

*Za Boha a národ*

*For God and Nation*

# Slovak Catholic Falcon

Slovenský katolícky sokol

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## 69<sup>TH</sup> S.K.S. GOLF TOURNAMENT

AT THE TREASURE LAKE GOLF COURSES IN DUBOIS, PA  
August 9 – 11, 2024



2024 Frank S. Petruff Memorial Award winner Steven M. Pogorelec with his family.



## MESSAGE FROM OUR SUPREME PRESIDENT LARRY M. GLUGOSH

Welcome to September and all the wonderful things that come with this time of the year like the start of our youth returning to school and our older members heading off to college and university.



It is also the start of many sports programs like football, basketball and hockey, which means it is good time of the year for your local assemblies, wreathes and groups to organize a special outing in order to participate in one of these new fall events. If you do so, kindly follow the lead from our Supreme Vice President, Andrea Tadlock and raise some funds and/or collect some non-perishable food items for the needy in your community. This was the case at our recent National golf tournament, where our efforts raised over \$700 for the Haven House, which is a local shelter. We should never stop helping and giving to those less fortunate in our local communities.

That said, our 2024 International Golf Tournament was held a few weeks ago in Dubois, PA at the beautiful Treasure Lake Golf and Country Club. Based on the feedback, our members enjoyed their weekend together, despite the wet weather during the Friday practice round. Thankfully, any member that did not play was entitled to a full refund. Given the poor weather, our Supreme Director of Sports and Athletics Kathleen S. Watkins had to quickly move the Friday night hospitality from the outdoor pavilion to an indoor facility.

The service and food from the folks at Luigi's were very good and plentiful for both the hospitality and the Saturday night banquet, which was held at the Silverwood's Golf Pavilion, as originally planned. Before our Saturday night banquet, our Supreme Chaplain Father Andrew S. Hvozdovic

performed mass to fulfill our Sunday obligation. We would like to thank our Supreme Chaplain for taking the time to come to Dubois and help our members fulfill their spiritual needs.

We had 100 golfers and many guests in attendance this year, which is a consistent turnout from the past few years. My sincere thanks to our Supreme Director of Sports and Athletics and her staff for their hard work and preparation for the tournament. It was another wonderful weekend of friendship, sportsmanship and good times shared by all that participated this year.

As well, I would also like to congratulate our 2024 Frank S. Petruff Memorial Sports Award recipient Steven M. Pogorelec Sr. from Clifton, NJ. Brother Steve has made a lifelong and significant contribution to our golf program for the past 50 years and dedicated his life to promoting the Slovak Catholic Sokol. It was my honor and privilege to be a part of his ceremony, along with our Supreme Secretary Scott T. Pogorelec F.I.C., many Supreme Officers, local officers, members and many of his immediate family and friends that were all in attendance. It is a very deserving award for a very deserving individual.

In a few weeks, we will host our Q3 Board of Directors meeting. This will also be a virtual meeting like we conducted in June, in an effort to help reduce expenses for the society but still execute an effective agenda and plan the necessary financial, operational, spiritual and fraternal aspects of our organization. Kindly forward your ideas and thoughts to the Board of Directors and we will collectively discuss how we can improve our society and help our members.

In closing, I would like to wish all of you the very best this month and a happy Labor Day long weekend. May you all have a safe and enjoyable holiday weekend and may God continue to bless you and keep you in His vision and care.

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**FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPREME SECRETARY  
SCOTT T. POGORELEC, F.I.C.**



**FRATERNAL MONTH**

Greetings from the Home Office! As we transition into autumn, the kids are going back to school and football is appearing on the television, it is also a suitable time to look forward and do a life checklist. One of those items on that checklist should be answering



if you have enough life insurance coverage. September is Life Insurance Awareness Month. It is an industry wide campaign designed to educate Americans about the importance of life insurance and helping them get the coverage they need. In honor of this month, I urge all our members to examine your current life insurance and find out if you are adequately covered. Unfortunately, I can tell you that much of our membership is under-insured, but we can fix that. If you have any questions and need assistance, please contact our Home Office at (800) 886-7656, and we would be more than happy to assist you. Remember, life insurance coverage protects the people that are most valuable to you, your loved ones!

I know that there are many local Assembly/Wreath functions planned for the Fall Season. I urge all our Assembly and Wreath Officers to announce the event in our publication and to follow up after the event with brief articles and photos. It is important for everyone in our organization to see and hear from our active local lodges.

From September 16th-18th, I will be attending the 2024 American Fraternal Alliance Executive Summit. The American Fraternal Alliance was established in 1886 and continues to

be an organization that strengthens and supports its members in the fraternal benefit sector by its leadership in advocacy and education. Whenever possible, the Alliance looks to collaborate with their member societies, state and federal policy makers, and community service organizations to achieve common goals. This meeting provides a forum for representatives of the nation's fraternal dedicated to topics of interest in the fraternal benefit system. The Slovak Catholic Sokol has been a member of the Alliance for many years and the annual meeting gives us an opportunity to address the current conditions that all fraternal are experiencing. I look forward to an informative conference and will inform the membership of any new developments that could impact our society.

Congratulations to all our flight winners at the recent 69<sup>th</sup> International Golf Tournament held in DuBois, PA at the Treasure Lake Golf Resort. A wonderful time was had by all, and the spirit of fraternalism shone brightly. Thank you to our Director of Sports and Athletics, Kathleen S. Watkins, and her entire staff for their efforts to make this wonderful event a success. A big congratulations to our 2024 Frank S. Petruff Award winner, Steven M. Pogorelec, Sr., from S-162, Clifton, NJ. Brother Steve's service and dedication to our Golf Tournament and the entire Organization is second to none. I think we can all agree that this award was well-deserved! Congratulations again, Dad!

Until next time, enjoy the last few days of summer and may God Bless you all!

Stay safe, stay strong, and STAY POSITIVE!

Zdar Boh!

**SOKOL CALENDAR**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7**

**GROUP 7, WILKES-BARRE, PA 88<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SOKOL DAY PICNIC** at the Plains Lions Pavilion on Clarke Lane, Plains Twp., PA from noon until 5 p.m. The picnic will feature Slovak food and other picnic favorites, baked goods and games for all ages.

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER MEETING** held virtually.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28**

**GROUP 1 GOLF OUTING** at noon at Preakness Valley Golf Course, Wayne, NJ. For more information, please contact Group 1 President John Pogorelec, Jr. at (973) 493-0508.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29**

**SLOVAK HERITAGE FESTIVAL** at the Middlesex County Fair, 655 Cranbury Rd., East Brunswick, NJ.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20**

The **ANNUAL MEETING OF MSGR. ANDREW HLINKA, GROUP 6** (Perryopolis, PA) will be held at 1:00 p.m. at the Clubhouse Grille, Rostraver Twp. Reservations must be made by Thursday, October 3, 2024 by contacting either Terri Gardner at 724-929-8675 or Anna Mae Warnick at 724-736-4032. This meeting will be an election of officers so please try to attend.

**SLOVAK CATHOLIC FALCON  
PUBLICATION DATE**

The next issue of the **SLOVAK CATHOLIC FALCON** will be that of **OCTOBER 1, 2024. DEADLINE** for all photos and information for this issue will be **SEPTEMBER 22, 2024.**

The next **SLOVAK CATHOLIC SOKOL NEWSLETTER** will be posted on our website on **SEPTEMBER 15, 2024.**

## Thank You!

Dear Slovak Catholic Sokol,

Thank you sincerely for awarding me this scholarship. I am truly grateful for your generosity and support. This funding will be immensely helpful as I prepare for my upcoming clinical training. Your investment in my education is deeply appreciated and will contribute directly to my professional development as a future physical therapist.

Thank you again for your kindness. – Jenna Troxil

My name is Joe Phillips and I am honored to be one of this year's recipients of the Slovak Catholic Scholarship Grants/ Thank you for picking me to win \$500 scholarship. I know you could have choose anyone at the nearby Catholic school, but you choose me. This money will greatly help me to continue my Catholic education. Also I worked this summer at Bishop Carroll and half of my earnings went towards tuition. With this scholarship and summer job my tuition will be much more manageable.

I am currently a junior at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School. I belong to the basketball, track and cross country teams. I am truly thankful for this scholarship and the opportunity to learn about God every day. Thank you for supporting my Catholic education.

Sincerely,  
Joe Phillips

Dear members of the Slovak Catholic Sokol Supreme Board and Members of the Scholarship Committee,

Thank you for awarding me the 2024 Slovak Catholic Sokol Scholarship.

I am very honored and proud to be a member of such generous and strong organization. The scholarship will help me greatly in achieving my academic goals as I continue my education at Marywood University.

Sincerely,  
Victoria Para

Dear Slovak Catholic Sokol,

Thank you so much for choosing me as a recipient of the 2024 Slovak Catholic Sokol Scholarship. This money will greatly help me to achieve my academic goals by furthering my education at Saint Francis University. I greatly appreciate this scholarship.

Thank you again,  
Zachary Eckenrode

Dear Slovak Catholic Sokol,

I recently received the scholarship check towards my college tuition for \$1,000 from the Slovak

Catholic Sokol, for which I am very grateful. I truly appreciate the efforts of the Slovak Catholic Sokol to support the education of its members and maintain a relationship with them.

I will soon return to Texas Tech University, where I will be in my sophomore year. As President of the TTU Russian & Slavic Association, I hope to host a Slovak cultural event to share the country and culture of Slovakia with the TTU community.

Thank you once again for your financial support. I look forward to remaining active in the Slovak and Slavic community, whether at school or in my future career.

Sincerely,  
Viera Pulver

Dear Members of the Slovak Catholic Sokol Board of Directors and Scholarship Committee,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing me as a recipient of the 2024 Slovak Catholic Sokol Scholarship. It is truly a honor. For school, I am majoring in psychology with a concentration in criminal justice studies and minor in sociology. It is with your gracious gift that the burden of the cost of education has been eased.

I am very proud of my heritage and I am proud to be a member of this society.

Thank you again. God Bless!  
Brianna C. Bell

Dear Slovak Catholic Sokol,

This letter is to acknowledge receipt and express my gratitude to the Scholarship Selection Committee for awarding me the \$1,000 Slovak Catholic Sokol Scholarship.

This scholarship will help me achieve my educational and career goals. I'm excited about my upcoming sophomore year at the University of Pittsburgh, where I will begin to take classes specific to my Computer Engineering degree.

Zdar Boh! – Stephen Franke

Thank you for generously giving me a scholarship to school during the 2024-2025 school year. I appreciate it so that I can have Christ-centered education. Thank you for all you have done to continue my spiritual journey with Christ.

Blessings. – Kyle Peterson

Thank you so much for the scholarship you have given me. It means a lot for you to invest in me as a student, a person, and most importantly a child of God. Your scholarship will help ensure that all 3 of these are achieved to the best of my abilities.

Thank you. – Andrew Peterson

Dear Scholarship Committee,

Your kindness means the world to me. I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for making the scholarship possible. I am beyond thrilled and excited to be selected as one of this year's recipients! I am so thankful for the support towards my college journey!

The financial assistance that you provided will help with my financing towards my education endeavors!

Thank you again for generosity. Your investment in my education means much! – Audre Peretin

Dear Slovak Catholic Sokol,

Thank you so very much for choosing me as a recipient for one of the scholarships. This generosity will truly help me advance in my collage career. Writing that essay and being chosen makes me feel as if I am honoring my Slovak heritage and my great grandparents and other family members. Thank you once again for everything that all of you do as well for honor the Slovak heritage and the Slovak memory. May God bless all of you! – Joslyn Borah

Dear SCS Board of Directors and Scholarship Committee,

I want to thank you for granting me one of the 2024 Scholarships. It is greatly appreciated. It will be a huge help with my tuition and achieving my future goals. I am happy to know that I have the support of this wonderful organization behind me. It is a great honor.

Thank you. – Zachary Jozwiak

Slovak Catholic Sokol,

I am honored to be a recipient of the SCS Scholarship. I am extremely appreciative to be selected for this very generous award. It will help me in paying my tuition.

I will work very hard to be successful as I work to earn my degree Biometrical Engineering.

Best regards. – Allie Silinskie

## GROUP 16 ANNUAL MEETING

Group 16 Annual Meeting will be held at Saint Cyril and Methodius Church in the Heritage Room on October 15<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

The meeting will be followed by 5:30 p.m. Mass with Slovak Catholic Sokol Intentions. Coffee, donuts and pastry will be provided.

All members are welcome to attend whereby upcoming events will be discussed as well as a review of our 2024 events.

An information table will be displayed outside of the meeting room for all parishioners and prospective members.

God Bless our Great Fraternity!

**John M. Papcun**

President Group 16

## Thoughts from our Supreme Chaplain, Rev. Andrew S. Hvozdovic OUR MOTHER OF SORROWS

This holiday is always celebrated on **September 15<sup>th</sup>**.

The holiday is a Roman Catholic feast day that marks the seven sorrows of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ. Mary is a patron saint of Slovakia.



The holiday may also be called 'Day of Blessed Virgin Mary' or 'Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows Day'.

In Slovak, this holiday is called 'Sviatok Panny Márie Sedembolestnej, Patrónky Slovenska'.

What are the Seven Sorrows?

The Seven Sorrows relate to events during the life of the Virgin Mary.

1. The Prophecy of Simeon
2. The Flight into Egypt
3. The loss of the child Jesus in the Temple
4. Mary meets Jesus on the way to Calvary
5. Jesus dies on the cross
6. Mary receives the body of Jesus in her arms
7. The body of Jesus is placed in the tomb

As a mark of devotion, Catholics may recite one Our Father and seven Hail Mary's for each of the sorrows.

In 1727, Pope Benedict XIII declared Our Lady of Sorrows to be respected by the Church and its members as a Patron of Slovakia and later in 1966 was declared by Pope Paul VI as the main Patron.

Devotions to mark the sorrows of the Virgin Mary can be traced back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The Day of Our Lady of Sorrows was added to the Roman Catholic calendar as a feast in 1814. Pope Pius X moved the feast to 15 September in 1913.

## GROUP 11 ANNUAL MEETING

Group 11 will hold their annual meeting on Sunday, October 20, 2024 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Hosts for the meeting will be Assembly 34, and Wreath 4 7.

Mass will be offered at the Church of Sts. Cyril & Methodius, 13<sup>th</sup> Ave, & 2<sup>nd</sup> St. N.E. at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. in Father Dargay Hall. Coffee and rolls will be available before the meeting,

All delegates and guests from Minneapolis, Duluth Mn/Superior, Wis. Wreath 21, and Ironwood, Michigan Assembly 155 are requested to register with the Group Secretary, by October 11.

Zdar Boh!

**David J. Genosky**

President

## SLOVAKS PLAY KEY ROLES IN NATO 75<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY SUMMIT

By Ken Bombara\*

The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was commemorated and celebrated in Washington, D.C., during the second week of July (9-11). Representatives of the 32 NATO member nations came to Washington to engage in discussions about the past, present, and future of the alliance; to make decisions affecting the collective defense and security of their respective nations; and to discuss related matters. Of course, a major focus of the summit was the situation in Ukraine, arising from Russia's invasion in February 2022 and its continuing aggression. Ukraine, a non-member country, has long desired NATO membership and has been supported in its defense efforts by NATO and other countries. One of the key issues that was discussed is the commitment of each NATO member country to reach a level of defense expenditures equivalent to 2% of its GDP (gross domestic product). As of 2024, 23 of the 32 NATO member countries have met the 2% goal, including Slovakia. Because Slovakia has been a member of NATO since 2004, a delegation of Slovak officials came to Washington to participate in the summit. Most notably, recently inaugurated Slovak President Peter Pellegrini headed the delegation, which also included Foreign Minister Juraj Blanár and Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Robert Kaliňák. The evening prior to the opening of the summit (July 8), Slovak Ambassador to the US Radovan Javorčík hosted a reception at the Slovak Embassy for the president and his delegation, all of whom wished to meet Slovak-Americans and other friends. Ambassador Javorčík provided opening remarks, and then President Pellegrini spoke briefly. Afterwards, Pellegrini graciously spent the evening in conversation and photo ops with the attendees.

On Tuesday, July 9, the summit opened with remarks made by President Joe Biden to the NATO representatives in the historic Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium (where the NATO Treaty was signed in 1949. ). The official proceedings continued on July 10 and 11, culminating in the traditional NATO Summit Declaration, which pledged long-term security assistance to Ukraine. The Declaration also affirmed that "Ukraine's future is in NATO," while continuing to withhold a formal invitation for membership.

Parallel with the main summit, the NATO Public Forum was held to provide various members of the foreign policy community and other interested parties with a chance to review the many issues that NATO faces. On the afternoon of July 10, Pellegrini got the opportunity to address the Public Forum in the form of opening remarks at a session entitled "NATO Policy Toward Russia." He emphasized the Slovak government's support for NATO and for Western institutions, stating that "Slovakia has been a reliable ally for the past 20 years, and we will

continue to do so in the years to come...." He continued, "The engine of our success has been, and remains, a commitment to democracy, freedom, and human rights, with a clear understanding where we belong. Our present and future is in NATO and the European Union." The Slovak president went on to discuss the many ways in which Slovakia has supported Ukraine since the Russian invasion.

Pellegrini generated considerable controversy and concern during the Slovak presidential campaign when he argued for a 'peaceful' solution to the Ukraine conflict and characterized his opponent's strong pro-Ukraine position as being in favor of 'war.' In his remarks to the strongly pro-Ukraine audience, Pellegrini sought to clarify his position when he stated "...we need to invest more into wide international understanding that we are not trying to disintegrate Russia, but to change its behavior to one that fully respects its obligation under the UN charter, international law, and its OECD commitments.... Supporting peace...does not mean supporting the aggressor. It is up to Ukraine to decide on this, but a just and sustainable peace can only be a peace based on international law." He then went on to stress that NATO



Slovak President Pellegrini speaks at the Slovak Embassy in Washington DC on July 8, 2024.  
Photo Credit: Author.

needs to continue to build its strength as a defensive alliance, particularly in the areas of defense-related industrial production and technology, as the Ukraine conflict has displayed evolving methods of conflict (drones, electronic warfare, and hybrid warfare).

The Public Forum itself was organized under the auspices of five non-profit foreign policy organizations. One of these organizations was the Bratislava-based GLOBSEC, which focuses on international foreign-policy and national-security issues, primarily from a European perspective. GLOBSEC was the only European partner among the five organizers of the Forum. Several Slovak experts and policy analysts, including GLOBSEC's president and founder, Robert Vass, played a key role in the sessions held during the Forum. The Forum was a hybrid event that included in-person and online attendees. Interestingly, even the Internet conferencing platform 'Slido,' which was used for the Forum, is a Slovak-based company that was founded in 2012 and now has wide international distribution.

The hope is that the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit will be successful in advancing NATO's mission of promoting freedom, security, prosperity, and peace among its members and the world. Slovakia and Slovaks are continuing to make key contributions and to play increasingly important roles, on many levels, as part of the international community.

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\*Ken Bombara is the representative of the Slovak League of America to the Central and East European Coalition (CEEC - <https://ceecadvocacy.org/>). He is also a former Chairman of Friends of Slovakia.

Remarks by President Biden: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2024/07/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-75th-anniversary-of-the-north-atlantic-treaty-organization-alliance/75th-anniversary-of-the-north-atlantic-treaty-organization-alliance/>

NATO Declaration: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_227678.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_227678.htm?selectedLocale=en)

NATO Public Forum: <https://www.natopublicforum.org/>; President Pellegrini's remarks can be found on the YouTube video for Day 1 of the Forum at approximately the 5:36:00 mark.

The five organizations organizing the Public Forum were: the Atlantic Council, the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), the German Marshall Fund of the US (GMF), GLOBSEC, and the Hudson Institute.

GLOBSEC: <https://www.globsec.org/>

## “Sokol Forward Spotlight”

**Jennifer Romine**

**Jennifer Romine: Group 4 President and member of Wreath 93**

**Charity: Million Meal Movement**

Jennifer's presence at the Eucharist Congress in Indianapolis, Indiana from July 17th to July 21st was truly inspiring. Her active involvement in the Indiana Million Meal Movement's days of service during the Congress made a significant impact and warmed the hearts of many. Together with other Congress participants, she helped package 300,000 meal

boxes for the homeless, supporting the noble cause of combating hunger for 1 million people in need, including the 1 in 5 children in Indiana who are at risk of going without a meal. Witnessing the dedication of the Million Meal Movement, Jennifer and her group were inspired to extend their kindness even further by sharing their dinner leftovers with the homeless. Their selfless actions serve as a powerful reminder of the impact we can make when we come together to help those in need.

**Jennifer thank you for your Sokol Spirit of caring and giving to others. May God continue to bless you in your good works!**



If you'd like to submit an entry for an opportunity to be the monthly 'Sokol Forward Spotlight,' please send me an email by the **15th of each month** to [vp@slovak-catholicssokol.org](mailto:vp@slovak-catholicssokol.org) and include the following information:

- ♥ Group, Assembly, or Wreath Number with city and state
- ♥ The name of the charity or volunteer activity
- ♥ A description of the volunteer or charitable activity
- ♥ The date(s) of the activity
- ♥ The frequency of the activity
- ♥ How long the members have supported charity or participated in the activities
- ♥ Pictures of the event

I am looking forward to sharing your Sokol Spirit. Thank you for all that you do and keep Sokol Forward!

**Andrea M. Tadlock**  
Supreme Vice-President

## FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE SUPREME SECRETARY AS OF 06/30/24

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,265,582
Investments - Bonds & Bills	80,512,374
Investments - Stocks	5,195,388
First Mortgage Loans	533,042
Loans on Certificates	414,132
Accrued Interest Receivable	788,444
Sokol Building/Land	345,929
Accounts Receivable	39,910
Due From Groups	-
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ <u>89,094,801</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND RESERVES</b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Life Reserves	\$ 73,416,000
Asset Valuation Reserve	1,471,090
Reserve for Supplemental Contracts	2,370,869
Reserve Emp. Retirement Plan	4,800,000
Reserve for Convention	50,000
Claims Payable	205,012
Conversion - Canadian Currency	4,483
Accounts Payable	7,548
Sokol Secure Fund	1,232,719
Mary Jane Rich Scholarship Fund	85,000
Emil Slavik Scholarship Fund	100,000
Dr's Lesko Medical Scholarship Fund	20,000
Yencha Memorial Scholarship	20,700
Krista L Glugosh Memorial Scholarship Fund	24,000
Dividend Payable	50,000
Advance Premiums	31,584
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ <u>83,889,005</u></b>
Adjusted Unassigned Funds	<b>\$ <u>6,586,051</u></b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; SURPLUS</b>	<b>\$ <u>89,094,801</u></b>



## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES

<b>INCOME</b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Investment Income	\$ 1,583,358
Amortization of IMR	8,019
Dividends on Stocks	87,000
Interest on Mortgages	13,120
Interest on Certificate Loans	14,652
Sale of Cookbooks	217
Rent Received - Sokol Building	56,041
Life Premium Income	847,918
Annuity Income	2,301,265
Scholarship Income	-
Miscellaneous Income	2,896
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ <u>4,914,486</u></b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Death Benefit Claims Paid	816,078
Interest Expense	48,000
Fraternal Expenses	274,254
General Expenses	432,835
Employee Retirement Expenses	204,141
Commissions	110,000
Annuity Benefits	4,106,554
Taxes & Fees	8,250
Reserve Increase	(850,000)
Cash Surrenders	130,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ <u>5,280,112</u></b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>\$ <u>(365,626)</u></b>

ZDAR BOH!  
 Scott T. Pogorelec, FIC  
 Supreme Secretary

# 2024 INTERNATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT SCORES

## TREASURE LAKE IN DUBOIS, PA – AUGUST 8-10, 2024

Thank you to all the golfers who participated in the tournament at Treasure Lake.  
 \*\*The number of winners will vary in each division based on the number of participants  
 in that division. \*\*The yellow highlighting indicates the winners.

A - Flight Summary											
Participant		Silver			Gold			HCAP	SCRATCH	HCAP	SCRATCH
Last Name	First Name	TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
Hornacek	Brian	79	10	<b>69</b>	84	10	<b>74</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>163</b>	1	3
Macko	Hayden	77	6	<b>71</b>	78	6	<b>72</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>155</b>	1	1
Burfield	Ryan	81	11	<b>70</b>	85	11	<b>74</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>166</b>	3	4
Weber	Thomas	76	9	<b>67</b>	86	9	<b>77</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>162</b>	3	2
Pogorelec	Scott	82	7	<b>75</b>	85	7	<b>78</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>167</b>	5	5
Macurak	Adam	84	9	<b>75</b>	88	9	<b>79</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>172</b>	6	9
Calcei	Jesse	83	7	<b>76</b>	87	7	<b>80</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>170</b>	7	7
Iskra, Sr.	Dave	82	5	<b>77</b>	85	5	<b>80</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>167</b>	8	5
Watkins	Gary	84	7	<b>77</b>	87	7	<b>80</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>171</b>	8	8
Hornacek	Scott	89	12	<b>77</b>	94	12	<b>82</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>183</b>	10	11
Iskra	Tom	84	7	<b>77</b>	91	7	<b>84</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>175</b>	11	10

B - Flight Summary											
Participant		Silver			Gold			HCAP	SCRATCH	HCAP	SCRATCH
Last Name	First Name	TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
Germ	Tim	88	20	<b>68</b>	86	20	<b>66</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>174</b>	1	4
Underation	Dan	86	18	<b>68</b>	84	18	<b>66</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>170</b>	1	2
Macko	Chris M.	89	19	<b>70</b>	86	19	<b>67</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>175</b>	3	5
Bajus	Edward	82	13	<b>69</b>	84	13	<b>71</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>166</b>	4	1
Karraffa	Joseph	86	14	<b>72</b>	84	14	<b>70</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>170</b>	5	2
Macko	Chris P.	90	20	<b>70</b>	93	20	<b>73</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>183</b>	6	10
Weber	Joseph	87	15	<b>72</b>	88	15	<b>73</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>175</b>	7	5
Iskra, Jr	David	86	14	<b>72</b>	90	14	<b>76</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>176</b>	8	7
Dorich	Dusan	89	15	<b>74</b>	90	15	<b>75</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>179</b>	9	8
Burfield	Matt	92	15	<b>77</b>	88	15	<b>73</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>180</b>	10	9
Shedlock	Corey	89	16	<b>73</b>	95	16	<b>79</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>184</b>	11	11
Karaffa	Kyle	90	16	<b>74</b>	95	16	<b>79</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>185</b>	12	12
Macko	Stephen	99	19	<b>80</b>	95	19	<b>76</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>194</b>	13	13
Ferrari	Jason	104	21	<b>83</b>	98	21	<b>77</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>202</b>	14	16
Kapitan	Mike	95	20	<b>75</b>	106	20	<b>86</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>201</b>	15	15
Macko	Bob	96	15	<b>81</b>	100	15	<b>85</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>196</b>	16	14
Underation	Joseph	99	19	<b>80</b>	105	19	<b>86</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>204</b>	16	18
Macurak	Nick	101	17	<b>84</b>	102	17	<b>85</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>203</b>	18	17
Dziuba	Chet	106	20	<b>86</b>	112	20	<b>92</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>218</b>	19	19
Rasimas	Tony	103	17	<b>86</b>	119	17	<b>102</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>222</b>	20	20

SLOVAK CATHOLIC FALCON, SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

C - Flight Summary											
Participant		Silver			Gold			HCAP	SCRATCH	HCAP	SCRATCH
2024		TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
Last Name	First Name	TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
Underation	Matthew	96	38	58	103	38	65	123	199	1	4
Francis	Jeremy	106	36	70	108	36	72	142	214	2	11
Dorich	Adam	92	22	70	100	22	78	148	192	3	2
Francis	Justin	99	21	78	91	21	70	148	190	3	1
Muldoon	Caleb	100	28	72	107	28	79	151	207	5	7
Papcun	Donald	95	22	73	100	22	78	151	195	5	3
Keagy	Nathan	98	30	68	114	30	84	152	212	7	10
Muldoon, III	Thomas P	97	27	70	113	27	86	156	210	8	9
Loehle	Derek	107	24	83	100	24	76	159	207	9	5
Recker	Jeff	102	22	80	103	22	81	161	205	10	5
Coley	Ken	112	30	82	110	30	80	162	222	11	14
Pogorelec, Jr	Steve	98	21	77	107	21	86	163	205	12	5
Underation	Luke	118	30	88	108	30	78	166	226	13	16
Waksmunski	Kevin	107	24	83	112	24	88	171	219	14	12
Tutko	John	108	32	76	128	32	96	172	236	15	16
Phillips	Brian	109	22	87	112	22	90	177	221	16	13
Sadowyj	Jesse	109	22	87	116	22	94	181	225	17	15
Laury IV	Frank	116	29	87	127	29	98	185	243	18	18

Callaway - Flight Summary											
Treasure Lake PA		Silver			Gold			HCAP	SCRATCH	HCAP	SCRATCH
2024		TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
Last Name	First Name	TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
										-	-
Papcun	John	116	39	77	0	0	0	77	116	-	-
Most	Edward	83	9	74	83	9	74	148	166	1	1
Gonda II	Edward	104	29	75	110	34	76	151	214	2	8
Underation	David	91	14	77	94	19	75	152	185	3	2
Carcini	Cory	88	13	75	97	19	78	153	185	4	2
Dorich	Nick	106	28	78	114	39	75	153	220	4	7
Lucansky	John	105	29	76	106	29	77	153	211	4	6
Dorich	Andrew	109	31	78	112	36	76	154	221	7	9
Manyak	Gary	117	40	77	117	40	77	154	234	7	11
Nydam	Kenny	97	20	77	101	24	77	154	198	7	4
Laury	Drew	104	27	77	106	27	79	156	210	10	5
Laury III	Frank	111	35	76	117	37	80	156	228	10	10
Watkins	Gavin	120	40	80	122	40	82	162	242	12	12
Jacob	Jeff	123	40	83	120	40	80	163	243	13	13
Underation	Nathan	142	40	102	118	40	78	180	260	14	14

(Continued on page 15)



## KIDS' CORNER "Detský kútik" September 2024

**Congratulations to Sophia Mosorjak from  
Group 9 Assembly 82!  
The Winner of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Riddle!**



THE KIDS' CORNER SUMMER READING PROGRAM DUE DATE  
SEPTEMBER 10<sup>th</sup>

**Reading Program Reminder:** Please email your completed reading list to Andrea Tadlock at [vp@slovakcatholicssokol.org](mailto:vp@slovakcatholicssokol.org) by September 10<sup>th</sup>. Remember to include your name, email, address, group number, and age so I can recognize you in the paper.

Can you do me a favor and let me know which books are your favorites on the list? I'd love to share them with other kids!

Keep reading and have a great school year!



### Happy Birthday to You!

Kyle Peterson	9/4
Natalie Costlow	9/7
Alexandra Moeller	9/17
Nathan Radtke	9/26
Evan Radtke	9/28

Send your birthday dates to  
[vp@slovakcatholicssokol.org](mailto:vp@slovakcatholicssokol.org)





## KIDS' CORNER "Detský kútik "

### September 2024

### Word Detective

Read each sentence and use the context clues to determine the meaning of the highlighted word.

- Jonathan was **reluctant** to ride his bike after he fell and broke his arm the last time he cycled.  
a. angry b. unwilling c. annoyed
- The students are very **fond** of the gentle service dog that visits the classroom.  
a. have a liking for b. being scared of c. feeling bored
- The twin girls were **identical**, with the same height, hair, and eye color.  
a. looking closely b. acting like someone c. exactly the same
- After attending tutoring sessions and spending extra time studying, Derek's test scores began to **improve**.  
a. get better b. make money c. worsen
- After a long night of studying, Lena stumbled out of bed sleepily and **grumbled** about her upcoming math test to her mom.  
a. sang happily b. complained and murmured c. talked nonstop
- Jessie was impressed with the **bargain** he got on his new television after he found two coupons, and paid less than half of the original price.  
a. small gift b. sick to your stomach c. surprisingly cheap price
- During the spring season, Lisa got a **temporary** job at the local flower store, when many people were buying garden supplies to replant their gardens.  
a. lasting for a short time b. permanent c. night-time
- Her favorite **leisure** activities are painting, reading, and riding her bike.  
a. exercise b. responsibilities c. free-time



#### Send me your Vocabulary Results for a Chance to Win a Prize!!

If you want to win a **\$25 gift card**, send me a copy of your solved word search by **September 30<sup>th</sup>**. I'll randomly select a winner from all the entries I receive. **GOOD LUCK!!**

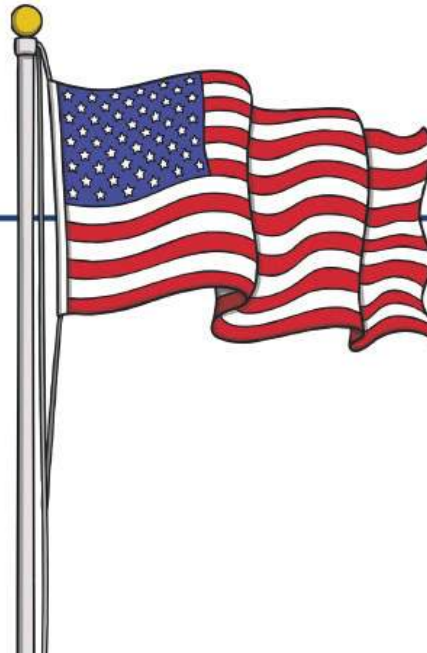
Send your completed entry by email to [vp@slovakcatholicsokol.org](mailto:vp@slovakcatholicsokol.org) with your name, group, address, and email address.



## KIDS' CORNER "Detský kútik" September 2024

### Labor Day

Labor Day is a U.S. holiday. It is a day to honor workers. It is the first Monday in September. It is observed in many ways. Many people do not work on Labor Day. Parades and special events are held. Some people have picnics. Others have barbecues. It is a day to celebrate their hard work. It celebrates their contribution to America. It was first celebrated in 1882. Labor Day is the unofficial end of summer. Many children go back to school after Labor Day.



1. When was Labor Day first celebrated?
  - 1882
  - 1982
  - 1880
  - 1928
2. Labor Day is celebrated on the first Monday of what month?
  - January
  - September
  - October
  - March
3. What are two ways people observe Labor Day?

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## 2024 INTERNATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT SCORES

Senior Flight 62-69 - Flight Summary											
Treasure Lake PA		Silver			Gold			HCAP	SCRATCH	HCAP	SCRATCH
Participant	2024										
Last Name	First Name	TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
Macko	Paul	105	21	84	0	0	0	84	105	-	-
Burfield	Joe	80	12	68	80	12	68	136	160	1	1
Hvozdovic, Jr.	Joseph	96	24	72	98	24	74	146	194	2	3
Pisano	Vincent	83	6	77	82	6	76	153	165	3	2
Shedlock	Robert J	98	21	77	105	21	84	161	203	4	4
Macko	Donald	99	21	78	107	21	86	164	206	5	5

Senior Flight 70+ - Flight Summary											
Treasure Lake PA		Silver			Gold			HCAP	SCRATCH	HCAP	SCRATCH
Participant	2024										
Last Name	First Name	TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
Papcun	Mark	119	28	91	0	0	0	91	119	-	-
Shedlock	Keith	88	19	69	96	19	77	146	184	1	1
Lipski	Frank	102	17	85	91	17	74	159	193	2	3
Checton	Clarence	109	29	80	112	29	83	163	221	3	6
Skorupka	Stephen	109	23	86	103	23	80	166	212	4	4
Pogorelec, Sr	Steve	93	12	81	99	12	87	168	192	5	2
Muldoon, Jr	Thomas P	109	21	88	107	21	86	174	216	6	5
Palchanis, Jr.	Bob	112	26	86	114	26	88	174	226	7	8
Onderko	John	123	33	90	118	33	85	175	241	8	10
Koval	Steve	111	23	88	113	23	90	178	224	9	7
Koval	Donald	115	25	90	115	25	90	180	230	10	9

Women's - Flight Summary											
Treasure Lake PA		Silver			Gold			HCAP	SCRATCH	HCAP	SCRATCH
Participant	2024										
Last Name	First Name	TTL	HCP	NET	TTL	HCP	NET	TOTAL	TOTAL	PLACE	PLACE
Skorupka	Stephanie	98	21	77	101	27	74	151	199	1	1
Dorich	Mary	110	35	75	117	39	78	153	227	2	4
Most	Arlene	115	40	75	104	26	78	153	219	2	3
Macko	Carol	117	40	77	112	35	77	154	229	4	5
Dorich	Suzanne	107	26	81	110	35	75	156	217	5	2
Smith	Loretta	118	40	78	111	33	78	156	229	5	5
Bakita	Karen	123	40	83	109	33	76	159	232	7	7
Karaffa	Janice	116	40	76	128	40	88	164	244	8	8
Palchanis	Terri	119	40	79	125	40	85	164	244	8	8
Karaffa	Kelsey	122	40	82	131	40	91	173	253	10	10
Macko	Kathryn	129	40	89	131	40	91	180	260	11	11
Palchanis	Kelly	140	40	100	129	40	89	189	269	12	12
Babik	Judy	146	40	106	136	40	96	202	282	13	13

## THE CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SHEPHERDING IN ILIAŠOVCE, SLOVAKIA

MICHAEL J. KOPANIC, JR., UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND GLOBAL CAMPUS

When visiting Slovakia in June 2018, I came across a modern-day shepherd who is still tending sheep in the traditional manner. The event was not planned but just happened spontaneously, making it all the more intriguing. But it rang home, because my grandfather, Anton Kopaničák, had also been a shepherd.

I was visiting my distant relatives in Harichovce, which lies just a kilometer north of Spišská Nova Ves. This is the village of my paternal grandmother, Julianna Kovalčíková. There she had met my grandfather, who had just returned from serving four years in the Austro-Hungarian cavalry. Although born in the village of Ruskinovce, he had found a job around 1902 as a shepherd that was advertised in a newspaper. He would tend to sheep and/or cattle in nearby Levočská Luka, just north of Harichovce. He probably stayed with his father's cousin, Samuel Kopaničák who had moved to Harichovce. Samuel was the grandfather of my distant cousin, Mária (née Kopaničáková), who had married Emil Grondžák, a tailor who hailed from Iliášovce.

During a visit in early June 2018, Emil suggested that we visit Iliášovce and enjoy a picnic lunch at nearby Sans Souci, a site 2 km away that had a restored chapel that dates back to 1775. Many Germans had settled in Iliášovce (Spersndorf, in German) after the Mongol invasions of the 13th century and it would become a free Saxon town in the 15th century. The village's Latin name Villa Ursi (meaning Villa of Bears) testifies to the fact that its residents helped their lords and accompanied them there for hunting bears.

By the 16th century, the village had become a property of the lords of Spiš Castle, the Csáky family. During the 18th century, Count István Csáky (1741 – 1810) and his wife, Countess Júlia Erdődy, chose Iliášovce as his summer residence. Having studied French in Vienna and inspired by the French Enlightenment, he decided in 1765 to locate it on a hill above the village with a panorama view of the High Tatra Mountains. He constructed an elaborate garden and park with all sorts of amusements, which he called Sans Souci – which in French means a place with no worries or cares. There they could relax, read books, and discuss ideas. Their goal was “to revive the idyllic golden age of poets and to create a shelter for philosophy, beautiful art, peace and freedom.” It was to rival the grand Sans Souci summerhouse constructed by Frederick the Great in Potsdam, Prussia.

It was supposed to last a thousand years, but financial problems and marital disputes led a decline of the estate. Count Csáky had many of the buildings torn down and sold off the furnishings at auction. All that remains is a restored chapel, a well, the foundation of a former building that is being excavated, and a monumental obelisk commemorating what once was a grand manor and park. Today it is small clearing surrounded by forest and some picnic tables for visitors. When Iliášovce sponsors a foot race, the participants run up to Sans Souci as part of their course.

While visiting the Sans Souci site, a shepherd with a flock of sheep came upon us and we had a friendly conversation with him. He spoke with a strong Spiš dialect. The shepherd was humbly dressed in a plaid shirt, army fatigue trousers, and black boots. He used a walking stick and wore a backpack. Accompanying him was his trusty black dog that kept the sheep together and prevented them from wandering too far off in the woods. The shepherd told us that he worked this job from the spring until the

fall so the sheep could graze on fresh grasslands. He earned only 500 euros a month in 2018, about \$550, well below the average wage in Slovakia. But he had no living expenses there and ate well. At night, he slept in a shepherd's hut and his well-trained dogs watched the flock. He would go home just once a month to visit his family. The profession seemed like one more suitable for a single non-married man.

The shepherd then moved on as the sheep searched for fresh grass and greener pastures. Subsequently, with my zoom lens camera I took photos of the shepherd's hut, which was a small mobile dwelling, a storage shack, a sheep corral, and the general picturesque setting. Apparently, he had only taken part of his flock with him. More sheep were fenced in the corral and a large white sheepdog ensured that predators did not attack the sheep while the master was away grazing the other half of the flock.

The sheep belong to Farma nad ihriskom (The Farm above the playground) in Iliášovce. The farm has a store which sells syr, žinčica, bryndza (cheese, sheep's whey, sheep's cheese), and other products such as lamb meat (jahňacina). The shepherd's place is called Salaš pod tisícročnou kaplnkou (The shepherd's shack under the thousand-year-old chapel). One may view the store and the winter home of the sheep at the Facebook website listed in the sources below.

The long tradition of shepherding continues to this day in Iliášovce and other places in Slovakia. It is the reason that Slovakia continues to have some of the finest cheeses in Europe.





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**SLOVAK HERITAGE FESTIVAL**  
**FESTIVAL BUDE! SAVE THE DATE**  
**29<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**



at Middlesex County Fair Grounds | 655 Cranbury Rd. | East Brunswick | NJ 08816  
[www.slovakfest.org](http://www.slovakfest.org)



Slovak Catholic Sokol  
 Group 17 ~ Youngstown, Ohio  
 Is Hosting Their Annual

**GOLF OUTING / PICNIC**  
**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2024**  
**MAHONING COUNTRY CLUB**  
 710 E. Liberty St., Girard, OH 44420  
 Phone: 330-545-2517

**ALL SOKOL MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND!!**

*Tee time: 10:00 a.m. Shotgun Start*  
*Dinner after golf (approx. 3:00) at Mahoning Country Club*

Format: 18 hole SCRAMBLE with a variety of skill prizes to be awarded!

Golfer Fees include 18 holes w/cart, Food, beverages and prizes \$40.00 Total fee to SCS Members \$60.00 Total fee to Non-Members	Non-Golfers who wish to attend \$15.00 for food and beverages	<b>PLUS</b> Corn Hole, Cards, Putting Contest, Raffles & More!
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**DEADLINE TO REGISTER: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2024**

To register, and for additional information contact:  
 Jim Jerek: 330-718-2253 [jjerek@zoominternet.net](mailto:jjerek@zoominternet.net) ☆ Nancy Kropolinsky: 330-727-2487  
 Glen Kramer: 330-788-6260 ☆ Monica Shirilla: 330-550-8326 ☆ Judy Babik: 330-360-5690

**Find us on Facebook:** 

**Slovak Catholic Sokol Public Group**

**Get quick updates on the latest events going on in our organization**



**GROUP 16 SOKOL DAY PICNIC** was held at June 29 at River Benz Park in in Sterling Heights, Michigan Pictured are dedicated Sokolky who made the Group 16 'Sokol Day Picnic' a HUGE success! (Left to right) Beth Penxa, Sharon and Colleen Papcun.



## **SLOVAKIA FACES MANY CHALLENGES, ONE OF BIGGEST IS AGEING POPULATION**

Education and talent development, modernisation of health care, the ability to cope with the impacts of climate change - these are some of the biggest challenges Slovakia has ahead of it, Slovakia's central bank (NBS) governor Peter Kazimir pointed out in connection with a document called 'Structural Challenges 2024' published by the central bank.

According to NBS, one of the biggest challenges for Slovakia's society and economy is the ageing of the population. "Slovakia is ageing. There are more and more old people and pensioners, there will be fewer and fewer working people. These are not hypothetical calculations. We will feel it significantly in 10-15 years," stressed Kazimir.

The central bank has calculated that the number of people of working age in Slovakia will fall by 280,000 over the next 15 years. As a result, their ratio to the post-working-age population over 65 will fall from the current 3.7 to 2.8.

Part of the solution lies in more intensive employment of both pensioners and young people, especially women. A well thought-out strategy will also be needed to attract talent and labour from abroad. However, even this alone won't solve the labour market problems. "Today, neither Slovakia nor any European country is ready to accept such a number of foreigners to compensate for the shortfall of domestic players," said the NBS governor.

"We have to figure out how to accomplish more with fewer people. In this, unfortunately, we've been less and less successful lately. The productivity of our employees is growing more and more slowly," pointed out Kazimir.

Modern technology, digitisation and the advent of artificial intelligence offer possible solutions for the future. However, according to Kazimir, Slovakia isn't yet ready to use them. More sophisticated investments also require educated people, he stressed. "Our education system cannot offer them to the Slovak economy to the extent we need them. In addition, many talented people, not only young people, are leaving us for abroad," he added, commenting on the NBS findings.

## **DOCTORS CAN ONCE AGAIN APPLY FOR GRANT TO SET UP NEW OUTPATIENT CLINICS**

General practitioners and paediatricians can once again apply for a grant to set up new outpatient departments, Health Minister Zuzana Dolinkova.

Those interested can send in their applications until the end of 2025. A total of €4 million has been allocated from the recovery plan for the third round of the call.

This is the third opportunity for doctors to apply for a non-refundable financial contribution to set up a new outpatient clinic. The amount of the grant will depend on the district's

degree of vulnerability in terms of the shortage of physicians, and it is intended for black (€80,000), red (€70,000) and orange (€60,000) districts. A map of these is available on the ministry's website.

"I'd also like to call on all doctors, providers of health care, including general care for adults and also for children and adolescents, and motivate them to open new outpatient departments in the districts that are today marked as the worst, that is, the black districts. Because there we need to increase as much as possible the availability of daily primary outpatient care," stressed Dolinkova, noting that Slovakia currently lacks 533 adult general practitioner outpatient clinics and 236 primary paediatrician outpatient departments.

The recipients of grants will undertake, among other things, to operate a general practice in the district for at least five years. Otherwise, they will have to give back all or part of the funding.

The health minister added that the ministry registered a total of 140 applications for grants for setting up new outpatient departments in the first two calls.

## **THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE PROTEST IN BRATISLAVA AGAINST GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS**

Thousands of people gathered in SNP Square in Bratislava on August 14 evening to protest against the actions of the government, criticising the current situation in culture, personnel changes in cultural institutions and expressed their concerns about the rule of law.

Organisers of the rally, the opposition Progressive Slovakia (PS) and Freedom and Solidarity (SaS) parties, estimated the turnout at 18,000 people.

The speakers included, for example, former head of public-service Radio and Television of Slovakia Lubos Machaj, ex-culture minister Silvia Hroncova and the former director of the International House of Art for Children Bibiana, Zuzana Liptakova. They pointed to the need for free media and culture and spoke about the loss of decency and the arrogance of power. They called for a change in the leadership of the Culture Ministry.

The governing coalition was criticised before the protest by PS leader Michal Simecka and SaS chairman Branislav Groehling. In particular, they objected to the actions of Culture Minister Martina Simkovicova (a Slovak National Party/SNS nominee) and Justice Minister Boris Susko (Smer-SD). Groehling said they should end in their posts.

Prime Minister Robert Fico expressed last week his support for both Susko and Simkovicova. According to the premier, Susko acted lawfully in the case of former special prosecutor Dusan Kovacik. He also thinks that Simkovicova has the right to make personnel changes in her ministry, adding that she did them in accordance with the law.

## **SLOVAKIA HAS ROOTS AS DEEP AS SHAFTS AND TUNNELS**

The mining profession in our homeland has roots as deep as the shafts and tunnels that intertwine the Slovak land, President Peter Pellegrini posted a social network on the oc-

casation of Mining Accidents Victims Day and White Rose Day.

White Rose Day commemorates the biggest tragedy in the history of Slovak mining, when 11 mine rescuers and nine miners died in the Handlova Mine in Trenčín region on August 10, 2009. "Even after 15 years, the tears haven't dried up and the pain of the loss of 20 human lives in the biggest mining accident in Handlova hasn't subsided. Not even 15 years have healed the scars that this tragedy has left in the hearts of their loved ones, their families, friends, but also in the soul of the whole of Slovakia," Pellegrini wrote in this regard.

In this context, the head of state called on the public when they look at a white rose on Saturday to remember all those who lost their most precious thing - their own lives - in their daily hard and dangerous work.

### **NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY TO BE REPLACED BY THREE SUCCESSOR ORGANISATIONS**

The National Crime Agency (NAKA) will cease to exist on September 1 and will be replaced by the Office for the Fight against Organised Crime (UBOK), the National Anti-drug Unit and the Anti-terrorist Headquarters, Police Corps President Lubomir Solak has written in the *Policia* newspaper, published by the Police Trade Union.

UBOK will be composed of an anti-crime Unit, an anti-corruption unit, a financial police unit, a financial investigation and analytical activities unit and a management support department, wrote the police chief.

"These units will deal with the most serious forms of crime requiring comprehensive investigations. Detection and investigation of the most serious crimes, such as corruption, remains one of police's priorities," stated Solak.

The number of officers investigating cases falling under the European Prosecutor's Office and the nature of their work will remain unchanged, he noted. The transfer to regional and district Police Corps divisions will affect about 100 officers assigned to NAKA, he wrote, adding that the changes have been communicated to them in advance.

The Police Corps president stated that the aim of the reorganisation is to create an efficient and effective distribution of police forces. According to him, the changes should help departments struggling with a shortage of police officers.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT BODIES DOING THEIR BEST TO INVESTIGATE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT**

The law enforcement authorities are doing everything necessary to investigate the assassination attempt on Prime Minister Robert Fico (Smer-SD), Prosecutor-General Maros Zilinka posted on a social network on Wednesday, adding that the length of the preparatory proceedings is mainly conditioned by the performance of numerous procedural acts through international judicial cooperation.

"In view of the non-public nature of the preparatory criminal proceedings, and also in view of the nature and seriousness of the offence (a particularly serious crime of terrorist attack), the provision of partial (selective) information would not only be unfair, but especially harmful from the point of view of achieving the purpose of the criminal proceedings," stressed

the prosecutor-general.

The length of the preparatory proceedings is, in his words, determined by the interest in the proper investigation of the case and is conditioned in particular by the performance of numerous procedural acts through international judicial cooperation (by the judicial authorities of the United States of America, the Kingdom of Sweden and the Czech Republic). "Despite intensive communication, only partial results of legal assistance have been provided by foreign judicial authorities (with the exception of the Czech Republic, whose judicial authorities have handled requests for legal assistance in their entirety)," he noted.

The premier was shot on May 15 following an away-from-home session of the government in Handlova (Trenčín region). Several shots were fired and the attacker was arrested. Fico was in a life-threatening condition.

We cordially invite you to the signature  
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**SS. CYRIL AND METHIDIUS APPEAL OF THE SLOVAK CATHOLIC FEDERA-**

The Saints Cyril and Methodius Appeal is in its 46th year raising money to assist the Pontifical Slovak College of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Rome with its day-to-day operations. The Appeal relies upon the generosity of individual donors in addition to collections taken up in personal parishes of Slovak ancestry. A direct mailing asking for donations was sent in February to local district and branch leaders from the four Catholic Slovak Fraternal Organizations, members of the Slovak Catholic Federation, clergy with Slovak ancestry, and previous donors.

**As of August 20, the 2024 Appeal has received \$25,703 from 179 donors.** Among the 47 donations received from Catholic Slovak Fraternal Branches and Districts, Assembly 11, Assembly 23, Assembly 24, Assembly 34, Assembly 59, Assembly 78, Assembly 162, Group 1, Group 2, Wreath 15, and the Home Office of the Slovak Catholic Sokol have donated a combined total of \$1,600. Donations to date have also been received from 8 churches, 27 clergy and religious, and 97 individuals. On behalf of the Pontifical College, thank you for your continued generosity and support.

All wishing to contribute to the 2024 Appeal are asked to fill out the information in the box at the bottom of this article and mailing it along with your check payable to the Slovak Catholic Federation to the address provided. Donations in any amount are deeply appreciated and are acknowledged. **Gifts received after November 30, 2024 will be credited toward the 2025 Appeal.** Thank you again for your goodness and generosity.

*The Slovak Catholic Federation was founded in 1911 by Rev. Joseph Murgas, founding Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Slovak Church, Wilkes-Barre, PA. The Federation brings together under one banner both individuals of Slovak heritage as well as Catholic Slovak Fraternal Organizations for cultural, religious and educational needs. Serving as Moderator is the Right Reverend Gary Hoover, O.S.B., Abbot of St. Andrew Svorad Abbey, Cleveland, OH. National President is Reverend Andrew S. HvozdoVIC, V.F., Supreme Chaplain of the Slovak Catholic Sokol and Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish, Harveys Lake, PA and Gate of Heaven Parish, Dallas, PA Reverend Thomas A. Nasta, National Chaplain of the First Catholic Slovak Union and Parochial Vicar with Senior Priest status at Our Lady of Grace Church, Penndel, PA, serves as First Vice President of the Federation and is the Appeal Coordinator.*



**46<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SS. CYRIL AND METHIDIUS APPEAL**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to **Slovak Catholic Federation** and mail to: Reverend Thomas A. Nasta, National First Vice President, Slovak Catholic Federation, Our Lady of Grace Church, 225 Bellevue Avenue, Penndel, PA 19047-4052

**OBITUARIES**

**ANDREW "JIM" JAMES MACURAK**

**FEBRUARY 26, 1939 – AUGUST 3, 2024**

Andrew James "Jim" Macurak (Jumbo), age 85, of Acworth, Georgia passed away Saturday, August 3, 2024. He was born on February 26, 1939 in Pittsburgh, PA. He was preceded in death by his wife Marilyn, his parents Andrew and Sophie, and his sister Marlene.



He served in the US Army 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Division, then went on to graduate from Arizona State University, where he played football and baseball (fun fact: he struck out Reggie Jackson).

He married the love of his life, Marilyn Margaret Pegher, in 1969. They celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 2019, shortly before she passed away. They moved to Acworth in 1977, where he resided until his death. He is survived by his children Matt (Michelle), Brian (Mitzi), Jami, Mary, Scott (Laura), Michael (Allison); his siblings Tony, Patty, Tom, Carol, Bob, Don, Jan; his 16 grandchildren and 7 (soon to be 8) great grandchildren.

Jim loved to play golf, watch sports (especially Steelers football), and play cards with his family. He was happy with a cigar and a Manhattan in his hands, making everyone around him laugh with questionably inappropriate jokes (wushy, wushy, wushy).

He was an extraordinary salesman all his life. He never met a stranger and prided himself in remembering everyone's name. In his career he sold anything and everything including beer, telecommunications, cranes, insurance, building supplies, and pest control. As good of a salesman as he was, he was also a sucker for a good sales pitch.

Brother Macurak was a member of Assembly 16. He was the 2016 Frank S. Petruff Memorial Sports award winner for golf.

The funeral mass to honor the life of Jim Macurak was on Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at St. Catherine of Sienna Catholic Church in Kennesaw, GA.

**When was the last time you looked at your designated beneficiaries on your valuable Sokol insurance policy? How important is it? Just think about how much your life has changed. Have you married, divorced, had children, maybe you lost a loved one? This is an item you should consider annually. If you do need to make changes to any of your policies, contact the Home Office at 800-886-7656.**



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**This is an item you should consider annually. If you do need to make changes to any of your policies, contact the Home Office at 800-886-7656.**



## IN MEMORIAM

### JULY 2024

Assembly 9	William J. Wargo of Stratford, CT	67	May 23, 2024
Assembly 11	Karen Fialkowski of Delavan, IL	74	October 31, 2023
Assembly 11	Thomas Sullivan of Oak Lawn, IL	88	June 5, 2024
Assembly 11	Cecilia Mueller of Hardin, IL	96	July 21, 2024
Assembly 33	Marian Misiewicz of Seymour, CT	93	June 21, 2024
Assembly 59	Susan Berlew of Dallas, PA	47	May 1, 2024
Assembly 59	Irene Kaschak of Pringle, PA	88	June 15, 2024
Assembly 59	Susan Adams of Dallas PA	47	May 1, 2024
Assembly 59	Jane Ann Bednar of Dallas, PA	90	July 8, 2024
Assembly 72	Helen M. Tolomay of Cary, NC	81	July 1, 2024
Assembly 72	Agnes Chabak of Catasauqua, PA	107	July 8, 2024
Assembly 72	Alois Badura of Walnutport, PA	88	July 28, 2024
Assembly 78	Marie Bolcar of Bethlehem, PA	87	July 25, 2024
Assembly 78	Peter Ognibene of Emmaus, PA	83	July 27, 2024
Assembly 108	Harry R. Hatala of Poland OH	83	March 22, 2024
Assembly 108	Maria Kistler of Las Vegas, NV	97	June 9, 2024
Assembly 162	Anna Sucek of Ridgefield, NJ	95	July 9, 2024
Assembly 163	Donald Mitchell of Belle Vernon, PA	89	July 26, 2024
Assembly 180	Irene Burfield of Navarre, OH	96	June 5, 2024
Assembly 185	Rudolph Sedlacek of Endicott, NY	95	July 17, 2024
Assembly 227	Joseph Balazovic of Canada	88	June 30, 2024
Assembly 261	Edward Wentzel of Longwood, FL	57	December 4, 2023
Assembly 312	Martha Kociscin of Piscataway, NJ	93	May 23, 2024
Assembly 312	Mary Ann Slanina of Campbell, OH	84	July 1, 2024
Assembly 312	Eugene Yacapsin of Nesquehoning, PA	71	July 12, 2024
Wreath 47	Helen Gable of Blaine, MN	93	May 30, 2024
Wreath 81	Cyril Polak of Sun City, AZ	91	July 18, 2024
Wreath 85	Olga Fitzgerald of Monaca, PA	89	July 2, 2024
Wreath 93	Anna Klauer of Jackson, WI	99	June 23, 2024
Wreath 93	Jacqueline Porubsky of Milwaukee, WI	69	July 9, 2024



Life insurance is always a perfect gift for that special loved one. It's a gift that will last a lifetime. It cannot be lost, stolen, broken or squandered away. It is economical, worth something immediately and appreciates in value over the years.

Of course it is a Slovak Catholic Sokol life insurance policy or annuity plan. By providing your child, grandchild or other members of your family and friends with a Sokol insurance policy, you have a number of advantages which should be considered. It is first and foremost a lifetime of insurance protection at a cost that can never be replicated. It also creates a cash value account that may be used for future college expenses or some other of life's emergencies. And, you will have also protected that loved one's insurability which means that no matter what happens to their health in the future, they will always be insured under the policy you purchased for them.

Another important fact about life insurance is that it is the cornerstone of any financial plan. By purchasing a policy today when rates are low, you will have started that special child or grandchild

off on the right road to financial success.

And in addition, the Slovak Catholic Sokol offers a number of fraternal benefits. Our athletic and gymnastic programs emphasize our belief in both physical and mental health, as well as our commitment to our fraternal way of life. Each year, our organization provides scholarship grants to our members. As a firm believer in the Catholic school system, we provide grants to students attending Catholic grade school and high school. We also offer a generous number of college scholarships as well.

So why not purchase that life insurance policy or annuity plan now so that the new year can start that loved one on the road to financial success. Give a call to our Home Office at 1 800 886-7656. We will provide you with all the rates and applications or see your local Assembly or Wreath officers.

Sokol life insurance policy makes a wonderful birthday gift, first Holy Communion, Confirmation or graduation gift as well. Think about it and start that favorite loved one on the road to financial success.

## ČERNICE POSILNIA ZDRAVIE

Černice s jemne kyslastou chuťou, dozrievajú v júli a v auguste, pri teplom, slnečnom počasí aj skôr. Ak ich nazbierate viac ako skonzumujete, sú skvelé na džem, sirup či likér. Avšak nielen plody, ale aj listy sú plné zdraviu prospešných látok.



Čerstvé plody sa hodia do ranného jogurtu, chutia s tvarohom, ale aj v ovocných či zeleninových šalátoch, sú výborné k tvrdým a plesňovým syrom a na prípravu deytov.

Ak máte veľké množstvo černíc, môžete ich zamraziť. Pred zmrazením ich dôkladne umyte, osušte a rozložte na plech. Po zmrazení ich presypte do vzduchotesných vreciek. Takto si ich môžete uchovať na neskôr na pečenie.

Konzumácia čerstvých plodov vám prospieja, ak trpíte zápchou, jedna šálka denne pomôže znížiť vysoký tlak, čerstvé plody vám dodajú energiu pri vyčerpaní a slabosti.

Nielen bobule, ale aj listy pomôžu pri zdravotných problémoch. Na výluh z listov potrebujete 50 g listov a 1 l vody. Listy zalejte vriacou vodou, a po 20 minútach výluh scedte.

Výluhom kloktajte pri kašli, angíne a zápaloch ústnej dutiny. Pomáha tiež pri psychickom vypätí, vysokom tlaku a hnačke. Výluh z černíc sa používa na kúpeľ pri kožných ochoreniach.

Černice obsahujú vysoké množstvo antioxidantov, ako sú vitamíny C a E, ktoré pomáhajú chrániť telo pred škodlivými voľnými radikálmi. Tieto antioxidanty môžu znížiť riziko chronických ochorení, ako sú srdcové choroby a rakovina.

Vysoký obsah vlákniny v černiciach podporuje zdravé trávenie. Pravidelná konzumácia môže pomôcť pri prevencii zápchy a udržaní zdravého tráviaceho traktu. Černice ocenia tí, čo sa snažia zhodiť prebytočné kilá.

Vitamín C, ktorý černice obsahujú vo vysokom množstve, je nevyhnutný pre správne fungovanie imunitného systému. Pravidelná konzumácia černíc môže pomôcť znižovať riziko infekcií.

Vďaka horčíku prispievajú černice k správnej funkcii nervovej sústavy, ale aj k celkovej psychickej pohode.

Černice obsahujú luteín a zeaxantín, karotenoidy, ktoré sú dôležité pre zdravie očí. Pomáhajú chrániť sietnicu pred škodlivým modrým svetlom a znižujú riziko vzniku degenerácie makuly.

Ak vás pobolievajú kĺby a svaly, doprajte si pravidelnú dávku čerstvých černíc. Ich jadierka obsahujú éterické oleje a salicyláty s protizápalovým účinkom.

### DŽEM

Umyté plody (500 g) dajte do hrnca, pokvapkaťe šťavou z citróna, zasypte 250 g cukru a povarte 10 minút. Keď černice zmäknú, rozmixujte ich ponorným mixérom a dajte do pohárov. Uzavreté poháre obráťte hore dnom a nechajte vychladnúť.

## AUGUSTOVÁ OKUPÁCIA 1968

Reformný a demokratizačný proces v Československu z roku 1968 ukončila invázia armád piatich štátov Varšavskej zmluvy - Sovietskeho zväzu, Bulharska, Maďarska, Nemeckej demokratickej republiky (NDR) a Poľska. V stredu 21. augusta uplynie 56 rokov od začiatku okupácie bývalej Československej socialistickej republiky (ČSSR). Udalosť sa v SR od roku 2021 pripomína ako pamätný deň.

Stalo sa tak po tom, ako poslanci Národnej rady (NR) SR 3. novembra 2020 rozhodli, že do zoznamu pamätných dní pribudne 21. august ako Deň obetí okupácie Česko-Slovenska. V ten istý deň poslanci odsúhlasili aj to, že 21. jún sa bude pripomínať ako pamätný - Deň odchodu okupačných vojsk sovietskej armády z Česko-Slovenska.

Invázia bola najväčšou ozbrojenou akciou v Európe od konca druhej svetovej vojny. Začala sa v noci z 20. na 21. augusta 1968. Na invázii s krycím názvom Operácia Dunaj sa zúčastnilo 27 bojových divízií a jedna letecká armáda. Intervenčným jednotkám v počte približne 700.000 vojakov s 800 lietadlami, 6300 tankami a 2000 delami a raketami velil generál Ivan Grigorjevič Pavlovskij.

Pod vedením predsedu Ondreja Klokoča zasadla 21. augusta 1968 Slovenská národná rada na plenárnom zasadnutí, na ktorom posúdila vzniknutú situáciu a prijala vyhlásenie.

Len počas prvého dňa okupácie zomrelo na území Slovenska alebo bolo smrteľne zranených 20 ľudí. O deň neskôr pribudol k obetiam napríklad aj vtedy len 16-ročný Peter Legner, ktorého postrelili pred budovou hlavnej pošty na bratislavskom Námestí SNP. Zomrel pri prevoze do nemocnice. Počas celého obdobia okupácie až do odchodu sovietskych vojsk v roku 1991 zomrelo v dôsledku ich pobytu na území Československa 406 ľudí.

Operácia mala zastaviť demokratizačný proces v ČSSR. Na čele tohto procesu stál Alexander Dubček, ktorý bol od januára 1968 prvým tajomníkom Ústredného výboru (ÚV) Komunistickej strany Československa (KSČ). Na podporu reforiem vznikla aj výzva Dvetisíc slov, ktorú skoncipoval spisovateľ Ludvík Vaculík a podpísalo ju množstvo literátov, vedcov, športovcov i široká verejnosť. Pozitívna odozva myšlienok Pražskej jari v spoločnosti bola však dôvodom, prečo sa o situáciu v ČSSR začali intenzívne zaujímať predstavitelia Sovietskeho zväzu. Sovietske vedenie začalo požadovať rázny postup proti tzv. antisocialistickým silám v ČSSR.

O okupácii Československa sa rozhodlo v Moskve 18. augusta 1968 na stretnutí generálnych tajomníkov komunistických a robotníckych strán krajín Varšavskej zmluvy. Pod tzv. pozývacím listom, ktorého originál odovzdal v júli 1992 ruský prezident Boris Jelcin prezidentovi Českej a Slovenskej Federatívnej Republiky (ČSFR) Václavovi Havlovi. Okupácia a následný pobyt sovietskych vojsk zastavili reformný proces v ČSSR. V apríli 1969 nastúpil Gustáv Husák do funkcie prvého tajomníka ÚV KSČ a začal sa proces normalizácie.

**KRÁTKE SPRÁVY ZO SLOVENSKA**

Na dobrovoľnú vojenskú prípravu (DVP) nastúpilo v tomto roku 24 ľudí. Pôvodne sa prihlásilo 65 občanov. Z nich bolo na prijatie spôsobilých 27. Pre TASR to uviedol komunikačný odbor Ministerstva obrany (MO) SR. Absolventi výcviku získajú hodnotu vojak druhého stupňa a zručnosti, ktoré môžu využiť aj v civilnom živote. Výcvik zahŕňa napríklad poskytovanie zdravotníckej pomoci, orientáciu v teréne či prežitie v sťažených podmienkach, priblížilo ministerstvo. Po absolvovaní výcviku dostanú aj možnosť zaradiť sa do aktívnych záloh. Na DVP sa mohli hlásiť občania a občianky SR vo veku 19 až 55 rokov. Musia mať ukončené aspoň stredné odborné vzdelanie a byť zdravotne a psychicky spôsobilí, doplnil rezort obrany.

Národná kriminálna agentúra (NAKA) zanikne prvého septembra. Nahradia ju Úrad boja proti organizovanej kriminalite (ÚBOK), Národná protidrogová jednotka a Protiteroristická centrála. Prezident Policajného zboru Ľubomír Solák to potvrdil v novinách Polícia, ktoré vydáva Odborový zväz polície v Slovenskej republike. Súčasťou ÚBOK bude protizločinecká jednotka, protikorupčná jednotka, jednotka finančnej polície, jednotka finančného vyšetrovania a analytických činností a odbor podpory riadenia, vysvetlil policajný prezident. Počet príslušníkov, ktorí vyšetrujú prípady spadajúce pod európsku prokuratúru, a povaha ich práce podľa neho zostanú zachované. Presun na krajské a okresné útvary PZ sa podľa neho dotkne asi 100 príslušníkov, ktorí sú na NAKA zaradení.

Slovenská stíhačka F-16 so slovenským pilotom uskutočnila 18. augusta prvý oficiálny let nad územím Slovenska. Prípravy na zalietavací let trvali viac ako dve hodiny. Lietadlo bolo dôkladne skontrolované a na let pripravené už slovenským technickým personálom. Najmodernejšia verzia stíhačky F-16 Block 70 v Európe je podľa Ozbrojených síl SR pripravená slúžiť a chrániť vzdušný priestor Slovenska s maximálnou efektivitou. Prvé dve slovenské stíhačky F-16 pristáli na vojenskom letisku v Kuchyni pri Malackách 22. júla. Tretia slovenská stíhačka F-16 by mala na Slovensko doraziť v októbri. Ďalších päť lietadiel by malo priletieť v roku 2025. Podľa ministra obrany Roberta Kaliňáka by tak malo byť od roku 2025 Slovensko schopné chrániť svoj vzdušný priestor samostatne, bez pomoci susedných krajín. Kontrakt na 14 stíhačiek F-16 C/D Block 70 americkej výroby uzavrelo Slovensko koncom roka 2018. Dodanie lietadiel sa pre pandémiu oneskorilo.

Vláda schválila zmeny v minimálnej mzde, v budúcnosti by mohla rásť rýchlejšie. Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny SR predložilo novelu zákona o minimálnej mzde, ktorej cieľom je transpozícia a implementácia smernice Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (EÚ) 2022/2041 o primeraných minimálnych mzdách. Tá má za cieľ zabezpečiť dôstojné životné a pracovné podmienky a podporiť kolektívne vyjednávanie o stanovovaní miezd.

## VOJENSKÉ LETISKO NA ZAHORÍ JE PRIPRAVENÉ NA PRÍCHOD PRVÝCH DVOCH STÍHAČIEK F-16 Z USA

Letisko v Kuchyni je plne pripravené na prijatie moderných stíhačiek F-16. Príslušníci Ozbrojených síl SR úspešne otestovali letecký záchytný systém, ktorý vojenské lietadlá potrebujú pre núdzové pristátie. Ako informovalo ministerstvo obrany, prednedávnom boli dokončené aj opravy hangárov, v ktorých majú lietadlá parkovať, a čaká sa už len na dodanie mobilných stojísk potrebných na servis stíhačiek. Tým pádom je vojenské letisko na Zahorí plne pripravené na príchod prvých dvoch kusov F-16.

Momentálne je vojenské letisko v Kuchyni pripravené nielen na bežné pristátie moderných bojových lietadiel, ale aj na tie núdzové prípady. Funguje tam záchytný systém BAK-12, ktorý úspešne prešiel certifikačným testom. Záchytný systém pozostáva z niekoľkých ocelových lán položených cez pristávaciu plochu letiska, navrhnutých tak, aby boli zachytené zadným hákom lietadla. Systém nastupuje, keď nemožno použiť ani brzdy ani núdzový padák.

Záchytné zariadenie BAK-12 dokáže zabrzdiť lietadlo do hmotnosti 22 680 kilogramov a môže sa používať nielen pre núdzové zabrzdenie F-16, ale aj ďalších typov vojenských lietadiel, ako sú F-22 a F-35. Systém bude prevádzkovaný nielen pre potreby slovenského letectva, ale aj v rámci poskytovania podpory pre lietadlá koalíčných partnerov z NATO.

Systém BAK-12, ako aj jeho inštaláciu a výcvik pre technikov zabezpečili príslušníci americkej armády. Pentagon tiež uhradil náklady na záchytný systém, ktoré boli podľa slov veľvyslanca USA na Slovensku Gautama Ranu 880-tisíc dolárov (814-tisíc eur). Americký veľvyslanec ocenil úsilie slovenských aj amerických vzdušných síl pri príprave certifikácie. Projekt bol podľa neho dokončený za deväť mesiacov, hoci zvyčajne trvá realizácia rok. „Oslavujeme ďalší míľnik v našej bezpečnostnej spolupráci,“ zhodnotil.

Otestovať nasadený systém prišli dve stíhačky F-16, ktoré na Zahorí doleteli zo základne v Taliansku. Aj keď mnohí očakávali, že testovať systém budú slovenské lietadlá, v stredu túto úlohu plnili americkí vojaci na stíhačkách z americkej vojenskej flotily. Stíhačky po 45-minútovom lete spravili ukázkový prelet nad letiskom, po dvoch okruhoch nad záhorskými lesmi úspešne pristáli.

Letisko v Kuchyni disponuje potrebnou infraštruktúrou pre moderné vojenské lietadlá. „Prvé F-16 tu pristáli ešte v roku 1996, boli to lietadlá holandských spojencov,“ povedal pre Pravdu hovorca Ozbrojených síl (OS) SR Štefan Zemanovič. Aj preto táto vojenská základňa bola vybraná ako dočasný domov pre slovenské prúdové lietadlá, prilet ktorých sa očakáva do konca júla. Najprv prídu dve F-16, do konca roka na Slovensko priletí aj tretí kus. Ďalších sedem stíhačiek by malo na Slovensku pristáť začiatkom roka 2025, zvyšné štyri v polovici roka 2026.

Výcvik slovenských pilotov na stíhačkách F-16 prebieha v rámci 162. krídla národnej gardy štátu Arizona na letisku Tucson.



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