



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

# NEWSLETTER

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## Celebrating National Day of Culture

As festivities were held across the Slovenia on Sunday, February 8, when Slovenians traditionally observe their Cultural Day, a national holiday dedicated to Slovenia's foremost poet, France Prešeren, the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington hosted a reception for the occasion on February 5, evening. The event featured two young Slovenian visual artists, painter Barbara Jurkovšek and conceptual artist Ištvan Išt Huzjan.

In his address to over 100 guests, Ambassador Dr. Cerar outlined the poet's contribution to Slovenia's national identity and his distinctive contribution to the formation of Slovenia as a nation, having lifted the Slovenian language to the European level of literally expression. Besides the ambassador, European Parliament Member and the first Prime Minister



The event was attended by more than 100 guests.

of the independent Slovenia, Lojze Peterle, who was in D.C. for an official visit, in his remarks also stressed the importance of culture for national unity and for paving the way to Slovenia's statehood.

The remarks were followed by the opening of the exhibition, titled "Things", by the artist, **Barbara Jurkovšek**. The exhibition presented a series of works on burlap in mixed technique, created since 2013, which as a

special characteristic include the use of calligraphic and typographical elements. The art project relates to figures of animalistic creatures as one of her central motifs, from their embryonic state on. The aim of the artist is to draw attention to the increasingly present problem of »human-animal hybrids« in today's world, which is reflected also in contemporary art and pop culture.

**Ištvan Išt Huzjan**, who during the month of February





Address by MEP Lojze Peterle, next to him is Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar,

resides as the artist-in-residence in Slovenian Ministry of Culture's apartment in New York, presented on the occasion his book entitled "OHO and the Korean Avant-Garde Association". The publication is a compilation of images from work of two neo-conceptual artistic movements from the late 60's and early 70's that have despite of geographic distance and no knowledge about each other produced formally similar work. The presentation featured Huzjan's performance titled "Od tu do tu"

("From here to there") during which the artist talked about his work and the context of the publication. He also presented his travel drawings with pen on boarding passes, photographs and unique sculptures – keys that open no doors.

An event celebrating the Slovenian cultural day was also held at Marlene Tavern in New York, organized by Branch 93 of the Slovenian Union of America. The program included reading of poetry by Kajeten Kovič, Ciril Zlobec, Janez Menart, Tone Pavček, Alojz

Gradnik – and France Prešeren -- and a live music performance by Jan Kus on saxophone, along with Sean Fitzpatrick, piano, and Dan Martinez, double bass. Slovenian Cultural Holiday Programs were also held in Indianapolis's Slovenian National Home, sponsored by the Indianapolis-Piran Sister Cities Committee, at the Slovenian Catholic and Cultural Center in Lemont, IL and elsewhere in the U.S.

Meanwhile, in Slovenia on the occasion of the Prešeren Day, cultural venues offered free access to their performances and exhibitions, and several bookshops opened their doors to mark the holiday. In Ljubljana, where Prešeren worked and created, as traditionally, recitals of his poems were held at the Prešeren Square in the center of town by an association of theater actors and playwrights. As part of the holiday, a reception was also held for the Prešeren Prize and Prešeren Fund laureates. Slovenia's highest awards in culture were handed out on the eve of the holiday, while the winners gathered in Kranj. The winners of the prestigious Prešeren Prizes were cartoonist Miki Muster and poet Andrej Bvar.



Presentation by Ištvan Išt Huzjan. In the photo is also Barbara Jurkovšek.



Performance: "Od tu do tu."

## Ambassador Attends ASEF Event in San Francisco



From the right: father Peter Rožič, Ambassador Dr. Cerar, and Ravnik brothers.

The Ambassador, Dr. Cerar, visited the San Francisco Bay Area at the end of January. On Saturday, January 24 evening, he attended a cocktail reception organized for the Slovenian community by the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Slovenia in California, Mr. Thomas Brandi, on the premises

of his legal office. He presented a book collection to the President of the Educational and Dramatic Club Slovenia (Izobraževalni in dramski klub Slovenija), Mr. David McCormick, on the occasion of its 90th anniversary.

The highlight of the visit was the American Slovenian Education Foundation Gala

Fundraiser Dinner, which took place on Sunday, January 25, when ASEF celebrated the successes and fulfilled aspirations of its first year. The Foundation strives to strengthen the link between Slovenia and the United States by advancing programs for students and educators that will encourage growth, exchange of ideas, character formation, and community building. ASEF's goal is to link promising students in Slovenia with university and industry mentors in America, and doing the same for American students in Slovenia. In 2014, ASEF collected over 150,000 dollars in donations from a variety of donors and has already sponsored three young Slovenian researchers, who received fellowships at the University of Santa Clara and Stanford University in California.

During the program, the Honorary Consul of Slovenia, Thomas J. Brandi, offered introductory remarks and Rev. Michael E. Engh, S.J., President of Santa Clara University, delivered the invocation. Dr. Božo Cerar, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to the U.S., extended his greetings and read a letter in support of the Foundation from Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia, and Mr. Gorazd Žmavc, Minister of Slovenians abroad. Richard S. Gordon, California State Senate Assembly Member (24th District), offered greetings as well. Jure Leskovec and Peter Rožič, S.J., members of the ASEF Board of Directors, reported on the foundation's activities. At



Zvonko Fazarinc and Franc Rode, were given the lifetime achievement awards.

the annual gala, two Slovenians scientists, Zvonko Fazarinc and Franc Rode, were given the lifetime achievement awards. Working mainly for Hewlett-Packard, the two worked on the development of the GPS system and the first electronic calculator. If you wish to be involved in helping the ASEF enable talented students and educators transcend borders and reach their full potential by contributing to ASEF's cause, please, visit the website at <http://www.asef-fund.org> and get in touch.



Reception on the premises Tom Brandi's legal office and his address. All photos are courtesy of Anthony Ravnik and John Ravnik.

## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

### Embassy Exhibit at CUA



Slovenian booth was very popular among visitors.

On Friday, January 30, the Catholic University of America (CUA) for the fourth year hosted an Open House and the Embassy Exhibit event, which aimed to capture the sights, sounds, and

tastes of global cultures. The Slovenian Embassy was among the exhibitors participating in the International Bazaar, giving the CUA community an opportunity to learn more about

what Slovenia has to offer.

The event, featuring cultural displays, performances, and a sampling of foods from around the world, was a great success. More than two dozen embassies in the Washington area accepted the invitation to set up booths and displays, and so did many international student clubs, trade representations and tourist offices. They shared information about their respective cultures and traditions and activities with over 300 attendees.

The Slovenian Embassy presented facts about the country, promoted its tourism sites, and educational opportunities and distributed brochures about Slovenia. The embassy staff also offered a taste of Slovenia's traditional pastry – potica, a sweet walnut roll-cake -- and Carniolian sausages.

# 34rd Summer School of Slovene Language 2015

The Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana invites you to visit Slovenia this summer and take a course in Slovene while enjoying an unforgettable Slovene holiday. Various Slovene language courses are scheduled for the period **July 6–31, 2015**, at the **Faculty of Arts, Aškerčeva 2, Ljubljana**.

You can choose between two-week (40 hours) and four-week morning course (80 hours); 4 lessons each day for a total of 20 lessons a week. The course takes place Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. If you want your studies to be more intensive, you can decide to attend an optional course, i.e., two additional language classes a day, available on July 7 through 17, 2015, and/or July 21 through 31, 2015; 2 lessons each day for a total of 18 lessons in 2 weeks from Monday to Friday from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm.

According to your level of knowledge of Slovene, you can select from among the following courses: **Beginners' level** (Conversation and Phonetics), **Intermediate level** (Conversation / Slovene Literature and Culture / Grammar), and **Advanced level** (Conversation / Slovene Literature and Culture / Preparation for the Exam of Slovene at the intermediate and advanced level). Individual elective courses will be held if at least five students enroll. At the end of the Summer School, you will receive an official **Certificate of Attendance**.

After successful completion of the course, the participants

are awarded ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credit points: 3 credits for a 60-hour course, 4 credits for an 80-hour course, 6 credits for a 120-hour course. If you want to obtain an **official certificate of Slovene**, you can take the Exam of Slovene at the Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced Level, administered by the Examination Center at the Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language, and other institutions in Slovenia (only the Basic Level).

**Summer school activities** are not limited to language learning; there is also a varied social program, where you can get acquainted with Slovene culture, history and contemporary reality. In workshops, you will learn about cultural practices and customs, meet famous and interesting Slovenes, see a Slovene film or a theatrical production, go to a concert and do some sports.

The activities of the accompanying program are held in the afternoons and in the evenings and are covered by the tuition fee. Parts of the accompanying program are translated into English, which enables beginners to follow those activities as well; other activities are held only in Slovene and are meant as a direct complement of the language courses.

Anyone with an interest in learning Slovene is very welcome. However, participants must be at least 18 years old; younger participants should attend the Youth Summer School.

**Tuition fees** that vary from EUR 158 to 915; about \$180 to \$1035) and cover language

courses as well as the additional activities program. The textbook is not included in the price, you will buy it at the course after the results of the placement test are known. The price of the course also does not include the Exam of Slovene.

You can apply for the course using **the application form no later than June 22, 2015 (and July 6 for the course July 20–31, 2015)**. Upon receiving your application the center will send you the invoice by regular or e-mail.

Members of Slovene ethnic minorities in other countries and descendants of Slovene expatriates and emigrants can apply for the **scholarship** (2-week morning course). The deadline for applications is May 15, 2015. Candidates who do not have Slovene background, but are actively engaged in Slovene culture or in some other way contribute to the promotion of Slovenia in the world can apply for one of the scholarships of the Jana Zemljarič Miklavčič Scholarship Trust. **The deadline for applications is May 1, 2015.**

More information about the enrollment, payment and cancellation and the prices is available at: [http://www.centerslo.net/I2.asp?L1\\_ID=1&L2\\_ID=1&LANG=eng](http://www.centerslo.net/I2.asp?L1_ID=1&L2_ID=1&LANG=eng)

In addition, The Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana is this year organizing the ninth Slovene Language Summer School for teenagers. For more information see: [http://www.centerslo.net/I2.asp?L1\\_ID=8&L2\\_ID=143&LANG=eng](http://www.centerslo.net/I2.asp?L1_ID=8&L2_ID=143&LANG=eng)

# Prof. Vinko Lipovec Celebrates 100 Years



Consul General presenting the recognition. Prof. Vinko Lipovec.



of "Korotan" and "Fantje na vasi" singing groups. Remarks were given by Rev. Jože Božnar of St. Vitus's church in Cleveland, who introduced to the audience

Prof. Lipovec's remarkable life and accomplishments. Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Jurček Žmauc, conveyed to the professor the recognition by the Minister of Slovenes abroad and thanked him for all of his endeavors to preserve and nurture Slovenian culture and heritage in Cleveland and around the U.S. The consul general also presented on the occasion to Rev. Božnar a letter of condolences on the passing away of Bishop Edward Pevec.

On January 21, a celebration on the occasion of Prof. Vinko Lipovec's 100th birthday was held on the premises of The Slovene Home for the Aged In Cleveland.

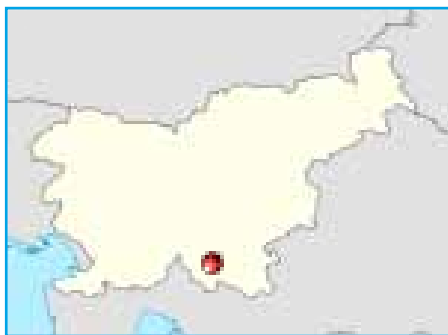
Around 30 friends congratulated Prof. Lipovec, among them many representatives of American Slovenian organizations. During the evening, Prof. Lipovec was serenaded by various members

Prof. Vinko Lipovec was born on January 22, 1915, in Spodnje Jarše pri Domžalah. After elementary school, he attended classical secondary school in Ljubljana and in 1939 obtained a degree in history and geography at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Arts. He started his teaching career in 1940, but was arrested in 1944 by the Germans and taken to the Dachau concentration camp, where he stayed until the liberation on April 29, 1945. In September 1949, he moved to the U.S. and, in 1950, started editing the Ameriška Domovina newspaper. In 1979, he retired, but, remained an active member of the Slovenian community in Cleveland. He was a great advocate for the Slovenian independence, and dedicated his efforts to the recognition of Slovenia's independence by the U.S. government.



Professor Lipovec and Consul General Jure Žmauc.

## Kočevska Reka



Kočevska Reka is the central settlement lying between the crossing points, forests and meadows of the Gotenica–Kočevska Reka valley. The village, with 277 inhabitants, lies at the foot of the Gotenica Snežnik mountain (1290 m – 4232 ft.).

The Kočevje region is famous for its history. Due to the region's isolation, vast forests, harsh climate conditions, karstification, water shortage and bad land-fertility, it has been known as a deserted inaccessible jungle ever since the 13th century. In the 1330's, the Counts



The largest walnut and the parish church of St. John the Baptist in the village of Kočevska Reka.

of Ortenburg populated the Kočevje region with rebellious German peasants. The geographical remoteness and desertedness of the region provided its people with the opportunity to pass their customs, traditions, folk costumes and speech down from generation to generation.

The inhabitants kept their German linguistic and cultural background in the Slovenian ethnic territory for over 600 years.

When the Kočevje region was occupied by the Italians at the beginning of WWII, the leaders of the Kočevje Germans opted for relocation. In the fall of 1943, the Kočevje region became the center of the liberated territory, as the First Assembly of Slovenian Delegates was held at the former cultural center Sokolski dom, which is today known as Šeškov dom, in the city of Kočevje. On multiple occasions, the region was swept by various armies and the evacuated villages of the Kočevje Germans suffered immense damage.

The village of Kočevska Reka with its vicinity is known for the status it held from 1949 to 1990, when the area was closed to the public due



The rivers and lakes in Kočevje are ideal for fly-fishing.



The brown bear is the most famous inhabitant of the Municipality of Kočevje.

to the nearby underground facilities and other political-military facilities. The then-closed area of Kočevska Reka covered about 180-200 sq.km. (45,000-50,000 acres) of land, which represents a quarter of the Municipality of Kočevje. It was larger than 16 of the then-existing municipalities. In the summer of 1991, the Slovenian government passed the law re-opening the closed area of Kočevska Reka.

Kočevska Reka is also the cradle of Slovenian statehood. It is there that in December 1990 the First Special MORS Brigade was first presented to the public. The so-called Park of Maneuver Structure of National Defense still reminds of activities that took place during the War of Independence.

In the center of the village of Kočevska Reka, stands the new church of St. John the Baptist. It was built in the same location where stood the old church, destroyed in the years 1953 to 1956 – just

like other churches in the area. The new church's interior was designed by the local academic sculptor Stane Jarm.

Next to the church, there is a memorial park with a chestnut promenade and the largest walnut tree in Slovenia. The walnut is over 400 years old, its circumference measures 434 cm (13 ft.) and it is 15 m (50 ft.) tall. Under the tree, stands a stone bench with the year 1696 chiseled into it.

The village also offers original architecture and typical old buildings. The nearby village of Novi Lazi has a cemetery, while another neighboring village, Koče, is the birthplace of Peter Kozler, the founder of the famous Union beer brewery and author of the first map of Slovenian lands.

All of the most interesting corners of Kočevska Reka and its vicinity can be visited riding horseback. Since there are many hiking and biking trails in the proximity of the village, its surroundings can

also be discovered on foot or by bicycle. Another beautiful spot in the area is definitely the Reka brook. Its upper stream is dammed and forms an artificial lake. The lake, which is 2 km (1.3 mi. long and up to 6 m (20 ft.) deep, is an important habitat for plants and animals. Together with the surrounding forest it has been proclaimed the Nature Reserve of Jezero. It is the home of the white-tailed eagle and other rare birds. The lake of Reka also offers a good spot for fishing, although only fly-fishing for pike and zander is allowed there.

Another place to visit is the Borovec nature educational trail and take a walk through pristine nature – the jungle of Krokav and the Krempa nature reserve. Each spring, the grass-covered Krempa col transforms into a carpet of daffodils.



Kočevje forest honey with the European Designation of Origin.



# Traditional Pristavska noč Banquet and Raffle



Tina Maze's autographed ski-suit.

Traditional Pristavska noč Banquet was held on Saturday, January 24, in Slovenian National home on St. Clair Avenue, where around 400 guests enjoyed the program that featured music by the Alpine Sextet. Opening remarks were given by Consul General Jurček Žmauc who commended the numerous activities of the Pristava and its role in preserving Slovenian heritage and traditions.

The highlight of the evening was the launching of the raffle of an autographed racing ski-suit of the Slovenian

two-time Olympic Gold Medal Champion and 2013 World Cup Champion, Tina Maze. The raffle runs from January 24 to September 13, 2015. The cost of the tickets is \$10 for one and \$50 for 6 tickets. For more information, email: [TMaze@slovenskapristava.org](mailto:TMaze@slovenskapristava.org). All proceeds will go towards Slovenska Pristava operating expenses. You can news from Slovenska Pristava at: [www.slovenskapristava.org](http://www.slovenskapristava.org) and [www.facebook.com/slovenskapristava](http://www.facebook.com/slovenskapristava)

## UPCOMING EVENTS - DC

### **EXHIBITION "THINGS" BY BARBARA JURKOVŠEK AND PROJECT "FROM HERE TO THERE" BY ISTVAN IST HUZJAN**

The project THINGS, with its seemingly innocent and at the same time grotesque content, creates irony and parody of the spirit of our time, in which the modern man is caught, and, in the metaphorical sense, shows how a man in his struggle for survival and craving for immortality puts at risk not only his own existence but also that of other biological species; from his own essence, he creates psychic and physical hybrids.

Huzjan's work, on the one hand, results in atmospheric, temporary site-specific installations and, on the other, deals with the format of the book he created as a more permanent object. His essential themes are appropriation of his own childhood and the transitional time of the recent European history.

When: [Ongoing – April 2015, Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.](#)

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