

## Looking for Junior Tamburitza Festival Photos

**PITTSBURGH, PA** - We are creating a special commemorative program book for the 50th Anniversary of the CFU Junior Tamburitza Festival which will be held in Chicago, IL the weekend of July 1-3, 2016. Therefore, we are asking individuals who have festival photos dating from the beginning, 1967 through approximately 1995, to please share those with us.

If you have any festival photos from those years, we kindly ask that you scan and email them as soon as you are able to Derek Hohn, Director of Fraternal Programs at derekhohn@croatianfraternunion.org.

**Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras**  
National Secretary  
Treasurer

### SAVE THE DATE...

## Featuring Zadnja Stanica

**CLEVELAND, OH** - Event: Sounds of Croatian Tamburitza Music, in the Croatian Cultural Garden, sponsored by The American Croatian Lodge "Kardinal A. Stepinac" featuring Zadnja Stanica, from Steelton, PA.

Join us for an afternoon of music, food and dancing, Saturday, June 18 from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Cost: Free-Donations accepted. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. Parking: Martin Luther King Blvd. and East Blvd. Security will be provided.

For further information, please contact Branka Malinar at 440-316-7211.

**Suzanne Jerin/Lodge 995**

### SAVE THE DATE!

## CFU Sports and Cultural National and Regional Schedule

**May 13 - 15**

CFU National Bowling Tournament  
Bell Wick Bowl  
Hubbard, OH  
Hosted by  
"St. George" Lodge 66  
Youngstown, OH

**June 3 - 5**

National Golf Tournament  
Summer Fest  
Peek 'n Peak Resort  
Clymer, NY

## Association of Croatian American Professionals First In-Person Conference

**WASHINGTON, DC** - The First In-Person Conference of the Association of Croatian American Professionals (ACAP) held in Washington, DC on April 21 and 22 was a resounding success. It was a privilege for me to participate with 210 Croatians who all showed their commitment to network, share knowledge, and foster new friendships over two days. The group was about 90 per cent Croatian Americans, however, the twenty-five plus Croatians from Canada and Zagreb gave the conference more of a true global dimension and really enhanced the dialogue of further international collaboration.

ACAP President Marko Zoretic and Croatian Ambassador Josko Paro welcomed the 200 plus attendees to a wonderful reception at the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia on Thursday night with tamburitza music led by Tom Vesolich and his musical ensemble. It was a night of Croatian wine, Plavac Mali and Posip flowing, with new friendships being formed and the "One Global Croatia" theme playing out real-time in person.

ACAP Vice President and the President of the organizing committee Dr. Steve Pavletic said, "This is a very historical meeting, totally oriented towards the future and one can feel it in the air." There were many Croatian Fraternal Union (CFU) members there and CFU National President Edward Pazo gave a warm welcoming speech on Friday morning and shared some definitive highlights about the CFU organization, too.

Former Senator Mark Begich, was the featured speaker on Friday and gave the receptive audience a captivating and entertaining mix of politics Alaska-style, with insights into his days as a U.S. Senator. It was very interesting and inspiring to hear him speak of his father, the first Croatian American Congressman, Nick Begich, and his political achievements. Begich, the first Croatian American U.S. Senator, shared his sincere appreciation for all the Croatian support and interest in his candidacy and victory. He spoke glowingly of his visits to Croatia while serving in the U.S. Senate and mentioned his participation in the annual Ron Brown Summit in Croatia as another Senate highlight.

The conference highlighted seven different panels to showcase Croatian Americans' talent, success and commitment within the fields: National Diaspora Organizations; Future of the U.S.- Croatia Relations; Entrepreneurship and BioTechnology; Medicine - Focus on Cancer and Health; Croatian Space Program; Croatian Arts

and Entertainment in the USA; Legal Topics-Immigration and Real Estate.

It was a high honor for me to be part of the U.S. Croatian Relations panel moderated by Ambassador Josko Paro. This politically focused panel included former US Ambassador to Croatia James Foley, the U.S. State Department's Hoyt Yee, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasian Affairs, former Croatian diplomat and Foreign Minister Miomir Zuzul, and Senator Mark Begich.

The political panel had a very substantive discussion about the double taxation challenge between the USA and Croatia as one of the major barriers to

stronger influx of investments and businesses to Croatia and vice versa. The significance of the floating Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) terminal proposed for the Krk area was a major topic. It was very encouraging to hear that Croatian Canadians in Toronto are involved in the potential financing for this LNG project.

Lastly, it was brought up that the Bosnian Croat community still needs our support and involvement and a few National Federation of Croatian American (NFCA) projects were mentioned in that regard.

Musician Nenad Bach, founder of the Croatian World Network (CROWN), energized the attendees with his message that we need to further develop the means and media that serve



**AT THE ACAP CONFERENCE**, from left, CFU National Vice President/Member Services Franjo Bertovic, NFCACF Public Affairs Director Joe Foley, President of the Republic of Croatia Hon. Kolinda Grabar Kitarovic, CFU National President Edward W. Pazo, Croatian Honorary Consul to Pittsburgh Dr. Marion Vujevich; and back row, from left, President, Croatian American Bar Association Mauro Viskovic and Attorney Lydia Antoncic.



**STEVE RUKAVINA**, NFCACF Vice President; Mark Begich, former U.S. Senator, Alaska; and Edward W. Pazo, CFU National President.



**TAKING PART IN THE ACAP CONFERENCE**, from left, CFU National Vice President/Member Services Franjo Bertovic, CFU National Secretary/Treasurer Bernadette Luketich-Sikaras, CFU National President Edward W. Pazo and Former Croatian Foreign Minister Miomir Zuzul.



**ASSOCIATION OF CROATIAN AMERICAN PROFESSIONALS (ACAP)** at inaugural meeting April 21-22 at Washington, DC.

our community to enhance our message and communication. Nenad challenged the audience to globally create more economic leverage by our community committing to buy Croatian products. His theme that art, and especially music, is a cohesive force in a progressive society is spot on, like his beautiful song from the 1990s, "Can We Go Higher." Nenad has been leading the effort to make direct flights to Croatia from the USA happen.

There were so many other speakers and panelists and there's just not enough space to do justice to mention all of them here. ACAP folks were very impressed with the special guest from Zagreb, Davorin Stetner, and all his progressive work with the Kreator Group, and his media and digital achievements and also with the Croatian Business Angels Network. Similarly, Professor Slobodan Bosanac of Swiss Space System Zagreb and Zoran Kahric, Chief Engineer at NASA, convinced us that the Croatian space program has a bright future.

Dr. Steven Pavletic and his experience at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda could help his colleagues in Croatia battle cancer, which would also foster research in this utmost important area of biomedicine. Those types of professional collaborations must be further developed. Successful scientists turned entrepreneurs, such as Dr. Boro Drolulic of Lentigen in Maryland and Dr. Dubravko Kicic of the Biocenter in Zagreb, discussed specific ideas to take this field of medicine forward in Croatia and make it a focal point of economic progress.

The Friday sessions closed at The Embassy Row Hotel with excitement as President Kolinda Grabar Kitarovic visited, after a busy day in the U.N., to extend her well wishes. The Croatian President delivered an excellent and inspiring ten-minute speech. She thanked everyone for their efforts and challenged the Croatian diaspora to be even more involved with their time and talent to further help develop Croatia. The gathered Croatians were so appreciative of the President's visit to this conference and her willingness to meet, greet and allow pictures to be taken with her at the meeting.

The Embassy's Friday night's reception featured entertainment by musician Nenad Bach, guitarist Dr. Miroslav Loncar and tambura star, Tom Vesolich. The ACAP celebration continued past 11 p.m. that night to put a little more icing on the ACAP cake.

Successful conferences do not happen at random and it was very impressive to see all the volunteers that made this event happen. The DC local Hrvatska Ura group and the Croatian Embassy staff are to be commended for all their wonderful organizing, preparation and dedicated work. Both CFU National President Ed Pazo and NFCA President Mijo Radocaj were there both days to show support and to network and were part of many dialogues about more cooperation and collaboration on many fronts.

This first ACAP conference has set in motion a new era for more global Croatian collaboration and proposed coordination and it's up to our community to build on this opportunity. Please visit their website at [www.CroAmPro.com](http://www.CroAmPro.com) for more information.

**Steve Rukavina/Lodge 1976**