

# CROATIA MONTHLY

## Josipovic sworn in as third President of Croatia



Source: Nacional

By taking the oath before Constitutional Court judges, Ivo Josipovic swore loyalty to the Constitution on February 18th and thereafter became the third Croatian President. The inauguration ceremony was attended by 10 heads of state from the region and central Europe, 70 national delegations, and delegations from nine organizations, as well as by diplomatic corps.

Josipovic became President after winning the elections held on January 10 against independent candidate and mayor of Zagreb Milan Bandic.

Croatia's new President told Croatian citizens in his inaugural address that they had to be brave in the fight for a more just society, promising to lead the fight for justice and equity.

[See Page 2](#)

### WELCOME NOTE



On behalf of the entire team of the Embassy of Croatia to the United States of America, I would like to welcome you to our new monthly newsletter. With this publication we would like to inform you briefly of newsworthy events in Croatia as well as about our activities here in the USA. This newsletter, I hope, will provide fresh insight on news you might find interesting. As this is the first issue, do feel free to tell us what you think as well as areas what you believe can be improved. Enjoy reading!

Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic  
Ambassador

### ONCE AGAIN IN THE EURO FINALS



Championships held in Austria from January 19th to January 31st 2010. Croatia was beaten by France in the final of Championship by the result 25:21.

Croatia This is the third medal for Croatia in the European handball championships. Croatia's first european medal was bronze in Portugal in 1994 and second was a silver in Norway in 2008. Croatia has in the past also won two gold Olympic medals, in Atlanta 1996, and in Athens 2004. Also, Croatia was the world champion in men's handball in Portugal 2003, and three time silver medalists in Island 1995, in Tunis 2005, and in Croatia 2009.

Continued from Page 1

Speaking of Croatia in the 21st century, Josipovic said he saw Croatia as a country based on values such as responsibility, honesty, trust, respect and the principle of equal opportunity, non-discrimination and valuing of knowledge and work, whose citizens would be encouraged to embrace and live those values. Josipovic believes that in this century, Croatia will unite in the fight against corruption and crime and said that he would support efforts to stimulate enterprise and strengthen motivation for domestic and foreign investment.

In his address, Josipovic thanked all honorable people who fought for a free and just Croatia, many of whom died in that fight, as well as his predecessor, Stjepan Mesic, for his exceptional contribution to Croatia's democratic development. The new President also thanked all previous governments and parliaments, including the team negotiating Croatia's EU membership, for the great efforts they have invested in "making our European dream come true".



TRADITIONAL ANNUAL GATHERING OF CROATS IN LOUISIANA

The traditional annual gathering of Croatians in Louisiana was held in New Orleans under the organization of the Croatian-American Society whose goal is to strengthen and preserve Croatian national identity in the southeast of USA.

Croatian Ambassador Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic greeted the 300 guests who gathered at the festive dinner and the ball. The President of the Society Ms. Susan Hihar, in her remarks mentioned that opening of the Croatian House is to be the Society's main activity for this year.

New Orleans, one of the oldest among American cities was the spotlight of the first immigration



of Croatian people from South Dalmatia and the peninsula of Peljesac, who came to the United

States at the beginning of the 20th century. The persistency and effort that has gone into the establishment of the Society, as well as the fostering of ethnic affiliation and Croatian culture in Louisiana is showing results from generation to generation.

The Croatian-American Society is not only a center of gathering for Croatians from New Orleans, but through its day to day activities will become one of the most important holders of Croatian national identity in Louisiana.

CROATIA GAINED USA H-2A AND H-2B GRANT VISA PROGRAMS



The Republic of Croatia joined those countries whose nationals can fill temporary or seasonal jobs in the United States. The United States Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano included 11 countries, among them Croatia, in the H-2A and H-2B nonimmigrant visa programs, which allow US employers to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary or seasonal jobs for which US workers are not available. Besides Croatia, the program was extended to Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Serbia, Slovakia and Uruguay.



**NEW CROATIAN CENTER  
OPENED IN FLORIDA**

The Croatian Ambassador to the USA Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic opened the Croatian Center in Clearwater, near Tampa, in Florida. At the opening ceremony were more than 150 members of the Croatian Club of Tampa Bay and their guests, as well as the President of the National Association of Croatian Americans Mr. Zvonko Labas.

In her remarks, Ambassador Grabar-Kitarovic talked about the active role that Americans of Croatian origin have been playing in promoting the interest of the Republic of Croatia in the US and in preservation of their Croatian identity, and invited them to work more closely and intensively with the Croatian Embassy.

“Together we have changed the image of the Republic of Croatia in the eyes of American citizens, and that is our joint success”, the Ambassador emphasized.

The Croatian Club of Tampa Bay gathers around 300 Americans of Croatian origin. The President of the Club is Mrs. Ljubica Simunovic. The construction of the Center began by mid 2008, as a result of the efforts of the Community to have a place where it’s members can gather together.

**OLDEST CROATIAN  
CATHOLIC CHURCH IN  
THE UNITED STATES TO  
BECOME A MUSEUM**

Representatives from the Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation and the Northside Leadership Conference presented Croatian Ambassador Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic a plan for saving St. Nicholas Church, which once was the center of the North Side's ethnic Croatian Catholic community, but has been abandoned since 2004.



Ambassador Grabar-Kitarovic gave her support for transforming the abandoned St. Nicholas Church into an Immigration Museum. She promised to set up meetings with Croatian-Americans to help raise money for an estimated \$10 million in renovations. Also, she offered the Embassy’s help in organizing presentations for representatives of other embassies who have an interest in representing their immigrant groups at the museum. Ambassador Grabar-Kitarovic will probably come to Pittsburgh in May this year for the annual meeting of the National Federation of Croatian Americans where she will help publicize the museum and the fund-raising process.

**SAG Award Reception**

The Screen Actors Guild Washington chapter held a reception at the Croatian Embassy on January 23<sup>rd</sup> in the honor of the SAG Award ceremony. SAG member Bruce McBarnette hosted the event with former news anchor Beverly Burke. Donations accepted at the reception benefited Charlie’s Place, a homeless service center at Saint Margaret’s Church in Washington DC. Two artists from the Tacoma raised money by selling art. Embassy DCM Vice Skracic welcomed the guests.

**Croatian Embassy  
welcomes new DCM**



Mr. Vice Skracic is the new DCM at the Embassy of Croatia where he succeeded Mr. Marijan Gubic, who became Consul General of Croatia in NY. Mr. Skracic was previously at the Croatian Permanent Mission to the UN in NY, where he was political coordinator in the UN Security Council. He has a long diplomatic career in the MFA (since 1992) and has previously been posted at the Embassy of Croatia in Washington DC as well as in the Permanent Mission of Croatia to the UN in Geneva.