



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

December *Slovo*
articles due November 1

Friendly Friday
Evening Social Event
Friday, November 10
(more info on page 13)

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

Annual Membership
Meeting and Board
Election
Friday, November 17
(more info on page 3)

Holiday Breakfast,
Craft, and
Koláče Bake Sale,
Sunday, November 19
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
(info adjacent)

Sokol Gift Shop
open during events;
by appointment; and on
Small Business Saturday
Saturday, November 25
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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

- Dinners
- Czech and Slovak
Language Lessons
- Sokol Gymnasts



Sokol Children's Holiday Party 2023 7 p.m. Friday, December 8

Hosted by
Czech and Slovak
Sokol Minnesota
at the
C.S.P.S. Hall
383 Michigan St.
Saint Paul



Sokol families and friends
are invited to a special
program of song and dance
by the *Taneční Mládež*
and *Taneční Teens*.
Louise Wessinger, Director.

Visit from:
Svatý Mikuláš (St. Nicholas),
anděl (angel),
and *čert* (devil).
Performance by: Sokol
Czech and Slovak Singers
Don Haselbauer, Director.

Holiday Breakfast Craft and *Koláče* Bake Sale Sunday, November 19 2023 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

\$10 Adult; \$6 child under 9; \$30/family of 4
Pancakes and all the fixings. No reservations needed.



Apricot, cream cheese, poppy, prune, or raspberry *koláč* \$2. each
Prepaid *koláče* orders must be received by Saturday, November 11
Prepay: credit/debit card or PayPal at www.sokolmn.org/cc/
If prepaying your *koláč* order by check through the mail; text/call: 651-210-0401
To reserve a craft table: activities@sokolmn.org

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

See Reflections of the 2023 34th Annual
Czech & Slovak Festival on pages 7-12

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

This month, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Membership Director Steve Ernest shares memories of growing up as a fourth-generation Czech living in the Midwest. His recollections are so vivid! Steve mentions the Sokol motto, "a sound mind in a sound body" in his article and he is the embodiment of it! Attending language classes, studying in Czechia multiple times, serving on the Board of Directors, and starting the Kolo Sokol Bike Club really showcase his passion. I'm always touched when I read about family reconnections in Czechia/Slovakia, too. I hope one day to visit my distant cousins in Slovakia!



Cinnamon Whaley



Steve Ernest

Hello, fellow Sokol members. My name is Steve Ernest. I've been a Sokol member for almost ten years and currently volunteer as the Membership Director on the Board of Directors.

My father's grandparents emigrated from southern Bohemia shortly after 1900 and lived in the Chicago area. When I was young, we would drive down to Chicagoland every summer. In Berwyn where my grandparents lived, we would stop by a Czech bakery (Vesecky's) for a big round loaf of rye bread and some *koláčky*. We would go to a Czech card and gift shop (Pancner's) for a calendar, book or some other interesting item imported from Czechoslovakia. And we would go out to several different Czech restaurants where the meals came complete with bread, soup, dessert, and coffee. As good as the restaurant meals were, my grandma's cooking was even better. We always looked forward to her potato salad—loaded with hard-cooked eggs, bacon, and lots of other things that made it hands-down the best potato salad in the whole world—and her poppyseed rolls, apple strudels, and almond crescent cookies. My grandparents occasionally spoke Czech and my father understood it, but my generation only learned words and phrases that were kept as souvenirs of family events and lifestyles passed down through generations.

Over the years, I've occasionally taken Czech language classes and had a variety of opportunities to spend time with Czechs who didn't leave Europe. On my first trip to Europe, I was able to locate the farm (at that time collectivized) where one of my great-grandfathers was born. My grandmother was so happy to re-establish communication with her father's family. On two other trips, I participated in two very different versions of a summer school for foreigners—the first at Charles University in Prague under the communist government and the second just last summer in Poděbrady, in a program specifically designed for people involved in organizations like Sokol that preserve traditional Czech culture and appreciate modern Czech culture. When I was studying international communication at American University in Washington, DC, I also had the great opportunity to do an internship at the Embassy of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic there. This was after communism fell but before the country was divided into two. One way or another, I hope that someday I will be able to hold an extended and detailed conversation in Czech.

Getting involved with Sokol appealed to me because of the opportunities to participate in a variety of different activities. The Sokol motto is "a strong mind in a strong body." Sokol members strive to improve themselves. We have classes for language and other skills, and we have more energetic activities like gymnastics, dancing, singing, biking, and this year kung fu and tai chi. I'll be sending out membership renewal forms soon and I encourage you to check some of the boxes on your form to indicate things you might like to get more involved with in Sokol. Participation and volunteering take time, but the benefits of stretching your mind and body in different ways are definitely worth it. *Nazdar!*

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 2023 BOD (Board of Directors)

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Cinnamon Whaley

Vice President

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

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

Sokol Minnesota is affiliated with, and shares the values of, American Sokol (www.american-sokol.org) and the World Sokol Federation (<https://world-sokol.eu/en>).

Mark your calendar!
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17
7 p.m.

**Sokol Minnesota Annual
Membership Meeting and
Board Election**

The Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Annual Membership Meeting will be held Friday, November 17, at 7 p.m. at the C.S.P.S. Hall.

Reports reviewing the year's activities are presented by officers and committee chairs. The Board of Directors election is also held at the meeting.

Board terms are two years, with half the board up for election alternate years.

If you are interested in applying to serve on the Board, contact NominatingCommittee@sokolmn.org or call Joyce Tesarek at 612-232-2993 for more information.

Join us for the meeting and for visiting and refreshments afterwards!

**June 30 to July 5, 2024
in Prague**

2024 XVII All Sokol Slet

Sokols from around the world will flock to Prague for the XVII All Sokol Slet to be held from

June 30 to July 5, 2024. Tours are being planned.

Watch the *Slovo* for more information or contact joan@sokolmn.org

See photos of the past Slet events at www.slet2024.cz/galerie

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**Going away this winter?
Forwarding your mail?**

Do not forget about the *Slovo*!

We mail at bulk mail rates.

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

Or, you can change your subscription to receive the

Slovo in color

via email: Contact:
slovo@sokolmn.org

We think our volunteers produce a great newsletter.

We want to be sure you receive it!

**Dvořák's New World at 130
Sokol Minnesota Commemorated his 1893 Visit**

By Denise Stibal

On September 17, 2023, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota hosted a wonderful program to commemorate the 130th anniversary of Antonín Dvořák's visit to the Twin Cities and the C.S.P.S. Hall. On his visit on September 4, 1893, the composer was met at the train station by Fr. Jan Rynda, pastor at our neighbor, St. Stanislaus Catholic Church. Dvořák first asked to visit Minnehaha Falls, where he was inspired to compose the "Minnehaha Melody" (Sonatina in G Major). On the evening of his visit, a reception was held at the Hall, with music provided by Emil Straka's orchestra. Although he did not perform, Dvořák was greeted with great applause and cheering.



Event Co-Chair Denise Stibal addressing the Dvořák Visit Commemoration audience.

Our "2023" Celebration began with the **Artaria String Quartet** (www.artariaquartet.com) performing Dvořák's *American Quartet*, *String Quartet No. 12*. The **Twin Cities Horn Club** (www.tchornclub.org), played a selection of Dvořák's works, including selections from *In Nature's Realm*, *Opus 63*. It concluded with *Goin' Home*, sung by soprano **Maria Jette** and also accompanied by **Dan Chouinard** on the accordion.

Paul Straka, grandson of Emil Straka and a professional horn player, played with the Horn Club and provided remarks on his grandfather's and father's musical legacies in the Twin Cities.

(continued on page 4)



Artaria String Quartet with (L-R) Ray Shows, violin; Nancy Oliveros, violin; Patricia Ryan, cello; Annalee Wolf, viola.

continued Dvořák “2023” Celebration

After a brief intermission, Maria Jette, accompanied by Dan Chouinard on piano, performed the aria *Song to the Moon* from Dvořák’s opera *Rusalka* and two additional works. The **Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers**, led by Louise Wessinger, performed Dvořák’s *Quadrille* and a dance set to *Slavonic Dance No. 7*.

Patricia Hampl, award-winning local author, spoke about her Czech roots and connections to the Saint Paul Bohemian community. **Daniel Freeman**, one of the world’s leading authorities on the musical culture of 18th Century Prague, provided interesting insight into Dvořák’s music. A beautiful ending to the program was performed by **Stephanie Arado**, professional violinist, who played *Humoresque* on Emil Straka’s violin which was used at the 1893 concert, accompanied by **Timothy Lovelace** on the piano. We were extremely honored to have Consul General of the Czech Republic/Chicago, **Jakub Utěšený**, as our guest.

He was very impressed by the program and expressed his gratitude to be part of the celebration.

The approximately 200 attendees were invited to enjoy plates of *chlebíčky* and *koláče*.

I would like to thank my co-chair of the Festival Committee, Dave Stepan, and our Committee members: Dawn Bulera, Mark Dillon, Jean Draheim, M. L. Kucera, Bob Olsen (Twin Cities Horn Club), Joyce Tesarek, and Renáta Tichá, as well as Michaela (Míša) Giancarlo Kotek and Markéta Pálková for food preparation. Together we worked to create a memorable event exhibiting pride in our Czech musical heritage.

Special thanks to the Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors which approved the initial funding for the event, and to the additional donors, which included the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, Honorary Czech Consul M. L. Kucera, and Paul Straka.



Dvořák’s *Goin’ Home* sung by Maria Jette, soprano, with Dan Chouinard on accordion, and the Twin Cities Horn Club (L-R) Bob Olsen, Sydney Chandler, Paul Stracka, Carole Serrine, Christina Werling, Ken Lovely, and Jeff Ohlmann.



Patricia Hampl



(above) Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers performing Dvořák’s *Quadrille*. L-R by pairs: Jyni Koschak and Michael Topic, Lenka Hester and Dave Cammack, Brittany Stepan and James Metcalf, and Dawn Bulera and Jason Brozovich. Lucy Rose and Gibson Batch joined in for *Slavonic Dance No. 7*.



Event Co-Chair Dave Stepan



Daniel Freeman

(right) Violin soloist Stephanie Arado and Paul Straka. Straka told the story of this violin, upon which his grandfather, Emil Straka, had played a solo for the 1893 concert in C.S.P.S. Hall for Antonín Dvořák. The violin is still in the Straka family.



Professor Paddy Dale Lecture on Dvořák in the Context of History

By Renáta Tichá

On September 20, 2023, J.P. “Paddy” Dale, Associate Professor Emeritus of St. Olaf College, presented a lecture titled *The Socio-Economic and Political Contexts of Dvořák’s Contributions to Emerging Czech and Slovak Identities*. In his illustrated lecture, Dale explained how Antonín Dvořák’s music was both shaped by and contributed to emerging national identities. His explanation involved examining the changing economic and political contexts of the Czech and Slovak lands in the fragmenting Hapsburg Empire towards the end of the 19th century. One of the most intriguing aspects of his lecture was his presentation of the tension between the social construction of nations relative to nations as drawn through lines and colors on maps from different eras. Dale highlighted the abolition of serfdom in

Austria and Hungary and its influence on Czechs and Slovaks emigrating abroad, namely to the United States. Dvořák did not emigrate to the United States, but spent time in New York as Director of the National Conservatory of Music and in Spillville, Iowa, where he felt closer to his roots, and from where he made a trip in 1893 to St. Paul, Minnesota.

Dvořák returned to the Czech lands in 1895 and was subsequently awarded a gold medal by Emperor Franz Joseph. Dale argued that while Dvořák was a talented musician, his stay in the United States catapulted him to be known at an international level.

The lecture, sponsored by the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center, was held at the Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain, University of Minnesota.

Student Archivists from Czech Republic Help Digitize Sokol Minnesota Archives

By Dave Stepan

A group of four high school students from Žďár nad Sázavou, Czech Republic, and two teachers, History and Social Science teacher Martina Janurová and English teacher Petra Stárková, visited Sokol Minnesota October 10-19 and helped to digitized materials from our Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota archives at the C.S.P.S. Hall. Participation in the internship project involved a competitive application. The students received training in archival methods before their arrival. The project was sponsored by Attorney Dr. Jaroslav Horký, also a sponsor of the project “Czechoslovak Talks,” which preserves the life stories of Czechs and Slovaks from around the world (www.czechoslovaktalks.com/en/).



The students provided information on their interests, experience, and plans.

Viki Hadová, 17 years old, enjoys history, learning languages (Chinese, Spanish) and cooking. She hopes to study art history.

Alžběta Novotná has long experience with book archiving and has interests in reading, researching, writing essays, art, community involvement, and volunteering.

Sylvie Troubilová, 17 years old, enjoys math, music, playing the piano, and video games.

Filip Zbořil, 16 years old, enjoys computers (anything technical), math, physics, science, video games, and sports.

Student Archivists and Teachers joined in *škola* activities on Saturday, October 14.

(L-R): Alžběta Novotná, Sylvie Troubilová, Filip Zbořil, Petra Stárková, Martina Janurová, and Viki Hadová.

The student archivists did extensive work that is much appreciated. Several Sokol Minnesota members and groups, including the *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teens* (Sokol Minnesota children and teen dance groups), Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities (*škola*) students, and the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, had the opportunity to meet and interact with the students and their instructors.

The group participated in a visit to the Immigration History Research Center (<https://cla.umn.edu/ihr>), thanks to Daniel Necas. They attended classes at Mounds View High School as well as a Friday night high school American “football” game, thanks to Sokol Minnesota member and Kung Fu expert Luboš Mareš. The students also experienced the international sport of curling, thanks to Dave Stepan. They also did much sightseeing.

More information on what materials the students digitally archived and where they can be accessed will be included in the next issue of *Slovo*.

2023 Youth Leadership Award Recipients

By YLA Committee member,
Doreen McKenney

High school juniors and seniors active in activities, programs, and events sponsored by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota were invited to apply for the 2023 Youth Leadership Award competition.

Candidates submitted applications documenting their involvement. They also wrote an essay on how their involvement with Sokol had positively impacted them, and on how the leadership skills they developed were used to encourage and support other youths in their programs.

A selection committee of three judges, Steve Earnest, M. L. Kucera, and Judy Metcalf, carefully reviewed the applications.

The 2023 Youth Leadership Award recipients are Adam Acs, Lily Callanan, and Mitchell Gillman. The essay winner is Adam Acs.

Congratulations to the winners!

The honorees received a certificate from Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, a cash award, and were honored at the Czech & Slovak Festival on September 24. The winners will be recognized on a plaque located in a trophy case on the second floor of the C.S.P.S. Hall.

For the fourth year now, a special thank you to additional contributors to the YLA's, including M. L. Kucera, Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic, and Louise Wessinger, Sokol Minnesota Children's and Teens Dance Director.

Adam Acs, Czech and Slovak Folk Dancer and Volunteer



Adam started dancing with Sokol Minnesota's children's dance group at an early age because his parents wanted him to have more exposure to his heritage. In the teen group, he showed leadership by assisting the younger and new dancers in ways that strengthened their confidence.

Adam enjoys volunteering and that is reflected in his involvement through activities offered by Sokol Minnesota. He has volunteered for the Festival of

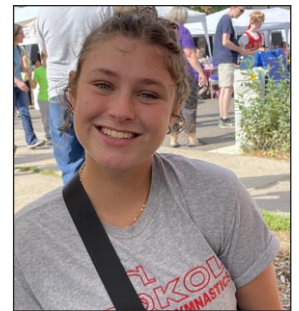
Nations and the Czech & Slovak Festival, served as a Junior Leader at Czech and Slovak Children's Cultural Day Camp, set up tables after dance practice for events, and is a member of the Sokol Minnesota Youth Link.

Louise Wessinger, Sokol Minnesota's Dance Director, says this about Adam: "Adam is a strong leader in our dance group, helping to teach the younger children and teens parts of the dances and how to have a stage presence."

Lily Callanan, Sokol gymnast, Coach, and Volunteer

Lily grew up in the Sokol Minnesota community through participating in the gymnastics program. On her first day of class, she immediately fell in love with the gymnastics program. Her coaches showed her patience and gave her encouragement.

Through the years, she realized she wanted to inspire and be a role model for the future generation of Sokol gymnasts, just as her coaches were to her ten years ago. Lily represented Sokol Minnesota at American Sokol Western District and National Slet competitions. In her teens, she took the initiative to seek out the proper training required to become a coach. Now a coach, Lily starts class off with a physical warmup and a question of the day that becomes a team building activity, giving all students a sense of being heard and accepted.



Along with coaching the gymnastics program, Lily volunteers at the Czech and Slovak Children's Cultural Day Camp, Czech & Slovak Festival, and is a member of Sokol Minnesota Youth Link.

Courtney Benson, a Sokol Minnesota Lead Gymnastics Instructor, describes Lily as "a talented, gifted coach, and most importantly an exceptional leader. As much as Sokol has shaped her into the person she is today, she has shaped Sokol for the better. Her kind nature is a strength the organization has been able to leverage; she leads with an inclusive mindset and strives to help others reach their full potential through unwavering encouragement."

Mitchell Gillman, Sokol Gymnast, Coach, and Volunteer



At a young age, Mitchell started gymnastics. He was in the initial class that sparked the resurgence of boys' gymnastics at Sokol Minnesota over a decade ago. Mitchell admits he was not the most coordinated student but he enjoyed coming for lessons. He developed confidence through attending American Sokol Slet competitions and instructors' school. His confidence and positive attitude are reflected in the leadership, discipline, and skillset he brings to the Monday nights boys' class as a coach. Mitchell enjoys working with the younger students. He feels lucky his first job was coaching and to have made lifelong relationships at Sokol Minnesota.

In addition to being a gymnastics coach, Mitchell volunteers at the Czech & Slovak Festival and is a member of Sokol Minnesota Youth Link, in which teens participate in Sokol Minnesota-sponsored events and community projects.

Jason Brozovich, Sokol Minnesota Men's Physical Director, shared that "Mitchell has always been, and still is, a positive person and gymnast. He can be counted on and leads by example. He inspires his teammates to strive for their own goals."

Reflections of the 34th Annual Czech & Slovak Festival held on Sunday, September 24

By Joyce Tesarek



Wow! Sokol Minnesota's 34th Annual Czech & Slovak Festival on Sunday, September 24, was another one for the books! After weeks of anxious study of the rain prediction, which at one time was up to a 92% probability, but with a Plan B ready, we had another lovely fall day for our Festival. Ethnic food, a beer garden, the speaker and performance program, Gift Shop, Sweet Shoppe, kids' games, vendors, and a booth of other Czech and Slovak organizations provided a variety of offerings for the enjoyment of the large crowd that teemed through the C.S.P.S. Hall, our newly re-paved parking lot, and the blocked-off street.

Louise Wessinger organized another marvelous program of speakers, gymnastic demonstrations, and dance and music performances. (See Louise's article on the outdoor and indoor programs on pages 8-9).

We were especially honored to have **Ondřej Pometlo**, Deputy Consul General, Consulate of the Czech Republic/Chicago, **Adam Wilt**, president of our parent organization American Sokol, and **Ondřej Kundra**, Czech journalist and author of the book, *Vendulka: Flight To Freedom* visit our festival. Sally Lieberman, Sokol Minnesota Educational Director, and Renáta Tichá, president of the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center, arranged to have panels from the *Vendulka* book in a special third-floor exhibit. (See the article on Kundra's visit on page 11)



Of course, none of this could have happened without all of our much-appreciated volunteers, before, during (even stepping in as needs developed), and after the festival. We give special thanks to the team leaders, highlighted in bold in the volunteer thank you list below. We are especially grateful for the delicious *guláš*, *chicken paprikáš*, and *langoš* (fried bread) prepared for us by Miša Kotek and Markéta Pálková and *koláče*, with baking led by several Sokol bakers. Thanks also to *jitrnice* sausage by Cynthia at Forster Meats and Catering for again donating *jitrnice* sausage, Robert Bokuvka of Midwest Jelinek, and many others for donating items for the festival.

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None of this could happen without the help of our wonderful volunteers.

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

Pat Andrlé, Tom Aubrecht, Christy Banks, **Dan Bednar**, Diane Bell, Mark Bigaouette, Jason Brozovich, James Bradford, Dennis Cahill, **Mary Cahill**, Lily Callanan, Jana Castillon, **Chuck Draheim**, **Jean Draheim**, Shannon Duffy, **Steve Ernest**, Darren Giese, Eva Giese, Abra Gillman, Roger Green, Mia Grignon, Dave Grostephan, **Glynis Grostephan**, Kristina Gurgel, **Martina Gurgel**, Arlene Hamernik, **Ed Hamernik**, Don Haselbauer, Katie Haselbauer, Lenka Hester, Marlene Hinshaw, **Theresa Hudachek**, Jen Iverson, Tom Iverson, Robert (Jake) Jacobson, Ken Janda, Ann Janda, MaryJo Kacvinsky, Anthony Kaczor, Darla Kolb, Carla Korb, Jyni Koschak, Bob Kostichka, **Bob Kotek**, **Miša Kotek**, Pam Kotval, Lloyd Krocak, **Marit Lee Kucera**, Diana Langridge, Pam Langworthy, Ann Leland, Hannah Lieberman, Jay Lieberman, **Sally Lieberman**, Luboš Mareš, Linda Maxey, **Doreen McKenney**, Brad Narr, Terry Narr and Tristen, **Cheryl Nelson**, Jiří Němec, Maria Neuzil, Mark Neuzil, Gary Novak, Carl Novak, Anna Overbo, Rick Palma, Steve Peterson, Teresa Pojar, **Markéta Pálková**, Petra Riedel, Gina Roers-Liemandt, Jan Roers, Mike Roers, Lucy Rose, Dáša Rosenthal, **Richard Sargent**, **Jitka Sebek**, **Joan Sedlacek**, Steve Shimer, Al Simon, Bonnie Simon, Fred Simon, Ron Simon, Pat Slaber, Brittany Stepan, **Dave Stepan**, Michelle Stepan, Denise Stibal, Cheri Tesarek, John Tesarek, **Joyce Tesarek**, Penny Tesarek, Tom Tesarek, Renáta Tichá, John Topic, Michael Topic, Tereza Treanor, Ray Vanyo, Michaela Wentz, **Louise Wessinger**, **Cinnamon Whaley**, Bryan Wyberg, Alena Youngberg, and Petr Zábranský.

We look forward to next year's festival. Save September 29, 2024, on your calendar!



2023 Czech & Slovak Festival Program Highlights By Louise Wessinger

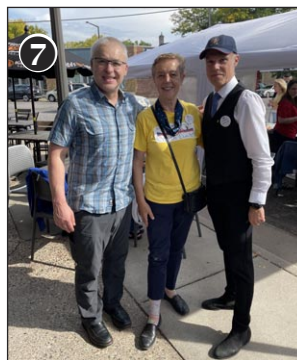
On the Saturday before our Festival we were extremely anxious we would have a rainy day for the festival. Fortunately, we had only a damp morning, followed by a very pleasant afternoon. We were able to go ahead with the two programs to entertain our festival guests, one program outdoors in the sunshine and one inside our gym in our C.S.P.S. Hall.

Our outdoor program opened with our traditional flag ceremony. Former Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Autumn Gare sang our National Anthem, followed by the Sokol Minnesota Singers leading the Czech and Slovak National Anthems. Program Emcee Dave Stepan introduced our Sokol Minnesota President Cinnamon Whaley, who welcomed our guests. As Honorary Consul for the Czech Republic M. L. Kucera extended well wishes and introduced Ondřej Pometlo, Czech Deputy Consul General Chicago.

Czech & Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota Vice President Cheryl Nelson Theuninck greeted the crowd as our Slovak Representative.

Sokol Minnesota gymnast Lily Callanan spoke about the Sokol Minnesota Youth Link group and the activities they have planned for the fall. Former Sokol Minnesota President Dave Stepan presented Youth Leadership Awards and scholarships to this year's winners, Adam Acs, Lily Callinan, and Mitchell Gillman.

Inside our historic Hall, the program began with a demonstration by our Sokol Minnesota gymnastic programs (see page 11). We also had demonstrations of American Kung Fu and Tai Chi, which are being taught at our Hall by John Allen and Luboš Mareš. The Miss Czech Slovak Royalty and the Junior Ambassadors presented their programs.



1. Sokol Minnesota President Cinnamon Whaley. 2. (L-R) Ray Vanyo, American Sokol President Adam Wilt, C&S Festival emcee Dave Stepan. 3. Pat Andrie checked in the many volunteers. 4. Joan Sedlacek in the Gift Shop. 5. Chicken paprikáš. 6. Glynis and Dave Grostephan staffed the Sokol Minnesota Youth Link booth. 7. Dr. Jakub Tolar, Dean of the University of Minnesota Medical School; M. L. Kucera, Czech Honorary Consul/Minneapolis; Ondřej Pometlo, Czech Deputy Consul General/Chicago. 8. Bob Kotek frying the first langoš. 9. Czech & Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota President Renáta Tichá and Vice President Jan Knudtson. 10. The Pajarito restaurant's outdoor floral arrangements. 11. Sweet Shoppe volunteers Tristan, Anna Overbo, Kris Gurgel, and Terry Narr; and Rosina Bianco and Jan Košťál making their selection.

Highlights continued from page 8

The St. Paul South Bohemian Bagpipe Ensemble, directed by Frank Trnka, performed an entertaining variety of music played on traditional instruments. From 2 to 4 p.m., Mary Riebel and her friend Melinda entertained on concertina and piano for dancers, customers of the Sweet Shoppe and the bar, and workers in the kitchen.

The Sokol Minnesota Singers, directed by Don Haselbauer, entertained with a selection of Sokol marches as well as polkas and waltzes. Jitka Sebek of the Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities described their school activities. Izabela Carlson stood in for her cold-stricken mother Barbora and presented certificates to the Slovak children for their art-in-literacy project "Bee Day in May" (see page 12). Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Queen Ellaina Novak performed her talent-award-winning tap dance to the polka tune "Apple, peaches, pumpkin pie...". Princess Alexia Timmerman sang an English version of the Czech National Anthem. The Czech Slovak Junior Ambassadors Alenka, Clara, Evelyn, Jules, Kailey, and Margaret told us about their travels as representatives of our history and culture.

Our Sokol Minnesota children and teen dancers, directed by Louise Wessinger, were next, presenting a variety of Czech and Slovak dances in their colorful *kroje* (folk dress.)

Our guest performers, the Lipa Slovak Dancers of Minneapolis, again gave a beautiful performance of authentic Slovak folk dance under the direction of Lara Ciganko. This year, the Ethnic Dance Theatre showcased a new dance from Hungary and a beautiful duet from Slovakia. As always, these talented young people, directed by Donald LaCourse, lifted our spirits. We had a new performer this year, Jimi the Polka Pirate, who was great in getting the audience up on the stage and dancing several times during the day. The *koláče* eating contests for children, teens, and adults were again entertaining. As a grand finale, the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, as always, provided a beautiful display of Bohemian, Moravian, and Slovak folk dances.

Reflections continued from page 7

Although the festival is our chance to share an afternoon of community, culture, food, and fun, it is also an important fundraiser for Sokol Minnesota and our C.S.P.S. Hall. This year we brought in over \$14,000! We want to give a big thank you to all who attended and helped make this event a community-building and financial success! It was a great day for our Czech and Slovak community, friends, and the West 7th Street area. We look forward to next year's festival. Save September 29, 2024, on your calendar!



1. Sokol Minnesota Singers. 2. Darnell and Dave Stepan of the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers. 3. Taneční Mládež. 4. Lipa Carpatho-Rusyn Slovak Dancers. 5. Jimi the Polka Pirate. 6. Taneční Teens. 7. Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers. 8. Ethnic Dance Theatre Director Donald LaCourse. 9. Ethnic Dance Theatre.

Sokol Minnesota is grateful for all of the fabulous and talented performers who made our 34th Annual Czech & Slovak Festival a great success.

Entertainment Participants: We wish to express our thanks to all of our entertainers, including those who are Sokol Minnesota members and those who practice at the Hall.

Technical/Audio: Richard Sargent, Rick Palma, Sandy Prochaska, Matt Weathers.

Flag Ceremony: Chuck Draheim, Dawn Bulera, Rick Palma, Sandy Prochaska, Michael Topic, and Lucy Rose.

Emcee: Dave Stepan.

Sokol Minnesota Gymnasts: Jason Brozovich, Men's Physical Director.

Sokol Minnesota Singers: Director Don Haselbauer, Ed Hamernik, Marlene Hinshaw, Ann Janda, Ken Janda, Bob Kostichka, Pam Langworthy, Jiří Němec of Masaryk University (Brno, Czech Republic), Richard Sargent, Dave Stepan, John Topic, Michaela Wentz, Louise Wessinger.

Sokol Minnesota Taneční Mládež and Taneční Teens: Director Louise Wessinger and assistants Karin Fisher, Michaela Dojcinovic, and Lucy Rose. Marcus Bachmayer, Izabela Carlson, Luna Fisher, Althea Hoffmann, Seanna and Callista Kluzak, Emre Knutson, Tommy Koster, Juna and Leo Krikava, Olivia and Kamila Marko, Adam, Liliana, and Adela Peterson, Eilis, Magdalena and Killian Robbins, Sylvie Rose, Sara Rosenthal, Martina Sarnicki, Sofia Scholtz, Karolina and Viktorie Svensson, Leon Welle, and Sophia Wenberg.

St. Paul South Bohemian Bagpipe Ensemble (stpauldudy.com): Frank Trnka, Director. Jason Brozovich, Dawn Bulera, Maria Neuzil, and John Topic.

Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers (tancuj.org): Louise Wessinger, Director. By partners: Dawn Bulera with Jason Brozovich, Lenka Hester with Dave Cammack, Jyni Koschak with Michael Topic, Pam Langworthy and Richard Sargent, Julie and Scott Lindner, Judy Metcalf with John Topic, Brittany Stepan, Michelle Stepan with James Metcalf, Teresa Pojar with Anthony Kaczor, Lucy Rose with Gibson Batch, Sandy Prochaska with Richard Palma, Darnell and Dave Stepan, and Renáta Tichá with Tom Aubrecht.

We also wish to thank our guest royalty, dancers, and musicians who graced our outdoor and indoor stages with their talent and performances, including:

Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Organization (www.facebook.com/MissCzechSlovakMN/): Anne Jans, Coordinator.

Lipa Carpatho-Rusyn Slovak Dancers (<https://m.facebook.com/LipaCarpathoRusynSlovakDancers/>): Lara Ciganko, Director.

Ethnic Dance Theatre (<https://ethnicdancetheatre.org/>): Don LaCourse, Director.

Mary Riebel and her friend Melinda.

Jimi the Polka Pirate.



Festival Events from inside our historic C.S.P.S. Hall

1. Mary Riebel and her friend Melinda on the concertina and keyboard.
2. Czech Slovak Junior Ambassadors.
3. Sokol Minnesota Men's Physical Director Jason Brozovich spotting for one of the gymnastics demonstrators.

Czech Journalist Ondřej Kundra Visits Twin Cities By Sally Lieberman and Renáta Tichá



Journalist and author Ondřej Kundra at the Czech & Slovak Festival

During the week of the Sokol Minnesota Czech & Slovak Festival, our community was honored with a visit from award-winning investigative journalist Ondřej Kundra. Kundra, of Prague, is the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the magazine *Respekt*. Kundra gave two talks in the Twin Cities, one on reporting on the war in Ukraine, the second on the subject of his book *Vendulka: Flight to Freedom (Vendulka: Útěk za svobodu)*. An exhibit associated with the book was presented both at the second talk and during the Festival.

In his first talk, held at the Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain in Minneapolis on September 22, Kundra discussed reporting on the war in Ukraine in the context of his extensive work documenting Russian influence and espionage in Europe, including in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. He has visited Ukraine eight times since the war began. The challenges of reporting from the war zone, according to Kundra, include keeping readers engaged as the war drags on, and focusing at least some attention on the Ukrainians' success in keeping their country running despite the war. Some of Kundra's recent reports from Ukraine have presented the conflict through the experiences of ordinary Ukrainians, such as a widow of a Ukrainian soldier.

Kundra's second talk, held at the same venue on September 23, focused on his research into Jan Lukas's iconic photograph of young Vendulka Vogl on the eve of her deportation to Terezín in 1943. Lukas's image of this Czech Jewish child, sitting pensively in her family's home with a yellow star sewn to her coat and a transport number hanging from her neck, is perhaps the most famous photograph documenting the Holocaust in Czechoslovakia. The challenge, for Kundra, was that the photographer and his descendants had meticulously guarded the identity of the subject for more than six decades. With the help of Lukas's daughter, he was able to contact Vendulka, then in her 80s and living in Columbus, Ohio. It took several years, however, to convince her to tell her story publicly for the first time. That story is one of courageous survival and of a lifelong friendship during which Vendulka and Jan Lukas were able to help one another in the face of totalitarian oppression.

In conjunction with the second talk, an exhibit was shown both on September 23 at the Masonic Institute and on September 24 during the Czech & Slovak Festival. Approximately 100 people made their way during the Festival to the third floor of the C.S.P.S. Hall to view *The Second Life of Vendulka V*. Kundra was present and many Festival participants and guests had the opportunity to discuss with him the exhibit and his journalistic work.



Well-known photo of Vendulka Vogl on the eve of her deportation to Terezín in 1943

Ondřej Kundra has received many awards for political analysis and investigative reporting, including the prestigious Ferdinand Peroutka Prize and the Novinářská Křepelka Award. He is the author of five books, including *Putin's Agents (Putinovi agenti)*. His visit to North America this fall was co-coordinated by the U.S. Embassy in Toronto and the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota. Kundra's talks and exhibition in Minneapolis and Saint Paul were sponsored by the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and the Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic in Saint Paul.

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.

Under \$99: Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities in honor of the Dvořák Visit Anniversary Celebration, Shannon Duffy, Ken Mowll, and Wayne Zbytovsky

\$100 - \$499: Mary Krizan in memory of Norm Petrik, Saint Paul Czech & Slovak Folk Dancers, and Joyce Tesarek in memory of Ivan Krizan.

\$500 - \$999: William and Virginia Simek

TOTAL: \$ 1,195

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Škola Students Artwork in World Bee Day Competition

By Barbora Carlson

To celebrate World Bee Day in May and to bring awareness to pollinator protection, Barbora Carlson had her Slovak-language students at the Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities (*škola*) participate, during the last school year, in the international art and literary competition *Včielka Meduľka*, featuring *Honey The Bee*. This event is sponsored and prizes were provided by Apidora,



an apitherapy center in Našice, Croatia, in cooperation with the International Slovak Educational Institution and Association ISEIA. In the second year of this competition, Slovak students living abroad from 11 countries worldwide submitted over 500 artworks and literary pieces.

We are thrilled that five of our students were awarded diplomas and prizes for their work: Hanka Kováč, second place, preschool artwork; Miška Novosad, second place, literary work elementary school level; Eliška Novosad, recognition; Martina Sanicki, recognition; and Finley Smith, recognition. Izabela Carlson presented the awards to the students at the Czech & Slovak Festival on September 24, 2023. Congratulations!

Honey The Bee by Eliška Novosad



Flower Garden by Hanka Kováč

Language Classes - In-person learning is back!

By Sally Lieberman

Sokol Minnesota's 2023 Beginning Czech Class with teacher Michael Trittipio, the first adult language class to start the year in the C.S.P.S. Hall classroom since September 2019.

Best of luck to our in-person and online students of Czech and Slovak and their dedicated teachers!

For information about the classes offered, the instructors, and registration, visit www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/language-classes/



KIDS COLD OUTSIDE?

Spots are still available for the Winter Gymnastics session starting the week of November 27, 2023. Classes hosted by Sokol Minnesota are on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings. For more information, please visit www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/sokol_fitness/

COME INDOORS OUT OF THE COLD AND GET ACTIVE WITH GYMNASTICS AT THE C.S.P.S. HALL!

Tai Chi and Kung Fu at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Kung Fu: Wednesdays 6-7 p.m.
Tai Chi: Wednesdays 7-8 p.m.

The classes at Sokol Minnesota's C.S.P.S. Hall are continuous, so you can join at any time!

Fee: \$40/month.
Family discounts are available.
More information at:
AmerikanKungFuNorth@gmail.com

Travels in the North: Exemplified by the Author's Own Drawings by Karel Čapek, translated by M. & R. Weatherall. The Macmillan Company: New York, 1939, 270 pages. Available at libraries and bookstores.

Karel Čapek (1890-1938) remains my favorite Czech writer, a prolific producer of novels, stories, plays, critiques, poems, essays, journalistic articles, and travel books. He is widely known for his works of science fiction—*R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots)*, published in 1920), which introduced the word robot, and *War with the Newts* (1936). I also especially enjoyed his nonfiction *Talks with T. G. Masaryk* (1929), humorous *The Gardener's Year* (1929), and fiction *Tales from Two Pockets* (1929).

Lately I have been making my way through his travel books, which include *Letters from Italy* (1923), *Letters from England* (1924), *Letters from Spain* (1930), *Letters from Holland* (1932), and *Travels in the North* (1936).

I found *Travels in the North* to be interesting, entertaining, and instructive, boosting my desire to travel in the land of the midnight sun. Čapek's gentle sense of humor is a delight, as he describes the noisy American Christians on board his ship, the Norwegian with strong eyebrows like a squirrel's tail, drinking from cattle horns, and the six Royal Guards in huge bearskin hats that he was told made up half of the Danish army.

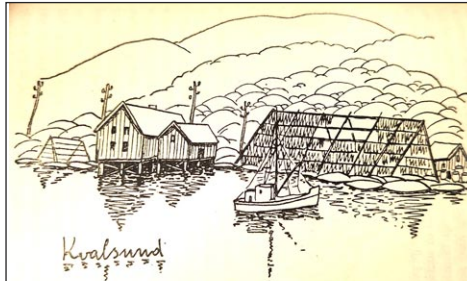
Alan Riach, Professor of Scottish Literature at Glasgow University, is a critic who believes a more accurate translation of the title *Cesta na Sever* would be *A Journey to the North*, rather than *Travels in the North*. Riach's concise description encapsulates Čapek's travel writing: "these are epic journeys, wide-screen panoramas zooming in on intimate details of places, persons, and languages, with nuanced, sympathetic humor and patience, a humbling sensitivity to difference and an understanding of human commonality in all its variations" (*The National*, September 7, 2020).

This was Čapek's second journey to the North, taken on a real ship, the *Håkon Adalstein*, and also in his imagination. "... every harbor is merely a little station of reality along a journey that is a dream," he wrote of sailing through Norway. The first sentence of the book reads, "This journey began a long time ago in the days of my early youth; where are those times when we used to sail out from Göteborg on the *Vega*, or from Vardö with the *Fram*! 'In front of us was the quiet, open sea'; yes, those were the beautiful days. But life is unaccountable, and adventurous; it is only a matter of chance that I have not become an Arctic explorer."

As he travels through Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, Čapek describes and illustrates with great detail and awe the geography, plants, animals, buildings, and racks of cod hanging out to dry. Although they are simple line drawings, his illustrations are more polished and intricate than I have seen in his earlier books. Some pages make me think of an art student's sketchbook showing how he could convey different trees, housing styles, and islands.

As he pictures icebergs, fjords, and even a harpoon shot at a whale, I imagine how huge climactic and social changes affected the area in the last eighty-seven years, and the wealth of the 1960s oil boom transformed Norway from small-town to cosmopolitan.

The midnight sun fascinated Čapek as it would me: "... it doesn't even get dark, it only turns pale, transparent, and phantasmagoric; it isn't darkness at all, but an odd, ghastly light without any source, which seems to rise up from the walls, roads, and water." He wrote eloquently of wanting to travel the same way once more, to see the night there, "The night that has no end. Without end the black sky, and the sea, the twinkling little lighthouses and blinking buoys, the tiny red and white lights, the shining human windows in the fog..."



Čapek's illustration of Norwegian cod drying

This was Čapek's last book, published in Czech in 1936, two years before his death. The Spanish Civil War also began in 1936, and the Nazi movement was on the rise. The author's optimism, curiosity, and gentle humor come through in *Travels in the North*, but I detect an underlying melancholy not typical of his travel books. Čapek noted that the history of these Northern countries included "hostilities, conquests, and wars; and nothing of them [the hostilities] remains; they were all to no good. Some day, people will come to realize no victory is worth while..."

Travels in the North concludes, "My word, it was a good boat, and a good journey."

Gwen is coordinator of the Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures book discussion group. *Literary Ventures* is cosponsored by the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and the Office of the Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic. Find information and updates at cs-center.org or contact gwen@cs-center.org.

Join Literary Ventures for a discussion of *Freedom to Win: A Cold War Story of the Courageous Hockey Team That Fought the Soviets for the Soul of Its People—and Olympic Gold* by Ethan Scheiner at 10 a.m. on Saturday, November 18.

Friendly Friday
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Friday, November 10
Cards
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Questions: activities@sokolmn.org

Czech Honorary Consul News

November
2023

Minnesota had the honor of visits from two diplomats from the Consulate of the Czech Republic/Chicago for three festivals within ten days in September. Consul General Czech Republic/Chicago Jakub Utěšený attended *Dožinky* in New Prague on September 16 and the *Dvořák's New World at 130* concert on September 17 (see page 3-4). Deputy Consul General Ondřej Pometlo came to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's *Czech & Slovak Festival* in Saint Paul on September 24 (see page 8). Minnesota also welcomed Czech journalist Ondřej Kundra, author of *Vendulka, Flight to Freedom*, who gave two lectures and also attended the two displays of the 12 panels from his book, first at the Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain at the University of Minnesota and then at the *Czech & Slovak Festival* (see page 11).

At *Dožinky* on September 16 in the Czech Heritage Village in New Prague, Consul General Czech Republic/Chicago Jakub Utěšený (second right) posed with Czech Heritage Club members (L-R) James Simon, Mayor Duane Jirik, Vi Chromy, and Honorary Czech Consul M. L. Kucera.

Photo by Patrick Fisher, *New Prague Times*.



In his meticulously restored 1929 Model A Ford, Don Pesta, chauffeured Honorary Consul M. L. Kucera and Czech Heritage Club members Vi Chromy and George Mikiska in the 2023 *Dožinky* parade on September 16 in New Prague. Photo by Anthony Kaczor.



Consul General Jakub Utěšený held a breakfast meeting on September 18 with two members from the Minnesota Trade Office: Laurence Reszetar, Director, International Business Strategy, and Mykola Megits, Regional Trade Manager, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.



Slovo Publication Information and Committees

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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.

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More information at www.sokolmn.org

Czech Honorary Consul News

November
2023

Steve Riedel, Corporate Relations Officer at Global Minnesota, arranged for Consul General Jakub Utěšený to present his PowerPoint, *Czechia Economic Snapshot* at Fredrikson & Bryon, P.A., in Minneapolis on September 18.

(L-R) Chris Enger (Axis Communications, Inc.), Steve Riedel (Global Minnesota), Czech Consul General Jakub Utěšený; Honorary Consul M. L. Kucera; Robert Oberlies and Richard E. Weiner (both attorneys with Fredrikson).



The Consul General also was invited to sit in on a session by Stephenson Harwood, the United Kingdom law firm, which was visiting to speak to members of Fredrikson's mergers and acquisitions team.

At the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Czech & Slovak Festival on September 24, Deputy Consul General Ondřej Pometlo was interviewed by a Channel 5 reporter. View the KSTP news clip at <https://tinyurl.com/4ub2tdm8>



Visits to the offices of the Minneapolis Saint Paul Film Society explored bringing *Czech that Film* back to the Twin Cities.

(Left) On September 18, Jesse Bishop, MSPFS Programming Director; Honorary Consul M. L. Kucera, Susan Smoluchowski, MSPFS Executive Director; and Consul General Jakub Utěšený. (Right) On September 25, Jesse Bishop and Deputy Consul General Ondřej Pometlo.

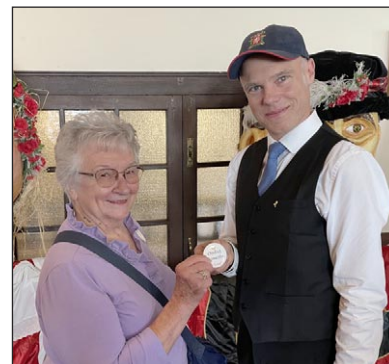


Both Consul General Utěšený and Deputy Consul General Pometlo received Honorary Memberships and Name Buttons from the Czech Heritage Club (CHC).



Attending a *Dožínky* dinner (below) on September 16 hosted by New Prague Mayor Duane Jirik were Jakub Utěšený pinning on his Name Button; and CHC Board Members Fred Simon, Vi Chromy (lower left), plus (not shown) George Mikiska and Honorary Consul M. L. Kucera.

Right: On September 24, at the C&S Festival in Saint Paul, CHC member Vi Chromy gave Deputy Consul General Pometlo his Name Button and declared him also an Honorary CHC Member.



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



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www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/hall-calendar/

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO November 2023

Saturday, January 20

20
24

New Year's Dinner
Svičková s knedlíkem

5 p.m. (doors open 4:30 p.m.)



Price: \$30. per person

Menu:

Beef in cream sauce,
bread dumpling,
dessert, coffee, and cash bar.

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