On the Cover

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to All!
Brothers and Sisters,

On behalf of my wife Lynette, as well as the whole CSA family, I’d like to wish everyone a happy holiday season, and Merry Christmas! As I’m writing this article (in mid-November) we’re in the middle of an early winter. We’ve already had our third decent snowfall, and we’re supposed to have a record cold temperature tonight. We’re not too excited about the early rough weather around here…but we are excited about the wonderful Holiday Season ahead of us.

To recap some of the highlights of this past year…

As we began 2019, we were just coming out of our Convention year. At the Convention, in addition to electing our Board of Directors for the next four years. CSA Fraternal Life continued our positive evolution. Our delegates voted to upgrade our Bylaws in order to, among other things, have higher Governance standards. This is not only a positive from a regulatory standpoint, but it should assure our full membership that CSA will strive to have the best leadership available so our members’ policies and annuities are safe and secure.

Over the past year, our management team and our Board of Directors have continued to work in unison…with the same goals of continuing the CSA Fraternal Life tradition, enhancing our offerings (both Fraternally, and financially), and continuing to strive to be even better in future years.

Later in the year, we had another successful Get-Together, thanks in large part to the hosts of the event…our Iowa membership! At the Get-Together, we crowned our Miss National CSA, Hunter Yurkovich, whom (not surprisingly) has become a great representative for CSA. In addition, Anna Ramirez was named our Fraternalist of the Year. We continue to have a number of wonderful Fraternalists, with Anna becoming the latest to hold that well deserved title.

In between these highlights, our membership has continued to help CSA’s renaissance continue. We’re coming up on 166 years of our existence, and we’re on the path for many more successful years.

As we wrap up the year, our financial position also continues to be on a positive path. Our Surplus and Capital continues to be on an upward trend, and our Risk Based Capital (RBC) also is moving positively. Rest assured that we’re here daily fighting to keep those trends going.

In the months ahead, I’ll continue to update you on the goings on around here and perhaps have a chance to see you out and about either at a local event, or perhaps at our 2020 Get-Together in Clearwater, Florida in August. If you’re able to get there, I’d recommend attending. It’s always wonderful.

Once again, Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and “May you all stay happy, healthy, safe, and good.”

Thank you for your support, and until next time…

Fraternally,

John J. Kielczewski, CLU, FLMI
President
CSA Fraternal Life
Calendar of Events

Sunday, December 1, 2019
D.C. No. 12 Cultural Division Christmas Party
Crystal Sky Banquets
7941 47th St., McCook, IL 60525
$25 to attend. Doors at noon, dinner at 1 p.m.
D.C. No. 12 Lodge Officers will be honored (must be in attendance).
Raffle to be held and Cultural Division cookbooks for sale.
RSVP with your Lodge Secretary or call Caroline Johnston at 708-387-9423.

Sunday, December 1, 2019
St. Nick Pancake Breakfast
American-Czech Educational Center
4690 Lansdowne Ave., St. Louis, MO 63116
Breakfast served from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
St. Nick visits at 10:30 a.m.
$6 for adults; $4 for children 12 and under.
Admission includes meal, games, craft, and a gift from St. Nick.
The Christmas Boutique will also have gifts available for purchase if
your youngster would like to do a little Christmas shopping!

Saturday, December 14, 2019
Great St. Louis Czech Beer Festival
American Czech Educational Center
4690 Lansdowne Ave., St. Louis, MO 63116
Event is 21+.
General Admission is $25, Designated Driver Admission is $5.
Check-in at noon; tastings from 1-5 p.m.
Visit www.facebook.com/stlpivo for more info.

Sunday, April 1–30, 2020
Junior Bowl-o-Rama Month
Various locations.
More details to come!

Saturday, May 2, 2019
Join Hands Day
Various locations.
More details to come!

Friday, July 31 – Sunday, August 2, 2019
CSA 84th Annual Get-Together
Clearwater Beach, FL
More details to come!

*All Journal articles are due the 12th of the month prior to publica-
tion
(Ex: Articles for January would be due December 12.)
The Fraternal Department is Filled to the Brim

Dearest Members,

Another year has come and gone. Time moves so much faster as we age, don't you think?

In November, we held meetings with our Board of Directors, brainstorming ideas for new fraternal programs and discussing how to make our existing programs excel even more. We confirmed dates for various deadlines, fraternal activities, and Home Office closures for next year. Check out the Fraternal Calendar on page 8. (See the full calendar in next month’s Journal.) Lodge Secretaries, please keep an eye out this month for our packet of CSA documents that we send annually. Forms and letters regarding the Lodge Recognition Program, CSA Serves, President Reports, Financial Reports, and so on will be included.

Between November and December, we had a lot of exciting things planned. Last month, I made the trip to the Atlanta, GA area for the “2nd Annual Shindig | Tancovačka” which was hosted by the Czech and Slovak School of Atlanta. There was live music by Joe Polach and the St. Louis Express Band. They played various polkas, waltzes, and even some American classics, too. We had some delicious guláš, bryndzové halušky, klobásy, pivo, and more. Additionally, it was great seeing long-time CSA members Lawrence Placek and Sherri Ruperto Placek. This was my first time attending, and I am definitely considering going back! Thank you to everyone for the hospitality.

In November, representatives from the Slovak Consular Office were at the CSA Home Office to serve Slovak-Americans with various passport and consular matters. It was great seeing some new faces and networking with members of the Slovak community. A week later, the Fraternal Department hosted the District Council No. 12 Family Holiday Party at Safari Land. We had about 100 people in attendance. Wow! Thank you to all who showed up and made this another successful year.

On November 30, Miss National CSA Hunter Yurkovich attended “Christmas in the Czech Republic” hosted by the Moravian Cultural Society at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. She also explored Christkindlmarket in the downtown area. I was very excited for her, as these are two fun holiday attractions that I hope everyone in the local area gets a chance to enjoy. She finished off the event-filled weekend with the District Council No. 12 Cultural Division Christmas Party at Crystal Sky Banquets. More photos, information, and a recap of all of these exciting endeavors are to come in upcoming magazine issues.

In closing, I would like to wish you and yours a warm, welcoming holiday season... with just the right amount of family dysfunction (wink wink). I hope all of your upcoming New Year’s resolutions come true!

“Kindness is like snow. It beautifies everything it covers.” – Kahlil Gibran

Fraternally,
Amanda S. Lovell
Fraternal Director
alovell@csalife.com

Read the Journal online at: www.csalife.com
Brothers and Sisters,

“Well, small things lead to big things.”

Some years ago, I had the pleasure of having a friendship with an agent from Massachusetts. Let’s call him Walter. Walter was in his 80s and about 5’4”. He weighed maybe 120 lbs., he drove a 1970’s Lincoln Town Car, so when he pulled in, all you saw of Walter were his fingers on top of the steering wheel.

When a piece of business was not going the way he needed it to, he would reply with the quote above. With his unflinching positivity, I have no doubt that he probably was in business until the day he died.

I am reminded of another situation in 1989 where an annual sanctioned march commemorating student protests over Nazi Occupation in 1939 morphed into a march of thousands pushing back against the controls the citizens of Czechoslovakia lived under. November 17 marked the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution.

Walter’s quote is how I view our path here at CSA. As John mentioned in the President’s article, we continue to build our surplus and capital while keeping controls on costs. The Sales Department continues to develop distribution channels and products that are relevant to our current and potential members. We recognize the importance of being active in the ethnic community, and we have introduced some new faces to help give Amanda Lovell’s Fraternal Department some extra reach.

Along with John or myself, don’t be surprised if you make the acquaintance of Nick Kosmas, IT Director, or Anna Trush, Chief Underwriter, at an event.

Your Board Members are actively engaged in many of the events we attend and need your feedback on program development. I encourage all members to talk to their Board Representative. They are an excellent resource and they look forward to hearing from you. Let us know how we are doing.

I would like to take a moment to recognize one of our finest members Mary Zahradka of Lodge No. 230 in Virginia. Mary recently passed the Lodge Secretary role over after 71 years of service to the lodge. Traditions run deep in each Lodge, but at the core of each Lodge is the bigger picture of CSA.

This Christmas, enjoy your traditions at home and in your Lodge. Take some time and appreciate that CSA is here to protect you in your time of need.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Fraternally,
Matthew A. Koski

Do you know a CSA member who deserves recognition?

Are they active in the community?

Do they volunteer often or donate money to charitable organizations?

Send us their photo, a brief description of who they are and what they do, and we will publish them in the Journal.
Hello Brothers and Sisters,

I can’t believe that we are already nearing the end of 2019. Where has this year gone? By the time you are reading this, I will have just finished my fall semester at Carlow University. I thought the semester would drag, but it feels like all I did was blink and then it was finals week. This means I officially have one semester of Nursing School left! It also means that I am one step closer to taking the NCLEX exam, which determines if I am safe enough to practice as a nurse. How nerve-racking is that?

Even though the end of the semester is complete chaos with exams and due dates, my Carlow Love Your Melon Campus Crew held a successful DKMS Bone Marrow Donor Drive. DKMS is an organization dedicated to the fight against blood cancer and blood disorders. It is used by doctors when patients do not have a bone marrow match within their biological family. My crew’s goal was to reach 100 swabs, and I am happy to say that we achieved our goal! Events like this always remind me that we cannot afford to sit on the sidelines. It’s time for us to stand up to all cancers.

This month, I will be attending a few CSA events. I will be traveling to Chicago for “Christmas Around the World” at the Museum of Science and Industry and the D.C. No. 12 Cultural Division Christmas Party. I am excited to see everyone and explore Chicago during the holiday season! I’m sure I’ll have so much to share in next month’s Journal.

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year!

Fraternally,

Sis. Hunter Rae Yurkovich
Lodge Groveton No. 4
District Council No. 12 of Northern Illinois, Wisconsin, & Indiana – The days, weeks, and months of this year have quickly come and gone. Now we are moving along into the final month of 2019. The old Romans called this time “Decem,” a Latin word meaning the tenth and final month of the calendar. Now we call this time, “December.”

There are many interesting days in December that are worthy of consideration. On Sunday, December 1, we have our D.C. No. 12 Cultural Division Christmas Party. Pearl Harbor Day was on December 7, 1941 (this is the 78th anniversary); the founding of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) was on December 11, 1946; Hanukkah and winter begin on December 22; Christmas Eve and Day are on the 24th and 25th, respectively; Boxing Day is on December 26 and is celebrated by Canadians and American who provide useful items for people in need; and of course New Year’s Eve is on the 31st. Also, did you know that a favorite holiday movie, “It’s a Wonderful Life,” premiered in New York on December 12, 1946?

The D.C. No. 12 Family Holiday Party was held on November 24 at Safari Land in Villa Park. Fraternal Director Amanda Lovell, Director Ken Dvorsky, and a few Home Office helpers organized this extravaganza with rides, games, pizza, and a visit from Santa for the children and parents.

If you are looking for something to do during the holidays, the Museum of Science and Industry has the traditional “Christmas Around the World” tree display. You can meet Miss National CSA Hunter Yurkovich at “Christmas in the Czech Republic,” which is a special program at MSI and it is hosted by the Moravian Cultural Society on Saturday, November 30 at 11:00 a.m.

Wishing all of our CSA families and friends a blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year! Our next meeting will be in the Heritage Rome at the CSA Home Office at 6:30 p.m. on January 23.

Fraternally,
Edward Slavik

2020 CSA Fraternal Calendar

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Home Office closed for New Year’s Day</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>CSA Scholarship Application Available (website)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Deadline - 2019 Lodge Recognition Program submissions</td>
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<td>February</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Deadline - 2019 President Report forms due in Home Office</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Home Office closed for President’s Day</td>
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<td>March</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Deadline - Bowl-o-Rama Entries</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Deadline - Photo Contest Entries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Deadline - CSA Scholarship Applications and Transcripts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Deadline - Lodge Financial &amp; Election forms due in Home Office</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>Jr. Bowl-o-Rama Month</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>Join Hands Day</td>
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<td>Home Office closed for Memorial Day</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Deadline - Bowl-o-Rama Scores</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Deadline - Fraternalist of the Year Nomination Application</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Deadline - Miss CSA Photos for Application</td>
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Weird and Whimsical Christmas Facts

Although Christmas is all about traditions, there are plenty of very interesting – and sometimes weird – things about this holiday. We collected the most fascinating and bizarre Christmas facts from all over the world. This holiday can be very surprising!

1. “Jingle Bells” was originally written for Thanksgiving, not Christmas. The song was written in 1857 by James Lord Pierpont and published under the title “One Horse Open Sleigh”. It was supposed to be played in the composer’s Sunday school class during Thanksgiving as a way to commemorate the famed Medford sleigh races. “Jingle Bells” was also the first song to be broadcasted from space.

2. Rudolph’s red nose is probably the result of a parasitic infection of his respiratory system. According to Roger Highfield, the author of the book “The Physics of Christmas: From the Aerodynamics of Reindeer to the Thermodynamics of Turkey,” the world’s most famous reindeer has a red nose due to a parasite. However, Rudolf’s relationship with his parasite is symbiotic: after all, the red nose illuminates the path through the winter night for the whole reindeer team!

3. In the Netherlands, Sinterklaas (the Dutch version of Santa Claus) arrives from Spain, not from the North Pole, and that’s not even the only weird thing about the Dutch Christmas. Sinterklaas has his little helpers, but they are not adorable hard-working elves. They come to steal misbehaving children and bring them to back Spain which is, according to the Dutch, a severe punishment.

4. In Germany, Poland, and Ukraine, finding a spider or a spider’s web on a Christmas tree is believed to be a harbinger of good luck. According to one legend, a spider wove a blanket for Baby Jesus, and according to the other, a spider web on the Christmas tree turned silver and gold once the sunlight touched it. One way or another, decorating a Christmas tree with artificial spiders and spider webs will inevitably bring you luck and prosperity!
5. **Santa stretches time like a rubber band, in order to deliver all the gifts in one night.** According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), there are 2,106 million children under age 18 in the world. If we assume that each household has in average 2.5 children, Santa would have to make 842 million stops on Christmas Eve, traveling 221 million miles. Given the different time zones, Santa has 36 hours to deliver gifts, therefore his average speed would be approximately 650 miles per second. It is less than the speed of light. Therefore it’s theoretically doable, but still quite hard for the jolly elderly man. Larry Silverberg, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering at North Carolina State University, suggests that Santa uses relativity clouds to get the work done. Relativity clouds, based on relative physics, allow Santa to stretch time like a rubber band which gives him months to deliver gifts, while only a few minutes pass for the rest of us.

6. **Two weeks before Christmas is the one of the two most popular times for couples to break up.** According to data analyzed from Facebook posts and statuses, couples are more likely to end their relationship two weeks before Christmas and two weeks after Valentine’s Day. Christmas Day, however, is perhaps the least favorite day for breakups.

7. **In Armenia, the traditional Christmas Eve meal consists of fried fish, lettuce and spinach.** Many Armenians fast for a week before the Christmas Eve, that’s why, in order not to stress the stomach, the menu for the Christmas dinner is pretty light.

8. **Japanese people traditionally eat at KFC for Christmas dinner.** Although the percentage of Christian people in Japan is close to zero, every Christmas, kids and grown-ups head to the closest KFC in droves to enjoy some fried chicken. To be fair, the closest food to turkey that you can get in Japan is some fried chicken. It’s all thanks to a successful “Kentucky for Christmas!” marketing campaign in 1947. First aimed at foreigners, KFC offered a “Christmas dinner” that contained chicken and wine – a meal that remotely resembled the food that expats and tourists had at home. After a huge success, Kentucky Fried Chicken started promoting this offer every year, which made this fast food chain strongly associated to the holiday season.
9. Xmas is a common abbreviation of the word Christmas, but have no fear: the “X” in “Xmas” doesn’t take “Christ” out of “Christmas,” per se. In the Greek alphabet, the letter X (“chi”) is the first letter of the Greek word for Christ or Christos.

10. The first artificial Christmas tree wasn’t a tree at all. It was created out of goose feathers that were dyed green. The first artificial Christmas trees were developed in Germany in the 19th century, due to a major continuous deforestation. The feather trees became increasingly popular during the early 20th century and finally made their way to the US.

11. Iceland has 13 Santas and an old lady who kidnaps children. Christmas in Iceland is a colorful fusion of religion, fairytales, and folklore. Instead of one Santa, the kids are visited by 13 Yule Lads that either reward children for good behavior or punish them if they were naughty. The holiday period begins 13 days before Christmas. Each day, one of the 13 Yule Lads comes to homes and fills the shoes that kids leave under the Christmas tree either with sweets and small gifts or rotting potatoes, depending on how that particular child has behaved on the preceding day. The mother of Yule Lads – a half-troll, half-beast, and horrifying old woman, Grýla – kidnaps naughty kids and boils them in her cauldron.

12. In Germany, Heiligabend, or Christmas Eve, is said to be a magical time when those with pure, kind hearts can hear animals talking. They can also see that rivers turn into wine, Christmas tree blossoms bear fruit, mountains open and reveal gems hidden inside, and bell ringing that can be heard from the bottom of the sea.

Happy Holidays!

Christmas Dinner Customs in the Czech Republic

Czech Christmas dinner, held on December 24, is connected with a great number of different customs, rules, and superstitions. Very few of them are still observed today, and for good reason. It must have been quite a challenge to put the dinner together and go through with it without a mistake if all the customs were to be followed! Here are some of them:
- No lights should be lit in the house before the first star comes out. After it does, dinner is served.
- The table should be set for an even number of guests. An odd number brings bad luck or death.
- An extra plate can be used to even out the number of guests. An extra plate should also be prepared just in case an unexpected guest or a person in need comes by the house at dinner time.
- The legs of the table can be tied with a rope to protect the house from thieves and burglars in the coming year.
- No one should sit with their back to the door.
- Christmas dinner should consist of nine courses including soup, bread with honey, carp, potato salad, fruit (dried, fresh, or canned), dessert (apple strudel or Vánočka), and other foods.
- No alcohol should be served on Christmas Eve.
- No one should ever get up from the Christmas table before dinner is finished. Doing so brings bad luck and death in the family.
- Everyone should finish their dinner and leave nothing on the plate.
- The first person to leave the table after dinner will be the first one to die in the coming year - that is why everyone should get up from the table at the same time.
- Any leftovers from dinner (crumbs, fish bones, etc.) should be buried around the trees to ensure they will bear lots of fruit.
- All household animals should be fed after dinner so that no one goes hungry on Christmas Eve.

The Magical Powers of Foods and Plants

Certain plants, spices, and foods are said to have special qualities, making them an important part of traditional Czech Christmas celebrations.

Garlic is an essential part of Christmas that should not be missing at any Christmas dinner. It is believed to provide strength and protection. A bowl of garlic can be placed under the dinner table.

Honey is believed to guard against evil. A pot of honey can be placed on the dinner table.

Mushrooms give health and strength. A traditional meal called Kuba, prepared from dried mushrooms, barley, garlic, onions, and spices, used to be served as the main meal. Kuba or mushroom soup can be served at dinner.

Sheaf of Grain, bundled and dipped in holy water, is used to sprinkle the house to prevent it from burning down in the next year.

Poppysseed, peas, wheat, and barley given to hens on Christmas Eve will ensure that many eggs will be laid in the coming year.

Vánočka (Christmas Bread) fed to the cows will ensure plenty of milk all year. Putting a few crumbs in front of the bee hive will make certain the bees produce enough honey next year. Throwing a piece of vánočka into the well will keep the water of good quality.

Apples given to the goats on Christmas Eve will make their milk sweet all year. If an apple is cut crosswise in half and a star appears in the core, everyone at the table will get together next year in happiness and health.

Money and Wealth

Although Czech Christmas has traditionally been focused on spirituality and family rather than on material possessions, there is one custom to note that relates to money and wealth. Fish scales should be placed under Christmas dinner plates or under the tablecloth to bring wealth to the house. Also, carrying a fish scale in a wallet all year will ensure that money will not run out.
Foretelling the Future

The foretelling of the future and predicting the well-being of the family in the coming year is connected with many popular Christmas customs some of which are still practiced today.

The Floating of Walnut Shells
Little boats are made out of empty walnut shells and each family member places a little burning candle into a shell. Everyone’s shells are then floated on a bowl of water. If the shell makes it across the bowl, its owner will live a long and healthy life. A shell that sinks brings bad luck to its owner.

The Cutting of the Apple
After Christmas dinner, every person present at the table cuts an apple in half (crosswise, from the stem down). Both halves are shown to everyone around the table. If the core is shaped as a star, it means that everyone will get together next year in happiness and health. A four-pointed cross is a bad omen and means that someone at the table will fall ill or die within a year.

The Pouring of Lead
A piece of lead is melted over fire and then poured into a container of water. The resulting shape will tell the pourer’s destiny.

Foretelling Marriage

Lots of Christmas customs help young girls in the family find out if they will get married in the upcoming year.

Cherry Tree Twigs (Barborky)
On December 4, St. Barbora’s Day, an unmarried girl is supposed to cut a twig off of a cherry tree and put it in water. If the twig blooms by Christmas Eve, the girl will marry within a year.

The Throwing of the Shoe
An unmarried girl is supposed to throw a shoe over her shoulder and towards the door. If the shoe lands with the toe pointing towards the door, the girl will marry within a year.

The Shaking of the Elder Tree
An unmarried girl is supposed to shake an elder tree and if a dog barks, she will marry a man who lives in the direction from which the dog bark came.

Other Christmas Customs and Superstitions

- He who fasts all day until dinner will see the golden piglet on the wall.
- After Christmas dinner, no field is to be crossed until the midnight mass. He who does so will die within a year.
- He who fails to give a present on Christmas Eve will be met with poverty.
- A pregnant woman will know whether she is carrying a boy or a girl once the first Christmas Eve visitor enters the house. If the visitor is female, she will have a daughter.

**Christmas in Slovakia**

The first checkpoint to remember is Advent (a period of four Sundays and weeks before Christmas). It is when the Christmas season starts. As a majority of Slovaks belong to Roman Catholic Church, many Christmas traditions are related to religious celebrations. It is also a time of cleaning, baking, shopping for presents, and decorating the Christmas tree. Christmas markets are organized in the bigger cities and streets shine bright with dazzling lights.

Slovaks also celebrate St. Nicholas’ Day on December 6. He is also known as Mikuláš. He comes during the evening of December 5 and gives presents to well-behaved children. Little rascals finally have a good reason to clean their shoes – they place them near the door for Mikuláš to fill them with sweets and fruit.

**Festive Slovak Vocabulary**

Christmas Eve is the most important day of the Christmas season. It is called “Štedrý deň” (translated as the Generous Day) and its actual evening is called “Štedrý večer” (translated as the Generous Evening). The Christmas season is called “Vianoce”. If you want to wish Merry Christmas to your Slovak friends, remember the phrase “Veselé Vianoce.”

**How Slovaks Celebrate Christmas Eve**

Some families still follow a very traditional way and get a live fish (usually a carp) which is placed in the bathtub for kids to play with until the Christmas Day morning. Some of them even give it a name as if it were a pet. During the day, people cook supper and decorate the Christmas tree (the compulsive ones start days earlier). The Christmas tree is kept until January 6, which is the Feast of the Three Kings, also called Epiphany. Then children are finally allowed to eat the candies and other sweets from the tree. The religious tradition dictates to fast throughout the Christmas Day. Rumor has it that if you manage to get by without a single bite the entire day, you will see a little golden pig in the evening.

Guess what, it’s not Santa who brings the presents. It’s Baby Jesus! A common tradition is that the children leave the room when Baby Jesus comes with the presents. When the gifts are placed under the Christmas tree, someone rings the bell. That’s the cue the children are waiting for. They dash to the Christmas tree to open the presents. The majority of Slovak families open their presents after the main Christmas meal, but some just can’t wait and dine while surrounded with torn wrapping paper.

**Typical Christmas Dinner**

The Christmas supper varies between regions and families. In general, it has lots of courses including a fish dish, potato salad (with mayonnaise, pickles, and carrots), and a sauerkraut soup – kapustnica, with sausage, meat, dried mushrooms, and cream. Every family has its own secret recipe and some might include unusual ingredients such as dried plums or even apples. In some regions, kapustnica is replaced by a milky mushroom soup – mliečna hubová polievka.

Special poppy seed dumplings (“makové opekance” or “bobáľky”) are often served as a dessert. However, cookies are a must during Christmas. Gingerbread, vanilla crescents, or cookies with walnuts and apricot jam cannot be missing. Each family easily makes more than 10 different types of sweets, which are served to their guests over the Christmas season. Gluttony at its best!
Christmas Traditions at the Christmas Table

With richness of Slovak folklore, you shall not be surprised by plenty of traditions still relevant in the majority of Slovak households. Let’s have a look at them.

**Money or fish scale** from the carp placed under the table cloth to multiply family wealth.

**Garlic** to ensure good health for the family; each family member should eat a clove.

**Honey** to ensure goodness and abundance, so everyone is nice and good and there is plenty of everything. It is either eaten on thin wafers or, what’s interesting, the head of the family makes a honey cross on the forehead of each family member.

**Apple** that is to be cut horizontally in two halves. If the seeds form a star, it symbolizes happiness and good health for the family. If they form a cross, this means problems, illness, or even death. So get a bunch of apples and slice until you see the former.

**Nuts** that are thrown in each corner of the room or at least to be eaten during the Christmas dinner to ensure the abundance.

**Set one extra plate**, because you need to be prepared for an unexpected guest as a symbol of mercy and fellowship. It is also interpreted as a plate for deceased family members.

What Do We Do After Christmas Supper?

Once dinner has been eaten and presents opened, people usually visit their close family or neighbors and exchange small gifts. Many people attend the Midnight Mass, which is the busiest church service of the year. December 25 and 26 are much quieter and are spent with close family. Just resting, laughing, and overeating. December 26 is also the day when St. Stephen is celebrated, and you can find many events and parties organized for that night.

Peculiar Traditions from the Past

Historically speaking, there was a number of other traditions connected to the Christmas Day which have not survived the test of time. We’d like to mention the truly peculiar ones.

A female stranger could not enter the house as it would bring bad luck. Wicked witches, perhaps?

If family members needed to borrow something on this day, it was a bad sign as well.

Everyone tried to have their behavior under control on the Christmas Day as it was believed that the way one behaves on this day, they will behave in this way the following year.

Who sneezed during the morning of the Christmas Day, would live up to high age.

If you broke something on this day, the shatters would bring bad luck.

One could not hang the freshly washed clothes on this day to dry, as the one to whom it belonged to would die.

The Christmas cookies and bread had to be baked before sunrise and once the dough was prepared, women touched the fruit trees with the hands that prepared the dough to make sure they will bring plenty of fruits.

Figurines (or rather, voodoo dolls) of domestic animals were made from water and flour in order to make them prosper the year after. The tradition of baking ginger breads in shape of different animals is believed to be inherited from this custom.

You could not sweep the house, because if you did, you would also sweep away dead souls from the house.

A chain was placed around the legs of the table to ensure family unity.

There were many magical rituals to foresee the future, like pouring liquid lead into water.

Lodge Happenings

December Toy Drive for Hope’s Front Door

Lodge DuPage Pioneers/Edison No. 409, Lombard, Illinois
– November’s meeting was called to order by our President, Jerry Gaydusek. Fraternal Director Amanda Lovell was recognized. Minutes from October were read and accepted. No correspondence was received and no bills to pay. Helen’s Treasurer’s Report was accepted.

Thanks to Vice President Lyn Burton for conducting our Annual Memorial Service dedicated to deceased Lodge No. 409 members. A lovely poem was read accompanied by music from Dvorak.

Helen reminded us of the Cultural Division’s Holiday Dinner at Crystal Sky Banquets on December 1. The Division agreed to donate $250 to Hope’s Front Door. Dinner, games, prizes, fun, and a raffle await were in store!

Our evening’s guest speakers, member Phil Arnone and friend Andre Gargano, spoke on behalf of the Rosecrance organization which helps teens suffering from substance abuse and addiction. An excellent, informative lecture on Rosecrance was given regarding treatment modeled after the 12 Steps famously successful in Alcoholics Anonymous. Open and honest about their experiences, they sat for a Q&A at the close. We were impressed with their sincerity and dedication to helping troubled teens. We offered a donation which they politely declined. They suggested a donation to Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) which we will do. Thank you, Phil and Andre! You are always welcome!

We elected Officers for 2020. Present officers were polled and all agreed to serve another term: President Jerry Gaydusek, Vice President Lyn Burton, Secretary & Scribe Gerri Romanelli, Treasurer Helen Gaydusek, Sentry/Guide Dale Burton, and Auditor Joann Nekolny. Thanks to all!

Next, a motion was passed to change our meeting day to the second Monday of the month. This will help meet the Journal deadline for submission of articles. All agreed to continue with monthly raffles as well.

Regarding charities: Gerri spoke with Kathy Nazzarini, Program Director of Hope’s Front Door, who emailed details on their December Toy Drive. Members agreed to a monetary donation to be used as needed and for a toy fund. Gerri, Lyn, and Joann will be shopping for the toys. Gerri was asked to invite Kathy to Cultural Division’s Holiday Dinner so that we can formally present our check and the toys/goods we purchased. Her attendance would promote Hope’s Front Door to our District No. 12 guests. In addition to donating to CSA’s Scholarship Fund, we will continue our contributions to Fisher House at Hines Hospital.

All of us at Lodge DuPage Pioneers/Edison wish our brothers and sisters around the country a joyous Holiday Season and a happy, prosperous, healthy New Year. Enjoy!

Fraternally,
Gerri Romanelli
Lodge Happenings

AMA Mobile Exhibit

Lodge Century of Progress/Bila Hora, No. 231, Cicero, Illinois – We met on October 9, 2019. The minutes and Treasurer’s Reports were read and approved and accepted. Reports were received from the District Council and, the Cultural Division, in particular, discussed the upcoming Christmas Party scheduled for December 1, 2019.

The report from the T. G. Masaryk School included an update on the building’s roof fundraiser. The initial ambitious goal the school had set was not only reached and then topped, but also matched by an anonymous donor. With that, the roof project was entirely funded by the Czech community! The workers removed 20 tons of old material, built a brand new roof, and replaced the old downspouts. Funds left will be used towards the 2020 summer project – bathroom remodeling.

Lodge members once again travelled to Rosary Hill. This time, Ed Slavik entertained the residents with his accordion in a sing-along.

In keeping with our “Moment in Life” series, I am reporting on a moment, or, I should say, two months out of my life as an employee of the American Medical Association. Sometime during the 70s, maybe even earlier, the AMA found itself waning in membership. The establishment of a Marketing Department was meant to study and correct the situation. A “Plan” was developed, as a test, to target a certain area of the United States, an area known to have a significant fall in membership numbers—Los Angeles County, California. That is, take the AMA to the physician instead of expecting the physician to come to the AMA. The idea was to visit as many hospitals within a two month period as possible. The project was known as the “AMA Mobile Exhibit”. The end result was to recruit membership.

I won’t go into details, but setting up the visit to the hospitals—one hospital a day, Monday through Friday for the months of October and November 1979, was my assignment. The mechanism used was a truck and trailer (see photo). A driver was located and hired. An interactive display was assembled and installed in the trailer. (see photo). My responsibility was to see to the development and permanent installation of the exhibit, since I was familiar, taking the portable to past specialty society meetings. Also, it was my responsibility to make the appointments and set a schedule for the mobile presentation at the hospital.

The Los Angeles County Medical Association assisted in finding staff lodging, since there are not many short term apartment rentals—a three month rental, centrally located within the county, near MacArthur Park, was ultimately found. A rental car also needed to be scheduled.

The visits were scheduled for 6:00 a.m. each morning (not easy getting around in LA traffic) for the Doctor’s Dining Room. The announcement of the visit was made and the physicians were invited to the display once their rounds and other patient visits were completed.

I staffed the mobile exhibit along with other members of the AMA staff. Each Department represented in the display sent a representative for a period of five days. In some cases, staff was allowed a period of 10 days. Again, my responsibility to schedule staff participation. The project was quite intensive and exhausting but gratifying in the end. The physicians were curious; they attended and in many cases pledged to join the AMA.

On a lighter note, I wanted to know what it felt like to sit in the cab of the truck—it was huge! (see photo) Watching the driver manipulate this monster onto hospital parking lots was nothing short of a heart attack. And, yet, we did it!

A very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Fraternally,
Elaine Tejcek

Read the Journal online at: www.csalife.com
Lodge Missouri No. 1, St. Louis, Missouri – Members of Lodge Missouri No. 1 were among the many volunteers working at our American-Czech Educational Center’s Annual Czech Festival. The event was a great success with over 800 dinners being served. There were also Czech beers available, Slivovitz tastings, t-shirt ornament, pastry and decorated cookie (perníky) sales, game booths, and more. There was plenty of Czech music by the St. Louis Czech Express and a visit by the United Moravian Society Dancers. It was a great event and it takes many hours of preparation and many volunteers to make it happen, so thanks to all who helped to make it possible.

Congratulations to our Lodge Officers who were re-elected to the current position and will help to guide our Lodge for another year. We are now making plans for our Christmas Party and Dinner. Happy holidays to all.

Marla Breidenbach and Mike Wolf

Lodge Golden Gate No. 252, San Jose, California – Our lodge members celebrated the 4th Annual Czech & Slovak Heritage Night at our San Jose Sharks Hockey Arena. Over 100 members from various Czech clubs in the San Francisco Bay area attended a fun-filled evening.

Our San Jose Sharks Czech star player, Tomas Hertl, scored 48 seconds into the third period to tie the score at 2-2. The Sharks outshot the Winnipeg Jets 53 to 19 but with only one minute and 24 seconds left in the third period, the Winnipeg Jets scored to give them the win.

After the game, all the Czechs attending the game were allowed on the arena ice to take photos with Thomas Hertl. We were able to have a few words with him using our limited Czech vocabulary. It was a fun-filled evening meeting Tomas Hertl and being with our Czech friends. But too bad we lost the game. We’ll get them next time. Our San Jose Sharks are hungry.

Fraternally,
James Vaclav Martinek

Over 800 Dinners Served at Annual Czech Festival

Troy Kenyon and Joe and Jim Martinek with Tomas Hertl
Lodge Happenings

A Gingerbread Man for Christmas

Lodge Yank-Mann No. 77, North Riverside, Illinois – Our October meeting was a lot of fun with a Halloween costume party. Catherine Riha and Kathleen Riha were tied for first place; and Ray Riha was second place. Everyone brought all kinds of goodies, no tricks just treats. We also played Bingo and raised $50 for one of our charities.

In September, members Mildred Calek and daughter Anne Calek (and husband Dave Lockery) hosted relatives from the Czech Republic. Twenty years ago, Anne met her grandmother’s sister (Teta Anna) and family when she visited them in Tasov, Moravia. Since then, the families have kept in touch. Anne and her husband have been to Tasov several times, one time with their nephews Matt and Dan Dory. While studying in Rome, Dan Dory visited them earning the nickname “Kned” short for knedliky (they were astonished by how many dumplings he ate at one sitting). Hanicka, great-granddaughter of Teta Anna, visited Chicago several years ago. At this time, her mother and father, Hana and Evzen Vitovsky, and their daughter, Klara, came to celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary and Klara’s graduation from law school. Every night at dinner, Mildred and Hana talked in Czech, while Klara and Mildred translated. The conversation was lively, filled with laughter and tears. They drove through Berwyn and Cicero where Anna

dan dory, aka kned!

Lodge Roavnost No. 53, Cicero, Illinois – I want to wish everyone a happy holiday season. I will be celebrating my holiday with my children and grandchildren.

I often think of the days I spent with my family at Grandpa’s and Grandma’s on Christmas Eve. All of my cousins would get together and have fun playing under the dining room table, there was a divider that we would use for different games that we made up. My mother was one of 10 children and there were only 17 cousins, but at that time some were not born yet, so there was quite a range of ages. Grandpa and Grandma did not have much money so for Christmas we cousins would get a gingerbread man, and we loved them. My aunts and cousins would be in the living room and dining room and the men would be in the kitchen playing cards and would not allow us to come in and bother them.

After my father passed away, I was 9 years old at that time, Mom and I went to live with my grandparents. My parents owned a grocery store and Mom had to sell it after Dad passed away. I always enjoyed decorating the Christmas tree with Grandpa and it was quite a treat for me. Uncle Otto would bring up the tree for me. Then I would sit on the radiator and sing Christmas songs, I think everyone wanted to tell me to be quiet but no one ever did.

Fraternally,
Caroline Johnston

Dan Dory, AKA Kned!

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Fraternally,
Caroline Johnston

Dan Dory, AKA Kned!
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 __________

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. — Nelson Mandela

CSA Fraternal Life
In New York Czechoslovak Society of America

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Lodge Happenings

Travel and Toys

Lodge Mile-Hi Czechs No. 432, Lakewood, Colorado – We would like to report on our October and November meetings, as well as some travel! Mary Lou Bennington and Bob spend two weeks touring China. Sites included Beijing, the Great Wall, the Yangtze River, Shanghai, and more. She said it was her second best trip she has ever taken. Of course, she promptly developed a very bad cold when she got home.

Pat Kenning and grandson Peter Campe also toured locally. They took a Princess Fall Foliage tour from Quebec to New York City. The weather could have been better but they did see some lovely colors, ate delicious food, and saw some fabulous shows.

Our October meeting featured a program focused on garnets, known as “Bohemian Diamonds” and was led by President Irma Farrell. She spoke of their calming health benefits, various colors – the deep red is the most common, and their brief history. Several members brought their precious jewelry and told family tales.

During the November meeting, two long tables were piled high with new toys donated by our generous members for the Action Center. Mary Campe, a longtime volunteer there, took them to the organization. Her SUV was overflowing! Though she quickly remembered that toys for older kids, such as bikes, skateboards, etc. were requested and we obliged. We hope that businesses and stores will fulfill those requests!

We all look forward to our annual Christmas party again, hosted by George and Maryellen Vialpando. Enjoy the holidays!

Fraternally,
Pat Kenning

Happy Anniversary

December 16, 1958
Donna and Jack Griffin
Lodge Mile-Hi Czechs, No. 432

Scholarship Fund Report

October 10, 2019 - November 10, 2019

IN MEMORY OF GEORGIANA UHLIR
Diane Rezabek

IN MEMORY OF JOYCE M. JANCA
Lodge Anton J. Cermak No. 99

IN MEMORY OF ALL DECEASED MEMBERS
Lodge Laurel No. 452

TO CONTINUE CSA’S TRADITION OF ASSISTING YOUNG MEMBERS IN PURSUING THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION
Lodge Rovnost No. 53
Donation Match/Lodge Brookfield No. 475
Cynthia Shea Nakai
Lodge Groveton No. 4

IN MEMORY OF DECEASED MEMBERS
Lodge Du Page Pioneers/Edison No. 409

TOTAL DONATIONS $725.00

Read the Journal online at: www.csalife.com
Lodge Washington No. 30, St. Louis, Missouri – What a fantastic Czech Festival at our ACEC in October! We had a record crowd, with everyone enjoying our Czech food, pastry, beer, and music all day, along with the games, booths, and raffles offered. Many lodge members put in lots of hours to make the event a success, setting up and manning the booths, decorating, baking, serving, and tending bar. We thank everyone who worked and everyone who joined us. This is a tradition that goes back to the old days at our National Hall and it has continued through the 50+ years we’ve been at the American-Czech Educational Center. Beginning next year, the Festival changes to a spring event, scheduled for March 28th. Hope to see a good turnout then as well.

Of course, the highlight of the day was the performances by dancers from the United Moravian Societies. The hall was filled to capacity to watch Radost, Omladina, and Moravske Kolo, and the crowd was delighted with their enthusiasm and their beautiful costumes. It was a real treat to have them with us again. Special thanks go to Yvette Bobcik, Miles Mojica, and Hana Prince (in absentia) for their hard work as teachers and trip coordinators. Great job!

We held our usual Bake Sale to raise money for our chosen project for the year, Honor Flight, and I’m happy to report it was a great success. The table was filled with a variety of cookies, mini cakes, brownies, and more, all baked by our members. Lots of folks stopped by to pick up a sweet treat, and we especially appreciated the gesture of one gentleman who purchased a dollar’s worth of brownies and gave us a $19 tip toward the cause. With our profits, the hours we put in, and the matching funds from the Fraternal Department, we made enough for one escort’s airfare on a Flight in 2020. Nice job!

Here’s wishing all our members and their families a very happy holiday season!

Fraternally,
Deborah Zeman
Lodge Woodrow Wilson No. 377, Brookfield, Illinois – We are delighted to share the news that Emily Ramirez is engaged to be married to James Chopp, a fellow nurse at Christ Hospital. Emily, you may recall, is a former nominee as our lodge’s Fraternalist of the Year, and the daughter of current CSA Fraternalist of the Year, Anna. We are so very excited for you, Emily, and we wish you and James every happiness together in the future!

Another milestone was recently celebrated for a special member: Ray Hemzacek joined our ranks of nonagenarians with his 90th birthday in October. The occasion was made extra-special with a visit from both Laukant grandchildren: Amanda from New York and Chris from Montana. It’s a rare treat to have both of them here at the same time, and you can be sure that this mom was every bit as delighted as was Grampa to spend time together as a family.

Our November meeting was extra-busy! Many thanks to our lodge officers from this past year all of whom, having been duly re-elected, will continue in their roles in 2020. Our craft project, “Santa bellies”, was a big, round success: the cute holiday ornaments have already been donated to Tabor Hills, in our annual tradition.

Yet another belly-full of fun was tasting a variety of treats, with (more) voting: this time for our favorite dishes. Pat Satek took the win with her Thai chicken spread, and Nancy Hamrin’s apple cake was such a close second that we named her a winner as well! Thanks to everyone for the treats, and to all the hard-working, dedicated tasters!

A new year will be soon be upon us, and I hope that you might be able to join us for our activities and meetings. Questions? Need a ride? Just let me know! I wish you all a wonderful upcoming holiday season, and look forward to seeing and hearing from you in 2020!

Fraternally,
Jean Hemzáček Laukant
hemzacek.j@gmail.com
630-279-7894
Lodge Laurel No. 452, Ashford, Connecticut – On September 15, Lodge members participated in Ashford’s Family Day Event. We created a display of many various kroj, using pictures from all across the Czech Republic and Slovakia. We were able to include a few dolls, photographs of some of our Lodge members in costume, and a few small pieces of clothing. The pictures included captions with information about the kroj. We also had craft projects for children to make Czech/Slovak man or woman paper dolls. The youth and their parents enjoyed the craft and the many beautiful costumes. The pictures show our display, with Sister Margaret Varga manning the booth.

On October 19, Lodge members and family members gathered for our annual Memorial Service at the Willington Hill Cemetery. The service, led by Deacon Lawrence Goodwin, began with members singing “Amazing Grace”. We continued with a scripture reading and CSA’s recommended Ritual. The “We Remember Them” reading is a perfect group Response. Deacon Goodwin always conducts this service with grace and dignity. The list of names of all Lodge Members who had died this past year, as well as all Lodge Laurel members now buried in this cemetery was read. There are about 50 past members buried here. Sister Valerie Voboril Rogers sang “A Celtic Blessing” and the ceremony concluded with Cole Rogers on the trumpet playing “Taps”. Following the ceremony members placed flowers on the graves of Lodge Members. The pictures show us at one end of the cemetery with Deacon Goodwin conducting the readings and then the entire group of participants. You can see that we were blessed with a little rain. Thankfully, it didn’t last long. We then proceeded to Sister Marion Varga’s for our monthly meeting. It was a busy day!

Happy holidays to all!

Fraternally,
Marion Varga
Lodge Happenings

The Spark Has Been Ignited

Lodge Benjamin Franklin No. 02, Seven Hills, Ohio – On a cool, seasonal evening of October 21, the lodge convened its Halloween meeting at our usual haunt. The new proprietors spared no expense in decorating for the spooky occasion. Among several agenda items that President Scott Krecow brought to the floor was the approval to sponsor the lodge bowling team for the 2019-2020 season. Our heroes are notorious for being slow starters and this year is no exception. However, they lead the league in high single game with a 1155 scratch, so, the spark has been ignited and they should be hitting on all cylinders in the chilly months to come! Scott also volunteered to put together the ten door prizes the lodge will donate for the annual District Council No. 10 Christmas Party to be held in December. Thank you, Mr. President!

It was a pleasure to welcome Ken Kus to October’s meeting and his big brother Dave Kus surprised us all as his daughter, Holly, joined us, making her annual pilgrimage from Cape Coral, Florida, to the Cleveland area. She brought along her significant other, the congenial gentleman, Ron Worst, who was our photographer for the evening!

Finally, it is our fervent wish that all members and lodge friends have a joyous holiday season and a healthy and prosperous new year!

Fraternal regards,
Jeff Zidlicky
LodgeFranklinScribe@gmail.com

Velvet Revolution

Lodge Harrison Hus Garfield No. 378, Cicero, Illinois – Happy holidays to all and best wishes for 2020. We met at the T.G. Masaryk Czech School in November and had a very good lunch and good discussion. We will have six members in attendance at the holiday party. Donations were made to the Red Cross and Salvation Army for disaster relief and to the CSA Scholarship Fund. Gladys and Emil Zemanek told us about their recent trip to Dollywood for a gospel festival. Bill Kostecki is back with us and filled us in on his summer in Wisconsin where he fished, golfed, and enjoyed the North Country.

Plans were discussed for our annual Christmas party at Czech Plaza Restaurant. We talked about the progress of the T.G. Masaryk Czech School and the 90 students who learn Czech history, language, and culture. Thanks to Andy Bultas for his information on the school. A highlight for this year is the Velvet Revolution; there are illustrations and stories posted throughout the building.

There will be no January meeting but we will be back on February 3.

Fraternally,
Ken Dvorsky

Elections Held

Lodge Queensdale No. 422, Woodside, New York – The Lodge acknowledged all Lodge members who are currently serving or have served in the military in honor of Veteran’s Day. We thank you for your service and the sacrifices made by you and your families to secure our freedoms.

Lodge Queensdale’s annual election of officers and convention delegates was held on November 18, 2019 at St. Jacobus Evangelical Lutheran Church. The District Council No. 2 meeting was held immediately following.

Fraternally yours,
Joanne Murnane

Read the Journal online at: www.csalife.com
Lodge Happenings

Fun at the State Bowling Tournament

Lodge Cleveland Chapter No. 219, Cleveland, Ohio – We were supposed to have our November meeting on the 12th, but Ohio decided to dump a bunch of snow on our streets and buildings. Since we have some physically challenged members, we moved our meeting to the following week. Elections for officers were held then and a lunch of lasagna was served!

God bless all the men and women that served our country. My dad was in the Navy during World War II and my two brothers served in the Navy. We should be proud of all the people who served our country.

A group of us went to the State Bowling Tournament October 12 and 13 at the Meadows Casino in Pennsylvania. We had the pleasure of meeting and bowling with Hunter Yurkovich, Miss National CSA. Hunter, you bowled just fine!

Most of us from Ohio struggled with even bowling our averages, but we had fun!

Our Pin Party is coming up on December 8 at noon at St. Michael’s Party Center. Please contact June Karecki for tickets.

The District Council No. 10 Christmas Party is on December 5 at the Clubhouse Restaurant in Parma Heights. All members of local lodges are invited. Please contact Tony Genco at 440-886-2420 if you are attending. Everyone pays for themselves.

Until next time,
Fraternally yours,
Judy (Sevcik) Genco

Tony Genco, Judy Genco, Karen Buzek, and Wayal Abarca

Wayal Abarca, our 90-something member

Our members with Hunter Yurkovich
Lodge Happenings

Lodge Brookfield No. 475, Brookfield, Illinois – It was a dark and stormy November evening, but that did not prevent our faithful Lodge Brookfield members from attending our annual Movie Night presentation. This year’s film was “Green Book,” about a sophisticated world-class pianist and his Italian-American chauffeur touring the deep South in 1962. They must rely on a “Green Book” to guide them to establishments that were safe for African-Americans.

The two men could not have been more different culturally, physically, and financially. They are confronted by racism and danger but also some humanity and lots of humor. When they head south, they must rely on each other to survive. Eventually, the two of them become best of friends and go on a journey of a lifetime.

Before the movie, we took time to elect officers for year 2020. Returning as President is Barbara Deig, Vice President is Kevin Pileggi, Treasurer is Dolores Chiappetta, Secretary is Jerry Silhan, Sentry-Guide is John Kielczewski, and Scribe is Kimberly Silhan.

We will be returning to Stevens Restaurant in Downers Grove on December 11 at 5:30 p.m. for our Christmas meeting this year. If you would like to attend, please notify Barbara Deig at the CSA Home Office so that we can get a correct head count.

Most normal Lodge Brookfield meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. at CSA Home Office in Lombard, Illinois. Guests are always welcome.

Fraternally,
Kimberly Silhan

Election of Officers Held

Fleece Tie-Blanket Time

Lodge R. T. Crane Jr. No. 7, Berwyn, Illinois – When our October meeting rolled around, it was hard to believe the time had come for our annual blanket making event. We held a quick meeting with pizza and salad for dinner so we could spend the majority of our time together creating fleece tie-blankets. We have become pretty good at making these after doing them at our October meetings for the past few years. It was hard to believe that the freezing cold temperatures arrived soon after this meeting as we got a few inches of snow on Halloween and already hit the single digit temperatures in November! This just means our blankets will be in high demand when they are delivered to a nearby retirement community soon!

A few of our members enjoyed themselves at the Moravian Cultural Society’s “Night at the Hospoda”. The event was very enjoyable with Czech bar snacks like as chlebičky, plenty of pivo and Czech spirits, and even a Pražký Walk! “Czech out” members Alix Fron, Kveta Skach, Adam Wilt, and Vera Wilt having a great time posing by the bar!

As the temperatures keep dropping, we were excited to host our 3rd Annual Soup Competition at our November meeting. Stay tuned for the results of the competition next month!

We wish all of our CSA brothers and sisters a wonderful holiday season spent with loved ones making wonderful memories!

Fraternally,
Alix Fron
Lodge Happenings

Holiday Wishes

Lodge Kruh Osvojencych Zen A Panu No. 121, Dillonvale, Ohio – The members of Lodge No. 121 would like to send best wishes to all of our brothers and sisters throughout the United States. As we approach this beautiful season, we are grateful for our family members as well as our CSA extended family. Our gifts have been many and we are ever mindful that others may not be so fortunate.

Our members have been busy volunteering at various community, church, and lodge events. We will be reporting more details in the upcoming January issue of the Journal.

We have elected to reinstate our previous officers and are feeling great anticipation for 2020. What are you hoping for in the new year?

Best wishes,
Sister Wendy Kurtz Lovell

Smoluchna Raises Money at Chicago Marathon!

Lodge Sionilli No. 170, Brookfield, Illinois – Our members have been very busy lately, making it a challenge for us to keep consistent with our regular meeting schedule. At our October meeting, we made the decision to have a dinner meeting in November at Bohemian Crystal. We always enjoy a good meal together!

Congratulations to Amy Smolucha for completing the Chicago Marathon and raising money for the Ronald McDonald House! Her parents, Stan and Pat Smolucha, cheered her on. Amy finished in under 5 and a half hours. Way to go Amy, what an amazing accomplishment!

Many of our members participated in the Czech performance at the Christmas Around the World celebration at the Museum of Science and Industry again this year. It’s always a great day to spread the Czech traditions the museum’s many visitors and begin the holiday season. We wish you all a happy holiday season and joyous new year!

Speaking of the holidays, did you hear about the thief who stole a Christmas Advent Calendar? He got 25 days!

Fraternally,
Alix Fron
Lodge Happenings

Warm Up America

Lodge Bratri od Sazavy No. 211, Little Ferry, New Jersey – The October meeting was held in the Little Ferry Public Library. Our special guest was CSA Executive Secretary/Treasurer Matt Koski. Matt spoke to us about the state of CSA, which is good. We discussed the possibility of having Thomas Masarik’s granddaughter, Charlotta Kotik, speak to us at a future meeting.

Sisters Blanche Bidnik and Carol Tranter presented their handiwork of afghan pieces for Warm Up America. Sister Tranter will send them to their headquarters in Texas.

On October 19, Carol Tranter, Matt Koski, and our Miss CSA Hunter Yurkovich attended the Virginia Czech and Slovak Folklife Festival in Prince George, Virginia. The weather was terrific and we all had a wonderful time.

The November meeting was also held in the library. As mentioned before, all meetings will be in the library. After the regular business meeting, elections were held. The results are Carol Tranter, President; Frank Zabransky, Vice President; Jasmin Russo, Secretary; John Sadvary, Treasurer; Blanche Bidnik, Assistant Treasurer and Lodge Recognition Program Chair.

Carol Tranter held a memorial service for deceased members.

We will not have a December meeting but will, instead, have a Holiday Party at Bella Napoli on December 4 at noon.

The holidays will soon be upon us and we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year!

Fraternally,
Carol Tranter

Read the Journal online at: www.csalife.org
Lodge Happenings

Closing Out 2019!

Lodge Groveton No. 4, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – Hello once again fellow CSA members. We are nearing the end of a fast moving, yet successful, 2019 at Lodge Groveton. This year, we performed multiple volunteer projects around the community, contributed to numerous charities and benefit organizations and attended a fantastic Get-Together, just to name a few things. As we hold our last few meetings of the year, we are still finding time to squeeze in a few more memories.

Lodge Groveton was the proud recipient of the Platinum Award and we decided to get together as a Lodge and celebrate. About 15 members of our Lodge gathered at The Olive Garden in celebration of our group achievement. That night was about Lodge Groveton getting together and just enjoying each other’s company, as well as delicious food, and getting to reconnect with each other without planning or discussing Lodge topics only. A fun time was had by all that were able to attend, and it brought us closer together as a group.

The November meeting provided Lodge Groveton with a special guest speaker and her furry friend. Patty Yurkovich, accompanied by her specially trained Therapy Canine Kessel, were on hand to discuss the hard work and preparation that goes in to becoming a therapy dog as well as its importance. Kessel was put through a rigorous training regime that consisted of having to remember and follow numerous commands as well as how to interact with the people who may need a therapy dog. Therapy Canines such as Kessel are trained to provide people with comfort, love and affection or just a playful companion to take their mind off of any hardships they may be experiencing.

The November Lodge meeting finished off with our annual election of Officers for the upcoming year. Lodge Groveton went with the philosophy, if it’s not broke then don’t fix it. We, as a group, decided that after such a successful 2019 we were going to keep our Officers in the same positions. TerriLyn Bichler was rewarded for her hard work as President with another term in office along with the best right-hand man in the business, Vice President Chet Yurkovich. Our precise book-keeping and number crunching will continue to be handled by our always efficient Treasurer, Terry Placek. And finally, the detail-oriented Gary Forrester will continue to take the minutes as Secretary while Dana Forrester (Scribe), Vince Shulin (Sentry & Guide), and both Patty Yurkovich and Donnie Obeldobel (both Auditors) round out the hard working Lodge Groveton Elected Officers.

Lodge Groveton hopes that the rest of the CSA Lodges had as much fun as we did in 2019 while also helping CSA roar into 2020. Follow us on our Facebook page, Lodge Groveton, to check out some pics from our year. Our members would like to wish all CSA members a safe and happy holiday season. We will talk to you in 2020. Take care.

Yours Fraternally,
Bro. Gary Forrester
**Lodge Happenings**

**Mary Zahradka - Celebrating 71 Years of Service**

**Lodge Virginia No. 230, Colonial Heights, Virginia** – Our annual meeting was held at Maria’s Restaurant in Old Town Petersburg, Virginia on November 9, 2019. Congratulations to Anne Michalek, President and Dorothy Michalek, Secretary/Treasurer, as they were installed as our new officers. Several guests were present and included our CSA Secretary from Chicago, Matt Koski, and our Director Carol Tranter. We were pleased to also have Peter Kleskovic from Lodge No. 211 in New Jersey in attendance.

We had four ladies in attendance who have been members of CSA for 75 years! We honored these members with a pin and special letter of recognition from CSA Fraternal Life: Blanche Ruzicka Andrews, Emily Uhrich Cerny, Shirley Cizek Franchok, and Mary Uhrich Zahradka.

We celebrated the service of Mary Zahradka, as she steps down from her post of Lodge No. 230 Secretary which she held for 71 years. It was 1944, at 18 years of age, when her father, George Uhrich, took her to her first meeting as an adult member. She was immediately installed as Secretary of the lodge. “How did I know what I was getting myself into,” she said as she willingly agreed to the position. Ever since, she not only fulfilled her duties as Secretary, but became the custodian of wealth of knowledge of the CSA organization as well as Czech members in the community. For nearly 10 years, she also added the title of Treasurer to her duties. Even though she officially is “retired”, she will continue to be a valued adviser of Lodge Virginia.

Our next lodge meeting will be held on Saturday, January 11, 2020, at 1 p.m. at the Colonial Italian Restaurant in Colonial Heights, Virginia.

_Fraternally,_

_Janet Zahradka Reiner_

![Certificate of Appreciation for Faithful Service](image)

![Shirley Franchok, Mary Zahradka, Emily Cerny, and Blanche Andrews received 75-year membership pins.](image)

![Carol Tranter, Matt Koski, and newly installed Lodge Virginia President, Anne Michalek](image)

![Congratulations for 71 years of service](image)
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<th>Claim</th>
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Lodge Betsy Ross No. 151 was saddened to hear about the passing of Virginia Nicklas, a former Lodge President, in Valparaiso, Indiana. She served in that capacity for several years. She was blessed to have a son, daughter, five grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and one great-great granddaughter.

Virginia graduated from Morton East High School and worked as a secretary for Pure Oil.

Lodge Cleveland Chapter No. 219 is very sad to report that our beloved sister, Camille Shim a, has passed away. She had just celebrated her 94th birthday. Camille was a sweet, friendly, spunky lady. She danced, bowled, rode a camel, paddled a canoe, and attended all our lodge meetings. She even drove a semi-truck in her younger days. Our deepest condolences go out to Freddie Shima, her daughter, her son and her family members. She will be sorely missed.

Earlier this year we lost our dear sister Evelyn Weed. She was 91. Evelyn was a proud, lifelong member of CSA, originally in Lodge Garden State No. 434, now part of Lodge Bratri od Sazavy No. 211.

In her youth, she was an active member of the Degree Team, travelling to many states to perform its ritual. She often spoke of the fun her group had on those trips, and the young men they met. Evelyn attended all dinner-dances and socials sponsored by Lodge Bratri od Sazavy. She loved to dance, especially polkas.

For many years, Evelyn was the Goodwill/Hospitality Ambassador for the lodge. She had a great sense of humor and would often enclose jokes and funny poems with greeting cards. She loved to travel, both day trips and longer vacations, with her best friend Anne Shiring. We miss and remember dearly our sister Evelyn.
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Premium Deferred Annuity
4.5%
Initial Guaranteed
First-Year Interest Rate

5-year SILVER Flexible
Premium Deferred Annuity
3.5%
Initial Guaranteed
First-Year Interest Rate

BOTH AVAILABLE FROM
OCTOBER 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2019.

PLAN DETAILS
- Principal is guaranteed 100%
- No annual administrative or other maintenance fees
- Eligible on all annuity products and plan types
- Tax deferred accumulation
- CSA does not penalize for withdrawals

1Surrender charge ends after 7 years. 2Rate is guaranteed for 1 full year from annuity contract date. Initial contributions must be $1,000 or more. In succeeding years, rates may change but will never be below the 2% guaranteed in the contract. 3Surrender charge ends after 5 years.
4Annuity application and initial deposit must be received between October 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019. 5Subject to contractual guidelines. 6Under current IRS regulations. Neither CSA nor its agents provide tax, legal, or accounting advice. Consult a tax, legal, or accounting professional with your specific situation. 7Within each contractual year, you may withdraw up to 10% of accumulation value. Early withdrawals may be subject to IRS penalty. Product not available in all states.
LET IT SNOW!

BLIZZARD
BLOWING
DRIFT
FLURRIES
FREEZING
IGLOO
INCHES
SHOVEL
SNOWBALL
SNOW BOOTS
SNOW DAY
SNOWFLAKE
SNOWMAN
SNOWMOBILE
SNOW FLOW
SNOW SHOE
SNOW STORM

Czech to English

prosinec.............................................December (pro-si-nect)
Vánoce..........................................Christmas (Vá-no-ce)
Vánoční Stromeček..............................................................Christmas Tree (Vá-noč-ní Stro-mě-ček)
ozdoba / okrasa..........................................................ornament for the tree (oz-do-ba / o-kra-sa)
dárky..................................................gifts / presents (dár-ky)
Štědrý Večer....................................Christmas Eve (Ště-drý Ve-čer)
Štědrý Den........................................Christmas Day (Ště-drý Den)
Svatý Mikuláš..............................Saint Nicholas (Sva-tý Mik-u-láš)
perník na figurky..............................................gingerbread cookies (per-ník na fi-gur-ky)
Zlaté Prasátko..............................Golden Pig (Zla-té Pra-sát-ko)
houbový kuba...........................................mushroom barley casserole (hou-bo-vý ku-ba)
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