

# Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation Newsletter

Published for those interested in preserving the memory of St. Nicholas Church, N.S.

## PCHF Exploring Partnership with Senator John Heinz History Center



In early March, PCHF Board Members met with Andy Masich, President and C.E.O. of the Senator John Heinz History Center and members of his staff. We were given an opportunity to convey our ideas for a potential display in regard to St. Nicholas Croatian Church, North Side, the Mala Jaska neighborhood and Croatian culture.

We supplied their staff with a list of artifacts and a CD containing a collection of photographs of artifacts from St. Nicholas Church, as well as various Croatian artifacts. We discussed the possibility of the Heinz History Center taking over our archives.

Anne Madarasz, Vice-President of Museum Exhibits gave us a tour of a section of the History Center that houses specific cultural items and

stories that go with them. It seems like a display of St. Nicholas Church and related Croatian culture would fit well in that section. John Paul Deley, Director of Thomas & Katherine Detre Library & Archives gave a tour of the archive section that keeps books and other archival materials safe and secure. Viewing this section of the museum that is not normally available to the general public was a unique and enlightening experience.

Going forward, we hope that this will be the first of many meetings with the goal to designate the Senator John Heinz History Center as the official depository of our archives, artifacts from St. Nicholas Church, as well as the collection site for related objects, images and archival material related to Croatian immigration and life in this region.

By Steve Willing

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## Memorial Day Service Set for May 30 at Cemetery



PCHF invites everyone to join former parishioners and friends of St. Nicholas Church, N.S., at the Saint Nicholas Cemetery located on Hahn Road, Pittsburgh, PA at 11 AM on Monday, May 30, 2016, to pay tribute to the 27 North Side Church parishioners who were killed or listed missing in action during their service to our country.

For more than a decade, this beautiful and solemn service has been held at the North Side Church Cemetery, and we urge you to spend a half hour with us to reflect on all those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. Participating in this service could help to make your festivities on this day more meaningful.

We are hoping Deacon Greg Jelinek of Most Holy Name Parish will join us again this year to offer scriptural readings and reflections about the importance of this day of remembrance. American flags will be distributed to the attendees; a moving eulogy will be given; votive candles will be lit and the bell tolled as the names of each deceased veteran is called. The ceremony will close with the playing of Taps and the singing of "God Bless America" led by Bernice Goyak.

Please invite your family members and friends to join you at this most important St. Nicholas Memorial Service.

By Susan Petrick

# St. Nicholas 3 Bags of Gold Donations



A special thank-you is extended to those who have so generously donated to the Saint Nicholas 3 Bags of Gold Fund in memory of deceased loved ones of Croatian ancestry.

We want to take this time to acknowledge all our donors:

Josie Cote  
Virginia Gundy  
Helen Kowalski  
Paula Majersky

Charles & Bernice Follen  
Joseph & Mary Iski  
Anna Leighliter  
Jean Pascarella



Ron Pavlechko  
Jim Santucci  
Peter Sladack  
Bill Srsic

Dennis & Susan Petrick  
Steven Sibenik  
William Sladack  
Bill & Claire Vergot

The funds collected help PCHF to continue updating the [www.stnicholasns.org](http://www.stnicholasns.org) website, sending the PCHF newsletters and covering liability insurance costs.

May God bless you for your kindness and generosity!

## Note Cards of the New Our Lady of Lourdes Statue at Historic Site

If you've visited or driven by the St. Nicholas Church Historic Site, you may have seen the new statue of Our Lady of Lourdes. It is a beautiful and appropriate addition to the St. Nicholas Church Historic Site. A statue of Our Lady of Lourdes was sought after for several months. With visitors leaving holy cards of the Blessed Mother, as well as crucifixes and floral vases at the site, it was obvious that others were also interested in having some representation of St. Nicholas Church placed in the indented area of the seating wall at this historic site. Other statues of the Blessed Mother were explored, but there was always something that dissuaded PCHF Board members from purchasing any of those statues. When one of PCHF's members caught sight of the Lady of Lourdes statue in the Sacred Heart Religious storefront in Bloomfield, PA, it was obvious that this was the statue of Mary we'd been seeking. The emotion depicted in the eyes of the statue of the Blessed Virgin mimics a sadness that seems to reflect the long saga and fate of St. Nicholas Church, N.S. and the Grotto that were demolished by the Diocese. Made by a manufacturer just outside of Pittsburgh, this very precious statue arrived just in time for the feast day of Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of St. Nicholas Church, N.S. On the eve of December 6, the new statue of Our Lady of Lourdes was surrounded with luminarias, in memory of the luminarias that yearly graced the steps and Grotto of St. Nicholas Church, N.S., as had been part of the celebration of that day.

We believe that PCHF Co-chairman, Steve Willing, captured the solemnity of the new Lady of Lourdes statue in his photographs of the December 6 event. To share both the images from the 2015 candle light service and a photo of the original Grotto and Blessed Mother statute, the PCHF directed the creation of note cards. One can purchase these note cards via our website's store or by utilizing the enclosed order form. Other note cards of St. Nicholas Church's interior and exterior can be ordered from our website as well.



By Susan Petrick



# Luminaria Light up St. Nicholas Church Historic Site at Annual Candlelight Prayer Service

Faithful supporters of Saint Nicholas Croatian Church, N.S. gathered on December 6, 2015, the Feast Day of Saint Nicholas, as they have year after year on the exact spot where St. Nicholas Church, N.S., once stood, honoring its memory and historical significance.



Over two dozen luminarias that were used at prior St. Nicholas vigil services shined brightly in memory of St. Nicholas Church. PCHF Co-chairman, Bill Vergot, dressed as Saint Nicholas, was in attendance waving to passing motorists on Route 28 as they honked their horns in support.

About a dozen passionate supporters gathered to pray and remember Saint Nicholas on his feast day.



PCHF Board member, Bernice Goyak, led the group in prayer and song. Silent Night was sung in both English and Croatian. A condensed history of Saint Nicholas, the Church's patron saint, was read by Susan Petrick. Co-chairman, Stephen Willing, read aloud Luke 1: 26-33, a biblical reflection of the Annunciation. Bernice Goyak then led the group in the Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, with Susan Petrick reciting Luke 2: 4-13, the Biblical reflection of the Nativity. The Croatian hymn, Radujte Se Narodi, closed out the solemn ceremony.

PCHF plans to continue this service each and every year on this sacred ground. Please make plans to attend next year.

By Steve Willing



## Seeking Parishioner's Photos for St. Nicholas Website



In our fall newsletter, we announced the unveiling of the beautiful, redesigned [www.stnicholasns.org](http://www.stnicholasns.org) website. We hope you've had an opportunity to view the website and its compelling home page featuring a large, vivid, color photograph of the Church and the unique mosaic above the main entrance proclaiming St. Nicholas N.S. Church as the "First Croatian Catholic Parish in America — the Mother Croatian Parish".



A brochure with the Church's history and architecture, including the truth of why St. Nicholas was demolished, can easily be downloaded from the site as a keepsake. Copies of this brochure are freely available for visitors at the St. Nicholas Church Historic Site.

Other links in the website include: current news, PCHF newsletters, a store to purchase St. Nicholas merchandise, events calendar, a membership application and ways to donate, feasibility studies and news articles from 2000 to present. One of the main features of the new website is the collection of over 550 photographs displayed in the 15 different gallery albums — photos that have special meaning and bring back memories from our past. These photos include

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## Seeking Parishioners' Photos for St. Nicholas Website continued from page 3



the Mala Jaska neighborhood, clergy and religious, St. Nicholas School, homes along E. Ohio Street, the 2003 Earth Day Event (when hundred of visitors came to tour St.

Nicholas Church) and many more albums. But it is the “Parishioners and Family” album that we believe is the most important, as it was the parishioners who made St. Nicholas a parish — *they*

were its heart and soul. We have gathered 67 photos for the *Parishioners and Family* Album. But our goal is to have every parish family represented with a photograph.

We have explored every possible avenue to gather photographs for the website gallery, but surely there are more old photographs lingering in attics or just hiding in old, dusty,



photo albums. Please take some time to review old photo collections or inquire among friends and relatives as to if they might have a photo or two that could be included in one of the St. Nick’s website albums. Pictures of Weddings, Communions, Confirmations, St. Nicholas School graduations, Church Bazaars and other such event celebrations are especially appreciated.

To submit your photos, please scan and email them to [pchf@stnicholasns.org](mailto:pchf@stnicholasns.org) or send your original photograph to PCHF, Box 5812, Pittsburgh, PA 15209, along with your name and address for its return. Or simply give us a call at 412 821-3725 to discuss how we may include your precious photograph(s) on our website, without harm to the original.

By Susan Petrick



## Annual St. Nicholas Day Banquet Fills Javor Hall

Friends, families, and supporters of St. Nicholas Croatian Church, North Side, gathered at Javor Hall on December 5, 2015, the eve of St. Nicholas Feast Day, to celebrate the annual St. Nicholas Day Banquet. A large crowd of 90 were greeted at the door by PCHF Board members, Bernice Goyak and Rose Willard. Corresponding Secretary, Susan Petrick, and Lynne Corsello were busy selling St. Nicholas note cards, post cards and beautiful, brass, Christmas ornaments of St. Nicholas Church. Nick Simunovic was ready at the bar serving patrons their favorite beverages, including the tasty Croatian beer, Karlovacko. Tables were decorated with red and green placemats with various laminated pictures of St. Nicholas Church displayed at the ends of the tables. And the walls of Javor were adorned with Christmas wreaths and duplicate copies of the three interpretive panels from the St. Nicholas Church Historic Site.



## St. Nick Banquet continued from page 4

Nova Catering was on hand again serving a delicious mix of stuffed cabbage, fried chicken, pierogies, and kielbasa. Homemade desserts were provided by PCHF board members.

Saint Nicholas made his annual rounds handing out chocolate filled gold coins, and Darlene Harris, Pittsburgh City Councilwoman, District 1, stopped by to say hello.

Co-chairs, Bill Vergot and Stephen Willing, recapped the PCHF-related events of 2015 including the June 20 PA Historical Marker Dedication & Ribbon Cutting that took place at the St. Nicholas Church Historic Site. They explained that the historic site is visited regularly and invited the guests to encourage friends and family members to take the 10-minute walk from the Penn Brewery parking lot to the site or to make an even quicker trip by bicycle. The historic site walkway connects to both the North Shore trails, the 31st Street Bridge and the William Lieberth Memorial Pedestrian Bridge. Future plans of PCHF to have a plaque fabricated and installed at the children's area of the St. Nicholas Cemetery on Hahn Road was also given. This plaque would memorialize all of the children buried in the cemetery.

Three lucky winners took home door prizes from the St. Nicholas Banquet. The first prize was a framed print of St. Nicholas Church. The second was a framed print of Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto. The third prize was a brass Christmas tree ornament of St. Nicholas Church.



The beautiful voices of the Javor Pittsburgh Ensemble filled the banquet hall, entertaining guests with Croatian melodies. The Mikey Dee Band played throughout the evening with the dance floor filling up quickly, and Christmas carols were sung in Croatian.

We look forward to seeing you next December!

Article and photographs by Steve Willing





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Address Service Requested

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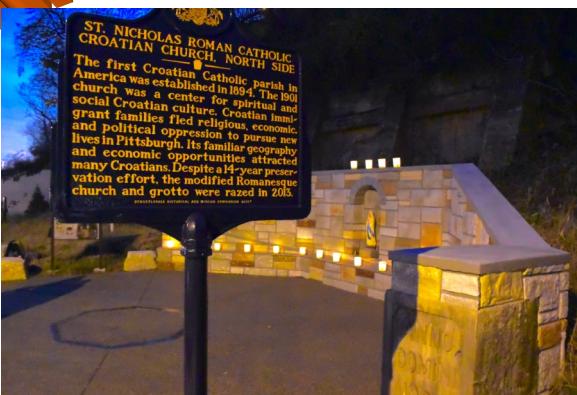
**How to Reach Us**

**E-mail us at [pchf@stnicholasns.org](mailto:pchf@stnicholasns.org)**

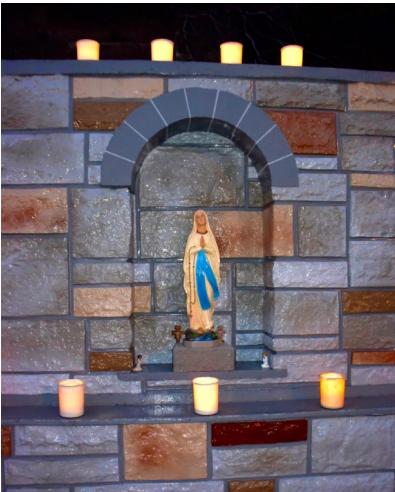
You may call any of the following Executive Committee Members by telephone as shown below:

Bernice Goyak	412 335-2780
Bill Kurtek	724 625-9145
Susan Petrick	412 821-3725
Pat Polaritz	412 231-4324
Francis Schmitt	412 322-8223
Jane Sestric	412 231-8134
Bill Vergot	724 941-8673
Steve Willing	412 527-5764

# Note Cards



**A**—State Marker & Our Lady of Lourdes Statue - 2015

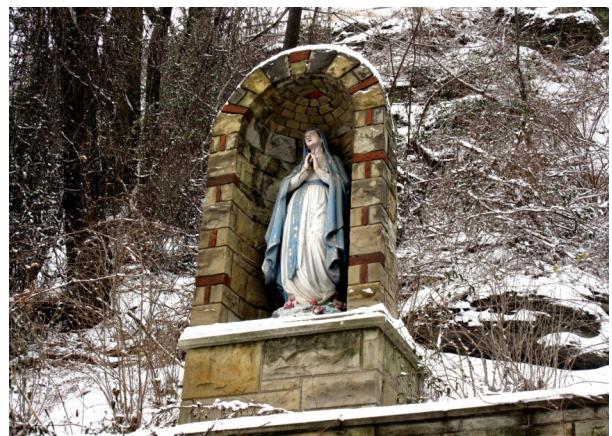


**C**—Our Lady of Lourdes Statue—close up—2015

**Note Cards  
size -  
5" x 7"**



**B**—Our Lady of Lourdes Statue—wide angle - 2015



**D**—Original Grotto & Our Lady of Lourdes Statue

## NOTE CARD ORDER FORM—2016

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>A - \$2.00 ea. + \$0.50 postage</b> (State Marker & Lady of Lourdes Statue) - 2015 | Qty. _____ |
| <b>B - \$2.00 ea. + \$0.50 postage</b> (Lady of Lourdes Statue—wide angle - 2015 )    | Qty. _____ |
| <b>C - \$2.00 ea. + \$0.50 postage</b> (Lady of Lourdes Statue—close up - 2015)       | Qty. _____ |
| <b>D - \$2.00 ea. + \$0.50 postage</b> ("Original" Grotto & Lady of Lourdes Statue)   | Qty. _____ |
| <b>E - \$ 9.00 (Set of 4 )</b> 1 of each of the 4 note cards including postage        | Qty. _____ |

**Amount enclosed**\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_