



american sokol publication

September/October 2018 | Volume 141 | Issue 6

On August 8th my grandfather, who served in the Marine Corps during the Korean War, participated in an Honor Flight from Chicago to Washington, D.C. For those of you who are not familiar, Honor Flight is a national organization that recognizes the bravery, determination and patriotism of our nation's war veterans. They are currently honoring WWII and Korean War veterans, and soon Vietnam veterans, with a free one-day trip to Washington, D.C. I was lucky enough to accompany my grandfather, Howard "Bud" Maskill as his family guardian. The group consisted of eight WWII and 82 Korean War veterans. They were escorted throughout the city to monuments, memorials and museums, and were truly treated like heroes everywhere they went. Honor Flight is a great organization serving these most deserving heroes.

In many ways, I see similarities between Honor Flight and Sokol. We are both non-profit organizations, volunteer based, and operate with American pride. Each flight takes more than 1,500 hours to plan, prepare and fly, and the majority of that time is executed by volunteers. I recall several of our own Sokol members have participated in past Honor Flights. If you are a war veteran who is eligible to participate or have a family member who may be interested, I highly recommend you look into it. I am grateful to have been part of such an amazing experience; one that I will never forget. honorflight.org

As our summer comes to an end and we prepare for the start of a new Sokol season, let's remember what makes Sokol what we are. As the American Sokol website states:

American Sokol is a multi-faceted organization guiding its members throughout life to physical and moral health, good citizenship and responsible patriotism, combined with continuous self-improvement. Sokols affirm that they are proud of their citizenship in our great country, the United States of America; that they continue to vigilantly guard the democratic principles on which our country and our organization is based; that we honor the sacrifice of Sokols who fought valiantly in past wars to defend our freedom and independence; and that our patriotism is deep, sincere and extends to commitment and action in our local and wider communities. Sokol is a place of working together, learning new skills, helping one another, and giving of oneself. Sokol was born from noble goals and a willingness to give to others. The future of Sokol is in the hands of those who accept the mantle and carry it forward.

NAZDAR!

Bro. Howie Maskill, Sokol Spirit



AMERICAN SOKOL

ISSN 003-1259

Published six times each year: January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, November/December. All content is due on the 1st of the first month. For example, the March/April issue's content is due no later than March 1st.

American Sokol, 9126 Ogden Ave, Brookfield, IL, 60513
Subscription: \$12.00 per year

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

American Sokol reserves the right to edit all submitted materials.

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From the Editor...

Welcome autumn and a new Sokol season! I've had the pleasure of attending a couple of the welcome home celebrations at Midway airport for the Honor Flight Chicago participants (*see cover story*), and I am taken aback each time. The organizers put so much thought into every detail, including a military band playing in the airport when the veterans arrive back from their trip. I agree with Howie, it's a wonderful non-profit that is worth looking into for those who qualify.

I'd like to encourage each unit to seek out veterans that qualify, and organize a welcoming with unit members to accompany the families and witness this awesome event. I was very moved by the experience and even more now appreciate the freedoms we often take for granted.
#OneSokol

NAZDAR!



HELP Save Our Organization. CLICK HERE:

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**REMINDER: PLEASE SUBMIT
EVENT INFORMATION TWO
MONTHS PRIOR TO THE EVENT**

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Postal Mail: American Sokol Editor, Julie Kaupert,
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The Presidential Address

*The Sokol Eye –
Sokolským Okem*

Fall is here!

The leaves will soon be changing and we will all be heavily into our Sokol programs. I would like to take the time to reflect in this issue on the importance of October 2018 in our Sokol lives. October 28, 1918, a country was formed. Czechoslovakia! This year we are all celebrating with many people around the world because there is grand significance between the formation of what we know as the first Czech Republic and Sokols.



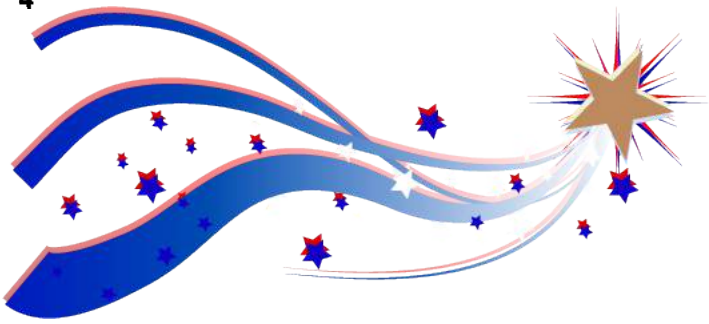
Prior to this date, it is noted that the Sokols from all over the world would join the Legion and fight in WWI on behalf of the Bohemian/Moravian/Slovakian lands. Our Sokols in Chicago rallied together and marched from Cicero down historic Cermak Road to sign on the dotted line and commit to joining the Legion Army. The Czechoslovak Legion Army was comprised of mainly Sokols, even Sokols from America. We are proud of our ancestors and our Sokol Brothers that fought and took part in ending the war, which resulted in the establishment of the first Czechoslovakia.

This year as we all celebrate our homeland and its birth, we will remember all of our Sokol brothers and sisters that sacrificed their lives and helped to form Czechoslovakia. We continue to honor our legacy, for without Sokols, the Czechoslovak Legion would be frail. It is truly a privilege to be a Sokol today knowing that we are connected to forming a country. I will be attending events in Chicago and Washington, D.C. representing all of you, our American Sokol members. We have a reason to celebrate and be proud of our Sokol history.

Today I am proud to see our Board continuing the tradition of excellence. Our new Executive Board has taken on their positions and we are progressing on a positive path. I want to recognize them this month as we celebrate the greatness of Sokols. Thank you to our National Officers for their perseverance and dedication to forming a great Sokol organization.

Ať žije Sokol!
Long Live Sokol!
Nazdar!
Jean Hruby
President





RISING STAR

MEGHAN BOWDEN

submitted by Mary Cushing
American Sokol Instructors School Director

Conclusion of the THREE Rising Stars (left to right) Sidney Bowden, Megan Pech and Meghan Bowden



This third segment in the trilogy of Rising Star articles on three girls from Sokol Greater Cleveland will focus on Meghan Bowden, the sister of last issue's star.

Meghan started Sokol at age 4 in Tots class and is now in Junior Girl's class. She competes at the Xcel Platinum level. A part of Sokol Greater Cleveland's competitive team, Meghan competes in the AAU meets, as well as Sokol competitions.

National Slets in Cedar Rapids, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh and Cleveland; the last two Sokol USA Sokolfests. Meghan hopes to attend the next Prague Slet in 2024.

Meghan began coaching at 12 years old, assisting with Tots class, and still continues to teach the Tots and Girls classes. Meghan coaches the girls in Excel Silver level. She wants to continue with Sokol as an adult and coach Girls Class as long as she can.

Meghan will be a senior at Cuyahoga Heights High School this coming year. She is active in the marching band, playing trumpet, choir and orchestra, where she plays violin. She also enjoys being on the high school soccer team. Her hope is to attend Cleveland State University next year, where Meghan hopes to study sociology. Her plan is to go into social work, perhaps with an adoption agency someday.

Like the other two girls previously highlighted, Meghan has also attended four National Instructors Schools. Her Beginner School was completed at age 13. She was one of the lucky ones who was able to attend her for School Levels in four different districts at four different locations: 2014 at Sokol Greater Cleveland, 2015 in Chicago at Sokol Spirit, 2016 in Ennis, TX at Sokol KHB, and completing her Advanced II School at Sokol Cedar Rapids in 2017. When asked what kept her coming back each year, she replied, "meeting all the different people". Although the school is only two weeks out of a year, you make friends for life! Meghan feels being thrown into leadership positions, especially at the more advanced school levels, helped her immensely in other areas of her life as well.

A member of the S.A.L.T. (Sokol Aspiring Leaders of Tomorrow) group, like the other girls, Meghan was one of the members who put together the Teen Social held at the Nation Slet in Cedar Rapids. She felt encouraged that the BOI would accept ideas of younger members and the others who attended, were enjoying an event she helped to organize.

All three of these girls from SGC, have accomplished a lot in their short time in Sokol. Being finished with the School did not detour them from helping out. They made breakfast one morning for everyone and were the "snack people" each evening so the current students could enjoy munchies. Collectively I think each and every one of these girls will continue to be active in Sokol and contribute and help out wherever they can.



The Sokol Educator

from The National Education Committee

The Anniversary of Independent Czechoslovakia

Note: The founding of the Czechoslovak Republic is celebrated on October 28th. This year will mark the 100th anniversary of this event. The following are remarks taken from the Private Prague Guide.

At the time of World War I, Czechs and Slovaks had long suffered under the control of Austro-Hungarian rule. When a 16-year old anarchist, Gvriilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist with ties to the secretive Black Hand pointed a pistol and assassinated Franz Ferdinand, the Archduke of Austria-Hungary. His actions would propel Europe and later the United States into World War I. It was now time for Czechs and Slovaks to fight again for their independence.

Two years before the war ended, the Czechoslovak National Council was formed. Two of its now famous founders were Thomas Garrigue Masaryk and Edvard Benes. Later these two men would become the first and second presidents of the new independent state. In January 1918, on Epiphany, a call went out to support statehood.

Early on October 28, 1918, the Agriculture Council put a stop to all transports of grain to the front lines. The war was almost over and it was obvious to most everyone. Prague's famous Wenceslas Square was the venue for yet another famous moment in Czech history: The declaration of independence from Austria-Hungary and the formation of an independent state consisting of the provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia and Ruthenia.

The war ended in November and the new independent Czech state took part in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. The infant country found itself in an enviable position. It now had most of the industry (glass, china, machinery, automotive, etc.) once belonging to Austria-Hungary.

Suddenly Czechoslovakia was ranked among the top ten industrialized nations in the world. In this new Europe, a post-monarchy world, Czechoslovakia became the independent state it had desired for so long. Its culture bloomed; this country was the place to be.

www.private-prague-guide.com/article/october-28-foundation-of-czechoslovakia/

Submitted by Sue Bares, National Educational Director



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International Meeting for Sokol Instructors

Creating a Bridge Between Sokol Organizations by Alix Wilt

For longer than I can remember, American Sokol has been a constant in my life. I began Tots Class at age 3, moved on to Girls Class, and continued on to Juniors as a young adult. I've served as a Junior Board officer, attended four American Sokol Instructor Schools, coached classes at Sokol Spirit, sat on our BOI, and taught at three Instructor Schools. With those experiences guiding me, I jumped at the opportunity to continue my Sokol involvement by attending the 2018 International Meeting for Sokol Instructors. It was advertised as a five day event for adult members (who spoke Czech or English) showcasing different activities relating to the Sokol program. With plans already in the works to attend the Slet in Prague, I extended my trip by five days and prepared for an unfamiliar yet exciting experience.

The experience began with my arrival at Tyršův Dům (Tyr's House) where I "Czeched"-in to the Hostel and set up camp. We ate our first meal, and every one thereafter, at Hotel Kampa which was just across the courtyard. I quickly learned that the advertisement for English speakers was not taken seriously by anyone but me. Everyone spoke Czech and only a few spoke English. I was lucky enough to meet a woman named Lenka who spoke English beautifully. Lenka took it upon herself to be my translator for the week.

The first evening consisted of icebreakers and team-building activities, much like ones I have experienced at Instructor Schools and Development Conferences in America, but the difference was my need to follow along by body language due to the language barrier. What a challenge! Throughout the next few days I participated in many different activities including swimming games, marching, acrobatics, dance, gymnastics, bosu ball conditioning, yoga, and lectures on child psychology, Sokol history, uniforms, and organization. One of the best parts of these lessons was that different experts were brought in to teach each one. Throughout the five days we had over 10 different instructors share their knowledge with us. This is very different from the way I have seen American Sokol set-up educational programs, and I think it is something that we should consider for the future.

In addition to the daily activities and lessons, we got the chance to tour Tyršův Dům and even climb up to the roof. One night we participated in a scavenger hunt throughout the entire grounds, in which clues led us to areas like the attic, boiler room, pool and other typically restricted areas. We went on an outing to go paddleboarding along the river and we even participated in a Sokol-themed scavenger hunt throughout the city of Prague.

During my days at the event, I had the opportunity to learn from the members of Czech Sokols about their programs. After years of admiring Sokol in the Czech Republic from afar, I was finally able to pick their brains. One of the most interesting things I learned was that many Czech Sokols seem to have the similar membership problems that we





experience in America. Although they are much larger than us, their numbers have been declining as many young people choose to participate in one or two competitive sports instead of the spread of activities that Sokol programs offer. I learned about a few programs that have brought them success in battling this membership decline. While none of us want to hear about membership declining, there was some reassurance in hearing that the Czech Sokols face the same challenges that we do and that they have success in combating them.

I learned about a program that they participate in called TeamGym, which is group gymnastics on floor, mini-tramp,

and tumbling track. They have found great success from this program because it provides an opportunity for gymnasts not wishing to take part in all-around gymnastics to work as part of a team. USAG has a similar sport called Gymnastics for All that I believe would be a great program for many of our gyms. I also had the chance to learn about some of their successful Tots programs and they even gave me some materials to pilot a new program at Sokol Spirit. Before I can do so, I will need the materials translated, but I hope to find success with their suggestions and be able to share about it in the future.

When I decided to attend this event I knew I was going to learn a lot, but after the five days, I walked away having a whole new perspective on Sokol. I made connections with active members in the Czech Republic and I even encouraged my new friends to attend the American Sokol Slet in Chicago in 2021! I thank American Sokol for allowing me this opportunity and I hope to return when they offer it again in six years and bring a MUCH larger contingency from our organization. While we have had so much success on our own for over 150 years, I think a collaborative relationship with COS is one that can benefit us all!

The following report of the 1938 Slet in Praha was written by Helen Ann Reidl (Rajdl) (Marsik). She was 19 years old at the time. Helen belonged to the Sokol organization on Long Island. She was fortunate to be visiting her Aunt Barbara who worked with President Tomas Garrigue Masaryk. Helen was able to get on the last train out of Praha before the Germans closed the train station.

Submitted by Fred Marsik

GREETINGS FROM ACROSS THE SEA . . .
1938
Czechoslovakia — the original home of the Sokol

This year Czechoslovakia was in her glory in showing her strength. Two events were for her most important. First, the 21st of May, the most critical day in her short young life of twenty years when she showed the world her own strength against invaders and second, the X. Vlasovskiy Slet in Praha.

The first event being thoroughly covered by all newspapers over the world, this article will only concern itself with the second which will be more interesting to you. Sokol days in Praha. While ordinarily one could get in a certain spot in a few minutes time now took three times as long. All of the thoroughfare, main or just small side streets were crowded with "Proletky" and guests of the Slet from other parts of Czechoslovakia and from foreign lands. Praha's traffic cars, "elektriky" as they are called, being used for their regular transportation now were in such a poor because of the long lines of traffic along each

October 1938

with its heavy burden of Sokols bound for the district. In fact during the days of the Slet these same vehicles did not run as per usual routine but were all bound for the district. Everywhere the streets were filled with people dressed in sokol garb or in colorful costumes of their native land. One came in contact with people from such lands as Jugoslavia, Poland, Bulgaria, Russia, England and America, so that it looked like a League of Nations, Czechoslovakia. Sokols for each Slet invite many foreign guests who also show that they—although non-Czechs—also Sokols and follow the teachings of Tyrk and Jungner, for the Sokol is a widespread organization and is not only limited to Czechoslovakia.

This year 30,000 men and 24,189 women participated in the Slet. Compared with the total number of 720 in the I. Vlasovskiy Slet held in 1882 under the direct supervision of Dr. Miroslav Tyrk, one can readily see how Sokol membership has grown.

The district, a huge stadium built especially for the Slet was 40 hectares large, 13 times as large as Vlasovskiy district or Wenzelska Square which is about 4 city blocks long. The stadium consisting of the Main tribune together with the north, south and east tribunes each day accommodated over 170,000 guests and the dressing rooms for the Sokols accommodated 70,000.

The main days of the Slet were the 3rd, 4th and 5th of July, when only senior Sokols performed, although in reality the Slet has been going on since January, when various games were held in the High Tatras and down through the months when Junior Sokols competed and performed.

Although the main events lasted 3 days, each day brought before the audience new gymnastics and new drills. One was never bored watching the kaleidoscopic scene before one's eyes. These drills to us all in essence, are very number of that encounters number out of step. And when in a drill the arms played the most important role it seemed as if one were looking at a large field of rippling grain rippling under the light breeze that played over it. Each drill signified something different and was thoroughly worked out. Czechoslovakia being in such a political crisis one could naturally expect the drills of the men to show their readiness to take up arms for the protection of their country and their willingness to lay down their lives. Women being the fairest sex had lighter and happier drills performed with the aid of huge colored balls, gaiters, hoops and ribbons. The foreign guests attracted much attention for they came dressed in the Sokol dress of their country or even in their national dress and even their performances showed the characteristics of their people. For instance, Bulgarians and Jugoslavs executed their

showed a tendency of being more Oriental than European. The French and Belgians, on the contrary, had graceful and flowing calisthenics showing their natural love for beauty. Americans as could be expected had a different type of drill—a more stately and dignified exhibition, reflecting the staidness and conservatism of the Americans and their love of being entirely different from everyone else. All of the foreign guests received a hearty welcome but how good it made one feel to see the American flags waving the distance, waving in the breeze in the various divisions of the 5th of July. Undoubtedly, they watched an indescribably field, men in their gym suits and their women and girls all in white with their white belts and aprons of the flag that surrounded them. Needless to say the performance undoubtedly had shown that Sokol's heart went up from the street, "Vyboreni", "vystoupi" and in the evening

Rijen 1938

mened, marching off the field crowds outstayed down from the grandstands onto the street and carried them off. Order had to be restored before the rest of the program could go on but since the rain was no longer chilling and although the sun was not seen the day was so much brighter because the Americans "made a hit".

As all things must come to an end the Slet was finished off with a grand parade, lasting 5 hours on the morning of July 6. Praha being fond of parades made much of this one and even though it started at 9 o'clock in the morning many people were up at 3 o'clock already standing on street corners so that they would get a good view of it. It was a grand conclusion to a grand spectacle which will remain an unforgettable memory. Many new friendships were started during those hectic days and promises to meet were made. Conditions being such as they are and shown a cloudy future but it is more than certain that in 6 years time Czechoslovakia will be still Czechoslovakia and again the stage for another Slet.

Helen A. Rajdl



2018 GATEWAY TO THE FUTURE, American Sokol Internal Grants Available

During the celebration of the 150th anniversary, a capital campaign developed into an internal grant program called **“GATEWAY TO THE FUTURE.”** This fund has grown through contributions from the 3-year “150 Club” campaign run by the Foundation, 2017 Slet banquet proceeds, and other grants on record which the Executive Board allowed to be moved. The fund after three award rounds has grown to \$61,166.58 (as of June 30, 2018) and will be the main concern of the Foundation from this point forward (Bylaw convention change) We hope to “GROW” this program so it becomes an endowment that grants money to units annually. Since its establishment 15 units have been awarded checks by the American Sokol!

The following is a listing of some of the items for which units applied for and received reimbursement: Unit Operations Update; Window Replacement; Energy Conservation – Lighting; Emergency Fire Stairs Replacement; Equipment for New Program; Storage Unit Project; Improvement of Unit’s Publication; Parking Lot Improvement; New Home – New Equipment; Exterior Door Replacement; Developing Unit’ Gymnastics; Gymnastics Equipment Repair; Safety Equipment for Gymnasium; Special Needs Gymnastics Project; In-Class Activities Equipment; and, Sound System Project.

Please take time to fill out the application by November 1, 2018 and e-mail it to foundation@american-sokol.org or Foundation Director, Meribeth Tooke mktooke830@gmail.com. After review by the Foundation Committee, recommendations will be made to the Executive Board’s November meeting and awarded/ announced in December, 2018. The 2019 awards will start on a more convenient schedule starting in early spring. Please note that projects not funded previously, can be represented during this award phase (please indicate this on the application form.). Please note that the application follows, but can also be found on the American Sokol website, backdoor tab, administration. Please completely fill out all three pages and have the applicant and the unit president sign the application before submitting. Those applications coming to the American Sokol after the deadline or not completely filled out/documented will be disqualified, with a notice going to the applicant and unit president. An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent by the Foundation Committee to the email address on the application.



Mark your Calendar

Events around the American Sokol

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

September

- September 8** **Oktoberfest** - Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL
- September 9** **Polka Hall of Fame Dance & Induction Ceremony** - Sokol Omaha, Sokol Auditorium, Omaha, NE
- September 15** **Central District President's Conference** - Central District Sokols, Brookfield, IL
- September 15** **Oktoberfest** - Sokol Greater Cleveland, Cleveland, OH
- September 16** **28th Annual Czech & Slovak Festival** - Sokol Minnesota, St. Paul, MN, MO
- September 22** **Central District Plane Pull** - Central District Sokols, Chicago O'Hare field
- September 23** **Bike & Train Ride** - Sokol Ceska Sin, Cuyahoga Valley, OH
- September 30** **Central District Rhythmic Clinic** - Sokol Chicagoland, Elite Sports Complex, Downers Grove, IL
- September 30** **Central District Golf Outing** - Central District Sokols, Western Acres Golf Course, Lombard, IL

October

- October 5** **Performance by Renowned Violinist Pavel Sporcl** - Sokol San Francisco, Palo Alto, CA
- October 6** **The Accidental Hero event** - Sokol Milwaukee, Pius XI Catholic HS, Milwaukee, WI
- October 13** **Haunted Hayride & Trick-or-Treating** - Sokol Detroit, Sokol Camp, South Lyon, MI
- October 14** **Annual Picnic** - Sokol Town of Lake, Sokol Camp
- October 20** **Central District Track & Field Competition** - Sokol Tabor, Berwyn, IL
- October 21** **100th Anniversary of the Founding of Czechoslovakia** - Sokol San Francisco, Orinda, CA
- October 26-28** **Centennial Celebration of Czechoslovakia Founding** - Sokol Greater Cleveland, Cleveland, OH
- October 27** **Annual Czech Festival** - Sokol St. Louis, American Czech Center, St. Louis, MO
- October 27-28** **Central District BOI Development Conference** - Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL

November

- November 3** **Annual Spaghetti Dinner** - Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL
- November 4** **Central District Annual Meeting** - Sokol Tabor, Berwyn, IL
- November 10** **Vendor Fair** - Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL
- November 17** **Annual Holiday Fair** - Sokol Greater Cleveland, Cleveland, OH
- November 17** **Fall Quiz Night** - Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL
- November 18** **Central District Women's/Girl's Volleyball Tournament** - Sokol Spirit, Brookfield, IL



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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September/October 2018 | Issue 6

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