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Year of the Czechs in Orinda

By Sora O'Doherty



Attendees enjoy the Dvorak opera. Photos Sora O'Doherty

with salad, a choice of roast pork or beef goulash with Czech dumplings, and large slices of apple strudel with cream for dessert. Fortunately owner Jerry Sedivy provided to-go boxes as the portions were large. And for those who missed the event, the restaurateur was kind enough to share his goulash recipe with our readers. (See recipe at right.)

This event will also contribute to the funding for the next visiting student who will come from Tabor, Orinda's Czech sister city, to study at Miramonte High School in the fall. Already, Marek Vybral has been chosen. Marek, whose favorite subjects are geography and history, is an avid athlete who swims, skis, cycles and hikes. He is also fond of languages, and looks forward to learning about the way of life in Orinda and getting involved with Orinda's big Czech Festival in the fall.

Czech Goulash

(serves 4)

Recipe courtesy of DJ's Bistro, 1825 Sutter St. Concord.

2 medium to large onions, finely chopped

2 lbs. beef round steak cut into 16 medium cubes

3 oz. bacon, chopped

6-8 cloves garlic, chopped

3-4 oz. sweet Hungarian paprika

Scant tablespoon cayenne pepper

1 1/2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour

Water

Put the chopped onions and the chopped bacon into a large skillet and let cook until the onions are very brown. Add the beef cubes and let simmer 10 minutes. Add water to cover and let boil until the meat is very tender, about 35-40 minutes. Add the chopped garlic, the paprika and the cayenne and let boil another 5-10 minutes.

Mix the flour with a little water really well and slowly add to the stew to thicken. Simmer another 5 minutes.

Serve with dumplings, boiled potatoes or any pasta.

As part of the continuing Year of the Czechs in Orinda, the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation hosted a screening of Antonin Dvorak's opera, "Rusalka" and offered a dinner of Czech cuisine at the Orinda Community Center on Mar 12.

Last month the Metropolitan Opera in New York produced the piece, and the New York Times raved, "the Metropolitan Opera's new production of Dvorak's 'Rusalka' may be the unlikeliest hit of the season, a staging that takes opera's answer to 'The Little Mermaid' fairytale and turns it into an almost shockingly dark, sexy drama." Both the 1989 Disney film and the Dvorak work are based on the work of Hans Christian Anderson. "Rusalka" premiered in 1901 in Prague.

The food for the 40 guests was provided by D.J.'s Bistro in Concord, the Contra Costa hangout for Eastern European cuisine. Diners enjoyed a three-course meal



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