

The Pittsburgh Area Slovak Folk Ensemble Performs at New Jersey Slovak Festival

The PNC Bank Arts Center + Holmdel, N.J. + Sunday, September 23

by Angela Lipchick

The Pittsburgh Area Slovak Folk ensemble (PAS) once again was invited to share some music and dance of "the old country" with audiences at this year's New Jersey Slovak Heritage Festival at the PNC Arts Center in Holmdel, N.J. This year's invitation was made even more special because of the opportunity to perform for the President of the Slovak Republic, Ivan Gasparovic. President Gasparovic visited the festival to celebrate its 35th anniversary.

PAS, a group of first-through fifth generation American Slovaks, presented a program of songs and dances from the Horehronie region of central Slovakia, featuring the beauty and precision of their stamping and rhythmic movement.

The program opened with members of PAS's Junior Ensemble creating the atmosphere of the region by pretending to be sheep in the fields while women worked nearby. Soon, the celebration of spring and the flirting that begins after a long winter warmed up the stage as the Adult Ensemble began the lively program.

Highlighted by Horehronsky Dupak, in which young men and women compete to impress each other with unique dancing, and stamping "calls" to attract their romantic partner. President Gasparovic told the members of PAS that the program was "Just beautiful."

PAS is proud to add this honor to its ever-lengthening list, which also included performances at venues ranging from annual performances at Slovak Day at Kennywood Park in Pittsburgh to repeat invitations to participate in Disney World's Performing Arts Onstage Program in Florida. PAS was also invited to represent all Americans of Slovak ancestry in Detva, Slovakia at the 44th Annual Folklorne Slavnosti Pod Polanou v Detve (folklore celebration below Polana Mountain) and has performed in concert with the Pittsburgh Philharmonic Orchestra for its "Going Abroad" series.

For more information about the Pittsburgh Area Slovak Folk Ensemble (PAS), visit <http://www.pasfolkensemble.com/index.html>.

