



american sokol publication

July/August 2019 | Volume 142 | Issue 4



AMERICAN SOKOL

ISSN 003-1259

Published six times each year: January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, November/December. All content is due on the 1st of the first month. For example, the March/April issue's content is due no later than March 1st.

American Sokol, 9126 Ogden Ave, Brookfield, IL, 60513

Subscription: \$12.00 per year

Periodical postage paid at Oak Brook, IL and additional mailing offices.

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From the Editor...

How would you answer the question "what are one or two positive Sokol experiences that have impacted my life?" That's the question four American Sokol Merit Award winners answered, each in their own way. Their responses start on page 8.

Have you ever thought about what your life would be like without Sokol? You'd have never met some of your closest friends. You'd never have traveled to all the locations where you attended a Slet. Thanks to the donors listed on page 10, and countless others through the years, you've kept Sokol alive. We urge you to contribute what you can to your favorite fund. See the explanations and listing on the web:

Click link: <https://american-sokol.org/donate/>

#OneSokol NAZDAR!



NOTE: Nikole's and Erica's names were inverted on the cover of the last issue. We regret the error.

PLEASE SUBMIT EVENT INFORMATION AT LEAST TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO THE EVENT

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The Presidential Address

The Sokol Eye – Sokolským Okem
Jean Hruby – President

We are unique, but united. We are different, yet the same. We are stronger than we think!

One summer morning I boarded a plane. I passed a familiar face, but she was engaged and enlightening another passenger's life. Then another young lady passed my seat, someone whom I have only known a few years. I called out to her and she flashed me a huge smile with a sisterly "hello". Unsure and alone, I already knew that where I was headed I would find my tribe, my team, my Sokols. Why, of course I would know someone on my flight. There are Sokols everywhere converging toward one destination. So, together we found each other and took the shuttle to the hotel, shared a great lunch, not knowing much about each other and then began to see Sokol members filing into the hotel for check-in. Everyone needed a valet for coolers, suitcases, flags and props; and then finally the traditional team of cyclists rolled in after (some) 19 days of biking, to celebrate another Sokol USA Slet in Buffalo, New York. This was going to be a fantastic week! I was proud to be present and this "Sokol Eye" was anticipating all of the new experiences I would have.

When we participate and support other Sokol organizations we learn and grow. There are so many different ways to "be a Sokol" yet we all strive for the same ideals and goals. Sokol organizations have varying sport programs. American Sokol, DA Sokol and Sokol USA have a strong emphasis on gymnastics, when others do not. Some of our American Sokol Units have swimming pools, while others strictly have cultural programs. At the Sokol USA Slet in Buffalo, we saw people come together to compete, perform and have a great time together. From the opening picnic at the kiddie park, to the BBQ by the pool, there was non-stop family fun. Sokol Canada attended in strong numbers, and even a few leaders from the Polish Falcons Organization came to see the event. The venues, the hotels, the location and the execution of the Slet were perfect. Even after five days together, there are still people that you didn't have enough time to see.

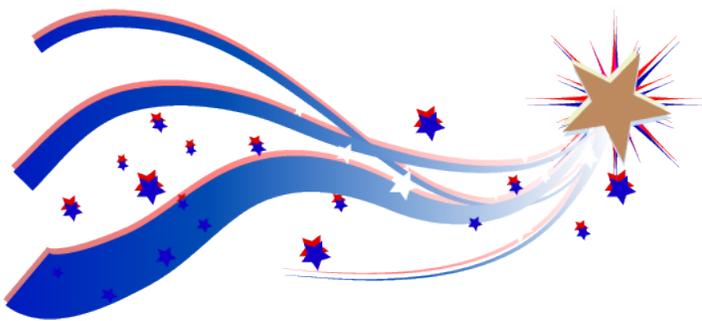
One evening an American Sokol member approached me and asked if I would get up early and help mark the field. You see, despite this being a Sokol USA event, American Sokols are there to help in every way to make sure this event goes off without a hitch. So, I said, "Sure, what time do you need me?" The man said, "Well, we leave here at 6am sharp." Now it was probably 1 or 2am by now and I thought, "What was I committing to?" Sure enough, I was there. When I say I will be there, I am. When I arrived, no one could believe it. But then all of the others started to show up as well. American Sokols got up early and I wanted to be a part of it all.

What I saw and observed this past summer at the Sokol USA Slet in Buffalo, was a stronger bond between all Sokols, no matter where we came from and no matter what Sokol organization we came from. I felt like we were one. We all have different backgrounds, we are all unique, we come from various communities, and yet we bring the diverse Sokol Community together. This was truly one of the ongoing events that I witnessed the strength that we have as One Sokol together. We are a family and I know that we will continue to grow as long as we have each other.

Another event with summer days and nights with Sokols is all we need to know that we are stronger than we think! Thank you, Sokol USA for an amazing Slet and we look forward to seeing everyone in Chicago in 2021. Best of luck to all Sokols in the coming Sokol year and wishing everyone a wonderful end to the summer!

Ať žije Sokol! ~ Long Live Sokol!
Nazdar!





RISING STAR

CASSIE CROFT

submitted by Kathy Barcal, Sokol Spirit



Congratulations to Sis. Cassie Croft from Sokol Spirit of the Central District for being named American Sokol Rising Star for the months of July and August!

Cassie started Sokol at the young age of three when she was in Tot's class at Sokol Tabor, and then switched to Sokol Slavsky as a 2nd class girl and continued with the mergers. Cassie was a competitor in gymnastics, rhythmic, track and field and volleyball. Cassie was active in the Junior Girls class and served as director of the Junior Board. Cassie was on Morton West High School's Varsity Gymnastic team all four years. She was co-captain in her junior and senior years.

After high school, Cassie went to University of Illinois (Urbana) to pursue her bachelor's degree and graduated in 2005. Cassie has her Masters in Counseling from Northeastern Illinois University.

In 2000, Cassie was Ms. Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky while she was in Junior's class. Cassie achieved five years of perfect attendance in Sokol and represented Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky in the Houby pageant and parade. Cassie became an adult member of Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky in 2001. She joined Women's class in 2005. Cassie taught Junior Girl's class at Sokol Spirit for five years. She became involved in Central District as the Membership Director and took it upon herself to polish up the list and keep it current going forward.

On a unit level at Sokol Spirit, Cassie has served as their Secretary, PR/Marketing Director and 2nd Vice President. Cassie has been in charge of Sokol Spirit's involvement in the Village of Brookfield's Farmer's Market. Each week she ensures that Spirit has volunteers at the market to promote our Sokol program and all that we offer to the community. Through the farmer's market opportunity, our Wheel program and Tot's class have grown over the last couple of years.



Through her PR/Marketing skills, Cassie has helped promote and work fundraisers. Cassie has been an integral part of the success of Sokol Spirit's Oktoberfest that she has been involved with for over nine years! Rain or shine, she always makes this event successful and a great event to be a part of at Spirit! We have also held many successful wreath sales with Cassie taking the lead on this fundraiser and making sure all orders are correctly placed and received. Cassie is always looking for creative ways to raise money to keep the Sokol programs running for our community. Most recently, as part of our beer club, we had a chili cook off. This was very well liked by those who attended the event, thanks to Cassie.

Most recently, Cassie has been a board member of the American Sokol National BOI. She contributes great ideas and brings her leadership skills and constructive feedback to assist our National BOI. The National Physical Directors have put together a Cal committee to review cal's for the 2021 Slet, which Cassie is an integral part of and brings her teaching and coaching abilities to help critique the cal's being submitted.

Through Cassie's many years participating in Sokol and taking on roles from Junior's class all the way up to the national level. She has shown impressive leadership skills and that Sokol is in her heart. She is showing our younger individuals that Sokol can help you grow from a tot to a successful adult.



The Sokol Educator

from The National Education Committee

Why Am I a Sokol Member?

by Br. Pavel Paces former Sokol New York Educational Director

The question I present to current and future Sokol members is meant to stimulate your minds and get you to reflect on why you are part of this organization or wish to be.

The standard answer to this question is, "I believe in our motto - A Sound Mind in a Sound Body". However, for some, to achieve this goal can be quite difficult without the right support, resources and encouragement. There lies the true answer to why we are here.

Since its founding, by Miroslav Tyrš in 1862, Sokol has flourished because of its camaraderie (mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together) and willingness of its members to help one another, not only for the good of the individual, but for the good of the team, the organization and the country!

We have existed nationally and internationally for over 150 years because we welcome all with open arms, to join us in obtaining this goal of improving our lives both mentally and physically. Volunteers and instructors have designed programs beneficial to all ages, from pre-adolescence to adult. To achieve this desired outcome, we as an organization, pledge to be supportive and non-judgemental for the good of all.

Those of us, who have grown with this organization, know that without the volunteerism and unity, not to mention the time and resources spent to keep this historic building safe and relevant to our member's needs, that most likely Sokol New York would not exist. If you recall, at one time there were three other Sokols in this neighborhood. For this reason, it is important we all understand, that we are in this together; "All For One and One For All".

As Sokol Educator, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all present members for all you have done, are doing and intend to do. For those of you who wish to join our ranks, we trust that the Sokol spirit is in you and that you will contribute in some way, your time and expertise to achieve the goals of this proud organization.

Na Zdar!

SOUND MIND & BODY WITH
ORGANIZED GYMNASTICS TO
KEEP PHYSICALLY FIT WITH
ORGANIZED VOLUNTEERS AND
LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS
SPECTACULAR AND
LASTING AND
EXCITING
TIMES TO REMEMBER

Submitted by JULIE SLAVIK-WEISS, Eastern District Educational Director

2018 American Sokol Gateway to the Future Awardees

The reports from the 2018 Gateway to the Future award winners have been closed out and the Foundation could not be more pleased with the results and use of the money for worthy projects that assist units to carry out their business and remain viable to the community. The Gateway to the Future fund was started through the 150th anniversary celebration income, the 150 Club, grants from the Czech Ministry, Western Fraternal Life, 2017 Slet Banquet Silent Auction to name a few. Currently the Foundation Committee has made a goal of raising enough money to fund both the Gateway to the Future and Future Sokol Leaders Fund to the endowment level by 2020 while assisting the Education Committee to continue to develop archival identification and a traveling exhibit.



Sokol Milwaukee, WI used the award to replace very old broken landing mats. They are currently teaching classes from Blessed Sacrament Gymnasium, Milwaukee. The picture shows some of their students waving “thank you” to the American Sokol for the grant that allowed them to purchase the new mats on which they are standing.



Sokol Greater Cleveland, OH award was to replace the heat exchanger in their gym. A pretty pic of a heat exchanger especially now that the winter season allowed a warm gym for students plus all the other activities.

Sokol Karel Havlicek, Yukon, OK has had a several year project to update their plumbing running to the bathrooms which had not been worked on since the building was constructed. They also were awarded money from the 2019 Gateway to the Future Fund to update fixtures and hardware.



Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL had a major flood (several thousand gallons) in March 2017 run through the lower building level. When they started clean-up, they found asbestos in the tile mastic and mold had started. After abatement, tiling, plumbing, etc. needs, replacement of a very old, warped and soggy ceiling, doors and kitchen shelving was also necessary. The award was utilized for the new floor tiles.

continued on page 11



Sokol Gear FLOWY RACERBACKS & HATS



RACERBACK T-SHIRTS



IN OVER 40 COLORS



WOMEN'S FLOWY		FITS SIZES
XS	Extra Small	0-2
S	Small	2-4
M	Medium	6-10
L	Large	10-14
XL	Extra Large	14-18
2XL	Double Extra Large	18-20

\$20 each

White	Black	Athletic Heather	Athletic Heather/ Neon Pink	Athletic Heather/ White	Berry	Black Heather	Black Marble	Blue Marble	Brick	Charcoal Black Slub	Coral	Dark Grey	Dark Grey Heather
Denim Slub	Forest Marble	Heather Deep Teal	Heather Navy	Kelly	Lilac	Maroon	Mauve	Mauve Marble	Midnight	Military Green	Mint	Neon Pink	Neon Yellow
Peach	Peach Slub	Pebble Brown	Red	Red Marble	Soft Pink	Solid Black Slub	Storm	Sunset	Teal	True Royal	True Royal Marble	White Marble	White Slub

FLOWY RACERBACK T-SHIRTS

ALL HATS
\$16 each



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QTY: ____



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KHAKI BASEBALL
QTY: ____

unit: _____
 surname: _____
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3 digits on back (AMEX 4 digits on front): _____

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Send your order with payment to:
American Sokol Organization
 9126 Ogden Ave
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National Merit Awardees

NOTE: Some essays were shortened due to space restraints

Megan Pech, Sokol Greater Cleveland, OH

A positive Sokol experience that has impacted my life was the American Sokol Instructor School. Throughout my experience, I learned how to be a confident leader, a team player, and a curious learner. I also realized that I learn the most when I leave my comfort zone. Attending the Instructor School for four years has given me friendships, the ability to coach, and memories I will cherish for a lifetime.

In 2014, I decided to attend the Instructor School in Cleveland. As soon as I arrived at the gym, I met so many people that are still a part of my life today. Over the course of those two weeks, I learned that everything I had known about Sokol so far was just the tip of the iceberg. The Instructor's School introduced me to calisthenics terminology, marching commands, combatives, and resistives. I use everything I was taught about gymnastics, coaching and Sokol as a class leader and assistant.

I am beyond thankful for the opportunities I have had because of the American Sokol Instructor School. I have made connections with adult mentors and my peers that have helped me inside and outside of Sokol. It is because of my four years at the Instructor School that I have many friends across the country and the confidence to go out of my comfort zone. My experiences in Sokol and the Instructor School have helped me gain the independence to go to college over 300 miles away from home and pursue a higher education.



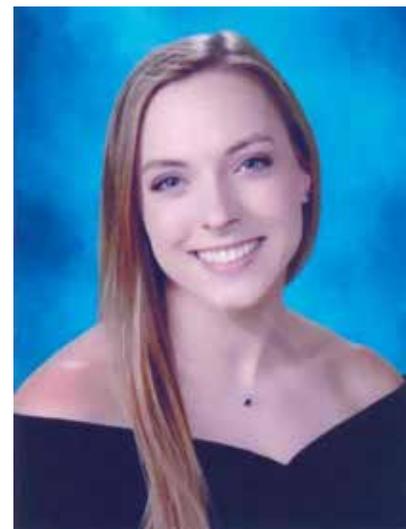
Athens Milan, Sokol Fort Worth, TX

The Sokol Instructor's School in 2014 was one of the most amazing experiences in my life. The Instructor's School gave me a vast understanding of Sokol history which is very important to me and my family. The Instructor's School also allowed me to meet many Sokol members from across the United States, which has helped me learn to socialize more and become aware of how much Sokol has impacted others. The Instructor's course taught me many valuable skills that have tremendously impacted my coaching and helped me develop into a safe and fun coach.

The 2014 National Slet in Wisconsin was a very rewarding and positive experience. The Sokol Fort Worth team all travelled together by overnight train from Fort Worth all the way to Milwaukee. On the train I realized as one of the older boys' team members that I needed to help entertain and keep busy the younger boys and set a good example for them to follow. The competition was fun, and I made lots of new friends from other Sokols around the country. The friendly atmosphere at the Slet helped me compete some of the best routines I had ever done. Being in Milwaukee impacted me by making me want to take my own team to a National Slet.

Julia Newell, Sokol Fort Worth, TX

Sokol Fort Worth has been a home to me for 11 years now. It is full of incredible gymnasts, coaches and mentors. Through my Sokol experiences as a progressing gymnast, as well as a coach, I have learned how to work hard, how to set goals and how to be a leader. I began gymnastics at Sokol Fort Worth at 8 years old as a Level 5 gymnast. I trained tirelessly to progress up the levels of Artistic Gymnastics, striving to reach my ultimate goal of becoming a Level 10, the highest level an Artistic Gymnast can reach before going Elite. For the past four years, I train 22.5 hours each week between Sokol Gymnastics and High School Varsity Gymnastics. I continue to push myself past the fear I experience when learning challenging new skills in the gym. This has taught me to celebrate the little successes in life, because while gymnastics can be an extremely frustrating and scary sport, it is important to look back on each day positively. I believe that this lesson is something that I can carry out in college and beyond.



The perseverance I have gained through this sport has taught me to never give up. I believe this attribute will also aid me in reaching my goals in college of completing my nursing degree, and further along in my career of neonatal nursing, as it is important to keep a strong work ethic when times become tough. I believe my hard work and devotedness to what I love will result in success. Sokol Fort Worth has given me opportunities in gymnastics that I will forever be grateful for.



Anna Slovak, Sokol Ennis KHB, TX

Sokol has been a part of my life as long as I can remember. I began in the Tots' class in 2003 and here I am, still involved 16 years later. Sokol has impacted my life in so many ways. One of the most influential experiences given to me was while attending the Sokol Instructor Course in 2016 at Sokol KHB. In just two weeks, I was taught more than I could have imagined. I knew I would learn about the history of Sokol and its founders, Czech songs and spotting teaching techniques, but I did not know I would learn life skills such as critical thinking, fast decision-making, interpersonal relationships and effective communication. The memories and friendships from those two weeks are even stronger now. The lessons I learned have impacted my daily life by growing friendships at school and building presentation and interview confidence. As a whole, the experiences which I

gained from the Sokol Instructor Course will help me as I pursue my engineering degree in college and continually influence my life in a positive manner.

After a serious back injury in September 2017 and consequent physical limitations, I was forced to step out of the gym program as an instructor and redirect my energy to other areas of our Sokol unit. This led to the most life-changing experiences I have had through Sokol. After being a lifeguard at Sokol KHB Tyrs Pool the summers of 2016 and 2017, I was very familiar with the pool and how it worked. At the beginning of the summer of 2018, when I no longer could be a lifeguard, I was approached to consider being the manager of the pool.

My overall experiences through Sokol have been life changing, eye opening, and maturing opportunities for me. Through guidance and support, I have learned life skills which will be with me the rest of my life.

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January 1 through May 31, 2019		
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Sokolice Tabor		
IN MEMORY of CAMILLE PEKAREK		
Sokolice Tabor		
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic-2019		
Education & Gateway to the Future Funds		
* * * * *		
Western Fraternal Life-Gateway to the Future Fund		
<p>In accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure, donations will be published in the July/August and January/February Publications. We thank everyone for their continued support to our organization. If we have forgotten anyone, please let us know through foundation@american-sokol.org. THANK YOU SO MUCH!</p>		



Mark your Calendar

Events around the American Sokol

Get your event featured! Email editor@american-sokol.org

July

July 7-21 **National Instructors School** - Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL

August

August 4 **Unit Picnic** - Sokol Ceska Sin, Cleveland, OH

August 10 **Bike Hike** - Sokol Ceska Sin, Cleveland, OH

September

September 15 **Unit Picnic** - Sokol Town of Lake, Willow Springs, IL

continued from page 6



Sokol Karel Havlicek Borvansky, Ennis, TX were awarded money to assist in purchasing two used/warranted convection ovens for their kitchen. The previous ovens could not handle any events and became a problem when serving large events. The picture is of the Bakers Pride Double Stack Convection Ovens at the Texas Restaurant Equipment store which came with a 30-day warranty.

Sokol United (Stickney), Lyons, IL to kick-off fundraising for stand-alone uneven bars because the gym in their new location would not allow floor anchors. Classes are now successfully held at St. Hugh Church Gymnasium, Lyons, Illinois. They were awarded money from the 2019 Gateway to the Future Fund to help finish off the cost of the purchase from Spieth America.

For 2019 the Foundation, with the approval of the American Sokol Executive Board, offered awards from the following funds: Gateway to the Future (\$10,000); Unit Growth (\$20,000); Mentoring/Volunteering (\$10,000); and Endowment Foundation (\$10,000). The awardees have been announced and progress reports are due September

1st with the final report due December 15, 2019. The next round of internal grants will be announced in February of 2020 utilizing the same timing as 2019. Of note is that the Endowment Foundation fund money will be utilized to kick-off the Safesport certification reimbursement for all units. The Risk Management (Executive Board) Committee formulated the protocol and will be administrating this under Sister Maryann Fiordelis, 2nd Vice President and chair of the committee.

REMEMBER to go to the American-Sokol.org website, donation page to contribute to either the Gateway to the Future fund, Future Sokol Leaders fund, or American Sokol Library, Archival, and Traveling Exhibit fund. Any of these funds, along with the Endowment Foundation fund, can be utilized to honor or remember a special Sokol, friend or relative. The donor list is published twice yearly in the *American Sokol* publication, and a receipt is forwarded when the donation is more than \$25 for tax records.



American Sokol Deadline

Send your submissions, articles, events and photos to editor@american-sokol.org by the 1st of the month prior to the publication issue. For example, items you want included in the March/April issue need to be submitted no later than February 1st.



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July/August 2019 | Issue 4

The mission of the American Sokol is to provide fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural and social programs.

We are pleased to announce the 2021 Slet will be hosted by the Central District.

Celebrate Chicago Style June 23-27, 2021

CHICAGO



XXV AMERICAN SOKOL SLET