



Journal

June 2026





Helping Lions Support a
Good Cause
Page 16



Pull Tab Palooza
Page 26

On the Cover

Lodge Benjamin Franklin No. 2 participated in Ronald McDonald House of Cleveland's annual "Pull Tab Palooza," held the first Saturday of May. (See details on page 26). The first Saturday of May is also Join Hands Day. Watch for articles featuring ways lodges participated in Join Hands Day sprinkled throughout this issue.



To 2 Million...
Page 23

In this issue

- 3 Membership Matters
- 4 Upcoming Events
- 5 Today's Fraternal
- 6 Miss CSA
- 7 Let's Get-Together
- 9 Fraternalist of the Year Nominations
- 13 Scholarship Recipients
- 15 Fraternal Calendar
- 16 Lodge Happenings
 - Lodge No. 7, Page 16
 - Lodge No. 121, Page 17
 - Lodge No. 372, Page 18
 - Lodge No. 30, Page 19
 - Lodge No. 99, Page 20
 - Lodge No. 475, Page 20
 - Lodge No. 409, Page 22
 - Lodge No. 77, Page 23
 - Lodge No. 377, Page 24
 - Lodge No. 137, Page 25
 - Lodge No. 2, Page 26
 - Lodge No. 452, Page 27
 - Lodge No. 231, Page 28
 - Lodge No. 366, Page 29
 - Lodge No. 434, Page 32
 - Lodge No. 219, Page 33
- 18 CSA Serves
- 19 Miss CSA Application
- 21 Scholarship Donation Form
- 23 Fraternal Well Wishes
- 30 In Memoriam
- 31 Photo Contest
- 32 Scholarship Fund Donation Report
- 34 Just Kids

Membership Matters

Welcome, Sons of Norway!

Brothers and Sisters,

I hope everyone is doing well, and the beginning of summer has been a bright spot on everyone's calendar.

By now, many of you may have heard the news of BetterLife's new partnership with Sons of Norway, through the grapevine or via social media. If you haven't, I'm excited to spread the news right now! BetterLife has entered into a definitive agreement to partner with Sons of Norway, bringing together two mission-driven fraternal organizations while preserving identity, tradition, and local community life.

Key Points

- The transaction is subject to regulatory approval and closing.
- Sons of Norway retains its name, brand and lodge structure, local identity, and cultural autonomy.
- BetterLife extends its presence to more than 400 communities.

- The partnership supports long term member and community stability.

- Following the closing, Sons of Norway is expected to operate as part of BetterLife (similar to other legacy brands under the BetterLife umbrella).

- The organizations expect the transaction to close later this summer, with full integration anticipated by the end of the year.

With this, the BetterLife family, which will now include Sons of Norway, CSA Fraternal Life, Western Fraternal Life Association, and National Mutual Benefit, will continue to grow, all while continuing to honor the past by keeping the traditions of the original groups alive and well.

So, welcome to the Sons of Norway members, and we very much look forward to with working with you, as well as getting to know you.

Thanks again for all of your support, and be well.



John J. Kielczewski
Senior Vice President
Fraternal Development
BetterLife

*Until next month...
Fraternally,
John J. Kielczewski
Senior Vice President
BetterLife*



FLAG DAY

Leadership

Board of Directors

Chris Campbell
Madison, WI

Mary Bradley
Frankfort, MI

Michael Hosek
Lincoln, NE

Duane Jirik
New Prague, MN

Daniel L. Shinnich
Mount Horeb, WI

Maria Ferrante-Schepis
McKees Rocks, PA

Bradley Bodell
Chicago, IL

Russell Denk
Madison, WI

Daniel Biank
Blanchardville, WI

Terry Placek
Lawrence, PA

Executive Leadership

Chris Campbell
CEO and Chairman of the Board

Leanna Letuchy
Chief Financial Officer

Dudley Simmons, CLF
Chief Distribution Officer

Matt Mikulcik
Chief Operating Officer

Kaye DeMartino
Senior Vice President,
Talent Management

Member & Community Engagement Leadership

Jake Manne
Senior Director of
Member & Community Engagement

John J. Kielczewski
Senior Vice President,
Fraternal Development

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 1, 2026

Miss CSA Application Due
See page 19.

June 15, 2026

GTG REGISTRATION DEADLINE EXTENDED
See pages 7 – 8.
Register online at: GetTogether2026.eventbrite.com

June 27, 2026

Fraternalist of the Year Nomination Deadline

Visit: csalife.com

https://csalife.com/doc/nominations/2026_FOTY_CS_AFOTYAPP_rev%2012092024.pdf

See pages 9 – 12.

July 2, 2026

Kropik Scholarship Application Deadline

Visit csalife.com

CSA Journal

Volume 139 No. 6 JUNE 2026



A Dynamic Magazine "Dedicated to Our Membership"

ÚREDNÍ ORGÁN JEDNOTY ČESKOSLOVENSKÝCH SPOLKŮ V AMERICĚ

Phone: 800-543-3272

FAX: 630-472-1100

Email CSA: fraternaldept@csalife.com

Website: www.csalife.com

Editor: Cynthia Hall, CSAJournalEditor@gmail.com

CSA MISSION STATEMENT

CSA Fraternal Life is a fraternal benefit Society that provides families with financial security while promoting community involvement with volunteerism.

Home Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

CSA Journal (ISSN 0195-9050)

Published monthly—except bimonthly July/August by CSA Fraternal Life, 2050 Finley Rd., Suite 70, Lombard, IL 60148. Periodical Postage paid at Lombard, Illinois, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription Rate: \$12 per year, U.S. only.

Postmaster: send address changes to:

CSA Journal, P.O. Box 249, Lombard, IL 60148.

Today's Fraternal

Spring Brings Energy and Activities

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters,

The weather is finally starting to get warmer, and many of us are excited to enjoy the sunshine and spend more time outdoors. Spring always seems to bring new energy, and it also means we have many activities and events happening within our organization.

We would like to extend a big thank-you to all the students who applied for this year's scholarships. We received ten applications from hardworking and talented students, and we truly appreciate the time and effort that went into each one. Congratulations to everyone who applied. We are proud of your accomplishments and wish you all the very best in the future. (See pages 13 – 15.)

Thank you as well to everyone who participated in this year's Bowl-O-Rama. It was wonderful to see so many people come together for a friendly competition. Events like this help bring our members and community closer together, and we sincerely appreciate everyone who helped make the event a success.

We are also busy planning for our Annual Get-Together and look forward

to another great event filled with friendship, good conversation, and lasting memories. It is always a special time for members to gather and celebrate our organization and community.

As we continue through the year, please do not forget to submit your nominations for Fraternalist of the Year. This award is a meaningful way to recognize someone who has shown dedication, leadership, and support for our organization and community. We know there are many deserving individuals, and we encourage everyone to take the time to send in a nomination. (See pages 9 – 12.)

Thank you, again, to all our members, volunteers, and supporters for everything you do throughout the year. Your participation and commitment help make our organization strong, and we look forward to many more successful events and activities ahead.

Happy Father's Day!

Fraternally,
Kelly Deegan

Fraternal Programs Manager
Lodge DuPage Pioneers/Edison No. 409



Kelly Deegan
Fraternal Programs Manager

Journal Themes for 2026

- July/August** – Independence Day
- September** – Annual Get-Together
- October** – Lodge Recognition Program
- November** – Honoring Those Who Served
- December** – Photo Contest Winners

Please send lodge articles to:
csajournaleditor@gmail.com
by the 13th of the month prior.

Please address all Fraternal inquiries to:
Kelly Deegan
kdeegan@betterlifeins.com
or call 1.800.543.3272 x 4307



Congratulations Graduates!

See this year's Scholarship Recipients
on pages 13 - 15.

Kropik Scholarship Applications due July 2.

Miss National CSA

Planning Summertime Travel

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters,

Since last month, I have been finishing up my classes and I have finally completed my sophomore year of college! This semester was hard but definitely

eye-opening to new classes and opportunities I want to take next semester. I have been enjoying my free time by going to concerts, spending time outdoors fishing, and traveling to nearby states.



I hope everyone had an amazing Mother's Day. Our family was blessed enough to all be together and share moments. We were able to share a homemade dinner where all of my family attended.

Shortly after the last article was written, my dad, my boyfriend, and I attended lunch at Lodge Mile-Hi Czechs, in my hometown. This lunch was hosted at the same church where my dad and grandfather would have had lunch back in the day, making sauerkraut and dumplings for all of the members.

Meeting with the individuals from my own lodge was a great experience and we shared an amazing lunch with freshly baked cookies.

So far this summer, I will be traveling to Taylor Park in Colorado which is a yearly thing for my boyfriend's family that I have attended the past four years now. It is a great week-long trip to a cabin in the mountains where the only worry is how many fish we are catching that day.

Next, I have the trip to Wilson, Kansas planned for the Czech Festival at the end of summer. This will be a nice stay as we are making a trip out of it to visit my boyfriend's distant family. This will be amazing to show them more about our culture and what it means to the community!

I am so excited for the Get-Together in Wisconsin and I cannot wait to reconnect with everyone again!

I truly hope everyone has a super relaxing and blissful summer. Spend time with your loved ones and never take anything for granted.

*Fraternally,
Cassidy Payer
Miss National CSA 2025-2026*



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It's that time of year again! We would like to invite you to join us this year for our **89th Annual Get-Together**, which will be held in **Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from July 31 - August 2, 2026**.

Enclosed is a registration form as well as any information you may need for booking and planning. We will be staying at the **Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel**.

Registration costs are \$175 for adult members and guests, \$140 for anyone under the age of 18.

Below is a brief outline of the weekend's events.

FRIDAY

- 12:00 PM Registration/Hospitality Suite (Hospitality suite ends at 3:00 pm.)
- 6:00 PM Dinner
- 7:00 PM Opening remarks/Miss National CSA Contest
- 8:00 PM Music and Dancing

SATURDAY

- 9:00 AM Service Project
- 10:00 AM Bus leaves for Harley Davidson Museum/Lakefront Brewery (both tours start at 10:30 am)
- 5:00 PM Cocktails
- 6:00 PM Formal Dinner
- 7:00 PM Crowning the 2026 Miss National CSA
- 8:00 PM Music, Dancing, and Raffles

SUNDAY

- 10:00 AM Brunch
- 11:00 AM Program
- 11:30 AM Closing Remarks, Retire Colors, Adjourn

Fraternally,

The Get-Together Committee

2026
CSA FRATERNAL LIFE
GET-TOGETHER
89th ANNUAL

REGISTRATION, DEADLINE, AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE THE VARIOUS DUE DATES AND PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

If you prefer a paper form for any of the items below, contact Kelly at:
(800) 779-1936 or kdeegan@betterlifeins.com

REGISTRATION FORM

GTG REGISTRATION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2026

ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR THIS EVENT IS ENCOURAGED, PLEASE GO TO:

GetTogether2026.eventbrite.com 

ADS FOR AD BOOKLET

Due Date: Wednesday, May 27, 2026

ONLINE PURCHASE OF ADS IS ENCOURAGED, PLEASE GO TO:

GetTogetherAds.eventbrite.com to order and pay online.

Email graphics and advertisements to: kdeegan@betterlifeins.com

RAFFLE TICKETS - 6 TICKETS FOR \$5 *Single tickets will be available for purchase at the event.

Due Date: Saturday, August 1, 2026

If purchasing in advance, event coordinators will pre-fill and print raffle tickets and hand them out to you at event registration. If you are not present, the coordinators will enter your tickets in the raffle on your behalf.

ONLINE PURCHASE OF RAFFLE TICKETS IS ENCOURAGED. You can purchase raffle ticket bundles when you register for the event or buy them at anytime at: **GetTogether2026.eventbrite.com**

When you are in Eventbrite, click the orange "Reserve a Spot" button, scroll all the way to the bottom to purchase your raffle ticket bundles.

If you register online or via paper and choose to pay with a check, please mail checks and forms to the CSA Home Office - Attn: Kelly Deegan, 2050 Finley Road, Suite 70, Lombard, IL 60148

ALL ONLINE CORRESPONDENCE, QUESTIONS, AND CONCERNS CAN BE SENT TO:

kdeegan@betterlifeins.com



Fraternalist of the Year

Deadline: June 27th, 2026

October 30, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

It's not too late to nominate your Fraternalist of the Year. Who do you think is the one person in your lodge who has given the most of their time, talent, and skill to make your lodge activities – CSA SERVES, Join Hands Day, and social affairs – a great success from 2025 to 2026? Who is that one member you can always count on to go the distance and never let you down? You know that person, and that's the one you should be nominating! *If one of your members has been nominated in the past but has not won, don't hesitate to nominate them again!* *

The application – **including a recent photo of the nominee** – should be submitted to the Home Office and postmarked **no later than JUNE 27th**. If in attendance, this award will be presented to the winner at this year's Get-Together at the Saturday evening banquet. Our Fraternalist of the Year receives a plaque and is allowed to have CSA make a \$100.00 donation in their name to their favorite charitable organization!

To honor our nominees, their accomplishments will be summarized in *the Journal*, and each will be recognized with a certificate and letter.

So, please put on your thinking caps and nominate the most deserving person from your lodge. Don't be modest; we want to hear some boasting about this member's accomplishments. **To repeat, a past nominee (who did not win) can be nominated again.** An officer of the lodge should fill out the application. What a great surprise it will be for the winner. Remember, each lodge can only submit one Fraternalist of the Year nomination. Thank you, and best of luck to your deserving members.

Fraternally,

Kelly Deegan
Fraternal Programs Manager
kdeegan@betterlifeins.com

2050 Finley Road Suite 70, P.O. Box 249, Lombard, IL 60148 ·

2026 Scholarship Recipients

Jordan Cannon

Jordan Cannon is a motivated student with a strong passion for aviation and a clear goal of becoming a pilot. Through early exposure to flying, close connections to military aviation through family, and hands-on experiences such as discovery flights and aviation tours, he has developed a deep understanding and appreciation for the field. Jordan is committed to pursuing a career in aviation and continues to build the knowledge, discipline, and experience needed to achieve his goals. He is dedicated to turning his passion for flight into a professional career in the aviation industry.



Ruby Chaillou

Ruby Chaillou developed a passion for science and the natural world at a young age, inspired by rock collecting and hands-on exploration. A member of the Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club and a STEM Academy student, she has combined interests in geology, engineering, and technology through research, travel, and a UAV-focused internship. She plans to attend the University of Kentucky to study Mining Engineering with a focus on rare earth minerals.



Ryan Goodwin

Ryan Goodwin is a dedicated student-athlete known for his strong work ethic and commitment to kindness. Through his job at Marketplace Restaurant and Bar and his experiences on the soccer field, he has learned the value of supporting others and leading by example. He strives to make a positive impact through small, meaningful actions and plans to carry this mindset forward in all areas of his life.



Abigail Helfrich

Abigail Helfrich is a compassionate and driven student with a strong commitment to helping others. Through her experience in food service and volunteering at local blood drives, she has developed valuable skills in empathy, patience, and communication. These experiences have shaped her passion for supporting people in both every day and challenging moments. Abigail plans to pursue a career in nursing, where she hopes to continue serving her community and making a meaningful impact on the lives of others.



2026 Scholarship Recipients



Delaney Nekolny

Delaney Nekolny is a dedicated student with a strong passion for agriculture and a commitment to supporting family farms and rural communities. Through hands-on experience working on her family's generational farm and involvement in agricultural education, she has developed a deep understanding of hard work, responsibility, and the importance of agriculture in everyday life. Delaney plans to pursue a career in Agricultural Business, where she hopes to help producers make informed financial decisions and support the long-term success of family farms. She is driven by a desire to advocate for the agricultural industry and contribute to its future sustainability.



Justin Obeldobel

Justin Obeldobel is a dedicated student with a strong passion for aviation and a clear goal of becoming a commercial pilot. Currently a high school junior taking college-level aviation courses, he has demonstrated academic excellence by earning straight A's while preparing early for his future career. Justin is committed to earning his private pilot license, completing a four-year aviation degree, and building the flight hours required for commercial certification. Driven by determination and a love for travel and flight, he represents a focused and promising future in the field of aviation.



Annabelle Porter

Annabelle Porter is a reflective and creative student who has transformed personal hardship into resilience and self-discovery. After years of struggling with identity and self-confidence, she has focused on building authentic relationships, sharing her artwork, and embracing her individuality. Today, she moves forward with renewed confidence and purpose, striving to spread authenticity, kindness, and creativity through her work and voice.



Josie Schretter

Josie Schretter is a future cosmetology professional pursuing a career built on creativity, skill, and human connection. She is passionate about helping others feel confident and believes cosmetology offers a meaningful, hands-on path that cannot be replaced by technology. Choosing cosmetology school, she plans to develop her technical skills while building a career in a growing industry centered on artistry, personal care, and client relationships.

2026 Scholarship Recipients

Hailey Rose Tordai

Raised on a family farm, **Hailey Rose Tordai** developed a strong work ethic and a passion for animal care, beginning each day tending livestock and training young horses. She also founded a small metalworking business in high school, gaining experience in design, finance, and customer relations. She plans to attend the University of Wyoming to study Agriculture Business with a focus on animal sciences and is committed to improving animal well-being and advancing sustainable agriculture.



Blake Wilson

Blake Wilson is a dedicated student and leader who has developed resilience and determination through experiences like a rigorous backpacking trek at Philmont Scout Ranch and years of competitive marching band. Inspired by both real-world challenges and philosophical ideas, he has learned to embrace difficulty as a source of growth. He plans to pursue a future in engineering, applying this mindset to push his limits and achieve his goals.

2026 Fraternal Calendar

JUNE

1 – Deadline: Miss CSA Application & Photos
 15 – GTG REGISTRATION DEADLINE EXTENDED
 27 – Deadline: Fraternalist of the Year Nomination

JULY

2 – Deadline: Kropik Scholarship Application
 2 – Deadline: CSA Scholarship Recipient Information Form
 4 – Home Office Closed (Independence Day)

AUGUST

7/31 – 8/2
 89th Annual Get-Together, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

SEPTEMBER

7 – Home Office Closed (Labor Day)
 26 – Deadline: Photo Contest Entry

OCTOBER

15 – Deadline: Veteran's Names & Articles

NOVEMBER

26 – Home Office Closed (Thanksgiving)
 27 – Home Office Closed (Thanksgiving)

DECEMBER

1 – Deadline: CSA Serves Matching Funds Request
 24 – Home Office Closed (Christmas)
 25 – Home Office Closed (Christmas)

LODGE HAPPENINGS

June - A Month to Celebrate

Lodge Lincoln No. 7, Berwyn, Illinois – June is the month to celebrate Flag Day, Juneteenth, the first day of summer, and Father’s Day. Please remember to fly your flag on June 14 and to recognize all the special fathers, stepfathers, and grandfathers who have done so much for our families, on Father’s Day.

The Riverside Township Lions Club held their Annual Chicken Dinner fundraiser on Sunday, May 3, 2026. Our own Sister Vera Wilt is a member of the Lions Club. After a

brief meeting at her home in Riverside, where we snacked on chips and dips and discussed donation options, we headed over to the Chicken Dinner at the Riverside Town Hall to help raise funds for a good cause.

The Lions Club catered their chicken dinner from a local restaurant. Lodge Lincoln paid for our dinner as a charitable contribution. There was a steady turnout as they served a delicious chicken dinner along with dessert and beverages. There was a 50/50 cash raffle and door prizes for the lucky tick-

et holders. Both John Pritasil and Vera Wilt were lucky enough to win prizes. Lodge members had an opportunity to socialize, and at the same time, donate to a good cause. Vera even volunteered at the dinner.

On June 7, 2026, we plan to attend the Lidice Commemoration, located at 1631 Prairie Avenue in Crest Hill, Illinois, for the 11:00 a.m. ceremony. Afterwards, we will have a group lunch at White Fence Farm main restaurant at 1376 Joliet Road in Romeoville.

We will not meet in July but we will meet on August 16 at 12:30 p.m at the home of Stan and Pat Smolucha for our annual steak cookout and business meeting. Their address is 0S718 Myrtle Street, Winfield, Illinois.

*Fraternally yours,
Pat Smolucha
(s.smolucha@sbcglobal.net)*



Editor’s Note: The photo above was inadvertently omitted from the May issue where Lodge Lincoln featured members volunteering at Operation Support Our Troops.

LODGE HAPPENINGS

Flags, Fraternalism, and Friends

Lodge Kruh Oswojnych Zen a Panu No. 121, Dillonvale, Ohio – June is a month that invites us to pause and reflect on one of our nation’s most recognizable symbols—the American flag. Celebrated each year on June 14, Flag Day commemorates the adoption of the Stars and Stripes in 1777. While many associate the holiday with parades and patriotic displays, fewer may know that it was not officially established as a national observance until 1916, when President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation, and later made permanent by Congress in 1949. Another interesting note—Bernard J. Cigrand, often called the “Father of Flag Day,” was a schoolteacher who began the tradition by encouraging his students to honor the flag’s birthday. His efforts helped grow what started as a small classroom recognition into a nationwide observance. It serves as a meaningful reminder of unity, history, and the shared values that bring us together.

Our lodge was pleased to continue that spirit of appreciation through our “Thank a Driver” program, honoring four dedicated bus drivers from West Elementary School in Adena—Dave, Mark, Brian, and Loretta. These individuals have faithfully transported students for many years, providing a safe and steady presence in the daily lives of so many families. They were both surprised and grateful to receive Dairy Queen gift cards from Lodge No. 121, a small token of our appreciation for their continued service to the community.

In early May, members gathered at Naples Spaghetti House in Steubenville for another enjoyable meeting filled with good food and even better company. We were warmly welcomed and well taken care of by one of our favorite waitresses, Phyllis, whose friendly demeanor and ever-present smile never go unnoticed. We were also delighted to have Terry, Kathy, and Jean Placek from Lodge Groveton No. 4 join us once again—we always look forward to their visits and the fellowship they bring.

We missed Sister Secretary Mariann Ebright and husband, Chuck. We look for-

ward to the day when we can all gather again as one.

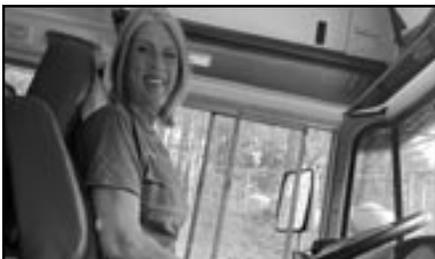
There were also a few joyful surprises during our meeting. Jack Snider let it slip that his lovely wife Bonnie was celebrating her birthday that very day—and what a milestone it was! Bonnie turned a very young 85, and as many of us can attest, she certainly doesn’t look or act her age! In addition, Terry and Kathy Placek had just celebrated their ninth wedding anniversary the day before. With so much to celebrate, members happily ordered a variety of desserts (courtesy of Lodge No. 121) including peanut butter pie, lemon cake, Boston cream pie, cannoli, and chocolate cake. It was a sweet way to honor some very special people!

We were also glad to welcome our dear friend Chris Bauknecht, whose presence added to the warmth of the afternoon. Brother Director Terry Placek shared highlights from his recent directors’ meeting with our friends at BetterLife in Wisconsin, helping us feel connected to and a part of the larger organization and its continued efforts.

As we reflect once more on Flag Day this June, we are reminded that the flag represents not only our nation’s history, but also the values of service, unity, and perseverance that we strive to uphold in our lodge and our communities. Perhaps this year, that meaning feels even more significant, as we all hope for and work toward peace in our world. May we continue to honor the flag—not just in display, but in the way we care for one another and stand together. Remember to check on someone you love today.

“Old Glory”—“Long may she wave,”

Sister Wendy Kurtz Lovell



LODGE HAPPENINGS

Czech Day

Lodge Paramount/Southgate No. 372, Maple Heights, Ohio – We had a lovely 66 degree, sun-shiny day at the DTJ in Taborville, Ohio on April 23. I presided over the meeting in Mary Ann Toncar’s absence with members Kris, Bruce, Donna, Johnny, and Diane, who is back from Florida, in attendance.

The DTJ in Taborville, Ohio, will have their Chicken or Duck Dinners June 28, July 26, August 23, October 4 and November 1. All dinners require reservations and are served 12 to 2 p.m. For reservations, call Kris Marek at (440) 543-8489. Reservations must be in by Wednesday before the dinner. Meet up with friends and have a great

dinner.

The 103rd Cesky (Czech Day) is July 12 (also at Ceska Sin & Bohemian National Halls), the 92nd Obzinky (Harvest Festival) is August 9. The parade starts at 2 p.m. Both are a \$5 donation with bands playing all day. Where else can you go and have fun for \$5? Food, drinks, and bakery will be available for sale. For more information go to their website: www.dtjtaborville.com.

Congratulations to the 50/50 winners: Donna, Bruce, and Kris.

Kris provided chicken tenders and potato and pasta salads, Diane brought cherry coffee cake and Jell-O, and

Johnny brought a birthday cake, as it was Bruce’s birthday! Thank you all for providing our delicious snack this month.

Our meetings for 2026 will be: June 10 (Casino Bus Trip), July 23, August 27, September 24, October 22, November 19, and December 17. Come to a meeting, reconnect with friends, and have a tasty snack. We would love to see you!

*Fraternally,
Annette Reichman*

DONATE

Have you considered a donation to
the *Scholarship Fund* as
one of your CSA Serves choices?

CSA
serves.

LODGE HAPPENINGS

Miss CSA Contestant

Lodge Washington No. 30, St. Louis, Missouri – We started the May meeting with the great news that our lodge received another Platinum Star in the Lodge Recognition Program. We've been taking part in the program since its inception, and we're pleased to continue the tradition. It takes a lot of effort by many people to reach this goal, and we thank the members who made this possible.

Our meeting included some exciting news – Anna Ryals will represent the lodge in this year's Miss National CSA Contest at the Get-Together! It's been several years since we had a contestant, and we know she'll have a great time taking part in this long-time tradition that started in St. Louis in 1961. There were other local "pageants" before that, but the first national title was bestowed 65 years ago here in the birthplace of CSA. Does anyone else remember that there used to be a talent portion and a swimsuit appearance in the contest?

Wow, have times changed!

There will be a good contingent of lodge members in Wisconsin to cheer her on, with at least five of us making the trip. Can't wait!

In addition to supporting the American-Czech Center as part of the "CSA Serves" project, we also decided at the meeting that we would help out a couple of local charitable organizations this year. Lydia's House is a local shelter for women and children, and we've supported them in the past. The other is the My Life in a Bag Foundation, which provides suitcases and duffel bags full of essential items for kids in foster care so they don't have to carry their possessions in black trash bags as they move through the system. Both of these groups fill specific needs in the area, and we're happy to provide some assistance.

As always, we're keeping busy!

*Fraternally,
Deborah Zeman*



*Miss CSA
Applications
due June 1.*

Visit CSALife.com

LODGE HAPPENINGS

Plans for 2026

Lodge Anton J. Cermak No. 99, Brookfield, Illinois – Lodge Cermak’s May meeting was held at Tony’s in Brookfield, Illinois. Members discussed plans for 2026 outings that include a trip to see the Chicago Dogs battle the Milwaukee Milkman at Rosemont Horizon and the CSA Get-Together in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Sister Karen Hrznejak

reported on possible charitable activities and donations as the lodge makes plans for another Platinum Award. New ideas and faces are always welcomed.

*Fraternally,
Chuck Courtney, Scribe*

Christmas in July (or August)

Lodge Brookfield No. 475, Brookfield, Illinois – We are off to a great start thus far this year. Folks from BetterLife were in attendance at several of our meetings to introduce themselves and answer our many questions. We received a Platinum Award for 2025 in the Lodge Recognition Program and

already conducted a number of activities towards next year’s requirements. All the while, we are looking forward to events in the coming months.

Our next activity still in the planning stage is a Christmas in July (or August?) celebration, so stay tuned for details.

Lodge Brookfield holds meetings at

the BetterLife office in Lombard, Illinois, generally on the second Wednesday of the month at noon. Hope to see you there!

*Fraternally,
Kimberly Silhan*



Scholarship Fund Donation Form

With the price of higher education rapidly increasing, scholarships continue to be an important fraternal benefit. The CSA Scholarship Fund assists young adults, not only with their education, but with their professional goals. We appreciate your generous donations and your continued support!

Fill and send this form with donation. Please make checks payable to CSA Fraternal Life Scholarship Fund.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____

For the general Scholarship Fund or In Memory of _____

Send acknowledgement of contribution to _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Donor's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

“ We were delighted to donate \$5,000 from our t-shirt and mug sales to the CSA Scholarship Fund! ”
— the 83rd Annual CSA Get-Together Committee



www.csalife.com



2050 Finley Rd. Ste. 70, P.O. Box 249, Lombard, IL 60148 • Phone: 630-472-0500 • Fax: 630-472-1100

SCHFDONFRM03242020



LODGE HAPPENINGS

Lodge No. 409 Members Enjoying Life

Lodge DuPage Pioneers/Edison No. 409, Westmont, Illinois – Members have been having a great time! Happily, they have shared moments at lodge meetings and events.

Bro. Nicholas Antos, wife Deb, and children Alexis, Colin, and Grace recently visited Death Valley National Park, the largest of its kind in the 48 states. The park has much to offer: desert sands, salt flats, and volcanic

craters. Endangered Devil's Pit Pupfish, about an inch long, remain safe living in a small water-filled cavern in the park.

Another highlight of the trip was the Valley of Fire State Park in Nevada, due to petroglyphs (rock carvings) along its trails and beautiful scenery. The vacation continued in Las Vegas where they enjoyed Magician David Copperfield and other shows. The family's last stop was an unusual museum dedicated to puzzles, the Omega Mart by Meow Wolf. This unpredictable interactive experience allowed one to move through portals, from an extraordinary supermarket to worlds of art-filled landscapes in which to play. This was the end to a great vacation and one to cross off their wish list.

On April 26, 14 lodge members and two guests from District Council No. 12, attended a performance of Million Dollar Quartet at the Stolp Island Theatre in Aurora, Illinois. Thanks to a great suggestion from our Vice President Lisa Cassai and Sis. Karole Gaydusek, a musical of back-in-the day rock 'n roll was enjoyed. Four very talented singers performed classic songs

by Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, and Jerry Lee Lewis. Their voices, the choreography, and their talent on the guitar, piano, and bass fiddle was remarkable. A venue of only 98 seats made for a close-up and intimate interaction with the players. Thanks to a generous gift from John and Joann Nokolny, it was an afternoon of great music and nostalgia for the beginnings of an American art form.

Sis. Delaney Nokolny, granddaughter of John and Joann Nokolny, recent graduate of St. Joseph-Ogden High School in St. Joseph, Illinois, has been awarded a full four-year scholarship from Iowa State University where she will begin studies in Farm Management in the fall. Congratulations to Delaney for a job well done and best wishes for success in college and all of her future endeavors!

Hoping to see many friends we haven't seen in a long time at the Get-Together in August.

*Fraternally,
Gerri Romanelli*



LODGE HAPPENINGS

On Our Way to Second Million Pop Top Club!

Lodge Yankee-Jungmann No. 77, Lombard, Illinois – May was a very busy month for our lodge. I delivered seven huge containers of pop tabs to the Ronald McDonald House located in Hines, Illinois. While there, they weighed the containers and our total was 56 pounds. Thanks to everyone who has donated to our collection. We are on our way to the Second Million Pop Top Club!

On May 11, I made a delivery to Guardian Angels Parish Food Pantry. The car was packed with 10 grocery bags full of food as well as a monetary donation. We would like to thank all our members who donated and a special thank-you to Lodge Harrison for their food donation.

At our April meeting, we collected 680 pill bottles to bring our total to 720 this year. We hope to be well over 1,000 by the end of the year. We also discussed the Annual Get-Together. So far, four members showed interest in going. We voted to take a half-page ad for the booklet.

The school year is winding down, be aware of the children on the streets. Don't forget Dad on Father's Day. We want to wish everyone a great summer of barbecuing, swimming, traveling, and enjoying the weather.

*Fraternally,
Mary Ellen Janda*

Fraternal Well Wishes

Mariann Ebright
Lodge Kruh Osvojenych Zen a
Panu
No. 121

Mary Ann Toncar
Lodge Paramount Southgate
No. 372



LODGE HAPPENINGS

Celebrating Our Officers

Lodge Woodrow Wilson No. 377, Brookfield, Illinois – We already had informally acknowledged and welcomed our 2026 lodge officers to their (continuing) roles in keeping our lodge functioning through the year, but not until our May meeting did we have an opportunity to be more official about it. It seems significant, I think, to celebrate our dedicated officers on May Day! This meeting was in person, all officers were present, and Nick Kosmas was kind enough to perform the Officer Installation ritual with us. Clearly a bit later in the year than usual, but we're not overly concerned as all of our officers have served for a number of years and are very familiar with their roles and responsibilities, both to the lodge and to the larger organization! Still, we continue to thank them for their service, as we also thank our other active members for their commitment to projects throughout the year.

Plans are underway for our annual, traditional Lodge Recognition Picnic: please mark your calendars! We will gath-

er at noon, on Sunday, August 16 in Lombard, Illinois. Members provide their own meal, plus (if desired) a dish to share. More specific details will be posted on our Facebook page as we get closer to that date; or you can let me know you're interested, and I will update you either via email or phone (use my contacts below). We truly hope you will join the fun! We've already put in an order for perfect weather that day; all we need is you!

As always, please also share with me any updates or news of your own. Is there a graduation or other special celebration in your circle? We'd love to hear from you; photos to share are especially welcome!

Fraternally,

Jean Hemzáček Laukant

hemzacek.j@gmail.com / 630-915-9745



2026 officers pledge to serve another year!

LODGE HAPPENINGS

Lodge Prokop Velky Springing Through the Ages: Remembering the Past as We Plant Seeds for the Future



LODGE HAPPENINGS

Breaking Records at Ronald McDonald House



Lodge Benjamin Franklin No. 02, Seven Hills, Ohio – Ronald McDonald House of Cleveland typically holds their annual “Pull Tab Palooza” during the first Saturday of May to cool and damp weather conditions. This year was no exception. However, that didn’t stop the excitement and goodwill of our hosts and volunteers as they welcomed a constant line of guests with their donations of aluminum tabs.

My wife Nancy, grandson Bryce, and I were greeted by one of the attendants as we exited the car and he took care of all the heavy lifting. We started with some paperwork, then weighed our contribution on their large scale which totaled 35.6 pounds. Another Lodge Franklin record! That puts us at 141 pounds for the past few years. Quite an accomplishment from our small group!

Guests were serenaded by a roving guitar player, and for the youngsters there was a game wheel to win small carnival type prizes as superheroes and cartoon characters in costume cheered them on.

One of the volunteers asked what exactly our lodge was. After a quick summation, she thanked us and offered

a tour of the building. Because the upper floor family suites are private, we were able to see the main entrance with a fireplace, and their new “dream kitchen” area with salad bar, a coffee station, grab and go food item cooler, and well-stocked snack drawers. A bright laundry room, a resource area with games and internet, along with an inside playroom for the children took up the balance of the first floor. Before heading back outside, Nemo, the therapy dog, introduced himself. Judging by his size, he could work security, too!

We exited to an outdoor wooded and landscaped patio with a fire pit and Adirondack chairs and a beautiful gas grill. It was amazingly tranquil and relaxing, being in the city, across the street from the Cleveland Clinic and only a stone’s throw away from UH’s Babies and Children’s Hospital!

Hats off and thank-you to all the members and friends who steadfastly save the tabs throughout the year so we may play a small part of this fine institution!

*Fraternal regards,
Jeff Zidlicky*



LODGE HAPPENINGS

Join Hands, Lodge Laurel Member Author

Lodge Laurel No. 452, Ashford, Connecticut – Lodge Laurel again joined hands with the Windham Tolland 4-H Camp. Lodge members baked or bought muffins, brownies, and desserts and the lodge bought beverages for the camp workdays. These were all delivered by Sister Margaret Varga. This helped the camp to feed the volunteer workers on those workdays.

Our lodge is proud to honor one of our own for her writing accomplishments. Allison Keeton has authored and had published two novels, “Blaze

Orange” and “Arctic Green”. She is working on more. Allison grew up in Willington and now lives in Maine. She recently came to the Willington Library to talk about her writing and her books. Several of us attended her talk. It was very interesting and we learned a lot. We also got to purchase some new books.

We are looking forward to our 50- and 75-Year Pin Ceremony to be held at our Annual Picnic on Saturday, June 27 in Mansfield. Please email: laurel452@msn.com or call the secre-

tary at 860-429-6322 for more details and to let us know if you will be attending.

Happy Spring!

*Fraternally,
Marion Varga*



LODGE HAPPENINGS

Eleven Bags of Groceries Donated!

Lodge Century of Progress/Bila Hora No. 231, Cicero, Illinois – Greetings from Cicero, Illinois. Our meeting was held on May 13, 2026 in the T.G.

Masaryk Building. The usual Minutes and Treasurer Reports were accepted. A discussion of the high cost of living and the inability of some to afford food for

the family, gasoline for the car to get to work and/or the grocery store, among other things, took place.

Discussion continued informing lodge members, wherever you are, that our lodge officers, family, friends and a very active senior center group collected enough groceries to fill 11 grocery bags, in addition to cash donations. These items were taken to the food pantry affiliated with St. Barbara's Parish.

This year's Get-Together was another item discussed at length. The results were that our Lodge No. 231 will contribute a half-page ad in the book and buy a book or two of raffle tickets.

Several other things were on the docket. Lodge members were invited to Maria Pappas' Mother's Day luncheon. A District Council No. 12 meeting was held on April 22, 2026. Several of our lodge members attended. The meeting was well-attended with all lodges being represented. Our lodge received the Platinum Award. The next District Council meeting will be held on June 11, 2026.

One of the Masaryk School teachers will be leaving and returning to Prague and another will be sent to replace her. The University pays for the teachers.

Several lodge members will attend the Lidice Memorial Ceremony in June.

Welcome back, Maryann Slavik! Maryann visits her brother Ed Slavik and sister Delores Klejko each year. You may remember, several back issues of the *CSA Journal* featured the fact that she lives in Puerto Rico and fills a great deal of her time by volunteering by helping children with math and English, among other things, at Casa Juan Bosco Center.

Our meetings are generally held at the T.G. Masaryk School on the second Wednesday of the month at 12:30 p.m. We invite you, our members, to join us and we welcome your input. Please join us at the School at 5701 W. 22nd Place, in Cicero, Illinois. For more information, contact Ed Slavik at 708-423-5267.

*Fraternally,
Elaine Tejcek,*



LODGE HAPPENINGS

150th Anniversary of Sokol Detroit

Lodge Pingree No. 366, Dearborn Heights, Michigan – It’s been a long, cold winter and spring with a few warm days thrown in here and there. However, there is hope as I anticipate some days in the 70s and low 80s. The good news is that I am excited and grateful to welcome Diana Balint on board as Treasurer. She and Audrey Modos have taken on the task of contacting members of our lodge to determine the future of our lodge – continue or dissolve? They have contacted members through postcards or electronically to obtain feedback as to the future of Lodge Pingree. I encourage you to respond as soon as possible so we know what your desire is.

Looking back to November 2, 2025, it was a joyous occasion to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Sokol Detroit with well over 100 enjoying the food, fellowship, and walk down “Memory Lane” as we heard about the beginnings and the different locations where meetings, gymnastics, and other special events took place.

I was blessed to be with Vaclav Kalivoda (who I’ve known for over 70 years and who sold me my first set of luggage,

which I still have) and his daughter, Lynn Conrad, at this momentous occasion. Seeing friends that I’ve not seen in many years will forever bring back fond memories and be a source of joy in the future.

I hope Mother’s Day was a wonderful occasion for all you mothers and those who’ve filled in as mothers. By the time you read this, Father’s Day will be fast approaching or perhaps a memory. If a memory, hope it’s a good one.

With summer to look forward to, I hope you do some special things that will give you good memories to look back on. So, until the next time, enjoy each day and do something kind for someone.

*Respectfully submitted,
Marie Palmer, Secretary*



In Memoriam

Name	Lodge Number	Lodge Name	Date of Death
Arthur R. Palecek	001	Missouri	04/04/26
Raymond T. McFeely	479	Christa	04/13/26
Audrey N. Harrison	484	Blue Crystal	04/04/26
Delores I. Boling	372	Paramount/Southgate	04/11/26
Glenn F. Spachman	377	Woodrow Wilson	04/17/26
William M. Sabatovich	408	Independence-Liberty Bell	04/16/26
Janet S. Little	419	Wayne Star	04/04/26
Eleanor Jankowski	419	Wayne Star	04/02/26
Junie A. Alexis	211	Bratri Od Sazavy	04/14/26
Sylvia Jones	422	Queensdale	04/20/26
Marie A. Wilson	230	Virginia	04/01/26
Dorothy J. Lacy			04/07/26

In Memoriam

It is with deep sorrow and much love that Lodge Groveton No. 4 mourns the passing of **Vince Shulin**, 92, on February 6, 2026. He is preceded in death by his beloved wife Judy.

Vince was a life-long member of the CSA Lodge Groveton No. 4. He was very proud when he received his 75-Year Pin.

Vince and Judy were very active mem-

bers of CSA. They would travel all over to attend meetings, Get-Togethers, and bowling tournaments. He always referred to Judy as his co-pilot on their trips. She would be reading the "paper" map and giving Vince directions. They always arrived at their destination on time (yes, that was before GPS)!

Vince loved to listen and dance to polka music. If there was a polka band playing anywhere, he would be there singing and dancing. In his later years, the weekends were dedicated to listening to AM radio and his favorite polka station.

Aside from traveling, dancing, and bowling, he loved going to the casinos and playing the penny slot machines. He never won much, but enjoyed the anticipation.

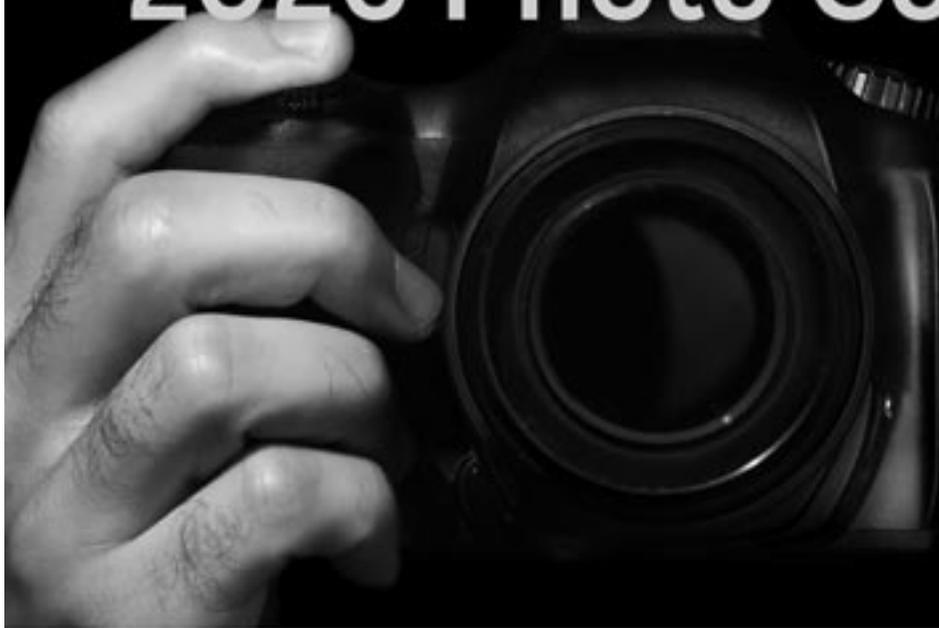
The CSA family was a very big part of Vince's life. Just days before he passed, he said he was dreaming that two of his very close friends from the CSA (that previously passed away) were taking him on a trip to a bowling tournament. Maybe it wasn't just a dream!

His precious smile and wonderful heart will truly be missed.

*Fraternally,
Hunter Rae Yurkovich*



2026 Photo Contest



Best of Contest: \$250
Prize for Each Category:

1st Place: \$125

2nd Place: \$75

3rd Place: \$50

Youth

1st Place : \$125

2nd Place: \$75

3rd Place: \$50

Deadline: September 26, 2026

- Submitted photograph(s) must be taken By a CSA member in the year 2025 or 2026. No professional or studio photos will be considered, as this is an amateur contest.
- Participants may send only one (1) submission max, per each of the 4 categories. A member will also only be allowed to win up to two categories max.
- You may submit any size photo (up to 8X10), un-mounted, in black and white or color. The photo must be submitted as is; no retouching or photo shopping

Photo submission Categories

Animals

Nature

People

Photographers Choice

(Objects or subjects of interest)

Send photos to:

kdeegan@betterlifeins.com

2050 Finley Road
Attn: Fraternal Dept.
P.O. Box 249
Lombard, IL 60148

Digital images must be sent electronically or printed traditionally on photo paper; print-outs on computer paper will not be accepted. If mailing your photo, include your name, lodge name and number, age, full address, phone number, type of camera used, and submission category. If the photo includes specific scenery, please give the location. Do not write on the back of the photos.

Connect with us:



1-800-779-1936



www.csalife.com



@csafraternallife

CSAPOCNST09192025

LODGE HAPPENINGS

Looking Forward to Our Train Ride and More!

Lodge Sokol Pilsen No. 434, Oak Brook, Illinois – Lodge Sokol Pilsen held its meeting on May 17, 2026 at

Catherine Malusa's home. The early months of 2026 had been very busy with birthdays and other family affairs. Also, our Vice President was in Florida for a couple of weeks vacation. Vice President Francis had something to celebrate – his grandson Joseph Pemberton graduated from St. Patrick's High School, and has been accepted at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business – Finance.

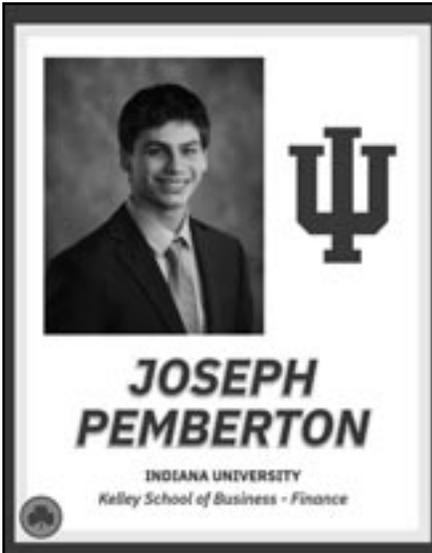
President Bultas was blessed with a great-granddaughter, Madison Autumn Yochem. The President's grandson, Cooper Bultas, celebrated his fourth birthday. Therefore, Lodge Sokol Pilsen had a very active first few months of 2026.

We did get to conducting lodge business. The President discussed the meeting he attended at the Home Office on

April 22, 2026 with the representative of BetterLife Insurance regarding how the merger with them was going to affect the CSA lodges. Basically, his main interest was how the merger would affect the lodge's finances, especially the money the lodges have in their checking accounts. He said the lodges wouldn't be affected with any immediate changes and that there would be no changes in the lodge's checking accounts.

The next item discussed was the up and coming 89th Annual Get-Together in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, July 31 – August 2, 2026. We would like to know who wants to go. Kelly will help those wanting to go with registration.

*Fraternally,
Andrew Bultas*



Scholarship Fund Report



April 10, 2026 - May 10, 2026

IN MEMORY OF ERIC J. KREMSREITER
Lodge Independence Liberty Bell No. 408

Total Donations:

\$ 50.00

Scholarship Applications
are available at CSALife.com

LODGE HAPPENINGS

Looking Forward to Our Train Ride and More!

Lodge Cleveland Chapter No. 219, Cleveland, Ohio – Our May meeting was held on May 12 at the Parma Snow Library at 10:00 a.m. Twelve members were in attendance. We are all looking forward to our train ride on July 8, thanks to Carol Schroeder, who arranged getting the tickets for the ride. Members need to be at the train depot at 8:30 a.m.

Our bowling league (not affiliated with the Sports Committee) has ended for the season. Sadly, one of our bowlers passed away recently. We start again at the end of August. We could use a couple more bowlers, since more have resigned due to age or health matters.

Our oldest member, Wyal Arbaca, has been a CSA member for many years. Wyal is 98 years old and was a great inspiration to us all. He received a plaque at our bowling banquet. (See photo).

At the Sokol Building, they are having

their pork or chicken dinners on the fourth Wednesday of the next few months. They are also having a Crock-Pot cook off on October 3. You can pay \$10 at the door or bring a Crock-Pot dish of your choice and enter at no cost.

On September 3, the District Council is having a picnic at the DTJ facility at noon. Chicken, potato salad, plates, etc., are provided. You can buy drinks there. Bring a little dessert or snacks. All members of each lodge are invited. Please let Diane DiBianca know if you are coming.

Right now, Jan Russell is the only one going to the Get-Together. Our lodge is putting in a half-page ad in the booklet and will buy raffle tickets at a later date.

We have also requested “CSA Serves” gift cards to give out to “Thank a Driver.”

Jan Russell’s son Kurt and fiancée Kaylie are getting married in Charlotte on June 6. Jan attended the bridal shower. (See photo.)

We are sorry to report that one of our member’s daughters has passed away. Love and support go to her and her family.

We celebrated three birthdays - Karen Buzek, Sylvia Lorenz, and Sue Garofalo - with a rounding chorus of “Happy Birthday.” Karen brought in a delicious cake to share and handed out candy bars. Thanks, Karen!

Tony and Judy Genco celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on May 1. Wow, what an accomplishment. (See photo.)

We also put together two baskets and two money frames for events at the DTJ facilities.

The 50/50 raffle was won by Sue Garofalo and Kathy Setlift.

Our next meeting is at the Longhorn Restaurant on Rockside Road at 11:30 a.m. on June 9. We hope everyone had a lovely Mother’s Day and Happy Father’s Day.

*Fraternally yours,
Judy (Sevcik) Genco*



Happy Father's Day!



AT THE BEACH!

H N C V L C K W R I Y S E F A E E O A I
 Z N P S N E E D B F C V I B R I H Y N S
 E S S E A O N E D I T L J B E I A A L U
 R L V A L S O L L S L I C F S Z P D C N
 V E L S N I C E N H C L E K E A S V G W
 N Q C H A D C S O T E O C A D U S A O E
 I S R E L G C A F N C A C N F N A C W W
 C E A L S E D N N E N A N G C S M N C A
 C F B L I Z C L S A V S S E J A R I C L
 H W A V E S C O D E N A E C O N N D A D

WORD LIST

SUN	PELICAN	WAVES
SEASHELL	OCEAN	SAND
CRAB	FISH	TIDE

Just Kids

Send Just Kids your stories, riddles, etc.

Mail: Just Kids, c/o the CSA Journal,

P.O. Box 249, Lombard, IL 60148

Email to: CSAJournalEditor@gmail.com

Czech to English

Let's go to the beach.

Pojďme na pláž.

Happy Father's Day

Šťastný Den otců.

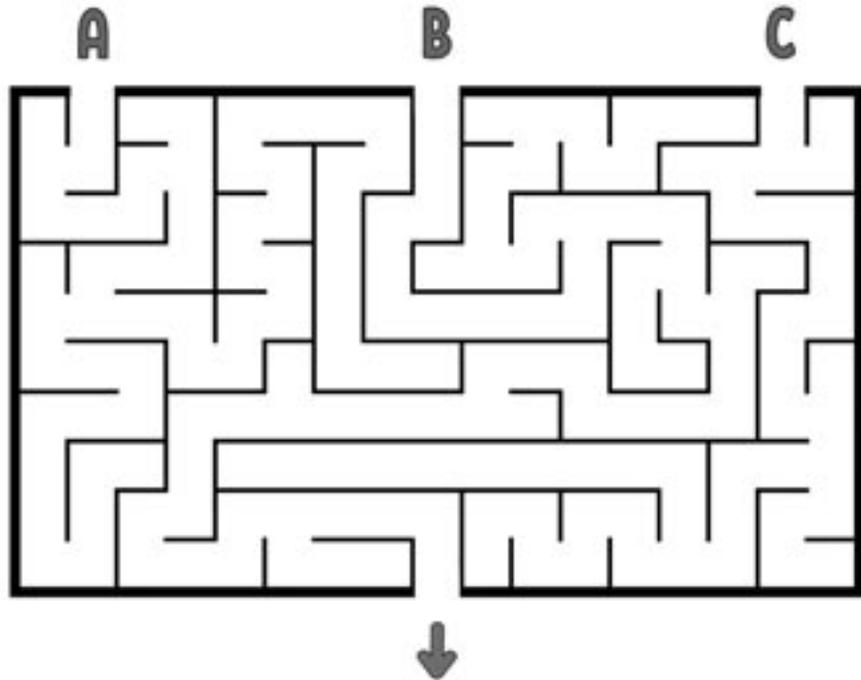
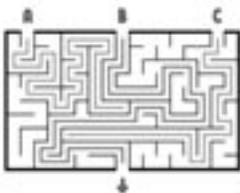
Honor the flag.

Čest vlajce.

Maze Game



Answer





“Volunteering - It’s What We Do”

Who Will be Our Next Fraternalist of the Year?

Nominations Due June 27