

(USPS 500-660)

# SOKOL



# TIMES

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

December 14, 2023

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

**Veselé Vianoce a Šťastný Nový Rok!**  
**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**



***To all our members from the  
Supreme Lodge of Sokol USA***

## From the President's View

As I write this article, Thanksgiving is a few days away and the festivities of Christmas, New Year's and the winter holidays will soon be upon us. This season is a good time to remember those in our communities who are in need. Many of our lodges will meet for holiday parties, functions, and events. I encourage our members to enjoy each other's company and the fraternal events offered by our lodges. However, it is important to remember the other aspect of fraternalism, which is helping those in need. Many families will have empty chairs at their holiday tables because a loved one has passed away. Others will not be able to afford holiday festivities due to economic circumstances. I encourage our lodges and our members to make donations to food banks, holiday toy drives, homeless shelters, and other organizations that assist those in need.

Additionally, there are numerous natural disasters worldwide. The war in Ukraine continues on. There are many people in need all over the world. Should anyone wish to donate to relief efforts, I would recommend donations to the American Red Cross or to Nova Ukraine.

I truly hope our members enjoy the holiday seasons, festivities, and their families. Following the holidays, it is a good time to work off excess pounds by walking, stationary bike riding, or



Joseph Bielecki

traditional Sokol aerobic exercise. These can be done at home or in lodge halls. For those wishing to do traditional Sokol exercises, I would recommend going to the Sokol USA website and following the chair aerobic exercises posted there by Sister Ellen Kovac. This is a good starting point for post-holiday exercise!

2024 is the year of the All-Sokol Slet in Prague, Czech Republic. The events will occur from June 30 to July 5, 2024. I encourage those who are interested, able, and who can afford to go to Prague to experience the activity and enthusiasm of such a large-scale event. It is a return to Sokol roots, and it is a very special experience to witness so many engaging in Sokol movement and Sokol sports. For those who cannot attend, I encourage you to visit the COS website for photos and information about the upcoming Slet and

***“Health,  
wealth and  
happiness!”***

its activities. The website is [www.sokol.eu](http://www.sokol.eu).

The University of Pittsburgh held its annual Slovak Heritage Festival on Sunday, November 5. This year, Sokol USA was a major sponsor of the event. The festival featured a large Sokol display, a lecture about the history of the Sokol movement given by myself, and many other displays, presentations, lectures, and performances highlighting the richness of Slovak culture. Several thousand people attended the event.

As the year ends and the holiday festivities begin, let's remember to be thankful for all of the blessings which we have received, to appreciate our family and our loved ones, and to make the best we can with what we have in these uncertain times.

I will close this article with one of the traditional Slovak holiday wishes that people say to each other: “Health, wealth and happiness!”

I wish all of you happy holidays and a happy new year! Health, wealth and happiness! NAZDAR!

Joseph Bielecki  
President  
Sokol USA



Sokol USA President Joe Bielecki (left) with Vaclav Havel Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Charlotta Kotik (right).

## VACLAV HAVEL AWARD EVENING

Sokol USA President Joe Bielecki attended the November 14, 2023, Vaclav Havel Center Award Ceremony in New York City. The Vaclav Havel Center presented Freedom of Expression Awards to Salman Rushdie, as well as an imprisoned Egyptian journalist at a gala evening hosted by CBS' 60 Minutes host Lesley Stahl. The Havel Center also presented a Lifetime Achievement Award to Charlotta Kotik for her lifetime of service to the Czech and Slovak community. Kotik is the great-granddaughter of Tomas Masaryk, founding president of Czechoslovakia.

Kotik and her children have presented numerous programs to the Czech and Slovak communities of Pittsburgh in the course of the past 30 years. Additionally, Tomas Masaryk, during his lifetime, was a long-time proponent of the Sokol movement.

# SOKOL TIMES

official organ of the  
SLOVAK GYMNASIAC 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

SOKOL OFFICE:  
Telephone: (973) 676-0281  
E-mail: info@SokolUSA.org

All communication for publication should be sent  
to Editor at 408 Main Street, P.O. Box 677,  
Boonton, NJ 07005-0677  
Or info@SokolUSA.org  
by the 22<sup>nd</sup> 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



**SOKOL USA  
HEADQUARTERS  
HAS A NEW  
MAILING ADDRESS:**

**SOKOL USA  
408 Main Street  
P.O. Box 677  
Boonton, New Jersey 07005**



Sokol USA Milan Getting Scholarship



# SCHOLARSHIP Program 2024

*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 visit the Sokol USA website using the QR  
code below to access the application and further detail.*



sokolusa.org



**HEY SOKOL GOLFERS!**

Save the date for the best GOSH DARN  
Golf Scramble in Western Pennsylvania  
Saturday, June 8, 2024



**FIFTEENTH ANNUAL  
SOKOL FARRELL, PA  
FOUR PERSON OPEN  
GOLF SCRAMBLE**

SHENANGO LAKE GOLF CLUB: 99 Birchwood Dr., Transfer, PA 16154



**DISCOUNT FOR**

**SOKOL MEMBERS!**

For more information, please visit our webpage at:

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

Bro. Tim Brandt, chairman





## SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Interested in sponsoring an inner-city child in one of our physical fitness programs? Reach out to Kristin Greenberg at [kgreenberg.sokolusa@gmail.com](mailto:kgreenberg.sokolusa@gmail.com) to find out how you can become a part of this new sponsorship program.



**SLOVAK HERITAGE FESTIVAL –** The University of Pittsburgh hosted its 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Slovak Heritage Festival on Sunday, November 5. Sokol USA was a major sponsor of this event. Sokol USA President Joe Bielecki gave an hour-long talk about the history of the Sokol movement and made a large-scale Sokol history display. Several thousand people attended the event, which included Slovak cultural and heritage lectures, music and folk dancing, cultural displays, and Slovak ethnic food.

## MINI GYMNASTIC MEET HOSTED BY AMERICAN SOKOL

A huge thank you to the American Sokol Central District BOI on hosting another successful mini meet. During the weekend leading up to Thanksgiving, the ASO Central District hosted a mini gymnastics meet. Competitors of all ages were welcome to participate in the event. The overall event went smoothly, and everyone seemed to have an enjoyable time.

Sokol Krivan in Chicago, Ill., had 17 gymnasts, two coaches, and two volunteers that participated in the event. Everyone is looking forward to the next mini meet which will be held in the Spring.

## Happy Holidays and Welcome 2024

As we prepare for our Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year celebrations and 2023 reaches its end, it is always a good time to take stock of ourselves and reflect on the past year. As members of the Sokol community, we are charged with passing on our history and promoting a strong mind and body. Therefore, it is time to consider increasing our physical activity and improving our diets as we finish 2023 and embark on a new journey in 2024. For example, incorporating a daily 15- to 20-minute walk or chair exercises has long been medically proven to increase one's health and lengthen their life. Even a 10 percent reduction in calories eaten a day can result in a sustainable weight loss over time that can lead to better health as well. The holidays during the last few months of the year are always challenging in these areas, but if you take these small steps now, they'll have a beneficial impact on your health in the long run. So, I'd like to encourage our membership to resist the temptation to take that second helping of turkey or extra piece of pie and try to remember the importance of a healthy lifestyle this season.

In addition to promoting better health, we are a community-oriented and charitable group. As such, I am pleased to say our board has voted at the October meeting to continue to fund and sponsor Fraternal Projects in 2024. If your lodge or district is interested and looking for new project ideas and/or guidance, please contact me at [fna240@verizon.net](mailto:fna240@verizon.net). Also, I hope all of you will consider making holiday and end-of-year gifts to both our Milan Getting Scholarship Fund and the SFW fund. Finally, as the weather changes and the cold of winter prepares to blow in, make sure to check in on our family, friends and neighbors to see if they are safe and warm. I wish all of our members a Happy Thanksgiving (Šťastné Vďakyvzdanie), Merry Christmas (Veselé Vianoce) and a Happy New Year (šťastný nový rok).

**NAZDAR**  
Sister Nancy Shurina  
Chairwoman of Fraternal Activities



**THANKSGIVING WITH LODGE 269 –** Members of Sokol USA Lodge 269 in Whiting, Ind., raised funds for the Center Lounge at their Thanksgiving dinner.





## HOLIDAY DONATIONS GRATEFULLY APPRECIATED

### To the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund

Sokol U.S.A. District Board, Boonton, N.J. \$100.00  
*In memory of Justine West,  
Former Finance Committee member for many years*

From Deborah Golden, Vice President, Sokol U.S.A. \$100.00  
*In memory of Gerald Von Schwedler,  
Former Finance Committee member for many years*

From Milan Kovac \$100.00  
Lodge 12 & National Fraternal Secretary Emeritus  
*Wishing All a Very Blessed Christmas*

From District MCT, Chicago, Ill. \$1,200.00  
*May Everyone Have a Happy and Healthy New Year*

From Lodge 12, Newark, N.J. \$150.00  
*Ho, Ho, Ho! Merry Christmas!*

From Lodge 6W, Perth Amboy, N.J. \$191.25  
*Happy Holidays*

From Emil Trgala, Lodge 12, Newark, N.J. \$100.00  
*May Everyone Have a Happy New Year*

From Lodge 39/40W, Chicago, Ill. \$200.00  
*Merry Christmas*

From Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. \$21.25  
*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*

From Lodge 63, Homestead, Pa. \$297.50  
*May Everyone Have a Happy New Year*

From Lodge 79, Mahanoy City, Pa. \$1,170.00  
*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*

From Lodge 500, Boonton, N.J. \$21.25  
*Merry Christmas*

### To the Sport, Fitness and Wellness Fund

From Milan Kovac \$100.00  
Lodge 12 & National Fraternal Secretary Emeritus  
*Wishing All a Very Blessed Christmas*

From Lodge 12, Newark, N.J. \$150.00  
*Ho, Ho, Ho! Merry Christmas!*

From Lodge 79, Mahanoy City, Pa. \$1,170.00  
*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*

From Lodge 6W, Perth Amboy, N.J. \$191.25  
*Wishing All a Very Blessed Christmas*

From Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. \$21.25  
*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*

From Lodge 63, Homestead, Pa. \$297.50  
*May Everyone Have a Happy New Year*

From Emil Trgala, Lodge 12, Newark, N.J. \$50.00  
*Ho, Ho, Ho! Merry Christmas*

From Lodge 500, Boonton, N.J. \$21.25  
*Wishing All a Very Blessed Christmas*



LODGE 30 FOOD DRIVE – Sokol Lodge 30 in Brookfield, Conn., and the local VFW hosted their Third Annual Thanksgiving food drive. As usual, there was great support, and the overall event was a huge success.





# Sokol Krivan in Chicago has busy program schedule



Sokol Krivan in Chicago, Ill., currently has many classes underway. They have one boys' class, two girls' classes, a Juniors' class, a conditioning class, tots' classes and various clinics being offered during their winter session. The session ends in January.



Sokol Krivan in Chicago, Ill., holds a tots' class every Saturday morning. These classes have various themes from week to week. Some of the themes already covered during this session include animals, alphabet, fire safety, Halloween and fall. During the fire safety unit, tots got to attempt climbing up the pole!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

GBU Reporter submissions for the April 2024 (Spring Edition) issue are due no later than January 25, 2023, to [sokoltimessubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:sokoltimessubmissions@gmail.com).

As the year is coming to an end, Sokol USA reminds all individuals, lodges, and districts that you still have time to make a donation to the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund and Sports Fitness Wellness Programs.







**SOKOL USA DISTRICT 4000**  
**National Board Meeting**  
**Held at via Zoom**  
**Sunday June 25, 2023, at 8:00 p.m. EDT**  
**APPROVED AGENDA & MINUTES**

1. Call the meeting to order@ 8:10 pm EST
  2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America
  3. Moment of Silence for deceased members and families
  4. Roll Call of Officers & Introduction of guests
    - Brother Joseph Bielecki – President (Present)
    - Sister Deborah Golden – Interim Vice-President (Present)
    - Brother Arthur Burkhardt – Treasurer (Present)
    - Sister Kristin Greenberg – Recording Secretary (Present)
    - Brother Jeff Richter – Trustee (Present)
    - Brother Michael Cunningham – Trustee (Present)
    - Brother John Kennedy – Fraternal Secretary (Present)
    - Sister Kerri Sommer - Trustee (Present)
    - Brother Greg Bender - Trustee (Present)
    - Brother Jerry Pereira - Trustee (Excused)
    - Sister Nancy Shurina – Fraternal Activities Chair (Present)
    - Sister Chris Yatchyshyn – Co Director Sport, Fitness, & Wellness Dept. (Present)
    - Brother Todd Yatchyshyn – Co Director Sport, Fitness & Wellness Dept. (Excused)
- Also Invited:
- Brother Milan Kovac, Past Fraternal Secret (Present)
  - Brother John Kamenitsky (Present)

5. Presentation of Agenda

- a. Acceptance of Minutes of the last board meeting April 2023

Sis. Yatchyshyn made a motion to accept the minutes circulated. Sis. Shurina seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- b. Report from the President

Bro. Bielecki welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared that we were presented an award at a GBU fraternal conference for the work we do. In addition, they shared about the health of the company and how they are currently attempting to join regions where there is no structure currently.

At the GBU event, Sis. Shurina also was present, and they covered a variety of topics.

- c. Report of the Trustees.

Bro. Richter shared there is no open business at this time. He receives the statements from Bro. Burkhardt every month and they continue to be reviewed.

Bro. Burkhardt reported that we sent Mrs. Gordon a letter at the beginning of the year. We have received about \$800 in payments from last year which places her up to date for June; however, she continues to be 2 months behind.

- d. Report of Sport, Fitness & Wellness Committee

Sis. Yatchyshyn shared a report on behalf of Bro. Yatchyshyn.

Since our April meeting I have focused my efforts on identifying venues to visit in 3 potential SOKOLFEST locations; Erie, Pennsylvania, Saratoga Springs, New York, and Traverse City Michigan. One of the gymnastic locations in Saratoga did not re-open after the pandemic and the distance to the next facility capable of hosting our competition may take that location out of the running. The Splash Lagoon Indoor Waterpark and Hotel in Erie has also changed ownership, and my initial contact no longer is with the company. I will be meeting with the new group sales representative to begin the process of discussing rates and amenities.

Traverse City has emerged as a new location as the tourism industry grows in the region of Michigan. The towns north of Traverse city now have hotels that fit the criteria to host a SOKOLFEST. Michigan is an ideal location due to its proximity to several American Sokol units, a strong presence of Polish Falcons, and it's still a reasonable destination for Sokol Canada.

I have continued to represent Sokol USA on monthly conference calls with American Sokol. On the most recent call we discussed results of their 2025 Slet Survey that identified the preference for a Saturday evening Slet performance and the addition of Pickleball. The location of their next SOKOLFEST will most likely be in the Chicago area. The addition of Pickleball is a fantastic idea that I had already considered for our next SOKOLFEST and also found a grant that would help us facilitate that activity.

This month my role as a consultant on a grant writing committee for American Sokol required me to provide training on the use of a grant catch website ([www.grantsalert.com](http://www.grantsalert.com)). American Sokol opted for a basic membership to the website that lists available grants and deadlines for application. The higher subscription levels allow for features such as setting up automatic alerts based on keywords in the titles and descriptions of grants. This is a wonderful tool for their organization to take advantage of with their 501c3 status. I will pass along any grants that I feel may benefit any of our local lodges.

Additionally, I am assisting American Sokol with the establishment of a partnership with the US Center for Safe Sport. As a Safe Sport recognized entity "Sokol" will appear on the drop-down menu of officially recognized Safe Sport organizations. This will also allow the U.S. Center for Safe Sport to keep track of the certification status for Sokol coaches and volunteers. I began the process to affiliate with the U.S. Center for Safe Sport in 2017. The major stumbling block preventing affiliation with Safe Sport was that Sokol USA could not independently meet the required number of coaches/volunteers set by Safe Sport. We were reliant on a shared affiliation with either American Sokol, Slovak Catholic Sokol, or the Polish Falcons to move forward.

I am happy to see it finally coming to fruition, with the backing of American Sokol; however, there is no update on the American Sokol/SafeSport partnership.

The co-directors of the Sports Fitness and Wellness Department continue to serve on the Milan Getting Scholarship Committee and at least one of us has participated monthly in the Lodge 306 monthly meetings to provide guidance and answer questions when possible. We are very proud of the present officers' efforts to reorganize lodge priorities and continue to provide an excellent gymnastic program. This was no easy task, and we thank those members who took these responsibilities so seriously. It is a true testament to their dedication to the Sokol ideals.

In closing, I would like to congratulate Sokol Farrell on running a successful 14th annual golf scramble. I was in attendance and as usual, it was a fantastic event, and very well attended by community members. Also, I would like to wish the best of luck to all the students and instructors at the American Sokol National Instructor School in Cleveland. This 9-day school began June 24 and will conclude July 2; our organization is well represented on the staff by Kristin Greenberg and Lili Glover.

Sis. Golden inquired as to whether ASO may be having much participation in their own Slet. Sis. Yatchyshyn shared that information is not yet available, but participation will probably be lower than before. However, if they can host in the Chicago area, having it there may help their participation numbers.

Sis. Golden inquired as to whether there was anyone interested in stepping up into the vacant National Co-director role at this time. Sis. Yatchyshyn shared they continue working on finding someone who is willing and able.

- e. Collateral Loan for Sokol USA Lodge 410 Pen Argyl

Bro. Kennedy shared there is nothing new to report since the March board meeting. They received a letter requesting forbearance and at this point they will stay in forbearance at this time. Sokol USA will of course not foreclose on them because they are doing what they can.

Sis. Yatchyshyn shared they are working hard to raise whatever funds they can to get themselves back into a better financial space.

- f. Report of Milan Getting Scholarship Committee

Sis. Golden shared there were 2 applicants Abigail Grico from 30 and Jolene Ventrino from Lodge 32. Abigail is interested in business management. She was in

(Continued on Page 7)

SOKOL USA DISTRICT 4000  
National Board Meeting

(Continued from Page 6)

the yearbook club, photographer team lead, key club, volleyball, sold raffle tickets for her lodge, helped setup for an anniversary party. and helped with the flag presentation for Memorial Day. Despite health issues, she had a 3.2 GPA. Jolene is interested in business, specifically in the area of marketing and finance. She was a three-sport athlete throughout high school. She was senior captain of the basketball team and senior leader of the soccer team that went on to win the state championship. She played 2 years of Lacrosse and 1 year of golf. She was in Boonton’s gymnastics program from 2nd through 6th grade. She competed in both Boonton and New York. She wants to continue her involvement in her lodge by participating in meetings and continue to promote Sokol activities on social media. Even with all her involvement in those various activities, still managed to have a 4.36 GPA.

Sis. Golden would like to see a submission about the recipients and a little blurb to encourage individuals to apply for next year.

Bro. Bielecki shared she should complete a formal write up and submit to John to be included in the next submission.

Sis. Yatchyshyn shared that she had heard feedback that we have a very cumbersome system. Hopefully, this will become an easier process in the future when we officially adopt the platform GBU is using.

g. Report of Fraternal Activities

Sis. Shurina shared the launch of the fraternal projects. Big thanks you were shared with the Danbury Lodge for the first successful project. They did a really nice job involving the community, and children from the local high school. The next project is by MCT who are sponsoring an event to support the Milan Getting scholarship for September. New Kensington and Leechburg have also expressed interest in taking advantage of this opportunity as well. We are off to a nice start to the initiative.

Sis. Shurina shared that she attended the GBU conference. They shared a lot of valuable information. Presenters were very knowledgeable. The event was well run and opportunities for communication transfers. They seem to be very happy with the activity and participation in our district. The scholarship seems to be a big issue and they feel once they get this platform off the ground it will solve many of the problems we are seeing. It is also concerning that we have many of our members applying for the GBU scholarships but not our own.

h. Audit

Bro. Kennedy shared the audit is still ongoing because some of the IRS fraternal rules for nonprofits have changed.

Due to the audit, there have been many files from headquarters that have been scanned and saved electronically. This has eliminated at least a ½ of the paper files that were being stored.

Bro. Bender shared he is happy and encouraged to hear about the thoroughness of the audit and the number of questions they are asking to get our finances in order. Bro. Bender shared his concerns about some of the information shared at headquarters and thinks we would be better served by an independent company.

Audit for Chicago has not been started because we are waiting until the National audit is concluded.

i. Mortgage Receivable M-1274 Desiree Gordon \$25,000.00

Was addressed earlier in the meeting.

j. Directors Insurance

Bro. Kennedy shared we are still in the process of this. They have been asking for more information and a lot of the information they are asking about does not pertain to us. We have narrowed it down to 2 companies. At the moment they are requesting documentation that we currently are not sure we can produce for them.

k. Chicago Lodge & Issues (Executive session)

Buddy made the motion to go into executive session. Sis. Golden seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting went into executive session @ 8:52 pm

Bro. Kennedy made a motion to leave executive session. Sis. Golden seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting left executive session @ 9:00 pm

l. Prague Slet

Bro. Bielecki shared there is no new information at this time. The tentative dates are June 30, 2024 - July 5, 2024. American Sokol is working on getting a tour together, but they are still in the early stages of organizing that as well.

No timetables or schedules have been organized and published yet.

6. New Business  
a. GBU awards

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

Sis. Golden also attended the GBU meet up. Many of their districts are having the same issues in their districts where they don’t have many younger members to step up into their open offices/positions. She also shared it is the 60th anniversary of their foundation which funds the scholarships. They are trying to encourage people to make donations. As one of their districts we should consider making a donation to their foundations. Bro. Burkhardt shared that we did recently make a \$500 donation to their scholarship.

Bro. Bielecki shared that we get as many lodges as we can to let Bro. Kennedy know what they are doing so it is reported to GBU. They give quarterly financial rewards, and they like to recognize their districts for that type of information shared.

Bro. Burkhardt recommended we do a write-up in the Sokol Times. Bro. Bielecki shared that he would submit an article in the next Sokol Times.

b. Unclaimed Properties

Bro. Kennedy shared he has been continuing his work on this. We recently received from a lodge in the state of Virginia and disbanded in 1964. We received about \$1700 from the state of Virginia. We also received \$91 from the state of New York from our gym that has been gone since 1936. We are currently waiting to hear back from the states of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the state of California. We are unsure of the amounts at this time but won’t know until a check is received.

7. Old Business  
a. Website/social media

Bro. Kennedy shared there is nothing new to report.

b. Status of Membership in Suspension

Already covered earlier in the meeting.

8. Correspondence

Bro. Kennedy has received some correspondence about policies previously carried. So he has been doing a lot of research and finding the original policies.

9. Other  
a. Date, Time, and location of next meeting

Next meeting will be in Palmerton. Bro. Kennedy will send out a doodle to identify a date.

Sis. Yatchyshyn shared her appreciation for all of the extra work Bro. Kennedy is doing in regard to the suspensions and unclaimed properties.

10. Adjournment

Sis. Shurina motioned to adjourn. Sis. Golden seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned @ 9:20 pm EST.



## THE BENEFITS OF PUMPKIN

*Summarized from an October 2021 article by Healthgrades author Elizabeth Beasley, who writes about alternative and complementary therapies.*

Pumpkin is actually a fruit, which helps explain why it's often used in desserts such as pumpkin pie. But it also has significant health benefits. Its orange color comes from beta-carotene, and it contains high amounts of Vitamin A, which helps improve vision, supports healthy skin and bones, battles infection, and boosts cellular growth. Pumpkin is also a great source of fiber. And, it contains only 50 calories per cup. (Although tasty, pumpkin seeds aren't quite as nutritious as pumpkin pulp.)

Pumpkins ripen in the fall just before the cold and flu season. In addition to the antioxidants and Vitamin A, pumpkin contains Vitamin C and zinc, which can speed up your recovery from colds. Vitamin A helps your body ward off viruses and fight infections, and nutritionists suspect it may even provide protection against autoimmune diseases. These are all great justifications for indulging in pumpkin pie in the fall (and year-round)!

Pumpkin is also good for eye health. Being rich in Vitamin A and beta-carotene, it helps improve retinal function and light processing. Pumpkin also contains lutein and zeaxanthin, antioxidants that protect against cataracts and macular degeneration in aging eyes.

Regarding heart health, pumpkin, similarly to other winter squashes such as acorn or butternut, contains 16 percent of the daily recommended amount of potassium, which helps prevent heart disease. It can lower cholesterol levels and balance minerals in the body. Try adding roasted pumpkin or other squashes to salad or pasta dishes. You can also cook with pumpkin seed oil, and you might even try substituting mashed pumpkin for



## SOKOL KRIVAN HOSTS HODY FALL FESTIVAL

Sokol Krivan in Chicago, Ill., hosted their Annual Hody Fall Festival event. At the event, they served Chicken Paprikas (which tends to be everyone's favorite). They also continued the tradition of having guests participate in the traditional fruit dance and Hody Mayoral election. This year's mayor was a gentleman named Floyd Rueger. After his mayoral win, he led everyone through a polka and made sure they remained involved in the dancing throughout his celebratory dance.

A big thank you goes out to the Slovak American Historical and Literary Society for sponsoring the dessert table and beverage station. The beverage station included hot chocolate and hot apple cider. This station was a fun addition to the event and a huge hit with the families who were there.

mashed potatoes.

Pumpkins and other squashes contain carotenoids, which battle free-radicals in your body and may help protect you from some cancers, including colorectal and breast cancer. Pumpkin also contains beta-carotene and lutein, two flavonoids that may slow or stop cancer cell growth.

Try eating pumpkin seeds (also called pepitas) as a bedtime snack to help you have a restful night. Pumpkin seeds are high in essential fatty acids and zinc, so you can improve your health while you sleep! You can also try sipping on pumpkin juice before bed.

Also, research indicates that pumpkin, like other foods containing

carotenoids, could prevent your body from storing fat around your midsection, as long as you don't indulge in sugary pumpkin treats. Leaner bodies typically have high blood levels of the good carotenoids.

Additionally, some claim that eating pumpkin regularly can help keep your digestive system in sync because pumpkin is full of fiber (7 grams of fiber – and only 30 calories! – in one cup). Getting enough fiber in your diet can help reduce your risk of bowel cancer, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.

Because pumpkin is a fiber-filled fruit, it can help keep you feeling fuller longer. Try sipping pumpkin juice after your workout to



help you resist unhealthy snacks!

Another possible bonus to eating pumpkin is that it can help improve your skin's appearance and prevent sun damage. Vitamin A is the key component in pumpkin that helps protect your skin from UV rays.

### About the author:

Elizabeth Beasley has been writing for Healthgrades since 2014 and specializes in articles about alternative and complementary therapies like meditation, yoga, energy work and aromatherapy.