



AMERICAN
SOKOL
WASHINGTON, DC

MAY 2022



Assembling the maypoles is a spring holiday festivity in Czechia and Slovakia. A maypole is a decorated tree trunk and the central element for spring festivities. It is usually put together on April 30 or May 1. The maypole includes the entire tree. Aside from the treetop, it is stripped of its branches and bark. The top is then decorated with colorful ribbons made of fabric or crêpe paper. They symbolize love, new life, and good growth. A decorated wreath is hung on top of it. The assembling of maypoles is also associated with the ritual of safeguarding the maypole through the night. Depending on the region and tradition, the safeguarding usually lasts until sunrise or the first crowing of the rooster.

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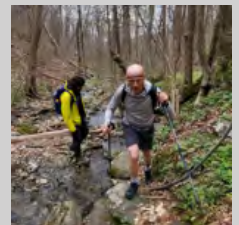
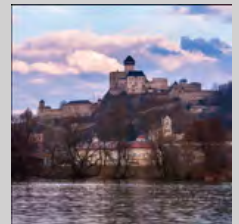
Milena Jesenská - Not only a muse to Kafka but a talented Czech journalist, translator, and writer

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Czech that Film Festival

Occupation - watch one of the festival movies at local theater AVALON



TRADITIONAL RECIPES

Vepřo-knedlo-zelo

IN EVERY ISSUE

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Sokol Washington, D.C. Facebook & Instagram

Thank You



MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

WEDNESDAY, May 4, 8:00 PM

[Little Falls Community Library](#), 5501 Massachusetts Ave, Bethesda, MD 20816

Please join us at our Monthly Membership Meeting, share ideas, and participate in planning future events. It is your opportunity to play a part in shaping the future of our unit and meet our board.

We meet every 1st Wednesday of the month at 8 PM in the community library. If you are interested, please RSVP to sokol@sokolwashington.org and we will send you more information.

All members and non-members are welcome to join us!



APRIL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT THE LIBRARY!

After a long break, we had an excellent turnout for the first in-person meeting. We went thru our regular reports, treasurer, membership, Safe Sports certificate reminders, and information from our Czech and Slovak schools and gymnastics. Our activities are picking up. Reviewed our past events and discussed upcoming events: Easter Egg Quest, Tennis Tournament, Hudlicka Memorial Hiking Marathon, and forthcoming June Canoe Trip.

Alex Merka became a voting member. Congratulations Alex!

6
Did
You
Know
?

Slovakia is a veritable superpower, with the most castles (180) and chateaux (425) per capita in the world.



Slovaks consider castles a national treasure partly because castles in Slovakia are linked with the country's history and are some of the unique must-see landmarks. There are hundreds of castles, chateaux, and forts in Slovakia.

Castles served as seats, residences, or forts for kings and nobles, whether in Slovakia or elsewhere. They preferred to build them on elevated locations, such as steep high grounds and cone-shaped hills, which were particularly favored. Cliffs, or rock formations, were well defensible, guarded access, and offered good visibility, enabling the residents to control the surrounding area.

Most of them were at places of strategic importance to guard an area, road, river, or mountain pass. The Slovak term *hradská cesta* (castle road) connotes a road that connected castles used to protect it and provide shelter to travelers or in case of an enemy attack.

The best castles in Slovakia have been preserved, renovated, and repurposed into museums and hotels.

Listed here are just a few and are all National Cultural Monuments.

THE BEST-PRESERVED CASTLES IN SLOVAKIA

- 1. Červený Kameň:** Kežmarský hrad / **2. Bojnice:** The Most Romantic Slovak Castle /
- 3. Banská Štiavnica:** Part of a UNESCO Preserve / **4. Bratislava:** The Best Known Castle in Slovakia /
- 5. Kežmarok:** Castle citadel / **7. Krásna Hôrka:** The Gem of Eastern Slovak Castles / **8. Kremnica:** A Spectacular Citadel /
- 9. Ľubovňa:** A Castle of Royals Summits / **8. Ľupča:** Steel Works Owned Castle /
- 9. Smolenice:** Smolenice Chateau is a fairy-tale-looking Slovak castle / **10. Nitra:** A Great Moravian Castle /
- 11. Trenčín:** Trenčiansky hrad (Trenčín Castle) / **12. Orava:** one of the most beautiful and largest castle /
- 13. Zvolen:** Zvolenský zámok (Zvolen Castle)



Lucia Maruska Levendis Scholarship Applications

The objectives of the American Sokol Washington, DC Scholarship Program are to provide financial support to students who have assisted regularly with Sokol Washington activities, and promote the principles of community service.

This Scholarship is available to applicants who are college-bound seniors or college freshmen, sophomores, or juniors. The applicant must have participated, or currently must be participating in Sokol Washington programs, and the applicant's parents or the applicant (if over 18) must be a Sokol Washington member in good standing, must have maintained a GPA of 3.0 or better, and demonstrate leadership and sportsmanship attributes through participation in a range of community and scholastic activities.

More information about the application process: <https://www.sokolwashington.org/school/scholarship/>

The application deadline is May 15, 2022.

Canoe/Kayak on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River

with Optional Camping

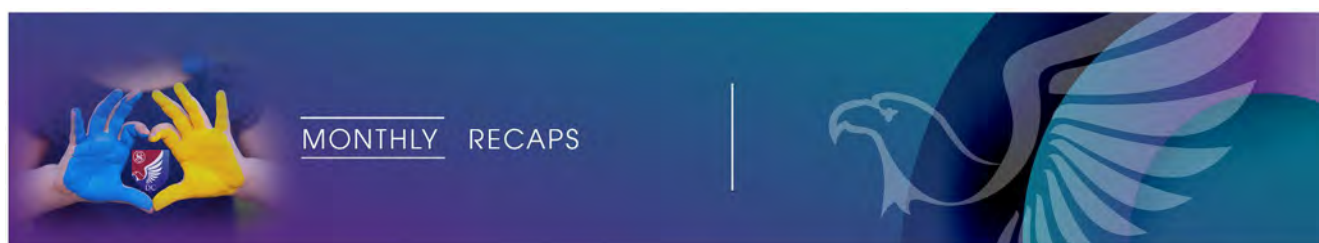


Minimum age: 5 with close parental supervision. On Saturday, we plan to do a 5-mile trip on the river and on Sunday a 12-mile trip on the river or about 5-6 hours with stops, subject to change based on water conditions. There will be an option for interested folks to go down the Compton Rapids (class I-II).

CONTACT: events@sokolwashington.org to reserve a canoe or kayak or to book a shuttle for your own canoe or kayak. For a discount on the rental, please [RSVP](#) no later than **Wednesday, June 1.**

START on Saturday, June 4: 10:30 AM from the [Downriver Canoe Company](#)
[884 Indian Hollow Road, Bentonville, VA 22610](#) | www.downriver.com

START on Sunday, June 5: 10:30 AM from the Golden Rock Campground [Downriver Canoe Company/Golden Rock Campground](#), 9751 US-340 N., Rileyville, VA 22650



Hudlicka Memorial - Hiking Marathon



By Dagmar Merkova

What a spectacular morning! *"Do not forget plenty of water, snacks, poles, and comfortable shoes to wear afterward! More drinks and snacks"!*

That was on my mind the morning of the marathon hike. An early start is a must since Babi Olga liked punctuality, plus it is a long hike. We arrived among the first at the small parking lot at the trailhead - 16 brave ones. We tied our shoelaces, grabbed our poles, took pictures, and swiftly started to ascend the biggest climb of the day – Little Devils Stairs. Small break at the top and wait for all, and with a smile and motto: "ustvani posledniho" we continue to gain miles. It was nice to meet new and old friends; there was enough time to enjoy conversation, spring flowers, and share memories from previous years. Contesting who could make the best bread or if we would make a loop this year or go there and back on the Appalachian Trail made us laugh and enjoy the spirit of the day. After a small lunch break, our big group was divided into an entire marathon hikers group and almost half marathoners. One group did a 20 km long hike, which was still a respectable distance.

The actual marathoners enjoyed a full day of conversation, fun, and beautiful views. They also found a ramp (Česnek medvědí) and collected a few to make a very healthy salad and pesto. According to this [US national forest](#), you can harvest some for personal use.

Overall—another excellent marathon hike! We hope to meet you on similar marathon hikes.

Nazdar"

source: <https://www.farmersalmanac.com/what-the-heck-are-ramps-17122>

*Also known as spring onions, ramsons, wild leeks, wood leeks, and wild garlic, ramps (*Allium tricoccum*) are a member of the allium family, including [garlic and onions](#). It grows in early spring. Ramps are rich in vitamins A and C, selenium, and chromium like all onions. That makes them good for teeth, bones, eyesight, the immune system, and the cardiovascular system. They contain antioxidant properties.*



Ramp (Česnek medvědí)

Tennis Tournament



By Petr Minar

On April 23, we held the annual Sokol tennis tournament.

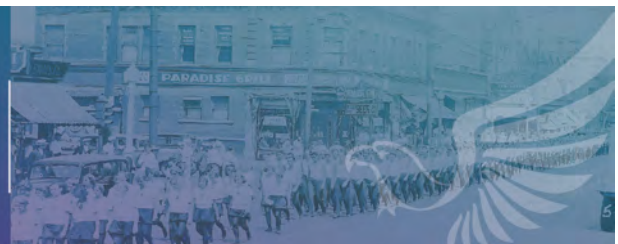
Participants from all categories came to have fun and measure up their skills. With temperatures close to 80° F, everyone was tested to their limits. Short of typical summer humidity, the day felt like summer was here.

In the junior category under 14 years, the title went to *David Huser*.

In the adult category, a combined category for men and women, the title went to a young and talented *Jan Pekar*.

Thanks to everyone who participated; I hope to see even more players next year!

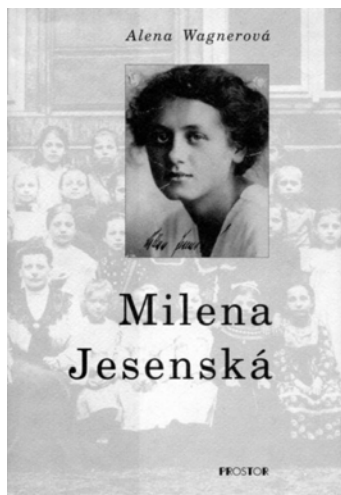
HISTORICAL CORNER



Milena Jesenská

By Mirka Mimrova

- not only a muse to Kafka but a talented Czech journalist, translator, and writer in her own right



May 17 will mark 78 years since Milena Jesenska (1896-1944), an unconventional person, renowned journalist, translator, writer, and an active participant in the anti-Nazi resistance during World War II, died in the Ravensbrück concentration camp. She earned her worldwide fame after Franz Kafka's Letters to Milena, a collection of his letters to Milena Jesenska from 1920 to 1923, was published in German in 1952 as Briefe a Milena, and by some was viewed solely from this perspective. Her achievements as an esteemed Czech journalist, translator and author were later recognized. She was awarded in memoriam by order of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, class II, in 1996. In 1995, she earned the honorific title "Righteous Among the Nations" by the State of Israel in 1995 for her help provided to Jewish and political refugees in Czechoslovakia controlled by the Nazis.

Milena Jesenska was born to a family of Jan Jasensky, a professor of stomatology at Charles University, and his wife, Milena. In 1915, she graduated from Prague Minerva high school, the first academic gymnasium for girls in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, known for providing high-quality education. Already at that time, as being quite unconventional for her

time, very intelligent and energetic, she became a favorite member of Prague cafe society. There, she met many Prague German Jewish authors and intellectuals, including Max Brod, Franz Kafka, and her first husband, Ernst Polak. She married Ernst Polak in 1918, although her father had initially been against the marriage and allegedly agreed to it only because the married couple would not stay in Prague and move to Vienna. In the capital of Astro-Hungary, under the influence of local intellectuals and due to the need to earn some money on her own in the time of high inflation and hunger after the fall of the empire, she began writing her articles for Czech newspapers and magazines, e.g., Tribuna, Národní listy, Pestrý týden and Lidové noviny.

She worked on her first translations into Czech, including texts by Franz Kafka, Franz Werfel, and many others. In 1925, she divorced Ernst Polak and returned to Prague, where she continued to work as a journalist, translator, and editor. Among young architects in Prague, she met her second husband, Jaromir Krejcar, and in 1926 she gave birth to their only child Jana Cerna. However, even her second marriage falls apart.

Due to her social solid empathy, Milena Jesenska was always on the left side of the political spectrum. Thus at the beginning of the 1930s, she became attracted to communism; however, after learning from Jaromir Krejcar about Stalin's crimes, she left the communist party in 1935. At that time, she was hired by Ferdinand Peroutka for his weekly newspaper, Přítomnost, and finally became a brilliant political journalist. Her commentaries on the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany, the Anschluss of Austria to Nazi Germany, the possible consequences this was to have for Czechoslovakia, and her reports from the Sudeten on intimidation of the German minority by the Czech majority are regarded as the pinnacle of Czech modern journalism.

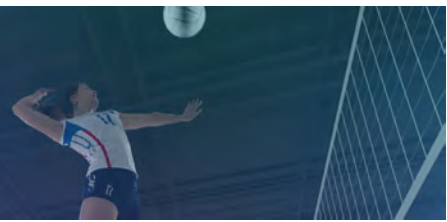
After the Munich Agreement was signed (September 30, 1938), Milena Jesenská became actively helping Jews, communists, and German antifascists to emigrate. After the German army occupied Czechoslovakia, she got involved in the anti-Nazi resistance. She was arrested in 1939 and transported to the concentration camp in Ravensbruck in Germany in 1940, where she died from kidney failure in 1944.

There are many resources on Milena Jesenska in various languages, e.g. Alena Wágnerová. Milena Jesenská. Prague: Prostor, 1996 (also published in German: Milena Jesenska. Frankfurt: Fisher 1997), Alena Wágnerová. Dopisy Mileny Jesenské. Prague: Prostor, 1998, Mary Hockaday. Kafka, Love, and Courage: The Life of Milena Jesenská. New York: The Overlook Press, 1997.

Sources: [Wikipedia](#)

Plachá, Pavla; Zemanová, Věra: Milena Jesenská Biografie, historie, vzpomínky. Praha: Aula, 2016.

Wágnerová, Alena. Milena Jesenská. Prague: Prostor, 1996



Volleyball Fridays



WHEN:
Fridays from 8-10 pm

WHERE:
[Jackson Middle School](#)
Main Gym (Room 304)
[3020 Gallows Road Falls Church, VA 22042](#)

CONTACT:
Radovan Kohlmayer
sports@sokolwashington.org

Pick-up volleyball has been a favorite weekly adult sports activity for our members and friends of both genders, varied ages, and skill levels for many years.

Pepik's Peeps: Sokol for Life

"The world doesn't end outside the door; we learn from animals to run, jump, climb, and more"

By Dasa Merkova

We are enjoying the outdoors! After the spring break, we enjoyed the Easter Egg Hunt activity trail, examined our balance, strength, and endurance, and even tested a few parents. We finished with an egg roll race. On another Tuesday, we made flower wreaths to improve small motor skills and took a little hike to enjoy spring flowers in the park. Lots of climbing, jumping, and treasure hunting on the way. We will meet on the last day of the month for spring celebrations, roasting sausages on the fire and singing songs.

Next month, we plan more trips, some orienteering, practicing our skills with the ball, and balancing.



WHEN:

WHERE:

CONTACT:



Learning about Traditions

By Michaela Kiss

In April, the highlight for our students was learning about Czech and Slovak Easter traditions and decorating eggs in both the traditional and not so traditional ways. The custom of "spanking" women and girls with a whip for health, beauty, and fertility raised many young eyebrows. Still, the coloring and decorating of eggs and sweetbreads in the shape of a lamb received unanimous approval. With the guidance of our fabulous art teacher, Misa Pazderova, children got a chance to decorate hollowed-out eggs, the traditional Czech and Slovak way, with hot wax of various colors. It took a bit of patience, but the students loved it. We tried a more modern technique, drawing onto a paper towel with makers, wrapping the eggs into it, wetting the paper towel lightly, and letting the colors bleed onto the egg. The kids could hardly wait to unwrap their eggs and see their creations.

Our students loved learning about Czech and Slovak traditions and sharing their painted egg masterpieces with their families at the end of the class.





EU Open House Is Back

Visit Czechia, Slovakia, or other European countries in 1 day!

Both Czech and Slovak embassies in Washington, D.C., will be part of this much-loved spring annual event with the [European Union in the United States](#). This traditional event is celebrating Europe Day.



Enjoy great beer, food, a dog show, bounce house, and a folk fashion show. Step into the 1930s with a live jazz band, lindy hop dancers, and history of two Czech actors, George Voskovec and Jan Werich.

May 14, 2022, 10 am - 4 pm

Embassy of the Czech Republic
3900 Spring of Freedom Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008

No RSVP required | Free admission

[Czech Embassy](#): step into the 30s with a live jazz band, lindy hop dancers, and the history of two Czech actors, George Voskovec and Jan Werich. Enjoy great beer, food, a dog show, a bounce house, and a folk fashion show.

[Slovak Embassy](#): two Countries – One River: Discover Slovakia and Austria, connected by the river Danube! Enjoy presentations and a taste of typical food and drinks inside and outside the two Embassies!



Learn more about Slovakia in an exhibition “Good Idea Slovakia”.
 Try typical Slovak dishes “strapačky”– potato dumplings with sauerkraut and delicious home-made “šúľance”, taste Slovak drinks (Hafírovica/Blueberry liqueur, Slovak wine).
 Learn about Slovakia’s economy, tourism opportunities, watch demonstrations of folk traditions. Chat with Embassy staff and our guests. Let the balloon twisters and face painters cheer up your little ones.

May 14, 2022, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Embassy of the Slovak Republic
 3523 International Court NW,
 Washington, DC, 20008

NO RSVP | Free admission

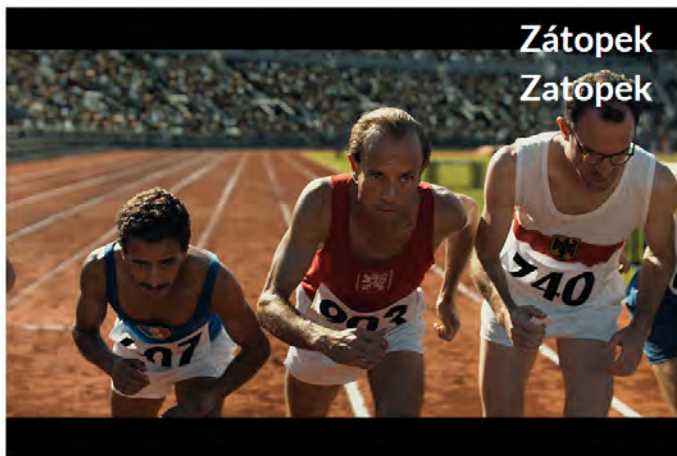
Saturday, May 14, from 10 AM to 4 PM



[Festival](#)

[Watch Online](#)

[Contact](#)



The annual Czech film festival titled “Czech That Film” was established in 2012. Currently, it is the largest Czech cultural event in the United States. It is a film festival of the best recent Czech films held throughout the United States every year, with screenings and discussions with the cast and crew. The 11th edition of the Czech That Film will be ONLINE from May 13 to May 22, 2022, and through several live screenings in the USA.



Here is the list of movies you can watch during the festival:

Zatopek, Two Ships, Gump, Diary of Modern Dad, Bird Atlas, Occupation, Intensive Life Unit, Every Single Minute, Dreams About Stray Cats, Anatomy of a Czech Afternoon, Rude boty, Dear Dad, Mikrotron, Azyl, Kuku, Raven



Watch one of the festival movies in person at local cinema theater **AVALON**



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Occupation

Lions of Czech Film presents OCCUPATION

One Show Only! Wednesday, May 11, 8PM

Also a part of the *Czech That Film* series

[Learn More](#)



TRADITIONAL RECIPES



By *Monica Rokus*

VEPŘO-KNEDLO-ZELO The National Dish of the Czech Republic

Vepřo-knedlo-zelo is shorthand for roast pork (*vepřová*) with dumplings (*knedlíky*) and stewed cabbage (or sauerkraut; *zelí*), a dish that's in the top tier of classic Czech cuisine. It's still a lot of meat and carbs, but when done well, it can feel lighter than some of the other sauce-drenched meat dishes popular here, perhaps because of the cabbage, which lends a subtle sweetness to the plate. Also, it's a vegetable—always a welcome addition to a Czech meal. Here's where to find a tasty version of this can't-miss Czech dish.

Ingredients

Roast Pork

- 2 lbs. Pork roast
- 1 tbsp. Vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp. Mustard
- 2 tbsps. Caraway seeds
- 1 medium onion (chopped)
- 2 tbsps. Butter
- 1 tbsp. Cornstarch
- 1 tsp. Salt
- 1 tsp. Ground black pepper

- ½ cup Beer/water
- 1 tbsp. garlic powder

Dumplings - [CLICK here for last month's recipe](#)

Sauerkraut

- 4 slices of bacon (cut into small strips)
- 1 lb. sauerkraut with juice
- 1 medium onion (chopped)
- 1 tsp. caraway seeds
- 1 tsp. cornstarch
- 2 tsp. cold water
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- Sugar to taste
- Vinegar to taste



Instructions

Roast Pork

Combine the caraway seeds, vegetable oil, mustard, salt, pepper, and garlic powder into a paste.

Rub this paste onto the pork and let it marinate for forty-five minutes.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

Place the chopped onions into a roasting pan and pour the beer or water over it. Place the marinated pork on top of the onions. Cover with foil and bake for about one and a half hours, occasionally basting the pork with its natural juices. Turn the pork over while baking so that all sides cook evenly. Make the gravy by combining the pork juice, cornstarch, and butter into a saucepan and let it simmer until thick.

Sauerkraut

Fry the bacon until golden brown and set aside. Sauté the chopped onion in butter until soft.

Add the sauerkraut to the onions and cook until tender. Add the fried bacon and season with salt and pepper.

Sprinkle in the caraway seeds.

Combine the cornstarch and water separately, and stir into the sauerkraut. Simmer for a few minutes before turning off the heat. Add sugar and vinegar to taste.

Place slices of roast pork with a few dumplings and a spoon of sauerkraut on a serving plate

Drizzle gravy over all of it and serve.

Different varieties of Czech dumplings



Kynute Knedliky (Fermented)



Houskove Knedliky (Bread)



Bramborove Knedliky (Potato)



Karlovarske Knedliky (Karlovy Vary)

There are many different ways to make Czech dumplings. They can be called *knedlo*, *knödel*, *kniddel*, and *knédli*, depending on the country or culture of origin, including Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia.

Bread dumplings, or *houskový knedlíky*, uses diced stale bread, flour, milk, eggs, and leavening.

Bramborové knedlíky or *potato dumplings*, use mashed potatoes, eggs, flour, and sometimes butter. *Karlovy Vary dumplings* or *Karlovarský knedlík* use coarse flour, rolls, milk, eggs, parsley, and nutmeg. Versions of these dumplings are also standard in some of the surrounding countries.

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Make a Difference - Support Our Sokol Washington

Please give us your consideration when you are deciding on your donations. All your contributions to the American Sokol Washington, D.C., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, are charitable tax-deductible contributions.



We are on Social Media

Sokol Washington, D.C. offers additional ways for members to communicate and stay informed about additional events we may not include in our monthly newsletters.



Please check out American Sokol, Washington D.C. on Facebook and Instagram

If you have a cultural, folk, educational or sporting/athletic event you would like to share with our members, please **CONTACT:** media@sokolwashington.org

Join Us and Become a Member

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of Sokol Washington.

Benefits to our Unit

Your membership dues enable our Unit to continue our many programs – sports, outdoor, social, cultural and educational.

Benefit to You

Membership in our Unit has a number of benefits – discounts at all our social events; free participation in gymnastics for youth; and for adults, and free participation in pick-up volleyball.

SOKOL WASHINGTON MEMBERSHIP DUES

- Individual Membership (adult/voting) \$40.00
- Two Adults Membership (both voting) \$75.00
- Family Membership I. (one adult voting / all children up to 26 years & one non-voting adult) \$50.00

- Family Membership II. (two adults voting / all children up to 26 years) \$80.00
- New Member/Reinstated One-time Administrative Fee waived

CONTACT: membership@sokolwashington.org



We would not be able to flourish as an organization without the constant help of our many volunteers. American Sokol. That's why it's important that all members and friends, at least from time to time, offer their contribution to help our Sokol Unit thrive. Our Unit can be only as good as our members' participation in its activities.



KEEP IN TOUCH

We value you as our audience! Stay engaged and informed about our oncoming educational, cultural, folk, or sporting events, and do not miss our MailChimp campaigns. Please make sure that our e-mail sokol@sokolwashington.org is included in your Contacts/Mailing list and does not end up in your Spam or a Trash box

Washington, D.C. Chapter, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all of its officers are volunteers.

Newsletter Publication and Information

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Please send news, articles, and pictures before the 15th of the prior month.

CONTACT: media@sokolwashington.org



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