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# SOKOL TIMES

APRIL 11, 2013

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## From the President's View

As I write this article, spring has finally arrived, the winter snows melted, and spring flowers are beginning to poke through the garden soil. The earth has come back to life after a long, cold winter.

Our Supreme Lodge and its various committees have been extremely active through the long winter. Our Futures Committee recommended exploring prospects of merger with another fraternal. The Supreme Lodge approved the concept and began this exploration in the fall.

The Supreme Lodge has been concerned with the declining sales of insurance policies and our increasingly aging membership. Roughly one-third of our members are over age 70. There is not a sufficient number of new members joining

(Continued on Page 6)



Joseph Bielecki

## Sokol USA proposes merger with GBU Financial Life

### AGREEMENT OF MERGER

This agreement is entered into by and between: GBU Financial Life herein referred to as GBU; and Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol USA herein referred to as Sokol USA.

### RECITALS

1. GBU is a fraternal benefit society organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Its principal place of business is in the City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

2. Sokol USA is a fraternal benefit society organized and existing under the laws of the State of New Jersey. Its principal place of business is in the City of East Orange, New Jersey.

3. The Board of Directors for GBU and Sokol USA have agreed that a merger of the two organizations would be desirable as a means of providing increased financial security for their members with a reduced administrative cost.

4. This instrument, after appropriate authorization has been given, will be executed by each of the parties and submitted to the Department of Insurance of Pennsylvania and to the Department of Insurance of New Jersey for approval and filing.

### AGREEMENTS

1. Title to all assets of Sokol USA, real, personal, or mixed, shall pass to GBU, and all such ledger assets shall be assigned their respective book values as of the effective date of the merger. The officers of Sokol USA will cooperate with GBU and perform all necessary acts to accomplish the transfer of assets. An authenticated copy of this agreement shall constitute authorization for that purpose.

2. GBU will assume all liabilities of Sokol USA, which exist at the effective date of the merger. In addition to claim and reserve liabilities, this shall include all agency contracts and commission schedules relating to the business in force as such date.

3. A certificate of assumption for each certificate of Sokol USA outstanding and in force on the effective date of the merger shall be mailed by GBU to each certificate owner at that person's last known address, as shown by Sokol USA's records. The assumption certificate will constitute acceptance by GBU of all certificate terms, including reinstatement rights. Participation in the divisible surplus of GBU after the effective date of the merger shall be determined by GBU in the same manner as for all other GBU plans of insurance.

4. After excluding the book value of the Sokol USA Home Office, certain mortgages and other invested assets, and after providing the necessary safety margin adjustment as determined by the actuary, the excess unassigned surplus over and above GBU's solvency ratio at the effective date of the merger will belong to the members of Sokol USA and will

### FROM THE SUPREME SECRETARY

The Supreme Lodge of the S.G.U. SOKOL of the U.S.A. has entered into an agreement of merger with GBU Financial Life, a Pittsburgh-based fraternal benefit society. A copy of the agreement is published in this issue of the Sokol Times as notice to the membership.

Your Supreme Lodge has worked tirelessly to find the best course of action for the future of Sokol USA. We have examined many options and merger candidates. We believe this merger is in the best interest for our entire membership as well as for maintaining our Sokol programs.

The process of merger requires approval of the membership of both Societies as well as the approval of the Insurance Departments of the States of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Our upcoming XXIV Sokol USA Convention, to be held at the Sands Hotel in Bethlehem, Pa., on July 28 -31, 2013, is of extreme importance. Please be sure your Lodge or District is represented. The materials for the Convention have been mailed to every Lodge and District. If your lodge or district has not received the convention material, please contact Headquarters immediately.

We recognize that this subject of merger will elicit many questions from our membership. It is our intent to make ourselves, and/or other Supreme Lodge Officers, available to attend Lodge or District meeting prior to our convention to address any issue or answer questions that the membership may have pertaining to this matter. Lodge or District Officers should contact Headquarters to reserve a date to have a Supreme Lodge representative attend your meeting and discuss the merger. Thank you.

Nazdar!  
Milan S. Kovac  
Supreme Secretary

be used for their exclusive benefits. Excess unassigned surplus as of the effective date of the merger will be applied in the following manner: 1. The Board of Sokol USA will establish an endowment for the benefit of the new Sokol USA district and fraternal programs. 2. The balance of the excess surplus will be utilized to purchase paid-up life benefits for such an amount as each Sokol USA member's interest appears based on actuarial principals to maintain equity.

5. The surviving organization shall be GBU, which shall continue doing business under its present name and at its present address. A Sokol USA district will be chartered by GBU upon the merger of GBU and Sokol USA. All districts and lodges of Sokol USA will remain under the supervision of the newly established Sokol USA district. The Sokol USA Home Office will remain operational until all records and computer files are transferred to GBU. After the transfer is completed, The Sokol USA Home Office will be

(Continued on Page 6)

## Debnarik celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> birthday



Attending the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party for Pauline Debnarik (center), President of Trenton Lodge 59, are Emily Punctatz and Marty Polacek.

See Story on Page 4.

# SOKOL TIMES

official organ of the  
**SLOVAK GYMNASIAC UNION SOKOL  
OF THE USA**

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## SOKOL USA DISTRICT MCT SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, April 28, 2013  
1 PM

Clarion Hotel  
Route 28 North, Exit 14

### Agenda

Sokol USA Convention  
Officers Report  
Lodge and District Reports

*We trust all lodges will be represented.*

Nazdar!  
Patricia A. Blistan  
Recording Secretary

## DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED

### To the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund

From Sokol USA Lodge 15, Yonkers, N.Y. \$100.00  
*In memory of deceased members*

From Dorothy Studnicka Erickson of Rolling Meadows, Ill. \$25.00  
*In memory of Mildred Mihalik*

### To the Sokol USA Gymnastic Fund

From Harvey & Toni (Kozar) Johnson of Allentown, Pa. \$100.00  
*In memory of Marie Kozar*

From Gregory & Michele Kozar, Libertyville, Ill. \$50.00  
*In memory of Marie Kozar*

From Sokol USA Lodge 15, Yonkers, N.Y. \$100.00  
*In memory of deceased members*

## BOONTON SOKOL

301 Pine St., Boonton, NJ

The Tricky Tray event scheduled for April 14 has been Cancelled.

## LODGE 2 SOKOL USA BRIDGEPORT CONNECTICUT ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP

Lodge 2, Bridgeport, Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol, has continued its scholarship program for high school graduates, it was announced by Lodge President Miguel Alicea. "In 2012, we awarded three high school students, one from Bunnell High School in Stratford and the other two from Trumbull High School, Connecticut, \$1,000 scholarship awards. We will offer up to two \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors accepted for admission to an accredited four-year college/university who are Slovak or Carpatho-Russian descent and residents of Bridgeport, Stratford, Trumbull, Shelton or Milford, Connecticut," said Alicea.

Applicants must complete the official Application for Scholarship Award and submit it with requested documentation to

the Lodge's Secretary by May 1<sup>st</sup>. The Award must be applied to tuition or the purchase of text books in the pursuit of higher education.

"Criteria to be used in judging are overall merits of applicants, cumulative grade average, community activities, college acceptance, financial need and essay content," he continued.

"The essay content," said Lodge Secretary John Kamenitsky, "is somewhat unique. Rather than the usual 'why do I want this award,' we are asking the applicants to discuss the history, culture or traditions of Slovak or Carpatho-Russian heritage or stories about their ancestors in Slovakia."

"We hope to encourage the applicants to study the history, customs and traditions of their forefathers in Slovakia," he concluded.

Applications were sent to all high schools and churches in the area and are available from the Lodge at [jkamenitsky@snet.net](mailto:jkamenitsky@snet.net). Entries for consideration must be forwarded by May 1 to:

Sokol USA Lodge 2 – Bridgeport  
c/o John Kamenitsky, Secretary  
485B Commanche Lane  
Stratford, CT 06614  
or  
E-mail: [jkamenitsky@snet.net](mailto:jkamenitsky@snet.net)

Founded in 1895, the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol is a national fraternal benefit society established to promote physical culture, education, patriotism and support and aid to its members. Young men from Bridgeport and New York City became friends during gymnastic competitions and founded the Society. The Society is a member of the American Fraternal Alliance of the United States of America.



Do you know the average  
person gains  
1-2 pounds over the holidays?

Well... WALK IT OFF!!!

## Sokol Healthy Heart Walking Club

Benefits include:

Reducing your stress level      Lowering your risk of heart disease  
Controlling your weight      Controlling your blood pressure

Sign up for Sokol's Healthy Heart Walking Club  
by sending your name, mailing address  
and home lodge to:



Brandi Kovac  
280 East 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Apt. 9A  
NY, NY 10009



OR email: [BKKovac@aol.com](mailto:BKKovac@aol.com)

You will receive a free Sokol pedometer  
and a Healthy Heart mileage chart.

You are responsible for recording your mileage.  
Walk with fellow Sokol members, or on your own.  
Contact Brandi when you reach a milestone and get a reward!

## Maleski named 2013 Fraternalist of the Year by FSGP

Congratulations to our Sokol Sister Cynthia Maleski, who was named 2013 Fraternalist of the Year by the Fraternal Societies of Greater Pittsburgh at a testimonial banquet on Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> in Pittsburgh, Pa. The Fraternal Societies of Greater Pittsburgh is an association of 21 fraternal benefit societies. This trade association has been in existence for over 68 years.

Cynthia is a lifelong member of Sokol USA's New Kensington Lodge 130. She is a widely-recognized expert in insurance law and served in a Cabinet-level post as the Insurance Commissioner during the term of the late Governor Robert P. Casey. During her tenure,

Cynthia led the implementation of the first Children's Health Insurance Program in the United States. She also tightened solvency standards for insurance companies and achieved accreditation for the Pennsylvania Insurance Department for the first time in its history. She was also instrumental in Pennsylvania's adoption of the Model Fraternal Benefit Code.

In addition to her prior tenure as Insurance Commissioner, she served as Legal Counsel and Senior Executive for Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh and Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield. She also has operated her own law practice. Presently,

Cynthia is the National President of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies' Association, headquartered in the Cleveland area with over 400 branches nationwide, over 100,000 insurance certificates in force and more than \$700 million in assets.

Additionally, Cynthia has been involved in fraternal and Slovak community organizations for many years. She has engaged in activities regarding the advancement of women, children's issues, human rights, cultural diversity and economic development.

Many congratulations to Cynthia on being named FSCP Fraternalist of 2013!

## Sokol USA National Gymnastics Department Conference Call Meeting

Thursday, September 13, 2012 – 8:00 PM, EST

(Continued from March 2013)

### Sokol Farrell/Svätopluk

Director of Men: Stephen Banjak

Director of Women: Bibiana Murcko

List the nights on which you hold **Sokol classes** & indicate which group(s) gym: **Girl's/Boy's** 5 to 11 years, Thursdays from 6:00 to 7:15 PM **Juniors/Seniors Competitive Gymnastics Class:** 12 years and older, Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. **Calisthenics** all classes Sunday afternoons

Indicate numbers of any additional non-Sokol participants & describe the programs: **Tuesday Evenings:** Slovak Language and Culture Classes open to anyone

List any fundraisers you have conducted this year: St. Nicholas Party, Chocolate Candy Bar Sale

List the number of participants you had in each of the following: Sokolfest XXVI 25, XV All Sokol Slet (Prague) 3

Describe events in your lodge, district or community in which your gymnasts participated: Active "Sister Sokol" relationship with T.J. Sokol Vranov in Slovakia; maintain website: sokolfarrell.org ; publish "Sokol Farrell Newsletter" three times/year.

### Monessen Lodge 47

Director: Charity Ruhl

Assistant Director: Ron Moffit

Gymnasts (Indicate number of **Sokol members only** in each group):

Sokolettes 25, Junior Girls 25, Sr. Women 15, Sokolads 1, Junior Boys 0, Sr. Men 10, Tots, Cheerleaders 20, Instructors 9 plus 8 other volunteers, 150 class participants

List the nights on which you hold **Sokol classes** & indicate which group(s) gym: **Sundays:** Level 5 - 9 competitive gymnastics; **Mondays:** Level 4 **Tuesdays:** Level 5 - 9 gymnastics, Youth Cheerleaders; **Fridays:** Level 4 - 9 competitive gymnastics **Wednesdays:** Tini cheerleaders

Indicate numbers of any additional non-Sokol participants & describe the programs: **Mondays:** Level 3/Future Stars gymnastics, Level 1 & 2 recreational gymnastics, Tumbling, Karate, Playtime with Parents - morning, Summertime morning tumbling and gymnastics; **Tuesdays:** Level 1 & 2 recreational gymnastics, Tumbling; **Wednesdays:** Preschool gymnastics, Tini cheerleaders, Level 1 & 2 recreational gymnastics, Advanced tumbling, Karate; **Thursdays:** Boys gymnastics, Preschool gymnastics, Tumbling; **Saturday:** gym rental and birthday parties

List any fundraisers you have conducted this year: Cheerleaders performed hoagie sales, tag days, mixed bags, candles, coffee, Joe Corbi's pizza, t-shirts, and gyro cards.

Gymnasts: The Polar Bear Meet, Food Drive, Basket Raffle for the Ryan Burkholder Scholarship Fund, "We Got Your Back" back pack fundraiser

List the number of participants you had in each of the following: USAG Competition(s): 25, Cheer: 20

Describe events in your lodge, district or community in which your gymnasts participated: **The Annual Polar Bear Meet was held on January 28 and 29, 2011. 350 competitors participated in the meet ranging from level 3 to level 9. We were happy that gymnasts from Leechburg were able to attend. We also awarded high all around awards in honor of Martha Kunka, Betty Milanchak, and Joanne Giannini. Special awards were also given in honor of Ryan Burkholder and a friend of the gym. Many gymnasts qualified for western PA sectionals and state championships. We had several sectional and state champions as well. We also had 3 graduating senior gymnast / coaches, Chelsey Billick, Paige Allen and Caroline Tucker.**

**The competitive cheer squad attended a National Championship in Hershey and placed very well. The held try-outs for the upcoming season in May**

## XXXIV CONVENTION OF THE S.G.U. SOKOL USA

JULY 27 - 31, 2013  
SANDS HOTEL  
BETHLEHEM, PA

*This is a reminder to all lodges and districts to begin preparation for the election of lodge and district delegates. More details to come.*



## PENNSYLVANIA FRATERNAL ALLIANCE 2013 SCHOLARSHIP

The Scholarship Committee of the Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance is announcing that the 2013 applications are now available for the annual Scholarship Program. Applications can be obtained through eligible members of a Fraternal Benefit Society belonging to the Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance or by visiting the website of the Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance at [www.pafraternal.org](http://www.pafraternal.org).

Applicants must:

- Be a resident of Pennsylvania and a member of a Fraternal Benefit Society that is a member of the Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance.
- Be a 2013 high school graduate attending an accredited college, university, trade school, etc. in the summer/fall of 2013 as a full-time student (12 semester credits).
- Obtain a recommendation letter from their Fraternal Benefit Society.
- Submit a 500-word essay on: **"The impact of a Fraternal Organization on your daily life, family and community."**

Return the completed application, essay and letter of recommendation, postmarked no later than September 1, 2013.

At least one \$500 scholarship will be awarded. Additional scholarships may be awarded depending upon available funds.

If you or your society has not received the information on the Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance Scholarship, please contact Charlotte L. Androckitis, FIC, Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance Scholarship Chairperson, at the Polish Union of the US of NA, P.O. Box 660, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18703-0660. You can also call 570-823-1611 or e-mail [cla@polishunionusa.com](mailto:cla@polishunionusa.com)

**We had a Food Drive in November and raised a few hundred pounds of food for the Westmoreland County Food Bank. Children were allowed to "open gym" for 2 hours with a donation of a non-perishable food item.**

**We also participated in the world record attempt - Most People Kicking up to a Handstand at One Time" on National Gymnastics day in September.**

## Pauline Debnarik, President of Trenton Sokol Lodge 59, celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> birthday

Sunday is always a good day for family celebrations. With a partly cloudy day in Trenton and slightly below average temperatures, November 25, 2012, was a special day. It was Pauline Debnarik's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Pauline received letters of congratulations from President and Mrs. Barack Obama, Governor Chris Christie, Congressman Chris Smith, a New Jersey Legislative proclamation from Legislative representatives Senator Linda R. Greenstein and Assemblymen Daniel R. Benson and Wayne P. DeAngelo of the 14<sup>th</sup> District and a Hamilton Township municipality Proclamation from Mayor John F. Bencivengo.

Pauline's celebration started at Trenton's St. John Slovak Lutheran Church, where she was joined by her son Nick Jr. who did the readings, his wife Nancy and grandsons Nick III and Mike. Pauline has been an active member for 67 years. She is the oldest and only member to reach the age of 100 in the 105-year history of the church. She was one of three birthdays celebrated that week.

Following church service, it was off to Villa Mannino Restorante in Bordentown for food and refreshment with family and friends. A buffet of chicken, fish and pork was served. Renewing and reliving old times was the rule of the day. Her niece Emily Punctatz and nephew Marty Polacek attended. Millie Polacek, the remaining surviving niece, could not attend due to poor health. Marty's mother Sue and her husband Martin brought Pauline from Czechoslovakia to America in 1936. She lived with them "down neck" at 68 Kossuth Street in Newark for the next nine years.

Emily, a long-time officer in the United Lutheran Society Number 60 where Pauline is a member, spoke telling how good it was to see her aunt reach 100 and for everyone to get together. Since Emily is 96, the return thought was we will have another party when Emily turns 100. Trenton Lodge 59 Secretary Helen Trapp, one of the three birthdays turning 90, enumerated Pauline's long service to the Lodge in many offices and fundraisers. Pauline has been an officer for the past 25 years.

Since older family members couldn't drive the necessary distance, younger members performed the task. Steven Polacek brought his father Marty and mother Betty. Nancy and Dick Hines brought Nancy's mother Emily. Emily's son Ivan and his wife Shelly attended as did two grandchildren of Pauline's brother Martin, Supreme Lodge Secretary Milan Kovac and his sister Ethel Nardone. Attending from



Pauline Debnarik, President of Trenton Sokol Lodge 59, celebrated 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 25, 2012.

Pauline's late husband Nick's side was Eunice Prokop, granddaughter of Nick's mother Josephine's sister Mary, Kathy Kralik daughter of first cousin Adele with their husbands Rusty Arnold and Gerd Langford and Nick's sister Lottie's son Bob Kato and his wife Edie from Alabama. Bob contacted the family after Superstorm Sandy struck inquiring of their well being and if anything was planned for his Aunt Pauline's birthday. When told of the arrangements, he said they would attend. A surprise meeting for all the cousins since Bob left the area more than 50 years ago and Bob could identify a 1947 picture Eunice brought with her.

Cloudy with possible light rain and temperatures ranging from 37 degrees to 46 degrees was the Wednesday, November 25, 1912, weather forecast for the village of Kosariska, in Upper Hungary, Kingdom of Hungary of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Pauline was born in Kosariska, the seventh child of the eight Elizabeth (Fajnor) produced. Her father Martin Placko was married twice, having five children by his first wife with 35 years difference between Pauline and her oldest half sibling. Kosariska in 1912 was a small farming village containing 11 families named Placko but not all related. Today Kosariska has a population of 429.

Pauline lived her early life in Kosariska doing chores on the farm as her age permitted. Her family belonged to the local Lutheran Church, a church whose Pastor was Pavol Stefanik, father of World War 1 Slovak national hero Milan Resislav Stefanik. Pauline attended the local Slovak one-room school house that had six grades taught by one teacher.

On a late April 1922 day when

she was 9, her father asked her mother not to send the children to school today. They were his last words. He waved to the children and died. He had spoken many times to her of the future where the modern amenities of planes, trains and automobiles would be the norm. Pauline's mother died seven weeks before her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. She stayed on the farm for a year with older brother Stephen and his wife Judith. For the next five years, she worked as a live-in maid in a town about four miles away called Brezova; first for a local official and later a doctor.

Four siblings had come to America. Martin was the first, arriving in 1903, Beta in 1904, Anna in 1906 and Anna brought Susana to America in about 1916. Susana and her husband Martin Polacek, who first came to America in 1909, returned to the Kingdom of Hungary in 1914 and returned permanently to America in 1921, brought Pauline to America in 1936. She left Bremen, Germany, on November 13th aboard the SS Bremen and arrived in New York five days later. Pauline did not go through Ellis Island because she was sponsored. This meant her family had to pledge assets that she would not be dependent on the government for subsistence. Pledged items included home and other assets. Susana greeted her at the ship and took her to her home on Kossuth Street located in the "down neck" or "Ironbound Section" of Newark. Pauline, like many other Slovak women immigrants, obtained work as a maid. She worked for a wealthy family in Orange on Heywood Avenue and there started receiving the training in cooking and baking that later she would be so well known for.

In "down neck," she had a ready-made family and social circle reuniting with her brother and sisters and their children, many which were of similar age. She joined Zion Lutheran Church on 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Newark where her sisters Anna and Susana worshiped. Today Zion Lutheran Church has relocated to Clark. Although not a Sokol member, Pauline attended dinners, plays and dances at the Newark Lodge 12 Sokol Hall on Morris Avenue. Less than an hour's drive was Boonton Sokol Camp, always a good place to go in summer. With the lake, parade grounds, cabins for overnight and extended stays, dining facilities and hall, Sokols from everywhere migrated there for vacation or a day of fun and relaxation. And, of course, there was the spring located just across the road behind the Kurz student barracks where the water was ice cold year round. The water was so good, visitors filled jugs and took them home. Even after Pauline married and moved, Boonton Sokol Camp remained a staple for weekend day trips. At the end of the two-hour drive from Trenton, Pauline always found family members there.

It was on a visit prior to World War II that Pauline met her future husband Nick Debnarik who came from Trenton. The war interrupted the romance, but following Nick's discharge from the Navy they were married on April 21, 1945, at Zion Lutheran Church in Newark.

Pauline moved with her husband to Trenton, living with her father-in-law Joseph and his second wife Julia (Nick's mother died in 1933) at his home 531 Home Avenue. Pauline found employment within walking distance at the Scammell China Company located on Third Street

between Landing and Lalor streets. Leaving Scammell, she worked at the General Motors facility on Parkway Avenue in Ewing until her son was born. Nick returned to work as a machinist at John A. Roebling and Sons Steel and Wire. The next two years, they lived on Home Avenue. Pauline joined St. John Slovak Lutheran Church and became a member of Sokol. Both Nick and his father were already members of Sokol and Joseph was a participant in the 1910 Sokol Slet held in Trenton which was chaired by Michael Polacek, Martin's brother.

In 1947, Pauline and Nick purchased their own home located just outside the City of Trenton limits in Hamilton Township. The home was centrally located two blocks from an elementary school, a mile and a half from church and two miles from Nick's work. A half block away was a bus line. There, the following year, they brought their only child Nick Jr. Pauline devoted her time to being a full-time homemaker. Her skills in cooking and baking gave her instant acceptance at St. John's and Sokol where home style dinners were a normal mode of fundraising. Pauline became a naturalized citizen in 1942 and when the young son went to school Pauline also went to school taking English language night courses to enhance her communication skills.

Pauline's deep affection for her sister Susanna showed after she suffered a debilitating illness that left her paralyzed. For well over 10 years until Susanna's death Pauline and her family tried to make a weekly trip from Trenton to Hillside to visit her.

The long distance romance that was made even longer by  
(Continued on Page 7)



Giving their best wishes to Pauline Debnarik (center) at her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration were Supreme Secretary Milan Kovac and Trenton Lodge 59 Secretary Helen Trapp.



### SLOVAK HERITAGE PROGRAMS

The Western Pennsylvania Slovak Cultural Association presents the "Slovak Heritage Programs" on the first Monday evening of each month from 7-9 p.m. at the Mount Lebanon Public Library, 16 Castle Shannon Blvd., Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228. The events are free.

May 6: "Folk Customs of Eastern Slovakia." John Righetti will discuss the customs of East Slovaks and Rusyns. From Christmas and Easter to christenings, funerals, weddings, and fertility protection, rituals will be demonstrated with incantations.

June 3: "Overview of Slovak Folklore and Crafts." Larry Kozlowski will demonstrate some of his Slovak crafts and art as well as tell entertaining Slovak folklore.

October 7: "Uncle Andy." Don Warhola, the nephew of Andy Warhol, will reminisce about the times with his Uncle Andy.

### WPSCA OFFERS SUMMER SCHOLARSHIP

For the eighth consecutive year, WPSCA is offering a scholarship to attend the Summer Slovak Language and Culture program at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. WPSCA will award \$2,500 to cover transportation, tuition, room and board to the successful candidate. Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Must be a full-time college student
- Must be of Slovak heritage
- Must not have previously attended the program
- Must apply to Comenius University for acceptance
- Must be willing to attend WPSCA events when requested to discuss the program

The SAS Summer School is the oldest summer language school in Slovakia and is designed to enable students to improve and enhance their Slovak language competency as well as increase their knowledge of Slovak literature and culture.

For more information or for an application, contact Joe Senko at 412-531-2990. Completed applications must be received by WPSCA on or before April 15.

### SLOVAK-TOBEREST IS COMING BACK!

Due to its popularity, WPSCA is planning its third European beer tasting event. It is tentatively scheduled for October 5, 2013.

### LANGUAGE CLASSES

WPSCA is offering a basic Slovak language course. It will be held every Tuesday from April 16 to June 4 from 7 to 8:45 p.m. in Mt. Lebanon Public Library, 16 Castle Shannon Blvd., Pittsburgh, Pa. Tuition is free. The instructor is Bozena Hilko.

### SLOVAK GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

On Saturday, May 11, the WPSCA, in collaboration with the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, will host a seminar on Slovak genealogical research. The seminar will be presented by noted Slovak genealogist and author Lisa Alzo and will focus on local history, research tips and finding ancestral villages.

The four-hour workshop will be held from 1 to 5 p.m. in Room A of the Mt. Lebanon Public Library, 16 Castle Shannon Blvd., Mt. Lebanon, Pa., and will feature a roundtable session where everyone can discuss their research. Light refreshments will be served.

Admission is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members and must be paid in advance. Attendance is limited to 35 people. Reservations are required and can be made by calling Joe at 412-531-2990 or Albina at 412-343-5031. Participants are encouraged to bring documents, photographs and a laptop (not required) for the networking session.

## IS YOUR FAMILY COVERED?

Insurance coverage for all family members is an essential part of personal financial planning. Don't put off taking care of this responsibility.

See your lodge Financial Secretary or call Sokol Headquarters toll free at 1-888-253-0362 for additional information or membership applications.

## Sokol Camp - Potters Lake, Waitress Reunion



Above from left, Suzie Kohl from Lodge 96, Cudahy, Wis., Judy Papanek from Lodge 39/40W, Berwyn, Ill., and Jean Bagel from Lodge 306, Chicago, Ill., recently visited the exhibits at the Wisconsin Slovak Historical Museum in Cudahy, WI. Below, they enjoy looking at the dresses that were on display. Photos courtesy of Sister Darinka Kohl of Lodge 96, Cudahy, Wis.



# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW

(Continued from Page 1)

Sokol to replace the members who pass away. The Supreme Lodge was also concerned about the future continuity of the Gymnastic Department and its programs.

Several fraternal societies presented merger proposals which were heard, reviewed and discussed by the Supreme Lodge. The Supreme Lodge selected GBU as a merger partner and began intensive negotiations to secure a favorable merger agreement. A copy of that merger agreement is published in this Sokol Times so that all members may view its terms.

It was important to the Supreme Lodge that any proposed merger agreement was with a financially sound merger partner and would provide for the financial security of our policyholders, as well as the future continuity of the Gymnastic Department and our Sokol programs. As you review the merger document in this issue of the Sokol Times, you will see that great efforts have been made to achieve both goals. Policyholders will receive a premium and the agreement contains a funding mechanism for the Gymnastic Department. In addition, our Society will have input to the Board of Directors of the GBU by having an advisory representative on the Board. Also, our Gymnastic Directors will be members of the GBU Fraternal Activities Board and have input to that body. The GBU is a non-sectarian Society and has sound and strong finances.

The Supreme Lodge believes that this merger will secure the future for our Sokol members and our Sokol programs. Brother Kovac and I are willing to meet with any Lodge or Lodges that wish to discuss the proposed merger agreement. The merger agreement will be voted upon at the Sokol USA National Convention in Bethlehem, Pa., in July.

Until the July convention comes, I encourage you to ask any questions that you may have regarding the proposed merger agreement, to review it and, most importantly, to continue in your Sokol Lodges all of the various sports and fraternal activities which you have been doing.

Nazdar!  
Joseph Bielecki  
President, Sokol USA

## IN MEMORY

*Of our deceased Brother and Sister Sokols with a sincere expression of sympathy to their families from the Supreme Officers of Sokol U.S.A.*

**MARIE KOZAR** – (1915-2013) A member of Lodge 62, Allentown, Pa. She is survived by her two daughters.

**HELEN V. PUSKAS** – (1914-2013) A member of Lodge 30W, Allentown, Pa. She is survived by her children.

**CAROLINE KILARESKE** – (1923-2011) A member of Lodge 30W, Allentown, Pa. She is survived by her husband.

**JOHN LAYDA** – (1919-1992) A member of Lodge 30, Danbury, Conn. He is survived by his children.

**MILDRED MIHALIK** – (1913-2013) A member of Lodge 39/40W, Chicago, Ill. She is survived by her son.

**JANICE HUDAK** – (1931-2013) A member of Lodge 66W, Bethlehem, Pa. She is survived by her daughters.

**JOSEPH MATUS** – (1924-2013) A member of Lodge 93, Bethlehem, Pa. He is survived by his son and grandchildren.

**MICHAEL J. HARVILLA** – (1955-2013) A member of Lodge 93, Bethlehem, Pa. He is survived by his wife.

**CECILIA DOYLE** – (1921-2013) A member of Lodge 12, Newark, N.J. She is survived by her son.

**WILLIAM POLLACK** – (1923-2012) A member of Lodge 12, Newark, N.J. He is survived by his nieces and nephews.

**CHRISTINE MARIE RULL** – (1930-2013) A member of Lodge 500, East Orange, N.J. She is survived by her sisters.

**EUGENE DEMPSEY** – (1932-2012) A member of Lodge 214, Palmerton, Pa. He is survived by his son.

**WILLIAM MIHALA** – (1919-2013) A member of Lodge 93, Bethlehem, Pa. He is survived by his wife.

**MICHAEL PAVLOVICH** – (1932-2013) A member of Lodge 244, Westfield, Mass. He is survived by his daughters.

**RUTH FAKO** – (1934-2010) A member of Lodge 39/40W, Chicago, Ill. She is survived by her children.

## MERGER

(Continued from Page 1)

sold with the proceeds being invested by GBU along with its other invested assets. Once the realizable value of the excluded mortgages or other invested assets are determined, the proceeds will be used for the exclusive benefit of the members of the Sokol USA or Sokol USA district. Sokol USA Board of Directors will determine the method to allocate the proceeds for the benefit of the members of Sokol USA or the Sokol USA district.

6. The Sokol USA Supreme President, Supreme Vice President, Supreme Treasurer, Director of Women and Director of Men will be retained at their current remuneration for five years after the effective date of this agreement. Their duties and responsibilities will require them to promote and support fraternalism among the lodges of Sokol USA, Sokol USA district and GBU. In addition, they will be a member of the Advisory Board for five years.

7. The Sokol USA Supreme Secretary will be retained at his current remuneration for not more than two years after the effective date of the merger. His duties and responsibilities will be of limited service and only require that he promote and support fraternalism among the lodges of Sokol USA, Sokol USA district and GBU. In addition, he will be a member of the Advisory Board for five years at a mutually agreed upon remuneration.

8. To promote the membership and identity, Sokol USA will be identified as a division of GBU. This designation of Sokol USA as a division of GBU along with an appropriate Sokol USA logo will be utilized on correspondence to Sokol USA membership whenever possible. This designation will be continued for a term of five years at which point GBU may choose to extend the designation.

9. GBU will establish an Advisory Board consisting of the current Sokol USA Board members who shall meet quarterly for the purpose of promoting the welfare and advancement of all Sokol USA members, Sokol USA district, and Sokol USA lodges. Advisory Board members shall serve for five years, and will be compensated at their current compensation annually, plus out-of-pocket travel expenses in accordance with GBU's Travel and Expense Guidelines. The Sokol USA Advisory Board will also be offered the privilege to serve as the officers of the newly established district for five years from after the effective date of the merger. Districts and lodges of Sokol USA will be sub districts and sub lodges under this newly established district. GBU's fraternal department will work with this newly established district to ensure that Sokol USA district complies with the GTBU National and District Bylaws. However, Sokol USA sub districts and sub lodges will not be required to comply with GBU's district bylaws.

10. The Sokol USA President will become the Sokol USA advisor to GBU National Board of Directors and will attend the quarterly meetings of GBU's National Board of Directors as an ex-officio member. This individual will be compensated at the per diem rate established at GBU's National Convention for these services rendered. This position will terminate five years from the effective date of merger or sooner in the event that a Sokol USA member is appointed or elected to GBU's National Board according to the National Bylaws of GBU.

11. In accordance with GBU National Bylaws, Sokol USA will be represented at GBU's 2014 National Convention by five voting delegates elected by the members of the Sokol USA district. In addition, Advisory Board members that are not elected as delegates for the Sokol USA District will be invited to attend the convention as guests of GBU.

12. The GBU guidelines with respect to property owned by any lodge shall apply at all times. These guidelines require lodges that sell or dispense liquor to have the liquor license and the related business activity in a separate legal corporate entity not connected to GBU, the Sokol

USA district or a Sokol USA sub lodge. Secondly, if a sub lodge disbands or transfers as a whole to another sub lodge, all assets are to be transferred with the members via GBU's Home Office.

13. Sokol USA participating contracts will be paid the same dividend scale as other similar GBU contracts subject to the provision that allows GBU to reduce or eliminate dividends under the terms of the contract. All contracts are subject to the applicable state insurance regulations relating to fraternal insurance contracts.

14. The scholarship funds of Sokol USA may be disbursed at the discretion of the officers of the newly established Sokol USA district or may be contributed to the GBU Foundation.

15. GBU offers several fraternal benefit programs to its membership, including but not limited to scholarships and waiver of premium for senior members. The Sokol USA membership is eligible for all these programs once the merger is approved.

16. GBU will support the newly formed Sokol USA district and fraternal programs by contributing \$15,000 annually, payable to the Sokol USA district for five years after the effective date of this agreement.

17. GBU will pay the Sokol USA district a one-time membership award of \$10.00 per new members assigned to the Sokol USA district. This Awards Program, payable annually, will continue for five years after the Effective Date of this Agreement.

18. The Sokol USA district will receive from GBU the annual district dues at \$3.25 per year per member. The Sokol USA district may also participate in any other district/fraternal programs of GBU in accordance with the terms of the programs.

19. Sokol USA's Sports and Recreation Directors will have representation on the Fraternal Activities Committee of GBU, as ex-officio members.

20. It is the intent of the GBU to have the merger completed with 120 days of the signing of this agreement and the approval of each society's supreme governing body.

21. GBU and Sokol USA will bear their own expenses until the date of merger approval by the Insurance Departments of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. After the date of merger approval, all expenses will be the responsibility of GBU. No brokerage fees or commissions will be paid to any person or party in connection with the merger of GBU and Sokol USA.

22. The certificate records, journals, ledgers, and files of Sokol USA shall be retained by GBU for use in servicing the business assumed under this agreement. The officers and directors of Sokol USA, jointly and individually, agree that after the effective date of merger, all such records shall be the exclusive property of GBU.

23. The invalidity of any part of this agreement shall not affect the remainder. Changes in form which may be required by a department of insurance shall not require re-submission of this agreement to certificate owners, members, directors, or delegates.

This agreement has been executed by the respective parties for submission to those entitled to vote thereon the 27<sup>th</sup> day of February 2013.

<p>For GBU Financial Life:</p>  <p>Les Ann Hazen Chairman of the Board</p>  <p>James R. Stoker National Secretary/Treasurer, CEO</p>  <p>Matthew M. Blizan, Jr. National Vice President</p>	<p>For Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol USA:</p>  <p>Joseph S. Bielecki Supreme President</p>  <p>Milan S. Kovac Supreme Secretary</p>
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# 65<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SOKOL U.S.A. NATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT

May 18 to 19, 2013

Entry Fee Per Event:  
 Bowling \$ 9.00  
 Prize Fee \$ 9.00  
 Tournament Expense \$ 1.00  
 TOTAL \$20.00

The \_\_\_\_\_ Bowling Team

From Lodge \_\_\_\_\_  
 Of Sokol USA.

**COMBINATION ENTRY BLANK**

Team Entry Fee: \$80.00  
 Doubles Entry Fee: \$40.00  
 Singles Entry Fee: \$20.00  
 All Events Fee: \$ 1.00



**ENTRIES CLOSE: May 1, 2013**

Checks Payable to: Sokol 65<sup>th</sup> Bowling Tournament

Send Entries to: Mary Backus  
 42 Smith Road  
 Denville, NJ 07834

The undersigned captain hereby makes entry into the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual National Bowling Tournament of Sokol USA, May 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, and agrees to comply with the rules which govern the Sokol USA Tournament.

Boonton Lanes  
 720 Myrtle Avenue  
 Boonton, NJ 07005  
 973-355-0123

	Sanction #	Name	Avg	Event	Time	
1				TEAM		CAPTAIN: _____ LODGE: _____
2						ADDRESS: _____
3				SINGLES		CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
4						TELEPHONE: _____
				DOUBLES		

	Sanction #	Name	Avg	Event	Time	
1				TEAM		CAPTAIN: _____ LODGE: _____
2						ADDRESS: _____
3				SINGLES		CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
4						TELEPHONE: _____
5				DOUBLES		

Team Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Lodge Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

## Trenton Lodge President celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> birthday

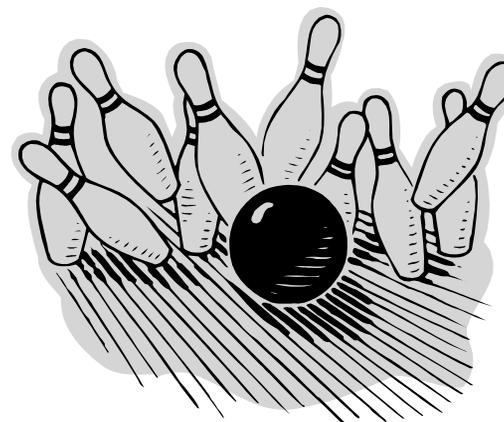
(Continued from Page 4)  
 World War II and resulted in 25 years of happy and productive marriage came to an end when Nick passed away in October 1970 after a short illness. Pauline faced new challenges. She obtained part-time employment to increase her Social Security benefits and although she had a drivers' license had not driven in years and had to learn how to drive again. Trenton Lodge 59 was also changing. The members who had made the hall the center of their social life were aging and younger members did not view the hall as a centerpiece of social activity. The hall was sold in 1975. Members continued to have meetings and gatherings,

but no longer would have the responsibility to maintain a building. Nick Jr. married Nancy A. Murphy in 1984 and that union produced two grandsons. Pauline has lived long enough to see her grandsons reach maturity and they have the memories of knowing their grandmother.

Still able to live by herself in her own house, old age infirmities have slowed Pauline down to where she walks with a cane and has diminishing eye sight. Doctor visits are becoming more frequent and here she has become a celebrity of sorts. Whether visiting a doctor or from one of her rehabilitation stays

following hospitalization, they marvel at her determination and positive attitude. She is used by the medical staff as an example to others for what can be accomplished at advanced age. No longer driving, family and friends take her to church or shopping and she uses the county senior citizen transportation system to go to the senior center three times a week.

And then there is the Sokol motto: to be strong in mind and body. Being President of Lodge 59 for the past 12 years since the death of long time Lodge delegate Milan Karlik, Pauline exemplifies those qualities by the life she lives.



## ATTENTION SOKOL BOWLERS

The 65th Annual Sokol Bowling Tournament, hosted by Boonton Lodge 32, will be held on May 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. More details will appear in future issues.

Please save the date and plan to join us. We look forward to seeing our old friends and meeting new ones.

Nazdar  
 Boonton Lodge 32  
 Mary Backus  
 Marjo3732@aol.com

## LODGE 103 FARRELL OFFERS SCHOLARSHIP

Applications and eligibility requirements for the \$1,000.00 "Steve Banjak Memorial Scholarship" are available by downloading the three-page form from our web-site: <http://sokolfarrell.org>. Click on "News and Events" and "Scholarship." Deadline for receipt of completed applications by the Scholarship Committee is May 15, 2013.

Applications can also be received by writing to Brother Melvin Slezak, 6850 Seneca Road; Sharpsville, PA 16150-8418.

Brother Steve Banjak lived his whole life believing in and supporting the ideals of the Sokol movement founded by Dr. Miroslav Tyrs in the Czech Republic and established by Ivan Branislav Zoch in Slovakia.

Brother Banjak was active in the Sokol gymnasium in Farrell, Pa., since he was introduced to the organization when he was 14 years old, stopping only when his advanced age and health did not permit it. As President of Lodge 103, he led the lodge for a period of 50 years, seeing it become one of the most successful lodges in the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol, USA. Currently Lodge 103 has approximately 300 members. Brother Banjak also held almost every office in District Svätopluk, including President. In 1958, he was President of the Committee responsible for the very successful XIII Sokol USA Slet held in Cleveland, Ohio.

Upon his death in October 2006, the membership of the lodge unanimously voted to name this scholarship in his



Steve Banjak

honor as a way to remember him for his many years of service to Sokol. The first recipient of the scholarship was announced at the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the lodge held at the Radisson Hotel on May 20, 2006.

Recipients of the Steve Banjak Memorial Scholarship are:

- 2006 Oleksandra Banjak
- 2007 Oleksandra Banjak
- 2008 Katie Shebeck
- 2009 Lucia Murcko
- 2010 Robin Platte
- 2011 Bibiana Murcko
- 2012 Shared between Robin Platte and Bibiana Murcko

The Scholarship is available for download by following the links in the box above. The Scholarship will be announced at the Annual Meeting of Sokol USA Farrell, which is held on the first Sunday in June of each year. Applications are due to the Scholarship Chairman on or before May 15th of each year.

## Central Jersey at the Gym



Central Jersey gymnasts relax in the "pit" after a Friday night workout. From left in front are William Rehwinkel, John Koch, Robert Koch, Madeline Rehwinkel, Elizabeth Rehwinkel and Katherine Koch, and, in back, Julia Valentin, Ellen Kovac, Wanda Koch and Neechee Rehwinkel.

## FOURTH ANNUAL SOKOL USA FARRELL FOUR-PERSON OPEN GOLF SCRAMBLE



**SHENANGO LAKE GOLF CLUB**  
 99 Birchwood Drive  
 Transfer, PA 16154  
 June 8, 2013; 9 AM

**ENTRY FORMS:** All Sokol members and non-members are invited to participate in the **FOURTH ANNUAL SOKOL USA FARRELL OPEN FOUR-PERSON GOLF SCRAMBLE** at Shenango Lake Golf Club on **June 8, 2013. SHOTGUN START** is at 9:00 a.m.

**Registration Fee includes:** Green fee, cart, skins game, T-shirt, door prizes, line prizes, beverages, steak dinner, and food at the turn.

### FEATURING:

- Keys to a 2013 Chevrolet Camaro for the **FIRST** Hole-in-One on a designated par 3 
- \$5,000 Cash Prize for ANY Hole-in-One on a designated par 3



**Team Prizes (based on minimum of 25 teams)**  
 1<sup>st</sup> Prize: \$800 per team  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: \$400 per team  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: \$200 per team

**Entries Accepted on "First Come" basis. Limit of 30 teams.**

Information and entry forms can be downloaded by visiting <http://sokolfarrell.org> and clicking "News and Events" and "Golf Scramble" or by contacting Brother Tim Brandt, chairman; 1448 Hall Ave.; Sharon, PA 16146; Phone: 724-866-8553.

**29 TEAMS WERE ENTERED LAST YEAR.  
 ENTER NOW AND BEAT THE CUT OFF!**



## WHO NEEDS MONEY FOR COLLEGE?

High School Seniors planning to attend college or current college students, Sokol USA's **Milan Getting Scholarship** is available to Sokol USA members!

Education is never something that should take a back seat. Improve your financial ability to attend college by applying for the Milan Getting Scholarship. Each year, Sokol USA is proud to award the Milan Getting Scholarship to Sokol USA members who are furthering their education. Contact Sokol USA Headquarters by phone or e-mail (1-888-253-0362 or [SOKOLUSAHQ@aol.com](mailto:SOKOLUSAHQ@aol.com)) and obtain an application and get ready to enjoy one of the benefits of being a Sokol USA member.

Applications for the 2013-2014 academic year must be received at Sokol USA by April 1, 2013. New scholarship recipients will be announced by June 1, 2013.

**Reminder: All current Milan Getting Scholarship recipients must submit a scholarship renewal application each year by June 29<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Sokol USA headquarters with any questions.**