

# American Sokol™



## One Sunny Sokol Day In June



Sokol Members from Naperville Tyrs, Spirit, Stickney, Tabor, Town of Lake, Chicagoland and USA Lodge 306 participated in the Chicago Sister Cities, June 5th Prague Day. Sokol performers and spectators converged on Daley Plaza via train, trolley and bus, excited to be a part of this special event. The site was busy with other performers as we started to assemble. The plaza had tents with information and goodies for enjoyment. The Central District presentation was performed in a large area off to the side of the main stage. The demonstration started with girls, of all ages, from Sokol Stickney tumbling and their lively music drawing the plaza's attention to them. Members from USA Lodge 306 joined the tumblers. This was followed by Sokol Naperville Tyrs 1st class girls dressed as cheerleaders' doing their special number called "Together". Their excitement was shown by their energy. The Senior AM class from Sokol Spirit, our largest group comprised from many Central District units & lodge 306, showed off their marching as they entered the performance area and then performed the National Special number to "500 Miles". Due to some technical issues we needed a filler number so we lined up the 1st and 2nd class girls and they gladly performed their calisthenics. We ended the performance with the ladies from Sokol Stickney doing their special number called "Calypso". Every number had the crowd captivated. Our Central District flyers were passed out in the crowd with contact information about the units in our district. Sokol members were in other groups performing such as the United Moravian Society dancers, earlier that day and many familiar faces were seen in the crowd for support. This was an event to remember. I would like to thank all those who supported this performance and took time to come and show off our Sokol enthusiasm.

Nazdar, Sis Barb Kucera

# AMERICAN SOKOL

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ASO Executive Board meets every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 7:30 PM  
(except July/Aug).

ASO Board of Instructors meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 7:30 PM  
(except July/Aug).

# Calendar of Events

## SEPTEMBER

3	Labor Day
15	Sokol San Francisco Picnic - Lake Chabot
15	Our Lady Mary of Sorrows (obs. Slovakia)
23	Sokol MN Czech & Slovak Festival
28	Den české státnosti St. Wenceslas Day (Czech Statehood Day) Day of Czech Statehood
28	Sokol MN Potluck Membership Meeting

## OCTOBER

4	Sokol MN - Fruit Dumpling Class
8	Columbus Day
13	Sokol New York - 140 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration
13	Sokol MN Harvest Dance
20	Sokol San Francisco Independence Dinner/Dance
28	Den vzniku samostatneho ceskoslovenskeho statu - 1918 (Czech Independence Day)
28	Sokol MN Pork Dinner
30	Halloween

## NOVEMBER

1	All Saint's Day
2	Day of Souls
11	Veteran's Day
12	Veteran's Day Observed
15	Sokol MN - Goulash Class
17	Den boje studentu za svobodu a demokracii (Students' fight for freedom and democracy - 1939 and 1989 - Velvet Revolution)
18	Sokol MN Pancake Breakfast & Craft Sale
22	Thanksgiving Day
30	Sokol MN Annual Meeting

**Send your Events to**  
**Editor@American-Sokol.org**  
**and add them to the Calendar at**  
**www.American-Sokol.org**

The mission of the American Sokol is to provide fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural and social programs.

## June Issue Correction:

Brother Vaclav Solfronk. Sokol Washington writes...

As someone who has spent my formative years in Chicago I want to thank you for including at least four articles about Chicagoland in the June issue. I enjoyed reading them all.

But the article reprinted from the Chicago Tribune "Czechoslovakian roots run deep in Chicago" had a glaring error in the third paragraph from the end. The paragraph starting "During the gala, . . . stated that Jan Masaryk was the first president of Czechoslovakia, this is incorrect! First president of Czechoslovakia was Tomas G. Masaryk, Jan's father. Jan Masaryk was Czechoslovakia's Foreign Minister until 1948, when as many believe, he was forced to jump out of the window at the Foreign Ministry's building (Cernin Palace).

-- Thank you.

## Grandparents Day September 9<sup>th</sup> GRANDMOTHERS & GRANDFATHERS

Grandmother, Grandfather! Sent from above; Child-hugging, heart tugging, symbols of love!  
Kind, understanding faith that supplies You who are keepers of family ties.

Grandmother, Grandfather! Life is a test.  
You are the guardian of all that is best.  
Teacher, example, leader of men,  
Someone who listens, wonderful friend!

Grandmother sits with them, family style  
Time to teach lessons with afternoon teas.  
Calling on neighbors, trying to please.  
Rainy days spent with a "memory" trunk  
Making real treasurers from discarded junk.  
Sharing their secrets, finding their toys,  
Teaching them gently life's special joys.  
Knit a warm sweater, make pinafores,  
Sewing and cooking, shopping in stores,  
Note the resemblance to Mother and Dad,  
Flooded with memories, refreshing and glad.  
Cookies need baking, swings need a shove,  
Grandmothers know the importance of love.

Grandfathers, Grandmothers! Yours to enjoy,  
Play with and daydream  
With your girl or boy!  
Grandfathers whistle, sometimes they talk,  
Tell a good story, go for a walk.  
Go along fishing with someone who cares,  
Yelling at ballgames, listening to prayers.  
'Deep down inside, the heart sings a song,  
Feeling like springtime, vibrant and strong!  
Grandchildren grow up too fast to measure.  
Grandfathers know they are something to treasure.

Grandmother, Grandfather! Hold out your hand!  
For this you were chosen, a part of God's plan,  
To love them, to lead them, remove doubt and fear,  
Tomorrow is present when children are near!

by: John Goodman

## Identified as the "Sokol Chicks"

on the Foundation Fighting Blindness website's Events page, these great Stickney ladies participated



in the VisionWalk - in support of Sister Irene Polashek. Among the "chicks" walking were Sisters Audrey Austrevich, Barb Vondra, Donna Scott, Nancy Pajeau, Irene Polashek, Irena Polashek and Juanita Logiudice, and others. These Sokol Stickney women participate in Fund Raising Walks all year long! It is a great way to keep in shape and gives these Sokol friends a purpose to get together. They also meet in the summer months and walk the beautiful grounds of the Oak Brook Park District and then stay to enjoy the concerts in the park.

**VISIONWALK** is a walk-a-thon fundraising program of the Foundation Fighting Blindness. Last year FFB raised over \$1.3 million to fund sight-saving research through **VISIONWALK**. As promising treatments move into critical human studies, the need for research funding is greater than ever before.

## Way to Go Sokol Chicks!

## ATTENTION ALL SOKOLS

## ATTENTION ALL SOKOLS

In this issue many articles show Sokol members doing different things than the "norm". What is your Unit doing? Let us know. Send your event announcements and follow ups in for inclusion. We're all very interested in how you run your Sokol Unit!

Contact: Sis, Nancy Imbrone, 651-481-7949  
or email [Editor@American-Sokol.org](mailto:Editor@American-Sokol.org)



# The Sokol Educator

Sis. Ellen Jeanne Schnabl, Educational Director

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## NAZDAR! SISTERS AND BROTHERS:

By the time you receive this issue, Sokol classes will have started and the agendas for regular administrative meetings will be in the works.

You will be seeing new members in your ranks, so please welcome them warmly. Make them feel comfortable and make them know they are wanted and needed! As newcomers, they may be a bit shy about joining in. Hand out some Sokol literature, starting with the very nice 3-fold pamphlet which is available from the National Office.

Samuel Gompers was 26 years of age in 1876 and tried to make a living as a cigar maker. He was very well read and in 1886 became the first president of the newly-formed American Federation of Labor. The primary function of unions was to deal with employers, private or public, and to improve job conditions. The wider concept of unionism includes social responsibilities as well. Now LABOR DAY is the first Monday in September and is observed in the United States of America and Canada as a legal Holiday in recognition of the working man and woman.

The beginning of September starts the picking of hops (sber chmele) in the agricultural regions of the Czech Republic. The end of hops harvest calls for celebrations - Docesna (from "cesat chmel" - picking up hops). These festivities also honor the god of beer: Gambrinus.

In September --

5, 1841	Antonin Dvorak was born
9, 1850	California admitted as a State into the Union
12, 1822	Jindrich Fuegner was born
17, 1832	Dr. Miroslav Tyrs was born
23, 1800	Wm. H. McGuffey was born. His early reader for use in schools made him famous. Over 122,000,00 copies were sold.

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## Strategic Planning Imperative Teams

Have you been wondering who is on the various teams that have been working toward moving our strategic plan along? Wondering what they have been doing and which teams still need help? READ ON!

First let me introduce you to the team members.

**Program Team:** Mary Cushing, Detroit, Team Lead; Tom Pajer, Spirit, Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF) member; Maria Breidenbach, St. Louis; Marla Breidenbach, St. Louis, Florence DelCarlo, Chicagoland; Candy Short, Tabor; Barbara Vondra, Stickney, SPTF member and BOI Resource Person.

**Personnel Team:** Mary Steinman, Ft. Worth, Team Lead, SPTF member; Maryann Fiordelis, Detroit, SPTF member, Larry Laznovsky, KHB Ennis, Executive Board Resource Person; Brenda Michalek, Chicagoland & Naperville Tyrs.

**Database Team:** Tom Pajer, Spirit, Team Lead, SPTF member; Brian Dolezal, Greater Cleveland; Mike Drobick, Spirit; Jean Hruby, Spirit, Stickney & KHB Ennis, National Office Resource Person; Laura Kwak, Chicagoland; Rob Newcomer, St. Louis; Laura Weber, St. Louis.

**Finance Team:** Barbara Vondra, Stickney, SPTF member; Allen Cushing, Detroit; Don Newsom, Chicagoland nonmember; Meribeth Tooke, Spirit.

**Membership Types Team:** Mary Steinman, SPTF member; Nancy Beasley, St. Louis; Mary Ellen Newsom, Chicagoland; Mary Ann Sulz, St. Louis.

**Volunteer Management Team:** Barbara Vondra, Stickney, SPTF member; Dolores Detroyer, Detroit.

*Team Leads are recommended by the team members and presented to the Strategic Planning Task Force for approval.*

Are you reading through these names and which units they are from and saying wow my district or unit isn't even represented. **So do something about it by applying today.** Read on to see what these teams have accomplished so far and which teams still need HELP!

The Program Team has been meeting weekly on Wednesdays from 6:00-7:00 p.m. central since March and is diligently working on putting together core programs in each of the four focus areas of physical, educational, cultural and social. In fact, at the August Executive Board meeting, the team made a presentation to them around their educational program. So you'll be hearing about our exciting educational program soon. Hope this spikes your curiosity. This team has sufficient members to move forward and no further applications are being accepted.

The Personnel Team has been meeting weekly mostly on Mondays from 7:30-8:30 p.m. central (this might change when we get back into the gym season) since June. As I hope you've read elsewhere in this publication, our main task was to develop the job description for the Executive Director position. Moving forward on this position has been approved by both the Executive Board and the Board of Governors. This position is currently posted on both monsters.com and craigslist.org. Letters/emails have gone out to Unit as well as District Presidents alerting them on this position and asking them to help spread the word to potential candidates (members and nonmembers alike). The team is currently screening resumes as they come in (as of August 22 we have received 23 of them), finalizing interview questions and other information the Selection Team will need as they go through the selection process. We hope to have the top candidates interviewed during the Board of Governors meeting in November. One of the next areas this team will be addressing are standards and performance evaluations for instructors. This team is fortunate to have two people who have human resources backgrounds as well as one who is an insurance specialist. This worked really well as the Executive Director position was being developed. However they would like to see more people on this team as they began looking at the instructor goal. So if you have experience in soliciting qualified instructors, ideas around what type of qualifications to look for or what needs to be included in a performance evaluation, go to the website ([www.american-sokol.org](http://www.american-sokol.org), click on members, then member forms) and send in an application for Personnel.

The Database Team is just getting going. They had their get acquainted meeting and will begin to meet on a regular basis on August 29. They will be meeting on Wednesdays from 5:00-6:00 p.m. central. At this time, they feel there is a sufficient number on the team so this team is also closed for new applicants.

The Finance Team is our next team to start. They have a big job ahead of them looking at various sources of revenue streams for national and units, how will the new programs be funded, how/where can we tap into potential grants, and so much more. This is a relatively small team so if you are interested in joining please go to the website and submit an application.

The Membership Types Team is waiting in the wings. Once we have more members on the Personnel Team, Mary Steinman will be better able to see her way to getting this team going. We would like a couple of more members from some different units to join them. Are you interested?

The last team that was to get started this year is Volunteer Management. Well guess what we do not have enough volunteers to get going. We complain about being expected to do too much for Sokol and all we are doing is burning people out so help us figure out how we can either correct the problem or at least make it more appealing for more people to volunteer by joining this team and bring your thoughts and ideas to the table.

Nazdar,  
Maryann Fiordelis  
Interim Strategic Plan Manager



# NEWSFLASH



The Personnel Team of the Strategic Planning Task Force has received permission to start seeking an Executive Director for American Sokol. Check out our website at [www:american-sokol.org](http://www.american-sokol.org) for information on what this job entails.

Interested in applying? Go to either [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) or [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org) and search for Executive Director, American Sokol, location Chicago-West. Help us spread the word. Deadline for this posting is October 10, 2007.

## BELIEVE

## DREAM

## ACHIEVE

Maryann Fiordelis  
Interim Strategic Plan Manager

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Sokol Baltimore Presents



### Vinobraní - The Grape Harvest Dance

Saturday, September 29, 2007

Music by "Joy"

Tickets \$ 30.00 per person



For reservations call

Frank Huber @ 410-877-0534 Mail your check, payable to "Sokol Baltimore"

To Frank Huber, 514 Sellrus Court, Fallston, MD 21047.

*Last day to order tickets is September 25<sup>th</sup>*

### What is Vinobraní?

Vinobraní literally translated means Grape Harvest Dance. Bohemia's rich soil and mild climate were well suited for the cultivation of grapes. Local wine industries developed. Near the end of the growing season the farmers would contract with the vintner to sell their grapes. After an agreement was concluded, the grapes became the property of the winemaker (even though the grapes were still on the vine).

Soon it became mischievous sport for the former owners of the grapes to sneak out into the fields and remove portions of the crop from the vine. The new owners of the grapes had to keep watch over their investment. To do this they employed constables to police the vineyards. The townspeople did everything they could to outwit the policemen and escaped with bunches of grapes. Every year this routine was repeated and before long it became a tradition.

VINOBRANÍ is a celebration of this event. This evening the grapes and apples will become the property of the winemaker. The policemen will begin patrol of the property. At that time, you are encouraged to join in the sport of stealing the grapes. Some will be successful while others will be arrested by one of the policemen and taken to the judge for sentencing. All will enjoy the judge's decision.

# 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

## 2007 Merit Awards

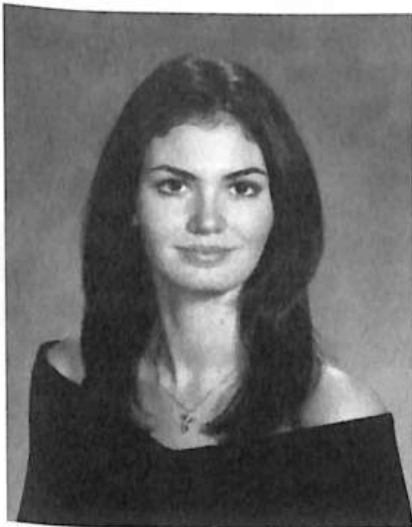
*The XIIIth American Sokol Convention (June, 1975) instituted Merit Awards to be paid from the American Sokol Future Leaders Fund. American Sokol Youth or American Sokol adult Sokol members who are planning a full time (at least two semesters of 12 hours per semester or equivalent) course or program in an accredited two-year or four-year college or who are already participating in such a course of study may apply.*

Here are the seven recipients of the 2007 Awards, and their essays on ...

## “How Sokol Has Prepared Me For The Future”

**Erin Flaherty**

**Sokol New York – Eastern District**



My involvement in Sokol has undoubtedly prepared me for the future. I have, over the course of the past few years, had opportunities that many of my peers have not. I have been in leadership roles, and learned important organizational and planning skills. I have taught Small Boys for three years, which has, to say the least, greatly expanded my patience quota. I've helped with many fundraisers in that time, including Roller Nights, overnights, and holiday parties. Additionally, attendance at Board of Instructors meetings has taught me how to voice my thoughts effectively but more importantly, really hear and consider the thoughts of others.

The leadership I've learned through Sokol has also taught me the value of teamwork. I've learned that every member of a team has something to contribute. I have been able to take this philosophy and apply it to other aspects of my life. For example, I chaired a highly successful World

Water Day campaign at my high school last year, putting into practice all the fundraising tips I'd picked up around the gym. Creating groups by individual's particular talents felt natural to me, since we always did it that way at Sokol – you joined the committee that you feel fits your talent. However, a lot of my classmates had not thought to do that, and it definitely increased participation when responsibilities were clearly outlined.

With all of the useful skills I have developed over my time in Sokol, I know I've been prepared for success in the future.

**Mary Kubat**  
**Sokol New York - Eastern District**



When I was a little girl I loved kindergarten but I couldn't wait to get home from school to watch "Murder She Wrote". I loved the music and the fast pace of the show and was fascinated when Jessica found the clues to solve the murder. My parents were a bit shocked and amused with my obsession with the show and topic but they sat and watched it with me and helped explain the obvious parts that I did not understand. Years later, I started watching the show "Forensics" and was again fascinated with the tools used to investigate crime. I remember thinking how dumb a criminal must be, knowing how easily science could be used to solve almost any crime or murder. There really is no such thing as the "perfect crime". I realized that I liked the study of forensics and wanted to be a part of it. I began to read all I could find about the subject and when my high school offered a science course in this area, I was the first to sign up. During the class I was convinced that this was a career I would love and decided to study this in college. I chose The George Washington

University because of its excellent reputation in general, but the clincher is that they offer degrees in both biology and criminal justice AND had a building on campus devoted to the study of forensics. I am thinking of medical school in the future and the possibility of becoming a pathologist – a key player in the field of forensics. I am so excited about college and can't wait to start studying to begin my career.

My parents, both Sokol members, met at Sokol when they were young. My father was born in Czechoslovakia and his family came to New York after World War II. He joined Sokol New York when he was a boy and has been involved ever since. My mother started on the gym floor when she was 16 years old and became a member when she was 18. You can say that I would not be here if it wasn't for Sokol! I don't remember any time in my life when Sokol wasn't a part of it. When I was an infant I was attending Sokol functions because my older brother and sister were also enrolled in classes. I joined the tots class as soon as I was eligible and I loved it and have been enrolled in classes ever since. I have taken classes in gymnastics, ballet, and rhythmic gymnastics, among others. All have taught me the value of learning to achieve goals beyond my expectations. I remember seeing moves on the gym floor and thinking how wonderful they were and never dreamed that I would actually be able to do them. I can now do just about any move with ease on the gym floor and have the confidence to try and master even more difficult and complicated moves. Sokol taught me that if I tried and practiced hard, anything could be possible. Sokol gave me the tools and the discipline needed to accomplish any task. When I decided to enter the field of forensics and possibly medicine, I knew it would be a long and hard road. I also know that because of the values of striving for excellence and the fun in competing that I learned at Sokol, I can do anything that I set my mind to.

The Sokol philosophy has instilled in me the love of being physically fit and strong enough to be able to have the ability to work hard for my goals. My ideals and goals are within reach because Sokol has given me the gift of knowing that I can achieve results, no matter how daunting, if I master one step at a time. I know that with the solid foundation that I have learned through my life, I will succeed in my chosen career. I look forward to the opportunity and hope that, by giving me a scholarship, Sokol will also be proud of my achievements.



1918 College Freshmen

**Ryan Newcomer**  
**Sokol St Louis - Central District**



Sokol has prepared me for the future by teaching me leadership. Sokol has given me opportunities to show responsibility and to grow in character. I have been a member of Sokol Saint Louis since I was born. When I was a child, I would attend summer camp and picnics at our Sokol Camp in Imperial, Missouri. Recently, I attended the American Sokol Instructor's Course and was awarded the Brother Robert Liptak Scholarship Award and also received the Leadership Award for my class. For the past two years, I have been a gymnastics instructor for the Sokol St. Louis 1st, 2nd and junior boys classes. I am also currently our unit's youth director. The responsibilities required for these jobs have helped me immensely. I hope to have the opportunity to be a counselor at Sokol National Camp in the summer of 2007. Over the years, I have made many friends from across the country. Some of these friends I will

keep for the rest of my life. I continue to strive to get people my age active in Sokol, so they can experience what I have.

**Melyssa Petkus**  
**Sokol Tabor - Central District**



The past 17 years in Sokol has greatly opened my eyes for the future. Through Sokol, I have gained the leadership and social skills that will help me through the next stage of my life: College. I have learned to become a better leader by teaching 1st class girls and attending 2 National Instructor Schools. The girls I teach look up to be for guidance, as well as help. With these leadership skills, I know I have better prepared myself to be a hard worker, and make the right choices in life. Through Sokol, I have made a time of friends when I participated at various national events, including National Slets, Youth Camps, and Instructor Schools. These social skills I have developed with help me socialize with new friends at college. Being involved in Sokol for so long has helped me develop into a fine young lady that is ready for success in my future.

**Kelsie Soneson**  
**Sokol Ceska Sin - Central District**



Sokol has been a key part of my life since I was four years old. It has helped to shape me into the person that I am today and given me the chance to make long-lasting friendships. Through instructing at Sokol and attending Kurz in 2006, I have learned much better leadership skills and have become much more responsible. Spending two weeks away from my parents and having younger children look up to me has forced me to mature and become a stronger and more independent person. In addition, competing in Sokol gymnastics has been extremely important in gaining a positive and optimistic attitude and in teaching me to never give in or quit. By far the most important thing I learned from my membership in Sokol and especially Ceska Sin, is that the people you share experiences with are what makes certain experiences unforgettable. Through all the years I have been in class and all the slets I have attended I have made

amazing friends that will stay with me for forever. The ability to socialize and meet new people will be the first obstacle that I will have to overcome upon going to college and thanks to Sokol I feel well prepared for this challenge. Sokol has had an astounding impact on my life and I recommend this experience to everyone who wants to learn, belong, or grow.

**Victoria Schoepke**  
**Sokol Milwaukee - Central District**



Sokol is a great organization that has helped me to prepare for the future in many ways. It has given me the opportunity to take leadership and follower roles. I have learned how to give and take direction without causing conflict. Sokol has also taught me how to respect others and myself no matter what their ability is. When I first went to National Camp in New York, I was very introverted and afraid to let people see the little gymnastic ability I had. I was floored when I found out no one cared how good I was, only that I was hard-working and willing to contribute everything I had to the group. This made me realize that I can be strong in who I am and not let others judge me by their standards. Sokol camps have given me the tools I need to make friends, who I still talk to, and to work well with others. I attended Instructor's school in Omaha; there I found out that everyone was not always agreeable to my ideas. This made me reconsider the way I approached things and people; I needed to listen to others' ideas. Now I look at a situation from all points of view before putting in my input to help solve a problem. Sokol has also given me many chances to be creative and go outside the box. The competitions at Instructor's school require you to test the limits and go outside what is considered normal which has given me the courage to think and go outside the box in other aspects of my life. All of these things accumulated have made me a more mature, understanding, complete individuals and this is how Sokol has prepared me for the future.

**Stephanie Valentine**  
**Sokol Omaha - Western District**



How has Sokol influenced my life? Hmm. Well, I think the better question would be "How as Sokol NOT influenced my life?" I cannot think of a single aspect of my life that has not benefited from active involvement in the cultural revolution that encompasses Sokol's youth today. I simply could not be who I am without the confidence and leadership skills that this program has given me.

I am not a gymnast. I never really have been, except of course for three months when I was five. I attended a competitive gym named Academy of Nebraska Gymnastics (ANG). I hated it. We were jump roping and cart wheeling on the beam within weeks. I rarely missed any of my sister's practices, though, and when she switched from ANG to Sokol Omaha in 1999, my attendance was almost as consistent as hers. I knew artistic gymnastics; I knew each routine backward and forward and every note of the floor music.

Within a year, I jointed, or rather became, the rhythmic gymnastics class. It was previously unprecedented or at least as unpopular to participate only in the rhythmic program, but it was the only sport I related to. Artistic was not quite "my thing". Looking back on those first two years, I recognized my hard work and I appreciated the dedication, of my coaches to me, and to myself. I liked rhythmic, I guess. It was okay. But it was absolutely nothing compared to my love of coaching.

Coaching is my life. Those girls are my life. Every group that I get the opportunity of leading I consider a true blessing and each gymnast secures a place in my heart. To be a part of their lives, even just for three hours a week is phenomenal.

I remember my first class, a group of beginner six-year-olds, and I remember my anxiety on that first day when those 7 pairs of glittery eyes looked at me for instruction. I was only thirteen.

"They're looking up to me," I thought.

The pressure of the situation hit with full force at that moment. I wasn't just a regular thirteen-year-old girl. No, not anymore. I was a coach, a role model, and a leader. It wasn't about me anymore, but about them. I struggled through the first year, and, now that I think about it, all five years since then. Struggling, though, is the first step in growth and the mother of learning.

I think that the role of a coach in a young person's life is crucial to positive development. I try and teach every class to ensure their growth as gymnasts as well as people. I care more that they can laugh at themselves if they fall of the beam, than if they can stay on it. Gymnastics is about having fun, about feeling confident in who you are. A sound mind in a sound body. Both of these things are equally important in the growth of our nation's youth.

To be, being a coach is like being human. It defines who I am, who I've become and who I want to be. Sokol has given me the opportunity to live my dreams. Sokol taught me that dreams really do come true.

## Congratulations to all 2007 Merit Award Recipients

Try your luck with a BrewNost! raffle ticket! BrewNost! is the annual fundraiser for the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library. Please use the form below to order tickets. Tickets are \$10 each, with 100% of the proceeds benefiting the National Czech & Slovak Museum Library. P.S. Act fast - we only printed 1,200 tickets!

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## “Prague Days” in Chicago

As experienced by Sister Jean Hruby, American Sokol National Office

As you probably know, June 2007 was designated “Prague Days” in Chicago. This event was a collaborative effort on the part of the cities of Chicago and Prague to celebrate Czech heritage. I was privileged to be selected to represent American Sokol on the Prague Days Committee which planned this historic event. Since no such event had ever been held in Chicago, neither I nor any of the distinguished committee members knew just what to expect. In the end, our efforts were a great success. Our Czech heritage was highlighted and celebrated throughout Chicago in a new and wonderful way. I want to share with you just a few thoughts about my Prague Days experience.

You can take pride in knowing that American Sokol was a major sponsor of the Prague Days 2007 events. In the past issues, you have read about American Sokol’s contribution to the Opening Day on Daley Plaza and our hosting of the “Czech’s in America Exhibit” in the National Office. Other memorable events that I attended and that were co-sponsored by American Sokol included Art Exhibits featuring the incredible talents of Jan Grimm, Oldrich Kulhanek and the Re-Dedication of Cermak Road. The Re-dedication ceremony was hosted by the Honorable Richard M. Daley, Mayor of Chicago, in Dvorak Park which is located on Cermak Road in the Pilsen neighborhood. Both the Czech Community and the Mexican Community joined together that day to honor the former Mayor Anton Cermak, the first foreign born Mayor of Chicago. I asked any Sokols attending this event to wear their uniforms. As luck would have it, the Chicago Tribune highlighted this event with a picture of one of our Sokol Stickney girls, Payton Elliot! She looked so cute smiling for the camera in her Sokol leotard!

I was chosen by the Golden Prague Gala Committee to assist in the planning and execution of the entire Golden Prague Gala which was a Ball to celebrate the culmination of the entire month’s activities. It was incredible! Notable attendees included; Pavel Bem, Lord Mayor of Prague, Petr Kolar, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the USA, Marek Skolil, Consulate General of the Czech Republic and other distinguished members of the Czech Embassy and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ondrej Havelka and his Melody Makers were the featured entertainment – and Wow!, it was like walking into a 1930’s movie!

At dinner, I was honored to have Mr. Oldrich Kulhanek, artist from Prague, at my table. His daughter, Katarina, works for the Consulate Office here in Chicago. Brother Rome Milan, Sister Henrietta Milan and Sister Annette Schabowski all donated beautiful artwork for the Silent Auction. While my duties kept me running that night, I had a wonderful time and I could see that all of our guests enjoyed a lovely evening of dining and dancing.

One of the most memorable moments of Prague Days 2007 was attending the Non-Profit Seminar hosted by the Kristyna M. Driehaus Foundation held at Northwestern University. Sis. Barb Vondra attended with me. The distinguished speakers included Karen A. Egerer, President and Founder of Heartland International, Valerie S. Lies, President and CEO of the Donors Forum of Chicago, Donald Haider, Director Kellogg School’s Center for Nonprofit Management, Members of the Sister Cities International Program of Chicago and the Guest of Honor, The Honorable Tomas Chalupa, Mayor of Prague 6.

Mayor Chalupa spoke of nonprofit organizations in the Czech Republic, much of which focused on the Sokol Organization. In his conclusion he presented American Sokol with a Commemorative Folder from the 1948 Slet in Prague that included commemorative stamps and original signatures of the Officers and Delegates to that Slet. His presentation was an incredible moment for me and for the American Sokol as well.



As he was congratulating us on our nonprofit accomplishments, he recounted the same story many of you have heard - one which Sis. Jarmilla Vogel told me about during her visit to the 2005 Slet here in Chicago. He described how all but one of the people who signed this Commemorative Folder had been taken away after the Slet and later executed by the Communists. He spoke of how the Czech people believed that American Sokol was "the light at the end of the tunnel" to them. Because we kept Sokol going, they still had hope that their lives would be better some day. As he told the story my lips quivered and I tried very hard to fight back the tears of gratitude. I couldn't believe that I would be able to touch and hold the signatures of these honorable people who lived and fought for democracy and believed in the Sokol movement. They may physically be gone from this earth, but their faith in Sokol is still alive encouraging me, and all of us, to spread the word of Sokol. It amazed me that still today the connection between the Czechs and the Americans is so heartfelt and strong because of Sokol. As the Mayor spoke, I remembered standing with Sis. Vogel listening to her reminiscence of the 1948 Slet in Prague and this, too, brought tears to my eyes. Remembering Sister Provaznikova brought the feeling back to me yet even more. I think everyone in the room could feel the powerful connection that American Sokol has with the Czech people because, as I looked around, they were crying too.

On behalf of American Sokol, I proudly accepted this precious gift from Mayor Chalupa and I knew immediately that this gift was not just a gift from him, from his family, from his Sokol, but it was also a gift from each person whose signature appears within. At that moment, I felt the connection of what Sokol meant to those people and how we must strive to keep American Sokol alive. I was so proud to be there and even more proud that American Sokol was a part of Prague Days 2007.

As I look back over the past few months, I am amazed at what was accomplished on behalf of our Czech Community. In just a few short months The Czech Consulate Office in Chicago, the Czech Embassy in Washington DC, The City of Prague and the Prague Sister Cities Program of Chicago made the event possible, albeit with the Prague Days Committee doing the heavy lifting! What a task it was. Nevertheless, I would do it all over again. It was worth every minute! As for our American Sokol, it has benefited greatly from the events of the past months. American Sokol has developed new and strong ties with people and organizations that are striving to promote volunteerism and nonprofit programs between the Czech and American Communities. The similarity of their programs and our purpose is astounding: The Heart of Europe (Prague) and The Heart of America (Chicago) is what brought us together for Prague Days 2007 and it is also what brought American Sokol together in 1865! It doesn't take much to see that American Sokol is special and that with our new friends, our future is bright!

I wish all members could have been a part of Prague Days 2007.

Sis. Jean Hruby

## Did you know ... Czech

...Oskar Schindler with whom you may be familiar from Spielberg's film Schindler's List was born in a Moravian town called Svitavy (now in Eastern Bohemia) in 1908?

...the English playwright **Tom Stoppard**, who received an Oscar for Shakespeare in Love in 1999, was born Thomas Straussler in Zlín, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic)?

...the Nobel Prize in Literature for 1984 was awarded to the Czech poet Jaroslav Seifert?

...the Czechs are the #1 beer drinking nation in the world, consuming the most beer per capita in the world (160 liters or 43 gallons), and that they have been drinking beer since at least 900 A.D.?

...Václav Havel, former president of the Czech Republic, liked to take visiting politicians to Prague pubs?

...the brewery U Fleků was established in 1499?

**Dear Sokol community and friends:**

Some of you are aware of the following unconfirmed news that was released by EverestNews.com several weeks ago: "...reliable sources have reported to EverestNews.com that a climber from the Czech Republic collapsed at 8300 meters after returning from the summit with his climbing sherpa Dawa Sherpa. His agent in Ktm is Iceland Trekking, the climber was put on an Asian trekking permit (like a ton of the climbers are). We are continuing to withhold his name until it is confirmed that his family has been notified...

As there is no official reporting system on the North side of Everest it is sometimes hard to know when the family has been notified. The agencies have been notified...We have asked that they confirm to us that the family has been notified..." Unfortunately, the sad news has been confirmed - It has come to our attention that Br. Libor Kozak life's journey has been unexpectedly concluded.



Br. Libor Kozak will be remembered as a true renaissance man with a big heart open to all that needed it. Libor was known to us all for enthusiastically organizing our summer camps. In the years 2000 - 2002 Libor helped to establish a children's program for our Chapter.

Libor's untimely death has left his wife Dana and two talented young daughters Eliska and Marketa not only without his loving care but also without the principal means of financial support. 'Sokol Washington Libor Kozak Fund' ('SWLKF') has being established to help the family navigate the difficult financial issues facing them. Please feel free to visit [www.liborkozak.com](http://www.liborkozak.com) to learn how you can help. Your donation will go a long way to help the family recover every small gift will be appreciated. Your donation is tax deductible. Sokol Washington, D.C. organization acts as the designated agent accepting and processing your donation, and will absorb the administrative cost associated with your gift.

I would like share with you the following from Ecclesiastes:

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, And a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

A time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate,  
a time for war, and a time for peace.

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-8*

Thank you!  
Brother Tibor Bartalos  
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## In Memoriam:

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



### **Rose L. Friedrich (nee Zeman)**

*25 September 1919 - 9 August 2007*

Rose L. Friedrich, 87, of Venice, FL suddenly passed away on 9 August 2007 of complications due to heart failure. She was born in Chicago, Ill. And lived in Edgewater, MD. and the Washington, DC area over 50 years.

Beloved mother of her daughter, Carol Bierwagen & (son- in-law, Ronald) of Englewood, Fl., her sons, J. William Friedrich of Rockville, Md., John & (daughter-in-law, Micki) Friedrich of Lawton, MI and Ronald & (daughter-in-law Paula) Friedrich of Westminster, Md.

She is also survived by her granddaughter, Kari B. Schlieper, husband, Howard Schlieper, great grandson and granddaughter, Austin and Jolie Schlieper of Warrenton, VA; her grandson, Christopher Bierwagen, wife, Jill, and great granddaughters, Carly and Cassidy of Ponte Vedra, Fl. Additionally, she is survived by grandchildren and spouses, Bill Friedrich of California and Christy Friedrich Cavey & husband Mike Cavey of Maryland and great granddaughter, Alexa Cavey. Jocelyn Friedrich ; Jeffrey, & wife, Christie Friedrich of Maryland.

Rose and her now deceased husband, Jaroslav (Jerry) worked for the Bata Shoe Co. in Chicago and Belcamp, Md. Always known for her friendly smile and good business sense, Rose was ahead of her time, when in her early 20's, she opened her own retail store. For many years, they were a team, and opened several shoe stores in the Maryland area, including Jerry's Family Shoe Store in Annapolis, Md. They were active members of The Lions Club, and Sokol. Rose was a Sokol gym instructor in Belcamp, Md. She later became Treasurer of Sokol WA. Upon moving to Venice, Fl. in 2000, she became President of the Venice Czech-Slovak Club and remained active in various Venice organizations until her death.

Submitted by  
Sis. Mildred Barcal  
Sokol Washington D.C.

## STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

I haven't had an article in the paper for a couple of months so I figured I better give everyone an update. While I'd love to say that the newsletter to all our members worked the magic and we have lots of people volunteer for the various committees but that just aint true. While we did have some submit team interest forms we still do not have enough on most of our teams. Does this faze us – you bet it does. Will it stop up – nope but it will slow us down. The Executive Board and the Strategic Planning Task Force does not see that we have an option. We MUST move forward or die. Maybe not overnight but we will eventually whither away.

The word I hear most is that we are so busy with our own unit we can't give anymore time. Fact has it that you ask a busy person when you want something done. Another fact is that without the American Sokol, our units will not survive. Humph, you say. Not so, we have our own building and/or money in the coffers. So did Sokols Moravan, Zip, West Suburban, Taylor and several others but over time they lost their buildings, no new members were joining and soon they were just a few members attending meetings or going out to lunch. This is not SOKOL. There is still time to submit your form.

The only team that is officially closed is the Programs Team who are well on their way to developing standards and core programs. The Personnel Team has also begun. They are first tackling the position of Executive Director and will work their way through the fulltime paid positions. But the other area they will be working on is the area of Instructors. So if you are or have been an instructor or a physical director and have experience in coaching, hiring or finding good instructors why not join the team.

Our Database and Finance Teams will be getting started in another month or so. We still could use some more team members on the Finance Team as well as on our Membership Types and especially our Volunteer Management team. Please seriously consider your willingness to fill out a Team Interest Form for one of these teams. Just go to our American Sokol website at [www.american-sokol.org](http://www.american-sokol.org), click on members then member forms; here you will see the various team forms.

Without your help and support we may not succeed but with it we CAN do it.

**Remember to DREAM BELIEVE ACHIEVE**

Maryann Fiordelis  
Interim Strategic Plan Manager



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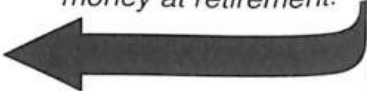
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