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## **SLOVAK-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON**

### **NEWSLETTER**

**May 2007**

## **Slovak League of America Celebrates Centennial**

The month of May marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a special event in Slovak history—the founding of the Slovak League of America, a civic and cultural federation of Americans of Slovak ancestry. The large population of Slovaks that emigrated to the U.S. during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries remained concerned about events in Europe. Slovaks had endured more than a thousand years of Hungarian political domination, and as conditions continued to worsen, Slovaks in America sought to support their brethren. Led by fraternal leaders Rev. Stephen Furdek of the First Catholic Slovak Union and Peter V. Rovnianek of the National Slovak Society, nearly 10,000 Slovaks, representing a variety of organizations and churches, gathered in Cleveland in May 1907 to form the umbrella organization.

The Slovak League supported Slovaks domestically, but also played a key role in supporting Slovaks' quest for freedom and self-determination in Europe throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The League played a key role in the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Agreements that led to the emergence of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. When the events leading to World War II resulted in an independent Slovak state, the league advocated for its recognition while fully supporting the U.S. war effort at home with a hugely successful war bond drive. With the re-emergence of a post-war Czecho-Slovak state, and the unfortunate turn to Communism, the League continued its diligent advocacy for Slovaks' aspirations for freedom. Then, with the coming of the "Velvet Revolution" and the subsequent "Velvet Divorce", the League served as a key supporter of improvement in Slovak social, political and economic life.

In celebrating its' Centennial year, the League has sponsored a tour to Slovakia, which includes a historical seminar, a meeting with Slovak President Gasparovich, and the dedication of a statue of League co-founder Rev. Furdek. Also, the Slovak Republic will issue a commemorative postage stamp in honor of the founding of the League. Finally, the League will hold an anniversary dinner on Sunday, June 10, 2007 at the Crown Plaza Hotel at the Meadowlands in New Jersey. SASW extends to the Slovak League, and its current National President, Daniel F. Tanzone, its congratulations and best wishes!

### ***In this newsletter mailing:***

- 2007 SASW Annual Picnic Announcement --- **NEW LOCATION!--PLAN TO ATTEND!**
- 2007 Membership Directory

Extra: Enjoy Slovakia! Travel Brochure

## ***President's column***

We wanted to catch everyone before they take off for summer vacations, so this mailing includes a packet of information including the newsletter, the membership directory, and an extra--a travel brochure on Slovakia. The brochure was something that embassy staff passed along to us, and some of you may have picked up a copy at our last Speakers Series event with Jim Lukach. Since people liked the brochure, we're passing it along to the rest of the membership---we hope you enjoy it!

We also hope to see you at annual picnic on June 24 (see flyer). Viera Jamrich is organizing the picnic and has graciously offered her newly-acquired property as the picnic location. Since this is the first year for the new site, some adjustments will be necessary, and we ask for your patience and perhaps, some additional help if you can provide it. Please contact Viera. Let me take the opportunity to thank Millie Schoepe and her husband Jim Evans, for all their hospitality in hosting the picnic the last five years. Millie will continue to be involved and will serve as "SASW Official Picnic Consultant" to Viera and the crew!

SASW will once again provide two \$500 scholarships to students at VSM/City University in Slovakia. This year's fundraising efforts were supplemented by a generous donation of books by Bolchazy Publishing. The bulk of the funds however, still were provided by our SASW membership---and we thank you for your continued generosity. This year the SASW Board decided to dedicate the 2007 scholarships in honor of Slovak Ambassador Rastislav Kacer and his wife, Ottilia, for their efforts on behalf of Slovakia and their support of SASW's mission. These scholarships are one of SASW's most worthwhile activities---so please keep Slovak students and VSM/City U. in mind during our 2007-2008 fundraising drive.

Finally, a couple of SASW Board-related notes. During the remainder of the year, we will focus on our social events, the picnic and the Sv. Mikulas Party in December, and are planning one or two Speakers' Series events, probably later in the summer or fall. Some of our energies are going into a modest Board re-organization, for which we are preparing some by-law revisions. We will keep you apprised in future newsletters. In the meantime, our Board meetings have been held primarily at office of Drake Hearing Aid in Arlington thanks to the efforts of Kathryn Tatko, who works there. With Kathryn's "retirement," we will no longer have access to that location. While we have some options, please let us know if there are other possible locations that might provide us with space to hold our Board meetings. We have found that the most convenient location is in the Ballston-area and/or near a metro stop. Call me at (703-851-6035) if you have some ideas on this, or on any other aspect of SASW, for that matter. Have a good summer!

Ken Bombara

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**2007 SASW Directory in this issue---** Enclosed in this issue is the 2007 SASW membership directory. It reflects all the new and renewing members we have to date. Our purpose in publishing the directory is to encourage communication and interaction among SASW members who share a common interest in Slovak heritage, culture, history and current affairs. It *is* a challenge to keep all this information straight, and occasionally we may miss something that needs to be corrected. If you have any such corrections, or if your information changes during the year, please let us know by contacting Helen Fedor at [helenfedor@hotmail.com](mailto:helenfedor@hotmail.com) or by calling 703-437-0228.  
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## ***SASW News and Notes***

**LOOKING FOR NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS OF SLOVAK** --ACTFL (the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages) is looking for non-native speakers of Slovak to take part in a 30-45 minute telephone interview in Slovak. This is part of training for language evaluators, so that they can practice evaluating the level of people's language abilities. You DO NOT need to speak perfectly to take part. Interviewees are paid \$25 each time they are interviewed, and the interviews are kept strictly confidential. ACTFL is greatly in need of Slovak-speaking interviewees. If you're interested, go to <http://llr.actfltraining.org/> and register, then email Sylvia Metzger [sylviametzger@yahoo.com](mailto:sylviametzger@yahoo.com), an evaluator currently in training, and she'll make arrangements for the payment. Feel free to pass along this information to anyone who you think may be interested and who qualifies.

# Slovak American Society of Washington 2007 Annual Picnic (Note! New Location)

**Sunday, June 24, 2007  
1:00 to 4:00 pm**

On the property of Viera A. Jamrich  
**3717 Morningside Drive  
Fairfax, Virginia 22031**

Admission: \$7/member, \$10 non-member, children 12 and under free

The SASW picnic tradition continues. We will have special recipe Slovak sausage, Gulas, Slovak beer (Zlaty Bazant!), and a menu that includes hot dogs for the kids. Plan to Attend!!

- To help us plan for the right amount of food, **please RSVP by Friday, June 22** by calling Millie Schoepe-Evans at 703-830-3628. You can also send an email to <[helenfedor@hotmail.com](mailto:helenfedor@hotmail.com)>.
- To supplement the menu, please consider bringing a dessert (if your last name begins with M-Z), or a side dish, such as salad or baked beans (if your last name begins with A-L). Bring enough for at least 4 persons.
- Any sausage (and other foods) remaining after the picnic will be available for sale on a first-come, first-served basis.
- We could also use some help with picnic set-up and clean-up. Contact Viera Jamrich at 703-280-1625 if you can help, or if you have questions about the picnic in general.
- Also, keep in mind that while we have tables, we have a limited number of chairs, so if possible, please bring your own chairs.



## **Directions to Viera's house:**

### **From Dunn Loring Metro**

--Take a cab (3 miles) to Viera's house or call 703-280-1625 in advance and we will come to pick you up.

### **By Car**

#### **from West MD or VA**

--Take the Beltway to Arlington Blvd. West; take left on Prosperity Avenue, take left on Morningside Drive.

#### **from East MD or VA**

--Take the Beltway to Little River Turnpike, take right on Prosperity Avenue, take right on Morningside Drive.

#### **from DC and inside Beltway VA**

--Take 66 West, take exit to go to I-495 Richmond and take exit to Arlington Blvd West, take left on Prosperity Avenue, take left on Morningside Drive.

#### **from VA East**

--Take 66 East, take Nutley Street exit, make left on Arlington Blvd., make right on Prosperity Ave., take left on Morningside Drive. (or you can take Arlington Blvd instead of I-66).

**Parking section in front of the house will be marked.** Park on Morningside Drive in the front of the house, two wheels off the road-style. Additional parking available on adjacent street Morningside Woods Place. See map on back of this flyer.

**Your Support is Needed on the Visa Waiver Issue!**—In the last newsletter, we mentioned efforts to extend the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) to a number of central European countries, including Slovakia. This would allow Slovaks to travel to the U.S. without having to go through the process of obtaining a visa. This visa process can be lengthy and costly and often denies Slovaks citizens entry to the U.S. for business opportunities, tourism or family contact. A number of organizations are leading an effort to support legislation to revise the VWP, with the Friends of Slovakia (FOS) playing a key role in the effort on the part of Slovaks. FOS has circulated a letter explaining these efforts, which you can access at [www.friendsofslovakia.org](http://www.friendsofslovakia.org) . SASW is supporting these efforts as well, and we urge you to contact your congressional representatives and ask that they co-sponsor the legislation to reform the VWP and support it when it comes up for a vote. To assist your efforts, a sample letter can be found below. The letter was provided to us by Joe Senko of FOS and the Western PA Slovak Cultural Assn. (WPSCA). He notes that it is preferable to write the letter in your own words. Also, it is best to email or fax your message to your Representatives and Senators, as regular US mail may be slowed by security considerations. This issue is very important to Slovakia, and Amb. Kacer is working on it very hard. Your support is needed to convince Congress to revise the VWP.

**Slovak and Czech movies in DC**---As we went to press, we did not have a firm date for the next installment of the FOS Slovak film series at the Embassy. The expected date is sometime later in June or July. We will send out an announcement on dcsllovaks when information is available. In the meantime, the Czech Film Series continues in DC. On **June 13, 2007, 8 pm**, the Avalon Theatre will screen *Return of the Idiot* (Navrat idiota), directed by Sasa Gedeon, and winner of 6 Czech Lion Awards. The film is in Czech with English subtitles. This summer, the Avalon Theatre will bring more Czech Lion Award winning films to the DC-area including, Bitter Coffee (Silny kafe), and Autumn Spring (Babi leto). The Avalon Theatre is located at 5612 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20015. Tickets may be purchased at the box office 30 minutes before the start of the show. For more information, call the box office at: (202) 966-3464, or to hear general information about films playing at the Avalon, call: (202) 966-6000. Tickets prices are: Adult \$9.75 / Senior, Student, or Military \$7 .

**Amb. Kacer term extended**—We have just learned that Slovak Ambassador Kacer will remain in Washington for another year. His term was expected to end this summer.

**History Of Slovaks**—Some may remember a Speakers' Series talk by Prof. Greg Ference in July, 2004. He discussed the English-language translation of Konstantin Culen's famous book, *History of Slovaks in America*. The long-awaited volume is now expected to be published this summer. For information contact, the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society Intl., P.O. Box 16225, St. Paul, MN 55116-0225, or check [www.cgisi.org](http://www.cgisi.org) .

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**Passing of Paul Albrecht**--SASW was saddened to hear of the passing of one of our most distinguished members, Dr. Paul Albrecht. We extend our sympathies to his wife, Renata and the entire Albrecht family. The following obituary appeared in the Washington Post, Wednesday, May 2, 2007; Page B07

### **Paul Albrecht; FDA Expert On Infectious Diseases**

Paul Albrecht, 82, a Food and Drug Administration virologist, immunologist and pathologist who developed diagnostic techniques used to research and treat infectious diseases, died of cancer April 11 at his daughter's home in Rockville. He was a Rockville resident. After an early scientific career in his native Czechoslovakia, Dr. Albrecht settled in the Washington area in 1965. He worked at the National Institutes of Health and worked closely with future Nobel laureate D. Carleton Gajdusek on studies of kuru, a slow virus disease. Dr. Albrecht joined the FDA in 1967 and retired in 1993 as director of virology at its Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research.

During his career, he did extensive antibody testing on vaccines for polio, rubella and pediatric infectious diseases. In his research, he often collaborated with the leading scientists in their respective fields, including Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin on polio, and Harry M. Meyer Jr. and Paul Parkman on rubella. Dr. Albrecht also consulted with the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other institutions on major immunization projects and hosted visiting scientists in his FDA lab. He published more than 130 articles on pathology and virology. His work on measles vaccine investigations, on which he published widely, helped lead to new recommendations on the best age for immunization.

Dr. Albrecht was born in Presov, in what is now Slovakia. In 1949, he received a medical degree from Comenius University medical school in Bratislava. Starting in 1955, he spent a decade at the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, working at its institute of virology. In 1960, he received a doctorate in virology from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and specialized in immunofluorescent antibodies for detection of various antigens in tissues. He also published a book in 1963 on how to look at antigens in tissues using fluorescent antibodies. The book used the best photographic resolutions at the time to achieve clear images of tissue slides.

His memberships included the American Society for Microbiology, the New York Academy of Sciences and the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine. He presented his scientific findings around the world and helped create vaccine guidelines internationally. Besides English, Czech and Slovak, Dr. Albrecht was fluent in Polish, Russian, German and Hungarian. He kept a 41-foot Morgan sailboat in Galesville and sailed on the Chesapeake Bay. Survivors include his wife of 54 years, Dr. Renata Gruner Albrecht of Rockville; two children, Dr. Renata Albrecht Farkas of Rockville and Paul Albrecht of Bedford, Mass.; and six grandchildren.

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**The Flag Raisers**---The recent Memorial Day Holiday focused our attention on those who have served and sacrificed for our country. It is a good time to remember the role that a young Slovak American, Sgt. Michael Strank, played in what has become the most enduring symbol of the spirit of our nation's armed forces---the raising of the US flag by the Marines on Iwo Jima in WWII. Strank was born in 1919 in Jarabenia, Slovakia and was raised in Johnstown , PA. For more information check out the website [www.iwojima.com](http://www.iwojima.com) .

**SLOVAK-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON  
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION/DONATION FORM**

New membership or renewal runs thru the end of 2007

\_\_\_\_ Individual membership (\$15/year)    \_\_\_\_ Family membership (\$20/year)

Optional Tax-deductible donation:    City U. fund \_\_\_\_; SASW general fund \_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail your check made out to the Slovak American Society of Washington, and this form to:    Helen Fedor, 11914 Winstead Lane, Reston, VA    20194-1518**

NAME(s) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE    Home: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_    Work: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Yes! Please contact me to help out with Society events  
Please do NOT include my phone number in the Membership Directory (03/07)

The **Slovak-American Society of Washington** is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Contributions and dues are tax-deductible.

**Board of Directors:**

Ken Bombara, President;  
Anne McKeown, Vice-President;  
Tom Marton, Treasurer;  
Linda Jo Trout, Secretary.  
Helen Fedor,  
Viera Jamrich  
Rebecca Labuda-Hindrichs

**Correspondence** should be addressed to:  
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Centreville, VA 20120-1727  
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bombarak@verizon.net

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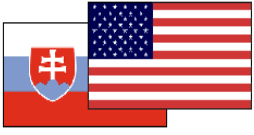
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