





AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Memorial Events in Washington Celebrate Life of Václav Havel



Friends of the Czech Republic in Washington, DC, representing a multitude of backgrounds and religions, came together to celebrate the life of Václav Havel on Sunday, February 12, 2012.

In the morning, at a well-attended memorial mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on the campus of Catholic University, the late president was praised for his thematic slogan: "Truth and love must prevail over lies and hatred" and for his emphasis on empowerment best articulated in his famous essay, "The Power of the Powerless." His strength of character was summed up in the words, "he was a synthesis of modesty and bravery." In the Basilica's beautiful gothic sanctuary, Bishop Jan Vokál of Hradec Králové conducted the service in fluent Czech, Latin, and English prose, expressing thanksgiving for Havel's inspiring life. The Basilica's angelic-sounding choir sang Psalms, the Kyrie eleison, and the Agnus Dei of Dvorak's Mass in D Major, Opus 86, the Pie Jesu of Dvorak's Requiem, Op. 48, and the Qui confidunt in Domino of Krystof Harant. Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski eulogized Václav Havel as opposing evil and fighting for righteousness, being a humanist but not a pacifist, and fulfilling his destiny and duty.

In the afternoon, the Czech Embassy in Washington hosted a reception, which included the opening of a photographic exhibition by Tomki Nemec showing Havel the playwright, the political dissident trying to break and eliminate communist control, the central figure of the transformation of 1989, and the president of the reemerged Czechoslovak democracy. Speakers included Czech Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Jaroslav Zajíček, Bishop Vokál, and the executive director of the world-famous Czech NGO People-in-Need, Šimon Pánek, who recounted the President's support of PIN's work in Belarus, Chechnya, Burma, Cuba, and other non-free states. As the nine-year President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, AFoCR President Tom Dine also spoke.

Dine spoke of President Havel in the context of a democracy builder and a visionary. "The moving force of democracy is an inspiration," he declared, "and so was Václav Havel - his experiences as an active opponent of the Communist regime and mindset, his writings on behalf of freedom, and his strategies to uplift Czech society out of the rigidities of authoritarian rule and return to the western camp of free politics and free economics and innovative lifestyles." For instance", Dine noted, "Havel became the godfather of a revitalized instrument" of America's freedom promotion policy, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

In Dine's private discussions with him, Václav Havel never failed to reflect on what the Cold War broadcasts of Radio Free Europe's (continued on page 4)

Opportunity for Plaques on Walk of Freedom to Close Soon

The AFoCR Board of Directors has set the deadline to add additional plaques on the Walk of Freedom at the Woodrow Wilson Monument in Prague. The Walk, consisting of two 50-foot wings of polished granite plaques extending from the base of the monument's pedestal, recognizes those who made substantial contributions to rebuild it. The opportunity for individuals and organizations to be recognized with a plaque will close as soon as all remaining plaques are spoken for, or on December 31, 2012, whichever comes first.

The Walk contains a total of 137 plaques. Of the 25 remaining open at the time of the dedication, 14 have already been taken. The 11 remaining plaques are in three sizes ranging from 6" X 12" to 10" X 20", for contribution levels from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Currently, the following 24 states, provinces, and countries are represented by plaques on the Walk: Alabama, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Czech Republic, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Quebec, Tennessee, Texas, Great Britain, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

The Woodrow Wilson Monument in Prague commemorates the historic ties between the Czech and American peoples. Its dedication was the most significant symbolic event concerning these ties since the 1989 Velvet Revolution. AFoCR urges all organizations and individuals who wish to join in this history-making project to contribute for a plaque. For information, contact AFoCR at afocr@afocr.org or (202) 413-5528.



Woodrow Wilson Monument and Walk of Freedom in Prague **Showing Both** Wings of **Polished** Granite **Plaques** on Either Side of the Monument (photo by Lillis Werder)

Jon Dine

Letter From the President



Tom Dine Speaking at Embassy Reception in Honor of President Havel

Dear Friends of the Czech Republic,

The fog of constitutional dictatorship hangs heavy over the middle and eastern parts of Europe today. Twenty-three years after the crumbling of the Berlin Wall, the political landscape shows authoritarian bosses coming to the fore, seizing power by stifling systems of checks and balances, banning open decision-making, taking away freedoms of assembly, expression, and unimpeded voting, and crushing political pluralism. The results are partially free societies such as Ukraine and Hungary, lining up alongside non-free societies exemplified by Belarus and Russia, to see which can furthest remove itself from contemporary standards of genuine freedom.

In such circumstances, I worry about the Czech Republic because the fog is now covering nearby Hungary, up to the Slovak border, and heading in a westward direction. America's political and military ally, the Czech Republic, is threatened by this gathering of an expanding non-free storm. The Hungarian government led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, a man of modernization when he visited me in Prague and I him in Budapest over a decade ago, is preventing fundamental democratic practices and processes. The media is always the first target of power-grabbing brutalization, and in recent months, Budapest has witnessed Prime Minister Orbán attacking media outlets with increasing frequency.

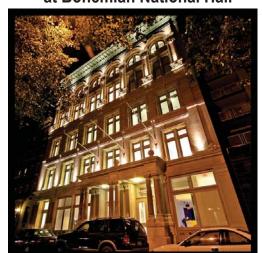
CNN has been Orbán's first target for its reporting on the sorry state of Hungarian openness. Hungarians can still watch CNN, it is reported, but since the beginning of 2012, the network is no longer part of the package offered by the country's largest cable provider. Klubradio, the country's popular independent talk channel, has been so restricted, despite protests from its listening audience, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and top officials of the European Union of which Hungary is an active member. The government's one-party Media Council has not renewed the station's broadcasting license. Hungarians and friends of Hungary abroad expect Klubradio's broadcasts to be unplugged this spring.

In light of the crude dictatorial fog that has come over Hungary, three influential people recently wrote a sizzling critique of Orbán: Mark Palmer, former American Ambassador to Budapest and someone with a distinguished record in the field of promoting freedom and democracy; Charles Gati, a leading political analyst of

Hungarian affairs and Hungary's relations with the United States at Johns Hopkins University, as well as refugee from the country when it was ruled by the Communists; and Miklós Haraszti, a Hungarian author and representative on freedom of the media for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for six years. The three advocate that the U.S. revive the closed-down Radio Free Europe's cold war Hungarian Service, believing that such an inexpensive cold war instrument would pierce through Orbán's media barriers. My guess is that under our current fiscal problems, this revival will not occur.

Insiders and outsiders who believe in a Central and Eastern Europe with fair and decent values must apply as much pressure on the current Hungarian government and create the environment of change, in order to return Hungary to the family of open, just, and liberal democracies. What's at stake is nothing less than two decades of democratic achievements in the Czech Republic and elsewhere.

"Nicky's Family" Screening for U.N. Diplomats at Bohemian National Hall



BNH at Night, 321 E 73rd Street, New York City (Photo credit: www.bohemiannationalhall.com)

H.E. Edita Hrdá, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations in New York, in cooperation with H.E. Miloš Koterec, Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations, organized a special screening of the latest Matej Mináč film "Nicky's family." The screening took place on March 15, 2012, at the Bohemian National Hall in New York City. Also in attendance was Peter A. Rafaeli, Hon. Consul General of the Czech Republic in Philadelphia. The audience of almost 200 people gave the film a standing ovation. AFoCR donated 240 copies of the book "Nicholas Winton's Lottery of Life" to those who attended the screening. The film stimulated great interest in the Winton story and follow up activity is expected. The film screening was also attended by Jozef Šepetka, member of the Supervisory Board of J&T Bank, the primary coproducer and sponsor of the film. Any follow up questions should be directed to Peter Rafaeli at Philadelphia@honorary.mzy.

Czech and Slovak Freedom Lecture - November 17, 2011



Sen. Petr Pithart and Amb. Petr Gandalovič



Sen. Petr Pithart (center) flanked by Wilson International Center for Scholars Executive Director Michael Van Dusen (on his right), AFoCR President Tom Dine (far right), Amb. Bill Cabaniss (far left) and other honored guests



Sen. Petr Pithart and Czech Embassy Officer Jana Rácová



Senator Petr Pithart and Ambassador Petr Gandalovič



AFoCR President Tom Dine Thanks Senator Pithart after Lecture as Amb. Petr Gandalovič and Amb. Petr Burian Look on

Tomáš Masaryk Birthday Commemoration Ceremony - March 7, 2012



(l to r) Tom Dine, Senator Pithart, Ambassador Bill Cabaniss

"Nicky's Family" Screened at Bohemian National Hall - March 15, 2012



(l to r)
Under Secretary of the
U.N. Kio Akasaka,
Permanent Representative
of Slovakia to the U.N.
Miloš Kotorec, Permanent
Representative of the
Czech Republic to the U.N.
Edita Hrdá, and Czech
Honorary Consul General
in Philadelphia
Peter Rafaeli

(Havel Memorial continued from page 1)

Czech Service had meant to him. He was an avid listener; RFE avidly followed his whereabouts and well-being. Each time he was jailed by the Communists, for example, the Radio station in Munich would announce over the airwaves that he had been arrested and cite the location of his incarceration. He believed that without these reports, he would have been killed. With his whimsy, he told the story of the occasion in jail when his fellow political prisoners and their guards were listening to an RFE broadcast and unexpectedly a presenter read from start to finish a new essay of his.

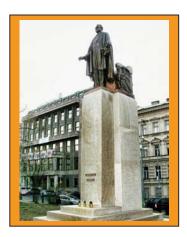
President Havel became the godfather of a revitalized Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty when the U.S. Administration was having second thoughts about the Radios' continued existence. Havel proposed a deal to the White House: continue the funding but move the international broadcasting headquarters to Prague, which ultimately occurred. Havel thus hit two strategies at once: the dependable RFE/RL was saved in its relocation to the Czech Republic and by the relocation Havel succeeded in tilting the Czechs westward, putting the country on the road to NATO and EU membership and striking an enduring relationship with the United States.

Walk of Freedom Plaque to Honor Václav Havel

The AFoCR Board of Directors voted in January to install a plaque on the Walk of Freedom at the Woodrow Wilson Monument in honor of former Czech President Václav Havel, who died on December 18, 2011. The Walk, consisting of two 50-foot wings of polished granite plaques extending from the base of the monument's pedestal, recognizes those who made substantial contributions to rebuild it. Havel will be honored for his leadership in regaining freedom for the Czech and Slovak peoples after 42 years of dictatorship.

The Havel plaque will be of the largest size, 14" by 28", and be located in the most prominent position on the Walk, directly adjacent to the right side of the pedestal base. AFoCR is seeking donors to sponsor this tribute.





A new tradition of Woodrow Wilson Annual Remembrances began at the Woodrow Wilson Monument in Prague. On February 3, 2012, the 88th anniversary of President Wilson's death, AFoCR Advisor Magdaléna Vošalíková and her colleague Vít Kurfürst from Czech PR honored the former President, assisted by Vít Kurfürst's son, Jan.

NCSML Grand Opening – Grand Designs Festive Weekend Planned

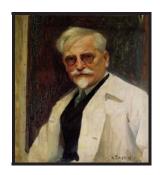




Works of Art
by Mucha:
(left)
1899
Primrose
(right)
Princess
Hyacinth
will be on
Display at
NCSML

A celebration is truly in order. Four years after incurring extensive damage in the 2008 flood, the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library will open its new museum and library on July 14 and 15, 2012. The remarkable recovery has included moving the damaged building to mitigate from future flooding and expanding it to three times the original size. The weekend will be action-packed and offer something for everyone. Entertainment, food, beverages, and activities will take place inside the new museum and outside in the amphitheatre and under tents. Inside the theatre will be showing footage of the museum's incredible move; the new classroom will be the site for children's arts activities; and three original exhibitions will be open. The entire building will be open for tours - every nook and cranny. Outdoors, the lawn will be abuzz with a beer garden and food tent, where hogs will be slowly roasting on a spit. In the outdoor amphitheatre, Czech and Slovak groups from across the United States will demonstrate their talents - instrumental, vocal, dance and more. Saturday night, everyone can enjoy a concert and spectacular light show as the beer garden and food tents will remain open. Sunday will begin with a blessing of the building while the afternoon will feature two performances of the Czechoslovak-American Marionette Theatre from New York City. Festival fare with pulled pork sandwiches, hot dogs, and ice cream will keep everyone energized while kids can get their faces painted and meet Papa Balloon.

The opening will feature a spectacular Mucha Exhibition. More than 230 rare works by one of the world's most beloved artists will be on display at the opening. *Alphonse Mucha: Inspirations of Art Nouveau* is coming directly from the Mucha Foundation in Prague and London. Not since 1999 has an exhibit of this size and caliber appeared in the United States. The exhibit will explore Mucha not just as the father of art nouveau, but also Mucha's Moravian roots, his family, his photography, and his devotion to the Slav people. Mucha's grandson, John will be there to share stories of his famous grandfather.



Alphonse Mucha in a 1926 Portrait by Atanas Tasev Photo credit: www.nonsolo-arte.com

Special Exhibit of Uprka Art in Prague



(L to R) AFoCR Director George Drost gives an interview to Czech media with grandson Jack and wife Beth Drost

The Czech Lands can lay claim to numerous skilled artists over the last centuries, but international fame has been elusive. In the area of the fine arts, Moravian-born Joža Uprka became a recognized and talented artist in the early decades of the 20th century. To mark the 150th anniversary of the artist's birth, the National Gallery and the Moravské Slovácko Foundation arranged a special exhibition. It was the artist's largest posthumous exhibition. Rarely seen works by Uprka were displayed in a unique exhibit at the Wallenstein Riding School at the Castle in Prague. Opening in September, the exhibit recently closed. However, during the Wilson Monument Dedication in October, visitors to Prague had a special opportunity to view the exhibit. A number of paintings in the exhibit were from the collection of George and Beth Drost of Chicago, who arranged a special opening event for Wilson Monument Dedication visitors. Drost is an AFoCR Director.

Uprka was born in Kněždub, Moravia, in 1861 and died in Hroznová Lhota, Moravia, in 1940. His origins were modest, but he exhibited skills and an interest in art that eventually earned him admission to the Prague Academy and later the Munich Academy. As a Czech painter and graphic artist, his work was often representative of romantic historicism and Art Nouveau decorativism. His work ethnographically documents the folklore of South Moravia. In his early works, his art was drawn in a realistic style, using darker colors in his compositions. After spending time in France, the style and nature of Uprka's work changed to French Impressionist. His strokes on his oils were broader, even choosing impasto to give depth to his works. The colors moved from the darker browns to the crème colors, pastels, oranges, reds, and greens. The canvas seemed to explode. In France, Uprka enjoyed a special relationship with the French sculptor Auguste Rodin, who even visited Moravia early in the last century.

Uprka's subject matter was significant: He depicted the people from the regions where he grow up in Eastern Moravia. One could consider his art as an ethnographic study; women in kroje and men in fur coats were some of his subjects. The subject matter is reminiscent of the works of Jean Francois Millett [1814-1875] depicting rural farm scenes, with thankful and humble, almost pietistic subjects. *The Gleaners* is an example. Uprka was sympathetic to the everyday life of the rural people, to their simple ways, faith, hard work, and family. He took joy in their celebrations of life such as the "Ride of the Kings" and the "Pilgrimages of Saint Anthony."

2012 Freedom Lecture Held



Czech Senator
Petr Pithart was the
featured speaker at
Czech and Slovak
Freedom Lecture on
November 17, 2011
(photo by Lillis Werder)

The annual Czech and Slovak Freedom Lecture was held in Washington on November 17, 2011, at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The Freedom Lecture Series is a joint project of the Czech and Slovak Embassies that commemorates the Velvet Revolution, which began on November 17, 1989. The speaker was Czech Senator Petr Pithart, a prominent leader of Civic Forum and a signatory of Charter 77, who served as first Prime Minister after the revolution. He has served several terms as President of the Senate and currently is a Senator Pithart spoke about the Velvet Revolution, the early days of the new democracy, and the important role of the legal system in a democracy. Wilson Center Executive Director Michael Van Dusen presided over the wellattended event that included Czech Ambassador Petr Gandalovič and Slovak Ambassador Peter Burian. Representatives of AFoCR and Friends of Slovakia presented awards to Senator Pithart.

Annual Meeting Held in Washington

AFoCR held the annual meeting of its Board of Directors in November. Chairman Fred Malek called the meeting to order and welcomed guests Czech Ambassador Petr Gandalovič and Czech Senator Petr Pithart. Senator Pithart then addressed the meeting as guest speaker. President Tom Dine presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Jack White, who was leaving the Board after over 10 years of service. The Directors received reports on the successful Dedication of the Woodrow Wilson Monument and the completion of the Wilson Project, and reviewed preliminary plans for the future. Officers for 2012 will be Fred Malek - Chairman, Tom Dine - President, Bill Cabaniss - Executive VP, Phil Kasik - Treasurer and VP, Patricia Stack - Assistant Treasurer and Robert Doubek - Secretary.



AFoCR
President Tom
Dine Welcomes
Czech Senator
Petr Pithart at
annual AFoCR
Board Meeting
(photo by
Lillis Werder)



Tom Dine and
Fred Malek
congratulate
Retiring Director
Jack White for
his ten years of
service to
AFoCR
(photo by
Lillis Werder)

American Friends of The Czech Republic 4410 Massachusetts Avenue, NW #391 Washington, DC 20016

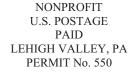




Photo by Lillis Werder

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