

american **SOKOL**

Volume CXX, Number IV

APRIL/MAY 1998

SKILLS



CLINIC

Sokol Fort Worth hosted a Skills Clinic on Saturday, January 10, 1998, under the direction of Sis. Lori Laznovsky, Southern District Women's Director. Fifty-two gymnasts attended from Corpus Christi, Ennis and Fort Worth. The clinic was designed to let gymnasts work on new skills at each event and was also designed to allow instructors to get more spotting and coaching experience. Instructors, in addition to Lori, were Kevin Bates, Melissa Chamberlain, Shay Hennessey, Josh Milan and Laurie Southwell.

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From Your Editor...

It's amazing the commotion one little word can cause. In acknowledging everyone who took time to send comments on the February issue, may you know I find it gratifying that you are out there, reading every word, and are mindful of my feelings, though rest assured, I was in no way upset by any of the correspondence I received. It is not the first, nor certainly the last, error you will see in these pages. Keep your eyes open.

NA ZDARI!

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

CALENDAR of EVENTS

MAY

31 Sokol Minnesota Pancake
Breakfast

JUNE

2 Sokol Milwaukee Spring
Fling
6 Central District Children's
Competition

7 D. A. Sokol Exhibition
12-14 Southern District Slet at
Sokol Fort Worth
12-14 Western District Slet at Sokol
Minnesota

13 Central District Junior/Senior
Competition & Awards
Ceremony

13-14 Eastern Area Slet at Sokol
Woodlands
14 Central District Slet
16-20 Sokol Minnesota Children's
Cultural Day Camp

JULY

2-5 Sokol Na Slovensku Festival,
Kosice, Slovakia
21-8/4 American Sokol Instructors'
School at Sokol Karel
Havlicek Borovsky

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.

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THOUGHT STARTERS

from Bro. Jerry Milan,
ASO Educational Director

"All great discoveries
are made by men
whose feelings
run ahead of their
thinking."

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.

GOOD IDEAS FROM SOKOLS FOR SOKOLS!

The Red Folder

*Submitted by Sis. Dorothy Cummings,
Educational Director, Northeastern
District and Sokol Greater Cleveland*

Some years ago, Helen Samec, our Educational Director at that time, initiated a folder (red) which was distributed to all members of boys, girls and junior classes. The cover page was a large Sokol emblem, complete with Falcon. Other pages gave information on Sokol; Goals and Beginnings; What Is Sokol?; about "Na Zdar!;" meaning of Brothers and Sisters; and a Slet. Unfortunately, she was not able to continue with the book.

When I was elected Educational Director two years ago, I felt the project was an excellent idea and warranted being revived. Since that time, I meet with each class about once a month and cover additional topics. Each session is 15-25 minutes long and a page covering the subject is distributed, to be added to the folder. The classes are encouraged to bring their books to each session. They are awarded a sticker (a Sokol seal, each one different) when they bring their book. At the end of the term, the one with the greatest number of stickers is awarded a prize.

Additional subjects have included: a list of districts and units of the American Sokol, including a map; our Sokol Greater Cleveland brochure, with extra copies to share with friends; National Anthems (U.S., Czech, Slovak, Canadian)

with proper etiquette when anthems are played; a colored copy of the Sokol Greater Cleveland logo and how it came to be; pictures of gymnasts for the younger ones to color; article about Vitavin/Moldavite for Juniors; page with "Talon" for the boys and girls; and mini tours of our historic Bohemian National Hall for the Juniors.

At the beginning of a term, all Juniors are given a Sokol quiz. At the end of the term the quiz is repeated. Prizes are given for the top scores in each class and for the greatest improvement. The prizes are all Sokol related; e.g., pins, patches, etc. All sessions are held in our library to expose the classes to the material available.

We have also prepared two "Report Packets," one on the Czech Republic and one on Sokol. These contain general information on both and provide easy access to material which can be used to prepare school reports.

As for success, how can you ever measure "success" in teaching? It's an intangible. However, since some youngsters have asked if we could meet with them every week, it would seem we're on the right track.

Basketball Program

*Submitted by Bro. Lenny Gianitsos,
Basketball Coach, Sokol New York*

In 1996, Sokol New York celebrated the 100th anniversary of the groundbreaking ceremony of Sokol

Hall. This event was well worth remembering, however, even more noteworthy was the bold innovative policy initiatives taken by Sokol's Ruling Board of Governors. They recommended that other sports, including basketball, bowling and swimming, would now be an official part of Sokol programs and could be integrated into future Slets. The hard task of keeping children active and interested in Sokol as they grow older, a problem facing Sokols nationwide, was recognized and a progressive remedy formalized.

Prior to the announcement of the new sports initiatives, Sokol New York had already resumed its program. At various times in the past, basketball consisted of three groups, older girls, boys and younger children, with sessions held at various times during the week. The program is now coed, with girls and boys ages 8 to 11. There are 19 children enrolled, 17 of whom are also a part of Sokol Gymnastics.

Faced with such a young group many institutions would relax their standards. Not Sokol. Every week, for two hours, the "Little Falcons" are run through sprints, calisthenics, fundamentals and simulated games. Each exercise is designed to teach basketball fundamentals and hopefully reinforce lessons the children may not have learned elsewhere: the values of teamwork, sacrifice and commitment.

Continued on Page 10.

Sokol Karel Havlicek Borovsky Celebrates 90th Anniversary

On Sunday, February 8, 1998, Sokol Karel Havlicek Borovsky, Ennis, TX, celebrated 90 years of continuous activity. The 90th Anniversary day began with a dinner at noon. The program began at 1:30 p.m. with the grand entry of gymnasts. The Star Spangled Banner was led by Sis. Mary Schumacher and Kde Domov Muj was led by Sis. Kim Oates. Bro. Larry Laznovsky, President of Sokol KHB, gave the welcome and then introduced the guest speaker, Sis. Donna R. Parker, Executive Vice-President for Urban Development at the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, who recalled Sokol memories. Bro. Ryan Mullican then gave a special presentation of the history of Sokol KHB. Guests from various units and representatives of various Czech organizations in the area were recognized. Length of service membership awards were presented. The gymnastic program included apparatus, special numbers, tumbling and twirling numbers. Sokol Ft. Worth Seniors joined the local class in the final number which was the presentation of the co-ed prostna in honor of Bro. Ed and Sis. Ann Halik, authors of the number. Kari Schumacher, Tot Class Member, led everyone in the singing of God Bless America. The day concluded with socializing and the sharing of fond Sokol memories.

The historic milestone celebrated on this date is the result of dedication that had its beginning when, in 1908, a group of men met

to form Sokol in Ennis. They made plans to secure apparatus and to utilize the technical knowledge they had brought with them to this country. The immigrants were a proud group, striving to become good Americans while preserving their heritage. One of their avenues to band together to carry on the heritage they brought from their homeland was their involvement in fraternal organizations and the organization of a Sokol unit.

Sokol Karel Havlicek Borovsky was accepted into the National Sokol Unity on April 2, 1909. The first officers were: Alois Jurcik, President; Karel Moucka, Secretary; Karel Sosolik, Director of Men and Joseph Zazvorka, Program Director. Since our first building was not constructed until 1912, gym classes were held at the "Narodni Sin," home of SPJST Lodge 25, for four years. The second, third and fourth buildings were erected in 1913, 1917 and 1936, respectively. As the unit grew, larger facilities were required, thus the Sokol Gymnastic Center was dedicated in 1971. It was destroyed by fire on January 24, 1990. The Sokol Activity Center was dedicated April 19-21, 1991. Sokol Tyrs Pool was opened in 1972.

Sokol has played a vital role in the Czech History of Texas. Twenty-five charter members led our unit into the beginning of 90 years of challenges – the depression years and the struggles associated with building new facilities, to name a

few. Our unit was one of the few to survive the depression years. Strong leadership, determination and many sacrifices kept the members going, thus the unit was saved and has grown. Along with the challenges of progress, we have also enjoyed success in our physical, educational and cultural activities.

Czech plays and musicals were a very important past time for members. Some of the traditional annual events held were the Posviceni, Harvest Dances, May Celebrations and Czech Independence Day on the 28th of October. A movie machine provided enjoyment for members. Musical inspiration was provided by the Sokol Band. Czech language classes were held.

The first Narodni Scruzeni (Czech National Organization) unit in the state of Texas was organized at Sokol in Ennis on June 6, 1916. Along with other Texas Czechs, local citizens banded together for the purpose of raising funds for the Red Cross and to aid their homeland to regain its long lost independence. A close association with other Czech organizations in our area continues.

To help keep the Sokol name in the forefront, we participate in as many activities as possible. These include the National Polka Festival in Ennis, Heritage Day at the Texas State Fair, special performances at

Continued on Page 10.

New Curriculum At Instructors' Course Draws Rave Reviews

There was a new and unexpected class conducted at the ASO Instructors School held in Omaha this past June. Bro. Bob Liptak, D.A. Sokol, led a very enthusiastic group of ladies from Sokolice South Omaha through the steps of making Bread Dumplings! The delicious results were then served at the graduation dinner. This expanded into a "dumpling class" for all interested parties the week after school ended.

Editor's Note: *I wish this class had been part of the Kurz when I attended. My dumplings always turn out lousy. Thank goodness for mom!*

◆ MEMORIAM ◆ Sis. Marie Kozak

Sokol Schenectady mourns the loss of Sis. Marie Kozak, 95. Sis. Kozak was born in Prague and moved to the United States in 1919, living most of her life in the Schenectady area. For more than 40 years she was a Sokol instructor in Czechoslovakia and in this country. She was active in Girl Scouting in Europe and a Girl Scout Leader in the U.S., also serving as swim instructor for her troop. Later she was a swim instructor for the YMCA, teaching and choreographing water ballet, and an American Red Cross water safety instructor. She is survived by two daughters, Ethel Tomaszewski and Milada LeGere, 22 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Sokol Schenectady will miss her and recall the wonderful friendship they shared.

FAMILY TREE INFORMATION WANTED Do you have any information regarding this Czech family?

NAME	YEAR	AREA OF ORIGIN
Duczek	1450-1520	Strunkovice, Sablath, South Bohemia
Ducek	1500-1580	Strunkovice, Sablath, South Bohemia
Mylnar	1600-1620	Zablatti, U Netolice, South Bohemia
Zablatsky	1600-1650	Zablatti, U Pratachice, Vimperk, South Bohemia
Zablatsky, Von Liebenthol	1580-1650	Zablatti, Lieben Prague, Bohemia
Zablatsky	1600-1640	Zablatti, Vimperk, South Bohemia
Zablatsky	1620-1660	Brno, Tulesice, Horni Dubnany, South Moravia
Zablatsky, Von Tulesichitz	1640-1740	Brno, Tulesice, Kojetin, South Moravia
Zablatsky	1700-1895	Brno, Kojetin, Kromericz, Central Moravia
Zablatsky	1850-1930	Kromericz, Moravia, New York, NY, USA, New Jersey, USA

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1997 SOKOL SEALS UPDATE

All you need is the desire and you will succeed! Sis. Jolene Dalton, Sokolice South Omaha, took on the not so small task of our annual Sokol Seals fund-raiser and did a *terrific job*. To date, the seals have brought in over \$5,600! We thank the many members who donated to the seal fund this year.

If you are reading this and have not yet contributed for the beautiful seals you received from the National Office, you can do it right now. Get your checkbook and send a donation, payable to American Sokol - Seals, to 6424 West Cermak Road, Berwyn, IL 60402. Go on, DO IT!

The following letter was sent from the American Sokol to Sis. Dalton and her committee:

On behalf of the American Sokol Organization, I want to extend my thanks to you and your committee for accepting and completing the task of our Annual Seal Drive.

You and your committee did an excellent job in all phases of this task. Many complimentary comments have been received regarding the current issue of seals.

Again, thanks to a great group of Sokols and the best of everything in 1998.

NAZDAR a Tuzme Se
 Fred G. Kala
 President

Sis. Dalton and committee have accepted this responsibility again for 1998! Great! Did you send your check yet?



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The more we change, the more we stay the same?

SOKOL TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE

*Charles M. Prchal,
Southern District Slet, Dallas 1960*

Continued Sokol activity is as necessary today and will be needed as much in the future as it has been in the past. Dr. Tyrs and his co-workers could not state bluntly their real purpose for insisting that the entire nation become physically active. They were operating within an autocracy while their whole outlook upon life was a democratic one.

Nobody was fooled in either camp. After all, an organization like the Sokols that had emblazoned on their banners, "Liberty, Fraternity, Equality," could hardly be expected to be loyal to a dictatorship of any kind, be it emperor, mass or class. Neither autocracy, Naziism, fascism or communism appeal to men who know that only in the air of freedom can anyone develop to the limits of his ability.

This antagonism presaged a battle to the finish. A battle that is not ended even today. True, three of the opponents are down, but the fourth one is still a road block to that free development envisaged by Havlicek, Palacky, Tyrs and Fuegner. Masaryk carried on when they parted from the lists of life. He helped create that freedom of individuals and nations that was so necessary before the true federation of the nations of the world could become a reality.

This intense feeling for liberation and justice for all nations and particularly for Czechoslovakia, was brought to this country 95 years ago. Successive waves of immigrants sustained and increased it. The tempo was accelerated until the First World War that brought

liberation and democracy to the land of Masaryk. Many felt that the need for the Sokol's work was now at an end. Masaryk, Drs. Scheiner and Vanicek immediately pointed out that the necessity for Sokol training was and never would be terminated as long as there were forces in the world bent upon the subjugation of humanity to dictatorial rule.

Just because we here have liberty, a democratic way of life and freedom to engage in almost any form of activity does not mean that we can or should become negligent. Decadence is as great and even more vicious a disease than cancer, heart failure and a half dozen others combined. We might even go so far as to say that soft, easy living may be the pathway through which they wreck their havoc.

What a lack of Sokol physical training does to the body, as great a damage as this is, it is still small compared to what it does to the mind. Those of us who have been fortunate to participate in the Sokol physical culture from early youth to maturity know of the tremendous benefits we have received, namely: strong, well developed bodies capable of taking anything life may present; self-discipline, courage, the ability to keep trying, undaunted until we succeed; a purpose in our lives, to live every day for the attainment of new goals; all of these inspired by a desire to prove our love for our country and all that it represents, by doing our utmost to make it an impregnable fortress of those forces that believe in the sanctity of the human individual.

This will be the role of Sokol in the future, as it has been in the past. If you really understand what our way of life means and if you have every bothered to study and learn what it has cost in human lives, thinking and effort to secure what we have now, surely you too will do everything within your power not only to maintain, but increase the Sokol activity until it touches beneficially every citizen of the United States of America.

Battles are not only lost on the battlefield. Many a nation and civilization has gone down by default. The forces of decadence operate the same as those of evil in every form. They win automatically when enough good men and women do nothing.

The Sokols great role is to see that the entire nation becomes more active mentally, as well as physically. "Physical perfection should go hand in hand with a noble mind." Therein lies our destiny.



AMERICAN SOKOL ORGANIZATION

GYMNAST

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



FOR THE BRIGHT FUTURE

In the article "For the Future," Brother Vrzalik is dealing with many important ideas. I recommend that this article serve as a basis for discussion and therefore I want to add my comments.

1. Calisthenics is a Sokol specialty and should be developed and marketed.

I agree 100%. We need attractive forms of calisthenics for the youth. The Czech Sokol Gymnaestrada where sports elements were used, could serve for example. The videotapes made for instruction should be photographed from the rear (performers back to the camera). That way it is much easier to learn the moves. But proper description should be always available to the instructor.

2. Sokol should again become the leader in General Gymnastics.

When stressing the General Gymnastics i.e. the all-round fitness which includes calisthenics, basic gymnastics, swimming and track and field, these activities should be strongly recommended and used especially for those who do not intend to compete on high level. But competitiveness is an important factor for the youth especially and our instructors should know how to organize tests and competitions. Again, the Fitness Test, Euroteam, Gym Game, Floorball, even aerobics can be organized as competitions. How about climbing rope - see the Supcik Memorial. Aerobics can be used as mass exercises! Our leading instructors should be sent abroad to attend courses, estradas and congresses with the goal to bring back new forms of activities. They also should know perfectly how to apply the Tyrs method of physical education and know how to explain the importance and benefits of the moves. For this purpose, the ASO BOI must be reorganized: experts and organizers in the headquarters should lead various sports and other activities departments, teach by means of a well prepared program, follow up in the units by checking how they follow instructions. Our small units should be given priority in visiting them and teaching them not only physical education, but also how to lead the unit effectively, how to promote it, how to be in touch with local authorities etc. The units should not be left thinking that they are abandoned by the headquarters. Here comes up the importance of the District to distribute instruction and information given by the headquarters.

3. Other recommendations in the article "For the Future":

Start marketing our activities. Consider some derivative of franchising. Adopt a business approach to manage Sokol. This is very important and without it we will become outdated and will soon be laughed at by the younger generation. A question arises, to what extent our administration should be professionalized. Money will be needed. If we show progressive thinking, we may attract progressive entrepreneurs as sponsors and rich people as donors. All this should become the task of the suggested Strategic Leadership.

4. Brother Vrzalik says that the Czech Sokols will not save us. It is very true, we have to save ourselves. But we have to learn from them and from the others as well. We must be receptive to every good idea. To help fulfill this task, I am translating articles from the magazine Sokol edited by COS and mail them to the Chicago ASO headquarters.

I knew brother Vrzalik as an effective promoter of "Self Improvement Clinics". To my opinion, the self improvement should be strongly recommended to instructors, officers and leaders, and the headquarters as well, if we want to become the leaders again.

Jiri Liska
Sokol Los Angeles

"Blow Your Own Horn"

In the March "Gymnast," Sokol units were challenged to "Blow Their Own Horn" about interesting activities that go on at their unit and share those ideas with other units looking for new and interesting activities to do. Sokol Greater Cleveland is the first unit to respond to the challenge:

The following activities have been incorporated mainly in the adult classes at Sokol Greater Cleveland (SGC). Through the efforts of Georgia Jencik and Howie Wise the Senior Men and Women have found these activities to be beneficial and fun.

WARM-UPS

- ♦ Warm-ups to music - led by class teacher or a member of the class who has composed an exercise routine.
- ♦ Towel warm-ups - instruct the class to bring a bath towel with them. Warm-ups are done using the towel for resistance in the exercises.
- ♦ Folk dances - Czech and from various countries, try to use the dance as a mixer where partners are changed before the phrases are repeated. Dances can be coordinated with upcoming holidays or special events.
- ♦ Square dances - start with easy dances and progress to harder ones.
- ♦ Rhythmic implements: ball, hoop, wand, indian club, jump rope - use only one piece of equipment; can serve as a warm-up plus expose the class to the sport of rhythmic.
- ♦ Large jump ropes - (those unable to jump become the turners) - start slow, wiggle rope on floor - turn and run through - jump in, jump once, jump out, - etc. Try to get the whole group to jump at once. Divide class into groups of 6-8.
- ♦ Medicine ball skills - various passing drills using a medicine ball.
- ♦ Volleyball skills - basic skills of the game, expose class to the sport.
- ♦ Basketball skills - no need to run - stand and shoot, dribble, pass, play game of HORSE
- ♦ Frisbee - throw and catch with partner - throw for targets such as through hoops, into barrels, much exercise gained in bending to pick Frisbee from floor.
- ♦ Football (nerf) - throw and catch, throw at targets as with Frisbees
- ♦ Soccer - kick soccer ball towards targets, knock pins down, etc.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO APPARATUS

- ♦ Exercises in chairs - watch newspapers and magazines for suggested exercises
- ♦ Walking - 30 minutes - vigorous walking around your gym, give the group various floor patterns to follow when walking
- ♦ Exercise with light weights - (2-3 pounds for women) - hand held
- ♦ Bowling - use bowling set made for gymnasium use or a child set as used in the home
- ♦ Indoor horseshoes - can be purchased - for gymnasium use
- ♦ Badminton - can do with a partner and no net - hit birdie back and forth; can also do over a volleyball net as a team badminton game
- ♦ Beanbags into a hoop on floor - similar to jarts lawn game or horseshoes
- ♦ Weight equipment or exercise machines - if these are available this can be a squad rotation especially popular are the stationary bikes, treadmills, and steppers
- ♦ Beachball volleyball - use volleyball net but use a beachball or light weight play ball instead of a volleyball. Everyone can hit the beachball and no one is afraid of getting hurt by the ball
- ♦ Floor hockey - purchase a gymnasium floor hockey set - Use cones for goals - great aerobic workout for players - puck works better than a ball, a ball tends to make everyone think they are playing golf
- ♦ Broom hockey - everyone brings a broom to class to use for the game - use a small ball rather than a puck
- ♦ Step aerobics - use flip fold mats for steps, they can be made higher or lower by unfolding
- ♦ Aerobics - high or low impact - good workout for those interested

Calling ALL Potential Instructors

1998 AMERICAN SOKOL INSTRUCTORS' SCHOOL

JULY 21st - AUGUST 4th

More Ideas from SGC

FUN COMPETITIONS TO BE DONE DURING CLASS TIME

For the first three it is best if the teacher creates the groups in order to disperse the creative individuals in the class among all the groups

- ♦ Marching routines - divide class into groups - give music to each, set a time limit to create the routine - have each group perform their creations for the class
- ♦ Hand apparatus routines - 16-32 measures of music - give groups unusual hand apparatus such as dumb bells, large flags, wands, - the group must create a short routine and then perform for the class
- ♦ Pyramid building competition :
 - ♦ regular style pyramids - must be performed to a 4-5 count command - build and dismantle
 - ♦ apparatus pyramids - each group is assigned a piece of apparatus to be used for their pyramid (bars, beam, horse, etc.) All members of the group must be used and again it should be built and dismantled by a 4-5 count command
 - ♦ pyramids using hand apparatus
- ♦ East vs West - teams were made up geographically by where the class members lived - (east or west side of the city) small contests were held and each team selected representatives from their team to be in that particular contest. These might include:
 - ♦ stand on one leg - flamingo stand
 - ♦ crab walk to a line & back
 - ♦ shuttle run - 4-5 people
 - ♦ hit balloon with hand to line

Several of the contests can include the entire team - such as a tug of war Points are awarded throughout for first, second, third places and a total is obtained at the end to determine the winner.

PLAN ON PARTICIPATING IN YOUR DISTRICT SLET

Central District - June 13-14, 1998

Chicago Suburbs

Eastern District - June 13-14, 1998

Barryville

Northeastern District - June 13-14, 1998

Detroit

Southern District - June 13-14, 1998

Ft. Worth

Western District - June 13-14, 1998

Minneapolis/St. Paul

More 'Forget for Success'

Excess Baggage can unconsciously weigh down, hold you back, and take up precious space in your brain. Regardless of our good intentions, each of us is susceptible to flawed beliefs and behaviors that negatively impact us, the people we work with, the environments we work in, and the results we get. Dump this data from our memory banks -- forget these counterproductive ideas, practices, and habits -- and we're well on our way to becoming more successful leaders..... and more successful people. How about this one:

"All we need are a few big changes"

How about one big FORGET IT!

No doubt most of us, at one time or another, have felt that our organizations we in desperate need of some reeeeeeally big changes -- your know , the kind that cure all our ills in one fell swoop. And you may feel the same need sometime in the future. Our best advice: Don't sit on the sidelines holding your breath! If you're looking for true changes that last, you need to focus on lots of little things done over and over by lots of people...including you.

Take a look at what separates winning people and companies from the "also rans." Compare those who walk the talk and those who don't. The winners aren't unique because of one or two gigantic things they do one hundred percent better than the rest of the field. Rather, they're profoundly different because of the hundreds of things they do ten percent better. No quick fixes, instant solutions, or "programs of the year" for these folks. They work hard at managing "the small stuff": they understand that you can't do big stuff every day.

Are we saying that large, complex change strategies are never appropriate? Not on your life! We're merely suggesting that in the long run you'll be better off if you ...

Devote more of your time, attention, and focus to doing a lot of little things a little bit better.

That's real. That's doable. That's change.

"Forget for Success -- Walking Away from Outdated, Counterproductive Beliefs, and People Practices" by Eric Harvey and Steve Ventura.

Starting Health Habits Early Pays Dividends in Later Life

Taking stock of your diet, exercise habits, even your emotional outlook in your 20s and 30s can pay huge health and beauty dividends later.

Women don't realize that some of the best anti-sagging, wrinkle-erasing, life-lengthening tips, wrote Hallie Levine in an article in *Cosmopolitan*, are easy and take just minutes a day.

For starters, your skin really takes a beating. Up to 80 percent of the signs of aging are caused by sun exposure. Use a moisturizer that contains SPF 15 or apply sunscreen along with your foundation, every day.

Smoking decreases your skin's oxygen supply, leaving it sallow and leathery. No matter your age, once you stop smoking, your skin will start repairing itself within a few months.

Frowning, barrow furrowing, squinting, and forehead wrinkling can, eventually, cause permanent wrinkles.

Besides a daily multivitamin, reach for the antioxidant blend of vitamin C and E. Antioxidants get rid of free radicals, compounds in your bloodstream that increase your risk of cancer and heart disease. A 1997 University of Maryland study also found that a vitamin C and E combination increased the ability of arteries to expand to accommodate increased blood flow, even after patients consumed a McDonald's meal.

When it comes to your emotional well-being, a 1993 National Center for Health Statistics study found that working women had lower cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and body weight than did those who stayed home. Another study found that pet owners have lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels than do non-pet owners. Animals encourage touch and contact, which relaxes you and lowers your blood pressure.

The best source of oil is flaxseed, available in health-food stores. It's rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, which act as antioxidants and anticarcinogens. Recommended dosage is one tablespoon a day, used in cooking or even mixed into yogurt.

Your best source of protein is fish, especially fatty fish like tuna or salmon, because it's packed with Omega-3 fatty acids, a vital nutrient for the brain and blood. Eating 35 grams of fish daily (less than one serving) almost halves your

risk of a heart attack, according to a 1997 New England Journal of Medicine study. Even eating 3 to 4 ounces, two to three times a week is sufficient.

Women who consume the National Academy of Science's recommended daily dosage of 350 mg of magnesium can exercise harder - they require less oxygen and have less heart strain than do women who consume 175 mg, according to a 1997 study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Humane Nutrition Research Center. You can find magnesium in multivitamins or foods such as bran and dark green veggies.

Walking with hand weights is the best form of exercise. Half an hour, three times per week, builds muscle, which burns fat. It provides cardiovascular benefits and weight-resistance training -- which is critical for strengthening bones, thus warding off osteoporosis. Start with half a pound in each hand and build up to no more than three pounds.

Research has shown that 30 minutes of physical activity a day can reduce a woman's risk of cardiovascular disease by 50 percent.

Plano Star Courier, November 19, 1997.

Did You Know?

- ♦ **Contrary to popular belief, men's sport participation has not suffered at the expense of female sports participation. There were 63,963 more male athletes in 1995-96 than there were in 1985-86. For every two new female participation slots created in this ten year period, 1.5 new male participation slots were also added. *National Collegiate Athletic Association, 1996***
- ♦ **If a girl does not participate in sports by the time she is 10, there is only a 10% chance she will participate when she is 25. *Bunker, L., 1989, University of Virginia.***
- ♦ **In 1971, 1 in 27 girls participated in high school sports. In 1997, that figure was 1 in 3. For boys, the figure has remained constant at 1 in 2. *National Federation of State High School Associations, statistics, 1997.***
- ♦ **High School girls who spend time participating in sports tend to have higher grades. *Study of Stanford and the Schools, 1986.***

Reflections

REFLECTIONS

When one has been married for a long time (a very long time) you become attuned to requests that you better heed. Never mind that it's not a labor of love; never mind that you would rather do something else – just do it. Anyway, my wife alleged Barb Edmunds would welcome an article or two for our publication and in a moment of weakness, I agreed.

So what can I possibly touch on which would be of interest to our readers? During the 50's, Bro. J. Cihak wrote about Sokol and Czech history. Karel Prchal wrote inspirational articles of Sokol merit. His wife, Milada, (whom I deeply admired and who possessed outstanding gymnastic credentials) wrote articles for the gymnastic practitioner. The list is endless, as anyone who wishes to take the time to obtain back issues can verify.

Today, however, our local readership is different than it was in the 50's and 60's. A recent Cedar Rapids Gazette article alleges our unit has 165 members and 50 students. To begin with, let's discount the students, because the publication wouldn't be mailed to them. Addressing the 165 members – without taking a survey, I would generalize that the membership is overwhelmingly "older" or should one be more politically correct and say "mature?," i.e., over 50. And while today it has become fashionable to take pride in one's ancestry, fewer and fewer of us

speaking the mother tongue with any degree of fluency or are familiar with the history of the Czech lands. And lastly, and this is the ultimate irony, while Sokol is an organization with physical education as its core, I'll wager 90% of its members haven't had on an "ubor" in years or follow a fitness regime on a regular basis.

So, what shall I say to interest the readers? I think I'd like to try a series of articles calling them "*Reflections*," whereby I attempt to touch on the "big picture." Starting with the origin of Sokol and its reason for being, its transfer to other lands, how it has changed and how much has remained intact. All this through the lenses of an old timer who came to its door as a lad of 19, fresh from the Navy, who caught the gymnastics spark on the beaches of Santa Monica and wanted to learn more. I would like to touch on the gym aspect, the basic soundness – or lack of soundness – of its original program and how, at this time, our current fitness craze seems to have given it credence. But, by the same token, how it could have been or should have been modified; some shortcomings and in what direction we should consider moving.

In my opinion, the single greatest difference between the Sokol of yesteryear and today can be summed up in one word – PASSION. Today, we lack the fire and zeal of our charter members. Oh yes, I still see dedication – in

some areas an amazing amount, about the intense emotion, the zeal and the sense of direction of past generations has vanished. I was fortunate to have had a number of mentors. I wish I had listened more and had greater recall, but the tales of persecution under the Hapsburg rule and a long train of abuse of people struggling to establish themselves was ever fresh in the hearts of our forefathers. Henceforth, Sokol became a bastion of freedom for human dignity and identity and if these oldsters seemed unyielding at times, it was because the past had impinged too greatly upon their ancestors.

Two of my mentors stand out – Bro. Rudy Langer and Bro. Ted Hlubucek. Ted was extremely bright, artistically and culturally inclined and truly a spokesman for Sokol and the Czech community. Sokol was Rudy's passion – he was eloquent with boundless enthusiasm and optimism. He constantly reminded me that "Sokol was more than gymnastic skill and muscular development" (comments like this tend to fall on deaf ears when you are 19 and your focus is competition). I would like to share some of these concepts if the readership would indulge me.

When I asked Barb how long the article should be, she said a "half page." A HALF PAGE! That's like asking a speaker to limit himself to ten sentences; that only covers the opening remarks. I'll be dependent upon the readership for their reactions. If it becomes mere prattle or too inflammatory, I'm sure I'll hear about it. NA ZDAR!

*From Noviny Sokol Cedar Rapids
by Dick Petrzalek*

NEW BOOK:

FOR THE LOVE OF PRAGUE

This newly published non-fiction book is the story of the one American (Gene Deitch) who lived inside Communist Czechoslovakia for 30 continuous years (and lives there still) and yet was "outside." It is a never before told love story of his love for Prague and a Czech woman and his unique vantage-point from which to view all the history that transpired.

Following is the Introduction (by David Speranza) from For the Love of Prague:

There has been a steady flow of interest in Prague since 1989's "Velvet Revolution," when communism was finally overthrown and democracy allowed to bloom. In the last seven years, thousands of Americans have flocked to this great city, many settling here for the long term, others, with only a few months or a year to kill, coming simply out of curiosity. The stories of Prague's older expatriates have already begun to be written – in memoirs, plays, poems, news reports, short fiction and even a novel or two. Inhabiting many of these tales is a growing nostalgia for the city before Big Macs and Levis were a common currency, when the joy of liberation still swelled the streets and an anarchy of good will ruled the land. But even those fearless explorers who came during democratic Czechoslovakia's earliest days are little more than newcomers beside Gene Deitch.

As an American who has lived and worked here continuously since 1959, Gene scooped us all, making all our stories appear woefully incomplete. In fact, he is the only American citizen to be continuously resident in Prague during 30 years of Communist rule. Yet he was not a Communist himself, he was not of Czech origin, not a political refugee and nobody's secret agent. He was simply and incredibly an American animation cartoonist assigned here by a New York film distributor to direct animated children's films.

In the course of doing his work – and concurrently falling in love with a Czech woman who single-

handedly changed his life – Gene was in the remarkable position of being able to observe and actually live the life of everyday Czechoslovakia, without getting involved or becoming subject to it. In this unique situation he was his own wife's customer (she being an employee of a State-controlled film studio), and he became a living symbol of the free world for every Czech who knew him. Even more amazing, he managed to pull this off for 30 years.

What follows is Gene's story – part history, part memoir, part love story. This is his personal account of how it came to be, how the unpredictable events of his new life played themselves out and how life in a hard-line communist country truly was. It's the kind of story no reporter who rushed in, interviewed a few dissidents and then rushed out, could ever tell. Gene had a "fly's eye" view, as he puts it, of what was happening on the ground: sad, funny, serious, ironic, absurd. He was here during the dismal Stalinist period, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, during the euphoria of 1968's Prague Spring and its heartbreaking destruction at Soviet hands, during the 20 years of renewed darkness that followed and finally he was a joyous witness to the "Velvet Revolution" of 1989. He came with a contract assuring he need not stay more than 10 days... and he has been here more than half of his life so far! Gene's story, like the story of the Czechs and Slovaks themselves, is one of courage, hope and perseverance in the face of an adversity most of us from the West can never know. It is also a story of love and how the human heart, no matter what our mind tells us, can take us places we've never dreamed of.

If you are interested in ordering For the Love of Prague, contact Peter Lemkin, U Jitka Houdkova, Jaselska 15, 16000 Praha 6, Czech Republic. Phone +420-2-24311281. E-Mail: plemkin@terminal.cz

This book is NOT available through the American Sokol.

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

NEW BOOK:

THE 7-DAY COOKBOOK

Sokol Fresno Members Find the Answer to the Age Old Question: "What's for Dinner?"

Nadine Nemechek and her daughter, Sharon Nemechek Gerardi, have revealed the answer in their new cookbook, *The 7-Day Cookbook, the Easy Answer to "What's for Dinner?"* Nadine is the wife of Bro. Victor R. Nemechek, past president of Sokol Fresno. Victor's father, Victor P. Nemechek, was the first president of Sokol Fresno.

The low fat cookbook has a theme for every day of the week. Also

included is a chapter of side dishes and quick desserts, menu planners and shopping lists.

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DO NOT send orders to the American Sokol!



GOOD IDEAS

(continued)

The resumption of the Sokol basketball program means teaching, supervising and guiding the children. There are many responsibilities inherent in such a program that require time, patience and sacrifice, and are performed by a small number of Sokol loyalists, all of them generous, most of them anonymous, none of them indifferent.

The basketball program is breaking new ground in the Sokol tradition and generating new enthusiasm among the children. In the world of Sokol, the children are taking shots at lofty goals and living up to high expectations.

Sokol KHB 90th Anniversary *(continued)*

football game half-times, programs for civic clubs and other activities. With the United States Gymnastics recognition of Sokol as a leader in the field of general gymnastics, our unit has been represented at USA Gymfests. Our team was a pioneer participant in the first USA Gymnaestrada and a part of the USA delegation to the World Gymnaestrada in Berlin in 1995. The group also visited Tyrsov Dum in Prague and met with the COS officers. Plans are being made to participate in the 1999 Gymnaestrada in Goteburg, Sweden.

We have also been a part of many "firsts" associated with the reorganization of Sokol in the Czech Republic in 1990. Our president, Bro. Larry Laznovsky and Bro Jerry Milan, President of Sokol Fort

Worth, attended the reorganization of Sokol in Prague in January 1990. IN the summer of 1990, we were represented at the first Sokol program there since 1948. In 1994, four local members participated in the first Sokol Slet in the Czech Republic since 1948.

The unit is proud of its record of preserving physical fitness in the community since 1908. Our current officers are Larry Laznovsky, President; Jerry Wester, 1st Vice-President; Kim Oates, 2nd Vice-President; Mayfair Mullican, Secretary; Louis Green, Financial Secretary; Betty Trlica, Treasurer; Sylvia Laznovsky, Educational Director; Jessica Burns and Charles E. Kalat, Co-Directors of Gymnastics.

Submitted by Sis. Sylvia Laznovsky

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