

American Sokol



National Sokol Summer Camp 2007

Sponsored by Sokol USA, DA Sokol, and American Sokol

Where: Sokol Woodlands Camp, Barryville, NY (2 hours north of NYC)
When: Monday July 30 – Sunday, August 5, 2007
For: Youth Ages 12-17
FMI: sokolsummercamp@american-sokol.org or write the home office: 122 W. 22nd St., Oak Brook, IL 60523-1557



National Sokol Summer Camp 2006
Look like fun? Register today for 2007
See page 14 for a way to win free tuition to camp!

AMERICAN SOKOL

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ASO Executive Board meets every 4th Tuesday at 7:30 PM
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Calendar of Events

MARCH

4	Sokol Milwaukee Bowling Tournament
4	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Annual Swim Party
5	Sokol MN Beginner Lv 2 Czech Language Class - Mondays for eight weeks
7	Sokol MN Beginner Lv 2 Czech Language Class - Wednesday's for eight weeks
10	Sokol Tabor Exhibition
11	Sokol Chicagoland Exhibition
15	Sokol MN Genealogy Class - Your Czech or Slovak Family History & How to Get Started
16	Sokol Naperville Tyrs Exhibition
16	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Fish Fry
17	Sokol Stickney Exhibition and After-Party
17	St. Patrick's Day
18	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Girls Team Competition
24	Sokol/Sokolice Milwaukee Večirek at Cliffords
24	Sokol Spirit Exhibition and After-Party
24	Masaryk Dinner/Dance - Sokol San Francisco
25	Sokol MN Flavors of Slovakia Dinner
29	Sokol MN Genealogy Class - Tracing your Ancestors Back to the Old Country
31	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Holiday Candy & Bake Sale

APRIL

6	Good Friday
8	Easter Sunday
9	Easter Monday (obs. Cz Rep & Slovakia)
13-14	Sokol MN Garage & Bake Sale
15	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Pork Dinner
20	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Fish Fry
21	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Boy's Gymnastics Meet
21	Central District Special Number Competition (possible alt. date 4/28)
27	Sokol Spirit Rummage Sale

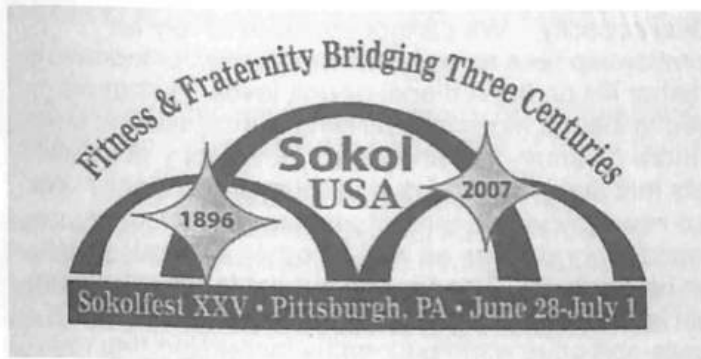
MAY

1	Svatek prace (May Day)
5	Kvetnove povstani ceskeho lidu - 1945 (Prague Uprising - 1945)
4-6	Sokol MN Participation in Festival of Nations
8	Den osvobozeni od fasismu - 1945 (Liberation from Fascism Day - 1945)
12	Central District Artistic Gymnastics Competition (girls 5-9 yrs)
12	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Vcelky Dramatic Society Play
13	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Vcelky Play & Duck Dinner
13	Mother's Day
13	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Duck Dinner
17	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Fish Fry
19	Central District Older Girls & Women's Gymnastics Competition held at Lyons Township North High School
19	Central District All Boys Gymnastics Competition - held at Sokol Spirit
19	Sokol San Francisco Picnic - Lake Chabot
19	Sokol MN Annual Tea Party Social
20	Central District Sokol Day - National Grove So. 1
28	Memorial Day

From the President...

Bro. Larry Laznovsky

In a letter dated January 31, 2007, Sokol USA President Beatrice Walko writes:



I am both pleased and honored to extend an invitation to you and your organization to participate in Sokolfest 2007. Sokol USA is sponsoring our twenty-fifth Slet and gymnastics and sport competitions June 28 through July 1, 2007 in the city of Pittsburgh. Our theme of "Fitness & Fraternity Bridging Three Centuries" really tells the entire story. Sokol USA is proud of its heritage, its history and looks proudly toward the future.

We invite your members to participate with us in gymnastics competitions, a golf tournament, men's basketball, men's and women's volleyball, a bowling tournament and fitness challenge as well as to perform in the Slet calisthenics. In the Sokol USA tradition, we will also sponsor a number of social events where you will be able to meet and greet brother and sister Sokols. We extend a special invitation to you to attend the Slet banquet, which will be held at the beautiful Senator John Heinz History Center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian museums.

The city of Pittsburgh has wonderful venues to accommodate all of the planned activities. We invite you to visit our web site www.SokolUSA.org or to consult Sokol Times for more information.

I sincerely look forward to meeting you at our Slet in Pittsburgh!

I remain with our sincere Sokol greeting

NaZdar!
Bea Walko
President



The Sokol Educator

Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl, Educational Director

Classes are well underway and many are working on the calisthenics, apparatus routines and special numbers for their annual exhibitions.

Let us remember that the Sokol movement was founded by Miroslav Tyrs and Jindrich Fuegner, February 16, 1862 in Prague. It developed into one of the greatest physical culture organizations and the most influential forces in the national life in that country and a dominant factor in the establishment of the Republic in 1918.

The American Sokol adopted all the superb teachings of the founders in Europe - physical, moral and cultural development - based upon the ideology of Tyrs: "A sound mind in a healthy body".

The American Sokol is a progressive organization willing to accept open frank democratic exchanges of opinion and devote time and energy to systematic, physical, mental and moral training. The American Sokol's attempt to bring every American of Czech, Slovak and Moravian extraction into the organization. And now, we are proud and privileged to accept all interested persons, no matter what their nationality, creed or color.

One obligation is expected from members: That they live their lives honorably to the best of their ability, to be faithful to the truth and to be proud of being an American.

- **Feb. 1, 1899:** Inauguration of divisions for Women in the Sokol Gymnastic Organization in Bohemia.
- **Feb. 5, 1820:** Birth of Bozena Nemcova, beloved Czech author. Her "Babicka" is a classic.
- **Feb. 14, 1865:** Funding of the Sokol movement in the United States, in St. Louis, Missouri, and was then known as Spolek Sokol. (What is the founding date of your own Unit?)
- **Feb. 25, 1858:** Joseph Cermak is born. Greatest exponent of Sokol ideals in America and a great teacher and leader.

There are so very many more important dates in February. Feel free to contact me for additional ones if you don't have them in your Unit's Library. Better yet, discuss these and other dates with your Senior Members.

Don't forget Valentine's Day on the 14th. The real Valentine was a young Christian priest who lived in Rome in the third century, A.D. He was martyred because of his faith and a feast day was kept on the anniversary of his death, Feb. 14. Do more research to find out more about this man.

NAZDAR !
EllenJeanne Schnabl
American Sokol Educational Director

AMERICAN SOKOL STRATEGIC PLAN

Submitted by Maryann Fiordelis, Interim Strategic Plan Manager

Continued from January:

Let me continue on with covering the remaining eight strategic imperatives. The next one to cover is **Standardized Programs** with the goal to 'standardize core programs for quality and content criteria in each of the 4 Sokol focus areas'. These focus areas include physical, educational, cultural and social. Here our goal is to build one core program in each of these areas that will be up and running in all of our units. The units will be given the direction and assistance to not only run these programs but how to maintain them successfully. It is our expectation that any member could go to any unit and feel comfortable on what to expect when utilizing any of them. Yes these programs will be cookie cutter types but ones based on quality and ease of starting up and running. This doesn't mean that programs you are currently running successfully will be discontinued but rather provide all units to have avenues to increase membership participation and asset utilization.

The third strategic imperative is around **Personnel**; here we have three subsets. The first is an Executive Director with the goal to 'design and staff position of Executive Director to lead standardization of core programs, develop national fundraising capacity and coordinate national events'. Yes, I know this was tried before but did we really give it a chance? How will it be different this time? The position will have a detailed job description with expectations and results spelled out, needs to be filled with a trained professional who has already produced results elsewhere. Although we can certainly look inside our organization we definitely need to look outside also. It is expected that over time this position will be self-funded (but that will take time). Each and every one of us needs to build a positive mindset and not set up roadblocks for failure. The next subset around Personnel is Instructors with the goal to 'develop and promote national standards to increase the qualifications and performance of instructors thru hiring, compensation, training and performance evaluation programs'. Some units have highly qualified instructors and great gymnastic programs but some pull in a body with little training or experience. Other units may regularly send students to instructors' school or courses but never fully utilize them once they get back. Does your unit have a plan in place for evaluating your instructors? How do you know they are doing a competent job? Once you have a good instructor, how do you keep them around? And the last subset around Personnel is Volunteers with a goal to 'develop and train districts and units in volunteer recruitment and retention strategies'. We know volunteers are the lifeline to keep us going but how often do we latch on to a new member and quickly burn them out because we keep plying them with more and more responsibilities or you have the same 10 percent of your membership (if you're lucky) doing everything!

The fourth strategic imperative is on **Finances** with three subsets. First there is Sources with a goal to 'fully analyze diverse revenue strategies including membership fees, program fee and facility usage to its fullest capacity'. We cannot continue to rely on membership fees as our primary source of income whether it's on the national or unit level. Rather we need to look at more fully utilizing our facilities to bring in more revenue on a unit level. How many of us have halls that stand unused during most of the week? We also need to explore the potential revenue maker around program fees as well as other avenues which can be explored. The second subset is Grants whose goal is to 'develop capacity to apply for and obtain grants and other contributions by increasing the Organization's attractiveness to donors and its ability to find and prepare winning proposals. We can't continually rely on our members' money but rather tap another good source of revenue from grants. But first we need to know the proper way to submit a grant and to make sure we have the information required to put into the proposal. We need to make ourselves look more attractive to donors as they don't want to pay for our own party. Wouldn't it be great if through grants or sponsorships our National slets could be fully funded? And the last subset around Finances is Units with a goal to 'increase funding diversity by providing grant writing tutorials and suggested areas to apply for grants, sponsorships and contributions'. Once we get up to speed on the National level this information will be filtered down to district and unit levels as well as have units who have been successful in obtaining grants share their information. As a recap around finances, by improving our revenue strategies we hope to increase each unit's financial situation and also our Sokol name recognition. As our name gains recognition so too should we increase members and attract donors and on it goes.

Our next strategic imperative is on **Membership** with two subsets. The first being Types with a goal to 'simplify and clarify membership for better organization and metrics'. Our membership policies and procedures are not meeting our customer's wants and needs. Our membership rules are confusing, unattractive and certainly different across our units. Do we even know the variety of membership types we have across our units? Do we have the right categories? Do we need a new category for parents of our gymnasts? The next subset is Database where the goal is to 'establish national capacity for capturing membership data that includes demographic and program information, meets the organization's needs to track its activity and outcomes, evaluate trends, identify markets and attract donors and clients'. Right now we really have no way to track our members other than maybe numbers but we can't go back very many years. It's difficult to do any marketing without data on demographics and trends.

Continued on page 10



In Memoriam:

It is with great sorrow we recognize the passing of long-time Sokol members.

Brother Louis Teichman

Submitted By Bro. Marty Eisenstein

A request was made by the family of Brother Louis Teichman to deliver a eulogy on behalf of Sokol Detroit.

For those who are not familiar, Sokol is a multifaceted organization guiding its members throughout life from early youth through maturity. The goal is pursued thru physical fitness, gymnastics and sports as well as varied cultural and social activities. A guiding force with a simple motto "A sound mind and a strong body".

My first reaction to the request was "Wow" what a tremendous responsibility and it was quite intimidating as well. But after a few moments I thought "Wow" what a great honor to have the chance to speak of the life and contributions of such an extraordinary man. I will continue by saying that from this point on I will be referring to Brother Louis Teichman as Tyk, only because that's what everyone called him.

It's easy to feel sorry at a funeral. Sorry for the person we just lost, Sorry for his grieving family, Sorry for his wife. I'll tell you whom I feel sorry for. I feel sorry for those people who did not have the opportunity to meet or know Tyk, or worst yet, I feel sorry for those who failed to understand his wisdom.

We will all be sorry and saddened by his departure but we will continue to benefit from his relentless drive to perfect our organization. We will benefit from his example of defining true character and we will benefit from the care he took to insure in us the Sokol principle of a sound mind and strong body.

If you are a Sokol member, I don't care if you are 25 or 85 you can't help but look back at how your own life has been impacted by your Sokol training and how much of that came from the actions, words and inspiration of Tyk.

He lived by, and taught the principles of Sokol.

For him it began in 1929 at the age of 17 when he joined the men's class and soon after attended his first kurz, which is a training school for instructors. A year later he joined the Board of Instructors and remained a member for 76 years. There was no question that Sokol gymnastics was his first love and that he followed closely in the footsteps of Miroslav Tyrs, the founding father of Sokol.

Tyk has many proud moments as a Sokol but none more than competing for and being awarded the honor of representing the American Sokol Organization at the 1938 slet in Prague. You can only imagine that at that

time Adolph Hitler was just beginning to move thru Europe.

Back in this country there wasn't a Sokol Slet or gymnastic event that Tyk wouldn't attend. Even during the Depression he found it necessary to attend the ASO Slet and it didn't bother him a bit that he ended up sleeping on a park bench. He wanted to participate.

Another highlight for Tyk was the 1967 grand opening of our Sokol Cultural Center. It was remembered by many that on that special day, he as Director of Men, gathered all the gym classes outside and declared, "Miroslav we have arrived!"

His devotion to Sokol was steadfast.

When we reached our 100th Anniversary here in Detroit he wanted to pay a true tribute to our Sokol spirit. So he virtually, single-handedly assembled 100 men to take the field at our Slet out at Sandy Bottom Lake. Again, many can remember that is was only the weatherman that did not cooperate. Everyone else sure did.

I remember Tyk. I was just a little guy and he was the teacher.

- He taught you more than just how to do a somersault or how to complete the proper dismount off the parallel bars.
- He taught you the importance of maintaining the right values.
- He taught you how to command respect.
- He taught the meaning of a true gentleman.

It goes without saying that Tyk was a disciplinarian but it was not offensive.

Did Tyk have a funny bone? Well if he did he would have knocked you over the head with it if you got out of line during one of his gym classes. The truth of the matter was he had a great sense of humor. It was just that it had its time and place.

Was Tyk the life of the party? No, but in his own quiet way he could light up the room.

Could he tell a joke? No, he was too modest and unassuming; he left that up to his friends.

Did Tyk have a big rip roaring belly laugh? No, but long after the laughter died one could spot Tyk standing and still smiling as he shared the enjoyment with others.

Bro. Teichman continued on page 6

Bro. Teichman continued from page 5

What Tyk had were many admiring friends. I understand he was a superb traveling companion. In their visits to Europe he often surprised everyone in his desire and capacity to taste the drinks native to each country.

With his shoulders back, chest out and chin up, he marched into Bulgaria and drank what the Bulgarians drank; and then onto Romania; and then Hungary and Yugoslavia. He did this in true Sokol fashion. Only his nose would get red, never his conduct.

We all remember Tyk one way or another. For those not in the gym classes, maybe they remember him as our Historian and Librarian. How about the Czech Dinner Party which was always a lot of fun. For over 30 years Tyk has been providing that special cultural event with its skits and programs. They have been so popular and interesting that we have actually been requested to start reruns.

Now I ask you to think what this organization would have been like without Brother Louis Teichman.

He in one way or another touched so many lives. Brother Tyk, Sokol Detroit wants to thank you for the morality you brought to this unit for the way you taught our youth for those deep convictions of yours.

We thank you. And don't worry; you left behind a legacy of service and a legacy of wisdom. Today we lay to rest a true Sokol. Farewell Brother Teichman.

Nazdar!



2006 Prague Slet Souvenir Items Available from American Sokol

Item	Suggested Donation
Opening Gala DVD	\$15
Opening Gala VHS	\$20
Slet Performance DVD	\$20
Slet Performance VHS	\$25
Souvenir Book *limited supply – must be ordered from the Czech Sokol Org. – delivery may be delayed	\$45
Prague Performance Team DVD	\$25

If you're interested in any of the above items, please write to the National Office. Donations must accompany requests.

Czech by Numbers - Birthdays and Anniversaries

Radio Prague [02.09.2006] - ABC of Czech - Pavla Horakova

The Czech word for birthday is narozeniny. The suffix -iny can be added to practically any number above ten to mean the particular birthday. For example twenty in Czech is dvacet and a twentieth birthday is dvacetiny. In the same way a thirtieth birthday would be třicetiny and a fiftieth padesátiny. That is sometimes called abrahámoviny after the biblical character Abraham. Another biblical age is 33, often called Kristova léta - "Christ's years". Also related to Christianity, the word křížek - little cross - can be used to mean a decade in a person's age. So for example the idiom "mít pět křížků" means to be in one's fifties.



If a number ends in the digit 0, in Czech we say it is kulaté číslo or a "round number". Such a birthday is then called kulatiny. For an important birthday or anniversary you can also use the word jubileum - jubilee.

An anniversary - výročí - can also be "round" - kulaté výročí. So Radio Prague's 70th anniversary in 2006 is a perfectly "round anniversary".

Wedding anniversaries have special names in Czech, too. A twenty-fifth anniversary is called stříbrná svatba - a silver wedding. Fifty years is celebrated as zlatá svatba - a golden wedding and a diamond wedding, or a 60th anniversary, is diamantová svatba.

AMERICAN SOKOL GYMNAST

Pages 7-10 are specifically designed to be a benefit to the Gymnastics programs of American Sokol.

Please pull, copy and distribute to your participants as you see fit.

Kandi Pajer - 117 Oakland Grove - Elmhurst, IL 60126

KandiPajer@American-Sokol.org

Every time I see an article that I think may spark some type of activity-I like to put it in! This is an article I saw in an online magazine I receive called LifeSCRIPT. It frequently has little tips and tidbits of healthful information that you can use daily or even on a one time whim. If you would like to Czech it out (hee hee) the web site it www.lifescrpt.com. I suggest on subscribing. You receive a letter a day-and a healthy recipe a day-some are magnificent. Enjoy-KP;) Feel free to e-mail me with what you think!

Burn Calories in 10 Minutes

FREE DAILY FITNESS TIP By Carly Young, LifeScript Staff Writer

Even though a comprehensive workout usually includes 30-60 minutes of cardio followed by 45 minutes of strength-training, you can still get a good workout even if you don't have much time. Don't forgo exercise altogether just because you don't have an afternoon to devote to working out. If you can only spare an extra 10 minutes, forget driving to the gym. To get your heart pumping, head to your living room and do a mixture of lunges, jumping jacks, pushups and sit-ups. For an impromptu strength session, incorporate moves that work your whole body. Do shoulder presses while you squat or perform triceps kickbacks as you plié. Don't stop in between the sets to maximize your calorie burn.

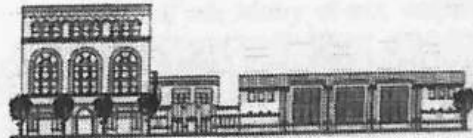
If you're feeling playful, jump rope for 10 minutes. Put on a CD with a good beat and crank up the volume for some extra motivation. Or, invest in a mini-trampoline to get a jump on weight loss. If working out for ten minutes doesn't seem very effective, just remember that every good thing you do for your body will help you on the road to a healthier you. Burning 50-100 calories is always better than burning zero! Making small changes in your diet and lifestyle will lead to a fitter, happier you over time. Take every opportunity to make good choices that will benefit your body and watch how ten minutes here and there can add up to a lifetime of fabulous health!



INSTRUCTOR SCHOOL

July 16 to July 30, 2007

Hosted by: Sokol Greater Cleveland



Novice

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Advanced II

Minimum age ⇨ 13

Also offered

USAG Safety Certification (must be 16 or over)

PDP Level 1 (must be 14 or over) *Highly recommended for Advanced and Advanced II*

For school applications: Contact your District or Unit Directors

For additional or immediate information contact:

Jane Wise, Instructor School Secretary

Phone 216-642-1429

Email: HJWISE@sbcglobal.net

Web www.american-sokol.org

Application Deadline is JUNE 1

Women in Sports Day in February

You all have probably seen this first hand, but it is great to relive it and realize the potential our bodies and minds have to get us through tough times. There are many other inspirational stories-you can find them online!
Search engine-Women in Sports! Happy Hunting! KP;)

"Kerri listen to me. You can do it," said USA coach Bela Karolyi as Kerri Strug readied for her second and final vault during the team competition at the 1996 Atlanta Games.

Heading into their final event, the vault, the U.S. had a lead over Russia and it looked like the U.S. had its first gold in the team combined exercises all sewn up. That is until teammate Dominique Moceanu fell down on both her vaults and Strug's first attempt also ended in a fall. Serious doubt crept into the thoughts of 32,000 spectators and Karolyi let her know that she needed to land her second and final vault in order to seal it. The only problem, aside from the avalanche of pressure on the 18-year-old, was that Strug had felt a pop in her ankle on her first vault and could barely walk, let alone sprint down the runway and fling herself up and over the horse to land with great purpose onto only one good leg. Somehow Strug gritted her teeth, thinking that the team's gold medals all depended on this final vault (in actuality they didn't, but no one knew that at the time), and got the job done with a solid landing before collapsing in pain onto her hands and knees.

The bear-like Karolyi scooped her up in his arms and carried her to the award ceremony to collect her gold medal and the rousing ovation from the packed house.

Strug, with two torn ligaments in her ankle from her courageous effort, was left unable to compete in any individual events.



How to Teach a Proper Round off

I obtained this information from www.drillsandskills.com. Feel free to visit and get more ideas for other skills. KP☺

I recently began volunteer coaching the cheerleaders at the High School I coach at and have been having trouble getting them to learn a great round off. Here are some strategies I used and they actually have worked. The key to a good tumbling pass (round off, back handspring) is to have a great powerful round off. Here are some tips and drills you can use in your classes to achieve a "Good Round off". The trick is to make sure they get a rebound and power from the trick. KP☺

Round off

- One of most important skills for floor. Frequently when a gymnast is unable to do a double back, full-in, or other high level back tumbling skill, the round off is where the problems begin.
- A deep lunge and long reach are important to generate the proper momentum.
- An aggressive blocking off of the hands and snapping of the feet are necessary to turn the round off over sufficiently for a stretched back handspring.
- As for back handsprings, handstand snap downs will help to improve this skill.
- It is important that the gymnast not leap into the round off. The second foot should not leave the floor before the first hand contacts the floor.
- The round off should finish in such a way that the gymnast should half to run backwards to avoid falling. The feet should finish in front of the rest of the body with the arms up and a hollow tight body.
- The gymnast's head needs to be kept in throughout the skill. Leaving the head out causes the round off to go around the side rather than over the top.
- Work round offs over stacked mats, or mat shapes to jump back onto 8 inch mats stacked on to cheese mats.
- Work round offs blocking from a slightly raised surface. Attempts should over rotate to the back without the feet touching the ground. This will encourage a strong block and snap down.

Passing the Torch: Rekindling the Flame of Czech and Slovak Heritage

By Sis. Louise Jansen Wessinger, Sokol Minnesota - Used with permission from Nase rodina (Our Family), CGSI Newsletter. Nase rodina promotes genealogy of the ethnic groups that comprise Czechoslovakia as it was formed in 1918. Article edited for space considerations.

I have always been immensely proud of my Bohemian ancestry. As long as I can remember I was dressed in Czech kroje, taught to sing and dance, and to respond with a hearty "dobře" to the question "Jak se maš?". I was the only 4th grader in my class who could not only spell "Czechoslovakia" but also find it on a map! As I got older I realized what a wonderful gift my parents had given me. I wanted to find a way to share my excitement about family and history with the next generation. Sadly, I think many young people today have very little interest in the past. This is unfortunate, because it also allows them to be unappreciative of the previous generations and their sacrifices to give them the lives they have today.

As a former elementary teacher, camp counselor, and educational director I have always been interested in how we help children learn. Years spent working at camps and directing VBS (Vacation Bible School) gave me the idea that a camp model could be used to effectively teach ethnic culture.

I was very fortunate to have several very talented and enthusiastic Sokol members including Judy Aubrecht (school social worker/former camp counselor) and Shirley Verner (former school teacher) who attended an "idea" meeting in early 1997. We discussed many options for our "camp". A few days later Judy surprised me with our "First Annual Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota Cultural Day Camp" brochure and we were on our way.

This June, 2006 we held our 10th Annual Camp. We had only 14 campers this year (we've had as many as 47!), 13 volunteers, and 3 junior leaders. We had a terrific week! Our theme was Castles and Medieval Europe. We talked about why so many Czech and Slovak cities are built around a castle (hrad) or a manor house



(zámek). We made heraldic shields, stained glass hangars, princess hats "robin hood"(Janosik) hats, and boys armor "tunics". We cooked stew with trenchers

(bread plates), made "jewels of the east", perníky, almond pudding, and "mead" punch. We built a huge castle gate complete with drawbridge out of refrigerator boxes. On the final day we held a banquet that included every camper receiving a title (queen, prince, duchess, etc.) then being introduced by the royal herald! After the banquet a tournament was held followed by a last day camp tradition---Sokol Bingo! (Campers make up their own boards with Czech words they have learned during the week. We give them a list!)

In our 10 years we have repeated some activities, but never an entire week. We try to keep it interesting to returning campers. We have changed things over the years to meet the changing needs of our campers or to take advantage when special opportunities come along. One example would be about 5 years ago, one of our camper's moms (Mary McMillan of Pony Pals) offered to bring her horses to our camp parking lot so the kids could ride. We connected that experience to our ethnic tradition in Moravia----the "Ride of the Kings".

Our camp sponsor is Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. It is important to have an established sponsor to handle financial matters and insurance issues. Sokol MN also provides our beautiful building and Sokol members most of our volunteer staff. As our camp brochure states: "Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota has a tradition of supporting educational, cultural, social, and athletic activities. Our program will provide campers with a week of learning about Czech and Slovak heritages. It will provide personal growth through cultural enrichment, and social and recreational activities. We welcome campers from all backgrounds."

Ages for campers are 7 to 14 years old. Campers are divided into smaller groups by age. This allows us to alter rotating group activities to suite each age group. Each group has an adult or junior leader assigned to them for the week. Groups are designated by color. (i.e. blue group---modra skupina). They are given that color folder to collect their papers and artwork during the week. They also make a name tag and are given a Czech version of their name.

Our junior leaders are 15 -20 years old and assist with various activities. Our staff consists of volunteers of all ages who offer their experienced backgrounds to make a memorable week for all. Many of our volunteers are parents, grandparents, and even great grandparents of the campers. They make camp fun and safe.

A sample day camp schedule would be:

- 8:45-9:00 Drop-off (have an arrival activity ready)
- 9:00-9:30 Daily Welcome (Arrival activity, theme of the day, special guest)
- 9:30-11:30 Rotating activities (1/2 hour classes in cooking, language, sewing and crafts)
- 11:30-12:00 Flag Ceremony/Singing
- 12:00-12:30 Lunch
- 12:30 12:45 Game/Relays
- 12:45-1:15 Special guest/ Activity
- 1:15-2:00 1st choice activity
- 2:00-2:45 2nd choice activity
- 2:45- 3:00 Snack and Parent pick-up

Continued on page 13

We have no method for tracking why we are losing members. How can we correct a situation if we don't know the cause? We need to have data that can help us at all levels to make good business decisions. When it is fully utilized across all levels it will make reporting and analyzing so much easier. Wouldn't it be great when it comes times for annual report, we can just push a button and out comes a report.

Another strategic imperative is around **Organizational Development** with two subsets. The first subset is Structure with a goal to 'improve national/district/unit organization structure for better top-down management'. Our current organizational structure has some limitations that must be resolved to address the needs of the Strategic Plan such as paid professional staff as well as creation and integration of new units into our organization as well as redefining responsibilities to allow for and take best advantage of new leadership. We need to ensure that the structure does not stifle us nor impede our decision making process with of course the right checks and balances in place. The second subset is for Units with a goal to 'develop handbook with standards for complete operation including creation, location, performance evaluation, asset management and accountability'. We need to adapt a structure and operation of all our units to allow them to take best advantage of the opportunities provided by the strategic plan. The National needs to provide assistance to units that cover all areas for their survival and growth. The handbook will be a guide to assist units not put a stranglehold on them to hinder their operation. Wouldn't it be great if there is someone out there waiting to start a new unit but doesn't know how to begin to be able to provide them with guidelines and tools which encourages them to undertake the project?

The next strategic imperative is **Communication- Standards & Methods** with the goal to 'define appropriate ways and methods to communicate within the organization'. If we depended on previous methods of getting information down to member level, it would be YEARS before they heard about our strategic plan! We need to get this information as well as other important messages down to the needed level in a timely manner. Too often we hear, "I was never told" or "I didn't know about it until it was too late"? We need to define and develop effective communication tools and standards for good two-way communication.

Another strategic imperative is **Marketing** with two subsets. The first being Brand with a goal to 'define the Sokol Brand based on hallmark programs'. First we needed to figure out who we are and what we want to do then we need to get our name out there and quit being the "Best Kept Secret". Do you remember playing the game of name the product where you would get tidbits from an ad and you had to guess what product it was? I bet if I mention 'golden arches' you know I'm talking aboutMcDonalds, of course. We

too need to create a Sokol brand that people start identifying with while utilizing techniques and strategies from hallmark programs. The second subset is Marketing Plan with a goal to 'create supportive marketing materials and implement marketing plans at all organization levels to promote brand'. So after the creation of our brand we need to market it, ourselves and our products so that the general public learns about Sokol. We need to utilize all the appropriate marketing tools for advertising, promotion, publicity, public relations and sales so we're no longer the best kept secret but world renown!

Our last strategic imperative is **Leadership Development** with two subsets. The first is Recruitment with a goal to 'recruit highly qualified leaders with key skill sets that meet needs of board and key volunteer positions'. Is the love of Sokol enough to make someone an effective leader? Are we losing gymnasts due to instructors who do not know how to motivate and retain students? How many times have we simply put a body in a position (whether qualified or really wanting to) just to fill a position? Do we even have a pool of candidates? What are the key leadership skills we need? We need forward thinking, decision makers with people skills. We have them in our organization we just need to recruit them and give them incentives for filling these positions. And the last subset is Internal Training with a goal to 'institute internal training and growth programs that develops members for leadership positions'. Do we have people doing mediocre jobs in key positions? Did you know that we have no structure training for Executive Board members on any level? We need to be on a continual improvement road to assist our leaders in their growth and development so they can properly lead us to growth and prosperity.

Our Strategic Plan for growth is a 5 year plan. We placed the strategic imperatives on a timeline for development of action steps to accomplish the established goals. We had lengthy discussions around which should come first and yes the professional facilitators even pushed us back when we were laying this out. So here's what we came up with and some reasons why. Our first order of business was a new **Mission** statement. Of course we have a new one but now we need to market it. It is already out in some of our publications but we need to incorporate it in all our marketing materials. The next imperative we will start working on is **Programs**. Why are we starting there you ask? Well we decided we needed to know which programs we wanted to standardize before we could start working on **Personnel**. But **Finances** should surely be the first area we tackle. We were assured that on a National level we have start up money to cover at least the first year of this plan. Throughout these five years we'll have management of the strategic plan; currently being overseen by the Interim Strategic Plan Manager. We anticipate that the Program Team

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AMERICAN SOKOL STRATEGIC PLAN

continued from page 10

will get begin the first quarter of '07 and be completed by end of 3rd quarter of '07. The Personnel Teams should begin the 2nd quarter of '07 and be completed by year end. The Finance Teams should begin the 3rd quarter of '07 and be completed by year end. Once we have programs and personnel in place, membership growth should begin and we need to have **Members** types well defined. We then need to take a look at our **Organizational Development** to see how our structure may need to be adapted and strengthen to complement the plan. Next on or plate will be **Communication, Branding and Marketing** and finishing off with **Leadership Development** so we have the right leaders to take us into the future. Our Members Teams with begin the 3rd quarter of '07 and completed by year end. The last four teams will start in 2008. The last piece I'd like to cover this month is the Implementation Plan again covering the five years of the plan. The first part of the implementation plans covers Hallmark Sokol Programs and Brands which is expected to run through 1st quarter of 2009. At the same time will also be development the standards for these programs and communication of same with expected completion by 2nd quarter of '09. The development of needed training at various levels and well as dissemination of training materials is expected to begin near the end of the 1st quarter of 2008 running through end of 2009. As we go through refinement of our various strategic imperatives, implementation of our plan will also be happening in stages with all pieces out to units by end of 2009. Because a good strategic plan is fluid and needs continued review and enhancement, the Peer Review and Improvement Plans is staged from the end of the 4th quarter of 2009 to the end of 2011. Because we need to set expectations for units to follow and fulfill, we've staged Unit Achievement and Accountability beginning mid-year 2010 through the beginning of 2012 (end of plan).

Next month I'll cover funding of plan, strategic imperative teams, as well as some next steps. Hopefully by now your unit has either seen the entire presentation by a member of the Strategic Planning Task Force or knows what the future date is. If not, please ask your Unit President when we'll be coming to town.

Don't forget to check out the plan on the website: www.american-sokol.org; click on Members. If you want to fill out the survey or check out the various Team Interest forms, the password is 'nazdar'.

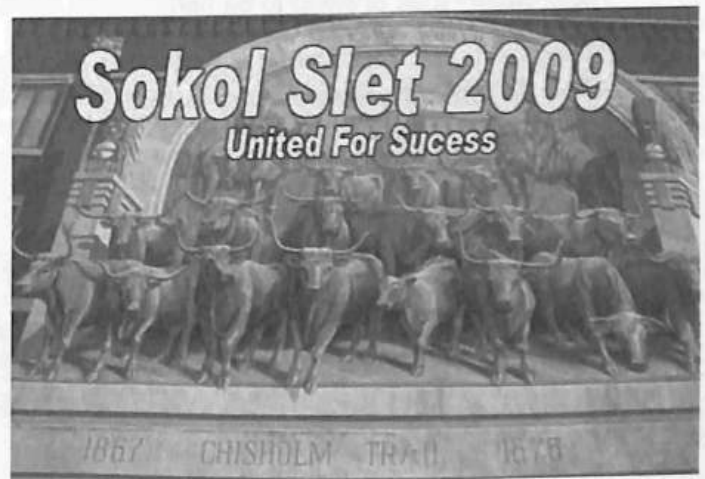
Maryann Fiordelis, Interim Strategic Plan Manager

Sokol Fort Worth to Host 2009 National Slet June 22 to 28

This is a huge honor for Forth Worth Sokol and a wonderful opportunity for our city. In addition to Sokol clubs from all over the U.S. coming to compete, several other national and regional organizations will be convening and holding their meetings here.

This event is only held every four years, and we'll need a lot of gymnasts and volunteers. So stick around for all the fun in 2009!!

Preliminary info is available at www.Slet2009.com and check back often for updates.



AMERICAN SOKOL

MERIT AWARDS 2007

Applications due by May 1, 2007.

Visit the American Sokol website to
request your application today!



Cedar Rapids 1942

by Blanche Adamec

Passed on to the National Office by Brother Paul Lebloch

In the summer of nineteen hundred and forty-two
I had a vacation --- there was nothing to do.
I decided that I would go to the course
Being given by Sokol ---my only recourse.

The train ride there wasn't quiet at all
I certainly thought that the roof would fall
There wasn't a bit of sleep to be had
When it came to an end I was really glad.

When in Cedar Rapids we finally arrived
I think we were all a bit surprised
The folks there were so nice to us
And just for us they made such a fuss.

The food we got was really good
Those people our stomachs understood
We didn't have to worry at all
To get some eats we just had to call.

We took part in the nice exhibition
Through others were at the river fishin'
We drilled as best as we could that day
It was pretty good --- some people did say.

The temperature had gone quite high
And for a cool breeze how we did sigh
But that wind just wouldn't come around
It wasn't anywhere to be found

Some of us went to the Ellis Park Pool
Where the water was so nice and cool
We swam around like a school of fish
To keep ourselves cool was our only wish

And then came the day when the course began
From all parts of the states the students ran
All of them eager to start
Most of them were quite smart.

With paper and pencils and all kinds of books
They wore on their faces intelligent looks
There were pretty girls and handsome boys
When they all got together ---what a lot of noise.

Then finally we did get started
And with the outside world we parted
We got acquainted with each other fast
It looked like friendships that would last

The first thing we did was to form a line
And introduce ourselves, one at a time
We each stepped forward and spoke our name
Also told from what Sokol and city we came.

By this time we had all our teachers met
And had looked around the grounds so wet
We took a walk to the Cedar River
The water looked warm, we didn't shiver.

We took a few steps in the muddy bank
And in about four inches we sank
But we all managed to find our way
Back to the cabins where we would stay

The girls two cabins occupied
The boys in the third had to abide
Laughter, there certainly was plenty
From all of these girls --- exactly twenty

The ages of all these little girls fell
From thirteen to --- I cannot tell
The boys were mostly from the Junior Class
We were all gathered in one great mass

Whenever we sat down to eat
It rarely failed to be a treat
And all of this was made complete
Be the services of Helen and Vera, so sweet.

We came to the table with huge appetites
Whenever we left we were satisfied
The waitresses would bring on more food
And they always were in such a good mood

Their services were appreciated
They couldn't be over estimated
And now with them everyone corresponds
It's Helen and Vera --- our dishwater blondes

Sister Hulac taught us a bit of dancing
You should have seen some of the boys prancing
The Polka, Mazurka and Waltz she taught
The results she got weren't what she sought.

Brother Molcar was the busy bee
Who taught us Sokol terminology
So that we some drills could compose
And write what we did with our heads to our toes

Brother Machovsky left us in a whirl
When he tried to teach us Indian Clubs to twirl
In most of our programs he played a part
And left us with a happy heart

Our leader there was Brother Jelinek
When he was around all hands were on deck
There he celebrated his fiftieth year
What we sang for him, you ought to hear.

Brother Machovsky wrote it
The contents were well noted
We had to learn it on the sly
When Brother Jelinek wasn't near by

Throughout the two weeks long
We had but one theme song
U Nasich Kasaren was the name
We really did bring that song to fame

A few times we had a campfire
Of these none of us would ever tire
We'd sit around in a circle and sing
Of this, that and the other thing.

The whole class numbered thirty-four
There would have been more if we weren't at war
It would take a book to tell about each
Of these young students who some day may teach

Edward Michal, Richard Ptacek,
Erwin Benda, Joe Chmelicek
Charley Schultz, Charley Basta,
Robert Klinsky, Brother Raska

Billy Mily, Milton Herzing
Betty Liska, Mildred Mahring
Helen Lebloch, Jerry Burian
Evelyn Pollock, Vlasta Krestan

Gloria Masek, Charley Zdenek
Blanche Lang, Vera Ruzicka
Annie Pospisil, Georgia Suchy
Olga Naxera, Joe Domansky

Bozena Storch, Valeria Kohler
Henrietta Kubik, Mildred Berger
Frances Lastovice, Willard Hollman
I hope I have forgotten no one.

Now I must close my reverie
Which was entered in my diary
I know that for some time to come
The Course will be forgotten by none

The good times we spent together
In every kind of weather
Those are memories which will last
And won't be forgotten very fast.

It is helpful to have a theme for the week/day to help you teach as well as have fun! The best resource for ideas is the volunteer's talents and experiences. One example would be Georgiana Dolejsi. She has had many roles in Sokol over the years and is leader of our Sokol Senior Singers. She has led our camp singing since day one. Georgiana teaches the correct pronunciation of all the Czech words. We have a flag ceremony each day. Our camper color guard marches in with "It's a grand old flag"---6 flags (US, Czech, Slovak, State, Sokol, Sokol unit). The color guards post their colors. Then we pledge allegiance to our US flag. Next we honor our Czech and Slovak ancestors with their anthems. Georgiana then leads us through some of our Czech and Slovak favorites: Fly you Sokol, Sla Naninka Dozeli, Hej hei, Aj lučka, Tovačov, to name but a few. We march, clap and dance as is appropriate. Over the years we have also learned some simple prostna (calisthenics drill) to honor our Sokol roots!

Everyone participates in morning half hour activities with their group. In cooking we have made kolachy, perníky, cabbage rolls, chlebecki, gulaš, ovcne knedličky and several kinds of polévka. Last year my



goddaughter, Marta Kotonová of Hustopeče, Moravia taught us to make šulanky and marzipan. We try to cook things that involve the kids.

Who knew kids would love to peel carrots?

Libby Imbrone and Mary Jo Chlebecek have developed many sewing projects. This year Mary Jo and her sister-in-law Sharon Liska helped the campers make beanbag hacky sacks (think World Cup Soccer). They also learned to fringe napkins (for our banquet) and weave on a loom. In crafts we have made many projects over the years. Our Sokol artist in residence, Doreen McKenney has helped us create craft projects to enhance our themes. Some of our favorites have been Czech and Slovak flags of many kinds, village bee hive folk art flowerpots, mini-saloon boxes, ancestor trunks, leaded stained glass windows, and many more. Special guests have taught us straw weaving (Sandra Hynek), paper cutting, egg decorating, and how glass beads are made (Lori Stroner). Vlasta Hanover started teaching Czech to our children in the early years of our camp. This year campers learned Czech language from Jim Chlebecek (two of his granddaughters are campers). We usually work on learning to count, colors, animals, foods---and simple phrases and words.

After lunch we run off some energy with a game. Czechs and Slovaks, kočka and pes and relays are favorites.

In the first years of camp we held four 20 minute groups in the afternoon. This was very rushed. About four years ago we came up with a plan to have two 45-minute choice groups in the afternoon. The campers pick two choice activities the first day of camp. This has worked very well as everyone is doing what they chose and it remixes the campers so they get to meet more kids. Examples of choices are: gymnastics (taught by a Sokol instructor), puppet theatre, play production, castle building contest with Legos (Sharon Liska), Miss Poppy Seed Contest (Carole Horak), beadwork projects, Adventures and Surprises (a new fun thing everyday--- sidewalk chalk, making ice cream, tours of the basement) folk designs and painting (Lucille Pavlicek), Camp Newspaper (Judy Aubrecht), Euro-knitting and rug hooking (Mary Jo Chlebecek) to name just a few.

Before the campers are picked up each day we have a snack and a short story. Traditionally, the 1st day the story is "Salt is Greater than Gold" and we pass bread and salt---the ethnic greeting. Each day the campers name 10 things they learned or did that day. They count to 10 in Czech! We also remind them of any thing they need to think about for the next day. Parents always come into the building to drop-off or pick-up.

The final day of camp we usually have our regular activities in the morning but a program for parents in the afternoon. The program consists of showing our flag ceremony, favorite songs and dances, a play or puppet show, etc. Certificates are presented to leaders and to campers. Campers and their parents usually have a load of projects to take home as well as many memories.

We have been blessed with many terrific volunteers and guests over the years. They bring their talent and enthusiasm to the program for our campers. Dave Stepan has been a part-time volunteer every year, even when his girls were too young to attend camp. His love for the Czech and Slovak cultures is a wonderful and positive male role model for our campers. Our friend, Mark Bigaouette is also a great camp supporter who continually looks for new ideas for camp on his many trips to the Czech and Slovak Republics.

Judy and I have been co-directors all 10 years. Every year is a new adventure. After our 1st camp in 1997 we were delighted at how well the week had gone and immediately began to worry about what we would do the next year. Honestly, we always have so many things to do that we run out of time. That is why plans are always done in pencil. Both of us talk to the children the very first morning about our expectations for their behavior during camp. We emphasize that all of the leaders are volunteers (that means they don't get paid) and that they help at camp because they love children

and our heritage. We expect them to respect our leaders, the other campers, and our beautiful old building.

We are fortunate to have such a rich and varied culture in our Czech and Slovak homelands. Hopefully, by teaching our children in a fun way about it we will spark their passion for family and history. And maybe by learning about their own heritage they will also gain respect for the cultural heritage of others.

About the Author:

Louise Jansen Wessinger is a life-long member of Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota. She is currently a member of the Sokol Board of Directors, serves as Educational Director and is director of the Tanecni Mladez and Tanecni Teens dance groups. She is secretary of Czech Lodge 51 of the CSA. Louise also serves on the BOD for the Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota and is a former Volunteer Coordinator of the CGSI and frequent volunteer. Louise is a longtime member of the St. Paul Czech and Slovak dancers and currently serves as the group's program director. In 2000 Louise was selected to attend the Czech Foreign Ministry's cultural language school in Dobruska, CR. She also participated in the Sokol Grand Slet in Prague that year, as well as visited her family's ancestral village of Hartmanice in Bohemia. Louise has also developed a one person play—*My Grandmother's Trunk from Bohemia*---about how her family emigrated to Minnesota in 1871 which she has presented at several schools. Louise is self employed having been an aerobics instructor for 26 years. Louise and her husband Chuck live in Eagan, Minnesota and have 2 grown sons. You may contact the author at: louisewessinger@msn.com

AMERICAN SOKOL YOUTH COMMITTEE ESSAY CONTEST

The American Youth Committee is sponsoring a contest whereby you could win **FREE TUITION*** to the National Instructors' School or Summer Camp. Four prizes are available for award.

Essay Topic:

The Youth Committee has run this Essay Contest for over five years with less than desirable results. Your challenge is to develop a contest that you think will generate an over-whelming response from the Teen Youth Members. In your essay you must devise and explain the rules of your contest. You must also detail the judging criteria you will use to select your contest winners. Remember the prizes are the same; four scholarship awards to either the National Instructors School or National Summer Camp.

Good luck and who knows, we may decide to use your contest ideas next year!

*For entry information, instructions, and prize details please visit the American Sokol Website/Sokol Kids/Kids News/Teens or ask your Instructor or Director.

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"Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words
Keep your words positive because your words become your behavior
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Gandhi



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