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SOKOL



TIMES

FEBRUARY 10, 2022

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From the President's View

I am writing this article as Pittsburgh has begun to shovel itself out of the aftereffects of the winter's first major snowstorm. While the snow shoveling was good exercise and helps work off the pounds that accumulated over the holiday season, it is not a replacement for regular exercise, calorie consciousness, and an organized approach to working out.



Joseph Bielecki

I urge our membership to follow the fitness and wellness tips often provided in the Sokol Times by the Sports, Fitness and Wellness Department as well as by Sister Ellen Kovac. Sister Kovac often provides very practical and useful advice in her fitness articles. I also encourage our members to do aerobic exercise if possible. For those snowbound at home, it is easy to do chair aerobics as well as traditional Sokol aerobics to stay fit during the winter snow season. When the spring comes, I encourage our membership to do bicycling, walking and outdoor fitness activities.

I encourage our lodges to hold meetings where safely possible. I also encourage our membership to be cognizant of the safety measures needed to avoid catching COVID during this COVID resurgence period. Getting vaccinated, frequent hand washings and wearing N95 masks are all good ways to reduce the risk of contracting COVID. I also encourage our lodges to be COVID conscience when having meetings and gatherings. It is important to consider the health and safety of our members.

I send good wishes to Brother Matt Blistan for his recent retirement. Brother Blistan had been a devoted fraternalist for many years. He had been in charge of the fraternal department at GBU and organized many wonderful programs for the membership. GBU has announced that Jennifer Stockdale has been promoted to the position of Director of Marketing and Community Development at GBU. She will be instrumental in creating fraternal programs and initiatives for the GBU membership. Many of our readers will recognize her from many of the GBU online fraternal events that have been held during the COVID pandemic. We congratulate Jennifer and look forward to working with her.

I encourage our membership to post fitness and Slovak cultural materials to our SOKOL USA website. Brother John Kennedy has been instrumental in creating the new website and its new look.

I also encourage our
(Continued on Page 6)

ANNOUNCING

THE XXXVI CONVENTION OF THE SLOVAK GYMNASTIC UNION SOKOL OF THE U.S.A.

TO BE HELD AT THE

**PARK INN
3377 NEW CASTLE ROAD
WEST MIDDLESEX, PA 16159
AUGUST 5 & 6, 2022**

An information packet is being sent to each lodge and district concerning delegates and other forms. Please give this immediate attention as to time is of the essence in choosing your delegate.

Holiday Celebration



The Sokol Lodge 130 Christmas party was held at Ryan's Creek Restaurant on December 18, 2021. Members had a lovely day celebrating together. Attending the party were, sitting from left, JoAnn Paulenda, Dee Choltko and Edward Schultz; standing in middle row, Matthew Imhoff, Cathy Ozdany, Mary Jo Shultz, Marie McAfoose, Lynn Culleiton and Brian Culleiton; and, in back, Austin Ealy, Zackery Imhoff, Mary Ann Slaninka, Helen R. Slaninka, Kristen Depanicis, John McAfoose, Tom McAfoose, Jean Choltko and Rick Choltko.

SOKOL TIMES

official organ of the
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 OF THE USA**
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SOKOL USA

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LODGE 32

BOONTON, NJ

Let's Stay in Touch

Would you like to receive **IMPORTANT** announcements from the lodge (minutes, news, events, etc)? Then please send an email with your name to: BoontonSokol32@gmail.com. We will gladly add you to our email list. Please spread the word to the rest of your family and Sokol friends.

Nazdar!
 The Officers of Lodge 32
 Boonton, N.J.

SOKOL WEBSITE BEING UPDATED

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 USA SFW Meeting Minutes

Conference Call – Sunday, December 5, 2021 – 8:00 PM

Attendance - Todd Yatchyshyn, Chris Yatchyshyn, Charity Ruhl, Amy Pracko, Kathy Naccarato, Heidi Yatchyshyn, Stephen Banjak, Bryan Pracko, Scott Pracko, Rich Yatchyshyn, John Kennedy

Lodge Reports - The following reports are a combination of the Sokol USA report prepared for the American Sokol District Director's meeting, presented by Amy Pracko at their annual meeting held October 9 in Oakbrook, IL and verbal updates (in italics) during the conference call meeting:

After not having been in the gym since December 2020, **Sokol Central Jersey's** Senior group resumed our very scaled-back gymnastics class in September. Our estimated attendance at this moment is about 35% of what it was pre-pandemic. We are being very cautious because our host club, Henderson's, has team practice at the same time that we are there on Friday evenings. We don't know whether all their people over 12 are vaccinated, and some of the team members are under 12 years of age. Therefore, we have only our Senior exercise class attending at this time. We wear masks (although those of us who attend are fully vaccinated), and we stay apart from Henderson's team. Regarding our previous small pre-Covid children's group, we are not sure what the interest may be in the future. We are hopeful that one teenager who attended pre-pandemic will return soon.

Sokol Farrell is happy to report that we celebrated on July 31, our 115th anniversary of continuous activity with a banquet at which over 100 members and friends attended. We also awarded 3 new scholarships to those attending universities this fall. During the 2020-2021 season, our gymnasium was closed for a 4-month period due to a state of Pennsylvania mandate. Additionally, during that period a leak developed and caused extensive damage to our spring floor exercise mat and the wooden floor underneath it. Because no one was routinely in the building because of the closing, this damage was undetected for an unknown period of time. Due to the damage caused by the leak in the roof, we have not resumed our classes until just three weeks ago. All three of our "junior" instructors graduated high school and are attending colleges which are not near our town, so we are basically "starting over" with a tot's class and one junior. We are able to assemble 8 to 10 Seniors, but have not yet done so.

Steve Banjak added that the lodge recently held a successful St Nicholas dinner.

Sokol Monessen/Falcon Gymnastics is open. We were closed from March 20 to July 20 then again in December 2020. Presently our enrollment at about 150% of pre-COVID with a waiting list. We are currently looking for 3 or 4 more instructors for 6 hours a week. It seems that our mitigation strategies turned out to be a huge selling point making people feel comfortable and helping us recover quickly. We also opened another "gym nest" for our nestling classes, ages 16 months to age 3. So many covid babies being born! Falcon Gymnastics was also featured in a recent GBU TV commercial, which aired during the Olympics in the Pittsburgh area.

Note from Chris: Falcon Gymnastics, which hosts Monessen Sokol, is a business model. To comply with all the Pennsylvania restrictions regarding gyms, a large business loan was taken in
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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 a position on the national board. This must be done at least four (4) 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.

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED

To the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund

From Barbara Franko Froehlich <i>In memory of parents</i>	\$250.00
From Sokol USA Lodge 15, Yonkers, N.Y. <i>In memory of deceased members</i>	\$225.00
From Sokol USA Lodge 127, Star Junction, Pa. <i>In memory of deceased members</i>	\$300.00
From Sokol USA Lodge 79, Mahanoy City, Pa. <i>In memory of deceased members</i>	\$135.00
From Sokol USA Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. <i>In memory of deceased members</i>	\$90.00
From Sokol USA Lodge 244, Westfield, Mass. <i>In memory of deceased members</i>	\$100.00
From Jeffery W. Richter and Family <i>Happy New Year to All</i>	\$125.00

To the Sport, Fitness and Wellness Fund

From Olga Paulovkin of Lodge 276, Pittsburgh, Pa. <i>In memory of Sister Patricia Blistan</i>	\$100.00
From Milan S. Kovac of Lodge 12 <i>In memory of Sister Bess Babuska</i>	\$100.00
From Sokol USA Lodge 127, Star Junction, Pa. <i>In memory of deceased members</i>	\$350.00
From Sokol USA Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. <i>In memory of deceased members</i>	\$90.00
From Jeffery W. Richter and Family <i>Best Wishes and Good Health to All</i>	\$125.00

Turning the Page to 2022

After a very long and chaotic year, we are finally putting 2021 in the rearview mirror and, as far as I'm concerned, good riddance! It was another stress filled year with the pandemic mutating and spreading variants across the country. Many businesses across the country, both big and small, had a difficult time staffing to meet customer demands and, unfortunately, some have been forced to close their doors permanently.

There does appear to be some good news on the horizon in that we may be finally heading out the other end of this crisis by spring. The government is mailing free Covid tests through the U.S. Postal office with four tests available per household per month. To get these tests and some much-needed peace of mind, you can apply online at COVIDtests.gov or call 1-800-232-0223 or, for the hearing impaired, TTY 1-888-720-7489. Remember, we are still sponsoring the Flu and Covid vaccine

(or booster) giveaway. Use the form in the Sokol Times to apply for a chance to win one of five \$25.00 gift cards.

Our delayed convention will be held this August, so our Lodges and Districts should be receiving their information packages soon for further details. Please read through and reply in a timely manner so that all members are represented at this event, the highest body of our organization. As always, please reach out with your own upcoming events, whether they be social or service, so that all the membership can be aware of the many ways we Sokols are active in our lodges and communities. I am available anytime through fna240@verizon.net for any events you'd like to share. Looking forward to hearing from you and seeing you all again at the convention.

NAZDAR
Sister Nancy Shurina

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 SOKOLUSAHQ@aol.com and ask for a Milan Getting Scholarship application. **Applications for the 2022-23 academic year are due by March 31st.**

Sokol USA SFW Meeting Minutes

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order to double the floor space of the gymnastics facility. While risky, this has proven to be the right choice. Other private gyms in the area have closed, but this program is on a strong path forward. We congratulate Charity on her business foresight. We also congratulate her on being named one of the 25 National Winners of PCA's Double-Goal Coach Awards. The Positive Coaching Alliance has partnered with AAU since 2010 and offers education courses for coaches and team administrators. "A Double-Goal Coach has two goals: winning and the even more important goal of teaching life lessons through sports." Charity was the only gymnastics coach in the country named this year and we couldn't be prouder of her!

Director Charity Ruhl added that the gym held a 3-hour Halloween Event for the community in which approximated 255 kids, not already affiliated with the gym, participated in 6 intricate obstacle courses, and enjoyed treats. They held a food drive for Thanksgiving, collecting 400 lbs. of food and have an ongoing service project, the Bag Brigade, which fills back packs on Wednesdays and Fridays to send home with kids who experience food insecurities. Their Christmas service project will be a PJ and blanket drive.

Chicago Sokol Lodge 306

One-on-one sessions were held in the spring of 2021, running one month at a time for two or three months until April when things got bad again with Covid. No classes were held over the summer.

Bryan Pracko was appointed as Director of Lodge 306 over the summer. The former directors chose not to run for office in May. Therefore, rather than see the program fold or flounder, Bryan was approached and agreed to step back into the role.

Gymnastics classes are back in session as of September 13. We currently have 30 gymnasts in the program. We are limiting class sizes (currently all classes have no more than 8 in the class.) We have seven instructors teaching classes on four nights a week. We are requiring all gymnasts and coaches to wear masks, and to socially distance. Gymnasts bring in their own water bottle. No parents allowed in right now. We follow CDC, IDPH, and CDPH guidelines. Extra cleaning of the equipment, gym and the rest of the building is necessary and requires more cleaning supplies than have been used in the past.

Fundraising activities will resume with our soap sale and Cartwheel-a-thon in first session. We plan to have a Halloween party on Oct. 29 (tentative) and Christmas Party/lunch for gymnasts on Dec. 18 in conjunction with the CW-a-thon.

Discussion has taken place regarding activities for our gymnasts. It has been agreed on at this time that we will focus on our program and building it back up at this time. We will further assess and determine what activities we participate in with Central District and on a national level for the time being until we get back on our feet. We have attended some activities in Central District in the last couple months and will plan to attend BOI meetings as well.

Other activities planned for the near future at Lodge 306 are: Spaghetti Dinner (Oct. 16), Fall Festival Hody (Nov. 6), Cookie Walk (Dec. 18), and Soup Smackdown (Jan. 15). All of this is of course contingent on Covid-19 guidelines. We currently have weekly rentals of the lower hall by a church group on Sundays, and a barbershop chorus on Wednesdays. We also have a tenant living in the apartment.

Director Bryan Pracko added they were able to hold a successful in-person Hody this fall and will hold their cartwheel-a-thon fundraiser in the near future. They are trying to run the programs as close to normal as possible, with a major

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Fit for Life

By Ellen Kovac

This column includes summaries of the results of several studies that provide insight into ways we can improve our overall health and well-being. Enjoy learning something interesting and useful for your good health.

First, SAD news: It's SAD season

Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, is a psychological depression that occurs during the winter months when there are fewer hours of daylight. It affects many of us to some extent. Decreased energy, weight gain, sleeping too much, and/or irritability may accompany SAD.

How to counteract SAD

1. Get yourself outside as often as possible, even in cold weather. Sunlight is nature's mood elevator; exposure to sunlight provides us with serotonin, which will improve your mood if you spend 15 minutes a day outside. Even exposure to bright artificial lights or sitting near a window will help counteract SAD.

2. Regular exercise – about 45 minutes a day – is an important means to reduce the depression caused by Seasonal Affective Disorder. Exercising improves one's mood and, as a bonus, is helpful in fighting weight gain. Try some serious exercise – it's a guarantee that you will feel better when you finish a good workout!

Don't overdo and cause yourself injury! Start moderately and build up gradually.

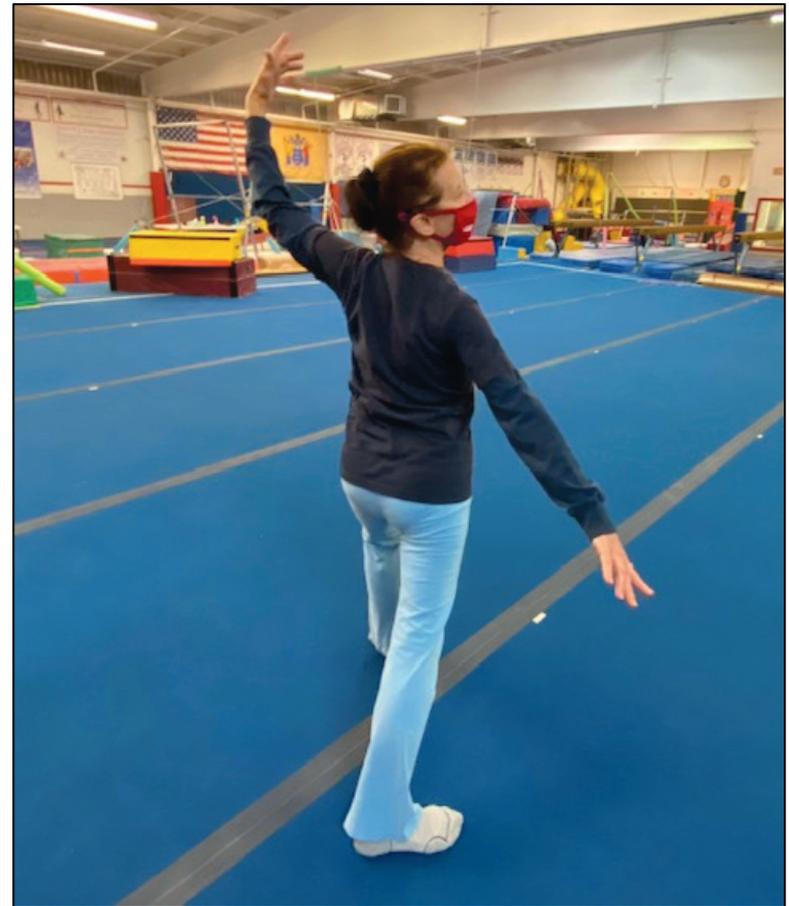
PS: A study of optimal exercise time found that morning exercisers (at 6:30 a.m.) did not seem to benefit as much regarding their cholesterol and other troubling health indicators as those who exercised at 6:30 p.m.

3. A healthy diet rich in vegetables and fruits and low in processed foods can reduce feelings of depression by reducing inflammation in our bodies. The popular Mediterranean diet, similar to the one described in #3 below, is an example of such a particularly healthy diet.

4. Stay in contact with others. Talk on the phone with your friends and family, text each other, have video chats, or meet in person being careful to do it safely. You may find you need to push yourself to be social. During the initial lockdown and two years of social isolation, our social skills may have become rusty. So, be positive and be kind!

5. To protect yourself and others, continue to carefully follow the guidelines of the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and other experts regarding Covid-19. Get vaccinated, get a booster shot on schedule, and wear a recommended mask such as the N95 for best protection.

This is summarized from an article by Ram Mahato, M.D. in HealthU, Fall 2021. Additional information from Consumer Reports ON HEALTH, February 2022.



The pandemic is not over. Continue wearing a mask indoors and keeping at least six feet away from others, more than that when exercising.

IMPROVE YOUR DIET: (You'll be surprised with some of these diet study results!)

1. **Avoid reduced fat and non-fat foods to decrease cardiovascular disease risk.** In a study, 60-year-olds who consumed full-fat dairy ended up with a **lowered** risk for cardiovascular disease during the following 17 years. The implication is that full-fat dairy foods are apparently more healthful (and satisfying) than reduced-fat foods.

2. **Artificial sweeteners may sabotage weight-loss efforts.** In a similar recent study, some participants drank water sweetened with
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Sokol USA SFW Meeting Minutes

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emphasis on sanitization after every class. 2022 will be Lodge 306's 75th anniversary so they are planning a year-long celebration of events but not an anniversary dinner due to the uncertainty of the pandemic.

Pen Argyl Sokol's weightlifting program runs year-round and has been able to stay open this year after being closed for about six months in 2020. Presently they are close to pre-pandemic numbers. Several athletes have won medals in local and state level tournaments, with a 13-year-old girl and a 16-year-old girl breaking state records. They will again sponsor the Special Olympics Weightlifting program this fall.

Lodge Treasurer Kathy Naccarato added that Special Olympics program was again a success, with several participants joining as members. Cage rentals for baseball and softball teams is also starting to pick up.

Bethlehem Sokol's Bowling leagues are starting up this fall. The lodge had to remain closed for much of 2020 and part of 2021 due to very strict PA restrictions that social clubs fell under during COVID.

Danbury Sokol's golf team participated in a summer league and placed second. They held weekly fishing tournaments on the lake, where members also enjoyed swimming and kayaking. This summer they sponsored their member Maggie Sommer, a track and field athlete with the Danbury Flyers. She placed in regionals in New Jersey and qualified for nationals in Texas. Every SAT at 9 AM

they meet for a 1-mile walk, encouraging a fitness activity that works for most of their members.

Lodge representative John Kennedy added that the Danbury Sokol Golf Team finished first in the summer league. The lodge also partnered with Heroes on the Water, which shared kayaks allowing more to participate in the water activity. They held a Thanksgiving food drive, filling two pick-up trucks and an SUV and collected \$450 in gift cards for the Brookfield Food Pantry. They are also participating in Toys for Tots in conjunction with the Marines. They recently held their Christmas party; 48 adults and 6 children attended. They also welcomed three new members.

Recommendations – The annual SFW Department Recommendations and Budget for 2021-2022 were proposed by the national directors as follows:

1. That Sokol USA pay full tuition of any Sokol USA member to attend a National Sokol Instructors School in 2022, with the recommendation of their Lodge Director and approval of the National Directors.
2. That Sokol USA subsidize the cost of tuition for Sokol USA campers to attend the American Sokol National Camp or other Fraternal Society Leadership Development Program in 2022 with an \$1,800 subsidy to be divided equally among the participants, with a maximum allowance of the cost of one week's tuition, with the recommendation from their Lodge Director or President and approval of the National Directors.

3. That Sokol USA subsidize up to \$3,600 total to be allocated for the
(Continued on Page 7)

Christmas wishes

On behalf of the president of the Czech Sokol Organization, Sister Hana Moučková, allow me to wish you a Merry Christmas and all the best in the new year of 2022.

With Sokol regards,
Eliška Colding



The world shall move to where the power is expended!

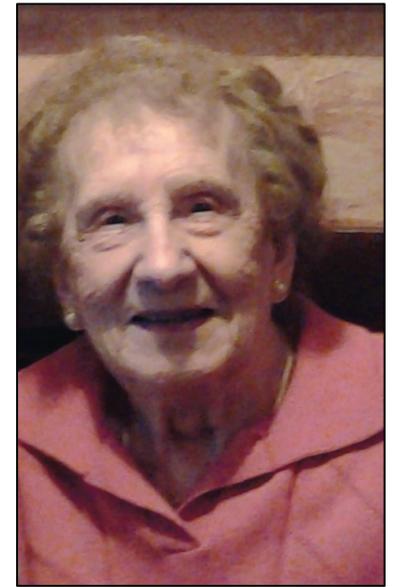
This is one of the traditional Sokol slogans which has been completely true for the past 160 years. Miroslav Tyrš and Jindřich Fügner were there at the birth of the Sokol movement on 16th February, 1862, along with other prominent personalities of the Czech culture and politics. They laid the foundations of the most significant society in our history. It soon started to use the name Sokol and set off on the path lined with all the milestones of the Bohemian Lands since 1862. The 160 years old history of Sokol is, thus, not only the story of our most important sports organization, but in effect, also the story of the struggle for an independent and democratic state for the Czechs and Slovaks.

The Sokol members took active part in the formation of the Czechoslovak Legions during the 1st World War and fought just as bravely for the borders of the new state in 1918 and 1919. After two decades of work in the field of sports, it was the Sokol members again, who manifested the most vehemently the preparedness to fight for Czechoslovak freedom at the X. All-Sokol Rally in 1938. Many of those paid with their lives during the 2nd World War. Participation in the assassination of the Reich-Protector Reinhard Heydrich was the most prominent act of the Sokol resistance.

Also after the communist take-over of power in February 1948, the Sokol members remained faithful to the democratic principles their organization was built upon. Following the unforgettable performance at the XI. All-Sokol Rally in 1948, they kept raising – both at home in secret and openly abroad – new generations of boys and girls. After the Velvet Revolution starting on 17th November, 1989, the Sokol members again participated in the forming of the new Czechoslovak democracy.

Today the Czech Sokol Organisation is the most important sports organization and association in the Czech Republic which unites 160,000 gymnasts in 1,100 clubs. Over half of the members are younger than 26 years of age. Even in the 21st century, Sokol remains a modern sports organization aiming at cultivating versatility, performance, sports and culture.

PF2022



Margaret Gaydac

Happy 100th Birthday

Sokol Lodge 130, New Kensington member Margaret Gaydac turned 100 years old in December 2021. We wish her a Happy 100th Birthday! She no longer lives in the area and has moved away. Lodge 130 truly misses her. She is a sweet and nice person! This is a milestone to be celebrated! Best wishes always from the Sokol Lodge 130 members!

START THEIR DREAMS **HERE**

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START BUILDING A LIFETIME OF DREAMS IN 3 EASY PAYMENTS

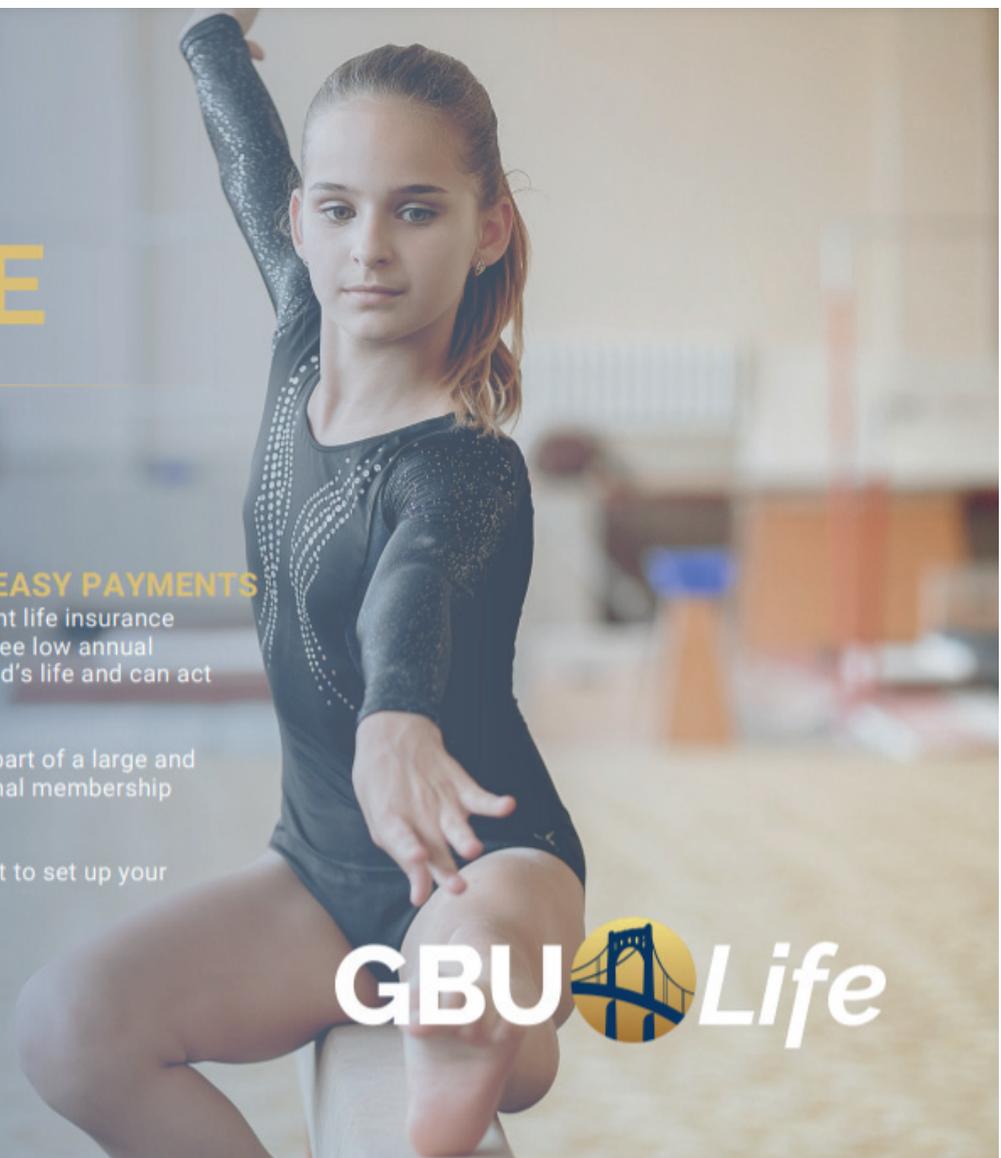
GBU's Youth 3 Pay Membership Life Insurance policy is permanent life insurance that offers a lifetime of coverage and financial growth for just three low annual payments. The policy will grow in cash value throughout your child's life and can act as a building block for future financial success.

Children become GBU members upon approval and will become part of a large and supportive community of fellow members with access to additional membership benefits.

Email sales@gbu.org or visit gbu.org to schedule an appointment to set up your simple Youth 3 Pay Membership policy.

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412-884-5100 800-765-4428
sales@gbu.org gbu.org

GBU-SOK-AV-1121



Fit for Life

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sucralose, an artificial sweetener used in many diet sodas. Other participants drank plain water or water sweetened with natural sugar. They then all ate as much as they wanted from a buffet. It was found that those who had drunk the artificially sweetened water ate more at the buffet. Researchers concluded that drinks containing artificial sweeteners cause heightened food cravings and higher food intake compared to naturally sweetened beverages.

3. Eat for immunity by choosing a largely plant-based diet of fresh/frozen vegetables and fruits, whole grains, beans/legumes, yogurt, seeds and nuts, especially sunflower seeds and almonds; and small amounts of healthy fats like olive oil; also, fatty fish like salmon and sardines.

4. Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and apple cider are all healthful (without added sugar is best). According to data from three long-term studies, those who drank black coffee, without milk or sugar, had significantly lower risks of heart failure. Drinking two or three cups daily was more beneficial than drinking one cup daily! Significantly, drinking decaffeinated coffee did not have any beneficial effects. Evidently and surprisingly, it is the caffeine that provides the benefit! Regarding tea: black, green, white, and oolong tea all contain health-boosting, plant-based flavonoids. All of these hot drinks are beneficial if we use no, or only little, sugar. Don't use artificial sweeteners.

Don't drink excessively hot beverages; that habit has been associated with esophageal cancer.

This is summarized from THE WEEK magazine, 12-31-21. Beverage report from Consumer Reports ON HEALTH, January 2022.

Boost your immunity and cardiovascular health

A study at the Human Performance Laboratory at the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis has found that taking a brisk 30- to 45-minute walk daily will improve the ability of our T-cells to boost immunity. Specifically, the study found that women aged 60 and older were less likely to develop upper respiratory infections when they took brisk daily walks.

Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville, has more advice for boosting immunity: One of the best ways to increase your immunity to various communicable diseases is to get needed vaccines against flu, Covid plus booster, possibly tetanus or Tdap, shingles, and others as your doctor recommends.

Make your blood vessels more youthful

Researchers with the British Heart Foundation studied 138 people training gradually over six months with the goal of running a marathon. They found that the runners got a huge boost to their cardiovascular health. In fact, they were able to reverse the aging of their blood vessels, with results showing an up to four-year reduction in vascular age! The researchers emphasize that it was the **habit of regular, moderately intense exercise** that was the key factor in reversing hardening of the arteries. Conclusion: Brisk walking is good for you, and running is even better!

A personal example: I, a "no spring chicken," have been working to improve my cardiovascular health. I take a walk one or two days a week during which I jog intermittently. I had not been good at running any farther than the distance of a vaulting runway, so I began my walk/runs at a low level of proficiency. I start walking, and begin jogging after a couple of minutes or whenever I see a stretch of smooth sidewalk ahead. I count my steps as I jog. I jog until I'm breathing hard, which lets me know that my heart rate is up and my cardiovascular system is getting a workout. Then I resume walking. When sufficiently rested, I jog/run again until I'm breathing hard again. And so on.

When I return home, I go to the walk/run log that I keep and write the date and the total number of steps I have jogged. Over the past few months, the number of steps I can jog has increased a little, so I'm satisfied that this is a good workout plan for me. Besides the increase in my cardiovascular capacity, my jog/run gets me outside for 30-45 minutes, and I'm getting fresh air and am not close to other people. And, I feel good when I'm done!

If you can run or jog at all, feel free to adapt my walk/jog to suit your needs. Or, just walk briskly!

Boost your brainpower

According to an article in the September 2021 issue of Consumer Reports' ON HEALTH newsletter, the isolation and inactivity of the

ongoing pandemic has taken a mental toll on all of us, not only those with pre-existing cognitive issues, but also those with otherwise healthy brains. A study of some 2,000 people older than 60 done at the Goldrich Center for Alzheimer's and Memory Disorders in Los Angeles found that the more physically active the study subjects were, the larger their hippocampus (the part of the brain that's involved with verbal memory and learning) was found to be. Regular aerobic exercise increased blood flow to the brain and actually increased the size of the hippocampus! Interestingly, the most positive effects of exercise were seen in those older than 75. The lessons of this study include these:

1. We should definitely continue exercising throughout our whole lives.
2. We can actually improve our fitness as we get older if we make a habit of exercising.
3. Because exercising increases the blood flow throughout our body including our brain, it keeps us mentally sharp as well as physically healthier as we age.
4. To protect yourself and others, continue to follow the guidelines of the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and other experts regarding Covid-19. Get vaccinated, get booster shots on schedule, and wear a mask as recommended. Covid has left some people with debilitating long-term effects, including "brain fog" and other cognitive problems. Don't become one of those people.

Homework assignments

- Make a list of the exercises you want to do regularly, with three categories: exercises for strength, exercises for endurance/aerobic capacity, and exercises for flexibility/agility.
- Check to make sure you have every part of your body included in each category of exercises.
- Schedule time every day for exercising. The number of minutes per day should total at least 150 minutes or at least 2½ hours, per week. For example: 20 min/day Monday-Friday plus 40 min/day Saturday and Sunday equals 100 weekday minutes + 80 weekend minutes = 180 minutes or 1 ½ hours, per week.
- Ideally, most workout sessions should include a variety of exercises (but not the same program every day). For example, you might do a one-hour walk/run on the weekend. Good for you – you are already well on your way to exceeding the weekly recommended exercise minimum.
- Every couple of weeks, review your schedule. The exercises shouldn't be too difficult (you might be discouraged and give up) or too easy (you won't benefit very much) for you. Make any desired adjustments.
- Suggestion: If you have to sit a lot during the day, some of your flexibility and strength exercises can be most beneficial when done during breaks from sitting.

GO FOR IT, and JUST KEEP MOVING!

"Your success and happiness lie in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties."

Helen Keller

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW

(Continued from Page 1)

members to continue to engage in fraternal and charitable activities. There are many community service events that can be done: lodges can make charitable donations, members can volunteer for activities and there is always the worthwhile cause of the Milan Getting Scholarship Program at SOKOL USA.

Our headquarters will soon be sending out communications regarding the August 2022 SOKOL USA National Convention. I encourage our lodges to select delegates, to have representation at the convention and to share their input into the governance of SOKOL USA. Participation in the convention will assure that everyone's voice will be heard and that the membership will have input into the selection of officers and the governance of this society.

While it is still possible to be nominated from the convention floor for a SOKOL USA office, I encourage as many as possible who are considering running for SOKOL USA to declare their candidacy in advance. Information regarding that will be sent out to lodges as well as published in the SOKOL Times.

Stay safe, stay well and stay fit!

NAZDAR!

Joseph Bielecki, President
SOKOL USA

Sokol USA SFW Meeting Minutes

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2021-2022 season for hosting or participating in a Weekend Instructor School, mini-Kurz, training sessions, or invitational competitions, for Sokol USA members or lodges. A proposal must be made in advance and approved by the National Directors and National Board. Proper documentation must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the event for reimbursement of the expenses. *Due to the COVID Pandemic, lodges may request up to \$1,000 during the program year for COVID-related expenses in lieu of these events which are currently on hold.*

4. That the Reactivation Project be continued to help any lodge that is not presently active, or to assist an active lodge that is adding a new program, up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per lodge with the prior approval of the National Directors and the National Board.
5. That Sokol USA support the Professional Development of individuals who attend clinics and/or conferences related to the teaching activities of the Sport Fitness and Wellness Department with a total subsidy of up to \$1,000. Prior approval of the National Directors is required.
6. That Sokol USA support "Project Safety" by reimbursing the sum of 50% of expenditure up to \$1500 per lodge on new mats or equipment for up to a total of \$3,000 during the 2021-2022 season. *Due to the COVID Pandemic, lodges may request assistance for either equipment or liability insurance but not both. Lodges may request up to \$750 toward liability insurance assistance, providing the cost of the insurance is at least that amount.*
7. That Sokol USA utilize the services of SafeSport by covering the \$20 fee for instructors to take the SafeSport online course; all parents and athletes should be encouraged to take the free parent course and athletes should be encouraged to take advantage of the free athlete training resources available.
8. That Sokol USA continue an affiliation with AAU with a Level 2 Club Membership for both Youth and Adult Gymnastics at a cost of \$80 per year.
9. That Sokol USA cover the cost of AAU membership for coaches, which includes a background check, (adult coach only - \$16; coach/competitor - \$24,) for up to six instructors per lodge. Coaches will at minimum take the Level 1 AAU Positive Coaching Alliance Course, which is offered for free with an AAU Adult or Coach membership.
10. That Sokol USA reimburse the AAU membership fee for the National Directors and Assistants.
11. That Sokol USA reimburse the adult coach or coach/competitor fee for up to six instructors per lodge to register with AAU, or equivalent professional membership, for a non-gymnastics, lodge-approved sport that occurs on a weekly basis.
12. That Sokol USA pay for travel, room, per diem & registration fee for the National Directors to attend the American Sokol Directors' Conference, District Directors Meeting and School Board Meeting in 2022.
13. That Sokol USA provide \$1,000 toward a National Bowling Tournament with the subsidy to be used to benefit Sokol USA members
14. That Sokol USA pay a travel expense of ten dollars (\$10.00) per Sokol USA bowler attending the National Bowling Tournament; payment is to be made to the participant's lodge. The host lodge is not eligible.
15. That Sokol USA pay ten dollars (\$10.00) to the host lodge for every eligible Sokol USA golfer in the National Golfing Tournament plus the cost of awards. If Sokol USA does not host a national tournament, lodges may apply for subsidy to help support participation in a tournament sponsored by any Sokol USA lodge or one of the fraternal organizations with whom Sokol USA collaborates, or to help fund costs associated with a lodge team that participates in an ongoing seasonal league.
16. That Sokol USA subsidize a National Sporting Activity, up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) plus the cost of the awards.
17. That lodges conducting weekly SFW programs can apply for financial

aid from Sokol USA to supplement the expense of their programs up to \$2,000 (two thousand dollars) each, for the 2021-2022 program year, for a sum of \$14,000 based on a total of seven presently active lodges.

18. That Sokol USA pay for the full travel expense for all authorized Sokol USA delegates to attend the 2022 SFW Department Meeting/Training Session, with room and per diem for the directors, room and food allowance for the assistants and registration fees for participants. This event may be scheduled in conjunction with an American Sokol BOI Development Conference.
19. That Sokol USA fund up to \$10,000 for a major Program Development Initiative that is designed to attract membership and help sustain Sokol USA into the future. Program must be presented in detail with a clear vision, goals and objectives, a strategic plan of implementation, a budget, action steps for reaching goals, and metrics for measuring program performance on a regular basis.

2021-2022 SFW Budget

Administration			
<i>Includes expenditures for:</i>			\$11,664.00
SFW Dept. Assistants' Salaries	1320		4 at \$330
SFW Dept. AAU Membership	144		6 at \$24
Safe Sport Course Participation	120		6 at \$20
Directors' Travel	4000		
AAU Level 2 Club Membership	80		
Nat'l Meeting/Training Session	6000		
Lodge Benefits			
<i>Includes expenditures for:</i>			\$23,920.00
Professional Membership	720		(30 at \$24)
Safe Sport Course Participation	600		(30 at \$20)
Lodge Reactivation	1000		
Professional Development	1000		
Project Safety	3000		
Supplemental Program Support	14000		
Local/Region Training Sessions	3600		
National Activities			
\$6,950.00			
<i>Includes expenditures for:</i>			
National Bowling Tournament	1200		
National Golf Tournament	1000		
National Sports Tournament	1150		
Instructors School	1800		
National/Leadership Dev. Camp	1800		
Program Development			\$10,000.00
Total			\$52,534.00

(Note: The SFW Department Recommendations and Budget for 2021-2022 were approved by the Trustees/Finance Committee and reported to the Board at the December 19, 2021 meeting.)

There were questions regarding AAU membership and liability insurance. It was clarified that Sokol USA's AAU membership does not extend liability insurance to individual lodges because not all lodges require AAU membership of those participating in their gymnastics programs. The membership enables Sokol USA to be affiliated with a national organization and run a sanctioned national competition (at Sokolfest), where all gymnasts and coaches must be AAU members. It does provide added liability insurance for that one event and enables us to rent a fully equipped gymnastics facility. If individual lodges want to use AAU for their liability insurance, they must obtain an AAU club membership and everyone participating in the gymnastics program plus officers must be an AAU member.

It was also pointed out that the budget was \$4,000 greater than the previous year since recommendation #14 and the program subsidy line was increased to \$14,000 since seven lodges requested funding last program year.

After discussion, the proposed recommendations were seconded, and passed unanimously. They will be sent to the Trustees/Finance Committee.

Next Todd presented his idea of creating an electronic form that combines a lodge's annual report and request for funds in one yearly lump sum, similar to a grant format. He will discuss this idea with the Finance Committee. He hopes this will lessen the number of financial requests that headquarters needs to address

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Bessie (Bozena Adamek) Babuska

October 23, 1921 - December 22, 2021



Bessie Babuska

Bessie Babuska, 100, of Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church, both located in Little Falls, N.Y. She is survived by six children, Debby (Dave Kruger), Barbara (Alan Butler), Ellen (Greg Bender), Linda (Dennis Beach), John David (Nivia), and Kathy (Ed Babuska); 11 grandchildren, Karen Pearson, Paul Kralovanec, David Kralovanec (MaryBeth), Lance Kovac (Jenn), Lindsay Hanson, Brandi Kovac (Joe Schiappa), Aaron Hanson (Tara), Albert Jardines (Carol), Matthew Reynolds (Stacey), Daniel Babuska, and David Babuska; and 11 great-grandchildren, Sydney and Drew Kralovanec, Katherine Pearson, Emeline, Wyatt, and Katie Kovac, Jonathan Jardines, Lincoln and Layton Hanson, Beckett Schiappa, and Reyna Reynolds.

Born in Little Falls, N.Y., Bessie was an active member of S.G.U. Sokol USA Lodge 88 and the Holy

Boonton, N.J., Sokol Camp and at Sokol Woodlands camp in Barryville, N.Y. Simultaneously, she facilitated her six children's participation in Sokol competitions, Slets, and camping programs while making sure that their schoolwork was never neglected.

After retiring to Tampa, she excelled in the Sokol USA Walking Club and spent many years continuing as a volunteer with the Girl Scouts, with which she became a 64-year Lifetime Member. She volunteered with the RSVP volunteers (Hillsborough County, Fla.), Lutheran Braille Workers, and at the Kaye Prox Food Bank at the Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, where she was a member for many years. Her hobbies included painting flowers in beautiful arrangements, dancing, reading, and (until her last month) walking.

S Bohom, Bozena! Be with God, Bessie!

Sokol USA SFW Meeting Minutes

(Continued from Page 7)

from lodges with SFW programs and by providing all the information in one location will also help simplify Sokol USA's annual report to GBU.

Chris explained that Sokol USA requires all directors and instructors to be AAU members, which includes a background check. This must be done annually at aausports.org. A USAG membership, which also includes an annual background check, can be substituted for those gyms that participate in USAG meets. Directors and instructors must also be SafeSport certified annually. It was agreed that year one the full course must be taken; year two and three the refresher courses offered by SafeSport are acceptable. Year four the process begins again. SafeSport also offers a free course for parents and one for gymnasts. Both are also recommended. The website is athletesafety.org/. The directors reminded everyone that the AAU and SafeSport memberships are reimbursable.

The National Directors emphasized that each lodge is responsible for making sure their directors and instructors comply with these requirements, as well as any additional requirements their individual states may have for persons working with youth.

It was mentioned that GBU now offers a Social Membership for \$25 which includes several benefits. Questions were asked about what this means for Sokol USA. Does the GBU membership also make a person a member of Sokol USA or is there still an additional social membership fee? What if any Sokol USA benefits are included? There is also interest in knowing why GBU decided to offer this type of membership and how will it affect Sokol USA going forward.

Election of Directors for 2022 Convention – It was decided that the SFW Department would hold their election in January, rather than closer to the Sokol USA convention rescheduled for this summer. If there is a change in leadership, and if there are plans for a Sokolfest being made, the present directors will include the proposed directors in Sokolfest-related decisions.

Sokolfest – Todd explained that planning for the next Sokolfest is on hold until public school districts are comfortable with extending contracts to outside groups, which is a direct result of the pandemic. The directors have created a financially sound model that works for our small organization and choose to

continue to follow it. Todd has been in contact with hotels, school districts and venues in both Saratoga Springs, NY and Erie, PA. Presently NY restrictions are more severe than in PA, but school districts in both locations are still not renting their facilities to outside groups. He emphasized that depending on when things improve, Sokol USA may not be able to stick to our anticipated 2023 date.

Todd noted that American Sokol has not made any announcements about rescheduling their Slet and added that American Sokol also has a convention in 2022 and new directors may be elected. He has been in contact with Catholic Sokols. Surprisingly, they plan to hold their 50th International Slet, July 13-17, 2022 at Kutztown University. He said that there would be an opportunity for interested lodges to participate.

The next SFW Department Conference call is scheduled for January 16 at 8 PM – EST. The main purpose will be the election of National Directors, but other items can be sent in advance of the meeting so they can be added to the agenda.

Chris thanked everyone for participating on the call. She wished them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. She urged everyone to stay safe, expressed hope that the pandemic would be over soon, and that our programs could get back to normal. She ended the meeting with Nazdar!

EASY EXERCISE VIDEO NOW AVAILABLE FOR SOKOLS

To help you with getting into an exercise routine, I have created a "Fit For Life" beginner video that is slower and easier to keep up with than most professionally made videos. It's been put up on YouTube and the link below will take you directly to it.

If you are reading this Sokol Times on the SokolUSA.org website, the link is "live." Simply click the link and you will see the Fit For Life video. From the Sokol Times in print, you can get to the Fit For Life exercise video by typing this link into the search window at the top of your computer screen.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=EEIBVSncnWY>

Try it and use it often to keep you motivated and improve your fitness. Feedback and suggestions for improvements are welcome. Send comments to ellenkovac@aol.com.