



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

December/January
Slovo articles
due November 1

Sokol Gift Shop
open by appointment

Annual Meeting
on Zoom
Friday, November 19
7 p.m.

Monthly Board of
Directors meeting
6 p.m.
(info on page 2)

Curbside Holiday
Koláče Bake Sale
and
Curbside Breakfast
Saturday, November 20
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
(info adjacent))

Curbside Roast Duck
Dinner
Saturday, January 22
10 a.m.-1 p.m.
(info on page 16)

Sokol Gymnasts
Ongoing
(See page 12 and website)

HOLIDAY

Koláče Bake Sale, November 20 ²⁰/₂₁

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Saturday CURBSIDE pick-up

C.S.P.S. Hall parking lot 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

383 Michigan St., Saint Paul, MN 55102

Koláče ordering and available flavors

To order koláče: food@sokolmn.org or call/text: 952-941-0426
Apricot, cream cheese, poppy seed, prune, or raspberry koláč \$1 each

Deadline and Payment to order koláče

PREPAID ORDERS for koláče must be received by 10 a.m. Friday
November 12, 2021, via PayPal:
www.sokolmn.org/curbside-cuisine/
or check mailed 10 days prior to deadline: payable and mailed to
Sokol Minnesota 383 Michigan St., Saint Paul MN 55102

Breakfast, November 20 ²⁰/₂₁

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

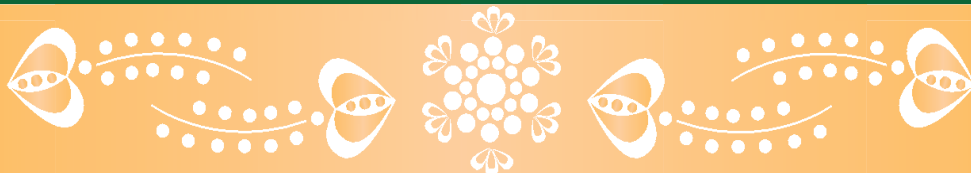
Saturday CURBSIDE pick-up

C.S.P.S. Hall parking lot 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

383 Michigan St., Saint Paul, MN 55102

New Breakfast Menu!

Egg and cheese English muffin sandwich,
Czech style pancake (filled crepe), two sausage links, and fruit cup.
To order your \$8 breakfast call: 763-571-6091



Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes by Dave Stepan

Multiple stars were aligned for the 32nd annual Czech & Slovak Festival. I hope you were able to join us. The day was bright and ripe for a social gathering among family and friends to share a beer and enjoy the *segedínský guláš* and many other dishes and treats.

Thank you all who made it possible or attended, but especially Event Chair Dr. Joyce Tesarek, Program Chair Louise Wessinger, and our many chefs.

Thank you to Tom Schroeder, owner of Waldmann Brewery and Wurstery in Saint Paul, and Adam his brewmaster for sponsoring the pivo garden with his new Czech Pilsner beer.

We were lucky to have the Ethnic Dance Theater and *Lipa* Slovak Folk Dancers perform. I heard nothing but compliments regarding the Festival. I, on the other hand, lost my voice at the event and was still looking for it almost a week later!

I want to thank CGSI president Kevin Hurbanis for the gift of a Slovak flag, which will be displayed proudly at my curling club Four Seasons in Blaine.

Although I am not the "chief cook," I do help, when I can, where I can. This past week Bob Kotek (chair of the Building Property Trustee Committee) and I, supervised by Lloyd Krocak, insulated all the building's steam pipes in the basement. We had a bid for almost \$10,000 and completed the work for just over \$800. Of course, it was neither easy work, nor pleasant, but it was something we felt worth the effort of doing ourselves.

We also recently resolved a safety/code violation with the help of the multi-talented Rick Palma, who installed a new rail for the 3rd floor open window overlooking the main hall. It looks like it has always been there. Thanks Rick!

What I won't be working on is replacement of the boiler. We have been anxious about the replacement of this heat box for the past two years. We recently had work done on the upstairs radiators, so they are now working correctly, and with the insulation of the pipes we expect a more cost-effective heating season. We recently had a boiler inspection and feel a bit more confident that we are not in an immediate need of replacement. With that knowledge, we are starting the discussion on how to transition to a new boiler without being caught off guard.

We are working to promote the youth in our midst. Our youth are our future and we need to make sure they feel included in this organization. The first *Trunks with Treats Harvest Fest* event was held last month for youth under 12, staffed by Sokol Minnesota Youth Link members! Congratulations on a successful event!

In November, at our annual meeting, we will be voting on a new set of officers for those who have reached their term limits or choose not to run again.

Our nominating committee is working on a slate of new officers.

Members are asked to attend this very important virtual meeting on Friday, November 19 at 7 p.m. Our monthly Board of Directors meeting will be at 6 p.m. I would be happy to invite you to these Zoom meetings; if you are interested, please let me know at president@sokolmn.org

Nazdar!

Going away this winter? Forwarding your mail?

Do not forget about the *Slovo*! We mail at bulk mail rates.

The post office does not forward bulk mail and we pay an additional amount for each issue returned, so let us know your winter address.

Or, you can change your subscription to receive the *Slovo* in color via email;

Contact: slovo@sokolmn.org

We think our volunteers produce a great newsletter. We want to be sure you receive it!

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



Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 2021 BOD (Board of Directors)

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Telephone: 651-290-0542

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

32nd Czech & Slovak Festival Sunday, September 26th, Was a Big Success

By Joyce Tesarek, Festival Chair, and Louise Wessinger, Festival Entertainment Chair



Attendance at Sokol Minnesota's 32nd Czech & Slovak Festival was a wonderful surprise. With COVID concerns, a "scaled-back" version of our usual event was planned involving closing the building and keeping the Festival outdoors, so we expected a much-reduced crowd. With the help of fine weather, a marvelous program, fabulous food, great volunteers, and our many loyal plus new attendees, this Festival matched past ones as an excellent event.



Our flags flying high.

Festival Food and Treats, Beer Garden, Crafts and Market, Activities

Míša Giancarlo Kotek prepared *segedinský guláš* and Doreen McKenney and Joan Sedlacek prepared the ever-popular *halušky* (cabbage and dumpling hot dish).

We again offered *jitrnice* (Czech sausage, again this year made by Sausage by Cynthia of Forster's in Plymouth) and hot dogs. For this Festival we added Sokol Camp *booya*, cooked in Pine City the traditional way, outdoors in enormous kettles. We also added *langoš*, a frybread special treat sold at festivals in the Czech Republic. (See separate article).

Our neighborhood Waldmann Brewery created a special craft Bohemian pilsner beer. The Sweet Shoppe's tasty desserts and *koláče* rounded out the menu. Special thanks to the Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities for the lovely *perníčky* (decorated gingerbread cookies) and sweets, and to Jan Roers and Cinnamon Whaley for their donated treats.

We had a food market and craft vendors as well as information booths for affiliated groups. Jitka Sebek and team made sure the children had lots of activities to do. Our giant puppets Jitka and Jarďa made an appearance, drawing in and welcoming guests from their seats in the back of Rick Palma's truck parked along West 7th Street.

The Youth Leadership Awards were presented (see page 10).



Jarďa and Jitka greeting guests.



Petra Riedel, Libuše (Libby) Imbrone and her son Paul Imbrone.

Jitka Sebek shared this story from the Festival:

Paul: "Mom, it is getting hot. Aren't you hot?"

Libby: "Yes, it is getting hot."

Paul: "Do you want me to help you take off your sweatshirt or move you into the shade?"

Libby: "No, thank you. Just get me some beer."

A true Czech woman's request!

32nd Czech & Slovak Festival: Beer, Food, Activities, and Vendors



1. Beer Garden volunteers Dennis Cahill, Brad Narr, and Ross Peterson. 2. Kateřina Svensson preparing *langoš* for happy customers. 3. Kids activities: Katarina Bila, Honza, and Bělík family. 4. Teen koláče eating contest led by Dave Stepan. 5. Ludmila Pálková and Markéta Pálková's home-canned treats. 6. Festival Chair Joyce Tesarek (center) with Sargent Natalie Davis and guest.

4 November 2021 *Slovo*

Entertainment Participants

A special presentation was made to Louise Wessinger for her 30 years of leading the children's dance groups (see page 9).

We would like to thank all of the Sokol Minnesota members and groups, along with the associated groups who practice or have activities at our C.S.P.S. Hall, for helping to provide entertainment to the audiences at our Festival.

Technical/audio: Richard Sargent, Rick Palma, and Matthew Weathers.

Flag Ceremony: Chuck Draheim, Dawn Bulera, Jason Brozovich, Rick Palma, Sandy Prohaska, and Joan Sedlacek.

Emcee: Dave Stepan.

Greeters: Sokol Minnesota President Dave Stepan, Czech Honorary Consul M. L. Kucera, and Slovak representative Cheryl Nelson Theunick.

Sokol Minnesota Gymnasts: Jason Brozovich and Courtney Benson, Lead Instructors, and Sokol Minnesota Gymnasts.

Sokol Minnesota *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teens*: Louise Wessinger, Director. Dancers: Adam Acs, Anna and Izzy Bracknell, Adela Bragg, Izabela Carlson, Isabel and Lucien Espinosa, Althea and Klara Hoffmann, Nora Holliday, Seanna, Keely and Callista Kluzak, Kaya Koudelka, John Kraemer, Leo Krikava, Olivia and Kamila Marko, Adela, Liliana and Adam Peterson, Matthew Resong, Isabella Spiess, Elizabeth Wentz. Assistants: John Topic and Michaela Wentz.

Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers: Louise Wessinger, Program Director, dancers by partners: Dawn Bulera and Jason Brozovich, Dave Cammack and Lenka Hester, Stefan Heyn and Brittany Stepan, Richard Sargent and Pam Langworthy, Judy Metcalf and John Topic, Michelle Stepan and James Metcalf, Sandy Prochaska and Richard Palma, Teresa Pojar and Anthony Kajzar, Dave and Darnell Stepan, Michael Topic and Jyni Koschak, John Mitchell and Michaela Wentz (photo on page 8).

Saint Paul South Bohemian Bagpipe Band: Frank Trnka, Director, Jason Brozovich, Dawn Bulera, and John Topic.

Mondo Jugglers: Tom and Penny Tesarek.

Taneční Mládež



Taneční Teens



Guest Royalty, Dancers, and Musicians

Very special thanks to our guest royalty, dancers, and musicians who graced our outdoor stage with their talent.

We are very grateful to them for enhancing our programs and making the day enjoyable for our audience.

Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Organization: Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota 2019-2020, Autumn Gare, soloist for the United States, Czech, and Slovak anthems.

Lipa Slovak Folk Dancers from Minneapolis: Lara Ciganko, Director, Krissy Chepp-Heir, Michaela Dojcinovic, Katarina Grajar, Paul Knuth, and Maria Zivkovitch.

Ethnic Dance Theatre of Minnesota: Donald LaCourse, Artistic Director: Rob Audino, Alex Dimitrov, Rachel Hames, Krissy Chepp Heir, Alina Jambor, Kathryn Korchak, Kostia Korchak, Matthew LaCourse, Pat LaCourse, James Metcalf, Tori Piorek Nett, Frances Olson, Marita Pelece, Maya Petros, Julian Pone, Olesia Sarazhynsky, Dunja Sher, Kjersti Velve, Anastasia Verdoljak, David Vincze, and Maria Zivkovitch.

Concertina and Accordion Jam: Sandy Prochaska, Coordinator, Gordy Prochaska and Mary Riebel.



32nd Czech & Slovak Festival Volunteers

A special thanks to all of our volunteers who helped before, during, and after the event (leadership team in bold):

Adam Acs, Denisa Acs, **Tom Aubrecht**, Christy Banks, **Dan Bednar**, Katarina Bila, Adela Bragg, **Blanka Brichta**, Zuzana Bracknell with Anna and Izzy, Jason Brozovich, Megan Brozovich, Dawn Bulera, Dennis Cahill, Mary Cahill, Jana Castillon, Andrea Červená, Bruce Chuchel, Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, Lucas DeBono Tesarek, **Chuck Draheim, Jean Draheim, Steve Ernest**, Stáňa Gerlach, Eva Giese with Darren and Natálka, Roger Green, Dave Grostephan, **Glynis Grostephan**, Arlene Hamernik, **Ed Hamernik, Don Haselbauer**, Katie Haselbauer, Lenka Hester, Marlene Hinshaw, Jennifer Iverson, Robert (Jake) Jacobson, Kailey James, Kaja Jost, Darla Kolb, Andy Korel, Jyni Koschak, Bob Kostichka, Bob Kotek, **Michaela (Míša) Giancarlo Kotek**, Lloyd Krocak, **Marit Lee Kucera**,

Pam Langworthy, Ann Leland, Marko family, Maxey family, **Doreen McKenney**, Kari Muyres, Leah Muyres, Scott Muyres, Brad Narr, Terry Narr, **Cheryl Nelson**, Gary Novak, Becky Olson, Rachel Olson, Markéta Pálková, Rick Palma, Ross Peterson, Teresa Pojar, Sandy Prochaska, Rad Rasmussen, Savana Rhodes, Petra Riedl, Jan Roers, Mike Roers, Lucy Rose, Dagmar Rosenthal with Thomas, Kelcey Rund, Richard Sargent, **Jitka Sebek, Joan Sedlacek**, Terry Shima, Fred Simon, **Dave Stepan**, Michelle Stepan, Denise Stibal, Kateřina (Katka) Svensson, Teen Folk Dancers and families, Cheri Tesarek, John Tesarek, **Joyce Tesarek**, Penny Tesarek, Tom Tesarek, Pavlina Tesch, John Topic, Tereza Treanor, Markéta Uhlířová with Adam, Olga, Adriana Wenberg, Michaela Wentz, **Louise Wessinger, Cinnamon Whaley**, Rosemary Whaley, Alena Youngberg, Petr Zabransky.



1. Dave Stepan, Ed Hamernik, Míša Giancarlo Kotek, and Kelcey Rund enjoy Míša's volunteer treats.
2. Don Haselbauer, Treasurer, picks up money from ticket sellers Terry Shima, Denise Stibal, and Fred Simon.
3. Scott Muyres, Jan Roers, Kari Muyres, Lucas Tesarek, Becky Olson, Rachel Olson, Terry Narr at the grill.
4. Jana Castillon, Míša Giancarlo Kotek, Kitchen Team Leader, Eva Giese, Kateřina Svensson.

32nd Czech & Slovak Festival



Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers ready to begin!

Festival Vendors: Hoffmeyer Woodcrafts, Mirwood Cottage (Jean and Chuck Draheim), Markéta Pálková and Ludmila Pálková home-canned and baked treats, and Michelle Stepan crafts.

Organizational Representatives: (* denotes information tables): Bechyn (Minnesota) Czech Heritage Festival: Tim Kojten; *Czech and Slovak Cultural Center: Renata Ticha, President, with Cheryl Nelson and Jan Knudtson; Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities: Jitka Sebek, Director; Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Singers: Richard Sargent and Pam Langworthy; *Czech Honorary Consul of Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota: M. L. Kucera; Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International: Kevin Hurbanis, President; Minnesota Czech Country: Fred Simon; *Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant: Autumn Gare and Josh Gare; *Rusin Association of Minnesota: Karen Varian, President; *Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota organization and membership: Tom Aubrecht and Mary Cahill; and *Sokol Minnesota Youth Council: Glynis Grostephan.



A big thank you to the Virtual Auction Business Donors

Can Can Wonderland; Doreen @czech_cards; The Czech Baker; Great Lakes Aquarium; R. Jelinek Products (Original Czech Distilleries); Kwik Trip; Leann Chin; Leitners Garden Center; Minnesota Marine Art Museum; Minnesota Vikings; Mississippi Market; Raising Canes; Saint Paul Saints Baseball; Three Rivers Park District; Total Wine & More.

Many thanks for the Virtual Auction Donations from Sokol Minnesota Members and Friends

Diane Bell, Mary Jo Chlebecek, Stana Gerlach, Dave Grostephan, Katie Haselbauer, Marlene Hinshaw, Bob and Michaela (Míša) Giancarlo Kotek, Marit Lee Kucera, Judy Metcalf, Jan Roers, Jitka Sebek, Joan Sedlacek, Anita Simek, Joyce Tesarek, Kathy Weese, and Louise Wessinger.

Thanks to all the winning bidders of the 2021 Sokol Minnesota Online Virtual Auction, which raised funds for Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota.

32nd Czech & Slovak Festival Income and Donations

We were pleased to have income from the Festival of over \$12,278 with a profit of \$9,999.50, both at levels matching prior Festivals, to help support the C.S.P.S. Hall and our activities. Sales income came from the Virtual Silent Auction, Beer Garden, Grill, Sweet Shoppe, Gift Shop, and Youth Group Book Sale. Cheryl Nelson collected business ads for our printed program, Glynis Grostephan collected donations from many individuals and businesses for our successful Virtual Auction, and Doreen McKenney donated ingredients for the *koláče*.

This year we had several additional donations: Waldmann Brewery donated a keg of its special Pilsner, and Sausage by Cynthia donated the *jitrnice* in honor of Cynthia's Czech heritage. Many thanks to the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers and the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center for their donations.

Thanks again to American Sokol, our parent organization, for the generous \$2,500 grant to support our Festival.

We want to thank all of you who attended and helped to make this event a success.

It was a great day for our Czech and Slovak community, friends, and the West 7th Street area.

We look forward to next year's Festival! Save September 25, 2022, on your calendar!

Taneční Mládež and *Taneční Teens* Celebrate 30 Years with Louise Wessinger

By Barbora Carlson

It might not be known to our youngest dancers that the year 2020 marked 30 years since the *Taneční Mládež* started dancing in our historic C.S.P.S. Hall under the enthusiastic and professional guidance of Louise Wessinger. For all of this time, Miss Louise has



Barbora Carlson with dancers presenting the commemorative *kroje* apron to Louise Wessinger.

commemorative apron decorated and signed by her dancers from recent years. If all children who ever danced in her groups had put a flower on this apron, it would probably be one of the most decorated pieces of *kroje*! Speaking of dancing, and dances, Louise herself has danced for 40 years! She is the Director of the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers with its repertoire of 60 dances!

Louise, from our hearts and with deep appreciation for all you do, thank you!

volunteered her time, talent, and love to the *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teens*, instilling Czech and Slovak heritage into the hearts of several generations of our children through songs, music, and dances.

Last spring, because of the abrupt COVID halt, we could not celebrate this wonderful anniversary. Now that we are all back together, at the Czech & Slovak Festival in September Louise was presented with a



Louise Wessinger

(right) Barbora Carlson with her daughters and friend signing the commemorative *kroje* apron for Miss Louise.



Bobbie Jo Chandler Celebrated for 50 years of Dancing

By Louise Wessinger



Roberta Chandler, known to most of us as Bobbie Jo, was honored at the Czech & Slovak Festival by the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers for 50 years of performing with the group. Bobbie is the oldest daughter of lifelong Sokol Minnesota members and dancers, the late Babe (Bulera) and Bob Vanyo. Her parents raised their 11 children to participate in Sokol Minnesota gym classes and folk dancing from the time they could walk. Despite the limitations of low

vision, only one lung, and her heart on the wrong side, Bobbie learned to be a terrific dancer. She is a hop polka specialist! She has danced with the adult dancers for all these years and participated in many events, such as Festival of Nations, numerous times. Over the last two decades her vision loss has become complete, which has limited her participation in certain group dances. Still, she dances with joy in her heart and a smile on her face.

The Dancers presented her with a silver bracelet with a “50” charm. We hope when she wears it, she will touch the 50 and remember how much she has touched our group.

Langoš Was Popular at the Czech & Slovak Festival

By Michaela (Míša) Giancarlo Kotek



Jana Castillon measuring dough for *langoš*.

Langoš (fried flat bread) comes originally from Hungary but has been widely adopted all over Europe. This treat can be found in the Czech Republic at every festival and market and at small take-and-eat windows. *Langoš* were served at this year’s Czech & Slovak Festival for the first time and were a big hit.

The dough is basic yeast dough deep fried in oil. My secret ingredients of sour cream and heavy cream made them extra tasty. Czechs traditionally serve it brushed with a mixture of fresh-pressed garlic/oil/salt and tartar sauce, ketchup, and shredded cheese. Can also be served plain.



2021 Youth Leadership Awards

To recognize our youth members, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota organized its second annual Youth Leadership Award competition this spring.

A committee consisting of Dave Stepan, Glynis Grostephan, Doreen McKenney, Jitka Sebek, and Judy Metcalf was appointed and reviewed the submitted applications. Current high school juniors and seniors were invited to submit an application telling how involvement with Sokol Minnesota had positively impacted them and to describe how their leadership skills were developed and used over the years.

After careful review of the applications, three Youth Leadership Awards were made. The 2020 Award winners are Nicole Giese, Zoe Hoiland, and Claire Wickiser. Theresa Williams won the Best Essay award.



Claire Wickiser, Zoe Hoiland, Theresa Williams, and Nicole Giese's sister Natalie with 2021 Youth Leadership Awards.



2021 Youth Leadership Award plaque at the C.S.P.S. Hall.

The winners received a cash award, certificate, and were honored at our recent Czech & Slovak Festival. Congratulations to our 2021 Sokol Minnesota Youth Leadership Award and Best Essay winners!

Thank you to the contributors to the awards, including Sokol Minnesota; M. L. Kucera, Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic; and Louise Wessinger, Dance Director. The award plaque is located in a trophy case on the second floor of the C.S.P.S. Hall.

If you would like to help endow this award, please contact finance@sokolmn.org

... and the Second Annual 2021 Youth Leadership Awards go to:



Nicole Giese

Hi, I'm Nicole Giese. I graduated from Shakopee High School and am currently a freshman at Minnesota State University Mankato. I am glad that I have been a part of Sokol Minnesota for many years. I was a Sokol Minnesota dancer and a Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities student until the end of my senior year.

I enjoyed being involved and getting a better understanding of how to communicate better with

my family and other members of Sokol. The environment surrounding me was always so welcoming and my teachers

made sure to take time to help me understand if I was puzzled.

I also volunteered at a few of the Sokol Minnesota events and helped set up games and prizes for the younger children. It was fun being involved with what was going on and seeing all the various people checking out the events.

Outside of Sokol, I played basketball and did track and field. I also work as a sports coach for the YMCA during the summers. With my experience around people, I hope to use that with my future career as a dental hygienist.

I am very proud to be Czech and a part of Sokol Minnesota and all the things it provides for me. It helps me connect better with my culture and my family in the Czech Republic.

Thank you!

continued on page 11

For status of events scheduled for the C.S.P.S. Hall, check our calendar at www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/hall-calendar/

To see the November issue of *Slovo* in color visit www.sokolmn.org/slovo-newsletter/



Zoe Holland

Hello, my name is Zoe Hoiland. I am currently a senior at Nova Classical Academy in Saint Paul. I have been a part of Sokol Minnesota for almost seven years as a gymnast and five years as a gymnastics coach. This year, I am especially excited to be back after having more than a year off of gymnastics and I can't wait to begin coaching the Boys Class and the Acro Cats! My favorite part about being an instructor is seeing

the improvements throughout the year and how that increases the gymnasts' confidence and willingness to try new things. It is fun seeing how even the littlest gymnasts have grown up during our time off!

Besides coaching, I have volunteered at numerous Sokol Minnesota events and performed at the annual Czech & Slovak Festival for several years and I have loved each experience (especially the food!).

The people and teammates whom I have met through Sokol Minnesota will become lifelong friends, and I have learned so much from being a part of this group. Gymnastics is very important to me, and I am excited to see what my team can do with me as one of the captains this year.

Outside of Sokol, I am a leader of my school's National Honors Society as well as a member of the track and field team. I plan to go to college next year and study to become an engineer.

Sokol has become a big part of my life, and I am so grateful to be involved in such an interesting and amazing organization.

Thank you!



Claire Wickiser

Hello! I am Claire Wickiser and I am currently a senior at Central High School in Saint Paul. I have been a gymnast and member of Sokol Minnesota for over a decade and I have been an instructor for three years.

I started gymnastics in the 7 to 8-year-old class and eventually moved to the competition team. I have competed in the annual Western District competitions

and the 2016 American Sokol national *slet*.

I started coaching the 4 to 6-year-old class in 2018 after completing my beginner level at the National Instructors School. In 2019, I returned to Instructors School for the intermediate level and took a couple of virtual classes this year. Coaching at Sokol Minnesota has made me realize my love for teaching and I hope to pursue a career in it. In Sokol there is always room to grow and you can always count on Sokol to support you.

Outside of the gym I am involved in varsity track and field for my school. I also enjoy spending time with my friends and family. I am so grateful for this recognition and I can't wait to see what my future Sokol career holds.

Thank you!

Youth Leadership Award Best Essay: Serving Our Sokol



Theresa Williams

Starting gymnastics at Sokol Minnesota at twelve years old, I felt delayed and out of place in this new gym setting, where it seemed everyone was already a close-knit family. Six years later, however, I am part of this family. While I have not been involved with Sokol Minnesota my whole life, my years involved were transformative of my character; through surviving instructor school, becoming a coach, and

helping at the Children's Cultural Day Camp, each of which changed my life in a way nothing else could have.

Upon being invited to instructor school, I was through the roof with excitement because this meant I would become a gymnastics coach. While becoming a coach may seem insignificant, it had been my dream job ever since I began

gymnastics. Instructor school changed my view of Sokol, partly because I had no idea how big the organization was; I was shocked when we learned about international Sokols! More importantly, however, as I was learning how to be a gymnastics instructor, my life was changed because I was now the one to whom young gymnasts would look up to.

I had always admired and looked up to my gymnastics coaches and now I would be that role model for others. As I went back to my gym and started coaching there, my dream was achieved. Coaching at Sokol Minnesota affected me greatly as I saw how I was able to serve in my own community in a way that catered to my gifts. The world needs love and service and this is my way to serve. Culture Camp in particular presented children who had never tried gymnastics. I was able to introduce them to the sport that changed my life and show them that Sokol Minnesota is not just a gym.

Thank you!

Why Do You Learn Czech or Slovak?

By Jitka Sebek

Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities recently resumed at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's C.S.P.S. Hall for the 2021/2022 school year. After the COVID-related online learning of much of the past year, now with 40+ students actively coming to the Saturday morning language classes, it feels just like in the song *The Show Must Go On*. And it does go on!

Since the C.S.P.S. Hall was built, how many generations of Czechs and Slovaks have come to the Hall to exercise or to enjoy ethnic music or food together? What will be happening at the Hall in 50 years, we do not know, but our generation has added language classes. The idea of a Czech language school in the Twin Cities started as a dream twenty years ago of Dr. Josef Mestenhauer (Distinguished International Emeritus Professor at the University of Minnesota in the College of Education and Human Development and past Honorary Czech Consul). The theoretical concept found support in a very happy group of friends (parents and children) who were generously welcomed at the C.S.P.S. Hall. For the past ten years we have been combining, on Saturday mornings at the Hall, Czech and Slovak language immersion classes for children from birth until high school graduation with the already-established Czech and Slovak folk dance lessons led by Louise Wessinger.

The most recent neuro-linguistic research results support our teaching intuition (not to give up on the mother tongue) with practical needs (to ensure our children can communicate with their grandparents and extended families living overseas). Countless multilingual benefits (better multitasking skills, empathy, focus, delayed signs of Alzheimer's, and so on) matched with the national support for heritage languages (high schoolers can take a test in any language they speak to earn a Seal of Bi/Multiliteracy) help us enjoy the mutual support of Czech and Slovak schools globally. In the United States, state departments of education have recently been very supportive of multilingualism and teachers are trained to incorporate other languages into their lesson plans. Students are required to learn English, but it is known that the higher a student's literacy is in their native language, the better is their English language acquisition. School academic visions also encompass linguistic support for the rising global citizens.

The Czech Ministries for Education and Foreign Affairs have established through conferences, workshops, and financial support very strong contacts with expats, but it was still a big pleasure to get a phone call from Radio Prague International this past summer. The radio interview (see the link below) gave my daughter Sally and me a chance to shine some light on the existence of Czech schools around the world.

12 November 2021 *Slovo*

As a little nation, Czechs always appreciated even the smallest attempts of foreigners to produce at least *děkuji* (thank you), and at the same time were always suspicious of such efforts. Hence Czechs' reading of Czech Schools in Minnesota or Melbourne makes them curious but hearing our children's lovely speech makes them smile. They beam when they learn that our children practice Czech at home, drive to Saturday lessons, and learn in an immersion school. They are impressed by the mastered grammar rules that enable a very pleasant communication that leads to better mutual understanding. This radio interview was about all of it. After all, people around the globe are the same, only the results of their actions and traditions might create interesting distinctions.

"Sally," asked Ms. Kuchyňová, the interviewer, "how do you compare the Czech Republic with the U.S.?"

"Well, I love Czech culture. It is quite different: different architecture, different forms of interactions, and the food is different. I like coming to the Czech Republic where I can experience a different kind of life. I love it!"

To listen to the interview and read a partial translation, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/radio-czech>



Jitka Sebek with her daughter Sally during Prague Radio interview.

Gymnastics is Back

By the Sokol Minnesota Board of Instructors

After more than a year without gymnastics classes for our girls, we are excited to be back in the gym. The boys resumed classes in the spring. Many of our previous gymnasts have returned and there are new participants as well. Classes are at or near capacity. We are following COVID guidelines requiring masks for all instructors, participants, and parents; keeping gymnasts in groups as they rotate apparatus; distancing as much as possible; and electrostatically cleaning all equipment after classes.

Returning instructors include Courtney Benson (Head Coach and Program Coordinator); Junior Instructors Zoe Hoiland, Claire Wickiser, and Theresa Williams; Jason Brozovich (Men's Physical Director and Head Boys Instructor); and Matt Schussler (Boys Instructor). Lily Callanan and Anna Nowaczewski are new girls Junior Instructors and Mitchell Gillman is new boys Class Assistant.

Gymnasts are enjoying classes and the equipment given to Sokol Minnesota by Sokol Omaha when it sold its building this past spring.

Our first 10-week session ends on November 18 and the second 10-week session begins November 29.

For more information, email us at fitness@sokolmn.org

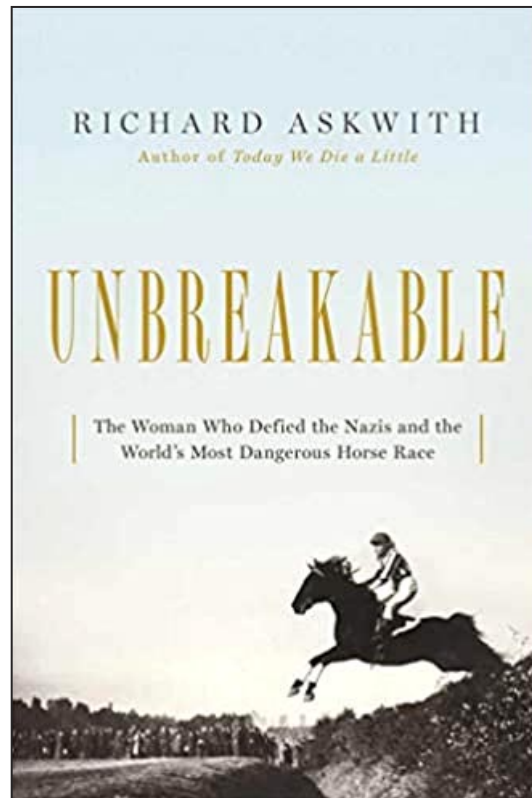
Unbreakable: The Woman Who Defied the Nazis in the World's Most Dangerous Horse Race by Richard Askwith. Pegasus Books: New York, 2019, 440 pages. Available at libraries and bookstores.

The determination of Countess Marie Immaculata Brandislová led her to achieve a remarkable, nearly impossible victory with great figurative and literal consequences. Compounded by the political and social upheavals of twentieth-century Czech lands, the fascinating story of her life forms the core of this book. *Unbreakable: The Woman Who Defied the Nazis in the World's Most Dangerous Horse Race* is one of the favorite Czech or Slovak books that Literary Ventures members have read and discussed. It is excellently told by Richard Askwith, who takes the reader along for the ride, making a scholarly historical novel come across as smoothly as engrossing fiction. The reader doesn't need to be fond of horse racing. Since my love of horses goes back to childhood and serving as a teenage groom for Standardbreds in harness racing, this mix of horse racing and Czech history is extremely interesting to me.

Although the achievements of the shy and humble Countess Brandislová, known as Lata, are largely forgotten, Askwith found many sources of information and interviewed numerous people. Among the back-matter's notes, acknowledgments, and index is a section on sources that details Askwith's extensive research, mostly in Czech and German.

The countess' life revolved around her family and their 500-hectare estate, Ritka, which had a population of 300 at its height, but was poor compared to other nobility in those twilight years of the Habsburg empire. Born in 1895, she became a natural leader among her eight siblings, managed the estate for many years, and brought in income through horse racing.

Began in 1874, the Velká Pardubická steeplechase was grueling and dangerous to the point of being reckless. Military men eager to show their bravery and prowess trained on the steeplechase. As a friend of horse owners and trainers and someone who made horses her friends, Lata sought opportunities to enter the male-dominated steeplechase. After unsuccessful attempts to win the Velká Pardubická in 1927, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, and 1935, she took first place riding the mare Norma in 1937. She was the first and only woman to win the Velká Pardubická.



1937 was an especially auspicious year, since Nazi paramilitary elite had come to dominate the race, and it was a highly visible symbol of Nazi power over Czechoslovakia. Also, beloved President Masaryk had died three and a half weeks before the race. "Edward Benes, Masaryk's successor as president," writes Askwith, "was decent and competent. What the Czechoslovaks needed, though, was someone to inspire them. In its moment of danger, their nation needed a champion." They found that in a silver-haired countess riding a golden mare to victory against warrior-athletes of the Third Reich. An estimated 40,000 people came to see the race in person, and many more heard it over the radio. As war ensued, this was the last Velká Pardubická held for eight years.

Lata continued to race in the following years and had a major fall in 1949, when she was 54, leaving her with extensive injuries. She was in pain the rest of her life and received disability status from the communists.

Although Lata began life as a member of the nobility, her privileged status and the family's estate were battered again and again, by the First Republic, Nazis, and the communist regime. She empathized with and was loyal to her family's Czech workers to the extent that she refused to speak German when the Nazis ruled Czech lands.

After she was reduced to living with her remaining sisters in a small section of the family chateau, they were sent to a rustic cottage in the nearby

settlement of Klinic in the 1950s. Lata spent her last months living with her nephew Ernst Hahn and his family in their castle in Reiteregg, Austria, where she died peacefully in 1981.

Gwen is coordinator of the Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures book discussion group. Literary Ventures is cosponsored by the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and the Office of the Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic.

Find information and updates at cs-center.org or contact gwen@cs-center.org.

Join us for a public talk on *You Can't Go Home Again?*

A Third Generation Slovak-American's Return to the Homeland by Sarah Hinlicky Wilson

from **noon-1:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 13**

and

discussion of *I Am a Brave Bridge* by Sarah Hinlicky Wilson
at **noon on Saturday, November 20.**

Highlights of the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota September Board Meeting By Denise Stibal

The Board of Directors virtual meeting was called to order on September 16 at 7 p.m. by President Dave Stepan.

Member at Large Blanka Brichta noted there will be no inside exhibits for the Czech and Slovak Festival because of COVID.

Gary Zweber, Chair of the Rental Committee, and Dawn Bulera, Rental Coordinator, met with a representative from Calli Catering, who works with Pajarito and its restaurant group. The representative will meet with the Rental Committee in the future to present menu ideas and options to enhance the efficiency of our event rental operation.

Glynis Grostephan, Corresponding Secretary, reported \$304 was received for the General Fund.

Education Committee Chair Pat Slaber noted online language classes begin on September 27 (online only). We have 23 students enrolled for Czech classes, and will have three classes with the addition of Jakub Dajc as an instructor.

Steve Ernest, Financial Secretary, reported that four new membership applications were received, our total membership is now 307.

Jean Draheim, Activities Director, reported on events listed on the calendar and possible upcoming events including Beer Brewing at Vine Park Brewery and Curling at Frogtown Curling Club. The Czech Roast Pork Dinner on October 23 will also be Curbside. The Holiday Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale was discussed, with decisions to be made on the amount of help needed and alternate menu ideas. There will be further discussion at next month's meeting. Please contact Jean with any events to be posted on the Hall Calendar.

Don Haselbauer, Treasurer, reported on all balances and noted our 2020 tax return is in the Second Review process.

Joyce Tesarek, Chair of the Board of Budget and Finance, reported that the insurance coverage for the gymnastics

program has been reviewed and renewed. The board will meet with our bank to renew our line of credit.

Board of Instructors Directors Mary Cahill and Jason Brozovich reported classes for boys started on September 13, with all safety protocols in place. Girls classes will resume on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Gaming Chair Ed Hamernik asked for and received approval of the October budget. Motion carried to move \$15,000 from Gaming to the General Fund.

New Business: The kitchen vents will be cleaned every six months per the Fire Department request.

Brittany Stepan completed our window display.

We will grow hops in a small garden near the Hall next spring.

The freezer needs to be replaced; building committee will review options.

Bob Kotek has ordered the new rug with the Sokol Logo for the entryway.

Options for location of the third bike rack were presented by Steve Ernest and reviewed.

Sokol Minnesota Welcomes New Members

By Steve Ernest

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

Denisa Acs of Cottage Grove with interests in youth dance group, films and theater, music and dance, craft classes.

Jerry Karel of White Bear Lake with interests in history and genealogy, language classes.

Hana Pletichova and **Josef Pleticha** of Rochester with interests in youth dance group, youth culture camp, films and theater, music and dances, language classes.

Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!

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.

LEGACY FUND:

\$100 - \$499: In memory of **Georgiana Sobola** by **Lillian** (sister) and **George Bednar** and niece **Wendy Bednar**.

M. L. Kucera in appreciation of **Dan Bednar's** dedication to Sokol Minnesota.

GENERAL FUND:

Under \$99: **Mary Ann Tumasmith**.

\$100 - \$499: **Katie** and **Don Haselbauer** in honor of **Cheryl Nelson Theuninck's** Doctorate; **Medtronic Your Cause**, in recognition of **Don Haselbauer's** volunteer hours.

\$500 - \$999: **Czech and Slovak Cultural Center, Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, Virginia R. and William R. Simek Donor Fund**.

\$5000 - \$9999: **Jan Peterson, Cindy Gengler, Kathy Thiss**, and **Rita Vavrosky** in honor of their parents, **Wally** and **Dorothy Vavrosky**.

Legacy Fund: \$ 450

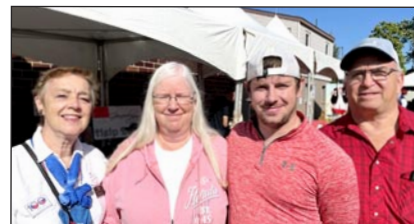
General Fund: \$ 6,604

TOTAL: \$ 7,054

Czech Honorary Consul News

November 2021

At *Dožínky* in New Prague on September 18, a family from Minot, North Dakota, stopped at the Czech Heritage Club booth. Jean and Billy Skolicky with their son Zdenek came to New Prague for the sole purpose of attending a Czech Festival. They had a great time. They had never been to Czech Country Minnesota before and knew no one there ...before attending *Dožínky*. Honorary Consul Kucera joined them for this picture.



At the Czech & Slovak Festival on September 26, Czech and Slovak Cultural Center, the Rusin Association of Minnesota, and the Czech Honorary Consul shared a tent and tables with information, books, maps, and memberships. (L-R) Karen Varian, Cheryl Nelson, Renáta Tichá, and Jan Knudtson. Behind Honorary Consul Kucera, seen here giving a welcome greeting to Festival attendees, are panels

that were used for the *Tom's Christmas Fish* display at the American Swedish Institute (ASI) for the Christmas 2018 season when Czechs were the invited community partner. Kucera sent Bruce Karstadt, ASI president and also Swedish Honorary Consul General, a picture from Sokol's 2021 festival and thanked him once again for ASI giving those panels to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. He replied, "Thank you. So lovely of you to write and show me the continued use of those backdrops. It's great that they are continuing to serve a good purpose! It was a pleasure to work with the Czech community for the 2018 Christmas/holiday celebration. This year our community partner is the Hmong Museum."



Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant Committee held a fundraising pork chop and dumplings dinner on October 2 in Montgomery. Kucera joined the servers: 2021 Queen Mary Carson, Loraine David, Kucera, Anne Smisek Jans, and Junior Ambassador Alenka. 2019 Queen Autumn Gare greeted visitors at the door; her father, Josh Gare, was head chef with the sauerkraut-wrapped thick pork chops.



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

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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.

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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: Mary Cahill and Gymnastics Team, Barbora Carlson, Nicole Giese, Zoe Hoiland, Dave Stepan and Youth Leadership Award Committee, Jitka Sebek, Joyce Tesarek, Louise Wessinger, Claire Wickiser, Gwen Willems, Theresa Williams.

Additional photographs or illustrations this issue (not already noted) provided by: Tom Aubrecht, Bobbi Jo Chandler, Nicole Giese, Zoe Hoiland, M. L. Kucera, Donald LaCourse, Doreen McKenney, Zdeňka Kuchyňová, Sandy Prochaska, Markéta Pálková, Matt Resong, Jitka Sebek, Joyce Tesarek, Claire Wickiser, and Theresa Williams.

September 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, many 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



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publicity@sokolmn.org

For status of events scheduled for the C.S.P.S. Hall, check our calendar at
www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/hall-calendar/

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *SLOVO* November 2021

January 22 20
22

19th Annual **ROAST
DUCK DINNER**

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Curbside

Saturday pick-up

10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

C.S.P.S. Hall

383 Michigan St., Saint Paul, MN 55102

Please place your Curbside order by contacting:
food@sokolmn.org or call/text: 952-941-0426



MENU

Half-a-roast duck, potato dumplings,
sweet and sour red cabbage caraway rye bread,
applesauce, and dessert \$25

Payment and Deadline

Limited number
of Roast Duck Dinners available.
Place your prepaid order early via:

PayPal: www.sokolmn.org/cc/
or *check: payable and mailed to
Sokol Minnesota
383 Michigan St.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

*Call to reserve your dinner first
before mailing in your check.