

CZECH AND SLOVAK



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

SLOVO

June/July 2026
vol. 49 no. 5

UPCOMING EVENTS

August Slovo articles
due July 1

**Friendly Friday
Evening Social** 7 p.m.
Friday, June 12

**Membership Meeting
Potluck**
Friday, July 10, 6:30 p.m.
See page 8

Kolo Sokol Bike Club
May - October
sokolmn.org/bike

Volunteer Opportunities
See page 8

Sokol Gift Shop
by appointment
giftshop@sokolmn.org

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.

Contact
Joyce Tesarek
to discuss your tax-
deductible donation at
finance@sokolmn.org

Thank you!

Write **Legacy Fund** in
the check's memo line.

Mail to **C.S.P.S. Hall
Legacy Fund.**

Attn: Treasurer

Or donate online:
www.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 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.

2026 YLA application closes July 1.

Information and forms: www.sokolmn.org



SOKOL BIKE RIDES

Ride metro area trails with
fellow Sokol bikers
May through October 2026.
For upcoming dates and details
check the Kolo webpage at:
sokolmn.org/bike

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!

To volunteer in tent setup, food preparation,
or food and beverage serving, contact:
Sokol Camp Association Picnic Co-Chairs
Kari or Scott at 763-226-0313 or 612-387-0274

37th annual CZECH & SLOVAK FESTIVAL

Hosted by Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota
C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota

Sunday
September 27 2026
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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

Become
a Volunteer:
festival@sokolmn.org



Prezidentův komentář/President's Notes by Bob Kotek

Greetings to all readers of this issue of the *Slovo*! I have information to share from American Sokol and a recap from a really fun musical event held at the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on May 1. American Sokol president, Adam Wilt, shared the following resource guide.



Bob Kotek

American Sokol Resource Drive

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CbDFUkK7dpPlazLahEyR29Q61PofUe2S>

What is the American Sokol Resource Drive? This is a collection of shared resources available from the American Sokol (AS).

Who has access and where is this drive being saved? This drive is being hosted in an independent drive within our American Sokol Google Business account. Anyone with the link to this drive may view and download documents within the drive.

What's in the AS Resource Drive? American Sokol is only posting public documents to this drive and will not share any private PII (Personally Identifiable Information) of our members. The drive includes six folders (titles below include direct links) with resources and AS info:

American Sokol Executive Board Includes AS abbreviated EB meeting minutes, and will soon include job descriptions and timelines for each office (once finalized this spring).

Education & Archives Includes copies of all prior American Sokol publications and a listing of our units and dates of formation.

Foundation/Grants *COMING SOON* Resources for American Sokol grants including application info and other paperwork.

Membership Resources from our National Membership Committee.

Physical Programs Board of Instructors (BOI) Includes resources from the American Sokol Board of Instructors including their publications, resources for Sokol class instructors and units/districts, *Slet* info (manuals, Cal info, insurance/compliance documents/templates, etc.), and historical display photos.

Unit & Organizational Resources - Includes files with the official American Sokol logo, AS bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and will later include unit resources (i.e. event how-to's, etc.).

If you have a resource from your unit, please email it to office@americansokol.org if you would be willing to let us share this on the AS Resource Drive.

Don't hesitate to contact Adam or Gina at the office (office@americansokol.org) if you have any questions.



On Friday, May 1, my wife Michaela and I traveled to Cedar Rapids to attend a performance of the Czech Republic's own 4 Musical Tenors, singing hits from Broadway, the Beatles, the Bee Gees, and Elvis! The event was emceed by Dr. Cecelia Rokusek, president and CEO of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. It was a beautiful and powerful performance enjoyed by the sold-out crowd. *Nazdar!*



The 4 Musical Tenors, (L-R) Marian Vojtko, Michael Bragagnolo, Pavel Vitek, Jan Kriz.

Sokol Minnesota attendees: Michaela Giancarlo Kotek, Bob Kotek, and Honorary Consul Marit Lee Kucera.

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 2026 BOD (Board of Directors)

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Steve Shimer

Telephone: 651-290-0542

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

Third Time's the Charm — And This Time, Gala Style! by Event Chair Markéta Pálková

Because so many of us love dancing, socializing, and keeping our Czech and Slovak community vibrant at the C.S.P.S. Hall, we knew we had to bring back the “Blast from the Past.” When the band SlovCzech agreed to play live at our Hall, it was an opportunity we simply couldn't refuse. That's when the idea for a proper Gala event was born!

In the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, this type of event is traditionally called *ples*. Those elegant balls are usually held on winter Saturday evenings and are organized by schools, town halls, churches, or other community organizations. Many villages and cities have numerous balls through the winter. While each group adds its own touch, the formula is wonderfully consistent: a live brass band, or band playing different styles of music; great food and drinks; and *tombola* (raffle), which we replaced with a silent auction. The goal is always the same — to enjoy a beautiful evening with friends and community while raising funds for the organizing group. In our case, all net proceeds from the April 18 event will go directly into the Sokol Hall General Fund to help with much-needed repairs and maintenance. This event earned over \$4,400.

We knew the event wouldn't feel complete without some authentic Czech and Slovak touches. Since food is always the heart of any proper *ples* back home, we assembled a dream-team kitchen crew and created a special menu. *Guláš* with fresh bread was an easy choice, especially because we rarely serve it at other Sokol events. We also had *chlebičky* (open-faced sandwiches),



prepared with love by Linda Maxey, Marta Hipp, Markéta Pálková, and Ludmila Pálková. And because no Czech gathering is complete without something sweet, we added homemade cream rolls (*trdelníky* or *kremrole*), made from scratch by our very own Ludmila Pálková, the same talented mom whose cream rolls are famous in her village. She also took the lead on cooking the *guláš* and definitely earned every bit of applause she received! Bread for the *guláš* was baked and donated by Linda Maxey and Markéta Pálková.

A huge thank you goes to SlovCzech for providing such a fantastic atmosphere. Their music and energy brought people of all generations onto the dance floor.

It was wonderful to see everyone dancing, laughing, and enjoying themselves. And for those who preferred to sit this one out, the bar offered plenty of good company and entertainment.

Special thanks to our amazing volunteers: Rosina Bianco, Dawn Bulera, Jana Castillon, Eva Giese, Kája Jost, Honza Košťál, Míša Kotek, Marit Lee Kucera, Zdeněk Kuhn, Luboš Mareš, Linda, Lilli, and Lance Maxey, Chad, Silvi, Lucas, and Claire Nemes, Igor Nestrašil, Lidka Pálková, Ludmila Pálková, Markéta Pálková, Matt Schroeder, David Stepan, and Katka Svensson.

Thank you also to everyone who generously donated silent auction items (SA), food ingredients (F), and cash (C): Luciana and František Chudoba (SA), Denisa Hancock (SA), Martina Havlová (SA), Marta and Charles Hipp (SA), Lucie and Michal Jašek (F), Míša Kotek (SA), Marit Lee Kucera (C), Luboš Mareš (SA), Lucie Mikolášková (SA), Beth Moeller (SA), Chad and Silvi Nemes (SA), Lidka Pálková (SA), Ludmila Pálková (SA), Markéta Pálková (SA and F), and Jitka Sebek (SA). If I accidentally missed anyone, please forgive me! It truly takes a village (or in our case, a wonderful Czech-Slovak community) to make an evening like this possible.



Škola Spelling Bee Challenge by Jitka Sebek

Q: Do you know which is the most challenging Czech and Slovak word?

The one tricky word that decided first and second place in our next very successful 2026 *Česká a Slovenská škola* Twin Cities Spelling Bee Competition. The one word that has an unexpected cluster of consonants and rightly baffles students of both languages being studied. A word that every student must know when ordering a sweet treat this summer while in Czechia or Slovakia.

A: The challenging word is *zmrzlina*, the sweet treat known as ice cream.

Congratulations to Spelling Bee winner: Lucas N.



Congratulations to our 2026 Graduates: Adela, Jas, and Amari!



Adela Peterson, daughter of Lewis and Karolina Peterson, will graduate from Mounds View High School on May 27. While in high school Adela's favorite activities were band, drama, and music but her "most favorite" was definitely sports. She participated in track and field since eighth grade, lettering in cross country and track & field in tenth, 11th,

and 12th grades. She received the Equity Promise Scholarship through the Susan C. Carlson Memorial Fund and is graduating with honors. Some of her favorite school memories will be bus rides home after a long race day and fun group projects with friends in history classes on World War II topics.

Since 2013 she has been a member of the Czech and Slovak dance program. Her favorite memories of being in the group was performing at Christmas time at the Sokol Hall, especially doing the Candy Cane Dance! She also enjoyed dancing for the Festival of Nations and eating all the traditional food that came with those activities. "The Czech and Slovak building is so unique and beautiful it looks nothing like any other common spaces in Minnesota and has a vibe that I will always remember."

Something she learned from the group is that it is fun to tell others about Czech culture by performing dances and wearing a traditional *kroj*. She learned that it takes a lot of effort from volunteers to keep these traditions going. Mrs. Louise is kind, patient, and showed Adela how to be a good teacher by telling younger dancers to cherish the moments and the fun performances you get to be a part of, because the years go by faster than you think! Her favorite dance was *Holka modrooká*. Adela would like to thank all the volunteers who made this experience possible for her and her friends: "I appreciate their passion, time, and effort."

Adela plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse next year, where she is committed to the UWL Cross Country and Track & Field teams. She is planning to study elementary education.



Jas Gillman started gymnastics at four years of age in Sokol Minnesota's first year of our revived boys class and has been an active participant in Sokol classes every year since. He has participated in Western District competitions for several years and attended two years of American Sokol National Instructor Schools, and he officially became an instructor with Sokol

Minnesota these past two years after helping out prior to attending Instructor School. When asked what Sokol has meant to him, Jas responded, "Gymnastics has taught me a lot about the importance of consistency, how to teach, creating lesson plans, and numerous other skills that will transfer to a professional workplace. I appreciate all the opportunities Sokol has given me, the fun I have had, and the friends I have made." Jas will be attending college at the University of Minnesota, Duluth campus, and is undecided on a major at this time.



Amari Conway started gymnastics with Sokol Minnesota at age four, and she has been an active class participant every year since. She started competing at around age nine and has been a class instructor for two years after attending Instructor School; however, she has been assisting younger gymnasts in learning skills and providing tons of

encouragement for years. When asked what Sokol has meant to her, Amari responded, "Sokol Minnesota has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. The Sokol program has introduced me to so many opportunities and new people that now feel a part of my everyday life and personality. It offers growth, trust and new friendships." Amari is taking some time to decide what she wants to pursue academically and is currently pursuing certification as a nursing assistant.

Highlights of the Sokol Minnesota March 2026 Board Meeting

The March 19, 2026, Board of Directors' online meeting was called to order by President Bob Kotek. BOD members: Jason Brozovich, Jean Draheim, Steve Ernest, Sally Lieberman, Linda Maxey, Marketa Palkova, Steve Shimer, Fred Simon, Dave Stepan, Denise Stibal, and Joyce Tesarek. February BOD meeting minutes motioned and approved with corrections. Introduced new Sergeant at Arms BOD member Linda Maxey.

Education Director: Sally Lieberman reported sufficient enrollment to continue all language classes. Two Cross Cultural Scholarship applicants ages 16 -22 were received from Sokol Minnesota. Heritage scholarship application deadline is March 31, Sokol Minnesota deadline is March 26. Sokol member applying for two week teaching class in CZ. Sally to give a tour of Sokol hall during Saint Stans Festival; two volunteers needed to tend Sokol's info table. UMN Theater production of *Bohemian Flats* update.

Board of Instructors Report: Jason Brozovich mentioned how gymnastic classes are going great with third 10-week session beginning and

enrollment increasing. Gymnasts participation in Western District competition in Cedar Rapids, will be held May 2. Uneven bars were sold. Half dozen students and families attended UMN women's gymnastics meet 1st week of March.

Building Property Trustees Committee: Dave Stepan reported that the boiler valve needs to be replaced before spring shutdown process. State inspection was approved. Additional costs incurred during installation.

Set price was \$137K with new final expected cost of \$150k. Vacant restaurant cleanup project for BPTC. Get a bid from Eagle, for upstairs and downstairs floor refinishing. New lighting needed in basement. BOD guidance on timeline and funding for stage effort and roll drops, put on back burner per Bob. Groundwater discharge disapproved by State inspection, work with civil engineer to devise a plan and look into STAR grant funding. Padlock back fence to prevent dumping.

Finance Committee: Joyce Tesarek presented February financial statements. Reported that the

by Aaron Mislivec, Recording Secretary

restaurant lease is ending, with a loss of \$7k per month. Looking for new tenant. Motioned to move \$40k from checking account to money market account, motion approved. Increase amount in small checking account to avoid fees. Mike Sebek reviewing Sokol MN's insurance. Motion to donate \$500 to the International Film Festival, motion approved. Volunteers are needed to manage Quickbooks, cafe at International Festival, spring pancake breakfast.

Gaming Committee: Steve Shimer reported that income showed \$9k loss, which includes \$15k transfer to Sokol Minnesota. Made \$5k in March - bars slowed down. Motion to approve proposed April budget, motion approved. Motion to approve February expenditures, motion approved. Motion to acknowledge \$15 transfer, motion approved.

Membership Director: Steve Ernest moved to approve five new members: Elizabeth Mischke, Hastings; Katarina Bila, Bloomington; Martin Marko, Bloomington; Donnell Linscheid,

continued on page 5

Spring Celebration at the C.S.P.S. Hall with Dance and Language

The end of year Spring Celebration at the C.S.P.S. Hall was held on April 25. The gym floor was filled with children, parents, teachers, and friends to watch performances from the *Taneční Mládež* and *Taneční Teen Dancers* directed for the 37th year by Louise Wessinger. The Spring Celebration also recognized students from the Czech and Slovak School Twin Cities/Česká a slovenská škola Twin Cities.



Fourteen younger dancers started the celebration by performing some of the groups traditional beginning dances, joined by adult helper Emily Fiamová and teen dancer Sara. Emily, Sara, and Katka Svensson (who was running the UltraElm Creek Backyard Ultra 2026) help Louise during practice and dance performances. *Taneční Mládež* dancers were Marie, Eilis, Evelyn, Finley, Gavin, Josef, Karolina, Magdalena, Mason, Theo, Tommy, Victorie, and Zoe.

Five teen dancers performed one of their favorites *Podšable* (Under the Sword) (left), where all eyes were on the intricate and steady movement as the swords intertwined with their dance steps.



Another favorite is when the children join the teens to dance the *Volky* (right). The fourteen teens closed the program with their signature dance *Tancuj* before Louise presented certificate recognition to dance participants and helpers. Anna Hester, Renáta Tichá, and John Topic help Louise and fill in when a dance partner is needed. *Taneční Teen* dancers: Adam, Adela, Althea, Callista, Emma, Emre, Fiona, Kamila, Keely, Liliana, Luna, Olivia, Sara, and Sofia.



(Left) Adela Peterson spent Saturday mornings at the C.S.P.S.Hall as a student studying Czech language and danced with the Sokol *Taneční Teen Dancers* after class. Adela is the Czech & Slovak School Twin Cities recipient of the Minnesota Seal of Biliteracy that concludes the years of speaking her heritage language at home while broadening her literacy with a focus on reading, writing, and vocabulary throughout the weekends of her classroom participation. At the same time it is a gate wide open to her multilingual future, travels, and college studies. Congratulations! More about Adela on page 5.

Board Meeting continued from page 4...

Cottage Grove; and Larry Bartek, Eagan. Motion approved. Steve reaching out to 48 members who have not renewed.

Bylaws Update: Steve Ernest motioned to approve correction of reference to Section C to Section E, motion approved. Motion to approve Joyce's proposed change to Section 1.E, motion approved. To view bylaws: <https://sokolmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Czech-and-Slovak-Sokol-Minnesota-Bylaws-effective-Mar-2026.pdf>

Rental Committee: Markéta Pálková reported the committee is working on Dawn Bulera's job description. Next rental meeting scheduled end of month.

Activities Director: Jean Draheim stated that Sokol Minnesota's online calendar is fixed and up and running. Linda Maxey will assist the online calendar entry requests and to send to both. Fall postcard info needed by June 15 to mail out in September.

Publicity: Tereza Treanor will continue to promote Spring Pancake Breakfast, Blast From the Past Gala, and will promote European Friendship Bike Ride.

Corresponding Secretary: Denise Stibal reported new contributions to the General Fund total: \$4,650 and Legacy Fund total: \$9,797.

Sunshine Committee Report: Denise Stiba: No activity to report.

Miscellaneous: Motion to approve 1/3 of \$15 registration fees for European Friendship Bike Ride, motion approved. Czech Heritage Club presentation.

If you are interested in a copy of the February BOD minutes, please contact: slovo@sokol.mn.org



MSPIFF45 Screens April 8 to 19 by Jitka Sebek

Friends gathered after the first Czech and Slovak film screening of *Secret Delivery*. Katka Svensson introduced the film, which partially takes place in Studenec, where the Mestenhauer family is from.

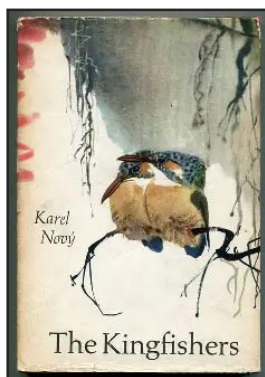
The Kingfishers by Karel Nový, illustrated by Mirko Hanák, translated by Peter Avis and Jiřina Tvarochová. Brockhampton Press: Leicester, large format, 102 pages, first English edition 1967, written in Czech in 1936. Available at bookstores and libraries.

The Kingfishers was inspired by boyhood experiences of Karel Nový (1890–1980), who walked to school along a brook running through a forest near Benešov. On the hour-long journey, he observed the birds and animals in the forest and fields and the fish in the brook. He wrote, “Since that time, I have been fond of nature, of the trees, rocks, water, fields and all their inhabitants.”

Of all the birds, he best liked the kingfishers that he saw fishing in the mill pond. The book chronicles a year in their lives, opening in winter, when cold weather leaves them hungry. When the snow and ice melt in spring, all the birds—siskins, orioles, blackbirds, wrens, and more—chirp gaily.

However, men come, cut down trees, and bank up the river. The kingfishers’ hiding place, where they have lived through many seasons, is destroyed. The kingfisher Or and his wife Kik fly off, knowing they have to look for a new place to live. We follow along as they dig a new home, Kik lays six eggs, and their children are born and learn how to live as kingfishers, “how to fly with their wings and steer with their tails. And above all they have to know how to dive, holding their breath, falling into the water like stones and swimming swiftly out again!”

It was a challenge for Nový, a Czech writer and journalist, to write about communication among birds and animals, who make themselves understood “one to another by voice and movement.” He chose the simplest form and the simplest words for them to



speak among themselves and about themselves. “I wrote the story out of my love of nature and from a wish to share at least a part of this love with all who read this book,” he concluded.

The result is a charming, gentle story that details the joys and struggles of the kingfishers’ lives and the many birds and animals that surround them. It is appropriate for children to read and re-read as adults. Watercolor swatches in the illustrations by Mirko Hanák (1921-1971) give them warmth and appeal.

Hanák was a Czech painter, graphic artist, and illustrator. He gained fame for his natural themes, often of wild animals in the Czech countryside. During World War II, he was sent with a friend to a Nazi labor camp; they escaped together and he studied art in Prague. He died from leukemia at the age of 50.

Nový was arrested in 1944 by the Nazis and interned in the Klecina labor camp in Silesia. After the war, he worked as a journalist, a children’s book editor, and as a professional writer. He wrote short stories, theatrical plays, film scripts, books, and feuilletons (secretly circulated, typed articles advocating reform under communism). Nový was appointed National Artist in 1960. He died in Prague and is buried in the Old Town

Cemetery in Benešov.

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

**Literary Ventures is on summer break
and will start meeting again in September.**

Sokol Minnesota Thanks Donors

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

GENERAL FUND

Under \$99: Ronald Asleson, Aaron Bye, Edward Keogh (Mellon Trust of Delaware), Anita and John McKeown, for *Slovo*, Kathryn Weeks, and Wayne Zbytovsky.

\$100-\$499: Jan Kostal, and Nancy Raymond.

\$1,000-\$9999: David Stepan (Fidelity Charitable).

LEGACY FUND

\$500-\$999 : Kenneth Mowll.

\$1,000 - \$9999: Roger Green (Renaissance Charitable) for boiler.

IN KIND DONATIONS:

June McKinney, a lithograph.

Katka Svensson Completes Elm Creek Backyard Ultra 2026

Sokol Minnesota member Katka Svensson delivered a standout performance at the Elm Creek Backyard Ultra, held on April 24–25, 2026, at Elm Creek Park Reserve in Minnesota. She completed 30 hours of continuous running, covering a total distance of 125 miles.

The Backyard Ultra format is a unique endurance race where runners must complete a 4.167-mile loop every hour, on the hour. Each loop must be finished within the hour, leaving only the remaining time for recovery before the next start. The race continues until only one runner remains, meaning minimal breaks and virtually no sleep over the duration of the event. Svensson’s effort earned her the title of Last Woman Standing, and she finished among the top three runners overall.

Katka is grateful for the encouragement from Czech supporters from Sokol Minnesota. This result currently places her in a provisional ninth position on the Czech National Team selection list, which consists of 15 endurance runners preparing for the World.

Final confirmation of team eligibility is expected by mid-August.



Center Katka Svensson and support crew, Olivia Svensson and Michelle Pho. Recognition awards.

Czech Honorary Consul News

June/July 2026

The 2026 annual meeting of Honorary Consuls of the Czech Republic in the United States took place in Washington, D.C., on April 23-24. Ambassador Miloslav Stašek and the Czech Embassy staff welcomed the participation of the Director General of the Legal and Consular Section of the Czech



Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Prague, Jiří Šlais, as well as Consuls General from Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York, together with representatives of CzechTrade, CzechInvest, and Czech Centres. Sixteen of the current 23 Czech honorary consuls attended. The American honorary consuls are considered an essential part of the Czech consular presence across the country. Political, economic, consular, and public diplomacy issues were discussed during the meeting. The meeting served as a great platform to share best practices and bring forward new ideas on how to promote the Czech Republic and strengthen bilateral ties between our countries.



Donations from Czech and Slovak organizations and individual donors in support of Czech and Slovak films at the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival/MSPIFF45, were presented on opening day, April 8.

(L-R) Donors Grechen Toman and M. L. Kucera to Executive Director Susan Smoluchowski, Community Engagement Coordinator Anjali Moore, and Programming Director Jesse Bishop.

The Czech & Slovak booth at IFest-MN (International Festival of Minnesota) on Saturday, April 11, welcomed His Excellency Andrej Droba, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Republic to the United States of America. Over 70 nations and ethnic communities shared food, music, art, dance, traditions, and cultural demonstrations at the Saint Paul River Center for the two days of the 2026 Festival. Dates for 2027 are April 9-10.



(L-R) Robert (Jake) Jacobson (whose jacket was a souvenir from his run in the October 2025 Košice Peace Marathon and whose shirt was from his run in the 25th Prague Marathon in May 2019), M.L. Kucera (in an Americanized *kroj*), Ambassador Droba, and Barbara Carlson (the Ambassador's host at IFest). Jacobson and Kucera were Sokol Minnesota volunteers at the Czech & Slovak booth on April 11.



From the KCHK radio station booth at the 8th annual outdoor May Day Celebration in Montgomery on May 3, Honorary Consul Kucera gave a greeting to the audience plus she spoke about the significance of the linden (*lipa*) tree, known as the Tree of Liberty in the Czech Republic. The linden, which was planted in Heritage Park in Montgomery in 2018 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the formation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, is doing very well.

In August 2024, the Ritz Theater/Theater Latté Da in Northeast Minneapolis did a series of musicals-in-the-making, including *My Antonia*, based on Willa Cather's beloved novel. I was privileged to attend one of the truly outstanding public presentations, as part of the continuation of Latté Da's commitment to championing new work and voices in the theater. The world premiere musical comes to the stage June 3 through July 12 at the Ritz, 345 13th Avenue Northeast, Minneapolis. According to Theatre Latté Da's publicity, "*My Antonia* offers a timely celebration of the contributions of immigrants to the nation's identity and spirit as America marks its 250th anniversary." Tickets: latteda.org/my-antonia



Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic/
Minneapolis

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



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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: \$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* management team:** Mary Cahill, Doreen McKenney, 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: Mary Cahill, Steve Ernest, Bob Kotek, M. L. Kucera, Doreen McKenney, Aaron Mislovitz, Kari and Scott Muiers, Markéta Pálková, Jitka Sebek, Denise Stiebel, Katka Svensson, Louise Wessinger, and Gwen Willems.

Issue photographs, ads, or illustrations: Martina Gurgel, Bob Kotek, M.L. Kucera, Doreen McKenney, and Joyce Tesarek.

For more information: www.sokolmn.org



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

Sokol Minnesota Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for:

- a **Treasurer**, a BOD position, familiar with Quickbooks, contact: finance@sokolmn.org
- **Independent woodworkers** to repair broken chairs at the location of your choice, contact: trustees@sokolmn.org
- Various positions for the **Czech & Slovak Festival, September 27** contact: festival@sokolmn.org

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



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For 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 2026

Join the **SLOVO** Team

Volunteer position opening for Sokol's *Slovo* newsletter publication as managing editor.

Contact: slovo@sokolmn.org

Membership Committee Potluck
 Friday, July, 10, 6:30 - 10 p.m. at the C.S.P.S. Hall.
 Interested in membership topics?
 Then join us for an open conversation.
 Bring your own beverages and/or a dish to share.
 Questions, membership@sokolmn.org

COMING SOON

Tây Hồ Restaurant

Street level in our historic C.S.P.S. Hall Building
 605 7th St. W., St. Paul

Czechia's 2026 FIFA World Cup
 Group A Schedule

- June 11: Czechia vs. South Korea Guadalajara Stadium in Zapopan, Mexico (10 p.m. ET)
- June 20: Czechia vs. South Africa Atlanta Stadium (12 p.m. ET)
- June 24: Czechia vs. Mexico at Mexico City Stadium (9 p.m. ET)

Basketball

The Minnesota Lynx signed two new players from the Czech Republic, Emma Čechová and Eliška Hamzová.
 Info at <https://lynx.wnba.com/news/minnesota-lynx-sign-six>

HAPPY   **th** **BIRTHDAY** to member *Libby Imbrone*