

All Slavonic American Association

SRETNA NOVA GODINA!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 2017

Well, another year has gone by and I am still standing erect. I will celebrate my 81st birthday on January 16. My Doctors tell me I am doing well for my age. I was in an auto accident on Father's Day. An old man ran into the driver's side of my suburban. I got the vehicle repaired and my body is doing pretty good but will never be the same as before the accident. Still playing golf 4 times a week, and fishing whenever possible. I went fishing to Mexico and caught Trigger Fish & Stripped Marlin, but no Dorado due to El Nino. I had a ball. I hope everybody is doing as good as or better than me. Merry X-Mas and a happy & healthy and enjoyable new year. I want to give a BIG THANK YOU to all the members that contributed to the Scholarship Fund. In 2016 the Association awarded 2 great students a total of \$3500 dollars. THANKS AGAIN.

Now down to business. Our Association had a good year. Everyone who attended the Summer Picnic Festival in Fresno and Christmas Party in Visalia had lots of fun, visiting with relatives and friends. This year the Summer Festival will be in Delano. Hope to see you there.

FINANCIAL NEWS: Our financial position in the GENERAL FUND is OK. The SCHOLARSHIP FUND is doing just fine due to the generosity of our members. WE NEED MORE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS. I plan, with your generosity and the Boards approval, to give each qualified scholarship recipient \$2000 this year. With, your increased generosity and the generation of additional funds from our Scholarship Funds investment program, we should be able to accomplish this wonderful goal. The Scholarship Program still offers special recognition to special donors. The Fund will name a Scholarship any way you want to name it. We will establish a Scholarship in your or a loved one's name for a period of 3 years for a \$500 donation, or for a 6 year period for a donation of \$1000.

Continued next page

News

Please help the Scholarship Fund accomplish this goal.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS: BAD NEWS. We still need new members. Please, get some relatives or friends to join. We will be having our Annual Meeting soon. Membership attendance at our Annual Meetings has been VERY POOR. This is a good time for all members to give some input on what they want the Association to do.

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. We are in need for new young people to step forward and get involved in Board functions. At 81 years old, I will be retiring in the near future.

I want to THANK all Board Members for everything they have done to make this Association an enjoyable experience, THANK YOU. I would also like to thank all the members that participate in our activities for their help in making our Association an enjoyable experience, where family and friends can get together and have fun.

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

Louie Obradovich, President



It's time!

Time to send in
your annual dues

Membership dues
remain unchanged
from last year!

\$25 Individual
\$40 Couple
\$50 Family

Please complete
the enclosed
membership form
and renew
today!

And invite a Slav
friend or family
member to join too!
The more,
the merrier!



In Memoriam
Remembering those members who passed
from this life in 2016

Vincent L. Jurkovich

Annual Meeting . . . Mark your calendars!

Sunday, March 12 will be our **Annual Membership Meeting**

Marie Callender's Restaurant ~ Visalia ~ 12:30 pm



We want you! to help guide the direction of the Association - let your voice be heard ... we need your participation as we move forward ...

Vital information for all members

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

Please plan to attend

Birthday Grams . . .

Celebrating milestones!

ASAA extends birthday wishes to all those members who will be celebrating a birthday this quarter ...

želi Vam dobro zdravlje i sreću



Nick Pavlovich - January 3
Kathryn Spradling - January 3
Michael Yingst - January 4
Marilyn Bahn Jurkovich - January 6
Anton Zaninovich - January 7
Patricia Jurkovich - January 8
Evelyn Miljevich - January 13
Louie Obradovich - January 16
Janet Ferguson - January 23
Mike Ubick - January 24
Marko Zaninovich Jr. - January 24
Matt Pandol III - January 31

Stephanie Mello - February 9
Amy Turnipseed - February 10
Myrna Zivanich - February 14
Martha Slaven - February
Louise Ninkovich - February 25
Anna Zaninovich - March 15
Robert Walker - March 19
Stacie Hernandez - March 24
Zorka Tarailo - March 25
Kurtis Smith - March 28

If we missed you ... please let us know!

It's not just a Christmas cookie . . .

Licitars are colorfully decorated biscuits made of sweet honey dough that are part of Croatian and Serbian cultural heritage. They are used as an ornamental gift, often given at celebrations of love such as weddings and St. Valentine's Day. At Christmas time, the city of Zagreb and the Christmas tree in the main square are festooned with thousands of licitar hearts.



Now on the UNESCO "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage" for Serb-Croatian culture, the tradition of making and giving licitars stretches as far back as the 16th century when cakes in richly decorated wooden molds were made in many European convents. Licitar makers, known as *Medičari*, were highly regarded in society, and their licitars very much sought after (licitars were more sentimental than giving a bouquet of roses). Although at one point the art of licitar-making was in danger of being lost, today the tradition is kept alive by a select few who guard the art in family secrecy, and their methods of production have scarcely changed. One licitar still takes over a month to make; expert licitar-making shops, using the ages-old process, can be found in Zagreb, Samobor, and Belgrade.

Licitars became famous due to their being sold at the Marian shrine of Marija Bistrica. Although not a religious symbol, licitars were often bought to take home as a reminder of their long and sometimes arduous journey to Zagorje. Licitars' simple shape and attractive bright red color and decorations were a keen souvenir to show their families and neighbors when they came back.



Licitars are made using traditional ingredients, methods and devotion. Their ingredients are simple — honey, flour, eggs, water and natural colors — but their preparation is long. (Licitars are referred to as gingerbread, though they do not actually contain ginger.) After mixing and kneading, the dough matures for a few days, then is shaped and baked and left for two weeks to dry. Coloring is the next step after which they are left to dry again for two weeks. Once dry the licitars are finally decorated and *again* left to dry for a week. Traditionally licitars are 100% handmade, decorated with a swirling outline, small flowers and a small mirror. Being

continued page 8

Happening Around the State . . .

Festival of St. Blaise - Los Angeles

Saturday, February 4 • 6:00 pm

St. Anthony's Croatian Catholic Church

712 N. Grand St. - Los Angeles

Mass • Gala Dinner Party

More info: see <https://www.facebook.com/events/1869322876647389/>



Croatian American Club—San Pedro

Saturday, Feb. 11: “Bila Noc” Dinner & Dance

More info — see <http://ww.croatianamericanclub.com>



11th Annual Croatian Cultural Extravaganza

Friday, Feb 10—Sunday, Feb 12

Kolo groups from US and Canada perform

More info: see <https://www.facebook.com/events/911872818949419/>



The Tambura Tradition - 18th Annual San Francisco Tamburitza Festival

Croatian American Cultural Center

60 Onondaga Ave ~ San Francisco

A Tambura Tradition dating back to 1902— Ensembles perform for listening, play dance tunes, polkas, waltzes, circle dances, and sing until the bar closes late at night.

Sunday , Feb 19, 2017 - 12:00 Midnight



A Look Back . . .

Do you know of, or have an ancestor, who emigrated from Croatia, or the Austro-Hungarian Empire, just after the turn of the 20th century? How was the country viewed by travelers in those days? Looking through old magazines, we can get a peek!

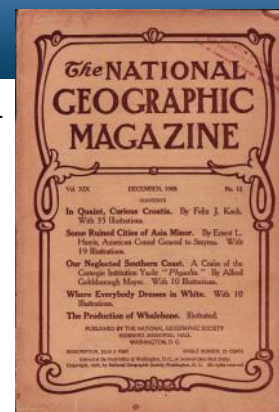
‘In Quaint, Curious Croatia’ is the title of an interesting article about life in Croatia written by National Geographic reporter and photographer Felix J. Koch over 100 years ago.

The article, published in the December 1908 edition of The National Geographic Magazine, makes some interesting observations about Croatia a century ago.

Koch, praises the ritual of weekend farmers’ markets, held on Sundays, which was good, he wrote “for then the husband can accompany his spouse ... and help bear the heavy basket.” And market days, in his opinion, provided the best opportunity to “view the native costumes of the peasants.”

“In Croatia every village has its own particular costume. The costume varies for young men and old men, for matron and maid and dowager.” But, he surmises, the styles had remained unchanged since perhaps the 15th century, and so someone who knew the country could detect the village of origin for any young girl or young man. “Every village had its modifications, and there must have been hundreds of varied costumes here . . . It was the most beautiful market scene in Europe.” And, he added, “unlike in America, there was no refuse on the streets.”

While visiting Zagreb he remarked “This market was the cleanest, fairest and brightest of all markets. Every apple was polished, every basket was immaculately clean.” The vegetables were arrayed “in neat piles or pyramids” by the peasants who had brought them for sale. In other markets in Europe, Koch wrote, the tidiness was to attract the tourists; but in Croatia at the time “tourism was practically nil.”



continued next page

In 1908 a number of Croatian cities were known by different names which is reflected in the article. Koch visited Agram (Zagreb), Pola (Pula), Zara (Zadar), Spalato (Split) Somobor (Samobor) and Fiume (Rijeka), and made a number of observations about the people and the environment.



Koch wrote that the people of Croatia seemed to be of medium or small stature. “The people were tanned and good-natured. They were orderly, they do not push.”

Koch wrote that the ruling party, the “Government Party”, sought a stronger union between Croatia and Hungary, and would like to abolish all thought of Croatian autonomy. Censorship was strict at the time as many in the country, however, were looking to separate itself from Hungarian rule. “In Croatia, before a newspaper appears a copy must be sent to the censor to see if anything objectionable is in it.” If so, confiscation, fines, or imprisonment were the swift result. “In Croatia journalists are free to criticize the Hungarian government, but not that of Croatia itself.”



Koch paid special interest to Fiume (Rijeka) as it was the port of embarkation for “tremendous hordes” of immigrants from southern Europe headed to America.

Another area of interest to Koch was Samobor where there was an active grape-growing and wine-making economy. “In many parts of Croatia a glass of wine is far cheaper than drinking water.” And along with that, the area was known for providing various “grape cures” - locals came with a particular ailment, and they were prescribed a daily diet of so many pounds of a particular grape variety as the cure.

After tripping around the country (with some photos but no mention of the southern Dalmatian coast or the islands!) Koch ended the article by saying – “One wonders that to the tourist it remains still a well-nigh undiscovered country.”

Read the full article here:

<http://www.croatiaweek.com/what-national-geographic-wrote-about-croatia-100-years-ago/>

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

continued from page 4

made of honey dough and natural products, licitars are also edible. Well, you *can* technically eat them, but you wouldn't—they can be quite hard!

In modern times licitars have become traditional souvenirs. Small size licitars (heart, cherry, doll, small bird, mushroom, horse-shoe, small wreath, horse) are favorite decoration of Christmas trees in Slav homes, whereas the large size licitars are created for giving as a gift to the loved ones at special occasions. A young man giving a heart shaped licitars to his girlfriend to express this love and devotion to her is a custom deeply rooted in the Slav traditional heritage.

Licitars are not just cookies, but rather a significant symbol of heritage and culture.



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