

President Komentář/ President's Note

Pozdrav bratři a sestry/Greetings
brothers and sisters

Even when I was at university my research didn't include primary source material, but now I am touching history. Leading up to Sokol's 125th anniversary, on Tuesday mornings Louise Wessinger, Jeanette Pafko, Joan Sedlacek and myself sorted through over 130 years of St. Paul's Bohemian, Moravian, Silesian, and Slovak immigrant records and artifacts in our hall. That effort continues, and now I wonder if we need to re-write our St. Paul history (*Gateway to a New World, Building Čech and Slovak Communities in the West End*) that I compiled and co-edited?

Questions arise. For example, my mother and her aunts referred to themselves as Bohemian, and that was people generally referred to the St. Paul community. But, since neither the Czech nor Slovak Republics existed, what was the regional affiliation of those first immigrants in our CSPS Hall? Extensive (dusty!) written records use diacriticals (accent marks) hand written in all of our record books (hundreds!) which reflect the Czech written language. Our earliest document, the minutes and accounting (1870-78) of Slovanska Lipa ("Linden Tree," a reading society) provides names and signatures of the early founders. Two books detail library loan records from 1879-94!

continued on page 2.



An undated snapshot found in the archives taken at the "Masonic home." The accordionist is "Valter Schovanec."

Upcoming Events

June 12 & 13
Culture
Camp

June 12
Board of
Directors
Meeting

June 16-18
Culture
Camp

July 10
Board of
Directors
Meeting

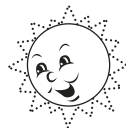
Aug 10,
noon-5
Sokol Camp
Booya &
Picnic
Pine City

August 14
Board of
Directors
Meeting

Booya Picnic in August

By Ray Vanyo

Minnesota Sokol Camp will host its Annual Booya and Picnic noon to 5 p.m., August 10, at Sokol Camp in Pine City, Minnesota.



We are planning another incredibly beautiful and sunny Cross Lake day filled with fun activities and great foods. The leading attraction will be delicious chicken booya for sale by the bowl or in bulk. Bring a jar or pot to fill to take home and enjoy or share with friends. The menu also includes meatloaf sandwiches, cabbage rolls, kolace, hot dogs and candy. A cold pivo (beer) or refreshing soda pop will satisfy any thirst. Old time music, dancing,

bingo, a cash prize raffle, kiddy games, a country store and performances by the St. Paul Czech & Slovak Folk dancers and Tanecní Mládež (Dancing Youth) will take you back in time.

Our Country Store is always in need of white elephant donations. Please call Pat Andrl at 651-484-6360 for pick-up coordination or bring your donation to the Sokol Camp on the day of the picnic. For any other questions, call Ray Vanyo at 651-222-6448.

To get to the campground, exit Interstate 35 at the Pine City exit (#169) and follow the signs to Minnesota Sokol Camp.

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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

continued from page 1.

The first Czech school was Sokol Žižka, though the name was changed to Telocvična Jednota Sokol on April 2, 1888. Antonín Jurka was one teacher. We restored a photo of one of his classes for the 125th Anniversary celebration! We also have a large "cover" signed twice by Jurka that may have contained music scores. One bound book, Světozor (1887), is a collection of literary periodicals published in Prague in 1887. We know it was owned by Vaclav Picha, our first bar owner, because he signed it and included his city and state: St. Paul, Minnesota. He had beautiful handwriting. In another book we have minutes of the Falcon Sokol Social Club (1919-22), and this is one of the few in English.

One recent major effort was alphabetizing, by playwright, over 170 plays. Since my Slavic language skills are non-existent, it even takes a bit of guesswork to determine who wrote what! They are mostly undated booklets made of fragile, thick paper and stiff covers, often frayed, some with multiple copies stretching back to the 1800's. Drami Spolek (Drama Club) was established September 11, 1885 by J K Týl. Its records detail expenditures, as well as a 1911 inventory of Sokol gym equipment! One play produced at the hall was Josef Skružný's *Románek na Horách* (Romanek in the Mountains, 1918). We have separate scripts for this play, including the role of Lustinec as played by Frank J. Svoboda, who lived at 284 Pleasant Avenue. In the 1920s, several plays were produced each year, and taken to outlying communities. The earliest typed (we even have the typewriter!) playbill from these Sokol productions is a 1908 program for *Taněční Zábava* (dancing sport?) in ten acts featuring "u piana Sokolka M. Čížkova" (M. Čížkova on piano). Playbills continue through 1930 and detail events including the performers and their roles. We can easily recognize many of the family names. Two programs refer to road productions in Hutchinson (1925) and Montgomery (1929).

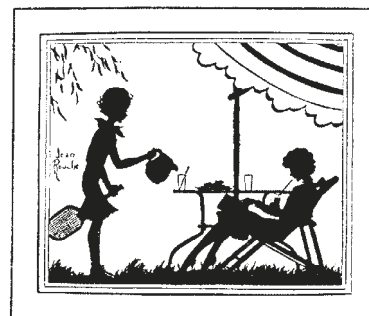
We also have a lot of music to research, including four undated books, one each for Tenor I and II, and Bass I and II. It is called *Lumír-St. Paul*. Perhaps the piles of financial records for St. Paul Sokol, Minneapolis Sokol, Sokol Denham (1921-46), CSPS, CSA, ZCJB will date these, as well as others besides Victor Hubal who painted our stage's backdrops. Our CSPS "Rád Čech #12" minutes date back to our founding 2 July 1887 and include the founders' signatures. We also have a book titled *Památník 50th Letého Jubilea CSPS 1854 -1904* that details the state of CSPS in the United States on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. Another is a 1930 multi-national Christmas program of the International Institute that featured a Czech folk dance and vocal selections by Mr. Frank Jerabek and Mrs. Tony Muska at the St. Paul YMCA.

Of course, we have many photographs and pictures that we are in the process of inventorying, documenting and restoring. Georgiana Dolejsi is in the process of comparing names of individuals across multiple copies and versions, which should be a rich source of genealogical source material.

To summarize, we could very well be the best documented immigrant group in the State of Minnesota. It may be easy to view this material as a dusty archive of minutiae, but when one thinks that original receipts reflect someone going to the local store and buying materials for our hall, it becomes a neighborhood experience. So also for the signatures, addresses, and news-clippings. If you wish to help with this effort, no matter your particular interest, please contact me. There is so much.

Na dzar (they way they spelled it in the 1800's)

Joe Landsberger, President



Introducing Robert Vanasek

Czech Honorary Consul for Minnesota, Iowa and North and South Dakota

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued its Diplomatic Patent to Robert Vanasek, naming him the Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic with jurisdiction in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota. The appointment was effective on May 9, 2008. He succeeds Josef A. Mestenhauser, who retired from this position effective the same date. Dr. Mestenhauser held the post since April 19, 1999.

Biographies of newly appointed Honorary Consul Robert Vanasek and retiring Honorary Consul Joseph Mestenhauser



Robert Vanasek

Robert Vanasek was born and raised in New Prague, Minnesota. He and his wife Mary still live in the New Prague School District. They have three adult children. He received a B.A. degree in political science at the University of Minnesota. He also was awarded an M.A. in public administration from Harvard University. He served in the Minnesota House of Representatives for 20 years, including four years as

Speaker of the House. After leaving the Legislature in 1992, he was President of the Minnesota High Technology Council for three years and Vice President for Public Affairs at Metropolitan State University for four years. For the last 10 years, he has owned and operated his own consulting business, Robert Vanasek & Associates, Inc.

Vanasek has served on several boards, including the Czech and Slovak Culture Center. He chaired the University of Minnesota Regent Candidate Advisory Council and was a member of the Carlson School Board of Overseers. He also served on the board of directors for Queen of Peace Hospital, the Citizen's League, the Jefferson Center and the Minnesota Technology Corridor. He was a member of the New Prague Volunteer Fire Department for 21 years.

He was awarded a Bush Foundation Leadership Fellowship to attend the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He was named "Legislator of the Year" award by *Politics in Minnesota* and received an "Outstanding Young American" award by the U.S. Jaycees.

Mr Vanasek will continue to use the Honorary Czech Consul office located in our CSPPS Hall.

Josef A. Mestenhauser

Josef Mestenhauser is Distinguished International Professor Emeritus in the Department of Educational Policy and Administration. His more than 50-year long career included being teacher, researcher, administrator, counselor and consultant. He published more than 120 books, monographs, articles and book chapters on international education, educational exchanges, international studies, transfer of knowledge, cross-cultural relations, leadership development, cultural change, educational reform and professionalism. He is three-time holder of senior Fulbright grants in the Philippines, Japan and Czechoslovakia. He was President of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, ISECSI (International Society for Educational, Cultural and Scientific Interchanges) and the Fulbright Association of Minnesota, and held offices in several professional associations. He holds a doctorate from the Charles University, Faculty of Law, and Ph.D. degree from the University of Minnesota in political science and international relations. He was appointed Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic April 19, 1999 and retired on May 9, 2008.

Among honors he received is the Marita Houlihan Award for Excellence in International Education; Centennial Award from Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan; Comenius Medallion from the Prime Minister of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic; International Citizen Award from the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul; Honorary Fellowship of the Faculty of Pedagogy, Charles University; Honorary Professorship of the European Humanities, University in Minsk; Honorary Professorship of the Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University in Bishkek; Medal for Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education by Charles University in commemoration of the 650th anniversary of its founding; Presidential Silver Medal from President Vaclav Havel; Jan Masaryk Silver Memorial Medal from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic; and the Distinguished Global Engagement Award from the University of Minnesota.

A Sokol since his childhood in Czechoslovakia, Dr. Mestenhauser has graciously and energetically served as Honorary Consul since the position was established in 1999. Sokol Minnesota thanks him for his outstanding service to the Czech community.



Gymnasts finish another successful year

By Sokol Minnesota Board of Instructors

The 2007-2008 gym class season ended with an exhibition for parents and friends and district competition in Omaha, Nebraska.



A large crowd attended the annual Exhibition, Awards and Celebration which was held April 15. Each gymnast performed her own routine on either the uneven bars or balance beam, and demonstrated tumbling skills in front of a packed Sokol Hall full of parents, grandparents, siblings and friends. Those who were headed for the Western District Slet and Competition, April 19-20 at Sokol South Omaha performed all their routines for an appreciative audience, giving the gymnasts an opportunity to get some of the butterflies out of their system before competing the following weekend. The gymnasts made great progress over the year, and we were so proud of their efforts.

Twelve competitors traveled to Nebraska with Sokol Minnesota coaches and instructors. They once again were outstanding young ambassadors for Sokol Minnesota, displaying good social and gymnastic skills. There were many first time successes – “getting” a trick for the first time in actual competition, and also a few disappointments – like missing the trick for the first time ever in competition. Our gymnasts brought home placement ribbons,

medals, certificates and, of course, good memories. We participated in a special number with Sokol Cedar Rapids that was very well received. Host Sokol South Omaha put on a wonderful Sunday program showcasing Sokol on an expanded level for our gymnasts and parents. The program featured a grand march with Unit flags and a variety of *prostnas* (cals).

Thank you to all of the parents for supporting their children in our gym program and for choosing Sokol Minnesota to work with your children. It has been a pleasure, and we hope to see your young gymnasts and their friends back in September, and we look forward to creating another year of fun, successes and memories.



Membership Report

By Norm Petrik, Membership Director

Sokol Minnesota welcomed ten new members in April and May.

Andy and Tiffany Pavlish of Rogers, Minnesota, expressed interest in Culture Camp and language classes. They are parents of four children.

Frank Trnka of Minneapolis played piano for the Sokol Minnesota's 125th Anniversary celebration in April. He is interested in Czech music, language and cooking classes.

Larry Mares from St Paul is drawn to Sokol by dance, cooking and language classes.

Karen Bauer from St Paul is interested in language and cooking classes, and genealogy.

Adela Smeby of White Bear Lake expressed interest in various events, including singing.

Vince Jirik from Stillwater has interest in language and cooking classes.

Chris Reimer from Eagan is attracted by language classes.

Charles Rusnasko of Shoreview is interested in language and cooking classes and dance. He is choreographer for the Czech-Slovak dance group.

Cinnamon Whaley from Minneapolis expressed interest in language and cooking classes, ethnic history, genealogy and dances.

We welcome you all to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and hope to see you at membership meetings and other events in the future! The next membership meeting is Friday, August 22 at 7 p.m

Around Sokol

By Marlene Hinshaw

Ahoj! Ah, spring at last! Yesterday, I took my 18 month old great- grandson to the neighborhood park. On the way we stopped to smell apple blossoms and lilacs in neighbor's yards. What a precious experience!

Christian Hall, our "Sokol" kid is back from a tour in Iraq. Mom and dad, Jean and Larry Hall, met him as he arrived in the US. He'll be home for a short leave and then it's off to Kuwait for four months. We hope he'll soon be home for good; safe and sound.

Sadly, we have lost several members recently, Joyce Sladek, age 67, on May 9, Rose Roch, 94, on May 11, and Don McKenney, age 84, on June 1.

Joyce (Poole) Sladek was the wife of former Sokol President, Dr. Norman E. Sladek, Ph.D. Joyce, a graduate of the University of Minnesota, majored in anthropology, with minors in political science and psychology. Self-described as a frustrated writer, she worked 35-40 hours a month for years, producing the Slovo. I hope she knew how much we looked forward to receiving the Slovo. As a tax-practitioner with the IRS for 25 years, Joyce also did Sokol's taxes. She did volunteer work for other organizations as well. And, she did all this while working full time and raising three daughters. Sokol is appreciative of her dedication and hard work. She was a great lady and a good friend.

Rose Roch was another Sokol activist. Rose became a Sokol member after moving to St. Paul with her husband Jerry in the 1930s. At that time, Sokol was at low ebb. A core group of members came together and pumped some life back into the unit. They included Jerry Roch, who became Sokol president, and members Rose Roch, Frank and Florence Haselbauer, Hank and Laura Jensen, Ludmilla (Litka) and Frank Verner, Al and Lucille Pavlicek, Georgiana and Al Buzicky, and others. Besides working together for Sokol, they did lots of socializing. Georgiana told me the ladies in this group called themselves "The Dolls." She said, "we had great parties and lots of fun together." In the 1950's Rose and Jerry bought one of the first "campers," a slide-in on a pickup truck. With the Haselbauers, Jensens and others, they enjoyed many camping trips together. Sokol is indebted to folks like Rose and Jerry Roch. Rose was put to rest beside Jerry at the Bohemian National Cemetery near Cadott, Wisconsin.

Don McKenney was one of our tireless workers over the years. He was a Sokol member for 25 years, and Mason for 50. He recently had surgery, was in rehabilitation care but died unexpectedly. He retired

from the Veterans Administration, was a member of Fred Babcock VFW #5555, and served in the USMC during WWII.

Don was involved in Boy Scouts and had a great love of the outdoors. Survived by wife of 60 years, Doris; son, Dana (Elise); granddaughter, Shae; grandson, Joshua (Julie) and great-grandson, Jadon; daughter, Danita (Dave) Larson and grandson, Quint; daughter, Doreen.

That Sokol continues to survive after 125 years amazes me. Sometimes when I'm alone at the hall, I'm aware that I'm walking on the same floors, sitting in the same chairs and occupying the same space as past Sokol members. I can't help but think we're some kind of "special" people. One of these special people is our president, Joe Landsberger.

On May 15, Joe received the 2008 David L. Sons Community Service Award (established in 1987). This award is given to an outstanding West 7th neighbor who has given selflessly to his community. Joe was instrumental in creating and sustaining the North High Bridge Park at the West Seventh end of the High Bridge, our old Czech/Slovak neighborhood. Joe found the baptismal gates from the old St. Stanislaus Church and had them installed in the park. St. Stans is located next to our hall. Joe also led the effort to mark Sokol's 125 anniversary with a day-long festival at the hall, in which Czech & Slovak history and culture were shared not only with the West End, but the entire City of St. Paul. His work to revitalize the West End Arts organization was also noted. Sokol Member Maxine McCormick was also presented with the award for her contributions to the Community Reporter newspaper, and for advocacy for restoration of the historic Irvine Park neighborhood. Congratulations!

The Czech singers ended their practice season with a wonderful luncheon at the Cherokee Sirlain Room. They plan to get together for at least one outing this summer. You can bet John Cicha will be there with his button accordion.

The ice finally went "out" at the Cross Lake Sokol Camp. Members have been working on a big project; removing the old wood on the running dock and replacing it. This Memorial Day weekend they were able to put the new dock in the lake. A big thank you to the "guys and gals" responsible for this project. They are, Don, Pat, Ron, Ann, Rachel and Mark Andrle, Chuck Draheim, Julie and Colin Clancy, Miro Verner, Vickie Marabella and husband Eric. I'm eager to stand on the new dock and throw in a line.

Happy summer to you all!



Editor's Note: This part two of Paula Pojar Vukonich's account of her family's 2007 heritage trip to the Czech Republic.

Backroads of Bohemia

Story and photos by Paula Pojar Vukonich

Every village in this part of the Šumava Mountains has its own hand dug shallow square pond about ½ acre in size. According to our guide, long ago each village was required by royal decree to dig a pond to have water available in case of fire, which frequently destroyed whole villages of thatched roof homes. The villagers used the ponds as carp hatcheries – filling them with fingerlings in the spring and harvesting the fish in late fall. They then drained to ponds and collected the muck from the bottom to use as fertilizer for their fields. Alongside one pond, we spotted a “Vodnik”, a green troll-like figure placed next to a pond to guard it and warn people away from the dangerous water. Vodniks are also said to collect the souls of those who drown so they are not lost forever in the water.

While traveling through the countryside, I observed numerous small monuments with cast iron crosses appearing randomly alongside the road, at the edge of towns, in a small park or village square. Our guide explained these were penance crosses. For the most serious sins, the priests of old would instruct the supplicant to build a monument as a penance. One penance cross was dated 1888. Every village had at least one penance cross. We also passed many tiny roadside shrines where travelers can to stop and pray. I don't know if these were also erected for penances.

We stayed in the famed renaissance-era town of Český Krumlov (UNESCO World Heritage Site) for several days, using it as a base camp for our explorations. It is a small town with so much spectacular beauty concentrated into its perimeters that it seems like a fairytale.

We had another guide/ interpreter for the rest of the trip. Her name was Zuzanna, a wonderful young Czech lady who spent time in the USA learning English and now teaches it in the Czech Republic. Her command of both languages was incredible, and we were really able to understand and communicate with the native people.

Our first journey was to Trhové Sviny, birthplace of our paternal great-great grandparents. It is a larger town with a business district on either side of a long boulevard-like square with a fountain and several statues. I found a family name on one of the memorial

plaques from World War I era. Great-great grandfather Kryzer lived in a two story building on one side of the square, now housing a bar on the main level with living space above. He was a tailor and likely had his shop where the bar is now.

Around the corner on a side street was building #62, the birthplace of our great-great grandmother. It was now a paper shop. We spoke with the owner and showed her our ancestor's marriage and birth certificates, and her wedding picture. The lady was not related and did not recognize the name, but went back to her office to check the deed. We studied it and found it listed a property transfer naming two of our ancestors. The current owner insisted on giving me the original page from the deed after making a copy for herself. I could not persuade her otherwise. She said “It is your family and you came so far-this belongs to you.”

From Trhové Sviny we drove east to Třeboň located in the lake country, a large flat lowland basin with many man-made lakes. Třeboň is located on the shores of two of the largest lakes. Many of the lakes in this area are used for raising carp – considered a delicacy in this landlocked country. Large fields of safflowers, flax and other crops grew in this fertile basin.

The small towns of Nový and Stará Hlína were likely the birthplace of a maternal ancestor. We found two ancient arched bridges built in the 1700's. Damaged in the 2002 floods, they have been restored.

Traveling north from Třeboň we came to Přeseke, birthplace of our maternal great grandmother. The house where she was born is one of three large farmhouses with attached outbuildings and enclosed courtyards, and the only one restored to good condition. We talked to a lady on a bicycle, and she led us to her brother's house where he had the village “chronicles.” The village chronicles are handwritten accounts of the history of the village that have been passed on from one recorder to the next for centuries. He told us the three large farmhouses were the first houses built in the village, and our ancestor was born in the Zahradník house, named after the original owner.

Interestingly, the name Zahradník is listed on our great grandmother's baptismal certificate as her godparents. Our family name was not mentioned in the chronicles, but we photographed some pertinent pages for later translation. Přeseke had a small church across the street from the three farmhouses. A beautiful old linden tree grew in a tiny square in the middle of town,



Penance cross near Přeseke

and next to it stood a penance marker. Perhaps the sinner had to plant the “lipa” as well.

Next we drove to Přebořov where earlier generations of the same family (Hanzal) had lived. Our guide called ahead, making an appointment to meet with the mayor who led us on a tour. First he showed us the ruins of Přebořov castle at the edge of town. It had been abandoned during the Communist era, and fell into disrepair, eventually partially collapsing. As part of the restitution program after the end of Communism, it was returned to the preoccupation owners, but they did not want to restore the property.

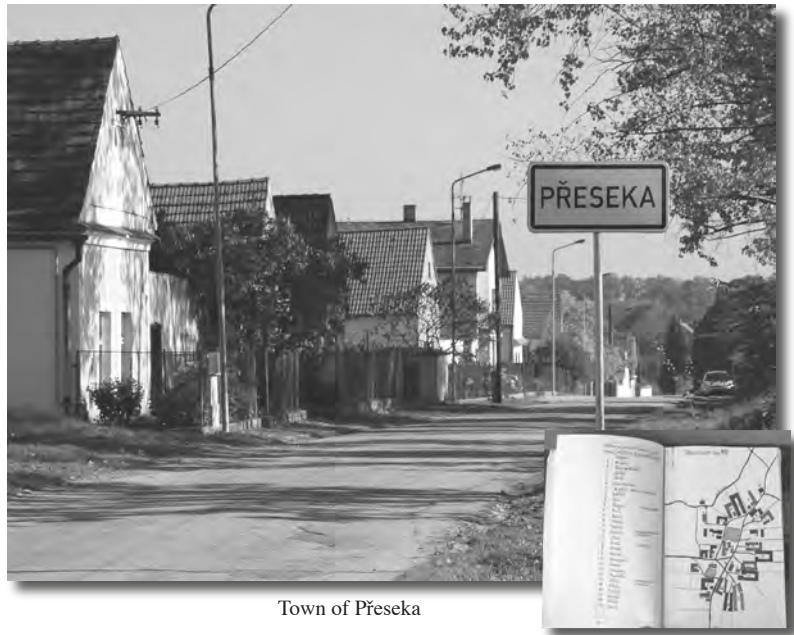
The local church and cemetery were in the adjoining town of Kvasejovice. The mayor presided over these two towns and one other nearby. The church was very old with an elaborate pipe organ, and full-size porcelain statue of the crucifixion with realistic skull and crossbones underneath, both equally as old. The church stood at the top of a hill with a well maintained cemetery in the churchyard below it. Our ancestral name appeared several times among the tombstones. In Kvasejovice we found the house that belonged to our ancestors 200 years ago, and a story of a family who vanished.

In the center of the village was an abandoned communist store. The mayor told us that a Hanzal family lived in a house on that site and one day, a few years after the war (WWII), the police came and took the whole family away – to the German border the villagers were told. Of course, the villagers asked no questions. Their house was demolished and the Communist store was built on the site. The family was never heard from again.

The mayor was very proud of his newly restored city hall. He explained the town crest that was painted on the building. The three roses stood for the three ruling families of the surrounding area, each of whom had a different colored rose on their crest.

As we drove along the narrow winding country roads I saw small gnarled trees lining both sides of the road spaced about 20 feet apart for miles on end. They were apple trees, and our guide said the trees were planted on the right-of-way to provide food for anyone who wanted to pick the apples, or perhaps for wildlife like the wild boar we saw running across a grassy field. Later we saw an old man with a burlap bag gathering apples.

to be continued



Town of Přeseká

1850 Přeseká chronicle showing map with house numbers and corresponding names

Heritage Award

St. Paul City Councilman Dave Thune presented Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota with the City of St. Paul’s Heritage Preservation Commission’s Award of Recognition for its “125 year commitment to sustaining the cultural heritage and identity of the Czech/Slovak organization and their ongoing stewardship of the C.S.P.S. Hall on West Seventh Street.” Accepting on Sokol’s



behalf were Maren Schroeder, Tom Schroeder, Marcella Bigaouette, Joyce Tesarek, Siri Schroeder, President Joe Landsberger, Councilman Dave Thune, and Mark Bigaouette. West Seventh neighborhood individuals and organizations received six of this year’s twelve awards presented May 13 at St. Paul City Hall.

Dancers brighten Festival of Nations

By Louise Wessinger

Our Czech and Slovak dance groups were busy at the Festival of Nations the first week in May.

The St Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers danced several new dances, including the *Kalamajka*, a Bohemian dance taught to the group by our guest instructor Alice Janotova last October. It was set for the group by choreographer Charlie Rusnacko. Charlie also worked out new versions of the Slovak women's dance, *Tichy Potok*, and the men's dance, *Basistoska*. The main performance ended with a Pilky from the Lassko region of Moravia. Eighteen dancers performed both on the Main Stage and in the café area of the Festival.

The Taneční teens performed both Friday and Saturday. For students on Friday, they choose to do the Bohemian dance *Crna Vlna* (The Black Wool) and the Slovak dance *Ceresnicky*, *Ceresnicky* for the shorter student day sets. On Saturday, they offer a dancing tour of the Czech and Slovak Republics, performing the beautiful Slovak women's dance *Hore Hronske Czardas*, followed by *Kalina* and a *Trojke* dance, featuring a trio of dancers representing a driver and two horses. They finished with a *Chosko* dance that Ms. Janotova taught the teens. The ten teen women and our male teen dancer, James Metcalf, were joined by alumni Jenny Gedde and Kate Aubrecht .

Not to be outdone by any of the older dancers, the children's dance group Taneční Mládež praised the town of Boleslav, pretended to be pheasants in Bazant, and played the part of a cobbler in the dance *Svec* – all in less than three minutes!

Thank you to all our dancers and their families for their commitment to preserving and celebrating our heritage in music and dance.

Lipa Dancers perform

By Jeanette Pafko

The Lipa Slovak Folk Dancers, directed by Sokol Minnesota member Don Pafko, performed both Friday and Saturday at the Festival of Nations. The troupe is based at St. Cyril and Methodius Slovak Catholic Church in Minneapolis.

The main auditorium program consisted of a three-part dance called *Ceperka-Mojse-Kuri Krik*, from the Eastern Slovak region of Zemplin, as well as a dance from the *Hore Hron* region of Central Slovakia called *Sorovy a Dupak*.

These dances were performed in their original form, just as one would see them performed by a performing group in the Slovak Republic.

Czech and Slovak Language Classes

Sokol Minnesota will offer a special session of introductory Czech and Slovak language classes in August. The classes will meet four times from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The day of week is yet to be determined. Check www.sokolmn.org for updates.

The classes will focus on basic phrases and pronunciation. No text book is required. Classes fees are \$35 for Sokol Minnesota members and \$40 for non-members.

For further information, call Louise Wessinger at 651-452-6240.



Sokols headed to Dobruska

Sokol Minnesota members Pam Langworthy and Paula Vukonich were chosen to study the Czech language this summer at Dobruska in the Czech Republic.

Pam dances with the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Dancers, and is a student in Sokol Minnesota's intermediate language classes. Pam also sings folk songs with the Tuesday morning Senior Singers. Paula lives in Chisholm, but often helps at Sokol dinners and events, when visiting family in the Twin Cities.

Dobruska is a 4-week program, including six hours in class each day, as well as tours of local areas. Other Sokol members who have received scholarships to the program in recent years include: Louise Wessinger (2000), Annie Smisek (2001), Norm Petrik (2005), Doreen McKenney (2006) and Jan Knudtson (2007). The Czech government pays for the program, which includes room and board in a dormitory setting. The government supports the program to promote Czech language around the world and ensure that Czech immigrants and travelers will find Czech speakers wherever they go.

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Generous Donors

By Jean Hall, Corresponding Secretary

Sokol Minnesota extends thanks to individuals who have recently made charitable contributions to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. All donations are to the general fund, unless otherwise indicated.

Donations in honor of Sokol Minnesota's 125 Anniversary

Charles and Joanne Parvey

Donations to *The Slovo*

Ellen Vavrina

Pancake Breakfast

Georgiana Dolejsi

In Memory of Vlasta Hanover

Ralph & Mary Halbert

Donald & Catherine Haselbauer

John & Mildred Grealish

Tillie Dolejsi (Elevator)

James & MaryJo Chlebecek

Kent & Marlene Hinshaw

Elsie Roepke

Florence Haselbauer

Ken & Sharon Wyberg

Thank You!

David & Darnell Stepan

Georgiana Dolejsi (Elevator)

Thomas & Judith Aubrecht

(Elevator)

Donald & Jeanette Pafko

(Building)

Donations help Sokol Minnesota preserve the historic C.S.P.S. Hall and support programs serving members and the community. Please send donations directly to the Sokol Treasurer: Tom Aubrecht, 2106 Berkeley, St. Paul, MN 55105. The treasurer will notify the Correspondence Secretary, who will acknowledge your donation. Thank you.



Song of the Month

Submitted by

Georgiana Dolejsi

Ay, from Buchlov the wind is blowing, it is picking up Kacenska's ribbons.

Today a bride, tomorrow a wife, tis evening you will start wearing a cap.

You, Kacenska, are a white rose, you did not need a husband.

You could have remained single like a fish proudly swimming in water.

You, Martin, are a green tree, you did not need a wife.

You could have remained a gallant man, flying about like a dove.

NOTE: Single women wore ribbons and flowers in their hair, married women wore caps covering their hair.



Ej, od Buchlova (Ay, from Buchlov)

Pomalú *Moravská se Slovácku*

Ej, od Buch-lo-va vě-tr vě-je, už téj Ka-čen-ce pan-tle be-re.

Dneskaj nevěs-ta, zaj-tra že-na, dnes večer budeš za-če-pe-ná, -pe-ná.

Ty si, Kačenko, bílá růža,
tobě nebylo třeba muže.
(:Tys mohla chodit po slobodě,
ta jak rybička v bystrej vodě.:)

Ty si, Martine, strom zelený,
tobě nebylo třeba ženy,
(:Ty mohl chodit po galánkách
ta jak holúbek po hambálkách.:)

Thanks to Festival Chairs!

I want to thank all the Chairs for the Festival of Nations:

Joyce Tesarek and Mary Cahill (Café)

Doreen McKenney (Bazaar gift shop)

Jill Bastyr (Culture Exhibit)



Thanks also to all the volunteers that worked in each area. We could not have had a better crew, and know that all of you put in a lot of time to help make this go. Thanks again, and I hope to see all of you and some new faces next year - **Jean Hall FON Chair**

Sokol Café serves up treats at Festival

By Mary Cahill and Joyce Tesarek

Peanuts, popcorn, crackerjacks? Not available at the Festival's Czech and Slovak International Café.



Jay and Barb Fonkert

This year's visitors were treated to cuisine that included halusky (cabbage, dumpling and bacon hot dish), jaternice (Czech sausage), kolache (pastry), dumplings (with sugar and cinnamon or gravy) – a new menu item this year. For those with a little more traditional American palate, the menu included hot dogs (parky), pork burgers and fried cheese sticks – with or without cole slaw.

Fried cheese sticks? Yes, this was the second new menu offering this year. Perhaps to your surprise, fried cheese, or "syr," is a popular item sold in cafes in Prague. The Chairs of the café attempt to stay true to the types of ethnic foods found in the Czech and Slovak Republics. These foods, much as many of us love them, have limited appeal to thousands of middle and high school students that visit the Festival on Thursday and Friday. We needed another item that would appeal to the "fast-food" generation. Fried cheese was a huge success --One boy came back for "fourths".

This year's crew of cooks and servers was an unbelievable cadre of hard-working and fun-loving volunteers. Thank you to everyone who cooked and baked, who worked a shift or more in the café, and who helped set up and take down, and also thanks to our faithful patrons!

Thanks to Festival of Nations Volunteers

Sokol Minnesota Festival of Nations Chair: Jean Hall

Bazaar Chair: Doreen McKenney
Café Chairs: Joyce Tesarek & Mary Cahill

Doris McKenney	Jean & Larry Hall	Jan Knudtson
Dana McKenney	Dennis Cahill	Darla Kolb
Danita Larson	Norm Petrik	Marit Lee Kucera
Quint Larson	Jeanette Pafko	Joe Landsberger
Marit Kucera	Don Andrlé	Mary Ann & Ken
Louise Wessinger	Kate Aubrecht	Loxtercamp
Norm Petrik	Judy Aubrecht	Jeff Martinka
Joan Sedlacek	Jason Brozovich	Doreen & Doris
Betty Erlandson	Megan Cahill,	McKenney
Terry Pulkrabek	Jim Chlebecek	Cheryl Nelson
Mary Krizan	Mary Jo Chlebecek	Kat Nelson
Angie Caldwell	George Chlebecek	Jackie Paul &
Bill Caldwell	Georgiana Dolejsi	friend Annie
Kathy Jorgenson	Shannon Duffy	Teresa Pojar
Dan Washick	Karla Erickson	Joan Sedlacek
Joe Landsberger	Barb & Jay Fonkert	Terry Shima
	Ed Hamernik	Steve Shimer
	Katie, Don &	Bob Vanyo
	Gretchen Haselbauer	Paula Vukonich
	Andrew Hine	Barb Williams
	Carol Horak	Ken Wyberg
	Katherine Jorgenson	

Cultural Exhibit

By Jill Bastyr

The Festival theme this year was Arts and Architecture. Sokol Minnesota always ranks among the best of the ethnic groups in promoting the Festival theme and it was no different this year.

Focusing on the "Town Square" aspect, five panel-sized, self-standing displays were designed and built by Jill Bastyr. A call for pictures and photographs produced beautiful examples of the many types of architectural styles the Czech and Slovak Republics have to offer. The pictures were displayed on the panels in a unique fashion by Jean Hall, representing bricks or windows highlighting Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and Art Nouveau architectures. The crowning features were the hand-painted "toppers" made by Doreen McKenney which represented domes, red roofs, spires, bell towers and even sgraffito. Arches were made using rope lights. Two lion statues, two lamplights and hand-made flag banners made by Joan Sedlacek graced either side of the display. Completing the picture was a bistro table and chair set, sitting on cobblestones with geranium plants about. Visitors were asked to stroll the square and search for unique pictures like the "rainbow over the St. Charles Bridge or the "Man coming out of the manhole" (statue). Special thanks to Jean Hall, Doreen McKenney, and Joan Sedlacek for their unwavering assistance, Bob and Bill Bastyr for their man work, and the booth workers and picture donaters. Without their help, my crazy concept and construction of a "Symphony of Stone Town Square" wouldn't have gotten off the ground. Hope you liked it!



Norm Petrik, Livi and Sue Martin at the Culture Booth



Doreen McKenney at the Bazaar Booth

Culture Booth Chair: Jill Bastyr

Bob & Matt Bastyr
Doreen McKenney
Jean Hall
Don & Pat Andrlé
Diane Bell
Marcella Bigouette
Mary Cahill
Georgiana Dolejsi
Scott Hinshaw
Libby Imbrone
Ann Smisek Jans
Sue, Liv & Emma
Martin
Molly Griese
Leah Sticha
Mrs. Sticha
Joan Sedlacek
Louise Wessinger

(Sorry if we missed anyone- thanks to you too!)

Doreen McKenney and her mother, Doris with help from many volunteers, again recreated Sokol's Krásné Dárky (Beautiful Gifts) gift shop at the Festival's bazaar. The booth introduced visitors to wonderful Czech glassware, ornaments, books, crafts, and much more. Thanks to Doreen and her team for representing Sokol so well!





Dr. Josef Mestenhauser

The Skeleton of the Past

By Honorary Czech Consul
Ret., Dr. Josef Mestenhauser

In May, the Czech media covered three important pieces of news that were largely ignored in the Western press. These stories reveal how deeply communist rule affected the thinking and

reasoning of people in the Czech Republic and, I believe, in other post-socialist countries as well.

In the past, we tended to over-estimate the strength of the former Soviet Union, but underestimated the damage that the totalitarian period had caused to intellectual resources of common people. I want to devote this column to that damage because it is multi-dimensional, and because the high degree of specialization among us causes us to obtain only partial knowledge about what happened – and still is happening.

The most common explanations we get are from historians and political scientists; historians usually cover things chronologically, linearly, and focus on “big” names, such as Dubcek, Husak, Jakes, Havel and others. Political scientists, on the other hand, speculate about policies and distinguish between “domestic” and “international” policies, ignoring the fact that there was no difference between them when all decisions were made in Moscow. This shortage of “full service” perspectives is coupled only by the tendency of people in the Czech and Slovak Republics not to want to think and discuss these topics.

The first piece of news that came to my attention was a public pronouncement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in which the party stood firmly and proudly behind its 40-plus years of rule. Although most people guessed that the present party has not changed (it did not become a normal democratic opposition party as happened in some other countries of the former Soviet block), this pronouncement was the first time the party acknowledged its heritage and full compliance with the Marxist-Leninist credo. The announcement praised the past leadership for great sacrifices and achievements. It dismissed the past leadership’s excesses with a brief statement that, because the February 48 events were the “first form of socialism, it was unfortunately accompanied by some ‘deformities’ that damaged and impoverished the ideas of socialism”. In other words, these “deformities” were to be blamed on a few individuals for which the regime was not responsible and that the damage was done primarily to itself. As could be expected, there was no apology for the damages caused to hundred of thousands of people, nor was there any recognition that these “deformities” were implicit in the communist system itself.

The second bit of news came shortly after the first. A group of 57 Social Democratic members of Parliament filed a brief with the Constitutional Court, requesting that a decision of the cabinet to create a new Institute for the Study of Totalitarianism be abolished on the ground that

the communist system was not “totalitarian” after all, and that the communists actually did a lot of good things. This is an incredible stand on part of the party that was itself annihilated by the communists, and that is now supported by one-third of potential voters. These members of Parliament claimed that the communists should take credit for such achievements as building the metro system and legislation that gave children of unwed couples the rights of children born in marriage. The action of these 57 MP’s shows what other commentators have missed, namely the poverty of social science sophistication about what is the nature of democracy and totalitarianism. It also misses the fact that every regime, no matter how totalitarian (for example, Nazi Germany) has to perform some of the same functions dealing with public services.

The third news report concerned a recent public opinion poll finding that 51 percent of those surveyed considered the socialism era to be better than the present democratic system. This, too, is an incredible sign of how the communist era affected the comparative and critical thinking of people.

I have been studying the reasons for these phenomena because I think they are important, not only to our understanding of what has happened in the country of our ancestors, but also because the same lack of critical thinking is responsible for what they know about us and our own system of government and society. After some twenty years, new information about daily life under socialism is finally emerging into full light. It shows that communism was indeed a totalitarian regime that practiced complete thought control, in turn causing the transition to democracy to be slow and difficult. Most people who started working in the Czech and Slovak republics have been driven by interests in economy and trade, and considered that democracy was synonymous only with the existence of political parties and elections. They neglected and still do damage to mental resources.

There are a few lessons from these events. First, communism is neither buried nor dead; it will continue to be a barrier to the growth of democracy. Second, those of us from Czech and Slovak heritage – and indeed all Americans – have some responsibility for understanding what has happened there and how what happened influences the ignorance people have of us. Third, what we are doing now is neither sufficient nor appropriate to knowing more about the present status of relationships. It is a worthy cause to maintain traditions, but not at the expense of understanding contemporary developments. If we want people to understand us, we also have to understand them.

Ivan Dubovicky, a friend of the Minnesota Czech community, has been named Deputy Ambassador and Commercial Attache to Costa Rica. He is a past Research Fellow in the Department of History and the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota, and has visited Minnesota often throughout his career. His assignment includes five Caribbean nations in addition to Costa Rica.

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August 1 (copy deadline: July 1)

October 1 (copy deadline: September 1)

November 1 (copy deadline: October 1)

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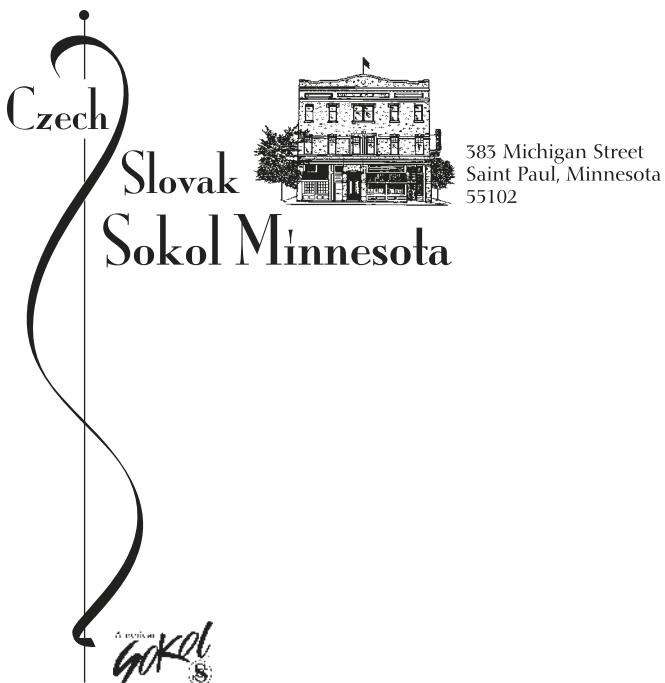
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