

THE GUILDED PAGE

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Ahoj,

Here we are in the summer season, again, with its family gatherings, weddings, vacations and class reunions that evoke thoughts of bygone days and also help to create more special memories.

Though our country finds itself embroiled in a much disputed war and struggling to find the definition of democracy not only among ourselves but seemingly, through out the world, there was recently brought to our attention one wonderful example of generosity made by several persons to alleviate the poor health of many. Not many of us will rise to the situation of Warren Buffet and Melinda and Bill Gates but at the same time we can be inspired to do what we can "in our small corner".

I have been involved with museum activities for only ten years. It did not take long for me to realize the importance of what goes on here, with our celebration of Czech and Slovak heritage. This impacts not only many of our visitors, including students, but also our city and community. We have reached out to other parts of our country and our world. We assist our competent staff leaders in their efforts, as they have repeatedly told us, in many ways.

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THE GUILDED PAGE STAFF:
Marilyn Shima Tucker, Fern Fackler, Betty Truesdell and Bob Tucker



SUMMER 2006

After visiting our exhibits, people shop in our store and research in our library. Not only do we assist our museum with our two main fundraisers, Cookie Walk and Taste of Czech, but we help with museum activities such as the recent Dance Festival and Brew Nost in the fall. Special gatherings such as the June Tea Parties and demonstrations that relate to specific new exhibits add to our offerings

We have communicated with persons throughout the entire country for recipes and family histories to compile our newest Guild Cookbook.

People know this museum exists, in part, BECAUSE OF US. Thank you one and all.

Here's wishing you enjoyment during the rest of the summer and fall. Activities will include the Guild Tour of Kalona, which is the Amish Mennonite Community, Saturday October 21st, sponsored by our Lavanda Woosley.

Sincerely,
Shirley Alexander

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~ THANK YOU ~

I would like to thank the Guild members for the kind words and messages, cards and hugs, and monetary donations in my mother's memory, that were given to me and my family during our recent bereavement. The caring and support of my Guild "family" has helped me to get through this difficult time and is so very sincerely appreciated.

Patty Christle Hikiji and the Don Christle family

Museum Guild Program
 July 10, 2006
 "Local History Trivia"
 by Mark Hunter

It wasn't a pirate that told Guild members about buried treasure but local historian, Mark Hunter. Not many Cedar Rapids citizens realize that the beautiful Union Station from down town was used for landfill as part of a flood control project.

In March of 1961, water flooded the Riverside Park area and it was decided to institute a plan to protect this part of the city. In July of the same year, the depot was being demolished so the rubble was used as fill for the park project. Under four feet of dirt and a layer of topsoil, the pieces of a once elegant structure provide a foundation for the familiar are with flowers and playgrounds.

If Osgood Shepard's cabin were to rise from its' resting place, it would push up the Tree of Five Seasons. The first log cabin of the settlement that would become Cedar Rapids, was built on the bank of the river which is now the site of the sculpture.

From that site, one would have a good view of the Iowa corn sign that was part of the Iowa Theatre for many years. Mark said that 4000 green, yellow and white bulbs were used to illuminate the landmark.

In the 1890's, a one story Victorian/Italianate building was constructed for the Sindelar family. This property at 116 Third Avenue SE, now houses the Copy Shop. Looking at the building from across the street, it is apparent that the story of one of the building owners is true. This gentleman refused to sell his business to developers and consequently a multiple story building was constructed to surround the small architectural gem.

Mark shared more stories and information about the treasures of the city and ended his presentation far too soon for the audience. His vast knowledge, unflagging interest and wonderful disposition make him another treasure we must value.

— Fern Fackler

2006 MUSEUM GUILD OFFICERS

President	Shirley Alexander
Vice President	JoAnn Neff
Treasurer	Alicia Jackson
Rec. Secretary	Cynthia Monroe
Corres. Secretary	Carolyn Holubar
Museum Guild Rep.	Leo Modracek
Ex-Officio	Andrea Siebenmann

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Betty Pulkrab Gallagher

Edward (Ed) F. Volsch

Lucretia (Lu) R. Pochobradsky Volsch

ADDRESS CHANGE

Evelyn Dvorak

Patricia A. Hikiji

E-mail address change

Cindy Monroe:



MEETING MINUTES

The Museum Guild of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library met at NCSML on May 6, 2006 at 9:00 a.m..

Betty Truesdell called the meeting to order and Carolyn Holubar led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Hosts: Pat Martin, Jessie Stastny and Leni Stastny provided delicious treats of fresh fruit, mints, nuts and breads. There were no new members or visitors to introduce.

Czech/Slovak word of the day (Bob Stone):

In keeping with our new exhibit:

English	Czech	Slovak
May	Květen, Máj	Máj
A cold May is paradise	Studený máj,	Studený máj
In the barn.	v e (v) stodole ráj.	v stodole raj

Program:

Member Pat Martin's program on the *Accidental Tourist in Czech-Slovak Culture* focused on the development of Czech Village since 1977 when she was the first Village Coordinator. A highlight of the program was Pat's gift to each of us of her most recent book, Prague Saints and Heroes of the Charles Bridge. Thank you, Pat, for your very generous gift.

Secretary's Report (Cindy Monroe):

Minutes will be found in the Guilded Page.

Corresponding Secretary's Report (Carolyn Holubar):

Gail Naughton sent a kind thank you for our gift of \$1,500.00. Cards were sent to Jo Anne Neff, Vera Hanson, and Mana Zlatohlavek. A thank you was sent to Bonnie Stepanek for her generous contribution to defray the cost of the office typewriter.

Treasurer's Report (Alicia Jackson):

Treasurer's Report (Alicia Jackson):

Beg. Checking Acct. Balance in April	\$6,169.06
Dues Received	+ \$ 30.00
Donations	+ \$ 250.00
Interest	+ 8.17
NCSML Endowment Fund	- 1,500.00
Memorial, Rose Kopecky	- 25.00
Ending Ch Acct. Balance in April	\$ 4,932.23

Museum Representative Report (Leo Modracek):

Funds have been received to demolish the building across the street and create a temporary green space.

Volunteer Coordinator (Patty Hikiji):

A report will be found in the Guilded Page.

Committee Reports:

Fundraising The cookbook committee is continuing their editing of recipes typed by the printing company. The goal is to have the cook book completed by the December Cookie Walk. Irma Kelly continued her coordination of Taste of Czech and Slovak food preparers and workers. A motion was presented by Carolyn Holubar and seconded by Barb Pulkrab to purchase ten #40 scoops. Members may contribute money if they wish when unable to cook or work. Members will be called and asked if they wish to cook or work.

Membership (Milly Ortner) We have 87 members. Please encourage volunteers and friends to join the Guild. Betty Truesdell and Leo Modracek will assist with calling members who have not renewed.

Program (Lavanda Woosley) Our next program's topic will be *Textiles by Stephanie Kohn*; July 10, 2006 – *Local History Trivia with Mark Hunter*; August 7, 2006 – *HD Youth Center with Henry Davis*; September 2, 2006 – *OUR Treasured Textiles*; October 7, 2006 – *Stepping into Better Health with Reflexology*; October 21 – 8:30-5:15 *Kalona Historical Tour*; November 4, 2006 – *Andy Warhol Exhibit*; December 9, 2006 – *Cookie Walk*; January 6, 2007 – *Kalona Tour Presentation*; February 3, 2007 – Undecided; March 3, 2007 – *A Ukraine Experience with Don Wickenkamp*. (All months subject to change.) Make reservations for our Kalona Historical Fall Tour by October 7. The cost is \$69.

Garden (Mel Holubar) Planting will take place at 1:00 today.

Publication (Marilyn Tucker) Motion to reimburse \$80.85 in printing costs (110 copies) and \$39.84 in stamps was made and passed. Discussion held about finding a sponsor to print our newsletter.

Social (Irma Kelly) June's hosts are Lavanda Woosley, Betty Truesdell and Emil Koval.

Education (Jan Stoffer) No report

History and Property (Andrea Siebenmann) Andrea will be taking pictures at the Taste of Czech and Slovak and collecting materials for our records.

Public Relations (Carol Ann Rexroat) A report on the committees work for the Taste of Czech and Slovak was given.

Old Business: The Brother typewriter arrived. We did not have to pay postage. The office staff is thrilled and appreciative. It has a microprocessor and a thirty-day trial test period.

New Business: Volunteers are needed for the June 2 and 3 teas.

Door Prize Drawing: EVERYONE received Pat Martin's newest book.

Adjournment by Cindy Monroe. Seconded by Carolyn Holubar. Next Guild meeting at 6:30 p.m. on June 5, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Monroe, Secretary





MEETING MINUTES

The Museum Guild of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library met at NCSML on June 5, 2006 at 6:30 p.m..

Shirley Alexander called the meeting to order and JoAnne Neff led the Pledge of Allegiance. 26 members attended.

Hosts: Emil Koval, Lavanda Woosley, and Betty Truesdell provided refreshments. There were no new members or visitors to introduce.

Czech/Slovak word of the day (Bob Stone):

In keeping with our new exhibit:

English

- Proverb Wine and children speak the truth.

Czech

- *Príslovi* *Víno a děti mluví pravdu*

Slovak

- *Príslovie (ye)* *Víno a deti hovoria (ya) prav(u)du.*

Program:

Stephanie Kohn, NCSML collections manager reviewed our textiles exhibit.

Secretary's Report (Cindy Monroe):

Minutes will be found in the Guided Page.

Corresponding Secretary's Report (Carolyn Holubar):

Several thank yous were sent. Linda Grove (Western Fraternal) was a very effective organizer on the planting day. Approximately 50 people assisted. The youth groups of Lodge 262 and New Covenant Bible Church also volunteered. It will be important for us to keep our new plants watered. Thank you to Vera Hanson for providing 10 plants.

Treasurer's Report (Alicia Jackson):

Beg. Checking Acct. Balance in May:	\$4,932.23
Dues received	+ 10.00
Taste of Czech	+ 1,375.80
Interest	+ 9.63
Disbursement for the	
Typewriter for Museum	- 519.99
Ending Ch Acct. Balance in May	\$5,807.67.

We have 91 members.

Museum Representative Report (Leo Modracek):

No report

Volunteer Coordinator (Patty Hikiji):

Homemade cookies are needed on June 9. 52 Guild members provided 692.75 hours. The top ten contributors for May are Dolores Usher, Marilyn Tucker, Ann Kloubec, Shirley Alexander, Irma Kelly, Cindy Monroe, Marjeanne Jungjohann, Lillian Kopecky, Laverne Fisher, Charles Opatrny and Jessie Stastny, giving from 21.5 to 47 hours.

Committee Reports:

Fundraising The cookbook committee is continuing their editing of recipes typed by the printing company. There were many positive comments during and after our Taste of Czech

and Slovak fundraiser. Twelve members donated over \$300. The food supply was close to what was needed. Irma Kelly took notes for next year. For example, no pickled beets are needed next year. It earned \$1,375.80. 123 tickets at \$7 and 66 tickets at \$4 were purchased. Suggestions for next year include trays, water pourer, help elderly carry food, and move drink away from ticket area.

Membership (Milly Ortner) We have 91 members. Please encourage volunteers and friends to join the Guild. New membership lists were available. Please give your email address to Milly if she doesn't have it.

Program (Lavanda Woosley) Our next program's topic will be July 10, 2006 – *Local History Trivia with Mark Hunter*; August 7, 2006 – *H D Youth Center with Henry Davis*; September 2, 2006 – *OUR Treasured Textiles*; October 7, 2006 – *Stepping into Better Health with Reflexology*; October 21 – 8:30-5:15 *Kalona Historical Tour*; November 4, 2006 – *Andy Warhol Exhibit*; December 9, 2006 – *Cookie Walk*; January 6, 2007 – *Kalona Tour Presentation*; February 3, 2007 – *Undecided*; March 3, 2007 – *A Ukraine Experience with Don Wickenkamp*. (All months subject to change.) Make reservations for our Kalona Historical Fall Tour by October 7. The cost is \$69.

Garden (Mel Holubar) Planting went very smoothly. Thanks to Bill Shiffer for his reliable watering of our new plants.

Publication (Marilyn Tucker) No report.

Social (Irma Kelly) July hosts are Patty Hikiji and Marie Webster.

Education (Jan Stoffer) No report

History and Property (Andrea Siebenmann) Andrea is with her mother celebrating her (mother's) 70th birthday.

Public Relations (Carol Ann Rexroat) No report.

Old Business: HyVee and John Rocarek need thank you notes for their donations to Taste of Czech and Slovak.

New Business: Lavanda Woosley reviewed details of our October 21 trip to Kalona. We will meet by Younkers at Westdale Mall. At noon we will enjoy a home-cooked family style meal and we will stop at the Stringtown Grocery.

Door Prize Drawing: Donated by Olga Sedenka, it was won by Bill Shiffer.

Adjournment by Bob Stone. Seconded by Marjorie Stone. Next Guild meeting at 6:30 p.m. on July 10, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Monroe, Secretary



MEETING MINUTES

The Museum Guild of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library met at NCSML on July 10, 2006 at 6:30 p.m.

Shirley Alexander called the meeting to order and JoAnne Neff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Hosts: Marie Webster and Patty Hikiji were hostesses, providing fruit and rhubarb bars. The beautiful centerpiece of flowers matched the napkins, both in shades of lilac. Andrea Siebenmann provided chocolates purchased in Slovakia while celebrating her mother's 70th birthday.

Czech/Slovak word of the day (Bob Stone):

In keeping with our new exhibit:

English

- Nursery rhyme Then the bell rang and that was the end of the story.

Czech

- Říkanka *Pak zazvonil zvonec a pohád(t)ky byl konec*

Slovak

- Detská rýmovačka *Zazvonil zvonec a roz(s)pravky bol koniec (nyets)*

Program:

Mark Hunter shared slides of interesting architecture of Cedar Rapids. He entertained many questions during his presentation.

Secretary's Report (Cindy Monroe):

Minutes will be found in the Guilded Page.

Corresponding Secretary's Report (Carolyn Holubar):

A thank you was sent to Sykora Bakery. A letter, on behalf of the staff, from Carmen Langel, thanked the Guild for purchasing a typewriter for the office.

Treasurer's Report (Alicia Jackson):

Beg. Checking Acct. Balance in June:	\$5,807.67
Donation Taste of Czech	+ 20.00
Interest	+ 9.65
Disbursement for the Guilded Page	- 120.69
Ending Ch Acct. Balance in June	\$5,716.63

There are 91 paid members.

Museum Representative Report (Leo Modracek):

The Executive Committee asked Gail Naughton to prepare a RFP for a proposal to expand the museum facility. Interviews for a consultant will be completed soon.

Volunteer Coordinator (Patty Hikiji): No report. Our sympathy and prayers to Patty on the unexpected death of her mother.

Committee Reports:

Fundraising The cookbook committee is editing their work a second time.

Membership (Milly Ortner) Three new members were introduced. We are pleased to welcome to Betty Gallagher, and Lu and Ed Volsch, all of whom are regular volunteers.

Program (Lavanda Woosley) Our next program's topic will be (August 7, 2006) – *HD Youth Center with Henry Davis*; September 2, 2006 – *OUR Treasured Textiles*; October 7, 2006 – *Stepping into Better Health with Reflexology*; October 21 – *8:30-5:15 Kalona Historical Tour*; November 4, 2006 – *Andy Warhol Exhibit*; December 9, 2006 – *Cookie Walk*; January 6, 2007 – *Kalona Tour Presentation* (Make reservations for our Kalona Historical Fall Tour by October 7. The cost is \$69.); February 3, 2007 – *Undecided*; March 3, 2007 – *A Ukraine Experience with Don Wickenkamp*. (All months subject to change.)

Garden (Mel Holubar) Thank you, Bill Shiffer, for watering our new plants.

Publication (Marilyn Tucker) Please have all items for the newsletter in by July 15.

Social (Irma Kelly) August hosts are Vera Conway, Bette Krall, and Laverne Fisher.

Education (Jan Stoffer) Volunteers are still needed for the Dance Festival. Coolers packed with ice are also needed. Jan's brother will be videotaping the festival. Ads are running on television.

History and Property (Andrea Siebenmann) No report

Public Relations (Carol Ann Rexroat) The Executive Board will discuss Gazette sponsorship before the next meeting.

Old Business: The Kalona trip on October 21 will leave from Westdale Mall by Younkers upper level. We need 30 participants in order to make the trip.

New Business: Evelyn Dvorak has a new address – 292 North Point Drive NE. Cindy Monroe's new email address is

Door Prize Drawing: Door prizes were won by Gary Dvorak, Evelyn Dvorak and Ed Volsch. Thank you, Marge NejdI for the painted napkin holder, and Andrea Siebenmann for the Slovakian items.

Adjournment by Barb Pulkrab. Seconded by Gary Dvorak. Next Guild meeting at 6:30 p.m. on August 7, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Monroe, Secretary



An Accidental Tourist in the Czech-Slovak Culture

Program by Pat Martin

to

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

May 6, 2006

Understanding "Point of View" is a critical component of communication. Every message has a source from which it springs. After my first book, **The Czech Book**, was published with the name "Pat Martin" on the cover, people asked, "Who is Pat Martin and what is her Czech name?" I knew an explanation was needed. Throughout the years, nearing 25 years now and including authoring five books, the explanation has become more important and intricate. For example, now, when I look up something about the Czech or Slovak cultures, I frequently see myself cited as a source. So how did an Irishwoman, nearly 100 per cent Irish, start down the path of celebration of the Czech culture? Here's the story!

My roots are in Centerville, Iowa. There, for me, was the beginning of cultivation of and fascination with ethnic diversity, personal family history, and the joy of knowing and understanding one's heritage. My father's family, the McConvilles, came to Appanoose County to work the coal mines. There were more than 400 mines when they arrived, and my Great Grandfather McConville's family owned several. Working along with the Irish, were Slavs, Czechs, Italians, Yugoslavians, Croatians, and African Americans. The grandfather of opera singer Simon Estes worked in the mines there, just as McConvilles did. My Great Grandfather Bradley came to Appanoose County with a peddler's sack on his back and stayed to build a banking dynasty. From my earliest years I understood family pride and expected that others did likewise. I was charmed by ethnic names. One particular favorite name was "Tagliapietra." I was also fascinated by various ethnic music, dancing, costume touches, and foods, and from my childhood I understood that one's ethnic and religion were integral features of who we are. A group called the Tamburtizians, from University of Pittsburgh, came to Centerville every Thanksgiving when I was a teenager. Their program featured the joy of ethnic diversity in folk music and dancing, and every year I attended at least one performance!

After graduation from Creighton University I landed my first teaching job at Jefferson High School in Cedar Rapids. This school on the southwest side of town was the educational home of many Czech families. I was so impressed by the Czech students and their pride in their families, although they were modest and quiet in their pride. When I made a writing assignment regarding personal heroes, the Czech teenagers tended not to write about presidents and celebrities, but instead wrote about parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. The first name that piqued my interest in 1964 was "Vicko." I remember looking at that name, which I later found to be Hungarian, and wondering what to do with it (how to pronounce it). I realized that there were interesting ethnic groups in my new Cedar Rapids home.

In the politically-correct times of today, it is hard to imagine that in the late 60s and early 70s our Czech families were at times ridiculed as "dumb bohemies." As a young teacher I vividly recall the "bleacher bums" (yes, there was such a group) at a rival school, shouting "dumb bohemie" taunts at the Jefferson basketball team on the rival's home court. The Czechs had no NAACP to protect their rights. I was appalled. When we visit the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library today, it is difficult to imagine that 35 years ago Czech Pride was not evident except in private homes, fraternal organizations, and churches. In 1965 there was a particularly vile joke book, "Czech and Double Czech," published and circulated. I recall one entry labeled "Bohemie Luau" with the line drawing depiction of five men drinking through straws from the city sewage. Czech Village baker Lester Sykora, whom during these years we knew as the "Mayor of Czech Village," sadly told me of this book. What a shame, to ridicule descendants of this ancient and rich culture. I observed all of this and it made me sad as well as angry.

After a few years and marriage, I took a 12-year maternity leave from teaching. In Cedar Rapids the Czechs were emerging as a group to watch with wonder and pride. First, the public began to be aware of the fact that we were living in a sprawling time of bigness, vastness. Perhaps some had lost faith in former heroes. Confusion governed "Who am I?" There was little to hold fast to, day by day. One very real thing people have to cling to is their heritage, if they are lucky. Nostalgia was big. Alex Haley's Roots was a popular television series, and Americans were mesmerized by it. Genealogy as a hobby was thriving, with participants eagerly collecting old photo albums and tracing family trees. There was great interest in ethnic backgrounds. People with no visible and concrete family history purchased old photographs in antique shops, framed them, and passed them off in their homes as Grandmother ___ or Uncle _____. It is an expectation in some social groups to know one's "roots."



An Accidental Tourist in the Czech-Slovak Culture

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Perhaps with these conditions, encouragement was given local Czechs who had carefully preserved their culture privately in churches and fraternal organizations, but not publicly. In 1971 the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, under leadership of Donn Young, held "A Festival of Fine Arts." From October 28, Czechoslovakian Independence Day, through December, more than 14 thousand Czech art/culture enthusiasts attended. The festival displayed a rich variety of fine and decorative arts that are typically Czech. Gathered from outstanding public and private collections in the Cedar Rapids area were cut glass, hand-painted wooden ware, beautifully decorated eggshells, porcelain tea and coffee sets, garnet jewelry, handmade laces, costumes, pipes, and paintings. Marj NejdI, who has become a highly-praised regional artist, was asked to demonstrate her eggshell decorating. Marj had learned this art from her Uncle, Martin Polehna, who with his brother Andrew founded Polehna Meat Market, and she grew up thinking everybody decorated eggs in this manner during the Easter season. She was amazed by the interest Cedar Rapidians showed in her work. Each Sunday during the exhibition, a program of Czech music, dance, crafts, or gymnastics was featured. Many facets of the Czech heritage were here, but the general public was ignorant of it, had never witnessed it. The Czechs, however, knew the richness of their culture. In fact, a Czech School in which children learned more of their language and customs had been in summer session annually for more than 100 years at that time.

The Czech Heritage Foundation was established, uniting members of churches and fraternal organizations who knew and preserved their culture. There was interest in several areas of education and development, including the transformation of "The Avenue," 16th Avenue SW, into a Czech Village. This group desired regular programming of music, literature, a "festival" that would continue annually, perhaps even closing the street for special events!

George Joens (Joens Brothers Interiors) was president of the Foundation, and other steering committee members were George Barta (Saddle and Leather Shop), Rev. Robert Cizek (St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church), George Chmelicek (United State Bank, at that time), Richard Holden (attorney with offices in what was then the First Trust Bank building), Raphael F. Snitil (Slavia Agencies Insurance), Melvina Svec (retired college geography professor), and Charles Vyskocil (Western Fraternal Life Association). This non-profit group also wanted to see the re-development of 16th Avenue SW and acquired an architect who sketched facades and drew up plans. And what about a Czech restaurant, shops featuring jewelry and glass, and a business with a river-view outlook? Many families owned collections of objects of art, ceramic ware, glass, toys, choice and rare items. What about a suitable site for building a Czech Museum, a place that would be open daily? With traditional events and special exhibits planned throughout the year? Urban renewal in the area was a part of this, and meetings were held with local governmental leaders. The Czech Village enthusiasts met with the riverside neighborhood group, with Bun Howell as one of the most vocal members. Bun, by the way, just prior to that time owned an ambulance service that was operated for the entire city of Cedar Rapids.

Let's step back again and put me, the "Accidental Tourist in the Czech Culture," into the picture. I was married in 1968, lived on the southeast side of town, and drove through 16th Avenue SW that is now Czech Village, every day en route to my teaching world at Jefferson High School. I was fascinated by the neighborhood, but also mildly horrified by one aspect. Where the Village Bandstand stands today was a bar frequented by colorful individuals. At 7:30 a.m. I would see inebriated customers emerging from that establishment. Incidents there might appear in unsavory Gazette articles. The neighborhood was deteriorating and was not a place to celebrate a beautiful culture.

The 16th Avenue merchants did not have time to work on all of these revitalization plans. They had businesses to run, so they looked for someone to lead their efforts. Some merchants had seen copies of *Leaguely Speaking*, quite a fine publication in those days, published by the Junior League of Cedar Rapids. It had contained an article, written by me, about the beauty of the Czech culture and possibilities for its showcasing in the area. "Now is the Time for Czech Heritage Foundation." Who is this writer who finds us fascinating, they asked, and they called me in to interview for the position of Czech Village Coordinator. A stay-at-home mom involved in the community, I was contacted and interviewed. How exciting, I thought, and an Irishwoman was hired. Both the Celts and the Slavs were ancient cultures, and later I was told that the group deliberately hired *outside of* their culture so that the Coordinator would be neutral, would not carry grudges or prejudices for one group or against the other in this community. And that I could acquire prejudices of my own! I was hired as the first Czech Village Coordinator in late fall, 1977.

At this time Czechoslovakia included "regions" of Czechoslovakia, Moravia, and Slovakia. I knew Czechs and Moravians in the area, but no Slovaks had identified themselves to me or the merchants. It was not until after the Velvet Revolution of 1989, when the Czech and Slovak Republics were established, that numbers of Slovaks in the Cedar Rapids area were identified and later included in the establishment of the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library.

An Accidental Tourist in the Czech-Slovak Culture

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I began to COORDINATE! I view the work as educational. I worked specifically for the Czech Village Association, but worked closely with Czech Heritage Foundation and Czech Fine Arts Foundation. I was an educator, and I had the ability to help people dream together and work together and get along, even if they preferred, initially, not to do so. We started the May Houby Days together in 1978, and the Czech Village Festival in September was already established. We worked with Mayor Don Canney and Tom Aller, his assistant, at that time. Other city leaders helped us persuade the merchants to pay for a new sidewalkscape. This sidewalk was to unify and beautify the area between A and C Streets S.W. The first time we asked for bids for the new sidewalk scape, nobody put in a bid... Nobody wanted the work. Construction was booming at that time. Was the job too small? Were we difficult to work with? Eventually a contractor was hired, and the area began to resemble a Czech Village with this construction, completed the summer of 1980. Ed Sauter was our architect and Jim Fox Construction did the work. (Spring of 2006, 26 years later, a new sidewalk scape is being completed.)

I began to really concentrate on the beauty of the Czech culture. I did a great deal of public speaking about the culture and the Czech Village project, and I immersed myself in reading and correspondence with other ethnic villages in the United States. The ancientness of the culture is tantalizing. Some 100 years before Columbus discovered America there was a university in Prague, the second oldest in Europe, where doctors and lawyers, architects and teachers were educated. Earliest copies of the Linn County Atlas showed that most city leaders were Czechs. William Severa, of Cedar Rapids, made a fortune in pharmaceuticals. Joseph Sosel, the first lawyer west of the Mississippi River, practiced law here. His two daughters had been principals of two early elementary schools in Cedar Rapids. How did the Czechs get to Linn and Johnson Counties? In the 1850s a military road was laid out for purposes of exploration. Scouts were sent forth to survey the route, which later became old Highway 1. Settlers traveled the route, which ended in Iowa City. People were tired of traveling. There was no more road. Linn and Johnson counties looked like home, so they settled here. Consider how this same road led to other ethnic pockets... the Norwegians in Decorah, the Dutch in Pella, and so forth.

I had a Czech costume made for myself. I knew we needed to encourage costumes during our festivals. I didn't know much about the costuming at first, but I enjoyed the festivity of my costume and even wore a wreath of flowers on my head. I was 35 years of age and had two children, and only young virgins were to wear flowers in their hair. I was enthusiastic and sometimes plunged in to ventures just to get things going. And I was criticized, but not discouraged. Criticism was not from my merchants or the leaders in the Czech community, but by others who possessed knowledge but were unwilling to do anything constructive with it. Change in the Czech community was abounding and many in the Czech community were uncomfortable.

Association member Ray Snitil, Slavia Agencies, owned a house next to the corner of 16th and C Avenue SW. That house became the first Czech Museum, organized and run by Czech Fine Arts Foundation. I gave tours until we had a museum director. It was a small beginning, but again we plunged in and learned along the way. We had this beautiful culture and this beautiful collection of Czech costumes and artifacts. No one was able to celebrate their Czech culture in Czechoslovakia at that time, because USSR and Communism was the governing body and the only entity to be celebrated there was the STATE.

At this time I met Joan Liffing-Zug. She was most interested in preservation of the Czech culture and realized we needed color postcards and other promotional tools. My merchants did not have the money to pay for a color postcard, and I knew she was right about promotion and that we needed her. She asked me to write a book, with recipes and history of our Czechs, and she would pay for the publishing and provide marketing. Why not, I thought? **The Czech Book** was published in 1981. I became Joan's first writer, through Penfield Press, and our book was sold in tourist spots throughout the United States.

The Czech Book, with Cedar Rapids Czechs as the focal point, was published in 1981. It contained general information about the culture and pioneer recipes. These recipes that were simple fare, prepared with what folks had on hand on their farms and in their gardens. Each recipe was a personal contribution of a member of the Czech community and most were accompanied by a personal memory or tradition. The Czech Village Bandstand was on the front cover and Village baker Les Sykora on the back one. In a sense, Joan Liffing-Zug (Bourret) was the finest of teachers, in that she knew the story needed to be told and that *I could and should* write it. Joan encouraged me and accommodated my shortcomings. She coached me to become an author! When I first saw the beautiful color photos to be included in the book and the covers, I said to her, "Joan, thank you for making me do this!" Then came the glorious benefits of



An Accidental Tourist in the Czech-Slovak Culture

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promotion of our Village. And the thrill of meeting people who had read the book. One couple I recall vividly came to a festival from the Washington DC area because they picked up **The Czech Book** at the Mt. Rushmore gift shop in South Dakota! I incorporated their writing in my next book!

Czechoslovak Wit and Wisdom was published in 1984. By this time letters with traditions were coming in from many new pen pals! I was now a spokeswoman for the culture and had the responsibility to share their contributions. My work to this time had embraced the Czechs and Moravians, but I had left the Slovaks out! This book began to rectify that error. This second book branched out to a number of Czechoslovak sites, with contributors providing wit and wisdom through proverbs, storytelling, and traditions. Charlie Vyskocil edited the language portion, for I wanted to preserve the language and he was the expert. We printed the Czech and Slovak anthems. I explained my Irish heritage in this second book. During this time frame City leaders helped us acquire the block building on the river on 16th Ave SW, the former Dowie Sign Company, and the museum moved to its second home. A director was hired and museum dreams, goals, and numbers of cultural enthusiasts grew.

I knew I should visit Czechoslovakia, but my husband would NOT travel in a communist country, and I agreed with him. **Czechoslovak Culture**, written by an armchair tourist, was published in 1989, just before the Velvet Revolution. (During this "revolution," Communism "gave" Czechoslovakia back to its people and the Czech and Slovak Republics were established.) The book elaborated on Czechoslovak arts, such as eggshell decorating, glass blowing, needlework, dancing and music. We featured recipes from third generation Czechoslovaks who had prospered and now cooked more elaborately. I relied on both local and national artists and cooks. One feature, "How to stage a Czech Festival," listed locations and times of Czech festivals nationwide.

Czech and Slovak Touches: Recipes, History, Travel, Folk Arts was published in 1999. The book was inspired by a tour of the Czech and Slovak Republics enjoyed by my sister Joyce and I, along with publisher-photographer Joan and her husband Dwayne Bourret. We featured touring the two republics, tracing one's genealogy and ancestral sites, traditional celebrations, and Cedar Rapids' beautiful new National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. We also reprinted the pioneer recipes included in the 1981 book, which was out of print.

My fifth book, published in 2003, is **Prague: The Charles Bridge: Saints and Heroes**. This work was started after the death of my husband and was six years in researching and writing. The focus of the Czech and Slovak culture shifted to its heroes. Who are our heroes? What artifacts in your home designate or honor ... your heroes? How does a nation pay tribute to its heroes? The Charles Bridge, a main thoroughfare in Prague, celebrates 34 saints in statuary who are much more than holy. The book is a history of this 600-year old structure. Through the lives of the saints, who represent 12 countries and 16 centuries, the reader encounters the goodness and power of noble humanity while reliving the history of Middle Europe.

With the establishment of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library I knew the Czechoslovak culture in our area had been transformed...and what a testimony that museum is to the vision of those who first settled here and, later, those who had the vision to treasure their heritage and share it with others. I have always held it to be a privilege to be involved in the preservation of this culture. When U.S. President William Jefferson Clinton, Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel, and Slovak Republic President Michal Kovac were together at the Museum dedication in October, 1995, I knew I had participated in a true historical marvel.

ASK ME!

Campaign ends September 30, 2006

NCSML volunteers are now in the midst of the 2006 "ASK ME!" campaign.

The rules are simple. NCSML museum volunteers may sell memberships to anyone - museum visitors, friends, family members, etc. Please record your name on the membership form in the lower right corner to get credit for the sale

The rewards are great - **Did You Know** that membership dues, memorials, and other financial gifts made by museum members contribute about 25% of the museum's annual operating budget?

There will be prizes awarded at the end of the campaign for the most memberships sold.



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

**Kalona Historical Fall Tour
Kalona, Iowa
Saturday, October 21, 2006**

We invite you to Kalona, where you will discover a way of life that the rest of this country has left behind. Come experience that "old fashioned" hospitality!

8:30 a.m. Depart at the Westdale Mall Younker's Upper Level (Across from Wal Mart)

Begin your tour with a cup of coffee or tea and fresh doughnut holes from a local bakery as you learn about the fascinating "whys and ways" of the Amish Mennonite people. Throughout the day you will travel the scenic back-roads with the guides and experience a new sense of the hard work and family ethnic that continues to mark the Amish way of life. See their homes, schools, farms, and beautifully manicured gardens as you pass by.

Stops will be made along the tour to view Amish handmade quilts, demonstrations and shopping.

Relive the 1800's when you visit the **Kalona Historical Village** with its authentically restored buildings and Quilt Museum.

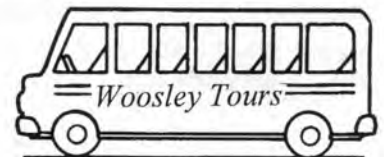
Included in our Countryside Tour is a **home-cooked meal served in an Amish-Mennonite home.** The meal is served family style, from the home baked bread to the Amish tapioca pudding, the cook sees to it that you never leave hungry!

String Town Grocery (bulk packaging) ½ hour stop before leaving area.

5:15 p.m. Approximate arrival to Westdale Mall, Cedar Rapids

\$69.00 includes transportation, Kalona Historical Countryside Guided Tour, gratuity for the Kalona tour guide and cook.

Reservations made by October 7 meeting. Need 30 passengers for this tour.
No refunds after this date unless a replacement.



Tour prepared by Lavanda Woodsley, Woodsley Tours, Czech Museum Guild Member

WOOSLEY TOURS
4316 Golf St NE, Cedar Rapids, IA
52402-5748

www.mwnet.com/woosleytours



TOP TEN GUILD VOLUNTEERS

MARCH 2006

Number of Guild members recording hours in March — 50

Number of Guild Hours recorded — 897.75

Emil Koval	199.00
Carolyn Holubar	111.50
Mel Holubar	77.50
Marj NejdI	40.00
Dolores Usher	35.00
Irma Kelly	29.50
Lydia Elias	25.00
Shirley Alexander	23.50
Marjeanne Jungjohann	22.50
Marge Pace	19.50

APRIL 2006

Number of Guild members recording hours in April — 45

Number of Guild Hours recorded — 599.75

Cindy Monroe	49.00
Marj NejdI	46.00
Shirley Alexander	37.00
Dolores Usher	35.00
Charles Opatrny	28.00
Irma Kelly	27.50
Carolyn Holubar	26.50
Marjeanne Jungjohann	25.75
Jessie Stastny	24.50
Marie Webster	21.00

MAY 2006

Number of Guild members recording hours in May — 52

Number of Guild Hours recorded — 692.75

Dolores Usher	47.00
Marilyn Tucker	42.50
Ann Kloubec	38.75
Shirley Alexander	37.50
Irma Kelly	27.00
Cindy Monroe	25.50
Marjeanne Jungjohann	24.50
Lillian Kopecky	23.50
Laverne Fisher	22.50
Charles Opatrny	21.50
Jessie Stastny	21.50

THANK YOU FROM VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR PATRICIA A. HIKIJI

Thank you to the Guild members who baked cookies for our "A Community Learns" series. And thank-you to Irma Kelly for taking care of the refreshment table.

Thank you to Mel and Carolyn Holubar and Emil Koval for home-hosting museum guests in March. Emil opened his home to CNCA Fellow, Dr. Slavomir Michalek for nine days. Mel and Carolyn hosted watercolor artist, Barbara Froula, and her husband.

Thank you to the Guild members who helped with the opening reception for the "Embellished Textiles: Absolutely Art!" exhibit.



Patricia A. Hikiji
Volunteer Coordinator

Thank you to the Guild members who helped with the "Lifting the Lid on the Dowry Chest" breakfast.

THE GUILDED PAGE

Marilyn Shima Tucker
Editor



NEXT MEETING

6:30 P.M.

Monday

August 7, 2006

Shirley J. Alexander

52402+2810-36 C07A



UPCOMING GUILD MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Monday, August 7, 2006, 6:30 p.m. at the
National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
"HD YOUTH CENTER"

Presented by Henry Davis

Hosts: Vera Conway, Laverne Fisher and Bette Krall

Saturday, September 2, 2006, 9:00 a.m. at the
National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
"OUR TREASURED TEXTILES"

Presented by Members of the Guild

Hosts: Milena Novosad and Andrea Seibenmann

Saturday, October 7, 2006, 9:00 a.m. at the
National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
"STEPPING INTO BETER HEALTH WITH REFLEXOLOGY"

Presented by Mada Jones, Registered Relexologist

Hosts: TBA

Saturday, October 21, 2006
"KALONA HISTORICAL FALL TOUR"

See Page 10

From the Board and Membership of
The Museum Guild
OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

to
Founder and Guild Member
Patty Hikiji and family

on the loss of her dear mother

LUDMILA CHRISTLE

