



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

May Slovo articles
due April 1

Friendly Friday
Evenings Social
Friday, April 14
7-10 p.m.

Spring Pancake
Breakfast, Craft and
Koláče Sale
Sunday, April 2
(info adjacent)

Sokol Minnesota
Singers
First and third Tuesdays
10 a.m.-noon

Sokol Gift Shop
Visit during Sokol events
or by appointment

Children's Czech
and Slovak
Cultural Day Camp
June 19-23
(See page 12)

Use our QR code
to sokolmn.org to follow
all of our activities,
events, and classes!

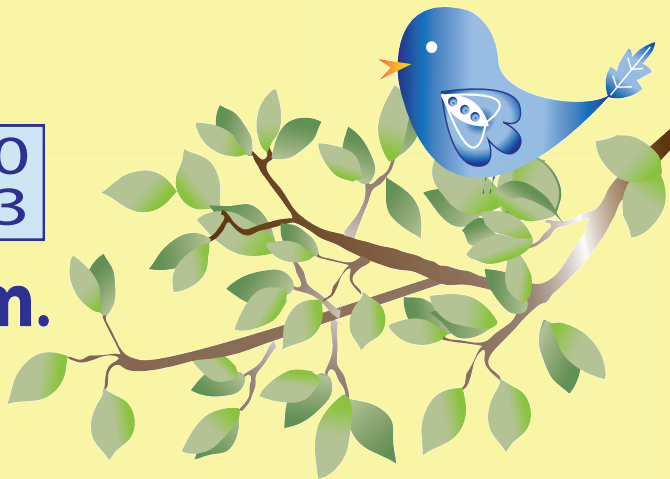
- Dinners
- Czech and Slovak
Language Lessons
- Folk Dancing
- Sokol Gymnasts



Spring Pancake Breakfast Craft and Koláče Bake Sale

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota
C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul

Sunday
April 2 20
23
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.



Menu and pricing

Buttermilk pancakes, sausage, fruit cup, orange juice, and coffee.

\$10 Adult; \$6 child under 9; \$30/family of 4

No reservations needed

Public welcome

Ordering koláče

Apricot, cream cheese, poppy, prune, or raspberry koláč \$1.50 each

Prepaid koláče orders must be received by Wednesday, March 29

Prepay: credit/debit card or PayPal at www.sokolmn.org/cc/

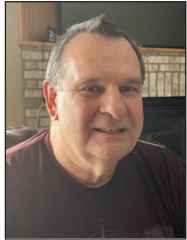
If prepaying your koláč order by check through the mail,
or to reserve vendor space, call/text: 651- 210 - 0401

Komentáře prezidentky a členů rady Sokol Minnesota Comments from the President and Trustees Committee Chair

In reading Lucy Rose's page 2 article last month, I (Cinnamon Whaley) found that we have something fun and unusual in common, homebrewing! About 15 years ago, my partner Ryan and I came to a homebrewing meeting at the C.S.P.S. Hall. I took a brochure for Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota and I have been involved ever since. It is interesting though how, due to the diverse activities we are each involved in, I did not know Lucy until this year. Our writer this month, Bob Kotek, has been a member since 2008 and I did not know him until I joined the Board of Directors again for 2022! We really do have amazing members; I'm glad to be getting to know a little more about some of them.



Cinnamon Whaley



Bob Kotek,
Building and
Property
Trustees
Committee Chair

My (Bob Kotek) great-great grandparents immigrated to the New Prague area to homestead land in 1860, making me a fifth generation Czech (or Bohemian as my dad would say) to carry-on our heritage. I grew up on a dairy farm near Montgomery in the heart of Czech country. My parents were the last generation to be fluent in the Czech language in my family. The Czech language was their main method of communicating with my 15 aunts and uncles and many of their friends. The majority of my classmates and friends were also of Czech heritage and many of us maintain a close connection to this day. Czech cuisine was a daily staple in my youth and the Montgomery Kolacky Days celebration was a highlight every year.

After high school, I joined the United States Navy and served the majority of my active duty at a communications station in Greece. I was able to travel around the Mediterranean islands and several other European countries, which served to pique my interest for travel. After my military commitment and further education, I embarked on a nearly 35-year career with what was originally the Northwestern Bell telephone company, today known as Lumen Technologies.

In 2008, I met my future wife Míša, who was born and raised in the Czech Republic. In 2011, along with her two young children, Dominik and Emma, I was introduced to Sokol. During this time, the kids would meet at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's C.S.P.S. Hall for Czech language classes and folk dance on Saturday mornings. Other native Czechs and Slovaks organized monthly Sunday family nights at the Hall which we attended as well. Míša is an excellent cook and baker, which takes me back to my youth of wonderful Czech cuisine. We were married at the Hall on March 16, 2014! Just a few months later, we moved to Ostrava in the Czech Republic, Míša's hometown, to live for two years. Our children went to school there, we traveled extensively, and had such a good time we stayed for three years!

After our return in 2017, I gradually became involved with some of the fundraising ethnic dinners and the Czech & Slovak Festival at Sokol Minnesota. My involvement led to my joining the Building and Property Trustees Committee and by early 2020, I was installed as the Chair. The BPTC is responsible for the care and upkeep of the C.S.P.S. Hall, inside and out. Recent large projects include steam pipe insulation in the basement, structural support throughout the building, and a new fire/intrusion alarm system. I am most appreciative of the support I receive from other committee members, the Board of Directors, and all Sokol Minnesota members in maintaining our beloved Hall.

I like to spend a lot of my time outdoors gardening, grilling, biking, hiking, golfing, fishing, and hunting, but I do not have as much time available as I used to. Recent years have taken me to many of Dominik's and Emma's sporting events as their most passionate cheerleader!
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



Use our QR code to sokolmn.org to follow all of our activities, events, and classes!

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 2022 BOD (Board of Directors)

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

Announcing the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Youth Leadership Award for 2023

By Louise Wessinger

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

Up to three Sokol Minnesota youths will receive a Youth Leadership Award and a \$300 cash prize (\$200 from Sokol Minnesota and \$100 donated by the Czech Honorary Consul). A separate award and \$100 prize (donated by Louise Wessinger) is given for the Best Essay.

Applications for the 2023 Youth Leadership Awards open on April 1.

The criteria for this award are as follows:

Applicants must be in their junior or senior year of high school and they and their parent(s) need to be paid members of Sokol Minnesota for at least the current and preceding calendar year (2022 and 2023).

Applicants must actively participate in one or more Sokol Minnesota youth activities, such as *Taneční* Teen dancers, Sokol gymnastics, Czech and Slovak Children's Cultural Day Camp, or Sokol Minnesota Youth Link; or actively participate in Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities activities; and be a regular volunteer at Sokol Minnesota events. Of course, over the last few years, because of COVID, some activities and events have not been held, so prior activity involvement and volunteer help with curbside or other events will be considered.

Applicants will be expected to complete the Youth Leadership Award application form outlining their activity participation, write a 300-word-maximum essay about how their participation in Sokol Minnesota activities has impacted their life, have a participation verification form signed by an adult director of their youth activity, a letter of recommendation from an adult director, and forms signed by adult leaders of Sokol Minnesota events where the applicant was a volunteer.

All forms and further details can be found after April 1 on our website: www.sokolmn.org

Applications must be submitted by July 1, 2023.

Applicants can apply multiple times, but may receive the award only once.

Award recipients will be announced by September 1 and all awards will be presented at the annual Sokol Minnesota Czech & Slovak Festival on September 24.

Questions?

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



CITYWIDE Spring Cleanup



**Celebrate Earth Day
Citywide Spring Cleanup
Saturday, April 22, 2023
from 10-11a.m.**

Saint Paul Parks & Recreation and Public Works teams are hosting

The 37th annual Citywide Spring Cleanup on Saturday, April 22, 2023 rain or shine!

Sokol Minnesota Youth Link members invite Sokol families and friends of all ages to meet at the C.S.P.S. Hall parking lot Saturday, April 22, 2023 from 10-11a.m.

We will pick up litter from public sidewalks, curbs, boulevards and storm drains, from the block of West 7th and Michigan Street.

If you are interested in partaking in the neighborhood clean up contact: youths@sokolmn.org so we can register the number of people who will be participating.

Gloves and bags will be provided by local neighborhood sponsors and distributed by SMYL advisors and members.



Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers ready to begin.

Masopust 2023 in Montgomery By Jean Keogh

Montgomery held its 23rd Annual *Masopust* celebration on Sunday, February 19, 2023, at the Rustic Farmer and Revival on Main in historic downtown Montgomery, Minnesota. Organizers called the event a huge success with approximately 250 in attendance, one of the biggest crowds ever.

Music was provided by George's Concertina Band. Plenty of polkas, waltzes, and even the bunny-hop and chicken dance kept the dance floor full throughout the afternoon.

Louise Wessinger and seven couples from the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers performed many traditional Czech and Slovak dances for the crowd. They provided a bouquet of vibrant color as they frolicked around the dance floor. Young and old joined them for the mixers.

Honored guests were the Kolacky Royalty represented by Queen Alexis Hoefs, First Princess and Miss Congeniality Elizabeth Odenthal, Second Princess Kaia Krocak; Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Queen Marisa Winget; and Miss Czech-Slovak Junior Ambassadors Alenka Jans and Hayden Dietz. The Kolacky Royalty served as judges for the costume contest.

The highlight of the afternoon was the crowning of the 2023 *Masopust* King by the 2022 King Austin Testerman. Two high school junior boys competed for the honor of representing the Montgomery area this year; they were Alex Soukup and Luke Skluzacek. Judging consisted of individual interviews by three out-of-town residents. After much deliberation, Luke was selected the new *Masopust* King and he now begins his reign of attending the area's Czech festivals and parades.

The Montgomery Lions awarded 2022 King Austin with a \$500 scholarship, and the Czech Heritage Club presented 2023 King Luke with an honorary club membership. Runner-up Alex was presented with a cash award.

A shortened version of the traditional *Masopust* skit was performed, with Montgomery Mayor Tom Eisert granting permission to the villagers to party as they say "good-bye to meat" for the Lenten season. The First Town Official was portrayed by King Austin Testerman, and the Second Town Official by Linus Voves, visiting from Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The traditional Czech meal of pork, dumplings, kraut, and gravy was served by the Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant Board. *Vomáčka* and *zelničky* were available from the Veseli Lions. The *Masopust* Committee had Czech hotdogs, *buchta*, and cream puffs on hand. The Rustic Farmer/Revival on Main had plenty of Pilsner Urquell and Czechvar beer along with a variety of beverages that surely quenched the Czech thirst.

The Czech Heritage Club was present with Czech merchandise, ball caps, cookbooks, and Anita Smisek's book, *Minnesota's "Big Woods" Musicians*. Mardi Gras beads, feathers, masks, and other specialty items were available from the Arts & Heritage Center.

No Czech event in Montgomery is complete without Alenka and Vláďa, the Czech topiary dancers. Many guests took advantage of the great photo opportunity with these two.

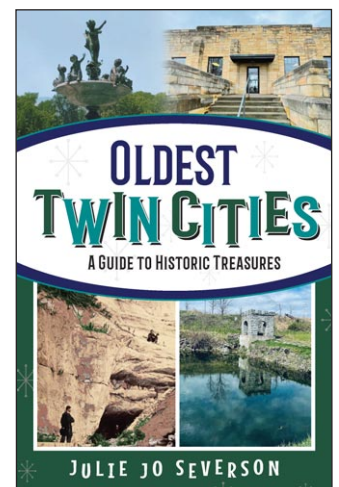
The committee extends special thanks to all our sponsors who made this event possible, and invites all to join us for the 24th Annual *Masopust* celebration on Sunday, February 18, 2024.



George's Concertina Band.

C.S.P.S. Hall Featured in Updated Local Guidebook

Oldest Twin Cities: A Guide to Historic Treasures by Julie Jo Severson turns back the pages of time through both legendary and little-known treasures in our midst, from age-old eateries, theaters, and clubhouses to sacred landscapes, sanctuaries, and cemeteries. The book takes the reader on an intriguing and informative ride as the author explores many rich and wonderful sites, milestones, and legacies throughout the metropolitan area, including our very own Czech-Slovak Protective Society (C.S.P.S.) Hall, featured in a two-page vignette on pages 90-91. The updated *Oldest Twin Cities* will be available online and from retailers throughout the Twin Cities starting April 1.



93rd Annual Minnesota Sokol Camp Booya Picnic on August 13

Sokol Minnesota brothers and sisters and friends, it's not too early to plan for upcoming summer events! Please mark your calendars now for the 93rd annual Minnesota Sokol Camp Booya Picnic on Sunday, August 13, 2023. There are plenty of opportunities to enjoy a beautiful day or weekend up at the camp, including fellowship with others in volunteer positions. We are always in need of volunteers for set-up, food/beverage serving, and tear-down and clean-up.



Mark your calendar!

What: **93rd Annual Minnesota Sokol Camp Booya Picnic**

When: **Sunday, August 13, 2023, noon-5 p.m.**,
food and beverage service ends at 4 p.m.

Where: **Sokol Camp, 19201 Woodland Acres South,
Pine City, Minnesota 55063**

Why: To participate in Sokol Minnesota fellowship.
Profits help maintain the Sokol Camp's buildings for recreational use and fellowship for all our members!

**Please contact Kari or Scott Muyres
at 763-226-0313 if interested, text preferred.**

2022 Booya volunteers Leah Muyres, Kari Muyres, Stephanie Johnson, Bobbi Jo Chandler, and Rhiannon Vanyo chopping delicious ingredients for the booya!

Fifth Annual Czech May Day Celebration in Montgomery By Jean Keogh

The community of Montgomery, along with the organizers of the Fifth Annual Czech May Day Celebration, invites everyone to join in the fun as we welcome spring on Sunday, May 7, 2023, from noon until 5 p.m. in Heritage Park, located on the corner of Vine Avenue and First Street North in historic downtown Montgomery.

Our Czech May Day was first celebrated in 2017, but it was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 because of the COVID pandemic.

The main event will be raising the traditional May Pole, followed by ribbon dances around the pole. Music will be provided by members of the Czech Area Concertina Club. Put on your *kroj* (optional) and your best dancing shoes to kick up your heels on the dance floor.

The afternoon will feature performances by the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers and the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Children and Teen Folk Dancers.

The organizers plan to partner with the Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant Committee to bring you a delicious meal of pork, dumplings, and kraut; and with the Veseli Lions to have *vomáčka* (soup) and *zelňáky* (cabbage pancakes) available. Czech hot dogs are also on the menu. Local Czech bakers with plenty of home-baked goods will be on hand. The Czech Heritage Club will have a wide

variety of merchandise, and George Mikiska will be ready to assist you with genealogy searches for your Czech ancestors. Face-painting and other crafts for the young and young-at-heart will add to the celebration

A cash bar with Czech beer options will also be available throughout the afternoon.

We hope to again have beer from the Montgomery Brewing Company for your tasting pleasure.

Please note that the details above are subject to change as we are now in the very early planning stages.

Heritage Park is home to a linden tree that was planted in 2018 in commemoration of the Czech 100 Celebration, commemorating 100 years since the birth of Czechoslovakia, 50 years since the Prague Spring Movement, and 25 years since the formation of the independent nations of Czechia and Slovakia.

In the event of inclement weather on May 7, we have Saturday, May 13 designated as the rain-out date. Please listen to KCHK radio (95.5 FM or 1350 AM) for that information.

For more information or any questions, please contact Jim Mladek at 507-364-5659 or Jean Keogh by phone call or text at 952-334-2172.

Friendly Friday Evenings

Social for
Members, Families, and Friends
at the C.S.P.S. Hall, 7-10 p.m.
April 7 and May 12

Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp

June 19-23
Information on page 12

Sokol Minnesota Welcomes New Member By Steve Ernest

One new member was accepted at the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors February meeting.

Cindy Johnson of Saint Paul with interests in language classes, films and theater, music and dances, history and genealogy. Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!

Thank You for Your Membership! By Steve Ernest

Renewed Memberships

Thank you to everyone who renewed their membership in Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota for 2023.

The end of March is the close of the renewal season and we are happy to announce that we expect our membership to remain at over 275 members, keeping us one of the larger Sokol units in the United States.

Reinstated or New Memberships

If you were not able to renew before now and would like to reinstate your membership, or if you know someone who would like to become a member, the member application form is at www.sokolmn.org/membership

Regular membership rates are \$60 for one person, \$100 for a couple/two adults at the same address. Senior membership rates are \$50 for one person, \$90 for a couple/two seniors at the same address. (Seniors are individuals who are 65 and older.)

Please let us know if you have any questions about membership: memberships@sokolmn.org

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors

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

Dolores K. Speidel

GENERAL FUND

Under \$99: **Pat Andrlle** (in memory of **Ken Wyberg**),
Dennis and Mary Cahill (in memory of **Mary Jo Chlebeczek**),
Dennis and Mary Cahill (in memory of **Kenneth Krocak**),
Ed and Arlene Hamernik (in memory of **Kenneth Krocak**),
Marlene Hinshaw (in memory of **Ken Wyberg**),
Jean and Rod Sykora.

\$100 - \$499: **Terry Shima** (in memory of **Ken Wyberg**),
William R. and Virginia R. Simek.

\$500 - \$999: **Joyce Tesarek** (in memory of **Norm Petrik**).

\$1,000 - \$4,999: **Western Fraternal Life Association**
Hopkins Lodge 11.

TOTAL: \$ 2,825

IN-KIND DONATION

banner from **Dolores K. Speidel**

Sokol Children's Saturday Dance Groups

Do you know some kids who would like to learn Czech, Moravian, and Slovak folk dances?

There are openings in the Saturday dance classes for preschoolers (with parent) from 9:30-10:00 a.m.,

TM Dancers (kindergarten-6th grade)
from 9:45-10:45 a.m.,

and the Teen Dancers (6th-12th grade)
from 11 a.m.-noon.

The fee for non-member children is \$40/year (children and grandchildren of members dance for free!)

Each dancer⁷ can borrow a dance costume for only \$10/year!

For more information contact
Louise Wessinger at
louisewessinger@msn.com



Join the E-blast List

Receive emails with all
of Sokol's Latest News!

Send your email address to
publicity@sokolmn.org

GIFT SHOP

The Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota gift shop is open during Sokol dinners, breakfasts, Czech & Slovak Festival, and Small Business Saturday.

Contact: giftshop@sokolmn.org
and a volunteer will schedule an appointment with you if you cannot make one of the above events.

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Volunteer Opportunities

- ★ Do you want to serve on the Board of Directors as Corresponding Secretary? The position acknowledges donations, reports donation activity in the *Slovo* newsletter, and works with the Sunshine Committee. To apply, contact: finance@sokolmn
- ★ Do you want to help oversee our charitable gaming through quarterly meetings? Contact the Gaming Committee: gaming@sokolmn.org

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota is proud to support the Czech and Slovak films in the 42nd Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival (MSPIFF42), April 13 - 27. One of the largest and longest-running film festivals in the country, MSPIFF42 returns as an in-person festival, showcasing 200+ films from around the globe. Screenings are at The Main Cinema, now owned by The Film Society of Minneapolis St. Paul, 115 Southeast Main Street. The refurbished five-screen cinema, along the historic Mississippi waterfront, is across the river from downtown Minneapolis.

Individual ticket price is \$15. The Film Society offers discounted tickets for \$12 to our organizations. Use code **CZSLMSPIFF42** when purchasing tickets, either online or at the box office.

MSPIFF42 also offers several opportunities to engage with the local and global film communities through an array of parties, discussion panels, and virtual events. For the full 2023 MSPIFF lineup and schedule: www.mspfilm.org

Donors supporting Czech and Slovak cinema at MSPIFF42 also include Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, the Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis, plus several cinema aficionados, including Sokol Minnesota members: Blanka Brichta, John Palka, Marshall Toman, and Cinnamon Whaley.

This article has information furnished by Kendall Murphy, Community Engagement Coordinator, MSPIFF.

***Il Boemo*, 2022, 130 minutes, Czech Republic, Italy, Slovakia, directed by Petr Václav. Languages: Italian, German, Czech, with English subtitles. Fiction. Thursday, April 20, 1:45 p.m. Sunday, April 23, 4:15 p.m. with film consultant Daniel E. Freeman attending and discussion afterwards. Tuesday, April 25, 4:00 p.m.**

This period drama recreates the tragic life and sublime music of now-nearly-forgotten, Czech-born composer Josef Mysliveček (1737-1781). Known as “Il Boemo” in Italy where he established his career, he was one of the most prolific opera composers of the Baroque era. He inspired the young Mozart. Undone by the vices of the age (women, gambling, and the changing musical tastes of the aristocracy who once supported his commissions), he met an untimely and undignified end.

Il Boemo has a Minnesota connection. Daniel E. Freeman, an American musicologist based in Minneapolis, has written three books on topics related to the musical culture of Prague and 18th-century Europe. Well-known in the local Czech-American community, Daniel recently stated, “I was invited to serve as a consultant for the film *Il Boemo* in 2009, almost as soon as my biography of Josef Mysliveček, the earliest one in English, appeared in its first edition in 2009. The director, a citizen of both France and the Czech Republic, won a French government award to work on the screenplay, and I was invited to serve as a consultant for the preparation of the original screenplay at the Villa Medici in Rome in 2010. After that, until the last stages of the filmmaking process were completed in 2022, I was asked for opinions concerning every aspect of the composer's biography and the musical culture of Europe at the time when he lived, including many details concerning operatic production. I also observed some of the filming on location and the recording of the soundtrack.”



***Victim (Ober')*, 2022, 91 minutes, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Germany, directed by Michal Blaško. Languages: Czech, Ukrainian, Russian, with English subtitles. Fiction. Monday, April 17, 4:20 p.m. Tuesday, April 25, 1:45 p.m. Thursday, April 27, 4:15 p.m.**

A taut moral thriller, *Victim* centers on the intersection of conscience, the individual, and society. The central character is single mother Irina, who is a hard-working Ukrainian immigrant in the Czech Republic where Igor, her high school-aged son, is a competitive gymnast. While she was in Ukraine sorting out their documents so they could become Czech citizens, Igor is beaten in the hall of their apartment building. When he awakes in the hospital after surgery, he tells a story of assault by a group of non-white youths, casting suspicion on the combative Roma family living in the flat above. As Irina becomes involved with and indebted to elements of the town that seem all too ready to act on their anti-Roma sentiment, she starts to suspect that her son is not telling the truth.

***Beautiful Beings*, 2022, 123 minutes, Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands, with co-production from Czech Republic, directed by Guðmundur Arnar Guðmundsson. Language: Icelandic with English subtitles. Fiction. Friday, April 14, 1:40 p.m. Tuesday, April 18, 4:20 p.m. Thursday, April 20, 9:40 p.m.**

A savagely bullied youth forms a tentative rapport with a trio of tough outsiders; the boys experiment with aggression and violence, but also learn about loyalty and love. In contrast to the uniformly toxic adult masculinity that surrounds the boys is the caring, clairvoyant mother of Addi, the film's narrator. As someone who relies heavily on intuition and gets guidance from his dreams, Director Guðmundsson says, “In general, people in Iceland believe in interpreting their dreams and fortune telling. It's ingrained into our culture even if it is not something we talk a lot about.”



MEMBER NEWS: OBITUARIES



Mary Jo Chlebecek

By Jim Chlebecek

Mary Jo Chlebecek (nee Liska), age 87, passed away peacefully on January 21, 2023. She grew up on Pleasant Avenue in Saint Paul's West 7th Street neighborhood, attended Saint Stanislaus Catholic Church and went to school at Saint Joseph's Academy. She earned her LPN license from Miller Hospital School of Nursing and began her lifelong mission of caring for those around her.

A member of Sokol since 1953, she, along with other young women from Saint Paul Sokol, completed a gymnastic instructors course in Chicago. She met her future husband, James Chlebecek (a member of Sokol Minneapolis at the time) one magical night at the Šibřinky dance at the C.S.P.S. Hall. They were married in 1957 and had their reception at the Hall.

Together Mary Jo and James were very active in the Sokol community. Mary Jo was a camp counselor for Kid's Week at Minnesota Sokol Camp in Pine City in the 1970s. They helped run the Sokol booth at the International Institute of Minnesota's Festival of Nations for many years, as well as the Children's Cultural Day Camp and the Children's Christmas party at the Hall. She helped bake many *koláče* and *knedliky* for the dinners and festivals held by Sokol. Mary Jo and James were also enthusiastic members of the Sokol Minnesota Singers.

Family, including regular get-togethers, was always of primary importance to Mary Jo, with Mary Jo and James and the older generation conversing almost exclusively in Czech. She brought up her children and grandchildren to appreciate and enjoy their Czech heritage through teaching them some basic Czech language, singing Czech folk songs, and being involved with Sokol gymnastics.

A loving, caring wife, mother, and grandmother, Mary Jo always had a smile and a laugh for everyone she met, whether a family member, a long-time friend, or a complete stranger. Her kindness and caring, joy, strength, determination, and the love she inspired in all those she knew serve as an example to us all of a life well lived.

Mary Jo is survived by her husband of 66 years, James; children, Jim (Erin) and Jodi (Brian); six grandchildren; one great-granddaughter; as well as extended family and friends.



Ken Wyberg

By Bryan Wyberg

Milan Ken Wyberg died at age 87 on February 11, 2023, in Minneapolis, where he was born, with his family at his side.

Ken was a 34-year Honeywell employee (retired 1989) and worked primarily in the Avionics and Underseas divisions. He was a draftsman and designer who was proud to have worked on electronics devices using gears, vacuum tubes, transistors, and microcircuits. Starting out drawing with pencil, he retired using Computer Aided Design tools. Ken worked on many of Honeywell's programs supplying controls to aircraft and space vehicles, but his proudest contribution was on one that flew in the space capsule for the Apollo moon landing.

Proud of his Slovak heritage, Ken was a forty-year member and dedicated volunteer with Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Ken worked hard throughout those years on the restoration, remodeling, and maintenance of the 135-year-old C.S.P.S. Hall, the beloved home of Sokol Minnesota. Ken was voted a Sokol Minnesota Honor Member by the Board of Directors in October 2020.

An all-around handyman and talented carpenter who loved woodworking and home remodeling, Ken was always busy with his home projects, right up until the unexpected end.

Ken is survived by his wife of 58 years, Sharon Joy Wyberg (also voted a Sokol Minnesota Honor Member; see the February 2023 *Slovo*, page 11), son Sokol Minnesota member Bryan Wyberg (Lisa Steidl), two sister-in-laws, several nieces and nephews, and three "grandchildren."

For Ken's full obituary: www.washburn-mcreavy.com/obituaries/Kenneth-Wyberg/#!/Obituary

Czech Government Chicago Consulate Provides Assistance and Many Large Grants to Midwest Czech Associations

The Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs program for the support of Czech cultural heritage abroad includes language classes, study programs, and direct financial aid to projects of Czech communities.

The Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Chicago noted on its website (see below) that it is proud that dozens of historical and new associations present their applications each summer and that the Consulate can support various activities by their presence and financially. In March 2023, the Consulate sent the historical amount of 4,180,000 CZK (\$188,806) to 36 associations in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, and South Dakota.

This amount is more than any other Czech embassy or consulate distributed both in number of partners and in money. The Minnesota recipients are Bechyn: 50,000 CZK; Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota: 70,000 CZK; Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota: 200,000 CZK; Czech Heritage Club: 50,000 CZK; and Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International: 60,000 CZK.

(Note: approximately 22.5 CZK = 1 USD.)

The Consulate thanks all that hold the Czech flag, preserve the Czech cultural heritage, and invest their time in all kinds of Czech activities. *Děkujeme!*

www.mzv.cz/chicago/en/other_useful_information/index.html

From Good King Wenceslas to the Good Soldier Švejk: A Dictionary of Czech Popular Culture by Andrew Roberts. Central European University Press: Budapest, New York, 2005, 207 pages. Available at libraries and bookstores.

From Good King Wenceslas to the Good Soldier Švejk: A Dictionary of Czech Popular Culture offers more than 600 entries describing Czech things such as songs, books, people, food, and communist slogans. *A Dictionary of Czech Popular Culture* is a good thing to keep on your bookshelf for handy access, especially helpful as a good starting point for exploring topics.

The dictionary was compiled by Andrew Roberts, an American associate professor at Northwestern University. He was an English as a Second Language teacher in Brno in the early 1990s, is fluent in Czech, stays in Czech lands every summer, and is fascinated with Czech culture and films. Roberts considers his pop culture fascination to be mostly a hobby since his day job is as a political scientist. In an online talk on January 28, sponsored by Literary Ventures and the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center, Roberts discussed what he sees as the five major traditions of Czech culture: nationalism, liberalism, egalitarianism, democratic humanism, and self-interest. His dictionary entries are more specific.

Roberts does not intend this dictionary to be a complete account of Czech history and culture, but simply to introduce the reader to a number of concepts known by Czechs that do not appear in dictionaries and textbooks. The appeal of each entry will depend on your experience and interest.

Since I lived in Žižkov for a month during one visit to the Czech Republic, I was curious to see what information about it the dictionary included. Roberts described this quarter of Prague, named after Jan Žižka, as “home to Vitkov hill, where nationalists built a monument to the Czech unknown soldier on the site of one of Žižka’s great military victories. The communists later hijacked the memorial as a mausoleum for the remains of the first communist president, Klement Gottwald.”

While in Žižkov, my husband and I discovered the Baba Yaga (Old Witch) restaurant, which made absolutely delicious *palačinky* folded over chocolate and nuts and topped with whipping cream and a mist of powdered sugar. Roberts’ experience was with much less appetizing *palačinky*, sometimes greasy, and rolled up with jam or cottage cheese.

I have been fortunate to see three distinctly different versions of the opera *Rusalka* by Antonín Dvořák. One put on by the Minnesota Opera was minimally staged, another in the Czech Republic was a colorful water show accompanied by music, and the third was a beautiful, full staging by the Metropolitan Opera with the incomparable



Renée Fleming as *Rusalka* with the Metropolitan Opera
www.tinyurl.com/RFRusalka

Renée Fleming as the beguiling water nymph. Roberts’ entry describes the opera’s plot, in which a water nymph falls in love with a prince, and ends concluding, “*Rusalka*’s popularity rests not only on its melodies, but also on its romantic and fairytale plot.”

Karlovy Vary, the famous spa town named after King Charles IV, has twice been a quick getaway for me. The first time in the late 1990s, I was charmed by the meandering river, pleasant walkways, fountains for spring water, and classical music, including a free and fabulous concert in the Grandhotel Pupp. When I returned just a few years later, I overheard Russian spoken in the streets and the atmosphere had taken a downturn. Roberts reminded me of the legend that Charles IV had discovered Karlovy Vary’s springs during a deer hunt there.

We got our train tickets from Prague to Karlovy Vary through the officious downtown Prague office of Čedok. Čedok was founded in 1920 as independent Czechoslovakia’s first travel agency, was seized by the Nazis in 1939, and nationalized by the communists in 1948. According to Roberts, “... it was Čedok that took most Czechs on their first trips out of the country in what was called ‘collective recreation’ after the war.” These excursions were largely limited to Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, though.

Some entries are a bit idiosyncratic and dated (the book is eighteen years old). For example, I question whether the entry on **fifty favorite books** chosen from a library readers’ poll would apply across the Czech population. Most popular in the library poll are *Harry Potter*, *Lord of the Rings*, and the *Bible*, with *Babička* (The Grandmother) in fifth place, and the only book by Karel Čapek was *Dášeňka: The Life of a Puppy*, which came in twenty-seventh. This does support the idea that tastes in literature are similar in many countries, but *Babička* is no longer mandatory reading in schools and many Czechs tell me that Karel Čapek is their favorite author.

The book also has a similar entry on **100 books every Czech should read** or at least know about. Borrowed from the *Pocket Book of Facts*, it included many Czech and Slovak books I have read, but also gives me ideas for future reading.

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

Join Literary Ventures for the discussion of *Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain* by Zuzana Palovic and Gabriela Bereghazyova at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 22.

Highlights of the Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors February 2023 Meeting

By Theresa Hudachek

The Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors meeting was called to order on February 16, 2023 at 7:03 p.m.

There was continued discussion on the need for updating the website and how to go about it. An ad for a volunteer professional website developer was placed in the March *Slovo*.

Providing funding for the Sokol Minnesota Youth Leadership Award was again approved.

Sponsoring the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International conference again was approved. Feedback was given that it is a great conference and Sokol Minnesota members are encouraged to attend.

Sponsoring the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival again was approved.

Budget and Finance Committee Chair Joyce Tesarek presented the 2022 profit & loss financial statement. There was no Finance Committee report as the meeting was delayed until the following week.

The Treasurer's report, including balance sheet and account totals, was given by Joyce Tesarek. She also reported a bookkeeper has been hired to handle payroll.

Membership Director Steve Ernest presented the application for one new member, which was approved.

Gaming Manager Ed Hamernik presented the committee's report. The March 2023 Expense Budget was approved, as were the January 2023 Actual Expenditures. The application has been filed for a second pull-tab site. There is an active search for staff for the second site.

Board of Instructors Co-Directors Mary Cahill and Jason Brozevich reported that preparations are underway for the April 15 Western District Competition in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Two junior boys and a small number of girls are planning to compete. An inquiry about the possibility of starting a class(es) for youth and adults in self-defense, stretching/loosening, meditation, and Qigong was discussed. Mary and Jason are preparing a "Get to Know You" brief presentation for the March 8 National American Sokol BOI meeting, where Sokol Minnesota will be the featured unit.

Building and Trustee Committee Chair Bob Kotek presented an update on the parking lot lighting and power upgrade, exterior door replacement, and Western Avenue window replacement. Contact Bob if you have any information on the front door lettering.

Darlene Sitko passed away January 30, 2023. Marlene Hinshaw represented Sokol Minnesota at the Celebration of Darlene's life and brought a bouquet of flowers from Sokol Minnesota. A sympathy card was sent to Ken Wyberg's wife Sharon and to his son Bryan. Ken passed away February 11, 2023.

Corresponding Secretary is still an open position and recommendations are needed.

Activities Director Jeanie Draheim presented the need for volunteers at upcoming events, including the Flavors of Slovakia Dinner and silent auction, and the Spring Breakfast, Craft, and *Koláče* Bake Sale. Forming an Activities Committee was discussed. Email events@sokolmn.org if you are able to fill any volunteer needs or want to join the Activities Committee.

Richard Sargent has updated the Rentals page on the website to provide Dawn Bulera's number rather than the C.S.P.S. Hall number.

Education Director Sally Lieberman recapped the February 6 Information Session on summer language study opportunities in Czechia. A language teaching in-service with Kristýna Horáčková of the T.G. Masaryk Czech School in Chicago is scheduled for Saturday, March 18, 1 p.m. in the first-floor classroom. Spring language class registration opens March 1; the spring trimester starts the week of March 20. We will offer an in-person Beginning Czech class starting in Fall 2023, the first in-person class since 2020!

Other Items:

The January 30 ASO meeting was specifically on non-gymnastics fitness at Sokol units. The options presented included circus arts, spin, Zumba, dance, and a hiking group. The John Righetti Carpatho-Rusyn event on February 5 was a success, with about 20 people attending from various organizations. A family who came up from Oklahoma for the Saturday event extended their trip to come to the Hall for the discussion that Sunday. Roughly 30 people turned out for Sokol Minnesota Friendly Friday Evening at the C.S.P.S. Hall on February 10!

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

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

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, Corresponding Secretary (open), Steve Ernest, Theresa Hudachek, M. L. Kucera, and Cinnamon Whaley.

Photographer: Joyce Tesarek.

Sokol Minnesota Ad Designer: Doreen McKenney (page 1, 3, 12).

Mailing and email Lists: Penny and Tom Tesarek.

Mailing: Mary Cahill and Joan Sedlacek.

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

Additional contributors to this issue: Tom Aubrecht, Jim Chlebecek, Steve Ernest, Jean Keogh, Bob Kotek, M.L. Kucera, Kelly Meyer, Kari Muyres, Julie Jo Severson, Joyce Tesarek, Louise Wessinger, Gwen Willems, and Bryan Wyberg.

Additional photographs, ads, or illustrations in this issue (not already noted) provided by: Tom Aubrecht, Jim Chlebecek, Steve Ernest, Jean Keogh, Bob Kotek, Kari Muyres, and Julie Jo Severson.

More information at www.sokolmn.org

Czech Honorary Consul News

April 2023

Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota met February 4 for its annual Board of Directors' meeting at the University Club in Saint Paul. Patricia Mestenhauser Bergh was elected to the Board for 2023. Among its many actions, CSCC voted to continue to support the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Film Festival, April 13-27, (see page 7 for Czech and Slovak films) and to support the continuing fundraising efforts of the American Ukrainian Community Center on the one-year anniversary of Ukraine being viscusly invaded by Russia.

(L-R) Seated: Jan Knudtson, Bea Flaming. Standing: Renáta Tichá, Cheryl Nelson, Andy Kozak, M.L. Kucera, Gwen Willems, and Joyce Tesarek.



I joined the Honorary Consuls of Finland, Germany, Slovenia, and Sweden to unite in solidarity and to *Stand With Ukraine* at the *365 Days of Defending Freedom* event on February 25 at the Ukrainian-American Community Center in Minneapolis, to recognize the strength and perseverance of the Ukrainian people and their allies, as well as to salute local Ukrainian- American community supporters and volunteers.

The program included both live and virtual speeches by several elected Minnesota officials, details of local aid and supplies sent to Ukraine, *Ukraine: War and Resistance* photo exhibit organized by Fulbright Ukraine in partnership with the Fulbright Association Minnesota Chapter, The Isles Ensemble played works by Ukrainian composers, and the virtual keynote address by Volodymyr Dubovyk, a preeminent Ukrainian expert in the fields of international affairs, security studies, and foreign policy analysis at I. Mechnikov National University in Odessa, Ukraine. This was one of 16 rallies for *365 Days of Defending Freedom* across the United States.



Paul Bard, Diane Gerth, M. L. Kucera

Two members of the board of directors for the *Community Reporter*, the monthly newspaper serving West End neighborhoods from downtown Saint Paul to Fort Snelling since 1970, were guests of the Czech Honorary Consul at the 20th annual Roast Duck Dinner at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota on January 21. After the dinner and a tour of the upper two floors at C.S.P.S. Hall, Paul Bard, Board Secretary, and Diane Gerth, Board Vice Chair, joined the Honorary Consul Kucera in her office. In the March issue of *Community Reporter*, under Community Heritage, Bard wrote an article about C.S.P.S. Hall, titled *A look inside the C.S.P.S. Hall*, highlighting how "Sokol Minnesota helps preserve Czech and Slovak history and culture by offering a range of activities..." (communityreporter.org)

Starting with the February 2023 issue of the *Community Reporter*, the Honorary Consul is showing support for the neighborhood newspaper with a small monthly ad. With a background in journalism and communications, I strongly support and value community newspapers.

The 2023 annual conference of Czech Honorary Consuls in the United States will be in Phoenix, Arizona, April 19 to 21.

The Czech Government now prefers to use Czechia instead of the Czech Republic to refer to the country.



Supporting Little Bohemia and W7th

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C.S.P.S. HALL LEGACY FUND

We ask for your support for maintenance and renovation to C.S.P.S. Hall as we celebrate the Hall's 136th year in 2023.

Contact Joyce Tesarek to discuss your tax-deductible donation: 612-232-2993 or email: finance@sokolmn.org *Thank you!*



Name: _____

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To help refinish the C.S.P.S. Hall floors, I make a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

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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* April 2023

Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp



Years of

CAMP FAVORITES

June 19-23 2023

25th annual
Children's Czech and Slovak
Cultural Day Camp
June 19-23, 2023
C.S.P.S. Hall 383 Michigan St., Saint Paul

Register by May 1 to qualify
for the Early-Bird discount.
All camp registration materials
must be received by June 1.
Registration materials
can be downloaded at
www.sokolmn.org
for campers ages 6 to 14
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Full refund if camp needs to be postponed.

Questions? Contact:
Louise Wessinger 651-271-3601