

american



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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1997

*The Officers and Staff of the  
American Sokol Organization  
wish you, your family and friends a joyous holiday!*



**PEACE  
ON EARTH**

## American Sokol

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46 Northgate Rd. - Riverside, IL 60546-1639  
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## THOUGHT STARTERS

from Bro. Jerry Milan,  
ASO Educational Director

"I love myself  
when I am myself."

## From Your Editor...

I wish each and every one of you a safe and happy holiday season. May 1998 hold only good things for us all! (May it also bring lots of mail to me from you containing many interesting and insightful articles and photos and poems and... whatever! My cupboard is absolutely void of anything with which to fill the pages of the January issue. HELP!) (P.S. The calendar is bare, too! See note below.)

**NA ZDARI!**

Sis. Patricia Satek  
46 Northgate Road  
Riverside, IL 60546-1639

## CALENDAR of EVENTS

SEND ME A LISTING OF  
YOUR UNIT'S COMING EVENTS,  
SO THIS CALENDAR  
CAN CONTINUE!

A.S.O. Board of Instructors meets every 2nd Wednesday, 7:30 P.M.  
A.S.O. Executive Board meets every 4th Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.

**E-Mail: [Editor@American-Sokol.org](mailto:Editor@American-Sokol.org)**

**A.S.O. FAX: 708-795-0539**

### 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.

*Who are the Lusatians?* Among the participants in the XII All-Sokol Slet were the Lusatian Sorb Sokol. They were outlawed by Hitler in 1933 and by the East German Communists. They have applied for membership in the World Sokol Federation. Who are they? The following article from the Prague Post, April 1994 (forwarded to Sokol Minnesota's Slovo by Mark Bigaouette) answers the question.

~ Bro. Paul Lebloch

# S O R B S

## AN ENDANGERED NATION

On a bright, brisk Sunday morning, lines of black-clad men and women file into a 13th century church in the village of Pancicy-Kukow, Germany. The weekly mass is always a celebration - it is proof of the resilience of a tiny nation that has always struggled to survive.

Tucked between the Czech Republic and Poland in eastern Germany, yet not Czech, Polish or German, the Sorbs are Germany's Slavic minority and the smallest Slavic ethnic group still in existence anywhere.

Upon closer inspection, small clues reveal the precarious position of Germany's Sorb minority: The people in the congregation are primarily elderly and their speech is heavily punctuated with German words and phrases. The most essential element for the continuation of this culture, however, is its young people. Outside in the church courtyard, the children chase each other in a game of tag and yell to each other in German.

A grandmother and her granddaughter converse, the young girl in German and the

grandmother responding in Sorbian. After a short time, the girl runs off to join her friends and the grandmother shakes her head sadly. "When they forget their language, they will soon forget their history."

Conscious of their waning numbers, the Sorbs cling tenaciously to their history and customs. But this small nation is dying out; a result of Germanization, emigration and industrialization.

In 1884, the first real census of the Sorb people (also called Lusatians or Wends) estimated the number of Sorbian speakers in the region of Lusatia to be 166,000. Today, there are about 80,000 ethnic Sorbs in Lusatia, but less than half that number still speak the language.

Many Sorbs wonder if their children and grand children will still speak their language and carry on their old Slavic customs, many of which have already died out in the Czech Republic and Poland.

Contemporary Sorbs are descendants of an ancient Slavic people who first settled in the fertile farm land between the Saale and

Oder rivers around the year 600. A nation of farmers, the Sorbs were often attacked by their larger, more warlike neighbors, who cast a covetous eye on their fruitful land.

The Sorb nation actually consists of two distinct groups with different religions, customs and languages: the mainly Catholic Sorbs in Upper Lusatia, the area around Budysin (Bautzen) in the south; and the mainly Protestant Lower Sorbs in the area around Chosebuz (Cottbus) in the north.

Because the Upper Sorbs maintained their historical ties with the Catholic Church of Bohemia, they were able to retain their Slavic language and culture. Today, the Upper Sorbian language, most closely related to Slovak, is spoken by young and old. Some schools in the region teach solely in Sorbian, while others have a bilingual syllabus in Sorbian and German.

Lower Lusatia has lost a significant part of its Sorb identity through industrialization and Germanization. Today, only the older generation speaks Lower Sorbian, which is closely related to Polish,

*Continued on Page 10.*

## ◆ MEMORIAM ◆

Jiri (George) Prevratil  
1920-1997

Jiri Prevratil was born February 4, 1920. He died August 2, 1997. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Helen. To this marriage were born 9 children. Surviving are daughters Sylvia Turner, Linda Bird and Helen Lea and sons Joseph, Jimmy, Ben Frank, Jon Karl and Fred Prevratil. Preceding him in death was son Jerry.

In 1936, at the age of 16, George joined the Navy for four years. During World War II he served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Maritime Service supporting the war effort.

George followed the footsteps of his father, Ben and mother, Marie. His father was President of the Southern District, American Sokol,

for 20 years, while his mother served as Secretary for many of those years. They were also offices in their unit, Sokol Zizka. Over the years, George held many offices in the Sokol Organization, including Unit President and Vice-President, Southern District President for 11 years, Vice-President for 6 years. He also chaired the National By-Laws Committee many years and was considered an expert on the By-Laws of the ASO. He chaired the 1980 National Convention and served on many committees. He served as a mentor for many of us that are still involved in Sokol today.

Those of you that knew George well, know he possessed a strong, determined will. I would like to share

with you a story I was recently told. It seems that when George was about 11 years old, he made friends with some of the Sokol children of Corpus Christi at a Sokol event. After returning to Dallas with his parents, he missed his new found friends, so he decided to visit them. He rode his bicycle all the way to Corpus Christi! I'm not sure how long it took him, but I bet it was quite a long ride home with his father, Ben.

Bro. Prevratil was a true leader who made many contributions and sacrifices for the Sokol movement. Na Zdar! May he rest in peace.

*-Eulogy by Bro. Larry Laznovsky,  
President, Southern District*

*-Submitted by Sis. Sylvia Laznovsky*

## SLET SOUVENIR CLEARANCE SALE!

Remaining souvenirs from the 1997 Slet in Chicago have been reduced in price for quick sale!

Slet T-Shirts .....	\$8.00 All Sizes
Slet Sweatshirts .....	\$12.00 All Sizes
Slet Coaches Shirts .....	\$12.00 All Sizes
Slet Pins .....	\$2.00
Slet Patches .....	\$2.00
Pin and Patch Together .....	\$3.00
Postcards .....	\$ .25
Blue Hats .....	\$5.00
Bumper Magnets .....	\$1.00
Talon Mugs .....	\$3.00
Past Slet Plates .....	\$10.00 Each (Set of 4 for \$30)
1993 Slet Videotape Set .....	\$5.00

Selection of sizes on shirts is limited, so act fast! Contact the ASO Office at 708-795-6671.

## 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 Elmer Jezek from the Vytlačil & DeValk Families .....	\$25.00
In Memory of Robert Kolar from Sokol Chicagoland .....	\$25.00
In Memory of Vlasta Kulovany from Sokol Chicagoland .....	\$25.00
In Memory of Rudolph Liska, Sokol Milwaukee from Mildred Liska and Family .....	\$50.00
In Memory of Bozena Vanek...	
From Margie McManus Lanoue and Maureen Mc Manus .....	\$40.00
From Jerry & Josephine Sommer, Sokol Town of Lake .....	\$25.00
From Joan & Ray Hemzacek, Sokol Town of Lake .....	\$25.00
From Anton Smunt, Sokol Town of Lake .....	\$25.00
From Robert & Vivian Smunt, Sokol Town of Lake .....	\$25.00

Total \$775.00 from:

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## MUSEUM, LIBRARY & ARCHIVES FUND

From Vera R.P. Rogers, D.V.M., Sokol Cedar Rapids .....	\$25.00
In Memory of Miroslav Piliik, Sokol Los Angeles from Eva Piliik .....	\$20.00
In Memory of Bozena Vanek & Edwin Halik from Roy & Marie Jensen .....	\$30.00

## FOUNDATION FUND

In Memory of George Basta from George Kalas .....	\$50.00
In Memory of Bob Kolar from Joan Grabarek .....	\$50.00

## CZECH FLOOD RELIEF



From Sokol Los Angeles .....	\$500.00
From Louise Nekuda, Sokol Los Angeles .....	\$20.00
From Julie Slavik-Weiss, Sokol New York .....	\$100.00



american

# SOKOL *Flag Waver!*

The American Sokol Organization gratefully acknowledges receipt of the following donations in direct support of the American Sokol Publication. **NA ZDAR!**

*Marie B.  
Lewandowski  
Sokol Chicagoland  
\$25.00*

**See Page 11 for information on how you, too, can become an AMERICAN SOKOL FLAG WAVER!**

# New "Old Wives" Tales

More people are running, jogging, lifting and doing all kinds of exercises than ever before. Dieting and fitness routines are "in" and it's not surprising a new crop of "Old Wives' Tales" have sprung up in the last few years. Like...

## **NO PAIN, NO GAIN**

They shout it at you from the TV screens and in the gyms and you want to shout back, "Pain? No way!" More of an Old Trainers' Tale than an Old Wives' Tale, it's a tale that has come to be accepted as gospel truth in the last few years. It is also why more than half the population of the United States still does not really exercise. We feel guilty, of course, but who, in their right mind, likes pain?

Drs. Peter and Lorna Francis (both Ph.D.'s) have written a book called *If It Hurts, Don't Do It*. But, if we "don't do it" when it hurts, will we derive any benefit? Is there gain without pain?

The answer isn't a simple, straightforward yes or no. It really depends on what exercises you are doing and why you are doing them.

You should exercise for health. It's a good idea to exercise for fitness. And you can exercise for strength and performance, too. Three different reasons demanding three different approaches and two different answers to the no pain, no gain debate.

When exercising for health, a moderate program is in order. These are exercises that help you lose and maintain weight; reduce the risk of heart problems through

aerobic activities such as walking and swimming; maintain flexibility; and induce relaxation. When engaging in a program like this there is no reason at all to do anything that causes discomfort, shortness of breath or pain. Just performing these activities at a comfortable level will bring about improvements.

Exercising for fitness requires more effort, more cardiovascular activity, more dedication and should include stretching, aerobic training and a program for building strength. Here again, there is no need to endure pain to achieve gain. It's OK to try to push past a little fatigue, but when your tired arms and legs start shaking uncontrollably, it's time to ease up. All of the above activities can be extremely beneficial without putting undue strain on your joints, ligaments and cardiovascular system. Most important, by exercising within these painless guidelines, there will be gain. Your stamina and ability will steadily improve if you stick to your program. Even the strength training you incorporate into the program does not require pain to achieve results.

For those people who train for performance, the answer is different. These are people who are interested in training for a specific sport, or simply building a very muscular body. Experts seem to agree that when it comes to developing specific muscles, there is a benefit from the fatigue one feels as one reaches and pushes capacity. However, the pain or "burn" must still be mild and

confined to the muscle itself. Great care must be taken not to tax the ligaments, the skeletal structure or the cardiovascular system that supports those muscles. Research shows that injury rates are higher among the very fit; ignoring pain can almost guarantee an injury.

For serious trainers, mild fatigue pain in the muscle itself can deliver gain, but for the rest of us it is not necessary to exercise to the point of pain to receive the benefit. Everyone who exercises, at any level, should keep in mind that pain is nature's way of warning us that we are abusing our bodies.

## **MUSCLE WEIGHS MORE THAN FAT**

Among the explanations heard when the scale doesn't budge or even creeps upward, this theory is the "heavyweight" champ, just edging out "heavy bones." People say they exercise and exercise, but because the muscle they are building weighs more than the fat they are replacing, their weight remains constant. Are they right? Perhaps this is not the whole story.

Muscle is more dense and will weigh more than an equal amount of fat, just like a brick will weigh more than a stack of feathers the same size as the brick. But how does that all relate to weight loss? Will a person who is exercising and building muscle actually gain weight? The answer is in the calorie intake.

Let's compare two people taking in 2,000 calories per day, one working out, the other not. The person

*Continued on Page 10.*

AMERICAN SOKOL ORGANIZATION



# GYMNAST



Editor: Chuck Kalat -- 2401 Bluebonnet Dr., Richardson, Texas 75082



**Merry Christmas  
and  
Best Wishes  
for a  
Happy and Successful 1998  
from the  
American Sokol  
National Board of Instructors**

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Howie Wise Bob Kucera*

## **Coaching Your Children**

An estimated sixty to eighty percent of volunteer youth sports coaches are coaching their own children. It can be a wonderful and effective way for families to spend time together, but it also presents some unique problems for both parents and their children.

The most serious problem is that of role confusion between being a parent and being a coach. There has to be an understanding between the parent and the child that parenting behavior and coaching behavior will be different. For example, a coach will not be able to give the immediate access or personal attention that a parent would give a child at home. The coach has to make time for a group of players: a parent can concentrate on a couple of kids.

### **Get Child's Perspective**

There are four principles for the coach/parent to consider. The first two establish a foundation on which the next two can be put into practice. Begin by asking the child what he or she thinks about having a parent for a coach. Get the child's perspective. There may be a sense of undue pressure to perform, favoritism, or even reverse favoritism--having a coach who is too hard on his or her own children. These are legitimate concerns and ones that the parent must address.

Be up front with your children. Tell them that your role as parent will change in the athletic environment. Assure them that they will be treated just like every other member of the team. At the first practice or meeting, explain the situation to the whole team. Some coaches tell their teams that, even though their sons or daughters are on this team, they consider every player on the team as one of their children. They seem to understand that message.

### **Parent at Home, Coach at Practice**

The third suggestion is to be a parent at home and coach on the field. The parent has to emotionally separate the two roles. Avoid parenting during games and avoid coaching at home. There are at least two ways to put this principle into practice: 1) Have your child refer to you as "Coach" during practices and games. It helps the athlete solidify the separation of roles. 2) If you have an assistant coach, have that person work with your child. If the assistant also has a child on the team, use the criss-cross technique of coaching each other's children.

Fourth, reaffirm your love for your children regardless of the level of their performance. Make

sure that the goals of sports are kept separate from the relationship between the parent and child. Your children have to know that you will always be mom or dad regardless of how they do in sports.

### **Don't Be "Coach for Life"**

It is probably not a good idea to coach your own children for more than two years at a time. You shouldn't be the only coach your children ever have. Kids have to learn to adjust to other styles of leadership. It is a disservice not to expose them to other coaches. While coaching your children may be convenient, it is not in their best interest. When the time comes to end the coach/parent/child relationship, explain the decision so that they don't feel rejected.

Finally, be careful that family life doesn't get lost in the sport. Playing ball is only one part of total family involvement. Families that are heavily involved in sports should find other things to do together. Find things of value to the other children in the family who are not sports-minded. Stress that sports are no more important than other activities and that each person in the family can have interests and abilities that will be recognized and supported with equal enthusiasm.

*Penn State Sports Medicine Newsletter, October, 1997.*

## **Arm Yourself for Snack Attacks**

Snack time provides another chance to offer energy-packed, nutrient-rich, foods. While some kids would rather do homework than eat so-called "healthy snacks," the Food Pyramid provides lots of nutritious food choices sure to please the toughest snack critic. Like.....

- ♦ **Cinnamon Toast**
- ♦ **Bagel, Rice Cake, or English Muffin**  
(Spread with peanut butter and top with sliced bananas, apple ring or raisins)
- ♦ **Mini English Muffin Pizzas** (Spread pizza sauce on English Muffin half, sprinkle on low-fat cheese and broil or microwave until cheese melts)
- ♦ **Fresh Strawberries** (Dip in low-fat yogurt for fun)
- ♦ **Fresh Fruit Kabobs** (Skewer grapes, banana slices, and apple chunks)
- ♦ **Homemade Snack Mix** (Combine pretzels, peanuts, and easy to handle dry cereal, or peanuts, raisins, and small chocolate candies in a plastic bag and shake)
- ♦ **Low fat / Fat Free Ice Cream** (Add whip topping and sprinkles for instant smiles)
- ♦ **Angel Food Cupcakes** (Frost with a powdered sugar glaze, tinted with food coloring, and toss on sprinkles)
- ♦ **Ready-to-Eat Cereal with Milk**
- ♦ **Chocolate or Fruit-Flavored Milk Shake**
- ♦ **Pudding** (Boxed mixes provide more calcium than ready-to-eat varieties)

## A GUIDE TO EYE PROTECTION

There's no substitute for protective eye gear and good sense using it. Here are three ways the right gear can help.

### Wear protective glasses

The highest number of sports eye injuries come from playing basketball. Baseball is No. 2 and racquet sports are No. 3 in spite of the much smaller number of people playing them.

Racquet sports are so dangerous because their smaller balls aren't deflected by the bony eyebrow and cheekbones that protect your eyes. Squash and racquetball players need to wear frame like eye protectors. A speeding ball can cause severe damage to an unprotected eye.

### Keep swimming goggles dry and clear

Different swimmers can have very different eye socket shapes, so there's really no such thing as one-size-fits-all swimming goggles. If your goggles don't fit comfortably or leak, you may just be using a brand with eye cups that don't fit your face. Try different brands; one may fit much better than your present goggles without being tightened hard against your head.

Once you have goggles that fit well, keeping them from fogging up is the next nagging problem. Some swimmers use saliva to keep their goggles clear. There are commercial products for keeping goggles fog-free. It just takes a tiny bit, rubbed onto the inside of the lenses, so if you don't want to buy a whole bottle of the stuff, ask at the office where you swim. They probably have some you can use.

### Use polarized lenses

Polarized sunglasses reduce the glare of reflected light. They make water and snow sports and shooting much easier.

To tell whether a pair of sunglasses has polarized lenses, look through them at light that's reflecting off a flat surface, for example a pool of water, a polished table top or a car window. Rotate the glasses 90 degrees. If the reflection dims or brightens, the lenses are polarized. If it doesn't, they are not.

Sources: American Academy of Ophthalmology Consumer Products Safety Commission

## ATTENTION PROSPECTIVE CALISTHENICS AUTHORS

The 2001 American Sokol Slet, being hosted by the Northeastern District will be approaching faster than we think. Fresh, new mass calisthenics compositions will be needed.

The National Board of Instructors invites any and all interested, prospective calisthenics authors to step up, indicate their interest in composing calisthenics for the 2001 Slet at this time, and get started. This is not a commitment, but merely an indication of interest which can then be monitored by the BOI.

Authors are welcome to collaborate with others to produce combined calisthenics where necessary. Interested individuals should submit the inquiry form below to obtain appropriate calisthenics composition guidelines and information. The general timetable is as follows:

- ♦ 06/01/99 -- Video tape presentation of composition for consideration **due**
- ♦ 6/99 -- Consideration/selection of compositions from submitted videos
- ♦ 10/01/99 -- Written text of selected compositions **due**
- ♦ 99-00 -- Testing of calisthenics compositions by volunteer districts
- ♦ 08/01/00 -- Corrected text and demonstration video - **due**

To: American Sokol BOI, 6424 W. Cermak Rd., Berwyn, IL 60402

I am (we are) considering composing a mass calisthenics exercise for the following class(es) for the upcoming 2001 American Sokol Slet:

Girls & Boys \_\_\_\_\_ Juniors \_\_\_\_\_ Men & Women \_\_\_\_\_ Senior Group II \_\_\_\_\_ Other??? \_\_\_\_\_

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode \_\_\_\_\_

## National BOI Programs

The National Board of Instructors continues to be disappointed with the lack of enthusiasm on the part of member units for the new programs that have been started. With many peoples' efforts over the last few years, the American Sokol national organization finally has some new "programs". People sometimes ask, "What does the National Organization do for us?" Well, when new programs are initiated, few people make use of them. Its very discouraging to the people who put in an extra effort to formulate these programs. Perhaps, we are so ingrained with the things that we do and have been doing for years that we ignore anything that is new or different because it would take some extra effort to become familiar with and incorporate it into past/current activities.

### ♦ **Instructor / Director Development**

- ♦ Patti Komara Tapes -- The tapes in this 35 tape set of Patti Komara's instructional video tape lectures (with written text) are available to Sokol units at reproduction/shipping cost only (approximately \$40 values for \$12-\$15 each).
- ♦ Directors Newsletter -- this monthly publication (10 times per year), sent free of charge to all unit/district directors and other interested individuals on a subscription basis, continues to carry informative, technical articles regarding leadership and coaching techniques/information to aid in the development of our unit/district directors and the instructor staffs.

### ♦ **Birthday Ribbons**

- ♦ A standard Sokol Birthday Ribbon is available from the National Office for use in individual unit classes.

### ♦ **Seniors In Motion**

- ♦ Text and Video materials for two modules (Exercises and Line Dancing) are now available from the national office.

### ♦ **Folk Dance**

- ♦ The program to date provides written and audio materials to help use folk dancing as an in-class activity.

### ♦ **Gymnastic Skills**

- ♦ The Tots, Girls, and Boys Gymnastic Skills programs provide a reward mechanism for skills achievement. All these programs can be used in their present form, but will undergo review and modification during the 97-98 season.

### ♦ **Judging Certification**

- ♦ Womens Artistic - The womens artistic judges certification program was utilized extensively this year since all judges for the 1997 Slet had to be certified. Major program review and update will be undertaken now that the Slet is over. The program needs to be updated for the new 1997-2001 womens routines anyway.
- ♦ Rhythmic - This is a new program instituted this year through the efforts of Helen Onni and Mary Panackia. The rhythmic judges certification program was applied in a few instances. Review and update will be undertaken based on experience gained in the cases where the program was offered.
- ♦ Mens Artistic - This certification program just became available this Spring through the efforts of Bro. Michalek and Bro. Harlan.

### ♦ **Aerobics Program**

- ♦ This was a new program (text/audio/video) this year thanks to the efforts of Maryann Fiordelis.

### ♦ **Ballet Program**

- ♦ This is a brand new program to help introduce basic ballet activities was made possible through the efforts of EllenJeanne Schnabl and just became available during this past Summer.

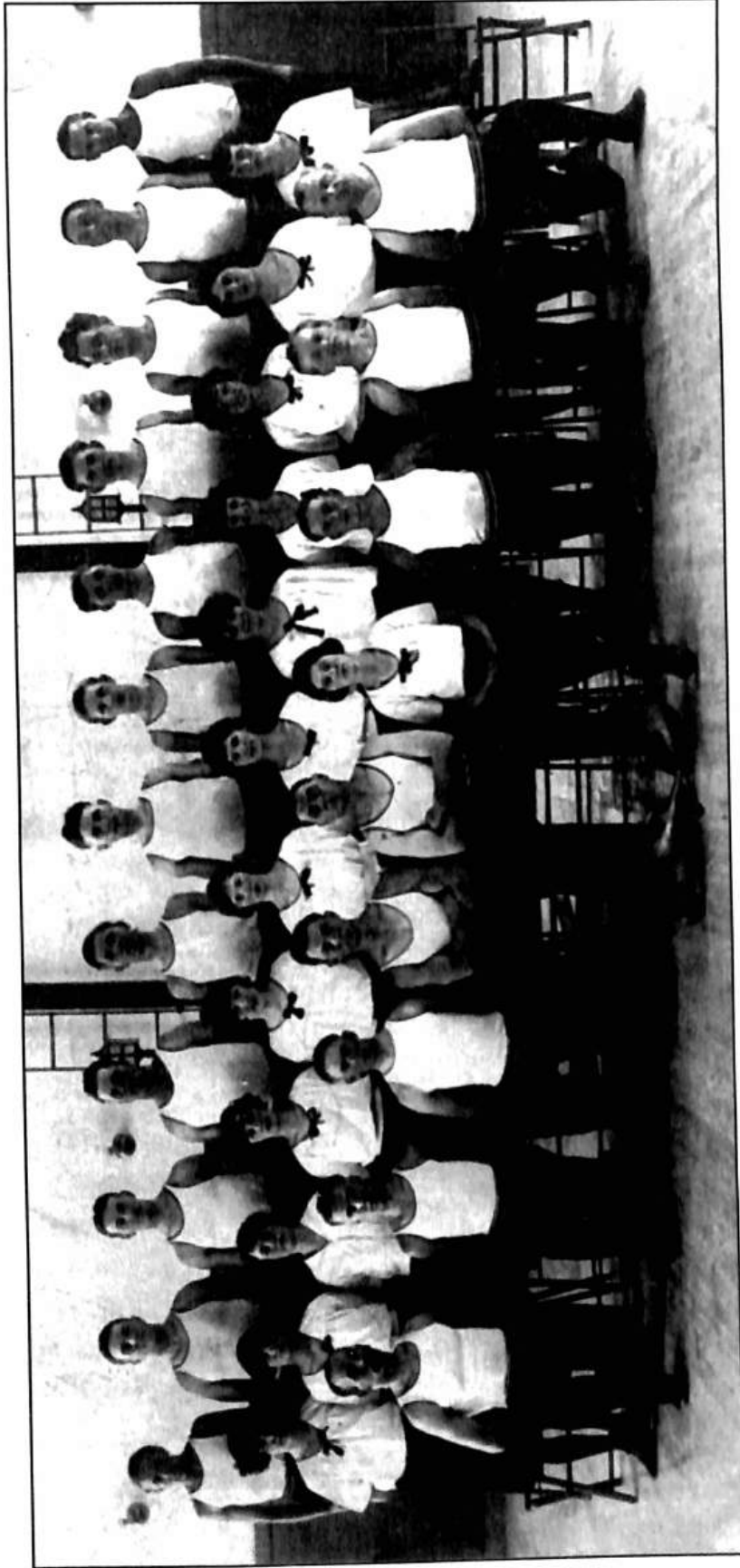
### ♦ **Basic Volleyball Skills Program**

- ♦ This new program, just put together by Bro. Michalek, is intended to help introduce fundamental volleyball skills and is now available.

### ♦ **COS Fitness Testing**

- ♦ This program provides a quantitative/comparative mechanism for the measurement of personal fitness.

# FIND YOUR MAGNIFYING GLASS! PUT ON YOUR GLASSES!



**DO YOU RECOGNIZE ANYONE IN THIS PHOTO?** It was found by Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl's son-in-law, Bro. Bruce Rhoades, in a house he was rehabbing. We have no information about it's origins. **WE HOPE YOU CAN HELP!** If you can identify anyone, please send the information to the American Sokol Office, Attention: Editor. *(Editor's note: Sorry about putting it in sideways, but I wanted it as big as possible to help in possible identification.)*

# OLYMPIC



## BRO. FRANK KRIZ

Born 1893 of Czech parents, enrolled in Sokol New York (Bohemian Gymnastic Association Sokol of New York) gymnastic classes when he was 8 years old. Although visibly talented, it was his perseverance which impressed his instructor, Bro. Joseph Gregor (1936-52 President of the American Sokol Eastern District). Bro. Gregor did not let him compete until he was 19. From then on, until 1928, when he was 35, Bro. Kriz dominated all AAU and Sokol meets. In 1922 and again in 1924, he captured AAU All-Around Championship; in 1918 and 1922 he won the vault, parallel bars in 1922 and horizontal bar in 1924.

Frank Kriz represented the United States at three Olympiads, 1920, 1924 and 1928, winning the Olympic tryouts in 1920 and 1924. In Paris at the X Olympiad, he won the vault with an incredibly high mark of 9.98. In the rope climb, he placed 6th, with a time of 8 and 2/5 seconds. With 100.293 points, Kriz placed 19th all-around, far ahead of the other

Americans. He was 31 years old.

Bro. Kriz was a NYC fireman. Behind his fire station he built a horizontal bar on which he practiced in his spare time, admired by many passers by. In 1949, Frank Kriz passed away. In 1959, he was posthumously inducted into the USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame.

## SIS. LADDIE BAKANIC

Nee Hniz, was a member of the United States Olympic Gymnastic Team at the XIV Olympiad, July 1948. Team placed third, winning an Olympic Bronze Medal. Laddie Hniz was born on May 3, 1924, as the only child of Charles and Sophia Hniz, who resided on 76th Street in Manhattan, NYC. Both of her parents were devoted members of Sokol New York (Bohemian Gymnastic Association Sokol of New York). They came from Czechoslovakia in 1920, by then known for their devotion to Sokol and opened a tailor shop on First Avenue near East 71st Street. Her father, Charles Hniz was an instructor of Sokol men for almost two decades, also teaching a Sokol unit in Guttenberg, NJ. Starting with 1948, he served three consecutive terms as President of Sokol New York. Her mother,

Sophia Hniz participated in Sokol gymnastic classes and was also a member of a Sokol drama and singing society.

At the age of five, Laddie joined the gymnastic classes of Sokol New York. Her parents spent all of their free time at the Sokol Hall, so Laddie had many opportunities to apply herself into gymnastics. Having natural talent, she had no difficulty mastering intricate routines and soon outgrew her classes, winning most Sokol meets. By the age of 13, Laddie Hniz won 1st Place in Sokol Junior Girls Championship held at New York Madison Garden. In 1946 she won the Championship of Sokol Senior Women in New Kensington, PA. By then she successfully entered numerous AAU gymnastic meets, winning the 1st Place of Junior Championship in 1941 and placed 2nd in the AAU Senior Championship in 1944. At the All-Sokol Slet in Chicago in 1947, Laddie placed 2nd in Championship Division.

Her finest hour came on May 8, 1948, when she placed 6th in the National AAU Championship in Philadelphia, which assured her a place on the Olympic Team. At the XIV Olympiad at London in 1948, Laddie helped the U.S.

# FLASHBACK

Gymnastic Team to gain a Bronze Medal, with 50.10 points and 5th Place among Americans.

In today's terms, Laddie Bakanic had no coach, nor choreographer. Her father, Charles, helped however he could. So did Bros. Karel Bednar and Rudy Hradecky. Being instructors of men in Sokol New York, rather than actually coaching Laddie, they instilled in her a desire to improve herself and a will to succeed. Additionally, competing in gymnastics and winning competitions was not everything she was striving for. Laddie was an excellent class leader and a director of women in Sokol New York.

Standing on the podium of champions at the XIV Olympiad receiving an Olympic Medal was a great moment of deep emotion for Laddie Bakanic. Yet, she was quite happy back home in New York Sokol Gym Hall, teaching small girls; knowing that through her efforts, the girls will live a better life.

## BRO. JAMES NICHOLAS HARTUNG

Born in Omaha, NE, on June 7, 1960. In 1966, James Hartung (Jim) entered Sokol South Omaha

gymnastics class. Attracted by the strong gymnastic program, Jim quickly demonstrated his gymnastic talents by winning one meet after another, be it Sokol or AAU competitions. Under the disciplined guidance of Bro Phil Cahoy, Sr., Jim won the 1977 Sokol Slet meet in Chicago and repeated at the 1981 Slet in Fort Worth.

In 1975 and again in 1976, Jim won the first place all-around in AAU Junior Olympics, followed by first place in the USGF Junior Olympics. In 1979, Jim enrolled at the University of Nebraska and easily made the varsity gymnastics team. With the help of his dedicated coaches, Jim Howard and Francis Allen, Jim was a NCAA All-Around Champion in 1980 and 1981 and his team captured NCAA Team Championships from 1979 to 1982. The current NCAA records list James Hartung with 22 All-American awards and 17 individual titles. In AAU Championships between 1978 and 1984 Jim never placed lower than 3rd in All-Around, winning 1st Place in 1981.

Jim Hartung was a member of four United States Gymnastic Teams at the World



Championships in 1978, 1979, 1981 and 1983.

At the Olympic tryouts in 1980 in Jacksonville, Jim Hartung placed second All-Around and fourth in 1984. At the Los Angeles XXVI Olympiad he was a member of the United States Gymnast Team that won the Gold Medal. His fifth place in Vault and ninth place All-Around contributed to that medal. Jim Hartung is still involved in U.S. gymnastics. He was an assistant coach of the 1989 U.S. World Championship Team and he is an Internationally Certified Judge of gymnastics. Although living in Lincoln, NE, he is still an important member of Sokol South Omaha. In his own words, Sokol is about more than gymnastics – it is about life.

*Written for the Encyclopedia of  
Ethnic Sports in the United States  
by Bro. Vladislav Slavik.*

*Illustrations by Sis. Henrietta Milan*

# SORBS *(continued)*

just a handful of schools teach any classes in the language and the national dress is worn only on holidays.

Seeking fertile farmland, the first great wave of Sorb emigres left their homeland in the mid 1800's and settled as far away as America, Australia and South Africa.

Fifty miles southeast of Austin, Texas, is the diminutive town of Serbin, meaning "Home of the Sorbs." Serbin was founded by Upper Lusatian emigres in the mid-1800's. Today, the town consists of little more than a few farms, a school, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, a cemetery and the museum of the Wendish Historical Society. A single wave of 600 Sorb emigres first settled there in 1854; it is estimated that only a handful of Texans still speak Sorb.

Charles Wukasch, Vice President of the Wendish Society says "Wends" is the preferred term for the Sorbs in Texas, because "Sorbs" is too easily confused with

"Serbs." In fact, the German word for the Sorbs, Wanden, is historically a pejorative term meaning "those on the other side, foreigners."

Many believe the key to the future existence of this tiny nation within Germany will require effort from Germans, Sorbs and their Slavic neighbors. The culture needs financial support from the German government to survive. The Sorbs also rely on their historical connections with their larger Slavic neighbors, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Czechoslovakia's first President, Tomas Garrigue Masaryk, was a frequent guest at gatherings of Sorb intellectuals while he was a student in Leipzig. Afraid for the future of this small Slavic nation encompassed by Germany, he unsuccessfully pressed for its inclusion in the newly formed Czechoslovak state at the end of World War I. Although the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia

can't provide financial support needed by Sorb institutions to continue their operations, there is scholarly and cultural contact through groups such as the Czech-Lusatian Youth Association and monthly lectures on Sorb history at the National Museum in Prague.

In addition to their genuine friendliness, hospitality and deep sense of solidarity and community, the Sorbs are also renowned for their diligence and their stubbornness. Sorbs speak proudly of an ethnographer who traveled around Lusatia in the 1840's documenting the lively Sorb songs, dances, colorful costumes and festivities. He wrote about customs that have long since died out in other Slavic countries: frog carting, maypole hurling, St. Martin's singing and Barborka fairs, and also noted these people for their "singular stubborn nature."

Paramount for the survival of the Sorbs are their own efforts not to be assimilated and absorbed by German culture.

## New "Old Wives" Tales *(continued)*

working out will burn most of the calories while building muscle, so that person will lose weight. The calories taken in, but not used, by the sedentary individual build fat.

However, if the person who is working out increases his or her intake of calories, then there will be less and less weight loss as they bulk up. They will be building muscle but not burning enough calories,

and those extra calories turn to fat. This is a general rule, and naturally, the two different bodies react to the rule at different rates.

### **WHEN YOU STOP EXERCISING, MUSCLE TURNS TO FAT**

This popular myth is perpetuated by the apparent frequency of gigantic football players and weight

lifters turning into "The Blob" when their careers end.

Muscle is muscle and fat is fat. They are different tissues and one cannot turn into the other. The sloppy ex-athlete is simply continuing, or increasing, his or her intake of calories without burning them off with exercise, thereby adding fat to the body.

~ From "The Truth About Old Wives' Tales" by Sue Castle

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