

History of the Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess Program

Czech Heritage Foundation

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

This program, sponsored by the Cedar Rapids Czech Heritage Foundation, dates back to 1981 when the Czech Heritage Foundation formulated a program under which boys and girls aged 14 to 16 (roughly freshman or sophomores in high school) could compete for the title of Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess.

The Prince and Princess participate in all Czech activities that are supported by the Czech Heritage Foundation. They appear in many parades, festivals, and other Czech events throughout the year. The royal couple is crowned at the annual meeting of the Czech Heritage Foundation on the third Monday in January. They are awarded their royal sashes, which bear the year of their reign. They introduce themselves and their parents and present a short biography of themselves. Each receives a \$50.00 U.S. savings bond from a local bank. Each is also awarded a check for \$100.00, which is used towards the purchase of a Czech costume (kroj). The boy's kroj consists of black slacks, a white shirt, and a red vest, any of which can be embroidered in the Czech motif. The girl must arrange to have a kroj made for herself. The Czech Heritage Foundation or the National Czech-Slovak Museum and Library can assist in finding a seamstress or providing information and materials to construct your own kroj.

Those contestants that are not named Prince and Princess become part of the Czech Heritage Foundation's Royal Court. Inclusion in the Royal Court gives these contestants an opportunity to remain involved in the Czech community. Members of the Royal Court may also participate in parades, festivals, and other Czech events.

Application forms are available at the National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library and at local school's counseling offices during the first week of October. Applications are also available on the Czech Heritage Foundation's website: www.czechheritagefoundation.org. The application form explains the benefits and duties of the Prince and Princess. Candidates include with their application an explanation of their Czech background, the Czech activities in which they have been involved, and why they are interested in being a Czech Prince or Princess for a year. They indicate which school they attend, what school subjects they enjoy, and in what extra-curricular activities they are involved. Deadline for applications is **November 1**. A committee then reviews the applications and calls the candidates to arrange a private interview.

Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess Program

A Prince and Princess will be selected to preside over events during this year's Czech activities. Crowning of the new Prince and Princess will take place at the National Czech Slovak Museum and Library at the annual meeting of the Czech Heritage Foundation on the third Monday in January.

1. Rules

Applicants must be 14 through 16 years of age, or in their freshman or sophomore years in high school. They must be at least partially of Czech decent and living the Cedar Rapids area.

Within the suggested deadline, the applicant must submit the completed application form and a written essay describing activities at home, school, church, and community particularly as they are related to Czech heritage.

2. Judging

The panel of judges will select the prince and princess after the informal interview. Each contestant will be scored in the following areas:

- Completed application form and written essay.
- General appearance, personality, and poise.
- A prepared discussion concerning how the youth is active in or participating in some facet of his or her Czech heritage.

3. Prince and Princess Honors and Responsibilities

The Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess will preside over a number of Czech events in the area and at the National Czech Slovak Museum and Library. Families of the Prince and Princess are encouraged to join the Czech Heritage Foundation.

The winners receive a traveling crown and banner to be worn throughout their reign.

** A check for \$100.00 to be used towards the purchase of a Czech costume (kroj) which will be worn at all Czech Heritage Foundation functions and events.

**A savings bond from a local bank to the amount of \$50.00

4. Applications must be postmarked on or before November 1. Send applications to:

Czech Heritage Foundation
c/o Karen Lehmann, Prince and Princess Coordinator
3738 Elmwood Dr. NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Duties of the Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess

The events listed below represent the minimum involvement of the Prince and Princess. In the past, many participants have attended additional parades, festivals, and events throughout the community. Listed below are the events the Prince and Princess are expected to attend and participate in.

January

- Attend the annual meeting of the Czech Heritage Foundation with parents. You will introduce your parents and give a short biography about yourself and your goals.

March

- Ride in the St. Patrick's Day parade.
- Ride in the St. Joseph's Day parade.
- Attend the St. Joseph's Day dance.

May

- Attend the Houby Days Festival. Assist with flag raising, work the information booth, and ride in the Houby Days parade.
- Attend and speak at the Memorial Day services at the Czech National Cemetery.

June

- Ride in the Cedar Rapids Freedom Fest Parade.

July

- Present the Pledge of Allegiance and sing the Czech and United States national anthems prior to the Czech School program.

August

- Attend the annual Czech Heritage Foundation picnic.

December

- Ride in the Cedar Rapids holiday parade.
- Participate in the Svaty Mikulas activities at the National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library and in Czech Village.

Application for the Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess

Name _____ **Date of Birth** _____

Address _____

City, State, & Zip Code _____

Phone () _____

E-Mail Address _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s) _____

School _____ **Grade** _____

- Please attach an essay detailing your activities in school, church, community, and home as they relate to your Czech heritage. References to your Czech heritage may be from the past, present, or future plans.
- Be prepared to attend an informal interview before a committee where you will be asked about your activities or participation in some aspect of your Czech heritage.
- If you have any question or concerns, contact Mrs. Lehmann at 294-0634.
- Applications must be postmarked on or before November 1.

I hereby declare my application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge, and furthermore, I agree to the rules of the Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess Program.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date** _____