

**92nd Annual Meeting of the Ohio Fraternal Congress
Comfort Inn
Mentor, Ohio
October 2-4, 2009**



Friday Evening, October 2, 2009

A short business meeting was held at 5:30 p.m. Alan Spilar called the meeting to order. Barbara Sekerak gave the opening prayer. Alan welcomed everyone to Mentor, OH. He and Sue Ann went over the schedule for the weekend. Several committees discussed last minute details. Robert Katricak discussed the slate of officers for the year 2009-10. Alan asked if there was any other business to come before the board. Hearing none the members in attendance unanimously adjourned the meeting. Barbara Sekerak closed the meeting with prayer.

The delegates then joined the board members for dinner at 6:15 p.m. After dinner the attendees were invited to the Hospitality Room. Alan served refreshments courtesy of the COF. Everyone participated in an ice breaker, "Deal or No Deal the Fraternal Way". Everyone seemed to enjoy this fraternal activity.

Saturday morning, October 3, 2009

The annual meeting was called to order by Alan Spilar, President, at 9:30 a.m. The flags were presented and the assembly sang our NATIONAL ANTHEM to open the meeting. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Walter Dudich, Sentinel. The invocation was given by Chaplain, Barbara Sekerak. President Spilar welcomed everyone to the 92nd annual meeting of the OFC.

Roll call was taken by secretary, Sue Ann M. Seich. All officers were present with the exception of Board Members Lillian Fratantonio and Ruth Benien, who were excused. The member societies were then read and 14 of the 35 societies that are members of the OFC were represented by one or more delegates. Donna Oros reported that there were 38 delegates from 14 societies present and eight guests.

There were ten past presidents in attendance: John M. Spilar, COF, Anna Mae Mannion, AMLA, Sue Ann M. Seich, FCSLA, Joseph V. Hocesvar, ASCU, Anthony Beno, NSS, Robert Gruszecki, UCT, Dean Burns, NSS, Jack F. Taphorn, COF, Dr. Cipriano B. Gomez, NSS and Robert Katricak, NSS.

There were no greetings or correspondence from other State Fraternal Congresses.

The president then asked for approval of the 91st Annual Meeting minutes. The motion to approve the minutes as they were presented was made by Dean Burns and seconded by Robert Katricak, all were in favor. He then asked for the reading of the 4th Officers Board Meeting's minutes. Sue Ann read the minutes from the previous evening. A motion to accept the minutes as read was made by Robert Gruszecki and seconded by Kathy Spilar, all were in favor.

The treasurer's report was presented in the annual booklet. A motion to accept was made by John Spilar and seconded by Anna Mae Mannion to approve the report subject to audit, all were in favor. The President then reported that no new legislation has been submitted to be shared.

The president then called upon the chairperson of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Dean Burns. Dean reported to the delegates that the Revised Bylaws were sent to all Board Members, Past Presidents, and Member Societies more than 90 days before the annual meeting for their approval. He then made a motion to accept the revised edition and it was seconded by Bob Gruszecki, all were in favor.

The president then called on Loretta Ballenger, First Vice President who represented us at the NFCA Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, for her report. Loretta reported on the meeting and thanked the OFC for allowing her to represent us. She then presented our President Spilar with the Gold Medal, the highest award, which we received for our participation in the "Go For The Gold" Program. The president in turn thanked Loretta for compiling all the information that was submitted to the NFCA that qualified us for this award.

A short break was taken to prepare for our first speaker. Sue Ann Seich introduced Karen Visocan, ESQ. who is the Compliance Officer for the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association whose Home Office is in Beachwood, Ohio. Karen's topic was "Compliance for Fraternal Recommenders". She spoke about three areas of interest which pertain to all Fraternal Organizations. Her presentation was welcomed and very informative. President Spilar presented Karen with our OFC pin and thanked her for taking time out of her busy schedule to speak to us.

President Spilar asked if there were any National Presidents in attendance. One National President was in attendance, Mary Ann S. Johaneck, FCSLA. President Spilar welcomed and recognized 7 First Timers who were in attendance at the meeting, Tom Welsh, COF, Audrey A. Schmidt, CCU, Bernadette Demechko, FCSLA, Donald L. Morlock, IOF, Steve Brockwell, LCBA, Mitchell Bienia, PRCUA, and Mary Galentine, WLIS.

President Spilar informed the delegates that Mary Jo Hudson, Director for the Ohio Department of Insurance was unable to attend this year's annual meeting due do some health reasons. He then introduced our next speaker, who was representing Ms. Hudson and the Ohio Department of Insurance, S. Craig Predieri, ESQ. Attorney Predieri is the General Counsel for the ODI. He spoke on "What Non-Profit Fraternal Insurance Societies Need to Know". He was very informative and

entertained the delegates with his wit and expertise. He informed the group that he researched many of the Fraternal Organizations on the internet that belong to the OFC and wondered if they had succession plans in place. He also questioned how payments were made for Insurance and Annuity Certificates. He cautioned all fraternal representatives to make sure their organizations followed their state insurance regulations where they do business and where they are domiciled. The delegates were very pleased with the information he shared and how he presented it. President Spilar presented Craig with the OFC pin and thanked him for taking the time to make the presentation to us and for making the trip to Mentor from Columbus.

Our chaplain, Barbara Sekerek concluded the morning session with our Memorial Service. Barbara read the names of the deceased members who were submitted by their Fraternal Organizations. They were remembered and honored at the service with prayer, song and a candle to be presented to their families.

President Spilar then recessed the meeting for lunch.

After the lunch recess Barbara Sekerak, 2nd Vice President, was given the floor by our President to introduce our afternoon speaker. Elizabeth Snyder is the Director of Advocacy and Public Safety for the NFCA. She gave an informative presentation on the topic, "State Fraternal Congresses are an Integral Part of the NFCA's Government Affairs Strategy ". She also informed the delegates of the new and existing issues at the NFCA's Headquarters that may concern the fraternal benefit societies that are domiciled or do business in the state of Ohio. She was presented with the OFC pin by our President and also a very sincere thank you for all the information she presented.

The president called for old business and there being none then called for new business. A discussion followed with many delegates voicing their concerns that many of the societies belonging to the OFC did not have representation at the meeting. It was suggested that a letter be sent to those not having a representative at the meeting asking them why they did not attend. Also what we can offer them that will bring them back to sharing the meeting with us. A healthy discussion followed with many suggestions being made.

The President asked for a report from the Display Committee. Rose Marie Held gave a report that there were 6 displays: AMLA, CCU, COF, FCSLA, OFC AND UCT, for the delegates to view. She thanked these societies for their presentations.

The Auditing Committee was called upon to give a report on the treasurer's records. Cathy Nadolski reported that all the books were in order. She made a motion to accept the report seconded by Chair of the Auditing Committee, Robert Katricak, all were in favor.

The President then called on Nominating Chair, Robert Katricak, NSS, to report on the slate of officers. The following were nominated:

President Loretta Ballenger, WLIS
1st V. P., Chaplain, Barbara Sekerak, FCSLA
2nd V. P., Vicki Grau, IOF
3rd V. P., Historian, Joyce Lechman, FCSLA
Secretary/Treasurer
Sue Ann M. Seich, FCSLA
Immediate Past President
Alan Spilar, COF

Director, Kathy Figard, SCS
Director, Rose Marie Held, WLIS
Director, Donna Oros, FCSLA
Director, Cathy Nadolski, FCSLA
Director, Lillian Fratantonio, IOF
Director, Tom Welsh, COF
Director, Dean Burns, NSS
Director, Walter Dudich, RBO

Chairperson, Robert Katricak then asked for nominations from the floor, three times in succession. There was a short recess.

The afternoon session continued with a Panel Discussion led by Moderator, Elizabeth Snyder. The panel consisted of Jack Taphorn, COF, Barbara Sekerak, FCSLA, and Robert Katricak, NSS. The topic was, "What Fraternal Societies Should or Shouldn't Do to Help Maintain Their Tax Exempt Status?" There was a very informative discussion with many questions, suggestions, and sharing of strategies. All fraternal benefit societies should get information out to the public and have information shared about the fraternal and community activities they are doing. It is of utmost importance to publicize involvement in all charitable and benevolent causes. President Spilar thanked the moderator and the panel for their leadership in the discussion. He also thanked the participants for their cooperation and attention during this part of the meeting.

President Spilar then asked if there was any further business to bring to the floor. The secretary cast the ballot to elect the slate of officers presented. All were in favor. He then called upon OFC President-Elect, Loretta Ballenger to announce next year's meeting. She informed the delegates that next year's meeting will be in Columbus, OH near the airport at the Four Points Sheraton. It will be held from October 1-3, 2010. Information will be sent to all fraternal societies along with a copy of the minutes.

Motion to adjourn was made by Rose Marie Held, seconded by Tom Welsh, all were in favor.

The flags were retired and a prayer was said by our Chaplain.

President Spilar reminded everyone of the schedule for the evening. Mass was at 4:00 p.m. with Rev. Bill Jerse presiding. The new board picture will be taken during the Reception from 5:30-6:00 p.m. sponsored by the Catholic Order of Foresters. The dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m.

Saturday Evening Highlights

Rose Marie Held, WLIS gave a report on the Scholarship Program for OFC. We were very pleased that one of the recipients, Darcie Paganucco from UCT was present to receive her scholarship. She is the granddaughter of Robert and

Beverly Gruszecki who are active members of the OFC and have been for many years.

President Spilar introduced our speaker from the Hospice of Western Reserve, Diane Hartt. The hospice was one of our charities this year. Diane gave a very interesting talk about what the hospice does and who it helps.

Dean Burns our Fraternalist of the Year for 2008 was given the floor to present our 2009 Fraternalist of the Year. Robert Katricak, NSS was presented with a plaque. Bob thanked everyone for this recognition.

Barbara Sekerak asked Sue Ann Seich, Secretary/Treasurer to come to the podium. Barb purchased a book, "God Calling" and had everyone attending the meeting sign their name on the page of their birth date. Sue Ann had been Chaplain for the OFC for 18 years. She presented Sue Ann with the book and also a gift from outgoing President Spilar. The gift was a very special one. Sue Ann is an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist at her home parish. She was given a pix and burse to hold the hosts she delivers to the sick and home bound. She was very surprised but most of all very appreciative of this generous and meaningful gift.

The new board for 2009-2010 for the OFC was installed by the National President of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association of the USA, Mary Ann S. Johaneck, ESQ. Those in attendance for the banquet warmly welcomed the new board.

Our newly installed President for 2009-10, Loretta Ballenger presented outgoing President Spilar with a Past President's Plaque. She thanked him on behalf of all the officers and members for all his hard work to make this 2009 Annual OFC Meeting a great success.

President Spilar introduced the entertainment for the evening compliments of him and the COF. The entertainment for the night was Richard Kuhar. Dick entertained everyone with music, singing, jokes, and audience participation for over an hour.

The money and door prize raffles then took place along with the silent auction. The money raised went to our three charities: Hospice of Western Reserve, OFC Scholarship Fund and the Deaf and Blind Apostolate.

President Spilar thanked everyone for attending and wished them a safe trip home.

Sunday morning, October 4, 2009

1st Meeting of the 93rd Annual Congress for 2009-10

President Ballenger called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Barbara Sekerak, Chaplain opened the meeting with prayer.

A motion was made by Tom Welsh and seconded by Rose Marie Held to pay all the bills, all were in favor.

Many ideas were discussed for next year's annual meeting. Our president will contact the legislators and senators and set up a day for us to promote our fraternal organizations at the State Capitol. She will also have the tickets printed for our annual raffle and inform the board of her charities at our next meeting.

Father Jerse donated the collection at mass back to the OFC. A motion was made by Sue Ann Seich and seconded by Cathy Nadolski to include the collection with the money raised for breast cancer research. The money will be donated to a local Cleveland Chapter of the Network of Strength, all were in favor.

The location and date for the next board meeting were discussed. A motion was made by Donna Oros and seconded by Alan Spilar to have the meeting at El Campesino Restaurante in Mansfield, OH, on April 17th, 2010, at 11:00 a.m. All were in favor.

A motion to adjourn at 11:00 a.m. was made by Rose Marie Held and seconded by Donna Oros, all were in favor.

Our chaplain, Barbara Sekerak closed the meeting with prayer for a safe journey home and God's protection until we meet in the spring.

Respectfully submitted,

**Sue Ann M. Seich, FCSLA
Secretary OFC**