



CARPATHO-RUSYN CONSORTIUM OF NORTH AMERICA

NEWS RELEASE

Release Date: November 17, 2009

In USA: 1817 121st Ave. N.E., Blaine MN 55449

In Canada: PO Box 21133, Saskatoon SK S7H 5N9

North American Carpatho-Rusyn Organizations Form Consortium

MINNEAPOLIS / SASKATOON – A coalition of six Carpatho-Rusyn cultural organizations in the United States and Canada have come together in a new umbrella organization to foster cooperation and more frequent consultation.

The Carpatho-Rusyn Consortium of North America will enable Carpatho-Rusyns in North America to more effectively act on issues affecting their communities in the U.S. and Canada, and advocate on behalf of Carpatho-Rusyns in their European countries of origin. The consortium will also represent North America's Carpatho-Rusyns on the World Council of Rusyns which meets every six months and holds the World Congress of Rusyns every two years.

The participating organizations are: Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center (New York, N.Y.), Carpatho-Rusyn Society (Pittsburgh, Pa.), Rusin Association (Minneapolis, Minn.), Rusyn Association of North America (Kitchener, Ont.), Rusyn-Saskatchewan Ruthenian Culture Association (Saskatoon, Sask.), and World Academy of Rusyn Culture (Toronto, Ont.).

The consortium has two co-chairs, one each from the U.S. and Canada. The U.S. chairperson is Karen Varian, president of the Rusin Association; the Canadian chairperson is Lubomyr Medjesi, chief information and recording officer of the Rusyn-Saskatchewan Ruthenian Culture Association. "The Carpatho-Rusyn community in North America has matured to the point where all our organizations can coordinate our efforts in this way for greater impact," Varian said. Medjesi added, "North American Rusyns are following a model of cooperation that has worked well for our fellow Rusyn organizations in the homeland."

At its organizational meeting on October 31, the consortium identified some initial priority issues of concern, including the following:

- establishing and holding an annual National Rusyn Day in the U.S. and Canada;
- coordinating with the U.S. Census Bureau and Statistics Canada to ensure that Carpatho-Rusyn ethnic origin/ancestry is accurately recorded and reported on the upcoming national censuses;
- maintaining ongoing contacts in Washington, D.C. and Ottawa with the embassies of the European Union and countries where Carpatho-Rusyns live;

MORE

Carpatho-Rusyn Consortium, pg. 2

- maintaining a dialogue with the offices of the Papal Nuncios in the U.S. and Canada about halting the forced assimilation of Rusyns within the Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia and Ukraine.

Carpatho-Rusyns are a Slavic nationality from the Carpathian Mountain region of east central Europe. Since the end of World War II, their homeland has been divided between Slovakia, Ukraine, Poland, Hungary and Romania with large immigrant populations in the Czech Republic, Croatia, Serbia, Canada and the United States. About 1.2 million Rusyns live in Europe. In the United States there are approximately 700,000 individuals with Carpatho-Rusyn ancestry, and in Canada they number around 20,000.

For more information on the consortium's activities, please contact crconsortium@gmail.com.

###