



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

January 2015 | Volume 138 | Issue 1



*In honoring the 150th Anniversary
of*

Sokol St. Louis

*You are cordially invited
to join the celebration*

*on Saturday, February 14, 2015
at the American-Czech Educational Center
4690 Lansdowne Ave. St. Louis, Missouri 63116*

*Program 3:30 Dinner 4:45
Dancing to follow*

By Reservations Only

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From the Editor...

With the New Year, a new leaf, and a new era. American Sokol celebrates its 150th! How sweet it is! Many efforts are already underway, as you'll read about, and definitely more to come. See page 14 for a quick overview.

I regrettably need to start out this first issue of the New Year with a retraction. I misreported in the last issue regarding the grant acquired for Sokol Spirit's new spin class. It was not from the Lauren Wilt Memorial Fund. Sis. Lauren Wilt is "alive and well" as her husband Adam pointed out to me so tactfully :0) Sorry Lauren!

Remember, February is just around the corner. RSVP now for the Sokol St. Louis 150th anniversary celebration on Valentine's Day 2015. Feel the love!

NAZDAR!



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*SAVE THE DATE:
150th Anniversary Weekend and Gala
NOV-13-15th, 2015 – Chicago IL*

Happy 2015 – It's Our Year to Celebrate!

It is finally here and it is time to celebrate -- the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sokol in America!! As you all know we are kicking off the anniversary year in St. Louis, the place where it all began, on the day it began, February 14th. We will continue to post celebratory events as they are planned.

Goals

In January, the Executive Board will work on our goals for 2015 and on the National Capital Campaign that will outline our fund-raising goals for the next 3 years. We will keep you all up to date on our progress. One of my goals as President is to focus on raising funds. Our success over the years has placed us on a solid path. However, if we are to achieve our full potential we need find the resources to better empower our youth, instructors and leaders. It is our hope that this Capital Campaign will make possible program development, technology advancements, additional instructors, and updated facilities and equipment. To initiate our fund-raising efforts, and in honor of our 150th year, we are currently engaged in our annual Sokol Seals Campaign and have mailed Sokol Seals to all of our members this holiday season. We hope that you find the Seals to be a wonderful memory of years past and that you will generously support our efforts to begin our Capital Campaign.



Establishing a plan to raise funds and focusing on commemorating our anniversary are immediate goals. However, my other efforts lie in the areas of increasing membership and creating a new membership database for all Units that will allow us to report more efficiently and to utilize our database for fund-raising efforts at all levels. Furthermore, it is my goal to find new ways for the National Organization to support Unit programs, help with recruitment of instructors, and assist in equipment and facility needs. All of these goals are incorporated in the Capital Campaign and the fund-raising efforts.

Unveiling of Vaclav Havel Bust in Washington, D.C.

I was extremely honored to be present at the unveiling of the Vaclav Havel bust in the Statuary Hall of the United States Capital Building in Washington, D.C. I also attended several other events in D.C. that week honoring Vaclav Havel and commemorating of the 25th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution. Madeleine Albright, John McCain, and all of the amazing speakers spoke of the impact Vaclav Havel had on the political world. It was truly an amazing event and I was extremely proud to represent ASO. After the D.C. events, back in Chicago, the celebrations continued with special concerts and more visits from Czech government officials.

Sokol West Update

Directly following the Washington D.C. event, Governor Rick Perry, the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Bohuslav Sobotka, Chairman Fred Malek, and Director Phil Kasik of AFoCR visited Central Texas to break ground on West's new Sokol gymnasium. The project will take about a year to complete and, when finished, the gym will serve as a gathering place for athletes and citizens alike. The gym is being built on property that was laid waste by the April 2013 explosion at the West Fertilizer Plant. Sokol West has received support from both the Czech government and AFoCR to assist in rebuilding the gym.

continued on page 13



The Sokol Educator

from The National Education Committee

The Post-Holiday Blahs

Have you been dragging ever since the New Year started? It can be hard to get up and get motivated at this time of year – the weather is dismal, daylight is minimal, and it often is easiest to just throw on a football game and open a bag of chips. However, your attitude is not just because of the weather. In the winter, we tend to eat plenty of comfort foods, which are often high in carbs and fat, and low in protein, which improves your alertness. Try incorporating some of these foods into your daily diet and see if you don't experience an energy surge:

Salmon: Salmon contains high levels of omega-3 fatty acids, linked to decreased heart disease, and protein, which will make you feel more alert

Almonds: Almonds are full of protein, fiber, and good fat. They also prevent spikes in blood sugar and insulin, meaning fewer afternoon crashes.

Crunchy green veggies (*kale, watercress, brussel sprouts, etc.*): These veggies are also high in fiber, meaning they will prevent spikes in blood sugar just like almonds.

Dark chocolate: Dark chocolate will not affect your cholesterol levels, but bars that contain 70% or more of cacao can increase blood flow to the brain, decrease your appetite, and lower cortisol, a stress hormone.



Greek Yogurt: Greek yogurt is a protein-rich, thicker version of regular yogurt. It will help keep you full and help to protect your heart.

Not ready to let go of creamy, delicious (and unhealthy) Ranch dressing on your salads and chicken wings? Try this idea from WeightWatchers:

Mix together:

- 16 oz Plain, Fat-free Greek yogurt
- 1 packet of Hidden Valley Ranch dressing powder mix
- 1 tbsp of olive oil

A healthy and (almost) guilt-free alternative! Remember, Spring is around the corner!

submitted by Sis. Ethna Flaherty, National Education Director



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

With genuine sadness in our hearts, we announce to our members of American Sokol Organization, that our Illinois Comptroller, great politician, Sokolice Tabor member and friend, Judy Baar Topinka suddenly passed away, on December 10th, 2014.

Besides Topinka's rich political involvement, she was proud to be a Czech descent. She attended countless number of Czech and Slovak as well Sokol events. She raised respect due to her hard work and genuine interest for her community and state of Illinois.

She was always up and moving as well as outgoing. Some of us saw her only few days ago with her usual glamorous cheer and smile at the 90th anniversary of the Slovak Athletic Association or the 25th Velvet Revolution at the Czech consulate. Therefore, her sudden departure came out of the blue. We were looking forward to her upcoming second term as an Illinois Comptroller. The story however took a rapid turn that left most of people in a shock. Some of you knew Judy personally whether you saw her in Klas, on the TV or at one of the Sokol or Czech events. We would like to ask you to take a moment and remember the remarkable persona that Judy was!

We salute Nazdar to Sister Judy Baar Topinka! Her legacy will linger among the Sokol brotherhood for years to come!

With sincere condolences,

Jean Hruby, American Sokol President

Sokol
Memories

If you have a Sokol Memory or photo send it to editor@american-sokol.org. We look forward to hearing and sharing your special memory.

Tony Hlinka: Sokol Champion of the 1950s

by: Robert Tomanek

Anthony (Tony) Hlinka, was the best male Sokol gymnast of the 1950's as evidenced by his four national titles in the ASO Slets of 1953, 1955 and 1957 and the SGUS Slet of 1954. A member of Sokol Chicago, where he began his training at the age of five, Tony's gymnastic skills were developed under another Sokol champion, Stanley Barcal, as well as Paul Fina who was named to the US Olympic team in 1940. In 1955, competing in the NCAA Championships for the University of Illinois, Tony earned all-American honors in three events: all-around, vault and horizontal bar. He later became an instructor at Sokol Chicago. As a junior, Tony won numerous Sokol and AAU titles and also participated in track and field events.

His older brothers, Edward and Charles and his younger sister, Lillian were also active in gymnastics at Sokol Chicago. Tony was a very modest and unassuming man, who was highly respected, not only for his gymnastic skills, but also for personal attributes. He, like many of his Sokol peers, served in the Armed Forces.

Tony was born in Chicago in 1927 and passed away on May 17, 2014, in Naperville Illinois, where he lived since 1978 and where he was a founding member of St Thomas the Apostle Church. He is survived by his three daughters, Hope, Cynthia and Jill and their husbands, seven grandchildren, and his sister Lillian Ujka and her husband. He was preceded in death by his parents and brothers, Edward and Charles, and in 2010 by his wife, Emilia.



A Portrait of Sokol Little Ferry

by Audrey Benda, 60+ year member of Sokol Little Ferry

The “Little Ferry” once existed at the shore of the Hackensack River at the end of the trolley line down Main Street from Northern areas. The ferry took commuters across the river to the Ridgefield Park railroad station for workers to get to jobs in New York City. The unit founded in 1896 was formerly T. J. Sokol, known as the Blue Sokols. There was a D.A. Sokol hall a few blocks away, known as the Red Sokols. Then T. J. Sokol became known as American Sokol, which remains in the unit name.



Formerly known as Czech School, Sokol Little Ferry Hall circa 1925.

The property on which the Sokol hall was built, was donated by a Czech Sokol family. After the first wooden Sokol Hall was damaged by fire, the current brick Hall was completed in 1923. Much of the construction material had been donated by local brickyards and businesses. The hall can hold up to 300 people.

From its inception, Sokol Hall has been a community center. Saturday Night movies were shown for town people. The Red Cross ladies met during to roll bandages for hospitals serving war wounded. Dinners were held for returning War Veterans. Young peoples’ social groups held dances and presentations. Families held celebrations, graduations, weddings,

etc., and still do this. Boy Scouts held their Amateur Hours to crowded audiences. It was a voting station before the schools had gymnasiums. Various unions held their meetings in daytime hours.

To carry out its gymnastic purposes, events included: annual gym exhibitions since 1896, Instructor Training schools from about 1915, Young Men’s Sokol Baseball Team originated in the 1920s, many artistic gymnastic competitions, fundraising dinners, dances and product sales to maintain the building and purchase new gym equipment.

Across the U.S., classes were originally for children of Czech heritage. In 1940, Sokol Little Ferry opened classes to anyone, even before ASO made the change. Children from many foreign countries, whose parents could not speak English, registered because they believed in exercise and discipline.



September 2002, after extensive renovations. Br. William Reidel painted the plaques on metal which were attached to face Main St.

FUN

A C T

There is a Sokol living under the Route 46 Bridge in Little Ferry. Actually, it’s Mr. and Mrs. Sokol and three Sokol kids. If you’ve forgotten, Sokol is the Czech word for falcon, specifically a Peregrine Falcon. It was selected as our emblem by Sokol founders because of its great strength, speed, excellent eyesight and skill in catching prey, now mostly pigeons in our cities. The Sokol bird has been timed at flying over 200 mph at a 45 degree angle and spotting its prey from five miles away. Which Sokol member has those skills? This Sokol family will hold up repairs of their part of the bridge until the Sokol kids leave around early August. The DOT is not allowed to disturb the Sokol family until the DEP declares the nest empty. NaZdar to the Sokol family under the bridge.



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 NEW YEAR!

Author: Catherine Pulsifer

Here are some inspirational words to live by for the New Year! KP ;)

*H*appiness depends upon your outlook on life. Find the good in all situations.

*A*ttitude is just as important as ability. Keep your attitude positive.

*P*assion find yours this year! Do what you love and you will never work.

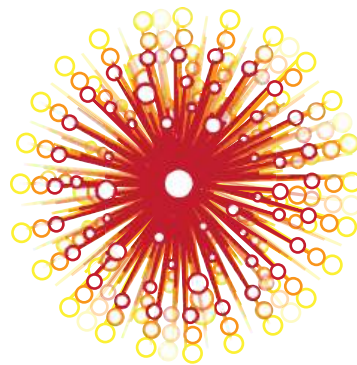
*P*ositive thoughts make everything easier. Stay focused and stay positive.

*Y*ou are unique, with special gifts, use them. Never forget you have talent.

*N*ew beginnings with a new year.

*E*nthusiasm a true secret of success.

*W*ishes may they turn into goals.



*Y*ears go by too quickly, enjoy them. Wisdom from your elders, listen.

*E*nergy may you have lots of it. Take care of yourself.

*A*ppreciation of life, don't take it for granted. Live each day.

*R*elax take the time to relax in this coming year. Keep a balance in your life.

Unwelcome Guests: **COLD** and **FLU** Viruses in Your Gym

by: Bree Simmons, MD St. Vincent Sports Performance Medicine / TECHNIQUE Magazine

Introduction

'Tis the season for runny noses and scratchy throats among your athletes and staff. Most often these symptoms come from a common cold virus. Fortunately, these infections are usually mild and self-limited. However, more serious viruses such as influenza can befall gym members. Also, there are significant safety concerns when an athlete has a fever and when he/she is taking certain common cold medications.

Therefore, it is important to recognize symptoms that require medical attention, to appropriately modify training for sick athletes and to be cautious regarding medicines in the treatment of common upper respiratory infections.

Epidemiology of Colds and Flu

Common colds are exactly that: common. Adults suffer common cold infections one to six times a year. Children are affected more and often have prolonged symptoms compared to adults. Many different viruses cause colds, including rhinoviruses, enteroviruses and coronavirus.

Influenza epidemics occur yearly during autumn and winter in temperate regions. Worldwide, these epidemics result in 3 to 5 million cases of severe illness and over 250,000 deaths. The most likely to suffer these severe consequences are those over 65 or under 2 years of age, as well as those with chronic medical conditions. There are three types of seasonal influenza – A, B, and C. Only A and B type viruses are included in seasonal vaccines because type C infections are rare.



Signs and Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of common cold viruses do differ from signs and symptoms of influenza. The common cold usually begins gradually with a runny nose and sore throat. Congestion worsens and cough can develop as the infection progresses. Other symptoms can include headache, sneezing and watery eyes. Most people will feel their symptoms peak within 10 days and then gradually resolve.

Influenza characterized by sudden onset of fever, body aches, fatigue, dry cough, runny nose without significant congestion and sore throat. Symptoms tend to be severe immediately, and then resolve within 3 to 7 days. A mild cough can persist for two weeks or more in some patients.

Neither of these illnesses requires antibiotics for treatment. They are not bacterial infections and thus do not respond to antibiotics. Influenza can be treated with an antiviral medication, but this must be started within 72 hours of symptom onset to be effective. There is currently no cure for the common cold and treatment is largely supportive with fluids, rest and symptom management.

According to the Center for Disease Control, and child with a persistent fever over 100.4 degrees F, symptoms that last longer than 10 days or symptoms severe enough to cause difficulty breathing, dehydration or extreme fatigue should be evaluated by a physician.

Special Considerations For An Athlete

Whether your athlete has an infection from a common cold virus or an influenza virus, there are some important considerations regarding his or her safety while participating in physical activity. First and foremost, no athlete should exercise with a temperature greater than 100.8 degrees F. Elevated body temperature, or fever, is a primary mechanism our bodies use to fight infection. Important functions of the immune system are enhanced, and endotoxins released by infectious agents lost their harmful effects. However, body temperature is also raised by exercise. The combination of fever from an infection and the increased temperature produced by exercise could raise body temperature to dangerously high levels, enhancing the catabolic (or tissue breakdown) effects of the infection and possibly straining the heart. Athletes should not exercise until their fevers have subsided without the aid of anti-pyretics, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

Independent of body temperature effects, strenuous exercise can prolong recovery from illness. Evidence-based guidelines in response to this issue are difficult to find, but tradition in sports medicine often has athletes perform a 'neck check.' If symptoms are located above the neck, such as nasal congestion, sore throat and/or sneezing without fever, then, the athlete may train at half his or her usual intensity and progress as tolerated. If symptoms are located below the neck, such as with productive cough, vomiting, diarrhea, fever or diffuse muscle aches, then, the athlete should rest completely until symptoms resolve. This simple strategy works well as it protects athletes with more serious infections from training and possibly worsening their conditions.

Lastly, some caution is necessary when choosing medications for symptom management. It is difficult for those in the gymnastics community to forget the case of Andrea Raducan from Romania. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) stripped her of her all-around gold medal at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney after she tested positive for pseudoephedrine, a common ingredient in over-the-counter decongestants, and at the time, a banned substance. Pseudoephedrine is now a monitored substance and must not be present in urine above a certain concentration. Most other common cold medicine ingredients, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, phenylephrine, dextromethorphan, guaifenesin and diphenhydramine, are allowed by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). However, the decongestants pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine and diphenhydramine can dehydrate athletes and should be used with caution during physical exertion.

Prevention Strategies

Both cold and flu infections can be transmitted by direct or indirect contact with viral particles. Cold viruses are often carried on infected persons' hands. The virus can be passed by hand-to-hand contact, or it can be picked up from contaminated surfaces. The influenza virus can be passed by inhaling respiratory droplets that infected persons expel as they cough.

Thus, powerful means of preventing infection include frequent hand washing, disinfection of surfaces commonly touched and covering one's mouth when coughing. The most effective way to prevent influenza is vaccination. According to the World Health Organization, influenza vaccine can prevent 70-90% of influenza-specific illness in adults.

Conclusion

The viral season is upon us and your gym will certainly be affected. Encourage all coaches, staff and athletes to wash their hands frequently to prevent the spread of these germs. Look for signs or symptoms that warrant medical attention and consider modifying workout intensity for sick athletes. Always review the WADA and IOC banned substances list for your elite gymnasts, and advise your gymnasts to discuss issues of vaccination and medication safety with their physicians.

A Leader's Impact

by: Brian Cavanaugh, T.O.R., The Sower's Seeds

In September of 1862, the civil war tilted decisively in favor of the South. The morale of the Northern army dipped to its lowest point of the war. Large numbers of Union troops were in full retreat in Virginia. Northern leaders began to fear the worst. They saw no way to reverse the situation and turn the beaten, exhausted troops into a useful army again.

There was only one general with the ability to work such a miracle. That was General George McClellan. He had trained the men for combat and they admired him. But neither the war department nor the rest of the cabinet members saw this connection. Only president Abraham Lincoln recognized Gen. McClellan's leadership skills.

Fortunately, Lincoln ignored the protests of his advisors and reinstated McClellan back in command. He told the general to go down to Virginia and give those soldiers something no other man on earth could give them: enthusiasm, strength and hope. McClellan accepted the command. He mounted his great black horse and cantered down the dusty Virginia roads.

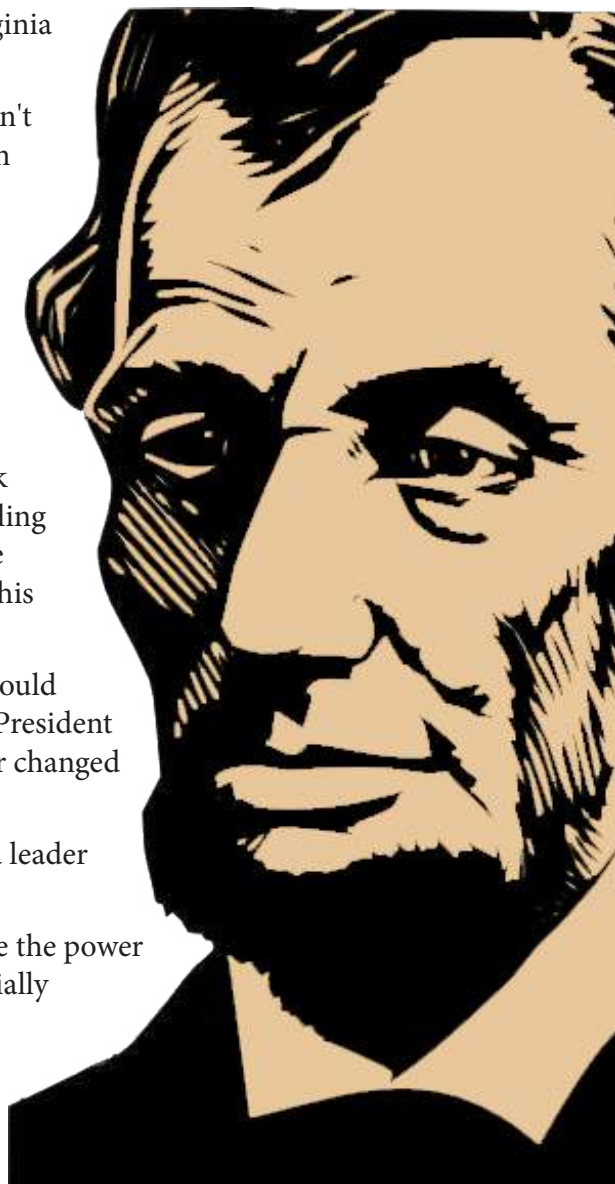
What happened next is hard to describe. Northern leaders couldn't explain it. Union soldier couldn't explain it either. Even McClellan couldn't quite explain what happened. Gen. McClellan met the retreating Union columns, waved his cap in the air and shouted words of encouragement. When the worn out men saw their beloved teacher and leader, they began to take heart once again. They were moved with an unshakable feeling that now things could be different, that finally things could be all right again.

Bruce Catton, the great civil war historian, describes this excitement that grew when word spread that McClellan was back in command. "Down mile after mile of Virginia roads the stumbling column came alive. Men threw their caps and knapsacks into the air, and yelled until they could yell no more... because they saw this dapper little rider outlined against the purple starlight.

"And this, in a way, was the turning point of the war. ... No one could ever quite explain how it happened. But whatever it was, it gave President Lincoln and the north what was needed. And history was forever changed because of it."

The story of Gen. McClellan illustrates dramatically the impact a leader can have on the human spirit.

This story is to demonstrate that you should never underestimate the power of enthusiasm, encouragement and positivity. As a leader, especially of children, it is so beneficial to motivate them by raising their confidence and being energetic. Next time you are confronted with a challenge, try to approach the situation as mentioned above and see how the atmosphere changes. Who knows, you may even help win a Civil War! Enjoy- KP ;)



Sokol San Francisco Celebrates its 110th

by Zelmira Zivny & Yvonne Masopust

Saturday the 6th of September at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Foster City was a day of meeting old friends and making new ones, of dancing and talking, enjoying good food and showing and seeing beautiful national costumes. Sokol San Francisco was celebrating its 110th birthday and managed to do it in style.



Sokol San Francisco President Jara Dusatko and Czech Republic U.S. Ambassador Petr Gandalovic

There were many guests from around the whole United States, among them Mr. Petr Gandalovic, Ambassador of Czech Republic, Sis. Jean Hruby, President of American Sokol, Czech Consul General Mr. Michal Sedlacek and Honorary Consul General Mr. Richard Pivnicka, as well as Slovak Honorary Consul Ms. Barbara Pivnicka. And of course, Sokol brothers and sisters and friends from Northern California, Los Angeles, and from as far as Portland, Oregon—over 700 miles away. Members of Sokol San Francisco were preparing this event for many months and got also a much appreciated help in the form of a grant from the Czech Republic.



ASO President Jean Hruby and Pacific District President Yvonne Masopust



Helenska Livingston awarding Mikaela Sargis the scholarship she earned for Czech school.

Old Sokol memorabilia, pins and trophies welcomed guests in the lobby and everybody could also watch a slide show of Sokol activities from hiking and climbing to social events like dances and dinners and the kids enjoying their stay at the Dinkey Creek Camp. The National Czech and Slovak Museum's exhibition reminded us all when and why were Czechs and Slovaks emigrating to the United States and how were they started their new lives.



Children had their role at the celebration, too. Six-year-old Audrey Bain accepted an award for her art sent to the International Children's Exhibition Lidice 2014. And children from the Czech School of California entertained all guests with their Czech songs. Sokol collaborates closely with the Czech School and for the first time this year, a student was chosen to benefit from a newly-funded Sokol Scholarship.



The national costumes (kroje) presentation was probably the main attraction of the day. Sis. Yvonne Masopust from Sokol Los Angeles brought part of her rich collection for the show and many kroje not used for a long time were found by Sokol San Francisco members. Sister Yvonne accompanied the show with a qualified ethnographic narrative. Information about the history, colors and style of the dresses, aprons and head covers added more depth to the beautiful show. Everybody seemed to have a wonderful time as it is supposed to be at a birthday party.

Photos courtesy of: Milos Zivny, Mirek Vondrus and Judy Keston.

SOKOL WEST GROUNDBREAKING

by Sis. Mary Cushing, National Operations Advisor

I was able to attend Sokol West's groundbreaking ceremony Thursday, November 20, 2014. It was an early morning ceremony on the site where their former halls once stood. As most of you know, a year ago on April 4-17-2013, a devastating evening for the residents of West, TX took place, because of an explosion at a local fertilizer plant. Sokol West was among the many buildings destroyed and devastated by the loss of members' lives who were first responders. Though much time has passed, it was obvious the pain was still there and the loss of lives, buildings and their city would never be the same, no matter how much reconstruction takes place. I was fortunate enough to get to know many of these people at the 2012 National Instructor's School that they hosted. We lived in their buildings for two weeks!



Sokol West members with CR Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Sobotka

The ceremony was awesome and had us arriving early with all the security and parking issues. The program was filled with prominent dignitaries both from Texas and the Czech Republic. The master of ceremonies was our own Bro. Bob Podhrasky, President of the Southern District and 1st Vice President of American Sokol. He did a great job juggling the program due to the late arrival of some of the dignitaries.

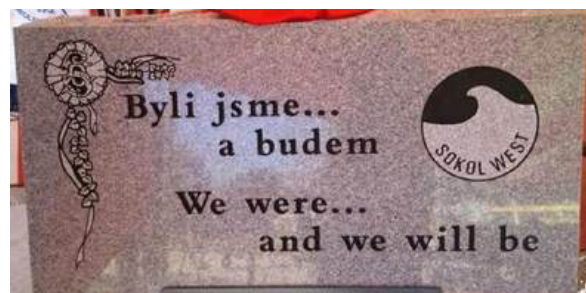
First up, was the local High School Jr. Historian group, who performed several folk dances in national kroj. This same group had come to perform and teach at the Instructors School. They did a great job especially having to dance on the gravel. The honor guard from the city of Waco fire department presented the colors. Bro. Rome Milan carried the Sokol flag in old Sokol uniform. The anthems were sung by Miss Czech-Slovak Texas.

There was a tribute made to the first responders who gave their lives protecting the city of West. This was given by Bro. Shane Bivens, President of Sokol West, and also a first responder himself.

There was recognition of the retiring Honorary Consul, Ray Snokhaus and the newly appointed Honorary Consul, Brian Vanicek. There were messages given by the mayor of West and Fred Malek, the chairman of the American Friends of the Czech Republic (AFoCR). The highlight of the ceremony was the speech by the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, H.E. Mr. Bohuslav Sobotka. He spoke in Czech with his speech being repeated in English by his translator. The governor of Texas, Rick Perry, also spoke.

The dancers performed a couple more dances before the unveiling of the corner stone which was donated by the Southern District and presented by Bro. Jerry Milan. "Byli jsme... a budem! We were... and we will be" This is the motto of Sokol West and engraved on the beautiful cornerstone. And then the official ground breaking with shovels and all took place with all the dignitaries including the Ambassador H.E. Gandalovic.

Many members of Sokol West were also involved in the ceremonies and the event was attended by many Sokol members of the Southern District units. All Sokol members were in official dress uniform. This included six of the Unit Presidents. I took the opportunity to speak with several of them that I have been working with on various projects at their units. I also was able to work in a meeting with executive board members of Sokol KHB the evening before, to make the trip chock-filled with time well spent. I'd like to thank my hosts Bro. Chuck and Sis. Jan Kalat for helping



make my trip possible. I barely got to the luncheon for the Sokol members at the Czech American Restaurant in downtown West, when I was whisked back to Dallas and off to the airport, so I could change and make it back to Chicago to attend a reception with my husband, Allen, and other Sokol members in downtown Chicago. There were several Czech Republic dignitaries there to celebrate the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Velvet Revolution.



Sokol West EB members, CR Prime Minister, Gov. Perry, Mr. Malek (AFOCR), Mayor of West, and the children members with their motto T-shirts

The Czech Republic government, the AFoCR, and many Sokol units and members have all helped to make Sokol West’s dream of rebuilding a reality. They will actually break ground next month and begin building. Their new hall will combine the “dance hall” and gymnasium under one roof. We are hoping all will go smoothly and Sokol West will be opening their new doors soon. We do have them penciled in to host the 2016 Instructor’s School. Congratulations to Sokol West and their members!! They are West Strong and have shown all of us the determination to live up to their motto “Byli jsem . . . a budem! We were . . . and we will be!

continued from page 3

Touched my heart...

During my visit to Sokol Greater Cleveland to attend their Mikulas Party, I was able to tour their hall and enjoy their amazing and historic building. We still have several amazing original facilities and I believe it is crucial that we work to preserve these historic places. In so doing, we not only leave our mark but we also keep alive the goals and dreams of our ancestors. While we were touring their Sokol library, a young man, just 9 years old, peeked inside and asked cheerfully, “Is THIS the Library?!” I invited him in and learned that he was indeed a Sokol member and that he loved to read. I asked him if one day he would like to be in charge of the Sokol Library. He thought briefly and replied, “now... is that a volunteer or paid position?” We were quite amused and impressed with his question! When we told the young man that it was a probably a volunteer position, he stated, “well, good, because I love to volunteer!” When I introduced myself and told him that I was the President of American Sokol, he was thrilled to meet me and proceeded to share with us much of the Sokol and Czech history he has learned in his Sokols Class! This experience touched my heart; I am sure we will see this young volunteer on the National Board some day! I had such an enjoyable visit with my Sokol friends in Cleveland and I am so proud that Sokol Greater Cleveland is working hard to preserve their building and history and to continue our educational programs with our youth. My experience there reminded me of how important our children are to our future and how critical it is that we continue to nurture their interest and love for Sokol.

This coming year, we have many reasons to celebrate. LET’S MAKE 2015 OUR BEST YEAR YET! We WILL make things happen as we do our part to ensure that Sokol thrives for another 150 years.

I hope to meet you in St. Louis February 14th!
 Nazdar! Ať žije Sokol!
 Jean Hruby



Celebratory Events & Socials for the 150th Anniversary

2015 is a very special year for American Sokol as it was 150 years ago our first unit in St. Louis was founded. I'm sure all units are planning events to help celebrate. As you read in the November/December issue, President Hruby gave us a "Save the Date" message for the weekend of November 13-15 noting that plans are underway. I just wanted to give you a brief update (plans are still being finalized) for a couple of BOI events and socials that are underway for our members.



We would like to host a special number competition for all groups that can join us that weekend (Central District has successful ones every year so we have a great foundation to follow). We are working with the 150th Anniversary Committee to plan for an evening old-fashioned Sokol social at one of the Sokol halls in the Chicago area. We are also planning on having a volleyball tournament open to all with Mixed, Male and Female teams (if the numbers warrant). While this is going on, we are also discussing having a "Bowling for Fun" event for those non-volleyball players. On Saturday evening we would like to have a lower-key banquet where Sokols and Friends of Sokols of all ages can join in the fun with food, music and activities.

None of us will be alive to celebrate our next 150th milestone, so please join us for this one. Watch for further updates in the Publication and Director's Newsletter but mark your calendar now to save the November 13-15 dates.

Nazdar,
Maryann Fiordelis
National Physical Director

SAVE THE DATE

November 13-15, 2015

*150 Year Anniversary Weekend Celebration
in the Chicago Area*

Gala Banquet & Sports Event



Mark your Calendar

Events around the American Sokol

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

January

- January 9-11** **Central District Skills & Progression Weekend** — Sokol Tabor, Berwyn, IL
- January 11** **Sokol Omaha Party** — Sokol Omaha, Omaha, NE
- January 17-18** **Amerikids Invitational USAG Meet** — Sokol Omaha, Omaha, NE
- January 24** **12th Annual Candlelight Roast Duck Dinner** — Sokol Minnesota, St. Paul, MN
- January 24** **IPDGC Meet** — Sokol Stickney, George Washington School, Lyons, IL
- January 25** **Annual Meeting** — Sokol New York, New York, NY
- January 25** **Old Believers (Piemule 1992)** — Norway House, Sokol Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI

February

- February 1** **GIJO Tumble Down** — Naperville Central High School, Naperville, IL
- February 8** **Sokol Stickney Pancake Breakfast** — Sokol Stickney, Stickney, IL
- February 14** **Sokol St. Louis 150th Kickoff Celebration** — Sokol St. Louis, St. Louis, MO
- February 21** **Co-Ed Cal & Marching Competition** — Sokol St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

March

- March 7** **Sokol Greater Cleveland Winter Exhibition** — Cuyahoga Heights High School, Cleveland, OH
- March 8** **Flavors of Slovakia** — Sokol Minnesota, St. Paul, MN
- March 8** **Sokol Chicagoland Exhibition** — Elite Sports Complex, Downers Grove, IL
- March 14** **Sokol Tabor Exhibition** — Sokol Tabor, Berwyn, IL
- March 20** **Sokol Naperville Tyrs Exhibition** — Naperville Central High School, Naperville, IL
- March 21** **Sokol Stickney Exhibition** — George Washington Middle School, Lyons, IL
- March 28** **Sokol Spirit Exhibition** — George Washington Middle School, Lyons, IL
- March 29** **Pancake Breakfast with Craft & Bake Sales** — Sokol Minnesota, St. Paul, MN



American Sokol Deadline

Send your submissions, articles, events and photos to editor@american-sokol.org by the 1st of the month prior to the publication issue! For example, send items you want included in the October issue no later than September 1st.



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