

A very special thank you goes to Michelle Von Merta-Sustarich for believing in me and encouraging me to run. Without your support, I might never have stepped onto that stage. You saw potential in me before I saw it in myself, and your encouragement gave me the confidence to try.

I want to take a moment to recognize my fellow contestants: Lexy Trout from Lodge 6, Juli Kurta from Lodge 715, Lauren Hudson from Lodge 564, and Jami Meglich from Lodge 604. Each of you amazed me with your poise, talent and grace throughout the weekend. Competing alongside such remarkable young women was truly an honor, and I am so grateful to have shared this journey with you. You made my first Slovenefest unforgettable, and I know each of you will continue to shine within our SNPJ family.

SEE MISS SNPJ 2026  
ON PAGE 2

## Lodge 603 scaring up a good time this Halloween

by JEANNETTE HUMPHREY  
Lodge 603

**SAMSULA, Fla.** — The members of SNPJ Lodge 603 in beautiful downtown Samsula gathered Sept. 8 for a covered dish meal followed by a business meeting with President Brandon Schmidt presiding. Thanks was extended to John and Rhonda Tesauro for completing the fire suppression system, meeting the requests of our insurance carrier.

A Halloween party is scheduled at the Lodge 603 Hall on Friday, Oct. 24, from 6 to 8 p.m. Kimberly Schmidt has volunteered to chair the event. A costume contest, cake walk, spook house and much more are planned. Food will be available from the kitchen. This event is open to the public. The Samsula Woman’s Club donated \$100

SEE LODGE 603 HALLOWEEN  
ON PAGE 2



**Luka A. Skrajner**

Born June 4, 2021

**Ruby K. Skrajner**

Born Aug. 3, 2023

Cleveland Lodge 142

SNPJ Lodge 142 welcomes Luka Anthony Skrajner and Ruby Kathleen Skrajner as the newest additions to the Lodge. Luka and Ruby are the children of David (142) and Sarah Skrajner, and the grandchildren of Kathy (142) and SNPJ Recreation Center Committee member Dave Skrajner (142). We welcome Luka and Ruby to the Society and extend our best wishes to their family.

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ELLEN KOCI (786) at the podium following the announcement of the Miss SNPJ 2026 titleholder.



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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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# Bubbling with activity, Family Fun Day picnic raises funds for the Miss SNPJ Pageant

by KARA MARUSZAK (142)  
Miss SNPJ Commission  
**KIRTLAND, Ohio** — To paraphrase from “The Little Mermaid,” life is better under the sea. And life was certainly better at the “Under the Sea” Family Fun Day picnic hosted by the Miss SNPJ Commission. This third annual picnic was held in July at the SNPJ Farm in Kirtland, and it was wonderful to see so many attendees enjoying the festivities.  
Each year, the Miss SNPJ Commission picks a theme for the picnic and decorates the Farm to match the theme. This year, the Farm looked like a nautical oasis with the tables beautifully decorated with blue tablecloths, fishing nets and floating candles, while underwater videos played on the brand new flat-screen television recently added near the dance floor. Cardboard fish hung from the ceiling above the dance floor, making the usual grapevines look like seaweed, and large octopuses with trailing tentacles were a colorful addition.  
Our younger guests enjoyed mak-

ing unique sand art pieces and taking part in the scavenger hunt. A highlight of the day was the giant bubble show and interactive bubble station. Adults and kids alike tried their hand at making different types of bubbles, and many had their pictures taken standing inside a human-size bubble.  
During the picnic, attendees also enjoyed perusing the drawing basket auction and partaking in the sideboard while listening to the Don Wojtila Band. In addition to our usual food and drink offerings, new this year was a Snack Shack that featured kid-friendly treats and sweets.  
We had beautiful weather and a terrific turnout with many families enjoying the amenities at the SNPJ Farm.  
A big thank goes out to everyone who supported, attended or volunteered at the picnic. Although the proceeds from this event help continue the legacy of the Miss SNPJ Pageant, the memories made at fraternal events like these are truly priceless and inspire the next generation of SNPJ members.



Lodge 142 members **CASSIDY** and **CARSON NEKIC** working the Snack Shack, a new addition to Family Fun Day that offered kid-friendly treats and sweets.



Former Miss SNPJs in attendance at the Family Fun Day picnic.

## Revisiting a busy Loyalties summer

by DANIELLA VOLPE  
Lodge 158 Treasurer  
**EUCLID, Ohio** — Happy fall, y’all! It has been a while, but the Loyalties were some “busy beavers” this summer.  
Although summer is over now, we want to take time to look back on some of the highlights, starting with our Lodge picnic back in June. We had a great time celebrating Loyalties through the years. Everyone came together with lots of photos, articles and memorabilia from Lodge 158.  
Next, we want to extend huge congratulations to all of our ladies who absolutely showed up for the National SNPJ Days athletic tournaments. We now have back-to-back beanbag champs with our very own Liz Smrdel and her partner, Sammi Likovic (576).  
In the National Balina Tournament,

several Lodge 158 ladies were members of the two top teams: the team of Liz Smrdel, Janet Smrdel, Diane Horabik and Janice Rockwell (138) came in second place; while teammates Ashley Russ, Lori Kiefer, Mallory Lamovec and Juli Bosek (564) were tournament champions. Way to represent, ladies!  
Summer may be gone, but that doesn’t mean the fun is going to stop. Keep an eye out for more Lodge 158 announcements, like our annual Christmas party that will held Sunday, Dec. 7. More details and instructions on how to participate to come. Be sure to follow us on all social media for even more up-to-date information on all Lodge 158 events.  
As always, we send our thoughts and prayers to our ill and deceased members and their families during this difficult time.



Miss SNPJ 2019 **LIZ SMRDEL** (left) and Miss SNPJ 2020 **DANIELLA VOLPE** presented copies of the *PROSVETA* issues announcing their crownings among the Loyalties Lodge 158 memorabilia displayed during the annual Lodge picnic.



Tears flowed as **ELLEN KOCI** was awarded the title of Miss SNPJ 2026 and received her crown from Miss SNPJ 2025 **ERIN LAWRENCE**.

## Miss SNPJ 2026 expresses gratitude as her reign opens

**MISS SNPJ 2026**  
FROM PAGE 1  
I also want to thank Miss SNPJ 2025 Erin Lawrence for setting such a strong example. Erin, you wore the crown with grace and pride, and I am honored to follow in your footsteps. You have left big shoes to fill, and I will do my very best to carry forward the spirit you brought to this role.  
This moment also carries personal significance for me because my mother, Teresa (Mlakar) Koci, was once Miss SNPJ. Growing up, I heard her stories about what the pageant meant to her, but I never imagined I would have the chance to follow in her footsteps. Standing on that stage, knowing I was continuing not only the tradition of this pageant but also my own family’s legacy, was incredibly powerful.  
To the Pageant Commis-

sion and the SNPJ Executive Committee, thank you for the countless hours and dedication you put into making Slovenefest and the Miss SNPJ Pageant possible. Experiencing my very first Slovenefest gave me a new appreciation for how much heart and effort goes into keeping our heritage alive.  
I begin this year as Miss SNPJ 2026 with immense gratitude, excitement and pride. I can only hope to represent SNPJ with the same dedication and spirit as the many incredible women who have worn this crown before me, including my own mother. Slovenefest 2025 will always hold a special place in my heart, not only because it was my first, but because it was where I began this extraordinary journey as Miss SNPJ 2026.  
*Hvala lepa*, and here’s to an unforgettable year ahead!

## Samsula Lodge 603 slates annual Halloween party, holiday activities

**LODGE 603 HALLOWEEN**  
FROM PAGE 1  
to help with prize purchases.  
Victoria Stein was awarded the Lodge 603 continuing education scholarship. She and longtime friend Kaitlyn Schmidt attended the SNPJ Young Adult Conference held in June at the SNPJ Recreation Center in Pennsylvania. They reported enjoying their first Young Adult Conference.  
We are so excited to announce that Billy Gilmore’s Bluegrass Band from Gainesville, Fla., will be performing at the Lodge 603 Hall on Saturday,

Nov. 22. The Lodge hall will open at 6 p.m.; music will follow from 7 to 10 p.m. Admission is \$10 per person.  
Barbecue plates will be available from the kitchen for this performance and the bar will be open, serving your favorite libations. Ruth Benedict and Jeannette Humphrey will be chairing this event which is open to the public.  
Rhee Carter has volunteered to serve as chairman for the annual Lodge 603 Christmas Tractor Parade, scheduled Saturday, Dec. 13. More details will follow.  
Thanks was extended to Tony

Lavarque who donated his \$250 Tractor Parade winnings to our Lodge treasury.  
Kimberly Schmidt is working to plan additional activities at our Lodge hall. If you have ideas and can help her out, please do so!  
Samsula Woman’s Club members are constructing a small box which will be placed near the front of the Lodge hall for exchange books. If you have books that you would like to donate, look for the “Lending Library” exchange box when completed. Bring a book, take a book is the idea.

The Woman’s Club celebrated its 75th anniversary in August at our Lodge hall. Cheri Smith, who currently serves as club president, chaired the event.  
The club’s annual Christmas Craft Show is set for Saturday, Dec. 6, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Breakfast and lunch will be available for purchase from the Lodge hall kitchen. A few outdoor vendor spaces are still available; contact a Samsula Woman’s Club member if interested.  
Until next time, enjoy your Lodge activities and fraternal friendships!

# Up-and-Coming...

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

- OCT. 10-12..... SNPJ National Bowling Tournament co-hosted by Sygan, Pa., Lodge 6 and Strabane, Pa., Lodge 138 at the Sygan Lodge 6 Bowling Center and the Strabane Lodge 138 Lanes. Entry forms available online at [snpj.org](http://snpj.org).
- 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.
- NOV. 22 ..... SNPJ Spartans Lodge 576 one-day casino bus trip to Presque Isle. For additional information contact Karen Novak at (216) 965-3181 or Erica Novak at (440) 725-6523.



# We've Got You COVERED



by DAVID GOMBKOTO  
SNPJ Sales Director

## DON'T BE SPOOKED!

Why life insurance is a *treat*, not a *trick*

October is here, and with it comes pumpkins on porches, skeletons in windows, and cobwebs stretched across every corner. It's the season of ghosts, ghouls, and things that make us grow goose-bumps in the night.

While most of us enjoy the thrills and chills of Halloween in good fun, there's one topic people tend to find truly scary: life insurance. But here's the truth – life insurance isn't a trick, and it shouldn't send shivers down your spine. In fact, it's one of the most thoughtful gifts you can give your family. This Halloween season, as we stock up on candy and plan our costumes, let's also take a moment to look beyond the masks and talk about protecting what matters most.

### The Real Monsters Aren't in Haunted Houses

When you walk through a haunted house, you expect someone in a scary mask to pop out at you. You laugh, you scream, and you walk away unharmed. But the real fears in life don't come with fog machines and rubber spiders. They're the unexpected challenges – accidents, illness, or the sudden loss of a loved one. These are the moments that can leave families unprepared and vulnerable. That's where life insurance comes in. It acts as a shield, a way to keep the real monsters – financial stress, unpaid bills, and uncertainty about the future – from haunting your loved ones.

### Why Life Insurance Isn't Scary

Many people avoid talking about life insurance because it feels uncomfortable, almost like saying "Bloody Mary" into the mirror three times. But unlike urban legends, life insurance is rooted in security, not superstition.

Here's why it shouldn't scare you:

- It's affordable: Policies can be customized to fit your needs and budget. Protecting your family may cost less than your weekly pumpkin spice latte habit.
- It's simple: While terms like "whole" and "term" can sound intimidating, an advisor can walk you through your options in plain language.
- It's selfless: At its core, life insurance isn't about you. It's about making sure your loved ones don't face unnecessary hardship in the event of the unexpected.

### A Halloween Story with a Lesson

Picture this: Families are trick-or-treating on Halloween night, lanterns glowing as children in costumes laugh and run from house to house. Behind one door, a man dressed as Dracula hands out candy. But he isn't thinking about monsters or ghosts – he's thinking about his own children out the streets having fun, collecting candy, but most importantly... remaining safe.

Years ago, he made a decision that wasn't scary at all: he purchased life insurance not only for himself, but his wife and children too. He knew that, should something happen to him, his family wouldn't be left in the dark. His children could still go to college. His spouse wouldn't have to worry about the mortgage or picking up a second job. They would have the financial security to carry on with life's necessities. He also realized that to protect his kids' insurability in the future, in the event they should be diagnosed with some scary unexpected illness, they'd already be protected. That's not a ghost story – it's a peace-of-mind story. And it's one that can belong to you too!

### Give Your Loved Ones a Treat, Not a Trick

This Halloween, kids will unwrap their candy and hope for the good stuff – the chocolate bars, the caramels, the peanut butter cups. Nobody wants to be left with raisins or candy corn. In the same way, when life hands out surprises, your family deserves the security that comes with being prepared.

Life insurance is one of the greatest treats you can provide for your loved ones. It ensures that the people you care about will be taken care of, even if you're no longer there to hand out candy on Halloween night. It allows those who depend on you the freedom to choose your final arrangements and focus on the celebration of life. It gives them the treat of not having to find additional sources of income to replace yours.

Those who depend on a person without life insurance can be left with tricks that aren't so sweet. Picking up a second job just to keep the mortgage payments going or the hope of continued gifts at Christmas and birthdays. The mourning of a loss coupled with a spaghetti dinner or a GoFundMe to pay for final arrangements is something that no one should go through. Just like deciding what candy to hand out at Halloween, it's your choice of what you hand out to your surviving spouse, children, or even siblings – tricks or treats?

### Don't Wait Until the Witching Hour

If there's one thing scarier than ghosts and goblins, it's waiting too long. Life insurance premiums are typically lower the earlier you buy. Delaying can make coverage more expensive – or even unavailable – later on. Think of it like carving your pumpkin. If you wait until Halloween night, it's too late. But plan ahead, and you'll have a glowing jack-o'-lantern greeting trick-or-treaters at your door.

### Final Thoughts

Halloween is about fun, imagination, and maybe a little fright. But when it comes to protecting your family's future, there's nothing frightening about life insurance. It's a practical, caring step that turns an uncertain future into one of security and peace of mind. What's truly frightful is the thought of leaving a loved one behind in despair. So this October, as you hang the cobwebs and light the candles, remember that life insurance isn't a ghost to avoid – it's a guardian that stands watch. Don't be spooked by the idea. Instead, see it for what it really is: one of the sweetest treats you can give your loved ones.

If you would like to talk to someone about your options without any frightful pressure, call us at 1-800-843-7675 or e-mail [snpjmarketing@snpj.com](mailto:snpjmarketing@snpj.com).



## 2028 declared the Year of Oton Župančič

**LJUBLJANA (STA)** — In mid-July, the Slovenian government officially declared 2028 the Year of Oton Župančič to honor one of the most important Slovenian modernist poets and to commemorate the 150th anniversary of his birth. “[Župančič’s] poetry, plays, translations and editorial work have left a significant mark,” the government wrote.

Preparations for the 150th anniversary of Župančič’s birth started some time ago. Funds have been secured for the renovation of the Oton Župančič Memorial House in Vinica, according to the Culture Ministry, which had proposed the Year of Oton Župančič.

The renovation of the house in Vinica, which was built after the poet’s birth house burned down, is planned for 2028. The house opened as part of the Metlika-based Bela Krajina Museum in 1951, two years after his death.

According to a ministry representative, the Year of Oton Župančič will not only celebrate the poet, it will also be an “opportunity to encourage reading; deepen our relation to our language and literature; connect cultural, educational and research institutions; and promote the Bela Krajina region as an important cultural area.”

Oton Župančič (1878-1949) is regarded – along with Ivan Cankar, Dragotin Kette and Josip Murn – as an initiator of Modernism in Slovenian literature. In the period following the First World War, he was considered the greatest Slovenian poet after France Prešeren. After the Second World War he was dubbed “the people’s poet.”

His first collection of poems, “Čaša Opojnosti” (The Goblet of Inebriation), published in 1899, along with Cankar’s controversial book “*Erotika*” (Eroticism), marked the beginnings of Modernism in Slovenian literature. However, Župančič is best known for his book of children’s poetry, “*Ciciban*,” published in 1915.

Župančič was also a prolific and talented translator best known for his translations of Shakespeare’s plays. He also translated other important authors, including Dante, Molière, Goethe, Balzac, Stendhal, Dickens, Tolstoy and Voltaire.

He died in Ljubljana and was buried with full honors in Žale Cemetery.

## Project helps mitigate the effects of cave tourism

**LJUBLJANA (STA)** — There are nearly 15,000 caves scattered around Slovenia; however, only 22 are open to visitors. But the latter are paying a price, as human visitors are detrimental to the cave ecosystems. In an effort to mitigate the effects of cave tourism, Slovenia is launching a four-year project involving more than half of the caves open to the public.

“The goal of the project is to improve visitor safety and increase public awareness of the fragile nature of underground habitats,” according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, which is carrying out the project in conjunction with the Škocjan Cave Park. The Škocjan Cave Park team will contribute know-how and oversee the implementation of measures introduced as part of the project.

Detailing the project, the ministry notes that caves are home to a number of endemic animal species, among them the olm and the leptodirus (cave beetle). Caves are also key habitats for a number of endangered European bat species, the ministry added.

Cave tourism changes the microclimate, increasing the temperature and the concentration of CO<sub>2</sub>, which can be detrimental to cave formations and ecosystems. In addition, artificial lighting encourages the growth of algae, which has a negative effect on the natural habitat.

Much of the infrastructure built to accommodate cave tourism is worn out and dangerous to visitors, while some caves are also fitted with inappropriate lighting. “All this calls for a comprehensive overhaul to allow sustainable management and reduce the effects of tourism on cave ecosystems,” according to ministry representatives.

The project, which includes the following caves: Kostanjeviška Jama, Krška Jama, Vilenica, Dimnice, Železna Jama, Županova Jama, Huda Luknja near Mislinja, Francetova Jama, Jama under Babji Zob near Lake Bled, Križna Jama, Planinska Jama, and Divaška Jama, is estimated at nearly EUR 5.4 million (\$6.3 million), the ministry noted.



## Slovenian farmers face challenges of technology

**LJUBLJANA (STA)** — Slovenian farmers are embracing new digital and technological solutions more and more, but agriculture as such is still in a critical phase of transformation, an Agricultural Institute expert told the press, pointing out that smart farming and precision agriculture are no longer a luxury, but a means of survival.

Farming has undergone changes throughout history, and the latest development stage includes robotics and digitalization. “This is no fad, but rather a logical consequence of the natural development where technological revolutions have always followed labor shortages and pressure for greater productivity,” said Blaž Germšek, head of the Department for Infrastructure, Research and Knowledge Transfer at the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia.

“It can happen that the crops remain uncollected and rot in the fields because there is no one to harvest them,” he said, raising his concern about another issue in agriculture – the farmer producing more and more food, but earning less and less income. Robotics are inevitable amid such labor shortages and financial struggles, and Slovenia is now co-funding investments in modern technologies.

Efforts are currently underway to build bridges between research and actual farming. “In recent years we have seen the first concrete steps, from the introduction of precision fertilization and automated machinery to the development of support infrastructure such as the Digital Innovation Hub,” he said.

Despite this progress, there are still some major restrictions in Slovenia, including the small size of farms, lack of solutions tailored to the country’s agricultural climate, and restricted access to investments.

“In addition, quite a few farmers remain opposed to new technologies, and high initial equipment investments aren’t helping the matter,” Germšek said, but he added that it was precisely these challenges that provided an opportunity to test advanced and sustainable solutions.

Germšek is involved in a number of projects devoted to these challenges, including those dedicated to smart farming and precision agriculture customized to Slovenian needs. He is also in charge of a project that aims to help family farms in particular.

The goal of the project is to reduce the use of pesticides, increase productivity and efficiency, and come up with new proposals on agricultural-environmental-climate financial incentives and other measures after 2027. “Without smart farming, there will not be enough accessible, affordable and nutritious food to feed all the people in the world,” Germšek concluded.

## Aljaž Tower now in its 130<sup>th</sup> year on Mt. Triglav

**MOJSTRANA (STA)** — On Aug. 7, the Slovenian Alpine Association celebrated 130 years since the Aljaž Tower was erected atop Mt. Triglav, Slovenia’s tallest mountain. Over the years, the small shelter made of zinc-coated metal has become one of the main symbols of Slovenian identity.

The tower has been a symbol of Slovenia ever since Catholic priest Jakob Aljaž (1845-1927) had it erected on Mt. Triglav in the Julian Alps. He was motivated to do so to preserve the Slovenian presence in the Slovenian mountains, which at the time were under German influence.

“This cultural monument of national importance has preserved its noble role to this day,” a representative from the Slovenian Alpine Association said on the occasion of the anniversary. For instance, when Slovenia declared independence in June 1991, a Slovenian flag was unfurled atop the tower. The Slovenian Alpine Museum marked the anniversary with an immersive exhibition that presented the tower’s historical, cultural and symbolic significance.

In 1895, when Slovenian lands were still part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, Aljaž purchased 16 square meters (approx. 175 square feet) of land atop Mt. Triglav from the local authorities and started planning the tower. He wanted it to be a shelter for mountaineers – and a beacon of the Slovenian identity in an effort to resist German domination in the Slovenian Alps during the 19th

century. He asked his friend, tinsmith Anton Belc, to build the tower, which Aljaž and five assistants erected at the peak of Mt. Triglav on Aug. 7, 1895, in just five hours.

A modest inauguration ceremony for the 1.9-meter (6.25-foot) tall round tower, measuring 1.2 meters (four feet) in diameter, followed 15 days later, according to information on the Triglav National Park website. It was originally named the Triglav Tower, and only later assumed Aljaž’s name. The original tower had four small windows, a telegraph, three stools, a logbook and a stove, and displayed a panoramic painting of Mt. Triglav by artist Marko Pernhart.

Aljaž then donated the tower, along with the land he had purchased, to the Slovenian Alpine Society, the predecessor of the Slovenian Alpine Association. In 2018 the tower was transported to the valley for a monthlong series of much-needed repairs and restoration.

## All aboard for a wine tour of the Vipava Valley

**AJDOVŠČINA (STA)** — Visitors to the Vipava Valley can enjoy a unique tour of this western Slovenian wine region aboard a vintage train, sampling local wines and foods during the trip and on stops in villages along the way.

Guests are welcomed aboard the train in Nova Gorica with a glass of local sparkling wine, and it only gets better from there as they can enjoy five glasses of local wines on the journey to Ajdovščina. They are also served local tapas and are offered a guided tour of Ajdovščina, after which they are served an additional five to six glasses of local wines and homemade food at the winery in Dornberk on the return to Nova Gorica.

“Priced at EUR 79 (\$92.50) per person, this year’s trips – 16 in total – are almost completely sold out, with only a few spots left,” Jani Peljhan, director of the Burjatik local tourist agency, told the press.

Although most of the guests are Slovenians, there are also many Austrians and Italians. The Wine Train has also been enjoyed by people from all over the world. “The second part of the season [began] in September, and we are well on track to filling all the spots,” Peljhan said, noting that up to 90 passengers can be accommodated on each five-hour trip.

Special Wine Train trips can also be arranged for larger groups as part of a journey to visit local winemakers who introduce them to wine culture and local food.

Peljhan said they were considering expanding the service to other destinations, which could include a trip along the Bohinj railway to Bled. “A lot of effort would still have to be made, especially organization-wise, since the Bohinj route is quite busy – and we would like to offer this route during the tourist season, in the summer months,” he added.

According to the Slovenian Tourist Board, the Wine Train, which currently runs only in the Vipava Valley, is listed among the five unique gastronomic experiences in Slovenia that are well worth trying.

## Ptuj unveils a sculpture of the traditional Kurent

**PTUJ (STA)** — In early September, a bronze sculpture of a Kurent, the traditional carnival figure, was unveiled in Ptuj. The sculpture, which is more than five meters (approx. 16.5 feet) tall, stands in the center of a roundabout on the way into town.

The sculpture depicts a Kurent in the middle of its jump, a tradition in which people dressed in the Kurent costume gather around a bonfire, jump around it, and ring bells to symbolically chase away winter and evil.

It was created by artists Dušan Fišer and Tomaž Plavec. They tried to capture the dynamic of the figure and depict the costume in an older variation that was popular in the 1950s and 1960s, Plavec explained at the presentation.

The sculpture was gifted to the city by poultry producer Perutnina Ptuj, which is celebrating its 120th anniversary this year. Ptuj Mayor Nuška Gajšek said the sculpture brings together business and cultural heritage, as well as tradition and the future. “Perutnina Ptuj is a symbol of work and persistence, while the Kurent is the protector of good and the carrier of the soul of our city,” Mayor Gajšek said.

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



SNPJ fraternal sympathies

BRO. JOHN KRAYNAK  
• LODGE 715 •

**UNIVERSAL, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 715 sadly report the May 27, 2025, passing of Bro. John Kraynak, 95, of Youngstown, Ohio.

Bro. Kraynak was born Nov. 6, 1929, in Youngstown, a son of the late George and Anna (Paramucha) Kraynak. He was raised on his family's farm in West Middlesex, Pa. He began his education in a one-room schoolhouse, Stoney Hill School, near the family farm in West Middlesex, and graduated from Hubbard High School. He later pursued additional studies at ETI Technical College.

John was a proud veteran of the United States Army, serving as a corporal during the Korean War from 1951 to 1953. He was stationed in Stuttgart, Germany, where he served as a radio and wireless operator in the 101st Airborne Division "Screaming Eagles," 28th Recon Company.

John started his professional career at Youngstown Sheet & Tube and went on to become a co-owner of Bel Park Medical Laboratory. Dedicated to the field of laboratory science, he also served as a board representative for the American Association of Bioanalysts.

John was a man of many passions. He loved polka dancing and was a familiar face on dance floors across town. He had a talent for restoring antique tractors and took great pride in bringing them back to life. He and his wife traveled the world for both business and pleasure, exploring every country in Europe, including Slovenia. In later years they spent their winters in Florida, enjoying the sunshine and warm community.

He is survived by his loving wife of 74 years, Mary Louise "Babe" (Candel) Kraynak, whom he married Feb. 23, 1951. He also leaves behind his three

children, Shelly (Dave) Pollnow, Cheryl (Mark) Lowney and Jeff (Gail) Kraynak; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, George and Nicholas Kraynak; and two sisters, Anna Lombard and Martha.

John will be remembered for his strong work ethic, deep faith, devotion to family, and unwavering pride in his heritage and service. His legacy will live on through the lives he touched.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 715 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we extend our condolences to Bro. Kraynak's family, relatives and friends on their loss.

BRO. JOHN A. ROBERTSON  
• LODGE 89 •

**MIDWAY, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 89 sadly report the June 14, 2025, passing of Bro. John Andrew Robertson, 87, of McDonald, Pa.

Bro. Robertson was born Nov. 25, 1937, in McDonald, a son of Thomas and Mary (Benard) Robertson. A graduate of the former McDonald High School, class of 1955, he worked as an assistant postmaster in McDonald for 32 years, retiring in 1992. He was also a former tax collector in McDonald for several years.

On July 11, 1970, he married Ruby Jane Robertson. She preceded him in death on July 14, 2021.

A 56-year SNPJ member, John attended Cross Connections Alliance Church in McDonald. He enjoyed hunting with his sons, playing softball, golfing, running, and walking on the Panhandle Trail.

He is survived by three children, Scot (Jen) Robertson of Illinois, Greg (Megan) Robertson of North Carolina, and Gayle (Michael) Jesse of Burgettstown, Pa.; and six grandchildren.

In addition to his wife and parents, he was predeceased by three sisters, Jean Hannan, Isabelle "Izzy" Wilson and Mary Campbell; and four brothers, William, Henry "Herk," Alex, and Thomas Robertson.

Services for Bro. Robertson were held June 18 in Cross Connections Alliance Church. Interment followed in Robinson's Run Cemetery, South Fayette Twp., Pa.

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

SIS. NANCY S. LOGIUDICI  
• LODGE 225 •

**GIRARD, Kan.** — The members of Lodge 225 sadly report the June 18, 2025, passing of Sis. Nancy S. Logiudici, 87, of Arma, Kan., at Via Christi Village, Pittsburg, Kan.

Sis. Logiudici was born Nov. 11, 1937, in Chicago, the daughter of the late Bill and Marie (Carzoli) Briscoe. Nancy was a homemaker who lived in the Arma area most of her life. She was raised in Croweburg, Kan., and graduated from Arma High School. Nancy worked for the Unemployment Office in Pittsburg, was the secretary for Kumer-Logiudici Lumber and Kenny's Hardware in Arma, and later worked at Northeast Elementary School as a teacher's aide.

A 55-year SNPJ Lodge 225 member, she was also a member of the American Legion Lon Helm Post #182 Auxiliary.

She married John Logiudici on Aug. 5, 1967, in Arma. John preceded her in death on Oct. 18, 1991.

Surviving are two stepsons, Johnnie Joe (Vickie) Logiudici and Kenny Logiudici, both of Arma; a step-grandson, D.J. (Carrie) Logiudici; a step-great-granddaughter, Mady

Logiudici; and a brother, Bill Briscoe of New Jersey.

Funeral services for Sis. Logiudici were held June 20 at the Bedene Funeral Home, Arma. Burial followed in Garden of Memories Cemetery, Pittsburg.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 225 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we extend our condolences to Sis. Logiudici's family, relatives and friends on their loss.

SIS. ANN SANTEL  
• LODGE 138 •

**STRABANE, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 138 sadly report the June 20, 2025, passing of Sis. Ann "Annie" Santel, 95, of Johnstown, Pa., formerly of Houston, Pa., in Horizon Personal Care, Johnstown. She was a 77-year SNPJ member.

Sis. Santel was born Aug. 5, 1929, a daughter of the late Joseph and Mary (Abramvick) Malli. Ann lived more than 65 years in Houston and was a faithful member of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Roman Catholic Church, St. Oscar Romero Parish, in Meadowlands, Pa. She cherished fond memories of her childhood home "on the hill" in Broughton.

On Sept. 3, 1955, she married Martin Joseph Santel, who passed Nov. 19, 2023, after 68 years together.

A loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, Ann touched the lives and hearts of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren with her warmth, kindness, gentle spirit and thoughtful advice.

Left behind to cherish her memory are her daughters, Mary Ann (Jeffrey) Kohler of Johnstown, and Carol S. (Scott) Parke of Freeport, Pa.; her beloved grandchildren, Kara (Nate) Preffer, Kelsey (Ben) Levine, and Danielle and Nicole Parke; three great-grandchildren, Peyton and Nat-

alie Preffer, and Elle Levine; her sister, Alice Barthauer of Rochester, N.Y.; and several nieces and nephews.

Deceased, in addition to her husband and parents, are her brother, Joseph Malli; and her sister, Mary Malli.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Sis. Santel on June 24 in Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church. Interment followed in Jefferson Memorial Park, Pittsburg.

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

SIS. DAISY L. SUZNEVICH  
• LODGE 721 •

**ALIQUIPPA, Pa.** — The members of Lodge 721 sadly report the July 7, 2025, passing of Sis. Daisy Lee Suznevich, 95, with family at her side, at Calcutta Health Care, Calcutta, Ohio.

Sis. Suznevich was born Oct. 20, 1929, in Midland, Pa., a daughter of the late Anthony and Millie Bomestar. She played an active role in her community for 85 years before relocating to Crossroads Assisted Living in East Liverpool, Ohio.

Daisy loved her family, her community, reading, cooking and baking, dogs, traveling with family, her friends, and the

Circle of Serbian Sisters. She was a loyal Pittsburgh Steelers fan and followed tennis, poker and golf. "Miss Daisy" had many friends in Midland, both young and old, who remember her quick wit, laughter, kindness and generosity. Strong, sweet, loyal, courageous and adventurous were among her other attributes.

A 77-year SNPJ member, she was most proud of being a member of St. George Serbian Orthodox Church since its inception in 1949 and was one of the original board members. Daisy also served as an officer of the Mother's Club and the Circle of Serbian Sisters.

In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her husband, George Suznevich; her sister, Ann Borato; and her brother, Nick Bomestar.

She leaves behind her children, Nancy Huber of Maryland, Dan (Andrea) Suznevich, and Marsha Suznevich of California; two grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and her beloved nieces, nephews and their families.

Funeral services for Sis. Suznevich were held July 10 in St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, Midland. Interment followed in Beaver Cemetery, Beaver, Pa.

On behalf of the members of Lodge 721 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we extend our condolences to Sis. Suznevich's family, relatives and friends on their loss.

DEATHS REPORTED  
For the month of August 2025

LODGE	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	CITY, STATE
A01	Alex R. Kikel	05-18-2018	McKees Rocks, Pa.
A01	Elizabeth J. Bencho	08-12-2025	McKees Rocks, Pa.
6	Lloyd L. McClouchic	07-18-2025	Bridgeville, Pa.
6	Patricia K. Cooke	07-18-2025	Walland, Tenn.
31	Samuel J. Heaslip	08-04-2025	Sharpsville, Pa.
34	Corinne T. Hart	07-24-2025	Sun City West, Ariz.
41	Kenneth F. Kladnik	02-08-2020	Maggie Valley, N.C.
41	Paul E. Lovato	04-18-2024	Claridge, Pa.
89	Harold S. Krawczyk	12-23-2024	Bulger, Pa.
106	Monica Grandovic	03-23-2025	Noblesville, Ind.
106	Arlene M. Pangersis	06-26-2025	Elyria, Ohio
106	Dorothy P. Tomazich	08-01-2025	Allison Park, Pa.
106	James E. Osborne Jr.	08-02-2025	Moon Twp., Pa.
106	William H. Cole	08-05-2025	Imperial, Pa.
106	Stanley R. Derosky	08-10-2025	Oldsmar, Fla.
106	Joseph J. Vidmar	08-13-2025	Coraopolis, Pa.
138	Annie Santel	06-20-2025	Johnstown, Pa.
142	Stanley Pajek	07-04-2025	Cleveland Hgts., Ohio
174	John F. Brezovec	05-19-2025	Johnstown, Pa.
218	Marjorie M. Gann	03-03-2025	Hendersonville, Tenn.
223	Elva Zajec	07-21-2025	Homer City, Pa.
225	Margaret Ann Setina	12-13-2024	Arma, Kan.
277	Cynthia E. Emmerling	07-03-2025	Wellsville, Ohio
358	Veronica E. Wolski	07-19-2025	Hamilton, Mich.
559	Charles J. Zordani	12-24-2022	Chicago, Ill.
559	William P. O'Crotty	08-09-2023	Joliet, Ill.
559	Zdenka M. Blum	06-12-2025	Bartlett, Ill.
562	Edward Waldman	01-01-2021	Logan, Ohio
562	Gary W. Drobne	06-28-2025	Rayland, Ohio
564	Deborah A. Psotka	07-22-2025	Leonard, Mich.
576	Lynne C. Jankovich	09-03-2023	Willowick, Ohio
576	Teresa A. Jankovich	01-29-2025	Willowick, Ohio
584	Robert N. Flanum	02-12-2025	Moorehead, Minn.
584	Donald J. Everett	07-12-2025	Kenosha, Wis.
604	Stacy M. Bradac	11-19-2024	Cleveland, Ohio
604	Robert T. Lazar	01-01-2025	Birmingham, Ala.
643	Gislinda U. Byrne	06-26-2025	Niles, Ohio
723	Jon R. Benedict	04-25-2024	Santee, Calif.
729	Donald J. Pidanych	05-16-2025	Perryopolis, Pa.
749	Thomas F. Hodgkinson	07-05-2024	Portage, Pa.
749	Bryan C. Jubina	05-22-2025	Portage, Pa.
749	Carol J. Nosko	06-22-2025	Ashland, Ore.
776	Robert S. Bernard	06-23-2025	Youngstown, Ohio
786	Marija Stojkoski	06-16-2025	Laguna Niguel, Calif.

KAREN A. PINTAR  
National Secretary/COO

PROSVETA 2025 Publication Dates

JANUARY 2025

			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
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FEBRUARY 2025

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30							

DECEMBER 2025

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28	29	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](mailto:prosveta@snpj.com); or submitted via the Publications section of the SNPJ website, [snpj.org](http://snpj.org).

PROSVETA Crossword  
FOOTBALL (#0925) solution

S	P	E	A	K		T	E	G		S	A	S	H
A	O	R	T	A		W	E	I		T	I	N	E
D	O	N	O	R		I	N	S		O	A	T	E
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E	R	O	S		C	I	G	S		S	T	A	R
A	G	R	A		S	M	I	T	H		A	R	E
R	U	I	N	G		N	C	A	A		L	E	N
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			F	O	A	L		F	O	E			
P	L	A	Y	E	R	S		C	A	N	T	O	N
A	U	G	E	R		P	E	R		G	U	L	E
C	R	O	W	S		I	R	E		A	D	D	T
K	E	G	S			C	A	W		N	E	S	T



SNPJ Membership Anniversaries  
October 2025

80-Year Members

Lodge  
729

Member  
Mary Valko

70-Year Members

Lodge  
41

Member  
John E. Poznick

Lodge  
138

Member  
Joseph Murn

Lodge  
142

Member  
Frances A. Pelton

Lodge  
225

Member  
Florene M. Sotosek

Lodge  
581

Member  
Annette Kirk

Lodge  
584

Member  
Joanne F. Marnich

Lodge  
604

Member  
Elizabeth Louis

Lodge  
721

Member  
John L. Egyud

Lodge  
782

Member  
Patricia M. Malisher

Lodge  
A02

Member  
Ruth A. Huckestein

60-Year Members

Lodge  
2

Member  
John J. Brejc

Lodge  
5

Member  
Carol A. Stead

Lodge  
6

Member  
Charles F. Ream

Lodge  
87

Member  
Frank J. Klum

Lodge  
113

Member  
Linda J. McKee

Lodge  
138

Member  
Stephen R. Vavrek

Lodge  
142

Member  
James J. Izanec

Lodge  
142

Member  
Eugene C. March

Lodge  
174

Member  
Joanne K. Peschock

Lodge  
223

Member  
Victoria A. Butchko

Lodge  
562

Member  
Carl J. Pierce

Lodge  
603

Member  
George N. Johnson

Lodge  
603

Member  
Peter R. Flis

Lodge  
604

Member  
Barbara Grzincic

Lodge  
689

Member  
Wilma D. Yelenich

Lodge  
749

Member  
Mary A. Dix

50-Year Members

Lodge  
3

Member  
Mark W. Znidarsic

Lodge  
5

Member  
Donn C. Samsa

Lodge  
6

Member  
David W. Davidson

Lodge  
6

Member  
Raymond B. Pozzi

Lodge  
8

Member  
Melvin E. Vranicar

Lodge  
8

Member  
Nicholas L. Pillarella

Lodge  
8

Member  
Denise M. Lapka

Lodge  
87

Member  
Ronald Phillabaum

Lodge  
87

Member  
Jo Ann Newingham

Lodge  
87

Member  
Gabrielle L. Herbert

Lodge  
87

Member  
Samuel H. Hensell

Lodge  
126

Member  
Terry R. Antosh

Lodge  
138

Member  
Ronald D. Cadez

Lodge  
142

Member  
Thomas F. Lowery

Lodge  
174

Member  
Kenneth D. Gahagan

Lodge  
174

Member  
Maureen J. McCloskey

Lodge  
174

Member  
Linda M. Robb

Lodge  
174

Member  
Tammy L. Pongrac

Lodge  
218

Member  
John D. Cahill

Lodge  
218

Member  
Michael Videtich

Lodge  
223

Member  
Mary M. Kubistek

Lodge  
225

Member  
Ginger L. Gastel

Lodge  
225

Member  
Karen A. Ryba

Lodge  
257

Member  
Michael Pelcic

Lodge  
518

Member  
Katherine A. Stacey

Lodge  
559

Member  
Melanie J. Matiassek

Lodge  
564

Member  
Donna M. Brown

Lodge  
576

Member  
Joida A. Mann

Lodge  
584

Member  
Rebecca M. Ewinski

Lodge  
604

Member  
Douglas F. Gabriel

Lodge  
604

Member  
Dwight J. Gabriel

Lodge  
604

Member  
Linda Lampe

Lodge  
643

Member  
Joyce E. Heslop

Lodge  
689

Member  
Vivian J. Parrick

Lodge  
715

Member  
David M. Slater

Lodge  
721

Member  
Frank J. Kamickier

Lodge  
723

Member  
Teena J. Majdic

Lodge  
749

Member  
Judith A. Baglio

Lodge  
749

Member  
Robert L. Parlock

Lodge  
771

Member  
Marguerite J. Lauro

Lodge  
771

Member  
Mark S. Helvak

Lodge  
786

Member  
Dennis G. Derieg

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# Lodge 581 electing officers at November meeting

by MARCIA KLANCER BLEGGI  
Lodge 581 Secretary/Treasurer

**ST. MARYS, Pa.** — On Aug. 17, SNPJ Lodge 581 and the North Central Pennsylvania Slovenian Polka Boosters hosted a combined annual picnic at the Kersey Firemen's Club. More than 60 people attended the event, celebrating to the music of the Polka Classics from Pittsburgh.

The meal was great, and as usual the big hit was the Chinese auction. Attendees from one family won all of the poticas baked and donated by SNPJ Lodge 581, valued at \$80.

The Lodge 581 quarterly meeting was held at Wildwoods on Aug. 31. Topics discussed included the St. Marys Fall Festival, held Sept. 19-21, and the Lodge Christmas party, scheduled Sunday, Dec. 21, at the Kersey Firemen's from 2 to 6 p.m. Please remember to make your reservations a week early to Pat or John Moore by phoning (814) 598-2269.

Shawnee Troha, a Lodge 581 member who is now attending college in Pittsburgh, received notice of receiving a scholarship from SNPJ. If you are a college student and a member of Lodge 581, contact Marcia Klancer Bleggi for information about the scholarship. You can still apply in the early spring.

The Nov. 30 Lodge meeting will be held at the Wildwoods starting at 12:30 p.m. Election of officers will be held during the November meeting, and we're looking for a board member to serve in 2026. If interested in serving as an officer, please call Lodge Secretary/Treasurer Marcia Klancer Bleggi at (814) 335-4983.



SNPJ Lodge 581 and the North Central Pennsylvania Slovenian Polka Boosters held their combined annual picnic in August, drawing a crowd of more than 60 to the Firemen's Club in Kersey, Pa.



Four of the students enrolled in the SNPJ Lodge 581 Slovenian language classes, [from left] **LISA ADAMICH** (581), **KATHY SUESS** (33), **JANICE ROCKWELL** (138) and **LISA KAUCIC** (6), took advantage of the opportunity to meet up at Slovenefest in July.

## Donation marks history of Utah Slovenian fraternal

**UTAH FRATERNAL HISTORY**  
FROM PAGE 1

in Spring Glen.

The banner was given to Dr. Morgan by his grandfather, Frank John Gorishek, who immigrated from Slovenia to the United States in 1904. The banner presents three lodges from three different Slovenian benefit societies that were founded in Winter Quarters-Scofield, Utah, in the early 1900s: the earliest, SNPJ Lodge 32 (founded Aug. 1, 1907), followed by Sv. Barbara Lodge 42 (founded Dec. 16, 1907), and SSPZ Lodge 6 (founded Nov. 7, 1908).

[Editor's Note: The Sv. (Saint) Barbara Society merged with the Slovene Workmen's Benefit Society (SDPZ) sometime prior to 1921 when the SDPZ-SNPJ merger was approved during the SNPJ Merger Convention held in September 1921, and the Slovene Progressive Benefit Society (SSPZ) merged with SNPJ in September 1941

during the 12th Regular SNPJ Convention.]

The U.S. flag with 46 stars is sewn to the reverse of the banner. New Mexico and Arizona were later admitted to the Union in January and February 1912, respectively.

Along with the flag, Dr. Morgan also presented several lovely sashes, bandanas and lodge hats that were proudly worn by members of the various society lodges. The flag was displayed at meetings and community events locally and statewide. One significant event was the annual Mardi Gras celebration and parade in Pleasant Valley, Utah. The parade route started in Winter Quarters and ended in the north part of Scofield Town.

Frank Gorishek moved from Crested Butte, Colo., to Scofield, Utah. He and his bride both became American citizens.

Winter Quarters was a mining town located near Scofield, approximately 34

miles northwest of Helper. It was settled in the late 1800s when coal was discovered in the area. The mine remained in operation until about 1928, and by 1930 the town had been abandoned.

Because these artifacts have been lovingly kept in a cedar chest for more than a century, they are in immaculate condition, honoring the history and spirit of the Slovenian people who lived and worked there.



During the 43rd Slovenian Day Picnic held Aug. 9 at the Slovenian Home in Spring Glen, Utah, Dr. Max Morgan presented a banner and several additional items to SNPJ Lodge 757 Secretary/Treasurer Joanne Lessar. Pictured (from left): **Max Morgan, M.D.**; **JEAN BOYACK** (757); **JOANNE LESSAR** (757) and **Lee Nielsen**.



In English, the banner reads: "Triple union of Slovenian Societies. Sava Lodge 32 SNPJ, established Aug. 1, 1907; Sv. Barbara, Lodge 42, headquarters F.C. [Forest City, Pa.], established Dec. 16, 1907; [Lodge name unknown] Lodge 6 SSPZ, established Nov. 7, 1908. Winter Quarters, Utah."



The U.S. flag with 46 stars, sewn to the reverse of the banner.

U.S. Postal Service

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JAY SEDMAK  
Editor, SNPJ Publications



# SNPJ Region 4 Vice President, Lodge 8 members pay a visit to Indianapolis for the Slovenski Festival

by TINA RIGLER (8)  
SNPJ Region 4 Vice President

**INDIANAPOLIS**—On Aug. 31, SNPJ Region 4 Vice President Tina Rigler and several SNPJ Lodge 8 members attended the Slovenski Festival at the Slovenian National Home in Indianapolis.

This was my first visit to the Slovenian National Home, and it did not disappoint. The homemade food – including the pastries – was delicious. It was a well-attended festival, drawing many SNPJ Lodge 34 members and friends. Vince Rigler and the Polka Pals entertained throughout the afternoon.

Lodge 34 Secretary/Treasurer Jerry Watson and many other volunteers from Lodge 34 and the Slovenian National Home provided an afternoon of great food and music, and a place for everyone to gather and enjoy the festival. I had the pleasure of meeting the Lodge 34 officers, President Mary Dragan, Vice President Jozef Watson and Secretary/Treasurer Jerry Watson.

Thank you, Jerry, for the hospitality extended to our group and for the tour of the Slovenian National Home, which includes the lower hall that showcases several old



While visiting Indianapolis, the home of SNPJ Lodge 34, in late August to attend the annual Slovenski Festival, SNPJ Region 4 Vice President **TINA RIGLER** (*third from left*), met Lodge 34 President **MARY DRAGAN**, Secretary/Treasurer **JERRY WATSON** and Vice President **JOZEF WATSON**. The group is pictured with Vince Rigler and the Polka Pals, who provided the entertainment for the Slovenski Festival.

photos from the early years of the SNPJ. I found it all fascinating, especially the many pictures of Slovenian history on the walls of the Slovenian National Home.

It was also nice to see Bob Kleman (a.k.a. “Polka Bob” of Indy Polkamotion), another Lodge 34 member who helped provide the equipment for the band.

I’m looking forward to attending the Slovenski Festival again and meeting up with more Slovenian friends!



What’s a festival without food? The kitchen crew at the Indianapolis Slovenian National Home served up delicious homemade meals and pastries to the hungry crowd.

# 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!

## SNPJ 87<sup>th</sup> National Bowling Tournament October 10-12, 2025

co-sponsored by SNPJ Lodge 6 and SNPJ Lodge 138  
and SNPJ Athletic Districts 1 and 2

**MEN**  
**Doubles & Singles Events**  
at Sygan Lodge 6  
540 Third Ave.  
Bridgeville, PA 15017  
Phone: (412) 221-9862

- ☐ Friday, Oct. 10, 6:30 p.m.  
☐ Saturday, Oct. 11, 9 a.m.  
☐ Saturday, Oct. 11, 2 p.m.

**MEN**  
**Team Event**  
at Strabane Lodge 138  
269 Latimer Ave.  
Strabane, PA 15363  
Club: (724) 745-9860  
Lanes: (724) 745-9775

- ☐ Sunday, Oct. 12, 9 a.m.  
☐ Sunday, Oct. 12, Noon  
☐ Sunday, Oct. 12, 3 p.m.

**WOMEN**  
**Doubles & Singles Events**  
at Strabane Lodge 138  
269 Latimer Ave.  
Strabane, PA 15363  
Club: (724) 745-9860  
Lanes: (724) 745-9775

- ☐ Saturday, Oct. 11, 9:30 a.m.  
☐ Saturday, Oct. 11, 2:30 p.m.

**WOMEN**  
**Team Event**  
at Sygan Lodge 6  
540 Third Ave.  
Bridgeville, PA 15017  
Phone: (412) 221-9862

- ☐ Sunday, Oct. 12, 9:30 a.m.  
☐ Sunday, Oct. 12, 12:30 p.m.

Doubles & Singles Entry fee \$32 per person Friday/Saturday Only	Lodge No.	Highest Average 2024-25	All-Events \$5 per person YES/NO
1.			
2.			
1.			
2.			

Submit bowlers’ names by position in lineup

Four Person Team Event Entry fee \$64 per team Sunday Only	Lodge No.	Highest Average 2024-25
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Team name \_\_\_\_\_  
Team captain’s name, phone number & e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

The entry fee for each event is \$16 per bowler, \$9.25 of which shall be used for prizes and \$6.75 for bowling. An extra \$5 is charged to all who desire to compete for handicap All-Events prizes. The Slovene National Benefit Society adds \$7 per member to each prize fund except All-Events.

Return form, along with fees of \$16 per person, per event, to:  
Den Brand

405 Forbes St., Bridgeville, PA 15017

e-mail: [dhbrand3517@gmail.com](mailto:dhbrand3517@gmail.com)

Make checks payable to **SNPJ Lodge 6**

**ENTRY DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 1, 2025**

The Home Office will verify all memberships. Complete tournament rules are available by contacting the SNPJ Fraternal Department, 247 West Allegheny Rd., Imperial, PA 15126  
Entries will be posted online at [snpj.org](http://snpj.org)

## New Address?

Please use this form so PROSVETA will move with you. Complete this form, attach your old mailing address, and mail to: PROSVETA, circulation, 247 West Allegheny Rd., Imperial, PA 15126-9774; or e-mail your new and former address to [snpj@snpj.com](mailto:snpj@snpj.com).

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

## PROSVETA Crossword

Halloween (#1025) by StatePoint Media

### ACROSS

- Cut of lamb
- Numbers, abbr.
- Friend from Down Under
- Jonas Salk’s conquest
- Bingo!
- Secret storage
- Like a beaver?
- Sun, in Spain
- Knightly suit
- \*Can take the form of a certain flying mammal
- \*Spell casting
- Between E and NE
- Fisherman’s fly
- Away’s partner
- Biology lab supply
- Offspring of alumnus
- Month before Nisan
- Latte choice
- Filthy dough
- Sound on a scale
- \*Homeowner’s Halloween option
- Subsequently
- A deadly sin?
- Competitive advantage
- Assigned theater spot
- Popular post
- Biblical firstborn
- What skeletons and skedaddlers have in common
- Tiresias in “Oedipus Rex”, e.g.

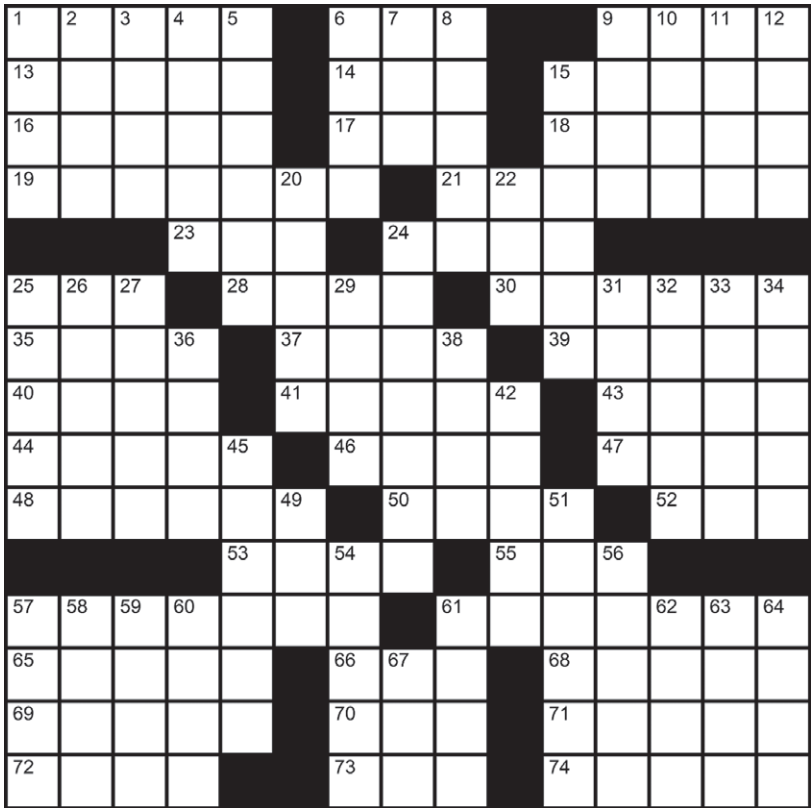
- French vineyard
- \*Grisly
- \*Ghostly apparition
- Throat dangler
- \*“The Murders in the \_\_\_ Morgue”
- Actress Watts
- Relating to a lobe
- Songwriter Gershwin
- a.k.a. tangelos
- Pitcher
- Lt.’s inferior, in the Navy
- River clay deposits

### DOWN

- Hightailed it
- \*Adjective for Merlin, hairwise
- Aquarium scum
- \*“Unattractive” Munster relative
- Slovakian monetary unit
- Project Apollo org.
- Exclamation of surprise
- Pico de gallo, e.g.
- Painter Chagall
- Pinnacle
- Chris Hemsworth’s Marvel role
- \*Like decorated house on Halloween
- El Chapo’s organization, e.g.

- MC Hammer’s “Too \_\_\_ to Quit” album
- Black gold
- Puppy purveyor, often
- \*Teeth of #19 Across
- Love intensely
- a.k.a. honey badger
- 0.405 hectare
- \*Blood and \_\_\_
- Partner of pains
- \*Spooky house sound
- “Fiddler on the Roof” gossipy character
- Coral barrier
- Gads, anagrammed
- Mold a mind
- Expel a lawyer
- Ever, to a poet
- Bluish planet
- \*#12 Down, alt. sp.
- Sushi option
- Stubborn beast
- Swear, not curse
- Type of hexahedron
- Having wings
- Black-eyed legumes
- Sound of a bell
- Fail to mention
- Magnolia State, abbr.
- \*R.I.P. container

The solution to puzzle #1025 will run in the Nov. 3 issue.



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