



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

# NEWSLETTER

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## Embassy Event with Harvard Club of DC

The Embassy of Slovenia on Wednesday, November 12, hosted members of Harvard Club of Washington, D.C, a non-profit organization, which sponsors educational, cultural, social, and charitable events and programs in the U.S. capital. After the introduction by the president of the club, Ms. Yi-Fun Hsueh, around 70 alumni with their spouses as well as current students were addressed by Deputy Chief of Mission, Vladimir Kolmanič, who in his remarks briefed the guests about Slovenia's



Deputy Chief of Mission Vladimir Kolmanič.

**pathway from independence towards euro-transatlantic integrations, and outlined foreign policy priorities as well as the economy and investment opportunities.**

He included in his presentation historical facts and geographical features of the country, cultural highlights, presented endeavors and activities of Slovenian diaspora

in the U.S. as well as emphasized Slovenia's most interesting sightseeing spots, tourist attractions and holidays that are traditionally celebrated.

In this regard, he spoke about annual events that are organized throughout Slovenia on the occasion of St. Martin's day, which was celebrated a day before the Harvard event, on November 11. The menu for



the reception that followed the lecture included many of the traditional St. Martin's dishes. The guests could taste duck and goose meat, red cabbage and mlinci pasta next to the traditional Slovenian potica, prosciutto, Carniolian sausage, and trout. Because St. Martin's is mostly celebrated in connection with viticulture, the guests were introduced on the occasion to Slovenian wine from Štajersko and Primorsko regions of Slovenia, including Verus šipon, Marof chardonnay, Capris merlot, and Capris cabernet shiraz.



Around 70 Harvard alumni with their spouses attended the event.

## HERITAGE

# Martinovanje in New York

The New York Branch of Slovenian Union of America organized the annual Martinovanje event at the Church of Saint Cyril in New York on Sunday, November 9. On behalf of the Branch 93 Tanya Vajk welcomed honored guests, who came from Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. and as far as south of Argentina. Father Krizolog also greeted the parishioners of the Church of Saint Cyril and members of the New York Branch of Slovenian Union of America; a dozen children from 6 months to 16 years - and 80 Slovenes young at heart!

Before the meal, Ambassador Dr. Cerar, who joined the Slovenian community for the celebration from Washington, D.C., thanked all



From left: Mia Branc, Ria Polajner Whitmire, Camille Okoren Price and Tanya Vajk preparing the martinovo dishes.

the guests for their support of Slovenia and for nurturing Slovenian culture and heritage in the United States. After the meal, the guests danced the polka to tunes played the whole

time on the accordion by Alex Gergar from Bethlehem. This was the third Martinovanje hosted by the Slovenian Union of America at the Church of Saint Cyril in East Village, New

York, and the one with the largest attendance yet.

Everybody enjoyed one of the best home-cooked Slovenian meals they had had in years. The menu included traditional regional Slovenian dishes: home baked bread and liptauer (farmer's cheese spread), savoy cabbage and roman beans salad (zelje in fižol), roasted goose, mlinci (home made pasta) with goose gravy, red cabbage, roasted green beans, bread dumplings (plain and with ham), potica walnut roll cake and plum tart and chicken fingers for the children.

The wine was donated by Emil Gaspari of Slovenian Premium Wines and by the Movia Winery from Dobrovo, Slovenia. The event would not have been possible without the



From left: Mr. and Mrs. Miro Zupančič, Ambassador Dr. Cerar and his wife Dr. Martina Skok, Ms. Irena Mernik Knee with her husband and father Krizolog Cimerman.

aid of numerous volunteers, and especially without the dedication and hard work of Ms. Tanya

Vajk, who, with her endeavors to preserve Slovenian traditions, is a vibrant force in the American Slovenian community in NY.

## CULTURE

# Gary Bukovnik Exhibition in San Francisco

On November 7, 2014, American-Slovenian Education Foundation presented an evening with famed Slovenian American artist Gary Bukovnik at the Thomas Reynolds Gallery in San Francisco. Master watercolorist Gary Bukovnik returned from his monumental solo exhibition at Today Art Museum in Beijing to an intimate exploration of the glories of the rose. This was the first time in his long and storied career to paint roses.

Gary Bukovnik's exhibition runs through November 22, so do not fail to attend it and admire the master's portrayals of roses of all sizes, shapes and colors. For more information on Gary and his fantastic career, his numerous exhibitions, his



Gary Bukovnik together with Ravnik brothers and father Peter Rožič at the opening.

continuing work with the San Francisco Symphony, see his website at:

[www.garybukovnik.com](http://www.garybukovnik.com)  
(Peter Rožič SJ, photos: Tony Ravnik).



One of Bukovnik’s artworks on display.



Honorary Consul Tom Brandi, his wife Carol and Gary Bukovnik.

## CULTURE

# Opening of Juvan’s Exhibition at Pellissippi University

The moving photo exhibit, (Un)Ordinary Lives -- pictures of Afghan people experiencing daily life in a war zone, created by Slovene photographer Manca Juvan — once again has captured the emotions of an American audience. On November 3, the exhibition was opened on the premises of the Pellissippi University. The university is located in the beautiful green foothills of the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee, far from the hardships of Afghanistan, yet a fair number of students there have served in Afghanistan, so the Central Asian country and its tribulations are not so distant. Thus, the gallery was also full of students interested in the exhibition, and the guests at the opening also included the president of the university and many other officials.

The exhibit, curated by art professor, Jennifer Brickey, mounted in a large rectangular



Address by Honorary Consul Dr. Lydia Mihelič Pulsipher.

room, has become the venue for classes in art, history, politics and design. Students gathered there analyzed the photos from a variety of perspectives. Professor Brickey says this experience is very important for the students at this

University, where most must work to pay for their education. She also spoke of being deeply moved as she was taking the photos out of the crates -- moved by the emotion conveyed by the photo content, and also moved by what

she called "the incredible artistic qualities of the photography."

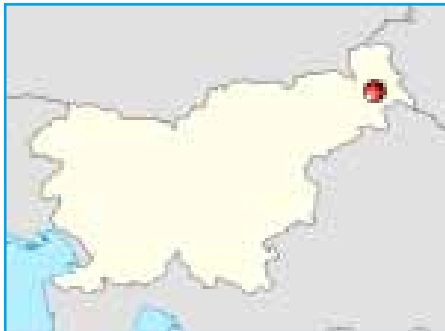
(Un)Ordinary Lives is the second art exhibit from Slovenia to enjoy enthusiastic acceptance at Pellissippi. The first one was of paintings by ZEK-Crew. "Please bring us more exhibits from Slovenia," said one university official, "because they are of such high quality." Honorary Consul of Slovenia in TN, Dr. Lydia Mihelič Pulsipher, who has endeavored for the exhibition Afghanistan (Un) Ordinary Lives to be presented also throughout the statewide Regents' University system, promised to do her best, and that, in fact, she will soon be delivering an exhibit on the history of woodworking in Dolenjsko.



Opening of the exhibition.

## TOURISM

### Beltinci



**The municipality** of Beltinci lies on the left bank of the river Mura in the Prekmurje flatlands region in northeast Slovenia and consists of eight villages: Beltinci, Bratonci, Dokležovje, Gančani, Ižakovci, Lipa, Lipovci, and Melinci. The center of the municipality is the town of Beltinci, which has been granted market rights already in 1811. The municipality is known for its rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, ethnological points of interest and a well developed tourist infrastructure.



Beltinci castle.

The municipality offers perfect conditions for sports and recreation like cycling, walking, and rafting on the river Mura.

**The settlement** was first mentioned already in the Middle Ages, first as Beletfalua in the year 1322, then later with the

same name in 1379 and 1381, whereas a document from 1389 names it villa Belothfalua. As a landed estate, Beltinci belonged in the 13th century to an old-Slovenian noble family, Jura, and was in 1265 or 1267 inherited by the mighty family Banffy (Banič) from Lendava, and later by the

families Nádasdy, Széchényi, Ebergényi, Csáky, Gyika, Sina, Wimpffen, and Zichy. The development of the town started after the end of Turkish raids (the 17th century) and the Kruc raids (1708).

**The Beltinci castle**, a one-floor brick mansion was built in the 15th or 16th century and has preserved its Baroque style until the present time. In the castle are located a permanent exhibition of History of Health Service in Pomurje, the Institute for Tourism and Culture Beltinci, exhibition and wedding halls a restaurant. The mansion is surrounded by 8 hectares (abt. 20,000 acres) of park area.

**The church of St. Ladislav** in Beltinci is one of the most important monuments of historicist architecture of the late 19th century in Prekmurje. It was built in 1742, but was between 1893 and 1895 completely renovated and expanded by the Viennese architect, Max von Ferstl. On the south side of the church, there is Our Lady's



Floating mill.

chapel with the altar of Madonna with Child, dating from the 15th century, and also the tomb of the Zichy family.

Beltinci lies on the alluvial plain on the left bank of the river Mura. The groves along the river and the forest Hraščica are of special ecological and nature-preservational importance for the municipality. **The river Mura**, together with a belt of swamp woods is treated as a protected

natural reserve of European significance (Natura2000), which is the home of some rare and endangered species of birds, fishes, amphibians, dragonflies, butterflies, beetles, mollusks, spiders and other invertebrates as well as diverse flora.

The Beltinci municipality preserves the old tradition of crossing the river Mura by **ferry** in Ižakovci and Melinci. In the past, the ferry was an indispensable



A traditional wedding-time figure the "pozvačin".



In the past, handicrafts were very important.



St. Ladislav's church in Beltinci.

mode of transportation and today it is a witness of the times past and a tourist sight. The ferry is attached to a steel cable stretched between the two banks and moves across the river with the help of the river flow. A safe crossing is assured by a ferryman who steers the ferry with a wooden rudder and fastens it with chains to the pier at the river bank.

This island near Ižakovci is known for the **floating mill** on the river Mura, where they still grind wheat, grown in environmentally friendly way. The mill is constructed totally of wood and, together with its large water wheel, is supported by two boats. In the riverbank house, there is a permanent exhibition of **Büjraštvo** on the river Mura, a tourist information office and a shop with handicraft product.

In the Beltinci municipality, **traditional crafts** like weaving straw products in Lipovci, brickworks in Melinci, coopery in Gančani, handmaking of wooden troughs in Beltinci, miller's trade, and growing and working of flax in Ižakovci are still preserved today.



A tradition of folk dances in Beltinci is more than seventy years old.

There are also events which keep old traditions and customs alive – cracking the whips, riding old bicycles, a traditional wedding-time figure the “pozvačin”.

The events are always accompanied by **folk music**. Music customs are preserved by music bands, tambura players and folk singers. A tradition of folk dances in Beltinci is more than seventy years old. The biggest folklore event in Beltinci is an annual international folklore

festival with the best folklore performers from Slovenia and several European countries.

In the entire area of Beltinci there are well maintained **cycling and walking tracks**, which connect the villages and offer recreation to people who want to experience the beauties of the Prekmurje plain. Tourist theme-paths – Millers’ path, Down the river Mura, Road of renewable energy sources – offer interesting tourist products and give the tourists a broader view of the Prekmurje region. The theme-paths offer the beauties of natural environment, a wide variety of rare animal species and plants, as well as cultural experiences, learning about ethnological characteristics and lives of people living along the river Mura, and enjoyment of authentic culinary specialties.

The tourists can also take part in a special experience by rafting down the river Mura, which is organized by the Institute for Tourism and Culture Beltinci in cooperation with Boat Society. More information: [www.beltinci.net](http://www.beltinci.net)



Mura river.

**Slovenian film CLASS ENEMY at the AFI–EU Film Festival**

Now in its 27th year, the AFI European Union Film Showcase continues its tradition of bringing the best in European cinema to Washington audiences. This year's selection of more than 50 films includes award-winners, international festival favorites, local box-office hits and debut works by promising new talents, plus many countries' official Oscar® submissions for Best Foreign Language Film, including Slovenia's 2013 Oscar® Selection, Class Enemy (Razredni sovražnik).

Synopsis: When an easygoing homeroom teacher goes on maternity leave, she is replaced by Robert, a no-nonsense German teacher with certain ideas about how students should behave. Things fall apart after a student commits suicide following an especially demeaning interaction with the authoritarian teacher, and the tight-knit senior class rebels against his humiliating methods and the "system."

The film is based on actual events that occurred in the high school of debut filmmaker Rok Biček, whose morally complex feature has been celebrated on the international film festival circuit. Presented in Slovenian and German with English subtitles.

When: [Sunday, December 21 at 9:45 a.m.](#)

Where: [AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center, 8633 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910](#)

More information: <http://www.afi.com/silver/eushowcase/>

**CONCERT BY KAJA DRAKSLER AT THE KENNEDY CENTER**

The Embassy of Slovenia presents jazz pianist and composer Kaja Draksler, in a program featuring her original works and free improvisations. Draksler is a graduate of The Conservatory of Amsterdam and the Prince Claus Conservatory, and has studied privately with Vijay Iyer and Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz Jason Moran.

Where: [Kennedy Center, Millennium Stage, 2700 F St NW, Washington, D.C. 20566](#)

When: [Wednesday December 17 at 6 p.m.](#)

Free entrance.

**MIKLAVŽEVANJE IN WASHINGTON**

As he has the world over for more than seven centuries, St. Nicholas soon will come again to children of all ages in the Washington area. The Bishop Baraga Society, Lodge #257 of the KSKJ (American Slovenian Catholic Union), invites you, your family, and friends to join us at the 50th annual Slovensko Miklavževanje - Slovenian Saint Nicholas' Celebration.

When: [Saturday, December 6, 2014](#)

Time: Doors open at 4:30 p.m. Program begins at 5:30 p.m.

Where: [North Chevy Chase Christian Church, 8814 Kensington Parkway, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815](#). Enter basement hall from rear parking lot.

Admission: Free to children under age 14, members of the Bishop Baraga Society, and other KSKJ lodges. A donation of \$3.00 is requested from others to help defray costs.



**"VTIS UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: SLOVENE SCIENCE AROUND THE WORLD".**

Društvo v tujini izobraženih Slovencev - VTIS (in English: Association of Slovenes Educated Abroad) is organizing an event called "VTIS United States of America: Slovene Science Around the World". The event will feature short presentations of the work of Slovenes who are active at universities and research institutes in and around New York City.

The event will take place on Saturday, **15th November 2014, from 4pm until 6.30pm at NYU, Kimmel Center, Suite 406, 60 Washington Square South, New York City.**

5 Slovene researchers and young academics will be presenting their scholarly work in 15-minute long "lightning talks" and answer questions from the audience. They are:

- Dr. Arne Baruca, Professor of Marketing, Sacred Heart University
- Dr. Veronika Dolar, Professor of Economics, Long Island University
- Miha Habič, Researcher and PhD student in the field of Mathematics, City University of New York
- Dr. Ana Hočevar, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the field of Theoretical Neuroscience, Rockefeller University
- Dr. Tatjana Trček, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the field of Developmental Genetics, New York University

The presentations will be followed by a networking reception.

To RSVP, please visit the following page: <http://goo.gl/forms/u1naWdVa2K> (in English) or <http://goo.gl/forms/636U4o15Gw> (in Slovene). To get more information about the event or the Association in general, please visit our website at <http://www.drustvovtis.si/> (in Slovene) or contact [info@drustvovtis.si](mailto:info@drustvovtis.si).

**A CONCERT BY KAJA DRAKSLER AND MATISS ČUDARS IN NEW YORK**

Kaja Draksler (organ) and Matiss Čudars (electric guitar) will be playing (more or less) improvised music they already presented on a tour this summer in Slovenia. The performance will be followed by Slovenian wine tasting.

Where: **St. Cyril's Church, 62 St Marks Pl, New York, NY 10003**

When: **Sunday, December 14 at 11:30 a.m.**

**PSALMS IN NEW YORK performed by CARMINA SLOVENICA**

"Chorus can take over from us and experience for us our innermost and most spontaneous feelings and attitudes, inclusive of crying and laughing." Žižek.

Choregie project by Karmina Šilec.

When: **January 8–11, 2015**

Where: **St. Ann's Warehouse, 29 Jay Street, Brooklyn 11201** -- just east of the Manhattan Bridge (aka DUMBO) <http://www.stannswarehouse.org/directions.php>

More information: [http://www.stannswarehouse.org/current\\_season.php?show\\_id=100](http://www.stannswarehouse.org/current_season.php?show_id=100)  
[http://www.stannswarehouse.org/current\\_season.php?show\\_id=100](http://www.stannswarehouse.org/current_season.php?show_id=100)

Watch the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qshuAZwC4Kw>

## **SLOVEN"SKI" WEEKEND @ WINDHAM MTN RESORT**

When: [Friday and Saturday, January 30 and 31, and Sunday, February 1, 2015](#)

Where: [Windham Mountain Resort, New York](#)

Saturday: Nastar Championship @10:30 a.m, lunch @ 12 noon, dinner @ 7:00 p.m.

Special NOTE: This year: minimum number of skiers on Fri & Sun: 15; minimum number of skiers and racers on Saturday is 20, to get group discount rates.

Those interested, ASAP call or email [Ivan Kamin at \(718\) 424-2711](#) or [jfkamin@verizon.net](mailto:jfkamin@verizon.net)

## UPCOMING EVENTS - OH

### **CONCERT BY GLASBENA MATICA CHORUS IN OH**

Under the direction of Angela Perrine, with Michael Cercek at the piano, the Glasbena Matica Slovenian Singing Society presents an unforgettable evening of song. The chorus takes "Center Stage" with selections from its repertoire of famous musical stage productions. You'll enjoy arrangements from well known shows and operas from Broadway, Italy, and Slovenia. These celebrated stage productions include "Fiddler on the Roof," "West Side Story," "South Pacific," and "The Student Prince." From the Slovenian stage, you'll hear numbers from "Melodija Srca (A Melody from the Heart)," "Planinska Roža (The Mountain Flower)," and "Gorenjski Slavček (The Highland Nightingale)." Favorites by Lojze Slak and the Avsenik Brothers will add to the listening pleasure.

When: [Saturday, November 15 at 5:30 p.m.](#)

Where: The grand auditorium of the [Slovenian National Home, at 6417 St. Clair Avenue, in Cleveland, OH.](#)

Admission to the concert and dance that follows is \$15 per person. Tickets are available from chorus members and the Polka Hall of Fame, 605 East 222nd Street in Euclid, Ohio, (216) 261-FAME. For more information, contact Lori Sierputowski at (440) 449-5643.

### **POLKA HALL OF FAME MUSIC AWARDS AT DOWNTOWN CLEVELAND**

For the first time, the Polka Hall of Fame Awards Show will be staged in the Grand Ballroom of the Marriott Hotel in Downtown [Cleveland, Ohio](#), on Public Square, Saturday, November 29, 2014. The gala Awards Show will be the high point of the three-day Thanksgiving Polka Party Weekend hosted by the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum, Thursday, Friday and [Saturday, November 27, 28 and 29](#), at the Marriott.

Two long-time polka musicians will be inducted at the Awards Show, Cleveland musician and radio host Denny Bucar and the late accordionist and bandleader Don Lipovac of Kansas City. Both were voted in for their lifetime achievements by the membership and board of the Polka Hall of Fame and announced at a preview meeting on October 9. They will be honored at the stage event on November 29, along with six individuals to be added to the Trustee Honor Roll. Winners will also be announced in nine categories, including Polka Band of the Year, Polka Musician of the Year, and Polka Album of the Year.

The Polka Hall of Fame is located at 605 East 222nd Street in Euclid, Ohio, in the historic former Euclid City Hall. Hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 11:00 to 4:00. Admission is free. For details, contact (216) 261-FAME or [www.polkafame.com](http://www.polkafame.com).