



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

# NEWSLETTER

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## NCIV makes Traditional Visit to Slovenian Embassy

**National Council of International Visitors, a nonprofit organization founded in 1961 to provide services to the international exchange community in the United States, hosted an annual meeting February 15 – 18, 2012, in Washington, DC.**



NCIV works to promote citizen diplomacy, develop knowledge and cultivate skills in support of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) and other exchanges.

Each year, more than 80,000 volunteers working with NCIV's Community Member Organizations welcome visitors from around the world. In the past eight years, many distinguished Slovenes have visited the United States as guests of the IVLP.

As part of its annual meeting, NCIV organizes yearly visits to foreign chanceries. On Friday, February 17, Slovenian Embassy had a pleasure of hosting a NCIV reception for NCIV members, continuing with the tradition of this strong and lasting relationship, acknowledging importance



Matej Grahek performing Zvočni pejzaž by Slovenian composer Alojz Ajdič.

and privilege of the international cooperation.

NCIV members were welcomed by the Deputy Chief of Mission Ms. Ondina Blokar Drobič. Following a short introduction of Slovenia, the guests enjoyed an outstanding performance by the Slovenian musician Mr. Matej Grahek, solo flautist of the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, and afterwards experienced a taste of Slovenia as well.



# Conversation Club

On Friday, February 17, EUNIC Washington organized the European Conversation Club. EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) is a partnership of national institutions for culture from the E.U. member states. It works across a global network of 70 cities, from Brussels to New Delhi and from Moscow to New York. EUNIC Washington was founded last year, and the Embassy of Slovenia joined it as an associate member.

During the lovely evening, hosted by the Alliance Française, the audience had a chance to discover the richness of languages in Europe. After a short presentation on the diversity of languages in Europe, the guests were invited to attend two 30-minute, beginner-level classes of several infrequently spoken languages in Europe, with the choice of Catalan, Danish, German, Greek, Irish,



Bernard Pesjak teaching.

Portuguese, Romanian, and Slovenian.

Bernard Pesjak, language and cultural instructor at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute, gave the beginner-level class, in which he outlined the basic phrases and grammatical specifics of the Slovenian language. The participants were

very excited about learning the basics of Slovene, and eventually introduced themselves in Slovenian. Bernard Pesjak and Grega Umek of the Embassy of Slovenia created a genuine atmosphere in the classroom with sharing potica, as well as brochures and pamphlets about Slovenia.



Slovenian classroom.



Students eager to learn Slovene.



## Slovenian Hidden Champions

»Who could imagine that in Central and Eastern Europe there are so many innovative companies with major global market shares in their respective fields of activities? Even OECD experts agree that this is incredibly positive news from this part of the world.” --positive words from Professor Danica Purg as she presented the results of a two-year research project into “hidden champions”, defined as local businesses that are holding international market leadership positions.

Professor Purg, chair of the IEDC-Bled School of Management and founding president of the Central and East European Management Development Association (CEEMAN), explained that the objective of the joint project was to identify such companies in

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Turkey, and Kazakhstan. A further aim was to test the assumption that some Central European countries are lagging behind in terms of their economic position in the globalized business world.

The research yielded 165 “hidden champions” (HCs), mostly small and medium-sized enterprises. The largest number of them, 36, are located in Poland, while Slovenia has 16. The researchers defined HCs as companies holding leadership positions in international markets, usually in a narrow product group. Generally unknown to the general public because they operate in the business-to-business sector, the companies not only exhibit distinctive products and product positioning but also have in many cases created distinctive business

models and novel business practices. Many of Central and Eastern Europe’s hidden champions come from mature industries such as industrial machinery, transportation, automotive products, and information and communications technology. There are also many in the metallurgy and energy sectors.

They all are marked by strong international competitiveness in at least one product category; exhibit consistent growth over the last decade; innovate much above the average national company level; have the capability to adapt to demanding business environments; make for interesting leadership stories; and have success that is based on smart and hard work. (Courtesy of Slovenian Times/Simon Demšar)

## CONSULAR AFFAIRS

### Legislative Referendum on Family Law

The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia has called for a legislative referendum on Family Law, which will take place on March 25, 2012.

The referendum will take place at the representations of Slovenia in Cleveland, New York and Washington D.C., from 9 am to 5 pm local time. Until March 9, 2012 voters will be able to check their information (name, address) in the electoral roll and, in case of incorrect data, request a correction. Voters intending to vote at the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington may call the consular office at (202) 386-6613 or (202) 386-6614 (Monday-Friday, 9 am-

12 pm) to check their information.

Slovenian citizens with registered permanent residence in the United States can vote in person at the above listed representations or by mail by registering at the National Voting Commission by March 10, 2012 (unlike in the case of elections, no referendum material will be sent automatically by mail).

Slovenian citizens with registered permanent residence in Slovenia and visiting or temporarily residing in the United States can vote in person at the listed representations or by mail. In either case, voters have to register at the National Voting

Commission by March 10, 2012.

In order to register, a completed and signed registration form, which can be found at [www.dvk.gov.si](http://www.dvk.gov.si), must be sent directly to the National Voting Commission. All registration forms must be received by March 10, 2012, and can be sent by mail to Državna volilna komisija, Slovenska cesta 54, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, by fax to (011) (3861) 433-1269 or by e-mail to [gp.dvk@dvk-rs.si](mailto:gp.dvk@dvk-rs.si) (due to the signature requirement, only scanned documents may be e-mailed).

More information can be found at the National Voting Commission’s web page [www.dvk.gov.si](http://www.dvk.gov.si)

## Genealogy

Genealogy is the study of one's unique family history. It is a personal record of one's ancestors: when they were born and where they lived, who their children were and whom they married, and where one belongs in one's extended family tree. Learning about one's family history usually starts at home by talking with relatives and friends, and recording information about one's ancestors. If you are interested in expanding your knowledge of your heritage, you can start your research with the help of two prominent Slovenian genealogical research organizations.

The Slovenian Genealogical Society was founded in March 1995. It is a voluntary association of amateur researchers in the field of family and other genealogy. Its intention is to support research in genealogy and related fields. It strives to reduce the backlog in Slovenian genealogy research in comparison to countries which already have several decades' worth of substantial family genealogy research. If you want

to learn more about your heritage, you can visit the web site: <http://www2.arnes.si/~rzjtopl/rod/rod.htm>.

Another Slovenian genealogy research organization, which bears a similar name, is the Slovenian Genealogy Society International, Inc. (SGSI). It is a nonprofit charitable corporation that collects and distributes information on Slovenian family history. SGSI is a self-help community, whose common goal is to help members make use of available information to perform their own genealogy research. The society is governed by an executive board, whose members serve on a volunteer basis to preserve, promote, and protect Slovenian genealogy. SGSI was founded in 1986 by Al Peterlin of Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, and was established to preserve and make available to the public, records documenting the lives of individuals with Slovenian ancestry.

Not many individuals are familiar with their family history. Even

fewer of them are aware of the fact that family lines can be traced back several centuries. If someone wants to explore his family tree, they will have to obtain all the basic attributes of the members of the family. These attributes are the name, date and place of birth, marriage and death. These basic attributes are usually easily obtainable for close relatives. However, the farther back you trace your roots, the harder it is to acquire these basic attributes.

Therefore, a thorough genealogical research is carried out based on available resources, including: registers of births and baptisms/christenings, registers of deaths, registers of marriages, and cadastral registers. Those are all available at the National Archives of the Republic of Slovenia (web site: <http://www.arhiv.gov.si/en/>), the Archdiocesan Archives of Ljubljana (e-mail: [arhiv.lj@rkc.si](mailto:arhiv.lj@rkc.si)), and the Maribor Diocesan Archives (e-mail: [skofijski.arhiv@slomsek.net](mailto:skofijski.arhiv@slomsek.net)).

## TOURISM

### Slovenia Wine Tour

A tour of leading Slovenian wineries is scheduled for June 5-9, 2012, which is just after Vievinum, an international wine festival in Vienna. The program is being offered by Unique Slovenia, a custom tour designer in Slovenia in partnership with former Honorary Consul General of Slovenia Mark Ryavec.

The tour is tailored for

those who write about wine, buy wine, serve wine and love wine. The tour was developed in consultation with wine writers and editors, leading importers of Slovenian wines and those who sell them, to reveal the depth and breadth of Slovenian wines.

During the five days, there will be a chance to taste Slovenia's superb gastronomy to

match Slovenia's delicious wines and a comfortable tour of this Alpine gem at the crossroads of Europe. It will be an unforgettable experience. Please note that to hold a space, confirmation of services should be made by April 2, 2012. For more information please go to: <http://www.unique-slovenia.si/si/novice/101/22/vec/slovenia-wine-tour/>

# Slovenj Gradec



Slovenj Gradec is the cultural and administrative center of Slovenian Carinthia, which borders on Austria. It is notable as the birthplace of world-famous composer Hugo Wolf. Marking Slovenj Gradec's medieval past is the parish church of St. Elizabeth, consecrated in 1251. It stands in the center of the old city core of Slovenj Gradec. Its foundation was a Romanesque nave that was gothicized at around 1400. Several late Gothic tombstones are built in the inner walls of the nave.

The fine art tradition of medieval carvers and baroque masters became an internationally known activity of the Gallery of Fine Arts, which has taken place in Slovenj Gradec over the last four decades, with performances under the patronage of the United Nations. Slovenj Gradec has earned its reputation as a place of unique fine art creation, peace, and international dialogue, which helped it gain the title as a United Nations Messenger of Peace city in 1989.

The 2012 European Capital of Culture (ECOC) project in Slovenj Gradec is aimed at promoting cultural activity in small urban centers which represent

the future of European culture. The city will have a special role as a partner city of Maribor with the project "Sounds of the Past", which involves a cultural and infrastructural renovation of the city as well as notable high-art events honoring Hugo Wolf.

Slovenj Gradec boasts an extraordinary collection of objects and art works representing Africa when it was liberating itself from colonial influences and seeking greater world recognition. The collection was given to the town in 1977 by a local, Franc Tretjak, who spent 18 years in Africa as a U.N. financial adviser. During that time, Yugoslavia was one of the leading members of the nonaligned movement and cooperated with several African governments. Franc Tretjak was declared an honorary citizen by the Municipality of Slovenj Gradec for his outstanding contributions to the economic development of African countries. Thus, one of the notable ECOC events in Slovenj Gradec will be the African collection exhibit.

Another ECOC exhibit to be featured is "Soft Control: Science, Art, and the Technologically Unconscious", a symposium

directed by Dimitrij Bulatov from Kaliningrad. The exhibition will showcase ideas of a modern postbiological society, which are modified and extended over the borders of our reality and identity. Emphasis will be given to art works being created with the help of robotics, biomedicine, and nanotechnology within the strict domain of visual arts. Their artists strive to discover the source of the modern technological myth which is based on values such as efficacy, control, technological development, and economic influence. The exhibit is a multinational event, featuring participants from the U.S., Canada, Australia, the U.K., Austria, the Netherlands, Russia, Germany, and, of course, Slovenia.

Additionally, there will be a traveling exhibition of the House of Minerals, Culture and Literature for All, which is tailored toward the disabled; a folk singer concert; the International Arts and Crafts Exhibition by the Association for People with Disabilities of Slovenia; an international conference titled "Challenges of Arts and Crafts Creativity in Europe"; and Literature in the Street.



## Taurus G4 -Collier Trophy Nominee

The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) released the list of nominees for the 2011 Robert J. Collier Trophy, among them Taurus G-4 Electric-Powered Aircraft by Slovenian company Pipistrel.

The Collier Trophy, the "Greatest Award in Aviation," has been the benchmark of aviation and aerospace achievement for over 100 years. Awarded annually "...for the greatest achievement in aeronautics or astronautics in America," it has been bestowed upon some of the most important projects, programs, individuals, and accomplishments in the U.S. history. Past winners include the crews of Mercury 7, Apollo 8 and Apollo 11, , Scott Crossfield, Elmer Sperry, and Howard Hughes.



"We are very proud of the nominations we received for the 2011 Collier Trophy, said NAA Chairman Walter J. Boyne. "Each of them – in their own way – mark significant progress in the advancement of aviation and aerospace on the planet, and we certainly welcome them to the Collier selection process."

The Selection Committee will meet on Monday, March 12, in Arlington, Virginia, and the winner will be announced the next day, March 13, at the NAA Spring Awards Ceremony and Luncheon. The formal presentation of the Collier Trophy will take place on May 10, 2012, at the 2012 Collier Dinner in Arlington, Virginia.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

## Slovene Language Course

The Centre for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language organizes three Slovene language courses in March:

Intensive Morning Course of Slovene (12–23 March 2012): the 40-hour course of Slovene is a great opportunity to learn the most vital communication forms or extend your knowledge of Slovene in just two weeks. The course runs from Monday to Friday from 9.00 am to 12.30 pm at the Pionirski dom (15 Vilharjeva).

Specialized Intensive Course for Doctors and Dentists (19 March–30 May 2012): the 80-hour course is intended for doctors, dentists and other medical staff whose first language is not Slovene. It is held twice a week from 5.00 to 8.30 pm at the Medical Chamber of Slovenia (162 Dunajska).

Let's Taste Slovene (29 March–7 June 2012): a 30-hour course for beginners (A1). Once a week for 3 school hours, Thursdays from 6.00 to 8.30 pm at the Centre for Slovene (12

Kongresni trg). Suitable for very busy people!



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**22nd Cinequest Film Festival**

A Slovenian film will be shown at the 22nd Cinequest film festival as part of the "Global Landscapes competition" category.

When: A Trip is scheduled for three showings: **Wednesday, February 29 at 7:00 pm; Saturday, March 3 at 4:45 pm; and Tuesday, March 6 at 2 pm.**

Where: San Jose, CA

More information: [programming@cinequest.org](mailto:programming@cinequest.org), <http://www.cinequest.org>

**Photo Exhibition Afghanistan (Un)Ordinary Lives**

The photo exhibition is a collection of Manca Juvan's work on Afghanistan and presents a more nuanced image of the country, one which tells more than just the news coming from reporters. The photos were taken on several trips to Afghanistan between 2003 and 2009.

When: **Ongoing - April 2012**

Where: Embassy of The Republic of Slovenia, 2410 California Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

**Memories of A City: Miha Štrukelj**

For his first solo exhibit at the gallery, Slovene artist Miha Štrukelj will create an installation of murals and small drawings on panels throughout the gallery to address the limitations and confines of the gallery space.

When: **Ongoing – March 11, 2011**

Where: 139 Eldridge Street, New York, NY 10002

More information: (212) 255-9707, email: [info@lmakprojects.com](mailto:info@lmakprojects.com), web: [www.lmakprojects.com](http://www.lmakprojects.com), [www.miha-strukelj.com](http://www.miha-strukelj.com)

**All-Star Accordions exhibition**

For the first time, the accordions of legendary polka bandleaders are brought together on display. The exhibition celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Polka Hall of Fame Awards Show with award-winning musicians performing in person.

When: **Opening Wednesday, March 21, 2012. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. Admission free.**

Where: National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum

More information: call (216) 261-FAME, toll-free (866) 66-POLKA, or check [www.polkafame.com](http://www.polkafame.com).

**Wine Tasting**

A field trip to LeDu wine shop to taste 15 different wines from Slovenia. LeDu wine shop was rated Number one in New York City by Zagat for 2011-2012.

When: **Monday, February 27, 2-5pm**

More information: <http://www.slovenianpremiumwines.com/WineSelections.aspx>, e-mail: [macgoodwin@me.com](mailto:macgoodwin@me.com)

**SUA Slovenian hors d'oeuvres tasting**

Please join the SUA National Board for a wine, cheese and Slovenian hors d'oeuvres tasting. Special guest, 40-year member, Paula Mavec, will outline her plan to climb Mount Triglav this summer. Please come and support Paula as she embarks on this monumental adventure at the young age of 70.

When: **Saturday, March 3, 2012, 5:30 to 8:00 pm**

Where: Slovenian Union of America, 431 North Chicago Avenue, Joliet, IL

More information and RSVP: [mary.carmody@rockymountainpotica.com](mailto:mary.carmody@rockymountainpotica.com)