



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
EMBASSY OF REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
WASHINGTON

# NEWSLETTER

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## Celebrating 25th Independence Anniversary in Minnesota

**The Consulate of the Republic of Slovenia in Minnesota hosted the celebration of the 25 anniversary of Slovenia's independence on Saturday, June 25, 2016. The celebration began at 1:00 pm with live Slovenian music and an open bar and was attended by over 160 people, who were served a large assortment of appetizers and beverages throughout the day.**

A short program began at 2 p.m. with the singing of the U.S. national anthem, followed by the Slovenian national anthem, both performed by a quartet of professional male singers, assembled for this occasion. After presentation of the anthems, Honorary Consul Miro Medved read the



Key note by Consul General Andrej Rode.

certificate "In Celebration of Slovenia's 25 Years of Independence", sent by Roseville Mayor, Dan Roe.

Afterwards, Garrison McMurtrey, Outreach Director for the Office of U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar, read the letter written by the senator for the occasion. Jim Klobuchar, a well-known journalist, author of many books and father of Sen. Amy Klobuchar was also in attendance.

Honorary Consul Medved then introduced the guest of honor, Consul

General Andrej Rode, who spoke about the events leading to Slovenia's independence. After addressing the attendees, Consul General Rode presented an award to the Twin Cities Slovenians' organization in recognition of its 10 years of existence.

As part of the celebration, a bocce ball tournament was held with 48 people participating. Each team member for both the champions and 2nd place team received a trophy, custom made for the occasion. Dinner was served at 5:30 pm. Later in the evening, the guests formed a large circle and sang a variety of Slovenian folk songs, capping off a great day of celebration.



Jim Klobuchar.



Band: John Stark, Denny Anderson, Jay Broderson.



25th anniversary cake.



Some 160 people attended the celebration.



Trophies for bocce ball tournament.

## I FEEL 25

# Slovenian Diplomacy – Twenty-Five Years and Counting

Twenty-five years is a period long enough for us – as a state and as individuals – to look back and assess what has changed, what has improved and what has stayed the same. Slovenia can definitely be proud of the path it has taken. After 25 years, which brought numerous challenges and turning points, Slovenia and Slovenian diplomacy are mature, confident, penetrating, creative and innovative, just like the Slovenian people.

If we look back at the period since its beginnings in 1990, we can say that Slovenian foreign policy and diplomacy co-created the growing ambitions and goals of the Slovenian state and considerably contributed to their fulfilment. Today, Slovenia is a

Member State of the European Union and NATO, and it has presided over the OSCE, the European Union and the Council of Europe. As a newly-established state, Slovenia has served a term on the U.N. Security Council, become a member of the U.N. Human Rights Council for the second time, and is also a member of the UNESCO Executive Board.

But the work of Slovenian diplomacy is far from complete. Last year, the Foreign Ministry invested a significant amount of work in preparing two new strategic documents for Slovenian foreign policy – the Declaration of Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia and the Foreign Policy Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia – in

collaboration with many partners from political, expert and academic circles and the interested public. Both documents contain the fundamental guidelines for the work of Slovenian diplomacy in the future, and will improve and facilitate Slovenia's responsiveness to current developments in international relations.

The past 25 years have given rise to many positive stories about Slovenian diplomacy, foreign policy and other spheres; they have been collected in the web publication entitled 25 Years, where developments in various areas are briefly outlined over 40 pages. You are invited to read the stories at [www.slovenia25.si](http://www.slovenia25.si), a website presenting various topics related to the 25th anniversary of independent Slovenia.

# Order of Merit for Honorary Consul in California, Thomas J. Brandi



Tom J. Brandi receiving the Order for Merit from President Borut Pahor. Tom J. Brandi along with his wife Carol, brother Bob and his wife Midge, family, relatives and friends after the decoration ceremony.

On June 25th, the National Day of the Republic of Slovenia, President Borut Pahor decorated with the Order for Merit Slovenia's Honorary Consul in California, Thomas J. Brandi. Mr. Brandi is a well-recognized trial attorney, and a managing and name partner of the Brandi Law Firm. In 2015, he was named by the SF/LA Daily Journal one of the Top 25 Plaintiff Lawyers in California. Tom is also an adjunct professor of Trial Practice at the Law School at the University of San Francisco.

He is a San Francisco native, but of Slovenian ancestry on his grandmother's side, who came to the U.S. from Rožni dol in Bela Krajina, where his relatives still live. He has served as the Honorary Consul of Slovenia since 2007 and has in the past nine years notably contributed to the bilateral cooperation between Slovenia and the state of California in business, science, culture and as a Chair of the American Slovenian Educational Foundation also in education. He has been a true asset to

Slovenia, both by keeping the social ties of Slovenians of all generations together and by assisting our country and our citizens whenever needed. Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar and the entire embassy staff congratulate Mr. Brandi for this high recognition as well as thank him for his continued service to Slovenian citizens and businesses, and for his continuous extraordinary efforts in enhancing the ties between Slovenia and the U.S. West Coast.

## DIASPORA

# 30th Anniversary of the Slovenian Genealogy Society International

The Slovenian Genealogy Society International, Inc., celebrated two birthdays in one on Saturday, June 25, 2016—the 30th anniversary of helping fellow Slovenes in their search of family heritage and Slovenia's 25th anniversary of independence by holding two genealogy workshops at SGSI's Research Center, 6415 St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44103. In attendance were 46 participants representing nine states and Canada.

The first workshop, "Archiving Your Family History," was introduced by graphic designer, Chris Panchur; the second, "Free Genealogy Rest Stops on the Information Highway," was presented by genealogist, Bonnie Snyder. The program was followed by a Slovenian luncheon at Sterle's Country House—a restaurant specializing in Slovenian cuisine. Well-known Clevelander, August B. Pust, an Ellis Island Medal of Honor recipient, was

the main speaker. SGSI volunteers were also recognized for their service.

SGSI was founded in 1986 by Al Peterlin with the purpose of furthering genealogy research and promoting interest in family histories of persons of Slovenian ancestry. For 21 years, Peterlin operated the Society from his home, accumulating a myriad of research materials. In 2007, SGSI headquarters moved to Cleveland, Ohio and in 2009, the SGSI Research Center

was established within the Slovenian Museum and Archives (SMA) located at the Slovenian National Home complex. With financial assistance from the St. Clair-Superior Development Corporation, SGSI moved to larger quarters in September 2012, still within the National Home's complex. With these larger quarters, SGSI not only assists fellow Slovenians in researching their ancestry, but also serves as a central repository for American-Slovenian family histories.

The Research Center holds a wide variety of genealogy resources,

the most popular being “surname indices”—surnames extracted from written sources. Among these indices are: a 150,000 surname index from various Slovenian church jubilee and fraternal organization booklets from the U.S. and Canada; a one million plus index from the Slovene National Benefit Society's publication, Prosveta, and a 10,000+ index from selected editions of their youth publication, Voice of Youth; indices from Ave Maria Koledars, 1915-1954 and Ameriška Družinski Koledars (selected editions), 1915-1950.

The newest index is from the newspaper, Ameriška Domovina (American Home), for the years 1940-1954, with more years added as they become indexed. SGSI has biographies of Slovenian families, translated from the magazine Novi Svet. All of these plus other smaller indices and many other genealogy resources are available to SGSI members. Visit its website ([www.slovenianguenealogy.org](http://www.slovenianguenealogy.org)) and join their Facebook page. You can also call (216) 361-5600, or email [sgsi.rc@gmail.com](mailto:sgsi.rc@gmail.com) to request research assistance.



## DIASPORA

# Dobrodošli doma – Welcome home 2016

For the sixth consecutive year, the Government's Office for Slovenians Abroad has organized an annual event for Slovenes from abroad under the slogan “Welcome home”. The meetings took place from June 30 to July 2, with various gatherings, workshops, presentations, a reception and cultural performances taking place throughout Ljubljana.

The program started on Thursday, June 30, with an opening of an exhibition on migrations of Slovenians to the U.S. at the National and University Library in Ljubljana, followed by a concert at the Slovenian Philharmonics Building. Among the performers were Canadian-Slovenian soprano Theresa Plut and harpist Tina Žerdin, singing group Voxon from Austria, Davorin Jenko Choir from Banja Luka in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Mendoza Octet from Argentina.

Later on the same day, a host of Slovenians living abroad gathered for a get-together at the National Assembly, where Minister for Slovenians Abroad, Gorazd Žmavc, and Speaker, Milan Brglez, praised the emigres' contribution to the

international recognition of Slovenia 25 years ago. Martin Lissiach of the Slovenian Cultural and Economic Association, an umbrella organization of the Slovenian minority in Italy, highlighted the importance of unity among Slovenians. This was echoed by Verica Trstenjak, a professor of European law at the Faculty of Law in Vienna.

President Borut Pahor received the Minister for Slovenians Abroad, Gorazd Žmavc, and members of both government councils for Slovenians abroad in the Presidential Palace on Friday, June 1. Both councils met for a joint ceremonial session, hosted by Prime Minister, Miro Cerar, to mark the 25th anniversary of Slovenia's independence. At the session, PM Cerar recapped Slovenia's achievements in recent years and highlighted future priorities. PM Cerar also thanked representatives of the organizations for their help during efforts for independence as well as for all the support provided today.

The Council for Slovenians in Neighboring Countries and the Council for Slovenians Abroad are consultative

bodies of the government. They were established in 2006 in line with the law on relations between Slovenia and Slovenians outside the country's borders. Each council counts 19 members, excluding their presidents and vice-presidents. Both councils are chaired by the prime minister. The formal sitting is part of events dedicated to the Slovenian diaspora. Representatives in the council from the U.S. are Milan Ribič (Cleveland, Ohio) and Janez Kamin (New York).

The ‘Welcome Home’ three-day event concluded on Saturday, July 2 with a program in various outdoor venues in the center of the capital. Performing were SKD Lipa from Munich, Triglav Society from Stuttgart and Drava Society from Augsburg (all in Germany), Kakanj Society from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Triglav Singing Society from Subotica in Serbia, the Encijan choir from Pulj, and Prijedor Slovenian Society Lipa. In the afternoon, people gathered for a mass celebrated by Bishop Anton Jamnik in the church of Holy Trinity in Ljubljana.

## Original Prešeren's Manuscripts Found in the U.S.

The manuscripts of two poems written by the Slovenian poet France Prešeren in the 19th century were recently discovered in Cleveland. Both manuscripts were signed by Prešeren and are in remarkably good condition. Titled "Slovo od mladosti" (A Farewell to Youth) and "Dohtar" (Doctor) were sent to Ljubljana with assistance of Slovenian Consul General, Mr.

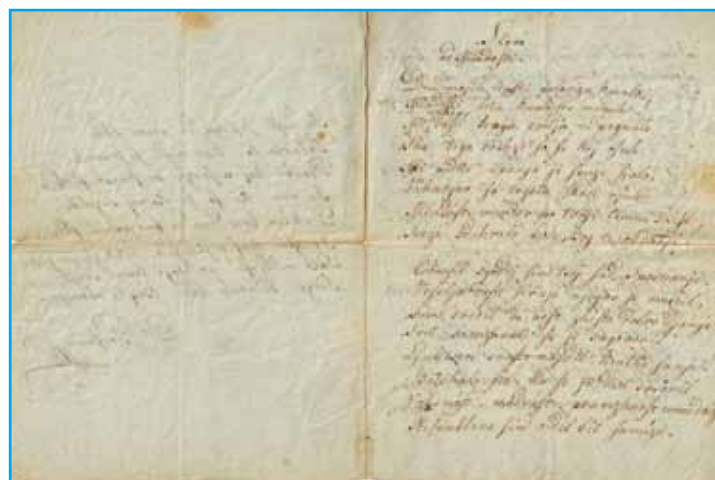
Andrej Rode, and Slovenian language instructor at Cleveland State University, Mr. Luka Zibelnik, where a spectral analysis was carried out to confirm their authenticity.

The two manuscripts were displayed at the University of Ljubljana's Department of Arts in July. Later they will be sent back to be put on exhibition at the Slovenian Museum and Archives in

Cleveland, in line with the wishes of their donor Evgen Favetti. The two poems were first published in 1830 in the Slovenian poetry magazine. A Farewell to Youth was written in the old Latin script of bohoričica and describes the poet's reflections on life. The second was written in the Latin script called gajica and describes the poet's pain over his loved one.



Luka Zibelnik with the manuscripts.



France Prešeren: A Farewell to Youth.

## IN SHORT

- According to the Global Peace Index 2016 (GPI), Slovenia is among top 10 most peaceful countries in the world: <https://www.facebook.com/worldeconomicforum/videos/10153639988766479/>

- Check episode 12 of the Discovery Map Travel Podcast with Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar sharing an insight of the best tourist features of Slovenia: <http://discoverymap.libsyn.com/ep-12-slovenia#ea5a3T7i0TqKlIHc.01>

- A Slovenian, Andrej Prša, Villanova Astrophysicist, was awarded two NSF grants to develop new model for celestial study: <http://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/media/pressreleases/2016/0610.html>



Congrats to cyclist Marko Baloh, who finished third the Race Across America! More at: <http://markobaloh.com>

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