



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

JULY 31, 2013, VOLUME 9, NUMBER 29

Farewell Letter from the Ambassador

Dragi prijatelji,
Dear friends,

At the end of July, after four wonderful, most interesting and inspiring years, my wife Jovana and I will leave Washington and the United States to assume new responsibilities in the Slovene Foreign Service.

It is always with great excitement that we, as diplomats, start our missions abroad, and it is with profound sorrow when the moment comes to leave that same country. Such are the very feelings of ours before leaving the United States for good. We have spent four memorable years in Washington and before that four exciting years in New York.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the U.S. came close to our hearts.

I have visited many states and many places in the U.S., either privately as a tourist or on official trips, and I have discovered again and again the greatness of your country – not only in terms of its mere size and beauties but in particular in terms of its cultural diversity.

One of many surprises that I have encountered while travelling across America was that I have always had the opportunity to meet members of the American Slovene community. I have learned again



and again that they are not only proud members of American society but also a strong pillar of American-Slovene friendship that cares a lot about preserving the Slovene heritage in the U.S. and developing strong bonds between our two countries. For it is not solely through inter-governmental contacts and cooperation, which are indeed excellent, that we build our friendly relations, it is also through a growing network of Friends of Slovenia in America. And I am proud to say that you,



the readers of our Newsletter, are an indispensable part of this story, a part of the same bridge we walk together.

I was honored to serve as Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia in such a great

country and I am pleased that during my tenure I was given the opportunity to contribute my share to building friendly relations between two partners and allies. I could not have done that without your understanding and

support, without your friendship and engagement. I thank you all for that.

With kind regards and gratitude,
S prijaznimi pozdravi, nasvidenje

Roman Kirn
Ambassador

Mr. Ambassador. Thank you for your hard work and your dedication to strengthening the relations between Slovenia and the U.S. and for your support of the Slovenian community in the U.S. We wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors. Srečno!

FAREWELL

Ambassador Kirn Bids Farewell to U.S. Officials

Ambassador Roman Kirn together with his wife, Ms. Jovana Kirn, met with President Barack Obama on Friday, July 19, 2013, in the East Room of the White House at the Diplomatic Corps Reception, hosted by President Barack Obama and the First Lady Michelle Obama. On the occasion, Ambassador Kirn thanked President Obama for his friendship over the last four years as he bid farewell to him at the conclusion of his tenure in Washington.

Ambassador Capricia Penavic Marshall, outgoing Chief of Protocol at the U.S. Department of State, hosted a farewell reception for the Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia and Mrs. Kirn on Friday, July 26, at the State Department. The event, attended by State Department representatives, among them Thomas M. Countryman, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation; Philip T. Reeker, Deputy Assistant Secretary for South Central Europe at the U.S. Department of State; Deputy Assistant Secretary Brent Hartley and John Winant, former Director for Central and Northern Europe of



From the right: Chief of Protocol Capricia Penavic Marshall, DAS Phillip Reeker, and Ambassador and Mrs. Kirn at the farewell reception in the U.S. Department of State.

the National Security Staff, further, E.U. member states' ambassadors and other members of the foreign diplomatic corps gave the opportunity to the outgoing Ambassador Kirn to express his appreciation for support and dedicated efforts of the State Department to enhance the cooperation on political, business, cultural and educational issues between Slovenia and the U.S., and to thank the U.S. for the support

in the international development cooperation projects, especially in the area of demining.

Ambassador and Mrs. Kirn had met with Secretary of State John Kerry already on Tuesday, July 23, when Secretary Kerry hosted a reception in honor of the chiefs of diplomatic missions and their spouses in The Benjamin Franklin Room at the U.S. Department of State.

OAS Secretary General Receives Ambassador Kirn

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States, José Miguel Insulza, on July 18, 2013, received in his office in Washington, DC, the Permanent Observer of Slovenia to the OAS, Roman Kirn, who is concluding his assignment to the Organization.

During the meeting, the two discussed the role of the OAS as the diplomatic nexus for Slovenia with the Americas, progress in the common foreign policy of the European Union, and trade flows between Europe and the region. For his part, Ambassador Kirn described the importance his country ascribes to its collaboration with the OAS. Secretary General expressed his sincere gratitude to Ambassador Kirn for the valuable cooperation achieved during his tenure as



Ambassador Kirn with OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza.

Permanent Observer of Slovenia to the OAS. The OAS Director of the Department of International Affairs, Jorge Sanín, was also

present at the meeting.

For more information, please visit the OAS Website at www.oas.org

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Visit of RCM Washington Group

A small group of individuals who participate in the Employment Readiness program at the RCM of Washington visited Embassy of Slovenia on Monday, July 29. The goal of the program is to prepare individuals with disabilities for their future employment in the community by being exposed to a great diversity of community partners.

The group was welcomed by Nuška Zakrajšek, Public Diplomacy and Cultural Officer at the Slovenian embassy who had prepared a presentation on Slovenia as well as introduced to the group how every day work at the embassy looks like. The



The group on the embassy premises.

group also enjoyed listening and dancing to Slovenian music

as well as traditional Slovenian dessert potica wall-nut roll.

EUNIC at Artscape

Artscape, America's largest free arts festival, took place in Baltimore, MD, from Friday, July 19 to Sunday, July 21. The festival, featuring more than one hundred and fifty fine artists, fashion designers and craftspeople, visual art exhibits and live concerts on outdoor stages every year over three days, attracts around 350,000 attendees

In an outdoor tent in Mount Royal avenue, EUNIC Washington DC cluster of European Union National Institutes for Culture presented this year the partnership between the City of Baltimore and EUNIC DC with regard to the project "Transit – Creative Placemaking in Baltimore".

EUNIC Washington is a coalition of E.U. member states' national institutes of culture: Alliance Française, Austrian Cultural Forum, British Council, Goethe-Institut, Hellenic



On Sunday, representatives from Germany, British Council, and Embassy of Slovenia presented various projects that enhance cultural exchange and international understanding.

Foundation for Culture, Instituto Camoes, Italian Cultural Institute, Romanian Cultural Institute, and the Embassies of Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Romania, Spain, and Sweden as well as Slovenia. EUNIC aims to present edgy, creative, diverse and thought-provoking cultural and educational programs to

showcase Europe. At Artscape, EUNIC members also presented their respective programs and countries, among them also Slovenia.

You can find out more about EUNIC and the project at: http://www.eunic-online.eu/usa_washington_dc

HERITAGE

Slovenian Genealogy Society International

The Slovenian Genealogy Society International, Inc., was founded in 1986 by Chairman Emeritus, Al Peterlin, as an all-volunteer not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable corporation. The mission of the society is to enrich the lives of individuals of Slovenian ancestry by helping them forge a link to the past.

For 21 years, Peterlin operated the Society from his home, accumulating a myriad of research materials. In 2009, the SGSI Research Center was

established within the Slovenian Museum and Archives (SMA), located at the Slovenian National Home in Cleveland, Ohio. With the help of St. Clair-Superior Development Corporation, the SGSI moved to larger quarters, opened in January 2013, just two storefronts from the SMA, thus now having the capacity to assist fellow Slovenians with their research as well as to meet our goal to become the repository for American-Slovenian family histories in America.



Society's new space at the Slovenian National Home on St. Clair in Cleveland, OH.

Ambassador Roman Kirn visited the Research Center in June, when he commented, "I am amazed at what you are doing for our Slovenian people," as he reviewed SGSI's genealogy resources and learned of the projects we have undertaken.

A valuable genealogy resource is the "surname index"--a compilation of surnames with references, extracted from written sources. Among SGSI's surname indexes are: a 150,000 surname index of various Slovenian church jubilee and fraternal organization booklets; a 750,000+ surname index of the Slovene National Benefit Society's publication, Prosveta, and selected editions of their youth publication, Voice of Youth; Ave Maria Koledars, 1915-1954; and Ameriška Družinski Koledars (selected editions), 1915-1950. The SGSI also has biographies of Slovenian families, translated from the magazine Novi Svet. All the above are available to SGSI



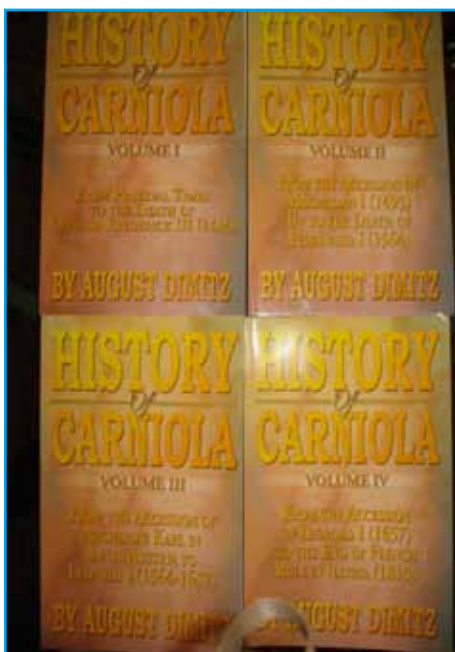
From left: Rose Marie Macek Jisa, SGSI President; Ambassador Roman Kirn; and Fran Coberly, SGSI Research Center Administrator.

members on our website, www.slovenianguenealogy.org.

In the collection of materials, one can also find (1) family histories of Slovenians across America; (2) 15-minute oral recordings of "Women Behind the Scenes", donated by Slovenian radio hostess Patti Sluga; (3) oral histories of Slovenians taken by SGSI volunteers in the Cleveland area as well as oral histories of Slovenians across America who have recorded their own histories (guidelines available upon request at sgsi.rc@gmail.com); (4) a card index file and a database of member surnames on our website; and (5) invaluable books by Slovenian authors dealing with (a) family histories from specific Slovene regions, and (b) Slovenian nobility. All of these are available for research. The society will hold its third Genealogy Conference in Slovenia this September.

research their family ancestry, they become interested in Slovenia's history, culture, and mores. SGSI meets this need by publishing relevant books, the newest being The History of Carniola from Primeval Times to 1813 with Emphasis on Cultural Development. (Carniola equates to "Slovenia.") This 1,500-page book was written in German by the Slovenian author August Dimitz, who served as secretary/-treasurer of the Historical Society of Carniola in the mid-1800s. The English edition is available for purchase through Xlibris Corporation at www.xlibris.com.

One can support SGSI by becoming its member. The membership application form to complete is available on the website www.slovenianguenealogy.org. To visit the Research Center, please call for an appointment at (440) 655-3954 or email sgsi.rc@gmail.com (by Rose Marie Macek Jisa, President, SGSI).



Four volumes of the society's newest published book: The History of Carniola by August Dimitz.

2013 Bled Strategic Forum

Between September 1 and 3, 2013 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia and the Centre for European Perspective will organize the eighth Bled Strategic Forum (BSF). Held in the picturesque resort town of Bled, the BSF offers a platform for discussing the most pressing issues of our age in a relaxing environment of the beautiful alpine lake. This explains why it has developed into one of the most well-known high-level forums in this part of Europe, attracting prominent speakers, important policy makers, successful businessmen, as well as academia and media representatives. Every year, the Forum is attended by more than 450 participants from 50 different countries.

The 2013 BSF will be held under the title "A Changing Europe in A Changing World". The main panel will take place on September 2 and will be followed by a special panel which will address the water challenge in the Middle East and North Africa region (in light of



2013 International Year of Water Cooperation). On September 3, four panels will be held on the following topics: prospects for the E.U. Economic and Monetary Union, the role of International Criminal Justice, E.U.-Turkey relations, and E.U. enlargement policy toward the countries of the Western Balkans region after Croatia's accession.

Following international and regional business trends, as well as Slovenian foreign policy and economic diplomacy priorities, on September 2, 2013, the second Business BSF 2013 will seek to create new business opportunities and explore new potentials. Russia and Central Asia will be the focus

of attention, highlighting, in particular, energy and high-tech development. Business BSF will be organized in cooperation with the Slovenian-Russian Business Council and IEDC-Bled School of Management.

The 2013 Young BSF, held under the title "The clash of Gs", will focus on a new concept of tackling some of the most significant issues faced by the young: The Youth in the E.U.: The promise for the future or a lost generation?; Digital revolution: DIY politics; and Doing Business: New tools and new rules.

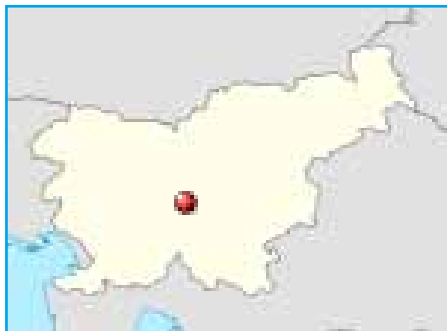
For further details about the Forum, please visit www.bledstrategicforum.org or follow it on Facebook or Twitter. The daily updated list of participants is available here.

Media representatives are welcome to attend and cover the eighth Bled Strategic Forum, for which accreditation badges will be required. Please register and apply at: <http://akreditacije.ukom.gov.si/en>

Registration will be open from July 26 to August 26, 2013 (until 12 noon).



Ig and Iška Gorge



On the southern outskirts of Ljubljana, only seven miles out of the capital of Slovenia, lies the town of Ig. Its name was first recorded in 1249 as Yge, however, during the Middle Ages, Ig was actually a regional name, and the settlement now known as Ig was called Studenec until the beginning of the 19th century.

The parish church in Ig, dedicated to Saint Martin, was built in 1780. Another church, built in the 14th century on Pungart Hill west of the main settlement, is now in ruins. Pungart Hill is also the location of



Ig Castle was first mentioned as hof Ig in 1369.

the Ig Castle, first mentioned as hof Ig in 1369, which in the late 15th century was converted into a small manor and in 1510 sold to the house of Auersperg. The castle was the target of peasant revolts in 1515, and was besieged by the Turks in 1528. It was also

the place where the uprisings of the 1848 revolution started. After being burned down in the Second World War, the castle was repaired and converted into a women's prison.

In the vicinity of Ig the remains of prehistoric pile-dwelling (or stilt house) settlements have been found, believed to date back to between 2300 and 1800 BC. Since 2011, the area has been protected as part of the Prehistoric Pile dwellings around the Alps UNESCO World Heritage Site. The finds from the wide Ljubljana Marshes archaeological sites include over 10,000 objects, kept in museums in Ljubljana and abroad. The most important find is the world's oldest wooden wheel, made between 3350 and 3100 BC.

The picturesque gorge of the nearby Iški vintgar, carved deeply in the limestone dolomite plateau by the Iška river, is one of the most recognizable



The picturesque gorge of the nearby Iški vintgar is carved deeply in the limestone dolomite plateau by the Iška river. (Source: www.slovenia.info)

natural pearls of Slovenia Its stunningly beautiful landscape attracts swimmers, hikers and cyclists. Along with the numerous rapids, small cliffs, refreshing green river pools, waterfalls, and other phenomena, one can also find indigenous vegetation and numerous animals. Interestingly, the part of the river Iška that runs through the gorge between the villages of Iška vas and Strahomer vanished underground during the night between September 20 and 21, 2010. The river may have moved underground after a crack opened in the riverbed, however, no earthquake was reported.



One can find numerous rapids, small cliffs, refreshing green river pools, waterfalls, and other phenomena in the Iška gorge.

TO DO LIST

[Mladinsko gledališče from Ljubljana performs in Washington, D.C.](#)

To coincide with the National Gallery of Art's exhibition Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes, 1909–1929: When Art Danced with Music, CulturalDC welcomes Slovenia's Mladinsko Theatre, and their production of Norman Allen's solo drama Nijinsky's Last Dance. Exploring the artistry and madness of Diaghilev's greatest star, the play joined the Mladinsko repertory in 2010, and has toured throughout Europe. Washington-based playwright Allen said, "I saw the production in Ljubljana and was thrilled with the matched intimacy and innovation. It's a stunning performance by Primož Bežjak, and fascinating in its use of theatre craft. I felt I was seeing it for the first time." In addition to support from CulturalDC, the Mladinsko Theatre's visit is funded by the City of Ljubljana, the Slovene Ministry of Culture and the Slovene Embassy in Washington.

Pay-What-You-Can-Previews: [Monday, August 26, 8pm](#)

Opening Performance and Reception: [Tuesday, August 27, 8pm](#)

Performances: [August 26 – August 30, 2013](#)

Venue: [Mead Theater Lab at Flashpoint, 916 G St. NW \(near Metro Center & Gallery Place Metro\)](#)

Tickets: \$25

For Tickets: Call 866.811.4111

or visit <http://www.culturaldc.org/events/2013/06/mladinsko-theatre-norman-allens-nijinskys-last-dance/>



Slovenia & Bach on Capitol Hill

Vibrant contemporary chamber music from Slovenia and by J.S. Bach, with guest soprano Patrice Michaels and pianist Jeffrey Chappell, along with composer Brina Jež and violinist Branko Brezavšek, special guests from Ljubljana.

When: [Wednesday, August 3 at 8 p.m.](#), [Friday, August 5 at 8 p.m.](#), [Sunday, August 7 at 8 p.m.](#)

Where: [St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill at 3rd and A streets SE](#)

Suggested donation: \$20, seniors \$17, students \$12. 16 and under free.

More information: www.chcmf.org.

Consular hours in Illinois

Consular hours will be held at the annual picnic of the Slovenian Catholic/Cultural Center on an as-needed basis. Please, contact Jurček Zmauc the Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia in Cleveland, for an appointment at (1) (216) 589-9220 or by e-mail at kcl@gov.si. Another contact point is the Slovenian Honorary Consul in Chicago, John Vidmar, at (1) (708) 204-4390 or, by e-mail, slovconsul.chicago@comcast.net

Where: [Slovenian Catholic/Cultural Center, 14252 Main Street, P.O. Box 634, Lemont, IL 60439](#)

When: [Sunday, August 11, from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.](#)

More information: <https://slovenian.center.org>

Exhibition Afghanistan (Un)Ordinary Lives in Cleveland, OH

Slovenian freelance photojournalist Manca Juvan spent a number of years in the last decade in Afghanistan and Iran in order to document the effect of thirty (30) years of war upon daily life. Her body of work entitled "Unordinary Lives" reflects the pathos and ravages of the human spirit but also the resilience and perseverance of the Afghan people.

When: [Ongoing through August 31, 2013](#)

Hours by Appointment: Contact John Kirn, 216-382-2394 or Geri Hopkins, 216-347-9888

Where: [Slovenian Museum and Archives, 6407 St. Clair Ave, Cleveland, OH 44103](#)

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/UnordinaryLivesByMancaJuvan>

<http://www.smacleveland.org/>

The Visual Identity of Slovenia – Design for a State exhibition

This touring exhibition presents the range of designs elaborated for the young state and its institutions by one of Slovenia's top designers, Miljenko Licul. Over the course of his artistic career, Licul has created a number of great works of visual culture that are closely related to the identity of the nation and the state, and are, by any means, the most recognizable visual images of Slovenia's identity to have been created over its 22-year history as a sovereign state.

Licul designed the banknotes for Slovenia's former currency – the tolar. Working together with Maja Licul and Janez Boljka, he also designed Slovenia's euro coins. Miljenko Licul is also responsible for the visual image of Slovenia's biometric passport, ID and health insurance cards, and driver's license. Licul also designed a series of postage stamps with ethnographical motifs.

When: [Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., closing in October 2013](#)

Where: [Embassy of Slovenia, 2410 California Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20008](#)

The next issue of the Slovenian Embassy's Newsletter will be published on Friday, September 6, 2013.

The weekly Embassy Newsletter, produced by the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington, is available on: www.washington.embassy.si.

Send us your comments or request for a subscription on: vwa@gov.si,

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