



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

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

March 2025 *Slovo* articles due February 1

**Sokol Singers**

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-noon  
First and Third Tuesdays February 4, 18  
March 4, 18

**Make Valentines for Seniors**

with Sokol Minnesota Youth Link  
Saturday, February 8,  
Noon-2 p.m.

**Summer Language Study in the Czech Republic**

Online informational meeting  
Monday, February 10,  
7 p.m. See page 3

**Friendly Friday Evening Social**

Friday, February 14,  
7 p.m. See page 3

**Czech Puppet Performances**

Friday, March 21,  
7 p.m., thriller for adults  
Saturday, March 22,  
Noon, for children and teens (bilingual).

Use this QR code to sokolmn.org



**urban expedition**  
passport to adventure • 2025

**Sunday**  
**February 23**  
**1-3 p.m.**



LANDMARK  
C E N T E R



Landmark Center's beloved Urban Exposition program invites families to explore traditional Czech Republic and Slovak Republic cultures for **FREE** right in the heart of Saint Paul, through music, dance, cuisine, arts, and crafts.

This Landmark event is supported by Ecolab, Hubbard Broadcasting, Xcel Energy Foundation, Travelers, and Ramsey County.

**Flavors of Slovakia Dinner**  
**Sunday, March 9** **20 25** Serving 12:30p.m. (doors open 12n)



\$35 per person

Soup, Traditional Slovak *Bryndzové halušky* (potato dumplings, *bryndza* cheese, and bacon), *holubky* (cabbage roll), dessert, coffee.



Payment: Prepay with credit/debit card by reserving online at [www.sokolmn.org/cc/](http://www.sokolmn.org/cc/) or reserve and pay by check  
Voice/text: 651-210-0401 (Pay and reserve by March 2)



Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, 383 Michigan St., Saint Paul, MN

## Prezidentčín komentář/President's Notes by Bob Kotek

It's a new year, 2025, and I would like to provide a brief introduction of myself for the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota membership as I begin my term as president.

I was born and raised in the Montgomery area, the son of fourth-generation Czech parents; my ancestors first arrived and homesteaded land just outside of New Prague in 1860. Czech was the primary language of my parents, but unfortunately my siblings and I did not maintain that part of our heritage. My dad always referred to our heritage as "Bohemian," as was common back in the day. We enjoyed Czech cuisine, Kolacky Days, and many Czech customs.

My wife Michaela (Míša) was born in Czechoslovakia (before the Velvet Divorce with Slovakia) and, together with our children, we were able to realize a long-term desire of mine to live in the Czech Republic for three years, 2014–2017. We lived in Míša's hometown of Ostrava and traveled throughout the country, as well as to many other countries around the world.

Upon our return, I became more involved at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, beginning with small volunteer opportunities. In 2020, I began a nearly five-year role as chair of the Building and Property Trustees Committee (BPTC). This proved to be a special time for me. With our very dedicated group of volunteers, we accomplished many improvements and enhancements to the building. Through this role, I became acquainted with many aspects of the Sokol organization, the people involved, and their efforts to develop and deliver all the wonderful activities and events for Sokol membership and the general public.

I would like to recognize the following Sokol members who have volunteered to fill Board of Director positions beginning in 2025: Lucy Rose (Recording Secretary), Tereza Treaner (Publicity Director), Denise Stibal (Corresponding Secretary), and Dave Stepan (Chair, Building and Property Trustees Committee). Lucy and Dave, as past presidents of Sokol Minnesota, continue to play vital roles in our organization.

I also want to share that we have a new neighbor in our West Seventh neighborhood! On December 18, I attended the grand opening of Viengchan Oriental Market, a new Asian grocery store that opened in the former home of Cooper's Foods, directly across the street from the C.S.P.S. Hall. During the dedication, the owners talked of their own journey as immigrants coming to the United States. This made me think of our own ancestors arriving in a new country over 160 years ago with the same hopes and dreams for a new life. *Nazdar!*



On Friday December 3, along with two of my Sokol Minnesota presidential predecessors, Dave Stepan and Lucy Rose, we welcomed Pader Heurh Vang, one of the Viengchan store owners, to the neighborhood. Pader was very interested to hear about the Czech and Slovak immigrants who first came to this area over 150 years ago. We presented her with a copy of Joe Landsberger's 400+-page book, *Origin Story of Fort Road*. Not pictured: M. L. Kucera, Honorary Czech Consul, who accompanied us and took this picture.

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)



Use this QR code to go to [sokolmn.org](http://sokolmn.org)

## Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 2025 BOD (Board of Directors)

President  
Bob Kotek

Vice President  
Fred Simon

Recording Secretary  
Lucy Brudnak Rose

Corresponding Secretary  
Denise Stibal

Treasurer  
Barbara Skrivanek

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Markéta Pálková  
Don Haselbauer

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Committee  
Joyce Tesarek, Chair

Activities Director  
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Educational Director  
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Marketa Pálková

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Physical Director  
Jason Brozovich

Building and Property  
Trustees Committee  
Dave Stepan, Chair

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Ed Hamernik

Telephone: 651-290-0542

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



## Urban Expedition: Passport to Adventure by Louise Wessinger

On **Sunday, February 23**, from 1 to 3 p.m., the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic will be highlighted at the beautiful Landmark Center on Rice Park in downtown Saint Paul at 75 Fifth Street West.

This is a family-oriented, free event. There will be a stage program with St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, Sokol Minnesota *Taneční Mládež* (children) and *Taneční* Teens dancers, Lipa Carpatho-Rusyn Slovak Dancers, St. Paul South Bohemian Bagpipe Ensemble, and Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota queens and ambassadors. There will also be vendors, arts and crafts, children's activities, food, information tables, and more from several of the Czech and Slovak organizations. Urban Expedition is always a popular and very well-attended event. Czechs and Slovaks were last honored with this Urban Expedition opportunity in 2011. Please join us for a wonderful time. <https://www.landmarkcenter.org/urban-expedition/>

Contact Louise if your organization would like to have an information or sales table or with other questions: 651-271-3601 or [louisewessinger@msn.com](mailto:louisewessinger@msn.com)

## Bulletin Board at Sokol Minnesota



in the  
Parking  
Lot  
Entry  
Lobby

Flyers for upcoming and ongoing Sokol Minnesota events, cleverly created by Doreen McKenney who is Sokol Minnesota's volunteer inhouse Graphic Designer, let both members and guests to C.S.P.S. Hall know what is happening. Next time you are at C.S.P.S. Hall, check it out!!!



## Friendly Fridays: Fun, Games, Laughs, Snacks

On the second Friday evenings of each month, Friendly Fridays at Sokol Minnesota are fun with games, plus a lot of laughs, snacks, and friendly card and board games. Luboš Mareš is our Friendly Friday director and *maryaš* card whiz. Members bring crackers, cheese, dips, cookies, beverages, and sometimes tiny homemade pizzas.

Join in this relaxing and socializing fun on **February 14**, 7 p.m.

On **March 14**, Saint Paul historian Joe Landsberger speaks about his new book, *Origin Story of Fort Road/West Seventh Street, the Township/City of Saint Paul, the Territory/State of Minnesota, Glacial Age Forward*, 7-8 p.m.; socializing to follow.

It was a lucky Friday the 13th for all who attended in December. (L-R) Dave Stepan, Markéta Pálková, and Linda Maxey, John Topic, Renáta Tichá, and Luboš Mareš. Not pictured: M. L. Kucera, photographer.

## Summer Language Study in the Czech Republic: Programs and Scholarships

Online Informational Meeting  
Monday, February 10, 7 p.m.

Learn about opportunities for a month of study in the Czech Republic this summer, including language classes, cultural activities, day trips, and more.

Details will be provided for applying for scholarships.

Speakers: Ondřej Pometlo, Deputy Consul General, Czech Consulate in Chicago; Tim Kojetin and Theresa Hudachek, 2024 Participants; with a welcome from M. L. Kucera, Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis.

Prior to the meeting, visit this page for the Zoom link:  
<https://sokolmn.org/czech-language-institute-in-podebrady/>

Sokol Minnesota Youth Link



## Valentines For Seniors

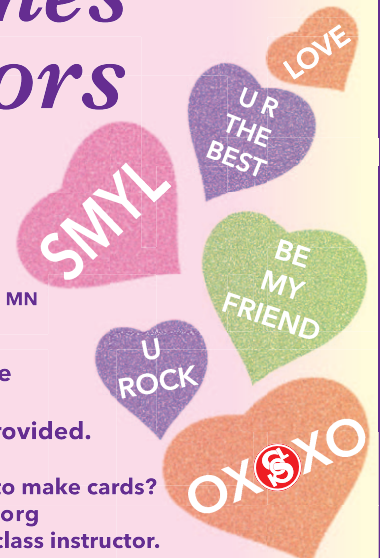
Saturday  
February 8 <sup>20</sup>25  
12 - 2 p.m.

383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, MN

Drop by the dining room  
starting at 12 p.m to make  
cards for seniors.

Art supplies and snack provided.

Interested in volunteering to make cards?  
Contact: [youths@sokolmn.org](mailto:youths@sokolmn.org)  
or teens sign up with your class instructor.



## 2025 Leaders Elected at Sokol Minnesota's Annual Membership Meeting in November

### by Joyce Tesarek

The annual meeting of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota was held on Friday, November 22, at our C.S.P.S. Hall. President Lucy Rose welcomed members, listed the many accomplishments of our unit in 2024, and read the names of members who had 5, 10, 15 to 70 years of membership (see list on page 5, *Slovo*, December 2024-January 2025 issue).

Each November, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota holds its Annual Membership Meeting, with half the Board of Directors up for election or re-election. Most Board positions are for two years. Some officer positions, such as president, vice president, and secretaries have term limits of (two) two-year terms. Committee chairs are elected to serve on the Board. Members of the Building and Property Trustees Committee, (BPTC), Budget and Finance Committee, and Gaming Board are elected on a three-year cycle with no term limits. Our representatives to the American Sokol Western District are also elected, but Men's and Women's Physical Directors are automatic representatives to WD.

The 2025 Nominating Committee, comprised of Lucy Rose, Fred Simon, Dave Stepan, Joyce Tesarek, and Louise Wessinger, started work in late September 2024 to fill 2025 open positions. Vice President Fred Simon read the slate at the November 22 meeting; the nominees were unanimously approved by acclamation and then installed.

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota's 2025 officers and leaders are Bob Kotek, President; Fred Simon,

Vice President; Lucy Brudnak Rose, Recording Secretary; Denise Stibal, Corresponding Secretary; Steve Ernest, Membership Director; Tereza Treanor, Publicity Director; Markéta Pálková, Director at Large; Jason Brozovich, Men's and Women's Physical Directors; Joyce Tesarek, Budget and Finance Committee Chair; Sally Lieberman, Educational Director; Dave Stepan (new Chair), Lloyd Krocak, and Gary Zweber, Building and Property Trustees Committee; Marlene Hinshaw and Bob Kostichka, Board of Gaming Committee; Richard Sargent and Dave Stepan, Budget and Finance Committee members; Mary Cahill, M.L. Kucera, Joan Sedlacek, Delegates to Sokol Western District.

Board of Directors members not up for re-election and continuing on the Board are Bonnie Simon, Corresponding Secretary; Barbara Skrivanek, Treasurer; Jean Draheim, Activities Director; Silvia Magana, Sergeant at Arms; Don Haselbauer, Director at Large; Ed Hamernik, Gaming Manager.

A grateful thanks to all our Sokol leaders, past and present, for volunteering their time and expertise, plus leading Sokol Minnesota so well.

### Board of Directors Forming New Membership Committee

Current members are invited to become more involved in Sokol Minnesota by joining the newly forming committee on membership. This committee will review how members join and renew, how we communicate about and participate in Sokol activities and opportunities, and how we recognize contributions and achievements.

If you have questions about this committee or are interested in being on the committee, please contact [steve.ernest@sokolmn.org](mailto:steve.ernest@sokolmn.org).

Frequency and format of meetings (in-person/online/hybrid) will be decided as the committee forms in the coming weeks.

## Spring Pancake Breakfast Craft and *Koláče* Bake Sale

**Sunday, April 13** 20  
25  
**9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

**Ordering *koláče***  
*Place your prepaid koláče order by Sunday, April 6*  
Apricot, cream cheese, poppy seed, prune, or raspberry *koláč* \$2 each  
Prepay order online by credit/debit card, go to: [www.sokolmn.org/cc/](http://www.sokolmn.org/cc/) or Voice/text: 651-210-0401 if paying by check.  
Vendor information contact: [activities@sokolmn.org](mailto:activities@sokolmn.org)

Pancakes (all-you-can-eat), sausage, fruit cup, juice, and coffee.  
\$10 Adult  
\$6 child under 9  
\$30/family of 4  
Public welcome.  
No reservation needed.

Hosted by  
Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota  
383 Michigan St., Saint Paul, MN



### RENEW YOUR SOKOL MINNESOTA MEMBERSHIP FOR 2025

If you have not yet renewed your membership in Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota for 2025, please return the renewal form mailed to you or save a stamp by using our online membership page at [www.sokolmn.org/membership](http://www.sokolmn.org/membership) to:

- Pay your 2025 dues
- Update your contact information
- Share your ideas and feedback
- Update the activities where you have interest in participating or attending

Please renew your membership as soon as possible and continue being part of our Sokol family in 2025!



## Sokol Singers Performance at Lexington Landing by Pam Langworthy

On December 3, 2024, the Sokol Singers performed at Lexington Landing, a senior residence on West 7th and Lexington in Saint Paul.

The Sokol Singers sang marches, waltzes, polkas, and Christmas carols in Czech and Slovak. The residents enthusiastically participated in a sing-along in English of patriotic songs and Christmas carols. *Koláče* made at the C.S.P.S. Hall were a special treat for the residents.

Sokol Singers and also the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers perform at Lexington Landing to show appreciation to the J.A. Wedum Foundation, which has given Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota over \$30,000 in grants over the past four years. The J.A. Wedum Foundation has developed several residences of choice for seniors, including Lexington Landing.



(Front L-R) Libby Imbrone, Claire Press, Marlene Hinshaw, and Pam Langworthy.  
 (Back) Ann Janda, Don Haselbauer, Louise Wessinger, Richard Sargent,  
 Bob Kostichka, Dave Stepan, John Topic, Ken Janda, and Diane Bell.  
 Not pictured: Doreen McKenney, photographer.

### Czech Puppeteer Coming March 21-22

The Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and the local Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic are pleased to jointly sponsor two puppet performances at C.S.P.S. Hall:

*The Care*, Friday, March 21, 7 p.m. for adults and

*Muahahaha!*, Saturday, March 22, 12 noon for children and teens.

Light refreshments will be provided.

The performances and puppets have been designed and will be conducted by Czech artist, Marie Černíková, PhD (*Bio Masha*) from the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen.

Performances are **FREE** thanks to a generous donation from the Consulate of the Czech Republic/Chicago.

For more information:  
<https://cs-center.org/events/>

**MARCH 22, 2025**

**MARIE ČERNÍKOVÁ (BIO MASHA)**

**Performance**

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At C.S.P.S. Hall  
383 W Michigan,  
St. Paul, MN 55102

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Saturday,  
March 22, 2025  
12:00 PM

## June 25-29 2025

# CHICAGO

★
★
★
★

XXV AMERICAN SOKOL SLET

## KIDS COLD OUTSIDE?

### Gymnastics Classes

## Ongoing and Available

Gymnastics classes for boys and girls continue through Winter!

For more information, please visit [www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/sokol\\_fitness/](http://www.sokolmn.org/at-our-hall/sokol_fitness/)

## COME INDOORS OUT OF THE COLD AND GET ACTIVE WITH GYMNASTICS AT THE C.S.P.S. HALL!



## 2024 Sokol Children's Holiday Party by Louise Wessinger

The Sokol Minnesota Children's Holiday Party was held Friday evening, December 6. Louise Wessinger, Folk Dance Director, was sick that day; not wanting to pass illness to others, she did not attend. Louise feels very fortunate that her Sokol friends were so kind and made sure the party went on!



The Sokol Singers opened the program with several wonderful Czech and Slovak holiday carols. Special thanks to the Singers coordinator Pam Langworthy, technical specialist Richard Sargent, and pianist Don Haselbauer. Also, thanks to the Czech and Slovak "Moms" who joined the Singers.



The *Taneční Mládež* dancers were led by Emily Fiamova, Louise's wonderful helper who is mom to Mason in this group; she also dances with the Lipa Carpatho-Rusyn Slovak Dancers. John Topic and Mike Topic from the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, the adult dance group, helped the *Taneční Teens*. All of the dancers did a great job. Louise is very proud of how the dancers handled dancing without their director. Thank you, parents, for bringing your children and giving them the opportunity to learn about their heritages. Of course, the evening would not have been complete without a visit from *Svatý Mikuláš* (Saint Nicholas), *Anděl* (Angel), and *Čert* (Devil). All the children signed the Book of Good Children and were rewarded with a bag of goodies. Even though *Čert* tried to give them spoiled vegetables to win them over to the dark side, he did not succeed. Thank you to those who made all this magic of the evening happen: especially Jason Brozovich, Darnell Stepan, Dave Stepan, and Glynis Grostephan and family.



### Czech Christmas Baking by Joyce Tesarek

On December 5, Markéta Pálková and her baking team of Karolína Bílá, Renáta Scholtz, Dáša Rosenthal, and Adriana Wenberg baked 20 *vánočky* (Christmas breads) and 21 *makovky* (poppy seed rolls). Eight smaller *vánočky* were made for the volunteers at the *škola Mikuláš* event on December 7.

Again, this year's proceeds from the sales of these breads went to support Sokol Minnesota activities. Thank you to these bakers!

1. Renáta Scholtz and Dáša Rosenthal rolling dough. 2. Markéta Pálková applying egg wash. 3. Beautiful loaves after baking.

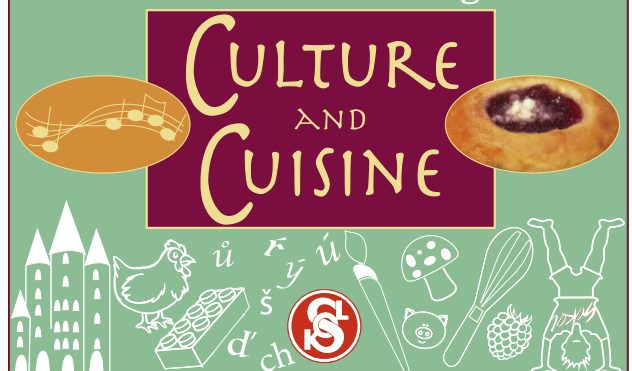
**February 15: Deadline for applications for 36th Annual Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant for Royalty and Junior Ambassadors.**

<https://www.facebook.com/MissCzechSlovakMN> and [MissCzechSlovakMinnesotaPageant.com](https://www.facebook.com/MissCzechSlovakMinnesotaPageant.com)

### Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp

June 16-20 2025

Online registration is open  
[www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org)





## Mikuláš at Škola by Jitka Sebek

In Minnesota, Thanksgiving seems to mark the beginning of the holiday season. For others, it begins with Advent, and for the Czech and Slovak community,



it is *Mikuláš* (Saint Nicholas). With the first snow, the tradition of small gifts and the enchanting trio of Saint Nicholas, the angel, and the devil, we eagerly anticipate the joy, generosity, and togetherness of the festive season.

This year, we proudly celebrated the 20th anniversary of our *Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities/Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities* community's *Mikuláš* event on December 7. Tracing its origins to a humble family gathering, our celebration quickly grew, and eventually found its home at the historic C.S.P.S. Hall. Our *škola* community's *Mikuláš* celebrations have been filled with heartfelt stories and fond memories.

A highlight of every celebration is the thoughtfully prepared potluck dinner featuring traditional holiday foods, caroling with our budding musicians, and the sharing of cherished traditions with children and friends.

This year, our young musicians performed beautifully, carrying on the tradition without their SlovCzech adult mentors.

*Mikuláš* has spoken to hundreds of children over the years, mostly in Czech and Slovak, but also in English, Hungarian, and even Japanese! His messages build memories with stories more unique than the popular "you are a nice boy, but please don't fight with your older sister" and "you're a lovely girl, but try to be kinder to your younger brother."



After 20 years, *Mikuláš* remains one of our *škola* community's most beloved traditions, a celebration well worth the effort. Be sure to join us for the next *Mikuláš* event in December 2025, as we continue to create more cherished memories together.

## Montgomery's Third Annual Svatý Mikuláš Celebration by Jean Keogh



Montgomery, in the heart of Czech Country Minnesota, held its third annual *Svatý Mikuláš* celebration on Sunday, December 8, 2024, highlighting our Czech Christmas heritage and culture. Sokol Minnesota members Vi Chromy, Anne Jans, and Jean Keogh were members of the Montgomery *Svatý Mikuláš* event committee.

Following tradition, Saint Nicholas (*Svatý Mikuláš*), the angel (*anděl*), and the devil (*d'ábel*) greeted the children, who were given bags of treats and a wooden toy, after proclaiming they had been very good during the whole year.

More than 150 guests enjoyed everything from favorite holiday and old-time tunes by Colton Tupy and Gary Pikal on their concertinas to several door-prize drawings, make-and-take crafts with the Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant royalty, tasty Czech food, and Sharon Cartway Belgians & Wagon Rides took visitors on sight-seeing rides through town. Everyone was delighted with the great folk dancing by the Sokol Minnesota's *Taneční* Teens (photos left) and also the Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers who engaged the audience to dance with them (photo right). Among the vendors were the Sokol Gift Shop and several Sokol members: Czech Sis Kitchen (Markéta Pálková and her sister Ludmila), Doreen McKenney, and Mirwood Cottage (Jean and Chuck Draheim).



**Save the dates for upcoming 2025 Czech Fests events in Montgomery:** *Masopust*, March 2. Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant, April 12. May Day on May 4. *Svatý Mikuláš* on December 7.

**25th annual *Masopust*, March 2, Sunday, noon-4 p.m.**

Rustic Farmer/Revival on Main in downtown Montgomery. King Coronation, Czech food (until 3:30), costume ball with prizes, silent auction (12:30-3:30), cash bar with Czechvar beer, Czech Bakery, and other merchandise. Entertainment: George's Concertina Band and the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers.

**Don't miss this silver anniversary Czech Mardi Gras Celebration!**



## Remembering Dorothy Mulko Kucera by Louise Wessinger

The St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers wish to acknowledge the passing of one of its founders, Dorothy Mulko Kucera. She was instrumental in starting the dance group in 1962. She died on July 6, 2024, just five days before her 90th birthday.

Dorothy was the daughter of immigrants from Ratiškovice, Moravia, Czechoslovakia, who settled on a farm in Dominion City, Manitoba, Canada. As a young woman, Dorothy moved to Minneapolis to work for Pan American Airways. There she met Vera Verner, whose family were active members of Sokol Saint Paul, now known as Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Dorothy and Vera, with enthusiastic support from many Sokol members, thought that the Czechoslovak community should have a dance group.

They were able to secure support from CSA Fraternal Life, which owned the C.S.P.S. Hall at the time. With help from other local folk dance groups, the group began to meet on Monday evenings. They learned *Česká beseda*, as that was the only folk dance that was taught at the time. They also did many international dances to improve their dance skills. Working for Pan Am, Dorothy was able to bring music from Czechoslovakia and the group was gradually able to add more Czech, Moravian, and Slovak dances to their programs. Probably the most exciting thing Dorothy brought back was when she went to her family village and returned with several trunks full of folk dress (*kroje*) that people gave her to take to America for the dance group, so the dancers here would look authentic.

The St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers are very grateful to Dorothy and Vera (who died September 11, 2019) for their enthusiasm in beginning a dance group that has brought much joy to not only all those who have danced with the group, but also those who have enjoyed seeing the group perform.



The St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers at the 1965 Festival of Nations: (L-R) Fred Kala, from Moravian Dance Group in Chicago and at one time President of American Sokol; Linda (*nee* Jansen) Nicoli, a former dance group director; Bob Bastyr, former dance group director; Louise (*nee* Jansen) Wessinger, current dance group director; Dorothy Mulko Kucera, a dance group founder; Don Andrie, long time dance group member and Sokol Minnesota President; Vera Verner Hawkinson, a dance group founder; Wayne Hawkinson, Vera's husband.



### 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 TOTAL \$4,403

**Under \$99:** Two Anonymous, Darla Kolb, Ivana Labounkova, Charles Mara, Wayne Zbytovsky.

**\$100-\$499:** Sue and Steve Fritze, John Palka, Barbara Pavelka, Thomas Schroeder, Michael Sebek, Barbara Skrivanek.

**\$500-\$999:** Anonymous, George Hoffman, Lucy and Stephen Rose.

**\$1,000- \$9,999:** Sue and Steve, Dave Martin, CVS Health Foundation.

#### LEGACY FUND TOTAL: \$1,835

**Under \$99:** Mary Habstritt.

**\$100-\$499:** M. L. Kucera (in memory of John Smisek), Bryan Wyberg (in memory of Sharon and Kenneth Wyberg).

**\$500-\$999:** Michaela Kotek.

#### OTHER TOTAL: \$66

**Under \$99:** Anonymous (restoration of stage scenery).

#### IN-KIND DONATIONS

**For the Gift Shop:** Jitka Sebek, Renáta Scholtz.

#### 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 (uncropped) digitally to [slovo@sokolmn.org](mailto:slovo@sokolmn.org)

**Advertising:** For information on due dates and rates, please email [slovo@sokolmn.org](mailto:slovo@sokolmn.org)

**Moving or temporarily away:** Please notify us via email or USPS mail of your change of address to make sure you continue to receive the *Slovo*.

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, M. L. Kucera, Kelly Rynda, and Joyce Tesarek.

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

**Mailing/Email lists:** Penny and Tom Tesarek.  
**Minnesota ad designer:** Doreen McKenney (1, 7, 9, 16).

**Production layout:** Mary Kucera.

#### February issue contributors:

Mary Cahill, Steve Ernest, Jean Keogh, M. L. Kucera, Bob Kotek, Pam Langworthy, Sally Lieberman, Jitka Sebek, Joyce Tesarek, Louise Wessinger, and Gwen Willems.

#### February issue photographs, ads, or

**illustrations:** Barbora Carlson, Martina Gurgel, Katie Haselbauer, Jean Keogh, Bob Kotek, M. L. Kucera, Doreen McKenney, Joyce Tesarek, and Gwen Willems.

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



## November Pancake Breakfast Recap by Co-Chairs Joyce Tesarek and Mary Cahill

On November 24, 2024, a sunny late fall day, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota volunteers served up delicious, all-you-can-eat buttermilk pancakes, fruit cups, our special sausages, juice, and coffee to 115 hungry guests. These customers also purchased *koláče* and Bob Kostichka's delicious homemade caramel corn from the bake sale and shopped the vendors' tables, where beautiful handcrafted items and yummy holiday breads, cookies, and canned pickles were among the available wares.



Teen volunteers Emma and Silvie serve Carolyn Cahill, Greg Seaberg, their twins, and Dennis Cahill.

Thank you to our vendors: Sokol Gift Shop (staffed by volunteer member Doreen McKenney), Czech Sis Kitchen (Sokol member Markéta Pálková and her sister Ludmila), Mirwood Cottage (Sokol members Jean and Chuck Draheim), Lynn Hoffmeyer Woodcrafts, Doreen McKenney (Sokol member),

Deanna Miller, Kathy Kaluza, and volunteers helped at the Sokol Silent Auction remainders table, Joe Landsberger, former Sokol Minnesota president, sold subscriptions to his book, *Origin Story of Fort Road/West Seventh Street, the Township/City of Saint Paul, the Territory/State of Minnesota, Glacial Age Forward*. Sokol Minnesota's Legacy Fund will be the recipient of all proceeds from the sale of this book. At that same table, Czech Honorary Consul,

M. L. Kucera had a display of Czech tourist information for guests to peruse and take home.

Sokol Minnesota thanks our stellar volunteer crew for their time commitment and hard work. It is our volunteers who make events like this possible: Tom Aubrecht, Jason Brozovich, Dennis Cahill, Mary Cahill, Bruce Chuchel, Jean Draheim, Shannon Duffy,

Emma Giancarlo, Roger Green, Mia Grignon, Dave Grostepahn, Glynis Grostephan, Don Haselbauer, Katie Haselbauer, Mary Jo Kacvinsky, Chantelle Kley, Darla Kolb, Bob Kostichka, Doreen McKenney, Becky Olson, Lucy Rose and Sylvie, Joan Sedlacek, Steve Shimer, Sheila Surrone, Joyce Tesarek,



Members Mary Jo Kacvinsky, Jason Brozovich, Cinnamon Whaley, and Mia Grignon serve breakfast.

Tereza Treanor, and Cinnamon Whaley.

A special thanks to the 620 Club (formerly Keenan's), our neighbor across West Seventh and one of Sokol Minnesota's two charitable gambling sites, for the generous donation of pancake mix.



Thank you also to all who came and supported this fundraiser.

**We hope to see you, your family, and friends at our next pancake breakfast on April 13.**

## Thomas Gurke: Franz Kafka, Kafka's Novella *The Metamorphosis*, and Its Adaptations by Gwen Willems

On November 15, Thomas Gurke gave a fascinating talk at the C.S.P.S. Hall commemorating Franz Kafka's death 100 years ago in 1924. A recent research interest of Dr. Gurke is Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*.



*The Metamorphosis* remains Kafka's most popular work and has had many adaptations made of it. They include a Charlie Brown version and one called *The Meowmorphosis*, supposedly written by both Franz Kafka and Coleridge Cook. *The Meowmorphosis* begins, "One morning, as Gregor Samsa was waking up from anxious dreams,

he discovered that he had been changed into an adorable kitten." His family doesn't know what to do about this

man-sized kitten, who is cute but not able to pay the bills.

For a fun way to get to know more about Franz Kafka, Gurke suggests the graphic novel *Kafka*, which blends biographical vignettes with reworkings of Kafka's literary pieces. It is written by David Zane Mairowitz and illustrated by Robert Crumb. This combination biography and literary adaptation uses comics-style art to explore Kafka's many neuroses and his relationship with his critical, overbearing father.

Thomas Gurke, Ph.D., is a visiting professor and director of graduate studies for his department at the University of Minnesota: he has a degree in English literature and musicology.

The event was sponsored by the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis, and the University of Minnesota Department of German, Nordic, Slavic & Dutch.

*Tatra: The Legacy of Hans Ledwinka* by Ivan Margolius and John G. Henry. SAF Publishing: Harrow, United Kingdom, 160 pages, 1990. Available at libraries and used bookstores.

*Tatra: The Legacy of Hans Ledwinka* is a remarkably thorough and detailed history of the Tatra automobile and its principal designer. The book covers Ledwinka's life, the company's background, relevant European history, and Tatra vehicle models and their workings. Numerous photos and intricate technical drawings enrich the story. The book is enhanced by a foreword by Ledwinka's son Erich, a chronology, a table of in-depth information regarding Nesselsdorf/Tatra passenger cars and commercial vehicles, a bibliography, and an index.

The authors, both architects, share an interest in the history, development, and innovation of motor cars. They are also great admirers of Ledwinka, a brilliant, often under-acknowledged visionary in vehicle development and technology. He can be compared to Karl Friedrich Benz, Gottlieb Daimler, and Ferdinand Porsche. As Margolius and Henry write, "In seventy years of active involvement, of which forty were spent in heading the Tatra factory, Ledwinka the individualist was frequently regarded as a design genius."

Ledwinka was born in 1878, when passenger transportation was by horse-drawn carriage. In his late teens, he came to work at the wagon factory in Nesselsdorf (Kopřivnice in Czech) in northeastern Moravia, later to become the Tatra company, named for the beautiful Tatra Mountains, 100 miles to the east. In 1895, plant managers decided to construct Nesselsdorf's first automobile. Ledwinka was interested and eager to take part. The result was the Präsident (1897), the first factory-produced automobile with a petrol engine to be made in Central and Eastern Europe. The Präsident's engineering was directed by Ledwinka and Edmund Rumpel, an automotive and aviation pioneer.

Twenty-two Nesselsdorf A's, the first car completely designed by Ledwinka, were produced in 1900. It had a rear-mounted 2714 cc engine and a top speed of 40 km/h (25 mph). It was followed by the Type B (1902), with a central engine. Ledwinka then left to work on steam engine development. Returning in 1905, he designed the Type S, equipped with a 3308 cc four-cylinder engine.

In 1916, Ledwinka left the company for a competitor. In 1919, the company branded its cars Tatra. Two years later, he returned to the company to run its new car plant. It is claimed Ledwinka had the idea of a small "people's car" in 1921. His next design was the Tatra 11 (1923) with a rigid backbone tube, swinging semi-axles at the rear, and a front-mounted, air-cooled two-cylinder engine. The Tatra 17 (1925) had a water-cooled six-cylinder engine and independent suspension; the Tatra 12 (1926) featured four-wheel brakes.

Tatra shifted from luxury cars to streamlined cars, producing the Tatra 77 (1933), the world's first production aerodynamic car. It had a rear-mounted, air-cooled V8 engine. The Tatra 97 (1936) offered a rear-located, rear-wheel drive; air-cooled four-cylinder boxer engine; and luggage storage under the front hood and behind the rear seat. Porsche designed the Volkswagen with similarities to the Tatrás, and Tatra sued for patent infringement. However, the lawsuit was halted when Germany invaded Czechoslovakia.



The dispute was renewed much later, and Volkswagen paid a one million Deutsche Mark out-of-court settlement in 1965.

Following the signing of the 1938 Munich Agreement, Czechoslovakia was occupied by the German Reich. Tatra was unavoidably forced into military production, with trucks like Tatra 111 (1942) instrumental in the Nazi war effort and post-war reconstruction.

I find the personal history of Ledwinka, who died in 1967 at the age of 89, fascinating. He considered himself an Austrian rather than a Czech or German and appears to have been preeminently a businessman who dealt with politicians for the benefit of business.

In 1945, he was accused by Czech authorities, on Soviet instructions, of collaboration with the Nazis. After acquittal in two trials, he was nevertheless sentenced at a final trial, despite local opposition, to six years for manufacturing arms and supplying trucks to the German army. He spent much of the sentence working in gardens and fields and continuing car designs. Following his imprisonment, he was offered work with Tatra, but declined.

In 1951, *Die Automobil-Revue* saluted his return to freedom, writing, "After his imprisonment in Czechoslovakia Dr. Ledwinka has not given into the brutal methods of the Communists any more than he had in the past bowed down to the Nazi rulers."

The Tatra company is one of the oldest continuous manufacturers of vehicles. Heavy, off-road Tatra trucks continue to be produced and used in Germany, India, Israel, and the United States. Last made in 1999, Tatra cars are now collector items. Visit the Minneapolis Institute of Art to see the permanent display of a 1948 Tatra T87 sedan, of which only 2,000 were produced. (See picture of Literary Ventures members viewing this vehicle, page 11, December 2024-January 2025 *Slovo*. Editor's note)

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 Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis. Find information and updates at [cs-center.org](http://cs-center.org) or contact [gwen@cs-center.org](mailto:gwen@cs-center.org)

Join Literary Ventures at 10 a.m., Saturday, February 15, to discuss *The Glass Room* by Simon Mawer.



# Czech Honorary Consul News

February 2025

Each year, a Czech calendar hangs in the Honorary Consul office. This year's features the Broumov Churches, collectively a National Cultural Monument. The Broumov region boasts a unique collection of Baroque churches, built between 1709 and 1743, which are masterfully incorporated into the landscape in northeastern Czechia. The calendar was presented to me by Ondřej Pometlo, Deputy Consul General of the Czech Republic/Chicago.



The Minnesota Consular Corps held its annual holiday party at the American Swedish Institute (ASI) in Minneapolis on January 10. Countries represented in this annual picture on the lovely staircase of the Turnblad Mansion at ASI were Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lebanon, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and Sweden.

Again, we were hosted by the Minnesota Trade Office (MTO), headed by Gabrielle Gerbaud, Executive Director and Chief Protocol Officer. Also attending from MTO were Nate Long, Regional Trade Specialist; Barbara Mattson, Regional Trade Manager; and Laurence Reszetar, Director, International Business Strategy.

It's become a tradition for me (left) in early December to go backstage (a.k.a. the Sokol classroom) to watch Sv. Mikuláš (IN), anděl (MMW), and čert (LM) become joyful realities for the children of Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities/Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities. Professional makeup artist Petra Antošová (second from front left) gives dramatic vitality to the beloved threesome.



In 2024 I had the honor as Honorary Consul to pass out 34 Czech passports, more than in any previous year. Many were renewals, but some were first time. Included this year was citizenship-by-descent awarded to Dave Stepan, whose grandfather emigrated from Bohemia as a teenager with his family in 1907 to Le Center, Minnesota.

To renew or to apply for a Czech passport, the applicant first must go to a full diplomatic consulate or the embassy. That person can then request to pick up their new passport at the nearest honorary consul office. Many chose the honorary consul option; there are 24 Czech honorary consul offices in the United States, but only three Czech consulates (New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles) and one Czech embassy in Washington, D.C.



Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/  
Minneapolis

Marit Lee Kucera, Honorary Consul  
651-238-0447  
minneapolis@honorary.mzv.gov.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 138th year in 2025. Contact Joyce Tesarek to discuss your tax-deductible donation: 612-232-2993 or email: [finance@sokolmn.org](mailto:finance@sokolmn.org) *Thank you!*

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

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I make a tax-deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my gift designated:  in memory or  in honor of:

Make checks payable to **Sokol Minnesota**

Write **Legacy Fund** in the memo line.

Mail to **C.S.P.S. Hall Legacy Fund. Attn: Treasurer**

Or donate online: [www.sokolmn.org](http://www.sokolmn.org)



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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* February 2025



### Spring/Summer 2025 Events at Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102 • 651-290-0542

For the most current information, go to the Sokol Minnesota website: [sokolmn.org](http://sokolmn.org)  
 Instagram: @sokolminnesota or Facebook: [facebook.com/sokolminnesota](https://facebook.com/sokolminnesota)

#### Sokol Minnesota Friendly Friday Evenings

2nd Friday of each month, 7-10 p.m.\*\*  
 Family friendly card and board games, fun, food, and friends. No fee. Bring your own beverages and/or snacks to share. Special guest: March 14, St. Paul Historian Joe Landsberger, 7 p.m.

**Make Valentines for Seniors with Sokol Minnesota Youth Link**  
 Saturday, February 8, Noon-2 p.m. Dining room. No fee. Art supplies and snack provided. Contact: [youths@sokolmn.org](mailto:youths@sokolmn.org)

**Urban Expedition at Landmark Center, Saint Paul**  
 Sunday, February 23, 1-3 p.m. Free. Open to the public. Traditional Czech and Slovak cultures through music, dance, cuisine, arts, and crafts. (75 Fifth St. W, downtown Saint Paul)

#### Flavors of Slovakia Dinner

Sunday, March 9, doors open noon, serving: 12:30 p.m. Soup, traditional Slovak *Bryndzové halušky* (potato dumplings, bacon, bryndza sheep cheese), *holubky* (cabbage roll), dessert, coffee. \$35. Place your prepaid\* dinner order by March 2.

**Czech Puppet Performances** by *Bio Masha*, performer/artist  
 Friday, March 21, 7 p.m., crime thriller for adults (in English).  
 Saturday, March 22, Noon, for children and teens (bilingual). Free. Grant from Consulate General of the Czech Republic/Chicago. Sponsors: Sokol, Czech and Slovak Cultural Center, Honorary Czech Consulate.

**Blast from the Past!** DJ Music: 80's, 90's, and more  
 Saturday, April 5, 7 p.m.-midnight. Ages: 21+  
 \$10 prepaid\* by March 30, \$15 at the door [sokolmn.org/all-event](http://sokolmn.org/all-event)

\* To order and prepay online: [www.sokolmn.org/cc](http://www.sokolmn.org/cc) or text/call before mailing a check (2 weeks before deadline) 651-210-0401 or [food@sokolmn.org](mailto:food@sokolmn.org) Mail to Sokol Minnesota, 383 Michigan St., Saint Paul, MN 55102

#### Pancake Breakfast with Craft and Koláče Bake Sale

Sunday, April 13, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. No reservations needed. \$10 adult, \$6 children under 9, \$30/family of 4. Public welcome. *Koláč* (apricot, cream cheese, poppy seed, prune, raspberry) \$2 each. Prepaid\* koláče order by April 6. Reserve a vendor table\*\*

#### SMYL Outdoor Spring Clean-up

Saturday, April 26, 10-11 a.m.  
 Join our Sokol Minnesota Youth Link teens and volunteers to clean-up around the C.S.P.S. Hall. [youths@sokolmn.org](mailto:youths@sokolmn.org)

#### The Accidental Hero by actor Patrick Dewane

Sunday, May 18, 2 p.m. live performance  
 Multi-media one-man performance. True story about Czech freedom at the end of World War II. Limited seating. Reserved: \$20 or General: \$15. Prepaid\* by May 10. At the door: \$15.

#### 27th Children's Czech and Slovak Cultural Day Camp

Monday-Friday, June 16-20. For ages 6 to 14 years. Ethnic crafts and cooking, Czech language, gymnastics, and more. Early bird registration by May 15. Final registration by June 1. Info: [sokolmn.org](http://sokolmn.org) or call Louise Wessinger: 651-271-3601

#### Sokol Camp Booya Picnic (Pine City)

Sunday, August 10, Noon-5 p.m.  
 Great food, live music, folk dancers, children's games, and fun!

#### 36th Czech & Slovak Festival

[festival@sokolmn.org](mailto:festival@sokolmn.org)  
 Sunday, September 28, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free.  
 Music, folk dancers, gymnastics, vendors, ethnic food, children's games.  
 Volunteer: 612-232-2993 or [events@sokolmn.org](mailto:events@sokolmn.org)

\*\* Information: [sokolmn.org](http://sokolmn.org) or contact: [activities@sokolmn.org](mailto:activities@sokolmn.org) or text/call: 651-210-0401

