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SLOVAK AMERICAN SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, DC

NEWSLETTER

February 2010

Former Ambassador Lichardus Addresses SASW Annual Meeting

On November 21, 2009, SASW held its annual meeting on Capitol Hill at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation. SASW members in attendance heard a delightful talk by former Slovak Ambassador Dr. Branislav Lichardus. Dr. Lichardus, who was the ambassador to Washington from 1994-98, is currently the rector of Vysoká škola Manažmentu (VSM), which is affiliated with City University of Bellevue, Washington. Dr. Lichardus, in Washington to attend a gala dinner celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, also wanted to meet with SASW to give us an update on activities at VŠM/City U. and to thank the Society for the scholarship support that it has provided to the school for over a decade. Dr. Lichardus' talk highlighted the importance of the scholarships provided by SASW each spring.

In addition, Dr. Lichardus spoke about his time as ambassador, focusing on the opening of relations between the nascent Slovak government and the United States. The talk was a retrospective on some of the events that occurred during his tenure in Washington, and was illustrated with numerous photos. Many of these photos included members of the Society, and other local Slovak-Americans, who helped to establish an effective Slovak presence in the nation's capital. The talk was received warmly by the audience and, in addition to sharing memories, Dr. Lichardus discussed several contemporary issues during a question-and-answer session.

During the business part of the annual meeting, SASW President Kathryn Tatko gave the traditional report on the status and activities of the Society during the past year*. As for the Board of Directors, the terms of three members were expiring and elections were held. Anne McKeown and Dr. Jerry Rich were re-elected to three-year terms and the Board experienced one transition. Linda Trout, who has served as SASW secretary since 1999, decided to step down from the Board, and Georgene Chastain was elected to fill that open three-year Board slot. We extend our thanks and warmest thoughts to Linda for her service, and look forward to her continued participation in SASW activities. We are also very happy to have Georgene, an active SASW member, come onto the Board and expect that she will contribute a fresh perspective and energize the rest of the group.

At the first meeting of the new Board, on January 13, 2010, officers were selected to serve as the SASW Executive Committee. Three officers were re-elected: President Kathryn Tatko, Vice-President Jerry Rich, and Treasurer Tom Marton. Also, new Board member Georgene Chastain was elected to fill the vacant Secretary position. Congratulations to these officers and best wishes for a successful SASW program in 2010 and beyond!

[* The 2009 SASW annual report will be posted to our website <dcslovaks.org>. If you don't have internet access and would like a copy, call 703-851-6035 and leave your name and address.]

President Obama Nominates Next U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia.

It was recently announced that President Obama has nominated Theodore Sedgwick as the next U.S. ambassador to Slovakia. He will succeed former Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik (who is a past member of SASW). Mr. Keith A. Eddins has served as chargé d'affaires in Bratislava since Amb. Obsitnik stepped down in January 2009. Here is a brief biography of Mr. Sedgwick:

Theodore Sedgwick is a business executive with experience in launching and operating publishing and timber enterprises. He is the founder of Pasha Publications, a specialty publisher focused on energy, defense, and environmental markets. He served as the company's chief executive for twenty years. More recently, he launched Io Energy, an online energy information company covering the natural gas, coal, and electricity industries. He also has served as president of Red Hills Lumber Company, a producer of pine flooring. Mr. Sedgwick graduated with honors from Harvard College, where he majored in Ottoman History. He has been an active volunteer for a number of cultural institutions, and has served on the boards of the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Shakespeare Theater Company of Washington, DC, and the Gennadius Library in Athens, Greece. He has also served on the boards of a number of land preservation organizations, including the Civil War Preservation Trust, which he chaired, the Wetlands America Trust, and the Land Trust Alliance, where he is a national council member. He is also a member of a various business organizations, including the Chief Executives Organization, an international business organization for global leaders. He is married to Kate Watt Sedgwick, a public health specialist with a master's degree in Public Health from Harvard University. They have two daughters and two grandchildren.

Inspiring Events Held in DC Area Commemorate Velvet Revolution Anniversary

It was indeed a very busy fall season for Slovak-related events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the "Velvet Revolution." SASW held a very interesting program on October, 17 focusing on the Catholic Church under Communism. Prof. David Doellinger, of Western Oregon University, gave a talk based on his extensive academic research, explaining how the underground Church developed and functioned in communist-ruled Czechoslovakia. He discussed how the organization of the underground Church was able to play an important role, as the events of the late-1980s evolved into the Velvet Revolution. The showing of the documentary film "*Interrupted Lives*," a film focusing on Catholic nuns in Central and Eastern Europe during the communist era, complemented Dr. Doellinger's talk. The film is very well produced, and the audience was touched and impressed by the strength and courage of those who endured the communist era.

A number of other events were held locally, sponsored by the Slovak Embassy and the Friends of Slovakia (FOS). On November 17, a program was held at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, "The Velvet Revolution--Twenty Years of Freedom in Central Europe and the Slovak-U.S. Partnership: Through the Eyes of Ambassadors." The current Slovak Foreign Minister, Miroslav Lajcak, and seven former ambassadors were brought together with other experts to review Slovakia's emergence in freedom and its remarkable progress during the past twenty years. You can view the entire program on the Heritage Foundation's website at <www.heritage.org>--click on the events archive.

Later, on the evening of the 17th, the Slovak Embassy hosted the opening of an art exhibit, "Memories of Slovakia: Slovak Paintings in American Collections" (see the article from Amb. Burian on page 6). The exhibit featured a large collection of paintings held by various individuals in their private collections. The diverse collection was impressive and was warmly received by the assembled guests, including many SASW members. Then, on November 18, a gala dinner was held at the Washington Golf and Country Club in Arlington. The event featured many guests, including Mr. Lajcak, current and former ambassadors, Slovak fraternal leaders, and congressmen John Mica of Florida, Joe Sestak of Pennsylvania, and Joe Wilson of South Carolina.

These events were complemented by other meetings, and also events sponsored by the Czech Embassy. One such event was the Annual Czech and Slovak Freedom Lecture on December 9, held at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, and sponsored jointly by the embassies of both countries, FOS, and the American Friends of the Czech Republic (AfoCR). This year, the lecture was given by former Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek. Topolánek, an ardent defender of liberty, gave a somewhat pessimistic assessment of some of the events that have followed the Velvet Revolution, adding a spirited call for greater individual responsibility by the Czechs and Slovaks to continue the development of freedom and democracy. You can read a summary, and view this event, at the Woodrow Wilson Center website <www.wilsoncenter.org>.

Supporters of Slovakia, particularly those in the DC area, should be proud of the impressive series of events that were held to commemorate the Velvet Revolution and its aftermath.

SASW Calendar of Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 6

COOKING WITH MILLIE I. (HALUSHKY)

Saturday, March 20

COOKING WITH MILLIE II. (HOLUBKY)

[Rescheduled from 2/13]

SASW founding member Millie Schoepe-Evans will conduct a hands-on lesson in making halushky--delicious Slovak dumplings made from potatoes--on March 6, and holubky--Slovak stuffed cabbage rolls--on March 20. Participants will watch Millie demonstrate the various steps, then will make halushky(holubky) themselves, taking home the finished product. A recipe will be provided, but bring a pen or pencil to take notes and an apron to wear while you work.

When: 10:00 AM

Where: 12910 Westbrook Dr., Fairfax, VA (Millie's house)

Cost: \$5/person, payable in cash at the start of the event.

To RSVP for the March 6 session, please send an email to <dcsllovaks@yahoo.com> or call Helen Fedor at (703) 437-0228. "PLEASE NOTE THAT SASW MEMBERS WILL BE GIVEN PRIORITY."

* * *

Saturday, April 17

"Svadobné nôty: Ceremonial Wedding Tunes and Slovak Traditional Culture"

A talk by Jadranka Važanová, PhD

Svadobné nôty are wedding tunes that are unique to a locale and are sung a cappella, usually by women, during ritual moments of the ceremony. What role do these tunes play in the traditional wedding ceremony and how do they fit into the broader context of traditional village culture?

When and Where: 2:00 PM at the Slovak Embassy, 3523 International Court, NW, Washington DC 20008

SASW News and Notes

2010 Vancouver Olympics—As of this writing, Slovakia has earned three medals in Olympic competition, including its first gold medal in a winter Olympics ever, when Anastasia Kuzmina won the women's 7.5 km biathlon sprint event. She also won a silver medal in the 10km Pursuit event. Pavol Hurajt won a bronze in the men's biathlon 15 km mass start event. The Slovak men's hockey team has scored upset wins over Russia and Sweden and will compete for a medal. Congratulations to the medal winners and the entire Slovak Olympic team!!! To get the latest info visit <www.nbcolympics.com>.

Lenten meals--Meatless meals featuring ethnic favorites will be available every Friday during Lent from February 19-March 26, 2010, at Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church, 3410 Woodburn Road, Annandale, VA (703-573-3986). Take-out starts at 4pm, Dine-in: 5-7pm. The menu features savory, meatless, Eastern European meals including: Pirohi (potato & cheese-filled pasta); Halushki (sautéed noodles with sweet cabbage); Homemade vegetarian soups; Desserts. Meal items are priced separately. Quantities may vary. Also, Slovak & Ukrainian handiwork & ceramics, egg decorating kits, nutrolls & cookbooks will be on sale. Sale times of these items may vary. Sponsored by the Epiphany Ladies Guild. Questions? Call the Parish Center on Fridays, after noon, at (703)573-0777.

Interested in language classes in the DC area?—SASW is always considering options to offer Slovak language classes in the DC area. It's difficult to organize them because we must find a qualified teacher, a time and location that are convenient to all, and then, at least 6-8 people who are willing to commit to the classes. If you fit this latter category, please let us know. We may have a teacher who is available on Saturdays. If interested, email <dcsllovaks@yahoo.com> (or call Kathryn Tatko at 703-751-1456) and give us your name, phone, where you live, and any schedule constraints.

Slovak language classes in Bratislava—Terézia Šajgalíková, the Cultural Counselor at the Embassy of Slovakia, has informed us that the Center for Language and Academic Preparation of the Bratislava School of Law is organizing its 6th annual "Summer School of the Slovak Language and Culture" for 2010, running July 5 to July 23, 2010, in Bratislava, Slovakia. You can find more information at <www.uninova.sk/cjop/src/summer_school.php>.

University of Pittsburgh summer language program---Another option for language study is offered by the University of Pittsburgh and its "Pittsburgh to Slovakia" program. The program offers six weeks of intensive beginning thru advanced-level Slovak language study at Pitt's Slavic and East European Summer Language Institute, followed by four weeks of instruction in Bratislava. The program also includes excursions and other activities. Info and applications are available at <<http://sli.slavic.pitt.edu>>. The deadline is March 19, 2010. You may also call (412) 624-5906 or email <slavic@pitt.edu>.

Studium Carpatho-Ruthenorum (Summer School in Rusyn Language and Culture)--The Institute for Rusyn Language and Culture at Prešov University is inaugurating its first international Summer School in Rusyn Language and Culture to take place in Prešov, Slovakia, between June 14 and July 4, 2010. The goal of Studium Carpatho-Ruthenorum is to help students (from 18 years of age), scholars, and others interested in Rusyn studies attain proficiency, or improve their existing ability, in communicating in the Rusyn language, and broaden their knowledge of Carpatho-Rusyn history and culture. Instruction will be provided by university professors, distinguished Slavicists, and specialists in Carpatho-Rusyn studies.

The language of instruction, in parallel courses, will be either Rusyn or English. Language instruction consists of two hours per day of grammar and conversation, for a total of 30 hours. Language classes will be divided into three groups: language instruction conducted in Rusyn (1) for beginners (levels A1, A2), and (2) for advanced students (levels B1, B2); and (3) language instruction only for beginners offered in English. Participants will also attend history and culture lectures, including presentations on Carpatho-Rusyn folklore and folk life, Carpathian wooden architecture, Carpatho-Rusyn literature, and other topics provided either in English or in Rusyn.

Upon successful completion of the program, participants will receive a certificate from the program. Course credit for university students is determined by the students' home institutions. A full program of excursions to areas surrounding

Prešov and populated by Carpatho-Rusyns, as well as social and cultural events, such as films and theater performances, is also planned. Scholarships will be available for between five and ten participants, and will be used to cover the costs of the program. Participants interested in applying for a scholarship must send a special request along with their application, in the form of a 1-2 page essay describing their interest in the program and outlining their financial need.

The cost for the entire program (tuition, accommodations, three meals a day, extracurricular program) is 900 euros (approximately \$1,300). Participants will pay for their own travel to Prešov, which can be reached by train from locations in Europe, or by plane to the international airport in Košice, with bus connections to Prešov. For further information, please e-mail Patricia Krafcik at <krafcikp@evergreen.edu>. Completed applications may be e-mailed to the following address and must be received no later than March 1, 2010 <urjk@unipo.sk>. The postal address and phone number for the Institute for Rusyn Language and Culture at Prešov University is: Ústav rusínskeho jazyka a kultúry, Prešovská univerzita, Námestie legionárov 3, 080 01 Prešov, SLOVAK REPUBLIC. Phone: +412 (51) 7720 392.

Senator Cardin on Slovak language law—During the question-and-answer session at the SASW annual meeting, Dr. Lichardus discussed the controversy generated by a recent amendment to the Slovak language law that is aimed at clarifying the use of Slovak—the state language—by official public bodies. The amendment generated considerable controversy involving the Hungarian minority and the Hungarian government. Interestingly, we learned of a statement by Maryland Senator Ben Cardin concerning the controversy, which presents the issues in a balanced way. The statement was published in the *Congressional Record* on December 15, 2009 (Vol. 154, No. 18). If you are interested in reading this statement and can't find it on the internet, send an email to <dcsllovaks@yahoo.com> and we can send you a link. Otherwise, send a note to the address on this newsletter and we can send you a copy.

Theater J in Washington—The Spring Arts Preview section in the January 31 *Washington Post* lists a theater event, “Andy Warhol: Good for the Jews?”. Josh Kornbluth’s new one-man show takes a look at the pop artist’s religious affiliation and depictions of Jewish notables. The event will run March 6-21, at Theater J, 1529 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. (Tickets) 800-494-8497 <theaterj@theaterj.org>.

2010 Treasure Tours—If you are interested in touring Slovakia this summer you may want to check out the popular tours sponsored by Helene Cincebeaux and her group at <www.treasuretours.com>. For more info, contact Helene toll-free at (888) 529-7150 or at <helenezx@aol.com>.

New Books of Interest—Several new books of interest to Slovak Americans have been published recently:

1. *Cleveland Slovaks* is a new book by John T. Sabol and Lisa A. Alzo (who spoke to us about her book *Baba's Kitchen* in March 2009).

<http://www.arcadiapublishing.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=VPROD&Product_Code=9780738552422>

2. *Jan Kocur: A Story of Slovak Pride, American Patriotism, and the Golden Age of the Slovak League of America* by Richard D. Kocur, Jr. This is the first biography written about one of the driving forces behind the Slovak League in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, and a true Slovak patriot. The book is available on Amazon.com.

3. *After Hitler, Before Stalin: Catholics, Communists and Democrats in Slovakia, 1945-1948* by James Ramon Felak. Published by Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2009.

4. *Dark Dreams: A Commander Jana Matinova Investigation* by Michael Genelin. This is the second novel by Genelin involving his Slovak heroine Jana Matinova. Genelin spoke to SASW about his first novel in 2008, and this new novel was reviewed in the August 28, 2009, issue of the *Washington Times*.

Slovak movie “Bathory”—Sometime this spring, the Friends of Slovakia (FOS) will resume its popular movie series at the Slovak Embassy with the showing of “Bathory.” This Slovak film, released in July 2008, is based on the story of Elizabeth Bathory, a 16th/17th century Hungarian countess with an infamous history. We will send out an email announcement as further details become available.

NCSML moves forward with recovery—The National Czech and Slovak Museum in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is continuing with its plans for recovery from the 2008 flood. It has devised a plan to move its surviving building to a new, higher location, and then implement an ambitious re-building and expansion plan. They are asking individuals and groups for support with their recovery plan. Visit <www.NCSML.org> or call (319) 362-8500 if you would like additional information.

Slovak folk songs at TJ--On Tuesday, March 16, at 7pm, the chorus of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology will give a free concert that includes four Slovak folk songs collected by Bela Bartok in villages around Banska Bystrica, Slovakia. The chorus will sing these songs in the original Slovak. The concert will be repeated on March 18, at Carnegie Hall, in New York City. The school is located at 6560 Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA. For directions, go to <<http://www.tjhsst.edu/abouttj/visitors/directions.php>>.

* * *

Message from Amb. Burian on the “Memories of Slovakia” Exhibit

On January 31, 2010, the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Washington closed the doors on one of the most memorable events in its recent history, the exhibition "Memories of Slovakia." The display of a unique selection of Slovak classic and modern art was opened on November 17, 2009, as part of a series marking the 20th anniversary of the democratic change in former Czechoslovakia, which also included an unforgettable gala dinner later, on November 18th. Under the patronage of, and in presence of, the Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honorable Miroslav Lajcak, distinguished guests at the official opening enjoyed a presentation of over 30 paintings by renowned Slovak artists such as Jan Hala, Stefan Pukner, Fero Guldán, Miroslav Cipar, Ferdinand Hložník, Julius Jakoby, M. Bazovsky, Peter Michal Bohún, and others, all of them from private collections in the United States. During a more than two month display, the exhibition attracted the interest of hundreds of guests, including a group of the wives of Washington-based ambassadors that held one of their regular meetings in the Embassy's gallery, diplomatic corps members, the Washington art community, Slovak compatriots, as well as the general public from the wider Washington area.

The idea of organizing the event came to mind when my wife Nina and I chatted with Slovaks and friends of Slovakia over how to help present and promote the extraordinary values that were hidden for years behind closed doors in the homes of Slovak-American families. What we found out later was that their stories were as fascinating as the pictures themselves. People were forced to leave their home country to live abroad, too often unable to maintain any contact whatsoever with their relatives in the former Czechoslovakia. For them these paintings were more than just artwork of extraordinary value; they helped keep alive memories of a home destined not to be seen again. Therefore we decided to address a group of compatriots and friends willing to exhibit their paintings and share with others their personal stories. Just to mention one of them: "Portrait of Anna Philadelphia," the great grandmother of Juraj L.J. Slavik. The classical portrait by Peter Michal Bohun, painted in 1860, found its way to the United States with the Slavik family in 1946, when the late Juraj M.D. Slavik served as the last ambassador of free Czechoslovakia to Washington.

The Embassy would like to express its gratitude not only to the Friends of Slovakia and the extraordinary people who helped to organize the event, such as artists Mrs. Klara Sever and Mrs. Nena Thayer, Amb. Theodore Russell, Mrs. Julie Slavik, and many others, but especially to those who granted us the trust to hold their family treasures away from home in order to take part in this unique, and in every sense of the word great, presentation of the Slovak ability to create, protect, value, and share its own contribution to the world of art. We were encouraged by the success of the event that marked an important milestone in Slovak history as well as in the history of modern cooperation between Slovakia and its countrymen in the United States. We would like to build on these strong foundations and turn the event into a tradition. The idea of "Memories of Slovakia, Part II" is already on the table. I want to use this opportunity to invite possible donors willing to participate in the second part of this successful event to contact the Slovak Embassy in Washington for further details.

Peter Burian
Ambassador

Travelogue: Summer Slovak Language Study in Bratislava

By John Bartko

[For many years a summer language program, Studia Academica Slovaca (SAS), has been conducted in Slovakia under the sponsorship of Comenius University. Students from around the world attend, and while the program is focused on young people, it is open to people of all ages. SASW member John Bartko, attended the program last summer and was gracious in writing up some of his experiences to share with our members and others who may be interested in the program. We hope you enjoy his travelogue.]

This is a brief report of my attendance at the Slovak language school (SAS) this past summer, July 30 to August 22, 2009.

Slovak Background—My father came from Slovakia in 1928. My mother was born in Pennsylvania of Slovak immigrants. I was born in Ohio but grew up in Masaryktown, Florida, which was a community of Slovak family chicken farmers. Slovak was spoken in everyday conversations, and in the Lutheran church. What Slovak I know, I learned in the home environment. There was no “Slovak” school.

Why? The question I was often asked by my neighbors is why go to school at “your age?” What do you plan to do with Slovak after you return, etc? I went for many reasons: the curiosity to see what Slovak grammar I could learn in three weeks along with the desire to experience living with the Slovak culture and language for three weeks. I had been in Slovakia in 1970 and stayed with a cousin who lived in Važec. Part of this trip was to see if my cousin was still alive and if I could find her. Luckily, part of the SAS program included an excursion, which went to *Otec's* (my father's) village, Važec. I was successful in finding my cousin, now 82, and visiting and being greeted by the mayor. In 1970, Slovakia was communist-controlled. I wanted to observe the differences in the country since the fall of communism. This trip was a low-cost way to spend three weeks in Slovakia. Room, board, classes, the three-day excursion, and local trips came to 1400 euros. My airfare was on frequent flyer miles, so that saved some money as well.

Of course, I did have trepidations. I knew from the SAS website that I would be the *starý otec* (grandfather) of the group. Most of the students would be “kids,” that is between 19 and 26 or so, who were real party people! The other concern was food. In 1970 Slovak food was heavy, greasy, with lots of carbohydrates. Fresh fruits and vegetables were rare.

Slovak Language School (SAS, *Studia Academica Slovaca*) Bratislava, Slovakia

Fast forward 60+ years. The announcement from the Embassy about the Slovak language program in Bratislava sparked my interest. I spoke to Ken Bombara, who had attended the three-week Univerzita Komenského program in 2001. He was very positive, so I registered and am happy that I did.

The School, Building, Layout etc. SAS is about 25 minutes from downtown Bratislava by public transportation. Bratislava is at about 50 degrees north latitude--the same line as Labrador. Thus, I was surprised to discover how hot and humid it was. There were also mosquitoes and no screens on my windows. I improvised by using the lace curtains in such a way as to serve a useful barrier. There was no air conditioning. Why mosquitoes is still a mystery to me.

The building is three stories, basically square with a garden atrium. My room was on the second floor, which by U.S. convention is the top floor or the third floor. I had an outside-facing room with a balcony, so I was away from the party noise. Sleeping rooms either had a view of the atrium or an outside view. The building housed all the facilities, the sleeping rooms, the class rooms, dining room, offices, a snack shop, and a computer room with 20 computers (*počítač*). My room had a single bed, an easy chair, a desk, TV, radio,

bathroom and balcony. The balcony came in handy for hanging laundry. There were no laundry facilities in the building. The first thing I bought at TESCO was a better bath towel.

The Students, the Food. The students were mostly young, in their 20's, about 170 of them from more than thirty countries. Many of them were on stipends from the Slovak government, which has a program to encourage the teaching of the Slovak language. Of interest was a guide from Nepal, who guided Slovak mountain climbers and wanted more facility with Slovak, and a group of students from Taiwan. My concern about the food was well founded. Apart from breakfast, the food was, in a word, awful. Breakfast was the saving grace. It was a common European breakfast, hotdogs, sausage, several cheeses, lunch meats, breads, good yogurt, milk and cereal. I learned to "stock up" on breakfast to carry me throughout the day, supplemented with trips to the local grocery store to buy fruit, mineral water, dairy products, and other reasonably healthy foods as I could find. Keep in mind that I grew up with a Slovak mother who was an excellent cook, so I know good Slovak food.

The Daily Schedule: Monday to Friday:

7:00 to 8:15	Breakfast (<i>raňajky</i>)
9:00 to 10:30	Class time
10:30 to 11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 to 12:30	Class time
12:30 to 13:30	Lunch (<i>obed</i>)
13:30 to 15:30	Class time
17:30 to 18:30	Supper (<i>večera</i>)
20:00	Movies, music, cultural events.

Saturday Afternoon Free. Sunday—a free day. Slovakia Excursion - August 13 to 15 (Thursday to Saturday). Note that all classes, announcements, posters, etc., were all in Slovak

Afterthoughts—Any regrets? No regrets. The study program was intense and tough. I was in level two of five levels, level one being for beginners. Slovak is a difficult language. I can't imagine an adult without a Slovak childhood environment undertaking its study. In my class of eleven, the kids ran circles around me grammar-wise, but I was way ahead of them in speaking and understanding. Short-term memory and memorization were a problem. Still I did learn and did increase my speaking, understanding, and vocabulary skills. I was encouraged and pleased that I could be understood and make my wishes known in shops and restaurants. Everyone got a diploma, which did not record how well one did—it recorded the number of hours of classes and lectures one attended.

There were two highlights associated with being the *stary otec* of the student body. The Taiwanese students showered me with attention, since their culture reveres age for its associated "wisdom". I did not try to dissuade them otherwise. In addition, I was a target for interviews by the media. I was interviewed three times the first day. A Web-link to the video interview can be found at <<http://aktualne.centrum.sk/domov/zdravie-skolstvo-spolocnost/clanek.phtml?id=1187771>>. Along with four other students, I was on Slovak TV. I was also interviewed by a Canadian in English for Slovak short-wave radio. I plan to return to Slovakia in 2010, not perhaps with SAS again, although all in all, I recommend it highly. You can't beat it for the Slovak immersion experience! *Ďakujem* and *dovidenia*.

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

New membership or renewal runs thru the end of **2010**

Individual membership (\$15/year) \$ _____

Family membership (\$20/year) \$ _____

Optional tax-deductible donation:

VSM/City U. scholarship fund \$ _____

SASW General Fund \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Make checks payable to:
Slovak American Society of Washington, D.C.

MAIL THIS FORM TO:

SASW--Carol Fedorchak
3309 Dunnington Road
Beltsville, MD 20705-3206

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_____ **ZIP+4** _____

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_____ Please do NOT include my phone number in the Annual Membership Directory

_____ Yes! Please contact me to help out with Society events (02/10)

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

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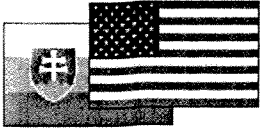
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Website: www.dcslovaks.org
Email: dcslovaks@yahoo.com

**There is still time to renew
your SASW membership for
2010!**

We need your support to continue
our programs and activities.

Thanks!



SLOVAK-AMERICAN SOCIETY
OF WASHINGTON
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