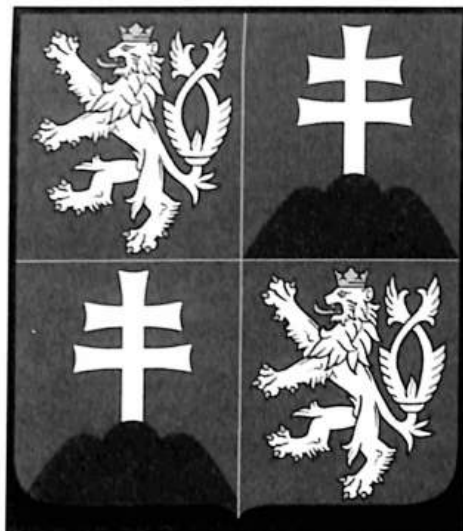
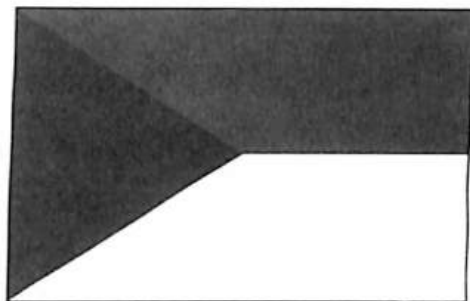


The mission of the American Sokol is to provide fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural and social programs



Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk
first president of Czechoslovakia

The creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 was the culmination of the long struggle of the Czechs against their Austrian rulers and of the Slovaks against Magyarisation and their Hungarian rulers. Although the Czechs and Slovaks have similar languages, at the end of the nineteenth century, the situation of the Czechs and Slovaks was very different, due to the different stages of development of their overlords – the Austrians in Bohemia and Moravia, and the Hungarians in Slovakia – within Austria-Hungary. Bohemia was the most industrialized part of Austria and Slovakia that of Hungary – however at a different level. Despite cultural differences, the Slovaks shared with the Czechs similar aspirations for independence from the Habsburg state and voluntarily united with the Czechs. At the turn of the century, the idea of a "Czecho-Slovak" entity began to be advocated by some Czech and Slovak leaders. In the 1890s, contacts between Czech and Slovak intellectuals intensified.

During World War I, in 1916, together with Edvard Beneš and Milan Štefánik (a Slovak astronomer and war hero), Tomáš Masaryk created the Czechoslovak National Council. Masaryk in the United States, Štefánik in France, and Beneš in France and Britain worked tirelessly to gain Allied recognition. When secret talks between the Allies and Austrian emperor Charles I (1916-18) collapsed, the Allies recognized, in the summer of 1918, the Czechoslovak National Council would be the main contributor to the future Czechoslovak government.

In this issue ...

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AMERICAN SOKOL

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*except in July and August

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Mailed submissions cannot be returned.
Digital photos must be in .jpg, .tiff, or .bmp format and a minimum of 2" sq., and 150 dpi.

Calendar of Events

MAY

1	Svatek prace (May Day)
1-4	Sokol MN Exhibits Festival of Nations
1	Accidental Army - Chicago History Museum
3	The Grand Dumpling (Klas Restaurant, Chgo)
4	Bohemian National Cemetery Tour - in conjunction with Czecho de Mayo
5	Kvetnove povstani ceskeho lidu - 1945 (Prague Uprising - 1945)
5	Cinco de Mayo
5	Kentucky Derby Horse Race
6	National Teachers Day
8	Den osvobozeni od fasismu - 1945 (Liberation from Fascism Day - 1945)
11	Mother's Day
11	Sokol Washington Jiri Vaclav Parma Memorial Tennis Tournament
17	Armed Forces Day
18	Sokol LA Family Picnic - Agoura Hills, CA FMI email mikul8laska@yahoo.com
16	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Fashion Show & Brunch
20	Sokol/Sokolice Milwaukee Gymnastic Exhibition
24-26	Sokol Washington Canoeing Trip
26	Memorial Day
27	Indianapolis 500 Race

JUNE

7	NE District Sokol Competitions - Hartland, MN
7	NE District Sokol Exhibition - S Lyons, MI
6-8	Southern District Slet - Sokol KHB-Ennis, TN
12-18	Sokol MN Culture Camp
14	Flag Day
15	Sokol Gr. Cleveland Duck Dinner
15	Father's Day
20	First Day of Summer

Summer

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



The Sokol Educator

Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl, Educational Director

NAZDAR! Sisters and Brothers --

COMMUNICATION == 5 syllables and 13 letters

Communication can be implemented in many ways:

- ✓ by correspondence, an epistle
- ✓ by a circular
- ✓ by a form letter

Communication is:

- ✓ an announcement
- ✓ an enlightenment
- ✓ a report
- ✓ a story



Why is this being emphasized??? Because our Sokol Units use their NEWSLETTERS to get the word out as to what, when, where, why and how things are in their respective Units. The following Sokol Units have newsletters (that I know of) - some are monthly and some quarterly.

CENTRAL; Spirit, Tabor, Chicagoland, Ceska Sin, Milwaukee, St. Louis

EASTERN: Little Ferry, New York, Baltimore, Washington, D. C.

NORTHEASTERN: Greater Cleveland, Detroit

PACIFIC: Los Angeles

SOUTHERN:

WESTERN: Minnesota, South Omaha, Cedar Rapids

Is your Unit missing from my list? If so, please add me to your list. (edandej@verizon.net)

We all would like to know that you exist! Everyone should subscribe to each other's publications because there is so much knowledge to be conveyed; so much information that is expressed and so many pronouncements that are declared. Just write to the Unit -- they will be more than happy to give you more information.



NAZDAR! EllenJeanne Schnabl



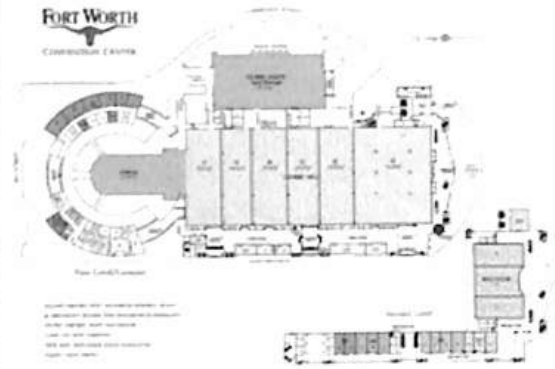
2009 International Sport and Cultural Festival

June 23-28, 2009

www.2009iscfestival.com



Ft. Worth Convention Center, Ft. Worth, Texas



- Arena with a seating capacity of 13,500.
- Multiple breakout rooms for meetings and Educational Forum.
- Multiple dressing and locker room areas.
- Exhibit area for National Stands and vendors.

Planned Activities:

2009 American Sokol Slet

- Multi-sport activities – Artistic gymnastics, Rhythmic Gymnastics, Volleyball, Basketball, Fitness activities, Golf Tournament, Bowling, fun Run/Walk, Marching Competition.
- USA Gymnastics/Sokol Gala Showcase Evening
- Opening and Closing Ceremonies

USA Gymnastics

- Competitions – TeamGym Nationals, USA Gymnastics for All Challenge, International Rhythmic Gymnastics Invitational, Festival Rhythmic, Aesthetic Gymnastics Invitational.
- Displays – National GymFest, USA Gymnastics/Sokol Gala Showcase Evening, City Performances, Large Group performance opportunity for the Closing Ceremony
- Education – Coaches Congress & Forum, TeamGym instructor and judge's course, and more!
- Fun – Fitness Challenge, social activities, etc.

Pan American Gymnastics Union Gymnaestrada

- Includes Educational Forum and workshops, Choreography sessions; PAGU Gala Evening; Preparation, planning and workshops for 2011 World Gymnaestrada.

Special Olympics

- Artistic Gymnastics, Fitness, Rhythmics Combined Activities
- Opening and Closing Ceremonies
- Downtown Parade
- Educational Forums
- International Exhibition Hall and Museum
- Special Social Events – We are looking at a holding a Day at the Park for interested groups at a location such as Six Flags over Texas.

Travel and Accommodations:

- Airport Arrivals and Transportation will be handled by our travel partner, National Travel Systems.
- DFW Airport offers over 1,900 flights per day with non-stop service to 135 domestic and 36 international destinations.



Omni Hotel

Marriott Courtyard

Embassy Suites

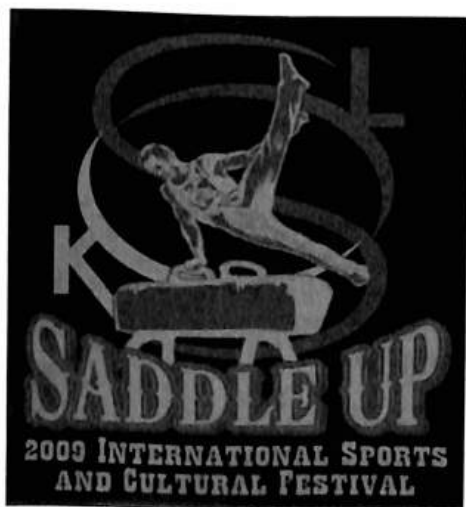
- The Convention Center and hotels are located 20 minutes from Dallas/Ft Worth International Airport
- The Convention Center is walking distance from the hotel and downtown attractions.
- Hotel bookings will be handled by our travel partner, National Travel Systems

Tourism:

Shopping!
Dallas sites
Museums
Stockyards - Rodeo

South Fork Ranch
Six Flags Over Texas
Water Gardens

Easy travel to other Texas cities
Stockyards - Rodeo
South Fork Ranch



Questions and information visit: www.slet2009.com

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817 371-1944 (cell)

Watch the Promo Video at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8K76sDj8bs

STRATEGIC PLANNING - The Future of Sokol

Hope by now that everyone has received the word about our new conferencing option where you can call in anytime - day or night - and listen to a monthly prerecorded message. The toll free phone number to call is (888) 284-7564, message code 22426.



To date, we have had 22 calls. Please take the time to call in. Send me your comments. So far most have been favorable. I know it might be a little confusing on how to wind forward or back by pushing certain numbers. I am trying to get a list of all the codes to publish but have not yet received it. A couple of people have asked to go more in depth on teams so next month I'll highlight one or two areas with a deeper dive.

Over the weekend of March 8, the Selection Team comprised of me, Brenda Michalek, Sokol Chicagoland, Russ Vondra, Sokol Stickney, Tom Pajer, Sokol Sprit and Central District President, and Larry Laznovsky, Sokol KHB, Ennis and our National President, interviewed five candidates for the Executive Director position. A job offer has been made but until official acceptance and background and reference checks are complete, I am not at liberty to announce the name.

While in Chicago for the interviews Larry and I stopped by the new office. I'm amazed at how much they have already settled in - bit more to go but they are getting there.

The Implementation Team is ready to hold their first meeting and we do have a couple more people on board either at the National Level or District level. Joining this team at the National level from the Eastern District is Irene Wynnyczuk. Still do not have representation from either the Northeastern or Western Districts; please don't complain if you are out of the loop.

The Instructors Standard Team is almost ready to send their guideline book to our National Physical Directors for their review and the Program Team is putting their finishing touches on the Physical Program. The Database Team is taking a short hiatus until the new Executive Director is on board to get their input. Finance Team is still waiting for more of the Building/Rental Property surveys to come in before doing an in-depth analysis of the results. If your unit or district has not yet returned theirs, please encourage them to do so. The Volunteer Management Team is putting together templates on what is needed to do some typical fundraisers incorporating roles and responsibilities for various levels of volunteers. This information will be part of their resource book.

Maryann Fiordelis
Interim Strategic Plan Manager

Teamwork Teamwork Teamwork

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**

The Bob Liptak Award

Who received it at last years Instructor School?

The National Instructor's School has been one of the best experiences in my life. For those who do not know what an Instructor's school is, it is a 2 week course in which you learn many different things about Sokol. Of the things learned, you learn how to become an instructor, fun ways to interact with Sokol classes, and many other things. People from all over the United States and Canada come to learn how to better themselves in the Sokol ways.

This past year was my fourth and final year that I had the privilege to attend a Kurz as a student. My first three years were in Omaha. The final year was in Cleveland. Every year that I went was better. I learned a lot of new and fun ideas that I have now put to use in teaching my first class boys at my gym.

Along with learning many different things, you get to meet so many great people from all over. Every day you go to classes that teach different aspects about Sokol. My first year there I had the opportunity to meet a great instructor from New York. His name was Bro. Bob Liptak. He was an amazing person, and an even better instructor. He taught me many things that made Kurz a lot easier. Sadly, he passed away later that year.

Now the Instructor school holds a scholarship that goes to one person every year. The person that receives the scholarship receives it based on a certain criteria and then is voted on by the instructors.

This past year I was the recipient of the award. I received the award at the graduation ceremony that is at the end of the two weeks. This meant a lot to me and was a very emotional part of my instructor school experience. I received a plaque along with the tuition of the instructor's school fully reimbursed. I am glad that I was the recipient and I hope that more people will follow my ways and go to an instructor school.

I will always look back at these past four years as one of the best times in my life. I want to thank all the instructors that never gave up on me and were always there for me no matter what.

Sincerely,

Jon Rus

Who will win The Bob Liptak Award this year? Will it be you??!!

Helping Your Athletes Excel In Gymnastics

When I was competing I used to constantly dream about myself doing my routines perfectly, but not just dream-I mean I used to "feel" myself doing the skills and positions flawlessly. I definitely think it helped me be more confident and aided in my performance as a whole. Below is an article from USA GYMNASTICS that talks about the same type of getting your gymnasts to "dream" or "feel" their gymnastics. KP:)

See it to Believe it!

Helping make new skills seem easy.

By: Alison Arnold Ph.D. and Brian C. Hite M.S., USA GYMNASTICS July/August 2006

Summer time is one of the best times of the year for gymnasts. No school, less pressure and the excitement of learning new skills are just a few of the things I liked best about summer gymnastics, not to mention putting a beam over the pool at my coach's house and missing on purpose just to get out of the hot sun! Along with the fun of these new and more difficult summer skills comes the fear of the unknown. Can I do this trick? Am I ready? What if I fall?

These are just a few of the questions that may come into your mind when you attempt something you've never done before. This article will teach you a tool to help you overcome any fear beasts that come your way. It's called Mental Imagery.

Do you ever rehearse events or skills in your mind before you do them? Have you ever "seen" routines in your head the night before a big competition? That's mental imagery! Mental imagery is visualizing exactly how you want to perform your skills. It's kind of like a dress rehearsal for your body. Mental imagery is one of the most widely used research tools in sport psychology. In some research studies, gymnasts were divided into two groups. One group actually practiced a skill, while others practiced the skills some but also spent time visualizing each skill performed flawlessly. Guess what happened? The athletes that imagined the task even with less practice did just as well as the athletes that practiced (Hall, 2001) but did not visualize the skill. Whenever you imagine something perfect in your mind, you are creating what's called "muscle memory." As you imagine the skill, the muscles in your body are actually "firing" tiny impulses. This trains them to do the exact same thing when you are actually performing the skill. Your muscles "remember" how they reacted to your imagery new skill, and then do the same thing when you are ready to go for it!

How to "See it to Believe it"

Step 1 *Relax*:

Your visualization will be more powerful if you are relaxed. Be sure you take several deep breaths and relax all the tension in your body before you begin. Breathe deeply into your abdomen not simply into your chest.

Step 2 *See Everything*:

Your imagery should be as vivid as possible. Use all five senses. Hear the sounds of the skill or your teammates, see the colors of the gym, see your coaches, notice what you are thinking. Be sure you imagine all of the details. What does each body position look like or how does it feel. Don't leave out the little things, hands to toes. See it all!

Step 3 *See it or Feel it:*

When you do visualization, choose to either see the skill like you are watching a movie or simply feel the skill inside your body. Maybe try a little of both and notice which one feels more real to you. You can also switch off and get both experiences.

Step 4 *Inside Vs. Outside:*

Do you see the skill from outside yourself, like watching TV or do you see it from inside your head? Both can be beneficial. Research suggests that when you are first learning a skill, it may be better to see the technical aspects from outside yourself,

but after you have trained the skill, more your imagery to inside your body (Pie, et al, 1996).

Step 5 *Practice:*

Finally, practice makes perfect. AND seeing perfect practice helps you create new skills! Start out with five minutes of visualization at a time, and work yourself up to 20 minutes or so. If you see yourself fall or make a mistake, rewind the tape in your head and see the skill in slow motion. Imagine every element perfect, every body position just right.

When to “See it to Believe it”

There are many situations where visualizing your routines or skills can be helpful. Here are just a few.

Learning New Skills

Self-Confidence

Making Corrections

“Flipping” Fear

Motivation

Injury

Before anyone can achieve greatness, they have to first see the dream.
See it and then..... Be it!

GOOD LUCK KP ;)



HELP!!

COACHES-I need your help!! I would love to put skill ideas in here-but am not sure what you need!! If anyone is having trouble teaching a skill or getting an athlete to perform a skill correctly please e-mail me and I can put my suggestions, progressions and/or corrections in the *GYMNAST* section of the *American Sokol Magazine!* I am here as a resource for your classes and would love to help any way I can!

Please send me your skills or questions to Kandi@pajer.us

KP:)

Help -I Forgot My Routine!

A lot of you coaches are trying to teach routines this time of year. Here are some tips on how to make it fun and most successful!

1. **Keep It Simple** - Use short explanations when introducing a skill/routine. Don't bombard the athletes with every detail-just say the skill and maybe demonstrate so they have the basic idea. (Later when the routine is learned you can fine tune things.)
2. **Small Steps At A Time** - When you are teaching the routine, teach only three things at a time. Some instructors try to show the entire routine-and then have the students try to repeat it! Teach three things at a time and it is easier to process.
3. **Repeat** - Repeat the three skills/positions a few times before moving on. This helps the athlete clump those three actions together and helps with retention.
4. **Add On** - Once you have taught the first three things-teach the next three skills/positions and repeat a few times-THEN ADD these three things to the first three things. Do all six actions now and repeat a number of times in succession!! Half of the routine is learned already!
5. **Cues** - Make up silly names for the skills to help the athletes remember better-also instead of go up on toe-you can say "toes". Shortening a phrase is a way of using cues as well.

Example: You can call a cartwheel a "WHEELY 'O". This helps them associate silly names with skills they are having difficulty remembering!! They will never forget that cartwheel in their floor routine now! (Just remember, you still need to call skills by the proper name so the athletes know the skills as they should be called-but any ways you can use little tricks to get routines memorized are beneficial!)

6. **Play A Game** - Have your students play the game add on with their routines. The first child does the first skill in the routine. Then the second child does the first skill and second skill-so on and so forth! This is best played in small groups! This helps so much because it is fun and the kids think they are just playing-but also learning-and you will be surprised-they will start correcting each other as well. They will say I had straight legs on my cartwheel-or your feet should be together on your cast!! It really works!
7. **Positivity Is The Key** - If you have an athlete that constantly forgets their routine-be positive. Yes, it gets frustrating but they may be overwhelmed! Try the tips and games I gave above, but most of all-let them know that as long as they do their best you will be proud of them. With more practice they will get better and with the help of you and their classmates they will excel!

Have fun with your gymnasts and remember-Practice makes perfect.

- + Also-let them know what to expect. Tell them that they will be performing by themselves in front of a judge at competition. Let them know things the judges will be looking for-such as remembering the entire routine, legs together and straight and pointed toes.
- + Also-practice the approach and retreat! That is a big part of competition-the gymnast should know how they are expected to stand while waiting, what to do when the judge solutes them and what to do when they finish their routine! Practice these things in the gym before you get to competition!

**These things all help with eliminating pressure and helping remember routines on competition day!
Smiling also helps melt the judges hearts!! KP:)**

Sokol Greater Cleveland's
Alice Khol Inducted Into The Cleveland State Athletic Hall Of Fame



Alice Khol , Sokol Greater Cleveland, was inducted into the Cleveland State University Athletic Hall of Fame on February 9, 2008 as eleven Sokol members proudly watched. Alice's career at Cleveland State began in 1980 when she joined the staff as the head women's basketball coach and coordinator of women's athletics. Alice also was the head softball coach for two seasons and was voted the Ohio College Softball Coach of the Year for 1982 and 1983. Her addition to the CSU staff immediately helped the athletic program make the move to the NCAA level.

Besides coaching at Cleveland State, in 1988 Alice was selected as an assistant coach of the USA Select Basketball team that competed in the Jones Cup Tournament in the Republic of China.

Alice is the winningest coach in CSU Women's basketball history, compiling a 115-187 record in 11 seasons before giving up coaching in 1991 to become an Associate Athletic Director.

During her time at Cleveland State Alice fought to make CSU athletics a better organization. She worked hard to expand the athletic programs for

both men and women, overcoming many administrative obstacles. She began the women's athletic fund raising event and was a leader, mentor, and advocate for the CSU coaches and athletes.

Alice was part of the volleyball games management staff at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. She also played an instrumental role in bringing the NCAA Women's Volleyball Championships to Cleveland State in 1996, serving as the Tournament Director.

Most recently she was one of the driving forces behind bringing the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Final Four to Cleveland. She served as the Tournament Director of both the 2006 regional and the 2007 Final Four Games.

Alice was raised in a Sokol family and has attended Sokol classes since the age of 3. She has attended almost every ASO, Sokol USA, and Canadian Slet since she was a Jr. Girl. In 1987 she was the Sokol National Champion at the Slet in Dallas. Alice proudly drilled in the COS Slets in 1994 and 2000 and eagerly cheered on all participants at the 2006 COS Slet.

Congratulations Alice on a well deserved honor!

***"The Sokol Greater Cleveland Czech Folk Dancers
delighted the crowd with a different kind of hat dance."***

Cleveland Plain Dealer, March 3, 2008

"Celebrating Cleveland's diversity....High stepping folk performers gave the audience at the Allen Theater a taste of Cleveland's International population during the 19th International Services Center Folk Festival. The longest running show at Playhouse Square included performances from 11 groups representing the folk traditions of many nations."

In the photo are Karen Berg, Tony Berg, Angela Wise, Lou Huml, Jane Wise, Howie Wise, Michelle Jirousek, and Ryan Wason.

Dolly Baca is the dance group leader and they have been in existence for 35 years!



Charles University Celebrates 660th Anniversary

[07.04.2008] - Current Affairs - Ruth Fraňková Source: Czech Radio 7, Radio Prague, URL: <http://www.radio.cz>



Monday, April 7, marked 660 years since the founding of Charles University, the oldest university in Central Europe. On this day back in 1348 Emperor Charles IV issued an edict calling for the founding of a university in Prague bearing his name. Politicians, cultural figures and academics gathered in Prague's Carolinum, the university's historic building, on Monday to commemorate the anniversary. Related events are scheduled to take place throughout the year. Ruth Fraňková spoke to Jan Škrha, the vice-rector of Charles University about the history and reputation of the country's most esteemed place of learning:

"Charles University was founded in 1348 by Charles IV and it was the 31st University in Europe and the oldest one in the central European region. At the time it was founded the University had four faculties. Right now we have altogether 17 faculties. So only four of them have the 660-year old tradition.

What were the original four faculties?

"It was the faculty of theology, faculty of law, faculty of medicine and faculty of arts."

How many students studied at Charles University in the first years of its existence?

It was only several dozen, and later several hundred. Of course it's a great difference in comparison with the present day, when we have approximately 48 to 49,000 students.

Who attended the university in those days?

"It was mainly local people. Of course the languages were different. It was mainly Latin and afterwards German and Czech."

When did Czech become the official language at the university?

"Very early. Already at the end of the 14th century. So the Czech language was the leading one already at the beginning of the 15th century."

Are there actually any original buildings preserved to this day?



"Yes, that is the Karolinum – the headquarters of Charles University. The grounds of this house date back to a time before the reign of Charles IV."

How does it feel to be working at this historical institution?

"Of course it is not easy because we have these important roots but we also need to look into the future, to incorporate the modern developments from all over the world. At present we have more than 190 agreements between Charles University and universities around the world. I think that is promising for our future development."



Sokol Auditorium – Omaha, Nebraska

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Sokol Auditorium is located at 2234 South 13th Street in the Little Bohemia neighborhood of south Omaha, Nebraska. It is a local icon for its historical context, as well as modern musical performances and gymnastics.

Located below the auditorium is the Sokol Underground, where a concert promotion company called 1% Productions hosts many rock and hip hop shows.

Sokol Auditorium was built in 1926 at the corner of South 13th Street and Martha Street to house many of Omaha's Czech community's social activities. Sokols were fraternal organizations founded in Bohemia to promote equality, harmony, and fraternity. As one of four in Omaha, the Sokol Auditorium was utilized for meetings by twenty-five Bohemian lodges as well as ethnic Italians and American groups. The hall also offered recreation classes for its members.

The Sokol Auditorium in Omaha was one of many such buildings built as part of the Sokol movement. In 1862, a highly educated young intellectual, Dr. Miroslav Tyrš (1832-1884) founded Sokol. His goal was to develop physically strong and mentally alert citizens, and to instill in them a deep love for national freedom from volunteer exercise and discipline.

Sokols have been prominent in the Olympic Games for many years. Sokol Omaha sent Phil Cahoy and James Hartung as members of the 1980 Olympic team; Hartung competed again in 1984.



Understanding the Design and Symbolism of the U.S. One Dollar Bill

<http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/triviadollar.htm>

Although symbols are open to many interpretations, we believe the following information offers some historical insight (and some undocumented perceptions) about the design and meaning of some of the images on the one dollar bill. The explanations and interpretations that appear below were verified by the Truth or Fiction website, and predominantly (except where noted otherwise) reflect the official interpretations of the United States Treasury Department and the United States Department of State, the official keeper of the United States Seal.

Take out a dollar bill and study it.

The one dollar bill you're looking at first came off the presses in 1957 in its present design. According to the U.S. Treasury Department that is when the motto, "In God We Trust" started being used on paper money. It was in use on coins long before that.

This so-called paper money is in fact a cotton and linen blend, with red and blue minute silk fibers running through it. It is actually material. We've all washed it without it falling apart. A special blend of ink is used, the contents we will never know. It is overprinted with symbols and then it is starched to make it water resistant and pressed to give it that nice crisp look.

If you look on the front of the bill, you will see the United States Treasury Seal. Although some claims have been made that the scales represent the need for a balanced budget, the Treasury Department has little to do with whether the budget is balanced, since that is actually handled by congress. The U.S. Treasury Department indicates that the balancing scales actually represent justice. In the center, some people believe there is a carpenter's T-square, a tool used for an even cut. But that image is actually a chevron with 13 stars representing the 13 original colonies. Underneath is a key that is intended to represent a symbol of authority.

If you turn the bill over, you will see two circles. The two circles reflect the two sides of the Great Seal of the United States. Before the adjournment of the Continental Congress on July 4th, 1776, a committee was appointed to develop a seal for the United States. The committee was Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, three of the five men who had drafted the Declaration of Independence. They were merely the first committee, however. It took six years, the work of two additional committees and a total of 14 men before a final version of the Great Seal was approved. The final proposal, as accepted by Congress, was submitted on June 13, 1782, by Charles Thompson, Secretary of Congress. He brought together some of the recommendations of the three committees, their consultants, and artists.

If you look at the left hand circle, you will see a Pyramid. This pyramid was not a part of the proposals for the Great Seal until the third committee, and it was not suggested by Jefferson, Franklin, and Adams. Notice the face is lighted and the western side is dark. Although there is no "official" explanation for the shading, some interpret it as a reflection that our country was just beginning and had not begun to explore the West or decided what we could do for Western Civilization.

The Pyramid is UN-capped, which may signify that our country was not yet finished. The unfinished state of the pyramid was intentional, and Charles Thompson, in his remarks to congress about the symbolism on the Great Seal, said the pyramid represented "Strength and Duration." Inside the capstone you have the all-seeing eye, and ancient symbol for divinity. Although Franklin's committee did not suggest a pyramid, it did originate the suggestion of the eye. However, the term "the all-seeing eye" was never officially used when describing it. The Franklin committee wanted the seal to include a reflection of divine providence and discussed a variety of themes including the Children of Israel in the Wilderness.

"IN GOD WE TRUST" is on this currency. The Latin above the pyramid, ANNUIT COEPTIS, means "God has favored our undertaking." It was Franklin's belief that one man couldn't do it alone, but a group of men with the help of God could do anything. The Latin below the pyramid, NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM, is interpreted to mean "a new order for the world." At the base of the pyramid is the Roman Numeral for 1776.





If you look at the right-hand circle, and check it carefully, you may notice that with only slight modifications it is the Seal of the President of the United States. It also appears on every National Cemetery in the United States, the Parade of Flags Walkway at the Bushnell, Florida National Cemetery, and is the centerpiece of most heroes' monuments. On the Great Seal, the eagle faces the talon holding the olive branch. The eagle on The Presidential Seal faced in the opposite direction-toward the talon holding the arrows until 1945, when Harry Truman had it redesigned to face the olive branch as well.

No one knows for certain what the symbols mean. But although there is no explanation of the imagery of the eagle in the official records, most historical references to the bald eagle indicate that it represents something of uniquely American origin. One of the original design proposals for the Great Seal featured a small crested white eagle, which is not uniquely American, but this was later changed to the uniquely American Bald Eagle. An unsupported

interpretation of the inclusion of the Bald Eagle is that it could also represent victory and independence, because the eagle is not afraid of a storm, is strong and smart enough to soar above it, and wears no material crown.

Also, notice the shield is unsupported. Charles Thompson said it denoted that the United State of America ought to rely on their own virtue. The shield consists of red and white stripes with a blue bar above that represents Congress. The colors are taken from the American flag and officially the red represents hardiness and valor, the white represents purity and innocence, and the blue, vigilance, perseverance, and justice. In the Eagle's beak you will read, "E PLURIBUS UNUM", meaning "one nation from many people."

Above the Eagle you have thirteen stars representing the thirteen original colonies. Again, we were coming together as one. Notice that the Eagle holds an olive branch and arrows in his talons. The official meaning is that the olive branch and the arrows "denote the power of peace and war." As noted previously, the design shows the eagle facing the olive branch. This was the opposite of the Presidential Seal, which showed the eagle facing the arrows, until President Harry Truman had it redesigned to face the olive branch in 1945."

Some feel that the number 13 is an unlucky number. You will usually never see a room numbered 13, or hotels or motels with a 13th floor. But the significance of the number 13 in U.S. history is very strong. The number 13 as used on many U.S. symbols (the stripes on the flag, steps on the Pyramid, 13 stars above the eagle, 13 plumes of feathers on each of the Eagle's wings, 13 bars on the shield, 13 leaves on the olive branch, 13 fruits, and 13 arrows) all represent the beginning of our country, as established by the thirteen colonies. But it should also remind us of the importance of the "13th Amendment". And you can, and should, be reminded of the history of this country each time you look at a one dollar bill.

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ATTENTION ALL SOKOL UNIT AND DISTRICT OFFICERS

In May, we will once again publish a list of Unit and District's information. Please help us by making sure your current information is on file at the home office. To submit changes, please download the correct form from the ASO website. www.American-Sokol.org, then Members, Member Forms, and Admin Forms. If you do not have Internet access or have difficulty with the forms, please contact Jean and they can be mailed to you.

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Bohemian Bagpipe Tradition Focus Of Documentary Call Of Dudy

04.04.2008] - Arts - Ian Willoughby. Source: Czech Radio 7, Radio Prague, URL: <http://www.radio.cz/en/article>



Dudy is the Czech word for the bagpipes and Call of Dudy is the title of a documentary film focused on the Bohemian piping tradition. Featuring lots of great music and interesting interviews, it takes viewers to the instrument's traditional strongholds in south and west Bohemia, and over the border into Bavaria.

Call of Dudy was produced and co-directed by long-time Prague resident Jefe Brown: "I had shot a couple of feature films and I was tired of actors and all their prima donna behavior. I wanted to get back into documentary films as a producer and filmmaker. I had been to the Strakonice bagpipe festival in 2000 and 2002...I had been there twice, it happens every two years.

"Also I was taking a greater interest in music documentaries. No one had shot it. Originally it was just an idea to go down to the festival, which is just a quirky, fun, very offbeat...situation.

"Why in the Czech Republic is there a bagpipe festival? But

there's a huge tradition there, and the more we got into and more than our original idea to just drink beer and race around with cameras and have a good time – which is in essence still what we did – the more we realized that there was a rich story there which hadn't been told in an hour-long documentary film. "So the

more we got into it, the more we decided that more than just showcasing the festival needed to be done."



Photo Jefe Brown



Josef Režný

The Strakonice International Bagpipe Festival has been running in the south Bohemian town for over four decades. Another stronghold of the piping tradition is Domažlice, the capital of the west Bohemian region of Chodsko. One thing that emerges in Call of Dudy is a certain rivalry. An example: in Chodsko pipes using metal screws are played, but the strict traditionalist Josef Režný – founder of the Strakonice festival – tells the film's makers he wouldn't countenance such inauthentic pipes.

Jefe Brown says the different camps are not always so rigid: "People use both [types of dudy] and I think it doesn't matter if you're western or southern Bohemia – that's the sense I always had from it. There's great crossover, and these bands perform together all the time at festivals. "That said, people from Domažlice are from western Bohemia and they don't

want you to forget that. People from Strakonice are from southern Bohemia...a lot of times I had in my head that it was a southern Bohemia bagpipe tradition...when I would make reference to 'Domažlice in the south' that was wrong, because it's not. "The three regions we tried to concentrate on were Prácheňsko, which is the south – Strakonice, Chodsko where Domažlice is, and Chebsko where Cheb is. Somehow Chebsko appeared less – it's more part of the border story."

American music scholar Mike Cwach, whose father's ancestors were Czech, features in the film Call of Dudy. He lives in the US but frequently comes to the Czech Republic. On the line from Domažlice, he describes his first encounter with the dudy.

"That was on my first trip to the Czech Republic in 1998. At the time I had just started playing Scottish bagpipes in America, so I had a little bit more awareness of bagpipes in general. "I took this particular trip to the Czech Republic, I had started getting interested in my heritage a little bit. I went to an evening of Czech bagpipes, and I really hadn't known what they were. "It piqued my interest when I saw the Czech bagpipes played for the first time in a village called Klenčí, here near Domažlice. "I thought to myself the best thing for me would be to bring this instrument to America. At that time I didn't know that the Bohemians who first came to America in the 19th century...among them in certain regions – in states like Nebraska and Wisconsin and Minnesota – were bagpipers from Bohemia."



Mike Cwach

Call of Dudy's subtitle is Bohemian Bagpipes Across Borders, and the film documents the overlap in the musical cultures of west Bohemia – from where many ethnic Germans were expelled after the war – and the German state of Bavaria. Producer Jefe Brown:

"The songs and the traditions of the songs are quite similar, oftentimes the same – just sung in different languages. The more we got into the dramaturgy of the film...and our dramaturge Keith Jones realized, and we were all living this together, that these stories crossed over. This was a part of the story. "It's a very touchy issue, the whole Sudeten German issue. What we very much tried to focus on was the stories and the music, and not the negativity of the situation. That came out on its own, even though we wanted to concentrate on the music, that's all the musicians really talked about. "And that's actually quite nice. Because usually you mention the Sudeten German or the border issue and people will become very negative and you'll see a lot of tasteless comments. So we were happy that that didn't really come up in our interviews or our shooting."

Finally how healthy is the Bohemian bagpipe tradition today? Does it have a future? Mike Cwach:

"They definitely have a future...It's important what they do in some places like Domažlice, Strakonice, Blatná, places like this where they still teach bagpipes in the elementary art schools. "There are many young bagpipers in Strakonice, for instance, young gals – mostly there young girls are playing the bagpipes. Historically women did not play the bagpipes in Bohemia. "Here in Domažlice they teach bagpipes...I think there's a good future for it."

For more about the documentary go to www.callofdudy.net



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