



By Alexander Billinis

Right off of Sombor's Holy Trinity Square, next to the elegant neoclassical public library, there stands a small domed chapel. Here is Jene Visinka's atelier.

Jene Visinka is an interesting fellow, both exceedingly modern yet in his own way, almost an anachronism. With his Backa Hat, piercing blue eyes and handlebar mustache, he easily passes for an official from the old Danubian dual monarchy. His background reflects the mosaic of identity that is Vojvodina, where over two dozen nationalities live, most of them for generations. Jene was born and raised in Svilojevo (Szilagy), a predominantly ethnic Hungarian village a few kilometers away from Sombor, close to the Danube River. He speaks a very Vojvodina Hungarian as flawlessly as his crisp Serbian, but to classify him as Hungarian would be a simplification of the subtleties of Vojvodina. "How can I be just Hungarian when I have Czech, Jewish, and Hungarian background?" he asks.

Coming from a family with agricultural and crafts background, he was drawn to art early. "The only way my mother could keep me still was for me to draw, or to color in the lines," Jene reflected over a rakija. He studied to be a waiter; his mother was a cook, but he started working with a crew of majstori who

Painted and restored churches, and that was that. "Maybe it was genetic, my father painted buildings, so perhaps that directed me to become an artist." Jene always combined his love for painting with a very, frankly, atypical respect for market forces. "Here people are often not realistic in the way they do business. We are in a severe crisis, I charge less for my paintings than, say, two years ago. You have to understand your market." Adding thoughtfully, he offers, "Sure, maybe elsewhere in Europe I could get more for my paintings, but then I would have to go there, and it is here where I am inspired." When he speaks of his land, this flat, fertile part of Serbia known as Vojvodina, his voice is almost reverential. "This land, this flatness, and the people and places of Vojvodina, these are my ongoing inspirations." Artists from elsewhere in Serbia, more mountainous parts, often ask me what is so hard about painting a flat range," and smiling, Jene says, "When painting the horizon, the attention to the distance and detail becomes minute and more important than ever." My sister in Salt Lake City, Utah, said something similar when I presented her with one of Jene's paintings, of sunflowers in the field with the towers of Sombor on the distant horizon. The sense of oceanic vastness, combined with the minutia of the distant town, emerged from the canvas.

In addition to his atelier and house in town, Jene owns a salas, a Hungar-

ian word loosely translatable as ranch. Here too his pictures crowd out the walls, together with antique home and farm implements worthy of a museum. Indeed, often enough he hosts great parties celebrating Vojvodina arts, music, and, of course, food and drink. The Salas sailing like a ship over the Vojvodina plains is often enough a key subject of his work. These hardworking ranches are a symbol of Vojvodina, dotted throughout the rural landscape. Jene's favorite description of the salas is comparing them to islands, or oases, in a sea of wheat, sunflowers, or barley. Jene's wife Jovanka, who is Serbian, hails from one such salas. Jene recounts how the neighboring salasi of different faiths would refrain from putting out wash or making too much noise when their neighbors celebrated a holiday. "It's how we do things here, and always have," Jene says, using the expressive and expansive Serbian term, "kod nas." Reflecting on his, and his family's mosaic background, he says, "Hybrids are always stronger and each puts their own traits into the mix." Stopping for a second, he added thoughtfully, "Perhaps that is part of America's secret. All those many nations making America great."

Often Jene will paint series, and now he is focusing on the people of Vojvodina, the good people of the land and towns. "The artist has a knack for finding those with pure hearts," he says, "and it is those people who I wish to commit to

canvas." Whether an old man in local costume lounging on his third glass of well-enjoyed wine, or a baba in kerchief resting on a wooden bench outside her salas, the spirit of the people, and his love for them, jumps off the canvas. "We in this country are not good critics of ourselves," Jene offers, but then he says offers one of his own. "I paint constantly, but when my mood is negative, the painting generally will not sell, but when, for example, my heart is jumping with some sort of happiness, I can barely hold onto the painting."

Jene is a happy man, with a great modesty about the quality of his work and even more, about the value of his example. "A man is fortunate when he can do what he loves, and pay his bills from it." His paintings grace many of our walls, and seldom is a negative word spoken in his pictures' shadows. Vojvodina is one of those places where the mosaic of identity is celebrated and respected, and it is a credit both to the people of the area and to the Serbian government which fosters this mosaic. It is fortunate that Sombor possesses a prolific artist dedicated to recording in art scenes from his fascinating and beautiful part of Serbia.

To see more of Jene Visinka's art, visit Sombor in person, or via the internet: <http://www.galerija-slika-visinka.com>

**COMING NEXT**

In our next issue, a story by Holy Trinity News Reporter Christina Tepsick about the St. Sava Day celebration at her church in Youngstown, Ohio. This is the blessing of the Slavski Kolac by Very Rev. Stav. Father Vladimir Demchuk and Kumovi Simone and Clive Sims and Melissa Varner. Many more pictures and the complete story in our next issue of the American Srbo-bran.



**SEARCHING FOR PHOTOGRAPHS**

We heard from Aleksandra Rebic of [www.generalmihailovich.com](http://www.generalmihailovich.com) that Jevdja Alexander Jevdjevic, vice president of the Kingdom of Serbia Association, is searching for photographs of King Peter II taken after World War II. Of particular interest are those that may have been taken at his funeral in Libertyville, Illinois. You can write [savezsrpskih.sokola@live.com](mailto:savezsrpskih.sokola@live.com) for more information on how to transmit any photos and how they will be used. -- str.



Jevdja Alexander Jevdjevic



King Peter II

## FROM SNF GENERAL MANAGER

*Cissy M. Rebich*



Greetings from Pittsburgh!

Last month, a Comedy Night was held at the South Side Serbian Club to benefit the Jedinstvo Folklore Ensemble of the Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in Pittsburgh. Very good turnout for a fantastic meal at a bargain price of \$10, prepared by expert chefs Tihomir and Jelena Japundza. Three comics took the stage to make us laugh all our cares away and of course, there was a wee bit of drinking going on. Along with a fun night, hopefully, Jedinstvo was able to raise the money that it needs in order to accept some of the invitations to travel and perform. To find more about this talented group, find them on Facebook.

Neither cold weather nor snow affected the music and Valentine's Dance celebration at Saint Nicholas parish in Monroeville, Pennsylvania. An annual happening sponsored by the Saint Nicholas Men's Klub Karadjordje, this year the music was provided by Sokoli orchestra of Lackawanna, New York. Billed as an exclusive reunion performance, the original band members serenaded the crowd until well after midnight. SNF Audit Committee members Lara Trbovich and Pam Rajkovich were on the Monroeville scene along with Cheryl Leydig, Manager of Accounts, who snapped these photos. On the very same evening in Boston you could hear hot Serbian music of a classical nature in a set of three Serbian folk songs presented by George Milosh, tenor, as part of his recital to fulfill the requirements of a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Vocal Performance from the Boston Conservatory of Music. You know George; he has a distinguished "Savez" pedigree. His grandfather, Sam Milanovich, served as SNF Athletic Director for many years. His great aunt, Millicent Milanovich, served as SNF Financial Secretary for many years. His grandmother, Simmy Milosh, was a treasured SNF Home Office employee, and his mother, Milana Milosh, currently serves on the SNF Board of Directors.

His recital featured songs in German, Italian, French, English, and as an understated yet proud proffer, a Serbian set featuring the Milanovich family to accompany George. Uncle Paul Milanovich on bugarija, cousins Mark Milanovich on bass and Mike Milanovich on accordion beautifully enhanced "Sumadija," "Janicar," and "Zapevajte pesme stare." Approximately 30 extended family members and friends traveled to Boston for the event and you might think that those 30 would be the ones to immediately jump to their feet in appreciation after the Serbian set. But they weren't. It was George's non-Serbian colleagues, professors, and friends who led the well-deserved ovation. They probably never heard anything like it. Congratulations to George!

During my trip to Boston I was very happy to be able to visit the Saint Sava Serbian Orthodox Church on Alewife Brook Parkway in Cambridge. It's just a short walk from the last stop (Alewife) on Boston's Red Line but Father Aleksandar Vljakovic, parish priest, was very kind to pick me up at the station, which allowed me to avoid the piled-up snow drifts that remained from the big storm. Father Aleks and Popadija Vera have six children and the family was expecting a visit from their Kumovi from the West Coast, so I was very appreciative of his offer to show me the church and take photographs.

Saint Sava Boston recently celebrated its 20th Anniversary and burning of its mortgage. Approximately 300 families are members of this church, with about 100 families actively participating. The parish owned a previous structure in Wakefield, Massachusetts, but in 2005, it purchased the current property from a Roman Catholic parish.



**COMEDY NIGHT**  
Front row: Michelle Tomei, SNF Manager of Accounts Cheryl Medich Leydig, SNF General Manager Cissy Rebich  
Back row: Lee Ann McCarthy, Melissa Wuchenich Volitich, Melanie Menich Bard



Stage is set for Comedy Night



Sokoli Orchestra reunion for Valentine's Day



**VALENTINE'S DAY IN MONROEVILLE**  
SNF Audit Board Chairperson Lara Trbovich, Mark Winovich, SNF Audit Board member Pam Rajkovich



Linda Jovonovich, Donna Vranesevich, Sari McNamara



George Milosh, tenor



Paul Milanovich, Mike Milanovich, Mark Milanovich in recital

**FROM SNF GENERAL MANAGER**

*Cissy M. Rebich*



Next door to the church is the International School of Boston, which has turned out to be a copasetic neighbor. Saint Sava and the school are able to share the responsibilities and advantages of having the parking lot maintained and the school even rents space in the church hall for some of its activities.

The transformation of the church is an interesting story. As you can imagine, the details of Western and Eastern churches are a bit different, especially regarding the altar and the iconostas. One of the characteristic features of medieval Gothic architecture, the Rose window, is a round window divided into segments by stone mullions and tracery. Saint Sava has two Rose windows, one above the front entrance and one above the altar. When the parish hired its iconographer, George Bilak, who lives in Minnesota, they collaborated on how best to incorporate the Rose window into the Serbian Orthodox traditional structural components. What they did was to feature the round window being held by the hands of two angels in the night sky, with the script "I am the Light of the World" painted in Old Church Slavonic around the window. The night sky surrounding the scene as background is a spectacular shade of blue, almost periwinkle with violet and navy overtones, which truly enriches the gold-leaf stars.

The iconostas is made of wood with carvings of religious designs, quotes from the Scriptures, and Bible story scenes by the iconographer; one section that stands out is a depiction of the Prodigal Son. The icons are large, as the distance from the entrance of the church to the iconostas is about 100 feet. To see samples of iconographer and carver George Bilak's work (especially the Easter eggs), visit his website at [www.carvingart.com](http://www.carvingart.com). The huge pipe organ still stands in the back of the choir loft and although the parish plans on its eventual removal, Father Aleks

told me that it was even played once at a concert of area choirs when the Greek Orthodox choir asked if they could use it during their performance.

According to Father Aleks, the local Serbian community was originally made up of students and intellectuals attending and teaching at the many institutions of higher learning in the Boston area. Many of the students stayed in the area post-graduation and Father Aleks believes that the Boston church has a bright future. Newcomers to the U.S. from the former Yugoslavia attended the recent holiday Liturgy in huge numbers. Annual events include a Serb Fest, which will be held on September 14-15, 2013, attracting about 2,000 people and will offer food, drinks, Church tours, children's activities, parishioners' photo exhibits, and four or five Serbian orchestras. If you find yourself in Boston, I recommend you take the time to visit this lovely church and community. Its website address is [www.stsavaboston.org](http://www.stsavaboston.org).

Rumor has it that not very many choirs have yet signed up to make the trip to Lansing for the 72nd Annual Serbian Singing Federation Choral Festival on Memorial Day Weekend. The deadline is March 15. Come on, singers, let's go! This is an annual happy experience that you owe to your choir, your children, and all the Serbian singers that you know. So far we have St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Choir, Mississauga, Ontario, S.S.S. Mita Topalovic, Joliet, Illinois, Sts. Peter & Paul Choir, Atlanta, Georgia, St. Elijah Serbian Church Choir, Aliquippa, PA, and St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Cathedral Choir, Hamilton, Ontario. Check out the SSF's webpage at [www.serbiansingingfederation.org](http://www.serbiansingingfederation.org). Don't miss it.

Hope to hear from you,  
Cissy  
[cmrebich@snflife.org](mailto:cmrebich@snflife.org)



Saint Sava church in Boston



the Rose window above the iconostas



View from the altar toward the front door

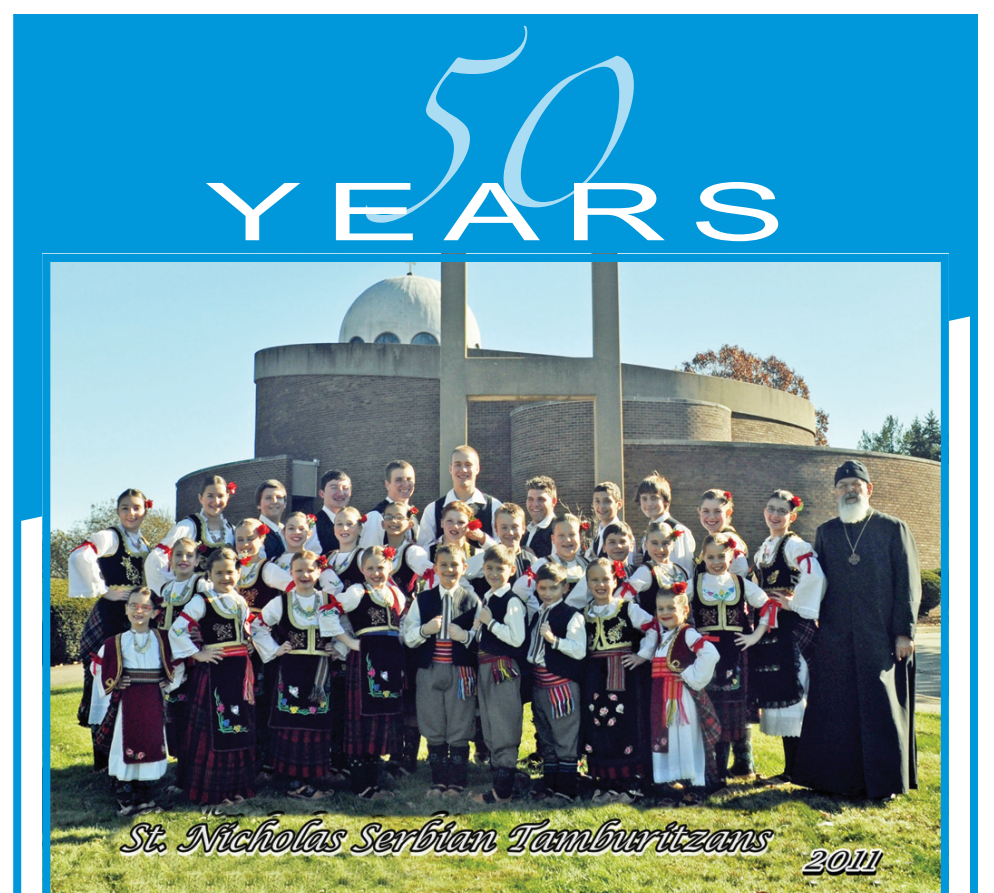


Hand carved scene of the Prodigal Son



Very Reverend Aleksandar Vlajkovich

Read the SNF Blog at [www.snflife.org](http://www.snflife.org)



MONROEVILLE, PA - The St. Nicholas Serbian Tamburitizans, shown here in a 2011 photo with their spiritual leader Very Rev. Dragoljub C. Malich, will present their 50th Spring Concert at East Allegheny High School, 1150 Jacks Run Road in North Versailles, PA on May 18, 2013. A dinner and dance will follow at St. Nicholas Hall on Haymaker Road in Monroeville. The group is sending out a special call to all alumni to come out and share the 50th anniversary with all the current dancers and fans. Svi nam dobro dosli!



## COUNTDOWN TO THE 2013 SUMMER GOLF TOURNAMENT IN PITTSBURGH



**Quicksilver Golf Club**  
([www.quicksilvergolf.com](http://www.quicksilvergolf.com)) – voted the best public golf course in Pittsburgh 8 times, this Golf Club has been the host course for the Senior PGA tour and the Ben Hogan tour. This championship course features 7,000 yards of golfing challenge, manicured fairways, playable rough, and an abundance of sand traps. Also, all golf carts are equipped with GPS.



**Ponderosa Golf Course**  
(<http://www.ponderosagolfcourse.com>) – just a short drive from Quicksilver, Ponderosa features 6,625 yards of golf and has had all sand traps and tee boxes updated within the last two years. This course does what a good course should—it rewards you for a good shot and punishes you for the bad ones.



**Butler's Golf Course**  
(<http://www.butlersgolf.com/index.php>) – features two 18-hole courses: Woodside and Lakeside. The Lakeside course has over 6,500 yards of golf. The Woodside course has 6,689 yards of golf from the back tees. Both courses feature plenty of woods and water hazards along with some beautiful scenery.

In approximately 145 days from this American Srbobran publication date, the 72nd annual SNF Summer Golf tournament will be underway. The tournament committee, comprised of members from Holy Trinity Cathedral of Pittsburgh along with local SNF Lodges 6, 10, and 11, are busily planning and preparing for this event. We hope that you will come to Pittsburgh to spend the time with us and wanted to give you five reasons for why you should!

We'll start with reason #1...YOU LOVE TO GOLF! Let's face it, if you didn't love to golf, you wouldn't be attending the golf tournament...well unless you are young and like to travel with your friends for the parties. And we DO hope non-golfers will join in the evening celebrations at the Serbian Club.

We have selected and secured three great golf courses in the Pittsburgh area for the tournament because of their reputation and their accommodations. Each course has a full-serve restaurant for those who would like to have breakfast there instead of the hotel. All golfers will have the opportunity to golf at each of the courses. So, here they are:

Quicksilver and Ponderosa will be used on Thursday and Friday. On Saturday, Butler's two courses will be used – allowing all golfers to end the tournament in one location. Shotgun start will be at 9:30 am daily.

Affordable prices, variable difficulty, and well-maintained greens sold us on using these courses for the tournament. We hope you will join us in Pittsburgh this summer and see for yourself what great courses they are!

Watch this column in each issue of the American Srbobran for more details regarding the 2013 Summer Golf Tournament in Pittsburgh, including information about the main hotel (coming up next). Until then, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mark Winowich, Tournament co-chair, at [mlwinowich@msn.com](mailto:mlwinowich@msn.com).

Mark your calendar for July 31 through August 3, 2013 and set your GPS for Pittsburgh. We'll be waiting for you!

72nd Annual SNF Golf Tournament Committee  
Pittsburgh – Summer 2013



## PATRIARCH IN KOSOVO

His Holiness Irinej, Serbian Patriarch and members of the Holy Synod of Bishops and the Committee of the Holy Assembly of Bishops for Kosovo and Metohija visited the Southern Serbian province from 6-8 February 6 to 8.

Along with Bishop Teodosije of Raska-Prizren and Bishop Jovan of Lipjan, Vicar to His Holiness, were Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Littoral, Bishop Vasilije of Srem, Pahomije of Vranje, Jovan of Sumadia, Joanikije of Budimlje-Niksic, David of Krusevac and retired Bishop Atanasije of Zahumlje-Herzegovina.

## Notice of Procedure change: Billing through SNF lodges

In December 2012, the SNF Board of Directors approved an important change to the insurance premium billing procedure currently used by our SNF lodges to collect and send payments to the Home Office on behalf of lodge members.

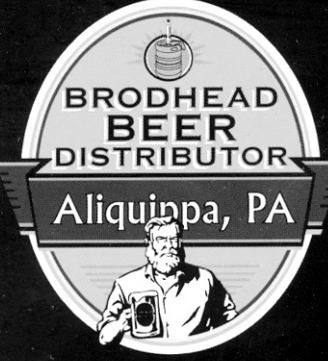
Effective March 31, 2013, all SNF members making payments to their local lodges will convert to a direct billing system with the Home Office. After that date, lodge officers will no longer be responsible for collecting insurance premiums and forwarding them to the Home Office. All SNF members will be responsible for sending their insurance payments directly to the Home Office.

A letter was recently sent to notify all SNF lodge officers who currently collect insurance payments that they need to collect all premiums due up to March 1, 2013. After that, each SNF member will send premium payments directly to the Home Office.

The Board of Directors and SNF staff truly appreciate all the work lodge officers have done to collect payments. If you have any questions on the conversion to direct billing, please contact the Home Office at 412-642-7372.

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## PILIPOVICH HEADED IN RIGHT DIRECTION

COLORADO SPRINGS - Dave Pilipovich became the eighth head coach in the history of the Air Force men's basketball program on February 8 last year and was named to the position permanently within a month. It came during his fifth season as a member of the coaching staff and first as associate head coach when he was promoted to head coach as Jeff Reynolds was relieved of his duties.

In a recent article in the Denver Post, sent to us by Georgie Grknich of Arvada, Colorado, it read: "If Reggae musician Bob Marley were alive, he might seek some credit for the Air Force men's basketball team's surprising success in the Mountain West. Marley's music has become part of the Falcons' practice routine, but it might be coach Dave Pilipovich who appreciates it most."

Pilipovich has broken down the rigid atmosphere that some thought may have handicapped the Falcons under their previous coach by allowing music to be part of the practice session during stretching exercises and warm-ups.

But, according to the Denver Post,

there's a catch: "I pick the music," Pilipovich said, meaning that Marley's rendition of "Everything's Gonna Be Alright," is frequently heard.

His online bio at [www.goairforcefalcons.com](http://www.goairforcefalcons.com) says that after taking over the program, Pilipovich won "two of his first three games as head coach, including a 58-53 win at Wyoming in his first road game. He then led his team to one of the biggest victories in program history with a 58-56 triumph over 13th-ranked San Diego State at Clune Arena, marking Air Force's first-ever win over a Top 20 team and just the second against a ranked opponent."

During his time as an assistant coach, Pilipovich helped the Falcons snap a 16-game losing streak in conference tournament play (2009), helping the Academy earn its way to the postseason.

Before ARA, Pilipovich spent two years with the University of Michigan basketball program where he was the administrative assistant to head coach Tommy Amaker, then was an assistant coach during the 2006-2007 season. All together he

has 25 years of coaching experience under his belt including time at Eastern Michigan University, Robert Morris University, Georgia State University and Florida Atlantic University. It all began when he worked as a graduate assistant at California University in Pennsylvania.

He graduated from Thiel College in Greenville, Pa., with a degree in business administration in 1986. He earned his master's degree from California (PA) in 1988 in geography and regional planning.

Pilipovich and his wife, Kelly, have a son, Kyle (20), and a daughter, Kelsey (17). He is a member of SNF Lodge #64 "Napredak" in Irwin, PA.

You can read the entire Denver Post article at [www.denverpost.com](http://www.denverpost.com), and search for "Pilipovich sets tune for soaring Falcons" written by Irv Moss, Feb. 2-2013.



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## KERRY CONGRATULATES SERBIA

WASHINGTON, DC – On February 14, Secretary of State John Kerry, on behalf of President Obama and the people of the United States said, "I am delighted to congratulate the people of Serbia as you celebrate your National Day this February 15."

He included in his remarks that the United States is proud of "our many years as partners and friends. We remain committed to helping Serbia strengthen its multi-ethnic society, its democratic institutions and rule of law, and to achieving its goal of full membership in the European Union. We welcome Serbia's efforts to work constructively with its neighbors to build a more stable region. We will support Serbia in each step of its European path, and look forward to a growing role for Serbia as a force for peace and prosperity."

Kerry said the United States stands behind Serbia on its special day, as he expressed wishes for a peaceful and prosperous future.

## ► OBITUARIES

### With Utmost Respect for SLOBODAN ZELICH

By Milana (Mim) Karlo Bizic 2/13/13

RESPECT. I felt it as soon as I began to climb the steps of Holy Resurrection Serbian Orthodox Church on the corner of North 4th Street, in Steubenville, OH to attend the funeral of our beloved Serbian composer +Slobodan Zelich. With each step up, I thought about different things connecting the church with Slobodan:

- How Slobodan's father, V. Rev. Paul Zelich, was at one time, the spiritual leader of this church, and the one tasked with helping Steubenville's faithful garner the funds to build it in 1947.
- How Slobodan would have taken these same steps for Sunday services throughout his lifetime.
- How he must have always stepped up to help the serving clergy.
- How he felt when he first stepped up to become a singer in the choir loft.
- How he must have studied before stepping up to serve as SSS Petar Krstich's beloved director from 1961-2008.
- And then, the mixed feelings he must have had, stepping out of the spotlight by handing the baton over to his chosen one, replacement Nino Karas.

Upon making my last step up, I was able to see that Slobodan had made one last step, this time, lying in state in front of the altar of the church he was so proud to be a part of.

RESPECT. I saw it because the vestibule was full of singers from all over the tri-state area who had come to pay their last respects to this great Serbian legend. George Mistovich, Kathy Loverich and son Adam, Diane Volitich Knapp and Dushie Mistovich from the Aliquippa choir greeted me warmly there, but sadly. They all had their own wonderful memories of Slobodan at Choral Festivals all over the USA. So did the helpful tutors of the church, where I purchased some candles to light in Slobodan's memory, and to pray for the latest victims of Kosovo, the monks in Visoki Decani, who had to close the centuries old Serbian monastery for the first time in five centuries due to the dangers from Albanian extremists who were viciously proclaiming the Serbs had usurped this monastery from them. "Oh, Slobodan, you and your beloved Kosovo," I whispered as I placed the candles in the holder. "If anyone is able to make a difference from above, I know my deceased hero will be trying."

Slobodan, age 88, looked dignified and regal in his coffin, ever the gentleman, even though he had been ill for a long time. Slobodan's sister, Duska Milo, traveling from Florida, met me on my way back to my seat, to say how pleased the family was to see him resting so beautifully. "You can hardly tell from looking at him, how much he suffered these last few months, or how much weight he really lost, he looks so good." Then she added with her beautiful, so youthful a smile and beautiful dancing eyes, "Mim, do you remember the wonderful time we all had singing throughout Serbia in 1989 for the 600th Anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, and how Slobodan asked me, of all people, to sing the solo for our Kosovo Detroit concert in 1989?" her face belying her 80+ years! Indeed, who could forget either of those momentous, historical events and our connectivity to each other? Ask anyone who was there. Traveling to Kosovo in 1989 was almost like now having blood-brother, pobratim, Kumstvo ties.

Slobodan's wife, another Serbian beauty, Nevenka ("Nena"), was composed and thoughtful, kindly finding a memory to relate to everyone as they passed by and expressed condolences. Slobodan's family,

led by son Paul and daughter Sonja and children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, filled the first four rows, and the rest of the church was full of mourners from all over the USA.

RESPECT. I sat beside Dr. Natalie Pavlovich, who despite needing a walker, made sure she was in attendance. John and Joanne Wuchenich, and others from Pittsburgh's Holy Trinity Cathedral came out of respect. Behind me were Mark Zatezalo and his beautiful daughter, Jennifer. We spoke quietly before the services started about the 50th Anniversary of the Steubenville Church and the impact Slobodan made that day, and also, how much fun it was to gather to honor Slobodan for his many contributions to the Serbian people just a few years ago in the same hall where his dacha (mercy dinner) would be held later in the Weirton Serbian Cultural Center.

RESPECT. More and more people continued to enter the church and I wasn't surprised at all to see Rick and Mary Zivic from Cleveland, in attendance. Wife Mary had been in Canada, visiting her mother, and Rick was supposed to join them for the weekend, but the tables were turned. They knew what they had to do. Each person present wanted Slobodan's family to know just how very much he was respected, appreciated and loved.

RESPECT. Four priests served the funeral service. Joining V.Rev. Stavrophor Rade Merick from Steubenville's Holy Resurrection church were V. Rev. Stavrophor Stevan Stepanov from Aliquippa's St. Elijah, V. Rev. Stavrophor Dragoljub Malich from Monroeville's St. Nicholas, and V. Rev. Stavrophor Stevo Rocknage, from the St. Sava parish in Monroeville. The night before, retired Cleveland priest V. Rev. Stavrophor Vasilije Sokolovic and his family were there for the Pomen services. Fr. Merick, in his heart-wrenching eulogy to Slobodan and his innumerable good deeds, mentioned also how His Grace, Bishop Dr. Mitrophan had sent his sincerest sympathies, and was so sorry he couldn't attend as Slobodan deserved it, but he had made a commitment to be in New York's St. Sava Cathedral for an Opening Exhibit from Monastery Hilandar. Fr. Rocknage shared warm memories as a child and teen-ager, growing up in the Steubenville church, and how proud Slobodan always made them feel. Fr. Malich recalled the wonderful times had when Steubenville Choir was guest choir for Monroeville's parish concerts and the excitement felt by all.

RESPECT. A full-house Petar Krstich Steubenville choir, augmented with some out-of-town singers, sang responses, both in old Slavonic and English. How often it was mentioned by many speakers, afterwards, how appreciative Fr. Merick and the Choir were to have had Slobodan Zelich translate the traditional Serbian responses into English, to be among the 100 compositions he had created! Slobodan's repertoire contained not only Serbian Orthodox Liturgical selections (with English translations also!), but folk and patriotic music as well, which stirred the hearts of all in attendance whenever his choir performed. Slobodan was benevolent and productive, using all of his God-given talents so wisely.

Our Sunday church bulletin from February 3, 2013 mentioned how St. Niphon, a 12th century Saint who spent many years living in the Kievan Caves before becoming Bishop of Novgorod, offered these wise words to a young man who felt he needed to go to a monastery in order to be saved: "My son, a man is neither saved nor lost by the place he is in, but is saved or lost by his deeds. Neither a holy place or a holy state is of use to him if he does not fulfill the commandments of the Lord." We all know

that Slobodan, the son of a priest, lived his faith to the fullest, and served the Lord in many different ways, including the translation of the entire Liturgy into English! St. Niphon also said these additional words: "Be devout towards God and loving towards men, and you will be saved."

If only I could remember word for word what each of our religious leaders had to say! Each one spoke lovingly of Slobodan's many deeds and good work, and how he encouraged each of them in his unique way. Indeed, the overall theme from our priests and six speakers at the hall was two-fold: How much of a Mentor Slobodan was, encouraging in his unique way, pushing for more and more when he recognized latent talent, and also, how proud he was of his ethnic Serbian heritage and how proud he made all around him feel to be Serbian Orthodox Christians. It always came with a stern, but loving warning for the younger ones in the Junior and Senior choirs: "Never forget who you are and always act accordingly! You're representing all of us in all you do. Be proud, but posteni. And always remember, you're Serbian." His singers had an ethnic identity. They knew who they were and what they represented. Only the best.

Indeed, as each speaker talked about Slobodan's love and admonishments, you couldn't help feel yourself sitting up a little bit straighter and prouder in your seat, whether in church or at the hall for the mercy dinner.

V. Rev. Stavrophor Rodney Torbic reminds us: "The biggest project in life for individuals is the care of their own souls. Each person has the responsibility for his or her own soul. The choices made and the way life is lived determines the ultimate judgment when Christ returns."

Jesus said: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me, you can do nothing." Slobodan believed. Slobodan chose Christ, and was able to bear much fruit. The six people who spoke of his incredible contributions at the Mercy dinner were: Milan Vuchenich on behalf of the family; Mary Lynn Pavokovich Ricci, president of the Petar Krstich choir; Mary Zivic, SSF Board member; John Martich, SNF Board Member and representing Slobodan's Lodges #22 and #78; Nino Karas, Petar Krstich Choir Director, and Bob Zori, Church President.

All spoke directly from the heart, but I also have a few written notes that I was able to secure and share with you:

Mary Lynn Ricci lamented: "The Serbian Singing Federation and all Serbian singers on the North American continent have indeed lost a tremendous choir director, composer and arranger. His contribution to Serbian choral music on this continent was astonishing. He is indeed a legend among SSF choir directors and I was fortunate to be able to call Slobodan a friend.

"Husband, Father, Father-in-law, Brother, Grandfather, Great Grandfather, Kum, Friend, Neighbor and Mentor are words that describes this man who has touched so many people throughout the Serbian Communities. +Slobodan leaves us with a physical void, but even as we take leave of our friend today, we are joyful that his music will live on with us and all future Serbian singers.

"My first meeting of Slobodan was in junior choir. At my first practice, he placed me from the back row to the front row and said, "Sing loud and sing with your heart. Show how proud you are to be Serbian Orthodox.

That's when I fell in love with singing.

"I've witnessed him composing music sitting on the beach or during a sunset while on vacation in Naples, Florida which he loved doing and then, his first Tuesday back, he was teaching these new songs to his choir. We rarely sang a song twice, as Slobodan believed in singing a new song for festivals. That's why there are 100 musical compositions in our choir room with his name on them.

"Slobodan we will feel your presence with us in the choir loft, on stage and even standing at the bar singing. You have taught us that he who sings prays twice.

"Slobodan also had a saying, 'Keep on singing.' That's what we will do to honor him."

Mary Zivic, trying to hold back the tears in her eyes of the big loss felt in her heart, represented the Executive Board of the Serbian Singing Federation of the US and Canada.

"+Slobodan's contribution to the Petar Krstich Serbian Choir of Steubenville will not soon be matched, nor will it be forgotten. This in turn made him a gem in the world of SSF singers. He was an amazing man, director and arranger who represented his choir, his church, and his family with grace and dignity. Those of us fortunate enough to have known him, shall keep his memory close always.

"+Slobodan's arrangements memorializing the trials and tribulations of his generation of displaced Serbs, and his never-ending pride and loyalty to his beloved Chetniks will always remain a part of his legacy and will be immortalized with the continued performances of his pieces." His obituary read, in part:

Slobodan joined the organized guerrilla fighters known as the Chetniks, detachments of the Yugoslav Army, led by Gen. Draza Mihailovic, who, as royalists, fought to preserve the crown of young King Peter II of Yugoslavia. The Chetniks battled the communist Partisans of Josip Broz Tito, as well as the fascist Ustase, allied to Nazi Germany. Near the end of the war, Vojvoda (Chief) Momcilo Djujic, sensing all was lost, marched his Dinara Division, to which Slobodan belonged, out of Yugoslavia, fighting his way with his men over snowbound mountains, leading a mixed body of 20,000 combatants and civilians, a long line of humanity, stretching for miles, girded by soldiers to the front, rear, and flanks. Slobodan and his future wife, Nevenka, possessing only what they were wearing and what they could carry, trudged through deep snow for hundreds of miles, eventually transiting the Istrian peninsula to the relative safety of Italy, where they spent time in displaced persons camps, then on to refugee camps in Germany, where they were married in Diepolz in 1947. They came to the United States in 1949, after burying their first born son, who had died of a fever in a postwar Germany sadly lacking in medicine.

Mary ended: "We were blessed to have had him in our midst and part of our American Serbian community and we will continue to sing his songs as long as we have voices."

John Martich began by saying what a challenge it was to summarize Slobodan's lifelong contributions to our Holy Church, but how evident it really was in the Pomen and Funeral services conducted for him. Moreover, he added, his own favorite memory of Slobodan's was when the Petar Krstich Choir was asked to sing for the closing of the SNF's 90th anniversary. "True to his style," John related, "Slobodan dutifully

## ► OBITUARIES

prepared for months in anticipation of the big event. He chose the difficult Cantata of the renowned Serbian composer, Ljubomir Bosnjakovic, 'Albanska Glogota.' As if directing this were not enough, Slobodan also composed the music for an orchestral accompaniment performed by many young Serbian musicians from throughout the Pittsburgh area. The audience sat spell-bound as the choir and orchestra together gave a flawless performance. Having been a member of the choir at the time, I recall Slobodan placing his hand on his heart several times during the song, and each time, looking up as us and smiling. We didn't need him to tell us how well we were doing. We saw it in his eyes and in his smile. The standing ovation and the tears flowing from an appreciative audience proved it was one of the choir's greatest moments under Slobodan's direction. As a side note, we remember the opening tenor solo masterfully

performed by our friend and parish priest the time, Proto Vasilije Sokolovic.

"Slobodan loved all things Serbian," John continued. "He would faithfully read the American Srbobran from cover to cover, paying particular attention to news items of other member choirs of the Serbian Singing Federation. He did this regularly until his failing eyesight made it too difficult to read, and it was then that Sonja was recruited to read it to him, with Nena pitching in when it came to reading the Cyrillic section."

Then John really brought it on home with his Serbian: "Dragi Nena, Paul i Sonja, u ime clanova I odbor direktora srpska narodna saveza, nudimo najdublje saosecanje Zelich porodici i hvala Slobodanu za njegove doprinose savezu. Neka mu Bog podari vecni pokoj u njegovum carstvu."

Vjecna mu pamjat, Cika Slobodan."

Vjecnaja pamjat. One last respect. I remember how last September, 2012, Omaha was the guest choir of our host Aliquippa. Under the direction of Tom Olsen, the Omaha singers proudly ended their selections with the invigorating "Vesela je Srbadija," (All of Serbia is happy!) arrangement by the immortal Slobodan Zelich of Steubenville, Ohio! Near and far, Slobodan was recognized for his wonderful accomplishments.

In Aliquippa's St. Elijah, dentist and fellow tenor, Dr. George Mistovich, relayed how happy he was to have been one of the trumpet players for Slobodan's cantata. "I said, 'Slobodan, I haven't played my trumpet since High School.' 'You can do it,' he told me. 'Just practice.' And I did. I was so happy to be part of that special moment. Slobodan gave you confidence, but you

also knew you had to produce!"

Stepping Up! Producing! Knowing Slobodan met the criterion for entry into Heaven, its fun to imagine the welcome he will receive from all past +SSF members. He'll soon be busy, creating Arrangement 101, and helping to direct all of those wonderful SSF choir members who have since gone on to their Heavenly rewards: Nick and Bob Stone, the Popovich Brothers, Helen Bizich, Milan and Dara Tomich, John Tomich, Martha Belosh, Kay Begovic, Mary Beaver, Monty Popovich,..... the list is endless. Like Slobodan's good deeds!

He surely earned our heartfelt respect.

Brother Slobodan was a member of SNF Lodge #22. Vjecnaja Pamjat! May he be endowed with paradise and eternal blessedness and may his memory be eternal!

### Julius M. Rambat

Julius M. Rambat, 87 years old, passed away peacefully, after a long illness, with his family at his side on Friday, February 8, 2013 joining his beloved wife, Delphine "Del", who predeceased him on October 14, 2012 as well as his sister, Rose Brdar in 2008. Julius and Del are survived by their children, Jadel (Paul) Lerner, Rayna (Doug) Burns, Gregory Rambat (Gina) and Dara (Jamie) Cockrum; their grandchildren: Melissa and Alexandra Lerner; Ariana and Conor Burns; Michael and Nicholas Rambat and Jordan and Benjamin Cockrum. They are also survived by sister Josephine and Peter Sredich. Julius and Del leave behind many loving nieces, nephews and cousins. They were loyal kumovi of the late Swats and Delores Sarovich of Chicago, IL and Naples, FL and also kumovi of the late Dan and Ann Borkovich of Chicago, IL. Julius and Del were married on May 27, 1951 at St. Laza-

rus Serbian Orthodox Cathedral "Ravanica" in Detroit, MI and were founding members of St.

Andrew's Orthodox Catholic Church in East Lansing, MI. Julius was a veteran of WWII, where he served in the U.S. Marines. He and Del took over the family business running Milo's Restaurant on Olds Avenue in Lansing, MI and later Milo's Taverna on Jolly Road. In 1988, Julius and Del moved to Bradenton, FL. In the summer of 2008, they moved back to Michigan to be near family.

The funeral services were held on October 19 and February 14. The Parastos will be held at St. Lazarus on Sunday, March 10.

Arrangements were by the Estes-Leadley Greater Lansing Chapel, in Lansing, MI. [www.EstesLeadley.com](http://www.EstesLeadley.com)



## Eulogy for my Uncle Gojko Vukas

### A TRIBUTE TO BROTHERS

My dear Uncle Gojko passed unto the Lord on February 1, 2013. He was only 66 years old. Many who knew him saw the same qualities I experienced during my adult life. He was always upbeat with a radiant and friendly smile, generous laugh and a deep devotion to his family, friends and Serbian heritage.

Gojko came to America in his early 20's with the assistance provided by my parents, Milenko and Mildred Vukas. My father was the oldest of 5 children and was 19 years senior to Gojko. During his first year, Gojko was welcomed by many and quickly established new friendships with many fellow Serbs in America. He found employment quickly as he had previous vocational training in Yugoslavia. Initially, he lived with our family in Highland, Indiana and although we knew he was "Striko", he was only 9 years older than my brother Nick and

11 years older than me. At times he seemed like a long lost brother from a foreign land but we understood he came from the same stock as our Father. Over the years, Uncle Gojko travelled back to Yugo and in fact found his soul mate, my dear Aunt Soka during his first return visit. Like his older brother Milenko, they both enjoyed working. This quality alone affirms a rewarding life. Gojko was always busy and was generous with his time as he helped others. He and Soka devoted years working for their Serbian church.

Gojko and Soka were blessed with two sons, Milenko and Sasha, and he was given the good fortune to see two masculine grandchildren- Neven and Stefan. Even in a shortened life, Uncle Gojko had much to be grateful for.

My Uncle deeply admired his oldest

brother, Milenko, my father. I also know he felt an obligation to my brother, Nick and me. But what is even more amazing is how he steadfastly filled the void once my father passed away almost 20 years ago. He always had good things to say whenever we visited. He was fiercely proud of our Serbian heritage but also understood what the American dream offered to all people. He had wisdom and wit and shared his outlook whenever we would converse. He and Aunt Soka always made us feel so welcome. There is no substitute for this type of love.

As I look back on the life of my dear Uncle, I think of his role as a brother. He knew how much Nick and I missed our departed parents. There is always a void when parents die too young. Gojko stepped up whenever we visited...not just by barbecuing a lamb or offering

Serbian libations but with his heart and soul. His eyes would sparkle as he greeted us. He and Soka proudly held our children when they were baptized, filling in as closely as if they were our parents. He would speak, at times with tears in his eyes...stories about our Father, wanting us to appreciate the deeper meanings of life and our Serbian heritage. Uncle Gojko was a role model for any brother...exemplifying how important you are to those with the same blood. Always be there for your brother when needed. Such a simple lesson with such a powerful result...a life well lived...an uncle for the ages...a brother with much love to share.

May God grant my Uncle peace and may his memory be eternal.

Jordan Vukas  
Carmel, Indiana, Feb. 2013

## SNF Weblink

GET ON OUR SNF WEBLINK

From the Home Page, click  
News and Events then click SNF Links

### Know of a great Serbian website of interest?

We will be taking a listing of links to Serbian websites and adding it to our SNF website. Send addresses of websites that you visit for information about Serbia's art, culture, people, environment, geography, history, economy, government, churches, tourism, city-and-country guides, weather, maps, local Serbian newspapers, etc.

### Want to add your church, lodge, or Serbian club website?

Write to us at [snf@snflife.org](mailto:snf@snflife.org) and be on the lookout for THE SNF WEBLINK at [www.snflife.org](http://www.snflife.org)

# Paschal PILGRIMAGE PLANNED

With the blessing of His Grace Bishop Longin, Holy Resurrection Serbian Orthodox Cathedral has announced a Serbian Orthodox Paschal Pilgrimage to the Holy Land planned for Easter Week including Palm Sunday, April 26 to May 6, 2013. The trip will cover 11 days. Two nights will be spent in Bethlehem, two in Galilee, five nights in Jerusalem and an optional extension for one night in Sinai and another in Jericho are available.

Participants will depart Chicago April 26 for Tel Aviv, with arrival in Bethlehem the next day. There will be a stop in Jaffa to see the home of St Simon. Other highlights include visiting the church of the Nativity, a visit to St. Sabas Monastery or the Palestinian Craft Center and much more, including a stop at the Jordan River to see the Baptismal site. Several meals are included in tour rates beginning at approximately \$3,200.

More information is available at Select International, 85 Park Ave, Flemington, New Jersey 08822 • (908) 237-9262 • 1-800-842-4842 • E-mail: sales@select-intl.com http://www.selectinternationaltours.com.

## 49th Annual ASERB Scholarship Awards

The American Serbian Eastern Rite Brothers (ASERB) are once again accepting applications for college scholarship awards. To be eligible for an award, a candidate must meet all of the following qualifications:

- The applicant must be a graduating high school senior in 2013.
- The applicant must be an Eastern Orthodox Christian, and one or both parents or step-parents must be of Serbian descent and parishioners of a Serbian Orthodox Church in one of the following communities: Aliquippa, Farrell/Hermitage, Johnstown, Masontown, McKeesport/Dusquense, Midland, Monroeville, Pittsburgh, Steubenville/Weirton, Youngstown, Youngwood, or Warren.
- The applicant must be able to show proof of acceptance by a college or university granting a four-year baccalaureate degree.
- The scholarship recipient must attend the Scholarship Banquet on Saturday, June 22, 2013 at Pugliano's in Plum Boro, Pennsylvania.

ASERB representatives have been assigned to each church community. Candidates may pick up a scholarship application from the following members:

ALIQUIPPA	Robert Mervis	724.375.1855
	Brian Hayden	724.774.3322
CLAIRTON	Milan Jerry Drobac	412.384.5655
FARRELL/ HERMITAGE	Robert Kosanovich	724.588.7191
	Lazo Raketich	724.347.3956
	Mark Raketich	412.417.0354
JOHNSTOWN	Charles Bulich	814.536.5210
MASONTOWN	Stanley Brozik	724.583.8301
McKEESPORT/ DUQ.	Michael Mochan	412.824.0458
MIDLAND	George Vlaich	304.564.5727
	Paul Adams Jr.	724.495.3627
MONROEVILLE	John Stipanovich	412.372.1552
PITTSBURGH	Gregory Volitich	412.344.1050
STEBENVILLE	Nick Drazich	740.264.7851
YOUNGSTOWN	Michael Rogich	330.792.1879
YOUNGWOOD	Melvin Tarbuck	724.925.6679

COMPLETED SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN MAY 6, 2013. The 49th Annual Scholarship Banquet will be held on Saturday, June 22, 2013 at Pugliano's, 1808 Golden Mile Highway, Plum Boro, Pennsylvania. The banquet is open to the public. For ticket information contact Chester Hayden at 724.378.3852; advance reservations are required.

## Notices & Announcements

### ATTENTION LODGE OFFICERS

File Form 990-N by May 15

It's time to file Form 990-N (e-Postcard).

IRS REGULATIONS require each SNF lodge to file a short, online form electronically by May 15 of each year if the lodge's tax year ends on December 31. There are no exceptions.

If you do not file this form for your lodge by May 15, your lodge will lose your tax exemption and will be required to file annual Federal tax forms even if your lodge has no income. Failure to file Federal tax forms could result in fees and penalties.

Here is a list of information that you need in order to file the online Form 990-N:

- Employer identification number (EIN), also known as Taxpayer Identification (TID). You can find this number on the bank statement for your lodge. If you do not know your lodge's EIN, do not use the SNF's. Please contact the Home Office at 412.642.7372.
- Name of Lodge, Lodge #, and Lodge mailing address.
- Name and address of the Lodge's principal officer.
- Confirmation that the Lodge's annual gross receipts are less than \$50,000.

Once you know the above information, go to the e-Postcard website address, which is: [www.epostcard.form990.org](http://www.epostcard.form990.org)

Register as a new user, or enter your previously registered login and password.

Follow the directions to create and submit your lodge's Form 990-N (e-Postcard).

If your lodge does not have anyone available to file this form, please contact the Home Office as soon as possible at 412.642.7372.

The Board of Directors has approved reorganization and merger for SNF lodges who lost tax exemption status and were unable to file applications for re-instatement. The following lodges will be contacted by our President, Michael Marjanovic, regarding merger with another SNF lodge.

1. Steubenville, OH/ Lodge 22
2. Sacramento, CA/ Lodge 29
3. Clairton, PA/ Lodge 88
4. Cincinnati, OH/ Lodge 101
5. Chisolm, MN/ Lodge 116
6. Toledo, OH/ Lodge 137
7. Jackson, CA/ Lodge 144
8. Hazelton, PA/ Lodge 166
9. Escondido, CA/ Lodge 176

10. Lyndora, PA/ Lodge 175
11. Ambridge, PA/ Lodge 188
12. Bovey, MN/ Lodge 242
13. Ambridge, PA/ Lodge 188
14. Park Ridge, IL/ Lodge 86

### AMERICAN SRBOBRAN PUBLISHING DATES & DEADLINES FOR 2013

As approved by the Board of Directors of the Serb National Federation

DEADLINE DATE	PUBLICATION DATE
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FEB 22	MAR 6
MAR 8	MAR 20
MAR 22	APR 3
APR 5	APR 17
APR 19	MAY 1
MAY 3	MAY 15
MAY 17	JUN 5
JUN 7	JUN 19
JUN 21	JUL 3
JUL 5	JUL 17
JUL 19	AUG 7
AUG 9	AUG 21
AUG 23	SEP 4
SEP 6	SEP 18
SEP 20	OCT 2
OCT 4	OCT 16
OCT 18	NOV 6
NOV 8	NOV 20
NOV 22	DEC 4
DEC 6	DEC 18
DEC 20	JAN 7*

### 74th Basketball

June 14 - 16  
Detroit, MI  
Hosts: St. Lazarus Serbian Orthodox Cathedral and SNF Lodge 98

### Three Day

July 19 - 21  
Pittsburgh, PA  
Hosts: Tri State Lodges

### 72nd Summer Golf

July 31 - August 3  
Pittsburgh, PA  
Hosts: Holy Trinity Cathedral and SNF Lodge 6, 10, 11

### 67th Bowling

October 12 - 13  
Milwaukee, WI  
Hosts: St. Sava Orthodox Cathedral and SNF Lodges 93, 99, 145

### SNF BOARD MEMBERS

President: Michael Marjanovic

1st Vice President:  
John Martich

2nd Vice President:  
Peter Raketich

Secretary: Melicent Bielich

Treasurer: Greg Volitich

At Large Members:  
John Lovrensky  
Dane Medich  
Milana Milosh  
Rob Zunich  
George Mistovich  
Ted Potkonjak

### UP TO DATE?

Is your information up to date? Do we have your correct address? Do we have your email? Do you want to change beneficiary information? Contact the SNF Home Office at 800-538-7372 or go to [www.snflife.org](http://www.snflife.org).

### Want to add your church, lodge, or Serbian club website?

Write to us at [snf@snflife.org](mailto:snf@snflife.org) and be on the lookout for THE SNF WEBLINK at [www.snflife.org](http://www.snflife.org)

### NOTICE OF BIDS

Bids are now being accepted for the following SNF events:  
2014 Midwinter Golf Deadline to submit bid is April 1, 2013  
2014 Basketball Deadline to submit bid is May 31, 2013  
2014 Summer Golf Deadline to submit bid is July 1, 2013  
2014 Bowling Deadline to submit bid is October 1, 2013

To be considered, all bids must be in written form and signed by an authorized representative of the SNF Lodge and local church community interested in sponsoring the event. The written request should include as much detail as possible concerning potential event dates, facilities and any other relevant information that will be useful in selecting the successful bidder. All written bids must be received at the office of the Serb National Federation, 938 Penn Avenue - 4th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222 no later than 5:00 PM Eastern on the deadline date for the specific event.

### CONTRIBUTION

Please accept my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the

SNF Scholarship Fund

SNF Fraternal Fund

SNF American Srbobran

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please include your **name, lodge number, and address** and mail to Serb National Federation, 938 Penn Avenue, 4th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Make checks payable to *Serb National Federation*