



Český Hlas

The Czech Voice

Summer 2020- Volume 35 No. 2



Newsletter of

the Czech Heritage Society of Texas

2020 CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Pageant and Winter State Meeting

By Kathy Podsednik and John E. Blaha, Jr.



The Wharton County CHS, along with President Danny Hughes, hosted the winter state meeting for the 18th Annual 2020 CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen Pageant on February 22, 2020. The event was held at the Taiton Community Center in New Taiton, Texas for a crowd of over 145 people gathered in attendance.

Opening ceremonies began with a welcome by Wharton County CHS President Danny Hughes. The national pledge and colors were presented by the American Legion Post 251 El Campo. The American and Czech National Anthems were led by Lydia Pustejovsky, 2019 CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen. Rudolph Rusnak composed and provided the invocation, *Our Czech Heritage*, recited in Czech and in English.

The Master of Ceremonies for the pageant were Tom and Phyllis Teykl, Fayette CHS/Travis-Williamson CHS. Pageant hostess and assistant were Miss Lydia Pustejovsky, 2019 CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen, daughter of Bob and Traci Pustejovsky of Abbott; along with Miss Allison Pustejovsky, 2019 CHS Little Czech Sister, daughter of Andy and Joanie Pustejovsky of Abbott. Pageant judges were Leon Anhaiser, Fort Bend CHS; Barbara Mikulik, Concho Valley CHS; and Susan Chandler, Director Czech Heritage Museum and Genealogy Center in Temple. Auditors were David Bucek and Andrew Waligura of Wharton County CHS. Pageant assistance was provided by Kathy Podsednik, Irene Szwarc, Jana Vaculik Riley, and Ashley Šulák Hermes. Thank yous are extended for assistance along the journey to the pageant for these queens which include Eileen Rosipal, Mildred Dokupil, Maggie Grmela, Richard Skopik, Danny Hughes, and Wharton County CHS.

The four categories of the pageant include private interviews with judges, on-stage interviews, kroj modeling, and talent competition. Prior to the opening ceremonies, the queen contestants completed their private interviews with the panel of judges. Contestants and Little Czech Sisters marched in under a Moravian lace queen canopy presented by Ashley Hermes, Jerusha Brown, Molli Pustejovsky, and Jana Vaculik Riley. Queen presentations began with Travis-Williamson CHS Queen Miss Andrea Cavanagh, daughter of Edward Cavanagh and Pavlina Svánovská of Killeen, a senior at Early College High School in Killeen. Her Little Czech Sister Miss Sophie Hyzak, eight years old, the daughter of Michael and Stephanie Hyzak of Austin. McLennan-Hill CHS Queen Miss Lauren Gerik, the daughter of John and Molly Gerik of Abbott, a senior at Abbott High School in Abbott. Her Little Czech Sister Miss Sarah Alexander, ten years old, the daughter of Matthew and Katie Nors Miller of West and Jimmy Alexander of Abbott. The Lavaca CHS



Allison Pustejovsky Lydia Pustejovsky Sarah Alexander Lauren Gerik Kathy Podsednik Sophie Hyzak Andrea Cavanagh Lara Hermes

Queen was unable to participate and were honored to present Lavaca CHS Little Czech Sister Miss Lara Hermes, seven years old, the daughter of Mark and Ashley Hermes of La Grange. After the opening ceremonies each queen contestant and the Little Czech Sisters were introduced with an opportunity to make remarks. The queen contestants then drew an Americanized question, an authentic question, and a kroj question which were answered on-stage. The contestants presented excellent answers to their selected questions with extraordinary knowledge and poise.

The next portion of the queen pageant was kroj modeling. Both contestants selected to model an authentic kroj. Miss Andrea Cavanagh wore an authentic early 20th century kroj from the Chodsko region of southwest Bohemia representing her family ancestry. Her featured headscarf was handmade by Andrea's Babi (grandmother) in Czechoslovakia in the 1950's. Miss Lauren Gerik wore an authentic antique replica of Southern Bohemia representing family from Trebonice and Tisova. The fabric and construction was created in the Czech Republic which included a hand embroidered v-cut vest and lace scarf. All Little Czech Sisters Miss Sophie Hyzak, Miss Sarah Alexander and Miss Lara Hermes presented and spoke about their kroj to the audience.

The queen pageant continued with the talent portion of the contest. Miss Andrea Cavanagh demonstrated and explained her favorite Easter tradition in the Czech Republic of how to weave willow branches into a traditional *pomlázka* (whip). Miss Lauren Gerik played her keyboard presentation of "Largo" from Symphony No. 9 in E minor, "From the New World," written by Czech Composer Antonin Dvorak in 1893.

Everyone enjoyed our featured entertainment of visiting guest Miss Jerusha Brown, 2019 Miss Czech-Slovak US 1st Runner-Up of Oklahoma. She inspired the audience with her favorite hymn "Come Thy Fount of Every Blessing." During pageant breaks those in the attendance were encouraged to visit the queen display tables, various vendors, and the silent auction.



Allison and Lydia Pustejovsky

Miss Lydia Pustejovsky gave her farewell address noting her sincere appreciation and acknowledged the wonderful memories she will always cherish as being queen this past year. She thanked everyone who helped in the past year including CHS of Texas, sponsors, assistants, and most of all her parents. She was joined in her farewell by Little Czech Sister Allison Pustejovsky.

Following the lunch break, everyone enjoyed a beautiful kroj grand march of reigning queens and guests. Each participant provided a description of their kroj authenticity and queens provided an update of where life has taken them since their reign. CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queens included: 2001 Jana Vaculik Riley; 2016 Miss Monika Cavanagh; 2008 Ashley Šulák Hermes; with current reigning queens and Little Czech Sisters. Also included were 2019 Little Czech Sister Brazos Valley Miss Grace Moravec and 2019 Miss Czech-Slovak US 1st Runner-Up Jerusha Brown of Oklahoma. Other participants included Mildred Dokupil, Molli Pustejovsky, Madison Murphy, Mark and Ashley Šulák Hermes family, and Kathy Podsednik family.



Jerusha Brown

Now came the time for the queen announcements. Miss Andrea Cavanagh was awarded the Private and On-Stage Interview competitions of the pageant. Miss Lauren Gerik was awarded Authentic Kroj Modeling and Talent competitions of the pageant. Miss Lauren Gerik was crowned the 2020 CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen with Little Czech Sister Miss Sarah Alexander. The runner-up title was presented to Miss Andrea Cavanagh and Little Czech Sister Miss Sophie Hyzak. The 2020 Honorary Little Czech Sister was presented to Miss Lara Hermes. Crowning, sashes, flowers, certificates, and many prizes were presented to the queens and royalty. Photo sessions and pictures with guests followed.

The CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen will travel throughout the state and compete in the Miss Czech-Slovak US Pageant in Wilber, Nebraska. The Little Czech Sisters can travel with the queen to events, with nationals assigning a Little Czech Sister for the competition. The goal is to encourage the younger generation so they can be inspired and continue an interest in their Czech heritage. All chapter queens and little sisters are encouraged to be invited and attend events throughout the state. They truly realize a life-changing experience, learn about their family history, Czech culture, meet dignitaries, attend events, admired by our younger members, and earn the respect of our members. Our queens learn many life skills such as poise, public speaking, sharing their heritage and passing it on to future generations.

The pageant would like to thank the families of all our queens and chapters for supporting them. Thank you for providing gifts for our queens and Little Czech Sisters. Sincere thank you to Billy Raley and Danny Hughes, Wharton County CHS, for the impressive stage design. Also a special thank you is extended to the Wharton County CHS Chapter for hosting the meeting and queen pageant. As well, a thank you to Brian Svetlik for the sound system and Jon Vaculik for photography.

The CHS of Texas business meeting followed the pageant in the afternoon.



Congratulations ladies!



Flag of the Czech Republic

Adopted on March, 30 1920 (original flag) and January, 1 1993 (current version). Designed by Jaroslav Kursa. The flag contains red and white colors derived from the ancient Coat of arms of Bohemia; because the flag was almost identical with the Polish flag and had the same colors as the Austrian flag, a blue wedge was added in 1920.

paint the world
SUPER

Above is the backside of the bookmark activity on the previous page...



Wishing you all a Safe Happy Fourth of July!

VICTOR PETER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Lauren Gerik who attended Abbott High School in Abbott, TX is the recipient of the Victor Peter Memorial Scholarship. Lauren is a graduating senior at Abbott High School and is the daughter of John Gerik of Abbott, TX.

Lauren will be attending Texas A&M University. She enjoys reading, writing, photography and playing piano. She enjoys traveling to many different states with her family and has explored 10 different states and visited some of our nation's National Parks. Lauren is planning on majoring in English and minoring in Education at TAM. She plans to become a high school English teacher.

Lauren is currently serving as the 2020-2021 Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen. In preparation for entering the State pageant, Lauren was crowned the Czech Heritage Society's 2019-2020 Miss McLennan-Hill Czech-Slovak Queen.

I thank Cherie Vasquez and Robert Janak for serving on the CHS Scholarship Committee.

Pat Parma



Miss Lauren Gerik



Queen Pageant News

by Pageant Director Kathy Podsednik



Thank you for joining our 2020 CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen Pageant and crowning hosted by Wharton County CHS. Please invite our reigning queens to your upcoming events as they can be scheduled during the coronavirus pandemic that developed shortly after the pageant. As an update, the 2020 Miss Czech-Slovak US Pageant in Wilber, Nebraska in August has been canceled due to the virus. Future information about possible virtual festival events will be forthcoming. Our current queen 2020 Miss Lauren Gerik will compete in the 2021 national pageant. Currently, the discussion is in process to continue this process of the following year competition with adjusted pageant guidelines for approval by the CHS of Texas Executive Committee.

Our next CHS Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Pageant is planned for February 2021. The pageant will be hosted by Concho Valley CHS. The scheduled date may be adjusted according to established guidelines of the anticipated coronavirus pandemic to continue. Chapters are encouraged to crown queens to serve until the next pageant and will include a year of preparation for the national pageant. The average age of the crowned national queens is 23 years of age. We will be overlapping queen's reign, so we will need help in keeping them busy while preparing for the next pageant. It's never too soon to crown a chapter queen to attend events this year and compete in the new year. Please contact me if our queens or myself can help in any way with your search. Thank you for your continued support to help our young people keep their Czech heritage strong. Email: kathypods@gmail.com; Cell: 254-744-0770

More news ...

by Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen
2020 Lauren Gerik

Ahoj!

I would first like to thank the Czech Heritage Society of Texas for giving me this amazing opportunity to serve as the 2020 Miss Texas Czech-Slovak. I am truly honored to be taking on this role and cannot wait until I can fulfill it once the coronavirus pandemic ends. Though I am saddened by the news of the cancellation of the national pageant in August, I am gratefully looking forward to representing Texas at the 2021 national pageant! I am very thankful that I was able to attend two events before the pandemic began. In March, I had so much fun attending the Spring Baking Class hosted by Brazos Valley CHS, where I learned to make homemade kolache, buchta, rohlíky, and Chodsko kolache. I also got the wonderful opportunity to attend the Annual Texas Music Festival held at the KC Hall in West, where I had an eventful afternoon polka dancing and assisting with the raffle drawing. I am really looking forward to being with you all once more, so please let us know if I can possibly attend any events in the foreseeable future!

Děkuji!

Lauren Gerik,
Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen 2020



Miss Texas Czech-Slovak Queen 2020 Lauren Gerik and Little Czech Sister Sarah Alexander





A grand entrance, onstage interviews, kroj modeling, and talent competition ...



Andrea Cavanaugh



Lauren Gerik



Andrea Cavanaugh



Pageant Judges: Susan Chandler, Leon Anhaizer and Barbara Mikulik



Lauren Gerik



The Passing of the Crowns...
Congratulations Lauren and Sarah!



Little Czech Sister Allison Pustejovsky crowns 2020
 Little Czech Sister Sarah Alexander

Queen Lydia Pustejovsky crowns 2020 Miss
 Texas Czech-Slovak Queen Lauren Gerik



Thank you to all the sweet little sisters, contestants, judges , Pageant Director Kathy Podsednik and all the wonderful guests and volunteers who made this year's Pageant a great success. We applaud you and Wharton Co. CHS for hosting an outstanding event!





Thanks to ALL for your Love and Support of our CHS royalty!



Summer 2020

