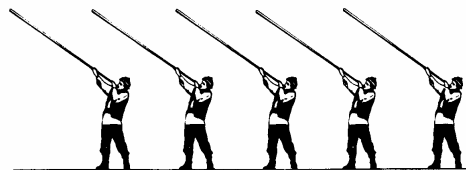


# Trembita



Volume 15, Number 3—4

Fall/Winter 2003

The Rusin Association is attempting to document and preserve the family histories of Rusin immigrants to Minnesota and the Midwest.

This article written by Norm Larson, the son of Katherine Semanko Larson, is a historical account of the Semanko family who immigrated to the United States from the Rusin village of Becherov, Slovakia. To complement this story we are also publishing a history of the village of Becherov.

This is the first part of a two part story of the Semanko Family.

The Association is looking for others who would like to contribute a written history of their family.

Karen Varian, Editor

## The Semankos of University Ave. N.E. Minneapolis

When I was growing up in the late 1930s and through the 1940s, I lived in the upper duplex at 2410 University Ave. NE. in Minneapolis.

I am the oldest of four sons of the former Katherine (later Catherine) Semanko (1903-1976) and Walter E. Larson (1900-1979). I was born in 1934. I have three brothers: Lawrence (1937), David (1940) and Glenn (1943).

My parents were married on Feb. 7, 1933, at St. Mary's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church with the Rev. John Nedzelnitsky officiating. The best man was my mother's brother, Sam Semanko, and the maid of honor was her niece, Marie Schneider, daughter of Mary Semanko Schneider and Samuel Schneider. The other attendants were Alice Larson, sister of my father, and John Semanko, my mother's nephew, son of Mary and John Semanko. The "starosta" was William Leschisin.

### *Inside this issue:*

- Village of Becherov—Its History and Nature
- News from Slovakia
- News from Ukraine
- Youth Activities
- 18th Annual Duchnovich Day Celebration
- Rusin Association on the Radio



In addition to our residence, three other buildings in the 2400 block of University Avenue NE. contained Semankos.

My mother's parents were Gregory Semanko (sometimes referred to as Semanczak, as on his naturalization papers) and the former Mary Zurbey. (I have found four other spellings for Zurbey. On some genealogical information that a cousin sent me the name is spelled Dzurbay, as well as Zurbey. On the Minnesota Historical Society's Death Records Index, the name is spelled Zurbay for Sam Semanko's death certificate, Zurby for Frank G. Semanko's and Zurrey for Catherine Semanko Larson's. It is spelled Zurbey on the certificate for Mary Semanko Schneider and for Peter Semanko.) Gregory and Mary Semanko emigrated from Becherov, which at that time was in Austria-Hungary and now is part of the Slovak Republic near the Polish border. Gregory Semanko helped found what is now St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral at 5th Street and 17th Avenue NE. Both Gregory and Mary Semanko died in 1936 when I was 2 years old.

I was baptized in what formerly was called St. Mary's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, probably by Father Nedzelnitsky, since he was the parish priest in 1934. He must have been the priest for many years because I remember him as well as Fr. Alexander Semiavsky (I am not sure of the spelling) and Fr. John Dzubay. Once a week Fr. Dzubay conducted a class during which we were trying to learn the Russian language. I did not do well at it, even though I was a very scholarly student at Schiller School. In the seventh grade at Schiller, I started publication of a school newspaper titled the Schiller Herald.

My younger brothers and I attended Sunday School at St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Lowry Avenue and

Quincy Street. Soon after the war – for younger readers, the war I refer to in this article is World War II – the Russian Church started its own Sunday School, and we all went there. I was in the first class that graduated from that Sunday School in June of 1948, and I have a certificate that states that I “completed the prescribed courses of study at St. Mary's Russian Orthodox Sunday School.” The certificate is signed by Frs. Semiavsky and Dzubay, as well as by John G. Tkach, the church president, and Joseph Grivna, the school chairman. I also have a framed diploma, dated June 6, 1948, signed by Frs. Semiavsky and Dzubay and by Kathleen Patosnak, the instructor.

Each of us graduates also received a book, titled “The Most Useful Knowledge for the Orthodox Russian American Young People,” signed by the two priests and by Mr. Tkach, Mr. Grivna and these five people who I think were the school's teachers: Irene Madir, Eileen Memorich, Gloria Memorich, Kathleen Patosnak and Marion Sivanich.

Even though I no longer attended St. Paul's Sunday School, I continued to be a Boy Scout in the troop that the church sponsored, and I started a newspaper titled the Troop 157 Bugle.



Larson Brothers—1947  
Front—Glenn, David  
Back—Norm, Frank G. Semanko, Larry

At the corner of University and 24th Avenues NE. was Frank G. Semanko's grocery store and meat market. The living quarters were on the second floor of the building. My Uncle Frank (1894-1975) and his wife, the former Marie Tkach, had four children: Lorraine (1922), Vera (1923), Mary Ellen (1924) and Frank G. Jr. (1926-2003). Marie Semanko died in October 1927, shortly before Frank Jr.'s first birthday; she was 29 years old. My mother helped take care of the four children, and Uncle Frank had hired girls to help, and much later had a housekeeper named Mary that he married.

The new Mary Semanko became the fifth Aunt Mary that we had at the time. One Aunt Mary was my mother's sister, Mary (1892-1962), who was married to Samuel Schneider. Then there were two other Mary Semankos. One was the mother of John (1913-1995) and Frank J. (1914-2002) Semanko, who lived at 2414 University Ave. NE., and the other was the former Mary Mokita, who was married to my Uncle Peter Semanko, who died in 1963.

They lived in the downstairs of the 2410 University Ave. NE. duplex; they did not have any children. The other Aunt Mary was Mary Warchol, who really was not an aunt, but we called her Aunt Mary because she was my godmother, as well as for two of my younger brothers (Larry and Glenn).

The upper duplex of 2406 University Ave. NE. was where my Uncle Sam Semanko and his wife Margaret lived. They did not have any children. Uncle Sam, who died in 1979, and his sister, my Aunt Anna Dusenka, who died in 1950 at age 49, co-owned the duplex. Aunt Anna and her husband lived in Los Angeles, where Uncle Jack had the Golden Gopher bar. He had been in the liquor business in Minneapolis – he is the Jack of Jax at 1928 University Ave. NE. My Aunt Anna had no children.

It was in 1949, as I recall, that my Aunt Anna was seriously ill, and my mother flew to Los Angeles to attend to her. It was then decided that Aunt Anna should return to Minneapolis to be hospitalized. Uncle Jack drove from Los Angeles to Minneapolis in his Cadillac – he always had a Cadillac, and we were always so impressed when he and Aunt Anna came to visit in Minneapolis and stayed with Uncle Sam and Aunt Margaret.

Aunt Anna was very ill for many months. She was a stout woman and lost a lot of weight. Anyone visiting her in the hospital would not recognize her. I do not know exactly what was wrong with her although I remember being told that she had “cancer of the female organs.” She died in June 1950 as I was about to complete my sophomore year at Edison High School. I was one of the pallbearers even though I was still 15 years old.



Greg and Mary Semanko Family—1920  
 Front—John, Mrs. Mary, Sam, Mr. Gregory, Michael  
 Back Row—Mary, Peter, Catherine, Frank, Anna

After Frank (Red) Semanko was married in 1940, he and his wife Helen lived for a short time at 2414 University Ave. NE. Then Red joined the Navy, and his wife returned to her parents' home. After the war, John Semanko and his wife Helene lived at 2414 University Ave. NE. While there, they became parents of three children, Kathleen, John Dale and Gail. In

1953 they moved to a new house at Pierce Street NE. and 36th Avenue NE. A fourth child, Jim, was added to the family. Johnny and Red Semanko had a younger brother, Peter J., who lived for only three days, June 26-29, 1916.

Frank G. Semanko Jr. and his wife Eleanor (Ellie) lived in the downstairs duplex at 2406 University Ave. NE. for about seven years during the 1950s. Frank and some of his buddies were seniors in high school when the war was on and they left to join the Navy. He and Ellie had gone together during high school and when he returned from the service in 1946, he and Ellie became engaged. They were married in September 1947. Ellie was 18 and Frank was 20. They lived in an apartment in Southeast

Minneapolis while Frank was attending the University of Minnesota, and then they moved to the lower duplex at 2406 University Ave. NE. Their son Greg and daughter Jane were born when they lived there. In 1957 they moved to their new house on Columbia Boulevard across the street from Columbia Park. I remember that house really well because of its magnificent view of downtown Minneapolis.

John Semanko and his brother Frank J. (Red) Semanko were the only two of the 10 Semanko cousins living on University Avenue NE. who married within the church. Johnny's wife is the former Helen Brinda, and Red's wife is the former Helen Banisky. Helen Brinda Semanko added an e to her name to differentiate her name from Red's Helen, especially since if they used the maiden name as a middle name, they both were Helen B. Semanko. Helene Semanko told me recently that she and the other Helen now go by Helene J. (for John) Semanko and Helen F. (for Frank) Semanko.

For many of the years that I was growing up, Alderman Syl Blosky and his wife Helen and their daughter and son lived downstairs at 2406 University Ave. NE. Back then, each of Minneapolis' 13 wards had two aldermen, and I remember that Harold Kauth also served at the same time as Mr. Blosky did. They were aldermen for the First Ward, but in the mid-1940s, I assume due to redistricting, they became the aldermen for the Third Ward.

There are two other Semanko men. One was named John (the father of John and Frank J.), and the other was named Michael. These men were unknown to me, as I was growing up. I remember my mother telling me that both of them "disappeared." She spoke of Mike as being in the Merchant Marines. I found out recently that John Semanko Sr. went to Canada, changed his last name to Schneider and served in the Canadian Army, rising to the rank of lieutenant. Somehow he ended up in Wyoming, where he died at age 46.

The children of Gregory and Mary Semanko also included an infant girl named Anne who died before Anna was born in 1900.

The back of the lot at 2400 University Ave. NE. had a small house that had been moved from Ramsey Street NE. near 8th Avenue. My mother told me she was born in that house. Others in the family, I would assume, also were born in that house.

The house at 2414 University Ave. NE. was the first of the Semanko structures on the block. I have a picture of the family proudly posed on the front porch of their new house. I think that the picture was taken in about 1907. My mother, who was born in June 1903, was the youngest in the family at the time, and she looks to be about 3 or 4 years old. A couple of years later, in May 1909, Sam Semanko was born; he was the last of that family's children.



Gregory and Mary Semanko and their children—John, Michael, Catherine, Peter, Frank, Anna, and Mary—on the front porch of 2414 University Ave. N.E. Minneapolis (about 1907)

My cousin, Lorraine Semanko Koza, informed me recently that she was told that Grandpa Semanko homesteaded the property on University Avenue. She said she remembers the big front hall at 2414. She said it was built so that a coffin could be moved in and out because there were no mortuaries at the time. (part 2 continued in next issue)

# Becherov, Slovakia

The following information is from the Becherov website. The English translation has been rewritten for clarity.

[Http://www.becherov.host.sk/](http://www.becherov.host.sk/)

The village of Becherov is located in north-eastern Slovakia, Bardejov district near the border to the Poland. Nearby are the villages of Ondavka, Vyšná Polianka, Jedlinka, Smilno, Chmeľová, Regetovka and Konieczna (Poland).

Becherov is comprised of 1909 hectares and 278 citizens. There are two churches a Uniate (Greek Catholic) church (1847) and an orthodox church which was built with elements of old Russian Baroc. Near Becherov is the 24,13 ha National natural reserve—Becherovská tisina.

In Becherov one can find rare kinds of fauna and flora, a mineral water spring that contains a lot of sulphur, and a Second World War monument. Approximately 500 m west of Becherov boarder crossing is a First World War monument. The Becherov border crossing to Poland was opened in 1994.

The village has a hunting association, community forest associations, farmers' cooperative and a successful voluntary fire brigade, which has won many competitions. Every year in August the village hosts a folklore festival "Stretnutie pri vatre" (Meeting by bonfire).

## The History

The first written mention of the village is dated back to the year 1414. At that time, the village was known as Kwberher and was in the Makovicky domain confirmed by King Sigmund to barons Cudarovci. It is believed that the village existed probably as early as 1241.

The village was built by peasant households lead by the magistrate. In various documents from 15.-18. century the village is mentioned as: "Kwbeher, Byharo, Biharo, Bicharo, Becharow". The name Becher was probably a surname of the first magistrate in an arising Becherov.

Becherov belonged to the Walachian villages in the Makovicky domain with a Rusin population

at the end of 15th century. We know that in the 15th century the village had a wooden church without a tower and a cemetery.

At the end of the 16th century, Becherov was a medium sized village with a Rusin population, magistrate, and the family of the orthodox rector. At this time the people of the village worked only on "panske" and in the large forest.

The population of Becherov was at its largest in 1828 when there were 971 residents. The number of residents fell to around 700 at the beginning of the Second World War. After the war the population dropped to 553. With more families moving to the cities the population continues to fall. The village would like to prevent further depopulation of the village.

During the First World War, many battles between the Austro-Hungarian and Russian militaries, occurred in the vicinity of Becherov. In memory of the battles a stone monument was built at the hill called "Dujava" by the border. Buried there are 168 Hungarian and 135 Russian soldiers. In the village of Becherov local cemetery there are another 74 tombs from First World War.

Between the world wars, the people of the village worked mainly in the forests and agriculture.

During the Second World War, 60 men from the village joined the partisans to fight against German occupation, 15 of them never came back home. A monument in their honor was built in the village. (see page 6)

Becherov was damaged during the wars. The historical buildings that remain are the Uniate church from year 1847 and the Orthodox church with the elements of old-Russian baroque from year 1929. (continued on page 7)

# World War II War Memorial

Honoring 15 men from the village of Becherov who fought with the partisans and never returned home.



Parts of the names and dates are hidden by the wreath.

Listed on the monument are:

- Grivna, Seman—1910-1944
- Fedorko, Petro—1919-1945
- Jurchisin, Petro—1921-1944
- Grivna, Ivan — 1923-1945
- Lazorik, Ivan—1921-1944
- Brinda, Joseph—1923-1945
- Cuper, Joseph—1925-1945
- Jaroschak, Joseph—1915-1945
- Jurchisin, Andrew
- Gmiterko, Ivan
- Roman
- Snyder
- Varchol
- Zbilyy
- Vados

In 1981, Mitro Jurchisin compiled a booklet, Carpathian Village People, which lists Rusins who immigrated to Minneapolis, Minnesota between 1880 to 1947 and their village of origin.

Following are the surnames of those families from the village of Becherov who immigrated to Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Banisky, Boris, Brinda, Cuper (Super), Dupay, Fedorko, Franko, Grivna, Gmiterko, Guzie, Hafich, Jazusko, Jaroschak, Jurchisin, Kohanik, Kohan, Kokosh, Kostik, Kotik, Krish, Kulkaya, Lazorik, Leschisin, Masley, Marcinak, Markovich, Mihalik, Miulak, Miterko, Panko, Petrichko, Plenka, Reshetar, Roman, Rozum, Rusinko, Rusinak, Semanko, Siroka, Sivanich, Snyder, Stenach, Tanchin, Taragos, Tutko, Vados, Vadotz, Varchol, Zbilyy, and Zurbey.

Some of the same surnames appear on the World War II monument in Becherov.

Editors Note: The Carpathian Village People Booklet is available through the Rusin Association for \$7.00

## The Nature

Rare fauna and flora can still be found near the village. The nature in our village has been undisturbed. There is a mineral spring called "Svablovka" and the 24,13 ha State natural reservation Becherovska tisina which was established in 1954.

Becherovska tisina is located north-west of Becherov, on the northeast slopes of Javorina. It was established to protect the largest presence of the yew (*Taxus baccata*) in the flysch area of Carpathian Mountains. At 500-600 m altitude, about 230 yew shrubs and trees are growing on steep sandstone slopes. In the Bercherovska tisina beech, fir, maple, and ash trees grow. The yew grows mostly on a inaccessible slopes. The stone slope, with a lot of rocks, is covered by maple beeches and many kinds of ferns. The yews fight for their own existence with the sandstone slates on the steep slopes. This has lead to yews falling and sliding down the steep slopes. In these difficult areas, the yew grows as a shrub. On smaller terraces and rock ascents rarer kinds of plants grow. This includes the cornflower (*Centaurea mollis*), *Cicerbita alpina*, very rarely *Phylitis scolopendrium*, sc *Arum alpinum*, *Polystichum braunii*, *Polystichum aculeatum* and other common kinds of the maple fir.

A visit to the Becherovska tisina is a great experience and source of instruction. Access to Becherovska tisina is by a footpath through fir beech to the peak of Javorina, where there is a beautiful view of the territory of Poland - Beskid Niski. In autumn one can see groups of law-protected *Aconitum variegatum*. On visiting the Bercherovska tisina one can see that the area is worth preserving. Natural decreases of yew are the results of radical soil conditions, on which yew grows, e.g. landslide.

The aim of the state is to preserve the area so that school children, scientists and society can experience its beautiful natural state.

**The village office—Becherov**  
**08635 Becherov**  
**Tel./fax: 054/4798316**  
**Email: becherov@pobox.sk**  
**Web site: <http://www.becherov.host.sk/>**

## **Carpatho-Rusin Folk Dress**

**From the village of Becherov**

**Handmade in Slovakia by Jrina  
Kruskova**



This folk dress is a replica of those worn in the Rusin village of Becherov, Northeastern Slovakia in the early 1900's.

Featured above are just two examples, others are available. The outfits fit 18" dolls (on left), including the American Girl Doll.

**7 piece set - \$30**  
**includes blouse, skirt, vest, apron, hat,**  
**scarf and necklace**  
**with doll - \$50**

Available through the Rusin Association. They will be available for purchase at the Duchnovich Dinner on March 6 or contact Karen Var-

# News from Slovakia

## Slovak Mayors Accuse Government of Intention to Liquidate Ruthenian

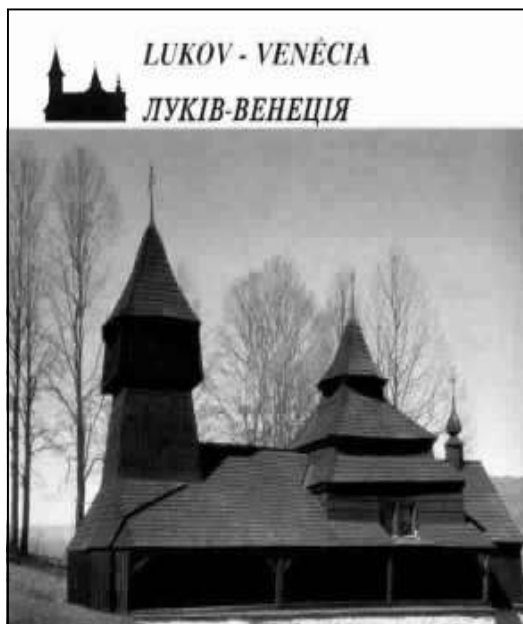
### Minority

The mayors of 51 eastern Slovak settlements sent a letter to Premier Dzurinda and parliamentary speaker Pavol Hrusovsky on 26 September, 2003 to protest a cabinet decision to move a district seat from Svidnik to Stropkov, CTK reported. The signatories called the decision “cynical and discriminatory,” and say it is intended to “completely liquidate the ethnic Ruthenian minority.” A copy of the letter was also sent to diplomatic representatives of the European Union, Germany, the Netherlands, the United States, and Russia. The signatories asked parliament to change “the government’s irrational, discriminatory, and nationalist-oriented proposal.”

## Wooden Churches to be Saved

From the Slovak Spectator –11/10/2003

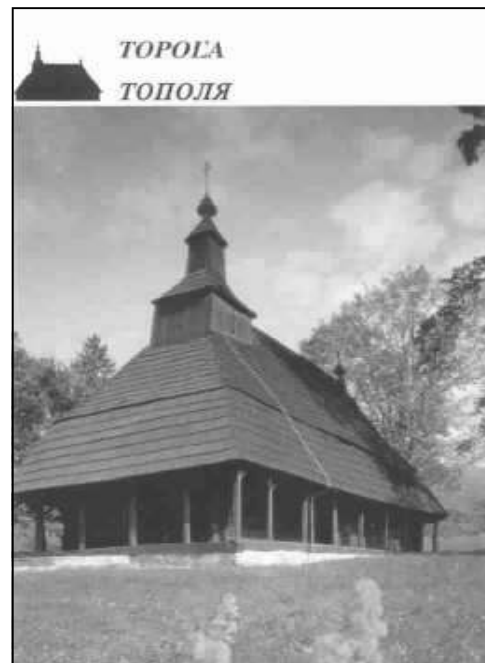
U.S. and Slovak organizations have recently agreed to support a plan for preserving three Greek Catholic wooden churches from the 17th and 18th centuries located in eastern Slovakia’s municipalities of Bodružal’, Lukov-Veneica, and Topol’a.



**St. Cosmos and Damian**

The World Monuments Fund (WMF), the foremost private, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of historic art and architecture worldwide, has added these three churches into its World Monuments Watch list, 100 Most Endangered Sites for 2004.

According to the WMF, the Greek Catholic Church of eastern Slovakia has always battled for its survival. Orthodox in tradition, yet aligned with the Pope, the Church has faced persecution and even dissolution while maintaining a unique cultural and religious tradition for its followers. These traditions are reflected in the architecture of their houses of worship, which exhibit a fusion of Byzantine and Western architectural styles.



**St. Michael the Archangel**

The three churches—the churches of St. Nicholas, St. Cosmos and Damian, and St. Michael the Archangel—constructed of timber between the mid-17th and early 18th centuries, represent some of the most highly developed examples of this unique sacral architecture.



# News from Zakarpattia, Ukraine

## Ukrainian Riot Police Block “Our Ukraine” Mayor from City Council Meeting in Mukachevo

AP Online; Kiev, Ukraine, Jan. 9, 2004

Riot police blocked opposition lawmakers from participating in a city council meeting in western Ukraine on Friday, in the latest sign of political tension in the run-up to this year’s presidential election.

“We’ve witnessed a gross violation of the law,” said Ihor Ivancho in comments posted on the opposition Our Ukraine bloc’s Web site.

The conflict came almost two weeks after President Leonid Kuchma appointed Myroslav Opachko as acting mayor of the southwestern city of Mukachevo amid a festering electoral dispute. Vasyl Petiovka, Our Ukraine’s candidate, was declared the winner of the June mayoral vote but a regional court called a new election after the pro-presidential Social Democratic Party United, headed by Kuchma’s chief of staff Viktor Medvedchuk, claimed the vote was marred by violations. On Thursday, the council announced a new vote would be held April 18.

Our Ukraine claimed that four cordons of police blocked their representatives from attending Friday’s meeting which Opachko convened one hour ahead of schedule.

The region is considered a stronghold of Our Ukraine supporters, but many businesses owned by Medvedchuk, one of Ukraine’s richest men, are also based there.

Tension between opposition and pro-presidential forces have piqued in recent weeks after the constitutional court ruled Dec. 30 that Kuchma may seek a third term. That decision came on the heels of parliament’s preliminary approval of a constitutional amendment that would allow lawmakers to choose the president in 2006—not voters.

† *Eternal Memory!* †  
† *Vičnaja jim pamjat’!* †



Nicholas Puzak, age 88, November 21, 2003. Survived by his wife of 57 years, Virginia, whose love and devotion helped him through his most difficult years, sons Frederick, George and Nicholas J., and their spouses, eight grandchildren, and his sisters, Anne Puzak and Mary Berg. Preceded in death by brothers Paul and Alexander.

Nick was born December 6, 1914, in Northeast Minneapolis to George and Anna Cimba Puzak, Rusin (Ruthenian) immigrants from western Ukraine and eastern Slovakia. He learned to speak English at Schiller grade school and went on to become Valedictorian of his graduating class at Edison High School in 1933. He graduated from Carleton College, cum laude in 1937. Nick then earned his MBA from Harvard Business School in 1939.

A Navy Lieutenant during WWII, Nick served as a communications code breaker and in 1945 was assigned to the founding sessions of the United Nations in San Francisco. He was a life member of the Disabled American Veterans and Military Officers Association of America.

As a Realtor for over 35 years, Nick was proud to work throughout Minneapolis, but primarily for families on the Eastside. A bold and hardworking entrepreneur, he was known for his candor and wit, and often stated that the most important thing in life was the ability to get along with people.

He was an avid reader, active in the Audubon Society, and enjoyed golfing, beekeeping, and fishing. In addition, he studied international affairs and traveled the world with his family, visiting six continents.

Editors note: Nick was a member of the Rusin Association for a number of years.

# 18th Annual Duchno-

This year our 18th annual “Duchnovich Dinner” will be held on Saturday, March 6. The format of what we call our Ruskyj Den (Rusin Day) will be as follows.

The day will start at 3 p.m at St. Mary’s Orthodox Cathedral School building, 17th and 5th St. N.E. Mpls., where Dr. Elaine Rusinko. Rusinko will speak about her recently published book, “Straddling Borders, Literature and Identity in Subcarpathian Rus’.” The title of her lecture is “Without Literature a People cannot exist: Rusin Literature and Identity.”

Following her presentation the emphasis will shift to St. John’s Byzantine Catholic Church Hall where she will sign copies of her book and answer more personnel question about her Rusin activity. The social hour will coincide with the book signing and we will sit down to our traditional Rusin dinner at 6 p.m.

We have some great entertainment in store for you this year. The youth from St. Mary’s Orthodox Cathedral will present a short Rusin dance program just prior to dinner. Following dinner a musical program highlighting our Ukrainian neighbors will be presented. You will be hopefully pleased with our guests as they are both amateur and professional musicians playing and singing Ukrainian songs.

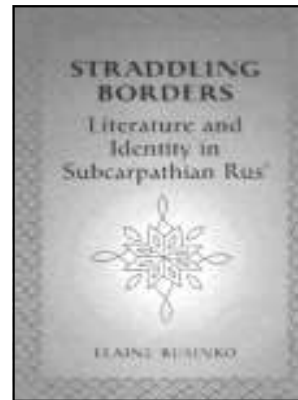
As this is considered a fund raiser for our Rusin Association, the ticket price will be raised to \$18 in advance and \$20 at the door. Children 6 to 12, \$5, and children 5 and under no charge. Lecture only—\$5.00, free with purchase of dinner.

Tickets will be sent out to all Rusin Association members. You are asked to reserve seats by sending in your money and ticket stub. Those who make advanced reservations will be eligible for a special door prize drawing.

**Contact Larry Goga at 763-595-9188  
for information and reservations.**

## Straddling Borders

Literature and Identity in Subcarpathian Rus’



This new book by Dr. Elaine Rusinko is the first comprehensive history of Rusin literature ever written in English. It includes an analysis of Rusin literature from the 16th century and explains how literature helped develop a distinct Rusin Identity.

The granddaughter of Rusin immigrants, Rusinko grew up in northeastern Pennsylvania, surrounded by immigrant Slavic culture. She first became aware of the culture of her ancestors through the work of groups such as the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center and the Rusin Association. She is now active in the Rusin movement, serving as vice-president of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center and vice-president of the National Capital Chapter of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society. Since its establishment in 1996, she has been chair of the judging panel for the Aleksander Dukhnovych Prize for Rusin literature, which is awarded annually to an author who has made a significant contribution to creative literature in the Rusin language. She was a North American delegate to the Fourth, Fifth, and Seventh World Congresses of Rusins.

Elaine Rusinko is Associate Professor of Russian Language and Literature at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. She received a PH.D. in Russian language and literature from Brown University. Since 1988, she has been studying and writing about the Rusin literature of Subcarpathia and has published articles in scholarly journals in the US, Canada, and Europe. Her translation of a play by the Rusin “national awakener” Aleksander Dukhnovych, *Virtue is More Important than Riches*, was published in 1994.

## Festival of Nations—Volunteers Needed

This years theme is Ethnic Celebrations. Our committee has decided to focus our exhibit on the importance of water in our celebrations. This includes the celebration of Theophany/Epiphany, as well cleansing rituals etc.

In order to make this a first rate display we need the following assistance

- Creative, artistic people to help design the exhibit.
- Acquire mannequins - borrow or donated.
- Items to be used to display water, snow, ice etc.
- Volunteers to staff the booth.

Contact Kay Handley at 763-574-0658.

## Rusin Association on the Radio

Representatives from the Rusin Association, Karen Varian and Larry Goga, were guests on the Radio Ukraine show on January 29th, 2004. To listen to the program go to <http://www.kfai.org/programs/ukrradio.htm> and listen to archived programs. It will only be available on line until February 12.



## Rusin Association Annual Meeting

The Rusin Association held its annual meeting on Saturday, January 3, 2004. It was decided that the current Board of Directors will continue for another year. It was proposed that the by-laws be amended to reflect 2 year terms (currently 1 year) for the Board of Directors. This proposal will be voted on at our April 3rd meeting.

## Minneapolis Youth Learning Rusin Dance

Dean Poloka, Vice-President of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society, President of the Pittsburgh Chapter, and Choreographer for the Rusin folk dance group Slavjane, was in Minneapolis in November. He choreographed and taught the youth of St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral, ages 5 to 12, a Rusin dance—Od Ungvara.

The children performed the dance at the St. Mary's St. Nicholas Yolka Celebration in December. They will be showcasing their talents again for a special Family Traditions evening at St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral, Wednesday, February 11, 6:30 p.m. You will also be able to see them at the Rusin Association's Duchnovich Day Dinner in March.

Teachers—Greg Doten, Karen Kokosh-Doten and Karen Varian.

Dean also taught the Lipa Slovak Dancers lead by Don Pafko a Rusin dance. Hopefully this one will be ready to perform in 2005.

## Trembita

Published quarterly by the  
Rusin Association  
1817 121st Ave. N.E.  
Blaine, MN 55449  
Phone: 763-754-7463  
Email—Rusinmn@aol.com

Web site: <http://www.geocities.com/rusinmn/>

Letters and submissions of articles welcomed

Editor—Karen Varian

Contributions—Norm Larson

Board of Directors

Karen Varian—President  
Demeter Kokosh—Vice President  
Matt Dion—Secretary  
Barb Breza—Treasurer  
Larry Goga—Immediate Past President  
Frank Mihalik—Director  
Tom Sery—Director

This newsletter is published in an attempt to bring to the reader whatever news about our Rusin people we are able to find. You will note that our sources are varied and diversified.

## Upcoming Events

### **Saturday, February 14 - 10:30 am, Come and learn how to make Perohi**

St. John's Byzantine Catholic Church Hall, 22nd and 3rd St. N.E., Mpls.

### **Saturday, March 6—Annual Duchnovich Lecture and Dinner Fundraiser**

3:00 p.m.—“Without Literature a People cannot exist-Rusin Literature and Identity”

Lecture by Dr. Elaine Rusinko, St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral, 17th and 5th St. N.E., Mpls.

4:30 p.m.—Social hour followed by ethnic dinner and entertainment,

St. John's Byzantine Catholic Church, 22nd and 3rd St., Mpls.

Advanced ticket price \$18.00 adults, children 6 to 12 \$5.00, 5 and under free.

Volunteers needed to work in the kitchen serving food and clean up.

Contact Larry Goga at 763-595-9188 for tickets, information and to volunteer for a shift.

**Saturday April 3, 10:30 a.m.,** Regular Meeting followed by language classes, St. John's Church Hall.

**April 29-30, May 1-2—**Festival of Nations, St. Paul River Centre.

### **7th Annual Rusin Heritage Tour**

June 25-July 9—NOW BOOKING

Visit Rusin and Rusin cultural sites and events in Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine. Experience the fullness of Rusin Culture. For more information or the complete itinerary and costs, contact Karen Varian at [Rusinmn@aol.com](mailto:Rusinmn@aol.com) or 763-754-7463

### **2nd Annual Lemko Heritage Tour**

August 12-26—NOW BOOKING

This tour is specially designed to experience Rusin culture in Lemkovyna, southeast Poland. For more information or to receive the itinerary and costs, contact [ns.revak@verizon.net](mailto:ns.revak@verizon.net) or call the Carpatho-Rusyn Society at 412-749-9899.

**FIRST CLASS**

**Rusin Association**  
1817 121st Ave. N.E.  
Blaine, MN 55449