

## **AHF receives highest award**

*Paraphrased from the Hungarian speech of AHF Co-President Balogh*

May 6, 2017. The Friends of Hungary Foundation (Magyarország Barátai Alapítvány) gave its highest award for preserving the good image of Hungary to the American Hungarian Federation at its May 5-7 worldwide conference. Over 200 notable Hungarian expatriates, leaders, and friends of Hungary from 24 countries attended this conference that was greeted by Hungarian President János Áder.

The award was presented by E. Sylvester Vizi, Széchenyi-award winning neuroscientist and Chair of the Board of the Friends of Hungary Foundation to Co-President Gyula Elemér Balogh who accepted the award on behalf of the Federation and to 5 other Board and AHF members who were on the podium including Ferenc Koszorus, Jr, Zsuzsanna Dreisziger-Stricz, Katalin Kádár Lynn, Prof. András Ludányi, the Honorable Anikó Gáál Schott (who is one of AHF's most selfless supporters and was asked to join the celebration by Mr. Balogh), and Bertalan Kolus.

Mr. Balogh gave thanks (in Hungarian) to the Foundation for this wonderful award on behalf of the Federation and opened his remarks with a moving quote from a letter sent by Viktor Orbán at the 100th Anniversary of AHF which talked about faithfulness to your country, Fidelissimus ad Mortem. He then described the mission that AHF's Founders had, about working and sacrificing together, about helping immigrant Hungarians adjust to life in the US. He described ten major accomplishments and events in the life of the Federation, starting with building and donating the George Washington statue to Hungary (in Budapest) to show the warm relations between Americans and Hungarians.

He mentioned the millions of dollars in donations that AHF gave to Hungarians to reconstruct after World War II and to help relocate to the US in 1956. He mentioned the support AHF gave to the Victims of Communism Memorial in Washington DC.

In 2010-2013, together with the Amerikaiak a Magyarokért Alapítvány (AMKA) in Hungary, AHF contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to help the farmer and individual victims of the floods and Red Sludge. In 2013 AHF helped to build the Hungarian Roots to Revival Festival, which was part of the Smithsonian Festival visited by over 1.4 million persons and over 40 million on TV.

In 2014 AHF sponsored the Peace Forum to improve American Hungarian relations which was held at the 5th anniversary and Thanksgiving celebration of AMKA, and had over 225 attendees. In 2016 on the 60th anniversary of the 1956 revolution against the Soviet Communist dictators, AHF spoke out against former President Clinton's outrageous remarks about Hungarians liking dictatorships.

He concluded with remarks about the importance of involving young people in the Federation, about collaborating with the Foundation on creating and sponsoring future 3rd and 4th generation Hungarian EXPO-s, and about selflessness and giving back to the country of our ancestry. He then introduced Ferenc Koszorus, Jr. the past President and Chair of the Board, and lauded him on his extensive work on behalf of the Federation.