



*News from the Czech Center in the  
Museum District - Special Edition March 7, 2016*

**From the Heart of Europe to the Heart of Houston,  
The Czech Center Museum Houston**

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Open Monday - Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



There is no limit to **what can be accomplished** if it doesn't matter **who gets the credit.**"

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"We do not inherit the earth **FROM OUR PARENTS.** **We borrow it from our children.**"

Native American proverb

### Julie Halek Kloess

*On Monday, March 7, 2016, at 12:30 a.m. in San Antonio, Texas, Julie Halek Kloess' life's journey ended at Fort Sam Houston - going, her close friend Dee Wright stated, to join her husband, Dr. Edward Kloess. A real cornerstone of our foundation, Julie will always be a part of us. Her namesake third floor's Kloess Pilsen Hall, numerous Beveled glass windows and doors, the Grand Chandelier, the Baby Grand Petrof Piano, and if you sit in our lovely cranberry chairs at a table of elegant white and black linen, you sat at our lovely Julie's table.*

*The Czech Center Museum Houston pays tribute to Julie Halek Kloess celebrating her life and gifts to the Czech Center she supported so graciously and proudly. We will so miss our Julie, but still much of Julie remains with us to inspire us that we must carry on in her place. Although a memorial service is held at Fort Sam Houston on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, her formal resting place, as she wished, will be in the land of her birth, the Czech Republic.*

*Contributions in her honor may be offered to CCMH for various upcoming and ongoing projects, i.e. the outdoor Sculpture Garden, Landscape beautification or Endowment for Perpetuity. **May she rest in Peace!***

Effie Rosene, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, and W. G. Bill Rosene, Vice President Administration, will especially miss her presence!

**Julie's Life Story** Julie Halek Kloess was born September 9, 1921 to Vaclav and Anna Tobermanova Halek on a small farm in Mecholupy northeast of Klatovy and southwest of Prague Czechoslovakia. Julie epitomizes the quotes above as she is a living example. At age six the family moved to Pilsen where her father was employed in the paper mill. She resided there eighteen and half years finishing school, studying Drama and participating in Sokol Theater productions which required traveling from town to town performing. In March 1938 prior to World War II, Germany occupied the Czech lands. The occupiers decreed that all born from the year of her birth 1921 were to be sent to Germany for slave labor in factory, farm or hotel work. Julie was sent to Hotel Platerhof in Bavaria close to Bertchesgarten (today it is the American owned Hotel Walker). She worked 16 hour days, no pay, very little to eat of poor food. From the windows she saw the high Nazi officials even Eva Braun, Hitler's partner. She and her close village friend, Vlasta Vysteinova, were then sent to Berlin to work in the hotels throughout the air raids. They lived in barracks, and when everything was destroyed by the incessant bombing, they were sent to Pilsen and then again sent back to Berlin. Her father was dying of cancer and she was allowed to go home three days; her brother in Munich was not allowed so he escaped and upon seeing their father, the father then died within hours. Her brother remained hidden by the underground and was never discovered by the Nazis. She was detailed to work Dresden hotels on February 13, 1943, and at 8:00 p.m. came the announcement American and British planes were coming to bomb. Dresden was full of refugees and prisoners of war. Julie and friend stayed in basement tunnels to survive the fire bombs as the city burned, going from house to house underground as the streets literally melted and fire entered. A second wave of air raids occurred with the B17s again dropping thousands of firebombs. 90,000 people died that night. A man, her "Angel," stepped through a hole into a church basement leading some 200 people to the river water to keep from burning. When the air raid had ceased in the incredible confusion they found a train leaving and they lay hidden in the coal car to escape, arriving eventually in France. In 1945, Julie and her friend worked in a Camp for German prisoners manned by Polish guards. She met an American Colonel, Dr. Godil, who helped her get work in the American hospital there. Julie says they had a choice of working with Americans or Russians. They were fearful, but chose the Americans though all they knew about Americans were the Chicago gangsters from the movies. All of their belongings



and documents were destroyed; they needed to get back to Munich where she met American Dr. Edward Kloess and his associate Roger Saunders. In time Dr. Kloess asked her to marry him; she felt there was too much age difference – 20 something years. She instead married his best friend, Roger Saunders, and Dr. Kloess was their “best man,” who eventually married her girlfriend. Roger went from Army to Air Force in Titan missile work and they moved to the United States first to Arkansas, then Kansas and eventually to Denver, Colorado with the Strategic Air Command. Her husband traveled to Japan, and after eight days there he died of a heart attack at age of 45. Julie meanwhile had been caring for his parents, who subsequently died. She took a job as a surgical secretary in the intensive care unit of Denver General Hospital where she worked 24 ½ years buying a home, alone in a new country and needing to be self-sufficient. In 1985 Dr. Kloess called after her girlfriend, his wife, had died asking to visit her. He said, “40 years ago you didn’t want me, but marry me now.” She did in 1986. They moved to Bellville, Illinois, his home. Retired he had served 32 years as an Air Force physician, living there until 1992 after which they moved to San Antonio where he had many retired Air Force friends. Ten months later he died. In retrospect, Julie was age 28 when she married her first husband. Upon his death after 14 ½ years, she remained single and on her own for 26 years in a very different adopted country. Her second husband died after seven and half years of marriage in 1992. Today, Julie is a vivacious, robust, beautiful lady still filled with great spirit – of the right stuff of what counts! She has been often begged to live in the country of her birth – the Czech Republic. One of three children, her sister died at age 72, her brother at age 69. There are nieces and nephews. Julie says while she has enjoyed her Julie Halek Kloess return trips to the land of her birth, America is her home. Besides, the Czechs don’t even speak pure Czech anymore as she knew it! A busy lady, in February 2003 she was the winner of a Bake Off in her hometown. Her entry was the exquisite traditional Czech Christmas cookies. In March 2003 Julie won the Cook Off with her Czech green pea soup! She won’t take your telephone call, so don’t. She is too busy with friends, Bridge, reading and dinners out.

*Ed: This bio from an article in the News of the Czech Center – Fall/Winter 2006*

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*“When we build let us think that we build forever. Let not it be such for present delight or for present use alone. Let it be such work as our descendants will think of us for. And Let us think, as we lay stone upon stone, that a time is to come when these stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, ‘See this our father did for us’.”*

*John Ruskin*



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***Quotes for your consideration:***

*“Time goes by so fast; people go in and out of your life. You must never miss the opportunity to tell these people how much they mean to you.”* Anonymous.

*“Those that say that individuals are not capable of changing anything are only looking for excuses.”*  
Vaclav Havel.

*“To forget one’s ancestors is to be a brook without a source, a tree without a root.”*  
Chinese and Czech Proverb.

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**SPJST Lodge 232 Houston Midtown please note:** The President of SPJST Brian Vanicek invited members and prospective members of charter Lodge 232 Houston Midtown to be based at CCMH to attend and celebrate the organizational meeting on Tuesday, March 22, 2016. The event will take place at the Czech Center Museum located at 4920 San Jacinto at Wichita in the Museum District. Please feel free to extend this invitation to your family as well as non-members who could benefit from membership in SPJST. There will be a reception at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner and the organizational meeting. Among the items that will be covered are the election of officers, explanation of benefits and a discussion of ways that the Czech Center Museum may be integrated as the central focus of the Lodge 232 Houston experience. All members and their guests, including those who are members of sister SPJST Lodges in the vicinity — are welcome to attend and to share their support for the new lodge. Please call Fraternal Services Specialist Tammy Martinez at 800.727.7578 by midday Monday, March 21, if you plan to attend. I look forward to seeing you there!

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Questions or comments or to be removed, please email first and last name to  
Effie M. Rosene, Chair/CEO on behalf of Board of Directors, Volunteers and Members and Friends.

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