Embassy of the Republic of Croatia

WEEKLY BULLETIN


EU Members and Aspirants Support Croatia

Of Special Interest

- U.S. Military Honor Awarded to Family of Peter Tomich Posthumously
- Croatia Elected to UN Peace Building Commission

Croatia in News...

- Minister Grabar-Kitarović’s Interview in Transatlantic Magazine
- Islands Magazine: Croatian Charmers
- Sherman’s Travel: See Croatia’s Adriatic Pearls
- New York Times: Random Bits of Whimsy in Croatia in “What Is a Man Without a Mustache?”

THIS WEEK...

- EU Members and Aspirants Support Croatia
- Prime Minister Sanader Meets with Heads of Government
- U.S. Navy Commemorates Croatian Watertender Peter Tomich
- Croatia Elected to UN Commission for Peacebuilding
- Strategy for Croatia’s Development Presented
- Secondary School to Become Mandatory
- Minister Grabar-Kitarović’s Interview in Transatlantic Magazine
- CARE’s 60th Anniversary
- Kostelić Wins Laureus Award
- Croatian Charmers
- See Croatia’s Adriatic Pearls
- What Is a Man Without a Mustache
- Brief News

U.S. Navy Commemorates Croatian Watertender

Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe Admiral Harry Ulrich, presents the Medal of Honor to retired Croatia Army Lt. Col. Stecko Hrosc on behalf of U.S. Navy Chief Watertender Peter Tomich on the flight deck of the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Enterprise [U.S. Navy photo by Photographer’s Mate 2nd Class Milosz Reterski]
Heads of Central European Countries Support Croatia

Varna, Bulgaria, May 19 – Thirteen Presidents of Central European countries met in Varna for their annual summit and confirmed they had a major common goal – a united Europe. The Heads of State of Central Europe supported the admission of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union as well as Croatia’s entry into the Union as soon as possible.

Prime Minister Sanader Meets with Heads of Government

Zagreb, Croatia, May 18 – Last week Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader met with Finish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, Macedonian Prime Minister Vlado Bučkovski and Slovakian Prime Minister Mikulas Džurinda.

During its presidency of the European Union in the second half of this year, Finland will continue supporting EU enlargement, Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen said during his visit to Zagreb. Finland takes over the six-month EU presidency from Austria on July 1 this year. The Finnish Prime Minister said that the EU must honor its obligations and that Croatia will become a EU member as soon as it meets all the requirements. Prime Minister Sanader said that Croatia expects most reports on negotiation chapters to be completed during the Finnish presidency and that he expects those six months to be very dynamic.

In Macedonia, Prime Minister Sanader concluded with Macedonian Prime Minister Vlado Bučkovski that relations are good and constantly improving, especially when it comes to the common goal for Croatia and Macedonia – EU and NATO membership.

During his visit to Slovakia, Prime Minister Sanader met with his counterpart, Mikulas Džurinda. The two Prime Ministers noted the “excellent” relationship between their countries. Regarding Croatia’s path to the EU, Slovakian Prime Minister Džurinda said that “we will try to eliminate all unnecessary obstacles on the path of Croatia to the EU,” adding that the EU should consider Croatia’s membership individually, not tied with possible membership of Turkey.
U.S. Military Honor Posthumously Awarded to Family of Peter Tomich

SPLIT, Croatia, May 18 – The family of Croatian American soldier, Chief Watertender Peter Tomich Herceg, received the posthumous Congressional Medal of Honor awarded in recognition of distinguished conduct in the line of duty during the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

The Croatian family of a U.S. Navy Chief Watertender accepted a posthumous Medal of Honor for the man’s heroism during the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Navy Adm. Harry Ulrich, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe, presented the Medal of Honor to the family of Chief Watertender Peter Tomich at a ceremony.

Retired Croatian Army Lt. Col. Srečko Herceg Tomich received the U.S. military’s highest award on behalf of the Tomich family. Tomich, a U.S. citizen of Croatian heritage, served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was born in 1893 in Prolog, in what is now Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the Croatian border. After coming to the United States, Tomich enlisted in the U.S. Army at Fort Slocum, in New Rochelle, N.Y., on June 6, 1917. After service in World War I, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy on January 23, 1919 rising to the rank of chief watertender, equivalent to today’s chief petty officer.

Tomich was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for his heroic actions aboard the battleship USS Utah on December 7, 1941, during the surprise Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. During the attack, USS Utah sustained major damage from a Japanese torpedo and gunfire. Knowing the ship would sink, Tomich returned to his post in the boiler room to evacuate the personnel and keep the boilers from exploding so he could get as many men as possible out alive before the ship sank. Tomich sacrificed his own life to save the lives of his shipmates. A destroyer, the USS Tomich was named in his honor in 1943, and the Navy’s Senior Enlisted Academy in Newport, R.I., is housed in Tomich Hall.

To read U.S. media coverage about this event, go to:
http://www.estripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=36442&archive=true
Croatia Elected to UN Commission for Peacebuilding

NEW YORK, N.Y., May 17 – Croatia was elected to the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, a newly-established advisory body aimed at helping countries emerging from conflict not to revert to violence. Croatia is the first Southeast European country to join this UN body.

The election of Croatia into the UN Commission for Peacebuilding is one of the greater diplomatic successes on the path of Croatian affirmation in the international community, said Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović. [Photo: Vječernji list]

The UN Commission for Peacebuilding was established in December 2005 as part of reform efforts at the world body and focuses on peacekeeping, stabilization, reconstruction and institutional development in countries in transition from war to peace. It has 31 members that are chosen by the UN General Assembly. Seven members come from the Security Council, seven from the Economic-Social council, five from the ranks of countries that give the largest financial contributions to the EU, five are the biggest contributors to peace missions and seven are from the General Assembly, chosen by regional key. Croatia elected from the General Assembly.


Strategy for Croatia’s Development through 2013 Presented

ZAGREB, Croatia, May 15 – Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader has said that a framework for Croatia’s strategic development in the 2006 – 2013 period should help the country accelerate its economic growth beyond five percent and that the average income per capita should rise from the current 34 percent to 75 percent of the European average.

Presenting a document define Croatia’s main development goals until 20013, Prime Minister Sanader said that the strategy envisaged the reduction of the unemployment rate from the current 12.7 percent to 9 percent in 2010. The document entitled “The Strategic Framework for the Development and Competitiveness of Croatia” was launched at an event organized by the Croatian National Competitiveness Council [NVK]. The strategy elaborates ten sectors of strategic importance, which require the achievement of excellence. Excellence should become a Croatia brand, Prime Minister Sanader said on this occasion. The State Secretary of the Central Office for the Development Strategy, Martina Dalić, said that the main objective of the strategy was to achieve social prosperity through development and employment in a market economy. The authors of the strategy also attach great importance to education, its adjustment to the needs of the economy, the promotion of lifelong learning, the reduction of poverty, and reform of the social welfare system.

Secondary School to Become Mandatory

ZAGREB, Croatia, May 15 - Prime Minister Ivo Sanader and Minister of Education Dragan Primorac have announced that attendance of secondary school will become mandatory as of fall 2007. The move is part of the Government’s development strategy, which relies on the acquisiton of knowledge and skills in order to make Croatia more competitive internationally.

Minister of Science, Education and Sport Dragan Primorac have announced that the attendance of secondary school will become mandatory as of fall 2007. With this initiative, the Croatian educational system will become one of the most competitive in Europe by 2010 and will help in the fight against unemployment. [Photo: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport]

Prime Minister Ivo Sanader and Minister of Science, Education and Sport Dragan Primorac have announced that the attendance of secondary school will become mandatory as of fall 2007. Currently, only primary school is mandatory. According to the available data, 18 – 25 percent of children who complete primary school do not finish secondary school. A staggering 45 percent of Croatians have only primary school education or even less. This is a huge obstacle for the Government development strategy, which relies on knowledge. “Without knowledge, we cannot be competitive tomorrow,” said Prime Minister Sanader adding that the new rules will turn the Croatian educational system into the most competitive in Europe by 2010 and help in the fight against unemployment.
Minister Grabar-Kitarović’s Interview in Transatlantic Magazine

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 15 – Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović recently met with editor-in-chief of Transatlantic Magazine, Robert Guttman, to discuss EU enlargement, NATO membership, and relations with neighboring countries. Minister Grabar-Kitarović stressed that Croatia is doing everything necessary in order to meet requirements to become EU and NATO member as soon as possible.

For full interview, please visit the web site of the Croatian Embassy at: http://us.mfa.hr/?mv=1047&mh=181

Embassy Event:
CARE 60th Anniversary

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 17 - Croatian Ambassador to the United States Neven Jurica hosted a black tie dinner for CARE's 60th Anniversary.

The gala dinner took place on May 17, 2006 at the Embassy of Croatia in Washington, D.C. Invited to the dinner was a wide range of guests from the fields of business, politics and philanthropy. The evening’s guest of honor was Ohio Senator George V. Voinovich, accompanied by his wife Janet.

CARE [Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere] is one of the world’s largest private international humanitarian organizations, committed to helping families in poor communities improve their lives and achieve lasting victories over poverty. Founded in 1945 to provide relief to survivors of World War II, CARE quickly became a trusted vehicle for compassion and generosity to millions.

Janica Kostelić Wins Laureus Award

BARCELONA, Spain, May 24 – The world’s best skier, Janica Kostelić was presented with the Laureus Sportswoman of the Year Award at a ceremony in Barcelona.

Swiss tennis superstar Roger Federer was named Laureus World Sportsman of the year for the second consecutive year with the women’s honor going to Croatian skier Janica Kostelić. The 23-year-old Kostelić, who won the women’s combined event at the Turin Olympics, beat off rivals including Yelena Isinbayeva, the first woman to pole vault over five meters, U.S. Open tennis champion Kim Clijsters and Swedish golfer Annika Sorenstam. Janica Kostelić became the first woman to win four Alpine skiing gold medals after her victory in the women’s February’s Winter Olympics in Turin. Once again she had to overcome injury and illness to triumph having been forced to pull out of the Olympics downhill because she was unwell. Four years ago she won three gold medals at the Salt Lake City Olympics after fighting back from three knee operations in 12 months.

The Laureus Award, known as the most prestigious sports award worldwide, is given by the Laureus Academy. Croatian tennis player Goran Ivičić, a Wimbledon Cup winner, is the only other Croatian athlete to have won the Laureus Award.

To read CNN’s article, go to: http://www.cnn.com/2006/SPORT/05/22/awards.laureus/index.html
The July issue of Islands magazine carries a spread on three Croatian jewels with a rich history.

1. During the 1800s, the Menghelo family grew rosemary and bottled essential oils on the island Eden of Palmiziana, located just 15 minutes south of Hvar by boat. [www.palmiziana.hr]

2. The island of Mljet is a Croatian national park and legend has it that Calypso held Odysseus captive in one of the island's many caves. Mljet is also home to a 12th century Benedictine monastery. [www.hotelodisej.hr]

3. Pločica is one of the tiniest islands in the Adriatic Sea and the only building on the island is a lighthouse built in 1887. The lighthouse serves as two separate apartments, allowing visitors to have the whole island to themselves. [www.adriatica.net]

Today these three islands are popular destinations for tourists from all over the world.

See Croatia’s Adriatic Pearls from $20/night

NEW YORK, N.Y., May 15 - Sherman’s travel, a leading U.S. publisher of travel sales and specials, trip ideas, and travel destination, recommends four travel packages to Croatia this summer and fall season.

1. Gate1Travel offers an escorted 10-day Dalmatian Coast escapade with visits to Dubrovnik, Split, Plitvice National Park, Slovenia’s Lake Bled, Zagreb, Trogir and Opatija. [www.Gate1Travel.com]

2. For those opting to travel in the fall, Go-Today offers the same package as above with additional excursions to Ljubljana, Slovenia and Zadar, the oldest Slavic city on the Adriatic. [www.Go-Today.com]

3. Travel Time’s kayaking package is perfect for those seeking a great vacation adventure. This eight day trip includes kayaking around Sipan and Lopud islands or Korcula Island. [www.TravelTimeNY.com]

4. Finally, Adriatica suggests a lighthouse stay for those who want to experience the beauty of Croatia while staying within a modest budget. There is a choice of 11 lighthouses, all furnished and well-equipped with resident keepers in most of them. [www.Adriatica.net]

To read the whole article, visit: http://msnbc.msn.com/id/12853420/print/1/displaymode/1098/
Film: “What Is a Man Without a Mustache?”


Quirks of fate give shape to “What Is a Man Without a Mustache?” This pleasant if inconsequential romantic comedy from the Croatian director Hrvoje Hribar is distinguished by its good-natured sensibility and rowdy, slightly fabulous tone: a kind of Eastern European magic realism, without the magic.

One gray afternoon, high up in a city construction project, a man without a mustache loses his balance and falls, with an audible splat, to his death. He is survived by his wife, the lovely, impetuous Tatjana [Zrinka Cvitešić] who, under the influence of idiosyncratic mourning, uses the settlement money from his death to purchase the rural hillside where he first wooed her.

To read reviews about the movie, please visit: http://movies2.nytimes.com/2006/05/25/movies/25man.html?adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1148569518-sKLnEnoqqqAbsqce7wqhf0Kg

Brief News...

- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development would assist three urban projects in Croatia lending a total of EUR 27 million [USD 34.9 million] for their implementation. EBRD would provide the funds for the development of the new combined central parking garage and a bus terminal in Rijeka and for the renovation of the bus fleet and for a waste water management project in Pula, both on the northern Adriatic coast.

- So far, the Ministry of Interior has received EUR 42 million from the EC CARDS program for 17 of its projects. Even more projects will be launched with the help of PHARE funding, including modernizing border crossings and improving cross-border cooperation in policing.

- Croatia and Hungary have completed their joint bid for the right to host the 2012 European Soccer Championship, to be presented to the Union of European Football Associations [UEFA] by May 21, 2006. In addition to the two counties’ bid, Italy and a joint Polish-Ukrainian bid are in contention.