



PHOTO: OFFICIAL FACE BOOK PAGE / ZUZANA ČAPUTOVÁ

30 YEARS AFTER

Newly elected Czech Republic President Petr Pavel makes a state visit to Slovak Republic's President Zuzana Čaputová in the first days of his presidency.

NCSML's Online Lecture Series Provides Reminders for All of Us Now and for Future Generations

BY DR. CECILIA ROKUSEK AND DR. DALIBOR MIKULAS

In February and March 2023, the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in Cedar Rapids hosted in its online lecture series one of the best Czech and Slovak experts on foreign policy, Dr. Pavol Demes from Slovakia.

In his first lecture, under the title *30 Years after Division: Similarities, Differences, and Relations between the Czech and Slovak Republics*, Pavol Demes spoke about the above-average relations between Slovakia and the Czech Republic after 30 years after the split of Czechoslovakia — and also about those particular qualities that support good relations between the two countries. As he says, “Thirty years after the peaceful division of Czechoslovakia, both new states show a high degree of friendship and cooperation. One can hardly imagine a more powerful sign of the times than that expressed on March 13–14, 2023, during the state visit in Slovakia by the

newly elected Czech President and former army general Petr Pavel, just a few days after his inauguration in Prague.

“In front of the Bratislava Presidential Palace, the Slovak Head of State, Zuzana Čaputová, and her Czech counterpart started the state visit while listening to both national anthems — *Kde domov můj* followed by *Nad Tatrou sa blýska* (until 1992, the two were performed together as the Czechoslovak anthem). During the two-day program, both Presidents clearly demonstrated their shared values and announced that in April they would plan to visit Ukraine together and meet President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kiev. There is no more urgent issue than helping the brutally attacked neighbor and contributing to peace, Slovaks and Czechs together with their Transatlantic friend — the United States — and other partners.”

Helping Ukraine was also focused upon in his second lecture *Independent Slovakia and the*



First visit of a Slovak President to the White House in April 1993. Pictured from left to right: Foreign Affairs Advisor to the Slovak President, Pavol Demes; Slovak President Michal Kováč; U.S. President Bill Clinton; Slovak Foreign Minister Jozef Moravčík.

PHOTO: THE WHITE HOUSE



U.S. President Bill Clinton with the President of the Czech Republic Václav Havel (L) and the Slovak President Michal Kováč (R) at the opening of NCSML in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, October 1995.

PHOTO: PAVOL DEMES

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NATIONAL CZECH & SLOVAK MUSEUM & LIBRARY

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IOWA ARTS COUNCIL
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"We, as a global society, have much more in common than we realize."

Dear friends of the NCSML,

Happy Spring 2023! Welcome to our latest edition of *MOST*. As you will see, we are starting the year with outstanding exhibits, spectacular programs, and new initiatives. 2022 was an incredible year, and 2023 will be even bigger! Thanks to our wonderful editors, Dean and Lori Rathje, we have continued to expand our *MOST* and provide stories of interest and highlight stories of education and future visioning that will preserve and expand our rich Czech and Slovak stories for all persons. Our national museum and library is here so that all people can learn from the Czech and Slovak stories to integrate into their own ancestry and culture. We, as a global society, have so much more in common than we realize. My father used to say if people knew and understood each other we would have no wars!

2023 is such an important year as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of Czech and Slovak independence. Both countries have become pillars of freedom and democracy for the entire world. The roles that both countries have

demonstrated have enabled them to become shining stars in the European Union and the entire world as they continue to support Ukraine and the country's struggle to preserve democracy. The Czech and Slovak Republics have demonstrated their leadership in business, education, and technology. In the past 30 years, both countries have become the leaders in Central Europe for preservation of democratic principles and freedoms for all.

I am pleased too that we have highlighted in this issue of *MOST* some great accomplishments of our members as they continue to keep alive our rich cultural history in the 21st century through their writing, research, and storytelling. I hope to see all of you as you come to visit Cedar Rapids this summer.

Cecilia Rokusek

Cecilia Rokusek
President and CEO



Prestigious Gratias Agit shines the spotlight on Cecilia Rokusek, NCSML, and Cedar Rapids, Iowa

NCSML's Cecilia Rokusek has been honored by the Czech Republic for her forward-looking direction as she leads the museum, for her commitment to the Czech and Slovak cultures (she has served as Honorary Consul of Slovakia for 12 years), and her lifelong work in health care education.

The award is bestowed "for the promotion of the good name of the Czech Republic abroad, and in appreciation of prominent personalities and organizations developing activities in non-governmental fields." She shares this award with some prominent personalities — previous recipients include Joan Baez, former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, playwright Tom Stoppard and Academy Award-winning director Milos Forman.

Quoted in a November 2022 Gazette article: "We [fellow recipients] represent such an incredibly diverse group," Rokusek said. "What an incredible group of people. But for all, I think the central theme (is) kind, loving, wanting to make a difference in the Czech Republic, for the Czech Republic, for the people, and for this great nation."

"We in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, are really doing a lot to preserve the culture, to preserve the history, and



PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE GAZETTE

Dr. Cecilia Rokusek was presented the prestigious Gratias Agit award (loosely translated as "Give thanks") on October 19, 2022 in Prague.

also the new era of the Czech Republic in America. And so I absolutely loved when I was on Czech radio and being interviewed, they kept talking about Cedar Rapids and the museum and the library," she said.

"That made me so happy because they really recognize us as a national (Czech) museum and library in North America — the only one in North America — and in my way that I can promote that, I'm pleased and happy to do that. It's a labor of love. But to my ears, it was so refreshing and to hear Cedar Rapids, Iowa, being spoken on TV and radio, and in the print there. That made me really proud." ■



UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit ncsml.org or call 319-362-8500 for more information as new programs are announced throughout the year.

APRIL

- 12 Puppet Building Workshop
- 13 Puppet Building Workshop
- 14 Puppet Show
- 15 Exhibit Opening:
Artists Caught Behind the Iron Curtain
- 16 Volunteer Appreciation Event
- 19 Needlepoint Guild Demonstrations
- 23 The Best Opera Arias: Jana Sibera, Soprano;
Katelyn Bouska, Piano
- 27 Embroiderers' Guild Demonstrations

MAY

- 4 Book Talk: Author Charles Ota Heller's newest,
Cowboy from Prague
- 5 Coffee & Kolach
- 5 Reception for business leaders, public policy-
makers, and university presidents from Cedar
Rapids, the U.S., and Czech and Slovak
Republics. Co-sponsored by Cedar Rapids
Metro Economic Alliance.
- 6 Free First Saturday for Students
- 6 Third Annual Preciosa Gala
- 13 Exhibit Opening: *Folkjard*
- 17 Needlepoint Guild Demonstrations
- 18 Chicago Meet-and-Greet
- 19-21 Houby Days in Czech Village
- 25 Embroiderers' Guild Demonstrations

JUNE

- 2 Coffee & Kolach
- 2-4 11th Annual Conference of Czech Schools
in North America
- 3 Free First Saturday for Students
- 3 Exhibit Opening: *Mad Silkman*
- 17 Exhibit Opening: *Brilliant Bohemian Garnets*
- 21 Needlepoint Guild Demonstrations
- 22 Embroiderers' Guild Demonstrations

JULY

- 1 Free First Saturday for Students
- 1 Freedom Festival's "Music at the Museum"
- 4 Closed for the Holiday
- 7 Coffee & Kolach
- 24-28 Week-long art class on Moravian Art Motifs
- 19 Needlepoint Guild Demonstrations
- 27 Embroiderers' Guild Demonstrations

CALL FOR VENDORS



Contact NCSML
Events Services:
319-362-8500
x203 or 217

AUGUST

- 4 Coffee & Kolach
- 5 Free First Saturday for Students
- 16 Needlepoint Guild Demonstrations
- 24 Embroiderers' Guild Demonstrations

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Coffee & Kolach
- 2 Free First Saturday for Students
- 15 BrewNost 2023
- 16 Exhibit Opening: *Sanctuary*
- 20 Needlepoint Guild Demonstrations
- 28 Embroiderers' Guild Demonstration

OCTOBER

- 6 Coffee & Kolach
- 7 Free First Saturday for Students
- 18 Needlepoint Guild Demonstration
- 26 Embroiderers' Guild Demonstration

NOVEMBER

- 3 Coffee & Kolach
- 4 Free First Saturday for Students
- 15 Needlepoint Guild Demonstration
- 23 Embroiderers' Guild Demonstration

MOST

MOST, "the bridge," is published semi-annually by National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library (NCSML). For additional information on NCSML programming and events, visit ncsml.org or follow us at

MUSEUM HOURS Monday - Saturday, 9:30 AM - 4 PM;
Sunday, 12 - 4 PM

LIBRARY HOURS Tuesday - Saturday, 9:30 AM - 4 PM
Appointments recommended
for research.

1400 Inspiration Place SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
319-362-8500
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The accomplished Monica Pechous crowned Miss Czech-Slovak U.S. 2022-23

Monica is an attorney based in St. Louis. Her great-great grandparents immigrated to the U.S. from České Budějovice, in Southern Bohemia. While studying law in Chicago, she became involved with the Bohemian Lawyers Association and built community within the context of her profession. When she moved to St. Louis, Monica joined the Sokol St. Louis, where she engaged with the vibrant Czech community. While studying for the Missouri Bar, she also earned her MBA. She has been studying the Czech language for the past year and a half as she immerses herself in the Czech culture. In addition to being selected as the national queen, Monica earned the Oratory Award in this year's pageant.



EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS



Folkjard

Skala Bartizal Library

May 13-August 13, 2023

Welcome to Folkjard, a country where the real pleasures that life offers us take on the form of art. Folkjard prints are created under the hands of skilled Slovak designers. Famous United States and Iowa landmarks are depicted next to similar sites in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Many of the prints on display are especially crafted for NCSML and will be available for purchase in the award-winning museum store.

Traveling Exhibits



Amazing Athletes



A Century of Robots



Good Idea Slovakia



**Planting Roots:
The Story of Czech America**



**Czech Heroines:
Prominent Czech Women**



**Guts & Glory: The War
Train that Shaped a Nation**

The NCSML traveling exhibition program currently owns 15 exhibits that can be shipped anywhere in the country, or even the world. To learn about exhibit contents, availability, and space and security requirements, please contact Tricia Bender, our Collections Manager and Traveling Exhibits Coordinator at 319-362-8500 ext. 201 or tbender@ncsml.org; or go to ncsml.org and click or tap on the Traveling Exhibits tab.



Artists Caught Behind the Iron Curtain

Petrik Gallery

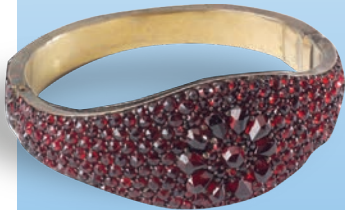
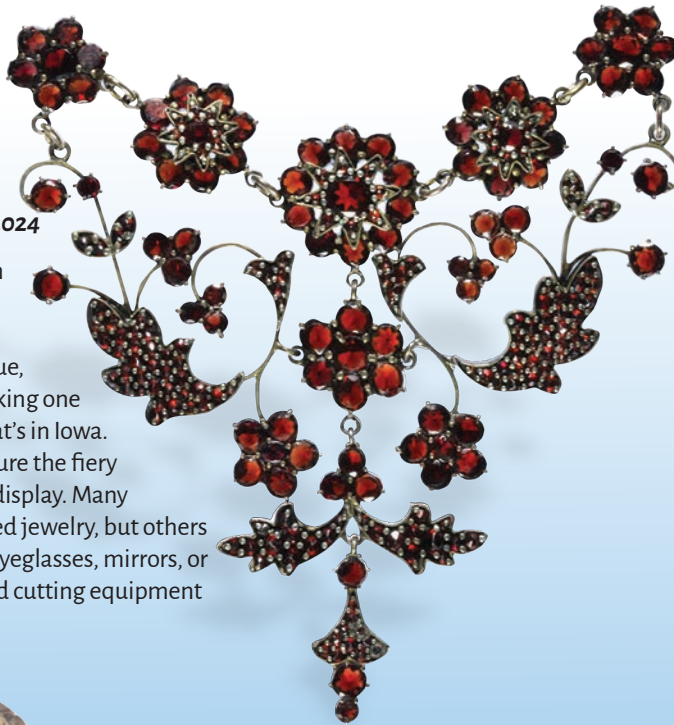
April 15–May 29, 2023

In 1964, on his first visit to Prague, NCSML Trustee Lee Freeman met the artist Jiří Mrázek and through this friendship began a life-long interest and passion for collecting contemporary Czech art. During this period it was very difficult, and often forbidden, for artists to show unsanctioned work. Freeman assisted these artists by transporting their work to the U.S., where he would sell them and send the proceeds back to Czechoslovakia, along with paint and other art supplies unavailable to them.

**Brilliant Bohemian
Garnets from the
National Museum, Prague
Petrik Gallery**

June 17, 2023–January 14, 2024

A one-of-a-kind exhibition of priceless antique and modern garnets from the National Museum in Prague, Czech Republic is only making one stop in America — and that's in Iowa. Over 300 objects that feature the fiery red gemstones will be on display. Many pieces are garnet-decorated jewelry, but others are household items like eyeglasses, mirrors, or picture frames. Mining and cutting equipment will also be featured.



Bohemian garnets are an important and beloved part of the cultural heritage for people of Czech and Slovak descent. After this special showing at NCSML, the garnets will be put on permanent display at a special new gallery at the Czech National Museum, never to leave the Czech Republic again.



Mad Silkman:

**Zika & Lida Ascher Textiles and Fashion
Smith Gallery**

June 3, 2023–October 8, 2023

In collaboration with The Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, and the Czech Center New York, this exhibit focuses on the life and work of Zika and Lida Ascher, a husband-and-wife duo who left Czechoslovakia before the outbreak of WW2 and built a textile empire in the United Kingdom, which supplied fabrics to the international fashion industry. Featuring more than fifty original patterns, textile samples, photos, drawings and videos, the items in the exhibition have been generously lent by the Ascher Family Archive in the U.S.



Moravian Folk Motifs

Anderson Gallery

April 1–August 27, 2023

Seventeen painters from all over Moravia have created a gallery of large folk motifs that showcase their signature styles. These unique mosaics of decorative paintings represent five regions of Slovácko and form an educational trail through Moravia.

Shown: Motif by Kamila Bartálová



Sanctuary

Anderson Gallery

September 16–December 31, 2023

Zuzka Vaclavik is a dual citizen of the United States and Slovakia. She grew up in Germany, where she took art lessons from a Czech painter. *Sanctuary* is a series of paintings on wood panels inspired by Slovak folk art patterns. Vaclavik has exhibited her work in New York, California, Cambodia, Germany, Austria, and across the United States.



Memoryscape

Smith Gallery

December 3, 2022–May 6, 2023

Honza Sakař's fascination with the wet-collodion process began around five years ago. His photographs stand as a counterpoint to digital perfectionism, by virtue of being a study, a drive to capture an otherworldly presence. The exhibit features iconic points of interest in South Moravia, including meadows, forests, castles, historical sites, and local celebrities.



DEMOCRACY IN THE HOMELANDS

The Czech Republic Inaugurates Petr Pavel as its Fourth President



EXCERPTS FROM PRESIDENT PAVEL'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

We all care for the same country, we speak the same language. We long for safety, we appreciate freedom and democracy. This applies from Krásná to Bukovec, from Lobendava up to Vyšší Brod. We are all citizens of this beautiful country.

There are many people in each of our regions who hold a clear vision of how to move our country forward. However, something hampers them — prejudice, lack of courage or incessant bureaucracy. Some claim that we are too small for the world to hear our voice. Or too weak to change the opinion of our stronger partners. This feeling may well result from the fact that history has not always been merciful to us.

I wish for us to be able to step out of this shadow. Let's not make easy things complicated, let's not create obstacles, let's not lose time searching for ideality so we do not end up doing nothing. We have proved so many times what we can do. A recent example is the successful presidency to the Council of the European Union. Let's be active and apply it to other areas, too ... We are a medium-sized country with a unique location in the middle of Europe, due to which we often have a more sober view of the world than the countries with power ambitions. Therefore, we can become the significant player to weld partners of similar area and reasoning. There is a majority of such countries in Europe. Let's learn to develop the position.

... I would like Czechia to be perceived as an active and reliable partner with an opinion, as someone who can change things for the better. As President of the Czech Republic, I will do everything in my power to bring the reputation of our country to a new level."

— Petr Pavel,
President of the Czech Republic
Vladislav Hall, Prague Castle
March 9, 2023

President elect Petr Pavel took the oath of office at the joint meeting of both chambers of the Parliament on March 9 and assumed his duties as President of the Czech Republic. The inaugural ceremony in the Vladislav Hall of Prague Castle was attended by representatives of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, by members of the government, excellences and both ex-presidents of the Czech Republic.

H.E. Miloslav Stašek arrived in Washington D.C. last September as the new Czech Ambassador to the U.S. In an interview with Linda Štucbartová for *Czech & Slovak Leaders Magazine* (czechleaders.com), Ambassador Stašek discussed the role of technology in future Czech exports, and his country's new slogan: "Czech Republic — the Country for the Future." He said that the brand "goes even further in supporting the implementation of trends linked to Industry 4.0, digitalization, robotization, and the use of artificial intelligence to support the competitiveness of the Czech economy and Czech products in general. If we want to progress in these new sectors of industry and business, fundamental changes in our education system will be required."

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CZECH EMBASSY



The National Council of The Slovak Republic Building. Parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held in Slovakia on September 30, 2023 to elect members of the National Council.

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS





NCSML Welcomes Back Darya Bodrova

In January, Darya Bodrova, a member of NCSML and Assistant to the Slovak Honorary Consul in Odessa, was here for several speaking engagements and an appearance on NCSML's *Coffee and Kolach*.

Darya is a graduate of the University of Odessa Ukraine and holds degrees in Economics and Entrepreneurship, and German and English languages. She serves as the Executive Assistant to the head of a large food company in Ukraine.

While here, she shared some of the challenging conditions experienced by her country at war: the massive destruction, the joy and excitement of having two consecutive hours of electricity, and the bitter cold. In an especially moving interview with Dr. Cecilia Rokusek on NCSML's *Coffee and Kolach*, she quoted her 96-year-old grandmother: "A nation with no roots and no history has no future." ■



Left: Darya Bodrova was Dr. Cecilia Rokusek's guest on the January *Coffee and Kolach*. Above: Darya presented at the Golden Tee Meeting at the Cedar Rapids Country Club.

Subscribe to our YouTube channel to see all our video presentations when and where it is convenient for YOU!



CzechSlovakMuseum

<https://tinyurl.com/yc3nfc8x>



Slovak President Zuzana Čaputová met with President Joe Biden on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York on September 23, 2022. PHOTO: THE WHITE HOUSE

30 YEARS LATER

continued from page 1

United States in 30 Years: From Friendship and Partnership to Alliance in Helping Ukraine. Dr. Demes emphasizes that "The war on the European continent, which broke out after the invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops on February 24, 2022, became a new and extraordinary challenge. This topic overshadowed all the other ones in the development of bilateral relations. The United States and Slovakia, as NATO member countries, were fully involved in the efforts to respond to the Russian aggression. Issues of all-round assistance to the struggling Ukraine, the coordination of actions against the aggressor within NATO, and other multilateral formats have become extremely important. The United States became the lead country in these efforts

and has been strengthening its cooperation with Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and the entire Eastern flank of the Alliance." ■



Both lectures were a successful occasion for fruitful debates. They were recorded and are available at ncsml.org. The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is planning to continue this series and will soon host Dr. Pavol Demes as an NCSML Visiting Scholar in Cedar Rapids at its coming events.

Dr. Pavol Demes



Dr. Pavol Demes is a graduate of Charles University in Prague. After democratic changes in 1989, he served as the Executive Director of the Slovak Academic Information Agency — Service Centre for the Third Sector. From 1991 until 1992, he was the Slovak Minister of International Relations, and also served as the Foreign Policy Advisor to the President of the Slovak Republic (1993-1997). From 2000 until September 2010, he was the Director for Central and Eastern Europe of the German Marshall Fund of the U.S. He is now a non-resident senior transatlantic fellow with the German Marshall Fund of the U.S. and serves as a board member of the European Endowment for Democracy. Dr. Demes has published numerous articles and books on international relations and civil society and has had many photographic exhibits in multiple countries.

As an NCSML Visiting Scholar, Dr. Demes will be in Cedar Rapids in May and will be speaking at the museum and throughout the community, and in Washington, D.C.

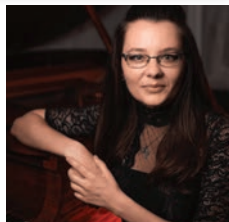
MUSIC AT NCSML



NCSML AROUND THE COUNTRY



Jana Sibera, Soprano



Katelyn Bouska, Piano

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Sunday, April 23 | 7–9 PM

Cost: Free

Jana Sibera, soloist of the National Theatre Opera in Prague, will perform a program of “The Best Opera Arias” — music by Dvořák, Smetana, Janáček, Bellini, Verdi, Gounod and Bernstein. She is accompanied by pianist Katelyn Bouska.



November 8: Independent Marketing Manager and Artistic Director Alex Navratil introduces Guitarist Babaro Kubikova and Mezzo Soprano Ester Pavlu.



March 24: Cedar Rapids Opera Founder and Artistic Director Daniel Kleinknecht and Mezzo Soprano Janara Kellerman reprise their Dvořák program at St. Wenceslaus Church in Spillville. While there, they explore the 1876 Pheffer & Son Organ that the great Maestro Dvořák himself played during his summer in Iowa 130 years ago.

Editor's note: On July 23, 2022, representatives of NCSML joined our friends of Sokol Greater Cleveland for the 125th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of Bohemian National Hall, an important center of Czech history and culture. Paul Burik, President of Sokol Greater Cleveland, was our congenial host.

Celebrating 125 Years with Bohemian Kings & Knights on Broadway

BY PAUL BURIK, PRESIDENT, SOKOL GREATER CLEVELAND

In the late 1800s, there were numerous Czech groups, lodges and organizations in Cleveland, Ohio. These groups needed to find a home and chose to join forces to build a common facility on Broadway Avenue, the heart of what was known at the time as “Little Bohemia.” The cornerstone was laid on December 20, 1896 with a great celebration. In just ten months, in phenomenal time, the dedication of the building took place on September 26, 1897 — 125 years ago this year!

In 1902 and 1907, Professor T.G. Masaryk presented lectures in the building. In 1915, Bohemian National Hall was the site of the signing of the Cleveland Agreement by Czech American and Slovak American representatives. This eventually led to the formation of a joint Czech and Slovak state, which was realized with the founding of Czechoslovakia in 1918 and the election of Masaryk as its first president. In 1960, John F. Kennedy spoke there.

While the edifice served the Czech community well, in time attendance and support faded, and the building needed maintenance. The Sokol units in Cleveland experienced attrition and chose to unite as one unit, Sokol Greater Cleveland (SGC). In 1975, SGC purchased the facility and restored it to its original glory. In 1999, a 12,000-square-foot gymnasium addition was built to accommodate Sokol programming, such as gymnastics and calisthenics, and which continue to this day. The historic building features a great ballroom with full performance stage, two



dining areas, classroom, library, and a museum. There is also a “sklipek” (clubroom, literally “little basement”) for those after-hours gatherings!

The year-long celebration included an online auction, volleyball tournament, SGC band concert, Easter Egg Decorating class, heritage presentation, theater performance and Sunday dinners. The apex of the celebration was Sunday, September 25, with a concert by musicians from the Cleveland Orchestra, featuring music by local Czech composers (Rychlik, Zamecnik, Krejsa) as well as Dvořák, followed by a formal gala dinner.

The July event was rather different. As a way to reach out to the community, including other ethnicities as well as the SGC membership, an outdoor presentation called “Bohemian Kings & Knights on Broadway” was offered. Our Czech heritage has a plethora of Kings to be proud of: King Wenceslaus, Charles IV, Jiri z Podebrad, and more — hence the theme of Kings and Knights. And, since the building is on Broadway, it was “on Broadway.” The event started with a brief play by the SGC marionette group featuring a King and his Court. This was followed by “Silks,” an aerial acrobatics troupe, and a presentation by our own Ted Krejsa (note the same name as one of the aforementioned composers, yes — same family) presenting the story of “Bohemian Kings.” ■



Left: The historic building features a great ballroom with full performance stage. Right: Medieval re-enactors provided an illustration of medieval armor, weapons skills and man-to-man combat known as jousting. More than one hundred people cheered the riders as they performed in their shiny armor.



Florida Meet-and-Greet



▲ Slovak Ambassador Radovan Javorčík and his wife Michelle Joanne Javorčíková.

▲ Bob Petrik, Bob Vancura and Ron Olson.

◀ The Rudziks, a two-generation immigrant family, with Dr. Robert Petrick and Dr. Cecilia Rokusek.

A lively group of local members, supporters, and new friends turned out to three Florida Meet-and-Greets, to learn what NCSML has achieved and what it has planned for the future.

Next up: Chicago, May 18

There will be an opportunity to meet NCSML staff and find out more about NCSML.

Engraved on the granite monument in Lidice Memorial Park in Crest Hill, IL: "Lest we forget, truth shall prevail." The monument, and the park built around it, is located outside Chicago, honoring the memory of the people who died and the village that was destroyed by Hitler in the Lidice (Czechoslovakia) Massacre in 1942. When you are in Chicago, please visit this meaningful monument, owned by NCSML.



Czech Language School hosted by NCSML

The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library is delighted to be hosting the 11th Annual Conference of Czech Schools in North America this coming June 2-4. The conference, conducted entirely in Czech, offers an intensive two-day training program, opportunities to meet Czech dignitaries and academics, and as always, traditional Czech food.

Complete your online registration at <https://tinyurl.com/bxdkbk8s>, or scan the code.



130 Years Ago: Antonín Dvořák Discovers a Familiar World in Iowa

Iowans have long had a special relationship with the beloved Czech composer Antonín Dvořák. And he, apparently, with the gentle countrysides and the Czech people in the Spillville, Iowa area.

Cedar Rapids Opera Founder and Artistic Director Daniel Kleinknecht recently performed an evening of Dvořák with Mezzo Soprano and Cedar Rapids native Janara Kellerman. In an interview leading up to the concert, Maestro Kleinknecht said, "Some of my favorite music was composed by Antonín Dvořák! One of my favorite symphonies is the 7th Dvořák. It's a monumental work, heroic yet sometimes folk-like with an incredible sweep of emotion."

"In the early 1890s, Dvořák was director for the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. He took a vacation the summer of 1892 and came to Spillville, to be with Czech people, a church with an organ, a town with a river (the Turkey River), and pigeons, one of his best loves. I'm sure the stresses of New York life made Spillville a nice change!"

Daniel and Mezzo Soprano Janara Kellerman reprised their NCSML concert at St. Wenceslaus in Spillville March 24. "To make music, Dvořák's music, in the place that he knew, where he played the organ, was so exciting. I'm very glad to have shared this experience with Janara and with our audiences."

The sold-out concert was presented by CROpera in partnership with NCSML. ■

Slovak American Society Funds Endowment at NCSML

A major NCSML partner steps up to enhance our commitment to Slovak culture and history

The Slovak American Society of Washington, D.C. (SASW) has funded an endowment at NCSML to heighten the presence of Slovak culture and history at NCSML, and to establish a long-term commitment to Slovak culture within the United States. Income from the principal amount of \$13,000 is designated for Slovak exhibits; speakers on Slovak topics; acquisition of Slovak materials; and the promotion of scholarship on Slovak topics. NCSML is currently working with the National Slovak Museum, headquartered in Bratislava, to plan for annual exhibits and programs.

About SASW

The Society, established in 1988 by residents of the greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, is an independent, not-for-profit social, educational, and cultural association. Its purpose is to promote a greater understanding of Slovak history, culture, language, and customs. It also provides opportunities for persons of Slovak heritage, and others interested in Slovak affairs, to meet and exchange information, share ideas, and participate in Slovak cultural activities. It supports efforts to extend freedom, democracy, and prosperity to

Slovakia. SASW sponsors or supports lectures, cultural events, language classes, social activities, scholarships for disadvantaged students in Slovakia, and other related activities. You can learn more about SASW at dcslovaks.org.

In the past, SASW has collaborated on events with Friends of Slovakia and with the Slovak Embassy. It is currently in the midst of a four-talk series with these partners, a series



SLOVAK AMERICAN SOCIETY
OF WASHINGTON D.C.

called Slovakia@30, which celebrates 30 years of Slovak independence, reviewing Slovakia's foreign policy, domestic policy, economy, and civil society. SASW also contributes yearly to Seattle-based City University in Slovakia, to provide scholarships for deserving Slovak students who attend the University at its campuses in Slovakia. Since 1999, SASW has contributed a total of \$56,000 (86 scholarships).

NCSML and SASW

SASW's relationship with NCSML began some 20 years ago, when Rosie Johnston, who was working on NCSML's oral history project,

contacted Helen Fedor (now the SASW program chair) for suggestions on Slovak-Americans to interview. After that project was finished, contacts between NCSML and SASW took place at the individual level, with a few SASW members donating materials to the museum or library, or occasionally traveling to Cedar Rapids for special events.

Organization-to-organization ties were revived again in September 2021, when three members of the SASW board (President Georgene Chastain and members-at-large Ken Bombara and Helen Fedor) traveled to Cedar Rapids for the delayed 25th anniversary celebration. That's where the idea of creating the endowment originated, in a conversation among the three of them. Georgene, Helen, and Ken enjoyed touring the exhibit of items from the Slovak National Museum in Bratislava that had just opened at NCSML, but noted that the museum had always been heavily Czech-oriented. They felt that SASW should take the initiative and establish a fund to promote a greater Slovak presence at NCSML. They took that idea back to the SASW Board and . . . the rest is history. ■

Additional contributions to this endowment fund will go directly to the endowment to ensure a growing fund for ongoing Slovak exhibits at NCSML. Contributions can be made directly to NCSML or SASW.

Scholarship Opportunities for University Studies in the Slovak Republic: April 30 deadline looms

Scholarships and grants for students, Ph.D. students, university teachers, researchers and artists are available through the *National Scholarship Programme*. The program is funded by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, and from the resources of the European Union — NextGenerationEU.

Scholarships help to cover living costs for:

- Students currently studying at universities outside Slovakia in order to undertake a study stay (1-2 semesters or 1-3 trimesters) at



a university in Slovakia during their higher education (master's or senior year).

- Ph.D. students currently studying at universities and research organizations outside Slovakia in order to undertake a study and/or research/artistic stay (1-10 months) at a university or in a research organization, eligible to carry out a doctoral study program, in Slovakia during their doctoral studies.
- University teachers, researchers or artists currently working at universities/research

organizations outside Slovakia in order to undertake a teaching and/or research/artistic stay (1-10 months) at a university, or in other eligible research organizations in Slovakia.

Travel allowances are also available.

A world-wide program

Citizens of any country in the world can apply for a scholarship in the framework of the National Scholarship Program of the Slovak Republic, except citizens of the Slovak Republic. ■

Go to scholarships.sk to learn about mandatory conditions, to find detailed information, and to apply by this deadline:

APRIL 30 — scholarship stays during the next academic year.

Check the online information for future study-abroad opportunities.





Congratulations to NCSML Board Trustee Dr. Michael Paul Seng

Last fall, in a colorful ceremonial event at Brno, CR, Masaryk University awarded NCSML Trustee Dr. Michael Seng its highest award: *Doctor Honoris Causa*. The honorary degree is bestowed upon excellent citizens of the Czech Republic, and especially foreign nationals, whose extraordinary creative contributions to the development of science, culture, and art are internationally recognized and respected.

Dr. Seng, co-executive director of The John Marshall Law School Fair Housing Legal Support Center and Fair Housing Legal Clinic in Chicago, was acknowledged for his part in a project of the American Bar Association. Named the Central and Eastern European Law Initiative (CEELI), the goal of the project was to help former Eastern Bloc states with the reformation of the Rule of Law principle.



From Dr. Seng's acceptance speech: "Lawyers and judges are the chief agents advancing this mighty agenda [Rule of Law Principle] — you might say that law professors, even more so. Whether we are working in the United States, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Latin America, or elsewhere in the world, we face the same challenge: We have equal responsibility to advance the rule of law so as to provide a path for society that embodies both peace and justice." ■

NCSML Welcomes Four New Board of Trustees Members



Karen Brown is a poet, author, and knowledge seeker. Her love of understanding humanity has taken her to live in and travel to over 70 countries on six continents.

An active member of National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD), Karen has 17+ years of non-profit board service experience, serving on boards of WorldChicago, American Red Cross, Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN), Big Brothers Big Sisters and more.

Karen also founded Bridge Arrow, a Chicago-based management consultancy, to make businesses more profitable by focusing on return on equity for investors, shareholders and employees.



Jacob Pipkin is an Iowa native, spending much of his personal and professional life establishing his roots in the greater Cedar Rapids community. As a Principal and SVP of Operations at

TrueNorth Companies, he has spent the past 13 years supporting leadership development and organizational health while being an active member in the community.

Jacob plays a key leadership role in fundraising and has spent the past several years driving TrueNorth's workplace campaigns for the United Way, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the Zach Johnson Foundation. He's passionate about the preservation of his Czech and Slovak heritage and desires to continue to build on the legacy established by the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library.



Joe Seliga is a Partner in the Chicago office of the international law firm Mayer Brown LLP. Joe leads Mayer Brown's Government Transactions practice and is co-lead of Mayer Brown's

Projects and Infrastructure Industry Team. Joe advises public and private sector clients on transactions related to transportation and social infrastructure. Joe is widely recognized as a leader in the infrastructure industry, having actively advised clients on

infrastructure M&A and public-private partnership transactions for over twenty years.

Joe is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Chicago History Museum and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, The Civic Federation and American Friends of the Czech Republic. Joe is of Slovak descent and been active in various Slovak-American organizations and activities.



David W. Zrostlik is the President of Stellar Industries, Inc. in Garner, Iowa. Dave's education included Garner-Hayfield Community School, the University of Northern Iowa,

and the Thunderbird School of Global Management. He also spent a year abroad in Australia as a Rotary International Exchange Student. Throughout his career, Dave has served on numerous national, state, and local Boards of Directors. ■

The Migrant Words Return Home

BY PAUL SODERDAHL

The expression “birds of passage” was used to describe individuals who came to America during the mass migrations of the late 19th Century with the intent of working in the U.S. for several years and then migrating back home. For these birds of passage, years of hard work and harsh living conditions, away from their families and compounded by the dangers of their round-trip journey, was a risk worth taking with the prospect of returning home with some savings to provide for their families.

Borrowing from this metaphor, the *Words of Passage Project* collects selected works, primarily journal publications, of 20th Century Slovaks living abroad who wrote about and for Slovaks — the people, their language, their culture, their history, and their national identity with the hope that one day Slovaks would form a free and independent Slovak state. Today, thirty years after the dissolution of communist Czechoslovakia and the establishment of an independent Slovak Republic, the *Words of Passage Project* allows these collected works to “return home.”

The publications produced by U.S. presses were collected by libraries and can still be found scattered across research libraries and archives frequently connected to major U.S. research universities. The collections these libraries hold are rich, their archives are open and welcoming, and their conservators and curators are deeply committed to preserving the physical artifacts. Consequently, the works themselves, as physical artifacts, are not considered rare or at risk.

They are, however, well beyond the reach of the casual reader. The journals are often poorly

cataloged and indexed, and only the initiated even know they exist. Once discovered, only the most determined researchers who have the financial means to travel will be able to visit the select libraries and archives to read what is held inside these publications.

Unlike tangible cultural heritage artifacts of historical and cultural significance, texts can be reproduced, subject to copyright restrictions. Digitization allows the words inside to be “repartriated” to Slovakia, where students and scholars alike can discover and read them, while at the same time making them available to readers worldwide. The *Words of Passage Project* fills a gap in the publication history of Slovakia and exposes new audiences to works whose original authors always intended for them to be widely shared. Today, circulation and distribution are no longer constrained by politics and production costs. ■



Village Stories Shukshin's all Berry-Red

by David J. Soderdahl

From an emigrant's I had in Slovakia... (The text continues with a description of the village and the author's experience.)

Paul Soderdahl

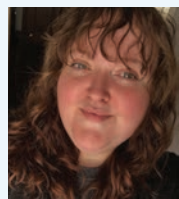


In 2022, University of Iowa Associate Librarian Paul Soderdahl undertook a project to digitize NCSML's collection of two publications in our archives: *Slovakia*, an English-language scholarly journal published by The Slovak League of America from 1951 through 2021; and *Most*, a Slovak-language cultural literary quarterly first published in 1954. Mikuláš Šprinc acted as editor until 1986. We are indebted to Paul for his commitment to providing access to these works to a worldwide audience. The digital publications can be accessed at the website “Words of Passage,” wordsofpassage.net.



NCSML owns a good number of these journals, and we are expecting a donation of a few issues we are missing. They were published in America — *Most* in Slovak by Slovak Roman Catholic emigres and *Slovakia* in English by the Slovak League of America. The project virtually fills in the gaps of our collection. An NCSML visitor who could previously only see about half of them in the building can now see the rest at wordsofpassage.net.

NCSML welcomes Kassidy Eagleson to Staff



Kassidy Eagleson grew up in Davenport, IA and recently moved to Central City. She received her bachelor's degree at St. Ambrose University and her master's degree in Museum Studies at Western Illinois University. Previously, she worked in visitor services at the Putnam Museum and Science Center in Davenport. She has discovered a passion for nurturing quality visitor experiences.

As Membership Coordinator, she makes sure that new, current and past members of NCSML are able to take advantage of the many opportunities the museum and library have to offer. As a member of the Development Team at NCSML, she assists in reaching out to visitors, members, donors, and other organizations to help cultivate worthwhile experiences for the community. ■



Moravian Folk Art Motif Classes at NCSML July 24-28

NCSML is thrilled to announce its first summer week-long workshop. Two artists from Southern Moravia will be teaching Moravian folk art motif painting (Moravian Ornament Painting). Participants will use large canvases and take their completed paintings home to proudly display. For information and registration, please call 319-362-8500 ext. 200 and ask for Michelle Simoneau. Class size will be limited so please register early.

Surviving the Holocaust to Pursue the American Dream

Please join us on May 4 at 7 PM for an evening with Charlie Heller, NCSML board member, noted author and lecturer, and all-around amazing person.

People who are lucky enough never to have been forced to leave their country have no idea of the courage, risk-taking, and pain of those who leave behind family, friends, material possessions, language, and the comfort of home. No one abandons their native country on a whim. Whether escaping tyranny, murderous gangs, poverty, or religious persecution, all refugees have one thing in common: seeking a better life. This was the driving force when the Heller family decided to escape their Communist oppressors and start from nothing in America.

As an immigrant who landed in New York harbor at age 13, Charles Ota Heller experienced struggles that were very different — and exactly the same — as those of millions of others. Like many child refugees today, he had lost family members to political violence and survived years in hiding before reaching the Promised Land — the United States of America. Like them, at times he faced hostility and challenges, alongside his resilient and courageous parents.

In his three memoirs — *Prague: My Long Journey Home*; *Ready, Fire, Aim!*; and *Cowboy from Prague* — he chronicles the amazing life of a man whose earliest years were shaped by World War II and the loss of 25 family members in the Holocaust. Less than three years after coming out of hiding and reuniting with his mother and father, Heller and his family were forced to escape a Communist regime in Czechoslovakia that declared them “enemies of the state.”

Once one of the wealthiest families in their native country, the Hellers crossed the border into the U.S. Zone of Germany, leaving behind friends, material possessions, and their beloved country. Following months in refugee camps, they departed for America aboard a Liberty ship. When the lady known as the Statue of Liberty stepped toward them out of the mist on May 31, 1949, Rudolph Heller ordered his 13-year-old son to forget everything that happened to him on the other side of the Atlantic, to take advantage of the freedom and opportunities his adopted country would offer him, and to “become a 100% American” in one year. Ota Karel became Charles Ota, or “Charlie,” and — despite the fact that he knew two words of English upon arrival (“sank you”) — he spoke his adopted language without an accent by the time he entered high school. Thus, his American Dream began to take shape.

Like refugees who came before him, the author recognized the value of education, hard work, and perseverance. He vowed to grasp every

opportunity offered by his new homeland. Despite being called “a goddamn immigrant freak” by a high school coach, he wasted no time in learning American sports and earned a basketball scholarship to Oklahoma State University. Sports played an important role in his life, and the *Cowboy* book is full of anecdotes from the basketball court, behind the wheel of a race car, the helm of a sailboat, and the golf course fairway — and rough.

As he aged, Heller became more introspective and wondered what would have happened to his family had they not escaped from Communist Czechoslovakia. He saw it quite clearly, based on the experiences of his friends, as well as friends of his parents, who stayed behind. His father, Rudolf, would have become a slave laborer in a uranium mine, alongside his comrades who had served in the Czechoslovak Brigade of the British Army in World War II. His mother, Ilona, would have been relegated to menial work in a state-owned factory. Instead, Rudolph, who began as a lowly pattern-cutter, retired as one of the top executives of the world’s largest sportswear firm. Ilona, whose first American job was as a cleaning lady in a girls’ school, retired as a scientist in a pharmaceutical company.

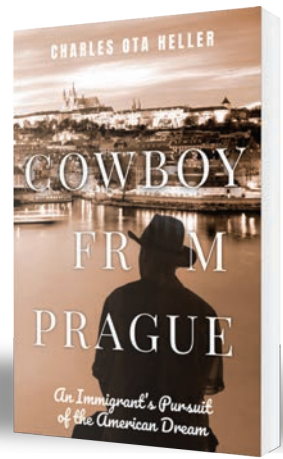
An overachieving son of overachieving parents, Charlie earned three engineering degrees, and after a teaching career, built two software companies. Following what he called years of “entrepreneurial terror” and subsequent burn-out, he built one of the nation’s leading entrepreneurship centers at the University of Maryland. As a venture capitalist, he participated in a number of high-tech investments that led to innovative products and the creation of hundreds of high-paying jobs.

Despite having arrived in America with a two-word vocabulary, Heller fell in love with the English language. Writing became his hobby — freelancing for newspapers and magazines throughout his adult life — until it became his full-time profession. His memoirs have received awards and critical acclaim, and the first, *Prague: My Long Journey Home*, is translated into Czech.

Charles Ota Heller’s memoirs — and his presentation “Surviving the Holocaust to Pursue the American Dream” — present a story of an extraordinary childhood, and an even more extraordinary adulthood. It is the story of loss and pain, joy and regret, life and growth. It is a truly American story. ■

In February 2023, Feathered Quill announced that *Cowboy from Prague* was selected as a Reviewer’s Choice winner. Reviewer Katie Specht wrote:

“With this memoir, Heller has penned a poignant, compelling story of his grit and determination to make the most of his life, even during the most traumatic of circumstances. His writing is deeply engaging, real, raw, and often humorous. Readers of his story will be amazed by his sheer willingness to succeed in the face of the most challenging situations and drawn in by the relatability of the life experiences that he undergoes.”



Charlie Heller



Charles Ota Heller is the author of four memoirs in English and one in Czech. The former are: *Prague: My Long Journey Home*; *Name-droppings: Close Encounters with the Famous and Near-Famous*; *Ready, Fire, Aim! An Immigrant's Tales of Entrepreneurial Terror*; and *Cowboy from Prague: An Immigrant's Pursuit of the American Dream*.

After high school in New Jersey, Charlie entered Oklahoma State University, where he earned a basketball scholarship and received BS and MS degrees in engineering. He holds a Ph.D. from The Catholic University of America.

Today, he is a full-time author and serves on several boards of directors, including the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, and Walden University.

A widower, Dr. Heller lives in Annapolis. He has one son, three grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. He is a member of the Annapolis Yacht Club, Naval Academy Golf Association, Rotary Club of Annapolis, Oklahoma State University's O-Club, the Authors' Guild, and Maryland Writers' Association. He is an avid golfer, skier, sailor, kayaker, and hiker.



VISITING SCHOLARS AT NCSML

The Visiting Scholars program at NCSML offers professionals, academics and students a wide variety of opportunities that benefit individuals and institutions alike. The robust program is funded by CRST, the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, and Cedar Rapids Hotel Motel taxes. It is anticipated that we will have 6-9 scholars each year. With signed affiliations with both Mount Mercy University and Coe College, the student exchanges provided through NCSML are rich, and the outcomes life-changing for the students and scholars.

Intern Jacob Ketman Reflects on Unique Opportunity at NCSML

BY JACOB KETMAN

The collaboration between the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, and the Palacký University in Czech Republic, brings students with a variety of backgrounds to Cedar Rapids. I was fortunate to spend the last quarter of 2022 as a Palacký University student interning at the museum. As a Ph.D. student in Media Studies and Journalism (with expertise in history), I spent almost the entire internship in the museum library and archive conducting research and helping library staff with their daily agenda.

My research opened a new chapter in my study of media history. I analyzed several important Czech periodicals published in the United States around 1918, when the independent Czech state was being established. While we have enough information about political issues and activities of Czech communities in the U.S. during World War I, media coverage of the time is still academically unexplored.

One of my most notable findings is how the Czech immigrant press offered a significantly fresh perspective on the Czech fight for independence during World War I. Materials from NCSML have provided me with a unique perspective on the media-political context of Czech history. Former Czech journalists in the U.S. were more open with their readers about political agendas than were their contemporaries in the totalitarian Austro-Hungarian empire. In the Czech Republic, I pursue my study because the results are strongly encouraging.



Jacob Ketman, NCSML intern in September through December 2022, is from Palacký University.

Another part of my internship was the cross-cultural experience I got with the help of my hosts, headed by NCSML President and CEO Cecilia Rokusek. I have tasted the atmosphere of big cities (Miami, Chicago); experienced the pleasures of American cuisine (jambalaya, barbecued ribs, Iowa pork, etc.); experienced the excitement of sporting events (Iowa Hawkeyes, CR Rough Riders); admired American culture and art (Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, jazz clubs, and classical music concerts); and partially understood the American political system on Election Night.

I learned a lot about the functioning and funding of cultural and educational institutions such as the NCSML. In addition, I was fascinated to meet people who were related to the Czech Republic, whether they were descendants of Czech immigrants or simple admirers of the Czech country and culture. From this internship, I took away a fundamental understanding of the functioning of American society, as well as respect for the communities that preserve the Czech cultural legacy. ■



Visiting Scholar Tereza Mičanková snaps a selfie at her family's beautiful Museum of Folk Costumes in Ostrov, a small village in central Bohemia.

Tereza Mičanková is a master's student of Cultural Anthropology at Charles University in Prague. She is currently working on her diploma thesis and doing research at NCSML. Her work will result in creating fundamental Czech and Moravian folk dress parts categories and their translation into English.

The work will contribute to unification of folk costume parts categorizations used by experts and contribute to a wider project aspiring to unify terminology in Czech folk costume ethnography. The project is taking place in the Museum of Folk Costumes (MOLK) in Ostrov, a small village in central Bohemia, one hour by car from Prague. The museum is owned by Tereza's family.

The museum in Ostrov possesses the largest private collection of rural clothing in the Czech Republic. Its unique exposition is the very first public presentation of all folk costume regions in the country, and specializes in folk culture and artifacts of the 19th century.

The museum also exhibits historical artifacts that were used for textile processing, spinning and weaving. Visitors can view an accompanying collection of scarves and lace (including an example of their production), ribbons, bonnets, a collection of buttons, dolls in folk costumes and other related objects.

The museum has published *Atlas of Folk Costumes of the Czech Republic* (Hampton and Kuča, 2021) in both Czech and in English. It is available at the NCSML Store.



Anna Triščová, a conservator of textile materials in the Department of Collection Care in the National Museum, has returned to the Czech Republic. She was on site to assist as we packed the Mystery and Magic exhibit that closed on March 19. The exhibit, which was on loan from the National Museum in Prague, has also returned to its home. Anna is pictured at left, in Czechia, working on an early 19th century gown.

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Spring and summer abound with colors, and so do our beaded flower pots! The best part? Their owners don't need to worry about watering or enough sunlight. These artworks are lovingly hand-crafted by Slovak-born folk artist, Eva Kováčová in Canada.

Planning to travel to one of the homelands this summer? To help with navigating the many amazing historic or natural landmarks, or learn basics of the Czech language, we have several books to choose from.

Folk art has been, and will remain, an intrinsic part of our cultures. More resources in our store's book collection are acquired to encourage any and every age group to appreciate and learn more about their heritage.

Culture Smart! Pocket Guide to Czech Republic: \$10.95

Culture Smart! Pocket Guide to Slovakia: \$11.99

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Shop in person or online at store.ncsml.org, or call us at 319.362.8500, ext. 100.



Pansies: \$51.95



Mixed flowers: \$59.95



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Embroidery in Slovakia: \$68.95

Atlas of Czech Folk Costume: \$75.95



CORPORATE SOCIAL WEDDINGS

Plan your next event at NCSML, and we'll provide the old-world charm!

Not to mention complimentary indoor and outdoor parking, full accessibility, tables and chairs, and full setup and tear down. A full-service bar with bartenders can be added to any rental agreement, as well as discounted admission to the galleries. Wedding party dressing rooms are provided for on-site ceremonies. Our experienced event coordinators will be there for you during every step of your event — start to finish. No sales tax, fees, or automatic gratuity are added for rentals.

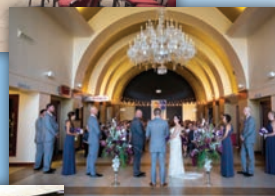
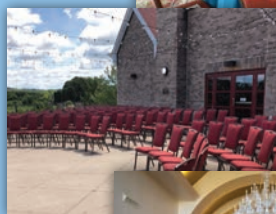
Choose from these beautiful spaces

WFLA/ZCBJ Heritage Hall Host up to 400 guests in this art nouveau-inspired space with state of the art A/V equipment and internet access. This space may also be divided into two rooms, if desired.

Naxera Terrace Ideal for cocktail receptions or outdoor ceremonies, Naxera can seat up to 200 guests.

Rozek Grand Hall This space, featuring the Preciosa chandelier, can accommodate up to 250 guests and be configured for a broad range of purposes.

Hemphill Theater Equally appropriate for business or social gatherings, Hemphill contains 55 comfortably upholstered and permanently affixed chairs (with ample space for wheelchairs), making it ideal for presentations and film screenings.



NCSML is the ideal setting for meetings, weddings, corporate, or social events. Whatever the occasion, we can assist in making it just right for your needs.

For tours and additional booking information, please contact

Romana Goodell
rgoodell@ncsml.org

or

Nicole Everhart,
neverhart@ncsml.org

319-362-8500
ext. 217





**National Czech & Slovak
Museum & Library**
1400 Inspiration Place SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

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Leading up to the 3rd Annual President's Society

Preciosa Gala

NCSML and the Cedar Rapids Economic Alliance Will Host

The Cedar Rapids Business Partnerships Forum

Friday, May 5, 2023 | 5-7 pm in the WFLA Ballroom at NCSML

Ambassadors from the Czech and Slovak Republics, University Presidents of Midwest Universities and Czech and Slovak Universities, Area Business Leaders, and Public Policymakers will gather for presentations and discussions on our current economies, international business currently in the area, and potential partnership opportunities.

*Congratulations to
Tony and Magda Golobic,
Recipients of the
President's Third
Annual Award for
Outstanding Leadership,
Philanthropy,
Dedication to Their
Community, and
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Preservation of Their
Cultural Ancestry in a Free
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