



CZECH-NEBRASKA

1133 Oldfather, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE, 68588-0315

Number/• íslo 58

www.unl.edu/komenskyclub

April/duben 2004

Spring2004 Schedule.....	1
100 years of Komensky Club.....	1
One Century since Antonin Dvorak's Death	2
News from the Czech Republic.....	2
Czech music in Nebraska.....	2
Top 10 Figures of Czech History.....	3
Dumplings – knedliky.....	3

Schedule for 2004

- May 2** Nebraska Czechs of Lincoln Festival Moose Lodge, 56th and Cornhusker, Lincoln, NE, SVU Booth
- Sept. 16** Film: Antonín Dvořák (Czech with Engl. subtitles) University of Nebraska Student Union, 14th & R Streets, 7-9 pm
- Sept. 30** Lecture: John Svagera: Antonín Dvořák and his significance for world music University of Nebraska Student Union, 14th & R Streets, 7 pm
- Oct. 12** FILM TBA

Czech Festivals in Nebraska:

April 25 – Omaha

Czech/Slovak Folklore Festival Omaha Sokol Hall (13th Martha St) 10-5 p.m.

May 2 – Lincoln

Nebraska Czechs of Lincoln
Moose Lodge 4901 N.56 St. 10-4.30 p.m.

June 5 – Hastings

NE Czechs of South Central
VFW Club, Hwy 6 Wabash 12-9 p.m.

June 13 – Hemingford

Legion Hall 12 – 5 p.m.

June 25-27 – Clarkson

Clarkson Czech Festival
Rodeo, Talent Contest, NE Czech/Slovak Queen Pageant, Parade

July 16-18 - Dwight

Czech Festival with Street Dance, Pork Sandwiches and Parade

August 6-8 – Wilber

Czechs Capital of Nebraska and USA (www.ci.wilber.ne.us)
Parade and Miss Czech/Slovak USA

September 12 – Omaha

Sokol South Omaha Hall 21st U Streets
(www.sokolouthomaha.com)

Noon- 5 p.m.

September 18 – York

Yorkfest Festival 10 – 2 p.m.
Parade, Accordion Jamboree

September 26 – Prague

Czech Heritage Day 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Port roast, Duck Dinners, Entertainment, Dance

September 26 – Lodgepole

Panhandle Czech Heritage Day
Lodgepole – Legion Hall Noon- 5 p.m.

for more information contact

402 435 6914 or 308 384 7355 www.nebraskaczechs.org

We are all citizens of one world. To dislike a man because he was born in another country, because he speaks a different language, or because he takes a different view on this or that, is a great folly. Let us have but one end in view, the welfare of humanity. Komensky - Comenius

We celebrate 100 years of the Czech Komensky Club

The Czech Komensky club is 100 years old this year. To mark this anniversary the officers of the Czech Komensky Club organized Czech Days at UNL. Nebraska Governor, Mike Johannes issued an official proclamation naming February 12th through the 25th Czech Days at UNL. The program started with the visit of the Czech Ambassador, Martin Palouš, to UNL on February 12th with his lecture entitled “Integration of the Czech Republic into the European Union”. The ambassador also met with UNL professors and administrators, and presided over a banquet organized by the Czech Language Foundation that was attended by 157 people. The Czech Days at UNL ended with the *Czech Culture Night*, during which the UNL community had a chance to sample Czech food prepared by the Czech language students, learn Czech folk dances, and listen to “authentic Czech rock” music. Throughout Czech Days everybody had a chance to attend lectures by Matyáš Zrno and Amy Swoboda. Matyáš Zrno lectured about the political history of beer, and the post-Velvet Revolution politics in the Czech Republic, that were attended by more than eighty (!) people. Amy Swoboda presented her research about the role of music in the Czech ethnic life in Nebraska; a synopsis of her lecture is in this issue.

But the year is not over yet, and we have other events we hope you will attend. (See in the schedule box above.) We are in the process of planning the 2004/2005 year that will be full of exquisite lectures, movies, concerts, exhibits, and social events marking the centenary. If you have any suggestions, please, let us know! And do not forget, the public is always welcome to any of the events. If you would like to learn traditional folk dances, Czech included, the International Folk Dancers teach every Friday night from 8 until 9 p.m. at Mable Lee, Room 310. Don't be afraid, all ages and abilities are welcome!

The year 2004 is important for it marks the one-hundredth-year of Antonín Dvořák's death. Professor Mark Clinton has promised to offer musical tribute to this giant who played in Omaha, Nebraska in 1883.

Lincoln Czechs Festival Theme is the Celebration of 100 years of The Komenský (Comenius) Club at UNL

The Lincoln Czech, among whom many are graduates of the Czech Language Program at UNL and former members Komensky Club and presently still remain associate members, will celebrate this important anniversary with us. Please, come to celebrate with Lincoln Czechs, May 2, 2004, Moose Lodge from 10:00 AM till 7:00 PM. *MSP*

One Century since Antonín Dvořák's Death

The year 2004 is important for it marks the one-hundredth-year of Antonín Dvořák's death. This coming fall, the Komensky club will celebrate this great composer's contribution through a series of lectures, films, and concerts. Antonín Dvořák has a very special connection with the United States and in particular Nebraska and Iowa. In 1898, Dvořák played in Omaha for the World's Fair, having traveled from Spillville, Iowa, where he was living at the time. The United States made such an impression on Dvořák, that he composed his 9th Symphony- "From the New World", as a commentary on his time spent in the U.S. We look forward to celebrating this famous Czech composer who made such a wonderful contribution of music both to his homeland and the world.

-News from the Czech Republic-

President Klaus expresses support for Czech soldiers in Afghanistan

The mission, approved by Parliament, will see more than 100 elite soldiers from Czech Special Forces sent to the combat zone to help weed out remaining Taliban and Al Qaeda forces, as part of the U.S.-led operation 'Enduring Freedom.'

Czech Republic sees rise in tourists, tourism revenues

According to data released by the Czech Central Bank the Czech Republic increased foreign currency earnings from tourism, compared with the figure from 2002, the year the Czech Republic was hit by severe flooding. Income rose by 4.2 percent on the 96 billion crowns (3.5 billion dollars) achieved in 2002, when the summer tourist season was cut short by devastating floods in Prague and other parts of the country in mid-August. Despite the rise, last year's figures still fell below the 118 billion crown earnings of 2001. In addition, the tourism industry has also been weakened by economic factors affecting the flow of tourists from the US and Germany, while business from Britain has grown as the result of cheap airline flights. Last year, more than 6 million foreign tourists visited Czech Republic, most of them stayed in Prague. The tourism income makes 8.1 percent of Czech republic GDP.

Czech leaders commemorate TG Masaryk's birth

Sunday, March 7th marked the 154th anniversary of the birth of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the founder and first president of an independent Czechoslovakia following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918. To commemorate the occasion the current Czech President Václav Klaus and Prime Minister Vladimír Špidla paid a visit to his grave. Both consider his legacy to be the most significant in recent Czech history.

On Sunday morning, President Václav Klaus and his wife Livie set out on a symbolic journey to the presidential Láňy Chateau, where Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk died in 1937. The couple left from Prague's Masaryk train station in what once was Masaryk's own presidential salon. The journey has become part of a commemorative tradition in

the Czech Republic for the past 10 years, which was initiated by former president Václav Havel. President Klaus spoke to Czech Radio while waiting at the Masaryk Train Station. *"It is understandable that he is recognized as a figure who has made a great contribution to the formation of the Czechoslovak state and I believe that this is the sentiment of all generations since 1918. In this respect, his position is unique and embedded in the mentality of Czechs today."*

Prior to Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk's political career he was a professor of philosophy and was extensively involved in literary activities. But it was his political achievement that forged his everlasting place in Central European history. As of 1891 in Vienna he headed the *Czech Realist Party*, and was its only representative in the Viennese parliament. He continued to work toward the Czechs achieving equality within the Hapsburg Empire. In the beginning of the First World War, when the politician was forced into exile, he became a leading opposition figure fighting from abroad for the liberation of the Czech and Slovak peoples. At the end of the war and the collapse of the empire, he became President of the first independent state of Czechs and Slovaks where he served till 1935.

Though on Sunday it was the Czech leaders of today who paid homage to the political shoulders upon which they stand. President Václav Klaus and Prime Minister Vladimír Špidla laid wreaths on the TG Masaryk's grave in a ceremony attended by 300 people. Prime Minister Vladimír Špidla: *"Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk is actually the most significant figure in our modern history and the founder of our democracy in the full sense of the word. Today I have realized again that there are very few presidents, even in other nations, that have such a significant status."*

Czech Music in Nebraska Researched by Amy Swoboda

The influence of music in the Czech culture is, and has been, profound because it is a fundamental part of the Czechs education and way of life. Music is a tradition in the education of Czech children and used to be mandatory for every teacher to be knowledgeable in. Young Czechs used to be taught to play at least one instrument. Until today, social gatherings usually incorporate music and also are an important way many young Czechs to socialize and be exposed to Czech culture.

Since the 17th century through the present day, many Czech musicians performed classical music throughout Europe. Dance music too, was brought out of the Czech Lands and polka music, especially was shared by the whole of Europe. It therefore was, a part of the Czech tradition to take their instruments when they traveled to America, as well, whether it was to perform classical or lighter type of music.

Czech culture incorporates music into every aspect of its social interactions. It accompanies christenings, work, rest, church, funerals and other social gatherings. There is an old Czech proverb that illustrates its importance in Czech culture. "Every Czech is born not with a silver spoon in his mouth but with a violin under his pillow."

For the past two years Amy Swoboda has conducted research of the history and role(s) of Czech music in Nebraska. Since Czech music is an integral part of the fabric of many Nebraska communities, two years of research has proven to be not enough time to do justice to this topic. There are many personal collections in private hands, and Amy Swoboda has studied the one collection in particular, that of Mr. Elmer N•mec of Crete, Nebraska. Mr. N•mec's collection is only one collection of posters that was available for the authors' primary analysis. It proved to be a very useful resource. Mr. N•mec has a long and illustrious career as a tuba player in several well-known bands throughout Nebraska, and has spent many years doing his own research into Czech music in Nebraska. His collection consists of

seventy-six posters that document many notable Nebraskan as well as Czech musicians and is still growing. Amy Swoboda digitally photographed the posters and entered them into a database. She has also worked with the record collection of Cathy Oslzly.

She is bringing the results of her research in the form of a paper presentation to the Czech Republic, to the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences Congress that is taking place from June 27 to July 2, 2004, in Olomouc, Moravia. If anybody has any materials dealing with Czech culture in Nebraska and the Great Plains, please, contact her. She will include it in her work.

C.J. Svagera Receives the Prestigious UCARE Pepsi Scholarship to Continue the Study of Czech Music in Great Planes

It is with great pride that we learned that the Czech Komensky Club president, C.J. Svagera received the UCARE scholarship. After Amy Swoboda, he is the second student of the Czech language to study Czech music in Nebraska.

To All Supporters of "Czech Days in Nebraska"

On behalf of myself, C.J. Svagera - Komensky Club President, and Dr. Mila Saskova-Pierce - Club Advisor, and all the other officers and members of the Czech Komensky Club, we would like to thank you for your support of our "Czech Days in Nebraska" celebration here at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. As you probably know it was a great success! Beginning with the visit of Ambassador Martin Palous and concluding with the Komensky Club's 100th Anniversary celebration on February 25th, we had a wonderful time sharing our Czech culture and heritage with the University and greater Lincoln communities. Because of the great success enjoyed by this year's festivities, we plan on continuing "Czech Days" celebrations in future years. Once again we thank you for your wonderful support and help with our recent festivities and the Komensky Club program. With the wonderful support you have provided, the UNL Komensky Club is well on its way to another hundred years of glory.

C.J. Svagera President - Komensky Club

Dr : Mila Saskova-Pierce Advisor- Komensky Club

Top 11 Figures of Czech History

Some important people of the Czech history (both remote and recent).

1. Svatý Václav (St. Wenceslas - 900s)

Patron of the Czech lands. Peace-loving king opposing war with the Germans, killed by his brother Boleslav. According to legend he and his soldiers lie under the mountain Blaník and will rise to help the Czech nation in the gravest hour of need.

2. Karel IV. (Charles IV.) (1316 - 1378)

Holy Roman emperor (1355-78) and founder of Charles University (1348). Under his rule, Czech lands were the political and cultural center of Europe.

3. Jan Hus (1372 - 1415)

Reform preacher and linguist, author of modern Czech spelling. Burned at stake for heresy. Inspired the Hussite movement.

4. Jan Zizka (d. 1424)

Successful military leader of the Hussite forces. Under him, Czech rebels defeated crusaders sent by the Roman emperor. Famous for directing battles even being blind.

5. Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius) (1592-1670)

Famous educator and bishop of the Czech Brethren, sometimes nicknamed the 'Teacher of the nations'. Wrote the first modern

compendium of pedagogy. Was exiled during 30-Year War and worked on the educational systems of Sweden and Holland.

6. Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

World-famous composer. Spent several years in the United States, where he wrote his famous symphony 'From the New World'.

7. T. G. Masaryk (1850-1937)

Politician and philosopher. First president (1918-35) of the pre-war Czechoslovakia, founded at the end of World War I after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

8. Jaroslav Hašek (1883-1923)

Popular Czech writer and humorist, author of the 'Good Soldier Švejk', a book translated into over 20 languages.

9. Karel Čapek (1890-1938)

Leading novelist and playwright of the 'First Republic'. Coined the word 'robot' in his play 'R.U.R.'

10. Václav Havel (b. 1936)

First president of Czechoslovakia after the fall of communism. Human rights fighter and playwright.

11. Jára Cimrman (1865 - 1898 - 1915 - 1927)

A fictitious figure from the turn of the century, attributed with most famous inventions. Cimrman was created in the late 60s by a group of Czech actors who produce plays in his name. Gained enormous popularity on the scale of Monty Python in Great Britain.

Dumplings – knedlíky (story)

A short story by Arkadiy Averchenko in Russian translated from Russian into English. The story illustrates nicely the high regard of Czechs for knedlík, which they quite undeservedly consider to be one of the best in the world.

You cannot find a more delicate and more educated person in the world than a Czech... He is kind. He is gentle. He is considerate. Immovable. Always in good spirits. Likes us Russians greatly. I have never seen a Czech get angry in public. But for me, nothing gives me greater pleasure than to tackle the most difficult tasks in the world. That is why I decided to put a Czech beside himself with anger...

We – three Czechs and I – were sitting in a restaurant and were drinking beer in a most friendly atmosphere.

I waited for a break in the conversation, looked up, and, with an intelligent look in my eyes, I said unexpectedly: "I don't like your government."

If I were a Czech, I would have said: "Right, and you Russians just have a great government, don't you!"

Instead, a Czech only said: "You know, our government is still very young. When it grows up and gains more experience, it will surely be able to avoid the mistakes to which you are referring." "And I don't like this Prague of yours either," I said and, just in case, raised a hand to protect myself from a potential blow from my companion.

"Well, I think it's a rather pretty city," responded my neighbor gently.

"And next, my friends! You should be ashamed. How can you smother a sleeping person with 150 pounds."

"Who smothered you under 150 pounds?" asked my neighbor on the left in a worried tone of voice.

"Excuse me! But what about these feather blankets under which you sleep. There's one beneath you, there's one over you; and in the morning the parlour-maid has to spend a long time looking for you and return you to life through massage and artificial respiration."

"In the winter, it is much warmer under a feather blanket," replied the Czech diffidently. "But if you're not used to it, it could be quite unpleasant..."

“And the way you serve vodka in restaurants. Have you ever seen it served before lunch? They always bring it with the sweets. What a habit!!!”

“That must be surely because our national drink is beer...”

I shouted, gesticulated, and kept coming up with more and more serious things – the Czechs remained affable and happy... I was beating my head against a stone wall of gentility until my throat went sore, and in the end, not being able to uncover any further inadequacies, I said: “And finally, I don’t in the least like your...”

I am afraid to even write down the word I then uttered, because as soon as it sounded, my companions underwent a great transformation... Their faces filled with blood, their eyes gleamed with indignation, and angry fists hammered on the table:

“You are a guest here in the Czech lands!” shouted voices. “And it is not polite to say things like that. If you don’t like them, you can go back to Russia.”

Good God! What was it that made my friends so angry? The only thing I said was that I didn’t like such a simple thing as “*knedlíky*!!!”

That’s the word that caused my friends the Czechs to become so very agitated.

“Excuse me gentlemen, but what is so great about them? What are *knedlíky*? It’s nothing but boiled bread, heavy as lead, which lies in your stomach like a stone. If I ate *knedlíky* every day, they would form a stone house in my stomach!”

“You don’t have a stone in your stomach,” cried my neighbor at the table. “You have a stone in your heart! Have you ever even tasted real *knedlíky*?”

Another Czech, the most delicate of all, said: “I completely forgot, that I need to go home...”

“Excuse me,” I worried, “I thought that you had said that you had the whole evening free...”

“Yes, but I didn’t realize that it would end so sadly.”

“I will go as well,” rose another one.

“And I!”

I remained in gloomy solitude.

“What can you do?” Lunch time came.

The first course was soup with *knedlíky*, followed by pork chops with *knedlíky*; for dessert *knedlíky* with apples inside. Looking at these innocent pieces of food I was wondering:

“Is it possible that such trifle can bring about an international scandal and the severing of diplomatic relations?”

Arkadiy Averchenko (translation by Dominik Lukeš) -- 14. 8. 2002

www.bohemica.com

CZECH LANGUAGE CLASSES NEED YOUR HELP!

The Czech Language program was started in 1907, and has a great history. Many famous people started their creative and political lives in this program. For example, Senator Hruška, Rudy Vrtiška, Olga Štastrný, and others. This year, once again students are enrolled in the Czech Language Program.

Please, support this one -hundred -year-old program, its existence depends on it. The support can have two forms. First of all, inform your children and your grandchildren about its availability, so that they could enroll in Czech. You also can send a tax-deductible donation. And most of all, come to the Komenský club program. We are the only organization that keeps Nebraska Czech culture alive at the university.

Contributions in care of the UNL Foundation can be sent to the Czech Instruction Fund #4931, UNL Foundation 1111 BLDG, 1111 Lincoln Mall, Lincoln NE 68588

Komenský Club at UNL

The principal function of the Komenský Club is to sponsor events that focus on culture and history and bring together people of diverse backgrounds who want to share Czech heritage. Readers of *Náš Svět* are encouraged to attend club events and participate in other activities listed in the newsletter in order to enhance awareness of the Czech culture in Nebraska communities. There is a low annual membership fee of \$3.00 for students and \$8.00 for non-students. The membership fee helps finance the films, newsletters and other special activities. Checks should be made out to the Komensky Club and mailed to: Mila Saskova-Pierce, UNL, 1133 Oldfather Hall, Lincoln, NE 68588-0315. Membership is open to everyone!

Editors: Matyáš Zrno, Dr. Míla Šašková-Pierce
Special Guest Editors for Volume 57: C. J. Svagera
Náš Svět/ Czech-Nebraska
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
1133 Oldfather Hall
Lincoln, NE 68588-0315