

SOKOL TIMES



FEBRUARY 11, 2021

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

MCT Meeting



Attending the MCT meeting on October 25, 2020, at the Quality Inn in New Kensington Pa., are (from left) Natalia Gardner, Lynn Culleton, Ethel Moschak, Carolyn Coleman, Mary Ann Slaninka, Jerry Blistan, Helen R. Slaninka, Donna Skefede, Joe Bielecki and Nancy Shurina and Ed Bohon and Milan Kovac from the New Jersey office. It was a wonderful meeting and luncheon, and appreciated by all who could attend, stated President Helen R. Slaninka.

From the President's View

The New Year has begun. The COVID virus is still with us, however, vaccines have been created and the population is beginning to receive immunization shots. COVID has caused many difficulties all over the United States. Many places such as theaters, sports halls and public entertainment are either closed or operating at low capacity to prevent new COVID infections.

I urge all of our members to observe all the COVID prevention guidelines and to try and stay as safe as possible until the COVID pandemic is over. One of the positive aspects of this COVID situation has been the growth of programming online. Many conferences are occurring online so as to avoid large gatherings of people. This is a means of controlling the spread of COVID infections. Many festivals such as the Pittsburgh Slovak Festival and the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society have had very extensive online programs in substitution of their public events. Many meetings are held by ZOOM or other similar technological programs.

Brother John Kennedy has taken the lead and has been working with a web designer to update our Sokol USA website. Sistert Nancy Shurina and several others are working to create online content for our members to view on the website incorporating such topics as Sokol History, simple exercises and health and wellness topics which our members can view during the pandemic and afterwards. These are all in the early phases of development and will be highlighted in the Sokol Times as they roll out in the future.



Joseph Bielecki

As I write this article, preparations are being made for our Sokol USA National Convention which will be held in August 2021. The 2017 convention changed some of the By-Laws. Candidates for the Sokol USA National Board of Directors must be nominated four months prior to the convention by either themselves or an adult Sokol USA member in good standing. The candidate must also submit a letter authenticated by an officer of the proposed candidate's lodge verifying that the candidate is a member in good standing. The proposed candidate must also provide a brief biography including the candidate's qualifications and a statement explaining why the candidate would like to be a candidate for office. The Sokol USA National Board of Directors will validate the proposed candidates' submissions and notify the proposed candidates of their findings. If validated, the candidate biographies and statements for election will be

(Continued on Page 3)



A Slovak mother arriving at Ellis Island in the early 1900s.

American flag was 45. Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, Alaska and Hawaii were not yet ratified as states in the United States. In 1906, the first radio broadcast with voice and music was aired in the United States.

How did Sokol Farrell start? "Under the leadership of Julius Pleteník, Michal Ivan, Izidor Cvík and Štefan Bohunický, 22 Slovak immigrants gathered on June

10, 1906, for a meeting with the aim of founding the 103rd lodge of the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol of the USA in Farrell, Pa. From the historical records available to us, this first meeting was held in the Polish Home, at that time located on Emerson Avenue, just a few hundred feet north of Idaho Street." (From our 1st 100 years as described on our website: <http://www.sokolfarrell.org/>)

How will we celebrate this important event? At a recent monthly membership meeting, it was noted that not only was 2021 our club's 115th anniversary, but that it was also the 125th anniversary of Sokol USA. Additionally, it was noted that next year is the time for Sokol USA's quadrennial convention. After much discussion, it was unanimously

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What is the length of time that one would expect an organization to exist? It is a question worthy of consideration. Even countries have come and gone. Empires have seen the same fate. Rome comes to mind.

115 years is quite a long time. At least five generations. In 1906, just past the midpoint of the 20th century's first decade, Theodore Roosevelt was in the White House. In 1906 alone, the United States received 1,100,735 newcomers which was, up to that time, the largest number of immigrants ever to arrive in the U.S. in a single year. A large number of these came from Slovakia.

The year 1906 marked the growth of American economic productivity as immigrant labor fueled industrial production and life in American cities. In 1906, President Roosevelt departed for Panama to inspect the progress of the construction on the Panama Canal. It was the first time in American history that a sitting president made an official trip outside the United States!

The number of stars on the

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**
**4254 Saw Mill Run Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15227-3394
412-884-5100 * 800-765-4428
www.gbu.org ~ Email: info@gbu.org**

SOKOL USA

A Division of **GBU** FINANCIAL LIFE



DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED

For the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund

From Milan Kovac & Brigid Ruvolo <i>In Memory of Gerald von Schwedler</i>	\$100.00
From Lodge 15, Yonkers, N.Y. <i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>	\$225.00
From Lodge 79, Mahanoy City, Pa. <i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>	\$135.00
From Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. <i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>	\$90.00
From Lodge 130, New Kensington, Pa. <i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>	\$50.00

For the Sport Fitness and Wellness Fund

From Lodge 244, Westfield, Mass. <i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>	\$100.00
From Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. <i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>	\$90.00
From Lodge 130, New Kensington, Pa. <i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>	\$50.00

Announcing the XXXVI Convention of Sokol USA

August 6, 2021 thru August 8, 2021

**Park Inn by Radisson
3377 New Castle Road
West Middlesex, PA 16159**

**Mark your calendar now!
Plan on attending.**

For delegates arriving on Thursday, August 5, 2021, there will be limited registration that evening beginning at 7:00 p.m. Prior to the opening of the Convention, registration will resume Friday, August 6, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

For delegates selected to serve on committees, meetings are scheduled to begin approximately 9:00 a.m. on Friday August 6, 2021. Opening ceremonies for our convention will begin at 1:00 p.m.

At our last convention, our organization adopted bylaws to reflect to operations as a district of GBU. Most of the adopted changes were centered on the national organization. Bylaws concerning districts and local lodges were not addressed. After the convention, a new Bylaws Committee was appointed by President Joseph Bielecki to review and revise the remaining sections. "Draft" copies of the proposed changes will be distributed to all lodges, and national officers will be available to explain and answer inquiries concerning the document. After reviewing the proposed changes, if a lodge or group of lodges wish to have an opportunity to discuss the bylaws prior to the convention, please contact Headquarters to arrange such an event. We expect to adopt the proposed bylaw changes at the upcoming Convention of Sokol USA.

We look forward to a high attendance and brisk participation in this Convention.

NAZDAR!
Edward A. Bohon
Fraternal Secretary

Sokol Flu Shot Drawing Form

Name: _____

Lodge #: _____

Address: _____

Date & Place of Shot: _____

Mail to:
Sokol USA Headquarters
301 Pine Street, P.O. Box 677
Boonton, NJ 07005-0677

IN MEMORIAM**Gerald von Schwedler
1930 – 2020**

**Former President
of Sokol USA District Ludovit Stur
Former Member
of the Supreme Lodge of Sokol USA**

**The National Board of Sokol USA sends
its sincerest condolences to
Sister Arlene von Schwedler and Family**

**From the
President's View**

(Continued from Page 1)

distributed to the convention delegates and lodges and the candidates' statements will be published in the Sokol Times. All candidates verified to run for office must attend the convention. If a candidate is not a convention delegate, the candidate will be responsible for paying his or her own expenses of attending the convention.

I encourage all of our lodges and members to think about the upcoming national convention. Lodges should begin to discuss selecting their delegates and to prepare for the August convention. The convention is an important matter as it is the governing body which will select the national officers and set the tone for the upcoming next four years of Sokol USA. It is my hope that as many lodges as possible will send delegates and participate in this very important Sokol USA convention.

Now that the New Year has begun, I encourage all of our members and our lodges to work off the extra pounds that were gained over the holidays. While COVID may make this a bit more difficult than in the past, it is still possible to go walking or to do home exercises and, where the public health guidelines permit, go to Sokol gyms and exercise. Additionally, Sister Ellen Kovac often provides very wise health tips in the articles she submits to the Sokol Times. These are very useful especially now in light of the larger numbers of people doing home exercises.

Additionally in these difficult times, I urge our lodges and members not to forget those in need. Many people remain out of work due to the pandemic and the current economic situation. Many food banks are assisting larger and larger numbers of people. Many health charities are in need of donations to be able to provide services. It is my hope that our members will not forget those in need and offer whatever assistance they can.

NAZDAR!
Joseph Bielecki
President, Sokol USA

New website being developed

Sokol USA is working with Lab Media to redesign our website! The new website design will be a user-friendly comprehensive site to better fit the needs of our lodges and Sokol USA together. We are looking for high resolution images of your lodge members and functions (please include the lodge name and names of individuals in the photos). New images can be emailed to SOKOL USA Trustee John Kennedy at kennedy1073@gmail.com.

**Sokol 5 Tool Fitness Powerlifters
Score Big****Special Olympics**

This fall Pen Argyl Sokol 5 Tool Fitness had four Special Olympians participate in powerlifting. Due to COVID-19, all in-person competitions for Sectionals and States were unable to be held. Instead, Special Olympics Pennsylvania decided to conduct Virtual Sectionals and Virtual Fall Festival (States) competitions. The athletes practiced and then competed in their normal places of competition and the coaches submitted videos and scores to the competition committee.

Our Special Olympics powerlifters worked very hard and performed even better when the virtual competition was held. In the end, each of our Special Olympians won three gold medals at sectionals and each won three gold medals at States, for a total of 24 gold medals for our Special Olympics powerlifters!

Congratulations to our three year-round participants Mika Kanofsky, Ty McKelvey and Logan Wismer, and to our fall program participant Tyler Youngkin.

Teen Powerlifters

After having to train at home from March through June due to COVID-19, Zoe Edmonds and Jack Malitzki were able to get back into the gym in July. The two powerlifters gave it their all and it showed on November 14 at the 2020 Philadelphia Freedom Championships. Both Zoe and Jake each earned Gold Medals. Zoe also set six Pennsylvania State Records!

Jake is currently ranked #1 in the State of Pennsylvania in the Teen 1 (14-15-year-old) 66KG weight class and #10 in the Nation. Zoe is currently ranked #1 in the State of Pennsylvania in the Teen 1 (14-15-year-old) 63KG weight class and #10 in the Nation. We are so proud of both Jake and Zoe!

While 2020 has been difficult for my family, specifically losing our house to a fire in January and the world in general, it has been a pretty good year for Sokol Lodge 410 powerlifters with 27 gold medals, one silver medal and one bronze medal in 2020. Not too shabby!

Nazdar,
Director Erl Persson

Supporting the First Responders

Hoping to find all our Sokol members are staying safe and healthy. That said, we know our nation is still facing this crisis of the coronavirus pandemic. I am pleased to announce that because of this crisis, our GBU home office is again sponsoring the 2021 Districts in Action Program. Our board has chosen the following five organizations to receive \$1,000 each to help their communities. Those five are the Byram, Connecticut Fire Department, Boonton Kiwanis First Aid Squad in New Jersey, the Second Harvest Food Bank of Lehigh Valley/Northeast PA, Greater Pittsburgh Community Foodbank serving Western PA, and the Chicago Food Depository in Illinois.

A mailing will be sent for a fundraising request to all GBU members within the locality of these organizations. GBU will again match all donations up to \$2,500 that are collected in the 30 days after the mailing date. I encourage all of us to respond to this initiative as quickly and generously as possible. After all, Sokols care and share.

Save the date for our most important event of this year, the 36th Convention of our Slovak Gymnastic Union of the USA. This will be held August 6-8, 2021. All the lodges and districts should have received packets containing important information and due dates for the convention by now. Make

sure to go over the packet information, elect your delegates, and return your paperwork no later than May 15, 2021. All lodges should be represented to provide input for the coming four years.

It's that time of year again for young Sokol scholars, parents and grandparents to get your paperwork in order for the Milan Getting Scholarship. Contact headquarters for forms, information, and any questions you may have. This is a wonderful benefit for young Sokol members to help with

educational costs. Don't leave this money and opportunity unused. Speaking of member benefits, be sure to fill out and send in your flu shot vaccinations information too.

There are five \$25 gift cards waiting to be distributed to those who do.

Finally, remember to check on our older family and friends to ensure their well-being in these tiring times. Stay safe, stay healthy, and I hope to see many of you in August.

NAZDAR
Sister Nancy Shurina

**Milan Getting Scholarship**

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 SOKOLUSAHQ@aol.com and ask for a

Milan Getting Scholarship application. **Applications for the 2021-2022 academic year are due by March 31st.**

CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE REQUIREMENTS AND TIMELINE

Sokol USA's By-Laws were changed at the 2017 convention in Pittsburgh, Pa. Some of those changes affected the process of nominating candidates for office. There will not be nominations from the floor of the convention under the new By-Laws.

Any adult member in good standing may be nominated for position on the national board. This must be done at least four months prior to the convention by submitting to the national board:

1. The letter of nomination written by an adult member of Sokol USA in good standing regarding the proposed candidate and the office for which the candidate will run. Candidates may nominate themselves.

2. A letter authenticated by an officer of the proposed candidate's lodge verifying that the candidate is a member in good standing.

3. The proposed candidate must provide a brief biography including the candidate's qualifications and a statement explaining why the candidate would like to be a candidate for office.

The Sokol USA National Board will validate the proposed candidate's biographical submissions and will notify the proposed candidates of their findings. If validated, the biographies and statements for election will be distributed to the convention delegates and lodges and the candidates' statements will be published in the Sokol Times.

Candidates verified to run for office must attend the convention. If the candidate is not a convention delegate, the candidate will be responsible for paying his or her own expenses of attending the convention.

Sokol Farrell to Celebrate 115th Anniversary

(Continued from Page 1) decided that Sokol Farrell would continue in our tradition of celebrating our anniversaries every five years with a banquet for our members. Furthermore, that we would place a bid with Sokol USA to host the convention in our area and celebrate both anniversaries concurrently.

We are happy to report that the National officers have agreed with and accepted our proposal to host the convention. Arrangements have been made to reserve the facilities at the Park Inn by Radisson for the convention and that the dual anniversary banquet will be held on **Saturday, August 7, 2021**. As we have done with all of our anniversary celebrations in the past, all of our members will attend, free of charge. But, this time, convention delegates will be attending also. We sincerely hope that members from other lodges will attend and take part in this momentous celebration. Please reserve the date. Our members will receive more information in the spring as well as personal

invitations in the summer of 2021. Additionally, notices will be posted in the *Sokol Times*.

What qualities has Sokol Farrell possessed to give it the longevity to last for such a long time? The answer is very simple! We have stayed true to our roots and our

mission of promoting "A Sound Mind In A Sound Body" in our membership. Additionally, we have had dedicated leaders and workers from the beginning right up to the present who have volunteered their time in the spirit of another Sokol axiom... "Neither gain, nor glory!"

HOLIDAY GREETINGS & DONATIONS

For the Milan Getting Scholarship

From Lodge 114, Tarrytown, N.Y. \$300.00
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

From Lodge 59, Trenton, N.J. \$100.00
Wishing all a Very Merry Christmas

From Lodge 39, Berwyn, Ill. \$100.00
*Merry Christmas & Best Wishes
a Happy New Year*

From Lodge 68, Blairsville, Pa. \$50.00
Best Wishes to All this Holiday Season

From Debbie Golden \$50.00
May This Holiday Season Be Joyful for All!

From Anthony Puglisi – Sokol Times Layout Editor \$50.00
Wishing All a Blessed Christmas

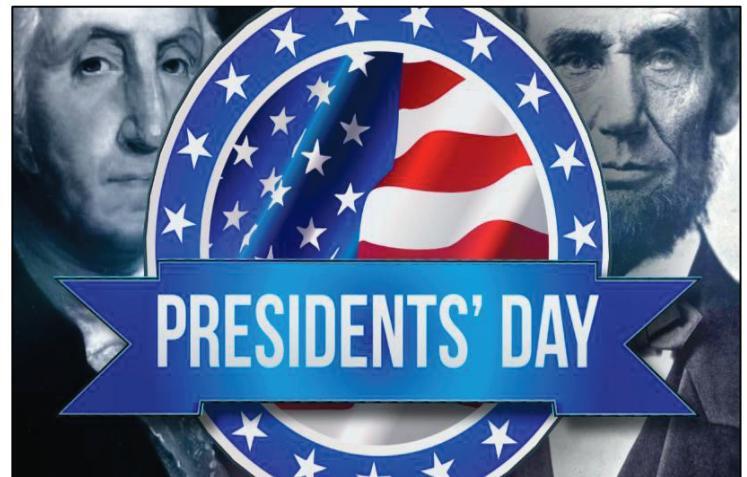
For the Sports, Fitness & Wellness Fund

From Lodge 114, Tarrytown, N.Y. \$300.00
May Everyone Have a Happy New Year

From Olga H. Paulovkin, Lodge 276 Member \$200.00
May This Holiday Season Be Joyful for All!

From Debbie Golden of Lodge 39 \$50.00
Wishing all A Very Merry Christmas

From Anthony Puglisi – Sokol Times Layout Editor \$100.00
*May Health, Peace and Happiness
be Yours for the New Year*



Celebrate President's Day Monday, February 15th

HEY SOKOL GOLFERS!

Save the date for the best GOSH DARN
Golf Scramble in Western Pennsylvania
Saturday June 12, 2021

TWELVTH ANNUAL SOKOL FARRELL, PA FOUR PERSON OPEN GOLF SCRABMLE



SHENANGO LAKE GOLF CLUB: 99 Birchwood Dr., Transfer, PA 16254



DISCOUNT FOR

SOKOL MEMBERS!

For more information, please visit our webpage at:

<http://www.sokolfarrell.org/home.html>

Bro. Tim Brandt, Chairman

FIT FOR LIFE

Engraved on the wall in the Library of Congress, Washington D.C.: ***They are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts.***

During the ongoing pandemic, this column includes elaborations of information that has appeared in previous issues of the Sokol Times, focusing especially on ways to stay safe and healthy.

First, let's review what health experts have taught us about keeping yourself and your family safe:

--Wear a mask whenever you must go out.

--Keep at least 6 feet away from others.

--Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds after you have been out.

--Keep yourself healthy to maximize your resistance to any illness.

Next, think about how you are doing in each of the four aspects of healthy living.

Exercise sufficiently for optimum maintenance of the body.

Diet with sufficient nutrition to supply the body's needs while avoiding excess caloric intake.

Sleep, at least seven hours of per night, to adequately revitalize the brain and body.

Mental health is important to maintain to cope with difficulties and maintain a positive outlook.

As we continue limiting our in-person interaction with others either for business or socially, many of us are experiencing feelings of isolation or at least a feeling that our world has turned upside down. Here are tips from experts on exercise, diet, sleep, and mental health to help get the next few months.

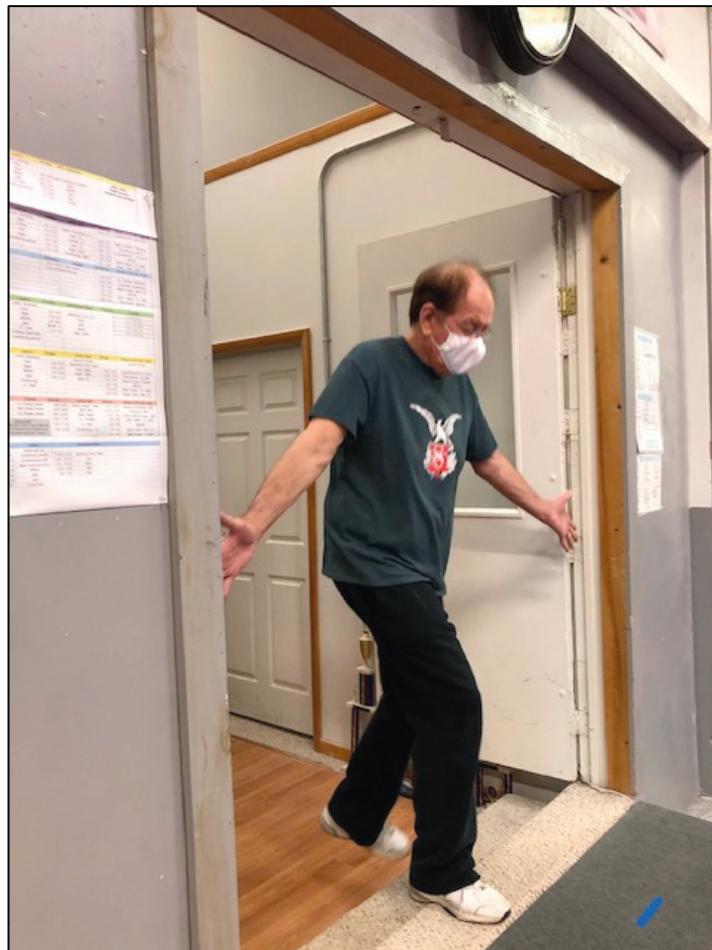
How is your home exercise program doing?

Make a checklist of things you should be doing to strengthen your muscles, increase your cardiovascular endurance, and improve your range of motion/flexibility.

Reminder: People with medical conditions should consult with their doctors in advance about the kinds and extent of physical exertion that is good for them.

For strengthening

Push-ups. If you can't do any push-ups, easier variations include doing them while your knees are on the floor (keeping



"Step Up-Step Down" exercises are easy to do and can be adjusted to your abilities. If you don't have access to a gym, try to find some steps, as shown in this photo. If regular stair-steps do not have enough rise for you, you may feel more comfortable stepping up over one step to the next higher one, as in the photo. A door frame or handrail for support is a plus. Repeat with each leg being the lead leg an equal number of times. This exercise can be done every day for good results. Try to increase the number of repetitions from one week to the next.

your body straight from knees to shoulders) and doing them while standing with hands leaning on the edge of a countertop, body straight and at an angle with your feet further back from the counter.

Burpees. One of the most versatile conditioners, Burpees – also called "squat-thrusts" – are in their basic form a four-count exercise: 1) squat and place hands on floor. 2) Jump the legs backwards to push-up position. 3) Jump back to a squat with hand support. 4) Stand up. Add to the exercise by jumping up and clapping your hands overhead at the end of count 4). Repeat as many times as you can!

There are many possible variations, the most common being simply including a push-up after count 2), which turns the Burpee into a six-count exercise.

Here's a more challenging variation: After count 2), the push-up position, jump to a squat on one leg while stretching the other leg straight out to the side. Then hop back to count 2). Then, jump to a squat on the opposite leg with your other leg out to the side. Then hop back to position 2 again. Finally, jump to a squat and then stand up. This variation takes eight counts and

gives a better workout to a more advanced exerciser.

Chin-ups. If you can find a chinning bar (I have one in my house and you should, too), do chin-ups. If you can't do any actual chin-ups, how long can you hang from the bar? Can you get into a chinning position and hold that for a few seconds? If you are unlucky enough not to have a chinning bar or a set of rings hanging in your house, go to a playground or park where you can find climbing equipment.

Squats. Strengthen your legs by doing squats. See if you can increase the number of repetitions you can do over time. If you can squat only halfway, how many times can you repeat that?

Also, can you do single leg kneels and rises? Get into a lunge, front leg bent. Then bend your rear leg to touch your knee on the floor, then return to a lunge with your rear leg straight. Repeat as many times as you can, then repeat with the other leg being the kneeling leg. It's good to do this close to something that you can lean on if necessary.

Hand weights or those stretchy bands used for exercise and physical therapy are good to have at home. You can learn many exercises to



Sokol Lodge 12 Senior members Emil, Greg, and Ellen take a break from their weight training, calisthenics and stretching routines, which they continued in the gym when permitted by the state during the pandemic. The gym's wide open floor exercise area provided ample room for socially-distanced workouts, and a nearby side door was left ajar for increased ventilation. When it became inadvisable to go to the gym, each senior continued with their individual workout routines at home. Note: Face masks are always used during workouts. Masks were momentarily removed for this photo and immediately replaced. We recommend that all Sokols develop and implement a fitness routine for at least two hours per week of vigorous exercise (at home during the pandemic), including walking or jogging outdoors when possible.

strengthen your back and abdominal ("core") muscles.

The plank, an excellent though difficult exercise, consists simply of getting into a push-up position but with your body supported on your forearms instead of on your hands. See how many seconds you can hold this while keeping your body perfectly straight. Listening to music helps the seconds go by. Do planks at least twice a week and you should be able to increase the time you can hold your plank. Challenge yourself!

Crunches. There are many varieties of crunches, which are sit-ups with bent knees (to avoid straining your back). It's not necessary to sit completely up; it's only necessary to lift your head and shoulders off the floor or exercise mat. From lying on the floor, try bending your legs and reaching as far as you can toward your ankles with your fingers. Or, try a crunch with your right elbow touching your left knee and then left elbow touching your right knee, and repeat.

Stretch every movable part of your body every day in every direction:

--Head, neck, and shoulders.

--Trunk, bending forward, sideward left and right, and backward.

--Legs and ankles.

Have you improved your diet to your satisfaction?

Do you . . .

--Eat several fruit and vegetable servings every day?

--Drink water instead of sugary drinks or even drinks with artificial sweeteners?

--Limit processed foods in favor of fresh, unprocessed foods?

--Avoid eating for psychological reasons such as a reward or consolation?

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SOKOL USA DISTRICT 4000 NATIONAL BOARD MEETING VIDEO CONFERENCE

July 7, 2020

(Continued from December 2020)

6. Report of Fraternal Secretary Ed Bohon

a. Status of Lodge 30/Danbury, Ct.

Brother Bohon reported on the status of the Lodge 30/Danbury, CT loan request. Internally there were many questions which needed to be discussed.

How much do they want? How long do they want it? What rate? The National Board directed the executive board to further investigate what that entailed. The initial scope of the project included expanded driveway at privacy trees, lodge improvements including the interior, new bathrooms, and other building renovations. The initial estimates were someplace around \$225,000.

Brother John Kennedy provided additional background on the situation and their lodge circumstances. He expressed Lodge 30 had been in its current location since 1981. In 1988 zoning rules changed in the town of Brookfield. They agreed that Lodge 30 could be a club even before that. In 1995, the neighbor moved in and they decided that they didn't want Lodge 30 being a club here because they were the last residential property on a commercial stretch of property. So, to the north would be a commercial property and to the south a residential property, so the two properties are kind of like quasi both of them. In 2019 we went for a variance to get a new parking lot because they were only allowed to park 13 cars in their current lot. Since then Lodge 30 has put a new parking lot.

In the last few months we've done over \$50,000 worth of work, which came out of money that we had. They are currently looking to renovate the building. This was presented to the board back in March last year.

FIT FOR LIFE

(Continued from Page 5)

Here are suggestions from reader Lenny, who has taken these steps to improve his diet. When having a sandwich, choose turkey instead of a processed meat such as ham or bologna. To satisfy a sweet tooth, eat Jello instead of higher-calorie dessert such as candy bars. Thanks for the tips, Lenny!

Are you sleeping well?

Here's advice from the medical director of the Center for Sleep Medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine: Prepare yourself for a good night's sleep by beginning to "wind down" about an hour before your bedtime, without TV, late-night exercise, eating, or alcohol. Teach yourself to clear your mind of stress or worry by sitting down, relaxing your body and paying attention to the present moment and your own breathing.

Is your mental health holding up?

--We need sunlight every day to keep serotonin in our bodies. Serotonin is nature's mood elevator. Serotonin counteracts the Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), sometimes called "the winter blues," that causes many of us to feel depressed to some extent during winter, when days are short. Even in very cold weather, bundle up warmly and get outside.

--Whenever you need to, take a minute to close your eyes and relax your body, from your forehead and jaw down to your fingers and toes. Notice your breathing and breathe slowly and deeply several times. You should feel tension leaving your body and mind.

--In general, avoid dwelling on negative news and situations. Be positive and think of pleasant thoughts and memories. Tell yourself that things will be better soon.

--Be sure to get good nutrition, sufficient sleep, and invigorating exercise; they all are interactive in contributing to good mental health.

--Stay in touch with others and check regularly on family and friends so neither you nor they feel isolated. Look out for your children. Help them communicate their feelings and help them feel secure.

--It's okay to talk to your pet, your plants, or even yourself. According to a professor of psychology at Morgan State University, "self-talk can give people a brief tangible sense of control or agency in the world."

--Although most of us value and benefit from our friendships, being alone does not have to mean being lonely. Read books, play a musical instrument, write poetry, or take up painting. You can learn a lot and improve yourself. As quoted at the top of this column:

They are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts.

Ellen Kovac
ellenkovac@aol.com

Brother Bohon clarified that Lodge 30 has planted the trees and put in a new driveway already. In addition they are getting the resolution of the neighbor's appeal.

Brother Bohon expressed that the executive Board directed by himself, Brother Arthur Burkhardt, John Kamenitsky and Brother Milan Kovac went up to Danbury for initial discussions and conferred by phone. They began gathering required information, competent deeds manual expense statements, tax returns etc.

Brother Bohon stated they picked out what the terms of the loan would be. Sokol Danbury would pay all fees to cover the search attorney, filing fees, etc. Their proposal is for \$140,000.

As of now they have asked for authorization to increase that amount to \$160,000. So we'll have to come back to the board, if there was an increase for inflation, fees or whatever else popped up. So we can give Danbury what they needed, rather than have to come back and be authorized by the board again later. The term would be 25 years, 5.5 annual percentage rate. The money we currently have invested with GBU is paying 4.5 percent; a timeframe is roughly someplace early 2021.

Brother Joseph Bielecki clarified that Sokol Danbury has scaled back the request to roughly \$160,000 from the initial request of \$250,000.

Brother Bielecki stated the executive committee voted to recommend to the board this proposal. He then opened the floor to any discussion regarding Danbury's request for the mortgage.

There were concerns of whether Danbury had shopped around and checked the interest rates at their local banks. Brother John Kennedy expressed Danbury had started by going to three banks around the area (prior to COVID). Their membership voted on using Sokol USA.

There were also questions about their Danbury's overall goals for after the renovation to expand membership there.

Brother John Kennedy expressed they are already doing that. Currently they have 7 members, waiting on policies from GBU. He also expressed there has been a lot of enthusiasm in the place which they haven't seen in years. While in Phase 2 they are allowed 25 people inside and 100 outside. On July 5 they probably had about 30 people at the lodge.

Brother John Kennedy stated they recently had someone donate five kayaks to the place. There's fishing there everyday and kayaking. You know the building is old so to get these renovations you will be able to get more use of it.

There were questions about the potential rentals of the facilities/grounds.

Brother John Kennedy stated they generally have between 15-20 rentals a year. It depends on the size of the party for the amount they charge them. In the past because of the only 13 cars there were not many ways to get people to the lodge. But now they have a 30 car parking lot. They also have an agreement with the town. The school is a mile down the road, so if they need additional parking on a weekend there are no issues and can utilize that lot as well. Those larger gatherings help bring in income plus they also have substantial amount of money and investments from their old properties.

Brother Bielecki stated, it should be noted the value of the property certainly supports the mortgage.

Brother Bohon shared the monthly payment on a 25 year loan of \$160,000 would be 300 payments. The monthly payment would be \$935.

Brother Bohon made a proposal that Sokol loans Danbury up to \$160,000 at the terms that we discussed.

Sister Chris Yatchyshyn seconded the motion.

Motion passed, with 1 abstention by Brother John Kennedy.

Brother Kennedy expressed thanks on behalf of the Danbury Lodge.

Brother Joseph Bielecki stated we will have to get a Connecticut attorney to draw up the documents and do the title search and things of that nature. He inquired into when Danbury may foresee they would actually be utilizing or needing the funds.

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Brother John Kennedy stated they have their next board meeting in August to better identify those answers, but he guesses sometime of Spring of 2021.

Brother Bielecki stated they will defer the actual implementation of the legal end of things until Danbury advises us that they're going to start to proceed. Sokol will probably need roughly 60 days for the lawyer to do the title search, prepare the documents, etc. That's a pretty comfortable margin. Sokol will retain one, but won't commence directing him because the title searches are only valid for title insurance and things like that for a certain number of weeks after they're done. So we can't start it now if you're not going to be requesting the mortgage till the spring. So we will defer our work until closer in time but we ask you to give us roughly 60 days, lead time.

7. Existing Lodge Loans

Brother Bielecki stated the executive committee agreed to recommend deferral of payments on loans from lodges that are in need and request a deferral. Meaning if for example a lodge has a loan and they are having difficulties due to COVID, loan payments could be deferred for so many months.

Brother Bohon made a motion we extend the offer to lodges to defer the payment of their loans, without penalty, as needed.

Brother Scott Pracko seconded the motion.

Brother Richter inquired into whether anyone was delinquent currently because we may need to make this retroactive.

Brother Bielecki stated they sent two letters to all the lodges both a sports active and non-sports, active lodges, and no one has come to us, other than Danbury, with a request.

Sister Chris Yatchyshyn stated she spoke with both Monessan and Pen Argyl that it was said at the last meeting that we didn't have to wait for a vote, but both lodges said they wanted a vote and have it in writing before they did not send their money in. Sister Yatchyshyn also expressed the letters sent out said if you're in need, but didn't necessarily explain very much, so some lodges may not have really understood what that meant. Brother Kovac clarified that Monessan paid off their loan in December.

Motion passed unanimously

8. General Financial Update (Buddy Burkhardt)

Brother Arthur Burkhardt shared the 2019 budget and income and a projected 2020. Brother Burkhardt expressed that in 2019 Sokol had expenses of \$157,000 and income of \$131,000. This leaves Sokol with a shortfall of about \$25,000, which we transferred money from the escrow at GBU to cover the shortfall and a little additional.

Brother Burkhardt stated the December 31 balance for the Foundation is \$1,614,046. The scholarship fund had \$16,758.28. Our investors operating account had \$5713.41, and the investors direct billing account had \$1,572, which gives us a total at the end of the year of one \$1,638,089.69. If we look through March 31, we did not do up to June, the second quarter. But the scholarship fund is the same. We have interest of \$371.26 for the first six months of the year. The beginning balance for January in the foundation was \$1,589,046. And we have interest accrued into that, but \$35,303.71, which was 1,624,349.71. So at the end of March we had a total of 1,659,397.91

Brother Burkhardt also stated that in the 2019 expenses there were a couple of items that were carried over from 2018 and paid out at the beginning of 2019. That was an insurance charge for almost \$1900. The other was the assistant directors' pay for 2018, which they didn't receive until January, 2019, which was \$1320. We did have a little extra income. That wasn't allowed for in 2019, and that was interesting coming from the Gordon mortgage. Brother Burkhardt stated after speaking with Brother Milan Kovac we did get more of this interest from this year and we expect a little more. That'll increase the projected income figures for this year as well.

Brother Bielecki thanked Brother Burkhardt for his financial report. He expressed we should see some cost savings for a while this year, because we won't be having the expenses necessarily that we've had in the past for travel and the

national board meeting, due to COVID, unless we have a physical meeting later in the year.

9. Sports, Fitness and Wellness

a. COVID-19 Impact on Gym

Sister Chris Yatchyshyn shared a report via email for all the sports active lodges based on feedback she received.

Sister Yatchyshyn contacted each of the gyms and, obviously, no one last week was doing anything in the gym. Monessen was the only gym that was able to open up.

Central Jersey rents for a few hours on Friday nights at Henderson's Gym which is currently closed, so since they're not able to rent they're not responsible for any rent. So, they are not having any trouble other than not being able to gym.

Sister Yatchyshyn, expressed that Ellen shared her report that she sent via email to the Lodge 12 gymnasts at the end of the gym year, which explained the current situation. Hopefully they'll be back in the fall; Ellen also gave them some exercises to do while they were at home.

Sister Yatchyshyn reached out to Chicago, and Kristin wrote that little section for us. One thing that she hadn't put on there was that they had had the Chicken Paprikas and Halusky Curbside dinner. She expressed she was glad to see that they were able to do one of their fundraisers because fundraisers are really important at all of the gyms. Besides not being open, not bringing in money from classes and not bringing in money from rentals or fundraisers are added hardships when they own their own facility. All of the lodges have fundraisers and when they're put on hold, that puts an even bigger strain on the programs.

Brother Scott Pracko shared that they always do their annual chicken paprikas dinner in June, the Saturday before Father's Day. During one of the lodge meetings, they decided that they would try to do it as a curbside meal. They made over 70 dinners that were picked up. There was a just a handful of people that were in the building running the dinner. Mostly it was Amy Pracko and Cindy Merker doing the cooking. There were several that came in to actually do the delivery of the meals outside. The meals were distributed in plastic containers and delivered curbside in our parking lot area. Kristin handled all the reservations and registration curbside. All meals were paid for ahead of time, whether it was electronically or sending a check or getting the money to Kristin. We took orders with payments ahead of time to avoid anyone reserving a meal and not picking up. Overall, it was very successful. Lodge 306 made just over \$1,000 on it.

Brother Scott Pracko also reported they are still deciding that if this is still the situation in the fall that we would have our fall spaghetti dinner in the same way as a curbside meal option. That would ensure we can continue to get some money in, because it is difficult. We are working now with the church group that uses the hall and the barbershop quartet group that uses the hall, to get them back in based on the regulations we have with the City of Chicago, the state of Illinois, and the CDC. Lodge 306 is following all that so they are going through the process of putting all the signs up for social distancing and room capacity signs, and recently they purchased hand sanitizer dispensers to have on each level the building. Lodge 306 has met with these group leaders to set expectations for all to strictly follow all guidelines being laid out. To begin, one group is going to start with some stuff outside in our parking lot. The barbershop group does store equipment in the building but only one person will be coming in to get it. Overall, it will be slow moving to get the church group back in since they usually are there twice a week. They're going to start at the end of July with once a week. The plan is to have someone from the lodge there when they first have their meetings again and gatherings to make sure they're following all the rules and regulations and if there's any questions that they have that there is someone available to answer them. There will be markers on the floor in the basement for the chair setup. Typically, they have rows of chairs right next to each other so we'll have those marked on the floor at six foot intervals and go forward with that, but it's been a very quiet time, and a bit of a struggle. Brother Pracko reported they are closely monitoring their finances. They will take a pretty big hit but fortunately had some money saved up.

Brother Scott Pracko also reported they will hopefully be back into the gym. The Physical Fitness Staff is going to have a meeting later this week to go over the options for starting up classes again; hopefully something can start this summer before we get into our full classes in the fall. But it's been a struggle and it's definitely not a money making situation.

Sister Kristin Greenberg stated it will be a very slow start. They are hoping to
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begin with just one on one clinics because not only do they have families that are really concerned about having the kids come back into the gym, but a lot of our coaches are concerned because they have older family members at home that they take care of, or they're just worried about their own health and safety which is a huge concern, so we're just trying to take it slow for everyone to be comfortable when the time comes.

Sister Chris Yatchyshyn reported one of the things Kristin mentioned was important is the cleaning of equipment and what is acceptable, or what constitutes the proper cleaning products. All of that has to be figured out. The cleaning costs alone will be hard for many of these gym programs, for the cleaning solutions, the wipes, the additional facemasks which will need to be available is costly. You need to have so many supplies, on an on-going basis, that is going to become very expensive.

Brother Todd Yatchyshyn reported that Charity has expressed it is easier to sanitize the kids than to sanitize the equipment, due to the amount of time it would take for a balanced beam to dry or a bar to dry, because you cannot put children on them until they are dry and ready to go.

Sister Chris Yatchyshyn reported the Farrell gym equipment is not yet set up, so they're not up and running yet. They had a flood from their roof that mostly landed on the gym floor, which was soaking wet so they had to bring in a company who could dry out the equipment, and they had an over \$900 bill from that. That was indirectly related to COVID because if they had been in the gym, they would have known that the roof was leaking. They don't know how long it was leaking because it had been quite a few weeks since they had been in the building. And it just so happened that it was dripping all the way down to the first floor. When the manager went in to check on the bar, he figured out where the water was coming from. There was no structural damage to the floor, just the spring floor. Some of that wood has to be replaced, but luckily the company was able to dry things out and there is no mildew.

Sister Yatchyshyn stated they are going to wait and see what happens with their area schools to decide how they are going about their physical education

programs before making any decisions on classes. Their hopes are to model theirs after that; so they don't have any answers yet about what they're doing program wise.

Brother Todd Yatchyshyn reported he had recently spoke with Pennsylvania lodges and a big concern is the number of children they will be able have in a class and if they're going to be able to spread out the kids over the time that they're typically in the gym. They typically gym only a couple of nights a week, but they may have to spread that out, and we're worried about having the necessary amount of coaches to cover additional nights. The Pennsylvania regulations limit the number of participants per square feet and our gyms are not very big.

Brother Burkhardt questioned if Sokol generally gives the lodges their stipend of \$2,000 at the end of November, but if they could use the money sooner maybe we could give it to them in July or September if a written request is submitted.

Sister Chris Yatchyshyn expressed interest in wanting to go back and look at the budget and see if we can reallocate one or two line items for cleaning, sanitizing type products and allocate money for that. Without doing the cleaning it becomes a liability. Probably the best thing we can do is maybe help with the cost of some of the cleaning products so it would be helpful to go back and see which categories are not being used.

Brother Burkhardt expressed he felt that any lodge that needs money or wants our assistance should give us something in writing. And not just switch money from one section to another, because it's, it wasn't used. I think they should make a request, and indicate what they want or what they're looking for and why they need it, which we all know and what they intend to do with it.

Sister Yatchyshyn expressed concern because she was told by the finance committee/trustees years back, that if you needed something and you could reallocate something else, that you should make that suggestion.

Sister Yatchyshyn emphasizes when everyone got the chance to read through the lodge reports, they will see that Monesson had to take out a large loan. And the reason was because they need to be able to rent the present gym and the back gym in order to have enough space to social distance, to bring in enough kids to make enough money to pay the bills. Monessen qualified for a business disaster type loan; they weren't eligible for the PPP loans because they didn't have full time employees. Charity was concerned that they may have to close down again so they took out a large loan so if that happens they can still pay the bills.

(To be Continued in April 2021)

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.*

MARION BARONE – (1923-2020) A member of Lodge 47, Monessen, Pa.

GEORGE HALAS – (1935-2017) A member of Lodge 39/40W, Berwyn, Ill.

VIOLET HMUROVIC – (1925-2020) A member of Lodge 269, Whiting, Ind.

GERALDINE HUSOVSKY – (1929-2020) A member of Lodge 66W, Bethlehem, Pa.

CAROL KANA – (1953-2013) A member of Lodge 7, Byram, Conn.

MARLENE KRIZAN – (1932-2020) A member of Lodge 30, Danbury, Conn.

THERESA KUKLIS – (1920-2020) A member of Lodge 114, Tarrytown, N.Y.

KATERINA MACK – (1922-2016) A member of Lodge 214, Palmerton, Pa.

MARY PATAKY – (1922-2019) A member of Lodge 269, Whiting, Ind.

DONALD PATRICK – (1928-2020) A member of Lodge 103, Farrell, Pa.

ANDREW PAVLOVICH – (1929-2014) A member of Lodge 244, Westfield, Mass.

JERRY SCHRAM – (1942-2020) A member of Lodge 276, Pittsburgh, Pa.

F. BUD SHANNON – (1942-2020) A member of Lodge 255, Leechburg, Pa.

MATILDA WEISENBORN – (1929-2013) A member of Lodge 103, Farrell, Pa.

