

Heritage Happenings

Newsletter of Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery

Fall/Winter Issue ~ Vol. XXI No. 2-3

January 2025

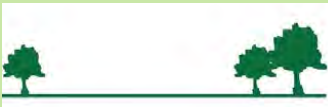
carol jean smetana, editor

Mission Statement:

Promote the historical significance, enhance the beauty, and preserve the artistic heritage of Bohemian National Cemetery

Vision:

Create an appreciation of BNC in local, national, and international audiences



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What's New with Friends of BNC



It has been my joy and privilege to serve as president of Friends of Bohemian National

Cemetery since our incorporation in 2004. We have grown from our original 40 charter members to over 200 now. We have helped put Bohemian National Cemetery on the National Register of Historic Places, raised funds to renovate the crematorium-columbarium building, including part of the Mallin artwork, to restore the gatehouse, rebound

the historic books where the interments were recorded, hosted numerous tours, published our quarterly newsletter, and even spoken about the cemetery in the Czech Republic!

Now, due to my no longer being able to drive and feeling new leadership will move us forward, I am stepping down to an advisory role as a potential director. You will find a ballot in the newsletter to vote for our new leaders. I wish you a most happy and healthy new year!
Šťastný nový rok!

Marge Sladek Stueckemann
President

Live from BNC

At the request of the Czech Consulate in Chicago, Bohemian National Cemetery was included in the celebration of Czech Heritage week, September 21-28. The cemetery was open for visitors, who gathered in the gatehouse and were able to view various displays and also visit significant monuments and tombs in the cemetery. Although he was not able to visit BNC due to a busy schedule, a highlight of Czech Heritage Week was the visit of Czech Republic's President Petr Pavel.

Tomáš Kačmár, news reporter

for CNN Prime News in Prague, toured the cemetery in November. There is a possibility BNC will receive coverage on Czech TV in the near future.

Volunteers led by Friends BNC director Chuck Betzold worked during the fall on the never-ending task of cutting fallen trees and branches. Several days were dedicated to trimming the large bushes surrounding the Masaryk Memorial Columbarium. Small pothole patching was also done.

The volunteers welcomed Larry

(Continued on page 7)

Heritage Happenings

Heritage Happenings is published quarterly by Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Manuscripts, articles, photographs, and advertisements for *Heritage Happenings* may be submitted to carol jean smetana, 511B 9th St, Las Vegas, NM 87701-3911 or emailed to her at editor@friendsofbnc.org.

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Officers of Friends of BNC

President:

Marge Sladek Stueckemann

Vice-President: *Juli Nelson*

Secretary: *open*

Treasurer: *Linda Burton*

Directors:

Chuck Betzold

Jim Trnka

open

Fund-Raising Co-Chair:

Joseph Topinka

Membership: *Ellen Pomes*

Newsletter: *carol jean smetana*

Publicity: *Jenny Lakmani*

Sales/Marketing/Gala Chair:

Juli Nelson

Projects Co-Chair:

Chuck Michalek

Webmaster: *open*

Online Vote for Friends of BNC Board

In the absence of an in-person membership meeting, we are asking our members to vote online to approve the following slate of candidates:

President: **Chuck Michalek**

Vice-President: **Juli Nelson**

Treasurer: **Linda Burton**

Secretary: **Open**

Directors: **Chuck Betzold**

Marge Sladek Stueckemann

Jim Trnka

Please send your vote—via email to info@friendsofbnc.org or regular mail to Friends of BNC, 5255 N Pulaski Rd, Chicago IL 60630—indicating YEA or NAY for the entire slate. Thank you.



from the editor's laptop

We are looking for a volunteer member to fill the position of Secretary. The main responsibility of the secretary is to take minutes at our board meetings (held at most monthly), and distribute them afterward to the board. Since our meetings are held online, the secretary does not have to live in the Chicago area. If you can help, please email Chuck or Juli at info@friendsofbnc.org.

Look at the address label on your newsletter. If you see the number "24" after your surname, it means your membership has expired. Please take a moment to renew your membership now. See back page for details. Thank you.

*Na shledanou,
carol*

Děkuji Vám!

Marge Sladek

Stueckemann for her years of service as president and her unending energy and leadership;

Larry Anderson and Chuck Michalek for *cleaning and repairing gutters at the gate house;*

Wednesday Volunteers

for trimming the large bushes around Masaryk Memorial Mausoleum as well as for their ongoing lumberjack work;

Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Chicago for their *ongoing support*

Welcome to Our New Members!

Byl Adam ... Chicago IL

Karen Cermak ... Maplewood MN

Evelyn Funda ... Logan UT

Susan Golland ... Chicago IL

Jeffrey Janusch Family ... Chicago IL

John Kurinsky ... Skokie IL

Mary Sebahar family ... Punta Gorda FL



Civil War Veterans Monument Project Update

Work has begun on our current project focus on the Civil War Veterans Monument, which was dedicated in 1892. Marion Restoration power-washed and cleaned the granite base, revealing a gleaming white surface.



Caulking between the granite blocks will occur once warm weather reappears.

The next step involved

DAM Excavating and Concrete Co. digging out and removing the old bollards, which were cracked at their foundation and leaning over. Circular forms were built and concrete poured to replace the

eight bollards.

The heavy sculpted chains with ornamental cannon balls linking the bollards were

removed and will undergo cleaning and a powder-coat painting over the winter in a factory setting.



Watch for the completion of the project by early spring!

Chuck Michalek
Project Chair

Upcoming Events at Bohemian National Cemetery



Tours of the Tombstones:

Watch for spring date to be announced on website and Facebook page (& in next newsletter if prepared in time!)

Winter office hours:

Monday through Friday
8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Closed Saturday and Sunday.

Cemetery Grounds:

Open 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

JOIN US IN SPRING FOR TOURS OF THE TOMBSTONES

Both of Friends' tours on Sunday, Sept 22, were sold out, despite windy and rainy weather.



Stories of the Stones: Karolina Machovský

by carol jean smetana

It is rare that a “Stories of the Stones” article can be personalized with an anecdote or family photo. This article has both, thanks to the newly digitized *Denní Hlasatel* Archive now being posted online by the Czech and Slovak Genealogical Society International (www.CGSI.org).

The *Denní Hlasatel* was a Czech-language newspaper that began publication in Chicago in May 1891. Over the decades of its existence, it became the most widely read foreign-language newspaper in the United States, and when it ceased publication 115 years later, it was the oldest and longest-running Czech newspaper in the world.

The *Denní Hlasatel* (“Daily Herald”) was more than a news source. Through its regularly published letters from its readers, the *Denní Hlasatel* was a forum for the Bohemian diaspora to communicate with friends and relatives across the country. Correspondents reached out to family and friends, described aspects of their daily lives, and shared their concerns.



The granite monument on the Machovský family lot at Bohemian National Cemetery lists five names, with years of birth and death. Civil records confirm the relationships of the people buried there: Matěj and Karolina Machovský are the parents of Frank, Helen and Bessie.

On April 7, 1912, the newspaper published one such letter, accompanied by a photo of children. It was written by a reader in Chicago, Karolina Machovský and included her address of 2315 47th Place. Using the address she gave, I was able to find Karolina and her family in census records, identify the children in the photo, and determine that the family was buried at Bohemian National Cemetery.

Dear editors! her letter began. *I was inspired to write by the letter and picture of Mrs. Terezie Amrichová, because she was my best friend. Dear Rezinka! Please accept my sincere condolences on the*

death of your husband. ... It's a pity that we are so far apart and can't visit each other in person. Please be so kind as to write to me at the address below.

In the 1910 census, I found a Theresa Amrich living with her husband John and their three children in Pekin, Illinois. John died on 14 Sept 1911, so quite possibly this Theresa Americh was the friend Karolina

was addressing.

Karolina continued her letter with an anecdote about her son: *Dear readers! Teach your children to speak and feel Czech. We have a son who is now eleven years old. At the time of the Sokol slet in Chicago, an Italian girl scolded him: "You Pole! You Bohemian!" He answered her: "Yes, I am Czech and proud of it. I am not ashamed to speak Czech as you are ashamed to speak Italian." ... He is now a Sokol in body and soul. I dare to send you a picture of him and his sisters.*

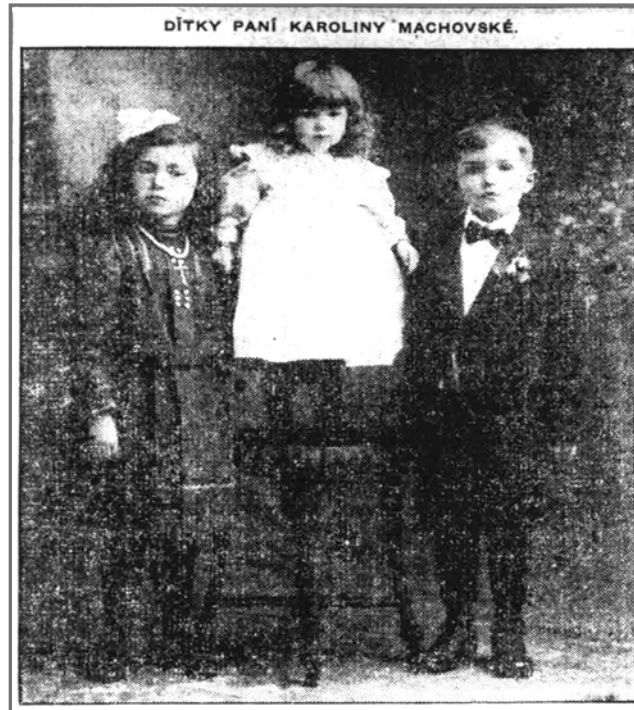
It is worth noting that Karolina's comment urging her fellow immigrant parents to



make sure their children know their Bohemian language and heritage came at a time of increasing sentiment to limit the number of immigrants to the United States and demand their “Americanization.” Immigrants were exhorted to reject their alien ways, especially their native language. Public schools of course taught in English, and naturally wanting to fit in, children of immigrants often were ashamed of their parents’ foreign tongues and accents. The Bohemian community, like many other ethnic groups, set up their own classes and organizations to ensure that children knew their ancestral language and heritage. (The T.G. Masaryk Czech School in Cicero was born in that era and continues to fulfill those function today.)

Karolina then added another personal message in her letter: *Greetings to my cousin Mrs. Karolina Jirová; before she married her name was Karolina Moulíková, from Domanice. I would ask you to send me your address, and the next time you try a cake recipe, I’ll come help you eat it.*

In the 1910 census,



The caption above the photo translates “Children of Mrs. Karolina Machovský.”

Based on civil records, they are (left to right) Bessie, Helen, and Frank.

Image courtesy of Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI) (www.cgsi.org)
Denní Hlasatel Archive

confirmed by other census records and her obituary, I found Karolina (“Carrie”) and her husband John Jira and their one-year-old son Robert living in the Pilsen neighborhood, just five miles away from where Karolina Machovský and her family were living in 1912.

Karolina concluded her letter: *If my letter tires some readers, just skip it and read on, that’s what I do here. With regards to the esteemed editors and readers,*

Karolina Machovský, 2315 47th Place, Chicago, Ill.

Karolina Hlaváček and her

future husband Matěj Machovský both emigrated from Bohemia in the late 1880s/early 1890s. In 1899 they were married in Chicago by the leader of the Freethinker community, Frank Zdrůbek, and settled on the city’s south side, where Matěj was a butcher in the stockyards. Their first child Frank—“Sokol in body and soul”—was born in July 1900, followed by Bessie in 1902 and Helen in 1906.

In 1930, eight years after the publication of the letter, the entire Machovský family was still living together, but they had moved to a house they had purchased a little further south at 6530 South Troy Street.

Matěj Machovský died on August 31, 1934, of heart problems. Sadly, Frank died five years later, on August 14, 1939, of acute appendicitis, less than a year after he and his wife, Olga Marie Skala, had welcomed their first child, Helen Bess (was she named after his sisters?).

Karolina Machovský and daughters Helen and Bessie, neither of whom ever married, continued to live together for the rest of their lives. Karolina died in 1954, Helen in 1982, and Bessie in 1983. The family now rests in peace together at Bohemian National Cemetery.

Donations

Thank you all for your generosity.

Your donations help preserve and restore Bohemian National Cemetery.

Benefactors (\$1000—\$9999)

Dorothy Batka *in honor of*
Hynek J. Batka

Carol Crosson *in honor of*
August & Julia Zamostny

Kenneth Dvorsky

Carol Krauser

Patrons (\$500—\$999)

Lawrence Anderson *in honor of*
Magdalena Anderson

Jeanne M Hoesley *in honor of*
John J. Hoesley

Paul & Shirley Lawrisuk

Patricia & Timothy Sievert

Glenn & Susan Spachman

Brad Suster & Hector

Hernandez

Patricia Volkman *in honor of*
Linda, Robert & Anne

Kostuba

Sponsors (\$100—\$499)

American Wilbert Vault

Anonymous (3)

Anonymous *in honor of* the
Baxa Family & the Šulda
Family and Charmaine
Parker

Anonymous *in honor of*
Gladys Zajicek

Eduard Avis *in honor of* the
Brabec family

Marlene Bostelman

William Bratschun

Donna Brehovsky *in honor of*
Joseph V. Brehovsky

Cindy Bueneman *in honor of*
the Vostal family

Angeline Bultas

Elaine Collina *in honor of* the
Josef Hejny family

Czech Catholic Union

Richard & Marilee Davies *in*
honor of Grace

Henningsen Abbott and
family

Otto Dolansky *in honor of*
Hynek & Karolina
Dolansky

Jack & Georgina Dortch *in*
honor of Josef & Ursula
Ozga and Michael Dortch

George Drost *in honor of*
Chuck Michalek *for his*
tireless work!

Lori-Jo A. Fergle *in honor of*
the Fergle family

Susan Golland *in honor of*
George and Libby Krtouš

Sheryl Stedronsky Gossman

Kathryn Gray *in honor of*

Vlasta Stehno Podlipec

Lillian B. Hahn *in honor of* the
Hahn Family

Howard Habenicht

Ron Hejna *in honor of* Hejna,
Blizek and Prihoda
families

Joann Herber

William Hudecek

Kevin Hurbanis

Jeffrey Janusch

Edward Kletecka *in honor of*
the Kletecka family

Joseph & Jennifer Kolar

Kenneth Kralik *in honor of* All
Veterans

Kimberly A Kubata-Martin *in*

honor of Anna Maxa

Kubata (*died 1893*), *buried*
in "term grave"

Christina Kuczora *in honor of*
her ancestors who

emigrated to the Chicago
area from the Old World

John & Mila Kyncl

James P. Laska *in honor of*
Mr. & Mrs. James and
Anna Laska

Lodge CH Harrison/Jan Hus/
Garfield #378, CSA
Fraternal Life

Lodge DuPage Pioneers/
Edison #409 *in memory of*
Helen Gaydusek

Lodge Yankee-Jungmann #77
in honor of Lodge Yankee-
Jungmann

Paul V. Machalek *in honor of*
Vladimir P. Machalek
(WWII Veteran)

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Malin

Katherine Mallin

Carol May

Rudy Michalek

Diane Minarik & Gary Lilly

Marlene Capek Murray *in*
honor of Joseph Schuster

Alderman Samantha Nugent

Linda Odenbach *in honor of*
her parents Charles &

Marie Michalek

Alan Penczek

Ellen Pomes

Henrietta Bartizal Pons *in*
honor of Bessie & Frank

(Continued on page 7)

Live from BNC



(continued from first page)

Anderson, who joined as a regular volunteer. Larry has many skills and is pictured assisting Chuck Michalek cleaning the gatehouse gutters. Larry also helped with sanding and painting the bench at the Beyond the Vines outdoor Cubs columbarium.

Mary Lachiewicz was at BNC many weekends watering flowers. Gethsemane Garden Center planted flowers at the recently repaired World Wars I and II Memorial and at the Cermak Mausoleum and



Eastland Memorial.

Recent visitors to BNC have noticed the extensive deterioration of the surrounding iron fencing, particularly along the long stretch fronting Pulaski Road. The Bohemian National Cemetery Association and Friends of BNC are having discussions about what steps can be taken to remedy the deteriorated sections of fencing.

Chuck Michalek
Project Chair

Donations

(continued from page 6)

Skala family
Bess Prazak
James Prihoda
John Purdy, Jr.
Elizabeth Raleigh
Anna Ramirez *in honor of*
Henrietta & Karel Nolc
Ronald L & Linda L Roaks
Bill & Ruth Rosol
Thomas Ruzicka *in honor of*
the Joseph Ruzicka family
Sokol Chicagoland
Joseph Stoklasa
Jerry & Mary Souta *in honor of*
the Souta, Hruska and
Kuta families
Barbara Sullivan *in honor of*
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Weddell
Richard R. Sykora
Lorraine Szabo
Kenneth M. Teska *in honor of*
Tom E. Teska
Jim Tye

Carol & Gerald Vovis
Susanne Zielinski
Donors (\$25—\$99)
Anonymous (3)
Patricia Krizek DeVoe *in honor*
of her dad Lad Thomas
Krizek
Jo-Ellen Douglas *in honor of*
the Florian family
Dolores Beneš Duy *in honor of*
Karel & Josefa Beneš
Evelyn Funda
Raymond Hemzacek *in honor*
of Helen Gaydusek
Mary Ellen Janda
June Jansa
John Kurinsky *in appreciation*
for maintaining BNC where
his parents, grandparents
and uncle are buried
Roger Liska
Lodge Lincoln #07, CSA
Fraternal Life

Pamela Morong
Loretta Paulus *in honor of*
Robert Paulus
John M. Persic Jr. *in honor of*
the Bily family
Laddie & Janice Polz *in honor*
of Otto & Blanche Polacek
Richard Prospal
Sikorovsky Family Fund
Robert & Rae Weniger *in*
honor of Rudy & Marie
Betzold
Karen Welch *in honor of*
Hlavka family members
Gladys Wheeler *in honor of*
her son Michael Sherry
who passed away Nov 27,
2024

Thank You (\$1—\$24)

Janet Cundiff
Michael E. Condon

Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery

5255 N Pulaski Rd
Chicago IL 60630-1701

Phone: 847-362-9036
Email: info@friendsofbnc.org
Website: www.friendsofbnc.org



Heritage Happenings Fall/Winter 2024-25

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Your membership in Friends of Bohemian National Cemetery is vital to the preservation of our cemetery. As a member, you will receive our quarterly newsletter and be entitled to discounts on merchandise. Above all, you will enjoy the satisfaction of knowing you are helping to maintain, improve and beautify Bohemian National Cemetery.

Our membership year is January - December. This means that **all memberships, except those renewed for two years last year or those already renewed after September this year, expired December 31, 2024.** If the number "24" follows your surname on the mailing label above, your membership has expired. If you are unsure if you need to renew, please inquire at info@friendsofbnc.org and we will let you know. New members joining in the last quarter of a year receive those 3 months as a bonus, and their membership year begins the following January.

Memberships: One year: \$30 individual; \$40 family; \$25 senior

Two years: \$55 individual; \$70 family; \$45 senior

You can renew by mail or use your credit card on our secure website <https://friendsofbnc.org>.

Send renewal form with check
payable to Friends of BNC to:

**Friends of Bohemian
National Cemetery—
Membership
5255 N Pulaski Rd
Chicago IL 60630-1775**

*Friends of BNC is a 501(c) (3)
not-for-profit public charity.
To make a tax-deductible
donation to fund improvements
at BNC, please write a separate
check with a notation on the
memo line. Thank you.*

Membership Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code (+ 4) _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Type of Membership _____