

## Celebrating Masopust in Baltimore and Prague

by Olga Mendel

### Local families bring the Masopust tradition to Baltimore

On Friday March 1st the Czech and Slovak School for Children held its first annual Masopust Family Fun Night, celebrating the traditional Czech and Slovak holiday (analogous to Mardi Gras or Carnival) to rejoice in the last days before the beginning of Lent.

Several Baltimore families and friends of CSHA met at the Woodbrook Baptist Church on Stevenson Lane to celebrate, enjoy good food and make carnival masks. Some children came already dressed up, and some created their own new masks at the event.

Victoria LaBuff, age 4, beautifully colored a butterfly mask. She attended the event with her brother Sammy, age 10, and her mother Zuzana LaBuff.

*For more on the Masopust tradition, and a report on this year's Masopust celebrations in Prague, see accompanying story on p.6*

Accompanied by her mom and grandma, Emilka Havlová-McCullough, age 10, came dressed up as a pink kitten.

*continues on page 7*



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

### CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE SCHOOL

The fall semester brought changes to the schedule and location of the CSHA Children's school. Regular language classes for children aged 3 and up are held every other Friday from 6 to 7:30 PM, rather than weekly as in the past. There are two levels of instruction in Czech this year (from beginning to advanced). We would like to hold Slovak classes as well, and are currently seeking students.

### FAMILY FUN NIGHTS

The Children's School hosts Family Fun Nights every month or two, offering all CSHA members a chance to get together and share a potluck dinner while celebrating our Czech and Slovak heritage. Visit our Facebook page or website (see addresses below) for detailed schedule information, and to register.

### ADULT LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Do you like the sound of the Czech and Slovak languages? Are you interested in taking Czech or Slovak classes? CSHA is one of a few organizations in the USA that offers language instruction for adults. Beginning, intermediate and advanced classes are offered on Saturdays in the spring and fall at the Gribbin Center on Bel Air Road in Perry Hall. The spring semester began on January 12th.

### HERITAGE SINGERS

If you like to sing and enjoy Czech and Slovak songs, carols and hymns, please consider joining the CSHA Heritage Singers. All voice parts are welcome. The group meets on Mondays from 7 to 9 PM in the months before our Christmas concert and Memorial Day performance.

## APRIL 2019

EASTER TRADITIONS FAMILY FUN NIGHT - April 5th, 2019 from 6PM to 8PM at Woodbrook Baptist Church, 25 Stevenson Lane, Baltimore, MD 21212

GENERAL BOARD MEETING - April 28th, 2019, 2PM at Woodbrook Baptist Church, 25 Stevenson Lane, Baltimore, MD 21212

## MAY 2019

FAMILY FUN NIGHT - ČARODĚJNICE (Witch burning) - May 5th, 2019 in Ellicott City - follow our Facebook page and [www.cshamaryland.org](http://www.cshamaryland.org) for details

MEMORIAL DAY at Bohemian National Cemetery - May 27th, 2019 - Heritage Singers

## JULY 2019

CSHA ANNUAL PICNIC - Date will be announced in the Summer 2019 Hlas

## SEPTEMBER 2019

BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC - September 15th, 2019, from 12PM to 5PM at Patapsco State Park - details will be published in the Summer 2019 Hlas and on our website

## OCTOBER 2019

33rd ANNUAL CZECH AND SLOVAK FESTIVAL - October 27th, 2019 noon to 6PM, American Legion Hall, 125 York Rd, Baltimore, MD 21204

HLAS - The CSHA newsletter comes to you with a new look. If you have any suggestions or comments, email us at [info@cshamaryland.org](mailto:info@cshamaryland.org). You can find back issues of Hlas at [www.cshamaryland.org](http://www.cshamaryland.org).

CSHA ONLINE - For more information about any of these activities or to register for classes, you can contact CSHA at our new email address: [info@cshamaryland.org](mailto:info@cshamaryland.org). CSHA's new Communication Committee will respond promptly to answer your questions and provide information, and we are eager to hear your ideas and suggestions. Also, please check our website [www.cshamaryland.org](http://www.cshamaryland.org) and follow us on Facebook at [Czech and Slovak Heritage Association of Baltimore](https://www.facebook.com/CzechandSlovakHeritageAssociationofBaltimore).



## President's message:

The Czech government has awarded the Czech and Slovak Heritage Association of Maryland a generous grant. The award, 87,000 Czech crowns, is to be used in 2019 to support our 33rd annual Festival and our language schools; that is a little over \$3,860 (at today's exchange rate) earmarked for these important activities. The Czech government is admirably altruistic in its support of Czech arts, culture and language beyond its country's borders. For the year 2019, the total amount of the government's grants to cultural organizations outside the Czech Republic is in excess of 21 million Czech crowns. We are very grateful for this generous financial award.

Speaking of support...CSHA needs yours. Annual dues are our most important source of income; we depend on you, our members, for our financial well-being. If you have already sent in your 2019 dues, thank you. If paying this year's dues has somehow slipped your mind, please take this reminder to heart. We need your support. And we thank you for it.



Margaret Supik - CSHA president

## In Memory of Ann C. Huber

Ann C. Huber (Anči), age 77, of Fallston, MD passed away on March 2, 2019 in her home, surrounded by her family. She was born in the Czech neighborhood in East Baltimore to the late John and Rose (Kortus) Cervin.

Ann was a nurse for over 55 years. Her career saw her working as a clinical nurse at Union Memorial Hospital; as a public health nurse with the Baltimore City Health Department; and as a community health nurse with the Harford County Health Department. She culminated her career as a nurse manager/coordinator of an HIV/AIDS clinic with Harford County Health Services. In 1994 she returned to school and earned a Bachelor of Science in



Nursing from the University of Maryland.

Ann was a member of Sokol Baltimore for 67 years, where she coached and competed in gymnastics. When she could no longer participate actively in gymnastics, she stayed involved through volunteering in multiple capacities. She was the first woman president of Sokol Baltimore and also held the office of vice president.

Ann was a long-time member of CSHA, and she attended Czech classes at our adult school for several years. She also organized the Sokol table at our festivals where her beautiful kroj and her delicious half-moon cookies always drew admiration.

## Adult Language School - Small but Steady

*by Lois Hybl*

CSHA's Czech and Slovak Language School for Adults has 22 students enrolled for the spring semester distributed between Beginning and Intermediate Czech, Beginning and Intermediate Slovak, Intermediate and Advanced Czech Conversation, and Slavic Literature. Iva Zicha and Andrea Kletetschka teach Czech and Natalie Karlinsky teaches Slovak. We are also delighted to have some beginning Slovak students this year.

With hot drinks and a regular supply of donuts and other goodies contributed by students, we never go hungry. And we can depend on

several students who are always willing to help carry our white board easels and other supplies in and out of the building.

This semester's classes began January 12, and they will end on April 6 with our traditional potluck lunch. So far the weather has been kind to us, and we are keeping our fingers crossed for the last month.

If you are interested in the fall semester, we plan on September 7 as our opening day. Contact Lois Hybl for more information at 410-243-1710 or e-mail: LHybl@verizon.net for more information.

# 50 years since Jan Palach

by Olga Mendel

On January 16th, 2019, Czechs marked the 50th anniversary of the tragic death of Jan Palach, a university student who set himself on fire on Prague's Wenceslaus Square in a desperate act of protest. As Palach hoped, his sacrifice helped awaken Czechs from the apathy that developed in the country after Soviet forces invaded Czechoslovakia in August 1968.

The Soviet invasion – and the occupation that followed -- brought a brutal end to the Prague Spring, a period of hopeful reforms to Czechoslovakia's communist system. Seeing the widespread public demoralization that followed this invasion, Palach, a 20-year-old student of economics and philosophy, decided to act.

He went to Wenceslas Square on Jan. 16, 1969, poured petrol over his body and lit himself on fire. Passers-by used their coats to try and stop the fire and save Palach, but the burns were too severe and he died three days later.

In death, Jan Palach would become known as “the conscience of the nation,” and he was celebrated as a martyr of exceptional courage and character. In the days following his death, hundreds of thousands gathered in the freezing rain to participate in the funeral procession honoring this previously unknown student, who was buried after a ceremony organized by his peers at Charles University.

Palach left a letter behind calling for the end of censorship and Soviet propaganda, and for a general strike.

“People must fight against the evil they feel equal to measure up to at

that moment,” Palach said before he died in hospital on Jan. 19.

The Czechs mourned Palach, but his act failed to overturn the Soviet-imposed “Normalization.” Rather, Czechs and Slovaks were forced to endure two more decades of repressive Communist rule in former Czechoslovakia. But Palach's suicide did inspire many to keep fighting for freedom.

In his suicide letter, Palach called himself “Torch no. 1,” and a handful of people did follow his example: Jan Zajic on Feb. 25th, 1969, and few in other eastern block countries. But Palach was not a part of a larger movement, and gradually the protests faded.

On the 20th anniversary of Palach's death in January 1989, however, thousands of Czechs protested in the biggest anti-government demonstration in many years. Václav Havel was among the protestors, and he was arrested, tried, and jailed as a result of his participation -- the last of his many imprisonments.

The Palach protestors were violently dispersed by police, but cracks were revealed in the authoritarian system that was toppled ten months later in the Velvet Revolution.

This year, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Palach's death, many public events took place across the Czech Republic. They included a concert and exhibition in Wenceslas Square and the unveiling of a memorial plaque at Charles University, where Palach studied.



*Jan Palach Memorial on the Wenceslaus Square in Prague*



# Mikulášská at the Children School

by Dana Havlik

After a successful Czech and Slovak Heritage Association Festival in October, members of CSHA followed up in early December with our annual "Mikulášská nadílka" (St. Nicolas Day) for small and tall. We were happy seeing new children and their parents and grandparents blending easily with our usual visitors. We met a number of new families with young children and several new members joined our Association that night.

The event took place amid the warmth of lovely Woodbrook Baptist Church. Beautiful "Anděl", scary "Čert" and amazing "Mikuláš" brought goodies and excitement to over 30 children. We could hear songs and poems from some of them and all fear was gone when the Anděl subdued Čert and kept him on his chain. Children and adults enjoyed decorating cookies and Christmas ornaments, as well as a variety of delicious dishes, desserts and coffee.

And then the questions started popping up: what is next, what else do you do for children? That was a music to our ears. We are grateful

to all who participated and contributed to the wonderful potluck and we hope to create many more such gatherings in the coming years.



## Christmas Concert 2018

On Sunday December 9th, CSHA's Czech and Slovak Heritage Singers presented a program of varied and traditional Christmas music at St. Wenceslaus Church in East Baltimore. Selections included "Kyrie" and "Gloria" from Jan Jakub Ryba's classical Czech Christmas Mass as well as traditional folk carols such as "Narodil se Kristus Pán" and "Spi, spi Jezulátko". Because the event was at

St. Wenceslaus Church, the audience was encouraged to sing "Good King Wenceslas" along with the chorus. An appreciative and larger than usual audience joined the singers for coffee and koláče after the program. Many from the audience expressed their hope that a Christmas concert will be held again in December of 2019. The singers and their director, Greg Satorie, are planning to do just that.



# In Prague, Masopust Festivities Generate Large Crowds and Tons of Fun

Baltimore wasn't the only place holding festive Masopust celebrations this month. Prague offered multiple locations to come and not only watch or join in a parade, and maybe dress up in a crazy costume, but also to celebrate with good beer, mulled wine, smoked meats and other tasty treats, lively music and the company of new friends.

Masopust was seldom celebrated during the years of communism, but the freedom of past 30 years has enabled Czechs to revive this tradition. All around Prague, and in other parts of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, you can find a multitude of events at the end of February or beginning of March, depending on which date Easter falls on that year. The biggest parties and parades usually happen over the weekend prior to Ash Wednesday.

My family and I attended a Masopust event in Lesser Town and Kampa near the Charles bridge. A parade started near Prague Castle and continued down Nerudova Street, stopping at pubs and enjoying beer and other drinks along the way.

Many participants dressed in festive costumes that were creative and modern while honoring the old traditions. Some costumes were colorful, others whimsical.

One man dressed up as buck and sipped beer through the face opening in his mask. A young lady tied branches to her head and gave everyone something to smile about as she danced wildly to a local band. Among the other parade-goers we noticed were bears, goats, dogs, horses, firemen, witches, chimney sweeps, and caricatures of unpopular politicians. The weather was pleasant, but still cold enough to enjoy hot cider and mulled wine while listening to the music.

Though you didn't need to dress up to take part in the celebrations -- we didn't -- the costumed participants made it clear that dressing up will help you fully embrace the fun spirit of Masopust. There are no hard rules for carnival costumes but generally, the brighter and bigger they are the better. No matter how you choose to dress, with or without a costume, it's hard not to enjoy Masopust. Just eat, drink, listen to the music, enjoy the scenery, and be merry.



## What is Masopust?

*In Old Czech, the word 'masopust' means 'meat fast' or Farewell to Meat. It is the Czech alternative to Mardi Gras or Carnival. Dating back to the 13th century, the celebration historically provided a way to bid farewell to winter and celebrate the fertility of spring. Nowadays, it marks the beginning of the Lenten season with feasting and fun. Slovaks and Moravians both have a different name for this celebration – Fašiangy (for Slovaks) and Fašank (for Moravians). Both are variations of the German word Fasching, which means Carnival.*

*Back in the Middle Ages, it was customary for a group of men dressed in costumes to go door to door, similar to today's Halloween trick-or-treat, singing and dancing in exchange for pork, doughnuts or brandy. Roast pig, alcohol, singing and dancing all still play an important part in the annual Masopust celebrations around the Czech Republic and Slovakia today.*



"It was so fun," said Jennifer Jesatko, a Baltimore parent, describing her sons' experience: "Jacob and Tyler enjoyed playing with the other kids. It was so nice to get together with families."

The Czech and Slovak Children's School actually planned to introduce Masopust in 2018, but the event had to be cancelled

due to a dangerous ice storm. Fortunately, the weather cooperated this year, and we have to hope that severe weather won't stop us from continuing this tradition in the years to come – a chance for Czech and Slovak families in Baltimore to spend time together while celebrating a fun-filled piece of our shared heritage.



Emilka Havlová-McCullough with Grandma



Victoria and Sammy LaBuff



Tyler Jesatko and Sasha Rezek

## Czech and Slovak Recipe Corner:

### Easter Judases (Velikonoční Jidáše)

by Dana Havlik

Traditionally, Jidáše are made on Green Thursday morning, typically before the sunrise. There are various stories and interpretations of what they represent and symbolize in connection to Easter. One is that they resemble of Judas's rope.

#### INGREDIENTS:

25-30g (1 tablespoon) active dry yeast  
85g (½ cup) sugar  
300 ml (1¼ cup) cream or half & half  
500g (3 ½ cups) all-purpose flour

2 large eggs  
½ teaspoon salt  
70g (5 tablespoons) softened butter  
Grinded lemon peel from ½ lemon  
1 tablespoon honey

#### DIRECTIONS:

In a small bowl, mix yeast with a third of the lukewarm cream, a spoon of sugar and a spoon of flour. Cover with a towel and let rise for 10 minutes.

In a large mixing bowl, mix flour, sugar, salt, lemon peel, eggs, the rest of the cream and the yeast.

Mix everything together into a nicely moldable dough that is soft and flexible but not sticky. Let it rise in a bowl covered with a towel in a warm place for about an hour, until it doubles in volume.

Cut the dough into 16-24 small pieces and roll them into sticks thick as a finger. Braid, roll or form into various shapes, and place them on the baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Paint with mixed egg and let it sit for few minutes before baking at 350-375F for about 20 minutes until golden. Warm up a spoon of honey and mix in a spoon of butter to make a creamy sauce. Paint the Jidáše with honey sauce right after taking out of the oven and let them cool off.





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The VOICE of The Czech & Slovak  
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Festival - Zuzana Justinova  
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Governance - Gregg Iskra

HLAS - Olga Mendel

## Easter Family Fun Night, April 5th, 2019

*by Dana Havlik*

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

The next family fun event will be Easter Traditions Night on April 5, 2019 from 6 to 8PM. Children and adults will practice a variety of traditional egg decorating techniques, and also learn how

to make a "pomlázka" – the stick made from braided willow branches that plays a big role in the Czech and Slovak Easter tradition. Please continue to check the CSHA website and Facebook for new events and activities, and let us know if you would like to help out.

