



Czech

Slovak

Sokol Minnesota



SLOVO
Aug/Sept 2008 vol. 31 no. 7

19th Annual Czech & Slovak Festival promises fun for the whole family

The C.S.P.S. Hall and Sokol Minnesota comes alive again this September 21 with the 19th annual Czech & Slovak Fall Festival. The Festival promises great events – indoors and out – with fun for the whole family! Festival hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Favorite ethnic foods this year include halušky kapusta (dumplings and cabbage), jitrnice (one of many famous Czech sausages), knedliky (fruit-filled dumplings), and everyone's favorite koláče, made in our own CSPS kitchen, to eat at the Festival and to take home. Locally-brewed beer, brats and hot dogs round out the menu.

Plan to enjoy lots of music, singing, and dancing with performances by the Taneční Mládež (children's dance group), St. Paul

Czech & Slovak Folkdancers, and the Senior Singers. New this year is the *SlovCzech Trio*, a group of native-born musicians specializing in music currently popular in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

This year's feature presentation will be a special exhibit of Kroje (Czech and Slovak folk costumes) in the air-conditioned board room/gallery on the first floor.

Many always popular fall festival events are returning: bingo, crafts, demonstrations, games and puppet shows for children, a silent auction, and a bike raffle. Vendors, including a few of our own Sokol members, will sell Czech and Slovak books, folk art, crafts, jewelry, t-shirts, and more.

continued on page 3.

Upcoming Events

22 August
7:30 pm
Sokol Membership Meeting

21 September,
11 am-4 pm
Czech & Slovak Fall Festival

26 September,
7:30 pm
Sokol Membership Meeting

24 October,
7:30 pm
Sokol Membership Meeting

26 October,
12 noon
Roast Pork & Dumpling Dinner

1 November,
7 pm
Mystery Dinner Theatre benefit for Sokol Cedar Rapids

see page 5 for other area events

19TH ANNUAL CZECH & SLOVAK FESTIVAL

2008



SUNDAY • SEPT-21 • 11-4

383 Michigan - St.Paul • Historic CSPS Sokol Hall

www.sokolmn.org • 651-290-0542 • Vitame Vas



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Sokol Minnesota
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President Komentář/President's Note

Pozdrav bratři a sestry/Greetings brothers and sisters

The C.S.P.S. Hall has been our community center for 121 years. Before that, we had another one! In 1879, we purchased our “block” from a sitting mayor of St. Paul and his wife, William and Mary Dawson. C.S.P.S. then purchased a school building from the City of St. Paul, and moved it onto the property in 1879. After the school was moved, a stage was built for cultural programming.

In reflecting upon the role of our hall as a community center, I had a conversation with Sokol member and trustee Jeff Martinka, who is the Executive Director of the West 7th Community Center (W7CC). Jeff is highly respected for the work he is doing in transforming the W7CC, and immediately jumped into very thought provoking ideas out of his experiences.

The West 7th Community Center has taken over the CSPS Hall's role as a communal, neighborhood space—though not a culturally specific one. It has athletic programs, after school programs for children, a library, senior programming (including daytime old-time dances), and social services such as Meals on Wheels and senior nursing program. Most programs target West 7th neighbors, much as did the C.S.P.S. programs of our first 75 years or so.

But what is to become of our beloved hall now, since only few like Joan Sedlacek and I live within walking distance, or the few that live in St. Paul or along West 7th Street? How can we appeal to a “modern audience” that reflects the 21st Century's patterns of transportation (gas prices and time spent driving); reflects loss of Czech/Slovak language skills and even identity; reflects changing tastes in entertainment, sports, and the like? What lessons does history teach us?

Bohemian, Silesian, Moravian, and Slovak immigrant families started Slovanska Lipa (Linden Tree) in 1868, and began to develop our communal space in West 7th. The immigrants began a lending library – we know because we have their records in the 1870's, as well as C.S.P.S. records of book loans in later years. The lending library did not last, but it did not fail. It served its purpose! Soon public libraries such as Carnegie Libraries permeated American cities, including the downtown St. Paul library, which was built in 1917, the same year we built our third floor. Growing affluence also allowed many families to purchase books, and share them informally amongst themselves.

Librarians will be the first to tell you that libraries, as we used to know them, no longer exist. Recently, I was at the St. Paul central library researching our building, and asked the librarian for a few old books and newspaper clippings. Her remark was interesting, “Oh, old school (research).” She meant that I wasn't on the internet; I was seeking original source material.

The point I wish to make is that we need to review what we do, and how we do it. We don't need to check out Czech or Slovak-language novels. Would you? However, we do need to develop a resource center of our historical documents for researchers, including picture books for travelers and digital copies of our old photographs, with identification of individuals for genealogy and family history researchers. We need to develop new partnerships with people who can help us assess, document, inventory, and conserve our resources. As far as I know, we do not have members who are so qualified, but there are experts who are fascinated and willing to help Joan as our archivist.

I have been dwelling on the CSPS Hall and our Sokol organization, but return to the fact that our building is indeed a communal center, much bigger than its history. We must look to see what new partnerships we can create to remain viable.



Jeff Martinka

Festival Fun continued from page 1.

Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota will visit the Fall Festival, wearing her crown, and posing for pictures in her native costume. It is expected that Sokol Minnesota's own Emilie McMillan, who won the talent award at the Miss C/S Contest, will also attend. Jarda and Jitka, our larger-than-life smiling puppets, will make their annual appearance.

Krásné Dárky/Beautiful Gifts, the Sokol-supported gift shop on Michigan Street in our CSPPS building, is filled with beautiful gifts from books to braids, hand-blown glass to garlands and garnets. Fall Festival is a great opportunity to check out the fine selection of Beautiful Gifts.

*You too can be part of this great Fall Festival.
Volunteers are needed to help produce the fun!
Call (651) 290-0542.*



President's message continued from page 2.

We have dozens of complimentary partnerships that can be better developed, and some not yet discovered. It was non-members through our neighborhood Federation/district council who came to our aid in saving our building. Neighbors send their children to our gymnastics program. The Lex-Ham Community Theater keeps alive our tradition of presenting Czech and Slovak plays. City, state, and federal granting agencies provide funding. City of St. Paul departments, especially the Historic Preservation Council, provide guidance and support. They are interested in us, and value us. We just need to think of "them" as "we".

Nazdar, Joe Landsberger,

Thank-you, Sokol

There is one more thing I have to do before I end my office of the Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic, and that is to send a most sincere thanks to Sokol as an organization and to many individual members. I am indeed most grateful for the hospitality that Sokol has given me by providing the office space and some support services, and for working with me closely on many functions that I had to perform. And what a surprise when Joyce, Norm and many people recently treated me to dinner with them – and I arrived with Pat – voila – there were many other friends and supporters I worked with more closely than with others. If you can believe it, it almost left me speechless – and that does not happen to me often. I was deeply touched by their presence and by the occasion that Libby explained as their own recognition of the work I did. That pleased me to know because I always wanted the relationships to be mutual. Thanks again, and again.

- Joseph Mestenhauser

Former Slovak Ambassador Butora to visit St. Paul

Dr. Martin Butora, former Slovak Ambassador to the United States, and his wife Dr. Zora Butora, will be the feature speakers at the Havel Symposium in October.

Martin Butora was Ambassador during the time when Congress was considering resolutions favoring admission of the Czech and Slovak Republics to NATO. After his term as Ambassador expired, Dr. Butora became candidate for the Presidency of the Slovak Republic. Zora Butora is a noted sociologist and human rights activist. Together, they will bring much needed insights about Slovakia and its relations with other countries.

Most of the Havel Symposium activities will be at the University of St. Thomas and the House of Hope Presbyterian Church, but plans are being made for a reception for the Czech and Slovak communities at the C.S.P.S. Hall, Saturday, October 4 from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Czech Ambassador and Consul General coming to inaugurate Honorary Consul Robert Vanasek

Czech Ambassador Dr. Petr Kolar and Consul General Dr. Marek Skolil will visit St. Paul September 19 to inaugurate Robert Vanasek as Consul General of the Czech Republic for Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Ambassador Kolar will arrive early on Friday and stay through Saturday evening. During his visit, he will attend series of meetings and appointments public officials and private individuals. If time permits, the Ambassador and Consul General will also attend the Dožínky festival in New Prague on Saturday. Consul General Skolil plans to remain in St. Paul through Sunday afternoon and attend Sokol Minnesota's Czech and Slovak Fall Festival.

Watch the web pages of Sokol Minnesota www.sokolmn.org and the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center for further details of Dr. Kolar's and Dr. Skolil's visits.

The Tabor, South Dakota, Czech Festival: On the Road with Jarda & Jitka

by Doreen McKenney, Louise Wessinger and Mark Bigaouette

It seemed as if half of Sokol Minnesota attended the 60th annual Tabor Czech Festival the third weekend in June.

Jarda and Jitka, those giant traveling puppets, and their “people” (a small caravan of their Sokol friends) traveled to Tabor, South Dakota for the 60th Annual Czech Days Celebration. After seeing Jarda and Jitka at the Wilber, Nebraska, Czech Days Parade last summer, the Tabor Chamber of Commerce invited the happy puppet couple to Tabor. They gladly accepted the invitation, with Doreen McKenney as their chaperone, to lead both the Giant Grand Parade and the Kiddie Parade in Tabor. The Bon Homme High School football team and student council members escorted Jarda and Jitka through the Tabor streets. Accompanying them were Sokols Jean Hall, Doreen McKenney and Louise Wessinger who threw candy to the children and greeted all on behalf of Sokol Minnesota.

Sokol members Mark Bigaouette, Louise Wessinger, Anne Jans, and Doris McKenney brought more than a dozen authentic Czech and Slovak Folkdress (kroje) and lots of pictures to display in a two-day exhibit at the Kostel Funeral Home in Tabor. Louise Wessinger gave a performance of her Great Grandmother’s Trunk from Bohemia presentation. It is the true story of her great-great-grandparents emigration from Bohemia to St. Paul in 1872. Louise tells the story dressed as and portraying her great-great-grandmother, Katerina Hamerova, accompanied by a slide show of maps and photographs.

Mark Bigaouette wore several hats, presenting a slide show tour of the Czech and Slovak Republics and a giving a beginning genealogical research class. He was backed up by the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International’s Traveling Research Library. Tabor area natives Jean Hall and Norm Petrik proudly showed off their hometown to their visiting friends. The highlights included the cemetery adjoining St. Wenceslaus church in Tabor, which has many of the

beautiful Czech iron crosses as grave markers, as well as the town museum. We also witnessed 232 dancers performing the Czech National Beseda accompanied by live music in Sokol Park. The Beseda Hall in Tabor baked more than 2,000 kolaches including rhubarb, lemon and peach, in addition to the usual varieties. Our Minnesota delegation also tasted local delicacies of Taverns (sloppy joes), Chislex (fondued lamb) and poppyseed pie. Also seen along the parade route were Sokol Marcella Bigaouette, Doris McKenney, Joyce Tesarek, and Norm Petrik’s daughters Becky and Julie and their families, as well as Anne and Andy Jans and their children Clayton and Alenka.

Friday and Saturday evening was the occasion of a large mass Beseda dance, in their standard red, black and white kroje. More than 230 people danced at once – more than the population of the whole town! Dancers ranged from about four years old to over fifty – and they all had fun doing

it. They have a small, quaint open-air Czech museum consisting of a few buildings. The historic church of Sv. Vaclav or St. Wenceslas is glorious, and they still sing and say the prayers in the Czech language (this might be the only church still doing this in the USA). The cemetery is spectacular. It has dozens of the old iron grave markers, most in the Czech language, looking very much like the old country. The weekend was marked by beautiful weather, with an occasional prairie thunderstorm and downpour. Warmest of all was the welcome and gratitude of the people of Tabor and our gracious host, Dennis Povondra and his family.



St. Wenceslas cemetery, Tabor

Tabor, SD is about a 6 hour drive from the Twin Cities. Next year book your hotel rooms early in Yankton - it’s about 18 miles East of Tabor. Also, plan a visit to Tyndale (11 miles west of Tabor) for the excellent bakery and meat market.

Family History author to read at IHRC

Historian Joseph Amato will read from and sign copies of his book *Jacob’s Well: A Case for Rethinking Family History* Tuesday 7 p.m. September 23 at the Immigration History Research Center. The event at Room 123 Anderson Library on the West Bank of the University of Minnesota campus is sponsored by Friends of the Library and Friends of the IHRC.

Amato’s book traces seven generations of his own family, weaving their stories into narrative about larger American Society. The past and present together shape an individual’s identity in Amato’s look at the role of family history in creating meaning for people today.

Sokol Minnesota is a member of Friends of the IHRC, and the IHRC archives house many Sokol historical materials.

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Generous Donors

By Jean Hall, Corresponding Secretary

Thank You!

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

Donations 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.

In memory of Luella Greb:

James and MaryJo Chlebecek (\$100)
George Chlebecek
ZCJB Rad Cesky Lev No. 10 (\$250)

In memory of Vlasta Hanover:

Louise Wessinger

In memory of Cody Hanzel:

Shannon and A. James Hanzel

In Memory of the Houska Family and Florence Ruprecht Seashore:

Irene Seashore – padded chairs

In memory of Bertha Loss:

Frank Loss

In memory of Vlasta Hanover, Joyce Sladek and Rose Roch

Bessie O'Neill (\$100) – Elevator Fund

In memory of Donald McKenney:

Norm Petrik and Joyce Tesarek (\$100)
Eugene and Marjorie Aksamit
Dennis and Mary Cahill
Lorraine Peter
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Czechoslovak Genealogical

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Georgiana Dolejsi – Elevator Fund

Doris McKenney – Elevator Fund

Doreen McKenney – Elevator Fund

Susan and Steven Fritze –

Elevator Fund

Donations to Sokol Minnesota Culture Camp:

Mona Ahlf

Susan and Jonathan Blais

Sokol Minnesota 125

Anniversary Celebration:

Libby Imbrone

Lloyd Krock – Chairs

Credit River Antique

General Fund

Richard and Sandra Saliny in honor of their 50th Wedding Anniversary (\$100)

Festival of Nations Donation:

Joyce Tesarek

Area Czech & Slovak Events

24 August, all day

Czech Festival
Bechn, MN

20 September, all day
Dožinky Czech Festival
New Prague, MN

7 September, noon–4 pm

Quarterly meeting of the
Czechoslovak Genealogy Society
Historic ZCJB Hall, Cadott, WI
www.cgsi.org

18 October, 9 am–3 pm

Annual meeting of the
Czechoslovak Genealogy Society
New Prague, MN
www.cgsi.org

Cultural Camp scores another hit!

By Louise Wessinger and Judy Aubrecht

The CSPS Hall was once again filled with the laughter and music of children's voices for five days in June during the 12th Annual Czech & Slovak Cultural Day Camp. Unlike the 11 previous day camps, this year's camp was spread over two weeks.

This year's Camp focused on communities among the Czech and Slovak people, including the Roma (Gypsy), the Jews, the Sokols, and the immigrants to America in late 19th century. The children learned how all these made contributions to the cultural life of the Czech and Slovak people.

Learning about the Jews of Eastern Europe included learning some of their sad history, as well as their contributions. The children made a "Star of David" symbol of the Jewish people. They also made "dreidels" and learned to play the game and sing the song. They heard the story of Rabbi Loew and the clay man he made called "Golem" – and then made one to take home. In cooking, they read the story of *The Horse Who Wouldn't Eat Lattkes*. Then they made some that were delicious with sour cream or applesauce. They snacked on "lox" (smoked salmon), bagels and cream cheese. Later, they learned about the children of Terezin Concentration Camp, and viewed the artwork the Terezin children created to tell about their life and learned about the operetta *Brundibar*, which the Terezin children presented years ago.



Campers and Junior Leaders surround Maria Cox, Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota.



Campers working together



Chloe Ahlf, junior leader, watches as campers enjoy building Lego castles.

Many new faces were among the 28 campers, seven junior leaders, and 16 adult leaders. A Sokol grandmother from Omaha, Nebraska, brought her grandchildren from Decatur, Georgia, to their cousins home in Apple Valley so that all four cousins could attend camp together. Many long time campers have grown up to be junior leaders, including Josh Melichar, Rachel Blaise, Chloe Ahlf, Becky Horak, Nick Liska, Robert Wicks, and Emilie McMillan. Brittany Stepan and Julia Wicks took on the dual roles of campers and leaders in their group.

Monday was a lively day, as we learned about the Romani (gypsy) folk. Volunteer Peg Purcell found wonderful library books about the Roma to share with the campers. The children cooked up a delicious Gypsy Goulash (made with beef instead

of the hedgehog meat more available to the Roma). Campers made bright colored tambourines and beaded headscarves and bandanas in the craft area.

Sokol President Joe Landsberger welcomed the campers on "Sokol day." He told them how our Sokol unit was founded and grew over the last 125 years. He brought many old photos to show how times have changed. Life-long Sokol Georgiana Dolejsi taught the campers a short "prostna" (calisthenic exercise to music) she created to the tune *You're A Grand Old Flag*.

On "Immigrant Day," the campers were issued "Inspection Cards" as they entered the building. They wore them throughout the day as our ancestors did when they entered American ports in the 1870-1920s. Louise Wessinger presented part of her Great, Great Grandparents story dressed as her great-great-grandmother Katerina Hamrova, and told of her families' trip to America in 1872. The children also made kolache, an immigrant favorite filled with prune, poppyseed, apricot, and cream cheese. Campers were aided by Doreen McKenney, our lead kolache maker at Sokol.

The camp experience included gymnastics and tumbling, as well as Czech language classes, lego castle building, puppet theater, Czech rag doll-making, Miss Poppyseed, Czech rag doll-making, flowerpot fun, and foam castle fun.

One of our special guests at camp was the current Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota, Maria Cox was a special camp guest. She will vie for the national title in Wilber, Nebraska, this August. Another highlight was the visit of Dr. Pepper and Patches, our horse friends, courtesy of Mary McMillan and Pony Pals, Inc.

We were blessed by wonderful leaders and campers and cool weather. Thanks to all our adult helpers: Judy Aubrecht and Louise Wessinger (Co-directors), Doreen McKenney (crafts), Lenka Hester (language),



One of the optional craft activities was sewing Czech rag dolls.



Campers show off the "donuts" they made in camp cooking class.

Alisa Hollibush (gymnastics), Georgiana Dolejsi (music), Laurie Witkowski (puppets), Sharon Liska, Carole Horak, Doris McKenney, Virginia Budka, Ann Newton, Marit Kucera, Tiffany and Andy Pavlish, Sherry Dickie, Elaine Strand, Dave Stepan, and Anne Jans.

Due to Jarda and Jitka's trip to Tabor, South Dakota (see Mark Bigaouette's report on page 4), as well as the variety of Twin Cities area school closing dates, this year's 12th Annual Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp began on a Thursday and skipped the weekend to continue for three days the following week.



Another optional activity for campers was the Miss Poppy-seed contest, in which all the girls were winners!

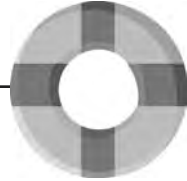


How to Contribute to Sokol Cedar Rapids flood recovery

The historic Iowa floods of June did serious damage to the Sokol Cedar Rapids Hall and the Czech and Slovak National Museum in Cedar Rapids. The flood struck just a few weeks before Sokol Cedar Rapids' 100th Anniversary. Czech Village businesses also suffered heavy flooding. Flood waters crested more than ten feet above all-time records, putting hundreds of city blocks under water. A report from Sokol Cedar Rapids President Allison Gerber appears below.

An account has been established at the Village Bank in Cedar Rapids to receive donations to help Sokol Cedar Rapids rehabilitate its building. You may send checks payable to "Sokol Cedar Rapids Flood" to the American Sokol National Office, 9126 Ogden Avenue, Brookfield, IL 60513.

If you prefer to make a wire transfer, please contact Jean Hruby at the American Sokol



Thanks and Flood Recovery Update from Sokol Cedar Rapids

I wish to extend to everyone who have sent emails, letters, or called, a big heartfelt THANK YOU for your kind words, your interest in how we are doing and for your wonderful and most generous donations. The outpour of concern and well-wishes has touched us all beyond belief.

This tragedy just confirms that SOKOL is a family, and that we do look out for one and another no matter what part of the country we live in.

I met with the contractor yesterday. There is an area in the girl's locker room that they need to spray again for mold, and then they should be done. Hooray.

They have laid the sub flooring in the gym, lobby area and in the two store fronts. They have removed all glass windows from the front of the building - as it now has to be tempered glass and most of it was only plate. So it's all-boarded up for right now.

The building looks so sad and forlorn with the padlock on the makeshift door. They have laid some temporary stairs in the lobby and will be putting up the same to the 2nd floor.

We are planning on bringing back the gym apparatus that we put into a POD for storage by this weekend. We are holding off having the beams and horses recovered along with purchasing mats - til our finances are in better shape.

We need to setup a number of dehumidifiers and fans to prevent mold from forming on the exposed wood studs and cement walls from the humidity in the building. The building still needs to have electricity hooked up and inspected and okayed for habitation, before we can go much further.

At our unit meeting on July 7th, it was decided:

- 1) To look for an interim facility to hold our gymnastic classes to begin in September. We have contacted several of the gym clubs in our area to hopes that we could work-out on days that they are not holding classes. They all seem to intent to help - we're just waiting for some figures to be worked out. So many of the owners took lessons at Sokol and would like to help in any way that they can.
- 2) Look into the buildings that are for lease or for sale around the city. We're checking into what options are out there, but this IS NOT the time to buy in this area. Prices have gone up 10 – 25 percent.
- 3) Get some bids to have some drywall put up at which time we could do some remodeling of the lobby area. This would also have to include some scraping and the repainting of the concrete walls in the basement. When this is done it should eliminate the need for the dehumidifiers.

But actually doing the work will all depend on when they will start issuing building permits once again. Whenever that might be!

I did hear that the Czech and Slovak Museum is holding their first event since the flood. I believe it's a musician giving a concert. This is good news, as it might encourage others in the Czech village to reopen.

I'll keep in touch.

Allison Gerber

And Officers, Members and Students of Sokol Cedar Rapids



Solve a mystery and help Cedar Rapids Sokol

Intrigue and good will take center stage this November when Sokol Minnesota hosts a Mystery Dinner to raise funds for Sokol Cedar Rapids, whose building sustained heavy damage in the June floods. Dinner guests will wear costumes and help solve a staged mystery. Fabulous food. Great Acting. Help for our Sokol Brothers and Sisters! \$50 (25\$ tax deductible). Reservations: 651-290-0542 events@sokolmn.org

National Trust for Historic Preservation Grant

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota has received a matching \$5,000 grant from the Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation, a program of the non-profit National Trust for Historic Preservation. In announcing the grant, National Trust President, Richard Moe, said, "With these start-up dollars, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota joins the hundreds of other communities and organizations across the country actively ensuring the America's architectural and cultural heritage is preserved." It was one of only 13 projects funded in this round. The grant is dedicated to developing an Historic Structures Report, necessary to form a foundation for any future physical work on the building and future grant applications. The firm of MacDonald and Mack, Architects was recommended for their previous HSR work on the Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, as well as the Landmark Center and Ramsey (first governor's) House in St. Paul.

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION®



St. Paul Cultural STAR Grant

Mayor Chris Coleman has recommended, and the City Council approved, a \$22,000 St. Paul Cultural STAR grant to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota for CSPA Hall Fire Protection. This project has the highest priority of both

Sokol's trustees and board of directors. Throughout the 20th Century, twelve Sokol halls have been lost to fire, as has the Danish Dania Hall of Minneapolis in 2000, and Swedish Gustavus Adolphus Hall in 2004. Project estimates are about \$200,000 to install a sprinkling system throughout the building including the basement and Glockenspiel Restaurant space.

SOKOL MINNESOTA PRESENTS

"DRESS TO KILL"

An interactive who-done-it where you sleuth out the killer(s)

A flood relief fundraiser for Sokol Cedar Rapids, Iowa

The scene:
aboard the SS Ethelred, the Captain's Dinner the last night at sea

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1
7 - 9 P.M.
CSPA HALL
383 MICHIGAN ST, ST. PAUL

Minnesota Historical Society State Grants-in-Aid Project Grant

Nina M. Archabal, Director, Minnesota Historical Society announced a State Grants-in-Aid project grant in the amount of \$8,000 for the installation of a fire protection sprinkler system at the CSPA Hall. This project was recommended for funding by the Society's Grants Review Committee and the Society's Executive Committee. This program is intended to "acquire, restore, or preserve buildings, structures, or sites that are significant to national, state, or local history, and that are open or highly visible to the public. Projects most likely to be funded in this category are those that will stabilize and conserve significant historic properties."



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Folkdancers perform at Ironworld

By Louise Wessinger

The St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folkdancers, including several Sokol members, represented Czech and Slovak immigrants at All-Slave Day at Ironworld in Hibbing Minnesota in June. Ironworld is an interpretive park dedicated to the immigrant miners who worked in the open pit and underground iron mines of Northern Minnesota.

Fifteen dancers were greeted by a beautiful sunny day. Also performing were an energetic Slovene singing group from Duluth and a peppy Slovene band from Chicago. Our group gave two 45-minute dance performances, including re-introduction of the Moravian square dance Kanafaska. John Topic had the honor of leading the dance Furiant with a beer barrel on his shoulder. John and his wife Peggy Endres have since left us for a year in the Czech Republic teaching English.

In the audience supporting our group were Peggy, and Sokol member Paula Vukovich, who helped arrange the invitation. Also in attendance were Dave Stepan's father Clarence and nephew Eric, who joined us from Duluth.

We also presented a half-hour kroje(folkdress) program in the small theater on the grounds. Some of the dancers had time to explore the exhibits, including one titled "Tangled up in Ore" - about Hibbing native Bob Dylan. We got to take a special tour on the train that takes visitors to the former open pit mine, which is now a beautiful three mile-long lake and to a recreated mine location(town). We also had the chance to sample sarma, a Slovene cabbage roll and potica, a walnut filled pastry. We enjoyed our trip to Ironworld and our audiences enjoyed our dances.



St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folkdancers at Iron World in Chisholm, Minnesota, June 7, 2008.



Song of the Month

Submitted by
Georgiana Dolejsi

Boleraz, Boleraz (Slovácká)



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Márne

1. Bo - le - raz, bo - le - raz, ze - le - ný bo - le - raz,

1. ne - choď šu - haj, da - lej, len tu no - cuj u nás!

2. Ja by prenocoval,
sivá holubička,
kebys ma zbudila,
keď vynde zornička.

3. Zornička vychodí,
milá ma nebudí,
a to všetko preto,
že ma ráda vidí.



Dr. Josef Mestenhauser

Tomas Garrigue Masaryk and Sokol

By Dr. Joseph Mestenhauser

Most people celebrate Masaryk's birthday on March 7. For me, the date to remember is September 14 – shortly after you receive this issue of *The Slovo*. Masaryk died on this

date in 1937, and was buried on September 21 in an incredibly large and moving funeral ceremony that resembled the funeral of American President John F. Kennedy.

The funeral turned into the most memorable demonstration of national strength, national leadership tragedy and, at the same time, national commitment to democracy – at a time in history when the then Czechoslovakia was surrounded by totalitarian regimes. I was a small boy then, but recall this event most vividly, as I was glued to the radio listening to the proceedings of the funeral, and looking for clues why my parents, whom I have never seen cry in my presence, were weeping so hard. The entire nation was mourning, crying and worrying about the future, and was not re-assured by the words of President Beneš funeral oratory: “Věrní zůstaneme” (we will remain faithful) to the heritage Masaryk has left to the nation and indeed to the world.

I was reminded of this recently when Bob Vanasek (incoming Honorary Consul) and I attended the meeting of all Czech Honorary Consuls and Consuls General from the entire world in Prague in June. The meetings were held at the Černín Palace – the building in whose name the Ministry of Foreign Affairs awards its medals for achievement on behalf of the Czech Republic. (You might recall that three Minnesota Sokol members have been awarded this medal, Norm Sladek, Joyce Tesarek and Libby Imbrone). Three thoughts occurred to me then. One was about the Černín Palace Medal that I always considered being very prestigious. But, now suddenly its value rose as I savored the experience just being in this Palace. I have been there before many times, but always in offices. This time we were able to see the ceremonial parts of the Palace, allowing us to fully appreciate its splendor and the meaning it gives to the medal. What a building, and what a meaning!

The second thought came when I stood in silence at the place in the inner court where Jan Masaryk's body was found after he was thrown out of the window. My thoughts turned not only to him, but to his father. My work at the University of Minnesota was in international education – a global program that could

not be separated from the cold war activities of the Soviet Union. I was interested in the activities of the Soviets in this field and studied their strategies, which I described in several articles about how the Soviets recruited and indoctrinated students that they sponsored in USSR. I subscribed to and regularly received all publications and textbooks used in the so-called University of Seventeenth of November, and noticed that every year there was a new book against Masaryk. This was not an accident, because much of Masaryk's work was very much in opposition to the Marxist teachings. Masaryk's work really bothered them, almost pathologically. All his works were first on the prohibited reading list in communist Czechoslovakia. The Soviet's anti-Masaryk books were full of hate, intimidation, lies, misinformation and personal attacks.

My third thought was that Masaryk's relationship to Miroslav Tyrš and to Sokol was largely neglected. Masaryk and Tyrš knew each other well, since both of them were professors at the Charles University where they saw each other often. They also belonged to a small study group whose meetings they attended regularly. Although the relations with Tyrš were complex and initially somewhat hesitant, they grew in warmth and intensity, as did Masaryk's relationship to Sokol as an organization. He learned about Sokol already in the 1860's and started going to regular “cviceni” (exercises) at the age of thirteen while attending school in Brno.

His subsequent study tour in Vienna interrupted this activity, but he created his own “group” while in Vienna as member of the Austrian Parliament. He became regular member of the “Prague Jednota” (Vinohrady) in 1884 and later transferred to the Malostranská Jednota where his wife, Charlotte, became the founding member of the women's group. Masaryk was true to his membership in this unit until his death, as were all his three children, Herbert, Jan, Olga and Alice. The last contact he had before he fled Austria at the beginning of the war, was the President of the Sokol, Dr. Schreiner with whom he consulted not only about obtaining financial support from overseas branches, but also about strategies for gaining independence from Austria-Hungary and the role Sokol might play to secure law and order. Sokol was also his model of an army when he created the Czechoslovak Legion in Russia in 1916.

Wouldn't it be nice to organize a series of seminars and lectures about Sokol – not just its history, but about the incredible life of an idea that was abolished three times and survived three times the efforts of destruction? I bet that most of us do not know the half of what there is to know and appreciate about Sokol.

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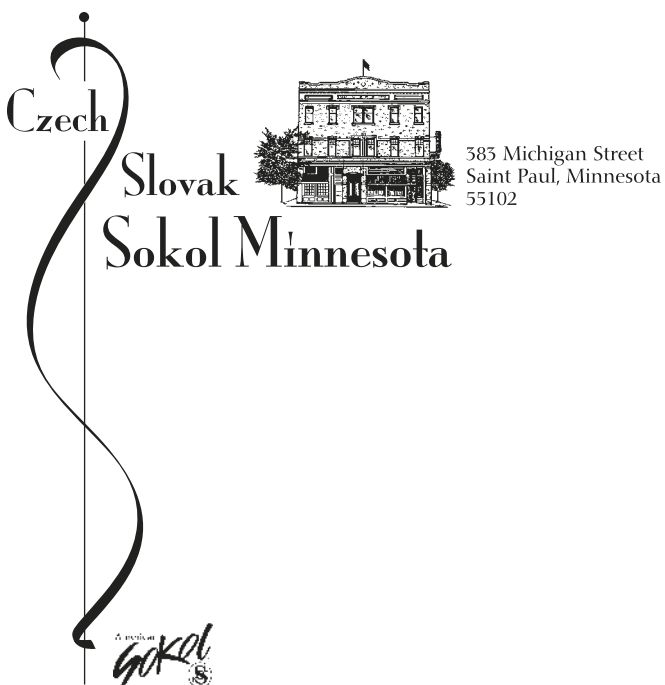
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