

Czech  
Slovak  
Sokol Minnesota



# SLOVO

March 2008 vol. 31 no. 3

*Editor's note: This is a re-print of an article that first appeared in the August/September 1978 issue of the Slovo. Articles from readers recounting memories of the history of the C.S.P.S. Hall and Sokol are welcome.*

## C.S.P.S. Hall

by Karleen Chott Sheppard  
First published in the Slovo, August/September 1978

The property the C.S.P.S. Hall is situated on was purchased in 1879 by Rad (Lodge) Čech, no. 12. Česko-Slovanský Podporující Spolek (C.S.P.S.), parent fraternal insurance organization of the CSA. The lot cost \$600 and it was bought from William and Mary Dawson. Mr. Dawson was a banker, and at the time of the sale he was mayor of St. Paul. In March of 1887, the Lodge took out the first building permit and hired a neighborhood contractor, W. J. Gronewold, who had offices where Mancini's now stands. The estimated cost of the two story building was \$10,000.

Continued on page 6

### Upcoming Events

Mar 1, 7, 8  
7 pm  
*Memorandum performance*

Mar 2&9  
2pm  
*Memorandum performance*

March 15  
*Literary Ventures*

Mar 16, 11am  
*Easter Bake & Pancake Breakfast*

Mar 22  
*Euchre Tournament in New Prague*

Mar 28,  
7:30 pm  
*Membership Meeting*

Mar 30,  
12:30 pm  
*Flavors of Slovakia*

April 6, 2 pm  
*Sokol/C.S.P.S. 125 Celebration*

April 11-12  
*Garage Sale*

## Flavors of Slovakia

**Sunday March 30th**

Historic CSPS Sokol Hall 383 Michigan Street - St. Paul MN 55102  
www.sokolmn.org

holupky (cabbage roll)  
halusky kapusta(dumplings and cabbage)  
pirohy, pickled beets, green beans  
caraway rye bread, dessert and coffee

**limited seating-12:30 only**

**\$12.- Adult \$5.- for children under 7**

**Mail your prepaid reservation to Sokol MN**  
**Attn: Slovak dinner- No later than March 23rd**  
*Please attach phone number with payment for call back confirmation*  
952.941.0426  
**public welcome • take-outs available**

## Sokol /CSPS 125

A special event of music & theatre & history  
Czech & Slovak Sokol Minnesota  
celebrating 125 years , 1882 - 2007  
383 Michigan, St. Paul, 2nd floor theatre

Sunday

April 6

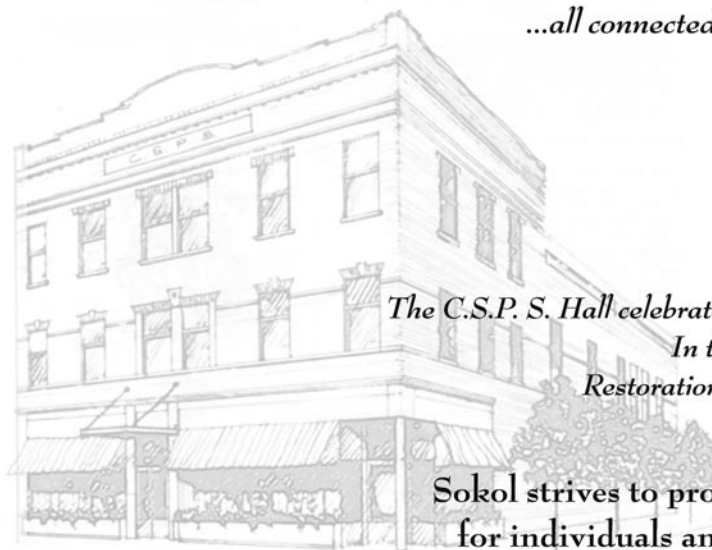
2-7 p.m.

performances 3-5 p.m.

*...as in years past, we'll hear the music of Antonin Dvorak*  
*...we'll enjoy a scene from Havel's "Memorandum" and "The Mushroom Picker"*  
*...all connected through our timeline in history*

www.sokolmn.org for program

Reserve your seat  
651.297.9000  
\$25.00



*The C.S.P.S. Hall celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2012.*  
*In the next four years we will focus on*  
*Restoration & Renovation & Rehabilitation*  
*of our beloved home.*

Sokol strives to provide fitness and community  
for individuals and families through physical,  
educational, cultural and social programs

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Sokol Minnesota  
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**President Komentář/President's Note**

By Joe Landsberger

Pozdrav bratři a sestry/Greetings brothers and sisters!

Congratulations! As you may have heard, we are finally ready to have a celebration for Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's 125th anniversary! (that was last year) The ad in front has the basics, but you will get more information on the website: [www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org) If you haven't access to the website, call me 651.297.9000 and I will let you know what we are developing.

I am very excited about this event. For one, I am producing and writing the historical narrative that will connect the performances. It has been great fun researching it. We also hope to have a display of some of the great artifacts of the hall, and part of the fun is digging into shelves and drawers, discovering "stuff." In March we will begin to inventory whatever we can find, and I hope that if you have pictures or documents that are of value to our history, you will loan or contribute them for either this event or future ones.

For example, check out the "Rates and Regulations of C.S.P.S. Hall" in effect October 1st, 1924. Such a mundane document in the history of our hall.

*Dances, including lower halls, check rooms and use of piano. Evenings \$35.00 Hall will not be rented for dances such as vineyard, etc. What's a vineyard?*

The third floor has lots of stuff. One day Louise Wessinger

and I rummaged about and consolidated some. Another day I climbed a ladder and inventoried large pictures stacked on the cabinets and tried to restack them so they wouldn't get damaged further. Another I climbed up the storage room walls to photograph Václav Picha. Other times I just climb, and look. I noticed a name that was familiar to me: Trnka. I have a friend named Trnka! Frank Trnka! I called him, and he said his grandfather grew up blocks away from the hall, and that he used to dance with us in the 70's. Small world.

I found some interesting artifacts besides the hall rental. I found a c. 1905 photograph, one of the few I have seen that pre-dates the third level addition of 1917. Also a wonderful art deco poster from 1935 advertising *Sokol: Keep in Trim*. I found nifty pamphlets, old medals, costumes in a trunk. I read books with snippets of facts I didn't know. Did you know that Šibřinky has been celebrated in our hall since 1908? That Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk came to St. Paul in May 1918 on a "secret visit" on his way to visit with President Woodrow Wilson. Five months later he was President of Czechoslovakia. I have visited the downtown St. Paul public library, the Minnesota History Center, and the City of St. Paul's Department of Safety and Inspections in search of information and documentation related to our listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sadly, there is a lot that has been lost that relates to our history. I would like to continue to gather whatever we can find that will keep generations to come informed about the role, not only of Sokol, but also the organizations that worked with us to make our building one of the last, and oldest, national halls in Minnesota. Care to help? Please look to see what you can find. It's fun!

Nazdar, Joe Landsberger

Rates and Regulations of C. S. P. S. Hall	
In effect October 1st, 1924 and until further notice.	
	<p><b>DANCES.</b> Lower halls, check rooms and use of piano. Evenings ..... \$35.00 Afternoon and evening ..... 45.00 SHOWS ..... 25.00 Rehearsals \$1.50 each.</p> <p>Lodges and Clubs not holding regular meetings in the C. S. P. S. hall will be charged \$10.00 additional to above rates and total amount must be paid at the time hall is reserved.</p> <p><b>LECTURES.</b> Afternoon or evenings. \$15.00 <b>PARTIES.</b> Dining room, kitchen and club room ..... \$10.00 <b>GYMNASTICS.</b> Each drill ..... 2.00 Children, Sunday mornings, free.</p> <p><b>LODGE MEETINGS.</b> Meeting hall (one meeting per month), to be used for meetings only, payable monthly or quarterly: per year ..... \$60.00</p>
	<p>For use of dining room and kitchen by lodges after regular meetings a charge of \$2.00 will be made. Dishes and utensils used, must be returned as received.</p> <p><b>REGULATIONS.</b> In case of any damage, it will be charged to and must be paid by parties engaging hall. Hall will not be rented for dances such as vineyard, etc. A special police officer must be engaged for dances and the cost will be paid by the party engaging hall. Parties engaging the hall are responsible for any infraction of laws and payment of internal revenue tax. Reservations are not transferable and hall cannot be used for other purposes than for which engaged.</p>

**Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO**

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

## Join Sokol friends at Dvořák's *Rusalka*

Sokol Minnesota invites members and friends to join us for a performance of Antonín Dvořák's opera *Rusalka* at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts Thursday, April 17 at 7:30 p.m., or Sunday, April 20 at 2:00 p.m.

Tickets are \$57.50 for the Thursday's performance, and \$65.50 for the Sunday's. The Ordway, 345 Washington Street, is located across from St. Paul's historic Rice Park. This special cultural outing is sponsored by Sokol Minnesota's Education Committee, chaired by Louise Wessinger. For tickets or information, call Louise at 651-452-6240.

Using Czech songs and dances, Dvořák based his opera on tales of Rusalki. In Slavic folk tales from many cultures including Czech, Russian, and Polish, Rusalki were either water nymphs or forest dwellers who enticed young men with their singing and beauty, then drowned them. The *Rusalka* opera debuted in Prague in 1901. Famed opera soprano Renee Fleming made its aria, *Mesicku na nebi hlubokem* (Ode to the Moon), one of her signature pieces. The opera will be sung at the Ordway in Czech, with English subtitles above the stage.



A rendering of Erhard Rom's set of Antonin Dvořák's opera *Rusalka* as produced by the Minnesota Opera.



### ***Rusalka* Lecture**

Learn about the opera before you attend! Daniel E. Freeman will give an illustrated presentation on Saturday, April 5, from 10 am -noon at the C.S.P.S. Hall 1st Floor. *Rusalka* was first performed in 1901 at the National Theater in Prague. The opera established itself almost immediately as one of the most successful operas ever written to a text in Czech. The attraction of the work is above all from its beautiful music, a rich assortment of Czech and internationalist styles, but audiences are also moved by the tragic story of the main character, a water sprite who wants to experience love as mortals do for the first time in her life.

Daniel E. Freeman has taught music history at the University of Illinois, the University of Southern California, and the University of Minnesota. He offers lecture series annually at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. He has published extensively on 18th century European music with a specialization in the musical culture of the Bohemian lands.

## **Easter Bake Sale and Pancake Breakfast in March**

By Louise Wessinger

Sokol Minnesota's annual Spring Pancake Breakfast takes the stage at the C.S.P.S. Hall Sunday, March 16, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.. Guests will enjoy all-you-can-eat pancakes, complimented with sausage and beverage (coffee or milk) at \$6 for adults and \$3 for children under age 8.

All Sokols are encouraged to bring donations of baked goods Friday or Saturday. Volunteer bakers are needed on Friday and Saturday to make goodies to sell on Sunday. We plan to make páška (bread), spring perníčky (gingerbread) and lamb cakes. We also plan to sell filled Easter baskets. If you need some baskets

to fill, pick them up at the hall.

Also fun to sell would be nicely potted flowers or plants. We also will have a large "Easter food basket" of ham, wine and other typical treats for sale through Silent Auction. So come to have breakfast, and take many goodies home for your own Easter celebration.



# Sokol Minnesota Thanks Generous Donors

By Jean Hall, Corresponding Secretary

Sokol extends appreciative thanks to those who recently made donations.

## In memory of Stanley Vosejпка

Georgiana Dolejsi  
Tillie Dolejsi  
Elsie Roepke

## In Memory of Adolph & Mary Pliva and Agnes Pliva Mules

Tamara and Richard Radke  
(\$100 to General Fund)

## In Memory of Emanuel Tesarek, Funča & Joe Hošek, and John & Clara Roushar

Thomas & Penny Tesarek  
(General Fund)

## General Fund

Gary & MaryAnn Novak - \$100  
Richard Pavlicek - \$100  
Eugene & Arlene Courneya  
Blanche Dvořák  
Violet Dvořák  
Wayne & Vera Hawkinson  
John Kuzman  
Joyce Kuzman  
Frank Loss  
Anca O'Neill  
Joe Ruzicka  
Ted Skluzacek  
Dolores Speidel  
Agnes Zeman

*Thank You!*

## Childrens Dance Fund

Mir & Shirley Verner

## Culture Camp

George Chlebecek - \$300  
Mir & Shirley Verner

## Elevator Fund

Elsie Roepke **Kitchen Fund**  
George Chlebecek - \$200

## Slovo Fund

Mir & Shirley Verner

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

## Song of the Month

Submitted by  
Georgiana Dolejsi



*Teče Voda, Teče* Moravská ze Slovácka

Moderato

Te- če vo- da, te- če----- cez ve- lec- ký ma- jír,  
Wa- ters wist- ful wa- ters flow, from the migh- ty Slo- vak hi

ně- hal si ma ně- hal, sta- re- dáv- ný fra- jír.  
Thou hast left my dear home, with the ev- er sing- ing rills

ně- hal si ma ně- hal, sta- re- dáv- ný fra- jír.  
Thou hast left my dear home, with the ev- er sing- ing rills

2. Něhal si ma, něhal, dobre ty vieš komu, 2. Thou hast left me thou knowest  
čo ty reči nosí do našeho domu. and all people laugh at me.

3. Do našeho domu, pod naše okénko 3. Far from me thou goest  
čo som sa naplakal, sivá holuběnko. leaving me longing for thee.

## Membership Report

By Norm Petrik  
Membership Director

Sokol Minnesota welcomed three new members at the January 25 Membership meeting. Gene Kubes of Eagan expressed interest in history and geneology. He has six adult children. Eunice Miller of Pine City expressed interest in children's dance, cooking and other cultural events. Ken Kadlec of Minneapolis expressed interest in language, cooking and various cultural events. Minnesota welcomes all our new members.



Gene Kubes (left) and Ken Kadlec (center) shown here with Membership Chair, Norm Petrik were inducted and had a chance to visit with fellow members at January's Membership meeting.

## Czech Easter Traditions

On the Monday after Easter, young Czech boys chase after the girls, shouting:

*Hody, hody, do provody*

*Dejtje vejce malovaný*

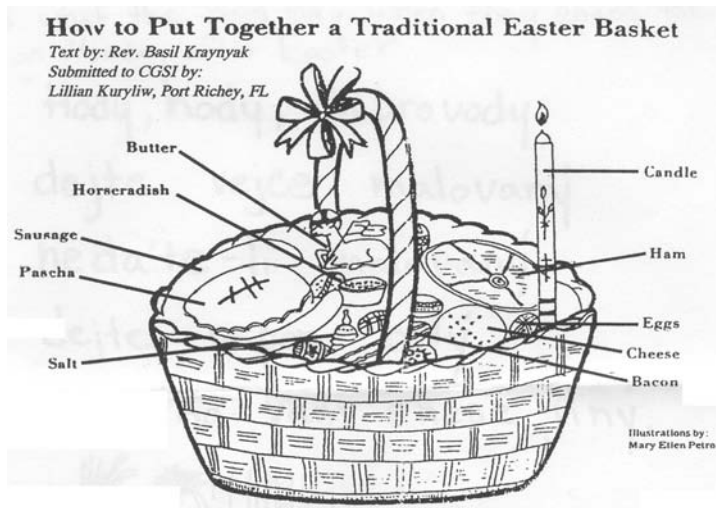
*První polovinu ještě děčka znají*

*Detje aspon bílý*

*Slepicka vam snese jiný*

How to put together a traditional Slavic Easter basket

A traditional Slavic Easter basket contains a cornucopia of treats. In a wicker basket with a ribbon or bow tied to the handle, you might find:



Pascha – An Easter bread, symbolic of Christ. It is usually a round loaf baked to a golden crust. Sometimes a cross of dough is placed on top, or possibly Greek abbreviations for the name of Christ.

Ham – or possibly lamb or veal – symbolic of the joy and abundance of Easter.

Sausage – a spicy, garlicky sausage, indicative of God’s favor and generosity.

Eggs – Hard boiled eggs, decorated with beeswax.

Horseradish – mixed with grated red beets – a sweet red colored mixture bringing to mind the sufferings of Christ.

Bacon – uncooked and cured with spices – symbolizing God’s mercy.

Butter – shaped in the figure of lamb, reminding of the goodness of Christ.

Salt – necessary for flavor, and standing for duty to others.

The articles are placed in a wicker basket, with a ribbon or bow tied to the handle. A linen cover may be embroidered with a picture of the risen Christ. A candle is placed in the basket and lit at the time of blessing.

Source: adapted from text submitted by Rev. Basil Kraynyak to *Nase Rodina*, volume 10, no. 1, March 1998, a publication of the Czech Genealogical Society International.



### Czech & Slovak Sokol Minnesota Education Classes Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Sokol Member \_\_\_\_ Non-member \_\_\_\_

Class Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Fee(s): 1 \_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_

Please do not include other fees in the same check. Please do not send cash.

Send your check payable to Sokol Minnesota, and mail along with this form to:

Louise Wessinger  
 3704 Denmark Ave  
 Eagan, MN 55123

*C.S.P.S. Hall continued from page 1*

However, soon there were legal complications. Rad Čech, No. 12 was incorporated July 2, 1884. This meant the Lodge was unincorporated at the time the property was bought and incorporated when construction began. This situation was the cause of a variety of legal maneuvers. The first document filed was a quit claim from the Dawsons to the property held by the C.S.P.S. as a corporation. Then the Lodge was required to deed the property back to itself as a corporation. This transfer was completed on October 6, 1887.

Furthermore, the entire membership of the unincorporated C.S.P.S. had to renounce any claim to the property, and this had to be accomplished in the form of a lawsuit tried at term of Special Court on March 17, 1888.

At least the legal snarls were settled, and the construction proceeded to completion in 1890.

As soon as the new C.S.P.S. Hall was ready to rent its corner store space in 1889, Václav Picha moved in, advertising “Wines, Liquors, and Cigars.” Although he came to America as a tailor in the early 1870’s, he had turned to saloon-keeping even before he rented the C.S.P.S. corner, and his 25-year occupancy of our Hall is legendary.



Václav Picha, reproduced from the composite 1890 picture of C.S.P.S. founders from our 3rd floor storage.

Old Picha, as he was called, was full of fun. He knew lots of jokes. When anyone came in he started telling one, and then everybody had a good laugh. The saloon had a wide reputation, and when anyone came in from out of town, he knew where to go. At the end of the bar was a free lunch counter. A person could buy a big glass of beer for a nickel and go to the lunch counter and eat for nothing.

Picha was a free-thinker, and his friendship with Father Jan Rynda, priest at Saint Stanislaus Church around the corner, was something remarkable. Father

Rynda would become irritated with Picha when his parishioners stopped in the saloon on the way home from church, and some of Father Rynda’s parishioners were unhappy over their priest’s association with a non-believer. The men, however had great respect for each other and spent many hours in conversation in Picha’s rooms back of the saloon.

Václav Picha died at the age of 73 in 1914, and his funeral was held in his home, the living quarters behind the saloon. After his death, his son Karel, who had been helping his father tend bar throughout the years, and Peter Nekola, who was married to Václav’s daughter Gustie, continued the saloon. Somehow things did not go too well, and after five years the store was occupied by Fishbach and Bspalec Meat Market.

## Sokol History Finds



This uncaptioned photo was found in a cabinet and may date before the third level addition of 1918. It will be a historical reference and visual document for our building and perhaps for any restorative work in the future.



A 1935 recruitment placard for Sokol measuring 9 x 13 inches



## Friend of Sokol donates 16 Moravian Kroje

By Louise Wessinger

Barbara Seiler Grelson recently blessed Sokol Minnesota's Taneční Mládež youth dancers with 16 beautiful Moravian kroje, or folk costumes.

In the early 1980s, Barbara's mother, Veronica Seiler, worked in a small Wisconsin town near Green Bay to preserve and share the heritage of Czechoslovakia. One of her greatest gifts to her community was coordination of the Young Czech Dancers and Singers. Veronica's dancers ranged in age from 3-15 years. They performed many places in the Midwest, including Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska, as well as on TV and at ethnic festivals.

Even though Veronica had 10 children of her own, she made 16 folk costumes for the group to wear. The folk dress represented the Moravian area of Czechoslovakia. Veronica spent countless hours searching for the correct materials, embroidery, laces, and buttons to use on each kroj. Many nights she would be at her machine until midnight making sure each costume would fit just right.

The Young Czechs performed for over a decade until daughter Barbara Seiler Grelson was no longer able to do the dance instruction. Veronica died in 1999 after a battle with heart disease.

In her mother's memory, Barbara Grelson has donated all 16 kroje to the Taneční Mládež. It is her hope that young people continue to wear the costumes, helping to share our beautiful Czech and Slovak heritage. Parents of the Taneční Mládež dancers are cleaning and updating the kroje. The kroje will become part of our costume closet. This closet has been generously filled by many members of Sokol Minnesota. Having all these beautiful kroje makes it possible for many more children to be part of our group and helps us show the variety of the traditional kroje of the Czechs, Moravians, and Slovaks.



Barb Seiler Grelson donated 16 colorful Moravian kroje to Sokol Minnesota in January. Louise Wessinger, children's dance group director, accepted the kroje in St. Cloud.

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## Sokol again offers Czech language classes

*Sokol Minnesota's popular Czech language classes begin again in March. To register, call Sokol Education Chair Louise Wessinger at 651-452-6240. Additional information is available at [www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org) All classes are at Sokol Minnesota's home, the C.S.P.S. Hall at 383 Michigan Ave., Saint Paul.*

### Czech Language - Beginner Level 3 (two classes: Mondays or Wednesdays)

Class 1- 8 weeks beginning March 24  
Instructor: John Topic  
Mondays 6 – 7:30 p.m. or Wednesdays 7:00-8:30 p.m.  
Texts: *Cestina Hrou*, plus cassettes (\$55) and Workbook (\$45)

Class 2-eight weeks beginning March 26

**Czech Language - Advanced Beginner 3**  
8 weeks beginning March 25  
Instructor: Blanka Brichta (Doreen McKenney, Coordinator)  
Wednesday 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m.  
Czech Language Text /Workbook continues as before



### Czech Language - Intermediate 3

8 weeks beginning March 25

Instructor: Jitka Sebek (Norm Petrik, Coordinator)  
Tuesdays, 7 pm.- 8:30 p.m.

Czech Language Text/Workbook continues as before

Fee for all language classes: \$55 (Sokol members);  
\$75 (non-members)

*Registration is required for all classes. Please use the registration form in this edition of the Slovo.*

### Slovak Language Interest Group

Please call Robin Anderson at 763-300-3782

## Bobbin Lace Classes

We have secured a teacher for a bobbin lace class, and are planning an eight-week beginners class in 2008. We also plan to have an embroidery class, a repeat of the kolache making class, a cabbage roll cooking class, and a Czech beading class. Watch the Slovo and the Sokol Minnesota website [www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org) for further information.

## On the Road: Ethnic Travel Highlights

by Mark Bigaouette

This is sort of a recap of places you can see and visit when you travel around. About 10 years ago, I attended the Winnipeg, Canada Folklorrama. It takes place the last weekend in July and the first weekend in August. You buy a passport ( like a ticket ) and can visit a large number of ethnic locations each evening - they have dinners and lots of food, they put on very nice ethnic shows, and have displays, and shops. Each week features different ethnic groups, including a Czech-Slovak group.

In Florida, they have Czech-Slovak club halls in St. Petersburg (an older not-so-active group), and in North Miami much more going on at this club. They have a bar, and very nice ethnic meals. This is where Sokol Miami used to meet. They also have a Museum to a Czech artist in Winter Park - near Orlando, the Albin Polasek Museum.

Texas is a world unto its self. I attended West Fest a few years ago, It's a HUGE event, mostly country-western music, not really a very ethnic Czech event. Better to visit the Czech museum complex being built in La Grange (west of Houston) or the Houston Czech Center.

Or make a trip to the Museum of the SPJST in Temple, you will be able to enjoy fresh kolace.

Back in the Midwest, Nebraska is plum full of Czech towns and festivals. Cedar Rapids, Iowa, has the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. And, don't forget Spillville, Iowa, where Dvořák summered and wrote music.

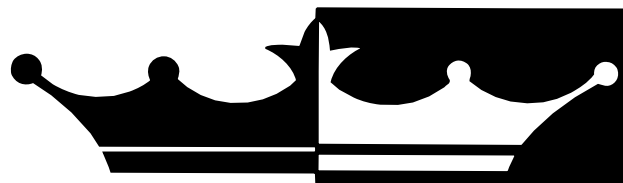
Chicago is a bit of a sad story if you want to see the old Czech neighborhoods. However, they have wonderful ethnic Czech restaurants. The best old hall I have ever seen on this side of the pond is the Bohemian National Hall in Cleveland, Ohio – a wonderful place to visit. However, the Czech government is putting over 10 million dollars into renovating the Bohemian National Hall in New York City.

Pittsburgh has a Slovak festival - small and not very good – but, they have the greatest ethnic youth dance group I have ever seen! Hold on to your hats, because they are a Carpatho-Rusyn group with roots in Eastern Slovakia.

Try and see them if you can.

I hope this article inspires you to learn more about ethnic places and events.

**Contestants Wanted  
of Czech, Slovak  
or Moravian Descent  
Ages 16-26  
for the 19th Annual  
Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant  
April 12, 2008  
Montgomery, Minnesota**



**Information:**

**call Lorraine David  
507-364-9370 days  
507-364-5384 evenings**

**email at:  
davidsdiner@hotmail.com**



Visiting for a month from Seoul, Korea, is Sokol Minnesota member Colleen Cahill and friend, pictured here with Colleen's mother Mary. They stopped by to greet friends making dumplings for the Duck Dinner. They sampled the dumplings and gave their approval, before heading off to Como Zoo to see the polar bears. Colleen, who graduated from Beloit College, has been living and teaching English in Seoul.





## Around Sokol

By Marlene Hinshaw

Ahoj!

Seriously, I think spring is on its way! I'm happily aware of the longer daylight.

We sure had some dangerously cold days about two weeks ago. I'm wondering if some of you experienced what we did: our house made loud cracking and booming sounds during the night. I fully expected to wake up in the morning to find big cracks in the walls. All was OK. A 50 degree weather change in 48 hours was the cause. Good-bye winter!

January 26 was the great Duck Dinner at the hall. A mighty tasty dinner indeed. I had enough leftovers for another meal, and then some. The new round tables make conversation much easier. At our table, my husband Kent and I met new Sokol member Ken Kadlec. Ken is taking a Czech language class, as is Kent. They commiserated on how difficult it is to learn Czech grammar. Also at our table were Katherine and Ted Eckstrom, proud owners of Cesky Terriers. They have shown their dogs in the Czech Republic several times. Our guest, the Rev. Jim Nelson, is also a dog guy. His two service dogs, Gina and Gracie, were guide dogs for the blind. So, this table of strangers had a good time talking about dogs, Prague and Sokol, as well as which churches have the best (lutefisk) dinners. Katherine and Ted regularly come to Sokol dinners. They are considering Sokol membership. I'm thinking the Cesky Terriers might like to attend Culture Camp this June.

Singing class on Tuesday morning was crazy. When we arrived at the hall for practice, we noticed the Vito Plumbing truck in the parking lot. Not seeing anyone around we supposed Vito and crew were working on the boiler in the basement. As we were singing, the workers began hammering loudly on the water pipes. Sometimes it was funny because the hammering was the same tempo as our songs, but mostly, it was annoying. In retaliation, John Cicha jumped up, grabbed his metal cane and gave the radiator a few whacks. The hammering stopped abruptly. We had a great laugh over that. You had to be there!

About two weeks ago, Kyler Clancy, 20-month old son of members Julie and Colin Clancy, became seriously ill with Guillain-Barre syndrome. Kyler is hospitalized at Gillette Children's Hospital in St. Paul. He will be receiving therapy for approximately five more weeks. Thankfully, a full recovery is expected. Kyler's grandparents are Beverly Clancy, and Ron and Ann Andrle. We send our prayers and best wishes for Kyler's complete recovery.

Ralph Halbert is recovering from surgery at St. Mary's Home in St. Paul. Bob Vanyo had cataract surgery on both eyes, and is thrilled with his improved vision. He said, "Now I can see the road signs!" Better, Bob, I'm sure you meant to add better. Millie Grealish is homebound. She's receiving therapy for a sore back. Our oldest Sokol member (number of years as a member), Helen Lander (age 97), has been hospitalized. Helen lives in Dickenson, Texas. Cheers to you all! We hope you'll all be up to speed real soon.

Remember the Sokol mission statement about having a sound mind in a sound body? Here's proof that the Sokol way of life really works. Did you have any doubts?

We send Birthday Wishes to:

Richard Pavlicek (92) - March 13

Rose Roch (94) - March 15

Lorene Sedlacek (97) - March 17

Also in their 90's are Lou Pavlicek, Val Hanover, Florence Haselbauer and Bessie (Anca) O'Neill. Clean living and good beer helps too.

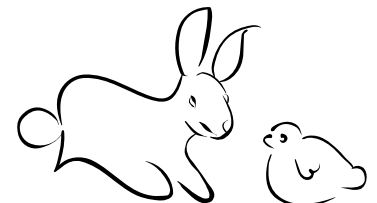
Two very special members will be celebrating their 90th birthdays this month. Georgiana Dolejsi, March 14, and Frank Loss, March 9. They have been Sokol members since childhood and are still going strong. Georgiana has been a leader in Sokol since her teens. Presently, she leads the Sokol Minnesota Czech & Slovak Singers. Frank is an important member of this group, too, because he speaks and translates Czech.

Over the years, Georgiana and Frank have held many official positions in our Sokol unit. Both were involved in gymnastics and participated in slets here and abroad. Frank also held offices in the Western Fraternal Life Insurance Association (insuring Czechs and Slovaks).

I've barely touched upon their volunteer service to Sokol. I plan to profile each of them in future *Slovo* issues.

When you were accepted into Sokol you no doubt got a hug from Georgiana. She is the official Sokol "hugger." Now it's our turn to give her and Frank (he likes hugs, too) a hug and wish them "Happy Birthday."

Sibrinky was a couple of weeks ago. I don't do much dancing these days, but I sure love to hear polka music. Don't forget the Flavors of Slovakia dinner on March 30. I'm looking forward to eating halusky and kapusta (dumplings and cabbage). I hope they have leftovers for sale. Yumm! Think Spring!



## Havel's *The Memorandum* is C.S.P.S. Hall Theater Treat

Lex-Ham Community Theater will perform Václav Havel's *The Memorandum* on the C.S.P.S. Hall stage the weekends of February 29-March 2 and March 7-9.

The comedy about bureaucracy at its funniest is co-sponsored by Sokol Minnesota and the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center.

*The Memorandum* follows Gross, the Managing Director of a large bureaucracy. His Deputy Director has declared that Ptydepe, a completely logical and almost completely incomprehensible language, become the new official language for all office communications. Bureaucratic rules, office politics, and management fads rule as employees throughout the organization respond to the new mandate.

Havel wrote the play in 1965 during Communist rule of Czechoslovakia. The play's topics – jobs that had unclear purposes, spying on colleagues, and absurd

rules – were everyday experiences of the Czech public of those days.

Mark Monfils directs the Lex-Ham production. The cast includes: Jennifer Amaya, Rebecca Aurit, Jessica Buelow, Brian Casey, Natasha Crupko, Christine DeZelar-Tiedman, Bridget Dutkowski, Anthony Frick, Patience Hughes, Joyce Johnson, Larry Kaplan, Meg Moynihan, and Aaron Wlaschin.

The February 29, March 1, and March 7 and 8 performances are at 7:30 p.m. The March 2 and March 9 shows open at 2 p.m. All performances are on the Sokol stage at the C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan Street (near W 7th and St. Clair) in Saint Paul. Delicious Czech food and beverages will be available for purchase.

*Photos of the production may be viewed at:* [www.lexhamarts.org/theater/MediaResources.htm#Show200802](http://www.lexhamarts.org/theater/MediaResources.htm#Show200802)

*To purchase tickets or get more information, go to:* [www.lexhamarts.org/theater/200802/Show0802.htm](http://www.lexhamarts.org/theater/200802/Show0802.htm), or call 651-314-4332.

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## Czech-Slovak genealogy help available

If you want to learn how to research your Czech, Moravian or Slovak roots, stop by the Minnesota Genealogical Society Library in South St. Paul March 15 for help from the Czech and Slovak Genealogical Society, International (CGSI).

Starting at 12:30 p.m., a program will include a presentation on Czech and Slovak language by Dave Pavelka, as well as a talk on Czech history by Steve Potach. After which there will be a library tour and orientation will follow. Also featured will be an exhibit of historic materials which were prepared by the Czech National Archives in Prague. A sales table will offer a selection of maps, dictionaries and other helpful materials. There is no charge, but small donations are requested to help cover costs.

The library's new location is 1185 Concord St. N. (from I-94, take Hwy 52 south to Concord exit and turn left) or take bus route 71B from downtown St. Paul.

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## Travel the World without a Passport

Sokol Minnesota will again be well represented at the 2008 Festival of Nations, May 1-4 at the St. Paul River Centre.

Established in 1932 by the International Institute of Minnesota, the Festival of Nations is designed to bring Americans of all backgrounds together. Groups from 97 world ethnic groups will share foods, crafts and traditions that form the mosaic of American culture.

Sokol Minnesota will represent the Czech and Slovak peoples in the Festival's cafés, bazaar and cultural exhibit area. In addition, Sokol's Taneční Mládež dancers will dance on the Festival stage.

## Calling All Townspeople! - and their Pictures

The theme for Festival of Nations is Art and Architecture. Sokol Minnesota is building a "Symphony of Stone" Square for the cultural exhibit. The Czech & Slovak Republics are very rich in a great variety of building styles (Romanesque, Renaissance, Gothic etc.) We are looking for all kinds of pictures and posters showcasing buildings. Your pictures will be used as "bricks." They can include people but cannot be returned. Please write the name and location on the back and send to:  
FON-Symphony of Stone; Sokol Minnesota  
383 Michigan St.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

If you would like to help with this project please call Jill Bastyr at 651-457-8999 or email [bastyr930@comcast.net](mailto:bastyr930@comcast.net)





Dr. Josef Mestenhauser

*This column consists of a short “feature” and brief bullet-type news from my office and from Czech and Slovak Republics. Information comes from several sources; daily press in the Czech Republic; Newsletters from Czech and Slovak Embassies; news from Czech language Kanadske Listy and Americke Listy; the Prague Post; “EU Politics Today (published by the EIN News Service); daily abstracts*

*from Czech newspapers (Ihned;) and from my contacts associated with the Honorary Consulate. My sources are short on news from Slovakia; readers are invited to give me leads for more information from Slovakia. There is too much to report for the space available. I invite readers to also let me know what items interest them most.*

## The “Other” Culture

By Honorary Czech Consul, Dr. Josef Mestenhauser

I receive more written materials from and about the Czech and Slovak Republics than I can read. I usually scan them, and decide what to read more carefully.

Of the many things on my desk, one captured my special attention, partly because it included information from Mělník, the place of my late brother and his family, and partly because it required reflection about cultural changes that have occurred in the “old” country. It was Czech business and Trade magazine, a bi-monthly publication of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The time from the velvet revolution to this date is almost as much as the duration of the first republic. Yet the extent of cultural changes is greater than is recognized.

Most people tend to think of “culture” as being music, art, dances, literature and theater – in short, what the French consider the big “C” culture. My entire training and education suggests that culture with a small “c” is much larger; it is a way of life, a way of thinking and reasoning – how people organize themselves; what they believe, how they earn their living, and what they do with their time. Considered in this light, the above mentioned magazine is more than statistics about economic activities in the Czech Republic. It is a reflection of profound cultural change – and it is this perspective that I invite the readers to consider in connection with the economic statistics contained in the magazine.

In the first place, more than half of Czech economy is export-driven. Export is, in turn, the result of foreign investments, and they, in turn, depend on the degree of trust that people have in the economy, organization, skills, and behavior of the Czech people. This is not the whole story. The extent of international trade is also a result of changing nature of foreign relations, which now includes a substantial emphasis on “economic diplomacy” with which the Czechs negotiate various trade agreements. In order for such diplomacy to function, the country had to develop ways to integrate, coordinate and streamline functioning of various private and public institutions. Although a great deal still needs to be done, the creation of the Trade and Investment

Council, is a step in the right direction.

The driving force of Czech trade is, of course, tourism, which accounted for 113 billion Czech crowns last year, brought to the country by 3.7 million tourists. Although Prague continues to be the center of tourist attention, people are discovering other interesting places to visit, not just the famous Czech spas. Every region of the country has its own tourist agenda that is increasingly more effective largely due to the fact that the Czech people have also discovered the rest of the world right in their own country and learned how to welcome strangers. At the same time, Czechs spend about half of tourism income on their own tourism abroad. Still, the balance is exceptionally positive. The other sector of trade that has experienced a positive balance is transportation. Although expenditures for transportation continue to increase, the balance is still positive – a little below one billion Euros. As the transportation infrastructure improves, and the newly instituted toll charges improve, the balance may become even more positive because of the country’s central transit location of Europe.

The trade in “other services” is not as positive. The country has about a 1.5 billion Euro deficit in exchange of these services, which include financial services, insurance, and licenses businesses, consulting, organizational management, and research and development.

Going beyond the statistics, the remarkable changes that these figures represent, are evidence of cultural changes, away from collectivism to valuing individual worth; away from being in the box to being connected; away from dependency on the Soviet empire to global interdependence; away from fatalism to control of their own decisions; and away from being pegs in narrow holes to pride in individual achievement.

As I reflect on these changes, I write this article in hope that Americans, including the ethnic Czechs, will pay more attention to this broader concept of the Czech culture, and that, in turn, the people in the Czech Republic will broaden their understanding of the life and culture of the US beyond the communist inspired stereotypes of an exploitative society. In addition, I hope that the Czechs will also gain not only an economic, but also a political culture.

In December 1989 the country was so devastated, it was predicted it would take at least two or three generations just to catch up with the standards of the first republic. Now, less than one generation later, the balance has rendered these predictions irrelevant and the country is about 85% on the standards of Western Europe. There is a message for us all about how we should relate ourselves to the Czech and Slovak people and what we should know and appreciate about their achievements.

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Minneapolis, MN 55419

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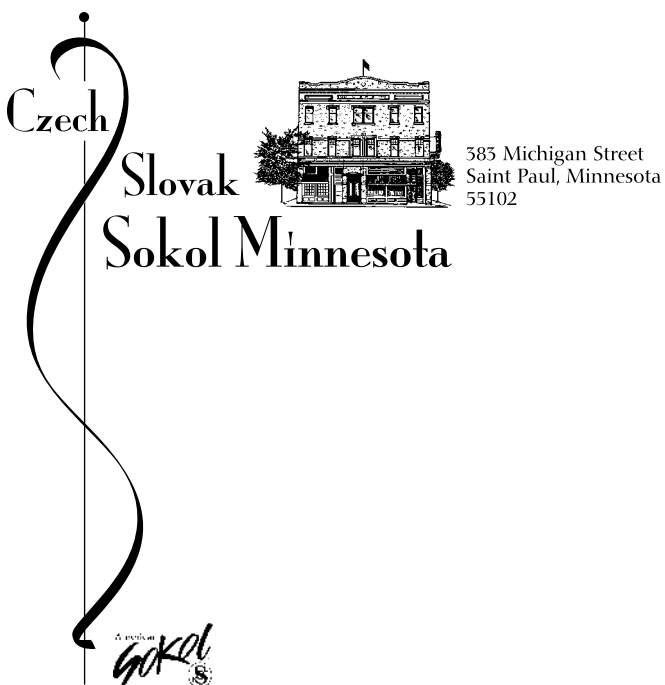
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