

SLOVAK AMERICAN SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

Annual Membership Meeting

November 21, 2009

Lutheran Church of the Reformation

Report to the Membership

This year, 2009, has been a fairly busy one for SASW as we have pursued our goal of fostering awareness and appreciation of Slovak culture and current affairs. Following are the highlights of 2009.

Membership

Our membership has decreased to 100 memberships--55 families and 45 singles—for a total of 155 members. There are 55 memberships in VA, 26 in MD, 9 in DC, and 10 in other states.

SASW Membership 2005-2009

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
# of Memberships	123	125	127	113	100
Total Members (Indiv=1: family=2)	188	192	193	172	155

Your Board began a discussion recently on ways to improve our outreach and increase our membership. All and any suggestions are welcome.

Financial status

Our financial status is stable. Our total assets at the end of October are \$10,857.90. We have two accounts: a business checking account with Bank of America (\$7,445.37) and a CD account with Lafayette Federal Credit Union (\$3,401.53). Currently, our City University account has \$210.00.

Programs and Activities

In 2009, we continued the programs in our Speakers Series, our summer picnic, and the Svätý Mikuláš Party. We continue to have a cooperative relationship with the Slovak Embassy, which graciously provides the venue for most of our events. This year we worked with Michal Pavuk, the acting cultural attaché until the arrival, in August, of the new cultural attaché, Terézia Šajgalíková. The Embassy welcomed a new ambassador, Peter Burian, in early December 2008. Your board met with both Mr. Burian and Ms. Šajgalíková and they promised to continue our cooperative relationship. Following were our major activities for 2008.

SASW Speakers Series

We finished the seventh year of our Speakers Series, which offers talks on a variety of subjects and shows the richness of Slovak culture. This program continues to enhance our reputation in the wider Slovak community around, and outside of, Washington. Following are the programs we held this year:

1. On February 21, John Scherpereel, from James Madison University, spoke to us on how both internal and external forces have shaped Slovak democracy during the past 20 years.
2. On March 14, Lisa Alzo visited us again. This time she talked to us about her book *Baba's Kitchen*. Lisa told us about the recipes and life lessons she learned from both her Slovak and Rusyn grandmothers. Our friends in the Carpatho-Rusyn Society, National Capital Chapter, co-sponsored this event.
3. On April 25, Owen Johnson, from Indiana University spoke to us about how, during the 20th century, Slovak mass media used a variety of ways to foster a sense of nation among the people of Slovakia.
4. On October 17, David Doellinger, from Western Oregon University, talked about the Catholic Church in Slovakia—from the underground Church to the Velvet Revolution, and during the past 20 years. We also showed a documentary film "Interrupted Lives" about the lives of Roman Catholic and Byzantine-Rite Catholic nuns in Slovakia, Lithuania, Romania, Hungary, and Ukraine under communism.
5. On November 21, former Ambassador Branislav Lichardus spoke about his experiences as the first ambassador from Slovakia to the U.S., and about his current experiences as the rector at VŠM/City University.

Social/Cultural Activities

On December 7, 2008, we held our annual Svätý Mikuláš party. We served an abundance of good Slovak food, Svätý Mikuláš distributed presents to the children, Pajtaši played their usual good Slovak music and we raised some money for VŠM/City University in Slovakia. Everyone seemed to enjoy the party.

The last Sunday of summer, September 20, we resumed our annual picnic at the home of Millie Schoepe-Evans and Jim Evans. Again, we all enjoyed good Slovak food—kielbasa, halušky, delicious desserts, and Golden Pheasant beer. Bob Rychlik entertained us with his fujara and Slovak songs.

Support/Other Activities

VŠM/City University Scholarships—We continue our ongoing support of deserving students at City University, in both Bratislava and Trenčín. We provided two \$500 scholarships, for two students, for this current fall term. The students greatly appreciate these scholarships that help them finish their education and move forward to advance the progress of Slovakia. Thank you for your past and present support.

Meet Up Group—SASW continues to support this group for newer and younger Slovak émigrés.

Web site—Our web site, <www.dcslovaks.org>, is kept up to date. It is always available to find current information about our activities.

Board Transitions--This was our first full year of operation under our new by-laws, under which three board members are elected every year for a three-year term. The Board chose its officers for 2009 at its first meeting after the annual meeting.

2009 Board of Directors

Kathryn Tatko, President	Kenneth Bombara, at-large
Dr. Jerry Rich, Vice-President	Helen Fedor, at-large
Linda J. Trout, Secretary	William Laska, at-large
Thomas Marton, Treasurer	Anne Gornal McKeown, at-large
	Mark Sabol, at-large

Your board members continue to represent the Society at various events sponsored by the Slovak Embassy and other Slovak organizations. We maintain contact with Friends of Slovakia, the Czech & Slovak Heritage Society of Maryland, Slovak fraternal, and others. Some of the board members represented SASW at the recent reception “Memories of Slovakia” and the gala dinner in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution.

The SASW Board of Directors thanks our members for their support in 2009 and asks for your continued support in 2010. Again, please get involved. The people who make a difference are the ones who show up.