

CZECH AND SLOVAK

Sokol



MINNESOTA

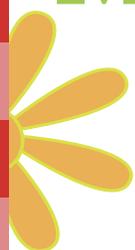
*Providing fitness and community
for individuals and families
through physical, educational,
cultural, and social programs*

SLOVO

June/July 2021

vol. 44 no. 6

Members/Volunteers



Picnic



1-4 PM

Lakewood Hills Park, White Bear, MN

**Bring an appetizer, salad,
or dessert to share.
Sokol is providing
lemonade, root beer,
hot dogs, kielbasa,
paper products,
and family friendly games.**

RSVP by May 30 to president@sokolmn.org



Sunday

June 6 20
21



Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes by Dave Stepan

Did someone say fire!? For those of you who may not be aware, on May 1 our Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's C.S.P.S Hall tenant, the Pajarito restaurant, had a fire in the exhaust stack of one of their grills. The fire was contained to the inside of the vent, but the heat emitted was enough to initiate our fire suppression sprinkler system. Many thanks to the Saint Paul fire department who responded quickly and put out the fire.



Lessons I learned from the fire:

- There is a difference between a wet and dry fire suppression system.
- It pays to invest in the future. Sokol Minnesota invested years ago in our wet fire suppression system. Investments pay off, whether it is your home, your children, your physical or mental health.
- As a landlord we need to be vigilant to ensure our tenant maintains the side of the first floor they are renting.
- We need to do everything we can to make sure that it does not occur again.

I might be selfish to say it, but I could think of nothing worse for my legacy than if our Hall were to have burnt down under my watch. "Infamous" is not what I want my name associated with!

Thank you to the forward thinkers in this organization who planned years ago to install the fire suppression system and, more importantly, to you the donors who supported this project. You can be certain you are part of an organization which not only owns a building with a working fire suppression/sprinkler system but is interested in preserving it for the future. We escaped this potential catastrophic disaster with only minor issues. It could have been much, much worse.

We are investing in our future:

The 23rd Sokol Minnesota Children's Cultural Day Camp will be held this year. Under the tutelage of co-directors Louise Wessinger and our late president Judy Aubrecht, and long-time leader and new co-director Doreen McKenney, the camp has taught Czech and Slovak traditions to hundreds of children.

We are again honoring, with Youth Leadership Awards, our junior or senior high school age children who participate in Sokol Minnesota youth activities and regularly volunteer at Sokol Minnesota events. Applications are due July 1. For more information, see the article in this issue. The awards include a \$300 grant. If you have the means to help endow future awards, please contact finance@sokolmn.org.

Our new Youth Group grades 6-12 will be starting up this fall. See the article in this issue.

We are always investing in our building by fixing what needs to be fixed and planning improvements.

We provide opportunities to improve your physical and mental health through activities such as *Kolo Sokol* (our bicycle group, www.sokolmn.org/bike), the members and volunteers picnic on June 6, the 23rd Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp June 14-18, the 90th Sokol Camp Booya Picnic on August 15, our 32nd Czech and Slovak Festival on September 26, craft and bake sales, dinners (at the Hall when we can), and events such as dances (although none are scheduled this year so far).

If any of you are looking to get active with our leadership, please let me know (president@sokolmn.org). As one example, we have been working without a backup to our website coordinator, Richard Sargent, and could use some assistance.

Nazdar!

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota provides fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural, and social programs for children, teens, and adults.

Information on our programs, calendar of events, membership, C.S.P.S. Hall rentals, and gift shop, plus e-addresses for our board, program directors, volunteer staff, and the Czech Honorary Consul, as well as *Slovo* past issues, are available at www.sokolmn.org or www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota

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

Congratulations to High School Graduates Isabelle Callanan and Ella Pratt!

By Courtney Benson



Isabelle Callanan

Athlete turned gymnast. Gymnast turned coach. Coach turned leader.

I personally have known Isabelle since the first day she stepped foot into our Sokol Minnesota C.S.P.S. Hall approximately seven years ago. I knew she was unique from the start. She will be first to tell you she was looking for a gymnastics program after performing cartwheels on the basketball court, but I think she found so much more than that, and Sokol Minnesota did the same. Within herself, she found a leader.

Isabelle has been a gymnast competing on behalf of Sokol Minnesota for all seven years. Her natural talent is evident. She has “flawless” execution and she is often referred to as the “beam queen.” Her teammates describe her one-of-a-kind personality as what will be missed most: “I will miss all the endless jokes during practice... her ability to joke around in every situation. Isabelle never loses energy.”

Isabelle has also been a coach for five years, primarily leading our 4-6 age group. She is a role model to many and her passion for gymnastics is infectious: “She makes gymnastics really fun. The happiness that follows her is truly special.”

Isabelle will graduate from Visitation School. She plans to attend Colby College in Maine to study pre-medicine. Much like her past at Sokol Minnesota, Isabelle will undoubtedly succeed in her future; her dedication and drive will take her the distance.



Ella Pratt

To a true team player, to say you will be missed is an understatement.

Ella is someone who sets the standard on how to treat others; she is someone whom I adore. She is outspoken and willing to voice her opinion, but equally wants to allow others a platform to be heard. If someone is nervous to try a new skill, Ella is the first to offer reassurance. Likewise, if someone masters a skill, Ella is the first to celebrate their success. Her teammates mention her bringing “joy and happiness to practice every day.” Whether “recovering from an injury or facing a hard skill, Ella continues to have a smile on her face.”

Her “caring nature and positive energy” will be missed the most, both as a gymnast as well as a coach, primarily leading our 7-8 age group. She has been a valued leader at Sokol Minnesota for the past six years, contributing well beyond her

years. “She lights up the room and creates such a welcoming environment. She is a wonderful leader and a great friend. Her kindness is contagious.”

Ella will graduate from Open World Learning Community (OWL). She plans to attend the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, to major in exercise science. Her commitment and curiosity will position her well for all the challenges, and inevitable celebrations, to follow. I look forward to following the exciting things life has in store for her and her future.

To Isabelle and Ella: Take pride in how far you have come; have faith in how far you will go, and, most importantly, enjoy the journey along the way. We will certainly miss you, but constantly support you, and look forward to your visits back home, which hopefully include a stop by the gym to say hi to your fellow community. On behalf of the entire Sokol Minnesota organization, thank you and congratulations!

Sokol Minnesota Youth Group will Launch Fall 2021

Are you in grade 6 -12?

**Are you ready to meet others
in Sokol Minnesota,
and become involved in
youth-planned activities?**

**If so, the Sokol Minnesota
Youth Group is for YOU!**

**We may choose Sports, Fundraisers,
Cultural Events, Service-Learning Projects,
Baking or Ice Cream Parties, Make Art, or
Just Hang Out and Play Games.**

**Watch for e-blasts and articles
in the Slovo for upcoming events.**

*Interested in taking on a leadership role in this group?
Please contact louisewessinger@msn.com or
your adult leader of group activities.*

Dancer Isabella Spiess Graduates

By Louise Wessinger



Isabella (Izzy) Spiess, daughter of Sokol Minnesota member Audrey Spiess and Paul Weig, will graduate from South High School in Minneapolis this spring. She has consistently been an honor roll student while lettering in dance and theatre. One of her favorite memories of school is her 10th grade involvement in History Day. She went to state in the competition, placing Fifth for her performance and winning the Topical Award. While at South she was very active in theatre, with roles in six performances. These included *Eurydice*, *Breaking the Code*, *Clue*, *Seussical*, *High School Musical*, and *Good and Plenty*.

Izzy also has been involved with the Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis.

She had roles in *Carrie* and *Chicago* as well as one of the leads in *Spamtown, USA*, which only got to run for one weekend in 2020 due to COVID. She received very positive reviews for her performance. She plans to attend the University of Minnesota in the fall, where she will be a theatre major. I always tell Izzy I know you will be on Broadway some day!

An excellent dancer, Izzy has been in the Sokol Minnesota *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teens* since she was four years old. Always one of the most enthusiastic dancers, Izzy remembers: "I LOVED the singing when I was little and the way the skirts swirled. My favorite dance is 100% *Kalamajka*." Her favorite events were always the Christmas program and the Festival of Nations. At her first teen group performances at the Festival of Nations, she remembers dancing on Friday with her hair long, getting a haircut, and returning to dance on Saturday with a short pixie cut. Everyone was shocked! It was pretty funny.

Izzy was always a terrific dancer and she just got better and better. Even though she was one of the best dancers in the group, she was always willing to help other dancers or to dance with someone who needed help. Izzy suggestion to younger dancers was always: "Stick with it. When you are in the teen group the dances will be a fun challenge for you!"

I feel sad to think we have been unable to practice or perform since March 2020, so Izzy has missed her last year and a half of dance. Usually, we would celebrate our seniors at the Festival of Nations dress rehearsal, which we have not been able to hold. Hopefully we will be able to celebrate Izzy and honor her participation in dance sometime this summer. I will miss you, Izzy! Best and brightest future! You have always been a star and I'm sure you will always be one!



Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Queen 2021-2022 Crowned

Mary Carson, Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota First Princess 2018-19, was crowned Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Queen 2021-2022, on May 18 by Autumn Gare, Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Queen 2019-2021.

The Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant Board of Directors is very excited to have Mary share her Czech Slovak heritage during the upcoming year. Mary will represent Minnesota at the Miss Czech Slovak United States Pageant in Wilbur, Nebraska, August 6-8.

Boys Gymnastics Bouncing Back

By Jason Brozovich

In February 2020, young girl and boy gymnasts were working hard at our Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota C.S.P.S. Hall, and some were training for an upcoming competition in April. Fast forward to mid-March of 2020 and so many things had changed. The threat of COVID essentially closed the Hall's doors and put an end to our gymnastics endeavors, including our Western District competition and our end-of-the-year celebration. As we know now, some of these changes were just the tip of the COVID iceberg.

Because we value so highly the health and safety of our Sokol Minnesota gymnasts, members, and families, we continue to adhere to the guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Minnesota Department of Health. As the restrictions lessened, we made the decision this past winter to resume some of our programming, specifically our boys' class on Monday evenings. On February 15, 2021, ten gymnasts (all previous participants) returned to the Hall with one family member per household present. We required sign-in at the door, temperature checks, masks, and social distancing as able. The equipment was set up to allow for distancing as well. Despite the changes, everyone worked hard and made some great improvements in a short period of time! Our eleven-week session ended without any COVID cases or required quarantines!

I would like to thank our coaches, Mary Cahill, Matt Schussler, and Zoe Hoiland for their willingness to take on this new challenge, and the parents that trusted us to provide a safe environment. But it was the gymnasts that truly made our program work by adhering to the precautions, adapting to the changes, and coming with a positive attitude each evening. Thank you all! I hope when classes resume in September (for both boys and girls), things will be a little more "normal", but if not, I know we have a system in place and participants will keep things safe while still having fun!

Sokol Minnesota Receives Grant from the Czech Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs

By Joyce Tesarek

Once again, Sokol Minnesota is a grateful recipient of a generous grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic to support our programs and facility. This year, Consul General of the Czech Consulate in Chicago, Jaroslav Kanturek, announced that Sokol Minnesota would receive 120,000 Kč (\$5,350.45) to be used to make the third-floor mezzanine space more effective as a meeting

space and classroom. Shades will be installed on the eleven very large, uncovered windows to block heat and light, and equipment will be purchased to support films and presentations held in the room.

We greatly value our connections with the countries and people of the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic and their history, culture, and traditions.

J. A. Wedum Foundation Grant to Sokol Minnesota

By Joyce Tesarek

Formed in 1959, the J.A. Wedum Foundation is a private family foundation located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Foundation fulfills its charitable mission by providing quality housing and impacting communities through charitable giving. Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota is pleased to accept a \$10,000 grant from the Foundation. This grant will be used to rehabilitate the steam radiator heating system and support Sokol Minnesota programming.

The Foundation owns and operates student housing in Saint Cloud, as well as senior housing in Rochester, Mankato, Saint Paul, and San Antonio, Texas. In December 2020, the Foundation opened its newest development, Lexington Landing. The building is located at the base of the re-routed

Lexington Parkway and West 7th Street in Saint Paul. Lexington Landing provides residents who are 55 and older with various living options to suit a variety of lifestyle choices: independent living, assisted living, and memory care apartments.

We are excited by opportunities to partner with nearby Lexington Landing, to share programs there, and have residents attend our events. Our own special Sokol Minnesota member Libby Imbrone is a resident and welcomed us to her apartment during our May 5 tour. We enjoyed sharing our traditional *koláče* baked and sent by Míša Kotek for the occasion.



Front row, L-R: Libby Imbrone, Sokol Minnesota member and Lexington Landing resident; Michele Helgen, Wedum Foundation Board member; Joyce Tesarek, Sokol Minnesota Finance Chair; Anita Imbrone McKeown, Sokol Minnesota member; Jay Portz, Wedum Foundation President.

Back row, L-R: Kellie Tesch, Wedum Foundation Director of Accounting; Bob Kotek, Sokol Minnesota Building and Property Trustees Committee Chair; Dave Stepan, Sokol Minnesota President; M. L. Kucera, Sokol Minnesota member and Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic; Deb Waedt, Campus Administrator at Lexington Landing

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Historical Articles: Sokol Slets

We are fortunate to have in this issue articles about the 1938 All-Sokol *Slet* by Joan Sedlacek and Louise Wessinger. Here is some general background information about the All-Sokol *Slets*. Sokol, founded in 1862, flourished between the two World Wars. During this time, membership grew to over a million. <www.Czechgallery.com>

Every six years, the All-Sokol *Slet* brings together international members of Sokol for a grand-scale celebration, the first of which took place in 1882. Thousands of people descend upon Prague for a week of *prostnas* (calisthenic drills), gymnastics performances, and other sporting and cultural events. For those who live in the country, the *Slet* presents an opportunity to foster national pride. Some 160,000 people across the Czech Republic count themselves as members of Sokol. But the event is also a chance for people of Czech origin living abroad to reconnect with their roots.

<https://english.radio.cz/sokol-slet-a-celebration-czechs-and-everyone-else-8156739>

The *Slets* continue. The 2018 All-Sokol *Slet* had 11 mass *prostna* performances. www.visitczechrepublic.com

The 1938 ČOS Slet

By Joan Sedlacek

1938 was an anxious year, but also one of great anticipation and excitement for Sokols around the world. Tensions in Europe were growing with the increased activities of the Nazis. *Česká obec sokolská* (ČOS, the Czech headquarters of Sokol, www.sokol.eu) was preparing for the X All Sokol *Slet* for Sokol men, women, and children from around the world to gather in Prague. It would be a glorious time, a celebration of 20 years of independence for Czechoslovakia.

Preparations had been going on for years, including planning for housing, feeding, and transporting tens of thousands of people. Huge tasks for the *Slet* itself included writing the *prostnas*, choosing music, sending music and instructions to three dozen countries around the world, preparing the athletic venues, including putting *značky* (markers) on the field, mapping out parades, and arranging entertainment.

The logistics of the *Slet* are mind boggling. Housing was needed for over 100,000 people. Four three-story buildings were built beside the lineup area at Masaryk Stadium. Each building housed 6,000 people.

How do you get 10,000, 20,000, or more people lined up in the staging area so that when they march, shoulder to shoulder, through the entrance to the field and spread out they are exactly on the one marker in a field of 20,000 markers that is theirs? It is through exquisite pre-planning, self-discipline, and a willingness to obey. After being in more than a few *Slets* myself, I still think it is magic.

As Sokol gained popularity, it needed larger spaces for the *Slets*. Most needed was a stadium. Letna Stadium had grown too small, so Sokols around the world contributed money for the new Masaryk Stadium at Strahov. In the six years since the last *Slet*, work at the

stadium included upgrading the underground sound system and building dormitories. Strahov is the highest point in Prague. Centuries earlier it was used as a lookout point for the protection of Prague. In the 11th century, the Saint Augustine Seminary was located there. In the 15th and 16th century it was a battleground for military actions, including the Thirty Years War. In the 17th century, it was a military base and training ground. Stones from the large rock formations were used for building Prague. On this firm and historic foundation, the Sokols met in Masaryk Stadium to show their loyalty to one man's dream.

Before the *Slet*, the national radio in Czechoslovakia broadcast the music for the different calisthenic numbers at specific times across the country. The Sokols met at their local *Sokolovna* at the designated time to practice. The entire country benefited from the exercise of practicing. They competed at local and district levels to prove their prowess and perfection before being chosen for the *Slet*.

The American Sokol Organization selected men's and women's teams to represent the country. Georgiana Smolik (Buzicky Dolejsi), Emily Cikanek, and Hank Jansen of Sokol Saint Paul Gymnastic Society were members of these teams. My Dad, Fred Sedlacek, was a member of the team from Sokol Berwyn in the Chicago area. Other Saint Paul members attending were Albert and Bessie Smolik, Laura Jansen, and Millie Podavar. Minneapolis Sokol members included Rose Saliny and Joe Hosek.

The SS Aquitania, the "Aristocrat of the Sea", was berthed in New York City and Sokols from across the United States traveled by train to begin the great adventure on June 1. Round trip fare, NY-Cherbourg-NY, for Sokol members was \$176, non-members paid \$205. The train from Cherbourg, France to Prague in 2nd class was \$21.29. Third class was



Cal Practice on the Aquitania \$14.96. The trip across the ocean took five days. Dressed in their gym uniforms, men and women practiced their "*prostnas*" aboard ship. Imagine what the other passengers thought when they saw the Sokols doing these calisthenic drills. Coming from many units around the country, this was a chance to practice as a group. Pictures were taken of the group in dress uniforms and gym uniforms.

The American Sokols landed in Cherbourg, France and boarded a train for Prague. They did not know when the coming war would start. If anything had happened, they would have been turned away and forced to set sail for home. Crossing Germany, they met with Aryan arrogance. The train had not been supplied with food or beverages. At one stop, some of the men got off to buy food for the group. After the sandwiches had been passed out and the people were going to eat, someone looked in a sandwich and found maggots crawling! When they reached Cheb, Czechoslovakia, they were greeted by welcoming Sokols.

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US Womens Team. L to R: 3rd: Georgiana Smolik (Dolejsi), 4th: Emily Cikanek.

Happy to see the Americans, children in uniform were part of the reception party. As the train rolled through the Czech countryside, they passed a woman standing next to a bicycle. She was the mother of Marie Svanhauser. Marie had come to the United States as a young woman and settled in Saint Paul, where she became an active Sokol member. Her mother rode the bike for a couple of hours to stand by the railroad tracks to watch a train carrying people who knew her daughter. Then she had the long, lonely ride home.

The train pulled into Wilson Station in Prague. The Americans were met with a brass band and a large welcoming crowd. They marched from the station down Vaclavske Namesti (Wenceslas Square) to the hotel. The Slovak contingent from the United States took a later boat because they had some problems with scheduling. The American Sokol group was the only one there to greet them. They had days to wander Prague when they were not at a competition or practice. Some went to visit relatives. The *Slet* parade went down *Václavské náměstí* through Prague and across Karlův Most (Charles Bridge). Judging by the shiny streets and umbrellas in photos, they had rain. What a parade it was! 73,840 men and women in dress uniforms, gym uniforms, *kroje*, and civil attire marched with 1,000 flags and banners accompanied by 100 bands with 2,953 musicians.

The *Slet* with the *prostnas* lasted 10 days. The competitions over a month's time included gymnastics, track and field, water sports, heavy athletic contests, weightlifting, wrestling, hammer throw, fencing, equestrian, and more.

The countries represented were: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Chile, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Yugoslavia, Canada, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Austria, Romania, Greece, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and United States, and Great Britain. Each of these Sokols paid their own expenses. They worked, learned, and sacrificed to be a part of this grand life experience.

A total of 61,680 youth had their own parade and competitions. There were 20,000 boys and girls under 10 years old, 17,700 boys and girls ages 10-14, and 23,980 older boys and girls in the low division, 11,520 boys and 12,480 girls in the high division, and 17,160 junior boys and 16,640 junior girls.

225,000 gymnasts were registered for the various mass calisthenics drills. Some of the days were rainy and cold, but no one minded too much. This was the culmination of six years of work and dreams. Attendance was over 1,000,000 people.

The American Sokol group went to Lány to lay a wreath at the grave of first President and Liberator T.G. Masaryk and visit his summer home, a ceremony I also participated in at the XII *Slet* in 1994. On the way back to Prague the Americans stopped at Bila Hora (White Mountain). On the spot where Czech freedom was lost in 1620, the representatives of the American Sokol proclaimed that under no circumstances would the American Sokol ever desert the Czechoslovak nation, a pledge we faithfully kept for 51 years. On July 7, President and Mrs. Benes hosted a garden party for the Americans at Hradčany. Flowers were laid at the graves of Sokol founders Miroslav Tyrš and Jindrich Fugner at Olsany Cemetery. Fifty six years later, in 1994, we repeated the ceremony.

When the *Slet* ended, a group toured Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia. One stop was at Barondov, the Hollywood of Czech with its village of false fronts and other sets. Another was a visit to

Konopište and the gardens. A luncheon was given them at Sokol Brno. Sokols gathered in front of the National Theater in Bratislavia. They marched in uniform with flags to lay a wreath at the Milan Stefanek monument at Brezová pod Bradlom. He was one of the three principal founders of Czechoslovakia, with Masaryk and Edvard Benes.

They visited Hlboko and Semnica and were greeted by townspeople in *kroje*. Next were Sterbske Pleso and Liptovský, Svätý Mikuláš, Tatranska Lomnica, and a cable car ride at Vysoke Tatry, where they stood in snow. They went to the ice caves at Dobsinka, L'Adova, Jaskyna, and toured the Bata shoe factory in Zlin. Then on to Plzen and Domažlice, including the air conditioned *Sokolovna* there.

Some people went home at the end of the tour. Others visited family. My Dad, Jeri Svarc, and Ed Halik traveled to Vienna, Paris, and parts of France and London.

They boarded the Queen Mary in Southampton for the trip home. Other American Sokols were also on board. The trip home was quieter. No practices on deck. No anticipation of the upcoming *Slet*. Only satisfaction and life-long memories. Their last day at sea was August 21, 1938. When the Statue of Liberty came into view, they knew they were home, although they still had thousands of miles to travel.

I grew up with the stories of the 1938 *Slet*. I have Dad's photo album of the trip. The people who were there never forgot one of the great moments of their lives. After Dad died, I met many of his friends and heard their stories, so many that I feel as though I had been there.

In 1994, I participated in the XII *Slet*. Dad was in the last *Slet* in free Czechoslovakia and I was in the first post-communism *Slet* 56 years later. I stood where he stood, waiting to enter Masaryk Stadium. I heard the chimes at the beginning and sang the national anthems. We marched through the passageways and onto the field to add our footsteps to those who went before. So much had happened between the two *Slets*. A world-changing war. Generations of communism. Heady freedom. Through it all Sokol remained faithful to its ideals and steadfast in its loyalties.

SLETU ZDAR!

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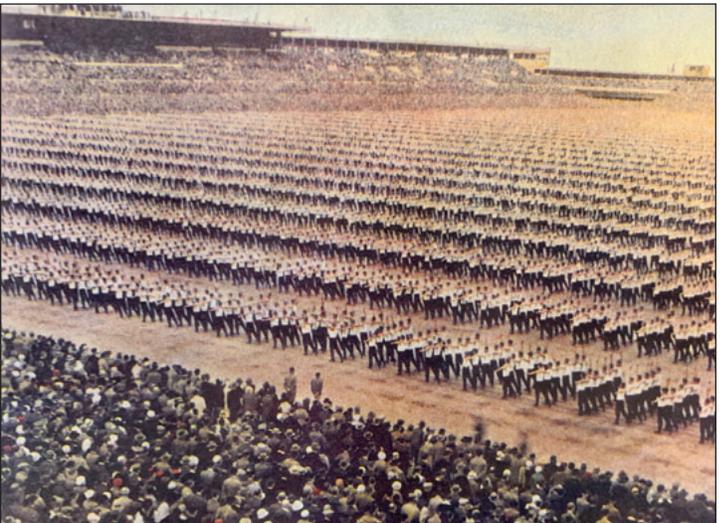
Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Historical Articles: Sokol Slets

My Parents' Memories of the X Sokol Slet in Prague By Louise Jansen Wessinger

Memories of the 1938 Sokol *Slet* in Prague provided some of my parents' most cherished stories that were told and retold to my sister Linda (Jansen) Nicoli and myself. Those memories are most probably why Sokol became such a big part of our family life.

My father, Hank Jansen, was a lifelong Sokol. He was brought to the Sokol Saint Paul gym at the age of seven by his stepfather, Charlie Zalesky. Dad loved gymnastics at first sight! He met my mother at a gymnastic meet at the Turner's Hall (Turner's is the German version of Sokol). They were married in 1937.

Dad, who had competed in many gyms meets, made the American Sokol Men's Team for the 1938 *Slet* in Prague. When he told Mom he was going to Prague; she said so was she! Mom and Dad's "honeymoon" was their trip for the *Slet*. They sailed aboard the Aquitania. Dad roomed with the men's team and Mom with the older ladies (Mom was 20 at the time, so the other women were not that old). In 1938,



A calisthenic routine at the Masaryk Stadium in 1938 done by 17,000 men. Other routines had up to 30,000 men participating. There were between 150,000-200,000 spectators each day of the *Slet*. [Photo credit: National Geographic]



US Mens team. American Sokol Men's team on the Aquitania. Second from Left: Hank Jansen, my dad, competed at the Slet in gymnastics and decathlon.

American Sokol also had a woman's team. Two women on the team were from Saint Paul: Georgiana Smolik (Buzicky Dolejsi), who held many roles at Sokol Minnesota, including President, and Emily Cikanek.

Mom and Dad spent almost two months traveling in Europe, mostly with the American group. They made many lifelong friends, including Joan's Sedlacek's Dad, Fred Sedlacek, who was from Berwyn, Illinois. Fred met Joan's mother Lorene Ahlf, who like my mother, was a member of the Turners in Saint Paul. The group visited Plzen, Zlin, and the Tatar's. While traveling, my Mom ordered fruit dumplings at a restaurant and thought she would get one or two, but she received a platter of twelve!

When Dad and Mom returned to New York, they bought a used car, my Dad repaired it, and they drove to Minnesota, arriving home with \$10.

Our family has always been very active in Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. It was my parents' social network. Dad



Slet Parade. American Sokol delegation arriving in Prague. L to R: 3rd: My Mom Laura Jansen, Sokol Saint Paul. 4th: Joan Sedlacek's Dad Fred Sedlacek, Sokol Berwyn, Illinois.

32

nd annual

CZECH & SLOVAK



FESTIVAL

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota



September 26

20
21

11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN

FREE Admission!

PUBLIC WELCOME!

Accessible Facility

- Ethnic Food
- Czech Beer
- Live Music
- Dance Performances
- Children's Games
- Sokol Gift Shop
- Street Vendors
- Exhibits
- Special Guests

Online Virtual Auction, September 18 - 23
www.32auctions.com/sokolminnesota2021
Auction winning bids pick up on September 26

For updates on the Festival and COVID requirements go to www.sokolmn.org

You may enjoy these Youtube Videos from the 1938 Slet

1938 Slet Parade: 10th Sokol Club Congress Prague 1938 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqeGIZW0-Dc>

One of the *prostnas*: Přísaha (Oath or Vow) 1938 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LguuqlRwUQ>

Mass Physical Calisthenics (*prostna*) (1938) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIDm0C-iHqo>

Bobbin Lace Class



Dagmar Beckel-Machyckova



Bobbin Lace Easter Egg by Doreen McKenney



Bobbin Lace Easter Egg in process by Janet Balej

In April, lacemaker Dagmar Beckel-Machyckova led a hands-on online class in lacemaking. The basic patterns were taught in the first session, and after a week of homework to work on the design, the second session continued to finish the project of making a lace Easter egg.

In the Sokol Kitchen with Markéta and Míša

On a cold day in March, two of Sokol Minnesota's chefs, Markéta Pálková and Míša Giancarlo Kotek, joined Pat Slaber to video the cooking of *Svíčková na Smetaně s Knedlíkem* (tenderloin in cream sauce with dumplings). It was a day filled with wonderful smells in the kitchen, lots of laughter, and a great meal to top off the day.

The video was shared in April on Zoom with Sokol Minnesota members. Markéta and Míša were on hand



Svíčková na Smetaně s Knedlíkem

at the showing of the video to answer any questions. The *knedlíky* video is on Sokol's Facebook page.



Pat Slaber, Míša Giancarlo Kotek, and Markéta Pálková



Knedlíky, sliced and ready to serve

Online Virtual Auction Items Needed

Extraordinary items are needed by September 10 for the Sokol Minnesota Czech Slovak Festival Online Virtual Auction

If you have suitable donations, please contact Glynis Grostephan:

ggrostephan@earthlink.net

Successful Craft and Flea Market

By Jean Draheim and Doreen McKenney

Saturday, May 1, was a beautiful day to celebrate the start of May by heading over to the C.S.P.S. Hall parking lot to browse and shop at the first-ever outdoor Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Craft and Flea Market. The many happy COVID-safe shoppers had the opportunity to purchase donated items from the Sokol Minnesota tables, as well as from vendors selling household goods, clothes, toys, hand-crafted cards and wood items, Scandinavian gifts, and Czech specialty foods. *Koláče*, *parky* (hotdogs), and *langoše* (fry bread) were popular takeout items at the Sokol Minnesota food table over the lunch hour.

Many thanks to the hard-working crew that prepped weeks in advance and covered the 11-hour day, from 7 a.m. set up to 6 p.m. take down.

Volunteers: Tom Aubrecht, Dennis and Mary Cahill, Chuck and Jean Draheim, Judy Gavin, Míša Giancarlo Kotek, Bob Kotek, M. L. Kucera, Dave and Glynis Grostephan, Jean Hall, Don Haselbauer, Colin Hester, Lenka Hester, Marlene Hinshaw, Zoe Hoiland, Bob Kostichka, Doreen McKenney, Mary Jean Mulherin, Richard Sargent, Joan Sedlacek, Ann Siefert, Dave Stepan, Joyce Tesarek, Kathy Weese, Louise Wessinger, Claire Wickiser, and Alena Youngberg.

Sokol Minnesota thanks our visiting vendors: Jean and Chuck Draheim, Andrea German, Lynn Hoffmeyer, M. L. Kucera, Doreen McKenney, Markéta Pálková-Resong, Ludmila Pálková, Mia Rodgers, and Louise Wessinger.



Teen volunteers from the Gym program Claire and Zoe selling Sokol Minnesota *koláče* and bread from the "Czech Baker" Míša Giancarlo Kotek.



1. Craft and Flea Market grounds with May Pole. **2.** For May Day, Jyni Koschak dressed her dog Jerry with a purple scalloped collar and butterfly wings. **3.** Bob Kostichka and Marlene Hinshaw, proudly wearing Sokol Minnesota t-shirts, took turns at the reception table greeting guests. **4.** Volunteers at the *koláče* booth: Standing L-R: Jean Hall, Joan Sedlacek. Sitting: Glynis Grostephan, Mary Cahill. **5.** Lynn Hoffmeyer with his hand-crafted wood items. **6.** Alena Youngberg and Míša Giancarlo Kotek preparing the crowd favorite, *langoše*.

Spring Clean Up

Many thanks to Building and Property Trustee Committee Chair Bob Kotek for organizing the April 24 Clean Up event at the C.S.P.S. Hall. Participants included his committee members: Dan Bednar, Robert (Jake) Jacobson, Rick Palma, and Gary Zweber, as well as volunteers Lucy Rose, Dave Stepan, and John Topic.

The work included tree trimming, cleaning and organizing the basement, and installation of a baby changing station.

Come join us for the next Cleanup!



Dan Bednar installing the new baby changing station.

Bob Kotek and John Topic cleaning and organizing the basement.



Outdoor cleanup.

Dan Bednar, Robert (Jake) Jacobson, Bob Kotek, John Topic, Gary Zweber, and Rick Palma.

Highlights of the Sokol Minnesota April Board Meeting

By Denise Stibal

The Meeting was called to order April 15, 2021, at 7:05 p.m. by Vice President Ed Hamernik.

Activities Director Jean Draheim presented information on upcoming events: Craft and Flea Market on May 1 has 15 available spots for vendors. There are six confirmed.

Registration is closed for the Mushroom Hunt on May 23. The registration total is 31, with 19 on a waiting list.

The Members and Volunteers Picnic is scheduled for June 6 at Lakewood Park in White Bear Lake.

The 90th Sokol Camp Booya Picnic is August 15; this is a date change.

Our 32nd Czech and Slovak Festival is September 26.

Jean will be hosting a class about gems and jewels and is looking for craft supplies.

The 23rd Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp is June 14-18. The theme this year is *Medieval "Castles and Kings."* Louise is looking for chess instructors and someone with knowledge of fencing. Glynis Grostephan offered to help with the chess class. Mortars and pestles are also needed.

Rental Committee: Denise Stibal reported for Gary Zweber. There are one to three bookings every month from June 2021 to January 2022. Recently there has been an uptick in inquiries for rentals, with 75% coming from Eventective, the online rental advertisement service. The results have paid for the advertising cost many times over. The short-term goal is to fill the openings each month, and eventually gain momentum whereby the calendar is fully booked in advance each quarter.

Education Director Pat Slaber noted the Bobbin Lace class finishes up April 17. Cooking classes via Zoom are scheduled. The bread dumplings class is April 19 and the *svíčková na smetaně s knedlíkem* (tenderloin in cream sauce with dumplings) class is April 26. Class registration forms are on the Sokol Minnesota website.

Membership Director Norm Petrik presented one new member, Mark Stafford of Saint Cloud. Financial Secretary Steve Ernest presented the online member registrations: Greg and Karen Gaides of Roseville, Mark Neuzil of Saint Paul, Amy Kuebelbeck of Saint Paul, Pam Brokaw of Hudson, Wisconsin, and Karel and Charlotte Havle of Minneapolis. The new members were accepted. Total current members: 285.

Treasurer Don Haselbauer reported the account totals.

Corresponding Secretary Glynis Grostephan noted \$20 were received this month for the General Fund.

Finance Committee Chair Joyce Tesarek reported on grants. Grants submitted: \$5,288 to American Sokol Organization (ASO) Foundation (matching grant) to be used for the third floor blinds, ASO -\$3,535 for water cooler and bike racks, and \$10,000 Wedum Foundation grant for additional radiator work, insulating pipes, and programming .

Mary Cahill reported for the Board of Instructors. The boys' class will end its 10-week session on April 26. Income from that class, \$530, has paid for the truck rental for the trip to Omaha to pick up donated gym equipment. The girls' competition group will have weekly classes from May to July.

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors

By Glynis Grostephan

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

GENERAL FUND

Under \$99: John Gaichas, Laurel Lyngklip,

Maxine McCormick, Maryann Tumasmith.

Carol Richter memorial gift Kubik.

Hynek Hermann, Laurel Lyngklip, Mia Rodgers for Boiler Fund.

Pamela Langworthy, Pamela Kotval for Online Cooking.

TOTALS:

General Fund: \$ 209

TOTAL: \$ 209

Building and Property Trustee Committee Chair Bob Kotek noted the annual cleanup is April 24. Bob has obtained one bid for the alarm system update and is awaiting a second bid. The sump pump is repaired and the drain trench on the west wall needs repair.

Planning Committee Chair Mary Cahill reported review was made of Planning Committee functions, responsibilities, and interaction with the Building and Property Trustees Committee. The draft Project Request Form submitted by Mary was reviewed. Ed Hamernik recommended implementing the use of the form; any needed changes will be made later. Bike racks will be installed. Bike rack locations have been approved by the City of Saint Paul and red was the color approved by the board.

Gaming Manager Ed Hamernik reported the March net income of \$12,382.62 includes \$10,000 transferred to the General Fund. Proposed Budget for May is \$10,975 was approved. Motion also carried to transfer another \$10,000 to the General Fund in April. There is a proposal on the Minnesota house floor to eliminate electronic pull tabs and bingo for non-profit Agencies. Ed will follow up and ask board members to contact their legislators if necessary. Austin Palma will likely resign from his Finance and Publicity positions because of his new job location. We need to find a replacement for the Publicity position.

Old Business: The *100/50/25 Goes Into the Second Century Committee* held an April 1 Zoom meeting to learn about activities and programming of the many Czech and Slovak organizations here in Minnesota. Sokol is a member of this roundtable.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.



For Sokol's Latest News!

Join the
E-blast List

Send your email address to
publicity@sokolmn.org

MEMBER NEWS

Sokol Minnesota Welcomes New Members By Steve Ernest

Eight new members were accepted at the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota April Board of Directors meeting:

Karen and Greg Gaides of Roseville with interest in the Sokol Kola bike group.

Mark Neuzil and Amy Kuebelbeck of Saint Paul.

Mark Stafford of Saint Cloud with interest in genealogy, history, and language classes.

Pam Brokaw of Hudson, Wisconsin, with interest in language, cooking, crafts, festivals, helping with events including organizing, cooking, marketing, publicity, membership, and community relations.

Karel and Charlotte Havle of Minneapolis with interest in cultural activities.

Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!

Share Your Expanding Interests

If any member would like to express new interests in Sokol Minnesota activities, we now have a page on our website titled **My Sokol Membership** where you can do that at www.sokolmn.org

There are many opportunities to participate in Sokol Minnesota activities and we try to pass your interests along to the organizers when we can. We are a volunteer organization and we look forward to having new people involved in our activities and events!

Obituary for Alton Krikava

Alton Krikava, a Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota member, died of natural causes in Albert Lea on April 24, 2021.

Over the course of his 92 years on earth, Alton did a lot. He was a farmer, a tinkerer, a world traveler, and a husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather.

He attended Albert Lea High School. After graduating, he met and married Marie Pieper who would be his wife for 67 years. He always said that she was the love of his life, and that he was the luckiest man alive to have married her. They lived for a short time in a small house at the edge of Myrtle, Minnesota, before moving to the Krikava farm in Hayward Township near Albert Lea. There they raised a family and ran a successful crop farm.

Alton's great-grandchildren Juna and Leo are in the *Taneční Mládež* (Dancing Youth) group and have attended the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Children's Cultural Day Camp.

Please see Alton's full obituary at www.bonnerupfuneralservice.com/obituary/Alton-Krikava



Youth Leadership Award for 2021

The Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Youth Leadership Award was started last year as a way to recognize and encourage outstanding participation of youth members of Sokol Minnesota and to foster a future generation of leaders and members for our organization.

The criteria for this award are as follows. Applicants must be in their junior or senior year of high school and applicants and their parent(s) need to be paid members of Sokol Minnesota for at least the current and preceding calendar years. The applicants must actively participate in one or more Sokol Minnesota youth activities, such as *Taneční Teens* dancers, gymnastics, Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, or Czech and Slovak Children's Cultural Day Camp as a junior leader or teacher, and be a regular volunteer at Sokol Minnesota events. Of course, because of COVID, these activities have not been possible, but prior involvement and help with curbside events will be credited.

Additional information and application forms are at www.sokolmn.org/youth-leadership-award/

Applications are due July 1, 2021.

Award recipients will be announced by September 1. Awards will be presented at the annual Czech and Slovak Festival on September 26.

For questions, contact:

Louise Wessinger at louisewessinger@msn.com
or Blanka Brichta at brichta.blanka@gmail.com

The 90th Sokol Camp Booya Picnic Sunday, August 15, 2021 Noon until 5 p.m. Rain or Shine!

SAVE THE DATE!

90th Sokol Camp Booya Picnic

We are set to host this highly anticipated event and fundraiser once again.

Where: Historic Sokol Camp (built in 1926)
19201 Woodland Acres South
Pine City, Minnesota 55063

When: Sunday, August 15, 2021 Noon - 5 p.m.
(rain or shine)

Who: All Sokol Brothers and Sisters are invited to attend and/or volunteer!
General public is also welcome.

Why: To raise funds for Sokol Camp's upkeep and structural maintenance projects.

How: COVID-19 Safety protocols will be followed whenever possible!

Questions?

Please contact co-chairpersons Scott and Kari Muyres: skdlmuyres@yahoo.com or 763-226-0313

Czech Honorary Consul News

June/July 2021

One of the most frequent (and enjoyable) assignments that I have as Honorary Consul is to hand over new passports to Czech citizens. A person first has to go to the Embassy or a Consulate of the Czech Republic to renew a passport, but one can then request to pick it up at a nearby Honorary Consulate. Here in the Upper Midwest, the old passport, along with signed documents, are mailed back to the Consulate in Chicago, which sends the old passport to the home jurisdiction in the Czech Republic.

Entering the Honorary Consul office and seeing the picture of Václav Havel (1936-2011) on the wall usually produces smiles, as Czechs fondly remember the last President of Czechoslovakia (1989 until the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1992) and then the first President of the Czech Republic (1993 to 2003). Sophie Jane Radvan, now living in Minneapolis, is one of many who have asked to have a photo taken with Havel's picture. She wanted to send it to her mother. I gave her a recent *Slovo* and a small Czech flag, one which had decorated an immigrant Czech grave in New Prague during the 2018 Centennial Celebration of the birth of Czechoslovakia.



Lucas Janíček was the special dinner guest of the Czech Heritage Club in New Prague on May 11. Lucas is this year's Czech exchange student at the New Prague High School. He is from Rokycany, a city with just over 14,000 inhabitants, 11 miles (17 km) east of Plzeň, in western Bohemia. L-R: George Mikiska, Lucas, Vi Chromy, Doris Coghill, and Bruce Coghill. George reported that all enjoyed pork, dumplings, kraut, and *vomacka* at the Fishtale Grill in New Prague. (*Vomacka* is the beloved comfort-food soup, comprised at its most basic of cream or half-and-half with potatoes, green beans, and dill.)

Photo by Jim Simon.

Summer Events in Czech Country Minnesota

A Kaleidoscope of Czech Heritage, July 8 to September 4, sponsored by the Czech Heritage Club, New Prague, and hosted by the Arts & Heritage Center, 206 First Street in Montgomery. czechheritageclub.com
Thursday/Friday: 2-5 p.m. Saturday: 9 a.m.-noon. By appointment, call or text: 952-334-2172

87th Kolacky Days, Montgomery, July 23-25, with parade, queen pageant, music, foot races, dancing, Czech food, and lots of *kolačé*. St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers have been invited to perform. montgomerymn.org

Czech Out New Prague, August 5, 5-8 p.m., Memorial Park around the Park Street Parking loop, is a business and community expo with over 50 local businesses and organizations. The Czech Honorary Consul will be in the Czech Heritage Club tent.



Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic
in Minneapolis, MN

Marit Lee Kucera, Honorary Consul

651-238-0447

minneapolis@honorary.mzv.cz OR mlkucera@outlook.com

Slovo Publication Information and 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. Phone: 651-290-0542.

Sokol Minnesota members receive the *Slovo* with their membership.

To receive your *Slovo* in color via email instead of the black and white mail version, contact slovo@sokolmn.org.

A subscription to the *Slovo* is available for \$15 annually.

For a subscription, please include name, address, phone number, email address and a \$15 check payable to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and mail to *Slovo* at the above address.

The *Slovo* staff welcomes submissions. Send news, articles, and pictures digitally to slovo@sokolmn.org. The copy deadline for each issue is the first day of the prior month.

Advertising in the *Slovo* is available. Please email slovo@sokolmn.org for information on due dates and rates.

Moving or temporarily away: Please notify us via email or USPS mail of your change of address to make sure you continue to receive the *Slovo*.

The *Slovo* is bulk mailed and non-deliverable copies are not forwarded or held by the Post Office. Non-delivered copies are returned to Sokol Minnesota and they are billed to us at the first-class mail rate.

For this reason, we will not send additional issues until we have a current, correct mailing address on record for you.

Member volunteer *Slovo* staff: Co-Managing Editors: Tom Aubrecht, Mary Cahill, and Joyce Tesarek. Copy Editor: Tom Aubrecht.

Production Layout: Mary Kucera. Regular Contributors: Jean Draheim, Steve Ernest, Glynis Grostephan, M. L. Kucera, Norm Petrik, Dave Stepan, and Denise Stibal. Photographers: Martina Gurgel and Joyce Tesarek. Collages: Martina Gurgel.

Sokol Minnesota Ad Designer: Doreen McKenney (pages 1, 9, 16).

Mailing and email Lists: Penny Tesarek and Tom Tesarek.

Mailing: Mary Cahill and Joan Sedlacek.

Advisors: Christy Banks, Arlene Hamernik, M. L. Kucera, and Jitka Sebek.

Additional contributors this issue: Courtney Benson, Blank Brichta, Jason Brozovich, Jean Draheim, Glynis Grostephan, Doreen McKenney, Kari Muyres, Joan Sedlacek, Pat Slaber, Joyce Tesarek, Louise Wessinger.

Additional photographs or illustrations this issue provided by:

Courtney Benson (page 3), M.L. Kucera (11, 15), Doreen McKenney (11), Joan Sedlacek (6-7), Pat Slaber (10), Dave Stepan (12), Joyce Tesarek (5, 11), Louise Wessinger (4, 8).

May issue mailing: Mary Cahill and Joan Sedlacek.

More information at www.sokolmn.org

C.S.P.S. HALL LEGACY FUND

To keep us all safe from COVID-19, all our income-generating events are on hold. If you can help, we would greatly appreciate a donation to Sokol.



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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

To help refinish the C.S.P.S. Hall floors, 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 *Thank You!*

CZECH AND SLOVAK



383 Michigan Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
651-290-0542

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *SLOVO* June/July 2021

23rd Annual Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp

Sponsored by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Medieval "Castles and Kings"

June 14-18 20
21

Ages: 6 to 14 years old



Extended Early-Bird discount!

Register by May 15 to qualify for the discount.

With camp nearly 2/3 full we require that all camp registration materials be received by June 1.

Registration materials for campers ages 6 to 14, adult volunteers, and junior leaders ages 15 to 21 can be downloaded at www.sokolmn.org

Full refund if camp needs to be postponed.

Questions? Contact Louise Wessinger 651-452-6240