



CARPATHO-RUSYN SOCIETY

For Immediate Release

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Carpatho-Rusyn Society's 15th anniversary to bring the world to Pittsburgh in October

In an era when many ethnic clubs are closing their doors and ethnic fraternal membership is waning, the Carpatho-Rusyn Society will celebrate its growth at 15th anniversary events that will bring people from across the nation and culture from across the ocean to Pittsburgh.

October 9 through 11, this national organization based in Munhall, Pa, now the largest exclusively cultural Rusyn organization in North America, will host a number of cultural events open to the public in celebration of its 15th anniversary.

Oct.9

The Society will open its first international exhibit of art in its National Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural and Educational Center, 915 Dickson St. in Munhall. "Dana Kyndrova: Podkarpatska Rus'" will feature the black and white photographic work of Dana Kyndrova, an artist in Prague, Czech Republic. Her photos capture scenes from present-day Transcarpathia, the Rusyn-inhabited region of Ukraine.

Open 7-9 p.m. Admission is free.

Oct. 10

The society will host its first ever National Carpatho-Rusyn Festival, a celebration of many aspects of Rusyn culture. Also at the National Center, the event will be held from 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Various booths will provide a variety of traditional Rusyn foods, and Rusyn-American artists will display and demonstrate traditional Rusyn crafts from icon writing, to lacemaking, to weaving to pysanky (Easter egg decorating), to woodburning. Rusyn imported and domestic ethnic items will be available including woodcarved items, embroideries, t-shirts, CDs, and more.

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There will be continual Rusyn entertainment by performers, choirs and ensembles from throughout western Pennsylvania as well as Ohio and Arizona, with two professional performing groups originally from Slovakia. Admission is \$5 with children 17 and under admitted free.

Simultaneously, the Society will offer the Rusyn Bus Tour of Pittsburgh, a narrative tour that takes groups to four key sites in the development of Rusyn history nationally and internationally that are all in Pittsburgh, including Andy Warhol's boyhood home and a number of Rusyn Churches that were key sites in the development of the Rusyn experience. Tours will be offered from 1-4 p.m. and 4 -7 p.m. Cost is \$12.00 per person. Reservations are recommended.

In addition, a Rusyn walking tour of Munhall/Homestead will be available during the day which will highlight Rusyn historical and cultural sites in the area.

Oct. 11

The Society will hold a 15th anniversary banquet at which time it will award its first ever Michael Strank Award for Service. The award is named in honor of Michael Strank, a Carpatho-Rusyn immigrant to the United States from the Rusyn village of Orjabyna in Eastern Slovakia who was one of the soldiers who raised the U.S. flag on Iwo Jima in World War II.

The Carpatho-Rusyn Society was founded 15 years ago in Pittsburgh to bring Carpatho-Rusyn Americans together to keep their culture alive and evolving. From 8 people in Pittsburgh it has evolved to an organization with over 1,700 in the US and Canada and 10 chapters in many US metropolitan areas. It not only develops Carpatho-Rusyn culture in the Americas but supports its ongoing development in the Rusyn Homeland in Europe as well as provides humanitarian aid to the Rusyn territories in Europe.

The Carpatho-Rusyns are a small East Slavic group whose homeland is currently divided between Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Romania and Hungary. Not permitted to exist as a people under the Communist regimes, they have revived themselves as a community both in Europe and North America since the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe. Today Rusyns are recognized by all of the nations in which they live except for Ukraine. And the governments in these nations support their cultural activity.

There are about 1.2 million Carpatho-Rusyns in the world, with 600,000 living in the United States.

For more information on the 15th anniversary events, contact John Righetti at 412-749-0675 or president@c-rs.org.