



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

# NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 11, 2013, VOLUME 9, NUMBER 36

## Annual General and Honorary Consuls' Meeting



Honorary consuls and consul general next to Ambassador Dr. Cerar and embassy staff after the meeting.

**As traditionally on the first Friday of October, the Embassy of Slovenia hosted the annual meeting of consul general and honorary consuls of the Republic of Slovenia in the United States. The meeting was also attended by the Slovenian honorary consul in the United Mexican States, which the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington is covering nonresidentially.**

The gathering was an ideal opportunity for the consuls to meet with the new Slovenian

ambassador to the United States Dr. Božo Cerar, and to present their activities throughout the year, in which they endeavored to strengthen economic, scientific, educational and cultural relations between Slovenia and the United States.

In his introductory remarks, Ambassador Dr. Cerar outlined the importance of honorary consuls' hard work and engagement to promote Slovenia as a business and tourist destination in their respective states. He also expressed

his great gratitude for their help to Slovenian citizens throughout the U.S. and Mexico. In his welcome address, Ambassador Dr. Cerar especially welcomed consul general in Cleveland, Jure Žmauc, and newly appointed honorary consuls: Ambassador Yousif B. Ghafari for Michigan, and Mr. Miro Medved for Minnesota, whose consulates were opened in October last year and in last May, respectively. New consulate was also opened in Mexico in April 2013 in the state of Querétaro and is headed by



Honorary Consul Danijel Muršec.

Next to honorary consuls Ghafari, Medved and Muršec, the network of honorary consuls currently consists of Mr. Thomas J. Brandi (California), Dr. Gregory S. Chan (Florida), Mrs. Barbara K. Nelson (Kansas), Dr. Lydia Mihelič Pulsipher (Tennessee), Mr. Paul N. Steinfeld (Georgia), Dr. John P. Vidmar (Illinois), Mr. Srečko Vidmar (Colorado), Mr. Richard B. Wilkens III (Texas), Mr. Ronald Joseph Zlatoper (Hawaii) and Mr. Ariel Lopez (Mexico, Mexico City) and is due to expand to Pennsylvania and New York.

After presentations and discussion on bilateral relations between Slovenia and the U.S. in economic cooperation, science and technology, education, culture, public diplomacy and consular affairs, honorary consuls updated the ambassador on their efforts toward the promotion of Slovenia in their respective states. The meeting was also an opportunity for the participants to discuss



The annual meeting was also an opportunity to discuss future projects in scientific, economic and cultural cooperation between Slovenia and the U.S.

current developments in Slovenian internal and foreign policy as well as for the honorary consuls to get acquainted with the reforms undertaken by the Slovenian government, to exchange their experiences with their colleagues and to review further cooperation with support of the embassy staff.

In the last part of the meeting, this year's special guest-speaker, Adeline Hinderer Sayers,

Deputy to the Head of Trade and Agriculture Section at the Delegation of the European Union to the United States, briefed the consuls on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement that is at the moment under negotiation between the E.U and the U.S. and is anticipated to drive growth and create jobs on both sides of the ocean and boost transatlantic partnership.

## EVENTS

# 10th Anniversary of SUA Branch 108

Slovenian Union of America's Branch 108 celebrated its 10th anniversary on Saturday, October 5, afternoon. The event, attended by SUA officers, members, their family and friends as well as other members of the Slovenian community in the U.S., was hosted by the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington.

Over 100 guests were welcomed by the Ambassador of Slovenia, Dr. Božo Cerar, who stressed in his speech the branch's successes in the past ten years in empowering the Slovenian heritage through numerous programs and



Ms. Bernardka Kovačič Fitzsimmons giving address at the beginning of the celebration, next to her standing are members of SUA #108 and Ambassador Dr. Cerar.



The milestone anniversary celebration was also joined by SUA's national officer Mary Lou Voelk.

events. The ambassador also recognized branch's president, Ms. Bernadette Kovačič Fitzsimmons, for her efforts to encourage and inspire its members to preserve Slovenian legacy, holidays, culture and traditions.

In her remarks, Ms. Fitzsimmons underlined that Branch 108 was founded with the goal of expanding the possibilities for SUA membership to grow and to offer to members and families of Slovenian descent in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, and beyond, opportunities for



Estelle Zorman, on the occasion donated to the embassy a painting of Most na Soči (Bridge over the Soča River). The gift was presented to the Ambassador by Ms. Fitzsimmons.

involvement and participation. She stressed that all the achievements as well as the celebratory tenth anniversary event would not have been possible without the support and dedication of numerous members. Recognition to SUA 108 members on the occasion was also given by the sister-branch 103 represented by Ana Šonc Jevtič.

The milestone anniversary celebration was also joined by SUA's national officer and Vice President of Culture and Heritage, Mary Lou Deyak Voelk, who conveyed to the members of

branch 108 congratulations of SUA's President, Bonnie Prokup, and the entire board. She underlined the importance of sustaining the ethnic heritage and of teaching young generations about their legacy, since only customs, traditions, and celebrations build a strong family, a strong community, and a strong nation.

On this celebratory occasion, the guests were also superbly entertained by the chamber choir Megaron, which, like branch 108, was also founded 10 years ago, and consists of alumni of the Ljubljana Diocesan Classical High School, known for its excellent choral tradition. The more than 40-voice mixed choir performed, under the baton of conductors Martina Batič and Damijan Močnik, arrangements of numerous Slovenian as well as American traditional songs. The choir's distinctive, inspiring and sensitive performance was the last on its tour of Canada and the U.S and was followed by a reception at which typical Slovenian foods and wine were served.



Concert by Megaron Chamber Choir which on occasion performed numerous Slovenian songs, including Slovenec sem and Triglav moj dom.

## Tanja Verlak Exhibits in New York

Slovenian artist and photographer Tanja Verlak is currently exhibiting work from her series ZOO in the exhibition THEY ARE US: Animal Identity and the Anthropomorphic Urge, at Rick Wester Fine Art, located in the Chelsea art district in New York City.

Tanja Verlak, a doctoral candidate at the Royal College of Art, photographed in and around zoos in Eastern Europe and the United Kingdom from 2006 to 2007. It was after encountering Verlak's work from her series Zoo, that the gallery was inspired to curate an exhibition focusing on our own innate urge as humans to identify with animals.

In Zoo, Verlak's caged subjects are the pathos of confinement, an anthropomorphized panoply of fear, longing, frustration and solitude. Eschewing photography's natural tendency towards prolific production, each image is carefully considered and exquisitely printed with reflections in silvery grays and deep ebony blacks resonating with the quiet turmoil of the emotional transference inherent in the imagery. Verlak's use of animal imagery in this series masterfully reflects upon the human qualities that separate us from animals, while ultimately serving to connect us as well. She achieves this with both a humble and poignant dignity that challenges us to contemplate what it is we are truly seeing. This quality is evident in all of her work.

Ms. Verlak has always



Photo by Tanja Verlak. Source: <http://www.rickwesterfineart.com/>

admired the documentary photographers of a loosely define group, the New York School, in addition to the work of Philip Lorca DiCorcia, William Eggleston, Paul Graham, and early Craigie Horsfield, to name a few. These artists influenced her thinking and image making.

Tanja Verlak is currently involved in a PhD by practice at the Royal College of Art. She holds BA and MA degrees in Documentary Photography from FAMU, Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and a Master of Philosophy from the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi.

During her studies, she was a visiting lecturer at the Jamia Millia Islamia University, Mass Communication Research Centre and a speaker at the Devi Art Foundation. She has recently obtained an assistant professorship. and lectures in MA Photography Courses at the

French Institute of Design and Communication Arts in Mumbai, India. Verlak exhibits and publishes internationally. She has received numerous awards and nominations and is a recipient of various scholarships, such as the Zois Scholarship and the Tata Grant.

The exhibition, THEY ARE US: Animal Identity and the Anthropomorphic Urge, will be on view at Rick Wester Fine Art, New York, through November 2, 2103. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10 to 6 and Saturday, 11 to 6. For additional information please contact Rick Wester Fine Art via e-mail at [rwfa@rickwesterfineart.com](mailto:rwfa@rickwesterfineart.com), by telephone at +1 (212) 255-5560 and make sure to visit our website at <http://www.rickwesterfineart.com>. You may learn more about Tanja Verlak's work by visiting her website at [www.tanjaverlak.com](http://www.tanjaverlak.com) (by Margaret Kelly sociate Director ick Wester Fine Art, Inc.)

# Bachelor, Master Theses and Doctoral Dissertations Competition

The Government Office for Slovenes Abroad has announced The Award-Giving Competition for Bachelor and Master Theses and Doctoral Dissertations on topics

A: Slovenes in neighboring countries

B: Slovenes in emigration/abroad.

The aim of the competition is to promote research studies by undergraduate and postgraduate students on issues related to Slovenes in neighboring countries and abroad. The ultimate goal is to raise awareness of the importance of preserving Slovene identity in the mother-country as well as outside its borders.

Candidates from the Republic of Slovenia and abroad may apply. Authors of Bachelor and Master theses or Doctoral dissertations dealing with the topics related to Slovene communities outside the borders of the Republic of Slovenia that have been successfully defended at any university in or outside Slovenia may apply to this competition.

The theses or dissertations that have been entered into other similar competitions may also apply. The theses or dissertations that will be defended in the period from November 1, 2012, to October 31, 2013, will be taken into account.

The awards will be distributed in the following way: three for theses or dissertations dealing with the topic of Slovenes living in neighboring countries and three for theses or dissertations dealing



with Slovenes living abroad; the award for the best written paper in either field in the amount of 800 euros (approx. \$1,080), and two awards in the amount of respectively, 600 and 400 euros (resp. approx. \$810 and \$540) will be given to the second and third best paper. On the basis of the expert committee's proposal, the Office may decide to increase the number of the awards in one of the categories, but the total number of awards should not exceed the total number of the awards to be distributed (i.e. 6 awards) or the total amount of the fund of 3,600 euros.

At the winners' request, the Office will issue a recommendation for the best theses or dissertations to be published.

The expert committee will evaluate the Bachelor and Master theses and Doctoral dissertations dealing with various topics in relation to Slovenes living in neighboring countries and abroad, based on the following criteria: the originality of the topic, the approach, the applicability of papers in relation to the preservation of Slovene identity outside the borders of the Republic of Slovenia and its connection with the motherland, professionalism, complexity and

interdisciplinarity of papers.

By participating in the competition, the authors are deemed to have given their consent for the papers to be kept in the archive of the Office.

## Method of application and deadline

The candidates should send or deliver one copy of their papers bound together and equipped with a hard cover, the certificate of successful defense of the respective paper (the date of its submission must be evident) and a short curriculum vitae (including personal data and details of e-mail contact)) to the Government's Office for Slovenes Abroad address (Komenskega 11, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Only papers sent or delivered by **December 10, 2013** (inclusive) will be accepted; the results of the competition will be announced by the end of April 2013. The award-giving ceremony is expected to be held in spring/summer of 2014.

Additional information may be obtained at the following telephone number: (001)(386) (1) 230-8011 (every workday between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., CET) or by e-mail: [zvone.zigon@gov.si](mailto:zvone.zigon@gov.si)

## Consular Hours in New York City

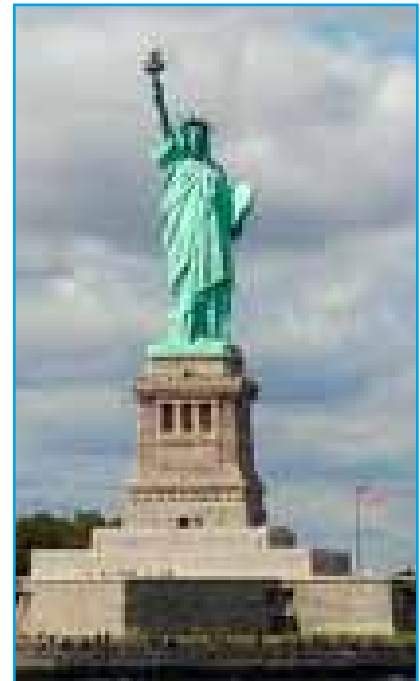
The consular officer from the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Washington, DC, will hold consular hours and provide consular services (authentications, certifications, passport applications, etc.) in New York City on Friday, October 18, 2013, at the premises of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations, located at 630 Third Avenue, 20th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10017. **(Please note the new address of the Mission!)**

To schedule an appointment, please, fill out the form available at the embassy's website and send it to the Embassy of Slovenia at vwa@

gov.si by October 15, 2013, to allow the embassy enough time to verify your data.

The embassy will suggest the time of your appointment and give you further information on the documentation you need to bring along. You may also visit the embassy website <http://washington.embassy.si/> (Consular Affairs, Visas) for documents required for most consular services. Please note that the consular fee must be paid with a money order made out to "Embassy of Slovenia". Cash, personal checks or credit cards will not be accepted.

Due to security reasons, prior appointment is needed to enter the premises of the Mission.



## BUSINESS

## Slovenian Software Developer Boosting Presence on US Market

Slovenian company Euro Plus, a leading software development company in the automatic identification data industry, recently acquired its United States distributor Niceware International. The move is aimed at boosting Euro Plus brand and market share in the U.S., which represents 40% of the global market, the company said.

Euro Plus is present on all continents and in more than 100 countries, generating almost all of its sales abroad. Development is completely based in Slovenia, while subsidiaries in Germany,

the U.S., Singapore and China see to sales and support, Marko Vrbnjak of Euro Plus said.

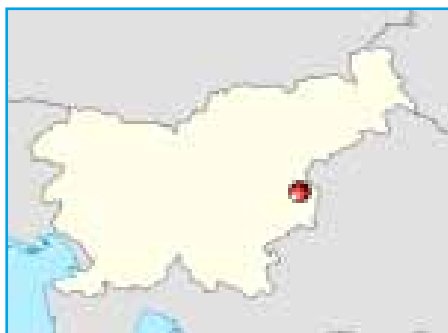
The main products of Euro Plus is Nicelabel software for design of labels and radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags, integration of printing with business applications and own labeling applications. The company is also a leader in the production of drivers for thermal printers. "More than 60% of buyers of thermal printers get drivers and free basic version of our software," Vrbnjak said. Euro Plus's main customers are Ikea, Würth, British American

Tobacco, Louis Vuitton, Hugo Boss, Benetton, Leica, and Pepsi.

The core company last year generated EUR 3.5m in revenues, while it plans a 17% growth in the small company segment and a 48% expansion in the large company segment for this year. (Source: STA)



## Bizeljsko



Bounded by the river Sotla in the south, by the river Dramlja in the west, and in the north by the hills of Orlica, Bizeljsko lies in the eastern part of Slovenia near the border with Croatia. Due to favorable natural conditions, the area has been inhabited since the Stone Age. The region had an important frontier position since the Roman times, as it lay on the border of the provinces of Noricum and Pannonia.

In the 7th and 8th centuries, the area was permanently settled by the Slavs, who soon began to pass under the political authority of the medieval German state. Its



Renaissance Bizeljsko castle.  
(Photo: [www.bizeljsko.si](http://www.bizeljsko.si))



Bizeljsko vineyards. (Photo: [www.slovenia.info](http://www.slovenia.info))

German name, Wiesel, was first mentioned in the 12th century and later converted into Wissel: the Slovenian Bizelj, hence Bizeljsko. In 1475, one of the largest clashes between the joint Styrian and Carniolan army and Turkish troops took place in the Bizeljsko area. In the 16th century, Bizeljsko was the locale of the two most notable peasant revolts. After 1848, the region began to connect administratively and politically with Brežice, and after WWII the area became existentially dependent on the nearby urban and employment centers.

Nowadays, this small town has only around 1800 inhabitants, but is nonetheless rich in historical, cultural and natural attractions. Outstanding are the renaissance Bizeljsko castle, first mentioned in 1404, the medieval parish of St. Lawrence, rebuilt between 1725 and 1737, several small churches, the site of Roman excavations in Orešlje, the ethnographic

museum and the »Lusthaus« viewing tower.

Since the lowland part by the Sotla river gradually builds up into sunny slopes full of vineyards, above which grows a leafy forest, the diverse terrain gives an opportunity for a range of activities. Especially popular are hunting tours with stay at a hunting lodge, wine cellars and old wine huts, holiday farms, hiking among the vineyards or riding in a horse-drawn carriage along the wine road.

Several traditional events take place in Bizeljsko all year long, such as the Bizeljsko Wine Festival in April, Bizeljsko Vintage with a Wine Marathon in September, and St. Martin's holiday with the christening of new wine in November. With several thermal spas just a few miles away, Bizeljsko is also an excellent starting point for those who wish to visit Terme Čatež, Atomske Toplice, Podčetrtek or Rogaška Slatina.

Source: [www.bizeljsko.si](http://www.bizeljsko.si)

## **FRU FRU THEATRE at the Kids' Euro Festival 2013**

A celebration of European arts for kids at the largest children's performing arts festival in the United States, with 250 free performances, workshops and films! Slovenia's FRU FRU Theatre will present a puppet show: [My Umbrella Can Also Be a Balloon! \(Moj dežnik je lahko balon\)](#) by [Ela Peroci](#). The show is the winner of five stars as "Best Children's Show" (1999) at the Edinburgh's legendary Fringe Festival. For ages 3 to 10; duration: 30 min. All performances are free. Registration is required.

When: [Sunday, October 27 at 1:00 p.m.](#)

Where: [Hill Center, Abraham Lincoln Hall, 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Washington, DC 20003](#)

When: [Monday, October 28 at 6:00 p.m.](#)

Where: [Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, 2700 F St, N.W., Washington, DC 20566](#)

When: [Tuesday, October 29, time TBD](#)

Where: [Ross Elementary School, 1730 R St., N.W., Washington, DC 20009](#) and [Petit Scholars, 2940 12th St. N.E., Washington, DC 20017](#)

When: [October 30 at 10:00 a.m.](#)

Where: [Library of Congress, Young Reader Center, Thomas Jefferson Building, Room LJ G31 \(ground floor\), 10 First St. S.E., Washington DC 20540](#)

More information and registration: <http://kidseurofestival.org/slovenia-perf/> and <http://kidseurofestival.org/my-umbrella-is-a-balloon-too/>

## **SlovenSki Calendar for 2014 Ski Season**

### **SlovenSki Weekend**

Where: [WINDHAM MOUNTAIN, NEW YORK](#)

When: [Friday, January 31 to Sunday, February 2, 2014.](#)

Slovenian GS Ski Race championship on Saturday.

### **SlovenSki trip #1 (Presidents Week)**

Where: [SUN VALLEY, IDAHO](#)

When: [Monday, February 17 to Sunday, February 23, 2014.](#)

Total cost \$1,495.00 from LaGuardia, NY to Boise, Idaho.

6 nights lodging at Sun Valley; 3 bedroom condominiums, 5-day ski pass.

Kids under 15 stay and ski FREE.

Call for air info from other airports: [Cleveland](#), [Toronto](#), [Chicago](#)

### **SlovenSki trip #2**

Where: [ASPEN / SNOWMASS, COLORADO](#)

Top of The Village 3 bedroom Condominiums, ski in, ski out.

When: [Monday, March 24 to Sunday, March 30, 2014](#)

Snowmass is home of 2014 Nastar Nationals Ski Championships during last week of March.

### **More information and application:**

[John F. Kamin a.k.a. Ivan Kamin](#)

[Government Council for Slovenians abroad Representative, USA](#)

[61-32 75th Place, Middle Village, NY 11379](#)

Tel: (718) 424-2711, Cell: (917) 723-2456, Email: [jfkamin@verizon.net](mailto:jfkamin@verizon.net)



### **Exhibit The Slovenes of Southeast Kansas in Franklin, KS**

An exhibit titled "The Slovenes of Southeast Kansas" will be held at the [Miner's Hall Museum in Franklin, Kansas](#), from October 1 through the end of the year. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Presentations and talks related to the Slovenes will be held on [October 20, November 21, and December 3](#). Admission is free to the museum and presentation.

Further information may be obtained by contacting [minershallmuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:minershallmuseum@yahoo.com).

### **Third Annual Slovenian Fall Film Night in CA**

When: [Friday November 1, 2013 at 7 p.m.](#)

Where: Slovenian Hall at, 2101 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA.

More information: Honorary Consul Thomas J. Brandi at [tjb@brandilaw.com](mailto:tjb@brandilaw.com) and <http://www.slovenianhall.com/>.

### **Martinovanje in New York**

Slovenian Union of America's New York City branch is hosting martinovanje (St. Martin's feast), a traditional folk festival that celebrates the year's new wine.

When: [Sunday November 10, at 12 noon](#)

Where: [62 Saint Mark's Place, New York, NY 10003](#)

Admission: \$20 per person.

RSVP by October 20 to [vajkusa@aol.com](mailto:vajkusa@aol.com)

### **Thanksgiving Polka Party Weekend in Cleveland, OH**

The National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum presents the 50th Annual Thanksgiving Polka Party Weekend at the [Downtown Marriott Hotel](#) in Cleveland, Ohio, [November 28, 29 and 30, 2013](#). The Polka Hall of Fame annual Awards Show takes place Saturday, November 30, at [Euclid Auditorium in Euclid, Ohio](#).

For more information visit <http://www.polkafame.com/> or contact Joe Valencic at [javalencic@yahoo.com](mailto:javalencic@yahoo.com) or (216) 496-4646.

### **Concert by Glasbena Matica in Cleveland, OH**

This Slovenian singing society will present "GREAT SONGS FROM TWO GREAT NATIONS"

Where: [Slovenian National Home, 6417 St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio](#)

When: [Saturday, November 16, 2013 Doors open at 4 p.m., family-style dinner at 5 p.m., concert at 7 p.m.](#)

Admission: \$30 per person; children 15 & under: \$15; children 6 & under: free

For tickets or more information call: Lori Sierputowski (440) 449-5643 or Dan Ivancic (440) 944-3919.

### **Happy Birthday**

Since the Embassy of Slovenia would like to deliver congratulatory messages to those Slovenes that mark their [100th birthday](#), we would appreciate, dear readers, if you could inform us of their celebrations by sending an e-mail to: [vwa@gov.si](mailto:vwa@gov.si).