



## KSKJ LIFE CEO TRANSITION



On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish to share a matter of importance regarding a change of leadership at KSKJ Life.

Following a successful 45-year career, of which seventeen were as CEO, Anthony T. Mravle has retired as CEO effective January 1, 2018. The

Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Tony Mravle Jr, Chief Information Officer, has been appointed to the role of Chief Executive Officer.

One of the most important responsibilities of the Board is to ensure the stability and future viability of our organization. Along with strategic planning and risk management, the Board is responsible for managing the CEO and ensuring back-up and succession plans are in place.

Finding and retaining the right leaders is a difficult task for any organization. It is critical to identify the person that has the right combination of education, experience, skills, values, and organizational fit, not only for the present moment but for the future. It is also important to ensure that the collective leadership team has the necessary characteristics to support each other and successfully manage the array of serious responsibilities required for leading a fraternal life insurance organization.

A life-long member, Tony Mravle Jr began working with us in 2004 as a consultant, supporting Julie Schneller with the creation of our Young Adult Leadership Conference, the first of which was held in Chicago in 2005. Since his hire as a full-time employee in 2012, Tony Jr has served on the home office executive committee and has played a key role in guiding KSKJ Life's expansion of fraternal support and member benefits, technology innovation,

branding and marketing development, and talent acquisition and growth. Tony Jr holds a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership, a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics, the FLMI (Fellow, Life Management Institute) designation, and the PHR (Professional, Human Resources) certification.

Towards the end of 2016, Tony Mravle Sr communicated his desire to retire as CEO at the end of 2017. Over the past year, the Board discussed the benefits and challenges of external versus internal candidates. After deciding to focus on internal candidates, we considered several and conducted a formal interview process. As a result of that process, the Board unanimously chose to appoint Tony Mravle Jr. as the next CEO.

Tony Jr's people-focused leadership style, strategic focus, and fraternal spirit will build on the success that our society has achieved. Tony Jr has demonstrated effective executive leadership and is focused on helping KSKJ Life continue to grow and achieve its long-term financial and fraternal strategic goals,

**Continued on pg. 2**

## IN THIS ISSUE

### A NOTE OF INTRODUCTION

Page 2

### RMD FAQs

Page 4

### SNACKS FOR SOLDIERS

Page 6

### LODGE NEWS

Page 8

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**Continued from the front page**

including the promotion of our legacy and heritage to future generations.

This transition and the new appointment are exciting milestones in the history of KSKJ Life.

Tony Mravle Sr. originally joined KSKJ in 1972 as the Treasurer, and held several leadership positions before being appointed as CEO toward the end of 1999. During his time in that role, Tony Sr. led the society through a sustained period of significant development by executing key strategies for product expansion and asset growth. Among the highlights are KSKJ Life's development of a strong independent agent distribution channel, expansion into new states and successful new releases of fixed annuities and final expense products. Since 2000, KSKJ Life has experienced incredible increases in membership growth and assets (from \$50M to \$500M).

In his new role, Tony Sr will continue to serve as Investment Manager, reporting directly to the Board of Directors, as he transitions these and other duties to the executive team. There is an excellent staff and strong leadership team in place at the home office that will continue in their roles, including Stuart Buchanan, Chief Operations Officer; Paul Kaiser, Director, Agent Sales; Kathy Lovati, Manager, Agent Sales; and Brian Sharp, VP Information Technology.

Tony Sr will leave a considerable legacy, and we're grateful for his inspiring leadership over the years. We'll look forward to working with he and Tony Jr to ensure KSKJ Life is positioned for continued success through a robust transition plan.

I want to thank the Board for their leadership, service, and dedication to KSKJ Life.

*Fraternally,*

*Rudolph Krasovec Jr*

*Chair, KSKJ Life Board of Directors*

## A NOTE OF INTRODUCTION AND THANKS



I am thankful and excited for the opportunity to serve as the CEO for KSKJ Life.

I was born and raised within the KSKJ community – beginning with Christmas parties, Easter egg hunts, picnics, and basketball tournaments, and as I got older, serving as a lodge officer.

In 2004 I met Julie Schneller, a board member, who had an innovative idea to create a Young Adult Leadership Conference for KSKJ Life.

As a result, my professional connection with KSKJ began by supporting Julie in the development and implementation of the YALC, with the first conference occurring in Chicago in 2005.

In 2012, I was hired as the VP Fraternalism & Communications, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn, grow and contribute in

evolving leadership capacities while serving on the executive committee at the home office. I have provided leadership to a variety of growth initiatives, including lodge operations and member benefits; employee benefit programs, payroll, HR policies and procedures; upgrading technology and software for our agents, staff and members; and branding and marketing development.

We have some exciting initiatives planned for launch in 2018 with new streamlined online tools and resources for our agents, members and lodges to assist with the sale and management of our life insurance and annuity products as well as supporting our lodge officers in their leadership roles.

At the same time, we are steadfast in our ongoing organizational commitment to provide excellent financial products, tangible member benefits, and personalized service that is second to none.

I am deeply grateful to commit myself, every day, to a calling and purpose, being of service to an organization that has a heart, a soul, and a purpose to take care of people. We do that here in many ways based on a relationship with people – in life and death – by a community of people who truly care, starting with our members and lodges to the board of directors, agents, trusted partners and home office employees.

There is a legacy here in which we are all caretakers. We are part of a story that began long ago, and our responsibility is to do everything we can to ensure the story continues for generations to come.

We have a wonderful community of members, agents, business partners, friends, benefactors, home office staff, and board of directors. My heartfelt thanks to all of you for the many ways in which you support KSKJ Life and the services we provide to members and local communities. I also want to thank everyone for the overwhelming response to the CEO announcement – I humbly appreciate the kind words for me personally and join the enthusiasm expressed for the shared success of KSKJ Life.

I want to acknowledge my parents for their guidance and wisdom in my development, and my wife Jennifer for her constant love and support.

I am honored to serve and lead our organization in the next chapter of our story together.

*Tony Mravle Jr.*

*CEO*

## 39TH KSKJ LIFE NATIONAL CONVENTION

All information relating to the convention is now available on our website, including a viewable board application and guidelines. Please visit [www.kskjlife.com/convention](http://www.kskjlife.com/convention).

For general questions, please call (844) 407-9242.



<b>March 1st</b>	-Board application available for submission. (Details on website).  -Lodges can start elections for its delegates at a regular or a special meeting. Notice of meeting should be published in <i>The Voice</i> .** Deadline for publication of delegate elections in <i>The Voice</i> is the 2nd Friday of the month. March: <b>Deadline 2/9/18</b> April: <b>Deadline 3/9/18</b>  -Last day to submit photos for Fraternal Video Project.
<b>April 30th</b>	<b>-Last day to hold delegate election.**</b>
<b>May 1st</b>	-Deadline to submit Advertisement for National Convention book.
<b>May 11th</b>	-Last day to submit proposed amendments to KSKJ Life Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation, and resolutions involving questions and proposals of an actuarial nature. Must be received or postmarked by 5/11/18.
<b>June 1st</b>	-Deadline for Young Adult Leadership Application. Applications available online via convention tab or activities tab.
<b>June 10th</b>	<b>-Deadline to submit board application.</b> To request application, please submit request via online.  -Deadline to submit all other resolutions or proposed amendments to KSKJ Life Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation, which are <u>not</u> of actuarial nature. (Proposed changes must be received or postmarked by 6/10/18.)
<b>August 7-9th</b>	-Young Adult Leadership Conference – Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel, Rosemont, IL
<b>August 9-11th</b>	-KSKJ Life National Convention – Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel, Rosemont, IL

\*\*within 5 days after election, secretaries of local lodges shall certify to Home Office names and addresses of all elected delegates and alternates.

## A LOOK BACK....THE 7TH KSKJ LIFE NATIONAL CONVENTION

The year was 1902. Theodore Roosevelt was president, author John Steinbeck was born and the first Rose Bowl was played on January 1st with Michigan beating Stanford 49-0. It was also the year of the 7th KSKJ Life National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio.

President Anton Nemanich opened the proceedings and business included the following: 1) A transfer list to be used between lodges when a member moved from one to the other would cost \$1.00. 2) No insurance would be paid for internal illness. 3) A balance in the treasury would add \$9,000 to the reserve fund, which could not be used except in emergencies. 4) Male members' entrance fees would remain at 50 cents, while that of women

members would be 25 cents and slated for the reserve fund. 5) The time of the convention would change to take place henceforth in October instead of July; thus, the date of the next convention would occur the first Monday in October, 1906. 6) The organization's assets at this time were announced at being \$13,421.44.

Officers elected for the next two years was: John R. Sterbentz, president; Michael Skebe, vice president; Michael Wardjan, financial secretary; Joseph Stukel, recording secretary; John Grahek, treasurer; Rev. John Plevnik, spiritual director; Aloysius Dular, Martin Fir and George Laich, auditors. The next convention would take place in Joliet, IL.



## RMD FAQs

### (UNDERSTANDING REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTIONS)

If you have an IRA with KSKJ Life (or any other financial institution) and are at least 70 ½ years of age, you should have received your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) letter recently in the mail. This letter informs you of the amount of the RMD. Below are some frequently asked questions to help you better understand RMDs.

#### What is an RMD?

You generally have to start taking withdrawals from your IRA, SEP IRA or retirement plan account when you reach age 70 ½. Roth IRAs do not require withdrawals until after the death of the owner. Your Required Minimum Distribution is the minimum amount you must withdraw from your account each year. Your 2018 RMD is calculated based on the value of your account as of 12/31/17.

#### Do I need to do anything with my KSKJ Life RMD letter that I received?

Yes. Please complete the section letting KSKJ Life know if you want taxes withheld from your RMD and what month you would like your distribution.

#### What if I have other IRAs from other financial institutions? Can I take all of the RMDs from KSKJ Life?

Yes. Please cross out the amount listed on the letter from KSKJ Life and indicate the new amount of the distribution and return letter to KSKJ Life.

#### What if I am taking my KSKJ Life distribution from another financial institution?

Please make a note on your KSKJ Life RMD letter that you will be taking the RMD from another financial institution and return it to KSKJ Life.

#### What if I don't take my RMD? Is there a penalty?

Yes. If you do not take your RMD by the deadline, the amount not withdrawn is taxed at 50%.\*

#### Do I have to pay taxes on my RMD?

Yes. RMDs are taxed as ordinary income.

(\*Information source: IRS website)

*Coming next month....We will discuss options of what you can do with the RMD money that you may not need.*



## LODGE ANNIVERSARIES LODGE #150

Three lodges are celebrating milestone anniversaries in the month of February: Lodge #150 at 105 years, Lodge #226 at 90 years and Lodge #257 at 50 years. We will highlight these lodges over the next few Voice issues, beginning with Lodge #150.

Founded on February 28, 1913, St. Anne Lodge #150 had 14 charter members: Theresa Lekan (president), Ivana Cvilbar (financial secretary), Mary Zeleznikar (recording secretary), Mary Peskar (treasurer), Aloysia Skufca (auditor), Mary Miklavcic (lodge representative and associate auditor), Mary Globokar, Theresa Novak, Anna Zaletel, Anna Foruna, Theresa Godec, Mary Novak, Frances Globokar and Josephine Perko.

The lodge owned shares in the Slovenian National home in 1924 – a well-recognized landmark in the Cleveland area.

Today, the lodge coordinates and partakes in a wide-variety of events including Matching Funds events and Join Hands Day. The lodge is also very instrumental in helping to coordinate and participate in several Cleveland-area multi-lodge events such as the annual 4-Lodge Picnic and Porky Pig Softball Tournament. Congratulations to Lodge #150! Here's to many more years with more great things to come!



*Lodge #150 members (left to right) Tony Peskar, Liz Jones, Luke Jones, Greg Snyder and Elaine Peskar during the lodge's 50-year member recognition dinner in summer of 2017.*

### DO YOU WISH TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THE VOICE?

In the fall of 2017, we asked readers to fill out a short form online if you wished to continue to receive the paper version of *The Voice*. We understand that some members do not have access to computers, so we have decided to extend our deadline through March 31, 2018, and are allowing you to call into our main phone line to let us know you would like to remain on our subscriber list.

**Please call (800) 843-5755 and press "7."**

If you are calling outside of business hours, you will not have the option to press 7. Instead, the phone will go directly to voicemail. Please leave a message with your name and address and state that you would like to continue receiving *The Voice*.

**\*If you have already called in previously or filled out the online form, there is no need to call again. Your name has already been recorded. Thank you!**

### 2018 LODGE ANNIVERSARIES

Lodge	Age In 2018	Founded
Lodge #1	124 years	06.10.1894
Lodge #2	124 years	04.02.1894
Lodge #7	124 years	04.02.1894
Lodge #20	123 years	02.13.1895
Lodge #25	123 years	05.21.1895
Lodge #29	122 years	04.02.1896
Lodge #42	121 years	04.30.1897
Lodge #44	121 years	08.22.1897
Lodge #50	119 years	11.30.1899
Lodge #52	118 years	05.06.1900
Lodge #53	118 years	11.17.1900
Lodge #59	116 years	03.04.1902
Lodge #63	116 years	10.16.1902
Lodge #65	115 years	01.19.1903
Lodge #69	115 years	08.17.1903
Lodge #79	114 years	12.18.1904
Lodge #104	112 years	12.28.1906
Lodge #108	111 years	02.14.1907
Lodge #110	111 years	03.07.1907
Lodge #115	111 years	05.14.1907
Lodge #136	108 years	05.16.1910
Lodge #143	107 years	07.18.1911
Lodge #144	107 years	09.10.1911
Lodge #146	106 years	04.01.1912
Lodge #150	105 years	02.28.1913
Lodge #153	104 years	05.02.1914
Lodge #169	97 years	07.01.1921
Lodge #170	96 years	04.14.1922
Lodge #171	96 years	06.01.1922
Lodge #196	93 years	08.01.1925
Lodge #197	93 years	09.24.1925
Lodge #219	91 years	03.08.1927
Lodge #226	90 years	02.09.1928
Lodge #236	88 years	06.02.1930
Lodge #257	50 years	02.04.1968

## SNACKS FOR SOLDIERS - CAMPAIGN RECAP

A heartfelt thank you to all the lodges that participated in our 3rd year of the Supporting Soldiers Campaign. "Snacks for Soldiers" was this year's theme and the collected items included a variety of salty snacks and card games. A total of 20 lodges participated in this year's drive, either by collecting snacks, collecting monetary donations, or a combination of both.

Total Number of Snacks Collected	Amount of Member Donations	Charitable Giving Award From Home Office	Amount Donated to Support the Troops
1,203	\$1,506.25	\$1,000	\$2,506.25



Lodge #219



Lodges #1 & #170



Lodge #52



Andrea Ostrowski from Lodge #65 (left) with Leann Boudwine from Support the Troops



Lodge #171



Lodge #153



Lodge #136

## STUDENT ATHLETE RECOGNITION & AWARD PROGRAM

The Student Athlete recognition and award program, which began in the fall of 2008, is back again for the 2017-2018 school year. The program, which is designed to recognize our young adult members who work hard on the field and even harder in the classroom, is open to all students, both high school and college, aged up to 25 years old. Visit [kskjlife.com/membership/athletics](http://kskjlife.com/membership/athletics) to enter in your information. Registration closes May 15, 2018. Fifteen random winners will be selected from the list of student athletes, and each winner will receive a \$100 educational award.

## ABC BOWLING

The ABC Bowling Competition for youth members is still going strong! The contest will run through April 30th. Be sure to visit [kskjlife.com/membership/athletics](http://kskjlife.com/membership/athletics) to enter your information. Winners from each division (straight bowling and bumper bowling) will be randomly selected at the end of the tournament. Results will be posted on the website and in the Voice.

## MEMBER MEMORIAL

Our prayers go out to the families of our recently passed members. Claims have been paid and a donation to the KSKJ Life Educational Grant Fund has been made on behalf of each.

### DECEMBER 2017 & JANUARY 2018

**Lodge #1-** Rose T. Tomazin, Glen Ellyn, IL

**Lodge #1-** David J. Vastalo, Bolingbrook, IL

**Lodge #2-** Pauline Blair Buchar, Elmwood Park, IL

**Lodge #7-** Michael L. Deverich, Pueblo, CO

**Lodge #25-** Dorothy Petrich, Sagamore Hills, OH

**Lodge #42-** Robert L. Stewart, Harrisburg, PA

**Lodge #44-** Bernadette M. Miller, Chicago, IL

**Lodge #50-** Michael J. Stanko, Pittsburgh, PA

**Lodge #50-** Patricia A. Russian, Aliquippa, PA

**Lodge #50-** Adele R. Deleva, Brodheads ville, PA

**Lodge #50-** Elizabeth Zivic, Coraopolis, PA

**Lodge #52-** Randy A. Ramsey, Fort Wayne, IN

**Lodge #52-** Lillian L. Brezigar, Indianapolis, IN

**Lodge #52-** Robert E. King, Evansville, IN

**Lodge #52-** Glenda L. Carie, Vincennes, IN

**Lodge #53-** Juergen Lauer, S. Elgin, IL

**Lodge #53-** Linda G. Underwood, Hebron, IN

**Lodge #59-** Daniel A. Novak, Virginia, MN

**Lodge #59-** Frances Fink, Cedar, MN

**Lodge #63-** Dorothy Sas, Elyria, OH

**Lodge #110-** Vickie J. James, Newark, OH

**Lodge #110-** Samuel A. Rowley, Alliance, OH

**Lodge #110-** Frank B. Smerdel, Barberton, OH

**Lodge #110-** Lewis Smole, Wadsworth, OH

**Lodge #115-** Verna L. Elliott, Kingman, KS

**Lodge #144-** Steven J. Melanz, Evansville, WI

**Lodge #150-** Irene Yankovic, Solon, OH

**Lodge #153-** Audrey H. Buoy, Laurelton, PA

**Lodge #153-** Steve Vasko, Eighty-Four, PA

**Lodge #153-** Randall S. Whiteman, Trumbull, CT

**Lodge #169-** Anton Grebenc, Cleveland, OH

**Lodge #169-** Mary E. Gery, Eastlake, OH

**Lodge #169-** Josephine Grebenc, Mentor, OH

**Lodge #196-** Bernice Bailey, Irvine, CA

**Lodge #196-** Annie Strukel, Virginia, MN

**Lodge #226-** Dallas Prater, Bellefontaine, OH

**Lodge #236-** Arturo Guiz, National City, CA

**Lodge #236-** Lori L. Christu, Santa Ana, CA

**Lodge #300-** Joseph J. Dremel Jr., Streamwood, IL

## KSKJ VOICE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF KSKJ LIFE,  
AMERICAN SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC  
UNION, IN THE INTEREST OF ITS  
MEMBERS

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To change address or name, or for matters concerning membership, please contact the KSKJ Life Home Office.

This publication is also available electronically at [kskjlife.com](http://kskjlife.com).

## IN MEMORY OF

**Doniella Hlade Zagozen** - Lodge #144, Sheboygan, WI  
Joe and Denise Hlade, \$75

**John Kilmartin** - Lodge #44, Montgomery, IL  
St. Florian Lodge #44, \$10

**Joseph Vukadinovich** - Lodge #44  
St. Florian Lodge #44, \$10

**Robert Crowder** - Lodge #44, Tucson, AZ  
St. Florian Lodge #44, \$10

**James Carney** - Wadsworth, IL  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Grampovnik, \$25

**2017 Deceased Members of St. Mary #79**  
St. Mary #79, \$100

**Bettie Sczygielski**, Waukegan, IL  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Grampovnik, \$25

**2017 Deceased Members of St. Joseph #53**  
St. Joseph #53, \$200

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

### REGION 1

PENNSYLVANIA, CONNECTICUT AND DC

### LODGE #50

PITTSBURGH, PA

#### MATCHING FUNDS



*Bob Lokar, Jr., center, presents a Matching Funds check to St. Catherine's Preschool. Left to right: Isabella Schiemer, Natalie (Lokar) Schiemer, Bob Lokar, Jr., Father Steve (pastor) and Katie Sperdutie (director of preschool). Lodge #50 partnered with St. Catherine's in October 2017 to match funds for the school's fundraiser.*

#### CORRECTION

The following photo was published in our January issue on page 3. It incorrectly listed the Lodge member as Shaun Mikulan. The Lodge #50 member pictured is actually Eric Mikulan (third from left in front row). Eric was part of a group from Penn State Behrend Baseball team who voluntarily received haircuts/shaves as a fundraiser for Grady's Decision. This event was also a Matching Funds event for Lodge #50.



### LODGE #257

WASHINGTON, D.C.

#### MIKLAVŽEVANJE/ST. NICHOLAS CELEBRATION

On the evening of Saturday, December 2, 2017, the Bishop Baraga Society celebrated its 53rd annual slovensko Miklavževanje/Celebration of the Feast of St. Nicholas. Again this year, Fraternal Committee member, Ashley Mikulan, and her mother, Kristine, traveled approximately five hours from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, just to attend our event. The program commenced with a recitation of the story of St. Nicholas by Christopher Delaney, whose great grandfather was a National Auditor for KSKJ Life from the 1930s through the 1960s. Young members of the Slovenian community of greater Washington D.C. followed with vocal and piano musical presentations. Our president, Chris Bohince, next called all the children to the stage. With his accordion, he led the children and the audience in a Slovenian melody that called St. Nicholas into the hall. St. Nicholas then entered, attired in bishop's robes, and accompanied by angels and devils. He called each child or family to the stage for their gift, often adding saintly compliments or authoritative reprimands. After his departure, a light meal of klobase, hot dogs, sauerkraut, and bread followed. Throughout the evening, baked goods, including potica and krofe, were available for sale. The evening ended with a raffle, which was enjoyed by all, particularly the children.



*Angels with St. Nicholas (Maeve Mavretic, Samantha Sanders, Emma Caudron, Isabella Ackerman, Evelyn Mavretic, and Mark Oven)*



*A Child's First Encounter with a "Parkelj" (Devil) played by Anthony Terselic*

#### CHARITABLE COLLECTION

As a part of the annual celebration of the feast of Saint Nicholas/Miklavževanje held by Lodge #257, the Bishop Baraga Society, on Saturday, December 2, 2017, also collected items for the Little Sisters of the Poor in Washington D.C. The Little Sisters of the Poor is an international congregation of Roman Catholic women founded in 1839 by Saint Jeanne Jugan. Together with a diverse network of collaborators, they serve the elderly poor in over 30 countries around the world. On Sunday, January 7, 2018, Bishop Baraga Society members Bernadette Fitzsimmons, her daughter Juliana, sons Thomas and Matthew, and President Chris Bohince, along with Bernadette's husband, Tim, met Sister Mary Jamina and Sister Mary Michael, Mother Superior of the Little Sisters of the Poor, during their visit to their Jeanne Jugan Residence in Washington, D.C. In addition to toiletries, hats, breakfast cereals, thermal undershirts and underwear, laundry detergent, and a check representing cash donations collected at our St. Nicholas Celebration, lodge member Mary Lou Terselic and her husband, Rich, also provided hand-knitted shawls donated by the prayer shawl ministry of their parish, St. Ignatius of Loyola Catholic Church in Ijamsville, Maryland.

*See pictures on the following page.*

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

### REGION 2

CLEVELAND AREA

### REGIONAL NEWS

#### PALM SUNDAY BENEFIT EVENT

St. Vitus Parish will have its annual Palm Sunday benefit dinner on March 25, 2018 in St. Vitus Parish Auditorium, 6111 Lausche Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44103 from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sit-down and take-out dinners will be available. Cost is \$15 adult and \$10 for a child 12 years-old or younger. Main menu will be home-made soup, chicken or roast beef along with side dishes of lettuce, potatoes, side veggie plate, pastry, roll and butter along with coffee. Ticket reservations will be available by early February 2018 and may be purchased or reserved ("will call reserved dinner tickets") by contacting the parish rectory AFTER Feb. 5, 2018. This will be a KSKJ Life Matching Funds event. Up to \$1,000 in a matching funds grant for each local KSKJ Life lodge sponsoring this event will be matched by the home office of KSKJ Life. St. Vitus Lodge #25 and Christ The King Lodge #226 will be sponsoring this event.

This year's benefit organizations are two USA Veteran Posts: St. Vitus Catholic War Veteran Post 1655 and PLAV Post 31, Euclid, Ohio. These two veteran organizations have as their main purpose to serve those individuals who served in one of five USA Military branches; and to assist their families. Post 1655 and Post 31 provide and lay flags at the grave sites during Memorial Day weekend at local cemeteries, provide gift packages to veterans in the VA Hospital in Cleveland, visitation to veterans at the local VA hospital, provide various scholarships, and work to ensure the rights of veterans are provided by the US government. Of the over 320 million citizens in the USA, the five US Military branches today consist of only 1.4 million plus additional 800,000 members in the reserve forces, a total of only 2.2 million who serve the security and freedom of 320 million, less than one percent of all USA citizens.

The United States of America currently has five military branches that serve the security and well-being of all American citizens: US Army, US Navy,

Marine Corps, US Air Force, and Coast Guard. In historical terms, the military in the USA did not begin as a formal institution until 1775 when the Continental Army, Navy and Marines were established. In 1784 these formulated military branches were demobilized with the creation of the US Army by an act of Congress; and then followed by establishment of the Navy and Marine Corps.

It was not until the conclusion of World War II when various veterans from St. Vitus Parish, Cleveland, Ohio, began to return home from active service in Europe, Africa or Asia, came upon the idea to establish a Catholic War Veterans Post at their home parish. This idea would become a reality in May 1949 when then pastor Msgr. B.J. Ponikvar approved of a plan to organize such an entity. More than 750 parishioners from St. Vitus Parish had served in WWII with 40 killed in action.

Installation of officers for this new "St. Vitus Catholic War Veterans Post 1655" occurred on Nov. 20, 1949 in then St. Vitus School Hall. Note: This was in reality a reserved section in the lower school basement area that would eventually be converted to "physical education site," and then into a library and teacher lounge. The official Catholic War Veterans Charter was also presented at this time that contained the names of 53 men and two women. It was School Room No. 6 that would be the initial post "club room." In the course of time, however, the lower house section at address 6111 Glass (now Lausche) Avenue would become the long-term home for Post 1655.

Post 1655 became active in parish life at St. Vitus, holding events such as an annual dance, raffle, and eventually organizing the "weekend" summer festival that would become a parish weekend summer festival as well as an annual fall festival with the purpose to support the work of the parish. The summer festival was so successful that not until 1993 did the parish have a need for a weekly "bingo," primarily to support the work of the parish school. This bingo ran from 1993-to-2003.

The primary task of Post 1655 was to serve the needs of those individuals who had served their country in the military with a special focus on the families where an individual had been killed in action or had been disabled; and now had a wife or wife and children but no father. Post 1655 has faithfully on an annual for nearly 70 years placed flags at various



*Bernadette Fitzsimmons, her daughter, Juliana, Sister Mary Jamina, President Chris Bohince, Sister Mary Michael, Thomas and Matthew Fitzsimmons*



*Lodge #257 donations to the Little Sisters of the Poor*

*Chris Bohince  
President  
Lodge # 257, Bishop Baraga Society*

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

cemeteries in northeast Ohio to remember all the fallen as well as deceased veterans now laying in a permanent place of rest. They also visit and provide gifts and/or packages for various veterans or family members at a local Veteran Administration Hospital. Post 1655 has also provided a number of scholarships to children to be able to move ahead in their goals for a college degree or a technical degree. Each Memorial Day weekend they honor their fallen and deceased comrades with corporal Mass and provide a wreath with "taps" to indicate they have not forgotten those who served with dignity and honor so all could live in a free society in the USA: All gave some and some gave all.

Similar but a bit further east of Post 1655 is what is technically known as the "Polish Legion of American Veterans, Post 31," also referred to as "George Washington Post 30." Post 30 is located in Euclid, Ohio just off 1-90E on East 200th Street. Polish Legion of American Veterans (PLAV) has a more historic background in that PLAV was established after the end of World War I. There are currently about 75 such PLAV Posts across the USA, most concentrated in areas where individuals of Polish background live or once resided. The core of PLAV is patriotism, allegiance, honor, charity, and volunteerism, especially when it concerns disabled veterans and/or their families. The city of Euclid in fact has a "Euclid Joint Veterans' Council, that is comprised of a number of veteran posts. From these posts in Euclid, 90 veterans were killed in action in WWII, eight were killed in the Korean War and 12 were killed the Vietnam War. As is the case with Post 1655, PLAV members continue to honor the work of veterans with Memorial Day services, visitations to the local VA Hospital of veterans in need of physical or mental help (and in some instances both), placing of flags at grave sites during Memorial Day weekend of fallen or deceased veterans, and so on.

Both Post 1655 and PLAV Post 30 now have a number of the members that are much older than when they joined. But the workload to help disabled veterans, veterans in need of medical care, visitations to the VA Hospital, however, continues to increase.



*St Vitus Courtyard with Veteran "Memorial Stone" installed and dedicated in 2009 listing the names of 42 veterans from the parish that were killed in action, WWII to Vietnam Wars.*

*Stane Kuhar,  
Member, Christ The King Lodge #226*

### LODGE #25

CLEVELAND, OH

#### LODGE UPDATE

Greetings - just a brief note: The annual dinner for 50-year members had to be canceled due to poor response. It was now decided to have it on April 8th at 12 noon. All members are welcome. Please call John Turek at 216-531-0230 for reservations no later than April 2nd. Please try to attend.

*John C. Turek, Secretary*

### LODGE #169

CLEVELAND, OH

#### LODGE UPDATE

Many of our members celebrated the Christmas holy days at the resplendent St. Mary's Church with masses and litanies befitting the great occasion of the Christmas season. Our St. Joseph Lodge #169 Clarinet Quartet contributed to the music with arrangements of Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming and an Ave Maria before and during Midnight Mass. Photos and videos are posted on our lodge's Facebook page.

College and private high school students wishing to apply for a Lodge #169 scholarship can email me (jtnemec@sbcglobal.net) for an application form. We will celebrate the feast of our patron, St. Joseph, by gathering for 10 a.m. mass at St. Mary's in

Collinwood on Sunday, March 18 and then heading over to the parish hall for a hot breakfast of eggs and sausage. All our members are warmly invited! Our next meeting will be Thursday, February 15 at 6:30 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the Collinwood Slovenian Home on Holmes Avenue. All the best to our members and their families in the new year. Our prayers go out to those with health issues and special needs. We send our deepest condolences to the family of Ivan Tomc, a faithful member and parishioner who passed away in early January.

*John Nemeč  
Fraternal Affairs Coordinator*

### LODGE #226

CLEVELAND, OH

Happy 2018 Fellow KSKJ Life Members!

I came across a short poem, written by a gal named Kathryn Heim, that seemed like a perfect way to kick-off 2018. It also perfectly reflects what KSKJ Life's fraternalism is all about.

#### A NEW YEAR'S PLEDGE

*To hope for and always see the best,*

*To love with a heart full of heaven's zest,*

*To help make other's days and lives better,*

*and forever remember the things that most matter.*

On behalf of the board and committee members of Lodge #226, may 2018 be filled with joy, dreams realized, and lots of love.

#### LODGE UPDATE

January Lodge Meeting and New Year's Party: Our first meeting of the year took place at the Slovenian National Home. It was wonderful to see so many folks in attendance.



## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS



*Members discussing the meeting*

**Helping Make Lives Better:** During our Youth Christmas Party, Tim Klodnick had the clever idea of passing around a tin to collect change for the Supporting Soldiers campaign. That collection brought in \$103 from our members in attendance that day. In addition to this, our lodge agreed to donate \$100, bringing the total collected in support of our soldiers to over \$200.

In addition, our lodge voted to give monetary donations to some other worthwhile organizations, including The Slovenian National Home, The Angel Fund for St. Vitus Slovenian School, The Slovenian Home for the Aged, and St. Vitus for their Annual Palm Sunday Benefit in support of US Veteran Post 1655 and Post 30. To learn more about the the Palm Sunday benefit, please refer to the Upcoming Events section of this article.



*Chuck Potenga presents a check to Bob and Geri Hopkins, Slovenian National Home*

And, just before the meeting ended, Rosemarie Zupancic offered up a secret envelope for a special raffle with the money raised going to our Frank & Antonia Segal Scholarship Fund. As we were all curious what the envelope contained, contributions to the raffle poured in. The grand total was \$145. Congratulations to Carmen Frederico for having the winning number. What was in that secret envelope? You'll have to ask Carmen at our next monthly

meeting on February 23, but let's just say he donated some of his winning to the scholarship fund as well!



*Carmen Frederico wins the Special Raffle supporting the Frank and Antonia Segal Scholarship Fund*

**Fraternal Activities:** Chuck Potenga is still looking to charter a boat on September 8, 2018 to island hop from Cleveland to Kelley's Island to Put-in-Bay and back to Cleveland. However, in order to make the event a success, we need approximately 150 people to commit. If this sounds like an event you and your family would enjoy, please send Chuck a quick note at [cpotenga@wowway.com](mailto:cpotenga@wowway.com). We would love to see members from other lodges join in the fun too, so spread the word!

We are also looking for some fresh ideas for activities. We are exploring a family bowling night at The Nash following our March meeting and Fish Fry. Although the date has not been confirmed, if you are interested, please drop me (Tamara Zupancic) a quick email at [tlsinmentor@hotmail.com](mailto:tlsinmentor@hotmail.com) or via cell at 440.488.2904.

For those of you receiving *The Voice*, information regarding the 39th KSKJ Life National Convention is posted in this edition on page 3. Lodge #226 will vote on delegates to send to the convention during our April 8th Lodge Meeting. Please join us at 12 p.m. at the Slovenian National Home for this important decision.

The Young Adult Leadership Conference is held prior to the National Convention and is a unique opportunity for our 18-25 year old members to develop self-awareness and leadership skills, learn more about KSKJ Life, and build fraternal relationships with other members from around the country. If you are a member between the ages of 18-25 and are interested in attending the YALC, please go to KSKJ Life's website to fill in the application. Applications should be submitted before April 30th.

To wrap up our January meeting, our 2018 leadership team was sworn in.

Chuck Potenga - Vice President  
Erika Kurbos - Financial Secretary  
Diane McClusky - Recording Secretary  
Carmen Frederico, David Sanders, and Bill Urban - Auditors  
Sergeant at Arms - Ray Yartz  
Ron Zak - Fraternal Activities Coordinator,  
Communications Director - Randy Zak  
Voice Reporter and Youth Activities Co-Chair - Tamara Zupancic  
Membership Committee Co-Chairs - Tim Klodnick and Clara Abriani  
Youth Activities Committee Co-Chair - Beth Paskey



Congratulations to all. We appreciate your dedication to our Lodge and are looking forward to a wonderful 2018 filled with fellowship.

An extra-special thank you to all who brought food to share during our Annual Adult New Year's Party and to Rosemarie Zupancic for the special raffle prize to raise money for our scholarship fund.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

Feb 23 - 5:30 p.m. (Slovenian National Home Club Room). Lodge Meeting and Fish Fry

Mar TBD - 5:30 p.m. (The NASH). Lodge Meeting, Fish Fry, and Family Bowling

Mar 25 - 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (St. Vitus Parish Auditorium). St Vitus Parish Palm Sunday Benefit Dinner. The benefit dinner will focus on raising funds for both Post 1655 and Post 30; and to humbly ask for support from the general public for these two Veteran Posts so that they may be able to have the means to continue the fine work on behalf of veterans and/or their family members. All individual,

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

business, or organizational donations received before, during and after this event will go these two Veteran Posts. Dinner tickets will be \$15 adult and \$10 child 12 years or younger. Sit down and take out dinners will be served. Ticket reservations will be available in early February and may be purchased or reserved ("will call reserved dinner tickets") by contacting the parish rectory after February 5, 2018.

Apr 8 - 12 p.m. (Slovenian National Home) - Voting on Christ the King Lodge #226 delegates for the 39th KSKJ Life National Convention

May 5 - 10 a.m. (Slovenian National Home)- Join Hands Day and Lodge Meeting

Jun 3 - 12 p.m. (Slovenian National Home)- Meeting.

July 7 - 4-Lodge Picnic at Odd Fellows Park. Join Lodges #150, #146, #63, and #226 for this annual family-fun event!

### CONDOLENCES

On behalf of Lodge #226, condolences are extended to the Bango Family (Clyde, Ohio) over the passing of John Bango.

### WE ARE SOCIAL

Are you active on Facebook? So is Lodge #226! Follow KSKJ Lodge #226 (@kskjcleveand226) to receive lodge updates and see photos of our events. It's a great way to stay connected with the lodge. I encourage all members to reach out to me via email—include the words: Lodge #226 in the subject line—if you have any news or photos to share. My email is tisinmentor@hotmail.com.

Tamara Zupancic

### REGION 3

CLEVELAND AREA

### LODGE #150

CLEVELAND, OH

### UPCOMING MEETING

Our next St. Anne's Lodge #150 meeting will be

held on Friday, February 23, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at the Slovenian National Home (The Nash) at 3563 East 80th, Cleveland, Ohio. It will take place during The Nash's Fish Fry and Family Bowling. Members of Lodge #150, who attend our meeting, will have their fish fry paid for by Lodge #150.

Our March meeting will be held on Sunday afternoon, March 18, after our 50 Year Dinner. Details to follow.

### NATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT

The KSKJ National Bowling Tournament will be held April 21-22 in Indianapolis, IN. We will sponsor two Lodge #150 teams for the tournament. Any Lodge #150 members interested, please contact Tony Peskar or Liz Jones for additional information.

### CONGRATULATIONS

This year, St. Anne's Lodge #150 will celebrate their 105th anniversary. They were founded on February 28, 1913.

### FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

Lodge #150 has a Facebook page to share lodge news, event calendar, photos, and other information. Check us out at: [www.facebook.com/KSKJ150](http://www.facebook.com/KSKJ150). You do not have to be a Facebook member to view the page.

### LODGE EMAIL ADDRESS

The Lodge #150 email address for Financial Secretary, Liz Jones is: [kskjlife150@gmail.com](mailto:kskjlife150@gmail.com)

Tony & Elaine Peskar

### REGION 4

JOLIET AREA

### REGIONAL NEWS

### ILLINOIS FEDERATION

The next Illinois Federation meeting will take place on Friday, February 23, 2018 at 7 p.m. at the Slovenian Cultural Center in Lemont. All KSKJ Life members are welcome. Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

The Illinois Federation will again be a sponsor for the Slovenian Cultural Center Palm Sunday Brunch which will be held on March 25. All members are welcome to the mass and brunch.

Save the date: IL Federation meeting on Friday, November 16, 2018 at 7 p.m. at SCC.

### JOLIET LODGES

The Joliet lodges have been asked to lead the holy hour from 12-1 p.m. on Saturday March 17. This is on the weekend of the 40-hour devotion for St. Joseph Day at St. Joseph Church in Joliet. We have shared this duty with the SUA Branch 20 for the last several years. All are asked to come and pray.

The Marija Pomagaj Mass will be held on Thursday, May 24 at St. Joseph Church at 6:30 p.m. There will be a reception immediately following Mass in Ferdinand Hall. All KSKJ Life members are welcome to attend.

### LODGE #2

JOLIET, IL

KSKJ St. Joseph Lodge # 2 held its installation of officers meeting on Sunday, January 7. The next event will be the lodge's annual St. Joseph Brunch to honor 50- year members on March 18, 2018. We will celebrate mass at 10 a.m. at St. Joe's Church followed by brunch at Merichka's.



The swearing in of the 2018 officers



Sie Mihelich enjoying the meeting with her granddaughter, Olivia Mihelich

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS



Outgoing Financial Secretary, Lydia Marquardt, goes over meeting notes with new Financial Secretary, Zach Pucel.

### LODGE #29

JOLIET, IL

### LODGE UPDATE

The 35th Annual Christmas Luncheon was well attended on Sunday, January 7, at 176 West Banquet Hall in Joliet. Entertainment was provided by Ray Koncar & the Boys. We honored Louie Derlinga for 50 Years of Lodge membership. Officers for 2018 were installed and are looking forward to a great year.



Santa said the kids of Lodge #29 were extra good this year!



Laurica Zitko gets her Grandpa Petrella out on the dance floor.



Becky and Ken Velasquez enjoying the festivities at the Christmas luncheon.

Calling all teens! Lodge #29 will be hosting a teen bowling event on Sunday, February 11 from 12-2 p.m. at Crest Hill Lanes. Check-in at 11:30 a.m. FREE for all KSKJ Life members ages 12-17. Bowling, pizza and pop. Please RSVP to Becky at (815) 212-9904 (text) or email at [kskjldge29@gmail.com](mailto:kskjldge29@gmail.com).

Our next meeting (election of delegates to the National Convention and Chili Cook-Off) will be Sunday, March 4, 1 p.m. at St. Joe's Park Hall. Don your apron, pull out your best chili recipe and put it to a taste test. If you have not already signed up to enter your crockpot of chili, please email me at [rccklcal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rccklcal@sbcglobal.net) just so we can get an idea for set up.

How many more days of winter, Mr. Groundhog? Hope you are staying happy and warm!

Karen (Ramsak) Colman, Reporter

### LODGE #108

JOLIET, IL

### LODGE UPDATE

Happy Valentine's Day!

On Saturday, December 16 members of St. Genevieve Lodge #108 along with members from the Joliet Rivals Club had come together to once again participate with the "Wreaths Across America" program, which took place at the Abraham Lincoln

National Cemetery. The weather had finally cooperated for us so that we could honor our fallen soldiers by placing holiday wreaths down on the gravesites. As long as I am able, I will continue to help out with the "Wreaths Across America" program. There are times that it just takes your breath away after seeing all the holiday wreaths down.



Officers from St. Genevieve Lodge #108 and members from Joliet Rivals Club.



Photo of holiday wreaths that were laid at veterans' headstones.



Photo of a marine (name unknown) standing in front of a field of headstones adorned with holiday wreaths.

On Monday, January 1, 2018, Alan Mihelich, Financial Secretary and myself presented a check to Jonathan Studer on behalf of the Illinois Federation KSKJ Life. Jonathan is a member of St. Genevieve Lodge #108 and is attending Saint Xavier University.

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS



Standing L to R - Alan Mihelich, Financial Secretary, presented a check to Jonathan Studer as Pauline Mihelich, Lodge President, looks on.

Crest Hill, IL. Guests enjoyed bowling, pizza and plenty of camaraderie. More pictures from the event can be found on our Facebook page.



It was all fun and smiles at the Christmas Bowling Party for our youth attendees.

### UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS

St. Genevieve Lodge #108 will hold their monthly lodge meeting on February 4 in Ferdinand Hall at 1 p.m. to discuss their upcoming events for the year.

On Sunday, February 11, St. Genevieve Lodge #108 will be sponsoring another ice-skating/pizza party. It will be held at the Joliet Park District Ice Arena from 1 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Upcoming lodge meetings to be held: Sunday, March 4 at 1 p.m., Ferdinand Hall and on Sunday, April 8 at 1 p.m. in Ferdinand Hall. Please be advised that at the April lodge meeting we will hold elections for delegates to attend the KSKJ Life National Convention in August. So please attend this very important meeting.

St. Genevieve Lodge #108 will have a mass at St. Joseph Church in Joliet, Illinois to honor all living and deceased members sometime in June.

Well, that's it for now. Have a wonderful day!

Respectfully submitted,  
Pauline Mihelich  
Lodge President

### LODGE #143

JOLIET, IL

### LODGE UPDATE

St. John the Baptist Lodge #143's Christmas Party was held on January 6, 2018 at Crest Hill Lanes in

In addition to the party, a lodge meeting was held in the bowling alley's meeting room. The installation of the 2018 officers took place and Financial Secretary April Sleyko was recognized as Lodge #143's Lodge Person of the Year for 2017. New president Julia Markun presented April with her certificate. Congratulations, April!

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS



Sarah Earley and Dylan Thomas

We'd like to welcome the newest member to the Lodge #143 family, Sophia Marie Koncar who was born on December 28, 2017. Sophia is the daughter of Frank and Cathy Koncar. Welcome to the world, Sophia!



Grandma Annette Koncar holding granddaughter Sophia

If you have any member updates (wedding, engagement, graduation, new baby, etc.) that you'd like to share, please send it to laurenbaltz73@gmail.com.

### REGION 5

CHICAGO & INDIANAPOLIS AREA

### REGIONAL NEWS

#### LODGE #1 & #170 CHRISTMAS PARTY

Eighty-six attended the annual party (39 adults from Lodge #1, 33 adults from Lodge #170, 13 children from Lodge #1 and 1 child from Lodge #170). Thank you to Theresa and Kazy Krampac

and Joanne Sierzega for being in charge of the set-up and to Luba Novak and her kitchen crew for a delicious lunch of soup, salad, beef stew and polenta, potatoes, Slovenian sausage and hot dogs. Our thanks to the buffet servers Barbara Krampac, Tom and Tommy McNally, Wayne Wagner and Dawn Zamora. Thanks also to Don and Irene Sierzega for the large platter of assorted homemade cookies for dessert.

Additional thank you's go to Santa (Pat Sierzega), to Mia Wagner who played two Christmas songs on the saxophone and to cousins Hailey Neetz, Aleah and Holly Richter, Lily and Luke Roskos and Abigail Michau for singing Jingle Bells for our entertainment. Thank you to Donna McNally who took pictures at the party for publication in The Voice.

Many nice door prizes were distributed. Thank you to Tom and Donna McNally, Don and Irene Sierzega and Theresa Krampac for their donations for the adult raffle and to Joanne Sierzega for donations for the children's raffle.

We regret, if through oversight, someone's name has been omitted from the thank-you list. Please know that volunteering your time, donating baked goods, etc. is very much appreciated. It takes many volunteers to have a successful event and we thank each one of you, whatever your part, for the success of this party.

With gratitude, we thank all who donated to the "Support the Troops" Campaign. 391 packages of snacks and \$165 in monetary donations were received.

Submitted by,  
Joanne Sierzega



Mia Wagner entertains the guests with some songs on the saxophone.



It was all smiles when the man in red made an appearance at the party.



Susan and Al Michau's grandchildren sing Christmas songs for the party guests.

### LODGE #1

CHICAGO, IL

Dear Members, Happy New Year.

Election of 2018 officers was held in December. President and Recording Secretary: Dawn Zamora; Financial Secretary/Treasurer: Joanne Sierzega; Fraternal Activities Coordinator: Patrick Sierzega; Lodge Membership Committee Chair: Thomas McNally. There were no 50-year members for the year 2017.

Dakota Zamora volunteered to represent our lodge at the 2018 Young Adult Leadership Conference. If any other young adults, ages 18 to 25, would like to attend the conference, please complete the online application by April 30 at kskjlife.com/yalc.



## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 10, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. at Cristo Rey High School, 22nd Place and Wolcott, Chicago. We will hold election for delegates to the 2018 KSKJ Life convention so please plan to attend. Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

*Joanne Sierzega  
Lodge Reporter*

### LODGE #44

S. CHICAGO, IL

#### LODGE UPDATE

Lodge #44 hopes that everyone had a great time ringing in the New Year with friends and family. Your board members are ready to hit the ground running with events and activities for everyone to participate in 2018. I would like to take a second to thank my fellow officers (George Bozzetti, Chris Bozzetti, James Rossi Jr., Betty Krcmaric, Mary Jane Strus, Bob Oberman, and Jan Oberman) for their time and effort in 2017 and for continuing with their elected positions again this year. We would also like to welcome Mary Franko who will join us this year!

As a reminder, this year we are only going to be having 4 meetings with a lot of behind the scenes action so hopefully each lodge member can attend at least one. Sunday, March 11 will be our first meeting of the year at 10 a.m. at Saint George (9546 S Ewing Ave. Chicago, IL 60617). Come out and see what we are planning for the year. New ideas and activities are always welcome. If you cannot make the meeting and still want to share your thoughts, you may reach out to George (708-334-5434) or myself (219-718-7599) and we will be sure to share them. What would you like to see Lodge #44 do in 2018?

Save the date: Our Corporate Communion Brunch will take place on March 18 immediately following Mass. The brunch will be held at the American Legion Post. More details to come.

*Angela Rossi*

### REGION 6

NE ILLINOIS & WISCONSIN

### LODGE #53

WAUKEGAN, IL

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 11- Regular Meeting - 9:15 a.m.

March 18- Annual Lodge Luncheon Meeting - 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

April 8- Regular Meeting- 9:15 a.m.

May 2018- No Meeting

#### LODGE UPDATE

Here is a quick recap of our December events. The Lodge Christmas party, co-hosted with St. Mary's #79, was well-attended and all of our members enjoyed bowling, crafts, pizza and Santa Claus! The Snacks for Soldiers campaign was a success with a generous outpouring of games, candy, gum and snacks from all who attended. A huge "thank you" goes to The Shipping Point who shipped out three large boxes to the campaign headquarters FREE of charge!

Our January meeting saw the installation of our returning officers with the exception of one. Ray Dolence has stepped down after serving two years as a lodge auditor. We thank him for his time and talents and wish him well in the years ahead.

Save the Date for March 18. Primo (the former In-Laws Restaurant) in Gurnee, IL will be the venue for our annual Lodge Leaders and 50-Year Members Lodge Luncheon meeting. We will enjoy a brunch from 11 a.m. through 1 p.m. The cost for Members is \$10; members 12 years or younger are welcome at no cost. As always, guests are invited to enjoy our gathering as well. For details and to RSVP (by March 12), call Sue Dolence at (847) 662-0908 or to myself at (847) 244-8949.

A belated Happy New Year to all. Peace on Earth...

*Victoria Drinka, Secretary*

### LODGE #65

MILWAUKEE, WI

Many thanks to all the people who attended our Christmas Party, and to the many people who worked so hard to make it a success. The kids had a great time as Andrea Ostrowski read them a Christmas Story. They enjoyed pizza and Christmas cookies as well. Santa, aka Adam Budda, made his appearance amid the loud singing of Jingle Bells and gave each child a chance to relay their requests. A fun day like this has many elves. Many thanks to Andrea Ostrowski, Pat Pugel, Steve Morzy, Agnes Lobacz, Tom Gorenc, and Diane Mouradian for all their help.

Did you make any New Year's resolutions? How about you make "attending our monthly meetings" one of them? This year we will be celebrating our 115th Anniversary as a lodge. We would like to make it a special celebration, but one person cannot do it alone. Our next meeting will be February 7, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. Please come.

Election of officers was held in December. The officers for 2018 are: President, Rudy Pugel, VP Tom Gorenc, Recording Secretary, Agnes Lobacz, Financial Secretary, Diane Mouradian, Auditors, Pat Pugel and Andrea Ostrowski, and Sgt. of Arms Steve Morzy. Please support them and attend our meetings.

The Slovenian Cultural Day Celebration will be hosted by the Slovenian Arts Program of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee on Saturday, February 3, 2018. The free program will feature a talk and PowerPoint on the various regions of Slovenia. The program will be presented by Dolores Ivanchich and Helen Frohna at the WestAllis Library at 2 p.m.

*Nasvidenje  
Mici Bregant*

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

### LODGE #136

WILLARD, WI

#### LODGE UPDATE

Greetings from Willard:

Mary of Perpetual Help #136 will be having their Hunting and Fishing Jamboree on March 11, 2018.

It will be held in The Holy Family Parish Center in Willard, WI at noon. We will start with a potluck lunch and our lodge will provide the meat, bread and beverages.

There will be door prizes and the prizes for the largest deer (buck or doe), bear, turkey, duck, goose and game fish. The children of the lodge can also register rough fish. All you have to be is a member of Lodge #136.

Please contact Bob Trunkel at 715-267-7264 or email Lonna Rakovec at genelonna@hotmail.com We would appreciate pictures but they are not necessary. We have many members in other states, so register your game that you got in your state. You do not need to be present to win your prize for the biggest game.

Please come and join us for a fun-filled time. Besides all the fellowship, we will also play bingo.

*Lonna Rakovec*

*Financial Secretary*

### LODGE #144

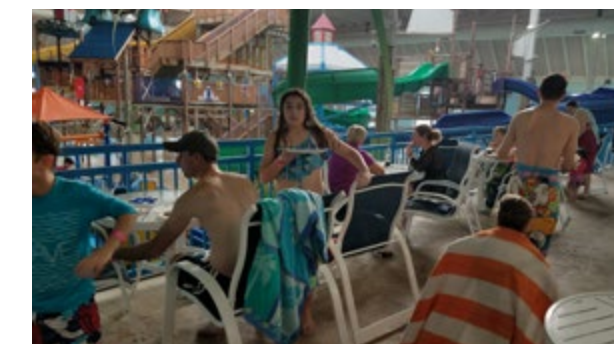
SHEBOYGAN, WI

#### LODGE UPDATE

By the time that you read this, we will be well into 2018.

On December 18, Doniella "Donnie" Zagozen was called to her eternal home. She was the oldest member of our lodge and also SS. Cyril & Methodius Parish. In September, she would have been 100 years old. Eternal Rest grant unto her O' Lord.

On December 3, we held our annual Juvenile Christmas Party at Blue Harbor Resort. It was an afternoon of fun at the Water Park, which was enjoyed by the kids and adults as well.



On December 17 we held our annual meeting. We discussed possible activities for 2018. The following are in the works:

- Family Bowling Day in March.
- Our Join Hands Day will again be cleaning up at Greendale Cemetery on May 12 with a rain day of May 19.
- Our Annual Dinner and Fellowship Day will be August 19 at the Knights of Columbus Center.

- A Matching Funds project idea will be sent to the Home Office for approval

More details on all of the events will be in future Voice articles.

The 2018 Lodge #144 Officers will be:

President: Patricia Slapnick

Vice President: James Noordyk

Secretary / Treasurer: Tammy Miller

Recording Secretary: Marian Burich

Auditor: Diane Udovich

Activities Director: Ken Miller

We are always interested in suggestions for the success of our lodge. Feel free to call any of the officers with your ideas.

*Pat Slapnick  
President & Reporter*

### REGION 7

MINNESOTA AND MICHIGAN

### LODGE #171

DULUTH, MN

#### UPCOMING EVENT

Our annual sleigh ride will be held on Saturday, March 10 from 1-3 p.m. at Countryside Rides (4488 West Lismore Road). There is no charge for members and an \$8 charge for non-members. Please call Sharon Bucar at 218-626-1928 or email: sharonmbucar@gmail.com by Tuesday, March 6 if you would like to join in the fun. Dress warm and bring a dish to share during our social time. Coney's hot dogs, hot chocolate and apple cider will be provided.



Know someone who might like to be a part of KSKJ Life? Give Sharon Bucar a call at 218-626-1928 or email sharonmbucar@gmail.com.

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS

### LODGE #196

GILBERT, MN

On Sunday December 10, 2017, Blessed Virgin of Help #196 held its annual Youth and Adult Activity Christmas Party at 12 p.m. at St. Joseph's Catholic Church - Father Kausek Hall. Approximately 32 people were in attendance. We enjoyed a great dinner catered by Mary Skerjance and her Angels (Ladies of the Church who also do catering for funerals at our Parish). We enjoyed a very delicious pork dinner with all the fixings and dessert. The group spent some time visiting with other members who they haven't seen for a while, bringing out that Christmas spirit. Santa Claus stopped by to give presents to all the boys and girls, and door prizes were drawn and distributed by the boys and girls to all the winners. This year we also honored Marianne Nanti for serving our lodge as an officer for 5 years. A year-end report of the lodge activities was recited to all by President Oberstar, and then we reconvened a recessed December 5 lodge business meeting with the election of Officers for 2018 - the only official business on the agenda.

We elected Karl Oberstar Jr. (President), Leo Skrebec (Vice President), Yvonne Skrebec (Financial Secretary/Treasurer), Yvonne Skrebec (Recording Secretary), Rocco Leoni, Marianne Nanti, and Bob Finc (Auditors), Fraternal Activities Coordinator, Ashley Theien. We wish to thank outgoing 2017 Officer Richard Roach (Auditor) for his service to the lodge.

Included once again at this year's Christmas Party was a "Feed the Hungry" campaign in which members were asked to bring non-perishable food items to the party. This was a very successful venture since we collected \$34 for the food Shelf and \$34 for the Supporting Soldiers campaign. The food shelf collection was brought to the Quad City Food Shelf located right here in our city of Gilbert. Thanks to all who made this possible. At the close of the Christmas Party, we all joined in with singing of a few Christmas carols led by Leo Skrebec, Rocco Leoni, and Tom Prosen. Once again, it is safe to say that a wonderful time was had by all.

The KSKJ Life Lodge #196 board and Lodge #196 membership wishes everyone a Happy New Year. God bless you all.

*Respectfully Submitted by,  
Karl Oberstar Jr. (President)*



*Lodge #196 2018 Officers (left to right): Marianne Nanti (#2 Auditor), Bob Finc (#3 Auditor), Katherine Trampusch (Membership Committee Chair), Yvonne Skrebec (Financial/Secretary Treasurer and Recording Secretary), Karl Oberstar Jr. (President), Ashley Theien (Youth/Adult Activities Coordinator), Leo Skrebec (Vice President), Rocco Leoni (#1 Auditor).*

### LODGE #197

ST. CLOUD, MN

#### MATCHING FUNDS UPDATE

Representatives from Lodge #197 recently presented a Matching Funds Check for \$1,000 to Generation Next – Diocesan Youth Fund. The Matching Funds event was held in conjunction with "Act-Oberfest," which was a variety show in St. Cloud, Minnesota.



*Left to right: Jim Bisek, Lodge #197 Officer and Financial Secretary, Jill Lieser, Alice Coudron, Curt Hanson, and Mike Retka, Lodge #197 Officer and Recording Secretary.*

### REGION 8

COLORADO, KANSAS, MONTANA & CALIFORNIA

### LODGE #104

PUEBLO, CO

#### LODGE UPDATE

Lodge #104 conducted a toy drive in conjunction with their lodge Christmas party. The toys were collected for St. Mary Catholic Church. The lodge was awarded a Charitable Giving Award for their benevolent drive which was donated to St. Mary's. Members were definitely in the giving spirit as an abundant amount of toys were collected, evidenced by the photo below.



*Left to Right: Diane Slayton, Marian Pechek and Norma Becco*



*Christmas party guests enjoying their time with friends*

## LOCAL LODGE NEWS & EVENTS



*It was a full house for the Lodge #104 Christmas party*

### OTHER NEWS & NOTES

#### SEND IN YOUR LODGE UPDATE

Remember to send in all lodge news and events to [voice@kskjlife.com](mailto:voice@kskjlife.com) by the second Friday of each month. Additionally, feel free to submit feature articles of interest for consideration.



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