

A new era of Czech Royalty



summer 2009

Emma Lehmann

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something you have to see. Visit
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If there is anything you would like to see included in the next issue, please let me know. Email me at

or send articles to

. We accept articles on any topic so don't hesitate to submit. And as always, remember to share your copy with a friend or relative, or better yet send in a gift membership in their name!

President's message

With the remaining months left in the 2009 calendar year, efforts by the Czech Heritage Foundation to reestablish activities that best represent our efforts to honor and celebrate Old World Czech Heritage continues. The Czech Heritage Foundation has participated in more than sixteen events and anticipates at least five more events by the end of this year.

Each event for planning, set up and representation has been conducted by board member chairs and in most events is represented with the old world image of our vouth dressed in kroje.

Traditionally, August is our rest and relaxation month in which our only scheduled event is our annual heritage picnic.

If you as a member wish to join our annual picnic scheduled August 11 at 6:00



Leonard Pfeifer

p.m., it will be held at the Knights of Columbus Hall located at 716 A Avenue NE Cedar Rapids, Iowa by St. Luke's Hospital. Once everyone has served themselves, our returning 2009 Homestay participants will present a pictorial and oral recap of their recent 30 day stay in the Czech Republic. This is an informal event and will be followed by our monthly board meeting.

For the picnic please bring something to share. The paper products, plastic utensils, drinks, cups, and the meat entrée will be furnished by the Czech Heritage Foundation.

And, please don't hesitate to bring a guest who is considering ioining our "Pride".

> Thank you, Leonard Pfeifer

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Czech Plus Band Schedule.

Aug. 14: Regular Concert Aug. 28: Regular Concert Aug. 30: Season Finale with the Czech Heritage Band 2:00

Czech Plus Band, since 1978. Official band of the Czech Village. Acclaimed ethnic folk artists by the Iowa Arts Council.

Svetlušky celebrates second anniversary

Saturday, December 1, 2007. The first ice storm of the season hit the Cedar Rapids area. It was an auspicious beginning for the newly formed Czech youth folk ensemble called Světlušky. The original plan that day was for the ensemble to provide 15 minutes of entertainment while the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library converted Heritage Hall from a puppet theatre to a make-and-take workshop. But the ice storm caused the Eulenspiegel Puppet Theatre to cancel, so Světlušky ended up performing a full 30 minute program to the assembled audience. What a beginning!

Over the course of the next two years, Světlušky (pronounced SVYET-loosh-kee), which means "Fireflies", has seen several growth opportunities. We have grown from 4 couples to 5 couples; one singer has learned to play the recorder; and our costumes are more uniform for all participants.





(Above) Svetlušky youth ensemble. Pictured back row (left to right): Joey Mark. Sarah Sindelar. Eric Sindelar. Hannah Van Deusen. Victor Mark. Megan Lehmann. Front row (left to right): Michael Simoneau. Cassie Lehmann. Carly Mark. Micah Van Deusen. (Below) Svetlusky founder Donna Merkel provides musical accompaniment for dancers Cassie Lehmann and Carly Mark.

Our performances have followed an equally broad swath of opportunities after our debut for Svatý Mikuláš Dav in 2007: the National Bohemian, Moravian, and Slovak Folk Dance Festival, sponsored by NCSML (May, 2008); World Lunch in Marion (July, 2008); Global Dance Fest, sponsored by CSPS/ Legion Arts (Sept., 2008); Svatý Mikuláš Day, sponsored by NC-SML (Dec., 2008); WFLA state meeting (April, 2009); Houby Days (May, 2009); and most recently, the Linn County Fair (July, 2009). We also had some lower-profile appearances: Linn County Child Development Cen-

ter Diversity Show (Feb., 2008); Jefferson High School Halloween Concert (Oct., 2008); and participating in various parades. Our next performance, a major program, will be at NCSML at Lindale for "Christmas in August" on Saturday, August 15th, at noon.

Our costumes have also undergone transformation as the ensemble has evolved. Everyone now has more uniform yet individualized costume components. The girls' costumes are now complete; we still need to create white folk shirts and yellow knee pants for the boys, in order to

A late celebration...

Pilsen Liberation Festival

How about stepping back 65 years in time when WWII ended, and celebrating the liberation of your city from the Nazis as if it is a current event? Well, it now happens every year in the city of Pilsen, Czech Republic around May 6, 2009. It is called Slavnosti Svobody (the Slavic Freedom Fest) and it has become a remarkable 19 year tradition, as well as a great time for all who care about freedom. Following are some relevant points of history:

·1938 Chamberlain signs the Munich Agreement with Hitler and turns most of Czechoslovakia in stages over to the Germans.

·1939-1945 The Czechs suffer under Nazi domination and are forced to support the Axis war efforts.

·1945 The allied powers are on the offensive and advance across Europe; Americans, Brits, Canadians, and free Europeans move from Normandy into Germany; the Soviets advance from the East.

·April-May 1945 US 3rd Army under George Patton is moving rapidly across central Germany toward it's objective – the German border; Patton, in his usual style, keeps going and crosses the Czech border.

·May 6, 1945 Lead elements of the 16th Armored Division enter Pilsen around 8:00 a.m. By late morning, after a sharp engagement with a Nazi rear guard at the town center bridge, Pilsen is liberated and the streets are filled with large crowds showing "immense enthusiasm." 3rd Army meets the Soviet forces a few miles east at the village of Rokycany, and a temporary demarcation line is established.

·1947-1948 The democratic government of Czechoslovakia is subjected to a communist conspiracy and becomes part of the Soviet Comintern as a puppet state. Soviet propaganda is directed toward eliminating the history of the Allied campaign in WWII.

·1989 The Velvet Revolution occurs in November and the country peacefully converts to a western style democracy. Submerged memories from earlier times reappear across the land.

·May 1990 The city of Pilsen and various organizations hold a large and successful 45th year liberation celebration with Sokol marching units, many dignitaries, and a surprising number of salvaged US WWII military vehicles.

·1990-2009 Slavnosti Svobody becomes an annual 4 day event held in conjunction with 8 -10 other organizations such as the Military Car Club of Pilsen. Thousands of people from all over the world attend the festivities, parade, displays, ceremonies, and drink the local beer, Pilsner Urquell.

After years of reading about this event, I organized a traveling group to attend the 2009 festival. We converged on Pilsen from different directions. My contingent arrived after a road trip through southwestern Bohemia by way of Budejovice and Krumlov.

We arrived in Pilsen on Friday evening and immediately discovered a new modern hotel (Courtyard Marriott) and an old traditional restaurant (Usal



(Above) An M-3
White Halftrack
appearing in the
"Convoy of Liberty
Parade". (Below)
American WWII
Veteran Ray
Noury, 87, survived a 15,000foot fall when his
B-24 Bomber was
shot down over
Nepomule, Czechoslovakia.



zmanu) with a fine choice of knedlicky, Pilsner Urquell, and premium cinnamon liquor.

The Festival started on Saturday, May 2, 2009. I had already scanned their website and had an idea of what to expect but was very surprised at the number and scope of the scheduled events. There were several different things going on at the same time all weekend, followed by additional ceremonies covering two more days.

I can summarize most of the numerous events as follows:

Memorial ceremonies honoring General George Patton, Second Infantry Division, 16th Armored Division, victims of WWII, and a "Thank You America Commemoration". Monument unveiling: A new permanent memorial was unveiled to honor an American veteran, Ray Noury, 87, who was in attendance, and his crewmates. All but Noury were killed when their B-24 bomber was shot down over Nepomuk, CZK. Noury survived after falling 15,000 feet with only a shredded parachute, then landing on a snowy ski slope, and sliding for a half mile. (Visit www.projo.com/news/content/bombermonument for the complete story.)

Displays and Encampments: Much restored WWII equipment is displayed in various encampments such as the 16th Armor, Second Infantry Division, Free Czech Brigade, and the historical German Military.

Modern equipment is also displayed by the Czech Army, U.S. Army Second Cavalry Regiment (Stryker), the Police of the Czech Republic, and the History of the Jeep Legend.

Patton Memorial Museum: This interesting, and very American museum, is open year round and is now five years old

Band concerts: A wide variety of performances are held in Republic Square and the amphitheater. They range from the traditional 35th Pilsen Infantry Band to country bands and modern rock (i.e. New Rangers & Semtex). These are all free of charge.

Battle Reenactment: "Operation Last Alley" is an amaz-

Czech School celebrates 140th year

The Czech School Board has wrapped up another busy school session, our 140th! Between Czech School itself and our first Adult Czech Language Class, approximately 80 students ranging from ages 6 to 87 were accommodated. The following is a detail of who and what made 2009 a great year for the Czech School family.

Czech School

Leading the Czech School effort at Wilson School as Coordinator was Cecelia Wolter. Cece is a graduate of Czech School and has remained very involved since. She is a senior at Grinnell College majoring in religious studies with a concentration in linguistics. This was her first vear in the role of Coordinator of Czech School. She did an excellent job in managing the busy, and often hectic day-today operations at Wilson for the five week term. Cece enjoys seeing the children progress from Division One through Division Three. "They grow so quickly and learn so much!" The Czech School Board is very thankful to Cece for her very successful effort.

Bessie Dugena, Division One teacher, commented that in



Jana Tureckova



Alena Slepickova

all her years of teaching Czech School, this, her 24th class, seemed to be the best ever! The students, ranging in age from six to eight, were able to have fun and still be very orderly in class allowing her to teach them a more difficult cirriculum. The class delighted the crowd at the final program with their performance of Mrs. Dugena's surprise: singing a traditional Czech School song, "We Are Special" which was complemented by their use of bells and bubbles! Mrs. Dugena was assisted in her classroom by her brother Fred Anthony and Czech School graduate Zoe Wolter.

Our Division Two students were led by Jana Tureckova in her second year of teaching Czech School. This was the biggest section, with 18 students ranging from ages nine to 11. They concentrated on the more difficult sounds of ř and ch and were introduced to Czech geography and history. The class especially enjoyed completing a dough art project lead by artist Marj Nejdl.

Jana is from Luzany, a village south of Pilsen. She will complete the Masters Program in Ed-



History presentation at final program. page 6

ucation of English and French at Western Bohemian University in September. She has taught private English lessons and optional classes of French in a middle school in Pilsen. Jana also works as a tour guide for a Pilsen travel agency and regularly leads trips to France and Spain. When Jana returns to the Czech Republic she will be living in Prague. She states that it is nice for Czechs, as residents of a small nation, to know that others are interested in their language and culture. It is heartwarming to hear their Czech national anthem and other familiar Czech songs sung in the United States.

Alena Slepickova of Brno, in her first year of teaching Czech School, instructed Division Three. They studied more advanced conversation and aspects of Czech culture including composers and writers and the Czech Republic's role in Europe. The students explored their Czech heritage, studying their family trees and photos and presenting their story. The class studied history, giving a very impressive timeline presentation at the final program.



Bessie Dugena



Donna Merkle

Czech Heritage Foundation awarded three \$750 scholarships to area students

by Lee Thornbloom

Rachel Lehmann, University of Iowa Daughter of Steve and Karen Lehmann

Throughout her life Rachel has been very involved in the Czech Heritage Foundation. For four years she attended Czech School and graduated when she was 14. At 15 she was crowned Czech Heritage Princess and at 16 she was crowned Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa. This past vear Rachel judged for the Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess selection. Since then she has attended many Czech Festivals such as Houby Days and her family has continued to stay active in the Czech community.

At age 19 Rachel has just completed her freshman year at the University of Iowa. Her major is business finance with a minor in



business management. She hopes to someday work in real estate finance.

One of Rachel's references noted that she is well organized, efficient, tremely competent, and she has

an excellent rapport with people of all ages.

Rachel is well prepared and on her way to achieving her dreams. She has been, and will continue to be, a valuable asset to any organization that she is involved in.

Amanda DeHoedt, University of Iowa Daughter of Russ and Zelda DeHoedt

Amanda will be a senior at the University of Iowa majoring in biomedical engineering with minors in Spanish and mathematics. Classes are her top priority right now but over the years she has been very involved with events in the Czech community starting with entering the Czech Heritage Foundation's Princess Contest. Even with a loss her first try, she started volunteering at the National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library and took several folk art classes. Later that year she competed in the Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa pageant and won. That year was spent learning about her heritage, community, and herself which changed her life.

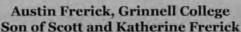
Since then she continued volunteering for a number of community organizations, serving as a tour guide for the museum's Andy Warhol art exhibit. She worked as a teaching assistant at our local Czech School and participated in the Homestay Program. Amanda's family has hosted a number of Czech exchange students and she has attended countless parades, festivals, speeches, fundraisers and other events in the Midwest.

Recently Amanda proposed, created, and now maintains a website for the CHF. She also has designed a number of graphics and publications for the organization.

Amanda was honored and thrilled to receive the Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa title for the second time at Houby Days in May. She is hopeful with her trip to Wilber this summer that she can represent her community well and bring back a national title.

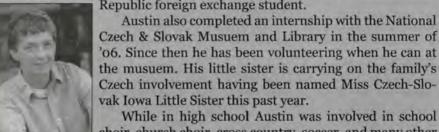
For the past year she has studied the Czech language in college and hopes to continue these studies.

Amanda's references recommended her because of her great character, motivation to excel in any situation, and enthusiasm to be a diverse individual.



Austin and his family have been very active members in the Czech community. He was Czech Prince in 2005 and went on to participate in the Czech Homestay Program. When he returned, his family hosted a Czech

Republic foreign exchange student.



While in high school Austin was involved in school choir, church choir, cross country, soccer, and many other school, work, and community activities and remained on the honor roll for four consecutive years. Co-curricular ac-

tivities included an internship with the Iowa Obama campaign in the fall of '08 and Campus Democrats from the fall of '08 to the present.

It was pleasing to hear in one of his recommendations say that Austin is an exceptionally motivated, hardworking, enthusiastic individual who puts pressure on himself to excel.



Cleaning up after the flood: Sokol Gymnastics recovers

As you all know, Sokol was devastated by the 2008 flooding of the Cedar River in downtown Cedar Rapids. Despite efforts of sandbagging, putting things up higher and praying, we all watched the television in disbelief as the flood waters touched and then took over the city streets. When we were finally let in the area we couldn't believe our eyes. The water had been at least six feet high in the Sokol lobby and four feet high in the gym. Equipment, mats, flooring: all soaked in river water. We had no clue where to even begin.

That was a year ago and we have moved forward, persevering but not forgetting.

In January 2009 we purchased a building at 5200 - 18th Ave. SW, that we are sure is perfect for Sokol's needs. The new

building was a hydraulics business before the sale and everything was grease and dirt from ceiling to floor. As a unit, we approved to have EPJ workers come in to clean. (EPJ is a state funded jobs program that gives preference to workers that were dislocated because of the flood.) The workers cleaned from ceil-

ing to floor with rags and mops until it almost shined. In all, the cleaning process took about 6-8 weeks. We then installed the gymnastics equipment starting with the 40 x 40 floor exercise mat. This building has an open floor plan so our gym is arranged around our mat instead of be



(Top photo) Gymnasts perform inside the building. (Bottom photo) The new Sokol building was previously a hydraulics business.



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A new era of Czech Heritage Foundation crowned The Czech Heritage Foundation crowned Little Sisters during the Miss Czech La Lebmann

in several parades and Czech-related events throughout the community during the year.



Adeline Volesky is in charge of the Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Pageant. She works in conjunction with Joyce Netolicky and Zelda DeHoedt to make the pageant a success every year.



(left to right) Little Sister Cassie Lehmann, Miss Czech-Slovak Towa Amanda De Hoedt, Little Sister Abby Frerick.



Pageant Judges:

Leah Sticha from Stillwater, MN. Leah was Miss Czech-Slovak Minnesota 2007-2008 and National First Runner-Up. Frank Lundak from Traer, Iowa. Frank is a registered piano technician and button box and piano accordion player. Katie Ziskovsky Dawson from Marengo, Iowa. Katie was Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2002-2003.

(l to r) Leah Sticha, Frank Lundak, Katie Ziskovsky.

Royalty



photos by Russ De Hoedt story by Belda De Hoedt

The Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Pageant and the Czech Heritage Foundation wish to thank the following organizations who generously contributed to help make this event a grand success:

Czech Village Association, Art 2M Broidery, Bed Bath and Beyond, Bohemia Cafe, Corvette Club, Edgewood 5 Seasons Car Wash, Fairfax State Savings Bank, Johnson Avenue Dairy Queen, Local P3 Building, Photo Pro, Ralston Foods, Sam's Club, Stejskal Florist's, Texas Roadhouse.



The following individuals were also key to making this event successful and also deserve special thanks:

Lisa Volesky

John and Adeline Volesky

Dennis and Debbie Volesky

Arlo and Joyce Netolicky

Russ De Hoedt Family

The program for the pageant included a private interview with the judges, kroj (Czech/Slovak costume) competition, talent competition, and on stage interview with the master of ceremonies. The local P3 building was the facility in which the pageant's evening ceremony was held. The building also housed a houby breakfast, which was provided by the Czech Heritage Foundation and was open to the public. The Bohemia Cafe provided a luncheon for the contestants and guests. Also included in the day's group activities were the parade and maypole dance.



Hannah Van Deusen participates in the maypole dance on 16th Avenue.

Master of Ceremonies: Lisa Volesky of Chicago, IL. Lisa was Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2000-2001 and Miss Czech-Slovak USA 2001-2002.

A new era of Czech Royalty



Special Guests:

Samantha Hubler - Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2008-2009 Carly Mark - Little Sister of Iowa 2008-2009 Andrea Cada - Czech Heritage Princess 2008-2009 Joey Mark - Czech Heritage Prince 2008-2009 Valerie Smith - Miss Czech-Slovak Missouri 2008-2009

Talent: Samantha Hubler provided her talent during the evening ceremony by reading a book she created about her family history and Czech heritage. She attends Iowa State University and is pursuing a teaching degree.

Entertainment: Valerie Smith provided entertainment during the pageant. She sang Czech songs while Frank Lundak accompanied her on his accordion. Thank you Valerie for traveling and attending our Houby Days Festival and the Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Pageant.



Trene Hamous



Parade of Kroje: Earlier in the day, the kroj competition was held at the Kosek Bandstand. After the kroj competition a Parade of Kroje was presented. Several individuals participated and it was a beautiful display of authentic and Americanized kroje. The Czech Heritage Foundation extends a thank you to all the individuals who participated.

Parade of Kroj Participants: Samantha Hubler, Amanda De Hoedt, Cassandra Lehmann, Abbigail Frerick, Joey Mark, Andrea Cada, Zoe Wolter, Valerie Smith, Lisa Volesky, Lenora Watson, Kim Volesky, Connie Wildfield, Olivia Bydyos, Pat Martin, Guenter Merkle, Lud Svoboda, Christina Hamous, Irene Hamous, Mike Papich, Hannah Van Deusen, Marissa Cada, Joyce Netolicky, Arlo Netolicky, Zelda De Hoedt, and the United Moravian Societies Dancers.

St. Joseph's Day Dance hailed as the spring's big success

The Czech Heritage Foundation in Cedar Rapids was the proud host for the annual St. Joseph's Day Dance on Sunday, March 22, from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.

This was held at the Cedar Rapids Elks Lodge, 801 - 33rd Avenue SW. This successful dance seems like it took place a long time ago but it's nice to be able to relive the fun we had that day.

Barefoot Becky and the Ivanhoe Dutchman from Cedar Rapids entertained over 400 guests. This band is very popular throughout the Midwest and we were so fortunate to have them. Becky and the band were as good, if not better, than ever, playing the favorite songs that make everyone want to dance. Food was for sale by the Elks Lodge and a big bake sale by the CHF. We thank all that donated the wonderful items that were enjoyed while people listened to the great music.

There were door prizes given out during the afternoon and nice raffle items that are all part of the fundraising. This is the main means to raise money for the CHF's scholarship and Homestay Program.

For the Homestay Program, students are selected each year to spend one month in the Czech Republic. Three students were chosen this year to go the Czech Republic. What a great group of students we had this year; they did a fantastic job of selling tickets for these two programs. The donations we received were remarkable and we sincerely thank everyone who brought these items.

Although many people brought items, a special thanks go out to the Frerick family for all they brought, Larry and Arleen Spina for the many items they donated, Lud and Loreen Svoboda, the Kostle family, the ambassadors and their wonderful baskets and donations. Many others are to be thanked too for making this fundraiser a success.

We have many other people to thank for the success of this event. Stejskal Florist Inc. paid for the printing of the tickets. Letters and tickets are sent out to the Czech Heritage Board members, former ambassadors, as well as previous Princes, Princesses and scholarship winners. We did receive donations and letters from several young people who have been in our programs. We thank those that responded to these programs that they were so much a part of.

Again this year we want to thank Evelyn Steiskal for all of her hard work in contacting businesses and people to support this event. She raised \$1,073.00. Mr. and Mrs. Leo Shima were a big help in raising \$329.00 and helping at the door during the dance. We sincerely thank Evelyn Stejskal's daughter Lynette Stejskal Cohen for her generous donation to the Czech Heritage Foundation.

We had a very successful bake sale with 20 people donating items for the sale. Thanks so much.

This year's profit from the St. Joseph's Dance was \$3,720.31, which will be split between the Homestay and scholarship programs. Again thanks to all that helped make this year's dance a success.

The planning for next year's event is already underway. Barefoot Becky and the Ivanhoe Dutchmen have been booked and the Elks Lodge will have us back. Mark your 2010 calendars for Sunday, March 21.

by Frank and Barb Edmunds



Royal court member Samantha Wehr sells tickets at the annual St. Joseph's Day Dance, March 22nd.

CH7 donates \$12,000 to NCSML publication

A wonderful thank you letter follows:

On behalf of the entire National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library (NCSML) organization. I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Czech Heritage Foundation for its very generous support of the Summer 2009 edition of Slovo. This sponsorship is a tremendous demonstration of the Czech Heritage Foundation's endorsement of NCSML's work and mission.

This full-color commemorative issue will be a companion piece to be used by those visiting the Rising Above exhibit in the Kosek building. This very special edition features:

-The story of the early settlement of Cedar Rapids by the Czechs -The story of Czech Village and the efforts to celebrate and preserve the Czech heritage of the city, including the Czech Heritage Foundation -The Flood of 2008 -Some personal sto-

ries gained from the

oral history inter-

views done since the flood

-A description of the new NCSML exhibit, Rising Above: The Story of the People and the Flood Photos include:

-Early settlement

-Czech Village business

-Significant events and influential Czech civic leaders

-The flood

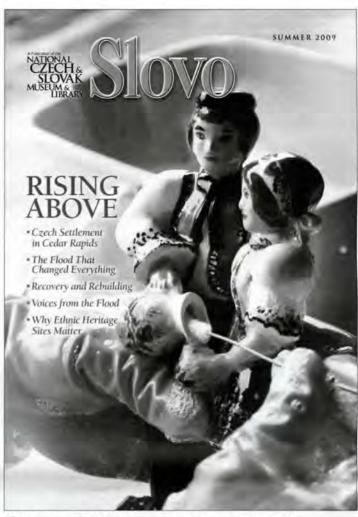
-The recovery

The outside back cover is being reserved for the Czech Heritage Foundation.

The sponsorship cost for this commemorative edition of *Slovo* was \$12,000.00.

We are very grateful for this sponsorship. No other issue of Slovo so closely aligns with the Czech Heritage Foundation mission to protect and honor the Old World Heritage and celebrate the Czech influence on the Cedar Rapids community.

by Jason Wright, Vice President for Development NCSML



The summer 2009 commemorative issue of Slovo Magazine was sponsored by the Czech Heritage Foundation, who generously donated \$12,000 to the publication.

	To purchase this issue of Slovo, please send \$18.00 to:
	Czech Heritage Foundation P.O. Box 761
	Cedar Rapids, IA 52406
Name_	
Addres	ss
City, S	tate, Zip
Phone	
	Make checks payable to: Czech Heritage Foundation
	ezeen Heritage Foundation

Svetlušky

~continued from page 3

complete our Bohemian costumes for everyone. Of course, none of this would be possible without the expert skills of Karen Lehmann and Guenter Merkle. Hats off to both of them for their patience and willingness to undertake this awesome task!

If you read the prior carefully. paragraph you will note that we mentioned full Bohemian costumes as our current goal. However, those costumes will not suffice for performing dances from Moravia or Slovakia. We will need special costumes for each of these areas as well. That, of course, means money. To help us meet this need, Světlušky has applied for and successfully obtained a non-profit corporation status with the State of Iowa. We now even have the necessary Employee Identification Number (EIN). We are in the process of applying for the IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exemption status, which we hope to have completed by the end of this year.

This tax status would then allow us to accept tax-deductible donations as well as apply for grants. As you might guess, most events want entertainment: vet, we need revenue to help cover our expenses. The 501(c)(3) status is our lifeline. We'll keep you posted on our efforts in this regard.

So, to summarize our current situation, we are about to celebrate our second anniversary: we grown from 4 couples to 5 and expect to add more soon; we have performed at numerous venues, not all Czech sponsored; we have improved our costumes; we have augmented our list of instruments; and we are now incorporated as a non-profit corporation. We continue to improve and expand, which we hope will continue to add value to the Czech community of Cedar Rapids.

Thank you for your continuing support of this vibrant and exciting ensemble.

by Donna Merkle

Donations needed for education kits

In the flood of 2008 the Czech Heritage Foundation lost two education kits containing authentic Czech artifacts. Their purpose was to facilitate the teaching of Czech culture. The kits were also used at diversity days in many towns around the Cedar Rapids area.

If you are interested in helping the CHF replenish these kits here is a list of suggested items. Monetary

donations are also appreciated.

Please look at the list below and contact Joyce Netolicky at or Karen Lehmann at

to make a donation. Or mail donations

to:

Czech Heritage Foundation P.O. Box 761 Cedar Rapids, IA, 52406.

Wooden display case (have someone design and create for us to latch and carry) Czech, Moravian, Slovakian maps Maps of villages

Czech ABC book

Dolls with kroje from each area

Postcards Czech flag

Historical Moravian flag

Slovakian flag

US flag

Decorated eggs

Wooden eggs

Egg with straw design

Glassware (crystal)

Dish/vase (Czech design)

Beer steins

Coins

Articles with two-tailed lion or other Czech emblems Military items (patches, buttons, pins)

Small puppet Small wooden tov

Garnet jewelry

News article from the garnet factory describing the history of garnets

Clothing article describing the history of the article Bobbin lace and the tool(s) to make bobbin lace

Fairy tale book in Czech language

ABC/123 books in Czech language (note: cardboard type that withstands use)

Hockey jersey

Czech cookbook

Cooking supplies (goose pastry brush) Translation book

Pilsen Liberation Festival visitation

~continued from page 5 ingly accurate depiction of the combat that occurred at the Roosevelt Bridge on the morning of May 6th, 1945. A Nazi rearguard tried to hold a position on the east side of the central downtown bridge and was eventually overwhelmed by 16th Armor recon units. This recreated action features original gun jeeps, armored cars, halftracks, anti-tank guns, and supporting infantry. They all expend several cases of blank ammunition over the course of an hour. The all volunteer reenactors play both American and Germans and take great care in the accuracy of uniforms, equipment, and the battle detail. The show is performed three separate times to accommodate crowds numbering in the thousands. As a former US Army officer I can say I have never seen anything quite like this.

Athletic Events: Good crowds watch the half marathon run through downtown Pilsen. A youth triathlon is held over the course of three days for those under 16. This competition is organized by the General Patton Youth Club and is reminiscent of the event in which George Patton competed in the 1912 Olympics. There is also the "Grand Prix of Liberation" sports shooting event held over 5 days.

Parade: This is the central event at the Festival lasting almost two hours on Sunday and is called the "Convoy of Liberty." Approximately 120 units cover

the long parade route and consist largely of accurately restored US/Allied WWII military vehicles: jeeps, half tracks, armored cars, deuce and a half and 3/4 ton trucks, staff cars, motorcycles, and some very rare items like two Studebaker Artic Weasels. These are all privately owned and maintained by military club members/reenactors from all over the Czech Republic and Europe. Avid reenactors haul their antique units long distances for this parade - some as far away as England and Russia. The prime organizing group is the Military Car Club of Pilsen. See website (http://www.militarycarclub. cz/odkazy.php)

The festival is sponsored by the city of Pilsen and organized by a permanent non-profit agency named the American Center. It has a permanent office and hospitality bar located on the Town Square. It was my pleasure to meet the American Center Director, Vladimir Palek, who was most gracious in welcoming our group to the town and festival. He made sure we had great access to events. His group made a special effort in hosting the true VIP guests to the festival - returning WWII American veterans. There were perhaps two dozen surviving GIs at this year's festival and I was privileged to meet several who had very interesting memories to share. Every year this group is honored in dinners, ceremonies, and jeep rides in the parade.

The Liberation Festival tradition will continue into the future. In fact next year, 2010, will be even bigger as it is every 5 years. It will be the 65th anniversary and Palek is expecting various government and military notables to attend. There should be more and bigger military equipment such as WWII Sherman tanks from European armor museums and larger crowds from far and wide. If you have an urge to see all of this, I would suggest early reservations for next year's dates: May 2-6, 2010. The website (www.liberationfestival. com/index.html) publishes a complete event schedule around April 1st.

I would like to close by sharing some overall impressions. The Liberation Festival is a relative bargain as all events are free. The Pilsen price structure is less than Cedar Rapids (\$50 -\$80/night for a 1st class hotel.) The Czechs make the world's best beer and serve it with fine restaurant menu choices. There is nowhere else in Europe where an American will feel more welcome and real pride about our country and it's history. I saw living history that I had only read about and it goes way beyond the History Channel.

Why does Pilsen do all of this? As our host Vladimir Palek told me, "For us WWII didn't end until May of 1990." And now they can finally celebrate.

by Denver Dvorsky

The people behind Czech School

~continued from page 6

Alena was born in Kyjov, in the folklore rich area of Moravian Slovakia. For many years she has lived and worked in Brno, the capital of Moravia. Alena and her husband have two sons, Martin and Tomas. She is a career educator with a Ph.D. in English from Masaryk University in Brno. However, her most beloved endeavor is writing poetry. Alena is an accomplished poet with three books published in the Czech Republic, with another to be released this fall.

Donna Merkle, in her third year as the music teacher, offered great variety in her program. The students participated in singing, dancing, instrumental solos and ensembles. They studied both the traditional Czech School songs, as well as new songs recommended by Jana and Alena.

Donna was born in Houston, Texas and has Czech heritage. She earned a Master of Music degree in Piano Performance from the University of Houston. She and her husband, Guenter, have lived in Cedar Rapids for just over three years.

Donna's favorite part of Czech School is the final program. This year she added instumental selections for soloists and groups. She enjoys collaborating with the teachers from the Czech Republic who offer their personal selection of songs to present a balanced program of old Czech School favorites and more contemporary selections.

Also participating in this year's program were the Czech Heritage Princess Andrea Cada, Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Amanda DeHoedt and Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Little Sister Cassie Lehmann.

And one cannot provide a summary of Czech School without mentioning Friday treats! The students really enjoy this

She earned a Master of Music longstanding tradition of receivdegree in Piano Performance ing treats provided by our local from the University of Houston. Czech organizations.

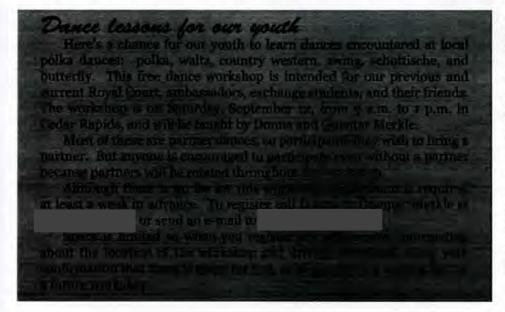
Adult Classes

Thirty enthusiastic adults participated in the Adult Czech Language Class held on five Thursday evenings at Mt. Mercy College. One class of 15 was taught by Alena and the other by Jana. In both classes the students arrived with various levels of beginning experience with Czech language.

Both teachers were energetic, engaging and patient. The focus was conversational language, with the goal being to go beyond the question, "Jak se mas?" Students performed many solo pronunciations and practiced by sharing conversations with the teacher and partners. They acquired the ablility to have introductory conversations and order food in a restaurant. Many students were so enthused by this experience that they intend to continue through informal get-togethers to collaborate and practice.

The current Czech School Board represents yet another generation of relentless local volunteers who are motivated by their love of Czech language and heritage. To all of those who participate in making these efforts a continuing success, including Wilson School, Mt. Mercy College and the Czech Heritage Foundation, we are very grateful! Thank you!

by Julie Wiedner



Sokol cleanup still efforts continue

~continued from page 8

ing separated between different floors.

We opened the gym to our returning gymnasts March 11. We had a "Welcome Home Sokol Gymnasts" sign as well as a celebratory party afterwards where we all indulged in chocolate cookies and brownies. The gymnasts and coaches were happy to be home.

In April Sokol Cedar Rapids hosted the Western District Slet. We had about 100 competitors from four different Sokols competing in 6 different levels. The place was packed with people sitting on bleachers, in chairs and on the floor while gymnasts performed terrific routines. It was a fantastic day for all of us!

As of right now we are anxiously, yet patiently, working on the building of a kitchen and hall in the new location. We have been working closely with an architect and the unit has approved the plans. Now we are awaiting city approval and you know how long that can take! We will let everyone know when we are up and running with our pork dinners and kolache sales!

It is amazing how things have changed for us. We were about to celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the 3rd St. building when the flood happened and now the building stands empty but full of history and memories.

Right now all we can do is actively look toward the future and try to add new programs that will benefit the community, increase our membership and benefit The Sokols as a whole.

by Susan Mark

SOKOL CR

RISING UP FROM THE FLOOD



Houby Days Highlights, June 2009











(Clockwise from top left) Little
Sisters Abby Frerick, Carly Mark
and Cassie Lehmann. Maypole
dance on 16th Avenue. CHF float in
parade through Avenue. Czech singing
ensemble. 2009 Powa Czech royalty
and visiting royalty. Photos by Russ
De Hoedt.

Czech Heritage Foundation Membership Application

Membership period is January 1st through December 31st and is renewable on January 1. This organization is dedicated to the preservation of our Czech Heritage. Renew now so you won't miss a single 'information packed' issue of Naše České Dědictví.

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Membership dues: \$	Donation: \$
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Membership is 417,000 per year	and is tax deductible.
	nd are used to continue Czech Heritage Foundation programs.
	ven beyond the annual membership fee will be considered a dona-
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