



**Czech
Slovak
Sokol Minnesota**



385 Michigan Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota
55102

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

SLOVO

**June/July 2016
vol. 39 no. 6**

Another Successful Year for Gymnasts

By Courtney Benson, Head Coach, and Mary Cahill, Women's Physical Director



UPCOMING EVENTS MAY 2016

**Czech and Slovak
Cultural Camp**
June 13-17

Board of Trustees
June 8, July 13, 7 p.m.

Board of Directors
June 16, July 21, 7 p.m.

August Slovo Deadline
July 1

**Outdoor Grill Night at
Germanic-American Institute**
July 15, 6-9 p.m.
(See page 4)

Sokol Camp Booya
Pine City
August 14, noon - 5 p.m.

On Saturday, April 9, ten Sokol Minnesota gymnasts competed at the Western District Slet which was hosted by Sokol Crete, Nebraska. The competition began Saturday morning with Levels 1-2 and continued into Saturday afternoon with Levels 3+ and Xcel. Sokol Minnesota had two competitors and eight competitors in these respective sessions.

Sokol Minnesota is very proud of the results from the meet. Not only was Sokol Minnesota represented well on the podium, but Sokol Minnesota gymnasts were a positive reflection of Sokol Minnesota at large. The girls prepared well in advance; this was a huge testimony to the level of effort committed at practice throughout the season. Moreover, the girls supported and celebrated the success of each other, including the other Sokol units.

The results from the meet demonstrate the fine coaching provided by Head Coach Courtney Benson, Mickaela O'Malley, Alice O'Brien, Erica Meyer, and Siri Schroeder.

Our Sokol Minnesota gymnasts placed as follows: Babette Lume, 1st Place, Level 2 Child, ages 7-9; Anna Nowaczewski, 1st Place, Level 2 Child, ages 10-11; Lauren Anderson, 1st Place, Level 3 Child, ages 8-9; Lily Callanan, 2nd Place, Level 3 Child, ages 8-9; Lucy O'Brien, 4th Place, Level 3 Child, ages 10-11; Claire Wickiser, 5th Place, Level 3 Child, ages 10-11; Ella Pratt, 1st Place, Silver Xcel Junior, ages 12-14; Charlotte Marboe, 2nd Place, Silver Xcel Junior, ages 12-14; Isabelle Callanan, 3rd Place, Silver Xcel Junior, ages 12-14; and Zoe Hoiland, 4th Place, Silver Xcel Junior, ages 12-14.

The event concluded on Saturday evening with the Awards Ceremony where the Sokol Minnesota gymnasts performed a special number, written and taught by instructor Siri Schroeder. Siri combined the older tradition of building pyramids with the more contemporary use of music. The audience enjoyed the performance with a loud round of applause. All in all, another successful year for our gymnasts.

continued on bottom of page 2



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Sokol Minnesota**

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Past issues of *Slovo* and
Hall Calendar of events:
www.sokolmn.org

Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes By Judy Aubrecht

Pozdrav bratři a sestry/Greetings Brothers and Sisters

The local Czech and Slovak community is invited to a friendly evening at the Germanic-American Institute (GAI), 301 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, for an outdoor Grill Night, 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, July 15. The catering staff at the GAI plans to serve a Czech/Slovak plate of *jiternice* (sausage), Czech potato salad, and red cabbage. Czech bottled beer and *koláče* will also be sold. The German plate will include bratwurst, German potato salad, and sauerkraut with Paulaner beer on tap for sale. Each plate will cost \$8 to \$10. You may want to bring a partner and share the plates to get a taste of all of the foods. Czech and Slovak entertainment is part of the evening. The GAI has already hosted Grill Nights with the Turkish and Norwegian communities, with gatherings of 100 to 150 people. Let's plan to have a grand turnout from our Czech and Slovak community. Please mark your calendar, hope for pleasant weather, invite some friends or family, and attend this special, friendly evening.

The 19th annual Czech and Slovak Children's Cultural Day Camp takes place at the C.S.P.S. Hall from June 13 to 17. Children between the ages of 7 to 14 are invited to be campers and junior leaders and adult leaders are invited to help during the week. The theme this year is Legends and Folktales. Registration information is available at <SokolMN.org>. Registration forms are due by June 1, so that the necessary materials can be prepared for each camper.

Many people have asked about updates for large projects underway at the Hall, including the new air conditioning system and the replacement fire escape. Workers were busy several weeks ago making air pressure and system adjustments to the air conditioning unit. Now, final bills can be paid so that the permits can be closed out with the City of Saint Paul. After that, we can enjoy much cooler events at the Hall. We will also be able to have more rental events, which will enhance our bank account. Progress continues with the fire escape on the north side of the building. This is a very expensive project and your financial support is much appreciated.

Potential restaurant tenants and the backers have had several visions for our restaurant space. Agreement about the space is firming up and the financial backers are satisfied with the current plans. Sokol Minnesota is working with a commercial lease attorney to work out a fair and solid lease. Members of the Sokol Minnesota planning committee have been involved in these negotiations and have worked very hard to lease the space to a suitable tenant. *Nazdar!*

Thank You, Christy Banks!

Slovo salutes Christy's work as Copy Editor.

Since November/December 2010, Christy has helped produce the best Sokol newsletter in the United States!

That's 56 issues. That is a lot of volunteer hours!

Thank you, Christy, for your steadfast dedication.

As we say *Thank You for a Job Well Done* to Christy, we welcome Madison Jerde as the new copy editor.

Continued from page 1 **Another Successful Year for Gymnasts** (also see page 12)

A special congratulations to all of our Sokol Minnesota gymnasts, both competitors and non-competitors, and a huge thanks to all of our fine instructors, including those mentioned previously, as well as Jason Brozovich, Boys' Head Coach. Lastly, this could not have been possible without the guidance of Mary Cahill, Women's Physical Director; her countless hours spent in the gym this season count toward a cumulative of 50 years devoted to the program. She participated in the program as a child, continued teaching classes while in high school, and we have been blessed with her oversight of the program since 1989. We greatly appreciate her dedication, and owe much of our success in turn to her supportive and encouraging leadership. We look forward to our 2016-2017 season, capped off with the 2017 National Slet, which will be held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. We hope to see our many fine gymnasts again come September!

The Western District, to which Sokol Minnesota belongs, is honored to host the American Sokol XXIV National Slet and Festival, June 22 to 25, 2017, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the City of Five Seasons.

Step on Up!

The Search Continues for Sponsors...Adopt a Step!

By Joyce Tesarek, Finance Chair

As we talked about last month, to comply with a city citation, we needed to replace our fire steps. To stay within the time frame, we immediately installed a temporary scaffolding stairway. We have hired an architect to do the drawings for the permanent steps to submit to the city. We want to move on to the permanent steps, but we also need to pay for the temporary steps, which cost about \$9,500.

Won't you Adopt a Step? We already have sponsors for three steps, but we still have many more steps hoping to be adopted too. Step on Up! For a tax-deductible donation of \$475, you can sponsor a step (or maybe sponsor several?) or split a step with another donor for only \$237.50.

With your help we can get these temporary steps paid for and move on to finance their permanent replacements. The permanent steps are estimated at about \$40,000.

Please donate online at our website <www.sokolmn.org> or fill out this donation form with a check made out to Sokol Minnesota. Write "Steps" on the check memo line. Send to the Hall at

Sokol Minnesota
383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul,
Minnesota 55102

As always, one hundred percent of all donations go directly to fund the project and are tax deductible. Thank you!

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.

Adopt a Step Fund: \$500 - \$999: Marit Lee Kucera, Norm Petrik and Joyce Tesarek, Joan Sedlacek.

General Fund: under \$100: Ken and Sharon Wyberg in memory of Al Dvorak.

Legacy Fund: \$100 - \$499: Jim and Mary Jo Chlebeck, in memory of Robert Pomije; Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities; Darlene Sitko.

\$1000 - \$4999: Eileen and Ellen Vavrina.

Slovo: under \$100: C. E. Heritage Tours, Inc.; Elsie Khol.

In-Kind Donation: under \$100: Hana Matousek, dessert ingredients for Šibrínky dinner.

General Fund: \$10 Slovo: \$10
Legacy Fund (including Adopt a Step): \$3,961

Teen Dancer Emma Stodola Graduates

By Louise Wessinger

On June 3, Emma Stodola, daughter of Sokol members Joe Stodola and Tamara Amon-Stodola, graduates with honors from Academy for Science and Agriculture (AFSA High School), Vadnais Heights. She is still deciding whether she will take a year off or attend beauty school to study esthiology and make-up artistry next year.

Emma was a member of the *Taneční Mládež* Dancers along with her older brother Tyler when she was younger. Her cousins James and Jessica Metcalf and Kyle Spillman were also in the group. She and her sister Maddie were taking other dancing lessons, which involved competitions so they took some years off from being in the TM Dancers. When Emma was in 8th grade and Maddie in 7th, they saw their cousins dance at the Sokol Camp Picnic in Pine City and decided to return to their "Czech roots." They joined the Teen *Taneční* Dancers and have been dedicated members ever since!



Membership Updates By Norm Petrik, Membership Director

There were three new members accepted at the April 21 Board of Directors meeting: Madison Jerde from Golden Valley, who has interests in graphic design and the Slovo; James Gerlach from Pulaski, Tennessee; and Stephen Ubl from Saint Paul Park, with interests in the Czech Republic and Prague. Welcome to Sokol Minnesota! Our next membership meeting is August 26.

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> Thank you!



Name: _____

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

I would like my gift designated: in memory or in honor of:

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

383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
Or donate online: www.sokolmn.org Thank You!

Czech Robotics Team R.U.R. Takes Second Place in Minnesota

By Renáta Tichá

R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots) is a play that every child and adult in the Czech Republic knows. Karel Čapek launched a new word, "robot," that the world has adopted and uses to refer to machines that can automate many different actions. When Karel Čapek wrote *R.U.R.*, he cautioned humanity against the mechanization of life and to preserve human relationships.

On April 9, a different *R.U.R.*, a high-school team of students from Prague (PORG Gymnasium) under the leadership of Jakub Haláček came to Minnesota to compete with their robot at the FIRST Minnesota Robotics Competition. The team included Dominika Hermanová, Anna Hrubá, Jaromír Šolc, Daniel Hykl, Martin Juříček, Jakub Kašpar, Albert Polák, Filip Chudoba, Pavel Havlín, Filip Cihelka, Jonáš Fuksa, Ondřej Dušek, Daniel Kaftan, and Martin Bláha. Sixty-three teams from the Upper Midwest (and the Czech Republic) assembled in Williams Arena at the University of Minnesota for an exciting series of matches, first among individual teams and later among team alliances. This is the first time ever that a Czech team travelled to the United States for a regional robotics competition. Team *R.U.R.* (#5996) qualified in 20th place. It was selected to be on a robotics team alliance composed of fellow teams from Roseville, Minnesota, and Cedar Falls, Iowa, and together advanced to the second round of the competition.

The incredibly talented Czech team and its team partners made it through quarterfinals, despite their robot's malfunction. Nothing could stop them. Their fans, including Czech and Slovak Cultural Center (CSCC) members, saw them all the way to the finals! Their alliance's second place was unexpected but well deserved. The Czech team won the competition's rookie award, plus an award for inspiration in engineering, accompanied by many cheers and even a standing ovation for their inspiration and pioneering spirit. As icing on the cake, the team received a wild card to compete at the world finals in Saint Louis, Missouri at the end of April!

Thank you, R.U.R.! You made us so proud in Minnesota by reminding us of Čapek's message in a world of pervasive technology that robots can indeed bring us together from all over the world and inspire us to push our boundaries in pursuing a common goal through friendship, teamwork, and innovative spirit! Go R.U.R. team #5996!

4 June/July 2016 *Slovo*

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 2 - 4, The Czechoslovakian Collectors Association will hold its annual convention for the second year in a row in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The convention features excursions, lectures, camaraderie with like collectors, and the famous Sales Room where collectors can browse and purchase glass, pottery, jewelry, and other decorative arts of the Bohemia, Austria, and Czech regions from about 1850 to 1940. For registration and more information: www.czechcollectors.org

June 17-19, 33rd Annual Czech-Slovak Community Festival, Phillips, Wisconsin, with music and dancing, Wisconsin's state queen pageant, vendors, state *Kolachy* contest, polka Mass, beer garden, pork and sauerkraut dinner, antique farm equipment, children's activities, bike rally, and more. 7 p.m. Friday *Lidice* Memorial Service. <www.czech-slovak-festival.com>

We're Invited! *Grillabende/grilovací večer/Grill Fest* at GAI on July 15, 301 Summit Avenue in Saint Paul

Each summer the Germanic American Institute (GAI) host several events. One of the main purposes of these events is to enjoy sitting outside in good weather on their lovely lawn at 301 Summit Avenue in Saint Paul. They call these events *Grillabende* or grill evenings.

This year GAI has invited Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota to partner for one of these evenings. Our *grilovací večer* will be on Friday, July 15 from 6 to 9 p.m. There is no entry fee and it will be held on the outdoor lawn and patio area. There will be a beer garden serving German and Czech beer.

They will also sell German and Czech/Slovak food plates as well as *koláče*. The Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers will offer entertainment during the evening.

Here is a great chance to get to know our neighbors and also to advertise our own fall events (especially our Czech and Slovak Festival and our Pork Dinner).

The Grill Fest is open to the public, no reservations needed. Please join us for a fun night with our German friends!

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

Through July 10, *Still...Life*, exhibit of Czech Jewish cemeteries with photos, text, and live cuttings of actual sympathy plants that thrive 70 years after the Holocaust. Weisman Art Museum, University of Minnesota, 333 East River Road, Minneapolis. <www.wam.umn.edu/event/still-life>

Through July 17, *Bohemian Boudoir: Czech Vanity Glass*, National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library (NSCML), Cedar Rapids, Iowa, show-cases glass crystal perfume bottles and bedroom accessories, hand-crafted in the Bohemia region of Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic) in the 1920s and 1930s. Rosemary (Rosie) Loss Bodien, former Sokol Minnesota member who died December 15, 2015, donated the perfume bottles and accessories featured in the exhibit. Named for her parents, the Ladd and Lydia Straka Loss Memorial Collection has over 200 boudoir items, including perfume bottles, mirrors, brushes, cigarette boxes, clocks, trays, powder boxes, and vases. A catalog is available. <www.NCSML.org>

August 14, 25th Czech Heritage Festival, Bechyn, Renville County, Minnesota, sponsored by St. Mary's Preservation Association of Bechyn, with folk dancing, ethnic foods, quilt raffle, souvenirs, farmers market, silent auction live music with Wendinger Band, Malek Fishermen Band, and the Sleepy Eye Area Concertina Club. Bechyn is 10 miles northeast of Redwood Falls. Proceeds from the annual festival help to fund St. Mary's Church annual operation costs: <www.bechynczechfest.org> Contact Jeanne Wertish: <gwertish@mvtvwireless.com>

Sunday, August 14 Sokol Camp Booya Picnic Noon to 5 p.m. at Sokol Camp

19201 Woodland Acres,
Pine City, Minnesota

Volunteers needed to serve Booya and other fine Czech foods, sell raffle tickets or Bingo Cards, work kids' games or silent auction.

To be a part of the action, call Kari Muyres 763-226-0313 or Don Andrlé 651-484-6360.

Šibřinky Dance Celebrates Spring

By Louise Wessinger

On one of our first warm evenings of the year, many happy guests gathered at the Hall to celebrate spring, eat great food, and dance to the music of the Dale Pexa Band on April 16. The evening began at 4 p.m., when early arrivals feasted on *vepřový řízek* (pork schnitzel), pickled beets, pumpernickel bread, and delicious homemade Czech potato salad. Head cooks Hana Matousek and Marketa Resong were joined in the kitchen by Radmila Rasmussen, who helped serve food. They also made sure there were hot dogs and cookies for the kids. Hana made a great dessert, featuring her own cherries. Robert Jacobson, Norm Petrik, Michael Gonsowski, and Dave Stepan were busy at the bar serving soda, wine, and our Sokol favorite, Staropramen beer.

The entertainment began shortly after 5 p.m. with the *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teen Dancers*. They featured many of their favorite dances and also dances being prepared for the Festival of Nations the first week of May. A special treat was a revival of a men's dance taught by James Metcalf to teen dancer Everett Swartz. During intermission the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers took the floor to perform, but also to teach some of our dances to the audience. Dancers were Emma Martin and James Metcalf, Teresa Pojar and John Topic, Jyni Koschak and Robert Jacobson, Diane Bell and Scott Hinshaw, Judy and Tom Aubrecht, Dawn Bulera and Michael Gonsowski, and Louise Wessinger (Director) and Dave Stepan. Chuck Draheim was the announcer. Special thanks to all of the parents for bringing the younger dancers. Many of the children stayed to joyfully dance to the band with their friends.

Thank you to all who made this a special night: Doreen McKenney (who designed the posters and tickets), Chuck and Jean Draheim and Shirley Verner (who sold tickets), Robert Jacobson, John Topic, and Louise Wessinger who handled set-up, and Judy Aubrecht and Louise Wessinger who donated door prizes. A special shout out to Sokol Evelyn Holman who purchased 13 presale tickets to bring her whole family to *Šibřinky*! Thank you, Evelyn!

Co-chairs Ed Hamernik, Marketa Resong, and Louise Wessinger reported \$870 in ticket sales, \$733 in food sales and \$362 in beverage sales for total event sales of \$1,965. Thanks to all the volunteers, dancers, and guests who helped make this celebration a success.



James Shambour points to his mother's picture.

HALL VISIT BRINGS BACK MEMORIES

By Chuck Draheim

During *Šibřinky* on April 16, James Shambour, one of our guests from New Prague, asked to tour the third floor meeting room. His mother, Stella Capp, had attended dances at the Hall 100 years ago. Always eager to show off the Hall, I took Mr. Shambour and three of his friends upstairs for a tour. They were all impressed by what they saw, particularly all of the historical photos of members and events associated with the Hall since 1887.

As Mr. Shambour was examining one of the photos, his face lit up and he announced that he had found his mother in one of the old photographs. There she was, dressed in a Sokol gymnastics uniform. Unfortunately the photo is not dated but surely is from the middle of the 1910 to 1920 time period, perhaps even before the 1917 Hall expansion.

It is always my pleasure to take visitors up to the third floor and, as best as I can, explain the Hall history and show visitors our various artifacts. When one of our visitors makes an historical connection, it greatly increases the pleasure and frequently adds to my knowledge and understanding of Sokol Minnesota's rich heritage.



Passing of Former Member

Alvin J. (Al) Dvorak of Coon Rapids passed away on April 5 at the age of 91 years. As a long-time member of Sokol Minnesota, Al enjoyed spending time singing with the Sokol Singers. His daughter, Judith Fisher, found a songbook that he used with his favorite songs checked off, a nostalgic discovery for her as she was reminiscing how much he enjoyed being a part of that singing group. She also recalls times that she came to the Hall with him. He was a frequent participant at the Festival of Nations along with other Sokol members. Al, and many of the singers, were part of the Sokol tour that went to the Czech Republic to perform at the 2000 Slet.

Our sincere sympathy to the family of Alvin John Dvorak.

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Part 4 of an ongoing series. Parts 1 - 3 appeared in April, May, and October 2015. This series grew out of the memories of the '48er/'68er/'89er Panelists at our September 26, 2014, Featured Friday Members' Meeting, which celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Velvet Revolution and the fall of communism (November 17, 1989). In this issue, Hana Matousek, a '68er, shares the fourth of her recollections of growing up under communism. If you are a '48er/'68er/'89er and would like to share your experience, you are welcome to send it (600-800 words) to <slovo@sokolmn.org>

Život v komunismu/ Life under Communism - Part 4 By Hana Matousek

Then, also in 1956 we kids learned about a big change coming to our family: we would be moving!

Moving, but why? Where? It is a really big change in a child's life. The decision, made by our parents without our knowledge, was made in order to make life easier for our father who had a difficult commute to work. We rarely saw him on workdays, only after he returned late in the day, had supper, and shortly afterward made his way to his room to read a little and then sleep.

However, I suspect it was mostly our mother's decision, caused by her disappointment with the changes in their lives that were so different from their previous situation as owners of a shop. She was still young and looked forward to achieving something beyond her role as a mother. Which role, as I remember, she fulfilled with top speed and energy on a daily basis, ordering everyone around with absolute resolve and yet with time to spare. As she must have realized at that time, the time to wait for things to improve under communism was over, and she wanted to go on with life.

The downstairs shops changed, after some extensive rearrangements. Instead of having three individual shops, the state turned them all into one large clothing shop. Mother also needed a change, and also some challenge. So, we had to move. A tenant for our upstairs apartment was found: a childless couple from the neighborhood with an elderly mother. On our mother's insistence, our father received, which was an unbelievable achievement for him, a sufficiently large apartment from his company close to his work. And in the summertime of that year we moved, since we would be attending a new school in the fall.

We kids were lucky! After life in a city, however small, we found ourselves in paradise. Because my sister was quite young yet, she and I stayed at grandma's during the time of the move. After my parents got our new apartment settled, grandma traveled with us on the train to our new home. When we arrived at the train station in the new town, Grandma, who didn't know the local bus schedules, decided that we would walk to our

apartment. Soon after leaving the station, walking across the tracks and down the decline, we entered what seemed to me then a Garden of Eden!

We were immersed in a green world, which continued to surround us as we walked. I asked grandma where we were, what and whose were these beautiful gardens, and she just said "People's" and that we would be home soon. We followed a well-travelled trail beside a brook, with water so clear it almost sparkled, and grandma reached in for a handful and gave us a taste that was cold and refreshing. We kids were used to small family gardens. Grandma had a garden too, as well as chickens and ducks. But I had never seen orchards as far as we could see. When we finally emerged from my Garden of Eden, we had another beautiful 'mirage' in sight: *Velehrad Basilica and Monastery*. It was magnificent, and I can still picture that view today. The site where Christianity was brought to our pagan Moravian ancestors in the year 863!

Then finally, after crossing the brook and negotiating a path through some fields, we saw our new home. It was a large, yellow-gold painted structure, sitting in the middle of yet more beautiful gardens! I loved it at first sight. No matter that people lived in the same building, each also shared the gardens. Our new apartment was large and comfortable, and we could see the front, the garden, and the back of the house from our windows. And that was important to us kids, since we wanted to be aware at all times of what was going on outside. As a bonus to our view over and beyond the orchards, we could see the gentle wooded hills, which became 'our woods' in coming years.

Our father was invigorated by this change, since his commute to work was now very short. He'd built a small tool and bike shed in the back courtyard with a little enclosure for chickens, and mother was already busy with chicks and even a little garden. Actually, the garden was quite large and included quite a few plum trees along the long fence, as well as some dwarf apple, apricot, and cherry trees, and also many different fruit and flower bushes.

We also had quite a large vegetable plot, so there was plenty work available for our father's and brother's garden tools.

As I look back at the *Velehrad* years, I realize that it was there that my love of gardens and gardening was born. My brother, as it turned out, not only enjoyed gardening, he even helped mother with canning! They had fun together making all those jams, pickles, and rows and rows of jars of goodies. Later, he even attended a four-year technical college for the food processing industry, and after 1990 he started his own wholesale business in produce. Finally, he started his own company processing fruits and vegetables.

Sometime later mother had learned the history of our new home. Now it had six apartments: two large, two medium-sized, and two efficiencies. But the building had an unusual look to it, having a large portico, big windows, and a pseudo-baroque roofline. It did not look as crude as most apartment buildings of that time. Mother found out that its previous owner had been a rich local miller, and before it was completed the villa had been confiscated when the communist party committee instituted the "new order." The irony of it all: our parents, whose livelihood had also been stolen, were now living in a property stolen from another victim of collectivization! Once, by accident, mother spoke to a person who knew the miller's family. She verbally sent the family a sincere apology and an explanation.

We kids who grew up there, eventually finished school, and went on to higher education elsewhere. But mother, after many years in a rural paradise, became homesick for her home back in Břeclav and for city life again. So, back she went with our youngest sister. But that is another story.

Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp, June 13-17, ages 7 to 14

*The theme for camp this year is
Folklore and Fairy Tales.*

Camp information and registration materials can be downloaded from
<www.sokolmn.org/culturecamp/index.htm>

Prague's National Theatre Celebrates Its Birthday!

By Vanda Kofroňová, columnist from Prague

Happy 135th birthday, National Theatre in Prague! One of the most important Czech culture institutions has something to celebrate this month. The first time it opened was on June 11, 1881. The first performance ever was a world premiere of *Libuše* by Bedřich Smetana. The grand opening was held a little too soon since the building was not totally completed, but the city wanted to honor the visit of the crown prince of Austria. Soon afterwards, the theatre was closed again and the work continued. Unfortunately, a fire broke out. It was said to be due to the carelessness of two locksmiths who were working on the roof. They were both sentenced to a week in a jail. However, there are some suggestions that the fire was set intentionally.

To rebuild the first Czech theatre stage the whole nation contributed. "*Gulden by gulden*" says the tradition. The truth is however that a lot of money also came from aristocracy as well as scientists and artists. Gold valued at one gulden was sent by someone from California, and many others just sent some money. The Czechs also organized

special events (such as bazaars, lotteries, and balls) to support the fundraising. Last but not least, the new pride of the nation was insured, of course! In the end, the insurance company paid even more than it had to.

Thanks to all this help, the National Theatre was reopened with the same performance in November 1883. Architect Josef Zitek was, however, no longer in the running. It was his pupil Josef Schulz who finished the reconstruction (and changed a thing or two as well). It has served for almost one hundred years without any significant modification.

Nowadays, this historic building serves as a main stage of three artistic ensembles of the National Theatre: the drama, the ballet, and the opera.

If you are wondering what this building looks like now, there is a 3D tour on the theatre's website. Here is the link: http://www.narodni-divadlo.cz/panorama/ND_vsechny/. Enjoy it. Or you know what, better yet, come to see it yourself, in person!

BOOK REVIEW :Rabbi Loew Surpasses the Golem Myths By Gwen Willems, Ph.D.

As Golems Go: Rabbi Loew, the Reluctant Czech. Benjamin Kuras. Praha: Baronet. 2000, 165 pages. Available in libraries and used bookstores.

Benjamin Kuras readily admits that the title of the book was just a come-on, drawing us in with expectations of the fascinating and popular story of the *golem* in Prague, which mythology claims was created by Rabbi Loew. As it turns out, the *golem* myth was likely written and attached to the rabbi a century or so after his death. The legend is of a giant created out of clay by a rabbi to protect Prague's 16th-century ghetto from persecution, and is said to be called forth in times of crisis. "After living through the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Nazism, and decades of communism," Kuras says, "the Czechs are drawn to a character with supernatural powers that will help liberate them from oppression." In today's commercial atmosphere, the popular golem is represented in mugs, t-shirts, figurines, books, and even a restaurant (U Golema) and museum.

The book Kuras created is an interesting and unusual mix of Rabbi Loew biography, Jewish history, mysticism, educational theory, seemingly capricious imposition of persecution and languages, and word derivations. I found out that the Czech word for moonlighting, *melouch*, comes from the Hebrew *melachah*, and the Hebrew word for whining, *kvetch*, comes from the Czech *kvič*. These dense, serious topics are interspersed with quips and jokes. Have you heard the one about the country Jew and Ukrainian peasant traveling on a train?

The Ukrainian asks the Jew to explain why Jews are so clever in business. "We eat fish heads," replies the Jew. The Jew offers the Ukrainian the head of his smoked herring for 20 kopeks. The Ukrainian buys it, munches, and says, "It occurs to me that I could have bought the whole fish for 10 kopeks in the market." The Jew replies, "Exactly. You see, it's beginning to work."

Judah Loew ben Bezalel (1525-1609) was widely known as the *maharal* (wise sage) of Prague, an important Talmudic scholar, Jewish mystic, teacher, and philosopher who served as a leading rabbi in the cities of Mikulov in Moravia and later of Prague in Bohemia. The Polish branch of Hasidism was inspired by his works, as were more recent Torah scholars originating from Lithuania and Latvia from the late 1800s to late 1900s. Rabbi Loew is buried in the Old Jewish Cemetery in Josefov, the former Jewish ghetto in Prague, where his grave can still be visited.

Kuras was born Miroslav Kuraš and raised in Zlín and Olomouc, migrated to England in 1968, and converted to Judaism in 1974. Much of the book attempts to argue for the Jewish influence on Czechs and Czech history. Perhaps he is usually correct, but sometimes it came across as a stretch, such as his claim that Loew heavily influenced the theories of the great educator Comenius to the extent that their perspectives were "almost identical." Nonetheless, as someone who has studied Czech education in comparison with that of other countries, I am impressed with how wise, accurate, and still applicable are Loew's *10 Principles of Education*, such as "Love of learning, motivation to learn, is a necessary condition of success."

Kuras is a prolific writer of plays, blogs, numerous commentary pieces in magazines and newspapers, and books. The result can be slapdash, as this book needed a good edit and proofreading. Kuras is a major critic of the European Union, multiculturalism, Islamism, and socialism. His writing in Czech is said to raise heated debates. In 2009 he became a member of the preparatory committee of the Eurosceptic Party of Free Citizens. After his loss in a run for the European Parliament, he left the party.

The Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures group is taking a summer break and selecting books for the next year, September 2016 to May 2017. Check <cs-center.org> in later summer for schedule updates.

June/July 2016 Slovo 7



**SHOW
AND
TELL
2016**

Second Annual Show-and-Tell Featured Friday

Again this year, Sokol Minnesota devoted a meeting for members to show a favorite Czech or Slovak treasure or tell a story. On April 22, members and guests were thrilled to hear the stories and to see the keepsakes. We were lucky to have four guests join us, including three Czech students from St. Thomas University who shared their stories and the sister of a member who showed us beautiful handwork.

1. Norm Petrik: t-shirt from the 2006 Slet in Prague. **2. Pamela Kotval:** photographs of the house where her grandfather was born in June 1862 and black walnuts from the tree that her great-grandfather Jan planted at Karlov #7, a small village near Kutna Hora in Central Bohemia. Her grandfather Frank Kotval came to New York City in 1884, then settled in Todd County in Minnesota in 1903. When Pam and family members took a trip to the Czech Republic, with Hana Matousek as tour guide in 2006, the current owners of the house gave several nuts from the tree to Pam and her cousins. **3. Joyce Tesarek:** mineral water cups from Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic, collected on several different trips to the Czech Republic. **4. Tom Aubrecht:** medal honoring Václav Havel, which Tom bought in Prague when he attended the 2000 Slet, with the Sokol Girl Scout Troop. **5. Chuck Draheim:** Sokol ring that belonged to the grandfather of his wife Jean with engraving: Sokol St. Paul 1924. **6. Judy Aubrecht:** exquisite Czech red glass pin, which was a gift from her mother-in-law. **7. Val Kuisle:** a very tiny Czech hand-painted porcelain basket, part of Val's collection of small baskets. **8. Nadine Hondl,** guest from Rogers, Minnesota, who accompanied her sister Colleen Hondl Genger: hand-embroidered textile, made by Hana Hacklova, who sells at the market in Český Krumlov. **9. Colleen Hondl Genger:** wore the t-shirt given to her by city officials when she and her husband visited her ancestral home of Dlouhá Třebová in 2014. She was also given an aerial photograph of the area, which she showed to us. She presented Sokol a copy of her book, *Under Minnesota Skies – John and Dorothy Hondl Family History and Farm Memories*, to Sokol President Judy Aubrecht.



Markéta Švehláková, Tomáš Botlík, Czech Honorary Consul Marit Lee Kucera, and Lucie Semerádová

border, under the *Krušné hory* Mountains. This city, one of the oldest cities in Czech Republic, was completely destroyed because of coal mining in late 1960s and early 70s. There is now a new "modern" town, composed of mostly Plattenbau (large panel system) buildings.

Markéta Švehláková, guest, University of St. Thomas scholarship student: described her hometown of Miňůvky, originally a very small town, which is now formally a part of Kroměříž. Situated in central Moravia, it is a very beautiful town with an old castle and gardens, which are on the list of UNESCO World Heritage. It used to be a center of the Archbishop; in 1848, the congress of the Austro-Hungarian Empire sat in Kroměříž.

11. Marit Lee Kucera: 1960-era kroj from western Bohemia, Chodsko kroje region, with jumper and jacket with an apron. Glass buttons and wide trim on the jacket. It was a gift from a California friend (originally from the Iron Range in Minnesota with Serbian and Swedish heritages) who found it on E-bay. The garments need cleaning. Chuck Draheim recommended Treasured Garment Restoration, 5843 Neal Avenue, Oak Park Heights. St. Croix Cleaners has 18 metro locations for drop off, with vintage specialists located in Stillwater and downtown Minneapolis. <www.treasuredgarmentrestoration.com>

Jean Verner Draheim: necklace made from a Sokol uniform belt buckle that belonged to her maternal grandfather Bohuš Edward Andrlé, from the late 1920s or 1930s.

Hana Matousek: told the story of when the Russians came down her street in Břeclav in 1968, at first, unbelievable, but then how frightening it was, especially for her mother who remembered the Nazis coming in the 1930s. Hana, her husband, and daughter, left Czechoslovakia in 1972. After several years in eastern United States, they came to Minnesota in 1981. Hana sang the song, *Ta naše písnička česká*. The Czech students joined her.

Mary Cahill: told the story of the friendship that began in 2006 between her younger daughter Carolyn and a Czech girl who were in adjoining pods on the Slet field in Prague. The girls were part of the callisthenic known as *Věrná garda* (a mixed group, normally but not exclusively, of older seniors); each thought she was the only young person among hundreds of seniors. They literally rolled their eyes at each other, but struck up a friendship that has endured to this day. Carolyn will attend her friend's wedding in 2017 in the Czech Republic.

10. Lucie Semerádová, guest, University of St Thomas scholarship student: told about her hometown of Trutnov. It is located in the mountains in the north part of the Czech Republic. First written mention about Trutnov (tiny village at that time) is from the 13th century. Since the end of the 14th century, Trutnov was the dowry town for the Bohemian queen. Here is the story about the Coat of Arms. According to the legend, there was a dragon living near the first settlement. People gave it goats and other animals for food. As this was an inconvenience and a lot of work, people were leaving the town. A knight, Trut, came to the town, fought the dragon and killed it. The town was called after him, Trautenau, currently Trutnov. He gave the dragon's skin as a gift to the prince of Brno to show his respect. The rook (crow) symbolizes the secrets of the Krkonoše Mountains. The golden ring, which the rook has in his beak, symbolizes the hidden wealth of the mountains.



Tomáš Botlík, guest, graduate student in German and history at the University of St. Thomas, on a one-year scholarship: his home town is Most, near to the German



12. Kat Nelson: the wedding hat came from her great aunt Katerina (Kosulova) Frank, but probably belonged to another great aunt because the initials are not Katerina's; a hand-embroidered "resistance" handkerchief made by another great aunt during World War II in defiance of the Nazi presence; a beautiful Moravian kroj apron; a vest, probably Slovak, came from her Grandmother's Kosulova family. The skirt, blouse, undershirts, and under garments were from the family of her Grandfather Gernertt. The Kosulova family moved a lot; they started out near Vienna, moved to Bratislava and next to Košice. Her family ended up near Brno in the small farming town of Hovorany, Moravia, where her Grandmother Frances met her Grandfather Joseph C. Gernertt in elementary school. Years later, around 1900, he sent for her and paid her way to America. She was the only one of her Kosulova family to come to the United States. Kat visited the hometown of Hovorany in 2008. The story Kat heard about her grandmother's brother was that he was shot while planting explosives under German tanks in 1940 in Czechoslovakia. Three sisters died in concentration camps during WWII for aiding Jewish friends. Of six siblings, four were killed by the Nazis. Katerina, who also was in the resistance during WWII, married one of her resistance partners after the war. Kat was named for Katerina to honor her work in the resistance.



Remembering Lidice: “*Lidice Shall Live*” By Toni Brendel

LIDICE: A small Bohemian village totally destroyed, with its population decimated, by Nazi SS on June 10, 1942, in retaliation for the death of top Nazi General Reinhardt Heydrich by Czechoslovak Paratroopers headquartered in England.

Although the World War II tragedy of the eradication of Lidice and most of its people may be well known, not many people know there is another facet of the story. Dr. Barnett Stross, British physician in Stoke-on-Trent and politician who served twenty years as a Labour Party Member of Parliament, created the slogan “Lidice Shall Live” and the appeal to raise funds to rebuild Lidice. Dr. Stross, a Polish-Jewish immigrant was deeply affected by the atrocity at Lidice.

Since the majority of men in Lidice were miners in the nearby city of Kladno, Dr. Stross spoke to English miners and their superiors, calling for the rebuilding of the village to memorialize the worst single-act atrocity of World War II. The “Lidice Shall Live” campaign was a call to all freedom-loving people of the world.

Dr. Edvard Beneš, President of Czechoslovakia, was part of the beginning of the “Lidice Shall Live” campaign, but its success can be directly attributed to the leadership and inspiration triggered by Dr. Stross. In 1947, the original idea generated the building of 150 homes with assistance from the Czech Government and people worldwide. In 1955, Dr. Stross created a rose garden as an international symbol of friendship and peace, with 29,000 rose plants from 32 nations.

Dr. Stross’ creative genius led to other undertakings that today are testimonials to his dedication to the people of Lidice

and his stand against tyranny. Due to his love of the arts and his familiarity with well-known artists of the world, today there are over 500 works of art from over 300 artists, representing 34 countries, in the Lidice repository. An annual International Children’s Exhibition of Fine Arts Lidice, set up as a living memorial to the children, welcomes entries from 60 to 70 nations each year.

Alan and Cheryl Gerrard, owners of The Art Bay Gallery in Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, England, have rekindled the bond between Stoke-on-Trent and Lidice, now in the Czech Republic. They have revived the slogan “Lidice Shall Live” and have raised an awareness of its origin worldwide. In preparation of the 75th anniversary of the destruction of Lidice in 2017, people from the Czech Republic, England, South America, and North America are considering ways to take part in Lidice events in 2017. It is hoped that Czech/Slovak organizations in the United States will show interest and support the effort.

In North America, there are two Lidice memorial sites. Shortly after the horrific news was broadcast in July 1942, the first was dedicated in Stern Park Gardens, Illinois, which in 1960 became the city of Crest Hill. The Czechoslovak American Congress plans memorial ceremonies annually at Lidice Park. Each year a busload of people from the Chicago area comes to the memorial site. In 2016, the service will take place on Sunday, June 12, at 11 a.m.

A temporary memorial was built in Phillips, Wisconsin, in July 1942, where members of Sokol, ZCBI (now Western Fraternal Life), and the Czech/Slovak community conducted a memorial service. In August 1944, a permanent monument was unveiled in Sokol Park designed by Václav Hajný, with mason work by Karel Nový. Today the Czech/Slovak Community Festival Committee holds the Lidice Memorial Service on the Friday evening prior to the opening of the annual two-day festival and Miss Czech Slovak Wisconsin State Queen Pageant. The 2016 service begins on Friday, June 17, at 7 p.m. at the Phillips First Baptist Church, 426 Flambeau Avenue, Phillips, Wisconsin.

Another Lidice memorial site is located in a town renamed Lidice in the Rio Claro District of Brazil, where local citizens maintain the memorial. A floral tribute is laid at the base of the monument each June. Recently, another memorial to Lidice was placed in Quito, the national capital of Ecuador. As these remnants of history are revisited, it is hoped that others become inspired by the international solidarity shown after WWII and that its message of peace and friendship are revived throughout the world.

You can follow the Friends of Barnett Stross on Twitter @LidiceLives. Facebook: Lidice Shall Live Educational Organization; Lidice Shall Live Public Group; Sir Barnett Stross Public Figure; Toni Brendel Lidice (Info on two memorials in North America, two memorials in South America.) All are invited to become friends of these Facebook pages.

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

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We Are Still Talking about the Visit by the Czech Prime Minister



It was a very exciting day for Czech Minnesotans and Minnesota Czechs when His Excellency Mr. Bohuslav Sobotka, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, and his official entourage visited Saint Paul on April 2.

Honorary Czech Consul Marit Lee Kucera wants to thank the many Czech and Slovak organizations that worked so well together to produce the reception at C.S.P.S. Hall in Saint Paul. Upon his return to the Czech Republic, Prime Minister Sobotka stated on Czech TV news that the most memorable time during his trip to the United States was meeting with the Czech community in Minnesota.

Volunteers included members of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Cultural Center (CSCC), Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI), Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, New Prague Czech Singers, Czech Heritage Junior Royalty and *Domáci* Czech Folk Dancers from New Prague, Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant, and Western Fraternal Life Association.

Don Andrlle, Pat Andrlle, Andrea and Faith Atcheson, Judy Aubrecht, Kate Aubrecht, Tom Aubrecht, Dan Bednar, Wendy Bednar, Blanka Brichta, Jason Brozovich, Dawn Bulera, Colleen Buszmann, Colleen Cahill, Dennis Cahill, Mary Cahill, Megan

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Special thanks to the staff of the Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Chicago who came to Saint Paul to direct the visit and the reception catered by Faces Mears Park: Consul General Bořek Lizec, Kateřina Lizcová Kulhanková, Milana Ličková, František Adámek, Martina East, Pavlína Vlčková, Petra Vander Sloot, Gregorio Fierro, Jana Šachová, and consulate friend Daniel Pořízka.

The official delegation visiting C.S.P.S. Hall included H.E. Mr. Bohuslav Sobotka, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic; H.E. Mr. Petr Gandalovič, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United State of America; František Formánek, Prime Minister's Advisor; Alena Kovářová, Head of Public Relations and Marketing Department, Prime Minister's Office; Jakub Kulhánek, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic; Bořek Lizec, Consul General of the Czech Republic in Chicago; Barbora Loudová, Head of Protocol Department, Prime Minister's Office; Tomáš Novotný, Vice Minister of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic; Roman Boháček, Interpreter; plus several journalists and other support staff.

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**EVENTS AT C.S.P.S. HALL
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Sokol Minnesota 2016 Events**

Children's Culture Day Camp

June 13-17, ages 7 to 14

Ethnic cooking and crafts, Czech and Slovak language, gymnastics, and more. 651-452-6240

Registration form: www.sokolmn.org

Grillabende / grilovací večer / Grill Fest

with Czech, Slovak, and German foods and beer.

July 15, 6 - 9 p.m., Germanic American Institute

(See page 4)

Minnesota Sokol Camp Booya Picnic

August 14, noon to 5 p.m., Cross Lake, Pine City

Fun-filled day for the entire family.

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* June/July 2016

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Boys' Gymnastics



The boy gymnasts with Jason Brozovich, Boys' Head Coach and Men's Physical Director, and Mary Cahill, Women's Physical Director