

What Is Šibřinky, Anyway?

By Jyni Koschak

The tradition of *Šibřinky* began in 1865 when Sokol Prague held its first “real Sokol costume ball.” Sokol founder Miroslav Tyrš coined the name *Šibřinky* based on the verb *šibřiti*, which was derived from imitation of a sparrow’s song, but had evolved to mean practical joking and clowning.

On the evening of February 25, 1865, crowds of spectators gathered in the street outside Sokol Prague to watch the festive carriages arrive. Guards bearing torches flanked the entrance, where a looming bear greeted the masked guests. Inside the beautifully decorated main hall, a kaleidoscope of costumed dancers whirled to live music. The event was a great success, and the tradition of *Šibřinky* has continued to this day.

Join us for our own *Šibřinky* on Saturday, April 18, from 4-10 p.m. at C.S.P.S. Hall.

Come for supper, and stay for the dance! Masks or costumes are highly encouraged, although not required (so why not give that old Halloween costume another spin!).

Don’t miss the \$7 ethnic dinner from 4 p.m.-7:30 p.m., featuring *vepřový řízek* (pork schnitzel) with potato salad and pickled beets. Hot dogs and dessert are also available, along with a cash bar serving wine and Czech beer.

Enjoy a performance by the Sokol Children’s and Teen Folk Dancers at 5:15 p.m., then dance to old-time favorites with the Dale Pexa Band at 6 p.m.

The lively and colorful Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers perform at intermission.

UPCOMING EVENTS April 2015

May Slovo Deadline
April 1

Family Morning
April 4, 11 a.m.

Sokol Minnesota Singers
April 7 and 21, 10 a.m.

Board of Trustees
April 8, 7 p.m.

Member Clean-Up Day
April 11, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Board of Directors
April 16, 7 p.m.

Šibřinky
April 18, 4 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Members’ Featured Friday
April 24, 7 p.m.

Festival of Nations
April 30 – May 3

Šibřinky

Come for Supper and stay for the Dance.

Masked Ball.
Costumes optional.

April 18

Live Music
6 -10 p.m.
by the
Dale Pexa
Band

4 - 7:30 p.m.
Ethnic Czech and Slovak food for sale.
Cash bar.
Menu:
Dinner \$7.00
(pork schnitzel-*vepřový řízek*, potato salad, pickled beets, and bread)
Hotdog \$2.00
Dessert \$1.50
Cookie \$1.00

Public Welcome

\$12.00 Admission at the door

\$10.00 Prepaid ticket
Cut off by April 11
Mail to Louise
3704 Denmark Ave.
Eagan, MN 55123
651-452-6240
Check to: Sokol MN

Folkdance Performance at 5:15 p.m. by Tanecní Mladez and Teen Dancers.
Intermission Performance by the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folkdancers.
383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN
www.sokolmn.org

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Sokol Minnesota
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(Board of Directors)**

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Past issues of *Slovo* and
Hall Calendar of events:

www.sokolmn.org

Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes

By Judy Aubrecht

Pozdrav bratři a sestry/Greetings Brothers and Sisters

On a Monday night in August 2012, my husband Tom and I were at dance practice with the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers. It was 90 degrees inside the C.S.P.S. Hall. After an hour and a half of rehearsing for an upcoming performance, all of the dancers were beyond warm. In attempts to cool off, Tom and other dancers brought towels to wipe their faces, some put wet paper towels on their necks to cool down, and everyone drank lots of cold water. I remember thinking to myself, "Maybe next year at this time, the Hall will be air conditioned and it will not be sweltering in here."

It has been a longer wait, but the final phase of the air conditioning project for the Hall is nearly ready to begin. With many thanks for your donations of all sizes, only \$18,000 remains to be raised for the matching grant fundraising project. Together, we can raise that money.

This project has been organized by the Sokol Minnesota Long-Range Planning Committee. The chairperson of the committee is Ed Hamernik. Members include Joyce Tesarek, Joe Landsberger, Chuck Draheim, Gary Novak, and me. Gary, the project manager, is very experienced with managing large building projects and he looks out for the interests of Sokol Minnesota when developing work contracts. Because Gary also worked closely with the Miller Dunwiddie Architectural firm, which developed the long-range plan for the C.S.P.S. Hall, he keeps in mind the future needs of our Hall.

Phase I of the project included installing a 25-ton air conditioning unit on the roof of the Hall last summer. The plan is for Phase II to begin when the roof is free of ice and snow, probably at the end of April after the gymnastics classes are finished for the season. Our hope is that the project will be finished by June 12, just before the Children's Cultural Day Camp starts. The James Steel Construction Company of Saint Paul is the contractor for the project. This family-owned business started in 1949 and is known for its honesty, quality workmanship, and client satisfaction.

A number of jobs are included in this project. There will be a new cement slab for additional equipment installed near the parking lot. For access, a ladder will be installed that will go from the second floor elevator roof to the third floor roof. Ductwork includes insulating with a closed-cell material. Our current alarm panel is at capacity with the installation of the fire suppression system, so a new panel needs to be installed, along with additional electrical work.

If you have been waiting to make a donation to the Legacy Fund, please send in your donation now. With a final push to raise the needed funds, the project can begin on schedule. We all can then look forward to a "Chill the Hall" celebration party and our hopes for an air-conditioned Hall will come true! *Nazdar!*

Honorary Consuls, plus Sokol Minnesota Committee Chairs (not seated on the BOD)

Honorary Slovak Consul: Donald Pafko Honorary Czech Consul Nominee: Marit Lee Kucera

Past Honorary Czech Consuls: Josef Mestenhauser and Robert Vanasek

Sunshine Committee: open

Gift Shop: Doreen McKenney

Housekeeping: Robert J. (Jake) Jacobson

Kitchen Coordinator: open

Website: Joe Landsberger

Volunteer Coordinator: open

Taneční Mládež and Teen Folk Dancers: Louise Wessinger

Hall Contacts: Chuck Draheim, Ed Hamernik

Slovo newsletter: Marit Lee Kucera, Christy Banks, Deb Ziskovsky, Mary Kucera

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Chill the Hall

Help Air-Condition the Historic C.S.P.S. Hall!

Only \$18,097 needed to finish the project!

\$239,260

\$221,163 raised so far, from donations and a grant!

Work Completed

- Architectural study/drawings
- Roof reinforced
- AC unit purchased
- AC unit installed on roof

Feel the Chill!

Every day your generous donations bring us closer to our goal of air conditioning by mid-June. The cards and envelopes we inserted into the March *Slovo* have raised more than \$1,500 (at press time, March 12).

These donors will be acknowledged officially in the May *Slovo*. Thank you for your generosity!

We hope to see more of those white envelopes arrive in the Sokol Minnesota mailbox. Have you sent yours? Every day you are bringing us closer to our goal to *Chill the Hall*.

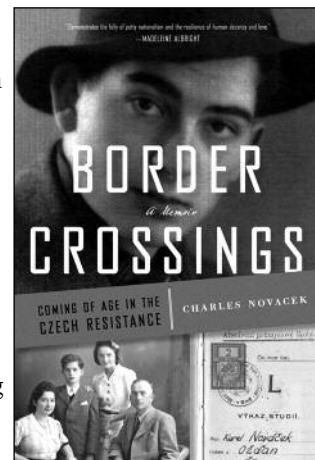
Thank you!

April 24 Member Meeting

Featured Friday

Sandra Novacek will speak on Friday, April 24, at 7 p.m. about her late husband Charles Novacek's book *Border Crossings: Coming of Age in the Czech Resistance*.

The book tells the story of his youth from the age of eleven to twenty when he actively worked with his family in the Czech Resistance against the Nazis and then the communists. After his death in 2007, she fulfilled her promise to her husband by publishing and promoting the book to make sure his story was told.



Border Crossings has been a winner and finalist of 14 independent book awards including "Gold Medal – Memoir" for the 2012 Midwest Book Awards and "Bronze Medal – World History" for the 2013 Independent Publisher (IPPY) Awards. The book was published by Ten21 Press in Detroit and is supplemented with a map, 30 black-and-white photos, a timeline, and biographies of Novacek's relatives in the resistance. Copies of the book can be purchased at the meeting.

Membership Updates By Norm Petrik, Membership Director

At the February 14 Board of Directors meeting, two couples and one individual were accepted as members in Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota: Alton and Marie Krikava from Glenville; and Benjamin and Emily Krikava from Minneapolis with interest in children's dance and crafts, and Matt Nowaczewski from Saint Paul with interests in children's gymnastics, history, literature, music, and theater. At the February membership meeting on February 27, two people were accepted as members: Kathy Ferry from Saint Paul with interests in cooking, genealogy, dance, dinners, festivals, and music; and Pat Randall from Osage, Minnesota, with interests in culture camp, history, and genealogy. Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!

Sokol Minnesota Annual Memberships

Renewals: Individual \$50; Couple \$90.

Senior \$40 (over age 65); Senior couple \$80.

New memberships: Individual \$55; Couple \$95.

This includes a one-time \$5 registration fee with our national organization, American Sokol Organization. Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's annual membership runs from January 1 to December 31. Dues are reduced for members joining after June 30.

Membership applications: <www.sokolmn.org> or by request from Norm Petrik (612-822-6147). Please send your completed membership application and check to

**Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Attn: Membership
383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102**

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE: The *Slovo* is published ten times per year by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, a non-profit organization, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102. Sokol Minnesota members receive the *Slovo* with their membership. The *Slovo* Advisory Committee welcomes submissions. Send news, articles, and pictures digitally to <slovo@sokolmn.org>. **The deadline for the May 2015 issue is April 1.**

This April 2015 issue of *Slovo* will be archived on the Sokol Minnesota website after April 30: <www.sokolmn.org>

Slovo accepts business card-size ads (3.5"x2"), paid in advance: one-time insertion \$25; 3 consecutive issues: \$65; 10 consecutive issues: \$175. Ad reservation deadline is 6 weeks before publication (April 15 for June/July issue), with ad and payment due by copy deadline (May 1 for June/July issue).

Slovo gift subscriptions and non-member renewals are

\$15/year (10 issues). (Rate is good through April 2016.) Please include name, address, phone number, and email address with your new/renewing non-member subscription.

Make your check to: Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota.

Send to: Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *Slovo* Subscriptions, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102.

Extra copies of *Slovo* are \$2 each, plus postage, while supply lasts.

Please contact us for a **change of address**, for problems with *Slovo* subscriptions, if you missed an issue, or if you received notice of payment due when a payment has already been made.

If you are temporarily out of town for an extended stay, the post office will not forward your *Slovo* because we use bulk mail. If you wish to have this newsletter suspended during this time or if you wish to have it sent to your out-of-town residence, please let us know. After one returned issue, we hold all future issues until you notify us. We pay 49¢ for each returned issue.

Email us: <slovo@sokolmn.org>, phone us: 651-290-0542, or write us: Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102. *Thank you!*
Member Volunteer *Slovo* staff: Christy Banks, copy editor; M. L. Kucera, managing editor; Mary Kucera, production assistant; Deb Ziskovsky, labels; Joyce Tesarek and Martina Gurgel, photographers; Doreen McKenney, ad designer; Mary Cahill, mailing production; Joan Sedlacek, mailing; with Jean Draheim, Arlene Hamernik, Norm Petrik, Jitka Sebek, Pam Snopl, advisors. Photographs for this issue provided by Martina Gurgel, M.L. Kucera, and Joyce Tesarek.



Marit Lee Kucera (left) and Joan Sedlacek (right) attended the **Sokol St. Louis 150th Celebration** on February 14. They proudly represented Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Marit and Joan stood under the special 150th Anniversary banner with Marla Breidenbach, president of Sokol St. Louis. Nineteen Sokol units from around the United States were represented and over 225 people attended the gala.

The festivities included a theatrical re-enactment of the Founding Meeting of Sokol St. Louis; Calisthenics Through the Years; singing of favorite Czech songs led by 150th Anniversary Singers; greetings from Jean Hruby (national president of American Sokol), Lynda Filipello (president, Central District, American Sokol), Dr. Bořek Lizec (Consul General of the Czech Republic in Chicago); John Kielczewski (president, CSA Fraternal Life). Sokol St. Louis President Breidenbach welcomed the guests, made introductions, read greetings from Sokol units around the country, then toasted the 150th with champagne in blue-stemmed keepsake glasses. Music by Joe Polach and the St. Louis Czech Express and dancing followed the dinner. During the first intermission, Sokol St. Louis teens performed folk dances. Sokol Minnesota sent a special greeting, written by Judy Aubrecht, our president. Sokol Minnesota also had a congratulatory ad in the 80-plus page program book, as did M. L. Kucera, Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic Nominee for Minnesota, Iowa, North and South Dakota.

There were large displays of Sokol St. Louis memorabilia for guests to view, as well as a special traveling gymnastics exhibit by Rome Milan from Ft. Worth, Texas.

Sokol St. Louis Celebrated 150 years

Slovo is pleased to print here the speech by Dr. Bořek Lizec, Consul General of the Czech Republic in Chicago on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Sokol St. Louis on Saturday, February 14. In 1865, Sokol St. Louis was the first Sokol unit in the United States of America.

Dear Sokols, dear friends,

First of all, please allow me to thank you that you invited me as a representative of the Czech Republic on this truly historic occasion. Sokol St. Louis was founded 150 years ago, only three years later than the first Sokol on the territory of the Czech Republic.

The Sokol organization is older (by more than 50 years) than modern Czech (Czechoslovak) statehood. It was in fact the Sokol organization that played such a key role in the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. The Sokols, not only from our homeland, but also from abroad, including from the United States of America, fought in the Czechoslovak Legion in the First World War; they resisted the Nazi occupation; and they opposed also the communist totalitarian regime. However, the contribution of Sokol to the development of the Czech nation and its state cannot, of course, by any means be reduced to the military and political realm.

Ve zdravém těle zdravý duch. "In a healthy body, a healthy - educated mind." The implementation of this idea into the life of Sokols was to lead to the advancement of an individual as well as the nation. The idea, no matter how simple it may seem at first glance, proved to be a brilliant recipe at the time of its formulation and continues to be just as brilliant a recipe today and for the future.

I have heard many times that Czechs tend to assimilate rather quickly when immigrating to other countries, that they lose their relationship to the old country quicker than in the case of some other nations.

If Czechs, as a relatively small nation, indisputably contributed on a rather large scale to the development of some part of the world, I think that it can be said about the U.S. Midwest. Yesterday I had a discussion with an American of German ancestry, and he told me that he envies us Czechs the impressive history that we can refer to here. In his words, Germany does not have Ray Kroc, Anton Cermak, Kim Novak, George Halas, the Pilsen neighborhood – they are found only when talking just about Chicago.

The glorious era of Czechs in the Midwest – in terms of numbers – seems to be over for a rather long time; for example, the times when Soldier Field stadium, home of the Bears owned by George Halas, was filled by Sokols during a *slet*. However, it is Sokol organizations (almost exclusively) that still carry the Czech flag throughout the Midwest. The Czech flag still flies high over their Sokol Halls. As a Czech and the representative of the Czech Republic for the U.S. Midwest, I would like to express my deep gratitude for your not having forgotten about your Czech roots, for having done quite the opposite.

I really hope that the Czech flag will continue to fly here thanks to you. I am very much aware that American Sokol has today a much more diverse membership and that the development of the sense of unity (linked with individual advancement) is more about community and the United States than the Czech nation. However, luckily there is absolutely no contradiction. As in the time of the first Czechoslovak President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the United States and the Czech Republic are the closest allies. Czechs once again stand practically on all issues by the U.S. that helped our country so many times in the last century to gain freedom.

This year we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, the fall of communism in the Czech Republic. I see this anniversary also as the anniversary of the reunification of Czechs in the homeland with you Czech-Americans, reunification of Czech Sokols and Czech-American Sokols. The Czech Sokols, just as the whole society, have been through a difficult time for long decades. It will still take some time before we fully overcome the sad heritage of totalitarian regimes. The Sokols in the Czech Republic have had a model to look up to during this process — you, their American brothers and sisters.

Please accept my sincere congratulations on your incredible anniversary! *Nazdar!*

ACTIVITIES AT C.S.P.S. HALL



Gymnastics Program: Our gym mats and equipment are taken out and put away after the gymnastic classes every week. (L-R) Mary Cahill, Women's Physical Director, Jason Brozovich (on top of the mats), Boys' Gymnastic Instructor, and Courtney Benson, Girls' Gymnastic Instructor, had help one night in February from Michael Sebek, the new Sokol Board of Directors' Sergeant at Arms.



In our West End Saint Paul Neighborhood: Over 500 people attended the Saint Paul West End neighborhood-wide fundraiser for St. Mark Lutheran Church, held at C.S.P.S. Hall on January 17. Sokol Minnesota donated the space for the fundraiser. Sokol members also donated to the silent auction, volunteered, and attended to show support for this neighborhood church. St. Mark sustained heavy losses from an arson fire on December 12, 2014. Located just two blocks from C.S.P.S. Hall on West Seventh, St. Mark Lutheran, whose history goes back to 1898, shares its church building with Free at Last congregation. The sanctuary (only) reopened for services on February 22, but much work remains to be done. The fundraiser, which raised over \$23,000, included a silent auction, musical acts, kids games, face painting, and great food donated by local restaurants. The church sent Sokol these words of gratitude: "Thanks to everyone at Sokol for playing a much needed role in the benefit! We at St. Mark have been overwhelmed by the support from all the neighbors and businesses!"



The Two Sauerkraut Classes were a Hit: Alena Youngberg demonstrated how to make sauerkraut to two groups on January 31 and March 7. Alena brought samples for the class members to taste the finished product. The class participants had the experience of chopping cabbage in a food processor and mixing the ingredients together by hand. "When I heard that people liked my sauerkraut and enjoyed each others company, I was happy to repeat the class!"

January 31, Front L-R: Kari Swartz, Jim Yanta, Joyce Tesarek, Alena Youngberg (class instructor), Dawn Bulera. Back: Jean Draheim, Colleen Hoppe-Kluzak and daughter, Jyni Koschak, and Pam Kotval.

Alena said, "I am happy that I was able to share the sauerkraut making and got people who were not afraid to go with the hands-on experience. My goal was to bring this simple food making closer to those interested. I demonstrated the process and we talked about the ingredients: cabbage, salt and (or not) caraway seed, as well as materials suitable for the process, storage, and answered some questions."

The second Sauerkraut Class on March 7: L-R: Jerry Pojar, Emilie Slaby, M.L. Kucera, Alena Youngberg (instructor), Merrillyn Enabnit, Monica Brower, Gale Thomsen, and Denise Stibal (missing: Teresa Pojar). Everyone took home a small jar of fresh sauerkraut to ferment-to-taste.

Czech and Slovak School Twin Cities will sell fresh sauerkraut at the Sokol Minnesota Pancake Breakfast (with Bake and Crafts Sales) on March 29, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.



Festival of Nations: April 30 - May 3, 2015



Come and enjoy this colorful event at the Saint Paul RiverCentre

“International Arts”

Volunteers get a *FREE* admission ticket!

Since 1932, the International Institute of Minnesota has presented the Festival of Nations. The Festival is the longest-running multicultural festival in Minnesota. Sokol Minnesota has shared their Czech and Slovak heritage at every festival since the start. You can travel the world under one roof in the cultural exhibit, watch dance performances and demonstrations, and sample foods from around the world.

• Café chairs: Jason Brozovich, Joyce Tesarek, and Dawn Bulera
(café volunteer contact: 651-436-5896).

• Children and teen dance group director: Louise Wessinger.

• General chair: Joyce Tesarek.

• Exhibit chairs: Cheryl Nelson Theuninck and Renata Ticha

(exhibit volunteer contact: cherylnt@earthlink.net and tich0018@umn.edu).

Thursday: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.


Friday: 9:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m.- 10 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Volunteer at our café or exhibit booth and get free admission, then stay and enjoy the FON festivities.

Czech Films at International Film Festival April 9-25



Czech
Slovak
Sokol Minnesota
is proud to sponsor
Nowhere in Moravia (2014)
To See the Sea (2014)

Sokol Minnesota offers gymnastics, language and folk dance classes, dinners, festivals, music, a culture camp for children, and hall rentals at our 1887 historic C.S.P.S. Hall on West 7th in Saint Paul.

Czech & Slovak Sokol Minnesota
383 Michigan Street (at West 7th)
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-290-0542
www.sokolmn.org

Plan to see two recent Czech films at the 34th Annual Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival, running April 9-25. A full list of films and ticketing information can be found on the festival website <mspfilmfest.org>.

The festival features more than 200 films from over 60 countries (in the original languages, with English subtitles) at the Saint Anthony Main Theater in Minneapolis. Both Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota and Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota are proud to be 2015 MSPIFF sponsors

Among the films scheduled is the Czech Republic's *To See the Sea (Pojedeme k moři, 2014)*, about a 12-year-old boy with a camera who begins making a film about his family and, not surprisingly, discovers more than one interesting family secret. The film's director, Jiří Mádln, visits the Twin Cities on June 24 as part of the upcoming *Czech that Film* series (watch for details about this Czech film festival in the May *Slovo*).

Also from the Czech Republic is *Nowhere in Moravia (Díra u Hanušovic, 2014)*, a dark comedy more about the atmosphere of its sleepy mountain village setting than its plot about a ex-German teacher turned pub keeper and her quiet escapades with family and male admirers.

Another notable film is *Corn Island* (from the Republic of Georgia and co-produced by the Czech Republic, 2014), about an old peasant and his granddaughter's persistent efforts to continue farming on a small island in a dangerous no-man's land between Georgia and a breakaway republic.

Sokol members can get the Patron Discount at the box office by mentioning that you are a member of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Tickets for members are \$10; regular priced tickets are \$12.

Sokol member Teresa Pojar created the ad that Sokol Minnesota placed in the 20,000 printed programs; Sokol's logo will appear on the screen before every film, as well as on the Film Society's website. Sokol Minnesota thanks members who generously contributed funds for this sponsorship: Steve Ernest, Libby and Al Imbrone, Arlene and Ed Hamernik, M. L. Kucera, Joyce Tesarek and Norm Petrik, Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, Cinnamon Whaley, and Louise Wessinger.

RECRUITS ARE NEEDED

The Sokol Minnesota Singers need additional voices to carry on an important part of our Czech and Slovak culture: singing and remembering our folk songs.

You do not need to know the language; most of us don't.

Those who do, help the rest of us with pronunciation. No doubt you're already familiar with some of the melodies from childhood. If not, they're short, simple, and easy to remember.

None of us are professional singers. We just like to sing and don't want to lose our heritage. You do not have to be Czech or Slovak to sing with us.

All you need is a desire to sing. Don Haselbauer is our director.

We meet at 10 a.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of most months at the Hall.

Come, join us!
Your heart will rejoice.

Call 612-859-8321 for more information.

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors

By Arlene Hamernik, Corresponding Secretary

Sokol Minnesota greatly appreciates your donations supporting Sokol programs and the refurbishing of our historic C.S.P.S. Hall. Donations are listed under the following categories: under \$100; \$100-\$499; \$500-\$999; \$1000-\$4999; \$5000+; and undisclosed.

General Fund: under \$100: In memory of **Norm Sladek; George Chlebecek; James and Mary Jo Chlebecek** (for gym equipment); **Don and Catherine Haselbauer; Al and Libby Imbrone; Elsie Roepke; Shirley Verner; Louise Wessinger.**

General Fund: \$100 - \$499: **Jason Brozovich.**

Legacy Fund: under \$100: **Mark Bigaouette;**

Joseph A. Kocab.

Legacy Fund: \$100 - \$499: **Pam Kotval**, in honor of **Doreen McKenney** for years of service to Sokol Minnesota;

Darlene Sitko; Mike and Cheryl Theuninck.

Legacy Fund: \$500 - \$999: **Tom and Judy Aubrecht.**

Legacy Fund: \$1000 - \$4999: **Ellen Varina.**

In-Kind Donations: **Dick and Marge Elasky, Goldie Fristet**, household goods, books, wall hangings; **Michael Sebek**, high efficiency bulbs to replace the standard light bulbs.

March 2015 Donation Totals:

General Fund: \$220 • Legacy Fund: \$1,880

C.S.P.S. LEGACY FUND

We ask for your support of renovations to C.S.P.S. Hall as we celebrate the Hall's 128th year in 2015.

Help us **Chill the Hall** (see page 3).

Contact Joyce Tesarek to discuss your tax-deductible donation: 612-822-6147 or <finance@sokolmn.org>

Thank you!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

To help Restore, Renovate, and Refurbish the C.S.P.S. Hall, I make a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

I would like my gift designated: in memory or

in honor of: _____

Make checks payable to **Sokol MN**
Write **Legacy Fund** in the memo line
Mail to **C.S.P.S. Hall Legacy Fund**

383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

Or donate online www.sokolmn.org Thank You!



Consul News

Honorary Consul of Slovakia Don Pafko played his diatonic accordion (*heligonka* in Slovak) before the 100+ guests received their steaming plates filled with Slovakian favorites at the annual *Taste of Slovakia* dinner at C.S.P.S. Hall on March 8. (Look for full details and more pictures of the Slovak dinner in the May issue of *Slovo*.)

Don played his first accordion, purchased when he was 19, for twenty years. His current instrument, which he has played for 25 years, was purchased in Prague. Don commented,

"I enjoyed playing for the Slovak dinner and hope the audience enjoyed it." Yes, everyone did!

After the *Taste of Slovakia* dinner, Don met up with his Lipa Slovak Folk Dancers to audition for the *2015 Festival of Nations* to be held April 30 to May 3 at the Saint Paul RiverCentre.



Miss Czech-Slovak U.S. Queen Visits April 10 Bringing Culture and Fitness

Morgan McMichen, who hails from Independence, Missouri, was crowned queen at the 2014-15 Miss Czech-Slovak United States National Pageant in Wilbur, Nebraska, last August 3. She visits Sokol Minnesota on Friday, April 10, from 7-9 p.m. She is in Minnesota for the Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Queen Pageant on Saturday, April 11 in New Prague, where two Sokol Minnesota members join her as judges, Ed Hamernik and Marit Lee Kucera.

7 p.m.: Morgan will be in crown, sash, and *kroj* for meet-and-greet and pictures.

7:30-8:30: *ZUMBA® with the Queen*, Morgan's fundraiser to help finance her trip to the Czech Republic and Slovakia this coming summer. She includes Czech and Slovak dances in her *ZUMBA®* routines.

Everyone is invited. \$10 suggested donation to attend.

If you are unable to attend, but want to support Morgan, please visit: <<http://www.gofundme.com/missczechslovakus>>

An Exhibit of Habsburgs' Art

The Habsburgs, Rarely Seen Masterpieces from Europe's Greatest Dynasty, at the **Minneapolis Institute of Arts**, through May 10. For nearly 600 years, from the 13th to the early 20th centuries, the Habsburgs ruled much of Europe, including what is now the Czech and Slovak Republics. The opulent history of the Austrian Habsburg Emperors is on view with more than 75 pieces of art from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. The dynasty used its collections to display and promote its power. Tickets: \$20; members: \$16. <<http://new.artsmia.org/the-habsburgs/>>

Collect - Gather - Clean Out!

**Support our Sokol Garage Sale: May 14 -15
Drop off: Wednesday, May 13, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.**

Member News

Sokol Minnesota recently received word that long-time member **Helen Vanek Lander** passed away at age 103 on January 14, 2014, at Ashton Parke Care Center in Texas City, Texas. She was born August 22, 1910. As a Sokol gymnast, Helen performed in many programs, competitions, and *slety*. Helen was our oldest Sokol member; she joined Sokol Minnesota in 1936, almost 78 years.

Gale Thomsen, active Sokol member and volunteer, is undergoing chemo treatments. She has a Caring Bridge site where you can follow her care and send her greetings at galethomsen2 on the Caringbridge website: <www.caringbridge.org>

Dan Washick, loyal Sokol member and volunteer from Darwin, Minnesota, will take his first trip to the Czech Republic, August 3 to 11. The group will travel to Karlovy Vary, České Budějovice, and Prague. He is looking for a travel companion to share occupancy. He is excited to visit the homeland of his ancestors. If you have ever wished to go to the Czech Republic, but have always been reluctant to go without a travel buddy, here's your chance! Call Dan: 320-275-2801.

Prague Days in Chicago 2015 Returning to Bohemian and Moravian Roots

The sister-cities relationship between Prague and Chicago celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2015. *Prague Days in Chicago* is the festival planned for the second week of June and is presented by the City of Prague, Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Chicago, the City of Chicago, and the Prague Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International. The festival explores the Czech (Bohemian and Moravian) roots of Chicago. It will honor famous Czechs and Czech-Americans who co-wrote the history of this great American city, such as the Mayor of Chicago Anton Cermak, astronauts Eugene Cernan and Jim Lovell, "Papa Bear" George Halas, founder of the McDonald's empire Ray Kroc, actress Kim Novak, rock star Jim Peterik, and Illinois political lioness Judy Baar Topinka.

Adriana Krnáčová, the mayor of Prague, will visit Chicago for the festival. Rahm Emanuel, the mayor of Chicago, as well as Bruce Rauner (the governor of Illinois), Andrew Schapiro (the ambassador of the United States of America to the Czech Republic), and Petr Gandalovič (the ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United States) have expressed their support to the festival.

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Every Good Boy Deserves Favor and Professional Foul. Tom Stoppard. New York: Grove Press, 1978, 93 pp.
Available in bookstores and libraries

BOOK REVIEW

Seeing the Absurdity of Totalitarianism

By Gwen Willems, Ph.D.

These two plays are short, easy reads about profound issues. *Every Good Boy Deserves Favor*, a play for actors and orchestra commissioned by André Previn, was written when Stoppard says he “knew nothing about orchestras and very little about ‘serious’ music.” Yet he orchestrated a fine blend of words and music in this tragic farce inspired by real-life Russian Victor Fainberg, arrested for protesting the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. For his political beliefs, Fainberg was pronounced insane and confined in a Soviet prison-hospital.

In *Every Good Boy Deserves Favor*, named for the mnemonic indicating the notes of the treble clef, the lunatic triangle-player Ivanov hears an imaginary orchestra performing under his direction. Ivanov’s cellmate, Alexander, is a political prisoner who will not be released until he admits his statements against the government are due to a mental disorder. He is visited by a Doctor, who makes one wonder who is sane and what is sane in such a world. The Doctor tells Alexander, “The sane are out there and the sick are in here. For example, you are here because you have delusions, that sane people are put in mental hospitals,” to which Alexander replies, “But I am in a mental hospital.” The Doctor diagnoses Alexander with the disease of dissent. When Alexander tells him “I have no symptoms, I have opinions,” the Doctor claims, “Your opinions are your symptoms.”

Every Good Boy Deserves Favor premiered in 1977 at London’s Royal Festival Hall with Ian McKellen playing

Alexander and Patrick Stewart playing the Doctor.

Professional Foul, a television play first aired on BBC in 1977, also delves into the absurdity of communism. It is dedicated to Václav Havel, who was in jail for his Charter 77 activities when Stoppard wrote the play. The title is a football term for a deliberate foul committed as a last-ditch tactic to prevent an opponent from scoring. Stoppard uses the term to refer to World Cup and other actions. Dr. Anderson, a Cambridge professor, is in Prague to present at a philosophy colloquium and catch the World Cup football qualifying match between English and Czech teams. The professor is visited by Pavel Hollar, a former student, now a dissident writer, who wants Anderson to smuggle out his thesis about ethics and rights. At first Anderson refuses, but comes around when Hollar is arrested and foreign currency planted in his residence in a professional foul by the police. Ultimately, Anderson plays his own professional fouls, switching his conference topic to individual and community rights and sneaking Hollar’s thesis out of the country in another scholar’s luggage.

Excerpts from productions of both plays can be viewed on YouTube.

Tom Stoppard was born in Zlín in 1937. His father, a doctor with the Bata shoe company, was transferred in 1939 with other Jewish employees to Bata branches in safer countries, just before the German occupation of Czechoslovakia. The prolific Stoppard is well known for *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1966), *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), and *Rock ‘n’ Roll* (2006).

Gwen coordinates the *Literary Ventures: Czech and Slovak book discussion group*. For more information: <www.cs-center.org> or contact <gwen@cs-center.org>.

Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures in April

Join us Saturday, April 25, 10:00 a.m.-noon, at the C.S.P.S. Hall to discuss the memoir *Border Crossings: Coming of Age in the Czech Resistance* by Charles Novacek. The author’s widow joins the discussion from 11:00-noon and is invited to lunch with the group at the Glockenspiel Restaurant.

The Wrong Target By Vanda Kašová, Columnist from Prague

It was twenty minutes after noon, February 14, 1945, when air raid sirens started to scream in Prague. Very soon after, the roar of forty planes of the 8th American Air Force was heard from the sky. It did not take more than five minutes for those planes to drop 152 tons of bombs on many populated areas of the capital of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (as the country was called during the Nazi occupation). In the air raid 701 people lost their lives, and many more were injured. During the war, the sound of sirens was heard so often that many people did not pay attention to them anymore. However, this time not even those who got to bomb shelters on time were safe: the bodies of 23 victims of the bombing were found almost 30 years later in a destroyed bomb shelter. About 150 houses and historical sites were totally destroyed, and more seriously damaged. Among them was the Na Slovanech monastery, founded by the great king Karel IV in the 14th Century. One of the bombs destroyed a house just a few meters from where I am writing this article in my kitchen.

It was war, and Prague was under the control of the Nazis, so there would unfortunately be nothing that special about that bombing if it were not for the fact that Prague was not meant

to be the target of the raid. The planes were heading for Dresden, about 150 km north of Prague. The bombing was the result of a navigation mistake. The American planes had flown from Great Britain for more than three long hours, the wind was blowing in the opposite direction, and above Belgium they came under defensive fire from the Germans, so they were confused. And both Dresden and Prague have rivers in the city center, and from above they look quite similar. Well, also this kind of thing can happen.

A month later American planes flew to Prague again. This time they targeted the railway and the Kbely army airport near Prague. They got what they wanted. And soon the war was over.

Even now you can notice scars from the February 1945 bombing in Prague. Not that 70 years later the destroyed houses have not been rebuilt, but every now and then, you notice a house that does not match its surroundings. The famous Dancing House (also known as the Fred and Ginger House) on the east bank of the Vltava was built to replace one that was destroyed that day. And Na Slovanech monastery got a new tower: the now-famous and admired Emauzy.

Part 4 of Slovo's ongoing series to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Velvet Revolution and the fall of communism (November 17, 1989). This month we feature the recollection of Dr. Josef Mestenhauser, a '48er Panelist at our September 26, 2014, *Featured Friday Members' Meeting*, at which Sokol Minnesota celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Velvet Revolution. Dr. Mestenhauser is a Distinguished International Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota Department of Educational Policy and Administration, Comparative and International Development Education. He was also the Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic for Minnesota, Iowa, North and South Dakota from 1999-2008. Material for this article was compiled by Christy Banks from past issues of *Slovo*: May 2011: *1948 and Today: Lessons to Remember*; October 2012: *Waiting for Godot: Czechoslovakia 1948, Part 3*; February 2014: *Two Kinds of Czechs: Those Who Escaped into Exile and Those Who Stayed, Part 2*; June/July 2014: *Life Was Better under Communism!*

If you are a '48er/'68er/'89er and would like to share your experience, you are welcome to send 600-800 words to <slovo@sokolmn.org>

Why I Left Czechoslovakia By Dr. Josef Mestenhauser

February 1948 was a long time ago, and there are few living who remember firsthand what happened. The communist revolution unleashed the greatest atrocities a nation can commit on its own people. Mass arrests followed, prison populations swelled, people lost jobs and security, student leaders were expelled from universities, and borders were closed to make it clear that Czechoslovakia would be one large prison.

The only people who stood up to the intimidation of the communist militias and the police were students. They organized a large demonstration designed to march to Prague Castle, hoping to persuade President Beneš not to accept the resignations of the democratic government ministers. The students were, as they expected and as anybody could have anticipated, brutally dispersed with force, arrests, and retributions. I did not participate in this demonstration, for which I was severely criticized. As the student leader in the Law School Student Association and an official of the National Student Union, I was expected to lead this demonstration. The reason I did not is because I had a prior engagement with the Secret Police. It was an engagement I could not break, because three days prior to the coup d'état I had already been imprisoned. The prison was at the infamous Bartolomějská Ulice near the Mustek, where the communists organized a special unit called Section "F," meaning "anti-state activities." This was the same place where later dissidents such as Václav Havel would be held.

When I was in prison, the police practiced what I call the "hot and cold" system of interrogations by shifting at intervals from a rough to a soft approach. I still recall one discussion during one of the "soft" interrogations when they encouraged me to speak freely. I argued that the communist regime could not last, just as the Nazi regime did not, because it oppressed

individual rights. My interrogator countered that the communists had carefully studied and corrected such failures. Essentially, they tried to persuade me that my faith in humanity was misplaced, that people care less for freedom than they do full stomachs. Democracy can be difficult because it requires citizen participation in important public decisions. Winston Churchill reputedly stated, "democracy is the worst system ever designed by men – except all the other ones." I may add that communism is the most cynical system, holding common people in great contempt while pretending to advance their rights.

While still being held for interrogations, I escaped from prison and went into hiding, and I realized my only safety lay in fleeing to the West. I do not think that even our best friends fully appreciated what it meant to leave one's country, how dangerous it was to cross borders heavily guarded with trained dogs and machine-gun towers. Many hundreds were killed in their efforts to flee. When I fled Czechoslovakia on March 19, St. Joseph must have guarded my escape through mud, slush, and sleet, crawling on all fours. Nearby, the communist militia was drunk. They were celebrating St. Joseph's Day.

We refugees did not realize how much we had lost until we were safely abroad. We had left everything: our parents and families, our sweethearts and best friends, our country, our careers. We also carried the tremendous guilt that we were branded "enemies of the people" and that those we left behind might be penalized because of us. Add to that uncertainty as to when, if ever, we might be able to return home and what we would do in exile with outmoded educations and the handicap of speaking a different language.

We also felt reproachful about how easily the communists had taken over and how our leaders had failed to prevent it. The full impact of our loss

did not become obvious until the first Christmas in a West German refugee camp. I will never forget the Christmas Eve of 1948, when we pooled watches and rings to sell on the black market to purchase cigarettes and soap, and to gain a little extra cash for a few bottles of wine in a local Weinstube. When we left after closing hours, we ran into a town crier at the city's main square playing "Silent Night" on his horn. This hymn hit us like nothing else had; many of us hid our tears while we continued on quietly and without a word to the refugee camp. We were homeless people in a strange land. I still remember that night each time I hear "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve.

Since most of us had escaped in a hurry, we did not anticipate that our illegal status would be a problem. Because those fleeing Czechoslovakia had not yet been granted official refugee status and aid, many of us were placed in refugee camps designated for the "Volksdeutsche" (Germans escaping from Eastern Europe) and for the Sudeten Germans just expelled from Czechoslovakia. The latter group naturally hated us so intensely that confrontations occasionally ended in fistfights. The commanding officer of the U.S. Army division in Nuremberg was persuaded to settle us temporarily in an unused army building in that city. The general was so sympathetic to the plight of us students that he allocated a military vehicle with a driver so that we could visit various refugee camps to invite more Czechoslovak students and professors to join us in Nuremberg, and later, in a regular refugee camp in Ludwigsburg after the International Refugee Organization granted us legal status in Germany.

Here we assembled all the officers of our student organizations and formed the National Association of Czechoslovak Students in Exile. Our primary goal was to extend our contacts with Western associations of students;

thanks to help from student leaders and their governments in The Netherlands, Norway, France, Switzerland, Great Britain, and the United States, we ultimately received some 300 scholarship offers. I received one of these U.S. scholarships, which I accepted because there was nobody else in our camp who had the requisite qualifications, namely to be a certified ski instructor.

Aware of the danger of intellectual starvation in a refugee camp, we

established not only our student association but created a “virtual” college that we named “Masaryk College in Exile.” We met regularly in seminar format, with lectures by anybody who knew anything. We were then all students and teachers simultaneously. At that time, we did not realize that it would take almost half a century for our goals to be realized. By the time the communist dictatorship was overthrown, many in my generation had adjusted well to new lives in the free

world, received higher degrees, published, taught in universities, traveled around the world to lecture, and participated in an active fight against what Gorbachev later called the Pax Sovietica, the Soviet effort to achieve total world domination.

When I escaped, I lost virtually everything: family, education, friends, and a future career either in politics or diplomacy. But what I and all my exiled friends never lost were our ideals and faith in democracy and freedom.

C-S Culture Center Lecture

Saturday, **April 18**, 10 a.m., City Bella, Second Floor Community Room, 6600 Lyndale South, Richfield.

Dr. Anna Matušková lectures from Prague: “*Can We Say That?*”

Experiences in Managing Czech and Slovak Political Campaigns.

The presentation focuses on Dr. Matušková’s experiences managing political campaigns, including Karel Schwarzenberg’s 2012 presidential campaign, the 2013 campaigns of the ANO party in the Czech Republic, as well as campaigns in Kosovo and Egypt. Dr. Matušková teaches political marketing and strategy at Charles University, Institute of Communications and Journalism (IKSŽ) in Prague. She was a 2007 Fulbright Research Fellow at Columbia University’s Institute for Social and Economic Research. Since 2006, she has been a vice-chair of Evropské hodnoty, the European Values Think Tank in Prague.

Všechno nejlepší k svátku!

All the Best for your Name Day!

Czech and Slovak calendars list first names; if a coworker or neighbor is having a name day, you wish a Happy Name Day.

This turns into a great reason to have a shot of Becherovka as a group of coworkers with the celebrated person. Yes, at work or after work, maybe.

Czechs and Slovaks love to find a reason for small celebrations that brighten up the day.

A name day gives the perfect opportunity every day!

Find your Name Day:

www.myczechrepublic.com/czech_culture/czech_name_days/alphabetical.html

Sokol Minnesota

GARAGE



Antiques, collectibles, books, clothing, and domestic treasures.

Thursday, May 14, noon - 7 p.m.
Friday, May 15, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Spring cleaning is right around the corner, so bag up those no longer needed treasures and donate them to our annual sale.

Unfortunately we are unable to take:
mattresses, bikes, electronics, and large furniture.

Drop off donations
Wednesday, May 13, from 10a.m. - 6p.m.

To arrange for early drop off: 651-290-0542

*We need to have everything in boxes with lids that close.
We must be able to stack the boxes.
Our storage space is very limited. No big bags, please.*

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota
Event chairs: Marit Lee Kucera and Doreen McKenney
383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102 - www.sokolmn.org

Please Join Us! April 11 Spring Cleaning at C.S.P.S. Hall 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- clean parking lot • plant spring flowers • tidy up ramp area • clean ceiling fans and coat room • repair sliding doors under the bar counter • and more
- Bring rakes, shovels, brooms, leaf blowers, scrubbers, dust cloths, buckets, and work gloves • potluck lunch

R.S.V.P. to the Board of Trustees: <trustees@sokolmn.org> Thank you!

ATTEND AND VOLUNTEER!
Sokol Minnesota 2015 Events

Come out for Member Clean-Up Day
Saturday, April 11, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Šibřinky Sokol Costume Dance
Saturday, April 18, 4-10 p.m.

Dance \$10 prepaid (651-452-6240), \$12 at the door
Special ethnic food and beer for sale
Folkdancers perform. Dance to the Dale Pexa Band

Festival of Nations, April 30 to May 3
Saint Paul RiverCenter
Volunteer and Attend Free!

Café: 612-822-6147 and Culture: 651-340-4767

Collect-Gather-Clean Out!

Support our **Sokol Garage Sale: May 14-15**
Drop off: Wednesday, May 13, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sokol Minnesota on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota
Check for event updates: **www.sokolmn.org**



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Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO April 2015

Celebrating 150 Years of Sokol in the United States

Joan Sedlacek, life member of Sokol Minnesota, talked about the 150-year history of Sokol in the United States on February 27 at our Featured Friday Members' Meeting. In her travels around the country, she has visited many Sokol units and has become friends with Sokols across the nation. She has an impressive collection of books and memorabilia and a vast knowledge of Sokol history. She displayed information on 210 American Sokol Units, many long since inactive, and over 150 pictures of American Sokol buildings.

In addition to Sokol units affiliated with American Sokol (Czech), there are (or were) also other Sokol organizations: Sokol USA (Slovak Sokols), D.A. (American Workman), Catholic Sokols, and Polish Falcons.

Vintage equipment used for exercise and calisthenics included wands (round 3' slightly tapered sticks), dumbbells, and Indian clubs. (Photo on Right) Anne Janda (left) holds dumbbells,



Joan holds Indian clubs, and Jason Brozovich has one of the programs from a long-ago *Slet* (a gathering of Sokol members for gymnastic competitions and precise calisthenics performed by hundreds, even thousands, on large stadium fields).

(Photo on Left) Sokol uniforms through the decades: (L-R): Cynthia Coulter holds a lady's gym uniform from 1914; Judy Aubrecht holds a 1930's lady's gym uniform; Tom Aubrecht holds two stuffed white bears that Joan dressed in 1990's field uniforms in 1995 for Sokol friends Anne and Ed Halik (Berwyn, Illinois) and a majestic falcon statue; Bob Mirabella holds a 1938 men's C.O.S. (*Československá obec sokolská*) dress uniform; Joan displays a vintage Sokol flag.

