

american SOKOL

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APRIL/MAY 2002



"Mama, mama,
give me salve
for my sores."

Májko,
májko,
dej mi masti
na bolavě

Až přijde
máj
buclen s
ráj.

Jaro ~ Spring

"When May
arrives, we'll
have paradise."

From the book
Nas Kalendar.

Translation by the late
Sis. Mildred C. Pinc

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Wednesday (except July/August), 7:30 P.M.

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From Your Editor...

Happy Spring - a time of new beginnings and wonder. If you are like me, you start to look at the things around you differently and suddenly you want everything to be fresh and vibrant. Consequently, I have a long list of projects to tackle and hopefully enough enthusiasm to carry them out. Enjoy this time.

NA ZDAR!

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

CALENDAR of EVENTS

APRIL

- 6 Sokol Milwaukee Vecirek
- 13 United Sokols of the East
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- 14 Sokol Los Angeles Pork Dinner
- 19 Sokol New York Beseda Ball
- 21 Sokol Little Ferry Exhibition
- 21 Central District Special Number
Competition
- 26-27 Sokol Brookfield Rummage Sale
- 27 Sokol Ceska Sin Swiss Meet

MAY

- 6 Sokol Milwaukee Gym Class
Gymnastic Competition
- 11 United Sokols of the East
Junior/Senior Competition
- 11 Central District Children's
Competition
- 17-19 Houby Days - Cedar Rapids, IA
- 18-19 Central District Junior/Senior
Competition, Sokol Day & Picnic
- 19 Sokol Little Ferry Pork Dinner
- 20 Sokol Milwaukee Exhibition and
Awards Night

MAY

- 24-26 Sokol Ceska Sin Hiking Weekend
- 26-27 Czech-Slovak Festival, Bohemian
Hall, Astoria, NY

JUNE

- 2 D.A. Sokol Exhibition
- 28-30 Eastern Area Slet at Sokol
Woodlands, Barryville, NY
- 30-7/7 ASO/DA/USA Sokol Summer
Camp at Sokol Woodlands,
Barryville, NY

JULY

- 15-28 American Sokol Instructors'
School at Sokol Corpus Christi

OCTOBER

- 5 Sokol Stickney 75th Anniversary
- 18-20 District Directors' Conference at
Sokol Greater Cleveland

XXIV SOKOL USA SOKOLFEST
July 2-6, 2003 • Valparaiso, Indiana

THOUGHT STARTERS

from Sis. Joan Sedlacek, A.S.O. Educational Director

"Some things have to be believed to be seen."

~ RALPH HODGSON

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.

MEMBER INSIGHT

By Sis. Sylvia Laznovsky
ASO Membership Chairman

Since the first of the year, I have had a number of letters and e-mails from not only membership chairmen, but from unit officers in positions other than membership, indicating their concerns about what can be done to increase membership. Contacts I have received include both favorable remarks regarding my previous messages and constructive criticism, suggestions, and also that I have not told the people anything that they do not already know.

We all know more needs to be done. Its always easier to identify problem areas than to identify action to take to help solve some of these problems. Some suggested solutions may not be what someone wants to hear. We must have an open mind! The bottom line is is that we have to be willing to consider sugges-tions, perhaps modifying the idea somewhat to fit our unit. In considering a new idea, additional new ideas may come to light! Letters, articles, booklets, and hand-outs will not help if we are not willing to consider Getting more members requires giving people a desire to join. This means having something for all ages. In very few instances will potential members come to you. You must ask them to be a member. I was told by an active person in one district that her child was in the gym over one year before being approached for membership. The unit was waiting

for her to ask! This indicates the unit was not too interested. The most fruitful area for membership is to touch the people's most valuable commo-dity — their children. People do not join to attend meetings, work at dances, etc. But, once they learn why these activities are necessary, many do want to be a part of helping.

I was told by one member that my position on parent membership was not known. I'll repeat my previous feeling that the parents of children receiving the benefits of American Sokol programs should be Sokol members. It works in the Southern District. It should be considered by other districts. Yes - you will have a turnover in your membership. Sometimes if a child does not enroll the next year, the parent will not renew their membership. But, they may — especially if you offer other programs for your membership and their children. Offer the parents a program. Many will remain members in support of the unit. Many come back the following year. Yes — There is paperwork involved, both by the unit and the American Sokol office. But nothing is easy. We have to put forth the effort required to accomplish the goal of getting more members. If any of you have questions about how this idea may work, I would be glad to tell you how I handle it in my unit. A parent membership application should be a part of

each unit's registration package for gym enrollment. If the gymnast is 17 years or older, they should become a member. Remember, at the last convention the Associate membership, as a stepping stone to Regular membership, was accepted.

The problem of how to get new members was brainstormed, at length, at the Future of Sokol meeting in Ft. Worth. With the direction of "not criticizing any Idea" the participants were able to expand on suggestions and come up with possibilities that might work for them. Most American Sokol officers and executive board members were in attendance. They made the trip at their own expense. All districts, but one, were represented. The group came up with a recommendation, which was approved by the Board of Governors in November 2001, allocating funds to try new programs. Since that time other positive issues have surfaced, delaying the announcement of procedures to secure these funds. Hopefully they can be announced in the next few weeks.

Several have expressed the concern that the raising of dues at the last convention may have an affect on some long-time members retaining their membership. Many units have a policy for reduced membership fees due to age and/or years of membership. Other units may wish to consider doing this and supplementing the amount needed.

Many units have been successful with implementing membership ideas. One district requested that

Continued on Page 10.

SOKOL HAWAIIAN STYLE



On January 11, 2002, eighteen members of Sokol Brookfield, Sokol Chicagoland, Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky and friends of Sokol departed for Honolulu on a 14-day "Tour to Paradise" sponsored by Sokol Brookfield. They enjoyed 6 days at the Ocean Beach resort on Waikiki Beach and 8 days at the Napili Shores Resort on Napili Bay on Maui.

Everyone made their own tours or trips to places they wanted to see: Arizona Memorial, Battleship Missouri, Polynesian Cultural Center, Kodak Hula Show, Pearl Harbor Memorial and the International Marketplace, or just walking on the beach or lying in the sun.

There were Mai Tai Parties, Luaus and a cookout by the ocean with singing and laughter - enjoyed by all. This was the fourth "Tour to Paradise" sponsored by Sokol Brookfield.

INSTRUCTORS' COURSE REUNION

The Southern District is organizing an "Unofficial Course Reunion" of the participants of the National Instructors' Course held in Corpus Christi, Texas in 1979 (*or any other instructors' course*). This reunion will take place the weekend of July 27-28, 2002 in Corpus Christi, Texas, and coincides with the graduation of the 2002 National Instructors' School being held at Sokol Corpus Christi.

ALL AMERICAN SOKOL MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE (*even if you didn't attend the course in 1979*). Many members from various units have expressed an interest in this event. Activities being planned could include beach volleyball and cookout. Other tour information is being assembled for those who might wish to make a family vacation of the event. We hope to see you there for fun and sun.

For more information on housing arrangements, activities, etc., please contact

**RHONDA LISKA at 903-597-4554,
or via e-mail at RKLISKA@AOL.COM**

FUTURE SOKOL LEADERS FUND

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

In Memory of Joseph & Mayme (Husa)Regner and Louis & Blanche (Regner) Schier from Helen Tuma		25.00	
In Memory of Bert Box from Pete Jr. & Jean Dusek		50.00	
In Memory of Bob Hala from Pete Jr. & Jean Dusek		50.00	
In Memory of John Kiml from Pete Jr. & Jean Dusek		50.00	
In Memory of Edward Lacina from Pete Jr. & Jean Dusek		50.00	
In Memory of Edward Linhart from Pete Jr. & Jean Dusek		50.00	
In Memory of Blanche Regner Schier from Lorraine & Tony Faikus		25.00	
In Memory of Walter Slavik and Mildred C. Pinc from Mary Newsom		50.00	
In Memory of Vladislav (Walter) Slavik			
From George & Julie Conklin	225.00	From Marilyn Armel	100.00
From Northeastern District ASO	100.00	From Elizabeth Gabris-Pokorny	100.00
From Edward Chlanda	50.00	From Teddy Krowl	25.00
From Charlie Krowl	25.00	From George Weiss	25.00

GENERAL FUND

From Mary Steinman for Old Pins	40.00
In Memory of Robert Drake from Ann Drake	20.00



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

Lillian F. Prikoda - \$10.00

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

American Sokol Foundation

Grateful thanks to our many wonderful contributors in support of our Foundation Fund:

Ronald Soltis	Olga Littlefield	Sokol Zizka	Jeffrey Wasem	Stanislav Segert
Jeannette Chambers	Blanche J. Dvorak	Violet F. Dvorak	Capt. Joseph Chruma	
Mrs. Ann Hart	Steven Stastny	Evelyn Weed	Annette Schabowski	Dr. Gogela
Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky Juniors	Klojda Family	Vicki Sedlacek	Anne Houdek	
Bob & Diane Podhrasky	United Moravian Societies			

Our 2000-2001 Drive may be successfully completed, but the Foundation always welcomes additional contributions to support American Sokol work. Make checks payable to American Sokol Foundation.

Joyce Tesarek ~ Foundation Director

AMERICAN SOKOL SUPPORT OF THE TOMAS GARRIGUE MASARYK STATUE

In honor of the first President of Czechoslovakia, Tomas Garrigue Masaryk, the Executive Board of the American Sokol has voted to donate \$1,000 to the project to erect the Tomas Garrigue Masaryk Memorial Statue in Washington, D.C. The American Friends of the Czech Republic, a non-profit organization established by proud citizens of the United States in support of the free and democratic Czech Republic, is the chief sponsor and coordinator of the project to build the statue.

Masaryk was a proud Sokol member and relied heavily on the Sokol membership for his efforts. The establishment of a free and democratic Czechoslovakia on October 28, 1918, was the result of his ability to combine the efforts of many individuals and groups toward this goal. Dr. Josef Scheiner, President of the Czech Organization of Sokol from 1906 to 1932, was a very good friend of Masaryk and helped ideally, as well as financially, in the birth of the new nation.

The necessary legislation has been passed and the project has been endorsed by the current President of the Czech Republic, Vaclav Havel. The location of the statue will be on Pennsylvania Avenue, in front of the World Bank. The American Sokol is represented in this project by Bro. Bo Bata, President of the Eastern District and American Sokol Executive Board Member. Bro. Bo has advised us that the dedication of the Masaryk Statue will be held September 19, 2002. Plans call for a reception followed by a formal dinner. Details of this event will be announced in the American Sokol Publication.

If you would like to contribute to this project, make checks payable to "Tomas Garrigue Masaryk Memorial Fund". Please indicate that you are an American Sokol member and the name of your Unit. Mail to:

American Friends of the Czech Republic
2801 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

Kristina Satek is State Finalist in Interpretation of Literature

Kristina Satek, daughter of Bro. John R. & Joy Satek, Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky, qualified in two categories for the state Speech and Drama competition which was held at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, KY. She qualified for the state meet by placing in earlier meets this year. In Oratorical Declamation she did an 8-minute speech, "The Problem with Pennies," and in Interpretation of Literature, she did an 8-minute piece called "Chrysanthemum." She competed 6 times on Friday; 3 times each in Interpretation of Literature and Oratorical Declamation. The competition was very tough, with 48 schools from Kentucky competing, ranging from 5th to 9th grade. Everyone at the state level has placed in at least one state-sanctioned tournament throughout the

year. Just being there was a privilege. Everyone was very excited when she made semi-finals on Saturday; only four students from her school made it that far. She was then competing with 18 children for the top six spots for the final competition and she made it for her "Chrysanthemum" piece. She did a great job in finals, her best yet. Hard to believe at 10-1/2 years old she could remain composed and not crack under the pressure. There was a 3-way tie for 3rd. After the first tiebreaker there was STILL a 3-way tie for third. After the 2nd tiebreaker, Kristina was in 5th place in the state!!! at such a young age, and her first year competing. It's a great thrill, and we are very proud!

~ Submitted by Bro. John R. Satek



AMERICAN SOKOL GYMNAST



Sash Dumanovic, 2419 S. Scoville Avenue, Berwyn, IL 60402

SashDumanovic@American-Sokol.org

Where has Physical Education gone?

Illinois is the **only** remaining state in the United States to require mandatory physical education classes for students from grades K-12.

Every other State Board of Education has eliminated or completely relaxed its physical education requirements. Some state boards and local districts found themselves in a budget crises, while others sought to allocate funds to the core academic areas and programs.

Once those legislative and policy changes were made, they created newer and more serious problems for the Youth of America. They may have inadvertently sent a signal to young people that little or no physical activity is a way of life.

These changes could not have come at a worse time. There are many things that beg for a child's attention in this age, and all too often, those things are sedentary activities such as video games, the internet, computers, TV, portable CD players, and most notably, sitting in their classrooms six or seven hours each day.

The diet of the average American child has changed significantly also. Soda and sugary drinks have pushed milk aside as a preferred drink among youth. Usually a kid will pick some candy over a piece of fruit. Most families' schedules are just too busy these days, so it's common to notice that kids' breakfasts may consist of a doughnut or pastry, their lunch may be a

couple of vacuum sealed bags of something, and dinners might offer something nutritional.

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education suggests that children, ages 5-12, should be collectively active for a minimum of one hour per day. The vast majority of children are not even coming close to getting that much activity.

Inactivity seems to grow with age. According to research, kids are most active in 3rd grade, and steadily begin to lose interest voluntarily or otherwise. An astounding 40% of high school students are not enrolled in any kind of physical education, as well as 75% of seniors.

The bad news is that these many kids will grow without balancing the needs between their body and mind which will lead to long term health problems such as diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, muscle and joint injuries, and circulatory ailments. All of these health concerns could lead to other illnesses or injuries.

The good news is that it's never too late. Voice your concerns to your community and encourage your local and state governments to let physical education thrive. Some educators are teaming up to demonstrate to their administrators that P.E. has lifelong benefits to children and that we cannot do without it.

In Sokol we must continue to do our part by supporting local schools, conducting our classes, and remember how fun it was to climb, run, jump, and ride bikes. Let's pass that on.



Left: Some of the skills clinic instructors get together for a photo at the skills clinic graduation ceremony on Sunday after gymnasts performed some of the skills they perfected during their long and tiring weekend.

Central District Skills Clinic

January 4-6, 2002



The clinic instructors are hard at work rehearsing their special number for the weekend.



Friendship! From L to R: Julia Hickey of Tabor, Evie Cutshaw of Ceska Sin and Heidi Snaders of Brookfield.



Clinic students are all ears as they watch the TNT team demonstration and wait for directions.

The Central District Skills Clinic was held January 4-6, 2002 at Sokol Tabor in Berwyn, Illinois. It was directed by Sister Christina Curran from Sokol Tabor and Brother Bryan Pracko from Sokol USA Lodge 306.

A total of 75 students attended the clinic representing Sokols Berwyn-Slavsky, Brookfield, Chicagoland, Ceska Sin, Naperville, St. Louis, Stickney, Tabor and USA Lodge 306. There were 13 full time instructors, two part time instructors and two kitchen directors.

Activities included an obstacle course, gymnastic apparatus sessions, stunting with the TNT team, marching, volleyball, special number performances and open gym. The weekend ended with a graduation ceremony on Sunday. Each student received a t-shirt, water bottle, group photo, and a certificate.

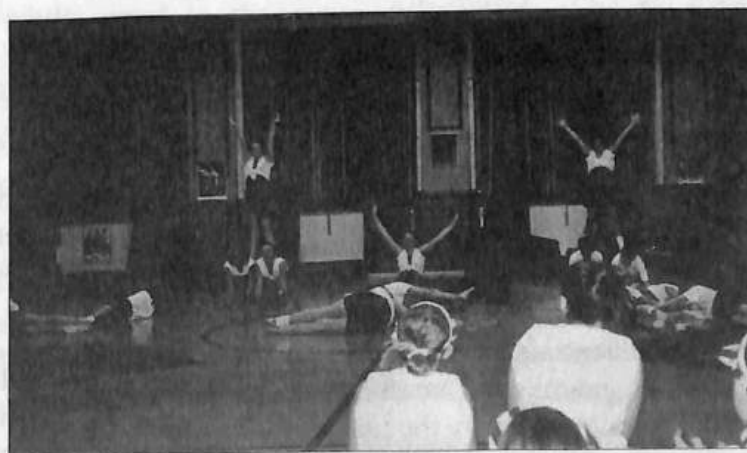
**Christina Curran
and
Bryan Pracko**



Boys Dancing to J-Lo! From L to R: Mike Dropka, Mike Smetana, Kevin Wheet, and Ed Burek.



Christina Curran hanging out with her nieces and nephews: From L to R: Christian, Kaitlan, Anna, Michael and Conner.



The Patriotic Sokol Dudes perform their special number in front of an excited audience.

TRAVELING INSTRUCTOR WANTED

THE AMERICAN SOKOL BOARD OF INSTRUCTORS is seeking the services of a Traveling Instructor. The following requirements are necessary:

1. Sokol background of Junior and Senior Classes.
2. Attended American Sokol schools and clinics.
3. Have a thorough knowledge of our Sokol System.
4. Be able to teach the English terminology on apparatus and calisthenics.
5. Preferably for a 2 year period.
6. Teach in summer schools.

REMUNERATION:

1. \$6,000 annual salary.
2. Two week vacation.
3. Transportation from District to District paid by American Sokol.
4. Expenses within the District to be paid by the District.

LORRAINE ZDENEK
Director of Women

EDWARD LINHART
Director of Men

How long has it been since we've seen an ad like this?

This ad came out in the March 1966 issue of the *Gymnast*, and as you can clearly see, being a Traveling Instructor was a highly regarded position in American Sokol.

The search continues. We have not had a traveling instructor for some time, however we have continued to conduct national instructors schools, camps, clinics, certifications and other training to advance and perpetuate the Sokol system.

We have reached a moment in time where the role of the traveling instructor may need to be redefined.

A traveling instructor is considered a contractual employee of American Sokol and must be recommended to the Executive Board by the national directors

for approval according to the American Sokol By-Laws. There may be some significant revision of qualifications, expectations, and remuneration between now and the next Convention.

The American Sokol Board of Instructors are researching and exchanging ideas for how a traveling instructor as we know it, could best serve Sokol.

Some possibilities include hiring a professional to do a top quality, professional job. Another possible strategy is to allow traveling instructors to work by category and specialty.

In any event, we must always keep in mind what is best for Sokol and its participants. What has worked in the past will not always work for the future.

The focus should remain on how a traveling instructor can benefit the future of American Sokol. We already have a rich and impressive past.



Pat Michalski, Assistant to the Governor for Ethnic Affairs, chats with Sis. Barb Kucera.



The Central District TNT team wows the audience!

Central District Shines at Naperville Ethnic Festival

The Sokol display on February 3 at North Central College, Naperville, Illinois, was a success. The American Sokol Archives department sent a lot of items thanks to Sis. Annette Schabowski, Curator. Bro. Sash Dumanovic, Public Relations, delivered all the items, including a display module. Sis. Barbara Kucera did a terrific job of talking with every child who visited our booth. She gave each a Sokol stamp for their "passport" book.

The festival featured performances by Irish, Mexican and East Indian dancers. A couple of Asian martial arts groups also performed. Sokol Naperville's women performed rhythmic. After all the youngsters performing, it took a lot of courage for them to do this. The Central District TNT team really got a lot of attention. Many people came over to the Sokol booth following their performance and complimented us. Our members really shined.

Other members that hosted the booth were Bro. Bob Kucera and Sis. Flo DelCarlo. They distributed American Sokol and TNT brochures and a flyer put together by Sis. Lynda Filipello, Central District Education Chairman, entitled "What is Sokol?"

~Submitted by Sis. Lynda Filipello

Dear Sokol Brothers and Sisters:

I want to thank the individuals who contributed to the Sokol Medical Fund, which was established for the women from Sokol Prostejov who were injured in the automobile accident in June 2001. Contributions to the fund were received from American Sokols, Canadian Sokols, Slovak Sokols and other citizens from North America. A total of \$12,574.71 was collected and the funds were distributed to Jarmila Donthova, Miloslava Turnova, Eva Leznova and Eva Sovick. va.

We have received some information regarding the progress of the Sokol Sisters through correspondence. Sis. Donthova and Sis. Turnova returned to the Czech Republic on September 10, 2001. Sis. Donthova has had several operations on her one leg and is recuperating slowly. Also, Sis. Turnova had brain surgery. Miraculously, she is able to communicate and is using a walker to get around. Eva Leznova had knee surgery in the United States prior to returning to the Czech Republic. Eva Sovickova sustained knee and shoulder injuries and returned to the Czech Republic a few weeks after the accident.

Again, we would like to thank everyone who helped our Sokol Sisters throughout this difficult time.

*Sokol Nazdar!
Vera Hibler, Chairman*

THE VOICE ... *Readers Quips, Comments & Queries*

Dear Ms. Satek:

At the suggestion of Ivan Dubovicky, Cultural counselor, Embassy of the Czech Republic, I am writing to you on behalf of the VIA Foundation.

Established in 1997 in Prague, the VIA Foundation is a nonprofit organization created by funding from the U.S. government. The purpose of VIA is to improve the quality of life in the Czech Republic by making grants to support community self-help projects. Each year, over 100 grants are made in support of human service and community development programs.

Examples of recent projects include the restoration of the neglected Libohaj Forest Park in Policka, Bohemia; the renovation of a 19th century warehouse to create a cultural, educational, and retail center in Brno; and support for a rehabilitation center located near Ceske Budejovice offering respite care to families of handicapped children.

VIA is at the center of many important changes going on in Czech society today. It has been a catalyst for a wide range of self-help projects that represent a new spirit in the Czech Republic. We think it is important for the community of Czech Americans to know more about these changes. With that goal in mind, VIA has asked me, as a Czech American, to prepare a series of articles that give a more personal look at some of these changes. These articles, which will be distributed over the next few months, will be brief (less than a thousand words) and provide a closer look at VIA projects of various kinds.

Would your newspaper be willing to place one or all of the articles in upcoming issues? Our goal in providing these articles is to raise the profile of citizen action in the Czech Republic.

You will find enclosed a copy of the first article, which can be edited to fit your space needs. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. I'll be willing to provide more information, as well as photographs of each project.

Yours truly,
Carol Hochman
President, Pittsburgh chapter of the
Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU)

For information about VIA Foundation, go to: [HTTP://WWW.NADACEVIA.CZ/ENGLISH.HTM](http://www.nadacevia.cz/english.htm)

BORUVKA: A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

It was a summer birthday party being held around the pool. Friends had gathered to share birthday greetings with a young lady who was celebrating her seventeenth birthday. It was a wonderful setting for such a special day. Some of the young people, including the birthday girl, pulled wheelchairs under the shade of a tree, leaving room for nurses and attendants standing

nearby to offer assistance. Being mentally or physically disabled was not keeping these young people from enjoying this special occasion. There was plenty of laughter and smiles as the birthday celebration got underway and that was exactly what the staff of the Boruvka Rehabilitation Center had in mind.

Located in Borovany, near Ceske

Budejovice, the Boruvka Rehabilitation Center was established in 1999 with the help of community volunteers to offer respite care to families of mentally or physically disabled young people. Respite care includes a week-long stay at Boruvka during which time the young people have opportunities to socialize and enjoy special

Continued on Page 9.

BORUVKA: A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

activities in the center facilities while families take a break from their responsibilities as care givers.

Boruvka, which translates as "Blueberry," is a bright and sunny building which formerly housed kindergarten students. It has a swimming pool, playground, and small garden that is kept by the young people. Inside the center, the walls and windowsills are decorated with the colorful pictures and projects of the weekly visitors. The entire atmosphere of the center is one of warmth and understanding.

As I toured the facility with the Executive director of Boruvka, Jiri Bajer, I saw young people doing lots of different things: a few girls were listening to popular music, a young boy was playing in a pile of colorful rubber balls, and one youngster was getting ready to nap in a private resting area, but still enjoying the hugs of her attendant as they sat together on a small bed.

In a room filled with bottles of paint, brushes, and clay, I found perhaps the most cherished possession at Boruvka – a kiln, necessary in the production of the many ceramics found throughout the center. The kiln, which was paid for by a grant from the VIA Foundation, had captured the interest of everyone at Boruvka. It was obvious from the number of colorful ceramics on display that the children were fascinated with their ability to create these colorful pieces of art. Before I left,

children approached and, in shy voices, asked if I would accept small ceramic gifts that had been marked as work completed at Boruvka 2001.

In the last two years, Boruvka has provided care for 223 young people and last year received the PROROK 2000 Award as one of the top three community development projects in the Czech Republic. An important part of this award-winning program at Boruvka is health care. An on-site pediatrician, who prescribes for medical needs ranging from epilepsy to muscular rehabilitation, works in coordination with six nurses. Staff also includes thirty-five community volunteers, many of whom are students helping with special activities like summer camp.

Czech foundations, such as VIA, consult with the staff of Boruvka regarding fund raising strategies and offer support through special grants, but the driving force behind the success of Boruvka comes from the dedicated efforts of Executive Director Jiri Bajer. According to VIA Director Barta, "If there were not people like Jiri Bajer and his staff, there would be no such services as those provided at Boruvka. The state does not recognize what they do as a social service." An example is the extraordinary means Jiri Bajer uses to meet his payroll each week. While Boruvka receives 58% of its budget from the contributions of individuals, corporations and foundations, the

rest is financed by government funding. Sometimes government funds are not available when needed, so Jiri Bajer must use his backup plan which involves a local network of supporters who provide interest-free loans. The loans are repaid when the government funds come in. It is a precarious way to maintain a budget that is the equivalent of \$50,000 a year, but the dedication of Jiri Bajer and his community of volunteers makes it all happen.

Boruvka is an excellent example of a community development project that is promoting change in Czech society today. It demonstrates that where there is a real need, groups of people are coming together to solve problems at a community level. They are volunteering to help local causes and no longer waiting for "state mandates" solutions to their problems. Peoples attitudes are changing about what it takes to bring positive change to their daily lives.

The work of non-profit organizations has been critical to the success of many human service programs in the Czech Republic. The VIA Foundation has offered long term support to boruvka, and to over 100 other programs each year. Foundations are providing the technical assistance, the funding, and most of all, the moral support to keep these vital programs going.

Member Insight *(continued from page 3)*

each of their units try at least one new thing in the coming year. I would like to hear from the membership chairmen, any officer, and any member in the organization as to their ideas. I will then share these ideas. My address is in the March issue of the

American Sokol magazine. Send e-mail correspondence to: 105444.710@compuserve.com

I appreciate your interest in membership. Let me hear from you. Let's share ideas!

SOKOL NEW YORK NEWS

From the Sokol New York Newsletter - March 2002, by Sis. Norma Zabka, President, Sokol New York

Sokol New York is a member of the Bohemian Benevolent and Literary Association (BBLA), which owned a building on 73rd Street (in New York), between first and Second Avenues. This building was known as "Narodni Budova," or "National Hall," by those who participated in its activities or those who lived in the neighborhood over 30 years ago. So, the building is known as National Hall and the association that owned it was BBLA. The building has been standing idle for over a decade.

Well over a year ago, BBLA voted to sell the building to the Czech Republic. Three opponents filed a lawsuit that delayed the completion of the agreement for 6 months. In December 2001, permission to sell the building was granted and the plaintiffs' claim brought against BBLA was dismissed.

FROM JUDGE MARTIN SCHOENFELD'S DECISION:

Bohemian National Hall is a significant reminder of Czech and Slovak culture that once flourished on the east side of Manhattan. BBLA has been subject to the changing demographics of NYC. It is well located and has been

professionally appraised at \$12,500,000.00

- The "Agreement of Purchase and Sale" and "Agreement of Lease" provides in essence that BBLA will transfer the building to the Czech Republic for \$1.00. The Czech Republic will renovate the building and BBLA will have the use of the 3rd floor for \$1.00 for 99 years plus three 99-year extensions. BBLA will have the use of the renovated ballroom 36 days a year rent-free.

- The Czech government has approved an allocation of \$6.2 million to renovate the building. After renovation, the Czech government will occupy those parts of the building not occupied by BBLA and will maintain the entire structure.

- Finally, the sale will further the BBLA corporate purposes because it will allow the BBLA to continue to pursue its mission in a renovated home, rent-free for many lifetimes to come without being burdened by a dilapidated, non-conforming building or crushing renovation costs. Obviously, sharing the building

with the Czech consulate may foster increased ties between the mother country and its children.

FROM AN ARTICLE BY PETR GANDALOVIC, CONSUL GENERAL OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

- The Czech Republic is aware of the great responsibility it assumes as it takes over the property built between 1895 and 1897 from funds of Czech American associations. It intends to reconstruct the building, which is planned to be completed in the Spring of 2004.

- The Czech Republic intends to place the offices of the Consulate General and the Czech Center in the building and operate the grand ballroom together with the Czech Community. The BBLA will utilize the entire third floor, while Czech-American foundations, exhibitions, museums and a Czech pub should find their homes in various other parts of the building.

I think now we can look forward to more activity, excitement and spirit as the renovation process moves forward.

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