



In This Issue

Slovenia from the Source.....	3
SNPJ Fraternal Sympathies	4
PROSVETA Crossword Puzzle.....	6
2026 SNPJ National Bowl Entry Form	6

Celebrate music and tradition at the annual SNPJ Farm Grape Festival

by JOE VALENCIC
Lodge 5

KIRTLAND, Ohio — Celebrate the fruit of the vine, old-country style, at the SNPJ Farm on Sunday, Sept. 20, during the colorful, musical Slovenian Grape Festival.

A polka parade, complete with Slovenian costumes, accordions and singing, opens the festivities at 2:45 p.m. After the parade, Tony Fortuna and his orchestra will perform polka and waltz favorites for the Grape Festival dance scheduled from 3 to 7 p.m.

Wear your Slovenian outfit and join the sing-along when

SEE **GRAPE FESTIVAL**
ON PAGE 2



The SNPJ Farm will host the annual Slovenian Grape Festival on Sunday, Sept. 20, starting with a parade at 2:45 p.m.

A September start date for Lodge 581 language classes

by MARCIA KLANCER BLEGGI
Lodge 581 Secretary/Treasurer

ST. MARYS, Pa. — The SNPJ Lodge 581 Slovenian language class will be resuming in mid-September.

Four members of the class visited Slovenia this summer. In August, class member Janice Rockwell (138) met with our language instructor, Lea Udovc, at a restaurant in Ljubljana. It seems that meeting at a restaurant is the thing to do. Lea has met everyone in person, and we can hardly wait until she visits the United States.

The members of Lodge 581 and the North Central Pennsylvania Slovene Polka Boosters

SEE **LODGE 581 CLASS**
ON PAGE 2



While visiting Slovenia in August, SNPJ Lodge 581 language class member **JANICE ROCKWELL** (138) [left] met with class instructor **Lea Udovc** in Ljubljana.

PERIODICAL MATERIAL

Home Office closed as we celebrate Labor Day

IMPERIAL, Pa. — The SNPJ Home Office will be closed Monday, Sept. 7, in celebration of Labor Day. Regular office hours, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., will resume Tuesday, Sept. 8. We wish all SNPJ members and friends a safe and happy Labor Day!

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, 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! Every valid referral earns the recommender \$10, plus an entry in the quarterly drawing for a chance to win \$100. Pay a visit to the SNPJ website, 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 Oct. 1 and Nov. 2. All material must be received by noon on Monday, Sept. 14, for the Oct. 1 issue, and by Monday, Oct. 19, for the Nov. 2 issue. If you’re concerned about making the deadline, send an e-mail to prosveta@snpj.com or submit your material via the publications area of our website, snpj.org.

Opt-in required to continue receiving *PROSVETA* by mail

IMPERIAL, Pa. — Just as digital media continues to evolve and expand, so too have preferences for how we interact with the media. Once dominated by newspapers, radio broadcasts and television news, the media now relies on websites, influencers, streaming services and social media apps to spread information quickly — and more directly — to consumers.

SNPJ is well aware of the rapidly changing media landscape. More so than ever before, the SNPJ Home Office, Lodges and members are turning to social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, X, etc.) to spread details of upcoming events and activities and share updated information that *PROSVETA* cannot provide in a timely manner. As a result, numerous members have contacted the Home Office to cancel their mail delivery of *PROSVETA*, preferring instead to receive an e-mail notification and read *PROSVETA* online directly from the SNPJ website, snpj.org.

Over the course of the next three months, September through November, we’re asking all members to determine whether or not they would like to receive *PROSVETA* by mail. We recognize that many members appreciate reading the monthly *PROSVETA* in its physical, printed format, and SNPJ will continue to print

and mail *PROSVETA* to those members who choose to opt-in and continue home delivery.

On Dec. 1, 2026, the *PROSVETA* mailing file will be purged and reformatted to include only the addresses of SNPJ members who have chosen to opt-in and receive *PROSVETA* by mail. Starting with the January 2027 issue, members who have not selected to opt-in will no longer receive print copies of *PROSVETA* in the mail. The opt-in does not pertain to members who have previously selected to receive notifications by e-mail for the online *PROSVETA* issues, nor to non-member *PROSVETA* subscribers.

To ensure delivery of the print copy of the January 2027 and future *PROSVETA* issues, the opt-in process must be completed no later than Monday, Nov. 30, 2026, by phoning the SNPJ Home Office at 1-800-843-7675 ext. 136 or sending an e-mail to optin@snpj.com with “OPT-IN” in the subject line and providing your name and current mailing address in the message. Please keep in mind that although opt-ins will be accepted after Nov. 30, mail delivery of the printed *PROSVETA* issues will cease until your opt-in request is received.

Three choices are available to all SNPJ members:



- 1.) Opt-in to continue receiving *PROSVETA* print copies by mail;
- 2.) Opt-out of receiving *PROSVETA* in the mail, but provide an e-mail address and request to receive notification when each *PROSVETA* issue is posted to the SNPJ website;
- 3.) Make no reply and opt-out completely, which means your address information will be automatically removed from all future *PROSVETA* print copy mailings until an opt-in is received.

Utah Lodges host their 44th Slovenian Day Picnic

by GAYE BABCOCK
Lodge 689 Secretary/Treasurer

HELPER, Utah — The 44th Utah Slovenian Day Picnic was held Aug. 1. A very hot but beautiful summer day welcomed picnickers to the Slovenian Home in Spring Glen. SNPJ Lodge 757 Secretary/Treasurer Joanne Lessar chaired the event, assisted by members of Price Lodge 113 and Helper Lodge 689.

Picnickers enjoyed polka music, conversation and, of course, the food! Klobase, cabbage rolls, stew, polenta, traditional potato salad, bean salad, and our infamous pickled eggs were served. Organizers baked dozens of cookies, potica loaves and pans of

SEE **UTAH PICNIC**
ON PAGE 2



[From left] Helper Lodge 689 President **DAVE BABCOCK**, Lodge 689 Secretary/Treasurer **GAYE BABCOCK**, Price Lodge 757 Secretary/Treasurer **JOANNE LESSAR**, and **JEANETTE MARASCO** (757) outside the Slovenian Home in Spring Glen, Utah.

Theodore Albert Lickert

Born Feb. 4, 2026
Strabane, Pa., Lodge 138

The members of Lodge 138 welcome Theodore Albert Lickert as the newest addition to the Lodge. A fifth-generation SNPJ member, Theodore is the son of Kristina Hartman-Lickert and Thomas Lickert (138), the grandson of Mary Jo Germovsek Hartman and Paul Hartman (138), and great-grandson of the late Joseph and Rose Germovsek (138). We welcome Theodore to the Society and extend our best wishes to his entire family.



follow SNPJ on
Facebook!

PROSVETA
ENLIGHTENMENT
(USPS 448-080)
(ISSN 1080-0263)
The Official Publication of the
Slovene National
Benefit Society
247 W. Allegheny Road
Imperial, PA 15126-9774
Phone: (724) 695-1100
Toll-Free:
1-800-843-7675 (THE SNPJ)
Fax: (724) 695-1555
e-mail: prosveta@snpj.com
website: <https://snpj.org>

EDITOR:
Jay Sedmak

Subscription rate is \$8 per year for non-SNPJ members in the United States (Fla. subscribers, please add 6 percent sales tax). Canadian and foreign subscriptions, \$50 per year. Advertising information available by contacting our office. Material concerning the official workings of the Slovene National Benefit Society is given publication priority. Unsolicited manuscripts returned only if a self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed.

Postmaster: Send all address changes to:
PROSVETA, 247 W. Allegheny Rd.,
Imperial, PA 15126-9774
(Published monthly)

(Periodical postage paid at Imperial, Pa., and additional mailing office.)

SNPJ NATIONAL BOARD
Executive Committee:
NATIONAL PRESIDENT/CEO
Joseph C. Evanish

NATIONAL SECRETARY/COO
Karen A. Pintar

NATIONAL TREASURER/CFO
Robert J. Lawrence

Correspondence received at:
247 West Allegheny Road
Imperial, PA 15126-9774

Office hours are Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Fridays, 7:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Finance Committee:

Robert Lawrence, Secretary
Joseph C. Evanish

Richard Hervol, Chairman
183 Wylie Ave.
Strabane, PA 15363

Roger C. Clifford
568 Lang Rd.
Sewickley, PA 15143

Tracey Anderson
1014 Edgewood Dr.
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Audit Committee:

Joanna L. Baker, Chairwoman
301 Cactus Rd.
Gallup, NM 87301

Vincent Baselj
1001 Grandview Ave., Apt. 903
Bridgeville, PA 15017

Kenneth J. Zakraysek
106 Queens Row, P.O. Box 137
Elton, PA 15934

Regional Vice Presidents:

Region 1: Maurice M. Sinan Jr.
116 Shady Oak Dr.
Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

Region 2: Jason J. Cadez
179 Alexander Ave.
Strabane, PA 15363

Region 3: Donald F. Srnick
29254 Chardon Rd.
Willoughby Hills, OH 44092

Region 4: Justina Rigler
1116 Berkley Ln.
Lemont, IL 60439

Region 5: Fred Mlakar
13592 Onkayha Cir.
Irvine, CA 92620

SNPJ Recreation Center
270 Martin Road
Enon Valley, PA 16120
(724) 336-5180 • fax (724) 336-6716
Toll-free: 1-877-767-5732
website: www.snpjrec.com
e-mail: snpj@snpjrec.com

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:
PROSVETA
247 W. Allegheny Road
Imperial, PA 15126-9774
e-mail: prosveta@snpj.com

A visit to Pumpkinville on the Lodge 142 October schedule

by KARA MARUSZAK
Lodge 142 Vice President

CLEVELAND — Greetings from Lodge 142! It's been a little while since our last article, and we hope all our members had a nice summer.

Fall is rapidly upon us, and Lodge 142 has an exciting outing planned at Pumpkinville, which is located at Rock's Farm and Garden in Kirtland, Ohio, on Saturday, Oct. 10, at 2 p.m. for Lodge members, their families and friends. The Rock family is very

active in the Cleveland Slovenian community, and we are excited to partner with them on this event.

Pumpkinville has all your favorite fall activities, including a petting zoo, corn maze, kids' activities, face painting, a food truck, kettle corn and more!

This year there will be a photo op with the animals, and donations will be accepted to benefit the Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center in Chagrin Falls, Ohio.

Each Lodge member (adult and youth) will receive a pumpkin provided by the Lodge that they can paint and decorate at Pumpkinville. Please call Carol at (440) 655-8776 by Oct. 1 to reserve your spot. It will be a fun day, and we hope to see you there!

Finally, we congratulate the Society on the 33rd Quadrennial Convention, which took place Aug. 17 at the SNPJ Recreation Center. Lodge delegates Carol Bacnik, Carol

Maruszak and Kara Maruszak provided a recount of the Convention at our August meeting. It was great to see and catch up with so many of our friends from around the country.

We would also like to congratulate the elected National Board members, and we hope everyone had safe travels home.

As always, you can stay up to date on Lodge happenings by following our Facebook page, SNPJ Lodge 142.

Pittsburgh Pirates game attracts a busload of fans from Lodge 106

by JOHN TUITE
Lodge 106

IMPERIAL, Pa. — SNPJ Lodge 106 gathered 50 members and guests on Aug. 9 for a beautiful, sunny day of baseball, food, friendship and plenty of fun on a Pittsburgh Pirates bus trip.

Our adventure began when an Elite Travel bus picked everyone up at the Lodge 106 parking lot and headed toward Pittsburgh. Once we arrived, the group settled in at a tailgate spot next to Acrisure Stadium for two hours of socializing, eating and enjoying each other's company.

And what a tailgate it was! There was an incredible assortment of homemade food and snacks, along with a few cold beverages enjoyed by all. With 50 hungry members and guests, there was certainly no shortage of good food or good conversation. The tailgate was a perfect way to get the day started.

After packing everything back onto the bus, we headed to PNC Park — arguably the best baseball stadium in Major League Baseball — to watch the Pittsburgh Pirates take on the New York Mets.

Unfortunately, that's where the Pirates decided to test our loyalty.

The Mets proceeded to literally destroy the Pirates, 11-1. But while the scoreboard was painful to look at, the Pirates' poor play did absolutely nothing to lessen the spirits of our loud and raucous SNPJ group. There were plenty of laughs, cheers, conversations and good times throughout the game. After all, a day at the ballpark with great friends is about more than just the final score!

A special thank you goes to our Elite Travel bus driver, Allyson, whose over-the-top customer service made the trip even

better. Her friendly attitude and attention to our group helped make the transportation portion of the day enjoyable from beginning to end.

The event was coordinated by Hannah Chauvet, Donna Daniels and John Tuite, and their efforts helped make the entire outing a success.

Despite the Pirates' best attempt to ruin the baseball portion of the day, they couldn't ruin the SNPJ spirit! From the tailgate to the ballpark and the ride home, 50 members and guests enjoyed a day filled with friendship, laughter, great food and memories.

All in all, it was a great day — and we're already looking forward to our next SNPJ adventure!

For more information about upcoming Lodge 106 events, visit www.snpjimperialpa.com and follow us on Facebook and Instagram.



[From left] HANNAH CHAUVET, Donna Daniels and JOHN TUITE, the coordinators of the Lodge 106 bus trip, enjoying the tailgate prior to the game.



The eager group of 50 Pittsburgh Pirates baseball fans from SNPJ Lodge 106 gathered to tailgate outside Acrisure Stadium, the home of the Pittsburgh Steelers, which is adjacent to PNC Park.

As autumn nears, Loyalites Lodge 158 slates holiday festivities

by DANIELLA VOLPE
Lodge 158 Treasurer

EUCLID, Ohio — Summer is coming to an end, but that doesn't stop the Loyalites. We've all been quite busy this summer between trips, weekends at camp, and most recently the 33rd Quadrennial Convention.

Lodge delegates Liz Smrdel, Sue Srnick, Diane Horabik, Janet Smrdel, Colleen Kuhn and Daniella Volpe enjoyed seeing the full force of all the Lodges coming together to discuss the topics at hand. We look forward

to seeing how the new National Board format works to increase the longevity of this organization we love so much.

We want to say a grand farewell to our very own Don Srnick who served as SNPJ Region 3 Vice President for the last eight years and did a fantastic job representing us at every meeting. Thank you for your years of care and dedication to SNPJ, both at the Lodge and national levels.

Looking forward to the rest of the year, the next Loyalites event is our annual Christmas party which will be

held Sunday, Dec. 6, at the Willowick Senior Center in Willowick, Ohio. We'll enjoy lots of fun, games and food, and we'll even have some presents delivered by the big man in red!

Mark your calendars now and look for more information as we get closer to the event date. You don't have to be a Lodge 158 member to attend — all are welcome!

As always, we send our thoughts and prayers to all ailing and deceased members and their families as they navigate through this difficult time.

We extend special condolences to the family of Barbara Mackanos. Barb was a long-standing member of Lodge 158 and was always willing to help in any way she could. She made it to many Lodge meetings, rain or shine, on good days and bad. Her beautiful spirit and positivity will be missed greatly by all who had the pleasure of meeting her.

Want to keep up with everything Lodge 158? Follow us on Facebook, on Instagram and on our website, snpj158.com.



KRIS COX (757), DAVE BABCOCK (689) and Clay Larsen worked behind the bar and sold drawing tickets during this year's Utah Slovenian Day Picnic.

The Slovenian Day Picnic an annual tradition in Utah

UTAH PICNIC
FROM PAGE 1

apple strudel. The potica always sells out first because of its popularity in this area.

A drawing was held for a cornhole set donated by Cen-

tral Distributing and a quilt donated by Joanne Lessar.

Lodge members spend countless hours making this event a success. The bulk of proceeds from food sales are donated to various charities.

Enjoy the Slovenian Grape Festival at the SNPJ Farm

GRAPE FESTIVAL
FROM PAGE 1

the parade starts. Tony will lead the parade accordionists, and Joe Valencic will provide a song sheet and relate the stories behind the tradition.

The pavilion will be decorated with grapevines and hanging treats. If you dare grab a goody, you could wind up in jail!

Admission is free if you wear your Slovenian costume or bring your accordion to the parade. Participants should arrive by 2:15 to prepare.

Regular admission of \$8 per

person includes four hours of live music and all the balina you can play. Guests 18 and under are admitted free of charge.

Dinners, sandwiches and refreshments will be served from 2 p.m. on. The hearty harvest fare includes smoked Slovenian sausages, savory roast beef, and homemade krofe.

The SNPJ Farm is located at 10946 Heath Road, off Chardon Road (Route 6) in Kirtland, three miles east of State Route 306 and six miles west of Route 44. For more information phone (440) 256-3423.

St. Marys Lodge 581 resuming their language classes in September

LODGE 581 CLASS
FROM PAGE 1

had a great time at their annual picnic held on Aug. 2. More than 60 members were in attendance, enjoying the music

and the delicious food.

Future dances are scheduled on Sept. 13 at the Kersey Firemen's with the Culkar-Baskey Band, on Sept. 20 at Wildwoods with Mikey Dee, and

on Oct. 4 at the Kersey Firemen's with Patty C and The Guys. The weather will still be great, so come visit Elk County, Pa.

For information about Lodge 581

activities, SNPJ scholarships, or insurance and investment opportunities, contact Lodge Secretary Marcia Bleggi at (814) 335-4983 or President Pat Moore at (814) 589-2269.



Members of SNPJ Lodge 581 and the North Central Pennsylvania Slovene Polka Boosters held their combined annual picnic in August at the Firemen's Club in Kersey, Pa.



by DAVID GOMBKOTO
SNPJ Sales Director

The beneficiary you named 20 years ago

September is Life Insurance Awareness Month, making it a great time to think about something many of us rarely revisit: Who is listed as the beneficiary of your life insurance policies and annuities?

Think back to where you were 10, 20, or even 30 years ago. Was your family situation different? Have you gotten married or divorced? Have children or grandchildren been born? Has someone you previously named as a beneficiary passed away? Life changes considerably over the years. Unfortunately, beneficiary designations don't change along with it unless you take action.

A Policy Can Last Decades. Your Circumstances May Not.

When we purchase life insurance, we typically spend time thinking carefully about who should receive the benefit. Then the policy gets placed in a filing cabinet, safe or desk drawer, and years can pass without looking at it again. That's one of the reasons Life Insurance Awareness Month is such a good reminder to conduct a simple policy review. Start with a few basic questions:

- Who is currently listed as my primary beneficiary?
- Do I have a contingent beneficiary listed?
- Are these still the people I want to receive the proceeds?
- Is my contact information current?
- Have any major family or financial changes occurred since I purchased the policy?

One of the Powerful Advantages of Beneficiary Designations

Life insurance and annuities can provide an important estate-planning advantage that people sometimes overlook: When properly structured with a living, named beneficiary, proceeds pass directly to that beneficiary rather than through probate.

Probate is the legal process used to administer someone's estate after death. Depending on the circumstances and state involved, the process can include filing documents with the court, identifying and valuing assets, notifying creditors, paying debts and expenses, and ultimately distributing the remaining property to heirs or beneficiaries.

Probate can involve court costs, legal or administrative expenses, paperwork and delays. It may also make certain information about the estate part of the public court record.

Compare that with a properly designated beneficiary on a life insurance policy or annuity. The beneficiary generally submits the required claim directly to the insurance company, and the benefit is paid according to the terms of the contract without waiting for the probate process to distribute those proceeds.

For a family dealing with the loss of a loved one, that distinction can be extremely valuable.

When Beneficiary Planning Goes Wrong

Suppose someone named a spouse as beneficiary decades ago, but that spouse later passes away. If no contingent beneficiary was named and the designation was never updated, the proceeds could ultimately become payable to the owner's estate. Once proceeds become payable to an estate (one of the primary advantages of having a named beneficiary), direct transfer outside of probate may be lost.

Don't Forget About Your Annuity

Beneficiary planning isn't only about life insurance, it's just as important for annuities.

Annuities also allow an owner to designate who should receive the contract's remaining death benefit, subject to the contract terms. A properly established beneficiary designation can allow those proceeds to transfer directly to the beneficiary rather than becoming another asset that must first pass through probate.

Take 15 Minutes This September

Life Insurance Awareness Month doesn't necessarily mean you need to purchase another policy. Sometimes the most valuable thing you can do is make sure the coverage you already have still accomplishes what you intended. Pull out your life insurance and annuity information. Review your beneficiaries. Check your contingent beneficiaries. Make sure your contact information is current. And most importantly, ask yourself one simple question: *If something happened to me tomorrow, would these assets go to the people I want, in the way I intended?*

A few minutes spent reviewing your beneficiary designations today can potentially save your family considerable confusion, expense and frustration later. SNPJ is here to help you understand the life insurance and annuity certificates you own and make sure your information is up to date. Good financial planning isn't only about accumulating assets, it's also about making sure those assets reach the people you care about when they need them most.

For an updated review of your SNPJ policies, contact the Home Office at 1-800-843-7675.



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.

Name	
New Address	
City/State/Zip	

The University of Novo Mesto officially founded

NOVO MESTO (STA) — The University of Novo Mesto marked its official inception on July 1. The interim university senate held its maiden session on July 3.

During the session, the interim senate elected Nevenka Kregar Velikonja university president; five of the nine members on the management board were elected as well. The senate also adopted the university statute, which must be approved by the management board.

The university brings together existing higher education institutions in Novo Mesto, along with the Rudolfovo Science and Technology Centre. Initially, its headquarters will be located in the municipality premises, but will be transferred to Novo Mesto National Hall once a renovation is completed. Novo Mesto Mayor Gregor Macedoni announced that the National Hall would reopen at the end of September.

The university's acting rector, Janez Povh, said the establishment of the university "was the result of years of effort, work, and the dedication of many individuals."

The University of Novo Mesto is Slovenia's fourth public university. The oldest and largest in Slovenia is the University of Ljubljana, which was founded in 1919. The University of Maribor was founded in 1975, and the University of Primorska in 2003.

Large language model showing great promise

LJUBLJANA (STA) — Slovenia's national large language model, known as GaMS, is already seeing its first practical applications across medicine, industry, cultural heritage and IT, project partners announced in late June. GaMS represents an important step toward developing open and safe artificial intelligence for the Slovenian language, strengthening the country's technological sovereignty.

Presented at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Computer and Information Science, the generative model is the result of the nationally-funded PoVeJMo project. The project was led by the university's Centre for Language Resources and Technology with the aim of establishing a foundational AI infrastructure tailored specifically to the Slovenian language.

As a freely accessible, open-source model trained extensively on domestic texts, GaMS – an acronym for Generative Model for Slovenian – is designed for use in research, education, business and the public sector. It currently ranks among the most successful open-source models in its class, according to Marko Robnik Šikonja, the model's head of development.

Processing the massive datasets required immense computing power, Šikonja explained, utilizing both Slovenia's Vega supercomputer and the European Leonardo supercomputer in Bologna, Italy.

"The most recent versions can process significantly longer documents and are culturally adapted to understand local context and references," lead developer Domen Vreš said. "It's no longer an American 'John' trying to speak Slovenian, but rather our own Slovenian 'Janez,'" he added.

During the project's second phase, several tech companies adapted the base model for commercial use. A health IT firm used it to automatically generate structured medical documentation from doctor-patient conversations. Other practical deployments have included voice-operated warehouse management, interactive multilingual museum exhibits, and automated IT infrastructure code generation.

Looking ahead, project leader Simon Krek pointed out that future development will rely on securing continuous access to high-quality Slovenian texts, requiring a careful balance between AI training and copyright protection. Further upgrades will be supported by the Slovenian AI Factory (SLAIF) and, according to Faculty Vice Dean Slavko Žitnik, by Frida, the newly launched supercomputing cluster.

Renovation completed at the Piran Aquarium

PIRAN (STA) — A major renovation project was recently completed at the marine aquarium in the Slovenian coastal



town of Piran. Staff report that the animals have settled into their new tanks, and local marine experts are equally encouraged by rare sightings of marine life in the surrounding Adriatic waters.

Aquarium staff have noted a surprising resurgence of the Mediterranean feather star. Despite its plant-like name, the feather star is a marine animal and its presence is a strong indicator of a well-preserved marine environment.

Researchers at the National Institute of Biology marine station in Piran confirmed the increased sightings. However, after years during which the species was almost entirely absent, they don't yet have the data to explain its sudden return.

There is also cautious optimism regarding the noble pen shell [or fan mussel]. This giant Mediterranean bivalve has been devastated by disease across Europe in recent years, leaving only a single known surviving adult in Slovenian waters. However, juvenile shells measuring around 10 centimeters (approx. four inches) have recently been spotted at various locations along the coast.

Manja Rogelja, scientific manager at the Piran Aquarium, noted that while this marks the first successful settlement of young noble pen shells since 2022, the population remains critically vulnerable due to high infant mortality rates.

Restoration underway at the Bolfenk watchtower

MARIBOR (STA) — The Maribor municipality has completed the first phase of restoring the Bolfenk watchtower, situated on the nearby Pohorje mountain. This initial stage paves the way for further structural repairs; the ultimate goal is to return the landmark to its original architectural design and reopen it as a safe public viewing platform.

The preliminary phase focused on demolition and clearance of the site, which is located above Maribor, Slovenia's second-largest city. Workers removed various non-original additions that had visually and structurally burdened the tower over the course of recent decades.

This included the removal of modern antennas, transmitters and cabling, as well as demolition of a dilapidated cable car operator's hut that had been built into the interior of the tower.

Standing approximately 20 meters (65.6 feet) tall, the watchtower is not only a highly popular hiking destination but also a vital piece of the region's cultural heritage.

Constructed in 1909, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage notes that Bolfenk watchtower is a rare surviving example of early 20th-century technical architecture in the country. Because of its protected status, conservation guidelines dictate that the structure must be returned as closely as possible to its 1909 appearance.

"This is a vital part of our city's identity," said Maribor Mayor Saša Arsenovič. "The tower will significantly enhance the Maribor Pohorje mountain as a year-round destination. I'm confident that, once renovated, it will reclaim its status as one of our most recognizable landmarks and a favored excursion spot for both locals and tourists," he added.

Training hill at Planica opens after a renovation

PLANICA (STA) — The Bloudek Giant, the second-largest ski jumping hill at the Planica Nordic Centre in northwestern Slovenia, was renovated throughout the spring and early summer and is now back in operation, once again providing a training site for young talent.

With a hill size of 138 meters, the Bloudek Giant is second only to the 240-meter Gorišek Brothers Ski Flying Hill within a complex that includes eight ski jumping hills.

The Planica Nordic Centre announced that the renovation of the ski jumping hill, which originally opened in 1934 and was completely rebuilt in 2012, finished in mid-July and it is already in operation and ready for the new training season. Workers replaced the worn wooden base under the plastic surface on the landing slope, which had been damaged by moisture over the years. The plastic surface had to be removed and reinstalled after the new base was laid.

Many ski jumping hopefuls from

Slovenia and abroad are already training on the Bloudek Giant, which stands next to the new normal hill, also built in 2012 during the complete overhaul to replace the old 90-meter hill.

"Ski jumping hills are living infrastructure that requires a lot of regular maintenance and constant care," a representative said, noting that the jumping hills were maintained throughout the year so they are "ready for new sport stories and high-level accomplishments."

Slovenian artist's lace egg on display in D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (STA) — "Bloom-in Egg," a large egg made of bobbin lace by Slovenian architect and designer Manca Ahlin, is on display through Jan. 3, 2027, at the Hillwood Museum in Washington as part of a major exhibition on the role textiles have played over the centuries.

"Interwoven: A Tradition of Textiles" features items dating from the 17th century to the present and includes works by contemporary artists who explore techniques experiencing a revival in the 21st century, such as embroidery and lace-making.

Ahlin told the press that she had been invited to take part by the museum's curators after they discovered her work online, and felt it would be a good fit for an exhibition showcasing lace and textile creations. Her bobbin lace egg also "fits well with the museum's permanent collection that includes many eggs, from ceramic to metal, including the famous Fabergé eggs," she said.

Ahlin, who hails from Žiri, one of Slovenia's bobbin lace centers, began creating lace eggs a decade ago at the suggestion of a friend. Bloom-in Egg is not her first project in the U.S. Her life-size mammoth made of rope lace has adorned the renovated terminal at the regional airport in Waco, Texas, since December 2023.

Prior to that, Ahlin produced an even larger installation in Pittsburgh, where she created a three-story playground for children. "Gymnasium," a pun on gym and lace, was part of a renovation at the former Carnegie Library building and took her three years to make.

She also did rope-and-lace projects in New York for the Etsy offices in Brooklyn, at two Starbucks locations and at several restaurants, while her piece "The Good Shepherd" adorns the Slovenian Church of St. Cyril in the East Village.

Two of her works are currently on display in Slovenia, including one at the ELES energy company headquarters, where she made a lace-inspired piece from electrical cables that depicts the design of Tesla's electric motor.

Museum of Madness wins a European award

ŠENTILJ (STA) — The Museum of Madness, located in a castle that once housed people with mental disabilities, won this year's Kenneth Hudson Award for Institutional Courage and Professional Integrity as the European Museum Forum conferred its annual EMYA awards in Bilbao, Spain, in June.

The award is named for EMYA founder Kenneth Hudson who was known for his unconventional and critical view of museums. It is awarded to a museum, group or individual for courageous museum practices that challenge established understandings of the role and responsibility of museums.

Trate Castle in northeast Slovenia was transformed into the Museum of Madness in 2013 after the Psychiatric Center for the Mentally and Neurologically Ill closed in 2004 and the building began to fall into disrepair. A group of enthusiasts was organized to preserve the castle while addressing the phenomenon of madness and exploring the history of the former psychiatric institute.

The museum features the permanent exhibition "Endless Fields of Madness" and serves as an educational center. It has been recording an increasing number of visitors in recent years. While presenting the award, the European Museum Forum noted that the permanent exhibition, launched in 2022, transformed the castle from a place of isolation into a site of remembrance and dialogue.

The European Museum Forum, an initiative of the Council of Europe, also confers the European Museum of the Year Award and the Council of Europe Museum Prize.

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

BRO. ANTON P. SLEMEC
• LODGE 198 •

SIS. LUCILLE A. GAZDA
• LODGE 6 •

Sis. Gazda was born Oct. 6, 1942, in Canonsburg, Pa., a daughter of the late Andrew and Bessie (Sloka) Borek. She was a longtime employee of Brown's Candy Kitchen in

SIS. CAROL S. BROWN
• **LODGE 562** •

On behalf of the members of Lodge 562 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we offer our condolences to Sis. Brown's family, relatives and friends on their loss.

Shirley was very involved in music, and music was her first love. She started piano at a young age which led to her being the church organist for multiple parishes over

On behalf of the members of Lodge 6 and the Slovene National Benefit Society, we offer our condolences to Sis. Herlihy's family, relatives and friends on their loss.

SIS. LINDA L. SCALES
• LODGE 225 SEC./TREAS. •

A 30-year SNPJ member, Linda served as secretary and secretary/treasurer of Lodge 225 from 2010 until her passing in June. She served as a Lodge 225 delegate to three SNPJ Quadrennial Conven-

Survivors include her children, Glen W. (Sherry) Scales of Allen, Texas, and Donna L. (Steven) Platt of Butler, Mo.; siblings Dennis (Sandra) Clugston of Deer Park, Texas, Paula Clugston and Peggy Rowley, both of Pittsburgh, and Garry Clugston and David Mitchell, both of Tulsa, Okla.; grandchildren Jenny Jo Burdine, Kaleb Platt, Breanna Jones and Tessa Webb; 11 great-grandchildren; and two

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

In memory of my friend

DANNY
“DIGLER” KIEFER

who passed away 10 years
ago September 24

Love you and miss you!

Amy Mavrich, Lodge 138



For the month of July 2026

LODGE	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	CITY, STATE
A01	Eleanor Reinisch	05-21-2026	Naples, Fla.
A02	Mary L. Fisher	12-08-2025	Harmony, Pa.
3	Mark J. Susko	06-11-2026	Johnstown, Pa.
6	Shirley Herlihy	06-14-2026	Cary, N.C.
6	Robert W. Campbell	06-21-2026	McKees Rocks, Pa.
6	Linda L. Cartwright	06-23-2026	Bethel Park, Pa.
31	Darcie Lynn Cvelbar	08-10-2019	Sharon, Pa.
34	Katharina Kastelic	11-24-2019	Reynoldsburg, Ohio
87	Katherine L. Goodish	04-26-2025	New Florence, Pa.
87	Jeanne L. Corwin	07-11-2026	Vanderbilt, Pa.
106	Ruth A. Daughenbaugh	05-19-2026	Oakdale, Pa.
138	Leo Donald Chesnic	04-18-2016	Canonsburg, Pa.
138	Christopher W. Aiken	06-19-2026	Canonsburg, Pa.
138	Jeffrey S. Anderson	07-04-2026	Moundsville, W.Va.
138	Joseph L. Free	07-08-2026	Cochranton, Pa.
138	Barbara J. Tennant	11-05-2012	Pursglove, W.Va.
142	Gladys H. Tomsic	07-29-2019	Kirtland, Ohio
142	Tony Lunka	09-10-2021	Painesville, Ohio
158	Elaine D. Sintic	06-02-2026	Eastlake, Ohio
174	Karen Danaitis	05-07-2026	Curtis Bay, Md.
218	Mark J. Vivoda III	06-12-2026	Pueblo, Colo.
218	Phyllis A. Henander	10-18-2025	Highland Ranch, Colo.
225	Eda Wosel	06-09-2026	Granbury, Texas
257	John D. Bidlencsik	07-04-2026	Cleveland, Ohio
371	Norman W. Shelton	12-13-2023	Port Townsend, Wash.
518	Marlene J. Morris	06-04-2026	Swartz Creek, Mich.
564	Amy Kukenberger	08-29-2025	Cooperstown, N.Y.
584	Mary Hamerski	04-16-2026	Plover, Wis.
584	Anthony T. Hodnik	06-11-2026	Richmond, Ill.
584	Carol M. Meganck	06-29-2026	Pewaukee, Wis.
603	Jacqueline L. Bowman	05-15-2024	New Smyrna Bch., Fla.
604	James L. Tidwell	04-08-2025	Richmond Hghts., Ohio
604	Robert A. Ipavec	07-10-2026	Livonia, Mich.
604	Erna Nieman	10-27-2023	Willowick, Ohio
604	Rose S. Pelozo	11-18-2022	Highland Hghts., Ohio
715	Evelyn A. Kumer	04-17-2026	Lowellville, Ohio
715	Francis R. Svoboda	07-11-2021	Turtle Creek, Pa.
721	Shirley Kremer	02-27-2026	Aliquippa, Pa.
723	Richard J. Cruthers	11-02-2020	Fontana, Calif.
723	Darlene Keith	12-25-2018	Diamondville, Wyo.
729	Dorothy K. Steck	06-03-2026	Santa Barbara, Calif.
749	Faye Lear	07-03-2026	Johnstown, Pa.
776	Mary G. Zelic	05-01-2026	Wampum, Pa.

KAREN A. PINTAR
National Secretary/COO

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

The Karen J. (Kovach) Russ Memorial Park: A playground built by love, community and legacy

by BRYN SNOW
Lodge 6

BOROUGH OF SNPJ, Pa. — There are projects that improve a community, and then there are projects that become part of its story. The new Trailer Court Playground at the SNPJ Recreation Center is one of those stories.

On Saturday, July 11, during Slovenefest, members of the Trailer Court Association, the SNPJ Recreation Center Committee, volunteers, donors and families gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating far more than a new playground. Together, they celebrated a promise to future generations while honoring those who helped build the foundation of our community.

The mission behind the project was simple: provide children with a safe, modern place to laugh, explore and create lifelong memories. Yet bringing that vision to life required the generosity and determination of an entire community.

The effort began in an unexpected way. Jerome Petukauskas, the winner of last season’s Trailer Court fundraiser, chose to dedicate his winnings to establish the Playground Fund. That selfless gesture sparked a community-wide campaign that inspired supporters to give what they could. Every donation – large or small – helped move the project one step closer to reality.

The playground replaces one that had faithfully served families for nearly three decades. Installed through the fundraising efforts of Bob and Karen Russ and many dedicated volunteers, the original playground became

the backdrop for thousands of childhood memories. Time, however, eventually took its toll. After years of service, the aging equipment could no longer safely serve the children who loved it.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the passing of Karen J. (Kovach) Russ, whose love for family and community continues to inspire those who knew her. Her daughter, Ashley (Russ) Brately, shared a heartfelt reflection that resonated throughout the fundraising campaign.

Nearly 30 years ago, Ashley’s parents, Bob and Karen Russ, worked tirelessly to raise the funds for the original playground. When the playground was removed because it had become unsafe, Ashley saw not an ending, but an opportunity to continue her mother’s legacy.

In Karen’s memory, Ashley made a donation to the new playground fund and encouraged others to help complete the project. She wrote that her greatest hope was to see children once again filling the playground with laughter – a living tribute to a mother whose love for children and community continues to reach across generations.

That spirit was woven throughout the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Trailer Court Association President Ross Snow (6) welcomed the crowd by thanking the Recreation Center Committee, the Trailer Court Association Board, the many donors, and the volunteers who transformed an idea into reality. Special recognition was given to Jerome Petukauskas for planting the seed that launched the campaign, and to the more than 60 individuals whose generosity carried it to



The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Trailer Court playground at the SNPJ Recreation Center was held Saturday, July 11, during Slovenefest weekend.

completion.

The ceremony also recognized Recreation Center Director Megan Spieler and the many who work throughout the year to maintain the grounds, facilities and traditions that make the SNPJ Recreation Center a place families proudly return to year after year.

Perhaps the most touching moment came when all of the children were invited forward to hold the ribbon. As they gathered around the new playground, they represented exactly why the project mattered. Their excitement reminded everyone that this investment was never simply about playground equipment. It was about ensuring that future generations of SNPJ Brothers and Sisters would experience the same joy, friendships and traditions that have made the Recreation Center feel like home for so many families.

Before the ribbon was cut, Bob and Ashley were invited to stand beside the newly installed memorial sign as the playground was officially re-dedicated in memory of Karen J. (Kovach) Russ. While Karen’s memorial stone has long been a place where family and friends can remember

her, the new sign ensures that every family who visits the playground will know that this special place exists because of a legacy built on generosity, compassion and community.

Following a countdown from the crowd, Bob and Ashley had the honor of cutting the ribbon as applause echoed throughout the Recreation Center. Moments later, the children rushed onto the playground, filling it with laughter for the very first time. In that instant, the true purpose of the project became clear.

The new Trailer Court Playground, proudly named “Karen J. (Kovach) Russ Memorial Park,” is not simply a replacement for an aging structure. It is a bridge between generations. It honors those who came before us, celebrates the volunteers and donors of today, and invests in the families who will gather here for decades to come.

Karen Russ’ legacy is no longer remembered only in words engraved on stone. It now lives in every child who climbs the playset, races across the bridge and swings toward the sky, creating memories that will last a lifetime. That is what community looks like. That is what SNPJ has always been about.



[From left] **BOB RUSS** (158) and **ASHLEY (Russ) BRATELY** (158) are joined by SNPJ Trailer Court Association President **ROSS SNOW** (6) at the newly installed Karen J. (Kovach) Russ Memorial Park sign.



A base of rubber mulch helps provide safety for the children who will climb the playset, race across the bridge and swing toward the sky on the new SNPJ Trailer Court playground.

September meeting date on the Lodge 8 calendar

by TINA RIGLER
Lodge 8 Secretary/Treasurer

CHICAGO — Lodge 8 members met on Aug. 1 at the home of Jan and Bill Maresh. President Justin Rigler called the meeting to order. Sergeant-at-Arms Lanie Maresh reported 10 members and two guests in attendance. Secretary Tina Rigler read all correspondence and gave a financial report. Lodge officers presented the following reports:

Justin Rigler reported on his recent band performances. He played with Vince Rigler and the Polka Pals at Triglav Park in Wisconsin in June, and at the Gostilna during Slovenefest in July.

Meredith Maresh reported on the wine diploma she recently received after completing the program. Edward Dabrowski reported on a European trip he enjoyed since our last meeting, and Lanie Maresh reported on

her recent move and new address. Vince Rigler reported on Slovenefest and the Triglav picnic held in June celebrating America’s 250th anniversary and the 35th anniversary of Slovenia’s independence.

Tina Rigler announced that since the last meeting, she has retired from the law firm where she was employed as a legal assistant.

Lodge members Jason Rigler and Robert Rigler attended the SNPJ Young Adult Conference. Robert was vacationing through Europe, so Jason Rigler gave a report on the conference weekend.

Tina Rigler gave an updated Chicago Federation report regarding the last two meetings and the Memorial Day service.

During the meeting we discovered that Patrick Maresh would be celebrating his 30th birthday, and we all joined in to sing to him. Happy birthday,



Even though the weather wasn’t the most cooperative, SNPJ Lodge 8 members did have the chance to enjoy a barbecue during their August meeting.

Patrick! Meredith Maresh and Sue Rus won the meeting awards.

Following the meeting, members enjoyed a barbecue hosted by Jan and Bill Maresh. A pool party was also planned; however, the weather didn’t cooperate that day. But every-

one did enjoy the barbecue and shared all the goodies.

Our next meeting is scheduled Sunday, Sept. 20, starting at 1 p.m. at the Rigler home. Please remember to bring your collection of pull tabs, along a prize for the card bingo we will play following the meeting.

Select the top klobasa at the 22nd Sausage Festival

by JOE VALENCIC
Lodge 5

KIRTLAND, Ohio — Klobasa is king on Saturday, Sept. 12, when the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame hosts the 22nd annual Slovenian Sausage Festival at the SNPJ Farm.

Celebrate with eight hours of non-stop music from noon until 8 p.m. as 50 accordionists “squeeze to please” on stage and during the jam sessions.

A total of 10 Cleveland-Style bands and entertainers will serve up polkas and waltzes to help you burn off the extra calories. Bring your squeeze-box or banjo and play along.

Sample a sausage from each maker, then choose your favorite. Pierogies, strudels and more await you between spins on the dance floor.

Each Slovenian sausage (*kranjska klobasa*) is made of

cured and smoked pork with garlic and a savory blend of seasonings. Vote for the vendor whose klobasa you like best. The winners of the 2026 People’s Choice and Jury Award will be announced at 6 p.m.

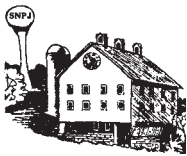
Tickets are \$12 in advance, \$15 at the gate. Guests age 18 and under are admitted free of charge.

Advance purchase tickets are available through the Polka

Hall of Fame, 605 East 222nd St. in Euclid, Ohio, next to Euclid City Hall. The Polka Hall of Fame is open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Phone (216) 261-FAME or e-mail Polkashop@aol.com.

The SNPJ Farm is located at 10946 Heath Road in Kirtland, off Chardon Road (Route 6), three miles east of Route 306 and six miles west of Route 44.

SNPJ Recreation Center 2026 Fraternal Events Schedule



Sept. 4-6 **National SNPJ Days**

SNPJ Membership Anniversaries September 2026

80-Year Members

Lodge	Member
5	Leonard M. Jaklich
584	Josephine Vidmar

70-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
8	Darla L. Shaw	581	Joseph F. Bizzak
174	Thomas G. Serokman	776	Marie Fabich
257	Alexandria Warden		

60-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
31	Robert J. Sliman	715	Francine C. Previc
138	Mary L. Neill	749	Shirley M. Gall
218	Louis W. Alfonso	770	Diane M. May
225	Joyce E. Harmison	776	Edward E. Snyder
225	Agnes J. Goodman	776	Henrietta M. Snyder
584	Michael J. Turk	A02	Dennis G. Friday
677	Mary A. Stroka		

50-Year Members

Lodge	Member	Lodge	Member
3	Anne M. Stenger	216	Fred C. Jug
3	Mary A. Koval	216	John P. Froehlich
6	Mark M. Miller	225	Margaret J. Shilts
33	Christine M. Petukauskas	225	Kathryn J. Mossom
87	Lee DeBone	304	Kathy J. Millbourn
87	Patricia A. King	371	Frances J. Strainer
87	Emma J. Hopeck	518	John S. Kirar
87	Paul A. Rendulic	562	Joyce A. Schmidt
106	Daniel L. Kokal	576	Lynn M. Lynch
106	Mary J. Mramor	581	Brenda A. Kogoy
126	Philip A. Yakovac	584	Danny J. Sertich
138	Deborah A. Krineski	604	Douglas D. Allen
138	Joyce P. Elish	629	Mona R. Robertson
142	Charles H. Kohli	643	William A. Copich
153	David J. Kohler	643	Gerald Gantar
153	Joanne C. Coppola	677	Laurie L. Huff
153	Scott E. Whitehouse	715	Dale R. Snyder
158	Brian J. Malin	729	Jeffrey P. Reyome
158	John S. Petkovsek	776	Edwin M. Parrott
174	Kathleen A. Thomas	776	Kimberley A. Confer
		776	Carol J. Greb

SNPJ Scholarship Fund Donations for the months of June & July 2026

SNPJ Lodge 518, Melvindale, Mich.....\$200	William Burdick, Erie, Pa.....\$50	Ronald & Jo Ann Pfeiffer (225), Kansas City, Kan.....\$50
Charlotte Popich, Macedonia, Ohio.....\$100	SNPJ Lodge 225, Girard, Kan.....\$50	In memory of Linda Scales
In memory of Shirley Popich Herlihy	In memory of Linda Scales	

Languages changing before your very eyes (and ears!)

by PAMELA RICHTAR PANDŽA
Lodge 723

FONTANA, Calif.—I am not a linguist. I am only a curious observer of social phenomena. I have been living in Croatia and Slovenia during parts of the year for a significant period of my life (returning to California when the weather cools). I am fascinated by the manner in which children, young adults and my “mature” age group either embrace or battle the changes in their native Slovene or Croatian languages, resulting from the invasion of English.

Cultural shifts, the movement of people, and political, social and economic factors have always influenced vocabulary, syntax and all aspects of living languages. Likely because of factors including the internet, television, movies, immigration and easy travel, the shifts in language patterns are more blatant and quick moving these days than ever before. That makes them more noticeable and in some cases controversial.

The speed of language changes makes some folks, experts and lay people alike, very upset. I have had well-educated people in Slovenia tell me that there is danger that their native language will cease to exist, with English doing what Franz Josef and the German language couldn't quite manage. They cringe at the broad application of English words, phrasing and structure to meld with or replace altogether what was formerly expressed so nicely in Slovene. In my own household, I hear complaints about the “invasion” of English into every mode of life. You can even hear a referral to the bastardization of the native language.

Other people in Croatia and Slovenia accept the revisions of their languages with a “let it be” attitude. They may not like all the innovations, but deal with them more or less like new fashion trends. There seems to be three camps: a group angry and concerned about the changes; another group expressing a neutral stance, just taking things in stride; and those who think that what might qualify as a global language is a positive direction, like an innovative form of Esperanto.

What is interesting is how English has flowed into many levels of society in so many places. You can catch it in intellectual broadcasts and publications, hear it as street language (especially cursing in English), printed on signs, used in marketing, and literally found “all around you.”

I think this situation is different from the amusement the

first and second generations from immigrants found with their parents’ and grandparents’ “Sloveneglish” phrases. “*BOM PA FIXALA CARU*”—type language seemed charming, and we associated it with the immigrants themselves and their specific personalities. The language mixture would die with its practitioners for the most part. The current invasion of English influence now seems to strengthen with each generation and to be *en vogue*.

Europeans in general are better at teaching and using multiple languages than are Americans, except where there is a mass of newer immigrants in a specific region of America. In Europe, you rarely encounter a North European who does not have a decent command of English. Some do a little language mixing, most others none at all.

In Croatia and Slovenia, children learn English in school, from the TV, and on the internet. Sometimes they are in a household where they use several different languages with several different family members and relatives and friends.

In one case of a married couple whom I know in Slovenia, one spouse is a native English speaker and the other is not. They decided that only the native speaker would communicate with their children in English to avoid any chance of the kids having an accent in English. I recently saw the results: the plan worked. The children are also fluent in German, and I can detect no “mix and match” of languages.

In another case I recently encountered in Croatia, a 5-year-old began to fret when he came out of the house and I was speaking with his mother in English. Why? He has been forbidden to speak English as his parents told me that he was making serious grammatical errors in Croatian, his native language. He would also substitute words, like the names of colors, with English terms.

Prior to going to school, he is receiving professional help with Croatian so that he can speak it fluently. In addition to missing common words in Croatian, he was applying some of the underlying structural basis of English to Croatian sentences. The scenario has caused the family grief.

In other circumstances, the children don't experience such confusion. Thinking back on some of my teaching days, I once encountered a young student of mine in the bank with his mother. The child was the equivalent of a high-level interpreter, speaking Spanish and English, and he never seemed

to use the wrong language with the teller or the mother. And that setting required some specialized vocabulary and skills.

An anecdotal detail that once startled me was the situation in a kindergarten class when I was helping a new teacher do the one-on-one information gathering and skill assessment required by a governmental agency. The question to the child was “What language do you speak at home?” One student stopped to concentrate and finally said to me “What's the name of the one that you and I are talking?” I responded “English.” He then replied, “At home we speak the other one” (which in this case meant Spanish).

Personally, I am unsure whether to view the fast track of English invading the sanctity of other languages as a negative, positive or neutral trend. Communication is supposed to breed understanding, and that

is usually considered a plus. On the other hand, if cultural identity and language are mutually supportive, should we be concerned about the assimilation of a small country's language—and perhaps culture—into a dominant cultural and linguistic bastion?

Information and data to help answer the question could be gathered from places such as India, where the myriad of local languages forced English to become the official language for national and government use. We can imagine the directions this issue might travel.

Meanwhile, there may be cases of 60-year-olds asking 6-year-olds the meaning of utterances such as “That's cool” or “*Edukacija*.” This is a different scenario than when we descendants of immigrants calculated how much money “*pet in dvajset*” would be. And the world goes 'round and 'round...



Photos taken in downtown Ljubljana show the prevalence of the English language influence in Slovenia:

[Above] 100% Slovenian beef, but 90% English language... with some Spanish thrown in. The price, from several years ago, is in euros.

[Below] Hey – watch out for that “DANGER” truck!



Important figures to consider...



- 29%... people who would purchase more life insurance if they were asked
- 62%... people who own coverage, but don't know what they have or why they have it
- 82%... people who are under-insured

If your coverage is over 5 years old, contact SNPJ for a policy review.
1-800-843-7675



SNPJ 88th National Bowling Tournament October 9-11, 2026

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

MEN	WOMEN
Doubles & Singles Events at Strabane Lodge 138 269 Latimer Ave. Strabane, PA 15363 Club: (724) 745-9860 Lanes: (724) 745-9775 ☐ Friday, Oct. 9, 6:30 p.m. <i>Shift limited to 32 bowlers</i> ☐ Saturday, Oct. 10, Noon <i>Shift limited to 40 bowlers</i>	Doubles & Singles Events at Sygan Lodge 6 540 Third Ave. Bridgeville, PA 15017 Phone: (412) 221-9862 ☐ Saturday, Oct. 10, Noon <i>Shift limited to 40 bowlers</i>
MEN	WOMEN
Team Event at Strabane Lodge 6 540 Third Ave. Bridgeville, PA 15017 Phone: (412) 221-9862 ☐ Sunday, Oct. 11, 9 a.m. ☐ Sunday, Oct. 11, Noon ☐ Sunday, Oct. 11, 3 p.m.	Team Event at Sygan Lodge 138 269 Latimer Ave. Strabane, PA 15363 Club: (724) 745-9860 Lanes: (724) 745-9775 ☐ Sunday, Oct. 11, 10 a.m.

Doubles & Singles Entry fee \$32 per person Friday/Saturday Only	Lodge No.	Highest Average 2025-26	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 2025-26
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

Make checks payable to **SNPJ Lodge 6**

ENTRY DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 1, 2026

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

PROSVETA Crossword

Autumn Vibes (#0926) by StatePoint Media

ACROSS

- *Maze plant
- Wharton degree, acr.
- Special effects in "Avatar," acr.
- Dwarf buffalo
- "On Golden Pond" bird
- Isolated
- Atomizer output
- Enthusiasm
- Pueblo people, pl.
- *Pre-game party (2 words)
- Doomsayer's sign
- Perfume bottles
- Tombstone acronym
- Construction binder
- "_____": The Movie, 2002 slapstick comedy
- Genetic info carrier, acr.
- Dorsa, sing.
- "He's Just Not That _____ You"
- *Like some sweaters
- Earth Day mo.
- Opposite of cation
- "Que Sera _____"
- Approved
- Denotes middle
- Assess pro rata
- Lorraine's neighbor
- Doctor Dolittle, e.g.
- Temporary stay

50. Chicago's Navy _____, tourist destination

- *Popular fall spectator sport
- Hutu's opponents, 1994
- Quinceanera or bat mitzvah
- Biblical captain
- Rocky ridge
- Having wings
- Russian parliament
- Diamond or ruby
- An affirmative
- Dog command

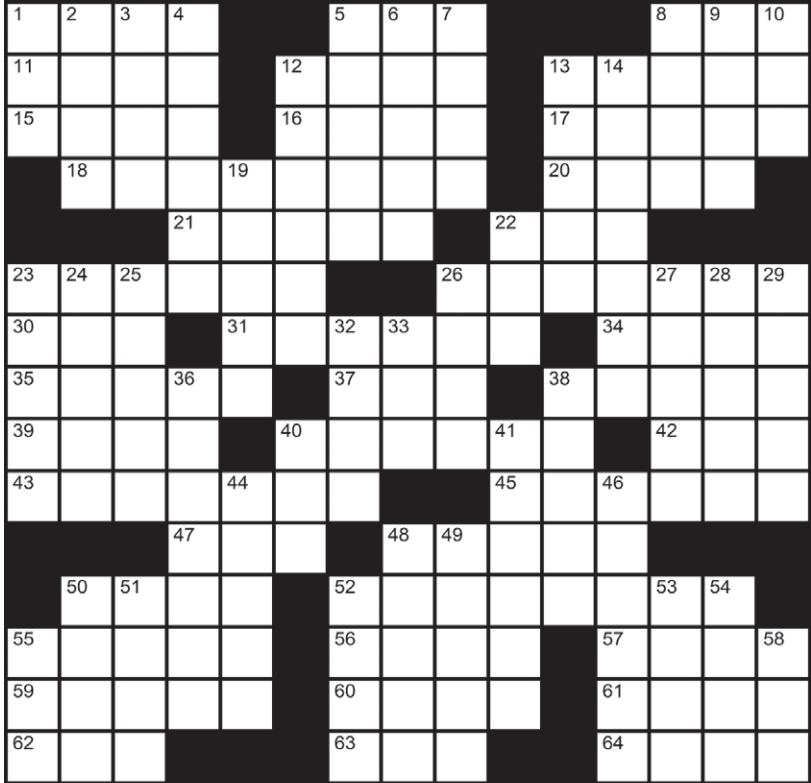
13. Before appearance of life, geology

- *Patch purchase
- _____ Hop dance
- Ewe's mate
- *Like air in fall
- Keyboard key
- Introduction to economics
- Twelve angry men, e.g.
- Carl Jung's inner self
- Indifferent to emotions
- Type of probe
- *Leaf collector
- R&R stop
- *Bushels of apples, e.g.
- Impromptu
- Over the top, in text
- Time for an egg hunt
- Falcon's home
- Uses two feet
- Bridal veil fabric
- Smidgins
- Unadulterated
- Individual unit
- Brawl
- Clod
- Tibetan priest
- Chasing game
- *Cushion on a fall ride

DOWN

- Cameron, to friends
- The Fonzie: "Sit _____!"
- Civil rights icon Parks
- Richard Wright's "_____ Son"
- Relating to mole
- Whatever rocks them!
- "Green Gables" protagonist
- Walking helper
- Smiley face
- "_____ Now or Never"
- Smooth, in music

The solution to puzzle #0926 will run in the Oct. 1 issue.



CALL CONSUMER CELLULAR 888-804-0913

Off First Month of New Service!
USE PROMO CODE: **G2590**

Consumer Cellular

© StatePoint Media © 2023 Consumer Cellular Inc. For promo details please call 888-804-0913