

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



## SEASON'S GREETINGS



## AMERICAN SOKOL

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\*except in July and August

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### From the Editor...

It has been an exciting year at the publication. As I look back on 2012, we have implemented several new recurring sections and have had many, many great submissions! Next year should bring even more excitement as we look forward to the 2013 Sports Festival in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

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

I wish you all the best during this holiday season. See you next year!

NAZDAR!



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## President Note — What's on Your Christmas List?

Happy Holidays! During this wonderful season, we get a special chance to share time with family and friends. While we don't all celebrate the same way or even the same holidays, many of us show our appreciation by finding them the perfect gift for whatever holiday you celebrate. Sometimes we know exactly what someone wants. Sometimes, we get people what they need (Max and Scarlet will get their share of clothes from Santa this year). But other times...we have to ask. Santa figured it out a long time ago. He put out mailboxes, spent some time at the local mall talking with kids, and even started a phone hot line where kids could leave a message with their Christmas wishes.

Based on what our members and Units need and want, here are some of the things that are on Santa's sleigh or at the North Pole being worked on:

- **2013 Sports Festival** – Every 4 years, the American Sokol hosts and organizes a grand gathering of athletes and performers. Come to Milwaukee on June 25-30 to celebrate this historic event with Sokol.
- **Mentoring/Volunteer Management Program** – We are a volunteer based organization. This program to mentor a volunteer manager will be available to all Sokol Units and the Community this month.
- **Leadership Development Program** – The Leadership Development team has been hard at work preparing a training module to help develop people into talented leaders. Stay tuned for more details.
- **Professional Services** – Need legal, insurance, or tax advice? We are working on a program to offer these professional services throughout the organization.
- **Merchandise** – We are on the lookout for someone who wants to create, produce and sell a full line of American Sokol merchandise. If we can find someone to coordinate this effort, we will have GREAT gifts available for Christmas 2013.

*But we want to get it just right....*Just like Santa, we want to ask what you want for Christmas.

Here's a holiday challenge! Please send your responses to [santa@american-sokol.org](mailto:santa@american-sokol.org).

### What do you want for Christmas?

- If you are a member of the community or a leader of a community group, what do you want from our Sokol organization?
- If you are a parent or a member of Sokol, what do you want from Sokol?
- If you are a leader in your Unit, what does your Unit want from Sokol?

### What are you giving for Christmas?

- If you are a member of the community or a leader of a community group, what can you see giving to Sokol?
- If you are a parent or a member of Sokol, what can you give back to Sokol?
- If you are a leader in your Unit, what can your Unit do to support Sokol and our mission?

Thanks for taking the time to write Santa a quick note with your wish list!

On behalf of my family, let me wish you a wonderful holiday season and an outstanding start to a new 2013!! ☺

Nazdar!

Tom Pajer, American Sokol President





# The Sokol Educator

*Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl, Educational Director*

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## NOVEMBER

Listopad (falling leaves): The muted month; the wind whispers; flowers fade; animals scurry for shelter.

- November 4, 1775: The Continental Congress directed that each American soldier receive one pint of milk and one quart of beer or cider each day.
- November 4, 1880: First cash register patented by James & John Ritty of Dayton, OH.
- November 4, 1924: Nellie Ross of Wyoming became the first female governor after being elected to fill the unexpired term of her husband.
- November 6, 1771: Alois Sennefelder born - discovered lithographic printing in Praha.
- November 7, 1940: Tacoma Narrows Bridge collapses - known as "Galloping Gertie" for its vertical ripple in a breeze. It twisted laterally in that day's 42 MPH winds. A dog is the lone fatality.
- November 8, 1620: Battle of White Mountain - Czechs lost their independence for 300 years.
- November 14, 1851: Herman Melville published "Moby Dick".
- November 18, 1852: Mikulas Ales born - great Czech painter.
- November 20, 1850: Charlotte Garrigue Masaryk born to a wealthy New York family and raised in the post-Civil War era where independence, talent and intelligence were nurtured and encouraged in young women.

Oct. 28, 1994 - An area known as Masaryk Park was dedicated to early Czech, Moravian & Slovak immigrants in Cedar Rapids. It was developed at the east end of the Bridge of Lions, near the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1942, the U.S. Military joined with the American Kennel Club to establish Dogs for Defense. On March 13, 1942, the Quartermaster Corps of the Army took charge of turning these pets into soldiers. German Shepherds, Belgian Sheepdogs, Doberman Pinschers, Farm Collies & Giant Schnauzers were used and training took 12 weeks. Duties included: Sentries, Scout or Patrol, Messenger & Mine dogs.

For many the month of November is one step away from the dead of winter and the coming of the holidays - Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year. BUT - what do you know about Veterans' Day which used to be called Armistice Day? It was originally set aside to honor the end of WWI; legislation passed in 1938 was "dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be hereafter celebrated and known as Armistice Day". In 1954, the 83rd Congress amended the Act of 1938, striking the word Armistice and inserting the word Veterans. In 1968, the Uniform Holiday Bill ensured 3-day weekends for federal employees by celebrating 4 National holidays on Mondays. However because of confusion, in 1975, Pres. Ford signed a law which returned the annual observance of Veterans' Day to its original day of Nov. 11. DO NOT FORGET; HONOR ALL THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES, WHO LOST LIMBS AND THOSE WHO WERE ABLE TO RETURN FROM ANY OF OUR WARS!!

Winter's coming. In the 1880s a Vermont farmer, Wilson A. Bentley began a hobby of taking thousands of photographs of snow flakes on black velvet. He believed that no 2 snowflakes are alike. Today, scientists say that no 2 complex snowflakes are alike.

"Panked" snow is popular in Michigan's UP and other northern fringes of the country; it refers to snow that has settled or has been pressed down so that people can walk on it. Snow comes in colors: glacier snow seems blue; algae growing on fallen snow create hues of green or red. Orange snow fell in Siberia but pollution was suspected.

Turkeys: A male is a tom and a young male is a jake. The Turkey Trot was once a scandalous dance and is now a road race, usually 5K. Hunting wild turkeys is difficult - they appear dumb & slow but have amazing eyesight & hearing. They can run 15 MPH and fly even faster. Oklahoma's official bird is the turkey; its eggs are tan with brown specks.

## DECEMBER — PODZIM

- December 3, 1755: Birth of Gilbert Stuart – American portrait painter.
- December 6, 1884: Army engineers completed construction of the Washington Monument by setting an aluminum capstone atop the obelisk.
- December 9, 1848: Birth of Joel Chandler Harris – writer of "Uncle Remus & Brer Rabbit".
- December 8, 1903: Bjornstjere Bjornson, Norwegian poet & defender of oppressed nations, especially the Slovaks, was born.
- December 15, 1791: Birthday of our Bill of Rights
- December 18, 1773: War for independence of the Colonies is begun.
- December 18, 1935: Dr. Edvard Benes was elected as the second president of the Czechoslovak Republic.
- December 27, 1571: John Keppler the famous astronomer was born
- December 27, 1988: Sokol Minneapolis merged with Sokol Minnesota.
- December 28, 1902: Sokolice South Omaha was organized.

Sending holiday greetings began in England in 1842. By 1874 Louis Prang was turning out a new kind of Christmas card. In the 1930's greeting cards became popular. The U.S. Postal Service issued the first holiday stamp in 1962 — only 4 Cents ! 90% of holiday cards are sold in boxed form. Americans exchange about 2 billion holiday cards each year.

275 million first class cards and letters are mailed on Dec. 17, the busiest mailing day of the year. 20 million pounds is the amount of mail the Postal Service will process for overseas military installations.

Adopted in 1893, the Mistletoe is Oklahoma's official floral emblem. Many birds eat the berries which are poisonous to humans and their pets. It is a parasitic plant found on oaks, hickory, mahogany and pecan trees and can be invasive.

30 to 35 millions of live trees are sold each Christmas season and more than 500 tree growers are in Illinois. It takes 7 years for an evergreen to grow to a height of 6 to 7 feet.. In 1851, the first Christmas Tree retail lot in the U.S. went into business.

Think about it: A gift for the teacher at Christmas time: Send your children to school, well-nourished, decently dressed, well behaved, well rested, alert, cooperative, well loved, respectful, eager-to-learn. Have them arrive on time with completed homework in hand. This would mean more to any teacher than all the cups, candies and candles.

The National Biscuit Co. introduced "Barnum's Animal Crackers" as a holiday seasonal promotion in 1902. The boxes carrying strings were designed for hanging on the Christmas tree at a time when candy and treats were typical decorations.

1887—prni lyze v Cechach

1893—prvni zavody

1903—vznik Svazu lyzaru v Kralovstvi ceskem.

1924—vznik Mezinarodni lyzarske federace - FIS

May peace break into your home and may thieves come to steal your debts.

May the pockets of your jeans become a magnet for \$100 bills.

My love stick to your face like Vaseline and may laughter assault your lips!

May your clothes smell of success and may happiness slap you across the face.

May your tears be that of joy.

May the problems you had forget your home address!

In simple words: May 2013 be the best year of your life. ☺

NAZDAR! Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl, American Sokol Educational Director



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# AMERICAN SOKOL GYMNAST

*Pages 7-10 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

## Happy Holidays from the American Sokol Board of Instructors!



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Theresa Vernon, Nadia Leary, Todd Yatchyshyn, Lori Laznovsky, Joe Kucera and Rome Milan

**We would all like to wish you a HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!**

## Fitting in Fitness: Finding Time for Physical Activity

*Finding time for fitness can be tough. The key is making it convenient. Consider these practical suggestions.*

*By Mayo Clinic staff*

You know fitness is important for your health and well-being. And you want to get more active, but your days are a blur of work, household chores, errands, and time with family and friends. Setting aside enough time to sleep — let alone exercise — can be tough.

So how can you find time for fitness? The key is to be flexible and make fitness a way of life. And remember all physical activity — not just formal exercise programs — adds up to a healthier you.

**Fitting in fitness at home**—Time spent at home doesn't have to be "couch potato" time. To make fitness a priority at home:

**Wake up early**—Get up 30 minutes earlier than you normally do and use the extra time to walk on your treadmill or take a brisk walk around the neighborhood. Make chores count. Mop the floor, scrub the bathtub or do other housework at a pace fast enough to get your heart pumping. Outdoor work counts, too. Mowing the lawn with a push mower is a great way to burn calories. Raking and hoeing strengthen your arms and back, and digging works your arms and legs. Be active while watching TV. Use hand weights, ride a stationary bike or do a stretching routine during your favorite shows. Get off the couch to change the channel or adjust the volume. Involve the whole family. Take group walks before or after dinner. Play catch. Ride your bikes. It's best to build up to about 30 minutes of continuous activity, but you can exercise in shorter bursts, too. Get your dog into the act. Take daily walks with Fido or Fluffy. If you don't have a dog, borrow one. An enthusiastic dog may give you the motivation you need to lace up your walking shoes.

**Work out at work**—To fit in more physical activity while you're on the job:

Make the most of your commute. Walk or bike to work. If you ride the bus, get off a few blocks early and walk the rest of the way. Take the stairs whenever you can. If you have a meeting on another floor, get off the elevator a few floors early and use the stairs. Better yet, skip the elevator entirely. Take fitness breaks. Rather than hanging out in the lounge with coffee or a snack, take a short walk. Start a lunchtime walking group. The regular routine and the support of your co-workers may help you stick with the program. Put it on the calendar. Schedule physical activity as you would any other appointment during the day. Don't change your exercise plans for every interruption that comes along. Take it on the road. If you travel for work, plan ahead. Bring your jump-rope or choose a hotel that has fitness facilities. If you're stuck in an airport waiting for a plane, grab your bags and take a walk.

Here are a few more ways you can add more activity to your routine:

**Get more out of errands**—When you go to the mall or grocery store, park toward the back of the lot and walk the extra distance. If you have a little extra time, walk inside for a lap or two before you start shopping. Keep a pair of walking shoes in your car so that you're ready when you find a few minutes for exercise. Plan active outings. Make a date with a friend to hike in a local park, or take a family trip to the zoo. Get social. Try a dance club, hiking group or golf league. Encouragement from others can help you stay with a new activity. Join a team. Sign up for a softball, soccer or volleyball team through your local parks and recreation department. Making a commitment to a team is a great motivator. Join a fitness club. Sign up for a group exercise class at a nearby fitness club. The cost may be an added incentive to stick with it. There's no single best way to fit physical activity into your day. Your lifestyle, job and family responsibilities will point to the most convenient time and place for fitness. Do what works for you — and make daily physical activity a habit you keep. ©



## Angels Here and Above Us By Kandi Pajer



A very special person left us last spring. Not only was she an angel, she was my mom. Although my sadness is still ripe, I have decided to transfer my grief into something positive. I will strive to honor her every day by encouraging others and sharing the spirit which she has instilled within me. This will honor her memory and hopefully express to the world how blessed I am to have had her in my life. Along with that, I have decided to share some of what her and my grandfather mean to my life and how they have influenced me in everything I do.

When I was brought home from the hospital my birth mother and father lived with my paternal grandparents. My mother and father were very young and had a difficult time managing their lives as well as caring for a newborn. Immediately upon my arrival my grandparents stepped up and had a major role in caring for me. When my birth mother and father decided to move in to their own place away from my grandparents and thus me, my grandparents took over complete care of me and eventually adopted me. I became theirs not only in heart but on paper as well. My grandparents are MY real life angels who made the choice to take me in when I needed them the most. I feel truly blessed to have them in my life and to be able to call them parents!

Stories have always been told about how as a baby, I was a BITER. I bit everything I could get my hands on that was materialistic. I remember how I used to bite our wooden chairs in our dining room table and chair set, as well as pencils, crayons and even my toys! However, I had one person who was the only one special enough to sink my teeth into, Mom. I never bit anyone else. She would say it wasn't out of meanness or being mad, I just loved to bite her. She would tell me "boy did you bite hard"-I would even draw blood! In some weird way I think it was my way of saying "I love you" as an infant/toddler. Like the old saying goes-dogs only bite the hand that feeds them. Once again, my mom was my angel, for never getting angry over the bite marks from my unique "I Love You's".

As I got older I got very busy with school, Sokol, gymnastics, violin, theatre-you name it-I was in it! Mom and Grandpa supported me in everything I endeavored. They would both walk me to and from school and lunch every day! After school my grandpa could always be found spotting apparatus for the Sokol classes. But more importantly they were there for me on a higher level. If I was having difficulty with a skill in gymnastics, they would help me set short term goals to help that happen. If I was sad they would hug and comfort me and just listen. They were amazing-perfectly supportive in every way!

On my wedding day I was so happy and thankful that I had met the man of my dreams and the feeling was mutual. As a child I remember my parents always being there for each other, unconditionally. There would be arguments, but they would never stay mad for long. They did everything together and were always supporting their children and grandchildren. My parents were married for 63 and a half years! They shared an amazing life together and accomplished so much. Their example has been an inspiration to me and their influence has set a great foundation for my relationship with Tom. Tom has been so supportive of me during this hurdle in my life and I hope we can be together 63 years, or even more!

As an adult woman, my mom and I had a special relationship. She became my best friend as well as my sounding board, my teacher, my rock, my best of EVERYTHING. My kids think their grandparents are "THE BEST" and they are right! I could not have asked for better parents or grandparents/great grandparents for me or my kids. When grandma first got sick, Scarlet had a very difficult time with it. Grandma, Scarlet and I were like the Three Musketeers! We would always eat lunch together, go shopping or Scarlet and I would just help around grandma's house while Snow White was on the DVR. Scarlet was grandmas little sweet heart. When grandma passed away Scarlet asked if we could get pretzel dogs for lunch and get an extra one for grandma because that was her favorite lunch. That sentiment immediately sent tears to my eyes, but also made me glad to know how much



grandma meant to her. Even though she was gone, Scarlet still wanted to have that time with her. Needless to say we did go to lunch and buy an extra pretzel dog. We also, with my son Max's influence-have decided that we will get this lunch every year on Grandmas birthday and purchase a helium balloon, write something to grandma and send it up in remembrance of her! I am so proud of the amazing young people my children are becoming. My son Max is so caring and sympathetic and Scarlet is perceptive and determined and I can see how grandma and grandpa have helped mold them into two, wonderful, young people.

When my mom got sick, I didn't want to believe that she may not survive. I would visit her every day to encourage her, hug her, let her know how much she meant to me and never taking for granted the time I was able to spend with her. But, no 30 year old should have to face the reality of losing a parent this day and age. I feel like I haven't learned everything I wanted to learn from her yet. We haven't done all the things we dreamed of doing together yet. I haven't made her proud enough yet-and my kids haven't gotten to spend enough time with her yet! I was able to tell my mom how lucky I feel to have been able to call her mom. That I was given so many amazing chances in my life because of her, her influence, her love and her encouragement. I could not have asked for a better mom or best friend. She was my ANGEL on earth and now up above!

This past year has been extremely difficult for me. I have had to endure much heartache, overcome a serious injury and reinvent myself as a motherless child. It has been even harder for my grandpa, however, he is thriving. He lost his wife in the spring, but has not gotten down or depressed. He constantly thinks about her and wishes she was here, but knows that he is loved by

many and still has so much to share. He is doing occupational therapy and physical therapy every day-and the therapists are running out of more difficult things for him to work on! The speech therapist can't get over how sharp his mind is. He remembers things that she can't! My grandpa is constantly teaching me strength in every way possible by being an amazing example of how to endure. I would not be the person I am today if it wasn't for him, his support, his love and the millions of opportunities he has given me. He is an inspiration to me every day, my real life angel. My Grandpa and I will always cherish the memories of my mom as she was a true angel to both of us.

My heart is broken due to the loss of the most amazing woman I have and will ever know. However, my wish for everyone this holiday season is that you will too someday have a heart shattered in a million pieces. Not because I want you to hurt but because it means that you have loved with your whole heart and soul and in turn have been loved wholly and unconditionally. Please hug often, smile always and let everyone you love-know you love them. Treat everyone as brothers and sisters-be kind and caring. May you all know that there are angels looking down on you and wishing you amazing things. Know there are angels on earth and do your best to spread your own wings. May you love with your whole heart and do your best to BE your best! Thank you to all that sent their sympathy, strength and support. Your wings have helped carry me to this amazing place!

Have an inspirational and Happy Holiday season as well as a POSITIVE outlook for the New Year! ☺

My love, wishes and BEST to you and yours,

Kandi Pajer KP ;)

## Slet XV in Prague: A Member Perspective: Three Sokol Los Angeles members share their stories

All 12 Pacific District members whom participated in the Slet have a wonderful feeling of accomplishment, having performed well under the direction of Los Angeles Men's Director Otto Notzl who gave selflessly of his time to ensure that all learned the routines. They certainly did not let him down on the field in Prague.

### **Crying in the Rain**

*Submitted by Brigit Otero, Sokol Los Angeles*

I wrote the following letter to my brother Martin on July 5, 2012, after our first Sokol Slet evening performance in Prague, Czech Republic.

Tonight marked the first 2012 Sokol Slet in Prague, celebrating the Sokol's 150 Year Anniversary. My Czech relatives had bought tickets; I was called by a cousin with a wish for luck and no rain.

After standing in the storm for two hours for lineup, march in, welcome remarks, flag salutes, pomp and circumstance, opening ceremony, and finally our calisthenics, I held the closing salute pose with my arms up while the 10,000 crowd filled stadium gave us a standing ovation. The applause and yells were equal to the thunder we had withstood. Around me were senior brothers and sisters, many trembling from the cold, and all completely wet; yet I believe that very few participants on the field would have changed the circumstances of the night.

From the corner of my eyes, I saw Mom and Dad, also with their arms up waiting for the cheers to cease; they momentarily looked at each other and smiled. They had arrived triumphant after countless hours of practice and obstacles. I leaned my head back, overcome with emotion, and gazed into the dark and turbulent sky for the beauty of it all. On my face, the rain and my tears merged into one as I took in the meaning of Sokol, strength, courage, unity, and love.

### **A Message from the Czech Republic**

*Submitted by Mike Vondrus, Sokol Los Angeles*

Nazdar Mirku,

Thank you for your kind greeting and photos of St. Vitus Cathedral. . . I remember the unique and festive atmosphere in the cathedral – Tyrš' ever living credo, common ideas, and the words of Cardinal Duka from the heart.

My friends and I admire your enthusiasm for participation in Slet XV in Prague and practicing the routines for the loyal guard. We give you thumbs up for enduring the training and then the performances. You were amazing.

I visited your website on the Internet ([www.sokolla.org](http://www.sokolla.org)) and

admire how well your organization represents Sokol.

Dear Mirek, have a nice summer, peace, health, happiness. Pass our greetings to the Sokols and friends who are so far from the homeland but so near to my life's principles.

Nazdar, Milada Kmochová

### **Journey of a Lifetime**

*Submitted by Lillian Roter, President/Treasurer, Sokol Los Angeles*

On 27 June 2012, Darine Klega and I embarked on a journey of a lifetime. We were two members of a 18-member Pacific District team participating in International Slet XV in Prague. We had been rehearsing our routines for months under the direction of Otto Notzl and the date had finally arrived. The anticipation of our performance helped make the long flight bearable.

Upon arrival in Prague the afternoon of 28 June, Darine and I were shuttled to the Hotel Jalta on Wenceslas Square. We were excited to find that our room had a balcony overlooking the Square. Looking to the left from our balcony we could see the statue of St Wenceslas on horseback with the Museum in the background. Our location made for easy access to all events scheduled for the Slet week with the Metro one block up the street from our hotel and a tram stop two blocks down the street.

Our first full day in Prague included a private tour of Tyršov Dum (Prague Sokol headquarters), a grand complex of several buildings, including a gymnasium, swimming pool, hostel, etc. We ate lunch at a beer garden restaurant near the funicular, riding the funicular to the first stop up the hill and walking through the garden to the restaurant where we enjoyed wonderful food and beer. After lunch, we walked around Prague and took the tram to Prague Castle. We enjoyed the Castle grounds then walked down the "old steps" to take the Metro back to Wenceslas Square.

The Gala was a special evening with demonstrations in an indoor arena by Sokol organizations participating in the Slet. All performances were exciting to watch. Our own American Sokol wheel demonstration was spectacular. But the highlight of the evening was a two-year old Czech girl hitting tennis balls. With badminton, table tennis and other tennis players performing, all eyes were on this adorable little girl throwing the ball up and hitting it with vigor.

*Continued on page 13*

## Sokol Fort Worth Notables

Submitted by Jerry Milan, Sokol Fort Worth

Sokol Fort Worth celebrated 100 years in January with three days of visiting past gymnasts, films, videos and exhibitions. 12 Noteables were recognized during the event. Four were highlighted in the July/August edition of the publication. Here are the stories of two more.

### MARY JEAN STOEPPLEMAN

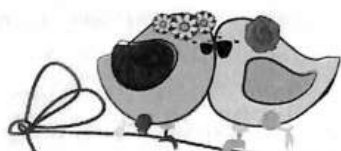
MaryJean is the granddaughter of charter members Anna and Joe Milan. Known throughout Sokol circles of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s and even 90s for special number routines and themes. After attending two national instructors schools and three district courses she immediately took charge and began teaching at age 12. Later, she choreographed hundreds of floor routines while teaching all age classes. She coached at Trinity High School and LD Bell High Schools for the after school gymnastics programs and judged for several years. She composed numerous warm-up routines for advanced and intermediate classes, two national junior calisthenics in 1977 and 1981 and a Senior II calisthenics in 1985 with Jerry Milan. Mary Jean's special numbers were known for their creativity any many times for the use of some unusual props. The original Texas RoundUp was re-used as a district special number in Chicago at the National Slet with an actual live horse. Mary Steinman carried a Southern District Sokol flag while charging across the field on horseback. Another large-scale routine was The Boot number which was a specially composed western number for the 1981 National Slet in Fort Worth. It used a three story scaffolding made into a giant boot. Gymnasts danced on, vaulted over and dove off the boot. By the Sea in 1985 was also a unit number that went on to be used at the Gymnaestrada

in Denmark in 1987. Most recently MaryJean created Young At Heart for the Sokol Fort Worth 100th Anniversary which included gymnasts from three generations ranging in age from 4-79.

### BARBIE KOZEL CRAIG

Barbie (Babs) Kozel Craig started gymnastics at Sokol Fort Worth in 1970 when she was four years old. She remained active in Sokol activities until she graduated from Lake Worth High School in 1984. A lifetime goal of becoming an astronaut triggered many of her next steps in life. She received her bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering from Texas A&M University, a master's and PhD from the University of Texas, private pilot's license, and even honed her skills at speaking Russian. In 1997, she was greeted with an opportunity of a lifetime. From thousands of applicants she advanced through successive interviews and became one of 100 finalists invited to NASA's

Johnson Space Center for a final interview. Although she did not get chosen, it was a journey and experience she will cherish forever. Since then she partnered with some colleagues to start a high tech, small business in Austin, Texas, that has since grown to over 150 employees. She lives in Austin with her husband Mark, two boys, Nicholas (10) and Zachary (8) and chocolate lab, Southpaw. ☺



Found Each Other at

**Sokol**

### Walter (Vladislav) and Anna (Pokorny) Slavik

My parents, Walter and Anna met at Sokol!

Dad was an instructor at Sokol Fuegner in Astoria, NY. He lived next door to my mom and her family. He had a car (which was rare in the NY boroughs in the mid-1950s) and dad would provide lifts to Sokol for various folks. (Actually, he taxied his friends to and from TJ Sokol in Manhattan until almost his dying day!)

Initially, my mom and dad were always in a group, involved in the volleyball league as well as other Sokol activities.

Little by little, my mom and dad got to know each other

better and realized they had a lot in common.

They began a courtship .... and the rest is history! Thank you to Sokol for matching up my awesome parents!

Submitted by Anne (Slavik) Nightingale

Did you or your parents meet at Sokol? Share the story with *American Sokol* readers by sending a short note to [editor@american-sokol.org](mailto:editor@american-sokol.org). We look forward to hearing about your special memory. ☺



# RISING STAR

## MARNI SABIN

Submitted by Br. Ed Chlanda, Sokol NY Building VP.



Marni Sabin! She is Sokol New York's Rising Star! However, we cannot take credit for the early development of our Rising Star. Stars do not appear out of the blue but are nurtured by many and something inside them responds. So we thank "the team" that inspired and nurtured our Rising Star. We thank her parents in Ohio for sending her off at age 3 to gymnastics classes at the local dance studio and at age 8 at the local YMCA. We thank Capital University in Columbus, Ohio for her early college training and Northeastern Illinois University for her Master's degree teachings, even though "spotting" was not part of the

curriculum. Of course Sokol Lodge 306, Sokol USA deserves credit for having her there for several years starting in 2003, where she became better acquainted with Sokol training as a gymnastics instructor and assistant director.

When she was moving to New York to pursue her career in publishing, a Sokol USA member told her to look us up. Indeed she did, and became an instructor in 2008 teaching juniors.

On our Board of Instructors she gave valued input, and by 2011 she was elected one of our BOI directors, becoming the youngest member of the Board of Sokol New York. As a board member she is a "team person," always helping in a positive way to find solutions. This year she attended the USA Gymnastics National Congress in San Jose, CA for our unit, and came back full of ideas. Special credit goes to her organizing new dance classes, including "Dance for Gymnasts" as well as Contemporary, Jazz, and Hip Hop. However, her best credits are not for her one-person acts, but for her team spirit and work, always positive, and always contributing to team solutions.

Sokols are best when they work together as a team. Indeed our "Rising Star" exemplifies this. Yorkville, NYC is an expensive place for young people after college, so we lose many of our "stars" to other states, and cities, but we are sure they carry on the spirit of Sokol wherever they go, and we are proud to be part of the team that developed them. For Marni Sabin, we thank her and the bigger team for making our "Sokol New York's Rising Star."

*Thank you, Marni for your team spirit. Sokol is truly a family that no matter where you go, you will have support in your endeavors.*

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](mailto:editor@american-sokol.org). ☺



*Slet XV in Prague: A Member Perspective, continued from page 11*

On 4 July, there was a special celebration at the Wilson Monument for the American Sokols with a reception following at the Prague Auto Club. There was food, beer, singing, dancing and a special cake designed like an American Flag. This was a Fourth of July celebration that out shone all celebrations I have experienced at home.

We rehearsed during Slet week in heat and humidity with temperatures in the mid to high 80s. And on 5 July, the rain came. Not only did it rain, but there was lightning and thunder as we lined up to enter the Synot Tip Arena. As we entered the arena in the pouring rain, there was more thunder. This time it was coming from the crowd – thousands cheering us on. We stood there in the rain during the Slet opening ceremony -- the flag procession onto the field led by a Sokol on horseback and the raising of the Czech and Sokol flags. Then it was our turn. We may have been soaked, but the victory was ours. Under the stadium lights, we outperformed all our rehearsals. The cheers from the stands made the months of training seem somehow trivial and the rain a minor obstacle.

Our second performance was under a blue sky, sprinkled with puffy white clouds. We performed equally as well as the evening before, this time to a packed stadium. Again we exited the stadium with the crowd on their feet. For those of us experiencing this for the first time, it allowed us to feel what it is to be a true Sokol. The warmth in our hearts, the feeling of accomplishment, is so strongly etched within to remind us of this amazing journey.

Onward and upward, Nazdar! ☺


## Commemorative Silver Coin to Mark 150th Anniversary of the Foundation of Sokol

Excerpt from [www.cnb.cz/en/banknotes\\_coins/numismatics/silver\\_coins/2012/psm\\_sokol.html](http://www.cnb.cz/en/banknotes_coins/numismatics/silver_coins/2012/psm_sokol.html)

On February 15, 2012, the Czech National Bank put into circulation a CZK 200 commemorative silver coin to mark the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the gymnastics organization, Sokol.

The obverse side of the coin features the current symbol of Sokol, with the Czech lion located at its center formed by the letter "O". The Sokol symbol is located on the background of a pattern depicting gymnasts at the Slet gymnastic festival. The name of the state in Czech "ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA" and the denomination and abbreviated monetary unit "200 Kč" are written around the outer circle. The mark of the Czech Mint is located above the letter "E" in the word "REPUBLIKA" and is bounded on both sides by figures of gymnasts. The reverse side features a motif from the flag of the Prague Sokol by Josef Mánes, which is located on the background of a pattern depicting gymnasts at the Slet gymnastic festival.

The inscription in Czech "ZALOŽENÍ SOKOLA" and the years "1862" and "2012" are written around the outer circle. The CZK 200 commemorative silver coin was designed by Jaroslav Bejvl. His initials, made up of the letters "J" and "B", are located below the left wing of the falcon.

Each coin comes with a white catalogue card with a red border containing a description and the relief of the coin. 

Country:	Czech Republic
Mintage year:	2012
Issue date:	15.02.2012
Face value:	200 korun
Diameter:	31.00 mm
Weight:	13.00 g
Alloy:	Silver
Quality:	Proof, BU
Mintage:	8,000 pc BU 12,200 pc proof
Design:	Jaroslav Bejvl



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## Mark your Calendar

### Events around the American Sokol

Get your event featured! Email [editor@american-sokol.org](mailto:editor@american-sokol.org)

## November

- November 3 Sokol Spirit Spaghetti Dinner** – Brookfield, IL
- November 3 Sokol Greater Cleveland Nite at the Races** – Doors open at 7 pm
- November 4 Sokol Detroit Czech Dinner Dance** – Sokol Cultural Center
- November 11 I.P.D.G.C. meet** – Central District Host
- November 16-18 Milwaukee Holiday Folk Fair** – State Fair Grounds, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- November 17 Czech Fall Festival** – 4690 Lansdowne, St. Louis, MO 63116, Dinners Served 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Roast Duck (\$11) or Roast Pork or Goulash (\$10) Dumplings – Sauerkraut – Czech Pastry; Music starts at 11:15 AM; Call 314-752-8168 for more information or visit [www.acec-stl.org](http://www.acec-stl.org)
- November 18 Central District Women/Junior Girls Volleyball Meet**
- November 18 Czech & Slovak Sokol Minnesota Holiday Pancake Breakfast** – 9am - 1:30pm Breakfast includes: french toast, pancakes, fruit cup, sausage, juice, milk and coffee. There will be a craft sale and bake sale. \$6.50/adult; \$4.50/child under 9

## December

- December 8 Central District Male Artistic Competition & Skills** – Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL
- December 8 Sokol Milwaukee Christmas Party** – Venice Club, Noon luncheon
- December 8 Sokol Greater Cleveland St. Nick's Dance** – 7:30 pm
- December 9 Central District Rhythmic Competition & Skills Testing** – Elite Sports Complex, 6360 S. Belmont Rd., Downers Grove, IL
- December 9 Czech & Slovak Sokol Minnesota 125th C.S.P.S Hall Anniversary Dinner** – Pre-paid reservations by November 21. \$20.00 per person for food and fun! RSVP 651 290-0542
- December 15 Sokol Spirit's 2nd Annual Cirque de Sokol Show**

### American Sokol Deadline - Please note NEW date!

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





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