

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

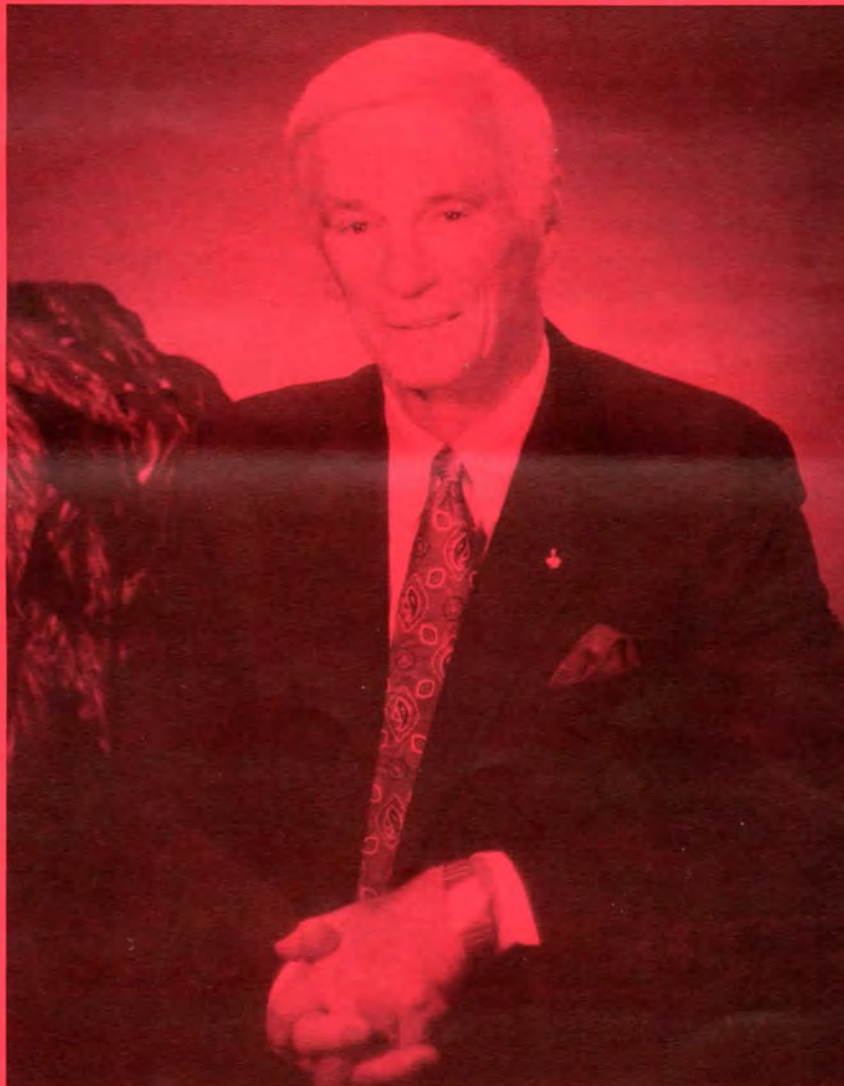
NAŠE ČESKÉ DĚDICTVÍ

OUR

CZECH

HERITAGE

ASTRONAUT CERNAN SPEAKS AT HRUSKA GRAND HALL DEDICATION



Eugene A. Cernan, Capt. USN (Ret.)
See Story on Page 8

Volume 21 - Number 4 - December 1996

Editor Adeline L. Volesky
Proof Reader Leona Poduska
Contributors Olga Drahozal
 Brad Dvorak
 Lovell Dvorak
 James Horak
 Marie Homerova
 Charles Krejci
 Jennifer Novak
 Cathy Schroeder
 Jeanne Tompkins
 Holly Upah

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	14
Astronaut Cernan.....	8
Biography	4
Calendar of Events.....	15
Crowning of Prince & Princess.....	14
Czechs & Slovaks in Olympics	9
Infant of Prague	7
Letters to the Editor.....	3
Local Czech Bankers of Past	9
My Homestay	10-11-12-13
Nativity at Třebechovice.....	7
Our Visit to Cedar Rapids.....	6
Sv. Mikuláš Weekend	14
The Czechs Are Walking Again	5
Volunteers.....	16
You Don't Have to Speak Czech.....	5

NAŠE ČESKÉ DĚDICTVÍ

Subscriptions for the newsletter are not sold. Members of the Czech Heritage Fd'n. who pay their annual dues of \$3.00 per person per year receive *Naše České Dědictví* free. Dues are renewable on January 1 of each year and expire December 31. The newsletter which is mailed quarterly, serves to inform its members of its activities, people, and places. (Dues received in September apply to the following year for new members.)

Deadline for receiving articles for the March issue is January 24th, 1997.

NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers who helped with the September newsletter were: my husband John. Thank you for your help.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

As 1996 is coming to a close, I look back and realize what an exciting year it has been. The museum's new director is Dan Baldwin, Carmen Langel as curator, and Judy Ostrander as Dir. of Development. The museum hosted some spectacular traveling exhibits. The landscaping and floral gardens are progressing. Attendance continues to rise. Some prominent visitors were Justice Clarence Thomas, Judge David Hansen, retired Senator Roman Hruska and Astronaut Eugene Cernan.

The Czech Heritage Fd'n had a busy and successful year. We sent 5 Homestay students to the Czech Republic to spend one month with a Czech family. We crowned a new prince and princess. We continue to win trophies with our prize winning floats in parades. We have opened our homes to Czech and Slovak visitors who are visiting our country and community. We have tried to make them feel welcome by arranging gatherings with well filled picnic baskets of Czech food, accordian music and singing.

The Czech Village continues to sponsor our summer Czech Band concerts. A big and special event was the passing of the Olympic torch through Czech Village this summer.

As editor, I too, want to share my highlights of 1996. When the 3 presidents dedicated our museum in October 21, 1995, I sent each a complimentary copy of *Naše České Dědictví* as I have already written about in the June issue. In President Vaclav Havel's envelope, I enclosed a souvenir copy of the dedication program for his autograph. Imagine my surprise when I received a special folder from Prague addressed to me! My autographed copy had arrived!

When Astronaut Eugene Cernan was the keynote speaker for the Roman Hruska Hall dedication, I was privileged to get his autograph "To Adeline—Best Wishes from 'The Man on the Moon' Gene Cernan Apollo XVII." (page 8)

I have one other special autograph I had acquired many years ago. That is the autograph of President John F. Kennedy.

I have been so richly blessed the past year.

An added climax to 1996 was a trip John and I took to Alaska in September and enjoyed the serene beauty and wilderness of our 49th state.

Adeline Volesky



Co je to? To je pes. What is this? It is a dog.
by Eric Gervais Division 2

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Adeline,

I'm sorry this has taken so long, but finally here's your autographed program! I thought you would enjoy the "whole package" — Rhonda Křížková is the woman in my office who had contact in the president's office to get the autograph. Have thanked her profusely!

Prague continues to enchant. Every week another building is hidden by scaffolding but surprisingly soon the work is done and a beautiful "reconstructed" building is unveiled. Work gets done when promised, some times sooner. The citizens of Prague take pride in their city, rightly so, and all the "modernization" and "improvements" happily enhance the beautiful historic heritage of the city, truly experiencing a renaissance.

Dreams do come true. On May 12, I was able to attend the opening concert of Prague spring—President Havel and Prime Minister Klaus were both there—a presidential trumpet fanfare, followed by the Czech national anthem, and then the harpist played the opening notes of Smetana's *má Vlast* — heartfelt tears of joy!

Carol Jean Smetana
Washington, D.C.

Dear Editor,

Some days ago I sent you an article, a small contribution of admiration to the work of the Czech Heritage. I wrote the article about our visit to Cedar Rapids as an appreciation of welcome we received by the Czech-American community.

Today I finished some translations of the two books *THE HISTORY OF CZECHS IN CEDAR RAPIDS*. I translated the main historical features and development to publish some stories in our Czech magazine. I have done this translation as I am persuaded that it can enlighten the fascinating history of Czech immigrants in the USA. As I am a history teacher, I know that our historians and the public will welcome the knowledge of the historical development of the Czech American community.

We will stay in Iowa in Iowa City until the end of October with one exception. We will go to Washington, D.C. October 6-9 and perhaps a weekend in Chicago.

Maria Homerová
(see story on page 6)

Dear Editor,

My sister Mary forwarded to me your publication containing the letters regarding the Matyk Building. She knew that I would be very much interested in reading the letters about the building and also that I had some pleasant memories of Bill Matyk, the son.

It was a great treat for me to accompany my mother on her shopping excursions to the Matyk Store. Living out on the farm, I did not get to come to 16th Avenue and from there to Matyk's very often. It was so much fun to go into the dry goods store and see all the pretty ribbons, fabrics, lace, buttons, et cetera. And if young Bill happened to be in the store, he always had a little treat for me, maybe some ribbon, lace or some fancy buttons for a dress.

I will never forget a trip to Matyk's in 1925. I was a little five-year-old. It was the first part of December when I went into the store with mother and the first thing that caught my eye was this lovely doll, it was in a box, had real curly hair, long, and I had never seen such a beautiful doll. I remember telling my mom, in Czech, look, it even opens and closes its eyes. I remember touching the red dress, and just walked a few steps back and admired the doll. I just couldn't take my eyes off the doll but never said, I'd like it, or I want it.

After we got home that day, mother was unwrapping the package containing the items she purchased, and unbeknown to her, Bill had included a box containing the identical doll. You can imagine what a happy girl I was. The next week mother took me to the store so I could thank him personally.

I never did remove the doll from the box, but just admired it and touched it frequently. I had it for many, many years until it finally disintegrated.

I also enjoyed the article by Pauline Jasa. Blanche, her sister, was my best friend and later my sister-in-law, and I had some great times at the Jasa home. I particularly remember one Halloween party in the Jasa basement, which was just super. Pauline certainly was a great hostess and saw to it that we had a good time. I remember the great meals.

I enjoyed the publication so very much and am enclosing my check for a subscription.

Agnes Tichy
Oklahoma City, OK

BIOGRAPHY



Charles and Lillian Vyskocil are very well known to many people. They have touched many lives in many positive ways.

Lillian was born on December 12, 1915 at rural Marengo, Ia. to Charles and Fran Dusil Coufal. Lillian had a brother Don and two sisters Wilma Fader, and Blanche.

Charles Vyskocil was born in Vamberk, Bohemia on November 10, 1910 to Henry and Julia Kovarik Vyskocil. When Charles was two years old, his mother and older brother came to the United States to join their father who had come six months earlier.

When Charles attended McKinley School, Grant Wood was his art teacher and friend. Charles would often clean his studio which was located above Turner's Garage. Now, Charles wishes he had asked the now famous artist for a painting. Charles graduated from Washington High School in 1928 and immediately went to work for Western Fraternal Life Association.

On September 23, 1933 Charles and Lillian were married in Vinton, Iowa. The marriage was blessed with four sons, Charles Jr, died in 1977 at age 42, Richard died in 1980 at age 42. Another son died in infancy. A son Don and his family live in Texas.

Having sons in the family and a devoted family man, Charles became active in the Boy Scout program. He was selected to serve as Scoutmaster for two national Jamborees, one in California and one in Pennsylvania. He took troops to summer camp in New Mexico. Charles was presented with the Silver Beaver, which is the highest award a council can bestow on a volunteer Scout leader. In the Cedar Rapids Sokol Gymnastic Organization, Charles served as a gym instructor and is still affiliated with the Sokols.

For 15 years, Charles served in the Iowa National Guard and Iowa State Guard from January 2, 1931 to 1946. During World War II Charles served as financial secretary for the local chapter of the Czech National Alliance. He also served as trustee for the ZCBJ Hall and was a member of the Dramatic Club and participated in Czech plays.

Lillian kept a busy schedule too. She worked at Quaker Oats and for the banquet department of the Roosevelt Hotel. She is a 50 year member of Lodge #262 and served as financial secretary

for Damska Matice for many years.

Charles served the Western Fraternal Life Association in many areas in the 51 years of service. He started as an employee in the office and served as president the last 12 years. He retired in September 1979 as President Emeritus.

After retirement, the Vyskocils devoted their spare time to Czech organizations. They are members of the Czech Heritage Fd'n. where Charles was named Honorary Director. They both belong to the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. In 1995 they had the privilege of meeting Presidents Clinton, Havel and Kovac. In 1964 Charles met President Lyndon Johnson when he was invited to attend a conference, called by the president, that was held in the White House.

The Vyskocils celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary this year. They have nine grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren.

When we have a Czech festival or celebration the Vyskocils are always there to help and are still giving generously of their time and talent.

BOY SCOUTS

Scouting was founded in Bohemia in 1911 while still a part of the Austrian Empire.

The Czech Scouts as such were organized June 7, 1919 with Dr. A. B. Svojsik as its first Scout leader. The classic Scout emblem is the Chod's dog head. The Chods, during the middle ages, were guardians of the Czech frontier, the dog being their constant companion at their border vigilance.

The first bona-fide Scout Stamp was issued by the Czechoslovak National Comm, in 1918 while overthrowing the Hapsburg government. After five years of German occupation and 42 years of Communist domination the newly freed Republic issued its second Scout Stamp.

Czech Scouts are called Junáks. Dr. Svojsik wrote and published a book called "*Foundations of Scoutism*".

CZECH EVENT TOOK PLACE 76 YEARS AGO

NOVEMBER 13, 1920

On this date four area bands and two orchestras donated their services to the week-long Czech bazaar at the CSPS Hall in Cedar Rapids. The bazaar was held to raise money for destitute children in Czechoslovakia. Two previous bazaars held to help Czechoslovakia gain independence had netted \$45,000.

(Reprinted from the *Gazette*)

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEAK CZECH TO GO TO PRAGUE

By Jeanne Vlasek Tompkins

In August, my traveling companion, Elsie and I returned from the Czech Republic. Neither of us speak Czech and we got along just fine. We used lots of sign language and smiles. We also discovered numbers are universal. Public transportation was our choice while in Prague. All the employees at the Hilton Atrium desk spoke English. They gave us good directions to our destinations.

We chose the Čedok tour of the Czech Republic because it was the only tour that encompassed most of the major towns. Our bus circled the Czech Republic, 727 miles in 7 days. One suggestion if you book a tour, request an ALL ENGLISH TOUR. It was a long wait while English and Spanish were translated from Czech.

There is minimal handicapped accessibility throughout the Czech Republic. We saw only a few marked spaces. In America we are fortunate to have the American Disability Act.

Before we left, I made up packets of free brochures about Czech Village and the museum to give to those we met on our trip. The people who spoke English were surprised to hear of so much Czech heritage in Cedar Rapids, though they were aware of our museum and the dedication October 1995 when the three presidents visited. I told many people about our Czech Heritage Fd'n., the Homestay Program, Czech Language classes for children/adults, and all the festivities in Czech Village. Our tour guide from Prague was amazed at all the Czech Village businesses.

Included in our tour group were two families who escaped communism. One family settled in Britain. The other family settled in New York state. One of the daughters was only 8 - years old back then, and this was her first visit to Brno where she was born.

One highlight of my trip was getting together with Milan Novak. I first met Milan in 1994 when he was a foreign exchange student in North English, Iowa. He stayed with my friends. We've corresponded the past two years. He speaks English because he chose it as his second language in the 4th grade. I wrote to Milan to tell him of my tour. He wrote back and graciously offered to pick us up and take us to see his home in Mikulov to meet his family. He is so proud of his country and of his town, he wanted to show it to us. His mother Dena, prepared a delicious meal, served with conversation 'till nearly midnight. Milan translated as his family spoke only Czech and German. As we left, his mother told Milan to tell us "Please stay with us, if you return to the Czech Republic."

I am still in the glow of my days in Prague and the bus tour of the Czech Republic. It was a good trip. I wish everyone could experience it as I did.

THE CZECHS ARE WALKING AGAIN

Czechs are known for their love of hiking in the open country away from the noise and fast pace of the larger cities. The national Hiking Club was organized in 1888.

Decades of Communist domination left the hiking trails in poor condition to the point they really did not exist. It was considered a decadent waste of time which could be better spent working for the Party. After the independence of Czechoslovakia, one of the first projects was the renewal of these trails.

Probably the best known of these outdoor pleasures is the Czech Greenways (Zelené Stezky). The network of trails is a joint venture of the Czech Republic and Austria. Starting in Prague, it winds its way for approximately 250 miles, ending in Vienna. It starts south of Prague and goes through southern Bohemia almost to the Austrian border. It turns east, going through Moravia and close to the Slovakian border where it again turns south and on to Vienna.

The interesting part is the trail can be completely traversed by foot, but some sections of the trail can be traveled on horseback, bicycle and even by canoe. Experienced hikers can make the 250 mile trip in 8 days, but for most it takes longer. The people of the small villages along the way are quickly learning the benefits of capitalism in offering lodging, food, drink and souvenirs. After hours of walking through the beer brewing Bohemian section, it seems very appropriate to stop for a "pivo" or two in one of the villages. In the Moravian wine country a frequent stop for refreshments is just as inviting.

It is estimated several hundred hikers used all or parts of the trail in 1995. As it becomes known the trail is open for use, many times that number are anticipated this year.

THE NEW OCTAVIA

The Czech car maker Skoda Auto introduced its new Octavia model. About 5,000 of the cars will be made this year. Production will increase to 70,000-90,000 cars in 1997. The Octavia will have a base sticker price of 340,000 CZK or \$12,600 in U.S. dollars.

OUR VISIT TO CEDAR RAPIDS



Left to right: Petr Hlebowitsh, Radmila Dostalová, Vera Dvořaková, Kristina Václavíková, Marie Homerová, Slavek Dvořák and Gregory Hamot.

(Editor's note—A group of 5 scholars from Charles Univ. in Prague came to Iowa City to develop a civics education course. The course was funded by a grant. The director of the project said leaders in an emerging democracy are being forced to rethink education. After 40 years of communist ideology, people are learning to live in a different society)

When we, a group of five Social Studies teachers from Prague, were chosen to study at the University of Iowa, we knew we would come to a region where the Czechs have been emigrating since the mid 19th century. We had also known about the Czech & Slovak Museum, opened by the three presidents last year, among them our widely loved and respected Mr. Vaclav Havel. We were extremely delighted that we would have the opportunity to visit the region and have the chance to gain more information and knowledge on the Czech American community.

Our wish to visit the community came true on August 17, the day when our guests and friends, university teachers Dr. Hlebowitsh and Dr. Hamot, took us to Cedar Rapids. Here, our devoted guide Mrs. Sylvia Rohlena guided us through Wilson School. We could see and try the computer educational programs on the origins, traditions, culture and heritage of the Czech community living in Iowa. The programs were elaborated by the students of the school. We as teachers acknowledge the amount of work and enthusiasm the teachers and students of the school put into their programs.

After the first hour of our stay, we visit the Czech & Slovak Museum where we were guided by Mr. Opatrny, who spoke Czech fluently. We appreciated his great love and knowledge of history. We were moved to see the old settlers house from the 19th century equipped by the things either brought with them or produced by themselves in order to keep the memories of home.

Mr. Kuba, an American Czech, who spoke Czech surprisingly well in spite of his birth in America, guided us through St. Wenceslaus

Church, the center of the religious life of the community. We admired the decoration, architecture and the interior of the church. Having visited the church we walked across the bridge to Czech Village and we were again moved to see historic symbols of the Czech state — the statues of lions on the bridge and to see the name of T. G. Masaryk in the park. The Czech and Slovak younger generations were not taught about the life and significance of this democratic philosopher and president in the previous regime.

Mr. Sykora's bakery and his kolaches reminded us again of our old traditions we often forget in the rush of daily life. All of us were surprised to see so many Czech names on store signs, but greater surprise indeed awaited us in the afternoon when we met the Czech American community in a typical Czech pub with traditional Czech meals.

The Czech Americans living in Cedar Rapids came in great numbers to see us. We were astonished to hear the people speak Czech as these people were mostly born in America. They had devoted a lot of their efforts and time to learn Czech, a very complicated language of a relatively small nation. Even if the people did not speak Czech they remember their origins, traditions and the history of their ancestors. These people did not have reason to learn the language and remember the old country because their ancestors came to America for freedom. They came from the country where they had been politically persecuted or had suffered poverty. One of my colleagues said she was near tears realizing the amount of love of the people of the Czech community for their old home. The rest of us assured her we share the same feelings.

The Czechs living in the Czech Republic do not frequently consider the significance of patriotism. We are mostly overwhelmed by every day life problems, but perhaps some thing has been left inside us. The younger generations had not been taught the spirit of patriotic values before 1989. Nevertheless, when the Velvet Revolution began all generations remembered and sang traditional songs, including the old medieval hymn St. Wenceslaus.

It is remarkable that the Czech communities in the Ukraine or Romania, who came to these territories in the 19th century, have also kept their national heritage. We did not know much of them. Therefore, discovering their existence and style of living is so surprising.

We would like to express our great gratitude and thanks to all the people we met in Cedar Rapids. We can assure them that we will never forget the deep impression we gained at the meeting. As we are teachers, we will teach the young people the examples of their true love for their old home country.

Many, many thanks to Czech Heritage in Cedar Rapids.

Marie Homerová

NATIVITY DISPLAY AT TŘEBECHOVICE

Around 1860 Joseph Probst, a farmer and cabinet-maker, who lived in Třeběchovice in Eastern Bohemia, decided to carve a nativity that would be so big and beautiful that people far and wide would come to see it. He chose a wood he was familiar with. He persuaded Josef Kapucian, a deaf wood carver to work with him in carving the nativity. The two men completed their project after forty years of labor and love. Probst then conceived the idea of setting the figures in motion. Joseph Friml joined the carvers and devised a system of cogwheels to improve the movement of the figures.

Probst was so devoted he spent more time with the project to the point of neglect to his family. He was a popular artist who wanted to glorify the world around him as well as religious objects. That is why Třeběchovice Nativity displays biblical figures as well as illustrates life in a small Czech town at the end of the last century.

Among the figures are Czech farm women with goats, a shoemaker's shop, a bakery, a weaver, and the Třeběchovice Chapel. Probst wanted to pay tribute to man and his work.

The Nativity is about 23 feet long, 10 feet wide and 6-1/2 feet high. The figures are 4 to 6 inches tall. There are 51 movable figures which are almost true to life. One hundred and twenty figures are attached to moving belts. There are over 1,500 objects such as trees, bushes, houses and a mill to mention a few. The entire carving weighs 1,365 pounds, but the Nativity portion weighs about 550 pounds. The metal base and wheels weigh 820 pounds.

When Josef Probst died, in 1926, the headmaster of the local school, purchased the Nativity. He purchased it with money he had borrowed to prevent it from being sold to a troop of traveling artists. He carefully cared for it, and finally, when WW I broke out, he hid it from the Nazis, hiding it in an abandoned mine beneath Mt. Oreb.

The Nativity was part of the Exhibit "World of Children" at the Czech pavilion at the 1967 World's Fair in Montreal, Canada.

The Nativity is now in the care of the Municipal National Committee and can be seen by visitors to the town. It is a coincidence that the three Josef's combined their talents to pay tribute to the Holy Season.

INFANT OF PRAGUE

The Infant of Prague is celebrated around-the world. Although it was of Spanish origin, the devotion to the Infant originated in Prague. The Holy Child was brought from Spain in the 16th century. The Infant of Prague is located in Our

Lady of Victory Church in Prague, capital of Czechoslovakia. The church was founded in 1611. After the Battle of White Mountain, the church was transformed into the Baroque style Catholic Church. In 1624, the Emperor gave the church to the Discalced Carmelite Fathers but the church was devastated in the 30 years War. Fr. Cyril helped rebuild the church but in 1784 the Carmelites were forced to leave again.

The statue has been preserved since 1628. The Infant of Prague is carved of wood and covered with wax. It is approximately 18 inches tall. The left hand holds a globe topped with a cross and the right hand is extended in a blessing. The garments for the Infant are changed seasonally and with the church calendar. The original garment has been preserved. Nuns from a church from Mala Strana change the garments. Some of the older inner garments were made of silk, velvet or damask and adorned with Czech garnets, pearls and embroidered with gold and silver thread. The outer garment is a cape.

Today the devotion to the Holy Child of Prague has spread far beyond the borders of Czechoslovakia and has become a favored devotion of all nations. On entering any Catholic church, monastery, convent and even private residences, one may be expected to be greeted by the smile of the Holy child.

The devotion was brought to America in the latter half of the century by Czech immigrants as the precious treasure of their national heritage. Through the efforts of various religious groups, devotion to the Infant is now prevalent around the world. America especially rejoices in honoring the Childhood of Jesus "Pražské Jezulátko," which reflects the beauty of childlike innocence and purity of the soul.

Not only is the statue of the Infant of Prague found around the world, but in most of the 50 states in the United States. According to some records there were several statues in Iowa including one in a local convent.

CHRISTMAS MORAVIAN LOVEFEST

Last year on Christmas Eve, the United Methodist Church in Detroit, Michigan, featured a national TV telecast.

The service was built around a Moravian lovefest which included choral and instrumental music, scripture readings, candle lightings, and sharing Moravian buns in a service of blessing.

The custom dates back to the 14th century. The lovefest first was conducted in North America in 1736 when John Wesley was introduced to it. Wesley, founder of Methodism in England, adapted and incorporated the service into the worship life of Methodists.

HRUŠKA GRAND HALL DEDICATION

On Saturday, October 26th, the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library was the center of polka music by the Czech Plus Band, gathering of politicians, and photo sessions for the dedication of Roman Hruška Grand Hall.

Unfortunately, the 92 year old retired Senator from Nebraska was unable to attend due to an injury in a fall. Hruška's son Quentin filled in for his missing father at the unveiling of the plaque.

Attending the dedication were Iowa's Senator Charles Grassley and Congressman Jim Leach. Evan Hughes, Cedar Rapids Parks Commissioner, spoke on behalf of the city council.

Former Senator Hruška's father was born in Tabor, Bohemia and immigrated to Spillville, Iowa.

Presidents Clinton and Havel sent letters for the Saturday's ceremony praising Hruska, who served with dedication to his government and to his heritage. Hruška was a big contributor and supporter of the museum.

The dedication ended with the serving of kolaches, houska, coffee and wassail.

ASTRONAUT CERNAN GUEST SPEAKER



Former Senator Roman Hruška and former Astronaut Eugene Cernan.

Retired and former Astronaut Eugene Cernan was the keynote speaker at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library on Saturday, October 26th at a dinner meeting. The special occasion was the dedication of the Roman Hruška Hall. Roman Hruška is a former Senator from Omaha, Nebraska.

Eugene Cernan's paternal grandparents, Steven and Anna Cernan were born in Vysoká, nad Kysucou in Slovakia and emigrated in the early 1900's.

His maternal grandparents, Frank and Anna (Petroka) Cihlar were born near Tabor in Bohemia and immigrated at the turn of the century to the Chicago area.

Captain Cernan's father Andrew was born in 1904 and his mother Roslyn was born in 1903.

He graduated from Purdue U. in 1956. He

earned a Master's of Science degree in Aeronautical Engineering in 1963 from the U.S. Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, California.

For thirteen years Captain Cernan was involved in the NASA Space Program. He flew three separate space missions. He was the second American to walk in space as the pilot on Gemini IX, one of the crew of three to venture to the moon on Apollo X. Captain Cernan holds the distinction of being the last man to leave his foot prints on the surface of the moon.

In his address he told about leaving the earth and circling the globe every nine minutes and leaving the earth's gravity, and in so doing the earth began to shrink. First you could see a whole continent, later, half the world. When they reached the moon's gravity, the world was like a ball wrapped in a dark shroud.

The heavens are beautiful. It is mindboggling that science has allowed man to leave earth and have the scientific guidance to land on a designated spot on the moon a quarter million miles away. The crew landed in a valley he likened to the Grand Canyon. They spent 75 hours on the moon.

President Kennedy's goal was for man to reach the moon, not because it was easy but because it was hard. It was the greatest human endeavor. It seems like a reach beyond our grasp. It was only a cracked door to more future exploration and he predicted man will return to the moon and even Mars. It is not the size of the step, but in the right direction. During the moon exploration the earth was equally explored.

Neil Armstrong was the first man on the moon but Cernan feels he will not be the last. It will be 25 years since man landed on the moon, but we are a nation of challenge, spirit and pride. We do not live in the past. A man on the moon is only a stepping stone to the future.

From his experience in space, Cernan feels there must be a Creator of the Universe and a Miracle of Creation.

For the young people in the listening crowd of 200, he advised youth to "Do your best—the best rise to the top. Make a dream and make that dream come true."

PRESIDENT HAVEL MISSES WRITING

Czech President Vaclav Havel, age 60, enjoys his role as a leader of a country he helped free from communism, but he misses the time for writing. He only has time to write his official speeches. He would like to write again. Before becoming president, Havel won fame as a playwright.

The presidential elections will be held in 1998. Havel enjoys a very popular rating since he took office, never dropping below 66%.

During a recent interview in his office in Prague Castle, his wish was that "People could co-exist in peace without quarrels or tension."

DOES ANYONE KNOW?

The readers response was great on the Matyk building so I will pose another building. This building is also on 3rd St. S.E. almost across, but somewhat north of the Matyk Building in the same block. Almost at the top and above the brick arches is the name SUCHY in the white square.

The photo shows the building as it looks today. It is a tavern open for business. If any of you readers know anything about the builders, owners or history, let us know.



CZECHS & SLOVAKS IN OLYMPICS

Prior to the Centennial Olympics in Atlanta, Czech & Slovak Olympic competitors received a total of 149 medals since 1924 — 49 were gold, 50 silver and 50 were bronze. The first gold medal was won by Bedřich Supcik in 1924 in climbing (rope or pole).

The most celebrated Czech Olympian was Vera Caslavská (gymnast) who gained 7 gold and 4 silver from the Olympics in Tokyo and Mexico City. She is the 9th most decorated Olympian in the world.

Emil Zatopek was awarded 4 gold medals in Helsinki in 1952 for the 5 km, and 10 km marathons. The Czechs stand in 13th place for medals awarded.

In Atlanta, Czech athletes gained 4 gold, three silver and 4 bronze this summer and achieved one of the best results in Czech Olympic history. If one were to compare the number of medals won, with the size of population, the Czech Republic would be among the top ten countries. Gold medalists

were Jan Železný in javelin, Martin Doktor in canoe, and Štepanka Hilgertová in women's canoe slalom.

Silver medalists were: Helena Suková and Jana Novotná in tennis, Lukaš Pollert in men canoe single slalom, and Miroslav Šimek and Jiří Rohan in men's canoe double.

Bronze medalists were: Jana Novotná in tennis, Sarka Kaspariková in triple jump, Tomas Dvorak in decathlon and Miroslav Janus in shooting 10 meter running target.

CZECH TOWNS IN THE UNITED STATES

Korber, Calif.; Masaryktown, Fla.; Protivin, Iowa; Olmitz, Kan.; Kolin, La.; Beroun, Minn.; New Prague, Minn.; Karlin, Mich; Prague, Neb.; Prague, Okla.; Frydek, Tex.; Carlsbad, N. Mex.; Pisek, N. Dak.; New Hradec, N. Dak.; Tabor, S. Dak.; Prague, Okla.; Malin, Ore.; Lipan, Tex.; Carlsbad, Tex.; Kolin, Mont.; Hostyn, Nechanitz, Pisek, Řek Hill, and Roznov, all in Fayette Co. in Texas.

Are there some Czech towns in the U.S. we do not know about? Tell us.

LOCAL CZECH BANKERS OF THE PAST

This is a list of Czech names in the Cedar Rapids area from the past that were associated in the banking field. Most of the names of the banks also changed with the times and some no longer exist.

PEOPLES BANK (now Norwest)- John Buriánek, Frank Mekota, Charles Smrček, Lester Frezek, Bob Prochaska, Henry Vyskocil Charles Krejci, Ervin Stepanek, Carl Volesky, and William Klima

MERCHANTS NATIONAL BANK (now Firststar) — Stan Mohrbacker, William Vomacka, Leonard Broulik, Louis Visha and Clyde Peremsky.

UNITED STATE BANK (now Mercantile) — Louis Pochobradsky, George Chmelicek, Charles Kriz, Frank Kanak and Leo Sedlacek,

CEDAR RAPIDS NATIONAL — Homer Pitner.

CEDAR RAPIDS SAVINGS — Joseph Sadowsky and Milo Blahnik

SECURITY SAVINGS — Frank Filip

AMERICAN TRUST — W. F. Severa, Otto Sikora, Louis Wokoun and William Kacena.

IOWA STATE (now First Trust) — V. O. Hasek, J. J. Cervený, J.W. Lesinger, Frank Dvorak, Frank Stastny, August Dohnalek and Lumir Stritesky.

CENTRAL STATE — Joe Ulch, G. P. Buresh, Ed Zbanek and Frank Kanak.



Left to right: Monika, Holly's "sister"; Holly Upah; Peter, James' "brother"; Maria, Jennifer's "sister"; Brad Dvorak; Jennifer Novak; and James Horak. Cathy Schroeder was not available for the picture.

MY HOMESTAY EXPERIENCE

by Jennifer Novak

This past summer I had the opportunity to participate in the Homestay Program. At first the idea of a four week trip to a far away country was scary. However, now that the trip is over I am only filled with memories.

For most of the trip I stayed with Maria, my host sister, grandparents in Dolany, a small farming village about an hour and a half outside of Prague. It was like a trip in time. However, Maria's grandparents did everything they could and more to make me feel comfortable and at home. The grandparents were retired farmers, but that didn't stop them from working in their two gardens and one large orchard. The house I stayed in was very old and the barn was attached. It was a new experience to have a horse, goat and chickens live in the same house as me, but experiencing a new culture was what I wanted to do. Dolany was located 12 km outside of Jicin, and Jicin was in the heart of Czech Paradise. One day we took a long hike through one of the parks in Czech Paradise. It was the most beautiful place I have ever been to. Everyone there seems to appreciate nature more, and the park is preserved.

I never stayed in one place for too long. During the second week of my trip, Maria and I stayed with her parents in Prague. Maria's father had a law degree and worked in the Prague Police Department. Maria's mother was an art teacher. They lived in a moderate size apartment with all the modern conveniences on the edge of town. Like Maria's grandmother, Maria's mother did her best to feed me 24 hours a day. While in Prague I went sightseeing, shopped and even went to a classical concert in an old church. Prague has to be the most beautiful city in the world, and everyone seemed so friendly. I was able to see in person what I had only seen in pictures before. I could never tire of looking at the beautiful architecture of Prague.

For most of the third week of the trip, Maria and I along with two American boys and their host brothers stayed in a mountain cottage. Later we were joined by Cathy, another American, and her host sister. While we were there I tried to climb the tallest mountain in the Czech Republic, but didn't make it too far.

During the last week of the trip I took several day trips to the many castles that are near Jicin, including Kost Castle and Humprecht Castle.

Before I knew it my time in the Czech Republic was over. I had made so many friends that I had a hard time saying goodbye. I had such a wonderful time that I had trouble finding the words to describe how I felt being able to experience my heritage first hand. When Maria and her father took me to visit the village my ancestors came from, I felt at home. I encourage everyone to visit the Czech Republic, and I thank the Czech Heritage Foundation for giving this incredible opportunity. I hope one day to return and visit my second family in Prague and Dolany.

MY HOMESTAY

By Cathy Schroeder

I think I had one of the most different experiences while staying in the Czech Republic this summer. My host sister, Denisa and I had our own apartment in downtown Prague. My mother worked as a secretary to the Japanese Ambassador, and lived in the Japanese Embassy with my brother. My father lived and worked in a town Prostejov, which is in Moravia. He owns a hotel and a club there. Instead of experiencing what a Czech family unit is like, I experienced what a Czech teenagers life is like. I didn't do many family oriented things, it was mostly Denisa and I. When I did spend time with the family, it was when we took day trips to other cities and sites. Some of the places I visited were Karlovy Vary, Karlstejn, family cottages, caves in Moravia, the Slovak Republic, and the mountains in the Czech Republic.

The highlights of my trip were: going to Karlovy Vary—where my great grandma went to the spa 30 years ago, spending time on the St. Charles Bridge, attending Mass at St. Vitus, and spending a few days in the mountains of Bohemia-Moravia with the other Americans.

I really enjoyed learning as much as I could about my heritage and culture. Even though I didn't have an ideal family stay. I don't think I would change anything because I had lot of fun and learned a lot. Thank you for the opportunity I had to experience the Czech Republic this summer.

MY HOMESTAY VISIT TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

By James Horak

This summer I was given the opportunity to visit the Czech Republic and stay with a family for a month. It proved to be an incredible experience for my hosts and I. The trip there was an event in itself.

My alarm went off much earlier than usual on the 24th of June. I woke up and dragged myself out of bed. I did some last second packing, ate my breakfast, and met Holly Upah and Jen Novak at the Cedar Rapids Airport. We then flew to Chicago-O'Hare, where we met Brad Dvorak and Cathy Schroeder, who had driven up the night before. This is where the fun began. Apparently, the woman that checked Brad's tickets neglected to assign him a seat on the overseas flight. When we arrived at the Newark, New Jersey airport, he didn't have a seat. The people said he could wait behind and catch a flight the next day through Germany, but Holly wouldn't have any of that. She ranted and raved and carried on until they finally made someone ride in the cockpit to make room for us. Just goes to show, the squeaky wheel gets the grease'

We breathed a sigh of relief, but as we were taxiing down the runway to take off, a lady sitting behind me had a heart attack. They had to turn the plane around and drop her off for medical care. We were an hour late getting off the ground. Hopefully she survived.

Upon finally arriving in Prague, we met our families at the airport. I was relieved to find my "brother," Petr Balcar, spoke very good English and his Aunt Bohuna could speak it so fluently I thought she was English at first. We made a long trip to Valdice (it seemed short after 9-1/4 hours in the air, and over 20 hours total travel) the small village northeast of Prague where I was to stay for the next week with Petr and his mother in a small apartment. The apartment was a "panel House" which is an apartment building built by the Communists. After my first delicious supper, some good soup and fruit dumplings with cream, I went to bed.

In the next few days Petr showed me around the area. Valdice is a small village near Jičín a town about 60 miles northeast of Prague. We made several trips to Jičín, where we saw the historical sites, such as the local lord's mansions and the "Alley" which was a 3 km long avenue that stretched from the lord's door to the clock tower in Jičín. We climbed a large magma hill and saw the surrounding area. What a beautiful country. On the third day we made a trip with Petr's father to Brno in Moravia, where we saw the Casematy (a prison castle in the center of the city) and several beautiful Catholic churches, as well as the countryside during the drive.

Then, after a week, we made the trip by train to Prague, where we visited Petr's sister, Jana, and her fiancée Jiri. There we saw all the famous sites, including the Vyšerad, national museum, the Astronomical Clock, St. Vitus Cathedral, and the Jewish cemetery. After a week in Prague, we went to Miliceves, another small village not far from Jičín where Petr's Aunt Bohuna and father Jaromir lived. I stayed in the same house as Brad Novak and his host, and ate my meals with Petr and his aunt and father. What wonderful food they have over there! And they won't let you leave the table until you're stuffed.

Over the next three days we took little hiking and biking outings to the Bohemian Paradise (Česky Raj), where there are massive sand deposits left by a sea covering the land and Prachovské skaly, a nature reserve with beautiful sandstone cliffs, vertical walls, and deep narrow grottoes. Then we went up into the mountains to stay in a ski lodge where we met up with Brad, Jen, and Cathy and their hosts. Of course it was out of season, so we had the whole place practically to ourselves. Petr, Cathy and I succeeded in climbing the tallest mountain (5,126 ft.) in the country, Sněžka, in the pouring rain.

Upon returning to Miličevy there was a bonfire for Brad, Jen, and I, as well as our Czech families. We had a good time trying to learn campfire songs in Czech and eating smores (which was an entirely new and exciting thing for them). We also saw more of the Bohemian Paradise and the castles and other historical places around Jičín. I got the chance to travel to the village of Vamberk, which is where my Horak ancestors came from in 1854. Then, for the last four days before we left for home, we returned to Prague.

Some of the neatest things we did were climbing Sněžka, rowing on the Vltava River, attending Mass at St. Vitus Cathedral, going to discos, eating Petr's mother's kolache and Aunt Bo's good meals, as well as

taking in all the wonderful different culture that is Czech Republic.

I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to the Czech Heritage Foundation for allowing me this opportunity. I will never forget the people and places I came to know while in the Czech Republic. The sights, sound and customs of a foreign country always give one a broader perspective and this was no exception. It was truly a wonderful learning experience which I am extremely lucky to have taken part in.

MY HOMESTAY TRIP

By Brad Dvorak

First I'd like to thank Czech Heritage Foundation for making my trip to the Czech Republic possible. I had a wonderful time, and I'll remember it for the rest of my life.

Leaving Chicago I felt slightly nervous, but I kept thinking positive and about how good of a time I was going to have. I didn't want to think about anything bad which could happen such as not liking my family, not even having a family at the airport waiting, or just getting lost in Europe. We stopped in Newark to switch planes when I was told they didn't have a seat for me on the plane. Somehow we made it after the plane waited 30 minutes for us. Thank you, Holly, for getting me on the plane in Newark so I didn't have to spend a night alone in the big city. I got off the plane in Prague and met Ondřej Klos. I enjoyed being with him for the month. His English was rough at the beginning, but improved over the month we were together.

I enjoyed the sights of Prague for the first two weeks. I basically got to see many of the big things including Prague Castle, St. Vitus Cathedral, St. Nicholas Church, Old Town Square, Astronomical Clock and Charles Bridge. We lived with Ondřej's uncle, who had a nice flat in Prague. His English was limited but he enjoyed saying "Škoda good car"!

I then got to spend some time in a small village in the country where Ondřej's grandparents lived. Grandma was a good cook. We had great dumplings and tons of kolaches that I loved. James Horak and his host brother, Petr Ondřej, and I stayed in the same house. Jennifer was within biking distance of us, so we all got to spend quite a bit of time together. I never really knew Jennifer or James, so I got to know them quite well when spending time with them. We spent a few days in a mountain cottage and hiked in the mountains. It was very beautiful.

The last week of my trip was spent in Pisek with Ondřej's parents. My host dad is a doctor, and my host mom a teacher. We biked around southern Bohemia and enjoyed the fantastic scenery and numerous pubs. I really liked his family a lot, and wish I could have spent more time with them.

The last couple days were spent in Prague.

All five of us did things together as we prepared to say goodbye and head home. It was hard to say goodbye to all of the people I met I just hope I can go back some day and that Ondřej can come to Iowa sometime in the future.

Again, I'd like to thank everyone who made this excellent trip possible. It was great and I have life long memories.

THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF MY TRIP TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

By Holly Upah

Hi, my name is Holly Upah, and I was chosen as one of the 1996 Czech Ambassadors. My trip to the Czech Republic was one that I will never forget. It was full of lifetime experiences and memories with a host family with the name of Hercegová.

My "sister" turned seventeen years during my stay with them in the Czech Republic. Her name was Monika. My "father's" name was Josef. He was an engineer. My "mother's" name was Jane. She worked at the Czech Savings Bank. They took me anywhere that I ever even mentioned, even if just in a passing conversation. I became close to them the month I stayed with them, and hope to see them again someday. Unfortunately the weather while I was there did not cooperate with us. It rained a good portion of the time, but we always seemed to find some way to pass our time.

All right. Now that you know something about my host family, on to my trip.

My family and I left for the Cedar Rapids Municipal Airport on June 24 at 5:30 am. There we met James Horak and Jennifer Novak. We were to be put on a plane to Chicago. There we were meeting with Brad Dvorak and Cathy Schroeder. Our plane left the Chicago O'Hare airport at 12:30 p.m.. Finally we were making our way across the country and that much closer to the...CZECH REPUBLIC, (land of excitement and adventure—something we were all looking forward to). Our plane ended up circling the airport for about 45 minutes. When we finally landed, we had to run to make our next connection. When we got to the Czech Air check-in desk there was about 50 million people in front of us. By this time we were nervous wrecks, hoping that we didn't miss our connection overseas. By the time we were checked in, we were the last people to get on the plane, and it ended up that we had held the plane up for 10 minutes just so we could get on. Finally we thought. No more mishaps. We are ready to get on with this trip already. "Let's get this tin cigar up in the air," Brad had said, and broke the tension between the five of us. We got out on the runway, and were fifth in line to take off (we were all breathing freely for the first time since we landed in Newark), when all of the sudden the pilot came on over the intercom and told us we had to go back to the gate because some woman on our plane had gone into cardiac arrest. By this time I was thinking, "Maybe fate just doesn't want us to go to the Czech Republic." It was starting to feel like our whole trip was jinxed. Finally we taxied back out onto the runway and got up in the air. When we were finally in the air, I knew that our trip was going to be successful. The trip over went without a hitch from that point on. When we landed in the Czech Republic, we were all so excited, I couldn't believe I was actually in Europe. I couldn't look at enough, experience enough. Our "families" were waiting for us on the other side of customs.

After a short meeting with our trip coordinator, we were whisked off with our families. During the trip through Prague, I wanted to absorb it all, try it all, but fatigue started to set in. I fought to the bitter end to stay awake through the hour car ride to our flat, but sleep got the best of me. When we got to the flat I unpacked my stuff; then decided to sleep for a couple of hours. I had planned to get up in time to go to Monicka's piano lesson with her, but the couple of hours that I had planned to sleep actually turned into four to five hours. Monicka knocked on my door to see if I was ready and I jumped up, *very* disoriented, thinking that I was going to be late for school. When she came in and asked me if I was ready to go, I was still in a stage of sleepiness, and couldn't really focus on what she wanted me to do. In the end I stayed home from her piano lesson, while her mom and dad were at work, so I was alone for a couple of hours. Luckily I figured out how to turn on the T.V. so that I had some company, and was pleasantly surprised to find that they had the Cartoon Network and that the Flintstones were playing and they were speaking...English! I was too excited to watch the T.V. though and ended up wandering around the flat, and exploring to find

that our next door neighbor had a yard full of chickens and roosters that liked to crow every five minutes.

The next morning I was awakened by the roosters next door at 4:30 am. I was able to fall back asleep thankfully. When I woke up next, it was already 11:00 am. I was very excited to get out and see Prague. We ate breakfast very quickly and took the Metro to the Old Town's Square. There I got a chance to see the Astronomical Clock and actually go up behind the disciples. We then walked over to the Charles Bridge.

We also walked past the National Museum and Theater. That night Monika's Uncle Yula came over to our flat. We got to go eat at his weekend cottage and eat "Traditional Czech Sausage", and roasted bananas for dessert. Tomorrow we get to go to Monika's school to pick up her report card.

I am awakened by the chickens the next morning just in time to get ready for Monika's school. We took the Metro to the stop closest to the school, and walked the last three to four blocks to the school. Their teacher gave them a summary of how she thought the year had gone. She talked a little too fast for me to understand her, but Monika was very good at letting me know what was going on around me, and what people were saying. School ended at around 10:00, so Monika and I decided we were going to go home and eat lunch, then "go out on the town". We took a tour through the Prague Castle and St. Vitus Cathedral. Both were incredible. To think that all those buildings were made by hand. That night we went to the movie "Father of the Bride II". Monika brought her friend along with us.

We went through the Konopiste Castle the next day. It was Franz Ferdinand's hunting castle. In it he killed more than 300,000 animals. We had an English tour guide, and Monika and I were the only ones on it. It was then kind of our "private tour". After our tour, we drove to Kutna Hora. We got to see the Czech Museum there and St. Barbara's Cathedral. My great-grandfather was originally from Kutna Hora. It was very moving to finally get the chance to see the land of my great-grandfather...a land that I have heard so much about, and I was able to experience it first hand, not just through pictures or stories. There was so much to see, it was if I couldn't see enough, experience enough, absorb enough.

Upon our arrival back into Prague, Monika and I went to the Jewish Cemetery. That was one of the most influential places that I visited during my stay. At the cemetery, it was very quiet. No one spoke. It was a very solemn place to be, one that left your stomach churning, and your heart wanting to go out to the families of the deceased. We could have probably spent the whole day there just wandering around looking at the pictures that the children drew while in encampment. It literally brought people to tears to see that these children didn't have a chance to really "live" their lives. They lived in a world of suffering, loss, and pain. It got me to thinking about how much I sometimes take for granted in my own life...my freedom, love, family. These children never got the chance to know what these things were and my whole mind and body ached for the children who never got the chance to partake in these kinds of things. It made me very thankful and I realized all that I have going for me in my life.

After the Jewish Cemetery, Monika and I just walked around Prague. Neither of us had very much to say for a long time after that. We were walking towards the Prague Castle, and were walking through the castle gardens, when who do we meet...James, Jennifer, and Brad. I hadn't seen them since we had parted at the airport. We made plans to go to a fountain show later that night all together. We were to meet at the fountain. The fountain show, for all of you readers who don't know what it is, a HUGE fountain with lights, and choreograph the lights and fountain to music...Dancing Waters. The fountain "danced" to *Rhapsody in Blue* by Gershwin. It was a spectacular show. After the performance we decided to go to a discotech. That in itself was an interesting ordeal. We went to the discotech called Music Park. It was a lot of fun. There was a floor that had all different colored squares on the floor that lit up in beat to the music. That night we canoed, and played pool until late into the night. Needless, to say, my feet were sore the next day.

The following day was the Fourth of July. James, Brad, Jennifer, and I (Cathy was out of town), went with our "broth-

ers" and "sisters" to the National Gallery. The National Gallery was *full* of sculptures and paintings from the renaissance era. After that we all went back to our respectful houses for supper, but made plans to go to *another* discotech that night.

The next morning Monika and I got up early, because we were going to stay with my grandma's second cousin for a couple of days. The first place that my relatives took us was to a small little town with the name Bethlehem. It has the world's largest Nativity, plus 10-12 other Nativity scenes there. They were all hand-carved and very intricate. That night my relatives took us out to eat at a hotel named after President Havel. The following day we went to an outdoor museum. It was modeled after the old days in Czech. They had sheep shearing, power generated by running water over a wheel, and weavers who were making rugs on looms. It was very old fashion and *very* interesting. Then we got to go see some Crop Circles. Crop Circles are allegedly made by aliens. They are circles folded into the grass that couldn't possibly be made by humans. We went to the castle Nove Mesto. In this castle was a music room. I had the chance to play the piano there. I now can say that I have actually played the piano in a castle. That was one of many highlights of my trip.

Twenty-four hours later we left for a two hour long bus ride back to Prague. That day in Prague we didn't do much. It was raining, and we were tired from our day's travels. We decided to go to the National Museum the following day, but when we got there, we found out that the Museum was closed for a couple of days, due to some problems that they were having and the water had been turned off. We walked around Wenceslaus Square instead, and admired the sights and sounds of everyday Prague.

For the next couple of days, our hot water in our flat was turned off because the city was working on the hot water lines. We had to take freezing cold showers in the morning, and at night we went to "Uncle Yula's" flat to take hot showers. This lasted only for three days. One of the many days that we spent in Prague, we stopped at a tiny Tea Cafe. It sold *every* possible kind of tea there was. I ordered mint tea. It was very good.

We visited Karlstejn Castle with Mr. and Mrs. Bruzek (friends). I found out that in this castle, NO women were allowed in it. It was King Charles' hunting castle. After Karlstejn, we went to President Havel's summer home and gardens. We saw the grave of President Masaryk's (first President) family. We then went to the little town of Lidice. Lidice was a town during World War II, that the Nazis thought was harboring a spy. The Nazis destroyed the whole town. The women were separated from their children. The men were killed, and the children were shipped off to Germany to become German citizens. The atmosphere of this town was similar to the Jewish cemetery. It was a place that reflected the past so strongly, it was almost overwhelming. There were statues and memorials of the people that died. There was one statue that sticks in my mind so strongly. It was the memorial to all the children that either died, or were lost. They were made to be life size, so that ages could be seen. They were made to look like *every single one* of those children. The haunted eyes, the small, undernourished bodies, the plain fear so visible, even in just a statue, brought tears to my eyes. I felt for these children. I wished that they could have had a chance to live, and to know something other than pain and sorrow. They had seen more destruction and cruelty, than most people will know in a lifetime.

We went to see my Grandmother's other relatives who lived in Ceske Budejovice. His name was Mr. Tomrle. He took Monika and me to see the countryside and other relatives of his. We met a lot of people that day. We went through Hluboka Castle that day too. It was incredibly gorgeous. The following days we spent in Tabor, where Monika, Josef, and Jane had their weekend cottage. We saw the catacombs under Tabor. They kept the criminals under there for years at a time. Outside in the town square we witnessed a mock battle. It was very interesting to see the medieval weapons, and how they were used. We walked up into the church tower. At the top, you could see the countryside. It was breathtakingly beautiful.

By this time I only had one week left. We were trying to cram as much in as possible. Monika took me to the top of the T.V. tower. It overlooked all of Prague. The Vltava river looked especially beautiful as the river resected the afternoon sun. We

decided to take a peddle boat out on the river. On the river we went past the National Museum, and could see the Prague Castle under the bridges. It was something that wouldn't do it justice to explain it in words. It is something that one has to experience to fully appreciate the beauty.

During my stay in Prague, there was an exhibit of the past and present President's cars. I had the chance to see the cars of Masaryk, through World War II, when Nazis occupied the Czech Republic, to present day President Havel. After we saw the President's cars, we went to the Church of The Infant of Prague. Inside, the church held the original Infant of Prague, and the story that goes along with it. We then visited Vysehrad. We saw the church of Peter and Paul. In the cemetery behind the church was the graves of all the famous people of Czech. Anton Dvorak and Bedrich Smetana, two world famous Czech composers are buried there. The first famous women author, Bozena Nemcova, is also buried there.

The following day we got into the National Museum. Inside it was *beautiful*. I stood in the doorway for a couple of seconds before I entered. It took my breath away. I have never, in my whole life, had a chance to see something that beautiful. We walked around all the exhibits, and I probably made the comment to Monika 100 times, "This is so incredible."

The day of Monika's birthday was the Friday before we left to come back to the States. As it turned out, Monika and Cathy had the same birthday. That night we had a birthday party for the two of them at Cathy and Denisa's (Cathy's "sister") apartment. We all had fun that night, and the comment "I can't believe it has almost been a month already" was made a minimum of 10 times. That night I had the opportunity to try poppyseed ice cream. I found that even though I like poppyseed kolaches, I do not care for poppyseed ice cream.

The day after Monika and Cathy's party, James, Jennifer, their "brother" and "sister" (Petr and Maria), and Monika and I all took row boats out onto the Vltava River. We walked around downtown Prague and over the Charles Bridge. The following morning I went to church at St. Vitus Cathedral with Cathy, Denisa, James, and Petr. It was definitely an interesting experience because the Mass was in Czech. Josef, Jane, Monika and I then went to the church where St. Wenceslaus was murdered. That night Monika and I went to the Czech Musical Dracula. It was incredible how much one can understand through the music and acting, even though you can't understand a word. After the musical, my family took me out into Prague at night. It is so much different in the night. Everything is so lit up and beautiful. It is almost like a different city.

My last night in Prague. My family and I went out to eat at a restaurant that overlooked Prague in all its glory. As the sun was setting, I realized that my trip was coming to a close. It made me sad to think that I might not ever get a chance to see my new friends that I had made, and my "family" that I was leaving behind. The morning would come too fast I knew.

Before I knew it, I was back out at the airport in Prague again. It seemed just like yesterday that the five of us had stepped through those customs doors, nervous and excited, not knowing what the Czech Republic held for us. It had gone by so fast. When it was time to say good-bye, of course Jennifer and I started to cry. That made the boys make fun of us. We became so attached to these families, that it was *very* hard to say good-bye to them.

Sooner than we had anticipated, we were landing in the Newark airport. One leg of our journey was already over. As soon as we stepped off the plane in Newark we headed for Sharro's Pizza Place, and ate like there was no tomorrow. We got on our plane with no problems this time, and were stepping off the plane in Chicago, and into the arms of our parents. Our month in the Czech Republic was now officially over.

I could write a book about the beauty of Prague and the surrounding areas, but it is something that has to be experienced first to get the full impact. I am certain of one thing though: if someone offered me a ticket to the Czech Republic, and I had to leave tomorrow, I would definitely go back again. I am very grateful to the Czech Heritage for making this trip possible for me.

CROWNING OF CZECH PRINCE AND PRINCESS



Left to right: Lisa Volesky, Quentin Lewis, Debra Rigel

Crowning of the new 1996-1997 Czech Prince and Princess took place on Friday, October 25 at a noon luncheon at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library during the opening event in conjunction with the dedication of the Roman L. Hruska Grand Hall.

Lisa Volesky, past reining princess and student from Prairie High School, crowned Quentin Lewis and Debra Rigel.

Quentin Lewis, 15, is the son of Kenny and Pam Lewis and a student at Washington High School in Cedar Rapids,

Debra Rigel, 15, is the daughter of Ernest and Carol Rigel, rural Cedar Rapids and attends Prairie High School.

This year all the candidates had a lot of close Czech ties and background. They all attended and graduated from summer Czech School held in Wilson School.

The new prince and princess will preside over various events in the Czech community and statewide for the coming year.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

If it were not for the generous donations received with renewals and gifts, we would not be able to continue to send our newsletter for the same cost since we first began. Donations from new members in July were from: Donald & Shirley Frus, Violet L. Kycek, and Mr. & Mrs. David Marner Sr. Donations enclosed with renewals were from: George, Joanne, Dan & Tamara Chadima, Bernard Drahozal, Dorothy Hladik, Joe & Mildred Peshek, Irene Popham, Ed & Erma Schuch, Hertha Scott, Robert Shelden, Mrs. Robert (Geraldine) Zach. Donations only from: Lillian Janousek, Ellen Neal, and Ramona Caslavka Schmidt.

Donations for August with renewals were from: Susan Beers, Frank Kysilko.

A new member who sent a donation was Liba Watson. Donation only Rose Pohlana.

In September, donations almost matched the dues. Donations with new memberships were

received from: Libbie Andrews, Sharon Hathaway, Joseph Lodl, Patricia Moloney, George & Marilyn Roushar, & Agnes Tichy, Donations with renewals were from: Bessie Dugena, and Jerry Ptacek, A donation was received from JoFran & James Falcon.

CONGRATULATIONS CCCC IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

(The following excerpts are from the new Czech Cultural and Community Center newsletter in Houston, Texas.)

The idea for a Czech center has been around for many years, but it was born to us as a result of attending a meeting in Hillje, Texas, Feb. 1995. It was an embarrassment that we of Czech Heritage in Texas, numbering over one million, had not yet put together a cultural center for a Czech presence that this city and state deserves. If the French, Italians, Germans, Jewish, Spanish and Asians, and other ethnic groups have done it, surely we can do no less.

After months of research and analysis, a committee was developed. In March 1996, a concept materialized and a Board of Directors formulated. On March 8, 1996 the Czech Culture and Community Center was incorporated in the State of Texas, to be located in Houston,

The first fund raiser was held Aug. 18, at the Ramada Plaza Hotel with a lovely dinner and entertainment.

Anyone wanting to become a Charter Member can do so through Dec. 1997. Write to: Vickie Castleberry.

(Editor's note-The Czech Heritage Fd.n. in Cedar Rapids sends its congratulations to the Czech's of Texas on their progress. We received a letter from Effie Rosene in April 1995 asking us to share our experience in developing our Nat'l Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. Mr. David Faltis, our president, responded, so we too share in your pride on your forthcoming Czech Cultural & Community Center.)

SV. MIKULAS WEEKEND

The annual Czech Village's Sv. Mikuláš weekend will be celebrated on Saturday December 7. As part of the celebration, the summer Czech School children will again present the play "Až Přejde Svatý Mikuláš" (When St. Nicholas Comes). The play was written by Olga Drahozal and was part of the last day school program in the Wilson School auditorium. The cast was made up of the older Czech school students.

Other events planned for the pre-Christmas festivity are:

10:00 a.m., Puppet show

11:00 a.m.. Czech Plus Quintette

12:00-1:00 p.m. Sv. Mikuláš, Devil & Angel greet children in Czech Village

1:00 p.m. Czech School play

2:00 p.m. Czech Heritage Singers

Plan to bring the family and share in the Czech traditions, customs and festivity.

Membership Application

Please check the proper item: Renewal ___ New ___ Gift ___

Name(s) Ms., Mr., Mrs. _____

Address _____ Zip + 4 _____

Make check payable and mail to :
Czech Heritage Foundation., P.O. Box 761, Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

Membership dues \$ _____ Donation \$ _____ Gift Membership \$ _____

Why not consider a gift membership for someone special? Your dues and generous donations help to fund several worthwhile endeavors such as Czech Prince and Princess sponsorship, financial support for the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, adult Czech language classes, the Homestay Program, along with publishing the quarterly Naše České Dědictví, and other numerous publications. The list of Czech Heritage projects goes on and on.

We appreciate your continued support. With your help we can carry on with projects, activities, and goals to preserve our heritage and culture. **THANK YOU! Na shledanou!**

Please renew today! A Bargain at \$3.00 per year

BEGINNERS CZECH CONVERSATION CLASSES

Spring Term — 10 Weeks
Mondays: 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
February 3rd through April 7th, 1997

ADVANCED CZECH CONVERSATION CLASSES

Spring Term — 10 Weeks
Wednesdays: 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
February 5th through April 9th 1997

Fee for each course is \$15.00 payable to Czech Heritage Foundation. Books are available at first lesson. Classes are taught at in Cedar Rapids, Iowa by Olga Drahozal.

CAN YOU HELP???

The Czech Plus Band from Cedar Rapids , Iowa desperately needs a copy (piano sheet music) of the words and music for KRASNE CHVILE, ZLATÁ PRAHA and NAŠE ZEM ČESKÁ which is also known as "Going Back to my Homeland." Contact Olga Drahozal,



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- December 7Sv. Mikuláš Day
- December 10Czech Heritage Fd'n.
Meeting at Museum
Bring treats.
- January 20, 1997 ..Annual Meeting
- February 3, 1997 ..Czech Class (Beginners)
- February 5, 1997 ..Czech Class (Advanced)
- March 16Czech Heritage Fd'n. Dance
- March 19St. Joseph's Day
- March 22St. Joseph's Day Parade
- May 17, 18.....Houby Days
Czech Village
- May 24, 25.....Ethnic Fest
New location —
Hawkeye Downs





WHAT ARE VOLUNTEERS LIKE?

Volunteers are like FORD —
They have better Ideas.

Volunteers are like COKE —
They're the REAL THING.

Volunteers are like PAN AM —
They make the going great.

Volunteers are like PEPSI —
They've got a lot to give.

Volunteers are like STANDARD OIL —
You expect more, and you get it.

Volunteers are like VO-5 HAIR SPRAY —
Their goodness holds in all kinds of weather.

Volunteers are like HALLMARK CARDS —
They care enough to give the very best.

BUT MOST OF ALL —

Volunteers are like FROSTED FLAKES —
They're GRRRRREAT!!!!