



Aislin Andrews, one of this year's Czech Little Sisters, enjoys a kolache during the St. Wenceslaus Goulash Day in September. (photo/Cindy Hadish)

FALL 2015

## Editor

Sara Jacobmeyer

## Memberships

Subscriptions to *Naše České Dědictví* (*Our Czech Heritage*) are not sold. Members of the Czech Heritage Foundation receive the newsletter free of charge. Annual dues are \$10.00 per person and are renewable on January 1 of each year and expire on December 31. Contributions go toward preserving our cherished Czech heritage.

## Website

CzechHeritageFoundation.com

## Got News?

Want to see your story or photo in this newsletter? Contact Sara Jacobmeyer by email at [CzechHeritageNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:CzechHeritageNewsletter@gmail.com), or send your article to the Czech Heritage Foundation PO box. Your ideas, photos, and stories are always welcome.

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## Recipe: *Prage Štrúdl*

*Yield: 8+ servings*



### For the pastry:

1/2 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup (125 grams) semolina (or coarse flour if you can get it)  
Pinch of salt  
3.4 oz (100 ml) lukewarm water  
1 egg  
3 tablespoons oil  
1 teaspoon vinegar

### For the filling:

3-4 apples, thinly sliced  
Raisins and walnuts to taste  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
Icing sugar for decorating before serving

Mix both types of flour (or just use two cups of all-purpose flour) and a pinch of salt. Gradually add the water, egg, vinegar and most of the oil while kneading the dough on a flour-covered table. When you get a very elastic dough with a silky shine, form a ball, oil the surface, wrap the dough in foil and, let it rest for at least half an hour in the fridge.

When rested, start stretching the dough with your hands until it is very thin. The perfect thickness is achieved when you can see the lines on the palm of your hand through the dough. The dimensions should end up being around 20 x 30 inches (50 x 75 cm). Spread the pastry on a kitchen towel and spread out the thinly cut apples, raisins and walnuts into a consistent layer on top; keep about an inch free on 3 sides for easy wrapping. Spice with cinnamon, and start wrapping using the cloth as support on both sides.

Create a spiral and tightly form a roll; wet your fingers in water and moisten the edges to make them stick better. Gently press and wrap both sides. Wrap the strudel in the cloth and transfer to a baking tray. Place in the oven pre-heated to 350 F (175 C) and bake for 50-55 minutes until lightly golden. Sprinkle with icing sugar before serving.

By Jan Macuch, [EatingPragueTours.com](http://EatingPragueTours.com)



# New to the Czech Heritage Foundation board



Curtis Stochl is a software engineer at TaxAct in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. A native of Williamsburg, Iowa, he moved to Cedar Rapids in 2009 to attend Coe College where he graduated in 2013 with a degree in math and computer science. Curtis' ancestors immigrated to the United States from Plzeň and moved to the Johnson County, Iowa area as early as the 1860's where they lived for several generations. Curtis's Czech heritage is very important to him. He loves to cook, often making Czech dishes at home. His other hobbies include bicycling, watching the St. Louis Cardinals and the Iowa Hawkeyes, and working in his garden. He lives in southwest Cedar Rapids with his girlfriend Emily Weber (also on the Czech Heritage Foundation board) and their two cats, Brogan and Dolph. They recently adopted a dog by the name of Gus.

## Annual CHF Wreath Raffle only weeks away!

The Czech Heritage Foundation is once again accepting wreath donations for the annual Wreath Raffle! This year's CHF Wreath Raffle will take place at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library's Old World Christmas Market on Saturday, December 5 and Sunday, December 6.

Wreaths of all kinds will be accepted at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library's first floor Information Desk until Saturday, November 28 at 4:00pm. Wreaths may be dropped off any time during the museum's normal business hours. Please attach your name or your organization's name to any donated wreaths.

Raffle winners will be announced at 2:00pm on Sunday, December 6 at the Old World Christmas Market. Barb Edmunds of the Czech Heritage

Foundation is once again organizing this greatly anticipated, well-loved holiday fundraiser.

If you plan to donate a wreath, please call Barb at [redacted] to let her know. We can't wait to see your creations this year!



# Announcing the new Royal Court

Article and photos by Cindy Hadish

The Cedar Rapids Czech Heritage Foundation's Royal Court has doubled in size, with the announcement of a new position and dual titles. Two young men and two young women will share the duties of Czech prince and Czech princess in the coming year, and for the first time ever, a "Little Brother" will serve on the Czech Royal Court.

"As one of the judges, I know what a difficult decision this was," said Janna Waters, Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2014-2015, who served on the Czech prince and princess judging panel.

Waters said both candidates for Czech prince and both for Czech princess did an excellent job of researching their ancestry, writing essays and answering questions about Czech culture and traditions in front of the panel of judges.

"Because it was such a tough choice, the Czech Heritage Foundation voted to expand this year's Royal Court," she announced during the crowning ceremony May 17 at Houby Days in Czech Village.

The new Czech princes for the coming year are: Branden Knight, the son of Tom and Karen Knight of Hiawatha, and Bryce Buresh, the son of John and Jennifer Buresh of Ely. Branden, 14, an eighth-grader at Harding Middle School, served during the past year as Mladší Princ, which translates to "younger prince." Bryce, 17, an 11th-grader at College Community Schools, wore the kroj (ethnic folk costume) that his father wore as Czech Prince from 1986 to 1987.

The new Czech princesses are Hannah Emrich, the daughter of Tiffany Morgan and Michael Becker of Cedar Rapids, and Rachael Brandon, the daughter of Jeremy and Jennifer Wills and Jason and Andrea Brandon of Cedar Rapids. Hannah, 13, is a seventh-grader at Prairie Point, and Rachael, 13, is a seventh-grader at Oak Ridge Middle School.

The new Little Sisters also were announced during the ceremony. Victoria Knight, 11, the daughter of Tom and Karen Knight of Hiawatha, will serve her third year as Little Sister. She is a fifth-grader at Pierce Elementary. Aislin Andrews, 8, the daughter of Chad and Danielle Andrews of Lisbon, and Ingrid Landa, 7, the daughter of Craig and Christine Landa of Toddville, are the new Little Sisters. Aislin is a second-grader at Lisbon Elementary and Ingrid is a first-grader at Alburnett Elementary School.

For the first time, the Czech Royal Court has a "Little Brother," bestowing the title on Lars Landa at the crowning ceremony. Lars, 9, is the son of Craig and Christine Landa and is a third-grader at Alburnett.

Outgoing Czech Prince, Sam Uthoff, and Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2015-2016, Ashley Pudil, assisted at the crowning ceremony. Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2015, Megan Lehmann, was also present at the ceremony.

Janna Waters also was recognized at the ceremony for serving as a role model for the younger members of the Royal Court, and for giving her time and talents on countless occasions during the



past year to spread the message about the program.

Boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 18 compete for the title of Czech Prince or Princess by researching their Czech heritage, writing an essay and being interviewed by a panel of judges. The winners serve as young ambassadors by

representing their Czech heritage and the Cedar Rapids area in parades, festivals and other events throughout the year.

Little Sisters and Little Brothers are between the ages of 6 and 12. Applicants for all of the positions must be of Czech or Slovak descent. Information is available on the Czech Heritage Foundation website: [www.czechheritagefoundation.com](http://www.czechheritagefoundation.com)



# Pageant returned to Houby Days in 2015

By Bonnie Rohlena, Co-Director of the Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Pageant

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Pageant was held on May 16, 2015 in conjunction with the Houby Days Festival held in Czech Village, Cedar Rapids, IA. This is a change from the previous year when the pageant was held with the St. Joseph's Day Dance in March. The pageant kicked off with a parade at 10:00 AM with nine convertibles carrying Miss Czech-Slovak queens and contestants.

Two excellent contestants vied for the crown of Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa. Ashley Pudil is the daughter of Kevin and Denise Pudil of Cedar Rapids, IA. She is a student at Loras College at Dubuque, IA, declaring a major in English-Creative Writing as well as Spanish. Ashley served as the Cedar Rapids Czech School administrator this past summer. She performed an ethnic dance that was performed by the Omladina Dancers at the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society Conference in St Louis, MO. Hannah Van Deusen is the daughter of Ray and Terri Van Deusen of Cedar Rapids, IA. She is a student at Coe College, planning to major in music education. She is also taking Suzuki teacher training to be a better qualified Suzuki violin/viola teacher. For her talent, she performed a violin piece composed by Miloslav Gajdos, called Zingaresca.

The judges for the pageant were: Kathy (Roushar) Jorgenson of Minnetonka, Minnesota; President of Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, Michael Klimesh of Spillville, Iowa; and Sandy (Benak) Schnackenberg of Gretna, Nebraska who is a Past Nebraska Czech-Slovak Queen Pageant Chair. The judging events were held at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library with the kroj modeling, oratory and talent presentation open to the public in the Mitvalsky Room.

Visiting queens included: the national queen Morgan McMichen, 2014-2015 Miss Czech-Slovak US; Gaby Salva, 2014-2015 Miss Czech-Slovak Missouri; Sara Vytlacil, 2014-2015 Miss Czech-

Slovak Kansas; Meagan Kurmel, 2014-2015 Miss Czech-Slovak Nebraska; and Julia Ourecky, the Wilber Czech Queen. Ethan Jobman, the Nebraska Prince, rounded out the visiting out-of-state royalty. Past royalty in attendance were Lynne Marie Nedjl Erger, 1980-1981 Czech Princess, and Holly Stepanek, 2012-2013 Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa.

The pageant featured a social reception 5 to 6 p.m. at the Avacentre in Cedar Rapids to acknowledge and greet the Czech Royalty, parents, and attendees. This was followed by an ethnic dinner of pork, dumplings, sauerkraut, cerna kuba, green beans, salad, rohlicky, poppy seed hoska, kolacky and poppyseed cake.

Following the dinner, certificates of appreciation were given to the sponsors: Cedar Rapids Western Fraternal Life, CSA Prokop Velky #137, Pat & Joan Waters, Czech Heritage Partnership, Eileen Tlusty, Jim & Caralee Gruntorad, Fairfax Savings bank, and Hills Bank & Trust Company.

A number of Czech and Slovak organizations committed to the preservation, protection and perpetuation of Czech and Slovak heritage were in attendance. Spokespersons sharing their mission at the event were National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library Chief Operating Office Leah Wilson; Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International President Kathy Jorgenson; Eileen Tlusty of the Czech Heritage Partnership in Protivin; Western Fraternal Life Lodge Director Kathryn Chadima; CSA Prokop Velky #137 member Barb Edmunds; Czech Slavnosti representative Julia Ourecky; and Cedar Rapids Czech School Board member Carolyn Wilson.

Before the crowning of the new queen, Janna Waters spotlighted her reign as outgoing Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa in her farewell speech saying, "It's been a really fantastic learning experience." The royal court assisting with crowning the runner-



up and Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2015-2016 included 2015 queen Megan Lehmann; Morgan McMichen, Miss Czech-Slovak US; Sam Uthoff, Czech Prince; Brandon Knight, Mladší Prince; and Victoria Knight, Little Sister. Hannah Van Deusen was crowned Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Runner-Up 2015-2016, and Ashley Pudil was crowned Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2015-2016 Queen. Both Pudil as queen and Van Deusen as runner-up will serve as ambassadors for the Czechs and Slovaks of the state by attending parades, festivals and other events with the royal court. The goal is to represent the culture and share it with communities around the state.

The reigning Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Queen 2015 is Megan Lehmann, daughter of Steve & Karen Lehmann of Cedar Rapids, IA. The outgoing Queen

for 2014-2015 was Janna Waters, daughter of Pat & Joan Waters, of Marshalltown, IA. She served as the Master of Ceremonies for the pageant judging events and evening banquet.

The Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Pageant is a program of the non-profit organization Czech Heritage Foundation of Cedar Rapids, IA. Young women ages 18-25 have an opportunity to learn about the history of their ancestors and their personal genealogy while participating in the pageant.

Please visit [CzechHeritageFoundation.com](http://CzechHeritageFoundation.com) to learn more about the Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Pageant, or email Donna Gruntorad at

or Bonnie Rohlena at  
for information.



Local and visiting royalty posed in front of this mural in Czech Village, Cedar Rapids. (photo/Cindy Hadish)

# Pageant participants excited to represent heritage

A note from Ashley Pudil, Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2015-2016



On the first night of freshman orientation at Loras College, located in Dubuque, Iowa, my professor asked my freshman introductory class, "Tell me something unique or special about yourself." Most of my peers discussed the many sports they play, their large families, or how many pets they own. My response, however, was different. "I'm of Czech descent and serve as the Czech Princess for the Czech Heritage Foundation in Cedar Rapids, which is my hometown."

Fast forward several months, and I've traded in my princess tiara for a queen's crown. Many weeks have passed since my crowning as the new Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa, and it has been nothing short of wonderful. So much has happened in such a small amount of time! I have jumped into researching festivals around the state and piecing together my personal genealogy, and it is truly remarkable how much information I have found. I know that I am on a fantastic journey of spreading my love for the

Czech heritage and learning more about my own.

I was born and have spent the past 19 years of my life living in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I am 75% Czech, inheriting 100% from my father's side and 50% from my mother's side. Both of my parents, as well as my grandparents, made sure I knew that fact about myself. It was a trait they wanted to emphasize and remind me how important it was. I was enrolled in the Czech School of Cedar Rapids at age six, and it was there my love and curiosity for my heritage began to grow from the roots my family told me about. I began to look through countless different documents and pictures of my great grandparents to learn more about their lives and where they came from. I asked questions about who was who in my family tree and how different family members are related to each other. The more I learned, the more I loved my heritage. Heritage is what connects us all together, regardless if we know about it or not. It allows us to learn more about our history, our abundant culture, and our cherished traditions. The more we learn, the more desire we will have for others to learn about it. My ultimate goal as Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa is to just that: to share the passion I have for my heritage throughout the state and encourage others, especially younger generations, to take an interest in their own background and ancestry. I am so humbled to have been chosen to represent the state Iowa and look forward to traveling to Wilber, Nebraska in August of 2016 to compete for the national title.

Thankfully, I have some time in between now and



then. My royalty ride is not over just yet, and I cannot wait to see what I will accomplish, learn, and experience over the upcoming year.

### **A note from Hannah Van Deusen, Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Runner-Up 2015-2016**



Ahoj! My name is Hannah Van Deusen and I am the 2015-2016 Miss Czech-Slovak Runner-Up. I was born and raised in Cedar Rapids and am a junior at Coe College majoring in Music Education. I enjoy crafting, traveling (I've been to Mexico, Honduras and many places in the US), working out, and cooking healthy meals.

There are two things in particular that are most

important to me: music and my heritage. I have been playing violin since I was four years old. However, that was not my intention. When I was four I wanted to play guitar just like my babysitter did, so I asked my parents. However, I did not know what it was called and I said I wanted to play violin. They thought, "Great!" and got me a violin and lessons. I eventually realized the instrument was not a guitar, but my "hands were too small to play guitar," so my parents made me stick with violin. It wasn't until high school that I really began to enjoy playing violin. Even though I wanted to quit violin for so long, I am so glad my parents made me stick with it.

Now I am a Suzuki violin and viola teacher for ages 3-28 and I would say I have found my dream job.

For as long as I can remember, I knew that I was Czech and I was proud of it. My mom and grandpa took me to many Czech events, my favorites being Houby Days and the St Joseph's Day Parade in Cedar Rapids. I was enrolled in Czech School for 9 years and I can still remember many of the songs we sang, words and phrases we learned, and teachers we had. When my grandpa passed away in 2006, my mom purchased an authentic kroj from the Czech Republic for me. It also just happens to be from a neighboring town to where my great-grandfather is from.

Today, I am still involved in my heritage – whether it means participating in the Czech folk music and dance ensemble Světlušky, or arranging Czech music for my students to play.

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# Three outstanding students receive scholarships

By Lee Thornbloom

Garrett Carlson, Kirkwood Community College

Rising above significant person adversity, Garrett has gone nonstop in his many achievements. He has worked numerous jobs throughout his youth, excelling in everything he does, and also has experience working as an independent manual laborer. Always inventing new ways to earn money, Garrett began working part-time for a lawn care and landscaping company. When the sod cutting machine broke down on his first day, he asked permission to take a look at it. He had it fixed within half an hour and the boss immediately offered him full-time employment and a raise. This past summer he interned at Altorfer Cat. In addition to his talents in the workplace, he maintains high grades at Kirkwood Community College. He is on the Dean's List. Garrett has chosen to pursue a career in Diesel Agriculture Technology and is now in his second year at Kirkwood.

During the last 5-6 years, Garrett has done a significant amount of volunteer work in the community. He is also a member of CSA Lodge Prokop Velky #137. Garrett wants to continue to develop his leadership skills.

"Tomorrow's leaders must be prepared to guide our country through some of the most challenging times that this nation has ever faced," he says. He has maintained his academic success and positive outlook on life by finding a balance between his studies, jobs, friends, family, volunteerism, and community service.

Janna Waters, University of Michigan

Janna is a familiar face in Czech circles and lately completed her reign as Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa 2014-2015. During that time, she attending as many Czech-related events as possible. She should be proud of all she accomplished for the Iowa program. She was the recipient of the Heritage Involvement Award at the Miss Czech-Slovak US pageant in Wilber, Nebraska in 2014. The award recognizes the winner for hard work in preserving her Czech or Slovak heritage.

After graduation from high school, Janna attended Marshalltown Community College, the Lifelong Learning Centre of the University of Tartu (Estonia), and the University of Iowa. She is now pursuing additional education at the University of Michigan with the ultimate goal of teaching Central and Eastern European history at the college level. She chose the University of Michigan for her Master's degree because of the college's excellent reputation for Eastern European Studies. Janna was on the Dean's List at the University of Iowa and maintained a 4.0 GPA as a graduate student. While at the University of Iowa, she was a student of Czech language and culture for three years. She was employed as a Czech language tutor by the Autonomous Language Learning Network at the University of Iowa, and founded and was president of the Czech Connection. The Czech Connection continues to be an official student organization, and is registered and recognized by the University of Iowa. Additionally, Janna has studied abroad in five countries: Italy, Estonia, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, and Russia.

Hailey M. Prochaska, Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine

Hailey is a recent graduate of Luther College. She majored in biology and minored in philosophy. She is now attending the Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine. A career in this field has been her dream and is something she has worked toward for most of her life. This course of study comes with a high price tag, and she has applied for and received numerous scholarships in order to continue working toward her goal. In the summer of 2014, she held three internships at veterinary clinics in her surrounding area. Currently she works two part-time jobs in addition to her studies. She is an excellent student and has been on the Dean's List. Hailey's great-grandfather was originally from the Czech Republic. In Wisconsin, her family is affiliated with the St. John Nepomuk Catholic Church, which is a Czech National Heritage Site. Hailey's family has a series of

family history books filled with family trees, photos, and other information regarding settlement and their past. The information they have about their family history is extensive, and Hailey feels extremely lucky to have these resources. In addition to veterinary medicine and her Czech heritage, Hailey also finds volunteerism to be very important. She has helped the Arc blood drive and Relay for Life. One of her professional contacts describes Hailey in this way: "Hailey is mature beyond her years and truly dedicated to making lives better. She loves animals, people, and nature. She is a great caretaker."

## Czech School: 146 Years Strong

By Ashley Pudil, 2015 Czech School Coordinator

On a Friday night in mid-July, 35 Czech School students, their families and friends of our local Czech community and beyond, came together to celebrate another successful year of Czech School. 2015 is the 146th consecutive year of the Czech School in Cedar Rapids, which strives to keep a presence of the language and study not only Czech history and traditions, but preserve the culture that was brought here by the immigrants years ago.

Classes began bright and early at Grant Elementary School on Monday, June 15 and ran through Friday, July 17. The session concluded with the annual Final Program and Ice Cream Social, held at St. Ludmila Church Social Hall. During the five week period, students learned many Czech words and phrases, made personal family trees, studied the geography and history of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and translated, sang, and performed traditional Czech songs. All of this was organized by the Czech School Board, and lead by teachers Mrs. Lora, Mr. Mariusz, and Mr. Bronek, Coordinator and Music Coordinator Ashley Pudil, and Accompanist Bryan Banowetz.

One of the highlights of Czech School each year is providing an opportunity and encouraging students to learn about the local Czech culture that Cedar Rapids has to offer. Each week a special activity or visitor was scheduled, in order to allow students to be involved with this culture. The Czech Heritage Foundation Royal Court and Miss Czech-Slovak Iowa Queens paid a visit to the classrooms in their beautiful kroje and informed students of their interesting experiences in representing the Cedar Rapids Czech community throughout the year. The students also took their annual field trip, this time to the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library to see the Global Shoes exhibit. Local folk artist Marj NejdI presented an egg decorating session, and Czech School Board member Carolyn Wilson and teacher Mrs. Lora gave a presentation on Czech food. We greatly appreciate and especially thank all of those who made this possible!

In addition, we were honored to receive several guests from the Czech Republic: Czech actor and director Jiří Mádl, friend Mrs. Eva and her Czech School-aged daughter, Alzbite "Bette" from Olomouc, and past teacher for two summers, Jaromir "Mira" Tvrznik. Each visited with our students, observed their Czech language work and were amazed!

In conjunction with Czech School, Czech Language classes for adults were held in St. Wenceslaus Parish facilities. Approximately 25 adults attended this year's sessions and got a taste of the language and culture of the Czech lands. Just as with the determination of our Czech immigrant ancestors, Czech School and Adult Language will persevere, and return again next year in mid-June with enthusiasm for yet another successful summer of study. We encourage everyone interested in preserving the local heritage and learning more about the Czech language and lands to attend. Make sure to keep an eye out for information over the upcoming year via our Facebook Page: Cedar Rapids Czech School. The Czech School Board can be reached by e-mail at: [czechschool@gmail.com](mailto:czechschool@gmail.com) or by calling Julie at [redacted]. We are very thankful to everyone who helps to make Czech School an ongoing opportunity for learning!



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