

american **SOKOL**

Volume CXIV, Number 1

JANUARY 1993

ŠIBŘINKY!



A traditional event, unique to Sokol, is the Šibřinky Ball. In the early part of this century, many of our units held them annually and they became a major event in the social life of the Czechoslovak community each year.

Continued on Page 4.

American Sokol

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CALENDAR of EVENTS

JANUARY

- 16 Sokol Berwyn Spaghetti Dinner
- 17 Sokol Women of Little Ferry Pancake Breakfast
- 22-24 Central District Progressions Clinic at Sokol Tabor

FEBRUARY

- 6 Sokol St. Louis BOI Barn Dance
- 6 Sokol Brookfield Spaghetti Dinner
- 7 Sokol Detroit Winter Gymnastical
- 6-7 Eastern District Competition at Sokol Baltimore
- 13 Sokol Slavsky Valentine Volleyball Tourny & Dance
- 14 Sokol Milwaukee Jaternice Dinner

FEBRUARY

- 21 Sokol Detroit Annual Membership Meeting
- 21 Sokol Stickney Pancake Breakfast
- 27 Sokol Karel Havlicek Borovsky - Ennis, TX "SOKOL \$10K GIVEAWAY" For Info: P.O. Box 205, Ennis, TX 75120
- 27 Sokol Minnesota Sibirsky
- 27 Sokol Brookfield Exhibition

MARCH

- 13 Sokol Tabor Exhibition
- 14 Sokol W. Suburban Exhibition
- 20 Sokol Stickney Exhibition
- 21 Sokol Slavsky Exhibition
- 27 Sokol Berwyn Exhibition

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY DATES

- July 24 Sokol Milwaukee 125th Anniversary

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Our Sokol Credo

*To build a healthy and beautiful human body,
To cultivate a harmonious and total person,
To develop firm character, a well-rounded disposition and
A love of truth and justice;
To produce strong, lovely and honorable people,
That is the goal of a Sokol education.*



*"Zdravé a krásné lidské tělo — souladné vypěstění celého člověka,
povahy ucelené, neoblomné, pravdivé a spravedlivé —
lidé silní, krásní a dobří — to je cíl sokolské výchovy."*

From Your Editor...

It's 1993 and the year holds infinite promise. As Sokols, we will all be preparing in earnest for the upcoming Slet. There is much to do. We must put forth the best mental and physical effort we can to make it a success. There's no doubt we're

up to the task. In six short months we'll all see for ourselves what a great job we've done. I can't wait; can you?

NA ZDARI
Sls. Patricia Satek
1922 S. 57th Avenue
Cicero, IL 60650-2143

The man who gets the most satisfactory results is not always the man with the most brilliant single mind, but rather the man who can best coordinate the brains and talents of his associates.

♦ W. Altan Jones

XVIII Slet Commemorative Plate



The Slet Commemorative Plate Committee announces the creation of a new Slet Plate commemorating the XVIII Sokol Slet. The design, as shown, will have the girl in a red leotard and the boy with blue shorts and white shirt. They are surrounded by linden leaves in various shades of green. The Sokol emblem is red and below, in red, will be printed, in script - XVIII American Sokol Slet 1993.

The plates will be numbered 1 through 300. No more than 300

plates will be produced. The price of each plate is \$25.00, plus cost of shipping and handling or it may be picked up at the Sokol Office.

The plate will make a beautiful addition as a collector's item or as a gift for someone special.

Ordering information:

SOKOL PLATE COMMITTEE
6424 W. Cermak Road
Berwyn, IL 60402

Make checks payable to:
XVIII American Sokol Slet.

GUEST SPEAKER

Bro. Vaclav Zenisek, Past A&O Educational Director

The Olympic Games which not too long ago ended in Barcelona, gave us a beautiful picture of what the human body can do with a little natural born ability molded by knowledgeable coaches. We, on the other hand, must realize that only one in a million can give us the pleasure of these extraordinary performances reaching such an acrobatic level. This, of course, brings up the issue of the rest of us, who cannot achieve this level of physical ability. Not everyone can be an Olympic gymnast, but everyone should care about their own physical health and well being.

At the Olympic level, the only motivation is to win at any price and sportsmanship and morals are not of too great a concern. This is where Sokol comes in.

Aerobics help us to work out the whole body. Bending and stretching as far as we can without too much concern for form. The results are body strength and elasticity which keeps our whole body structure in good shape. The word Aerobics is fairly new to us. Up until recently, it was just called stretching and conditioning, but regardless

of what we call it, it is good for us and we need it. The more people do it, the better.

In Sokol, however, we are not satisfied with just body strength and elasticity. We also want some classic form and have our own style of Sokol Calisthenics, in which we give more attention to good posture, positions and movements, not only for elasticity, but for better aesthetic control over all parts of the body.

We perform our calisthenics in formation which requires more thought and timing. The brain needs exercise too, and this helps to keep the brain in shape. The synchronized moves to appropriate music produces a beautiful and rhythmical show, bringing a pleasant mental satisfaction to all participants. The fact that this can be done simultaneously with young, old, advanced and beginner makes it psychologically and educationally valuable.

Our ideal is to see a person walking or marching in proper form, straight, upright with head up, just like a Sokol. We see too many gymnasts who are good on apparatus, but who cannot walk properly.

Finally, we have our educational goals. Speeches to the class are not popular and this gives the instructor more opportunity. An instructor need not be a highly educated person. Anyone with common sense and some knowledge of current events could make a good educator. He just needs to pick his topics at appropriate times.

There are so many topics to talk about. Things like behavior, respect of others, drugs, vandalism, graffiti, patriotism, discipline, littering, carelessness, responsibility, selfishness and so on. Less such as: One person's enjoyment can be a nuisance to others, honesty in competition, winning is not everything, if you want respect you must respect others. One subject at a time, and only 3-5 minutes each is enough. You might be surprised at the responses one gets during these discussions.

We like people who are friendly and behave as good Americans. Yes, Sokol has wonderful ideas and programs, but without good instructors and leaders, there will not be a future for Sokol.



The Sokol Educator

Bro. Paul C. Lebloch, A.S.O. Educational Director

ŠIBŘINKY!

The name comes from the Czech word "šibřiti," which means to jest, to make sport in a youthful manner. The Sokol chose this name because nestling falcons playfully peck at one another, chirp and whistle. Each ball had a theme and the hall was appropriately decorated. Do any of our units still carry on this Sokol tradition? Our units should consider reviving these Masquerade balls. We could incorporate them with our Halloween or Mardi Gras celebrations!



Sokol Stickney 65th Anniversary

On November 21, 1992, Sokol Stickney, Stickney, Illinois, celebrated its 65th anniversary. The following is the welcoming speech offered by Sokol Stickney's President, Sis. Nancy Borvansky.

"Brothers & Sisters, Friends of Sokol Stickney,

Tonight, we have gathered to celebrate 65 years of Sokol Stickney, which has been an active agent in this community, promoting the ideals of our founder, Miroslav Tyrs.

Our forefathers would be very proud of the endurance that has been displayed through our works in continuing to promote the ideals to our fellow man.

Many members here tonight deserve to be applauded for their unselfish caring and sharing ways. I commend all of you, because this type of character is what brought us up to the present day.

Hopefully, all the examples that we set before the public will enhance their desire to follow our ranks. We definitely are offering a gift to all Americans. A gift of brotherhood, moral values, mental soundness and physical well being.

Throughout the evening, we will be remembering the good times, sad times and our combined dreams for the future. May our strength continue and take us into the future with more followers for a better nation.

I personally thank all of you for your attendance this evening. Your support will encourage all Sokols to continue forward, forward, backward not a step.

Na Zdar!"

SOKOL SOUTH OMAHA CZECH MUSEUM



Sis. Bea and Bro. Ed Pavoucek posing with items from the Czech Museum.

Forget the traditional ribbon cutting ceremony! The recent grand opening of the newly expanded Sokol South Omaha Czech Museum was celebrated with a more appropriate Kolache cutting followed by a Czech dinner, festival and polka dance.

Museum organizers Bro. Ed and Sis. Bea Pavoucek have worked long and hard to make the museum a reality. They have put together a wide assortment of memorabilia that not only highlights Czech history, but also the history of Sokol South Omaha. The Pavouceks themselves have donated a collection of about 20 dolls, all dressed in costumes representing different Czech villages. The museum has been designed in a Czech cottage motif and has an adjacent gift shop which serves as a basic fund-raiser for the museum and offers hundreds of Czech imports.

Discussions about the museum date back to 1986 when Ed approached the Sokol men's organization about converting storage space in the hall into a

full-fledged museum. A 12-person museum board was established and the difficult task of finding artifacts and memorabilia began. Making the committee's task even harder, especially in trying to chronicle the 100-year history of Sokol South Omaha, was the destruction of valuable archives lost in a 1975 fire at the hall.

The new museum is a walk through history. On display are Czech costumes, wood steins and porcelain decorated with scenes from the Czech opera "The Bartered Bride." Crystal, ceramics, Christmas decorations, Easter eggs, Czech musical instruments and more fill the room. Not to be overlooked are the many pieces of Sokol memorabilia that are an important part of the museum.

The Sokol South Omaha Czech Museum is the only one of its kind in Omaha. It is located in the lower level of the Sokol South Omaha Hall at 2021 U Street in Omaha and is a must-see attraction for your next trip to Nebraska.

A Little Background History of the Sokol Greater Cleveland Concert Band

Several years ago, I appeared on Brother Hyvanar's Czech radio program and spoke in both English and Czech to publicize our annual Spring Concert, which we play in Bohemian National Hall, home of Sokol Greater Cleveland. Of course, we accompany both Sokol Greater Cleveland's Summer and Winter Exhibitions, plus are invited to play many concerts. Here is a short history of the band.

Originally, the "band" was a dance orchestra. In the late 20's, when the then Sokol Tyrs built their very own first building, we played weekly Sunday evening dances in the upstairs gym and combination ballroom. The dances were sponsored by Charlie Smirz and his wife. At that time, they owned an Ice Cream Parlor in the Bohemian National Hall.

Jerry Stoffl led the orchestra I was, and still am, percussionist. Ernie Sindelar, now retired, was one of the bandsmen. Sunday nights were not too popular or kind to us and sometime later we discontinued the dances.

In the interim, however, we managed to do some radio work. This was at the time of Rudy Valee's popularity. We played weekly broadcasts at WJAY, which was located in the old Starr Piano Building in downtown Cleveland. Our host and emcee was not other than Wayne Mack.

One evening, when we were out

socially, Charlie Ketz, an accomplished violinist, asked what I would think about starting a concert band. We started recruiting our musical friends, mostly from the Corlett and Mount Pleasant area. Rehearsals were held Sunday mornings in the new Sokol Tyrs building.

When Charlie Ketz retired and moved to Florida, Jerry Stoffl took over the baton. The Sokol Tyrs building housed a movie theatre on the main floor. As time went on and theatres were not doing too well, Sokol Tyrs started a drive to remodel the theater. The seats were removed and the terraced floor was leveled. During this transition, we rehearsed in my home.

Jerry Vencl, Jr. became a member of the band and suggested we could rehearse in the Corlett Movers building, which gave us much more space.

Rudy Hana, an accomplished violinist and music teacher, arranged the bulk of our music and manuscripts. Rudy came to American from Czechoslovakia with Rudolf Friml and made his home in Cleveland. We all know what happened to Rudolf Friml – he went on to Hollywood to seek his fortune and he did it well. Sound pictures had just taken hold and Rudolf Friml gave us the well-known "Indian Love Call" with Nelson Eddy and Jeanette McDonald.

For too short a time, Rudy Hana directed the concert band and ac-

quainted us with his arrangements and manuscripts. Shortly thereafter, Rudy decided to move to New York.

Voltaire Ziska, another accomplished musician, rehearsed with us. Being such a fine musician, we eagerly drafted Voltaire to take over the directorship. As much as he loved music, he did not want to direct permanently. Thus entered Jimmy Huml to direct the concert music. Under his leadership, we played several concerts on the WEWS Polka Parade. In the summer we played outdoors at Czech Day-Obzinky and Sokol and Oddfellows picnic.

When Jimmy Huml had to take leave from his band duties due to health problems, we were fortunate in acquiring the services of Elmer Bieler, a fine music teacher who taught in several suburban schools. Time marched on and Elmer retired and moved to Cincinnati. Then came Pat Iosue, our present concert band director.

I started Sokol at the age of eight. At that time, we were known as the J.A. Komensky, as we gyped in Komensky Hall on East 131st Street and Lambert Avenue. In 1928 we built the new building and our name was changed to Sokol Tyrs. When Sokol Tyrs bought the historic Bohemian National Hall on Broadway, our name was again changed to our present name, Sokol Greater Cleveland.



AMERICAN SOKOL ORGANIZATION

GYMNAST

JANUARY 1993

Editor: Frank H. Michalek — 10 S. 020 Lorraine Dr., Hinsdale, Illinois 60521



ATTENTION VOLLEYBALL PLAYERS OVER 35!

If you are interested in playing volleyball in Chicago for the Slet in 1993, but do not wish to play against the power volleyball teams; then please send the Slet committee, the ASO-BOI, or Dave Harlan a quick note notifying them of your interest in entering a team in a Masters Division Volleyball Tournament.

As someone who would like to see a Masters Division, I am encouraging all units to scout around for your potential players and inform the Slet Committee of your interest in entering a team. If ASO does not receive any feedback, then the tournament will remain the same. There appeared to be enough Senior volleyball players at the last couple of national Slets in Indianapolis and Toronto to warrant this Division. Hopefully this would also encourage more participation from other Sokol members if they knew they would not have to compete against the "youngsters" (power volleyball). As in Artistic gymnastics, many times the mind is willing, but the flesh is ...not quite what it used to be.

This Masters Division for volleyball would hopefully enable more men (and women, if enough interest is generated) to participate in the volleyball portion of the Slet. All players on the team would have to be 35 or over. In trying to keep with Sokol traditions of encouraging the masses to participate when physically able, lets get more of our members involved in the Slet in Chicago.

I feel that it would be a very interesting and competitive division. This would not be mandatory involvement for the over 35 gang, but an optional division for those who want to compete on a slightly lower level. If your unit cannot get enough to form a team, the Tournament of Rules allows you to have a maximum of 2 members from outside your unit on the team. Sokol Greater Cleveland will have a team entered in the Masters Division besides one in the regular division. I'm sure that there are other units that could field a team for this division also.

Nazdar,

Howie Wise, Northeastern District Mens Director

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Gymnastic Competition Results

December 12, 1992

6 & 7 Year Old Novice

Team Awards

1 Slavsky I	207.35
2 Stickney I	180.30
3 Sokol USA, Lodge 306	173.00

Individual Awards

1 Chris Hulka, Slavsky I	54.25
2 Howie Maskill, Slavsky I	52.80
3 Bryan Balin, Slavsky I	51.80
4 Keith Hovan, Stickney I	50.95
5 Nick Rozhon, Slavsky I	48.50

6 & 7 Year Old — Low Division

1st Place Team — Brookfield I	179.40
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Individual Awards

1 Joey Green	47.70
2 David Aguirre	44.55
3 Ryan Harlan	43.75
4 David Charmatrian	43.40

8 & 9 Year Novice Division

Team Awards

1st Place Team — Slavsky I	196.45
2nd Place Team — West Suburban	159.75

Individual Awards

1 Ken Holub, Slavsky I	51.00
2 Michael Dropka, Slavsky I	50.20
3 Jonathan Nepil, Slavsky I	48.45
4 Adam Wilt, Slavsky I	46.80
5 Eric Simon, Slavsky I	44.60

8 & 9 Year Old — Low Division

Team Awards

1st Place — Slavsky I	199.40
2nd Place — Brookfield	187.90

Individual Awards

1 Bobby Fawcett, Slavsky I	51.50
2 Chris Pros, Tabor	51.25
3 Michael McDonald, Slavsky I	50.55
4 Chris Chrobak, Slavsky I	49.55
5 Bill Feeney, Brookfield I	48.90

8 & 9 Year Old — Intermediate Division

No Team Awards

Individual Awards

1 Andy Lutha, Slavsky	51.55
2 Steve Rozhon, Slavsky	48.80
3 Steve Fischer, Brookfield	44.60
4 Owen Reynolds, Sokol USA, Lodge 306	41.30

10 & 11 Year Old — Novice Division

No Teams

1 Jurge Moreno, Slavsky	48.25
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10 & 11 Year Old — Low Division

No Teams

Individual Awards

1 Tony Lio, Tabor	51.85
2 Thomas Spirala, Tabor	47.15
3 John Kovar-Tookey, Brookfield	44.25
4 Robin Sroka, Brookfield	43.15

10 & 11 Year Old — Intermediate Division

Team Awards

1st Place — West Suburban	142.70
2nd Place — Slavsky I	131.05

Individual Awards

1 Jun Vichaikul, West Suburban	50.55
2 Mathew Kocek, West Suburban	48.80
3 Mark Kusper, West Suburban	48.40
4 James Maretta, Slavsky I	47.25
5 Eric Elavia, West Suburban	45.50

12 & 13 Year Old — Low Division

No Teams

Individual Awards

1 Nick Statler, Tabor	48.20
2 Paul Stepanovich, Tabor	48.15

Junior Boys — Novice Division

1st Place Team — Sokol USA, Lodge 306 I	183.85
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Individual Awards

1 Greg Becker, Slavsky I	50.40
2 Steve Palumbo, Sokol USA, Lodge 306	49.85
3 Steven Walde, Sokol USA, Lodge 306	45.20
4 Isaiah Thompson, Sokol USA, Lodge 306	45.15
5 Jason Harlan, Brookfield	44.75

Junior Boys — Class VII

No Team

Individual Awards

1 Tom Stahulak, West Suburban	48.15
2 Michael Neuberg, Stickney	46.80
3 Chris McGuire, Stickney	42.15

Senior Men — Class VII

No Teams

Individual Awards

1 Pete Colagrossi	50.20
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GYMNASTICS JUST ISN'T FUN ANYMORE

*There are many reasons for leaving a sport,
but lack of enjoyment is at the top of the list.*

By DR. JOE MASSIMO

A growing problem in gymnastics is that more and more talented gymnasts seem to be leaving the sport prematurely.

This exodus is not because of injury, training burnout or frustration from competitive failures, but seems more frequently a result of the "fun" being extracted from the experience. Recent survey research clearly demonstrates that the major reason for leaving or remaining in an athletic activity is the degree of pleasure accrued through participation.

Webster defines *extract* as "to take away forcibly," "to remove by effort from someone unwilling," and "to withdraw through a process."

When the fun ends for a gymnast, it is often the result of having had it taken away, not because of some implicit characteristic of the sport itself. Emotional damage often accompanies this event, as conversations with gymnasts and concerned parents have made movingly clear.

First, it is important to recognize that this problem occurs at all levels, not just the Elite. Although the training and performance demands at the highest level are extraordinary, such intensity in and of itself does not automatically mean there will be no fun associated with the hard work. While greater attrition is expected at the Elite level, this is not necessarily because the passion for participation has been systematically demolished. In most cases time has run out or the physical and psychological demands of the sport simply outstripped what the gymnast had available.

The apparent correlation between leaving the sport and the level of hard training is often spurious. It is only valid if the training experience is essentially negative and built on the destruction of self-esteem and individuality, rather than on the enhancement of these important aspects of per-

sonal development. The fact of the matter is that consistent hard work directed toward goal attainment can be most rewarding to youngsters and provide a good deal of fun at the same time. The joy, measured in terms of skills acquired and appropriate competitive success, comes through the learning process. Most athletes thrive on disciplined hard work and are more comfortable in this kind of predictable and productive environment than in one less demanding or even haphazard in quality. The issue is not the amount of work, but the nature of the reinforcement system for motivation and the emotional climate surrounding the work.

The area of greatest concern is probably not the Elite level but the feeder ranks, where gymnasts are leaving at an alarming rate because they are no longer happy.

Pressure from School, Peers

A number of factors contribute to this phenomenon. One of the most critical out-of-gym influences that contributes to an athlete leaving the sport is pressure associated with school. Obviously, serious training requires a very big time commitment. Organizing life around this schedule while maintaining academic expectations is a real challenge. Sometimes it just can't be done and one area slips below an acceptable level.

Social life and peer pressure relate to this issue. Gymnasts can become isolated from their non-gymnastic friends due to their training. There simply isn't enough time to go to the movies, parties, dances and other normal activities associated with growing and changing. Nothing can be said to ease this dilemma because advanced-level training requires these sacrifices. The gymnast's image at school is often mixed at best, with the lack of social availability almost always chalked up to "s/he's a gymnast." There is an unwritten understanding

that this label usually means the youngster is outside the mainstream of school-related social life. Awareness of the social consequences of high-level training sometimes creates dissatisfaction and can be a major factor in the decision to leave the sport.

Limited Competitive Success

Motivational factors behind participation can also have an influence. Many athletes dream of being a champion, which is a fine reason for doing gymnastics, but when the road to fame gets tough, some gymnasts are not willing or able to pay their full dues.

Competitive payoff, of course, is related to this. To train continually and tolerate all of the restrictions faced without progress is most frustrating. The technical demands of the sport in the '90s make success even more difficult to obtain. How long a youngster can pursue an activity with minimal rewards, always looking up from near the bottom, is an individual matter. But when the return on the investment is not enough despite the dream and drive, the only option may be to give it up entirely.

Pleasing Mom and Dad?

A high degree of parental identification can lead to unhappiness and leaving the sport prematurely. If the focus subtly shifts over time and the gymnast finds s/he is doing it to please parents, the motivation to continue often quickly vanishes.

The decision to leave often occurs during the early and middle teen-age years, when the sense of social isolation and school demands are at their highest. It may also relate to the questions, "Who am I doing this for?" or "Who's in charge?" This is complicated by the fact that adolescents are struggling to achieve an individual identity and personal autonomy. At this time, children need and want to feel a strong sense of ownership in decision-making and begin to direct the course of their lives themselves.

Although training can involve some give-and-take, it is essentially an activity in which the athlete is placed in the hands of another. Following directions, taking orders, having time scheduled by someone else, etc., are all aspects of the discipline of gymnastics. When the need for autonomy compounds questions of motivation, it is not surprising that some gymnasts decide to assert their self direction and take control over a poor situation by leaving the sport.

Injury

An important factor in quitting is the number of injuries a gymnast has had and their management. No matter how hard a program tries to prevent injuries, such mishaps come with the territory. A gymnast who has had an inordinate number of injuries, some of which may be serious, is going to be very aware of the price of continuing. Again, response is in part a matter of personality differences, but prevention in the first place and considerate, caring management when an injury does occur can do a lot to help the gymnast handle the problem positively.

Continued next issue.

International GYMNAST November 1992

1993 MERIT AWARD

Upon recommendation of the Finance Committee and the Board of Instructors, the delegates of the XII American Sokol Convention, held in Detroit in June, 1975, approved Merit Awards to be paid from the Sokol Future Leaders Fund.

The Merit Award Committee is accepting applications of students who are planning a course or program in an accredited two-year or four-year college. Although physical education will not be a criteria, more consideration will be given to those who are training in the physical education field.

The amount to be awarded is to be \$500.00 per year to one student per district which has under 1,500 members and an additional student per district which has over 1,500 members. A transcript of grades of the first year must be submitted to the American Sokol Merit Award Committee. A "C" average or better must have been maintained for the course of study during the year. Failure to submit such a transcript and/or failure to maintain the "C" average will result in a request for repayment of the award. This award is renewable for one additional year.

In order to qualify for the additional year, applicant must have maintained a "C" average or better for the course of study during the first year, and must submit a completed renewal application, including approval by the Unit and District Directors.

Unit and District Directors should also be responsible that application is complete otherwise application, if not properly completed, will not be considered. The letter of intent, the original application and the transcripts of grades will be reviewed.

The final selection is to be made by the Merit Award committee, approved by the American Sokol Organization Board of Instructors and the American Sokol Organization Executive Board. When a renewal is granted, a transcript of grades after the second year must be submitted to the American Sokol Merit Award Committee as soon as possible. A "C" average or better must have been maintained for the course of study during the second year. Failure to submit such a transcript and/or failure to maintain the "C" average, will result in a request for repayment of the award.

Renewal forms and transcripts are to be received at the American Sokol Organization c/o of Merit Award Committee by June 1, 1992.

The following points will be considered by the Merit Award Committee in selecting the candidates:

1. Regular attendance in Sokol classes for at least three years prior to this application. Juniors may be included but must become adult members at age 17.
2. Successful completion of Sokol District or National Organization Instructor Schools.
3. Teaching or assisting in Sokol gym classes.
4. Service to Sokol unit, District or National Organization.
5. Recommendation of Physical Director of Sokol Unit.
6. Recommendation of District Physical Director.

Application Request Should Be Postmarked No Later Than May 1, 1993.

Merit Award Committee

Janet Kalat, Frank Michalek, Anne Halik, Charles Borvansky, Paul Lebloch, Eva N. Balas (Chairman)

UNIT DIRECTORS - PLEASE POST ON BULLETIN BOARD

AMERICAN SOKOL ORGANIZATION, c/o Merit Award Committee, 6424 West Cermak Rd., Berwyn, Illinois 60402

I desire to make application for the American Sokol Organization Merit Award. Please mail application forms and all other instructions to:

Signature of Sokol member: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: area code _____ - _____

My age is: _____ years. I am a member of Sokol _____ of the _____ District.

FUTURE SOKOL LEADERS FUND

Purpose: To train and educate young people to assure able administrators, the best of idealistic instructors and educational directors for Sokol Units and Districts.

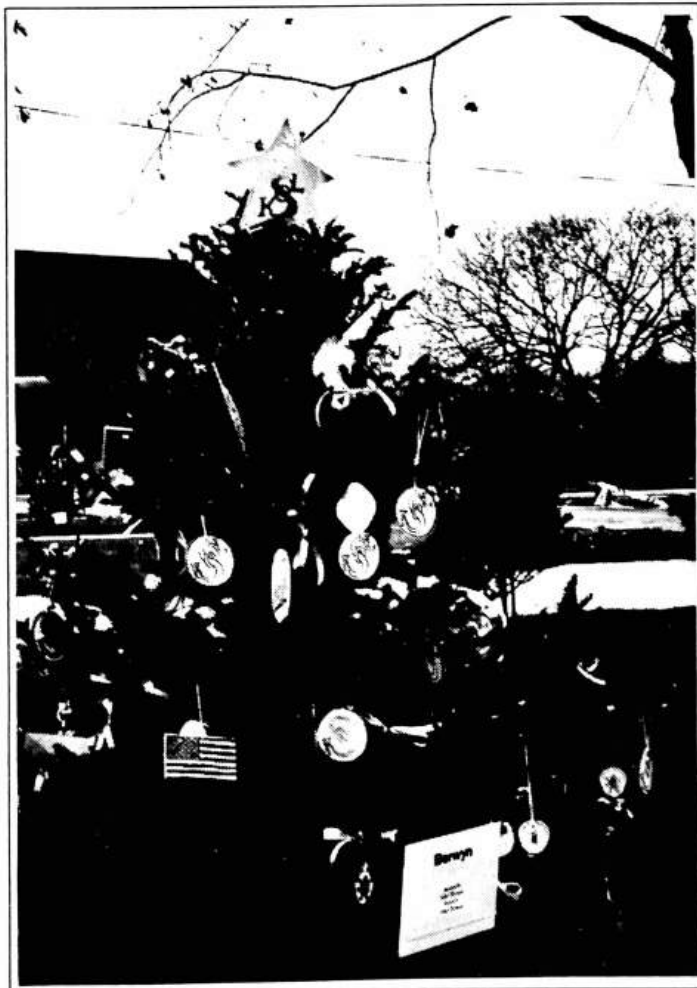
In Memory of Bro. Jaroslav Friedrich, Charter Member of Sokol Washington D.C. From Mildred Barcal	\$25.00
In Memory of Bro. Martin Hrabik, Member of Sokol Greater Cleveland From Jerry and Rose Rabas	\$30.00

A Czechoslovakian New Year

New Year's Eve is a night of merrymaking, but the New Year's Day fest in Czechoslovakia would not fill Americans with eager anticipation. The ear or jowl of a hog must be eaten! These cuts of pork are served with marinated horseradish and apples, for the superstition is that this menu will insure happiness all during the ensuing year. In meat markets, you will see hogs' heads suddenly making an appearance during the week between Christmas and New Year's Day.

In olden times, it used to be the custom for village boys to go around a week later in groups of three, each dressed in long robes and paper crowns to represent the Biblical "Three Kings." they scrawled their initials in chalk on doors and walls: "K" for Kaspar, "M" for Melchior and "B" for Balthazar. The houses they marked with these initials were supposed to be protected against misfortune for a year. The "Three Kings" received candy and apples or money from those they "protected," much as American children do during Halloween "Trick or Treat."

*~Reprinted from January 1992
Sokol South Omaha Newsletter.*



“O’ Christmas Tree!”

Sokols everywhere were proudly represented this holiday season by Sokol Berwyn's (Berwyn, Illinois) Christmas Tree at Brookfield Zoo as part of their community tree display for the zoo's "Holiday Magic" Festival. Sokol Berwyn Unit and class members made ornaments, including Czechoslovak and American flags, Sokol emblems, Sokol falcons and pictures of themselves involved in Sokol activities to decorate the tree. It was a wonderful, festive way to let others know about Sokol. *~Sis. Diana Rhoades, Sokol Berwyn*

Report on the Preparatory Conference of the World Sokol Federation

Reported by Bro. Vladislav Slavik

The World Sokol Federation preparatory conference, though postponed several times, was held October 28-31, 1992 at the Tyrsuv Dum in Prague. Four Sokol organizations agreed to found this umbrella organization, COS, American Sokol Organization, Sokol USA and Sokol Abroad. The American Sokol was represented by Bro. Vladislav Slavik, Bro. Paul Lebloch and Bro. Jerry Milan. Bro. V. Zbuzek was asked to assist.

The delegates of the American Sokol met in Zbrojnice, a hotel and part of Tyrsuv Dum on October 26 to go over the proposals. That night, we were invited to the Sokol Hall that Fuegner built in 1864. The building is just as beautiful as ever, even though Sokol Prazsky must pay rent if they want to gym in their historical hall. The lower court did decide that Sokol Prazsky is the rightful owner, but the Club Praga, at one time with Communist ties, appealed to the highest court. They surely will lose, but in the mean time, the "clausa: status quo" prevails. The President, Bro. Pleskac and other unit officials gave us a tour of the building, with its library where they store 22 Sokol flags, including the first Sokol flag designed by Josef Manes. We also had the pleasure of seeing 48 gymnasts of Verna Garda (not Old Guard, but Faithful Guard) practicing for their exhibition.

Our conference started promptly on time at 10:00 a.m. on October 28. The morning session and partly the afternoon session as well, was devoted to opening addresses of all four Sokol organizations. Bro. Jiri Janos, President of COS, dedi-

cated his over an hour long speech to October 28. Toward the end, Bro. Janos described the difficulties with which COS must deal on its path to complete recovery.

This being the national holiday, Bro. Frantisek Sedivy, member of the presidium of the COS, who spent 12 years in Communist hard labor camps, touched us all by a short reflection on the past 42 years. Speaking on behalf of the American Sokol, I assured COS of our firm and continuous support. I reminded the audience of some 60 delegates and guests of the enormous sacrifices of Czech and Slovak Americans during both world wars. The efforts of the American Sokol and Sokol USA helped to found Czechoslovak Republic, as well as free it from the Nazi yoke. Next, I outlined the American Sokol conception of our future Federation. At the end, I turned to the most pressing question of all Sokol organizations, that is, the involvement of our Sokol youth in our program. I spoke without notes, but was asked by other delegates to put it on paper. That I did, for whatever it is worth, and it is part of my report.

Bro. Rudolph Fiala, the President of Sokol Abroad, spoke next. Bro. Fiala summarized the activities of his organization in the past few years, especially the importance of Slets, held every four years in different European cities.

After lunch in the Zbrojnice, we convened at 2:00 p.m. Bro. Steve Banjak, Director of Men of Sokol USA, addressed the gather in the Slovak language. He went over the

Slets of Sokol USA in the last decade, pledged the support of his organization behind COS and the future Federation. Bro. Banjak quite rightfully asked for better understanding of Sokol relations in Slovakia.

The rest of the afternoon was devoted to comments on the thoughts of addresses of respective Sokol organizations. On the positive side, several Slovak speakers stressed the importance of close coordination of the future Federation.

The COS and especially Bro. Janos, explained why the COS needs a firm support from the other Sokol organization. He apprised us of the true situation in Czechoslovakia. We came to realize that COS is not the strongest physical organization, that it faces an outright antagonist in so called CSTV. This organization, 2,000 units strong, still occupies some 350 Sokol halls, is entrenched in the old structures and operates with funds accumulated during the Communist era. Their lawyers and instructors are well paid. While Sokol enjoys the sympathies of most Czechoslovak citizens, it is quite often overlooked by state institutions.

Bro. Janos explained that COS must have a successful All Sokol Slet in 1994 or will face an uncertain future. COS hopes that a successful Slet will help them to overcome present obstacles and the it will put them at the head of all physical fitness organizations. The ZRTV (Sport for Everybody), with about 60,000 members, is already learning the Slet Calisthenics and

promised full cooperation at the Slet. There is even an unofficial talk of joining the COS. Briefly, Sokol in Czechoslovakia is doing whatever is humanly possible to attain its former strength. To reach that goal it needs a commitment from all of us that we won't let them down.

All four delegates of the ASO expressed their support. We all realize that once COS is strong again, we, the American Sokol and Sokol USA will be the principal beneficiaries of their strength in the form of instructors, schools, calisthenics, technical advice, etc.

Our first day concluded with a dinner at the Zbrojnice, where we continued in unofficial discussions.

The second day found us divided into three committees: Ideology - Bro. Zbuzek; Program (BOI, including sports and education) - Bro. Lebloch and Bro. Milan; and Organization (By-Laws) - Bro. Slavik. The committee on Ideology dealt mostly with the necessary changes in

Sokol thinking, brought about with the social and other changes of the past 50 years. Bro. Zbuzek represented us very well. Both our delegates in the program committee excelled with their knowledge and additions to the final document. Both COS directors, Sis. Zitna and Bro. Zizka, praised their contributions in the general work of that committee. In the organization committee, we all agreed that the Federation must not supersede the sovereignty of the individual member organizations. I also stated the ASO opinion that the Federation cannot be a historical society, but

rather a vibrant and lively Sokol center. To prevent microscopic dimensions, the ASO proposed that each new member must have at least five active units, with no less than 500 members. That doesn't mean that the Federation will ignore small organizations; on the contrary, they'll find that the Federation is their best supporter, even if they cannot be official members.

There are strong indications that the so called Elbe Slavs in Germany are organizing themselves into several Sokol units. Recently, two members of the newly re-es-

all charter members. The COS declared that a prompt approval was needed to coincide with the establishing of a new Czech and Slovak Republic.

That evening found all delegates in a Sokol get-together in the old Zbrojnice. A true folklore orchestra kept all in a festive mood, climaxing with a might chorus of many folk songs. To the surprise of all delegates, Jerry and Paul didn't miss a single song and our tenor, Steve, would have stayed all night long.

On the third day, promptly at 9:00 a.m., the conference reconvened with the reports of each committee. All were adopted with some minor corrections. During the final debate, we finally came to a question everybody tried to avoid, yet it had to be dealt with. There is no doubt that the Czechoslovak Republic, to which founding the American Sokol and Sokol USA contributed so much, is coming to an end. Consequently, the COS will change its name, most likely to Ceska Obec Sokolska

(Czech Sokol Union) and Slovenska Obec Sokolska (Slovak Sokol Union). Being what Czechoslovakia is today, there is already a Slovak Sokol Union registered in Slovakia. It's an organization of three districts which parted with COS this Summer. It was a truly heart-tearing experience to hear Sis. Celkova describing the moral and factual dilemma facing Slovak Sokols on January 1, 1993.

However, life goes on. Bro. Janos concluded the conference with a parting address, after which the COS took us on a complete tour of the Tyrsuv Dum. We enjoyed the



established Belehrad Sokol came to Tyrsuv Dum asking for administrative help. Similarly, there are two units organizing themselves in Slovenia. In Poland and Ukraine, former Sokols are busy rejuvenating their long dormant units. Once the fury of civil wars is over, there should be enough fertile soil on which to build Sokol organizations.

It was well after 6:00 p.m. when this committee concluded its work with a proposal that satisfied all sides. To indicate the independence of all organizations, we don't call it By-Laws, but rather an Organizational Order. It calls for quick approval by

World Sokol Federation Conference *(continued)*

view from the roof, with majestic Hradcany right in front of us, while the steeples of the Old Town lured us to look the other way. Prague is beautiful, even in November, when the trees shed their leaves. Prague radiates its charm on any day, in any weather. If there is one city that shines its loveliness day or night, it must be Prague. As we took a walk from Mala Strana over the Charles Bridge to the Old Town and back to the National Theater and over the Bridge of the Legions to Tyrsuv Dum, we couldn't stop wondering. Happy and pleased with our Sokol work, we felt that we too are part of this magnificent "Mother of Czech Kingdom," Praga Caput Regnum.

The conference was over, but just like all Sokol work, the end of one event brings about the beginning of another affair. On Saturday, October 31, the COS held a conference of its BOI. Each of the 47 districts was represented by directors of men and women and its sport leader. We all took part in this conference and did not regret it at all. To start, Bro. Jiri Zizka, director of men of the COS, gave an inspiring speech outlining the Slet in 1994 and also offered several thoughts for future work of Sokol leaders. The boldest one, it seemed to me, was the proposal to send one skilled instructor or organizer into a region of several districts rather than send 20-30 potential instructors to Tyrsuv Dum. Bro. Zizka actually renewed the idea of traveling instructors or organizers. In terms of the costs, the advantage is obvious. He also stressed that in this day and age it would be impossible to keep sports away from our gymnasiums. The sports and Tyrs' gymnastics must go hand in hand.

In an interview on Prague television before the gymnastic exhibition held Saturday afternoon I reiterated our support of COS and the importance of the Sokol program of physical fitness and moral education for all young people. Together with many shots of young Sokols doing their calisthenics, it was shown on a nationwide evening news hour.

The exhibition of calisthenics for the 1994 Slet took place in a gymnasium of the Tyrsuv Dum. The galleries were packed with Sokols from all over the country. Nine sets of calisthenics were shown and were loudly appreciated. During one intermission, we, the delegates of the ASO, presented the COS Director of Men and Women with an appropriate memento. The idea came from Bro. Milan, who always thinks of these seemingly minor details that grow into large proportions. The gymnasts and spectators let us know how much they love the American Sokol with an endless round of applause.

We were all surprised to watch the diversity of exercises. They all were of high level and those who plan to participate in the 1994 Prague Slet have their work cut out for them. The videos and descriptions should be in early next year.

On Sunday, while the COS held its election of directors of men and women, we traveled to Kutna Hora, where local Sokols showed us a marvel of Gothic architecture, the Cathedral of St. Barbora, Vlach Court and many other treasures. We visited their two Sokol Halls, recently returned into Sokol hands. Late in the afternoon, the Kutna Hora Sokols invited us to their homes and served refreshments.

We appreciated it, since it was a very cold and raw day. In the evening we returned to Tyrsuv Dum to find out that Sis. Jarina Zitna and Bro. Jiri Zizka were reelected as directors of COS by a unanimous vote of all 47 districts.

As a leader of our delegation, I would like to thank Bro. Borvansky and the other members of the ASO for sending me to this conference. I spent many long hours preparing for it, but I don't mind, as long as we accomplished what we set out to do. Our task was made easier by the close cooperation of all four delegates. We were of one mind and one tongue. The other delegates noticed that we came here prepared and looked up to us, quite often admiring our knowledge of Sokol philosophy and especially our straightforward behavior. Finally, I thank Bro. Lebloch and Bro. Milan for their immense contribution to this conference, not only with words, but above all with their spirit. Bro. Zbuzek grew up in Prague, therefore it was easier to communicate and also because he knew several members of the COS. He, too, added much to the success of this conference. Bro. Milan and Bro. Lebloch demonstrated that even in distant America, people live by Tyrs' creed. They are proud to be Americans, yet they treasure the inheritance of their predecessors and traveled thousands of miles to share it with those who for 42 years were kept blind, mute and deaf. That's why the Czechoslovak Sokols did not hesitate to say "Thank You, American Sokol Organization!"

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