

CZECH AND SLOVAK



*Providing fitness and community  
for individuals and families  
through physical, educational,  
cultural, and social programs*

# SLOVO

August 2024  
vol. 47 no. 6

## UPCOMING EVENTS

September Slovo  
articles due August 1

### Board of Directors Meeting

August 15,  
7 p.m.-9:30 p.m.  
C.S.P.S. Hall

### Friendly Friday Evening Social

August 9, 7 p.m.

### Kolo Bike Club

August 18,  
10 a.m.-1 p.m.  
Meet in the C.S.P.S. Hall  
parking lot See page 12



Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

### 35th Czech & Slovak Festival

Sunday, September 29

### Sokol Gift Shop

open during events  
and by appointment  
See page 12

Use this QR code  
to go to sokolmn.org  
Follow all of our activities,  
events, and classes!



# 35<sup>th</sup> annual CZECH & SLOVAK FESTIVAL

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

## Sunday, September 29<sup>20</sup><sub>24</sub> 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.



**Ethnic Food • Czech-style Beer • Music • Sokol Gift Shop  
Dance and Gymnastics Performances • Children's Games  
Silent Auction • Street Vendors • Exhibit • Special Guests**

[www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org)

Become a Volunteer:  
[festival@sokolmn.org](mailto:festival@sokolmn.org)



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[publicity@sokolmn.org](mailto:publicity@sokolmn.org)

**FREE Admission • Public Welcome • Accessible Facility  
C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota**

**94th Annual Sokol Camp Booya Picnic in Pine City  
Sunday, August 11, noon to 4 p.m. Everyone welcome!  
Great Czech and Slovak food, music, dancing. See page 7.**

## Prezidentčin komentář/President's Notes by Lucy Rose

It's been a busy summer for Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Now that it's August, our annual Fall Festival is fast approaching. First, I want to welcome home our members who attended the *Slet* in Prague, June 30 to July 5. All six of the Sokol Minnesota delegation (plus Eddie) participated in the parade of 40,000 marchers on Sunday; Joan Sedlacek carried the Western District flag for the Sunday parade and for opening ceremonies on Thursday before the field *prostná* exercises; and Jason Brozovich participated in a Friday *prostná* performance. I have not yet attended a Prague *Slet*, but I can imagine how overwhelming and special it must feel to gather together with so many fellow Sokols from all around the world. Many thanks to our Sokol Minnesota members who represented us so well and make us so proud. Welcome home!

The inaugural West Fest on 7th was held on June 8 at St. Stan's, and Sally Lieberman and I were proud to represent Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota at this successful event. Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic M. L. Kucera also joined Sally and me, and the three of us had a busy afternoon talking with a steady stream of visitors to our information table. The beautiful weather fostered a relaxed and festive atmosphere, where people took time to share stories of their memories of the C.S.P.S. Hall. I was pleased so many people were eager to share their memories of attending events such as our annual Fall Festival and our Pancake Breakfast through the years. However, I was most surprised by the stories I heard of very personal life events that were shaped by our C.S.P.S. Hall: family members who had chosen our historic building to celebrate their wedding, their wedding reception, or a celebration of life for a deceased family member. It was truly wonderful to hear in these community members' voices the fondness for our Hall and for our organization. Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota is an integral piece of the fabric that binds the West Seventh community together, and our Hall remains both a physical and personal landmark for those who value the history of this St. Paul neighborhood.

On the heels of West Fest, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota hosted the 26th annual Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp at the Hall from June 17 to 21. Our tireless camp volunteer co-directors Louise Wessinger and Doreen McKenney and their crew of volunteers and junior leaders organized activities for the campers centered on this year's theme of fairs and puppetry. Louise, Doreen, and their volunteers spend months before the start of camp gathering materials for the daily craft projects, preparing ingredients for cooking classes, and lining up instructors for everything from Czech language to gymnastics, singing to juggling, and acting to chess. I continue to be amazed by the creativity of our members and their willingness to invest significant time and share their talents year after year. The importance of sharing our Czech and Slovak cultural traditions with the next generation cannot be overstated, and I am so grateful for the dedicated members of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota who make the annual culture camp such a positive experience for our campers. My hope is that the time spent together at the Hall during camp generates many wonderful memories for campers and leaders alike, and that the camp experience stimulates an interest in some aspect of our culture, whether it be cooking, language, crafts, or puppets and fairs. My sincerest thanks and congratulations to all of the volunteers, campers, and their families who made this year's culture camp such a success!

Coming up this month, please join us at the C.S.P.S. Hall for our monthly Friendly Friday on August 9 from 7 to 10 p.m. And just two days later on August 11, you are invited to attend the Sokol Camp Booya Picnic in Pine City from noon to 5 p.m. with its delicious booya and *holubky*. The next weekend, join the Kolo Sokol Bike Club at the Hall on August 18 at 10 a.m. for some exercise and camaraderie. *Nazdar!*



Lucy  
Brudnak Rose

## Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 2024 BOD (Board of Directors)

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Telephone: 651-290-0542

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

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota provides fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural, and social programs for children, teens, and adults.

Information on our programs, calendar of events, membership, C.S.P.S. Hall rentals, and gift shop, plus e-addresses for our board, program directors, volunteer staff, and the Czech Honorary Consul, as well as *Slovo* past issues, are available at  
[www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org) or [www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota](https://www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota)



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## 26th Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp by Doreen McKenney and Louise Wessinger

The 26th Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp was held June 17-21, co-directed by Louise Wessinger and Doreen McKenney. The theme this year was fairs and puppetry and 24 campers attended.

As campers arrived each morning, they completed small crafts and activities such as personalizing a water bottle, coloring and making stick puppet characters from the book *The Little Mole*, and completing a Sokol maze puzzle.

Morning rotations consisted of cooking, crafts, gymnastics, and language class. Sokol was fortunate to have Kristýna Horáčková, from T. G. Masaryk Czech School in Chicago, return again for a second year and once again be a house guest of Diane Bell. Language tools like coloring sheets, games, and

even a cartoon about *Krtek (The Little Mole)* made for some fun learning.

Enthusiastic Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota gymnastic coaches Mary Cahill, Lily Callanan, and Isabelle Callanan led gymnastics instruction, based on the classes they teach in the evenings at the C.S.P.S. Hall during the school season.

High school teacher Anne Jans taught a cooking class, teaching the kids hands-on food preparation, culinary techniques, and science. Anne's helpers Dawn Bulera and Colleen Kluzak worked with the kids to make ketchup, dill pickles, soft dough pretzels, *trdelník* (chimney cakes), and pigs in a blanket.

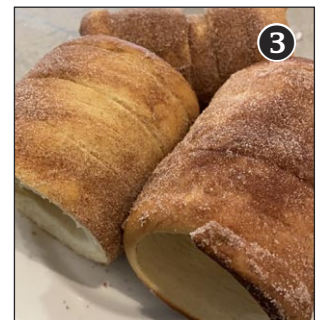
Jean Draheim and Kate Weeks assisted Doreen with helping campers make a *vodník* cone popup puppet, make two string marionettes of *Spejbl* and *Hurvínek*, and decorate a kite to serve as props in the play. Glynis Grostephan taught a rotation class using puffy paint on wood shapes to look like *perníky*, which could then be used as a holiday decoration and as props for the play.

Before each music class, the group started off with a flag ceremony honoring our country and the nations of our ancestors. Sokol Minnesota's pianist, Don Haselbauer, played Sokol favorites while Louise Wessinger, along with Kristýna (who helped with the lyric pronunciation), taught Czech and Slovak songs, Louise then taught traditional folk dance. Louise and Linda Nicoli taught a drill to "You're a Grand Old Flag" and explained about the 1938 *Slet* in which their father participated in Prague.

The favorite game of Czechs and Slovaks and relay races took place after lunch, so the kids could get a few wiggles out and cheer on their competitors.

Monday afternoon's guest was professional musician Ryan Cihlar. Ryan showed the guts of an accordion and how it worked, and he patiently answered the questions of an inquisitive audience. He played a few peppy songs that got everyone on their feet to dance freely to the music.

Continued on page 4.



1. Campers learned to operate their five-string marionettes after Kurt Hunter (center) led a workshop on constructing them.

2. Sokol gymnastics instructors Lily and Isabelle Callanan with campers. 3. Campers made *trdelník*. 4. Language class with Kristýna Horáčková. 5. *Vodník*, pop up puppets, were one of the crafts campers made. 6. Summer solstice fair with games and prizes put on by Glynis Grostephan and junior leaders.



## 26th Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp, Continued

On Tuesday, the Sokol Minnesota Singers were invited again to sing with the campers. Puppeteers Kurt Hunter and Kathy Hunter led a workshop teaching everyone how to construct a five-string marionette. Kurt also showed the now-marionettists how to maneuver the strings to sit, walk, fly, and wave.

On Wednesday, Doreen explained how the parade puppets, Jitka and Jarda, were originally constructed in 2004 and how the handlers move the puppets through the parade route.

Thursday afternoon's guests, Miss Czech and Slovak Queen Sarah Langridge and Junior Ambassadors Allie Langridge and Keely Kluzak, each wore their *kroj* and answered questions about their royalty duties. Afterwards campers were able to try on the young ladies' crowns. Also on Thursday, Dasha Rosenthal presented her daughter's award-winning, middle school history project on the Velvet Revolution and peaceful Velvet Divorce.



In the afternoons campers signed up for a group of their choice. Michael Topic taught juggling; Junior Leaders Leo and Marius guided LEGO castle building; and Anne, Colleen, and Dawn assisted campers with making strawberry sorbet. Anne and Colleen also helped campers paint bright expressive designs in the parking lot; Jean assisted with decorating bags and caps; and Colleen, Doreen, Jean, Linda, and Junior Leader Sofia Scholtz led sock puppet creation. A few first-timers even learned how to sew buttons!

Later, everyone used watercolor pencils and shimmery beads to make suncatchers for props for the play, and those who were not actors or narrators decorated fish props.

Every afternoon ended with a story, a snack, and the question, "What was one of your favorite things you did today?"



Parents and guests arrived at the Hall for a 2 p.m. program on Friday. The program started off with a flag ceremony, followed by a juggling demonstration, singing, folk dancing, a *Slet* performance, a parade of marionettes, and the all-camp play *Longest Daylight Day of the Year*, written by Doreen and directed by seasoned performing actress Linda.

**Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers!** Junior leaders: Lucien Espinosa, Kris Gurgel, Leo Krikava, Olivia Marko, Marius Morse, Fiona Nicoli, Sofia Scholtz, and Vicki Schousek.

Adult volunteers: Dawn Bulera, Mary Cahill, Jean Draheim, Glynis Grostephan, Don Haselbauer, Anne Jans, Colleen Kluzak, Doreen McKenney, Linda Nicoli, Michael Topic, Kate Weeks, and Louise Wessinger.

Special thanks to M. L. Kucera, who generously donated scholarship tuition for one of the campers.

Visit Sokol Minnesota's Instagram page @sokolminnesota to see more photos from the week, plus a video of the play.

1. Friday's summer solstice picnic, with food made during the week's cooking classes: pigs in a blanket, dill pickles, ketchup, honey punch, and strawberry sorbet for dessert.
2. Front: Sofia, Fiona, Leo. Center: Marius, Lucien. Back: Kris, Vickie, Olivia.
3. Elliot as the *vodník* in the all-camp play.



**Slet** Photo left: (L to R) Jason, Megan, and Eddie (in the front) Brozovich, and Mary and Dennis Cahill, and Joan Sedlacek. Photo right: All over Prague, there were billboards for *Slet*. Sokol Minnesota member M. L. Kucera posed beside this sign on the corner of Šumavská and Vinohradská, Prague 2. More on the *Slet* to come in the September issue!

## Sokol Minnesota Gymnastics Classes at the C.S.P.S. Hall

383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul

**No experience necessary!**

Gymnastics for everyone ages 4-18

Monday  
Tuesday  
& Thursday  
evenings  
beginning  
in September.



More details: [fitness@sokolmn.org](mailto:fitness@sokolmn.org)



## Annual Mushroom Hunt

by Sally Lieberman

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's annual mushroom hunt was held at a secret Twin Cities location on May 19. Participants had a great time and even modest success with the morels and other spring *houby/huby*!

L-R: Cailan Shannon, Liam Karow, Dawn Bulera, group leader Dan of Mojo Mushroom (kneeling), Greg Schuck, Joyce Tesarek, Gibson Batch, Bea Flaming, Mary Jo Kiewel, Jay Lieberman, and Sally Lieberman. Photo courtesy of Joyce Tesarek.

## Spotlight on Slovak by Sally Lieberman

Did you know that Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota has offered Slovak language classes for adults since 2008 and Czech language classes since 2002? Even during the pandemic, we didn't miss a beat! Our 2024 language program opens the week of September 30. Registration and full information can be found under "Classes" at sokolmn.org

This month we shine the spotlight on Slovak. Instructor George Hoffman will launch a brand new, beginning Slovak class this fall, and we are looking for students to join this grand adventure. No previous experience with the language is necessary. Beginning Slovak will meet online via Zoom on Tuesday evenings.

Learning Slovak is a great way explore one's heritage, to stretch your mind, discover a unique culture, open up possibilities for friendship and travel, or make professional connections. George says our textbook is really good at introducing phrases useful for travel or casual conversation right from the beginning.

Here is what Rebekah Tedrick and Andrew Vrabel Miles, two students who just completed George's Advanced Beginning (second year) class, have to say:

### Learn Czech or Slovak with Sokol Minnesota!



Adult language classes,  
online and in person starting in September!  
Friendly and supportive learning atmosphere.  
Many levels, including complete beginner.  
High school students  
may enroll with permission.

For full information and registration:  
sokolmn.org  
Email questions to:  
education@sokolmn.org

### Why are you learning Slovak?

**Andrew:** My mother's side of the family comes from Prešov, and I'd like to get reconnected with my cultural heritage over there someday. My family also hosted a Slovak exchange student when I was younger, and I think it would be fun to be able to talk in two languages.

**Rebekah:** Originally to understand some old letters from the 1930s-1950s, and later for a family trip to the Slovak Republic. Now I am staying with the language so I can go back and communicate with the amazing people we met there. I've learned so much more than I even realized during the Sokol Slovak course, and it really came in handy when traveling in small towns or talking with people on trains or in pubs. While a lot of people spoke English, speaking Slovak, even as badly as I do, seemed to really break the ice anywhere. There is also good music and television to enjoy in Slovak.

### What have you found most surprising or interesting about the Slovak language?

**Rebekah:** The humor. It's dark and full of pessimism. I love it.

**Andrew:** There doesn't appear to be even one hard and fast rule in this language!

### Where will you go from here? How does Slovak figure in your future plans?

**Andrew:** I'd love to spend a few months living in the Slovak Republic. I work as a carpenter these days, and I have heard that there is a long tradition of woodworking over there. I also want to learn about the plants and the animals that live in the place I come from.

**Rebekah:** I would like to go back to the Slovak Republic and learn more about my family history. Being able to communicate more fluently would be helpful.

### Do you have any words of advice or encouragement for the students who will begin learning Slovak this fall?

**Rebekah:** Find something that makes learning the language fun for you, and your brain will soak it up like a sponge. Don't be scared by the case system. Eventually, you'll just know what sounds right. Or you won't. Either way, it'll be fine!

### Anything else you'd like to add?

**Andrew:** I'm really glad that we have an organization like Sokol in Minnesota, because otherwise this would be much harder to do. Thank you!

**Rebekah:** I invite anyone who's interested in participating in a beginner Slovak conversation group online to reach out to me at slovaskupina@gmail.com So far we're usually two or three people, but never dull.



## Beautifying the C.S.P.S. Grounds with Trees and Hops by Bob Kotek and Dave Stepan



Spring has sprung at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota! The beautification of the C.S.P.S. grounds continues. Building and Property Trustees Committee (BPTC) members gathered in mid-May to plant five trees, three Regal Prince Oaks and two Autumn Blaze Maples, on the western edge of the parking lot for enhanced beautification, fall color, and future shade of our outdoor space.

It wasn't as easy as hoped, due to a long-lost concrete footing, hunks of limestone, and building bricks. See Sokol Minnesota's Facebook for more pictures and video.

John Topic and Dave Stepan also restrung the hop lines for our three Saaz (Žatec) hop plants that John and President Lucy Rose planted two years ago.

BPTC team members include, (R-L) Dave Stepan, Dan Bednar, and Bob Kotek. Missing from the picture is John (Honza) Topic.

## Winning Poem by Gabriella Stoudt, Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant's First Princess

This poem was written about my grandparents and their story of immigration to the United States from what is now the Slovak Republic in 1968 after the Soviet Union invaded. I made this poem and recited it as a part of my talent for the 2024-2025 Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant where I received the title of First Princess. This poem holds a lot of emotion honoring the sacrifice my grandparents made to come to this country and what other Czechs and Slovaks may have done to give themselves a life of freedom and opportunity within this country.

1968. Defenseless against the Red Army. No negotiations,  
no fight, no struggle. Streets rattled, groaned, and cried out  
under the weight of the tanks that stormed the villages.  
What could we do, as they burned and ravaged.

All wealth we had gained was lost in their hands, our farm  
taken, left with nothing: a true member of the communist bloc.  
Dzede called. Get out my son, get out while you still can,  
before they wreak more havoc on your life and land.

Like a succulent lamb they wanted me

I needed to find the land of plenty, the land of the free,  
where my future would be free. But what is a future without  
your family?

Obedient daughter, I was cleaning the floors when a stranger  
entered our home. My eyes drew up in surprise at the hand-  
some man who had arrived, and found me on the floor cleaning.  
What a terrible first impression on a stranger in our home.

Embarrassment welled inside for the state of my appearance  
and yet sparks flickered in my heart.

This stranger could be someone to share in a life and a future,  
maybe a future beyond occupation.

Time passed and the safety of the village dwindled from  
continued occupation. My mother warned me: get out, get out  
while you still can. More is being taken each day  
and you have another place in the Americas you can stay.

You are not safe here, my dear you are not safe here.

Find the land of the plenty, the land of the free. Finding my  
way out in secret I fled. But left behind my family

In the darkness, behind closed doors, deals were made:  
take your VISA and overstay. Do not return it is not safe.

Names were scored with vehemence into a list: deserters,  
traitors to the communist state; our names were marked in  
deep flowing ink.

Ink that forbid our return, a gate barring us from our family:  
a final goodbye

Immigrants. A new name, a new label, a new  
identity.

Who are you when you are striped bare  
of all that you know in the world and thrust  
into someplace new?

Slovak. Family framed in memory, language  
still on the tongue and in our hearts. That is  
who we are

Within America, in Pennsylvania, others  
arrived who shared our tongue, our hurt, our  
fear. A village was created from all of the  
Slovaks who left everything behind for a  
better life outside and a new generation grew  
from its arms: my mother, born from their  
sacrifice into an opportunity to choose a life  
of freedom and prosperity.

### Sokol Minnesota Friendly Friday Evenings

Remember: Second Friday of each month,  
**Free drop-in**

**Friendly Friday**  
**7-10 p.m.**  
**August 9**

Family-friendly cards and board games,  
fun, food, and friends.

Bring your own beverages  
and/or snacks to share.

**This year's festival is Sunday, September 29, and you can help!**

## **Help Make Our 35th Annual Czech and Slovak Fall Festival a Success! by Joyce Tesarek**

### **Festival Volunteers Needed**

A variety of tasks are available, before, during, and after the event, for people of all skill and mobility levels. Tasks range from distributing flyers, baking, set-up, serving, selling, clean-up, and more. Enjoy fun and fellowship while supporting Sokol. For more information contact Joyce Tesarek at 612-232-2993 or email us at [festival@sokolmn.org](mailto:festival@sokolmn.org)

### **We Need Your Help with Festival Publicity**

Good turnout is another key ingredient for our success. If you are unable to assist in other ways, please be sure to promote the festival by telling others about it and emailing, posting, or distributing flyers within your circles of influence.

For more information email us at [festival@sokolmn.org](mailto:festival@sokolmn.org) Thank you!

### **Virtual Silent Auction Items Needed**

Would you like to help organize the silent auction? Do you have a new or gently used item (Czech/Slovak pottery, antique, household item, et cetera), want to create a theme basket (holiday, spa items, et cetera), or want to donate a gift certificate (weekend at your cabin, bake two dozen *koláče*)? Do you have a business or know of one that would donate a gift certificate we could auction? (Please collect business cards and we will display them next to the certificate.) Be creative! People love to shop. All income goes to restore our historic C.S.P.S. Hall.

Contact Denise Stibal at 763-647-0563 or email us at [festival@sokolmn.org](mailto:festival@sokolmn.org)

Check the website at [sokolmn.org](http://sokolmn.org) for more information.



Jim Taylor stirring booya.

### **Sokol Camp Booya Picnic**

Please join us for this long-standing tradition of Czech and Slovak food, music, and dance.

The Lipa Carpatho-Rusyn Slovak Dancers will entertain the crowd starting at 3 p.m., along with live concertina and guitar provided by Dave Carlson.

**WHAT: 94th annual Sokol Camp Booya Picnic**

**WHEN: Sunday, August 11, 2024.**

**Food and beverage service  
from noon until 4 p.m.**

**(campgrounds are open until 5 p.m.)**

**WHERE: Sokol Camp,  
19201 Woodland Acres South,  
Pine City, Minnesota 55063**

**WHO: Sokol brothers and sisters.**

**Event is open to the general public**

Volunteers are needed to help serve food,  
set up tables and tents, and clean up.

Call or text Kari Muyres at 763-226-0313.

### **Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors**

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota greatly appreciates your donations supporting Sokol programs and the maintenance of our historic C.S.P.S. Hall.

#### **GENERAL FUND**

**Under \$99:** Geneva Adams, Michaela Makarianova-Wentz, Pavlina Tesch, Richard Vanyo, Roger Wencel, Cindy Johnson, Lewis and Karolina Peterson, Nicholas Samicki.

**\$100-\$499:** Michael Sebek, Dave Stepan, Wayne Zbytovsky.

**\$1000-\$9999:** Don and Katie Haselbauer, Blackbaud Giving Fund.

**(In memory of Jim Chlebeczek):**

**Under \$99:** three anonymous cash donations, James and Barbara French, Richard Sargent, Pamela Langworthy, Jack and Lilian Boman, Steven and Mary Young, David and Yupa Dennis, Michael Dennis, Cynthia Nelson, Steven Liska, Richard and Sandra Salina, Sharon and John Liska.

**\$100-\$499:** Bradley and Terry Narr, Donald and Katie Haselbauer.

**\$500-\$999:** Joyce Tesarek.

**TOTAL \$5815**

#### **LEGACY FUND**

**Under \$99:** Becky Green, Marjorie Nejdí

**(In memory of Jim Chlebeczek):**

**Under \$99:** Pamela A Kotval.

**\$100-\$499:** M. L. Kucera.

**TOTAL \$230**

**OTHER (Cash or Merchandise)**

**Under \$99: (Cash):** Carol Richter, Delores Speidel.

**(Merchandise):** Blanka Brichta.

**(TM Dancers):** Emily Fiamova, Michaela Bachmayer.

**\$100-\$499: (Cash):** Virginia Simek.

**Scholarships for Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp):**

M. L. Kucera.

**TOTAL \$590**

**IN KIND DONATIONS (Czech and Slovak Cultural Day**

**Camp):** Katie Haselbauer, cooking supplies;

Doreen McKenney, craft supplies; Louise Wessinger, 25 books;

Glynis Grostephan, supplies for name badges.

Audio equipment that belonged to her dad, Gordy Prochaska, who passed away January 7, 2024: Sandy Prochaska.





## Christmas in July by Sally Lieberman

A baker's dozen of enthusiastic bakers participated in Míša Kotek's Christmas in July baking class at the C.S.P.S. Hall on July 14.

The group made beehive cookies, Linzer cookies, vanilla crescents, and small *vánočka* loaves. Everyone was particularly proud of their six-strand braided *vánočka*.

(Left) Roger Green, Becky Olson, Cheryl Nelson, and Joyce Tesarek. (Right) Instructor Míša Kotek, Henry and Constance Jandrich.



## Early Czech-American Music Sellers with Filip Šír and Martin Mejzr by Dave Stepan



On May 17, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota and the Czech and Slovak Culture Center of Minnesota hosted Filip Šír and Martin Mejzr from the National Museum in Prague, Czech Republic. They gave a Power-Point presentation on their long-term research in connection with the history of Czechs/Bohemians in the United States. In a lecture

entitled *Early Czech-American Music Sellers Focusing on Old Recordings for Bohemians*, they showed the varied sale and distribution of Czech music in Saint Paul, Minneapolis, and the nearby towns of Montgomery, New Prague, and Hopkins.

In their lecture, they summarized the selling of music on the oldest sound carriers (such as Edison phonograph cylinders or old 78 RPM records), especially in the largest cities of the United States, New York and Chicago.

They moved on to the Twin Cities and the individuals who sold the sound technologies, such as W. J. Smetana, M. A. David and A. J. Jelinek. Thanks to these sellers and businessmen (who had different professions such as jeweler

and druggist) Czechs in cities, towns, and villages in Minnesota could listen to their favorite songs at the beginning of the 20th century, whether they were Sokol songs, folk songs, polkas, or brass music. The researchers also showed other historical sources, such as advertisements from newspapers, directories, and census documents. Those attending were treated to a 100-plus-year-old recording of the Sokol song *Lvi silou* ("With the Strength of a Lion").

The presentation included a historic Edison phonograph and cylinders from the Sokol Minnesota collection. Filip Šír and Martin Mejzr would like to continue their research on Czechs in the Twin Cities region and plan to assist in preserving the Sokol Minnesota collection. If you have old records or phonograph cylinders at home, take a picture of them and contact [filipsir@gmail.com](mailto:filipsir@gmail.com) or reach out to [education@sokolmn.org](mailto:education@sokolmn.org)

(Left) Filip Šír with a historic Edison phonograph.

(Right) (L-R) Luboš Mareš escorted the researchers, Martin Mejzr holds a record, Joan Sedlacek gave a tour, and Filip Šír holds a cylinder.



## May and June Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board Highlights by Theresa Hudachek

### May 2024 Meeting

The May Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors (BOD) meeting commenced at 7 p.m. on May 16, 2024.

**Attendance:** Lucy Rose, Jean Draheim, Bob Kotek, Ed Hamernik, Sally Lieberman, Don Haselbauer, Joyce Tesarek, M. L. Kucera, Markéta Pálková, Mary Cahill, Steve Ernest, Jason Brozovich, Dennis Cahill, Dawn Bulera, and Theresa Hudachek were present.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the April meeting were reviewed and approved with corrections.

### Discussions:

- **Rental Deposit/Correspondence Process:** Dawn Bulera presented information on how rental fees and communication with external

renters are currently handled.

- **Kristýna Horáčková stipend:** The board approved a motion to contribute a stipend and potentially gas and meal reimbursements for Kristýna Horáčková, who will be teaching Czech at the culture camp.

- **Filip Šír Honorarium:** The board approved a motion to pay an honorarium to Filip Šír for his presentation on Bohemian music sellers.

- **Large-Scale Fine Artwork:** The board discussed how to proceed with large-scale artwork like scenery side panels and backdrops. Jean Draheim will research the cost of producing replicas and cleaning/repairing existing ones.

- **Large-Scale Fine Arts Presentation:** The board approved a motion to contribute to

refreshments for the large-scale fine arts presentation on July 21, 2024.

### Reports:

- **Board of Instructors:** Mary Cahill and Jason Brozovich reported on recent gymnastics activities, including participation in the Western District *Slet* and the end-of-year celebration. There is ongoing planning for instructors next year after losing four to graduation.

- **Building and Trustee Committee:** Bob Kotek reported on the results of an HVAC audit by Xcel Energy. He also commented on the need to plan for boiler replacement and acquiring a new state flag.

Meeting notes continued on page 9.



### May Sokol BOD Meeting continued

- **Education:** Sally Lieberman provided updates on various educational events, including Maškrtnica baking classes, the Polish journalist Mariusz Szczygieł event, a mushroom hunt, and upcoming language classes. The board approved an honorarium for Miša Kotek and funding for supplies for the Christmas in July baking class.
- **Finance:** Joyce Tesarek reported she is working on a meeting schedule to accommodate the new treasurer.
- **Membership:** Steve Ernest presented five new membership applications, which were approved.
- **Gaming:** Ed Hamernik presented motions for approval of the June expense budget, April expenditures, and a transfer to Sokol, which were all approved.
- **Sunshine Committee:** Arlene Hamernik reported that sympathy cards were sent to Jodi Monder and Jim Chlebeczek following the passing of James Chlebeczek.
- **Activities:** Jeannie Draheim reported on upcoming events.

### June 2024 Meeting

The Sokol Board of Directors (BOD) convened on June 20, 2024, at 7:03 p.m.

**Attendance:** Joyce Tesarek, Jean Draheim, Theresa Hudachek, Bob Kotek, Ed Hamernik, Lucy Rose, Sally Lieberman, Steve Ernest, Silvia Magana, and Fred Simon were present.

**Student Music Performance Inquiry:** The board discussed a request from Savanna Larson, a Minnetonka High School student interested in performing Czech and Slovak music at C.S.P.S. Hall. Lucy Rose will follow up with Ms. Larson about possibly performing at a Sokol event.

### Proposed Czech Short Story Author Event:

Jeannie Draheim presented a proposal to co-sponsor a visit by a Czech short story author, translator, and guide. The event will potentially take place on October 4 in the second-floor dining room. Sally Lieberman will gather more information for further consideration.

### Committee Reports

- **Building and Trustee (Bob Kotek):** A window air conditioning unit was installed in the dining room. The city approved the plan for replacing large windows on Western Avenue. Elevator maintenance will transition to All City Elevator, Inc., on July 1. A grant from the J. A. Wedum Foundation was received for elevator and heating system maintenance. A security camera system was installed by Pajarito, with the possibility of adding cameras in the parking lot.
- **Education (Sally Lieberman):** The May 21 mushroom hunt was successful. The first VU3V course on mushrooms concluded with good participation. A teaching in-service focused on teaching beginners was held for language instructors. Upcoming events include a Bohemian Flats Park gathering and a Christmas in July baking class. Fall language class registration will open in August.
- **Finance (Joyce Tesarek):** A motion to transfer funds from checking to an Insured Cash Sweep (ICS) account was approved. There was a discussion regarding co-sponsored events with the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota (CSCC).

A form will be drafted to aid the planning and approval process for such events.

- **Membership (Steve Ernest):** A new membership application was approved.
- **Gaming (Ed Hamernik):** Three motions regarding the July budget, February expenditures, and May report were all approved.
- **Corresponding Secretary (Bonnie Simon):** An additional donation to the General Fund in memory of Jim Chlebeczek was reported.
- **Sunshine Committee (Arlene Hamernik):** Cards were sent to graduating high school seniors, and flowers were sent to Mestenhauser and Shima funerals.
- **Activities (Jeannie Draheim):** Information will soon be requested for fall postcards. A brief report on the Hubal presentation (July 21) was provided. Training on moving backdrops is being planned.
- **Stage Committee (Jeannie Draheim):** Backdrop cleaning costs will be included in a future grant request.

### Other Items

- Fred Simon reported on a visit from the Czech National Museum and the Czech Heritage Club's participation in the International Festival in Faribault, July 13.
- The 90th Annual Kolacky Days in Montgomery will be held July 26-28.



## CZECH HERITAGE FESTIVAL

**Sunday, August 11, 2024 Bechyn, MN**

**Polka Mass 10 a.m. | Czech Dinner 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.**  
**Raffle Drawing & Festival Ends 4:30 p.m.**

**Stop by Sokol Minnesota's Gift Shop's Sales Booth!**

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[www.BechynCzechFest.org](http://www.BechynCzechFest.org) [Facebook.com/BechynMinnesotaWorld](https://Facebook.com/BechynMinnesotaWorld)

### Slovo Publication Information and Committees

The *Slovo* is published ten times per year by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, a non-profit organization, 383 West Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102. Phone: 651-290-0542.

### Sokol Minnesota members receive the *Slovo* with their membership.

To receive your *Slovo* in color via email instead of the black-and-white mail version, contact [slovo@sokolmn.org](mailto:slovo@sokolmn.org)

**Non-member *Slovo* subscription: \$20 annually.** Please include name, address, phone number, and email address with a \$20 check payable to Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota; mail to *Slovo* at the above address.

The *Slovo* staff welcomes submissions.

**Copy deadline for each issue is the first day of the prior month.** Send news, articles, and pictures digitally to [slovo@sokolmn.org](mailto:slovo@sokolmn.org)

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The *Slovo* is bulk mailed; non-deliverable copies are not forwarded or held by the post office. Non-delivered copies are returned to Sokol Minnesota and billed to us at the first-class mail rate. For this reason, we will not send issues until we have a current, correct mailing address on record for you.

### Member volunteer *Slovo* staff:

***Slovo* team:** Mary Cahill, Kelly Rynda, and Joyce Tesarek.

**Co-managing and copy editor:** Kelly Rynda.

**Production layout:** Mary Kucera.

**Mailing:** Mary Cahill and Joan Sedlacek.

**Mailing/Email lists:** Penny and Tom Tesarek.

**Minnesota ad designer:** Doreen McKenney (1, 4, 5, 9, 12).

**August issue contributors:** Lucy Brudnak Rose, Arlene Hamernik, Theresa Hudachek, Bob Kotek, M. L. Kucera, Sally Lieberman, Doreen McKenney, Kari Muyres, Jitka Sebek, Bonnie Simon, Dave Stepan, Gabriella Stoudt, Joyce Tesarek, Louise Wessinger, and Gwen Willems.

**August issue photographs, ads, or illustrations:** Lenka Mišíková, Doreen McKenney, M. L. Kucera, Gary Lofquist, Joan Sedlacek, Dave Stepan, and Joyce Tesarek.

**More information at [www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org)**

*A Brief History of Living Forever: A Novel* by Jaroslav Kalfař. Little, Brown and Company, New York, NY, 320 pages, 2023. Available at libraries and bookstores.

Do you want to live forever? The reader is given much to ponder in this futuristic fictional view of immortality in *A Brief History of Living Forever: A Novel* by Jaroslav Kalfař. Fasten your safety lap bars, readers; this complicated roller coaster ride is about to begin.

The book is set in a dark future of America and the Czech Republic in a world ruled by autocrats since the overthrow of democracy and passing of the American Reclamation Act, now filled with militia, floods, tsunamis, immigration bans, fistfights on airplanes, and the invasion of Ukraine. Kalfař, who lives in New York, takes contemporary issues in an extreme dystopian direction.

In *Living Forever*, Kalfař intersperses chapters set in the near future (2029 and 2030) with those from 1978–1989 that fill in the history of our protagonist and narrator, Adéla Slavíková. Years earlier, Adéla starred in a new movie about Karel Čapek's book, *War with the Newts*. Kalfař delves quite extensively into newts as a metaphor for human-like beings treated inhumanely, as people are in *Living Forever*.

Adéla was just told by a doctor that she will die within a year. She is also fired from her check-out job at the German market Kaufland in the Czech Republic, where she will be replaced by a robot. With no prospects, she decides to leave her unsatisfying and unhappy life in the dismal village of Hluboká nad Vltavou and go to America to find the daughter she gave up for adoption forty years ago.

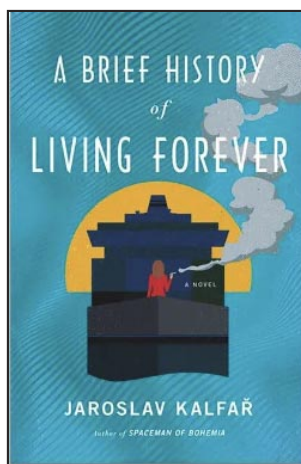
To Adéla's pleasant surprise, her daughter Tereza is pleased to see her when she shows up at Tereza's office in New York. She works as a bioengineer for the VITA corporation, "in pursuit of the company's promise to prolong human life, cure entropic diseases, and, someday, make our species immortal." Adéla thought this "sounded like a fairy tale—what kind of a maniac would want to live forever?—but as long as my daughter was happy and well paid in the booming permanence sector, I was content." Fans of VITA considered the corporation a key to a transhumanist utopia.

The leaders of VITA are twin brothers Steven and Mike, who were created in a laboratory from a frozen-sperm cocktail of important men's DNA. Steven and Mike's dream project and big success was hWisper, the first device to connect directly to human neural pathways. It operates like millions of internal computers connected through cellular network towers throughout the planet.

Within VITA's Division of Permanence, four types of experts were pursuing options for immortality: "cryonicists, or sleeping beauties; those who wanted to merge machine and flesh, known as the Borgs; the singularitarians, who

believed the mind to be transferable into Os and Is, digitized souls; and Tereza's people, the meat grinders, who believed the key to longevity rested solely in the body."

Unexpectedly, Adéla dies later in the day she visits her daughter. Her body is rushed off by VITA, and as the cryonicists begin to freeze Adéla's body, they encounter an unprecedented phenomenon. Adéla is presumed dead, but a part of her brain continues to function long enough for VITA to do a thorough mapping of it that is later significant.



Tereza returns to the Czech Republic, and she and her brother Roman start an adventure to find their mother's body. Going from Europe to the swamplands of Florida, they discover Adéla's calm but disfigured and frozen body submerged in a blue cryonic fluid in a black chamber.

After her body finally dies, VITA has a perfect virtual recreation of her via brain mapping. The corporation declares her the first immortal, a digital spirit of all that Adéla was when mortal, one that would continue to remember and reach out digitally. Was that utopia or nightmare?

The author, who moved to the United States at fifteen, is a popular rising star of contemporary Czech fiction. "I love odd books that play with genre expectations," Kalfař wrote, and "reflect the strangest parts of life which can be found both in the mundane and the extraordinary." I share a plot outline in this review, but you should still find the book a fascinating read of Kalfař's rich and complex ideas.

This book and his first novel, the award-winning *Spaceman of Bohemia*, are extremely different in topic and style. I am not a particular fan of dystopias, but as with *Spaceman of Bohemia*, Kalfař's excellent writing skills, inspired imagination, grasp of absurdity, and sense of humor benefit *Living Forever*.

I especially appreciated Kalfař's wit in *Living Forever*, such as his amusing description of custom books created for each reader. Using extensive data about the reader's preferences, the publishers would produce a perfectly tailored story "containing all of the reader's favorite things, quality-checked and *humanized* by a team of writers." The book would not offend, bore, or be difficult for the reader.

Gwen is coordinator of the Czech and Slovak Literary Ventures book discussion group. Literary Ventures is cosponsored by the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and the Office of the Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic. Find information and updates at [cs-center.org](http://cs-center.org) or contact [gwen@cs-center.org](mailto:gwen@cs-center.org).

Literary Ventures is on summer break. For the new year's schedule, check [cs-center.org](http://cs-center.org) in late summer.



# Czech Honorary Consul News

August 2024

The official "Family Picture" (right) of the 169 Czech Honorary Consuls from 90 countries who convened June 19-21 in Prague, for the fourth world-wide meeting since the formation of the Czech Republic in 1993. That first meeting took place in 2008. The Czech diplomatic service currently has 230 functioning Czech honorary consulates around the world.



Special music, in this Year of Czech Music, to the ears of Czechs living abroad, is that voting by mail was finally approved by the Parliament while we were in Prague.

The meeting was opened by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jan Lipavský, who welcomed the honorary consuls at the Czernin Palace. "Let me first of all thank you for your dedicated work and tireless efforts to represent and create a positive image of Czechia in the countries of your competence." The Minister also spoke about the irreplaceable role of honorary consulates in the Czech foreign service.



The seemingly easy task of gathering together the 17 American Honorary Consuls, all in Prague at the same time at the same meetings, for one picture was easier said than done. (L-R) Slobodan Popovic (Phoenix), Alexander Montanaro (Philadelphia), Jitka Putra, (Deputy, Miami), Lenka Hořáková (Little Rock), Frank Nosek (Anchorage), Sharon Valasek (Kansas City), Richard Pivnicka (San Francisco), Marit Lee Kucera (Minneapolis), Brian Vanicek (Houston), and Martin P. Pospíšil (New Orleans).



Three hours later, five additional honorary consuls posed for a second photo, joining five who were in the original picture, but we still missed Marie Amicci (Portland) and Myrna Božena Murdoch (Honolulu). (L-R) Richard Pivnicka (San Francisco), Monika Vintřlíková (Atlanta), Lenka Hořáková (Little Rock), Robin Robert Zoufalík (Pittsburgh), Jonathan Tichy (Salt Lake City), Mila Šásková-Pierce (Lincoln), Igor Lukeš (Boston), Marit Lee Kucera (Minneapolis), Sharon Valasek (Kansas City), and Alexander Montanaro (Philadelphia). In total there are 25 Czech honorary consuls in the United States, more than in any other country.

The honorary consuls' sessions focused on consular, compatriots, and cultural agendas as well as economic and scientific diplomacy. After day-long meetings on Wednesday, June 19, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Czernin Palace, the honorary consuls were received in the evening by Senate President Miloš Vystrčil at Wallenstein Palace, the seat of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic.

Thursday, June 20, meetings included a session with Prime Minister Petr Fiala. The Farewell Reception in the gardens of the Czernin Palace included short personal visits on my part with Petr Gandalovič, Ambassador to the United States (2011 to 2017), and Jaroslav Kantůrek, Consul General/Chicago (2019 to 2023).

My day-long excursion on Friday, June 21, was a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Site, near Pardubice, of the National Stud Kladruby nad Labem, home of the Kladruber horses, ceremonial carriage horses since the late 16th century. My group also toured the Winternitz Automatic Mills National Cultural Monument in Pardubice, the conversion of a flour mill (1909 - 2013) to multipurpose uses to meet 21st century interests and needs.

<https://eastbohemiafilloffice.cz/en/locations/automatic-mills-pardubice>



Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic  
in Minneapolis, MN

Marit Lee Kucera, Honorary Consul  
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minneapolis@honorary.mzv.cz  
or mlkucera@outlook.com



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

We ask for your support for maintenance and renovation to C.S.P.S. Hall as we celebrate the Hall's 137th year in 2024. Contact Joyce Tesarek to discuss your tax-deductible donation: 612-232-2993 or email: [finance@sokolmn.org](mailto:finance@sokolmn.org) *Thank you!*

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For status of events scheduled for the C.S.P.S. Hall, check our calendar at  
[sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/hall-calendar/](http://sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/hall-calendar/)

## Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *SLOVO* August 2024

### June - August 2024

Czech and Slovak Gift Shop  
by appointment only:  
[giftshop@sokolmn.org](mailto:giftshop@sokolmn.org)



Jak se máš?



Merchandise is owned by Sokol and run by Volunteers

### Kolo Sokol Bike Club

#### Scheduled ride dates 2024:

- May 19
- June 16
- July 21
- August 18
- September 15
- October 20



Rides are 2-3  
hours long.  
Third Sunday  
of each month.  
Meet and leave  
at the C.S.P.S. Hall  
at 10 a.m.  
Info:  
[sokolmn.org/bike](http://sokolmn.org/bike)