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# SOKOL



# TIMES

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## From the President's View

Fall has arrived bringing with it shorter days, cooler weather and, soon, colorful leaves. The time passes faster than we can ever imagine. As the weather gets cooler, it is important to turn to autumn exercise activities such as walking, bike riding, indoor aerobics or any number of activities in the gym. These are good ways to prevent the winter weight gain and to stay fit and healthy!

Our members can go to our Sokol USA website and read physical fitness tips from Sister Ellen Kovac in prior issues to the Sokol Times or watch the chair aerobics exercise video sessions she posted there so that people can attempt to do solo home exercises. They are a good introduction to staying fit and healthy!

The coming of fall and winter also offer good opportunities for indoor activities. I encourage our lodges to meet, to socialize and to consider engaging in charitable or community activities and projects. This is the time to think about a community cleanup event or a lodge project to bring members together and foster fraternalism. Consider having a meeting or an event where everyone attending is asked to bring a canned good donation for the local food bank.

I also encourage our members to take



Joseph Bielecki

cognizance of the upcoming Veterans Day holiday. Their service has kept our country free and preserved our democracy and its values.

Also coming soon is the Thanksgiving holiday. It is important to remember those in need at this time of year. Many will have fallen ill or are experiencing hard economic times. It is important to consider supporting food banks, medical charities or veterans service agencies so as to help those in need. I also encourage our members to consider supporting our own Sokol activities such as the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund. These are all very worthy causes that touch peoples' lives.

Our lodges can also preserve and support our ethnic heritage. I attended a 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party event  
(Continued on Page 6)

**LODGE 30 ACTIVITIES** – Sokol Lodge 30, Danbury, located in Brookfield, Conn., has had a busy and exciting summer filled with activities that brought together members, families and the community. Above is a photo from their sixth annual Golf Tournament. At left is a photo from their special Sokol Kids Day at the Lake.  
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# SOKOL TIMES

official organ of the  
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OF THE USA  
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SOKOL USA   
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## SOKOLS AT THE WORLD'S FAIR

Do any fellow Sokols have pictures or memories from "Sokol Day" at the 1964-65 World's Fair in Queens, N.Y.? If so, the New York Hall of Science in Corona, N.Y., would love to have them! Sokol USA's own Sister Ellen Kovac was there and performed. The Hall of Science has a picture of her, would love to have more and, in general, learn more about our organization's participation.

If you like, you can send Brandi Kovac your written memories, anecdotes, or pictures at: [BKKovac@aol.com](mailto:BKKovac@aol.com) and she will forward them to the museum. Or, if you'd like to communicate with them directly, here's their request:

*Did you attend the 1964-65 World's Fair - or know someone who did? If so, we'd love to hear from you! We are eager to share photos, videos, and other memories from the fair so that we can look back and dream forward together! If you have something to share, send a note to [info@nysci.org](mailto:info@nysci.org) with the subject line "World's Fair Memories." Thank you in advance!*

## Centennial celebration



Cutting the cake at the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party for the Nationality Rooms at the University Pittsburgh are (from left) Sokol USA President Joseph Bielecki; Thomas Kotik, the great-great-grandson of Tomas Masaryk, the founding president of Czechoslovakia; Eugene Myers, MD; Kati Csoman, executive director of the Nationality Rooms program; Maria Silvestri, president of the Timo Foundation, and Timothy Kuzma, president of the Polish Falcons of America.

## Resolution to merge the Convention and Sokolfest

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

A request was made to the Sokol USA National Board to consider merging the Sokol USA National Convention, which is scheduled to be held in 2026, and the Sokolfest, which is scheduled to take place June 22-27, 2027, at the Sheraton Detroit Novi Hotel in the western suburbs of Detroit.

In order for these two events to be combined into a single, coordinated event held in the same week in 2027, approval from the delegates of the 2022 National Convention was required to defer the National Convention from 2026 to 2027. The following resolution was presented for a vote:

### RESOLUTION

It is resolved to postpone the Sokol USA National Convention from 2026 to 2027 and grant the Sokol USA National Board of Directors the authority to merge the Sokol USA National Convention and Sokolfest into a single, coordinated event, which will occur during the same week in 2027 and in the same location as the 2027 Sokolfest.

Voting was conducted according to the established weighted procedure used at all National Conventions. A two-thirds majority vote was required for passage.

Of the 103 votes cast, 70 were in favor and 34 were opposed. As the resolution received the necessary two-thirds majority, it was affirmed, and therefore the Sokol USA National Convention and Sokolfest will be held together in 2027.

Nazdar!

John A. Kennedy  
National Fraternal Secretary, Sokol USA

## SOKOL FARRELL ACCEPTING DONATIONS

Sokol Farrell is accepting donations to the Scholarship Fund. Well over \$40,000 has been awarded to our Sokol Farrell members. Donations may be sent to: Sister Dorothy Slezak, Chairwoman; 6850 Seneca Road; Sharpsville, PA 16150. Checks may be made to Sokol USA Farrell.

Please refer to the Sokol Farrell website for applications and instructions. We are located at: <http://www.sokolfarrell.org/>.



MCT District members support a Fraternal Project celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nationality Rooms in the Cathedral of Learning.



Above and below, Lodge 255, Leechburg lodge held their annual Members Appreciation Party on September 13<sup>th</sup>.



## Pumpkin Spice Season 2025

As we close out late summer and enter into early fall, we are quite the busy group this time of year. On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, MCT District members supported a Fraternal Project celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nationality Rooms in the Cathedral of Learning on Pittsburgh's campus. Members toured the rooms, learned about the different cultures and what they contributed to Pittsburgh, and enjoyed some birthday cake and coffee. Sokol USA was one of the major sponsors of this year-long centennial scholarship drive.

Our Leechburg lodge held their annual Members Appreciation Party on September 13<sup>th</sup> at their venue of Lodge 255. Next up for them will be a Halloween party on October 25<sup>th</sup>. In a change of dates, they will also be the host lodge for the National Board's Fall Meetings on November 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.

In Chicago, the Gym Program is in full swing. They have revamped their program and are using a new app to better communicate with parents. This app also allows them to share the progress their gymnasts are making. They will be participating in ASO Central District Turkey Time Meet later in November.

Out in eastern Pennsylvania, both Bethlehem and Palmerton are in the Fall Bowling Season. Palmerton had country line dancing on September 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. October 18<sup>th</sup> is their annual Golf Scramble and on October 25<sup>th</sup>, there'll be a Halloween costume party with live entertainment.

Finally, Danbury has a full schedule in November, starting with a Red Cross Blood Drive on November 1<sup>st</sup>. On Veteran's Day on November 11<sup>th</sup>, they'll host a Bridge Renaming Ceremony in honor of Jason Lewis and Michael Schmit. Lastly, on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, a food drive will be held benefitting the Brookfield Food Pantry. To all our members, I encourage you to support your local food banks if financially possible. As we all know, prices have risen and many folks, especially our seniors and veterans, are in need of some extra help.

To all Sokol members, Happy Halloween and have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

## Lodge 30



Lodge 30's Sixth Annual Golf Outing. See also Pages 1 and 4.

## SOKOL LODGE 30 BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH SPORT AND TRADITION

Sokol Lodge 30 (Sokol Danbury), located in Brookfield, Conn., has had a busy and exciting summer filled with activities that brought together members, families and the community.

On July 16, 2025, the Lodge and local VFW proudly hosted their 6th Annual Golf Tournament at the beautiful Richter Park Golf Course. The event drew strong participation and support, with all profits benefiting both Sokol Lodge 30 and the Jason D. Lewis Brookfield Memorial VFW Post 10201 Community Outreach. The tournament not only raised funds but strengthened partnerships within the Brookfield community, reflecting Sokol's ongoing commitment to service and fellowship.

In August, Lodge 30 welcomed its youngest members and their families for a special Sokol Kids Day on the lake. Children enjoyed swimming, kayaking and time together outdoors, making memories that celebrated the joy of summer and the spirit of Sokol.

With events that blend tradition, recreation, and community support, Sokol Lodge 30 continues to live out its mission of fostering physical fitness, camaraderie, and service in Brookfield and beyond.



# Celebrating the Success of the ASO Instructor School



This summer, the American Sokol Instructor School brought together students, staff and volunteers for an unforgettable experience of learning, leadership and camaraderie. Hosted at Sokol USA Chicago Lodge 306 on the city's North Side, the school welcomed 19 students and was supported by nine part-time and full-time staff members.

This year's school director, Kristin Greenberg, a proud member of Sokol USA Chicago Lodge 306, led the program with energy and vision. Joining her on staff were several Sokol USA members, including Lili Glover, whose contributions, along with others, helped create a supportive and dynamic learning environment. A special thank you goes to Kim Schiro for her tremendous efforts in preparing the facility and kitchen, ensuring everything ran smoothly throughout the week.

Students came from across the country, representing American Sokol units in Cleveland, Ohio; Fort Worth, Texas; Baltimore, Md.; Berwyn, Ill.; and Minnesota, along with three Sokol USA participants from Chicago Lodge 306. Their diversity of experiences enriched the program as they built lasting friendships and strengthened their skills.

The curriculum covered a variety of key topics, including Spotting and Progressions, Calisthenics, Marching, Games and Sokol History. New initiatives introduced this year – such as Conflict/Resolution training, advanced spotting belt practice and a mock gymnastics meet – gave students valuable opportunities to learn and lead in new ways.

The week began with exciting team-building activities, including a mobile escape room that came to the facility. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, students, staff and volunteers celebrated Independence Day together at a Chicago Dogs baseball game in Rosemont, Ill., where they were honored with the opportunity to stand

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## AMERICAN SOKOL INSTRUCTOR SCHOOL

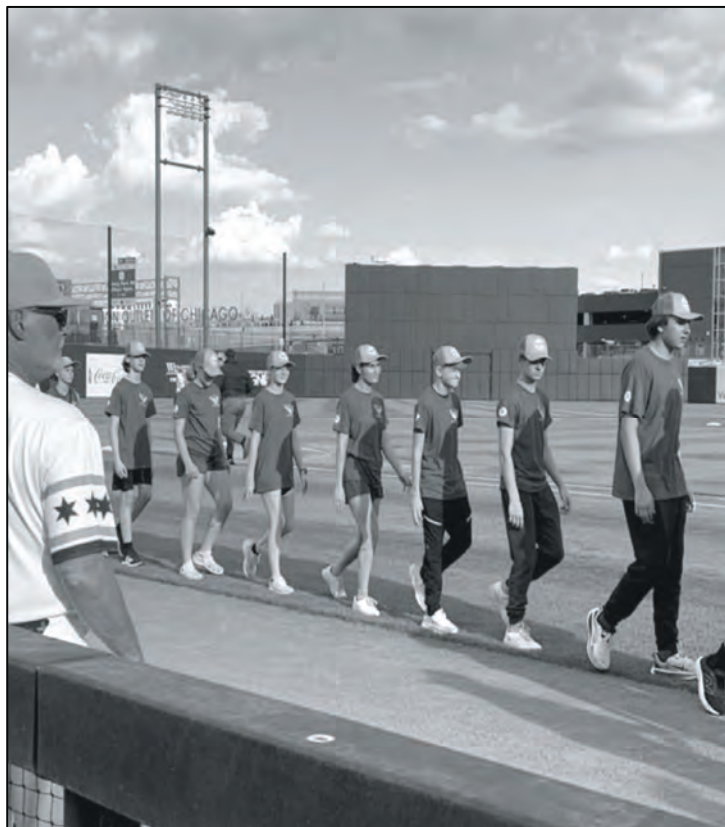
(Continued from Page 5)

on the field during the national anthems. Fireworks capped off the evening before everyone returned to the host site. A special thank you needs to go out to Sokol USA who sponsored the escape room and Chicago Dogs outing. These were some very memorable and great opportunities provided to the students throughout the 10-day school. They were also fan favorites when checking in with the students.

Importantly, the school directly followed the American Sokol National Slet, held earlier in the Chicago area, creating a seamless continuation of tradition, celebration and growth for the Sokol community.

This year's success was made possible thanks to the dedication of our staff, volunteers and parents, whose time and effort ensured a meaningful and fun-filled program. Most importantly, the students not only trained and learned – they had an unforgettable experience that embodied the true spirit of Sokol.

With another remarkable school completed, we look forward to the next American Sokol Instructor School and to seeing this new generation of leaders carry forward the proud traditions of Sokol.



## TRY THE PLANK CHALLENGE

Hold a plank position for 1 minute or longer.

### BENEFITS:

Improves core strength and stability



## WORKOUT CORNER CHALLENGE: 1-MINUTE PLANK

Hold a plank position for one minute every day this month.

How to do it:

- Place your forearms on the floor, elbows under shoulders.
- Extend your legs straight back, toes on the ground.
- Keep your body in a straight line from head to heels.
- Engage your core and avoid sagging hips or raised glutes.

Benefits:

- ✓ Builds core strength and stability
- ✓ Improves posture and balance
- ✓ Boosts endurance and body awareness

Get Involved!

Snap a photo of yourself holding your plank and submit it for a chance to be featured in the next issue of the Sokol Times. Participants also will have the opportunity to earn some Sokol Swag!

Submit your photo using the QR code below:



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW

(Continued from Page 1)  
for the Nationality Classrooms program at the University of Pittsburgh in late August this year. I saw many of our lodge members from Blairsville, New Kensington, North Side Pittsburgh and Braddock in attendance at the event. In fact, several of the lodges had organized groups of their members to attend the event and celebrate our ethnic heritage. Sokol USA members had been an important force in helping to create the Czechoslovak Classroom which opened at the University in March 1939.

I also encourage our lodges to contact Sister Nancy Shurina to help create or explore new programs. She is very willing to help lodges create fraternal activities or programs to engage their membership. She has had success in the past year in assisting lodges with new fraternal activities for their members. The coming winter months are conducive to planning and launching new lodge activities or events. Sister Shurina can assist the lodges with ideas and seed money from her fraternal activities budget.

As this issue of the Sokol Times goes to the press, the news has just reached us of the passing of Brother Stephen Banjak of our Sokol USA Farrell, Pa., lodge. While the next issue of the Sokol Times will address his memory and his many contributions to Sokol USA and its sports programs, I extend Sokol USA's deepest sympathy and condolences as well as my own to his family and to his lodge. He touched many lives and was an important force in Sokol USA for many years.

NAZDAR!  
Brother Joseph Bielecki  
President  
SOKOL USA



PLUM GIRLS AT SOCCER CAMP – The Plum High School Girls Soccer Team recently received a \$200 donation from Sokol 255, Leechburg in support of their program. Pictured are team members Hayden Wawrzyniak, Taylor Spudich, Maura Reilly and Sophie Gieb representing Plum at soccer camp.



Save the Date!

Wednesday, June 23 to  
Sunday, June 27, 2027

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY  
APPRECIATED

To the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund

|                                                                                 |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| From Sokol USA Lodge 122, Kenosha, Wis.<br><i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i> | \$106.25 |
| From Sokol USA Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa.<br><i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>  | \$63.75  |
| From Sokol USA Lodge 12, Newark, NJ<br><i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>     | \$50.00  |

To the 2027 Slet Fund

|                                                                             |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| From GBU Life<br><i>In Memory of Jakob Kennedy</i>                          | \$1,000.00 |
| From Joseph Bielecki<br><i>In Memory of Jakob Kennedy</i>                   | \$100.00   |
| From Sokol USA District MCT<br><i>In Memory of Jakob Kennedy</i>            | \$50.00    |
| From Deborah Golden<br><i>In Memory of Jakob Kennedy</i>                    | \$50.00    |
| From Albert and Patricia Curesky<br><i>In Memory of Jakob Kennedy</i>       | \$100.00   |
| From Sokol USA Lodge 103, Farrell, Pa.<br><i>In Memory of Jakob Kennedy</i> | \$200.00   |

To the Sports, Fitness and Wellness Fund

|                                                                                 |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| From Sokol USA Lodge 122, Kenosha, Wis.<br><i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i> | \$106.25 |
| From Sokol USA Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa.<br><i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>  | \$63.75  |
| From Sokol USA Lodge 12, Newark, NJ<br><i>In Memory of Deceased Members</i>     | \$50.00  |

## Summer Classes



This July and August, Sokol USA Chicago Lodge 306 hosted summer classes for 36 participants ages 3-12 on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Friday mornings. This session showcased the program's new look, featuring an updated facility, fresh equipment, a revamped curriculum and a dynamic new staff. Tots classes had some extra special themes which included superheroes week, animals week, circus week and under the sea. Despite the summer heat, everyone had a fantastic time! Fall classes began in mid-September, and the kids are already gearing up for their first competitions this November 2025.



## SPONSOR A GYMNAST

Are you interested in sponsoring a gymnast and getting updates on how the sponsored gymnast is progressing? 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.