



CEFT OFFICERS AT THE JANUARY 2016 ANNUAL CEFT MEMBERSHIP MEETING IN TEMPLE

From the President

By: **Woody Smith, CEFT President**

2015 has been a year full of memorable events for the Czech Educational Foundation of Texas (CEFT), and support by CEFT friends and members like you have helped make this happen. Throughout this newsletter you will be able to find out more about the three programs that CEFT has successfully endowed over the years (The Texas Chair of Czech Studies at The University of Texas at Austin, the William J. Hlavinka Fellowship at Texas A&M University, the Frank J. and Hermine Hurta Kostohryz Residency in Czech Music and Culture at the University of North Texas) and the Phase II, Jim J. and Rose A. Bezdek Endowment Celebrating Czech Music and Culture.

At this time, I would like to encourage everyone to take a look at CEFT's newly revised and updated website. Heartfelt thanks go to CEFT member, John Sefcik, for taking over the reins as webmaster of the organization's website. We now hope to be able to provide everyone with updated information about CEFT in a more timely fashion through better utilization of our website.

In April, CEFT, with the support of the Texas Chair in Czech Studies (one of

CEFT's endowed programs) and the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Languages at The University of Texas at Austin, celebrated 100 years of Czech language instruction at the university by conducting a one-day symposium to a standing-room only crowd. The event featured presentations by current and former students and faculty in the Czech program at The University of Texas. To further commemorate this historic event, CEFT, with expert editing by Lida Dutkova-Cope and Mark Hopkins, compiled and published a commemorative book, [Centennial of Czech Studies at The University of Texas](#). The book features articles by former students, faculty, and others associated over the years with the Czech program at the university and it contains spectacular photographs. CEFT still has some of these books for donation, so be sure to contact any CEFT Board Member for further information. Thanks also go to Austin master chef, Ms. Pavla Adamik van Bibber, CEFT Member, for catering the meals throughout the day. The evening concluded with a lively polka dance featuring music provided by the Kovanda Band from Houston, a fitting closure to a day full of information and

CEFT

The Czech Educational Foundation of Texas

Newsletter

Spring 2016 Edition

This edition was created by Lynette Urbanovsky, CEFT English Publicity Officer. Reviewed by: Amy Jurica-Hinnant and Diane Sulak Wilson.

memories about the Czech program at the university.

In September, an event to pay tribute to the work that CEFT has accomplished over the years was coordinated by Nancy Dewell Braus and Diane Sulak Wilson, and was held at the world-renowned Festival Hill in Round Top, Texas. Attendees were treated to a spectacular piano performance by pianist Richard Urbis, CEFT Member. A gala reception followed, catered by master chef, Ms. Pavla Adamik van Bibber.

Congratulations go out to Jan Benes, the Czech Fellow at Texas A&M University. Jan is a student at Masaryk University in Brno and is currently in the English MA Graduate Program at Texas A&M as the Czech Fellow. As the Czech Fellow at Texas A&M, Jan is involved in teaching off-campus Czech language classes.



Jan Benes with the CEFT Officers at the January 2016 Annual CEFT Membership Meeting.

Throughout the year, Dr. Thomas Sovik from the Department of Music at the University of North Texas (UNT) was intensely involved in preparations for the Second International Festival of Czech Music which featured presentations by national and international scholars of Czech music. In addition, Dr. Sovik was involved in the production and staging of the performance of the "Ceska mse vanocni" by Jakub Jan Ryba. A truly spectacular performance of the mass took place at UNT in Czech and featured UNT student soloists accompanied by UNT full orchestra and choir. Dr. Sovik subsequently accompanied the soloists on a post-festival tour to perform a part of the mass to audiences in several Texas cities.



Dr. Tomas Sovik addressing the congregation at one of the UNT performances of "Ceska mse vanocni" by Jakub Jan Ryba

As can be seen by the activities mentioned above, the endowments that CEFT has been able to establish are in a very positive way helping to promote and preserve the rich Czech culture and heritage that have been a part of Texas for many years. It is only with generous support of CEFT by those interested in helping to preserve this legacy, however, that CEFT is able to continue its mission. I, therefore, encourage you to re-new your membership in CEFT if you have not done so already, and to make it a goal to find at least two other people to join CEFT at this time.

Finally, the next CEFT Board of Director meeting will be held April 30, 2016, and is tentatively set to be at the KJZT home office in Austin, Texas.

On behalf of all of us at CEFT, we wish you a very Happy New Year!



Texas A&M University Hlavinka Fellowship Report

By: Lynette Urbanovsky, CEFT English Publicity Officer

The Spring Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society (BVCHS) Czech language class began on January 25, 2016 at the St. Joseph Catholic Church Parish Activity Center which is located at 600 E. 26th Street in Bryan, Texas. Classes are each Monday night from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The BVCHS is excited to have Hlavinka Fellow, Jan Benes, teaching the course while he is working on his English Masters at Texas A&M University. The Class has doubled in size this spring semester, and we are excited to report that there are more new students than veteran students!

Jan does a wonderful job of teaching conversational Czech, grammar, reading and some writing. One area that Jan really fortes in is that he engages the class through different activities. Some nights he has us work with partners or in small groups. We have even played games relating to vocabulary. From time to time Jan will also share a little Czech history with the Czech language class, which adds to the cultural experience of the class. Jan teaches Czech on different levels, which enables beginners and more advanced Czech students to all benefit from the course. Jan begins each class with a brief review over information that he has covered in prior lessons, and ends each class by highlighting topics that he covered during the current class. Jan challenges his students with assignments that we are tasked to completed on our own, or in groups. This allows Jan to measure his students' strengths and weaknesses in their study of the Czech language.



Some of the Czech Language Class Students in this picture and the pictures above.

While I am enrolled as a regular student, the class was excited to have another CEFT Board of Director, Amy Jurica-Hinnant, represent the CEFT by attending one of our classes during the fall. I know that the class really enjoyed meeting and getting to know Amy.



CEFT Board of Directors Amy Jurica-Hinnant and Lynette Urbanovsky with Texas A&M University, Hlavinka Fellow, Jan Benes.

The Czech language class also has a social aspect to it. After class, a group of the students usually share a meal with Jan each week. Cracker Barrel is a favorite of Jan's! We went there before he went home for the holidays to celebrate his December birthday.



Some of the BVCHS Czech Language Class Attendees with Jan Benes at Cracker Barrel

To wrap up the fall semester, I hosted the class at my parents' country place in Bryan, Texas and made Czech cuisine for everyone (Knedlicky --Czech dumplings- with a tomato gravy and with a beef mushroom gravy), Vanocka (Czech Christmas Bread), molasses cookies (a traditional Czech cookie), prune cake, chicken noodle soup, and carrots from a recipe in my Czech cookbook. Another CEFT and BVCHS member, Jo Ann Zaeske, made green beans from one of her recipes.

Please invite others to attend our Czech class! If you are interested, or know someone who is, they can contact me at lurbanovsky@gmail.com for more information. The class is open to beginning and more advanced students. Our class ranges from college students and professionals to parents and grandparents. Everyone is welcome!

Message from Jan Benes

By: Jan Benes - Hlavinka
Scholarship Awardee and Czech Language Class Instructor

The first four months in College Station and at Texas A&M University have been a blessing, and have lived up to all of my expectations. The coursework has been very challenging compared to the Czech Republic, and it has helped me to find new resources, viewpoints, and theoretical work for my further studies and career. I appreciate the facilities at

Texas A&M University: the library is extremely well-equipped, and the archives at the Cushing library have been a revelation. Hopefully, I will be able to take a course on Shakespeare next semester, and work with the First Folio (first edition!) when it arrives on campus. I must admit that I have been amazed by how welcoming and helpful most people are on campus, and at the Department of English.

The same goes for my Czexan students. We have had a lot of fun classes – perhaps except the few times when they forgot their homework (joking). The students have been very welcoming, and I have had some opportunities to socialize, thanks to them. Additionally, I have been taken on a few trips around College Station and Bryan, as well as outside of town. The most memorable is certainly the trip to Caldwell for the local Kolache festival. Although the Czexan kolache (there is no –s for plural needed, since it is already plural in Czech) are slightly different from the ones I would have every morning for breakfast back home, I still enjoyed the welcoming



More of the Czech Language Class Students

atmosphere and the way that one can talk to strangers and share stories about the Czech Republic, or former Czechoslovakia. In general, mentioning that I am Czech can sometimes go a long way locally, since I have seen so many Czech surnames all around (Slovacek and others). The stories have been fun to share to my friends and family back home, especially about how excited people get here regarding their Czech/Moravian heritage. Since I come from, and was raised in the city (Olomouc), I have not been exposed to much folklore, but it is refreshing to see how Czexans are trying to keep and observe some of the traditions from way back.



Jan Benes near Kyle Field at Texas A&M

What I regret is that coursework and working as a Teaching Assistant has prevented me from going to all of the Texas Czech events that I would like to attend. Hopefully, there will be more time in the spring to attend more events. Also, I was asked to translate one letter from Czech into English, but if there are more people, who would like to have letters or something translated, please do not hesitate and contact me at benyi85@tamu.edu, I will be more than happy to help.

University of Texas Czech Chair Advisory Committee Report

By: James Sassin

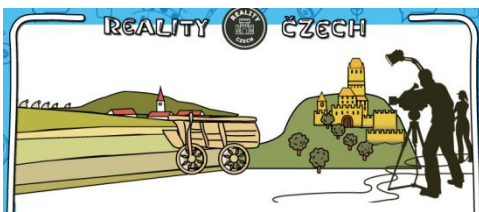
During the Spring 2016 semester, Christian Hilchey is teaching first and second year Czech language with about ten students, and Mark Hopkins is offering his course, "Puppets, Pubs, and Polyglots: An Introduction to Czech History and Culture."

Christian and Mark are also both teaching four advanced students in independent studies, and have also hired

a native speaking tutor for the two advanced students who are at the graduate level.

Christian and Mark are both also continuing to make progress on their precedent-setting Czech language textbook/curriculum called *Reality Czech*. After this semester, they will have completed two years of the four year project. Their trip to Prague last summer where they shot video interviews and cultural videos was a great success!

You can find more information about the project at www.realityczech.org. The website is still under construction, so keep checking back as they add more sample videos and material, as well as provide updates on their progress.



Adapted from www.realityczech.org



Christian Hilchey,
University of Texas
at Austin



Mark Hopkins,
University of Texas
at Austin

They are also running their annual Czech film series this semester showing six Czech comedies. To try to increase attendance at the film showings, this year they decided to try showing them during the day. The film series will be every other Wednesday from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Burdine Hall. A schedule with dates and films should be on the CREES website by next week.

The Czech Club, called Czechs Mix, meets on Mondays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at Austin's Pizza on Guadalupe starting on February 1st. Both the film series and Czechs Mix are open to community members, so please stop by if you are free!



Four Soloists and a Five Person Choir Performing Jakub Jan Ryba's Czech Christmas Mass in the beautiful sanctuary of St. John Nepomucene Catholic Church in Ennis. Left to right: Julianna Emanski, solo soprano; Amanda Jacobsen, soprano; Francesca Cacal, alto; Hannah Ceniseros, solo alto; Barrett Radziun, solo tenor; Brock Johnson, solo bass-baritone; Santiago Gutierrez, tenor; Hastings Reeves, bass; Lance Russell, bass; and Dr. Thomas Sovik, on the keyboard.

Next year, they will be continuing to work on the online curriculum, offering first and second year Czech courses and advanced independent studies, and offering some exciting content courses.

Christian will be offering his Slavic food course with a substantial portion dedicated to Czech cuisine, and Mark will be offering Mysticism in Slavic Literature and Homoeroticism in Slavic Literature. Both comparative courses examine these topics in Czech and Russian literature.

UNT Christmas Mass Tour in Texas

By: Lynette Urbanovsky,
CEFT English Publicity Officer



University of North Texas Singers and Musicians with CEFT members and Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society Officers, Jo Ann Zaeske and Lynette Urbanovsky.

The Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society was one group, out of many, given the opportunity through the Czech

Educational Foundation of Texas (CEFT), working with the University of North Texas, to host The Czech Christmas Mass (1796).

The Czech Christmas Mass (1796) was held by the Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society on December 3, 2015 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in College Station, Texas. Other locations included St. Mary's Church in West, St. John Nepomucene Church in Ennis, All Saints' Episcopal School Chapel in Fort Worth, St. Louis King of France Catholic Church in Austin, Temple Brethren Church in Temple, St. Justin Martyr Church in Houston, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Gainesville.

The hosting of the Czech Christmas Mass concert went wonderfully in College Station. The Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society had over 130 in attendance. There was a great showing of the Bryan-College Station community, as well as attendees from nearby communities such as Caldwell. Dr. Clinton Machann, Chairman of the Czech Educational Foundation of Texas, and member of the Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society gave the opening remarks.



Dr. Clinton Machann, CEFT Chairman and Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society Member giving opening remarks

The singers and musicians from the University of North Texas did a phenomenal job! Many attendees have

also commented on the wonderful message shared by Dr. Thomas Sovik, professor of Music Theory, College of Music UNT, also an ordained Military Chaplain! The Brazos Valley Czech Heritage society provided a turkey and dressing lunch from the Cracker Barrel restaurant and dinner at the Outback Steakhouse. Some of the club officers, members and CEFT Board of Directors joined the performers at the Outback Steakhouse afterwards.



University of North Texas Singers and Musicians with Dr. Thomas Sovik singing Happy Birthday to Jo Ann Zaeske at the Outback Steakhouse in College Station, Texas

The event happened to coincide with Jo Ann Zaeske's birthday, a CEFT and Brazos Valley Czech Heritage Society member. Jo Ann Zaeske had the happy birthday serenade of her life after the meal from the group! The students were most appreciative and were a delight to host! The students commented on how grateful they were of the attentive audiences.

The Austin and West groups also reported that their hosting was outstanding. Dr. Sovik shared that overall they had a wonderful showing and reception at each of the locations where the UNT group toured!



Singers and Musicians Singing Happy Birthday to Jo Ann Zaeske at the Outback Steakhouse in College Station, Texas.



Left to Right, Honorary Czech Consul Brian Vanicek; Joan Vanicek; Lenka Kabrhelova, US Correspondent Czech Radio, Prague and Washington, D.C.; and Margaret Jareš Klečka, CEFT Director, UNT Advisory Committee.

A Brief Biographical Sketch of Jakub Jan Ryba and His Celebrated *Česká mše vánoční*

By Margaret Jareš Klečka
CEFT Director, UNT Advisory Committee

Jakub Jan Ryba, famous the world over for his celebrated Czech Christmas Mass of 1796, was born October 26, 1765, into a family of humble means in Přeštice, a small town a few miles south of Plzeň in central Bohemia. His father, an impoverished village school teacher, was the talented young boy's first music teacher.

Having recognized the lad's potential, an uncle, who was a priest and tenor of renown, took his 15-year-old nephew to Prague in 1780 to study music. Jan was an excellent student. Talented, dedicated, always eager to learn, he was free at last to nurture his dream of becoming a famous composer of classical music.

The four years Jan spent in the capital city were the happiest years of the young composer's tragic life. Music consumed his every waking moment. He sang with a Gregorian choir, played in a quartet, wrote his first pieces of music, and enjoyed performing.

Ryba's plans for a successful career in music looked promising; then tragedy struck. His father became seriously ill, and the young composer had no choice but to leave his studies behind, return home, and assume responsibility as breadwinner for his family.

Ryba was 19 when he took the first of a series of jobs as a teacher in village schools not far from the family home in Přeštice. First at Nepomuk, then Mníšek pod Brdy, and finally in Rožmitál pod Třemšínem where he lived with his extended family for the rest of his life.

Ryba's career as an educator was a troubled, bittersweet experience. The schools under his supervision early in his career prospered, but at Rožmitál, he was in constant conflict with the clergy and tight-fisted administrative officials. He was not being paid enough to support his family, and his frequent requests for funds for repairs and building maintenance were usually denied. His efforts to promote educational and social reform were met with open hostility from the local priest and authorities in Rožmitál.

To make matters worse, Ryba's use of the Czech language in religious and secular music was an anathema to Church and Crown alike. German had become the official language for artistic and literary expression in the Czech lands after the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, when the Protestant forces were defeated by Hapsburg-backed Catholic forces, and remained so until the death of Emperor Franz Josef and the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire 300 years later. Latin, in the meantime, remained the official language for Church liturgy until the middle of the 20th Century.

Worn down by a lifetime of debt and despair, Jan Ryba took his own life on Sunday, April 8, 1815, after having attended mass. His body was found in the forest near Rožmitál. His final moments were no doubt comforted by the words of his favorite author, Seneca the Younger (4 B.C. – A.D. 65). Ryba had

a copy of the Roman philosopher's *Essay on Peace of the Soul* with him when he died. The young school teacher-composer was laid to rest in a plague cemetery near Rožmitál. He was 50 years of age.

Downtrodden and unappreciated, Ryba had no way of knowing that his *Czech Christmas Mass*, which remained discredited by the Church during his lifetime, would become the most popular piece of Czech Christmas music ever written and that he would become world-renowned.

The joyous music, with its lyrical folk motifs, bear no hint of Ryba's personal tragedy. Soon after his death, the piece spread quickly in popularity. Rožmitál became a popular pilgrimage destination for worshipers who, to this day, crowd into the Church of the Holy Cross to celebrate the birth of the Savior in a uniquely Czech service.

Because of its folk character and the fact that it was sung in Czech and not Latin, Ryba's Christmas Mass was deemed unsuitable for Church liturgy – but therein lay its genius. It is precisely these endearing characteristics that have made the work so enormously popular. The folksy quality and use of the vernacular were a Godsend to the masses whose humble lives were played out in a predominantly agrarian society. It touched their hearts; it spoke to their souls in a language they could understand.



Post-performance jubilation following splendid production of the Jakub Jan Ryba's delightful Czech Christmas Mass. Left to right, Brock Johnson, bass-baritone; Margaret Jaresh Klecka, CEFT Director, UNT Advisory Committee; and Barrett Radziun, tenor.

Online Public Radio for the Global Czech Diaspora?

Český rozhlas, Radio Prague and the View from Texas

By David Chroust, PhD
Texas A&M University

Český rozhlas is the public radio company of the Czech Republic, and it's unusual in the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) for the enormous number of radio stories it offers on its Web site for anyone in the world to play and download, free of charge. If you go to www.rozhlas.cz today, you will find over 1.1 million stories. Almost 450,000 of them are audio files you can listen to. You can also download many or most of them to your smart phone and then carry them around and play them anywhere you go... in your car, while you jog or wait in line, to your friends or students. You can use *Český rozhlas* to learn the Czech language and to learn about life in the Czech Republic and about Europe and the world we live in today from the perspective of Czech radio journalists and their guests. Also part of *Český rozhlas* is Radio Prague, which broadcasts to audiences beyond the Czech Republic in five languages, English, German, Russian, French and Spanish. It has a team of professionals in each of these languages. They produce their own stories, which you can find on Radio Prague's own Web site and its archive at <http://radio.cz>.

Online public radio on the scale of *Český rozhlas* is like a science fiction novel come true. It can serve and change a global diaspora—the Czech diaspora—and like any good science fiction novel, *Český rozhlas* online keeps us thinking and imagining what we can do with it and where it can lead us. The United States and Texas are a big part of the Czech diaspora ever since small peasants and tradesmen began coming here in the 1850s for cheap farmland and

independence. One hundred and fifty years later, many of their descendants are still interested in the Czech Republic and the Czech language. So are many other kinds of people and for all kinds of personal and practical reasons. It's an interest and identity that still motivates people and brings them together, as we see in the Czech Education Foundation of Texas (CEFT) and in the university programs it supports in Austin, College Station and Denton. And we see it in the new museums in Houston and La Grange, in the Czech Heritage Society of Texas, and in the old SPJST fraternal benefit and the Sokol mind-and-body societies.

Český rozhlas as a User Interface and Online Archive

The European Broadcasting Union, in Geneva, Switzerland, is the "largest community of public service media organisations in the world" and has 73 members in 56 countries. Each of these 73 radio and television broadcasting companies has its own kind of user interface on the World Wide Web, and they also vary a lot by access and archive. The user interface is what you see when you go to the broadcasting company's address, or URL, in your Web browser.

Český rozhlas lets users open its entire collection of 1.1 million stories. To do this, you simply click in the search window in the upper right corner of the home page, the one marked "Hledat" (i.e., "search"), and hit return, without entering any search terms. *Český rozhlas*, we can say, gives you everything when you search for nothing. But it doesn't tell you this. It's a trick I discovered myself in fall 2013, and since then I've tried it everywhere else as I've explored the public radio Web sites in Slovakia, Austria, Germany, Poland, Ukraine and Russia. None of them, I found, allow you to execute a null search.

Czech Radio let's you do it and then displays its entire corpus of 1.1 million stories on your screen. From here, you can choose one of three subsets. If you want to read, you can choose "Články":

that's almost 700,000 articles. For over 200,000 news reports, you can click "Zprávy." Or, if you want to listen, click "Audia," and you get almost 450,000 audio files. The same choice of articles, news, audio files or all three together comes with any search, and you can rearrange any result set by date, from newest to oldest, or keep the default order, which is by relevance.

Enter "Texas," and you get over 1,400 results. Over 80 of them are audio files. Many are editions of Czech Radio's *Radiožurnál* news program with segments on events in Texas, like the April 2013 chemical explosion in West or the April 2014 shootings at Fort Hood. Much of the Texas coverage is about violence. You can also explore how *Český rozhlas* sees Czech Texas, in stories on Christmas traditions, Czech Prime Minister Sobotka's November 2014 visit, Czech place names in Texas, and why the people Czech Radio calls "our Czech countrymen in Texas" speak so little Czech, as if language persistence after emigration were something normal in the second and later generations. In fact, it's not, as migration scholars have shown us. The stories about violence and the Czech language could become provocative in the productive sense of inspiring some among the "countrymen in Texas" to seek a dialog and maybe even collaborations with Czech Radio. Another way to search, different from the complete freedom of keywords, is by program. *Český rozhlas* now airs 390 programs, and you can see them by clicking the iRadio tab at the top of the home page. A new user interface appears, again with a search window for your keywords, but now with two more windows, the left one for choosing one of Czech Radio's seven national, twelve regional and four archival stations, and the right one for choosing one of Czech Radio's 390 programs ... and if you click the box marked "show programs no longer aired," it's 1,103 programs! You can scroll through them all to see their titles or quickly get to any single title, since they're listed alphabetically. You will find many programs for interviews, news, commentary, the arts, science,

health, everyday life and children. If you choose one and click "Hledat v archivu" (search in archive), you get all of the program's episodes and a search panel that allows you to limit them by time period, choose among them by author or choose only those available for download. You can also reverse the display order to see the episodes from oldest to newest, and you can click a link to see the program's own Web site, where you can read about its purpose, history and authors.

Downloading makes Czech Radio as remarkable as the null search that gives you all its 1.1 million stories. Generous downloading and freedom to download! Czech Radio is a real beacon for all who yearn to download. So far, from Germany and Austria to Poland and Russia, I found no other public radio that lets you download any audio files. Here in America, our own National Public Radio lets you download some, but it's far less generous than Czech Radio. Also, NPR stories tend to be short, just a few minutes each. At Czech Radio, the stories are much longer, from 20 to 50 minutes each.

The World ... as Seen from *Český rozhlas*

Czech Radio is another way to learn about the world. Its otherness is an alternative for those of us here in America who don't want to confine ourselves to our domestic media and to media in English. Ever since I came to America at the age of seven, almost fifty years ago, I've lived every day in more than one language. It's a need, like air or water. Too much time in one language makes me feel confined. Escaping into another makes me feel free. When I went to school, I came home to speak Czech with my parents. Now my wife and I come home from work to talk Russian, her native language. Languages are not simple equivalents, like a left glove and a right glove. You can never actually translate one into another. Languages are different ways of being ourselves and different ways of looking out at the world. It's more like one is a

pair of gloves and another is a pair of sandals.

About mass media, I learned these lessons of confines and freedom later, in the fifteen years since I began commuting three hours a day. Like many people, my wife and I fell into long commutes so we could both pursue productive careers. It also made me feel "commuted," the ambivalent new word I found for what was a radically new experience of confinement: body fixed in the driver's pose, mind fixed on hands, foot and road, three hours a day. The closest way to freedom was the car radio, where National Public Radio was a way to keep imagining and learning about the world while I drove. Until I began to feel confined again. For one thing, I wanted to learn more about Europe and Russia, but on NPR the stories not about America were about Iraq or Afghanistan.

I discovered Czech Radio online in fall 2013, after I taught a spring course at Texas A&M's Department of International Studies on global migration. I played NPR stories about migration in my classroom as conversation-starters. The students loved it, and their praise made me wonder about public radio elsewhere, since NPR left out so much of the world. Discovering *Český rozhlas* became a life-changer: now I always carry twenty or so stories on my smart phone. So, I can listen to either Czech Radio or NPR, and together they make my commutes feel shorter.

To avoid the news and myopia, to see more clearly how the world is changing, I download the daily twenty-minute *Svět ve 20 minutách*. Here, different Czech Radio journalists choose and describe the four or five most important new investigations and analyses from the world's online media. In twenty minutes you can hear what the London *Economist*, Hamburg *Spiegel*, Moscow *Kommersant* or even Budapest *Népszabadság* wrote about Europe and Russia, or what public radio in those and other countries said. It's an openness to the world I don't find at NPR. Could it be

that more of the world is visible from a small country? Could it teach us to look beyond our own media and to question our open-mindedness in America? I won't say *ČRo* is better than NPR. Just that having them both gives me the freedom of choice. I would be even happier if I could download public radio stories from Germany, Russia and the other countries. Like NPR, Czech Radio sometimes frustrates me and makes me feel confined. Coverage of Germany is too thin for a small country next door that relies on economic integration with Germany for so much of its prosperity. The political correctness is less stifling than in Germany but still piled too high. You can actually hear critics of uncontrolled immigration on Czech Radio, starting with President Miloš Zeman, who is himself a target of criticism. I can enjoy more stories about Russia than on NPR—Russia matters more to Czechs than to Americans—but their tone is often harsher. Sometimes it sounds like schoolboys whose teacher assigned them Ronald Reagan's Evil Empire theme from 1983. Why not rather explore Russia as a country much like and unlike any other, where people live ordinary and extraordinary lives? Then there's the still unresolved neurosis about the Czech people's own Communist past. When I discovered the oral history program *Příběhy 20. století* (Stories of the 20th century), I at once imagined a great diversity of lives, some that make you feel good, some ordinary, certainly not all tragic. But the many stories from the Communist years, 1948 to 1989, were all told by victims. The Communist state committed many crimes, but it also tried to improve the lives of working people with education, housing, health care, full employment, the things some Americans call "entitlements." Most people were not victims. I grew up listening to my parents recall coming of age with their friends in perfectly happy circumstances in the 1950s, when they felt lucky to be living in a country like Czechoslovakia. I do not find stories like theirs on Czech Radio.

I still listen to the victims' stories avidly. Suffering is something we all know, and it connects us to the storytellers, from simple people with their own genius for words to the popular Prague priest Tomáš Halík, who recalls students and intellectuals before and after 1968 with his much-admired and cultured narrative style. And victims, least of all Czech victims, are not at all estranged from humor: in 1966 the police put much of their time and talent into an operation to round up and crew-cut young men with long hair. In Czechoslovakia, the street word for hippies was *máničky*, a hilarious take on "Marie," the common girls' name. The young people struck back at the police: they gathered and chanted *Vratte nám vlasy!* ... "Give us back our hair!"

Like NPR and public radio elsewhere in the world, Czech Radio is full of gems that will dazzle you. *Příběhy 20. století* is now over 1,300 stories, each one 47 minutes long, a new life story every week since the program began in 2006. Another gem is Goranka Oljača and her *My a oni* (Us and them), a program about immigrants in the Czech Republic and about Czechs out in the world. Goranka Oljača came to the Czech Republic as a refugee from Bosnia, from the wars that destroyed Yugoslavia, where she worked for Radio Sarajevo. *My a oni*, also a weekly program, goes back to 1999 and won the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees media excellence award. Kurds, Vietnamese, the American writer and actor Steve Fisher, who calls himself *Amík Steve*, and people from many other countries tell us about their lives on *My a oni*, and they challenge our ethnocentricity and our stereotypes, often in perfect and brilliant Czech. *My a oni* is a chronicle of migration and diversity in the Czech Republic in the 21st century, a chronicle growing larger with meaning since 2015, when people from the Middle East and Africa began coming to Europe in masses, 1.1 million of them to Germany in one year.

Český rozhlas and Its Uses in the Czech Diaspora

On the World Wide Web, Czech Radio is full of uses for anyone who understands Czech or wants to learn it. Learning, teaching and networking are just the most obvious categories of uses, and they can occupy and reward us without end if we want to imagine and try them out. That would be good for us to do in CEFT, dedicated as it is to learning and teaching Czech language and culture among students and others in Texas. At the University of Texas, tenure-track faculty teach undergraduates Czech. At Texas A&M, a graduate student from Brno or Olomouc teaches community classes every semester as a Hlavinka Fellow. CEFT could promote Czech Radio to these teachers and collaborate with them to bring Czech Radio into the classroom. It could explore ways to do the same at universities that don't offer Czech and even at high schools, because Czech Radio could be a subject and a source for students and faculty who want to learn and teach about mass media, journalism, communication, the Internet, Europe, globalization and all kinds of other disciplines and interests. Such explorations and eventual collaborations could bring more students to the Czech academic programs CEFT supports, and they could also bring the CEFT all kinds of new partnerships and publicity. Students and scholars could go to Prague to pursue their own research interests in Czech Radio's sound archive, and maybe they and volunteers could help digitize and bring more of it onto the World Wide Web. *Český rozhlas* fills an enormous building from the 1930s on Vinohradská Street, just two blocks east of Wenceslas Square. It was a target and a place of resistance to the German occupation in 1945 and the Soviet one in 1968. I spent a day there in July 2014, after I read an SVU conference paper at the University of West Bohemia on Czech Radio. In the basement, I learned more about the radio archive from the archivists. It goes back to Czech Radio's beginnings in the 1920s, when public radio arose in most other European countries, while our National Public Radio only appeared fifty years later.

The 450,000 stories available to us as audio files on Czech Radio's Web site are all from just the last decade or so, the time since the Czech Republic joined the European Union in 2004. So, eighty years of Czech Radio, most of the 20th century, remain to be digitized, and planners expect it to take decades. Ideas, help and collaboration may be welcome from the United States. Meanwhile, the eighty years of radio rest on Vinohradská Street, available to researchers. What stories might they find about the United States, Texas and the Czech people who lived there?

Czech Radio could bring students into the Czech program at the University of Texas, and it could make the students already there more successful, because Czech Radio is such a vast and living thing, a kind of social media and school. Radio can captivate us as much as television or film, but it leaves us free to move around. With a smart phone and earphones, radio in the form of audio files is much easier to fit into our lives. We have to make time for television or film, but not for radio. So, we can consume much more of it and learn much more from it.

The simple search window on the home page is an endless way to explore and use Czech Radio as a social media to build our networks and as a school for the things we want to learn about. We don't need to know much Czech to search, just a good imagination for keywords and maybe a dictionary. If you want to learn about history, you can search for *historik* (historian) at www.rozhlas.cz. You get almost 3,000 audio files, each with an annotation in two or three sentences. It tells you the historian's name and what the interview or story is about. If one of them turns out to be important enough to you, then you can find the historian on the Web and take up a conversation of your own. For the word *student* we find over 2,000



Entrance to the Český Rozhlas Headquarters in Prague, Czech Republic

audio files on Czech Radio, for *Američan* almost 700, for *výuka* (teaching) 600, and

for *škola* 6,300. Explore Czech Radio for yourself. Use your imagination. Use the null search to see the 150 or so new stories Czech Radio adds as audio files to its Web site every day. They're always on the first 15 screens. Find new connections to the Czech Republic and new ways to be part of the Czech diaspora and to help the CEFT (re)imagine and advance Czech education in Texas. And write to me at d-chroust@tamu.edu: I would love to learn from your ideas and experiences.



Paul T. Hlavinka, Secretary of the CEFT receiving the CEFT Founding Father award from Diane Sulak Wilson, VP Membership/Public Relations; Woody Smith, President; and Dr. Clinton Machann, Chairman of the Board of Directors.

CEFT Awards Presented January 23, 2016

FOUNDING FATHER AWARDEE: PAUL T. HLAVINKA, SECRETARY OF THE CEFT

Reported By: Lynette Urbanovsky, CEFT English Publicity Officer

On January 23, 2016 Woody Smith presented Paul T. Hlavinka with this year's Founding Father award from the CEFT. Paul received his undergraduate degree from Rice University and served as a sports reporter on behalf of Rice University for a number of years. Paul next earned his Master's in Journalism at the University of Texas, and it was there that he attended law school. Paul now practices solo and focuses on estates and trusts and agricultural law. In the early 1990's Paul made several trips to the Czech Republic, where he was involved with Coal Methane Gasification on a large scale in Kladno, Czech Republic. Kladno is about 20 miles west of Prague.

Paul has since put together family trips, and in 2005 one of his trips celebrated the 100th anniversary of his grandfather's immigration to America. In 2013 and 2016, Paul made trips back to his family's home village in the

Czech Republic, Nechvalin, in Kyjovsky kraj, okres Hodonin, and plans to visit again.

Paul has enthusiastically served the CEFT for over 20 years. He presently serves as Secretary and Legal Advisor.

The William J. Hlavinka Fellowship celebrates its 17th anniversary this year, and was started in memory of Paul's father, William J. Hlavinka. Paul shared that his father grew up in East Bernard and was a graduate of Texas A&M University in 1949. Since then, East Bernard has become an Aggie town, while Paul is a graduate of Rice University and the University of Texas at Austin.

Please join everyone in commending Paul on his past and continued service to the CEFT.

During the Annual Membership Meeting, January 23, 2016, the CEFT also awarded the:

DIRECTOR EMERITUS AWARD

President Woody Smith accepts Director Emeritus certificate for long-time Director, Al Kercho of Bedford, Texas. Al Kercho served as CEFT Secretary during the establishment of the Hlavinka Fellowship at Texas A&M in the 1990's; and since then, served many years as a major fundraiser for several CEFT endowments in the State of Texas.



RESOLUTION OF THANKFULNESS

Attorney Sidney Kacir of Temple, Texas was presented with a Resolution of Thankfulness Award by President Smith for his 30 years of service to CEFT as the legal advisor. He retired from this position in 2015. Sidney Kacir is the son of one of CEFT's founding fathers, Attorney August Kacir. Henry R. Maresh, MD of Houston and Dr. John M. Skrivanek of College Station are also considered the Founding Fathers of CEFT for which an award is presented every year to recognize dedication and outstanding service to CEFT.



Remembrance's

CONDOLENCES GO OUT TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF OUR CEFT MEMBERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY PASSED. WE WILL GREATLY MISS THESE AMAZING MEN:

Jim J. Bezdek

Jim Bezdek passed away on November 17, 2015. Jim's vision and determination resulted in CEFT's accomplishments with UNT. The recent Christmas Mass festival and tour was a tribute to Jim's love of Czech music and culture.



Anton "Tony" Pustejovsky

Tony Pustejovsky passed away on January 2, 2016. He was an active Board of Director and was the Treasurer for CEFT. Tony was central to our organization. His love of his heritage showed through his service.



Raymond J. Snokhous

Raymond Snokhous passed away on February 26, 2016. His is a great loss to the Czech community and the many lives he touched throughout the United States and the Czech Republic during his many years as Honorary Consul General to the Czech Republic for the State of Texas.



CEFT Welcomes a New Lifetime Member!

*Donna M. Kaspar
of San Diego, California*

ANNUAL CEFT DUES ARE NOW DUE!

The Annual CEFT Dues are due for the 2016 Calendar year, please make checks out to "CEFT" and send them to Treasurer, Cindy Pustejovsky Belknap, 2520 Willing Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas 76110.



2016 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Pictured above, left to right: Clarice Marik Snokhous, Diane Sulak Wilson and Cindy Pustejovsky Belknap.



2016 CEFT EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

Pictured above, left to right: John Sefcik, Amy Jurica-Hinnant, Jan Vaculik, Jan Benes, Lynette Urbanovsky, Diane Sulak Wilson, Cindy Pustejovsky Belknap, and Brian Vanicek.

Connect with CEFT Online Today!

Did you know that CEFT not only has a website, but is also on Facebook! Please look us up for upcoming events, history, programs, articles, past newsletter editions, and much more to come!

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<http://www.ceft.us/>

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CEFT Board of Directors at the November 21, 2015 Board Meeting in Denton, Texas.

The Czech Educational Foundation of Texas Membership/Memorial Contribution Form

Promote the study of Czech language and culture in Texas institutions of higher learning
by joining the Czech Educational Foundation of Texas.

Membership

___ \$25 Individual (year) ___ \$35 Individual with Spouse (year) ___ \$1000 Lifetime (one time)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Memorial / Donation

Memorial/Donation Amount: \$ _____

Please make my gift in (___) Memory (___) Honor of: _____

Would you like your memorial/donation earmarked for a specific endowment?

No

Chair in Czech Studies at University of Texas

Hlavinka Fellowship at Texas A&M University

Kostohryz Residency or Bezdek Endowment (circle one) at University of North Texas

Send Acknowledgment to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST: _____ Zip: _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ Date: _____

Please return form with contribution to:

CEFT c/o Cindy P. Belknap

2520 Willing Ave.

Fort Worth, TX 76110

We do not sell or share our membership list. CEFT is a 501(c)(3) non-profit exempt organization.

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**Remember to “Czech” out
our Website and Facebook
Page for current, future
and past CEFT
happenings!**