

American



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

July/August 2012 | Volume 135 | Issue 6



Dan Bajec
Naperville Tyrs
Central District



Mary Bajec
Naperville Tyrs
Central District

2012 MERIT AWARD WINNERS

Read the essays on page 12-13



Nicole Muff
Sokolice Crete
Western District



Cara Tuskey
Sokol Detroit
Northeastern District

AMERICAN SOKOL

ISSN 003-1259

Published nine times each year: Jan, Feb, March, April/
May, June, July/Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov/Dec.

American Sokol, 9126 Ogden Ave, Brookfield, IL, 60513

Subscription: \$12.00 per year

Periodical postage paid at Brookfield, IL and additional
mailing offices.

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ASO Board of Instructors

Meets every 2nd Wednesday* at 7:30 pm

*except in July and August

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From the Editor...

This past July, Sokols from around the world gathered for the XV Prague Slet. I'd love to publish stories of your travels and experience, send them to editor@american-sokol.org. If you were not able to attend, check out the video of the Slet and Gala: <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ivysilani/10435283878-xv-vsesokolsky-slet>

If you have an memory, article, newsletter or calendar of event, please send it to me via email at editor@american-sokol.org. This publication's content is driven by – YOU!

NAZDARI!



To Submit Items for Publication:

Email: editor@american-sokol.org

Postal Mail: American Sokol Editor, Angela Hartford,
1652 West Grace #3, Chicago, IL 60613

Postmaster:

Send Notice of Undeliverable Periodicals to:
American Sokol, 9126 Ogden Ave, Brookfield, IL 60513



Report to the World Sokol Federation (WSF)

June 2012, Bro. Thomas Pajer, American Sokol President

The American Sokol remains committed to our mission and to the philosophy and ideals of Sokol. The mission of the American Sokol is to provide fitness and community for individuals and families through physical, educational, cultural and social programs. Our efforts continue to be aligned with this mission and we intend to grow stronger as an organization. We have an aggressive Executive Board that wants to grow and prosper. They are continuing to work hard and utilize the foundation of our current Strategic Plan. Through our Units, we are working diligently to grow our membership, and spread the Sokol methodology throughout our communities.

As we celebrate 150 years of Sokol, we want to not only congratulate the COS for their milestone accomplishment, but we most sincerely thank the World Sokol Federation and its organizations for sharing in our desire to spread the Sokol methodology far and wide. A sound mind in a sound body is a quest that transcends gender, ethnicities, ages, and other differences. On behalf of the American Sokol, we are honored to play the part of educator, instructor, leader, mentor, and visionary in this endeavor. Thank you for the opportunity and the memories!

In 3 more years, our own American Sokol, which started in St. Louis, Missouri and spread throughout the United States, will celebrate its 150 years of progress. I consider the start of our celebration to be here in Prague with the festivities continuing next year at our 2013 Slet in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Please plan to join us as we are "Wheelin' in Milwaukee", June 25-30, 2013.

The American Sokol is moving forward. Our current Executive Board is halfway through a 4 year term and continues to push our Units and membership to share the Sokol methodology with anyone and everyone. Our mission allows us the opportunity to do this. At a high level, the American Sokol has:

- Put new programs in place
- Assisted our Units financially with funding to grow their membership
- Strengthened our internal organization
- Upgraded our technology
- Expanded our marketing efforts
- Supported and trained our Unit and District officers and instructors
- Encouraged everyone to look beyond simply running their programs, but further to grow those programs.

Our drive and passion to charge forward and strengthen our presence in our communities will continue, for without it, we have little chance of surviving in our competitive environment.

Despite the strong efforts of many of our leaders, the American Sokol is at a crossroads. As an organization, we must make some critical decisions about the way we operate in today's

business climate. Without making significant and large scale changes, we remain on a course destined for collapse and elimination. Small tweaks to our operations are no longer enough to stem the tide of the competitive environment around us. Our strength will come from the American Sokol acting as a single organization and operating in a coordinated fashion. This call for big choices to be made and sacrifices will accompany those decisions. Without this unified movement, perhaps individual Units that are currently strong will succeed temporarily through a decentralized structure, but in the end, even those that are equipped for the short term, will suffer from lack of support as part of a national body.

Aggressive change to the organization must come now. We do not have the luxury of time as our number of members and Units has been declining tragically for far too long. There are various factors responsible for our delayed growth and we must address these barriers immediately. And the support for growth and removal of barriers cannot come from a handful of passionate members. We all must come together and make strong business decisions, support and allow our leadership to produce results, volunteer time, effort and money where necessary, and charge ahead to a single vision on a single path.

Our challenges are many, but each one can be overcome. Our primary barrier is ourselves.

Continued on page 5



The Sokol Educator

Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl, Educational Director

AUGUST

A garden is evidence of faith - it links us with all the misty figures of the past who also planted and were nourished by the fruits of their planting.

August is American Indian Heritage month; get ready for Kindergarten; National back to school; water quality and peach month.

Summer's gold: Wrapped by nature in green husks and silk, the gift of the season's true taste awaits. Here and gone like the dreamy summer days themselves, sweet corn season marks a high point on the calendar. Check your cook books for brand new ways to savor the classic flavor.

Crickets chirp to attract mates and to warn one another of danger. Count the number of chirps in 15 seconds and then add 40 and you will have a fairly accurate indication of the temperature Fahrenheit.

August 1, 1889 - First course in physical culture offered to Men in Praha.

August 6, 1904 - Gymnastic meet held by the American Sokols in St. Louis during the World's Fair Exposition.

August 15, 1878 - National Sokol Union founded in Chicago.

August 19, 1866 - Founding of Sokol Gymnastic Union in Chicago - Today known as Sokol Tabor in Berwyn, IL.

August 28, 1872 - Wedding of Dr. Miroslv Tyrs and Renata Fuegner.

What to look for when visiting Milwaukee, WI, for our own Slet next year: The facade of the Allen-Bradly Clock Tower which is being restored. It will be locked in the 6:30 position until the 50th anniversary on October 31st. This landmark is the largest four-faced clock in North America and was created by architect, Fitzhugh Scott.

HEAT AWARENESS:

Keep your living space cool; slow down and limit physical activity. Drink plenty of water even if you don't think you're thirsty. Eat lightly. Stay away from hot, heavy meals; wear lightweight, loose fitting and light colored clothing - then add a hat or umbrella to keep cooler.

Don't stop taking medication unless your doctor says you should. A cool shower or bath will actually work faster than air conditioning.

Be sure to check on your Sokol Sisters and Brothers who may be living alone — frequently!

Don't forget your pets who are also susceptible to heat exhaustion. They may become lethargic and listless and will pant more. If they have diarrhea or vomiting then take them to your Vet immediately for diagnosis and treatment. Your pets may also want to drink more. ☺

NAZDAR! Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl, American Sokol Educational Director

Report to the World Sokol Federation (WSF)

Continued from page 2

This year, we are all responsible for achieving the following goals:

Strengthen our core

- Restructure and Strengthen Internal Communications
- Revise Strategic Plan for American Sokol
- Evaluate current programs for viability

Grow our volunteer base

- 5% membership increase
- Become the Community Center in your area
- Review and revise structure and benefits of membership
- Implement Volunteer Management Handbook

We are constantly working to give our Districts and Units tools to achieve these goals. Additionally, we strive to inspire our Units to seek additional programming that will not only attract new members but also serve as an additional revenue stream.

Other concepts that are important this year to the American Sokol are:

- Additional technology upgrades
- Enlisting of professional services (Tax, Legal, Insurance)
- New membership database
- Leadership Development
- Grant Writing support for National/District/Unit
- External marketing (both National and grass roots)
- Mentoring strategies
- Volunteer Management
- Creation of a new Strategic Plan
- 2013 Slet preparations
- Process improvements to decrease expenses and time
- Creation of an internal communication plan to better send and receive information

To better coordinate all of these necessary activities, the Executive Board is working on a long term vision for the American Sokol as well as a roadmap for getting there. The road has already begun with the creation of our mission and the efforts of our first strategic plan. The vision and roadmap will be shared with our leaders and the World Sokol Federation very soon.

CURRENT AND PAST ACTIVITIES:

- Annual American Sokol National Instructors School – July, 2011 – 2 weeks – Chicago – beginner, intermediate, advanced, and advanced II levels
- Annual National Sokol Youth Reunion Camp as a joint effort of American Sokol, Sokol USA and DA Sokol – August 2011 – Sokol St. Louis Camp
- National BOI Sponsored Development Conference Weekend – Fort Worth - October 2011. 30+ training sessions for director and instructor development.
- Annual National Gymnastic Skills – December 2011
- 1st Inaugural Administrative Conference – Chicago – January, 2012. 20+ sessions dealing in all administrative topics
- Most units held annual exhibitions and local competitions in the Spring
- American Sokol show numbers were entered in the 2012 WSF "Show" Program
- Districts held District Competitions and/or Slets in Spring/ Summer 2012
- \$500 college scholarships were awarded from our Future Leaders Fund to college bound American Sokol youth.
- Sokol Slet in 2012, Prague. The American Sokol has a solid contingent that is participating.

UPCOMING EVENTS/ACTIVITIES:

- Annual American Sokol National Instructors School – July, 2012 – 2 weeks – West, Texas
- National BOI Sponsored Development Conference Weekend – Location TBD - October 2012. Training sessions for director and instructor development; this conference will also include calisthenics training sessions for the 2013 Slet in Milwaukee.
- New American Sokol Strategic Plan being developed.
- 2013 Slet in Milwaukee – June 25-30, 2013 – "Wheelin' in Milwaukee – 2013 Sports Festival"
- 2014 American Sokol Convention – St. Louis, Missouri – April, 2014
- 2015 – American Sokol celebrates 150 years!

In conclusion... Change is hard. Change is uncomfortable. Change is sometimes a risk. **In the end....change is inevitable.** The American Sokol must embrace change as part of its culture to succeed in the future.®

Two Organizations – One Brotherhood

Source Unknown, Submitted by Paul Lebloch

Through the efforts of Bro. Michael Dropka, Sokol Town of Lake, this flag has been lovingly restored and will be proudly carried in the XV All Sokol Slet parade and the opening of the Slet parade in Prague. What the heart unites, the ocean cannot divide. Sletu Zdar! Success to the Slet! Paul Lebloch

Czechoslovak flags were lined up from Riverside Drive all the way to Cicero. At 1:00p.m, they proceeded East on 22nd Street to Blue Island Avenue, on to Roosevelt Road, to Michigan Avenue and then to Grant Park and Soldier Field.

John Toman was Parade Marshall - he was a member of Sokol Havlicek and the Chicago City Council.

Shortly before 2:00 p.m, the orchestra, directed by V. Husa, performed the overture from Smetana's "Libuse". Then they played a rousing Sokol march, to which some participants followed the two flag bearers into the stadium. One was carrying the American flag, and the other, the Sokol flag. Also marching were Brothers Jarka Jelinek, leader of the American Sokol Organization, and Dr. Mirolav Klinger, leader of the exemplary tram from Czechoslovakia and the Prague Sokol.

Then, two other flag bearers carrying the American and Czechoslovak flags were followed by Bro. Fr. C. Vlach and Jarka Kosar of the AOS and Dr. Rudolf Krovak and Vladimir Mueller of the COS and gymnasts in blue uniforms, mostly from Sokol Chicago. Following were three trumpet players from the Lawndale-Crawford American Legion Post and fifty Sokols in red uniforms. Sister Sokols in their new festive uniforms were led by Marie Stepankova, an official of the AOS. Then all the American Sokol Districts marched in with the Slovak gymnasts of the District Ludevít Stur – Sokol USA.

After the assembly of all the participating Sokols, speeches were given by Anton J. Cermak, Otto Kerner, and Dr. Ferdinand Veverka. Next was the speech by Dr. Krovak, who presented the Brotherhood Flag to the AOS. Attendance at this Slet was estimated at 125,000!

Dr. Krovak's Speech:

"Brother Vice Regent – The president of the Czechoslovak Sokol Organization of Prague bestowed upon me the utmost honor. I'm present to you, the representatives of the American Sokol Organization, this flag. Our whole Sokol family, to be sure, even all the Czechoslovak people, send their heartfelt greetings. They agreed that it would be an unmistakable sign for this assemblage of men and woman, who feel such ardor for our Sokol cause, for this not to be faithful indication of this place where there is an

inseparable bond. Would that the donor was given a sign of the morality and ideals of our American Sokol branch.

The red color of the flag brings to mind the combined blood shed by our Sokols and countrymen. The blood shed in the last days of battle for our freedom and independence. The Slovak blue, then reminds us that their azure sky holds together what the ocean between us cannot part; The motto on the flag - Two Sokol Organizations, One Brotherhood, which will always remain truthful. With our good wishes that you will work to further the ideals which our Sokol flags stands for. We raise this flag to your celebrated star-spangled flag, a symbol of your new homeland, the democratic, North America. NaZdar!"

After Dr. Krovak's speech, the orchestra played the Czechoslovak hymns, "Where is My Home," and "Lightning Above the Tatry" whereupon Dr. Vlach accepted the flag on behalf of the American Sokol Organization – the flag of our country that was the cradle of our very existence. Dr. Vlach vowed that this flag would be carefully handled and protected. He then gave Dr. Krovak an American flag to show our love and devotion to the Sokol cause and ended his speech with a rousing, "NaZdar!"[Ⓢ]

Article Notes:

Timeline:

Slets were held in 1929 and 1933 (not in 1932). Cermak was assassinated in March 1933. Therefore, 1929 is the calculated year of the ceremony, as deduced by Bro. Paul Lebloch.

Anton J. Cermak:

President of Cook County Board of Commissioners, 1922
Chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party, 1928
Mayor of Chicago, 1931
Member of Sokol Chicago

Otto Kerner, Sr:

Judge in the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, 1927
Judge of the Illinois Appellate Court, 1931
Illinois Attorney General, 1932-1938

Dr. Ferdinand Veverka:

Czechoslovak envoy in Washington, DC



AMERICAN SOKOL GYMNAST

Pages 7-11 are specifically designed to benefit the Gymnastic programs of the American Sokol.

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

Kandi Pajer • 117 Oakland Grove • Elmhurst, IL • 60126 • Kandi@pajer.us

It will soon be the start of a new "Sokol" year, school year, etc. Here are some ideas to help start the year off fun, new and exciting! Get creative this year. Have fun, and learn a lot! Please also-if you have something to share that worked or didn't work, please e-mail me at the address above. Enjoy the year! KP ;)

Icebreakers, Warmups, Energizers & Deinhbitizer Ideas

From: *wilderdom.com*

Why use icebreakers?

- Create a positive group atmosphere
- Help people to relax
- Break down social barriers
- Energize & motivate
- Help people to "think outside the box"
- Help people to get to know one another

1. **Balloon Activities** — Games you can play with balloons to get a group having fun and working together. In partners, keep the balloon in air using different body parts-hands, head, elbow, knee, etc.
2. **Group Juggle** — Throw balls to others in a sequence, using each person's name. Can be extended to "Warp Speed" (to see how fast the group can throw balls through a set order to each group member).
3. **Fun, interactive activity** — Ask a group to organize themselves into smaller groups, based on categories such as favorite color.
4. **Gotchya (Grab the Finger)** — In a circle, grab the right finger on next person's left palm. Try to grab a finger before yours gets grabbed.
5. **Human Knot** — In a circle, people put their arms in and hold someone else's hand, then try to unravel the knot without letting go of hands.
6. **2 Truths & a Lie** — People write down two truths about themselves and a lie. Then introduce the three "facts" to the rest of the group who tries to guess which one is a lie.
7. **Zoom**—A group tries to create a unified story from a set of sequential pictures. The pictures are randomly ordered and handed out. Each person has a picture but cannot show it to others.
8. **Animal Sounds** — Participants are blindfolded and assigned an animal. The challenge is to use animal noises in order to meet up with other animals of same species.
9. **Line up** — Participants are expected to line up in different ways. Tell them to line up by birthdays, by first letters of first name, by age, by last letters of last name, etc. The catch is they cannot TALK! (S)

What Should A Sports First Aid Kit Contain?

From momsteam.com

No youth sports team or competition should be without a first aid kit designed to treat the most common injuries and illnesses that might be encountered.

Match the contents to the sport: The type of first aid that may be required varies by sport. Because bruises, abrasions, and sprained ankles are more common in baseball, a baseball team's first aid kit, for instance, needs to be stocked with cold packs, elastic bandages, and Band-Aids, while a track team's kit needs to have plenty of supplies to treat blisters, abrasions, pulled muscles, and sprains. If your team is going to be in the sun, carry sunscreen; the cross-country coach needs to carry an allergy kit to manage bee stings.

Stock a realistic quantity: Be prepared to treat more than one child at an event. For younger children, remember to stock pediatric doses (in liquid form, if necessary).

Ensure ready access: First aid supplies should be placed where they are readily accessible, and marked clearly to allow rapid identification. Use Ziploc-type bags within the kit for extra materials and to sort your supplies. For instance, it is helpful to partition supplies into modules "for wound care," "for an allergic reaction," and so forth.

Protect against damage: Carry supplies in a watertight container designed to withstand years of rough handling and extremes in temperature, such as a plastic (Pelican case or Otter Box) or metal container equipped with a rubber O-ring gasket for a tight, waterproof seal.

Contents

Listed below are what a sports first aid should contain. Go through this list carefully, and make a decision to include or exclude these items from your medical kit. Have a medical professional teach you how to take care of your players, so that when the time comes, you will know how to apply a Steri-Strip to close a wound, mold a Sam Splint to support a sprained wrist, or use a pocket mask to perform rescue breathing.

General Supplies

- First Aid Manual or Emergency/CPR flashcards
- Safety pins
- Paramedic or EMT shears (scissors)
- Sharp-pointed surgical scissors
- Bandage scissors
- Splinter forceps (tweezers)
- Standard oral thermometer: digital, mercury, or alcohol
- Wooden tongue depressors ("tongue blades")
- Waterproof flashlight (such as Pelican MityLite*) or headlamp (and spare batteries)
- CPR mouth barrier or pocket mask (such as a Microshield X-L Mouth Barrier*)
- Sterile (hypoallergenic or latex) surgical gloves (at least 2

pair); if you are allergic to latex, bring nonlatex, synthetic, nonpermeable gloves;

- Instant chemical cold pack(s)1
- Ziploc* bags (to hold ice for ice packs)
- Rescue blanket
- Cell phone
- Medical release forms
- List of emergency phone numbers (paramedics, hospital emergency room)

Wound Care-Preparations and Dressings

- Elastic bandages (Band-Aid* or Coverlet*) in assorted sizes (strip, knuckle, and broad); cloth with adhesive is preferable
- Adhesive strips for wound closure (Steri-Strip* or Cover-Strip II*), assorted sizes, reinforced [plain or impregnated with an antimicrobial] or elastic



- 3" x 3" or 4" x 4" sterile gauze pads (packets of 2 to 5) (such as Nu-Gauze* highly absorbent)
- 5" x 9" or 8" x 10" sterile gauze ("trauma") pads (packets of 2 to 5)
- Nonstick sterile bandages (Telfa*), assorted sizes (used to cover abrasions)
- 1", 2", 3", and 4" rolled conforming gauze (C-wrap* or Elastomull*)
- 1" x 10 yds (9.1 m) rolled cloth adhesive tape
- 1" x 10 yds (9.1 m) rolled paper or silk (hypoallergenic) adhesive tape
- 1" x 10 yds (9.1 m) rolled waterproof adhesive tape
- Molefoam* (4 1/8 in x 3 3/8 in)
- Moleskin Plus* (4 1/8 in x 3 3/8 in)
- Spenco 2nd Skin* (1.5" x 2", 3" x 4", 3" x 6.5") and Spenco* Adhesive Knit Bandage (3" x 5")
- Tegaderm* transparent wound dressing (also comes in combination with a Steri-Strip in a Wound Closure System)
- Liquid soap
- Sterile disposable surgical scrub brush
- Sterile cotton-tipped swabs or applicators, 2 per package
- Tincture of benzoin, bottle or swabsticks
- Povidone iodine 10% solution (Betadine), 1 oz bottle or swabsticks
- Antiseptic towelettes

Splinting and Sling Material

- Cravat cloth (triangular bandage)
- 2", 3", and 4" elastic wrap (Ace*)
- 4" x 36" SAM Splints (2)
- Aluminum finger splints

Eye Medications and Dressings

- Prepackaged individual sterile oval eye pads
- Prepackaged eye bandages (Coverlet Eye Occluser*)
- Metal or plastic eye shield
- Sterile eyewash, 1 oz (30 ml)
- Contact lens remover

Dental Supplies

- Save-A-Tooth Emergency Tooth Preserving System
- Topical Skin Preparations
- Bacitracin, mupirocin, or bacitracin-neomycin polymyxin B sulphate ointment
- Insect repellent containing DEET
- Sunscreen lotion or cream (SPF 15 or 30)
- Lip balm or sunscreen
- Sunblock

Nonprescription Medications

- Ibuprofen, 200 mg tablets
- Acetaminophen, 325 mg tablets
- Antacid
- Decongestant (such as oxymetazoline) nasal spray (to treat a nosebleed that doesn't respond to simple pressure)
- Glucose (liquid glucose) paste tube (to treat a hypoglycemic - low blood sugar - reaction)

Prescription Medications

- Metered-dose bronchodilator (albuterol) (to treat an asthma attack)
- Space meter
- Peak-flow meter

Allergy Kit

- EpiPen Auto-Injector [0.3 mg] and EpiPen Jr. Auto-Injector [0.15 mg]) or allergy kit with injectable epinephrine (Ana-Kit)
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl), 25 mg capsules

Other

Other equipment and supplies may be available at the venue, but are not usually transported with a youth athletic team, unless there are special circumstances. These include such items as large splints to accommodate major fractures (such as of the thigh), stretcher, and AED (automated external defibrillator).

**Brand names are shown to indicate representative products, not to indicate that these are the only products that may be used. Quality, availability, cost, and preference will influence which specific products you choose. Ⓢ*

Coach The Athlete, Not The Exercise

Posted on Friday, 20th April 2012

From coachmattsmith.com

Talking to a fellow coach the other day, he told me a great little story about two young athletes he coaches. Apparently the two boys were arguing with each other about the correct performance of an overhead squat. "Coach told me I need to do this. Yeah well coach told me to do this". As it happens they were both right. The coach was smart enough to realize that each boy needed different cues; very smart in fact because these boys were actually twins. Same exercise, different athletes.

But isn't that obvious. Sure it is but sometimes we miss the obvious. In physiotherapy there is a maxim - 'treat the patient, not the injury'. I think that is a simple reminder for all of us coaches also to keep the focus on the person and not the drill or exercise. Coaching is so much more than just issuing instructions. Communication is more than just what is said, but also what is heard. As coaches we need to deliver the right message at the right time. When we do that we positively change behavior and encourage optimal learning.

What feedback does this athlete need and when? How can I get this athlete to do more of what I want and less of what I don't? By keeping your attention on the athlete you will find yourself using less generic cues (instruction), that while technically correct seem to have little effect, and more personal cues that make sense to the athlete and create connection (coaching). When kept concise and given with clarity, athlete appropriate cues will power both acute changes and lead to long term learning and retention. Next time you're up, think: how do I coach the athlete, not the exercise? 🤝

Have fun while instructing your athletes this year. You will come across many students, from different backgrounds, that will test you and please you. My hope is that you will find the pleasure in every situation and enjoy the challenge. I hope that your parents will help you, ask you questions and be on time. Don't forget to plan ahead and be prepared. Have a great and learning filled season! KP ;)



Don't forget National Gymnastics Day is on September 22nd, 2012.

What are you doing? Please send pictures and a brief summary to my e-mail address (Kandi@pajer.us) and it may be in the next issue of the Gymnast! Thank you KP ;)

Sokol Fort Worth – Our Touch with Olympians

Submitted by Jerry Milan, Sokol Fort Worth

Sokol Fort Worth celebrated 100 years in January with 3 days of visiting past gymnasts, films, videos and exhibitions. We recognized "12 Noteables". Two of which are Olympians, Christine Loock and Pauline David Milan and Jill Parker, not an Olympian, but definitely a champion.

CHRISTINE LOOCK M.D.

Dr. Christine Loock began her diving career at age 5 and began gymnastics at the Fort Worth Sokol at age 10 to compliment her diving skills. She soon became a convert, especially on the trampoline, bars, and rings, winning a first place finish at the Sokol National Slet in Dallas in 1967. She went on to become the youngest member of the Pan American Games and a bronze medalist in the 1973 World University Games and the 1975 World Championships. In 1975, she became the first woman to become a "varsity letterman" on the Southwest Conference MEN'S team, before Title IX was enacted. Other diving honors included 1975 Canada Cup; Czech International; Bolzano, Italy; Finland International and U.S. Hall of Fame gold medalist.



A scholar athlete with a 3.95 GPA, Summa Cum Laude graduate of Southern Methodist University, Loock was chosen an Outstanding College Athlete of America for all 4 years of university. She received the 1976 NCAA Outstanding Scholar Athlete Award postgraduate scholarship to attend medical school. She later came out of retirement to train for the 1980 Moscow Olympics, which the U.S. subsequently boycotted, but captured the U.S. National title on the 10M platform, ending a competitive diving career that spanned over 2 decades.

Dr. Loock, Associate Professor, Pediatrics, University of British Columbia, has served as a national springboard and platform diving official and judge in Canada for over 20 years. A graduate of Harvard Medical School and dual citizen, she is licensed and board certified to practice medicine in both the USA and Canada. She currently practices and teaches in Developmental Pediatrics at British Columbia Children's Hospital in Vancouver. In November 2004, Dr. Loock received the Diving Plongeon Canada President's Award for Volunteer Service for her contributions to provide and develop sports medicine services, nationally and internationally.

PAULINE DAVID MILAN

Pauline married into a Sokol charter member family. Originally from New Zealand, she has had an extensive career in both rhythmic and artistic gymnastics. A competitor, coach, judge and club owner she is now general manager at Sokol Fort Worth.



Competitive Career:

- Olympic Competitor (Artistic Gymnastics) Tokyo, Japan
- International Elite Artistic Competitor
- New Zealand National Champion (Artistic Gymnastics)
- 5-time New Zealand National Champion (Rhythmic Gymnastics)
- World Championships Competitor (Artistic Gymnastics) - Dortmund, Germany
- US Dept. of State "People to People Tour of Southeast Asia" (Artistic Gymnastics)

Coaching Career:

- 1981-92: USA National Coach (Rhythmic Gymnastics)
- 1984: Olympic Training Site Director – Los Angeles, CA
- 1985: President US Rhythmic Gymnastics Coaches Association
- 1985: Member Board of Directors United States Gymnastics Association
- 1986: USA Coach to Goodwill Games (Rhythmic Gymnastics) Moscow, USSR
- 1990: USA Coach/Judge to Pre World Championships (Rhythmic Gymnastics) Sarajevo
- 1992: USA Coach World University Games (Rhythmic Gymnastics) Sheffield, England
- 1992-2000: Coach to British Junior National Team (Rhythmic Gymnastics)
- 1993: British Coach to Aloha Festival (Rhythmic Gymnastics) Honolulu, Hawaii
- 1996: Clinician South African National Physical Education Program – Capetown, South Africa
- 1996: British Coach to South African International Invitational Championships – Stellenboch
- 1996: Coach New Zealand World Championship Team (Rhythmic Gymnastics) -Berlin, Germany

Continued on page 14

2012 Merit Award Winners

How Sokol has Prepared Me for the Future

The American Sokol Merit Award is handled by the National Educational Committee. Eligible students are those who are planning a full time (at least 12 hours per semester or equivalent) course program in an accredited two-year or four-year college or who are already participating in such a course of study. The amount awarded is \$500.00. There are no merit award renewals.

The selections are made by the Merit Award Committee and approved by the American Sokol District Educational Directors and the American Sokol Executive Board.

Nicole Muff

Sokolice Crete, Western District

I started Sokol's when I was five years old and have been a part of it ever since. Sokol's was my first extracurricular activity and the one I have been involved in the longest. I competed until 2010 when I had surgery on my wrist, and was unable to compete. Since then I have participated in meets by assisting my instructor with whatever she needs.

Being a part of Sokol's has been a fun and enjoyable experience, while teaching me many valuable skills. It taught me social skills and how to interact with many different age groups. I over came my fear of performing in front of an audience. It also taught me physical and mental toughness. I learned how to be graceful and agile and it prepared me for the other sports I participated in, especially track. The most important skill I got out of Sokol's was mental toughness, I had to get up every time I failed and try again and again until I got it right.

Because of my involvement in Sokol's I have met many new people from around the United States. However, the thing I value the most was being able to teach and mentor the younger kids. I wasn't just their teacher, I was their role model. I was the person I always wanted to be when I was younger. I hope to involve my children in Sokol's, just like my mother did for me. (S)

Cara Tuskey

Sokol Detroit, Northeastern District

Well, Sokol has taught me how important it is to have something constant in my life. I've been in Sokol since I was six, and it's nice to have that routine of going to gymnastics once a week and seeing my friends. Sokol has also taught me how to manage my time because I always have to make sure that I've balanced my activities in my life, things such as homework and Stage Crew. I always have to finish my homework before coming to gymnastics so its taught me self-discipline. On the days that I come to Sokol, I have to come straight home from school to work on my homework to make sure I finish it in time to get to gymnastics.

Sokol has also taught me another lesson that I find to be very important in life. How to be confident in myself and my abilities. When I was younger, I was very shy and very unsure of myself, especially around new people. I was always the quiet one in the corner that didn't talk much and was scared to speak up. But through Sokol and all the opportunities that its given me, I've learned how to have more confidence in myself, be more outgoing with new people, and to overall just be a more confident person. I'm no longer afraid of meeting new people and it's a lot easier for me to make friends. I've learned to have confidence in my own abilities. Its like when you learn a new skill, and your coach thinks that you're ready to do it on your own but you're not quite sure. I've learned to take that leap of faith and to just trust in my own abilities and just do it. I'm not going to have a coach there to spot me on everything I do, eventually I have to learn how to do it on my own and Sokol has taught me that.

Sokol has also taught me how to be more responsible. I've learned how to prioritize my life and to manage all of my responsibilities. Overall, Sokol has taught me how to lead a balanced life, manage my time, and to be a more confident me. (S)

Dan Bajek

Naperville Tyrs, Central District

Ever since 1862, Sokol has evolved over the years and has changed many lives. This organization emphasizes the importance of physical and mental strength. One learns how to balance the two in order to grow into a successful individual. Sokol stresses character building and physical activity as the best ways to create a well-rounded person. I have been involved with Sokol for most of my life. I first joined at the age of three and I continue to be a member. The experiences, lessons learned, friends made, and core values make me the person I am today. Two goals that I have for the future are to become a Physical Education teacher and the head gymnastics coach at the high school I will work for. Sokol promotes the importance of fitness, character, and leadership and all of these have prepared me to reach my goals.

The best preparation I received over the years was from the National Sokol Instructors School. Sokol offers this school every summer in order to teach members how to ultimately become a gymnastics coach. I attended four years of the school and that is the maximum amount one can participate. Lessons learned such as spotting, gymnastics progressions, and starting a class lesson plan and character values such as leadership and responsibility are all examples of what I took from four years of Instructors School.

Part of the role of a Double Advanced student is leadership. It is essential for the other students and the first year students to have a suitable example. I was the only last year student and I knew the responsibility required to lead my peers. Here are three specific examples of leadership. First, I was put in charge of the men's quarters. The whole group of 15 guys all slept in the same area and I maintained order. I was the first one up every morning to wake up the others and I kept the room clean. Second, I was put in a position to assist my peers. Each night, the instructors gave us an hour to use for "study time". I walked around supervising the room and tutoring students who asked for help. Last, one of my final projects was writing a calisthenics number for the students to perform for the parents at our graduation show. This task seemed impossible. I knew the other kids were relying on me and that I must deliver a solid number. After countless hours of time and effort, the number was completed and I just had one hour to teach 40 people.

My lifelong participation in Sokol and attendance of four years of Instructors School has prepared me to reach my goals. Sokol led me to coach gymnastics at my unit and former high school. I used everything this organization has taught me to create my own philosophies as a PE teacher and coach. My main objective is to create a work ethic in my students that will encourage physical fitness and character. I want to promote health and wellness while also teaching others to be respectful. Also, Sokol has given me leadership opportunities which are vital to success in my career field. In the fall, I will transfer to Illinois State University and major in Physical Education Teacher Education. Sokol has influenced my career path and prepared me as I continue to develop as a teacher and gymnastics coach. I owe my current and future achievements to this organization as I move forward with my life and I am thankful for Sokol. ⑧

Mary Bajek

Naperville Tyrs, Central District

Throughout my life, the Sokol system has always challenged me to grow both mentally and physically. As a tot, I learned patience by waiting in line for my turn, and I learned how to listen and follow directions from my instructors as I gained physical strength executing my gymnastic skills. In 1st class and 2nd class girls, we started memorizing routines, setting goals to master specific tricks for competitions and how to persevere through practicing my routines multiple times even when my body was sore and tired. Once I was a junior, I was asked to be an assistant coach, in which I started to focus on how I could learn from my mistakes and how I could use my knowledge to help guide others.

The great thing about Sokol is the continual growth. Even after teaching at my gym, I began to learn more about how the body works and began thinking of creative ways to perform the skills learned in class and how to transform those skills into a special number. I continued on to choreograph special numbers that were entered into competitions and this year I judged for a special number competition. My transitions from student to coach and from choreographer to judge, has helped me become more aware and better understand everyone's importance within a community; everyone has a purpose.

Sokol has prepared me to have, "A sound mind in a sound body" while appreciating everybody's different talents and how they work together and support each other. Sokol has set me traveling on the road of success since the first day of tots class. My instructors and peers have always been an inspiration in their hard work ethic and loyalty to each other. Because of this, Sokol has prepared me for the future since day one. Sokol has always encouraged me to reach my potential in everything I do, and I am prepared to keep striving for that potential for the rest of my life. ⑧

Sokol Fort Worth – Our Touch with Olympians

Continued from page 11**JILL PARKER**

Jill Parker, who received her athletic start as a tot in the Fort Worth Sokol gymnastics classes, is the first American to run and finish a 26.2 mile marathon on all seven continents and the highest, Mt. Everest.

Her first marathon was in 1996 at the New York City

Marathon. Some of her most memorable marathons were on the Great Wall of China; King George Island, Antarctica; the Safari com in Kenya; the Prague, Czech Republic Marathon, and the Athens, Greece Marathon in 2010 which was the 2,500th anniversary of the first marathon.

To date, Jill has finished marathons in:

Africa: Kenya Safaricom*; **Antarctica:** King George Island; **Asia:** Great Wall of China; **Australia:** Gold Coast; **Europe:** Prague, Monte Carlo, and Athens; **North America:** Boston; New York City (5 times); Big Sur, California; Bellingham, Washington; The Marine Corps in Washington D.C.; Houston and Austin, Texas **South America:** Fin del Mundo, Tierra del Fuego

Jill is the descendant of long-time Sokols ... great-grand daughter of Joe and Anna Milan, granddaughter of Don and Rosie Milan Steinman, and the daughter of Jerry and Donna Rose Parker.

*One interesting side note was when Jill ran the Kenyan marathon; it was on a safari reserve among the native wildlife. Guards with guns surrounded Jill when she was running the marathon as there was a rhino stalking her. One guard jokingly told Jill not to worry, as the rhinos are herbivores ... it might kill her, but it wouldn't eat her! ☺

RISING STAR

KEN FRON JR.



Commitment and Passion are keys to success in every organization. Ken Fron Jr., a member of an extensive Fron family at Sokol Tabor is an example of that commitment and passion. Outside of his Sokol responsibilities, Ken currently attends University of Illinois in Chicago as a Business Major and is working with a volleyball club team.

Ken was unable to attend the 150th anniversary of Sokol in Prague. Why? Because he is hard at work in his Unit growing his summer Sokol program for the 3rd year. Born from his desire to expand programming in his Unit past the traditional Sokol "season", Ken proposed this program to his Unit, did the leg work to get it started and goes the extra mile by teaching a number of the classes. Not only is he taking in new members and new revenue for his Unit, but he is also supporting the efforts that the District and National have provided to him by sharing a percentage of the income with each. It is critical to the success of Sokol that our young adults take on these types of activities.

Ken teaches 2nd class boys at Sokol Tabor and has been either head coach or assistant for the last 6 years. He is an inspiration to his boys as he remains active as a gymnast and volleyball player on Sokol Tabor's teams.

Perhaps his greatest contribution to the American Sokol is his dedication to the American Sokol Instructor School. Ken attended all levels of the school over the course of 5 years. Ken now teaches at the school and has been doing so for 3 years. While he lends a hand in all aspects of instruction at the school, Ken specializes in apparatus terminology

Ken is certainly rising to the top and achieving the goals that we have as an organization with his hard work and dedication. Kudos to Ken for being a Rising Star of our American Sokol!

Thank you, Ken for your dedication to Sokol. Developing the summer program at your unit will ensure enrollment and the success of Sokol programs for the future!

Do you know of a young senior or junior member that exemplifies the Sokol spirit? Every month we highlight a young adult member in the Sokol organization that is an aspiring leader in your Sokol, Unit or District. To make this column a success we need your help! Send the name of a Rising Star, a photo and the reason you are nominating them to editor@american-sokol.org. ☺



Mark your Calendar

Events around the American Sokol

Get your event featured! Email editor@american-sokol.org

August

- August 5** **Sokol Los Angeles Family Picnic** – Cerritos Regional Park
- August 12** **82nd Sokol Camp Booya and Picnic** – Pine City, MN, Noon – 5 p.m., For more visit: www.sokolmn.org
- August 18** **Annual Sokol Detroit Golf Outing 2012** – Fox Hills Golf & Banquet Club
- August 18** **Sokol Greater Cleveland Dumpling Workshop** – Bohemian National Hall kitchen; Want to learn/help make Sokol dumplings? To help, or for more information contact Viola Jaros 216-921-8916
- August 24-26** **Sokol Detroit Fishing Derby and Fish Dinner** – Sokol Camp
- August 26** **Sokol Greater Cleveland Sunday Dinner** – Special Old-Country Czech Dinner, sliced cottage ham, sweet-sour cabbage, potato dumplings, \$13 1-2:30 pm
- August 26** **Sokol Camp (STL) Annual Summer Picnic** – Imperial, MO; BBQ Dinners, raffles, bingo and swimming,
- Aug 29 – Sept 4** **Czech Labor Day Campout** – Sokol Los Angeles past, present & future member camp – Sequoia National Park

September

- Sept 2** **Sokol Detroit Pancake Breakfast** – Sokol Camp; Serving from 8:00 am -10:00 am; Adult \$3.50, Children (under 12) \$2.50
- Sept 15** **Sokol Greater Cleveland Dumpling Workshop** – Bohemian National Hall kitchen; Want to learn/help make Sokol dumplings? To help, or for more information contact Viola Jaros 216-921-8916
- Sept 16** **Czech/Slovak Festival International Institute** – 1694 Como, Saint Paul 11 - 4 pm For more visit: www.sokolmn.org
- Sept 23** **Sokol Greater Cleveland Sunday Dinner** – Sliced Roast Pork, Dumplings & Sauerkraut, \$13 1-2:30 pm

MARK YOUR CALENDARS – BOI DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Hosted by the Central District in the Chicago area. One track will be devoted to the 2013 Cals so make your plans and save the dates. Watch the Directors Newsletter for further information on other sessions, location and cost.



American Sokol Deadline - Please note NEW date!

Send your submissions, articles, events and photos to editor@american-sokol.org for the American Sokol by the 1st of the month prior to the publication issue!





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9126 Ogden Avenue
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