

# BEXAR COUNTY CZECH HERITAGE SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In spite of COVID-19, this year continues to move along at what seems to be a very fast pace. I have been in office for a year, but unfortunately most of our meetings have been thru a camera via Zoom!

We had election of officers at our November 8 meeting. Only one position was open for election. We are happy to announce Jasmine Kirby stepped forward to serve as our secretary. She was elected unanimously. We would like to thank Kim McCarron for her many years of service she has given as secretary of our society. She did a great job!

Congratulations to Member Sister Anita Brenk who is celebrating her 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a nun with the Sisters of Divine Providence.

Thanks to the Judy Barr Topinka Foundation we have been able to host some virtual events and were able to keep up a type of community with our membership.

One of our members Jasmine Kirby came up with the idea of holding a Virtual Czech Heritage Day. We had about 20 people who came to the event,

along with followers on Facebook Live. We learned about Czech Composer Antonin Dvorak, and some history about Czech and Slovak Krojs, the special clothing worn by our ancestors.



Our last event of the year will be our upcoming Virtual Christmas Party on Sunday December 6, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. We are expecting to have special guests from the Czech Republic joining us to share how they will be celebrating Christmas in their country. I think it should be very interesting.

Svaty Mikulas plans to be there and would like to give a small virtual gift to the children or grandchildren of our members. To receive the virtual gift, children must be 11 and under and attend the Dec. 6 Virtual Celebration on Zoom.

Please respond to [kayvjdos@gmail.com](mailto:kayvjdos@gmail.com) with the name of the child receiving the gift, one thing they love to do such as sports, art, etc., one thing they need to improve on such as cleaning their room, etc. along with a valid e-mail address where the gift will be sent. Please let us know which gift card would work best for the child (see below). The information on the child is helpful to Svaty Mikulas when he visits with the children.

**Choices of gift cards include:** Texas State Parks, Robux (Roblox video game platform cash), Xbox, and Nintendo eCash.

**Send responses to** [kayvajdos@gmail.com](mailto:kayvajdos@gmail.com) by **Dec. 3.** I know these are not typical Svaty Mikulas gifts, but this is an unusual year.

If you are submitting a name of a grandchild who is not a member please share the Zoom link with the parents of the children so they will be able to join us on that day.



Here is the link to join the Dec. meeting.

**Topic: Bexar County Czech Heritage Christmas Party**  
**Time: Dec. 6, 2020 01:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81551349247?pwd=TElORWZnYVh2SzZWQ0J3bmZrbzk0dz09>

**Meeting ID: 815 5134 9247**

**Passcode: 396482**

One tap mobile  
+13462487799,,81551349247#,,,,,0#,,  
396482# US (Houston)  
+16699009128,,81551349247#,,,,,0#,,  
396482# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)  
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)  
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)  
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)  
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington

D.C)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 815 5134 9247

Passcode: 396482

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81551349247?pwd=TElORWZnYVh2SzZWQ0J3bmZrbzk0dz09>



It is also time for membership renewal. Our 2021 dues are to be paid by January 1, 2021. Just to remind you, we have two types of dues, our local dues are \$5, and the State dues are \$10. You do have the option of just belonging to our local organization, which entitles you to submit a name for the drawing of a Scholarship, which we give each year. The State dues entitles you to receive the Cesky Hlas (Czech Voice), a newsletter printed three times a year that keeps members informed

about the state society and county chapter activities and includes articles of cultural, historical and genealogical interest.

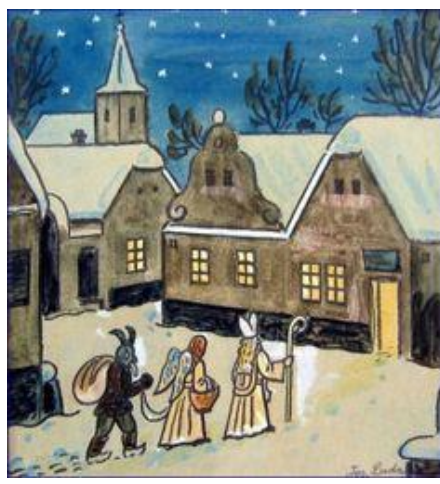
We have just learned about the loss of one of our new members. Charlotte Schwartz Aanstoos passed away in October. Please keep her family in prayer.



Just a reminder thanks to member Monika Prochazkova you can follow us on Facebook.  
[Facebook.com/txchsbcc](https://www.facebook.com/txchsbcc)

This is a good way to keep up with some interesting events such as concerts, etc. all over the world!

Thank you! Kay Vajdos - President



## MORAVIAN CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

By Lillian Picka

### St. Mikulas

- In Moravia as well as in some western European countries St. Nicholas Day (Svaty Mikulas in Czech) is celebrated on December 6<sup>th</sup>. On that day, according to tradition, a man dressed in the rich and regal robes of a bishop walks through the village and questions the children on their behavior during the past year. He is accompanied by an angel carrying a bag of presents, fruit, candy and nuts and by a devil with horns and a long tail, rattling a chain.
- When these three enter the home, the children kneel and pray. St. Nicholas asks the parents if the children have been good. If so, the angel dispenses treats. However if they were naughty, the devil hands out onions, potatoes and coal. Of course all children everywhere profess to being good all year

long and because St. Nicholas (Svaty Mikulas) always believes them, most children receive good things to eat and things to cherish.

- One delicacy is marzipan, an almond paste candy, colored and shaped to look like fruit, nuts or toys. It's a favorite present and, if not eaten, is hung on the Christmas tree as a decoration.

### Oplatky (wafers)



Oplatky were shared on Christmas Eve as a prelude to dinner. These very thin wafers were inscribed with nativity scenes and other designs, and were eaten with honey. Usually the father broke off a piece, sharing it with the mother and children to denote unity within the family circle. The round, sweetened Carlsbad wafer (Karlovarske Oplatky) are enhanced with almonds, chocolate or hazelnuts. Wafers were made with a special utensil resembling long metal tongs with flat round or square jaws, often producing a decorated surface. Honey was spread on the wafers. Sometimes these were decorated with rose hips, nuts or even garlic or different herbs mixed in the dough. This was not merely for decoration, but also protected the health of the household and all the domestic animals.



Oplatky Maker



## **Pernicky (Pernik)**

Although the name pernik might refer to a soft ginger-spiced bundt cake, it is predominately used to describe traditional Czech cookies spiced with cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, allspice, and ginger. They are usually cut out into different shapes and decorated with chocolate, yogurt, sliced almonds, candy, and sugar glaze, or simply dusted with powdered sugar.

In the Czech Republic, the cookies initially appeared in 1335, when they were mainly enjoyed as a dessert or as a thickening agent in savory sauces. Today, these crispy and fragrant cookies are appreciated for their artistic value, and the lavish decorations make them a unique, edible artwork. We will share a short YouTube video on making Pernicky at our Virtual Christmas Party on December 6 at 1:30 pm. Here is the recipe in case you want to try making them.



### **Pernicky (Gingerbread Cookie) Recipe** *Cookie ingredients*

3 5/8 cups of flour  
7/8 cup of powdered sugar (not regular sugar)  
7 Tbsp. butter  
2 eggs  
2 Tbsp. honey  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp gingerbread spice (a mixture of cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves)  
Mix the above ingredients. Put the dough in a covered dish in the refrigerator or 30 minutes to let the dough rest.  
Roll out the dough and use cookie cutters. Place the cut cookies on a baking pan and bake in an oven 350 degrees for 9-10 minutes. Let cookies cool. Decorate the cookies a few days or a week later if possible.

### **Icing ingredients (Royal Icing)**

2/3 cup of sifter powdered sugar-sift at least two times  
1tsp of cornstarch (optional)  
Juice of 1 lemon (1Tbsp)