



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

April Slovo articles due March 1

Sokol Singers
Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-noon
First and Third Tuesdays March, 2 and 16

Flavors of Slovakia Dinner reserve by March 2
March 8, doors open noon

Friendly Friday Evening Social
Friday, March 13
7 p.m.

Volunteer Opportunities
See page 3

Sokol Gift Shop
open during events and by appointment
giftshop@sokolmn.org

International Festival of Minnesota (IFest-MN)
April 10 & 11
See page 6

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



Spring Pancake Breakfast Craft and Koláče Bake Sale



Sunday
March 29 **2026**
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Public welcome.
No reservation needed.

Pancakes (all-you-can-eat). Sausage, fruit cup, juice, and coffee.
\$10 Adult
\$6 child under 9
\$30/family of 4

Ordering koláče

Place your prepaid koláče order by **Sunday, March 20**

Apricot, cream cheese, cherry, poppy seed, or raspberry koláč \$2 each

Prepay order online by credit/debit card, go to:
www.sokolmn.org/cc/
or Voice/text: 651-210-0401
if paying by check.

Vendor information contact: activities@sokolmn.org
Hosted by
Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota
383 Michigan St., Saint Paul, MN

Experience the World at the
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF Minnesota
IF

April 10 & 11, 2026 | Saint Paul RiverCentre
Imagine IF... We All Belonged. One festival. Many cultures. A shared home.

To volunteer, contact: volunteer@sokolmn.org

Outdoor Spring Cleanup at the C.S.P.S. Hall
Saturday, April 25, 2026 | 10 - 11 a.m.

Gloves and bags will be provided.
Sokol Minnesota Youth Link teens invite Sokol families of all ages to join them as they pick up litter around the grounds.
Interested in volunteering with the clean up contact: youths@sokolmn.org or teens sign up with your class instructor.



Komentář zástupce prezidenta /Vice President's Notes **by Fred Simon**

Bob Kotek, President of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, asked Fred Simon, Sokol Minnesota's Vice President, to write Vice President's Notes for this March 2026 issue.

Moving Through Time. I was asked by Bob Kotek, my very good friend and President of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, to put together a few thoughts for this March issue of *Slovo*. My Czech journey began back in 1999 with my first trip to the Czech Republic. I was fortunate to have a relative here who had visited there many times; he set me up with a family there. One of the sons, Petr Neubauer, had just graduated from Charles University and became my guide and translator (and a friend for life).

I met descendants of my six great-grandparents who had emigrated from Bohemia in the 1800s. I now have been back six times, meeting with relatives and making new friends. Eighty-year-old Karel Paleček, the first relative I met, was biking to the cemetery two miles away to visit his wife's grave. Initially, I didn't know that Karel was actually a relative of mine until he told Petr his last name was Paleček.

Astonishingly, just six months earlier when I was locating my ancestors' graves in the Saint Wenceslas Cemetery in New Prague, I dug up my great-grandfather Josef Paleček's footstone, which had settled a foot underground. Josef Paleček was actually an uncle to Karel. Every time I returned to the Czech Republic, I visited with Karel Paleček, who lived to be 103 years old.

My interest in Czech culture has only grown along with my love of the Czech Republic and its people over the past 27 years. I have been involved in many activities with the Czech Heritage Club in New Prague. I am currently Vice President of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. Unfortunately, due to several recent health issues, I've had to step away from a board position with the Czech Heritage Club.

If you are interested in your ancestry and heritage, I strongly recommend getting involved with organizations like Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, the Czech Heritage Club, or Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI). Volunteers are greatly appreciated, and I guarantee you will get so much more for your efforts than you put into it. You will also meet many interesting people who will become life-long friends. *Nazdar!*



Fred Simon

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota 2026 BOD (Board of Directors)

President
Bob Kotek

Vice President
Fred Simon

Recording Secretary
Aaron Mislivec

Corresponding Secretary
Denise Stibal

Treasurer
Wayne Zbytovsky

Sergeant at Arms
Linda (Ludmilla) Maxey

Directors at Large
Markéta Pálková
Don Haselbauer

Membership Director
Steve Ernest

**Budget and Finance
Committee**
Joyce Tesarek, Chair

Activities Director
Jean Draheim

Educational Director
Sally Lieberman

Rental Committee
Markéta Pálková, Chair

Publicity Director
Tereza Treanor

**Board of Instructor,
both Women's and Men's
Physical Directors**
Jason Brozovich

**Building and Property
Trustees Committee**
Dave Stepan, Chair

Gaming Manager
Steve Shimer

Telephone: 651-290-0542

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

Western District of American Sokol is the XXIII American Sokol Convention Host



with the Twin Cities
as the location
and Czech and Slovak
Sokol Minnesota
as the local unit

**You are invited to volunteer to help Sokol Minnesota
welcome the national delegates to C.S.P.S. Hall
for a social evening on Friday, June 12.**

Contact: Mary.Cahill@sokolmn.org or Joan@sokolmn.org

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

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



Use this
QR code
to go to
sokolmn.org

Czech and Slovak Study Opportunities and Scholarships

► **Summer Schools of Slavonic Studies 2026.** Apply now to study in Poděbrady, Prague, or Brno. Detailed information and instructions are available at <https://msmt.gov.cz/eu-and-international-affairs/summer-schools-of-slavonic-studies-2026>. Application: <https://msmt.gov.cz/file/64197/> must be submitted online to chicago@mzv.gov.cz by **March 15, 2026**.

► **Cross Cultural Pathways for Young Leaders 2026,** a 12-day, all-inclusive program in Prague, designed for young people aged 16-22, July 20-31. Study Czech culture, learn about civil society, tour Prague and Brno, network with university leadership and diplomats. **Deadline March 6, 2026.** <https://miic.world/summer-school/>

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota offers a \$1,850 tuition scholarship to a participant in 2026, with preference given to a Sokol Minnesota member or a child of a Sokol member: education@sokolmn.org

Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota (CSCC) has a \$1,000 scholarship: info@cs-center.org or CSCCofMNPublicity@gmail.com

If you are interested in one of these Minnesota scholarships, please also directly contact Sokol Minnesota or CSCC.

► **Irene E. Klemetson Scholarship 2026:** Minnesota residents seeking to study abroad in the Czech Republic or Slovak Republic in undergraduate or graduate studies are eligible. Scholarship requirements: <https://cs-center.org/2026/01/31/irene-e-klemetson-scholarship/> Questions and application forms: CSCCofMNPublicity@gmail.com **Application deadline: April 15, 2026.**

Here's Jan Knudtson's inspiration for this unique scholarship opportunity: Irene E. Klemetson, my grandmother was a daughter of two Bohemian immigrants. She instilled in me a great pride in my heritage. I learned how to polka and waltz in the kitchen of my grandparents' farmhouse when I was a child. When I was older, she told me about swear words.

I became a Czech nerd because of her and am extremely grateful for the opportunity to spend so many years with her. One of my life's greatest moments was when I introduced her to cousins in the Czech Republic when she and other family members visited me while I was a student there. I am privileged to have been able to study abroad in Dobruška and then Prague. I would like others interested in this magical place to be able to have the same opportunity. Therefore, I initiated a scholarship in my grandmother's name, Irene E. Klemetson, to give others assistance to have that same opportunity.

MSPIFF45 Screens April 8 to 19

45th anniversary edition of the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival (MSPIFF45) takes place April 8 - 19 at The Main Cinema, 115 SE Main Street, Minneapolis, with additional screenings and events at the Capri Theater in North Minneapolis, Landmark Center in Saint Paul, Edina Mann Theatre, and Rochester.



MSP Film Society believes that film has the power to bridge divides, foster unity across cultures, and provide a safe and welcoming space for people of all backgrounds to be in community with each other, especially during challenging times.

While the film program is still being confirmed, MSPIFF will share the titles in early March, as well as information about visiting filmmakers and the schedule of events in the weeks that follow. <https://mspfilm.org/mspiff45/> or call: 612-395-4444

Sokol Volunteer Opportunities

★ Publicity Team

Work with local print media

★ Online Calendar Admin

★ Quickbooks Expert

★ IFest-MN Café

8 Shifts each with 8 volunteers

★ Set-up and run IT Equipment

at Sokol Events

★ Managing Editor for *Slovo*

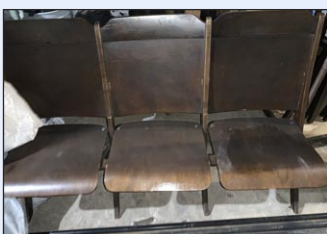
position open now

★ Event Reporter for *Slovo*

attend events and write articles

Contact: slovo@sokolmn.org

To volunteer, email: volunteer@sokolmn.org or call Joyce Tesarek: 612-232-2993



Volunteer to help with our ever-growing broken chair collection

Ideal candidate: woodworking/carpenter talents, woodworking tools, as well as the ability to work independently at a location of your choice.

Contact: trustees@sokolmn.org

You are invited to attend a BOD meeting to share ideas for classes, activities, membership, etc. Members are always welcome!

Contact: President@sokolmn.org

110 Valentines Created for Lexington Landing

Sokol Singers along with Sokol Minnesota Youth Link (SMYL) and their friends hand crafted 110 Valentine cards for our West 7th neighbors at Lexington Landing Senior Living.

After singing on Tuesday, February 3, several of the Sokol Singers stayed to make Valentines: Jean Draheim, Ed Hamernik, Don Haselbauer, Katie Haselbauer, and Marlene Hinshaw. On Saturday, February 7, SMYL members and friends made additional Valentines: Marit Kucera and Karin Fisher



with Luna and Fiona. Glynis Grostephan, Doreen McKenney, and Judy Metcalf were at both card-making events.

SMYL co-directors Glynis Grostephan and Doreen McKenney, plus Judy Metcalf brought supplies from their personal stashes to make cards: colored and patterned papers, red and white paper doilies in many sizes, felt hearts in several colors, colored pens and markers, glue sticks, scissors, blank cards and envelopes, stickers, and much more. Card makers had such a good time that they hope to make cards for more occasions.

Early in the second week of February, Glynis delivered the Valentines to Lexington Landing to be handed out by their staff on Valentine's Day. This annual activity gives Sokol Minnesota an additional activity to connect with Seniors in our neighborhood.

28th annual
Children's Czech and Slovak
Cultural Day Camp

June 15 - 19 20
26

C.S.P.S. Hall 383 Michigan St., Saint Paul

Cultural Landscape

In the
Czech and Slovak
LANDS

(the forest feeds us more than food)

Registration is OPEN

28th annual
Children's Czech and Slovak
Cultural Day Camp
 June 15-19, 2026

**Register by May 15
for the Early-Bird discount.**

All camp registration materials
 must be received by June 1.
 Registration materials for campers
 grade K to 5, Jr leaders grade 6-12,
 and adult volunteers
 can be downloaded at
www.sokolmn.org

Full refund if camp needs to be postponed.

Questions? Contact:
Louise Wessinger: 651-271-3601

Czech Embassy Photo Contest to Celebrate United States's 250th Birthday

As the United States marks 250 years of independence in 2026, the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, D.C., extends an invitation to help celebrate the enduring friendship between Czechs and Americans through photography.

Deadline is April 30.

The Embassy seeks photos from across the United States that capture Czech-American connections and contributions, past and present, such as:

- Czech-American communities here in Minnesota or in other American states
- Czech heritage in America today from architecture, food and drink, music, language, and fashion, to organizations, inventions, and everyday life

- Famous Czech figures in American history such as Augustine Herman, Antonín Dvořák, Miloš Forman, or Madeleine Albright
- Czech athletes or innovators on American soil.

Help the Czech Embassy tell the Czech-American story one photo at a time!

Selected photos will be featured on the Embassy's website and social media.

Learn more:

https://mzv.gov.cz/washington/en/culture_events/news/photo_competition_czechs_and_america_at.html

Ongoing Gymnastics Classes are Available at the C.S.P.S. Hall

All levels of gymnastics classes for boys and girls continue through Winter!



For more information, please visit: classes at www.sokolmn.org

COME INDOORS OUT OF THE COLD AND GET ACTIVE WITH GYMNASTICS

96th SOKOL CAMP BOOYA PICNIC

19201 Woodland Acres South, Pine City, Minnesota

**Sunday, August 9, 2026
Noon - 4 p.m.**

Great food, live music, folk dancers, children's games, and great fun!

Gala SLOVCZECH BLAST FROM THE PAST LIVE MUSIC AND MORE!

SLOVCZECH (LIVE) BRASS BAND MUSIC, DRINKS, GOULASH AND MORE	APR 18 2026	7PM - 11PM C.S.P.S HALL ST. PAUL
--	--------------------------	--

PRE-SALE TICKETS FOR \$15 ON SOKOLMN.ORG
OR AT THE DOOR FOR \$20

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota



**INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL OF
Minnesota**

**Celebration of Culture, Community, and Connection
April 10-11
International Festival of Minnesota (IFest-MN)**



Cultural Booth "city" created by Doreen McKenney

International Festival of Minnesota (IFest-MN) invites you to a Celebration of Culture, Community, and Connection at the Saint Paul RiverCentre. April 10-11. Formally known as the Festival of Nations, the IFest-MN gathers over 70 nations and ethnic communities to share food, music, art, dance, traditions, and cultural demonstrations.

With an expected 25,000 attendees, including 7,000 youth, IFest-MN offers hands-on, heart-opening experiences that fosters understanding across generations and provides a deeper understanding of each other's heritage. Czech and Slovak cultures will be represented at the two-day festival with a cultural booth, a food sales booth, folk dancers, and music.

Exclusive student hours:

Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Open to everyone: Friday, 3-9 p.m.

Saturday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Sokol Minnesota *Taneční* Teen folk dancers perform Friday: 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., plus Saturday: 10:15 a.m.

Saint Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers perform Saturday: 2 p.m. St. Paul South Bohemian Bagpipe Ensemble performance schedule is pending. Czech and Slovak cafe and the cultural exhibit will be open the entire time of the festival.

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota has been invited to organize Czech and Slovak participation.

You need not be a Sokol member to volunteer: volunteer@sokolmn.org



Taneční Teen practiced on Saturday, February 7

A food donation box is in the elevator lobby on the first floor of the Hall to collect non-perishable food items as well as personal and cleaning products for our local Saint Paul Hispanic community in keeping with our mission of community.



The box was first placed there when Sokol Minnesota hosted the IIHF Junior Slovak hockey team reception and dinner on December 28, 2025. The Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors voted at its January 11 meeting to continue collecting food and product donations. When you visit the Hall, please be generous. Thank you.

Renew your 2026 Sokol Minnesota Membership

If you have not renewed for 2026 already, please do so soon to continue being part of the Sokol family this year. Renewal letters were sent out around Thanksgiving 2025. If you did not receive yours, we may not have your current address. The easiest way you can renew anytime is by going online to www.sokolmn.org/membership In addition to paying your 2026 dues, you can use this web page to update your address, change how you receive the *Slovo* newsletter, express activities in which you would like to become more involved, and provide other feedback.

Thank you for your support of our historic Czech and Slovak cultural institution!

**Sokol Minnesota
Thanks Donors**

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota greatly appreciates donations received in December 2025 (not previously listed) and January 2026 supporting Czech and Sokol programs and the maintenance of our historic C.S.P.S. Hall.

GENERAL FUND

Under \$99: Geneva Adams; Bryan Bergh; Joyce M. Ehmke; Joseph Gall; Zuzana Hadarova and Kirk Gilbertson; George Hoffman; Anthony Kaczor; Darla Kolb; Bob Kostichka; M. L. Kucera; Charles Mara; Mighty Cause; Nancy Siewert; Raymond Vanyo; Richard Verner; Louise Wessinger; Wayne Zbytovsky.

\$100-\$499: Janet Balej; Lucy Brudnak and Stephen Rose; Kay Hromadko Edquist; Steve and Susie Fritze; Vince Jirik; Susan Lindoo and Mike Wolseky; Roger Wencel.

(2026 IIHF World Junior Hockey receptions and dinner) **Czech and Slovak Culture Center, Czech-Slovak Minnesota Pageant, M. L. Kucera.**
In kind: **Parjarito's Restaurant.**

LEGACY FUND

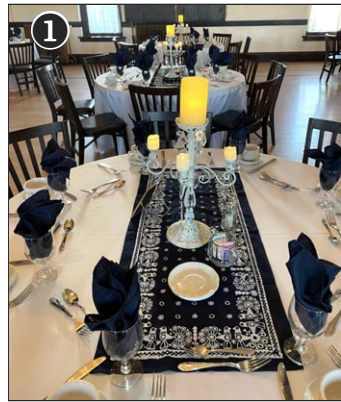
\$\$100-\$499: Pamela Kotval; Michael and Jitka Sebek.

Annual Candle Light Dinner on January 24

Contributors to this article were Dawn Bulera and the Slovo Team

Even Minnesota's 2026 Polar Vortex, the coldest temperatures in seven years, didn't stop nearly 100 people from coming to C.S.P.S. Hall to enjoy the authentic Czech made-from-scratch *svíčková s omáčkou a houskové knedlíky*/tenderloin with sauce and bread dumplings on Saturday, January 24.

Cooking started on Friday afternoon into evening, then continued early Saturday morning until dinner service began at 5 p.m. The beef



tenderloin was seasoned with a special blend of herbs and stuffed with bacon fat. The root vegetables were roasted alongside the meat. When done, the vegetables were set aside to cool, then pureed, and heavy cream added to create the most decadently delicious sauce. The bread dumplings were steamed to be light and airy. The dessert impressed everyone; *štafety* is a delicious multi-layered cake with creamy silk coffee filling and dipped in chocolate.

Our January Candle Light Dinner, previously with roast duck, has been a C.P.S.P. Hall tradition for nearly 25 years. This dinner joyfully welcomes in the new year. The Czech word for candle is *svíce*. The Hall was a beautiful sight. The tables were decorated with tapered candles (battery-powered) for the Candle Light Dinner "theme."



Our dinners make great gifts! Heidi Klima's Christmas gift to her father, Chuck Klima (center), was to treat him to the *svíčková* dinner. Her brother, Charley Klima, joined them.



Sokol President Bob Kotek and Honorary Czech Consul M. L. Kucera welcomed the dinner guests upon their arrival at the Hall, some of whom drove nearly 200 miles from Grand Rapids, Minnesota, to have special food "from home."



During dessert time, Sokol President Kotek's welcoming remarks included listing upcoming events at C.S.P.S. Hall and recognizing leaders of other Czech and Slovak organizations. Bob also introduced a special guest, a first-time Sokol Minnesota diner, Matt Varilek with Czech heritage and greatly proud of it! Matt is the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). DEED programs promote business recruitment, expansion, and retention; international trade; workforce development; and community development.



Special thanks to all the volunteers: Diane Bell, Rosina Bianco, Dawn Bulera*, Mary Cahill, Jean Draheim, Chuck Draheim, Julianne Feola, Roger Green, Jan Kostal, Bob Kotek, Michaela Giancarlo-Kotek*, M. L. Kucera, Luboš Mareš, Doreen McKenney, Markéta Pálková*, Ludmila Pálková*, Denise Stibal, Linda Maxey, Aaron Mislivic, Joyce Tesarek, Tereza Treanor, Rich Smith, Gary Zweber, and Izzy, who is a Sokol Minnesota Youth Link member. (*cooks)

1. The table setting had candles and Czech indigo-dyed runners. 2. At the end of the dinner, the kitchen and serving teams appreciated the applause from the diners. 3. Jan Kostal, Rosina Bianco, Julianne Feola, Izzy (SMYL member), and Gary Zweber were among our very professional volunteer servers. 4. Matt Varilek, greeted the guests. 5. Roger Green provided beer and wine service for the guests.

Upcoming Events of Interest

March 26, 6:30 p.m., Joseph Landsberger talks about his book, *Origin Story, A History of Saint Paul*. Sponsored by Czech Heritage Club. Giesenbräu Bier Brewery, 1306 First Street Northeast, New Prague.

March 27, 7 p.m. Czech political scientist and journalist Tomáš Klvaňa presents the 2026 annual Milan Sebek lecture, sponsored by Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis. Topic: *Feature, not a Bug? How Tribalism and Technology are Eroding Institutional Guardrails*. Our democratic institutions were built for deliberation, but they are being crushed by the speed of digital tribalism. This lecture explores how the fusion of economic inequality and algorithmic "outrage-engines" has weakened our institutional checks, leaving a vacuum filled by identity politics and systemic instability. Free admission. C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan, Saint Paul.

April 11, 37th Annual Miss Czech Slovak Minnesota Pageant. Dinner: 7 p.m.; Pageant: 7 p.m. Tickets for the Dinner and Pageant: \$25 per person. Pageant only tickets: \$5. Next Chapter Winery, 16945 320th Street, New Prague. Info: <https://www.facebook.com/MissCzechSlovakMN>

April 18, noon to 9 p.m. Slavic Experience South. Giesenbräu Bier Brewery, 1306 First Street Northeast, New Prague.

May 3, 8th Annual *První máj*/May Day celebration in Montgomery with ribbon dances around a 40' pole, music, folk dancers, food, vendors. Sponsored by Czech Fests in Montgomery.

Sokol Minnesota Welcomes New Members

The Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Board of Directors approved 17 new members in January:

Barbara Benson of Saint Paul.

Kyler Clancy of Oak Grove.

Cindy Chvosta Fortune of Apple Valley, with interests in language classes, cooking classes, music and dance, history and genealogy, and event help in the kitchen.

Denisa Hancock of Saint Paul, with interests in language classes and other Sokol activities.

Michael Justin of Saint Paul, with interests in language classes, cooking classes, history and genealogy.

Debbie Keller of Vadnais Heights, with interests in the youth dance group, youth culture camp, the literature group, language classes, films and theater, music and dances, history and genealogy, and other Sokol activities.

Anne Makepeace of Saint Paul, with interests in adult calisthenics, history and genealogy, and other Sokol activities.

Mary Miller of Vadnais Heights, with interests in cooking classes, films and theater, history and genealogy.

Jim Mishek of North Oaks, with interests in history and genealogy.

Kayla Oplinger of Alexandria, with interest in language classes.

Jim Rice of Minnetonka, with interest in language classes.

Bruce and Christine Skluzacek of Montgomery.

Debra Skluzacek of Montgomery, with interests in language classes, cooking classes, crafting classes, films and theater, music and dances, history and genealogy, event help: organizing, setup, kitchen, serving meals and cleanup, and also fundraising and finances.

Ronald Spika of Roseville.

Lucinda and Susan Susienka of Inver Grove Heights, with interests in language classes, cooking classes, crafting classes, films and theater, history and genealogy.

Welcome to Sokol Minnesota!

37th annual CZECH & SLOVAK FESTIVAL

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

Sunday, September 27²⁰ 26

11 a.m. - 4 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



Sokol Minnesota Friendly Friday Evenings 7-10 p.m.

Social for
Members, Families, and Friends
at the C.S.P.S. Hall
March 13 and April 10
with board games and activities.

Highlights of the January 2026 Sokol Minnesota Board Retreat

By Aaron Mislivec,
Recording Secretary

President Bob Kotek presided at the Board of Directors' annual planning meeting/retreat at C.S.P.S. Hall on January 11, 2026. Board members present: Jean Draheim, Steve Ernest, Sally Lieberman, Aaron Mislivec, Markéta Pálková, Fred Simon, Steve Shimer, Dave Stepan, Denise Stibal, Joyce Tesarek. Guest: Marit Kucera

President Kotek: Sokol Minnesota is in discussions with CSG, a Czech-owned company with production facilities in Minnesota, regarding potential financial support. In December, Sokol Minnesota received a \$25,000 matching grant from the J. A. Wedum Foundation, a long-standing and consistent supporter of our Sokol unit.

Activities Director: Jean Draheim: reservations are coming in for the *Svíčková* Dinner on January 24. Additional information is needed for the spring/summer event postcards, which will be inserted into the February issue of *Slovo*.

Building and Property Trustee Committee: Dave Stepan: updates on the Hall building projects included information on the installation of the new boiler. The Minnesota inspection is scheduled for January.

Major projects planned for 2026 include modifications to the fire sprinkler system to protect the stage backdrops and the relocation of the return air ducts. An evaluation of installing rooftop solar panels determined that repairs to the Hall roof are required first, making roof repair a potential project for 2026. Under consideration is creating copies of the stage backdrops for use during Hall rentals.

Applications are underway for Saint Paul STAR, American Sokol, and Czech grants to support future building projects.

Education Director: Sally Lieberman: the Czech glasswork presentation and glass jewelry design class is set for early February. Enrollment is sufficient to continue all our other winter Sokol Minnesota classes.

Finance Committee: Joyce Tesarek: review of 2025 financial statements and bank account balances.

Gaming Committee: Steve Shimer: 2025 gaming proceeds report and budgets; all were approved.



2026 BOD retreat. Front: Steve Shimer, Sally Lieberman, Jean Draheim, Denise Stibal, Joyce Tesarek, Markéta Pálková, Dave Stepan. Back: Fred Simon, Aaron Mislivec, Bob Kotek, and Steve Ernest. Missing: Marit Kucera, photographer.

Membership Director: Steve Ernest: the January membership report. (see page 8)

Vice President Report: Fred Simon: 26th Annual *Masopust* in Montgomery is February 15.

Study in Prague Scholarship: Marit Kucera: the proposed \$1,850 scholarship for study in Prague should give preference to children of Sokol members. The board approved the scholarship.

Preparation for the 2026 American Sokol Convention: Bob Kotek: Sokol Minnesota has been asked to provide *pivo* (beer) for the delegation reception on June 12; the board approved.

Volunteer Appreciation: The board discussed potential volunteer benefits including reduced fees for events for members and appreciation events. The board agreed to continue the discussion.

Corresponding Secretary: Denise Stibal: November and December saw a total of \$63,950 in donations.

Sunshine Committee: Denise Stibal: get-well cards were sent to Don

Haselbauer, Joan Sedlacek, Louise Wessinger, and Chuck Draheim; flowers were sent for Lloyd Krocak's funeral.

Miscellaneous Items: The board approved a motion to continue Sokol Minnesota's collection of non-perishable food, plus personal and cleaning products, for Saint Paul neighbors in need. The donation box is located in the entrance by the elevator.

A motion to raise the non-Sokol members *Slovo* subscription rate to \$25 was approved.

The board discussed the possibility of providing customized volunteer name tags for different events, such as the name tags used for volunteers at the IIHF event, which had crossed hockey sticks.

The board also approved Sally Lieberman's proposal for a sign requiring a magisterial warrant for ICE (Immigration and Custom Enforcement) to enter the Hall. The sign will be available to any group using our C.S.P.S. Hall.

Gymnastics for everyone ages 4-18

Monday
Tuesday
& Thursday
evenings



More details: fitness@sokolmn.org

The Golem by Gustav Meyrink, translated by Madge Pemberton, edited and with an introduction by E. F. Bleiler. Dover Publications: New York, 240 pages, 1976, published in German in 1915. Available at bookstores and libraries.

The story of the golem has been told many times in many ways over the years. It is usually depicted in medieval and Jewish folklore as a creature formed of clay and animated by Rabbi Judah Loew. Even today it appears in many pieces of literature, films, television, operas, music, and games.

In this book, the golem appears every 33 years. I consider the golem more a symbol of the mysterious nature of the Jewish quarter in Prague and the ghetto inhabitants' collective psyche than as a well-defined character.

However, Meyrink in *The Golem* supplies many characters and much description of the physical area and complicated activities and interactions. The story of the life of Athanasius (the Greek word for immortal) Pernath, a jewel cutter and art restorer, is experienced by an anonymous narrator.

Readers need to judge the metaphysical and transcendent events to decide for themselves if and when the narrator is telling the truth, dreaming, having delusions, or being inhabited by another creature.

The Golem offers several storylines in various genres, metaphysical fiction, mystery, horror, romance, speculative science fiction, and fantasy. The intertwined narratives form a complicated book, a dense, slow read for those willing to pay attention to details.

One scene that stands out is Pernath lifting a trapdoor and entering the darkness beneath the ghetto. As Meyrink describes it, "... I became aware of small steps leading down into nethermost gloom. I began to descend them. For some time I groped my way along with my hands, till there seemed to be no end to it: niches in the wall, full of fungus and decay; nooks, crannies, turnings, corners; straight passages—passages that wound to

the right or the left; the remains of an old wooden door; alleys branching off in all directions; and steps, and steps, and steps...."

"In a flash I knew where I was! A room with no entrance ... only a barred window... the ancient house in the Altschulgasse that everyone avoided.... The house into which the supernatural Golem had been known each time to vanish."

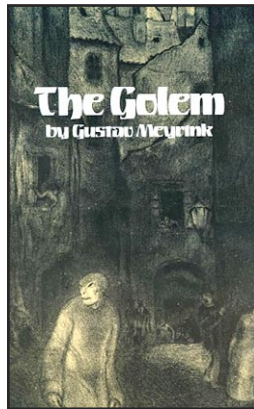
I suggest you not abandon reading before the end of the book since the last pages offer several possibilities and explanations of earlier events.

In the lengthy introduction, E. F. Bleiler offers helpful information. He considers Meyrink to be "one of the earliest expressionistic writers and certainly the foremost twentieth-century novelist of the supernatural."

The Golem was first published in serialized form in 1913 and 1914 in German. A book edition came out in 1915; it was so popular it sold more than 200,000 copies that year. *The Golem* was translated into English in 1928.

Meyrink was born in Vienna in 1868. He went to business school, worked in the export trade, and opened a bank with another man. He spent three months in jail after a false accusation and came out a ruined man. He went on to translate Dickens' works into German and wrote stories, plays, and five books. Suffering from an old spinal injury and the suicide of his son, he died by suicide in 1932.

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 or contact gwen@cs-center.org



Join Literary Ventures at 10 a.m., Saturday, March 21, to discuss *Skoda: Laurin & Klement* by Ivan Margolius and Charles Meisl.

Join Sokol Minnesota Singers!

Czech & Slovak songs.
Meet on the second floor
at the C.S.P.S. Hall,
first and third Tuesdays
of the month,
September through mid-June,
10 a.m. -12 noon. All are welcome.

Questions: activities@sokolmn.org



Special piano
accompaniment
by Don Haselbauer

Children and Teen Folk Dancing Saturdays

9:45 a.m. - noon

Dance practice
is held each Saturday
morning through the school year,
at the historic C.S.P.S. Hall,
383 Michigan St., Saint. Paul, MN 55102
Practices are subject to change.

Contact Louise: 651-271-3601 • folkdance@sokolmn.org

Czech Honorary Consul News March 2026

Matt Varilek (center), the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), posed with Marit Kucera, Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis, and Bob Kotek, President of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, at the Candle Light Dinner at C.S.P.S. Hall on January 24. DEED programs promote international trade, workforce development, and community development, as well as business recruitment, expansion, and retention. On his first trip to C.S.P.S. Hall, Matt celebrated his Czech Heritage at the *svíčková* dinner and also joined Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota.



Ester Davidová from Prague and Pavel Hanuš from Liberec enjoyed the Czech tradition of *Masopust* (Czech *Mardi Gras*) in Montgomery on February 15, along with their hosts-for-the-day, Mark Neužil (emeritus professor of journalism at the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, and a 2017 Fulbright Scholar at Charles University, Prague) and Amy Kuebelbeck (a news editor with the *Minnesota Star Tribune*). Both Mark and Amy are members of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, as is their daughter Maria Neužil, who plays E-flat clarinet with The St. Paul South Bohemian Bagpipe Ensemble.



Ester, who is studying sociology, and Pavel, who is studying law, are both recipients of the Kucera Endowed Scholarship for Czech students at Saint Thomas University in Saint Paul. (See *Czech Honorary Consul News* April 2025, page 7, April 2025 *Slovo* for more information on the Kucera Scholarship. <https://sokolmn.org/slovo-newsletter/>)

(L-R) Amy Kuebelbeck, Ester Davidová, Mark Neužil, Pavel Hanuš, Marit Kucera)

As the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, D.C., did in 2018 when the 100th anniversary of the formation of Czechoslovakia was celebrated, the Embassy is having a photo competition to celebrate 250 years of independence here in the United States, highlighting the rich and lasting ties between Czechs and Americans.

A unique collection of heartwarming photographs from the communities and everyday lives of Czech-Americans from all corners and plains of the United States were displayed at the Czech Embassy in summer 2018. https://mzv.gov.cz/washington/en/culture_events/news/photo_exhibition_czech_american_zoom_in.html Of the 19 photos chosen to hang in the Embassy in 2018, four came from Minnesotans, three were (and still are)

Sokol Minnesota members. Jitka Sebek's photo shows her late father-in-law, Milan Sebek with a basket overflowing with wild mushrooms from the forest, a favorite summer activity of Czechs both in Czechia and the United States.

Martina Gurgle's picture of *Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities/Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities* shows children in a play, based on *Rybáři a hastrmani* by Miloš Kratochvíl, on the stage at C.S.P.S. Hall. My picture of Paul Onderka's gravestone, (Czech – USA, 1957-2013), shows how it was decorated on Memorial Day 2017 by myself and another Czech-American, with photos from the family gravesite in Krnov, Czechia, along with two gravesite candles, wide white/red/blue ribbon, and a large vase of flowers. Paul Onderka lived and worked in the United States for

many years. When he died in 2013, he was buried in Resurrection Cemetery in Saint Paul, but also remembered on the family gravestone in Krnov, C.R.

Marisa Rotter's son, the young Czech-American boy in his Czech vest, is shouting for joy; both his hands are full of all the candy he's collected at his favorite celebration of the year in 2017, Montgomery's Kolacky Days Grand Parade.

As Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic/Minneapolis, it is my hope that Minnesota's rich Czech heritage will again be displayed at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, D.C., in 2026 as the United States of America celebrates its 250th!

April 30 deadline. https://mzv.gov.cz/.../photo_competition_czechs_and...



Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/
Minneapolis

Marit Lee Kucera, Honorary Consul
651-238-0447
minneapolis@honorary.mzv.gov.cz
OR mlkucera@outlook.com



SLOVO PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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

Non-member *Slovo* subscription: \$25 annually. Please include name, address, phone number, and email address with a \$25 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.

Issue contributors: Dawn Bulera, Steve Ernest, Glynis Grostephan, Jan Knudtson, Bob Kotek, M. L. Kucera, Doreen McKenney, Aaron Mislivec, Bonnie Simon, Fred Simon, Joyce Tesarek, Louise Wessinger, and Gwen Willems.

Issue photographs, ads, or illustrations: Martina Gurgel, M. L. Kucera, Doreen McKenney, James Simon, Joyce Tesarek, and Gwen Willems.

More information: 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 139th year in 2026. Contact Joyce Tesarek to discuss your tax-deductible donation: 612-232-2993 or email: 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 use the "Who We Are" tab.



For Sokol's Latest News!

Join the E-blast List

Send your email address to publicity@sokolmn.org

sokolmn.org

events@sokolmn.org

Instagram: [@sokolminnesota](https://www.instagram.com/sokolminnesota)

facebook.com/sokolminnesota

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* March 2026

Gala SLOVCZECH

BLAST

FROM THE

PAST



LIVE MUSIC AND MORE!

SLOVCZECH (LIVE)
 BRASS BAND MUSIC
 DRINKS, GOULASH
 AND MORE

APR
18
 2026

7p.m. - 11p.m.
 C.S.P.S. HALL
 383 MICHIGAN
 SAINT PAUL

PRE-SALE TICKETS FOR \$15 ON SOKOLMN.ORG
 OR AT THE DOOR FOR \$20

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota

