

*Dedicated to Dr. Josef Mestenhauser, 1925-2015*

## We Have Two Homes, Two Languages By Jitka Sebek

*A Sokol member recently mentioned to me that she was sad that she had to cut back on her involvement at Sokol because of a personal family commitment. But at the same time she is really proud to know that the Hall has a future with parents getting the younger generation involved.*

“You are so fortunate that your children know Czech or Slovak,” we hear quite often. Yes, our children are very fortunate. It is common in the Czech Republic and Slovakia to learn and use many languages. It doesn’t happen just by osmosis: our children hear their heritage language at home mostly from their moms and might even use it in their speech; during Saturday morning classes, they practice reading and writing. We are fortunate to have licensed teachers among the Czech and Slovak moms who can follow the Czech language curriculum. We have Sokol Minnesota with its C.S.P.S. Hall where we can meet, expose our children to ethnic food, dances, crafts, traditions, and enjoy their theater performances in Czech. Our children are growing up multilingual and multicultural.

Our school-age children are the generation whose parents chose freely to leave their homeland, did not need to flee communism, and, moreover, can return, as we do frequently. This dual-cultural exposure enables children to gain practical experience and a higher level of comfort, as it also requires previous knowledge and understanding of more or less subtle differences besides knowing the basic interpersonal communicative language tools. We prepare them for their summers with grandparents systematically by reading books together, teaching them grammar, asking them to write, and helping them memorize lines for their theater roles. Such efforts are similar around the globe. Children, mainly in Europe, participate in a franchised Czech School without Borders.



Teacher Karolina Peterson with preschoolers.

We, the Czech and Slovak Moms, started to meet on a regular basis in 2005; five years later we moved to the C.S.P.S. Hall where we continue as the Czech and Slovak School Twin Cities.

Did it all start just like that? No, along with good luck came support from others who were prepared and passionate. One of the key moments was the summer of 1999, when my friend Anna, Dr. Josef Mestenhauser’s student, and I lay on a beach. We never made it into the water that day, but brainstormed different ways and reasons to start a Czech school for Czech children in Minnesota, with Dr. Mestenhauser’s encouragement. We came up with a plan, but all the moms we approached just scratched their heads; we had to wait for our own children to become the first students.

We are not a school that is solely dedicated to teaching language, to supporting our children’s academic upbringing, and to raising culturally aware and socially responsible global citizens. We also actively model for them how to belong to an organization, how to volunteer, and how to contribute with ideas, skills, or fundraisers. With or without our children, in the school year 2014 – 2015, we moms again worked numerous times in the C.S.P.S. kitchen, organized children’s games at the Fall Festival, represented the Czech and Slovak community at the Festival of Nations, baked *perníky* and crafted small gifts for Sokol Minnesota events, recorded photo memories, and publicized ethnic activities, contributed financially on a regular monthly basis, and initiated new fundraisers. We helped individually and as a group, and plan to do so again the next school year, along with presenting our skills during upcoming culinary classes, collaborating with Sokol Minnesota and other ethnic groups, and welcoming new children to our two growing classes. With a certificate for successfully finishing another year of Saturday classes, our children are ready to enjoy summer in Europe, and we are proud of them.

### UPCOMING EVENTS June/July 2015

**August Slovo Deadline**  
July 1

**Board of Trustees**  
June 10 and July 8, 7 p.m.

**Sokol Minnesota Singers**  
June 12, 10 a.m.

**Member Workday**  
June 13, 8 a.m.

**Children’s Culture Camp**  
June 15 to 19  
651-452-6240

**Board of Directors**  
June 18 and July 16, 7 p.m.

**Annual Booya Picnic**  
August 9

### Czech That Film Festival

Five acclaimed Czech films  
with special guest  
Director Jiří Mádľ

at MSP Film Society  
St. Anthony Main, Minneapolis

4th week of June

Complete details on page 11

**Czech and Slovak  
Sokol Minnesota  
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(Board of Directors)**

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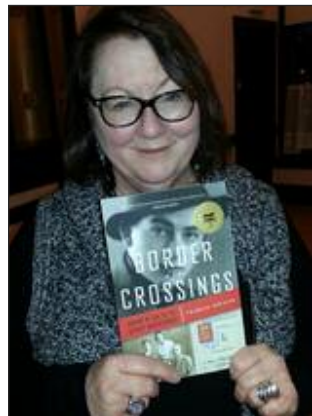
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Past issues of *Slovo* and  
Hall Calendar of events:  
[www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org)

**Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes**  
**Pozdrav bratři a sestry/Greetings Brothers and Sisters**

**By Judy Aubrecht**

Our Featured Friday guest speaker on April 24 was Sandra Novacek, from Detroit, Michigan. During the summer of 2014 the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center's Literary Ventures book discussion group selected the award-winning memoir to read called *Border Crossings: Coming of Age in the Czech Resistance*, by Charles Novacek. Bea Fleming, with the Literary Ventures group, contacted the author's widow, Sandy, to learn if she might be interested in being a guest speaker and talk about the book with the Literary Ventures group at some future date. Bea offered to host Sandy at her house for a weekend. In January, Sokol was contacted to see if a plan could be made to have Sandy do a more formal presentation at a *Featured Friday* meeting, followed up the next morning with the Literary Ventures group's book discussion. By February, Sandy had made her travel arrangements and plans became firm. E-mails circulated to gather advertising information and for Sandy to learn more about the interests of our Sokol audience. Finally, the April *Featured Friday* arrived.



Sandy, a past Michigan Library Association president, gave a PowerPoint presentation that included photos of Ožd'any, Czechoslovakia, where Karel (Charles) Novacek was born in 1928. We saw photos of Charles and his family enjoying typical Czech activities, including art, camping, hiking, foraging, and shooting sports. These skills later became very important to Charles when he and his family were heavily involved in resistance activities during World War II and when the country was taken over by Russia. Charles was imprisoned in 1948 by the communists. With underground support, he and others were able to successfully escape to Germany, where they endured the hardships of a displaced persons camp. We learned how Charles married at that time and settled first in Venezuela and eventually, Detroit. Sandy told us how mutual friends arranged for Sandy and widower Charles to be introduced and how they went on to marry and share a wonderful life together. Charles worked in Michigan as a civil engineer and later in several project manager roles, including for the Pontiac Silverdome. Writing this book was a difficult experience for Charles because he needed to think about past experiences and struggles. Charles passed away in 2007.

Coming to the Twin Cities gave Sandy an opportunity to fulfill a promise that she made to Charles to publish his book and to share his story with others. After the presentation, we were able to ask questions about Charles and his life and to purchase copies of the memoir. Two chapter titles provide some of the key themes of the book: "Life calls the Child to become a Man" and "The Power of If." Charles' father had him memorize Rudyard Kipling's poem *If* at about age 10 and that helped sustain Charles through many challenges. Even though I met Sandy for the first time that day, after hearing her speak, I felt like I already knew her.

Many of the audience members connected Charles' struggles with those of the representatives of the '48, '68, and '89 generations who spoke at our *Featured Friday* in September 2014 about leaving Czechoslovakia also under very difficult circumstances. *Nazdar!*

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

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

Past Honorary Czech Consul: Robert Vanasek

Gift Shop: Doreen McKenney

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Housekeeping: Robert J. (Jake) Jacobson

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Website: Joe Landsberger

Volunteer Coordinator: open

*Taneční Mládež, Školka,* and Teen Folk Dancers: Louise Wessinger

Hall Contacts: Chuck Draheim, Ed Hamernik

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

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## Taneční Mládež Graduate Michelle Stepan

By Louise Wessinger, Folk Dance Leader

On June 5, Michelle Stepan, daughter of David and Darnell Stepan, graduates from St. Anthony Village High School. Michelle graduates fifth in her class of 179. During her high school years, Michelle received many honors. As one of the top five juniors she received an AP (Advanced Placement) Scholar Award from Mount Holyoke College. She also has been a member of the National Honor Society; with a fellow NHS member, she raised \$1,000 for a teacher from Wilshire Park Elementary School stricken with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. Michelle was elected Snow Queen for her school's SnoDaze celebration this past winter.

Last year she was part of an "awesome" Spanish class visit to Costa Rica, spending a week touring the country and another week living with a family. Michelle played tuba in the school band. Her favorite sport was volleyball, but she also played basketball and soccer during her school years. Michelle ended her high school volleyball career as Most Valuable Player and also as an All-Conference player this year.

Next fall she plans to attend North Dakota State University in Fargo. She hopes to study nutrition and education with a minor in Spanish and eventually to work in women's health education.



### BULLETIN BOARD: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

#### ◆ Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp

June 15-19 • C.S.P.S. Hall • 8:50 a.m.- 3:15 p.m.

Help with arts and crafts group, as well as helping students to cook ethnic foods.

Call Louise Wessinger • 651-452-6240.

#### ◆ Sokol Members' Workday at the Hall

June 13 • 8 a.m. • Contact:

Michelle has been a member of the *Taneční Mládež* Dancers since she was four years old. Some of her fondest memories are dancing with her sister Brittany and of a 2005 trip to the Sokol *Slet* in Chicago where she danced with performers from all over the country. She wishes she could have learned more of the Czech language, but perhaps that will be a future project. Michelle would encourage the younger children to stick with folk dancing, because "it is more fun the older you get."

### 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](http://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**

#### **Slovo gift subscriptions and non-member renewals** are

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

Make your check to: **Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota.**

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

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

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

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

Email us: <[slovo@sokolmn.org](mailto:slovo@sokolmn.org)>, phone us: 651-290-0542, or write us: Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102. *Thank you!* Member Volunteer *Slovo* staff: Christy Banks, copy editor; M. L. Kucera, managing editor; Mary Kucera, production assistant; Deb Ziskovsky, labels; Joyce Tesarek and Martina Gurgel, photographers; Doreen McKenney, ad designer; Mary Cahill, mailing production; Joan Sedlacek, mailing; with Jean Draheim, Arlene Hamernik, Norm Petrik, Jitka Sebek, Pam Snopl, advisors. Photographs: Cheryl Bensen, Martina Gurgel, Kathy Jerde, M.L. Kucera, Jyni Koschak, Joyce Tesarek and Deb Ziskovski. Correction: May credits for photography also go to Vanda Kašová and Deb Ziskovski.

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

**The deadline for the August 2015 issue is July 1.**

This June/July 2015 issue of *Slovo* will be archived on the Sokol Minnesota website after June 30: <[www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org)>

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

## Congratulations and Thanks to All Our Donors!!

By **Joyce Tesarek,**  
**Finance Committee Chair**

In November 2014, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota determined the amount needed for the air conditioning installation project to be just over \$234,000. We had to raise a remaining \$128,000, as shown on Jyni Koschak's original *Chill the Hall* poster first seen in the November/December *Slovo*.

You, our amazing Hall supporters, came through with an anonymous \$50,000 challenge donation, which was quickly matched, including a \$10,000 contribution from Paul Imbrone, plus several \$5,000 and numerous other donations from so many of you. We have raised a total of \$240,175 so far. The project looks like it may have some additional costs, such as enlarging the cement slab and doing some tree removal. The additional dollars are needed and greatly appreciated.

The next step for installation is to pour the cement slab to hold the condenser, which will be installed in the northeast corner of our parking lot by the dumpster area. With some clever designs by Project Manager Gary Novak and the Board of Trustees, the plan preserves the two back parking spaces. Final bids on the electrical work have been received so this work will also start soon. Keep watch for updates! We plan to complete the air conditioning project this summer.



**C.S.P.S. Hall Planning Committee** and Board of Trustee representatives on April 22 discussed the next stage of the air conditioning installation. (L-R) Dan Bednar, Judy Aubrecht, Gary Novak, Joe Landsberger, Ed Hamernik, Chuck Draheim, and Lloyd Krocak. (Not pictured) Joyce Tesarek (photographer).

## 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.

### Legacy Fund

- Up to \$100: **Doreen McKenney** in memory of **Dr. Josef Mestenhauser**.
- \$100-\$499: **Donovan** and **Joyce Johnson** in memory of **Cameron Johnson**;  
**Charles Kalvoda** in honor of **Johnny Kalvoda**; **Patricia Mestenhauser**  
in memory of **Dr. Josef Mestenhauser**; **Darlene Sitko**.
- \$500-\$999: **The Czech and Slovak School Twin Cities**.
- Over \$5,000: **Ellen Vavrina**; **Eileen Vavrina**.
- **Legacy Fund total: \$11,393**

### C.S.P.S. LEGACY FUND

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

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



## Membership Updates

By **Norm Petrik, Membership Director**

Four new members were accepted in Sokol Minnesota at the Board of Directors meeting on April 16: Jana Castillon of Chanhassen, with two children, who moved here seven years ago from Prague and is interested in family activities and Czech plays; Cynthia McArthur of St. Paul with interests in Czech classes and various travels; Edita Mansfield of St. Paul; and Denise Stibal of Plymouth with interests in cooking, history, language classes, dances, dinners festivals, and music. Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!

# MASHER

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## A Picture-Perfect Fundraiser for the Legacy Fund By Jitka Sebek

"It is O.K. that I am not on a traveling soccer team; I now will have a professional photo like the athletes always have," announced my daughter after posing with her Czech and Slovak friends, feeling all happy and beautiful in gorgeous *kroje* borrowed from Sokol Minnesota thanks to Louise Wessinger, Sokol folk dance teacher, to whom the whole photo event was dedicated. Why a photo fund raiser event? All dancers take a group photo during their annual dress rehearsal before the Festival of Nations. This year, the idea was taken to a higher level. Hana Vilim (Czech) and Monika Stanek (Slovak), both former Lipa Slovak Folk Dancers and now busy Moms and *ViSta Image Photography* owners, offered this creative idea for a *Chill the Hall* fundraiser. Please visit their webpage and browse their portfolio to see for yourself what beautiful photos Hana and Monika take at <<http://vistaimagephotography.weebly.com>>.

With patience, smiles, and creativity, Hana and Monika spent five long hours on April 25 gently coaxing children as well as adults into their best single poses and then for poses with dance partners. Hana and Monika later spent hours of editing, but they graciously offered all the proceeds to Sokol Minnesota. Thanks to you who were photographed, *Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities* (Czech and Slovak School Twin Cities) contributed \$570 to the Legacy Fund for air conditioning.



L-R: Monika Stanek and Hana Vilim

Below: Hana Vilim and Monika Stanek set up a studio at C.S.P.S. Hall



Louise Wessinger writes:

"I thank Hana and Monika for all the time and talent they donated. I was honored that *Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities* gave this gift to Sokol Minnesota in honor of my 25 years of teaching the *Taneční Mládež* dancers. It was such a special day. They took a beautiful photo of the group, which is on Facebook. Thank you so much to all!"



## News and Notes of Interest

### CGSI Quarterly Program: Travel Tips

The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International's Quarterly Program is **Travel Tips for the Czech and Slovak Republics**, Saturday, June 13, at 1:00 p.m., 1185 Concord Street, North, Saint Paul.

Genealogist, historian, and tour guide Wade Olsen shares how to plan a successful trip to Europe. Visiting ancestral villages and the people who live there requires proper preparation. Topics to be discussed include travel planning and in-country logistics, expectations (your own and those of the people you meet), culture and core values, and how to connect with your personal family history. In the past six years, Wade has spent more than six months traveling in Europe. This presentation will help you have the trip of a lifetime.

This program is available either in person or via live webinar, for information on joining the webinar please email: <[info@cgsi.org](mailto:info@cgsi.org)>.

### The Czech Collections Association's Convention meets June 4-7 in Cedar Rapids

The association's mission is to foster appreciation of the beautiful art glass, ceramics, and other decorative arts produced in Austria, Bohemia, and Czechoslovakia from 1850 to 1940. For more info, go to <[www.czechcollectors.org](http://www.czechcollectors.org)>

### Bohemian Flats Exhibit at the Mill City Museum

"Remembering the Bohemian Flats: One Place, Many Voices" explores the many perspectives on the people and the conditions of this early Czech and Slovak neighborhood adjacent to the Mississippi River.

Through photographs, newspaper clippings, maps and surveys, visitors can "journey" down the 79 steps from the bluffs to the flats, and see how a community in the middle of the city could simultaneously be at the margins of the river, of society, and of historical memory. "Remembering the Bohemian Flats: One Place, Many Voices" is located in the museum's central Mill Commons, and is free and open to the public during regular museum hours through November 1, 2015. <<http://www.millcitymuseum.org/remembering-bohemian-flats>>.

### The Moravian Cultural Society Celebrates 50

The Moravian Cultural Society's 50<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration is Saturday July 18, at the Willowbrook Ballroom in Willow Springs, Illinois. This summer evening event highlights the dulcimer band *Morava* from the heart of the Moravian wine country in the Czech Republic. The six-man ensemble includes two violins, a viola, a string bass, a clarinet, and dulcimer. Reservations are required and doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$50 per person and include dinner, a folklore program by the Moravian Cultural Society Dancers, and an evening of live music for your dancing and listening pleasure. For tickets or more information, call 630-325-3873 or email <[moravianculturalsociety@yahoo.com](mailto:moravianculturalsociety@yahoo.com)> by June 10.



### Sokol Minnesota Gymnasts at 2015 Western District Slet in Cedar Rapids

**1** Unit Line-up and Presentation of Flags at the Awards and Closing Ceremony with participating gymnasts and Western District and American Sokol Officers. Sokol Minnesota team is in line behind the second flag from the left. **2** Eleven of the Sokol Minnesota gymnasts with Junior Instructors Alice O'Brien (L) and Erica Meyers (R). **3** Warming up before the Slet began on Saturday morning, April 18. **4** All fourteen of Sokol Minnesota's participants with Junior Instructors Alice O'Brien, Erica Meyers, Siri Schroeder, and Head Instructor Courtney Benson **5** Balance Beam competition. The gymnasts stood at attention when not performing. **6** and **7** Sokol Minnesota's special number, *SuperCALifragilisticexpialidocious*, the calisthenic routine created by Junior Instructor Siri Schroeder, using antique Indian Clubs, which have belonged to Sokol Minnesota for well over 100 years.

6 June/July 2015 Slovo

## Western District *Slet*: Success in Cedar Rapids

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

Fourteen Sokol Minnesota gymnasts competed at the Western District *Slet* hosted by Sokol Cedar Rapids on Saturday, April 18. The competition started Saturday morning at Cedar Rapids' Sokol building with the new kitchen and other major remodeling and internal construction projects recently completed. It is a beautiful facility and we were welcomed, as always, by enthusiastic Sokol Cedar Rapids members who served food and beverages in the new kitchen, as well as applauded and supported all the competitors.

Sokol Minnesota is very proud of our gymnasts' preparation efforts, their performances at the competition and Saturday evening's special number, and their sportsmanship and positive reflection as ambassadors of Sokol Minnesota. We heard several positive comments about our gymnasts' support of each other, as well as the competitors from other Sokol units.

The results of the competition demonstrate the fine instruction and coaching provided by instructors Courtney Benson, Summer Haag, Alice O'Brien, Erica Meyer, and Siri Schroeder.

Anna Nowaczewski, 1st Place, Level 1 girls, ages 8-9 years;  
Babette Lume, 2nd Place, Level 2 girls, ages 6-7 years;  
Lily Callanan, 1st Place, Level 2 girls, age 8 years;  
Lucia Mansfield, 2nd Place, Level 2 girls, age 8 years;  
Lucy O'Brien, 1st Place, Level 2 girls, age 10 years;  
Claire Wickiser, 4th Place, Level 2 girls, age 10 years;  
Isabelle Callanan, 1st Place, Level 2 girls, age 11 years;  
Tessa Vorlicky, 3rd Place, Level 2 girls, age 11 years;  
Torri Vorlicky, 4th Place, Level 2 girls, age 11 years;  
Chloe Mansfield, 1st Place, Level 3 girls, ages 9-11 years;  
Avery Fredericks, 4th Place, Level 3 girls, ages 9-11 years;  
Helena Lume, 5th Place, Level 3 girls, ages 9-11 years;  
Charlotte Marboe, 1st Place, Level 2 junior girls, ages 12-14 years;  
Kori Vanwert, 2nd Place, Level 2 junior girls, ages 12-14 years.

During the evening's Award Ceremony, Sokol Minnesota gymnasts performed a "mini-cal" to the happy birthday music from the movie *Frozen* in honor of American Sokol's 150th Anniversary. Calisthenics, exercises to develop strength and gracefulness, are a hallmark of Sokol gymnastics and of a Sokol fitness education. Fondly referred to as "the cal," these choreographed routines are written for all age levels and fitness abilities, and they are learned in Sokol gyms across the United States and abroad. Participants in the various Sokol gyms come together at events such as this weekend's *Slet*, and perform the cal together as one large group, in unison. Sokol Minnesota's special number, *SuperCALifragilisticexpialidocious*, was written and taught by Junior Instructor Siri Schroeder. Siri combined the older tradition of using Indian Clubs in

calisthenics with the more contemporary use of music in performing the exercises. She included some key components of a cal: a variety of arm positions, line formations, positional changes and movement of participants in the field, and the pinwheel. It was a fantastic special number and the audience was truly impressed and gave our Sokol Minnesota gymnasts a very hearty round of applause.

Congratulations to *all* of our Sokol Minnesota gymnasts, both competitors and non-competitors, and all of our fine instructors, those mentioned above and to Jason Brozovich, boys' head instructor, and class assistant Matt Schussler, who has two daughters and one son in our gym program.

We look forward to our 2015-2016 gym class season and the end-of-year competition in 2016 at Sokol Crete, Nebraska.



### Western District Officers Celebrated American Sokol's 150th Anniversary on April 18 in Cedar Rapids with a huge cookie decorated with blueberries and strawberries and two 150th Sokol logos.

(L-R): Barb Seefus, Western District (WD) Recording Secretary (Sokol Omaha); WD President Dan Rannels (Sokol Omaha); Jolene Dalton, American Sokol (AS) By-laws Chair (Sokol South Omaha); Allen Cushing, AS Foundation Chair, Chicago; Mary Cushing, AS Operations Manager, Chicago; Theresa Vernon, WD Women's Director (Sokol Crete); Deb Allison, WD Education Director (Sokol Cedar Rapids); Mary Cahill, WD Men's Director (Sokol Minnesota); Shelly Cairns, WD Treasurer and WD Financial Secretary (Sokol Cedar Rapids); and Allison Gerber, WD First Vice President and Chair of the XXIV 2017 American Sokol *Slet* (Sokol Cedar Rapids).

## We look forward to seeing you at the 85th Annual Booya Picnic on August 9

By Kari and Scott Muyres, Booya Picnic Co-Chairs

The sun is shining, and the water in area lakes is inviting. Our attention is on the summer season. It's not long until the 85th annual Booya Picnic! Mark your calendars now for Sunday, August 9, from noon until 5 p.m., for what will be a memorable picnic hosted at the historic Sokol Camp, 19201 Woodland Acres Pine City,

Minnesota. This year we will feature live music, extra kids' games, and most importantly, more Booya!

That's right, this year, we will offer a pre-sale on Booya to ensure that there's plenty to go around!

Details and additional information will be available as the date draws nearer.

In the meantime remember to contact Pat Andrie to donate those gently-used household items for the Country Store (651-484-6360).

**As always, we welcome your suggestions and comments to really make this 85th picnic one to remember!**

## Reflections of Sokol Both Present and Past By Jim and Mary Jo Chlebecek

We were delighted to observe End-of-Year Gymnastics Exhibition and Celebration last month on April 21, an evening of gymnastics performed by boys and girls ranging in age from 4 to 12 at the Sokol gym classes finale. Watching the boys complete an exercise on the rings was enjoyable, but the look on the faces of each performer said it all: "I did it!" The girls performed on the balance beam and the uneven bars, showing proud looks of satisfaction after completing their routine. All of the children participated in a variety of mat exercises, including cartwheels, tumbling, and somersaults. This evening of performances brought chills, smiles, and tears of joy to witness Sokol being Sokol.

The word *Sokol* means falcon, a symbol of strength. The motto of Sokol is "A Strong Mind in A Strong Body." Sokol was formed by people with common interests and heritage.



Head Instructor Courtney Benson assists a gymnast on the uneven bars, while Junior Instructor Siri Schroeder reassures those in line to perform.

The closing of gym classes in late May or early June was referred to as *verejné cvičení* (open to public gymnastics program). This was an event of great pride. All gymnasts were in Sokol uniform and participated in a Grand March performance to music. This was led by Brother Hank Jansen (father of Louise Wessinger) and Sister Georgiana Dolejsi. In those days every Sokol was referred to as a "brother" or "sister." Following the Grand March we had a program demonstrating various gymnastic class activities. The evening ended with the traditional meal of roast pork, dumplings, and sauerkraut.



At the End-of-Year Exhibition and Celebration on April 21, all our gymnasts performed before a full house of family and friends. Mary Cahill, Women's Physical Director, presented each gymnast with a participant trophy engraved with their name, along with Sokol MN Gymnastics and the season dates.

Jim was a young gymnast as a toddler, and his father was the instructor for the Minneapolis Sokol. Mary Jo began Sokol in the 1940s. Our classes began with *pozor* (attention) and concluded with a loud *Nazdar* (hurrah! to success!). Class began with marching around the gym floor with various commands in Czech, followed by calisthenics before apparatus. Apparatus included parallel bars, balance beam, rings, high bar, horse, high jump, rope/pole climb, and tumbling. After apparatus we had a game, usually volley ball or relays, always with much enthusiasm. Before dismissing, we learned and sang Czech songs. Finally, the *Zdar!* (success!)

Over the years we were fortunate to have many fine gymnastic teachers and coaches. I had a class of 17 girls (ages 11 to 15). During those years I had to go to Georgiana Dolejsi for help in translating the *prostna* (callisthenic drill) from Czech to English. In 1954 American Sokol began using English commands.



Junior Instructor Siri Schroeder helps a gymnast on the balance beam.



Boys' Head Instructor Jason Brozovich coaches a gymnast performing on the rings.

A group of 20 to 24 teens met on Sunday each week during the gym season. We learned the Czech, Slovak, and Česko-Slovenská *beseda* (dance) and many forms of folk dancing. We met at Minnehaha Falls or Bayport for some tough volleyball followed by a wiener roast. In the winter we met for ice-skating or tobogganing and then took turns at each other's house for supper. Sokol brought about this wonderful camaraderie.

Soldiers Field in Chicago was the site for the Sokol *Slet* (gathering of falcons). This was a national competition and *prostna* (a mass callisthenic drill) performed by adult men and women nation-wide. I still get goosebumps recalling this national event which took place every four years. It is an experience that is totally exhilarating. In 1953 Jim won first place in all-around competition, a wonderful recognition for Minnesota. I feel fortunate to be a part of Sokol since the 1940's, and a member since 1953. Jim was most pleased to witness the gymnastic event on April 21 with so many children carrying on the traditions and values of Sokol.

A great big thank you to all gymnastic teachers and coaches!



## Day for Love By Vanda Kašová, Columnist from Prague

Right away I have bad news for you: you have already missed this year's celebration. It is my fault, I am telling you too late. (Unfortunately, with a newborn baby I am often late very many of these days!) Czechs celebrate love on May 1. (We celebrate Valentine's Day as well, but it is considered a commercial holiday, so lots of people ignore it as an imported event.)

On May 1 every woman has to be kissed under a cherry tree in blossom (but any other tree or even a flower is fine if no cherry trees are around). If not, she is once again at risk of dying. As usual for Czech festivals, this day is connected to parties. Especially in villages the tradition is still alive. When you travel in the Czech countryside at this time you can see trees without branches with only the treetop left intact. Those cut-down trees are in the middle of the village and they are decorated with a wreath, ribbons, and flowers. In the region where my grandmom is from, the trees are also decorated with different kinds of sausages. The tree is called the Maypole. Single men guard it at night because guys from other

villages will try to steal it. The tree must be kept safe until Sunday. Then they will take it down themselves and they will march throughout their village with it and they will receive small gifts (typically a shot of alcohol) from single girls. In the evening there is a ball, where they can celebrate their success all together.

As I said, this is mostly a village thing. Those who live in the city barely know the tradition. Nevertheless, they also want a ball to celebrate love. Therefore, there is a huge party called *Majáles*, which is the student celebration. It has its roots in 19th Century. Nowadays, *Majáles* usually contains a lot of concerts; part of the tradition is also voting for King and Queen of *Majáles*. Another great thing about May 1 is that most of us do not have to go to work or school. It is a national festive day: the day of labor.

Well, now you know what to do next year on May 1. Until then, go find an appropriate tree. And you can kiss your beloved one, even if it is not the appropriate designated day!

## Fermented Food: Our Choice By Alena Youngberg

Growing up, I was part of a family in the Czech Republic that was planting and harvesting vegetables for our own use and for sale. We always valued good quality food and it was part of everyday life for us. We planted, harvested, canned, fermented, juiced, steamed, cooked and dried, and eventually ate what was available.

I mention fermentation. Fermentation is a process when organism converts carbohydrates such as sugar or starch into alcohol or acid. This method is used for preservation and making food and drinks such as breads, cider, beer, wine, sauerkraut, cheese, yogurt, and kefir. These have been around for a long time. In recent years they have caught the eye of the public again. Many products are now available in local food coops and bakeries. People are invited to taste wine and beer made in small batches and of the specific tastes crafted by small breweries and wineries.

We have picked some of the foods using fermentation for an upcoming series of classes for fall 2015 through spring 2016. The health benefits of eating raw fermented food are many. The lactic acid in cultured cabbage juice will purify a GI tract and is beneficial for all kinds of intestinal infections. Cabbage juice and apple cider vinegar are both very helpful with viral infections. Kefir and certain kinds of yogurt are the source of the probiotics, and so on.

We want to keep alive the traditions of preparing and preserving foods the way our families did, but most of all we want to pass on the joy of making and creating some of those foods yourself and satisfy your cravings! As a member of Sokol, I will end with our motto: Healthy Body, Healthy Minds, I wish you a great summer. I'm looking forward to your good company at a class in the fall!

*War with the Newts*. Karel Čapek. North Haven, CT: Catbird Press/UNESCO, 1936 original text, 1990 English translation by Ewald Osers, 240 pp. Available in bookstores and libraries.

### BOOK REVIEW: Look Closer at Humans By Gwen Willems, Ph.D.

Considering the complexity and details involved, it's hard to believe that *War with the Newts* was written in just four months. Karel Čapek wrote this classic science fiction during the summer of 1935. First published in Czechoslovakia in 1936, the first English edition was released by Allen & Unwin in 1937. Čapek died of natural causes in 1938, during the last of 20 years of the Czechoslovakia's democratic First Republic, just as the Nazi occupation of the country was beginning.

The book's title might conjure up visions of interstellar conflict between species, but *War with the Newts* devotes only four of 26 chapters to war. Most of the book follows the travails of the Newts, who are peaceful, intelligent, roughly four-foot-tall salamanders found living in a small bay off an island in Indonesia. A Czech ship captain discovers the Newts and trains them to harvest pearls for him. When that business and the Newt population thrive, the flooded pearl market causes a price drop and a less scrupulous corporation exploits the Newts as slaves for underwater construction and terra-forming around the world. The Newts finally rebel when their underwater habitat declines so severely that it can't support their exploding population.

The book is a highly amusing satire that has readers laughing at an almost endless list of normally serious topics: humanity, our prejudices, corporations, economics, politics, nationalism, science, academics, reporters, environmental manipulation, and even slavery. Eighty years later these themes are still relevant.

Understanding human nature, Čapek used not-so-thinly-veiled metaphors of people subjugating others and not seeing the harm they're doing, as in British colonization or the treatment of Native Americans. In the Newt world, cruel medical experiments are performed on them, and light-skinned Newts are considered superior by humans. Public discussion of the Newts goes from the sublime to the ridiculous: Do Newts have souls? Can Newts be baptized?

When Čapek wrote this work, he was a mature writer who had worked as a columnist, playwright, essayist, reviewer, art critic, storywriter, and novelist. He wrote *War with the Newts* in a number of styles, ranging from newspaper articles to scientific academic papers, which enliven the third-person perspective and paucity of main characters. The three folks we read about most, all from landlocked Czechoslovakia (Captain J. von Toch, the industrialist Mr. Gussie H. Bondy, and his doorman Mr. Povondra), are memorable but don't get much print space since the story's main actors are countries.

This translation by Ewald Osers lets humor and modern sensibility shine through and makes it clear why Čapek is such a wildly popular author among Czechs and Slovaks. To see accompanying illustrations of the Newts, check out the old English edition, but stick with reading the Osers' translation to avoid archaic language. *War with the Newts* continues to delight. It was presented as a play last month at Park Square Theatre in St. Paul; a Czech movie directed by Jan Švankmajer is in the pre-production phase, expected to be released with the title *The Salamander War* in spring 2017.

Gwen coordinates the Literary Ventures, the Czech and Slovak book discussion group now on summer break until September. For more information: <[www.cs-center.org](http://www.cs-center.org)> or contact <[gwen@cs-center.org](mailto:gwen@cs-center.org)>.

## Šibřinky at the C.S.P.S. Hall By Louise Wessinger and Ed Hamernik



On April 18 the great sound of **Dale Pexa's Czech and Slovak Band** from Lonsdale, Minnesota, echoed through the historic C.S.P.S. Hall. The evening started early with a fabulous Czech meal, *řizek* (breaded pork cutlet) with homemade potato salad or mashed potatoes, prepared and served by Marketa Resong and her wonderful crew: Rad Rassmussen, Alena Youngberg, Michaela Makarianova-Wentz, and Olga Splichalova-Espinosa. Hana Matouskova baked and donated many delicious desserts. As the room filled with diners, the Sokol Minnesota *Taneční Mládež* (children), *Školka* (preschool), and Teen Folk Dancers performed dances and songs from the Czech and Slovak Republics. The 36 dancers ranged in age from 4 to 18 years old (only eight of the regular dancers were unable to attend). Included in the program were dances prepared especially for the Festival of Nations, April 30 – May 3. Dancers included Faith and Andrea Acheson, Petra and Adela Bragg, Everett Paylor, Isabela Carlson, Elise Black, Adela and Liliana Peterson, Anna and Izzy Bracknell, Isabel and Lucien Espinosa, Seanna and Keely Kluzak, Matthew Resong, Kristina Gurgel, Elizabeth Wentz,

**10 June/July 2015 Slovo**

Elisa, Everett, Eva and Erik Swartz, Mary, Henry, Benedict, Greta and Bridget Yanta, Sara Rosenthal, Sofia Schultz, Isabella Spiess, Jessica Metcalf, Ellen Ferry, and Emma and Maddie Stodola.

Our special guest, newly-crowned Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Queen, Elizabeth Kaliska, was introduced and greeted the audience. She works and lives in St Paul; we hope to see her at many of our events this coming year.

At 6 p.m., the Dale Pexa Band had the dancers in the audience on their feet with many polkas, waltzes, fox trots, and other fun dances. At intermission, the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers presented a lively performance and then brought most of the audience out on the floor to learn three Czech dances. The St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers were John Topic and Teresa Pojar, Pam Langworthy and Richard Sargent, Tom and Judy Aubrecht, James Metcalf and Emma Martin, Dave and Sue Martin, Dawn Bulera and Chuck Draheim, Dave Stepan and Louise Wessinger, Robert Jacobson and Jyni Koschak, Don and Pat Andrlé, Diane Bell and Scott Hinshaw and Bobbie Jo Chandler.

At 9:30 Miss Czech- Slovak Minnesota

Elizabeth Kaliska drew names for several door prizes. Prizes were donated by Louise Wessinger, *Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities*, and Sokol Minnesota. Winners were Kari Muyres, Judy Metcalf, Lorraine Olson, Bev Stodola, and Dawn Bulera.

Special thanks to our set-up crew: Jean and Chuck Draheim, John Topic. Ticket designer: Doreen McKenney. Ticket sellers: Jean Draheim, Shirley Verner, Judy and Tom Aubrecht, Katie and Don Haselbauer. Cashiers and bar workers: Jim Chlebecek, Joyce Tesarek, Lloyd Kroack, Don Andrlé, Norm Petrik, Dave Stepan. Clean-up crew: Darnell and Dave Stepan, Jean and Chuck Draheim, Lydia Akradi, Pan Langworthy, Richard Sargent, Deb Ziskovsky.

*Šibřinky 2015* was a very successful event for Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Food sales totaled \$783; bar sales (featuring *Staropramen* beer) including tips: \$406; our gate receipts: over \$800 with another \$100 coming from donations and selling crafts made by the *Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities*.

Sokol Minnesota was saddened to learn Dale Pexa, age 74, died suddenly on May 10. Our sympathies to family, friends, and fans.



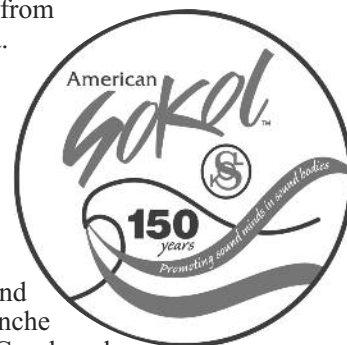
Sokol Folk dancers pose in 1956, From left to right are Jerry Roch, Rose Roch, Lucille Pavlicek, Robert Vanyo and Georgiana Buziky.

## Celebrating 150 Years of Sokol in the United States

During Sokol's sesquicentennial anniversary year in the United States, our *Slovo* is reprinting historical information from the collection of honorary life member Joan Sedlacek. She selected this month's Sokol history from the commemorative booklet, *Western District Sokol Slet, June 18-20, 1982, Hosted by Sokol Minnesota, 1882-1982, "A Centennial Salute."*

Two events of magnitude occurred in 1978: the name of the organization was changed from "St. Paul Sokol Gymnastic Society" to "Sokol Minnesota – An American-Czechoslovak Educational-Culture-Gymnastic Society" and the ownership of the C.S.P.S. Hall was transferred from C.S.A. Lodge Čech No. 51 to Sokol Minnesota.

On June 13 of 1982, the membership and unit friends celebrated 100 years of Sokol life in Minnesota. Caterers Paul and Hana Matousek prepared a delicious Czech dinner which was followed by a program of which the highlights included a salute to 50-year members, a short history of the unit, a fashion show featuring gym costumes past and present, a slide show, and a sing-a-long. After the program, the band, Blanche 'N the Waltz Kings, entertained with old-time Czech and Slovak songs. Vic Hubal served as Master of Ceremonies; Shirley Verner was General Chairman.



## Prague Days in Chicago: June 10-15

### Prague and Chicago, Sister Cities Celebrate 25 Years.

Golden Prague Gala, Friday, June 12, 6:30 p.m. Admission: \$175. Hosted by the Mayor of Prague, Honorable Adriana Krnáčová. Honoring the Czech history of Chicago. The swing music of *Ondřej Havelka and his Melody Makers Orchestra*. Unveiling of the recreated sculpture "Nature," originally created by Alphonse Mucha. Ticket information: <[www.praguedayschicago.com/tickets](http://www.praguedayschicago.com/tickets)>

**History and Visual Arts:** Exhibits at the Thalia Hall, Pilsen, Wednesday, June 10 through Friday, July 31.

**Music:** *Ondřej Havelka and his Melody Makers*, Wednesday, June 10, 8 p.m., Thalia Hall, admission. *Eggnoise*, Thursday, June 11, 6:30 p.m., Millennium Park, free. *Prague Rockfest*, Saturday, June 13, Cicero Community Park, free.

**Visual Arts:** "Treasured Legacy," Alphonse Mucha and Jarmila Mucha Plocková, Friday, June 12 to Friday, July 3, Thalia Hall.

**Film:** *Czech that Film* series, June 7-30, Gene Siskel Film Center.

**Dedication** of "A Heart for Václav Havel" Sculpture.

**Information:** <[www.praguedayschicago.com](http://www.praguedayschicago.com)>

## Czech that Film!

**Five Czech films: June 24 - 28**  
with English subtitles

**The Film Society of Minneapolis/St. Paul**  
**Saint Anthony Main Theatre**  
**115 SE Main Street, Minneapolis**

Website: <[mspfilm.org](http://mspfilm.org)>. Office: 612 331-7563.

### *Fair Play / Fair Play*

Wednesday, June 24 - 7:00 p.m.  
Andrea Sedláčková, director and screenwriter  
(2014, 100 min.)

### *Pojedeme k moři / To See the Sea*

Thursday, June 25 - 7:00 p.m.  
with special guest  
Jiří Mádl, director and screenwriter  
(2014, 90 min.)

### *Klauni / Clownwise*

Saturday, June 27 - 1:30 p.m.  
Viktor Tauš, director (2013, 120 min.)

### *Zakázané uvolnění / The Icing*

Saturday, June 27 - 4:30 p.m.  
Jan Hřebejk, director (2014, 77 min.)

### *Krásno / Krásno*

Sunday, June 28 - 1:30 p.m.  
Ondřej Sokol, director (2014, 119 min.)

Last minute updates:  
[www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota](http://www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota)

## Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp

for children ages 7 - 14 years

June 15 to 19

C.S.P.S. Hall

- ◆ Ethnic cooking and crafts ◆ Gymnastics
- ◆ Czech and Slovak language ◆ and more.

◆ 651-452-6240

Registration form: [www.sokolmn.org/culturecamp](http://www.sokolmn.org/culturecamp)

**ATTEND AND VOLUNTEER!**  
**Sokol Minnesota 2015 Events**

**Children's Cultural Day Camp**

June 15 to 19 • ages 7 to 14  
 Ethnic cooking and crafts, Czech and Slovak language, gymnastics, and more. 651-452-6240  
 Registration form: [www.sokolmn.org/culturecamp](http://www.sokolmn.org/culturecamp)

**Sokol Members Workday**

June 13 • August 8  
 Contact: [trustees@sokolmn.org](mailto:trustees@sokolmn.org)

**Czech that Film!**

June 24-28 • See page 11 for list of films.  
 Saint Anthony Main Theatre  
 115 SE Main Street, Minneapolis

**25<sup>th</sup> Czech-Slovak Festival**

September 27 • 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
 Music, Dancing, Singing, Silent Auction, Kids Games, Vendors, Czech/Slovak food and beer

Sokol Minnesota on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota](http://www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota)

Check for event updates: [www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org)



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**Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO June/July 2015**

**Zumba with the Queen**



Zumba with the Queen at C.S.P.S. Hall on Friday, April 10, was a fundraiser for the 2014-2015 National Czech and Slovak Queen, Morgan McMichen, (Kansas

City) to travel to Czech Republic and Slovakia this summer. Before the lively Zumba dancing session began, Morgan appeared in *kroj* for pictures: (L-R) Louise Wessinger, Dasha Rosenthal, and Judy Aubrecht.

You can support Morgan's efforts to promote Czech and Sloval culture and heritage: < [gofundme.com/missczechslovakus](http://gofundme.com/missczechslovakus) >.

**Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota**



Kaliska, 2015-2016 Princess Madison Jerde, and 2014-2015 Miss Congeniality Melissa Bastyr (New Prague). Missing: 2014-2015 Princess Heather Vikla (Lonsdale).

The Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Queen Pageant was held on April 11 in Montgomery. Judges were Ed Hamernik (Fridley) and Marit Lee Kucera (Saint Paul), both Sokol Minnesota members, and the National Czech and Slovak Queen Morgan McMichen (Kansas City). (L-R) Hamernik, 2015-2016 Miss Congeniality Emily Vikla (Lonsdale), 2015-2016 Queen Elizabeth Kaliska (Saint Paul), National Queen McMichen, 2015-2016 Princess Madison Jerde (Golden Valley), and Kucera. Little Sisters, Alenka J. and Melanie L., stood with National Queen Morgan McMichen, 2015-2016 Miss Congeniality Emily Vikla, 2014-2015 Minnesota Queen Corbin Jerde (Golden Valley), 2015-2016 Queen Elizabeth