



WINTER ISSUE: DECEMBER 2020 EDITOR: HELEN E. FROHNA

NEWSLETTER OF THE UWM SLOVENIAN ARTS COUNCIL SLOVENIAN ARTS PROGRAM



Pozdravljeni!



During these past nine months, as many of you are experiencing an upside-down year, we too on the Slovenian Arts Council are in the same situation. Special occasions of Easter, Mother's and Father's Days, 4th of July, and summer weddings have either been canceled or postponed. The usual picnics and banquets sponsored by the various Slovenian organizations here and in the Midwest have been canceled. The Slovenian Cultural Booth was not featured at the Annual Holiday Folk Fair which was canceled. Similarly, the Council's plans for a visit and performance by a high school choir from Ljubljana have been indefinitely postponed. Performances by musicians and artists here in the US have been impossible. This has really saddened and disappointed the members of the Slovenian Arts Council; we strive to host at least two events per year but have been unable to do so.

So, what is our new "normal" and how should we all adapt while trying to continue to live our lives without too much disruption? The world has been changing over the past years, including the area of technology. We have resources at our disposal that couldn't even be fathomed 20 or 50 years ago. In the 1960s and 1970s, I remember my dad cherishing his letters that he received from his sisters who remained in Slovenia after he emigrated. Written on airmail onionskin paper (to qualify for airmail postage rather than postage by sea), dad kept his letters by the kitchen window and would read them over and over. It was his cherished "Easter Mail" and "Christmas Mail" from his "people." Later on, overseas telephone calls replaced the letters, but thrifty dad always reminded the caller to talk quickly because those minutes added up and were expensive.

If you think about the technical innovations over a span of even 10 years, how is it possible to talk overseas without incurring costly charges by the phone company, using phones that don't have cords and that are not plugged into the outlet in the wall? Using the internet and new developments in wireless devices, we are now able to talk, share photos, and video chat, at any time of day and from anywhere, using a cell phone, tablet, or laptop. We all have had to learn how to adapt and how to use these new methods of communication, which leads me to introduce you to a new type of "event" that the Slovenian Arts Council would like to present.

Many are already familiar with the Zoom application that has now replaced conference meetings at the office, with employees participating via their computer monitors in their "home offices." In this issue of the newsletter, you will find a handout with all the appropriate information to login to upcoming Zoom presentations/lectures that the Council is sponsoring. There is no charge for this activity. Joe Valencic of Cleveland, Ohio, is the presenter. Joe gave an enjoyable and interesting lecture in Milwaukee for us in 2017.

The members of the Council, along with the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, Peck School of the Arts, Mary & Frank Ermenc Slovenian Arts Fund, extend our sincere appreciation to the families who donated to the Slovenian Arts Program in memory of their loved ones who passed away this year. It has been an especially difficult time for the families who have had to modify their loved ones' Celebrations of Life in order to comply with ever-changing pandemic protocols and quarantine. As you will notice in the Memorials listed in this newsletter, the deceased were active members of our Slovenian-American community who sang with the Slovenian choruses, served as lodge officers of the various fraternal organizations, and were often seen at the various ethnic picnics and events in the past years. May they rest in peace!

On behalf of the Slovenian Arts Council, I wish you a Blessed Christmas Holiday.
As for a Happy New Year, we cannot be happy enough to finish this crazy, unexpected year.

Here's a toast to a much better, HEALTHIER, New Year 2021. Na Zdravje!

President: Christina Carroll



Three Santa's in Slovenia It's good to be a Slovenian Child at Christmas!

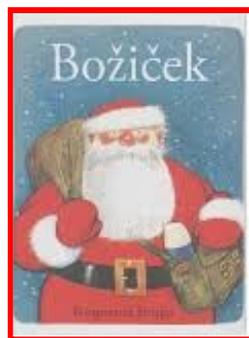
ST. NICHOLAS/SVETI MIKLAVŽ



The night air is filled with the cold vapor of tiny breaths as children gather in *Prešeren Square*, eagerly awaiting the first of three presents they will receive over Christmas. Every year, on December 5 at 5:00pm, *Ljubljana* plays host to the Saint Nicholas/Sveti Miklavž procession, which marks the first of the three traditions of Christmas in Slovenia. Even though he is a famous figure all across the Christian world, his image has been especially entrenched into Slovenian culture. Tradition says that he comes from heaven on the eve of his death, December 5, and bestows gifts of sweets, fruit and chocolates and other small gifts to the children. He is accompanied by angels, who assist him to disperse the gifts to all the children who have been good that year. He is closely followed by *parklji*, the image of the devil who come and scare the bad children. The angels are also there to protect the bad children from the devil and warn them to be good in future years. The procession begins in front of the town hall in *Mestni Trg*, and continues on to *Prešeren Square* where he addresses the crowd before disappearing into the Franciscan Church.

FATHER CHRISTMAS/BOŽIČEK

Božiček actually comes from the story of the This image of Santa spread around the world and Slovenia embraced this belief, calling their The Christian Saint Nicholas and the commercial discouraged during the Socialist era under revived shortly before independence. Slovenian experience the more modern commercial gifts are brought on the eve of the birth of famous and elaborate depiction of the nativity is Over the Christmas week the banks of the with open-air bars selling hot food and drinks. The center is lavishly decorated with a myriad of colored lights, all of which are ceremoniously switched on at a big event on December 3 at 5:00 pm to not only mark the beginning of the Christmas period, but also to coincide with the birthday of *France Prešeren*.



modern day Santa Claus. like most countries Santa, *Božiček*. Santa were Yugoslavia, but were children now get to Christmas where the Christ. The most found in *Postojna Caves*. *Ljubljana* come alive

GRANDFATHER FROST/DEDEK MRAZ

December 31 sees the arrival of the third of Slovenia's gift-bearers. Prior to 1991 religious and commercial celebrations were frowned upon. Rather than banning them completely, the authorities replaced them with the Russian communist *Ded Moroz*, which was translated into Slovenian as *Dedek Mraz*, literally Grandfather Frost. Unlike Santa, Grandfather Frost doesn't sneak presents to the children during the night, but hands them out personally at gatherings on New Year's Eve.



The break-up of Yugoslavia saw the open return of *Miklavž* and Santa, but Grandfather Frost was not tossed out with the rest of the former Yugoslavia's ways, but integrated into the new ways, thus providing Slovenian children with the luck of three days over Christmas where they receive presents. *Dedek Mraz* is believed to have his home under *Triglav* and emerges close to New Year's Eve to visit children all across Slovenia.

From December 26 to 30 *Dedek Mraz* will ride through *Ljubljana* on his carriage pulled by two Lipizzaner Horses and appear in *Krekov trg*, *Ciril-Metodov trg*, *Stritarjeva ulica*, *Prešernov trg*, *Wolfova ulica* and *Zvezda Park*.

Today many families follow the tradition of all three, and rather than being the enemies of the old ways they have been harmonized and each has retained his place in Slovenian Christmas tradition.

The week of celebrations along the *Ljubljanica* culminate in a climatic display of fireworks launched from the castle overlooking the old town and city center. Crowds gather in *Prešeren Square* and along the river to view this spectacle and welcome in the New Year with wine, champagne and music.

The Slovenian Holiday Sing-Along tradition of the Uspeh Slovenian Chorus,
planned this year for Tuesday, December 2, at the Todd Post,
has been cancelled due to COVID pandemic concerns.
We hope our guests will join us for the December 7, 2021, return of the event!

JOIN IN A ZOOM PRESENTATION WITH MR. JOE VALENCIC



Joe Valencic, a second generation Slovenian-American is very active in a number of local Slovenian-American organizations. Joe documents the Slovenian-American experience in films, lectures and exhibitions in the U.S. and Slovenia. He directs the museum of the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame which celebrates the style of American dance music rooted in Slovenian folk songs. He organizes many Slovenian-American projects and serves as president of the Cleveland Federation of SNPJ Lodges. He hosts a weekly radio and online show with music and news from Slovenia.

Note: You will need to download the ZOOM app in advance to access this link. If you haven't downloaded ZOOM yet, you can easily download it here.

<https://zoom.us/download>

If you need more detailed instructions or information on the zoom session, please e-mail your questions to slovartsmke@gmail.com and we will be more than happy to guide you through the process and answer your questions.

Topic: Slovenian Holiday Traditions: **December 8, 2020 7:00 PM CT**

Slovenians celebrate Christmas and the New Year, but with their own unique traditions. Joe will share some of the holiday activities and observations in Slovenia, from Christmas markets and special recipes, to visits from Baby Jesus and the Three Kings. You can view a live Nativity in *Postonja Caves* or have your horses blessed in the *Brkini Hills*. Many regions have distinctive customs found nowhere else. How do Slovenians decorate their Christmas trees? What do Slovenians toast with besides wine or schnapps? Joe will have recipes and song sheets available. Do you have a favorite Slovenian holiday recipe or tradition?

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84996652556?pwd=OG9tbFIRL2FRZFE2KzF2TmxnamVNdz09>

Meeting ID: 849 9665 2556 Passcode: 779077

Dial by your location: +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
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Topic: The Uncommon Sights of Slovenia:
Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2021, 7:00 PM CT

Tourists in Slovenia love *Lake Bled*, *Ljubljana* and the *Postanja Caves*. Joe will reveal many of the fascinating sights in Slovenia that visitors often miss. You can wander the deep, dramatic *Vintgar Gorge*, carved by rapids and fed by a stories-high waterfall. A stroll through the picturesque town of *Celje* takes you from prehistoric and Roman Times to the age of castles and cathedrals in just one afternoon. Historic pilgrimage churches impress you with magnificent art and architecture and miraculous tales. You will want to take notes for your next trip to Slovenia. What is your favorite experience in Slovenia? Share your stories.

Meeting ID: 886 0461 7883 Passcode: 704596 Dial by your location: Numbers above.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88604617883?pwd=emZjeFpwNzJ6bkpkb2pVZWl0bGdkdz09>

Topic: The Flavors of Slovenia
Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 7:00 PM CT

There's a lot more to Slovenian cooking than sausage and potica. Joe will present some of the unique dishes and pastries that define the different regions of Slovenia. The country is a crossroads culture and Slovenian menus reflect the best of Mediterranean, Alpine and Balkan cookery. Learn what they serve over pasta or polenta on the coast, or what to stew in the mountains, or how they like their buckwheat grits in the east. There are also more obscure traditions. In Notranjsko you can bake a dormouse or serve a tasty turnip hot-pot in Prekmurje. Joe will have easy-to-prepare recipes available for classic and specialty Slovenian favorites you can try at home. Do you have a favorite Slovenian recipe? Let us know and we'll share it.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87592818696?pwd=M2N2RVpmRlFmdEpoQ2JrQzJVb2Mvdz09>

Meeting ID: 875 9281 8696 Passcode: 519360 Dial by your location: Numbers above

Go Digital!

If you would like to receive *The Slovenian Arts Program of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA* newsletters in a digital format (pdf) instead of a paper copy sent through the US Postal Service, please send us your email address to: slovartsmke@gmail.com We will still maintain the mailing of hard copies to those who do not wish to share their email addresses with us.

Please note, your email address will be used **ONLY** to distribute our newsletters, notices of our sponsored events, and other invitations (Zoom, etc.). Emailed items will be sent from slovaratsmke@gmail.com. This account is administered privately by an officer of the Slovenian Arts Council, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA.

If you plan to participate in the December 8, 2020, Zoom meeting, "*Slovenian Holiday Traditions*," you can still receive this issue of the SAP newsletter in a digital format prior to that date. It will then be much easier for you to click on the active link in the description area which will take you to the Zoom sign in, as shown in the detailed information for this session (see enclosed handout).
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† NEVER FORGOTTEN †

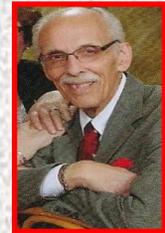
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Jane & Terrence Donaldson
Melanie & Michael Hackett
Mr. & Mrs. Perry Huyek
Susan & Jeffrey Mouthey
Deborah Pardek
Sarie Shainock



Fellow Slovenians that we have lost in 2020

Caroline Ellich □ Karen Janezic □ Olga Jorsch □ Miha Mejač
Frances Piwoni □ Helen Prijic □ Fannie Smole ♥ Connie Vidmar
□ Tom Yaklich ♥ Leopold Yonke



SLOVENIAN ARTS PROGRAM

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Email inquiries: jeffreymartinka@yahoo.com

- * To make a tax-deductible donation with a credit card:
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 AND YOUR
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 IN MEMORY OF OUR
 LOVED ONES!**

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Vesele božične praznike in
srečno novo leto 2021!

Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year 2021!



MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the
Slovenian Arts Council,
in collaboration with the
UWM Peck School of the Arts,
is to plan and implement
programs of Slovenian arts, artifacts,
dance, literature, music, and theatre
that promote the fine arts.

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