

2011 Czech and Slovak Festival, Sunday, September 18

By Jean Draheim

Bring your family and friends! Grab your lawn chairs and blankets! Summer fun isn't over yet!

Highland Park Pavilion is the place to be from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, September 18, when Sokol Minnesota hosts the 22nd annual *Czech and Slovak Festival*. The Pavilion is the site for food, fun, and folk culture galore. A variety of sausages, kolache, beer, as well as other goodies, will tempt your taste buds.

Back by popular demand, Sokol Minnesota's acclaimed made-from-scratch booya will be available for purchase by the bowl or by the quart. Real Booya fans can buy booya by the quart to take home. There is nothing like a steaming bowl of booya on a cold winter day, so buy several quarts to freeze.

The Festival will feature several family friendly activities, including juggling, puppet shows, and cookie decorating. Musical groups will perform traditional and contemporary Czech and Slovak music. The Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, *Mlada Skupina*, *Taneční Mládež*, and *Taneční Teens* folk dance groups will bring color and fun to the afternoon. Dancers range in age from 4 to 70 and beyond.

After you have sampled the wonderful food and enjoyed the great music, you can take a stroll around outside the Pavilion and visit the many informational booths. Organizations that are dedicated to keeping the Czech and Slovak immigrants' cultures and traditions alive will have volunteers on hand eager to answer questions you may have about their activities.

Several vendors will offer collectibles from the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovakia, including cards and jewelry made from imported ribbons, fabric, and crystals as well as travel and genealogy books. You will also be able to purchase or order *kroje*, the traditional folk dress.

Don't miss this opportunity to visit with old friends, meet new friends, and enjoy a sampling of Czech and Slovak culture and cuisine. We look forward to seeing you! Come with lawn chairs and blankets and be prepared to have a great time! Call Joyce Tesarek to volunteer: 612-822-6147. Don Haselbauer and Joyce Tesarek are event chairs this year.



Legacy Building Fund Update By Joyce Tesarek

In 2012, our CSPS Hall will celebrate 125 years of continuous use by the Czech and Slovak communities and the West 7th Neighborhood. Built in 1887, the CSPS Hall is the longest serving Czech-Slovak hall in continuous use in the United States and is the longest-serving national hall and theatre in Minnesota. A true Minnesota landmark, the Hall was placed on the National Register of Historic Properties in 1977.

In honor of this anniversary, the CSPS Hall Legacy Building Fund Campaign was established to ensure the future of the Hall. Fifteen projects were identified. We are currently completing replacement of the "antique" boiler pipes and the fire protection system. Your help is greatly appreciated. Make your tax deductible check payable to Sokol Minnesota Legacy Campaign and mail to 383 Michigan, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102.

To introduce you to some of the treasures in our Hall, Sokol historian Joe Landsberger will write a series of articles highlighting various parts of our building. He writes about our theatre stage on page 8.

Upcoming Events

October *Slovo*
Deadline
September 1

Board of Trustees
September 7

Board of Directors
September 8, 7 p.m.

Czech and Slovak
Festival
September 18
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Membership
Meeting
September 23, 7 p.m.
Singing, 6:30-7 p.m.

Senior Singers
Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

Gymnastics
Tuesdays, starting
September 13

President Komentář/President's Notes By Ed Hamernik

Pozdrav/Greetings! Have you been keeping cool? I hope so. I believe this type of weather is what we were wishing for last winter when the cold wind and snow were blowing. But at times I feel we are blessed with too much of a good thing.

The most important event I want to remind everyone of is the Czech and Slovak Festival, which is on September 18. Gather up the family and lots of friends and bring them to Highland Park for a fun-filled day of fellowship, entertainment, Czech and Slovak food specialties, and much more. There are many helping hands needed to put on a successful Festival. Why not join the fun of volunteering? Contact Joyce at 612-822-6147 to reserve a time slot to help with any of a variety of jobs. Thanks in advance for helping!

With Board of Directors approval, the Project Planning Task Force has selected the firm of Miller Dunwiddie Architecture to develop an Architectural Master Plan for our CSPS Hall. A review of scope is being done, and shortly they will begin work. This plan will be a blueprint to guide future projects to assure that the Hall will be preserved, the historic nature/value of the Hall is maintained, functionality is improved, and the CSPS Hall can serve future generations.

The sanding and resurfacing of the second-level wood floors will have been completed before the end of August. The repair and replacement of heating pipes has been delayed due to grant and state approvals that have slowed because of the state government shutdown. We are working on the Fire Protection System: we have three bids from contractors and now must resolve a funding approach and give our contractor recommendation to the Board of Directors for approval.

See you all at the Czech and Slovak Festival. *Nazdar!*

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE: The *Slovo* is published ten times per year by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, a non-profit organization, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102. Sokol Minnesota members receive the *Slovo* with their membership.

The *Slovo* Advisory Committee welcomes submissions. Send suggestions, articles, and pictures digitally to: slovo@sokolmn.org. **The deadline for the October 2011 issue is September 1.** *Slovo* staff: Christy Banks, copy editor; [seeking volunteer for layout editor](#) (M. L. Kucera, pinch hitter); J. H. Fonkert and M. L. Kucera, interim co-managing editors; Joyce Tesarek, photographer; Norm Petrik, Mary Cahill, Jeanette Pafko, Jean Draheim, Cinnamon Whaley, Arlene Hamernik, Doreen McKenney, advisors. Photographs for this issue were provided by Don Pafko, Joe Landsberger, and Joyce Tesarek. This September 2011 issue of *Slovo* will be archived on the Sokol Minnesota website after September 30



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

For problems with subscriptions, please contact us if you missed an issue or received notice of payment due, when a payment had already been made. If you are temporarily out of town for an extended stay, the post office does not forward your *Slovo* because we use bulk mail. If you wish to have the newsletter suspended during this time or if you wish to have it sent to your out-of-town residence, please let us know. You can email us at slovo@sokolmn.org, phone us at 651-290-0542, or write us at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102.

Slovo gift subscriptions and non-membership renewals are \$15/year (10 issues). Please include name, address, phone number, and email address with your new or renewing non-member subscription. Make your check to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota; send to Sokol Minnesota *Slovo* Subscriptions/Renewals, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102

Sokol Minnesota Annual Memberships: Renewals: Individual **\$45**; Couple **\$80**. Senior **\$35** (*over age 65 and member of Sokol for 5 years*); Senior couple **\$70**. New memberships: Individual **\$50**; Couple **\$85**. This includes a one-time \$5 registration fee with our national organization, American Sokol. Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's annual membership runs from January 1 to December 31. Year 2011 dues for members joining after June 30 are reduced. Membership applications: www.sokolmn.org or by request from Norm Petrik (612-822-6147).

Please send your completed membership application and check to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Attn: Membership, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102.

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 2011

Board of Directors

President

Ed Hamernik

First Vice President

Denis Novak

Second Vice President

Doreen McKenney

Recording Secretary

Megan Cahill

Corresponding Secretary

Jeanette Pafko

Treasurer

Steve Shimer

Financial Secretary

Leah Rieckens

Educational Director

Jean Draheim

Membership Director

Norman Petrik

Sergeant at Arms

Cinnamon Whaley

Members at Large

Judy Aubrecht

Louise Wessinger

Board of Budget and

Finance

Joyce Tesarek, Chair

Gambling Manager

Ken Wyberg

Board of Instructors

Mary Cahill,

Women's Physical Director

and Men's Physical Director

Board of Trustees

Chuck Draheim, Chair

Publicity Director

Open

Telephone: 651-290-0542

Past issues of *Slovo* and Sokol Minnesota's calendar of events are available online at www.sokolmn.org

Membership Meetings Now Feature Special Programs

By Jean Draheim

The Sokol Board of Directors and the Education Committee invite you to a very special evening on Friday, September 23. Following a brief membership meeting at 7 p.m., we will have the privilege of hearing Sokol member John Cicha talk about his experiences in the Pacific Theater during World War II. John, an ex-POW, has many interesting and important stories to share. (Read more on page 4)

Future membership meeting programs include music, beer, genealogy, dance, and immigrant stories. If you have an idea about a program that you would like to share, please call Education Chair Jean Draheim at 651-426-2826.

Education Updates

By Jean Draheim

The Sokol Minnesota Education Committee invites all members to a *Free-to-Members* class. Our first class will be a "make-and-take" greeting card party on Friday, October 21, at 7 p.m. in the first-floor classroom. Sister Doreen McKenney graciously has offered some of her art supplies to create up to five cards each. Supplies for more cards may be purchased that evening. *Free-to-Sokol-Members* is a

wonderful way to meet other Sokols and learn about Czech and Slovak culture. Consider bringing a non-Sokol friend or family member; they can purchase supplies for cards.

We need to know the number of participants so we have enough supplies. Register by Tuesday, October 18.

Our classes fill quickly. Get more information and a registration form at www.sokolmn.org. If you do not have Internet access, please call Jean at 651-426-2826. Classes require a minimum of six students and are limited to 10 students. Registrations must be made by the specified date and sent to Jean Draheim, 4044 Cranbrook Drive, White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55110. If too few students register, classes may be canceled.

Free-to-Members in January will be our *Soup-er Sokol* cooking event. Members will have the opportunity to learn about Czech and Slovak soups, plus we will make the soups for the January members meeting. You won't want to miss it!

Language classes: Fall session Czech classes will begin the week of September 26 and run for eight weeks through the week of November 14. Register by September 20.

Craft Class: Corn Husk Dolls are a decorative Czech and Slovak tradition. Usher in autumn with this fun class. The completed dolls can be used in a centerpiece or on a fall wreath. Class will be held Saturday, October 1, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Register by September 26.

Cooking Classes: The *Vánočka* (Christmas Bread) class is back by popular demand. Start the holiday season with a morning of traditional Czech and Slovak Baking. *Vánočka* is a braided sweet bread that is made during the Christmas holidays. This "bake and take" class will cover making the dough from scratch, braiding and forming the loaves, and baking. The class will be Saturday, November 26 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Register by November 21.

KIDS' GYMNASTICS:

Gymnastics classes resume Tuesday, September 13. For information, go to www.sokolmn.org or email: fitness@sokolmn.org or call 651-290-0542.

The second annual **Tumbling for Tots** program starts in September. For more information on enrolling your 2 - 4 year olds in this healthy program, contact fitness@sokolmn.org or 651-297-9000.

Jefferson Park Dedicated; Little Bohemia Announced By Tom Brock, Little Bohemia neighbor



More than 50 neighbors gathered at Jefferson Park for their neighborhood's National Night Out celebration on August 2. The event both dedicated Pleasant Park on Harrison Avenue at Garfield Street, as well as announced the designation of the area as *Little Bohemia*. The community's boundaries are 35E, Grand and Smith Avenues, West 7th Street, and Western out to the CSPS Hall.

Significant immigrant Bohemian families to the neighborhood included Antonín Jurka (1840-1917) who was

born in Kralovic, Bohemia, and his daughter Blanche Yurka (1887-1974) who was born in their little house on Douglas Street. Antonín taught German in the Saint Paul School System, and Czech on Saturday classes at Jefferson school until he relocated to New York in 1900. Blanche went on to become a famous stage and screen star, as well as author. Jan Račaš (1849-1936) was born in Mazic, Bohemia, and built his house at 309 Harrison Avenue. His son John Rockart (1872-1951) was born there and is listed with Cass Gilbert as architect of the United States Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C. He also worked with Gilbert on the Minnesota State Capital. The father, Jan Sr., was employed on the State Capital Building as a carpenter.

At National Night Out, the Saint Paul Fire Department visited with one of its impressive trucks and the Saint Paul Police Department's mounted police stopped by

to entertain and talk with the participants. The neighborhood thanks the Saint Paul Police, Saint Paul Fire Departments, and CSPS Hall for their contributions to our National Night Out event!

VISIT THE HEART OF EUROPE CZECH TOURS 2012

Our tours include RT airfare, hotels, breakfast daily, welcome & farewell dinner; all sightseeing, old time band; pre-tour & on-tour help with your genealogy; theater or classical concert.

TOURS FULLY ESCORTED!

for information call/write

Hana Matousek

952-440-4289

czechtours@aol.com

MEMBER NEWS UPDATE

By Marlene Hinshaw (Marle5421@aol.com)

It's been a quiet month at Sokol Hall. Record-breaking heat and no air conditioning makes for little activity. However, a few brave souls were unafraid to sweat when they met to plan the September 18 Czech and Slovak Festival. Now and then, they grabbed a few pretzels and tapped into the beer dispenser. Who could blame them?

Recovering at Home: After being knocked off his bike and badly injured in June, **Terry Shima** is healing well. I attribute this to his good physical condition before the accident. He's doing lots of physical therapy and strength training. He recently began driving again. He hopes to be back at his job (research analyst at Deluxe Corp.) before you receive this issue of *Slovo*. Terry, a volunteer on the Board of Trustees, plans to attend the BOT's next meeting. I'm impressed! Czech guys are tough!

Deaths: **Lorene Sedlacek**, Sokol Minnesota's first centenarian, died July 14, 2011. Born March 17, 1911, she was a Sokol member for 55 years. In the old days, you couldn't become a Sokol member unless you were Czech or Slovak. Lorene, of German descent, was involved with the Turner's (German) Gymnastics organization. She met Fred, her future husband at the CSPS Hall. Fred was an active Sokol member; upon their marriage in 1947, Lorene became a Sokol too. Joan was their only child. Lorene became a widow in 1969.

My memory of Lorene is seeing her walking great distances from home in the West Seventh/Fort Road neighborhood. Whenever I offered her a ride home, she refused. She thought it was ridiculous to accept a ride when "I'm only a few blocks from home." Not! Joan said her mom walked at least five miles a day until she was 89 years old. Could this be the secret to longevity?

Lorene was up for travel and adventure. She and Joan traveled through 48 states and across Canada attending Sokol events and visiting friends. Lorene was not one to pamper herself. Doing things the old way worked just fine for her. And, she loved her little "Pooch." She always brought home tasty tidbits for him.

With great effort and dedication, Joan was able to keep her mom at home until about a month before her death. An incredible achievement! Well done, Joan! We extend our sympathy.

Drink Pivo! Stay Cool! Volunteer to work at the Czech and Slovak Festival! See you there!

**SEEKING new Sokol Minnesota WEBMASTER
contact slovo@sokolmn.org**

4 September 2011 *Slovo*

WWII POW Vet Will Speak at our CSPS Hall

By Marlene Hinshaw

John Cicha has been an active Sokol member for 32 years. Those of us who know of John's military service have been reluctant to ask him about it. We didn't want to cause pain by having him relive horrible memories. But, at age 93, time is of the essence. We thought others should know, "lest we forget." When we invited John to speak of his service he graciously accepted. If you have young adults at home, please bring them. They'll learn some history and meet one of the greats of the Greatest Generation.

John, the youngest of six, was born in 1918 on the family farm in Lankin, North Dakota. In 1939, the U.S. was just coming out of the Great Depression. John, a recent high school graduate, was looking for work. The only jobs available were farm labor at 10 cents an hour. Not seeing much future there, John joined the Navy. He trained at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station.

In 1940, he volunteered for a two-year term with the Asiatic fleet. He was assigned to the *U.S.S. Canopus*, a submarine tender. He spent summers in China (where this studio picture was taken in 1940) and winters in the Philippine Islands. It was an adventure, until WWII broke out. Soon, all the islands were taken over by the Japanese. Supplies were low. The submarines left for Australia. They were surrounded. When Bataan fell, the *U.S.S. Canopus* was taken to deep water and scuttled by its crew. They evacuated to Corregidor. In March 1942, Corregidor fell to the Japanese. John and his mates were captured and imprisoned. Incredibly, he found a few Czechs in the camp. John was a prisoner in different camps for three and a half years.

By 1944, Japan was losing the war. Prisoners who could still walk were sent to Japan. The first unmarked ship John was on was bombed and sunk by U.S. planes. John survived. He swam about a mile and was picked up by a Japanese ship. Survivors of the first ship were then put on a second ship. The second ship reached Formosa (now Taiwan) but was sunk in the harbor by U.S. planes. The survivors of the second ship were put on a third ship. They arrived in Japan on January 31, 1945. Out of the more than 1,600 prisoners who started out, fewer than 300 reached Japan. John and the other survivors were put to work in a coal mine.

When the war ended, the Japanese vanished from the prison camp. American B-29s flew over the camp dropping food and information. Prisoners learned an atomic bomb had been dropped on Nagasaki, 80 miles away. They were informed that an American airbase was 300 miles from them. John and two buddies deserted the camp and set out for the airbase. With no money and little knowledge of where they were, they managed to get on a train. After riding three days and three nights they finally made it to the airbase. John remembers his first meal there: pancakes. The prisoners ate pancakes until the cook ran out of ingredients. He also remembers how wonderful it was to shower. He weighed 80 pounds.

American prisoners were taken to Okinawa. From there, marines and sailors went to Guam and then home. John went to the Great Lakes Naval Hospital to be checked over. He was given vitamin pills and sent home for 90 days. He was discharged in February 1946.

In 1947, John married his hometown sweetheart, Gladys Waith. They raised five children; two boys and three girls. After the war John worked seven and a half years as a mechanic for H.H. Hewitt Ford Motor Company in Minto, North Dakota. The family moved to Saint Paul when John was offered a job with the Railway Mail Service. He retired after 30 years. In 1990, his beloved Gladys died. Besides his five children, John has 12 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

John continues to be involved with P.O.W. and other veteran's organizations. Each year, he looks forward to driving his antique tractor in his hometown's celebration. He likes to hunt, fish, and travel. John, a first generation Czech, speaks the language beautifully. He plays the button accordion at Sokol events and sings with the Sokol Singers. John attributes his amazing good health and longevity to "good genes."



THE DVOŘÁK PROJECT has October Premiere at CSPS Hall

The story of a Maestro: Antonin Dvořák, whose sojourn in this nation of wide-open spaces, skyscrapers, immigrants, natives, democrats, bustling cities, and lonesome prairies would alter musical history. This is the story of how he came to the Midwest.

*Be dazzled to a stupor! See the notorious "Hoochie-coochie!"
The gleaming facades of the White City!
The Great Columbian Exhibition in Chicago!
Vertiginous effects! Ragtime! Wild West Shows!*

That's the voice of the Midway Huckster in Rachel Perlmeter's new work for stage and radio, as he lures the crowd to experience a re-imagining of Antonin Dvořák's historic visit to our region in 1893. The journey included a trip to Minnehaha Falls and a banquet held in his honor at the CSPS Hall in Saint Paul.

With an original score by J. Anthony Allen, this concert staging of the radio play will introduce characters based on legendary figures like Nikola Tesla, Jeannette Thurber, and Harry Burleigh. Supported by a prestigious Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant and featuring a talented ensemble of actors and musicians, it promises to be an occasion that you won't want to miss!

Tickets for the CSPS Hall performance on Saturday, October 15, 8 p.m., will be \$12 and available at the door. For more information, contact Sokol member Denis Novak (651-459-9404) or visit the project website: <http://dvorakproject.tumblr.com/>
Any musicians in the Sokol community who might like to become involved (amateurs welcome!) should email the director at rperlmeter@yahoo.com.

Society of Czech-Slovak Philately By Donald Pafko, Honorary Slovak Consul

L-R: Ludovit Svoboda, MaryLou Pojeta, Lois Verner (wife of Sokol member Jaroslav Verner), and Donald Pafko.

The annual conference of the International Society of Worldwide Stamp Collectors took place July 15 and 16 at the Crystal Community Center in Crystal, Minnesota. The Society's Czech-Slovak branch had a booth staffed by thirteen of its members. The Czech-Slovak branch held an informal dinner meeting at the Glockenspiel Restaurant prior to the conference. My wife, Jeanette, and I were honored to be the guests of Mr. Ludovit Svoboda, Past President of the Czech-Slovak Society.

The Society for Czech-Slovak Philately is an international organization founded in 1939. It is devoted to the collecting, researching, and publicizing of all aspects of stamp collecting in the geographic areas of the former Czechoslovakia. Members come from more than 30 states and 15 foreign countries. More information regarding membership in this organization can be obtained by contacting R.T. Cossaboom, P.O. Box 4124, Prescott, Arizona 86302. Website is <http://www.CSPhilately.org/>



New family in Little Bohemia The West End and Sokol communities have gained a new family in the *Little Bohemia* neighborhood of the CSPS Hall. Jan Vydra, Jr. and Rosa Vydrová have relocated from Prague to the Twin Cities for six months for professional research purposes. The family is well connected with Sokol in Prague, and their two children will join Sokol Minnesota's "Tumbling for Tots" program this fall. Pictured, from left to right Jitka Vydrová and Jan Vydra, Sr. (proud grandparents), Rosa Vydrová, Jan František Vydra, Julie Vydrová, Jan Vydra, Jr. Rosa Vydrová is a pediatric neurologist from the Motol Teaching Hospital in Prague. She will work as a visiting researcher at the Veteran Administration's Brain Sciences Center located at the Minneapolis Veterans Administration Medical Center, an interdisciplinary research institute and training center, which focuses on the mechanisms underlying the active, dynamic brain in both health and disease. Jan Vydra is a hematologist from the Kralovske Vinohrady Teaching Hospital. As a Fulbright-Proshok scholar, he will work as a visiting researcher at the University of Minnesota's world-famous Bone Marrow Transplant Unit. Each year the Fulbright-Proshok grant enables Czech physicians to conduct research and teach at the University of Minnesota School of Medicine.

Sokol Minnesota Thanks

Donors By Jeanette Pafko, Correspondence Secretary

Sokol Minnesota thanks generous donors who support Sokol programs and rehabilitation of the CSPS Hall Legacy Fund include:
Tom and Judy Aubrecht - 5 year pledge donation

In memory of Frank Loss:

Phyllis Vosejпка
Evelyn P. Holman
James and Mary Jo Chlebecek
Georgiana Dolejsi
Donald and Catherine Haselbauer

In Memory of Leonard Housam:

Irene Seashore

In memory of Dana McKenney:

James and Mary Jo Chlebecek
Georgiana Dolejsi
Louise Wessinger
Mildred Grealish
Kenneth & Sharon Wyberg
Marit Lee Kucera
Ed and Arlene Hamernik
George Chlebecek
Don and Catherine Haselbauer

In memory of Blanche Skarda Duffy:

Georgiana Dolejsi
Doris and Doreen McKenney
The Family of Blanche Skarda Duffy - \$100

In Memory of Lorene Sedlacek:

Doreen McKenney
Doris McKenney

General Fund in memory of Frank Loss:

Kent and Marlene Hinshaw
Robert J. Kostichka
Jon and Margarita Rukavina
Mildred Grealish
Carl and Patricia Carlson-Rukavina
Louise Wessinger

A Civil Society: Idea of the Century or a Bust?

By Josef A. Mestenhauser

Editor's note: This article originally appeared on the CSCC website <cs-center.org>.

I was introduced to the concept of the Civil Society during my sabbatical leave in the Philippines in the late 1960s where I studied leadership and organizations in the context of social and cultural change. In travels throughout the Philippines, I observed the creation of non-profit organizations and the volunteer spirit that drove their accomplishments, in a society traditionally dominated by a few wealthy families. My interest continued in my work in the post-Soviet Czech Republic, Hungary, Belarus (under extenuating circumstances), and Kyrgyzstan. Sokol is one of the examples I used to demonstrate a society that depends almost entirely on volunteers who have made the organization a bastion of what I want to describe as the Civil Society.

The concept is, of course, not new. Theorists trace it, as they do most of Western civilization, to the Greeks and Romans. It became a serious subject of inquiry when Alexis De Tocqueville visited the United States in the middle of the 18th century and glowingly described the "civil society" as a phenomenon typically American that was the hope and basis of its democracy. The turning point that gave the concept its present-day momentum came with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Voluntary societies appeared in large numbers to fill the vacuum created by totalitarian regimes that had authorized only a few carefully controlled organizations. Membership in voluntary organizations rose dramatically, not only in these post-socialist countries, but in developing countries and in Western societies as well. Charitable giving to these non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, also increased substantially. Why is it, then, that recently the idea of a Civil Society has been criticized and placed on the defensive?

Most of us who are associated with the Czech and Slovak Republics feel strongly about the values implicit in the concept of the Civil Society; we associate it, as does the scholarly world, with the work and life of Vaclav Havel. The Symposium in his name has attempted to popularize the concept and its practices; it will do so again this fall in an unprecedented year-long series of programs.

The concept of a Civil Society is more complex than has been assumed. According to Michael Edwards in his book *Civil Society* (2nd Edition, Polity Press, 2009), there are three major schools of thought about Civil Society: the "associational," the "Good Society," and the "Public Sphere." One's understanding of it depends on one's frame of reference. Yet that should not deter us from thinking about it seriously. Recent events in this country and in the rest of the world require that we pay serious attention to it.

The **associational** view of Civil Societies is traceable to Alexis De Tocqueville, whose writings approved the voluntary spirit in the new world. After World War II, new interpretations of Tocqueville's work gave rise to the so-called neo-De Tocquevillian perspective practiced globally by the U.S., other Western governments, and the World Bank. The "neons" postulate that non-profit organizations provide a third component to society that supplements government and commerce. The proliferation of non-profits provides assurance that neither government nor commerce will dominate or exploit private citizens. The main



feature of NGOs is individuals' freedom to join or leave them without compulsion or fear of punishment. Non-government organizations also provide a "safety net" from potentially oppressive regimes.

The rub, however, is who is included in or excluded from a Civil Society, and what happens in case a society splits over major differences? For example, is the National Rifle Association part of the Civil Society, despite the fact that it's staffed by professionals and has a strong lobby? Are labor unions, political parties, or the Tea Party part of Civil Society?

The view of Civil Society as a **Good Society** is the perspective represented by Vaclav Havel and other great thinkers such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, or, more recently, Aung Sang Kyi Sun. The idea is that members of Civil Society are only those who stand for civility, tolerance, non-discrimination, freedom, social justice for all, and true democracy. A Ford Foundation study of these criteria in 22 countries concluded that, while valid and worthwhile, the concept has not contributed to the goals of such "good societies" as much as was expected, despite infusion of substantial financial resources. Even in the U.S., although charitable giving associated with a Civil Society amounted in 1996 to almost 300 billion dollars, such funds did not contribute to the elimination of social inequalities or to a narrowing of the gap between the rich and the poor.

A major criticism of the Civil Society is that it means anything to anybody. For example, the conservative Cato Institute defined Civil Society as "fundamentally reducing the role of politics in society by expanding the free markets and individual liberties." In other words, non-profit organizations provide services so that the government would not have to. On the other hand, liberal thinkers such as Benjamin Barber (a Havel Society speaker several years ago) suggest that it "gently corrects generations of state and market failures"; others call it "our last best hope" that is "central to hold the society together against the onrush of globalizing markets."

The third viewpoint is identified by Michael Edwards as the **Public Sphere**, with the Civil Society providing leadership for national policies in the public interest that eliminate barriers hindering development of the Good Society such as excessive privatization, commodification of education, promotion of narrow interests, celebrity craze, aggressive media reporting, biased talk shows, exploitation of peoples' human weaknesses through marketing, and the substitution of false appearances of equal treatment for genuinely equalitarian policies. One of the weaknesses of the Civil Society in the Public Sphere is that associations lack consensus for action and do not possess sufficient strength to reform themselves. Here again, the Czechoslovak example shows how a numerically strong system of NGOs slept at the time of the communist takeover. Germany's experience was similar in 1933, when Hitler took power in the face of a paralyzed civil sector.

What do we make of this? A sociologist suggested that it takes six months to establish political structures, six years to develop a halfway viable economy, and sixty years to create a Civil Society. Tomas Masaryk gave it fifty years. What does this say about Civil Society in contemporary America? Which of the models do we, as a nation, promote globally? Can these three viewpoints be combined to provide an accelerated solution? What is the status of Civil Society in the Czech and Slovak Republics? And are we part of it, and if so, which kind?

Having worked to promote the concept in several countries, I am concerned not only for Civil Society domestically but globally. I believe that Civil Society must be promoted, both nationally and globally, because there is no other "best hope" to prevent wars and sustain peace and development.

The Family History Library, Family History Centers, and Online Searching CGSI Meeting on September 10, 2011

By Ginger Simek, President of Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International www.cgsi.org

The September 10 meeting of the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society (CGSI) will feature tips on how to use the famous Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, it is the world's largest genealogy library. Much of the library's collection is accessible from home via the Internet or at a half dozen LDS Family History Centers in the Twin Cities area.

Janie and Mike Puckett, directors of the Oakdale Family History Center will give an overview of resources available at the library in Salt Lake, as well as information on what services and resources are available at local Family History Centers. The Family History Centers are staffed by volunteers who can help answer family-history research questions. The Centers are free and open to the public. Visitors can use microfilms and books held locally, or, for a small rental fee, order microfilms from Salt Lake City. Each usually has a collection of resources such as genealogical research helps, maps, gazetteers, and atlases, but the extent varies by location. The Family Search website provides searchable online database opportunities, has helpful guides, downloadable forms, and more.

The CGSI meeting will be held in the main floor auditorium at 1185 Concord Street North in South Saint Paul, Minnesota. Registration starts at 12:30 p.m., followed by the program at 1 p.m. There will be a refreshment break and the CGSI Sales Table will be available. Suggested donation: \$5 for members, \$8.00 for non-members. Ample parking is available in lots on the north and south side of the building and across the street. It is accessible by the 71B bus line. The CGSI library collection, part of the Minnesota Genealogical Society Library and Research Center, will be open during the day.

New CSCC Lecture Series for 2011-2012

Czech and Slovak Cultural Center announces its 2011-2012 series of lectures: **Defining Events that Shaped the Czech and Slovak Republics.** Fall 2011 term schedule:

September 17: *The Curse of Yalta* by Josef Mestenhauer

October 29: *Munich and its Aftermath* by Winston Chrislock

November 14: *The 1944 Slovak National Uprising* by Gary Cohen

Sessions: 9 a.m. to noon at the Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Room 2-224.

Attendance is free; available to graduate or undergraduate students for 1 – 3 credit, in EdPA 5080; instructor of record is Dr. John Moravec. Full program flyer will be available at the CSCC booth at the Czech and Slovak Festival, September 18.

Be surprised by the variety of topics we plan to offer.

Watch for further information on 2012 sessions: January 21, February 18, March 31, April 21 by consulting the website at WWW.CS-CENTER.ORG

Vaclav Havel Symposium on Civil Society

The Vaclav Havel Symposium on the Civil Society announces its program for the year 2011-12. Instead of a concentrated program lasting a few days in October, the Symposium will be a year-long series of programs, some of which will be open to public. The first

SONG OF THE MONTH by Georgiana Dolejsi

Kde Je Sládej is another song from Georgiana's large collection. Here we sing that wherever you find the brewer (*sládej*), you will find young people.

50

KDE JE SLÁ - DEK, tam je
mlá - dek, tam je ta - ky
pi - vo, pi - vo - vá - rek,
kde se pi - vo va - ři, tam se dob - ře da - ři,
pojď - me tam a pij - me, pij - me
ho, pij - me ho až do rá - na
bí - lé - ho.

2. Pivo pijme, ať to zvíme, zdali sobě rozumíme,
[máme-li se rádi, jsme-li kamarádi,]
pojďme tam...

3. Pivo pítí, vesel býtí, hezké děvče v lásce mítí,
[to nás, bratři milí, blaží každou chvílí,]
pojďme tam...

program, hopefully co-sponsored by the Symposium with Augsburg College, will feature a presentation by Nobel Prize winner in Economics, Elinor Ostrom, on the Augsburg College campus on October 7.

Full program and details will be available in the CSCC booth at the Czech and Slovak Festival on September 18.

In view of the recent world events, the serious discussion of the Civil Society deserves careful attention. View the concept of the Symposium for the coming year on the web page of the CSCC www.cs-center.org

ATTEND and VOLUNTEER SOKOL MINNESOTA EVENTS

Czech and Slovak Fall Festival

Sunday, September 18, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Highland Park Pavilion, 1200 Montreal Avenue
(two blocks north of West 7th Street) in Saint Paul

Sokol-CSPS Open House Weekend, October 8 - 9

Staged Radio Play: The Dvořák Project

Saturday, October 15, 8 p.m. \$12 at the door

Czech Roast Pork Dinner

Sunday, October 23, 12:30 p.m, \$16

Prepaid reservations by October 17: 652-941-0426

Pancake Breakfast with Craft & Bake Sale

Sunday, November 20, 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m

*Check the calendar on our website for updates
www.sokolmn.org*

Minnesota Sokol has joined Facebook

Look up Sokol Minnesota (Non-Profit Organization) on Facebook for updates on happenings at the CSPS Hall as well as to share your Sokol stories and experiences with the online community. We welcome your suggestions on how to best utilize this exciting new technology! Please contact administrator Cinnamon Whaley through our Facebook page.



383 Michigan Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota
55102

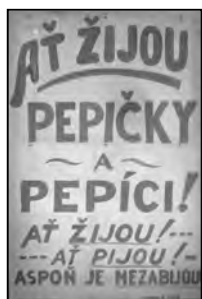
NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT NO. 5744

**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota SLOVO September 2011

Sokol Theater Sets a Very Old Stage By Joe Landsberger

What set Sokol Minnesota on the path to preserve the oldest stage and theater in Minnesota? Sokol Minnesota has had a theatrical tradition since the first CSPS Hall was built in 1879 when a schoolhouse was moved onto the property and a stage was built. When that Hall burned in 1886, the Czech and Slovak communities banded together in 1887 to build the present-day Hall, with the stage located where the women's restroom currently is situated on the second floor. It was upon that stage that Antonín Dvořák was celebrated in 1893. When the mezzanine level was added in 1917, the stage was relocated and the grand staircase was added.



Vic Hubal, Sr., painted three of the six beautiful stage backdrops in 1932. The unique "fly" (raise and lower) system of pulley and rope is hand operated, an historic rarity; only the front backdrop of the Charles Bridge in Prague has a counterweight to make the task easier. The Sokol Minnesota stage also has two sets of "splatter flats." The "cool" (grey) and "warm" (beige) sets are 10 feet tall with nine pieces: three are 4.5 feet wide, two at 36 feet, two "door" flats at 4.5 feet; one window with screen (only in Minnesota). Unlike modern hinged sets, these are lashed together to form sets. The Sokol stage scenic properties also include one roofed cottage, several flats of brick, and three trees.



Above: The Clock Tower, the back backdrop, is the smallest and rarely used. Left: A circa 1920 playbill.

Further research is needed to document how these props were used in Sokol productions at the Hall. We also would like to know when the footlights were converted to electricity. The original footlights, no doubt, were open-flame oil lamps with floating wicks. Complementing the historic stage, Sokol Minnesota also has a collection of more than 200 paperback plays printed in Prague and Chicago between 1880 and 1930, as well as a few scripts and some production notes.