



# Eastern Nebraska Genealogical Society Newsletter

P O BOX 541  
Fremont NE 68026-0541



September 2016

Margie Sobotka  
Dec 14, 1922 – Jul 23, 2016

MEETING: Sept 12, 2016 - 7 P.M.

Mares Meeting Room

1722 E 19 Fremont NE

Annual Show and Tell

Time for everyone to share their latest research efforts, breakthroughs, or disappointments

BROWSE NITE 7 P.M.

Sept 26, 2016

Come and do research or help file "Ticklers"

## A Warm Welcome to New Members:

Jean Carhart	G-49	Phoenix AZ
Denise Richards	G-50	Fremont NE
Ruth Fischer	G-51	Fremont NE
Denise Kay	G-52	Fremont NE
Marvelyn Spangler	G-53	Fremont NE
Jennifer Kiefer	G-54	Fremont NE
Donna Madrid	G-55	Fremont CA



The August "Grave Witching" meeting was well attended and a good time was had by all. If you were not able to join the fun, you might like to visit this link on the ENGSG website:

[www.usgennet.org/usa/ne/county/dodge/video/demo.htm](http://www.usgennet.org/usa/ne/county/dodge/video/demo.htm)

We received the sad news that Margie Sobotka, our good friend and a longtime ENGSG member, passed away on July 23, 2016. We think that it is appropriate to dedicate this newsletter to the memory of Margie, her friendship, and all she has done to facilitate genealogical research.

After realizing that Margie's membership number, A33, is currently the lowest number held by any ENGSG member, Claire decided to dig into the archived minutes of the early ENGSG meetings to find the earliest mention of Margie. Claire discovered that Margie joined ENGSG in 1974, just 2 years after the society was established. In 1976, Margie was elected ENGSG president. In 1978, Nona Wiese was elected President and Margie was elected Treasurer. We did not find any mention of a different person holding the office of Treasurer from 1978 to 2011 when Margie moved to Kirkland, Washington and Claire was appointed as her replacement. Way to go Margie!

During her years as ENGSG Treasurer, the minutes show that Margie was involved in a number of projects with other members compiling and indexing a variety of data for future researchers. Margie gave presentations at ENGSG meetings and local workshops. We even found a mention of Margie's mother joining her in a Czech heritage presentation. Margie and her mother served home-made kolaches at the end of the presentation.

Margie was instrumental in acquiring the collection of *Czech Immigration Passenger Lists* books on the ENGSG shelves and is acknowledged by Leo Baca for her help in abstracting a number of the lists. The ENGSG library is enriched by indexes that Margie created for important works that were published without an index. Margie's Index of Czech Settlers in NE from Rose Rosicky's *History of Czechs in Nebraska* is probably one of the most used indexes. As you peruse the library shelves, you will find indexes that Margie created for NE County, town, and Church histories. Besides researching her own family and assisting other Czech researchers, Margie translated and compiled a book of Death notices from a Czech Weekly publication for 1916-1927. The photo below was taken in Clarkson NE in 2008 when Margie received the International Czernin Palace Award from the Czech government for her work.



When Margie moved to Kirkland, Washington in 2011, she donated many of her personal research materials to the ENGSG library. Thanks to Margie, we have early Douglas County Marriage and Birth records on microfilm along with a variety of 1930 Nebraska census records. You will find evidence of Margie's generosity and dedication on just about any shelf in our library. We are sorry to lose Margie as an active ENGSG member and as a friend.

From:

<http://cascadememorial.com/obituary/156709/Marjorie-Sobotka/>

## Life Story of Marjorie Helen (Perina) Sobotka

Marjorie was born December 14, 1922 in Omaha, Nebraska to parents Frank Louis Perina and Mayme Sylvia (Woksa) Perina. "Margie," as she was always known by relatives and friends, was their only child. The family lived in the area in back of the South Omaha grocery store that Frank owned and operated, and Margie and her mother would help out in the business. Margie's primary responsibility was to organize the candy counter, with her reward to pick one piece of candy each week if she did a good job.

Margie attended Corrigan Grade School in South Omaha from 1st through 7th grades. At that time, since her birthday was in December, the school enrolled her as a first-grader at

age 4 in September. In the mid-1930s, she moved with her parents to a farm outside Bedford, Iowa, where she then attended a 'one-room' school with only 4 students. She finished her 8th grade at that small school, and then prepared to enter Bedford High School. Since the farm was almost 10 miles from the High School, and it was during the height of the Depression, it required Margie to live in a boarding-house room in Bedford during the week, and then her father drove in on Friday evenings to bring her home for the weekend. It was too costly to drive 20 miles per day back in the 1930s, and because her parents were adamant that she received an education beyond grade school, the only option was to board in town.

Therefore, at the age of 13 years old she began her high school years with responsibilities to cook her meals on a hot plate, awaken on time to attend classes, clean and press her clothes, and keep up her studies. She was an honor roll student all 4 years of High School studies in Latin, Mathematics, and English for 4 years, sciences Biology, Physics, and Earth Science, and electives over time in choir, business accounting, typing, shorthand, and PE. Her extracurricular activities were primarily marching band and orchestra, student drama productions, and student staff on yearbook annual.

After graduation, she attended a business school earning a 9-month certificate in 'comptometer training' - a comptometer best described as a giant calculator, pre-computer type machine that was essential in business accounting operations at that time. She graduated from the program at the age of 17 years. At that time, employers would not hire full time workers under the age of 18 years, so after having earned her HS diploma and the business school certificate, she was unable to find a job. Fortunately, the business school found a six-month temporary contract for her at a radio station in Shenandoah, Iowa as her first job. By December of that year when she turned 18 years old, the Swift Company of Omaha, Nebraska offered her a permanent position in the accounting office where she made extensive use of her bookkeeping and comptometer skills. This was at the start of the United States involvement in World War II.

During the "War Years" as she liked to call it, she enjoyed the many polka dances at the South Omaha locations of 13th & Martha Streets, and 21st & "U" Streets. In 1945 after the end of the War, she went to a dance on the eve of Thanksgiving, and met a tall, handsome man who had just returned from the War as an infantry sergeant in the Pacific Theater. His name was Rudie Sobotka, and they were immediately smitten with one another, later became engaged in 1946, and then married in August 1947. Rudie had grown up in the northern part of Omaha on a farm, and once they married they began farming operations on 80 acres in the Irvington, Nebraska area.

In 1949, their daughter Susan was born. They continued solely farming until economically it was necessary for Rudie to find work as a mechanic during the week with farming on weekends. Margie found part time work as a bookkeeper for a local grain milling operation, and they continued that strategy throughout the next 35 years or so.

In addition to her part time job and bookkeeping for the farm operation, Margie also volunteered as a 4 H Leader and was

on the leadership committees of Douglas County Nebraska. She spent several hours leading and teaching members of the 4-H club while also volunteering at the local fairs and county council. She was a parent sponsor for the Douglas County 4-H Band and supported the band kids at parades and concerts in the summer months and weekly practices during school months.

Every summer Margie, Rudie and Susan enjoyed traveling to various parts of the United States. Margie loved photography and taking photos and movies of the many travels and at holiday and family gatherings. One of her many hobbies was to develop her own photos in a dark room Rudie set up for her. Margie had many, many interests and hobbies, and became friends with many people who shared those interests.

After their daughter began college, Margie delved into extensive genealogy research, particularly of the Czech-Bohemian heritage of both herself and Rudie. The 'hobby' soon became a passion, and eventually lead to authoring research articles and books, translating documents written in the Czech language, and giving lectures under the Eastern Nebraska Genealogy Society in Fremont, Nebraska, and the Czechoslovak Genealogical International Society. She served in leadership positions in those organizations and developed a vast network of associates, peers and friends as she traveled to attend and to speak at national conferences. Among her many other honors and awards, Margie received the International Czernin Palace Award in 2008. This award is an honor given to an individual or entity that has made significant contributions to fostering Czech-American relations. Award selection is based on nominations from honorary consuls and honorary consuls-general who are entitled to make one nomination each year. This award truly was a pinnacle of her dedicated efforts for her contributions in Czech-Slovak genealogy and history, and for helping others to seek their own genealogical roots. By the early 1990s, Margie and Rudie sold their Irvington farm due to the increasing encroachment of housing development in the Omaha suburban area. They purchased farmland in Western Iowa as a business operation, and purchased an acreage with a house in the area around Elkhorn, Nebraska to live out their retirement years. Rudie died in 2003, and Margie lived there until 2011 when she moved to the suburban Seattle area to live with her daughter and son-in-law. Due to declining health, she moved to assisted living in 2014, and was active playing bingo and enjoying activities conversing with staff and residents. Margie was bright and cheerfully cognitive throughout her remaining days enjoying visits from her grandchildren, working on her puzzle books, and watching favorite television shows. She was an avid email user and kept up her correspondence with many family members and friends as long as she could.

Margie is survived by daughter Susan and son-in-law David Wardell, three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, all residing in the State of Washington, and many cousins, nieces and nephews throughout the country. Memorial donations are suggested to the Eastern Nebraska Genealogical Society (ENGs) or the Czechoslovak Genealogical International Society (C.G.S.I.).

Margie's family has scheduled a Memorial and Celebration of Life on October 8, 2016 near Seattle, WA.