



# AMERICAN SOKOL NEWSLETTER

2024



Welcome to American Sokol's Newsletter!

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Cover Photo: Maria Breidenbach, c. Summer 2008 - National Campers and Staff raising the US flag at Six Flags, St. Louis, MO

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# A Note from the President

## My life outside of Sokol

Dear Brothers, Sisters, and Friends of Sokol,

Sokol is the common bond that brings us together yet this time of year when we are with our Sokol friends we're either talking about Sokol or trying to avoid the topic from dominating our conversations. Our lives outside of Sokol aren't always something we share much about within the Sokol family. Yet those parts of our lives also shape who we are, how we act, and of course how many of us make a living.

My professional career is one that I take great pride in, but is also segmented from my Sokol involvement. I'm fortunate to find overlapping skills that I can utilize in my Sokol involvement as well as in my professional career. In my "day job" I am the State Director for Best Buddies in Illinois. In this role I work with an amazing staff team through the state of Illinois to provide one-to-one friendships, leadership development, and integrated employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

I find this work to be extremely rewarding as well as beneficial in guiding my knowledge and my passion for what Sokol brings to our communities. At work, I spend a lot of time developing opportunities for communities of all types, whether they be schools, workplaces, or actual physical communities themselves. The common bond of those efforts is to provide inclusion and friendship for the IDD community who are so often disenfranchised from the day-to-day aspects of society.



Adam in Jan 2024 with his Illinois Staff after being recognized as the State Director of the Year for Best Buddies International!

The theme of inclusion is one that I have found myself valuing my entire life. My personal commitment to Sokol was fortified when I joined the Juniors class at Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky. Prior to that time Sokol classes weren't typically my favorite activity. Athletics were one of my favorite parts of childhood, yet my larger build did not always align with the physical traits most valued in gymnastics. However as a Junior, Sokol provided not just a family, but a place where I felt included and a place where I felt I belonged.

I think we'd all agree that this sense of belonging is a common theme to most of the people who have stayed involved and engaged as Sokol members. We ALL value the things that make us feel valued and make us feel accomplished.



# A Note from the President (continued)

In my time as a Sokol, I have found great satisfaction from the sense of accomplishment I get from working with family and friends to promote our mission of a sound and a sound body. That expression is one we use often, but I don't know if we often think about the order in the sequence of those words. We all commonly view Sokol as a fitness organization, but it starts with a sound mind. Being in a good place mentally to be the best version of ourselves. We realize that because at Sokol we are welcomed and are included. Those values that I've learned from Sokol helped lead me to the work I get to do professionally at Best Buddies, and in turn are values I'm proud to perpetuate in my role as American Sokol president.

At the end of the day, we all want to be included. Let's take a step back and think about the amazing value that we find in being a member of Sokol and in feeling included in this Sokol community which cares about each of us as Brothers and Sister. Our guiding principles are not just an abiding influence in my life, but I'm grateful that they have helped guide me professionally to share these values into other communities beyond our Sokol one.

To Success!

**Brother Adam Wilt - President**

## ***Those Who Have Shaped My Sokol Journey...***

This month I'd like to express my gratitude to my Dad, Gary Wilt. This month marks twenty years since his passing, but I still feel his presence in my life every day. He was a wonderful role model to my sister, Alix, and I, and I'm proud to have many of his positive qualities. Without him, I wouldn't have been a Sokol today. As a child, I pleaded with him to let me move on to other activities, but he insisted that I had to stay in Sokol through one year of being in the Juniors class. Thank goodness for his insistence that I stick with Sokol!

## What's Adam Been Up To?



Corpus Christi in March is usually full of Spring Breakers, but Adam had other plans. Here he is swearing in the new officers at Sokol Corpus Christi!



# National Camp is BACK!

National Camp had a great run - 10 straight summers at the turn of the century, creating countless memories for hundreds of Sokol teens. And we're ready to run it back! Registration is now open for National Camp 2024, taking place in St. Louis, June 23-29!

Visit [host Sokol St. Louis' website](#) for detailed information on Camp as well as registration forms and pricing information. We are excited to offer a \$150 discount for all Campers registered and paid by April 1st. Early Bird registration fee will be \$200, with general registration option through April 30th for \$350. Please encourage your young participants to attend - some of our gymnastics coaches and Sokol leaders may even have their own stories from time spent at National Camp!

Join one of our virtual information sessions to learn more about National Camp and find out everything you need to know before you register! Please forward this to your unit class participants and their families.

## Open House Schedule

Tuesday, March 19th, 8:00 PM

Thursday, March 28th, 6:00 PM

All can be accessed via this [Zoom link](#).

Do you have memories of National Camp, either as a camper, staffer, or both? Share them with us on our [National Camp Facebook page](#) or send them to the [editor](#)!

**NATIONAL CAMP  
Q & A SESSIONS**

**VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULE**

- Sunday March 3rd, 7:00 PM
- Thursday March 7th, 7:00 PM
- Tuesday March 19th, 8:00 PM
- Thursday March 28th, 6:00 PM

(all times are central time)

Join us to learn more before signing up!

**AMERICAN SOKOL  
NATIONAL CAMP**

**23-29  
JUNE  
2024**

**SOKOL  
CAMP**  
6270 HIGHWAY 61/67  
IMPERIAL, MO 63052

JOIN SOKOL TEENS  
FROM ACROSS  
THE COUNTRY  
FOR A WEEK YOU  
WON'T FORGET!

**REGISTRATION OPEN NOW!  
DETAILS AND FORMS AT:**  
[bit.ly/natcamp24](https://bit.ly/natcamp24)

**REGISTER BY  
APRIL 1 TO  
SAVE \$150!!**

**CONTACT MARIAB4@GMAIL.COM**



# National Merit Award 2024

The American Sokol National Merit Award has been offered to members of ASO since 1975. This award is funded through the Future Sokol Leaders Fund. The Merit Award is designed to assist American Sokol members or the youth of a member in the pursuit of higher education. A person can apply for this award an unlimited number of times, but can receive it only once. The American Sokol Merit Award is administered by the ASO Education Committee.

The ASO Education Committee is now accepting applications for the 2024 National Merit Award. Eligible students are those who are planning a full-time course program (at least 12 hours per semester or equivalent) at a two-year or four-year trade school, college, or university. The amount to be awarded is \$1000 per student. Applicants may apply during any year of their studies. The selections are made by the ASO Education Committee and then approved by the ASO Executive Board. The ASO Education Committee will consider the following criteria in selecting the candidates for their recommendation to the ASO Executive Board:

- Cultural and Educational Activities
- Unit Participation
- District and National Participation
- Board of Instruction Participation
- Community and Extracurricular Activities
- Personal Essay
- Overall Leadership/Letter of Recommendation

The application can be downloaded from the [American Sokol website](#). Completed application, essay, and letter of recommendation must be received via e-mail at [education@americansokol.org](mailto:education@americansokol.org) by May 1, 2024. Assistance with the application process may be obtained by contacting your district or unit educational director.

**Elaine Benda - Education Committee**



# An 80 Hour Train Ride (& more)

*Are you traveling to Prague this summer? Many lament having a layover anywhere, and often, this includes an overnight in another city. Well, Stanley Barcal would think we've all gone soft. Here's an article from his daughter, Julie, who compiled some letters from her dad.*

My father, Stanley Barcal, attended the 1938 Slet in Prague along with several other Sokol members from the Chicago area. He wrote letters to my mother (they were married the next year in 1939) about what he saw and experienced while over in Europe. In this article I thought I would focus on their traveling accommodations using excerpts from his letters. Their experiences were definitely not for the faint of heart!

From Chicago to New York City: "The train ride was terrible from Chicago. We went by way of Canada and one of the wheels had a hot box [an overheated axle bearing] so they had to crowd us in the car behind for about 60 miles before they could pick up another coach. Then riding was a little better. About 3 AM it got so cold that nobody could sleep so we didn't get any rest."

In NYC, June 1st: "We arrived here at 8 this morning and have been standing around for about 2 hours. The boat sails at 12 noon. It sure is a dandy trip. We all had only a few hours sleep last night and are all cramped up from sitting all night."

On the Aquitania: "We left NY at noon and sailing was very fine until yesterday and today. The waves are pounding the sides of this ship so that it rocks from side to side like a canoe on a stormy lake. Sitting here in the library one moment you seem to be looking right down into the water and the next moment you are looking into a cloudy sky. The first three days we drilled on deck but yesterday and today we couldn't get out there at all. The whole party is getting along pretty good. Yesterday we put on a program so my sis and I were in a waltz with three other couples. A few of them have been sea sick but we that drilled and move around a little took it very well."

Arrival in Prague June 10th: "We arrived here at 6 PM after a terrible and long ride on French and German trains (82 hours) dirty, hot, and not a drop of water until we got into Czechoslovakia."

Sleeping accommodations in Prague: "First of all I must tell you of the place where we sleep. The beds are new and clean but they are so hard it's like sleeping on a bench in a park. The pillows are also like that. They are packed with straw or hay but now we are getting used to it. When we get through a tough day we could sleep standing up. There are 27 boys in one large room and 13 in one smaller one. The food is pretty good and we eat enough but I lost 4 pounds."

He ended the letter by saying it was time to hit the hay.

**Julie Barcal - Sokolice Tabor**



# American Sokol Town Hall Meetings

Our loyal readers surely know that we've been hosting Town Hall meetings at least every other month. (We've expanded beyond six for 2024!) But, if you're new here, check them out! Below is a list of past topics, as well as the most up-to-date future topic list! Come join us!

Check out past recordings, which are on our [YouTube channel!](#) They're also available by navigating to the videos section of [American Sokol's Facebook page!](#) To date, we've covered:

- [American Sokol Grants Explained](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Prague Slet 2024 Info](#)
- [Sokol Facilities](#)
- [Recruitment](#)
- [Membership & Social Engagement](#)
- [Non-Gymnastics Fitness Programs](#)
- [Fundraisers](#)

**Next Town Hall:** Monday, March 25, 2024, 8:30 PM EDT, 7:30 PM CDT, 5:30 PM PDT

**Next Topic:** Passing the Torch to New Sokol Leaders

**Who should attend:** All Unit, District, or National Officers, non-officers looking to grow their role, non-leaders in Sokol looking to change that!

Future topics will vary as we continue 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. In addition to being available [via Zoom by clicking here](#), you can dial into Zoom (info on flyer), or join us on the [Facebook live stream](#).



*American Sokol  
Organization*  
**TOWN HALL  
MEETINGS**



*Next Town Hall*

**Monday, March 25, 2024**

**Passing the Torch to New Sokol Leaders**

## *2024 Dates & Topics*

April 29, 2024 (Monday) - BOI Focus: Engaging Community in Sokol Programs

May 29, 2024 (Wednesday) - Foundation: Czech Ministry Grants

July 30, 2024 (Tuesday) - BOI Focus: Unit BOI

Sept. 30, 2024 (Monday) - 2025 American Sokol Slet Kick-Off Event

October 29, 2024 (Tuesday) - Investments, Gift Giving, & Tax Preparation

Dec. 3, 2024 (Tuesday) - Unit Roundtables



# Masaryktown Bingo

My wife Debbie and I have retired and we now live in Fort Myers, FL. One of my favorite activities is playing Senior Softball, which is very popular in Florida. A couple months ago, I was looking at a list of teams that had registered for a tournament I was playing in, and saw one of the teams was named Masaryktown Bingo. This immediately caught my attention, as I am familiar with the Masaryktown in Toronto, Canada. I have been there at least three times as a Junior and young Senior for Slets when Sokol Canada was active. I knew Masaryktown was named after Tomas Garrigue Masaryk, who was the first president of an independent Czechoslovakia after World War I. Could there possibly be a connection between a senior softball team in Florida and the place I knew in Canada? I decided to do a little research, and it turns out that they are not connected. But my investigation turned up a fascinating story of Czech and Slovak history in the state of Florida.

In the early 1920's, a newspaper writer named Joseph Joscak in New York began writing about the beautiful climate and potential opportunities in Florida. This appealed to many of the Czech and Slovak immigrants in the area, who were working in manual labor jobs such as coal mining and steel mills. The idea began to take off, and in 1925 a consortium was formed to purchase land in Florida for the purpose of forming a new community and beginning a Citrus Farm. 61 shares were sold at \$1,000 per share, mostly to Slovak immigrants.

The group arrived in an area north of Tampa, which was completely undeveloped and almost uninhabited. 24,000 acres were purchased and the Hernando County Plantation Company was founded. The group quickly built some housing and a central gathering hall. The little village was named Masaryktown, and the streets were named after Czech poets and scholars (Stur, Hurban, Kollar, Stefanik), as well as for US Presidents (Lincoln, Garfield, Wilson). They worked hard to put some roots down and to start their Citrus orchards.

Unfortunately, the group received some bad advice about the location of the land they had bought for Citrus farming. It was in a low lying area, where the coldest air tended to settle during the winters. For two straight years, frost destroyed their crops and killed the orange and lemon trees. For many of the settlers, this was the end of the Florida experiment, as they sold their shares and moved back north. But a hearty group of families and individuals decided to stay and try to find another way to make a living.

A couple families decided to erect chicken coops to produce some eggs and poultry for a food supply. This endeavor proved successful, and the excess eggs were sold to neighboring markets. Soon, all of the residents were raising chickens, and a cooperative was formed to distribute and sell the eggs. This began a relatively prosperous era in Masaryktown. At one point they were among the largest egg producers in Florida, and for a couple of decades the town was stabilized.

The town maintained its Czech and Slovak heritage. A large central gathering hall and schools were built. I found this quote from a History of Masaryktown article : "In 1932 a chapter of the Sokol





# Masaryktown Bingo (continued)

organization was formed in Masaryktown. This is a gymnastic society dedicated to the building of a strong, healthy body..... The Beseda dancers, always dressed in colorful costumes, often danced at dinners in the Community Hall during the winter months and at festivals.”

But once again, hardship hit Masaryktown. Large corporate egg farms sprung up in Florida, and the smaller producers could no longer make a profit. Most of the families turned to truck farming, planting crops like onions, sweet potatoes, and cucumbers to get by. Whatever progress the egg industry had provided was now gone. But many of the original settlers and their families were committed to staying in the community they had founded.

There is not much record of Masaryktown in the latter part of the 20th century. An occasional article about the passing of one of the original founders, and a particularly sad article about the closing of an original Czech restaurant. While the small time farming was still active, most residents took jobs in nearby Brooksville or Tampa, which was becoming a large city. The Czech and Slovak influence began to fade away as the founders died and their families left for other opportunities.

Looking at Masaryktown today, it is listed as an unincorporated community of Hernando County in the 2020 census, with a population of 1,077. The restaurant is still there , which now serves Cuban food. And there is the Community Center, which hosts Bingo twice a week and has occasional social events and rentals. A 90th Anniversary Party for Masaryktown was held in 2015, one picture showing a small group of mostly elderly residents, a lot of them relatives of the original founders.

I was hoping to talk to some members of the Masaryktown softball team, but they played at a different location than my team. I have not been able to visit the site of Masaryktown, FL ..... yet. The next time I have a softball tournament or other business in the Tampa area, I am planning to go check it out. So stay tuned for Part Two of this adventure!

## George Kulhanek - Sokol Tabor



The Masaryktown Hotel and Cafe was built in 1925.  
Photos from Tampa Bay Times, 12/3/2015



Original members of the Hernando Plantation Company, Inc. pose in 1925.



# Photo Hunt

Does anyone recognize the location where the below photo was taken? No one in the family shown can identify it. It's not in St. Louis, Missouri, or in the Chicago area, and it must be in the U.S. because of the American flag on top of the monument. The time frame is late 1930s to very early 1940s. If you can answer that question, please respond to [ACECNews@gmail.com](mailto:ACECNews@gmail.com). Thank you for your help!

## Sokol St. Louis



# Flapjack or Pancake?



If you think you see what looks like a stack of pancakes covered in syrup on the mantle of one of the above-pictured Sokol members, your eyes do not deceive you. That's the trophy from Sokol Spirit's annual Flapjack Open! Known around town as simply "The Flapjack" since 2016, the blind-draw, no-one-turned-away, post-All-You-Can-Eat-Pancake-Breakfast tournament was held on January 28th. While teams Krusteaz, Crispy Sausage, and Mrs. Butterworth all put up good fights, the Egg Beaters simply couldn't be, well, beat.

Congratulations to Mary, Mark, Kevin, Jeff, Ken, and Jenn!



# Charles J. Vopička

In September of 1935, a Czech immigrant laid in state at our Plzeňský Sokol before being laid to rest at Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago. The Chicago Tribune published that hundreds of people from many nations came to pay their respects. The Honorable Charles J. Vopička was a contemporary of President Tomáš G. Masaryk, of Chicago Mayor Anton Čermák, Czech Composer Antonín Dvořák, and famous sculptor Albín Polášek, to name a few. He was a major player in the "Golden Ages" of the Czechs in Chicago and became well-known in Chicago primarily for his being President of Atlas Brewing Company, but abroad, in Europe and in the Balkans, he became known for his neutrality during times of war and for his humanitarian efforts for fair treatment for prisoners of war and for basic necessities for people during times of war. Tomáš G. Masaryk (born 1850 only seven years before Vopička), who became the first president of Czechoslovakia in 1918, traveled around the world to drum up support to establish an independent Czechoslovak nation. In the early 1900s, in a letter to the people of Chicago, Masaryk wrote, "The better Americans you are, the better Czechs you will become." I truly believe that this very powerful phrase resonated within Charles J. Vopička.

Charles J. Vopička is considered to be the first immigrant to be a US Ambassador! He was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson as US Minister Plenipotentiary to Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia. He served 1913-1920. He was awarded 4 medals for his service: the Grand Cross of the Star of Romania, the Serbian Order of the White Eagle First Class, the Order of the White Lion from Czechoslovakia presented by President Tomáš G. Masaryk, and the Czechoslovak War Medal, also presented by Masaryk.

In his book *Secrets of the Balkans*, published in English in 1921, Vopička writes "...my reception in Prague was glorious, and aroused in me most intense emotion. And this feeling was shared by all who welcomed me, for aside from their respect for my official position and the welcome to be accorded the representative of a country known to be the champion of liberty and justice, was the realization that one of their own blood had been sent to them. For, although I had been an American citizen thirty-three years, I was born in Bohemia and these people knew I could understand and sympathize with them." (pg 19) His book was published in Czech in 1926 as *Taje Balkánu* and in Czech it reads "...moje přijetí v Praze bylo přímo slávné a došlo mne hluboce. A tyto pocity byly sdíleny všemi, kteří přišli mne uvítati. Neboť vedle jich úcty k mému úřednímu postavení a k přivítání, jež bylo projevováno žástupci země, která byla známa jako champion svobody a spravedlnosti, přistupovalo ještě vědomí, že byl Americkým občanem po třicet tři léta, přece jen jsem zrozen byl v Čechách a tento lid správně chápal, že mu rozumím a že s ním dovedu cítiti." (str. 18)

The English copy of his book references the "Czech government in exile" and in the Czech copy translated that line to "the Czech maffia." A little known fact about Sokol is that Sokol became an instant spy network in WWI, because Czech people could claim that they were Austrian. They could work at Austrian consulates and German shipping yards, but then go to their local Sokol units and pass tidbits of information on up the chain. According to the book *Spy and Counterspy* by Voska and



# Charles J. Vopička (continued)

Irwin, the Sokol organization had to give credit to American Intelligence and Scotland Yard in order to not be found out.

In the journal of the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Red Cross Medical Mission to Roumania, July 1917 to 1918, he wrote about Vopička saying "The Minister is best described as a jolly fellow well-met, a rough diamond, and a worker. He is doing wonders in the way of co-operating with the Commission in its work here and goes after things in a thoroughly American fashion and produces results."

Representatives of many various nations requested of him that he look after their affairs in the tumultuous Balkan states, as he was the representative of the leading neutral nation, the United States, during World War I. I often joke that "He WAS the European Union of World War I." At one point or another he represented the interests of the following countries in no particular order: United States of America, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, France, Britain, Belgium, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Turkey, Italy, Japan, China, Portugal and Israel. Throughout his book, *Secrets of the Balkans, Seven Years of a Diplomatist's Life in the Storm Centre of Europe*, Vopicka is careful to point out that all nations indeed see him as a neutral force, passionate about human life, justice, and education.

Two sayings that have regularly appeared when researching Sokol are:

"Kdo Čech, tedy Sokol." (He who is Czech is Sokol.) The Czech Community is a close-knit community. Vopička could not have been who he was without his community of Czech compatriots throughout the United States and our National and World Sokol organizations, among many others.

"Without Sokol there would be no Czechoslovak Legions, without the Czechoslovak Legions there would be no Czechoslovakia." In Vopička's book *Secrets of the Balkans*, it is fascinating to read about his interactions with both Tomáš G. Masaryk and the Czechoslovak Legionnaires.

As a translator of old letters and journals from Czech to English, I often am surprised with the items that are brought to me for translation. On August 4th, 2019, I was brought the contents of a time capsule from a Bohemian church that had closed years ago, and was purchased by a private individual. In the time capsule were several newspapers. One was an old newspaper called *Národ* (Nation) from Chicago from September 9th, 1904. In it were two ads for Atlas Brewing Company.

In another newspaper, I found an article from the Catholic weekly newspaper *Hlas* from the 21st of September, 1904, from St. Louis, MO, (the same year as the World's Fair 1904 in St. Louis, MO) there was also an article that helped me realize the emotional connection that many Czech Americans could have had to Vopička, as his real estate and banking business Vopička, Kubín & Co. was, among other things, being used to help them send money back to their families back in their



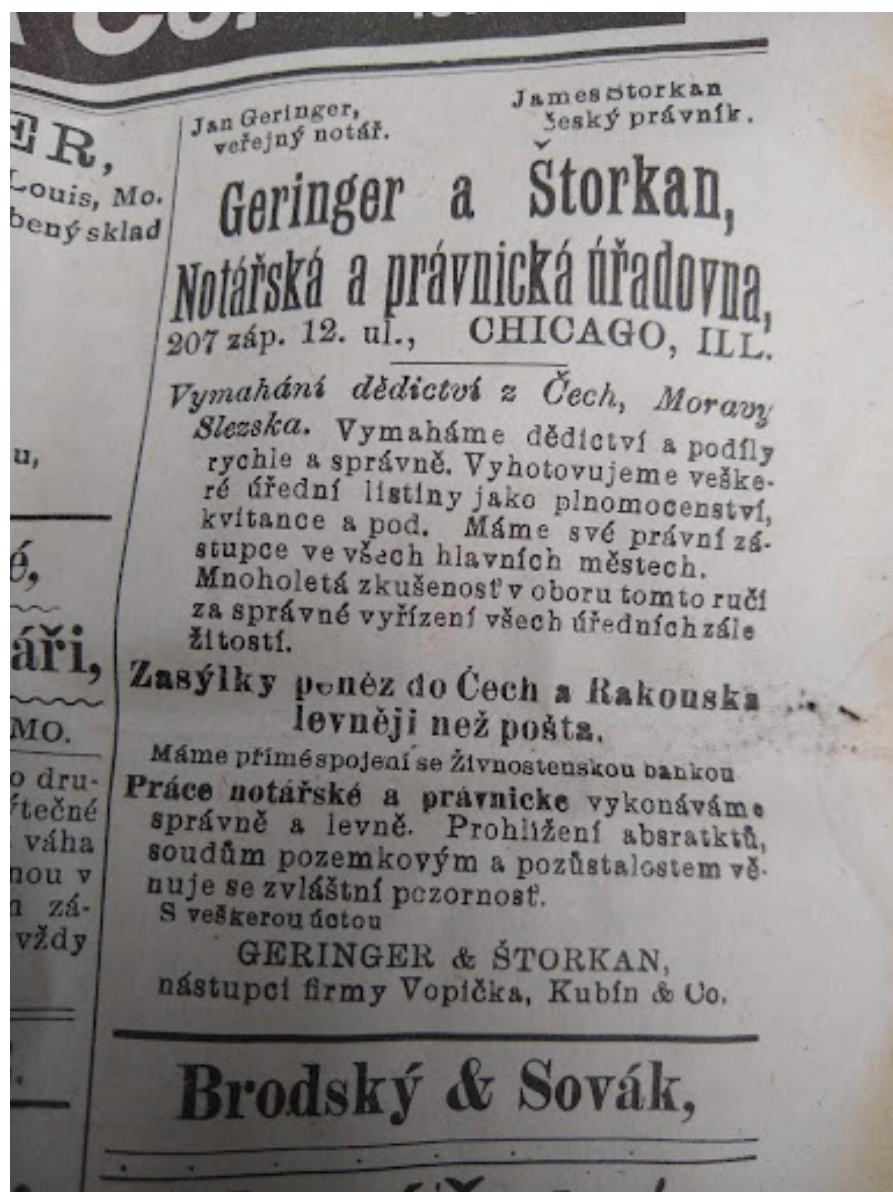
# Charles J. Vopička (continued)

homelands "at a cheaper rate than the Post Office." When he is described as a "Savior to his people," it is obvious he had a heart and a mind for helping his people, and the more I understand what he meant, when he said "Můžu dělat na tomto světě větší rozdíl, když půjdu do podnikání" ("I believe that I can make more of a difference in this world if I go into business"), the more I feel as though I am understanding him as a person.

I am learning that there are so many intricacies to our Czech-American history. The more I learn, the more I want to know and understand more!

Anna Cooková - Educational Director

PS - Here's a picture of a newspaper clipping, which translates as indicated below:



Jan Geringer, James Štorkan  
public notary. Czech attorney.

Geringer and Štorkan,  
Notary and Law Office,  
207 West 12th Street, Chicago, IL

---  
Enforcement of inheritance from  
Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia. We enforce  
inheritance and shares fast and correctly.  
We produce all official documents such as  
power of attorney, proof of debt pay-off,  
etc. We have our legal representation in  
all major cities. Many years of experience  
in this field guarantee the proper handling  
of all official matters.

Packages of money to Bohemia and  
Austria are cheaper than the post office.

We have direct connections with the  
Trade Bank, we do notarial and legal work  
correctly and cheaply. Special attention is  
paid to the review of abstracts, land  
courts and estates.

With all due respect  
GERINGER & ŠTORKAN,  
successors to the firm Vopička, Kubín &  
Co.



# DVD Lending Library: Part 2

American Sokol Czech Movies for you and your unit's enjoyment are now on loan!

The American Sokol Education, Library & Archives Lending Library has received, reviewed, and rated the following DVDs for Sokol Units and members to receive as a free loan. The application can be sent from the American Sokol Office Manager, Sister Gina Rocush, for scheduling and mailing. The only cost is mailing it back to the American Sokol office in Brookfield, Illinois. Hosting a Czech movie night? Or showing that the unit is fulfilling its Federal tax code designation as "Education" while learning and enjoying information about the culture and history of the Czech Republic? Several Sokols now have media rooms and one Sokol has been hosting Czech movie nights for over 13 years! A BIG thank you to Sister Dáša Měrková who donated several DVDs from her collection! Please [email Gina](#) for any forms.

DVD listing with English Subtitles (Remember over 20 titles were published in the 4th Quarter publication already):

- Bringing Up Girls In Bohemia / *Výchova dívek v Čechách*; 1997; 115 Minutes; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: PG13-Female frontal nudity & sexual content brief; *Výchova dívek v Čechách* is a Czech novel, written by [Michal Viewegh](#). It was first published in 1994, and translated into English by A. G. Brain (pseudonym of Gerald Turner) as *Bringing up Girls in Bohemia* in 1996, ISBN [1-887378-05-7](#). The novel which can be read in at least four ways: as a suggestive story of the life tragedy of a 20-year-old girl; as a witty satire of the current Czech education system; as a "book about writing books"; and finally, also as an ironic love story.
- Dissolved and Discharged / *Rozpuštěný a vybitý*; 1984; 80 Minutes; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: G; At the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, police investigator Trachta and his trainee, Hlaváček, investigate the murder of the factory owner Bierhanzl, who used duck eggs to make a miraculous ointment against baldness and mysteriously disappeared just as he was organizing a large party in his villa.
- Fimfarum / *Fimfárum*; 101 Minutes; 2002; Color; Rating: PG-Drinking scenes; The film *Fimfárum* retells five fairy tales written by renowned actor and writer Jan Werich, whose work can be found on the bookshelves of almost all Czech children.
- How About a Plate of Spinach / *Coz takhle dat si spenat*; 1977; 86 Minutes; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: G; Two swindlers are put into prison for alcohol theft. After an exit from prison, they are employed for theft of the device for regeneration of old cows.
- How to Drown Dr. Mracek, the Lawyer / *Jak utopit dr. Mrácka aneb Konec vodníku v Cechách*; 96 Minutes; 1975; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: G; In the heart of Bohemia, the last water sprite dynasty faces a dire threat as Dr. Mracek plans to evict them and demolish their ancestral wet home.



# DVD Lending Library (continued)

- If a Thousand Clarinets / Kdyby tisíc klarinetů; 130 Minutes; 1965; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: PG; The spa town of Alkalís is celebrating two hundred years since the passing of the composer JS Bach . That day, Private Schulz defected from the local military garrison after being disgusted by Second Lieutenant Max's drill. During the subsequent attack, all the soldiers' weapons are turned into musical instruments by the mystical intervention of Bach.
- Krakonos and the Skiers / Krakonosa lyznici; 73 Minutes; 1980; Color; Czech with English subtitles; Rating: G; Set in the Czech mountains on the Polish border, in a predominantly poor society, this film combines a fairy tale with reality; the protagonists (two young brothers from a poor family) a man that to them is the mythological "Man of the Giant Mountains" also known as Krakonoš, who rewards those who come to the mountains with good intentions and punishes those who come with bad in their heart.
- Long live the ghosts - Haunting in our ruin / Ať žijí duchové - V naší ruině straší; 81 Minutes; 1977; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: G; Friends from a boyish group would like to prove their bravery. Their leader Jenda decides that in the evening they will go in couples to sign on the wall of a dungeon of a desolate and shabby castle Brtník. Adámek and Vendelín put down their names, but they ran away from ghostly frightening and howling.
- My Sweet Little Village / Vesnicko má stredisková; 100 Minutes; 1985; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: PG-some partial nudity; The movie's main storyline follows the life of Otík, a mentally retarded young man, in a tight-knit village community. The sweet-tempered Otík works as an assistant truck driver with Mr. Pávek, his older colleague and practical-minded neighbor.
- Summer with a Cowboy / Léto s kovbojem; 90 Minutes; 1976; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: G; A romantic comedy, a young psychologist Doubravka swimming in a pool meets Honza who summers co-op cows nearby. Honza likes the racy girl at first sight and his directness imposes on Doubravka too.
- The Girl on the Broomstick / Dívka na koštěti; 80 Minutes; 1972; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: G; Fantasy/Comedy; Saxana is a young witch who is just learning her craft at a witch school. When one day he stays after school for 300 years, he uses the Lexicon of Spells to transport himself to the human world for 44 hours, where he wreaks havoc with his variously successful spells.
- Three Veterans / Tri veteran; 1983; 93 Minutes; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Rating: G; Packed with situational and verbal humor, The Three Veterans is a classic Czech fairy tale film beloved by both children and adults. The film has a strong moral message.
- Who wants to kill Jessie? / Kdo chce zabít Jessii?; 1966; 81 Minutes; Color; Czech with English Subtitles; Comedy-Sci-Fi; Rating: GP; "What if someone had an absurd dream and the visions ran out in the street?" a scientist asks Rose, a researcher who discovers a way to engender beneficial dreams (to produce contented, productive workers).



# DVD Lending Library (continued)

- Akumulator 1 / Akumulátor 1; 1994; 102 Minutes; Color; Spoken in Czech without subtitles; Rating: PG13-Full female nudity; partial male nudity; Young surveyor Olda is courting a girl, Jitka, but his colleague Slezák coaxes her into bed at his home. The morally exhausted Olda does not stop them, and watches TV all night, where he appeared that day in an absurd interview. He loses consciousness for three days and ends up in a hospital room with the ageing Mikulík.
- A Murder in the Hotel Excelsior / Vražda v hotelu Excelsior; 1971; 89 Minutes; Color; Spoken in Czech without subtitles; Rating: G; This movie (A murder in Hotel Excelsior) is one of successful quaternary of films which comes out of famous TV series Sinful People of the city of Prague (Hříšní lidé města pražského), a collection of stories about the crimes and criminologists (with the legendary chief of the investigators Vacátko (Jaroslav Marvan performs himself in this full-length picture too).
- Attention, Visit! / Pozor, Vizita! 1981; 84 Minutes; Color; Spoken in Czech without subtitles; Rating: G; The story of the film takes place in 1960 in the infectious department of a hospital, where an old Prepsi, a world-worshipper and a fat man without a family, is isolated as a bacillus carrier, a person with a special desire for freedom, who refuses to adapt to the harsh conditions of isolation and tries to escape several times.
- Day for My Love / Den pro mou lasku; 1976; 88 Minutes; Color; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Rating: PG 13-Female frontal nudity; The young married couple - photographer Marie and civil engineering student Petr - live in a cozy attic flat with their four-year-old daughter Maruska. The beginning of the story follows her on her little adventures. The girl comes down with a fever, which kills her before anything can be done, and the student and his photographer wife mourn and comfort one another.
- Dear Aunts and Me / Drahé tety a já; 1974; 76 Minutes; Color; Spoken in Czech without subtitles; Rating: G; It is an impulsive, whimsical tale full of madcap ideas about two old sisters – the aging spinster Fany and the widow Andělka, who live together. One morning, the sisters go shopping. Fany, however, mistakenly identifies Michal, the fiancée of their niece Hermínka, as the perpetrator of an armed robbery in a savings bank.
- Death of the Black King / Smrt černého krále; 1971; 111 Minutes; Color; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Rating: G; Following the TV series Hříšní lidé města pražského (The Sinful People of Prague, 1968), director Jiří Sequens and screenwriter Jiří Marek revisited the Prague of the 1930s to create four crime comedies. The plot of this 1971 film focuses on a murder investigation team led by executive Vacátko.
- Dinner for Adele / Adéla ještě nevečeřela; 1977; 102 Minutes; Color; Czech without Subtitles; Rating: G; The film is set at the fin de siècle. American detective Nick Carter is invited to Prague, in order to search for a missing dog. But Carter stumbles on a series of murders, as an evil baron keeps feeding victims to his carnivorous plant.





# DVD Lending Library (continued)

- Duchacek Will Fix It / Ducháček to zařídí; 1938; 87 Minutes; Black/White; Czech with no Subtitles; Rating: G; While creating his richly structured filmography during the 1930s, director Karel Lamač contributed substantially to Vlasta Burian's successful acting career. This penultimate feature film made by the popular comedian and the successful filmmaker is a loose adaptation of Konto X (Account X), a play by Rudolf Österreicher.
- Girls from a Porcelain Factory / Holky z porcelánu; 98 Minutes; 1975; Color; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Comedy; Rating: G; The fifteen year old Maruska (Lenka Korínková) starts as a new staff in the porcelain warehouse. For the boss Svetla (Míla Myslíková) it is the last straw. She asked to extend her staff consisting of four girls and a retired lady by a man, not a child.
- I Dutifully Report / Poslušně hlásím; 90 Minutes; 1957; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Comedy; Rating: PG-language; During the Budějovice military advance, the good soldier Švejk and Lieutenant Lukaš get into all sorts of trouble, such as forgetting their luggage on a train platform in Prague. A sequel to the exploits of Schweik, a good-natured buffoon in the Czech Army during WWI (1914-1918).
- I Killed Einstein, Gentlemen / Zabil jsem Einsteina, pánové; 1970; Minutes; Color; Czech without Subtitles; Rating: PG-Female frontal nudity; This futuristic science fiction comedy features an atomic bomb blast that causes women to grow beards and lose the ability to have children.
- In Order, Dear Comrades / Vázení přátelé, ano; 1989; 109 Minutes; Color; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Comedy; Rating: PG; In this slightly satirical comedy, Bohous is a tilemaker in a bathroom ceramics factory who is unexpectedly promoted to be the chief financial officer of his factory. The chief executive did this because he expects his new appointee to be sufficiently clueless to enable him to steal lots of money from the plant. Instead, the methodical, long-suffering, and good-natured Bohous arranges things so that the CEO's thefts are relatively minor.
- Journey into the Depth of the Student's Soul / Cesta do hlubin studákovy duše ; 1939; 88 Minutes; Black/White; Spoken in Czech without subtitles; Rating: G; Following on from his student comedy Škola základ života (School is the Foundation of Life, 1938), Martin Frič's next picture drew on the "Joe College" texts by author Jaroslav Žák. Cesta do hlubin studákovy duše (1939) went beyond its inherently patriotic theme, and beyond the limits of mere undemanding entertainment.
- Penicka and Paraplicko (Burglar & Umbrella) / Pěnička a Paraplíčko; 1970; 92 Minutes; Color; Spoken in Czech without subtitles; Rating: G; In the morning twilight of Prague, the dead body of the safe-breaker Toufar is found floating on the river Vltava with a knife in his back. Police inspectors visit Toufar's lover, the prostitute Anna Kulata nicknamed Umbrella, and it is apparent that the moment before she opened the door of her flat, someone fled through the window.
- Proud Princess / Pyšná princezna; 1952; 94 Minutes; Black/White; Czech Only no subtitles; Rating: G; A fairy tale of all Czech fairy tales about the proud princess Krasomila who refused to marry King Miroslav.



# DVD Lending Library (continued)

- Sisters / Sestřičky; 85 Minutes; 1983; Color; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Comedy; Rating: PG; Enjoy the misadventures of Marie, the young nurse trying desperately to become an adult, and Babi, an experienced woman guiding her in the ways of life and its trials and tribulations. Follow their stories and an array of colorful characters as they unfold in various episodes.
- The Emperor's Baker Part 1 / Cisaruv pekar - Pekaruv cisar; 80 Minutes: 1951; Color; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Comedy; Rating: G; In the rich tapestry of Czech cinematic history, The Emperor's Baker - The Baker's Emperor - Cisaruv pekar - Pekaruv cisar, directed by Martin Frič in 1951, stands out as a masterpiece that beautifully combines historical drama with the enchantment of a fairy tale. Set in the era of Emperor Rudolf II, the film narrates the intertwined lives of two lookalikes: the emperor, a lover of alchemy and art, and Matěj, a humble baker.
- The Heroic Captain Korkorán / Hrdinný kapitán Korkorán; 1934; Minutes; Black/White; Spoken in Czech without subtitles; Rating: G; The film is about a Prague skipper who dreams of commanding ships on the high seas but is stuck with running a small steamboat on the Vltava river.
- The Joys of Father Flasti /Slasti Otce vlasti; 1969; 100 Minutes; Black/White; Spoken in Czech with subtitles; Rating: GP-some male rear nudity; The young Prince Charles, the future King of his country Charles IV, is being educated at the French court in the company of his fiancée Blanche.
- The King of Kings / Král Králů; 1963; 81 Minutes; Black/White; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Rating: G; During his work assignment in Tamni Kingdom, Czech worker Lojza Kralu saves a local man from dying in the desert. Two years later, it turns out the saved man was also the Taman king; and that he has decided to name Lojza his royal heir, which turns his life upside down.
- The Secrets of the Steel City / Tajemství Ocelového mesta; 1978; 85 Minutes; Color; ALL IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE; Adventure Sci-Fi; Rating: G; Two scientists use their inherited fortune differently. One designs a beautiful town called Fortuna, while the second builds huge factories to make munitions known as Steel City. Two scientists use their inherited fortune differently.
- Two on Horseback, One on Donkey / Dva na koni, jeden na oslu; 1986; 127 Minutes; Color; Czech with Czech Subtitles; Rating: PG; Based on an eponymous play by Oldřich Daňek, the film version was brought to the screen in 1986 as the final film from experienced director Jiří Sequens. This musical comedy set in the 14th century, during the reign of King Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia, has a trio of mercenaries as its main characters.

**Sis. Gina Rocush - Office Administrator**



# American Sokol Donations

Received from September 1, 2023 - January 29, 2024

## **ASO Education, Library, & Archives:**

- Dáša Měrková - DVDs Lending Library

## **ASO Foundation Funds:**

### **\*New\* Carol Crosson Endowment Foundation**

- Carol Crosson

## **Endowment Foundation**

- Jan Schatz

## **Unit Growth**

- Sokol Little Ferry (incorrectly recorded as Endowment Foundation in 3rd Quarter)

## **ASO Operations Funds:**

- Ellen K. Duvall
- Wayne W. Wolff Trust

## **Seals (to send Sokol Greater Cleveland "Silks"**

### **Troupe to 2024 Prague Slet to perform at the Gala:**

- American Sokol Los Angeles
- Dolly Baca
- Blanche Bidnik
- Marilyn A. Cerny
- Mickey & Jolene Dalton
- Florence DelCarlo
- Tribute to Bessie Dugena, Marianne Ronquillo
- Ellen Duvall
- Anthony & Lorraine Falkus, Jr.
- James Hartung
- Jeanne & Dave Heilman
- Raymond T. Hemzacek
- Tribute to Ann (Cervin) Huber, Frank H. Huber
- Ralph Husa
- Viola Jaros
- Frank & Sarah Kalivoda
- George Kulhanek
- William Kostecki
- Tribute to Jan Kucera/Senior, Jiri Kucera
- Paul Lebloch
- Tribute to Lillian Rajdl Luffen & Rudolf Hradecky II, Rudolf Hradecky III

## **Seals (continued):**

- Karel Mara
- Jerry & Henrietta Milan
- Jenni Miller
- In Memory of Mary Ellen Newsom, Andreanna Moravec
- Ralph Perk, Jr.
- Robert & Diane Podhrasky
- Tribute to Emily & Bill Polacek, Elaine Collina
- Julie Pokorny-Conklin
- Janice Polz
- Don & Barbara Pulkrab
- Mildred Raper
- Jill A Ravnic
- Jim Riha
- Michelle Ruff
- Thomas Ruzicka
- Jan Schatz
- Andrea & Jack Scheirer
- Tribute to Charles Schultz, Sandra Michelin
- Irene (Vlasta) Seda
- Tribute to Joan Sedlacek, St. Paul, Minnesota, Marit Lee Kucera
- Joan Sedlacek
- Jerry & Jill Sijansky
- Anna Slavik
- Tribute to my dad-Vladislav (Walter) Slavik, Julie Slavik-Weiss
- In Memory of Bro. Vladislav Slavik, Julie Pokorny-Conklin
- Richard Smith
- Rose Ann Spann
- Shannon Stefanko
- Allan Treichel
- Thomas & Carrie Tuskey
- Richard L. Vachata
- Tribute to Tom F. Valek, Larry T. Valek
- Janice Voight
- Louise Wessinger
- Jerry & Joann Wester
- Adam Wilt
- Tribute to Irene & Alex Wynnyczuk, Emil Suhrada
- Norma Zabka
- Arnold & Deborah Ziskovsky

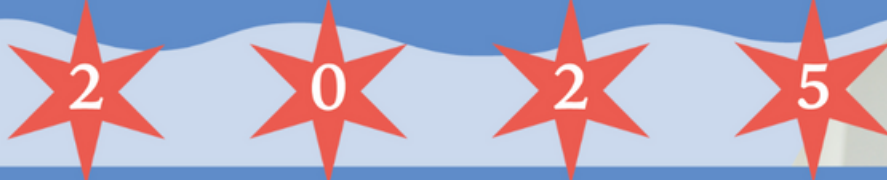


Its a Date - XXV ASO Slet!



**June 25-29  
2025**

**CHICAGO**



**XXV AMERICAN SOKOL SLET**

**We can't wait  
to see you at  
our first ASO  
Slet in 8 years!**

Stay tuned for more details.



# SOS - Calling All Sokol Collectors!

Our Education Department has been active, though not very visible these past several months. We have been busy with a massive project thanks to the generosity of Stephen Baluch, who has been digitizing our entire American Sokol Publication, going from 1879 to 2013! He has also been feverishly working on making this digitized collection searchable, which will help researchers immensely. We are hoping that you can help us.

**Is there any chance that any of you or someone you know may have any of the 2 missing issues listed below?**

2 Remaining Missing Issues:

1919-02-15\_Sokol\_Americky\_r041-c03

1919-08-15\_Sokol\_Americky\_r041-c08

Even partial copies would be very much appreciated! If you have any information, please send to [annacookova@gmail.com](mailto:annacookova@gmail.com) or call 715-651-7044.

Nazdar!

**Sis. Anna Cooková - Education Director**

PS - This list was 14 items long, but 12 have been located at the Library of Congress by Sokol Detroit member, **Sis. Diana Balint!**



# In Memory and Recognition of Wayne Wolf

Last year, the Chicago Czech community lost an enthusiastic member and great supporter with the passing of Wayne Wolf. Wayne was a long time enthusiast of Czech events and picnics, especially those with Czech music.

Those close to Wayne describe him as honest, intelligent, and a great enthusiast of history. The history of the Czech community is traditionally preserved in museums, cemeteries, artifacts, and in our traditions. But it was a love for music that Wayne took great care and initiative in preserving. This wasn't just limited to songs, but included the machines that once brought these wonderful sounds to the world. Wayne owned, repaired, and preserved an extensive collection of Nickelodeon pianos, phonographs, and other music making devices.



Wayne's passion even led him to take college courses to educate himself on machinery. He did this so he could personally preserve and restore these musical artifacts. He had a treasured collection and he was proud to personally preserve these devices. (Check out much of Wayne's extensive collection here!)

Wayne was a humble man who deeply appreciated supporting his community, and never sought recognition for his generosity. This support included a donation of over \$116,000 to the American Sokol upon his passing. Wayne also made many generous contributions to Chicago area Sokol Units during his lifetime, including on multiple occasions for facilities to make major essential repairs.

Sokol members may remember a Color Guard of young Sokols leading the ceremonies each Memorial Day at Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago. Each year a bus was provided for the Sokol Color Guard and other Sokol members to attend these services. Most of you wouldn't know though that Wayne Wolfe was the anonymous donor who made that possible each and every year. He did this because he wanted to make sure that we took the time to pay proper respect for those who made the ultimate sacrifice defending our country.

Wayne was no stranger to the Bohemian National Cemetery, having served as a delegate, an officer, and a generous supporter. The Bohemian Home for the Aged used to be near Bohemian national cemetery, but sometime ago moved to Naperville, and change his name to Tabor Hills. This community continues to be a top notch retirement home in the Czech community and they too received significant support from Wayne Wolf.

As mentioned Wayne was a humble man. He never sought credit for his generosity, but the American Sokol wanted to take this time to recognize him for his valuable contributions to the Czech community. We are very grateful for his generous support of our Sokol mission. The American Sokol Executive Board has designated the use of the majority of this donation for two important areas. The



# Wayne Wolf (continued)

first will serve as the seed money for our new Unit Sustainment Fund that has been established by our foundation committee to provide crucial support for our units to fund work for professional support. The other significant portion of these funds have been designated to establish a new Unit Emergency Fund. This will ensure that crucial funds will be available to our Units that experience unexpected emergency circumstances which require immediate financial support.

Wayne was not a member of Sokol, but that never stopped him from respecting the work that we do. Wayne valued the hard work of the Czech community. We are grateful for his support and proud that it will be used to continue his legacy for years to come. Thank you Wayne!

Special thanks to Wayne's long time friend Richard Grosser for sharing his memories of Wayne for this article.

**Brother Adam Wilt - President**

## Editors's Note

- Reminder: all the cover photos have been taken by Sokols. I plan to keep this trend going. But, I need your help. If you have photos you'd like to share for potential future use in ASO Public Relations-related material (like this newsletter, social media, etc), please share them. This includes, but should not be limited to, photos of: Prague, selfies with Czech celebs, group calcs new and old, gym action shots, former Sokol buildings, random Czech things in everyday life, an old recipe in action, etc. Literally ANYTHING that strikes you as being relevant to being a Sokol. Emailing the original photo instead of placing within a Word or PowerPoint document is preferred.
- Anything underlined in these newsletters is a link!
- No, you're not going crazy - we're transitioning to email addresses without the dash (-). So, anytime you see an email @americansokol.org instead of @american-sokol.org, it's legitimate! All "dash emails" will be active for a bit, though, as we continue our transition.
- Deadline for material for next issue: May 1, 2024
  - Note on material: feel free to get creative - not everything has to be a straightforward article
  - I will try to squeeze everything in, but there is a limit for our USPS version
- Please encourage members to sign up for this electronic version - this option can be changed by your Financial Secretary. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs grant that was designated for use to improve communication was all spent on mailed versions of this newsletter. If those in your unit would like to opt out of mail, but still prefer a printed copy, I email a print-friendly version at the same time the e-version comes out - then you can print on your own if that's your wish!
- I am looking for Communication/PR Team members, who are willing and able to do any of the following:
  - Host Zoom meetings/monitor chat as needed, but only a few times per year - you'll be in the background helping out, not presenting!
  - Create flyers, posters, forms, etc. for ASO
  - Help build out our Square site

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@americansokol.org](mailto:pr@americansokol.org) with all thoughts and ideas!

**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  
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Mary Cushing - Physical Director  
Shelley Cairns - Board Member  
Dáša Měrková - Board Member  
Joan Sedlacek - Board Member  
Rhonda Liska - By-laws Chair

## Note

Due to space constraints, some submissions/details were omitted from the USPS mailed version. All submissions are available on the interactive e-newsletter, which is posted to [www.american-sokol.org](http://www.american-sokol.org).

## Contact Us

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