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Fraternally Yours™

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK LADIES ASSOCIATION

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ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA

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ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA,

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God's Hands

Wishing to encourage her
young son's progress on the piano,
a mother took her boy to an Ignacy

Jan Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE."

When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the child was missing.

Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy was sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."

Then, leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was so mesmerized they couldn't recall what else the great master played. Only the classic "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

That's the way it is with God.

What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our

best, but the results aren't exactly graceful flowing music. But with the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful. Next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You can hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."

Dear Friends,

This Lenten season feel His loving arms around you. Know that His strong hands are there helping you turn your feeble attempts into true masterpieces.

Remember, God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called. And He'll always be there to love and guide you on to great things. Life is more accurately measured by the lives you touch rather than by the things you acquire.

Until Next Month ...
Warmly, **Carolyn**



We Need Your Help!

We will be evaluating our delivery system for *Fraternally Yours* during the months of March and April 2012. Kindly email marie@fcsls.com or zjbazik@comcast.net if you receive your magazine after the 15th of the month or if your magazine is not delivered at all.

Please provide us with your name, address, zip code and the month where you have experienced delivery issues including when you finally received your copy of *Fraternally Yours*. You may also call Marie Dalpiaz at 1-800-464-4642, ext. 1033 with the same information.

The magazine is a fraternal benefit and we want you to receive it in a timely manner each month! Thanks for your help.

Carolyn Bazik, National Editor

Inaugural Message from our National President

CYNTHIA M. MALESKI



To my fellow FCSLA officers, members and friends,

It is with great honor and humility that I assumed the office of National President of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association on January 16, 2012, and it is with joyful anticipation that I look forward to the next four years of serving you and leading our society into the future! Thank

you for the confidence you have placed in me, my credentials and my leadership experience.

On behalf of all of us, I salute my predecessor, Mary Ann Johaneck, for her decades of service to our organization. Mary Ann, together with our strong and steadfast foremothers, has set a powerful precedent for presidential leadership and vision, and I will do my best every day to follow in their footsteps and continue to build our society step by step, member by member.

In turbulent economic waters, we have been a rock for our members, providing them with financial stability and growth, even when seemingly impossible. With increased volatility becoming the financial norm, we will continue to chart our course and continue to be a beacon of financial strength and stability for our 83,400 plus members throughout the country.

Yet for a society like ours, financial strength must go hand in hand with fraternal strength. I hope that together we can rejuvenate our branches and fraternal activities so that, through youth and vitality, they become focal points of our culture, our traditions and the daily lives for our members and for future generations, just as they were for generations before us. We must once again make our branches cornerstones of our communities, serving our members and the many around us who need our help, with the determination and spirit that has ignited our society and allowed it to thrive through economic boom and bust, through war and peace and through decades of change.

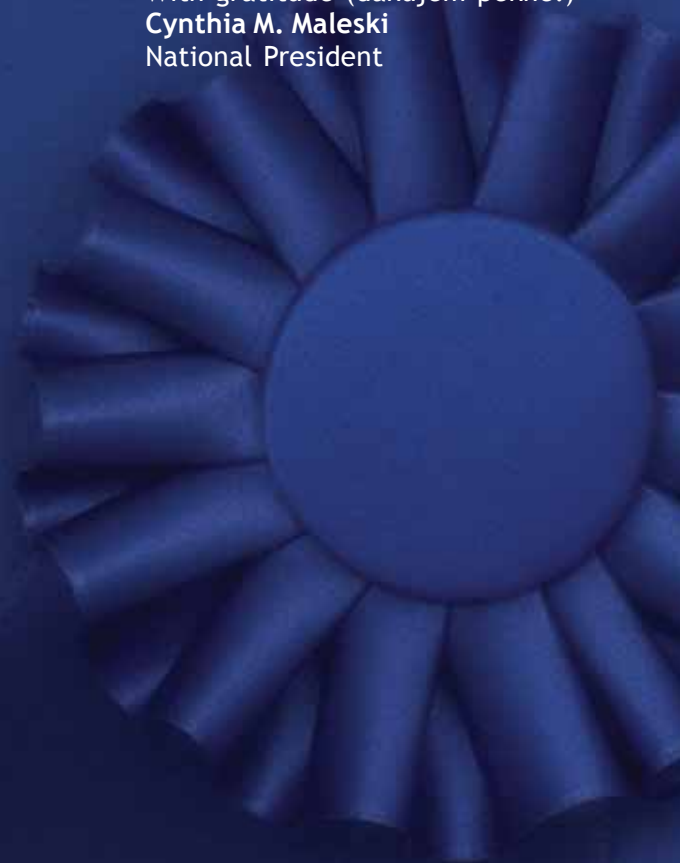
With deep gratitude we said farewell to our outgoing officers at a January 16 Appreciation Luncheon. Having had the privilege of serving with these remarkable people during my terms as National Trustee, I wish to extend to them my personal thanks for their years of service, support and friendship, and I wish them many more years of health and happiness.

I welcome the members of the incoming board of directors, especially the new faces among them, who have been called to a new level of service and leadership to our society. As we will inevitably face many challenges in our next four years together, we begin 2012 with a renewed commitment to provide financial security to our members, to promote our Catholic faith, and to carry on our Slovak and Slavic traditions in enriching the fabric of American life.

I look forward to serving our society, together with all of you across the nation, for the next four years. Today, more than at any time in our recent history, there is so much to be done, and there is so much that we can do together for the good of our Association, our members and our communities. Working together we not only celebrate our common heritage and our common values, we rededicate ourselves to the very idea of community and the very spirit of generosity and service that unites us as Catholics and as Slovak- and Slavic-Americans.

May God guide our hands, our minds and our souls in our work, and bless our people, our association and our nation!

With gratitude (dakujem pekne!)
Cynthia M. Maleski
National President



Farewell Luncheon Photos on Page 4

Farewell Appreciation Luncheon for Outgoing Officers

HELD JANUARY 16 AT THE HOME OFFICE



FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY

In the article in *Fraternally Yours* (December 2011 issue) about going "green" there were suggestions about what to do with used stamps and greeting cards. Several members asked for the addresses.

The front of used cards may be sent to:

**St. Jude Ranch
Recycled Card Program
100 Saint Judes St.,
Boulder City NV 89005**

The used postage stamps may be sent to:

**FCSLA Home Office — Attn: Margie
24950 Chagrin Blvd., Beachwood, OH 44122**
(Margie will take them to her church)

Our FCSLA membership consists of very caring individuals who make a difference in someone's life on a daily basis by caring and sharing. We thank you for taking time to be "fraternal".

Until next issue, may God keep you happy, healthy and loved.

Sue Ann M. Seich, National Secretary



Sue Ann M. Seich

The Ohio Fraternal Alliance

The Ohio Fraternal Alliance is once again awarding two \$500 scholarships for graduating high school seniors. The students must reside in Ohio and be a member of FCSLA or another fraternal benefit society that is an OFA member.

Scholarship forms and a list of the fraternal benefit societies are available on line WWW.OHIOFC.ORG or by calling Joyce Lechman at 440-842-6489 or Barb Sekerak at 216-676-9332.

**From JANUARY 1 through MARCH 31, 2012,
older FCSLA annuities (issued prior to 2005)
with a guaranteed minimum rate of**

4.50%

will earn a yield of 4.6025%.

NEWER FCSLA ANNUITIES

(issued 2005 and after)

with a guaranteed minimum rate of

3.50%

**will earn a yield of 3.5618% while those with a
guaranteed minimum rate of**

3.00%

will earn a yield of 3.0453%.

~ POSITION AVAILABLE ~ FCSLA Fraternal and Youth Director

Overview of the Position:

Development and implementation of FCSLA's Fraternal Program, including leadership in coordination of branch fraternal activities, recognition programs, matching funds, development and implementation of communication tools to members, agents and others regarding FCSLA's fraternal programs, as needed.

Desirable candidate is a self starter who is able to motivate others with good communication skills, demonstrated writing and speaking ability and who is able to promote leadership coordination; administrative abilities.

Desirable candidate possesses a college degree and/or experience in a management role; knowledge of and commitment to fraternalism, other relevant workplace and/or volunteer leadership experience. Position is located in the home office and requires some travel.

Those qualified should send resume to Cynthia M. Maleski, National President, 24950 Chagrin Blvd., Beachwood, OH 44122-5634 by April 20, 2012.

CELEBRATES 90th BIRTHDAY

On October 15, 2011, Regina T. Baloga Fabian of Wilkes-Barre celebrated her 90th birthday at Maria Hall, Danville, with 7 of her 8 children, other relatives and friends. Regina had celebrated her 85th birthday at Maria Hall when she was a resident in independent living there, and returned to enjoy the company of the Sisters. Regina is a lifelong member of Sr. Branch 172 of Wilkes-Barre, PA. Her daughter, Sr. M. Philothea, SS.C.M. is Building Administrator of Maria Hall.



Calling all Chicago Senior District Branch Members

Come join us for "A Day of Recollection" with Fr. Larry Janowski, OFM from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the Garden Chalet Banquet, 11000 S. Ridgeland Ave., Worth, IL 60482 on Saturday, March 24.

Coffee and rolls will be served at 9:00 a.m. Reflections with Fr. Larry will begin at 9:30 a.m. with lunch served at noon. Closing Reflections and Mass will begin at 12:45 p.m. Cost: \$18 per person, checks made payable to Sr. Branch 287. RSVP by Wednesday, March 14, 2012 to: Judy Tybor-Knizner — days (773-523-2191), evenings (708-424-3730) or Mary Therese Tylus at 773-262-6621. Hope to see you!

MATCHING FUNDS ACTIVITIES

Branch W080

Country Store Fundraiser

Branch W080 of Clarkson, NE sponsored a "Country Store" fundraiser held in conjunction with Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church's Fall Fest on September 25, 2011.

Many parishioners donated baked and canned items, crafts and garden produce for the store. Members of FCSLA volunteered their services and enjoyed a brisk business from the multitude of shoppers. It was a very successful event.



Members working at the country store.



Sr. Branch 172

Refurbishing Project

The First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, Sr. Branch 172, Wilkes-Barre, PA sponsored a Matching Funds Project to refurbish the Sacred Heart of Jesus statue at the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Dallas, PA, on the land which was purchased by Father Joseph Murgas for the parish of Sacred Heart Church of Jesus in Wilkes-Barre on November 3, 1921. The statue is located near the burial site of Father Murgas, who built the beautiful brick and stone Gothic church of Sacred Heart and became the first pastor of the parish in the Diocese of Scranton. Father Murgas, famous for his invention of wireless telegraphy over land, was also a botanist whose collection may be seen at King's College, and an artist whose works of art are above the altars in Sacred Heart Church. The total cost of \$2,200 to repair the statue which was originally donated by the parish Holy Name Society, was funded with parishioners' donations and the matching grant from the FCSLA Home Office in Beachwood, Ohio.



Statue of Sacred Heart donated by Holy Name Society.



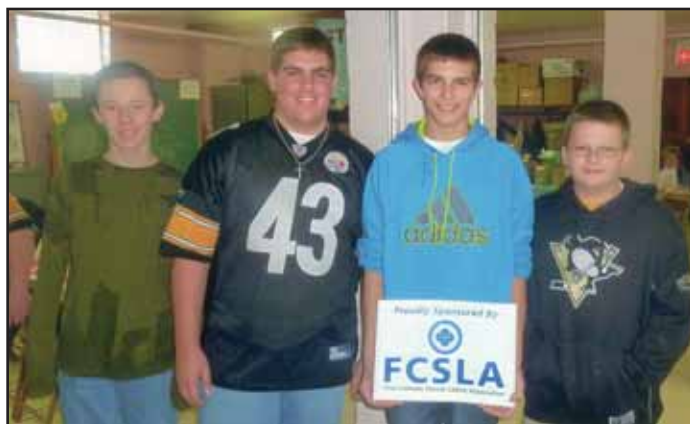
Presenting the contributions to Father Kenneth M. Seegar, pastor of St. Andre Bessette parish are Branch 172 officers (from left) Martha Iskra, treasurer; Bernadette Yencha, secretary; Father Seegar; Magdalen I. Iskra, president; and David Tarantini, project director.



Sr. Branch 177 / Jr. Branch 115

Spaghetti Dinner

On Sunday, November 6, 2011 Sr. Branch 177 and Jr. Branch 115, Clairton, PA, held a spaghetti dinner to benefit Saint Isaac Jogue's Construction Fund for the new portico, steps and side-walks. The dinner was served in the church social hall. Branch and church members cooked and served the spaghetti and made desserts, and theme baskets for the basket raffle. The matching funds activity raised \$3,300.50.



Eighth Grade Confirmation class servers. Camden Stover, Branch 115 member is holding the FCSLA sign.



Father Donald Jones (center) with Sr. Branch 177 members (from left) Lois Covelli, Anthony Covelli, Virginia Handley, Gerald LaFrankie, Pittsburgh District Vice President and Sr. Branch 177 President and Monica LaFrankie, Sr. Branch 177 Financial Secretary and Jr. Branch 115 Financial Secretary.

FCSLA Supports Catholic Education With Donations



National Officers Carolyn Bazik and Barbara Waller and local Sr. Branch 140 Officers, Veronica Bazik, Louise Dunstan, and Mary Ciganek, are pictured with Sister Bernard Agnes, IHM Principal of Marian Catholic High School, Hometown, PA, following a Mass on February 2, 2012 at the school that honored the Association for their generous support of Catholic Education.

Marian Catholic High School



Our Lady of the Angels Academy



Pictured are National Editor Carolyn Bazik and National Vice President Barbara N. Waller with Sr. Regina Elinich, IHM; Principal of Our Lady of the Angels Academy, Lansford, PA following the presentation of a check for \$9,000 which was awarded to the school at the 40th National Convention in Baltimore, MD.



Additional photos are scenes from the Mass offered by Fr. George Winne.



Pictured (at left) are National Officers Carolyn Bazik and Barbara Waller, Sr. Branch 140, (Lansford, PA) officers Louise Dunstan, Mary Ciganek, and Veronica Bazik along with Sr. Regina Elinich, IHM Principal and students from Our Lady of the Angels Academy in Lansford, PA. The officers presented Sister with their branch donation for scholarships which help offset tuition costs for students attending the Academy.

MARCH FOR LIFE IN D.C.

On Sunday, January 22, two buses left the FCSLA home office in Beachwood, OH around 11:30 p.m. to participate in the March for Life in Washington, D.C. on Monday, January 23.

There were approximately 90 students, clergy and members along with former and current National Officers that made the trip. They arrived in D.C. around 7:30 a.m. at the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center. At 12:00 noon our participants met with other fraternal leaders and members for a group photo.

Although the weather was cold and rainy, it did not dampen the spirit of the very large crowd Marching for Life! The March took us down Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court building on Capitol Hill.

A big "Thank You" to all who participated in this important occasion. The buses were provided by the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association and the First Catholic Slovak Union. The lunch for the ride home was provided by the FCSLA Cleveland District with a contribution from Branch 475. The neon green scarves were provided by Branch 301.

Next year the March for Life is scheduled for Friday, January 25, 2013. Please mark your calendars and plan on joining us! It is an awesome experience that you will never forget.



Welcomes Pat Granchay to District Board of Directors

Bernadette Demechko, President of the Maria E. Grega, Youngstown, Ohio District, welcomed Pat Granchay to serve as a Trustee on the organization's Board of Directors. The event took place at the District's Christmas Party in November 2011.

Pat is now the president of Branch 156, Struthers, OH. Since assuming the duties as President of the Branch this year, Pat has directed the Jr. Branch 66 Christmas activity, chaired the Sr. Branch party, contacted members to serve as delegates to the 40th National Convention in Baltimore, MD, and formed a telephone committee to contact members to attend District and Branch events. Her tireless efforts have rejuvenated a Branch that had become inactive. Congratulations Pat!



L-R: Bernadette J. Demechko, President of the Youngstown District and Pat Granchay, newly elected Trustee to the District Board of Directors.

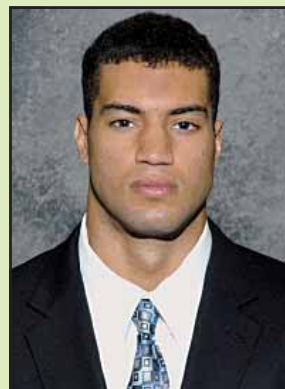
Goda Named to Academic All American Division II Football Team

Devin Goda (S177, Clairton, PA) a wide receiver for Slippery Rock University football team was named to the 2011 Capital One Academic All American Division II Football Team selected by the College Sports Information Directors of America. The senior received first team honors. To be eligible for Academic All American consideration, a student athlete must be a starter or key reserve, maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.30 on a scale of 4.00 and have reached sophomore athletic and academic standing at his/her current institution.

Goda earned first All Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference-Western Division honors last fall after he ranked second among PSAC receivers in catches per game (6.8) and third in yards per game (93.5).

A native of Monongahela and a graduate of Elizabeth Forward High School, Goda caught 75 passes for 1,028 yards and 11 touchdowns. Those totals ranked as the third, fourth and second best respectively among Slippery Rock's all time leaders. He also finished his four year Rock collegiate career ranked second in both receptions (173) and yardage (2,259). He played in the Dixie Gridiron Classic All Star Game on January 7, 2012 in Las Vegas, NV.

Devin a safety and environmental major, will graduate in May 2012. His Mom and grandparents are also FCSLA members. Congratulation Devin!



BRANCHES CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

• Branch 313 — Christmas Party

Branch 313 (St. Ann's Society), Natrona, PA, held its annual Christmas Party on Sunday, January 8, 2012 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Social Hall, Natrona Heights, PA. Pastor Father Jim Mazurek, and Beverly Kanecki, principal of St. Joseph High School, were present to accept a \$2,000 convention donation made to St. Joseph's High School.

After the singing of National Anthems by Elizabeth Groch, Opening Prayer by Father J. Mazurek and sharing of oplatki, Cynthia Maleski, Branch President welcomed 74 members and guests. She invited them to partake in a catered hot pork dinner and desserts brought by our members. Everyone brought non-perishable food items for the local Food Bank. Cash donations were also given to the Food Bank, St. Vincent DePaul Society and St. Joseph's High School. Branch members also enjoyed a Slovak costume exhibit which was also placed on the local historical society website and music by a local harpist.



L-R: Barbara Gajdosik, Kate Szymkiewicz, Cynthia Maleski, Principal Beverly Kanecki, Pastor Jim Mazurek, Suzzy Rapp and Norene Yandura.



Slovak exhibit welcoming guests.



• Sr. Branch 376 — Party / Meeting

On December 10, Sr. Branch 376 in Milwaukee, WI, held their Annual Meeting and Christmas Party in the Williamsburg Room at Klemmer's Banquet Center. Minutes and financial reports were read by the Officers, and members welcomed Carolyn Chabron, Bill and Andreana Spheeris, and Jim and Mary Peters, who were all new to our meetings.

Russ Parsons was honored for his Stars and Stripes trip to Washington, D.C., complete with congratulatory notes of gratitude from our Branch, and Mary Ann Johanek and the Home Office for his service to our country. Past recipient, Bob Budjac, was also honored, as well as all who served our country.



Donations were voted on; and Past District President and Secretary/Treasurer of Branch 376, Mary Kebisek, led the annual Election of Officers.

After the meeting, the Junior *Slovak Tatra Dancers* entertained us with dances and customs from various regions of Slovakia. We then enjoyed a delicious meal and dessert. Santa and Kathy the Christmas Elf visited the junior members again this year, and sang Christmas songs with us.

Table decorations and gifts were raffled and won by lucky members. All received a Usinger summer sausage and warm holiday greetings from the Board as they left. A special thanks to the Home Office for their thoughtful gifts.

Meetings for 2012 will be April 14, September 15, and December 8. We hope to see our members at all of these meetings – meals are complimentary to members! Our senior and junior members wish everyone a happy, healthy New Year!



BRANCHES CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

• Jr. Branch 334 — Christmas Party

On December 10, 2011, Jr. Branch 334 in Milwaukee, WI held their annual Christmas Party in the Maryland Room at Klemmer's Banquet Center. First on the agenda was cookie decorating! We have some very talented youngsters! Next, the Jr. Branch joined the Sr. Branch to watch the junior Tatra Dancers entertain us.

A delicious meal and cake were enjoyed, and members sang Christmas songs when Santa and Kathy the Christmas Elf came to visit! Members also received a monetary gift, gifts from the Home Office, and candy. Members thank the Home Office for their gifts. The next visit from Santa is only 364 days away!



• Branch 114 — Dinner / Meeting

St. Ann's Lodge Branch 114 in Lorain, OH gathered together at the American Slovak Club for their annual Christmas Dinner and special meeting on December 18, 2011. President Bernadette Robertson welcomed all the members.

The by-laws were read. The officers were all re-elected for another term and took their oath of office.



Ellen Butorac and son Michael enjoying Santa Claus at the party. Ellen was born on Christmas morning 1955.



The Hobar sisters and Irene Dombrowski.

A delicious dinner was served to all in attendance and everyone enjoyed singing Christmas carols led by Karen Brady.

Jolly old Santa Claus appeared with a twinkle in his eye wishing all a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.



Branch President Bernadette Robertson and her husband Al along with their family, all are branch members.



St. Ann's Lodge Branch 114 officers being sworn in by Marie Schweinberg.



• Sr. Branch 156 — Christmas Party

Sr. Branch 156, Struthers, OH held their branch Christmas Party at Bruno's Restaurant in Poland, OH on December 9, 2011. White tablecloths, along with red and green napkins highlighted the poinsettia centerpieces and Christmas candy on every table. Members were treated to a wonderful buffet along with Christmas cupcakes and ice cream for dessert.

Patti Granchay, Branch President was hostess for the party



R-L: Vivian Leko, Dorothy Wagner, Ann Bobby, Rose Yuhas, Patti Granchay and Gerry Vodhanel.

and introduced Mark S. Granchay, who is the new branch treasurer. The centerpieces were given away as door prizes along with gifts from the Home Office.



L-R: Helen Knapek, Anne Schur, Mildred Kudelko, Anna Mae Keenan and Dutch Keenan.



• **Sr. Branch 177 — Christmas Party**

The annual Christmas Party for Sr. Branch 177, Clairton, PA was held at Nakama Restaurant on the South Side of Pittsburgh, PA on Wednesday, December 28, 2011. Branch officers and members enjoyed the delicious food and the evening.



Branch officers and members at the December 28, 2011 Christmas Party.



• **Sr. Branch 111 / Jr. Branch 170 — Christmas Party**

On Sunday, December 11, 2011 the members of Sr. Branch 111 in Charleroi, PA, joined together at Salatinos River House Café for their annual Christmas Party and meeting.

Grace Popson, Secretary/Treasurer welcomed members and led the blessing before meals. A family style meal was served. She then thanked everyone who helped with the party



Officers and members of Branch 111, Charleroi, PA.

and conducted a short business meeting. A wrap up was given on the Pittsburgh District Autumn meeting which was hosted by the branch. A report was also given by Event Co-Chair and branch member Joann Macilan on the matching funds activity that was held for the Mary Mother of The Church Festival of Nations as a Slovak food booth.

The members in attendance received a chocolate Santa Sleigh favor and a monetary gift from the branch. In addition gifts were distributed from the Home Office and door prizes were given.

A closing prayer was offered for all the deceased members and everyone left with a wish for a season filled with Christmas love and blessings in the New Year.

In addition members of Jr. Branch 170, Charleroi, PA received a monetary gift from the branch and a Santa stocking filled with a chocolate Santa.



• **Branch W018 — Christmas Party**

The local Branch of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, Branch W018, Omaha, NE, hosted its 7th annual Christmas party for its youth members on December 11 at the Spaghetti Works in the Old Market. In addition to the youth, parents and grandparents helped celebrate the holiday.

Branch President Bob Hladik reminded all that the birth of the Christ Child was the reason for the season in his opening remarks. To reinforce the gift of Jesus Christ by God the Father, all attendees were asked to bring a toy to share with those less fortunate. The toys ranging from dolls to fire trucks were given to Marine Corporal Caleb Luikens for their Toys for Tots program, as well as a check from the Branch to help Toys for Tots make Christmas brighter for those in need.

The gift giving continued on a more personal level for the children when the Jolly Old Elf himself made an appearance. Santa listened to each child, presented them with a small gift and posed for pictures with the children.



• **Sr. Branch 89 — Christmas Luncheon**

On December 4, 2011, Sr. Branch 89 of Bethlehem, PA, gathered for a Christmas luncheon at the Palace Restaurant. President Patricia LaBuda extended a very warm welcome to everyone and a short meeting followed. Lunch commenced with a prayer by Michael J. Stephan, Jr.

Congratulations to our own Dawn LaBuda who was newly elected to the Court of Appeals at the 40th National Convention



Members of Branch 89, based in Bethlehem, PA.

BRANCHES CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

held in October 2011 in Baltimore, MD. Dawn reported on the highlights of the convention. We are extremely proud of Dawn's accomplishment and wish her the very best.

Christmas greetings and a big "thank you" was extended to everyone in attendance, hoping all enjoyed a well-spent afternoon of fraternal fellowship and fun.



• Jr. Branches 32 / 115 — Joint Party

Jr. Branch 32, McKeesport, PA and Jr. Branch 115, Clairton, PA, held their joint Christmas Party at Corpus Christie Hall on Saturday, December 10, 2011. Officers from Sr. Branches 77 and 177 joined the Junior Officers and members for the fun.

Carmie the Clown brought her good friend, the Cat, to entertain with magic and create balloon animals to take home. Santa came to collect Christmas wishes and gave gifts of goodie bags, \$5.00 bills and favors from the Home Office, assisted by Gerry



Carmie and Cat took time for a picture with Judy Fedor and Cassie Fedor, Junior Helper.



Junior and Senior Branch Officers pose with Santa.



Father Steven A. Kresak, Pastor of Corpus Christie Parish joins Santa and the children.

LaFrankie, Branch 177 President and Cassie Fedor, Junior Branch Helper.

Children, parents, grandparents and officers enjoyed a lunch of chicken fingers, French fries, ice cream and pop.



• Sr. Branch 77 — Christmas Party

Sr. Branch 77, McKeesport, PA held their annual Christmas Party and meeting on December 4, 2011 at the Palisades in McKeesport.

Members and guests enjoyed canapés before the meeting began. President Jerry Holmes opened the meeting with prayer. Jim Barchie, WW II veteran, led the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Secretary Judy Fedor took roll and read the minutes from the November meeting. All officers were present except for Irene Fedor, who was recovering from a recent fall. The minutes were approved as read. Virginia Holmes, Treasurer, read the financial report, which was also approved. President Jerry asked new members to stand and be welcomed into the branch.

President Jerry recognized Virginia Holmes, who has won re-election as National Trustee, Carol Yurechko, who won re-election on the Court of Appeals, and Judy Fedor, who won re-election as Pittsburgh District President.

President Jerry led the prayer for the members who had passed away during the year. The memorial candle was lit by Audrey Podlesny, in honor of her sister Janice Boyko, who recently passed away. He announced that the branch reaches out to homebound and hospitalized members.

The election was held and the officers for 2012 are as follows: Jerry Holmes, President; Irene Fedor, Vice-President; Virginia Holmes, Treasurer; Marian Greenland, Financial Secretary; Judy Fedor, Recording/Junior Secretary; and Audrey Podlesny and Carol Yurechko, Auditors. Judy Hornfeck administered the oath of office.

Dinner was served and followed by drawings for prizes. The



Branch 77 Officers: — L-R: Audrey Podlesny, Marian Greenland, Virginia Holmes, Jerry Holmes, Judy Fedor, and Carol Yurechko. Not pictured is Irene Fedor.

Magdalen I. Iskra District Celebrates 2,011th Birthday of Jesus

Children and family and friends enjoyed the Christmas Party given by the Magdalen I. Iskra District held at Genetti's Best Western Hotel in Wilkes-Barre, PA, celebrating the 2,011th birthday of Jesus. The party began with registration of all in attendance, a welcome greeting by District President Magdalen I. Iskra, introduction of branch and district officers, followed by the Prayer Before Meals led by Matthew Ceklosky, a Jr. Branch 362 member.



Committee members and planners.



The Baird, Ceklosky and Dougher families.



The Graham and Dougher families.

The buffet menu consisted of chicken fingers, hot dogs, hamburgers, French fries, macaroni and cheese, soda, and ice cream with chocolate sauce. Door prizes were awarded and a raffle of twenty prizes were chanced off to benefit the District Scholarship Fund.

A sing-along of Christmas carols was under the direction of Bernadette Yencha and Martha Iskra, Sr. Branch 172 officers.

Special guests were members of the Congregation of Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius and Reverend Joseph DeVizia, Deacon, Diocese of Scranton, PA.



L-R: Cheryl and Zachery Koval, Gino and Linda Cinti of Jr. Branch 362.



The Ann Dougher family.



Sing-along by junior members.

WHITING, INDIANA – SR. BRANCH 81 HOSTS HOLIDAY PARTY

On Wednesday, December 14, 2011, Sr. Branch 81, Whiting, IN hosted a Christmas Party for their members. The celebration was held in the Mural Room of St. John the Baptist School. Members brought gifts of non-perishable food and monetary donations that were given to the Whiting Food Pantry. Thank you to everyone for their generosity!

The celebration began with a prayer, led by Father John Kalicky, pastor of St. John. A family-style chicken dinner prepared by member and banquet facilitator Carol Vargo, was served, followed by peppermint ice cream for dessert. This delicious meal



Branch Officers take a moment for a holiday photo.

was enjoyed by all in attendance. Afterward the St. John Children's Choir sang Christmas carols to the delight of the audience.

Branch President Florence Hovanec gave an overview of the branch financial report. St. John the Baptist Church received two special gifts at the luncheon.

Pastor John Kalicky was presented with a \$25,000 check from Sr. Branch 81 and a \$1,000 check from Jr. Branch 58, both of Whiting, IN. Father was extremely appreciative of the support from the FCSLA local branches.

All members in attendance received a pen and notebook compliments of the Home Office. Dorothy Hoover and Marjorie Strjbak provided festive bell centerpieces as prizes for each table. Door prizes were donated

by branch officers and a 50/50 raffle coordinated by Donnie Sabol and Gerri Tumidalsky completed the party. Sincere thanks are extended to everyone who worked so hard to make the party a memorable celebration. Members were able to renew friendships and everyone left filled with the Christmas spirit.



Margaret Abildua District President and Branch 81 Treasurer looks on as Marjorie Strjbak Branch 58 Auditor presents a gift to Father John Kalicky.



Berdie Chiluski and Florence Hovanec share a holiday memory.



The Beaulieu family enjoy an afternoon of FCSLA fun.



Pastor John Kalicky and Father Leon Flaherty accept a gift from President Florence Hovanec.



Tony Franklin, Dorothy Hoover and Marjorie Strjbak sharing their Christmas spirit.



Marjorie Strjbak with cousins Joyce and Jerry Springer.



Sheri Floyd with Don and Delores Geffert and Donna Pesenko.



The Markovich family.



Greg and Cheryl Rosen.

East Chicago, Indiana Sr. Branch 409 Hosts Annual Christmas Party

On December 10, 2011, Sr. Branch 409, East Chicago, IN, welcomed members to their annual Christmas Party. The festivities took place at Our Lady of Consolation Parish Hall in Merrillville, IN, and included special guest members of Jr. Branch 317, also of East Chicago, IN.

Attendees were greeted by officers of Branch 409, Agnes Chervenak, President; Jeanette Bramer, Treasurer; Scott Sacek, Financial Secretary;

Mathilda Hogan, Auditor; and Branch 409 Good Guy/Agent and Director of the Indiana Alliance, Andrew Sacek; John Zaborske, Agent. Virginia Wagner directed the children in a variety of Christmas craft projects.

Members and guests were treated to delicious pizza, fruit/veggie platters, homemade nut rolls, cookies, chips, punch and soda, delicious chocolate cake and hot coffee.

Of course the main event of the af-

ternoon was a visit from Santa, (member Kirby Hoskins), who distributed gifts of a wide variety including: soccer/footballs, bracelet kits, stamps, cards and stencil kits, Jengo wood blocks, Fur Real friends (puppy, kitty and rabbits), trucks and other age appropriate gifts. Gifts received from the Home Office were given to all members and guest attending the festivities.



President Agnes Chervenak, Treasurer Jeanette Bramer, Financial Secretary Mathilda Hogan, and Financial Secretary Scott Sacek.



Sr. Branch 409 members Karen Bramer and Julie DeRolf assisting junior members at the craft table.



Maria Kovacs, Betty Ortiz, Betty Skvarek, Joann Banovich and Mathilda Hogan.



Santa (Kirby Hoskins) with Jr. Branch 317 members.



Mathilda Hogan with Branch 409 members Liz Lukacek and Dorothy Mravinac.



Marge Motes and Peggy McBride.



Santa greets Jr. Branch 317 members.



Marge Vrlík, Rosemary Mlinarich, Betty Dedinsky, Joseph Kovacs.



Andy Sacek, John Zaborske, Scott Sacek, Julie DeRolf checking the food and dessert table.

VILIJA DINNER HELD IN YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

St. Elizabeth Sr. Branch 161, Youngstown, OH, treated its members to the Vilija dinner held on December 11, 2011 by the American Slovak Cultural Association (ASCA) at St. Matthias Parish Hall.

Flyers advertising the event were sent to over 100 members living in the area. President, Virginia DeLuca; Auditor Emeritus, Agatha Fabiny; and Financial Secretary, Bernie Demechko took phone reservations and Bernie mailed the \$20 admission ticket to every member who responded. Thirty-six members were guests of the branch at the event.

The Vilija Dinner, initiated in 1970, has been a joyous event that ushers in the Christmas season and over 200 people were present to enjoy the traditional Slovak Vilija meal and entertainment. Loretta Ekoniak, Sr. Branch 161 Auditor, is also President of the ASCA. Doctor William Begalla, Vice President of ASCA, holds a basket raffle that is the major fundraiser for the scholarship that is offered annually to a college student of Slovak heritage. This year the scholarship was awarded to Michael Ekoniak, a graduate student at Virginia Tech University.

Every year, a representative of Youngstown-Spisska Nova Ves (Slovakia) Sister Cities, Inc. (YSC) addresses the group. This year there are no students in the High School Exchange Program that YSC sponsors between Slovakia and the United States. Bernie Demechko, Secre-



Bernadette Demechko, FCSLA National VP presents a donation from the 40th National Convention for \$8,000 to Bob Petruska, President of Youngstown-Spisska Nova Ves Sister Cities, while Gigi Bacon, Board Director and Ron Garchar, Board Treasurer, look on.

tary of YSC, did address the group stating that the group was founded in 1991 by eleven Slovak businessmen, professional people, and fraternal leaders. Bernie's brother, Steve Bacon, was co-founder of the group and "appointed" her as the group's secretary, a position she still holds. She noted that YSC Board of wanted to make a special 20th anniversary presentation to Nova Ves Mayor Jan

Volny, when the YSC 14th Heritage Tour visited their Sister Cities in 2011. She sent out special fundraising letters to the five Slovak fraternal Societies and the 300 tourists who have been on YSC trips to Slovakia. The \$5,500 that was donated was hand-carried by tour guide and Board of Director Jim Bench and his wife Kay, to Mayor Volny and put to use as a down payment for a new pumper truck for the Volunteer Fire Department of Nova Ves. In addition, YSC commissioned a special wall hanging by Wendell-August Forge which consists of a pewter plate with an etching of Youngstown's skyline, smaller pewter plates with the Coat of Arms of Nova Ves and the Seal of the State of Ohio and a square commemorating founder, Steve Bacon, and the names of the current eleven board members. In return, the Mayor who normally has the tourists at the Radnica for a champagne breakfast, instead, held a formal dinner at a nearby restaurant to show his appreciation for all that YSC has done for them: 42 teachers of English in the early 1990s, shipments of medical equipment, textbooks, computers, printers, sports equipment and clothing, 14 tours to Slovakia with 3 days spent in Nova Ves touring surrounding sites, and 25 students who have passed through the High School Exchange Program which is sponsored in conjunction with the International Rotary Club.

The First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association has been a strong supporter of Slovakia and in the perpetuation of our Slovak Heritage approved an \$8,000 donation to Youngstown Sister Cities. Bernie Demechko, a former FCSLA National Board member presented the check to YSC President, Robert Petruska.



Clockwise (L-R) Agatha Fabiny, Phil McCaffrey, Theresa LoGuidice, Dorothy Novotny, Michael and Margaret Hamrock, Virginia Christopher, Frank Fabiny.



L-R: Theresa Leonard, Frances Miketa, John Miketa, Gertrude Gross and Melanie Leonard.



L-R: Ethel Macek, Ann Hruska, Millie Kust and Rosemary Gordon.

CHRISTMAS IN NEBRASKA 2011

The Nebraska State Officers of the FCSLA St. Isidore District 11 hosted a Christmas party for Branch officers, agents, and counselors and their spouses/guests on December 5, 2011 in Prague, NE. Approximately 96 attended the event on a very cold evening. A dinner of roast pork, dumplings and all the trimmings was served preceded by a social hour.

Alice Maresh announced that she was resigning as the State Secretary effective December 31, 2011. She was presented with a gift from the District, as a show of their appreciation for all her work during the last twenty years. Clarice Sabata was elected as the new State Secretary. She will also represent the District at the upcoming By-Law Committee meetings. The District Officers for the next four years are President Gene Sobota, Vice-President Bob Hladik, Secretary Clarice Sabata, Treasurer Ron Paseka, and Chaplain Father Bernard Kimminau.

The Howells Harmonists entertained the gathering with a variety of songs, included much-loved Christmas carols. The evening ended with a gift exchange and presentation of door prizes to the lucky winners.



IN MEMORIAM

JOYCELYN "JEAN" "SIS" SMARSH Sr. Branch 476



Joycelyn "Jean" "Sis" Smarsh, entered the sunset of her life Saturday, November 12, 2011, due to natural causes, at her home in Interlachen, FL. Jean was born June 11, 1940 in Amherst.

Jean earned her Bachelor of Education from Saint John College and her Master of Education and Supervision from John Carroll University, both in Cleveland.

Jean spent her first 25 years of dedicated service to education with the Sisters of Notre Dame, as a teacher, principal, and coach in various Catholic Schools in Ohio, Washington, D.C., and North Carolina. The remaining 21 years of her 46 years of service were dedicated to serving the Putnam County School District. She retired in 2007 with the distinct honor of ranking as one of the district's top 25% teachers for the 2006-2007 school years.

Jean's interests were numerous and she was actively involved in the community she loved. She volunteered with the Friends of the Interlachen Library, and with Florida Parks and Recreation and was an ardent supporter of the Putnam County Humane Society and Communities In Schools of Northeast Florida.

The greatest loves of her life were God, her family, her godson, the children of Putnam County, and animals. She was a model citizen, a friend, and mentor to many.

Survivors include her brothers, Ronald (Randi) Smarsh of Avon Lake, Henry (Judy) Smarsh of Amherst, Donald (Shereen) Smarsh of Amherst; sisters-in-law, Martha (Ken) Collier, Karen Smarsh of Fort Wayne, IN; her godson, Evan McInnis, Bud, Alice, and Jesse (Crystal) McInnis; and a host of nieces, nephews, grandchildren and nephews, students, teachers and friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be made to The Sisters of Notre Dame Educational Center, 13000 Auburn Rd., Chardon, OH 44024.

FRANK BARTAK Branch W086

Frank Bartak died November 23, 2011 in Belleville, KS. He was born March 21, 1917 in Republic County, KS to Frank and Maric (Caslava) Bartak.

Frank was united in marriage to Neva Marie Chopp on August 8, 1945. To this union four children were born.

Frank farmed and worked for Bachelor-Faulkner-Dart-Surber Funeral Home until his retirement. He was a member of St. Edward's Catholic Church, Belleville, Branch 86 Catholic Workman, Munden, KS, of which he was an officer; Knights of Columbus, served as a board member of Golden Bell Haven Senior Citizen Center and Republic County Czech Club of which he was treasurer for many years.

He is survived by his daughters Marilyn and Terry Sullivan of Carrollton, TX, Katharine and Phil Yates of Rockwall, TX and sons Paul and wife Teresa of Overland Park, KS and Gary and wife Sara of Wichita, KS; eight grandchildren, four step-grandchildren, one great-grandson, six step-great-grandchildren; and sister Ann Wiruth of Denver, CO.

Preceding him in death were his parents, wife, brothers Stanley, Elmer, Frank, and Edward and sisters Christi Popelka, Celia Chermak and Mary Heyka.

CATHERINE H. SNYDER Sr. Branch 433

Catherine H. Snyder, age 86, passed away on Monday, November 14, 2011 in the Uniontown Hospital.

She was born on December 25, 1924 in Levoca, Czechoslovakia, a daughter of Michael and Sophia (Hostinsky) Dzurilla.

She was a member of St. Mary (Nativity) Church, the Confraternity of Christian Mothers, First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, the Golden Club, the Circle Club. She was employed with the A & P Super Market, Stream Line Super Market and retired from V & G Foodland.

Catherine was a devoted Catholic, loving wife, mother and sister.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Stanley W. Snyder, brothers Joseph Dzurilla and Michael Dzurilla.

Left to cherish her memory are her children Richard R. Snyder, Ronald Snyder, a sister Mary Torrey of Maine, a sister Frances Prah of Uniontown and a brother Lawrence Dzurilla of Uniontown, she is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

ANNA K. TLACH Branch W051



Anna K. Tlach, 90, of Britt, IA, died December 10, 2011, at the Concord Care Center in Garner.

The daughter of Martin and Anna (Hrubes) Stupka, she was born July 23, 1921, on a farm north of Garner. She graduated from Hayfield Consolidated School in 1938. After graduation, Anna was a clerk at Allard's Variety Store in Garner and helped take care of her younger brothers and sisters.

On June 18, 1941 she was married to William "Bill" Tlach at St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church in Duncan, IA. They farmed in the Britt area until retiring in 1985. She always had a garden and canned vegetables. In December of 2001, Anna and Bill moved into Britt.

She enjoyed reading, writing poetry and books in general. Another hobby was making bread, angel food cakes and her famous potato salad for family and friends. The family was her main source of joy.

She was a member of St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church, Rosary Society, Britt Court of Catholic Daughters of America, past president of the Mason City Deanery for Archdiocese Council of Catholic Women, FCSLA W051 (formerly the Catholic Workman), Garfield Hobby Club and Birthday Club.

Anna is survived by her daughter, Kathy (Art) Linden of Golden Valley, MN.; five grandchildren, one great-grandson; a brother, Clarence (Marlene) Stupka of Ankeny; nieces, nephews, farm family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Bill, July 6, 2007; two daughters, Betty (Darryl) Sparks and Patricia (Merlyn) Helps.

Recent Events Held by Branch W093 in Tabor, SD



Branch W093 of Tabor, SD met for its annual Halloween Party on October 30, 2011. Following a noon potluck, a meeting was held. There was also a costume judging contest with the winners being Caleb Meirose (children) and Marilyn Sestak (adults). A report was given on the 40th National Convention in Baltimore, MD and Father Joe was honored for Priesthood Sunday.



Branch W093 of Tabor, SD held their annual Christmas Party on December 4, 2011 with approximately 50 members in attendance. A noon potluck was held, followed by a brief meeting. Also, 50-year members were announced. They are Karen Cimpl, Ken Hejna, Connie Renfroe and Kathleen Schieffer. None were in attendance. Following the meeting, bingo was played and St. Nick visited to the delight of all in attendance. Refreshments were served to conclude the day.



Members of Branch W093, Tabor, SD met after Mass on January 1, 2012 to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. A potluck brunch was held to honor the 2011-2012 scholarship winners. Doug Vanecek of Tabor, SD was awarded the Branch W093 scholarship and also received a National FCSLA Scholarship in the Freshman College category. Doug is the son of Ken Vanecek



National and branch scholarship winner Doug Vanecek receives his awards from Gary Sestak, Branch W093 President.

and Evelyn Kloucek of Tabor, SD. He attends Mount Marty College in Yankton, SD. Also receiving a National FCSLA Scholarship was Teresa Marganis, who was not able to attend the event.



The members of Branch W093, Tabor, SD met on January 15, 2012 after Mass. The books were audited and found to be in good order. Officers were elected for 2012. They are: President Gary Sestak; Vice President Joyce Sestak; Treasurer Evelyn Kloucek and Trustee Daryl Mello. In other business a donation to help sponsor a confirmation retreat was approved for the St. Wenceslaus students. Donations to the Radio Rosary and the Bon Homme High School after prom party were also approved by the membership.

USE THIS FORM FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND MAGAZINE CANCELLATIONS

CHANGE THE ADDRESS ON ALL FCSLA POLICIES AND COMMUNICATIONS FOR:

☐ INDIVIDUAL — NAME

☐ ENTIRE FAMILY — LIST NAMES

Old Mailing Address

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

New Mailing Address

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____

Signature Required (Insured, Annuitant, Owner)

Date of Birth _____
(for ID purposes)

Today's Date _____

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MAIL OR FAX TO:

First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association
24950 Chagrin Blvd., Beachwood, OH 44122
FAX: (216) 464-9260

2011 National Officer's Annual Reports

Home Office • Beachwood, Ohio

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN

Rev. Monsignor Peter M. Polando, D.Min., J.C.L.

Madam President, National Officers, and Members of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association,

Pochválený Bud' Pán Ježíš Kristus!

It is a personal pleasure for me to present to the Board of Directors and the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association the report of the National Chaplain in this final year of my term. I have had a learning experience of being a member of the Board during these last four years and my hope is that from this experience I will be better equipped to go forth and be a more productive member of the Board of Directors of the Association during the next term of my chaplaincy commencing 1 January 2012.

- FCSLA Board of Directors. I attended the meetings of the Board on 29-30 March, 16-17 June, 14-15 September, and 6-7 December 2011 all at our home office in Beachwood, Ohio. As I reflect upon the past four years of being a member of the Board of Directors, I acknowledge the fact that the members do have at heart the good of the Association when it comes to the business component of the meetings. I applaud them for their efforts in this area and personally thank the members of management and those members of the Board who will no longer be serving in their elected capacities for their work in their individual and collective capacities. They know how their participation has contributed to the strength of the Association during their tenures.
- FCSLA Executive Finance Committee. I participated in the meetings of the Committee on 29 March, 16 June, 14 September, and 6 December 2011 all at our home office in Beachwood, Ohio. The performance of our investments were thoroughly discussed, dividends on our products were suggested for the Board of Directors approval, and the amounts of monies for various donations suggested for the approval of the Board of Directors were arrived upon during those meetings. Once again, I congratulate the members of the management team who have led our Association through these fiscally challenging times and have continued to financially strengthen our Association for the future. To the members of the Executive Finance Committee who are leaving their positions, I humbly ask Almighty God to bless you for all you have done for the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association and may He grace you with good health in the future.
- I represented our Association at the: *National Right to Life March on 24 January 2011 in Washington, D.C.; *annual feast day of Saint Benedict at Saint Andrew Svorad Abbey on 21 March 2011 in Cleveland, Ohio; *annual meeting of the District Presidents of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association on 12 April 2011 in Beachwood, Ohio; *National Convention of the Slovak Catholic Sokols on 31 July-1 August 2011 in Pittsburgh,

Pennsylvania; and, *American Fraternal Alliance annual meeting on 29 September-2 October 2011 in Denver, Colorado.

- I have actively participated in our Branch Model Committee of the Board of Directors either in person or by teleconference.
- In preparation for our Fortieth Quadrennial Convention, I traveled with the National President and National Secretary to Baltimore, Maryland on 27-28 June 2011 to survey the convention facilities at the Marriott Hotel Waterfront and to have talks with the staff personnel at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This visit proved to be of a great assistance in order to have a smooth running convention.
- In relationship to our Fortieth Quadrennial Convention in Baltimore, Maryland on 9-13 October 2011, I was a member of the following committees: Church Program; Convention Souvenir Book; Donations; Memorial; and Resolutions. I was the overseer of the Convention Opening Mass at the National Shrine and the various occasions of prayer during the Convention.
- There have been a number of occasions throughout the year when I have traveled to the Home Office for my participation in various discussions for the good of the order of the Association. I appreciate the persons with involving my input to the issues at hand and the ability to come to a decision and/or resolve of the particular matter.
- My monthly columns in *Fraternally Yours* have been thought provoking for me and, hopefully inspirational to our Members. My main thrust is to share our Faith through the Sacred Scriptures, the writings of the early Fathers and the Saints of the Church, Church teaching especially through the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. All of us are striving towards eternal life in the Kingdom of God. The everyday experiences of our lives should somehow be reflected in the above sources of our Faith Tradition. And we in turn should be the mirrors of our Faith Tradition in those sources.

Thank you for having me as your National Chaplain. May God bless all of you! Saint Ann, pray for us!

NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Mary Ann S. Johanek

Monsignor Polando, National Officers and members of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association:

Pochválen Bud Pan Ježíš Kristus!

Convention years are always exciting. The action starts pretty early in the year and gains momentum. After the Branches have announced the names of their delegates, committees are created and the heavy work begins. The Salary Committee, the

2011 National Officer's Annual Reports

Donations Committee and the Bylaws Committee generated the most activity (and meetings). The committee chairs had their work cut out for them.

At the beginning of the convention, new technology was introduced to take attendance accurately and more rapidly than before. It saved time for the work that needed to be addressed. It represented one change, among many, that our society has adopted to make our operation more sensitive to members' needs.

Much important business was handled, but the most notable item was the decision by the delegates to revise the Constitution and Bylaws of our society. It is a decision of great consequence for our society. We can expect the committee in charge of such a significant project to reach out to all corners of our society to collect ideas and advice. Members interested in participating in the process should contact District presidents. A Special Convention will be held in 2014 to approve the efforts of the committee which will present a new version of our Constitution and Bylaws. We can anticipate that a number of critical decisions will be made. Stay tuned and involved!

Your FCSLA is well positioned for the future. It did not happen by accident. We have worked consistently to provide new products and services for our members. Even in the struggling economy we are currently experiencing we have demonstrated that the society can make progress. I trust that the incoming officers will continue the effort. They know it is necessary to always look forward in order to keep our leadership place.

On a personal level, I want to share with you the joy of being named Slovak-American of the year by the Slovak Embassy and the Friends of Slovakia. The award was presented at a beautiful celebration in Washington, DC. A number of our Board members were present, along with some of my family, making it a most memorable evening.

It has been an honor and a privilege to be President of the FCSLA for the past four terms. I will be eternally grateful to all who assisted me over the years, especially Irene Drotleff, our National Secretary, and John Janovec, our National Treasurer. It takes team work to make our society successful. I could not have wanted a better team! Together we have come a long way!

I am confident that you will give our new officers the same courtesy and assistance you gave me. I wish them and our society great success in the future!

NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

Rosemary Mlinarich

Linda Killeen

Bernadette Demechko

Reverend Father, fellow officers and members of The First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association

Pochvaleny Pan Ježiš Kristus!

For almost three years, our Board of Directors has focused on a Strategic Planning Project. The plans we had only 5 years ago are simply not good enough today. We must make changes if we are to build an even stronger fraternal presence through the design of strategic priorities.

We have worked diligently on the most important and necessary categories, i.e., Membership Improvement, Acquisition

Strategies, Products, Philanthropic Dollars, Scholarships, Branch Model Enhancement, Reducing Organizational Risk, and Effective Board Governance. We need to think much differently and have succeeded in addressing critical areas and have become proactive in the aforementioned topics

The highlight of 2011 was, of course, our 40th Convention where our delegates made significant decisions as well as undecided ones that will necessitate a Special Convention to be held in 2013. In addition, during the next two years, strong emphasis will be made on the revision of our By Laws for approval by the Delegates.

At this Convention, major position changes occurred at the Board of Directors' election; a new President will direct the organization in the upcoming term; the National Secretary and Treasurer will continue as Board Members, however, holding different positions. We three Vice Presidents, after dedicating a combined total of thirty six (36) years to our beloved Zenska Jednota, have decided to end our Board positions. We salute the newly elected members of the Board and feel confident they will continue to plan and enforce the perpetuation of our fraternal Slavic heritage as well as strong emphasis on the challenges we are facing such as the tax exemption battle, compliance requirements and most of all, declining membership.

In closing, even though we no longer will be involved in the responsibilities of Board service, you can be confident we will continue to be committed to our Society through our own branches, districts and communities. And most important, we will offer opportunities for volunteerism, involvement and leadership that will appeal to young families . . . that's how we'll attract and retain the new members we need to strengthen the bedrock upon which the framework of our mission and vision is anchored.

NATIONAL SECRETARY

Irene J. Drotleff, FIC

Reverend Monsignor, Madam President, National Officers and members of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association.

Pochvalen Bud Pan Ježiš Kristus!

Year 2011 has been a year of challenges and progress. I am pleased to share the significant developments of our progress with you, our members. Year-end figures are not available at the writing of this report; therefore, figures are reported as of November 30, 2011.

INSURANCE AND CERTIFICATES IN FORCE

Insurance and Annuity Activities

January 1, 2011 to November 30, 2011 Year-To-Date Totals

LIFE:	Total Certs	Total Insurance
New Cert – New Member	1,038	59,889,772
Approved 2011		
New Cert – Current Member	282	15,424,141
Approved 2011		
Conversion New	54	587,000
Approved 2011		
Reinstates	1	10,000
Deaths – Paid	1,342	3,444,137

ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA



Death Benefit – Escheatables	33	27,455
Trust – Paid	0	0
<i>Mbr deceased, funds in trust – paid out</i>		
Surrender	715	4,144,550
<i>Requested to cancel – cash value</i>		
Surrender – No Value	9	750,000
<i>Requested to cancel – no value</i>		
Surrender – 1035 Exchange	20	446,808
Matured – Paid	8	9,000
<i>Endowments</i>		
Matured Term – Paid	136	1,405,000
<i>Age 25 – term certificates w/ accum. div.</i>		
Matured – No Value	33	395,000
<i>Age 25 – term certificates</i>		
Lapse – No Value	71	4,048,378
<i>Expelled – no value</i>		
Expel – APL Loan exceeds CV	3	4,500
<i>HO expelled – no value left</i>		
Expel – Loan exceeds CV	21	162,846
<i>HO expelled – no value left</i>		
Expired from Extended	55	267,324
Expired Term insurance	4	47,400
<i>Adult Term cert reached end of contract period-no options</i>		
Matured Conversion	50	492,000
<i>25 year old term certificates</i>		
Requested Conversion	4	31,000
New Cert – Right to Cancel	4	202,763
<i>Requested to cancel – 20 day free look</i>		
Contested	3	59,842
Cancelled Fraternal	1	0
<i>Canadian Post Mortem Benefit dropped</i>		

ANNUITIES:	Total Certs
New Cert – New Member	350
<i>Approved 2011</i>	
New Cert – Current Member	224
<i>Approved 2011</i>	
Conversion from Rider	27
<i>Edu/Ret Matured. Funds left here.</i>	
Reinstate	1
<i>Cancelled prior to current year, now active</i>	
Surrender	120
Surrender – Roth Conversion	0
<i>Surrender Traditional IRA – Conv to Roth IRA</i>	
Surrender – 1035 Exchange	7
<i>Surrender Non-Qual Annty – Leaving FCSLA</i>	
Surrender – Transfer	14
<i>Surrender Qual Annty. – Leaving FCSLA (Trustee xfer)</i>	
Surrender – Cancel Reserve	19
<i>Surrender Settled Annuity</i>	
Surrender – Conv. Exchange	0
<i>Prior to maturity, rider exchanged for regular annty.</i>	
Death Benefit – Paid	142
Death Benefit – Internal Transfers	9
<i>Member deceased. Spouse xfer funds to own annty.</i>	
Right to Cancel	0
<i>Requested to cancel within 20 day free look period</i>	

Totals as of	11/30/2011	11/30/2010
Membership	83,485	84,087
Certificates	107,708	108,603
Insurance Inforce		
(Includes PUA)	\$750,363,470	\$683,893,258
New Members (Life & Annuities)	1,388	1,345
New Member Insurance	\$59,889,772	\$42,819,811

Licensing

Our recommenders and agents selling FCSLA products are required to follow the licensing requirements of their State. The FCSLA is licensed to do business in 48 States and the District of Columbia. We are proud to announce that the FCSLA is now licensed in the State of California. If you are not licensed and would like to sell in your state or any other state in which we are licensed to do business, please contact the Home Office and we will assist you in obtaining your producer's license.

Website

One effective membership strategy to gain new members and reach our present members is through the FCSLA website www.fcsla.org which appears on many search engines. Visitors to our website can learn about our history, activities and the full range of FCSLA life insurance and annuity products. Over 400 visitors used our site to communicate with the Home Office. The FCSLA website was expanded to include individual District sites, a Youth Recognition Award section and a Fraternal Outreach site. We will continue to promote, update and expand the FCSLA website for your convenience and to keep you informed.

Loans

On all legal reserve certificates, loans are available. The rate of interest charged against a loan is according to the insured's contract. Different plan contracts have different loan rates of interest, the range being 4% to 8%

Unpaid Loan & Interest Balance	
as of 11/30/11	\$ 1,922,444.64
Number of Loans as of 11/30/11	1,139

Executive Committee Meetings

President, Mary Ann S. Johanek called four regularly scheduled Executive Finance Committee meetings. The Executive Finance Committee is appropriately more involved in the financial operation of the business and activities that involve substantial expenditures. This Committee meets before each Board of Directors meeting to review in detail financial issues.

2011 Computer Enhancements

Our new Producer Gateway website is a major milestone for FCSLA this year. With this new custom built agent web portal we can more easily communicate with our diverse producers, provide sales tools and generate accurate sales illustrations for all our products. We designed this website to provide exceptional services for Producers and potential members. Future enhancements are planned. Reducing costs, implementing compliance and supporting growth continues to drive our initiatives in replacing aging computers, upgrading servers and refining software applications.

2011 National Officer's Annual Reports

Branches

The Home Office strives to assist our Branch Officers with the duties that are necessary for the smooth operation of the branch. The Home Office recommends direct billing for Branches. Direct Billing is a Branch decision and there is no cost to the Branch for this service. Please notify the Home Office if you wish to take advantage of this service. Having direct billing gives the Branch Officers the time and opportunities to fulfill their fraternal role and obligation. Of the 412 active Junior/Senior Branches 231 branches are on direct billing.

It is recommended that Branch Officers review and share the **Branch Officers Manual**. This manual has a wealth of information to enhance the efficient operation of a Branch.

Following are the Branches that were merged from January through November 2011.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Sr. 162 & Jr. 030 – CT | went to Sr. 281 & Jr. 111 – CT |
| • Sr. W096 – MN | went to Sr. W003 – MN |
| • Jr. 206 – NY | went to Jr. 413 – NY |
| • Sr. 254 & Jr. 301 – NY | went to Sr. 002 & Jr. 015 – NY |
| • Sr. 342 & Jr. 188 – OH | went to Sr. 149 & Jr. 149 – OH |
| • Sr. 482 & Jr. 379 – OH | went to Sr. 423 & Jr. 440 – OH |
| • Sr. 293 – PA | went to Sr. 230 – PA |
| • Sr. 168 & Jr. 098 – PA | went to Sr. 107 & Jr. 038 – PA |
| • Sr. 467 – PA | went to Sr. 154 – PA |

I'm very pleased to report that the FCSLA has formed three new Branches in 2011:

- Senior Branch 626 located in Charlotte, NC
- Junior Branch 532 located in Oseola, NE
- Senior Branch 627 and Junior Branch 533 located in Council Bluffs, IA

Congratulations to the new officers of these Branches. We thank you for assuming branch responsibilities and may you and your members be blessed with many years of growth and fraternal fulfillment.

Branch Bonus — Dividends — Benefits

Membership in the FCSLA brings with it a host of benefits to members and Branches. Paid in year 2011, the FCSLA Junior and Senior Branch bonuses amounted to \$844,343. The bonus is calculated on three criteria: 1) a base amount of \$25.00, 2) \$8.50 per certificates in your branch 3) \$30.00 per each new member acquired during year 2011. It is the obligation of the Branch to use this bonus for **supporting spiritual and charitable programs, donations, operating expenses, officers' salaries and branch activities.**

A dividend of 100% of the base was allocated for 2011. Through December the dividends totaled \$1,952,540.40 and were issued in the following manner:

- \$ 228,025.55 – Junior & Senior Checks
- \$ 193,545.18 – Accumulated
- \$ 24,586.86 – Dividends used to reduce Premium
- \$ 6,803.98 – Dividends used to reduce loan balance
- \$ 1,424,865.36 – Jr. and Sr. Dividends were used to purchase over \$5.5 million of additional paid-up insurance.

To further support our Branches, the Home Office will mail the members' annual dividend. If the branch officers request this assistance, \$2.00 per certificate will be deducted from the branch's annual bonus.

Other Benefits issued to members as of 11/30/11

Post Mortem Benefit	\$926,540.32
Interest on Death Benefit	\$ 79,456.34

We are pleased and proud that the FCSLA has maintained an A- (excellent) rating for 2011 from AM Best.

Districts

We thank our Districts for their continued tradition of diligence, support and service. The FCSLA has always drawn strength from the Districts. The combined sales of our Districts through November 2011 totaled \$45,662,915.

As an incentive to promote sales, a District receives \$1.00 for each \$1,000 of insurance sold plus the bonus of \$1,000 if its quota is reached. The full bonus is pro-rated for Districts not reaching their quota.

Recommenders / Agents

FCSLA recommenders and agents are people who enroll new members, service their life insurance and/or annuity needs, and in many cases are the driving force in our active branches. The agents have provided 73% of our business. I sincerely applaud the spirit and accomplishments of these people. Commissions paid to recommenders/agents on Life Certificates as of 11/30/11 totaled \$2,048,443.08. Annuities represent a very productive part of business for the FCSLA. Commissions paid to recommenders/agents on annuity accounts as of 11/30/11 totaled \$266,401.06.

Sales Manager

To assist Patrick Braun, our Sales Manager, with his numerous responsibilities of training, teaching, and contracting independent agents we have three additional sales managers that represent different areas. I'm pleased to report that the FCSLA has contracted 652 agents as of 11/23/11.

2011 Convention Campaign

An extraordinary 2011 convention campaign was approved by the Board of Directors. This campaign ran from 1/1/11 through 8/31/11 and featured a new 2011 Ford Fusion as the grand prize. General Agent, John Gonsiorek of Buffalo, NY was the lucky winner. **Congratulations** John! The campaign also featured monetary bonuses. Bonuses paid out totaled \$27,525.

Fraternal News is Good News

It is difficult to capture in this brief report all the goodness/fraternalism that is performed on the Branch level, the District level and the Home Office level. They all support with pride our Slovak/Slavic roots and promote our Catholic faith and traditions. Fraternalism motivates our members to "be a friend" to all mankind — members helping members and others. The secret of true fraternalism is getting involved and expecting nothing in return.

Join Hands Day: is a national day of service devoted to bringing adults and young people together to make a difference in their community. Many FCSLA Branches and Districts participated in the 2011 *Join Hands Day* of volunteerism sponsored by the American Fraternal Alliance. We encourage our members to continue sharing their big hearts and helping hands by par-



ticipating in this special day, which is dedicated to fraternal action.

ProLife March: Every human life is an extraordinary gift from God. I am grateful to the FCSLA members, the area high school students and their chaperones that traveled with us to our nation's Capitol on January 22nd to demonstrate their commitment to the sacredness of life by participating in the March for Life.

Scholarships: Helping tomorrow's leaders today through education is one of FCSLA's proudest fraternal activities. Scholarship applications can be obtained through your Branch Secretary, the Home Office, the www.fcsla.org website or through one of several scholarship services on the Internet. The FCSLA Program awarded 221 scholarships totaling \$248,250. The scholarship program is reviewed annually by the Board of Directors.

Matching Funds Program: The Matching Funds Program is an opportunity for our Branches and members to volunteer and raise funds for a benevolent cause of their choice. Through October 2011 fifty-eight charitable projects raised \$163,099. Of the raised amount \$28,739 was matched by the FCSLA.

Annual District Presidents' Meeting: The Home Office hosted the 10th Annual District Presidents' meeting on April 5th. These meetings are held for the purpose of education and greater communication. Our goal is to make the District Presidents aware of FCSLA services, programs and future goals. It is also an avenue in which the District Presidents can communicate to the Home Office the needs and/or concerns of the branches and members in their district.

2011 Fraternalist of the Year Award & Youth Recognition Award: The FCSLA proudly awarded the 2011 Fraternalist of the Year Award to Bernadette M. Robertson of Senior Branch 114 from Lorain, OH. Luke A. Matulewicz of Senior Branch 452 from Whiting, IN received the Youth Recognition Award. We **congratulate** both Bernadette and Luke for their exemplary fraternalism and volunteer efforts that have benefited their church, community and branch.

Cookbook: Our Slovak American Cookbook continues to be a much loved and popular cookbook that fosters Slovak culinary traditions. The sale of cookbooks totaled \$11,718. In 2011 the 26th printing of our Slovak American cookbook was digitally reproduced.

50 Year Members: To recognize members of 50 consecutive years of membership, the FCSLA awards a one-time check in the amount of \$75.00. Checks issued to 50 Year members totaled \$56,650.

Fraternal Survey: Over the course of a year, FCSLA members volunteered countless hours of service and financial support to those in need. These acts of kindness and generosity should not go unnoticed. They are recorded, compiled and forwarded to the National Fraternal Congress of America as evidence of our fraternalism. From the Fraternal Survey compiled in 2011, with a 98% Branch response, FCSLA members contributed over 1.4 million man-hours helping the needy in their branch, church and community and have contributed over \$800,000 for charitable purposes. Keep up the great work!

Branch Activities: The FCSLA continues its tradition of subsidizing an annual Branch activity held for its Junior/Senior members. Approximately \$128,800 was paid to branches that hosted a Senior and/or Junior activity. Activities **cannot** be combined for reimbursement purposes. With some planning and creativity your branch can recruit new members by holding an annual activity. We recommend that you invite area branches to jointly sponsor an activity. This combined effort makes the workload lighter for each.

Employees: A very important strength of our society is our employees. They are loyal, dedicated and talented. They know their work and understand its importance. I'm enormously grateful to them for making our challenging progress possible. To all the staff, thank you for your **professional** assistance! ***The FCSLA is truly blessed with a great Home Office staff that is team-oriented for our efficient operation.***

My Fraternal Activities: I have attended the annual Convention of the National Fraternal Congress of America, the Secretary's Mid-year meeting, the Slovak Catholic Federation meeting and Slovak activities held in Washington, D.C. I also attended the Ohio and Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance meetings. I remain active in the Fraternal Insurance Counsellors of Ohio. These educational opportunities are a continuous update of knowledge, understanding and commitment to the Fraternal System. I have also had many wonderful and pleasant opportunities to be with our members by attending various District and Branch events.

Closing

Before we close 2011, I want to express my appreciation to the delegates of the 40th National Convention for your vote of confidence electing me to the Office of 1st Vice President. It was an honor to be part of this significant event. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the outgoing officers President Mary Ann S. Johaneck for her expert management and guidance that has brought our society to a prominent place in the Fraternal Industry. I also extend my sincere gratitude to Treasurer, John M. Janovec, for his professional knowledge and expertise which has guided the FCSLA through challenging years. To Rosemary Mlinarich, Linda Killeen and Bernadette Demechko thank you for your years of service and contributions to our society. I pray that God will bless you with peace. To the newly elected Officers – *welcome* and may you grow in your appreciation of the FCSLA.

To the Board of Directors, our Branch Officers and members thank you for your support, cooperation and encouragement. Only by working together can we perpetuate the FCSLA vision and mission that has been the foundation of our Society since 1892. May the Lord richly bless all FCSLA members.

NATIONAL TREASURER

John Janovec

In order to provide members with the most accurate year end numbers the report of the National Treasure will appear in a later issue, once all year-end adjusting entries have been finalized. We appreciate your patience and will print the report in its entirety as soon as it becomes available. Thank you!

2011 National Officer's Annual Reports

NATIONAL TRUSTEES

Cynthia Maleski
Virginia Holmes

Pochválený bud' Pán Je•iš Kristus!

Strategic Plan and Convention Year

We engaged in an active dialogue at the board meetings about salient features of the 40th Quadrennial Convention, including the standing rules of the Convention and the role of the parliamentarian. We volunteered to serve on convention committees, as needed. We also continued to implement salient features of our strategic plan through board committees. We led two of the subgroups, i.e., scholarship and philanthropic, and served on several others, including branch model, new products and board performance. We hope committee work will continue in 2012.

Executive Financial Committee of the Board

As part of our role of protecting FCSLA's mission and charitable interest, we, as National Trustees, serve on the Executive Finance Committee, where we discuss and predict trends that may affect our products and financial outlook. We endeavor to act for the benefit of our Association and its member when voting to recommend action to the full board on quarterly annuity rates, recommending donations, and reviewing investments and FCSLA's current financial status, as presented by the National Treasurer.

We continued our special stewardship role this past year by reviewing records of investments made by the managing officers between Executive Finance meetings, as well as income and expense reports prepared and presented by the National Treasurer, and by recommending interest rates for annuity products on a quarterly basis to the full board. This recommendation requires strict scrutiny of our annuity and insurance product rates, our premium and investment incomes, and our expense lines. It is necessary to keep a close eye on regulatory and legal requirements, especially in our state of domicile, in states where we have substantial numbers of members, and in states in which we are entering the market. We have endeavored to identify and examine benchmarks relevant to our type of fraternal benefit society in the current economic climate.

Board of Directors

As members of the board of directors, we participate and vote at quarterly board meetings, preparing for each board meeting in advance. We also have led and served on strategic planning committees.

Significant board time was spent discussing product and rate development (SP Whole Life, waiver of premium in case of disability, post mortem benefits and annuity guaranteed rates), in conjunction with reports presented by our outside accountants and actuaries. We also examined statistics presented by our national officers, sales statistics, and Errors and Omissions insurance for our agents and recommenders. During several meetings, we discussed FCSLA's budget on a line-by-line basis, with final approval at the December board meeting.

Expense Voucher Review

National Trustees review and approve all expense vouchers of the Association, which requires ongoing physical inspection of vouchers.

As active representatives of our Society, we openly support and take leadership roles in organizations supporting our mission, such as fraternal, religious and professional societies, including a multitude of Slovak-, Czech-, and Slavic-American organizations. We also dedicate much time staying attuned to changes and trends affecting FCSLA.

2012 promises to be another year of challenge and fulfillment for all of us!

NATIONAL AUDITORS

Dorothy L. Urbanowicz
Stephen Hudak
Barbara A. Sekerak

Reverend Monsignor, Madam President, National Officers and Members of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association

Pochválený bud Pan Ježiš Kristus!
Blessed be Jesus Christ!

We, your National Auditors, always look forward to presenting to you our annual report.

Last year's report ended with "*As we anticipate the organization's upcoming quadrennial convention in October 2011, we would like to encourage all branches to have representation at the convention and we look forward to meeting you in Baltimore, Maryland.*" We welcomed the opportunity to renew friendships and to meet first timers. We now look forward to the next four years and the 41st quadrennial convention in 2015. Work must be done between now and 2015 to reconstruct the Association's bylaws. To accomplish this task we anticipated a special convention to be conducted prior to 2015.

Taking a look back over the last 365 days we are pleased to report that the association's financial records are properly maintained, and accounted for by the executive management team. Our findings are based on the audits we conducted in March 2011 and September 2011 and reported to the Association's Board of Directors. We also audited the receipts from the special convention which was held in Cleveland, OH on October 10, 2010. We commend and thank the management team and staff at the Home Office for maintaining accurate records, safeguarding the assets of our organization and their cooperation when we conduct the audits.

The required Board meetings as listed in the Association's bylaws and constitution have been attended by the National Auditors in addition to the various strategic planning committee meetings conducted throughout the year.

Participation and membership in the State and National Fraternal Congress meetings, related business seminars, namely those in the insurance industry, have also been part of our duties and responsibilities. The National Auditors are licensed in their particular states and obtain the necessary continuing educational hours.

Our role as the Association's Audit Committee has been defined and a charter has been approved by the Board of Direc-



tors. We have also adopted an audit matrix as we continue to define the role and responsibilities as an Audit Committee. The quarterly review meetings with our Compliance Officer have been beneficial regarding any updates and rulings from the State of Ohio's Department of Insurance. This information is presented to our Board of Directors at the scheduled board meetings.

The Audit Committee has continued to monitor and report to the Board of Directors the call summary reports from Security Voice Hotline, a nationwide toll free 800 telephone monitoring service where one can anonymously report any suspicions and/or information of wrongdoing, unethical or illegal acts or other forms of loss which could affect the association's operations, properties, employees or members. We feel it is necessary to mention this responsibility in our annual report as a reminder to members of the association that such an avenue exists and serves in the best interest of all members of the association. The 800 toll free number for Security Voice is 866-596-0678.

The Audit Committee has met with the outside accounting firm for our Association, namely Horovitz, Rudoy & Roteman. You can rest assured the Association's records were in accordance with the accounting practices prescribed by the Insurance Department of the State of Ohio. The Audit Committee also reviewed the accounting firm's engagement letter and approved the firm to be hired for the 2011 audit. In addition to this annual audit approval, we have interviewed four other firms for the purpose of selecting one of the firms, other than Horovitz, Rudoy & Roteman, to conduct an internal control and IT (information technology) audit of the association. The firm of Grant Thornton LLP located in Cleveland, OH was selected and an engagement letter was approved. Grant Thornton representatives began the audit mid December 2011 and will present a report to the Audit Committee and the Board within six to eight weeks.

In this part of our report we must say our thank you's and farewells to President Mary Ann Johaneck, Vice Presidents Rosemary Mlinarich, Linda Killeen, and Bernadette Demechko. They have served the association well by keeping each and every member in mind with decisions that were made by the board. To Cynthia Maleski, Sue Ann Seich and Steve Hudak we offer our congratulations on being elected to serve as National President, National Secretary and National Treasurer respectively. To Irene Drotleff and John Janovec, we say thank you for your years of service as National Secretary and National Treasurer. We extend a warm welcome to our new board members Lawrence Golofski, Barbara Waller and Katherine Mueller as the association begins its 120th year.

To each and every member of First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, thank you for allowing us to serve as your National Auditors and Audit Committee. It truly is an honor to serve on the board and represent an outstanding fraternal organization — First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association.

NATIONAL EDITOR

Carolyn M. Bazik, MBA

To my fellow Officers & the members of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association:

Pochvaleny Pan Bud Ježiš Kristus!

MARCH 2012

Another year has passed and it remains an honor to bring *Fraternally Yours* into your home each month. You, our members are the FCSLA and it is your news along with important information about our fraternal industry that helps me mold and shape our monthly publication.

2011 was an exciting year for the First Catholic Ladies Association capped off by the 40th quadrennial convention in Baltimore in October. 362 delegates from 20 states gathered to learn more about the financial health of our association and to make decisions about our future direction. In the end most importantly the convention voted overwhelmingly to authorize the formation of a by-law revision committee with broad representation from districts, the national board and at-large members. This comprehensive effort will include a revision of our current governance model and will be brought up for a vote at a special convention to be held in 2014 so that the newly revised bylaws will be in place as we head into our 2015 convention in Louisville, KY. I believe that this revision is long over due and will help us in our efforts to keep our beloved Association a premier fraternal benefit society for many years to come.

I am very pleased that *Fraternally Yours* remains available on our web site, including archives of previous editions, making it even more accessible to members and easier to share good news and information with family and friends. If you have not visited our website I invite you to do so at www.fcsla.org where you will find not only a *Fraternally Yours* tab but a great deal of useful information about our society.

As I write this report I am filled with mixed emotions as we say good bye to our managing officers Mary Ann Johaneck, Irene Drotleff and John Janovec. They have provided strong leadership during these difficult economic times and helped the FCSLA become a premier fraternal benefit society. I am certain that the seeds they planted will continue to grow under the leadership of our newly elected managing officers Cynthia Maleski, Sue Ann Seich and Stephen Hudak. I also want to thank our retiring Vice Presidents Rosemary Mlinarich, Linda Killeen and Bernadette Demechko for their service to our organization. It has been an honor to serve with them over the years.

I welcome to the board all the newly elected directors and officers: Larry Golofski, Barbara Waller, Katie Mueller and Sue Ann Seich as well as those changing roles: Cynthia Maleski, Stephen Hudak, Irene Drotleff and John Janovec. This marks another new beginning in our 120 year history - we have been elected to lead responsibly and in keeping with our bylaws to make sound business decisions that always have the best interests of our members at heart. Yes, we are a big business one that has grown to well over a half a billion dollars in assets, but we are a very special business - one that has a heart!

I wish to thank the Home Office staff for their commitment to our mission and the service they provide to our members. They are hard working, dedicated and always willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done for you!

Our society flourishes because of YOU, our members, who entrust the FCSLA with your hard earned money. We are here to serve you! You can be assured as you review the annual reports of all our officers that your investment with us remains secure. We are working hard to comply with the ever changing complex regulatory environment we operate in today while remaining true

Annual Reports

to the ideals on which we were founded. This requires that we work to balance change with time honored traditions.

In closing I want to thank everyone who has taken the time to submit articles for publication and for the many kind notes and messages you send my way. I appreciate your feedback and thank you for re-electing me as both your Editor and a board member for another four year term. I look forward to coming into your homes with *Fraternally Yours* each month in the coming year and to actively participate on board committees and in healthy boardroom debates that lead to sound business decisions for our Association.



Remember that March is the month of St. Joseph.

As the foster father of Jesus and the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph protected the Holy Family from harm.

DINING HALL RECEIVES FCSLA DONATION

Saint Vincent de Paul Dining Hall, Youngstown, Ohio, received a \$5,000 check from the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, Beachwood, Ohio. Youngstown District President, Bernie Demechko, made the presentation to Brian Antal, President of the Mahoning County District Saint Vincent de Paul Society, and the Manager of the Hall, Ralph "Skip" Barone. The Hall serves more than 90,000 meals annually and its food pantry distributes food to 8,500 people. One hundred sack lunches are distributed daily to after-school "latchkey" students in area schools.



Elected As Councilman



Joseph G. Szumski was recently elected to serve as a Councilman in Maple Heights, OH. Joseph is also President of Sr. Branch 519, Cleveland, OH. He previously served as a Councilman from 2007-2009.

At the 2011 40th National Convention he was elected to serve on the Court of Appeals. As Councilman, Joe is presently serving on the Communication Committee, Education Committee, and Chairman of the Community and Economic Development Committee.

The Junior Line

GREGORY JOHN FLACK was awarded his Parvuli Dei by Fr. Thomas Au as part of his Webelos badge in Scouting. He is the son of Beth and David Flack. Greg is a fifth generation member of Branch W055, Sacred Heart, Cedar Hill, NE and a member and altar server of St. Mary and Joseph Parish, Valparaiso, NE.



The 23rd Edition of Our SLOVAK-AMERICAN COOK BOOK

No books are sold or delivered C.O.D. ALL ARE SOLD FOR CASH

The cost of each book is \$9.00.
A carton of 18 books is \$144 (\$8.00 per book).
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Send only money order or check payable to:

First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association
Attention: Cook Book Department
24950 Chagrin Boulevard, Beachwood, OH 44122
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.....

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Enclosed find \$ _____

☐ (Money Order) ☐ (Check) for _____ copies
of the Slovak-American Cook Book.



PARMESAN BLACK PEPPER BISCUITS

- 1½ cups heavy cream
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ⅔ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne
- ¾ teaspoon dry mustard
- ¾ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a mixing bowl, whip the cream until stiff peaks form.

In the bowl of a mixer, blend together all the remaining ingredients. Add the whipped cream and mix at low speed just until combined.

On a lightly floured surface, roll or pat out the dough to ¾-inch thickness. With a biscuit or cookie cutter or a clean empty can, cut out circles about 2 inches in diameter.

Transfer to an ungreased baking sheet with a spatula. Knead the scraps together just until combined, then roll out again and continue cutting out circles until all the dough is used.

Bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes, and serve immediately. Makes about 12 large biscuits.

REUBEN BAKED POTATOES

- 4 large baking potatoes
- 2 cups cooked corned beef brisket, shredded
- 1 cup drained sauerkraut, chopped
- 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- 3 tablespoons chopped green onions
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ¼ cup prepared horseradish sauce
- 1 teaspoon caraway seed
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ teaspoon paprika

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Bake potatoes for 45 minutes, or until tender. Let cool, then cut potatoes in half and scoop out flesh, leaving skins intact. Save the skins and potato meat.

Dice corned beef and place in a bowl.

Add sauerkraut and mix in shredded Swiss cheese. Add green onions, garlic, horseradish sauce and caraway seed.

In another bowl, mash potato with cream cheese. Stir into the corned beef mixture. Mound the filling in the potato skins, top with Parmesan and sprinkle with paprika.

Bake at 375 degrees for 30-40 minutes, or until heated through. Serve immediately. Makes 4-8 servings.

LEMON FUSILLI WITH ARUGULA

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic (2 cloves)
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 3 lemons
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pound fusilli pasta
- ½ pound baby arugula (or 2 bunches of regular arugula, stems removed and leaves cut into thirds)
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 pint grape or cherry tomatoes, halved

Heat olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for 60 seconds, then add the cream, the zest and juice of 2 of the lemons, 2 teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon pepper. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes, until it starts to thicken.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil, add 1 tablespoon salt and the pasta, and cook al dente according to the directions on the package, stirring occasionally. Drain the pasta and return it to the pot. Immediately add the cream mixture and cook over medium-low heat for 3 minutes, until the pasta has absorbed most of the sauce.

Pour the hot pasta into a large bowl and add the arugula, Parmesan and tomatoes. Cut the last lemon in half lengthwise, slice it ¼ inch thick crosswise and add a few slices to the pasta.

Toss well, season to taste and serve hot. Makes 4-5 servings.

BROWNIE-BITE ICE CREAM TREATS

- 12 store bought brownies (small cupcake size)
 - A muffin pan with six 3-by-2½ inch cups
 - 12 large scoops of your favorite ice cream
- Place brownies in a food processor and pulse for a couple of seconds, until finely chopped.

Distribute half of the brownie crumbs among the muffin cups, pressing to firmly coat the bottoms.

Place ice cream in a stainless steel bowl and mix with a spatula to soften. Divide ice cream among the muffin cups.

Place the remaining brownie crumbs on top of the ice cream, pressing down firmly. Freeze for 3-5 hours. When ready to

serve, fill a pan with hot water and place the muffin pan in the water so that it coats the sides. Flip the pan over onto a baking sheet and pop out the ice cream sandwiches. Put back in the freezer until ready to serve. Makes 6 servings.

SPICY-SUGARED NUTS AND BACON

For the Nuts:

- 1 cup pecan halves
- 1 cup walnut halves
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ½ teaspoon Hungarian paprika
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the Bacon

- 6 strips center-cut bacon
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- ½ teaspoon Hungarian paprika
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. In a small bowl combine pecans, walnuts, brown sugar, maple syrup, pumpkin pie spice, paprika, a pinch of salt and a grind or two of pepper. Stir until everything is coated, set aside.

In a small bowl combine bacon, brown sugar, lemon zest, paprika, a pinch of salt and a grind or two of pepper. Spread out on a rimmed non-stick baking sheet and cook until almost done and sugar is bubbling, 8 to 10 minutes.

Remove from the oven and pour nut mixture onto the baking sheet. With a spatula, stir and fold the nuts into the bacon; spread everything out on the sheet again. Return to the oven for 15 minutes, stirring and spreading again halfway through. Serve warm or allow to cool, then break apart. Serves 4-6.

BARBECUE CHICKEN PIZZA BAGEL

- Salt and pepper
- 4 ounces chicken breast meat
- 2 bagels (plain, honey wheat or onion)
- 4 tablespoons of your favorite barbecue sauce
- 2 ounce shredded mozzarella cheese

Season and grill or sauté chicken until cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees. Let cool, then cut into thin strips or ½-inch cubes.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Slice bagel in half. Spread barbecue sauce on bagel halves. Arrange chicken on bagel halves. Top with shredded cheese. Bake for approximately 6-8 minutes, or until cheese is melted. Serve immediately. Makes 2 servings.

PERIODICAL

3/12

The FCSLA Mission Statement

Established in 1892, the FCSLA provides financial security to its members nationwide through its premier life insurance and annuity products. Sales of these products allow FCSLA to serve both its members and the community with fraternal and charitable opportunities that promote Catholic and Slavic traditions.

The FCSLA Vision is to:

- *Promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of the members through fraternal and charitable activities in our communities*
- *Promote our Slovak Catholic values and traditions and all Slavic cultures*
- *Be a premier Fraternal Benefit Society that offers quality financial products and benefits.*