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**AMERICAN HUNGARIAN FEDERATION CELEBRATES MORE THAN
ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SERVICE**

New Brunswick, New Jersey -- On Saturday, September 26, 2009, the American Hungarian Federation (AHF) celebrated its *more than 100 years of service* to the Hungarian American community with a magnificent Gala Ball at the Hungarian American Athletic Club in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

A capacity crowd of over 250 people from all walks of life, listened to heartrending patriotic recitals, and beautiful renditions of the American, Hungarian and Transylvanian (Szekely) national anthems.

A unique collection of Hungarian songs and poems donated by Maczo Laszlo of Ber were played throughout the evening. The theme of these wonderful pieces and the evening was, "the future will only be beautiful, if the Magyar nation unites".

The gala program began with a moving candlelight ceremony signifying the eternal flame that unites American Hungarians with Hungarians throughout the world. AHF Chair Akos L. Nagy then explained AHF's mission to represent Hungarian-Americans in the US and help all Hungarians, particularly those whose cultural, collective and human rights are being violated in countries torn away by the Treaty of Trianon.

After the playing of the national anthems, Rev. Attila Kocsis, Reformed Minister of Perth Amboy, gave the invocation and thanked all those in America who gave of themselves in service to Hungary over the past 100 years and prayed for the successful continuation this wonderful organization.

In his welcoming remarks, AHF President Attila Micheller asked for unity among Hungarian American organizations, and entreated young people to join AHF to ensure the future of the entity.

Mr. Nagy then asked Co-President and Vice Chair Gyula Balogh, to introduce overseas guests and read their greetings. Mr. Balogh also issued a plea for all Americans, regardless of political party, who have Hungary at heart, to work together to help revitalize the country. He then read a very elegant, moving and patriotic letter, from the former Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orban (which Mr. Balogh brought from Hungary).

Mr. Orban's letter said in part, "What is the unified voice, the feelings that stir hundreds and thousands of people, which at once makes their hearts throb, moves their hands and feet and makes them hold their heads high? ...Nothing else but faithfulness... as in the AHF headline "over 100 Years of Service", and in your motto..."Fidelissimus Ad Mortem (Faithful unto Death)". ...Faithfulness to your country...which protects your

nation. Faithfulness to your family, which protects your children, faithfulness to your word which protects your honor, faithfulness to your friends which protects your inner self”...

Mr. Balogh then introduced Ms. Baba Silvia, Executive Director of the Magyar Kultúra Alapítvány (Hungarian Cultural Foundation) on Castle Hill in Budapest. She described the patriotic theme of the foundation as giving a home to various cultural and educational programs which benefit the Hungarian nation, and invited all to visit.

The evening then continued with Ferenc Koszorus, Jr, Chair of AHF's International Relations Committee and Co-President, reading a moving congratulatory letter from Geza Jeszenszky, Hungary's Foreign Minister (1990 – 1994) and Ambassador to the US (1998 – 2002). Dr. Jeszenszky also eloquently touched on the theme of the gala by noting that “Hungarian immigrants to America realized one hundred years ago that their interests would only be served if they united, and that is why they organized the American Hungarian Federation.” He not only recognized AHF's leadership in uniting its community in the past, but Dr. Jeszenszky also emphasized the role AHF can play in forging a united voice relating to the Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin.

Mr. Koszorus summarized AHF's current initiatives in educating decision and opinion makers about issues of concern to the Hungarian American community, including the situation of the Hungarian minorities in countries neighboring Hungary, who were relegated to the status of second class citizens when the punitive Treaty of Trianon ignored the vaunted principle of self-determination and transferred one third of the Hungarian nation to the newly created or enlarged Successor States of Rumania, Yugoslavia and Czecho-Slovakia. He highlighted AHF's steps in addressing the untenable and discriminatory Slovak language law and how unity within the Hungarian American community was needed now to achieve results.

Sandor Murai, treasurer of AHF, then followed with a request to support the Kazinczy Museum in Satoraljaújhely in Hungary. Mr. Nagy concluded with the need to preserve our strong Hungarian identity and pass it on to future generations, by strengthening American Hungarian institutions, and to help the US government in promoting democracy and economic progress in Hungary and minority rights for Hungarians in the neighboring countries. The dinner blessing was then given by Roman Catholic priest, Father Istvan Csete.

After dinner, a lovely cultural program was introduced by Thomas Hilberth, AHF counsel and member of the Board, and the primary organizer of the gala. The program included: the poem *O Bujdosó Székely*, recited by Karpatia; writings about Grof Albert Aponyi, Karoly Gesztesi, Ferenc Herceg, recited by Vizi Gyorgy; and a work about Karoly Kos, recited by Pal Oberfrank. Excerpts from the works of Sandor Csori and Albert Wass were read as well. A lovely youth dance program followed by a Connecticut dance group, which included: Nanassy Lydia, Melinda; Mihok Peter, Erik and Monika.

The formal part of the evening was concluded by the presentation of awards for service to the Hungarian and the American Hungarian communities. The recipients included: Gabor Bodnar, a legend in the Hungarian Scouting movement both in the US and post-communist Hungary (posthumous); Kalman Magyar, the American Hungarian who contributed the most of any person to advancing the folk-music and folk-art of Hungary in the US; Father Ivan Csete for his efforts in visiting rural parishioners and caring for the poor in New York; Judit Kerekes for her Hungarian community work in the Passaic area and the annual Hungarian Summer College program held in Pennsylvania; the renowned artist Gabriella F. Koszorus-Varso for her more than 50 years of disseminating Hungarian culture and history through her works of art; and Emery and Charlotte Ihasz for their community work in Connecticut.

The Papp Tivadar Orchestra from New York and Farkas Andras from Canada provided uplifting American and Hungarian music until 2:00 AM.

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