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Fraternally Yours®

FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK LADIES ASSOCIATION

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*Hosanna
in the
Highest:
Blessed is He
Who Comes
in the Name
of the Lord.*



ZENSKÁ JEDNOTA

Fraternally Yours, ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA®



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ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA,
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The Easter Lily

For many, the beautiful trum-
pet-shaped white flowers sym-
bolize purity, virtue, innocence,
hope and life—the spiritual es-
sence of Easter.

History, mythology, litera-
ture, poetry and the world of art
are rife with stories and images
that speak of the beauty and
majesty of the elegant white
flowers. Often called the “white-
robed apostles of hope,” lilies
were found growing in the Gar-
den of Gethsemane after Christ's agony.

Tradition has it that the beautiful white
lilies sprung up where drops of Christ's sweat fell to the ground in his final hours
of sorrow and deep distress. Churches continue this tradition at Easter time by
banking their altars and surrounding their crosses with masses of Easter Lilies,
to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and hope of life everlasting.

Since the beginning of time, lilies have played significant roles in allegori-
cal tales concerning the sacrament of motherhood. Roman mythology links it to
Juno, the queen of the gods. The story goes that while Juno was nursing her son
Hercules, excess milk fell from the sky. Although part of it remained above the
earth (thus creating the group of stars known as the Milky Way), the remainder
fell to the earth, creating lilies. Another tradition has it that the lily sprang from the
repentant tears of Eve as she went forth from Paradise.

The pure white lily has long been closely associated with the Virgin Mary. In
early paintings, the Angel Gabriel is pictured extending to the Virgin Mary a branch
of pure white lilies, announcing that she is to be the mother of the Christ Child. In
other paintings, saints are pictured bringing vases full of white lilies to Mary and
the infant Jesus. St. Joseph is depicted holding a lily-branch in his hand, indicating
that his wife Mary was a virgin.

The legend is told that when the Virgin Mary's tomb was visited three days
after her burial, it was found empty save for bunches of majestic white lilies. Early
writers and artists made the lily the emblem of the Annunciation, the Resurrection
of the Virgin: the pure white petals signifying her spotless body and the golden
anthers her soul glowing with heavenly light....

A mark of purity and grace throughout the ages, the regal white lily is a fitting
symbol of the greater meaning of Easter. Gracing millions of homes and churches,
the flowers embody joy, hope and life. Whether given as a gift or enjoyed in your
own home, the Easter Lily, along with other Easter blooms, serves as a beautiful
reminder that Easter is a time for rejoicing and celebrating.

*The following poem by Louise Lewin Matthews captures the spiritual essence of
the Easter Lily:*

*Easter morn with lilies fair
Fills the church with perfumes rare,
As their clouds of incense rise,
Sweetest offerings to the skies.
Stately lilies pure and white
Flooding darkness with their light,*

*Bloom and sorrow drifts away,
On this holy hallow'd day.
Easter Lilies bending low
in the golden afterglow,
Bear a message from the sod
To the heavenly towers of God.*

Until next Month,
Warmly, Carolyn

Happy Easter!

ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA

YEAR OF MERCY: MERCY GIVES WAY TO ETERNAL JOY

Very Reverend Monsignor Peter M. Polando, D. Min., J.C.L., National Chaplain

My dear Sisters and Brothers,

The winter season in my “neck of the woods” here in the Mahoning Valley of Ohio has been relatively warmer than usual. We did not have the traditional “White Christmas” and generally speaking, January and February were not too cold, only a few days in both months that went below zero. The snowfall was light and now that we are in the month of March, we are able to see the proverbial “light at the end of the tunnel” for the season of cold winter. I am not a winter person – any day below seventy degrees is too cold for me! But being a person who truly enjoys the changing of seasons, I have been blessed by parishioners and friends to have a couple of drawers of sweaters to keep me safe from the brutality of harsh, cold days! Thanks to those who make me warm and happy!

As you receive this monthly communication of *Fraternally Yours*, you and I are drawing closer to the annual celebration of the Sacred Triduum – Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Resurrection of the Lord. We are traveling through the last days of the Season of Lent. We continue to walk a path of

fasting and abstinence, almsgiving to the poor and extra prayer that Jesus our Savior demands of us not only in Lent but throughout our lives as His faithful followers (cf. *Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18*). I believe that Christ’s command of this way of life should never be cold or even lukewarm. He is emphatic that we be constant in our Christian ways highlighted in the Season of Lent. We are reminded during the annual Forty Days to repent, be faithful to the Gospel, and recognize that our good works, grace filled-words and spirituality lead us to eternal life. This path has been walked by Christians for over two thousand years, the same way in which Jesus exemplified to His followers on His way to Golgotha for the salvation of the world. This Way of the Cross is one of *Divine Selfless Love*, selfless love that leads to Eternal Joy.

The actions performed by Jesus on Good Friday exemplify the great mercy He had for all people of all time as the eternal gift of the Father’s love, i.e., the giving His own life on the Cross for the forgiveness of sins. The words resound endlessly as He cries out on the Cross in agony, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do” (*Luke 24:34*). After

which Jesus bows his head and dies on the Cross. This must be the saddest day in the world’s history – our Savior dies for our sins and exhibits the ultimate mercy of the Father.

But for us Christians, the human history of Jesus may have abruptly come to an end but the divine interjection of eternal life comes to light on Easter Sunday. In the Gospel of Saint Matthew, we are introduced to this eternal life in the persons of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary as they go to the tomb of Jesus early on that great day. An earthquake occurred, the stone of the tomb rolled aside, the guards of the tomb became paralyzed, and an angel of the Lord appeared to the women and said, “Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ Behold, I have told you.” Then they went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce this to his disciples” (*Matthew 28:5-9*).

The mercy of the Father was revealed to us on the coldest day on earth, Good Friday, in the death of Jesus. The greatest joy bestowed on the universe was the warmth of the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday morning, that joy first experienced by those two women at the opening of the tomb and by the words of an angel. My sisters and brothers, my prayer is that your journey of Lent was filled with mercy, the mercy shown by Almighty God because of your fasting, almsgiving and prayers. During the Triduum culminating on Easter Sunday, may you experience the joy of Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, the Apostles, disciples and the Blessed Virgin Mary!

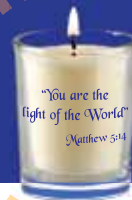
Požehnanú veľkú Noc!

Happy Easter!



Message from our National President

CYNTHIA M. MALESKI



Dear fellow members,

As we reported to you at our October 2015 Quadrennial Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, our society has grown to over \$800M in assets, over \$1B of insurance in force and over 81,000 members, with over 400 branches serving local communities in many states. We are licensed to do business in 48 states and the District of Columbia. In 2014 alone, members in our branches logged over 1 million

hours of community and fraternal service.

Our insurance products and annuities are excellent ways to provide financial security to our members. We are encouraged by an upward trend in sales, both for our annuity and insurance products in 2015, which resulted from a number of ongoing and new initiatives.

Our challenge moving forward is to find ways to grow in a fast paced new age. We are fortunate indeed to be in a strong position to be able to invest in the innovations,

human resources and technologies needed to fuel growth from a number of perspectives. In March, 2016, members of our board of directors will embark on a renewed strategic planning process where, hopefully, we will further define and address some of these challenges.

If you would like to introduce a family member or friend to the great financial and fraternal benefits of membership in our association, please contact your local branch officer or a member of the home office staff, who can put you in touch with one of our licensed producers.

I'm sure many of you will take an Easter Basket filled with homemade Easter foods and covered with a special cloth, to your church to be blessed on the Saturday before Easter. Let us not forget the beautiful services that we also have in our churches on Holy Thursday and Good Friday as well, as we prepare our minds and souls for the great Feast of Easter. On behalf of our board of directors, and my own family, I wish you and your family and friends a Happy and Joyous Easter Sunday on March 27th!

Fraternally,

Cynthia M. Maleski

FCSLA National President

News from Your Fraternal & Youth Director

▶ Kelly Shedlock

Easter Eggs

When Easter time had come again
With Easter eggs to dye,
We chose to paint our eggs with thoughts
Of those who would be nigh.

For Dad we chose purple
Which stand for royalty,
For he is head within the home
And pledged to family.

For Mom we chose a yellow shade
So bright and sunshine warm,
She is the heart within the home...
She shelters us from harm.

My sister's egg was pastel pink,
So feminine and gay,
The shade of ribbons and lace
And apple bloom in May.

Much like the nearby meadowed hills,
My brother's egg was dyed green,
For boys just love to romp outdoors
When spring is on the scene.

Our Grandma's shade was lilac soft,
and Grandpa's shade was blue,
For soft and gentle hues just fit
These fond and loving two.

When all our eggs have been prepared,
How beautiful they were!
We found we'd painted them with love
This special time of year.

Author unknown

**Wishing you and your family
a Happy & Blessed Easter!**





Albert Heiles

Purchasing a life insurance policy or an annuity from a fraternal benefit society provides a lot more than just a solution to a life insurance need or a savings need. It offers membership and a sense of belonging. Fraternal Benefit Societies sell insurance to members that share a common bond or purpose. Through First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association, our certificate holders are our members. Each member has the opportunity to join a local branch to participate and oversee mutual aid programs for their members and their communities at large.

According to a recent study, fraternal benefit societies generated nearly \$19 billion in member benefits between 2007 and 2011. Counting only direct contributions, the societies chalked up \$ 2.4 billion in charitable and community assistance, an average of \$478.3 million per year. Members of fraternal organizations volunteered nearly 400 million hours of their time during the five-year period.

First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association offered philanthropic efforts to many in our communities. Our outreach to our member communities is well recognized and our scholarship program to elementary students up to graduate students is a very large part of our contribution to society beyond simply providing excellent financial products.

In addition, First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association exercises diligence in appointing sales representatives to sell our financial products. Our career agents and recommenders are carefully screened and backgrounds are checked to assure, as best to our ability, the representative is competent and knowledgeable to represent our products. We expect our representative have an appropriate balance in commitment to professional, charitable and personal responsibilities. We recognize our representatives are in

business to provide services and products for which they are fairly compensated but at the same time, we ask our representatives to carry our message of being a fraternal benefit society. Many of our representatives offer long lasting personal and professional relationships with our members. It's not uncommon for relationships to be passed from one generation to another when working within a fraternal benefit society; grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren all have the opportunity to be included as members of our fraternal benefit society.

The mission of First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association is to serve our members-certificate holders — not stockholders. The bottom line is important in order to stay in business and continue to provide financial security and stability. But at the same time, we strive to maintain a balance which assures a positive outcome in terms of service and members benefits.

First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association can afford to take a long-term view of the business because we are not beholden to Wall Street and shareholders. This allows us to keep our eye on what's important to our members today as well as our members tomorrow. FCSLA wants to be a financial institution and a fraternal benefit society that is around 100 years from now to benefit our members and our member's grandchildren and family members.

If you have not taken a look at our full range of financial products in a while, I encourage you to do so. Our life insurance products offer options as to the type and the length of payment schedule. Some of our traditional life products offer an option of dividends and other benefits. The term life insurance certificate is available with a unique feature and our youth term life insurance offers an excellent opportunity to begin a life insurance protection program at a very reasonable cost. Lastly, our annuity products offer a choice of options designed to meet your specific required and time table with very competitive current crediting rates.

First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association is here to serve you. We welcome your inquiry regarding any of our products or services. If you would just like a second opinion of your current life insurance or annuity contracts, one of our representatives would be happy to visit with you. If your beneficiary designations haven't been reviewed in a while, or if there have been changes in your situation that requires adjustments to your contracts, an FCSLA representative would be happy to assist you.

Please feel free to contact us at the Home Office if we can be of any service and we thank you for your loyalty to our fraternal benefit society.

Albert E. Heiles Jr., CLU, ChFC, CRC, AEP, LUTCF
National Sales Manager

FCSLA Annuity Rates

Rates for our Elite Annuities:

SILVER ELITE (5 YEAR)

3.00% APY*

GOLD ELITE (7 YEAR)

3.25% APY*

PLATINUM ELITE (10 YEAR)

3.50% APY*

*This rate is in effect 1/1/2016 thru 3/31/2016.

The credited rate is reviewed quarterly by the Board of Directors and will never go below the minimum guaranteed rate. The guaranteed minimum rate for Elite Silver and Gold contracts issued in 2016 is 2% APY and for the Platinum Elite is 2.5% APY.

A REMINDER!

Members may contribute to their qualified IRA accounts through April 15, 2016 for tax year 2015. Please indicate TAX YEAR 2015 CONTRIBUTION on your check. Contributions must be postmarked by April 15, 2016 to qualify as a 2015 contribution.

JESUS *Savior*

I AM THE
RESURRECTION,
AND THE LIFE.

John 11:25

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Monsignor Peter M. Polando

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Cynthia M. Maleski

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Sue Ann M. Seich
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Joann Skvarek Banvich

NATIONAL TRUSTEES

Virginia A. Holmes
Barbara Novotny Waller

NATIONAL AUDITORS

Barbara A. Sekerak
Dennis L. Povondra
Dorothy L. Urbanowicz

FCSLA ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

National Secretary and National Treasurer Positions

As mandated by the changes to the bylaws (approved at October 2014 Special Convention), The First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association is accepting applications from qualified individuals for the positions of National Secretary and National Treasurer.

The National Secretary directs the operating activities of the Association on a full time basis and reports to the National President. The minimum qualifications for such position include a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university, and ten years experience, demonstrating communication, organization and managerial skills. Insurance and/or fraternal benefit society experience a plus.

The National Treasurer monitors the financial conditions of the Association, oversees the Association's finances and investments on a full time basis and reports to the National President. All candidates must have either a CPA or MBA in finance or related fields from an accredited college or university and shall have ten years or more experience in the fields of business, finance or related fields.

Parties interested in these full-time positions at the Association's headquarters, meeting the above qualifications, should submit a detailed resumé and cover letter to National President Cynthia Maleski, Esq., FCSLA National Headquarters, 24950 Chagrin Boulevard, Beachwood, OH 44122.

Maria E. Grega Youngstown District Scholarships

Students belonging to the Youngstown, OH District are eligible to apply for the following scholarships:

KATHERINE L. SEDLACKO SCHOLARSHIP (\$1000) – Catholic elementary and high school and college/graduate level.

ANNA S. GRANCHAY SCHOLARSHIP (\$500) – College students who have completed one year of college.

Deadline for both scholarships is May 1, 2016.

For details and information on how to apply contact: Bernie Demechko, 2634 Taft Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44502; Telephone: 330-782-8638 or email: bdemechko@aol.com.

BRANCH 77 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY AND MEETING

Branch 77, McKeesport, PA, held its annual Christmas Party and meeting on Sunday, December 6, 2015 at the Sunset Room in Elizabeth Township.

President Jerry Holmes called the meeting to order and opened with prayer and the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Roll was taken and all officers were present. President Jerry announced that he had appointed Mary Ann O'Neill Vice President of the branch for the remainder of the year due

The Feast of St. Nicholas Held

On Sunday, December 6, 2015, the feast of St. Nicholas, The Slovak Heritage Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania held its annual "St. Nicholas Celebration" at St. Matthew's Church, Wilkes-Barre, PA. Approximately 60 individuals from near and far attended the Slovak Hymn Sing. Traditional Slovak Advent Hymns and Christmas Carols were sung. The story GOD'S GIFTS TO THE SLOVAKS tells us God dipped His finger into the water in Paradise's well and from there He took the most harmonious songs. "I am giving you the most beautiful songs in the world. When your young girls sing, the birds will stop singing, the stream will chatter, and the hills will jump. The song of the girls will turn the land into Paradise." On that Sunday, the church resounded with music. After greetings from Bernadette Yencha, leader of song, voices were raised in song and praise to God; Poslaný Je Anjel, and Príde Kristus Spasiteľ Naš. Other traditional songs were sung and the program ended with Pán s časov, the hymn that was always sung on Na posledný den v roku (the last day of the year), and Vesel' Sa ľudské Stvoreníe (the Na Nový Rok, New Year's song.) John Simkovich was the accompanist; John also performed a solo, Spi Dieta, Spi. Magdalen Benish shared a very poignant story and Anna Hudock recited the humorous Slovak version of "The Night Before Christmas". A Vinš, in Slovak and English, was proclaimed by Helen Savinski. What would a Slovak Christmas Hymn Sing celebration be without a visit from St. Nicholas? He arrived in full bishop's regalia and made sure everyone received some "gold" – chocolate coins, that is. (Thank you Magdalen Benish for portraying St. Nicholas.)



to the passing of Irene Fedor who had held that position. Irene died in October 2015. She was loved by all and will be sorely missed.

The minutes of the November meeting were read and approved.

The financial report was given by Virginia Holmes and approved. Correspondence and thank you cards were read. The report of the Convalescent Committee was given by Carol Yurechko.

Audrey Podlesny lit the memorial candle. Carol Yurechko sounded the gong and the name of each member who died in 2015 was announced. Family members of each deceased member came forward and lit a votive candle in honor of their loved ones.

The election was held and the officers elected were as follows: President - Jerry Holmes; Vice President - Audrey Podlesny; Treasurer - Virginia Holmes; Financial Secretary - Marian Greenland; Recording Secretary/Jr. Secretary - Judy Fedor; Auditor - Carol Yurechko; Auditor - Mary Ann O'Neill. The oath of office was administered by Florence Keyes.

The meeting was closed with prayer and a delicious dinner was served. Entertainment was provided by the International Gypsy, George Batyi, who played a variety of songs, including our favorite Slovak tunes.

Drawings were held and prizes were given.



Treasurer Virginia Holmes extends Christmas greetings as President Jerry Holmes looks on.



Officers take the oath of office. L-R: President Jerry Holmes, Treasurer Virginia Holmes, Recording Secretary/Junior Secretary Judy Fedor, Financial Secretary Marian Greenland, Auditor Mary Ann O'Neill, Auditor Carol Yurechko and Vice President Audrey Podlesny.

LOUISE M. YASH DISTRICT CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS

Though the weather was not yet cold and white as it states in the song "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas", the members and guests of the Louise M. Yash District came together to celebrate another season of good will toward men on December 5. A wonderful meal was enjoyed at Aliotos Restaurant, with music by Beverly White.

The project this year was for the hunger task force. The members dug deep and we collected 183 pounds of food. Thank you to all and thank you to Paul Kimilicka for deliver-

ing the food to the task force warehouse. This helped many of our neighbors who did not have the funds for groceries this Christmas season, "the true meaning of good will toward men."

Election of officers took place during the annual meeting. New officer elected was Laurie Muffler for Vice President. Laurie is from Branch 23, she joins the reelected officers, Mary Jo Noyes-President, Betty Novak-Treasurer, Kathy Valent-Secretary, Ellen Tavela and Bob Mueller-Auditors.

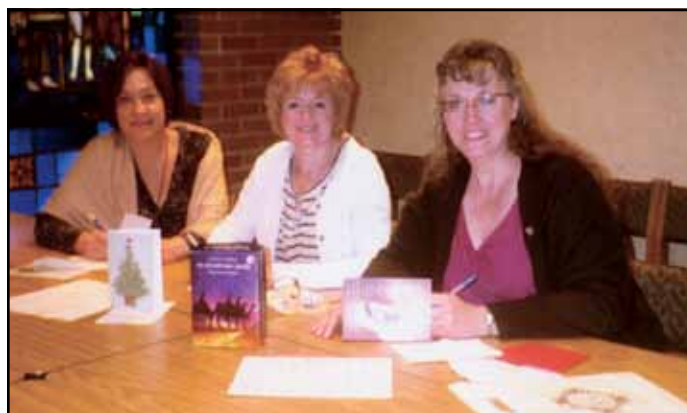
Branches S161 and J192 Send Greetings to Members

At the November meeting of S161 and J192 Branches, Youngstown, OH, the Officers discussed ways in which the Junior Activity could be more inclusive of its 175 members residing in 22 states. It was decided to send a Christmas card with a "Veselé Vianoce" greeting to all members and to include a \$5 bill to each person as a small gift. Nancy Clausen, Jr. Branch Secretary, took responsibility for the project. She met with the printer and they designed and printed two Christmas cards: a manger scene and the Holy Family. On the inside of the card was printed "Merry Christmas St. Cecilia Junior Branch 192, First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association." From the many phone calls, emails, and notes received from members in many states, it was determined the "all inclusive" project was a big success.



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION AVAILABLE

The United Slovak Societies of the American Slovak Club, 2915 Broadway, in Lorain, OH is offering a non-renewable scholarship of \$1,000 to eligible graduating seniors entering college. The applicant must have a 3.5 grade average out of a 4.0 and must have been a member in good standing of St. Ann's Lodge, FCSLA Sr. Branch 114 in Lorain for a period of at least 5 years. Please contact Margaret Thomas for an application. Phone 440-288-1492 or e-mail at mugsann@gmail.com. Deadline for applications is May 30th.



Officers of S161 and J192, President Virginia DeLuca; Junior Auditor and Chair of the Junior Event, Nancy Clausen; and Treasurer, Melanie Leonard, look over Christmas cards to be mailed to Junior Branch members. They also updated their mailing list to include six new members admitted into the Junior Branch in November.

FCSLA Washington DC Bus Trip Cancelled

Kelly M. Shedlock, Fraternal & Youth Director

Months of preparation go into planning our annual March for Life bus trip to Washington, DC. For the second time in the past few years Mother Nature brought our trip to a screeching halt. I was becoming sort of an hourly expert on what was going on with Winter Storm Jonas. I was checking the storms' progress and pattern starting Wednesday morning through the time I went to bed that evening. The forecasts started out with the DC area was supposed to get 4-8" starting around 8 p.m. Friday night then 5-8" then 8-10", etc.

The first thing I did was put the Weather Channel on Thursday morning while I got ready for work. Then I asked God to provide me with the information I needed to make the right decision. It was not looking good. They were now predicting up to 30" with it starting around noon on Friday. There was no way I could send 2 buses down to DC. I was leaning toward cancelling. We would get down there fine, but coming home I was very worried about the buses getting stranded on the PA Turnpike.

I put a call into my cousin, Chris that lives in Alexandria, VA – to get a firsthand report. I had called my captains and co-captains of our buses to get their feedback. Our President Cynthia Maleski also had emails and calls out to Fr. Gerard Gonda – Benedictine High School, Msgr. Polando, our National Chaplain and Carolyn Bazik, our Editor of *Fraternally Yours*. I started getting calls from our sources right away and from the groups that were going on our buses. The verdict was for the safety of everyone we should cancel. I shared all the feedback with President Maleski and at 10 a.m. Thursday morning I started emailing and calling to let everyone know we were indeed cancelling.

I went to Plan B. Since we couldn't go, what if we had a prayer service for the unborn? I asked Fr. Gonda and he said

he would be happy to put together a prayer service and bring a bus of the young gentleman that were supposed to go on the trip with us. It was a beautiful prayer service. As you can see from the photo's we had a really nice size group attend.

It was a really good thing we cancelled. As most of you had probably seen on TV, there were several buses of students that were stranded on the PA Turnpike coming home from The March for up to 20 hours.

Mother Nature threw a road block at us. And some people ask why don't they change the date of The March? Why do they have it on January 22nd? The answer: It is the date that the decision came down from the Supreme Court on Roe vs Wade, January 22, 1973 (to legalize abortion). The March for Life has been held every year since regardless of the weather. So in September 2016 I will start the planning of the 2017 trip! Maybe Mother Nature will be nicer next year.



Kristi Jordan and Justin Lister Wed in Ohio

Kristi Jordan and Justin Lister wed August 15, 2015 at St. Theresa of Avila Church in Sheffield Village, OH, her home parish. The day was perfect and the blessed mother came through with beautiful weather. Father Edward Smith was the officiant. They were surrounded with family and friends.



Kristi is a hair stylist at Elements Salon in Avon Lake, OH. She studied at the Aveda School in Los Angeles, CA. Her husband, Justin is a State Trooper in Elyria, OH and grew up in Rodman, NY.

Kristi is the granddaughter of the late Mary Slimak Kmetz and the daughter of Rita Jordan. She is the niece of the late Sister Mary James Slimak and the late Sister Mary Martina Slimak. Kristi has been a member of the FCSLA Sr. Branch 128 since she was very young.



Outgoing FCSLA National Board Members Honored

The outgoing FCSLA National Board members were honored with a dinner at Hyde Park Prime Steakhouse in Beachwood, Ohio on Wednesday, January 27, 2016. President Cynthia Maleski presented each outgoing officer with thank you gifts.



Outgoing Board Members with National President Cynthia Maleski L-R: Stephen Hudak, Irene Drotleff, President Cynthia Maleski, John Janovec, Carolyn Bazik, and Sue Ann Seich.



Former National Secretary and now outgoing Vice-President Irene Drotleff with National President Cynthia Maleski.



National President Cynthia Maleski with Steve Hudak, National Treasurer. The National Treasurer is no longer a board position but a hired one.



L-R: National President Cynthia Maleski, National Editor Carolyn Bazik and National Secretary Sue Ann Seich. The National Editor is no longer a board position but a hired one.



L-R: Steve Hudak, National Treasurer, and former National Treasurer and now outgoing National Trustee John Janovec with Cynthia Maleski, National President (right).



Outgoing National Secretary Sue Ann Seich (right) with National President Cynthia Maleski. Sue Ann will now serve the Association as a Director on the Board.

Convention Donation Presentations by Cleveland District Branches



Barbara Sekerak presented the donation award to Father Lawrence Jurcak, Pastor, Christine Kall, Director of Religious Education and the Eight Grade PSR Class at St. John Bosco Parish, Parma Hts., OH.



Joyce Lechman and Barbara Sekerak presented the donation award to Marian Ruben, Marketing Director at Jesuit Retreat House, Parma, OH.



Terese Joyce and her children Sean Patrick and Cailim Mary presented the donation award to Sr. Helen Therese Scasny, SC at St. Barnabas Villa, Northfield, OH.

Branch W033 Celebrates the Holiday Season

Branch W033, Spillville, IA, held their Annual Christmas Party and Meeting, Sunday, December 6, 2015 at St. Wenclaus School. After a delicious potluck dinner, minutes of the previous meeting, treasurer's report, and annual report were given. Following the reports the branch gave out four \$250 scholarships and one \$500 scholarship. Recipients of the \$250 awards were: Makenzie Kuhn, Tyler Klimesh, Kellen Kessler, and Rachel Stika. Joshua Stika, who is a seminar-

ian received the \$500 award. Donations and election of officers followed with all officers remaining the same. After the meeting the children who were making crafts came out to join the party. Door prizes for adults and children were given away and winners of the "Candy Guessing Games" were also given prizes! Santa arrived with a bag of treats for everyone. Everyone then enjoyed playing bingo and the chance to win prizes from the lighted Christmas tree.



Mom Sharon Kessler accepting the \$250 scholarship from Vice President Gerald Kuhn for her son Kellen Kessler.



\$250 Scholarship winner Makenzie Kuhn (center) with Treasurer Rita Fjelstul (left) and Vice President Gerald Kuhn (right) presenting the check.



Mom Elaine Stika accepting two scholarships from Vice President Gerald Kuhn, one for \$250 for daughter Rachel; and one for \$500 for son Joshua who is in the seminary.



Branch Officers L-R: Dan Silhacek, President; Rebecca Kuhn, Secretary; Rita Fjelstul, Treasurer; Gerald (Jerry) Kuhn, Vice-President; Richie Kuhn, Director; Alice Klimesh, Director; and Donna Ryant, Director.



So many choices! The delicious potluck was served at the Annual W033 Branch Party in Spillville, IA.



Santa gives a bag of treats to Kaitlyn Klimesh.



Mom Janice Klimesh accepting a \$250 scholarship from Vice President Gerald Kuhn for her son Tyler Klimesh.



Past Branch W033 President Tom Novak with daughter Jacquelyn Zillman and her two children Aiden and Evelyn.



Find us on Facebook • FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK LADIES ASSOCIATION

"BE OUR GUEST" AT THE ANNUAL VILIIJA DINNER

"Be Our Guest", the song from the Broadway Play, *"Beauty and the Beast,"* was the headline on the flyer that was sent to members of Branch S161 inviting them to be the Branch's guests at the annual Vilija dinner to be held at Our Lady of Sorrows Social Hall, Youngstown, OH on Sunday, December 13, 2015.

Bernadette Demechko, Branch Financial Secretary, also published articles of invitation in the parish bulletin of St. Matthias, Holy Name, and Saints Cyril and Methodius Churches, which now comprise Our Lady of Sorrows Parish.

Bernadette and Ginny Deluca, Branch President, took reservations. Fifty-nine members responded and Bernadette sent out the \$20 numbered tickets assigning seats so that family members, choir members, and most attendees were able to sit in requested groups.

The Vilija dinner is sponsored by the American Slovak Cultural Association, whose President is Loretta Ekoniak (Sr. Branch 161 Auditor). The event includes a delicious meal featuring the Vilija dinner menu our ancestors shared with their family and many Slovak Americans still enjoy. The members also enjoyed entertainment by the Revilak Family, vocalists and instrumentalists.

The S161 officers had decided this senior activity was a perfect fit for our Branch which still holds its meetings and attends Mass at this parish, which was founded in 1914. Sr. Branch 161, established in 1903 in the area, stepped forward in 1914 and assisted the parish financially and by its members' support and involvement. One hundred and two years later, Branch S161's goals of perpetuating Slovak heritage and supporting its Slovak parish have not changed.



L-R: Paul & Shelly Armour, Agnes Kachmer, Ann Hruska, Nancy Hildebrand.



L-R: Roseann Pritchard, Melanie and Therese Leonard, Luke Hnida.



L-R: Mary Pyne, Mickey and Diane Yanek, Bob and Julie Malkovits, Agatha Fabiny.



L-R: Joanne Yurco, Mary Yurco, Nancy and Clem Clausen.

Marriage Vows Exchanged

Melissa Bilec, S77 married Ryan Holgerson on August 29, 2015 in the Rose Garden in Renziehausen Park in McKeesport, PA. The bride is the daughter of Michael and Susan Ellen Bilec, Port Vue. The groom is the son of Susie Morrissey-Holgerson of Munhall and James and Dawn Holgerson of Jefferson Hills. White Oak Mayor Ina Jean Marton officiated. The flower girl was Marley Holgerson, the couple's daughter.



Melissa is a graduate of South Allegheny High School and Penn State Greater Allegheny, and is a histotechnician. Ryan attended Thomas Jefferson High School and Community College of Allegheny County. He is a machinist.

Melissa is a graduate of South Allegheny High School and Penn State Greater Allegheny, and is a histotechnician. Ryan attended Thomas Jefferson High School and Community College of Allegheny County. He is a machinist.

NEBRASKA BRANCH W018 HOLDS CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Omaha Branch W018 held its annual Junior Member Christmas Party on Sunday, December 6, 2015 at noon at the Millard Social Hall. Eddie's Catering prepared a delicious meal for the Branch's junior members, their parents and even the grandparents!

After lunch, the Omaha Children's Museum entertained us with a fun, hands-on, and, yes, educational program — the science of bubbles. All who wanted to see what it was like INSIDE a bubble were given that opportunity. Probably the most excited person experiencing the bubble was Roseann Rozmarin, a great-grandma of several junior members! Following the show, a special visitor from the North Pole stopped by, met each child (age was not important to Santa), brought a small gift to each junior member and wished us all good tidings before heading back to prepare for his "busy season."



Families brought games and toys that were delivered to "Toys for Tots".

ADDITIONAL DONATIONS FOR "FIGHTING HUNGER ONE DAY AT A TIME" CAMPAIGN

DONOR

Branch 140
Branch 313
Branch 301
Branch 140
Branch 149
Branch 172
Branch 225

LOCATION

Lansford, PA
Natrona Hts., PA
Canton, OH
Lansford, PA
Oregon, OH
Wilkes Barre, PA
Orland Park, IL

TOTAL DONATIONS \$34,510.00

Again, this year, the Branch asked that each person attending the party bring a new toy for the "Toys for Tots" program. This small, but wonderful gesture helped many of the children in our Omaha community experience a brighter Christmas. Almost 100 toys were donated by Branch W018!

The Omaha Branch wishes all FCSLA members a peace-filled New Year and a life-giving and charitable Year of Mercy!



One of our special guests this year was former Branch W018 Secretary Emmanuel Shavlik who attended the party with his son and grandson. Emmanuel is welcomed by Branch President, Santa Bob Hladik.



Andrew Barry and Noah Steinkraus help demonstrate the density of bubbles.



Roseann Rozmarin waits for the Bubble Lady to do her magic while her grandchildren provide moral support.

Have you checked out
the FCSLA website lately?
www.fcsla.org

Recognizes 50 Year Members

Branch W018 welcomed those members who have held certificates for 50 years into the Half Century Club on Wednesday, October 7, 2015.

All members who celebrated this milestone in 2014 or 2015 were invited for dinner at the Bohemian Cafe as guests of the Branch. The delicious food and the camaraderie were key ingredients for a delightful evening.

President Bob Hladik presented each member with a certificate honoring their loyalty to and support of FCSLA.



President Bob Hladik and James Warsocki with his certificate.



Fifty Year Members, L-R: Mary Sobotka, Brennen Belik, Patricia Warsocki, and James Warsocki.

Branch W080 Holds Christmas Celebration

Branch W080 held its annual Christmas party and meeting on December 5, 2015, at the Pine Street Pub in Clarkson, NE. Table treats were furnished by students of St. John Neumann School. Members were first treated to a buffet dinner before being tested about their knowledge of everything Christmas. A few of the questions even had honored guest Fr. Rod Knefl stumped! A short business meeting followed with reports and discussion of projects for the coming year.



Visits Area Nursing Homes

FCSLA W130 of Clutier, IA delivered 300 boxes of Kleenex to five area nursing homes for Christmas. Pictured is Kason Svoboda helping his mom Katie and Aunt Jill Svoboda hand out boxes of Kleenex. His big smile brought joy and delight to the residents.



Branch 111 Annual Meeting and Christmas Gathering

Thirty members of Branch 111, Charleroi, PA gathered together for their annual meeting and Christmas party. The members were served a full course meal and given a monetary gift, candy and a candle. A yearly report on the 2015 donations and the Quadrennial Convention in Louisville, KY was given by Secretary/Treasurer Grace Popson. Door prizes and gifts from the Home Office were distributed. Before the party ended members in attendance paused to pray for the deceased members of the branch.



YSC Sets Slovakia Tour

Youngstown-Spisaska Nova Ves Sister Cities will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2016. Their 19th tour of Slovakia will take place July 8-22. The annual luncheon with the Mayor of Nova Ves will again be a special feature plus a stay in a thermal water spa, a visit to Tichy Potek, a village of 324 people who transform their village into Slovakia of "olden" days, a re-enactment of a Slovak wedding, and many more events. Arrangements can be made for transportation and interpreter to relatives' homes. Contact Jim Bench (724) 858-5843 or Kay Bench (724) 771-7900 or Jmbench@yahoo.com or Adventure Travel (800) 542-2487 for details.

FCSLA 2016 FRATERNALIST OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Fraternalist of the Year Award is an honor presented by FCSLA to recognize an individual within our organization who, through example and accomplishment, provide outstanding volunteer service to his or her branch/society, church and community during the past year. The FCSLA winner will receive a crystal vase featured in *Fraternally Yours*, on our website and be submitted as a nominee for the American Fraternal Alliance (AFA) Fraternalist of the Year Award.



GUIDELINES:

- ◆ All FCSLA Officers and Members are eligible to submit a nominee for this award.
- ◆ The nominee must be a member in good standing of the FCSLA with a history of fraternal and community service.
- ◆ National Officers, Home Office Employees and previous recipients of this award are not eligible.
- ◆ The information requested on our nomination form is everything that we need to provide to the AFA with our nominee submission.
- ◆ Include a head and shoulders photo of nominee.
- ◆ **Deadline for Entries is APRIL 15, 2016.**
- ◆ Nomination form and photo should be mailed to: *FCSLA, Kelly M. Shedlock, Fraternal & Youth Director, 24950 Chagrin Blvd., Beachwood, OH 44122.*
- ◆ If you have any questions, please contact Kelly Shedlock via email at kelly@fcsla.org or at the Home Office 800.464.4642 EXT 1051.
- ◆ An independent committee will select the winner.
- ◆ You may also print this form off our website www.fcsla.org.

2016 FCSLA FRATERNALIST OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM

~ PLEASE PRINT! ~

Nominee's Name: _____ FCSLA Branch #: _____

Home Address: _____

Phone #: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Marital Status: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Widowed If Married Spouse's Name: _____

Occupation: _____ Employer/School: _____

Please review the following three categories and provide your response for each category.

Please use a separate sheet of paper (**Please Print or Type**)

1. **Society Leadership:** Describe your nominee's involvement in the **past year** in FCSLA's local branch and district governance and activities. This would include service as a branch or district officer, or committee member for any and all FCSLA branch meetings, activities, dinners, blood drives, Matching Funds, Join Hands Day, etc. at any branch or district level.
2. **Service to Others:** Describe how nominee has provided significant volunteer service in the **past year** to his/her community or participated in outreach programs and environmental activities on the local, state or international level. (Examples: Participation in church groups, mentoring programs, school or community activities, disaster relief efforts, community or service groups.)
3. **Innovative Leadership:** Describe how this nominee has been a leader or an innovator during the **past year**. (Examples: Engaged in cross-generational participation in an event or activity, updated an old annual activity to make it more relevant, saw a need and created a program to address it, etc.)

Name of Nominator: _____ Branch #: _____ Phone #: _____

Signature of Nominator: _____ E-Mail: _____

Christmas Dinner Held for Sr. Branch 114 in Ohio

The members of Sr. Branch 114 in Lorain, OH celebrated their annual December Meeting and Christmas Dinner on Sunday, December 20, 2015 at American Slovak Home. President Bernie Danevich welcomed all members followed by a prayer and meeting with the previous month's minutes read by Cindy Sams and treasurer's report given by Joanne Mrosko. A yearly report of the senior and junior branches was given. Included was a report of the activities and events from the quadrennial convention in October in Louisville, KY and the many donations given to help others.

An election of officers followed with the current officers agreeing to serve for the next year and were sworn in by Marie Schweinberg. Members were reminded of the year's coming social events held on the third Sunday of the month; July, scholarship luncheon; October, Bingo; and December, annual meeting and Christmas dinner. All members are welcome at all regular meetings. The meeting ended with poinsettias and monetary door prizes being raffled as well as gifts from the FCSLA. Members then enjoyed a delicious hot meal and visiting with fellow members.



Officers of Branch S114 L-R: Joanne Mrosko, Treasurer; Betty Boone, Junior Branch Treasurer; Cindy Sams, Secretary; Bernie Danevich, President; Marge Thomas, Financial Secretary; Marge Kurta, Vice-President.

MATCHING FUNDS ACTIVITIES

Branch W013

Country Store and Quilt Raffle

Branch W013 (New Prague, MN) held A Country Store and Quilt Raffle in conjunction with St. John's Annual Bazaar as their Matching Funds Project. All proceeds went to St. John's Parish.



Quilters who made the quilt for the Matching Funds Raffle. L-R: Bertha Musilek, Dorothy Coufal, Joyce Sousek, Marie Bilek, Dolores Chadek, and Joyce Kuncil.



Member Morgan Havlovic selects her pick at the Country Store. Tina Paseka and Henri Kliment made the sale during the Matching Funds event.



Members enjoying the Sr. Branch 114 Christmas party!

Branch 169 Members Attend Vilija Dinner in Youngstown, Ohio

Twenty-three members of Branch 169 of Youngstown, OH attended the Vilija Dinner at Our Lady of Sorrows – St. Matthias Father Snock Center on December 13th, 2015. Members enjoyed sharing memories of Christmas Eve's past, food, music and conversation.



Newest Members of Jr. Branch 11



Barrett James Watson



Bradley Michael Marra

BRADLEY MICHAEL MARRA and **BARRETT JAMES WATSON** are the newest members of Jr. Branch 11 in St. Louis, MO.

Bradley Michael Marra was born on July 26, 2015 weighing in at 7 pounds 11 ounces while his cousin Barrett James Watson was born on October 15, 2015 weighing in at 7 pounds 13 ounces.

Their grandmother, Jeanette, is a member of Sr. Branch 101 and their cousins Kylie and Daniel are also members of Jr. Branch 11.

Honors Scholarship Winners at Christmas Party in New York

FCSLA Branches S630 and J534, Buffalo, New York, awarded scholarships to member students at their annual Christmas Party held at the Polish Villa II Restaurant on December 15, 2015.



L-R, first row: Kelly Ann Swartz, Scholarship Committee Member Linda Zurek, and Emma R. Pyrak; second row: James D. Weil and John P. Weil; third row: James Staszak, Scholarship Committee Chairman. Absent from the photo were Allyson E. Olday and Christopher M. Vail.



Cleveland Branches

~ **SAVE THE DATE** ~

Saturday, May 21
at 2 p.m.

Playhouse Square

"Matilda"
THE MUSICAL



IN MEMORIAM

AMALIE SWARTZ, W013



Amalie Swartz, 90, of Prague, NE, entered into eternal rest on June 15, 2015 at Bryan East Medical Center in Lincoln, NE. She was born on October 30, 1924 on a farm three miles east of Prague to Charles and Mollie (Kubr) Sedlacek. She attended St. John's Catholic School and graduated from Prague High School in 1941. She then attended Midland College in Fremont and was employed at the ASCS office in Wahoo.

On October 28, 1947, Amalie was united in marriage to Leonard Swartz at St. John Catholic Church in Prague. Throughout the years, she was a dedicated farm wife that loved being a mother and homemaker. She was a member of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Rosary Altar Society, PCCW, Catholic Daughters, Legion of Mary, and the American Legion Auxiliary #254 of Prague.

She is survived by children, Gaylen (Vicki) Swartz of Malmo, Garland Swartz of Prague, and Gary (Annette) Swartz of Wahoo; grandchildren, Len (Lolly) Swartz, Heather Swartz, Justin Swartz, and Jill (Ethan) Warren.

HELEN MARIE HUMLICEK, W013



Helen Marie (Riepl) Humlicek, 91, of Prague, NE, entered into rest on June 20, 2015, in Lincoln, NE. Helen was born on November 8, 1923, to Charles and Theresa (Solko) Riepl. She was a graduate of Malmo High School. On Valentine's Day, 1946, she married Leonard C. Humlicek in Wahoo, NE. Leonard managed the

Prague Cooperative Grocery Store, and in her later years, Helen worked there as a bookkeeper. Helen's family was her life, and she took great joy in being a grandmother and great-grandmother. Helen was a faithful member of St. John Catholic Church. She was a member of Catholic Daughters, P.C.C.W., Rosary Society, and the American Legion Auxiliary. Helen is survived by her sons, Robert Humlicek of Lincoln, John and Mary Humlicek of Columbia, MO and Champaign, IL, and Jerald and Denise Humlicek of Shelby, NE; daughters, Patricia Herstein of Lincoln, NE, Theresa Humlicek of Lincoln, Linda and Wayne Penney of Lake Zurich, IL, and Kay and Dave Duncan of Lincoln; daughter-in-law, Wendy Lewis (James deceased) of Salt Lake City, UT. Helen has 12 grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren. Helen is also survived by her sister Bernice Clark of Beatrice, NE; sister-in-laws, Edith Riepl, Mae Safranek, and Dolores Janecek; many nieces and nephews, and her special grandpups and Mia the cat. Memorials may be given to St. John Catholic Church in Prague or Bishop Neumann High School in Wahoo.

RONALD E. CHADEK, W013



Ronald E. Chadek, 78, of Prague, NE, entered into eternal rest June 22, 2015. Ron was born on December 7, 1936 to Rudy and Lydia (Semrad) Chadek in Prague. Growing up, he helped on the family farm and worked at Wernsman Service Station. He graduated from Prague High School in 1955. As a Panther, Ron played first base on the only state championship

team in Prague history. On May 28, 1957 he married the love of his life, Dolores Vanek, in Prague. Following their marriage Ron and Dolores lived and farmed west of Prague for over 40 years, raising their four children. In the spring of 1993, the couple moved into town to the home that spoiled 8 grandchildren and hosted countless holidays, special occasions. Above all he was known for his passion and love of his children's and grandchildren's sports, activities, and achievements. He traveled all over the state, and the Midwest cheering on his family's sports teams, critiquing officials, and recording every time, score, and statistic.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Dolores Chadek; children, Lori Kuncel of Prague, Gail Benesch of Columbus, NE, Terry and Kathy Chadek of Shelby, NE, Debi and John Wade of Prague; 8 grandchildren; sister, Darlene and Louis Kavan; sisters-in-law, Georgia Vyhldal, and Marlene and Jim Fujan; and many nieces and nephews.

AGNES M. WOZNIAK, S200



Agnes M. Wozniak, age 91, of Glassport, PA, died August 8, 2015. She was the daughter of the late Charles and Josephine (Deliman) Gaums; and wife of the late Frank Wozniak, whom she married November 15, 1945, at St. Cecilia's Church. She is survived by her sons, John (Cindy) Wozniak of South Park and Chuck (Lori) Wozniak of Glassport; 7 grandchildren;

and 12 great-grandchildren; also nieces and nephews. Agnes was a member of Queen of the Rosary and former member of St. Cecilia's Parish, where she was a member of the Choir, lector and cantor. She was a member of the Rosary Society and Christian Mothers and was the neighborhood seamstress. She was in the Glassport Roller Rink Skating Review and made four appearances on Wilkins Amateur Hour back in the 1940's (radio) and was a member of the Catholic Women's Bowling League.

ALBERT SADOWSKY, W121



Albert passed away August 9, 2015 at CHI St. Joseph's Health in Dickinson. Albert was born May 29, 1924 in Dickinson, ND, the son of Louis F. and Rose (Jilek) Sadowsky. He grew up and attended school through the eighth grade at New Hradec, ND. Albert served in the US Army from 1946 through 1947, being honorably discharged as a T5. Albert married Elsie Karsky on July 25,

1946 in Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church of New Hradec. To this union, Yvonne, Yvette and LaVonne were born. Albert and Elsie farmed north of Gladstone (Emerson) until 1968, when they moved into Dickinson. He then worked for Carlson Construction, TMI and became the owner of his own business called Al's Lock Shop. Albert enjoyed a good game of cribbage, pinochle, whist or 500 rummy. He also enjoyed traveling and he loved playing his accordion. Albert is survived by his children, Yvonne (Gene) Ficek of Spearfish, SD, Yvette (Lynn) Geffre of Bismarck, and LaVonne (Ken) Grosz of West Fargo; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; one brother, Louis Sadowsky; three sisters, Lillian Bren (Albert's twin sister), Beatrice Rambousek and Beata Havelka, all of Dickinson.

FCSLA 2016 Youth Recognition Award

The Youth Recognition Award is for Honoring the Spirit of Service by an individual youth within FCSLA. There are countless young FCSLA members who participate in many service projects in their branch, church, school or community. They are individuals who stand out in a crowd because of their achievements. This is your opportunity to nominate an outstanding young member from your Junior or Senior Branch.

GUIDELINES

- ◆ Nominee must be an FCSLA member for at least three years.
- ◆ A nominee must be between the ages of 6-22 years. (Received date will determine the age eligibility.)
- ◆ All family members of the Home Office Staff and National Officers are eligible to be nominated.
- ◆ Previous recipients of this award will not be considered, but previous nominees who did not receive the award are eligible to be nominated.
- ◆ Service projects / volunteerism must be between June 1, 2015 through May 1, 2016.
- ◆ On a separate sheet of paper, TYPED or PRINTED describe in 500 words or less what the individual has done to deserve being nominated for this award. Such as his/her leadership and/or service to others in their branch, church, school and/or community.
- ◆ Include if they have pets, siblings or other activities they enjoy.
- ◆ Deadline for Entries is May 13, 2016.
- ◆ A head and shoulders photo of nominee should be included at time of entry.
- ◆ The winner receive a Star Award, \$100.00, will be featured in an issue of our *Fraternally Yours* Magazine and on our website.
- ◆ An independent committee will select the winner.
- ◆ You may print this form off of our website www.fcsla.org.
- ◆ If you have any questions please call Kelly at 1.800.464.4642 EXT 1051 or Email: kelly@fcsla.org

2016 FCSLA Youth Recognition Nomination Form

PLEASE PRINT!

Nominee's Name: _____

FCSLA Branch # : _____ Date of Birth: _____

Home Address: _____

Name of School / College / University: _____

Parent (s) Name(s): _____

Phone #: _____ Parents E-Mail Address: _____

PLEASE PRINT!

Name of Nominator: _____ Branch #: _____ Phone #: _____

Signature of Nominator: _____ E-Mail: _____

Your Relation to nominee: _____

MAIL TO: Kelly M. Shedlock, Fraternal & Youth Director, FCSLA, 24950 Chagrin Blvd., Beachwood, OH 44122

Jubilee of Mercy Holy Year

On December 13, 2015, the Doors of Mercy were opened at the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville, PA. The Basilica was named a place of pilgrimage for the Diocese of Harrisburg, PA for the Jubilee of Mercy Holy Year, December 2015 – November 2016. The Basilica, on the grounds of Villa Sacred Heart in Danville, is the motherhouse chapel for the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius. The Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius was named after the spiritual patrons of the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius: the missionary brothers Cyril and Methodius. The Basilica is the daily place of prayer for the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, and is also the site of ecumenical gatherings, pilgrimages, weekend and week-long retreats and days of prayer, not only for the Sisters, but for the general public. During this Jubilee of Mercy Holy Year, the Basilica will also house special Jubilee events, and welcome pilgrims throughout the year.



Fr. James Lease, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Danville, was celebrant for the Liturgy opening the Year of Mercy at the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

The chapel was designated as a Basilica in 1989. The designation of a basilica is given to certain churches because of their architectural beauty, historical significance and importance as centers of worship and pilgrimage. The Basilica is visited regularly by many who admire beautiful buildings, the stained glass windows and the mosaics. However, the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius is primarily a place of prayer.

Since the dedication of the chapel on October 17, 1939, the Basilica has been used for prayer by hundreds of thousands of people, and the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius have gathered here for prayer every day and have brought the whole world with them in their prayers. Pilgrims



More than 100 pilgrims attended the Liturgy opening the Year of Mercy at the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

are especially welcome to the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius during this Jubilee of Mercy Holy Year.

EVENTS TO BE HELD AT THE BASILICA OF SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS, DANVILLE, PA DURING THE JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

The Basilica is open daily from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. for private prayer and pilgrimage. Guided tours of the Basilica are available by calling in advance at 570-275-3581.

Evening Prayer and Eucharistic Adoration – Every Sunday evening from 4:00–4:30 p.m., January 10, 2016 – November 13, 2016 there will be public celebration of Evening Prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours, coupled with Eucharistic Adoration.

February 2, 2016 – Closing of 40 Hours Devotion, coinciding with the end of the Year of Consecrated Life. Services at 4:00 p.m.

Retreat specifically for those discerning a vocation to Religious Life

- May 27-29

Series of Directed 24-Hour Retreats

- February 19-20; March 18-19; June 10-11; September 9-10; October 28-29

Series of Silent Directed Retreat Weekends

- February 19-21; March 18-20; June 10-12; September 9-11; October 28-30

Two Taizé Prayer Services

- March 11, 7-8:00 p.m.; April 15, 7-8:00 p.m.

Two day-long Retreats

- March 5, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., "People of the Passion"
- April 23, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., "Compassionate Caregiving: Dimensions of Religion and Spirituality in Health Care Settings"

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available at the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius for individuals or groups upon request.

For information on any event, about visiting the Basilica, or to make arrangements for a group pilgrimage, call 570-275-3581.



The Doors of Mercy through which pilgrims pass to enter the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

Email your Wedding, Anniversary
and Birthday Announcements
to zjbazik@comcast.net

YOUNGSTOWN DISTRICT HOLDS CHRISTMAS PARTY

The eight Branches of the Youngstown District held their joint Christmas Party at the A La Carte Catering Center, Canfield, OH, on Sunday, November 22. Hosting the event were Branch 169 President, Dolores Sonoga, Carol Dumez, Secretary of J23, and Branch members. Dolores welcomed the 163 members in attendance and thanked the Branches for providing some of the 40 door prizes available for distribution. She introduced her committee and thanked them for their assistance in planning the party. They had prepared the room with a Christmas atmosphere. Centerpieces of holly berries and gold glittering leaves graced the tables. Each attendee received a 2016 two year pocket planner from Headquarters. Several of the Branches used the event as their Senior Activity, hosting their members to a wonderful afternoon of friendship and fraternalism.

District President, Bernadette Demechko, opened the meeting with a Christmas prayer which explained the gifts of the Magi to the Baby Jesus. They offered gold - because He is a King; frankincense because He is a God, and myrrh because He is our Redeemer.

After a delicious meal and brief meeting, Bernadette updated the group on the October convention results. She reminded the members that each person can sell up to \$200,000 in life insurance in Ohio with a limit of \$10,000 a certificate.

She again informed the group of the four District members who have Ohio licenses and can sell insurance in 48 states by obtaining a temporary license from Headquarters. She announced the names of the newly-elected National Board and that Monsignor Peter M. Polando, Branch 169, was re-elected to the position as National Chaplain.

There were two surprises. National President, Cynthia Maleski and National Chaplain, Monsignor Peter Polando, who is a member of hosting Branch 169, had donated 75 votive candles with the inscription "You Are the Light of the World." Similar candles had been given to Confirmandi at St. Columba Cathedral by Rector Monsignor Polando. These were given in a table raffle so two people at each table received a candle.



L-R: Nancy Yurco Clausen, Gina Clausen Lozier, Marcy Yurco, and Sarah Yurco Grosso. Mary annually presents a Slovak vinc to the Youngstown District members.

The second surprise was the celebration of Kay Kovalchik's 100th birthday on December 4. Kay's niece, Doctor Mary Lou DiPillo, President of Branch 30, provided two cakes for the group which were served as a dessert in addition to the catering Center's offering of "cherries in the snow," (Maraschino cherries in a "fluff" of cream cheese and whipped cream.)

After the group sang "Happy Birthday" to Kay, she blew out the "100" (three candles). She was overcome with joy and surprise. Bernadette presented her with a crystal rosary from the District and asked her to pray for us all since "she has a lot of free time." The President also read the inscription in the card which read, "Thank you for your years of service to the Branch, the District and the entire First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association. We love you."

The group then sang English and Slovak carols to help put the group in a Christmas spirit. A tradition at the Christmas party is the Slovak vinc that is given annually by Mary Yurco.

The meeting adjourned with prayers for the deceased members who have helped to bring our Branches and District to its successful standing to this date.



100th Birthday cake of Catherine Kovalchik shared by the Youngstown District members at their annual Christmas party.



Catherine Kovalchik admires her cake with her nephew, Kenny Kepko.



35th Midwest Slovak Pastoral Seminar in Chicago

The 35th Midwest Slovak Pastoral Seminar, under the auspices of the Slovak Catholic Federation, took place on September 20 at the Garden Chalet Banquet Hall in Worth, IL. Abbot Gary Hoover from St. Andrew Svorad Slovak Benedictine Abbey in Cleveland spoke about the abbey's roots in Lisle, IL; their service at St. Michael the Archangel Slovak Catholic Church in the Back of the Yards neighborhood of Chicago; and their establishment of the new abbey in Cleveland in the 1920's.

Robert Tapak Magruder, Publicity Chair



REPORT OF THE FCSLA NATIONAL TREASURER

BALANCE SHEET AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2015

ASSETS

Cash & Short Term Investments	\$ 13,254,310
Bonds	770,183,909
Preferred Stock	2,105,553
Common Stock	4,778,953
Investment Income Due & Accrued	12,069,935
Property Plant & Equipment, Net	5,637,267
Certificate Loans & Accrued Interest	3,162,804
Other Assets	113,021
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 811,305,752

LIABILITIES

Life Reserves	\$ 252,953,890
Annuity Reserves	442,941,869
Death Claims Payable	1,939,907
Unearned Premiums	502,965
Matured Endowments	368,312
Provision for Dividends Payable	1,941,945
Accumulated Dividends & Interest	4,357,895
Accrued Convention Donations	925,439
Provision for Future Conventions	503,454
Asset Valuation Reserve	7,017,971
Interest Maintenance Reserve	1,237,416
Other Liabilities	1,382,255
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 716,073,317

Surplus	\$ 95,232,435
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND SURPLUS	\$ 811,305,752

INCOME STATEMENT

For the Ten Months Ending October 31, 2015

REVENUE

Insurance Premiums	\$ 5,271,417
Annuity Premiums	29,863,754
Investment Income	33,407,499
Amortization of Interest Maintenance Reserve	111,918
Rental Income	327,424
Other Revenue	9,697
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 68,991,709

EXPENSE

Increase in Reserves — Life	\$ 2,079,101
Increase in Reserves — Annuity	26,691,433
Insurance Benefits	4,911,822
Annuity Benefits	18,127,286
Commission Expense	847,457
Surrender Benefits	4,507,452
Post Mortem Benefits	1,081,472
Miscellaneous Member Benefits	76,611
Matured Endowments	43,114
Donation Expenses	63,169
Change in Accrued Convention Donations	200,894
Convention Expenses	123,933
Bank Service Charges	15,780
Data Processing Service Fees	201,068
Accounting Fees	71,551
Actuarial Fees	170,285
Legal Fees	61,871
Consulting Fees	101,370
Bonus to Branches	708,330
Fraternal Activities	99,138
Official Publications	346,296
Scholarship Awards	216,426
Miscellaneous Employee Benefits	332,262
Fees — Directors	111,581
Salaries — Employees	1,200,606
Salaries — Officers	387,120
Interest Expense	277,057
Tax Expense	225,395
Depreciation Expense	214,404
Utility Expense	65,989
Postage and Printing	151,196
Advertising	110,191
Travel Expense	90,184
Insurance Department Fees	95,017
Sales Promotion	151,128
Rental Expense	327,424
Other Expense	389,804
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 64,875,216

Income (Loss) from Operations	\$ 4,116,493
Dividends to Members	1,606,486
Subtotal Income (Loss)	\$ 2,510,007
Capital Gains (Loss)	(56,659)
NET INCOME (Loss)	\$ 2,453,348



Hoppin' Good Recipes!

APRICOT-BOURBON GLAZED HAM

- ½ cup apricot preserves
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- ¼ cup bourbon or pineapple juice
- 6- to 8-lb. fully cooked smoked bone-in ham

Heat oven to 325 degrees. In small bowl, mix preserves, ginger and bourbon until smooth. Place ham on rack in shallow roasting pan. Make cuts about ½ inch apart and ¼ inch deep in diamond pattern around top and sides of ham. Brush with 3 tablespoons of the preserves mixture. Insert ovenproof meat thermometer in thickest part of ham.

Bake uncovered 45 minutes. Brush remaining preserves mixture over ham. Bake about 45 minutes longer or until thermometer reads 140 degrees. Remove ham from oven, cover with tent of foil and let stand 10 to 15 minutes for easier carving. Garnish with sliced pineapple if desired.

LAMB & POTATO SKILLET

- 1 lb. ground lamb
- 1 medium leek, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- ½ cup beef flavored broth (from 32-oz. carton)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill weed or 1 teaspoon dried dill weed
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 3 medium potatoes, cut into ¼-inch pieces (3 cups)
- 1 dried bay leaf
- 2 small tomatoes, coarsely chopped (1 cup)

Cook lamb, leek and garlic in 10-inch skillet over medium heat, stirring frequently, until lamb is brown; drain.

Stir remaining ingredients except tomatoes into lamb mixture. Heat to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer about 12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender. Remove bay leaf. Stir in tomatoes; heat through.

MINESTRONE CASSEROLE

- 2 cups uncooked mini lasagna (mafalda) noodles (4 oz.)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion (1 large)
- 1 cup sliced carrots, (2 medium)
- 2 medium stalks celery, sliced (1 cup)

- 1 medium green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium zucchini or summer squash, quartered lengthwise and sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 cans (15 oz. each) red kidney beans, drained, rinsed
- 1 can (15 oz.) diced tomatoes with Italian herbs, undrained
- ½ cup finely shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup refrigerated basil pesto

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Cook and drain pasta as directed on package using minimum cook time. Meanwhile, in 10-inch skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, carrots, celery and bell pepper; cover and cook 5 to 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until carrots are just tender. Uncover; stir in zucchini and garlic. Cook and stir 1 minute longer.

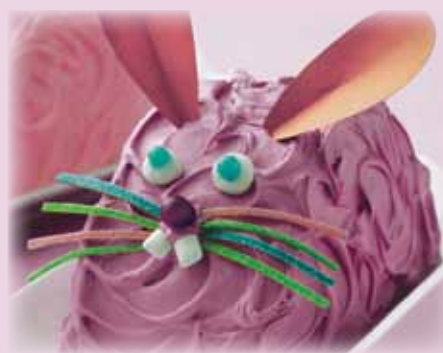
Place pasta in ungreased 2½-quart casserole. Stir in carrot mixture, beans, tomatoes, ¼ cup of the cheese, the salt, pepper and pesto. Cover casserole. Bake 40 to 50 minutes or until hot in center. Top each serving with remaining cheese.

EASY BUNNY CAKE RECIPE

- 1 box moist yellow cake mix
- Water, vegetable oil and eggs called for on cake mix box
- 2 containers (1 lb. each) Rich & Creamy vanilla frosting
- Neon purple and/or pink food color
- Construction paper (inedible)
- 2 small marshmallows, cut in half, flattened
- 2 small jelly beans, cut in half
- 2 (5-inch) strips rainbow-colored sour candy, separated into strips
- 2 large jelly beans or candy-coated chocolate-covered peanut candies
- 2 rectangular-shaped white chewing gum, cut in half
- 2 large marshmallows

Heat oven to 350 degrees (325 degrees for dark or nonstick pans). Make, bake and cool cake as directed on box for 2 (8-inch or 9-inch) round cake pans, using water, oil and eggs.

In medium bowl, tint 1 container frosting with neon purple food color. Using 1 cake round, cut in half to form 2 semicircles. Put



halves together with ¼ cup frosting to form body. Place upright on serving plate, cut side down.

Frost cake with frosting. Cut ears from construction paper; insert into cake. Using toothpicks to attach, use 2 small marshmallows halves and 2 small jelly bean halves for eyes. Use large jelly bean for nose and sour candy strips for whiskers. Place gum halves just below nose for teeth. Use large marshmallow for tail. Repeat with remaining cake to make second bunny, using pink neon food color. Frost and decorate as above.

EASTER CHICK CUPCAKES

- 1 box yellow or devil's food cake mix
- Water, vegetable oil and eggs called for on cake mix box
- Frosting and Decorations*
- 2½ cups shredded coconut
- Yellow liquid food color
- 1 container creamy vanilla frosting
- 48 brown miniature candy-coated chocolate baking bits
- 24 small orange gumdrops

Heat oven to 350 degrees (325 degrees for dark or nonstick pans). Place paper baking cup in each of 24 regular-size muffin cups. Make cake mix as directed on box, using water, oil and eggs. Divide batter among muffin cups. Bake 17 to 22 minutes or until toothpick inserted in centers comes out clean. Cool in pans 10 minutes; remove from pans to cooling racks. Cool completely, about 30 minutes. Place coconut in re-sealable food-storage plastic bag. Add about 8 drops yellow liquid food color; seal bag and shake to mix. Frost cupcakes with white frosting. Top with yellow coconut. For eyes, add brown baking bits. Cut orange gumdrops to resemble beaks; place on cupcakes.

BUNNY TAIL BONBONS

- 1½ (4-oz.) white chocolate baking bars, melted according to package directions
- 1 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup crushed coconut cookies
- 1 tablespoon coconut rum (or water)
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- Parchment paper
- 1½ cups shredded coconut

Beat chocolate and cream cheese at medium speed with a heavy-duty electric stand mixer until smooth. Add cookies and next 2 ingredients, beating just until blended. Spread in a parchment paper-lined 9-inch pie plate; cover and chill 2 hours.

Shape into 1-inch balls (about 2 tsp. per ball), and place in a single layer in a parchment paper-lined jelly-roll pan. Cover and chill 12 to 24 hours. Roll balls in coconut; chill 1 hour before serving. Refrigerate in a single layer in a container up to 1 week.

The FCSLA Mission Statement

We provide financial security to our members while embracing our Catholic values and Slavic traditions.

The FCSLA Vision is to:

Be a Premier Fraternal Benefit Society that offers quality financial products and benefits.