

All Slavonic American Association

News

The third social event of the year is just around the corner . . . see more information inside . . .

Summer Festival attended by 100+

Our 110th Anniversary was celebrated in style with our Annual Summer Festival, and over 100 members, family, and friends joined in the fun. Those who attended the annual Festival, held at St. Peter the Apostle's Social Hall in Fresno on August 3rd, were treated to a fabulous feast and superb entertainment . . . it was a wonderful event!



Bob Samarzich and his tamburitza band provided the music, **Nick Pavlovich** and his crew barbecued the delicious lamb steaks and chicken, and the kitchen brigade, coordinated by **Marilyn Bahn**, added the scrumptious mostaccioli, zaljanica, and salad. Then there were the many mouth-watering desserts brought by the ladies! It was a fabulous afternoon of socializing, eating, and celebrating our culture!

Following the meal we all took part in the raffle drawing - this year's scholarship honorees were hard at work all through the afternoon selling tickets for the raffle, and they were busy delivering prizes out to the lucky recipients as the winning numbers were called. Thank you to our Social Director **Joann Hall** and President **Louie Obradovich** for providing such a multitude of unique and useful raffle prizes!

Next Summer the Festival will be held in Delano—plan now to be

Scholarship Recipients for 2014

The ASAA, through the Scholarship Committee chaired by **Yvonne Duran**, has this year honored two recent high school graduates with scholarships for their upcoming college year. We had a chance to meet these very deserving recipients at the recent Summer Festival; we also “put them to work” as they sold raffle tickets in support of the Scholarship Fund and delivered prizes to the raffle winners. If you had the chance to interact with them I’m sure you will agree that we could not have found two more gracious, energetic, and congenial young people!

This year’s Scholarship Recipients are:

Elizabeth Papac is the granddaughter of Betty and the late Lou Papac. Elizabeth, who lives with her family in Idaho, has been home-schooled throughout her elementary and high school years and now looks forward to continuing her education at the College of Southern Idaho in their Biology program. She has plans to focus in the area of dental health.



Max Cusator is the grandson of Nick and Fran Pavlovich. Max is a water polo player and a graduate of Buchanan High School in Clovis. He will be continuing his education at California State University Long Beach studying Kinesiology. His plans are for his continued education to lead him to a career in Physical Therapy.



ASAA is pleased to be able to extend to these very deserving students our best wishes for successful college experiences.

Our Scholarship Program and Scholarship Fund, recently re-named the **Tom and Martha Slaven Scholarship Fund**, would not be successful without the efforts and support of our members. You faithfully support the fund with generous donations each year. Thank you.

Scholarships 2015

If you are the parent or grandparent of a high school senior, be watching this newsletter in the Spring for the announcements regarding the scholarship application process and the timelines involved.

Harvest Festival and Grape Stomp!

Have you ever been to a grape stomp? Would you like to go and take part?

The good news: **Opolo Winery**, located in Paso Robles, hosts their harvest festival each October complete with ethnic dancing (Serbian/Croatian), whole roasted lamb, and of course, grape stomping. The dates this year are October 17-18. **As of this writing** there are still reservations available for the Friday evening festivities - all-you-can-eat buffet dinner at 5:30, live (Slavic) music and dancing, and of course ... the grape stomp!



The not-so-good news: the Saturday evening festival (same great dinner, entertainment and stomping) is sold out! Names are being placed on a wait-list, however by the time this newsletter reaches your home, the Friday evening may also be sold out. Call **Opolo Vineyards** events at **(805) 238-9593**.

But ... the better news: you can still take part in the Saturday/Sunday afternoon BBQ, **October 18/19**, 11:00am - 4:00pm; Dine on roasted lamb, carne asada tacos, beans and all the fixings ... and of course Opolo wine!

No reservations necessary for the BBQ.
See more information at <http://www.opolo.com>

Holiday Social . . .

The third social event of the year is just around the corner ... well, maybe a *little* further away than that ... but nevertheless, it's time to mark our calendars and make preparations, because once the season is upon us, events start to whirl past like a Kansas twister.

The date of our Holiday Luncheon will be **Sunday, December 14** and the location will be the **Lamp Liter Inn** in Visalia. More specific information will be coming to you as we get closer to the date, but do mark your calendars — you will not want to miss this special holiday gathering.



Who do you think you are?

Now *that* was a question my mother used to ask me when she thought I had gotten a little "sassy" or a little "too big for my britches"!

But today it's the name of a popular television show ... a show that follows personalities (usually actors or entertainers) as they seek to uncover their roots ... find the members of their ancestral tree, and discover and share a bit of their heritage and cultural history.

In our last edition we learned a little personal history about three of our newest board members and where the roots of their Slav ancestors were planted. We continue in this issue with three more board members ...



Joann Hall, Social Chairperson, had a 3-year stint working at Alta Hospital in Dinuba after graduation from high school, but since then has enjoyed a long career as a homemaker and farmer's wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Joann's mother (nee Bjelokosic) immigrated c. 1912 at age 9 from Dubrovnik and later married Joann's father (Maikovich) who had immigrated earlier from Gromaca, a small village north of Dubrovnik. Family members still reside in the same home in Gromaca. Does this sound familiar? Yes, her family roots are the same as Susan Gonsalves' - they are Aunt and Niece! Joann enjoys painting (oil and watercolor), playing bridge, activities with various women's clubs, and most of all, her large extended Hixon-Hall family.

Nick Pavlovich, Vice President, is a retired City Manager having served the cities of Madera, Selma and Reedley during a 38 year career. His father Mato (Mike) emigrated at age 17 from Zukovica, Hercegovina in 1910 and came to Fresno to join other Slavs from the same region; he worked as a laborer for the Edison Company during the construction of the Big Creek hydro electric facility. Around 1936 he joined Bob Bartulovich as a partner in the Alaska Ice Cream Company until 1958 when they sold the business and retired. Nick's mother Pera (Pearl) (Tomicich), a housewife, emigrated from the island of Hvar, Croatia and came directly to Del Rey, CA in 1936 to join her sister Mandica (Madeline) Papac and her family. Mato and Pearl were introduced by friends, met, fell in love and were married in 1937.

Nick and his wife **Fran** (Radovanovich), whose parents emigrated from the island of Korcula, Croatia, have visited all three of their ancestral homes on two occasions (1984 and 1995) and had the pleasure to meet and spend quality time with aunts, cousins and family friends. In retirement, Nick spends a lot of time playing golf and volunteers as a Senior Advisor for the International City Management Association and the League of California Cities, City Manager's Department.

Louie Obradovich, President, is a retired teacher, coach, and basketball referee with experience in the elementary grades through the university level. Louie's father

continued p. 8

Mark your Calendars — Holiday Social — Sunday, December 14

Happening Around the State . . .

Sunday, October 12: Serbian *Talija Folk Dance Company* to Perform in San Diego

Talija Folk Dance Company from Belgrade, Serbia -- a foot-stomping, colorful tapestry of Serbian and Balkan folk dancers performs music and songs with a live orchestra, and the traditional musical instruments take all on an imaginary journey through Serbia and Eastern Europe.

As an auxiliary organization of **St. George Serbian Orthodox Church**, Morava Folklore Ensemble is proud to showcase Talija's talents and to promote Serbian culture through song and dance.

Dinner will be available from 5pm to 6:30pm on the patio for \$12 per person. Money collected from the dinner will help defray the costs of the performance.

Advance tickets/info: dobriila@cox.net or 760-212-5891

When: Sunday, October 12, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Where: St. George's Serbian Orthodox Church, 3025 Denver Street, San Diego, 92117

Concert: \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door

Saturday, October 18: San Francisco Croatian Heritage Festival

Tamburitza and Klapa music will be featured this year at the 157 year anniversary of the Croatian community in San Francisco. The headliners will be **Sinovi Tamburitza Orchestra** and **Zenska Klapa Ruzmarin** from Vancouver. Traditional Croatian cuisine will be available.

Zenska Klapa Ružmarin is a seven voice women's a cappella singing group that specializes in the popular four-part, close harmony, Croatian folk singing style known as Klapa. The group's repertoire also includes Croatian Liturgical Music and folk songs from continental Croatia. (Ruzmarin is the Croatian word for the herb, Rosemary, an important symbol in Croatia for remembrance and celebration.)

Also, featured will be **Sinovi Tamburitza Orchestra** with John Morovich. Sinovi performs traditional and popular Croatian music featuring the tamburitza, a stringed instrument native to Croatia. Other groups performing include the Slavonian Traveling Band with Lilla Serlegi and Croatian Kolo Group Veseli Hrvati.

Event time: 3:00 pm ~ Traditional Croatian cuisine will be available at the event.

Travel News



The writers at Adriatic Home ask ... "Need reasons to come here....?" and then make a compelling case for visiting beautiful Montenegro ...

There are some beautiful towns dotted along the coast, starting with **Herceg Novi**, which is less than an hour from **Dubrovnik**, stretching down to **Ulcinj**. Regular and cheap local buses make it easy to travel between the coastal hamlets so it's a good move to pick one as your base and explore from there. **Budva** is often a popular choice because it's the biggest.



One of the real beauties in Montenegro is **Kotor**. The town is small and most of the activity is found in the Old Town. You can walk up to the fortress and have a great view of the bay or tackle the hill behind it for a view over the fortress and the town.

Herceg Novi has a nice Old Town and fortress ... you'll find fewer visitors here and more locals going about their day. **Perast** is one of the most beautiful spots on the Montenegrin coast, some may even say *the* most beautiful. The highlight here is Our Lady of the Rocks Church, which sits on the only man-made island in the Adriatic Sea.

To the south, **Budva** is worth a look ... If you are interested in taking a cruise or fishing tour, this is the place to start from. Unless you're prepared to splurge big time, staying at **Sveti Stefan** will be out of the question. The small island not far from Budva is now a luxury hotel. But the beaches in front of it are still public, so you can get a little taste of a luxury lifestyle by going for a swim here.

Town Bar and it's Old Town contain nice cafes, plus a lovely view over the city and the mountains behind it. You can also visit the Bar's famous olive tree, which is more than 2000 years old.

Ulcinj is home to what a lot of Montenegrins consider the country's most beautiful beach: Velika Plaza. The beach is 12km long and, unusually for Montenegro, mostly sand.

While Montenegro is well known for its coastline, the country is actually incredibly mountainous. **Biogradska** is the smallest of Montenegro's national parks, but it's also the oldest. A starting point for most explorations of the area is Biogradska Lake. A walk around **Biogradska Lake** is easy and takes about one hour.

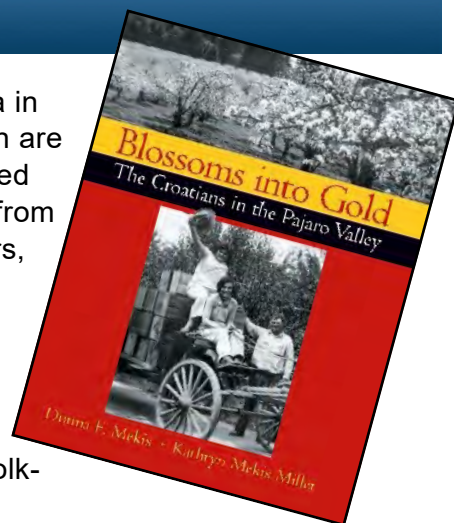
And **Durmitor National Park** is an outdoor lover's playground with rafting in **Tara Canyon**, the world's second deepest canyon.

The writers at Adriatic Home have definitely made their case ... it would be a true adventure to Discover Beautiful Montenegro!



Book Review

Of all the immigrant groups who flocked to California in the last two hundred years, probably the least known are the Croatians of the Dalmatian Coast. Often identified as Austrians, Slavonians or Dalmatians, they came from a glorious background of international traders, sailors, and political thinkers few people in America knew about, and brought with them knowledge that would change the way the United States did business. At the same time, they transported their customs and beliefs to their new home and established a way of life that was vibrant and rich in traditional folkways.



Blossoms Into Gold tells their story for the first time, from their fabled past to their economic innovations in the Pajaro Valley. Enriched with over 170 rare photos and illustrations, the book records an important segment of American history.

Authors Donna F. Mekis and Kathryn Mekis Miller are the granddaughters of Croatian immigrants who emigrated from Konavle, Croatia to Watsonville, California, in 1901. Their father, Andrew Mekis, was born in Watsonville's Croatian colony in 1920. The two sisters were raised in Santa Cruz and spent frequent Sunday afternoons with their Croatian grandparents and family in Watsonville.

Donna F. Mekis, co-author of *Blossoms Into Gold*, holds degrees in both Anthropology and Education from UC Santa Cruz. She has had a forty-year career in higher education, working at both UC Santa Cruz and Cabrillo College. She is currently the Vice-President of the UC Santa Cruz Alumni Council.

Kathryn Mekis Miller, co-author of *Blossoms Into Gold*, completed her undergraduate and graduate work at UC Berkeley. She and her husband opened Sun Shops in Santa Cruz in 1971, and it was honored as the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce's Business of the Year in 2009. Buy the book: http://blossomsintogold.com/Blossoms_Into_Gold/Purchase_Book.html or from www.amazon.com.

You don't stumble upon your heritage.
It's there, just waiting to be explored and shared.

cont. from p. 4

immigrated from Dubrovnik in 1905 at the young age of 15. He came to this country alone but traveled straight to the Fresno area to work on the farm owned by the Kusalo family. Louie's mother was born in the U.S. to parents (Vulich) who had immigrated some years earlier from the island of Brac. When Louie's dad went to work on the Vulich farm he met Louie's mother—still a babe in arms. He said he would marry her when she grew up—and he did just that some 15 years later! Louie's favorite pastimes are fishing and golf.

Now it is **your** turn ... Who do you think **you** are? Where did your ancestors come from, and how did they make their way to America? Our club members have an abundance of stories to tell ... who will be next?

Contact Donna Bronzan
112 Green Oaks Dr, Visalia,
or email allslavonic@gmail.com to share a bit of your own history and heritage.



Newsletter of the **All Slavonic American Association**, published Quarterly
Louie Obradovich, President 559.348.1927
email: allslavonic@gmail.com
web: www.allslavonic.org