



AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Spring, 2010

NEWSLETTER

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AFoCR Celebrates 15th Anniversary



In February, AFoCR celebrated the 15th anniversary of its founding in 1995. At a dinner meeting hosted by Chairman Fred Malek, founding directors Bob Doubek and Phil Kasik presented a cake to note the event and celebrate the milestone. The assembled directors, along with Ambassador and Mrs. Kolář and other friends, then offered a toast in honor of AFoCR's 15 years of service.

Since its inception, AFoCR has been the voice of the American constituency that supports the Czech Republic. The organization was founded to educate American government leaders, media, and other opinion makers about the Czech people, their history, and their aspirations, and to foster closer ties between the two countries in business, trade, culture, law, and education. In 1995, AFoCR took the lead in advocating for the expansion of NATO to include the Czech Republic, an effort which culminated with the acceptance of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic as members of the alliance at the Washington NATO Summit in April 1999.

Over the years AFoCR has sponsored events that promote interest in the Czech Republic, and it facilitates programs in a variety of fields. In 1998, AFoCR chaired the Executive Committee that produced the 80th anniversary celebration of the creation of Czechoslovakia. In 1999, AFoCR coordinated the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution. AFoCR held its first Civil Society Vision Award Dinner honoring Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, in New York City in 2000, and has held four more since then. AFoCR has worked with numerous policy and government leaders on the need for increasing international security and trade opportunities.

In 2001, AFoCR initiated the effort to build the memorial to T. G. Masaryk in Washington, D.C., which was accomplished in 2002. When massive floods ravaged the Czech Republic in August 2002, AFoCR again led by raising over \$300,000 for relief projects, distributing grants, and seeing those projects through to completion. Most recently, AFoCR promoted the benefits and fairness of visa-free travel for Czechs, which was finally achieved in 2008. Now AFoCR is leading the effort to reconstruct the Woodrow Wilson Monument in Prague, set to be completed in 2011. AFoCR is both proud of its achievements and grateful to its donors for the support that has made them possible.

Progress on Woodrow Wilson Monument

*Sculptor
Michal Blažek
at work on the
Wilson statue
in Prague
October, 2009
and Full-Size
Clay
Model in
October, 2009*



Like with any other major project, some of the significant steps in the critical path of building the Woodrow Wilson Monument don't take place in physical form. One of these steps was completed in January 2010, when the City Council of the Metropolitan District of Prague 1 officially approved AFoCR's desired location for the monument. The monument will be placed in Vrchlický Park, on the centerline of – and facing – the 1970's addition to Wilson Station (Main Train Station). The plans for the renovation of Vrchlický Park therefore have been revised to show the monument at that location. Moreover, in January, Prague 1 Mayor Filip Dvořák informed AFoCR that Prague 1 will obtain the zoning approval for the monument and the City of Prague will be responsible for the building permit.

(Continued on Page 4)



**Evan Frank
Lysacek Wins
Olympic Gold**

Photo: figureskatersonline.com

America's Evan Lysacek has won the gold medal in Men's Figure Skating at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. In perhaps the toughest men's field in Olympic history, Lysacek rose to the occasion, becoming the first American man to win the gold medal in 22 years. Born in Chicago, Illinois, and raised in Naperville, Illinois, Lysacek is of Czech and Italian descent. His great-grandfather František Lysáček, emigrated from Czechoslovakia to Chicago in 1925, listing his home town as the eastern Moravian area of Brumov-Bylnice-Sidonie. Lysacek began skating at the age of eight, his talent quickly becoming evident. As of February, 2010, Lysacek was ranked 1st in the world.

Letter from AFoCR President Thomas A. Dine



Dear Friends of the Czech Republic,

This is a wake-up call to those American citizens who are friends and supporters of a close, special U.S.-Czech relationship. A dramatic shift in public opinion away from heavy engagement in world affairs is underway. And the shift is reflected in a certain indifference that has overcome policy makers in Washington, DC.

According to the two most credible and prestigious polling organizations in the United States, Gallup and Pew, the American public is apprehensive and uncertain about America's place in the international arena. Moreover, says Pew's latest poll of more than 2,000 participants, isolationist sentiment is now at its highest level in 40 years.

Americans are decidedly inward-looking at this point. The souring of the economy has definitely soured the public's perspective about matters happening abroad. The public is now saying to our national leaders to focus at home. Eight years ago, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, just 30 percent said "to mind our own business internationally and let other countries get along the best they can on their own." Today this sentiment has reached an all-time high of 49 percent.

And the popular alternative to isolationism is not responsible global engagement but unilateralism, whereby 44 percent of the public believes it would be better for the U.S. to go its own way, not worrying about whether other countries agree with us or not. This reasoning could be harmful to smaller countries such as the Czech Republic and its democratic neighbors if and when a security crisis should occur. They would be left in the lurch and on their own.

Unlike 20 years ago when the American public was enthralled by the Berlin Wall's crumbling and the demise of cruel Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, this passion has abandoned the thinking of U.S. Government decision makers. An often cited example concerns Central Europe, when in September 2009 the Administration changed course about the missile defense system proposed for the Czech Republic and Poland. Public dissent was nearly silent; influential opinion makers did not protest in newspaper opinion pieces; Russian pressure was widely accepted as a given.

Another example is the fact that the Administration has still not announced a nominee to be America's ambassador to the Czech Republic.

This brings me back to the role of the American Friends of the Czech Republic in helping to offset isolationism and unilateralism. Our first imperative is to increase AFoCR's advocacy in public policy debates. It is in America's best interest to have better and better relations with the people and government of the Czech Republic. AFoCR is the leading voice in such matters and cannot permit the ghosts of 1939 and 1948 to return and to turn our backs to a small country of shared values and culture in the face of external threats.

Secondly, currently under discussion is the concept of establishing a gathering place for American and European academics, policy analysts, and former government officials under one roof in Prague to concentrate on U.S. relations with our allies of Middle Europe. I support the notion of such an "American House." To not acknowledge the current changes in the policy environment is to encourage a dark future. I am grateful to all supporters of AFoCR for recognizing the vital role that our organization plays in today's world.

Message from Ambassador Petr Kolář



My Dear American Friends,

After four and a half years, my posting as the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United States of America will be coming to an end.

Living and working in the United States has been a wonderful experience and I am really grateful for it. The United States has become my and my family's second home.

I hope that I have contributed to the strengthening of Czech-American relations. The United States is our most strategic ally and I have devoted my mission and my time here to bringing our countries and our peoples closer together. In the course of my work, I have always been amazed how many supporters and allies, how many admirers, fans, and friends we have here throughout the United States. Among them, the American Friends of the Czech Republic have always belonged to the closest and most reliable allies. True friends of the Czech Republic. True supporters and promoters of the Czech-U.S. relations.

My dear Friends, I am grateful for all your help and relentless support of the Czech Embassy and the Czech Republic. With your help, we achieved many things and many great things happened, such as visa free travel for our citizens through our membership in the United States' Visa Waiver Program or the creation of the Czech Caucus in the United States Congress, a successful bipartisan initiative and a base for promoting a deeper understanding of our countries' mutual relations. You supported us during the difficult times of negotiations of the missile defense project and you share our views on the importance of establishing a permanent U.S. intellectual presence in Prague. Your tireless efforts are connecting our countries through the monuments of our two great leaders – President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Woodrow Wilson in Washington, D.C., and in Prague, respectively.

Although I will depart physically, my connection with this country will remain strong. And so will my connection with the American Friends of the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic needs the United States and it is my determination to continue ensuring the strength of the transatlantic relationship. And I am grateful that you share my view and will continue your work and efforts toward building an ever-stronger partnership between the United States and the Czech Republic. My dear American Friends, thank you from the bottom of my heart for what you have been, are, and will be doing. You are Friends of the Czech Republic and my friends. Thank you and I wish you all the best.

Respectfully Yours,

Petr Kolář

AFoCR Welcomes New Directors



***AFoCR Director
Hana Slamova Callaghan
from
Philadelphia, PA***

AFoCR is pleased to introduce **Hana Slamova Callaghan** as one of its newest Board members. Ms. Callaghan was born and raised in Prague, Czech Republic. She received her Bachelor of Arts (Sociology and Cultural Anthropology) from Charles University and completed her Master of Arts (Communication) at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA.

Her professional career has been in the investment management industry at Goldman Sachs & Co., Wilmington Trust Company, and Lincoln Financial Group. Her areas of concentration have been trust and estate tax law, business succession planning, and the development and implementation of risk-controlled asset allocation and portfolio strategies. She is also a Director of The Callaghan Family Foundation.

In Philadelphia, Ms. Callaghan is active with The Union League, The Franklin Institute, The Mann Center for the Performing Arts, the World Affairs Council, and the Philadelphia Committee on Foreign Relations. Ms. Callaghan resides in Pennsylvania with her husband Don Callaghan.



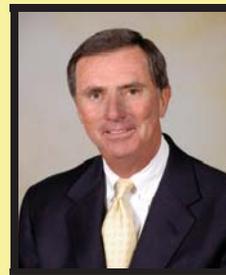
***AFoCR Director
Kristyna Pellouchoud
Driehaus
from
Chicago, IL***

AFoCR is pleased to introduce **Kristyna Pellouchoud Driehaus** as a new Board member. Ms. Pellouchoud Driehaus is a founder and Chair of the private investment company, Sazava Partners LLC. In addition, Ms. Pellouchoud Driehaus founded The Kristyna M. Driehaus Foundation in January, 2004 and currently serves as its President. The KMD Foundation's mission is to provide opportunities for citizens of the Czech Republic to expand their knowledge, expertise and experiences, and to encourage personal and community growth through academic, professional, and cultural activities both in the Czech Republic and the United States. Through its activities, the Foundation seeks to support the long-term development and improvement of Czech society.

The KMD Foundation supports educational programs such as The Regina's Hope Medical Program and The Global Health Program. These medical programs are a result of collaboration between The KMD Foundation, Northwestern University Feinberg Medical School (Children's Memorial Hospital) and

the Charles University 2nd Medical Faculty (Motol Hospital). The KMD Foundation further supports cultural organizations and projects that aim to expose the global community to Czech art and culture. Furthermore, support is provided to programs that encourage the revival of local traditions and the reconnection of Czech communities in the Czech Republic and the United States with their historical and cultural roots. The Foundation promotes activities that stimulate creative learning.

Prior to her current positions, Ms. Pellouchoud Driehaus served as Chair of the Prague Committee of the Chicago Sister Cities International Program where she was responsible for overseeing the development, management, and fundraising of all Program activities between Prague and Chicago. Ms. Pellouchoud Driehaus has also served on various boards, including the Auxiliary Board of The Chicago School of Art Institute, and an event planning board of Chicago Sacred Heart Schools. Currently, Ms. Pellouchoud Driehaus serves on the Women's Board of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Pellouchoud Driehaus holds a degree from St. Prumyslova Skola in Prague, Czech Republic and a B.A. in Political Science and Journalism from Northwestern University in Chicago.



***AFoCR Director
Fritz L. Duda
from
Dallas, TX***

AFoCR is also pleased to announce **Fritz L. Duda** as one of its newest Board members. Mr. Duda is chief executive officer of Genus Holdings, LLC, a Dallas-based investment company and the owner and founder of the Fritz Duda Company, a privately held real estate development company with offices in Newport Beach, California, and Chicago, Illinois. He has served on the boards of a number of private and public companies and was a founding investor and director of HMI Acquisitions and, subsequently, The Vons Companies, Inc., from 1985 to 1997, when the company was combined with Safeway.

He served on the University of Notre Dame College of Engineering and Architecture Advisory Council from 1991 to 1997 and was named a Trustee of the University in 1997. He has served as Chair of the Notre Dame Board of Trustees Campus Planning and Facilities Committee and is Chair of the International Facilities Committee. He received an honorary doctorate of laws from the University in 2009. He is a Trustee of the University of California's Hastings College of Law 1066 Foundation and is a member of the Knights of Malta.

Mr. Duda is a graduate of the University of California's Hastings College of the Law, where he received his L.L.B. and J.D. degree in 1964 and is a member of the State Bar of California and the American Bar Association. Mr. Duda is married to Mary Lee Nagle Duda of Iowa City, Iowa, a graduate of the University of Iowa. Mr. and Mrs. Duda have six children.

Progress on Woodrow Wilson Monument

(continued from Page 1)

While there has been good progress on approvals, physical progress on the statue of Wilson has been prevented by the elements. Because their studio is not heated, the sculptors in December suspended work on the clay model because of the cold weather. The model has been "winterized" and encased with Styrofoam blocks. Work will recommence as soon as the daily low temperatures in Prague are consistently above freezing. The clay model can be completed within a six week period. The next step will be the casting of the clay model into plaster.

AFoCR and its architects and sculptors soon will select a foundry to do the final bronze casting of the statue. This process will take approximately six months, so that the statue can be completed and ready for installation by the fall of this year. The architects have also been evaluating various types of granite for the pedestal and base and recently discovered an attractive stone in a quarry in southern Bohemia.

In February, AFoCR Vice President (and former U.S. Ambassador) Bill Cabaniss met with officials of Prague City Hall, who confirmed that the City will fund the construction of the pedestal and base for the monument. AFoCR will donate the completed monument to the City, and it will be maintained by the City's agency for monuments. AFoCR hopes that the

dedication of the monument can be held in late spring or early summer of next year, 2011.

While work on the monument has been on-going in the Czech Republic, AFoCR and its American architect Paul Beckmann have done substantial research and planning for the Walk of Freedom, which, alongside the walkway leading to the monument, will recognize individuals, companies, and organizations that have made significant contributions. There will be five donation levels ranging from \$2,500 to \$50,000 and above, with five corresponding sizes of granite plaques. Each plaque will have the donor's name (individual, company, or organization) and city inscribed, as provided by the donor. Donors will have the opportunity to dedicate their plaques "in memory" or "in honor" of friends and relatives. Also, members of organizations will have the opportunity to pool their donations and have their organization honored by a plaque on the Walk of Freedom.

More details regarding the number of lines per plaque and the number of characters per line, as well as proposed guidelines for content of text on the plaques, will be sent to all AFoCR and Wilson contributors this spring.

In order to give people throughout the Czech Republic an opportunity to support the monument effort, AFoCR is organizing a fund raising initiative in connection with the American Spring Festival of Music. The festival will be held in 31 cities from April to June 2010 in partnership with the International Dvořák Society.

AFoCR CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENTS



Historic 1990 Speech to Congress Commemorated



President Václav Havel Speaking at Joint Session of U.S. Congress February, 21, 1990

Photo: life.com

On February 21, 1990, newly elected Czechoslovak President Václav Havel made a memorable speech to a joint session of the United States Congress. In commemoration of that event, a group of prominent Czechs and Americans gathered in the U.S. Capitol last week to pay homage to Mr. Havel and the poetic vision of his speech, as well as to comment on the state of US-Czech relations 20 years later and to look at future challenges.

To reread the speech and remember the international context in which it was given is to glory in its beauty and inspiration at that moment in time. Havel reminded his distinguished American audience that he had been arrested by his Communist detractors four months earlier in Prague; that the playwright had been elected President a month after that last incarceration; that the Berlin Wall had come down in November; and the Soviet Union still existed with 18,000

of its troops occupying re-democratized Czechoslovakia. The President recounted the bipolar state of the world -- one side a defender of freedom, the other, a source of nightmares. The memory of that short historical period left the Capitol Hill audience, last week, breathless.

In his speech, Havel posed a most profound question to the Senators and Representatives—and to America: "I often hear the question how can the United States of America help us today? My reply is paradoxical...You can help us most of all if you help the Soviet Union on its...complicated road to democracy." The Russians today, as we know, still have far to go down that road and it remains a complicated, indeed troubling place. This point was made by each of the panelists participating in the program organized by the Czech Embassy in Washington, DC.

Washington Post columnist David Ignatius, calling the speech a "great moment," was the moderator. Each of the panelists urged a revitalized NATO, more trans-Atlantic contacts between those living in Central Europe and the people of the U.S. today and in the years ahead. Martin Palouš, close Havel confidant and currently the Czech Republic's Ambassador to the United Nations, mused that Havel would give a different speech today because the times have changed dramatically. Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright recalled her earliest contact with Havel, in which he confusingly referred to her as "Mrs. Fulbright". She also expressed the notion that Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, and others see themselves as "Europeans," not from Middle Europe, and do not consider themselves victims of their own history.

WILSON MONUMENT PROGRESS The Walk of Freedom and Sculptors at Work



Topolánek Delivers 10th Annual Czech and Slovak Freedom Lecture



(L to R) Phil Kasik, AFoCR Vice President, Tom Dine, AFoCR President, Mirek Topolánek, former Prime Minister, Leader of ODS, Michael Van Dusen, Wilson Center for Scholars Exec. VP, Amb. Petr Kolář, Ambassador from the Czech Republic, Amb. Theodore Russell, Founding Chairman, Friends of Slovakia

The 2009 Czech and Slovak Freedom Lecture was presented in December at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington. This year's speaker, Mirek Topolánek, is the Leader of the Civic Democratic Party and former Prime Minister of the Czech Republic.

This important series was initiated in November 2000 in commemoration of the inspiring struggle for freedom by the Czech and Slovak peoples. This year, AFoCR celebrated the 10th lecture in the series, as well as the 20th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution of 1989 which triggered the fall of communism. The legacy of those events was the focus of Mr. Topolánek's address.

Over the last ten years, the Czech and Slovak Freedom Lectures have provided a forum for important thinkers and practitioners from or with roots in Central Europe. Among others, these have included former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Adam Michnik, the Editor-in-Chief of Poland's *Gazeta Wyborcza*, and Vaclav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic. The Czech and Slovak Freedom Lectures are held annually through the cooperation of the American Friends of the Czech Republic and the Friends of Slovakia, as well as the Embassies of the Czech Republic and Slovakia.



*AFoCR President Tom Dine
thanks former
Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek.*

Historic Bohemian Hall Hosts Haiti Benefit in NYC



Suzanne Vega

Photo: www.musiciansatlas.com



Marta Töpferová

Photo: www.tatnews.org

The Bohemian National Hall – a century-old historic building on New York's Upper East Side, has hosted many memorable events. The building began its second life after a reconstruction from 2002 to 2008. On January 29, 2010, the Czech Republic and its friends presented a Haiti Benefit Concert at the Bohemian National Hall to raise much needed funds for the people of Haiti. Featured performers were Suzanne Vega, Gary Lucas, Lucia Pulido, Petr Váša, and Marta Töpferová, a New York vocalist with Czech origins who conceived the idea for the concert. All artists came to perform on short notice for this very worthy cause. Most are well-known show business personalities from the Czech Republic, the United States, and Colombia. All proceeds from the evening were donated to the Red Cross.

The event was organized by the Czech Center New York and the Bohemian National Hall in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Czech Republic in New York, the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the UN, and the Bohemian Benevolent & Literary Association. AFoCR provided financial support. Joseph Balaz, President of the Bohemian Benevolent and Literary Association, presided over the evening's events which raised \$3,500 for victims of the Haiti earthquake.

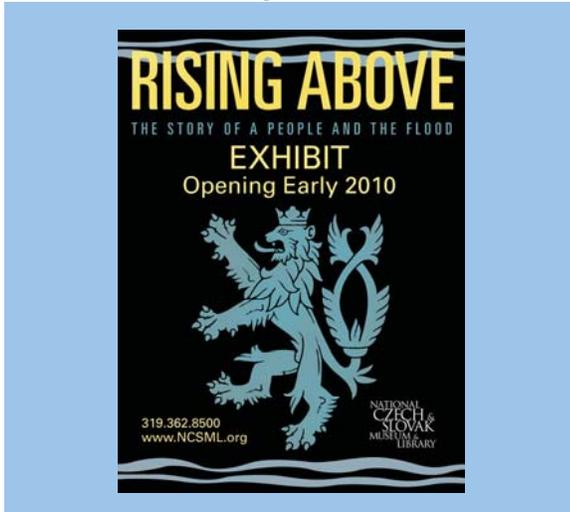


*Bohemian National Hall at Night
Photo by Pavel Semerak*

National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

Rising Above:

The Story of a People and the Flood
Exhibit Opens 4/17/10



The National Czech & Slovak Museum in Cedar Rapids is proud to announce a new exhibit beginning on April 17. The Czechs who came to Cedar Rapids overcame wave after wave of adversity as they left their homes behind and forged their destinies in the New World. This multimedia exhibition tells the story of those resilient people who settled a fertile bend in the Cedar River and built a thriving ethnic community there – one they would fight to keep.

The story begins with the history of Czechs in Cedar Rapids and the communities of Czech Village and New Bohemia. Then, news stories, video and eye-witness accounts carry you through the experience of the flood, moment by devastating moment, culminating with a walk-in model of a flooded house. Interactive kiosks will display news coverage of ongoing recovery efforts in Cedar Rapids and will allow you to record your own personal flood story. An interactive scale model of the cityscape of Cedar Rapids will vividly compare the 2008 flood to the previous floods of 1929 and 1993. Visitors will complete their journey in a restoration and memory area where they may view recovery progress and share their memories.

By installing the exhibit in the heart of historic 16th Avenue, the NCSML incorporates Czech Village and New Bohemia as authentic 20th century ethnic commercial districts -- once common to many Czech and Slovak neighborhoods across the country, but hard to find intact today. Walking tours, dynamic programs and festivals will make this an experience you'll remember. The NCSML has plans for an exciting opening weekend. Visit www.NCSML.org for a schedule of events.

The NCSML has a new location which will open in April 2010. Please visit the museum after the opening, at 87 Sixteenth Avenue SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404.

NCSML Flood-Damaged Building to be Moved and Elevated

The 15-year-old museum building is an architectural icon in Cedar Rapids and the museum's red roof rising above the 2008 floodwaters depicted the Cedar Rapids disaster around the world. "This museum represents and tells the story of hundreds of thousands of immigrants and their history. It is a symbol of the courage and vision of Czechs and Slovaks around the world and it will be the symbol of rebirth for Cedar Rapids," President/CEO Gail Naughton said. "We are eager to move forward with our plan."

In an effort to protect the building from future flooding and to retain it for its original purpose, the Board of Directors has agreed to pursue moving the physical structure from its current site on the banks of the Cedar River to a site across the street, still in the Czech ethnic neighborhood. The building will be elevated with parking on the lower level. The main floor of the museum is projected to be three feet above the 2008 flood level. The next step is to design the new museum and library. Detailed engineering studies of the building site are underway with the goal to make site improvements and move the existing building in 2010. Construction of the new additions will begin in 2011 with plans to open the new facility in 2012.

Czech Ambassador Kolář and AFoCR Directors Honored

H.E. Petr Kolář, Czech Ambassador to the United States, has been honored by the Czech Army's Military Institute with a Special Medal of Merit. The award came in recognition of Ambassador Kolář's exceptional efforts in fostering Czech-U.S. relations. Ambassador Kolář is only the ninth recipient of this prestigious award, which was presented during a ceremony at Bohemian National Hall in New York City on February 23, 2010.

The ceremony was held in honor of H.E. Přemysl Sobotka, the President of the Czech Senate, the Czech Parliament's upper chamber. Mr. Sobotka addressed the large gathering of invited guests and presented a number of Silver Senate Medals in recognition of their efforts on behalf of their native country – the Czech Republic. AFoCR Directors Joseph Balaz and Peter Bisek were amongst the recipients. AFoCR congratulates Ambassador Kolář and Directors Balaz and Bisek on receiving the honors.



*Ambassador
Peter Kolář*

*AFoCR Director
Joseph Balaz*

*AFoCR Director
Peter Bisek*

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