

the **Guided Page**

The Museum Guild of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
Volume 1; Number 2 The New Year is here— share the fun ! share the work!



MARJ NEJDL—

2015 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

359 HOURS



This first-generation Czech-American, had the opportunity to grow up surrounded by folk art artifacts. Learning egg decorating from her uncle as a child. He and her mother prepared dyes, and created these treasures. She assumed that everyone did this. She also saw the delicate art of bobbin lace work practiced by family members.

Marj teaches classes in Czechoslovakian egg decorating at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library (NCSML), and at festivals and other venues. She is a Master artist for folk arts apprenticeships in Iowa and South Dakota, and won the 1992 Iowa Cultural Heritage Fellowship. Her work is on display at the NCSML and at the Smithsonian Art Institute.

Her family members, and being surrounded by decorative arts in her home, influenced her as an artist. In the 1970's, she was encouraged to demonstrate egg art. Marj is very thankful she begin sharing her talents. That event has influenced her artistic life ever since. She finds inspiration in the whole area of folk art, and in flowers, in lace, and in costumes. She hopes students will be inspired to create their own eggs in this "magic art, this fun art."

(Continued page 2)

Marj creates wax-resist Czechoslovakian decorated eggs, employing a variety of traditional techniques. Some of the materials required are melted beeswax, crayon, dye, and flame from a candle.

An egg she created, along with eggs from the other states, were displayed at the White House in Washington, D.C. during the Easter season. Marj attended the Chicago Art Institute and studied commercial art.

Marj Nejd's artwork is all over the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library. On the weekends leading up to Christmas, she sat in a corner of the museum's gift shop, personalizing Christmas ornaments .

Her love of that art is rooted deeply in the foundations of her heritage, as a first-generation Czech-American.

"My dad was born 1908, and he came over when he was about 7 years old," she said.

But Marj believes her artistic flair came from her mother. She works with anything that has a good surface for painting, including hand-blown glass ornaments. They come from the Czech Republic already adorned with various designs, but Marj gives them a final touch for anyone who wants it, printing names of people and places on them. She does hundreds every year.

"Last year, it was about 650," she recalled, and said they're not all just for the holidays. "Anniversaries, new babies, first year, things like that."

This delicate work requires a steady hand, dedication, and an ability to admit the occasional mistake.

"Sometimes, I misspell a word, a name. I thought it was an 'a' and it's supposed to be an 'o.' So, I had to do that over."

What started as a fundraiser decades ago grew into a yearly tradition Marj looks forward to.

"I love it, and I love coming into the museum during December on Saturdays, because everybody's in a good mood, and it's fun."

She knows one day she'll have to pass down her tools and techniques to someone else.

"I was just advising one of the gals, she says that she's going to take over after I'm finished and she's going to learn calligraphy," Marj explained. I said, 'if you learn your own style, then you don't have to go back to the book to see what you're doing. You can just whip it out. '"

But Marj said she's not done yet.

"As long as I can see and hold a brush, I'll be doing it."

Reprint from , KCRG article. Cedar Rapids Gazette

Marj is one of 87 Volunteers of the NCSML who volunteered 8,676.07 recorded hours, during 2015. During December, 2015, 47 volunteers recorded 914.75 hours.

In addition to personalizing ornaments, decorating eggs, and creating special orders, Marj is active in Czech Heritage Singers, Domska, and was the catalyst of organizing a "Stretch Class" through the Sokol organization, which meets weekly at Hus Presbyterian Church.

As a former gymnast, she was one of the first certified judges of competitive gymnastics in Iowa. Marj also belongs to the Czech Heritage Foundation and the Czechoslovak (CSA) Lodge, which is a branch of the Fraternal Insurance Organization in America. She was nominated to the honor of National Volunteer of the Year in 2015, of this organization. In addition she belongs to the Sokol organization, and is a long standing member of the NCSML and the NCSML Guild.

For more than twenty years, Marj has designed original art work for the annual button fund raiser, which is her donation to the annual Houby Days Festival of Czech Village. She plans to do the same again for 2016.

The love of her life, husband Ed Nejd, passed away in 2001. He, too, enjoyed participation in the Czech inspired organizations and was a great supporter of her contributions to their shared heritage. Ed was known for being a master of making bread dumplings and demonstrated this skill at the Smithsonian Museum.

Marj recalls with a smile "He always encouraged me to paint faster". Marj instills her love of Czech heritage in her grandchildren, Tom(15) and Emily (17), who recently portrayed the devil and angel, along with her son Chuck (DeAnn), who portrayed St. Nickolas, at the NCSML's Old World Christmas Market. Tom and Emily are the children of Marj's son Phillip (Michelle) of Brandon. In addition to Tom and Emily, grandson Scott (Kasey) Szopinski gave Marj the distinctive title of great grandmother to Wyatt (8), Emma (7) and Gerrett(5). Marj smiles and reflects— "They all call me Babi".

Her love of life and Czech heritage lives on through them.



CONGRATULATIONS MARJ AND THANK YOU!

COOKIE WALK



From The

President's Desk . . . Dear Friends,

At the February 6 Guild meeting I presented the new NCSML Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020. The plan is focused on building for the future to remain relevant and serve the larger community. We set out a new STRATEGIC FOCUS: In the next five years, the NCSML will intensify its embeddedness and social impact. Every person we touch will have an experience that promotes an understanding of their connection to the world and to each other.

Strategic Priority I: Focus on Human Rights

Make a lasting impact on the education of global citizens by connecting to the lessons of Czech and Slovak history

Strategic Priority II: Celebrate Culture

Immerse people in the richness of Czech and Slovak culture

Strategic Priority III: Become Embedded in Community

Meet real needs that reflect authentic community priorities, and increase our social impact

Strategic Priority IV: Engage Families

Position the NCSML as a family-friendly destination in Cedar Rapids

Strategic Priority V: Enhance Performance

Adopt a high-performance operational and business model

Many people ask, “How do we define human rights?” We define human rights as something to which you are entitled by virtue of being *human*. *Human rights* are based on the principle of respect for the individual. Their fundamental assumption is that each person is a moral and rational being who deserves to be treated with dignity. They are called *human rights* because they are universal. (*United for Human Rights website*)

The Czechs and Slovaks were denied their human rights under centuries of oppression. Those stories and their lessons give us a base from which to contribute to the dialogue on contemporary issues and to the education of the coming generations to participate in an increasingly global society. The Board of Trustees and staff are very excited about the direction of the plan and are moving forward on all the priorities.



Gail Naughton
President & CEO

GUILD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We just completed a very successful Sweetheart Dinner, our very first attempt at this themed event. Those who attended were treated to an elegant, intimate dining experience with excellent food, service, entertainment, and ambience. The “numbers” may not be “up there” as we had hoped, but everyone I spoke with was quite satisfied. That is just as important, if not more so, than dollars earned, particularly for a first-time event. This gives us great hope and encouragement that a second go-round next year will be even better.

You can help us make all of our fundraisers a success by becoming involved, whether that is as a committee chair or member, a volunteer, a donor, or an attendee. It takes a village, all of us, Team Guild, working together in whatever way each of us can to make what we do matter.

We have many opportunities this coming year for you to be involved: Taste of Czech and Slovak in May; Time for Tea in July; Fall Dinner in November; Cookie Walk and Christmas Café in December; and always as a volunteer, greeter, docent, or gallery attendant for the NCSML. Please consider the way(s) you can help. Your contribution, no matter how large or small, is always greatly appreciated.



Donna Merkle
Guild President



The February Sweetheart Dinner was a delightful event! The entire evening was perfect! Every aspect from beginning to end ran smoothly. The committee, under the leadership of Sally Stejskal and Diane Moore, deserves a standing ovation for their meticulous attention to detail.

The elegance of the posters raised expectations, and there were no disappointments. Guests were warmly greeted, and check-in was quick. Everyone enjoyed a complimentary cocktail and appetizers while having the opportunity to converse with old friends and new acquaintances under the crystal chandelier in the Rozek Grand Hall.

Dinner was in Hroska Room. The tables were elegantly dressed in white linen. Students from the Floral Careers program of Kirkwood College had designed sophisticated contemporary centerpieces: a cylinder vase with green vegetation and a single rose. It sat upon a red circle with white hearts. A scattering of small red glass hearts completed the arrangement. At each place setting was a small pink gift box. The lid was decorated with a Czech & Slovak folk design by guild member Marj Nejd. Inside, guests discovered a take-home cherry kolach baked by the Guild Kolach Club.

Under the direction of guild member Mary Van Houten, the dinner was expertly served by students from the Kirkwood Community College Culinary Arts program. As a side note: some readers may not be aware that Guild member Carol Wohlleben founded and directed that culinary arts program before her retirement. Our Guild is indeed fortunate to have the collaboration of such a fine institution.

While listening to music provided by the artistic trio Deep Dish Divas, guests were treated to a dinner of Czech & Slovak favorites: Mushroom Potato Chowder, Pork Loin Roast with dumplings and gravy, and Sweet and Sour Red Cabbage. All were expertly prepared by a crew of talented and dedicated guild volunteers. The Kirkwood students had their culinary caps on as well. They created individual field green salads with a delectable dressing, and a scrumptious Chocolate Raspberry Torte. To add to the elegance, and to clear the palate between the salad and the main course, a miniature raspberry sorbet was served, complete with demitasse spoon. Ah! The experience could not have been more elegant if we had been dining with Prince William at Lobkowitz Palace in Prague. Submitted by Sandra Hudson

EASTER TRADITIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

SUNDAY— On the Saturday before “Floral Sunday”(Palm Sunday) , family members would gather pussy-willows to take to church. The next morning, the blessed pussy-willows would be carried home, just as in many other countries people bring home palms. **EASTER WEEK**—Festive celebrations begin on Monday. From Monday through Wednesday, everyone, particularly the older girls, would paint beautiful Easter eggs. That meant a great deal of work, because some took hours to complete and some even took a whole day to paint. The mother would be especially busy making kolacky, buchy, and special cakes baked in the shape of a lamb or a rabbit. On Easter Sunday, the decorated eggs would be taken to church to be blessed. Upon their return home, each family member would eat one of the Easter eggs. The egg shells would be saved, crushed into little bits and scattered on the fields to make the soil rich and fertile. **POMLAZKA**—Easter Monday features boys with little switches (Pomlázka) tied with bright ribbons.; girls with beautifully decorated eggs, and a game of chasing to brush dust from girls’skirts, and girls chasing the boys to try to get their eggs back.



Today is the oldest you've ever been and the youngest you'll ever be again.



COMMITTEES

Membership Program
Public Relations/Publications
Telephone Committee
Social/Kolache Club
Historian (Scrap Booking)

Marla Nikodim
Diane Moore
Donna Merkle
Marla Nikodim
Marge Sedlacek or Barb Hill
Sally Stejskal



Goulash

by Mana Zlatohlavek (**reprinted from NSS**)

2 lb. cubed beef meat or chuck roast
2 tsp. salt and pepper to taste
1/2 tsp. caraway seed
1 tbsp. paprika
1/2 lb. cubed pork 3 Tbsp. flour
1/2 c. chopped onion
2 bouillon cubes
1 stalk celery, chopped

Place meat into a Dutch oven with salt and pepper. Mix, cover and cook until all juice is cooked out and meat Browns.

Add onion, celery, and paprika, caraway seed and sprinkle with 3 Tbsp. flour and mix well. Add about 4 c. water, 2 bouillon cubes, cover and cook for 1 hour or until meat is tender.

Serve over dumpling, rice, or noodles.

If a member has recipes they would like to submit and be printed, don't hesitate to send them in.

Maňa Machovsky Zlatohlavek



Maňa Machovsky Zlatohlavek ,7, left , with her sister, Vera Machovsky Hanson, 5, first Christmas in the US.

'Maňa: One Girl's Story' Offers Students an Immigration Lesson Based on a Real Person by Jan Stoffer

"Maňa: One Girl's Story," an exciting educational program by the NCSML, was the January program at Guild. Great interest and delight was expressed by listeners of the presentation, which included photos of Maňa Machovsky Zlatohlavek and her sister, Vera Machovsky Hanson, both of whom were known by a number of Guild members.

Jan Stoffer, director of education, detailed how Maňa's story has been developed to teach immigration to second graders. Pre-visit lesson plans are available to teachers upon request, and post-visit materials are in development. Jan uses two oral histories, one of which was provided by Maňa and the second featured Maňa and Vera; family photographs; original art; Machovsky and Zlatohlavek family artifacts; and family documents to tell her story. Maňa's sons and Ellis Island officials provide context necessary to completely develop this personal story.

While at the NCSML, students tour the Sleger Immigrant Home to learn about life long ago. Docents challenge students to use their critical thinking skills. In the library, students work in small groups to source, observe, contextualize, and corroborate objects, photographs, and documents. Each group presents their findings to their friends. Using original art created by Maňa when she was a child, students are inspired to make their own version of the piece in the classroom. In "Faces of Freedom: The Czech and Slovak Journey," docents facilitate a conversation between Maňa, Vera, and the students as oral history clips are played revealing key facts about the Machovsky sisters lives. Students are given a coupon for a return visit and a copy of Maňa's gingersnap recipe, found in the Museum Guild's cookbook.

If you enjoy children and teaching, join the volunteer corps dedicated to directing this rewarding educational experience! You will immediately see the difference you make as a docent for school study trips. Contact Lindsay Erhardt-Hanson, director of visitor and volunteer services, at 319-362-8500 ext. 203 for details of training and involvement.

Jan framed her Guild presentation similar to how she would ask questions and raise topics with students, explaining how to relay background knowledge and use a variety of learning styles. She concluded her presentation by walking members through the path immigrants in 1922, would have taken from international waters to legally entering the United States.

Key Points of Interest

Maňa was seven-years-old and Vera was five-years-old when they immigrated with their family from Kolín, Czechoslovakia, to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. in 1922.

Mr. Machovsky secured a job with Sokol Cedar Rapids, which was one reason they came to Cedar Rapids. Mr. Machovsky was the leader of the Czecho-Slovak International Gymnastics Team and a high school physical education instructor prior to accepting the position.

During the trip, Maňa ate sardines, which did not agree with her, and gingersnaps.

There was a library on the ship.

The family was detained at Ellis Island. Consequently, Ellis Island is partnering with the NCSML and are interested in telling Maňa's story. They have many stories pertaining to what happened on Ellis Island; however, they rarely know anything about where the immigrants came from and what happened to them after they passed through. With Maňa, we know where the family came from and where they went.

Names were not changed at Ellis Island. Names had to match those given on the manifest. If there was a mistake in spelling, it occurred at the point of departure, not the point of arrival. Ellis Island, and similar ports serving immigrants, were ports of entry; nothing legal occurred there, outside of legally allowing people to enter the country. An official may have suggested to an immigrant that s/he change her/his name to make it easier for the American tongue and ear; however, should an official have changed the name, that official would have most certainly lost his job. Name changes occurred during naturalization and through other legal processes.

While at Ellis Island, the Mrs. Machovsky and the girls may have interacted with Ludmila Foxlee, a Czech immigrant who was employed by the Young Woman's Christian Association at Ellis Island. Mrs. Foxlee would have assisted them in assimilating to American society and made sure their needs were being met.

Maňa remembered eating mutton, which she did not like, while at Ellis. She also had her first taste of a banana.

The family's first home in Cedar Rapids was a furnished apartment.

Even though she had passed first grade in Czechoslovakia, Maňa had to take first grade over again as she did not speak English.

Maňa graduated from Grant High School, attended Coe College, and had a job before marrying John Zlatohlavek. John and Maňa had two sons, John and Mike.

The NCSML plans to share lessons with Czech schools across the country and, eventually, have them translated so they can be taught to students in Czech Republic.

The **Guided Page**

The Museum Guild of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

1400 Inspiration Place at the Heart of Czech Village
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404

Guild Meeting Dates for 2016

Please record these dates on your calendar now.

We want members to be present at meetings!

March 5	July 9
April 2	August 13
May 7	Sept 10 (an event, not a meeting)
June 4	October 1
	November 5

News You Can Use

April 2 meeting will be at the renovated house of Beth DeBoom - This will be an off-site meeting - the Heart House.

March 19th St. Joseph's Day Parade—Czech Village Saturday

May 7 - Speaker will be a merchant from the 16th Ave. business district

Taste of Czech—May 20

Houby Days— May 20, 21,22

June 4 - Joyce Langlas will speak about her recent trip to the Czech Easter Markets
In Prague, and countryside villages.!

Time for Tea—July 24



Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Museum Guild of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is to support the activities, programs, and facilities of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library by providing unpaid volunteers and other financial and charitable support, and to serve as an educational, service, and social organization for the persons interested in the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

A New Look

As you might have noticed we are making a few changes to our Guided Page newsletter , to start 2016 off with a fresh "New Look." Over the next several months I will be working toward a full redesign and would like your help. Please continue to send in articles of interest, meeting notices, articles of events/activities, etc. Don't forget pictures/photos because now they will appear in color. All submissions will be published at the Editorial staff's discretion. Please send articles/photos and any comments about our new look to me at JR:

Joyce M. Langlas, Editor Guided Page
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