



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

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E.U. Open House 2013 at the Slovenian Embassy

The Delegation of the European Union to the United States, the embassies of the 27 E.U. member states to the United States, and of Croatia opened their doors to Washington public during the seventh Annual E.U. Embassies' Open House Day on Saturday, May 11, 2013, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This annual event is a part of Passport DC event



Group photo with Ambassador Roman Kirn.

and also a highlight of the Washington diplomatic May calendar, and is every year celebrated around the Europe Day, to commemorate the day in 1950 when French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman first proposed economic integration of European nations.

Around 3400 people visited the Slovenian embassy, which provided a unique

opportunity for experiencing the country's cultural heritage and national traditions. The visitors were addressed by Ambassador Roman Kirn, who outlined the features presented at the embassy: an exhibition of Slovenian landscape paintings by Jože Svetina, crystal ware by Rogaška USA, and a showcase of authentic Slovenian costumes, household items,





Demonstration of apple strudel (jabolčni zavitek) making was presented by Bajda sisters: Albina Medved, Nadi Bajda, Rosie Antilla and Pavla Mavec.



Children were having fun listening to traditional Slovenian stories and play in the special kids' corner.

artwork and crafts brought for the occasion by Messrs. Seph and Martin Kumer from the SNPJ Slovenian Heritage Center near Pittsburgh, PA. At the event, Flaška company also presented its products.

Throughout the day, visitors could learn about Slovenian tourist attractions, and talk to embassy staff about history, economy, and politics of Slovenia. Furthermore, the guests could taste excellent Carniolan sausages (kranjske klobase),

traditionally smoked by [Ažman Meats](#) from Euclid, OH, and Pullus wine from Ptujška Klet wine cellar, presented by [T & K Distributors](#).

Demonstration of apple strudel (jabolčni zavitek) making was presented by Bajda sisters: Pavla Mavec, Rosie Antilla, Albina Medved and Nadi Bajda, who came to Washington all the way from Minnesota and Illinois, whereas typical Slovenian festive walnut roll-cake (potica) making was demonstrated by

Mary Gornik Carmody and Nick Carmody of [Rocky Mountain Potica Company](#), who came for the occasion, respectively, from Illinois and Colorado.

Traditional Slovenian folk music was performed on accordion by Alex Gergar, who with his family came for the E.U. Open House event from Bethlehem, PA, whereas Broadway singer Michael Alujevič Green and dancer Mojca Majcen presented Slovenian music from the '60s.

Promotional films on



Embassy staff at the tourism booth offered information about Slovenia.



Flaška company presented its products.



The event wouldn't have been as successful if it hadn't been for numerous volunteers.



Singer Michael Alujevič Green and dancer Mojca Majcen presented Slovenian music from the '60s.

Slovenia attracted a great number of people, many of whom were photographed with the embassy staff in national costume.

Children were having fun listening to traditional Slovenian stories and play in the special kids' corner. The event wouldn't have been as successful if it hadn't been for the dedication of Slovenian diplomats with their spouses, local staff, the interns Blaž Božnar and Andreja Škerl and numerous volunteers: Johanna M Bajc,

John Cloud, Marty McGihon, Joe Heitz, Michael Herndon, Elizabeth Obreza Hurst and Phillip Hurst, Carol Maruszak, Brian A. McGill, Clement and Sandra Mihelič, Roza Oblak, Michelle Offik, Aleš Pšaker, Emeše Purger, Greg Rudl, Mark Sfiligoj, Nina Srebočan, Frank Štanonik, Dhruv Sud, Katja Šteblaj, and Saad Yaseen.

Moreover, for the first time in Washington, DC, throughout the month of May one can experience Europe's rich and diverse culture during

the European Month of Culture, since the E.U .member states have put on an unprecedented performance series, featuring musical performances, art exhibits, film screenings, and lectures at the National Gallery of Art, the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, the Phillips Collection, American University, E.U. Embassies and Cultural Institutes, and other venues. For event details, please visit: <http://www.euintheus.org/event/european-month-of-culture/>



Authentic Slovenian costumes, household items, artwork and crafts brought for the occasion by Messrs. Seph and Martin Kumer from the SNPJ Slovenian Heritage Center near Pittsburgh, PA.



Numerous visitors were addressed by Ambassador Roman Kirm.



Traditional Slovenian folk music was performed on accordion by Alex Gergar, who with his family came for the E.U. Open House event from Bethlehem, PA



Slovenian festive walnut roll-cake (potica) making was demonstrated by Mary Gornik Carmody and Nick Carmody of Rocky Mountain Potica Company.



Pullus wine tasting.



Rogaška crystal on display.



Carniolian sausage tasting.



Demonstration of apple strudel (jabolčni zavitek) making was presented by Bajda sisters.



Altogether around 3400 people visited the Slovenian embassy.

Enhancing Human Security: 15 Years of ITF

The Slovenian-run fund for demining and mine victims assistance, ITF Enhancing Human Security, marked its 15th anniversary with a reception at the Residence of the Slovenian Ambassador Roman Kim in Washington, D.C., on Monday, May 13, attended by ambassadors of the countries that ITF has cooperated with in the past 15 years, congressmen and senators that supported ITF's initiatives in the past as well as their State Department counterparts and NGO representatives.

The ITF Enhancing Human Security is a non-profit organization, established by the Government of Slovenia in March 1998 in close partnership with the United States. The initial aim of the ITF was to provide humanitarian aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina, reflecting the active engagement of Slovenia in the aftermath of the Balkans conflict in the '90s. Since its inception, the ITF has focused its fundraising activities and support on humanitarian mine action in Southeast Europe. As the European Commission acknowledged the ITF as the reference model of regional organization in demining action, the



ITF director Dorijan Maršič presented awards for the very valuable support of the ITF work.

ITF was asked by mine-affected countries and donors to expand their operation to other mine-affected regions and countries as well, e.g., Cyprus, South Caucasus, Central Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. The constructive partnership between Slovenian state bodies, the ITF and other donors has facilitated the rehabilitation of children from Gaza and victims from Libya, and provided training for Palestinian therapists and medical specialists.

In 2012, the ITF raised \$21 million (including over \$10 million donated through the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs), which were used for implementing various projects cross-cutting with the main objective of enhancing security of people living in conflict-affected areas. The funds have been used for humanitarian demining and conventional weapon-destruction projects in southeastern Europe and south Lebanon. The U.S. donation reaffirms continued excellent cooperation between the ITF and its key partner, the United States.

At the reception, ITF director Dorijan Maršič presented awards for the very valuable support of the ITF work. The awards were received by Senators Tom Harkin (D, IA) and Mark Kirk (R, IL), Congressman Eliot Engel (D, NY), former Congressman James L. Oberstar (D, MN), Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA), Mark Adams (PM/WR), Donald F. Patierno (former Director of PM/WRA) and Ambassador Roman Kim.

More information on ITF projects and activities: <http://www.itf-fund.si/>, where one can also get involved as a donor.



The reception at Ambassador's residence was attended by ambassadors of the countries that ITF has cooperated with in the past 15 years, congressmen and senators that supported ITF's initiatives as well as their State Department counterparts and NGO representatives.

Commander of the Colorado National Guard Visits Slovenia

On May 14, Commander of the Colorado National Guard, Major General Michael Edwards, arrived for a visit to the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF). He was hosted by SAF Commander, Brigadier General Dobran Božič, who welcomed his guest and outlined the structural progress of SAF.

They both attended the signing ceremony on the premises of the Ministry of Defense, where the Slovenian Defense Minister Roman Jakič and the U.S. Ambassador to Slovenia, Joseph Mussomeli, signed a joint statement on Slovenia's participation in the Global Peace Operations Initiative highlighting good cooperation between Slovenia and the U.S. in the area of defense, which has grown stronger since its beginnings in 1993, as good bilateral relations between the two countries and its armies contribute to international peacekeeping operations.

The Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) is a U.S.-funded security assistance program, intended to enhance international capacity to effectively conduct United Nations and



Commander of the Colorado National Guard, Major General Edwards met with Defense Minister Jakič.

regional peace operations. GPOI is funded through the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account, which is managed by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.

The initiative has ten partners in Europe and over 60 worldwide. Slovenia will receive EUR 1.2m from the program. The funds will go for equipment and

training of Slovenian soldiers taking part in international operations and missions.

The meeting of Major General Michael Edwards with Defense Minister Roman Jakič was dedicated to discussing the strengthening of future cooperation between the Slovenian Army (SV) and Colorado National Guard (CNG) within the framework of State Partnership Program. The cooperation has been very intensive and fruitful in the past 20 years, peaking in a partnership program of exercise and training of members of SV and CNG in Colorado and Slovenia for the operations and management of OMLT (Operational Mentor and Liaison Team) in Afghanistan.

The established partnership added significantly to the friendly relations between Slovenia and the U.S., which is one of the reasons why both sides hope that this most appreciated relationship will continue in the future. The official celebration of the 20th anniversary will be held at the end of May in Colorado, when Slovenian Defense Minister Jakič is to visit the United States.



Slovenian Defense Minister Roman Jakič and the U.S. Ambassador to Slovenia, Joseph Mussomeli, signed a joint statement on Slovenia's participation in the Global Peace Operations Initiative

Bogenšperk



Bogenšperk Castle (Source: www.visitljubljana.com; photo by Aleš Fevžer).

In central Slovenia, close to the Zasavje and Ljubljana regions, stands one of the most important cultural monuments in Slovenia: the renaissance castle of Bogenšperk. Bogenšperk is well-known to the public for its architectural elements but as well as the home of Janez Vajkard Valvasor, the famous polyhistor and researcher, and also a member of the British Royal Society.

Standing on a low hill, the Renaissance castle has been fully restored. The three-story building consists of four tracts dating to several time periods, connecting four towers and surrounding an arcaded inner courtyard. The oldest part of the castle is the north tower, which originally stood as a stand-alone fortification. Later, a wooden bridge was added, linking it to the southeast tower, which originally

served a defensive purpose and was once much higher than the rest of the building; however, since a 1759 fire caused by a lightning strike heavily damaged the castle, the tower was never rebuilt to its original height. The castle stands on bedrock; one of its attractions is a deep well carved directly into the rock.

Today's form of the castle was built after the year 1511, when the old medieval fortress was damaged in an earthquake. The original owners, the Wagen family, could no longer live there, so the typical renaissance building with two round towers was built.

In a valley nearby, is located the town of Šmartno pri Litiji at the confluence of three creeks: the Reka creek, the Black creek (in Slovene: Črni potok), and the Kostrevnica creek (in Slovene: Kostrevniški potok).

The name of the settlement was first recorded in ecclesiastical documents for the year 1135, but the area was settled already in prehistoric times. The oldest house in Šmartno bears the date 1580, and, in the 17th century, the Mollerey painting and graphic arts workshop operated in it. The town of Litija outgrew the formerly more important Šmartno when the Austrian Southern Railway was routed through Litija.

In the Municipality of Litija, one can also visit the village of Vače. The settlement is best known as the location where one of the archaeological treasures of Slovenia, the Hallstatt-period



Baron Janez Vajkard Valvasor (1641 – 1693) is considered the founder of scientific literature on Slovenian territory. His fundamental encyclopaedic work *The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola* includes an incredible amount of data on the land and history of the Slovenian people. (Source: www.levstik.si)

Vače situla, a bronze vessel with a triple figurative frieze, was discovered in 1882. The original is now kept in the National Museum of Slovenia, whereas another important finding, the Vače belt buckle, is kept by the Naturhistorisches Museum of Vienna. Near Vače also is located the geometric center of Slovenia, marked with a memorial stone.

The Hallstatt-period Vače situla, a bronze vessel with a triple figurative frieze, was discovered in 1882. The original is now kept in the National Museum of Slovenia. (Source: www.visitljubljana.com; photo by N. Meden)



TO DO LIST

[LIVE HD Broadcast from the 2013 Eurovision Song Contest](#)

The Embassy of Sweden in Washington, DC, in partnership with the E.U. Delegation and the European Broadcasting Union, supported by EUNIC, is bringing all the action via 6 HD screens to Washington, DC - the only place outside of Europe to LIVE broadcast the Eurovision in HD. On air since 1956, the Eurovision Song Contest is not only Europe's favorite TV show with more than 600 million viewers, but also one of the longest running shows of all time. Singers and musicians from 39 countries in European will come to Malmö, Sweden, to compete for the votes for best song.

Where: [Embassy of Sweden, 2900 K St NW, Washington, DC 20007](#)

When: [Saturday, May 18, 2013 from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. \(EDT\)](#)

Snacks, trivia questions and surprise entertainment will be provided. Tickets include one drink. Food items will be available for purchase.

Tickets: <http://eurovisionus.eventbrite.com/>

[Artist Bogdan Grom at the Pennsylvania Convention Center](#)

Hotel Palomar Philadelphia's Historic Mosaic Donation to the Pennsylvania Convention Center's Art Collection. Special Appearance at the event by Original Artist Bogdan Grom.

When: [On Tuesday, May 21, 2013 at 10:30 am](#)

Where: [Pennsylvania Convention Center; Broad Street Atrium](#)

More information: [215 627 1082 ext. 102](tel:2156271082)

[6th International Language Summer Camps in Slovenia](#)

Camp programs are made for children aged 5 to 15. All workshops will be held in the English and Slovenian languages. Other languages can be involved (see individual dates below). In the Camps, workshops, best suitable for children aged 10 to 15, will be held in English or German by native speakers. Children will actively experience the living world and learn to live in unspoiled nature together with their peers and farm animals, discover the environment, get to know the Slovenian countryside traditions and the way of life on a farm, practice and improve everyday communication in a chosen foreign and Slovene language.

The list of camps and more information are available at: <http://www.kozjanski-raj.si/en-US/When>

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Editor: Nuška Zakrajšek