

Welcome



Dear Friends,

As the president of C-RS, I believe that the most effective way to preserve our Rusyn identity is to honor it through learning, tracing one's genealogy, discovering more about our shared history, and championing the accomplishments of one another.

For very complex historical reasons, we cannot build an identity based on "us" versus "the other". We cannot blame Ukrainians for the post World War II deportations when neither side actually held the reins of power. To perpetuate these historical half-truths is divisive and works against our efforts to educate ourselves and others about who we are. We are better than that.

We are Rusyn, and we are proud of our heritage. We have our place in a troubled history, but we must not marginalize ourselves by attacking other groups and therefore defining ourselves by what we are NOT. The events surrounding the deportations are well-documented; if we accept those facts, then we can move forward into the future.

During my tenure at C-RS, my colleagues and I have made a concerted effort to articulate the facts of history and the external forces that enacted many of the events. Our published articles and events have explored the reality that dominant empires, religious hierarchies, and chain migration to America are just some of the complex factors that coalesced to form political divisions among people whose ancestors originated from the same small villages in the Carpathians.

At C-RS, we attempt to pass on legitimate information through our *New Rusyn Times* newsletter and the carefully sourced content on our website, *C-RS Connection*, blog and Facebook page. We intend to provide a balanced platform from which our members and others interested in Rusyn heritage can find true and balanced information about our shared history and culture. We hope that it helps Rusyns focus on everything that is wonderful about our heritage and culture, and use that ancestral pride to better themselves and forward their interests and those of our people.

Those with Facebook accounts and interest in their Rusyn heritage may have seen the postings of some vehement social media "activists" of the Rusyn and Ukrainian organizations or certain ad hoc virtual groups. The strident tone displayed by some of these groups is alarming, not just because of the meanness of the arguments, but also because some of the most vocal critics appear to be seriously uninformed. They miss or ignore the true forces that created the identity split that today principally affects the Lemkos. Those who like to argue or bully will pick and choose episodes from history to depict the other side as "the evil other." This is a silly game that can be played out endlessly, but not successfully.

Simple narratives may be accepted and forwarded, including the belief that Rusyns who do not participate in these heated discussions embrace the opposite opinion. The use of a pejorative term for those who do not wish to argue says more about the name callers than their targets. Such viewpoints may be ruled by emotion rather than by reason or the understanding of a complex and tragic history.

Since we neither condone nor support this type of behavior, some members of our society have been attacked by more vocal Facebook activists. These individuals do not represent C-RS or participate in our organization. If persons researching their ancestral roots stumble upon a forum where such negative behavior is being demonstrated, they could unfortunately be deterred, which would be very unfortunate. This behavior does nothing to build and grow our community, and the dynamics can be potentially harmful for the longevity of our cultural heritage.

It is possible (and preferable) to be open to respectful dialogue and opinions from "opposing" sides with basic respect and decorum. People who listen to others even when they do not agree, are worth listening to and conversing with. Those who feel the need to degrade others while demonstrating selective or faulty historical knowledge become cultural charlatans. They are the anti-culture, and their actions can tear down their own people and discourage others from getting involved in cultural preservation. These people are easily identified by their simplistic and divisive narratives, pejorative nomenclature, and caustic and bullying social media attacks.

Join me in focusing instead on our mission to promote and better understand Rusyn history and culture.

Take care,

Maryann Sivak, C-RS National President
president@c-rs.org

Welcome Newest C-RS Members!

Welcome newest C-RS members. The following list of names reflects new members who have joined since September 15, 2019. Please review the list - you just might find someone you know.

Marie Clark, Bethel Park PA
Nancy Flanagan, Virginia Beach VA
Robert Joseph Gazo, Sterling Heights MI
Joseph Havrilla, Malvern PA
Joanne Yablonsky, Alptos CA

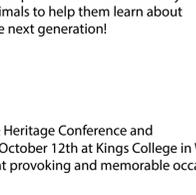
Alida Yodlowsky, Fuquay Varina NC
Alison Zaborniak, Marvin NC
Mark and Barbara Zvoloski, Port Washington WI

Again, we welcome these new members and look forward to a lasting relationship. We hope they become involved by bringing their talents and skills to the C-RS.

C-RS Chapter Event Highlights

Cleveland Chapter

September 8, 2019 found about 30 attendees transported to Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine through the magic of pictures and commentary, thanks to Paul Burik, Cleveland Chapter member, who traveled with John Righetti earlier this year on the Carpatho-Rusin Heritage Tour. More we are able to see the homeland of their ancestors as Paul went from village to village.



We were all "transported" to Sanok, Zyndranowa, and Krynica. Then on to Kamjanna and Orjabyňa, the homeland of many immigrants to the Cleveland area. Also, included were Habura, Medzilborce, Krasny Brod, Uzhorod, Mukachevo, and Kosice.

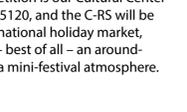
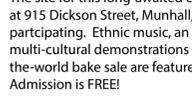
While in Presov, Paul was able to visit the grave of his great aunt, Irena Anna (Burik) Nevetica, who was a poet, playwright and political activist at a time when this was not something a woman did. We were able to meet her earlier this year when Paul presented her remarkable story.

Paul was able to locate and photograph the statues of Alexander Duchnovich in Presov, Uzhorod and Mukachevo, even though they were not highlighted as part of the tour.

We also met the camel, Abu Dhabi and the rabbit, Kookoo, two stuffed animals entrusted to Paul. They were photographed in the various locations along the trip. These photos will make their way into a book for the grandchildren of the owners of the travelling animals to help them learn about the home of their ancestors. What a special gift to hand down to the next generation!

Eastern PA Chapter

The Eastern PA Chapter hosted their 7th Annual Rusyn Genealogy & Heritage Conference and commemorated the 10th Anniversary of their chapter on Saturday, October 12th at Kings College in Wilkes Barre, PA. This well attended, day-long event proved to be a thought provoking and memorable occasion for all!



Save the Dates

Sunday October 20, Parma, OH

The C-RS Cleveland chapter is hosting a general meeting with guest speaker John Righetti from 2-4 pm at the Parma Snow Library, 2121 Snow Road, Parma, OH.



John Righetti is knowledgeable on many things Rusyn and he will be presenting about past funeral customs. This can be interesting from a genealogy point of view as funerals have changed over the years. Do you have any stories about funerals you attended many years ago? Do you have any funeral pictures or funeral announcements sent from the "Old Country?" Come, learn and share. Free event.

Saturday, October 26, Munhall, PA

On Saturday, October 26, the age-old question on the lips of many families and just about every baker will finally be answered: "Who makes the best nut roll?" The Pittsburgh Folk Festival will kick off its new initiative, "Our Roots," with a fun bake-off called Rollin' Around the 'Burgh with Nutz N'at. It's the perfect opportunity to roll out grandma's traditional recipe, but then again, some contestants may put a spin on tradition to create a tasty treat that is truly original.



The site for this long-awaited competition is our Cultural Center at 915 Dickson Street, Munhall, PA 15120, and the C-RS will be participating. Ethnic music, an international holiday market, multi-cultural demonstrations and - best of all - an around-the-world bake sale are featured in a mini-festival atmosphere. Admission is FREE!

Rollin' Around the 'Burgh with Nutz N'at is open to EVERYONE - Juniors under 15 and Seniors 16 through adult. Entries must contain nuts in a rolled pastry dough, and will be judged on original flavor, filling, creativity and how the recipe and personal story bring to life a family value, tradition, memory, etc. Judging will take place between 1 and 2 p.m.

If you are into baking, learning about other cultures, or just enjoy eating delicious pastries, you will want to be available on October 26 from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. to check out one of a kind competition that will finally settle the debate of who's nut roll is the BEST! For more information about entering the competition email ehjgpggh@gmail.com or call 412-657-6364.

Saturday, November 2, Plano, TX

Join the C-RS Dallas for "Texans Touring the Carpatho-Rusyn Homeland" from 2 - 4:30 pm at the Environmental Education Center, 116 W. Plano Pkwy, Plano, Texas 75093. Six members of our chapter (from all over Texas) will discuss their recent tour of Slovakia, Poland, and Ukraine. Come and see their photos of Rusyn landmarks and personal ancestral villages! Free admission.



Sunday, November 3, Little Falls, New Jersey

The New Jersey Chapter of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society cordially invites you to their Annual Heritage Celebration Dinner from 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm at Russian Hall, 4-6 Woodhull Avenue, Little Falls, New Jersey. Dinner will be served at 1pm.

The John Mihalasky Award will be presented to Honoree Luba Czerhoniak Fedash. Luba was born in the Lemko village of Lishchyny, in the Carpathian Mountains in Poland. As a child, she experienced the horrors of the Nazi occupation of her homeland, followed by the forced resettlement policy of Operation Vistula (Akcja Wisla). She is the author of two books, *Blossoms on a Rooftop* and *Those Fleeting Years*.

Other highlights include "Kontakty," a musical duo featuring Joseph Jurasi and Maria Jurasi for your listening and dancing pleasure, historical/genealogical exhibits by Kathryn & Tom Peters, basket raffle, 50-50 and various delicious ethnic foods.

Directions: Route 46 to Route 23 S., left at third light (Bradford), Russian Hall on the corner of Bradford and Woodhull. Public transportation - Bus #195.

For additional information, please visit c-rs.org/events or call Jim Huratiak at 267-421-3210.

Sunday, November 10, Wallington, NJ

The C-RS New Jersey Chapter and the Raritan Valley Slavic Cultural & Heritage Society present the premier screening of the documentary *Ostatni Gorale / The Gorals: Highlanders of Carpathia*. The screening will take place at the Cracovia Manor in Wallington, New Jersey at 2:00 PM. There will be a Q&A session afterwards along with a catered reception included. Cash bar.



Tickets \$23 - Buy tickets online in advance (no registration). Tickets may be available at the door - cash only. Please ensure your seat by buying tickets online in advance securely by credit card at <https://ostatnigorale.pl/tickets/wallington/>.

The film presents portraits of several Polish highlanders who hold the same professions as their ancestors over the past several centuries. These are people whose characters are shaped when confronted with nature, inaccessible mountains, weather changes and animals. The high peaks of the Tatra mountains become more than just a silent observer of our heroes. Around the mountains, everything changes and they stand unshaken. Is the culture of Podhale highlanders sustainable, or could these be the final times for these people living this lifestyle in the mountains? <http://ostatnigorale.pl/>

Movie trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrPLAHL0Vb8>

Facebook event page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2378292952383948/>

Sunday, November 10, Parma, OH

John Righetti and Maria Silvestri will share their new documentary *The Resurrection of a Nation* and answer questions from the audience from 2-4 pm at the Parma Snow Library, 2121 Snow Road, Parma, OH.



The 20th century was the roughest in history for the Carpatho-Rusyns of Central Europe. After World War II, when they were declared Ukrainians by the new Communist regimes in every country where they lived, Carpatho-Rusyns and elsewhere became extinct overnight -- and this was their existence for more than 50 years.

But with the 1989 Velvet Revolution, led by the playwright and former dissident Vaclav Havel, Carpatho-Rusyn ethnicity revived in every country... including the United States! This is the story of that revival. *Воскресенія народа* —the Resurrection of a Nation.

Enjoy this documentary, filmed in Slovakia, Canada, and the United States, made especially for the 30th anniversary of the Fall of Communism, and discuss it LIVE with the producers and other viewers. Free - Open to all - Bring a friend!!

Saturday, November 16, Asheville, NC

The C-RS Western NC Branch will honor veterans with a presentation of *Our Flag Still Waves* from 1:30-3:30 pm at Montreat College School of Adult and Graduate Studies, 29 Turtle Creek Drive, Asheville, NC.

The film features Michael Strank, a Carpatho-Rusyn born in Jarabina, Slovakia who lived in Johnstown, PA. Michael was a US Marine who was one of the six men who placed the American flag on Iwo Jima at that memorable event on February 23, 1945.

The event is free and all are welcome. Refreshments will be served. Reservations are necessary as seating is limited. For more information, contact Bonnie at: bb@c-rs.org or call 440 729-2045.

Sunday, November 17, Seattle, Washington

John Righetti and Maria Silvestri will screen and discuss their documentary film, *The Resurrection of a Nation*, on Sunday, November 17, 2:00 - 4:30, at the Columbia City Public Library in Seattle, Washington. Further information and RSVP: ak@c-rs.org.

Saturday, November 23, Jermyn, PA

The C-RS Eastern PA Chapter presents "Winter in the Carpathian Mountains" at 11:00 am at St. Michael's Orthodox Church-Church Hall, 305 Walnut St, Jermyn, PA 18433.

How did our Rusyn ancestors survive during the very long, very cold winter months in the Carpathian Mountains? How did they stay warm and what did they wear? What did they eat and how were the foods prepared? What activities kept them busy and what social activities took place?

Bonnie Burke, C-RS Southeastern Branch Coordinator, will cover the period between the Feast of the Nativity and the Feast of the Resurrection through photos and discussion. Breakfast buffet will be served at 9:30 AM. RSVP Contact information: **Jim Zeleniak 570-862-4914 jim_zeleniak@yahoo.com | Sharon Jarow 610-759-2628 shangp@rcn.com.

News contributions are welcome!
Please submit your content to am@c-rs.org.

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