

## The 2001 Andrew Elias SVU Human Tolerance Award

In the Spring of 2001, the Society – on the initiative of Dr. Andrew Elias as the Sponsor – established an annual Andrew Elias SVU Human Tolerance Award. The annual award includes a prize of \$1000. An ad hoc SVU Award Nominations Committee for the year of 2001 has been formed to receive and evaluate proposals for candidates for the award. The ad hoc Committee for 2001, consisting of Hon. Thomas Luke (Geneva), Dr. Ladislav Macho (Bratislava), Prof. Zdenek Slouka (Prague – Committee Liaison), and Prof. Alexander Tkac (Bratislava), submitted to the SVU President and the Executive Board a unanimous recommendation that The 2001 Andrew Elias SVU Human Tolerance Award be bestowed onto **FATHER ANTON SRHOLEC**, Podunajske Biskupice, Slovakia whose life and work are synonymous with tolerance, compassion, and faith in humanity. SVU Executive Board enthusiastically accepted their recommendation. A brief summary of Father Srholec's life and work follows.

### FATHER ANTON SRHOLEC

Born on June 12, 1929, in Skalica, Anton Srholec went through private Salesian High School in Sastin, was novitiated at the Salesian St. Benedict Cloister, graduated from a public High School in Bratislava in 1951 – and in the same year was amnestied, two months before reaching the age of 22. He was amnestied while attempting, together with other novices, to cross the border on the way to Italy to study theology at the Salesian University in Turin. A Bratislava court sentenced Anton Srholec for “presumed high treason and espionage” to twelve years in prison. From February 1952 on, novice Srholec worked in Jáchymov uranium mines, held in cells of concentration camps Dvanáctka, Rovnost, Bytiz, and Tmavy Dul. Under the general amnesty of May, 1960, Anton was released from Jáchymov and for 8 more years served at hard labor in heavy industry, including four years as a stoker at Ostrava steel works.

All evidence shows that throughout these sixteen years from Jáchy-mov to Ostrava, Anton Srholec was an untiring source of faith and hope to his mates, regardless of their persuasion, ideology, or personal history. Where lesser men would close themselves to others and to the cruel world, Anton Srholec opened himself to all in need around him. Where others would lose faith in humanity, and some did, Anton Srholec not only retained his, but retained so much faith in the value of every human being that he could, did, and to this day does share it with others.

In the hard years, Anton Srholec secretly studied theology and strengthened his Salesian and ecumenical predispositions and beliefs, learned English and German and in May 1970 was elevated to priesthood by Pope Paul VI. Back in Slovakia in the 1970's and 1980's was again persecuted by the secret police for contributing to "samizdat" literature and for preaching. From 1985 to 1989 once more ended up as a laborer in Bratislava.

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And yet in all of this Father Anton Srholec has remained unchanged as a man. Having written five "samizdat" monographs, four books, some fifty articles, all carrying the message of tolerance and compassion, after 1989 Father Antonio goes again to men as they are in real life – so many in dire need of helping hands and kind hearts. After many arduous efforts, in 1992 Father Antonio obtains from the City of Bratislava an abandoned building and converts it into a home for the homeless, the downtrodden, the alcoholics, the lost sons and daughters of society who need to be found again. More than two hundred of them have gone through "Roseta" Home in Podunajské Biskupice, and there is hardly a day when Father Antonio is not with them.

Said Prof. Pavol Traubner, M.D., Dean of Medical Faculty of Comenius University in Bratislava, and also the Head of the Jewish Community of Slovakia: "Anton Srholec represents the ideal of the lineage of different religious confessions. If only all of us would feel and think as this exceptional, honest man – there would be much less hate, and much more love."

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## Návrh na cenu Andrew Elias Human Tolerance Award Otcovi Antonovi Srhoľcovi

SVU - Miestna skupina Bratislava, bola od prvej chvíľe svojho založenia v r. 1993 obohatená o vzácneho člena, katolíckeho seleziánskeho kňaza, Antona Srhoľca - vzdelanca medzi chudobnými, kritika medzi lojálnymi, solidárneho s trpiacimi, nie však s mocnými.

Predsedsníctvo SVU jednoznačne usúdilo, že menovaný Otec Anto-nio, ako ho všetci voláme, je dôstojným kandidátom na takéto ocenenie humanity a tolerance. Svojím slovom, perom, aktivitami, svojím poznaním, svojou charizmatickou činnosťou, prekročil prah a brány kostola, vstúpil do sveta, do života ľudí. Pomohol veľkému množstvu ľudí niest' ich ťarohy, kríže, hriechy. Ovplynul životy nielen veriacich, ale i verejnú mienku mnohých občanov, žijúcich na Slovensku, ba i za jeho hranicami, nevynímajúc bratské Čechy. jeho heslo v tých najťažších chvíľach života (1952-1960) v jáchymovských uránových lágroch, či už v trestaneckých koncentračných táboroch, neskôr ako robotník tavič pri vysokých peciach (Ostrava 1964-68), bolo: „... človek je schopný podstúpiť najväčšie utrpenia, keď vie, že je zapojené do procesu poznávania zmyslu nášho života.“ Bol ochráncom slabých v zápase so silnými.

V septembri v r. 1970 je v Ríme spolu s vybranými bohoslovcami z celého sveta pápežom Pavlom VI. na námestí sv. Petra vysvetený za kňaza. Je to vrcholný okamih jeho života a stáva sa trvalým zdrojom jeho životného optimizmu.

Po Nežnej revolúcii v r. 1992 Otec Antonio se stáva obetavým patrónom bezdomovcov - získava od Magistrátu Bratislavy opustenú ubytovňu, v ktorej potom nachádzajú útočisko priebežne 20-30 chudobných, alkoholikov, invalidných trpiacich aj zločincov. Doteraz v tomto útulku RESOTY v Podunajských Biskupiciach sa vystriedalo už vyše 200 ľudí, ktorých postupne vracal do života, učil ich vzájomnej znášenlivosti a priateľským vzťahom a sám sa tam denne vracia, hoci je už 71-ročný. „Bezdomovci podobne ako chorí ľudia sú otvorenou ranou našej ľudskej existencie“, hovoríeva tento ochránce slabých v zápase so silnými.

Otec Antonio je vynímočná osobnosť, predtým politický vezeň a robotník, potom obľúbený kazateľ nekonvenčného obsahu a štýlu s kritickým pohľadom na okolitý svet i na „svojich“, ale aj horlivý publicista v samizdatoch i v slobodných médiach, človek súcitný s ubiedenými a korešpondujúci s duchovným, mravným i sociálnym myslením súčasného sveta. Vo svojej publikačnej činnosti se zamýšľa nad zásadnými otázkami duchovnej orientácie dnešného, tolerantného, ekumenického kresťana. Presadzuje nie deklaratívne, ale autentické kresťanstvo.

Záverom nech charakterizuje tohto výnimočného človeka sám hlava židovskej obce na Slovensku Prof. MUDr. Pavol Traubner, sympatizant našej SVU v Bratislave: „Život kňaza Antona Srhoľca muže byť príkladom nám všetkým, ako má žiť slušný, kultúrny a tolerantný človek z môjho hľadiska, z hľadiska predstaviteľa židovského etnika. Anton Srhoľec predstavuje ideál vzťahu rôznych náboženských konfesii. Kiež by všetci cítili a uvažovali ako tento vzácny a čestný človek. Bolo by podstatne menej nenávisťi a podstatne viacej lásky“.

Za predsedsníctvo SVU MS-Bratislava

ALEXANDER TKÁČ

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### From the Chief Organizer of the SVU Conference in Nebraska

Exactly one year ago Ambassador Vondra was in Lincoln speaking on the University campus and then spent the weekend at the Wilber Czech Festival. He was extremely touched by the heritage and culture that has remained so strong for over a century in America's heartland. I remember watching Mila Saskova-Pierce that day, having planned the Ambassador's visit by herself and I went up to her a few days later and told her if she ever needs help on another Czech and Slovak project, call on me. Little did I know that a few weeks later she and I would go up to the Dean of Arts and Sciences office and ask if the College would give us their support for the SVU Conference the summer of 2001. We left the Dean's office at 4:00 that day and by 5:00 p.m. had faxed a proposal to Dr. Rechcigl. After a few changes to the proposal, the SVU Executive Committee decided they liked what we had done, especially tying the conference in with the Wilber Czech Festival.

My life has been a whirlwind ever since that day. I have always been very proud of my Czech ethnicity and heritage, and I want to share my enthusiasm and pride with you. Everyone on our Organizing Committee has worked so hard the past 11 months and has the same sense of pride and enthusiasm. We have bonded together and have complimented each other's strengths and skills. And we have had a wonderful time getting to know each other. I am certain that some of the friendships I have made with members of this committee will be lifelong. You will all benefit from having come to Lincoln for this year's North American Conference: Nebraska Czechs will all be sharing their pride, their ethnicity, and their hearts with you.

Long after this SVU Conference has ended, I hope all of you will remember the Nebraska Czechs fondly and know that we all worked very hard to create a memory that will last a lifetime!

KACENKA OSLZLA

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## Happening v Nebrasce

To, co proběhlo při srpnové konferenci SVU v Nebrasce, bylo jedi-nečné a vpravdě fenomenální. Nelze to nazvat jinak než „happening“. Ti z nás, kdo přijeli z jiných států Unie nebo ze zahraničí, si připadali jako Alenka v říši divů, nebo jak Češi říkají, „v Jiříkově vidění“. Laskavost, dobrá vůle a přátelství, za doprovodu širokého úsměvu a pomocné ruky všude, kam se člověk podíval. Navíc bylo cítit, že to vše bylo přirozené, nestrojené.

Přijel jsem o den dřív, abych si „zkontroloval věci“. Po přistání na letišti v Omaze jsem byl odvezen do hlavního města Nebrasky Lincolnu, místa konání naší konference. Shodou okolností to byl den mých narozenin. Moji přátelé v Nebrasce mě překvapili uspořádáním radostné malé slavnosti a od toho bodu se věci začaly rozjíždět. Byli jsme ubytováni v nových, působivých apartmá hotelového stylu v Kauffmanově centru v areálu Nebrasské univerzity - obývací pokoj, kuchyň a dvě pěkné místnosti, za cenu studentské noclehárny. Všechny místnosti měly veškeré vybavení, včetně termostatů, které umožňovaly ovládání teploty v každé místnosti zvlášť. Kdykoli člověk něco potřeboval, jednoduše zatelefonoval do recepce a přání bylo bezodkladně splněno. Jaký rozdíl od předchozích konferencí a kongresů! Předem připravená jídla byla po-dávána v Selleckově síni hned vedle Kaufmannovy. Jídlo bylo skvělé a podáváno ve formě bufetu.

Většina účastníků konference začala přijíždět ve středu 1. srpna odpoledne. Po registraci, která byla příhodně umístěna v Kauffmanově centru, byla recepce v blízkém Wick Alumni Center. Kromě vynikajícího jídla a výborné společnosti byly pro zábavu hudba a zpěv. Mezi účinkujícími byli Světlana Yashirinová - klavír, Budomír Zvolánek - klarinet a Josef Blahník a Anita Smíšková z Czech Music Alliance. Na programu byly prezentace různých skupin z Nebrasky, které se podílely na organizaci konference, včetně Rona Stilese, prezidenta českého klubu Komenský, Heleny Pejsarové od Nebraska Czechs of Lincoln, Glena Riensche z Czech Language Foundation, Merliny Lawsona, děkana mezinárodních záležitostí na Nebrasské universitě v Lincolnu (UNL), Dr. Olivy, děkana koleje krásných a dramatických umění na UNL, Johna Fialy, nově zvoleného prezidenta Nebraska Czechs Inc., a starosty Licolnu Dona Weseleyho. Náměstek nebrasského guvernéra Carmelee Tuma přišel s osobní zdravicí a předal prezidentovi SVU zvláštní proklamaci s jeho jmenováním „admirálem nebrasského námořnictva“. Panovala při tom všem dobrá nálada.

Konference byla zahájena následující den v prostorném auditoriu Nebrasské studentské unie. Přesně v osm hodin byla všechna místa obsazena. Po čtyřech státních hymnách (americké, kanadské, české a slovenské) v provedení Joela Blahníka, Anity Smíškové, Maureen Beckové a Capital City Czech Choraliers, přišla uvítací řeč univerzitního děkana věd a umění Dr. Richarda J. Hoffmanna, po které následovalo moje oficiální zahájení z titulu prezidenta SVU. Dále na programu byla Dr. Mila Sasková-Piercová, předsedkyně organizačního výboru konference a Dr. Russell Ganim, vedoucí katedry moderních jazyků a literatury. Po nich následovali Kate Witeková, revizorka veřejných účtů státu Nebraska, která přinesla zdravici a zvláštní poselství guvernéra Mikea Johannse. Při té příležitosti guvernér vyhlásil naši konferenci ve dnech 1. až 3. srpna za „Dny Československé společnosti pro vědy a umění“. Pak přišel na řadu nově zvolený starosta Lincolnu Don Weseley, který uvítal účastníky jménem hlavního města Nebrasky Lincolnu a zmínil se o svých českých předcích, kteří se v Nebrasce usadili koncem devatenáctého století. (Jeho příjmení bylo původně „Veselý“.) Následovalo poselství amerického senátora Chucka Hagela. Na závěr oficiální účasti programu vystoupil se zdravicí generální konzul České republiky Petr Gandalovič, který oslovil účastníky jménem České republiky. Program uzavřelo hudební vystoupení Capital City Czech Choraliers.

Po krátké přestávce na kávu a koláče začala konference samotná. Obvykle se konaly tři sezení zároveň podle vytištěného programu. Všechny přednáškové haly byly vybaveny nejnovějším zařízením. Většina sezení proběhla hladce za dobré účasti. Každé sezení obvykle skončilo vyhrazeným časem na otázky a odpovědi, při nichž se často rozproudila rušná diskuse. Není zde dost místa na vyjmenování všech sezení, která se konala souběžně celé dva dny. Stojí za zmínku, že řady panelů se zúčastnili mladší posluchači a také prezentace měli mladší lidé, což byl jeden z hlavních záměrů konference.

Zvláštní plenární zasedání bylo věnováno prezidentskému symposiu. Měl jsem tu čest předsedat při sezení nazvaném „Role etnických organizací při zachování našeho kulturního dědictví“, jehož se zúčastnili významní činitelé etnických organizací ve Spojených státech. Byli mezi nimi zástupci Amerického Sokola, Bohemian Benevolent and Literary Association v New Yorku, Bohemian Citizens' Benevolent Society of Astoria-New York, Czech and Slovak Heritage Association z Marylandu, Czech and Slovak Music Society, Czech and Slovak Society v Oregonu, Czech Heritage Society v Texasu, Czech Language Foundation v Nebrasce, Czechoslovak American National Council of America, Klub Komenský, National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, Nebraska Czechs Inc., Nebraska Czechs z Lincolnu, Nebraska Czechs z Wilberu, Oklahoma Czechs, a Slavonic Benevolent Order Státu Texas. Českou republiku zastupovali Jaromír Šlápota z Československého ústavu zahraničního a senátor Milan Špaček, předseda senátního výboru pro zahraniční Čechy. Předseda odpovídajícího výboru české poslanecké sněmovny poslanec Jiří Karas se nemohl zúčastnit.

Při čtvrtečním obědě se o zábavu postaraly královny krásy Miss Czech-Slovak USA. Byly mezi nimi bývalá Miss Nebraska Czech Queen Nicole Kimbroughová, která hrála na housle, Miss Kansas Czech-Slovak Queen Mary Elizabeth Kasperová (finalistka soutěže 2000 Miss Czech-Slovak USA, umístila se jako druhá), která provedla baletní polku, Miss Nebraska Czechs z Wilber Chapter, královna Becky Kastanková, která zahrála sólo na trumpetu, a Miss Czech-Slovak USA, královna soutěže roku 2000, která zazpívala českou státní hymnu česky a anglicky.

Při pátečním obědě k účastníkům promluvil rektor Nebraské univerzity v Lincolnu Dr. Harvey Perlman. V pátek odpoledne se konalo výroční zasedání SVU s obvyklou zprávou o stavu SVU, kterou přednesl prezident SVU. Tato zpráva stejně jako rezoluce schválená valnou hromadou jsou v tomto čísle *Zpráv SVU* vytištěny odděleně.

Dnes 3. srpna večer byl uspořádán banket SVU, na němž vystoupili řečníci prezident SVU Rechčígl a generální konzul Petr Gandalovič. Pak následovaly prezentace prezidentských citací SVU vybraným organizacím, které se významně zasloužily o zachování českého a slovenského kulturního dědictví v USA. Byly to organizace, které se rovněž zúčastnily prezidentského sympozia SVU, ve spolupráci s National Heritage Commission. Dodatečné citace byly uděleny Matici Vyššího Vzdělání, Slovak American International Cultural Foundation, Masarykovu klubu i jednotlivcům: Jiřímu Eichlerovi, Míle Šaškové-Piercové, Tomovi Zumpfemu a Cathleen Oslzlé. Cathleen, která je nejraději oslovoována „Kačenka“, byla hlavní hybnou silou konference a za své mimořádné úsilí dostala od SVU kříšťalovou vázu a leteckou poukázku (airfare voucher) na kongres SVU v Plzni v příštím roce, kterou SVU věnovala newyorská cestovní kancelář Tatra Travel. Velvyslanci Alexandr Vondra a Martin Bútora, pod jejichž záštitou se konference konala, zaslali své zdravice, které byly na banketu přečteny.

Další akce, které doprovázely konferenci SVU, zahrnovaly Accordion Jam Session ve čtvrtek odpoledne, banket s udílením cen Czech Language Foundation s následným tanečním večerem s polkou ve čtvrtek večer ve velkém tanečním sále Hotelu Cornhusker, Wilber Children's Beseda Dancers tentýž večer v Hotelu Cornhusker, a promítání filmu „Musíme si pomáhat“ v Sheldonově kině.

V sobotu 4. srpna mnozí účastníci konference nastoupili do autobusu do Wilberu, Nebraska, aby viděli známý Wilber Czech Festival. To byla událost sama o sobě, v mnoha ohledech připomínající tradiční českou „pout“, jenže v mnohem větším rozsahu, s americkým průvodem a soutěží krásy, která vyvrcholila volbou české a slovenské královny krásy. Generální tajemník SVU Frank Safertal a já ve své funkci presidenta SVU jsme byli poctěni tím, že jsme byli vezeni v průvodu s našimi jmény a insigniemi funkcí vystavenými na antických automobilech.

Posuzováno celkově, konference SVU v Nebrasce byla obrovským úspěchem stejně jako vše, co s ní souviselo, díky místním představitelům a organizátorům jako Cathleen Oslzlá, Míla Šaškova-Piercová a její manžel Layne, Tom Zumpfe, John Fiala a Ron a Jitka Stilesovi, kromě několika organizací, jež s nimi spolupracovaly v příkladném týmovém úsilí. Nebraska Czechs of Lincoln byli skvělými hostiteli ve svých autentických národních krojích, středou v Kauffmanově centru počínaje a závěrečnou prezentací v pátek konče. Také se starali o prezentační místnosti v Nebraské studentské unii. Zaslouhují si veškeré pochvaly za své fantastické úsilí, včetně památníku Wall of Remembrance a umělecké sbírky v Great Plains Art Collection. Nebraští organizátoři získali několik místních sponzorů, kteří pomohli hradit náklady, takže naše registrační poplatky byly co nejnižší a většina sociálních a kulturních akcí mohla být pořádána gratis. SVU jim bude navždy vděčna.

Ti z Vás, kdo jste se zúčastnili Nebraské konference, zajisté budete souhlasit s tím, že to byl opravdový „happening“.

*MÍLA RECHČÍGL, Prezident SVU*

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## **SVU Edmonton Chapter Prepares CD Record with Czech Music**

Thanks to the efforts of the Edmonton SVU Chapter, particularly its president Prof. Pavel Jelen, a new CD record with Czech music is now available. The project has been brought to fruition thanks to cooperation with the University of Alberta, and the sponsor Dairy Farmers of Canada. The CD features a live recording of an Edmonton Symphony Orchestra (ESO) concert given on October 29, 1999 in the Winspear Centre, conducted by Grzegorz Nowak, an Honorary Professor at the Department of Music.

The music on the CD consists of "the original" version of the most revered piece of all Czech music, "My Homeland" by Bedrich Smetana (including the famous Vltava/Moldau, arguably the most famous piece of Czech classical orchestra repertoire), and an almost unknown opus by Leos Janacek, his "Moravian Dances" recorded only once before. This is the first recording of an ESO concert available on a CD; also a first recording of the "original version" of My Homeland by a Canadian orchestra and possibly by anyone, as this cyclus of the symphonic poems as played nowadays includes two additional pieces which were added by the composer several years after completing the original version.

The sale price for individual copies will be \$20, multiple copies (20 minimum) will be available at a discount. SVU encourages its members to buy this unique CD. Interested persons should contact George Patocka [[gpatocka@ualberta.ca](mailto:gpatocka@ualberta.ca)] or Pavel Jelen [[paul.jelen@ualberta.ca](mailto:paul.jelen@ualberta.ca)].

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## State of the SVU in the Year 2001

*Report of SVU President Dr. Miloslav Rechcigl  
to SVU General Assembly, 3 August 2001 in Lincoln, NE*

Welcome to our 2001 Annual Meeting. Since I don't wish to deprive you of attending any of the exciting events that our Nebraskan friends arranged for us, I will make this year's report brief.

Generally speaking, I am pleased to report that, since last year, we have made excellent progress in a number of areas and our finances are sound and well. Thanks to our new Website the SVU visibility and its overall image could not be better.

As customary, the newly elected Executive Board, in its first meeting, reexamined the aims of the Society and decided on its priorities. Considering the aging SVU membership, the Board has selected as its main objective to revitalize the Society with younger people under the new initiative, "Accent on Youth."

Toward this aim, we have established a new Youth Advisory Committee which is busy at work on special projects, including the formation of a separate database and a new page on our Website relating to young people. In addition to Anna Vysoka, who is responsible for this activity, I would like to introduce to you one young man, who is here with us, the SVU Webmaster, Jiri Eichler of Prague. Let the initiative of these young persons serve as an example to others.

The second major priority of the Executive Board has been focus on the computer technology and its application in SVU work. The Executive Board members now communicate among each other entirely via e-mail and, similarly, the Board's contact with SVU Local Chapters, for the most part, is conducted electronically. Those chapters which don't as yet have their e-mail addresses are admonished to add new officers to their boards who have access to a computer.

Technically speaking, our greatest advance has been made in establishing and perfecting a new SVU Website. In close cooperation of the already mentioned SVU Webmaster, Jiri Eichler, we now have a fully functional comprehensive and interactive website which provides information practically on every aspect of SVU work, past and present. In addition, it is becoming an excellent resource on Czech and Slovak matters, in general, including history, literature, culture, conferences, available grants, etc. The thousands of visitors who frequent our Website is indicative of the Website's popularity.

To make the Website as user-friendly as possible, it has been provided with a SEARCH tool which allows the user, by choosing appropriate key words, to readily find names, places and things, in a matter of seconds. Furthermore, we have also established a special SITE MAP which shows a detail outline of our site, permitting one to access any category or subcategory.

One of the major activities of SVU have been regional conferences and world congresses. This year, in its wisdom, the Executive Board chose Nebraska as its site for a conference and traditional annual meeting. It was obviously the best choice, as judged by the program our Nebraskan friends put together as well as the excellent logistical arrangements. I haven't witnessed for some time such enthusiasm with which they have carried out their tasks. They truly deserve our warmest thanks.

As far as the next SVU World Congress is concerned, this time it will be held in Pilsen, Czech Republic in June 2002. Our principal contact there is Dr. Ivo Budil, Dean of the Faculty of Humanity Studies.

Let me now turn briefly to other SVU activities. By now, our subscribers have received the second issue of *Kosmas*, under the able editorship and management of Clinton Machann and David Chroust. I am sure, you are pleased with its contents. From now on, you should expect to receive future issues on time.

With reference to our newsletter, *Zprávy SVU*, each issue now contains regular features, such as SVU Calendar, From New Membership Rolls, Focus on Younger Generation, etc. The SVU Calendar periodically brings information on the varied SVU activities worldwide. To keep it current it is imperative that local chapters send us their periodic updates in a timely fashion.

As for the other publications, we have two monographs in process: a collection of Zdenka Fischmann's *Papers on Musicology* and an Anthology of *Czech and Slovak Poetry in Exile*. Our goal is to have them published within a year.

You will be pleased to know that we are also proceeding with publishing selected papers from the last SVU World Congress under the editorship of Prof. Jan Skalný. Our current plan is to first issue them in the form of a CD and, depending on the interest, we may then also publish the papers in the conventional way.

I have also good news about our SVU Biographical Directory. Having solved a number of technical problems relating to the merging of new biographical data with the old SVU Directory, we are now proceeding with the transcription of data as quickly as we can under the capable hands of Jiri Eichler.

Let me now turn to another of our initiatives, i.e., the SVU efforts toward preserving Czech and Slovak heritage abroad. As part of this undertaking, I had the pleasure of conducting a comprehensive survey relating to Czech historic sites and archival material in the US. This led to two draft reports, "Czech-American Historic Sites, Monuments, and Other Memorabilia" and "Czechoslovak American Archivalia" which were presented to the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under whose sponsorship and financial assistance they were prepared. The reports generated lots of interest here as well as abroad and suggestions have been made that they be published. It

should be noted that the survey was done in cooperation with our National Heritage Commission, comprised of major Czech organizations in America.

A propos, the present Nebraska Conference, with its central theme, "Czech and Slovak Legacy in the Americas," is a part of the SVU continual quest to preserve our national heritage in America. Our aim is to sensitize the Czech and Slovak American community to get them involved in this important effort so that the work of the early immigrants from the Czechlands and Slovakia and their legacy not be forgotten.

In conclusion, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all SVU members who have assisted us with our multi-facet agenda and especially our Nebraskan friends who have made this conference and every-thing connected with it a big success.

In parting, I wish to reiterate that we always welcome suggestions and volunteers from SVU membership at large, as well as non-members, particularly among the younger folks, to help us with our aims. Thanks again and I look forward to seeing you in full force at our SVU World Congress in Plzeň.

*MÍLA RECHCÍGL, president*

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## **From SVU Executive Board**

After the summer break, SVU Executive Board met again on Sep-tember 23rd in Mila Rechcigl's residence in Rockville. Although some members could not be present, because of the tragic terrorist events in the US, there was a sufficient number present to constitute a quorum.

Executive Board agreed to add Dr. Jan P. Skalny and Rev. Michael Rokos to the Board, to fill the vacancy of Executive Vice President and Vice President, respectively.

VP Joseph Machac reported on the status of *Kosmas*, favorably commenting on its contents and the work of Clinton Machann as Editor-in-Chief. Some concern was expressed, however, about the lack of progress made on getting the subscription base enlarged and the need to remedy the situation as soon as possible. Recommendation was made to separate the production component from the other management functions and appoint an additional person with the responsibility for subscriptions.

VP Vera Borkovec gave an account of the status of the planned bilingual anthology "Taste of a Lost Homeland. Czech and Slovak Exile Poetry in America," which is being prepared as a tribute to Frank Marlow. The anthology which will include selected poems of some twenty poets, is almost completed and is ready to go to print. The Board gave the final approval to the budget and opted for having the monograph printed by Typos printers in Pilsen. The book should be available at the time of SVU World Congress in June.

VP Dagmar White informed the Board of some impending copy-right issues that will have to be resolved before the Fischmann Papers' can be published, expressing hope that this won't delay the overall publication schedule of the monograph.

Of the other SVU publication projects, Rechcigl gave a report on SVU Biographical Directory, commenting that the new members have the last chance to send in their biographical data and the old members to update their biographical entries since the last Directory was published in 1992. He also informed the Board of the efforts to publish selected papers from the SVU World Congress in Washington in 2000 on a CD under the direction and editorship of Dr. Jan P. Skalny. Prof. Josef Mestenhauser is doing the same thing with regard to the papers from the SVU Conference in Minnesota in 1999. And, finally, Mila Saskova-Pierce agreed to collect and edit the papers for another CD from the Nebraska Conference. Executive Board was also reminded of the fact that *Zpravy SVU* can now also be found in an electronic version on SVU Website.

President Rechcigl then reported on the status of preparation of the SVU World Congress next year and on his discussions and agreements with the organizers in Pilsen where the Congress will be held. The dates for the Congress were definitely set for 23-30 June 2002 at the University of West Bohemia in Plzen. The overall theme of the Congress is "Transformation of Czech & Slovak Societies on the Threshold of the New Millennium in the Present Global World", with sufficient latitude to also accept papers in other areas. In terms of planning the program, the organizers will use a two-prong approach, Dean Ivo Budil together with his collaborators in Pilsen will organize panels based on speakers from the Czech and Slovak Republics, whereas Dr. Mila Rechcigl will coordinate the panels from US and other overseas participants. Ivo Budil and Mila Rechcigl have agreed on a tentative list of panels, which appears elsewhere, with the understanding that this is a working document which can be modified or augmented, as appropriate by either side.

Considerable part of the discussion was devoted to the question of budget and the logistics. We shall report on specific local arrangements and the various planned social and cultural activities later once the details have been firmed up and fully negotiated. In the meantime, the Executive Board has provided the Plzen organizers specific guidelines. This was followed by an intensive discussion of the academic program, specifically the types of panels that could be organized from overseas and suggestions have been made regarding the people who could organize them. The topics included: Czech Military History, Czech Renaissance, Czech Theatre Abroad, US Role in Establishing Czechoslovak Independence, Current Relations between Czech and Slovak Americans and their Homeland, Sokol Abroad, Masaryk Symposium, Czech and Slovak Entrepreneurship Abroad, Teaching of Czech

and Slovak Languages Abroad, International Business and Trade with Czech and Slovak Republics, Czech and Slovak Economies as Viewed from Abroad, Civil Rights and the Roma Issue in Czech and Slovak Republic: Voices from Abroad, Civil Society in Czech and Slovak Republics, News and Media, Women's Issues and Feminism, Library Science, Computer Technology, Religion and Faith in Czech and Slovak Republics, Biomedical Sciences, Physical Sciences, Multi-culturalism vs. Melting Point, Ethics and Mortality, Czech Sports in America, Fundraising in the US, Youth Issues, Environmental Situation in Czech and Slovak Republics, Preserving Czech and Slovak Heritage Abroad, Literature, History of Art.

Rehcigl also reported on the SVU in Nebraska which he called an unqualified success. Accounts of the conference already appeared in *Zpravy SVU* and are also posted on SVU Website. One of the direct effects of the Conference has been the establishment of a new SVU Chapter in Nebraska, the details on which are presented elsewhere. The new Chapter is already busy at work as announced in the SVU Calendar.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the discussion of the new SVU initiative, "Accent on Youth", the progress made with the SVU Website, status of local chapters worldwide and SVU publicity. Among the new items, Executive Board briefly discussed and approved in principle a newly proposed project "Lighthouse", submitted by Mr. Safertal, jointly with Mr. Orkin and Mr. Melton. It also discussed the Jan Kaplan's proposal for a new publication "Atlantic Crossing" and encouraged him to submit a proposal to an appropriate agency to support this worthy endeavor. And, finally, Executive Board was agreeable to assist Jan Kratochvil's project "Czech and Slovak Exile in the 20th Century" with advise and contacts.

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## In Memoriam

### **GORDON SKILLING (1912-2001)**

"It would be absurd to consider Masaryk a ready-made model for today, or to treat his ideas as trusty guides in the vastly different condition of the immediate future. He himself did not always live up to his principles, and some of them have been outdated by later events. Nonetheless Masaryk's towering personality, his belief in truth, his remarkable courage, and his moral approach to politics, seem highly relevant to a world, and to two nations, Slovak as well as Czech, in which political partisanship, party polemics, national egoism, ideological intolerance, and narrowness of vision seem often to dominate the scene."

H. Gordon Skilling, arguably the best Canadian-born friend the Czechs and Slovaks ever had, will be remembered by many Western academics as a co-founder of the Centre for Russian and East European Studies (CREES) at the University of Toronto which he led from its inception in 1963 until 1974 when he had to resign due to ill health. Yet, what a survivor! He taught, published and defended his opinions with such a vigor and for so long that he will be undoubtedly remembered by humanity as one of its most honorable doyens. The Czechs and Slovaks, however, will always claim Gordon Skilling as their own man for he loved their country dearly both before and after their separation. He even married his American fiance Sally at the famous Old Town Hall in Prague (in 1937) as many locals do. Therefore it is almost unbelievable that only two of his numerous books dedicated to Czechoslovak and Central European history and politics have so far been translated into Czech: T. G. Masaryk, *Against the Current Prague*, 1995 one year after its appearance in the English edition from which the above quote is taken, and his memoirs *Czechoslovakia, My second Home*. This, his last work, came out in Prague a few days before his death on 2nd March this year. It would be a fitting tribute to Gordon Skilling's memory if all his works were to be published posthumously in the country which owes him so much.

*MILAN KOCOUREK, Walton on Thames, Surrey*



### **JOHN HENRY WOTIZ (1919-2001)**

A long-time SVU member, Dr. John Henry Wotiz, and his wife Kathryn E. (Kay) Wotiz, of Carbondale, died Tuesday, August 21, 2001, in a car accident in Morehead, Kentucky.

John Wotiz was born in Ostrava, Czechoslovakia, April 12, 1919 and emigrated to the U.S. in 1939. He was naturalized in 1944. He studied at the Czech Polytechnicum in Prague in 1937, and after coming to the U.S., received his B.S. in Chemistry from Furman University in 1941, his M.S. in Chemistry from the University of Richmond in 1943, and his Ph.D. in Chemistry from Ohio State Univ. in 1948. His Ph.D. studies were interrupted in 1944 for two years for service in the U.S. Army at the close of WWII. In the Army he became a lieutenant and gained his U.S. citizenship. At Ohio State he met his future wife, Kay, and they were married in 1945.

John started his full-time academic teaching and research career in 1948 at the University of Pittsburgh where he remained for 9 years. In 1957 he temporarily left his academic career for a research directorship with Diamond Alkali in Painesville, Ohio. In five years he became an author of 44 U.S. and foreign patents. In 1962 he returned to university life as Professor and Department Chairman at Marshall University in Huntington, WV. In 1967 he joined Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, as Chairman of the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department. While at SIU he conducted studies on the teaching systems in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. This led to the development of exchange programs involving graduate students and faculty between SIU and many foreign universities, primarily in Eastern Europe, notable among them the Technical University in his birthplace, Ostrava, Czech Republic.

At 70 he retired from SIU and became Professor Emeritus. He continued to work with SIU on the foreign exchange programs, and received an honorary Doctorate from the Technical University in Ostrava in 1998, recognizing his personal contributions in this arena. In 1992 he received the Dexter Award from the American Chemical Society for his outstanding contributions to the history of chemistry. In that same year he was the recipient of the University Gold Medal from the Technical University in Ostrava. He was Editor of *The Kekule Riddle: A Challenge for Chemists and Psychologists* in 1993.

He achieved an ACBL Life Master in duplicate bridge. John was affiliated with Unitarian Universalist Fellowships during his life in the United States.

Kay was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on September 18, 1923. She attended Ohio State University, studying biology. At OSU she met John and they married on February 23, 1945. She was a homemaker and became a mother with two children born in Pittsburgh, PA, and the third in Painesville, OH. Daughter Anita resides in northern California; daughter Karen resides in Arizona; daughter Vivian resides in southern California. Her lifelong devotion to husband John, and her loving care of their home and children allowed John to pursue and excel in his academic and outside activities. Her interests included opera, musicals, and classic movies. Friends and family remember her as a warm, sweet, hospitable woman who loved to help John entertain. Her roast "Bohemian duck" was a legend about which John loved to boast. She was John's travel companion on the many trips they both took around the world, trying to visit every place on the earth before they could no longer travel.

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## NEW SVU Chapter

The Nebraska SVU Chapter was officially established on August 20, 2001. The Nebraska chapter will be affiliated with the Czech Komensky Club at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Some of the goals of this new chapter are to be supportive of the Czech Heritage Digitilization Project, to publish manuscripts and books by Czech Nebraskan authors, and to involve the youth of Nebraska in the Accent on Youth SVU initiative. Our chapter will align closely with the other Czech organizations in the area and Kacenska Oslzla will serve as the SVU liaison to the six other local groups. The Nebraska Chapter will be working very hard to have a significant representation of people and panels at the PlzeÅ World Congress in June 2002. We want the Czech and Slovak world to know that the culture is very strong and being preserved in the Midwest.

Officers were elected at the second meeting which was held on August 27, 2001. The slate of officers for 2001-02 is: Dr. Jitka Stiles, *President*; Helen Pejsar and Dr. Mila Saskova-Pierce, *Co-Vice Presidents*; Cathy Oslzly, *Temporary Secretary*; John Fiala, *Treasurer*; Jeanette Pribyl Smith, *Publicity*; John Fiala and Cathy Oslzly, *Membership Coordinators*. Members of the Board of Directors include all officers and the following: Dr. Lawrence Jindra, Dr. Patrick Kudlacek, Dr. Gordon Pejsar, Layne Pierce, Ron Stiles, Dr. Joseph Swoboda, Mary Swoboda, Ed Trouba, and Tom Zumpfe.

A membership drive will be taking place very soon. Anyone who joins the Nebraska SVU Chapter prior to December 31, 2001 will become charter members of the organization. We are looking forward to being a very active chapter of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences. KACENKA OSLZLA

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## SVU World Congress

Plzen, CR, 23-30 June 2002

### SUGGESTED PANELS

- 1) Multiculturalism - Challenge, or Threat?
- 2) Planet Earth in Jeopardy?
- 3) The Effect of Nuclear Energy on the Environment
- 4) Will Central Europe Survive until the Year 2100?
- 5) Proteus' Face of Totalitarianism - Comparative Criticism of Communism, Nazism and Fascism
- 6) The Face of the First Republic - Legends and Facts
- 7) Czech Literature at the Break of the 20th and 21st Century
- 8) Shakespeare in Czech Literature (Problems of Authors Using English Language)
- 9) Present Czech Architecture
- 10) Czech Structuralism and its International Echo (Personality and Works of Roman Jacobson)
- 11) Changes in Czech Puppet Shows
- 12) Czech and Slovak Music of the 20th Century
- 13) Jewish and Czech Culture: Mutual Influences
- 14) The Beginnings of Czech State in International Context
- 15) Universities and their Role of Education in the 21st Century
- 16) Possibilities of Current Medical Science



- 17) Informational Technology
- 18) History of Czech Beer
- 19) History of Skoda Factory: World and Czech Industrial Tradition
- 20) Media and Democracy
- 21) European Integration: Euroskepticism and Eurooptimism
- 22) Belief and Czech Society
- 23) Czechs and Slovaks in America
- 24) Czech and Slovak Museums
- 25) Czech and Slovak Library Archives and Collection Development
- 26) Role of Ethnic Organizations in Preserving Our Cultural Heritage
- 27) Genealogy
- 28) The Constitution and Voting Systems: Czech and American Experiences
- 29) The Assimilation and Acculturation of Youth
- 30) Youth Movement
- 31) Student Exchange Programs
- 32) Teaching Czech Language
- 33) Economic Views of the Czech Republic
- 34) Contemporary Czech Film

*NOTE:* This is the first crack at the type of panels we are thinking of organizing. The listing is incomplete and tentative. Additional suggestions would be welcome. Send your comments and/or suggestions to SVU President at: [rechcigl@aol.com](mailto:rechcigl@aol.com). Potential speakers from the US and Canada should contact the same.

### **From New SVU Rolls**

**THOMAS JAMES PAVLAK** serves as Associate Director of Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia. He holds degrees from University of Illinois (B.A., 1965; M.A., 1968; Ph.D. in Political Science, 1971). His interests are: public policy, administration, arts and culture.

**RONALD E. JAROS** is a teacher and coach at North Penn School district, Pennsylvania. He is a native of Lansdale, PA and holds academic degrees from West Chester University (B.S., 1970, M.Ed., 1976. His interests are: art, music, fitness, Czech & Slovak history, Sokol physical/culture society.

**PATRICIA S. JAROS** is a teacher at North Penn School District, Pennsylvania. She is a native of Ambler, PA and holds degrees from Millersville University (B.A., 1970). Her interests are in history and art.

**ERICA A. JAROS** is a student enrolled at Clemson University. She is a native of Lansdale, PA and is interested in writing.

**MATHEW KREJCI** is a lecturer in flute/principal flute at University of the Pacific, Sacramento, CA. He is a native of Cleveland, OH and has academic degrees from Indiana University (B.Mus.Ed., 1973; M. Flute Performance, 1978). His interests lie in symphonic and chamber music. He toured Slovakia with his son, violinist, in 1997 a performed a flute recital in Prague in April, 2000.

**THOMAS KOLSKY** is Professor of History of Political Science at Montgomery Co. Community College, Blue Bell, PA. He was born in a Czech military camp in Buzuluk, Russia. He holds the following degrees: B.A., Rutgers University, 1965; M.A., University of Hawaii, 1967; M.A., Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1970; Ph.D., George Washington Univ. 1986.

**STEPHEN JOSEPH WATZEK** is President of Award Consulting Group. Inc., Scottsdale, AZ. He is a native of Columbus, OH and holds a degree from Franklin University at Columbus, OH (B.S. in Business Management Science, 1987). His interests are in business structure and financial improvement.

**TERESA LUDMILA O'DONNELL** is a student at Lewis and Clark College, with interest in international relations and linguistics. She is a native of Portland, OR who spent a year of study at Charles University in Prague during 1999-2000.

**ISA-KAE MEKSIN** is a retired teacher of visually impaired/blind children at Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District, California. She is a native of Bronx, NY and holds academic degrees from Hunter College (B.A. in Social Work, 1946) and CA State-Los Angeles (M.A. in Special Education, 1963). She has been a volunteer for the American Civil Liberties Union, Braille Institute and Commissioner on the Affordable Housing Commission (Los Angeles) and participates in many Echo Park organizations.

**MARCELLE MARIE SKUBNA** is a teacher at Los Angeles Unified School District, California. She is a native of Prague, CR and holds academic degrees from California State University at Northridge (B.A. in Sociology, B.A. in Spanish) and teaching credentials in Special Education from the same institution. Her interests lie in anthropology and mythology of the American Indian and language translation and interpretation.

**ROBERT PETER CYMBAL** is Account Executive of Pharmerica Corp. for Southern California. He is a native of Glendale, CA and has degree from California State University at Northridge (B.A. in International Marketing and Psychology with honors, 1997).

**NEAL ORKIN** is Associate Professor of Legal Studies at Drexel University. He is a native of Philadelphia, PA and has academic degrees from Drexel University (B.S. EE, 1967) and Temple University (J.D., 1975). His interests are in labor law, intellectual property law and Czech literature.

**TEREZA HRINKOVA** is a student attending gymnasium at Jablonec nad Nisou. She is a native of Jablonec nad Nisou, has interest in psychology, history and journalism and is fluent in English.

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## Activities of SVU Members

Dne 6. února ve Sněmovním sálu Nové brněnské radnice byly slavnostně uděleny Ceny města Brna prof. **MUDr. JANU SMARDOVI, Dr.Sc.** a pí. prof. **ALENĚ VESELÉ**, emeritní rektorce JAMU. Oba jsou členy SVU od založení brněnské skupiny.

Dne 21. června byla prof. **STANISLAVU KOMEDOVI, Dr.Sc.** udělena Cena města Olomouce v oblasti osobnost. Prof. Komenda je matematik, překladatel, vysokoškolský učitel a spisovatel. Na lékařské fakultě University Palackého vede oddělení biometrie při Ústavu lékařské biofyziky. Jeho odborná činnost zahrnuje více než 700 článků, 15 učebních textů, skript a téměř desítku monografií vydaných doma i v cizině, česky, anglicky a rusky. Vydal též řadu básnických sbírek a kromě toho píše aforismy, bajky, eseje, fejetony a rozhlasové hry.

**MARIE K. HOLECEK** of Florida has informed us that her translation of Ivan Olbracht's *Nikola Šuhaj loupežník* has just been published by Northwestern University Press under the title *Nikola the Outlaw*.

**JOSEF BROZEK** writes: "Dear Friends. Life was good to me and I assembled a basketful of awards and honors, beginning with the honorary membership ('ordinarius externus socius') of the Slovak Anthropological Society and ending with the award of honorary degree by the Masaryk University of Brno on May 28, 1999." And as if this were not enough, we have just learned that Dr. Brozek has been selected by the American Psychological Association for a life time achievement award for his continuing contributions to scholarship in the history of psychology.

**PETER BISEK**, publisher of the *Americké Listy*, has celebrated his best achievement so far as a junior rowing coach this summer when his protégé, Amanda Kendrick, placed 6th rowing "straith pair" at the Junior World Championship held this year in Duisburg, Germany.

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## Focus on Younger Generation

### JITKA AND RON STILES: A Youthful Czech-Canadian Couple Promoting Czech Culture in Nebraska

In 1996, a very energetic young Czech lady named Jitka Tomanova came overseas to study and work with Dr. Michael Stiles in his food microbiological laboratory in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. As she would have been left alone over Christmas, far from her family in Mnichovo Hradiste (60 km north of Prague), Dr. Stiles invited Jitka to spend the Christmas holiday with his family in Whitefish, Montana, U.S.A. There she met Ron Stiles who was eager to learn all about her including her Czech language, traditions and culture. This explains in part why a Canadian without Czech origins is so involved in Czech heritage and culture to this day in Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A.

At the end of June 1997, Ron moved to Prague in the Czech Republic and married Jitka a year later. By November 1999, Jitka was finishing her Ph.D., and had been hired by four different universities to do her post-doctorate research. Lincoln was the city where they both could work, Jitka at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UN-L) as a research associate, and Ron teaching English Language Learners in Lincoln Public Schools, which explains how they came to live in Nebraska.

The state of Nebraska has a large Czech population, and it was not long before Jitka and Ron made enough contacts to become members of the Nebraska Czechs of Lincoln and join their monthly meetings. They became actively involved by presenting a traditional Czech wedding ceremony and customs for this group, Jitka giving a lecture on Czech culture, and they later contributed to the group's 2000 Christmas party by providing hand-painted, mouth-blown Czech ornaments to the members.

Further, since UN-L offers a Czech language program, Ron enrolled for the spring semester starting January 2000, along with taking graduate level Special Education course as required by Nebraska Teacher's Certification. This effectively began his Masters Degree and secured his status for the next two years as a student at UN-L. As such, Ron was able to accept the nomination by Katya Koubek, his Czech Language instructor, and Dr. Mila Saskova-Pierce (the enthusiastic director of the Czech Language Program), to be the President of the Czech Komensky Club, a non-profit student organization in which capacity he is currently serving for a second year.

The Czech Komensky Club, humbly named after Jan Amos Komensky, the "Teacher of Nations", has been continuously active in Nebraska since 1904, providing a celebration of Czech culture. As President, Ron (with

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profound help from Jitka) took it upon himself to liaison between the Nebraska Czechs of Lincoln and the Czech Komen-sky Club, thus promoting both to one another. The Czech Komensky Club publishes a newsletter entitled *Ná%o Svût* (Our World) which has a circulation of almost 400, and deals with upcoming club events, Czech news around Nebraska, famous Czechs mini-biographies, and news from the Czech Republic. The club meets once every two weeks throughout the university year, providing guest lecturers, films, music, dance, and entertainment related to Czech history, language, and customs. At each meeting, the Komensky Club provides a supply of free soft drinks to its members.

Specific examples of recent Komensky Club meetings include: a presentation and demonstration of Czech bagpipes (dudy); the Capital City Czech Choraliers, a Nebraska polka band; a lecture on "Czecho-slovakia During the Second World War"; an early music ensemble named Dulces Voces to sing Czech Baroque music, a lecture on "The Unique Culture of the Czech Republic" (by Jitka); the screening of the Czech film "Hanele"; a Polka Party involving the history and instruction of the dance; and separate lectures on Czech Christmas, and Easter (spring) traditions followed by a potluck party with Czech-American foods. Jitka has managed to raise over \$3000 during the last year in grants offered to student organizations through UN-L to enable the Komensky Club to pay for musicians, lecturers, event supplies, and official club T-shirts.

As a rolling snowball continues to get larger, so did Jitka and Ron's contacts to other Czech organizations. Dr. Mila Saskova-Pierce and her husband, Layne, solicited their help in a project of theirs – the Czech Heritage Digitalization Project. The aim of this undertaking is the digi-talization and inventory of all items (including oral histories, books, toys, clothing, kitchenware, paintings, jewelry, photographs, etc.) of authentic Czech heritage that exist in Nebraska. In July, after returning from a month in the Czech Republic, Jitka and Ron began to attend meetings for the Czech Heritage Digitalization Project. Ron was able to obtain a \$300 grant from the Center for Great Plains Studies in support of it.

When Dr. Saskova-Pierce invited the former Czech Ambassador Alexandr Vondra to come to Nebraska at the beginning of August, 2000, Jitka and Ron were honored to meet with him personally to discuss the activities of the Komensky Club, and the Digitalization Project. When the new academic calendar year began at UN-L, Mondays alternated between meeting for this project and the Komensky Club meetings from September through October 2000.

Soon after the former ambassador's visit, Dr. Saskova-Pierce and Cathleen Oslzly conceived the idea and pitched it to members of the Czech Heritage Digitalization Project to bring the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU) 2001 North American Conference to Lin-coln. Once granted this opportunity, Jitka and Ron began close collab-oration with other groups – this time, the Czech Language Foundation, and the Nebraska Czechs of Wilber. As such, they became members of the SVU and were involved from the outset offering suggestions, ideas, and support as members of the organizational committee. From October 2000 through August 2001, planning for the Czech Heritage Digitalization Project was suspended in favor of preparations for the SVU Conference.

The Komensky Club was again awarded a grant, this time in the amount of \$1000, to enable it to become a sponsoring organization of the conference. Jitka and Ron spread flyers, called the newspaper in order to enhance the publicity of the conference, and continued to spread the word through the Komensky Club, *Ná%o Svût*, and at Nebraska Czechs of Lincoln meetings. Moreover, Jitka attended the Governor of Nebraska's Proclamation that August first through the third, 2001 is "Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences Days." She was able to arrange a Czech movie entitled "Musime si pomahat" (given the English title "Divided We Fall"), nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Film, to be brought to Nebraska for screening during this confe-rence; and booked the Baroque vocal group Dulces Voces to perform.

To kick-off the SVU conference, Ron was one of the Masters of Ceremonies at the Wednesday night reception, and sang the Canadian national anthem at the opening ceremonies. Both Jitka and Ron were panel chairs and presented papers during the conference. Jitka chaired the panel on Czech and Slovak Contributions to Medicine and the Life Sciences, contributing the paper "Positive and Negative Aspects of Molds in the Food Industry". Ron chaired the panel on The Assimilation and Acculturation of Youth, explaining his perspective on "Language: The First Target of Assimilation". He hopes to have this paper published in *Kosmas*. Ron also organized and chaired the free-form poetry reading session. Finally, the Czech Komensky Club was proud to provide cold soft drinks to accompany the kolace and coffee breaks provided by other sponsoring organizations throughout the conference.

Since the SVU conference, Jitka and Ron have resumed their duties with the Czech Heritage Digitalization Project, archieving the Czech artifacts from the "Wall of Remembrance", which were gathered and displayed at the Great Plains Art Collection. Jitka is also preparing to teach the intermediate Czech class at UN-L for the 2001-2002 academic year. Within a few days, Jitka and Ron plan to meet again with the conference organizational committee to assist in founding a new SVU chapter here in Lincoln. Although as yet undecided, it is likely they will serve as officers in the new chapter.

Unfortunately, Jitka and Ron Stiles will be leaving Nebraska to return to the Czech Republic in the fall of 2002. They will be leaving behind many great friends and a legacy of collaboration, which they hope will continue long after they have left. In the meantime, there are still ongoing projects keeping them busy, and many

more people to meet and work along side with. By working together in cooperative groups, we can achieve great things, *but musíme si pomáhat*.

The Stiles' are looking forward to seeing and meeting you at the SVU World Congress in Plzeň, Czech Republic, 2002.

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### **New SVU Biographical Directory - Last Call**

We are giving our members a last chance to update their bio-graphical data. There are also a number of new members who haven't sent us their biographical information at all. The type of information we are seeking can be found on our SVU Website at the following address: <http://www.svu2000.org/headlines/b19.htm>

In case of old members, send only new data or corrections in the form the entries appear in 1992 SVU Biographical Directory. Don't send any data if there are no changes in your previous entry or if you have already sent us your updates previously.

Time is of essence, however. If you won't send us your information right away, we shall use the old information or you won't be listed at all. All the information should be sent to: [rechcigl@aol.com](mailto:rechcigl@aol.com). Thanks for your understanding.

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