Fall, 2011 NEWSLETTER Volume XVII, Number 3

Woodrow Wilson Monument Returns to Prague Amid Week of Stellar Events

The long-awaited day of unveiling and dedication finally came. The historic event took place in Prague on October 5, 2011. It attracted hundreds of visitors as political leaders, business leaders, and luminaries gathered to celebrate the newly rebuilt monument honoring the 28th President of the United States. The Woodrow Wilson Monument again stands as a symbol of respect for a great statesman and for the friendship and common values of the Czech and American peoples. The American Friends of the Czech Republic, working with the Capital City of Prague, the Metropolitan District of Prague 1, and the Albin Polasek Museum, spearheaded the project to rebuild the monument that was destroyed by the Nazis during the dark days of the World War II occupation.

Graced with unusually warm weather, American and Czech leaders, ambassadors, and other notables assembled to recognize the moment with pomp and formal ceremony, as hundreds gathered with anticipation to witness history being made. With former Czech President Václav Havel in the audience, the speakers included Czech President Václav Klaus, Prague Lord Mayor Bohuslav Svoboda, U.S. Ambassador Norman Eisen, former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and AFoCR Chairman Fred Malek. The dedication ceremony proceeded with military precision to the unveiling and dedication of Prague’s newest monument. After delivering his address, Mr. Malek stepped forward, assisted by President Klaus, Secretary Albright, and Mayor Svoboda, to pull the special release that unveiled the 35 foot tall monument. A traditional wreath-laying ceremony was followed with moving renditions of The Star Spangled Banner, by Joan Dine of Washington, and the Czech national anthem, Kde domov můj, by Czech mezzo soprano Markéta Cukrová, accompanied by the Czech Army Band. Archbishop of Prague Monsignor Dominik Duka offered a prayer in honor of the event.

The dedication week included a series of commemorative events sponsored by AFoCR. Beginning with a reception attended by five current and former ambassadors, the president of Washington’s Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Jane Harman, and Secretary Albright, the events built toward the moment of the dedication on October 5. First on Tuesday came the opening of a historical exhibit at the National Museum, titled “Voices of Vision - Wilson, Masaryk and the Formation of Czechoslovakia”. This exhibit was created especially for the dedication week through a collaboration between the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and the National Museum. With an exceptional set of rare photos and images, the exhibit covered Woodrow Wilson’s role in the founding of the first republic, the tumultuous events of the twentieth century, and finally the victorious Velvet Revolution that brought forth the modern Czech Republic.

(continued on Page 2)
Dear Friends of the Czech Republic,

This year has been a turning point for the American Friends of the Czech Republic, and I personally have never had more pride in our organization. For in 2011, we reached our most noteworthy achievement and demonstrated the potential of our small but dedicated group in building stronger ties between the peoples of the United States of America and the Czech Republic.

On October 5th, in Prague, we achieved the culmination of our four year project to rebuild the monument of Woodrow Wilson, Tomáš Masaryk’s partner in creating an independent Czechoslovakia. It was my distinct honor to join Czech President Václav Klaus and our former Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, in unveiling the statue (see accompanying photo), all in the presence of former President Václav Havel. It took four years to conceive and build the monument. The fundraising itself extended our reach as former President George H.W. Bush and former Chicago Mayor Richard Daley participated in gala dinners with us. The real heroes were the members of our Board, led by our remarkable President, Tom Dine. This is a team in which all of you should share my pride. They include:

- Bob Doubek, who tirelessly led the effort to design and build the monument and negotiate its placement with the city of Prague.
- Phil Kasik, who skillfully and relentlessly orchestrated every aspect of the celebration including a memorable gala at the historic Rudolfinum and the unveiling ceremony itself. Phil was supported by the exceptional talents of other AFoCR board members, with Gail Naughton, Hana Callaghan, and Kristyna Driehaus playing special roles.

The result – a set of events widely recognized in the Czech Republic and here in the U.S. – events that profoundly illustrated the close and growing bonds between these two countries and their people. In addition, AFoCR further built its relations with the leaders of the Czech Republic.

As they say, “we fought above our weight.” So we are now positioned with a wider and stronger reputation and the opportunity to do even more in the years ahead. As our Board considers how to build on this success and strengthen even further our ties and understanding, we need your help in suggesting other worthwhile projects and causes to embrace.

I truly hope you are as inspired as is our Board and will provide AFoCR with further intellectual and financial support.

Frederic V. Malek
Chairman of the Board

Letter From the Chairman

Prime Minister Nečas in Washington

Czech Prime Minister Petr Nečas made his first official visit to Washington in late October with U.S. officials on bilateral and international issues. The Prime Minister was accompanied by a delegation of government officials and advisors. Mr. Nečas met with President Obama at the White House and held several meetings with U.S. business and government leaders to discuss progress on existing trade and development projects. In describing these projects, Mr. Nečas noted that opportunities include projects being undertaken by Czech businesses in the U.S. as well as projects by U.S. businesses in the Czech Republic.

During the visit, AFoCR President Tom Dine and other AFoCR officers met briefly with Mr. Nečas and with Ambassador Eisen. Mr. Nečas visited the Masaryk Memorial with Ambassador Eisen and Ambassador Petr Gandalovič and on Czech National Day, October 28, and placed a wreath to honor the memory of Czechoslovakia’s founder and first president.

Woodrow Wilson Dedication in Prague

Then at a Symposium at the Czernin Palace, home of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dedication visitors were treated to an academic tour de force on the subject of Wilson’s legacy in the 21st Century. Chaired by Ms. Harman, the event featured scholars of Wilson and Masaryk who joined with President Havel and Secretary Albright to lay out the story of how the relationship between Wilson and Masaryk, two remarkable statesmen with vision and leadership, led to the development of a free and democratic Czechoslovakia at the close of World War I, and how the principles that guided Wilson and Masaryk are relevant to the modern Czech Republic and the entire world.

Tuesday evening a Gala Award Dinner kicked off the celebrations as Americans and Czechs gathered at the historic Rudolfinum to celebrate the completion of the project and to award the first Masaryk-Wilson Award for Democracy and Freedom. The award went to the prominent and well-regarded international aid organization, People in Need. Receiving it was People in Need co-founder and executive director Šimon Pánek. Wilson Monument Project Director Robert Doubek also presented awards to the sculptors, architects, and others who played key roles in the project.

Following the ceremony on Wednesday morning was a reception for friends and donors to celebrate the dedication. Later, U.S. Ambassador Norman Eisen hosted a reception at his residence. Visitors from America and other friends also had opportunities to attend special cultural events in Prague, and some even enjoyed a round of golf on the grounds of historic Konopiště Castle outside of Prague. The cultural activities included a performance of Swan Lake at the National Theater, and a special tour of the recently opened exhibit of paintings by famed Moravian artist Joža Upíka. Attendees saw a first of a kind collection of some of Upíka’s rarely exhibited paintings depicting rural Moravian life, followed by a special dedication performance of Moravian folk music and dancing by musicians in authentic traditional dress.

Unless otherwise shown, photo credits in this issue for the Prague events are to Lillis Werder and Lenka Pekárková. A commemorative photo book containing photos from all events of the week of October 3 in Prague is available for purchase. See the book at the following web address: http://www.blurb.com/books/2614921
Or call Lillis Werder at 571-238-1794 to place an order.
Opening Reception in Prague, October 3, 2011

Historical Exhibit of Woodrow Wilson - Tomáš Masaryk Partnership at National Museum, October 4, 2011
Gala Award Dinner at Rudolfinum, October 4, 2011
The Legacy of Wilson and Masaryk in the 21st Century Symposium at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 4, 2011
U.S. Ambassador's Dinner, October 5, 2011

Architects Daniel Špička, Mikuláš Hulec with Sculptor Michal Blažek and Soprano Markéta Cukrová

Architect Paul Beckmann and Dianna Beckmann
Czech Senate Visit, Uprka Exhibit at National Gallery, Golf Tournament at Konopiště Castle, and Ballet Performance at National Theater

A FoCR Director George Drost Shows His Personal Uprka Works at National Gallery Press Conference

Golf Tournament Participants at Konopiště Castle

President Tom Dine at Czech Senate, Valdštejn Palace with Vice Chairman of the Senate Alena Gajdašková
Time Capsule Ceremony, September 8, 2011

Lord Mayor Svoboda places Ceremonial Prague Silver Coin in Time Capsule

Signing the Certificate of Authenticity

Inserting Documents into Time Capsule

Delivery and Installation of Statue, September 8, 2011
American Friends of The Czech Republic
4410 Massachusetts Avenue, NW #391
Washington, DC 20016

Photo by Lillis Werder

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The IRS has ruled that AFoCR is tax exempt under Sec. 501(c) (3).