

# Zajedničar

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## CFU Salutes Golden Class of 1976

### 337 Members Achieve 50-Year Status in 2026

By Edward W. Pazo / National President

PITTSBURGH, PA – We are pleased to announce the names of all members of the Croatian Fraternal Union who have reached the significant milestone of Fifty Consecutive Years of Membership in the year 2026. In compliance with a decision voted upon by the delegates to the 2023 CFU National Convention, the listing is based upon overall membership totals, including years of juvenile as well as adult membership.

It is our honor to extend well-deserved tribute to 337 Members of our Society who have been identified through the Society's records as having attained their 50-year membership status this year. On behalf of the National Administration of the Croatian Fraternal Union, I take great pride in acknowledging these dedicated members of our Society. Congratulations to the Members of the "Class of 1976"!

Upon reviewing the listing of the 337 fifty-year members being recognized in 2026, we are pleased to welcome into the CFU Golden Membership Circle 180 men and 157 women who have achieved 50 years of continuous CFU membership.

We thank them for remaining loyal to the Croatian Fraternal Union for the past 50 years and further acknowledge that their loyal membership has contributed to our longevity as a thriving fraternal benefit society.

A review of the report of the Society's 2026

Golden Members, reveals that there are 20 CFU lodges which enjoy the distinction of having the largest representations of fifty-year members among their lodges for the current year, each with six or more 50-year members in their lodge ranks.

For the year 2026, there are two lodges which hold the distinction of having the largest total number of 50-year members, with a grand total of 15 golden members, "Hrvatska Sloboda" Lodge 32 of Chicago, IL and "Sloga Milwaukee CFU Lodge 1994" of Milwaukee, WI.

Next, we are pleased to recognize, "St. George" Lodge 248 of Clairton, PA. with a grand total of 13 fifty-year members for the year 2026.

Following next, each with 11 golden members in their ranks are: "St. George" Lodge 66 of Youngstown, OH; "St. George" Lodge 354 of Cokeburg, PA; and "Franklin D. Roosevelt" Lodge

567 of Canonsburg, PA. Three lodges, each with nine 50-year members are: "St. Lawrence" Lodge 13 of Steelton, PA; "Hrvatska Vila" Lodge 141 of East Pittsburgh, PA; and "Sv. Vid" CFU Lodge 541 of Trafford, PA.

Next are five lodges which each boast of eight golden members for the year. They are: "Sts. Peter and Paul" Lodge 84, Anaconda, MT; "Sv. Trojstvo" Lodge 146, Versailles, PA; "Croatian Sons" Lodge 170, Merrillville, IN; "Zora" CFU Lodge 351, Detroit, MI; and "Alcro" CFU Lodge 720, Aliquippa, PA.

With seven 50-year members to their credit in 2026 are: "Svi Sveti" Lodge 1, NS Pittsburgh, PA; "Slavno Ime Isusovo" Lodge 126, Farrell, PA; and "Radnicka Sloga" Lodge 602, Verona, PA.

Three lodges share the distinction of each having six golden members in the year 2026. They are "Sacred Heart of Jesus" Lodge 3, McKeesport, PA; "Sv. Petar i Pavao" Lodge 72, Uniontown, PA; and "Hrvatska Sloboda" Lodge 235, Cleveland.

All of the remaining lodges in this year's Golden Membership Report have a total of five or fewer CFU 50-year members for the year 2026.

In recognition of the 337 fraternalists named in the 2026 Listing of CFU Fifty-Year Members, we take this opportunity to salute their individual and collective contributions to our Fraternal Society. We extend deserving tribute to these members who  
(Continued on page 11)



MEMBERS OF THE CFU EXECUTIVE BOARD welcomed Ante Šušnjar, Croatian Minister of Economy, to the CFU Home Office during a recent visit to the United States, which included Pittsburgh on his official itinerary. Accompanied by H.E. Pjer Šimunović, Croatian Ambassador to the United States, Minister Šušnjar appreciated visiting the CFU Home Office and touring the Cultural Museum. From left, CFU National Secretary/Treasurer Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras, Minister Ante Šušnjar, CFU Executive Vice President Franjo Bertović, CFU National President Edward W. Pazo and Ambassador Pjer Šimunović.

Honoring our 2026 CFU 50 Year Members

See Pages 4 and 11 for a Complete Listing of the 2026 CFU Fifty-Year Members.

75 GODINA HRVATSKE MATICE ISELJENIKA

Zagreb, February 17, 2026



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Mr. Edward W. Pazo, National President  
Ms. Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras, National Secretary/Treasurer  
Mr. Franjo Bertović, Executive Vice President of the CFU

Dear Mr. Pazo, Ms. Luketich-Sikaras, Mr. Bertović:

On behalf of the Croatian Homeland Foundation and on my own behalf, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for the congratulatory message and commemorative plaque that you sent us on behalf of the membership of the Croatian Fraternal Union of America from Pittsburgh on February 12 of this year, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Croatian Emigrants' Association - which has affirmed itself over the past decades as an indispensable cultural link to our Croatian identity, history, and culture.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your sincere wishes for the future strengthening of this vital cultural bridge of the Association, which connects the emigrant population with those living in the homeland Croatia, and especially with our most populous and most respected emigrant organization, the Croatian Fraternal Union of America.

American Croats have stood by our people in their homeland at all times during our glorious history, expressing love and respect for their new homeland towards the people in the Old Homeland, which culminated in the 1990s, when the United States was among the first to recognize the independent and sovereign Republic of Croatia.

Institutional cooperation and support for emigrants - including American Croats - began in 1869 during the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia, and was confirmed by the cooperation of the leaders of the soon to be organized National Croatian Society, the forerunner of the Croatian Fraternal Union, Zdravko Mužina, Josip Marohnic and Franjo Zibrat, and our beloved bishop, Josip Juraj Strossmayer. It continued in 1912 with the founding of the Society of St. Raphael, a Catholic society for the assistance of Croatian emigrants, which was renewed by the Blessed Cardinal, then Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojze Stepinac, continuing in the turbulent twentieth century comprehensive cultural and religious cooperation with emigrants around the world - until our days.

The democratic changes of 1990, under the leadership of the state-building vision of the first Croatian president, Dr. Franjo Tuđman, opened a new chapter for the Croatian Homeland Foundation, which greatly supported the membership of the Croatian Fraternal Union of America, led by the legendary Bernard M. Luketich, on both cultural and humanitarian levels.

(Continued on page 12)



# Zajedničar

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK...LORRAINE TURKALL

## Spring is in the Air

Typically, the third month of the year is considered a transitional period in the 12-month calendar since it is the time when many people throughout the country await and welcome the vernal equinox, the official start of spring. After frigid winter temperatures and difficult living and travel conditions for many, the first day of spring, March 20th on this year's calendar, is a welcome reprieve, giving people in many parts of the nation an uplifting physical and mental boost in their daily lives.

To further build our spirits, meteorologists are predicting that a large sector of the United States will experience potentially record warmth in the next week or two, somewhat of a "false spring" for many parts of the country. However, to quell our anticipation for this stretch of balmy weather, forecasters also predict the wonderful warm springtime weather spurt will be followed by a return of another winter blast for some of us. It's no surprise

that early springtime weather often fools us with a roller coaster pattern but hopefully consistent warmer temperatures will prevail following the forecasted brief return of Old Man Winter!

During these transitional days, we in the Croatian Fraternal Union are preparing for springtime events including tamburitza musical concerts, lodge meetings, and indoor as well as outdoor sports activities, which will give many CFU members a chance to get together and enjoy fraternal gatherings. Preparations for the Easter holiday also involve many CFU members, as lodges and other affiliated groups are offering Easter bake sales, fish fries and other events which are keeping members busy and socially active.

We encourage all CFU members to emerge from their wintertime doldrums to reconnect with fellow lodge members and friends and to spread our fraternal involvement throughout their respective communities. There is an abundance

of need within our lodges for volunteers to help in a variety of ways. Sharing the workload with others not only gets jobs done, it serves to invigorate one's own sense of accomplishment and self-worth. Enjoying activities together also adds another dimension of boosting one's health and overall attitude, particularly when physical fitness and sports are part of the activity. There are many benefits to engaging in fraternal and volunteer programs, so make it a personal challenge to become involved for the welfare of others as well as for your own well-being.

Let the last blast of winter get out of the way quickly and let's be optimistic about the days ahead. To quote the famous poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" Something tells me, we already have a feeling of spring in our step!

## Mukwonago Lodge Plans March Meeting

**MUKWONAGO, WI** - John Movrich CFU Lodge 993 will hold the next meeting and St. Patrick Reuben Dinner on Saturday, March 14th, at 5:30 p.m., at the Wendlandt home. We will have the big grill going and everyone can make their own Reuben sandwich just as they like it.

The lodge will provide all the ingredients, plus chips. Since it is PI Day (3/14) bring a pie of your choice (homemade or store bought) for dessert.

We had a great February soup-tacular meeting with nine soups to warm us up on a cold and blustery winter evening. At the meeting we discussed volunteering for the Waukesha County "Adopt a Highway" program. There are two roads that meet at "Movrich Corners" (LO & I) and we just have to decide which one we will do. Still waiting on information from the county. It would be a fun project for us and will also get our name out on the highway sign.

Our Activities Director, Destiny Froehlich, discussed a few fun things for us to do, which she will look into, including: indoor mini-golf and hatchet throwing. Please remember to write the date of our 66th Annual Mukwonago Croatian Day Fest on your calendars. It will be on July 11th.

**Carol Movrich Gedde**  
 Secretary/Lodge 993

## Croatian Minister of the Economy Ante Šušnjar Visits Pittsburgh



By Edward W. Pazo/National President

During the last week of February, our CFU Executive Officers were pleased to host a visit by Mr. Ante Šušnjar, Minister of the Economy, Republic of Croatia, while Minister Šušnjar was in the US for meetings in Washington DC and Pittsburgh regarding Energy needs of Croatia and Western Europe.

We followed Minister Šušnjar's very busy schedule via social media and were amazed at the number of important meetings he participated in with US Cabinet Secretaries Doug Burgum (Interior) and Christopher Wright (Energy) as well as State Department officials while in Washington D.C. We were notified by Croatian Ambassador to the United States H.E. Pjer Šimunović of Minister Šušnjar's intended visit to Pittsburgh for an energy conference and additional meetings concerning meeting Croatia's future energy needs and were very pleased to learn of his interest in visiting our CFU Home Office facility.

CFU members should know that our home office comprises three floors of museum quality pieces which feature: Croatian Folklore costumes and musical instruments; naïve art by masters Lacković, Generalić, Cugovčan, Fišter and Veža watercolors; an extensive library of Croatian manuscripts and books, some dating back over 150 years; and, sculptures by the world renowned Ivan Meštrović just to name a short list of the items found within the "**Bernard M. Luketich Croatian Cultural Museum**". Our Executive Board takes great pride in the preservation and presentation of these rare and beautiful artifacts. Accordingly, a tour of our office and museum is always one of the agenda items for visitors from Croatia.



**LEADING GUESTS ON A TOUR OF THE CFU HOME OFFICE,** National President Edward Pazo included viewing the statue of President Emeritus Bernard M. Luketich. At left, Croatian Minister of Economy Ante Šušnjar and, at right, Croatian Ambassador to the United States H.E. Pjer Šimunović

After welcoming Minister Šušnjar and his delegation to our office, my colleagues Sister Luketich-Sikaras and Brother Franjo Bertović and I, along with management officials Ivan Begg and Derek Hohn, accompanied the delegation throughout our museum space and provided insight where possible to the history behind each piece on display. The minister remarked upon the magnitude of the material on display, the uniqueness and the beauty. He expressed his appreciation for those within our society who had the vision and ability to acquire and preserve this part of Croatian History and Culture.

During the visit we had an opportunity to discuss some of the important highlights of his trip including discussions on LNG terminals on the Croatian Coast with the associated pipelines to areas inland and interconnected to neighboring Western European countries. This also included the meeting he held just prior to our office visit with a nuclear power generation company concerning Croatia's future energy generation and security. At the conclusion of the tour of our office, we proceeded to St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church in Millvale, Pennsylvania, where our colleague CFU Second Vice President Brother Michael Ricci was on hand to provide a tour of the Church interior and the famous and highly acclaimed murals by Maxo Vanka. Once again, the Minister and his delegation were appreciative of the cultural preservation efforts of Croatians here in Pittsburgh and the diaspora. (Continued on page 11)

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# There's Much To Do With 32

**CHICAGO, IL - Friday, March 13:** It's Friday the 13th, again! Some look at it as being unlucky, but we look at it as being a Lucky Two-Fold Day. First, is the Joliet Croatian Cultural Club's award-winning Fish Fry which is being served every Friday through April from 4 p.m.-7 p.m. Second, is the entertainment by the fabulous "Sinovi of Chicago" following that Fish Fry! Prices for the Fish Fry and at the bar are extremely reasonable. Come and judge for yourself. You won't be disappointed!

**Tuesday, March 17:** St. Patrick's Day! St. Patrick's Day celebrations have been embraced with open arms by the non-Irish and it has become known as Dia de la Cerveza or "Beer Day".

**Thursday, March 19:** St. Joseph's Day! St. Joseph is the patron saint of Sicily, who is believed to have ended a severe drought in the Middle Ages through his intercession. In gratitude, Sicilians began the custom of wearing red on this day, similar to wearing green on St. Patrick's Day.

**Friday, March 20:** Welcome, Spring Equinox! Celebrated in many cultures, it is a time of joyous gatherings, feasting and outdoor activities to welcome

the warmer weather and longer days. Alleluia!

**Saturday, March 21:** Our Prijatelji in Concert with The Tamburitzans of Pittsburgh as their guest performers. You won't want to miss this! Information elsewhere in this "Z".

**Sunday, March 22:** The Tamburitzans present "The Shared Song" uniting cultures through Music and Dance at Munster High School, 8808 Columbia Ave., Munster, IN at 2 p.m. For tickets, call 412.224.2077. You won't want to miss this exciting performance of talented young people displaying their love of music and dance! The best part are two local college students that will be performing, Sarah Pruzin from Munster and Roman Vucinic from the Chicagoland area, both following in the footsteps of their fathers.

**Sunday, March 29:** It's Palm Sunday. The Sunday before Easter is when the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is celebrated in many Christian churches by processions in which palm fronds are carried.

**Wednesday, April 1:** AKA - April Fool's Day! The story goes back to the 1500s in France when the Julian calendar (established

by Julius Caesar) was replaced with the Gregorian calendar (introduced by Pope Gregory XIII). In the old Julian calendar, the new year began on April 1st, but with the new Gregorian calendar, the new year was set to begin on January 1st. Since news did not travel very fast in those days, not everyone got the word that the start of the New Year changed to January 1st; they kept celebrating it on April 1st, and were widely mocked as April Fools.

**Sunday, April 5:** It's Easter Sunday - or Resurrection Sunday! It's the most significant Christian holy day, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead three days after his crucifixion. Happy Easter everyone!

**Sunday, April 12:** It's Orthodox Easter! Christos Anesti!

This day is also Sloboda's General Meeting at the Linda Sokol Francis Brookfield Library, 3541 Park Ave., Brookfield, at 11 a.m., when the library doors open. Meeting at approximately 11:30 a.m. The facility is handicapped accessible with an elevator to take you down to the lower level. A continental breakfast of coffee and...will be served. We hope to see y'all there!

"May the sun bring you new energy by day, may the moon softly restore you by night, may the rain wash away your worries, may the breeze blow new strength into your being, and may you walk gently through the world and know its beauty all the days of your life." - Apache Blessing

Congratulations to Patrick Carroll of Sloga Lodge 1994 on his first endeavor as Sports Director to run the 68th Annual Frank M. Jerbich Memorial Midwest Bowling Classic. Patrick did a marvelous job in seeing to it that all the bowlers and guests were having FUN! The alleys were in good shape, the Saturday evening banquet was delicious and the camaraderie... irreplaceable! Thank you, Patrick! Our sincere condolences go out to the Tom Cafferty Family on the passing of Tom's mother, Phyllis. She was also the proud grandmother of our very talented Sloboda Jr. Tammies musical director Alyssa. God rest her soul! May she rest in peace.

An Important Request - With the lodge picnic quickly approaching, we are in need of someone or two, man or woman, to chair the kitchen. What does it take to hold down such an important position you ask? It's a matter of getting the kitchen workers and scheduling them. Our Past Chair says that she will work with you in this task. I know that she has kept excellent records and will share them with you, including contact information. It's important that this position be filled not only for the success of OUR picnic, but for the picnic in general. Please consider! It is not hard. In fact, you'll find it quite rewarding! Any questions? Call 773.586.3025. If no answer, please leave a message.

**Arlene Boudos/Lodge 32**

# SPOTLIGHT ON CFU PROGRAMS

A Message from the Executive Vice President **FRANJO BERTOVIĆ**

## AFFORDABLE FINANCIAL PROTECTION

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MALE NON-TOBACCO				MALE TOBACCO			
Issue Age	\$25,000-\$49,999	\$50,000-\$99,999	\$100,000-\$125,000	Issue Age	\$25,000-\$49,999	\$50,000-\$99,999	\$100,000-\$125,000
24	2.04	1.43	1.14	24	3.47	2.67	2.35
25	2.04	1.44	1.14	25	3.49	2.68	2.39
26	2.07	1.46	1.16	26	3.55	2.74	2.41
27	2.09	1.48	1.17	27	3.62	2.80	2.44
28	2.11	1.49	1.18	28	3.69	2.87	2.47
29	2.13	1.51	1.19	29	3.76	2.94	2.50
30	2.16	1.53	1.21	30	3.83	3.00	2.53
31	2.21	1.56	1.23	31	4.02	3.10	2.66
32	2.27	1.59	1.26	32	4.20	3.21	2.80
33	2.33	1.62	1.29	33	4.40	3.31	2.94
34	2.39	1.65	1.32	34	4.61	3.42	3.09
35	2.46	1.68	1.36	35	4.83	3.53	3.25
36	2.65	1.76	1.43	36	5.17	3.83	3.52
37	2.87	1.85	1.52	37	5.54	4.16	3.82
38	3.10	1.95	1.60	38	5.94	4.51	4.14
39	3.35	2.05	1.70	39	6.37	4.89	4.49
40	3.63	2.15	1.79	40	6.82	5.31	4.87
41	3.83	2.30	1.96	41	7.39	5.75	5.29
42	4.04	2.46	2.14	42	8.01	6.24	5.73
43	4.26	2.63	2.33	43	8.68	6.77	6.22
44	4.50	2.81	2.54	44	9.40	7.34	6.74
45	4.75	3.01	2.77	45	10.18	7.96	7.31
46	5.04	3.30	3.04	46	10.96	8.79	8.13
47	5.36	3.62	3.32	47	11.79	9.70	9.03
48	5.69	3.97	3.63	48	12.69	10.71	10.03
49	6.05	4.36	3.97	49	13.66	11.83	11.14
50	6.43	4.78	4.35	50	14.69	13.06	12.37

If you have any further question(s) on the 20 Year Level Term or any other products CFU offers, call us at 412.843.0380 or visit our website at [www.cfu.org](http://www.cfu.org)



NEWLY-ELECTED OFFICERS OF LODGE 995 FOR 2026

## Lodge 995 Sets March Meeting

**CLEVELAND OH - CFU** Lodge 995 announces that its March meeting will be held on Saturday, March 21st, at 2 p.m., in the library of American Croatian Lodge, 34900 Lakeshore Blvd., Eastlake OH 44095.

We are looking forward see-

ing you there. Coffee and donuts will be served.

Board elections were held at the January 10th meeting. Board members elected to serve are: Bob Jerin, Ivica Sako, Katie Schnel, Carol Strickovic and Mary Laush.

**Mary Laush/Secretary**

## St. Lawrence Lodge Ready For 2026

**STEELTON, PA - CFU** Lodge 13 has an exciting 2026 in store! Mark your calendars for the following events and keep watching our Facebook page "St. Lawrence Club, CFU Lodge 13" for updates.

**April 19:** Sv. Lovro Junior Tamburitzans Purse and Cash Bingo.

**June-July:** Stop by the club to watch Croatia play in the FIFA World Cup!

**August 8:** St. Lawrence Day Celebration at the Lodge Home.

**September 20:** St. Lawrence Adult Tamburitzans ALL CASH bingo.

**October 17:** "The Tamburitzans" performance at Bishop McDevitt and reception to follow at Lodge Home. Come support "The Tamburitzans" and applaud our hometown Tamburitzan Natasha Milanovich. Hosted by St. Lawrence Adult Tamburitzans. Details to follow in future editions of the **Zajedničar**.

**December 5:** Breakfast with Santa and Lodge Christmas Party. Lodge Meetings will be held on the 3rd Thursday of every month beginning at 7 p.m. All active members are encouraged to attend the meetings.

**Tina Simpson/Lodge 13**

## Zajedničar Publication Dates

- - Publication dates are highlighted in black
- - All Material Deadline dates are circles
- - Office Closure

MARCH							APRIL							MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4				1	2					
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	30	31

Submissions may be mailed to "Zajedničar", 100 Delaney Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15235; faxed to 412-823-1594. If you are e-mailing material for publication, please direct them to [editor@cfu.org](mailto:editor@cfu.org). E-mailed articles should be sent in the body of your e-mail and not as an attachment. Only photographs should be sent as an attachment. All material must be received at least one week prior to the issue date. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated - Hvala! —Editors

# CFU Members: Earn 4.5% Now on Retirement Savings

Members and non-members alike are urged to consider the **Choice Two Savings Annuity program** presently offered by Croatian Fraternal Union of America. Annuity or IRA accounts issued through the Choice Two plan now through April 30, 2026 will earn a guaranteed rate of 4.5% for two years.

In testament to the stability of our society, we are pleased to state that this favorable rate of return has been offered for the past three years to the great advantage and benefit of our membership. In reviewing the options available in the general financial marketplace which includes banks, life insurance companies and fraternal benefit societies, CFU's present Annuity crediting rate of 4.5% is believed to be very favorable.

We urge individuals with idle cash in checking accounts or those who have experienced gains in their equity portfolio to consider a CFU Annuity or IRA account which will provide a fixed rate of return equal to 4.5% on their savings dollars. Also, for those members who have not already taken advantage of the Traditional or Roth IRA savings option for 2025 or 2026, we ask that consideration be given to fully funding your IRA now in order to lock-in this great rate of return. Additional information may be obtained by calling CFU Sales Coordinator, Sister Cathy Brnich, today, at 412-843-0380.

We urge our National Officers, Lodge Officers and interested members to review our CFU Annuity program and actively spread the word among relatives and friends that the CFU is the "Society that Cares" and continues to offer outstanding rates of return on its members' savings dollars.

# MINUTES EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2026

National President Pazo called the Meeting of the Executive Board to order at 10:00 a.m. with customary Fraternal Greetings.

In attendance were National President Edward W. Pazo, Executive Vice President Franjo Bertović and National Secretary/Treasurer Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras. Minutes of the Monday, December 15, 2025 meeting of the Executive Board were read and officially approved.

President Pazo opened the meeting with a review of the arrangements for the Annual CFU National SkiFEST which will be held the weekend of February 6-8 at the Holiday Valley Ski Resort located in Ellicottville, New York. All CFU Executive Board Members will be in attendance. President Pazo reported that Croatian Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Pjer Šimunović, will be attending as well as some embassy staff and the Consul General of Croatia in New York, Nikica Kopačević. Races will take place Saturday afternoon and music for the evening socials will be provided by Sedma Brzina Orkestar of Cleveland, OH.

President Pazo reported that CFU will be receiving credit from the audio/visual firm who provided this service at the last annual TamFEST at the Tropicana in Atlantic City due to the poor quality of the recordings.

President Pazo informed the Members that he has received the 2025 actuarial valuation report for the CFU Employee Pension Plan which notes that a voluntary contribution is planned for 2026.

President Pazo shared a new product proposal received from the actuaries for review. The Members will discuss it after further review.

President Pazo informed the Members that the agreement has been signed with the new bank vendor that will be handling future credit card transactions for the Society. This change ensures that we are in full compliance with all requirements and will improve the service to our members and administration of these payments.

Executive Vice President Franjo Bertović reported on his attendance at the 20th anniversary Sijelo of folk ensemble Kraljica Katarina which was held in Eastlake, Ohio on January 17, 2026. He presented a congratulatory certificate to the ensemble on behalf of the national administration of CFU.

Brother Bertović led a discussion of the year-end sales results for the Society. Brother Bertović then presented the following summary of new business activity for the month of December 2025:

<b>Insurance</b>	
• Year to Date New Members .....	245
• Year to Date Certificates .....	328
• New Insurance in Force.....	\$4,820,686.00
• Annual Premium.....	\$208,689.43

<b>Annuities</b>	
• Year to Date New Members .....	53
• Year to Date Certificates .....	244
• Face Value .....	\$14,360,043.65

Secretary/Treasurer Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras reported that the seven (7) trademarks for CFU must be renewed. The Members approved this action.

Sister Luketich-Sikaras then presented a new proposal for the scanning of

terminated member files from the current vendor. She noted that since the full scanning of active member files is almost complete, there should only be one more shipment of terminated files to be sent out to them.

Sister Luketich-Sikaras reported that the annual junior tamburitza group letter which includes hotel reservation information for the 2026 Junior Tamburitza Festival which will be held in Cleveland, Ohio has been completed and sent to the ensembles.

Secretary/Treasurer Luketich-Sikaras reported the following death claims settled during the period December 1-31, 2025:

United States	Amount	Number of Certificates	Number of Members
Colorado .....	\$ 2,000.00	1	1
Illinois .....	10,000.00	1	1
Indiana .....	15,465.00	1	1
Iowa .....	3,000.00	1	1
Michigan .....	5,525.00	2	2
Montana .....	3,953.00	2	2
Nebraska .....	1,000.00	2	1
New York .....	1,400.00	1	1
Ohio .....	23,093.00	5	4
Pennsylvania .....	83,436.94	24	19
Wisconsin .....	818.00	1	1
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$149,690.94</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>CANADA</b>			
Ontario .....	\$ 6,641.00	1	1
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$ 6,641.00</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>FOREIGN/PUAS</b>			
Foreign/PUAS .....	\$ 2,000.00	2	2
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$ 2,000.00</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$158,331.94</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>37</b>

Secretary/Treasurer Luketich-Sikaras then submitted the Statistical Report for the period December 1-31-2025 as follows:

	Number of Certificates	Amount	Number of Members
<b>Certificate:</b>			
Lapses/No Value.....	8	\$ 180,000.00	8
Cash Surrenders.....	46	166,498.08	41
Expired.....	24	599,000.00	24
Matureds (Pending) .....	10	13,913.06	10
Deaths (Pending).....	1	3,000.00	1
<b>Certificate:</b>			
New Sales .....	49	\$ 955,000.00	49
Increases .....	1	1,276.00	1
<b>Annuity:</b>			
New Sales .....	5	\$ 29,000.00	5
Increases .....	21	738,034.28	21

With no further business to come before this meeting of the Executive Board, President Pazo adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

**BERNADETTE M. LUKETICH-SIKARAS/National Secretary/Treasurer**

**ATTEST:**  
**EDWARD W. PAZO**  
**FRANJO BERTOVIĆ**

## 50 Year Members | Class of 2026

LODGE	NAME.....	LOCATION	LODGE	NAME.....	LOCATION
1	Cubelic, Charles R. ....	Pittsburgh, PA	60	McGehee, Christopher .....	Gallup, NM
1	Geis, Michael M. ....	Pittsburgh, PA	60	Menapace, Kevin R. ....	Gallup, NM
1	Koehler, Robert L. ....	Pittsburgh, PA	66	Briya, Lisa R. ....	Youngstown, OH
1	Ross, Crystal L. ....	Pittsburgh, PA	66	George, Michelle M. ....	Youngstown, OH
1	Shapira, Alberta .....	Pittsburgh, PA	66	Gleason, Phillip P., Jr. ....	Youngstown, OH
1	Srsic, Timothy .....	Pittsburgh, PA	66	Pontius, Jaime M. ....	Youngstown, OH
1	Waldo, Mary Jane .....	Pittsburgh, PA	66	Prosenjak, Lee A. ....	Youngstown, OH
3	Dandrea, Vincent M. ....	McKeesport, PA	66	Realty, Danielle M. ....	Youngstown, OH
3	Miscevich, Josephine .....	McKeesport, PA	66	Stachkunas, Nicole .....	Youngstown, OH
3	Pausic, Beth Ann .....	McKeesport, PA	66	Ugran, Rebecca L. ....	Youngstown, OH
3	Pausic, Theresa M. ....	McKeesport, PA	66	Vogrin, George John, Jr. ....	Youngstown, OH
3	Spanbauer, Gerald J. II .....	McKeesport, PA	66	Williams, Angela .....	Youngstown, OH
3	Zangrilli, Bethann M. ....	McKeesport, PA	66	Woodley, Eric E. ....	Youngstown, OH
4	Taylor, Randall J. ....	Etna, PA	72	Benlock, Michael F. ....	Uniontown, PA
5	Grasser, Paul R. ....	Johnstown, PA	72	McKean, Christine E. ....	Uniontown, PA
5	Horner, Jason P. ....	Johnstown, PA	72	Novak, Deanna .....	Uniontown, PA
5	Katranca, Glenn M. ....	Johnstown, PA	72	Pierce, Christopher S. ....	Uniontown, PA
6	Germanoski, Keith .....	Rankin, PA	72	Redman, Monda L. ....	Uniontown, PA
12	Jurjovec, Nick J. ....	Denver, CO	72	Schurko, Kyra .....	Uniontown, PA
12	Mahoney, Kris A. ....	Denver, CO	75	Hoffmann, Willard G. ....	Waukegan, IL
12	Olson, David F., Jr. ....	Denver, CO	75	Larsen, Mark W. ....	Waukegan, IL
12	Roy, Starlene R. ....	Denver, CO	75	Perpich, Michael F. ....	Waukegan, IL
13	Carney, Joan E. ....	Steelton, PA	75	Polich, David B.R. ....	Waukegan, IL
13	Lescanec, Robert Matthew .....	Steelton, PA	84	Estill, Amanda L. ....	Anaconda, MT
13	Moose, Jason A. ....	Steelton, PA	84	Etzwiler, Michael J. ....	Anaconda, MT
13	Muretic, MaryAnn .....	Steelton, PA	84	Hulverson, David J. ....	Anaconda, MT
13	Rados, Suzanne .....	Steelton, PA	84	Kolstad, Janet S. ....	Anaconda, MT
13	Raudensky, George A. ....	Steelton, PA	84	Marvin, Robert C. ....	Anaconda, MT
13	Scheib, Michelle .....	Steelton, PA	84	McKay, Thomas B. ....	Anaconda, MT
13	Sirmons, Amy Renee .....	Steelton, PA	84	Vetter, Ryan .....	Anaconda, MT
13	Squire, Jonathan O. ....	Steelton, PA	84	Vetter, Travis .....	Anaconda, MT
18	McMillin, Daniel G. ....	Joliet, IL	94	Faust, Joseph A. ....	Eveleth, MN
18	Ristau, Matthew T. ....	Joliet, IL	101	Kruzich, Nicholas F. ....	S. Omaha, NE
32	Dennis, Frances M. ....	Chicago, IL	121	Jason C. Andrew .....	Oakland, CA
32	Hairlich, Michael .....	Chicago, IL	126	Bartholomew, Scott W. ....	Farrell, PA
32	Jagust, Paul T. ....	Chicago, IL	126	Dzaja, Paul V. ....	Farrell, PA
32	Keseric, Laura E. ....	Chicago, IL	126	Karlovic, Blaise E. ....	Farrell, PA
32	Kostrzewa, Karen Denise .....	Chicago, IL	126	Kaszowski, David E. ....	Farrell, PA
32	Kozlowski, Norbert .....	Chicago, IL	126	Maupin, Christopher D. ....	Farrell, PA
32	Lane, Catherine .....	Chicago, IL	126	Pannelle, Christopher E. ....	Farrell, PA
32	Lane, John C. ....	Chicago, IL	126	Vranich, Charles J. ....	Farrell, PA
32	Modelski, Richard J. ....	Chicago, IL	130	Galovich, Stephen J. ....	Portland, OR
32	Momper, Kathleen M. ....	Chicago, IL	130	Quinn, Susan Marie .....	Portland, OR
32	Predovic, Branko .....	Chicago, IL	130	Weitzel, Michael R. ....	Portland, OR
32	Saric, Diane R. ....	Chicago, IL	136	Nahm, Adam C. ....	Lorain, OH
32	Sestan, Nikolas Derek .....	Chicago, IL	136	Zakrajsek, Gary G. ....	Lorain, OH
32	Tucek, John R., Jr. ....	Chicago, IL	141	Belavic, Jason R. ....	E. Pittsburgh, PA
32	Zapolsky, Christopher T. ....	Chicago, IL	141	Collodi, Michelle D. ....	E. Pittsburgh, PA
35	Baric, Lisa Ann .....	Kansas City, KS	141	Cravener, Darlene .....	E. Pittsburgh, PA
35	Reichart, Heather Ann .....	Kansas City, KS	141	Fulkerson, Kenneth P. ....	E. Pittsburgh, PA
35	St. Denis, Laura M. ....	Kansas City, KS	141	Horgas, Julie A. ....	E. Pittsburgh, PA
50	Jay, Jennifer C. ....	St. Louis, MO	141	Kravetz, George D. ....	E. Pittsburgh, PA
50	Wohlwend, Shirley R. ....	St. Louis, MO	141	Kravetz, Helen Lees .....	E. Pittsburgh, PA

LODGE	NAME.....	LOCATION
141	Stiles, Lori Ann .....	E. Pittsburgh, PA
141	Volturno, Jaime L. ....	E. Pittsburgh, PA
146	Barton, Randall K. ....	Versailles, PA
146	Fortney, Dvid K., Jr. ....	Versailles, PA
146	Furst, William R. ....	Versailles, PA
146	Glemba, Joseph G. ....	Versailles, PA
146	Greger, Mary J. ....	Versailles, PA
146	Luketich, Edward .....	Versailles, PA
146	Ranich, George N. ....	Versailles, PA
146	Streett, Melissa Walker .....	Versailles, PA
154	Miksich, Michelle D. ....	E. Chicago, IN
170	Ackerman, Clarence M. ....	Merrillville, IN
170	Ammon, Ryan L. ....	Merrillville, IN
170	Ashby, Kandi A. ....	Merrillville, IN
170	Johnson, Theresa J. ....	Merrillville, IN
170	Livovich, Susan C. ....	Merrillville, IN
170	Marinic, Zeljko .....	Merrillville, IN
170	Pries, Clyde L. ....	Merrillville, IN
170	Trtan, Katharine B. ....	Merrillville, IN
185	Rosenberry, Mandy .....	Campbell, OH
185	Triveri, Kimberly .....	Campbell, OH
194	Luketich, Courtney L. ....	Monessen, PA
194	Savarino, Joseph, Jr. ....	Monessen, PA
217	Anderson, Randall R. ....	Benld, IL
217	Katic, Cheryl Lynette .....	Benld, IL
217	Koniak, Leo A. ....	Benld, IL
217	Koniak, Steve M. ....	Benld, IL
217	Polovich, Dr. Glenn A. ....	Benld, IL
222	Gudac, Amanda C. ....	Madison, IL
222	Moran, Rosemarie .....	Madison, IL
222	Paskus, Thomas N. ....	Madison, IL
222	Serwatka, Stanley F. ....	Madison, IL
229	Churlin, Jeffrey M. ....	S. Chicago, IL
229	Jurich, Cheryl L. ....	S. Chicago, IL
229	Svetlin, Keith A. ....	S. Chicago, IL
235	Kucharski, Lisa M. ....	Cleveland, OH
235	O'Connor, Shawn P. ....	Cleveland, OH
235	Potocic, Barbara .....	Cleveland, OH
235	Spahich, Jozefa .....	Cleveland, OH
235	Strodtbeck, Eric .....	Cleveland, OH
235	Strodtbeck, Sharon .....	Cleveland, OH
238	Klink, Roberta J. ....	Gilbert, MN
238	Omersa, Rosanne .....	Gilbert, MN
238	Paolo, Nancy .....	Gilbert, MN
246	Karmy, Brian R. ....	Tacoma, WA
248	Barna, Susan June .....	Clairton, PA
248	Chernicky, David M. ....	Clairton, PA
248	DiBrog, Laurel A. ....	Clairton, PA
248	Dougherty, Karen N. ....	Clairton, PA
248	Fusco, Felix A. ....	Clairton, PA
248	Gobbie, Michael .....	Clairton, PA
248	Greenwald, Gary A. ....	Clairton, PA
248	Herndon, Lucille T. ....	Clairton, PA
248	Poskon, Diana .....	Clairton, PA
248	Verbanick, Anthony T. ....	Clairton, PA
248	Villafuerte, Linda .....	Clairton, PA
248	Vujevich, Justin .....	Clairton, PA
248	Yaksick, Andrea .....	Clairton, PA
268	Luvisotto, Carmella B.A. ....	Nanaimo, BC, Can

(Continued on page 11)



## Detroit Stars Celebrate Spring

**DETROIT, MI** - The Detroit Stars Parents group warmly invites the greater Detroit Croatian community, all Detroit Star alumni, and anyone who supports culture, to join us in celebrating the First Day of Spring with the Detroit Star Junior Tamburitza. The Stars will celebrate their Spring Concert on Saturday March 21, at our beautiful St. Lucy's Croatian Catholic Church Hall in Troy, MI.

The Spring season of new growth and renewal symbolizes a meaningful moment to witness the creative progress of our young Detroit Stars. This event will highlight the dedication and effort these performers have devoted over the past seven months, featuring songs, instrumental pieces and dances that celebrate Croatian heritage.

Since September, the children, between the ages of 6 and 14, have gathered each week to learn and get ready for this yearly event. The commitment that the kids have made to honor their heritage, amidst their busy and competing extra-curricular and athletic schedules, is something we cannot take for granted as a community. The preservation of culture by our youth is vital to the continuity of the Detroit Croatian community and your support will encourage the children to continue in their cultural perpetuation.

The group is presently guided in musical, vocal, dance, and artistic direction by Sonya Sestili, who has assisted the children in preparing an authentic and expressive repertoire for this year's concert.

The Stars are thrilled to welcome a special guest group from nearby Windsor, ON, Canada to add to the performance. Klapa Kartolina is an a cappella ensemble dedicated to promoting klapa singing—the traditional Dalmatian vocal heritage recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Founded in 2013 in Windsor, Ontario, at the Croatian Catholic Parish of St. Francis of Assisi, the group has performed throughout Canada, the United States, and Croatia, including three appearances at the prestigious Festival of Dalmatian Klapa in Omiš. The ensemble is led by Artistic Director and first soprano Prof. Višnja Tijardović, an opera singer and graduate of the Academy of Music in Zagreb and the University of Windsor.

The Detroit area is very fortunate to have such a talented and devoted group of Klapa artists right across the river in Canada, and their performance is sure to add an element of elegance to our event. Our audience in Detroit, who have a great appreciation for music, will undoubtedly enjoy their performance.

Following the program, the Stars parents have planned a very festive party to commence immediately! We will kick things off with a delicious home-cooked dinner prepared by the talented St. Lucy's Croatian catering crew, who always manage to create a meal not to be missed. The bar will be flowing with plenty of drinks for purchase.

For dinner, dancing and entertainment throughout the evening, we are blessed to have entertainment by Jasenko Ivanetić & Tamburaši. If you attended the Stars' Čevapi dinner last year, you would remember the beautiful sounds that kept dance floor filled. We plan to repeat that level of musicianship for our spring concert.

Doors will open at 5 p.m. for cocktail hour. The program will begin at 6 p.m., with dinner and dancing immediately following. Please note that there will be **NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR** for this event. Concert/Dinner Dance package tickets are available for advance purchase via check or Venmo as detailed below. Please contact Kelly Aluia at 586-703-5584 if you need help in reserving tickets or visit <https://tinyurl.com/bddfca73>.

Make it an evening of culture, fun and a delicious meal, and come out for a celebration of these talented and dedicated performers from both Detroit and Windsor! Without our youth, we have no future!

- Doors Open/Cocktail Hour: 5 pm
- Concert Begins: 6 pm
- Dinner & Music for Dancing: Immediately following concert.
- Pricing: Concert/Dinner-Dance Admission -\$45, Adults; \$10, Kids 6-12; Children 5 and Under, FREE.

Payment Options: Venmo: @Lauren-Osantowski (Last 4 digits 8034) or Check, payable to "CFU Lodge 351 Parents Club" and mailed to Lauren Osantowski, 2469 Weathervane, West Bloomfield, MI 48324.

Sonya Sestili/Lodge 351

## Hoosier Hrvati To Host Spring Concert in April

**MERRILLVILLE, IN** - We are pleased to announce that the Hoosier Hrvati Tamburitza Orchestra will present their Spring Concert on Saturday, April 25, at the CFU Lodge 170 Croatian Home, 8550 Taft St., Merrillville, IN 46410.

Doors open at 3 p.m. and the concert begins at 4 p.m. A dinner and dance will follow the concert.

In addition to our Hoosier Hrvati ensemble, the event will feature three outstanding special guests: Detroit Tamburitza Orchestra (DTO), Hrvatski Običaj Tamburaši of Kansas City and Prijatelji Orchestra of Chicago.

Tickets are available at \$50 plus applicable fees. For tickets, go to Tix.com (click on "Buy Tickets" and enter Hoosier Hrvati).

For more information, please call 219-649-1722 or email [Hoosierhrvati@gmail.com](mailto:Hoosierhrvati@gmail.com).

Sally Kegley/Lodge 170

## Prijatelji Orchestra's 31st Annual Concert

**CHICAGO, IL** - Get ready for an unforgettable event! The Prijatelji Orchestra of Chicago is thrilled to host its 31st annual concert on Saturday, March 21, and we can't wait to share this experience with you. Tickets are available now: <https://PRIJATELJI.ticketspice.com/2026concert>

This year, doors open at 3 p.m., and the concert begins promptly at 4 p.m. We're excited to welcome you again to our venue, the beautiful Lithuanian World Center at 14911 127th St., Lemont, IL 60439. After the concert, enjoy a delicious buffet-style dinner catered by the outstanding Grand Dukes Eastern European Restaurant of Downers Grove.

And that's just the beginning. We are absolutely delighted to announce that The Tamburitza (formerly "The Duquesne University Tamburitza") will once again join us as our special guests! Their presence means so much to our group. One of

Prijatelji's members, Roman Vucinic, is now part of the Tamburitza! We are extremely proud of his decision to develop as an artist and person with this organization. His father and uncle, Bob and Phil Vucinic, are alumni, as are our current director, Joe Gornick, and his wife Diane. And another Prijatelji performer, John Pruzin, also has a daughter currently performing with the ensemble—making this appearance even more meaningful.

The Tamburitza are also close to our heart because our beloved former director, John Gornick, was their biggest fan and championed the Tamburitza mission to share tamburitza music across the country.

The Tamburitza will present a captivating, abbreviated performance from their full show. If you'd like to experience the complete production, they'll be performing the next day—Sunday, March 22, at Munster High at 2 p.m. Learn more or purchase tickets at: [www.thetamburitza.org](http://www.thetamburitza.org).

## Croatian Festival Set for June 6 in Youngstown

**YOUNGSTOWN, OH** - Fellow Croatians and friends of Croatia, Join us for an unforgettable day at the Strossmayer Croatian Festival on June 6th, at Strossmayer's Croatian Picnic Grounds, 4202 Smith Stewart Rd., Vienna, OH 44438. Come celebrate our rich Croatian heritage while helping us continue revitalizing this historic gathering place for future generations.

Doors open at 12 PM. Cash-only event: \$8 admission, children 12 and under, free.

Enjoy authentic Croatian favorites like čevapi, sarma, and štrudel, Croatian beer and refreshments, traditional folkdance performances, and live music by Noćne Sove of Youngstown, OH. Come kolo and dance the day away!

Roasted lamb and pork will be available by pre-order only beginning May 1st, 2026.

### Our Mission

Strossmayer's is a 100% volunteer-run 501(c)(3) nonprofit. All festival proceeds support ongoing renovations of the grounds. Thanks to your generosity, we've completed much-needed roof repairs and kitchen updates in the past two years—and we have more improvements planned!

### Become a Donor or Sponsor

We warmly invite individuals, families and businesses to support this event as donors or sponsors. Your contribution directly supports the restoration of the grounds and helps preserve our Croatian traditions. Sponsorship recognition opportunities are available.

### Volunteers Welcome

Volunteers receive free admission and play an important role in making the day a success. To volunteer, donate, sponsor or learn more, please contact us on Facebook or call/text 330-507-6660.

Mark your calendars and celebrate Croatian culture with us on June 6th!

Marina Juratovic Saunders  
Lodge 66

## Gypsy Fantasy 3 in Cleveland

**PITTSBURGH, PA** - The Gypsy Stringz of Pittsburgh, in conjunction with the Harmonia ensemble of Cleveland and popular cymbalom player Alex Udvary of Chicago, are excited to announce their upcoming concert and dance, "Gypsy Fantasy 3", to be held on Saturday May 2nd, starting at 7:30 p.m., at the Slovenian National Home, located at 6417 St. Clair Ave., Cleveland OH 44103.

Tickets are \$35 for the concert and dance (\$30 advance purchase) and can be purchased by calling 216-288-8727 or online at [harmoniaensemble.com/events](http://harmoniaensemble.com/events).

The first two "Gypsy Fantasy" concerts were very successful events held in Pittsburgh, so this first-time event in Cleveland should be an epic experience to be cherished and remembered by all in attendance.

Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

Duwayne Dorich/Lodge 146

## Ansambl Sveti Nikola Seeks New Members

**ALIQUIPPA, PA** - Ansambl Sveti Nikola of Aliquippa, PA, is recruiting members for our orchestra and chorus, in order to sustain our group. We are in particular need of a bass and bugarija player. We have our own bass to use. We are also in need of brač players, but we will accept ALL tambura players and/or singers. We would like these members, as soon as possible but no later than April 1, 2026.

We practice at 7 p.m. on Thursdays at the Croatian Center in Aliquippa, PA, but we are willing to reduce to biweekly practices if it will afford new membership. If you are interested in joining our group please contact Jean Gillespie-Bedekovich at 412-908-1428. Talk, Text or Message. Thank you!

Jean Gillespie-Bedekovich  
Treasurer

## Radost Returns To Twin Oaks

**WHITE OAK, PA** - The Radost Orchestra returns to Twin Oaks Lounge on Saturday, March 28 starting at 3 p.m.

Twin Oaks Lounge is located in the Rainbow Village Shopping Center at the intersection of Route 48 and Lincoln Way in White Oak, PA.

At Twin Oaks there is always free parking and free admission.

Twin Oaks has a great menu that includes delicious dinners, sandwiches, and your favorite refreshments.

Stop by and treat yourself to a relaxing afternoon; you will be glad you did! Dobro došli!

Dave Vranesevic/Lodge 146

After dinner, the celebration continues with the always fantastic SINOVI Orchestra of Chicago. Their energy, talent, and crowd pleasing repertoire guarantee a dance floor that stays full all night. We're grateful to have them as a cherished part of our Croatian community.

Ticket Information (cash bar will be available): Adults-\$75; Kids-ages 6-16: \$20; Kids-ages 5 & under: Free (seat reservation still required).

When ordering online, you'll be able to choose your own seats and table. If you need help with your order, call Chris Gornick, 630-962-9906. Please note: No tickets will be sold at the door, so be sure to get yours early.

Join us for a joyful evening filled with music, dancing, community, and tradition. We can't wait to welcome our longtime supporters—and we encourage you to bring friends who may be discovering the beauty of tamburitza music and kolo dancing for the first time.

Let's make this event one to remember!

Chris Gornick/Lodge 32

## Radost to Play New Brighton Croatian Club

**NEW BRIGHTON, PA** - Radost will be performing at the New Brighton United Croatian Club, 820 Third Ave., New Brighton, PA, on Sunday, March 22, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., for your listening and dancing pleasure.

All are welcome! Admission is free.

Alyssa Michael/Lodge 720

## Od Srca Announces First Educational Open House

**YOUNGSTOWN, OH** - The Od Srca Adult Tamburitza will host a free Educational Open House on tamburitza music on Sunday, March 22, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Attendees will experience demonstrations of various music styles from different regions of Croatia, be able to touch the instruments, and learn a few songs with both Croatian and English lyrics. To prepare for the upcoming festival season, an introductory kolo dance lesson will conclude this afternoon event.

The open house will be at CFU Lodge 66 located at 3200 Vestal Road in Youngstown 44509. There is free and abundant parking on site. The Croatian Kitchen will be open, serving the club's special schnitzel sandwiches and čevapi plates with Slavic sides. To assist with food planning, please place food orders in advance to Tim at 330-519-9036 by March 18.

This event is open to the public.

John Slanina/Lodge 66

## Save the Date: Croatian Heritage Night at PNC Park - May 30

**PITTSBURGH, PA** - Mark your calendars for one of the most anticipated community events of the year—Croatian Heritage Night at PNC Park on Saturday, May 30, when the Pittsburgh Pirates take on the Minnesota Twins.

This year's celebration promises to be bigger and better than ever. We are excited to once again have the opportunity to **sing the National Anthem**, making this a truly special night of pride and tradition for our Croatian community.

Fans who purchase tickets through our **official Croatian Heritage Night booking link** will receive an **incredible exclusive giveaway**—and this year, it's not a hat.

In addition, several new **in-game features and special activities** are planned, including first-time experiences that will make this year's event truly unique.

While the official booking link has not yet been released by the Pirates, it will be shared as soon as it becomes available. The link will be published in the **Zajedničar**, as well as on our **social media platforms and website**.

For now, we encourage everyone to save the date and plan to join us for a night of baseball, culture and Croatian pride at one of Pittsburgh's premier venues.

We look forward to seeing everyone at PNC Park on May 30!  
**Derek Hohn**  
Fraternal Programs Director

## The Zajedničar Goes Digital

Find every issue online at [cfu.org](http://cfu.org) and stay up to date with CFU news and events.

## The Tamburitzans Back in Munster

**MUNSTER, IN** - The Pittsburgh Tamburitzans will be performing on Sunday, March 22, at 2 P.M., at Munster High School's Auditorium. Lodge 170's very own, Sarah Pruzin, is back for her third year. Sarah grew up playing with the Hoosier Strings Junior Group and now performs with Hoosier Hrvati Adult Orchestra.

We are extremely proud of our hometown girl and encourage our Northwest Indiana Family and Friends alike, to attend this phenomenal performance. Let's cheer Sarah on as we welcome this renowned ensemble for a memorable afternoon.

Please join us afterwards for a "Meet and Greet" Reception with The Tamburitzans to



follow in the Munster High School Cafeteria.

As in the past, there will be live music and great food. We will have our famous strudels and nut rolls for sale as well.

Online tickets now available at [TheTamburitzans.org](http://TheTamburitzans.org).

Any questions, please call John Pruzin at 219-616-2828.

**John Pruzin/Lodge 170**

## Tamburitzans Return to Ellwood City

**ELLWOOD CITY, PA** - "The Tamburitzans" (formerly the Duquesne University Tamburitzans) will perform their new production, **THE SHARED SONG**, on Sunday April 19 at the Lincoln Jr./Sr. High School, 501 Crescent Ave., Ellwood City, PA, at 3 p.m.

The concert is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ellwood City Scholarship Fund. Tickets may be purchased online at [ellwoodtams.eventbrite.com](http://ellwoodtams.eventbrite.com) for \$30 Adult Advanced Reserved, while tickets at the door on the day of the performance will be \$35. Student tickets are \$20. Additionally, face to face ticket sales will be held at the Ellwood City Library, 415 Lawrence Avenue, on Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

In their 89th season, the Tamburitzans will weave a tapestry of music, songs and dances of Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine. Audiences will be transported to folk celebrations in a ninety-minute production through intricate choreography, mesmerizing music and unique voices. Each year, this group of college students, creates a unique, and memorable, concert experience.



**THE TAMBURITZANS** are returning to Ellwood City again!

**Peter Kucan/Lodge 541**

## An Evening with Tajči

**PHOENIX, AZ** - Join us for an unforgettable evening celebrating Croatian culture, community and world-class music. We are honored to welcome legendary pop icon Tajči whose 1990 Eurovision performance remains a cultural milestone.

Tajči will appear in concert on Saturday, April 18, at the Pulaski Club, 4331 E. McDowell Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85008. Doors open at 6 p.m.

This event is more than a concert—it's a space for networking and social connection. Guests will enjoy a mix of traditional and contemporary sounds, a cash bar and the opportunity to purchase Ticketing: Early bird/advance, \$60; Day of event, \$75. Note: Food tickets must be purchased separately.

For more information, contact ACAP SW Chapter at [southwest@croampro.com](mailto:southwest@croampro.com).

**Sonja Schroder/Lodge 978**



## 32nd Velika Fešta Tamburaša Set for March 28 in Cokeburg

**COKEBURG, PA** - St. George Adult Tamburitza Ensemble of CFU Lodge 354 will hold its 32nd Annual Velika Fešta Tamburaša on Saturday, March 28, at the Cokeburg Croatian Home.

This event is one of the major celebrations held in our spacious and beautiful Croatian Home which has the capacity to accommodate large crowds. It is a very large and modern facility where we hold all of our lodge and tammie affairs.

The 32nd annual Fešta Tamburaša will feature an interesting line-up of 11 talented Adult Tamburitza Ensembles. The ensembles will present their programs in the upper and lower halls of the Croatian Home. You will not want to miss the performances of the outstanding tamburitza ensembles. The schedule of performances may be found elsewhere in this edition of the **Zajedničar**.

Each ensemble will present a one-half hour program in the upper hall then will move to the club social room to present another one-half hour program.

The musical sensation will kick off at 1 p.m. with the host St. George Adult Tamburitzans starting the entertainment in the upper hall, followed by the guest ensembles playing throughout the afternoon and evening.

When the last ensemble



completes its portion of the program, the festivities move to the lower floor where we dance and sing the rest of the night away. Musical entertainment will be provided by "Zlatni List" of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. This is the first time these young, talented musicians will be appearing in the Pittsburgh area and we are looking forward to welcoming them to our St. George Croatian Home. We invite all to join in singing along and enjoy the music, making for a wonderful conclusion to the day's festivities.

Throughout the day there will be an ample supply of delicious food available in our kitchen and the bar will be well-stocked with everyone's favorite refreshments.

We will also feature our popular bake sale with rolls, strudels and other home-baked goodies for your enjoyment. Since this year's Fešta is one week before Easter, we will be accepting pre-orders for the traditional rolls (nut, apricot & poppyseed). If you are interested in placing an order,

**ZLATNI LIST:** Erik Horvat, Matteo Vlašić, Karlo Zdelar and Davor Vlašić

please call 724-344-5188 or 724-344-7518 no later than March 18.

On behalf of the St. George Adult Tamburitza Ensemble, I invite all of our CFU members and friends to join us in Cokeburg on Saturday, March 28 for the 32nd annual Velika Fešta Tamburaša at the Cokeburg Croatian Home.

For out-of-town guests attending this year's Festa, hotel accommodations are available in Bentleyville at Holiday Inn Express located at the Bentleyville Exit of Interstate Route 70. Reservations can be made by calling 724-239-7700. Mention you are part of the St. George Lodge 354, Cokeburg, PA group to receive our special rate.

Don't miss an entire day of festive tamburitza music and the chance to socialize with some of the finest tamburaši in the Croatian Fraternal Union.

**Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras**  
President

## 32nd Annual Velika Fešta

**March 28, 2026** The following ensembles will appear in the upstairs hall and the club social room. All times are in P.M.

### UPSTAIRS:

- 1:00 - 1:30 - St. George Adult Tamburitzans  
Cokeburg, PA
- 1:30 - 2:00 - Veseljaci Adult Tamburitzans  
Farrell, PA
- 2:00 - 2:30 - Sevdah  
Conway, PA
- 2:30 - 3:00 - Penn-Sembles Tamburitzans  
Versailles, PA
- 3:00 - 3:30 - St. Lawrence Adult Tamburitzans  
Steelton, PA
- 3:30 - 4:00 - Sacred Heart Tamburitza Ensemble  
McKeesport, PA
- 4:00 - 4:30 - Žumberčani  
Cleveland, OH
- 4:30 - 5:00 - Veseli Hrvati  
Pittsburgh, PA
- 5:00 - 5:30 - Javor Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, PA
- 5:30 - 6:00 - Živa Grana Hrvatske  
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- 6:00 - 6:30 - Folklore Ensemble Ljeljo  
Pittsburgh, PA
- 6:30 - 7:00 - T.S. Zlatni List  
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

### DOWNSTAIRS:

- 2:00 - 2:30 - Veseljaci Adult Tamburitzans  
Farrell, PA
- 2:30 - 3:00 - Sevdah  
Conway, PA
- 3:00 - 3:30 - Penn-Sembles Tamburitzans  
Versailles, PA
- 3:30 - 4:00 - St. Lawrence Adult Tamburitzans  
Steelton, PA
- 4:00 - 4:30 - Sacred Heart Tamburitza Ensemble  
McKeesport, PA
- 4:30 - 5:00 - Žumberčani  
Cleveland, OH
- 5:00 - 5:30 - Veseli Hrvati  
Welland, Ontario, Canada
- 5:30 - 6:00 - Javor Pittsburgh  
Steelton, PA
- 6:00 - 6:30 - Živa Grana Hrvatske  
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- 6:30 - 7:00 - Folklore Ensemble Ljeljo  
Pittsburgh, PA

**7:30 - ??? - FINALE/DANCE** - Club Social Room "T.S. Zlatni List" of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada will entertain for your dancing and listening pleasure.



# Zajedničar

## FRATERNALIST



GLASILO HRVATSKE BRATSKE ZAJEDNICE U AMERICI / SVI ZA JEDNOG — JEDAN ZA SVE

GODINA 121.

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA / SRIJEDA 11. OŽUJKA 2026.

SEDMA STRANA

# HBZ odaje poštovanje Zlatničarima iz 1976.

## 337 članova navršava 50-godišnji status u 2026.

Piše: Edward W. Pazo/Nacionalni predsjednik

PITTSBURGH, PA – Sa zadovoljstvom objavljujemo imena svih članova Hrvatske bratske zajednice koji su u 2026. godini postigli značajnu prekretnicu od pedeset uzastopnih godina članstva. U skladu s odlukom koju su donijeli delegati Nacionalne konvencije HBZ-a 2023. godine, popis se temelji na ukupnim brojevima članstva, uključujući godine u gnijezdu, kao i odraslog članstva.

Stoga nam je velika čast odati zasluženno priznanje 337 članova naše Zajednice koji su utvrđeni kroz našu evidenciju kao oni koji su ove godine postigli 50-godišnji status članstva. U ime Nacionalne uprave Hrvatske bratske zajednice, s velikim ponosom pozdravljamo ove predane članove naše Zajednice. Čestitke upućujemo članovima "Generacije 1976.!"

Pregledom popisa 337 članova starijih od pedeset godina koji će biti priznati 2026. godine, sa zadovoljstvom pozdravljamo 180 muškaraca i 157 žena u Zlatnom članskom krugu HBZ koji su postigli 50 godina kontinuiranog članstva u našoj Zajednici.

Zahvaljujemo im što su ostali vjerni Hrvatskoj bratskoj zajednici proteklih 50 godina i dodatno priznajemo da je njihovo vjerno članstvo doprinijelo našoj dugovječnosti kao uspješnog bratstva s povlasticama. Pregled izvješća o Zlatnim članovima Zajednice za 2026. godinu otkriva da postoji 20 odsjeka koji uživaju u časti što imaju najveći broj pedesetogodišnjih članova među svojim članovima za tekuću godinu, svaki s šest ili više pedesetogodišnjih članova u svojim redovima.

Za godinu 2026. postoje dva odsjeka koji drže priznanje za najveći ukupan broj članova od 50 godina, s ukupno 15 zlatnih članova, društvo „Hrvatska Sloboda“ odsjek 32 iz Chicagoa, IL i društvo „Sloga Milwaukee CFU 1994“ iz Milwaukeeja, WI.

Zatim, s veseljem prepoznajemo društvo „St. George“ odsjek 248 iz Clairtona, PA s ukupno 13 članova od pedeset godina za godinu 2026.

Sljedeći, svaki s 11 zlatnih članova u svojim redovima su: društvo „St. George“ odsjek 66 iz Youngstowna, OH; društvo „St. George“ odsjek 354 iz Cokesburga, PA; i društvo „Franklin D. Roosevelt“ odsjek 567 iz Canonsburga, PA.

Tri odsjeka, svaki s devet članova od 50 godina su: društvo „St. Lawrence“ odsjek 13 iz Steeltona, PA; društvo „Hrvatska Vila“ odsjek 141 iz East Pittsburgha, PA; i društvo „Sv. Vid“ odsjek 541 iz Trafforda, PA.

Sljedećih pet odsjeka može se pohvaliti s osam zlatnih članova za tu godinu. One su: društvo „Sv. Petar i Pavao“ odsjek 84, Anaconda, MT; društvo „Sv. Trojstvo“ odsjek 146, Ver-

sailles, PA; društvo „Hrvatski sinovi“ odsjek 170, Merrillville, IN; društvo „Zora“ odsjek 351, Detroit, MI; i društvo „Alcro“ odsjek 720, Aliquippa, PA.

Sa sedam članova koji imaju 50 godina članstva u 2026. godini mogu se pohvaliti: društvo „Svi Sveti“ odsjek 1, NS Pittsburgh, PA; društvo „Slavno Ime Isusovo“ odsjek 126, Farrell, PA; i društvo „Radnička Sloga“ odsjek 602, Verona, PA.

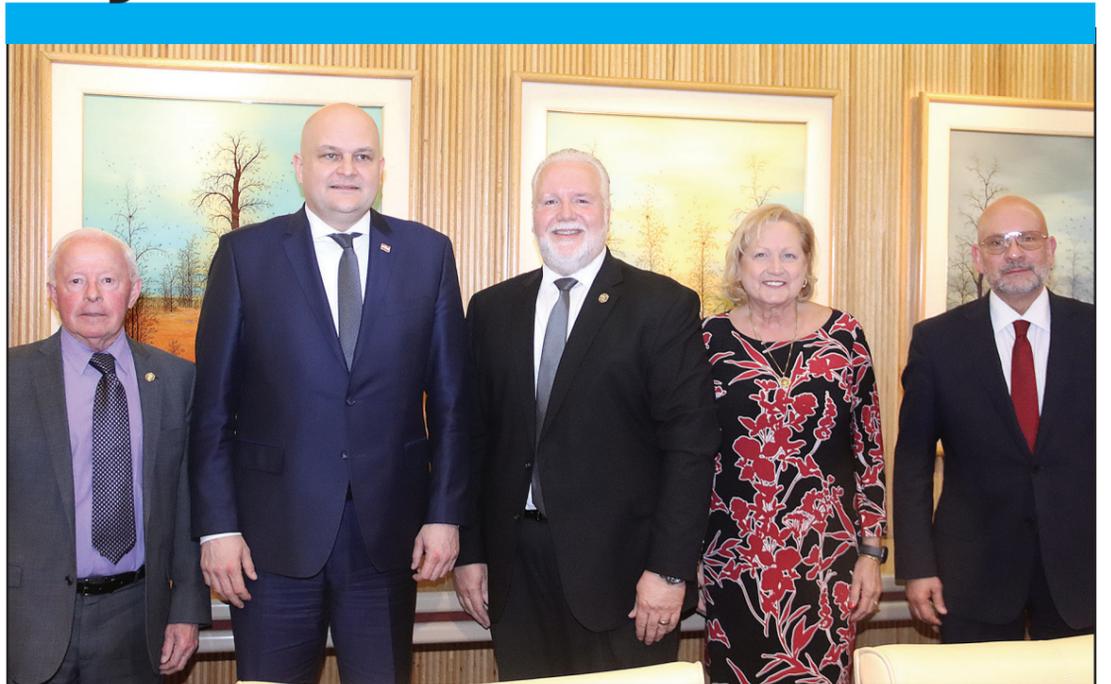
Tri odsjeka imaju po šest zlatnih članova u 2026. godini. One su: društvo „Presveto Srce Isusovo“ odsjek 3, McKeesport, PA; društvo „Sv. Petar i Pavao“ odsjek 72, Uniontown, PA; i društvo „Hrvatska Sloboda“ odsjek 235, Cleveland, Ohio.

Svi preostali odsjeci u ovogodišnjem Izvješću o Zlatničarima imaju ukupno pet ili manje članova s 50 godina članstva za 2026. godinu.

U znak priznanja 337 fraternalista navedenih u Popisu s pedeset godina članstva za 2026. godinu, koristimo ovu priliku da odamo počast njihovim pojedinačnim i zajedničkim doprinosima našem zajedničarstvu. Ovime izražavamo zaslužen priznanje svim članovima koji su postigli ovu važnu prekretnicu unutar redova naše Zajednice i potičemo sve odsjeke da odvoje vrijeme kako bi priznali fraternalnu predanost svojih članova s 50 godina članovanja.

Nacionalna tajnica/blagajnica Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras uskoro će poslati obavijest svima koji su navedeni na Časnoj listi pedesetogodišnjih članova za 2026. godinu. Ako ne vidite svoje ime na ovom popisu, a vjerujete da biste trebali biti uključeni na toj listi, molimo da svoj upit uputite nacionalnoj tajnici/blagajnici sestri Luketich-Sikaras u glavnom uredu Zajednice, tražeći od nje da provjeri vaš status članstva.

Ispričavamo se unaprijed za  
(Nastavak na 10. strani)



MINISTAR GOSPODARSTVA RH Ante Šušnjar boravio je nedavno u službenom posjetu Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama, tijekom kojeg je u Washingtonu i Pittsburghu sudjelovati na dva međunarodna skupa posvećena energetske sigurnosti i suradnji između Europe i SAD-a.

Tijekom boravka u Pittsburghu razgledao je glavni ured HBZ-a gdje se susreo s izvršnim odbornicima Hrvatske bratske zajednice. S lijeva su: Izvršni potpredsjednik Franjo Bertović, Ministar Ante Šušnjar, Nacionalni predsjednik Edward W. Pazo, Nacionalna tajnica/blagajnica Bernadette Luketich-Sikaras i Veleposlanik RH u Washingtonu Pjer Šimunović.

75  
GODINA HRVATSKE MATICE ISELJENIKA



HRVATSKA MATICA ISELJENIKA  
CROATIAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION  
Trg Stjepana Radića 3 pp. 241  
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e-mail: hmi@matice.hr  
www.matice.hr

Zagreb, 17. veljače 2026.

Gospodin Edward W. Pazo, Nacionalni predsjednik  
Gospođa Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras, Nacionalna tajnica/blagajnica  
Gospodin Franjo Bertović, Izvršni potpredsjednik HBZ-a

Poštovani gospodine Pazo, cijenjena gospođo Luketich-Sikaras, uvaženi gospodine Bertović!

U ime Hrvatske matice iseljenika i svoje osobno ime najsrdačnije vam zahvaljujem na čestitci i prigodnoj plaketi koju ste nam uputili u ime članstva Hrvatske bratske zajednice Amerike iz Pittsburgha 12. veljače ove godine, a u povodu 75. obljetnice utemeljenja Hrvatske matice iseljenika - koja se proteklih desetljeća afirmirala kao nezaobilazna kulturna poveznica našeg hrvatskog identiteta, povijesti i kulture.

Hvala vam od srca na iskrenim željama za budućim jačanjem ovog Matičinog vitalnog kulturnog mosta, koji povezuje naš narod iseljene i domovinske Hrvatske, a posebno s najmnogoljudnijom i najuglednijom našom iseljeničkom organizacijom kao što je Hrvatska bratska zajednica Amerike.

Američki su Hrvati u svim trenucima naše slavne povijesti bili uz naš narod u domovini, iskazujući ljubav i poštovanje svoje nove domovine prema narodu u Starome zavičaju, a koje je kulminiralo devedesetih 20. stoljeća, kada su Sjedinjene Američke Države među prvima priznale neovisnu i samostalnu Republiku Hrvatsku.

Institucionalna suradnja i potpora iseljentištvu - pa tamo i američkim Hrvatima - započeta je još 1869. u doba Kraljevine Hrvatske i Slavonije, a potvrđena suradnjom Zdravka Mužine i omiljenog nam biskupa Josipa Jurja Strossmayera. Nastavljena je potom 1912. osnivanjem Društva sv. Rafaela, katoličkog društva za pomoć hrvatskim iseljenicima koje je blaženi kardinal, tadašnji zagrebački nadbiskup Alojze Stepinac obnovio, nastavivši u burnom dvadesetom stoljeću svekoliku kulturnu i vjersku suradnju s iseljentištvom diljem svijeta - sve do naših dana. .

Demokratske promjene 1990. godine, pod vodstvom državotvorne vizije prvoga hrvatskog predsjednika dr. Franje Tuđmana, otvorile su za Hrvatsku maticu iseljenika novo poglavlje, koje je uvelike podržalo članstvo Hrvatske bratske zajednice Amerike na čelu s legendarnim Bernardom M. Luketichem kako na kulturnom, tako i na humanitarnome te karitativnome planu.

Danas, u vremenu globalnih izazova i digitalne transformacije, nastavljamo graditi suvremeno hrvatsko globalno zajedništvo, povezujući iseljentištvo, hrvatsku nacionalnu manjinu, Hrvate u Bosni i Hercegovini te povratnike iz dijaspore raznih naraštaja.

Slavimo u ovoj jubilarnoj godini našu povijesnu baštinu, ali još snažnije oblikujemo budućnost, u zajedništvu svih Hrvata u domovini i u svijetu.  
(Nastavak na 9. strani)

# Zajedničar

FRATERNALIST  
(ISSN 1087-7460)

ALL FOR ONE – ONE FOR ALL SVI ZA JEDNOG – JEDAN ZA SVE  
Official Organ Of The Službeno Glasilo  
Croatian Fraternal Union Hrvatske Bratske Zajednice  
of America u Americi

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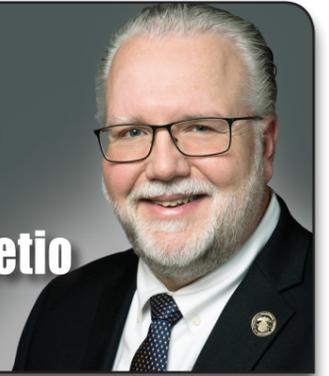
HRVATSKA BRATSKA ZAJEDNICA  
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GLAVNI URED  
Hrvatske Bratske Zajednice  
u Americi  
Organizirane 1894. godine

## Hrvatski ministar gospodarstva Ante Sušnjara posjetio Pittsburgh



Piše: Edward W. Pazo/Nacionalni predsjednik

Tijekom posljednjeg tjedna veljače, naši izvršni odbornici HBZ-a s zadovoljstvom su ugostili posjet gospodina Ante Sušnjara, ministra gospodarstva Republike Hrvatske, dok je ministar Sušnjara bio u SAD-u na sastancima u Washingtonu i Pittsburghu o energetske potrebama Hrvatske i zapadne Europe.

Mi smo pratili vrlo gust raspored ministra Sušnjara putem društvenih mreža i bili smo zadivljeni brojem važnih sastanaka na kojima je sudjelovao s američkim tajnicima kabineta Dougom Burgumom (unutarnje poslove) i Christopherom Wrightom (energija), kao i dužnosnicima State Departmenta dok je bio u Washingtonu. Hrvatski veleposlanik u Sjedinjenim Državama, g. Pjer Šimunović, obavijestio nas je o planiranom posjetu ministra Sušnjara Pittsburghu radi energetske konferencije i dodatnih sastanaka vezanih uz buduće energetske potrebe Hrvatske, te smo bili vrlo zadovoljni njegovim interesom za posjet našem sjedištu Hrvatske bratske zajednice.

Članovi naše Zajednice trebali bi znati da naš glavni ured obuhvaća tri kata muzejskih kvalitetnih eksponata koji uključuju: hrvatske folklorne nošnje i glazbene instrumente; naive umjetničke radove majstora Lackovića, Generalića, Cugovčana, Fištera i Veže u akvarelu; opsežnu biblioteku hrvatskih rukopisa i knjiga, od kojih neke datiraju više od 150 godina; i skulpture svjetski poznatog Ivana Meštrovića, da spomenemo samo kratki popis predmeta koji se nalaze u "Bernard M. Luketich Hrvatskom kulturnom muzeju". Naši izvršni odbornici izuzetno su ponosni na očuvanje i prikazivanje ovih rijetkih i lijepih artefakata. Sukladno tome, razgledavanje našeg ureda i muzeja uvijek je jedna od stavki na dnevnom redu za posjetitelje iz Hrvatske.



Razgledavanje prostorija glavnog ureda.

Nakon što smo ugostili ministra Sušnjara i njegovu delegaciju, moja kolegica sestra Luketich-Sikaras i brat Franjo Bertović te ja, zajedno s upravnim dužnosnicima Ivanom Beggom i Derekom Hohnom, pratili smo delegaciju kroz naš muzej te smo pružali uvid, gdje je to bilo moguće, u povijest svakog izloženog predmeta. Ministar je komentirao veličinu izloženog materijala, njegovu jedinstvenost i ljepotu. Izrazio je svoju zahvalnost svima unutar naše Zajednice koji su imali viziju i sposobnost da pribave i očuvaju ovaj dio hrvatske povijesti i kulture.

Tijekom posjeta imali smo priliku razgovarati o nekim važnim istaknutim točkama njegova putovanja uključujući rasprave o LNG terminalima na hrvatskoj obali s pripadajućim plinovodima prema unutrašnjosti te povezanim s susjednim zapadnoeuropskim zemljama. To je također uključivalo sastanak koji je održao neposredno prije posjete našem uredu s tvrtkom za nuklearnu proizvodnju električne energije u vezi buduće energetske proizvodnje i sigurnosti Hrvatske. Na kraju obilaska našeg ureda, uputili smo se u Hrvatsku katoličku crkvu sv. Nikole u Millvaleu, Pennsylvania, gdje je naš kolega, drugi potpredsjednik HBZ-a, brat Michael Ricci, bio prisutan kako bi nam priredio razgled unutrašnjosti crkve i poznatih, visoko cijenjenih murala autora Maxa Vanke. Još jednom, ministar i njegova delegacija cijene napore Hrvata u očuvanju kulture ovdje u Pittsburghu i dijaspori.

Ovdje s veseljem prenosimo s društvenih mreža objavu ministra Sušnjara u kojoj je predstavio svom (Nastavak na 10. strani)

### RIJEČ UREDNIŠTVA...LORRAINE TURKALL

## Proljeće je u zraku

Obično se treći mjesec u godini smatra prijelaznim razdobljem u 12-mjesečnom kalendaru budući da je to vrijeme kada mnogi ljudi diljem zemlje nestrpljivo očekuju i dočekuju proljetnu ravnodnevnicu, službeni početak proljeća. Nakon hladnih zimskih temperatura i teških životnih i putnih uvjeta za mnoge, prvi dan proljeća, 20. ožujka ove godine, predstavlja dobrodošli predah, pružajući ljudima u mnogim dijelovima zemlje poticaj za tijelo i duh u njihovom svakodnevnom životu.

Kako bismo dodatno podigli duh, meteorolozi predviđaju da će velik dio Sjedinjenih Država doživjeti potencijalno rekordnu toplinu u sljedećih tjedan ili dva, svojevrsno „lažno proljeće“ za mnoge dijelove zemlje. Međutim, kako bi ublažili naše iščekivanje ovog razdoblja ugodnog vremena, prognostičari također predviđaju da će prekrasni topli proljetni vremenski val biti praćen povratkom još jednog zimskog udara za neke od nas. Nije iznenađujuće da nas rani proljetni vremenski

uvjeti često prevare s uzorkom roller coastera, ali se nadamo da će se nakon predviđenog kratkog povratka Starca Zime održati dosljedno toplije temperature!

Tijekom ovih prijelaznih dana, mi u Hrvatskoj bratskoj zajednici pripremamo se za proljetne događaje uključujući tamburaške glazbene koncerte, odsječne sastanke te unutarnje i vanjske sportske aktivnosti, što će mnogim članovima HBZ-a pružiti priliku da se okupe i uživaju u bratskim druženjima. Pripreme za Uskrs također uključuju mnoge članove HBZ-a, jer naši odsjeci i druge povezane skupine nude uskrsne prodaje kolača, riblje večeri i druge događaje koji zadržavaju članove zauzetima i društveno aktivnima.

Poticali bismo sve članove HBZ-a da izađu iz svojih zimskih depresija kako bi se ponovno povezali s ostalim članovima odsjeka i prijateljima te kako bi širili naše bratstvo u svojim zajednicama. U našim odsjecima postoji obilje potreba za volonterima koji

moгу pomoći na razne načine. Dijeljenje radnog opterećenja s drugima ne samo da obavlja poslove, već pospješuje i osjećaj vlastitog postignuća i samovrijednosti. Zajedničko sudjelovanje u aktivnostima također dodaje novu dimenziju poboljšanju zdravlja i ukupnog stava, posebno kada su fizička kondicija i sport dio aktivnosti. Postoji mnogo koristi od sudjelovanja u bratskim i volonterskim programima, stoga neka vam postane osobni izazov uključiti se za dobrobit drugih, kao i za vlastitu dobrobit.

Neka posljednji nalet zime prođe brzo i budimo optimistični u vezi nadolazećih dana. Citirajući poznatog pjesnika Percyja Bysshea Shelleyja, 'Ako dođe zima, može li proljeće biti daleko?' Nešto mi govori da već osjećamo proljeće u našem koraku!

## HRVATSKA BRATSKA ZAJEDNICA

Garantira vašu zaštitu. Pruža svojim članovima konkurentne proizvode životnog osiguranja i anuiteta te bratske pogodnosti. STALNI PLANOVI ŽIVOTNOG OSIGURANJA  
Plan životnog osiguranja s jednom premijom.  
Obični plan životnog osiguranja.  
Plan životnog osiguranja na 10 godina uplaćivanja.  
Plan životnog osiguranja na 20 godina uplaćivanja.  
PLANOVI PRIVREMENOG ŽIVOTNOG OSIGURANJA  
Plan na 10 godina s fiksnom premijom.  
Plan na 20 godina.  
Plan dječjeg osiguranja do navršene 25. godine.  
Proizvode Anuiteta/IRA.  
BRATSKE POGODNOSTI KOJE NUDI HBZ  
Zaklada za stipendije, Inc.  
Kulturne aktivnosti.  
Sportski programi.  
Besplatne publikacije.

## Konzularni dani u Pittsburghu i Clevelandu

WASHINGTON, DC - Veleposlanstvo Republike Hrvatske iz Washingtona održat će konzularne dane u Pittsburgh-u u prostorijama Hrvatske bratske zajednice, na adresi 100 Delaney Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15235, u vremenu od 10 sati ujutro do 4 sata poslije podne (uz prethodni dogovor termina) na sljedeće datume: **9. travnja; 14. svibnja; 11. lipnja.**

Konzularni dani u Eastlake-u, Ohio održat će se u prostorijama hrvatskog doma "Kardinal Alojzije Stepinac" na adresi 34900 Lakeshore Blvd, Eastlake, OH 44095, u vremenu od 9 sati ujutro do 4 sata poslije podne (uz prethodni dogovor termina) na sljedeće datume: **10. travnja; 15. svibnja; 12. lipnja.**

**VAŽNA OBAVIJEST:** Potrebno je unaprijed zakazati termin i to putem adrese elektroničke pošte: crocons.washington@mvep.hr ili nazvati na +1-202-588-5899, kućni 2. Uz zahtjev za sastanak, potrebno je navesti vrstu usluge koja se zahtjeva i kontakt podatke (ime i prezime, broj telefona). Veleposlanstvo Republike Hrvatske u Washingtonu određuje vrijeme termina po redu zaprimanja zahtjeva i prema dostupnosti istih.

Mihovil Pažin/VRH

Naša suradnja između Hrvatske bratske zajednice Amerike i Hrvatske matice iseljenika imala je izuzetno kvalitetne uspjehe na polju njegovanja kulturne baštine među mladima. Najljepši primjer je višekratno gostovanje Omladinskoga tamburaškog festivala Kulturne federacije Hrvatske bratske zajednice Amerike, koji se čak osam puta održavao u našoj zajedničkoj organizaciji u glavnome gradu svih Hrvata u Zagrebu u Koncertnoj dvorani Vatroslava Lisinskog. Svi Matičini djelatnici još u srcu nose divnu energiju s festivala „Tambure kroz generacije“ iz godine 2024., a nadaju se da ćete dragi naši Zajedničari tradiciju nastaviti i gostovati u Zagrebu i s dolazećim 60. Omladinskim tamburaškim festivalom Kulturne federacije Hrvatske bratske zajednice Amerike, godine 2028.

Prema mišljenju suvremene hrvatske kulturne javnosti i Matičinih djelatnika - riječ je o najljepšem festivalu mladih koji se u Americi priređuje već 58 godina s ciljem očuvanja baštine i jezika hrvatskoga naroda u anglofonome svijetu, čiji je umjetnički sadržaj proteklih desetljeća obogaćivan i raznim interkulturalnim fenomenima koji simboliziraju današnje multikulturalno američko društvo.

Kulturna federacija Hrvatske bratske zajednice Amerike, koja okuplja brojne tamburaške zborove i plesne ansamble, zaslužni je promicatelj i njegovatelj hrvatskoga identiteta u urbanim područjima najrazvijenije zemlje svijeta, koju želimo ugostiti čim vam prilike dopuste poštovani i dragi čelnici Hrvatske bratske zajednice. U zajedništvu naših dviju institucija ova kulturna razmjena gostujućih festivala jamči ostvarenje višestrukih ciljeva. S jedne strane hrvatska iseljenička mladež bolje upoznaje kulturno-povijesne znamenitosti zemlje svojih predaka, a s druge strane domaća kulturna javnost ima priliku na izravan način vidjeti vaša bogata postignuća u umjetničkim koreografijama scenske primjene folklor, kao i čuti glazbena ostvarenja koja s velikom ljubavlju izvodite u svojoj novoj domovini.



Očekujući nastavak naše uspješne daljnje suradnje primite molim vas moju zahvalu i srdačne pozdrave od svih Matičinih djelatnika,

S poštovanjem,

Mr. sc. Zdeslav Milas, ravnatelj

## Tradicionalni programi Hrvatske matice iseljenika

ZAGREB - SVEUČILIŠNA ŠKOLA HRVATSKOG JEZIKA I KULTURE U ZAGREBU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF CROATIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN ZAGREB.

23. lipnja – 17. srpnja  
June 23 – July 17, 2026.

Škola je namijenjena mladeži hrvatskoga podrijetla i svim drugim studentima koji žele upoznati Hrvatsku, steći ili proširiti svoje znanje o njoj, naučiti ili usavršiti hrvatski jezik. Sveučilišnu školu mogu pohađati i učitelji hrvatskoga kao inoga jezika koji se žele usavršavati u području ovladavanja inim jezikom sudjelujući u nastavi i pohađajući predmet koji je samo njima namijenjen.

Akademski program obuhvaća 120 školskih sati nastave. Jezična se nastava sastoji od odvojenih gramatičkih i lektorskih sati. Znanje hrvatskoga jezika dijeli se na tri razine: početnu, srednju i naprednu.

Program kulture sastavni je dio Škole koji organizira Hrvatska matica iseljenika. Program podrazumijeva:

- akademska i terenska predavanja o hrvatskoj kulturi i povijesti;
- stručno vođene posjete različitim kulturnim i znanstvenim institucijama te umjetničkim izložbama, kazališnim predstavama i koncertima,
- studijske izlete u Hrvatsko zagorje i Plitvička jezera.

Polaznici koji polože ispite dobivaju diplomu Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, svjedodžbu s upisanim ocjenama te (tko treba) potvrdu o ostvarenim ECTS bodovima (8 ECTS bodova za jezik/1 ECTS bod za kulturu). **Prijave do 22. svibnja 2026.** <https://matis.hr/programi/sveucilisna-skola-hrvatskoga-jezika-i-kulture/>

The University School of Croatian Language and Culture is offered to persons of Croatian background, as well as to any students who want to learn (more) about the Croatian language and culture. The University School may be attended by teachers of Croatian as a foreign language who wish to improve in the field of Second Language

Acquisition (SLA) by participating in classes and attending class (Croatian as L2) designed specifically for them.

The Academic Program comprises of 120 hours. Language classes include grammar lessons and language exercises, i.e. The Croatian course is offered at three levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced).

Culture Program: All academic lectures and study visits on Croatian Culture & History make a part of the program organised by the Croatian Heritage Foundation.

- Academic lectures: Croatian Culture & History in the European & Global Context
- Guided study visits to museums, art galleries, cultural institutions, concerts, theatre & theatre performances
- Study trips to Croatian Hinterland and Plitvice Lakes
- Students who pass the exam receive a diploma from the University of Zagreb, a grade report based on achievement and (if they require) confirmation of achieved ECTS credits (8 ECTS credits for Language/1 ECTS credit for Culture).

**Registration May 22, 2026.** <https://matis.hr/en/programs-en/the-university-school-of-croatian-language-and-culture-2/>

Za sve dodatne informacije i pristupnicu javite se / For further information and the application form please contact Odjel za školstvo i znanost / Dept. of Education and Science, Lada Kanajet Šimić, e-mail: [lada.kanajet@matis.hr](mailto:lada.kanajet@matis.hr).

**MALA ŠKOLA HRVATSKOGA JEZIKA I KULTURE LITTLE SCHOOL OF CROATIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

20. – 31. srpnja  
July 20 – 31, 2026

Hrvatska matica iseljenika po trideset treći put organizira Malu školu hrvatskoga jezika i kulture u Novome Vinodolskom, primorskom ljetovalištu bogate kulturne prošlosti. Temeljni je cilj ovoga ljetovanja da djeca, uzrasta 9-14 godina, koja žive izvan Hrvatske, u zajedništvu s djecom

iz različitih mjesta u Hrvatskoj, unaprijede svoje znanje hrvatskog jezika te upoznaju kulturnu i prirodnu baštinu kraja u kojemu borave.

Program škole ostvaruje se putem raznih kreativnih igraonica-radionica (jezična, likovna, novinarska, lutkarska, dramska, filmska, animacija) te niza športskih, rekreativnih i zabavnih sadržaja. I još puno, puno veselja i radosnih trenutaka u zdravom, bezbrižnom i sigurnom okolišu pod nadzorom iskusnih i pouzdanih učitelja i voditelja.

Škola je započela 1993. godine i do danas je jedini program takve vrste u Republici Hrvatskoj. **Prijave do popunjenosti mjesta.**

Više informacija o programu nalazi se na mrežnoj stranici HMI-ja: <https://matis.hr/programi/mala-skola-hrvatskoga-jezika-i-kulture-4/>

Spend a happy holiday with us in Novi Vinodolski. The CHF is organising its thirty-third time Little School of Croatian Language and Culture in Novi Vinodolski, the objective of which is for children, ages 9 to 14, living outside of Croatia, to join children from all across Croatia in improving their knowledge of the Croatian language and learning about the culture and natural heritage of the region they are visiting.

In the company of children your age and our cheerful trained guides you will learn or improve your knowledge of Croatian language in our interesting daily workshops (language, art, journalism, puppet, drama, film, animation). And that's just the beginning! All young participants are encouraged to take a part in sport and other competitions on land and sea, and have fun in the evening dancing, singing and playing games, all in a beautiful, safe and carefree environment supervised by experienced and reliable teachers and guides.

The School has been staged without interruption since 1993. **Registration will run until all places are filled.**

More information about the program is on the website:

<https://matis.hr/en/programs-en/little-summer-school-of-croatian-language-and-culture-2/>

Za sve dodatne informacije i pristupnicu javite se / For further

## PROGRAMI HBZ-A POD POVEĆALOM

Poruka iz ureda izvršnog potpredsjednika  
FRANJE BERTOVIĆA

### PRISTUPAČNA FINACIJSKA ZAŠTITA

Životno osiguranje na vremensko razdoblje od 20 godina pruža zaštitu osiguranika i njegove obitelji. Osmišljeno je da zaštiti osiguranika na određeni rok i pruži mir, odnosno nebrigu o troškovima poput hipoteke, gubitka prihoda ili za pokriće bilo kojih troškova nakon njegove smrti.

U planu Osiguranja na rok od 20 godina premije su istog iznosa kroz vremenski period od dvadeset godina ili do smrti osiguranika, ako nastupi ranije. Plan osiguranja namijenjen je osobama od 24 do 44 godina starosti. Minimalni iznos je \$25,000 a najviši \$125,000.

Osiguranje se može pretvoriti u bilo koji plan stalnog životnog osiguranja za isti ili niži iznos bez upita o zdravstvenom stanju ali prije isteka vremenskog razdoblja od dvadeset godina. Nakon isteka vremena od dvadeset godina ne može se produžiti. Na koncu dvadesete godine, ako nije napravljen ponudeni odabir osiguranje prestaje i gubi vrijednost.

**Niže objavljena tablica cijena je za muškarci, nepušače na \$1,000.**

MUŠKARCI NEPUŠAČ				MUŠKARCI PUŠAČ			
God. izdanja	\$25,000- \$49,999	\$50,000- \$99,999	\$100,000- \$125,000	God. izdanja	\$25,000- \$49,999	\$50,000- \$99,999	\$100,000- \$125,000
24	2.04	1.43	1.14	24	3.47	2.67	2.35
25	2.04	1.44	1.14	25	3.49	2.68	2.39
26	2.07	1.46	1.16	26	3.55	2.74	2.41
27	2.09	1.48	1.17	27	3.62	2.80	2.44
28	2.11	1.49	1.18	28	3.69	2.87	2.47
29	2.13	1.51	1.19	29	3.76	2.94	2.50
30	2.16	1.53	1.21	30	3.83	3.00	2.53
31	2.21	1.56	1.23	31	4.02	3.10	2.66
32	2.27	1.59	1.26	32	4.20	3.21	2.80
33	2.33	1.62	1.29	33	4.40	3.31	2.94
34	2.39	1.65	1.32	34	4.61	3.42	3.09
35	2.46	1.68	1.36	35	4.83	3.53	3.25
36	2.65	1.76	1.43	36	5.17	3.83	3.52
37	2.87	1.85	1.52	37	5.54	4.16	3.82
38	3.10	1.95	1.60	38	5.94	4.51	4.14
39	3.35	2.05	1.70	39	6.37	4.89	4.49
40	3.63	2.15	1.79	40	6.82	5.31	4.87
41	3.83	2.30	1.96	41	7.39	5.75	5.29
42	4.04	2.46	2.14	42	8.01	6.24	5.73
43	4.26	2.63	2.33	43	8.68	6.77	6.22
44	4.50	2.81	2.54	44	9.40	7.34	6.74
45	4.75	3.01	2.77	45	10.18	7.96	7.31
46	5.04	3.30	3.04	46	10.96	8.79	8.13
47	5.36	3.62	3.32	47	11.79	9.70	9.03
48	5.69	3.97	3.63	48	12.69	10.71	10.03
49	6.05	4.36	3.97	49	13.66	11.83	11.14
50	6.43	4.78	4.35	50	14.69	13.06	12.37

Ako imate bilo koje pitanje(a) o ovoj vrsti životnog osiguranja ili o bilo kojem proizvodu kod HBZ-a nazovite nas na tel. 412-843-0380 ili pogledajte web stranice [www.cfu.org](http://www.cfu.org).

information and the application form please contact: Odjel za školstvo i znanost / Dept. of Education and Science, Lada Kanajet Šimić, e-mail: [lada.kanajet@matis.hr](mailto:lada.kanajet@matis.hr).

#### HRVATSKI INTERNETSKI TEČAJ – HIT-1

e-tečaj hrvatskoga kao inoga jezika

#### CROATIAN INTERNET COURSE – HIT-1

e-learning course of Croatian as a second and foreign language.

Hrvatska matica iseljenika, Sveučilište u Zagrebu i Sveučilišni računski centar Srce / Croatian Heritage Foundation, University of Zagreb and University Computing Center Srce.

E-tečaj HiT-1 provodi se dva puta godišnje (proljetni i jesenski semestar), a sastoji se od sedam nastavnih cjelina za ovladavanje kojih polaznici imaju na raspolaganju ukupno dvanaest tjedana u čemu im pomažu iskusni e-lektori. Nastava je interaktivna, a pristup učenju jezika individualiziran te uključuje i obavezna 24 individualna sata s lektorima. Polaznici koji polože i pismeni i usmeni ispit dobivaju diplomu Sveučilišne škole hrvatskoga

jezika i kulture Sveučilišta u Zagrebu te dvojezični i dvokulturni prijepis ocjena.

The HiT-1 e-course is offered twice a year (spring and autumn semesters) and consists of seven instructional units, which participants have a total of twelve weeks to complete, supported by experienced e-instructors. The classes are interactive, and the language-learning approach is individualized, including a mandatory 24 individual lessons with instructors. Participants who pass both the written and oral exams receive a diploma from the University School of Croatian Language and Culture of the University of Zagreb, as well as a bilingual and bicultural transcript of records.

Više informacija nalazi se na ovim poveznicama / More information about the program is on the website::

<https://matis.hr/programi/hrvatski-internetski-tecaj-hit-1-3/> (hrvatski)

<https://matis.hr/en/programs-en/croatian-internet-course/>

Za sve dodatne informacije i pristupnicu javite se / For further information and the application form please contact: Odjel za školstvo i znanost / Dept. of Education and Science, Lada Kanajet Šimić, e-mail: [lada.kanajet@matis.hr](mailto:lada.kanajet@matis.hr).

(Nastavak na 10. strani)



## DEATHS REPORTED

FROM FEBRUARY 17 TO MARCH 2, 2026

1 Henry Kretschmaier	Pittsburgh, PA
4 Sylvia T. Abramovic	Etna, PA
5 Audrey L. Babich	Johnstown, PA
5 Robert M. Fedore	Johnstown, PA
5 Edwin Mikesic	Johnstown, PA
136 Lucille A. Citro	Lorain, OH
146 Shirley A. Korenic	Versailles, PA
146 Charles Pecar	Versailles, PA
170 Emil Riccio	Merrillville, IN
217 Richard L. Drobney	Benld, IL
238 Eleanor Haidos	Gilbert, MN
248 Janice M. DiLonardo	Clairton, PA
304 Anna Marmalich	Ambridge, PA
304 Sara Weigand	Ambridge, PA
310 Elizabeth J. Zubovich	Columbus, OH
320 Jacqueline A. Oskin	Duquesne, PA
351 Nada R. Grubor	Detroit, MI
351 Matt Repar	Detroit, MI
367 John Debush	Canton, IL
367 Anthony Starceovich	Canton, IL
614 Thomas J. Krol	Newton Falls, OH
859 Michael Roberts	Cleveland, OH
859 Ann L. Winter	Cleveland, OH

## Tradicionalni programi...

(Nastavak sa 9. strane)

form please contact e-mail: [ecroatian@unizg.hr](mailto:ecroatian@unizg.hr).

### Eco Heritage Task Force

3. – 16. 8. 2026. Gospić

Hrvatska matica iseljenika i Ličko-senjska županija Eco Heritage Task Force program je koji okuplja mlade hrvatskog podrijetla iz cijelog svijeta, a koji se angažiraju volonterskim radom na ekološkoj obnovi i očuvanju hrvatske prirodne kulturne baštine u lokalnim zajednicama.

Ove godine polaznici programa sudjelovat će u raznim eko akcijama na području grada Gospića i njegovoj okolici, kao i u organiziranim radionicama i dodatnim aktivnostima kojima će bolje upoznati prirodnu i kulturnu baštinu te tradiciju ovoga područja (radionice hrvatskoga jezika i kulture, kulinarska radionica i izleti po Ličko-senjskoj županiji).

Prijaviti se mogu osobe od 18 do 35 godina. Broj polaznika je ograničen. **Prijave traju do 15. lipnja 2026. godine ili do popunjenja** predviđenog broja polaznika. Prijavnicu i više informacija o samom projektu i uvjetima prijave možete dobiti putem emaila [sara.mardetko@matis.hr](mailto:sara.mardetko@matis.hr)

*The Eco Heritage Task Force is a program gathering young people of Croatian descent from around the world to engage in voluntary work on the environmental restoration and preservation of Croatian natural cultural heritage in local communities. This year, program participants will take part in various environmental initiatives in the city of Gospić and its surrounding area, as well as in organized workshops and additional activities designed to help them become more familiar with the natural and cultural heritage and*

*traditions of the region (Croatian language and culture workshops, a culinary workshop, and excursions throughout Lika-Senja County).*

*Persons aged from 18 to 35 can apply. The number of participants is limited.*

*The application period lasts until June 15, 2026, or until the planned number of participants is reached. The application form and more information about the project itself and the application conditions can be obtained by email [sara.mardetko@matis.hr](mailto:sara.mardetko@matis.hr).*

**Lada Kanajet Šimić, prof.**

## TEŠKO JE BEZ VAS, PRIJATELJI

Obmana često zaokupi svakoga od nas,

U tim trenucima smo snažni i hrabri.

Ali, odjednom se tlo pod nogama uruši,

tada je stvarnost a ne obmana spas.

Jednoć, obmanula sam sebe da sve mogu sama, zarobila me čežnja, žudjela sam obale Jadrana,

Tada, daleko od Vas, poželih Vaš zagrljaj, Prijatelji

Bez Vas, život je prazan i radosni nigdje nema.

O, da su mi krila i da se vinem put Sjevera

Tamo sam ostavila mnogo dragih lica,

obmanjivala sam sebe žudeći odlazak na Jug

Shvatih, na put bez povratka, otišao mi i posljednji drug.

**Nina Novak/odsjeck 515**

## HBZ odaje poštovanje...

(Nastavak sa 7. strane)

sve nehotične pogreške ili izostavljanja na popisu za 2026. godinu i molimo sve odsječne odbornike i zainteresirane članove da nas obavijeste o svim ispravkama ili dopunama ovog izvješća.

Pregledom popisa Zlatnih članova za 2026. objavljenog u ovom broju, mnogi naši čitatelji Zajedničara prepoznat će imena članova obitelji i prijatelja na ovom popisu petdesetogodišnjih članova. Nadamo se da ćete odvojiti vrijeme kako biste čestitali osobama koje osobno poznajete, a koje su sada postigle ovaj status u našoj Zajednici.

Mi u Nacionalnoj upravi cijenimo sve članove navedene na popisu za 2026. zbog njihovih doprinosa našoj bratskoj organizaciji te svojim lokalnim odsjecima i zajednicama.

Dok pregledavamo popis imena, bilježimo nekoliko pojedinaca koji su, uz svoje lojalno članstvo, tijekom godina služili u nekoj funkciji u našoj Nacionalnoj upravi ili u Glavnom uredu.

S ponosom pozdravljamo na ovogodišnjoj Zlatnoj listi HBZ sestru Darlene Cravener, dugogodišnju članicu osoblja HBZ glavnog ureda koja trenutno radi kao cijenjena zaposlenica u Odjelu tajnice/blagajnice. Darlene je članica društva Hrvatska Vila odsjek 141 u East Pittsburghu, PA, i slijedi stope svoje majke, Mariann Yohe, koja je niz godina radila u Glavnom redu naše Zajednice.

Također nam je drago prepoznati sestru Mary Jo Greger, koja je bila zaposlena kod nas, a sada je u mirovini. Ona je članica društva "Sveto Trojstvo" odsjek 146, Versailles, PA.

U ime Nacionalne uprave Hrvatske bratske zajednice, čast mi je uputiti čestitke i dobre želje svakoj osobi navedenoj na Časnoj listi članova HBZ-a s pedeset godina članstva 2026. godine. Duboko cijenimo njihovu predanost našoj Zajednici tijekom proteklih pet desetljeća i želimo im još mnogo godina dobrog zdravlja i osobnog zadovoljstva.

Molimo vas da name se pridružite u ponosnom priznavanju muškaraca i žena koji su postigli pedeset godina članovanja u Hrvatskoj bratskoj zajednici 2026. godine.

*Na drugom mjestu ovog izdanja pogledajte imena naših pedesetogodišnjih članova HBZ za ovu godinu.*

**Hrvatska bratska zajednica je spojnica između Domovine i raseljene Hrvatske! Priključite joj se još danas. Potankosti potražite na**

**telefonski broj 412-843-0380**

**Piše: Edward W. Pazo/Nacionalni predsjednik**

(Nastavak sa 8. strane)

godine, vezano uz Hrvatsku i važnost nuklearne energije u zadovoljenju dijela budućih potreba Hrvatske.

"Pred Hrvatskim saborom predstavio sam Prijedlog Zakona o razvoju nuklearne energije u civilne svrhe, zakon kojim Hrvatska prvi put uspostavlja sustavan pravni okvir za razvoj nuklearne energetike.

U vremenu velikih energetske i geopolitičkih promjena, stabilna i pouzdana energija postaje jedno od ključnih pitanja gospodarskog razvoja, industrijske konkurentnosti i nacionalne sigurnosti.

Hrvatska ima znanje, iskustvo i stručnjake. Kroz više od četiri desetljeća sudjelovanja u radu NE Krško izgrađeni su snažni temelji na kojima danas gradimo zakonodavni okvir za energetiku budućnosti.

Nuklearna energija predstavlja stabilan, pouzdan i niskougljičan izvor koji jača otpornost hrvatskog elektroenergetskog sustava i dugoročno osigurava sigurnost opskrbe.

Do 2040. godine cilj je osigurati najmanje 30 % električne energije iz nuklearnih izvora, uz odgovoran i fazni pristup.

## CFU 2026 Calendar of Coming Events

### MARCH

28 St. George Velika Fešta Tamburaša - Croatian Home - Cokeburg, PA

### APRIL

18 Detroit Tamburitza Orchestra Annual Spring Concert - American Croatian Club - 32851 Ryan Rd. - Warren, MI  
25-26 76th Annual St. George's Day Celebration - Croatian Home - Cokeburg, PA

### MAY

16-17 CFU National Bowling Tournament - Hosted by Lodge 136, Lorain, OH  
30 Croatian Heritage Night at PNC Park - Pittsburgh Pirates Baseball Game - Pittsburgh, PA

### JUNE

5-6 CFU National Golf Tournament - Hosted by Zora CFU Lodge 351 - Rockham Golf Course - Detroit, MI  
7 Spring Picnic of Ogulin Lodge 530 - Tower Rd. - St. Thomas, ON

### JULY

3-5 58th Annual CFU Junior Tamburitza Festival - Hilton Cleveland Downtown - Cleveland, OH  
11 66th Annual Mukwonago Croatian Day Festival - Field Park - Mukwonago, WI  
12 Midwest Croatian Fraternal Union Day Picnic & Raffle - Hosted by Hrvatska Sloboda Lodge 32 - Croatian Cultural Club, 1503 Clement St., Joliet  
18 Joe Rady Golf Tournament - Hosted by CFU Lodge 367 - Kellogg Golf Course - Peoria, IL  
19 St. George CFU Lodge 66 Annual Picnic - Croatian Home - Youngstown, OH

### AUGUST

1 Detroit Tamburitza Orchestra's Bob Novosel Memorial Jamboree - American Croatian Club - 32851 Ryan Rd. - Warren, MI  
2 St. George Junior Tamburitza's Annual Golf Outing - Nemaacolin Country Club - Beallsville, PA  
30 Summer Picnic and Bocce Tournament of Ogulin CFU Lodge 530 - Croatian R.C. Church - London, ON

### SEPTEMBER

6 Annual Croatian Day Celebration - Rankin Croatian Home - Rankin, PA  
12 St. George Tamburitza's Annual Picnic - Cokeburg Community Park - Cokeburg, PA

### OCTOBER

10 Lodge 126 Indoor Picnic - Farrell Croatian Home - Farrell, PA

### NOVEMBER

6-8 39th Annual CFU Adult TamFEST - Renaissance Columbus Downtown - Columbus, OH  
29 Christmas Dinner and St. Nicholas Day of Ogulin CFU Lodge 530/Nest 530 - Croatian R.C. Church, London - ON

### DECEMBER

13 St. George CFU Lodge 354/Nest 122 Annual Christmas Party - Croatian Home - Cokeburg, PA  
13 Hrvatska Sloboda Lodge 32's Christmas Luncheon - Place to be determined.  
19 Detroit Tamburitza Orchestra's Christmas in Croatia - American Croatian Club - 32851 Ryan Rd. - Warren, MI

# CFU

**Guarantees Your Protection**

The Croatian Fraternal Union provides its members with competitive life insurance and annuity products and fraternal benefits.

**PERMANENT LIFE INSURANCE PLANS**

- ★ Single Premium Ordinary Life Plan
- ★ Ordinary Life Plan
- ★ 10 Pay Life Plan
- ★ 20 Pay Life Plan

**TERM LIFE INSURANCE PLANS**

- ★ 10 Year Level Plan
- ★ 20 Year Term Plan
- ★ Juvenile Term to Age 25 Plan

**ANNUITY/IRA PRODUCTS**

- ★ CFU Annuity and IRA Plans

**FRATERNAL BENEFITS OFFERED BY CFU**

- ★ Scholarship Foundation, Inc
- ★ Cultural Activities
- ★ Sports Programs
- ★ Complimentary Publication

## SAVE THE DATE: Joe Rady Golf Tournament set for July 18

CANTON, IL- CFU Sacred Heart Lodge 367 is happy to announce they will host the 2026 Joe Rady Midwest golf tournament on Saturday, July 18. The Joe Rady will be held at the beautiful Kellogg Golf Course, 7716 N Radnor Rd., Peoria, IL 61615.

Details will follow as the tourney weekend gets closer. For now, we hope you will mark your calendars and tell your friends to reserve the dates for this fun-filled CFU event. We welcome everyone and look forward to catching up with our CFU friends and guests over a great tournament weekend. Hvala!  
**Ruth Sepich**  
 Recording Secretary



**By Edward W. Pazo/National President**

*(Continued from page 2)*

Following this article, we are pleased to reprint from a social media post of Minister Šušnjar his presentation to Croatian Parliament on May 5, 2026, concerning Croatia and the importance of nuclear power in meeting a portion of Croatia's future needs.

**Post to Social Media account of Ante Susnjar**

I presented the Draft Act on the Development of Nuclear Energy for Civil Purposes to the Croatian Parliament, a law by which Croatia establishes for the first time a systematic legal framework for the development of nuclear energy. In a time of major energy and geopolitical changes, stable and reliable energy is becoming one of the key issues for economic development, industrial competitiveness and national security.

Croatia has the knowledge, experience and experts. Over four decades of participation in the work of the Krško NPP, strong foundations have been built on which we are today building the legislative framework for the energy of the future.

Nuclear energy represents a stable, reliable and low-carbon source that strengthens the resilience of the Croatian electricity system and ensures security of supply in the long term.

By 2040, the goal is to secure at least 30% of electricity from nuclear sources, with a responsible and phased approach.

## CFU Salutes...

*(Continued from page 1)*

have reached this important milestone within the ranks of our Society and encourage all lodges to take the time to acknowledge the fraternal commitment of their 50-year members.

National Secretary/Treasurer Bernadette Luketich-Sikaras will soon mail notification to all those listed on the 2026 Honor Roll of Fifty-Year Members. If you do not see your name in this listing and yet believe you should be included on this year's Honor Roll,

please direct your inquiry to CFU National Secretary/Treasurer Luketich-Sikaras at the CFU Home Office, requesting her to verify your membership status.

We apologize in advance for any inadvertent errors or omissions in the 2026 listing and ask all lodge officers and concerned members to please make us aware of any corrections or additions to this reporting.

Upon review of the 2026 Listing of Golden Members published in this issue, many of our **Zajedničar** readers will recognize names of family members and friends on this honor roll of Fifty-Year members. We

hope you will take the time to congratulate the individuals you know personally who have now achieved Golden Membership status within our society. We in the National Administration value all of the members named in the 2026 listing for their contributions to our society as well as to their respective lodges and communities.

While reviewing the list of names, we take note of several individuals who, in addition to their loyal membership, have served in some capacity in our National Administration and Home Office Staff over the years.

We proudly welcome to this

year's golden list of CFU Members sister Darlene Cravener, a longtime member of the CFU Home Office Staff who currently serves as a valued employee in the Secretary/Treasurer's Department. Darlene is a member of Hrvatska Vila Lodge 141, East Pittsburgh, PA, and follows in the footsteps of her mother, Mariann Yoha, who had been a dedicated part of our Home Office Staff for many years.

We are also pleased to recognize sister Mary Jo Greger, who was employed and is now retired from our Home Office Staff. She is a member of "Sveto Trojstvo" Lodge 146, Versailles, PA.

On behalf of the National Administration of the Croatian Fraternal Union, I am honored to extend congratulations and good wishes to each individual named on the 2026 CFU Fifty-Year Membership Honor Roll. We are deeply appreciative of their commitment to our Society which has enriched our Society during the past five decades and wish them many more years of good health and personal fulfillment.

Please join with us in proudly acknowledging the men and women who have attained their Fifty-Year Membership with the Croatian Fraternal Union in 2026.

## 50 Year Members... *(Continued from page 4)*

LODGE	NAME	LOCATION
271	Bennett, Alexis A.	Aberdeen, WA
271	Higgins, Andrea E.	Aberdeen, WA
304	Hanzevack, Richard A., Jr.	Ambridge, PA
304	Hissam, Vicki I.	Ambridge, PA
304	Kolar, Jennie N.	Ambridge, PA
304	Powell, Tricia Anne	Ambridge, PA
310	Colak, Rosemary	Columbus, OH
314	Goles, Christina M.	Steelton, PA
316	Dasovic, Timothy C.	S. St. Paul, MN
320	Balta, Carole A.	Duquesne, PA
320	Marino, Bernard A.	Duquesne, PA
320	Smith, Ronald R.J.	Duquesne, PA
320	Voytko, Edward S.	Duquesne, PA
327	Koskoski, Stephen J., Jr.	Donora, PA
327	Willman, Kimberly Ann	Donora, PA
351	Cindrich, Susan Marie	Detroit, MI
351	Hallford, Andrea	Detroit, MI
351	Kosovec, Diane	Detroit, MI
351	Matkovich, Gregory H.	Detroit, MI
351	Millinkov, Mark J.	Detroit, MI
351	Ross, Caryn E.	Detroit, MI
351	Russell, Mary M.	Detroit, MI
351	Sertich, Stefanie M.	Detroit, MI
352	Kulish, Anna M.	Watsonville, CA
352	Vranjes, Damir	Watsonville, CA
352	Wempe, Leslie A.	Watsonville, CA
354	Barker, Shirley J.	Cokeburg, PA
354	Blauvelt, Leon R.	Cokeburg, PA
354	Delegram, Anthony J.	Cokeburg, PA
354	Farrell, Christine	Cokeburg, PA
354	Hamilton, Lois Jean	Cokeburg, PA
354	Lape, Jason S.	Cokeburg, PA
354	Nalepka, Edward L.	Cokeburg, PA
354	Piasecki, Keith J.	Cokeburg, PA
354	Pohlot, Andrea J.	Cokeburg, PA
354	Sisul, James D.	Cokeburg, PA
354	Stevenson, Theodora A.	Cokeburg, PA
355	Nemanich, Thomas S.	Ely, MN
367	Bouc, David M.	Canton, IL
367	France, David C.	Canton, IL
367	Marshall, Amy S.	Canton, IL
367	Parker, Shane A.	Canton, IL
367	Parker, Shawn, M.	Canton, IL
434	Hamblen, Darlene	Sacramento, CA
434	Zanze, Angela M.	Sacramento, CA
472	Friess, Frederic J.	Akron, OH
472	Safar, John T.	Akron, OH
472	Shook, Charles D.	Akron, OH
514	Kendrick, Janet M.	Canton, OH
514	Schneider, Drena Marie	Canton, OH
530	Mataija, Tina	St. Thomas, ON, Can
535	Bassar, Christopher	Midland, PA
535	Zetz, Rudy III	Midland, PA
540	Haglan, Kenneth J., Jr.	Conway, PA

LODGE	NAME	LOCATION
540	Haglan, Linda Lee	Conway, PA
540	Idzotic, Jeffrey A.	Conway, PA
540	Klaich, Brian A.	Conway, PA
540	Vaughan, Kimberly D.	Conway, PA
541	Barsic, John J.	Trafford, PA
541	Cawoski, Eugene R.	Trafford, PA
541	DiCesare, Michael A.	Trafford, PA
541	Estep, John R. II.	Trafford, PA
541	Malovitz, Ami Lynne	Trafford, PA
541	Mazak, Darlene A.	Trafford, PA
541	Nejak-Bowen, Kari N.	Trafford, PA
541	Riner, Lee Ann	Trafford, PA
541	Toothman, Carmen A.	Trafford, PA
541	Krmpotic, Joan	New Duluth, MN
550	Malnar, James W.	New Duluth, MN
557	Underwood, Dawn Marie	Buffalo, NY
567	Gregory, Johnna M. Pasquale	Canonsburg, PA
567	Horvat, Matthew J.	Canonsburg, PA
567	Horvat, Michael S.	Canonsburg, PA
567	Krzeczowski, Joseph M.	Canonsburg, PA
567	Meddings, Toni Michelle	Canonsburg, PA
567	Murphy, Janet D. Pasquale	Canonsburg, PA
567	Pasquale, Frank J.	Canonsburg, PA
567	Pasquale, Virginia	Canonsburg, PA
567	Rameas, Samuel B.	Canonsburg, PA
567	Sweet, David W.	Canonsburg, PA
567	Thomas, Robert N., Jr.	Canonsburg, PA
588	Brillouet, Ruddy M.	San Pedro, CA
595	Karavanic, Monica L.	Weirton, WV
595	Krnaich, Michael	Weirton, WV
595	Lesho, Lisa Kaye	Weirton, WV
595	Mowery, Nathan T.	Weirton, WV
595	Usmiani, Michael J.	Weirton, WV
600	Currie, Marcy L.	Massillon, OH
600	Rozlog, Dyan	Massillon, OH
600	Smith, Richard A.	Massillon, OH
602	Ashbee, Amanda R.	Verona, PA
602	Buehler, Tamara M.	Verona, PA
602	David, Nina C.	Verona, PA
602	Jaronski, Lisa Ann	Verona, PA
602	Jezik, Joseph J.	Verona, PA
602	Kitko, Mark E.	Verona, PA
602	Shurina, Peter	Verona, PA
612	Bracher, Eric A.	San Jose, CA
612	Popovich, Margaret	San Jose, CA
614	Krol, Brenda K.	Newton Falls, OH
614	O'Malley, Robert W.	Newton Falls, OH
614	Yazombek, Darla J.	Newton Falls, OH
616	Billick, David J.	Stamford, CT
616	Evanson, John C.	Stamford, CT
617	Chvedukas, Mary	Welland, ON, Can
677	Silberstein, Nathan	Los Angeles, CA
677	Sucevich, Vaughn A., Jr.	Los Angeles, CA
684	Burns, Darlene	Baltimore, MD
684	Cindric, Jason E.	Baltimore, MD
717	Burilovich, Stephanie M.	Detroit, MI
717	Kuffner, John A.	Detroit, MI
717	McNabb, Carol	Detroit, MI
717	McNabb, Curtis	Detroit, MI

LODGE	NAME	LOCATION
720	Allegrini, Jean M.	Aliquippa, PA
720	Ellis, Matthew E.	Aliquippa, PA
720	Evanitz, Donald L.	Aliquippa, PA
720	Juth-Frederick, Heather R.	Aliquippa, PA
720	McKennie, Carrie B.	Aliquippa, PA
720	Popovich, Darren M.	Aliquippa, PA
720	Savin, Darinka	Aliquippa, PA
720	Webb, Amy Jo	Aliquippa, PA
730	Borovatz, Jess C.	Dinuba, CA
730	Evans, James W.	Dinuba, CA
730	Markus, Marsha R.	Dinuba, CA
730	Nicholls-Glabe, Billie Jo	Dinuba, CA
730	Pedersen, Kimberly	Dinuba, CA
739	Panenic, Katarina	Montreal, PQ, Can
739	Pipunic, Nedeljka	Montreal, PQ, Can
789	Karavanic, Ivo	New York City, NY
789	Maric, Gerald	New York City, NY
789	Zahn, Linda	New York City, NY
793	Banozic, Marina	Sudbury, ON, Can
793	Markic, Anthony T.	Sudbury, ON, Can
793	Markic, Deny	Sudbury, ON, Can
793	Tonkovic, Adrian	Sudbury, ON, Can
859	Johnson, Michael G.	Cleveland, OH
859	Kalapos, Beth A.	Cleveland, OH
859	Lucic, John A.	Cleveland, OH
859	Mahovlich, Walter E.	Cleveland, OH
900	Rukavina, Michael G.	San Francisco, CA
919	Lederman, Derek C.	Sault Ste Marie, ON, Can
930	Mesic, Anka	Schumacher, ON, Can
930	Mesic, Darko	Schumacher, ON, Can
936	Fay, Ryan D.	Bothwell, ON, Can
954	Luksic, Ivan A.	Hamilton, ON, Can
954	Pasalic, Rudolf	Hamilton, ON, Can
954	Staresinic, John	Hamilton, ON, Can
959	Allen, Gloria J.	Fontana, CA
975	Hlad, Dragutin	Toronto, ON, Can
975	Mlinaric, Dragica	Toronto, ON, Can
975	Tanfara, Marie V.	Toronto, ON, Can
978	Rukavina, Catherine M.	Phoenix, AZ
982	King, Stephen S.	Miami, FL
982	Stowell, Bernadette	Miami, FL
993	Movrich, Jennie M.	Mukwonago, WI
995	Reynolds, Donna Jean	Cleveland, OH
1976	Paskvan, Boris	Washington, DC
1994	Eyrise, Kathleen	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Greenlee, Roland	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Jensen, Glenn E.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Kodel, James A.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Koski, James A.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Koski, Mary Beth	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Kreiter, Peter G.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Levar, Laurie Ann	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Mayer, Jeffery	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Potocic, Lisa L.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Potocic, William L.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Pugel, Andrea M.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Pugel, Mark E.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Weltcheff, Natasha N.	Milwaukee, WI
1994	Ziemer, Mandie	Milwaukee, WI

# Croatia! Travel Throughout the Land of our Ancestors

CLEVELAND, OH - Travel to Croatia can be fun and rewarding, as has been the case for the 1,200+ people who have joined us on the Heritage Tours Sue and I have sponsored since 1997. Ask many of our travelers and they will tell you the most exciting elements of the trip involve visiting their ancestral villages and, in many cases, meeting long lost relatives. Unlike the typical tour, our programs offer help in putting together a family genealogy chart dating back to the 1790's in some cases. We can also help arrange a trip to your ancestral village to search for family still in those villages.

But, if you just want to visit Croatia from the perspective of a Croatian American, then ours is perhaps the tour you need to consider. We see the important and famous places but take pride in the fact that we include out of the way places which have a rich history such as museums that highlight the traditional way of life. We also enjoy some traditional meals such as real Croatian Sarma (which some of us in America refer to cabbage rolls) and enjoy local musicians performing traditional Tamburitza and Klapa music...and yes, you are invited to sing along and dance along!

For 2026, we have 3 tours planned, the first is from May 23- June 7, 2026. We just had a cancelation and a cabin for

two open up for this tour due to a scheduling conflict. The tour begins in Dubrovnik, visiting Konavljje and the Neretva River Valley. Then we begin 7 days onboard the top-level family-owned ship, the MV Markan. While on the Markan we visit the lovely coastal town of Omis, the island of Brac, the fortified island of Korcula, the famous Grgic wine cellar on Peljesac, the Island of Vis (where the movie Mama Mia was filmed), the Green Cave, the Island of Hvar with its history dating back to the Greeks and its fields of lavender, Europe's best beach at Bol on the island of Brac. We end the week of sailing by docking at the home of the Roman Emperor Diocletia in the city of Split. Our deluxe motorcoach meets us, and we journey inland by motorcoach to visit Plitvice Lakes National Park. Traveling north to Zagreb, we have a few days in this lovely, Austrian-inspired town and capital of Croatia before returning home. It is during this time that many of our guests plan a visit to an ancestral village or town of personal interest.

Next, we have 2 openings for the August 30-September 13, 2026 version. This tour begins in Zadar, home to the Sea Organ and a central square

with many ancient Roman ruins and artifacts. Once again, our friend Captain Petar, owner of the small ship Markan, will take us to Split, Korcula, Mljet Island National Park, Dubrovnik, Peljesac, Hvar, Brac, ending in the port of Split. We are sure to visit Plitvice National Park on this tour before we head on to Zagreb for a few days. Again, you have the opportunity to visit your ancestral village.

Advent in Croatia is my wife's favorite time as it features so many charming traditions. Our Christmas Markets of Croatia and Slovenia Tour is from December 3-12, 2026. We arrive in Zagreb as Advent begins, with the main square outside our hotel filled with many food and craft stands, and stages with traditional live folk entertainment. The Cathedral has just reopened so we can attend Mass on St. Nicholas Day! We have many special treats planned which include a guided tour of old Zagreb, a visit to the Ethnographic Museum (which houses a wonderful display of hundreds of folk costume from all over Croatia), a visit to the Salaj



**75** GODINA HRVATSKE MATICE ISELJENIKA (Continued from page 1)

Today, in a time of global challenges and digital transformation, we continue to build a contemporary Croatian global community, connecting the diaspora, the Croatian national minority, Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and returnees from the diaspora of various generations.

In this jubilee year, we celebrate our historical heritage, but we shape the future even more strongly, in the unity of all Croats in our homeland and in the world.

Our cooperation between the Croatian Fraternal Union of America and the Croatian Homeland Foundation has had exceptionally high-quality successes in the field of nurturing cultural heritage among young people. The most beautiful example is the repeated hosting of the Youth Tamburitza Festival of the Junior Cultural Federation of the Croatian Fraternal Union of America, which was held eight times through our joint organization in the capital of all Croats, Zagreb, at the Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall. All Matica employees still carry in their hearts the wonderful energy from the "Tambura through Generations" festival from 2024, and they hope that our dear members of the Croatian Fraternal Union of America will continue the tradition and visit Zagreb with the upcoming 60th Youth Tamburitza Festival of the Junior Cultural Federation of the Croatian Fraternal Union of America, in 2028.

According to the opinion of the contemporary Croatian cultural public and Matica employees - this is the most beautiful youth festival that has been organized in America for 58 years with the aim of preserving the heritage and language of the Croatian people in the English speaking world, whose artistic content has been enriched over the past decades by various intercultural phenomena that symbolize today's multicultural American society.

The Junior Cultural Federation of the Croatian Fraternal Union of America, which brings together numerous tamburitza choirs and dance ensembles, is a deserving promoter and nurturer of Croatian identity in the urban areas of the most developed country in the world, which we would like to host as soon as the opportunity allows, respected and dear leaders of the Croatian Fraternal Union. In the unity of our two institutions, this cultural exchange which welcomes CFU Festivals in Croatia achieves multiple goals. On the one hand, Croatian emigrant youth have an increased understanding and knowledge about the cultural and historical sights of the land of their ancestors, and on the other hand, the domestic cultural public has the opportunity to directly see your rich achievements in artistic choreographies of Croatian folklore as well as to hear the musical achievements that you perform with great love in your new homeland.

Looking forward to the continuation of our successful further cooperation, please accept my thanks and warm greetings from all Matica employees,

Sincerely,

**Mr. sc. Zdeslav Milas, Director**

English translation courtesy of Croatian Fraternal Union.

Family who have a Christmas display of over 1 million lights. A special dinner with wine is planned at the Kezele family wine cellar.

Heading out of the city for a day, we will visit the old Austrian-influenced city of Varazdin, with lunch at the Family Restaurant owned by the head coach of the Croatian National Soccer team, Mr. Zlatko Dalic. Leaving Zagreb, we head west toward Slovenia, but first a stop at what is said to be Europe's safest city, Samobor, for a guided tour and, if you like, a sample of Kremšnita pastry, and a taste of Bermet, the local special liqueur.

Arriving in Ljubljana, Slovenia, we will stay at the Hotel Grand Union, in the heart of old town. While there, we have a guided tour of this capital city and lunch at the traditional Gostilna restaurant with local entertainment. We then visit the Gorenjska Museum in Kranj, and the majestic scenery of alpine Lake Bled. Then we enjoy a special lunch at the well-preserved medieval village of Radovljica (one of my favorite villages) at the Lectar Restaurant, and, if we are lucky, Mr. Lectar may play the button box or harmonica for us. Topping

off our tour we have a full day excursion to the Karst region and the world-famous Postojna Caves, the longest underground cave system in Europe. To cap our journey, on the last evening we will host a farewell dinner to celebrate the season and our adventure together!

We hope you will consider joining us for one of Croatian History and Heritage Tours. The tour details and all travel arrangements have been handled over the decades by our trusted travel agent and tour operator Michael Benz (Lodge 995). With over 40 years in the business and the connections and resources of Direct Travel, one of North America's largest travel agencies, at our disposal, pre and post tour options and special requests are easily accommodated. All elements of the travel experience are taken care of: air flights, hotel requests, travel insurance and more. For details and to make a reservation, please contact Mike at mbenz@dt.com or by calling 1-800-734-8800 x 4055. I can be reached at kraljzvonimir47@gmail.com or call me direct at 216-225-6338.

Sretna Putovanja!

**Robert Jerin/Lodge 995**

## LENTEN FISH FRIES

### St. Lawrence Lodge 13 Fish Fries Return

STEELTON, PA - Once again, St. Lawrence Croatian Club in Steelton will host their delicious fish fry dinners every Friday during Lent, with the exception of Good Friday.

Dinners will be served from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Lodge located at 13 Highland St., Steelton. You will be able to purchase a delicious dinner including baked or hand-breaded fried fish, shrimp fettuccine, homemade macaroni and cheese, hand-cut French fries, salad, coleslaw, stewed tomatoes. Also, beets, applesauce, and fresh baked rolls. Chicken fingers and fries are available for children.

There will be bake sales each week to benefit the St. Lawrence Adult Tamburitza and the Sv. Lovro Junior Tamburitza.

Starting at 7 p.m. each Friday, you can enjoy listening to some of your favorite local bands! March 6, Happy Slovenes; March 13, Salt Hill; March 20, The Puskers; and March 27, Sviraj.

Bring your appetite, dancing shoes, and some friends for an enjoyable evening at St. Lawrence!

**Tina Simpson/Lodge 13**

### Youngstown Club Serves Lenten Dinners

YOUNGSTOWN, OH - The St. George Croatian Club of Youngstown, Ohio invites you to come out on any Friday, to enjoy their award-winning fish or seafood dinners for Lent. Our dinners are available to the general public and are available to eat in or to-go basis, cash or check only. We offer Baked Cod or Fried Haddock dinners with a choice of (mac & cheese, fries, haluski, potato pierogi or green beans), along with a choice of cole slaw or applesauce, all for \$15 per dinner. Single pieces of fish are available at \$11 per piece; Shrimp dinners with the above-mentioned sides are \$16 per dinner; and Potato pierogi dinners (8 pieces and a cole slaw) for \$10 per dinner. To place an order, call 330-270-9056 on Fridays any time after 10 a.m., or just walk in at our club located at 3200 Vestal Rd., Youngstown Ohio (westside) and place your orders.

We honor all CFU and Croatian Club membership cards in our bar area as a courtesy to our brother and sister Croatians who would like to purchase an alcoholic beverage to accompany their dinners.

Our menu and pictures of our dinners can be seen on our Facebook page St. George Croatian Center. Please like and share. We hope to see you at "The Club" for some great fish/seafood during Lent 2026 or any Friday of the year.

If you would like to help volunteer for Lent at the club, packing dinners, helping serve, frying fish or washing dishes, please call 330-519-9036. All volunteers receive a complimentary dinner.

**Tim Komara/President/Lodge 66**

### Lenten Fish Fries at Duquesne

DUQUESNE, PA - Duquesne American Croatian Club is open to the public for Fish Fries each Friday during Lent.

We offer a full menu of Lenten specialties for our members and friends, including baked and fried fish and shrimp, as well as pierogies and other delicious sides.

Dine in and take out is available between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Call 412-466-9766.

We hope to see you at our Club on 1111 W. Grant Avenue in Duquesne, PA.

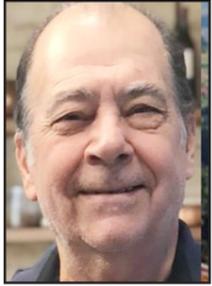
Stay tuned to our Facebook page at Duquesne American Croatian Club for updates and information. Everyone is welcome!

**Paul Cherkes/Lodge 320**

# OBITUARIES



## Emil Riccio



**MUNSTER, IN** – Emil Riccio, age 78, of Munster, Indiana, passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on January 26, 2026.

Emil is survived by his devoted wife of 56 years, Janis Riccio (nee Ganz); beloved children, Josef (Helen) Riccio and Jenna Riccio; cherished grandchildren, Petar Riccio and Luci Riccio; his brothers, Benny (Carol) Riccio and Louie (Leslie) Riccio; sister, Lena (late, Michael) Storino; along with several loving nieces, nephews, cousins and many dear friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Michael and Carmela (nee Verta) Riccio.

Born and raised in Italy, Emil later made his home in the United States, where he attended George Washington High School on the East Side of Chicago. He proudly worked as a union bricklayer until starting his successful career at North American Refractories, from where he earned his retirement.

Emil also served as a Member of the Board of Advisors of the CFU Junior Cultural Federation, reflecting his dedication to service and leadership within his community.

Emil enjoyed golf and was also known for his talents as a winemaker and salumiere; making and curing homemade Italian soppressata and capicola. An avid gardener, Emil took great pride in his garden—especially his cherished fig trees.

Above all else, Emil's greatest joy was his family, particularly the time spent with his grandchildren, who brought endless pride and happiness to his life.

A Memorial Celebration was held on February 7, 2026, at Solan-Pruzin Funeral Home, Schererville, IN.

The Family of Emil Riccio

## Frank Obrovac



**UNIONTOWN, PA** - Frank Obrovac, age 90, of Uniontown, PA, passed away January 12, 2026 in Ruby Memorial Hospital.

He was born May 12, 1935 in Uniontown, PA, son of the late Mile Obrovac and Mary Sabatula Obrovac.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his wife, Oma Jean Savage Obrovac; brothers, George Obrovac, Michael Obrovac and infant brother, Eli Obrovac; sisters, Anna Lalakulich, Mary Rabatin, Dorothy O'lonc, Christina Murin, Barbara Obrovac and infant sister, Agnes.

Frank was a 1953 graduate of Uniontown High School. He worked as a service repairman for Sears. Frank was a member of Fayette County Horse Owners Association and a member of Croatian Lodge 72. He enjoyed playing the lottery, cattle farming and his morning visits with the crew at McDonalds. Frank served in the United States Army during Vietnam.

Left to cherish Frank's memory are his daughter Holly Lynn Obrovac of Alamogordo, NM and longtime friend, Betty Greely.

Arrangements were entrusted to the Andrew D. Ferguson Funeral Home & Crematories, Inc., Uniontown, PA, where family and friends were received. A service celebrating Frank's life was held at the funeral home with Rev. Bev Roscoe officiating. Interment followed in Mt. Saint Macrina Cemetery.

May he rest in Eternal Peace.

Catherine Brnich/Secretary

## Henry W. Kretschmaier Jr.



**PITTSBURGH, PA** - Henry "Hank" W. Kretschmaier, Jr., age 92, of Middletown, DE, passed away on February 4, 2026.

Born in Etna, PA, to the late Anna (Rozankovic) and Henry W. Kretschmaier, Hank was a man of great intellect, integrity, and an even deeper love for his family.

A proud 1955 graduate of Mount St. Mary's College, Hank had a distinguished 30-year career running a food lab at the FDA. He was a dedicated member of the Croatian Fraternal

Union (CFU), a heritage so important to him that he ensured all of his children and grandchildren were members as well. He was a longtime member of Svi Sveti CFU Lodge 1 of Pittsburgh, PA.

An active community volunteer, he enjoyed sports, harness racing, and playing Santa, which led to a prestigious invitation to the White House. His "happy place" remained on his porch in Ocean City, MD.

Hank is survived by his beloved wife, Roselyn (Yonko); daughters Michelle (Joe) Hussey, Michon Kretschmaier, and Sheri Kretschmaier; and four grandchildren: J.P., Jr. (Rachael), Christopher (Alicia), Alexis (Jake), and Nicholas (Molly). He is also survived by six great-grandchildren; brothers, Regis (Joan) and David (Linda) Kretschmaier; and cousins, Vincent (late wife Mary) Jaksic and Richard Savor.

He was predeceased by aunts and uncles Mary (Leonard) Jaksic, Barbara (Joseph) Savor, Millie (Michael) Malo, and Joseph (Nada) Rozankovic.

He was a true family man who always put others first.

The Family of Henry W. Kretschmaier, Jr.

## Lodge 533 Plans Spring Meeting

**BATTLE CREEK, MI** - Come join us for the CFU Lodge 533 April meeting. The meeting will be held on Sunday, April 12. Meeting start time is 10:30 a.m. at the PNA Club, 15 Claire St., Battle Creek, MI.

The men of the PNA will prepare a delicious buffet. Come and enjoy breakfast with your fellow members.

Our special incentive award is still active and waiting for another winner. You could be next if you are present at the April meeting. We hope to see you Sunday, April 12th.

Sharon Muselin/Secretary

## Croatian Mass Schedule for March

**WASHINGTON, DC** - In March our Holy Mass schedule will be as follows:

**March 15** at Our Lady of Victory, 4835 MacArthur Blvd. NW, Washington, DC 20007. Stations of the Cross at 12:30 p.m. Holy Mass afterwards.

**March 22** at 11 am at the Church of St. Nicholas (Pittsburgh, PA), 24 Maryland Ave., Millvale, PA 15209. Confessions before Mass

**March 28** (Saturday) Vigil Mass of Palm Sunday at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Victory, 4835 MacArthur Blvd. NW, Washington, DC 20007. Opportunity for Confession beforehand.

**March 29**, Palm Sunday at 5 p.m. in the church of the Assumption of B.V.M. in Prince of Peace Parish, 815 South 2nd St., Steelton, PA 17113. Confessions starting at 4 p.m.

Mir i Dobro! Peace and Goodness!

Father Maurus Dolčić

## ★ GUIDELINES ★ for Submission of Obituaries

The *Zajednicar* understands that the death of a loved one is a difficult time for family members. Obituaries are among the most important items we publish in the *Zajednicar* since we are respectful of all CFU members and are grateful for their contributions to our Fraternal Family.

In light of the increasing number of lengthy obituaries which have been submitted in recent years, we ask all members submitting obituaries to please limit an obituary to two typed pages, double spaced (approximately 250 words). Be sure to include all basic obituary information include the CFU lodge affiliation of the deceased. Please note that eulogies, in most instances, will not be published. A photo may accompany the obituary, provided the photo submitted is of printable quality. Obituaries are published in the order they are received. We request that obituaries be submitted in typewritten copy by mail or by e-mail: editor@cfu.org. We reserve the right to edit information provided in all obituaries in order to maintain the style adopted for the obituary pages.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Editors

## Lodge 354 Save the Dates

**COKEBURG, PA** - At the Annual Meeting held by St. George Lodge 354 of Cokeburg, PA, the officers and members determined the dates of their most popular annual events for 2026.

Please mark your calendars and plan on joining them this year:

- **March 22** – Spring Vendor Show
- **March 28** – Annual Fešta Tamburaša
- **April 4** – Easter Egg Hunt
- **April 12** – Jr. Tamburitzans' Cash Bash
- **April 25 & 26** – Annual St. George Celebration
- **August 2** – Jr. Tamburitzans' Annual Golf Outing
- **September 12** – Annual Picnic
- **December 13** – Christmas Party

Watch the *Zajednicar* and listen to the Croatian Hour every Sunday afternoon between 11 am - 12:30 pm on WEDO 810 am for details as these dates near. We hope to welcome you at one or many of these events during the year.

The officers and members of Lodge 354 extend their wishes to all CFU members for a happy and healthy New Year!

Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras/President



## Diaspora Friendship Games Set for Split and Brač

**SPLIT, CROATIA** - The inaugural Diaspora Friendship Games will take place in Split and on the island of Brač from July 16-20, 2026, bringing together Croatian emigrants, athletes, and friends of Croatia from around the world.

The project is initiated and organized by the American Croatian Congress (ACC), with the participation of partner diaspora organizations.

The grand opening of the event will take place on July 16 at 7:30 PM at the Meštrović Gallery in Split.

Hosted by Aspira University of Applied Sciences, the Games will feature a variety of sports including tennis, pickleball, beach volleyball, bocce, five-a-side football, basketball, golf, and stand-up paddling. Cultural elements will also be part of the program, highlighting Croatian heritage and the global Croatian community.

### Participants and International Significance

The event will bring together Croatian Paralympians, recreational athletes, diaspora members from all continents, and friends of other nationalities living in countries where Croats reside. Representatives of the Church, Croatian war veterans, diplomats, and consular officials are also expected at the grand opening.

The cities of Split and Los Angeles are sister cities, and we expect the personal attendance of Janice Hahn, Los Angeles County Supervisor, Tim McOsker, Councilmember for the 15th District, and Rudy Svorinich, former Councilmember who, 32 years ago, was one of the key figures in establishing the sister city relationship between Los Angeles and Split. Their presence will give the event a strong international dimension.

### Project Goals

The main goals of the Diaspora Friendship Games are:

-Strengthening the connection between the Croatian diaspora and the homeland

-Encouraging return visits, especially by young people, and active involvement of diaspora descendants in Croatia's cultural, social, and economic life

-Building lasting bonds through sports, meetings, and intercultural exchange

Participants are expected to include amateur athletes, Croatian Paralympians, members of the diaspora, and guests from countries with Croatian communities.

The connection between culture and sport will be presented at the ceremonial opening of the Games at the Meštrović Gallery through the project "The Cravat of Distinguished Croatian Women and Men of the Diaspora." As part of the project, an exhibition will be opened and the second, expanded edition of the book "Croats United by the Cravat," by author Branka Bezić Filipović, will be presented.

The project is supported and personally attended by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, Andrej Plenković. The book cover features an artwork by the world-renowned artist and Australian Croat, Charles Billich.

On the final day of the gathering at Aspira University of Applied Sciences, another notable exhibition will be held by the Society of the Brethren of the Croatian Dragon, marking the 1100th anniversary of the Croatian Kingdom. On this occasion, a ceremonial awards event will take place, including the presentation of medals, recognitions and certificates of appreciation.

The Diaspora Friendship Games are intended to become an annual event rotating through different regions of Croatia, strengthening ties between the homeland and Croatians worldwide. The 2027 Games are planned for Osijek and the Slavonia region.

Those interested in participating in the sporting competitions can learn more and register online at <https://diasporafriendshipgames.com/>.

Steve Rukavina  
President/NFCACF

# COOKING Corner

## Baked Horseradish Salmon

1 salmon fillet (1 lb.)  
1 Tbsp. butter, melted  
1 Tbsp. prepared horseradish, drained  
2 Tbsp. lemon juice  
1/4 tsp. garlic powder  
1/4 tsp. pepper

Place salmon, skin side down, in an 11x7-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray.

In a small bowl, combine butter, horseradish, lemon juice, garlic powder and pepper; spread over salmon.

Bake uncovered at 375° for 25 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork.

## Dill Potato Wedges

1 Tbsp. olive oil  
1 pkg. (20 oz.) refrigerated red potato wedges  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/4 tsp. pepper  
2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese  
1 tsp. snipped fresh dill or 1/4 tsp. dill weed.

In large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add the red potato wedges. Sprinkle with salt & pepper. Cook 10-12 minutes until tender and golden brown, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; sprinkle with cheese and dill.

All Recipes from the Cooking Corner Archives

### Attention All Cooking Corner Contributors:

All submissions for the **Zajedničar Cooking Corner** are greatly appreciated. However, since we do not operate a test kitchen to validate all recipes received, we kindly ask everyone to please review each recipe submitted to ensure its accuracy. We realize many "Z" readers enjoy trying the recipes and recognize the fact that cooking and baking involves considerable time, effort, and expense. Missing ingredients and incomplete details result in disappointing finished products. We appreciate your accuracy because we want all of our **Cooking Corner** readers to be happy cooks and satisfied bakers!

—Editors

**RECIPES WANTED!** If you have a Croatian or American culinary specialty of which you're quite proud, please submit it to the "Z" by addressing it to **Zajedničar** at 100 Delaney Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15235, faxing to 412-823-1594 or e-mailing editor@cfu.org.



## Milwaukee Croatian Tamburitzans Spring Concert

**MILWAUKEE, WI** – Join us for our annual Milwaukee Croatian Tamburitzans Concert, proudly celebrating more than four decades of music, dance, and cultural pride!

Our 2026 Concert will be held on Saturday, April 25th, at 3 PM, at the Saber Performing Arts Center, located inside Franklin High School, 8222 S. 51st St., Franklin, WI. This year, we are pleased to welcome the talented American Zagreb Jr. Tamburitzans from Cleveland, Ohio, for a special guest performance.

The concert will be led by Musical Director Kristin Aasen, along with Assistant Directors Molly Krejcarek, Heidi Spellman, Angie Dougherty, and Mara Braovac. John Tate will serve as this year's emcee. We will proudly honor our graduating senior, Adrijana Stelzer.

The post-concert celebration is at St. Augustine Hall, 2025 S. 67th Place, West Allis, WI. There, you will find a combination of great food, a fully stocked bar, and tambura music/dancing provided by the incredibly talented T.S. Hrvatski Sokoli!

The menu will feature a buffet with chicken, sausage, and all your favorite sides. The bar will be stocked with your favorite Miller products, Croatian pivo, vino, and all of your favorite Croatian cordials. Živil! And of course, indulge in our wide variety of homemade desserts for purchase, including some of the Croatian favorites like strudel, which sells out fast!

In addition, we will be featuring a variety of themed raffle baskets. There is something for everyone, so be sure to get your tickets and take a chance at winning some fantastic prizes.

Concert tickets can be purchased in advance by visiting our website at [www.milwaukeecroatiantamburitzans.org](http://www.milwaukeecroatiantamburitzans.org). General admission is \$15 for adults, and children 10 and under are free.

We look forward to welcoming you for an afternoon of wonderful music and celebration!

Tracy Farrell/Lodge 993

## Mezick's Lamb Available For Easter Sunday

**EXPORT, PA** - We are pleased to announce that we will be serving hot barbecued lamb for Easter Sunday, April 5, starting from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at 236 Silvis Rd., Export, PA 15632.

Please place your order, no later than March 24, by calling 724-468-6529. Don't wait, place your order as soon as possible.

God bless all CFU members, our friends and customers. Happy Easter, everyone! Stay safe and eat more lamb!

The Mezick's/Lodge 141



## Easter Egg Hunt in Cokeburg

**COKEBURG, PA** – The Easter Bunny is returning to the Croatian Home in Cokeburg and will be tucking hundreds of colored Easter eggs all over the place for kids to find!

"Guardian Angel" Nest 122 and "St. George" CFU Lodge 354, Cokeburg, PA, will sponsor an Easter Egg Hunt for our Nest members and all children in the Cokeburg-Bentworth area on Saturday, April 4, beginning at 12 noon sharp.

The fun afternoon for all community children will be held on the property immediately behind the Cokeburg Croatian Home which is located at 26 Grant St.

There will be plenty of Easter eggs hidden all over the picnic area. Special prizes will be awarded to those children finding the largest number of Easter eggs. Additional prizes will also be awarded to many lucky youngsters.

Participants will be divided into two age groups for the event. Group one will include children ages three to five years old and group two will include children ages six to eight years old.

Following the egg hunt, all children, parents and guests will proceed to the upper hall of the Croatian Home for refreshments, hot dogs and cookies served by the ladies of Lodge 354.

As in previous years, the Easter Bunny will be on hand at the Easter Egg Hunt party to greet the children and to take photos with interested youngsters.

All parents are encouraged to bring their children, ages three to eight, to participate in this fun activity on Saturday, April 4, at the Cokeburg Croatian Home, compliments of CFU Lodge 354 and Nest 122.

Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras  
President

## CFU Lodge 978 Hosts Party

**PHOENIX, AZ** - CFU Lodge 978 will be hosting a "Cinco de Mayo" Party on Saturday, May 9. Bring your swimsuit and favorite Mexican appetizer. The event starts at 1 p.m.

For more information, contact Sonja Schroder at 602-405-2059.

Sonja Schroder/Lodge 978

CULINARY DELIGHTS • SPECIAL DINNERS • BAKE SALES  
LUNCHEONS • FUNDRAISERS • BREAKFAST MEETINGS  
BREAKFAST MEETINGS • LUNCHEONS  
BAKE SALES • SPECIAL DINNERS • CULINARY DELIGHTS  
LUNCHEONS • FUNDRAISERS • BREAKFAST MEETINGS  
BAKE SALES • SPECIAL DINNERS • CULINARY DELIGHTS  
LUNCHEONS • FUNDRAISERS • BREAKFAST MEETINGS  
BAKE SALES • SPECIAL DINNERS • CULINARY DELIGHTS

## St. Lucy Church Easter Bake Sale

**TROY, MI** - It is that time of year! Easter Sunday is around the corner and, once again, the Christian Women Society of St. Lucy Croatian Catholic Church will be sponsoring an Easter Bake Sale that will include Apple and Cheese Strudels, as well as an assortment of pastries and cookies on Sunday, March 29, by popular demand.

We will be offering the apple and cheese strudels by **PREORDERS ONLY**. Orders can be picked up following the 10 AM mass between the hours of 11 AM and 12:30 PM. St. Lucy Croatian Catholic Church is located at 200 East Wattles. Troy, MI 48085.

At time of pick-up, you will be able to buy a box of specially made Croatian Cookies made by our expert bakers while the supply lasts. No Preorders. You cannot miss this great opportunity. Once you taste these cookies, you will want more.

This is the time when the women of our parish get together and make the delicious delicacies that were made the way our grandmothers made them. The strudel dough is homemade and stretched to perfection. In other words, you cannot buy these delicacies in any store or bakery the way our special ladies bake at St. Lucy Church. This has always been a tradition in our homes during Easter to have many delicious pastries especially, apple and cheese strudel, and cookies to be on our tables to share these wonderful delicacies with family and friends.

Just a reminder: we will have an assortment of cookies and treats for you to choose from while the quantities last. So come early; if not, you snooze, you lose.

For the apple and cheese strudels, the cost per strip is \$15. To place your preorders, please call Violet Cunko, 586-412-7016, or Mary Jurich at 586-268-9899. All proceeds will be donated to St. Lucy Croatian Catholic Church. The deadline for preorders is March 24.

Violet Cunko/Zora Lodge 351

## St. Lucy's Church Annual Sarma Dinner

**TROY, MI** - Back by popular demand the Christian Women Society of St. Lucy Croatian Catholic Church is once again sponsoring their very popular Sarma (stuffed cabbage) Dinner, on Sunday, April 12.

The Sarma (stuffed cabbage) is made from sour (pickled) heads of cabbage, rice and seasoned meat that is cooked with sauerkraut and smoked meat, just like our mothers and grandmothers made this dish. Dinners will include two Sarmas (cabbage rolls), mashed potatoes, vegetables, bread and dessert. The price of this delicious dinner is \$20.

Once again, we will be doing carry out and dine in dinners at St. Lucy Croatian Catholic Church located at 200 E. Wattles Rd., Troy, MI 48085. Dinners are preorders only. Orders will be available to be picked up or you may dine in on April 12th between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

To place your preorder, please contact Violet Cunko at 586-412-7016 or Mary Jurich at 586-268-9899. Deadline for all preorders is Wednesday, April 8.

All dinners are to be paid by cash or checks payable to St. Lucy Croatian Women Society. All proceeds will be donated to St. Lucy Croatian Catholic Church.

At this time, we would like to thank everyone for supporting St. Lucy Croatian Catholic Church. It is greatly appreciated. Thank you for making our dinners a success.

Violet Cunko/Zora Lodge 351

## CFU Lodge 170 Easter Bake Sale

**MERRILLVILLE, IN** - The Croatian Sons Lodge 170 of Merrillville, IN will be selling apple and cheese strudels and nut rolls for the Easter Holiday.

The strudels and nut rolls are frozen for \$18 each. You will be provided with cooking instructions for the strudels.

Please call 219-765-3835 to place your orders. Orders are due by March 20th.

Order pick up will be from 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 28th, at the Croatian Center, 8550 Taft St., Merrillville, IN.

Thank you for your support.

Kathy O'Neill/Vice President

## Easter Strudel Sale in Farrell

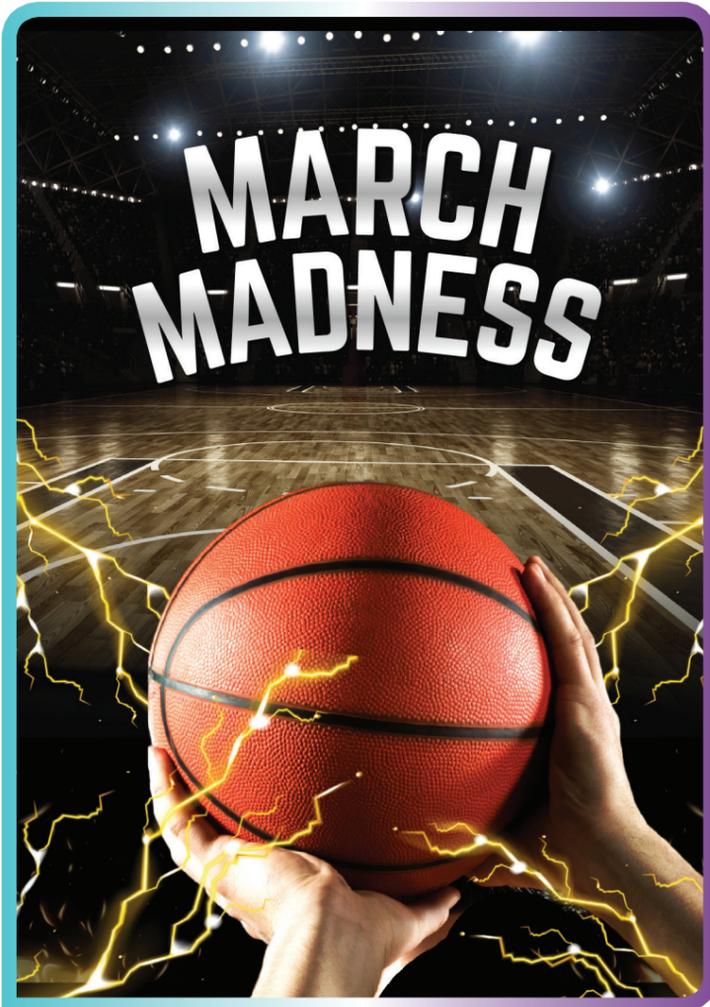
**FARRELL, PA** - Our brothers and sisters at Farrell Lodge 126 are preparing delicious frozen strudels for the upcoming Easter holiday. Buy now and bake them fresh at home for your convenience!

You can place an order for Apple, Cheese, or Cherry Strudels at \$18 each. Simply call or text Tom at 330-502-4671 or email [FarrellStrudel@yahoo.com](mailto:FarrellStrudel@yahoo.com) to place your order. The deadline to place an order is March 20th.

Pick-up will be on April 3rd, from 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM, at the Croatian Home, 412 Staunton St., Farrell, PA.

Don't miss out on this delicious treat! Order Now!

Charlotte Russo/Lodge 126



# CFU Junior Nest KIDS PAGE

The **Zajedničar** welcomes children and young adults to submit articles of interest and personal artwork for the CFU Kids Page which is published monthly in the first issue of each month. Original stories and artwork by CFU Nest Members may be submitted by e-mail to: [editor@croatianfraternalunion.org](mailto:editor@croatianfraternalunion.org) or by mail to: Editor/Junior Page, Croatian Fraternal Union, 100 Delaney Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15235.



**HERE IS LENA DICKINSON**, daughter of Kelly and Mark Dickinson, granddaughter of Vicky Perpich Fulks and great-granddaughter of the late Rudy Perpich, former CFU sports and education director. She is a member of Detroit Nest 318 and will be turning one on March 7th. *Happy 1st Birthday, Lena!*



**BAKER JOSEPH STUBLJAR**, one of CFU's newest members, was born April 1, 2025. He loves watching his favorite baseball team, the Red Sox, with his proud grandpop, James Stubljar, from CFU Lodge 13 Steelton, PA. As he anticipates celebrating his first birthday soon, Baker knows he is covered well, being a member of Nest 15 in Steelton. A big shout out to his dad, former Sveti Lovro Junior Tammie, Niko, and mom, Melissa Stubljar. *Happy 1st Birthday*, Baker, from all of us in CFU!

## Conversational Expressions In Croatian

- PJEŠAČITI – TO WALK
- MUZEJ – MUSEUM
- KĆI – DAUGHTER
- HLAČE – PANTS
- IZBOR – SELECTION
- ETIKETA – LABEL
- ETNOLOGIJA – ETHNOLOGY
- PROUČAVANJE – RESEARCH
- KAMION – TRUCK
- TEKSTIL – TEXTILE
- SMEĐE – BROWN
- JEDNOSTAVNO – SIMPLE
- NAVRATITI – TO STOP BY
- ZADRŽATI – TO STAY
- OBJASNITI – TO EXPLAIN

## GREAT-GRANDMA'S "THREE MUNCH-KINS"

...Enrolled by Great-Grandmother Ivanka Kuzmanovic as the newest member of CFU Nest 1959 of Milwaukee, WI, **BENNETT YOUNG** joins his two older brothers Luka and Cooper Young. They are the fourth generation of CFU American Croatian Silver Strings Lodge 1959. Their parents are Ryan and Danielle Young of Greendale, WI. Maternal grandfather is Tomislav Kuzmanovic, and maternal great-grandparents are Boris and Ivanka Kuzmanovic, all of Greendale. We proudly welcome these three handsome boys into our CFU Fraternal Family!



## MAKING EVERY-ONE SMILE

is what **MADELINE QUEAR** does best! Born on March 27, 2025 to parents Lindsey and John Quear, Madeline is the granddaughter of longtime CFU Home Office employee Cheryl Quear who is overjoyed to watch Madeline grow and do fun things. Madeline joins her cousins, Falynn, Corrin and Paisley Whitlock as a member of CFU Nest 203 of Trafford, PA. We are delighted to welcome her as a sweet little addition to our CFU Family!



## MARCH HAPPY BIRTHDAYS

(Junior Members Transferring into the Adult Lodge)

- 1 **Kansas City, KS**  
Kylee I. Teter
  - 7 **Denver, CO**  
Crew L. Mahoney  
Talyn R. Probasco
  - 10 **Merrillville, IN**  
Olive J. Eenigenburg
  - 15 **Steelton, PA**  
Molly C. Fagan
  - 17 **Chicago, IL**  
Jacob Lessek
  - 32 **Uniontown, PA**  
Ty Jonathan Whoric
  - 86 **Cleveland, OH**  
Marija K. Vukovic
  - 98 **Benld, IL**  
Xzavier A. Burch
  - 111 **Pittsburgh, PA**  
Kaylee E. Graf
  - 122 **Cokeburg, PA**  
Jacob S. Wood
  - 143 **E. Pittsburgh, PA**  
Dominick P. Woods
  - 157 **Midland, PA**  
Rade Milorad Vignovic
  - 181 **Gilbert, MN**  
Eric J. Bittmann
  - 318 **Detroit, MI**  
Simon Beljak
  - 459 **New York City, NY**  
Tate S. Duncan
  - 467 **N.S. Pittsburgh, PA**  
Martin J. Maruschak
  - 576 **Aliquippa, PA**  
Tyler T. Hill  
Kellen G. Huchko
  - 1994 **Milwaukee, WI**  
Isabella S. Strasser
- CANADA**
- 515 **Toronto, ON**  
Maja Kapulica



## CFU Lodge 5 and Croatian Hall Host Easter Egg Hunt

**JOHNSTOWN, PA** – CFU Lodge 5 and the Croatian Hall in Johnstown welcomes children to their Kids' Easter Egg Hunt. The fun event will be held on Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. until 12 noon, for members and children up to age 12.

The egg hunt will be divided into age groups. The event includes an Easter egg hunt, Golden egg prizes and a fun craft. A photo op also will be available.

We will have donuts and juice for the children.

Pre-registration is required to participate by March 20.

Carol Booth/Lodge 5

### WORD SEARCH

## March Madness

E B U Z Z E R B E A T E R E C U A R  
T N E M A N R U O T T R L E O S G B  
I I D B I G D A N C E B L G N S L B  
R U O F L A N I F G B B H N F E E A  
R E V O N R U T C U B T O I E N L S  
A T N M A R C H B I F T O N R D U K  
N E T E I I C C R F N E P N E A D E  
N R R A E H F D O C M D S I N M E T  
U E L T T T E F T M E C E W C E H B  
I G L C S L X E O E P W O R E C C A  
D I A I B N A I O U S E M E E R S L  
E O A U T M R E S L L A T E T L T L  
F N O R N E G L A T U H I I F D L E  
E D S A U E E M A P E E N R T N I A  
N A D S L W D I S A N E I I B I I R  
S T E L E U L E G N N T W E A A O W  
E E O C N N T H W H E I V S D N L N  
D C T K B R A C K E T S S O L D O L

AIR BALL	DEFENSE	REGION
BASKETBALL	DOUBLE DRIBBLE	SCHEDULE
BIG DANCE	ELITE EIGHT	SEED
BRACKET	FINAL FOUR	SLAM DUNK
BUBBLE	FOUL	SWEET SIXTEEN
BUZZER BEATER	HOOPS	TEAM
CINDERELLA	LOSS	TOURNAMENT
COLLEGE	MADNESS	TURNOVER
COMPETITION	MARCH	UPSET
CONFERENCE	NET	WINNING

# Make Your IRA Contribution Today

Any time is a good time to invest, but investing earlier can maximize the compounding effect on your money. Consider making your 2026 IRA contribution as early as possible.

## IRA CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

Tax Year	Under Age 50	Age 50 or Older
2025	\$7,000	\$8,000
2026	\$7,500	\$8,600

**Note:** You may not contribute more than your taxable compensation for the year.

**Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras**  
National Secretary/Treasurer

## IRA CONTRIBUTION COUPON

If you wish to make a deposit into an existing account with the Croatian Fraternal Union, simply complete this coupon and return it to our Home Office.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Certificate No. \_\_\_\_\_

Deposit Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Traditional IRA for Year 2026 \_\_\_\_\_

Roth IRA for Year 2026 \_\_\_\_\_

## Ohio Fraternal Alliance 2026 Scholarship Program

**LOWELLVILLE, OH** - The Ohio Fraternal Alliance annually awards a college scholarship to a graduating high school senior up to \$500.

Scholarship applications may be obtained from any Ohio Fraternal Alliance member fraternal home office or contact: Laurie Fox, lfox@nsslife.org or call 330-717-4705.

### Scholarship Applicant Eligibility Requirements:

1. Applicant must be an Ohio resident. Applicant must be a current youth policy member of a fraternal society, or included in a family member policy that does not have youth policies belonging to the Ohio Fraternal Alliance, and be in good standing.

2. Applicant must be a 2026 high school graduate attending an accredited college, university, trade or technical school, or school of nursing as a full-time student in the Fall.

3. Applicant must submit a minimum 150-word essay entitled: How I have been personally involved in my Fraternal Society and how I plan to be involved in

the Future.

4. Applicant must submit a separate list for each of the following categories:

- a.) Church related activities
- b.) Local community and volunteer activities
- c.) School activities/clubs

5. Applicant must submit a letter of recommendation from your local Fraternal Society officer explaining your involvement in your Fraternal Society.

6. Essay, all activities, and letter will be judged. Completed

application must be dated and submitted by April 1, 2026, and sent to: OFA Scholarship Committee, Attn: Laurie Fox, 6656 Lowellville Rd., Lowellville, OH 44436. lfox@nsslife.org (Email submissions preferred)

Judging will be done by the Ohio Fraternal Alliance Scholarship Committee. Scholarship grants will be announced and awarded following the Spring OFA Board of Directors meeting. If for any reason the recipient does not attend the school after receiving the grant, it must be returned to the Ohio Fraternal Alliance.

Laurie Fox/OFA

## Consular Days in Pittsburgh and Cleveland

**WASHINGTON, DC** - The Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Washington, DC will hold Consular Days in **Pittsburgh, PA** in 2026 at the premises of the Croatian Fraternal Union, 100 Delaney Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15235 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., **(by appointment only)** on the following dates: **April 9; May 14; and June 11.**

The Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Washington, DC will hold consular days in Eastlake, OH at the premises of the American-Croatian Lodge Cardinal Stepinac, 34900 Lakeshore Blvd, Eastlake, OH 44095 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., **(by appointment only)** on the following dates: **April 10; May 15; and June 12.**

### IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Appointments can be scheduled via e-mail: crocons.washington@mvep.hr or by phone: +1 202-588-5899 ext. 2. Please include the type of a request and your contact details.

Mihovil Pazin

Embassy of Croatia Washington, DC

## CFU Lodge 6 March Meeting

**RANKIN, PA** - Please mark your calendar to attend the regular monthly meeting of St. Nicholas Lodge 6 on Wednesday March 18, starting at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will take place in the All Purpose Room of the Rankin Croatian Home, 236 4th St., Rankin, PA 15104.

We hope to see many of our lodge members at this meeting.

Janet Craig/President

## CFU SCHOLARSHIP FUND

<b>PITTSBURGH, PA</b> – United CFU Lodges of Fayette, Greene, Washington and Westmoreland Counties.....	100.00
<b>MILWAUKEE, WI</b> – Amanda and John Tate, in memory of Loretta Lucas.....	50.00
Towards the Jennifer Lucas Scholarship Fund	
<b>OCONOMOWOC, WI</b> – Lori and Grant Steinmann, in memory of Loretta Lucas.....	25.00
Towards the Jennifer Lucas Scholarship Fund	
<b>CHICAGO, IL</b> – “Nezavisna Hrvatska” Lodge 848, in memory of John Kerpan.....	100.00
<b>AMBRIDGE, PA</b> – “St. Nicholas” Lodge 304, in memory of Mary A. Sasinovich, Daniel Cavish, Jeanette L. Kelly, Elsie M. Umberger, Elizabeth Douglas, Sylvia E. Higgins, Pamela P. Weigand, Carolyn Cipparone, Edward J. Umberger and Linda Lee Hunter.....	250.00
Towards the John P. Plesh Scholarship Fund	
<b>MORTON, IL</b> – Ruth Sepich, in memory of Robert Pavich and Emil Riccio.....	100.00
<b>JOLIET, IL</b> – Dave and Val Jelinek, in memory of Bob Pavich.....	50.00
Towards the “Sloboda” Lodge 32 Frank M. Jerbich Scholarship Fund	
<b>JOLIET, IL</b> – Croatian Cultural Club, in memory of Bob Pavich.....	100.00
Towards the “Sloboda” Lodge 32 Frank M. Jerbich Scholarship Fund	
<b>SAULT STE. MARIE, ON</b> – “Sv. Trojstvo” Lodge 919.....	100.00
<b>TOTAL THIS REPORT</b> .....	<b>\$875.00</b>
<b>TOTAL COLLECTED</b> .....	<b>\$875.00</b>

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## DONATION

# CFU SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Yes! I want to CONTRIBUTE \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the CFU Scholarship Fund in order to aid CFU students seeking a higher education. Please include the following message or memorial with my contribution.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



Make all checks payable to CFU Scholarship Foundation and mail to:  
Croatian Fraternal Union  
100 Delaney Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235