



AMERICAN SOKOL NEWSLETTER

FALL 2022



Welcome to American Sokol's Newsletter!

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A Note from the President

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am humbled and excited to begin my term as President of the American Sokol! The next four years will be crucial for our organization as we work to emerge from the impact of the pandemic, re-engage our members, and get back to bringing our mission to our communities. In assuming this role, I'd like to start by sharing the path that led me here.

My Sokol history began in the late 80's as a Tot at Sokol Slavsky in Berwyn, Illinois. This involvement continued through the merged Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky where Sokol classes helped keep me physically active between seasons on school/traveling sports teams. My abilities as a gymnast were mediocre at best, but I really enjoyed the physical activity and the friendships I found at Sokol. Our Junior Board provided a forum for friendships and leadership opportunities that shaped my teenage years, further growing my love for Sokol.

Growing up, my parents' example drove my passion for organizational involvement and giving back was a priority. My late father, Gary, was a regular active volunteer in many groups including Sokol. He was a behind the scenes driver of many causes and events, and eventually served as a local elected official. My mother, Vera, is a great leader within the Czech American community, has served as President of several Czech organizations (including Sokol Spirit), and has held multiple positions as an elected official in her community. Their commitments to involvement and service are values that were instilled in me and my sister Alix who also has a long list of service and self-less work. I am incredibly proud to be a part of my family, and I see their influence in both my personal and professional life every day.

After High School, I went away from home to attend Bradley University in Peoria, IL and earned a B.S. in Business Management & Administration. My education was amplified by my involvement as a member/officer of the Bradley Chapter of Delta Tau Delta Fraternity and of our campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Upon graduation, I pursued a career in the nonprofit sector with employment at the American Cancer Society. At that point, I was early in my role on the National Board for CSA Fraternal Life, and I resumed my active involvement in Sokol, including joining our unit BOD.

Meanwhile I had met a beautiful and caring woman named Lauren, who I have been proudly married to for over a decade. I'm grateful she has encouraged my involvement in Sokol and in the Czech-American community. Without her unwavering support I likely would never have pursued such deep involvement.



A Note from the President (continued)

I jumped into Sokol after college, but didn't begin to find my fit in Sokol until I was elected as a delegate to represent my unit at the 2010 Convention in Omaha. That convention experience inspired me to seek a leadership role within my unit. Until that time, I hadn't particularly aspired for a prominent role in our unit. Experiencing a Sokol Convention changed that, and soon after returning I assumed the role of unit President.

In my professional life, I serve as the State Director in Illinois for a nonprofit called Best Buddies. In this role I oversee two offices, and lead a team that creates friendship programs, leadership development, and job placements for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. My work in Sokol has proven to be very helpful in my career, and my professional experience has provided valuable knowledge for my roles in Sokol.

I am excited for the opportunity to lead our knowledgeable and enthusiastic Executive Board. In each issue of this publication we look forward to providing updates regarding our work and progress. I look forward to working with you, and I seek your feedback and input throughout my term. Thank you for your confidence!

Nazdar!

Bro. Adam Wilt – President

American Sokol Town Hall Meetings

Starting in November, the American Sokol will begin hosting bi-monthly virtual Town Hall Meetings. Topics will vary, and we plan to feature the work of our Sokol units in a forum for idea sharing and discussion. Please save these dates and note the featured topics:

First Town Hall Meeting

- Tuesday, November 29 - Fundraising Events
Zoom Info: Meeting ID - 850 5541 9346; Passcode - falcon

2023 Town Hall Meetings

- Monday, January 30, 2023 - Non-Gymnastics Fitness
- Thursday, March 30, 2023 - Membership & Social Engagement
- Tuesday, May 30, 2023 - Recruitment
- Monday, July 31, 2023 - Education
- Wednesday, September 27, 2023 - Sokol Facilities
- Thursday, November 30, 2023 - Passing the Torch to New Leaders



Sokol Memorial Day - Památný Den Sokolstva

Sokol Memorial Day - Each year, Sokols in the Czech Republic commemorate October 8th to remember the tragic events in the organization's history. On the night of October 7, 1941, the "Sokol Action" was launched by a decree of Reinhard Heydrich, acting Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. The decree's orders were to arrest and subsequently deport Sokol representatives to concentration camps and to paralyze the organization's resistance activity. On that day, hundreds of Sokol members were arrested, the organization was dissolved, and its property was confiscated. Throughout the Second World War, Sokol was among the most prominent sources of resistance. Over 3,000 Sokol members were executed during the Nazi totalitarian regime and another 8,000 were imprisoned. During 2018, the Civic Democratic Party proposed the inclusion of Sokol Memorial Day as an "Important Day" of the Czech Republic. In January of 2019, the Senate of the Czech Republic approved October 8th to be recognized as Sokol Memorial Day. President Milos Zeman signed this legislation. At the October 22, 2019 Executive Board meeting of American Sokol, a motion was approved that American Sokol will observe Sokol Memorial Day. We share our roots with Czech Sokols and together we will always remember October 8th with Sokols around the world.



Sis. Sue Bares - Sokol Detroit

Sokol Sandfest - A Rejuvenated Tradition

On August 11-15, over 45 Sokols from six states gathered to rekindle a long-time Southern District tradition in Corpus Christi, TX. For many years, members of the Southern District and guests from around the country met annually in Corpus Christi for volleyball and fun. A few Sokol members decided to reboot this event with some new twists, starting a new tradition of an annual gathering on the beach that includes activity, food, and fun!

Sokol SandFest 2022 was full of fun, including: sunrise yoga on the beach, volleyball, a cornhole tournament, beach-size Jenga, a sandcastle building contest, and much more! Saturday concluded with a very competitive team Trivia Night, complete with awards for the weekend. The group enjoyed several meals together which included homemade Czech pastries and street tacos made by members of Sokol Corpus Christi and BBQ provided by the Liska family from Sokol KHB. A big 'thank you' to all who made the weekend possible. A little rain was no match for the group who quickly pivoted to indoor games on the final day. Many old Sokol memories were discussed and many new memories made!

We look forward to seeing even more Sokols at the next Sokol SandFest, Aug 17-21, 2023!

Sis. Lori Laznovsky - Sokol KHB



Education Series - Coming to a Zoom Near You!

Sokol Scrapes is back with the second offering of the Educational Series! Join us on Sunday, November 13, 2022, from 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EST) for a presentation titled Origin, Development and Demise of Folk Dress in the Czech Lands, by Bc. Jozek Vacek, the Deputy Director of Muzeum Ostrov Lidových Krojů (Island of Folk Dress Museum). Located on a lovely Baroque-Renaissance farm, this museum boasts the largest collection of Kroj from all over the Czech Republic. During the FREE event, you'll learn about the most interesting collection items they have and listen to some of their riveting stories!

Join us on Zoom or by dialing 1-309-205-3325
Meeting ID 83076898271#, Passcode 630660#



Meeting info will also be broadcast on Facebook.

Interstate 40 - Exit 137

If you've never driven through Yukon, Oklahoma, you'll likely be surprised by this: Exit 137 on I-40 is "Czech Hall Rd." And, yes, this is named for our very own Sokol Yukon (Karel Havlíček). One unique detail about Sokol Yukon is their partnership with the local Better Life lodge (which was formerly Western Fraternal Life Association, and before that Zapadni Ceska Bratrska Jednota). This partnership began in 1899, shortly after Oklahoma was allowed to be settled, and it has existed since then. In partnership, they operate Yukon Czech Hall. The hall is a National Historic Site. There have been no balance beams, pommel horses, or other gymnastics equipment there for many years. What the Czech Hall is known for, however, is their Saturday night polka dance, with a live Czech-American band! This weekly offering is open to the public, and has been hop-step-stepping for over 100 years! The dance is worked by the volunteer efforts Sokol Yukon members. While it may be a different model than many of us are used to, Sokol Yukon, or as most people call them, Yukon Czech Hall, is promoting physical fitness and Czech heritage through dancing for all ages on a weekly basis! If you're in the area, check them out and stop by for a dance party!

When: EVERY Saturday, 7:00-10:30 PM - Where: 205 N Czech Hall Road, Yukon, OK

Info provided by Sis. Elaine Benda - Sokol Yukon

Rome Milan - A Special Recognition



Bro. Rome Milan, who passed away in 2021, was recently honored with a Special Recognition award during the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame induction ceremony for 2022. You can see a video tribute by visiting: https://www.ighof.com/special_recognition_award.php



ASO Convention - First-Time Reflections

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the XXII American Sokol National Convention, which was held in Ennis, TX, from June 10-12, 2022. This was my first Sokol convention experience, so I came aboard with a mixture of excitement and curiosity, eager to learn. After recently retiring from 30+ years of teaching in NYC, I felt I had more time to give. After reading the necessary correspondences, studying the communication kits, and learning what a "Sergeant-at-Arms" and a "Parliamentarian" does, I was ready! To say the XXII American Sokol Convention had anything less than a transformative effect on me would be a huge understatement. The tone was serious and detailed, operating like a small local government. The intimate rules that govern our Districts and Units, were reviewed, dissected, and then voted on. The by-laws, the core principles that the Units follow, were discussed and improved.

The agenda was packed, with its primary focus on strategies to help keep American Sokol relevant in the 21st Century. Another big challenge to Sokol is increasing membership. Many progressive ideas were presented, options that will help move Sokol forward. An example would be gender inclusive language that would be more sensitive to diversity. The biggest thrill for me came on Friday, seeing over one hundred Sokol members gathered together in one place, wearing their official uniforms, reinforcing my sense of belonging. Spending hours together, sharing meals, enjoying evening activities, and problem solving cemented the bedrock of mutual trust among our members.

Words fall short in expressing my gratitude to Sokol Ennis for their hospitality, good food, entertainment, and most of all, the love and kindness they shared with all of us. The attention to detail was evident throughout each activity, making each aspect of our experience spectacular. From the deepest recesses of my heart I want to say - Thank You. Sokol has always been like a family for me, and now my commitment to Sokol has been rejuvenated. I met so many interesting Sokols, attending from all over the USA. I would also like to congratulate the new Executive Board members. Moving forward, I plan on furthering the Sokol ideals and carrying them forward, in the gym, at meetings, and in my community. Nazdar! (On to success!)

Sis. Julie Slavik-Weiss - Sokol New York

Meet Me in St. Louis

If you're a kid and want to have a fantastically fun summer, consider asking your parents to ship you to St. Louis' Camp to take part in: swimming, pizza parties, visitors from the World Bird Sanctuary and Missouri Falconers, golf, yoga, nine square, sock wrestling, soccer, ice cream making, crafts, a dive-in movie, dancing, a war tournament, a foam party, and MUCH, MUCH MORE! Located just down the road from St. Louis in Imperial, MO, the camp hosts children's camping, picnics, fundraisers, and other events throughout the season.

Info provided by Sis. Marla Breidenbach - Sokol St. Louis



Sokol Baltimore's 150th Anniversary Day

On September 24th, Sokol Baltimore celebrated its 150th Anniversary! The day opened with Sokol Baltimore's 2nd Cartwheel-A-Thon fundraiser, organized by the BOI. Our goal was to raise \$10,000 for the gym. The first A-Thon was two years ago during the start of the pandemic. This time, we had 25 participants who solicited pledges from family and friends, then performed cartwheels, handstand walks, or rolls in nearby Patterson Park. About 60 parents, participants, and coaches gathered in the Park at 10 AM and cheered each other on. Afterwards, we held a bring-your-own-picnic lunch and enjoyed visiting with each other. The fundraising closed October 1 with a total of \$13,300 raised; well over our goal!

The Eastern District delegates then met at the Sokol Baltimore hall for luncheon and a business meeting. President Frank Huber shared some highlights of the past 150 years and provided commemorative pins created from a Rudy Parizek medallion.

Sis. Kate and Bro. Joseph Ehrenberger - Sokol Baltimore



Bohemian National Hall Celebrates 125 Years

Sokol Greater Cleveland (SGC) held numerous activities commemorating the 125 year anniversary of the dedication of the Bohemian National Hall, now known as the Sokol Greater Cleveland Czech Cultural Center. Among them were a virtual auction, volleyball tournament, heritage presentation, Easter Egg decorating class, Easter Egg hunt in the Czech Cultural Garden, live theater play, presentation on Kings and Knights (including fully dressed actors on horses), as well as Sunday dinners and fish fries. Most of these were free and open to the public. Four linden trees were planted along Pershing Avenue – these were “purchased” by members at high mark-up and the proceeds facilitated the aforementioned events.

Of course, the celebration climaxed with a concert and a formal dinner on September 25th. One hundred seventy-five attendees arrived around three o'clock for registration and refreshments provided by servers, including beer made specifically for this occasion. At 4 PM, a concert by six musicians from the famed Cleveland Orchestra presented a performance featuring Czech composers. Not only the giants like Dvorak, but especially significant were the composition by local Czech musicians who studied under Dvorak: Rychlik, Zamecnik and Krejsa. Edward Krejsa was the grandfather of one of our current members, Ted Krejsa. One of the musicians, Isabel Trautwein, provided informative narrative on their style and role in music. 20 of the original 60 members of the Cleveland Orchestra were of Czech heritage! The performance received a standing ovation.

The dinner portion started at 6pm with our member, Marjorie Juba, singing the national anthems; Czech, Slovak and American. Marjorie also sang a Hymn composed 125 years ago, specifically for



BNH Celebrates 125 Years (continued)

the dedication. In attendance was Czech Ambassador to U.S., Miloslav Stašek, who gave brief remarks: "I may be the official ambassador, but all of you are ambassadors of the Czech Republic with your deeds and your achievements." John Sabol, currently the host of Czech Radio Hour, who was the master of ceremonies, introduced Joseph Cimperman. Mr. Cimperman is heading an organization called Global Cleveland, which pursues the needs and causes of immigrants to Cleveland. He gave a passionate talk about the immigrants 125 years ago and their contributions to Cleveland, like this very hall. A benediction by Father Michael Brunovsky, a Slovak priest of the Benedictine Order, initiated a plated dinner, served by SGC volunteers.

The event was concluded when the SGC President, Paul Burik, presented commemorative pins to the people involved with the event, including his wife, Fran Burik, who chaired the organizing committee. Fran received a standing ovation!

Bro. Paul Burik - Sokol Greater Cleveland



Foundation Updates

The American Sokol Organization is very grateful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (Czech: Ministr zahraničních věcí České republiky) and their great award/grant programs in the past years. While we have noted in various publications and/or through mention of funded programs their assistance, the relationship started more than 10 years ago. The Ministry started January 1, 1993 and can be found at www.mzv.cz. News on twitter: Tweety od uživatele @CzechMFA. Currently, in Chicago there has been a Consulate General of the Czech Republic located in the Michigan Plaza Building. The Consul General Jaroslav Kanturek's office processes the annual grant application requests (after registration on the mzv website) each August for the next year. In late May, American Sokol is notified about the amount of the award(s) which fall into two categories: Maintenance and Culture.

History: In many countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the government department responsible for the state's diplomacy, bilateral, and multilateral relations affairs as well as for providing support for a country's citizens who are abroad. The entity is usually headed by a foreign minister. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia refers to the foreign affairs ministry which was



Foundation Updates (continued)

responsible for representing internationally Czechoslovakia during its existence, from 1918 to 1992. The First Czechoslovak Republic (1918–1938) with the first minister Edward Benes; Second Czechoslovak Republic (1938–1939); Czechoslovak government-in-exile (1940–1945); Third Czechoslovak Republic (1945–1948); Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (1948–1989); Czech and Slovak Federative Republic (1989–1992). The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic is a senior official of the Government of the Czech Republic, and as the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is concerned with foreign policy and foreign relations of the Czech Republic. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is appointed by the President after being nominated by the Prime Minister. The Minister of Foreign Affairs along with the Finance Minister, the Minister of Defense, and the Minister of the Interior are generally regarded as the four most important cabinet members because of the importance of their respective ministries. The incumbent minister, Jan Lipavský, started December 17, 2021.

ASO Awards: Recently, the Foundation dug into archival records and found applications through 2010. In 2010, the American Sokol Organization asked for assistance in funding a documentary entitled “Czechs in Chicago” for the local PBS channel.....it was finally finished and recently broadcast April, 2022. In 2011, Funding came in for digitization of the ASO Library & Archives and for an ASO Performance team to visit the 2012 Sokol Cirque Performance prior to the Prague Slet. Five of the past year’s applications were written by Sister Jean Hruby, immediate past president, one by Sister Mary Cushing, current B.O.I. Director, one by Brother Tom Pager, past president and the rest by Sister Meribeth Tooke, Foundation Director. Since 2020, the applications have become more diverse and some supplement existing grant programs such as Gateway to the Future and Unit Growth or the ongoing need to preserve the American Sokol Library and Archives. Since 2010 exactly \$74,605.55 was entrusted to the American Sokol to assist various existing programs and reach out/retain all members while teaching/learning about the Czech language, culture, and history.

In 2022, awards (\$12,841.89) were received for the Foundation grant programs: Gateway to the Future and Unit Growth; Education Archiving/Library - hoping to extend it to the units and the new Lending Library/computer projector program; and Board of Instructors Instructor’s School held in July. The applications for 2023 were approved by the Executive Board at their July combined old/new board meeting. There were six: Foundation: Grants from Gateway to the Future; Unit Growth; and new one called Unit Sustainment; PR/Marketing: Communications Update; and from the B.O.I.: Instructor’s School and Winter Slet 2023-4.

Should any American Sokol member have the chance to visit and/or in any way address any of the U.S. Consulates (Washington D.C.; Los Angeles; New York; and Chicago) or any of the Honorary Czech Republic Consulates, please find their locations at <https://www.visahq.com/czech-republic/embassy/united-states/>.

Sis. Meribeth Tooke - Foundation Director



Just What Is the Future Sokol Leaders Fund (FSLF)?

This fund began at the 1960 Convention and was the brainchild of Bro. James Cihak. "The purpose for the Future Sokol Leaders Fund is plainly and simply to train and educate enough young people to assure able administrators, the best of idealistic instructors, and educational directors for hundreds of Sokol Units and dozens of Sokol Districts." While our number of units and districts have decreased over the years, this purpose hasn't changed. We need to develop strong, younger leaders to assure our future.

In 2020, the fiscal year for this fund was changed from the July-August time frame to a calendar year to bring it in line with the Operation Budget fiscal year. At the July 23, 2022 Executive Board meeting, this fund was moved under the administration of the American Sokol Foundation. Each year, all members of the Executive Board will have the opportunity to request funds.

Our goal is to be able to reach a more robust level so we can expand our areas of need and increase number of events. Can you help us strive to go "Forward, Forward, not one step back!". If you would like to make a donation to this worthwhile effort, please make your check out to American Sokol Foundation with notation of FSLF and send to the National Office, 9126 Ogden Ave., Brookfield, IL 60513.

Sis. Maryann Fiordelis - FSLF Administrator

American Sokol Donations

Gateway to the Future

- Sokol Los Angeles
- American Sokol Endowment Foundation
- "To all my beloved at Sokol St. Louis & my Chicago Sokol who were always there for me." - Heather Diehl
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2022 grant

Education: Lending Library & Library/Archives

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2022 grant

Unit Growth

- American Sokol Endowment Foundation
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2022 grant

Board of Instructors: Instructor's School

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2022 grant

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

- 2022: \$12,841.89 (as referenced above in Foundation Updates)



Honor Guard Program & Training: ASO Seals Program 2021-22

Babka, Ellie	Dusek, Joseph	Kucera, Jiri & Lee	Polashek, Tec	Sulz, Mary Ann & Daniel
Babor, Patricia	Duvall, Ellen	Kucera, Marit Lee	Polz, Janice	Svestka, Ruth
Baca, Dennis & Mary	Egger, Robert	Kulhanek, George	Ptacek, Marie	Taylor, Shirley
Baca, Dolly	Faikus, Anthony & Lorraine	Kulhanek, Michael & Aniko	Riha, James M.	Teply, Vernon
Bednar, Dr. Charles & Mrs.	Filipello, Lynda	Latarski, Elaine	Ritter, Nancy Kovar	Thayer, Irene C.
Bidnik, Blanche	Fiorenza, Blanche	Maghrak, Christine	Rodgers, Rosemary	Tuskey, Carrie M.
Bikel, David	Gerber, Allison	Mara, Charles	Ronquillo, Marianne	Vachata, Richard
Bina, Clarence	Gianitsos, Leonard	Marcussen, Nina	Rospotynski, Tony & Frances	Valek, Larry
Borvansky, Charles	Goodridge, Lynne	McGuire, Regina	Sbriglia-DeCecchi, Donna	Vesely, Rose
Bouska, Loraine	Greene, Erika Anne	Mereka, Ronald D.	Schatz, Jan	Vicker, Marilyn
Bukovsky, Sally	He, Raymond T. & Elizabeth A.	Michalek, Frank	Scheirer, Andrea & Jack	Vila, Marsha
Campbell, Joan A.	Heidler, Keith	Michelin, Sandra	Schneider, Mary	Vanyo, Raymond
Capodice, Colleen & John	Hrabik, Jr., Martin J.	Milas, Jerry	Scott, Donna	Vondra, Barbara
Chlanda, Edward & Gisela	Hradecky III, Rudolf	Matusinec, Frank & Rose Mary	Seda, Irene P.	Webster, Marie
Cinati, John	Huber, Frank H.	Neuberg, Carol	Seymour, Delores E.	Wessinger, Louise
Cermak, Mary	Hurych, Mary Lou	Novak, Maria B.	Sijansky, Jerry	Wester, Jerry K. & JoAnn
Cerny, Marilyn	Husa, Roy	Novotny, Gerald	Sikon, Susan	Wostratzky, Blanche
Crosson, Carol	Kalivoda, Frank	Nyemcsik, Ellen	Slavik, Anna	Wynnyczuk, Irene
Cunningham, Thomas	Kalivoda, Vaclav B. & Jarmila	Pacelli, Christine	Smith, Richard S.	Zabka, Norma
Curran, Joan	Kalvoda, Charles	Pazdernik, Bob & Rose	Sokol Naperville Tyrns	Zezula, Richard & Frances
Dalton, Jolene	Kocab, Joseph A.	Pistorius, Sylvia	Soto, Lupita	Ziskovsky, Arnold J.
Domzalski, Michael & Beverly	Kotlan, Donald	Podhrasky, Robert	Starr, Linda	Zitko, Elaine
Dunlap, Joel & Diane	Koudeli, Josephy C. & Marie L.	Polacek, Emily	Stribrny, Vlasta	Zitko, Jerry
Durda, Lois A.	Kovac, Brandi K.	Polashek, Irena	Strnad, George F.	

Editor's Note

If you have an email address registered with ASO, you likely received an email with a little different-looking version of this Newsletter. But, many members are receiving this version in the mail, too.

Printing and shipping costs have risen, so we ask that you consider opting in to the electronic version. (And, it's neat and interactive, too, compatible with computer/phone/tablet screens of all sizes!) If you need assistance opting in or with navigating the electronic version, please contact your unit/district board, or reach out to me directly. If phone or mail is your preferred way to communicate, trust that communication to the ASO office will soon make its way to me.

Is there something you want to see in the Newsletter? Do you have positive and/or constructive feedback about this one? If so, please contact PR@american-sokol.org with all thoughts and ideas!

Bro. Matt Carlozzi - PR Director



2022 - 2026 Executive Board

Adam Wilt - President
Marla Breidenbach - 1st Vice President
Nancy Sijansky Hellegers - 2nd Vice President
Andrea Scheirer - Secretary
Bob Barcal - Treasurer
Allison Gerber - Financial Secretary
Anna Cooková - Educational Director
Kathy Barcal - Membership Director
Matt Carlozzi - Public Relations Director
Meribeth Tooke - Foundation Director
Mary Cushing - Physical Director
Shelley Cairns - Board Member
Dáša Měrková - Board Member
Joan Sedlacek - Board Member
Rhonda Liska - By-laws Chair

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