

Newsletter

T.G. Masaryk Statue Unveiled and Dedicated!



T.G. Masaryk
Statue stands tall at
the entrance to
[Embassy Row](#)

On a beautiful, sunny September day, over 1,000 people, including representatives of the Czech, Slovak, and U.S. Governments came together to dedicate a memorial statue and park to the memory of a worthy champion of democracy and human rights, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk.

The T.G. Masaryk Memorial Park and Statue unveiling and dedication ceremony took place on the afternoon of September 19. The newly created T.G. Masaryk Park is located on Massachusetts Avenue near Dupont Circle at the beginning of "Embassy Row." Czech Republic President Václav Havel, Former Slovak President Michael Kováč, Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic Craig Stapleton participated in the dedication program, for which American Friends of the Czech Republic (AFoCR) President Milton Cerny served as master of ceremonies. The U.S. Navy Band performed the Czech, Slovak, and U.S. anthems as well as some of President Masaryk's favorite songs, Tece, Voda, Tece and Ach, Synku, Synku.

Charlotta Kotik, great-granddaughter of T.G. Masaryk, officially unveiled the statue, using a sword found by the Czech Legion in Siberia and given to President Masaryk. President Masaryk later gave the sword to the Klecka family of Baltimore in gratitude for their generous financial support of the Czech cause in July 1918. The finale of the dedication program came as President Havel, President Kováč, and Ambassador Stapleton each placed a wreath at the base of the statue.

T.G. Masaryk once again stands in the city he often visited, lifting our vision to the ideals he so zealously pursued. In a time of particular strife, terror and bloodshed, the statue reminds us of President Masaryk's commitment to freedom, democracy, human rights and peace, and of his conviction that those ideals transcend time, geography, ethnicity and language. The statue will also serve as a reminder of President Masaryk's personal testimony that a single individual can carry the torch of those ideals high enough for all to see and follow.

Second Civil Society Vision Awards Dinner – Fitting End to a Memorable Day



James Wolfensohn, Maurice Greenberg, President Vaclav Havel and Frederic Malek at the *Civil Society Vision Awards Dinner*

A memorable day for Americans, Czechs and Slovaks came to a fitting conclusion

with the second Civil Society Vision Awards Dinner, which was held at The World Bank on September 19. The evening began with a reception at 7:00 p.m., from which guests moved into a beautiful hall for dinner at 8:00 p.m. and the awards program at 9:00 p.m.

The Civil Society Vision Award is given to individuals and institutions that have served the world community through efforts to foster civil, legal and democratic societies throughout the world. In light of the horrific terrorist attacks a year ago, this was a particularly poignant time to emphasize the value of civil societies. American Friends of the Czech Republic was proud to honor the following award recipients for their tireless dedication in supporting civil societies throughout the world: Maurice ("Hank") R. Greenberg, Chairman and CEO, American International Group, Inc.; Frederic V. Malek, Founder and CEO, Thayer Capital Partners; and The World Bank, whose award was accepted by World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn.

As part of his final presidential visit to Washington, Czech President Václav Havel participated in the program, concentrating his remarks on the status of flood relief efforts in the Czech Republic and expressing his nation's gratitude for America's help

in this time of need. Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright paid tribute to T.G. Masaryk with a speech highlighting the first Czechoslovakian president's important place in history. Sam Donaldson, of ABC News, served as master of ceremonies. William White, President of the C.S. Mott Foundation, Captain Eugene Cernan, astronaut, and Judy Baar Topinka, Treasurer of the State of Illinois, introduced the three awardees. The evening ended with a special musical presentation by Brian Chu, baritone with the Baltimore Opera, who was accompanied by harpist Michaela Trnkova. Mr. Chu performed two Czech-Slovak folk songs by Dvorak and led the guests in singing "God Bless America."

The Civil Society Vision Awards Dinner was a perfect ending to an historical day for Czech-American and Slovak-American relations. The bonds that T.G. Masaryk formed in the U.S. with individuals like President Woodrow Wilson are still strong in the relationships that exist today and were evident throughout the events of September 19.

Festivities at the World Bank

A reception to celebrate the unveiling and dedication of the T.G. Masaryk Memorial State on September 19 began at 5:00 p.m. as guests began to arrive at The World Bank headquarters building on Pennsylvania Avenue. Over 600 people were greeted with the customary bread and salt by the Czech and Slovak Heritage Singers of Baltimore. In the expansive Atrium of the World Bank building, guests enjoyed the dances performed by the Sokol Minnesota Tanecni Mladez and the St. Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers, the songs of the Columbia Pro Cantare Chamber Singers and Kristina Kotyza and the gymnastics of three members of Sokol Baltimore.

President Havel presented the "Medal of Merit First Grade" awards from the Czech Government to five deserving awardees. They included: Milton Cerny, President of the American Friends of the Czech Republic, Peter Charles Schultz, for outstanding scientific achievements, Frank Marlow (in memoriam) for his service to the Czech Republic (the medal was accepted by his wife, Irene Marlow), Joseph Lane Kirkland (in memoriam) for his service to the Czech Republic (the medal was accepted by his wife Irena Kirkland) and Jan Francis Triska (the medal was accepted by his son, John William Triska). The Honorable Madeleine Albright, Former Slovak President Michael Kovác, Czech Ambassador Martin Palouš, and Walter Andrusyszyn of the National Security Council staff, gave speeches during the reception.

This event marked the culmination of two years of support and hard work by many dedicated individuals and the American Czech and Slovak communities to erect a statue of T.G. Masaryk in Washington, D.C. It was truly a tremendous celebration for all!

T.G. Masaryk Memorial Dedication Events,

September 19, 2002, Washington, D.C.

[View photos from the events](#)

"In light of the horrific attacks of last September 11, we can think of no more appropriate time to emphasize the value of a civil society, the fact that so many of you are gathered in this building this evening lets us know that indeed civil society can exist throughout the world and that the hopes and dreams of all peoples must be accomplished without regard to race, religion or gender."

"This memorial honors the unique and vital role played by Tomáš Masaryk in the development of democracy in central Europe and human rights worldwide. It is our conviction that those ideals transcend time, geography, ethnicity and language, and are a personal testimony to the fact that a single individual can carry the torch of those ideals high enough for all to see."

"Love your country, your nation, and your native tongue." ~ T.G. Masaryk

"We are all equal, we must all be equally free." ~ T.G. Masaryk

"Great leaders transcend their times. It is fitting that, in a nation that shares his democratic values, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk shall be remembered for all time." ~ Ingersoll-Rand

"Long may our countries continue to share the ideals of democracy and the joys of friendship." ~ Marsh & McLennan Companies

AFoCR Leads Flood Relief





Floods of historic levels ravaged the Czech Republic and Central Europe in August. At the request of the Czech Embassy, AFoCR organized the collection of contributions to assist in the disaster relief efforts through direct charitable donations to relief organizations in the Czech Republic. Within the first week of the campaign AFoCR made the first grant for emergency medical supplies working through AmeriCares.

The support from individuals and corporations has been tremendous. Over \$235,000 has been raised to date. The Starr Foundation made a substantial grant towards flood relief, and The Boeing Company and Warburg-Pincus each made major grants towards specialized cleaning equipment for the town of Pribham and equipment to refurbish the flooded hospital in Kralupy nad Vltavou (respectively). Grants for emergency aid have already been made to the hard-hit cities of Decin, Melnik, Pisek, Ceske Budejovice, Usti nad Labem and Plzen. AFoCR has provided a substantial grant to the VIZE 97 foundation, for the reconstruction of the vocational school in Karlin. Additional donations have come from Paul Newman and Tom Cruise.

If you wish to contribute, a special account "AFoCR, Prague-Needs-Help Flood Relief Fund" has been established at CitiBank, 1901 Wisconsin Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20007. Account Number: 1507 4196 ABA/Routing Number: 2540-70116.

Nuclear Plants Provide Power During Flood

Despite the serious flooding in South Bohemia, the Temelin and Dukovany Nuclear Power stations continued providing electricity to the national grid. However, many coal-fired units elsewhere in Bohemia were shut down during the flood emergency due to a lack of fuel. Neither Temelin, on the Vltava River near Ceske Budejovice nor Dukovany, on the Jihlava River in South Moravia had operations affected by flooding.

EU Recommends Czech Admission

On October 9, 2002, the European Commission recommended admitting ten countries, including the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Slovakia into the European Union

in 2004. This comes as a result of the European Commission trying to break down the barriers that stand in the way of a united Europe.

More than a decade has passed since the fall of communism and the European Commission concluded that the ten countries now have the economic strength and political stability needed to compete with Western businesses. The ultimate goal is that all ten of the countries will be able to adopt the EU's common currency, the Euro.

Message from the President

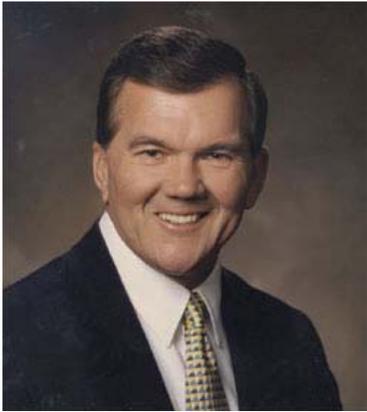
I am pleased to be writing as the newly elected president of AFoCR. Under Milt Cerny's able leadership AFoCR has accomplished much and is recognized in both Washington and Prague as the primary organization supporting the U.S.-Czech relationship. When the Czech Embassy sought leadership for U.S. fundraising for Czech flood relief they turned to AFoCR. AFoCR quickly mobilized an effective effort and within a matter of days major assistance was on its way to Prague and other areas. AFoCR has raised over \$235,000 for flood relief; and more than 10 major grants are already in place to aid in rebuilding the hardest hit areas.

A statue of Czechoslovakia's first president and liberator, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, now stands prominently at the entrance to Washington's famed Embassy Row not far from the home of President Wilson and the former Czechoslovak Embassy. President Havel in his last official visit to Washington dedicated the Memorial and spoke eloquently of T.G. Masaryk's importance in building a democratic nation. As the majestic statue was unveiled I felt a deep sense of pride for this symbolic union of our countries and our shared history of democratic traditions. As former Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright pointed out, a memorial to T.G. Masaryk in Washington has been long overdue.

Assuming the Presidency with so many successes already achieved is a great place to begin – but along with successes come challenges. The joyous and historic events of September 2002 have passed and there is much yet to do. Flood relief is our highest priority and the work to complete T.G. Masaryk Park will be getting underway soon. Hopefully the next phase of construction will be finished before winter sets in. Fundraising continues for the Park – we are not yet there and still need your help to complete the project. We look forward to celebrating Masaryk's birthday in March 2003 at the T.G. Masaryk Park.

Flood relief is a priority, but grants for education and scholarship programs are high on AFoCR's agenda. Let's redouble our efforts to help the cities with important flood reconstruction work, and then follow with education and business programs supporting the Czech Republic as it joins the family of western democracies. The recent action by the EU to recommend admission is a very positive step on this path.

"You have a friend in Pennsylvania"



By Peter A. Rafaeli

Hon. Consul General of the Czech Republic-Philadelphia Director – AfoCR

That slogan could be seen on Pennsylvania license plates for a number of years. It was kept in use by the administration of Governor Tom Ridge for several years. Pennsylvania's "Dutch hospitality" is well known. Our former Governor just practiced it more than some of his predecessors. In fact, Governor Ridge was a dear friend of the Czech and Slovak Republics. Unfortunately, the events of 9/11 forced President George W. Bush to summon his friend Tom Ridge to Washington to assume the awesome responsibilities of Director of Homeland Security. He is no longer in Pennsylvania and the Commonwealth lost a great leader for the good of the nation. Thus, Governor Ridge is no longer in Pennsylvania but on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC. Why is this outstanding American so proud of his Czechoslovak ancestry? Last year, during I visit with the Governor on a Pennsylvania Trade Mission, I learned that his grandfather was a public official in Bratislava before leaving for the United States of America to begin a new life.

Born August 26, 1945, in Pittsburgh's Steel Valley, Governor Ridge was raised in a working class family in veterans' public housing in Erie. He earned a scholarship to Harvard University, graduating with honors in 1967. After his first year at The Dickinson School of Law, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, where he served as an infantry staff sergeant in Vietnam, earning the Bronze Star for Valor. After returning to Pennsylvania, he earned his law degree and was in private practice before becoming assistant district attorney in Erie County. He was elected to Congress in 1982. He was the first enlisted Vietnam combat veteran elected to the U.S. House, and was overwhelmingly re-elected six times.

Governor Ridge considers the Czech and Slovak lands as the lands of his ancestors.

Presidential Elections: The Czech Way

Unlike the President of the United States, the President of the Czech Republic is elected at a joint meeting of both the House of Deputies and the Senate.

In the first round a candidate requires an absolute majority of all 200 deputies and 81 senators. If no candidate is elected those who win the most votes in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate advance to a second round, which is held within 14 days.

In the second round, the candidate who is supported by an absolute majority of deputies and senators present is elected. In the case of a failure, a third round is held, in which the candidate from the second round who gains an absolute majority of deputies and senators present wins.

If the third round still does not produce a head of state, a second election is held according to the same rules and with a new nomination in which candidates who failed in the first election can run again.

The President of the Czech Republic serves for a 5-year term with a two-term limit. The two leaders most often mentioned for the presidency are Petr Pithart, currently of the Senate, and Václav Klaus, leader of the ODS Party. Elections to be held in January 2003.

AFoCR Elects New Leadership



On September 20, 2002 the AFoCR Board of Directors held its annual meeting in Washington DC. At the meeting, the Board recognized Milt Cerny for his exceptional service as president. The Board also recognized retiring Board member Tom Gibian for his many years of service.

Milt Cerny thanked all for helping prepare and conduct the highly successful Masaryk dedication events. Milt noted that the events had placed Americans and Czechs in the finest light and drew much attention to the statue and park. Construction of the next phase of the Masaryk Park is scheduled to begin this fall. Fundraising to complete the park will remain a high priority in order to assure sufficient funds for completing the Memorial in 2003 as currently planned.

Milt assessed the year as an excellent one for AFoCR. In addition to the fundraising for the Masaryk Memorial and Scholarship Program, the organization raised over \$235,000 for flood relief efforts, including substantial donations from the Starr Foundation and Paul Newman. The Board approved a grant for flood relief effort to the

VIZE 97 non-profit foundation, designating it for use in the Karlin vocational school reconstruction project. The Board appointed a committee to recommend and establish criteria for evaluating additional projects for the award of grants from the flood relief fund.

The Board also elected new officers, Phil Kasik as President; Peter Rafaeli as Treasurer; Mike Rokos will continue as Vice-president and Ron Bartek as Secretary. Jack White of Vienna, Virginia and Peter Bisek of New York were elected to the Board of Directors.

New Board Members

Lewis M. "Jack" White



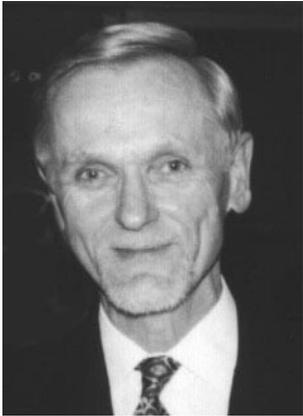
Lewis M. "Jack"
White

American Friends of the Czech Republic is please to introduce Lewis M. "Jack" White as one its newest Board members. Jack White is a graduate of Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. Mr. White also has a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University. He served three years with the U.S. Army in World War II, most of the time in the China-Burma-India Theater. Mr. White was a career Foreign Service officer for many years, serving in Colombia, New Caledonia, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Morocco. He also served in the State Department Office of Intelligence and Research dealing with the economics of the communist countries and the Economic Policy Staff of the Bureau of African Affairs. Mr. White now serves on the Board of Governors of Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired and also on four of its committees.

Mr. White is President of the Wilsonian Club which, in association with the Woodrow Wilson House honors President Wilson and the founders of Czechoslovak independence in 1918. His wife, Dagmar Hasalova, is the daughter of Czechoslovak General Antonin Hasal, who was President Benes's Military Adviser in London during World War II.

Mr. White is also the Editor and co-author of the three-volume series "On All Fronts: Czechoslovaks in World War II," a collection of memoirs of Czechoslovaks who fought with the allies to free their homeland.

Peter M. Bisek



Peter M. Bisek

American Friends of the Czech Republic is pleased to announce Peter M. Bisek as one of the newest members of the AFoCR Board of Directors.

Mr. Bisek was born in 1941 in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Since 1965 he has lived in the United States and currently resides in Long Island, New York with his wife, Vera. His son, Jonathan, currently resides in Pilsen, Czech Republic, where he is a manager for the Pilsner Urquell Brewery. His daughter, Veronica, is a corporate lawyer with the law firm Skadden, Arps.

Mr. Bisek is the owner of Typrints Company in Glen Cove, NY. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the Czech & Slovak-American bi-weekly, *Americké Listy* which he publishes with his wife Vera.

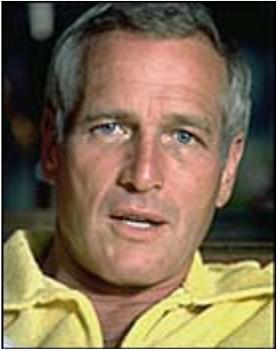
Mr. Bisek is also President of the Bohemian Citizens' Benevolent Society of Astoria, Inc. which owns the Bohemian Hall and Garden, in Astoria, New York.

In 1997, he was awarded the Medal of Merit First Class by Czech President Václav Havel in recognition for successful lobbying in the U.S. Congress on behalf of the Czech Republic for its early acceptance into the NATO.

Mr. Bisek is a certified rowing coach and a master rower-competitor.

Notable Americans with Czech Roots

Paul Newman, A notable American with Slovak Roots



Paul Newman

Over two million Slovaks immigrated to the United States from 1900 to 1910 to escape poverty and seek liberty. Over the years, many have contributed considerably to the economy, democracy and culture of American life. Actor Paul Newman is among these many notable Americans. Mr. Newman is part of a family with Slovak roots, as his mother immigrated from Humenne, Slovakia.

Paul Newman was born January 26, 1925 in Cleveland, Ohio. After serving in World War II, Mr. Newman attended Kenyon College on an athletic scholarship. He turned to acting after an injury ended his sports career, and he attended the Yale School of Drama. Mr. Newman had his first break in New York City with a role on the CBS television series *The Aldrich Family*. Warner Bros. executives spotted him in 1953 while acting on Broadway in *Picnic*. Upon his arrival in Hollywood, he was deemed "the new Brando," as worked his way to recognition in the competitive acting field. The 1956 hit, *Somebody Up There Likes Me* brought both commercial and critical success. With the hit *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* Paul Newman's career took off. His claim to fame in the film industry includes the 1969 film, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, which became the highest grossing western in movie history.

Today, Mr. Newman is one of the best-known contemporary movie actors, and is equally as successful as a film director and producer. Clearly possessing extraordinary versatility, Mr. Newman also excelled as an automobile racer and supporter of liberal activities. He is among Hollywood's most vocal supporters of the civil rights movement. Over the years Mr. Newman has moved away from the glitz and glamour of Hollywood, but has undoubtedly remained a prominent public figure through his extensive charitable work, which includes the Scott Newman Foundation, which declares its mission to prevent substance abuse through education. As well, all profits from "Newman's Own" gourmet food items are donated to help children suffering from cancer through The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp.

Ronald G. Slaby, Ph.D.



Ronald G. Slaby,
Ph.D.,
Scientist and
Educator

Ronald G. Slaby, Ph.D., is a Senior Scientist at Education Development Center in Newton, MA, and a Lecturer at Harvard University, where he teaches "Growing Up in a Media World" and "Preventing Violence in America." Through his innovative research as a developmental psychologist, Dr. Slaby has made a major contribution to our understanding of gender role development, media influences, and violent behavior. He has helped to shape a national agenda for preventing violence in America, having co-authored a prevention plan for the Centers for Disease Control, as well as two reports on violence and youth for the American Psychological Association. He has presented testimony to the U.S. Senate on the prevention of youth violence, to the Federal Trade Commission on television advertising effects on children, and to the U.S. House of Representatives on television violence effects and remedies.

Dr. Slaby has developed and implemented violence prevention strategies that are now in wide use across the country. He has also worked internationally to develop programs for the prevention and treatment of violence in Colombia, Argentina, Pakistan, and Uruguay. His books and curricula include: *Early Violence Prevention; Aggressors, Victims and Bystanders; Viewpoints; and Social Development in Young Children.*

Having had the opportunity to work with creators of "Sesame Street," Dr. Slaby learned strategies for enhancing the educational value of children's media. He has served on children's media panels for the National Endowments for the Humanities and the Arts, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the American Children's Television Council. As educational advisor, Dr. Slaby has contributed to the design, production, and content of many highly acclaimed television program series and family films, including: *Shining Time Station* (with Ringo Starr & George Carlin); *Thomas and the Magic Railroad* (with Peter Fonda & Alec Baldwin); *Noddy*; *The Longhouse Tales*; *Zoboomafoo*; *CNN Newsroom*; and *Long Ago & Far Away* (with James Earl Jones).

All of Dr. Slaby's great-grandparents immigrated to the Chicago area from southern Bohemia. In his visits to his family's homeland, he has been moved by the spirit and

generosity of his relatives and the Czech people. He enjoys playing the banjo, sharing outdoor adventures with his wife and two daughters, and investigating his Czech heritage.

The Gibian Family Lecture Series



In honor of Thomas Gibian's considerable contributions to the enhancement of Czech-American relations over the past five decades, The Tombros Foundation has established the Gibian Family Lecture Series Fund and has asked AFoCR to manage the Fund. This Fund will be used to support events like the Czech and Slovak lecture series at the Woodrow Wilson Center where past featured lecturers have included Madeleine K. Albright, former U.S. Secretary of State and Michael Novak, Senior Scholar, American Enterprise Institute. A member of the AFoCR Board since 1995, Tom retired from the Board this year.



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