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

NEWSLETTER

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E.U. Open House 2016 at the Embassy of Slovenia

The Delegation of the European Union to the United States and the embassies of the 28 E.U. member states opened their doors on Europe Day to Washington during the tenth annual E.U. Embassies' Open House Day on Saturday, May 14, 2016, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The event gave public an opportunity for a look inside the embassy and a chance for entire families to experience traditional Slovenian music, food, wine and art.

Some 3,900 people visited the embassy at 2410 California Street, NW, throughout the day. The event was focused on celebrating the 25th independence anniversary. Guests



Ambassador of Slovenia to the U.S. Dr. Božo Cerar and Ambassador David O'Sullivan, Head of the European Union Delegation to the U.S.

had an opportunity to learn about the best Slovenian tourist attractions, taste Slovenian culinary specialties such as "potica" (walnut-roll cake), "jabolčni zavitek" (apple strudel), Prekmurje layer cake ("prekmurska gibanica"), Carniolian sausage, and pumpkin-seed oil. Making of apple strudel and potica was demonstrated by Bajda sisters: Rosie Antilla, Albina Medved, Nadi Bajda and their niece Edika Hodnik, all Slovenian Union of America members, who came

to Washington all the way from Minnesota.

The event involved the largest U.S.-Slovenian organizations and associations. Next to admiring traditional and authentic Slovenian costumes, the visitors could also view original household items, home-made crafts and artwork displayed by the SNPJ Heritage Museum from Pittsburgh, PA, represented by Joan and Larry Gašperšič, Susan Mals and other SNPJ members. Slovenian

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SNPJ Heritage Center.



The line in front of the embassy.

Union of America SUA Branch 93 from New York and their President Tanya Vajk on this occasion conducted an online class of Slovene, and SUA Branch 108 from Olney, MD with President Bernardka Kovačič Fitzsimmons, Nika Kovačič, May Kokal, Erika K. Roda, Lisa Kokal and Daniel Hester exhibited traditional items such as Idrija lace and painted beehive front panels. Bethlehem–Murska Sobota Sister City Association (BMSSCA) members: Gene Novak, Marija Škrilec, Debi and Jon Rice and Lisa Kucsan were presenting the features of the Prekmurje region.

The program was also focused on presenting the Štajerska region, in terms of both tourism, as well as of culinary and wine offerings. Culinary specialties of Upper Savinja Valley were being presented throughout the day by the students of Ljubno

ob Savinji Elementary School. Maša, Maja, Jurij and Blaž served traditional foods from their region including “ajdnek” (buckwheat cake with honey and walnuts), “mohot” traditional cottage cheese spread), Savinjski želodec (traditional bacon-filled pork from the Savinja valley), “kruhov čips” (bread chips) and “jabolčni fižol” (cider beans). The students were finalists of the “Cooking Kids” competition and a culinary heritage research project, which directly involves each year more than 2,000 Slovenian primary school children. The project is managed by Anka Peljhan.

The visitors could also learn about the Savinja Valley tourist attractions presented by Žalec tourist office representative Ms. Sabina Palir. Hops producer Ms. Marta Rojnik was meanwhile offering a selection of beers: Kukec, Pelicon and Laško.

Also on hand was travel information on Slovenia, provided by Slovenian Tourist Office, and tourist information centers in Slovenske Konjice, Maribor and Ljubljana, which this year bears the title as the European Green Capital. Slovenia Travel Agency from New York, and Kollander Travel from Cleveland as well as some tour operators also sent their information. Displayed on the walls of the embassy was a photo exhibition titled: Slovenia is a love story – offering a glimpse of the best tourist sites of the country.

Visitors also could talk to embassy staff and discuss history, economy, and politics of Slovenia and even take a selfie with the ambassador. Promotional films on Slovenia screened in the video nook attracted a great number of guests. Embassy library was turned into kids’ corner, where children could listen to



Young entrepreneurs: Itero Watches.



Young entrepreneurs: Invented4.



Rosie Antilla, Bina Medved, Nadi Bajda, Edika Hodnik.



Maša and Maja - young chefs from Ljubno ob Savinji.

traditional Slovenian stories, color, play and read. Traditional music was performed on the embassy terrace, lobby and front by accordionists Alex Gergar from Bethlehem, PA, Kara Maruszak, from Cleveland, OH, and Frank Vidergar, from Silver Spring, MD.

Wine tasting was organized by sommelier Andreja Košir Gažovič and winemaker Polona Brumec, both

directors of SloWINEa institute. They were introducing vintages of wine cellars: Pullus, Zlati grič, Doppler Wines, Sanctum Wines and other from Štajerska. Wines from the Goriška Brda region were presented by Laureate Imports and its representatives Špela Zobec and Paul F. Monte. Guests could try Bagueri, Avia and Colliano wines. Buckwheat Vodka Slovenia was also available for

tasting, and on display were products of the Piran Salt Pans, and Kocbek pumpkin seed oil, all provided by Emil Gaspari of the Tri-Wines and A & E Trade Company from New York. Present at the event were also young Slovenian entrepreneurs who have launched their projects on the Kickstarter platform: Invented4, Itero Watches, and Lutman Design.



Wine and beer tasting.



Frank Vidergar and Kara Maruszak.

Shortcut to Europe:
 European Union **EMBASSIES'**
OPEN HOUSE
 Saturday **May 14TH** 2016 10am - 4pm





Readings and Discussions with Poet Cvetka Lipuš



Reading the Library of Congress

Book presentation at the Austrian Cultural Forum.

As part of the European Month of Culture, the Embassy of Slovenia and the Austrian Cultural Forum in Washington, DC organized a poetry evening with poet Cvetka Lipuš at the Embassy of Austria on Tuesday, May 17. The reading and discussion took place in Slovenian, German, and English with Introductory remarks by Prof. Dr. Vesna Kondrič Horvat, from the University of Maribor. On May 19,

Cvetka Lipuš presented her newest book, translated into English, *What We Are, When We Are* (Kaj smo, ko smo) also at the Library of Congress, when the event was presented in cooperation with the European Division of the Library.

Cvetka Lipuš, member of the Slovenian minority in Austria's province of Carinthia, is an award-winning author, who writes poetry in her first language despite having lived

outside the Slovenian community for most of her adulthood. After residing more than fifteen years in Pittsburgh, PA, she relocated in 2009 to Salzburg, Austria. Ms. Lipuš has published seven collections of poetry, much of which has been translated into different languages. She is also the recipient of fellowships and literary awards in several countries, including the prestigious Slovenian national Prešeren foundation award.

Violinist Lana Trotovshek Performs with the Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra



Discussion after the performance at the Kimmel Center.

Concert in New York by Boris Bizjak and Lana Trotovshek.

Slovenian violinist, Lana Trotovshek, described as “radiant” by The Washington Post, appeared with the Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra on May 14 and May 15, performing Mendelsohn’s violin concerto. Besides playing at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, Trotovshek also held a concert in New York. Both appearances were supported by the Embassy of Slovenia. This was her third tour in the U.S., after her debut performance in September 2014 in the frame of the Embassy Series. Last season, she also presented Brahms concerto with Kalamazoo, Mich., Symphony Orchestra.

Ms. Trotovshek first started to play the violin at four. At the age of 17, she was taken under the auspices of

Ruggiero Ricci, who was her mentor for a year and a half. She was also guided by Ivry Gitlis, Ida Haendel, Pierre Amoyal, Tasmin Little, Georgy Pauk, Edith Peinemann, Bernard Greenhouse and Menahem Pressler, and has studied with Vasko Vassilev and Rivka Golani at the Trinity College of Music and at the Royal College of Music in London with Itzhak Rashkovsky.

She has performed in the Wigmore Hall in London, Konzerthaus in Vienna, Teatro la Fenice in Venice, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Muziekgebouw Frits Phillips in Eindhoven and elsewhere in Europe, China and UAE with a number of orchestras including the Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra,

Moscow Soloists, Slovenian Philharmonic, Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, RTS Symphony Orchestra Belgrade, Pilsen Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna Konzertverein Orchestra, among others. Her performances have been broadcast on various media outlets, including BBC Radio 3 and Arte TV (France).

In 2005, Lana Trotovshek was the recipient of the Prešeren Award at the University of Ljubljana for her performance of the Khachaturian violin concerto with the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of George Pehlivanian in 2005. She plays on Pietro Antonio dalla Costa violin made in 1750 on loan from a private benefactor.

CULTURE

Embassy Series Concert by Bass-Baritone Juan Vasle



Some 90 guests attending the ‘Embassy Series’ program at the Embassy of Slovenia on May 24 evening were treated by a concert of operatic arias, lieder, tangos, South American and Slovenian folksongs presented by the recognized Slovenian bass-baritone, Juan Vasle, and the accomplished pianist, George Peachey. The concert was a highlight event of the European Month of Culture program. An addition to an excellent presentation by the artists

was the hors d’oeuvre reception held at the ambassador’s residence, hosted by the Ambassador, Dr. Božo Cerar, and a late dinner, which offered a taste of Slovenian wine and cuisine.

Slovenian bass-baritone Juan Vasle was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he received his education as a singer at the Superior Institute of Art (Instituto Superior de Arte) of the Teatro Colón. In 1988 he was a finalist at the Luciano Pavarotti International Voice

Competition in Philadelphia. Since 1990, he has been a member of the solo ensemble of the SNG Opera and Ballet Ljubljana, where he performed a long line of important basso roles: Zaccaria, Lindorf, Coppelius, Dappertutto, Miracle, Don Alfonso, Ferrando, Escamillo, St. Bris, Ramfis, among others. He also took part in guest appearances in Australia, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Italy, Canada, Kosovo, Peru, Uruguay, and elsewhere.

“The Cooking Kids” from Ljubno ob Savinji in Washington



EU Open House Day.



Cooking together with peers at Mann ES.

The elementary and high school students from Ljubno ob Savinji; Blaž Ermenc (14), Maša Černivšek (13), Maja Ermenc (13) and Jurij Jurjevec (16), along with their mentor Marija Ermenc visited Washington. between May 12 and 20 to present to the American public Slovenian culinary heritage. Their showcases were focused on the dishes from their hometown and the Upper Savinjska Valley region. The children were finalists in the “Cooking Kids” competition, organized in the elementary schools throughout Slovenia by Ms. Anka Peljhan,

The team was engaged in several events in the U.S. capital.

First, on Saturday, May 14, they took part in the Open House presentation at the embassy. The fifth-graders were preparing foods the whole day and offered to several thousand visitors traditional recipes of the Štajerska region. The most popular dishes included buckwheat cake with honey and walnuts, called ajdnek, and, Savinjski želodec - traditional bacon-filled pork from the Savinja valley. On Monday, May 16, the children mixed with fifth-graders from the local Mann Elementary School. Together they prepared apple pie with cottage cheese and savory dumplings called žlinkrofi.

On Wednesday, May 18 the

group took a day trip to Annapolis, where they met and cooked together with their peers from the Germantown Elementary School, Frank Hebron-Harman Elementary School, IB World School and Annapolis Middle School. In the afternoon, a guided tour of the town was organized. Besides sightseeing historical landmarks they also visited the U.S. Naval Academy. They were invited to a dinner by a local family and were able to try the local food from the Chesapeake Bay. The program was organized by the World Artists Experiences.

On Friday, May 20, the schoolchildren prepared traditional Slovenian honey breakfast for the



Helping in the D.C. Central kitchen.



Serving traditional Slovenian breakfast at the World Bee Day event.

World Bee Day: the To Be(e) or Not to Be(e) event, organized jointly by the embassy and the E.U. Delegation. Guests could try different spreads that included honey, “mohot” cottage cheese spread, sweet buckwheat bread with honey and walnuts, roasted apples with walnuts and honey, oat honey cookies and other delicacies. Available for tasting were also various types of honey such as wildflower honey, flower honey, buckwheat honey, acacia honey and walnut honey.

In the afternoon of May 20, the children visited the premises of

DC Central Kitchen, where they learned about its mission and helped prepare meals for public schools and other DC institutions.

The “Cooking Kids” culinary research project involves every year more than 2,000 Slovenian primary school children by introducing them to the world of gastronomy, the history and related local customs, and tourism, while providing them with healthy and responsible alternatives of living. Artisan producers, local farmers, and Slovenian food producers furnish the ingredients for the project while

teachers, chefs, and restaurateurs mentor, teach, provide their kitchens, and contribute to the culinary education. Competitions among students take place annually in renowned restaurants or tourist facilities, under the supervision of the renowned Slovenian ethnologist Professor Dr. Janez Bogataj, and Chef Janez Bratovž. Every year the competition results in more than 200 recipes of traditional Slovenian foods. Now in the 5th year, Cooking Kids has revived more than 900 almost forgotten recipes, the stories behind them and their history.



CULTURE

Cellist Sebastian Bertoncelj Attends Piatigorsky Festival in Los Angeles

Academy of Music cello student from the University of Ljubljana Sebastian Bertoncelj was one of the selected musicians participating at the prestigious Piatigorsky International Cello Festival, which took place on May 13 - 22.

Presented by the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in partnership with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the 2016 Festival showcased 26 talented international artists representing

15 countries and four continents.

Highlights included a gala concert at USC’s Bovard Auditorium, featuring performances of all Beethoven’s works for cello and an ensemble of over 100 cellists performing at Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Sebastian Bertoncelj’s participation was financially



Sebastian Bertoncelj.

supported by the Therese Kerze-Cheyovich Endowment at the USC Thornton School of Music.

Concert by Boris Bizjak and Wine Tasting Event with ICDC



In cooperation with the International Club of DC, the Embassy of Slovenia hosted on Thursday, May 12, a wine tasting event that highlighted cultural and culinary offerings of Slovenia. Some 80 people were welcomed at the beginning of the evening by Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar and ICDC President Sanjaya Hettihewa. The program continued with a

performance by flutist Boris Bizjak, who presented music by Telemann, Debussy and Paganini as well as introduced two new pieces for flute by young Slovenian composers Nejc Kuhar and Nina Šenk.

A selection of wines and various beers was paired with distinguished dishes from various parts of Slovenia. Guests could try Karst prosciutto ham, Carniolian sausages, Belokranjska

pogača flatbread, trout fillets in corn flour, Idrija žlinkrofi dumplings and “čompe” - potatoes with cottage cheese. Desserts included potica walnut roll, and Bled vanilla cream cake. At the same time sommelier Andrejka Košir Gažovič and winemaker Polona Brumec introduced exquisite wines, whereas Marta Rojnik and Sabina Palir from Žalec presented a Slovenian beer selection.



Ambassador Dr. Cerar.

Flautist Boris Bizjak.

I FEEL 25

Slovenian diplomacy marks 25th anniversary

The main ceremony marking this year's Slovenian Diplomacy Day was held at the Cankarjev dom hall in Ljubljana to celebrate 25 years of Slovenian diplomacy. The diplomats present at the event were addressed by President of the Republic of Slovenia

Borut Pahor, Prime Minister Miro Cerar and Foreign Affairs Minister Karl Erjavec. All three extended their gratitude to all Slovenian diplomats who were or are still engaged in this great yet, at the same time, demanding and challenging occupation.

Minister Erjavec pointed out that the efforts made by the then short-standing diplomatic tradition in Slovenia yielded concrete results relatively soon after the proclamation of independence, when Slovenia gained international recognition, which

placed it on the international map as an independent state equal to other countries.

In 2004, the Slovenian Government proclaimed May 22nd the Slovenian Diplomacy Day. This date was chosen to commemorate the day in 1992 when Slovenia joined the United Nations, which symbolized the culmination of the state's efforts to achieve independence. By becoming a member of this important international organization, Slovenia was also accepted as an equal partner in the international community.

At the ceremony, Prime Minister Miro Cerar said that the date was chosen to symbolically affirm full commitment of the Slovenian state to the goals and principles of the United Nations Charter, including the respect for the principle of the sovereign equality of all states and the right of self-determination of peoples, peaceful politics and the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as the respect for human rights and fundamental liberties.

Prime Minister also pointed out that the European Union has, during all this time, played the key role in the full array of ambitions and efforts made by our foreign policy, and that Slovenia still sees the E.U. as an important guarantor of stability, safety and prosperity.

It is in the interest of Slovenia to strengthen the position of the European Union as one of the key global players in foreign policy as well. "For this reason, it is very important that Slovenian diplomacy continues to actively participate in shaping a Common Foreign Security Policy for the European Union and the preparation of an E.U. Global Strategy," added the Prime Minister.

Furthermore, he emphasized that the Slovenian foreign policy invests extensive efforts into preserving and strengthening good relations with the neighboring countries as it is precisely such relations that are the key to advancing Slovenian political and economic interests while, at the same time, they enable better protection of the

ethnic minorities' rights for people who live in these states and are an important part of the Slovenian national identity. Prime Minister Cerar also expressed his content with the exceptional progress of Slovenian diplomacy in terms of support provided to the Slovenian export-oriented economy.

This year's Slovenian Diplomacy Day on May 22 was dedicated to Izidor Cankar, a diplomat, art historian, writer, journalist and translator, who served as Minister Plenipotentiary and Ambassador Extraordinary of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, first in Argentina, and from 1942 to 1944 in Canada. In 1945, Cankar was accredited as Minister Plenipotentiary and Ambassador of the Democratic Federal State of Yugoslavia to Greece, where he remained stationed until 1947. Izidor Cankar was a unique and dynamic personality in Slovenian history, who left his mark in Slovenian art history, politics and diplomacy thanks to his talents, exceptional mental capabilities and high ethical standards.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

E.U. Delegation Highlights Slovenia's Proposed World Bee Day

Slovenia has been stepping up its efforts with an aim to declare May 20 the World Bee Day. The latest event highlighting the importance of bees was held at the E.U. Delegation in Washington, DC, co-hosted by

the Embassy of Slovenia, which featured an expert debate and a honey breakfast. About 120 scientists, bee experts and other guests gathered on Friday, May 20 to learn about the Slovenian initiative and the

importance of bees as pollinators in agricultural production.

A panel of experts discussed the role of bees in food security, sustainability, and biodiversity at a program geared for scientists, federal,





state and DC agencies, environmental and regulatory businesses, press, bee organizations, young professionals and the general public. The program highlighted many causes of the bee population decline, why it matters, and Slovenia’s proposal to the United Nations to proclaim May 20 as the World Bee Day.

Deputy E.U. Ambassador to the U.S., Caroline Vicini, spoke of the loss of bees as a threat to commercial agriculture, the E.U.’s engagement on the issue, and her own concern as an avid gardener. Slovenia’s Ambassador to the U.S., Dr. Božo Cerar underscored the importance of raising public awareness of our global dependency on bees, since one out of every three bites of our food had been pollinated by bees.

Agnieszka Jarmula, Senior Advisor at the E.U. Delegation on food safety, health and consumer affairs in Washington explained

that bees are responsible for over \$24 billion of Europe’s economy. Measures taken by the E.U include: support to beekeepers through agricultural policies; identifying threatened species; supporting bee research; and providing bee health training. The E.U. created a guide to streamline surveillance practices, which now has led to a clearer picture of the honeybee situation in the E.U. Member States.

Dr. Kirsten Traynor, of the University of Maryland’s Entomology Department, said that among bee species, honeybees are the most resistant to pressures due to their large colonies. Non-honeybee varieties, which live solitary or in small groups, fare worse. While beekeepers are losing up to 50 percent of their stock annually, there is still no single cause identified. Instead, a variety of reasons are to blame, including: pesticides used in fields and inside

the honey combs, the spread of disease through moving of bees for commercial agriculture purposes, and habitat destruction leading to nutritional deficiencies. Dr. Traynor highlighted studies that found residue of “varroacides” – neurotoxic pesticides used to kill the parasitic varroa mite that feeds on bees, but also known to adversely affect honeybee health – in 80 percent of wax. Rather than advocating for the suppression of pesticides, Dr. Traynor instead supported regular monitoring of varroa and intervention when necessary to keep it under control. Other recommendations included reducing the presence of pesticides in the hive by replacing old combs, and improving bee nutrition by planting more bee forage and cover crops, which naturally increase nitrogen in the soil.

Gabriele Ludwig of the Almond Board of California provided



a West coast perspective on the effects of bees on almond production, which is highly dependent on honeybees. California is responsible for 100 percent of U.S. almond production, and 80 percent of world production. For orchards to bloom, the bees must pollinate the trees. Over the last ten years the hive levels have been stable because beekeepers are enacting more intensive measures to combat conditions conducive to disease within the hives. Higher costs of hive maintenance are passed on in higher prices to the consumer.

Molecular geneticist Jay Evans of the USDA-ARS Bee Research Lab seeks solutions for both small beekeepers and commercial enterprises, focusing on management of bees in the hive and in the field. Evans and visiting researchers from Europe and Asia have looked at ways to improve bee nutrition, minimize threats, provide resistance, and minimize disease impact. Evans said his lab has focused on identifying genetic traits providing resistance to

varroa, dietary supplementation, and the honeybee stomach. Translating lab results into field results remains the challenge.

While farming is regional and no single policy will solve the worldwide bee population problems, E.U.-U.S. collaboration would be beneficial in certain areas: surveillance on bee losses, research, and environmental policy. Dr. Traynor suggests standardizing the method of collecting samples to more easily compare results on both continents and improving coordination on policy measures to combat diseases and illegal importation of bees.

Participants were treated to honey-based breakfast foods prepared by students from Slovenia of a primary school from Ljubno ob Savinji in eastern Slovenia, winners of the “The Cooking Kids” competition, an ongoing program in Slovenia, which educates younger generations on healthy and sustainable food options. The panel was accompanied by an exhibition of original 1924

beehive panels, the distinct decorative elements of Slovenian beehives, as well as beeswax products and honey. At the same time Dejan Židan, the minister of agriculture, forestry and food, published an article in the Huffington Post laying out the case for dedicating a world day to bees.

Audience members came away with increased knowledge of the causes of honey bee decimation, the impact on food supply, the effects on local, national and world economies, and current research by apiary scientists. They gained practical information on what steps can be taken to reverse the situation including: how individual can provide bee healthy spaces, what agricultural practices can be modified, and policy programs that could be enacted by local and national governments. (Source: <https://medium.com/euintheus/world-bee-day-slovenia-calls-for-un-action-to-save-the-bees-de8e40f2fc61#.u8vt1a2fe>)

ARTICLE

World Bee Day: To Be(e) or Not to Be(e) — The Case for Proclaiming 20th May as World Bee Day



Today, Slovenia is the only European Union member state to have protected its native bee, the Carniolan bee. This indigenous Slovenian species is regarded as the second most widespread bee breed in the world and it is famed for its docility, hard work, calm character, good orientation, and utilization of forest forage; and excellent sense of orientation. Its advantage lies in its rapid spring development, good cleaning instinct, disease resistance and frugality.

“To bee or not to bee” captures the importance of bees as pollinators for biodiversity and food security; it also underlines the growing recognition of urgency required to address challenges brought about by the decline in world bee population.

These challenges affect the whole world, albeit with different level of intensity; they include: provision of sustainable and sufficient food production, adaptation to climate change, diminishing natural resources such as arable land and water supply, major price volatility of agricultural raw materials etc.

As climate change gains its place at the top of the agenda of world politics, its numerous and interdependent effects attract various degree of interest and global action. The role of bees and other natural pollinators is sometimes omitted from the discussions on climate change and on sustainable development goals.

Bees and other pollinators sustain one third of all food produced globally. The Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) estimates that 71% of all crop species grown for human consumption depend on pollinators. Annual value of global crops directly affected by pollinators is estimated to lie between US\$235 billion to US\$577 billion.

Beyond the importance of pollination for the livelihood and income of farmers worldwide as well as for the food security, bees are of great importance for maintaining the ecological balance and ensuring the conservation of biodiversity in nature. At the same time, bees are important bio indicator of the state of the environment.

In the last 50 years, bees have become increasingly endangered, particularly in the areas with intense agriculture. Shrinking habitat along with negative effects of expanding monoculture areas as well as modified

and intensified grassland cultivation technology have led to decline in development of bee colonies. The situation is made worse by new bee diseases and pests, whose impacts are aggravated by deteriorating resistance of bee colonies and impacts of globalization that allows for the transfer of pests over long distances.

The Republic of Slovenia, on the initiative of the Slovenian Beekeepers' Association, hence proposed to the United Nations (U.N.) to declare May 20 a World Bee Day.

Why Slovenia?

Slovenia, a country rich in natural resources, takes pride in its above-average biodiversity. More than 35% of total Slovenian territory is included in the Natura 2000 network of special protection areas. Slovenia is known as a country using a “unique beekeeping method” characterized by wide varieties of honey, most of it produced by indigenous Slovenian species Carniolan Bee. Slovenian beekeeping also spurred a special form of folk art featuring painted wooden beehive front panels. The country has always been in the front ranks within the E.U. in regard to raising awareness of the importance of bees in the lives of humans and our planet.

Why May 20th?

May is a month when the development of bees in the Northern hemisphere is in full swing. The bee colonies swarm, engaging in their natural way of reproduction. This coincides with the peak in terms of need for pollination of many plants. In the Southern hemisphere, May is the time of autumn, when bee products are harvested and the days of honey begin. In Slovenia, May 20th is known as the birthday of Anton Janša (1734-1773), the pioneer of modern beekeeping.

Janša was the first teacher of modern beekeeping in the world, he was appointed by the Habsburg Empress Maria Theresa at the first beekeeping school in Vienna.

Why World Bee Day?

Raising awareness about the importance of bees and bee products has an important role in the effort of protecting bees and the beekeeping sector. The objective of the initiative is to contribute significantly to international cooperation in tackling global challenges in terms of global food security, eradication of hunger and malnutrition and preserving the environment from further losses in biodiversity and degradation of ecosystem services. The initiative also aims to support global efforts towards Sustainable Development Goals.

Help us create the buzz: http://www.mkgp.gov.si/en/world_bee_day_initiative/

Do you know that ...

- Bees pollinate over 170,000 plant species.
- Without bees, fruits and vegetables would be much less abundant and there would be no lovely colors of flowers in the meadows.
- With 30,000 to 60,000 bees, a bee colony can be compared to a small city in terms of its population.
- The queen bee is the only member of the bee family that lays eggs, producing up to 2,000 eggs in a day.
- Honey bees' wings strike 11,400 times per minute, thus making their distinctive buzz.
- The Carniolan honey bee, *Apis mellifera carnica*, is a bee subspecies native to Slovenia and the second most numerous subspecies in the world.
- For a kilogram of honey, a bee must visit four million flowers and fly four times the distance around the world.

Slovenian film *The Beat of Love* Premiered at the 8th Panorama Europe Film Festival in New York



Panorama Europe 2016, the eighth edition of the essential festival of new and vital European cinema, co-presented by the Museum of the Moving Image and the members of EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture), returned to the Museum and the Bohemian National Hall in New York. Between May 6 and May 22 the festival introduced a slate of nineteen exceptional new

feature films, including Slovenian production by director Boris Petković: *The Heartbeat of Love* (*Utrip Ljubezni*).

Besides the Slovenian selection, which was screened on May 21, the program also featured films from Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Lithuania, Malta, The

Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and Spain. Programmed by David Schwartz, the Museum's Chief Curator, and Eric Hynes, Associate Curator of Film, the program offered a vibrant selection of some of the finest and most riveting films coming out of Europe today. More information can be found at: <http://www.movingimage.us/programs/2016/05/06/detail/panorama-europe-2016/>

IN SHORT

- Congratulations to the winners of Slovenian prizes at the Jeu de Piste de la Francophonie 2016 - the francophone treasure hunt, which took place in March.
- Find out why to decide to study in Ljubljana: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMLkJ7hAGyE>
- Interested in art? Interested in brain? Interested in art and brain? Check and apply for the Brainlapse project by young Slovenian artists Matej Končan, Črtomir Just and Ivor Knafelj: <http://www.brainlapse.si/>



Jeu de Piste de la Francophonie winners.

The weekly Embassy Newsletter is also available at: www.washington.embassy.si.
Send us your comments or request for a subscription on: sloembassy.washington@gov.si
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