

A publication of the Czech and Slovak Heritage Association of Maryland

CSHA Member Wins Canadian Translation Competition

by Dana Havlik

In May the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Canada and the Czech School of Ottawa announced the winners of the 1st Annual Literary Translation Competition for Czech schools in Canada. The winner of the competition for her category and the overall winner of all participants was Sarah Kaderabek, a former student of the CSHA Adult Language School, for translation of Jan Skácel's poem "Sonnet as a Talisman."

Sarah is a 3rd generation Czech-American. She was born in Detroit, grew up in Philadelphia and currently lives in Montreal, Canada, but her parents still live in Philadelphia. Sarah also speaks French, Russian and English, and she started learning Czech in 2019 to reconnect with her heritage and her non-English-speaking cousins in the Czech Republic. Sarah has been a member of CSHA since 2018.

continues on page 4



Sarah with the Czech Ambassador in Canada

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Children's Language School will resume virtual Fall classes in the week of September 17, 2023. The Czech language beginner's class will meet on Wednesdays at 6PM; advanced speakers will meet on Fridays at 6 PM. Slovak Language children's classes continue to meet on Sundays starting on September 17, 2023: beginners at 10 AM, advanced speakers at 11AM. For more information, or to register a student, please visit our website at <https://cshamaryland.org/>

ADULT LANGUAGE SCHOOL

CSHA is one of the few organizations in the USA that offers Czech and Slovak language instruction for adults. Beginning, intermediate and advanced classes are offered virtually on Saturday mornings. Fall classes will begin September 9, 2023. Please indicate your interest by August 31 and register with payment by September 6. For information, please contact Lois Hybl at 410-243-1710 or e-mail: LHybl@verizon.net or info@cshamaryland.org.

HERITAGE SINGERS

Future rehearsals and events will be announced on the CSHA website <https://cshamaryland.org> and our Facebook page.

CSHA ONLINE - For more information about any of these activities, joining Heritage Singers or to register for classes, you can contact CSHA at: info@cshamaryland.org.

The CSHA Board of Directors will respond to answer your questions and provide information, and we are eager to hear your ideas and suggestions. Also, please check our website www.cshamaryland.org and follow us on Facebook at Czech and Slovak Heritage Association of Baltimore

JANUARY 2023

The Virtual General Meeting took place on Sunday January 22 at 4 PM. It featured a presentation by Michael Gruenbaum, the author of the book *Somewhere There is Still a Sun* (Někde ještě svítí slunce) his memoir of surviving the Holocaust as a teenager in Czechoslovakia.

APRIL 2023

The 2nd Annual Spring Festival was held on Sunday, April 23, 2023 at the Maryland State Game & Fish Protective Association in Perry Hall, MD. Our guests enjoyed the live music of Orchester Praževica and a BODI Puppet Theater performance.

MAY 2023

The Czech and Slovak Heritage Singers performed at the Bohemian Cemetery on May 29, 2023 and participated in the traditional Memorial Day ceremony.

OCTOBER 2023

The 35th Annual CSHA Festival will be held in a new and better location, the Legacy Hall in Sykesville, MD on Sunday, October 29, 2023.

DECEMBER 2023

We are planning the holiday season celebration with Christmas Carol singing at St. Wenceslaus Church in Baltimore early December, and we are coordinating with Mikuláš and Anděl to bring children traditional goodies.

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If you have any suggestions or comments or want to contribute to the Hlas by writing an article, email us at info@cshamaryland.org.

President's Message

Dear friends,
I hope everyone is enjoying the summer months and those who travel are discovering some interesting places. We all deserve time to relax and recharge.

The CSHA is in full preparation mode for the 35th annual Czech and Slovak Festival. As I mentioned in my last message, this year's event will be held in a new (and better) location, the beautiful Legacy Hall in Sykesville, MD. We already have a few volunteers helping us with planning this event. If you are interested in volunteering at the festival, please let us know. We rely on the volunteers to make our events a success, and we will need a lot of them again for the Festival. We are also preparing a special issue of our newsletter Hlas, which everyone will receive at the Festival. If you are interested in buying an advertisement in the newsletter (e.g., in memory of your loved ones or for special occasions like anniversaries or birthdays) or being recognized as a sponsor of the Festival, please find the attached form and send it back to us.

In this newsletter, we included the festival poster. Please share it with your family and friends and invite them to come. We look forward to seeing you all and your friends at the Festival on Sunday, October 29, 2023.

Our family has just returned from a short trip to the Czech Republic. We met up with family and friends and visited some interesting places. We had a good Pilsner beer in Prague, we

tasted Moravian wine in Plze Cellars in Petrov, and had a few shots of homemade Slivovice in Vizovice, located in the Moravian Wallachia (Valašsko) Region. Our kids ran their own ice cream tasting competition. This summer delicacy is sold on the streets, at every castle, in pastry shops, simply everywhere. The winner was the mango sorbet sold on the main square in Kroměříž, closely followed by the pistachio ice cream from the Milotice Castle in Moravia. We simply had a good time.

I also had a chance to catch up with my high school teacher, Mr. Trávníček. He is retired, but still teaches at the school and he explained the challenges of young students from Ukraine. These children are fleeing the Russian invasion of their homeland and have found refuge in the rest of Europe. Mr. Trávníček was my homeroom teacher and now he is proud to help these young Ukrainians feel at home and make the most of their unenviable situation. While I hope all Ukrainians will be able to return to their country soon, I also hope they found my hometown, Kroměříž, welcoming and enjoyable.

Thank you for your continued support and we will see you at the 35th annual Czech and Slovak Festival.

Se srdečným pozdravem,



Petr Justin - CSHA president

Our Second Spring Festival

by Dana Havlik

This year's Spring Festival at the Maryland State Game and Fish Protective Association in Perry was scheduled after the Easter holidays to avoid a conflict with schools' spring breaks on April 23, noon- 5 PM. Over 100 visitors attended including representatives from the Czech and Slovak

Embassies.

The guests enjoyed delicious food including pork stew (*vepřový guláš*) and *halušky* with cabbage. CSHA volunteer bakers prepared a variety of home baked pastries and deserts. As

continues on page 8



Children watching the theater performance



Craft table and children at work creating puppets

continued from page 1

The translation competition was intended for all Czech language schools in Canada, their students, graduates, and supporters. The intent of the competition was to introduce students to interesting works of Czech literature, to enjoy working with a literary text, and to achieve closer cooperation between Czech schools.

Sarah attended CSHA virtual classes during the pandemic and those lessons gave her an essential foundation for further studies in Czech language and literature. She shared the results of her first venture into literary translation with us in the following letter:



Sarah Kaderabek's award

Ahoj všichni!!

I just wanted to share my good news with the group, since I feel you have all been an instrumental part of my Czech language development: I won the Czech Literary Translation Competition that was organized by the Czech Embassy in Ottawa, for all the Czech schools in Canada. (Not exactly super-fierce competition, though; there were only 26 entries!)

So, I hopped on a train and went to Ottawa for the celebration, where the Czech Ambassador to Canada handed out the certificates and swag. (I got three certifications—for participation, best poem, and overall winner—two books and a bouquet of flowers.) I had to make a little speech in Czech in front of the Embassy officials, the members of the jury and the other participants, so that was a LITTLE stressful!! But it was fun. Dad was super-proud and John got me a chocolate cake with a #1 candle on it. And my Prague cousin Martina had even hunted down the zoom link on the Embassy website and tuned in virtually. Now, if this feat doesn't help me with the Czech citizenship, I don't know what will!!

Attached is the poem and translation that led to my moment of glory. We had to translate another poem of Skácel's, as well as two passages from Karel Čapek's *Zahradníkův rok*.

https://www.mzv.cz/ottawa/cz/ceska_pritomnost_v_kanade/prekladatelska_soutez_hrajeme_si_s.html

Wishing you all a happy, sunny summer,

Sarah.

Sonet jako talisman

Aby tě před zlým chránil
(takový už je svět),
dávám ti amulet.
A nos jej bez přestání,
je proti chvílím krutým,
zahání z duše hlad
a toho, kdo má rád
uchrání před ušknutím.
Snad z nebe na zem spadlo
to vzácné zaklínadlo,
ve světle létavic,
do stříbra jsem vyryl
SINE AMORE NIHIL
Bez lásky není nic.

(Jan Skácel, ze sbírky *Dávné prosa*, 1981)

Sonnet as Talisman

To protect you from evil
(lest this world bring harm)
I will give you a charm.
And never take it off:
Cruel moments it fights,
banishes hunger from heart
and if it sets you apart,
protects from venomous bites.
Perhaps that precious spell
from heaven to earth fell,
by light of meteorite,
in silver I initial
SINE AMORE NIHIL
Without love all is night.

(Translated by Sarah Kaderabek, 2023)

Please stay tuned as Sarah shares her Czech language learning exploits with us in a future issue of Hlas.

Albert Hybl Obituary

Dr. Albert Hybl, an Associate Professor of Biophysics at the University Of Maryland Medical School and a resident of Original Northwood, died of end-stage dementia at College Manor on December 12, 2022.

Born January 8, 1932, in Iowa City, Iowa, he was raised in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, by his mother, Marie Hybl, and grandmother, Anna Rose Hybl. They were 1920 immigrants from Czechoslovakia who worked at the local meatpacking plant.

A high school and college wrestler, he graduated from McKinley High School and went on to earn a BA in math and chemistry at Coe College. Right after graduation in 1954, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and saw service in Germany and France. After his discharge in 1955, he headed to the California Institute of Technology and earned his PhD in Chemistry and Math, with a specialization in Crystallography. He then did postdoctoral work at Iowa State University. In 1964, he moved to Baltimore to work at the University of Maryland in Baltimore. At the end of his career, he worked in the IT division of the dean's office.

Al enjoyed classical music in addition to his many hobbies: mushroom hunting, chess, reading mysteries and science fiction and polka, waltz, folk and Irish social dancing. Because he still had relatives in the Czech Republic, he joined the Czech and Slovak Heritage Association where he studied the Czech language and helped with the language school and annual festivals. He enjoyed dressing in costume, even playing a priest in a play in Mary Lou Walker's Czech class. At one point, he performed with the Sokol Folk Dance Ensemble. With his wife,

Lois, he traveled to the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Ireland for dance workshops and tours organized by Dvorana Travel. On one trip, he met his Czech relatives in Ceska Trebova.

Survivors include his wife of 60 years, Lois Hybl (nee Lois Ann Gleason), children Anton A. Hybl and his wife Muluye Gonfa of Germantown, MD and Tanya M. Sandrock of Salt Lake City, UT and grandchildren Marie Hybl, Ziad Phoenix Hybl, Nathan Hybl, Jessica Sandrock, and Cameron Sandrock and his wife Gaby.



Albert performing in a role of a priest at the Adult Czech language school



Al and Lois - CSHA Festival 2019



Al and Lois Hybl - CSHA Festival 2015

Getting Even

by Charles Ota Heller

With the assistance of our Czech lawyer, Jiří (George), our good friend Jitka, and a bank account used to bribe corrupt government officials, we had managed to get back nearly all properties stolen from us by the government of the now-defunct Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. Mother and I were the owners of a clothing factory and a couple of single-family homes, and we had received restitution for properties we declined to take over.

Mother's participation in this long and painful process consisted of signing papers when she had to—nothing more. In no uncertain terms, she informed me that she is an American, and she has no interest in rekindling painful memories. Although the eventual value of Heller properties in Czechoslovakia might be measured in millions of dollars, I was not incentivized by economics. I wanted revenge.

The bastards robbed my parents of everything we owned. I'm going after them! That had been my attitude and my motivation from the start. Now there was only one remaining obstacle.

The nation's restitution laws applied only to properties that had been taken over by the Czechoslovak government. Our family had also owned a seven-story building in Prague that was taken over by the Secretariat of the Communist Party and became their headquarters for a section of the capital city. Since the party was still legal even after the country became democratic, the only way for us to get it back was by taking the Reds to court and winning.

There was only one problem: we had absolutely no proof that our family had ever owned the building. We had escaped in a rush a mere two weeks after the Communist putsch in 1949, and the last thing my parents wanted to carry out with them were documents showing that they owned properties in a land to which they had no intention of returning. The last legal owners, prior to the Nazis, and then the Communists, stealing the building were my grandfather and his brother. Both had been murdered by Germans while trying to escape. Our lawyer managed to convince the court that we could come before a judge if we could produce death certificates for Artur and Ota Neumann because then Mother would be the sole legal heir. But how do we manage that?

My entrepreneurial skills—and a lack of conscience when it came to dealing with thieves—to the rescue. I forged a letter from my grandfather to his daughter, my mother, informing her that his brother had been shot the previous day and that he himself was holed up in a farmhouse in Yugoslavia, surrounded by German soldiers. He expected to die at any moment. George took the letter to a government officer who, with the assistance of a bribe, promised to produce the death certificates, but only after Mother and I would appear before him and sign some papers.

The trial was scheduled for the Friday following Easter in 1994. Reluctantly, Mother agreed to accompany me, and we arrived in Prague on Easter Sunday. On Monday morning, along with George, we drove to the ministry to get the death certificates. Horrors! The bribed official had been promoted the previous week, and a short, plump, surly woman had taken his place.

Following a half-hour lecture on the unfairness of "rich Americans" coming back to their native country to get back their properties, she said: "You'll get your death certificates. But you'll have to wait sixty days, like everyone else." The fact that the trial would take place on Friday was no concern of hers.

Friday came and the cold and rain were an appropriate reflection of our collective mood as we stood on the courthouse steps. Our chances of winning the suit and getting our building back were somewhere between slim and none. Suddenly, one of our Communist adversaries, who was standing on the other side of the steps, popped open a black umbrella and approached us.

"Why do we have to fight like this?" he asked George in Czech, and put his arm around his shoulder. It turned out that the two had been classmates in law school. "Can't we settle this amicably?"

George and I had a long-standing agreement that, in order to give me time to think, we would pretend in all our negotiations that I did not understand Czech. He translated the Communist's words into English for me.

Oh, the slimeballs don't realize that we don't have any proof of ownership, I thought, as soon as I heard the question asked in Czech.



“What do they suggest?” I asked George in English.

“What kind of settlement do you have in mind?” George asked the Commie.

“We have no place to go with our headquarters. We need to be able to rent three floors of your building for two years at a reasonable rate,” he said.

Your building—all right! I cheered silently. George translated, but my answer was ready.

“Two floors, one year,” I blurted out.

George translated my offer into Czech and the lawyer joined his fellow henchmen who huddled under umbrellas on the other side of the steps. Despite the cold, I was sweating profusely while trying to appear calm and in total control of the negotiation. Finally, the Communist lawyer walked back toward us. As he approached us, he extended his hand to me.

“Deal,” he said in English.

“No, *tak dobře*,” (“Well, OK”) I replied in Czech, and shook his hand. He damn near added yellow moisture to

his already-wet pants when he heard me speak Czech. For the next year, I was landlord to the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.



Charles Ota Heller, resident of Annapolis, is the author of a trilogy of memoirs of a Czech Holocaust survivor and immigrant: PRAGUE: MY LONG JOURNEY HOME; READY, FIRE, AIM! AN IMMIGRANT'S TALES OF ENTREPRENEURIAL TERROR; and COWBOY FROM PRAGUE: AN IMMIGRANT'S PURSUIT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM.

Czech and Slovak Recipe Corner:

by Dana Havlik

Cherry Dumplings (*Trešňové knedlíky*)

This is another favorite Czech and Slovak summer dish and another way to use the seasonal fruit for a main course meal. In the region I came from (Krkonoše mountains), the cherry dumplings are typically made with the potato dough.

INGREDIENTS:

1.5 lb potatoes	½ teaspoon salt
2 cups all-purpose unbleached flour or Wondra	Cherries (can be with or without pits)
1 egg	Toppings: cottage cheese, butter, and powder sugar

DIRECTIONS:

Boil potatoes with the skins until soften and when cold grind them into the large boil. Add flour, salt and 1 egg, and mix everything together by hand into a moldable non-sticky dough. Roll out the dough, cut it into 2"- 3" squares, wrap 4-6 cherries in each square and roll into a ball. Bring water with salt to boil in a large cooking pot.

Place 8-10 dumplings in the pot, boil for 3-4 minutes on each side. Place finished dumplings in a bowl and add a square of butter, so they don't stick together. Cherry dumplings are typically served with melted butter, sugar, and cottage cheese.



IN THIS ISSUE:

CSHA Member Wins Canadian Translation Competition	pp.1,4
Calendar of Events	p.2
President's message	p.3
Our Second Spring Festival	p.3,8
Albert Hybl Obituary	p.5
Getting Even	pp.6,7
Recipe Corner	p.7



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continued from page 3

always, our barman, Russ (with his helper Sasha), was in charge of drinks, beer, and wine.

The music was provided again by Orchester Praževica featuring a variety of folk-dance music. The program also included a BODI Puppet Theater performance. BODI visited the Baltimore and Washington area during their last tour of the USA and performed short fairy tales enjoyed by all ages. Roman and Libuška Bauer demonstrated how on their tours they create the theater stage from cardboard banana boxes and duct tape. After the performance children and some adults joined the puppet making workshop and learned how to make theater puppets out of plastic bottles, wood sticks, strings, fabric, and yarn.



Orchester Praževica

The CSHA Board of Directors would like to thank all our guests for coming and enjoying our second Spring Festival, especially our guests from the Embassies who brought with them promotional literature, traveling brochures and other souvenirs. We also want to welcome all new members who signed up and joined CSHA. Finally, we want to extend our gratitude to all of our dedicated volunteers, who helped with the preparations, decorations, children's activities, and the cleanup to make this event possible. We are hoping for similar participation and support during the Annual Fall Festival at the new location - Sykesville Legacy Hall.



Roman and Libuška Bauer and their puppets