

January 1, 2019 Český Hlas Report  
Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society  
By Marie Dulak

Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society (BVCHS) offered a dance class to high school, college students and beyond on September 29, 2018. The class, which was organized by BVCHS member Tomas Panský taught 4 couples to Two-Step, Polka and Waltz. Everyone enjoyed a good time. Another dance class is to be offered in 2019.

On October 6, 2018 the Fall Baking Class was held at the St. Joseph Parish Activity Center (PAC) under the direction of Stan Vitha, BVCHS Vice-President. The six enrollees attending the class, which included 3 persons from Britain, were instructed on preparing fruit dumplings, buchty and the Bohemian kolač.



In promoting our Czech heritage, BVCHS held its annual Czech Heritage Celebration on Sunday, October 14, 2018. The festivities started with two Polka Masses celebrated at St. Joseph Catholic Church featuring the Taylor Czech Chorus. Following the Masses a meal of roasted pork loin and chicken, parsley potatoes, green beans, sauerkraut, gravy, rolls, a variety of desserts and tea was served to approximately 150 attendees. The Moravians of Ennis, Texas provided a variety of musical selections – polka, waltz and two-step – for everyone's dancing and listening pleasure. Twenty-six raffle prizes donated by BVCHS members and various organizations were given away during an intermission. Thanks to everyone who helped and contributed to the success of the celebration. Next year's celebration is scheduled for October 13, 2019.



On October 21, 2018 the BVCHS membership meeting was held at the St. Joseph PAC. Prior to the meeting, Fred Wenck led the opening prayer which was followed by a potluck dinner of various dishes provided by the 17 members in attendance.

Following the meal, E. J. Biskup, President, called the meeting to order. The "Our Czech Heritage" prayer was recited in Czech by Stan Vitha, Vice-President, and in English by E. J. Biskup.

Officers' and committee chairman reports were given. Membership Chairman, Jo Ann Zaeske, reported 4 new members joined the chapter during our Czech Heritage Celebration. BVCHS currently has 117 members.

Cheryl Wenck, Scholarship Chairperson, reported the Novak-Zaeske Scholarship application will be submitted to all local high schools and the Vestník.

Chapter Bylaws were presented and a committee was appointed to review for proposed changes.

Election of officers for 2019-2020 were held. Officers elected were:

President: E. J. Biskup

Vice-President: Frank Dulak

Secretary: Cheryl Wenck

Treasurer: Jo Ann Zaeske

Reporter: Marie Dulak

The officers will be installed at the January 13, 2019 meeting.

October, November and December birthdays were recognized. Following the adjournment of the meeting a 50-50 drawing was held.

BVCHS sponsored a cultural booth at the Brazos Valley Worldfest on October 27, 2018 at the Brazos County Expo Center. The Worldfest is a community-wide festival to promote and celebrate the international diversity and heritage of the Brazos Valley and Texas A&M University.

Prior to the festival, in preparation for promoting the Czech heritage, several members – Stan Vitha, John Moravec, Tomas Panský, Eileen Svec-Hugo, Frank and Marie Dulak, met at the St. Joseph PAC kitchen on Friday evening to prepare kolache, vanočka (Christmas bread) and apple strudels to be served at the booth.



Saturday morning members met at the Brazos County Expo Center to set up the booth display for the festival. Additional food items prepared and brought by members to sell were rosettes and brownies. Floral head wreaths were sold and a display of Czech toys were available for visitors to view.

Thanks to the following members who volunteered to work the booth: E. J. Biskup, Frank and Marie Dulak, Richard and Toni Fayman, Eileen Svec-Hugo, Tomas Panský, Lorraine Roesler, Lynette Urbanovsky, Stan Vitha and Tereza Walsbergerová.



With the Christmas Season approaching BVCHS held its annual Christmas Party on December 1, 2018 at the St. Joseph PAC. Members and guests were welcomed by President E. J. Biskup. An inspirational reading and prayer before the meal was given by Lynette Urbanovsky, BVCHS secretary. Turkey and dressing, ham, and all the trimmings was served to approximately 55 members and guests. Following the meal, everyone enjoyed listening to youth members, Erika Vitha, present a piano solo and Faith Wenck performed a repertoire of musical selections on her flute.

A cultural presentation on Czech Christmas traditions was given by Stan Vitha, BVCHS Vice-President. He spoke on the traditional Christmas Eve meal which consists of carp and potato salad. Other traditions presented were The Floating of Walnut Shells and Cutting of the Apple for foretelling the future. The Throwing of the Shoe foretells the future of marriage in the coming year.

A Czech Christmas Ornament exchange and door prize drawings were held. Czech and American Christmas Carols, which included Tichá Noc, Svatá Noc; Nesem Vám Noviny, Narodil se Kristus Pán, and Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree were lead by Tomas Panský and Lynette Urbanovsky with everyone joining the sing-a-long.

President E. J. Bishop in closing words wished everyone a Merry Christmas.



BVCHS in conjunction with The University of North Texas College of Music and the Czech Educational Foundation of Texas (CEFT) presented scenes from the Czech opera, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, at the Rudder High School's Margaret Rudder Performing Arts Center on December 4, 2018. This "comic" opera, performed in Czech, incorporated Moravian folk music and rhythms as it recounts the life of a clever fox and accompanying wildlife, as well as a few humans, in their small adventures.



"The Cunning Little Vixen" performers.

Upcoming Event:

April 6, 2018 – Spring Baking Class – 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at St. Joseph Parish Activity Center – Bryan, Texas. Apple Strudel and Poppyseed Roll making will be demonstrated. For information and to register contact Mr. Stanislav (Stan) Vitha at [bohemia2012@aol.com](mailto:bohemia2012@aol.com) or calling 979-587-1777.