

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

February 2013 | Volume 136 | Issue 2

## Quick and Interesting Facts about Abraham Lincoln:

- He was born on February 12th 1809, and died April 15th 1865 at the age of fifty six.
- His home state is Illinois.
- His wife was called Mary Todd Lincoln, who was brought up into a very wealthy family.
- Mary's parents disagreed with her marrying Abraham because he had a poor background.
- He created a national banking system with the National Banking Act in 1863, resulting in a standardized currency.
- He was the first president to be assassinated.
- He had deep depression, even though he would frequently tell stories and jokes to friends and family.
- He was the tallest U.S president at 6'4".
- He patented a system to alter buoyancy of steamboats in 1849.
- He ran a store in New Salem.
- Even though he was strong, a talented wrestler, and proficient with an axe, Lincoln disliked killing and harming animals, even for food.
- Lincoln proposed to Mary just one year after meeting her in Springfield 1839.
- He was the first president to have a beard.
- Lincoln was fond of pets, and owned horses, cats, dogs and a turkey.
- Lincoln, one week before his death, had a dream of someone crying in the White House, when he found the room; he looked in and asked who had passed away. The man in the room said the President. When he looked in the coffin it was his own face he saw.



Source: <http://www.alincoln-library.com/>

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**From the Editor...**

It's cold out there! Stay warm by staying active!

If you have a 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 and I need your submissions to make this a successful publication!

NAZDAR!



**To Submit Items for Publication:**

Email: [editor@american-sokol.org](mailto:editor@american-sokol.org)  
 Postal Mail: American Sokol Editor, Angela Hartford,  
 1652 West Grace #3, Chicago, IL 60613

**Postmaster:**

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## Unit Growth Programs Bring in New Members

*Reported by Robert Podhrasky, Second Vice President*

Three Sokol Units so far have reported on membership increases resulting from their participation in the American Sokol Unit Growth Program. These units reported increases of over 50 members as a direct result of the program and 35 more through existing programs and membership recruitment.

The American Sokol National Office recognizes that a solid membership base is key to the success of our Sokol units. Through a grant opportunity the National Office was able to offer funding for the Unit Growth Program to give our units the opportunity to try new ideas for building their unit activities. The program was offered to all Sokol units and six were chosen to receive grants in amounts ranging from \$1,500 to \$5,000 per program. Each committed to increasing their membership five percent through the grant related activities.

Sokol Greater Cleveland chose to offer "Strong Bodies, Healthy Lifestyles". The goal was to add equipment and programs that would provide fitness opportunities to parents of children participating in Sokol activities. The grant was used to purchase fitness equipment, educational material and to pay for instructors to set up new programs. The largest impact was a Zumba class which attracted 26 new members and over 100 current members. Sokol Greater Cleveland has committed to continue the program beyond the grant period. One parent commented "I love that I am able to use the time that (my children) are in class to work out. I

think it sends a good message about good health and fitness to my children when they see the grown ups are exercising right along with them."

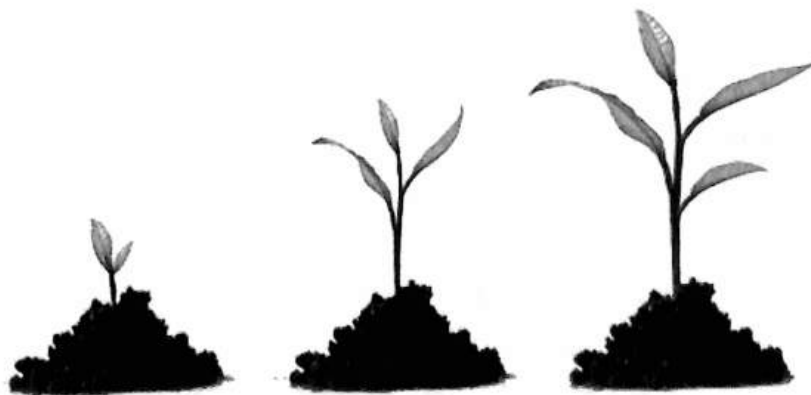
Sokol KHB Ennis also chose Zumba as their offering. Money was spent to purchase the necessary audio equipment for the instructor, for advertising to the general public, to provide discounts for new participants and to subsidize the income of the instructor. Comments included "members joined because Zumba demonstrated that we are a vibrant active organization", "some participants are parents of our gymnasts", "Zumba is one of the few physical activities being offered to adults in our unit", "the program has yielded a super enthusiastic Zumba instructor that frequently volunteers for other tasks". Sokol KHB added 31 new members last year.

Sokol Detroit chose to feature their existing programs through a membership drive. They created a colorful brochure to highlight the opportunities at their

Sokol building as well as their camp grounds. A special booth was created to set up at local ethnic and community events to solicit members. The effort resulted in 21 new members. Three were former members that appreciated being reminded of the activities offered at Sokol. They will continue to use the informational materials and a booth to recruit additional members.

The reports also described barriers to success that were experienced. These included the lack of volunteers to implement the new programs, competition for participants in popular programs that are offered elsewhere in the community and the challenge of converting nonmember participants into Sokol members.

Not all of the programs were totally successful and some units continue to work toward their goal. The National Office congratulates all who participated for taking the risk, using their vision and making the effort to strengthen the organization. ☺





# The Sokol Educator

Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl, Educational Director

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## FEBRUARY

### Unor

The days are getting longer with the sun rising sooner.

The 3rd week is National Brotherhood Week -also National Pancake week.

Sibirinky or Czech Mardi Gras celebrations/dances are held. National costumes or masquerade costumes are worn.

"Power tends to corrupt", said Lord Acton, 19th Century British historian. Also "Absolute power corrupts absolutely".

February 2nd — Groundhog Day & Candlemas Day - Folklore says that if Candlemas be fair and bright, winter will have another flight. But if Candlemas day be cloudy with rain, winter is gone and will not come again.

- February 4, 1941: The USO was formed in New York.
- February 8, 1693: A charter was granted for the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, VA.
- February 8, 1974: The 3-man crew of the Skylab space station returned to Earth after spending 84 days in space.
- February 9, 1825: The House of Representatives elected John Quincy Adams as President of the United States after no candidate received a majority of electoral votes.
- February 9, 1870: The U.S. Weather Bureau was established.
- February 9, 1942: Daylight Saving "War Time" went into effect with clocks turned one hour forward.
- February 9, 2008: The shuttle Atlantis, carrying a European-built science lab docked with the International Space Station.
- February 14, 1865: SOKOL WAS FOUNDED IN THE UNITED STATES – in St. Louis, Missouri.
- February 16, 1862: SOKOL FOUNDED IN MASS MEETING IN PRAGUE.
- February 12, 1733: English colonists led by James Oglethorpe founded Savannah, GA.
- February 12, 1909: NAACP founded.
- February 12, 1924: George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" premiered in New York.
- February 26, 1951: The 22nd Amendment to the Constitution, limiting a President to two terms of office was ratified.
- February 28, 1910: Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova debuted at New York's Metropolitan Opera House. She left Russia for good in 1914.

In 1929, the Soviet Union introduced a revolutionary calendar in which every month had 30 days and the remaining 5 or 6 days were month less holidays. Thus in 1930 and 1931, February had 30 days, but in 1932, the months regained their old lengths.

For Valentine's Day on February 14th - musings by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

Talk not of wasted affection; affection never was wasted.

If it enriches the heart of another, its waters returning

Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment." ©

NAZDAR! Sis. EllenJeanne Schnabl, American Sokol Educational Director

## American Sokol Flashed in Milwaukee

Submitted by Flash Mob Coordinators, Barb Vondra and Doris Marks

A mob of over forty members of the American Sokol Organization traveled from Chicago to Milwaukee to flash Winter Fest goers. The Flash Mob, a spontaneous public performance that seemingly appears out of nowhere with just one person, grows to a lot of people, and then quickly disperses, took place Dec. 27 at the Milwaukee Delta Center.

The American Sokol also had an information booth at Winter Fest where for five days Sokol Milwaukee volunteers handed out flyers, rack cards and promoted the up coming Sports Festival to be held in Milwaukee this June 25- 30.

Flash mobs are designed to surprise passers-by...and we sure did! Here's how it went...

At the start to attract attention we had the giant wheel go across the floor in each direction followed by some of our participants showing off their cartwheels. Then the music started and a grand "volleyball dive" entrance was made to get the spectators and passer-bys to stop and watch the American Sokol perform their

Flash Mob routine. Little by little all the participants came out on the floor "movin' and groovin'" and pretty soon we heard, "Wow! They're doing a Flash Mob! This is awesome!" come from the crowd. When we finished we walked off the floor as if nothing happened. Our performance was videotaped and will be posted on the American Sokol website soon - [www.american-sokol.org](http://www.american-sokol.org). Be sure to forward it to your friends, post it on your unit's and your facebook page, link it to your unit's website - to spread the word about the American Sokol 2013 Sports Festival - Wheelin' in Milwaukee, June 25-30. Also, we may be doing this again soon in the Chicago area so please keep checking the website for details for a chance to either take part or come watch.

We would like to thank all those that participated for not only taking the time to go to Milwaukee for the day but for also attending the practices to learn the routine and to make our idea a reality! Your efforts are greatly appreciated and we hope you had a "wheelie" good time!

## 2013 Sports Festival Pins for Sale

The first 2013 Sports Festival souvenir is available for purchase! Get the official pin today! Show your Sokol pride and promote the upcoming festival by wearing your pin to any and all events!

Custom 1" round photo dome lapel pin. Standard military clutch. \$3.00 each plus shipping.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Item	\$/ea.	Quantity	Merchandise Total	Shipping	Sales Total
Sports Festival Pin	\$3.00		\$	\$	\$

**To place an order, contact the National Office at 708.255.5397.**

The office will assist in determining shipping costs, scheduling a pick up and processing credit card orders. Mail payment (cash or checks made payable to American Sokol) to: American Sokol, 9126 Ogden Avenue, Brookfield, IL 60513



## More than 40K 'turned upside down' for 2012 National Gymnastics Day

For more information on "Turn the World Upside Down," go to [usagym.org/upsidedown](http://usagym.org/upsidedown).

INDIANAPOLIS, Sept. 24, 2012 – On Saturday, Sept. 22, at 1 p.m. ET, 43,901 gymnasts and fans nationwide, along with members of the cast of the Kellogg's® Tour of Gymnastics Champions, joined together to turn upside down to celebrate USA Gymnastics' annual National Gymnastics Day. This year's event more than doubled the participants in the 2011 handstand world record effort. Gymnasts and other participants documented their involvement by posting photos on the USA Gymnastics Facebook page to show how they turned the world upside down on National Gymnastics Day.

"Last year more than 20,000 gymnasts and fans nationwide broke the world record for most handstands performed simultaneously," said Steve Penny, president of USA Gymnastics. "We are thrilled that so many joined in our celebration of gymnastics and the incredible success of our athletes in London, as well as raised funds for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals."

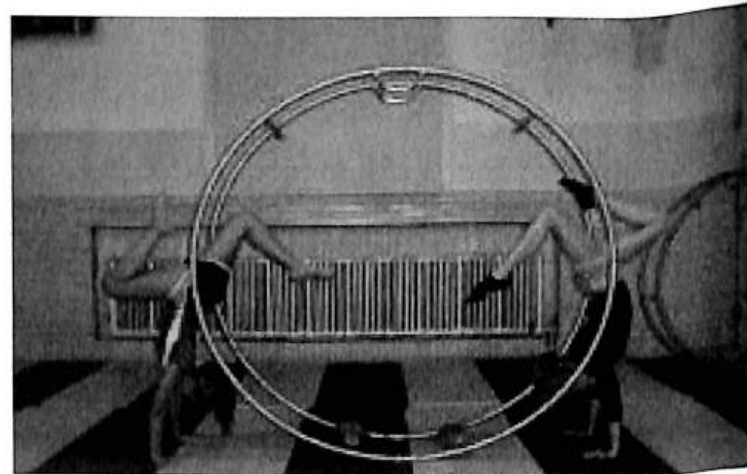
Each year, National Gymnastics Day builds awareness of the sport and support Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. Money raised benefits Children's Miracle Network Hospitals in each club's local community. Since 2001, gymnastics clubs across the country have raised more than \$1.7 million for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

### Central District Participated in "Turn the World Upside Down"

*Sokol Tabor, Berwyn, IL*



*Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL*





# 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

## FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL AMERICAN HEART MONTH

**Strengthen and protect your body's most important muscle with this essential guide.**

*By Hallie Levine Sklar—January/February 2013 issue, HEALTH Magazine.*

A workout a day keeps the Cardiologist away. The evidence is clear, say heart experts. Breaking a sweat regularly is one of the best things you can do for your ticker. Your ideal week of exercise:

**Cardio** — “It makes your blood vessels more flexible, so they’re more resistant to plaque buildup,” Nieca Goldberg, MD, explains. Try it for 30 minutes a day, even if it’s just walking at a moderate pace. (More is even better.) It’s most effective to do a half-hour at once, but if you’re strapped for time, divide it into 10-minute bursts.

**Strength Training** — “It helps lower your risk of heart disease by reducing your body fat,” Dr. Goldberg says. It may also reduce insulin, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels—all risk factors for heart disease. Aim for an hour twice a week.

**Yoga or Tai Chi** — A 2007 Yale review of 12 studies found that people who practiced regular relaxation therapies—particularly yoga—showed significant reductions in blood pressure. Squeeze in some moves at least once a week.

### GET TESTED

Don't know your blood pressure? Get checked the next time you're at your doctor or at Walgreens. The drugstore chain is offering free screening this February as part of the Million Hearts Campaign, an HHS initiative that aims to prevent one million heart attacks and strokes over the next five years. Go to [walgreens.com](http://walgreens.com) to find a location near you.



## Eat for a Healthy Heart 5 tips to keep your ticker in top shape!

Article from: [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org) — please visit the site for more great tips and recipes, KP ;)

In the fight against heart disease, the nation's number one killer, Americans already have three powerful weapons at their disposal:

The knife, the fork and the spoon.

As evidence mounts that cardiovascular disease can be prevented, managed and even reversed with changes in diet, the American Heart Association has made eating for heart health a central theme (especially during February, American Heart Month). Of the seven behaviors the AHA endorses to ward off heart disease, five are related to diet and nutrition.

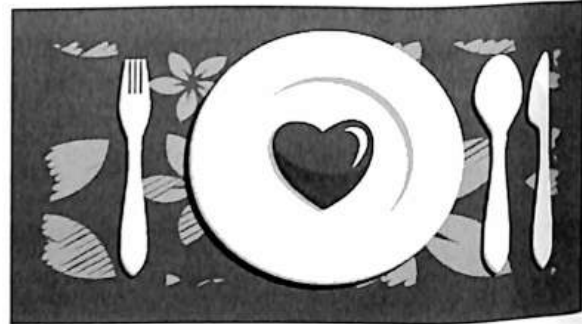
For patients newly diagnosed with heart ailments, there is more proof than ever of food's role in treatment, says Rachel Johnson, who has a doctorate in nutrition. Johnson and her colleagues on the AHA's Nutrition Committee "went through a rigorous process of reviewing the scientific literature and narrowing down to those components of a heart-healthy diet that have been shown to be the most effective in terms of lowering cardiovascular risks," she said. The five diet components that the AHA experts consider most crucial:

- Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables — the equivalent of 4 1/2 cups a day, or more when possible. "That may sound like a lot," Johnson concedes, "but by eating a big salad with lots of dark green and orange vegetables, you can go a long way toward that goal."
- Eating fish. "We are saying at least two servings a week if not more, up to 3 1/2 servings a week," says Johnson. "And especially the oily fish, because that's where the heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids are — fish such as salmon, mackerel and tuna."
- Eating fiber-rich whole grains, at least three servings daily of about one ounce (roughly one slice of bread). Johnson says read labels "to make sure that the first ingredient listed is whole grain. What we mean is eating grain in the most unprocessed form: brown rice instead of white, whole grain pastas instead of white flour pastas."
- Reducing sodium to less than 1,500 milligrams a day. "We've got a long way to go," says Johnson, given that the average American's daily sodium intake is about 3,400 milligrams, more than 70 percent of which are so-called "hidden salts" in processed foods. Johnson says the AHA has been working closely with the food industry to lower the sodium content in processed foods.
- Reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages to no more than 36 ounces a week for a total of 450 calories. "Americans are consuming way more added sugars than we should," says Johnson — not the sugars that occur naturally in foods such as milk and fruits, but those that are added in processing and preparation. "The average American consumes about 22 teaspoons a day of added sugar," she says, "and sugar-sweetened beverages are the number one source of those added sugars." The AHA recommends limiting added sugars to no more than six teaspoons a day for women and nine teaspoons a day for men — and drinking water instead of sweetened beverages.

Several of the specific steps also advance an overall AHA goal for a heart-healthy diet: helping patients achieve and maintain a healthy weight. "We know that as we age, there's that creep of a couple of pounds a year and before you know it, you're out of your healthy weight range," Johnson says. "So it's critical to achieve that appropriate energy balance, which means balancing your level of physical activity and the calories you eat."

Johnson knows that even when eating more healthfully may be a life-or-death matter, heart patients can struggle with it. "To me, the take-away message is, there's not one size that fits all," says Johnson. "The key is to find what works best for you, and make changes that you're going to be able to sustain."

**-Resolutions Workshop 2010: Action!** Even the biggest life changes are based on small, daily actions that build momentum and success. That's why we're proposing a collection of practical, right-now steps that empower you to eat healthier, become more active, and take charge of your finances - one small, doable step at a time. Stay tuned for Resolutions Workshop in the next American Sokol Magazine. It will feature some more ways to help "keep" your new years resolutions! KP ;)



## GO! How to Keep On Moving!

*Experience Life Magazine, January/February 2011*

The hardest part of any exercise routine is the first few days and weeks, before all the “getting easier” benefits start kicking in. Here are some tips to help you maintain your motivation:

1. **Enlist support.** Ask friends or family members to encourage you on a daily basis. The accountability and emotional support can boost your self-confidence and help you power through the days when your motivation is low. Online communities and coaching programs can be another source of support.
2. **Build your skills.** Consider hiring a trainer or getting involved with small-group training or group fitness classes. Getting some guidance on how to do exercises properly, and getting some encouragement along the way, can help you experience early wins that keep you engaged and focused.
3. **Track your progress.** Document your fitness goals and track your efforts in a fitness journal. Or, turn your smartphone or computer into a workout tracker for biking, running, walking and other activities.



## The Good Life Ratio

*Experience Life Magazine, January/February 2011*

Research by psychologist Barbara Fredrickson, PhD, and colleagues has shown that it takes tipping-point ratio of three positive emotional experiences for every negative one to create a thriving, flourishing life, as opposed to a negative, downward spiral.

Positivity grows through feelings not just of happiness, but also of pride, serenity, amusement, love, hope and interest. And people whose lives are flourishing, says Fredrickson, function on a whole different level—they are more resilient to adversity, better able to achieve goals, and report higher levels of well-being. But getting to that 3-to-1 ratio may take some focused effort:

Fredrickson's research suggests that most Americans have a positivity ratio of just 2-to-1, which tends to lead to a progressively negative outlook over time.

You can find your own ratio of positive-to-negative emotions by taking Fredrickson's two-minute quiz at [www.positivityratio.com/single.php](http://www.positivityratio.com/single.php). Fredrickson recommends taking the quiz each evening for two weeks to get the best picture of your overall ratio. To hear Fredrickson talk more about positivity and how you can improve your ratio, check out <http://j.mp/PosEmote>.

“Data from a wide range of experiments show clear casual connections between people's emotional states and their outlooks on life. The more positivity courses through your neural circuits and your veins, the broader your mind will be.” -Positive psychologist Barbara Fredrickson, PhD, from her book, *Positivity* (Crown Archetype, 2009).



January, 2013

Dear Family, Fun, Fitness Members and Friends,

We invite you to join us for the American Sokol 2013 Sports Festival in Milwaukee, WI from June 25-30, 2013. American Sokol has enjoyed a long history of physical, cultural, educational activities in the United States – 148 years to be exact. We sincerely hope you will join us for this quadrennial festival.

We have many opportunities for you to participate with us that week. Participants of all ages and skill level are welcome to compete in artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, volleyball, basketball, 5K run, fitness challenge, special number performances, golf, bowling, banquet and so much more.

Information regarding the headquarter hotel, competitions, socials, tours and more will be posted at [www.american-sokol.org](http://www.american-sokol.org) as it becomes available. To access from the home page, click on the 2013 Sports Festival logo. Online registration for hotel and competitions, with associated fees is available now. Also watch for our Sports Festival Bulletins for the latest updates.

Send an email if you have questions or inquiries regarding the 2013 Sports Festival at [sportsfestival@american-sokol.org](mailto:sportsfestival@american-sokol.org). Your email will be routed to the correct committee chairperson for a prompt response.

Please pass this invitation to others who share the same interests and excitement for family, fun and fitness. We are counting on your support to make this the biggest and most fun event yet!

Hope to see you in Milwaukee next summer!

Maryann Fiordelis

American Sokol National Physical Director

## Sokol Central District Rhythmic Competition

Sokol Chicagoland recently hosted the Central District's annual rhythmic gymnastics competition "Wild About Rhythmic" at the Elite Sports Complex in Downers Grove. On December 9, girls and women from Sokol Chicagoland, Sokol Naperville Tyrs, Sokol Spirit, and Sokol Tabor competed in the sport of rhythmic gymnastics in levels 3-6 and group. The events contested at this year's meet included ball, clubs and group floor. Younger gymnasts not yet ready for level 3 had the opportunity to compete in the skills testing competition. At that level, they are tested on 3 skills in four different events (floor, ball, clubs and ribbon). Gymnasts competing represented a wide range of ages from 5 years to 60+ years!

The following awards were given to the top places in each level and age division:

**Skills Testing:** (20-29 points=yellow ribbon, 30-39 points=white ribbon, 40-49 points=red ribbon, 50+ points=blue ribbon)

**Chicagoland:** Samantha Bachara (red), Eleanor Cassata (white), Kate Haffner (white), Julia Raczyk (red), Maya Raczyk (red), Teah Rupp (red), Betty Smith (red), Violet Smith (white)

**Naperville Tyrs:** Annalee Adelman (red), Jenna Biancofiore (red), Victoria Kosteci (red), Lily Kucera (white), Mya Nanninga (red), Tia Nanninga (red), Niamh Nugent (red)

**Spirit:** Emma Garesche (white), Theresa Lemont (white), Kristen Lynch (red), Kaitlyn Mazgay (white), Madisyn Mazgay (yellow), Julianne Noga (white), Antonia O'Keefe (yellow), Ashly Roberts (yellow), Emily Roberts (white), Julie Roberts (white), Clare Ruska (white), Cali Swinarski (white), Olivia Thomas (white), Sophia Thomas (red)

**Tabor:** Amy Arias (white), Lilly Barocio (yellow), Jennifer Beltran (white), Sophia Castaneda (white), Sandra Chavez (white), Mikaela Colagrossi (white), Jessica Cruz (white), Sasha Figueroa (white), Natalie Gomez (white), Anabelen Hermosillo (white), Zoe Hernandez (yellow), Olivia Lozada (yellow), Yaretzi Mondragon (white), Jacqueline Palacios (red), Melissa Perez (white), Madison Polich (yellow), Diana Rosas (white), Kendall Russell (yellow), Jayme Sanchez (white)

### Level 3 (age 60+):

1st place in Ball, Clubs, and All-Around – Mary Ellen Newsom, Chicagoland

### Level 4 (age 9):

1st place in Ball – Diana Kwak, Chicagoland

2nd place in Ball – Samantha Brito, Tabor

1st place in Clubs – Larissa Hernandez, Tabor

1st place All-Around – Samantha Brito, Tabor

### Level 4 (age 10-11):

1st place in Ball – Kerry Glimco, Chicagoland

2nd place in Ball – Grace Bervid, Chicagoland and Jacqueline Lopez, Tabor (tie)

4th place in Ball – Natalia Cassata, Chicagoland

1st place in Clubs – Natalia Cassata, Chicagoland

2nd place in Clubs – Jacqueline Lopez, Tabor

3rd place in Clubs – Delaney Raczyk, Chicagoland

4th place in Clubs – Citlati Tovar, Tabor

1st place All-Around – Natalia Cassata, Chicagoland and Jacqueline Lopez, Tabor (tie)

### Level 4 (age 12):

1st place in Ball – Nicolette O'Keefe, Spirit

### Level 4 (age 12-14):

1st place in Ball – Rhiannon Cassata, Chicagoland

2nd place in Ball – Isabel Gulden, Chicagoland

1st place in Clubs and All-Around – Elena Colbert, Naperville Tyrs

### Level 4 (age 25-34):

1st place in Ball – Ami Bazata, Spirit

### Level 4 (age 35-49):

1st place in Ball, Clubs, and All-Around – Andrea Scheirer, Chicagoland

### Level 4 (age 50-59):



## A Bohemian–American Literary Connection

The distance is 4,500 miles between southern Wisconsin and South Bohemia, but when the American translator of Rustic Baroque met the Czech author of this award-winning novel the two men found they had more in common than one might expect.

"I immediately felt a connection with Jiří Hájíček," remarks Gale A. Kirking, a former agricultural journalist who had first moved to what was then still Czechoslovakia in 1992. "Jiří was descended from a long line of farmers, like me. We each had grown up in a small, rural community. We had both graduated from agricultural universities. Both were deeply interested in history, and both were writers."

Kirking says that as he was reading Rustic Baroque in the original Czech, he realized this was a special book that should be shared beyond the Czech Republic. As a result, the two writers became friends and Rustic Baroque has just become available to American readers.

Named the Czech Republic's best novel in 2005, the book is set in rural South Bohemia. By means of a mystery narrative, it examines scars remaining to this day in Czech society from the communists' expropriation of private farmers during the 1950s. The opening two pages of Rustic Baroque are presented below.

Oh, for God's sake, not this miserable place again, I just thought to myself and sighed. The sun was searing through the thin green leaves, and the crown of the linden tree above us hummed with summer. Tourists exhausted by the scorching heat were plodding along the footpaths in the park, heading to the castle gate. Mr. Šrámek sat beside me on the bench and just kept talking. I was looking forward to being within the

coolness of those stone walls nearby, in the weirdly pallid light of the research room, the muffled rustling of archival documents, the musty odor exuded by old books.

"A man has to pull every word out of you," he said.

"You shouldn't have come here again," I answered.

"But you know these villages, these people. For you it's just a matter of a few days. You said so yourself. So why don't you want to do it all of a sudden? I don't get it..."

I was flipping through the files he had given me only in order to put this torrid and unpleasant interlude behind me. A few newspaper clippings, sheets torn from some yellowed brochure, copied pages of official documents. I repeated to myself the name of the village and then the three family names one after another: Jircha, Kubach, Mařánek... Yes, of course, Mařánek.

"It's house number 11. Two-gabled farmstead on the square, well kept up. And across the way, there's that ruin that used to be a farmhouse with the vaulted gate, and it has a two-storied granary. A part of it's been knocked down, and the cooperative farm stores some machinery there. The barn's about to fall in, too. They call it the Jircha place. And the Kubach farm? I don't remember exactly just now."

"I can see that you have it all in here," Šrámek said, tapping his head, his plump face brightening.

"Mainly in here," I replied, lightly rapping with the knuckle of my index finger on the laptop computer in its black case.

"Mr. Straňanský, it's certainly somewhere at those farmsteads. We don't know where, but you'll find it. Someone may

have it in some old shed around there, maybe in Černá Hůrka, I don't know... People used to keep such things. The old folks still come and sit about on the village squares there..."

"Tomašice, Černá Hůrka, Smrčí," I was pronouncing the names of the villages out loud. It's like a swirl in a kettle, those farmhouses, surnames, godparents, christenings...

"I had a few jobs from over that way some time ago. I think I even wrote about those farmhouses. But that was many years ago! These villages are dying out, Mr. Šrámek."

He bent his shaven pink face toward me. He was around 50, his hair already turning gray, wide suspenders on his light summer shirt with short sleeves, chubby arms.

"I tell you, it's a letter. It's there somewhere, that much we know. Maybe there's even more documents. At the village hall? At the rectory? I don't know, you're the expert. You may find there's a whole pile of papers. In some cupboard or in an attic."

He lowered his voice a bit more.

"And then it would be a straightforward swap, Mr. Straňanský, just as I told you. Papers to me, money to you."

The sun was right above the Třeboň castle, I was kicking at the bench with my heel and my thirst was pleading for me to get out of there. It was difficult to swallow. I was thinking about the open spaces above and beyond the fields back home, about water and shade. But now I was in this pressure cooker. Šrámek was prodding me to decide, to agree, and his hot, unpleasant shadow was pushing me into a place where I did not at all want to go.

"You know what? You should find

# RISING STAR KRISTINE BETIK



*Submitted by Chuck Kalat*



Kristine first became involved with Sokol in the Fall of 2002 at the age of 7 – attending the young girls class at Sokol Karel Havlicek Borovsky (KHB) in Ennis, Texas. By age 12, she was an accomplished gymnast; assisting with the small girls class; and even helping her Dad, Thomas, teach the boys classes. She attended the National Sokol Summer Camp in 2008 and after attending the American Sokol National Instructor School in 2011, she became head instructor of the beginner girls class – a position in which she continues today. She also has continued her competitive career – competing in the National Slet in Ft. Worth,


annual Southern District Slets, and local Texas Amateur Athletic Federation meets. In 2012, Kristine attended the American Sokol National School again as an intermediate student where she distinguished herself as the top student and was presented the intermediate school and the overall school leadership awards. She was the recipient of the prestigious Robert Liptak Award and Scholarship named after a past, beloved, long time School staff member and awarded to the one student each year who best demonstrates the qualities and leadership of a Sokol Instructor during the school. Kristine is ever the energetic, positive, young woman role model for our young gymnasts.

Her Sokol work and accomplishments have been squeezed into a busy high school student's life. Kristine is a member of the National Honor Society. She serves as a Squad Leader in the award winning Ennis High School Band, a First Lieutenant in the Ennis HS Lionette Drill Team, and President of her high school "Leading Ennis Against Destructive Decisions" community service Club. Outside of school and the gym, she teaches 4th Grade Faith Formation class at her church.

This fall, Kristine will be embarking on the next phase of her life at Texas A&M University – where she is sure to succeed.

Thank you Kristine for your many years of dedication to teaching Sokol youth. With your strong work ethic and leadership skills, we know the years ahead with continue to bring many opportunities.

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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). 

somebody else.”

“Mr. Straňanský! These things happened years ago. Who knows for how long that woman is already dead. There’s no danger for you.”

I got up and stretched my back. He stood up, too, sweat on his forehead, wet spots on his shirt. I handed him the things.

“Keep it, Mr. Straňanský. I’m going back again through Jindřichův Hradec on Friday. I’ll come by.”

And he immediately carried on, as if I had said nothing at all: “Here at one o’clock?”

I was looking at the half-dry grass.

“It’s a deal,” he said after a while – in fact speaking just to himself. “If you’re not here, I’ll come by and ring for you at the archive.”

- From Rustic Baroque, a novel by Jiří Hájíček © by Gale A. Kirking

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*Sokol Central District Rhythmic Competition*  
*Continued from page 11*

1st place in Ball, Clubs, and All-Around – Joanne Pikul, Chicagoland

**Level 5 (age 10-11):**

1st place in Ball – Olivia Papadopolos, Naperville Tyrs

**Level 5 (age 15-18):**

1st place in Clubs – Veronica Walinski, Tabor

**Level 5 (age 60+):**

1st place in Ball, Clubs, and All-Around – Florence DelCarlo, Chicagoland

**Level 6 (age 12-14):**

1st place in Ball – Marie Dix, Naperville Tyrs

**Level 6 (age 15-18):**

1st place in Ball, Clubs, and All-Around – Veronika Ilavska, Naperville Tyrs

**Level 6 (age 25-34):**

1st place in Ball – Angi Rutkowski, Chicagoland

**Level 6 (age 35-49):**

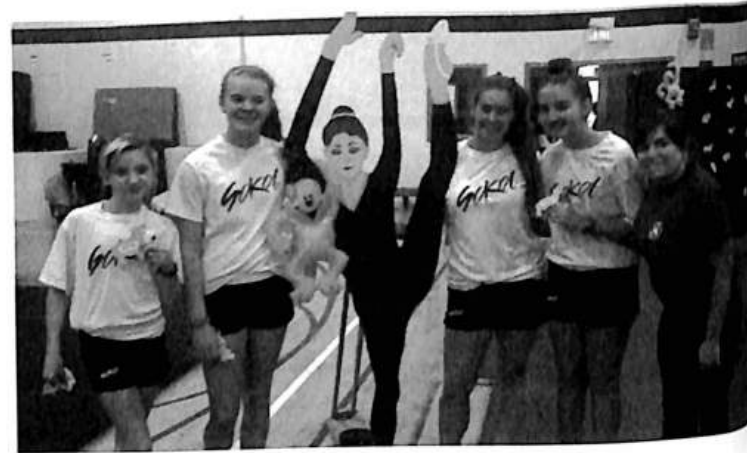
1st place in Ball – Laura Kwak, Chicagoland

**Group Floor (Junior Group):**

1st place – Sokol Spirit (Kaitlyn Barcal, Charley Domabyl, Isabella Smith, Ruth Hruska)

**Group Floor (Masters Group):**

1st place – Sokol Chicagoland (Florence DelCarlo, Laura Kwak, Beth McCloskey, Angi Rutkowski)



Sokol Spirit Junior Group with Coach Cassie Croft



Sokol Chicagoland Skills Testing Gymnasts



Sokol Spirit Skills Testing Gymnasts





## Mark your Calendar

### Events around the American Sokol

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

## February

- February 1** Sokol Spirit Czech Film Series **ROMAN PRO ZENY** — Starts at 7 pm; \$4/person, 1st round free.
- February 3** **GIJO meet: SuperTumbleDown: Central District Host** — Naperville North High School, Ogden Ave, Naperville, IL.
- February 9** **Cal & Marching Competition**— Host Lodge 306
- February 10** **Sokol Stickney Pancake Breakfast** — Stickney, IL; 7 am to 1 pm; Come down to the BEST Pancake & French Toast breakfast around complete with the infamous Sokol Stickney meat raffle! Adults \$7, Children \$3, Under 6 are FREE!
- February 10** **Sokol Milwaukee Czech Dinner** — NORWAY HOUSE, 7507 West Oklahoma Avenue, Milwaukee; CZECH OBCHOD (Bazaar) 10:30 am - 3:00 pm. Reservation Deadline: Friday, January 25, 2013. For more information call Cheryl LoCicero at (414) 732-8508.

## March

- March 1** Sokol Spirit Czech Film Series **MUZI V NADEJI** — Starts at 7 pm; \$4/person, 1st round free.
- March 3** **Sokol Minnesota Slovakia Dinner** — Reserved seating at 12:30 p.m. Pre-paid reservations required. Tickets \$16.00 adults, \$8.00 child under 9. For details visit: [www.sokolmn.org/events.htm](http://www.sokolmn.org/events.htm).
- March 9** **Sokol Tabor Exhibition**— Berwyn, IL
- March 10** **Sokol Chicagoland Exhibition** — Elite Sports Complex, Home of Sokol Chicagoland
- March 15** **Sokol Naperville Tyrs Exhibition**
- March 16** **Sokol Stickney Exhibition**
- March 23** **Sokol Spirit Exhibition**
- March 24** **Sokol Minnesota Spring Breakfast** — Featuring all you can eat pancakes and French toast, fruit cup, sausage, juice, milk, coffee. 9:30 am - 1:30 pm; \$7.00 adults, \$5.00 child under 9, \$22.00 family of four - No Reservations needed. For details visit: [www.sokolmn.org/events.htm](http://www.sokolmn.org/events.htm)

### **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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