



3909 S. Prairie Avenue  
Brookfield, IL 60513-2143

**December 2020**

Moving? Please let us know your new address!

Contact: Dorothy Becker

340 Lake Shore Drive North

Barrington, IL 60010-3425 [BeckerD9749@SBCglobal.net](mailto:BeckerD9749@SBCglobal.net)

Check out our website:

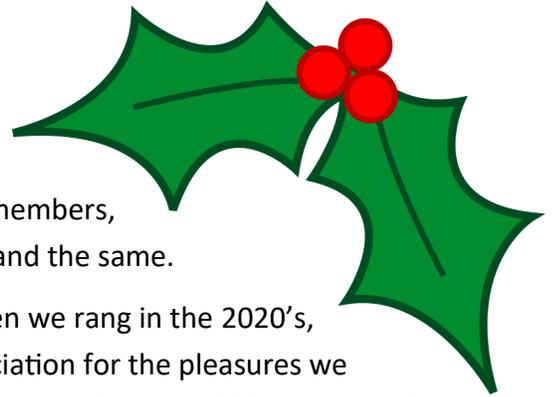
[www.sokolspirit.org](http://www.sokolspirit.org)

From our President,  
Bro. Adam Wilt

Dear Sokol Spirit Members,

Thank you for all of your support during what has been an unusual year. Sokol Spirit continues to move forward because we have many committed members, volunteers, and participants. Many of you are one and the same.

While we did not have the year we anticipated when we rang in the 2020's, I think we have all learned to have a greater appreciation for the pleasures we once took for granted. Gatherings that may have previously seemed like extra work, are now the encounters that physical distancing has all of us missing.



As we wrap up this year, I encourage you to think about the socials, fitness, family and the fun that Sokol provides. Think about the activities you may have taken for granted before this pandemic. And think about what you'd like to do when we can safely return to Sokol, and hopefully eventually to normal.

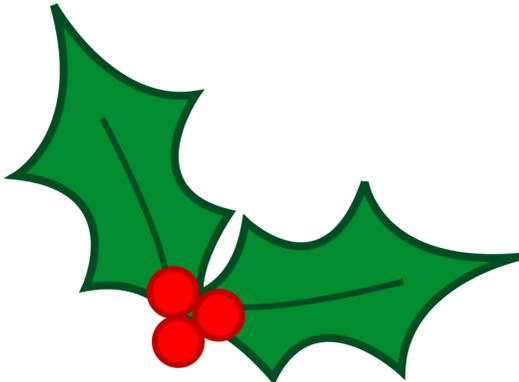
Thank you for helping to make the best of this past year. I hope that this holiday season brings back fond memories of Sokol friends, and that we will all appreciate our Sokol Family for a long time to come.

We're not yet sure when we will re-open, or even further when things will go back to normal, but we will work to safely return to each other soon.

Best wishes for a safe, healthy, and happy new year!

Brother Adam Wilt

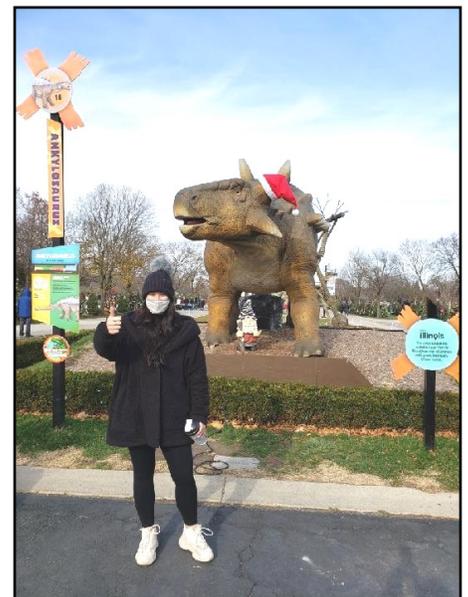
President, Sokol Spirit



*Newsletter Editor's note:* Thank you to our leaders, the Board of Instructors, members, participants, and families for your flexibility and for making lemonade out of lemons this year. We look forward to the 'normal' Bro. Wilt mentions above and look forward to seeing you in the new year. Looking forward to 2021

## Trim-A-Tree – November 28 – Brookfield Zoo

Some things about this year have changed but, luckily, some have stayed the same. Sokol Spirit was happy to be able to continue its long-standing holiday tradition of decorating the Sokol Spirit tree at Brookfield Zoo. Several Sokol Spirit coaches and families came out to decorate the tree with ornaments made by children in our Sokol classes. It looks fabulous! If you visit the zoo, please stop by and see the Sokol Spirit tree, spot #131 in the East Mall.



## 'Wheely' Good News

Congratulations go to our Wheel's coach, Emily Temmer, for winning first place in the women's division at the October 18th Chicago Open Wheels Gymnastic meet. Emily started her training at Sokol Spirit under our fantastic Wheels instructor, John Bazata, and has continued to excel on this apparatus. USA Wheel Gymnastics plans to send a Gym Wheel Team to the World Championship in New York in July 2021 and Emily has been chosen for that team. Way to go, Emily!

## Stirin' the Pot



Thank you to all who took part in Sokol Spirit's first Spaghetti Dinner Take-Out event on November 7. Although we were not able to enjoy the camaraderie we always find at the dinners, the food was excellent as usual. Hats off to the cooks who spent several days perfecting the sauce and preparing all the food, and the volunteer members who coordinated the event, shopped for the ingredients, and helped with serving the dinners in the drive-thru. Thanks also to those who donated or ordered off of the menu. I hope you enjoyed it as much as my family did!

## COVID Grant

The American Sokol Foundation Committee has recently made funds available for Sokol Units to alleviate expenses associated with reopening gyms during the pandemic. We are happy to announce that Sokol Spirit has been awarded \$325 towards the purchase of COVID prevention supplies to open our gym. The health and safety of our community is important to us, and these funds go a long way in helping us achieve this. Thank you to the American Sokol Foundation Committee for their support.

For sale: One Lifetime Portable Basketball hoop.. Asking \$200 (Original cost over \$400). Used only indoors – Like new. If interested, email Bro. Bob Barcal at [rrbarcal@sokolspirit.org](mailto:rrbarcal@sokolspirit.org). See the photo in the October newsletter.



# Have you heard...?

Tell us about Sokol Spirit member news:  
[SPIRITNEWS@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:SPIRITNEWS@HOTMAIL.COM) ~ 708.370.7335



Recently, members Sue and Ken Kozelka celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in the Sokol lower hall, the same place they had their wedding reception 50 years ago! Their children arranged for the surprise and even ran COVID tests for everyone in the family so they could all be together to celebrate.

Congrats to the happy couple!



## “The Many Faces of Sokol”

*Presented by Sis. Joan Sedlacek – ASO Membership Chairman – at the recent Central District Educational seminar*

In search of Sokols. As part of the worldwide organization with a current membership listing, this shouldn't be a difficult task. Unfortunately, over the past few years, units have disbanded, buildings have been lost to fire, highways, poor neighborhoods, a decreasing number of members who can provide the tremendous amount of work needed to retain a building or an increase of members in a need of a larger building.

Eleven years ago, Sis Sylvia Laznovsky of Ennis, Texas had the idea of a pictorial collection of Sokol halls. I was enlisted and since then have been involved in this fascinating aspect of Sokol history. Some halls are virtually abandoned. Some are lovingly cared for and some exist in only old pictures.

We began by taking pictures of present buildings using the unit listings in the March issue of the publication. From there I started going through books, year by year, making copies. Bro. Chuck Borvansky would always say “Are you making copies again? What are you going to do with all of them?”. Well, Chuck, what I did with them was make a record of 116 years of units and where they were. I found enough information to be able to ask you how many units were formed and I will. Do you know how many units have been listed in the ASO publication over the years? 210 combined and 54 women's units. Do you know what districts no longer exist? Chicago 1894-1898, Southwestern 1932-1940, and Northern 1962-last year. What units have been the seat of the Central District? Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Cedar Rapids and now Brookfield. How many units have been in the CD? 66 units.

Can you name the states that have had units? California, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Mass, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Washington DC, and Wisconsin.

In looking for buildings we have found fascinating histories and stories of the buildings, the people and the sacrifices to have the halls we take for granted. Many units shared buildings with other Czech or Slovak organizations, usually a CSPS or ZCBI lodge. They shared a building and members and worked toward a common goal - being good Americans while keeping their ethnic ties strong. Another important consideration - establishing and maintaining a language school for the children. The Braidwood Bohemian School was the only one in Illinois, outside Chicago, teaching a foreign language, at the time. Now when we talk among ourselves, we sound like we are using some foreign language. We know what the letters mean, but, and sometimes it's fun to watch other people get glassy-eyed, many people don't. You see - Sokol members who belong to the CSPS and ZCBI. Now the CSPS has become CSA and the ZCBI has become WFLA, more recently pronounced “Woof-la” and in Texas they have the SPJST and the KJT, among others. We have the BOI and the BOT or BOD and, well, you get the idea. We have to remember to explain to the new people and parents what the letters mean.

In Coal City, the year 1900 held great excitement and promise for the Czech community. They had sold enough shares at \$5 a share at 2% interest to buy a property and build the Bohemian National Hall. Coal City, as can be imagined, was a home of miners. They lived in a concentrated area and because they raised so many geese the area became known as Goose Alley. The miners didn't earn much from their hard, dangerous work but they spared enough and cared enough to build the large hall. Having a place to be together, a place for Sokol, a place for their children to learn the Czech language and customs, and a place they could speak without having to worry about English was important to them and worthy of any sacrifice. The Bohemian National hall, also called the New Opera House, still stands and, ironically, houses a fitness on the second floor.

This article will conclude in a future issue. Enjoy the photos on the next page. Thank you to Sis. Sedlacek.



ČES. NAR. SIN  
 COAL CITY ILLINOIS  
 SOKOLSKA JEONOTA HORNÍK  
 1892-1896

Sis. Vera Wilt adds: The banner hanging on the building in the photo above translates as: "Equality - Harmony - Fraternity" which is the motto for CSA Fraternal Life. In 1900 at the time of the top photo, they would still have been the CSPA, the oldest of the organizations that merged in the 1930s to form the CSA. CSPA = Česko Slovanska Podporující Společnost or Czecho Slovanic Protective Society. The photo below is from 1992.

"ČES. NAR. SIN"  
 BOHEMIAN HALL  
 OR  
 NEW OPERA HOUSE  
 BUILT 1900  
 COAL CITY, ILLINOIS



As promised in our last newsletter, Bro. Jim Hantak adds to the previous article with his experience in Coal City and this more recent photo.

Known locally as the Bohemian Hall it was the home of Sokol Hornik from 1892 to 1896. Hornik is Czech for "miner" which is fitting due to the fact that the area was big in coal mining from the 1880's through the 1950's. In the top center are the letters Ces. Nar. Sin. which would be an abbreviation of Ceska Narodni Sin or Czech National Hall.

When Joe Placek and Jim were there they talked to a local who stated that over the years the building has been a dance and banquet hall, opera house, roller skating rink and a commercial weight-lifting gym. Nowadays the bottom floor is a pharmacy and vita-

min shop and the second floor has apartments. Quite a lot of history and as he said: the building just screams "Sokol". Jim adds: In April 2021 my wife and I will (hopefully) be staying at a cabin near St. Louis and I plan on looking for another former Sokol Hall in Edwardsville.

## Member news from Financial Secretary, Sis. Dorothy Becker

Dues for 2021 are payable now on [sokolspirit.org](http://sokolspirit.org). Letters will be arriving soon to those who have not yet paid either through class registration or through our website. We really need your support this year due to lower than normal class enrollments and cancellation of several of our fundraisers due to Covid-19. Please help us by paying your dues as soon as possible. Thank you.

## Support Our Community Charity Partners – December 17 – 5:30-7:30pm

Every holiday season Sokol Spirit supports charity organizations in our community. This year we haven't been able to collect donations as easily due to our gym classes being paused in response to the recent pandemic surge.

***If you'd still like to donate, please stop by the Sokol Spirit gym on Thursday December 17, from 5:30pm-7:30pm.***

We will have some "elves" on site ready to collect the items you'd like to donate-curb side and contactless!

These are two local groups we are supporting this season:

***St. Barbara's Food Pantry*** are welcoming non-perishable food donations.

***Rotary Club of LaGrange-Secret Santa Program*** is welcoming gifts of toys, clothes and books for all ages-warm hats, gloves and scarves are a great donation!

## Next Virtual World Beer Club – December 18



There will be no World Beer Club at Sokol Spirit until further notice, but we will be having a Virtual WBC this month. See your Sokol friends you may not have seen for a long time. Earlier this year, 28 families from 5 states joined us for WBC. If you're from far away, join us to get a little taste of what WBC is about. Please check email and the website closer to the 18th for the Zoom login information.

**Hope you will join us on Friday, December 18, 8pm.  
You don't need a mask, and it's BYOB :).**

## ~ MEMORIAL FUND ~



In memory of Fred and Bess Anthony  
*from Marianne Ronquillo. . . . \$25.00*

In Memory of Bro. George Lacina  
*from Marilyn Michyeta. . . . \$25.00*

In Memory of Sis. Millie Pultorak  
*from Helen Sevcu . . . . . \$25.00 from Marilyn Michyeta. . . . \$25.00*

In memory of John R. Satek  
*from Kathryn and George Dvorak . . . . . \$25.00 from Linda Dvorak . . . . . \$25.00*



## ~ NEWSLETTER FUND ~

In memory of Bro. George Lacina, Sis. Millie Pultorak and Jay Satek *from Ellie Babka. . . \$50.00*

**Please send any Memorial Fund and Newsletter Fund donations to the address in the footer on the front page.**



## Holiday Greetings



All Sokol Friends: Veselé Vánoce (Happy Christmas) and wishing us all a far better New Year!!! Ellie Babka

Happy Holidays! Let's hope 2021 is a better year than most of 2020 has been.  
Nazdar! Sis. Marie Ptacek

Veselé Vánoce a Štastný Nový Rok! The Barcal Family

Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for a Happy, Healthy 2021! The Zitko Family

Merry Christmas and Happy 2021 to all our Sokol friends. The Becker Family

Veselé Vánoce a Štastný Nový Rok! Diana, Bruce and EllenJeanne

Wishing everyone a healthy and safe 2021. Peace, Jacki & Blaine Rada

Happy Holidays to all my Sokol friends and family! Joanne Bazata

Be thankful for all the Merry Christmases and Happy New Years we've had!  
Helen Sevcu

I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year! Carol Shrofe

Merry Christmas to All and a happy, *healthy* New Year! Alex, Howie & Mackenzie Maskill

Merry Xmas and Happy New Year! Marilyn Michyeta



Nazdar - Happy Holidays! The Vanek Family

Our warmest wishes for Happy Holidays!  
Chuck and Carol Rocush, Scott, Cara and McAna Craft  
Colleen, Cali and Chaz Swinarski,  
CJ, Gina, Mila, AJ and Audrey Rocush  
Casey and Lindsey Rocush

Thank you for your Holiday Greetings  
and donations to Sokol Spirit!



## Calendar of Events

**Recurring meetings** All members welcome to the Unit meeting!

First Wednesday Sokol Spirit Unit Meeting 7:30 pm

Third Monday Sokol Spirit BOI Meeting 7:30 pm

*All meetings will be virtual/remote meetings until further notice.*

*Check your email or the website for Zoom links.*

amazon smile



You shop. Amazon gives.

## Choose "Smile"

As you do your online holiday shopping, you may be asking:

**How can I easily support Sokol Spirit without wearing a mask?**

We've got the answer for you: *Amazon Smile*. Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), choose "Sokol Spirit" as your charity, and then shop as you normally would.



Sokol Spirit gets a portion of the sale. Remember to use *Amazon Smile*, and tell your family and friends about it, too.

*We wish you all safe and healthy holidays,  
and look forward to welcoming you back to  
Sokol Spirit in 2021.*

*Veselé Vánoce a Šťastný Nový Rok! (Czech)  
Happy Christmas and Happy New Year!*



Don't forget to check in at the gym: [www.facebook.com/sokolspirit](https://www.facebook.com/sokolspirit)



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