



LA GRANGE, TEXAS

NÁŠ ČESKÝ ŽIVOT

“OUR CZECH LIFE”

(Centrum českého kulturního dědictví v Texasu)

WINTER 2021

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 3

2021 TCHCC FALL EVENTS

INCLUDED A RECORD CROWD AT HERITAGE FEST, THREE SCHOOL TOURS, AND THE 12TH ANNUAL GALA THAT HONORED THE PAVELKA BAND AND JOHN ZAVADIL



LEFT: Members of the Pavelka Band accepting the honor with Retta Slavik Chandler , CENTER: John Zavadil, Texas Polka DJ, and RIGHT: Doc Darilek and Egon Barthels receiving the award for “Mister John” who was unable to attend.

Dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the history, language, culture, and heritage of Texans of Czech ethnicity.

Náš Český Život "Our Czech Life"

TEXAS CZECH HERITAGE AND CULTURAL CENTER

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Newsletter Address: All articles, photographs, advertising and correspondence should be directed to Retta Chandler or Janis Hrnčíř, co-editors, P. O. Box 6, La Grange, Texas 78945 (979) 968-9399.

Articles: Anyone may submit articles, which will be accepted for inclusion as space permits and subject to review and editing as necessary. All articles must be typewritten. The publication is not responsible for the return of unsolicited material not submitted with a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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The Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center, Inc. does not endorse or guarantee the products or services that are advertised in this publication.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the TEXAS CZECH HERITAGE AND CULTURAL CENTER, INC. is to provide a central facility for the preservation and promotion of the history, language, culture and heritage of individuals of Czech ethnicity who can trace their ancestry to the Czechs who immigrated from the present day Czech Republic or former Austria-Hungary (including Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia and Silesia), to honor those immigrants, and to operate exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes.

The goals of the TEXAS CZECH HERITAGE AND CULTURAL CENTER, INC. are:

To educate the public about the past and present contributions and status of persons of Czech descent

To encourage the study and preservation of the Czech language, fine arts, music and dance

To provide for the preservation and exhibition of artifacts that are historically significant to the Czech people of Texas

To provide a library and archives for the collection and preservation of books, newspapers, periodicals, family histories, research material, photographs and all printed data of historical significance to the Czech people of Texas

To provide adequate space for gatherings, meetings and educational activities for the benefit of the Czech people of Texas

To encourage and promote a cultural exchange program between the Czech people of Texas and the citizens of the Czech Republic

To provide the public with updated information regarding Czech-related activities and historical sites in Texas, the United States and abroad.

You are invited to continue receiving the newsletter Náš Český Život and an annual calendar by sending in your ANNUAL SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP. This journal will only be sent to members. Support your Center — JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY.

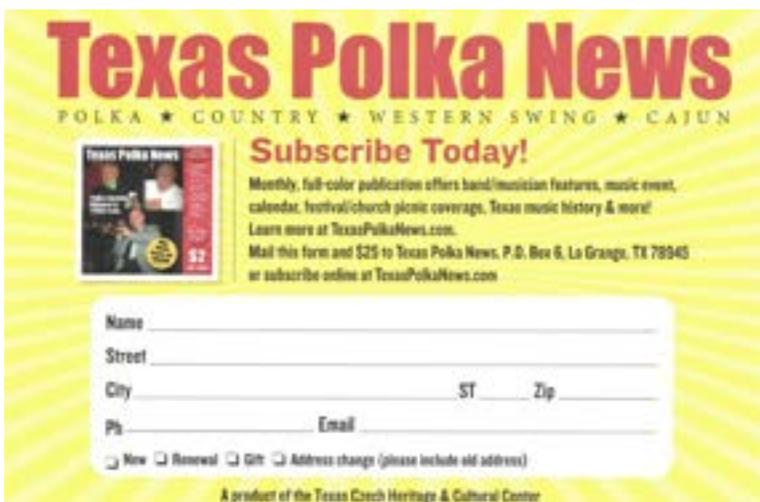
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and donations online.



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A product of the Texas Czech Heritage & Cultural Center

President's Letter
January 2022

Dear Members,

Scheduled Events for 2022 at TCHCC are filling up our calendar. Projects in the Czech Village are near completion. The Archival Storage Building will be ready for move-in soon and surface ground for the Blacksmith Shop is in place. Also filling our calendar are bookings for visitor and group tours and banquet hall rentals.

The Melnar Library is available for genealogy research. The Museum will feature The Moravian Glory Exhibit from January 14 to May 15. This traveling exhibit shows life in Moravia describing the specific destiny of a woman, great-grandmother Maryška, from Charvátská Nová Ves. With four seasons in the background, the stages of human life take place: childhood, youth, adulthood and old age.



TCHCC President
Retta Slavik Chandler

The Sanford Schmid Amphitheater with a spectacular view of the Colorado River Valley is available for bookings. In 2021, a performance by John Conlee and two productions by the Fayette County Theater Group delighted all who attended. On May 15, 2022, during the Slavnost Tribute, we will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center with special programs. Hundreds of donors and volunteers contributed to the progress made since 1997. They pledged and dedicated their time, expertise, and money to creating a place for the preservation of Czech history, culture, and traditions. A place that welcomes all to study the history of the Czech Lands and to view how those who left their homeland lived when they came to Texas. It is a place for those of Czech ethnicity to honor their ancestors.

We thank all of you for renewing your memberships, memorials, and special donations. Your support makes it possible to continue to move forward; to have TCHCC open to the public and to offer Special Events and projects.

Děkujeme,
Retta Slavik Chandler



Left top and bottom: Fayette County Community TheatRE performed the play *Of Mice and Men*.
Right top and bottom: Entertainer John Conlee performed at the Sanford Schmid Amphitheater on September 25, 2021 to the delight of his many fans.



IN MEMORY OF MARTHA BARTOS MAREK



Martha was born on December 27, 1931 in Hungerford, Texas, to the late Joe and Annie Spumy Bartos. She went home to be with her Lord on September 11, 2021.

She is survived by her loving husband of 70 years, Daniel J. Marek of El Campo; children, Diana Naiser of El Campo, Dennis Marek [Jan] of Sugar Land, Kenneth Marek [Clara] of Edna, Donna Barrett [David] of Bay City and Nancy McLain [Daniel] of Lake Jackson; grandchildren: Christy Brooks [John], Keith Naiser, Neysha Frontera [Stephen], Garrett Marek [Fiancé, Jessica Fleenor], Steffanie Thompson, Toby Marek [Tisha], Kayla Perry [Greg], Matthew Sikes, Lane Barrett [Julia], Chad Barrett [Amanda], Cody McLain [Amber], Clint McLain [Amy] and Joshua Marek; great-grandchildren. Blythe Brooks, Mitzi Naiser [Dylan Lohrstorfer], Rhett Naiser, Anthony Frontera, Derek Frontera, Blake Martinez [Candise], Kennedy Thompson, Reagan Thompson, Brooklyn Marek. Roman Perry. Emma Barrett,

Bohde Barrett, Sophia Barrett, Kasen McLain, Kynlee McLain and Fladley McLain; great-great-grandchild. Randle Martinez; sister. Josie Mican and brother, Jerome Bartos.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Joe and Annie Spurny Bartos; in-laws, John and Rosie Stavinoha Marek; daughter, Annette Matula; son-in-law, Allen Naiser; sister, Mary Miculka and brother, Paul Bartos.

Martha loved cooking for her family, traveling, dancing, quilting, playing corn hole and train with her grandchildren and watching the Houston Astros, she made it to one game! After raising her children, she worked at various businesses throughout El Campo finishing her career as a sales associate with Weiner's working there for 21 years. She was a member of St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church, Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court #1374, KJZT, Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center, and American Legion Ladies Auxiliary.

IN MEMORY OF MARY JANE KOCUREK



Mary Jane was born on August 6, 1939 to Willie and Annie Kubelka. She passed away peacefully at her Richmond home on September 1, 2021. She was raised on a farm between Beasley and Kendleton - on land owned by her grandparents. She went to elementary school in Beasley, and then to Lamar Junior High and Lamar High School in Rosenberg. Her family was of Czech descent and Mary Jane grew up speaking Czech before she learned English. Her grandfather never did learn English, so she was his translator/interpreter until she was in 8th grade, going with him wherever he went.

Coming from a farming family, Mary Jane had after school and weekend jobs when she was in high school. She met William Kocurek, her future husband, at the cafe where she worked. They were married just ten days after her high school graduation by the Brethren minister at Texas A & M on June 10th, 1958.

Mary Jane owned and operated a donut shop which helped finance her college education at the University of Houston. She graduated from the University of Houston in elementary education. She taught fifth grade in Lamar Consolidated Independent School District for three years and then followed her love of reading and books to get her library certification from University of Texas. She then worked as a librarian in LCISD for 26 years - opening libraries at Crocket and at Lamar Junior High. Mary Jane and William traveled extensively - spending time in Alaska and the Czech Republic, and even taking a trip around the world in 1990.

Mary Jane volunteered as a docent with the Fort Bend Museum just after the museum was given the Moore home in 1975. She did anything that needed to be done: cleaning the home, giving tours, helping with events, including Texan Market Days and Candlelight Tours. Mary Jane served as the Docent President in 1985. She has decorated, at one time or another, every room in the Moore Home for Candlelight Tours, and served as the Chairman for that event as well. Her contribution for many years was to help with publicity for docent activities.

Mary Jane was also a member of the Garden Club of Richmond, served as Membership Chair for the Friends of George Memorial Library, contributed to the Rainbow Room, and helped with the library at the Houston Museum of Natural Science in Sugar Land. She was a member of the Czech Heritage Society and has contributed both time and treasures to the Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center in LaGrange, Texas. Mary Jane was selected to join Delta Kappa Gamma, a teachers sorority, in their local chapter, Epsilon Omega, during her years in the school district.

Mary Jane was an avid reader - reading up to a book a day. She loved getting books as gifts and even had friends with whom she traded books.

Her family was very important to her. There were many lean years for her four younger siblings, so Mary Jane would supply them with school clothes and Christmas presents. Mary Jane would host wonderful, memorable Christmas parties for the Kubelka family. Mary Jane attended the Community Christian Church in Rosenberg. She was very active in her Church.

Mary Jane is survived by two brothers, Stanley Kubelka, and Eugene Kubelka and his wife Kay. Two sisters, Bernadette Hurta and husband Edward and Martha Grygar and husband David. She is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews. She is also survived by sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law Alice Kocurek, Frances Kocurek Wheat, Glen and Jane Kocurek Hill, and Jon Brooks.

OOPS! The Annual Immigrant Ceremony was held during the Slavnost festivities in May.

The picture to the right recognized the descendants of Joseph and Marie Krcma Macik Family surrounded by (left) VP Bill Schovajsa and (right) 2020 Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Madison Murphy, but there is one person who was mislabeled: The second person to the right is Dale Sykora, followed by his relatives Tommy Prasifka, Nick Macik, and Donna Willett. Our apologies.



Below: The original sign that hung on the downtown stage at the National Polka Festival in Ennis, Texas was donated to TCHCC. The presentation was done at the National Polka Festival in May of 2021.



Vintage Photo of Johnnie Mensik Orchestra of Ennis with the sign hanging on the stage.



The original sign was presented to Mark Hermes during the Czechaholics performance at the SOKOL Hall in May.

HERITAGE FEST 2021 Began Friday night with Music On The Deck and Chicken and Dumpling Meal. Left: The Friday night kitchen crew: L-R: Carolyn Surface, Joyce Hermes, Georgia Vyvial, Vera Wehring, Tracie & Jim Pfeil, Carolyn Heinsohn. Right: Barbara Hruby collected the meal tickets.



HERITAGE FEST 2021

The Annual Heritage Fest and Muziky was held on October 15 and 16, 2021. There was music on the Deck by the Dujka Brothers on Friday night and Music by the Czech Melody Masters & Ennis Czech Boys on Saturday. Below: Visitors lined up for the the Chicken and Dumpling Meal and danced the night away. Some of the booths and events on Saturday included a Taroky Tournament, Antique Farm Equipment Show, Car Show, Country Store, Saw Mill Operation, Newspaper Museum Printing Press Operations, Blacksmithing, Activities for the Children, visits to the Czech Village buildings, and Food and Drinks.





Top L-R: Opening Prayer was celebrated by Rev. Jonathan Hernandez. La Grange Mayor Jan Dockery gave a proclamation designating October 16 as Czech Day in the City of La Grange. Czech Consul Brian Vanicek read a letter of congratulations from Czech Ambassador Hynek Kmonicek. Center Left: Miss Czech-Slovak US 2021-2022 Lauren Gerik and 2021 Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen Madison Murphy attended and (below l-r) provided a booth for all to visit.





L-R: John Dujka visits with John Novak and Frances Barton who were on hand to autograph and sell their newly released song book *Czech Songs in Texas*.



La Grange Air Evac helicopter landed on the lawn and provided a display of their services.





Left: On Saturday morning KJT held its Annual State Tarok Tournament in the Hanslik Hall. Right: Phyllis and Tom Teykl take a break between their shifts in the booths.



Top: Retta Chandler and John Novak. Bottom: Train Rides were provided by the Leos Club.

CZECH OUT
*more photos of
our activities
on our website:
czechtexas.org.
Courtesy of
Gary E. McKee*



Music during the day was provided by the Czech Melody Masters and the Ennis Czech Boys and the Leo Majek Orchestra entertained under a beautiful moonlit night. The Leo Majek Orchestra celebrated 124 years of performing and promoting Polka Music. The Annual Fireworks Finale was sponsored by H.E.B.



The Ennis Czech Boys entertained under the tent in the afternoon.



Martha Majek on the accordion.

Right: Alfred Vrazel joined the Majeks for a few favorites.

Below Left: Mark Hermes and Alfred Vrazel presented the Majek Orchestra with a certificate from the International Polka Association (IPA) recognizing their 124 years of playing.



SCHOOL TOURS

Three schools visited TCHCC in the month of November: Sacred Heart Catholic School, Ezzell School, and Vysehrad School all from Lavaca County. They were treated to a homemade lunch and tours of the facilities as well as many hands-on activities.



12th Annual Gala

The Gala was held on December 4, 2021 in the Pavilion Hall and celebrated the musical contributions of the Pavelka Orchestra and Polka DJ John Zavadil. The night consisted of good conversations, a silent auction, door prizes, raffle drawing, speeches, dining (catered by Murphy's Steakhouse of Winchester), singing and dancing.





Raffle Winners

**First Prize: \$1500 Certificate-
Mike McClure**

**Second Place \$1000
Certificate- Michael R. Kaspar**

**Third Place: \$500 Certificate-
Rowan Pavelka**

**4th Place: Certified Czech
Garnet Jewelry Item - Nancy
McKee**

**Fifth Place: Certified Czech
Crystal Item - Gary Criswell**



2021 Gala Honoree: The Pavelka Orchestra

1943 - 1982

By Gary McKee

Polka music was flourishing in the early 1900s. John Pavelka loved music and was inspired to play the violin and read music from his grandpa Joseph Sumbera. During WWI, John decided to form a band; unfortunately, with unforeseeable events in the world the timing was not adequate. It was not long after John found the love of his life and married with six children, 5 sons and a daughter. Nonetheless, they all learned to play music. During WWII, John decided to attempt again with a second band and The Pavelka Orchestra began in 1943. The family band consisted of founder John Pavelka and sons: George Pavelka, Bill Pavelka, Benny Pavelka, Jerome Pavelka, Robert “Bob” Pavelka, and daughter, sole-survivor and first drummer of the band; Georgia “Cacha” Pavelka-Zidek along with Dorothy Fabrygel- Pavelka (wife of Bill Pavelka) and Ruby Fabrygel-Albrecht (sister to Dorothy Fabrygel-Pavelka).

The first performance was held in the old violet school succeeding with the first wedding performance on November 27, 1945. John Pavelka originally wrote many arrangements for the band members. His son Benny Pavelka took over the job later in years. The band loved to play and always ensured requests were met; especially, the Beer Barrel Polka {Skoda Lasky} which was a very popular song during this era. The band kept each other fine-tuned by having practices every Wednesday for four hours as if they were playing a regular dance. Many performances were held in the local community along with various parts of Texas: West, Elk, Corn Hill and down in the valley. Ms. Zidek recalls, “all band members traveled by their own car that included their spouses and children as there was no such thing as leaving children behind at home”.

There were troublesome times in the world, but polka music brought out jubilation. Ms. Zidek recalls many fond memories of all the fun they had but the most important one was “playing in the band kept the family together”. The Pavelka’s were a close-knit family that stuck together. If the band did not play at dances, they were having house parties. Family was very important! On stage, the drummer is an important piece to the puzzle and ensures the beat stays on target. Ms. Zidek laughs and recalls “Benny would be sure to keep me from dragging and to stay on beat”. Her dad John Pavelka also kept everyone humble and told all of them together, “I want to tell y’all something, y’all are going to hear this and hear that but I don’t ever want any of you to criticize another musician because everybody has their own way of playing and there’s no reason to be criticizing anyone”. This is what makes music beautiful with bands having their own uniqueness and diversity.

Eventually the ladies of the band started families of their own and one by one vacated their positions. There were many incredible musicians that assisted with the transitions: El Vanecek, Henry Valenta, Robert Janosek, Vit Parma, Jimmy Tousek, Bill Pavelka, Fred Tischler and Mark Rebecsek.

The versatility of music began to modify throughout the years adding woodwind instruments and country and western music to the mix. At age 12, George “Butch” Pavelka, Jr., was the third generation that began playing the bass horn at many dances. George “Butch” Pavelka, Jr. recalled before his recent passing, “I remember Grandpa John was proud and seeing his eyes swell up with tears of joy”.

In 1961, John Pavelka passed away tragically, nevertheless his legacy carried on. The Pavelka’s endured further unexpected sadness when two brothers passed away exactly three months apart in 1975; George Pavelka, Sr. and Robert “Bob” Pavelka. This was a disheartening time for the band but in memory of them they reconstructed and continued with members Benny Pavelka, Jerome Pavelka and Mark Rebecsek with adding new members Benji Pavelka and Mike Pavelka (sons of Benny Pavelka) and Kirby Park.

The Pavelka Orchestra always felt it was an honor and privilege to perform for so many events and individuals. There were so many fun-filled years, and they cherished every moment. Ms. Zidek stated with radiance in her eyes, “they all just had so much fun”. The best trait about the Pavelka’s was they were always smiling and fun-loving!!

In the later years, the band members gathered and decided to call it quits in 1982. Although the Pavelka Orchestra may have concluded, the love of music continues onwards through the next generations.

Interesting and fun facts:

There was no singing on stage as there were no microphones or amplifying systems.

During intermission Bob Pavelka, Benny Pavelka and Georgia Pavelka-Zidek would sing and a group of individuals would circle around as they entertained the crowd.

Many dances were performed with Joe Patek and the Majeks.

The Pavelka Orchestra would receive \$50 for a dance; Weddings received \$35 but local community weddings and church picnics were donated for free.

There was no air conditioning and no tables in the dance halls only benches along the side for children who would sleep underneath them.

Everyone that came to dances always stood around and danced.

The bar would serve only cold beverages and there was no kitchen in the halls as food was only served at weddings.

Most serious in the band - Benny Pavelka.

Most mischievous in the band - Bob Pavelka.



George Pavelka



The Pavelka Orchestra - Moravian Hall (1948)
George, John, Bill, Jerome, Benny, George, Dorothy, Bob, Ruby

The original Pavelka Orchestra members are as follows:

Son, George Pavelka (wife, Helen), both deceased; their children, George Jr. "Butch" (wife Marie), Butch is deceased; and Johnny Pavelka

Father, John Pavelka (wife, Lillian), both deceased; their children

Son, Bill Pavelka (wife, Dorothy), both deceased; their children, Joyce & Wilma, twins

Son, Jerome "Pee Wee" Pavelka (wife Helen), both deceased; their children Jerry Pavelka (wife, Beverly); and Karen Criswell (husband, Gary)

Son, Benny (wife, Maryla), both deceased; their children, Mike Pavelka (wife, Tina), Patti (deceased), Benji Pavelka (wife, Mama), Lauri Wright (husband, Donnie), and Ann Marie ?

Daughter, Georgia "Georgie" Pavelka Zidek (husband, Alvin, deceased); their children, Alan Zidek (wife, Vickie), Nancy Lyssy (husband, Melvin), John Zidek (Lynda Ragan), and Lisa Vyvlecka (husband, Brady)

Dorothy was Bill's wife

Son, Robert "Bob" Pavelka (wife, ?), both deceased; their children, Robert Jr. Pavelka, Leslie & Jaime

Ruby was Dorothy's sister (Bill's sister-in-law)

2021 Gala Honoree: John Zavadil - Texas Polka DJ

By Gary McKee

When the strains of Polka Time in Texas came rolling out of radios tuned to 1450 AM across Southern Central Texas from 1996 to 2013, people's ears pricked up and concentration was shifted to hear the voice of John Zavadil wishing them a pleasant day in English, Czech, German, and Spanish.

During this period John Zavadil became an institution around the Gonzales area as he truly loved the people and the culture. John was born and raised in Gonzales graduating in the class of 1957. He ventured up the road to Texas Lutheran College in Seguin, acquired a degree in business, and then headed to Houston for a good job with the John Deere corporation. The economy tanked and he was laid off. John saw this as a sign that it was time to leave the hustle and bustle of the city and head back home to the banks of the Guadalupe River.

Getting hired on as a business teacher and coach at Nixon he bided his time until an opening at the Gonzales school gave him the opportunity to teach where he was taught. John spent thirty years teaching business-oriented classes at Gonzales with the last ten spent teaching the newfangled computers that were beginning to become a part of society. John's inquisitive mind kept him up to date on the upgrades of technology and he embraced the possibilities. He retired from teaching in 1995, and his interest in his community and heritage led him to the local radio station.

John remembers KCTI (Gonzales radio) coming on the air for the first time in 1947 and listening to it growing up. After retirement, he heard a polka song on the radio and he knew what he wanted to do next, become a Gonzales disc jockey, and not just a regular DJ. He asked the station manager about doing a polka show, the manager thought John was requesting one song; John straightened him out, "No, I want to be on the air and do a full polka show." After some negotiations, a deal was struck and on February 5, 1996, the show christened the 1450 Polka Club went on the air on radio station AM 1450.

Small town radio appears to be an easy task to handle, but the emphasis on small town leads to difficulties that are unseen to the listener. Working at a small station involves wearing many different hats, there is the technical side (keeping the signal on the air), there is the managerial side, e.g., managing the staff, if you have any; dealing with the government regulations; interacting with the community, and assuming responsibility for the stations format. Sometimes there is a program director who decides what gets put on the air and what doesn't, and then there is the advertising manager. The advertising revenue, which pays for all of it, is minimal as most listeners are aware of the opportunities to spend their money in the rural areas and you have to hustle to convince businesses to advertise. Too much of the time there are only several people actually involved in bringing the information and music to your radio as the pay is low due to the small advertising base and you have to be really committed to the job.

So when John signed up, it wasn't too long before he began realizing the job entailed more than just spinning his favorite records. The station manager trained him for several weeks before turning him loose so he could attend to the multitude of his other duties.

John's time slot was 8 in the morning and the phones started ringing at 6 a.m. (rural folks get up early) with requests for specific songs for specific people and reasons (birthdays and anniversaries). John quickly learned that the records (78, 33 1/3, 45, and CDs) were not in any particular order, so he spent most of his first year organizing them into a quick to find format. Egon Barthels, former DJ at KCTI, remarked that John kept the Post-It Note company in business as he would mark each piece of music with Post-Its containing information about the song and the requestor's name and reason. By his third year, he had catalogued some 22,000 songs. The DJ is also responsible for ensuring that paid advertisements and that Public Service Announcements are aired at the correct time, and that the station is frequently identified (required by law). Rainfall is important in agricultural communities and on small town radio, the rainfall is reported by listener call in, during rainy periods there were up to forty-four different reports. Up to date livestock and crop prices were vital in rural areas, and that the local news and sports information is up to date and gathered by the morning DJ. John became very efficient at juggling these dudes and his local knowledge of all these functions endeared him to his listeners. All of this is necessary so that when a farmer in Hochheim Prairie turns on his radio in the barn or tractor he is well informed on local events which influence his life and can now enjoy listening to the Wence Shimek Orchestra or the Joe Patek Orchestra.

John's ties to the Gonzales area run deeper than being raised there. He not only educated hundreds of his present listeners in classrooms but was a school coach for many years and participated in many civic functions. John's heritage is a mixture of Czech, German, and Swiss, his grandmother did not speak English, so his upbringing bestowed upon him multiple language skills. Every morning he would greet his listeners in Czech and German. When it was possible John would announce the next song in those two languages in addition to Polish and/or Spanish if the song called for it. John settled into a comfortable routine by kicking off his show by playing Polka Time in Texas by the Shiner Hobos. At mid-show, he would play the Shiner Song by the Patek Orchestra. During a drought he would daily play the Rain, Rain

Polka by various artists until it rained. Ever the teacher, John would recite a Czech or German popular phrase and then translate it with a short definition of its use. During the show, his fans had pretty much dictated his playlist with requests. There is nothing more important to small town radio than connecting directly with each and every listener. When his listeners heard the Brothers and Sisters Polka by the Mikula Orchestra they knew the show was over.

When the opportunity came along for KCTI to hop on the internet and bring the 1450 Polka Club to lovers of polka and waltz music around the world, John was all over it. Word of mouth spread the news of a great three-hour Texas polka show that was available on the Web, and John began getting emails from Europe with praise and requests. One superfan, Michael Welz in Hamburg Germany, recorded the shows and now sends a lot of the shows back to John. On a bit smaller scale, Gonzales transplants to Houston, San Antonio, and other areas were able to get hometown news and music over the net.

Along the way John picked up an award from the Texas Polka Music Association for Polka DJ of the year. He drew further attention to his music of choice with membership in the Po.LK of A. and during several parades John and his wife Erlene, would street dance the entire parade length following the music from the PoLK of A float.

All good things come to an end, and in 2013 health reasons forced John to retire from the radio business. Over the years, John has harvested numerous awards including the Texas Polka DJ of the year and made thousands of friends.

John and Erlene still live on the ranch that had been in his family for over one hundred years. To keep in touch with the community, they joined God's Work, Our Hands kitchen, a group of folks who do their best to ensure that no one in their community goes without a meal.

John's earmark left on the polka and waltz world has stood the test of time.

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John Zavadil's ancestors were the Malateks from Horni Ujezd, Prerov Region of the Czech Republic and Zavadils from Vitonice who settled in Gonzales, Texas. His interest in genealogy runs deep as is evidenced by the book published by CHS in 1986 *Czech Footprints Across the Bluebonnet Fields: Early Czechs in Gonzales County*. A copy can be found in the Melnar Library.

John and Earline Kubecka Zavadil were members of the Moravia Czech Heritage Singers that were established in 1983 to 1990 when a new group was formed known as the Happy Czech Singers. The Singers are pictured below:

Front row: Zachary Tomlinson, Anton Havel, John Zavadil, and Alfons Schwartz. Back row: Georgia Cervenka Roznovsky, Agnes Novak Krhovjak, Loraine Konvicka Deem, Angie Jaeggli, Lorine Madala Dierschke, Lillian Havel, Annie Pohluda Wick, Erlene Kubecka Zavadil, Francelle Czichos. Not pictured: Charles J.Tousek. Taken at Trinity Lutheran Home, Shiner, Texas 1996. Photo courtesy of Janis Hrcir.



TCHCC Hosts First Responders Lunch

The Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center hosted a lunch for La Grange and Fayette County first responders on Tuesday, Dec. 21. Top: members of the Fayette County Sheriff's Department enjoyed the lunch: (from left) Sgt. Ben Wilson, Rick Bohlmann, Connie Tofel, Sgt. Charles Jobb, Terry Guentert, Angela Lala, Lt. David Beyer, and Sgt. Ryan Megher. Center: Members of the La Grange Citizen Police visited with the mayor: (from left) Juanita Bertsch, Mayor Jan Dockery, Joe Lamer, Barbara Eilert, and John Eilert. Bottom: Members of Emergency Medical Services were all smiles (from left): EMT Lt. Bradley Wunderlich, EMT Andy Schwartz, EMT Taylor Korenek, Paramedic Jessica Simkin, Paramedic Captain Doady Rogers, Paramedic Mackenzie Mixon, and EMS Director Josh Vandever. Photos courtesy of Amanda Gifford.





Top: First Responders are being served by Shirley Macik.

Center: Shirley Macik and Georgia Vyvial serve up the soup.

Below: Front: Lorenda Polasek, Shirley Macik, Retta Chandler and Georgia Vyvial

Back: Joe Lamer, Nicholas Macik



CZECH DO'S AND DON'TS

How many of these have you heard about?

Weddings & marriage:

1. The bride and groom should eat from one bowl for a harmonious marriage.
2. At the wedding the bride should break a plate, the groom sweeps it up and the pieces distributed to the guests with the newlyweds keeping one piece for themselves.
3. There should be no weddings in May or the bride & groom will die within a year.
4. A Czech custom is for bridesmaids to present guests with sprigs of rosemary as a symbol of fidelity.
5. Also a custom is for friends to stand along the paths when guests arrive, tie a ribbon across the path, and ask for a donation for the couple or as a tip for the musicians.
6. A collection is taken up at the wedding for the birth of the first child.
7. Peas are thrown at Czech weddings instead of rice.
8. A person will never marry if eating the last sweet on a dish.
9. Sitting on the table or singing at the table insures you will marry a crazy person.

Medicine or home remedies:

1. After a heavy or fatty meal, alcohol should be drunk to help the body break down these foods.
2. Drink beer for gastric problems - the bitterness is believed to prevent the development of gall stones.
3. Slivovice (plum brandy) is believed to fight off colds and promote long life.
4. A cure for the common cold is to eat onion with sugar. Or drink tea with lemon and honey.
5. To cure snoring, boil a chopped onion in two quarts of water for 15 minutes, add garlic and marjoram and cook for another 5 minutes. Strain the mixture and add a teaspoon of honey and olive oil. Take a small amount every hour.
6. Drinking water or beer after eating cherries will make you sick.
7. After a bee sting, remove the stinger, wash with soapy water and place a piece of onion there.
8. For wasp stings, pour vinegar over it.
9. If a fish bone get stuck in your throat, eat a piece of dry bread.
10. To stop severe bleeding, put a spider web on the wound.
11. To cure a fever in a child, tie a wedding ring around his/her neck.
12. To heal cuts, make a poultice of bread and milk.
13. To cure a sore throat, put kerosene and bacon around it.

Weather:

1. If it rains on Easter Sunday it will rain for 6 weeks. If it rains on Good Friday, the following year will be dry.
2. A ring around the moon means rain within 3 days.
3. It will rain 3 days after a frost.
4. It will soon rain if you put a snake on a fence or if you see a dog eating grass.
5. In July, no rain falls during the night.
6. Throwing a kitchen broom out the door during a hailstorm will sweep it away.
7. You will see the sun (even just for a short while) every Saturday except for 2 Saturdays in a year.
8. Thunder in spring when the trees are green means there will be no more frost. Thunder in the winter means there will be a frost 60 days later.
9. If you hear a cow mooing on Christmas Eve then there will be fair weather on Christmas day.
10. If hens go to sleep early or a spider spins a web there will be fair weather.
11. If doves sit on the roof in a straight line there will be bad weather.
12. The weather on the first 12 days of a year shows what kind of weather there will be for the remaining 12 months.

Flowers:

1. If wearing flowers on Mother's Day a red flower should be worn if the mother is living and a white flower if she is not.
2. When giving flowers, always give an odd number of flowers. Even numbers are for funerals.
3. Roses should be transplanted during a full moon to insure fuller blooms.



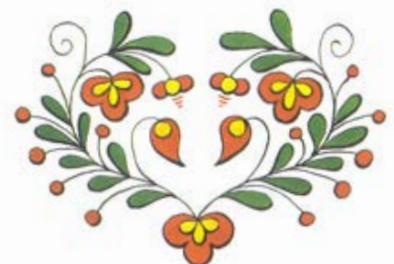
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G. M. Barlean: Book on The Czech and Slavic Epic Art History of Alfons Mucha

Mildred Bohlmann: 2 books on WWII involving Fayette County, silent auction items

Christine Burke: 4 Czech language books & tapes

Rev. Paul Chovanec: 7 feather beds, 2 quilts, 2 quilted tablecloths, 1 antique towel, 1 antique flour sack dress

Evelyn Clauss: from Estate of Durwood Fuchs: light box, negatives, rag paper making process

Jan Couch: TCGS Wedding Album book

Jewel Jones-Anderson: Original documents in black box belonging to Hajovsky, Hluchanek, Stavinoha Families

Georgia Funderburk: Quilt, fabrics, 1 large and 1 small scrub board, crocheted quilt, poppy seed grinder, nail kegs, bread board, cooking utensils.

Carolyn Haluska: SPJST Band Cap

Bob Heinsohn: shingle cutter, large & small chisel

Carolyn Heinsohn: Kitchen items for Salas house, antique wooden tomato box, book on Frank Chotek

Anton Hejtmancik Family: Items for Blacksmith Museum - Crank drill press and table mounted vice

Barbara Hruby: framed crocheted doily made by George Hruby's mother

Carolyn Hubenak: Religious items, newspaper clippings, photos and personal mementos

Virginia Huffer: Czech Books and Tapes

Ann Hyzak: books, videos, handmade clothing from feed and flour sacks belonging to Sr. Calista Hyzak

E. J. Jalufka: Framed religious picture of the Mary and Jesus given as a wedding gift to Josephine Stavinoha Jalufka from her godmother Mrs. Spacek.

Eugene Klekar: Picture book on Bethlehem and Golgotha in Czech

Nyle Ruth Leshikar: Updated Anton (Kahlig) Kalich Family History

Kay Potter: Czech prayerbooks, cards of Czech buttons

Tommy Prochaska: corn and grain grinder (screen)

Diane McRae: Sokol gym shorts, book of Czech songs

Donald Marek: wooden plates, photo scrapbook of Cleveland Slet, slet photos, post cards, obituary

Joseph Mole: Diary of Ignac Rek

Kay Potter: 2 Czech prayer books, 2 cards of Czech buttons

Marcel Maschmeyer: 8 nativity sets, book on WWII Memoirs

Tommy Prochaska: corn grinder/screen

Cindy Schwertner: 4 drawer filing cabinet

James Steffek: Steffek Family History

Keith Steves: Books, files, music, tapes, posters, brochures, etc. from the estate of Laddie Zezula

Rogene Tesar: 6 American Narodni Calendars

Ivan Vanek: Bowls, eggs, plate, vases, pictures

TCGS: *Pamatnik* book in English

Jocelyn Woodburn: Homemade rolling pin

Betty Zhanel: 2 Czech books



Rita Cernosek Dworaczyk was pleasantly surprised to find her Grandmother's wedding dress in the TCHCC Wedding Dress and Apparel Exhibit.



Christmas Visitors - First Cousins: Debbie Veselka, Ken Chandler, Retta Chandler, Faye Hudson, Melanie Zavodny and David Nauert

"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." Anonymous

TCHCC Memorials can be made to your deceased loved ones or to honor a family member that is still active in promoting Czech culture and tradition.

IMMIGRANTS' WALL

A stone wall with engravings on plaques that include the name(s) of the immigrant(s), village of origin and date that he/she/they arrived in the United States. Plaques are available for \$2500. Contact us for details.

ENTRY PAVING STONES

A 12"x12" pink granite stone will be engraved with your choice of wording up to 40 letters for \$1000. These stones are in the entryway of the Czech Center. Contact us for details.

ROSE GARDEN MEMORIAL

For \$250 an 8" x 8" brick will be placed along the Rose Garden path that lines the entry sidewalk to the Czech Center. The brick will be inscribed with your choice of wording. Contact us for details.

MEMORIAL BRICK PAVERS

An 8" x 4" brick paver will be engraved with your choice of wording for \$100. The bricks will be placed in the sidewalk leading from the flagpoles to the steps that enter the Czech Center. Contact us for details.

BELL & BELFRY

For donations of \$50 or more, inscriptions are painted on the memorial sign. For donations under \$50, a record of the donation is made on a parchment list.

AMPHITHEATER SUPPORTERS

A designated amphitheater seat will be reserved with your name plate. Participant can reserve this seat whenever there is an event at the Amphitheater by calling ahead. Seats range: \$1,000, \$750 and \$500.

FLAG SPONSORS

Sponsorship can be made in Memory of or in Honor of an individual or group. \$250.00/newsletter.

<p align="center">BECOME A FRIEND OF THE CENTER.</p> <p align="center">Donation amounts are recognized by levels:</p> <p>___ Permanent Endowment Fund</p> <p>___ Maintenance and Operations</p> <p>___ Other: _____</p>	<p align="center">Membership from January 1—December 31</p> <p>\$2000 ___ Lifetime Membership NEW!</p> <p>\$500 ___ Corporate</p> <p>\$200 ___ Non-Profit Organization</p> <p>\$ 75 ___ Family</p> <p>\$ 50 ___ Individual</p> <p align="center"><u>ANNUAL SUSTAINED MEMBERSHIP (yearly)</u></p> <p align="center">Benefits: Preserving YOUR Heritage, Annual Calendar and Nas Cesky Zivot newsletters</p>
<p>200,000 ___ Five Star</p> <p>100,000 ___ Platinum Benefactor</p> <p>50,000 ___ Gold Benefactor</p> <p>25,000 ___ Silver Benefactor</p> <p>10,000 ___ Bronze Benefactor</p> <p>5,000 ___ Benefactor</p> <p>2,500 ___ President's Circle</p> <p>2,000 ___ Pioneer</p> <p>1,500 ___ Heritage Friend</p> <p>1,000 ___ Founder</p> <p>750 ___ Steward</p> <p>500 ___ Patron</p> <p>250 ___ Donor</p> <p>150 ___ Special Friend</p> <p>100 ___ Friend</p>	<p align="center">MEMORIALS can be made to honor someone living, on their birthday or anniversary etc., or the memory of a deceased friend or family member.</p> <p>FOR _____</p> <p>Send Acknowledgement to: _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip: _____</p> <p>Donor: Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip: _____ Phone _____</p> <p>Message: _____</p> <p align="center">MAIL TO:</p> <p align="center">TCHCC, P.O. Box 6, LaGrange, TX 78945-0006</p>



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2022 UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 14 - May 15 **Museum Exhibit: MORAVIAN GLORY: PRESERVING OUR BRILLIANCE**
A traveling exhibit depicting the life in Moravia describing the specific destiny of a woman, Maryška, from Charvátská Nová Ves. The 21 panels trace her life through the four seasons of life: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age.
- February 12 **Valentine Dinner & Concert**
4 PM Social featuring local Texas Wines and Appetizers
6 PM Dinner served to your table
7 PM Grand Piano Concert by Professor John Dujka
Advanced Tickets Only - \$80 per ticket. Includes roses for attendees
- March 26 **TOCA Banquet, Pavilion Hall, La Grange 4 PM**
Tickets available from Czech organizations
- May 15 **TCHCC Annual Slavnost (May Fest) and 25th Anniversary of TCHCC**
10:30 AM 25th Anniversary Ceremony
11:30 AM Fried Chicken Dinner with all the trimmings
11:30-4 PM Music
4 PM Raffle Drawing
Village Tours, Museums, Classic Car Show and more