



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

**August 2025 Slovo
articles due July 1**

Sokol Singers

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-noon

First and Third
Tuesdays June 3, 17
July 1, 15

Friendly Friday Evening Social

Fridays, 7 p.m.

June 13, July 11, August 8

Sokol Summer Mushroom Hunt

Sunday, July 27, 1 p.m.

Online registration
opens soon at
sokolmn.org/all-events

95th Sokol Camp Booya Picnic

Sunday, August 10

See page 14

Sokol Gift Shop

open during events

and by appointment

giftshop@sokolmn.org

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

- Dinners
- Czech and Slovak
Language Lessons
- Folk Dancing
- Sokol Gymnasts



36th annual CZECH & SLOVAK FESTIVAL

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Sunday, September 28 2025
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota

**Ethnic Food • Czech-style Beer • Music • Sokol Gift Shop • Dance and Gymnastic Performances
Children's Games • Silent Auction • Street Vendors • Exhibits • Special Guests
FREE Admission • Public Welcome • Accessible Facility**

Become a Volunteer: festival@sokolmn.org



2025 SOKOL BIKE RIDES

**Ride with us monthly, June through October,
on the third Sunday of the month.**

June 15, July 20, August 17, September 21, October 19

Meet at the Sokol C.S.P.S. Hall at 10 a.m.

Bike the trails along the river for 2-3 hours.

Bring a friend! All are welcome!

For more information, e-mail: steve.ernest@sokolmn.org

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota



Sokol Minnesota Youth Leadership is a way to encourage and recognize outstanding participation of youth members and to foster a future generation of members and leaders for our Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota organization. Up to three Sokol Minnesota youths grade 11 and 12, will receive the YLA and a \$500 cash prize; \$400 each from Sokol Minnesota, plus \$100 each contributed by Honorary Czech Consul M. L. Kucera. A separate award and \$100 prize is given for the Best Essay, from Louise Wessinger.

Application deadline is July 1, 2025.

More information and forms go to : www.sokolmn.org

Prezidentův komentář / President's Notes by Bob Kotek

Greetings and welcome to the June/July issue of the *Slovo*!

Summer is upon us and with it we have many opportunities to celebrate our Czech and Slovak heritages at the various festivals held around the Midwest and beyond.

The 25th American Sokol *Slet*, one of the largest gatherings, is planned in the Chicago area from June 25–29; there is still time to join the fun!

For more information, please visit the American Sokol website at AmericanSokol.org and view the *Slet* event guides under the XXV *Slet* tab.

Primary Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *Slet* contacts are Jason Brozovich and Mary Cahill. Mary Cahill and Doreen McKenney are conducting training sessions at C.S.P.S. Hall for one of the *Slet* calisthenics (*prostrná*) scheduled for performance on June 28. I hope to see a great turnout from Sokol Minnesota.

Sokol Minnesota is primarily staffed by member volunteers. If you have an interest in supporting the efforts of this wonderful organization as a volunteer, please reach out to one of the board members or send a note to board@sokolmn.org *Nazdar!*



Bob Kotek



Attention: Czech Citizens

Czech Citizens Can Now Vote By Mail

You may apply for registration in the Special Register of Voters (SRV)

You can now register to vote at your local Honorary Consul Office:
385 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

Call Honorary Consul Marit Kucera for an appointment: 651-238-0447

Parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held in the Czech Republic in October 2025. All 200 members of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic, the lower house of the Parliament, will be elected and the leader of the resultant government will become the Prime Minister.

Registration must be completed 40 days before the election.

For complete information:

https://mzv.gov.cz/chicago/en/consular_information/elections2013/registration_in_election_specific/registration_in_the_special_register_of.html

Also: <https://www.facebook.com/CZinChicago/>

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 or www.facebook.com/sokolminnesota



Use this
QR code
to go to
sokolmn.org

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

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Telephone: 651-290-0542

Past issues of *Slovo* and
Hall Calendar of Events:
www.sokolmn.org

Our Two 2025 Folk Dance Graduates

by Louise Wessinger

This year in addition to showing off our Czech and Slovak dances throughout the year, our *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční* Teen dancers took time to honor our two high school senior dancers at our Spring Celebration on May 3. Both of this year's graduates have been dancing since they



were 3 and 4 years old, which gives them 14 years of Czech and Slovak folkdance experience! Both claim *Milavečská Polka* as their favorite dance.

Marius (L) and Izabela (R) with Louise Wessinger who has taught Czech and Slovak folk dancing to children and teens for 35 years.

Izabela Carlson is the oldest daughter of Sokol members Barbora and Darren Carlson. She attended Two Rivers High School in West Saint Paul, graduating on June 1. She participated in “just about anything band-related,” including marching band, jazz band, and Minnesota All-State Band. Her fondest school memories include many overnight band trips and participating in several interesting labs in science class. Izabela plans to attend Grinnell College in Iowa to study biochemistry and music. As a student of Saturday Slovak Language Classes taught by her

Slovak-born mother, Izabela earned a Minnesota Platinum Bilingual Seal in Slovak Language.

Some of Izabela's favorite dancing memories include the Festival of Nations. She recalled it as an incredible experience to share the culture of her heritage with so many people. She says “dancing requires one to think ahead, and more importantly how to focus on the most aesthetic way to move one's body. Dancing has taught me to move through life confidently and thoughtfully.” She encourages the younger dancers to “Stick with it. The unique experience of folk dancing is very much worth the time commitment.”

Marius Elias Morse is the son of Sokol members Steven and Debra Elias Morse. Marius attended Saint Paul Academy (SPA), graduating on June 8. Marius enjoyed a variety of activities in school, including singing in concert choir, learning ceramics, playing sports including tennis, and supporting his school teams. A special memory was being in front of the stands when SPA soccer teams won the state championships. He plans to attend Johnson and Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island, majoring in Hospitality Management and Culinary Arts with a minor in Environmental Sustainability.

Marius followed his older sister Izabela into the dance group. He remembers performing at the Festival of Nations and at our Sokol Czech & Slovak Festival each fall as the most fun. He learned from the group that showing up consistently affects yourself and others. He tells young dancers to “lean into being a group member and be open-minded about learning many different dances.”

Our best wishes to Chloe and Marius in college and beyond. I know they will do well and be successful in all they do.

Donations Needed for C&S Festival Silent Auction

by Denise Stibal, Silent Auction Chair

Please start thinking about items to donate to the silent auction as part of the Czech & Slovak Festival on September 28. The suggested minimum value is \$15. Last year we raised over \$1,000. Plans are to make this year's auction another success! Items to consider: gift cards from a business (local or otherwise); a gift card for services such as baking, handmade goods, personal services (cleaning, organizing, dance, or music lessons); theater or event tickets. Anything that you can contribute is appreciated! Thank you to all who contributed last year. Further information to follow on drop-off dates as we get closer to the Festival.



Sunday, September 28 **2025**
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Save the date!

36th Annual Czech & Slovak Festival
Sunday, September 28, 2025

Become a volunteer
or have ideas for the festival
contact: festival@sokolmn.org

Western District Sokol Gymnastics Competition by Jason Brozovich

Gymnasts from Minnesota, Nebraska, and Iowa showed off their skills on Saturday, April 5 at the Western District Sokol Slet (gathering) in Crete, Nebraska. Sokol Minnesota had two boys and five girls participate this year.



Opening Ceremonies included Sokol Minnesota members Joan Sedlacek carrying the United States flag and Jason Brozovich (hidden) carrying our Sokol unit flag.

On the left: Minnesota Coach Siri Schroeder and gymnast Laura.

Saturday morning began with the boys' competition. Families of the gymnasts and our Minnesota girl competitors were there to cheer on the boys as they performed their routines on all six male events.

This comradery was reciprocated when the girls took the floor in the afternoon to display their skills. By the end of the day, the look of a proud smile on a gymnast's face filled the gymnasium. That's just one reward of working hard for the last several months. Way to go, competitors!

After the competition, Minnesota families and gymnasts enjoyed a pool and pizza party at the hotel. It was a chance for the kids to celebrate their accomplishments and for the parents to connect with the coaches and one another. Coaches from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and other Sokol friends also joined in on the fun!

This yearly competition is an optional event that is offered to all Sokol gymnasts in the Western District. It was the first competition experience for four of the seven gymnasts from Minnesota this season and they all said they want to be a part of it again next year!!



Jas G. received First Place Medal from Minnesota Coach Mary Cahill.

2025 Western District American Sokol Annual Meeting in Crete, Nebraska



After the Western District Slet in Crete, Nebraska, the Western District of American Sokol held its annual meeting on Saturday afternoon, April 5.

Re-elected to the Board of Directors of Western District of American Sokol: (L-R) Joan Sedlacek (Sokol Minnesota), WD Education Director and Historian, WD representative to American Sokol (AS) Education Committee;

4 June/July 2025 *Slovo*

Mary Cahill (Sokol Minnesota), WD Women's Physical Director, Recording Secretary, and WD Bylaws Committee representative to AS; Kevin Sindelar (Sokol Cedar Rapids), WD Men's Physical Director; Allison Gerber (Sokol Cedar Rapids), WD President, WD Financial Secretary Committee rep and WD Membership Committee rep to AS; Shelley Cairns (Sokol Cedar Rapids), WD Treasurer and WD Financial Secretary; Deb Allison (Sokol Cedar Rapids), WD Vice President; and Marit Kucera (Sokol Minnesota), WD representative to American Sokol Foundation.

Also attending (but not pictured here) from Sokol Minnesota: Jason Brozovich, Women's and Men's Physical Directors, Board of Instructors (BOI) and representative to WD BOI and Siri Schroeder, Sokol Minnesota head female coach and representative to the WD Annual meeting



Western District Slef 2025 in Crete Nebraska on Saturday, April 5. 1. Maeve B. on beam. 2. Jas G. with coach Jason Brozovich watching. 3. Amari C. doing a backhandspring on floor exercise. 4. Minnesota gymnasts performed a Special Number (L-R) Shea J., Norah T., Laura S., Amari C., and Maeve B. 5. Landyn J. on rings with coach Jason spotting. 6. Shea J. on beam. 7. Coach Siri Schroeder with Laura S. on uneven bars. 8. Norah T. performing a wolf jump on floor exercise.

MSPIFF44: The Power of Cinematic Storytelling at its Best

Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival enjoyed a fantastic festival, April 2 to 13, as it celebrated its 44th anniversary. MSPIFF screened three Czech-Slovak produced films this year.

Two of these films made Best of the Fest (April 14-17), a real honor! Here is a breakdown of attendance:

Waves: 364 tickets, three screenings

Tiny Lights: 48 tickets, two screenings

DJ Ahmet (with Czech collaboration): 278 tickets, three screenings

MSPIFF44 stand-out moments included • 30,000 + attendees over 12 days • 127 feature films, 66 short films, 280 film screenings • films from more than 70 countries/regions • 100+ visiting filmmakers from across the globe • daily celebratory events between screenings • countless community partnerships with local businesses, cultural, and government organizations.

Special thanks to Marshall Toman, Markéta Pálková, and Katka Svensson for introducing five of the eight screenings. Anjali Moore, Minneapolis Saint Paul Film Society's Community Engagement Coordinator reported, "The introductions were great and I was there to oversee most of them and meet your community members."

One Sokol member made this comment about *Waves*, "The movie was very well presented. I finally got a clear picture of how jubilant Czechs were about the Spring of 1968 and how

brutal the invasion was. Good use of archival footage."

MSPIFF thanks our Czech and Slovak organizations and individuals for our continued financial support: Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities, Czech Honorary Consul M.L. Kucera, and Marshall and Gretchen Toman.

MSP Film Society welcomes our collaboration

in promoting and spreading the word so we can work together to share the joys of Czech and Slovak cinema with the Twin Cities community. MSPIFF is definitely a unique place to come together through the power of cinematic storytelling!



Presentation on April 3 of donations supporting Czech and Slovak films at MSPIFF44: (L-R) Greg Helmstetter, Technical Director; Jessie Zumeta, Volunteer Coordinator; M.L. Kucera, Honorary Czech Consul; Anjali Moore, Community Engagement Coordinator; and Jesse Bishop, Director of Programming.



Some of the many cinema fans who enjoyed the Czech and Slovak films



Late Breaking News: Upcoming Summer Event!

Tomáš Klvaňa is coming to the United States to present Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota's second annual Milan Sebek memorial lecture about democracy, live and in-person this year at the C.S.P.S./Sokol Hall. Exact date is to be determined, but it will probably be the evening of Friday or Saturday, July 11 or 12. Once Dr. Klvaňa lets us know what dates he will be here in the United States, we will let you know the lecture evening. Contact Bea Flaming to be on the list: beaflaming@gmail.com or check Events at sokolmn.org: <https://sokolmn.org/all-events/>

Dr. Tomáš Klvaňa is an outstanding journalist, scholar, researcher, and alumnus of the College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota, earning his doctorate in Speech Communication in 1997. He also holds an M.A. in Journalism from the Charles University in Prague (1992).

Wanted: Czech Language Teacher

For Evening/Adult Classes
September 2025 to May 2026

In Person or Online

Commitment: One 90-minute
class per week

This is a paid position!

For more info,
[email education@sokolmn.org](mailto:education@sokolmn.org)

2025 University of Minnesota Mestenhauser Student Award Ceremony by Patricia Mestenhauser Bergh

It is always a privilege and honor for me to attend the Mestenhauser Student Award for Excellence in Campus Internationalization ceremony at the University of Minnesota, which honors my dad, Dr. Josef Mestenhauser, Distinguished International Emeritus Professor, and recognizes his long career of advocacy for students.

My dad came to the United States as a political refugee after fleeing his beloved Czechoslovakia in 1948; he entered university as a foreign student, leaving his family and his dreams behind, and speaking no English. His experience no doubt contributed to his lifelong passion and commitment to students. He always marveled that the very country that expelled him in 1948 and stripped him of his citizenship came full circle in 1999 when President Havel appointed him as the Honorary Consul to the Czech Republic/Minneapolis (1999-2008). "Never say never," he often said.

This year's student award ceremony was held virtually on April 30. The award "recognizes outstanding student contributions to international education and acknowledges important work being done by students at the University of Minnesota to internationalize the curriculum and campus." This award is made possible through generous donations to the Mestenhauser Legacy Initiative at the U of M. <https://global.umn.edu/oci/legacy> Each of the students receives a scholarship and a copy of the book, *Mestenhauser and the Possibilities of International Education*, which my dad was working on in his last days.

Alina Ivashchenko and Seeun (Tina) Jeon are this year's recipients.

Alina Ivashchenko, Department of Math, Science, and Technology, U of M Crookston.

Alina is an international undergraduate student from Ukraine majoring in Software Engineering and minoring in IT Management, Cybersecurity, and Graphic Design. She is the vice president of the Multicultural International Club (MIC), whose purpose is to promote cultural awareness, connect



domestic students with international students, and create a community for students away from their home countries. In her role, Alina organized campus events and volunteer opportunities. Members of the MIC collaborated with the Center for Human Environment to prepare meals from Ukraine, Bangladesh and Nepal to individuals battling addictions. Alina also helped to organize International Week, which featured a variety of cultural events creating a valuable space for students and the Crookston community to learn about different world traditions while making new connections.

Seeun (Tina) Jeon, U of M College of Education and Human Development, U of M Twin Cities.

Seeun (Tina) Jeon is an international Ph.D. student from South Korea. Tina demonstrated leadership and dedication to improving the international student experience at the University, by assisting undergraduate students applying to graduate school in personal statement consulting, working with fellow international students to give constructive feedback for different campus parties as a senior facilitator of the International Student Advisory Board, as well as accommodating different graduate student demographics in Council of Graduate Students social events as their programming director. Tina is passionate about teaching and her research involves supporting teachers in incorporating technologies in South Korea. Her mother joined the Award Ceremony on Zoom from South Korea (14-hour time difference).



I encourage you to listen to their digital stories, available on the website of the Global Program and Strategy Alliance Mestenhauser Student Award:

<https://global.umn.edu/awards/mestenhauser>

Both Czech Honorary Consul, M. L. Kucera, and I were able to say a few words to the recipients, congratulating them for winning scholarships and thanking them for their outstanding student contributions to international education on their respective campuses.

MEMBER NEWS

Jazz trumpet player Kristofer Bergh is touring for the whole year with Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass, which performs at O'Shaughnessy Auditorium, St. Catherine University, on Friday, October 3.

Now based in Los Angeles, Kristofer, the son of Sokol member **Patricia Mestenhauser Bergh** and her husband Brian Bergh, grew up going to Sokol Minnesota festivals with his family.

<https://tinyurl.com/25b8xcku>



CZECH HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Sunday, August 10, 2025 Bechyn, MN

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

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

FREE Admission • Held rain or shine • Located 10 miles NE of Redwood Falls, MN
Beer Garden • Dancing • Kid's Games & Activities Bingo • Cash Raffle • Farmer's Market.
Food: Polish Sausage, Kolache, Jiternice Sausage, Dumplings, Sauerkraut.
www.BechynCzechFest.org Facebook.com/BechynMinnesotaWorld

Celebrating the End of the School Year with Dance, Language, and Community

by Barborka Carlson, Jitka Sebek, and Louise Wessinger

C.S.P.S. Hall was filled with joy as children, parents, and friends gathered to capture videos and photos of *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teen Dancers* proudly performing in traditional *kroje* at the 2025 Spring Celebration.

Under the dedicated guidance for the past 35 years of Louise Wessinger, known to all the children as Miss Louise, these young dancers brought Czech and Slovak folk dances to life, showcasing what they had been practicing throughout the school year. Louise not only choreographed the performances, but also emceed with her usual warmth and pride.

Both Sokol Minnesota President Bob Kotek and Honorary Czech Consul M. L. Kucera greeted the participants, their instructors, and the audience, extending congratulations and appreciation for keeping Czech and Slovak traditions, customs, and languages alive.

The Spring Celebration began with the younger dancers performing some of their traditional beginning dances. They were led by teen dancer Sara R., who has been a dedicated helper for several years. Also assisting the children perform were “Mom” dancers, Emily Fiamová and Katka Svensson, who help at practices and performances to keep the kids focused.

The teen dancers have learned so many dances this year, it was difficult to choose which to perform. Two group favorites are *Podšable* (*Under the Sword*) and *Milavečská Polka*. The younger children returned to perform additional dances, including a group favorite *Volky*. The teens closed the program with *Tancuj*, our group signature dance. Miss Louise then presented Certificates of Performance for 2024-2025.

Special thanks to Renáta Tichá and John Topic (from the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers) who helped with the teen group all year, learning the dances and filling in when we were short of dancers.



Sokol President Bob Kotek greeted and thanked students and parents. Dance Instructor Louise Wessinger stands to the right with young folk dancers waiting to perform.



Also huge thanks to volunteers Doreen McKenney, Renáta Tichá, John Topic and Michael Topic, who helped set up and take down everything for the Spring Celebration. As always, thank you to all the parents who get their dancers to every practice and performance. You are truly appreciated!

The second part of the end-of-year Spring Celebration focused on the Czech and Slovak School Twin Cities/Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities. We honored the parents who make time in their busy schedules to bring their children to *školka*, *základní škola*, *měšťanka*, or *střední škola* (kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, or high school) classes. We also celebrated those parents who, upon stepping over the threshold at the Hall, became Czech or Slovak language teachers with passion and expertise. Most of all, we celebrated the children for their joy, their progress, and the meaningful connections they form. In our classrooms and beyond, they strengthen bonds with their heritage language, their families, and one another.

After all, who else can appreciate sharing a story of eating *rohlik s máslem* (roll with butter) for breakfast quite like a classmate from our Saturday school!



Lead teacher Jitka Sebek ensured that each student had a flower to exchange for a certificate with the teacher, a Czech and Slovak school tradition.

continued on page 10



Miss Louise and her 2024-2025 *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teen* dancers.



The *Škola* students and their teachers.

Easter with Škola by Jitka Sebek

Easter 2025 arrived in mid-April this year, just as spring began to return to Minnesota and while trees and flowers were in full bloom already in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. For many of us, it is always a perfect time to gather, connect, and celebrate traditions.

With the school year nearing its end and *škola* friendships growing stronger, we looked forward to celebrating together. Deciding how to observe Easter in Minnesota also brought choices. For some, it meant attending religious services; for others, it meant a family dinner featuring traditional ham with green beans. The holiday weekend also gave us time to reflect on our own Czech or Slovak upbringings and ways of marking the season.

At the C.S.P.S. Hall, Easter Saturday always brings our community together in a joyful way. While children crafted and parents caught up, everyone came together to learn how to braid a traditional Czech *pomlázka* (whip). We also shared a delicious potluck lunch, filled with more conversation. Spring was welcomed, summer plans were discussed, and some enjoyed a stroll through the old Little Bohemia neighborhood. While not all school districts break exactly at Easter, the Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities proudly continues to honor the holiday, its rich customs, and sharing them with everyone who joins us.



Markéta Pálková helps Zoe make a *pomlázka*.

Blast from the Past by Markéta Pálková and Katka Svensson

Many of us still long for the good old days, when our lives were carefree, and the weekend meant only one thing: disco. It wasn't just music back then; it was a way of life, pulsing through our veins every Friday and Saturday night. You'd find us on the dance floor of the local club, living in the moment, dancing like no one was watching. Fast forward 30 years... that spirit never really left us. We decided to bring it back, loud, bright, and full of energy.

On Saturday, April 5 at C.S.P.S. Hall, we launched our very first Blast from the Past, an 80's and 90's-themed party that brought together over 70 guests ready to relive the magic. The Hall was transformed with gig bar lights, fog machines, and a DJ who tuned in to what the crowd craved. Whether you came to dance, mingle, or just soak in the retro vibe, the night had something for everyone.

Our crowd was as colorful as the decade itself with Czechs, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Turks, and Americans all coming together under one glittering disco ball. Some didn't quite know what to expect, but they left smiling, sweaty, and already asking about the next one. Get ready, because we are doing it again!



With love, rhythm, and fog from your Disco Divas: Markéta Pálková, Katka Svensson, Linda Maxey, and Lidka Pálková

We want to hear from you! Help us make the next party even better, please fill out our quick survey and share what you loved or what we could improve:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PS9SHBM>

Disco is about more than music. It's about connection, nostalgia, and losing yourself on the dance floor, even if just for one night.

Thank you to everyone who helped make it happen: DJ Izzy, Bar Pajarito, Lucie and Michal Jašek, Dan Bednar, Luboš Mareš, and all of you who helped with setup and cleanup. Your energy made the night unforgettable.

Next up: Blast from the Past: Spooky Edition, Saturday, October 18, 2025, at C.S.P.S. Hall.
Come in your best '80s/'90s outfit or show off your Halloween costume!
Cash bar, tasty snacks, live DJ, and dancing 7-midnight, 18+ only. Bring your friends, family, and neighbors!

Celebrating School Year (continued from page 8). This year, 20 learners who studied Czech in person or online received their school certificates. Six Slovak language learners also received certificates. Izabela Carlson and Vivien Makoviny were awarded the Minnesota Platinum Bilingual Seal with special distinction. As we close the 2024–2025 school year, we mark our school's 20th anniversary, an impressive milestone. Over the years, we've nurtured a new generation of multilingual, multicultural children, many of whom have earned the Czech or Slovak Seal of Biliteracy. They not only embrace their Czech and Slovak heritage, but also the long-lasting friendships they've made along the way. Although May 3 was our last school day of the year, it was far from a goodbye. Summer plans are already underway, and we look forward to seeing each other at upcoming events. Wishing everyone a joyful summer. We can't wait to see you again on Saturdays next school year!



Outdoor Spring Cleanup with SMYL

Sokol Minnesota members (L-R) Mary Cahill, Marit Kucera, Glynis Grostephan, Kate Wicks, SMYL teen member Izzy, and Doreen McKenney (photographer), cleaned up the grounds around the C.S.P.S. Hall on the brisk, sunny Saturday morning of April 26, as part of the annual Sokol Minnesota Youth Link project.

Four pails were filled with an assortment of food wrappers, cigarette butts, small and large glass and plastic liquor bottles, odd mittens, a sock, plastic cups, pop cans, paper scraps, and plastic bags.



April 13, 2025 Pancake Breakfast by Mary Cahill

Our annual Spring Pancake Breakfast on April 13, along with *koláče* and craft sales, was another success. Breakfast was served to approximately 100 members, friends, and neighbors, many of whom attend the pancake breakfasts regularly.

This April there were some new faces, like the two young women who said they had “read about the pancake breakfast in the *Community Reporter*, lived in the area, and had always wanted to see the C.S.P.S Hall; besides, who doesn’t love a pancake breakfast?” These women also commented on how delicious the pancakes (our secret Sokol Minnesota recipe!) tasted.

At the bake sale table, Sokol Minnesota sold *koláče* and brownies, made by volunteers in our C.S.P.S. Hall kitchen, and also Bob Kostichka’s delicious homemade caramel corn. Sokol Minnesota thanks our volunteers, who make events like this possible.

Volunteer bakers: Mary Cahill, Roger Green, Don Haselbauer, Katie Haselbauer, Doreen McKenney, Joan Sedlacek, and Joyce Tesarek.

Pancake Breakfast volunteers: co-chairs Mary Cahill and Joyce Tesarek, plus Tom Aubrecht, Dennis Cahill, Jean Draheim, Roger Green, Mia Grignon, Glynis Grostephan, Heidi Grostepahn, Don Haselbauer, Katie Haselbauer, Theresa Hudacek, Mary Jo Kacvinsky, Bob Kostichka, Doreen McKenney, Lucy Rose and Sylvie, Joan Sedlacek, Steve Shimer, Rich Smith, Sheila Surrona, Tereza Treanor, Cinnamon Whaley, and Bryan Wyberg.

Vendors at the Spring 2025 Pancake breakfast: Sokol Gift Shop, Marilyn Gomez, Markéta Pálková and Ludmila Pálková (Czech Sis Kitchen), Rachelle Peterson, and Jean and Chuck Draheim (Mirwood Cottage).

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

36th Annual Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant on April 12 held in Montgomery

(L-R) 2025 Junior Ambassadors R.J. Timmerman, Kylah Flicek, Allie Langridge, and Ella Flicek; 2025 First Princess Alexia Timmerman; 2025 Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Gianna Olsen, 2025 Second Princess Kailey Flicek, 2024 Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Sarah Langridge, and 2024 First Princess Gabby Stoudt. Little Sisters (not pictured): Arabella Gare, Addison and Arya Zimanske. Gianna sang *A ja taka dzivocika*, a Slovak song, for her talent.



7th Annual May Day *První máj* Pole Raising and Traditional Ribbon Dances on Sunday, May 4, noon-5 p.m., at Heritage Park in Montgomery



From lying on the ground with the bottom end of the pole resting on a sawhorse, it took the experienced crew less than 15 minutes to have the already-decorated May Pole securely standing upright. Then for everyone's enjoyment, the traditional ribbon dances began!



Entertainment on this beautiful sunny spring Sunday included St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, Sokol Minnesota *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční* Teen Folk Dancers and the Czech Area Concertina Club.

Face painting, crafts, sidewalk chalk, and wing painting pleased the kids. Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant, Veseli Area Lions, and May Day Committee sold delicious Czech foods, plus there was Czech merchandise to buy and genealogy to pursue.

Many people brought their own lawn chairs to enjoy the entire afternoon. Local radio station KCHK emceed.

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 *mariáš* card expert. Members bring crackers, cheese, dips, cookies, beverages, and sometimes tiny homemade pizzas.

**Join in this relaxing and socializing fun
on June 13, July 11, and August 8**

36th Annual Czech & Slovak Festival Hand-out Cards are Available

**for you to distribute
to your friends,
neighbors, and choice
bulletin boards.**

Pick some up at the Hall to help promote our favorite festival of the year!

Find them in a box, inside left door of the blue bureau by the elevator. Thank you!

36th ANNUAL CZECH & SLOVAK FESTIVAL
Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Sunday, September 28²⁰²⁵

11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota



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

www.sokolmn.org

Become a Volunteer:
festival@sokolmn.org

FREE Admission • Public Welcome • Accessible Facility

April Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board Highlights by Jean Draheim and Joyce Tesarek

Present: Bob Kotek, Dave Stepan, Joyce Tesarek, Jean Draheim, Jason Brozovich, Markéta Pálková, Sally Lieberman, Steve Ernest. Guests: Marit Kucera, Cinnamon Whaley.

Education Director, Sally Lieberman: Sokol has one new Czech language teacher for 2025-2026, but still seeking instructors who are qualified and interested. Under consideration: add one class for ages 10-13, for youth who have not had exposure to Czech language. Sally is checking online and with Škola. Discussion and approval: request by Sokol member Jim Chladek to publicize opportunity to host a Czech high school exchange student, through our Sokol publicity outlets. Future requests will be considered on an individual basis.

Board of Instructors, Jason Brozovich: Western District Slet and Gymnastics Competition was April 5 in Crete, Nebraska. Minnesota had two boys and five girls compete. There was a pizza party with kids, parents, and coaches after the competitions. Next year's competition will probably be in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The Western District annual meeting was held after competitions (see page 4). Our Gymnastics end-of-year party is Tuesday, May 6. Gymnastics classes are done for the summer after this date. Goals for the summer include working with BPTC to devise ways to more easily take out equipment and mats and to get access to

equipment that is seldom used and stored under the stage.

American Sokol National Slet is June 25 to 29 in Chicago area. Information is on American Sokol website. Registration is due by May 15 (price doubles after that date). Talk to Jason or to Mary Cahill if you have interest to learn one of the calisthenics routines.

Building and Property Trustee Committee, Dave Stepan: The boiler is hanging on; its replacement is on hold. May 3 is the clean-up day for the Hall. The Stage Committee will work with BPTC to repair the ropes and rigging on the stage. The Operations Manual is a work-in-progress.

Finance, Joyce Tesarek: Reports of cash balances; as approved at last BOD meeting, money was transferred from checking to money market account for interest income. We received two grants from American Sokol Foundation: \$1,461 for radiator valves and \$135 for shelving. Three motions were approved: the three signers for the Vanguard account will be Joyce Tesarek, Barbara Skrivanek, and Richard Sargent; Sokol adds fraud insurance to our accounts; and the STAR grant will be written for the repair and conservation of the large-scale Hubal fine art work on the stage.

Gaming, Ed Hamernik/Steve Shimer: Reports submitted. Three motions approved: Total Budget Approval Request for May; Total Actual

Expenditure Approval Requested for March; Motion to adjust Steve Shimer's hourly pay to \$30/hour.

Membership, Steve Ernest: Approved new member Julieana Bryarly. Current membership is 306.

Rental Committee, Markéta Pálková: Documents are being reviewed by a retired lawyer. The committee will work on the 2025 Rental budget at their next meeting. The American Ukrainian Center is looking to partner with us.

Activities, Jeannie Draheim: "The Blast from the Past" had 72 people attend. There was a wine and beer bar. Markéta is planning to have a "Spooky Blast from the Past" in October (see page 10). Members encouraged to order their tickets for *The Accidental Hero*, fundraiser performance donated again this year by Patrick Dewane on May 18. Information for the fall/winter event post card is due by June 15.

Stage Committee, Jeannie Draheim: The phase breakdown was presented and discussed. The repair of the ropes/rigging is okayed through BPTC. The total, out of pocket, cost is anticipated to be \$58,000 to \$59,000. The balance of the labor cost will be covered by volunteer workers.

Slovo Managing Editor, Marit Kucera: May issue is eight pages; it is almost ready to go to press. Items for the June *Slovo* are due May 1.

Sokol Minnesota Welcomes New Members

The Czech and Slovak Sokol Board of Directors approved two new member in April: **Juliana Bryarly** of Saint Paul with interests in language classes, cooking classes, films and theater, and history and genealogy. **Caitlin Puffer** is joining Sokol with interests in language classes, cooking classes, music and dances, history and genealogy, help setting up events, and other Sokol activities.

The Board approved three members in May and they are all royalty! **Gianna Olsen** of Stillwater is the 2025-26 Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Queen, **Alexia Timmerman** of Saint Peter is the 2025-26 First Princess, and **Kailey Flicek** of Lonsdale is the 2025-26 Second Princess. Welcome back to Alexia, who was the 2024-25 Second Princess! Czech Slovak Minnesota royalty memberships are sponsored by Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic. M.L. Kucera. Thank you, Marit!

Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!
<https://sokolmn.org/membership/>

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors

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

GENERAL FUND \$1,219 TOTAL: \$12,938

Under \$99: Anonymous, **Jean Draheim**, **Marlene Hinshaw**
\$100-\$499: **Jason** and **Megan Brozovich** (in memory of Arlene Hamernik), **Roger Wencil**

\$500-\$999: Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota

LEGACY FUND \$150

\$100-\$499: **M. L. Kucera** (in memory of Arlene Hamernik)

GRANTS \$11,569

\$10,000: J. A. Wedum Foundation for general repair in order to sustain the Hall for use during programming for members and the general public.

\$1,569: American Sokol Foundation 2025 Grants from the Gateway to the Future fund: \$1,461 for self-contained thermostatic radiator control valves which will allow us to specifically heat just-the-rooms-in-use and \$135 for basement shelving.

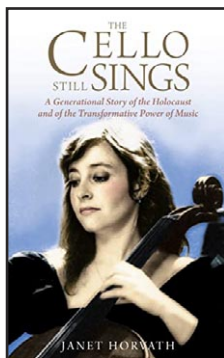
The Cello Still Sings: A Generational Story of the Holocaust and the Transformative Power of Music by Janet Horvath. Amsterdam Publishers: Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 563 pages, 2023. Available at bookstores and libraries.

Janet Horvath is a highly talented classical musician, author, speaker, and educator. In *The Cello Still Sings*, she presents a memoir of her life as a cellist and second-generation Holocaust survivor and biographies of her Hungarian parents, Gyuri (George) and Kato. A former Minnesota Orchestra cellist, Horvath lives in Minnesota with her husband Howie.

In this book, she blends personal stories and history as she shares her quest to find out more about her parents, to whom she was devoted. Like many genocide survivors, her parents were reluctant to talk about their experiences. Fortunately, after her mother's death, Janet's cousin Peter gave her a tape-recorded interview he had done with Kato many years ago. In another piece of good luck, Horvath discovered a written account of her father's Holocaust experiences.

Her father Gyuri was sent to hard labor and later liberated from the mining district of Bor in Yugoslavia by Siberian partisans. He ended up begging for bread from Russian soldiers and walking the long distance back to Budapest without shoes and in clothes that were in shreds.

Janet Horvath's mother Kato stayed in Hungary. She was one of about 100,000 Jews who were saved by Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, spending several nights in one of his safe houses. She hid with her brother Tibi in attics, basements, abandoned factories, and bombed edifices. Tibi eventually located an empty apartment on the outskirts of Budapest for Kato and Tibi's fiancé.



This book adds to our knowledge of Central Europe from a Hungarian perspective. The information Horvath shares varies from specifics of classical music and the lives of professional musicians, to the Holocaust, to limits on U.S. emigration and its unwillingness to accept victims of the Holocaust, to the long-time prevalence of anti-Semitism.

An effective theme that Horvath runs throughout the book is the transformative power of music. This is exemplified by a concert in which Gyuri played cello with other Holocaust survivors in 1948, with the young and remarkable Leonard Bernstein conducting. Seventy years later Janet Horvath, fellow musicians, and Leonard Bernstein recreated the earlier concert in the same place in Landesberg, Germany.

In addition to this book and an earlier one on injury prevention for musicians, Horvath has written more than 350 feature articles.

Her writing in *The Cello Still Sings* is beautifully lyrical, as demonstrated in this passage she wrote about playing a musical instrument: "I know now that beauty and inspiration ignites the best of the human spirit. The untenable pulsating, the tactile sensation of hugging the instruments, and breathing the music as one, creates a current that transforms us, elevates us, unites us, and propels us in ways we cannot explain."

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. Information and updates: cs-center.org or contact gwen@cs-center.org

Literary Ventures is on summer break until September.

Celebrate 100 Years of Sokol Camp on Sunday, August 10

Minnesota Sokol Camp, 19201 Woodland Acres South, Pine City, Minnesota 55063

By Kari and Scott Muyres, Co-Chairpersons, Sokol Camp Booya Picnic

It gives us such pride that 2025 marks the 100th year of our Sokol Minnesota Camp. We are so fortunate to have a place for recreation and camaraderie for our Sokol friends, relatives, and guests. To maintain the upkeep and structural integrity for the camp, we host a Booya Picnic each year to raise funds for the camp. The Booya Picnic has a 95-year tradition, which we are honored and proud to host. Each year, dozens of members and their friends come together in early August, to prepare home-made booya over an open kettle, serve *koláče*, grill *jitrnice*, and prepare other traditional foods.

Open to the general public, the picnic is a full day of service, hosting, and fraternizing with Sokol members and guests. Many treasured camp memories are made at the Booya Picnic! To celebrate this unique Sokol treasure, we personally invite all Sokol members to celebrate 100 years of the camp's existence, whether you've been attending the picnic your entire life or it's your first time.

We always need members to volunteer on this fun-filled day. Of course, there's also time to enjoy the picnic, filled with live concertina music from Dave Carlson and lively dancing by the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers.

The picnic begins at noon on August 10, with booya and other food



Booya picnic volunteers at Minnesota Sokol Camp.

booths open until 4 p.m. Grounds are open until 5 p.m. with live bingo, pull tabs, and games for the kids.

If you have questions or if you are interested in chopping vegetables, serving booya, or working a booth/kids' games, please contact Kari or Scott Muyres at 763-226-0313 or skdlmuyres@yahoo.com Thank you!

We hope to see you at the picnic!

Czech Honorary Consul News

June/July 2025

(L-R) Jitka Karešová, Consul, Consulate General in New York; Robin R. Zoufalik, H.C./ Pittsburgh; Jitka Putra, Vice H.C./ Miami Consul; Martin P. Pospíšil, H.C./New Orleans; Ondřej Pometlo, Deputy Consul General/ Chicago; Sharon

The Honorary Consuls of the Czech Republic in the United States met at the Czech Center Museum in Houston, Texas, April 10 -12 for our annual meeting, which included sessions with the Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Prague, Czech Trade, CzechInvest, and information about the new absentee voting and the role of Honorary Consulates (see page 2).



Valasek, H.C./Kansas City; Pavel Pešek, Director of Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Prague; Jan Hladik, Head of Economic Section, Embassy of the Czech Republic/ Washington; M.L. Kucera, H.C./Minneapolis; Pavel Doležel, H.C. designate/ Seattle; Lenka Hořáková, H.C./Little Rock; Jan Hladik, Head of Economic Section, Embassy of the Czech Republic/Washington; Dagmar Minaříková, Head of Consular Section, Embassy of the Czech Republic/Washington; Slobodan Popovic, H.C./Phoenix; Martin Smolek, Director General, Legal and Consular Affairs, MFA, Prague; Jakub Utěšený, Consul General, Consulate General/Chicago; Jaroslav Olša, Consul General, Consulate General/ Los Angeles; Miloslav Stašek, Ambassador of the Czech Republic/ Washington; Pavel Eichner, Czech Trade; Robert Braubach, H.C./ San Antonio; Levan Bokeria, Czech Trade; Tereza Porybná, CzechCentre; Jiří Maňák, CzechInvest; Monika Vintrlíková, H.C./Atlanta; Richard Pivnicka, H.C./San Francisco; Arnošt Kareš, Consul General/New York. Missing from this picture: Petr Kaván, Department of the Americas, MFA, Prague (who took this picture); Brian Vanicek, H.C./Houston (our Texas host); and Frank Nosek, H.C./Anchorage.



The new 2025-2026 Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota Queen visited the Czech Heritage Club booth at the May Day celebration on May 4 in Montgomery.

(L-R) Vi Chromy, M. L. Kucera, Gianna Olsen, George Mikiska, and Jim Simon.

Remembering, so we don't forget: Eighty years ago, World War II ended in early May 1945 in Czechoslovakia. Radio Prague International maps the last stages of the war and its aftermath on Czech territory. <https://english.radio.cz/80-years-ago-how-did-wwii-end-czech-lands-8840054>



Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/
Minneapolis

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SLOVO PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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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

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

Advertising: For information on due dates and rates, please email 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

Production layout: Mary Kucera.

June/July issue contributors: Mary Cahill, Jean Draheim, Steve Ernest, Sally Lieberman, Bob Kotek, M. L. Kucera, Doreen McKenney, Kari Muyres, Markéta Pálková, Joyce Tesarek, Renáta Tichá, and Gwen Willems.

Photographs, ads, or illustrations: Heather Vikla Dobias, Martina Gurgel, Elisha Jacobsen, Kája Jost, M. L. Kucera, Doreen McKenney, Kari Muyres, Jitka Sebek, Katka Svensson, Joyce Tesarek, and Gwen Willems.

More information at www.sokolmn.org



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

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 *Thank you!*

Name: _____

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I make a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

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

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

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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/

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota *SLOVO* June/July 2025

XXV American Sokol Slet on June 25-29

americansokol.org/xxv-american-sokol-slet



Prostná (calisthenics) rehearsal information:
Contact: mary.cahill@sokolmn.org

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XXV AMERICAN SOKOL SLET



XXV AMERICAN SOKOL SLET



XXV AMERICAN SOKOL SLET



XXV AMERICAN SOKOL SLET