



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

August Slovo articles
due July 1

Children's Czech
and Slovak
Cultural Day Camp
June 19-23
(info on page 20)

Sokol Camp
Booya Picnic
Sunday, August 13
(info on page 12)

34th Czech & Slovak
Festival
Sunday, September 24
11 a.m.-5 p.m.
(info on page 11)

Kolo Sokol Bike Group
Third Sunday of the
month May-October
10 a.m. C.S.P.S. Hall
sokolmn.org/bike/

Sokol Gift Shop
Visit during Sokol events
or by appointment

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



Sokol Members and Volunteers

Outdoor Potluck

PICNIC

Food • Festivities • Fun
Sunday, July 16, 2023

1 p.m.

C.S.P.S. Hall Parking Lot

info: activities@sokolmn.org
or text/call 651-210-0401

Komentáře prezidentky a členů rady Sokol Minnesota Comments from the President and BOD Member's Notes

The Minneapolis high school I (Cinnamon) attended offered almost a dozen languages, unfortunately Czech was not one of them. I took a few years of German and Russian. As someone to whom languages do not come easily, the dedication of our language learners amazes me, especially as the circle of Czech/Slovak speakers locally is relatively small. To use the language skills they have learned, there is a social component as well, as speakers need to seek each other out. You can't just go to the grocery store or coffee shop and find people to converse with.



Cinnamon Whaley

I continue to learn how the pivot from in-person to online instruction presented possibilities to our members in many ways. For reasons of distance, time of day, or for some just the preference of being in their own surroundings while participating, online classes have supported the growth of the language classes that we offer at Sokol Minnesota. While getting back into in-person activities, I hope we continue to find ways to involve those who would like to join us from home!



Theresa Hudachek

I joined Sokol Minnesota when I signed up for language lessons. With the language classes going virtual during the pandemic, I was finally able to sign up. My previous work schedule did not allow enough time to get across town from Minneapolis for the 5:30 p.m. start time on Mondays. Although there are challenges to virtual group lessons, the accessibility is great. I am on a break from classes right now, but I look forward to joining again soon. It is amazing how fast a language gets rusty when you are not using it.

I first took Czech classes while attending the University of Wisconsin. My major had a language requirement and it was exciting to discover that Czech was one of the over 50 languages they offered! I really enjoyed the four semesters of learning Czech with a great cohort of students. I was able to visit one of my classmates while she was studying abroad in Prague. It was an amazing trip and definitely a test of my language skills. I still have piles of homemade flashcards I should start using again.

I was interested in learning Czech because of my heritage. My great-great grandfather Powell Chudacek settled in Lone Tree, Iowa, after coming to the United States with his brothers and parents. He brought his family from Prevetec, Bohemia, which I understand was near current-day Pilsen. Please share with me if you know anything about Prevetec! I plan to visit someday and would love more information.

I work from home as a meeting planner, managing logistics for trainings, incentive trips, and our company's presence at conventions. I enjoy traveling for work and pleasure, and am grateful for the flexibility remote work has made possible. I play hockey and am always up for watching or going to a game. When the weather cooperates, you'll often find me reading a book on my deck or out hiking in nature.

After becoming a Sokol Minnesota member, I started volunteering for events instead of just attending. Volunteering at events is a great way to get to know people a little better. Behind the scenes time with other volunteers is a lot of fun as well as talking with all the attendees. I also was able to learn Czech traditions, like how to make *koláče*! I enjoy the logistics of planning events and I will be co-chairing this year's Czech & Slovak Festival with Joyce Tesarek. I hope to see all of you there!

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 follow all of our activities, events, and classes!

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

President
Cinnamon Whaley

Vice President
Lucy Brudnak Rose

Recording Secretary
Theresa Hudachek

Corresponding Secretary
Open

Treasurer
Don Haselbauer

Sergeant at Arms
Open

Members at Large
Markéta Pálková
Fred Simon

Membership Director
Steve Ernest

Budget and Finance Committee
Joyce Tesarek, Chair

Activities Director
Jean Draheim

Educational Director
Sally Lieberman

Publicity Director
Brittany Stepan

Board of Instructors
Mary Cahill,
Women's Physical Director
Jason Brozovich,
Men's Physical Director

Building and Property Trustees Committee
Bob Kotek, Chair

Gaming Manager
Ed Hamernik, Chair

Telephone: 651-290-0542

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

Western District Gymnastics Competition in Cedar Rapids, Iowa

By Jason Brozovich



Front (L-R): Aaron, Anna. Middle (L-R): Norah, Lily, Amari. Back (L-R): Head Women's Instructor Courtney, Mitchell, Jas, and Head Men's Instructor Jason.

On April 15, Sokol Cedar Rapids hosted the first Western District gymnastics competition (*Slet*) in four years. About 70 girls and boys from Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska took to the floor on Saturday morning to perform their routines in front of family, friends, and of course, the judges! Many participants also competed in the Fitness Challenge (four predetermined exercises) after the gymnastics competition.

Sokol Minnesota sent five Junior girls, led by instructor Courtney Benson, and two Junior boys, led by instructor Jason Brozovich, to the competition.

The girls took home a 1st place team trophy for Xcel Gold. Mitchell won the all-around prize for the boys Gold Level and his brother Jas took first place in the Fitness Challenge for his age group.



Women's 1st place team Xcel Gold (L-R): Anna and Aaron. Not pictured: Lily.



Mary Cahill received the Vojmir "Bud" Benak Outstanding Sokol Instructor Award for 2023

Other winners: Minnesota parents, families, and coaches on a fun weekend that included a pizza party and friendly gathering on Friday, while some of the gymnasts enjoyed the hotel pool!

Just prior to the awards ceremony, Sokol Minnesota's Mary Cahill was presented with the Vojmir "Bud" Benak Outstanding Sokol Instructor Award for 2023, which is given yearly to a "...Sokol member who, by her enthusiasm, leadership ability, and sustained Sokol activity, has contributed to the growth and longevity of her Unit, the Western District, and American Sokol." Congratulations, Mary!

After the competition and Fitness Challenge, the Western District held its annual meeting and election. Next year's competition location has not been finalized, but should be in the coming months. Sokol Minnesota Gymnastics will take the summer off and resume classes in mid-September. Stay tuned for details and consider joining us at the competition in 2024!



(L-R): 2nd place Men's Xcel Gold: Jas. 1st place Xcel Gold: Mitchell

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Youth Leadership Award for 2023

By Louise Wessinger

This 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 is given for the Best Essay with a \$100 prize (donated by Louise Wessinger).

Applications for the 2023 Youth Leadership Awards are open now. Applications must be submitted by July 1, 2023.

All forms and further details can be found on our website: sokolmn.org/events

Questions?

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

Join our Board of Directors!

By Cinnamon Whaley

Have you been enjoying reading about our Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota board members on page 2 this year and would you consider joining us?

We have two open positions on our Board of Directors currently, Corresponding Secretary and Sergeant at Arms. The Board meets on the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Corresponding Secretary responsibilities include, on a monthly basis, sending donors a form thanking them for their donations, recording and presenting to the Board the total of donations received, preparing a summary of donations for the *Slovo*, and working with the Sunshine Committee, which sends thank you cards, condolences, birthday wishes, and other cards.

The Sergeant at Arms position, which originally involved assisting with Board meetings and elections, is an opportunity to provide your thoughts on topics before the Board. This would be a great way to get introduced to board work!

If you are interested, or for more information, please reach out to president@sokolmn.org!

Taneční Mládež and Taneční Teens Spring Dance Performance

The *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teens* held their Spring Dance Performance at the C.S.P.S. Hall on April 29. Director Louise Wessinger noted this performance completes the 33rd year of the *Taneční Mládež*. The performance replaces the long-standing May performance at the International Institute of Minnesota's Festival of Nations, which has been cancelled since the beginning of the COVID pandemic.



Dasa Rosenthal FaceTiming with her parents in Moravia while taking photos of the *Taneční Mládež* performing.

(L-R) Magdalena with Killian, and Martina with Tommy.



Taneční Teens



Taneční Mládež: Row 1 (L-R): Tommy, Stella, Hana, Martina, Eilish, Magdalena, Zoe, Leon
Row 2 (L-R): Killian, Luna, Callista, Adam

After the dance performances, Director Louise thanked all of the dancers, parents, friends, and assistants. Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic M. L. Kucera spoke a few words of welcome and thanked Ms. Louise (as she is called by all her dancers) for preserving Czech and Slovak culture through traditional folk dance. She also asked the crowd to give Ms. Louise a hearty round of applause. Ms. Louise received a well-deserved standing ovation that lasted several minutes. This tribute brought tears to Ms. Louise's eyes.

The Honorary Consul helped Ms. Louise hand out the certificates of participation to the youngest dancers. Then Assistant Lucy Brudnak Rose helped Louise hand out all the other dance certificates.



Louise' apron was made by the children in 2020 to honor 30 years of the TM Dancers.



Assistant Lucy Brudnak Rose and Dance Director Louise Wessinger presenting certificates to graduates Adam Acs and Anna Bracknell. Adela Bragg is also a graduate, but she could not attend.



Front: Dance Director Louise Wessinger and Assistant Lucy Brudnak Rose. *Taneční Teens*: Sitting (L-R): Sofia, Izabela, Juna, Sylvie, Keely, Sara. Back (L-R): Marius, Leo, Liliana, Adela, Savanna, Seanna, Anna, Izzy, Emre, Adam.

Three 14-year Dancers Graduate By Louise Wessinger

This year, three *Taneční* Teens dancers are graduating high school and each of them have been dancers and group members since they were 4 years old! Adam Acs, Anna Bracknell, and Adela Bragg, or the triple “A’s” as I called them this year, have been outstanding members of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota’s *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční* Teens since preschool.



Adam Acs

Adam Acs is the son of Denisa and Robert Acs. He attended the Math and Science Academy of Woodbury. Adam was very active in theatre and speech club, social justice club, volunteer club, and international club. He enjoyed performing in plays and giving speech presentations. Adam also enjoyed making friends and attending events. He received many awards, including AP Honor Roll, High Honor Roll, and Distinguished Honor Roll. His plans for the future are to attend Drake University, where he plans to study Communications and Psychology, and “survive college, make new friends, and learn how to finance property.”

Adam’s favorite memories of the dance group are making friends and performing at the Festival of Nations. He learned from the dance group how to work as a team and how to stay connected with his cultural background. He would advise younger dancers not to be afraid to fail and just have fun! Adam’s favorite dance has been *Tancuj, tancuj*. Adam has also been a frequent volunteer for Sokol Minnesota and the Sokol Minnesota Youth Link. He has helped many times setting up for events, selling books, learning to make *koláče*, and helping with Trunks with Treats.



Anna Bracknell

Anna Bracknell will graduate June 12 from Washburn High School in Minneapolis. Her parents are Keith and Zuzana Bracknell. At Washburn, Anna enjoyed working on the school news show making videos that covered the school’s sports teams. She especially enjoyed filming football games. Anna is a member of the National Honor Society and received the Alpha Kappa Psi Enterprise Education Scholarship. She plans to attend the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota, majoring in Marketing and Business Analytics.

Anna’s favorite memory of being in the dance groups is performing at the Festival of Nations. She learned from the group “to appreciate my culture in a different way.” She would advise younger dancers to make friends, have fun, and enjoy your performances. Anna’s favorite dance is the women’s dance *Horehronský čardáš*.



Adela Bragg

Adela Bragg will graduate from Minnehaha Academy on June 4. Adela’s parents are Kyle and Lenka Bragg. Adela has participated on her school dance team, played tennis last fall, and was a library intern through her school’s leadership program. One of her favorite memories of high school is raising monarch butterflies in her biology class. She is graduating with honors, earning two academic letters. She is also an AP Scholar with Distinction, a recipient of a Gold Seal of Biliteracy, and earned a Sokol Minnesota Youth Leadership Award. She will attend either Capital University in Ohio or Lake Forest College in Illinois. Adela plans to explore her interests and may study economics or education.

Adela said “Saturday morning practices are always something to look forward to, especially when working on a new dance, but performances at the Festival of Nations are probably my favorite. I learned a lot about my love of dance through this group. I started dancing outside of Sokol Minnesota in fourth grade, and have since joined my high school team, but I trace my interest back to the earliest routines and steps that I learned in the *Taneční Mládež* group.” Her suggestion to younger dancers is: “Enthusiasm is contagious, so enjoy every dance you perform, as well as the friends you perform with! All the routines we learn are super fun, and the joy you have in your mind will translate to energy in your body.” Her favorite dances are *Horehronský čardáš*, *Milavečská polka*, and the *Shoemakers Dance* from the children’s group.

Adela added: “I would like to thank Ms. Louise for her extensive dedication to this group. Every week, she greets her dancers with a smile, and conducts practice patiently and enthusiastically to honor her heritage. She is an inspiration to me and other dancers in her commitment to creating a positive environment for growth.”

I will miss these three exceptional students and dancers.

They have been a joy to work with and they are wonderful examples of leadership for the younger dancers.

I know they will have successful careers in college and beyond.

— Ms. Louise

The Last School Bell Rang

By Jitka Sebek



Any traditional Czech or Slovak children's story as we know them ends with *Zazvonil zvonec a pohádka je konec* (the bell rang, and the story is over). The same could be said for another school year completed at Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities. Did the bell ring too early? Not at all, because during the school year, we learned Czech or Slovak through immersion, completed all planned activities, and we had fun. Parents turned into teachers and, with much passion on Saturday mornings, offered their linguistic or culinary expertise to the children, who all were enthusiastic students. We played games, read good books, tasted delicious foods, sang songs, and played cards. Like Hansel and Gretel, they tasted the best honey spiced bread; like Snow White able to speak the Dwarf language, the students all discovered new tools for communicating in their family language. They all opened their linguistic gifts just like Cinderella before the ball.

Is the *Škola* story over? Not at all, for the friendships made here, Cultural Day Camp in June, and visits overseas with family and friends continue this summer as additional opportunities to enjoy the language, food, and culture. Have a wonderful summer, everyone, and see you next school year!



Hana Pletichová with her Jesle (preschool children).



Czech language teachers and students.



Barbara Carlson with her Slovak students.

Two Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities Students Recommend the School

By Lucas (Age 12)

Before I went to Czech & Slovak School, I thought it was going to be a strict class with tests and quizzes. I did not even want to start. When we (my Mom, Dad, sister Claire, and me!) got there, Jitka and the classmates all easily made us feel welcomed. Jitka knew that I was scared and she was caring. You could say not wanting to start is a mistake, but I was also wrong about the way Jitka taught us. All the kids there were smaller than us or started before us, but it is never too late to learn a language. By the end of the first lesson, I wanted to come back every Saturday!

By the time the next couple of lessons had passed, we already had made friends. I really like how the lessons are in the morning when your brain is the sharpest. The lessons got harder and that is what I like, and what you need to learn a language. We always have something fun to do there and each time it is different. We learn songs, the culture, Czech fairytales, card games, and we even get to eat Czech food! At the same time, we learn Czech!

I wish these lessons would go on throughout the whole year and this summer I am really going to miss the Saturday morning fun. I give a big thanks to *Škola* for planting the seed in me, and for giving me the determination to learn Czech. I will be learning it every day through the whole summer. If you are looking for the right place to come to learn Czech, without a doubt you should come here. Just keep in mind that if I did not try, I would not be here having all the fun I am, so starting is your first step!

continued on page 7



Škola students Claire and Lucas with Jarda and Jitka in the meeting room at the C.S.P.S. Hall

continued from page 6

Students Recommend the School

By Claire (Age 10)

At first, I thought Czech & Slovak School, or *Škola*, at Sokol Minnesota was going to be really scary. I was frightened to go there and I did not want to go. But once I got there, my whole opinion changed. They were all happy and welcoming, and I felt it was a very peaceful environment. I felt completely welcomed, at home, and happy. The main teacher, Jitka, was super nice and kind. We had lots of fun activities, but we were learning Czech at the same time. We had a little bit of Czech to learn each day, but over time it adds up to a lot; you just have to keep practicing. Plus, if you ever have to try speaking Czech in front of everyone and you mess up, nobody will laugh at you. If you are shy, do not worry, you will never be put under pressure. Jitka, our teacher, may encourage you to read something, but really you will be OK. Over time I got really comfortable being around everyone and reading aloud. Some of my favorite parts were just being there in general, Jitka's funny jokes, and the activities we did.

You may think that spending Saturday mornings at *Škola* would be way too long and would waste your time, plus you would have to wake up early! If you want to have your Saturday open for other stuff, you should first just give it a try and see if it is a good fit for you. It is not a waste of time, it is more like something you should be excited about. I promise you will have an awesome time, plus you will steadily learn a new language! If you are looking for an amazing place to learn Czech, you should 100% come to *Škola*!



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

Young Violinists Perform in Italy

By Pam Langworthy

Annabel Grindheim and Kateřina Košťál, violinists from our Sokol Minnesota community, performed in concerts in Italy in March with a total of 120 students from two Mounds View High School groups, the Philharmonic Orchestra and the Symphonic Orchestra. Annabel was honored to serve as concertmaster of the Symphonic Orchestra. The groups performed in three magnificent churches: the Basilica di Santo Stefano in Lavagna, the Chiesa dei Santi Michele e Gaetano in Florence, and the Chiesa di Sant' Ignazio di Loyola in Rome. The tour also included Orvieto, Pisa, Portofino, Porto Venere, and Santa Margherita near Genoa.

Dignitaries, including the Mayor of Lavagna and a United States Consulate member, introduced the first concert. The two orchestras performed primarily classical pieces by Beethoven, Holst, Barber, Palestrina, and Brahms. The final work for the Symphony Orchestra was the dramatic *End Inevitable* composed by the Director Lucas Shogren. The orchestra played an unplanned encore after this concert in response to the groundswell of applause from the standing-room-only audience of Italian music lovers and the 88 members of the Friends and Family Tour from Mounds View.

Annabel, a senior, is the granddaughter of Sokol Minnesota members Pam Langworthy and Richard Sargent, and Kateřina, a sophomore, is the daughter of Jan Košťál and Rosina Bianco. Many parents, including Rosina, served as chaperones. Pam and Richard, as well as Annabel's parents and brother, were part of the family group.

Kateřina said her favorite town was Santa Margherita, because it was on the coast, and the best part of the trip was experiencing it with her friends. Annabel said the first performance was a bit overwhelming, as she was not accustomed to hearing her violin reverberating in such a live space while tuning the orchestra. Her favorite part of the trip was the final concert because she could relax a bit and enjoy the beauty of the sound and the magnificent church in which they performed.



Annabel Grindheim



Kateřina Košťál

New Royalty Crowned at Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant By M. L. Kucera



Honorary Consul M.L. Kucera stands with 2023-2024 Queen Ellaina Novak, 2023 Queen Sarah Holicky, and 2023-2024 First Princess Alexia Timmerman.

M. L. Kucera annually gives members of the royal court a membership to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Along with their many other duties, they will appear in full Pageant regalia with crown, sash, and *kroj* at upcoming Sokol Minnesota events.

As the Minnesota Pageant shifts the timing of its reigns to match those of the other states, Sarah Holicky, Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota 2022 First Princess and 2023 Queen, will represent Minnesota at the 2023 National Pageant in Wilber, Nebraska, in August 4 to 6. This timing change allows Minnesota queens to have more time to prepare for the national pageant.

The 34th Annual Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant was held April 15 at the American Legion in Montgomery. Always a well-attended event, this year's pageant more than lived up to any in its exciting 34 years.

1999-2000 Queen Anne (Smisek) Jans and 2018-2019 Queen Heather (Vikla) Dovias, part of the hard-working volunteer Minnesota Pageant Committee, led the short program at the conclusion of the pork and dumplings dinner. Both are Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota members. Then the suspense began as the two queen candidates competed in the categories of talent, ethnic folk dress, on-stage interview, poise, and appearance. They had had private interviews with the three judges earlier in the afternoon.

Ellaina Novak, age 19, from Montgomery was crowned the 34th Miss Czech and Slovak Minnesota Queen, with Alexia Timmerman, age 16, from Saint Peter as the First Princess.

The Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant focuses on Czech Slovak heritage. Judges were Anna Šedivý-Thompson, Miss Oklahoma and 2022-2023 Miss Czech Slovak U.S. First Runner Up; Makayla (Skluzacek) Dawson, Minnesota Pageant Queen 2011-2012; and Louise Wessinger, director of folk dancing at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Louise, who has been part of nearly every pageant since the beginning as a *kroj* advisor, had the unique privilege to help judge the Minnesota pageant this year. It was the first time that she did not have a potential conflict of interest since she was not involved this year helping a candidate choose her *kroj*.



This is the third year of the Czech Slovak Minnesota Junior Ambassador program for teen girls, ages 11 to 15.

(L-R) 2023-2024 Junior Ambassadors Clara Winget of Northfield, Jules Rotter of Lonsdale, Margaret deLeon of Stillwater, Evelyn Winget of Northfield, Kailey Flicek of Lonsdale, and Alenka Jans of Waterville.

Each Junior Ambassador, wearing *kroj*, had the opportunity in this special group presentation on *květiny* (flowers) to speak about the significance that flowers play in the many festivals each year in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The presentation was created by Heather Vikla Dovias and Anne Smisek Jans, who verified facts and details with the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



The Junior Ambassadors receiving their crowns and sashes, watched attentively by crowned royalty from Montgomery and surrounding towns, plus the Masopust King from Montgomery, as well as Miss Czech-Slovak courts from Wisconsin.

Montgomery Fifth Annual Czech May Day

By Jean Keogh

Over 200 visitors enjoyed the Fifth Annual Czech May Day celebration in Montgomery on Sunday, May 7. Highlighting the afternoon festivities was the traditional raising of the 30' May Pole. The Pole was a pine tree, stripped of its bark leaving a small "Christmas tree" on the top. A flower wreath positioned just below the top with ribbons afforded a chance for many to dance around the May Pole, winding and unwinding the ribbons around the tree in the native Czech style.



Young May Day fan in her kroj

Emcee for the event was Larry Jinda, who read a history of May Day and the May Pole. The audience was entertained by music from the Czech Area Concertina Club and special dances performed by the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Children and Teen Folk Dancers and the adult Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers.

Honored guests attending the event were M. L. Kucera, Honorary Consul for the Czech Republic in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota; along with the Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota royalty, the Kolacky Day royalty, and the 2023 Kolacky royalty candidates.

Sidewalk chalk art proved to be very popular with the young visitors, as was face-painting and window suncatchers. The latest "wings" project, an American Eagle, was present for artist young and old to add their touches. "Wings" is a joint effort of the Montgomery Arts & Heritage Center, the TCU Art Team, and the Montgomery Area Foundation to brighten the community.

Food was provided by the Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant committee, the Veseli Area Lions, and Carol Kotasek. Beverages were provided by the Montgomery Brewing Company, plus Julie Bifano and Scott Stasney. With their popularity most items sold out by the close of the event.



Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *Taneční Mládež* (Dancing Youth). In the background are Sandy Prochaska and Rick Palma of the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers.

Special thanks to our great sponsors: Julie Bifano and Scott Stasney, City of Montgomery (in-kind), CornerStone State Bank, Czech Area Concertina Club, Golden Years Home, KCHK Radio, KDHL Radio, Ed & Jean Keogh, Carol Kotasek, Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant, Jim Mladek, Montgomery Area Community Club, Montgomery Arts & Heritage Center, Montgomery Brewing Company, Rent-N-Save, Dale Ruhland/Ruhland Electric, Rustic Farmer/Revival on Main, Veseli Area Lions, and Waste Management.



Crew raising the Montgomery May Pole



May Pole Dance

We invite everyone to join us for May Day 2024 on May 5.

Czech Language Courses from Olomouc to Sokol Minnesota

By Jana Odevzdaná

A special online Czech language intermediate level course was started in fall, 2022, at Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic. The course was developed thanks to Eva Janebová's good friendship with compatriots from Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota and with faculty of the University of Minnesota. The lecturers were Lenka Nosková and I, Jana Odevzdaná. Lenka also teaches Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities children. Our adult students embarked on an adventure of online education with the aim of improving their Czech, which they had all been learning for some time.

Lenka and I based our course on Lída Holá's *Czech Step by Step* textbook that our students already knew and used. Additionally, we prepared lesson plans from various sources, online materials, and videos for our activities aimed at expanding vocabulary and developing active communication skills in Czech. Lastly, we wanted to introduce our students to Czech traditions, renowned people, and historical events of the Czech Republic, which we did during Christmas time and *masopust*. Despite the many kilometres that separate us and the time shift, with each lesson we felt that the friendly atmosphere grew, along with the participants' desire to learn more about the Czech Republic and to delve deeper into this difficult Slavic language.

At the end of the course, all participants prepared a short presentation on any topic related to the Czech Republic. All the projects were very successful. According to the students' feedback, our course fulfilled the goal that Lenka and I had set for ourselves and the students: to further their competencies in the Czech language and to learn new, inspiring knowledge about the Czech country and about each other.

We are grateful for this course and the wonderful experience. We look forward to any further cooperation with Sokol Minnesota and the students themselves!



Graphic for Christmas carol *The Christ Was Born*, sung in the language class. On the right, starting at the top: Lecturers Lenka Nosková and Jana Odevzdaná, and students Janet Balej and Allyson Grym.

Diane Bell Receives Scholarship to Poděbrady Language School

Czech Deputy Consul General/Chicago Ondrej Pometlo announced that Sokol Minnesota member Diane Bell is one of three scholarship recipients for the study of Czech at the Poděbrady Language School in the Czech Republic, July 24 to August 18. **Congratulations Diane!**

Czech and Slovak Language Classes at Sokol Minnesota

New Classes Start in September!

Online and in-person options.

For more information,

email education@sokolmn.org

Want to Teach Czech to Adults?

A teacher is needed for an **IN PERSON** class at the **Advanced Beginning level**.

Class meets once per week from September to May.

Compensation is provided.

For more information, contact Education Director Sally Lieberman: education@sokolmn.org

Dvořák Visit Anniversary Celebration

By Dave Stepan

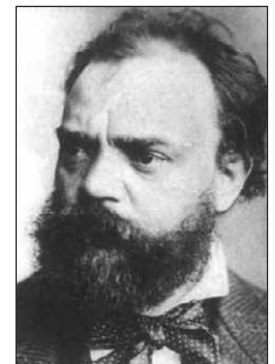
Save the dates for the Dvořák Visit Anniversary Festivities starting Sunday, September 17, and continuing into the following week. We will celebrate the 130th anniversary of the visit of Antonín and Anna Dvořák and his multi-faceted aide, Josef Kovařík's to Sokol Minnesota's C.S.P.S Hall. This visit was an extension of his family's vacation in the summer of 1893 in Spillville, Iowa, from his work in New York at the National Conservatory of Music. Dvořák was already a well-known composer for, among other works, his *Slavonic Dances*.

Dvorak's admiration for Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha* led to his visit to Minnehaha Falls and the sight caused him to consider writing an opera on the theme. He did, while at the falls, write the impromptu *Minnehaha* melody that he later incorporated into his *Sonatina for*

Violin and Piano, Opus 100, a favorite of his family.

Plans for September 17 include music of Dvořák in strings, horns, song, and dance. A lecture the following Wednesday by Emeritus Professor Paddy Dale of Saint Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, will bring out the history and politics of the time.

For more details on Dvořák's visit to Minnesota in 1893, including his visit to our neighbor St. Stanislaus Church, see the Minnesota Historical Society article (the source for much of this article) *When Minnehaha Falls Inspired Dvořák* at <https://tinyurl.com/DvorakCSPS>



Antonín Dvořák

10 June/July 2023 *Slovo*

34

th annual

CZECH & SLOVAK



FESTIVAL

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Sunday, September 24 20 23 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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



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

FREE Admission • Public Welcome • Accessible Facility

www.sokolmn.org

Become a Volunteer:
festival@sokolmn.org



For Sokol's Latest News!
Join the E-blast List
Send your email address to
publicity@sokolmn.org

Minnesota Sokol Camp Booya Picnic Sunday August 13

Sokol Minnesota Brothers and Sisters:

The summer months are here! After a long and arduous winter, we hearty Czech-Slovak Minnesotans deserve another reason to celebrate and enjoy the outdoors with a *pivo* and *jitrnice* in hand! What better event to make this dream a reality than to attend the 93rd annual Minnesota Sokol Camp Booya Picnic on Sunday, August 13. The event will start at 12 noon at Sokol Camp located at 19201 Woodland Acres South, Pine City, Minnesota 55063.

Come for the great food, entertainment, and the enjoyment of Sokol Camp with family and friends. We feature homemade piping-hot booya, cabbage rolls, meatloaf, and a variety of Czech favorites, including *koláče*. Entertainment will be provided free of charge. Live music by talented musician Dave Carlson will begin at 12:30 p.m., followed by the spirited *Lipa* Slovak Folk Dancers at 3 p.m. If a game of chance is on your list, try your luck at live bingo, pull tabs, or raffle games. There are kids' games for the young ones, as well.

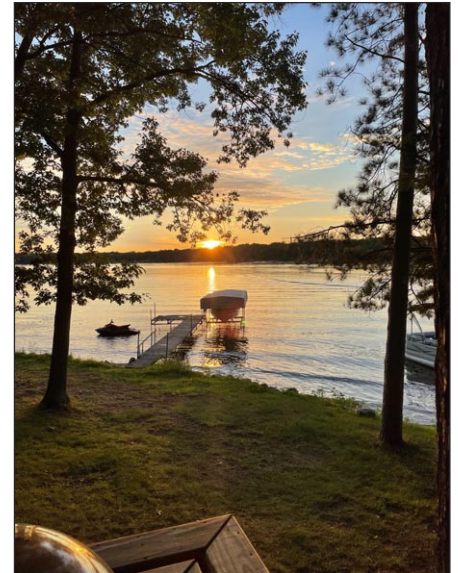
If you are interested in volunteering for this grand event, we are in need of help with set-up, tear down, the grill, serving food and beverages, and tending to the kids games and bingo tables. Along with organizing and implementing this successful fundraising event, we have a good time sharing in Sokol fellowship and making new memories! Please consider how your talents can be utilized at this year's Picnic!

Contact Booya Co-Chairpersons Kari or Scott Muyres if interested: skdlmuyres@yahoo.com or 763-226-0313.

School may be out for the summer, but it is a good idea to gently stretch the cranial muscles!

Take a moment to check your knowledge of the Booya Picnic. Answers in the August *Slovo*!

1. Which of the following is not an ingredient used in the preparation of Booya:
A) ox tail B) kohlrabi C) red onion D) celery
2. In what year was the Booya Picnic first held at Sokol Camp?
A) 1951 B) 1926 C) 1944 D) 1901
3. Approximately how many gallons of booya are prepared for each Picnic?
A) 50 B) 220 C) 130 D) 410
- 4) What qualifications are needed to be a registered volunteer at the Picnic?
A) Fun-loving attitude B) Enjoy working with others
C) prefer gray Camp T Shirts D) All of the above



Sunset over Cross Lake from Sokol Camp

C.S.P.S. Hall Parking Lot Repaving Has Begun

By Joyce Tesarek

The repaving of the C.S.P.S. Hall parking lot has begun. Curbs are poured and the lot is scheduled to be resurfaced with blacktop and striped.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this project!

Donations are still welcomed. If you would like to help with this project, donations can be made on our website www.sokolmn.org

or by check payable to Sokol Minnesota and send to 383 Michigan Street Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102



12 June/July 2023 *Slovo*

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors

By Tom Aubrecht, Arlene Hamernik, and Don Haselbauer

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

GENERAL FUND

TOTAL: \$ 3,175

Joan Sedlacek (Sokol Minnesota Youth Link)

In memory of **Ken and Sharon Wyberg**:

Under \$99: Jan and Gene Anderson, Tom Aubrecht, Bobbie Jo and Greg Chandler, Lorraine Gross, Ed and Arlene Hamernik, Tamara Johnson, Kenneth Roepke, Mika Roepke, Steve Shimer, Louise and Chuck Wessinger.

\$100 - \$499: Anonymous, Peter and Debra Bernier, Dennis and Mary Cahill, Donald and Catherine Haselbauer, Marlene Hinshaw, Alan and Debra Roepke, Terry Shima, Dave and Darnell Stepan.

\$500 - \$999: Joyce Tesarek

\$1,000 - \$5,000: Bryan Wyberg

DONATIONS:

Greeting cards donated by **Doreen McKenney** to our Corresponding Secretary.

100-year-old tambourine that **Helen (Jahnke) Graves** used in Sokol's Gymnastic program in the 1920's donated by **Judy Droubie**.

Two large dolls and several miscellaneous items donated by **Elsie Roepke**.

Hops Journey Upward By Dave Stepan



L-R: John Topic, Lucy Rose, and Mike Topic looking ahead to hops plants' growth. Not pictured: Dave Stepan (photographer) enough to use in Sokol Minnesota's own batch of beer. Stay tuned for brewing details.

Sokol Minnesota Vice President (and gardener extraordinaire) Lucy Rose, Dave Stepan, John Topic, and Mike Topic in mid-April added three stringers up to the C.S.P.S. Hall parapet to assist our Saaz hops growth. We planted the three plants last year and are doing our best to take care of them as they continue their journey to the parapet.

It will be fascinating to see the heights these plants will grow to. We are optimistic that this fall's harvest of hops will yield

Linden Trees at the C.S.P.S. Hall Have More Space to Grow

By Dave Stepan



Tree clearing group L-R: Dave Stepan, John Topic, Rick Palma, Terry Palma, Dan Bednar, and Mike Topic. Not shown: Bob Kotek.

After many years of trimming to try to reduce the various nuisances they caused, two black walnut trees and four box elder trees were removed from the west side of the C.S.P.S. Hall parking lot on May 2. The work crew included Sokol Minnesota members Bob Kotek, Rick Palma, Dave Stepan, and Dan Bednar, plus Terry Palma and dance group members John Topic and his son Mike Topic.

Clearing the unwanted trees will allow more room for the mature American Linden tree to grow and highlight the young Linden (pictured). Thank you, volunteers, for your hard work!

Dave Stepan, with spotting by Rick Palma, bringing down unwanted trees.



Citywide Spring Cleanup on Earth Day at the C.S.P.S. Hall

By Doreen McKenney and Glynis Grostephan

Thirteen volunteers participated in the Citywide Spring Cleanup as part of celebrating Earth Day on Saturday, April 22. The Saint Paul Parks & Recreation and Public Works Departments hosted the cleanup and Sokol Minnesota Youth Link (SMYL) members invited Sokol Minnesota families and friends to pick up litter from the parking lot, boulevards, sidewalks, curbs, and storm drains around the C.S.P.S. Hall.

Back L-R: Mathew, Judy Gavin, Coleen Cahill Cho, Mary Cahill, Adam Smith, Adam Acs.

Front: Charlie and Henry

Not shown: SMYL Advisors Doreen McKenney and Glynis Grostephan



Friend and neighbor to Sokol Minnesota, Judy Gavin, was our lead and sponsor for this event. She provided gloves and bags and even helped us sort our litter to find recyclables. Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities (*Škola*) teacher Jitka Sebek arranged for several teens to pick up trash prior to their language class. The multi-generational volunteers from the SMYL, *Škola*, *Taneční* Teens dance group, and Sokol Minnesota were amazed by the amount of trash accumulated over the past six months and uncovered when the snow melted.



Liliana, Adela, Jitka Sebek

Volunteers found used gum, cigarette butts, bottles, wrappers, screws, clothing, pieces of metal, and even broken glass among the trash they collected. SMYL member Adam found a used needle and a tack. He was proud to take this trash off the street so no one could get hurt by it. He said it was "worth being cold for an opportunity to help the environment." Colleen Cahill Cho said "It was such a great opportunity for the boys today. They feel proud

of themselves and pointed out trash and were asking to pick it up when we went to the store later." A couple from the neighborhood stopped by to let us know they drove around the block to thank us for taking time to pick up trash.

Cross-Cultural Curling By Jean Draheim

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota and Synnove-Nordkap, Sons of Norway, shared the ice on Saturday night, April 29, for Sokol Minnesota's first cross-cultural curling event.

The Czechs, Slovaks, and Norwegians gathered at the Four Seasons Curling Club in Blaine. Arranged by Sokol Minnesota member and Four Seasons curler Dave Stepan, we occupied three sheets of ice for two hours.

There were

18 curlers, three instructors, and ten folks who watched the festivities from the warmth and comfort of Moe's Icehouse. After a brief meet and greet, the curlers hit the ice for instruction and practicing delivery of the stones. They also learned the basics of sweeping and scoring. There were lots of laughs, smiles, and high fives. Slips and spills were endured with dignity, if not grace. A bonus was that no one needed medical attention! After the two hours were past, several folks stayed for a beverage or dinner.

Attendees from both organizations commented about how much fun it was to meet new people and learn something new. Without the annual Festival of Nations these past few years, we have lost some of the global connectiveness that we enjoyed. It would be fun to have more cross-cultural activities between Sokol Minnesota and other ethnic and cultural groups. Let's start thinking about how we can reach out to folks outside of our unit and ethnic background.

Here's to connecting with others and keeping learning lifelong!



Cross-Cultural Curling group at Four Seasons Curling Club

Sokol Minnesota Welcomes New Members By Steve Ernest

New members were accepted at the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors March and April meetings.

March: **Anthony Kaczor** from Minneapolis dances with the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers.

April: **Alexa Tyszka** from Chicago takes online language classes.

Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!



CZECH HERITAGE FESTIVAL

32nd
Year!

Sunday, August 13 Bechyn, MN

Polka Mass 10 a.m. | Czech Dinner 11a.m.-1:30p.m. | Raffle Drawing & Festival Ends 4:30 p.m.

Stop by Sokol Minnesota's Gift Shop's Sales Booth!

Entertainment: Mollie B & SqueezeBox with Ted Lange • George's Concertina Band
Sleepy Eye Area Concertina Club • Bechyn Czech Folk Dancers

Beer Garden • Dancing • Kid's Games & Activities • Bingo • Cash Raffle • Farmer's Market

Food: Polish Sausage, Kolache, Jiternice Sausage, Dumplings, Sauerkraut • FREE Admission • Held rain or shine
www.BechynCzechFest.org | [Facebook.com/BechynMinnesotaWorld](https://www.facebook.com/BechynMinnesotaWorld) | Located 10 miles NE of Redwood Falls, MN

Highlights of the Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors April 2023 Meeting

By Theresa Hudachek and Tom Aubrecht

The Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors April 2023 meeting was called to order by President Cinnamon Whaley on April 20 at 7:08 p.m.

Dave Stepan led discussion of the Dvořák Visit Anniversary Celebration the week of Sunday, September 17. A budget for the festival, not to exceed \$5000, was approved. (See the Dvořák Celebration article on page 10.)

Budget and Finance Committee Chair Joyce Tesarek noted that a representative of Bank Cherokee and a payroll specialist attended the last meeting.

Treasurer Don Haselbauer reported on account totals.

Membership Director Steve Ernest presented Alexa Tyszka for membership, she was approved.

Gaming Manager Ed Hamernik reviewed motions passed prior to the meeting via email voting:

1) Request BOD to give final approval for Sokol Minnesota Gaming to operate the second pull tab site at Falling Knife Brewing Company beginning April 10, 2023.

2) Approve the Lease (with option to buy) of a used two-year old two-game pull-tab dispensing machine at about \$200 a month. The current purchase price is \$7,495 with excellent buy-back terms and service terms.

3) Recommend Sokol Gaming pay Site Managers \$.60 per mile travel expenses if they are required to travel to each other's site as back-ups or to travel beyond their site for business reasons.

4) Hire Rosemary Baisden as site manager of Falling Knife Brewing Company pull tab site. She and Steve Shimer, site manager for Keenen's pull tab site, will serve as back-ups for each other.

Ed also presented the Gaming Committee's report. The May Expense Budget was approved, as was the March operating statement.

Gymnastics Board of Instructors Directors Mary Cahill and Jason Brozevich reported on the Sokol Western District Gymnastics Competition held April 15, 2023, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Sokol Minnesota was represented by two junior boys and five junior girls in artistic gymnastics. The two junior boys also competed in the Fitness Competition. All did well. Mary received the Vojmir "Bud" Benak Outstanding Sokol Instructor Award for 2023. Joan Sedlacek assisted in the tabulation room and provided tremendous support to the people tabulating scores and organizing awards. (See article on the Gymnastics Competition on page 3.)

Sokol Minnesota Gymnastics classes end April 27. Kung Fu classes will begin in May.

The Sokol Western District (WD) annual meeting was held after the competition on April 15. Delegates representing Sokol Minnesota were Courtney Benson, Jason Brozovich, Mary Cahill, and Joan Sedlacek. Highlights of the meeting: Joan Sedlacek accepted nomination to continue as WD Education Director and Historian; M. L. Kucera accepted nomination to continue as WD Foundation representative; Mary Cahill accepted nomination to continue as WD Recording Secretary and Bylaws representative. All were elected to those positions. Mary Cahill declined nomination to continue as Western District Men's Director. Allison Gerber was re-elected as WD president. WD is in need of a Membership representative. The Sokol Minnesota delegates said they would check with a couple of Minnesota members to see if there was interest in the position. WD will reimburse Units the early bird registration fee for any gymnast attending the 2023 National Instructor School. Sokol Minnesota has two potential students.

Building and Trustee Committee Chair Bob Kotek noted new doorbells were installed March 31. The C.S.P.S. Hall sign restoration is scheduled for the week of April 24 (weather permitting). The outside gift shop and grand stairway doors were replaced; the new hardware order is in progress. Contracts were signed for exterior lighting and parking lot repaving.

Discussion was held on the possibility of developing a "Sokol Minnesota Operations Manual."

Correspondence: Joyce Tesarek noted that Arlene Hamernik provided information on In-Kind donations received (see the Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors article on page 14).

Activities Director Jean Draheim is organizing a committee meeting; respond to email or reach out if you would like to be included. Details on the April 29 curling event were provided by Dave Stepan, RSVP to Jean: activities@sokolmn.org

The Annual Mushroom Hunt is on the radar, the date is weather dependent. RSVP to Jean.

Send Fall Postcard information to Jean by mid-May; the final deadline is July 15.

Denise Stibal reported for the Rental Committee that the new chairs are now out of stock and the balance of the order was automatically canceled.

Education Director Sally Lieberman noted that Kristýna Horáčková from the T. G. Masaryk Czech School in Chicago visited Sokol Minnesota March 16-19. Kristýna met most of her Minnesota students in person at a couple of drop-in social gatherings. She led a language teaching workshop titled "Activities in the Lesson," for which she received an honorarium of \$200. Kristýna also visited the Saturday morning youth *Škola* and folk dancing classes.

Sokol Minnesota is co-hosting, with the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota and the Office of the Czech Honorary Consul, two events in connection with the Czech and Slovak films at the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival. The first co-hosted event is a post-film discussion of *Victim* to be held on Thursday, April 27, at 6 p.m. at Pivo Riverplace. An RSVP is requested. Funding request was approved for up to \$100 for appetizers for the post-film discussion of *Victim*. The second co-hosted event is a presentation and discussion of *Il Boemo*, led by musicologist Daniel Freeman, to be held on Sunday, April 30, at 1 p.m. in the C.S.P.S. Hall classroom; it can also be attended via video meeting. Both programs have been promoted widely, and details are in the recent E-Blast. (See the articles on page 16.)

A funding request not to exceed \$500 was approved for language teacher professional development through attending the annual Conference of Czech Schools in North America at the National Czech and Slovak Museum in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, June 2-4.

Planning for next year's Czech and Slovak language classes will begin in May, as well as some advance planning for other educational activities.

Other Items:

Blanka Brichta has officially resigned from the board. There will be a brief article reaching out to membership to fill Sergeant at Arms and Corresponding Secretary positions. (See the articles in the May *Slovo* and in this issue on page 3.)

American Sokol has started sending information on the 2024 *Slet* in Prague.

Reminder by Ed Hamernik to contact state legislators about the new charitable gaming bill.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Three Czech and Slovak Films Featured in Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival

Two Czech and Slovak films, *Il Boemo* and *Victim*, and the Icelandic film *Beautiful Beings* with Czech technical assistance, were featured at MSPIFF42 in April (see the article on the Film Festival in the April *Slovo* on page 7 for more information about the films). Each film was screened several times. Two post-film discussions of *Il Boemo* and one discussion of *Victim* were co-sponsored by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, and the Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis.

Daniel E. Freeman Spoke on The Czech Answer to Amadeus: Petr Vaclav's film *Il Boemo* about Mozart's Friend Josef Mysliveček. by Gwen Willems and Daniel Freeman



Daniel Freeman presenting on composer Josef Mysliveček

On April 30, Daniel Freeman gave a fascinating hybrid talk about the life and music of Czech composer Josef Mysliveček, his relationship with and influence on Mozart, Petr Vaclav's film *Il Boemo*, and Freeman's consulting on the movie production. With the lively presentation, discussion, and questions and answers, the event at the C.S.P.S. Hall took two hours. Daniel Freeman, along with Patrick Dewane, also discussed *Il Buemo* on April 23 after that Film Festival screening at The Main in Southeast Minneapolis, home of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Film Society, organizers of the MSPIFF.

The biopic *Il Boemo* was selected by the Czech Republic as its entry for the Oscar for Best International Feature Film award. A lavish

historical film, it was supported by more funding from the Czech Republic than any other Czech film in history. The subject is the adventurous and scandalous life of Mysliveček (1737-1781), a prominent composer of the classic period of music history who remains little known today outside of the Bohemian lands. The film is famed for its ravishingly beautiful cinematography and exceptionally appealing sets and costumes, besides the way that Mysliveček's infamous romantic dalliances are brought to life, with considerable license.

As a close friend of both Wolfgang and Leopold Mozart for eight years, it is only natural that Wolfgang would be portrayed in the film, and indeed his appearance and impromptu performance as a young boy is unforgettable. Work on the screenplay and filming lasted about fifteen years before the premiere of the film in 2022, and Daniel Freeman was consulted for many aspects of the production.

Daniel Freeman is a renowned musicologist, teacher, and long-time friend of the Twin Cities Czech and Slovak community. He is best known for his research on the musical culture of eighteenth-century Prague and the Bohemian lands. Freeman has written books on both Mozart and Mysliveček.

16 June/July 2023 *Slovo*



Czech Cinema fans on the Red Carpet at the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival April 23 screening of *Il Boemo*.

(L-R) Michaela Wentz, Lenka Hester, Richard Sargent, Pam Langworthy, Michael Sebek, M.L. Kucera, Bea Flaming, Patrick Dewane, Blanka Cleveland, Gwen Willems, Jltka Sebek, and Sally Lieberman (kneeling).

Other Sokol Minnesota members attending Czech and Slovak film screenings included Tom Aubrecht, Andrea Manolov, Carolyn Sorensen, and Gretchen Toman.

MSPIFF42 Film *Victim* Discussion By Sally Lieberman



Post-screening discussion of film *Victim* at Pivo Riverplace. (Counter-clockwise from lower left) Richard Sargent, Pat Slaber, Cynthia McArthur, Sally Lieberman, Ken Mowl, Dave Stepan, Michelle Stepan, M. L. Kucera, Bea Flaming, Lorene Gilliksen, Paul Schroeder, Gwen Willems, Nancy Blume, Marshall Toman, and Pam Langworthy. Also attending the discussion, but not pictured: Steve Ernest and Jay Lieberman (photographer).

The debut feature film *Victim (Oběť)* by Slovak director Michal Blaško portrays a Ukrainian immigrant and her teenaged son who are working toward citizenship in the Czech Republic, where they live, when an incident occurs that brings into focus the often-tense relations between Czechs and Romas and the longstanding prejudice faced by the Roma.

Sally Lieberman and Gwen Willems led the post-film discussion of *Victim* on April 27 at Pivo Riverplace.

Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain, A History of Communism by Zuzana Palovic and Gabriela Bereghazyova. Global Slovakia: Bratislava, and Hybrid Global Publishing, New York, 2020, 617 pages. Available at libraries and bookstores.

Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain is a comprehensive overview of life under communism in Czechoslovakia. With so much literature and journalism coming from Czechia, the book is unusual and refreshing in being from the perspective of Slovaks. The book is easy to read and contains numerous illustrations and photographs. The two authors, Zuzana Palovic and Gabriela Bereghazyova, are young people with Ph.D.s who were born in Czechoslovakia. They met while studying at the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom. Zuzana Palovic is founder and Gabriela Bereghazyova is director of Global Slovakia, a nonprofit organization dedicated to sharing Slovakia with the English-speaking world. Global Slovakia is the sponsor of this book.

It has now been more than thirty years since the iron curtain came down in 1989 and Czechoslovakia was freed from communism. Many youth born since then do not have a full comprehension of communism and have perhaps mostly heard about it from their relatives' scattered recollections. *Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain* has been called "a book written by the younger generation for the younger generation," but young persons, who in general read less than older adults, might not be willing to tackle a 617-page book.

It is stunning to think that, as the book states, "In the last 100 years, Slovakia has gone through six regime changes: the collapse of the Empire of Austria-Hungary, the rise of democratic Czechoslovakia, the establishment of the Nazi Slovak State, followed by socialist Czechoslovakia to an independent Slovakia that willingly ascended the European Union."

The authors spent ten years gathering information about the history and leadership of Czech communism and its effects on everyday life—food shortages and lines, concrete housing blocks, collectivization, women's roles, political prisoners, passive resistance, the secret police, neighbors spying on neighbors (17,000 agents and 30,000 civilian collaborators during the 1950s), rural cottages, athletics, uprisings, religious persecution, and many more. Short biographies of famous people such as Edvard Beneš, Alexander Dubček, Klement Gottwald, Milada Horáková, Gustáv Husák, Vladimir Lenin, Karl Marx, Jan Masaryk, Jan Palach, Vladimír Remek, and Rudolf Slánský highlight their stories.

Slovaks were generally more content with communism than were their Bohemian and Moravian counterparts, write the authors. Communism promised food, shelter, and employment to all equally. These were important enticements since, at the end of the Second World War,

Slovak society was "well behind the standards of living in Western Europe and even elsewhere in the region," wrote the authors. "Communism brought with it the first systematic industrialization. The modernization of Slovakia addressed large social inequalities and improved living standards for millions of Slovaks. Food, consumer items, and services became more abundant and, more importantly, widely accessible to the masses. No one was to be hungry, homeless, or jobless in socialism. This promise also kept the public pacified and obedient. People were loyal to the state, because the government did take care of them. Even though it was the Czechs that elected the communists into power, once in office, loyalty to the regime was much stronger in the Slovak part of the republic. They were grateful to the Party for making their lives significantly and visibly more secure."

For someone like me, who has read about and seen a lot in the Czech lands, there were still new subjects and details to learn about, such as why Czechs and Slovaks felt so abandoned by the West and the United States. When Stalin turned down the Marshall Plan for

Czechoslovakia, the United States refused to supply Czechoslovakia with grain, according to the authors. Also, do you ever wonder why so many ethnic Vietnamese live in Czech and Slovak lands today? "North Vietnamese students were brought in on a short-term basis to address critical manpower shortages and to learn new skills from an industrially more advanced Czechoslovakia," the book says. "They were then expected to return to Vietnam and re-seed their new knowledge back home. But some 20,000 Vietnamese stayed on and with them came a new culture that shook up the stale ethnic waters of Czechoslovakia."

The book's back matter contains a glossary of communism, extended timeline of communism in Czechoslovakia, a brief who was who in Czechoslovakian communism, art credits, description of photographs and illustrations, recommended literature, and recommended films. However, it is missing a reference section and table of contents.

Czechoslovakia: Behind the Iron Curtain lacks citations and attributions for the collected interview materials that the authors say they "took creative liberties with to set them in a cohesive storyline." The book has typos, grammatical errors, odd formatting with apparently right-hand pages swapped for left, and page numbers difficult to read in the gutters. These drawbacks were easily avoidable.

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.

Literary Ventures is on summer break and will start a new year of book discussions in September.





Dr. Josef Mestenhauser

The Global Programs and Strategy Alliance at the University of Minnesota presented four international students with the 2023 Mestenhauser Student Award for Excellence on April 26 in a virtual ceremony. The awards are named in honor of Dr. Josef Mestenhauser (1925–2015), who was a Distinguished International Emeritus Professor in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development at the University of Minnesota. He was Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic from 1998–2008 for Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

Dr. Mestenhauser's more than 50-year career included serving as teacher, researcher, administrator, counselor, and consultant. The Global Programs and Strategy Alliance is the central international office for the University of Minnesota system; it is the driving force in globalizing teaching, learning, research, and engagement. The Mestenhauser Student Award recognizes outstanding student contributions to international education.

It acknowledges the important work being done by students on the many campuses of the University of Minnesota to

internationalize the curriculum and campus.

The Mestenhauser Student Awards are made possible by the Mestenhauser Legacy Fund, which supports the University of Minnesota's efforts to broaden international understanding through innovative programs and scholarship.

Learn more at global.umn.edu/icc/legacy

This year's award winners are:

Akash Dhotre, from India, College of Science and Engineering, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Ariadna Mondragón Botero, from Colombia, College of Biological Sciences, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Madeleine Schneider, from Germany, Department of Math, Science, and Technology, University of Minnesota Crookston

Tseten Gurung, from Nepal, Department of Math, Science, and Technology, University of Minnesota Crookston

To view the students' videos:

<https://global.umn.edu/awards/mestenhauser>



Sokol Run of the Republic

October 28, 2023

Sokol Minnesota is in the planning stages for a local fun run to join in the annual world-wide commemoration of the anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic on October 28, 1918.

See www.behrepubliky.cz/en/

More information will follow. To help plan the local event, or to get your name on the contact list e-mail: membership@sokolmn.org.

Slovo Publication Information and Committee

The *Slovo* is published ten times per year by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, a non-profit organization, 383 W. Michigan Street, Saint Paul,

Minnesota 55102. Phone: 651-290-0542.

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

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

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

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

The *Slovo* staff welcomes submissions. 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, 11, 20).

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: Courtney Benson, Jason Brozovich, Claire, Jeannie Draheim, Steve Ernest, Daniel Freeman, Glynis Grostephan, Arlene Hamernik, Theresa Hudachek, Jean Keogh, M.L. Kucera, Pam Langworthy, Sally Lieberman, Lucas, Kari Muyres, Jana Odevzdaná, Jitka Sebek, Dave Stepan, Joyce Tesarek, Louise Wessinger, Gwen Willems.

Additional photographs, ads, or illustrations in this issue

(not already noted) provided by: Adam Acs, Courtney Benson, Anna Bracknell, Adela Bragg, Jason Brozovich, Chuck Draheim, Steve Ernest, Theresa Hudachek, Jean Keogh, Tim Kojetin, M.L. Kucera, Pam Langworthy, Jay Liebermann, Doreen McKenney, Kari Muyres, Silvie Nemes, Lenka Noskova, Jitka Sebek, Renata Scholtz, Dave Stepan, Gwen Willems. **More information at www.sokolmn.org**

Czech Honorary Consul News

June/July
2023



The Honorary Consuls of the Czech Republic in the United States and Canada met April 19-21 in Phoenix, with the Consulate in Los Angeles making arrangements, and Slobodan Popovic, the Honorary Consul/Phoenix, and his wife Jane Shapiro, as our local hosts.

In this "family" picture, the Czech Consul Generals in the United States and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague stood in the front row

with Ambassador Miloslav Stašek (third from right). On the steps behind them were the Honorary Consuls, officials from the Czech Embassy in Washington, D.C., and representatives from CzechInvest, Czech Trade, Czech Tourism, and Czech Center/New York. Photo from the Embassy of the Czech Republic, Washington, D.C.



Aydin Miradian (center) was installed as the new Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Minnesota on April 17.

On the right is Filip Koste, the startup principal at the Minnesota Medical Alley Association in Minneapolis (medicalalley.org/). Last September Monika Bokšová, Head of Trade and Economic Section and Vice Consul/Chicago, and M. L. Kucera (left in this picture) met with Filip and others at Medical Alley.

The Tour the World online auction for Global Minnesota's Gala on May 6

included a Czech Experience Basket donated by Czech Honorary Consul M. L. Kucera. It included lots of Czech beer, wine, and much more. It promoted local Minnesota purveyors of Czech-inspired artwork, food, and beer, including Sokol members Doreen McKenney (hand-designed cards) and Markéta and Ludmila Palkova (home-canned condiments), as well as Czech-style beers from Udepils in Minneapolis and Giesenbräu in New Prague. (globalminnesota.org)



Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Cultural Center, Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, Czech Honorary Consul/ Minneapolis, plus Marshall and Gretchen Toman, John Palka, Blanka Brichta, and Cinnamon Whaley supported the 42nd Annual Minneapolis Saint Paul Film Festival, April 13 to 27.

(L-R) The Film Society's Jesse Bishop, Programming Director, and Susan Smoluchowski, Executive Director, accepted the

envelope with donation checks from Honorary Consul M. L. Kucera and Marshall Toman. Photo by Gretchen Toman.

The logos of our Czech and Slovak organizations appeared on the big screen before each screening of the 200+ features, documentaries, and shorts in MSPIFF42, plus the logos were also in the printed catalog.



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



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: _____

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!

Join the E-blast List

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* June/July 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

All camp registration materials must be received by June 12. Registration materials can be downloaded at www.sokolmn.org for campers ages 6 to 14 and teen and adult volunteers.

Full refund if camp needs to be postponed.

Questions? Contact:
Louise Wessinger 651-271-3601