

## **ONE SPECIAL CARNIVAL STORY AND GOOD WORK BY THE MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN CARNIVAL CITIES**

### **MAJUR, Croatia 03.06.2022.**

The year is 2020. The whole world is struggling with the Covid 19 pandemic. And these were not the only horrors we encountered. In Croatia, we were additionally hit by two strong earthquakes. On March 23rd, 2020, our capital Zagreb was destroyed by a devastating earthquake. One girl died. On December 29th of the same year, an even stronger earthquake of magnitude 6.3 occurred destroyed Banovina in Croatia. 7 people died. Human casualties and huge material damages caused great sadness and problems. In all this misfortune, hopelessness and shock, wonderful actions, love and solidarity started throughout our country and neighborhood. Many friends from Europe called us and wanted somehow to help. At the initiative of our members Carnival Association Frog from Ivanić Grad, who are located only 30 km as the crow flies from the epicenter of the earthquake, FECC Croatia launched a major humanitarian campaign of the Federation of European Carnival Cities to help a family in the earthquake-affected area. Vice-President of the FECC Croatia, Željko Posilović, the Carnival Association Frog from Ivanić Grad, led by Suzana Lovrenščak, and the Mayor of the Majur Municipality, Klementina Karanović, helped us to choose the right address, house and family that we can help together. In the presence of FECC Croatia President Ivana Bošković and Vice President Željko Posilović and members of the Carnival Association Frog, the five-member family of single mother Jelena Sestrić, who lived in a container after the earthquake, was chosen.

We began wholeheartedly to obtain all the necessary permits, solved the paperwork respecting the official procedure and opened special accounts for the humanitarian action. Our action was supported by the FECC International Board. On the initiative of the International Vice President Josip Silov, the President Lars Algell sent an encouraging letter to all members of the FECC.

We thank everyone who participated. Donations came from FECC member states: Slovenia, Italy, the Netherlands, Montenegro, Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, as well as numerous private members and other FECC member associations.

While we were collecting material resources, members of the Carnival Association Frog were in Majur providing comfort and hope to the vulnerable residents of Majur and cooking hot meals for all those in need.

On Friday, April 9th, 2020, a contract was signed between the Municipality of Majur and the Carnival Association Frog from Ivanić Grad, which granted the Sestrić family from Gornja Meminska near Majur a family home. The members of the Zaba Carnival Association helped to move the family from the container and to furnish the house and arrange the environment. As a sign of gratitude, the Sestrić family chose them as godparents for little Josip, who was baptized in August 2020.

Humanitarian action - the Federation of European Carnival Cities secured a house for the Sestrić family in the earthquake-ravaged Bania in Croatia - is a beautiful European and carnival story of solidarity. Besides the beautiful gesture, this is a great promotion of the carnival spirit and the FECC organization.

After the successful completion of this FECC humanitarian campaign, we organized a visit to the Sestrić family and the Municipality of Majur on June 3rd, 2022. Josip Silov, international vice-president, Branko Brumen, general secretary with his wife Jelka, Željko Posilović, vice-president and Branka Renko-Silov, secretary of FECC Croatia, Peter Radoja, vice-president of FECC Slovenia and member Roman Kramer, as well as Katica Miljan, treasurer of Carnival Association Frog from Ivanić Grad, were on this visit. We were welcomed by the hardworking mayor of the Municipality of Majur, Klementina Karanović. Together we visited the grateful members of the Sestrić family and their new, nicer and safer home at street Domovinskih žrtava 21.

It was an emotional visit that we will all remember for a long time.

Mayor Klementina Karanović introduced us to the Municipality of Majur, which is the smallest municipality in Sisak-Moslavina County in where 782 inhabitants live in 11 villages on 67 km<sup>2</sup>, most of them elderly. Out of a total of 760 buildings damaged by the earthquake, 123 are marked red, unusable, 149 marked yellow, temporarily unusable, and 460 marked green, usable with damage. All these numbers individually are not big, but considering that they are a small community, everyone's daily life has changed completely. Remembering those days immediately after the earthquake, the mayor expressed immense gratitude, especially to dear friends, known and unknown, to firefighters, volunteers, various companies, associations and donors from all over Croatia, Europe and the world who were the first to come to their aid. Among them stand out Carnival Association Frog from Ivanić Grad and the Federation of European Carnival Cities, which through a humanitarian action collected funds and provided a family of five members a new home in Majur.

We were all delighted by the welcome of Mayor Klementina Karanović and the dear people of the Sestrić family. We are proud to have proven once again that carnivalists are big-hearted people. We spread positive vibes around us and bring smiles to children's faces. This occasion also showed our unity. Friendship and solidarity continue...

**BIG THANKS** to everyone who helped!

Branka Renko-Silov,

Secretary FECC Croatia

Josip Silov.

International FECC Vice-president

