Annual Club Meeting
Sunday, April 1, 2012
Come join the fun!

Please mark the date for our club’s annual meeting on Sunday, April 1, 2012. It will be potluck and we ask that members and guests bring food based on the guidelines mentioned below. The club will provide the setups and drinks. The program this year will be a demonstration of traditional Czech and Slovak egg decorating techniques, followed by a hands-on workshop that children might particularly enjoy.

Club members will provide materials and guidance to anyone interested in decorating some eggs. The business part of our meeting will include the current financial status of the club, upcoming programs, and the election of officers. You can mail your ballot to the address on the last page of this newsletter or bring it to the meeting.

Please RSVP to Terry Smitka if you are planning to attend the meeting and participate in the egg decorating. It would help us determine the amount of supplies needed. Terry can be contacted at tsmitka@yahoo.com or 816-217-9487.

Club Meeting
Sunday, April 1, 2012 – 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

2:00 Social
2:15 Meal
3:00 Meeting
3:15 Demonstration of Czech and Slovak Easter customs and Easter egg painting
4:15 Cleanup

Location
Sylvester Powell Community Center
6200 Martway
Mission, KS 66202

Potluck
A – J ~ meat/main dish
K – R ~ salad/vegetable
S – Z ~ dessert/appetizer

The club will provide soft drinks, plates, and other utensils.
Learn the language of your ancestors?

If you want to give yourself a gift you can benefit from, what would it be? We can help you decide quickly. What about learning the Czech or Slovak language? You, your children, or grandchildren can now learn both of these languages from the comfort of your home with the help of various modern techniques. You will experience how it feels to read and understand online news in these languages, watch TV, or even travel to the Czech or Slovak Republic, and practice what you have learned.

The Czech North American Chamber of Commerce and Culture, Inc. and the Czech School without Borders joined together to bring Czech Americans and Czech Canadians to one Internet platform that promotes learning the Czech language through the website, www.czechevents.net. Teachers of the Czech language in the US and Canada can discuss various issues in the forum provided. In addition, the Czech School without Borders offers assistance and cooperation to any existing school or course in North America. The website informs about all the Czech and some Slovak cultural events across the United States and Canada, with many links to various interesting websites. Just take a look.

The Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Washington, D.C. sent out information about learning the Slovak language. The first online Slovak Language course is available through this website: www.slovake.eu. It is a completely free course and you can learn the language of your ancestors easily from the comfort of your home, at your own pace. Click on the website link and try it out.

In addition, you can learn these languages and many others through the Mid Continent Public Library’s (MCPL) website. In cooperation with Mango Languages, they offer free comprehensive language courses to anyone with an MCPL membership, at www.mymcpl.org. Just click on Online Resources, Research Databases, and Foreign Language. Then click on Mango Languages, enter your library card number, and give it a try.

Hopefully you will find these websites interesting and helpful in enriching you on your journey to learn more about the country of your ancestors.

Diplomatic Ball

The 2012 Diplomatic Ball, sponsored by the Kansas City Ethnic Enrichment Commission will be held on Saturday, March 31 at the Marriott Hotel, 200 W. 12th St. in downtown Kansas City. The theme this year is “Northern Lights.” The countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway, Scotland and Sweden will be the hosts and design the entertainment for the evening. There will be a cash bar at 6 p.m. with seating at 6:45 p.m. The featured meal is Nordic Salmon in Pastry and Tenderloin Beef Kabob. After the live entertainment, there will be dancing. The JWJB Jazz Band will be performing. Formal or ethnic attire is the dress for the evening. The cost remains $60 per person. Reservations must be made by March 17. Late reservations may not guarantee a seat at one of the two Czech and Slovak tables. Contact Robert Bee at 816-298-7468 or Bumble895@kc.rr.com.

Announcing a Special Recognition Ceremony

Linda Vlasak, recipient of the Czernin Palace Memorial Bronze Medal Award, will receive the award on Saturday, April 28 in recognition of her accomplishments in promoting United States and Czech relations. Sharon Valasek, honorary consul of the Czech Republic, announced the award. She, along with the Czech and Slovak Club, will proudly honor Linda, one of our own members, on that day. Family, friends and club members are encouraged to attend.

Event details:
Saturday, April 28, 2012
1:30 – 4:00 p.m.
Californos Restaurant
4124 Pennysylvania, Kansas City, MO 64111
Hors d’oeuvres, wine and beer, $15 per person, cash bar
Invitations for this event will be sent a few weeks.

Slovak 2012 Elections

With the early parliamentary elections set for March 12, 2012, Slovak Republic President Ivan Gasparovic appealed to the people of Slovakia in his New Year’s address to the nation to vote for politicians whose mission will actually be to serve them.

“It depends on you, whom you give the responsibility for the management of your state,” Gasparovic said.

Major issues being addressed by the main political parties in Slovakia are: the economy and changes in tax legislation, revision of the labor code, judicial reform, European Union, health care system problems and issues, and quality of education at all levels of society.

Gasparovic called on people not to become pessimistic and resigned because of the host of problems emerging.

“In the 19 years of a sovereign state of Slovakia and the many tests we have gone through in the previous centuries, we proved that we’re able to manage our public affairs and learn from our mistakes. Believe that this crisis is just another such test that we can overcome, thanks to our persistence,” urged Gasparovic, adding that we have a beautiful country that deserves our care.

The March election is a result of a no-confidence vote by the Slovak Parliament in October 2011 of their unhappiness with the current coalition government headed by Prime Minister Iveta Radicova, elected in 2010.
Commemorating Vaclav Havel: the Power of One Life

The Czech & Slovak Club of Greater Kansas City, the honorary consul of the Czech Republic to the Midwest, Sharon Valasek and Ross Marine, honorary consul of the Slovak Republic to the Midwest, will be hosting a commemoration celebrating the life of Vaclav Havel, Czech playwright, essayist, poet, dissident, politician and one of the original signatories of the “Manifesto of Charter 77.” The event will take place October 5, 2012 at the Kansas City Missouri downtown Central Library, 14 W. 10th Street. Vaclav Havel was born on October 5, 1936 in Prague Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic). He died on December 18, 2011 (at age 75) at Vlvice, Czech Republic.

Havel was a Nobel Peace Prize nominee, the ninth and last President of Czechoslovakia (1989-1992), and the first President of the Czech Republic (1993-2003). He wrote more than 20 plays and numerous non-fiction works, translated internationally. He was one of the major leaders in the Velvet Revolution movement that brought down the collapse of the Czechoslovakian Communist regime in 1989. Havel was one of few Czechoslovakian writers and intellectuals who, in January 1977, drafted and signed the “Manifesto of Charter 77.” The manifesto demanded that the Communist government of Czechoslovakia recognize basic human rights of its citizens. Charter 77 was hardly a radical document. Most of the rights it sought were already guaranteed by the Czechoslovakian Constitution and the Helsinki Accords, which the government had signed and agreed to.

Havel was a founding signatory of the Prague Declaration of European Conscience and Communism, which proposed the establishment of the European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism. He also was the recipient of the United States Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Gandhi Peace Prize, the Philadelphia Liberty medal, the Order of Canada, the Freedom medal of the four Freedom awards, the Ambassador of Conscience Award and numerous other distinctions.

In 2005, he was recognized as one the world’s top 100 intellectuals. At the time of his death, he was chairman of the New York-based Human Rights Foundation. He was the founder of the VIZE 97 Foundation in Prague (www.vize.cz). Source information for article from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, and the US Library of Congress.

National Council for International Visitors Annual Conference

Ross Marine attended the National Council for International Visitors Annual Conference (www.nciv.org) held in Washington DC, February 15-18, 2012 in his role as president of the Kansas City International Visitors Council board of directors. The theme of the conference was “One Story at a Time, the Impact of Citizen Diplomacy.” During Ross’ visit he had a lunch meeting at the Slovak Embassy with H.E. Peter Burian Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States, on Wednesday, February 15. He also attended a reception on Friday evening, February 17, at the Slovak Embassy, which was hosted by Ambassador Burian for a group of attendees at the NCIV conference. Music for the reception was provided by a Slovak musician who played a variety of Slovak hand-made flutes.

Ross Marine, Ambassador Burian, Christine Hughes, KCIVC board member

Student Scholarships

The Ethnic Enrichment Commission of Kansas City awards scholarships to graduating high school students each year. We understand the amounts are $2,500, $1,500 and $1,000. The applicants must provide a high school transcript and write a 500-word essay on their accomplishments, mainly pertaining to their culture and heritage.

The deadline is June 15, 2012 for this year’s awards. Although they have a website (www.eeckc.org), it may not have current or additional information at this time. We suggest interested parties contact Vanessa at the EEC office at 816-513-7553 for more information.
Kolache Baking At St. Cyril’s Sugar Creek

On Saturday, November 5, sixteen enthusiastic students attended a club-sponsored kolache-baking class taught by club members Jirina LaVine and Hana Buric. The class was held in conjunction with the University of Missouri Communiversity outreach program. It was held in the St.Cyril’s parish hall in Sugar Creek, Missouri. Eight students were enrolled through Communiversity and eight were club members. The club realized a $90 profit as a result of the class.

Good food and old world treasured knowledge on kolache-baking were shared and enjoyed by all who attended.

Calendar 2012

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1, 2012</td>
<td>Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Sylvester Powell Community Center</td>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 28, 2012</td>
<td>Czernin Award Presentation, Linda Vlasak</td>
<td>Californos Restaurant</td>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
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<td>June 8-9, 2012</td>
<td>Sugar Creek Slavic Festival</td>
<td>Mike Onka Hall, Sugar Creek, MO</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sugarcreekfestival.org">www.sugarcreekfestival.org</a></td>
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<td>July 14-15, 2012</td>
<td>National Czech and Slovak Museum Grand Reopening</td>
<td>Cedar Rapids, IA</td>
<td>Bus trip being planned for club</td>
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<td>August 3-5, 2012</td>
<td>Wilber Czech Festival</td>
<td>Wilber, NE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wilberchamberofcommerce.com">www.wilberchamberofcommerce.com</a></td>
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<td>August 17-19, 2012</td>
<td>Kansas City Ethnic Festival</td>
<td>Swope Park, Kansas City</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eeckc.org">www.eeckc.org</a></td>
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<td>October 5, 2012</td>
<td>Commemoration of Vaclav Havel &amp; 35th anniversary of Charter 77 Manifesto</td>
<td>Kansas City Downtown Library, 14 W. 10th ST</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>December 9, 2012</td>
<td>St. Mikulas</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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Czech-Slovak Queen (ks/Mo) Applicants Wanted!

Applicants must be females who are of partial Czech, Moravian, or Slovak descent. Young women who will be between the ages of 16 and 26 on September 1, 2012 are eligible. The applicants may be from any county in Missouri or Kansas.

For more information, contact Ross Marine: at rossmarine@earthlink.net or 816.943.0515.

On October 5, 2011, Czech, Slovak and American dignitaries gathered to commemorate the unveiling of the Woodrow Wilson Monument in Prague. The dedication ceremony was attended by more than 200 distinguished guests including Czech President Václav Klaus, former Czech President Václav Havel, former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and U.S. Ambassador Norman Eisen. The dedication ceremony featured several speakers including President Klaus, Secretary Albright, Prague Mayor Bohuslav Svoboda and Norman Eisen, U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic. In his remarks, Eisen said, “Neither the Nazis nor their Communist successors could destroy the fundamental concepts that govern our two nations. Let this new Wilson Monument hold these same truths, so that our future generations will know our unwavering commitment to a just and tolerant world.”

The original monument, built in 1928 in gratitude for Woodrow Wilson’s crucial role in Czechoslovakia’s independence, was torn down by the Nazis in 1941 after the U.S. entered World War II. The project to reestablish the Wilson monument in Prague was initiated in 2008 by the American Friends of the Czech Republic (AFoCR). During the dedication ceremony to re-install the statue in front of the Prague’s main railway station, Phil Kasik, vice president of AFoCR, placed a time capsule containing historic documents inside the base of the statue.

Sharon Valasek, honorary consul of the Czech Republic, participated in the dedication ceremonies in Prague. In addition to the dedication, Sharon attended related events held Oct. 4-6 including:

- Historical Exhibition of Woodrow Wilson, Tomaš Masaryk and their historical partnership at the National Museum
- Gala Award Dinner and Reception at Rudolfinum
- Symposium: The Legacy of Wilson and Masaryk in the 21st Century, hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Czernin Palace
- Joza Uprka Art Exhibition at the National Gallery, Wallenstein Riding School

Though Sharon commented that it’s difficult to sum up the experience in a few words, she said “It was a very memorable and meaningful week to be in Prague. I especially found the dedication ceremony very moving. It felt like I was in the middle of creating history, something that will be remembered for generations to come.”

Wilson Dedication Photo Book
A photo book of the Wilson Dedication week of events in October 2011 is available at http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/2614921. The book was created by the AFoCR’s official photographer, Lillis Werder. The cost is $90 for the 8 X 10 hard cover book (with dust jacket), which includes 120 pages of photos.

Czech Language and Literature Programs

The Czech Embassy announces the 2012 Compatriotic Educational Program Abroad which includes the following programs:

- Semester study abroad
- 4-week Czech language course
- 2-week Czech language methodology course for teachers from Czech compatriotic communities
- Sending Czech language teachers to Czech compatriotic communities abroad
- Sending Czech language teachers to foreign educational institutions


Conference on Czech School without Borders, Czech language education for Czech children living abroad

Czech Center in New York, NY
June 16 and 17, 2012
http://new-york.czechcentres.cz/

The conference will focus on the model of a “Sunday” Czech school, created in 2003 in Paris, started by Czech School without Borders http://www.cssh.cz/secundarni-odkazy/co-je-csbh/about-us and successfully repeated in 8 more European countries since.

Sharing the opinions and the experiences in this field will help to better define the needs of the Czech community in the USA and Canada in terms of the Czech language education for (Czech) children living abroad these days. The results of the conference will be presented during the annual meeting of the Czech Schools without Borders, held in Prague, in August 2012.

There is no entry fee. All interested participants, please send an email to csbh@csbh.cz, by March 9, 2012.
Ross Marine, honorary consul of the Slovak Republic, attended the Annual Czech & Slovak Festival in Wilson, Kansas July 30-31, 2011 and served as a judge for the 23rd Miss Kansas Czech & Slovak Queen Pageant. The pageant was held at Wilson High School on Saturday July 30. Jennifer Salva, a member of the Czech & Slovak Club of Greater Kansas City, was selected as the 2011-2012 queen. There were eight young women from various sections of Kansas competing for the title. Jennifer, as Kansas State queen, competes in the 2012 Miss Czech-Slovak National Pageant during the 51st Czech & Slovak Festival, held August 4-6, 2012 in Wilbur Nebraska. See www.nebraskaczehsofwilber.com or call 1-888-4WILBER for more information. We hope club members will attend the festival to support Jennifer. Good luck and best wishes, Jennifer!

Jennifer Salva: Miss Czech & Slovak Queen
Our club held its traditional St. Mikulas event on Sunday, December 4, 2011 at the Sylvester Powell Community Center in Mission, KS. This year’s event far exceeded recent St. Mikulas celebrations in attendance with over 120 members and guests present. Traditional Czech and Slovak music was once again provided by a group organized by Mark Pinter, with many of the musicians being current members of our club. Members of this talented group have played at many of our recent events and their entertaining performances are much appreciated. Also devoting time and effort to decorate the facility and help keep our program organized, were Hana Buric and Jirina LaVine. Many thanks to Hana and Jirina for their hard work. The food was delicious as always, with a wide selection prepared by all of the members.

And it wouldn’t have been a celebration without the arrival of St. Mikulas. As the children were gathered, the trio of St. Mikulas, the angel, and the devil came into the room. The children were each asked by St. Mikulas (Terry Smitka) if they behaved last year and deserved a present. Not surprisingly, the children were in 100% agreement that they had been good and should be rewarded. Our professional devil (Lukas Parrish) tried his best to convince St. Mikulas that the children were undeserving but our angel (Karolina Rooney) came to their rescue. After a short conversation with St. Mikulas and a performance by a few of the children, all were rewarded with a gift from St. Mikulas. I think everyone would agree that it was a fun time and a great day for celebrating this traditional Czech and Slovak holiday. Thanks to all for attending.
Czech and Slovak Club of Greater Kansas City

Officer Candidates for 2012

President ............................................... Terry Smitka
1st Vice President (Membership) .......... Mark Pinter
2nd Vice President (Social/Programs) .... Hana Buric
3rd Vice President (EEC Commissioner) .. Robert Bee
3rd Vice President (EEC Commissioner) .. Mike Kalny
Recording Secretary ............................ Sharon Short
Corresponding Secretary ....................... Maria King
Treasurer ............................................. Sue Herriage
Historian ............................................. Iveta Blahut

☐ Check box for entire above slate, or enter write-ins for specific office exceptions:

Your signature and date________________________

Please bring your ballots to the annual meeting or mail them to club Treasurer Jana Rooney, 6425 Valley Road, Kansas City, MO 64113. Contact Terry Smitka at 816-480-4227 if you have any questions. Ballots must be mailed by March 22, 2012.

Please Pay Your Club Dues
Pay your 2012 dues at the annual meeting. Just $25 per family or $20 per single helps support the mission of our Czech and Slovak Club.

Board Emeritus ......................... Joyce Cox
Board Emeritus ..................... Linda Vlasak
Board Emeritus .................... Jirina LaVine
Board Emeritus ................. Gene Simon

Address service requested

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