Vesele Vianoce A Stastny Novy Rok
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

To all our members from the Supreme Lodge of Sokol USA
Holiday Donations
Gratefully Acknowledged

To the Sokol USA Gymnastic Fund
From Sokol Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. $25.00
In memory of deceased members
From Sokol Lodge 17, Perth Amboy, N.J. $50.00
In memory of deceased members
From District MCT, Pa. $100.00
In memory of Brother Melvin Cernicky
From Sokol Lodge 276, Pittsburgh, Pa. $50.00
In memory of Melvin Cernicky
From Emily Bower of Lodge 39/40W, Chicago, Ill. $25.00
In memory of Stephen Kavicky
From Milan Kovac, Supreme Secretary $50.00
Wishing All a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year
From Brandi Kovac, Lodge 12 $50.00
A Peaceful 2013 to All!
From Deborah Golden, Woodstock, Ill. $150.00
Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year
From Eric S. and Dodi-Jean Skovronek, Mount Tabor, N.J. $100.00
To the Milan Getting Scholarship
From Sokol Lodge 74, Plymouth, Pa. $25.00
In memory of deceased members
From Sokol Lodge 39/40W, Chicago, Ill. $200.00
In memory of deceased members
From Sokol District Jan Kollar, Pa. $100.00
In memory of deceased members
From Sokol Lodge 66W, Bethlehem, Pa. $250.00
In memory of deceased members
From Eric S. and Dodi-Jean Skovronek, Mount Tabor, N.J. $100.00
From Emil Trgala, Roselle Park, N.J. $200.00
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
From Milan Kovac, Supreme Secretary $50.00
In Lieu of cards, Best Wishes for this Holiday Season
From Deborah Golden, Woodstock, Ill. $150.00
To all Sokol members and friends
In Honor of Sokol’s 150th Anniversary
From Lodge 39/40W, Berwyn, Ill. $100.00
Christmas Greetings to all our Sokol Friends

IN MEMORY
Of our deceased Brother and Sister Sokols with a sincere expression of sympathy to their families
from the Supreme Officers of Sokol U.S.A.

Sokol USA National Gymnastics Department Conference Call Meeting

Thursday, September 13, 2012 – 8:00 PM, EST


The agenda, lodge reports, address list, recommendations from district/lodges, recommendations and budget from the directors were presented via e-mail in advance of the call.

Agenda

I. Call Meeting to Order - Welcome
II. Self Introductions
III. Questions/Comments
   A. National Staff Reports
   B. District/Lodge Reports
IV. Old Business
   A. Code of Conduct
V. New Business
   A. District M.M. Hodza Letter
   B. American Sokol BOI Development Conference/Sokol USA Meeting
   C. American Sokol Slet, Milwaukee, WI, June 25-30, 2013
   D. The Future of Sokol USA
VI. Recommendations/Budget
   A. Recommendations from National Directors
   B. Recommendations from Lodges
VII. Adjournment of Phone Conference

I. & II. Call Meeting Order – Welcome, Self Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 PM by Todd Yatchyshyn; Chris Yatchyshyn agreed to be the secretary. All participants were asked to state their names and the lodge or district they represented.

It was shared that Farrell Director of Women Bibi Murcko, and Directors of Monessen Lodge 47 Charity Ruhl and Staff Hoffman were all working and unable to participate in the call.

Asst. Dir. of Men Matthew Reynolds has been deployed. He sent an e-mail explaining that he would not be able to connect to the call from his location in Afghanistan. Brandi provided Matthew’s address and Chris asked the lodges to consider sending some goodies to Matthew and his fellow troops. Todd reminded everyone that Matthew has access to the internet so we should also be in contact with him via e-mail and Facebook. His mailing address is below

SSgt Matthew Reynolds
CLB-2/Engineer Company
Unit 73980
APO AE 09510-3960

III. Questions/Comments – National Staff Reports, District/Lodge Reports

A. National Staff Reports

The National Staff members shared highlights from their reports, which are attached at the end of the minutes. Chris and Todd reported that they have been active on the Supreme Lodge sub committees focusing on the future of Sokol USA. Todd shared his experience as a second-year staff member at the American Sokol Instructor’s School and highlighted the changes in the curriculum. He also noted his disappointment in having to cancel the golf tournament due to lack of registration but hopes to run a one-day tournament next year. He also noted John Kaminski’s accomplishment at the National Bowling tournament where he bowled a perfect 300 game.

Eric continues to teach the boys’ class and has been busy handling issues that resulted from recent changes at the Boonton lodge. It was noted that Amy is practicing for the Chicago Marathon, which she will run with the American Liver Association in honor of her son Matthew who was diagnosed with a genetic liver condition called Alpha-1 Antitrypsin deficiency. Everyone wished Amy the best of luck. If you would like to be a sponsor you can donate online by going to Matthew’s web page at http://go.liverfoundation.org/site/TR/LiverLifeChallenge2012/LiverLifeChallenge?px=1749261&pg=personal&fr_id=2941 or you can send a check made out to the American Liver Foundation and mail it to Matthew’s Liver Savers, 1010 Hemlock Lane, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056.

B. District/Lodge Reports

Lodge directors also shared highlights from their reports; the full reports are attached at the end of the minutes.

Eric reported that the Boonton Cheerleading Program has been dissolved. They were becoming more competitive and needed a full floor exercise area. The financial and fraternal issues around the situation were a challenge that required much attention over the summer months. He also noted that his assistant Casey is moving to the Washington, D.C. area which will pose a challenge since they have two distinct age groups in the boys’ class and now only one instructor. A Yoga Program for special needs persons will be held at the lodge, providing an additional rental.

Norah and Brandi explained that Central Jersey also had a major challenge last spring when the gym they rented closed abruptly. They too had financial issues since they had paid their rent in advance. Lodge 12 has found a new location to hold their Friday night classes. While the location is not ideal for everyone, they do expect at least one family to return who was not participating last year. It was pointed out that Lodge 12 has many instructors; they just need more kids.

Steve shared that his family attended the Slet in Prague. He noted that Farrell has a new instructor who helped two summer cheerleading programs this summer that attracted between 18-20 girls. They hope to attract a few new members from that group of participants who were not Sokol members. Steve pointed out that their challenge is the location of the hall which is in a less than desirable area of town. He also shared the value of their newsletter that they send three times a year and their scholarship which has been existance now for six years. He was happy to report that Tim Brant has moved back from Arizona so Farrell hopes to resume their golf tournament, a substantial fundraiser for them.

Scott reported that Chicago held a summer camp that included an Olympic’s connection each evening during game time. He said attendance was higher than usual and they look forward to increased participation this fall. Scott noted that they have a full slate of activities and fundraisers planned and they continue to hold Wheel classes for both Sokol and non-Sokol members.

Todd encouraged all lodges to investigate the Wheel program. Lodges can contact Wolfgang Bientzle at wolfgang@thecircusesexperience.com. He also made mention of WHEELS in MOTION that will be held in Chicago on October 13, 2013 at the The Athenaeum Theatre that will feature world class athletes.

IV. Old Business

A. Code of Conduct

Chris reminded the directors to share copies of the Code of Conduct with all instructors. A copy was e-mailed to the directors. Chris asked if the lodge presidents received the Code of Conduct from headquarters as was suggested by the Gym Dept. last year. Scott said he did not receive a copy as president of his lodge. Chris will make the request again.

V. New Business

A. District M.M. Hodza Letter

In February District M. M. Hodza sent a letter to the directors and the Supreme Lodge regarding the Code of Conduct. The Supreme Lodge passed the letter over to the National Staff. Todd shared the letter and the recommendations follow the list of statements.

- “Sexual abuse of children almost always occurs in private.”
- “Never hire a person previously convicted of child abuse. Carefully check all references. Seek counsel immediately regarding how to handle any person previously accused of child abuse who has not been convicted.”
- “Do not permit one-on-one sessions between a coach and a gymnast – a parent, guardian, chaperone, or another staff member should always be present.”
- “Make your practice to send both a male and a female chaperone to every competition, unless the athletes are all of the same gender and the chaperone is of the same gender too.”
- “A minimum of two staff members should remain at the facility until all gymnasts have been picked up.”

The District recommends the following to the National Directors:

1. Amend the current Code of Conduct to include the above passages.
2. Include the Code of Conduct in the By-Laws.
3. Each year, have all Sokol USA instructors (and other adults that are involved with the supervision of minors) sign a copy of the Code of Conduct and submit it to Headquarters. The signature attests that the person has read, understood and promises to follow the Code of Conduct. If it is found that an instructor has not followed the Code of Conduct, then disciplinary action may follow.

(Continued on Page 6)
The holidays are here and the New Year 2013 fast approaches. Many of our members will travel near and far to spend the holiday season together with family and friends. Many will send greeting cards and good wishes. Others will give gifts, go to parties and share the happiness and joy of the season.

It is time to enjoy family and friends, to feast and be merry, and to appreciate the many blessings we have received throughout this past year. Many of our members will celebrate the ancient tradition of the Vilija (Vigil) dinner on December 24th. When the first star is seen rising in the evening sky, the Vilija dinner begins with the sharing of the Oplatky wafer. As the wafer is passed around the table, each person present takes a piece, dips it in honey, and gives blessings and good wishes for the coming year to all of those present.

As we hold our celebrations this year, let us remember all of those who have touched our lives in the past year, the positive experiences we have had, and the happiness we have shared with, family, friends, and our fellow Sokols. It is my hope that our members and lodges will remember those less fortunate this holiday season. The Supreme Lodge has received many inquiries about the recent Hurricane Sandy. While none of our lodges were damaged, many thousands of people in the northeast suffered great losses. I encourage our Sokol USA members to send donations to our Sokol USA headquarters for Hurricane Sandy relief. The donations will be given to charities providing assistance to the hurricane victims.

Congratulations go out to our Danbury, Conn. Lodge 32; Boonton, N.J. Lodge 32, Ceska Obec Sokol, and to Sokol Serbia, all of which celebrated major milestone anniversaries this year. It’s my wish for all of our members that the holiday season will be happy and I give you the traditional eastern European wish that your new year will be full of health, wealth, and happiness. NAZADAR!

Joe Bielecki
President, Sokol USA
Paul and Joan Lojpersberger celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, August 4th with a renewal of their wedding vows at St. Ambrose Catholic Church in Deerfield Beach, Fla. A dinner reception was held at Brooks Restaurant.

Mr. Lojpersberger is a member of Lodge 36 in Binghamton, N.Y., and former President of Lodge 36 and District Nitra. Mrs. Lojpersberger is a member of Lodge 15W and is its former President.

Their son, David, welcomed all the guests to the celebration and their daughter, Susan Lojpersberger Perez, gave the invocation. In his welcoming remarks, David talked about the concept of "until."

"Many times in life, we wait for the until moments before taking action. Until I get a better job, until the kids leave for college, until we have retired. My parents have never been people who wait for until moments. They have traveled, took a chance and moved to Florida, attended every game their kids and grandkids engage in, took up square and line dancing and are the first ones to say yes to a party. They embrace life with an energy that is infectious to the people around them," David said. "The love that they share with each other is gladly and unconditionally shared with the people in their lives. They have and will continue to influence all of us in this room with their kindness and spirit."

Joan and Paul Lojpersberger (center in the back row) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with family and friends on August 4th. With them are (in back from left) their daughter Susan Lojpersberger Perez and her husband Rick, and their son David; and (in front from left) their grandchildren Vincent, Nicholas and Kristin Perez.

Lojpersbergers celebrate 50th wedding anniversary

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Sokol USA National Gymnastics Department Conference Call Meeting

(Continued from Page 3)

After a lengthy discussion it was suggested that rather than amend the Sokol USA Code of Conduct, which was based on the USAG Code of Conduct, we could perhaps adopt the USAG Code of Conduct, which is where the above statements originated. Rather than vote on the issue without reading the full USAG Code of Conduct, Chris suggested that everyone take time to review it and share any concerns. After concerns are voiced, a vote will be taken via e-mail, prior to the Supreme Lodge meeting, so a recommendation can be made at that time.

Pat Bindas, who was instrumental in putting together the Sokol USA Code of Conduct, provided the link to the USAG and suggested that everyone read Code of Ethics, Club Requirements and Participant Welfare Policy at http://usagym.org/pages/aboutus/pages/welfare_policy.html

After review of the document and an e-mail vote in October, ten directors supported the following proposal. There were no dissenting votes.

That Sokol USA adopt as its Code of Conduct the following three sections from the USA Gymnastics Member Responsibility & Conduct section:

Code of Ethics, Club Requirements and Participant Welfare Policy

Ellen added the following comments
1. I wish we could have something even more specific, but I believe the USAG, with legal assistance, has developed that best feasible document.
2. In Lodge 12 Central, we are already having all our instructors read and initial a copy of this Code of Conduct.

Note: The above recommendation was approved by the Supreme Lodge. The directors were asked to write a cover letter to accompany the new Code of Conduct that will be sent to all lodge presidents.

B. American Sokol BOI Development Conference/Sokol USA Meeting

Information was shared regarding the upcoming American Sokol BOI Development Conference. The directors were reminded that we have approval to attend the event and hold a Sokol USA meeting some time during the weekend, depending on the schedule. To date the directors plan to attend, Farrell has 5 registered and Monessen is planning to have 2 attend. District M. M. Hodza pointed out that their annual meeting is held on that weekend. Chris asked if they would consider switching the date of the meeting so that Lodges 32 and 12 could have representation at the conference, where information for the Milwaukee Slet will be available and all calls will be taught, in addition to a wide variety of other sessions that could be very beneficial to our Sokol programs.

C. American Sokol Slet, Milwaukee, WI, June 25-30, 2013

The directors urged everyone to start making plans to attend the next American Sokol Slet. It was noted that a proposal requesting funding for half the travel to the Slet for Sokol USA participants is included in the directors’ recommendations.

D. The Future of Sokol USA

Todd and Chris updated the group on what has been happening on the Supreme Lodge level regarding a possible merger. Scott also contributed to the update. Questions were asked and answered but Chris strongly suggested that the directors speak to other Supreme Lodge members to get their perspectives and to offer their own concerns or suggestions for the future of the organization. The directors made it clear that while a merger will be beneficial to the insurance end of the organization, they are concerned that it must also be equally advantageous to the program side of Sokol USA. The directors believe this will require that a portion of the surplus be earmarked as a fund that would help support Sokol USA sports and fraternal programs going forward under a merger agreement.

Chris made mention that to date the directors have not moved forward with any plans for a Sokol USA Slet in 2015. She explained that she did not feel comfortable in light of the uncertain future of the organization due to a possible merger. She also noted that certain Supreme Lodge officers have suggested that we will not be able to replicate our past Slets because there will be less funding available, especially not at a location such as Hershey. As a result the directors thought it best to wait to see exactly where Sokol USA is heading. Steve suggested that we go forward and at least get prices for Hershey before anyone says it is out of the question.

Steve also added that we use the same call for two years in a row, specifically the year before the slet and the year of the slet. He also suggested that the calls should be submitted to a committee for review to correct terminology if necessary to make it easier for instructors to teach. Todd said he would also bring this suggestion to American Sokol.

(To be Continued in January 2013)
**SHARE YOUR FAMILY EVENTS WITH YOUR “SOKOL FAMILY”**

The Sokol Times Social Page is a great way to keep up with your old and new friends! Share your families’ events with your Sokol family. We want to hear from you. Only news regarding members of our lodges will be printed.

**ENGAGEMENTS, WEDDINGS & ANNIVERSARIES**

| NAMES: ____________________   | PHONE #: ____________________ |
| HOMETOWN: __________________ | SOKOL LODGE: _______________   |
| YEARS MARRIED (IF APPLICABLE): |                           |

**BIRTHDAYS**

| NAME: ____________________   | PHONE #: ____________________ |
| BIRTH DATE: __________________ |
| AGE: ____________________    | HOMETOWN: __________________ |
| SOKOL LODGE: _______________ |

**PROMOTIONS, HONOR ROLLS & OTHER EVENTS**

| NAME: ____________________   | PHONE #: ____________________ |
| HOMETOWN: __________________ |
| SOKOL LODGE: _______________ |
| EVENT: ____________________  |

Photographs are not required, but they do add to the presentation. Please include a self addressed, stamped envelope if you would like your photograph returned.

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**BOONTON SOKOL**

301 Pine St., Boonton, NJ

**Upcoming Events**

**December Food Drive**

Drop off food Monday or Tuesday nights from 7 to 8 PM

**January 11 – Slovak Dinner**

Seatings at 4 or 6:30 PM; Adults $12, Children $6
Featuring home-made pierogies, stuffed cabbage, chicken paprikash, kielbasa and kraut, salad, rolls, dessert, coffee and tea. Eat in or take out. Snow date: January 12.

**Feb 3 – Super Bowl Pancake Breakfast**

8:30 AM to 12 Noon; Adults $7, Children $4
Featuring regular and blueberry pancakes, bacon and sausage, home fries, scrambled eggs, coffee, tea and juice.

**March 8 – Fish & Chips Dinner**

4:30 to 7 PM; Adults $10, Children $7
Featuring batter fried fish or chicken tenders, French fries, coleslaw, hush puppies, coffee, tea and dessert.

**April 14 – Tricky Tray**

The Westin Governor Morris, Morristown, NJ

More details to follow

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**SOKOL USA**

276 Prospect St.
P.O. Box 189
East Orange, NJ 07019

Brothers and Sisters:

Why not take a little time and check your’s and your children’s (if you have any) insurance coverage. Most likely, you will discover that the amount is not sufficient and you need greater coverage.

Why not act on it right now and apply for an additional certificate?

Please Send ___

New Member Applications to:

| NAME: ____________________   | ADDRESS: ____________________ |
| CITY: ___________ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ |

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**BROTHERS AND SISTERS:**

Why not take a little time and check your’s and your children’s (if you have any) insurance coverage. Most likely, you will discover that the amount is not sufficient and you need greater coverage.

Why not act on it right now and apply for an additional certificate?

Please Send ___

New Member Applications to:

| NAME: ____________________   | ADDRESS: ____________________ |
| CITY: ___________ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ |

---

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New Member Applications to:

| NAME: ____________________   | ADDRESS: ____________________ |
| CITY: ___________ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ |
Greetings from Trenton Lodge 59

The surviving members of Trenton, N.J., Lodge 59 welcomed Supreme Secretary Milan Kovac (second from left) to their meeting on Sunday, August 5th. With Kovac are (from left) Recording Secretary Helen Trapp, Financial Secretary Helen Koudelik, President Pauline Debnarik and Trustees Amilia Karlik and Nick Debnarik.

A 3,000-Mile Walk, Anyone? Anyone?

Hi Sokol Walkers:

Ever thought about walking from coast to coast? Yes, that’s right. I mean walking clear across America, starting from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The country stretches about 3,000 miles and, depending on what route you take, from east to west, you could get to visit at least 13 states. Sounds like fun, but who has the time?

Several hikers have achieved this great feat, and documented their travels with photo journals and blogs. So my thought is to track my walking mileage in my own hometown, and then live vicariously through their experience!

Check out this website: www.discoverytrail.org

The American Discovery Trail has a suggested route for walkers hiking from coast to coast. The website gives historical and geographic information about each segment of the trip in each state. For example, a Healthy Heart Walker who has walked more than 150 miles could imagine that she has walked through Delaware into Maryland and to our nation’s capital already! Read all about the Victorian mansions, the U.S. Army forts, the state forests, the Mason-Dixon Line, the battlefields, and more!

Perhaps wondering how far across America you could have walked will inspire you to walk some more! Special thanks to Brother Brian Flaherty from Sokol New York who shared this website with me.

Wherever your walking takes you, please e-mail a picture of yourself on a walking trail to me! I know our Sokol Times readers would love to see where the Healthy Heart Walkers are globetrotting.

Happy Walking!
Brandi Kovac
bkkovac@aol.com

Final scenes from the XV All Sokol Anniversary Slet