



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

UPCOMING JUNE AND JULY EVENTS

Czech That Film June 7-9 Mspfilm.org

Board of Trustees

June 12, 7 p.m.

Children's Cultural Day Camp June 17-21

Board of Directors June 20, 7 p.m.

August Slovo Due Date July 1

Board of Trustees July 10, 7 p.m.

Board of Directors July 18, 7 p.m.

Save the Date: Czech film *IKARIE XB-1* (1963): This Czech thriller influenced 2001 and *Star Trek.* July 14-16 at Trylon Theater. www.trylon.org

Nine New Czech Films Coming to Minneapolis June 7-9

Presented by the Minneapolis St. Paul Film Society in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Chicago, *Czech That Film* is a series showcasing the best of Czech cinema from June 7-9. The series is committed to exhibiting films that not only expose participants to Czech culture, but also enlightens audiences, brings people together, and presents inspired entertainment for all.

For the fifth year, the Minneapolis Film Society hosts *Czech That Film*. Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota members, as well as members of all the Czech and Slovak sponsoring organizations, can receive the Partner Rate ticket price of \$8 (regular price of \$10) by ordering tickets online with the promo code: **CZECHTHAT19**. Order tickets at <**mspfilm.org**>

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, and the Honorary Czech Consul are all proud supporters of this 2019 Czech film series.

Friday, June 7

4:15 pm • Jan Palach • 124 min 7 pm • Winter Flies (Všechno bude) • 82 min 9:15 pm • The Hastrman • 102 min

Saturday, June 8

1:30 pm • Garden Store: Deserter (Zahradnictví: Dezertér) • 116 min 4:15 pm • Garden Store: Suitor (Zahradnictví: Nápadník) • 114 min

7 pm • Short Cut (Na krátko) • 104 min*

Sunday, June 9

1:30 pm • Golden Sting (Zlatý podraz) • 106 min

4:15 pm • Patrimony (Tátova Volha) • 90 min

6:30 pm • *Dukla 61* • 150 min To read about each film, go to <czechthatfilm.com/film.html>

*Director Jakub Šmíd will attend the *Short Cut* (*Na krátko*) screening on Saturday, June 8, 7 p.m. A special question and answer session follows. A reception is planned.





More information at mspfilm.org

Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes by Dave Stepan Pozdrav!

At our last board meeting there was a brief discussion of the benefits of Sokol Minnesota membership relative to being a friend or supporter. It got me wondering who these friends are. I believe I saw a few hundred of them at the Band Blast on April 27 at our C.S.P.S. Hall. The event was truly a BLAST and as I looked around the attendees were mostly a new group for me. I bartended with Igor who happens to live not far from me and is originally from Moravia. I fortunately was relieved at the bar by Chuck Draheim in



time to participate in the longest conga line I've ever been in. Sister Blanka Brichta and all of the volunteers did a fabulous job! These are the type of friends and supporters of Sokol who are willing to volunteer when asked. Maybe we need to do more asking outside our Sokol circle? We could expand our volunteer base by asking for help from some of these new faces that you might meet at a dinner or other hall event. Who knows, you might make a friend and possibly find a new Sokol member. Remember to inform your friends of events and bring them to your Hall.

Thanks to Sister Dr. Joyce Tesarek, who has been writing grants to help sustain the C.S.P.S. Hall and our programs. Last month we received two grants totaling 140,000 CK, or just over \$6,100 USD, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic for masonry tuck pointing and for our Czech and Slovak Festival. This shows me that the Czech government values our organization and you, our members and friends. We also had a member recently request information about naming Sokol Minnesota in her will. Perhaps I can convince her to share her story?

Czech That Film Festival is at St. Anthony Main on June 7 - 9, 2019. Jakub Šmíd, young director of the film *Short Cut* (in Czech language: Na krátko), comes for discussion about his film on Saturday June 8, 2019.

Co-directors Sister Louise Wessinger and Sister Judy Aubrecht will be running the 22nd Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp Monday, June 17, to Friday, June 21. This year's theme is *Art Through the Centuries and Sports*. Registration closes June 7. www.sokolmn.org/culture-camp-2019

Now is the time to register for fall Czech or Slovak language classes. Two members of Sister Blanka Brichta's intermediate Czech class, Sister Ally Grym and Austin Palma, will be attending the $\check{c}esk\acute{y}$ jazyk (Czech language) program in Poděbrady, Czech Republic. This is the same program that my wife Darnell and I went to last year in Dobruška, but in a new town. The scholarships are funded by the Czech Foreign Ministry and Charles's University.

I recently read that a *Česká a slovenská škola* Twin Cities (Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities) student was the first recipient nationally of the Seal of Biliteracy in the Czech language. Students are awarded the Seal of Biliteracy based on evidence of achieving proficiency in English plus one or more other languages during their high school years. I ran in races on April 27 and 28; the Get in Gear 10K and Scoops for Troops 5K. I ran the former to give me the opportunity to run and work on getting in shape, and ran the latter to run in memory of a coworker's son who was a soldier in our military. Do something good for yourself this month and do something good for someone else.

Nazdar!

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota provides fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural, and social programs for children, teens, and adults. Information on our programs, calendar of events, membership, C.S.P.S. Hall rentals, and gift shop, plus E-Addresses for our board, program directors, volunteer staff, and the Czech Honorary Consul, as well as *Slovo* past issues, are available at www.sokolmn.org or www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

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Spring Breakfast with Koláče and Craft Sales By Megan Cahill

The spring edition of our biannual Pancake Breakfast was held on Sunday, April 14. Over 120 people were served the delicious breakfast of all-you-can eat French toast and/or pancakes, sausage, and fruit cup. When not enjoying the delicious breakfast, guests browsed the many vendor tables and had the opportunity to purchase *koláče* or caramel corn. Despite challenging weather (snow!) on April 11, our dedicated and much appreciated *koláče* bakers prepared 80 dozen koláče at the C.S.P.S. Hall. They knew many people were counting on enjoying their *koláče* at the Spring Breakfast. Spending much of the day preparing, baking, and wrapping each individual *kolace* were Chair Joan Sedlacek, Roger Green, Don and Katie Haselbauer, Doreen McKenney and Joyce Tesarek. *Koláče* Co-Chairs Glynis Grostephan and Arlene Hamernik packaged 25 pre-orders of koláče, selecting from the flavors of apricot, cream cheese, poppy seed, prune, and raspberry. Selling *koláče* and the ever-popular caramel corn, made by Bob Kostichka, were Shannon Duffy, Darla Kolb, and Patricia Slaber.

A huge thank you to all who volunteered their time in the kitchen or selling tickets to help make the event a success: Allison Berry, Dawn Bulera, Dennis Cahill, Mary Cahill, Girl Scout Troop 55398, Roger Green, Julian Harris, Ed Hamernik, Lenka Hester, Anna Hester, Colin Hester, Dennis Johnson, Lisa Johnson, Bob Kostichka, Miša Kotek, Emma Kotek, Denis Novak, Joan Sedlacek, Joyce Tesarek, Cinnamon Whaley, and Rosemary Whaley-Baisden.

A special thank you to Jean Draheim for another outstanding job arranging for the vendors. The vendors were Jean and Chuck Draheim, Marilyn Gomez, Aneta Janovskova, Gail Jensen, Debra LaValle, Doreen McKenney, Ludmila Palkova, Marketa Palkova-Resong, and the Sokol Minnesota Gift Shop.

The total sales for the breakfast, bake sale, gift shop, and vendor table rentals were \$2,967; the net was \$2,367. Thank you to all of our guests and volunteers for your support of Sokol Minnesota!



1. Dennis Cahill in action. 2. Spring Breakfast. 3. Mark Cahill, Lisa Johnson. 4. Arlene Hamernik handling koláče sales. 5. Dawn Bulera and grandson Julian. 6. Guests in dining room. 7. Guests in main hall, with craft tables and koláče sales.



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Band Blast by Blanka Brichta

On April 27 the third annual Band Blast, the music-friendly fundraiser, was presented at the C.S.P.S. Hall by the Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities and Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. It was a great and fun night with lively music, homemade food, a silent auction, and once again no snowstorm! The Talking Strings, with native Czech Pavel Jany, welcomed Sokol Minnesota members and friends by playing a varied gypsy jazz repertoire with occasional traditional folk songs like Moravian Eště si já pohár vína zaplatím (One more glass of wine

Band Blast Photos on previous page:

1. Talking Strings. 2. The Bad Companions. 3. Jim Steinworth on piano. 4. Brass Messengers. 5. Brass Messengers and full dance floor. 6. Bar: L-R: Lenka Hester, Chuck Draheim and Dave Cammack. 7. Kitchen: L-R: Michaela Giancarlo Kotek and Marketa Resong at the oven. 8. Silent Auction: L-R: Christy Banks, Jean Draheim. 9. Logos of the sponsors. 10. Cold Plate: an assortment of meat and cheese. 11. Emcee Christopher Yeager with Alenka Jans, Junior Ambassador.

for me). Jim Steinworth on the piano was next. Many joined him for a sing-a-long of well-known songs. As the evening progressed, the crowd grew and the hall buzzed even more; the bar and kitchen volunteers were hard-pressed to keep up but did a wonderful job.

The line dance mini-lesson, led by Christopher Yaeger, was eagerly awaited and didn't disappoint. The Saturday Night Fever soundtrack took everyone decades back to disco years and the dance floor filled up. Oh, the moves!

The Bad Companions followed as we all 'traveled' even further in time, to 50's Rockabilly and Jitterbug dances.

The booming yet sweet sound of The Brass Messengers, the ever-popular ten-piece band, came on the stage and people danced, stomped, and jumped until the end of the night. The crowd's chants of ještě jeden, ještě jeden... (one more, one more...) didn't let Brass Messengers leave the stage, and they kindly gave two encores!

Once again, our sincere thanks to the participating bands: Talking Strings, Jim Steinworth, The Bad Companions, and The Brass Messengers for their time and fundraising support. We greatly appreciate Christopher Yeager, who returned as the emcee of the evening for the third time and promoted the Hall throughout the night. Thank you also to Miss Czech and Slovak Minnesota Queen Autumn Gare, Princess Megan Domonoske, and Junior Ambassador Alenka Jans, who joined us for the evening and helped in the fundraising efforts. The evening wouldn't have been a success without all of the countless volunteers and I am truly thankful for each and every one of you! My biggest gratitude goes to Stáňa Gerlach, whose fundraising effort stands unmatched, and Jitka Sebek, whose dedication to the cause is limitless.

And last, but not least, a very, very special thank you goes to David Hartman, who throughout all three Band Blasts was the biggest resource in helping me find musicians and running the sound.

Volunteers: Kitchen: Marketa Resong, Michaela Giancarlo Kotek, and Hana Matousek; Bar: Chuck Draheim, Dave Cammack, Lenka Hester, Bob Kotek, Igor Nestrašil, and Dave Stepan; Silent Auction: Jean Draheim, Marit Kucera, Christy Banks, and Richard Sargent; Food ticket sales: Tom Aubrecht; Admission table: Steve Ernest, Stáňa Gerlach, and Jitka Sebek;

Decorations: Alena Youngberg; Fundraising: Blanka Brichta, John and Stáňa Gerlach, David Hartman, Jitka Sebek, Adriana Wenberg, and Zuzana Bracknell; Poster design: Doreen McKenney; Floor clean up: Dominik Giancarlo and Colin Hester; and countless other volunteers who stepped in and helped with many small jobs and tasks.

Business/organization sponsors of the silent auction: 3M, Great Lakes Aquarium, Guthrie Theater, Minnesota Orchestra, Mall of America, Minnesota State Fair, Minnesota Twins, Old Log Theater, Post, R. Jelinek, Saint Paul Saints, Science Museum of Minnesota, Surdyk's, Taylors Falls Scenic Boat Tours, Three Rivers Park District, and Treadle Yard Goods.

Individual donors to the silent auction: Tom and Judy Aubrecht, Blanka Brichta, Michaela Giancarlo Kotek, Eva Giese, Stáňa Gerlach, Ally Grym, Martina Gurgel, David Hartman, Marit Lee Kucera, Hana Matousek, Mark Neuzil and Amy Kubelek,

Sandy Prochaska, Marketa Resong, Jitka Sebek, Pat Slaber, Joyce Tesarek, Louise Wessinger, and Alena Youngberg.

I am happy to report that our event was a fundraising success. With entrance donations, food sales, bar donations, and the silent auction, Band Blast earned \$4,304 (after expenses) for exterior repairs. I am even more proud to report that the last three Band Blasts (2017-2019) contributed a total of \$10,602 to the C.S.P.S. Hall's Legacy Building Fund. It far exceeded my expectations of what might be possible. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for your support!

Yes, it was a blast!

Sokol Minnesota at the Festival of Nations by Joyce Tesarek

The Festival of Nations, held May 2-5, 2019 at the Saint Paul RiverCentre, was a great success. Thousands of visitors were introduced to ethnic food, music and dance, shopping, and cultural exhibits representing countries from around the world. On Thursday and Friday alone, over 16,000 students visited from schools around Minnesota and nearby states. Many thousands more attended the Friday evening and Saturday and Sunday hours open to the public.

Sokol Minnesota again presented a Czech and Slovak Cultural Exhibit, with the theme this year of Christmas Holidays, and offered a selection of foods and desserts in the Cafe, featuring *perničky* (ginger) cookies hand-decorating demonstrations by Martina Gurgel and many assistants. Wonderful dance performances were presented by adults, teens, and children. The Festival was a great opportunity to share Czech and Slovak culture and a fun opportunity for volunteers to enjoy each other.

Volunteers helped with food preparation and serving, designing and staffing the cultural display, set up, and take down. Check our August Slovo for a full article and photos!

Dancers to Graduate By Louise Wessinger

Two long-time members of the *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční* Teens will be heading off to college next fall.

Chloe Elias Morse is the daughter of Debra and Steve Elias Morse. She is graduating St. Paul Academy and Summit School on June 9. In high school she has been very active. Chloe was Co-President of the Social Justice Club and also active in choir and theater. Another love of Chloe's is photography for which she won a national award in 2018. A highlight of her high school years was her choir trip to New York City, where they sang in Carnegie Hall. Chloe, a National Merit Finalist, plans to attend college but has yet to decide where. She hopes to study something related to the humanities, such as history or English; she has particular interests in cultural development and its connection to social justice.



Dance Graduates Elisa and Chloe.

Chloe started dancing with the group when she was seven years old. Her favorite memories are dancing at *Šibřinky* and signing her name in the book of Good Children at the *Svatý Mikuláš* program. She has learned how important it is to do the things you love, even when you are busy, because they are the things that will bring you the most joy. She advises younger dancers to have fun because it goes by really fast. Her favorite dance is *Milaveska* Polka. Her brother Marius is also a group member.

Elisa Swartz is the daughter of Kari and Bryan Swartz. Elisa has been home schooled by her mother. She will graduate on May 18. Elisa is a very talented pianist. She has often played to accompany the dancers during *Svatý Mikuláš* programs. She also took up Nordic skiing and was "rookie of the year" in 2017. One of her favorite memories has been writing her Senior Thesis and receiving the Minnesota Music Teachers Association Challenge Award. Elisa plans to attend South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City, where she will major in Industrial Engineering and Management.

Elisa joined the dance group when she was 3 (almost 4!). Besides learning about her Czech heritage, she looked forward to coming to dancing every week and making some of her best friends. She said the group taught her to be friends with everyone. Each year was more fun so she encourages the younger children to keep dancing, they will be glad they did. Elisa has two brothers, Everett and Erik, and a sister, Eva, who are members of the dance group. Elisa's favorite dance is the women's dance referred to as the flip dance. I will personally miss her help teaching the younger children in our group.

We wish both Elisa and Chloe all our best and lots of success as they begin this new chapter of their lives.

Gymnastics End of Year Celebration By Sokol Minnesota Gym Instructors

On Tuesday, April 23, families and friends gathered to watch Sokol Minnesota gymnasts showcase what they learned throughout the year in their Sokol gymnastics classes. The celebration started with an introduction of instructors by Girls Head Coach Courtney Benson and Boys Head Coach Jason Brozovich. This year they were honored to introduce five junior instructors who are also on the competition team: Ella, Zoe, Isabelle, Claire, and Theresa. These junior instructors not only teach girls, but they also help to teach the boys class on Mondays. Sokol Minnesota sends instructors to a national instructor school hosted by American Sokol each summer, where they learn skills and progressions, apparatus terminology, Sokol history,



Advanced class: Avery, Reyna, Liz, Clara, Aisling, Kavanaugh, Juniper, Neah.

and many other subjects.

After introductions, the exhibition started with the four to six-year old classes, Busy Bees and Tumble Bugs. Next, the seven to eight-year old girls, Acro Cats, demonstrated their new skills. Sokol Minnesota's growing Boys Class demonstrated skills on the rings and floor. Next, the Advanced class, girls nine and up, performed, followed by the girls' competition group. The competition group performed a special number to round out the exhibition. Trophies were awarded to gymnasts, and all were invited to partake in refreshments.

Sokol Minnesota Gymnastics offers classes for girls and boys from ages four to eighteen. During the school year, three ten-week sessions are held. We are proud of the gymnasts' hard work and dedication. We look forward to holding classes next year. Returning gymnasts will have priority registration. For more information, email fitness@sokolmn.org

Western District Gymnastics Competition By Sokol Minnesota Gym Instructors

Sokol gymnasts and their families drove from Saint Paul, Minnesota, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Omaha, Nebraska, to attend the Western District competition this year in Crete, Nebraska on Saturday, April 13. Twelve gymnasts from Sokol Minnesota participated, with nine girls competing in the silver category and three boys competing in level four. The Minnesota gymnasts had an intra-squad meet at Hamline University in preparation for the Western District competition.

The gymnasts gathered together in the Crete hotel the night before the competition to encourage each other. During the day of the competition, Courtney Benson, the girls' instructor, gave the gymnasts gift bags and a motivational speech. The Western District competition was a great opportunity for gymnasts to perform the skills they had been practicing all year, as well as for them to see gymnasts from other gyms performing different skills and routines.

Each gymnast went home with a medal. Sokol Minnesota gymnasts were represented on the podium for the silver category and level four for different age groups. Representing the boys, Emery took first place in level four for his age group, and Jas and Mitchell took the top two spots in level four for their age group. The girls took home several medals for the silver category, including a second place team award for junior girls. Sokol Minnesota gymnasts were complimented on their team spirit when the girls' team stayed after their events to cheer for the boys.

Families learned more about Sokol history during the weekend events. Erin Armstrong and Mary Cahill won raffle baskets from a Western District fundraiser. After the competition, gymnasts celebrated with a pool and pizza party while parents socialized. We are very proud of our Sokol gymnasts, and we look forward to the next District Competition, which will be held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



Second row, left to right: Lily, Anna, Isabelle, Claire, Erin, Theresa (Theresa was injured and did not compete). 2. Boys Head Coach Jason Brozovich, Jas, Mitchell, and Emery, Coach Matt Schussler. 3. Youngest age group Silver Awards: Amari third place, Norah second place. 4.Middle age group Silver Awards: second and third from left: Lily (4th), Anna (2nd). Two on the right: Claire (7th), Erin (8th). 5. Mary Cahill, Women's Physical Director; Jason Brozovich, Men's Physical Director. 6. Oldest age group silver awards: Ella third (right), Zoe second (left), Isabelle first (center). 7.Mitchell, Jas, Emery.

Charles Contract of the contra

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News from the Language Corner by Blanka Brichta

Students of the Czech and Slovak Language program at Sokol Minnesota have completed another successful year full of fun learning. Two students, Ally Grym and Austin Palma, have been awarded a scholarship from the Czech Republic's Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport for participation in the 30th Summer School of Slavonic Studies in Poděbrady, Czech Republic, from July 1 to 26, 2019. Congratulations Ally and Austin on your accomplishment! We hope you will have an extraordinary experience and we are looking forward to hearing all about it.

Our language program will start again in the fall, the week of September 16. We meet once a week in the evening, offering Czech and Slovak language classes from Beginners to Advanced levels. If you are interested, check our website:

www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/language-classes for more information.

Registration details for the next year will be available later this summer. Whether you would like to learn a few basics or are looking to brush up already acquired skills, we hope you'll join us. *Užijte si krásné léto! Ahoj!* (Have a nice summer! Bye!)

Sokol Minnesota's newest Linden Tree By Jitka Sebek



During the Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities Easter and spring celebration on April 20, school families and guests M.L. Kucera, John Palka, and Mark Dillon honored Sokol Minnesota's C.S.P.S. Hall's newest linden tree (*Tilia cordata*), the national tree of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. May it grow for hundreds of peaceful years. See the *Easter, Lindens, and Spring* article by Jitka Sebek in the May *Slovo*, page 3, for more information on the celebration and linden trees.



Intermediate Czech language students: Seated: Allyson Grym and Austin Palma (scholarship recipients).

Back row from the left: Pat Slaber, Christy Banks, Maria Neuzil, Sarah Votruba, Paul Pavek. Not pictured: Richard Sargent.

2019-2020 Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant Royalty and Junior Ambassadors



(Front, L-R) Junior Ambassadors Kristin Siebsen, Grace Tumasmith, Mikayla Marek, and Alenka Jans; Judge Eileen Tlusty.

(Back, L-R) Junior Ambassador Megan Marek, Judge M. L. Kucera, Queen Autumn Gare, Princess Meghan Domonoske, Junior Ambassador Juliann Will, Judge Dave Stepan.

At the 30th annual Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant on April 13 in Montgomery, Autumn Gare became Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Queen 2019-2020. Meghan Domonoske is Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Princess 2019-2020.

Judges were M. L. Kucera (Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis); Dave Stepan (President, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota), and Eileen Tlusty (Czech Heritage Partnership, Protovin, Iowa).

The Minnesota Pageant now includes the Junior Ambassador program originally created by Deb and Arnie Ziskovski of the former Domácí, Inc.

Singin' in the Grain - a Minnesota Czech Story - world



Al Milgrom with *Singin' in the Grain* poster showing Eddie Shimota, Jr.

premier screening By Denise Stibal

The premier of *Singin' in the Grain: Minnesota's Czech Story*, Al Milgrom's documentary celebrating Czech heritage in Minnesota, was on Saturday, April 6 at the Minneapolis Saint Paul International Film Festival. The event was a sellout and it was attended by several members of Sokol Minnesota. The film follows the Ed Shimota family of Veseli, in Minnesota's



Singin' in the Grain reception: Joyce Tesarek, Blanka Brichta, Al Milgrom, Jitka Sebek, Dave Stepan.

Czech Country, beginning in 1974. Documenting a family and their friends and neighbors that value their bond to each other, to music, and to their Czech heritage is very touching. The segments with views of the beautiful farmland in and around Veseli were truly heartwarming. The film mixes in scenes from the C.S.P.S. Hall featuring Sokol members, including activities and interviews. It was wonderful to see the Czech and Slovak dancers, Fall Festival, children's parties, and the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of Czechoslovakia. The film addresses the question: "What

does it mean to be Czech?" In short, the answer is: faith, family, hard work, food, music, and "good times"! It truly is a film that makes you both laugh and cry. After the screening, Ed Shimota Jr., who was 10 at the start of filming 44 years ago, gave a very gracious "thank you" to Al and his co-director and editor, Dan Geiger. After the movie, a reception was held at Pracna on Main. Thank you to Miša Kotek for preparing the Czech flag dessert, and to everyone who brought food and beverages. A gift basket was presented to Al from Joyce Tesarek and concertina music from Jerry Minar was enjoyed by all.

Minnesota Czech

New Prague Screening: Singin' in the Grain - a



Story

The line was very long at the New Prague High School on Sunday, May 5, to see *Singin' in the Grain - A Minnesota Czech Story*, Al Milgrom's documentary. The 600 tickets sold out several days before the screening. More screenings in Czech

Sellout crowd at New Prague screening of Singin' in the Grain.



Al Milgrom and Eddie Shimota, Jr.

Country Minnesota are planned. Czech groups in other parts of the country from as far away as California and Texas have requested screenings.

Before the screening in New Prague, Jerry Minar, his son, and grandson performed as a concertina trio. Much of the documentary focuses on the Czech-heritage life and music of Eddie Shimota, Sr. In the film, Jerry Minar is seen in several scenes as the sound engineer and producer of Eddie Shimota, Sr.'s first record (yes, vinyl). For the Q&A after the screening, Eddie Shimota, Jr., who has followed in his father's footsteps as a concertina band leader, interviewed Al Milgrom and Jerry Minar, talking about the 45 years that Al has spent filming this documentary.

Singin' in the Grain a Minnesota Czech Story additional screenings

Because of its popularity, additional screenings of Singin' in the Grain have been scheduled.

Czech That Film Festival

Monday, June 10 and Tuesday, June 11, 4:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. both days.

St. Anthony Main Theatres, Minneapolis. mspfilm.com

Duluth/Superior Film Fest

Sunday, June 2, 3 p.m., Zinema Theater, downtown Duluth. www.ds-ff.com

New Prague area

Early to middle June Details: www.newpraguetimes.com

Third Annual Czech May Day in Montgomery

On one of the sunniest and warmest days of the season, Montgomery celebrated Czech May Day on Saturday, May 4. The well-attended event included raising the May Pole, authentic Czech cuisine, bake sale, great Czech beer, music all afternoon by the Czech Area Concertina Club, classic car roll-in, Czech/Slovak heritage royalty, tug-o-wars, ribbon dancing around the May Pole, displays by the Montgomery Historical Society and the Czech

(1)

Honorary Čonsul, and horsedrawn wagon rides.

1. This very straight log is 53 feet long; six feet of the original branches are left at the pine tree's top with, 47 feet are de-limbed and sanded smooth.

2. A round wreath that hangs just below the six feet of original treetop is slid up the pole and attached before the pole goes up.

3. 2x4 crotched bars lift up the May Pole.

4. As the May Pole went up, the 2x4 lifter bars were moved closer and closer to the base; tightly-held long ropes helped to hold the pole steady. At the point the

May Pole was vertical, you





heard the spectators take deep breaths as huge wood wedges were pounded into the ground around the base to keep the pole absolutely stable. The pole remains in place until the 85th annual Kolacky Days, July 26-28.

5. The ribbon dancers were Czech and Slovak Minnesota Pageant Junior Royalty, Kolacky Day Ambassadors, Masopust King, and others in *kroje* who held the ribbons as Carole Kotasek (far left) and Dale Ruhland (far right) instructed the dancers how to wrap the pole by weaving in and out and around each other and the pole.

6. Woven ribbon patterns were created as dancers moved around the pole. The dancers had to retrace their steps to un-weave the ribbons before the next dance could begin.







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Join Us for the 2019 Sokolfest in New York!



See ALL the Details Here:

www.sokolusa.org/ Sokolfest 2019 menu.html

SOKOLFEST 2019: XXVIII Sokol USA Slet, June 26-30, Buffalo, NY

Sweet Home High School will host the Volleyball Tournament and Fitness Challenge in the gym, and Slet performances in the stadium field. sweethomeschools.org

AAU Sanctioned Gymnastics Competitions will be at Greater Buffalo Gymnastics. www.greaterbuffalogymnastics.com

To learn the Senior Calisthenic 2 for the Saturday, June 29 Slet performance. fitness@sokolmn.org

Make your hotel reservations at the Slet headquarters Buffalo Marriott Niagara. www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/bufny-buffalo-marriott-niagara

by Kari and Scott Muyres

Come one, come all to the 89th annual Sokol Camp Booya Picnic on Sunday, August 11, from noon until 5 p.m. Rain or shine, the picnic is held each year at the Sokol Camp in Pine City, which is located on the northeast corner of Cross Lake. We feature live entertainment, including the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers and folk singer Dave Carlson. Come hungry, because we are serving piping hot Booya, homemade cabbage rolls, meatloaf, jitrnice, and a wide assortment of koláče!

We are in *desperate* need of volunteers the weekend before the picnic (August 3 and 4) to help set up tents, tables, and benches. If you are interested and available, please consider volunteering your time and talents. Contact Scott or Kari Muyres at 612-387-9274 or 763-226-0313.

See you at the picnic! Nazdar!

An Inquiry of Remembrance

Did your family or ancestors participate in the Slovak National Uprising, or were they otherwise affected by events in Slovakia between 1943 and 1945, or serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps flying over Central Europe between 1943 and 1945? CGSI would like to hear from you and share your story as the Slovak community reflects on the events of that period in the coming months. Contact Mark Dillon at mdillon@cgsi.org or call 952-473-2765.

89th Annual Sokol Camp Booya Picnic | Highlights of the Western District Semi-Annual Meeting by Mary Cahill

The Western District Semi-Annual meeting was held on Sunday, April 14. Western District President Allison Gerber, Sokol Cedar Rapids, presided. Sokol Minnesota's delegation included Men's Physical Director and Head Men's instructor Jason Brozovich, Women's Physical Director Mary Cahill, Head Women's Instructor Courtney Benson, and Gymnastics Registration Coordinator and Class Instructor, Carissa Skrivanek.

A highlight of the meeting was re-inserting Sokol Minnesota into the Western District Slet and Competition rotation. Minnesota is now scheduled to host the District *Slet* and Competition in 2021. It is the same year as the National American Sokol Slet, which will be held in the Chicago area, and this hosting opportunity may be revisited because the Western District does not typically have a *Slet* and Competition in the same year as a National Slet. Cedar Rapids will host the Western District event in 2020, South Omaha in 2022, and Crete in 2023.

There is interest in having a Western District Skills Clinic. South Omaha and Cedar Rapids are checking on availability of their facilities for hosting this function.

Delegates voted to reimburse early bird registration fees for up to five participants from each Unit who attend and complete the National Instructor School 2019 Course at Sokol Spirit in Brookfield, Illinois. The Western District Annual meeting will be held in Des Moines, Iowa, on Saturday, September 7, 2019.

THE SLOVAK NATIONAL UPRISING: HONORING ITS 75th ANNIVERSARY I. THE CONTEXT By John Palka

On August 25, 2019, the C.S.P.S. Hall will see an international conference honoring the 75th anniversary of the World War II Slovak National Uprising. The Uprising is fully as important to Slovaks as the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich and the massacre at Lidice are to Czechs, but it is barely known in the West. The conference will provide an opportunity to both honor and learn about this central event in recent Slovak history.

The conference—featuring speakers (including one from Slovakia), eye witness accounts of the Uprising, a documentary film, and other special activities-will be described in the August issue of Slovo. This issue provides a brief background for, and description of, the Uprising. Czechoslovakia was an early victim of World War II, sacrificed by Britain and France in their effort to stop Hitler without actually going into battle. Within months of the infamous Munich Agreement of September 30, 1938, Czechoslovakia was divided into two parts. Under pressure from Hitler, a collaborationist and often openly pro-Nazi government in Slovakia declared its independence on March 14th of 1939. German troops poured unopposed into Prague the very next day, March 15th. On March 16th, Hitler declared the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia; the Protectorate was ruled directly from Berlin for the rest of the war. Even at this early time, however, resistance to Hitler had already started forming. Underground cells, both in the Czech lands and in Slovakia, had started to organize. Over time, these cells carried out sabotage against the Germans; facilitated the escape of soldiers and airmen to France and England where they later formed the core of Czechoslovak fighting units; helped thousands of Jews escape; provided outside organizations, including the Czechoslovak government-in-exile in London, with invaluable intelligence about what was happening in their occupied homeland; 12 June./July 2019 Slovo

and were central to both the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich in Prague in 1941 and the Slovak National Uprising in 1944.

Here are some distinguishing features of the Uprising. It was organized within Slovakia. not in London as was the Heydrich assassination; it involved around 100,000 armed fighters and thousands more in civilian support roles; it was staged against the Slovak government itself even more than against the Germans; it was crushed by several divisions of German troops called in by the Slovak government; and casualties are estimated to have numbered in excess of 10,000. The Slovak National Uprising is often regarded as the largest uprising against Nazi ideology to take place during World War II.

The Uprising was led by a self-declared Slovak National Council (such councils had also led the revolt of Slovaks against Hungarians in 1848, and the formal action of Slovaks in joining Czechs to form Czechoslovakia in 1918). This council consisted of six men. Three of the six represented the vision of a post-war democratic, independent Czechoslovak Republic in which the many inequities between Slovaks and Czechs that had been revealed during the first decades of the Republic would be eliminated. The other three represented the communist vision of a socio-economically restructured Czechoslovakia, preferably as a state within the Soviet Union. Even though their long-term visions differed profoundly, these two factions worked closely together in an effort to bring down the common enemy, the Slovak State, and to free the country from Nazi domination.

The National Council drew into its effort the commanding officers of important units of the Slovak army, infiltrated the government (for example, the governor of the National Bank systematically diverted funds for use by the Uprising), recruited tens of thousands of partisans, negotiated with the Czechoslovak government-in-exile in London and the



Adolf Hitler (left) and Jozef Tiso (right) shake hands. Tiso was the leader of the Slovak State during the whole of World War II. He represented the more moderate wing of the state's single governing party but was nevertheless an autocrat and a collaborationist who oversaw the export of over two thirds of all Slovak Jews to their death in concentration camps. Others in the party were even more aggressively pro-Nazi. The Slovak National Uprising was staged primarily against this Slovak government.

Soviet government in Moscow, and more. In the early days of the Uprising, the insurgents controlled over half the territory of Slovakia. The Germans dispatched 48,000 superbly trained, equipped, and battle-hardened troops, and against such a force the ill-equipped Slovaks stood no chance. No matter how hard they fought, the territory they held shrank quickly. However, effective resistance to the German troops lasted about two months, far longer than the four days the German commanders had anticipated. Thereafter, fighting shifted primarily to the east, with major battles taking place between the Germans and invading Soviet troops.

Both the assassination of Heydrich and the Slovak National Uprising were heroic actions against horrific evil. They are widely celebrated in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia. We will be celebrating the Slovak National Uprising right here at the C.S.P.S. Hall. The Uprising was launched on August 29th, 1944. Our commemoration of it will be on Sunday, August 25, just four days shy of the exact 75th anniversary. The next issue of *Slovo* will contain information about this commemorative event.

To learn more about the Uprising, visit the website of the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising at www.muzeumsnp.sk. Most browsers will offer you the option to translate from Slovak into English.

BOOK REVIEW Václav Benda Led Dissident Catholic Czechs By Gwen Willems, Ph.D.

Many think of typical Czech dissidents and Charter 77 signers as liberal and nonreligious, perhaps free-thinkers. In contrast, Václav Benda, a right-wing anti-communist, called himself a "conservative Catholic" or "Catholic conservative." Charter 77, a *The Long Night of the Watchman: Essays by Václav Benda, 1977-1989* edited by F. Flagg Taylor IV and translated from Czech by Barbara Day. St. Augustine's Press, Inc.: South Bend, IN, 2017. 352 pages. Available at libraries and bookstores.

civic document demanding human rights protections in communist Czechoslovakia, had three major groups of proponents: the leftists; secular intellectuals and artists; and Catholics and Protestants, whom Benda led. Czech Catholics protested by distributing *samizdat* (clandestine literature), signing a letter to the pope, and approximately 200,000 went on pilgrimage to Velehrad.

Benda's thoughts are collected in 36 essays in *The Long Night of the Watchman*. The book has three sections: reflections, essays and inquiries, and reports and defenses. *The Long Night of the Watchman* has an excellent introduction, notes on texts, and index.

He eloquently wrote, "Totalitarian power destroys both body and soul, knowing neither exception nor pardon; it is not (like other historical governments), a mere inducement to sin and a test of human freedom, but rather a denial of this freedom and a reign of death."

Benda's signing of the charter was a family decision. He and his wife Kamila knew likely impacts, but according to Taylor, "They also wanted to live according to their beliefs." Kamila was also brave, putting up with constant surveillance and harassment of her family. While her husband was in prison, she continued to make their Charles Square home one of three places in Prague where persecuted persons could come for help.

Benda believed strongly in three fundamental gifts for families and politics–fellowship, freedom, and the dignity of the individual. He sought to build structures and alliances, partnering with the Catholic Church, regional peace movements, Czech student-led movements and demonstrations, and others. He wrote in "The Parallel Polis," originally a *samizdat* essay, about what is perhaps the most famous of his ideas, that new institutions parallel to then-repressive Czech social, economic, and political institutions could be created. New ones would be more responsive to human needs and could eventually replace the corrupt ones.

Václav Benda was born in Prague in 1946, earned a Ph.D. from Charles University, and served as president of the Students' Academic Council. Refusing to join the Communist Party ended his academic career.

He wrote in his autobiography, *From My Personal File*, "Since the age of 18 I have been (often out of necessity rather than from choice) a student of philosophy, an assistant lecturer in philosophy, a schoolmaster, a hydrobiologist, unemployed, a student of mathematics, a mathematician with the railway, a programmer and a stoker. I have also had temporary jobs in a brewery and on a building site, as a cowherd, an assistant arts editor, a linguist, a teacher of logic and a computer expert." With visibility as a Charter 77 spokesman and founder of the Council for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS), Benda was charged in 1979 with subverting the state and jailed for four years. After the Velvet Revolution, he chaired the

Christian Democratic Party. From 1991 to 1998, he served as head of the Bureau for Investigating the Crimes of Communist Party officials. In 1996 Benda was elected to the Czech Senate and served until his death in 1999 at the age of 52.

Gwen is coordinator of the Literary Ventures: Czech and Slovak 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 for the Czech Republic. For more information, go to www.cs-center.org or contact gwen@cs-center.org.

The Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures book club is on summer break. Watch for information on new discussions starting in September.

The Slovak National Uprising

What happened 75 years ago and why it matters

An International Conference Sunday, August 25, 9-5 C.S.P.S. Hall

- Hear experts and historians from museums in Slovakia and Washington
- Learn from Uprising survivors and families
- See The Final Mission about Slovaks' rescue of U.S. Army Air Corps crews

Attendee preregistration required Go to cs-center.org or cgsi.org <u>Early registration options through August 15</u>

Conference Only for CSCC, CGSI, Sokol and Rusin Assn members	Complimentary	
Conference With Lunch for CSCC, CGSI, Sokol and Rusin Assn members	\$10	
Non-members with or without lunch	\$25	
All attendees under age 18	Complimentary	
Late registration as of Aug. 16, subject to availability. Check cs-center.org for prices and conditions,		
Post-secondary students Scholarships available. Email jpalka@whidbey.com for details.		
Conference Sponsors		

Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International

John and Helen Timo Foundation with the support of the Rusin Association of Minnesota National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, Slovak Consulate General in New York

Highlights of the April Board of **Directors Meeting By Denise Stibal**

The Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on April 18. President Dave Stepan reported on the upcoming Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities Easter and spring celebration on April 20. Czech that Film is on June 7 to 9 at Saint Anthony Main Theater, with a possible reception on June 8 for director Jakub Šmíd. Ed Hamernik reported that the scaffold is up on the north side of the C.S.P.S. Hall and we are ready for the brickwork to start. Ed has been in contact with an Engineer to assess Hall structural issues. Jean Draheim continues to update and manage our calendar. The Stage and Performance Committee will meet after the Festival of Nations. Don Haselbauer presented the monthly treasurer's report. Glynis Grostephan reported that we have used the Biz Recycling grant to purchase dishes and additional items for use in the hall. Membership reported that we are currently at 286 members, with one new member, Dave Cammack, New Brighton, Minnesota. The Gaming Committee budget was presented and approved. Pat Slaber reported on our Education program. We currently have 37 students in all levels of Czech and Slovak Classes. Joyce Tesarek, finance committee, reported on our restaurant rental income and also that we received two grants totaling 140,000 CK, or just over \$6,100 USD, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic for masonry tuck pointing and for our Czech and Slovak Festival. Mary Cahill reported on the gymnastics program, including some excellent results from the recent competition in Crete, Nebraska on April 13. Our team had nine girls and three boys competing. We currently have 62 gymnasts in all classes, with a break for the summer.

Judy Aubrecht reported on the Publicity committee activity. Motion approved to subscribe to a Mad Mimi email system membership, which will cover up to 500 email contacts. We've also had success in listings in the local papers for our Pancake Breakfast and Band Blast.

Next meeting: May 16, 7:00 p.m.

Sokol Minnesota Welcomes New Member by Norm Petrik

One individual was accepted to membership in Sokol Minnesota at the April 18 Board of Directors meeting:

Dave Cammack of New Brighton; interests: culture, film, music, dinners, dances, festivals, Welcome to Sokol Minnesota! 14 June/July 2019 Slovo

C.S.P.S.Hall Repairs Underway



Before construction, Don Peltier of Pelco Construction LLC windows at the back of and Ed Hamernik discussed the project.



During construction; shows the bricked-in windows.

www.Sokolmn.org or send a check made out to Sokol Minnesota to 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102.

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors By Glynis Grostephan

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

LEGACY FUND (includes matching Saint Paul Star Grant donations): Under \$99: Glynis Grostephan in memory of Norm Petrik's sister, Maxine Kinsley.

\$100 - \$499: Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities money raised from making sauerkraut (Alena Youngberg lead this project), Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities money raised from Family Nights.

\$500 - \$999: Judy and Tom Aubrecht.

\$1,000- \$4,999 Medtronic Matching Donation for Don Haselbauer's volunteering at Sokol Minnesota.

GENERAL FUND:

In-kind donation: Christy Banks (donated cookbook to Sokol Gift Shop).

TOTALS: Legacy Fund:	\$ 2,115
TOTAL:	\$ 2,115

By Joyce Tesarek

Our Hall masonry work, with money donated for matching our Saint Paul STAR grant, is off to a great start. Pelco Construction has completed bricking-in the board-covered the stage. Bemis Brickworks is well on their way to completing tuck pointing repairs to the C.S.P.S. Hall's north wall masonry. Our next project is the roof parapet repairs.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this project. If you would like to donate to complete the match, go to

Czech Honorary Consul News

His Excellency George S. W. Patten, Sr., Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Liberia, (center), who spoke to the Minnesota Consular Corps on April 26 in Minneapolis, stands here with several other Liberian

diplomats, plus staff and guests of the Honorable Jackson K. George, Jr., Honorary Consul General, Republic of Liberia/ Minnesota (second left), as well



as the Consular Officer from the Consulate General of Canada and honorary consuls from Czech Republic, Chile, Germany, Italy (emeritus), Latvia, Japan, Netherlands, Switzerland, and Tanzania (emeritus). Minnesota is home to four diplomatic consulates: Canada, Ecuador, Liberia, and Mexico, plus over 20 honorary consuls.





(Left) Sebastian Klanica, Czech exchange student at Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis, enjoyed netting the carp with M.L. Kucera at the Czech and Slovak cultural booth at the 2019 Festival of Nations in Saint Paul on May 2.



Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic in Minneapolis, MN

Slovo Publication Information and Committee

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

Advertising in the *Slovo* is available. Please email slovo@sokolmn.org for information on due dates and rates.

Moving or temporarily away: Please notify us via email or USPS mail of your change of address to make sure you continue to receive the *Slovo*. The *Slovo* is bulk mailed and non-deliverable copies are not forwarded or held by the Post Office. Non-delivered copies are returned to Sokol Minnesota and they are billed to us at the first class mail rate. For this reason, we will not send additional issues until we have a current, correct mailing address on record for you.

(Left) Volunteering at the Czech and Slovak cultural booth 2019 Festival of Nations on opening day, May 2: Christy Banks plus Junior Royalty members: Mikayla Marek, Kristin Siebsen, Megan Marek, and Grace Tumasmith, along with Honorary Czech Consul M. L. Kucera.

Background panels courtesy of American Swedish Institute, Minneapolis. Christmas market stalls created and built by Sokol Minnesota member Doreen McKenney.



For the Montgomery Historical Society (MHS) on April 26, Marit spoke about Czech Easter and Christmas traditions. Apples can foretell the future, depending upon whether a star (good fortune) or a cross (ominous) pattern results when the apple is sliced. Minnesota Czech Slovak Queen Autumn Gare, First Princess Meghan Domonoske, and Junior Royalty Alenka Jans each sliced

an apple. Jim Mladek, MHS President, verified the results: all will have good luck for the coming year.

Marit Lee Kucera, Honorary Consul 651-238-0447

minneapolis@honorary.mzv.cz OR mlkucera@outlook.com

Member volunteer *Slovo* staff: Co-Managing Editors (interim): Judy Aubrecht, Mary Cahill, and Joyce Tesarek. Copy Editor: Tom Aubrecht. Production Layout Managers: Amanda Tesarek and Lucas DeBono. Regular Contributors: Glynis Grostephan, M.L. Kucera, Dave Stepan, Denise Stibal, Norm Petrik, and Jean Draheim. Photographers: Martina Gurgel and Joyce Tesarek. Collages: Martina Gurgel. Sokol Minnesota Ad Designer: Doreen McKenney. Mailing List: Penny Tesarek. Mailing: Mary Cahill and Joan Sedlacek. Advisors: Christy Banks, Arlene Hamernik, M.L. Kucera, Norm Petrik, and Jitka Sebek.

Additional contributors this issue: Blanka Brichta, Mary Cahill, Megan Cahill, Mark Dillon, M.L. Kucera, Kari and Scott Muyres, John Palka, Jitka Sebek, Sokol Minnesota Gym Instructors, Denise Stibal, Joyce Tesarek, Gwen Willems.

Additional photographers this issue: Janet Bayliss, Blanka Brichta, Megan Cahill, Rebecca W. Dennis, Roger Green, Jean Keogh, Michaela Giancarlo Kotek, M.L. Kucera, Cheryl Nelson, Carissa Skrivanek, Dave Stepan, Denise Stibal, and Mary Ana Tumasmith.

Additional photographers this issue: Michaela Giancarlo Kotek, Gary Lofstrom, Cheryl Nelson, Kevin Vi.

May mailing: Mary Cahill, Joan Sedlacek.



Minnesota Sokol Camp Association's Annual Booya Picnic Pine City, Minnesota August 11, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m

Slovak National Uprising 75th Anniversary Commemorative Conference C.S.P.S. Hall August 25

30th Annual Czech and Slovak Festival Music. Dance. Vendors. Silent Auction. Ethnic food, beer, and wine! C.S.P.S. Hall September 15, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Check for more events and updates: www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/hall-calendar/ www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota

CZECH AND SLOVAK



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Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO JUNE/JULY 2019

