



## Czech & Slovak Festival

Sunday, September 23, 2007

Historic CSPL Sokol Hall 383 Michigan Street St. Paul, Minnesota

11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Bingo • Embroidery • Face Painting • Bouncing Castle • CGSI Photo Exhibit  
Krásné Dárky (Beautiful Gifts) • Country Store – New For 2007

Famous Sokol Booya, Delicious Cabbage Rolls, Outdoor Grilled Jitrnice,  
Bratwurst, And Párek (Hot Dog), Sokol MN Kolache, Cream Horns, Oplatky & Pernicky,  
Czech Pilsner Urquell On Tap, Lemonade, Pop And Water

### Upcoming Events

Aug 24  
Monthly  
Membership  
Meeting

Aug 25  
Glockenspiel  
Restaurant  
Customer  
Appreciation  
Day & Pig  
Roast 4-8pm

Sept 13  
BOD  
Meeting

Sept 23  
Czech &  
Slovak  
Festival

Sept 24  
Czech lang.  
classes begin

Sept 28  
Potluck  
Membership  
Dinner

Oct 4  
Dumpling  
Class 1

Oct 25  
Dumpling  
Class 2

Oct 28  
Pork Dinner



**Jerry Minar -**

of New Prague, is one of the organizers of the Czech Country Concertina Marching Band, he also manufactures Hengel concertinas and is one of the guiding forces of the Czech Area Concertina Club. A life long dedication and love of the accordion and concertina has earned him the 2006 "Lifetime Accordion Award".

### Entertainment by:

Our very own  
Sokol Minnesota  
Senior Singers  
Hej, Slované plus...



**Michael Cwach-**

is a Czech-American bagpiper and musician who works at the National Music Museum at the University of South Dakota. He was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue his study of Bohemian bagpipe traditions of the Czech Lands. Cwach has performed at numerous international folk festivals, and Czech-American communities across the U.S. He travels regularly to the Czech Republic.



**Taneční Mládež**  
Sokol's Own Dancing Youth

And much,  
much more!  
Please join us  
Sunday Sept. 23



**St. Paul Czech & Slovak Folkdancers**

**Czech and Slovak  
Sokol Minnesota  
2007 Board of  
Directors**

**President:**

Joe Landsberger

**First Vice President:**

Jay Fonkert

**Second Vice President:**

Doreen McKenney

**Recording Secretary:**

Mary Cahill

**Corresponding  
Secretary:**

Jean Hall

**Treasurer:**

Tom Aubrecht

**Financial Secretary**

Nancy Imbrone

**Educational Director:**

Louise Wessinger

**Membership Director:**

Norman Petrik

**Sergeant at Arms:**

Dan Brown

**Member at Large:**

Jeanette Pafko

**Member at Large:**

Tim Curtis

**Board of Budget  
and Finance:**

Joyce Tesarek

**Board of Trustees  
(co-chairs)**

Judy Aubrecht and

Jean Hall

**Board of Instructors:**

**Women's Physical**

**Director:**

Alisa Hollibush

**Men's Physical Director:**

Norman Petrik

**Gambling Manager:**

Ken Wyberg

**Public Relations  
Director:**Open

**SLOVO**

**Contributing Editor:**

Sharon Wyberg

**Copy Editor:**

Jay Fonkert

**Business Manager:**

Ken Wyberg

## President Komentář/President's Note

By Joe Landsberger

Pozdrav bratři a sestry/Greetings brothers and sisters!

As you read in this edition of the Slovo, the Sokol Camp booya and picnic has taken place, and one of our committees has been busy organizing September's festival. With the first, the Slovo didn't do such a good job promoting. With the second, we are doing a better job. How to account for the discrepancy?

As we go forward in building Sokol, I am very mindful of blending the historic with the new. When I think back on compiling and co-authoring our local Czech and Slovak history, *Gateway to a New World: Building Čech and Slovak Communities in the West End*, I am mindful that the camp wasn't even mentioned, nor was the Czech and Slovak Culture Center of Minnesota. Often at Sokol board meetings we ask ourselves how Sokol will continue to grow, and what will be our priorities for activities that will continue to attract new members? You see, last year, our membership surpassed 300 for the first time in history with the addition of West End neighbors, some with Czech and Slovak heritage, some without. But all share a dedication to preserving a certain undefined love of organizational history, and our building.

“The mission of the American Sokol is to provide fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural and social programs.”

I love this mission statement; it is very relevant to the troubles that face domestic America: lack of a viable national health care system and obesity, the challenges of (public) education, cultural identity and immigration. Sokol has so much to contribute, and our organizational challenge is to find our way toward translating our successful legacy to modern times.

Soon I will be convening a Nominating Committee to recruit members for committees toward helping us in this task, mindful of how our forebears came together to build organizational and physical structure. Renovating the C.S.P.S. Hall is central to our work. It has many needs. Our third floor is unusable since it is not accessible to those with disabilities, and our archives stored there are not completely sorted or catalogued. Our first-floor handicapped-accessible restroom is not readably accessible to the rest of the building, and our educational programs need more classroom space. We need air conditioning for summer-month use.

But it is not all about physical structure! Those marvelous men and women celebrated in third-floor photographs came together to build who we are today, and you are needed. We need a public relations person to promote our programs, and a volunteer coordinator to help a very dedicated group. An archivist! And of course, more volunteers. The Minnesota Historical Society web site states “History informs, inspires, defines us. It opens us to new ideas. Offers us new perspectives. Brings us closer to the future we long to create.”

If you can help, contact me at 651.297.9000 or [jfl@studygs.net](mailto:jfl@studygs.net). Thank you, and Nazdar!,  
Joe Landsberger

*Deepest sympathy is sent to Frank Loss and family  
on the death of Frank's wife, Bertha.*



### Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO

Published 10 times yearly by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota,  
a non-profit organization, 383 Michigan Street, St. Paul, MN 55102

## Czech and Slovak Festival Fun set for September

Some things new, plus some things tried and true, will greet visitors to the 18th Annual Czech and Slovak Festival Sunday, September 23 from 11-4. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend! You won't be disappointed.

Accordianist Jerry Minar will kick off the entertainment, playing from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Jerry's wonderful, traditional music will welcome guests and serenade them while they lunch on favorite Czech & Slovak "goodies."

A formal opening ceremony, featuring American, Slovak and Czech national anthems, will be at 12:30 p.m.

Other featured guest artists include Mike Cwach, a Czech "Dudy" bagpipe musician from Yankton, South Dakota, and Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota, Leah Sticha and her "Princess." In a special performance, members of Ethnic Dance Theatre of Minnesota will present their "Slovak Suite," from their 2007 spring concert program.

The afternoon's entertainment will also include the Sokol Minnesota Singers, the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Dancers, and Sokol's own youth dancers, Taneční Mládež.

Alert Festival-goers might also get a glimpse of those famous street puppets, Jarda and Jitka, fresh from their smash summer performances at the National Czech and Slovak National Museum in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and at Czech Days in Wilber, Nebraska. Also, WFLA (Western Fraternal Life Assoc.) is again donating bikes for the festival's bike giveaway.

### **Calling all Sokol Jelly Makers**

New at the Czech and Slovak Festival this year is a "Country Store/Jelly Cupboard". We would like to offer for sale items donated by our members. We are requesting donations of food items such as home-made jellies, honey, and dry soup mixes – that sort of thing. Items should be in a pint or quart jar (no larger). Jars should be clearly labeled. A drop-off area is set-up at the hall to accept your generous donations. Questions – Call Nancy at 651-481-7949 or email [njimbrone@comcast.net](mailto:njimbrone@comcast.net). I don't know about you, but I can't wait to shop from our cupboard this year!



### **Youth gymnastics classes kick off**

Looking for a way to increase your flexibility, balance, and possibly defy gravity while having fun and meeting new friends? Check out Sokol MN Gymnastics. Try a class and see what you think.

Weekly classes begin Tuesday, September 11 at the CSPS Hall at the corner of W. 7th and Michigan St. in St. Paul. Classes run through April. Gymnasts have an opportunity to compete with gymnasts from other Midwest Sokol gymnast in the spring.

For information about tuition and class schedules, call Sokol MN at 651-290-0542 or Lisa at 651-221-9955.

### **Sokol education program features Čestina, polka, dumplings and beer!**

Sokol Minnesota's Education Committee is offering several exciting opportunities for Czech and Slovak enthusiasts.

#### **Language classes.**

Czech language classes begin September 24 at the CSPS Hall. Students can choose from three levels: Beginner, Advanced Beginner, or Intermediate.

Classes meet weekly for eight weeks. Tuition is \$65, or \$50 for Sokol Minnesota members.

#### **Czech and Slovak dance lessons**

Have you ever wanted to learn to dance the polka, waltz or mazurka? Or just learn a few Czech, Moravian or Slovak folk dance steps?

The St. Paul Czech and Slovak Dancers are offering 5 free classes for beginners this fall. Classes will be from 6:30-7:30 pm on 5 Mondays in October. Instructors will be Charlie Rusnacko, choreographer and Louise Wessinger, program director. For details, call Louise at 651-452-6240.

#### **Dumplings and gulaš**

This is the year of the dumpling. Sokol Minnesota will offer a "dumpling series" this fall, giving hands-on instruction in the making of fruit dumplings, potato dumplings and bread dumplings. Classes will meet on Thursdays in the Sokol Minnesota kitchen. Class dates are October 4, October 25, November 1 and November 15. At the last class, a special guest will teach the making of hearty Czech-Slovak gulaš (goulash) to go with those tasty dumplings.

#### **Holiday baking**

Kevin Hurbanis will demonstrate how to make his popular Slovak Zavorniky (gingerbread cookies) and Hana Matousek will help bakers create a beautiful Vanočka (Christmas bread). Classes are December 5 and December 12.

#### **Brewing with Czech hops**

Sokol member Dave Stepan is organizing another tour to Vine Park Brewery to brew with Czech hops. For more information, call Dave at 612-789-2509.

*Information about all Sokol Minnesota classes and tours is available at our web site [www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org) Sokol Education Director Louise Wessinger is at 651-452-6240.*

## Jarda and Jitka travel to Wilber Czech Celebration

By Doreen McKenney

By the time you read this, Jarda and Jitka should be safely back in St. Paul resting up for our Czech and Slovak Festival in September.

But now, in August, I am traveling with our giant street puppets to Wilber, the Czech Capitol of Nebraska. Wilber, is the county seat of Saline County, and is a bout 45 miles south and west of Lincoln. Over the three day Festival, Wilber grows from about 1,100 to more than 30,000!

Jitka and Jarda will walk (with human help) in the Friday evening childrens' parade and again in parades Saturday and Sunday. Teen members of the Brenda Havel family will help carry the puppets Friday, and a group of teenagers from the local high school's Future Business Leaders of America will help on Saturday and Sunday.

The puppets will have good company - the National Czech and Slovak Queen pageant is held in Wilber every year on stage at the open air amphitheater.

The Minnesota Czech community is always well represented at the Wilber festival. Sokol member

Mark Bigaouette gives a travelogue at their Sokol Hall, Sokol member Corrie Ayers and her family will be participating in the childrens parade and visiting her family. Sokol member Louise Wessinger is giving a kroje exhibit at the Sokol Hall. Dottie Spidel and Ginger Simek will represent the Czech and Slovak Genealogical Society, and help people with genealogy research at the Wilber Library.

Wilber remains one of the most Czech communities in the United States. Year round, you will still hear the old time Czech spoken on the street and Czech polka music piped through speakers on main street.

Wilber is the home town of Gene Aksamit, past president of the Czech and Slovak Genealogical Society, International, and also is the hometown of my mother, Doris Richartik McKenney

The Richartiks homesteaded near Wilber in the late 1800s. Land records show they bought the land from the United States of America and the railroad. They farmed, owned and operated a brewery, and also an opera house.

The land has been passed down through generations and is still being farmed. My mother and her sisters still own a chunk of land and lease it out for farming.

---

## Great Grandma's Trunk goes to Alabama

By Louise Wessinger

In late April, I took my "Great-Grandma's Trunk" to Birmingham, Alabama. Well, not exactly the trunk itself, but rather, the story of how my Hamer ancestors immigrated to Minnesota from Bohemia in 1872.



Louise Wessinger with students at one-room schoolhouse in Palmerdale, Alabama

I have presented "Great Grandma's Trunk from Bohemia" in Minnesota schools many times over the past decade. The program was first assembled as a special project in Montgomery, Minnesota, schools. Since that time, the program has evolved to a PowerPoint and DVD presentation including drawings, photos and maps.

The Birmingham International Center (BIC) contacted me about a year ago about participating in their "Focus on the Czech Republic." BIC is a volunteer

organization formed in 1956 to promote mutual understanding between cultures. BIC provides art and cultural programs to Alabama schools, focusing on a different culture each year. These spotlights include professional development for teachers, authentic performers and other cultural activities.

Jefferson County (Birmingham) Schools have students from many "Katrina Families" – students who came to Birmingham after the devastating Gulf Coast hurricane. BIC though the students would benefit from seeing how people like my Hamer ancestors started life in a new place – Minnesota 130 years ago.

In my program, I dress as my great-great grandmother, Katerina Hajek Hamerova and tell the story of how my family came to St. Paul from the village of Hartmanice in South Bohemia. In the 4-part story, I tell (speaking as Katerina) how we left Europe, how we planned our trip, what it was like to live on the ship, and what America was like when we arrived. My story is based on information from my Dad's cousin, Lucille Kuhn. Lucille's grandmother, Marie Hamer, was born on board the ship between Europe and Baltimore.

While in Birmingham, I gave this 45-minute presentation several times a day. Each day, I was in a different school, so I got to meet lots of beautiful children. On Friday, I did a performance in a one-room rural school in Palmerdale, Alabama. The school had only 14 students and two young teachers in a double-wide trailer. They were a wonderful audience.

# Czech Immigrants Flavored Minnesota History

By Jay Fonkert

The history of Czech immigration doesn't get a lot of attention in Minnesota, home to legions of Germans, Swedes and Norwegian bachelor farmers. But the history of early Minnesota Czechs is as colorful and vibrant as any group that came to Minnesota.

Czech immigration to the United States is a bit tricky to study because there was no Czech nation at the time of the large immigration wave from Europe in the late 1800s. Instead, American immigration and census officials usually identified Czech speaking peoples as Austrians or sometimes Bohemians.

Wisconsin, with its reputation for political and religious freedom, was an early draw for Bohemian immigrants who had weak attachment to the church. Czechs were established in eastern Wisconsin by the 1850s. In the next 10 years, the frontier extended into Minnesota, where fresh arrivals from the Old Country joined Wisconsin and Iowa transplants to establish Minnesota's first Czech communities.

If you're looking for numbers, Chicago is the place to go to find Czech heritage, but if you're after flavor, Nebraska, Minnesota and Iowa are the places to check out.

Chicago outstripped even New York in the number of Czech immigrants. But, Czechs were just a small part of the immigrant crowd in Chicago, where large numbers of Poles, Irish and other nationalities also settled. By 1920, the largest Czech populations were in the city's west industrial suburbs. In 1920, Cicero was the fourth largest Czech city in the world.

While total numbers were smaller, Czech settlements stood out more in the rural Midwest, where some communities were heavily Czech. Czechs clustered in eastern Nebraska west of Omaha around Wilber and to the north around Schuyler. Another large contingent settled in LeSueur, Rice and Scott counties in Minnesota. A third concentration developed around Cedar Rapids and Tama, Iowa. Another sizable Czech community developed in South Texas.

Most immigrants to Minnesota came from southern Bohemia and Moravia, where farmers and laborers didn't benefit from the agricultural improvements and industrialization occurring farther north. The Catholic church and Austrian nobility controlled large amounts of land, stifling the economy.

Czechs began emigrating in significant numbers in the 1850s, but the numbers picked up in the late 1860s and early 1870s when subdivision of family lands and an agricultural depression made the American Midwest look more attractive. By the late 1850s, Bohemians had settled

in five Minnesota locales: the Hopkins-Lake Minnetonka area, south of Owatonna in Steele County, the Scott-Rice-LeSueur County area, Fillmore County in far southeastern Minnesota, and around Silver Lake in McLeod County.

Later, Czech farmers found their ways to the recently lumbered areas of Pine, Mahanomen and St. Louis County, as well as scattered areas in western Minnesota.

Neighbors from the Old Country often settled close together in Minnesota. The LeSueur-Rice-Scott county area drew heavily from the Ceske Budejovice area, and Steele County attracted families from Usti nad Orlici via Wisconsin. Old country names appeared on the map of Minnesota—Budejovice, Trebon, and Veseli in the Scott-Rice-LeSueur area. When the railroad came through Montgomery in 1877, Budejovice faded into oblivion. Similarly, Veseli lost out to Lonsdale in the race for commercial success.

By 1880, more than 4,000 Bohemians lived in the area stretching from Owatonna northwestward toward McLeod County, but Czech Minnesota was about to enter a more urban phase. Czechs had established St. Stanislaus Kotska church in St. Paul's West 7th area in 1872. Immigrants from the Bohemian-Moravian highlands founded the Cyril Congregational Church in 1886. CSPS was established in St. Paul in 1876, and the present-day CSPS Hall (home of Sokol Minnesota) was built in 1887. By 1930, one-third of Minnesota's foreign born Czechoslovaks lived in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

While the majority of Czech immigrants were nominally Catholic, many sympathized with "free-thinkers," and had somewhat loose ties with the Church. Especially in urban areas, fraternal and benefit associations such as Sokol, ZCJB (Western Bohemian Fraternal Union) and CSPS (Czecho-Slovanic Benefit Society) were often the center of community life. But, the churches also played an important role, especially in rural areas. In the early 1920s, ten parishes still supported elementary schools that helped preserve the Czech language and culture. In St. Paul, St. Stanislaus conducted services in Czech until 1945.

Czech culture and language are still alive in Minnesota today, in large part due to organizations like Sokol Minnesota and the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center. Immigration from other parts of the world continues to reshape and energize Minnesota today, but appreciation for Czech and Slovak culture rests on a rock solid foundation built by Czech and Slovak immigrants dating back 150 years.

*author's note: Much of the material for this article is drawn from C. Winston Crislock, "The Czechs," in June Denning Holmquist, ed., They Chose Minnesota: a Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981) and James Paul Allen and Eugene James Turner, We the People: an Atlas of America's Ethnic Diversity, (New York: McMillan Publishing Company, 1988).*

## Iron Lace Crosses

Story and photo by Paula Pojar Vukonich

Hidden away in small cemeteries scattered across this country are some nearly forgotten treasures of traditional Czech artistry. These are the iron crosses, cast iron grave markers made with such elaborate detail of fleur de lis, scrolls and filigree that they look like lace.

I first noticed a few of these crosses in a tiny Czech cemetery on a desolate South Dakota prairie. How incongruous their delicate beauty was on that parched land, the site of my ancestors' abandoned homestead claims.

Then again I saw many of the iron crosses in St. Wenceslaus cemetery in the early Czech settlement of Spillville, Iowa. The church and cemetery date back to 1860, only a few years after the earliest Czech settlers arrived, including two sets of my great-great-grandparents. The church sits atop a small hill overlooking the town. Impressive for its age, it is perfectly preserved.

Behind the church and extending down the hill is the cemetery with hundreds of cast iron crosses, large and small, in various designs and on different types of bases. They are all painted silver, and when viewed with the sky and the church as a background, the lace-like crosses seemed almost a celestial sight. Some months later I observed five more cast iron crosses in an Hibbing, MN cemetery, abandoned before 1920 when the town was moved.

Now I was intrigued with these unusual monuments and began to research them. I found pictures of similar crosses in two old cemeteries in the Czech Republic, near Bílá Hůrka and outside of Klatovy. I'm sure there are many more. The Bohemian crosses were similar in design to those in this country. They were very large, and most were painted black. I don't know the dates on these crosses. In many areas these artistic grave markers were stolen and sold for scrap during the Communist era.

The German Russians also made iron crosses, but theirs were made of wrought iron and fashioned by blacksmiths. The design was created by bending, rolling, twisting and fusing iron bars on a forge. The Russians brought their tradition to this country, and left many examples of wrought iron crosses in western North Dakota, where large groups of them settled.

The Czech iron crosses are completely different in appearance, construction and design because they were made of cast iron. Cast iron is made by pouring molten iron into a sand mold. The sand mold is formed

by pressing a wooden pattern into fine, damp, packed sand leaving an impression of the design. Creating the wooden pattern required a great deal of woodworking skill, and was usually done by a furniture maker or carver.

One such Czech artist was Charles Andera, who lived in Spillville, Iowa. He came to America as a young boy around 1860 from near Tabor, Bohemia. It is believed that Charles apprenticed as a furniture maker with his half-brother who had trained in Vienna. Charles opened a furniture store in Spillville, and did much of the detailed woodworking in St. Wenceslaus Church, as well as the altars of nearby churches. He also made coffins, as furniture makers commonly did in those days.



St. Wenceslaus Cemetery, Spillville, IA

Perhaps this combination inspired him to make patterns for iron cross grave monuments like the traditional ones near the town where he was born in Bohemia. Charles started creating the cemetery crosses about 1875, and continued making them until his death in 1929. He fashioned his incredibly intricate patterns with wood and plaster of paris, and had the casting done at a foundry. It is thought that he cast the name plates for the crosses himself. Charles incorporated religious symbols and images into his designs. A skull and crossbones was a reminder of man's mortality. The crucified Christ was on all the crosses symbolizing redemption. He also decorated the crosses with angels, cherubs, the Lamb of God, the Virgin Mary and the crown of thorns.

Charles Andera had eight different designs of crosses, and many different bases. The crosses varied in size from 3 feet 9 inches to 10 feet. He was also a photographer, and took pictures of all his different styles of monuments and assigned them numbers, but no evidence of any catalogue has been found. He marked some crosses with his initials, or the city, or the date, some with the number of the cross and some not at all.

Not only do the Andera crosses fill the St. Wenceslaus cemetery in Spillville, but they have been found in twelve states from Texas to northern Minnesota, to New York, and throughout the Midwest. Deceptively delicate, many of these beautiful monuments have marked graves in Czech Catholic cemeteries for well over 100 years, a lasting tribute to those who rest there, as well as the artistry of this Czech immigrant, and the traditions of the homeland.

*Author's note: Based on research from "Andera Crosses" web site at [www.klimesh.com](http://www.klimesh.com), with the permission of Cyril Klimesh, Charles Andera's grandson. Please visit the web site for additional information and photos.*

## News from the Czech & Slovak Republics

### Slovaks face housing and energy price rises

Minnesotans are worried about rising energy and food prices, but citizens of the Slovak Republic are perhaps even more worried about their personal finances. Slovak Radio International reports that household energy costs are expected to rise 16% in 2008. The country's three regional distributors have already agreed to buy electricity from the national utility, Slovenske Elektrarne, at rates 20% higher than 2007 prices.

Housing prices have also risen rapidly. First quarter 2007 increases reached 16%, according to the Bank of Slovakia. The average price per square meter has jumped 90% in five years.

Source: Slovak Radio International ([www.slovakradio.sk](http://www.slovakradio.sk)), 29 July 2007

### Weekends at the Cabin

Czechs and Minnesotans really aren't so different from one another! Minnesotans head up north to the cabin on the weekend. Thousands of Czechs go to the cottage in the country.

A media poll in 2001 found that one in five Czechs spent weekends at their cottage in 2001, but the same poll found the number has dropped to less than 8% in 2007.

Cottages were popular during the Communist era when travel to vacation destinations outside the country was difficult. Some Czechs made their cottages from homes vacated by ethnic Germans after World War II. The biggest boom was in the Sudetenland, along the German and Polish border.

20% of all dwellings in the Czech Republic are cabins and cottages, but the Czech still lag well behind the Scandinavians in this custom.

Source: Radio Prague ([www.radio.cz](http://www.radio.cz)), posted 26 July 2007

## Czech pop star to perform in Minneapolis

Czech pop music star Lenka Dusilová will perform at the Cedar Cultural Center Thurs., Sept. 13, at 7:30pm. Her 2005 CD *Mezi Světy* (*Between Worlds*) took the Czech music world by storm and reached gold record status within weeks of its release. *Mezi Světy* won the 2006 Czech Academy of Music Angel Award (the Czech Grammy) for best rock album and Lenka herself won as best female vocalist. She has been voted best female vocalist every year since 2000 by readers of the premier Czech music magazine, *Report*. She performs and records with her band, Secret Service, and has also recorded and performed with the Czech Republic's preeminent folk-rock band, Czechomor.

Dusilová is a native of the famous spa town Karlovy Vary. (Karlsbad).

## September 28th Membership Meeting

Dinner at 6:30 • Meeting at 7:30

Attention all Sokol Minnesota members. The Annual Potluck dinner will again be held prior to the membership meeting on Sept. 28. Everyone is encouraged to attend and bring a dish to share.

Remember, membership meetings are held on the 4th Friday of each month. That being said – both Nov. and Dec. stray from that norm. Nov. is on the 30th (because of Thanksgiving) and we skip the meeting in Dec. – when everyone has so many other things going on.

Please try to join us this fall on September 28 and November 30.

## Black Top Art!

Wistful... the beauty of the CSPS (Česko-Slovanská Podporudící Společnost) parking lot at sunset in black and white! Can you picture the bright yellow and blue lines? The shiny black surface? At the end of July, Minnesota Sealcoating of Bemidji resurfaced the CSPS Hall parking lot. The Sokol Board of Trustees has also engaged Marv Kuipper, Inc. to complete the insulation and sealing of the roof above the storage area of the second floor. Thanks to Sokol Trustees for their hard work!

## Corrections

The correct translation of last month's song title, *Měla Jsem Mileho Parukaře* is "I had a Dear Wigmaker." The correct spelling for the first song is *Ty Jsi Moje První Laska* (*You are my First Love*).

We love to use Czech and Slovak words in the *Slovo*, but are not always able to spell words with the appropriate diacritical marks. We apologize and ask your patience. In the future, we hope to use more authentic spelling.

Local author Joan M. Wolf has published a novel for young adults about a young Czech girl taken from her home village of Lidice, Czechoslovakia, by the Nazis in 1942. There will be a Publication Reading and Reception, Fri., Sept. 28th, 7 pm at the New Brighton Family Service Center, New Brighton, MN. There will also be a reading on Nov. 2nd at the Red Balloon Bookshop in St. Paul.



CSPS Hall parking lot photo by Joe Landsberger

## Bohemian Hall on the Prairie

By Libby Rybnicek Imbrone

While touring the countryside south of Mandan, North Dakota, in July, we went looking for the old Bohemian Hall on Hwy 6. The Hall was also known as “ZCBI” or “WFL” Hall.

Imagine our surprise and pleasure to see a group of folks by the front door and the doors wide open. The group included noted Prairie Ballad songwriter and singer, Chuck Suchy, his son and friends, Kent Svihovec of Mott, North Dakota, and a young man and young woman from Plzen and Jihlava in the Czech Republic.

During a visit to the Czech Republic, Mr. Svihovec had invited the young people to a Svihovec family reunion in Mott in southwestern North Dakota – although it was not known if they were at all related.

Surprisingly I was able to communicate well enough in Czech to please the guests. Speaking of pleasure,

---

## Bohemian Hall Honored by Centennial

By Brian L. Gray

*(published in the Mandan (ND) News, 27 July 2007; article and photo reprinted with permission of The Mandan News)*

Not much is known about the Bohemian Hall, or the goings on behind it. Not even the current committee, the ZCBI, knows exactly when it was built.

“We don’t know what season it was constructed, or anything like that. We only know the year it was made. Down in the basement, it has the year written on it – 1907,” said Erna Schmidt, a member of the ZCBI Bohemian club.

ZCBI is Bohemian, an acronym for Zápvní Češko Bratrské Jednota, which translates as the Western Bohemian Fraternal Association.

The hall, now currently used primarily for wedding receptions, was once a vibrant home for the Bohemians that moved to this area. The building was virtually its own community when it first began. Christmas and Memorial Day celebrations, Schmidt said, were popular dates for event to happen.

It was also a place for weddings and funerals. “They would carry the casket out into the hall, hold the ceremony, then take the casket out to the cemetery,” Schmidt said, referring to the cemetery lot located near the hall that was used primarily by the Bohemians.

The building was built as a sturdy structure, and most of its original architecture remains intact, including

it was especially interesting to enter the Hall and to note that it is in good condition. Meetings of the ZCBI still are held there, as are “Concerts on the Prairie” presented by Chuck Suchy.

And, on the wall is a Sokol charter-type document nicely framed from early 1900’s. This Bohemian Hall is on the National Register of Historic Sites and is well known in the area, as many couples met their future spouses while attending dances or events there.

Across the Highway from the Hall is the Bohemian Cemetery, known as St. John’s Cemetery, It is well kept, and the names on the monuments are those of the earliest Czechoslovak settlers of the area. Buried there is also one Civil War soldier.

My father, Hynek Rybnicek, a stonecutter and monument dealer in Mandan, quarried the stone and created many of the monuments. Often farmers requested that my father quarry a rock from their land and create a monument from that rock.



Mandan Bohemian hall – photo from *Mandan News*, with permission.

the building’s original floor, although “it’s darkened over the years. It used to be lighter,” said Schmidt, adding that it has only had minor remodeling, including tin roofing, new pine board and storm windows.

In the 50’s, the hall was used by the public for parties and dances, but that slowly dwindled away.

And the ZCBI are planning to change that. The organization hopes for more public events like this to happen in the near future. Schmidt said the organization purchased liability insurance for the building, something they’d never have done before. One of their main interests are in holding Saturday night dances with live music.



The hall is located about eight miles south of Mandan, right off Highway 6.

*Slovo editor’s note: The hall was opened to the public this August for a centennial celebration.*



## CGSI Celebrating 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

By Chuck Romportl

The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society, International (CGSI) is celebrating its 20th anniversary during the coming year.

CGSI got its start in 1988, when 25 people gathered at the CSPS Hall in St. Paul to discuss genealogy. Today, CGSI has more than 3,000 members in 49 states and 6 foreign countries. CGSI has become a major resource for anyone looking for ancestors from the Slovak and Czech lands. The organization's mission is communicated in its logo, a picture of a tree, where the leaves form the shape of Czechoslovakia.

The Society's publications have a great reputation. Members treasure their copies of the quarterly journal, *Naše Rodina* (Our Family). 8 volumes of Surname Indexes have been published, with more on the way. The Society's keystone publications are *The History of Czechs in America* (written originally in Czech by Jan Habenicht – translated and published by CGSI in 1996), and *The History of Slovaks in America* (written originally in Slovak by Konstantin Culen – translated by CGSI and due to be out in print before the end of this year).



Original members of Czech and Slovak Genealogical Society, 1989: Dave Pavelka, Helen Peterson, Teri Buckeridge, Mark Bigaouette, Paul Makousky, Lucille Micka, Mary Halbert, Dolores Jorgenson, Al Kranz, Jim Robasse and Karleen Sheppard

CGSI offers several Quarterly Workshops in the St. Paul area, Winter Symposia every other year throughout the country, and a National Conference in the years between. The “crown jewel” of CGSI's National Conferences was the 2005 “Back To The Homeland” Conference in Bratislava, Slovakia and Prague, Czech Republic. Participants learned first hand at the Slovak and Czech Archives about their ancestors.

The 2007 National Conference will be a little closer to home – in Madison, Wisconsin, October 18-20. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Lenka Matusikova, Archivist from the National Archives in Prague. She will bring a reproduction of the major exhibit on

Czech Genealogy that was on display at the Czech National Archives when CGSI was there in 2005.

Plans are still underway for the 20th Anniversary Celebration, possibly in Spring 2008 at the CSPS Hall where CGSI began.

The best way to find out about CGSI is through its website [www.cgisi.org](http://www.cgisi.org)

There you can find out about library holdings, publications and other

sales items, how to become a CGSI member, and about conferences, symposia and workshops. You can write to CGSI at P.O. Box 16225, St. Paul, MN 55116-0225, or call 763-595-7799.



## Dancers light up Festival of Nations

By Louise Wessinger

The St. Paul Czech and Slovak dancers once again delighted audiences at the 2007 Festival of Nations in St. Paul in May. To mark the 20th anniversary of dance master Frantisek Bonus' visit to St. Paul, the troupe performed two dances he taught when here. The dancers opened with *Esmeralda's Polka*, a ballroom dance and followed with an historic set called *Starodávní*. In this dance, Moravian shepherds preserved the formal dance steps of the aristocracy together with a spirited, informal polka. The performance concluded with a group favorite, a lively Slovak cardas.

Sokol's Tanečni Teens also performed at the Festival. The twelve girls performed a Slovak women's dance, *Hore Hronski Cardas*, the *Tratra Polka*, *Rovenacka* (Tailor's Dance) and *Čerešničky*. This is the second year the Festival has honored our teen groups with a special

place in the Festival program.

The teens also joined the young Tanečni Mládež (Sokol Youth Dancers) in their performances. The 32 dancers performed *Boleslav*, *Boleslav and Tancuji*, *Tancuji*.

The audience loved their beautiful folkdress. Special congratulations go out to Carolyn Cahill and Jennifer Gedde, who graduated from high school in June. Both have performed in the dance group since they were 4 years old!

*The St. Paul Czech and Slovak Dancers welcome new dancers, especially “a few good men” or couples. Contact Louise at 651-452-6240 for information.*




## Great Job!

Sokol member Dan Washick, Darwin, MN, has participated in the MS 500 ride to raise funds for multiple sclerosis. This was his 11th year and he has ridden 3,300 miles so far!

## Song of the Month

Submitted by Georgiana Dolejsi  
*Stará Lipa (The Old Linden Tree)*

Pod tou naší starou lípou, stávala malá lavička	Under our old linden tree, there was a small bench
A tam na ní, sedávala, moje milá Anička	And on that bench my dear Annie would sit
Když tu lípu, pradéd sázel, bylo mu sotva dvacet let.	When great grandfather planted that tree, he was barely 20 years old.
S prababičkou, prožívali, ten svůj nejkrásnější věk.	With great grandmother, they lived through their most beautiful years.
Pověz ty mně, stará lipo, proč uvadá tvoje listí?	Tell my, old linden tree, why do your leaves wilt?
Proč se nikdy, nenavrátí, to naše mladé štěstí?	Why does the happiness of our youth never return?
Už tej naší, staré lípé, listí vadne a opadá,	
Na lavičce, opustěné, nikdo víc nesedává.	

## Readers Write

I was brought up in Yorkville in Manhattan, NY, and went to school speaking only Czech. I belonged to Klub Mlately and Zabos, etc. We danced at the World Fair, Empire State Building and Madison Square Garden. I worked in a Czech bank, but later went to college and became a paralegal. My husband and I went to Czechy 10 times. All the above is gone, so I love your newsletter. I donated my costume to your local dance group. I currently belong to the Long Island Sokols. Keep up the good work.

Nazdar!

Diane Kahn, Medford, New York

## Donations

James Hanzel for Slovo *Thank You!*  
Bessie O'Neill in memory of Babe Vanyo  
Doreen McKenney in memory of  
Dan Brown's father  
Donations in memory of Bertha Loss:

Elsie Roepke Kent & Marlene Henshaw  
Valeria Kuisle Don & Doris McKenney  
Robert Vanyo Ken & Sharon Wyberg

Total donations \$138.00.

**Sokol MN thanks you for your generosity!**

## Sokol Minnesota News

By Marlene Hinshaw

This Father's Day, the *Pioneer Press* featured articles by children who learned lessons from their fathers. Included was an article by Ray Vanyo, about his father Bob. There are 11 children in the Vanyo family. Ray was impressed by the fact that his father held 2 and 3 jobs, volunteered at Sokol and church and still maintained a large vegetable garden. Bob taught Ray how to prepare the soil and maintain a productive garden for the family. Ray stated, "He also taught me to dance and sing. When we were growing up, we were all part of a Czech and Slovak folk dance group. He taught me the essence of life."

Sokol is grateful to Bob and his late wife Babe for the lessons they taught their children. It's hard to imagine a Sokol event without the involvement of a Vanyo family member. Ray is following in his father's footsteps. For the past few years he's been in charge of Sokol MN's wonderful pork dinners. This year, Ray will take over as chair of the Sokol Camp Booya in Pine City. He's replacing the very able husband/wife duo, Don and Pat Andrlé, who've co-chaired this event for the past 24 years. Thank you Don, Pat and your crew of volunteers for years of service to Sokol.

On July 5, Sokol member Bertha Loss died after a long illness. Bertha is survived by her husband of 69 years, Frank Loss and their 5 children. She is also survived by sister-in-law, Anne Neubauer. Bertha was an elegant and artistic person. Our sympathies to her family.

Congratulations to Sokol member Steve Fritze. In June's Mpls./St. Paul Business Journal, Steve was ranked the number 1 hardest-working chief financial officer (CFO) out of the top 25 of MN's 100 largest public companies. Steve is a 27 year veteran of Ecolab. An interesting profile of Steve can be found at [minneapolis-stpaulbusinessjournal.com](http://minneapolis-stpaulbusinessjournal.com). Steve and his wife, Susie, were instrumental in getting the dishwasher for our hall. Many thanks Steve and Susie! No longer do we have prune-like hands after each Sokol dinner. Susie is the daughter of Georgiana Dolejsi.

Congratulations to Sokol member Jan Knudtson on being accepted for the Dobruska Scholarship. She'll live in the Czech Republic this month learning the language and culture. Jan is the 4th member from our Sokol unit to be accepted for this competitive scholarship.

Recently, the Sokol MN dancers performed at the Metrodome. They were part of the MN Twins Diversity Day celebration. Scott Hinshaw reported, "it was fun!" They changed in the purple carpeted Vikings locker room. They were on the field with Twins players and found that exciting. Louise Wessinger, Diane Bell and Sue Martin were surprised to see themselves on the jumbotron screen.

Our dear member Verona Vrochota is bravely battling cancer. On June 16th her family held a celebration of her life in Veblen, SD. Several hundred family and friends attended. As always, Verona is in good spirits. We wish her well.

Georgiana Dolejsi went to the hospital for surgery and became a local TV star. The TV station was doing a segment on retired nurses returning to work as volunteers. They needed a patient to interview and chose our bubbly George. It was a positive segment and George was perfect for the role. It was replayed the several times. Hollywood? It could happen!

Other members recovering from surgeries include Azi Zemen, Lucille Pavlicek, Jay Fonkert, Carole Gonsowski and Judy Aubrecht. May you all heal quickly and completely.

Our annual Czech and Slovak Festival is fast approaching - Sun., Sept. 23. We need more workers for 2-hour shifts. You'll meet interesting folks and have fun to boot. Great food and beer! If you can volunteer, please call me at 651-222-4073. See you at the Festival.

Nazdar!

## Around and About Sokol Minnesota

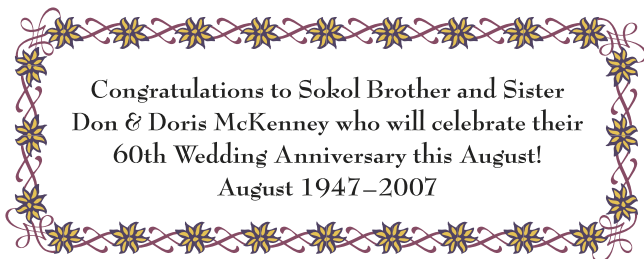
By Lucille Pavlicek

It seems such a long time since I wrote to you all. Our oldest Sokol member, Lad Loss, passed away. He kept in touch with me many years, and was also the brother of Annie Neubauer. Frank Loss also lost his wife Bert.

I am now recovering from a serious operation at St. Joseph's. Hopefully that is the end of my operations. Even though I am at Episcopal Nursing Home, I go to many functions and play piano at every meal and try to be cheerful. There are so many Czech people here.

Wally Schovanec wrote to me from Boise, Idaho. Warm wishes for recovery to Flossie Haselbauer, mother of Don and Carol. Our faithful Sokol Phyllis Vosejпка has been caring for her husband.

Good thoughts out to you out-of-town Sokols and we hope your good news comes our way soon. With a Sokol Nazdar!



## Kids love Czech and Slovak Culture Camp

By Judy Aubrecht and Louise Wessinger

Seventeen campers filled the CSPA Hall with laughter and learning at the 11th Annual Czech and Slovak Childrens' Day Camp in June.

12 camp leaders and 4 junior leaders provided a host of activities based on the childrens' book *Happy Times in Czechoslovakia*, which chronicles a year in the life of the Horak family in Moravia. Through the book, campers discovered what life was like for children in a small Moravian village around 1940.

In Jaro (Spring), children made copper framed Easter eggs with traditional designs, ate knedlíčky with gravy, and the boys chased the girls with the pomlaska (as is done on Easter Monday). To celebrate Léto (Summer) and Podzim (Fall), the children sewed a hobby horse from scratch and then decorated the horse for the traditional Moravian "Ride of the King." They also decorated a festival wreath, made pernický (gingerbread), potato soup and made marionettes that wore dressed in traditional kroje (folk dress). Sokol artist-in-residence, Doreen McKenney, provided the campers with a couple dressed in Bohemian, Moravian

## Interest in language classes grows

By Louise Wessinger

It seems a lot of people want to learn Czech! Over six years, Sokol Minnesota's language classes have grown from one class of 6 students to 4 classes with more than 40 students.

This past Spring, there was enough interest to have two beginner's classes, plus an advanced beginner and intermediate level group. We hope to see many of these students back for more this fall.

Our 2006-07 intermediate classes were taught by Jitka Sebek, a Czech native who has taught in the Edina public schools. Norm Petrik has coordinated the class for several years. Another Czech native, Blanka Brichta, has taught the advanced class for 2 years. Blanka is also an accomplished dancer who performs for Ethnic Dance Theatre in the Twin Cities. Her students love her teaching style and have become a very cohesive group. Doreen McKenney coordinates the intermediate class.

Karen Kaputa-Pofahl and John Topic have taught the beginners' class. Karen learned Czech while living in the Czech Republic with her husband, Dave. John Topic, who grew up in Minnesota's "Czech Country," also dances with the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Dancers.

*For information about 2007-08 classes, call Louise Wessinger at 651-452-6240.*

or Slovak kroje, or a waterman called Vodník – the boys' choice. For Zima (Winter), the children each braided their own vánočka (Christmas bread) to take home to their families.

Each camp morning was filled with cooking, sewing, language and crafts. Georgiana Dolejsi taught traditional songs. After lunch came game time. Mary McMillan of Pony Pals brought "Patches" and "Dr. Pepper" for pony rides, as well as a beautiful goose (husa) for show and tell.

The week ended with a program for parents and a parade of seasons, followed by a surprise visit (out of season!) of St. Mikuláš, Anděl (Angel) and Čert (Devil). The children renewed their vows to St. Nicholas to be good the whole year through!

Special thanks to all the Culture Camp leaders, including Georgiana Dolejsi, Mary Jo and Jim Chlebecek, Sharon Liska, Carole and Becky Horak, Nancy Sievert, Doreen McKenney, David Stepan, Josh Melichar, Peg Purserll, Krystyna Reisdorfer, and Mary and Emilie McMillan.

*Camp is planned again for the third week of June in 2008. Contact Louise Wessinger at 651-452-6240 for information.*

# Become a Sokol Member and get Slovo Free!

**Individual Membership \$40 (\$35 annual renewal)**

## Slovo gift subscriptions and renewals:

\$12 for ten issues! A complimentary copy will be sent to potential subscribers so designated by our readers.

Please fill out form below and send with check to:

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO  
5604 Morgan Ave So.  
Minneapolis, MN 55419

or email inquiries to [publicrelations@sokolmn.org](mailto:publicrelations@sokolmn.org)

### Advertising Rates:

\$15 and \$25 for one eighth and one quarter page prepared commercial ads, respectively. Discount rates for recurring ads are available.

### UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES

October 1 (copy deadline: September 1)

November 1 (copy deadline: October 1)

December 1 (copy deadline: November 1)

Send news and articles to Slovo editor by email to:

[slovo@sokolmn.org](mailto:slovo@sokolmn.org), or 5604 Morgan Avenue S., Mpls. MN 55419. Whenever possible, please type articles and send as email text or as Word-file attachments.

Name:

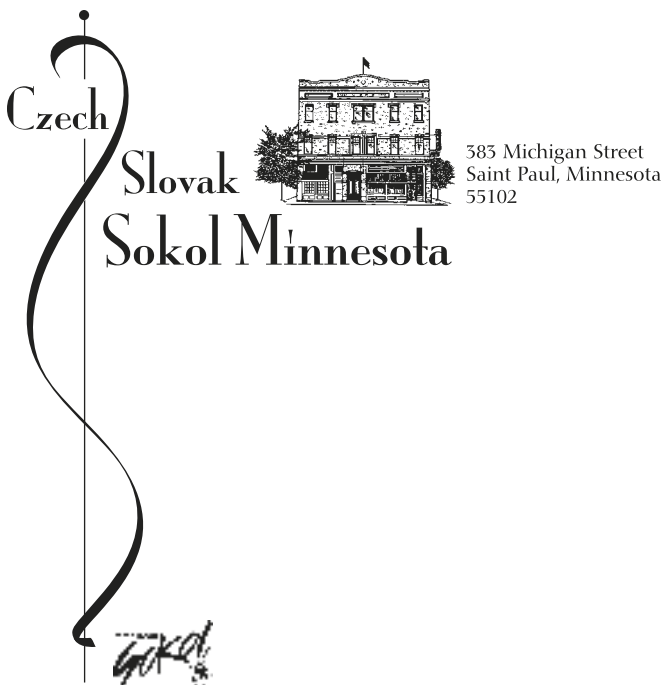
Street address:

City, State, Zip:

## Are you digital?

For your convenience, you can receive your Slovo in a .pdf file via email rather than through "snail" mail. Just send an email to [publicrelations@sokolmn.org](mailto:publicrelations@sokolmn.org) with your request and your next issue will arrive digitally!

Visit us at:  
[www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org)



NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ST. PAUL, MN  
PERMIT NO. 5744