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September 12, 2007

INVITATION

COMMEMORATION OF THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE DARR MINE DISASTER

You are cordially invited to participate in the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Darr mine explosion in Pennsylvania. A number of Hungarian organizations joined together, along with the local community, to remember the tragic event that took place a hundred years ago.



On December 19, 1907, an explosion in the Darr Mine, at Rostraver, Pennsylvania, took the lives of 239 men and teenage boys. The mining disaster is the worst in the history of Pennsylvania and the second worst in the history of the United States. In the explosion, most of those killed were Hungarian immigrant laborers. By commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Darr mine explosion, the Hungarian organizations planning the event declared that it is important to remember the tragedy and all those who were affected by it. “By remembering the Darr

tragedy, we reaffirm our nation’s focus on safety in the workplace,” they said. “We affirm that the sacrifices were not in vain, and we pledge ourselves to continue working together for the good of humankind,” said the statement of the six Hungarian organizations.

The commemoration is scheduled for September 29, Saturday, at 11 a.m., in Van Meter, Pennsylvania, at the Olive Branch cemetery and a neighboring church (Approximately 50 miles from Pittsburgh.) The program will include remarks by the representatives of the sponsoring organizations, representatives of labor organizations and safety and health organizations, as well as governmental officials. There will be wreath laying ceremony at the cemetery, and a visit to the Darr mine site. Hungarian-American children will read the names of the Hungarian miners who died in the explosion.

The following organizations are sponsoring the commemoration:

American Hungarian Federation
Bethlen Communities, Ligonier, Pennsylvania
Calvin Synod of the United Church of Christ
Hungarian Reformed Church of America
Hungarian Reformed Federation of America
William Penn Association

A fact sheet, with logistical and other information, is available on www.americanhungarianfederation.org/news_darrmine.htm. The fact sheet includes some links to information about the Darr explosion and other background details. The contact person for the event is The Reverend Imre Bertalan, 125 Kalassay Drive, Ligonier, Pa., 15658; 724-238-2235; revimre@bethlen.com. Participation in the commemoration is free of charge. Our hope is that a large number of Hungarian-Americans will attend the event, to remember a part of our history and to show solidarity in nurturing our culture and heritage in the 21st century.