

Register for the  
EDWARD J. BEHUNCIK PAPERS

1918-1993  
(Span dates 1935-1988)

MSS 170  
(M94-11, M96-08)

7.4 linear feet

Larisa Repin  
Processing Archivist for the Balch Institute

July 2001

The Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies  
18 South Seventh Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106  
[now the Historical Society of Pennsylvania  
1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19107]

*This project was made possible with a generous grant from  
**John C. Haas***

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13 ½ Hollinger boxes of mss.  
2 oversize boxes of mss.  
2 folders oversize materials  
1 oversize box of unprocessed photographs  
and artifacts

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PROVENANCE

This collection was donated to the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies by Edward Behuncik's wife, Catherine Behuncik, in October 1994 and March 1996. The papers came in as two accessions M94-11 and M96-08 and were processed in July 2001 by Larisa Repin, archival assistant for the Balch Institute.

The photographs had not been processed as of July 2001. They retain the same MSS 170 number as the manuscripts.

The few artifacts have also been removed from the manuscripts.

For related materials, see MSS 96 First Catholic Slovak Union Holy Ghost Lodge, MSS 98 Slovak Catholic Sokol Band, and SC 226 Saints Cyril and Methodius Church.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Edward J. Behuncik, son of John and Mary Bayus Behuncik, was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, on June 2, 1912. His grandparents were Byzantine Catholic natives of the regions of Zemplin and Saris in Eastern Slovakia, and were among the earliest Slovak families to settle in the Bridgeport area.

Behuncik graduated from the St. John Nepomucene Slovak School, Harding High School, and the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. where received his law degree at its School of Law in 1935. After passing the bar in January 1936, he began practice in Bridgeport.

As early as 1928, he was a member of Slovak Catholic Sokol Assembly 9 in Bridgeport, where his uncle, Michael Behuncik, had served as one of its early vice presidents. In 1940 Edward Behuncik was elected general counsel of the assembly. Because of World War II, he resigned this position in order to serve in the government as director of the Censorship Division, Foreign Funds Control of Treasury Department, in Washington, D.C. (November 1942 until May 1945). Following the war, Behuncik was in Germany with U.S. forces, and helped conduct investigations for the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal (1945-1946).

In May 1945, Behuncik was a special counsel to the delegation of the Slovak League of America at the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco, California. Thus began Behuncik's long association with the work of the Slovak League, a civic and cultural federation of Americans of Slovak ancestry established in 1907, where he later served in various capacities culminating with his election as national president in 1967. He was president for 18 years until retiring in 1985, and he continued as president-emeritus and a member of the league's executive board. During his presidency, he established the Slovak League of America Heritage Foundation, Ltd., the Slovak League of America Scholarship Fund, Inc. and the American Fund for Slovak Refugees, Inc., (national president, 1969), and helped to established the Fund for Free Slovakia, another league affiliate.

In 1970, Behuncik was also one of the founders of the Slovak World Congress in New York, and serving as an executive vice president and a member of the presidium of this international body for many years. He was one of the ethnic leaders in 1975 who was invited to the White House to discuss the then upcoming Helsinki Conference and

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its proposed Accords, and in 1977, attended the Belgrade Conference in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, to review these Accords.

Behuncik was also active and prominent in other various Slovak organizations. He was vice president (1937-1946) and director (from 1973) of the Slovak Alliance of Greater Bridgeport, and was involved with the First Slovak Wreath of the Free Eagle, the Slovak Catholic Sokol (national legal adviser, 1940-1946), and the First Catholic Slovak Union or "Jednota"(supreme legal adviser, 1937-1943).

Together with his wife, Catherine Fahy, he instituted a number of scholarships at the secondary and college levels for students in the Bridgeport area, and set up the Mark J. Behuncik Slovak Studies Center, named for his nephew, at Sacred Heart University. Behuncik served as president of the board of the Fairfield Foundation of the Diocese of Bridgeport for several years, and was a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Stratford. His dedication to the work of the church was recognized by Pope John Paul II who named him a Knight of St. Gregory in 1983 and Knight Commander in 1991. He was also a 1992 recipient of the St. Martin's Day Award of Slovak Catholic Sokol for his efforts in promoting the high ideals of the fraternal benefit system. Long active in the Stratford Democratic Party, Behuncik served as treasurer for many years. He was a candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives in the early 1950's.

Behuncik's mother and only brother, John Edward, both died in 1975. The death dates of his sister, Irene B. Noonan, and his father are unknown. Behuncik and his wife had no children; he died, at the age of 82, in Bridgeport, in 1994.

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SCOPE AND CONTENT

Textual Records: This collection spans the years 1918-1993, but the bulk of the materials is concentrated between 1935-1988, and reflects Behuncik's civic, community, political and religious activities. There is also some personal, professional, and family information here. The most noteworthy of the materials is in the large Series I, covering Behuncik's participation in the Slovak League of America and Slovak World Congress, and in other Slovak and religious organizations. The records include by-laws, congress and conference materials, correspondence, historical information about the organizations, biographical notes, speeches, resolutions, reports, programs of events, minutes, and official publications. Series II concentrates on Behuncik's political and professional missions and also contains a very small amount of his personal materials, including his resume, certificates, diplomas, correspondence, and obituaries. The records in this series generally consist of correspondence, European visit materials, election candidacy information, national histories and biographical materials, newspapers and newspaper clippings, speech materials, religious articles, prayers, and reference materials. All materials are in Slovak and English, equally.

The textual records, except for directories, financial materials, minutes, newspaper clippings, and reference materials, have been indexed.

Photographs: The photographs had not been processed as of July 2001. They retain the same MSS 170 number as manuscripts and have been placed at the end of the manuscript collection in a separate oversize box.

Artifacts: The few artifacts have also been removed from the records and put in the same box as the photographs, although carefully separated from them.

Library Materials: Some newspapers that were complete have been transferred to the Balch Library.

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RECORD SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

SERIES I: COMMUNITY, CIVIL & RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, 1935-1988  
Boxes 1-10, OS (Oversize) Box 2

This big series has been divided into three subseries to reflect Behuncik's involvement in the activities of many institutions, where he served in numerous capacities.

SUBSERIES A: Slovak League of America, 1939-1988  
Boxes 1-4, OS (Oversize) Boxes 1-2

Behuncik's long association with the work of the Slovak League, a civic and cultural federation of Slovak Americans, began in 1945, when he was the special counsel to the delegation at the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco, California. The organization was established in 1907, but materials in this subseries appear from the year 1939. Also there are materials of its affiliated societies: the American Fund for Slovak Refugees, Inc., the Heritage Foundation, LTD, and the Scholarship Fund, Inc., all established by Behuncik during his presidency (1967-85).

This subseries contains some proceedings of the league's congresses and conferences, including Behuncik's report of 1966 as a supreme vice president (1:8). Other records consist of correspondence, directories, historical and biographical materials, newspapers and newspaper clippings, programs of events, statements, proclamations and resolutions. There is Behuncik's letter to Richard Nixon (2:3) with congratulations on his election as the President of the USA (1966); the letter to the Senator Schweiker (2:6) with Behuncik's opinion about "Schweiker's Ethnic Heritage Studies Center Act" of 1971; his proclamation (3:10) concerning the political situation in Czecho-Slovakia in 1968, and his letter (1976) to Jimmy Carter (2:9) about Slovak and Czech national history. The materials here are in Slovak and English. Arrangement is alphabetical.

SUBSERIES B: Slovak World Congress, 1963-1988, Boxes 4-8

In 1970, Behuncik was a founder of the Slovak World Congress (SWC) where he served as a member of the international body's executive board or presidium for many years. Records here consist of by-laws and constitutions, correspondence, directories, financial data, historical and biographical materials, minutes, newspaper clippings, official bulletins (1971-1988), proclamations and proposals, programs of events, rules

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SERIES I: COMMUNITY, CIVIL & RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, 1935-1988

SUBSERIES B: Slovak World Congress, 1963-1988

and goals of the organization, speeches and addresses. There are Behuncik's reports (8:6) as a vice president of the SWC and his addresses (8:8) at closing banquets and other occasions, particularly, his speech "The Legacy of Slovak History" at the World Festival of Slovak Youth in West Germany (1980). The materials here are also in Slovak and English, and arrangement is alphabetical.

SUBSERIES C: Other Organizations, 1935-1988  
Boxes 8-10 & OS Boxes 1-2

Behuncik's activities and degree of involvement in various organizations is quite astonishing. He is listed as supreme legal adviser, 1937-1943, and national legal adviser, 1940-1946, of the First Catholic Slovak Union, and Slovak Catholic Sokol, respectively; vice president, 1937-1946, and director, 1973, of the Slovak Alliance of Bridgeport; 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president, 1974, PRO Fratibus; and so forth. Typical records for most organizations here consist of correspondence, historical materials, directories, minutes, and newspaper clippings. There are by-laws, convention materials, proclamations, resolutions, and programs. Noteworthy are Edward Behuncik's speeches at the Bicentennial Slovak Day Festival (9:18), sponsored by the Slovak Alliance of Bridgeport; at the Slovak American Bicentennial celebration in 1976 (10:7); on the occasion of the 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in 1978, of the First Catholic Slovak Union and at its 36<sup>th</sup> national convention (8: 9-10). In addition, there is the text of remarks (9:11) delivered by his nephew John G. Behuncik at the formal dedication of the Mark J. Behuncik Slovak Studies Center, established by Edward J. Behuncik at Sacred Heart University in Bridgeport (1985), named for another nephew. Materials are in Slovak and English as well, with alphabetical arrangement.

SERIES II: POLITICAL, PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS, 1918-1993  
Boxes 11-14, OS (Oversize) Boxes 1-2 & OS Folders 1-2

SURSERIES A: Political Materials, 1941-1982, Boxes 11-12

This small but interesting section of the collection deals with Behuncik's political activities, including his involvement with Democratic National Committee



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SERIES II: POLITICAL, PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS, 1918-1993

SURSERIES A: Political Materials, 1941-1982

where he served as campaign chairman of Slavic Ethnic Groups for about twenty years. Records here include correspondence, historical information, newspaper clippings, and reference materials. In addition, there are election campaign materials (1941-1982), including his and others candidacy information (11:7); materials under the heading "European visits" (12:1-3), including special mission orders to proceed to Paris, France, Prague and Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, and Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in 1945. Also there are materials from 1942 associated with the war crimes trials from the Foreign Funds Control of the U.S. Treasury Department (12:3). Once more materials are in English and Slovak. This subseries also is arranged alphabetically.

SUBSERIES B: Personal & Professional Materials, 1918-1993  
Boxes 12-14, OS Boxes 1-2, OS Folders 1-2

Unfortunately, there is not much real personal or family information in this subseries, and scant professional data, though these records include Behuncik's certificates, diplomas, resume, correspondence, national history and religious materials, newspaper clippings, speeches and reference materials. There are some obituaries for him and family members, but mostly for people with whom he worked or met. The bulk of the materials here is newspapers, which he collected, in Slovak or English, organized alphabetically by title. Other materials here are also in Slovak and English, and the arrangement is alphabetical.

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BOX LIST

SERIES I: COMMUNITY, CIVIL & RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, 1935-1988  
 Boxes 1-10, OS (Oversize) Box 2

SUBSERIES A: Slovak League of America, 1939-1988  
 Boxes 1-4, OS (Oversize) Boxes 1-2

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
1	1	Anniversaries	1957-82
	2	By-laws	1966
		Congress & conference materials	
	3	Announcements, speeches & other materials	1957-87
	4-5	Minutes	1957, 1968-85
	6	Newspaper clippings	1964-82
	7	Programs	1966-80
	8	Reports & resolutions	1964-87
	9-13	Correspondence	1939, 1946-66
2	1-14	Correspondence	1967-88 & n.d.
3	1	Declaration (Pittsburgh Pact)	1968
	2	Directories & other organizational information	1956-75 & n.d.

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SERIES I: COMMUNITY, CIVIL & RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, 1935-1988

SUBSERIES A: Slovak League of America, 1939-1988

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
3	3	Financial materials	1957-80 & n.d.
	4	Historical & biographical materials	1966-82 & n.d.
	5	Minutes & meetings	1956-88
OS Box 2		Newspapers: "Kanadsky Slovak" (Organ of Canadian Slovak League)	1986
	6-8	Newspaper clippings	1956-85 & n.d.
	9	Programs of events	1967, 1976-80 & n.d.
	10	Proclamations, resolutions & other materials	1953-77 & n.d.
	11	Reports	1956-88 & n.d.
	12-13	Statements, speeches & other materials	1948, 1968-83 & n.d.

Subsections of the Slovak League of America

American Fund for Slovak Refugees, Inc.

4	1	Correspondence & other materials	1969-80
	2	Financial & other organizational data	1970, 1982

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SERIES I: COMMUNITY, CIVIL & RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, 1935-1988

SUBSERIES A: Slovak League of America, 1939-1988

Box    Folder

Subsections of the Slovak League of America

Heritage Foundation, LTD

4	3	Anniversary	1981
	4	By-laws	1954
	5	Correspondence & other materials	1978-84 & n.d.
	6	Financial statement	1978

Scholarship Fund, Inc.

	7	Correspondence & other materials	1972-82 & n.d.
	8	Programs, reports & other materials	1968-72 & n.d.

SUBSERIES B: Slovak World Congress, 1970-1988, Boxes 4-8

Box    Folder

4	9	Anniversary	1981
	10	Banquets	1971-78
	11	By-laws, constitution & other documents	1970-81
	12-17	Correspondence	1970-77

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SERIES I: COMMUNITY, CIVIL & RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, 1935-1988

SUBSERIES B: Slovak World Congress, 1970-1988

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
5	1-4	Correspondence	1978-87 & n.d.
	5	Directories	1970-75 & n.d.
	6	Financial materials	1979-81
	7	Historical & biographical materials	1970-80 & n.d.
	8-13	Minutes & agendas	1972-78
6	1-5	Minutes & agendas	1979-86
	6-11	Newspaper clippings	1970-85 & n.d.
	12-13	Official publications (Bulletins # 4-12)	1971-73
7	1-12	Official publications (Bulletins # 13-69)	1974-85
8	1-3	Official publications (Bulletins # 70-81)	1986-88
	4	Proclamations, proposals & other materials	1973-82 & n.d.

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SERIES I: COMMUNITY, CIVIL & RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, 1935-1988

SUBSERIES B: Slovak World Congress, 1970-1988

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
8	5	Programs of events	1970-86 & n.d.
	6	Reports	1972-86
	7	Rules, orders & other materials	1975, 1979 & n.d.
	8	Speeches, addresses & other materials	1971-81

SUBSERIES C: Other Organizations, 1935-1988  
Boxes 8-10 & OS Boxes 1-2

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
		First Catholic Slovak Union & First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association	
8	9	Anniversaries & jubilees	1965, 1975-77
	10	Convention materials	1978, 1985
	11	Correspondence	1950, 1963-81 & n.d.
	12	Directory	n.d.
	13	Historical & other materials	1976-78 & n.d.
	14	Minutes	1974

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SUBSERIES C: Other Organizations, 1935-1988

Box    Folder

First Catholic Slovak Union &  
First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association

OS Box 1		Newspapers: (complete & incomplete issues)	
		“Jednota”	1938-87
		“Bratstvo”	1974-85
8	15	Newspaper clippings	1965-85 & n.d.
		Subsection of the Union	
		St. Joseph’s Society, Branch # 19	
9	1	Anniversaries	1964, 1971
	2	Correspondence	1935-81
	3	Directories	1938-39 & n.d.
	4	Meetings	1935
		PRO Fratribus	
	5	By-laws, certificates & other documents	1974
	6	Correspondence	1974-76 & n.d.
	7	Historical & other materials	1970 & n.d.

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SUBSERIES C: Other Organizations, 1935-1988

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
		Sacred Heart University	
9	8	Correspondence & other materials	1977-79
	9	Directories	1977 & n.d.
	10	Minutes & meetings	1977
	11	Proclamation & remarks	1985 & n.d.
		St. Andrew's Abbey & Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church	
	12	Correspondence & other materials	1948
	13	Newspaper clippings	1962-85 & n.d.
	14	Study books	1982
		Slovak Alliance	
	15	Correspondence & other materials	1940
	16	Directories	1940, 1976
	17	Newspaper clippings	1973-81 & n.d.
	18	Resolutions & other materials	1976 & n.d.
	19	Programs	1976-78



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SUBSERIES C: Other Organizations, 1935-1988

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
		Slovak American Bicentennial Commission	
10	1	Correspondence	1975-76 & n.d.
	2	Directories & other organizational information	1976
	3	Financial reports	1975
	4	Minutes	1975-77
	5	Newspaper clippings	1975-76
	6	Programs	1974-76
	7	Speech (Edward J. Behuncik)	1976
		Slovak Catholic Federation	
	8	Anniversary	1976
	9	Constitution	1985
	10	Convention materials	1975-81
	11	Correspondence	1965-87 & n.d.
	12	Historical information	1979 & n.d.
	13	Installation of officers	1970

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SUBSERIES C: Other Organizations, 1935-1988

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
		Slovak Catholic Federation	
10	14	Newspaper clippings	1976-85 & n.d.
	15	Official publications (“Good Shepherd”)	1976-77
	16	Proposals	n.d.
		Slovak Catholic Sokol	
10	17	Correspondence	1970-82 & n.d.
OS Box 2		Newspapers “Katolicky Sokol” (Includes “The Falcon” –English supplement)	1958-85
10	18	Newspaper clippings	1954, 1963-85
	19	Programs & other materials	1942, 1972-80 & n.d.
		Slovak Garden, Inc.	
	20	Financial materials	1987
	21	Minutes & agendas	1986-88
		Slovak Studies Association	
	22	By-laws	1978
	23	Correspondence	1978-82

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SERIES II: POLITICAL, PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS, 1918-1993  
Boxes 11-14, OS (Oversize) Boxes 1-2 & OS Folders 1-2

SURSERIES A: Political Materials, 1941-1982, Boxes 11-12

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
		Democratic National Committee	
11	1-3	Correspondence	1947, 1951-78 & n.d.
	4	Historical information	1960, 1976
	5	Newspaper clippings	1956-80 & n.d.
	6	Reference materials	1958
		Election campaign materials	
	7	Candidacy information (alphabetical)	1954-56, 1982 & n.d.
	8-10	Correspondence	1941-82
	11	Directories	1956, 1981 & n.d.
	12	Financial data	1956
	13	Newspaper clippings	1954-82
	14	Reports & speeches	1956 & n.d.
		European visits	
12	1	Correspondence & other materials	1956, 1963-69 & n.d.

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SURSERIES A: Political Materials, 1941-1982

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
		European visits	
12	2	Newspaper clippings	1968, 1977-81
	3	Reports & recommendations	1942, 1945-46

SUBSERIES B: Personal & Professional Materials, 1918-1993  
Boxes 12-14, OS Boxes 1-2, OS Folders 1-2

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
12	4	Certificates, diplomas & other documents	1918, 1924-58
	OS Folder 1		1978 & n.d.
12	5-7	Correspondence & other materials	1918, 1940-93 & n.d.
		Flying Cadet Civilian Committee	
	8	Applications & applicant information	1941
	9	Broadcast & release materials	1941
	10	Correspondence	1941
	11	Directories & recruiting statistics	1941
	12	Education & examination materials	1941 & n.d.

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SUBSERIES B: Personal & Professional Materials, 1918-1993

Box    Folder

13	1-3	National history materials	1937-80 & n.d.
OS Boxes 1-2 Newspapers: (complete & incomplete issues)			
		“American Ethnic”	1978
		“Americke Listy”	1964
		“The Bridgeport Post”	1974
		“Bridgeport Sunday Post”	1966, 1973
		“Ethnic American News”	1975-76
		“Family Life News”	1980
		“Horizont”	1973-85
		“Slovak v Amerike”	1968-82
		“The New York Times”	1956-85
		“Times-Leader, The Evening News”	1964-70
		“Villanovan”	1968
		“The Washington Star”	1978
13	4-6	Newspaper clippings & print materials	1946-86 & n.d.
OS Folder 2	Posters		1940, 1963
		Religious materials	
13	7	Articles, prayers & other materials	1955-85
OS Folder 1	Flyers		1974
OS Boxes 1-2 Newspapers: (complete & incomplete issues)			
		“The Catholic Transcript”	1963-85
		“Eastern Catholic Life”	1968-85
		“L’Osservatore Romano”	1946, 1979-85
		“Slobodne Slovensko”	1959-83
		“Wanderer Supplement”	1980

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SUBSERIES B: Personal & Professional Materials, 1918-1993

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>		
13	8	Programs	1977-81
	9-10	Reference materials	1957-82 & n.d.
14	1	Resume & jubilee (Edward J. Behuncik)	1992 & n.d.
		Speech materials	
	2-3	Drafts & notes	n.d.
	4	Newspaper clippings	1958-79 & n.d.
	5	Reference materials	1974-79 & n.d.
	6	Obituaries (alphabetical)	1975-80
	7	Edward J. Behuncik & family members:	
		Behuncik, Edward J.	1994
		Behuncik, John E.	1975
		Behuncik, Mary Bayus	1975

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INDEX OF SUBJECTS AND CORRESPONDENTS  
(Correspondence is indicated by an asterisk)

Directories, financial materials, minutes, newspaper clippings, and reference materials are not indexed. Edward J. Behuncik appears as a correspondent in almost all categories and thus has also not been indexed as such.

- \*Abate, Ernest N., 11:7
- Abate, Ernest N., 11:10
- \*Adamec, Joseph V., 10:11
- \*Adenauer, Max, 12:1
- \*Almer, Katarina, 12:6
- \*American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 2:11
- \*The American Ethnic Foundation, Inc., 2:13
- \*American Friends of Slovak Freedom, 1:10
- \*American Hungarian Federation, 2:6
- \*American Public Research Council, 2:11-12
- \*American-Slovak Democratic Association, 1:12
- \*Americansko Russky Viestnik, 1:10
  
- \*Balco, Method M., 4:1
- \*Baldwin, Ted, 11:7, 11:10
- \*Balley, John, 11:2
- Behuncik, Edward J, 1:3, 3:4, 5:7, 14:1
- Behuncik, Elizabeth Bendurich, 14:7
- \*Behuncik, John Edward, 9:11
- Behuncik, John Edward, 4:5, 14:7
- \* Behuncik, Mark J., 9:11
- Behuncik, Mark J., 14:7
- Behuncik, Mary Bayus, 14:7
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