

**UPCOMING EVENTS
FEBRUARY 2016**

March Slovo Deadline
February 1

Sokol Minnesota Singers
February 2 and 16, 10 a.m.

Board of Trustees
February 10, 7 p.m.

Board of Directors
February 18, 7 p.m.

**Membership Meeting
Featured Friday
Czech Movie: *Pelíšky*
(*Cozy Dens*)**
February 19, 7 p.m.

Family Night
February 21, 4 p.m.

Hromnice (Groundhog Day)
February 2 (see page 8)

Masopust (Mardi Gras)
(see page 8)

FLAVORS of SLOVAKIA DINNER

Sunday
March 6

Reserved Seating
12:30 p.m.

• \$16.00 adults
• \$8.00 child under 9

Dinner includes:

Cabbage roll; dilled green beans; pickled beets; pierogi;
halušky (dumplings, cabbage, and bacon); caraway rye bread;
dessert; and coffee.

The cash bar has plenty of wine and good beer on tap.

Pre-paid reservations are required by February 29

Call: 651-290-0542 for reservations.

LIMITED SEATING

Prepaid takeout is also available by reservation.

PUBLIC WELCOME

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota
www.sokolmn.org

C.S.P.S. Hall 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

**Czech and Slovak
Sokol Minnesota**

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Telephone: 651-290-0542

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

The holiday season at the C.S.P.S. Hall had many special activities. A very lively *Svatý Mikuláš* Children's Holiday Party was held on Friday, December 4, 2015. Boys and girls from the Sokol gymnastics program performed and the *Taneční Mládež* and Teen Folk Dancers danced, including some four-year-old children who performed for the very first time. Another well-attended *Svatý Mikuláš* party was organized the following night by the families of the Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities. Some of the school's children and their parents held a sleepover at the Hall.

Our Sokol Minnesota member Marit Lee Kucera was installed as the Czech Honorary Consul for the Upper Midwest on Saturday, December 5, 2015. Sokols, family members, friends from the Czech and Slovak community, and honorary consuls from the Twin Cities celebrated Marit's installation. Jaroslav Zajíček, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, D. C., and Council General Bořek Lizec from Chicago officiated at the installation and attended both of the *Svatý Mikuláš* parties. They were very impressed with the high level of ethnic participation at our Hall. Marit began serving the Czech constituents in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota on January 1, 2016. Congratulations, Marit!

At the Sokol Minnesota Annual Meeting in November 2015, several members were elected to open positions. Other members changed their responsibilities. Arnie Ziskovsky is a new member of the Board of Trustees and Steve Ernest is a new member-at-large on the Board of Directors. Megan Cahill, who has been a member of the Board of Directors for several years, decided to step down. Her ability to synthesize discussions and to keep ideas moving along will be missed at the monthly meetings. Thank you for your years of service to the Board of Directors, Megan.

You may have heard about the abrupt closing of the Glockenspiel Restaurant at the end of November. The Glockenspiel was a much-enjoyed community gathering place. Sokol Minnesota offered to extend the restaurant lease for six months, which was turned down. When news of the closing became public, several strong restaurant businesses approached Sokol Minnesota to discuss renting the space. Our goal is to secure a stable business that can establish a solid business. West 7th Street is becoming a popular Twin Cities destination and our space is quite desirable because it includes a liquor license. Negotiations are currently being conducted with a talented, knowledgeable restaurant group, which hopes to make concept, functional, and decorative changes to the space and then open an exciting new business.

If you were able to see one of the Havel films at the Trylon Microcinema in South Minneapolis in fall of 2013, you will want to mark your calendar for April 1, 2, and 3, 2016. The Trylon at 3258 Minnehaha Avenue, Minneapolis, has put together another Czech film series. Sokol Minnesota is one of the sponsors of the film series. The Trylon Microcinema is eager to have the Czech community see the films. Attendance is very important to this small theater that seats 50 people. If this series is well-attended, the owners may consider additional Czech series in the future. See you there! *Nazdar!*

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

Honorary Czech Consul: Marit Lee Kucera

Honorary Slovak Consul: Donald Pafko

Past Honorary Czech Consul: Robert Vanasek

Sunshine Committee: open

Gift Shop: Doreen McKenney

Housekeeping: Robert J. (Jake) Jacobson

Kitchen Coordinator: open

Website: open

Volunteer Coordinator: open

Taneční Mládež and Teen Folk Dancers: Louise Wessinger

Hall Contacts: Dan Bednar, Ed Hamernik, Joan Sedlacek

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

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Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Annual Meeting on November 20, 2015

At the annual meeting of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota on November 20, Steve Ernest (member since 2014) was elected to the Board of Directors (BOD) as a Member at Large. This is his first term on BOD. Half of the BOD (with some exceptions) is elected each year for two-year terms. Other Sokol Minnesota members elected for 2016–2018 are Ed Hamernik, Second Vice President; Cindy Coulter, Recording Secretary; Don Haselbauer, Treasurer; Norman Petrik, Membership Director; Mike Sebek, Sergeant at Arms; Jyni Koschak, Publicity Director; Marketa Resong, Member at Large; Joyce Tesarek, Board of Budget and Finance; Board of Instructors: Mary Cahill, Women's Physical Director and Jason Brozovich, Men's Physical Director. Dan Bednar, Jake Jacobson, and Arnie Ziskovsky were elected to the Board of Trustees. Also on BOT are Dennis Cahill, John Liemandt, Lloyd Krocak, and Terry Shima.



Steve Ernest

Joyce Tesarek was elected to the Gaming Board. Judy Aubrecht (as Sokol president), Ed Hamernik (chair), Joan Sedlacek, Steve Shimer, and Ken Wyberg are also Gaming Board members. Courtney Benson, Norm Petrik, Joyce Tesarek, Marit Lee Kucera, and Joan Sedlacek were elected Delegates and Alternates to the Western District Meetings. These delegates are elected annually. Mary Cahill and Jason Brozovich are automatic delegates as Women's and Men's Physical Directors.

Membership Five-Year Milestones in 2015: At the Annual Membership Meeting, Sokol Minnesota recognized the members listed for their years of membership. Congratulations! Thank you for being loyal Sokol Minnesota members!

5 YEARS (joined in 2010): **Ruth Ahrens, Cindy Chvosta Fortune, Sharon Jannusch, Patricia Slaber, Jim Sturm, Rose Vesely.**

10 YEARS (joined in 2005): **Bea Flaming, Richard Pavlicek, Frank Petruska, Kari Swartz, Phyllis A. Vosejka, Arnie Ziskovsky, Deb Ziskovsky.** **15 YEARS** (joined in 2000): **Colleen Cahill, Megan Cahill, Donovan Johnson, Marit Lee Kucera, Nora Mersch.** **20 YEARS** (joined in 1995): **Charles Kalvoda.** **25 YEARS** (joined in 1990): **Arlene Courneya, Libuse Imbrone, Donn Linscheid, Therese Linscheid, Terry Shima, Raymond Vanyo, Cecelia Yingling.** **35 YEARS** (joined in 1980): **Allen Sladek.** **40 YEARS** (joined in 1975): **Jean Draheim, Louise Gilson.** **50 YEARS** (joined in 1965; **new Honorary Member**): **Donald Andriele.** **65 Years** (joined in 1950): **Jaroslav J. Verner.** **70 YEARS** (joined in 1945): **Lucille Pavlicek.** Kudos to all, but especially to our 50-, 65-, and 70-year members!



2016 Board of Directors: Norm Petrik, Membership; Jyni Koschak, Publicity Director; Cindy Coulter, Recording Secretary; Joyce Tesarek, Finance; Marketa Resong, Member at Large; Jason Brozovich, Men's Physical Director; Judy Aubrecht, President; Tom Aubrecht, Financial Secretary; Mary Cahill, Women's Physical Director; Don Haselbauer, Treasurer; Ed Hamernik, Second Vice President and also Gaming Manager; Don Haselbauer, Treasurer, Jean Draheim, Educational Director. Missing: Denis Novak, First Vice President; Arlene Hamernik, Corresponding Secretary; Michael Sebek, Sergeant at Arms; Steve Ernest, Member at Large.

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 March 2016 issue is February 1.**

This February 2016 issue of *Slovo* will be archived on the Sokol Minnesota website by February 29: <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 (February 15 for April issue), with ad and payment due by copy deadline (March 1 for April issue).

Slovo gift subscriptions and non-member renewals are \$15/year (10 issues). (Rate is good through February 2017.) 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, advisors. Photographs: Martina Gurgel, M.L.Kucera, Don Pafko, Denise Stibal, Tamás Szinyei, Joyce Tesarek, and Deb Ziskovsky.

FEATURED FRIDAY Members' Meeting February 19, 7 p.m.

Please join us for *Pelišky (Cozy Dens)*, 1999, an entertaining and engaging coming-of-age Czech film set in 1967 during the last few months leading up to the 1968 Prague Spring.

Two families with different perspectives on communism and the future of Czechoslovakia become intertwined through marriage. Using the families' humorous interactions, the film illustrates the vastly different opinions in Czechoslovakia at this time, and how hopes for the country's development are dashed with the Russian/Warsaw Pact invasion. English subtitles.

After the film, we'll have a brief discussion led by Sokol Minnesota and Czech and Slovak Cultural Center member Cheryl Nelson Theuninck and CSCC member Jan Knudtson. Please join us! Refreshments will be served.

Members Annual Holiday Party

Over 40 members and guests attended the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota annual membership party on Sunday, January 3. Sokol President Judy Aubrecht and Financial Secretary Tom Aubrecht hosted the Sunday afternoon festivities. Arlene Hamernik took reservations. Joan Sedlacek helped with set-up. Doreen McKenney did the graphics for the poster and the beverage/door prize tickets. Jean Draheim and Shirley Verner registered the attendees. Marketa Resong, with help from Hana Matousek, made (from scratch) the lasagna and mixed-greens salad. Beverages were Czech Staropramen beer, wine, or bottled water. Members brought a great array of appetizers and desserts. Jason Brozovich, Coleen Cahill, Mary Cahill, Ed Hamernik, guest Jan Piskacek, Joan Sedlacek, Arnie Ziskovsky, and Deb Ziskovsky won door prizes, donated and beautifully wrapped by Judy and Tom.

Led by Louise Wessinger, Sokol members and guests helped to take down and pack up the Christmas decorations and also to do after-party cleanup. Thank you, everyone!!!

Here's an example of the impact and importance of our events postcard, which we distribute twice a year. Last fall, David Velich, a Czech-American living here in the Twin Cities, and his wife, Johannah Wiege, attended the Czech-Slovak Festival in September. They enjoyed the festival so much that they picked up an events postcard and decided to join our members' party on January 3. They brought along two friends, Jan Piskacek, also Czech, and Theresa Reinhardt. All were heartily welcomed and enjoyed the afternoon's festivities. Jan Piskacek even won a door prize. So welcome did they feel that they stayed to help clean up. We hope to see them again soon.

Membership Updates

By Norm Petrik, Membership Director

At the November 19, 2015, Board of Directors meeting, Patricia Mestenhauer Bergh, Minneapolis, with interests in history/genealogy and language was accepted for membership in Sokol Minnesota. Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!

At the Sokol annual membership meeting on November 20, Steve Ernest (a member since 2014) was installed as a member of Sokol Minnesota by Membership Director Norm Petrik.

November Pancake Breakfast By Jason Brozovich



Our great kitchen team: Julie Bohn, Teresa Pojar, Dennis Cahill, Colleen Cahill, Alex Cho, Megan Cahill, Mary Cahill, Jason Brozovich, and Joan Sedlacek.

The smell of pancakes, French toast, and sausage filled the air at the Sokol Hall on November 22, 2015. From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 139 folks enjoyed the delicious breakfast, including a fruit cup, with coffee, orange juice, and milk. The weather was great, as were the volunteers! They took tickets, mixed batter, flipped pancakes and French toast, served guests, bussed dishes, and cleaned the Hall. Thank you all!

Let's not forget the contribution of the Bake Sale and Crafter/Vendor Booths that day and all of the volunteers! Our teamwork brought in \$1,944 to help with the maintenance of our historic building. Together, we put forth a great event!

Chairs were Jason Brozovich and Megan Cahill: breakfast; Doreen McKenney: bake sale; and Jean Draheim: vendors. Volunteers included Rosemary Baisden, Julie Bohn, Colleen Cahill, Dennis Cahill, Mary Cahill, Alex Cho, Cindy Coulter, Jake Jacobson, Bob Kostichka, Denis Novak, Teresa Pojar, Joan Sedlacek, Cinnamon Whaley, and Girl Scout Troop 55398.

Jim Chlebecek, Mary Jo Chlebecek, Jake Jacobson, Joyce Tesarek, and Phyllis Vosejka (\$10 cash) donated baked goods and/or helped at the bakery table.

On November 19, Mary Jo Chlebecek, Roger Green, Danita Larson, Doreen McKenney, and Joan Sedlacek baked 80 dozen *koláče*.

See you again in the Spring!

Mark your calendar for March 20, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
for our next Pancake Breakfast fundraiser.

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Czech Honorary Consul Installation

Marit Lee Kucera became the new Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic for Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota on December 5, 2015, at our historic C.S.P.S. Hall. Jaroslav Zajíček, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, D.C., installed Marit, with Dr. Bořek Lizec, Consul General of the Czech Republic in Chicago, as master of ceremonies. Among the over 200 guests was Betty McCollum, Fourth Minnesota District Congresswoman, a great friend of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, responsible for helping to procure the Federal Save America's Treasures Grant in 2011 to update our Hall. The March issue of *Slovo* will carry a two-page photo collage of the event.

L-R: Dr. Bořek Lizec, Betty McCollum, Marit Lee Kucera, and Jaroslav Zajíček.



Broučci (The Fireflies): Performance on Sunday, May 15, at 3 p.m. By Judith Brin Ingber

How did a small theatre musical in the unlikely setting of a ghetto outside Prague during World War II blossom into a new production in Minnesota this spring of 2016? I grew up in peaceful Minneapolis, but some time ago, I became fascinated with what happened in Europe during World War II and, especially, what happened to Jewish dancers in that time. For many years I have been researching, lecturing, and writing about Jewish artistic activity and artists despite their terrible plight in European cities conquered by the Nazis. Jewish families and individuals were rounded up and sent by trains to transit camps, ghettos, and concentrations camps. I was amazed to find documentation of performances of all kinds and even of teaching in these seemingly impossible situations.

For example, children drew and wrote poems in Terezín. Years ago I saw a touching book, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, created from children's drawings and poems somehow saved from Terezín. This book pushed me to learn what I could about what happened artistically in Terezín. I first visited the ghetto/camp in 1971 with Dr. Karel Lagus, who was one of the directors of the camp site under the communists. I was introduced to Dr. Lagus through our family's friend, Eddie Grosmann. Mr. Grosmann, originally from western Czechoslovakia, was deported as a young man during World War II to Auschwitz. There he met a distinguished lawyer from Prague named Dr. Karel Lagus who had first been imprisoned in Terezín and then transported to Auschwitz. He managed to give Eddie hope and courage. Luckily both men survived. Eddie came to the United States and settled in Minneapolis. Dr. Lagus returned to Prague, where he later became, ironically, one of the directors of the museum at Terezín.

In my search to learn more about Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, the art teacher who inspired the children, I traveled to the Holocaust center in Jerusalem called *Yad Vashem*. That's where I learned Friedl not only taught and inspired the Terezín children through her art and writing classes but she also worked on performances with the children. At *Yad Vashem* I also learned about the actress Vava (or Nava) Shean who acted in many performances in Terezín. In the camp she met the choreographer Kamila Rosenbaumová who had the idea they could create a musical drama based on the children's book *Broučci*, which many of the children had with them when they were deported to Terezín. It was an obvious choice for the production. Vava, Friedl, and Kamila enlisted the help of the composer Karel Švenk and others to make the performances happen.

Last winter in Prague I visited the Jewish Museum and found flyers printed at Terezín advertising the *Broučci* production, as well as tickets to the performances and other surprising information. I also returned to Terezín, where I visited the little attic theatre where the performances took place. That's when I determined to recreate a performance of *Broučci* as an ode and elegy to both the adult creators and the child performers of this unique work. Of the 1,200 children who passed through Terezín, only some 100 survived, but *Broučci* was meant as a way to engage the children, to allow them to create something special together using the imaginative characters of fireflies and their animal friends in the cycle of life.

A few months ago I traveled to Tel Aviv and was able to interview Vera Meisels, who had been a child performer in the Terezín *Broučci* performances. While I was in Israel, I also visited Kibbutz Givat Hayyim, which has a museum to all that happened in Terezín including a whole children's section with some of the paintings inspired by Friedl's classes.

Broučci, an enchanting story, is a well-known Czech folktale of the little boy/firefly who barely survives the winter and famine to fly out above the fields in the spring. He meets a little girl/firefly whom he marries in the final scene. Even though this is a tale that was made into a performance seventy years ago, the kind of conditions that prompted its creation continue to exist in the world. The United Nations keeps statistics on refugees, and today there are over 30 million children in the world displaced by the scourge of war and persecution. I think *Broučci* provides several important universal themes to help us envision something better even when things are terrible.

It is touching that once again children will perform *Broučci*. How did that happen? It came about through my friendship with Blanka Brichta, who introduced me to Sokol Minnesota and to Lenka Bragg who runs the drama program for children. When I proposed the idea of recreating *Broučci*, it was decided that would make a fine project for this year's program with help from Louise Wessinger and her dancers and the singers of Sokol Minnesota. It's a privilege and an honor that so many are helping to do a new production of *Broučci*. I am very excited to have the opportunity to create this performance with the children of *Ceská a slovenská škola Twin Cities* (Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities) together with *Taneční Mládež* and many others from the Czech and Slovak community.

Our performance of *Broučci* will be on Sunday, May 15, at 3 p.m. at the C.S.P.S. Hall. Put it onto your calendar now and we'll be excited to have you in our audience.



Sokol Minnesota Children's Holiday Party with gymnastics and folk dancing, December 4

1. At the piano: Debra Elias Morse and Elisa Swartz. 2. Teen Dancers. 3. New Czech Honorary Consul Marit Lee Kucera waved in thanks for the flowers from Sokol children with Dr. Bořek Lizec, Consul General of the Czech Republic in Chicago (left) and Jaroslav Zajčcek, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington (right). 4. Candy Cane Dance. 5. Youth Dance Director Louise Wessinger introduced *Svatý Mikuláš*, *anděl*, and *čert* (Saint Nicholas, the angel, and the devil). 6. *Taneční Mládež* Folk Dancers. 7. Jason Brozovich and Mary Cahill, Men's and Women's Physical Directors. 8. Leaping gymnast. 9. Erica Meyers assisted a young gymnast. 10. *Svatý Mikuláš* greeted a child. 11. Children sang. 12. *Čert* high-fived a boy while *Svatý Mikuláš* was not looking.



Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities' Svatý Mikuláš Party, December 5

1. Puppets on their rack. 2. Children read the words to familiar Christmas carols with Jitka Sebek. 3. Children listened to SloVczech and the young musicians. 4. Puppet performance. 5. Jitka Sebek (left) introduced Czech diplomats Jaroslav Zajíček, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington; Dr. Božek Lizec, Consul General of the Czech Republic in Chicago, and the new Czech Honorary Consul, Marit Lee Kucera. 6. *Svatý Mikuláš* greeted children. 7. Family meal. 8. Young boy received his gift from *Svatý Mikuláš* and *anděl*, while *čert* lurked in the background. 9. Lenka Bragg and Romana Pulkrabek explained that the puppets were made by the children at our school during Family Events. 10. SloVczech and the young musicians performed. 11. *Čert*, *anděl*, and *Svatý Mikuláš*.

Photo collages by Martina Gurgel.

Hromnice is February 2, the same day as Groundhog Day.

The weather is a sign of how long winter will last.

Jihne-li na Hromnice, přilož do kamen; mrzne-li, po zimě amen.

If *Hromnice* is bright and clear, winter is sure to linger.

If there is snow or thunder, spring must be near.

UPCOMING EVENTS . . .

February 6, *Masopust* Celebration in Montgomery

(By Deb Ziskovsky). Deep in the heart of Minnesota Czech Country, Montgomery celebrates *Masopust*. This Czech Mardi Gras is held on Saturday, February 6 at the American Legion Hall from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Masopust, translating to “good-bye to meat,” is the Czech carnival marking the start of Lent. It is a rich tradition still observed in the Czech Republic today on the weekend before Ash Wednesday.

Music by *Glen Wondra and the Country Gentlemen* starts the afternoon off. A *Masopust* King is crowned. An old world Czech skit is sure to delight and entertain, as will a performance by the *Domáci* Czech Folk Dancers. Traditional Czech foods are available, plus there is a silent auction. Costumes (of any kind) are encouraged, with a costume contest for both adults and children. For more information, contact Jim at 507-364-5659.

March 1 is the deadline to enter the 27th annual Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant held on April 9

Sokol Minnesota is willing to sponsor a candidate for the 27th annual Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant. The 2016-2017 queen will be crowned on Saturday, April 9, at the American Legion Hall in Montgomery, Minnesota. Contestants must be of partial or full Czech, Slovak, or Moravian descent; an American citizen; a Minnesota resident; and between the ages of 16 and 26. Contestants present a talent and also appear in *kroj* (folk dress). Entries must be postmarked by March 1.

The Queen, the Princess, and Miss Congeniality all receive a crown, flowers, sash, trophy, and a cash award. For complete details, contact <missczechslovakmn@hotmail.com> or visit <www.missczechslovakmnpageant.org/>

The Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Board of Directors includes former queens Ashley Zimanske, Anne Jans, and Kendra Bisek, as well as founder of the pageant, Lorraine David.

Czech Animation Series at Trylon Microcinema

Friday, April 1 through Sunday, April 3,

3258 Minnehaha Avenue, Minneapolis 55406; 612-424-5468.

The Trylon accepts cash only at the door, advance tickets can be purchased online at <www.trylon.org>.

These screenings are made possible by support from the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, with additional support from Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Marit Lee Kucera, Honorary Consul, with office in Saint Paul), Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, *Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities*, the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, and Cinnamon Whaley.

Invention for Destruction (1958, DCP, 83m, Czech with

English subtitles), director Karel Zeman with actors Lubor Tokoš and Arnošt Navrátil. The illustrations of Jules Verne novels come alive in a dazzling admixture of black-and-white animation and live action. Behold steampunk submarines, crazy squid fights, and bicycle zeppelins! This gorgeous, clever, and touching film has been beautifully

restored by The Karel Zeman Museum. **April 1-2, Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m.; Sunday, 5 p.m.**



Alice (1988, DCP, 86m, Czech with English subtitles), director Jan Švankmajer with actress Kristýna Kohoutová.

Švankmajer's creepy and disturbing hybrid of live action and stop-motion animation (often involving

taxidermy, meat, or broken dolls) is probably not a good idea for young children (who want to sleep well) to attend.

April 1-2, Friday and Saturday, 9 p.m.; Sunday, 7 p.m.

Interested in the Slovak Republic? Check out the blog by Naomi Hužovičová, a Canadian living in Slovakia for the past eleven years and raising her family there. The blog, *Almost Bananas*, discusses life in Slovakia, including recipes, traditions, and places. <www.almostbananas.net>

MOVIE REVIEW: **ŽELARY** By Cinnamon Whaley

Želary (2003) opens in 1943 Prague by introducing us to couple Richard and Eliška, a doctor and nurse. They are a part of the Nazi resistance, running messages and helping those being persecuted. One morning, their friend Slávek comes to Eliška's home with news that Richard has emigrated and has left Eliška papers to do the same, with the expectation that she leave immediately with one of the patients they'd recently treated at the hospital.

Eliška leaves with Joza, a man roughly twenty years her senior, to return to his home village of Želary, in the mountains. They arrive with Eliška

taking on the identity of Hana, who has returned with Joza from Prague to marry. Moving without warning from the bustle of Prague to the mountains with the expectation of marrying a stranger in a home without electricity leaves Hana in the state you would expect. She tries to leave once, but finds that Slávek has been killed and now truly understands that she must stay hidden in the mountains or likely be killed. Over the course of the summer months of 1943 she settles in to the community, finds friendship and joy, and after a while, love.

From within the village of Želary, the

last two years of World War II are beautifully portrayed in the western Carpathian mountains. We are offered a glimpse into what it was like to be of the last generations privy to such seclusion before modernity began to reach the rural areas. The story of a young urban woman falling in love with a rural stranger would not usually catch my attention, but this was told so well that I would recommend it on a number of merits: the story, acting, scenery, and sound were all fantastic. It is nearly two-and-a-half hours long, but the anticipation as the film progresses would keep you from believing that much time has passed.

Our Experience with Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities at Sokol Minnesota

... Let's Stay Compatriots

By Markéta Drbohlavová

We arrived in Minneapolis one-and-a-half years ago, living here for the period of my husband's contract assignment. Although my husband and I went through training concerning life in the United States, in the beginning living here was more difficult than we expected. While it was not our first longtime placement abroad, the differences between Europe and the United States are striking. My search for a Czech organization to help us get accustomed to life in the Twin Cities started when we remembered our coach's comments that he always went to the Sokol in New York to drink a beer if he felt homesick while working his job there.

Before our departure from the Czech Republic, I had no time to search online for new contacts living in the area of our future apartment. Now, I see that this was a big mistake. It would have made our lives easier by helping us to overcome initial obstacles and homesickness during the first months.

Our first meeting with members of Sokol Minnesota took place during the Czech and Slovak Festival in 2014, after we had already spent three months in the United States. I was very pleased how we were welcomed and what a nice program was prepared. The theater performance in Czech was an especially nice surprise for our kids. We tasted with pleasure the *guláš* and Czech cakes, and we participated in the children's games.

After that, I kept an eye on the schedule on Facebook and participated in Family Night every month, which we really enjoyed, first because we like small art work for kids and the reading of a Czech book. Next, we went because of the excellent Czech food (everybody prepares something), and lastly because of the friendly chatting. I especially admire the Czech lessons for kids that take place once a week because I know very well how difficult this language is to learn. Dancing in folk dress contributes significantly to the keeping

of tradition, too. To tell the truth, it was the first experience my children had with folk dancing and folk dress because we do not come from an area where these



traditions are maintained. I consider Sokol's scheduled events for St. Nicolas and Easter to be important because they are cornerstone Czech traditions for kids. I am also grateful for the group's baking of Czech cakes and sweets because there is so much work and giving up of free time associated with it.

Our family participated in several meetings beyond the scheduled events, and these really were an "oasis" for me to speak in Czech and to collect experiences from life in the U.S. English has always been a third foreign language for me, so to make friends in English was not simple. I really appreciated all the recommendations I received concerning traveling or weekend programs.

To be honest, I was surprised how active the Czech and Slovak community is here and how well traditions are kept up, sometimes better than in some areas in the Czech or Slovak Republics. I would like to mention too, it was very pleasant to encounter the Slovak language (for our kids, it was the first time in their lives). I believe that everyone feels like continuing to participate in scheduled events and possibly to create one in the future!

Wintertime Reading By Vanda Kofroňová, columnist from Prague

What is the last book you read? the last Czech book? I offer you a short list of books you should definitely check out if:

... You want to know about Czech sense of humor. Well, *The Good Soldier Švejk (Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka za světové války)* by **Jaroslav Hašek** is considered the basic. To be honest, I have never read it. I do not like Švejk's incompetence (even though he always manages to display it to irritate and passively resist the Austrian military authorities, as the textbooks say). What do I like much more is *Saturnin* by **Zdeněk Jirotka**. This is an example of intelligent Czech humor. The main hero is an archetypal "faithful servant," who always hopes for unusual orders, and he will fulfill them even if he was not asked. A contemporary writer I really like is **Benjamin Kuras**. *Czechs and Balances: A Nation's Survival Kit* is a must-read for anybody who is interested in history.

... You want to know something about Czech fears and depressions. There is a wide range of novels you can read, if you really want to feel the weight of life on this planet. Among my favorite authors is **Franz Kafka**, whose book *The Trial* made it to number three of the most important books of the 20th Century according to the French newspaper *Le Monde*. I love **Milan Kundera** (who is more French than Czech now). His book *Žert (The Joke)* describes what happens when humor

is considered dangerous. And you can also try one from **Michal Viewegh**. The best-selling contemporary Czech author describes the "champagne problems" of this rich generation... until he almost died from a serious heart problem in 2012 which has left him too ill to write.

... If you want to read about Czech history in the 20th Century, you need to be prepared: it is not going to be very pleasant reading. **Arnošt Lustig**, a Jew imprisoned by Nazis in a concentration camp, never lost his optimism and his ability to elegantly describe the worst things that human beings can endure. My personal favorite is **Josef Škvorecký**. If you do not know where to start, try Škvorecký's *Zbabělci (The Cowards)*, which is his best-known story. And read **Václav Havel**. This is on my 2016 to-do list as well.

We also have quite a few contemporary authors that are pretty good but are not yet (as far as I know) available in English. So for those who can read Czech, I suggest **Milan Urban** and his modern gothic novels; **Kateřina Tučková**, who has only written two books, both of them breathtaking; and **Jiří Hájíček**, who writes about problems in the Czech countryside.

Have a great time with your books!

What are the books from the United States I should not miss?

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.

General Fund: Up to \$100: **Lillian Bednar, Harold Davidson** for *Slovo*; **Renae Faunce, Joseph Gall, Libby Imbrone** in memory of **Rosemond I. Kucera, Georgiana Soboda, Louise Wessinger, Taneční Mládež Dancers.**

Elizabeth Andrews, Leanne and Robert Crompton in honor of **Marit Lee Kucera's** installation as Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic.

Jim and Mary Jo Chlebecek, Ed and Arlene Hamernik, Doreen McKenney (for the kitchen) in memory of **Aldora Draheim.**

\$100 - \$499: **George Chlebecek** for gymnastics and *Slovo*; **Hana Matousek, Philothea Sweet, Thomas and Penny Tesarek, Susan Lindoo and Michael Wolesky, RAD C LEV No 10.**

\$500 - \$999: **Sue Bender** in honor of **Jitka Sebek.**

\$1000 - \$5000: **Joseph Dolejsi, Martin Family Charitable Fund, Joe Landsberger:** "This charitable donation is made in recognition of the contributions of **Mary and Megan Cahill** and **Jason Brozovich** to Sokol's core mission of fitness, as well as contributions of **Joan Sedlacek** for her life-long dedication to the unit."

Legacy Fund: \$100 - \$499: **George Chlebecek, Frank Trnka, Darlene Sitko, Jaroslav and Lois Verner** in memory of **Ludmila and Frank Verner.**

\$5000 - \$10,000: **Joan Sedlacek** in memory of **Lorene and Fred Sedlacek; Eileen and Ellen Vavrina.**

In-kind Donations: **Betty Anfinson**, glass items for Silent Auction; **Joan Sedlacek**, dumplings for Pork Dinner, outdoor decorations, metal cart, tool box, and various items to be used for cleaning.

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 129th year in 2016.

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

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

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Or donate online **www.sokolmn.org** Thank You!



Gottland: Mostly True Stories. Mariusz Szczygiel. Brooklyn and London: Melville House. 2006 original Polish text, 2014 English translation by Antonia Lloyd-Jones, 288 pages. Available in libraries and electronically.

A Pole Looks at Czech People and History

By Gwen Willems, Ph.D.

Mariusz Szczygiel's simple, succinct, and first-person style of writing, combined with the book's subtitle, *Mostly True Stories*, could make a reader suspicious of the authenticity of the stories in this book. But Polish journalist Szczygiel's extensive research, numerous interviews, and his stellar reputation lead me to conclude that he told the most objective truth he could discover, with doses of humor and tragedy. The book, *Gottland*, includes a long list of sources he researched and a brief Czech time line.

In *Gottland*, Szczygiel is a Pole exploring the extraordinary reality of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic in the twentieth century through stories of resilient individuals living in difficult times. To examine the ravages of totalitarianism and its long-term effects, he focuses on stories of famous and unusual Czechs, such as the beautiful actress Lída Baarová, who befriended the infamous Nazi Goebbels; Otakar Švec, the unfortunate sculptor who won the competition to design a massive statue of Joseph Stalin in Prague and whose life ended in suicide; and Zdeněk Adamec, who died of self-immolation in 2003. Szczygiel named the book after the pop singer Karel Gott, who played along with communism to avoid being its victim and opened a self-aggrandizing museum, Gottland, akin to Dollywood, in 2006.

One of my favorite pieces in this collection is about the famous Baťa shoe company. It started in the small town of Zlín and grew into a worldwide enterprise that continued to be led by Baťa family members in Zlín until they fled the Nazis takeover of Czechoslovakia. Cobbler Tomáš Baťa, out of the desperation of poverty, turned in the late 1800s to using canvas in shoes when he couldn't afford leather. They were a hit. He built his first shoe factory, employing 50 men in a space of 2,000 square feet. He visited the United States to learn about the assembly-line efficiency of Henry Ford, and returned home where he made Baťa into a massive, time-centric factory in a company town. Baťa constructed identical small houses, organized peoples' social lives, and told workers what to eat and how to behave. Upon Tomáš's death, his brother Jan took over leadership of the company. In 1937, Jan created a new way to oversee his workers, what Szczygiel describes as "his own mobile office space which follows his employees about the building. He placed the office in a glazed elevator which moves up and down the tower block. This cabin is 16 x 16 feet, and has a sink with hot running water, a radio, and air conditioning." Tourists can still view this moving office today.

Szczygiel is a reporter for *Gazeta Wyborcza*, author of several books, and head of the Institute of Reportage in Warsaw. He won the 2009 Europe Book Prize for *Gottland* and was named "Journalist of the Year" in Poland in 2013.

Gwen is coordinator of the Literary Ventures: Czech and Slovak book discussion group. For more information, go to <www.cs-center.org> or contact <gwen@cs-center.org>.

Join Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures members on Saturday, February 20, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., at the City Bella Conference Room, 6600 Lyndale Ave. S, Richfield, to discuss the first half of *Havel: A Life* by Michael Žantovský, and to view a C-SPAN interview with the author.

Slovak Honorary Consuls Met at the Office of the Slovak Ambassador to the United Nations

By Donald Pafko, the Honorary Consul for the Slovak Republic for Minnesota



Donald Pafko with Military Counselor Brigadier General Boris Ďurkech

Over one hundred Slovak business professionals attended the three-day meeting beginning on November 20, 2015, stressing business and economic development, plus foreign investment and trade negotiations.

It was interesting to note the number of successful Slovak business professionals who are working in the United States.

All-day seminars continued for Honorary Consuls emphasizing consular duties and responsibilities, passport and visas, consul protocol, and networking with Slovak professionals. Slovak Consul General Jana Trnovcova hosted the seminars. Slovak Ambassador to the United States Peter Kmec led the roundtable discussions, which focused on business and economic networking between the United States and Slovakia. Ten of the fourteen Honorary Slovak Consuls in the United States attended this seminar.



Slovak Representative to the United Nations František Ružička with Donald Pafko

Stibal Family Donation to The National Czech and Slovak Museum

By Denise Stibal

What to do with 100 years' worth of family musical memorabilia? Thanks to a suggestion from Czech Honorary Consul Marit Lee Kucera, I contacted the National Czech and Slovak Museum in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. My story goes back to the early 1900s, starting with my Great-grandfather Joseph Stibal. He was widely known as a band man, musician, and director of a dozen or more bands and orchestras for nearly 50 years in Silver Lake, Minnesota. His life history begins with music back in 1875, when as a boy of 14 he came with his parents from Malešín in Bohemia to settle in McLeod County. He played with many dance bands and was exceptionally talented on the clarinet. During these years he played in Twin Cities orchestras and for some time was a member of the *Grand Theater Orchestra* in Saint Paul. But city life did not appeal

to him and he returned to Silver Lake, organized a dance band of his own, married Anna Shimek, and settled on her father's farm. It was in those days that musical organizations in the Twin Cities rated him as one of the best clarinet players in the state. He was a member of Saint Joseph's Catholic Church from its beginning and was largely responsible for the purchase of its first organ. He played that organ at services for many years. Among his belongings were sheet music and letters from Bohemia and a catalog of religious items, along with his two clarinets, left to my father, Raymond Stibal.

Grandpa Joseph recognized the musical potential in "young Raymond" and arranged clarinet lessons from a member of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. Raymond played for many years with the *Jerry Dostal Band* and Wally Pikal's *Wally and the Dill Pickles* band until the mid 1960s, when he decided to devote his time exclusively to farming. In this collection there were many 78 rpm recordings of Czech dance music and of his Selmer clarinet, which was probably his prized possession.

In November, I met with Dave Muhlena, the library director in



Dave Muhlena and Denise Stibal Cedar Rapids, and donated our family collection. Dave was delightful to meet with and made me feel like I made a valuable contribution to the library. We also toured the newly-rebuilt facility, which is beautiful. The library was heavily damaged in the flood of 2008, but with donations of \$200,000 from the Czech Government, federal grants, and private funds, the museum was able to move and expand the library to a building that will preserve many years of Czech-American History. I encourage everyone to visit and spend some time nearby in the Czech Village. You can visit the website: <www.ncsml.org> for further information.



**EVENTS AT C.S.P.S. HALL
ATTEND AND VOLUNTEER!
Sokol Minnesota 2016 Events**

Featured Friday Membership Meeting

Czech movie: *Pelíšky (Cozy Dens)*
February 19, 7 p.m.

Flavors of Slovakia Dinner

Sunday, March 6, 12:30 p.m.
Prepaid reservations: 763-571-6091
\$16 adults \$8 child under 9
Prepaid takeout available

Pancake Breakfast with Craft and Bake Sales

Sunday, March 20, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Please Donate Baked Goods
Reserve a vendor table: events@sokolmn.org
Pre-order *koláče*: 651-290-0542

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 February 2016

Spring 2016 Events at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

383 Michigan Street, St. Paul, MN 55102 • 651-290-0542 *Join Us!* ~v~ Gift shop open during Sokol events ~v~

- **Family Fun Activities: Sundays, 4-6:30 p.m.: January 24, February 21, April 17; Saturdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.: March 26, May 14.** Potluck supper and activities. Fun for all ages.
- **Flavors of Slovakia: Sunday, March 6, 12:30 p.m.** Cabbage rolls, pierogi, dumplings, and more. \$16 adult; \$8 child 9 and under, cash bar. Pre-paid reservations by Feb 29: 651-290-0542.
- **Pancake Breakfast with Craft and Bake Sales: Sunday, March 20, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.** \$7 adult; \$5 child under 9; \$22 family of four. No reservations needed. Pre-order *koláče*: 651-290-0542. Reserve a craft table: 651-426-2826 or events@sokolmn.org
- **Šibřinky: Saturday, April 16, 4 - 10 p.m.** Supper and dance: Dale Pexa Band; children, teen, and adult folk dancers; food for sale; cash bar. \$10/advance (by 4/11, mail check made out to Sokol MN to 3704 Denmark Ave, Eagan, MN 55123). \$12/door.
- **Festival of Nations, May 5-8, Saint Paul RiverCentre, downtown Saint Paul.** Enjoy Czech and Slovak food and culture; children, teen, and adult folk dancers on stage.
- **Children's Cultural Day Camp: June 13-16.** For boys and girls ages 7-14. Ethnic cooking and crafts, Czech language, gymnastics, and more. Questions: 651-452-6240. Registration forms at www.sokolmn.org
- **Czech and Slovak Festival: Sunday, September 25, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.** Live music, folk dancers, vendors, children's games, ethnic food, Czech beer, info booths, silent auction. Free Admission. Accessible facilities. 612-822-6147.



Please check www.sokolmn.org for the latest information on all events. Questions? events@sokolmn.org