

# All Slavonic American Association

**SRETNA NOVA GODINA!**

## Our President's Message

Another year has gone by and I am still standing erect, having celebrated my 79<sup>th</sup> birthday on January 16. My Doctors tell me I am doing well for my age. Still playing golf 4 times a week and fishing whenever possible. I went fishing in the Delta with my Grandson and he caught more fish in one day than I did in 3 days, but I taught him how to fish. We had a ball. I hope everybody is doing as good as or better than me. Merry Christmas and a happy & healthy and enjoyable New Year!

Our Association had a good year. Everyone who attended the Summer Picnic Festival and Christmas Party had lots of fun eating delicious food, listening to the Tamburitza Orchestra, and visiting with relatives and friends. This coming year the Summer Festival will be in Delano. Hope to see you there.

**Financial News:** Our financial resources are decreasing in our General Fund. We now have a new Treasurer, David Bronzan, and he is doing a fine job. To help our General Fund attain a better financial position, I have proposed to the Board of Directors, and they have approved, that we increase the yearly dues by \$5.00 (see p. 3). There has been NO increase in dues for over 20 years, but expenses continue to rise. All the dues money is used to put on enjoyable activities, such as the Picnic Festival & Christmas Party, for the members. This slight increase in dues will help offset the increase in costs.

**Membership News:** Our membership is still dwindling. Word of mouth, and your personal invitation, is the BEST way to encourage relatives and friends to join. In hope of increasing our membership, I am going to propose to the Board that we do the following:

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## News

*President's Message, Cont.*

- 1) Open the membership to ALL SLAVONIC PEOPLE, any person that qualifies as part of the "Slavonic Tree" (Wendish—Southern Germany, Lithuanian, Latvian, Russian, Ukranian, Belarusion, Polish, Czeck, Serbian, Croatian, Bulgarian, Slovene, and Macedonian).
- 2) Place an advertisement in the Fresno Bee, inviting all members of the "Slavonic Tree" to join our Association and list our activities and financial benefits of membership.

The bottom line: if we do not change with the times and do not make improvement, we will dwindle away and disappear.

Our Association will be having our **Annual Meeting** soon (March 8). This is a good time for members to give some input as to the future of the Association. Due to the extreme poor attendance at the Annual Meetings, I am going to propose to the Board that we hold the election of Directors by mail; this will be costly (mailing, etc), but I feel that we need to hear from a larger number of Association members.

The nominating committee (The Board of Directors) will meet 30 minutes before the Annual Meeting. If you desire to be nominated for a position or nominate someone for a position, PLEASE ATTEND.

I want to THANK all Board Members for everything they have done to make this Association an enjoyable experience, THANK YOU.

I would like to thank all the members that participate in our activities for their help in making our Association an enjoyable experience, where family members and friends can get together and have fun and celebrate our shared heritage.

I would also like to give a BIG THANK YOU to all the members that have generously donated to our Scholarship Fund. The scholarship recipients are very fine young people and they are very thankful.

Louie Obradovich, President

## Annual Meeting . . .

Please plan to attend - share your ideas and input - help guide the direction of the Association - let your voice be heard ... we need your participation as we move forward ...

- Election of Officers
- Annual Financial Reports
- Annual Scholarship Reports
- Delicious No-Host Lunch

**Sunday, March 8 ~ 12:30 pm**

**(Board will receive Nominations at 12:00 Noon)**

**Marie Callendar's Restaurant ~ Visalia**

The  
business portion  
of the meeting is not  
lengthy, but the  
information presented  
is vital for all members.  
Please plan to  
attend!

## Dues News . . .

A new Annual Dues structure has been approved by your Board of Directors and will take effect this year; the new dues pricing is as follows:

Individual Memberships:	\$25.00	(a \$5.00 increase)
Couple (Husband-Wife) Membership:	\$40.00	(a \$5.00 increase)
Family Membership:	\$50.00	(no increase)

**Note:** Family memberships include Father, Mother, and all children 18 yrs. and under who are still living at home.

Renew your membership now—don't delay! See Membership form included.

**Please be aware**, as noted in the official By-Laws of the Association:

*"If a member fails to pay his or her dues for a period of three years, that member shall be suspended from membership until such time as the outstanding dues are paid in full, at which time his or her rights and privileges in this Association shall be reinstated."*

## Who do you think you are?

In the past two newsletters we learned about 6 of our Board Members, their Slav heritage, and just a wee bit about their professional and personal lives. In this issue we present a brief profile of two of our three LIFE members—those who have been members of the Association for 50+ years!

**Martin J. Zaninovich** *Sadly, before we were able to gather the profile information from Mr. Zaninovich, this last month, on December 9<sup>th</sup>, he passed away. Printed here is a brief excerpt from his obituary, courtesy the Fresno Bee, with added information from Ancestry.com.*

Martin John Zaninovich was born in Dinuba to parents John and Mary (Radisich) Zaninovich, immigrants from Grablje, Hvar, Croatia (c. 1914) and Vis, Croatia (c. 1921) respectively. Shortly after his birth the family moved to Porterville where Martin grew up on the family ranch. While a student at USC he was called into service to his country and served proudly in the U.S. Army until 1946. His life-long vocation was that of a leader in the grape-growing industry, having founded (with his cousin Vincent Zaninovich) Jasmine Vineyards in 1947 in Delano. In addition to his work as a grower, Martin also served on many boards and commissions to promote and prosper the agriculture industry, and also gave to his community with his service to many civic organizations. Martin was especially proud that his company is now prospering in the hands of the younger generation of his family, his son and nephews. From his immigrant parents Martin learned the values of hard work, education, and the love and appreciation for the blessings of America. Martin was blessed with 64 years of marriage to Margaret (Surjak), also the child of Yugoslavian immigrants Frank and Katina (Katherine) Surjak, both having immigrated from Dol, Hvar, c. 1910. Martin was a faithful member of the All Slavonic American Association for 67 years. We honor his memory.



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**Mark your Calendars — Annual Meeting — Sunday, March 8**

## Happening Around the State . . .

### Saturday-Sunday, February 14-15: 16th San Francisco Tamburitza Festival

Croatian American Cultural Center  
60 Onondaga Ave ~ San Francisco, CA 94112

**Feb 14:** Welcome Dance 7:30PM. **Jerry Duke** teaches kolos!

**Feb 15:** Concert, Dancing, Sing-a-long 12PM-8PM

More detailed information at [http://www.slavonicweb.org/event\\_details.php?id=189](http://www.slavonicweb.org/event_details.php?id=189)



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**Pete Zarko**, a 65-year member of the ASAA, was born in Fresno to Matteo and Florence (Milasich) Zarko. Pete's father immigrated from Dol, Hvar, Croatia in 1911 and originally went to live with a cousin in Yakima, Washington. By 1917, however, Matteo had settled in Fresno and was working in the agriculture industry, employed by J. Kovacevich. Matteo soon met Florence (who had immigrated from Hvar as well), married, and shortly after Pete's birth in 1931 they made their permanent home in Orosi on their ranch. It was on this ranch that Pete made his lifelong career in agriculture—primarily as a grower of grapes and apricots. For 20 years Pete also worked for Tulare County as caretaker of Smith Mountain Cemetery. His love of music (he plays the accordion) and dancing led him to meet and marry his lovely wife Virginia. After retiring and selling the ranch in 2003, Pete and Virginia now reside in Dinuba.

Interesting ... Pete's father Matteo arrived in 1911 on the steamship *Floride*; there was on that same ship a Milasich family (Mother and children) who were bound for Fresno, California to join their husband and father. Could Florence have been one of those children? The immigration documents are hard to read and therefore hard to verify ... but if anyone has information, Pete would love to talk with you!

In our next issue we will dig into the roots of our other Life Member, Kenny Kovacevich.

## Travel News



### Top 10 Budget Beach Hotels, Villas and Campsites in Croatia according to *The Guardian* (in no particular order)

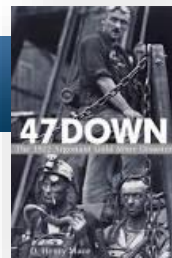
- **Hotel Solitudo, Lastovo** – arguably the most remote of Croatia's islands, accessible via catamaran from Split and Dubrovnik, home to just 800 permanent residents; most of the hotel's simple rooms face the sea and possess their own terrace.
- **La Villa, Lopud** – cars are banned, beaches are sandy and the ferry from Dubrovnik takes just under an hour; as the sun sets, day-tripping tourists disappear to the mainland and you'll have lovely Lopud all to yourself.
- **Hotel Odisej, Mljet** – Just over an hour's catamaran ride west of Dubrovnik, Hotel Odisej sits at the heart of this protected parkland on the island's western tip; guestrooms are a little dated, so it's worth spending a bit extra for a terraced room overlooking the pretty port and fabulous seafood restaurants of Pomena.
- **Hotel Mimbelli, Orebić** – a long-time locals' summer getaway, the town's shallow public beach – which runs the length of Orebić – is across the promenade from the hotel.
- **Villa Rosmarinus, Hvar** – a petite villa housing just three double bedrooms and three apartments, a 15-minute walk north of Hvar's Old Town – ideal for escaping the crowds that congregate here in July and August.
- **Hotel Maestral, Prvić** – off the west coast of Šibenik, overlooking Prvić Luka's main square, a former island schoolhouse, transformed into a holiday home and now into a hotel.
- **Villa Hotel Barbat, Rab** – picturesque Old Town, friendly residents and deserted beaches.
- **Oasi, Pula** – three miles from the hotel to Pula's impressive Roman amphitheater and Austro-Viennese Old Town.
- **Campsite Porto Sole, Vrsar** – an easy 10-minute walk to the fresh-off-the-boat seafood restaurants in the nearby fishing village of Vrsar.
- **Camping Simuni, Pag** – one of Croatia's premier campgrounds, renowned for its shallow waters and constant winds, ideal for windsurfing.

Of course the term “budget” is a relative term—The Guardian's definition of “budget” may not match *your* definition; for more information see <http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2014/jul/03/top-10-budget-beach-hotels-campsites-croatia>) Note: these are 2014 prices.

## Book Review

### “47 Down: The 1922 Argonaut Gold Mine Disaster”

by O. Henry Mace



On the night of August 27, 1922, 4650 feet below the surface of the earth in one of America’s deepest and richest gold mines, 47 miners, primarily immigrants, were trapped when a fire broke out in the mine’s main shaft. For 22 days, friends, family, and co-workers waited anxiously as rescuers attempted to tunnel across from a neighboring mine.

The story soon became spellbinding front page news, as reporters and film crews from across the nation descended on Jackson, California, the little Amador County, California mining town that was home to the Argonaut and Kennedy gold mines. It was the worst gold mine disaster in the history of the United States, yet the story was relatively unheard of before the publication of the book **47 Down: The 1922 Argonaut Gold Mine Disaster**, by author-historian O. Henry Mace. Among those 47 miners were 11 Serbian immigrants—men who came from their native homeland to work the mines and seek their fortunes.

Drawing on primary sources to re-create the event with nail-biting accuracy, **47 Down** provides a chilling narrative of the miners’ terrifying ordeal, the friends and family who kept hopeful vigil at the mine’s entrance, and the experts and rescue specialists who came from across the nation to help free the trapped men. Author O. Henry Mace researched the Argonaut disaster for seven years, sifting through stockpiles of rich primary sources (newspaper articles, diaries, government reports—including the complete minutes and correspondence of the Governor’s Committee on the Argonaut Mine Disaster); with these resources Mace paints a vivid portrait of the personalities and machinations involved in the Argonaut mine fire and rescue mission,

including: Virgilio Garbarini, the seasoned, no-nonsense superintendent of the mine; quick-thinking jigger-boss Ernie Miller; and sharp-tongued Sacramento Star city editor Ruth Finney, who launched her career with her heartfelt coverage of the tragedy.



The cemetery of St Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Jackson (the first Serbian Orthodox Church built in the United States) stands as a silent testament to the contributions of these Slavic immigrants to the development of California, as well as many others in both mining and other occupations and industries.

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



Mark your calendars for ...  
**ASAA Annual Meeting**  
12:30 pm  
Sunday, March 8  
Marie Callender's Restaurant,  
Visalia

Newsletter of the **All Slavonic American Association**, published Quarterly  
Louie Obradovich, President 559.348.1927  
email: [allslavonic@gmail.com](mailto:allslavonic@gmail.com)  
web: [www.allslavonic.org](http://www.allslavonic.org)