

Czech

Slovak
Sokol Minnesota



Providing fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural, and social programs

SLOVO

May 2018
vol. 41 no. 5

UPCOMING EVENTS

Band Blast

Saturday, April 28, 7:30 p.m.

June Slovo Deadline

May 1, 2018

Festival of Nations

May 3 - 6, Saint Paul RiverCentre

Sokol Senior Singers

Tuesdays, May 1 and 15, 10 a.m.

Board of Trustees

May 9, 7 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

May 17, 7 p.m.

FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

A Celebration of ...

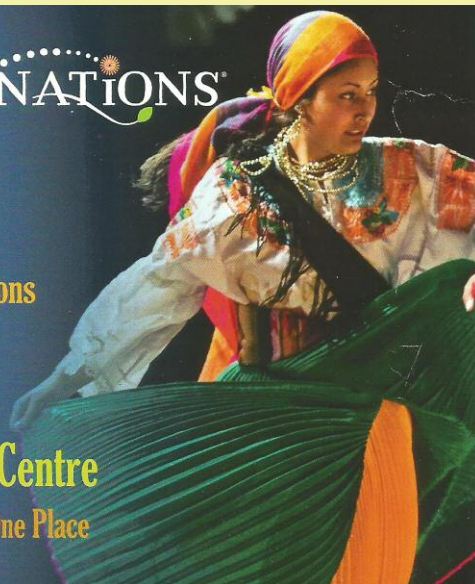
Now & Then:

Exploring Historical & Contemporary Cultural Traditions

2018 May 3 - 6

Saint Paul RiverCentre

A World of Cultures in One Place



Come see lively folk dance performances on the Main Stage (M) and Atrium (A).

Children: Saturday 11 a.m. (M)

Teens: Friday 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. (M), Saturday 1p.m. (M)

Adults: Saturday 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. (M), and Sunday 11 a.m. (A), 3 p.m., and 4 p.m (M)

Sample delicious Czech and Slovak ethnic dishes in the Café: hot dogs (*párky*); pork burgers (*vepřový karbanátek s houskou*); sausage (*jitrnice*); open-faced sandwiches (*chlebičky*); potato salad, liver pâté, and radish; dumpling/bacon/cabbage hotdish (*halušky*); fresh homemade sauerkraut (*zeli*); fried cheese sticks (*vyprážený syr*); cream roll (*kremrole*); Linzer cookies; kolache (*koláče*): apricot, cream cheese, poppy seed, prune, and raspberry.

Czech and Slovak Cultural Exhibit Booth: *Historic Currency*

Volunteers are needed in the Café!

If you Volunteer with us at the Festival of Nations, you will get a **FREE** admission ticket!

To volunteer for a shift in the Café, you can sign up on our website www.sokolmn.org or call Dawn 317-409-1095



May 13, Sunday, 1- 3 p.m., C.S.P.S. Hall, Panel Discussion: *Czech Influences on Writers and Musicians*

Moderated by Patrick Dewane, playwright and actor (*Accidental Hero*), with Patricia Hampl, author (*Art of the Wasted Day*, new book published April 2018); Daniel Freeman, author (*Mozart in Prague*); and Jordan Sramek, founder and artistic director of Twin Cities choral group the Rose Ensemble. Plus signing of books and CDs. It's Mothers' Day! Special Czech refreshments for all who attend!



Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes

By Judy Aubrecht

Vážení členové Sokola a přátelé / Dear Sokol members and friends,

The Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors held its annual retreat March 3 to get to know each other better and to work on pre-selected topics that are important for our Sokol unit in 2018. The topics included membership, fundraising, grant writing, and managing large events. We included time for small groups to talk about one topic to develop preliminary suggestions regarding that particular subject.

For many years, a formal system was in place to accept new members in which a current, active Sokol Minnesota member would sponsor the new member. The active member would present the new member to the organization, and the applicant would be introduced at a monthly meeting. A paper vote was conducted; ballots were counted. When the new member was accepted, he/she took the Sokol Minnesota oath and was congratulated. The sponsor mentored the new member by inviting that person to events and introducing the new member to others within the organization. However, with growing membership, the formal system changed. Now, new members submit an application for membership, their names are presented for a vote at a monthly Board of Directors meeting, and the names of new members are published in the *Slovo*.

While this new system is efficient, it does not offer opportunities to get to know other members or to easily contribute time and talents to the Sokol unit. To expand on the ideas discussed at the retreat, enhancing membership opportunities will be a topic for upcoming board meetings. This will include suggestions about how to welcome new members and to keep current members involved in unit activities.

The grants and fundraising team proposed hiring a professional grant writer to expand our grant opportunities. A new computer and additional software are essential, since our current equipment is very old. As a non-profit organization, Sokol Minnesota has access to reduced-cost software. An office on the first floor of the building is also considered important for better access, as well as environmental control.

As some of our events become more popular and better advertised, such as the annual Czech and Slovak Festival, handling crowds, while not exceeding the building capacity, is an important consideration. Security is essential at large events. Having enough food and supplies is important, which is complicated when there are no reservations and the weather can have a big impact on the event. Improving our recycling system is also a big goal for 2018.

As you can see, the Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors is working hard to encourage member participation and to keep our unit running efficiently and financially sound. Please continue to support Sokol Minnesota with your attendance at events, as well as through volunteering and financial contributions. *Nazdar!*

21st Annual Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp

C.S.P.S. Hall from June 18 to 22 | 8:50 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Theme:  100 years of Czech and Slovak history
1918 - 2018

Activities will include ethnic crafts, food, singing, games, folk dancing, language, and gymnastics classes. Children seven to fourteen years of age.

Parents, grandparents, or family friends can volunteer at the camp, which allows the camper to attend at a reduced rate. Older teens are invited to be junior leaders.

Registration ends on June 1.

Register at the Sokol Minnesota website < www.sokolmn.org >
under **Classes**, click on **Culture Camp 2018**.

Contact Louise Wessinger with any questions at 651-452-6240.

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

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Past issues of *Slovo* and
Hall Calendar of Events:
www.sokolmn.org

A School of Helpers by Jitka Sebek

Sejde z očí, sejde z mysli (out of sight, out of mind) is an idiom that luckily doesn't apply to the Czech government and its Czech expats and the organizations that consistently promote Czech-oriented programs. Annually the Czech government approves financial donations to support projects of the compatriot societies and friends. Czech economic statistics suggest that even small financial support can yield significant returns through tourism, business opportunities, and even permanent residences. This framework of "if you support us, we will come" creates a win-win situation.

Representatives from Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota and Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota (CSCC) have applied for Czech grants for as long as I remember, and if I am correct, they always have been successful. Last year, *Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities/Czech and Slovak School Twin Cities* also decided to voice its need for support of programs. Since the School does not have its own legal status, we work through Sokol Minnesota and work closely with CSCC.

Dr. Martin Stránský, who has lived in the U.S. and who also has actively supported Czechs abroad to the Czech Senate, discussed with us via Skype his support and offered words of encouragement to the School and CSCC, "I admire your work and pursuits and assure you of my effort to find ways how to help you. („Obdivuji Vaši práci a snahu a ujišťuji Vás, že se pokusím najít cesty jak Vám pomoci.”)

The right time to extend extra support for our School cause came in December 2017 when Blanka Brichta graciously agreed to meet in Prague with Czech Senator Tomáš Grulich, the Chairperson for Standing Senate Commission on Compatriots Living Abroad. She delivered a letter and also photo documentation that was prepared by Martina Gurgel.

The letter explained that Czech and Slovak School Twin Cities, affiliated with Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, teaches two heritage languages according to Czech and Slovak school standards and is open to everyone interested. The

School prepares its students not only to have active communication with other Czech or Slovak speakers, but also for tests leading to the Seal of Biliteracy. The letter also listed examples of co-organized events with CSCC and Sokol Minnesota, including the 2018 year-long centennial commemorations of Czechoslovakia's founding.

With pride (and relief) on April 14, we read the announcement on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic webpage that among the over 280 worldwide recipients of the Czech government's generous sum of 21M Czech Koruna are 57 in the United States, including Sokol Minnesota (92,000Kc/\$4,484) and Czech and Slovak Cultural Center (70,000Kc/\$3,412).

Congratulations to grant writers Joyce Tesarek and Renáta Tichá for these successful applications. The School is very proud of your successes. We are also very thankful for the generosity of the Czech Government. The School hopes that our support helped, even a little bit, as we all work together to carry out our culture-promoting plans and events. Joyce, as Sokol Financial Chair, stated, "fundraising, especially at the scale we need for the hall, is totally a team effort. It is so correct that the School and all the support from its people are an important factor in our strong connections with the Consulate and the Embassy. We have always had ties with them, but to have outgoing native speakers and the prestige of the School is so valuable. This is a very timely award, since one of the two grants we submitted was to help pay for updating the office equipment to support programming."

Eight other Sokol organizations in the United States also received grants: Gymnastic Association Sokol, American Sokol, Sokol Spirit, American Sokol Los Angeles, Sokol San Francisco, SAS-Slavic American Sokol, Sokol Greater Cleveland, *Americký Sokol* Washington, D.C., plus nine Czech schools: California, Portland, San Diego, Utah, Seattle, Atlanta, North Carolina, and Washington, D.C.



May 19: John Palka Presents *The Czech and Slovak Marriage*

Literary Ventures invites you to its annual lecture on Saturday, May 19, 1 p.m., second floor of the C.S.P.S. Hall. John Palka speaks about *The Czech and Slovak Marriage: What the Partners Brought to the Union*.

This lecture is part of the year-long series of events in 2018 that celebrate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Czechoslovakia. In this context, it is worthwhile to consider the long-term history of the Czechs and Slovaks and ask why their leaders argued for the establishment of a shared state in 1918 considering that no such state had existed for at least a thousand years, if ever. The lecture also discusses what the two partners brought to the union, how this affected Czech-Slovak relationships within Czechoslovakia, and how historical factors contributed to the controversial, but nonetheless amicable, divorce of 1993.

Personal connections enliven Palka's story, especially the roles played by Michal Miloslav Hodža (great-grand-uncle) in the Slovak National Awakening of the nineteenth century and by Milan Hodža (grandfather) in the establishment and

development of Czechoslovakia and its evolution during the First Republic. The family aspect of Czechoslovak history is narrated in Palka's *My Slovakia, My Family*. The lecture will not focus on narratives from the book; however, the book will be available for purchase at the lecture for a discounted price of \$20.

Sponsors for Literary Ventures are the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and the Office of the Honorary Consul for the Czech Republic.

Commemorate 2018!

- ♥ 100th anniversary of the founding of Czechoslovakia
- ♥ 50th anniversary of the Prague Spring reform movement
- ♥ 25th anniversary of the formation of the two independent nations of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic

www.CzechSlovakCentury.org

2018 Minnesota Sokol Camp *Booya* Picnic

By Kari and Scott Muyres, Co-Chairs

Mark your calendars • August 12

The annual 2018 Sokol Minnesota *booya* picnic is Sunday, August 12, 12 - 5 p.m. at the historic Sokol camp! 19201 Woodland Acres, Pine City, Minnesota 55063

Rain or shine, the picnic will be a fun-filled day complete with live entertainment, Czech and Slovak dancers, homemade cabbage rolls, *jitrnice*, *koláče*, and of course, *booya*! Come early and stay late! We hope to see you there!

We are always looking for helpers!
If interested in volunteering, please contact Kari or Scott Muyres at 763-226-0313

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors

By Glynis Grostephan, Corresponding Secretary

Sokol Minnesota greatly appreciates your donations supporting Sokol programs and the refurbishing of our historic C.S.P.S. Hall.

LEGACY FUND (includes matching Saint Paul STAR Grant donations): In memory of **Doris McKenney: Under \$99: Sharon and John Liska.** In memory of **Severin and Josephine Wanous: \$100 - \$499: Jo Ann Wanous Parvey.**

\$5,000: In memory of **Joie Dolejsi: Anonymous.**

GENERAL FUND: \$100 - \$499: Tom Tesarek.

In-Kind Donations to Sokol Minnesota: Chuck Draheim (plywood to make swords for *Taneční Mládež* dancers).

Legacy Fund: \$ 5,710 General Fund: \$ 100

TOTAL: \$ 5, 810

C.S.P.S. LEGACY FUND

In order to complete repairs to our roof and brickwork, we need your help! All donations are 100% tax deductible and will help match the \$85,000 City of Saint Paul STAR grant.



Let's get the Hall in shape to commemorate 2018: our 131st anniversary and the centenary of the birth of Czechoslovakia.

Contact Joyce Tesarek to discuss your tax-deductible donation: 612-822-6147 or <finance@sokolmn.org> *Thank you!*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

To help Restore, Renovate, and Refurbish the C.S.P.S. Hall, I make a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

I would like my gift designated: in memory or in honor of:

Make checks payable to **Sokol Minnesota**

Write **Legacy Fund** in the memo line

Mail to **C.S.P.S. Hall Legacy Fund**

Attn: **Treasurer**

383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

Or donate online: www.sokolmn.org



Šibřinky 2018

1. Member-since-1980 and door-prize-winner Alan (cowboy hat with sparkles) and Dorothy Sladek. Other winners: Val Kuslie, Mike McGinley, Lucas Pillman, Terry Pulkrabek, Brittany Stepan, Sharon Wyberg. Thanks to our several generous donors!



2. Led by James Metcalf, the boys danced *Podsable*.

3. Sokol Teen Dancers.

4. *Taneční Mládež* line up.

5. *Taneční Mládež* perform.

6. Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers.

7. Sandy Prochaska took a break from dancing to play her concertina with her father's band, Gordy Prochaska and the Little Fisherman.

8. Pat and Don Anderle.

9. Dancing the night away.



On April 7 Sokol Hall was filled with the sounds of friends meeting, watching talented ethnic dancers, eating fantastic food and goodies, drinking good Czech beer, and taking to the



dance floor to the music of Gordy Prochaska and the Little Fishermen Band. The eight-piece band filled the C.S.P.S. Hall with polkas, waltzes, and foxtrots. Thanks to all who made this evening such great fun!

Markéta Resong, head cook, with help from Alena Youngberg, Katerina Bila, and Michaela GianCarlo Kotek, prepared a great Czech dinner of pork cutlet, potato salad, pickled beets, and a

dinner roll. Hana Matousek, with help from Lloyd Krocak, offered a beautiful table of homemade sweets and Sokol-made *koláče*. Wendy Bednar directed dinner guests and cleared tables.



Chuck Draheim, bar manager, with Rick Palma, Emily and Benjamin Krikava, and Darnell and Dave Stepan, dispensed Czechvar beer, wine, water, Czech *Kofola*, and other soft drinks.

The teen dancers and parents sold bead necklaces, masks, and light bracelets. Thanks to Emma and Dominik GianCarlo, Robert Kotek, Matthew Weathers, and Tanah and Zephyr Bulera.



During the dinner hour, the Sokol children's dance group, *Taneční Mládež*, and the Sokol Teen Dancers entertained guests. The teen boys presented a new dance, *Podsable* (Under Swords) from the archives of Czech ethnologist, František Bonus, and taught to the boys by James Metcalf. Sokol dance director Louise Wessinger with John Topic, Dawn Bulera, Romana Pulkrabek, Lenka Hester, and Michaela Wentz helped the younger dancers with their performances.

During the band intermission, the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers presented dances from Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia. The audience joined them for a Grand March in honor of the 100th Anniversary of the founding of Czechoslovakia and everyone participated!

Doreen McKenney designed and printed our Šibřinky posters, ads, and our event tickets. Our door and food ticket sellers were Jean Draheim, Judy and Tom Aubrecht, Joyce Tesarek, and Glynis Grostephan.

Dawn Bulera, Chris and Rick Palma, Sandy Prochaska, and Raya Losier decorated the hall and set up for the dance. The team of those cleaning up after the party, in addition to the kitchen crew which left that area spotless, included Chris and Rick Palma, Darnell and Dave Stepan, Sandy Prochaska, David Cammack, Lenka and Anna Hester, Jean and Chuck Draheim, and Chloe, Steven, and Marius Morse.

Thanks again to all who came to Šibřinky and a special thanks to all who helped!



Grandpa František Sigmund was born in 1899 in the North Moravian town of Pribor, into the family of a local bakery owner. In Czech, this kind of bakery is called *cukrárna*. Young František was expected to follow in his father's profession. He began his apprenticeship at 15, which was the first year of World War I. Just as he was finishing learning his craft, the call card (draft notice) came, and a young sweet baker had to change his white apron for a soldier's uniform.

I don't have any information on his recruitment to the Austro-Hungarian army or how he got to Italy, but the war needed him, along with other hundreds of thousands of young Bohemians, Moravians, Slovaks, Poles, Germans, Slovenes, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Croats, Romanians, and Serbs.

I wonder how he must have felt, coming from a gentle, small town directly into the inferno of war. By that time he was drafted, the war was almost at a standstill on the Western Front. Austria's Empire was fighting with its last might. The Italian Front, where František was sent, was undecided with thousands of young men dying on both sides.



Grandpa František Sigmund

At the start of the war, Italy was unsure whether to join the war efforts on the side of the Central Powers (including Germany, Austria-Hungary, and others) or the Allied Powers (including France, United Kingdom, Russia, and others). At last, Italy joined the Allied forces in hopes of regaining its former territories held by Austria, like Dalmatia, South Tirol, and Trentino, in case of Austria's Habsburg's defeat. Italians began the war with a super

offensive, but the front soon slowed down to trench warfare similar to the Western Front in France. In Italy, the war included high altitudes and very cold temperatures in the winter. I do not have any detailed information on places or dates where František fought in battles with the Austro-Hungarian troops against Italy.

By the second half of 1918, it was apparent the Habsburg Empire was breaking up. For František, the war went on. In October 1918, he was taken prisoner, along with fellow Czech soldiers. The winter was coming soon, temperatures plunged in the night, and the men had very little food supplies left in their rucksacks. The Italian captors could care less about little details like their prisoners' hunger or comfort, for they had enough worries of their own. At that stage of the war, almost every army was nearly depleted of basic supplies.

I obtained a copy of František's diary, which he began writing by the end of October 1918, after he was captured. It provides most of the information and quotations below. He wrote of long days marching over dangerous, difficult mountainous terrain, cold nights sleeping under thin tarps that were not waterproof, and hunger, hunger, and more hunger.

He mentioned Mount Mayo (in Italian: Monte Maggio, 1856 meters/ 6,089 feet), where they were still fighting, dodging cannons and grenades, hiding in the caves, and then marching

on. Then at San Sebastiano, a town lower in the valley, they were joined with more prisoners of war. Several thousand men formed an impromptu camp, pooled their food resources together, and František was finally (somewhat) fed.

He wrote, "what a beautiful sight, wherever you looked some cooking is being done ... if our mothers could see us, they would not believe how their boys happily made *plácky* and *knedlíky*." I assume those pancakes and dumplings were of the water and flour variety, not very delicate, but if you're hungry, "you can eat nails," my grandpa used to say.

Later that same day, it was time to march on. They marched all night, left the town of Carbonare behind them and headed east to Orviera (Editor's note: not found on any contemporary map), where they arrived at 9 a.m. They were placed in a large garden, under fig and apricot trees, but again, no food in sight. Italian soldiers did not share their supplies while under way, so the captives had to take care of themselves. Here they met Czech Legionnaires, who were keeping things in order and made others share and exchange food and other things

The next day, they marched to a train station where all 8,000 boarded. At the station before departure, they were able to exchange some "spare" items, such as belts and shoes, for Italian bread, which František described as "white as a *buchta* (bun), but crusty on the outside, soft inside." What he was most happy about was that when glimpsing outside from the train, he did not see any more of those cursed, ugly, cold mountains! He noted, "...all around us I saw a beautiful Italian lowland spreading, full of vineyards and trees."

They passed the well-known Italian city of Verona, and shortly after stopped in a small train station. When they all got out, a couple of hours march followed. Arriving in a place called Castel Dasanor (in Italian, *Castel d'Azzano*), they were all "driven like cattle" into the large estate park. As it was already night again, and no food in sight, the men got out their tarps with rucksacks for pillows and laid down their tired bodies on the cold ground in another cold night.

The next day turned out to be somewhat happier, as they found some more Czech friends from other battalions, and a Czech cook amongst them. They all shared their stories and news from their last several days. Later that day, they finally received a piece of bread and half can of food.

During the next two days, more men arrived. They all were recounted and organized; Italian tents were erected in rows, so the camp was established. In all, there were about 50,000 men, six men to a tent. Food rations were established, meager as they were: five men received two small breads daily, sometimes meat, sometimes one food can for two men; also eight pounds of rice for 100 men, which was cooked for them daily.

Oh, how fondly František thought of his loved ones at home: his mother, brother, and sisters, his Sokol brothers, and Miss M. He thought about his former life in Pribor. Would he ever be back among them? And Miss M, was she thinking about him as he did of her? Sometimes when reminiscing, the men sang Czech songs, especially the *Kde domov můj* (Where is My Homeland).

Our men had some partial information about the diplomatic activity of Professor Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and other Czech nationalists. They knew about the formation of the

Czecho-Slovak Legion and most of the men voluntarily signed up for the Legion, except for Bosnians and Polish.

At about this time, far away in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Professor Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk helped to organize a meeting of a group of delegates from central European nations to “encourage them to resolve major disputes, especially in regards to territorial claims, before the larger powers began formulating postwar settlements ... after differences were aired and some agreements reached, the delegates gathered on Saturday, October 26, in the courtyard of Independence Hall. Professor Masaryk read the union’s Declaration of Common Aims, which they all signed ... the entire crowd then retired to the nearby Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, where Masaryk received a telegram confirming that he would be appointed President of Czecho-Slovakia ... two days later after the meeting in Philadelphia, on October 28, 1918, the new republic was declared when the Czecho-Slovak National Council formally proclaimed independence ... ‘Czecho-Slovak people! Your ancient dream has been realized’ ... in Prague, people spilled out of offices, factories and homes, and large crowds filled Wenceslas Square, where the proclamation was read aloud amidst cheering flag-waving crowd.” (The above paragraph is quoted from Kevin McNamara’s book, *Dream of a Great Small Nation*, pages 294-6).

The end of World War I happened on November 11, when the Allies signed an armistice with Germany that became effective on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. However, at that time, there still remained thousands of soldiers, prisoners of war, and various displaced people all over Europe.

The men in František’s camp knew that Austria-Hungary had lost the war, as sometimes small Italian boys climbed the trees and walls around the camp’s perimeter and called to them, “*Austria kaput, Austria kaput.*” The POW officers also received some news from the Italians. On December 16, 1918, the newsletter *Tabor* began publishing with news from the homeland. The men eagerly awaited orders to go home.

František fell ill with some intestinal malady, but refused to go to a hospital, as he was afraid to be separated from his comrades. In silence he suffered headaches and fever, unable to eat anything. After a few days, the illness abated somewhat. On November 17, he wrote that “at last I feel less ill, was able to eat some bread, but very weak yet. They say we are going to get a bath and then we are supposed to go away.” But it was not to be.

On November 22, he recorded, “today is St. Cecilia’s day and we received a lot more food and much better than any other day. A whole bread, much more rice, cabbage, and two pieces of meat! Also coffee and sugar!” As František observed on November 24, “we are not hungry now as we’re getting more food. But not a peep about going home.” The men were impatient. The long nights of waiting grated upon their psyche. They wanted to get back home to their families and to their new nation. They reasoned that since the new Czecho-Slovakia was not at war with Italy, why could they not, just maybe, get in a file and march home? This proposition was put to the Italians in charge, but it was declined.

Then on December 8, “today they rounded up the men who worked at post offices and railroads, we heard they will go home first as they’re needed there.” These men left on December 15. Oh, how František envied those men and would have liked to be among them! “Oh, maminko, will I ever see you and Pribor and all of you dear ones again? I am getting

weaker, if we have to wait and wait I do not know if I will last. And also how many others will endure?”

The food supplies must have been coming to the end again, as they were getting horsemeat, rice soup, and very little bread, along with more days and nights of waiting. The nights were getting colder as December marched on with cold rains. The men received some little cash as Christmas was approaching, so they could supplement the meager rations. František bought a little piece of chocolate for an astronomical price, but it reminded him of home and the *cukrárna*.

One day when it wasn’t raining, for lack of anything to do, he went to explore the camp. This large area of about five square miles originally must have been a very nice park. But now, it was full of holes and latrines, the trees demolished, branches and bark broken and rubbed off. On December 21, as he longed for home, František wrote, “the Germans who worked repairing the battle grounds in the vicinity, fixing the trenches and roads, were recalled. Also Czechs, who worked in Italian bakeries, were rounded up. I wonder why, maybe it is a sign we’ll be going home soon?”

On Christmas December 24, *Štědrý den a večer* (bountiful/generous eve), František recorded, “we are awoken at 5 by bells of all the churches in the vicinity ringing and ringing. Today is a bountiful day for all but us in captivity. Czech children are told if they fast all day, they will see a golden pig on the closest wall in the evening. I will see that golden pig for sure and much earlier than evening, for I am fasting longer than a month already. Breakfast today is a little piece of bread and rice soup/water. Afternoon was rice soup with flecks of horsemeat. Sometimes we get also a lemon. ‘Bountiful eve’ meal today was 1/2 a bowl of cabbage soup. Oh, *maminko* (mother), how I wish to be home today, and get at least the bountiful meal thrown to our dogs! A Czech officer visited us today and promised better food and said we should be home in two months!”

On December 25, his diary noted that “it rained the whole night until about 4 a.m., when a group of 150 railroad men marched out . . . oh, how I’d like to be amongst them! I learned today, that during our stay here, only in the past two months, 1,100 Czech men went to the hospital! And how many others must have been ill? In the afternoon we were able to buy 33 chestnuts and tomorrow we may get some figs.”

It is evident that the life of POWs in December 1918 in “sunny” Italy was anything but sunny. Constant cold, freezing rain, illness, and insufficient food could finish what the war began.

The return home took even more time; František and his comrades had to wait a little longer. But he was young and he was a Sokol, a person of strong mind and body. He survived even more of the same treatment and eventually, sometime in early 1919, he and his comrades were able to leave that camp’s miserable existence and go home to their new lives in a new republic.

“**František at War Again**” is coming in the next *Slovo* issue. Part 2 is a continuation of my Grandpa’s life story, as it continues to reflect the life of Czech citizens in the times “between the two World Wars” and later in the Cold War.

Editor’s note: for consultations, special thanks to Ken Janda, author of *The Emperor and the Peasant: Two Men at the Start of the Great War and the End of the Habsburg Empire*, and Dave Muhlena, Library Director, National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library.



Rosemary Whaley-Baisden, Cinnamon Whaley, Bob Kostichka, Jason Brozovich



Teresa Pojar and Terri Colucci



Louise Wessinger

Spring Pancake Breakfast Served 176 on March 25

By Jason Brozovich

A special thank you to the koláče bakers who supplied 80 dozen *koláče*: Judy Aubrecht, Mary Jo Chlebecek, Arlene Hamernik, Ed Hamernik, Don Haselbauer, Katie Haselbauer, Ann Janda, Ken Janda, Pam Langworthy, Doreen McKenney, Jerry Robbers, Richard Sargent, Joan Sedlacek, Joyce Tesarek (chair), Penny Tesarek. We had 24 pre-orders with the following fillings: apricot, cream cheese, poppy seed, prune, and raspberry. Jean Hall and Arlene Hamernik, bake sale co-chairs, appreciated the pre-orders, which were packaged and ready to hand over to our customers.

Other bake sale items were donated by Mary Jo Chlebecek, Hana Matousek, Joyce Tesarek, and once again Bob Kostichka brought 13 bags of his special, tasty Caramel Corn. Mary Jo and Jim Chlebecek and Arlene Hamernik sold the baked goods. Bake sales: \$998. Total: \$1,977.

Breakfast volunteers: Jason Brozovich, Colleen Cahill, Dennis Cahill, Mary Cahill, Terri Colucci, Chuck Draheim, Ed Hamernik, Bob Kostichka, Denis Novak, Teresa Pojar, Joan Sedlacek, Cinnamon Whaley, Rosemary Whaley-Baisden, and Girl Scout Troop 55398.

Vendors: Mark Dillon, Minnetonka Moravian Mix jam with organic huckleberries, mulberries, and raspberries; Jean Draheim, jewelry; John and Joe Gindele, *Yorkville Twins* book; Marilynn Gomez, knitted items; Julianne Hertog, Slovak decorated eggs; Pamela

Kotval, baked goods, cookbooks, fabric arts, notecards; Raya Losier, Czech and Slovak imported candies and cookies; Hana Matousek, baked goods; Doreen McKenney, note cards, imported Czech items; Deanna Miller, knitting and crocheted items; Ludmila Palkova, baked goods and assorted canned goods.



Perničky (decorated gingerbread cookies), info for *Sibřinky*, Festival of Nations, and the Czech-Slovak Century buttons



mingled at the tables with the Norwegians to sing the anthems and a table grace before enjoying the catered Czech dinner of roast pork and dumplings, with apple strudel for dessert; they exchanged ethnic heritage stories, traditions, and travel experiences.

Czech Honorary Consul Marit Lee Kucera, as emcee, gave a few facts and stats about modern-day Czech Republic. Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers performed a dance between each of the spoken parts of the program. (1) Wearing her Sokol uniform, Joan Sedlacek



8 May 2018 *Slovo*

Czechs + Norwegians on St. Paddy's = Great Evening

On Saint Patrick's Day, March 17, members of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota presented a program about the Czech Republic to the Sons of Norway Kristiania Lodge in Rochester. Every year the Lodge invites a different country to share its food and traditions. (2) Sandy Prochaska and Rick Palma gave a Czech welcome with cubes of Bohemian rye bread dipped in salt to Kristi Simmons and all the Norwegians. (5) Czechs



(4) described *kroje* details, including a capping ceremony on Megan Cahill, with Chuck Draheim and Dave Stepan watching. (3) The final dance included all the dinner guests. Dancers included Judy and Tom Aubrecht, Megan Cahill and Chuck Draheim, Pam Langworthy and Richard Sargent, Sandy Prochaska and Rick Palma, Darnell and Dave Stepan. Artist vendors were Doreen McKenney and Jean Draheim. Sons of Norway members are known for the beautiful Norwegian sweaters they wear to meetings. For this meeting, several Lodge members wore *bunad* (folk dress) to complement Sokols in *kroje*.



Czech, Moravian, and Slovak folk traditions and customs, which emanate from pagan to Christian traditions, often differ from region to region. In cities today, they are no longer observed as much as they once were, but we grew up



surrounded by them not only in cities but even more in villages where our grandparents kept them alive. For many of us, it was grandparents who made birthdays, weddings, *Masopust*/Mardi Gras, and Easter so very special; never questioning their day-long efforts to bake *koláče*, to roast a goose, or to make *jitrnice*. It is all part of our traditions, a happy routine just like honeybees keep on flying between daises and beehives.

Throughout the past centuries, many Czechs turned away from the doors of the Catholic church (either wanting to join a Protestant church or not wanting to be persecuted by communists) and joyfully engrossed themselves in traditions of pagan origin. This is especially reflected in Easter celebrations: we don't search for treasures on Good Friday and we don't sweep chimneys on Ash Wednesday, but we do thorough spring cleaning, start planning our gardens, put budding branches and flowers into vases, dye eggs, braid whips, and prepare special meals. Some choose to have lamb meat,



and some might bake a cake that resembles a lamb by the shape. No matter what we do, we are happy to welcome sunny spring days, blue skies, and hope for new energy and strength for the rest of the year.

In this cheerful spirit, we Czech and Slovak families celebrated Easter on March 31 at the C.S.P.S. Hall with brightly colored eggs and whips full of ribbons; we devoured *chlebičky*, *guláš*, and *beránek* (lamb-shaped dessert). Our children joined their parents in making treasured handcrafted Easter hallmarks and learned that bunnies and eggs actually have much to do with Easter (as symbols of fertility, birth, and resurrection).



UPCOMING EVENTS

May 3, Thursday, 7 p.m., Patricia Hampl talks about her new book, *The Art of a Wasted Day*, at Scott County Library in Prior Lake. Hampl wrote *A Romantic Education* (1981), in which she explored her Czech heritage and talked about Joseph Mestenhauser and his family. She is an American memoirist, writer, lecturer, and educator. A three-time Minnesota Book Award winner, she teaches in the MFA program at the University of Minnesota/Minneapolis and is one of the founding members of the Loft Literary Center.

May 5, Saturday, noon-6 p.m., Stavěvní Májky/ Czech May Day, outdoors at the corner of Vine and Main Streets, downtown Montgomery. Raising the traditional Czech Maypole, Czech Area Concertina Club, ribbon dance around the Maypole with Dale Ruhland, authentic Czech and Slovak beer, authentic Czech food, plus bake sale and games. Bring your own chairs. Questions: Carol Kotasek (612-756-1054) or Jim Mladek (507-364-5659).

May 13, Sunday, 1- 3 p.m., C.S.P.S. Hall, Panel Discussion: "Czech Influences on Writers and Musicians," Moderated by Patrick Dewane, playwright and actor (*Accidental Hero*), with Patricia Hampl, author (*Art of the Wasted Day*, new book due out in April 2018); Daniel Freeman, author (*Mozart in Prague*); and Jordan Sramek, founder and artistic director of Twin Cities choral group the Rose Ensemble. Plus signing of books and CDs. It's Mothers' Day! Special Czech refreshments for all who attend!

July 22: Founders Film Festival, 1:00 p.m., C.S.P.S. Hall, Our Vasek. On the Power of the Powerless (2012) 52 minutes. This Polish film about Václav Havel, first president of the Czech Republic, is directed by Krystyna Krauze, explores the relationship between the Polish and Czech opposition, and details what happened to end totalitarian regimes in Europe. Havel was awarded the Order of the White Eagle, Poland's highest honor, in 1993. **2:00 p.m. Intermission:** meet and greet **2:30 p.m. Masaryk** (2016) 114 minutes. Directed by Julius Ševčík, this Czech film traces the life of diplomat and politician Jan Masaryk, son of

Czechoslovakia's co-founder Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. Jan served as the country's minister of foreign affairs and died in 1948, reportedly at the hand of Russia. Suggested donation: \$5, or bring a Czech, Slovak, Rusyn, Moravian, or Polish food item to share at the intermission. Proceeds benefit Czech and Slovak Cultural Center programming.

August 1, Saturday, 11 a.m. C.S.P.S. Hall, Rooted in Time, An Architect for All Seasons, A Celebration of the Works of Slovakia's Dušan Jurkovič by Mark Dillon, presenter, Minnesota Bureau Chief, Polish-American Journal, fourth generation Slovak-American. Discover Jurkovič's impact on civic and residential architecture of Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic, how Jurkovič's designs were informed by Rusyn folk motifs, and remembering the fallen: Jurkovič's 35 World War I cemeteries in Poland. Sponsored by the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota and Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota on the 150th anniversary of Jurkovič's birth in August 1868. Suggested donation \$7, reception to follow.

My Slovakia, My Family: One Family's Role in the Birth of a Nation by John Palka. Kirk House Publishers: Minneapolis. 2012. 424 pages. Available at libraries and bookstores.

My Slovakia, My Family brings together a fascinating combination of 300 years of family heritage and national history to create a primer on Slovak identity. Palka incorporates social, cultural, and political information as he weaves his personal narrative into larger world events. Overall, the love of freedom and country is clear. Numerous photographs, maps, a pronunciation guide, genealogy charts, endnotes, and an index enhance this book.

Palka was born in Paris in 1939, two weeks after his mother fled the Nazi puppet state of Slovakia. Soon after, the Germans swept into France. The family was trapped in Nazi-occupied France for almost two years, residing under false identities. Once discovered and ordered to report to the nearest Gestapo headquarters for likely transport to a concentration camp, they escaped and eventually reached the United States. At the end of 1946, the family returned to Czechoslovakia. Barely a year later the communists took over. His father's arrest, release, and surveillance prompted them to escape again, this time when John was ten years old, crawling under no-man's-land barbed wire. In 1949 they returned to the United States.

Two of John's family members were especially significant to Slovak history. Michal Miloslav Hodža (great-grand-uncle) was prominent among the leaders of the Slovak National Awakening of the nineteenth century, a powerful upsurge of national consciousness and activism. The rising literacy and mass political mobilization of the time went hand-in-hand with a desire for nationhood.

Milan Hodža (the author's grandfather) was influential in the establishment of Czechoslovakia and subsequently in its development. From 1935 to 1938, while pressure from Hitler was escalating, he served as its prime minister. Forced into exile following the Munich Declaration in 1938, Hodža continued political activity "intended to assure a strong position for Slovakia in the Czechoslovakia of the future. He

died in the United States in 1944, still struggling to find a formula for a new Czechoslovakia in which the old imbalances and inequalities between Czechs and Slovaks would be resolved."

In 2002 the Slovak government brought Milan Hodža's remains from the Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago for ceremonial re-burial in the Slovak National Cemetery. In 2005 the government initiated annual celebrations in his honor. This prompted Palka to write *My Slovakia, My Family*, published first in Slovak (2010) and then in English (2012). At the celebration in 2014, John Palka (right) with President Andrej Kiska (left), and Jozef Petráš (center), the mayor of Hodža's home town of Sučany.



The author recently moved to Minnesota with his wife, Yvonne. He previously was a professor of biology with a specialty in neuroscience, cofounded the University of Washington's renowned Program on the Environment, and received numerous academic awards, including two Fulbright Fellowships for teaching in India and a Guggenheim Fellowship for research in Cambridge, England. You can hear John's oral history interview with the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library at <<http://www.ncsml.org/exhibits/john-palka/>> or read more about him and his book on his website <<http://www.jpalka.com/>>.

Gwen is coordinator of the Literary Ventures: Czech and Slovak book discussion group. For more information, go to www.cs-center.org or contact <gwen@cs-center.org>

Join Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures members to discuss *HHHh* by Laurent Binet on Saturday, May 19, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., in the first floor classroom at the C.S.P.S. Hall.

See page 4: Palka's presentation, *The Czech and Slovak Marriage: What the Partners Brought to the Union*, on May 19.

Sokol Minnesota Annual Memberships

Renewals: Individual \$50; Couple \$90. Senior \$40 (over age 65); Senior couple \$80. **New memberships:** Individual \$55; Couple \$95.

This includes a one-time \$5 registration fee with our national organization, American Sokol Organization. Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's annual membership runs from January 1 to December 31. Dues are reduced for members joining after June 30.

Membership applications: <www.sokolmn.org> or by request from Norm Petrik (612-822-6147).

Please send your completed membership application and check to

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Attn: Membership, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

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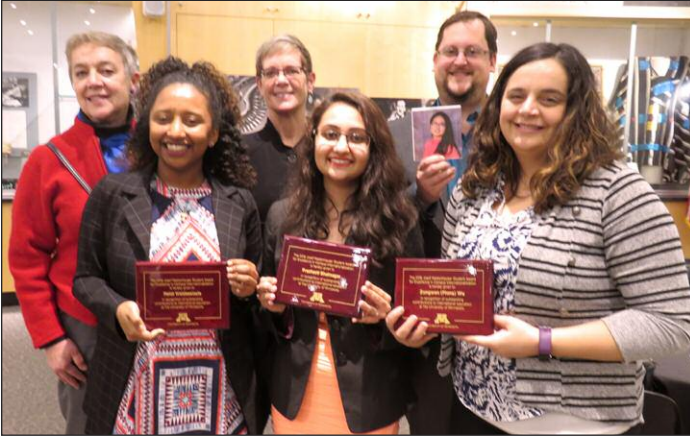
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Member News



2018 Mestenhauer Student Awards for Excellence in Campus Internationalization, awarded on February 23, at the University of Minnesota, honors the late Dr. Josef Mestenhauer. (L-R, back) M. L. Kucera, Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic; Meredith McQuaid, Associate Vice President and Dean of International Programs, UM-Minneapolis; Tim Lindberg, Assistant Professor, UM-Morris, holding a photo of award recipient Fiona Wu. Recipients (front), Melat Weldeselasie, Prashasti Bhatnagar, and Leslie Lindberg, Associate Academic Advisor, UM-Morris, holding Fiona Wu's award. The award recognizes students who contributed significant time and energy to improving international education and campus life. An article in the *Minnesota Daily*, April 11, featured Prashasti Bhatnagar and her award. < <http://www.mndaily.com/article/2018/04/n-umn-sociology-student-recognized-for-international-impact>>



Kevin McNamara, author of *Dreams of a Great Small Nation*, spoke about his book at two Czech and Slovak Cultural Center sponsored events on April 6 at the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights and on April 7 at Common Good Books in Saint Paul. McNamara was the featured guest at a dinner in Minneapolis: (L-R) Renátá Tícha, Jan Knudtson, Cecilia Dillon, Mark Dillon, Kevin McNamara, Ann Janda, Ken Janda, Yvonne Palka, John Palka, M. L. Kucera.



Domáci, Inc., held its second annual board meeting on April 8 in Webster to discuss its participation in the Czech Slovak Century event on October 28 in New Prague, fundraisers and scholarships for the Junior Royalty, the Hometown Holiday on December 2 in New Prague, and the 2018 report of the Domáci Czech Folk Dancers. (L-R Back) Ronna Trmka, Vicki Mach, Autumn Gare, Josh Gare, Gerald Ziskovsky. (Middle) Arnie Ziskovsky, Marit Lee Kucera, Deb Ziskovsky. (Front) Kailey Mach, Lizzie Trnka.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE: The *Slovo* is published ten times per year by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, a non-profit organization, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102. Sokol Minnesota members receive the *Slovo* with their membership. The *Slovo* Advisory Committee welcomes submissions. Send news, articles, and pictures digitally to <slovo@sokolmn.org>. **The deadline for the May 2018 issue is April 1.**

This issue of *Slovo* will be archived on the Sokol Minnesota website by April 30: <www.sokolmn.org>

Slovo accepts business card-size ads (3.5"x2"), paid in advance: one-time insertion \$25; 3 consecutive issues: \$65; 10 consecutive issues: \$175. Ad reservation deadline is 6 weeks before publication, with ad and payment due by copy deadline.

***Slovo* gift subscriptions and non-member renewals** are \$15/year (10 issues). (Rate is good through April 2019.) Please include name, address, phone number, and email address with your new/renewing non-member subscription.

Make your check to: Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Send to: Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *Slovo* Subscriptions, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102. Extra copies of *Slovo* are \$2 each, plus postage, while supply lasts.

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Email: <slovo@sokolmn.org>, phone: 651-290-0542, or write: Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102. *Thank you!*

Member Volunteer *Slovo* staff: Marit Lee Kucera, managing editor; Madison Jerde, copy editor; Mary Kucera, production assistant; Deb Ziskovsky, labels; Martina Gurgel and Joyce Tesarek, photographers; Doreen McKenney, ad designer; Mary Cahill, mailing production; Joan Sedlacek, mailing; with Christy Banks, Arlene Hamernik, Ann Janda, Ken Janda, Norm Petrik, Jitka Sebek, advisors.

Photos: Chuck Draheim, Colleen Cahill, Michaela GianCarlo Kotek, Lenka Hester, M.L.Kucera, Vicki Mach, Hana Matousek, John Palka, Elizabeth Schwartz, Jitka Sebek, Renátá Tícha, Sharon Valasek.

April *Slovo* mailing party volunteers: Mary Cahill, Joan Sedlacek.

**EVENTS AT C.S.P.S. HALL
ATTEND AND VOLUNTEER!
Sokol Minnesota Events**

Band Blast • Saturday, April 28, 7:30 p.m.

Featuring local folk and rock bands. Dance, trivia, raffle.
Fundraiser for C.S.P.S. Hall roof and exterior wall repairs.
\$10 suggested admission. Cash bar and refreshments.

Festival of Nations • May 3 - 6, Saint Paul RiverCentre

Enjoy food and culture from around the world.

Visit our Czech and Slovak Café and Exhibit Booth.

Enjoy our children, teen, and adult folk dancers on stage.

Czech Influences on Writers and Musicians • May 13, 1-3 p.m.

Panel Discussion with Patrick Dewane (moderator), Patricia Hampl,
Daniel Freeman, and Jordan Sramek.

21st Annual Children's Cultural Day Camp • June 18 - 22

For boys and girls ages 7 to 14 years.

Ethnic crafts, cooking, gymnastics, Czech language, and more.

Register at www.sokolmn.org

www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota

Check for event updates: www.sokolmn.org



Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *SLOVO* May 2018



NCSML Exhibit: *Guts and Glory*

At the April 6 opening of *Guts and Glory, the War Train that Shaped a Nation* at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in Cedar Rapids, it took two pictures, but *Slovo* was able to photograph all the Czech and Slovak diplomats with the Minnesota* delegation.

(Below L-R) Duane Jirik,* Board Chair, Western Life Association; Hynek Kmoníček, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to the United States; Joan Sedlacek,* Sokol Minnesota; Bořek Lizec, Consul General of the Czech Republic/Chicago; Marit Lee Kucera,* Czech Honorary Consulate Minneapolis; and Sharon Valasek, Czech Honorary Consulate Kansas City.



(Above L-R) Duane Jirik,* Joan Sedlacek,* Sharon Valasek; Josef Polakovič, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Washington, D.C.; Marit Lee Kucera,* Bořek Lizec; and Kateřina Lizcová Kulhánková,



Notice all the CzechSlovakCenutry buttons!

