



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

November *Slovo* articles
due October 1

Sokol Gift Shop
open by appointment

Sokol Gymnasts
Ongoing
(See website)

Curbside Czech
Roast Pork Dinner
Saturday, October 23
(info adjacent)

Trunks with Treats
Harvest Fest
Saturday, October 23
1-2 p.m.
(info on page 7)

Curbside Holiday
Pancake Breakfast and
Koláče Bake Sale
Saturday, November 20
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
(info on page 12)

Children's Holiday
Celebration
Friday, December 3, 6 p.m.
Details will be available on
Sokol website, Instagram,
Facebook, or December *Slovo*
newsletter

Czech Roast Pork Dinner

October 23 2021

C.S.P.S. Hall

383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN

Saturday pick-up
10a.m. - 1p.m.

**PREPAID ORDERS Must be Received
by 12N Friday, October 22 via PayPal:**

www.sokolmn.org/curbside-cuisine/order-selection/

Paying by check call/text: 952-941-0426

Curbside

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota



MENU

Roast pork, raised bread dumplings, sauerkraut,
caraway rye bread, applesauce, and dessert \$20

Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes by Dave Stepan

Without a doubt, our Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota is in good hands because of the numerous individuals contributing in various ways. I appreciate all of the support and the volunteers who donate their time and talent. We have a committed group and our pool of members has just crossed the number 300! In years past, we reached and passed this number but in these trying times, this tells me you continue to value our organization enough to become a member.



I recently read a question on a Facebook site asking what state/city/town is the most Czech? I would rephrase that to ask which is the most Czech or Slovak. Attempting to differentiate their differences serves little purpose and Czechs and Slovaks have more in common than not. I did not comment online to dispute the claims that Texas, Iowa, Nebraska, or South Dakota is the most Czech (Slovak) state. However, I think there is a good argument that can be made for Minnesota to stand up and be counted. Minnesota has New Prague, with its *Dožínky* celebration; Montgomery has *Kolačky* Days and is the home of the Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota contest; and Bechyn has its fabulous Czech festival. Veseli is presenting its 1st Annual Czechtoberfest on October 2.

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota has a big part to play in preserving our Czech and Slovak heritage through the many activities and events we offer at our own C.S.P.S Hall: Czech and Slovak language classes, youth gymnastics, one of the largest Czech and Slovak Children's and Teen dance groups in the country, the Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp, youth leadership awards, ethnic dinners including the Flavors of Slovakia Dinner in March and the Czech Roast Pork Dinner in October, our annual Czech and Slovak Festival, and numerous other special events and activities. The Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers (www.tancuj.org) call our Hall home and the *Lipa* Slovak Folk Dancers (www.facebook.com/LipaSlovakFolkDancers/) call Minnesota 'home' and have performed at the Hall often. The Czech Slovak School Twin Cities' (<https://www.facebook.com/CzechandSlovakSchoolTwinCities>) home is at the Hall. The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (<https://cgsi.org/>) was founded at the Hall. The Hall is home to the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota (<http://cs-center.org>) and home to Czech Honorary Consul for Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota Marit Lee Kucera. We are all proud of our state and our work to preserve the Czech and Slovak heritages.

I hope you all had a great time at our 32nd Czech and Slovak Festival. If you missed it, I hope you can join us for our next event. I was lucky to have previewed the new Pilsner beer brewed by my friend Tom Schroeder of Waldman Brewery of Saint Paul.

Our Youth Group is starting up. If you would like to include your child in this group, please let me know and I will forward the information to the youth leadership group. I can be reached at president@sokolmn.org

Our Czech Roast Pork Dinner on October 23 will have one of my favorite food combinations, to the dismay of two vegetarian daughters. We will be serving *vepřové* with *knedlíky a zelí* (pork with dumplings and sauerkraut). Although this will again be a take-out/curbside event, the love that is put into this occasion, from the cooks to the helpers, make this a special dinner that I hope you can share with family or friends. I look forward to the day we can all sit down together to break bread and say *dobrou chut'* (enjoy your meal) to everyone around the table.

I appreciate the support you have shown in these past couple of years and I hope you continue to keep Sokol Minnesota activities on your calendar.

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

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

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

90th Annual Sokol Camp Booya Picnic

By Kari Muyres



We had over 40 volunteers this year to make the 2021 Booya Picnic a huge success!
A big Thank You to our dedicated members!



Therese Linscheid stirring up a delicious booya.

We would like to extend a big “thank-you” to all who participated and volunteered in this long-running event to help maintain and beautify Sokol Camp! We look forward to seeing you all for the 91st Annual Booya Picnic on August 14, 2022.

The 90th Annual Sokol Camp Booya Picnic was held on Sunday, August 15. Much to our delight, over 400 people attended the event! The Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers entertained the crowd; Dave and Dawn Carlson provided musical entertainment lakeside on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. Over 40 Sokol Minnesota members and friends supported the Camp by assisting in set-up, preparation of the picnic’s activities, and clean-up. Congratulations to our raffle winners: \$200: Ann Andrle. \$100: Jim Kahout. \$50: Robert Kostichka, \$50: Cindy DeJarlaris



Julie Andrle, Ray Vanyo, Renae Faunce, Bobbi Jo Chandler, and Kai Faunce getting ready to advertise the picnic at the Pine County Parade on August 7.

32nd Annual Czech & Slovak Festival on September 26 was a Go!

By Joyce Tesarek

Sokol Minnesota's 2020 Czech & Slovak Festival happened, but it was only virtual and curbside. We greatly missed getting together, even though it was a big success as a fundraiser.

For this year's Festival, with still so much uncertainty about COVID, the Festival Planning Committees decided to have the entire Festival outside. This enabled having no people in elevators or indoors in crowded rooms. It was wonderful to see people in person again.

It was a great event, with ethnic food, *koláče*, and pastries, Czech beer, exhibits, vendors, children's games, and a

wonderful performance program. The silent auction was virtual; winners picked up their treasures at the festival. More about the Czech & Slovak Festival, plus photos, will be in the November *Slovo*!

We are very grateful to our parent organization, American Sokol, for its support with a Unit Growth grant of \$2,500. This made possible the purchase of tents for the festival and helped cover other expenses.

Special thanks to all of you who attended and to all of the volunteers who make this event possible.

Czech & Slovak Festival Program Highlights

By Louise Wessinger

It was great to be back together again and have live performances for Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's Festival. We are grateful to all those who helped us put on a fun and entertaining program. Despite having to pivot from two program stages to one, Sokol Minnesota's and friends' performers and entertainers came together to make it work.

Thank you to all our gymnasts who came to show us the strength of our gymnastic programs. Our children and teen dancers put their memories to work to present dances that they had not done for 16 months. The Sokol Minnesota Youth Awards were presented. The Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers provided a beautiful performance of Bohemian, Moravian, and Slovak folk dances. The Saint Paul South Bohemian Bagpipe Band entertained us with lively tunes. Sokol Minnesota members Tom and Penny Tesarek thrilled us with their juggling talent.

We were delighted to have our friends, the Lipa Slovak Dancers and the Ethnic Dance Theatre, provide colorful and dynamic entertainment. Our beautiful and talented Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota, Junior Ambassadors, and former Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota, Autumn Gare, visited us. Autumn led the singing of our national anthems.

Of course, we had our popular *koláče* eating contests. This year there was a children's contest, a teen contest, and an adult contest.

All of this was held together by our great program committee and our emcee, President Dave Stepan. Look for more details and photos in the November *Slovo*.

A big Thank You to our dedicated members and friends!

THE VESELI AREA LIONS
PRESENT
THE 1st ANNUAL
CZECHTOBERFEST

Saturday, October 2nd ~ 12 pm - 6 pm

PIVO-MUZIKA-JÍDLO
(BEER) (MUSIC) (FOOD)

Trouba Troubadours
Colton Tupy & The Sand Creek Connection
Kid Power Pedal Tractor Pull
Corn Hole Tournament
Czech & Octoberfest Food & Beer

Backyard of Brewster's Bar & Grill
9856 50th St W - Veseli, MN

Radio Prague International's 85th Birthday!

Radio Prague International
celebrated its 85th birthday
on August 31, 2021.

<https://tinyurl.com/23kyskmy>

Radio Prague's English
version:

<https://english.radio.cz>

Rising Star Claire Wickiser



Clair Wickiser

Congratulations to Claire Wickiser of Sokol Minnesota of the Western District for being named American Sokol Rising Star for the 3rd Quarter 2021! Claire began Sokol at seven years old as a participant in girls class at Sokol Minnesota. She joined her unit after listening to a recommendation from a friend and is the first in her family to join Sokol! As she grew older, Claire made the competition team at ten years old and continues to train and compete on team. She remains very active in Western District events by often competing in Special Number and Gymnastics competitions as well as participating in the 2017 Iowa National *Slet*. Claire participated in the Central District Skills Clinic in 2019 and 2020, while also winning the "Best All-Around Female" award in 2020. She has two full years of coaching experience in her unit helping the 4 to 6-year-old girls class, boys class, and anywhere else that she is needed. She is entering her senior year at Central High School in St. Paul, Minnesota, and graduates in spring of 2022. Claire stays involved at school as an honors student and member of the Track and Field team. Claire attended the National Instructors School for two years to enhance her coaching/leadership skills and involvement in Sokol. She went to *Kurz* in 2018 at Sokol Greater

Submitted by Bro. Dan Bajek, Sokol Naperville Tyrns

Cleveland and 2019 at Sokol Spirit. The school had a large impact on Claire in developing her as a contributing member of Sokol Minnesota. As a student, she learned how to spot gymnastics skills, classroom management, problem solving skills, and leadership strategies. Cal, Marching, Czech terms and knowledge, Sokol specific classes, all helped prepare her to teach Marching at Culture Camp. The school opened her eyes to the non-gymnastics parts of Sokol. Claire expresses interest in completing all four levels of the school as well as learning at the virtual school this summer.

Claire's favorite Sokol memory was going to the 2017 Iowa National *Slet*. Her Excel Gold team won 1st place and she enjoyed meeting new people at the Junior/Young Adult Social. Her life changing Sokol moments were meeting new friends at *Slet* and *Kurz*. When she attended *Kurz* in 2019, she realized that seeing all of her Sokol friends who live out of state again really meant everything to her. In the future, Claire desires to attend college and study Elementary Education, but is still deciding on the school.

Her dream job is to become an elementary school teacher, coach at least one sport in her future district, and remain involved in Sokol. Claire will take on more responsibilities in her unit this year by assisting with class registration. If her career after college keeps her in the Saint Paul area, she is interested in helping Sokol at the Unit, District, and National levels. Claire has so much potential to be successful in her career and Sokol. Expect her to do great things someday within our organization. I wish her the best of luck as she completes high school and college to achieve her goals!

Reprinted from the *American Sokol* publication of July 2021.



Julie Wilbert of Saint Paul is the 300th member of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota as of August 2021.

Sokol Minnesota Heralds its 300th Member

By Julie Wilbert

I first learned about Sokol when my mother began digging into genealogical research of her family line in Slovakia in 2014. She traced our lineage back to 1730, when the church records began. Her family immigrated to New York in the late 1800s. My great-grandmother was Mary Marczinovich, age twenty when she arrived in New York from the village of Kuchyna in western Slovakia.

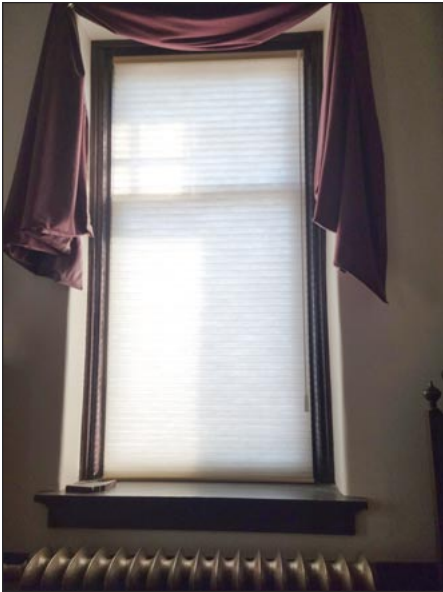
Previous to my mother's curiosity about ancestry, she brought me to the annual fall Sokol Minnesota Czech & Slovak festival. Being just 12% Slovakian (and an unknown percentage of Czech on my paternal side), I was not certain of the significance. However, the festival was beyond worth attending. The traditional dancing, music, food, silent auction, and 'All are Welcome' good cheer led me to want to know more about the culture. My then eight-year-old Norwegian/mixed daughter participated in the annual *koláče* jam-filled pastry eating contest and discovered that her best school-age friend was a member of Sokol Minnesota's *Taneční Mládež* (Dancing Youth).

Two years later, I registered my now 10-year-old daughter for the week-long summer Czech and Slovak Children's Cultural Day camp, where, in just one week, she learned to prepare traditional foods, learn some of the language, do gymnastics, juggle, and

even pull off a performance with her peers of a culturally-educational and festive theatrical show.

Sokol Minnesota, of course, is not the only organization where one can celebrate their heritage, but its significance reminds me of how much deeper we can delve into our ancestry.

Julie Wilbert, M.A., M.S. works in Public Health, is a former historian of Gender Studies and Health Journalism, and is creator of the children's book *Abbey Goes Skiing!*



One of the new third floor eco shades

New Eco-Shades For C.S.P.S. Hall's Third Floor

By Joyce Tesarek

C.S.P.S. Hall updates continued this past month as the Hall stayed closed to our usual Sokol activities in order to keep people safe from COVID infection.

A project we have discussed for many years was completed: purchase and installation of 11 Ultraviolet-Ray-Protecting Honeycomb E8 shades with power-wands. These attractive eco blinds cover the large windows of the third-floor mezzanine and will block the east and south sun, which will protect the historical artifact displays and photos. Controlling the temperature also makes the space more usable for meetings and classes.

The total cost for the eco blinds and installation was \$4,887. We gratefully accepted a grant for this project from the American Sokol Foundation for \$2,150, with the balance paid from the Sokol Minnesota General Fund.



Eco shade power wand

Recap of the 40th Minneapolis St Paul International Film Festival

By M. L. Kucera

The Minneapolis Saint Paul International Film Festival 2021 was held May 13-23. This 40th anniversary of MSPIFF, presented primarily virtually due to the pandemic, was considered a success according to Jesse Bishop, Programming Director. He provided the reservation and expected attendance numbers reported below for the three Czech and Slovak films, as well as their ratings and overall ranks based on the audience award balloting. The film attendance estimates are based on the survey findings that showed an average of two people per reservation.

Charlatan (Director Agnieszka Holland. Historical Drama category, Czech Republic and Slovakia. Languages: Czech and German with subtitles) had 100 reservations with an estimated attendance of 200. It received a 4.03 (out of 5) Audience Rating. It ranked #63 out of 104 feature length films. The Milgrom Tribute, named in honor of the late Al Milgrom, to Director Agnieszka Holland was live on Zoom and Facebook with an audience of 556 on May 16.

Havel (Director Slávek Horák. Historical Drama and Biography categories, Czech Republic. Language: Czech with subtitles) had 96 reservations with an estimated attendance of 192. It received a 4.02 (out of 5) Audience Rating. It ranked #69 out of 104 feature length films

Shadow Country (Director Bohdan Sláma. Historical Drama category, Czech Republic and Slovakia. Language: Czech with subtitles) had 50 reservations with an estimated attendance of 100, It received a 4.03 (out of 5) Audience Rating. It ranked #55 out of 104 feature length films.

See the May issue of *Slovo*, page 8, for details on these three films.

The local Czech and Slovak organizations and individuals that generously supported MSPIFF40 were Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota (CSCC), Czechoslovak Genealogy Society International (CGSI), Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, the Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic M.L. Kucera, plus several individuals, including Sokol Minnesota members Blanka Brichta, John Palka, and Marshall Toman.

Both Jesse Bishop and Executive Director Susan Smoluchowski thanked the Czech and Slovak organizations and community for their ongoing support of Czech and Slovak film exhibition in the Twin Cities. The Film Society look forward to working with us again next year to support Czech and Slovak cinema. MSPIFF 2022 runs March 31-April 15, 2022.

Call for *Slovo* Articles of Czech or Slovak Interest and Member News

Do you have an article or suggested topic for an article, that may be of interest to *Slovo* readers about Czech or Slovak culture or history, Sokol history, or an upcoming entertainment, event, or celebration that you would like to share with the *Slovo*? If a member or their immediate family has a wedding, birth, graduation, obituary, or any special news to share, please send a paragraph or short summary and photo. For memorials, please include a link to an obituary where we can send readers for more information. The *Slovo* Managing Editors welcome readers submitting information for possible publication in the *Slovo*.

***Slovo* Article Contribution Guidelines:** Copy deadline for each issue is the first of the previous month (use Word format; please don't use Pages or PDF). Attach any photos to an email (do not embed in the article or email) and provide the caption/cutline and photographer's name. As with all submitted articles, *Slovo* reserves the right to edit as needed for length or clarity. Please submit articles for publication consideration to *Slovo* Managing Editor Tom Aubrecht at tjaubrecht@comcast.net



Member Congratulations

Mary Carson, 2021 Czech-Slovak Minnesota Queen, from Lonsdale, won the Americanized *Kroj* award at the 2021 Miss Czech Slovak U.S. pageant in Wilber, Nebraska, on August 8, for her beautiful *kroj*. Lauren Abbott of Texas is the 2021-22 Queen. For more photos see www.facebook.com/MissCzechSlovakUS/ (left) Mary is modeling an Americanized *Blata kroj* made by her and her mother and inspired by her and her family's love of agriculture, faith, and gardening.

Congratulations to Sokol Minnesota members **Carissa** and **Dylan Freeland** on the birth of their first child, Victoria Lynn, on August 13, 2021! Carissa was a long-time gymnastics instructor at Sokol Minnesota; they are now living in Michigan.

Trunks with Treats Harvest Fest

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Youth Group

**Saturday
October 23 ²⁰₂₁
1-2 p.m.
C.S.P.S. Hall
383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul**

**Trunks with Treats
family friendly Harvest Fest.
Parking lot walk through with games,
treats, and a photo booth for Sokol kids
12 and under to enjoy! Goody bags
for the first 48 children.**

(Parents welcome • Costumes optional)

Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures 2021-2022

Join us for literary presentations and small-group informal discussions of Czech and Slovak books in English translation. Everyone is welcome.

Discussions are 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. Questions? Contact gwen@cs-center.org

Saturday, October 23, 2021, 10 a.m. - noon

Cechs (Bohemians) in America: A Study of their National, Cultural, Political, Social, Economic and Religious Life by Thomas Čapek. Book discussion

Saturday, November 13, noon-1 p.m.

Public talk on *You Can't Go Home Again? A Third Generation Slovak-American's Return to the Homeland* by Sarah Hinlicky Wilson

Saturday, November 20, noon-2 p.m.

I Am a Brave Bride by Sarah Hinlicky Wilson. Book discussion

Saturday, December 18, 10 a.m. - noon

A Brief History of the Czech Lands to 2004 by Petr Čornej and Jiří Pokorný. Book discussion

Meetings will be held virtually through January 2022.

Saturday, January 15, 2022, 10 a.m. - noon

Leopoldstadt by Tom Stoppard. Play reading by all present

Saturday, February 19, 10 a.m. - noon

Stop Dubček! The Story of a Man who Defied Power: A Documentary Novel by Jozef Banáš. Book discussion

Saturday, March 19, 10 a.m. - noon

Believe in People: The Essential Karel Čapek selected and translated by Šárka Tobrmanová-Kühnová. Book discussion

Saturday, April 16, 10 a.m. - noon

The Back of Beyond: Travels with Benjamin by Martin Vopěnka, translated by Anna Bryson. Book discussion

Saturday, May 21, 10 a.m. - noon

Hell and Other Destinations: A 21st-Century Memoir by Madeleine Albright. Book discussion

Obituary: Bishop Peter Esterka

By M. L. Kucera

Peter Esterka, the Czech Catholic Bishop who came to New Prague to help celebrate 100/50/25 in 2018, died on August 10, 2021, at age 85, in California. Funeral masses were said both in Garden Grove, California, and also in Brno, Czech Republic. His burial is in his hometown cemetery in southern Moravia in Dolní Bojanovice (just a few kilometers from the hometown of Sokol Minnesota member Markéta Pálkova, where the freak tornado struck in June. See August 2021 *Slovo*, page 3).

Esterka fled communist persecution from Czechoslovakia to Austria in 1957. His book, *Never Say Comrade*, describes his escape from Czechoslovakia. He studied for the priesthood in Rome and was ordained in 1963, then earned a doctorate in theology.

Many Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota members have connections to Bishop Esterka. He served in Minnesota for nearly 30 years before his appointment as an auxiliary bishop in the Czech Republic. His service to Czech Catholics began in Minnesota while he was on the faculty of the College of St. Catherine, now St. Catherine University, from 1967-1993. He also served at Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Therese parishes in Saint Paul, plus making many trips to St. Wenceslaus Church in New Prague.

Bishop Esterka, who became a U.S. citizen in 1968, joined the 934th Airlift Wing Reserves in Minneapolis in 1974 as a military chaplain, retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1995.

He began ministering to Czech immigrants in the U.S. and Canada in 1978. His dedication to Czech immigrants factored into his appointment in 1999 by Saint Pope John Paul II as

8 October 2021 *Slovo*



Czech Bishop Peter Esterka, who said Mass in Czech on Sunday, October 28, at St. Wenceslaus Church, was joined afterwards by Czech Heritage Junior Royalty 2018 and directors Deb and Arnie Ziskovsky. (See December 2018/January 2019 *Slovo*, page 15)

an auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Brno, Czech Republic, to care for Czech Catholics abroad. In 2013, Esterka was awarded the *Gratias Agit* award, given annually in Prague, to honor both individuals and groups that internationally promote the good name of the Czech Republic.

Pope Francis accepted his resignation as a bishop in 2013, but Esterka continued to minister to the Czech Catholic community until 2018 in the United States, Canada, and Australia. 2018 was the year Esterka returned to Minnesota to celebrate Mass in Czech at St. Wenceslaus in New Prague as part of a two-day festival celebrating the 100th anniversary of Czechoslovakia's formation (1918); the 50th anniversary of the Prague Spring Reform, the short-lived, but a significant era of political liberalization in Czechoslovakia (1968); and the 25th anniversary of the formation of the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovakia (1993). That weekend celebration included tours in 12 cemeteries in New Prague, Lonsdale, Montgomery and Veseli. More than 1,700 small Czech flags were placed on Czech immigrant graves.

Memorial Mass for Bishop Esterka on October 31,
10:30 a.m., at St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church,
215 Main Street East, New Prague

Information for this article came from Joe Ruff, August 14, 2021, Catholic News Service; Memory of Nations: Petr Esterka with videos: memoryofnations.eu/en/esterka-petr-1935; Matthew Davis, October 31, 2018, Czech bishop celebrates Mass during heritage celebration in New Prague, The Catholic Spirit; O'Connor Mortuary Obituary: oconnormortuary.com/obits/peter-esterka/; Radio Prague on 8/23/2021

Reluctant Witness by Jaroslav Cervenka. Xlibris, 2019, 250 pages. Available at libraries and bookstores.

The latest book written and published by our dear friend Dr. Jaroslav (Jarda) Cervenka is a memoir of his adventurous life. Cervenka gave one of the first talks sponsored by our book group almost twenty years ago; it was a fascinating overview of Czech and Slovak literature. In addition to this memoir, *Reluctant Witness*, he earlier wrote twelve books, most of which are collections of stories inspired by his real experiences.

As he wrote in *Reluctant Witness*, “None of my fifty-some stories are a pure fiction, all are based on real characters stumbling around in real localities. Anyway, ‘There are no stories which are not true (Chinua Achebe).’”

The “first half of life” in *Reluctant Witness* covers Cervenka’s growing up and trying to go to university in Czechoslovakia, working in his home country, Nazi and communist oppression, and leaving Czechoslovakia. The “second half of life” includes getting settled in Minnesota, working as a geneticist, traveling throughout the world, retirement, and taking up fiction writing. This memoir is crammed with exciting scenes of history, exotic places, good friends, and literature. Six of his stories published earlier are placed here in the context of his additional real-life memories. *Reluctant Witness* is an example of Cervenka’s advice to “look for the truth, but nothing but the truth (do not be politically correct) ...” The unedited, self-published memoir is an unfiltered view of his life and the world as he sees it. Some of his views will offend readers.

Cervenka likes to live life to the fullest, including taking risks, as when he snuck out of a guard cabin in the middle of the night to make a forbidden climb up icy Mount Fuji in Japan. “I will not describe my climb but I only say that I made it to the top in no visibility, covered with cloud and light snow, crawling on my belly part way, my crampons hardly holding on the ice, my hands freezing, scared and fully knowing that even a slight loss of concentration will cause my demise and they will find me in the Spring, down in some ravine, after snow and ice will melt.”

He traveled to many exotic places in the world, often for medical conferences and to provide services. Cervenka visited northern Canada, Polynesia, and Thailand; went diving in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean;

mountain climbed on Kilimanjaro in Africa, Mount Fuji in Japan, and Aconcagua in Argentina. Along the way, he has made the acquaintance of ethnic groups such as the Inuit peoples of Canada, the Cholos tribes of Columbia, South America, the Tamils of Sri Lanka, and many African tribes.

The stunning scenes he painted in *Reluctant Witness* also took place in Czechoslovakia. I was especially taken with him and his friend Jitka reminiscing: “Do you remember how we missed the train to Riesengebirge Mountains (Krkonose)?” Jitka asked. “That night, lots of snow fell in Prague—we put on skis and skied down Vaclavske Square.

People were freaking out applauding ... Do you remember? We might have been the first people to schuss down and finish with a telemark turn on the square in the 2000-year history of Praga (sic)....”

Jarda Cervenka was born and raised in Prague, graduated from Charles University with a Doctor of Medicine degree in 1956, and immigrated with his family to the United States in 1968. After serving as a professor of medical genetics at the University of Minnesota, he focused on fiction writing. In 1995 Dr. Cervenka published his first collection of short stories, *Mal d’Afrique and Stories from Other Places*. He has received several literary awards for his books of stories, novel, travel book, and book of photos. As he wrote about his life, “Existence. It was

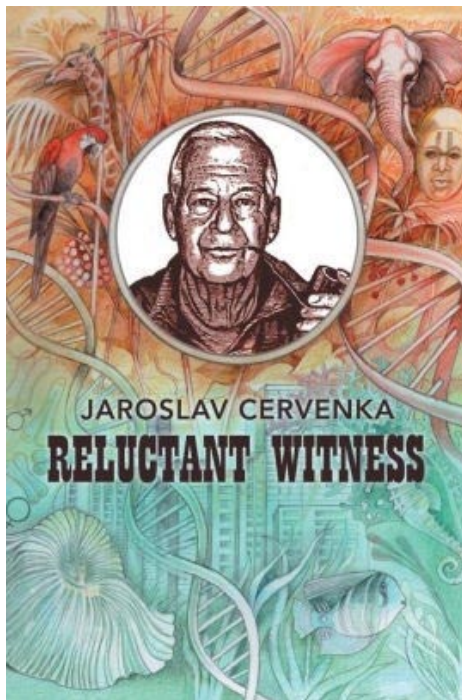
a pretty exhilarating joy-ride, with a few sharp turns taken and in the second half, without a skid, downwind, on a sunny road.”

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.

For more information, go to www.cs-center.org or contact gwen@cs-center.org

Join us for a discussion of *Cechs (Bohemians) in America* by Thomas Čapekat 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 23.

Check cs-center.org for scheduling updates.



Kolo Sokol Bike Club

Kolo means bike in Czech and Slovak. The goal of Kolo Sokol is to organize safe, family-friendly outings that help strengthen the physical and social health of our community.
sokolmn.org/bike

MEMBER NEWS

Sokol Minnesota Welcomes New Members

By Steve Ernest

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

Dale Ford of Eagan with interests in literature group, films and theater, history and genealogy, language classes, cooking classes.

Janice and Enrique Vazquez of Willmar with interests in language classes.

Julie Wilbert of Saint Paul with interests in youth gymnastics, youth culture camp, bicycle group, films and theater, history and genealogy, event help: organize, cooking classes, crafting 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: M. L. Kucera.

GENERAL FUND:

Under \$99: Mary and Dennis Cahill in memory of **Russ Goodman**. (Russ helped restart the boys gymnastics program and practiced gymnastics with Jason Brozovich).

Mary Ann Tumasmith.

TOTAL: \$279

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

The virtual meeting was called to order on August 19 at 7:00 p.m. by President Dave Stepan.

The classroom is ready for use and we will have the third floor ready in time for the Czech & Slovak Festival.

Glynis Grostephan, Corresponding Secretary, reported that contributions to the General Fund in July were \$29.

Youth Group Activities are being planned with a "Trick or Trunk" scheduled for October 23 and possibly a curling event also in October.

Education Chair Pat Slaber reported that the blinds are installed on the third floor and all historic materials are sorted and labeled. Language Classes are scheduled to begin on September 27, with a hybrid model of zoom and in-person available. A smart TV is being purchased to facilitate.

Membership and Financial Secretary Chairs Norm Petrik and Steve Ernest reported that our membership has increased to 303. Our goal was to have 300 members by the Festival.

Treasurer Don Haselbauer reported our total balances in all accounts.

Board of Budget and Finance Chair Joyce Tesarek reported on income for the current year. When we included a transfer of \$40,000 from Gaming and \$8,934 in donations to the General Fund, we have a net income of \$40,345 year-to-date. We issued three checks for \$300 to our Youth Leadership Award Winners and one check for \$100 to the Best Essay winner.

For the Board of Instructors, Jason Brozovich noted that National Instructor School training has been completed. The brochure for fall classes is being finalized with many inquiries already received.

Building and Property Trustees Committee Chair Bob Kotek noted that fire inspection is completed and new double doors are installed for the first-floor west side entry. A discussion on new rugs for the entry was held and we hope to make a decision soon pending more information on colors available.

Gaming Chair Ed Hamernik reported that the July net income was \$7,452. Gaming, which has a profit carryover of \$41,039, will discuss a transfer of funds to the General Fund at its next meeting.

Activities Director Jean Draheim is working on the 2022-2023 Calendar. We will also have a person working with Richard Sargent to assist with the Google Calendar.

President Dave Stepan noted there will be a President's Conference in June 2022 in Ennis, TX. Minnesota Department of Health policies regarding COVID were discussed. We will keep our existing policies in force and continue to have takeout-only for future food events. The Board will also continue to meet virtually.

New Business: Joyce Tesarek is making volunteer lists for the Czech & Slovak Festival and Czech Roast Pork Dinner. Please contact her if you are interested.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. The next meeting is September 16.

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 Honorary Consul News

October 2021



Mr. Richard E. Stahl, newly retired Honorary Consul for Japan/Minnesota, received the Order of the Rising Sun Gold Rays with Rosette from the Japanese government at a conferment ceremony, conducted by Consul General of Japan/Chicago Kenichi Okada on August 12, 2021, in the Japanese Gallery of the Minneapolis Institute of Art. Many members of the Minnesota Consular Corps attended, including Kucera.

On September 4, for the final morning of the *Kaleidoscope of Czech Heritage*, the special exhibit



sponsored by The Czech Heritage Club at the Arts and Heritage Center in Montgomery, Jerry Minar and Gary Pikal played their Chemnitz-style concertinas (originating in 1834 in Saxony in eastern Germany, very close to the Czech border). Plus they explained the concertina's history and the instrument's importance in the lives of 19th and 20th century immigrant from Czech lands, Germany, and also Poland. Minar not only plays, but also makes Hengel Chemnitz-style concertinas. It takes about 250 hours to build one Hengel concertina, considered one of the finest names. In 1997 Minar purchased the Hengel name, manufacturing business, parts inventory, and specialized machinery.

www.concertinamusic.com/hengel-concertina/

Book: *The Chemnitz Concertina: A History and an Accolade* by LaVern J. Rippley, St. Olaf College Press, 2006, 295 pp.

CHC board members: (left) Vi Chromy, George Mikiska, Fred Simon, and (right) Jean Keogh, Jim Simon with M. L. Kucera. Seated with concertinas are Minar and Pikal, who is also a CHC board member.

Athletes from the Czech Republic won 11 medals at the 2021 Olympics in Tokyo this summer. Gold: Men's Kayak Slalom; Men's +100-kg Judo; Women's Doubles Tennis. Gold and Silver: Men's Trap Shooting. Silver: Men's Canoe Slalom; Women's Singles Tennis. Silver and Bronze: Men's Javelin. Bronze: Men's Individual Foil Fencing; Men's K-2 1000 m Canoeing. www.olympic.cz Czech athletes also won 8 medals at the Paralympics in Tokyo. Gold: Men's Individual in Archery; Mixed Individual Boccia. Silver: Mixed Team Archery; Women's individual Archery; Men's 50-meter Backstroke Swimming. Bronze: Men's Shot Put; Men's table Tennis; Women's Shot-Put Athletics. www.paralympic.cz Czech athletes won a total of 19 medals: Congratulations!



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.

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Additional photographs or illustrations this issue (not already noted) provided by: Mary Carson (page 7) Kari Muyres (3), Joyce Tesarek (6), Veseli Lions Club (4), Julie Wilbert (5), and Claire Wickiser (5).

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



For Sokol's Latest News!

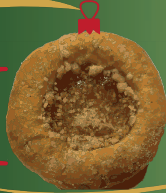
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Send your email address to publicity@sokolmn.org

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* October 2021

HOLIDAY



Pancake breakfast and koláče bake sale

Saturday pick-up

10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

November 20 20
21

C.S.P.S. Hall

383 Michigan St., Saint Paul, MN 55102

Curbside

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Koláč ordering and available flavors

To order koláč: food@sokolmn.org
or call/text: 952-941-0426

Apricot, cream cheese, poppy seed, prune,
or raspberry koláč \$1 each

Breakfast ordering and menu

To order a breakfast call: 651-290-0542
Menu: Pancakes, sausage, and fruit \$8

Payment and Deadline

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

(Please mail check 10 days in advance to arrive on time)