

SOKOL USA TIMES

FEBRUARY 14, 2019

PUBLICATION FOSTERING FRATERNAL, CULTURAL & PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES JULY 14, 1905



Entered as Second-Class Matter, February 7, 1980 at East Orange, New Jersey under the act of August 24, 1912, provided in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1918 authorized July 3, 1918

Two Milestones to Celebrate

On January 4, 2019, Falcon Gymnastics posted the following on Facebook: *Hard to believe it was 15 years ago today that we opened Falcon Gymnastics and reopened Sokol Lodge 47! Stay tuned for our year-long 15th anniversary celebration of the gym opening and the 115th anniversary of the lodge. We are so thankful for every single athlete and family that have been part of our organization throughout the years! Looking forward to many more years.*

The National Directors congratulate all Monessen Sokol members and Falcon Gymnastics' athletes, coaches, and instructors. Most importantly, we recognize Director Charity Ruhl for her sincere dedication to Sokol, along with her extraordinary leadership efforts that have resulted in such a well-



respected gymnastics program. It is a rare occurrence in Sokol USA when a lodge reactivates its gym program. It is even more difficult when the lodge no longer owns a building that can be supported by a social club.

With limited lodge funds, a loan from the Supreme Lodge, and donations from other lodges and members, Charity was able to establish a business model (Continued on Page 2)

From the President's View

A happy new year to all our Sokol USA members. I start this article by wishing you all health, wealth and happiness, the traditional Eastern European New Year's wish, for 2019.

2019 will be an event filled year. Sokol USA is hosting its Sokol Fest in the Buffalo, N.Y., area. Many people will come from all over the U.S., Canada, and Europe to participate in the sporting and gymnastics events at the Sokol Fest. There will be many fun events available to everyone who attends. There are the traditional Sokol sports event, there is an event at an amusement park, there will be a Polka band event and many opportunities to attend social events and renew old Sokol friendships with Sokols who are traveling from far and away to be together for the Sokol Fest. The Sokol Fest will be a great time to have fun, see old friends and

make new friends!

For details about the Sokol Fest and its events, please go to the SOKOL USA website and you'll be able to find detailed information about the events as well as registration information.

In late October, I attended our Sokol USA District MCT meeting. The district is considering hiring a bus so that their district members can travel to the Sokol Fest. I encourage our lodges and all of our groups to consider this option for traveling to the Sokol Fest. It offers a cost savings to individual members and it also provides Sokol fellowship during the travel.

In the near future there will be information going out to the lodges by the Sokol Fest committee about sponsorships of events, program book ads and other similar information.

During this chilly time of the year, I encourage our members



Joseph Bielecki

to think about sports, fitness and wellness exercise to work off the pounds that have accumulated since the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holidays. Our traditional Sokol sports are one way to work off the winter weight gains. Another way which has been successful for me has been walking. I encourage our members to join the walking club or the bicycle club. These are good ways to shed winter pounds and to become more physically fit. They are especially good ways if there is no gym facility near where you live. Another source of good exercise advice and ideas can be found in the exercises recommended and previous Sokol Times articles by Sister Ellen Kovac. These can be found in links to the Sokol Times on the Sokol USA website.

I also encourage our members and our lodges to consider making donations to the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund at Sokol USA. It will soon be time for our scholarship candidates to apply. The scholarships given are funded by donations received from our Sokol USA lodges and members. They are renewable and they are a very nice benefit for our very young members who are attending post high school education programs.

Also, I encourage our lodges to hold meetings and to engage in fraternal activities in their respective communities. These are good ways of getting people involved both in Sokol USA and in the community in general. Some lodges have done postcard writing projects for our troops overseas, others have participated in events such as (Continued on Page 3)

Sokolfest 2019

XXVIII Sokol USA Slet, June 26-30, Buffalo, NY



Schedule

| Date | Time | Event | Location |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Wednesday, June 26 | Afternoon/Evening | Opening Ceremonies with dinner | Fantasy Island Amusement Park |
| Thursday, June 27 | Morning/Afternoon | Gymnastics Competitions | Greater Buffalo Gymnastics |
| | Evening | BBQ with DJ | Buffalo Marriott Niagara |
| Friday, June 28 | Morning | Slet Rehearsals | Sweet Home High School Field |
| | Afternoon | Fitness Challenge | Sweet Home High School |
| | Evening | Brew Tour | Buffalo Breweries |
| | | Bowling | Transit Lanes |
| Saturday, June 29 | Morning | Polka Dance with dinner & band | Buffalo Marriott Niagara |
| | Late Afternoon | Volleyball Tournament | Sweet Home High School |
| | Evening | Fitness Challenge | Sweet Home High School |
| | | Slet Performance | Sweet Home High School Field |
| Sunday, June 30 | Morning | Celebration Dance with food & DJ | Buffalo Marriott Niagara |
| | | Golf Scramble | Amherst Audubon Golf Course |

SOKOL TIMES

official organ of the
SLOVAK GYMNASTIC UNION SOKOL
OF THE USA

Sokol USA - District 4000 a Division of GBU Financial Life

Published bi-monthly on the 2nd Thursday of the month

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All communication for publication should be sent
to Editor at 301 Pine Street, P.O. Box 677,
Boonton, NJ 07005-0677
Or SokolTimesSubmissions@gmail.com
by the 22nd of the previous month.

Second Class postage paid in East Orange, NJ
Annual Subscription for non-members is \$10.00

GBU Financial Life

**A Member Owned, Not-for-Profit Insurance
Provider**

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Pittsburgh, PA 15227-3394
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SOKOL USA

A Division of **GBU FINANCIAL LIFE**



SOKOLFEST 2019

**Time to make hotel reservations at
Buffalo Niagara Marriott
1340 Millersport Highway
Amherst, NY 14221**

Make your hotel reservations at the Buffalo Marriott Niagara, headquarters hotel for Sokolfest 2019. The hotel will also serve as the venue for three of the evening socials – the Thursday Poolside BBQ, the Friday Polka Dance, and the Saturday Celebration Dance. The group rate is \$129 per room for up to 4 persons and includes a continental breakfast for two. Additional continental breakfasts can be purchased for \$5 per person. The last day to book at the group rate is June 5, 2019. The rate is good starting Sunday, June 23 through Tuesday, July 2 if you care to extend your stay before or after the Sokolfest activities.

For online booking go to: <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1547565326266&key=GRP&app=resvlink>

For reservations by phone, call **888-236-2427** and provide the group name **Sokol USA** for the Buffalo Niagara Marriott.

DEADLINES FOR ORDERING SOKOL UNIFORMS

If you need a Sokol uniform, it's time to order now. The last date to order before Sokolfest 2019 is Monday, April 1. Follow the directions below, but if you have any further questions, please contact Juanita Lo Giudice, American Sokol BOI office secretary, at juanita@american-sokol.org.

Go to the American Sokol BOI web page at www.american-sokol.org/boi. The password is boi. Scroll down and click Uniform Order Website. There you will find all the information about the uniforms and how to place an order. You will need a credit card.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS & DONATIONS

To the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund

From Lodge 59, Trenton, N.J. \$100.00
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

From Lodge 114, Sleepy Holly, N.Y. \$300.00
Merry Christmas & Best Wishes for a Happy New Year

From Lodge 39/40W, Berwyn, Ill. \$100.00
Best Wishes to All this Holiday Season

From Debbie Golden, Lodge 39/40W \$50.00
May This Holiday Season Be Joyful for All!

From Lodge 15, Yonkers, N.Y. \$225.00
Wishing All a Blessed Christmas

From Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. \$90.00
May Health, Peace and Happiness be Yours for the New Year

From Lodge 79, Mahanoy City, Pa. \$135.00
Best Wishes for a Healthy & Happy New Year

From Lodge 127, Star Junction \$100.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

From Anthony Puglisi, Layout Editor of the Sokol Times \$50.00

From Milan Kovac \$25.00
In Memory of Brother Matt Blistan, Sr

To the Sports, Fitness & Wellness Fund

From Lodge 244, Westfield, Mass. \$100.00
May Everyone Have a Wonderful Holiday

From Lodge 114, Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. \$300.00
*May This Holiday Season Be Joyful for All!
In Memory of Deceased Members*

From Anthony Puglisi, Layout Editor of the Sokol Times \$50.00

From Milan Kovac \$25.00
In Memory of Sister Louise Botsko

From Lodge 39/40W, Berwyn, Ill. \$100.00
May Health, Peace and Happiness be Yours for the New Year

From Deborah Golden Lodge 39/40W \$50.00
Best Wishes for a Joyous & Healthy New Year

From Lodge 127, Star Junction, Pa. \$75.00
Best Wishes for a Healthy & Happy New Year

TWO MILESTONES TO CELEBRATE

(Continued from Page 1)

that offers classes to the public while simultaneously offering Sokol classes for members. In many cases, participants in the Falcon Gymnastics classes have moved on to become members of the Monessen Sokol Lodge. Many of these members started as young gymnasts and now serve as staff members who provide the quality training offered at Falcon Gymnastics.

We are very proud of Charity, Monessen Lodge 47, and Falcon Gymnastics for their great accomplishments and thankful to all who financially supported their efforts over the years. Nazdar!

Milan Getting Scholarship Recipient

Samantha Pracko

I have been in Sokol my entire life and have gone through Tots, Sokolettes, and Juniors classes. I have been to countless Slets. I have learned so much throughout my time in Sokol about family and teamwork, among other things. Sokol is something that I could not imagine being without. I love and cherish all of the friends that I have made throughout the years. I appreciate all of the coaches and adults who have guided me and taken me in as their own. Sokol truly is another family to me and is something I will be grateful for the rest of my life. Being a lifelong Sokol, I have been able to see how it has changed over the years, especially in Lodge 306. I have seen class sizes grow immensely and it moves me seeing how many people are willing to join my family.

The memories that I have made in Sokol will stay with me for the rest of my life. From slets, to instructor school and simply being in Lodge 306 with my family and friends, the memories and laughs as well as blood, sweat, and tears will always remind me of where I come from. It is something that I am truly lucky to have in my life because I would not be the person I am today if it weren't for this organization that I call home. I wouldn't trade Sokol for anything because it has become a part of me. While I was not able to stay as involved as I would have liked to during my last few years of high school, I still did my best to Nazdar!



Samantha Pracko

be as active as I could. Sokol is my family and it doesn't matter to me what Sokol a person is from. We are all brothers and sisters and I am thankful for having everyone involved in my life.

I wanted to thank you for this opportunity and honor of receiving this scholarship. I am truly grateful to be a recipient. It means so much to me knowing that I am being supported by my second family. Receiving this scholarship is allowing me to further my education and get another step closer to working in the criminal justice system. I am hoping to become a homicide detective while being able to stay as involved in Sokol as I can. This scholarship means more to me than simply receiving aid for college, it assures me that there are dozens of people who are supporting me and wanting to see me succeed in my future endeavors. Being a recipient also continuously reminds me what it means to be a Sokol and that family comes first, even if they aren't blood. Thank you again for choosing me as a recipient and helping me achieve my goals. Nazdar!

Winter Safety, Scholarships & the Calendar

2019 is here with a challenging start weather-wise for many of us. The snow, wind, and frigid temperatures facing us call for some simple tips to keep us safe during the cold season. When driving, remember to always clear snow and ice from your vehicle before you get moving. In my state of Pennsylvania, as well as many others, not doing so can lead to a fine up to several hundred dollars! Ouch. Slow down while driving because, while all-wheel or four-wheel drive is certainly useful in bad winter conditions, they don't necessarily stop better or faster if you hit a bad spot. Follow the advice of your public service members. If they say stay off the roads, then listen unless you are helping others as a first responder, emergency personnel or someone helping to treat and clear roads. If it's not absolutely necessary to go outside, stay home and be safe.

Now for the Annual Scholarship Notice reminder. To all Sokol scholars, parents and grandparents, the last call deadline for the Sokol Milan Getting Initial Scholarship applications is due at Sokol Headquarters by April 1, 2019. Renewals are due June 24, 2019, and additionally, all young Sokol members are eligible for GBU High School Freshmen grants. The grants require eighth graders to fill out an application and an essay to be postmarked by May 31, 2019, for this year's eighth grade students.

For older students, applications are due by May 1, 2019. This year's scholarships are available for high schoolers attending a four-year accredited college and are based on SAT or ACT test results, transcripts, essays and involvement in extra curricular activities. Interestingly, the recent GBU flier mentioned

judges' views of candidates' potential can leave some leeway if you as an applicant have had some bumps in the road along the way yet have persevered. I strongly encourage all Sokol high school seniors planning on furthering their education past graduation to apply. If you plan on going to a two-year program or you are in the first year of this program, awards are based on high school records or transcripts from the current school you're attending as well as activities and club memberships; which is the same criteria required for those already attending college as an undergraduate or enrolled in a graduate program. For information and applications, contact the GBU home office Fraternal Department at 800-765-4428 or info@gbu.org with GBU Scholarship Request/Information in the subject line.

Upcoming events include the National Board Meeting on March 23rd at Boonton Hall in Boonton, N.J. The Revived Nation Bowling Tournament will be hosted by Bethlehem Lodge and held once again in the third weekend in May at Bethlehem with bowling scheduled for May 18th and 19th with a new format. Of course, our calendars should have June 26-30th blocked out for Sokolfest XXVIII in Buffalo, N.Y. Finally, just a reminder to submit your name, address and date of flu shot to headquarters in order to be eligible for the drawings for the \$25 gift card. For the next several months, stay safe and warm, get those scholarship forms in by the deadline, and I hope to see many of you in Bethlehem.

NAZDAR

Sister Nancy Shurina
Chair of Fraternal and Cultural Activities

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW

(Continued from Page 1)

Operation Reach Out, others have raised food donations for community food banks, and still others have done things such as making lap blankets for residents of local veterans' hospitals.

Sister Nancy Shurina and I are working on a fraternal event for much later in the year which will be a fundraising event for the Milan Getting Scholarship Program. In the course of the next few months as the project comes together, there will be much more information presented here in Sokol Times.

Please note that my condolences and those of the Sokol USA District 4004 go out to the family of Sister Louise Botsko. Sister Botsko was very active locally in her Sokol Lodge, her Sokol District, and at one time had held an office on the Sokol USA Supreme Lodge.

Additionally, condolences go out to the family of Matthew Blistan, Sr. who had been a long time President of Sokol USA District MCT as well as Financial Secretary of Sokol USA Lodge 276 of Pittsburgh, Pa. He had been an ardent supporter of Sokol USA for many years and had been active in helping raise funds and sponsorships for many of our Sokol Fests over the years.

Nazdar!
Joseph S. Bielecki

Fit for Life

News flash:

A study reported in the Journal of the American Academy of Neurology, as heard last month on NPR, found that "high levels of everyday physical activity" result in less cognitive decline among older people. The report said any and all movement – not only the movement we think of as exercise – helps to maintain brain health even for those whose brains have been damaged as they age. The key is "high levels" of activity. Postmortem examinations of the subjects' brains revealed that physical activity helped to protect the brain from cognitive decline despite damage such as plaques. The brains of more active people had remained healthier throughout life than the brains of less active people.

There you have it. If you ever thought that exercise is a waste of time for the elderly, or that you can't exercise because you don't have access to a gym, forget those ideas. There is only one rule and requirement: KEEP MOVING!

Remember that we need to keep our bodies quite active because of future contingencies that will require reserves of strength, flexibility and endurance. These lifetime contingencies can include accidents, diseases, and surgeries. The JAAN study mentioned above gives us another reason to keep our bodies moving regularly: to help ward off dementia!

How can you increase your daily levels of activity? Here are some suggestions. You can adapt these ideas to make them as simple or as challenging as you like. As long as you keep moving, you are doing yourself well. For example, housework, such as vacuuming and carrying the laundry basket, is particularly effective exercise.

If you spend time sitting. We should never sit for more than one hour at a time, but sometimes we have no choice. Nevertheless, while sitting, you can keep moving.

A. Lift one leg off the floor and hold it for as long as you can. Repeat with the other leg. Variations: flex and stretch your leg; flex and stretch your ankle (always repeat with your other leg). If you are musically inclined, you can sing or hum a tune

along with your leg movements.

B. Circle your shoulders – upward, backward, down, forward. Repeat while you count to 20 or until you finish singing a song. The Alphabet Song will do. Then repeat by circling your shoulders in the opposite direction. Count or sing along and you will not be bored.

C. Stretch your arms forward, sideward, upward, and sideward. Repeat until your arms are tired. Count or sing in rhythm with your movements. Repeat with palms up. Repeat with fists clenched. Sing along.

D. Lower your head toward your right shoulder; then lower it toward your left shoulder. Repeat a lot. Turn your head to look over your right shoulder; then twist it to look over your left shoulder. Tuck your chin down toward your chest; lift your chin up, stretch your neck, and look towards the ceiling. (Don't force your head backward.)

Technique note: All shoulder, arm, and head movements should initiate from your spine, and your movements should be as large as possible, so that your back and chest get good stretches.

By now, you know to repeat every movement many times (and count or sing along), so I'm not going to mention that any more. If you are working in an office and don't want to draw attention to yourself, count, hum, or sing silently. Your co-workers will wonder why you are so happy.

Question: How many times should you repeat each exercise?

Answer: As many times as you can, plus one. Some exercises can be done as sets. After a set of 10 or 15 repeats, rest for a few seconds and do another set. And then another, until your muscles feel fatigued.

Qualification: If you can do 25 or more repetitions of an exercise without resting, it might be too easy. If that's the case, you can try to substitute a more difficult activity.

E. Put your hands palms down on the chair, under or alongside your thighs, and (Continued on Page 7)



This year, the American Sokol Central District hosted its annual Skills and Progressions Clinic. There was a total of 64 gymnasts who participated throughout the weekend. Sokol USA Lodge 306 had 14 gymnasts participate and four coaches help in organizing and coaching the event over the weekend.



When developing their calisthenics numbers, they had several requirements that needed to be fulfilled. They had to incorporate a marching part and at least one pyramid.



The Skills Clinic had many activities that required participants to work in teams. This gave them the opportunity to develop skills related to teamwork, communication, and gymnastics. They also were required to put together their own one-minute calisthenics performances to Surfing USA by the Beach Boys.



During the weekend, gymnasts had the opportunity to work on all apparatus. They were even given the chance to switch apparatus and try things that were not necessarily in their comfort zones.



During the first night of the Skills Clinic, the gymnasts did many getting to know you activities



CARTWHEEL-A-THON – At the Sokol Lodge 306 annual cartwheel-a-thon, (above at left) gymnasts did cartwheels for 10 minutes straight. One gymnast even did 293 cartwheels! While older gymnasts did cartwheels, the tots class (right at top) participated in the roll-a-thon portion.



GUTTENBERG, LODGE 26 ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Guttenberg Lodge 26 held its annual luncheon and December meeting. A good time was had by all and fond memories of past meetings were shared. A special holiday wish to Sister Nikki Hluchan who was unable to attend. Sister Hluchan is the oldest active member who keeps members updated on lodge history. Election of officers were also held and, with the passing of Vice President Susan Genuaro this year, the lodge decided to hold that position open in her memory.

Happy New Year to all.

James Malik, President
Keith Burkhardt, Financial Secretary
Buddy Burkhardt, Treasurer



Above, Santa and his helpers (center and at right) came to help at the Sokol Lodge 306 annual cartwheel-a-thon. Below, The Junior Board helped support the cartwheel-a-thon participants during the event by selling stress bags.



TRAVELING DOCUMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS THE GORALS

A traveling documentary film titled "The Gorals the Highlanders of Carpathia" is presently touring the United States. The film addresses the Gorals, which are a mountain people in Eastern Europe whose population transcends the territorial borders of parts of Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine. The film is an interesting documentary about the history of this mountain people. For other dates and other city locations, visit www.ostatnigorale.pl.



Falcon Gymnastics/Monessen Lodge 47 service project

Falcon Gymnastics/Monessen Lodge 47 continued their tradition of working on a service project as part of their Team and Staff Christmas Party. Above at left, the athletes made many blankets and collected socks for their annual donation to a local organization that helps those in need. Above at right, after their service project, the gymnasts enjoyed some fun and games, followed by holiday treats.

SOKOLFEST SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

Dear Sisters, Brothers and Friends of Sokol,

Sokol USA will be hosting Sokolfest 2019 in Buffalo, N.Y., from June 26-30. We invite you to be part of the festivities. Please go to the Sokol USA website at sokolusa.org for all the details. Click on the Sokolfest 2019 logo in the top left-hand corner for the menu.

We would also like to extend an opportunity for you to be directly involved in making Sokolfest 2019 a huge success by becoming a Sokolfest sponsor. Celebrate the XXVIII Slet of Sokol USA by sponsoring one or more of the Sokolfest 2019 events. In return for your generous contribution, your sponsorship(s) will be acknowledged in the *Sokol Times*, the Slet Program Book, and at the sponsored event with signage and verbal recognition.

Please refer to the varied list of available sponsorship levels. Your support would be greatly appreciated and will help keep the costs down for our dedicated gymnasts and calisthenics performers who are looking forward to this exciting event.

Checks should be made out to **Sokolfest USA**. Please indicate which event(s) you are interested in sponsoring. Sponsorships should be mailed to **Brother Emil Trgala, Sokolfest Treasurer, 201 Valley Road, Roselle Park, NJ 07204**.

Thank you in advance for your support of our Sokolfest 2019 endeavors. We look forward to hearing from you.

Nazdar!
Joseph Bielecki
President, Sokol USA

Attention Regions/Districts, Lodges and Members

Here's your opportunity to help make Sokolfest 2019 a huge success!

Celebrate the XXVIII Slet of Sokol USA by sponsoring one or more of the Sokolfest 2019 events planned for June 26-30 in Buffalo, NY

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

XXVIII Sokol USA Slet Sponsor - \$10,000

Sponsor the Slet Performance

Diamond Sponsor - \$8,000

Sponsor the Gymnastics Competitions – facility, judges & awards

Platinum Sponsor - \$5,000

Sponsor the Opening Ceremonies or

Sponsor the Polka Dinner Dance

Gold Sponsor - \$3,000

Sponsor the Celebration Dance or

Sponsor the Poolside BBQ

Silver Sponsor - \$2,500

Sponsor the Volleyball Tournament

Bronze Sponsor - \$1,000

Sponsor the Fitness Challenge or

Sponsor the Polka Band or

Sponsor the DJ for the BBQ & Celebration Dance

Red, White & Blue Sponsor - \$500

Sponsorship the Fun Bowling Event

Sponsor the Opening Ceremonies Folk Dance Group

Trophy Sponsor - \$100

Sponsor a Team Award in Gymnastics or Volleyball

All sponsorships will be acknowledged in the *Sokol Times*, the Slet Program Book, and at the sponsored event with signage and verbal recognition.

For more information, contact President Joe Bielecki at bielecki1@earthlink.net

Make checks out to: Sokolfest USA
Mail to: Brother Emil Trgala, Sokolfest Treasurer,
201 Valley Road, Roselle Park, NJ 07204

Sokol USA Invitational and Pig Roast

Women's Competition - all Xcel levels, USAG Levels 1-3 (age 12 & under only)

Men's Competition - Sokol Level 2 & 3, USAG Level 4 & up

All Ages Welcome!

Saturday

April 27, 2019

Cost - \$45 per athlete

Register by 3/1/2019

8 AM Jr./Sr. Cal Clinic

11 AM Gymnastics competition

Dinner & Cal performance to follow competition

\$10 dinner only

AAU Sanctioned



724-544-1721

email rosters to:
falcongymnasticsteam@gmail.com

Falcon Gymnastics
226 Nazareth Drive
Belle Vernon, PA
15012

Attention High School Seniors! (and their parents and grandparents)

Looking for some help to achieve your goal of attending college? Each year Sokol USA is proud to award the Milan Getting Scholarship to a limited number of qualified Sokol USA members who are furthering their education at an accredited college or university.

If you or a family member will be entering college or a university this coming fall, please contact Sokol USA headquarters at 973-676-0281 or SOKOLUSAHQ@aol.com and ask for a Milan Getting Scholarship application. Applications for the 2019-2020 academic year are due by March 31st.

FIT FOR LIFE

(Continued from Page 3)

attempt to lift your body up off the seat. Can't do it? It doesn't matter. The effort you make in trying is the exercise you want. Keep trying until your arms are exhausted.

Do you stand a lot? Some jobs require standing for long periods of time, but you can keep moving (and reduce fatigue) while standing, too. You can improve your balance and posture by standing on one foot.

When out in public and you don't want to draw attention from onlookers, simply shift your weight from one leg to another, and alternately raise your toes (or heels) an inch or two off the ground. You can also take a small step backward and very slowly shift your weight forward and backward.

When by yourself on an elevator or at home, where we spend a few minutes every day doing activities such as washing and drying our hands, brushing teeth, etc., you can do these: (Don't laugh. A few minutes a day adds up, and the point is to keep moving.)

Lift one leg forward. Then, bend your knee and flex your foot; straighten your knee with your foot still flexed. Repeat several times, then repeat with your other leg. Repeat with your legs raised to the side, then to the rear, including flexing and stretching your knees and your ankles.

Swing a leg forward and backward several times. Repeat with the addition of bending and stretching the leg at the knee.

Bend a leg forward and swing the knee across the front of your body several times. This will give your spine and hips a good stretch.

How long can you stand on each leg? Can you do it for one minute? Stand near something you can touch to avoid losing your balance, or grab in case you do.

Don't forget to repeat all of these movements with both legs.

Remember: Balancing exercises maintain and improve your balance, important for avoiding or managing falls during any locomotor action from walking to skiing.

Lie down while watching TV or listening to the radio, on your back, with knees completely bent (feet still on the floor) so that the back of your waist is pressing flat on the floor. There should be no space between the small of your back and the floor. Put a pillow under your head if you like. This should give you a relaxing stretch. To add exercise benefit, try these:

1. Bend your knees up, feet off the floor. Hold your knees and pull them up towards your chest. Can't do that? Start by raising, holding, and pulling one knee at a time above your chest.

2. Bend your legs above your waist, then straighten, and straddle your legs to a "V" position while lying on your back. Watch the TV through the frame of your V-shaped legs. Fun!

3. From the same starting position (flat on back with knees bent, feet on the floor), push down on your feet and lift your hips until your knees to shoulders form a straight line, supporting your weight on your feet and shoulders. Hold. Slowly lower your hips. Repeat many times. Keep watching TV.

Important note: Don't continue with any exercise that causes you pain.

Final note: If you don't like these suggestions, do whatever activities you like to do. Jump rope, perhaps with an imaginary rope. Dribble a basketball. Walk up and down stairs. Walk bent over like an animal or picking up litter or toys that a toddler has strewn around. Do gardening or lawn work. Sort out boxes of old papers. Trot with your dog. And don't forget that housework is a two-fer – you get good exercise and a clean house at the same time! **Just keep moving!!**

By Ellen Kovac, with thanks to validators Emil Trgala and Greg Bender, members of the Lodge 12 Seniors class.

IN MEMORY

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

STEPHANIE BARTUS – (1924-2018) A member of Lodge 47, Monessen, Pa.

RICHARD DOBRADENKA – (1936-2018) A member of Lodge 255, Leechburg, Pa.

JOSEPH W. KOLOK – (1922-2018) A member of Lodge 7, Byram, Conn.

MARY KORAB – (1923-2018) A member of Lodge 500, Boonton, N.J.

MATTHEW MANCUSO – (1930-2018) A member of Lodge 32, Boonton, N.J.

MICHAEL PALYO – (1940-2018) A member of Lodge 46, McKeesport, Pa.

MARY ROMANCHECK – (1921-2018) A member of Lodge 20, Ford City, Pa.

ANNA SLEZIAK – (1926-2018) A member of Lodge 164, Detroit, Mich.

DOROTHY STRANGIS – (1934-2018) A member of Lodge 46, McKeesport, Pa.



BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE – Sokol USA President Brother Joe Bielecki (at left) gave a two-hour talk about Sokol history and the Prague Slet of 2018 to the members of the Western Pennsylvania Slovak Cultural Association at the Mt. Lebanon Library near Pittsburgh, Pa., on January 7, 2019. At right, Bielecki made a Sokol USA display of Sokol history at the annual University of Pittsburgh Slovak Festival at the Cathedral of Learning in November 2018. Many visitors came and viewed the display and several of our members from the lodges in Braddock, Pa., and New Kensington, Pa., stopped and visited the display table.

HOP ON THE BREW BUS!

THE ONLY VIP ALL-INCLUSIVE TOUR OF BUFFALO BREWERIES



Join us for a VIP beer tasting experience! Sit back, relax and enjoy your entertaining, educational tour of brewing in Buffalo.

TOUR INCLUDES

- ◆ All tastings, bartender gratuities and a snack
- ◆ Roundtrip transportation
- ◆ No lines
- ◆ An experience not available to the general public
- ◆ BBB swag, including a stainless-steel pint glass!

ADULT SOKOLFEST SOCIAL

Looking for something to do between Friday morning Slet rehearsals and the evening Polka Party? All adults are invited to join us for an afternoon of craft beer tasting from Buffalo's best local breweries. The tour will leave from the Marriott at 1 PM and return to the hotel at 7 PM, just in time for dinner at the Polka Party, featuring a live band. Don't miss out on the fun! Tickets will be available for purchase when registering for Sokolfest 2019.



MORE FUN FOR KIDS IN BUFFALO

If you are looking for additional activities for kids while you are in the Buffalo area, check out **KIDSOUTandABOUT.com**. There, you will find a myriad of events, some free, others organized by date or age groups. There are favorite and featured events, and a section entitled **Top 20 Places to Take Kids as Voted by Buffalo Parents**.

The top 20 are: The Buffalo Zoo, Rolly Polies, Bounce Magic, Kelkenberg Farm of Clarence, The Buffalo Museum of Science, Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum, Canalside, Fantasy Island (*This is where the Sokolfest 2019 Opening Ceremonies will be held!*), Just Fun Farm Entertainment Center, Darien Lake Amusement Park (*A favorite of Todd, Heidi and Devin Yatchyshyn*), Allegany State Park, Buffalo Bisons, Explore and More Children's Museum, Erie County Fair, Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve, Becker Farms & Vizcarra Vineyards, The Aquarium of Niagara, Adventure Landing, Billy Beez and Sky Zone Indoor Trampoline Park.

There is a brief description of each of the top 20 places and links to their very informative websites. You can even sign up for a free weekly newsletter. So start making some extra special plans for the kids to enjoy during your trip to Buffalo for Sokolfest 2019!

Escape Room

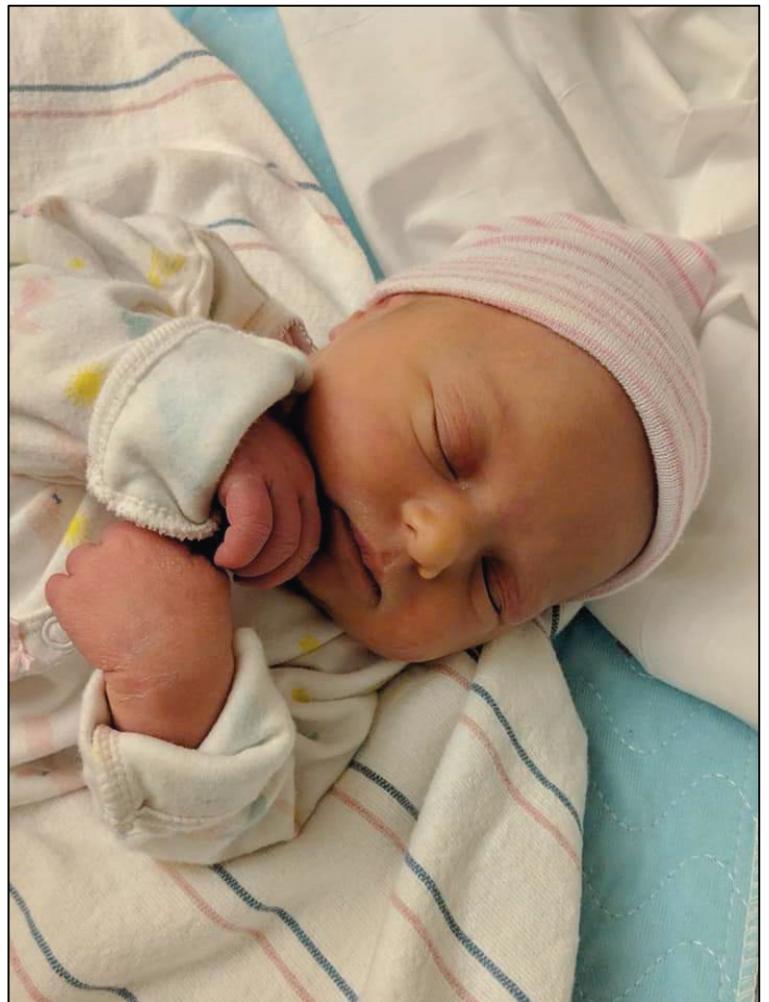


Sokol Lodge 306 Junior Board visited an escape room to work on their communication and teamwork skills. They successfully completed the escape room with just under five minutes to spare!

WELCOME CHRISTMAS BABY!

Congratulations to Todd and Heidi Yatchyshyn on the birth of their baby girl, Alana Jaye Yatchyshyn, born on Christmas Day, December 25, 2018, at 12:23 a.m. The 6-pound 4-ounce, 19-inch-long bundle of joy didn't want to miss out on the holiday festivities, arriving 10 days earlier than her original due date.

Her paternal grandparents are Chris and Rich Yatchyshyn of Pen Argyl, Pa., and her maternal grandparents are Nada Montgomery and the late JJ Vencl from Cleveland, Ohio. Alana's older brother, 5-year-old Devin Yatchyshyn, was excited to wake up on Christmas morning to see presents from Santa, but even more delighted to learn that he had a new baby sister!



Holiday Spirit



Sokol Lodge 130, New Kensington, Pa., held its Christmas Party at Villa Ballanca in Lower Burrell, Pa. Sitting from left are John Gaydac, Margaret Gaydac, JoAnn Paulenda, Dee Choltko, Marie McFaoose and Tom McFaoose, and, standing from left are Brian Culleton, Lynn Culleton, Mary Frances Kowalok, Jean Choltko, Rick Choltko, Cathy Ozdany, John McFaoose, Helen R. Slaninka and Mary Ann Slaninka. All members had a wonderful time celebrating and being together.



AN INTERVIEW WITH RACHEL GLAZNER ON MARCHING BANDS

The following is the second in a series featuring Sokol members who do not participate in gymnastics classes but participate in other sports or activities that they enjoy in order to stay in shape.

Rachel Glazner is a member of Lodge 12 and is a trumpet player with the JFK High School Marching Mustangs Band.

We hope readers will be inspired by this series featuring various ways to enjoy exercise on a regular basis. Also, the Sokol Times will be happy to print informative and motivational interviews from other Sokols of all ages. If interested, please contact ellenkovac@aol.com.

Interviewer: Hi Rachel. How and why did you become a member of a marching band?

Rachel: I first got interested when the Marching Band came to play at the middle school and I decided to join. I like it because I get to play my instrument and meet new people.

Q: Why do you like being in the band?

A: I get to compete with bands all over New Jersey. I also get to play in the parades and at football games. I enjoy marching in the field show and I also get to hang out with my friends.

Q: How much time do you spend practicing with the band?

A: During football and competition season, we practice about 8-10 hours a week.

Q: What is required to be in a marching band?

A: To participate, you can either play an instrument or join

Stepping Stones



SOKOL USA member Lily Bohon and Fraternal Secretary Ed Bohon present a donation from SOKOL USA to Principal Sue Brand of Stepping Stones. Stepping Stones is a school for children with Down Syndrome run by the ARC of Essex County, N.J. Stepping Stones Early Intervention Program was Lily's first preschool which she attended as an infant. Stepping Stones has recently expanded its program to include children up to the age of 10.

the color guard. You need to be able to keep up with the pace and be active, especially during football and competitions because we practice and perform a lot during that time. Marching band is a group activity, so you have to be able to concentrate and coordinate. It is not as easy as people think it is. It is a lot of work to learn new music and the field show which changes every year. In my school, if you play for the marching band for long enough you can earn a varsity letter.

Q: Are there any other benefits to being in your high school band?

A: Every year the marching band takes a trip together, which I like. Last year we all went to Disney and performed at Epcot Center and got to practice with some of the staff from Disney.

Interviewer: Thank you, Rachel, for agreeing to be interviewed for the Sokol Times. We wish you continued fitness and enjoyment as you continue marching and playing in the band.