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## Starosta's Message

Dear Sokol Members and Friends of American Sokol Washington, D.C,



I would like to wish you a healthy and prosperous 2024. We had a successful year in 2023. Our regular weekday activities included the Czech and Slovak language classes on Fridays from 6:45 to 8 pm, followed by sports for children. On Tuesdays, we also held our 'Se Sokolem do Zivota' for preschoolers aged 3 to 6, focusing on developing physical skills through games. We may resume weekly volleyball for adults in the upcoming year.

We organized our usual annual events this past year, along with our weekly events. At the beginning of March 2023, we hiked the Shenandoah Whiteoak Canyon. During the hike, several hikers tested the temperature of the Shenandoah creek by plunging into the crystal-clear water.

One of our board members had an idea of organizing movie nights. We watched Czech and Slovak movies and had short discussions afterward. The first movie was in March 2023, the Czech movie Kalamita. It is a 1982 Czechoslovak comedy directed by Vera Chytilova and starring Bolek Polivka. With the cooperation of the Slovak Embassy in Washington, DC, we enjoyed the Slovak movie Piargy, based on the book by Frantisek Svanter – The Balada of Piargy.

For decades, many of you attended the Czech and Slovak Easter and Christmas masses originally organized by SVU (Svaz vedy a umenia). These masses ended in 2021-22, so our organization wanted to keep this tradition alive. With the help of several SVU members, our American Sokol Washington D.C. organized the 2023 Easter and 2023 Christmas Interdenominational Services at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Bethesda. Both services were well received. We had inspiring speakers at both and were able to sing together. I am glad that members of our Czech and Slovak communities living here in the metropolitan Washington, DC area could attend the worship services in our native Czech and Slovak languages. We hope that with our community's support, we can continue organizing these Easter and Christmas events.

Our other events included the Masquerade Ball on Ice (May), the Hiking Marathon, the Shenandoah River Canoe Trip (June), and the Olympic Run (June), which was organized in partnership with the Czech Embassy, and the Labor Day Camping at the Cape Henlopen State Park (September).

In the fall, we relocated our weekly Czech and Slovak School activities from the Carderock Elementary School to Wood Acres Elementary School. Several parents of children attending the

school stepped up and became active in organizing and leading these weekly school activities.

In October, we had three annual events: The Libor Kozak Biking Memorial, Membership Appreciation Picnic, and Run of the Republic AKA 'Beh Republiky', organized in partnership with the Czech Sokol (Ceska obec Sokolska). In November, we held an annual walking marathon along the C&O Canal, and in December, we hosted our traditional Mikulášska Nádielka/St Nicholas Party.

Volunteers organize all events and weekly activities. I am very grateful for all these excellent, dedicated, hard-working people who contribute to our Sokol organization. We also have many Sokol members and friends, such as the parents of Friday activity participants who are stepping up to help when needed. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone volunteering for our community. I THANK YOU all for your work!

I also want to express my gratitude to the Czech Embassy, the Slovak Embassy, the Czech and Slovak governments, SVU, and ASO for their financial and in-kind support of our organization. We could only make a few of our activities happen without their aid.

If anyone wants to learn more about Sokol's activities and support our organization, please visit our website, [www.sokolwashington.org](http://www.sokolwashington.org). Unpaid volunteers run our Sokol. To be able to offer our events and activities, we still need funding. Please make a financial contribution through our website, if you are graciously willing to support our organization. Click the red 'Donate Now' button in the upper right corner.

Thank you! I wish you a happy, healthy, and relaxing 2024.

May it be free of stress and full of love and fun.

Milos

UPCOMING EVENTS



## **MEMBERSHIP MEETING** **Wednesday, January 3 | 8:00 PM**

You are invited to join any of our Membership Meetings, share ideas, and plan future events. Be a part of shaping our unit's future. We meet monthly in a library and take a break in July and August. Zoom option is also available.

If interested, RSVP to [sokol@sokolwashington.org](mailto:sokol@sokolwashington.org), and we'll send you more information. All members and non-members are welcome to join us!

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

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## MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2024!

**YOUR 2024 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE IS DUE NO LATER THAN JANUARY 31, 2024**



Your membership dues enable our Unit to be a part of the American Sokol and continue our many sports, outdoor, social, cultural, and educational programs.

### Benefits to You

Membership in our Unit has several benefits: Discounts at all our social events and free participation in gymnastics for youth and adults.

### 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**

### PAYMENT

- **By check or cash:** At our Monthly Meeting or on Fridays at the Czech and Slovak School;
- **By check:** Payable to *American Sokol Washington, D.C.*, and mail it to our membership director:  
Edita Hester  
6804 Karlson Street  
McLean, VA 22101
- **Online:** Use the [Online button here](#) with a note "Membership 2024" and your name.

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## Attention Bača Cup Ski Racers:

**It Is Time to SAVE THE DATE! FEBRUARY 17, 2024**



As the ski season has finally arrived, **the 45th Annual Baca Cup International Invitational Ski Race** is scheduled for Saturday, February 17, 2024. Sponsored by our Sokol, it will be held at the [Blue Knob Ski Resort in Claysburg, Pennsylvania](#).

We look forward to a much better ski season with lots of snow this year and can't wait to "Ski Ya There!"

We are wishing everyone a Safe Ski Season,

Carl & Dasha Fletcher – [Bača Cup Race Coordinators](#)

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## ŠIBŘINKY

**SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, February 24, 2024**



More information will follow.

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MONTHLY RECAPS



# December 2023 in Pictures

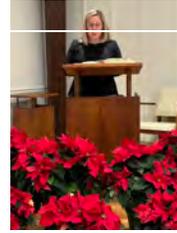
## December 2 – Mikulaška/St. Nicholas Party

Our very popular annual Mikulasska/St. Nicholas Party with traditional delights, baked goodies, drinks, and Christmas carols was a great event. Our many volunteers as well as performers have been much appreciated!



## December 17 – Czech & Slovak Interdenominational Christmas Service

At this joyful event, we sang Czech and Slovak Christmas carols at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Bethesda, followed by a friendly gathering with refreshments to welcome the upcoming holiday season. We were also honored by the presence of the Ambassador of Slovakia, his Excellency Radovan Javorcik.



WEEKLY ACTIVITIES



FRIDAYS

Wood Acres Elementary School  
5800 Cromwell Dr.  
Bethesda, MD 20816



## MINI-SOKOLIK

physical education for children ages 3-6 (45 min)



Join us on Tuesdays, contact Dasa ([se.sokolem@sokolwashington.org](mailto:se.sokolem@sokolwashington.org)) for a new location. We are learning new songs and dances, improving skills with balls and jumping, and continuing to practice calisthenics with our caterpillar for the XVII Všesokolský slet. Expect to be mostly indoors during the wintertime.

## DID YOU KNOW?



# The Codex Gigas [Devil's Bible]

In July 1648, during the final clashes of the Thirty Years' War, the Swedish army looted the city of Prague. Among the treasures they stole and brought with them upon their return home was a book called *Codex Gigas*, created for a Bohemian monastery. It contains a complete Bible, historical texts, magic formulas, and spells. Not only is it famous for being the world's most giant medieval book, but because of its contents, it is also known as *The Devil's Bible*, a prominent 13th-century manuscript from Bohemia, one of the historical Czech lands.

*The Devil's Bible* is 36" tall, 20" wide, and 8.7" thick; 310 pages are made from the vellum of 160 donkeys, weighing 165 lbs. At some point, someone cut out the last ten pages and removed them from the book. The author of *The Devil's Bible* is unknown. Scholars believe the book is the creation of one person, most likely a monk living in Bohemia.

Based on the amount of text and the details, it took as long as thirty years to finish the book. *The Devil's Bible* has been given its name because of a full-size portrait of the Devil.

The Devil's Bible has been given its name because of a full-size portrait of the Devil. Pictures of the Devil were typical during the Middle Ages, but this particular portrait is unique. Here, the Devil is portrayed alone on the page. The image is huge. The Devil is crouching and facing forward. He is naked apart from an ermine loincloth.

***The Devil wears ermine to demonstrate that he is the Prince of Darkness.***

## IN THE COMMUNITY

AVALON  
THEATRE

 LIONS of CZECH FILM

## HEART TO HEART (Srdce na dlani) Wednesday, January 10 at 8 PM / One Show Only!



Josef is excited to retire and finally fulfill his dream of becoming a street clown. He doesn't know that his clowning will result in meeting energetic Maruška. It's as if the two were looking for one another their whole lives, but is it too late to fall in love? Meanwhile, Josef's daughter Anička and her five-year-old son Honzík have just moved into Josef's villa. She's decided she's done with men, but meeting her old flame and neighbor, Pavel touches her heart and starts changing her mind. Love pays no mind to age or place. We can never know when or where we'll find it. We can fall in love in kindergarten, on the street, in a park. Love brings hope and beauty with it, but also complications and obstacles. It is up to our heroes to overcome them with goodwill and perseverance.

**Details:** 95 min. / Rated NR / in Czech with English subtitles / [Official Site](#) / [Buy tickets](#)

*"Sharing the story of Sokol's contributions to gymnastics, culture and democracy."*

<https://sokolmuseum.org>





<https://sokolmuseum.org>

## FREE VIRTUAL MUSEUM NOW AVAILABLE

- History of Sokol • History of Gymnasts • History of Prague Slets •
- Sokol Buildings in America • Sokol in America • Sokol in WWI and WWII •
- Sokol Slets in America • Sokol Souvenirs & Treasures •
- Competitive Sokol Gymnasts •

*Sokol Museum and Library (SML) is a non-profit (501c3) organization providing a virtual museum and library materials for educational, cultural and historic purposes.*



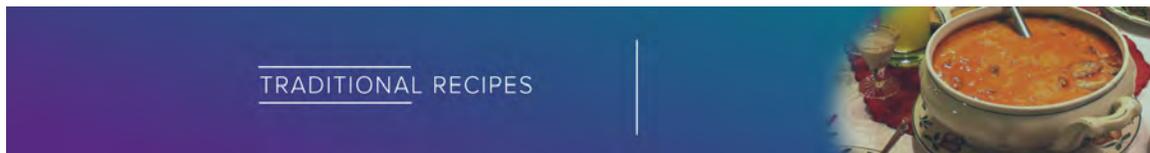
## THE XVII ALL-SOKOL SLET JUNE 30 – JULY 5, 2024, PRAGUE, CZECHIA

Update: We have our equipment for the Slet. We will send an email about our first meeting soon. The Sokol Gathering AKA Slet in Prague is in full preparation mode and soon we will be too. Rehearsals will happen about once a month. Contact: [slet24@sokolwashington.org](mailto:slet24@sokolwashington.org)

Children ages 3-7 will practice during our regular Tuesday evenings “With Sokol for Life.”



**Watch the videos and get inspired!**



## Lentil Soup (Čočková polévka)

## INGREDIENTS

One and ¼ cups (250 g) dried lentils  
green/brown  
5 oz (140 g) smoked sausage (or ham)  
One carrot mid-sized  
1 large onion or two small  
Two cloves of garlic  
Salt  
Pepper ground  
1 tsp dried marjoram  
6 cups (1.44 l) beef broth



## INSTRUCTIONS

Cook the lentils according to the producer's instructions. The fastest and easiest way to prepare the lentil soup is to get pre-cooked lentils.

Peel garlic, onions, and carrots. Slice garlic into thin pieces, and chop onions roughly. Cut carrots lengthwise and slice into half-circles. Dice smoked sausage (or ham) into ½-inch pieces.

In a pot, add butter and oil. Heat over medium until shimmering.

Start frying the prepared ingredients in this order:

- Add carrots and fry while stirring for about 5 minutes.
- Throw in smoked sausage (or ham). Fry for another 3-5 minutes.
- Add onions and sauté for 1 minute until translucent.
- Add sliced garlic and fry for 1 minute, but not longer; the garlic gets brown and will taste bitter.
- Add ⅔ of cooked lentils. Reserve 1 cup of broth and pour the rest into the pot—season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a minimum, let it simmer for 5-10 minutes.
- In the meantime, mix ⅓ the remaining lentils with 1 cup of broth in a mixer. Add in the pot.
- Add dried marjoram (always at the end of cooking), stir well, and you're done!

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[DONATE NOW](#)

Make a Difference - Support Our Sokol Washington. Please consider us when you decide on your donations. All your contributions to the American Sokol Washington D.C., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, are charitable and tax-deductible.

## 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.





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](mailto:media@sokolwashington.org)

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JOIN US

### **Join Us and Become a Member**

We appreciate your interest in becoming a member of Sokol Washington.

**Benefits to our Unit:** Your membership dues enable us to continue our many sports, outdoor, social, cultural, and educational programs.

#### ***Benefit to You***

Membership in our Unit has several benefits: discounts at our social events, free participation in gymnastics for youth and adults, free participation in pick-up volleyball, film club, and a newsletter from American Sokol, our national organization.

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PAY ONLINE

### **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](mailto:membership@sokolwashington.org)

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### **THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS**

We can only flourish as an organization with the constant help of our many volunteers. That's why it's vital 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.

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### **KEEP IN TOUCH**

We value you as our audience! Stay engaged and informed about our oncoming educational, cultural, folk,

or sporting events, and take advantage of our MailChimp campaigns. Please ensure that our e-mail [sokol@sokolwashington.org](mailto:sokol@sokolwashington.org) is included in your Contacts/Mailing list and does not end up in your Spam or Trash.

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*Washington, D.C. Chapter is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose officers are volunteers.*

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Please send news, articles, and pictures before the 20th of the prior month.

**CONTACT:** [media@sokolwashington.org](mailto:media@sokolwashington.org)

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