



LATEST USPEH HOLIDAY SING-ALONG ATTRACTED AREA CAROLERS

by **Beverly Boyance Marinello**

The Annual USPEH Holiday Sing-Along was held on December 12, 2023 at the Todd American Legion Post in Milwaukee. This year, the event was newly emceed by former USPEH Chorus member, local band leader, and longtime Slovenian volunteer John Ash. Our popular and good friend to all Slovenians, Tony Gorenc provided musical accompaniment on his accordion. We were so pleased to see many familiar faces as well as some new ones.

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LJUBLJANA AUTHOR TO VISIT MILWAUKEE ON APRIL 28

by **Jeff Martinka**

The UWM Slovenian Arts Program is pleased to sponsor a Milwaukee visit by Ljubljana author and researcher Dr. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik for an April 28th book lecture and reception. Dr. Milharčič Hladnik is the author of [Daring Dreams of the Future: Slovenian Mass Migrations 1870-1945](#). She will offer a talk on the topic and lead a discussion session afterwards. The afternoon will also feature a reception and book-signing.

The event will be held on Sunday, April 28th at 2 pm at the Polish Center of Wisconsin's Ballroom. The Center is located at 6941 S. 68th Street in Franklin. The Slovenian Counsel General, Alenka Jerak, and the Slovenian Union of America President Joe Valencic will both join us in Milwaukee that day. During a reception following her talk,

guests will be able to visit an extensive visual display of Slovenian achievements in the U.S., provided by the Slovenian Union of America.



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SLOVENIAN HOLIDAY FOLK FAIR BOOTH AGAIN EARNS DESIGN AWARD

by **Nancy Reese**

The 2023 edition of the Holiday Folk Fair International returned to the Wisconsin State Fair Park's Exposition Hall on November 17, 18 and 19, 2023. Last year's theme was "Celebrate Traditional Costumes" and our Slovenian booth won an award for the "Best Educational Presentation" from the International Institute of Wisconsin. This is the third time that our cultural booth has received an award and that is certainly gratifying. Thank you to the team who helped me with the booth setup and the nearly twenty volunteers who staffed the booth during the fair.

This year's Holiday Folk Fair will be November 22, 23, and 24, 2024. If you are interested in working at the booth on any of the days for a two-hour shift, let me know so I can reserve your preferred time. The days and times are Friday, 9:00AM – 2:00PM (school groups only) and 2:00PM – 9:00PM, general public, Saturday, 10:00AM – 9:00PM and Sunday, 10:00AM – 6:00PM. Some spots are already taken. Contact Nancy Reese, at nareese@wi.rr.com if you would like to reserve a specific day or time early, before the "rush".

Left top: crowds gather at the Slovenian booth at the 2023 International Folk Fair. Left bottom: Dominic Marinello (left) and Mark Frohna (right) volunteer at the Slovenian booth. Thank you to all of our volunteers!



**HOLIDAY
FOLK Fair
international**



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The Daring Dreams book chronicles the migration of nearly one-third of the population of today's Slovenia, an exodus who permanently settled in countries around the world. Some traveled back and forth, searching for work to ensure the survival of the family members left behind at home and the prosperity for the families and communities they were creating abroad. From one of the smallest nations in Europe, barely reaching one and a half million inhabitants at the time, people departed in numbers reaching 440,000. This book tells their stories about the "daring dreams of the future," as the Slovenian poet Oton Župančič—whose words open the book—so beautifully put it. In their new communities, they built homes, churches, and cultural institutions that have survived to the present.



Pictured above: Dr. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik, author of Daring Dreams of the Future: Slovenian Mass Migrations 1870-1945.



Pictured above: The Polish Center of Wisconsin's Ballroom, located at 6941 S. 68th Street in Franklin.

Dr. Milharčič Hladnik is a researcher at the Slovenian Migration Institute of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana and a professor at the University of Nova Gorica. Her research interests include human rights and migrant integration, gender inequalities, and Slovenian women migrants, as well as interdisciplinary approaches and innovative methodologies.

Mirjam is an enthusiastic researcher of "the documents of life," ranging from oral histories to analyses of correspondence and autobiographic texts. She is the editor of From Slovenia to Egypt: Aleksandrinke's Trans-Mediterranean Domestic Workers' migration and National Imagination (2015) and the editor (with Jernej Mlekuž) of Going Places: Slovenian Women's Stories on Migration (2014). She wrote the screenplay for the documentary film 100% Slovenian (2005) and is Editor-in-Chief of the academic journal Dve domovini / Two Homelands.

The reception immediately following the book discussion will offer light appetizers, Slovenian-style treats, and wines and include the announcement of SUA Branch #43's annual service awards.

SECOND ANNUAL SLOVENIAN FILM FESTIVAL SET FOR NOVEMBER 2024

by Jeff Martinka

We are pleased to announce initial details for our 2nd Annual Festival of Slovenian Films at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (UWM). Our mini-film festival is planned for either the weekend of October 5-6 or the weekend of 14-16, depending on the final Green Bay Packers schedule (we will try to book movies on a Packers by weekend) and will be co-hosted by the Slovenian Arts Program and the UWM Film & Video Studies Department. The film festival will again be held in the ninety-seat UWM Fine Arts Cinema in Mitchell Hall (Room B91).



Possible 2023 films include these recent releases.

As in 2023, we will be showing both feature-length films and short films from Slovenia, with a concentration on films that earned national or European awards. They will be presented in Slovenian, with English subtitles.

Thanks to the Ermenc Fund at the UWM Foundation, there will be no cost of admission (yes, there still are some things that are free), so please plan to join us. Mitchell Hall on Downer Avenue, just east of the main Peck School of the Arts buildings.

The movies will be selected by UWM Slovenian Arts Council member Paul Zovič, collaborating closely with Slovenian officials at the Slovenski Filmski Center in Ljubljana.

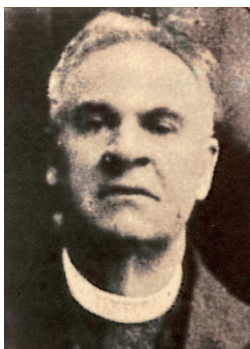
MOTHER/SON DUO RECEIVES 2024 “SLOVENIANS OF YEAR” AWARD



by Beverly Boyance Marinello

At their February meeting, the Board of the Slovenian Union of America’s (SUA) Branch #43 named Barbara Martinka and her son Jeff Martinka as their Members of the Year for 2024. The two will be recognized on April 28th. As Ellen Shiflet, Branch #43 Co-President noted, “This year SUA Branch #43 honors both the past and the future – Barbara Martinka has contributed time and energy to celebrating Milwaukee Slovenians over the years and Jeff Martinka works year-round to educate today’s Slovenians on our past. Their combined energy will carry our Slovenian traditions forward.”

Barbara Martinka’s roots in the Milwaukee Slovenian community go back to its very first years. In 1908, her Great Uncle, Father Mark Pakiz (pictured here), began his long tenure as

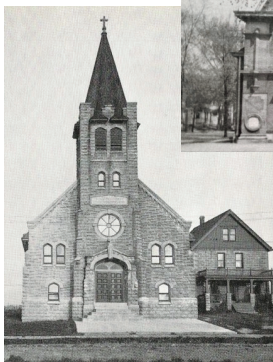


Pastor of St. Mary Help of Christians Church, a new Slovenian congregation in West Allis. Its original church was completed in 1908. Father Mark then planned the original St. John

the Evangelist parish in Walker’s Point in 1916, securing the archbishop’s permission to purchase a former Jewish Synagogue to serve his second fledgling



Above: the original St. John the Evangelist.
Left: St. Mary Help of Christians



Slovenian congregation. In that period, Father Mark’s Slovenian niece and Barbara’s mother, Frances Pakiz Kochar, immigrated, solo, to Milwaukee to serve as her Uncle Mark’s housekeeper. She was just sixteen at the time. St. John’s was established as a mission church to St. Mary Help of Christian’s and after Father Pakiz’ death in 1929, the two Slovenian Churches became separate parishes.



Above: Jeff Martinka and Barbara Martinka, SUA Branch 43 “Slovenians of the Year.”

Barbara Martinka became active in the Slovenian community herself after the first of her eight children were grown. She was a longtime member of both the Slovenian chorus at St. John the Evangelist and of the Uspeh Slovenian Chorus, with whom she participated in many concert tours, including two trips to Slovenia. Barbara also served as a 15-year member of the UWM Slovenian Arts Council and has been a fierce competitor in the balina league at West Allis Veteran’s Park. Finally, she is still a regular volunteer in the Slovenian booth at the annual Holiday Folk Fairs.

Jeff began his direct service as a five-year editor of the then-quarterly U.S.P.E.H. Slovenian Newsletter and like his mother, Jeff has been a longtime member of the Uspeh Slovenian Chorus.

He served on the UWM Slovenian Arts Council in two periods, including multiple terms as an officer of the Council. He has been active in both the Twin Cities’ and Milwaukee area’s SUA Branches, working to create Slovenian cultural displays at ethnic festivals in both St. Paul and Milwaukee. Recently, Jeff took on the role of editor of the UWM Slovenian Arts Program News/Glasilo. He was recently elected president of the Slovenian Arts Council at their November 2023 meeting and promises to be an active steward of the funds that the Ermenc family gifted to promote Slovenian cultural activities in the Milwaukee region. Jeff has visited relatives and friends in Slovenia many times, twice with Barbara, and he hopes to climb Mt. Triglav for a fourth and final time this August.

As an active SUA member myself, I have come to know and celebrate a personal friendship with Jeff and Barbara over the past five years and am so pleased to see them being honored. On a personal note, Barbara and my late mother, Christine Boyance, were roommates on the USPEH Chorus tours to Slovenia. I can only imagine the fun these two lively Slovenian women had! Barbara always has a twinkle in her eyes and her sense of humor is absolutely remarkable! Jeff has his mom’s same twinkle in the eyes and his beautiful tenor voice is always a joy.

Congratulations, Barbara and Jeff! Thanks for your work to preserve and promote our Slovenian cultural heritage.



Barbara Martinka and her son, Jeff, enjoy a polka dance at Triglav Park in 2023.

MARTINOVANJE ATTRACTS FESTIVE CROWDS

MKE SLO NEWS | Spring 2024

By Linda Abstetar

The Slovenian Union of America's Branch 43 held its Martinovanje on Saturday, November 11, 2023, attracting well over 100 revelers. It was the Milwaukee edition of the traditional Slovenian St. Martin's Day Celebration, marking the end of the harvest and the arrival of winter. This event was held at the Root River Center in Franklin, WI featuring Slovenian wines, a full dinner, and dancing. The program included the dynamic Polka Pals from Lemont, IL, with intermissions offering dozens of door prizes, a Slovenian wine raffle, and a visit by St. Martin himself. The dessert tables featured homemade potica, štrudelj, and other desserts.

Please join us for our next fun-filled event on Saturday, November 9, 2024 at the Root River Center. Contact BettyAnn Kolesari at 262-896-0942 for the details and to reserve your spot.



Clockwise from top left: Joe Valencic, Linda Abstetar, Ellen Shiflet; Connie Haessler, BettyAnn Kolesari, Mary Lynn; Martinovanje crowd; Denise Bartlett, Paul Zovic, Joanne Lipo Zovic. Middle: Potica bakers Shelly Gibson, Paula Weber, Bev Marinello, Helen Frohna, Linda Abstetar.

SUMMER 2024 SUA AND UWM SAC PICNIC

SUA Branch #43 member Frank Murn (who turns a young 96 this August 22nd) is again hosting a free picnic on Sunday, July 28th for donors to the UWM Slovenian Arts Program and for members of Slovenian Union of America Branch #43 members. The picnic will be from noon – 5 pm with lunch served at 1 pm.

Guests will be treated to a picnic lunch, with desserts of potica, strudel, and flanceti donated by the Slovenian bakers of Branch #43 and liquid refreshments provided by Frank. Following lunch, Frank, driving his "Popemobile" with a passenger trailer attached, will treat his guests to a ride through his 200 acres of flower-filled prairies. Frank will also offer tours of his home which was built in Frank Lloyd Wright/Prairie School style and highlights his art collection gleaned through his years of travel. Also featured were

demonstrations of a few of the whirligigs/"automata" that Frank crafts, truly works of art! The afternoon will include a serenade by Frank, a longtime Badger Button Box member, on his accordion.

Attendance at this fun afternoon is by reservation only. To book your picnic spots, Branch #43 members or UWM Slovenian Arts Program donors should contact Helen Frohna at hfrohna@att.net or 414-470-5296.



Above: Helen Frohna, Frank Murn, and Metka Rozina.



Top: Frank Murn and his whirligigs. Bottom: A prairie ride for 2023 attendees.

THOUGHTS FROM PAST SAC PRESIDENT CHRISTINA CARROLL

Dragi prijatelji,

This past December, I concluded my final term as President of the UWM Slovenian Arts Council. The policy of having an ongoing rotation of officer positions enables the Slovenian Arts Council to maintain a fresh approach in the planning of activities that promote Slovenian culture and arts in our Milwaukee community.

Over the past term as President, my goal was to achieve a more collaborative relationship with the other Slovenian-American organizations in our community and to reach out to other Slovenian communities in the Midwest. The Council also presented events that involved participation from the Peck School of the Arts and the Golda Meir Library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Many of these activities have been reported in the UWM Slovenian Arts Program previous newsletters. Our past newsletters are always available for viewing on our website (www.slovenianartsprogram.org).

Our events would not have been possible without the hard work and support of my fellow Council members, and the generous donations made by you to the UWM Ermenc Slovenian Arts Fund. The Covid pandemic and subsequent shutdown of our communities put a damper on some of our event planning. However, thanks to modern technology that offered the Zoom application, we were able to continue offering programs in an alternate, remote setting. In collaboration with Milwaukee's Triglav Cultural Society and Triglav Park, we were able to host the first visit to Milwaukee by Alenka Jerak, the Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia, along with a delegation from Slovenia. Also in attendance at the luncheon visit were the officers of the various Milwaukee Slovenian lodges--KSKJ, SNPJ, SUA, and CFU/Sloga.

As I step back in my role as President, I want to sincerely thank my fellow Council members and the staff at UWM for their support and their efforts in helping to create and to sponsor our various activities over the past six years. I consider myself to be blessed that so many of my peers with whom I grew up in the Slovenian community, both in Triglav and in the various Milwaukee Slovenian fraternal lodges, volunteered to help make these events successful. Hvala lepa. In the spirit of our parents and grandparents, we all have a desire to share our Slovenian ethnic culture and arts, not just among the Slovenian-American community in Milwaukee, but to the Milwaukee community at large.

Lep pozdrav!

Christina M. Carroll



REMEMBERING UWM SAC PRESIDENT SYLVIA MURN

By **Christianne Murn**

I was pleased to be asked to reflect on my Mother, Sylvia Murn (nee Petershack), for the supporters of the UWM Slovenian Arts Program. My siblings and I are immensely proud of her and her many achievements.

Our Mom was key in helping to establish the UWM Slovenian Arts Program (SAP). At the time of its inception, Sylvia was Executive Director of the



Sylvia Peterschack Murn

University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee's Foundation. She leveraged her many relationships within the University to affiliate the Slovenian Arts Council with UWM and she worked directly with the Ermenc Family to set up their founding endowment for SAP. Her commitment continued with her efforts as President of the UWM Slovenian Arts Council, which was created to guide the use of the Ermenc Family's gift.

Sylvia's involvement was a recognition of her family's Slovenian background and her respect for its arts and culture. Sylvia herself wrote poetry and instilled in her family a love of the arts. She was a regular patron of the Milwaukee Symphony, Milwaukee Ballet, Florentine Opera, the Rep and UWM's fine arts programs.

Sylvia was a proud graduate of Alverno College and a long-time supporter of the school. She began her career at Alverno, where she was their first Director of Development. Sylvia grew to be a leader in Milwaukee's nonprofit community and was recognized in 1987 as an honoree of the Cutlip Professional Fundraiser award. Sylvia started her own philanthropic management consulting firm, Murn & Associates, and had local, national, and international clients.

Sylvia retired to Florida and returned to Wisconsin as her Alzheimer's disease progressed. She remained cheerful and enjoyed creating art, examples of which were displayed throughout the State of Wisconsin by the Alzheimers Association. Sylvia passed away in December 2023 at the age of 90. She is survived by her four children and nine great-grandchildren. Her legacy lives on through them, and through her critical formative work to create the UWM Slovenian Arts Program.

A celebration of Sylvia Murn's life will be held at The Legend at Bristlecone Country Club at 1500 Arlene Dr, Hartland, WI 53029 on Sunday, June 23rd beginning at 3pm with a service at 4pm and a reception following. All are welcome to join us.

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Above: Jackie Smith, Tony Gorenc, and John Ash at the 2023 Sing-A-Long.

Please mark your calendar for the 2024 USPEH Sing-Along to be held on Tuesday, December 10, 2024 in the same location as always, Todd American Legion Post, 9159 W. Beloit Rd., Milwaukee starting at 6:00 pm. We promise a medley of Slovenian Christmas songs, traditional English Christmas songs, and a rendition of the “Twelve Days of Slovenian Christmas” that has to be seen and participated in to enjoy. Beer and soda are provided by the chorus and its friends, as well as homemade Slovenian sweets and treats.



Above: 2023 Sing-A-Long group. Right: Lilian Hartman, Rose Chepek, and Janet Oldenberg.



HELP US GO DIGITAL

If you would like to receive these UWM SAP newsletters in a digital format (pdf) via email instead of a paper copy sent through the US Postal Service, please email your name and email address to: slovartsmke@gmail.com We will still maintain the mailing of hard copies to those who do not wish to share their email addresses with us.

Please note, your email address will be used ONLY to distribute our newsletters, notices of our sponsored events, and other invitations (Zoom, etc.). Emailed items will be sent from slovartsmke@gmail.com. This account is administered privately by an officer of the Slovenian Arts Council, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mark your calendars and join fellow Slovenians as we celebrate our culture locally!

Slovenians In America: A Book Tour Presentation from Ljubljana

Sunday, April 28, 2024,
2 pm presentation/discussion
3:30-5 pm reception
Polish Center of Wisconsin
6941 S. 68th Street, Franklin, WI 53132

Triglav Cultural Society: Prvi (First) Picnic

Sunday, June 23, 2024
11 am Mass • 12 pm Dinner/bar open
1 pm Music by Vince Riegler & the Polka Pals
Triglav Park Dom & Grounds
6464 S. Loomis Road, Wind Lake, WI 53185
<http://www.triglavpark.com/>

UWM Slovenian Arts Program Donor & SUA Branch #43 Member Picnic

Sunday, July 28, 2024, Noon-5 pm
1 pm picnic lunch
Frank Murn's Home
Genesee, WI 54149
(UWM SAP donors or SUA Branch #43 members should see the article for reservation information)

Triglav Cultural Society: Drugi (Second) Picnic

Sunday, August 4, 2024
11 am Mass • 12 pm Dinner/bar open
1 pm Music by Ansambel Veseljaki
Triglav Park Dom & Grounds
6464 S. Loomis Road, Wind Lake, WI 53185

Triglav Cultural Society: Vinska Trgatev (Wine Festival)

Sunday, September 15, 2024
12 pm Dinner/bar open
1 pm music by BrewHaus Polka Kings
Triglav Park Dom & Grounds
6464 S. Loomis Road, Wind Lake, WI 53185



Second Annual Slovenian Film Festival

October 2024
(watch for show times and film details in the summer newsletter or at www.slovenianartsprogram.org)
Fine Arts Cinema, Rm B91, Mitchell Hall on the UWM Campus
3203 N. Downer Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211

SUA Branch 43 Martinovanje Celebration

Saturday, November 9, 2024
6-10 pm
Root River Center
7220 W. Rawson Avenue
Franklin, WI 53132

Slovenian Cultural Booth at International Holiday Folk Fair 2024

Friday, November 22
Saturday, November 23
Sunday, November 24, 2024
Wisconsin State Fair Exposition Hall
8200 W. Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214

2024 USPEH Slovenian Singer's Holiday Sing-Along

Tuesday, December 12, 2024
6-8 pm
HA Todd Jr., American Legion Post 537
9159 W. Beloit Rd.
Milwaukee 53227

NEW UWM SAC LEADERSHIP ELECTED

Here are the 2024/2025 UWM Slovenian Arts Council members. Thank you for volunteering your time to preserve our Slovenian culture and heritage in southeastern Wisconsin.

President:

Jeff Martinka, Milwaukee

Vice President:

Paul Zovic, Shorewood

Secretary:

Nancy Reese, Dousman

Treasurer:

Christina M. Carroll, Milwaukee

Council Members:

Linda Abstetar, West Allis

Patricia Gorenc, Milwaukee

Dolores Ivanchich, Greenfield

Beverly Marinello, Waukesha

UWM SAP Newsletter Volunteers:

Editor:

Jeff Martinka, Milwaukee

Layout:

Kimberly Gardner, Racine



Above, from left: UWM SAP President Jeff Martinka, Slovenian Counsel General Alenka Jerak, UWM SAP Vice President Paul Zovic and UWM Peck School of the Arts Dean Kevin Hartman. Below: Kimberly Gardner and Jeff Martinka.



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS JULY 2023 - FEBRUARY 2024

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Charles A. Murn

In Memory of Sylvia Murn:
Margaret A. Claudon & James L. Johnke
Beverly Marinello
Jeff Martinka
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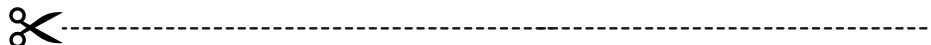
In Memory of Ed Vidmar:
Beverly A. Marinello

Thank You

SUPPORT OUR WORK TO PROMOTE SLOVENIAN CULTURE IN GREATER MILWAUKEE

The work of UWM SAC was launched by a generous gift from the Ermenc Family but is bolstered every year by donations from friends of the Slovenian Community.

To make a tax-deductible donation, please make checks payable to:
UWM Foundation, Inc. For proper routing to our account at the Foundation, be certain to reference the Ermenc Slovenian Arts Fund (5528000) on your check.



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DONATE NOW



You may also make a tax-deductible donation to the UWM Slovenian Arts Program online using a credit card at this link:

http://www.give.uwm.edu/ermenc_slovenian_arts

If you have gift questions, email your inquiries to: chrisarr0676@gmail.com.

Thank you for considering a new gift, and Hvala Lepa, to all who have supported our work! All new gifts will be recognized in future newsletters.

CONTACT US >










If you are interested in learning more about the Slovenian Arts Council, have story ideas for our newsletter, or have other inquiries, please contact:

Jeff Martinka at
jeffreymartinka@yahoo.com

Social Media Sites of Interest

- www.slovenianartsprogram.org
- www.sua43.org
- www.triglavpark.com
- www.washington.embassy.si
- [facebook.org](https://www.facebook.org)
Slovenian Arts Program
Milwaukee Slovenians

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