

2009 Regional SVU Conference

College Station, Texas
JUNE 5-7, 2009

Central Theme:

Contributions of Czechs and Slovaks to the American
Southwest

Interested Speakers:
ABSTRACT DEADLINE
March 31, 2009

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JUNE 5-7, 2009

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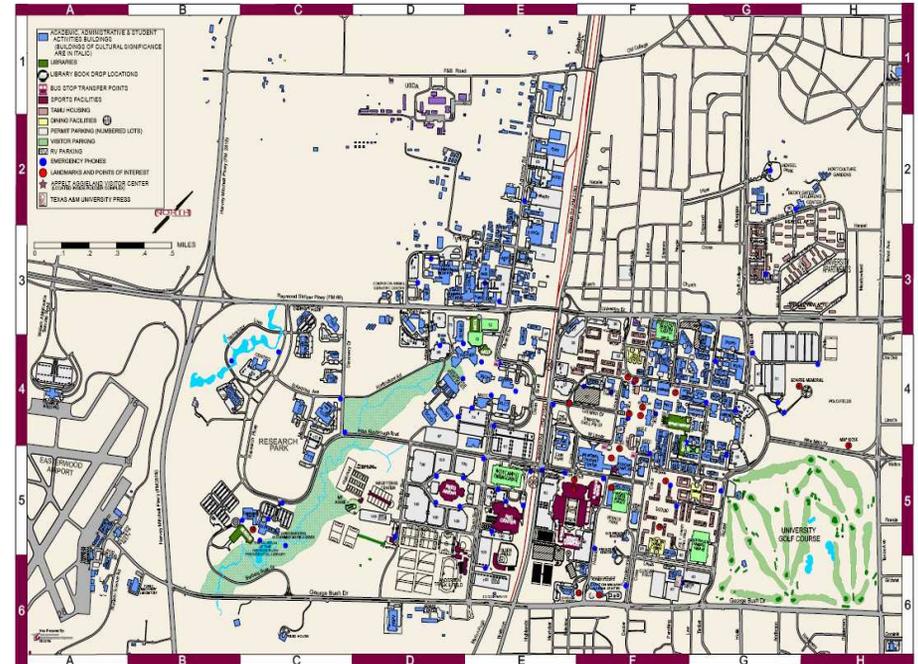
CONTRIBUTIONS OF CZECHS AND SLOVAKS TO THE
AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

Co-sponsor:
Department of English
Texas A&M University

Interested Speakers:
ABSTRACT DEADLINE – March 31, 2009
Abstracts should be submitted electronically to:

Dr. Zdeněk David at zdenek.david@wilsoncenter.org

Plan to Attend this Important Event!



Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

Opened in 1876 as Texas' first public institution of higher learning, Texas A&M University is a research-intensive university with 46,000-plus undergraduate and 8,500 graduate students studying in over 250 degree programs in 10 colleges.

The airport at College Station (Easterwood Airport) serves as a final destination for approximately ten Continental Connection and American Eagle flights per day that connect to major airlines in Dallas or Houston. <http://www.easterwoodairport.com/arrival.html>. College Station is located in the middle of the triangle formed by US Interstates 10, 35 and 45, Texas A&M is centrally located between Austin, Dallas and Houston.



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CERTIFICATE

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that there were received and accepted for record in the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Corporations Division, on the 14th day of November, 1978 *Articles of Incorporation of:*

CZECHOSLOVAK SOCIETY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, INC.

The above named corporation is duly incorporated and existing pursuant to and by virtue of the Nonprofit Corporation Act of the District of Columbia and authorized to conduct its affairs in the District of Columbia as of the date mentioned above.

WE FURTHER CERTIFY that the above entitled corporation is at the time of issuance of this certificate in Good Standing, according to the records of the Corporations Division, having filed all reports required by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of this office to be affixed this 27th day of December, 2007.

LINDA K. ARGO
Director

Business and Professional Licensing Administration



PATRICIA E. GRAYS

Superintendent of Corporations
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Adrian M. Fenty
Mayor

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

During the last two months our activities focused on organization of the 2009 regional SVU conference. Our host will be Texas A & M University at College Station, TX and its Department of English. Dr. Clinton Machann will be the Secretary-General of the meeting. The conference will take place on June 5-7, 2009. The central theme of the meeting is "Contributions of Czechs and Slovaks to the American Southwest".

Proceedings of our 24th World Congress in Ružomberok are starting to take shape. Please, if you did not do it, send your papers electronically to Dr. Zdeněk David and Dr. Karel Raška, Jr.

On November 5th, 2008 we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Society of Arts and Sciences at the Embassy of the Czech republic in Washington, D.C. We were particularly happy that the co-organizers of our Congress in Ružomberok, Dr. Dalibor Mikuláš and Dr. Ján Pavlík could attend.

I wish you a Merry Holiday Season and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. We all look forward to meeting you in Texas next Spring.

Karel Raška, Jr.
SVU President

TOASTING THE FOUNDING OF SVU

This year the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU) commemorated the 50th anniversary of its existence. Since its inception in October 1958, the Society has grown into a respected international organization with members located in just about every corner of the world.

The Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the US, H. E. Petr Kolář and his wife graciously hosted the occasion with a special reception on November 5 at the newly remodeled reception hall of the Czech Embassy in Washington, DC. It was a very enjoyable and naturally dignified event attended by some one hundred invited guests. Ambassador Kolář, who was first to speak, talked, at some length, about the accomplishments and the importance of the Society from the perspective of the Czech Republic. He was followed by the current SVU President Prof. Karel Raška who gave a detailed account of the development of the Society with the backdrop of historical events in the former Czechoslovakia and internationally. The ceremonial part was concluded by Past SVU President Míla Rechcigl, who was on the ground floor when the Society started, reminiscing about the early days and explaining what led to the establishment of SVU.



SVU President
Karel F. Raska, Jr.

The attendees had an opportunity to view and buy Dr. Rechcigl's new book *On Behalf of their Homeland: Fifty Years of SVU* and have it signed by the author.

At the reception were many distinguished guests including Dr. Ján Pavlík, Deputy Mayor of Ružomberok and Dr. Dalibor Miluláš, Past Vice-Rector of Catholic University in Ružomberok, both of whom played critical roles in organizing the recent, highly successful, SVU World Congress in Ružomberok. The joyous event proceeded into the late hours.

Tuberculosis Association, now the Gulf Coast Lung Association. Mrs. Holecek also served as a member of the board of the Gulfport Friends of the Library and was a member of both the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences and the Florida branch of the Friends of Mineralogy. In addition to her son and daughter, she is survived by six grandchildren, John M. Holecek Sr. (Tammy), Tracy Di Vito (Allyn) and Russell Holecek (Blythe), all of St. Petersburg, Harry B. Jordan III (Maybelle) of Delray Beach, Suzannah Holway (Jamie) of Neptune Beach and Mary Frances Jordan of Tampa; and nine great-grandchildren.

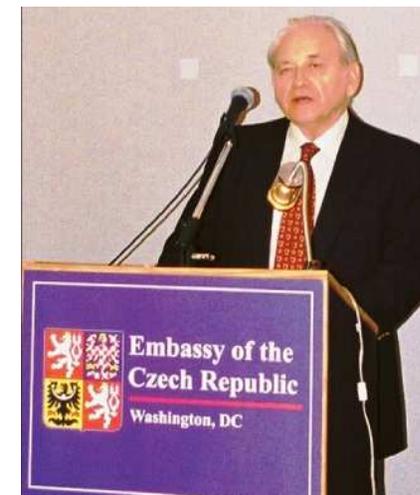
OBITUARY

HOLECEK, Marie K.

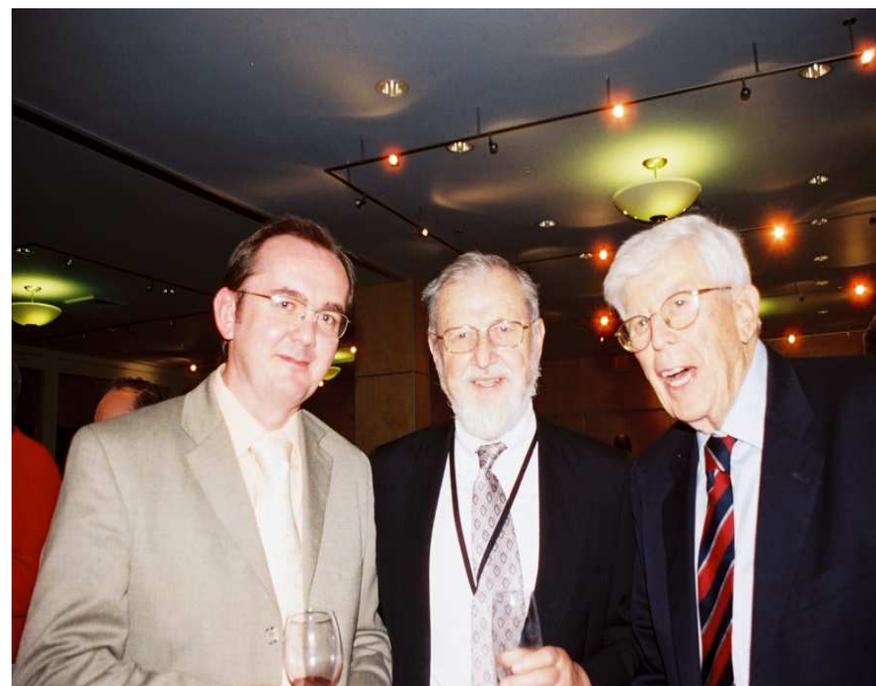
Marie K. Holecek, 101, died September 29, 2008, at Bon Secours Assisted Living. Born in Bay City, Mich., November 3, 1906, she was the widow of Frank Holecek, M.D. The Holecek family came to St. Petersburg from Johnson City, Tenn., in 1940 and lived in Gulfport for more than 40 years. Mrs. Holecek was a woman ahead of her time. A brilliant student, she received a bachelor's degree from Barnard College in 1927 and a master's degree from Columbia University the same year. Her outstanding scholarship was recognized through an American Exchange Fellowship to Charles University in Prague, Czechoslovakia. There she received her doctorate in history, the youngest, at age 22, to have achieved this degree. Prior to her marriage to Dr. Holecek in 1935, she taught at several colleges including Texas Women's University in Denton, Texas, and the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, Minn. In St. Petersburg, she managed Dr. Holecek's medical practice, taught for a time at St. Petersburg Junior College, and raised two children who survive her, John F. Holecek (Jill) of St. Petersburg and Mary Holecek Jordan (H. Baker Jr.) of Tampa. During her life, Mrs. Holecek wrote extensively and published a number of articles as well as translations from the original Czech of several books, including "Nikola the Outlaw" by Ivan Olbracht, published by Northwestern University Press, and "Old Czech Legends" by Alois Jurasek, published for UNESCO by Forest Books of London. Not only was Mrs. Holecek an accomplished writer, but she was also an avid reader of a broad range of publications in her native English and Czech. She remained a student of international affairs her entire life and was particularly interested in the culture of Czechoslovakia where her ancestors were artists, musicians and writers. She was a longtime friend of Dr. Alice Masaryk, whose father, Tomas, was the first president of Czechoslovakia. Mrs. Holecek's interests and hobbies were extensive. She was an ardent collector, particularly of minerals and Native American artifacts. She and Dr. Holecek spent many vacations searching for mineral specimens in locations around the United States and Canada. They amassed and meticulously catalogued an impressive collection over several decades. Mrs. Holecek was a member of the academic honor society Phi Beta Kappa. She joined the American Association of University Women in the 1930s and later served as president of its St. Petersburg branch and vice-president of its Florida division. She was a board member and vice president of the Pinellas County Lung and



Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United States
H. E. Petr Kolář



Past SVU President
Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr.



CURRENTLY AVAILABLE SVU PUBLICATIONS

1. Proceedings of the 2007 SVU Conference – “*Contributions of the Moravian Brethren to America*” editor: Zdeněk David - \$20.00
2. “*On Behalf of their Homeland – Fifty Years of SVU*” – by Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr. - East European Monographs and Columbia University Press, 2008 – \$ 45.00
3. “*Czech and Slovak Theater Abroad*” editor: Vera Borkovec. East European Monographs and Columbia University Press, 2007 – \$ 20.00
4. “*Fighting Communism from Afar. The Council of Free Czechoslovakia*” - by Francis D. Raska - East European Monographs and Columbia University Press, 2008 – \$ 30.00.

Postage and handling for each book is \$5.00 in North America and \$10.00 in all other countries.

Books can be ordered by sending a check or money order to:

Vlado Kysucky
1670 York Ave., #2E
New York, NY 10028
Tel: 917 680-9959
212 543-5646

Or by an on-line purchase through PayPal at:
http://www.svureg.org/svu_publications.htm

The Fall 2008 Issue of *Kosmas*

We believe that members of SVU will find a great deal of interesting material in our new issue. One year ago our Fall 2007 issue included an essay by Matthew Konieczny about Professor Bronislava Volková and the Czech program at Indiana University. Our current issue opens with an article by Volková herself in which she extends her effort to look at Czech literature in terms of the human values it reflects. Her discussion

WASHINGTON CHAPTER GETS GRATIAS AGIT RECOGNITION

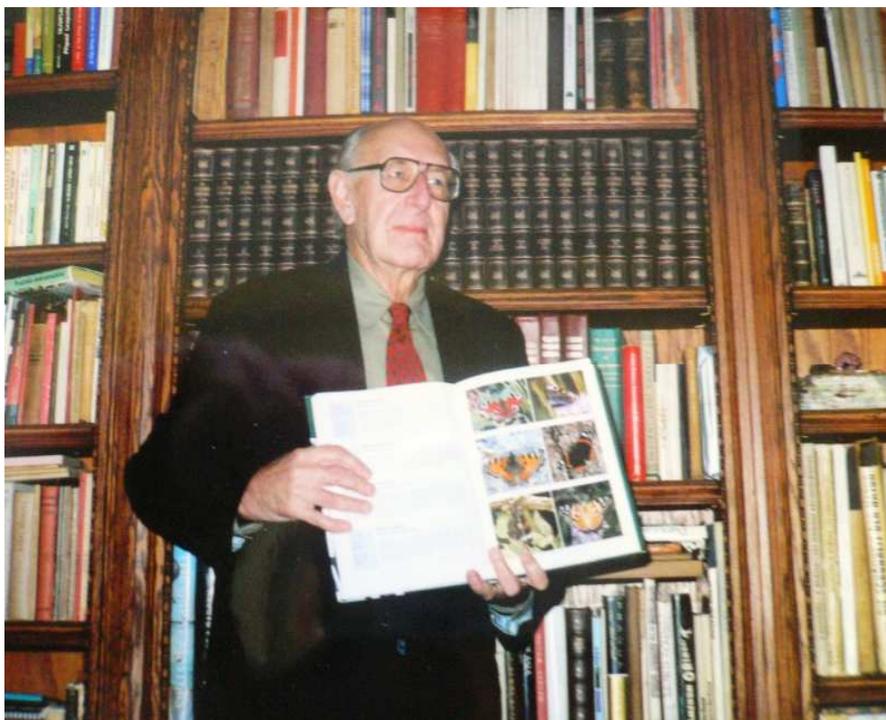
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic annually awards the prize known as Gratias Agit for merits of spreading the good name of the Czech Republic abroad. Among this year’s awardees was the Washington chapter of the SVU. The award was received by Dr. Ing. Alexej Borkovec and the Secretary, Dr. Judith Fiehler. The Czech ambassador Petr Kolar announced the honor during celebrations of the 90th Anniversary of Czechoslovakia in October, 2008 during the reception at the Czech Embassy in Washington, D.C.



Dr. Borkovec accepts the award for the Washington Chapter

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS GETS ANOTHER CZECH BOOK

SVU member George O. Krizek, M.D., Washington psychiatrist and amateur biologist, gave to the Library of Congress his book *Butterflies in Photography* (Motýli ve fotografii). The book was published in Czech in 2006. It has 201 pages and 560 colored photographs of live butterflies in their natural environment. The book contains contributions by Ladislav Havel (157 pictures) and also Spanish co-author Manuel Ortiz Garcia (36 pictures). Slovak entomologist Frankišek Slamka contributed 23 pictures. The book is the largest photographic assembly of butterflies published so far in Czech entomological literature.



of attitudes toward death in well-known works by Mácha, Nĕmcová, Neruda, Čapek, Hrabal, and Kundera should be of interest to everyone who cares about nineteenth- and twentieth-century Czech literature. This is followed by a study of one distinctive aspect of Prague's cultural history by Eric Dluhosch. His look at the history of the city's coffee house culture will surely appeal not only to those who have lived in Prague or have a special interest in the city but also to many readers who have visited the city only briefly but understand in a general way that Prague's coffee houses have played an important part in the development of intellectual, artistic, and political movements through the years. Dluhosch's colorful account stresses their significance during the period between the great wars.

Our emphasis on political and religious history in recent issues continues with three articles that focus, respectively, on the Eighteenth Century, the period leading up to the Second World War, and the period after the War up to the Velvet Revolution. Paul Shore's discussion of eighteenth-century Jesuits in Prague centers on the key figure Antonín Koniáš, whose fascinating career is described in some detail so that we may better understand his importance to Anationalist historians, Jesuit apologists, Communist writers, motion picture directors, and now historical revisionists. Patrick Crowhurst contributes a study of the rise and fall of the Sudeten Nazi Party in Czechoslovakia, explaining how a group of people who had enjoyed status and authority under German Hapsburg emperors became an ethnic minority in a democratic state ruled by people they felt were inferior. Józef Szymeczek's analysis of policies adopted by Christian churches in Czechoslovakia during the period 1945-1989 shows in some detail how the Communist regime benefited from conflicts among the Christian groups. We believe that each of these articles makes an important contribution to our understanding of Czech and Slovak history.

The essays in this issue offer a wide variety of topics, but the subject of the first one, by Milošlav Rechčígl, will be a familiar one indeed to many of our readers. His account of the formative years of SVU, the organization that sponsors this journal, is based on his book *On Behalf of Their Homeland: Fifty Years of SVU*, its publication in 2008 timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of SVU. It is appropriate that his essay be read in conjunction with my review of the book, which also appears in this issue, and I also urge readers to re-read the articles by Francis D. Raška in the Fall 2006 and Fall 2007 issues of *Kosmas* dealing with the Council of Free Czechoslovakia, which helped to prepare the way for SVU. As editor of *Kosmas*, I do not normally review books, but I made an exception in the case of Rechčígl's book because this history of SVU by a man who

served as its president for so many years will be a very special reading experience for members of SVU.

There are other essays as well. Joseph Masheck's essay on the important, innovative architect Adolf Loos, whose work is being displayed in a current exhibition in the City of Prague Museum, should be read in conjunction with Masheck's review of two recent books on Loos. Additional essays include two by Tracy Burns: one deals with Václav Havel's latest (and, apparently, last) play *Odcházení*, which opened at the Archa Theatre in Prague last May, and the other with Slovak author Dušan Mitana's 2000 novel *Vianočná cesta* (The Christmas Trip). Burns's review of the recently published novel *Vražda v Slipnej* (Murder in Slopná) by Slovak author Daniela Kapitánová also appears in this issue. Also among our essays this time is another personal commentary by Zdenek Salzman and a historical essay by Peter Toma in which he discusses the history of Czechoslovakia in a context that suggests parallels between the foreign policies of Great Britain and France regarding Hitler's Germany prior to his invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1938 and the modern US "strategy of pre-emption" in Iraq.

If you are not a current subscriber to *Kosmas*, please consider contacting Frank Safertal, our Subscriptions Editor. I think you'll be glad you did.

Thanks,

Clinton Machann
Editor

[Frank Safertal](#)

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*In the US and Canada, an individual one-year subscription to **Kosmas** is \$27.00 (\$22.00 for current SVU members). *Kosmas* may also be purchased on-line at http://www.svureg.org/svu_publications.htm.*

OBAMA DESCENDENT OF BOHEMIAN ROYALTY

Presidential Genealogy – Obama Descendent of Bohemian Royalty

Early this year, past SVU president, Mila Rechcigl predicted that the next American President would have the Czech roots. With the election of Barack Obama, this has now become a reality.

Although Obama is often characterized as an Afro-American, this is something of a misnomer, because of his mixed Caucasian and African heritage. Barack Obama's mother was Ann Dunham. She was born in November, 1942 in Wichita, Kansas, to Stanley and Madelyn Dunham. Stanley Dunham worked on oil rigs during the Great Depression, and served in the Army during World War II. Her mother, Madelyn, worked in a bomber assembly line during the war. Sometime after the war the family moved to Hawaii. Ann Dunham attended the University of Hawaii, where she met Barack Obama, Sr. The two were married in 1960, and she gave birth to Barack Jr. in 1961.

According to Dr. Rechcigl, Ann Dunham traces her royal blood to William I of Scotland, or William the Lion, the monarch who ruled Scotland from 1165 to 1214. King William the Lion's roots are traceable to Duke Boleslav I of Bohemia (ca 900-967), Duke Vratislav I of Bohemia (877-ca 919) and Duke Borivoj I of Bohemia (ca 842-894). Furthermore, he discovered that Barack Obama also descended from King Edward I of England (1239-1307), whose ancestry can be linked with King Vratislav II of Bohemia (ca 1035-1091), the 4th great grandson of Duke Borivoj I of Bohemia and his wife Saint Ludmila.

According to Rechcigl's research, 40 of the 44 US Presidents including President-elect Obama (91%) have ancestry linked to European royalty.