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## Heritage Endangered The Anton Jurka/ Blanche Yurka House

By Joe Landsberger

It's front porch is long gone, as is the family heritage that once marked the Antonín Jurka/Blanche Yurka House at 16 Douglas Street in St. Paul's



Yurka his daughter that appeared in *Gateway to a New World: Building Čech and Slovak Communities in the West End* (Landsberger et al, 2003), published in commemoration of the Czech and Slovak immigrant families that built the West End neighborhoods, businesses and institutions of the West End. The book was published by the Fort Road Federation/District 9 Community Council and for sale through our Gift Shop.

*continued on page 11*

### Upcoming Events

- April 7  
Euchre  
Tourney
- April 13-14  
Garage and  
Bake Sale
- April 21  
Cleanup Day
- May 4-6  
Festival of  
Nations
- May 19  
Tea Party  
Social

West End. The street is now a cul-de-sac, and ends at a tall wooden fence that separates it from a Burger King restaurant on Grand Avenue. The story goes that a family recently owned many houses in the neighborhood, then sold them individually, and now many have been forfeited for mortgage default. Now official flyers mark the house for potential demolition. We reproduce here profiles of Anton Jurka (Juřka) and Blanche

**APRIL 13 - 14**

**Sale**

PUBLIC  
WELCOME

**Garage  
and  
Bake Sale**

COLLECTIBLES·TREASURES  
ANTIQUES·BOOKS·UTENSILS·CLOTHES  
MISCELLANEOUS

**FRIDAY**  
9am - 5pm

**SATURDAY**  
9am - 1pm

Second floor of the  
Historic CSPS  
Sokol Hall  
383 Michigan St.  
Saint Paul MN

**DONATIONS  
WELCOME**

**FOR DETAILS to volunteer or drop off donations  
Call: Dorothy 507.645.4793 or Doris 952.881.6715**

**Czech and Slovak  
Sokol Minnesota  
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## President Komentář/President's Note

By Joe Landsberger

Pozdrav bratři a sestry/Greetings brothers and sisters!

Happy spring to you! As I write this, the last snow is disappearing, and I may even see some green appearing. Another shade of green is also on the minds of your Board of Directors. At our February meeting, we focused on fund raising under the able direction of Joyce Tesarek, Chair of the Finance Committee. The others members of that committee are Dennis Cahill, Jeanette Pafko, Ken Wyberg, Tom Aubrecht (treasurer) and Mary Cahill (past treasurer). I asked them to prepare our Board of Directors agenda towards increasing opportunities for fund raising for our programs and beloved building. As I stated in my first column, one of my passions is stewardship of our building, and meeting its needs. In 2012 we will celebrate its 125 years!

Under the direction of Committee Chair Judy Aubrecht the Trustees prepared a wish list that would justify a capital campaign for the big event and anniversary celebration. Read the list and you will see that we have some ambitious caretaking ahead: floor mats, stage upgrade, installation of a second stairwell in order to meet code and continue the elevator to the third floor, resurface parking lot, continue tuck pointing, air condition the hall, remove asbestos in the basement, upgrade building mechanical systems (electrical, plumbing, communications, heating, security, etc.), hall acoustics, lighting, storage, office space, dehumidify and upgrade the wonderful basement, replace the rug/flooring on third floor.

Last year we replaced windows (thank you members so much!) and now we will need to strategize. The first motion we approved is a sub-committee of Finance to research foundations and explore grants, increase funding from our programs, and target the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hall. This sub-committee will begin to develop a universal grant application also involving volunteers outside of Sokol and neighbors near to the hall. We also hope this year to develop a commemorative strategy of fund-raising that commemorates the families who have built our hall into the creative and friendly center that it is over these many years. So think green! And if you have ideas or wish to assist the sub-committee, please call or send an email to [publicrelations@sokolmn.org](mailto:publicrelations@sokolmn.org).

Nazdar,  
Joe Landsberger

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### Corrections: We're sorry!

*Slovo* reader Josef Smetanka points out that the Vltava River actually lies entirely within the Czech Republic. It flows into the Elbe ("Labe" in Czech) at the Czech town of Melnik. It might be appropriate to consider the Labe a tributary of the Vltava, since when they join the Vltava actually has more water than the Labe (Elbe). However, the Vltava flows into the Labe (Elbe) at a right angle to its flow, so the Vltava appears to be the tributary.

Two names were also misspelled: Doreen McKenney and Mark Bigaouette

### Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO

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

## Membership Report

By Norm Petrik, Membership Director

At the March 23 membership meeting, nine new members were accepted. They were Diane Gerth and Daniel Kueny who live in St Paul (interest in history and festivals); Jordan Šrámek from St Paul (language and genealogy); James Yanta from Burnsville with children in the dance group (dance, history and traditions); Suzan Lund from Hopkins (language and her heritage); Bernard Simek from St Paul (language and genealogy); Marshall Toman from River Falls, Wisconsin who was an organizer of the plays at the CSPA Hall March 9-11; Vernon Dworshak from Richfield (language); and Marlene Pechman from St. Paul (language). Welcome to these new Sokol members!

In addition we inducted four members who were present at the meeting: Diane Gerth and Daniel Kueny were elected this month, and Jason and Rachel Gorski from St Paul were elected at the February membership meeting. They were given the Sokol membership packet which includes our current bylaws. All new members are invited to be inducted at meetings and encouraged to attend various events at the CSPA Hall.

## Board of Trustees Report

By Terry Shima, BOT Secretary

Discussions continue on getting the roof fixed over the storage area on the second floor. Thanks to Lloyd Krocak and Tom Landsberger for their engineering expertise. One bid has now been received and a second bid is being sought. The BOT hopes to get work started on the necessary repairs in the next several weeks, before the busy spring and summer roofing season begins. The parking lot did not get resurfaced last fall as hoped for, but plans are to have the work done early this spring. The gym floor was refinished two years ago and will likely need to be refinished again this summer. A leaky second floor radiator at the top of the stairs is causing damage to the ceiling over the gift shop and will be repaired. Lastly, the BOT has scheduled a work day for Saturday, April 21st, from 9 AM -12:30 PM. Areas targeted for spring cleanup are the parking lot, the basement and the third floor. All Sokol members are invited to participate with lunch being served.

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## Around and About Sokol Minnesota

By Lucille Pavlicek

Our faithful young in heart and age are carrying on the traditions of making delicious poppy seed, prune, cottage cheese, and apricot koláče under Doreen McKenney and Hana Matousek's tutelage. And you can't beat those Slovak dinners; Ken and Sharon Wyberg started them and are experts with Slovak Foods. I hope my legs will be well enough to go as I was recently hospitalized with cellulitis.

Remember the wonderful poppy seed coffee cakes of Mrs. Loss? Her family still attends the singing on Tuesday mornings at the hall with Georgiana Dolejsi. Frank was a city commissioner, his youngest sister Annie Loss Neubauer became a piano teacher. And taught a past president of the 1950's, Jerry Roch. His wife Rose is a former teacher and lives in Logan, Utah and still reminisces about Sokol. She is in her 90's.

I became interested in Sokol with Mrs. Svanhauser who was president at that time. Since I was teaching in high school, she asked me to start a children's class. Jarka Jelinek (Jelínek), President of American Sokol, honored me with a letter for starting those first classes for 4-6 years old. And Louise Jansen Wessinger was one of my first students, and continues to contribute to the hall's educational programs. Louise's cousins were also in my classes, the Haselbauers, Don and Carole. Their mother looks great and still goes to the hall for singing. Remember Hank Jensen, Louise and Linda's father? He attended till ninety and won honors at the Slets in Praha on parallel bars.

Remember those long steps up into the Hall? That was my discipline for the boys and girls of my classes, marching and singing at the same time until they were tired and got a treat. Remember that fourteen steps up and down everyday can work wonder for us—but not too many knedlíčky or koláče.

I always wished I could win a million dollar jackpot and make the Hall ready, able, and stable. Today old edifices are being made beautiful as all around us developers are tearing down and renewing. Our Hall is in a very historic area. Congratulations to the new president, Joe Landsberger and the new committee people. Of course we miss Jay Fonkert, but he is hanging in there to give directions!

Stay well and remember: "If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at will change."



## Rarest Czech stamp in public first time in decades

Submitted by Sharon Wyberg

Radio Prague reports that the rarest Czech stamp is now on view for the first time in decades. The tiny rectangle, printed in green and black, has the words in German “Imperial and royal Austrian post: four Crowns” as well as the Czech “Czechoslovak Post 1919” (Pošta Československá 1919). The stamp is on view until November 2007 at the international collector’s conference in Prague. For the story behind the stamp, as well as its purchase and secrecy, visit Radio Prague’s website at [www.radio.cz/en/article/83183](http://www.radio.cz/en/article/83183).

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## Czech Film Comedies from the Communist Era

By Ladia Pust and Barbara Williams

The 1960s were a difficult time for the Czechoslovakians as many of their freedoms were taken away by the Communists. Fortunately many artists kept the hope of better times alive with their creative work. This work took two forms – that of “samizdat” or the circulation of forbidden views in secret written documents and also the form of satire in the publicly viewed work. The latter is the topic of this lecture.

Professor Roderick Henry, Bemidji State University, has collected Czech film comedies from the 1960s which show many subtle attacks on the government and which stretch the boundaries of what was permitted under the definition of artistic freedom. He will lecture on the topic of artistic freedom under a repressive regime with short clips from the following films to illustrate his lecture: *Bila Pani (White Lady)*, *Kdo Chce Zabít Jessii (Who Wants to Kill Jessie)*, and *Hori, ma panenko! (The Firemen’s Ball and Lottery)*.

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## Books for Sale at Krásné Darky/ Beautiful Gifts Shop

### Sokol Minnesota Sings

Book (\$8.00) includes 178 anthems, patriotic, popular Sokol marching, folk and Christmas songs. In Czech, Slovak and English. Two “working” cassette tapes (\$7.50) of piano music for each song. Combined: \$15 including postage.

### Sokol Minnesota Cookbook

\$17.50 per copy including postage  
351 pages of Czech, Slovak, Moravian and American recipes with folklore.

## Update on Czech Cemeteries (Slovo, January 2007)

By Mark Bigaouette

All church, village and town records (births, deaths, etc.) from before 1920 have been moved to the state archives of the Czech Republic. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) or Mormons have recently signed an agreement to start filming the records in South Bohemia for their Family History Library. It should take a year or more for people to be able to order them from their local family history center. It’s a very good start on filming the records of the very last European country to allow the LDS this practice.

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Professor Henry, who has been interested in Czech films since his undergraduate film and animation studies days, won an animation prize for creativity at the national FAST competition in 1996. Currently he is a professor of Business Administration at Bemidji State University.

This is an event for the whole family as well as for film and art lovers and will include a potluck dinner in addition to the film lecture. A Kid’s Club with free babysitting for young children will be provided. Liquid refreshments and tableware will be provided. Your contribution might be a hot dish, appetizer, salad, dessert, beer, or whatever you would like to bring!

Recommended donation: Members of Sokol and CSCC: \$3, Non-members \$5, Children free.

Friday, April 20, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

Club Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 7230 York Ave. S., Edina

For updates go to: [www.cs-center.org](http://www.cs-center.org)

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**Gateway to a New World: Building Čech and Slovak Communities in the West End** (2003). \$10 (\$11 including postage) Co-authored, compiled, and edited by Joe Landsberger, and published by West 7th/Fort Road Federation Documents and celebrates the contributions of Czech and Slovak immigrants and families in the West End of St. Paul since the 1860s

Make checks payable to ‘Sokol Minnesota’; mail to:

Krásné Darky/Sokol Minnesota  
383 Michigan St.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

## A Successful Weekend of Czech Plays

By Marshall Toman

The March 9th-11th production of Vaclav Havel's satirical skit *Motomorphosis* and Pavel Kohout's *Fire in the Basement* went well thanks to the combined efforts of the sponsors and many volunteers of the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota; Office of the Honorary Consul for the Czech Republic in Minnesota, Iowa, and North and South Dakotas; European Studies Consortium at the University of Minnesota; Minnesota International Center, and of course the Lex-Ham Community Theater and our own Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota.

Lex-Ham Community Theater and director Chris Kidder and stage manager Ryan Riply did an artistic job with the sparse but suggestive set, incorporating one of the permanent elements of the C.S.P.S. stage. *Fire in the Basement* takes place in an appropriately hinted-at gray basement. But these blank walls were cut away in zig-zag patterns, allowing a view of the cheery Bohemian street scene painted on the fly as fitting background to these Czech comedies.

Also sparse but suggestive were the costumes worn by the couple in *Fire in the Basement*. The characters were, after all, interrupted in flagrante on one of their honeymoon nights by the firefighters/con artists. Their near-birthday suits contrasted with the professionally attired firefighters (and probably sweating actors who played them in yellow slickers and fire gear). Sasha Walloch did an excellent job in her role as the wife despite, perhaps, being occasionally chilly.



Silhouettes of the audience complimented the surrealistic play *Fire in the Basement* of Pavel Kohout. Set in the early 1990s, the play comically addresses the confusion of the new (Czech) economic order as it presents scam artist firefighters who intrude into a couple's honeymoon setting. Actors left to right include Sasha Walloch (Jartchi), Jeff Olson (Tvrznik) and Alan Wales (Engl).  
photo by Marshall Toman

The actors and production were getting their "stage-legs" on Friday. Kristen Cruze, who played the character of Bursikova in *Motomorphosis*, for example, repaired her costume after Friday's



Aaron Konigsmark (Blackbird), Kristen Cruze (Bursika) and Mariah Christensen (Mercedes) interpret Vaclav Havel's satirical skit *Motomorphosis*  
photo by Urban Landreman

performance to good effect. Hoping to metamorphose into a Cadillac, she finds herself disappointingly transformed into a...moped. Her clever costume was a shiny yellow top with black tights and boots (the tires) and what looked on Friday night to be an inexplicably droopy set of wings. Through her sensitivity and skill, these metamorphosed for subsequent performances into...handlebars! In fact, Saturday evening's performances captured a wonderful energy with great timing, though the audiences on all three days were warm and appreciative.

Barb Williams, Vice President of the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center, staffed the ticket booth for all three performances with her group of volunteers. Attendance was slightly more than last year: 52 people attended on Friday; 68, Saturday; and 52 on Sunday for a total of 172.

Under the guidance of Norm Petrik who coordinated the beverage purchases, Pilsner Urquell and wines were available to a diversified audience, some of whom were visiting the C.S.P.S. Hall for the first time. Additional treats were the delicious and genuine, homemade and artistically crafted chlebíčky and the prune, cheese, poppyseed, or apricot koláčky, plus the skewers of cheeses, meatballs, fruit, and shrimp! Doreen McKenny and Louise Wessinger coordinated the bakers and makers.

The primary purposes of having an entertaining weekend and attracting the old as well as a new crowd to the historic C.S.P.S. hall were completely fulfilled.

More (colored) photos of the plays can be found at the Czech Slovak Culture Center website at [www.cs-center.org](http://www.cs-center.org) and Producer Urban Landreman's website at [www.flickr.com/photos/34893804@N00/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/34893804@N00/)

Next year's play will be Vaclav Havel's *Memorandum*.

## Song of the Month

Submitted by Georgiana Dolejsi



### I Want Devil to Take You Boys

Translation by Katarina Grajcarova

I want the devil to take you boys

Because you didn't invite me  
to a dance

I would be happy to dance

And not only pay for a band

But also kiss you all

Mom was worrying all night

Just to make you happy

She baked kolace

From three bags of flour

Just so I can dance.

### Bodaj by Vás, Vy Mládenci

Slovenská (Polka)

Rychle

1. Bodaj by vás, vy mlá-den-ci, čer-ti vza-li, keď ste vy mňa  
na ten ta-nec ne-po-zva-li. Ja by bo-la tan-co-va-la,  
aj na cim-bál nie-čo da-la a vás všetkých pobozka-la.

2. Čo sa mamka tejto noci natrápila,  
aby sa vám len nejako zavďačila;  
spiekla múky za tri korce  
pre vás, chlapci, na koláče,  
len aby som tancovala.

3. Už je ameň, už je koniec, milí chlapci,  
keď je už raz, keď je už raz po tom tanci;  
keď sa nový tanec strhne,  
pamätajte, chlapci, na mne,  
trebas bude po pol noci.

### Cooks Corner:

#### Moravian Open Face Sandwiches/ obložený chlebíček)

Recipe from Hana Matousek,

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Cookbook

On a loaf of French bread, arrange:

1 layer of potato salad or mayonnaise salad

A thin slice of ham, salami, or beef

Any of the following: slices of hard-boiled egg,  
fancy sliced sweet or dill pickle, tomato

Garnish with: green or red bell pepper or pimiento

Finish with green parsley

Optional toppings: Cheese spread, fish, tuna, or shrimp.

*Thank You!*

#### Donations to General Fund

Anonymous \$200.00

#### Donations to Sokol Camp:

##### *In memory of Babe Vanyo*

Lucille Pavlicek \$1,000.00

Don & Pat Andrlle \$100.00

Ron & Ann Andrlle \$100.00

Bob and Sue Marabella

Rich & Sandy Saliny

Dennis Saliny

Other donations with no designation:

Bev Clancy

Mary Ann Kodada

**Total donations \$1,305.00**

*Sokol Minnesota thanks you for these  
generous donations!*



## Attention All Czech & Slovak Sokol Minnesota Members

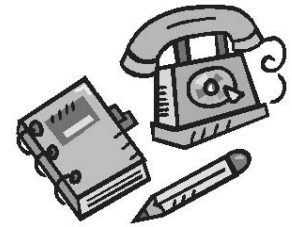


**A membership directory is in the works!**

By member request, we will again be printing a directory and it will be available by request only. The directory will list: Member Name(s), Address, Telephone Number, and Email Address.

***If you prefer your Address, Telephone Number or Email Address not be listed you can Opt Out - however, a full roster of member names will be included.***

To OPT OUT you may email njimbrone@comcast.net or call and leave a message at 651-481-7949. When calling, please speak slowly, clearly, spell your last name, and leave a phone number where you can be reached if we have a question.



**OPT OUT deadline is April 30, 2007.**

Printed Membership Directories will be available May 15, 2007 - at \$2.00 each (to cover cost). To order your directory, please send your check to SOKOL MN DIRECTORY (N Imbrone), c/o Czech & Slovak Sokol MN, 383 Michigan Ave., St. Paul, MN 55102.

**DIRECTORIES WILL ONLY BE ISSUED TO CZECH & SLOVAK SOKOL MINNESOTA MEMBERS.** Use of the directory for any purpose other than SOKOL related business is prohibited.



### Readers Write

I really do not like the new format but will try it for one year. Thank you

Arlene Patrias, St. Cloud, MN

Your new design is really nice. We like it. Keep up the good work of informing us on all the new things going on: they are nice to know.

Yours truly,  
Joe and Gladys Tupy, Owatonna, MN

I like the new look of Slovo: the print is very easy to read and I enjoy the photos. Good move, thank you.

Joe Smetanka

I enjoy the newsletter and like the new look.

Eileen Schmitz, Shakopee, MN

Sokol Slovo is a fine newsletter, and I always learn in each issue something new of our heritage. Thank you.

Sally Teresinski, Oshkosh, WI

## Festival of Nations Celebrating 75 years

It is time again for us to participate in the Festival of Nations, May 4-6 at the Rivercentre in St. Paul. The festival is an interesting and colorful event, featuring 97 ethnic groups, with exciting dance performances, folk art demonstrations, bazaar booths, cultural exhibits, and ethnic cafes. The St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers and the Taneční Mládež (children's group) will dance at the festival. Sample exotic coffee at the new Coffee Bar Café while watching performances at the newly built stage and gazebo in the bazaar area. There is also a new wine tasting area, ATM machines, and "ask me volunteers." More ethnic audio and visuals will appear throughout the building, as well as educational games and activities for school children.

Sokol Minnesota will once again be participating with our new café, gift and cultural booths. If you can help, call Bazaar Chair Doreen 952 941 0426, Culture Chair Judy 651 699 5148, or General/ Food Booth Chair Joyce, 612 822 6147.

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## Sokol MN Gymnasts Head for Crete, Nebraska

By Mary Cahill

On Friday April 13, sixteen gymnasts, five coaches, a program supervisor and a variety of family members will drive eight hours to Crete, NE where the gymnasts will compete on Saturday, April 14 with other Sokol gymnasts from Crete, Cedar Rapids and Omaha at the annual Western District Exhibition. This year's Exhibition is hosted by Sokolice Crete.



This year we have competitors ranging in age from 8 to 23 years. Six of the sixteen gymnasts are first time competitors and the remaining ten have competed previously, one or more times. All competitors are female, and include two adults, five juniors (ages 12-15) and nine ages 8-11. We have entrants in beginning through advanced intermediate levels. Competing gymnasts have been working extra practices on

Thursday evenings at Sokol, and some Wednesday evenings at a local area gym with a spring floor. All Sokol unit competitors will perform individual special numbers this year, in lieu of the typically required calisthenics number, or "cal" (prostrná), a hallmark of Sokol gymnastics. The decision to not do "cal" this year is a result of not participating in the Sunday program since it isn't finished until about 3 p.m. complicating return travel to Minnesota

All competitors have been working hard. The last three-five years Sokol Minnesota has done very well in the competitions and brought home many individual ribbons and trophies. Our end of the year exhibition is Tuesday, April 27 at 7 p.m. We invite all of our readers to drop by that evening and see for yourself just how much ALL the gymnasts in our program have accomplished and to enjoy their performances.

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## Czech Films on Film Fest Lineup

By Al Milgrom

Two recent films from the Czech Republic are among some eighty titles from more than 45 countries scheduled for the 25th Annual Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festival opening Thursday, April 19 and running daily until Sunday, April 29 at four Twin Cities venues.

Due to play the first weekend of the fest is *Holiday Makers/Účastníci zájezdu* (2006) one of the top box office hits of the year in the Czech Republic. From a script by popular writer Michala Viewegha, the lighthearted comedy involves a chance group of vacationers setting out on a grueling journey by bus for the Adriatic Sea. The trip will open up revealing secrets better hidden.

*Something Like Happiness/Štěstí* (2005), the Czech Oscar submission last year, is slated for the latter part of the fest. It is a poignant and moving story of three friends who grow up on the outskirts of an old industrial town. Their friendship is tested over going to America, the Land of Opportunity, to start a new life.

Minneapolis venues for the films include the Oak Street Cinema, Bell Museum Auditorium (U/M), St. Anthony Main Theater, and Riverview Theater. General admission is \$10, with senior, student, and film-pass discounts available. For locations and times, see the website at [www.Mnfilmarts.org](http://www.Mnfilmarts.org) (click on "festivals").



# Czech and Slovak Weather

By Jay Fonkert

Everywhere you go in the world, the weather is good for conversation. So, what kind of weather trade did the Czech and Slovak immigrants make when they opted for Minnesota?

The Czech Republic and Slovakia are nestled in the heart of Europe, but are not as “continental” as Minnesota. In both Europe and Minnesota, the weather mostly comes from the west. Minnesota is a long way from the ocean, and most of the moisture from the Pacific Ocean is squeezed out of the clouds as they cross the Rocky Mountains. The Czech Republic and Slovakia are a bit more exposed to storms moving east off the North Atlantic.

This is the major reason the Czech Republic and Slovakia are a bit warmer in the winter than Minnesota. Prague is at 50 degrees north latitude, putting in about 350 miles farther north than the Twin Cities. Yet, the average high in Prague in January is a balmy 33° F, compared to 21° F in the Twin Cities. Prague is also more moderate in the summer, with an average July high 74° F, compared to 84° F in the Twin Cities.

Bratislava is actually four or five degrees warmer than Prague through most of the year.

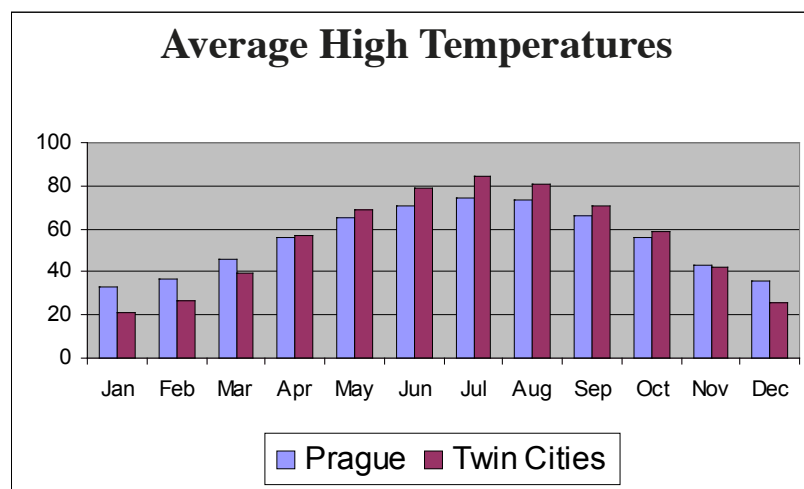
Bratislava is about 600 ft. lower in elevation, a bit farther south, and more in the path of warm summer weather moving up from Hungary and southeastern Europe.

Visitors to the region the past couple of summer might find these mild summer temps hard to believe. Temps frequently pushed into the 80s and 90s, making the lack of air conditioning in lodgings and trains very noticeable.

Overall, the Czech and Slovak region is colder than France and much of northwestern Europe in the winter, but warmer than the more interior areas of eastern Poland and northern Hungary. But, roles reverse a bit in the summer, when the great land mass of central Europe warms up more than more western parts of Europe.

Largely because of our summer thunderstorms, the Twin Cities is wetter through the course of a typical year than either Prague or Bratislava. We get about 28 inches of precipitation a year. The Czech and Slovakian capitals get only about 21 or 22 inches.

Of course, the weather isn't the same everywhere in the Czech Republic or Slovakia. The higher elevations are wetter and cooler than the lower-lying areas like Prague and Bratislava. This is especially true to the east in the mountainous parts of Slovakia, but also in the higher Šumava region of South Bohemia. Winters are snowy in the mountains, but snow cover is occasional and short-lived in the lower areas.



So, all in all, the Czech and Slovak region has a rather moderate climate, compared to Minnesota's greater extremes. For our Czech and Slovak immigrant ancestors, Minnesota winters probably seemed pretty tough, and summers pretty hot.

You can get up-to-the-minute weather

information for Prague and other cities at several web sites, including the official Czech Republic web site [www.czech.cz](http://www.czech.cz) or Weather Underground-Europe [www.wunderground](http://www.wunderground.com). If you're really into weather, try the Czech Hydrometeorological Institute [www.chmi.cz](http://www.chmi.cz) or the World Meteorological Organization <http://worldweather.wmo.int>.



# (Czech/Slovak) Beer Brewing Returns to the West End

By Dave Stepan

In keeping with the traditions of our forefathers and mothers, it was only appropriate that Czech and Slovak Sokol honor their memory by a night of beer brewing! Beer is only one of many items that have made the Czech Slovak Republics famous for hundreds of years.

Doreen McKenney, her father Don, Kevin Hurbanis, Christine and Randy Wicks, John Mansfield, Dave Stepan, his sister Mary Rodvold (all the way from Hermantown) and brother Mark Stepan gathered on March 12th for a night of beer brewing at Vine Park Brewery [www.vinepark.com](http://www.vinepark.com), just down the road from the CSPS Hall.

Six beers were brewed. According to Vine Park, the three Pilsners Capitol Hill Pils are distinctively hoppy, yet well balanced and smooth. A true Czech pilsner was brewed using Cara Pils malt and Saaz hops. The Frogtown Pilsner is

*This was the first time Sokol organized a brew fest but hopefully not the last.*

hoppy, crisp and golden. Simple ingredients yielded a well defined flavor profile making

this the beer to judge all lagers by. The Minneapolis Pilsner is between an American and Czech pilsner, and it is a good transitional beer for those not sure how hoppy they like their beer. Also brewed was an Ale, a Lager and a Bock. After brewing, the beer will ferment for one week, cold-age for one week, filter and carbonate in preparation for bottling. The test of how accurate these descriptions are will be determined on bottling night.



Mark Stepan (left) adds yeast at the end of the brewing process as co-owner of Vine Park Brewery Dan Justesen transfers beer to the storage container.

This was the first time Sokol organized a brew fest but hopefully not the last. According to Dan, owner of Vine Park brewery, the Zatec or Saaz hops are known as one type of hops but there are actually numerous types of Zatec hops within that one region. Mark Stepan's travels in 1998 fondly recall one phrase: Pivo, prosím! For more pictures from the brewing, see [www.photos.stepans.com/gallery2/main.php?g2\\_itemId=2927](http://www.photos.stepans.com/gallery2/main.php?g2_itemId=2927)



## Help Wanted: Development Director

The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library seeks a Director of Development to work closely with the President/CEO and Board of Directors to achieve annual and long range development goals. Includes cultivation of individual and corporate donors for sponsorships and major gifts, grant writing, annual support, and special events. The Development Director will work with a loyal, supportive national constituency and help implement a capital campaign in its early stages. Minimum of a bachelor's degree and documented experience and success in fund raising is required. Send letter of inquiry, detailed resume and three references to: Gail Naughton, President/CEO, National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, 30 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.

The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is the leading United States institution preserving, and interpreting Czech and Slovak history and culture. With a professional staff of 13, the museum mounts 6+ major exhibits and presents over 150 programs annually.

Anton Jurka was born in 1840 in Královice, Bohemia. When he completed his secondary education, he attended technical school in Praha, and emigrated in 1866. In Chicago he was active in the theater, and in 1867 moved to St. Louis as editor of *Pozor americké* and *Katolické noviny*. In 1870 he moved to St. Paul and taught Czech children in Jefferson elementary school for six years, the German language for eleven, and Czech language classes at the Č.S.P.S. Hall. He helped found the free-thinking group which grew to be the Č.S.P.S. Lodge Čech, Number 12, and was active in the national organization. He married Karolína Novák, and established his family in a small cottage at 16 Douglas Street. When his teaching appointment was terminated in the St. Paul

Schools, he moved his family to New York, and became Executive Secretary of the Čech Benevolent Society.

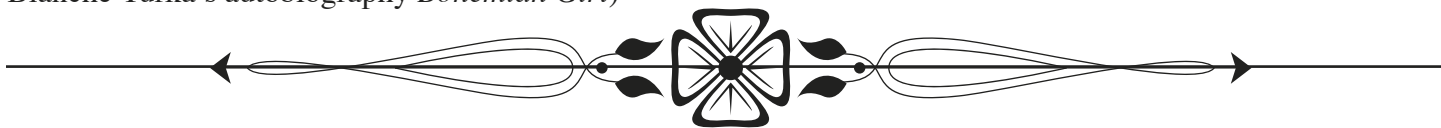
(Based upon a translation by Karleen Chott Sheppard of a biography of Antonín Jurka)



Blanche Yurka as the *Bohemian Girl*

Blanche Yurka was born in the Douglas Street cottage on June 18, 1887. When the family moved to New York, they immediately associated themselves with the local Czech Sokol where Blanche took singing lessons. Her first performance was in Balfe's *Bohemian Girl* produced by the local Sokol unit in New York, and she was an immediate success. She subsequently received a scholarship at age 15 at the Metropolitan Opera House to study under impresario Heinrich Conreid. However, her future lay in the theater, and she became a stage and film star, featured in such award-winning films as *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* (1944) and *The Song of Bernadette* (1943). She made her film debut in 1935 as the vengeful Madame de Farge in *A Tale of Two Cities* and was known to acting students for her teachings. She wrote *Dear Audience, A Guide to the Enjoyment of Theater* in 1959. This primer is still used in acting classes today on both the enjoyment of theater and on acting technique.

She published her autobiography *Bohemian Girl* in 1970. She died in New York on June 6, 1974. (Based upon Blanche Yurka's autobiography *Bohemian Girl*)



## Community Gate

The snowfalls of the first weekend of March have long melted, but the Community Gate (2004) stands in memory of early Czech and Slovak immigrant families. The sculpture was commissioned by the Fort Road Federation/District 9 Community Council. St. Paul Sculptor Craig David created the installation using the salvaged 1941 baptismal gate from St. Stanislav Kostka Church neighboring the CSPS Hall. In addition, early granite curb stones formed the pylons and were contributed by the City of St. Paul's Public Works Department. The finials are figures derived from Antonín Dvořák's opera *Rusalka*, and reference its famous aria *Měsíčku na nebi hlubokém* (Song to the Moon).



photo by Joe Landsberger

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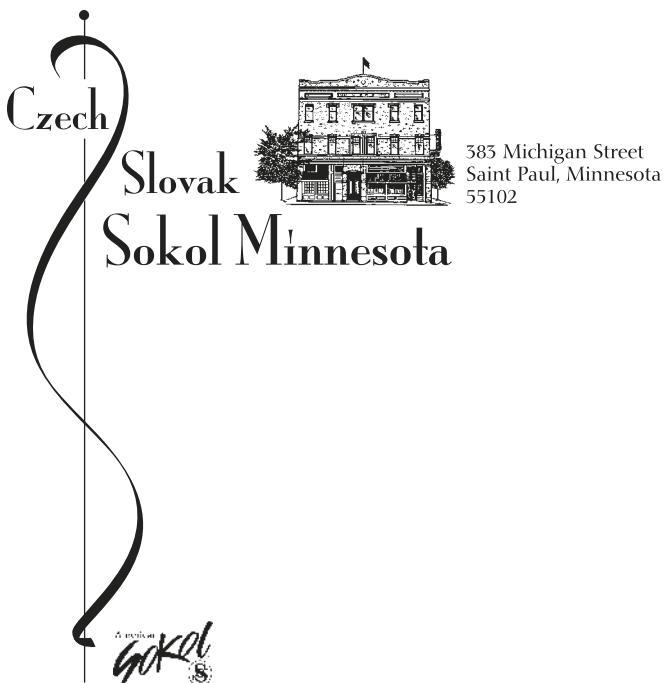
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