

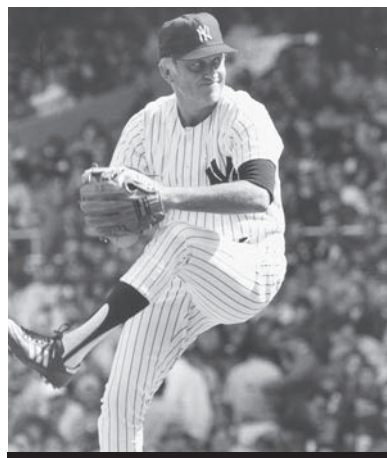
# POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

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HALL OF FAMER  
PHIL NIEKRO DEAD AT 81  
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2021 PROCLAIMED CARDINAL WYSZYŃSKI YEAR • MOSBACHER SAYS GOODBYE • POLISH LENTEN FARE  
FEWER VACCINES FORCE POLAND TO CHANGE PLANS • BELL STOLEN BY NAZIS TO BE RETURNED  
FINDING OUR ANCESTORS • PAHA'S 2020 AWARDS • JAKĄ PIOSENKĘ ZAŚPIEWAŁ FRANK SINATRA PO POLSKU?

## NEWSMARK

### Polish President Diplomatically Noncommittal on U.S. Election Clash

President Andrzej Duda responded to the violent siege of America's Capitol Hill by praising U.S. democracy. "The events in Washington are an internal matter of the United States which is a democratic and law-abiding state. Power depends on the will of voters, and the security of the state and its citizens is safeguarded by services established for that purpose," Duda said on Twitter.

"Poland believes in the strength of American democracy," he added.

He made the remarks after Trump supporters had overturned barricades, clashed with police and stormed the buildings of Congress, where lawmakers were meeting to certify Joe Biden's victory over Trump. The protesters had hoped to prevent Biden's certification, alleging that he had won by fraudulent means.

Although Duda has had a strong personal relationship with Trump, his noncommittal response apparently reflected the conviction that Poland must come to terms with whoever happens to occupy the Oval Office.

### Poland Looking for Bigger Supplies of Vaccines

(PAP) The Polish government is trying to increase the supplies of Covid-19 vaccines so it can vaccinate millions of people a month. Piotr Mueller, the government's spokesman, told public broadcaster Polish Radio 24 that, logistically, Poland is prepared to vaccinate three to four million citizens a month.

"We're hoping that the supplies may increase and we're making efforts to achieve that," he said. "In the next quarter, the supplies should be much bigger, and we're expecting that the vaccination levels will be much higher then."

"However, the government is also taking steps to increase the supplies for the first quarter but, naturally, at this stage we have not yet had confirmation of any additional supplies," he added.

More than 153,000 people had been vaccinated by the first week of January, Mueller said, but all of them require a second jab a few weeks later to achieve the required immunity level.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) gave the green light to a new vaccine, produced by the U.S. biotechnology company Moderna. The EMA's opinion was later endorsed by the European Commission, the EU's executive arm.

Poland received the first Covid-19 vaccines, made by Moderna's competitor Pfizer in collaboration with the German firm BioNTech, on December 25.

### World Bank Predicts Growth

The World Bank has upheld its 2020 forecast, according to which Poland's economy will expand by 3.5 percent in 2021. It also predicts Poland's GDP to grow by 4.3 percent in 2022. The report includes neither a justification nor new forecasts for Poland regarding other economic indices.

### Poland to establish Freedom-of-Speech Court, Fine Illegal Censors

Polish Justice Minister Zbigniew Ziobro has announced a legal initiative which would enable internet users to file complaints against the removal of their online posts.

Under its provisions, social-media services will not be allowed to remove posts or block accounts simply because their content is not to their liking. If they do, the victim of such ideological censorship will be entitled to file a formal complaint. Big Tech firms could face a staggering fine every time they unconstitutionally censor lawful free speech online. The measure includes the creation of a special freedom-of-speech court to handle such cases.

The court will also be able to rule in cases where someone feels slandered by an online post.

## St. Pope John Paul II, Sexual Abuse, Abortion, and the State of Contemporary Catholicism

### 13 Questions for Catholic Theologian George Weigel

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington D.C., a think tank dedicated to applying the Judeo-Christian moral tradition to public policy. He is the author of 28 books and is perhaps best known for his widely translated and internationally acclaimed two-volume biography of Pope St. John Paul II, the *New York Times* bestseller *Witness to Hope* (1999), and its sequel *The End and the Beginning* (2010). Weigel recently fielded questions from *PAJ* dealing with contentious issues in the Catholic Church, especially as they relate to Catholic Polish Americans.

*Q. The McCarrick Report published last November reveals an insular and bureaucratized clerical culture in the Catholic Church that enabled decades of sexual misconduct by now-defrocked Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington D.C. from 2001 to 2006, but to what extent is the subsequent finger-pointing at St. Pope John Paul II justified?*



PHOTO: ETHICS & PUBLIC POLICY CENTER

The McCarrick Report is a dense, 449-page document depicting various aspects of the ecclesiastical career of Theodore McCarrick: a sexual predator, pathological liar, relentless self-promoter, sycophant, and veteran manipulator of others. So, to turn the Report into an indictment of one of the men McCarrick manipulated and deceived, John Paul II, is simply shoddy journalism.

Unfortunately, the brief "summary" of the report, which is what reporters read before jumping to their conclusions, pays considerably more attention to McCarrick's appointment to Washington, in which John Paul

"There is no question that John Paul II made a mistake in appointing McCarrick to Washington. It was, however, a mistake made in good faith in a very murky situation in which there was no hard evidence of McCarrick's misbehavior, only a pattern of rumors. To judge John Paul II's decision then by what we know about McCarrick now is not right."

II was deeply involved, than to other aspects of McCarrick's long-term manipulation of the Church to advance his ambitions. There is no question that John Paul II made a mistake in appointing McCarrick to Washington. It was, however, a mistake made in good faith in a very murky situation in which there was no hard evidence of McCarrick's misbehavior, only a pattern of rumors. To judge John Paul II's decision then by what we know about McCarrick now is not right. Journalists seem to be addicted to "smoking gun"

See "Weigel," page 4

## Compassion Amid Capital Commotion



Johnna Jablonski, of Billings, Montana, is mom to 10-year-old Emma Jablonski (above). She told "Good Morning America" that her daughter had seen news footage covering the now-viral video of Officer Daniel Hodges being crushed against a metal door frame inside the Capitol building.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A little girl's touching letter to an officer who responded to the violent siege at the U.S. Capitol has received a response from the Metropolitan Police Department.

Johnna Jablonski, mom to 10-year-old Emma, told "Good Morning America" that her daughter had seen news footage covering the now-viral video of Officer Daniel Hodges being crushed against a metal door frame

See "Letter," page 2



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## 11 Things You Might Not Know About Thaddeus Kosciuszko

The lowdown on the Revolutionary War hero, in honor of his 275th birthday.

by Sandy Hingston

PHILADELPHIA — February 4th, is the 275th birthday of the most famous Polish figure in American history, Andrzej Tadeusz Bonawentura Kościuszko (a.k.a. Thaddeus Kosciuszko), the dashing, handsome Revolutionary war hero whose national memorial stands at the corner of 3rd and Pine. Here are 11 things you might not know about him.

**1** Kosciuszko ("Kawsh-CHOOSH-ko") was born in the village of Mereczowszczyzna in what is now Belarus but was then part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. He was the youngest son of an

see "11 Things ..." page 5





**POLISH CHILDREN'S HEARTLINE** (a non-profit corporation, State of New Jersey) begins its 35th year of helping children. An all volunteer non-profit organization receiving generous donations from Polonia and American supporters makes it possible for over 2000 Polish children to be treated annually by cardiac surgeons and physicians in hospitals in Poland. As requested, equipment critical to pediatric care is provided to seven hospitals in Zabrze, Katowice, Lodz, Suwalki, Bialystok, Grajewo, and Ostroleka. Contributions may be made in memory of and/or honor of family and friends. Each donation is tax exempt and acknowledged. We thank you for your support and ask for your continued support for much help is still needed. "If we don't help our Polish children, who will?" —Doreen Patras Cramer, President

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## FORUM

## Reflection and warning from Dingell in *The Dean*

Dingell tells the story of a family that lived the American dream, but never forgot their roots, nor the values that unpinning them.

by Matthew Stefanski

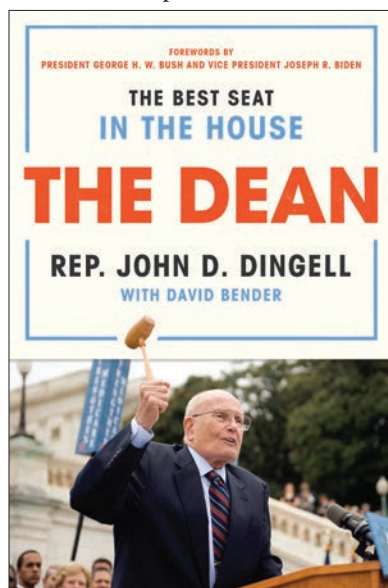
Congressman John Dingell Jr. was never one to bask in being the longest serving member of Congress. Instead, he took pride in the legislative accomplishments – and there were many – that he achieved for his predominantly Polish American, working class constituents over the course of his fifty-nine years in office.

In his memoir *The Dean: The Best Seat in the House*, Dingell provides readers with a first-hand account of the historic events and legislative efforts that he witnessed and shaped. Published in 2018, a year prior to his passing at the age of 92, *The Dean* is Congressman Dingell's parting gift to readers. Filled with wit and insight that can only be gained by living a life as notable as Dingell's, the book is written in such a way that the reader feels as if they are seated in Dingell's parlor, listening to the sage legislator himself recount his lifetime of public service.

From observing Congress declare war on Japan in 1941 as a young Congressional page, to his determined work on health care and the passage of Medicare and the Affordable Care Act, Dingell has no shortage of personal accounts with which to fill his memoir. He details his unexpected rise to Congress following the premature passing of his father, Congressman John Dingell

in 2015.

*The Dean* is more than just a retelling of votes cast and races won. Dingell writes about the values, such as social justice and integrity, that drove his public service career,



as well as his upbringing and deep Polish roots. It was his grandfather, Josef Dzieglewicz, who as a young man sailed to the United States in 1881 to join his father in Texas, before moving to Michigan where the now-anglicized Dingells made a home for themselves. The Dingells helped build St. Casimir's Church in Detroit and attended its parochial school. Dingell's father, John Sr., campaigned for Congress in 1932 with a bullhorn shouting slogans in Polish and English. In short, Dingell tells the story of a family that lived the American dream, but never forgot their roots, nor the values that unpinning them.

During the course of Dingell's nearly six decades in Washington, D.C., he served alongside politicians of all caliber and stripe, from champions of equality to segregationists, corrupt crooks to upstanding offi-

When I write this review in early January 2021, the American public has been fed a steady beat of alternative facts for four years by the White House, with the greatest lie of all to emerge in recent weeks: that the presidential election was stolen. This lie — and it is a lie — led to a dark day in our nation's capital when a mob stormed and assaulted the United States Capitol, our sacred institution of representative democracy. Observers will say that no one could have predicted these events, but reading the words Congressman Dingell wrote three years ago proves otherwise. "Donald Trump is a clear and present danger to the United States of America," he wrote. "Even more dangerous than Trump himself is the mindset that breeds 'Trumpism' and allows it to flourish ... This phenomenon, documented by researchers the world over, is characterized by two main features: first, a belief in total obedience to authority; and the second, aggression toward 'the other' that is, people who differ from the mob mentality, that spreads like poisonous mushrooms growing like wild in manure."

Four years of Trump's lies have spread his poison among a wide swath of the American electorate. A mob ransacked our Capitol, chanting "heads on pikes" and writing "Murder the Media" on a door in what was once regarded by Americans as the world's greatest legislative body.

"Fear spreads in the dark," Dingell wrote, "and Trump's black-hearted bullshit about Mexicans, Muslims and anyone else he chooses to demonize is a fetid breeding ground for his authoritarian followers. It fertilizes their self-righteousness and reinforces their (non)sense of being victims of a 'conspiracy' that threatens 'real Americans' like them... [Trump] will sacrifice anything and anyone to preserve and protect himself — not the Constitution he swore to uphold. This is unprecedented in the history of our nation. We have a rogue president and a large enough minority of Americans who, like lemmings, will follow him over any cliff. The problem is, if we let them, those crazy bastards will take us all down with him."

The assault on Congress, America's co-equal legislative branch of government, was instigated by the sitting President of the United States. A president who refuses to recognize the results of a free and fair election, a president who, as Dingell wrote, will sacrifice anyone and anything to protect himself. The seditious events that took place on Capitol Hill sought to disrupt the peaceful transition of power, a principle that rests at the very foundation of our union.

"Complacency got us Trump," he writes. "It will take courage and constant vigilance to undo the damage he's done. Trump, and all he represents, is a tumor growing on our republic... the cancer of cynicism eating away at our country can



**John Dingell, Jr.** (July 8, 1926 – February 7, 2019) served as a member of the United States House of Representatives from 1955 until 2015. A member of the Democratic Party, he holds the record for longest-serving member of Congress in American history, representing Michigan for more than 59 years.

be cured only when we trust one another again. No leader alone, no matter how charismatic, no matter how great his or her appeal, can fix what ails us as a nation. That is our unique work as free citizens. There is no more important a cause."

Congressman Dingell did not live to see this dark day in American history, but he knew enough to leave us with this warning. We would do well to take the old Polish lawyer's message to heart.

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port to reflect the opinions or views of the Polish American Journal, staff, clients, or subscribers. We welcome the opinions of our readers. Please submit articles to PAJ Forum, P.O. Box 271, N. Boston, NY 14110, or via email at [editor@polamjournal.com](mailto:editor@polamjournal.com).

Responses to printed articles should be brief, to the point, and are subject to editing. Because of space limitations, we cannot print all responses received. All responses must contain signature, address, and daytime phone number for verification.

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Sr. in 1955, and his trailblazing efforts to pass civil rights legislation which culminated in the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Of the more than 25,000 votes he took while in Congress, it was this vote which he was most proud of — a vote that almost cost him his seat. Following redistricting in 1964, his Michigan Congressional district was merged with a neighboring district represented by fellow Polish American John Lesinski Jr. "Running against Lesinski was like running against myself," Dingell writes, with the key distinction that Lesinski was one of the only Northern Democrats to vote against the civil rights legislation. Fortunately, Dingell prevailed in the contest and remained in Congress until his re-

retirement in 2015. cials who embodied the true meaning of public service in everything they did. Yet even for someone who has seen as much as he has, Dingell was so alarmed by what he saw in President Trump that he bookended his memoir with a sharp rebuke and grave warning.

"We cannot ignore the fact that these are grave and serious times" wrote Dingell in 2018, before President Trump was even impeached. "Hyperbole is impossible when we have a president who creates 'alternative facts' and then expects us to accept them as gospel, simply because a bully now uses the presidency as his personal pulpit. 'Alternative facts' used to be called lies. Renaming them doesn't make them any truer."

# Weigel: “Laws protective of pre-natal life, as in Poland, are, among other things, a defense of the integrity of the medical profession, which is becoming deeply corrupted ...”

continued from cover

explanations of scandals. But what if there is no “smoking gun,” but rather a long history of institutional malfunction and system-failure? That’s a far better explanation of what happened over decades with Theodore McCarrick. But it doesn’t make for a hot headline.

*Q. Many people assert that priestly celibacy is unnatural and one of the causes of sexual abuse. How does the Roman Catholic Church connect the teachings of Christ to religious rules put into place centuries after Jesus walked the earth?*

Marriage is not a crime-prevention program and religious communities with married clergy have serious problems of sexual abuse. The tradition of clerical celibacy in the Catholic Church goes back into the first Christian centuries; it was not a medieval invention.

*Q. Over the last two decades the exposure of clerical sexual abuse seems to have obscured the line between pedophilia and sexual activity between consenting adults. What could the Church and the media have done differently?*

I have been resisting for almost twenty years the use of the term “pedophilia” as an all-purpose synonym for “sexual abuse.” “Pedophilia” is the sexual abuse of pre-pubescent children. The vast majority of the sexual abuse cases that have come to light in the Church since 2002 involve the homosexual abuse of adolescent boys and young men. It would be very helpful if these things were described accurately, but I think it unlikely that linguistic accuracy will prevail over media memes anytime soon.



Weigel, who wrote a biography of Blessed John Paul II, speaks at a press conference at the Vatican April 25, 2020. At right is Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman.

*Q. Poles and Polish Americans remain predominantly Catholic, and yet rare even in Poland is a Catholic family of seven or more children. Many “cafeteria” Catholics selectively ignore rules related to birth control and family planning. Why shouldn’t they?*

Popes Paul VI and John Paul II taught that husband and wife have a moral responsibility to plan their families; Catholicism does not teach an ethic of reproduction-at-all-costs. The real question is, what is the morally appropriate means of regulating fertility and thus planning one’s family? The Church’s answer is that using the natural rhythms of biology to regulate fertility is the means of family planning that best reflects the dignity of the human person, and especially the dignity of women. The Church’s pastors have, by and large, done a very poor job of explaining this, but



Theodore E. McCarrick, right, with Pope John Paul II in St. Peter’s Square in Vatican City in 2001.

with John Paul II’s brilliant “Theology of the Body” they certainly have the resources for doing so.

*Q. For many Catholics, abortion has become a politicized issue and often given as the single reason for voting for one politician over another. Catholicism is not the only religion that opposes abortion rights with few or no exceptions. Why has this become such a contentious and politicized issue?*

It’s become a contentious issue because various forms of feminism insist, contrary to all moral logic, that women’s “empowerment” demands that women be able to abort their unborn children. How rejecting what is most intensely feminine contributes to the empowerment of women is not clear; what ought to be clear, however, is that abortion provides irresponsible and predatory men with an opportunity to solve a “problem” by a technical “fix.” As for the public policy side of the issue, if the state can declare an entire class of indisputably human creatures — unborn children — outside the protection of the laws, it is inevitable that others will soon be declared expendable — as we already see in the legalization of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide. The culture of life is seamless; so is the culture of death.

*Q. In Poland, as of 28 October 2020, abortion is banned except when the woman’s life or health is endangered by the continuation of pregnancy, when the pregnancy is a result of a criminal act, or when there is a high probability of a severe and irreversible fetal impairment. How can such legislation be enforced by the government?*

No serious pro-life proponent in the United States has ever suggested imposing criminal penalties on the woman who seeks or obtains an abortion. The legal burden should fall on the abortionist who performs the abortion. Laws protective of pre-natal life, as in Poland, are, among other things, a defense of the integrity of the medical profession, which is becoming deeply corrupted by abortion, euthanasia, “transgendering,” and other manifestations of the culture of death.

*Q. What can the Catholic Church do to examine the underlying reasons why so many American women are pregnant who apparently do not wish to be?*

Abortion rates are in fact coming down in the United States, and I have to hope that is because the pro-life movement, of which the Catholic Church has been an important part, has been able to show more and more women that the dilemma



Pope Francis, the leader of the Roman Catholic Church, offered his congratulations to Joe Biden his election victory. Weigel says Archbishop Allen Vigneron — chosen to lead a new national group that seeks to guide how Catholics should respond to Biden’s stance on abortion — “should make clear to Mr. Biden that he is not in full communion with the Catholic Church” and “while he is always welcome to worship at Mass, he ought not present himself for holy communion until his public actions demonstrate that he is in full communion with the Church.” (Above): Biden and Pope Francis in Washington, D.C., in 2015.

of an unplanned and unwanted pregnancy can be resolved by means other than the technological “fix” of abortion, which often leaves serious psychological wounds in its wake. That is why the Church, in partnership with other pro-life organizations, sponsors and supports crisis pregnancy centers where women can obtain pre-natal medical care and emotional support, can deliver their babies safely, and can then be helped to either provide for those children or place them with adoptive or foster parents.

*Q. Do equal “marriage rights” for homosexual people under the law undermine the sacrament of marriage as defined by the Catholic Church?*

They undermine human reason. As Cardinal Francis George said in the early days of the debate over so-called “gay marriage,” in telling us that two men or two women can “marry,” the state is telling us to believe something that we know is not true, and that cannot be true. But then what the state has meant by “marriage” and what the Catholic Church means by “matrimony”

have been quite different for some time. What the state means by “marriage” is a legal contract that can, under certain circumstances, be abrogated. What the Catholic Church means by the sacrament of matrimony is a covenant of love and mutual responsibility that is, by its nature, permanent.

*Q. In 2018 the Vatican announced that it had changed the official Catechism of the Catholic Church on the death penalty, calling capital punishment “an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person” and deeming it “inadmissible” in all cases. Why is the Church able to change doctrine on this issue and not others such as sexuality and birth control?*

I’m afraid the nuance of this has gotten lost in most of the reporting on it. “Inadmissible” is a judgment of prudence; the use of that word does not necessarily imply a change of “doctrine.” The Church has not said that capital punishment is intrinsically evil, but that it is imprudent and unnecessary for public safety, and that its use tends to coarsen society. The Church has taught repeatedly that fornication, contraception, and sexual activity

Church as Catholicism’s “constitution,” if you will. One early expression of those “constituting” truths is the Apostles Creed.

*Q. Pope Francis has decried income inequality and nationalism and spoken out on behalf of gay people, Muslims, immigrants, and the poor. Is he wrong?*

It is never wrong to speak out against injustice in any form. How public policy should deal with questions like immigration, religious pluralism, the civil rights of those experiencing same-sex attraction, and the empowerment of the poor involves another set of questions altogether.

*Q. What is the basis for the Catholic position on “a just war”? What did the Catholic Church do to oppose the immoral and unwinnable Vietnam War, the ill-conceived Iraq War, and the seemingly endless war in Afghanistan?*

The way you frame the question seems to imply that you’ve already arrived at an answer! A just war is one declared by a competent authority for the vindication of the peace of international public order (which often involves the defense of the innocent); a just war is also a war conducted in a just manner, with appropriate care for discriminating between combatants and non-combatants. The questions of whether the Vietnam war was “unwinnable” (which many would deny), whether the Iraq war was “ill-conceived” (also disputed), and whether the war in Afghanistan was and is “endless” (so, one might say, was and is the Korean War) are contingent historical judgments of prudence. Contingent historical judgments of prudence certainly figure into just-war reasoning, but so do other factors. It’s impossible to summarize the Catholic debate over Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan in an interview; suffice it to say that there was considerable debate and much public activism by Catholics on both sides of the question in each case. The just war tradition is not a machine that grinds out judgments like Dunkin’ Donuts produces pastries.

*Q. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops recently appointed Archbishop Allen Vigneron to head a new national group that seeks to guide how Catholics should respond to President-elect Joe Biden, who is Catholic, and the contentious issue of abortion. What should they do?*

I believe the mandate of the body Archbishop Vigneron leads is to advise the bishops on how to meet the many challenges posed by the new administration. On the specific issue you raise, I believe the bishops should defend the integrity of the sacraments and should make clear to Mr. Biden that he is not in full communion with the Catholic Church as long as he facilitates the grave moral evil of abortion. If he is a man of serious Catholic faith, Mr. Biden will then realize that, while he is always welcome to worship at Mass, he ought not present himself for holy communion until his public actions demonstrate that he is in full communion with the Church.

◆ ◆ ◆

George Weigel answered questions in writing. They were prepared for PAJ by Chicago journalist Leonard Kniffel.

## RELIGION

2021 Proclaimed  
Cardinal Wyszyński Year

The Sejm, the main lawmaking chamber of Poland's parliament, has voted overwhelmingly to proclaim 2021 the Year of the Venerable Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński (1901-1981).

Poland's Primate from 1948 until his death, he was known for shepherding Catholic Poland through decades of Soviet-style totalitarian rule. Wyszyński was imprisoned for three years in the Stalinist 1950s but refused to give in. Upon his release, he continued his campaign for human rights and religious freedom. Largely as a result of his efforts, Poland was the least oppressive country of the Soviet bloc and the only one that resisted forced collectivization of agriculture.

Many Poles regarded him as the



Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński

unquestionable leader of the Polish nation and even the "uncrowned king of Poland."

Numerous events will be held in Poland this year to commemo-

rate the legacy of a religious leader, whose beatification had been set for June 2020. It was postponed due to the pandemic and will be held as soon as circumstances permit.

Polish Troops,  
Catholic Charity aid  
Croatian Quake Victims

Poland was among the first countries to respond to an earthquake that struck Croatia at the turn of the year by rushing to the aid of its victims.

At least seven people died, dozens were injured, and thousands of buildings were destroyed in the 6.4 magnitude quake. Polish soldiers have supplied army tents which will provide temporary shelter for hundreds of victims who lost their homes in the disaster.

Caritas Polska, Poland's Catholic

charity, wired 50,000 zlotys (about \$14,600) to Caritas Croatia and launched an online donation drive to help tide the victims through the quake's chaotic aftermath. Caritas also supplied victims with tents, sleeping bags and warm blankets.

Pontifical University  
Patents Middle Ages  
Beer Recipe

(CNA) A pontifical university in Poland is patenting a beer that will give drinkers a taste of the Middle Ages.

Sławomir Dryja, a lecturer at the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków, created the recipe which he believes is 90% similar to the white beer drunk by medieval residents of the city, reported Radio Kraków.

Modern-day drinkers will be

able to sample the brew — known as Kraków White Beer (Piwo Krakowskie Białe in Polish) — from April at the earliest.

The 56-year-old archaeologist was able to identify the original yeast by studying the cellar walls of Kraków's Lubomirski Palace.

Dryja, an expert on the history of brewing, explained that the beer would be made in a similar way to the original.

"We know the production of malt technology. We can assume that modern light wheat malts do not differ significantly in their characteristics from those used at that time," he said.

"We have the original yeast and we know more or less the technological procedure, i.e., how it was mashed, boiled, in what proportions the hops should be added and how to handle it."

## 11 Things About Kosciuszko

continued from cover

officer in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth Army; his family held a modest amount of land that was worked by 31 families of serfs. Sent to France at age 20 to study, Kosciuszko returned to Poland a few years later, found his brother had squandered the family's (small) fortune, and nonetheless tried to elope with his nobleman landlord's daughter. The landlord's men beat him bloody, so he headed for America, having heard there was a revolution in progress and being pro-revolution generally.

**2**In August of 1776, Kosciuszko applied to the Continental Congress and was assigned to the Continental Army. He had studied artillery and fortifications in Paris, and his first job, at the request of George Washington, was to fortify Fort Billingsport in Paulsboro, New Jersey, to prevent the British from sailing up the Delaware to Philly. The land for the fort was the first land purchase ever made by the United States (in the form of the Continental Congress). Kosciuszko's first boss was Ben Franklin, but by October he'd been commissioned a colonel of engineers in the Continental Army.

**3**He was then sent to Fort Ticonderoga, on the border between the U.S. and Canada, to review its defenses. He recommended construction of a battery on a high bluff above the fort, but its commander rejected the idea. When British General John Burgoyne attacked Ticonderoga in July 1777, he did so from the high point, and the fort fell. In the subsequent retreat by Continental soldiers, Kosciuszko was called on to come up with some way of delaying the pursuing British army. He and his men built dams and destroyed bridges, creating a marsh that bogged down the enemy, and the American forces

safely escaped across the Hudson River.

**4**The defenses Kosciuszko planned and constructed at Saratoga withstood British attacks, and Burgoyne surrendered there in October 1777. The defeat is considered a turning point in the Revolutionary War, since it spurred the French and Spanish to join the American fight against the British. Kosciuszko found time that year to compose a polonaise for the harpsichord; the tune became a popular anthem during Poland's November Uprising in 1830-31.

**5**It was the maps and plans for the fortifications Kosciuszko built at West Point that Benedict Arnold stole and attempted to convey to the British. Arnold's go-between, Joseph Stansbury, was introduced to the Loyalist poet Jonathan Odell by William Franklin, Ben's Loyalist (and illegitimate) son, who was governor of New Jersey at the time. Franklin then introduced Stansbury to British Major John André, who was courting beautiful, lively Philly socialite Peggy Shippen. After André was captured and hanged as a spy, Peggy married Benedict Arnold.

**6**After his work at West Point, Kosciuszko headed to South Carolina, where he built boats and fortifications, enlisted informers, scouted territory, and generally did pretty much everything that would enable the Continental Army to outrun the British during the "Race to the Dan" retreat across North Carolina. The thus-preserved Continental forces then regrouped, recrossed the river, and confronted the troops of British General Charles Cornwallis, effectively routing them and taking the South. In fighting at Ninety Six, South Carolina (sorry; no one knows where the name came from), Kosciuszko suffered his only Revolutionary War battle wound



In March 1778 Kościuszko arrived at West Point, New York, and spent more than two years strengthening the fortifications and improving the stronghold's defenses. It was these defenses that the American General Benedict Arnold subsequently attempted to surrender to the British when he defected. Kościuszko's Fort Clinton fortifications (above) were widely praised as innovative for the time. In background: his statue.

when he was bayoneted in the buttocks.

**7**Kosciuszko was in Charleston, South Carolina, when the Treaty of Paris ended the war in April 1783. After taking time out to plan the fireworks for Princeton, New Jersey's Fourth of July celebration that year, he set about trying to collect the back pay for his seven years of military service. He didn't even have enough money to return to his homeland; plenty of other officers were in the same boat. Like many of his peers, Kosciuszko lived on money he borrowed from Philadelphia financial broker Haym Salomon. Legend says George Washington arranged the 13 stars on the first American flag in the shape of a Star of David in honor of Salomon's monetary contributions to the war effort. Salomon died, penniless and in prison, in 1785 at age 44, and is buried in Mikveh Israel Cemetery at Spruce and South Darien Street. Kosciuszko was eventually given a certificate for \$12,000 and 500 acres of land, but only if he stayed in the United States. With the war over, he moved on.

**8**Back in Poland, he reclaimed some lost family land and took up farming. But after he limited the service his male serfs owed the lord of the manor to two days per week and exempted female serfs completely, production dropped off, and Kosciuszko accumulated debts.

After the adoption of reforms at the Grand Sejm, he lobbied for creation of a Polish army based on the American model and eventually was commissioned as an officer, with a salary that alleviated his debts. He was disappointed when the nation's new constitution of 1791 retained the monarchy and did little to better the peasants' lot. Reactionaries trying to overthrow the constitution enlisted help from Russia, which was happy to invade the new Commonwealth with a force three times the size of Poland's, beginning the Polish-Russian War of 1792.

**9**Though Kosciuszko never lost a single battle, the Polish king, Stanislaw August Poniatowski, capitulated to the Russians. Horrified, Kosciuszko traveled through Poland and Ukraine, attracting adoring crowds, before settling in Leipzig, where, with like-minded patriots, he began to plot a revolt against the victors. After the Sejm was forced to rescind the constitution, Kosciuszko mounted the Kosciuszko Uprising in March 1794, marching on Warsaw with an army of 6,000 men and calling for civil rights and reduced workloads for the nation's serfs. Alas, the Prussians, under Frederick the Great (the guy that King of Prussia's named for), threw in with the Russians, under Catherine the Great (King Stanislaw's ex-lover), and in October, Kosciuszko was captured and imprisoned. At the subsequent

Battle of Praga, the Russians killed 20,000 Warsaw residents.

**10**After the death of Catherine the Great in 1796, her son, Paul I, granted amnesty to Kosciuszko on the condition that he never return to Poland. He sailed for America, installed himself at 3rd and Pine streets, befriended Thomas Jefferson (who called him "as pure a son of liberty, as I have ever known"), flirted with and sketched the local ladies, then left America for France and later Switzerland, where he died in 1817 after falling from a horse. He was 71. His body was first buried in a Swiss church, then removed to Krakow and interred in a crypt with Polish saints and kings; the local populace raised a monument to him built of dirt from all the battlegrounds on which he'd fought. His internal organs, removed at his embalming, were buried separately in Switzerland, except for his heart, which was kept in an urn at the Polish Museum in the Swiss town of Rapperswil until it was sent in 1927 to Warsaw, where it's now in the Royal Castle.

**11**On his last trip to Philadelphia, Kosciuszko listed Thomas Jefferson as executor of a will directing that his military pay from the Revolution be used to buy the freedom of American slaves and pay for their education.

## MODLITWY

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**PRAYER TO SAINT ANTHONY OF PADUA.** O Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints, you love for God and Charity for His creatures, made you worthy, when on earth, to possess miraculous powers. Miracles waited on your word, which you were ever ready to speak for those in trouble or anxiety. Encouraged by this thought, I implore of you to obtain peace of mind for all who await the end of the pandemic. The answer to my prayer may require a miracle, even so, you are the Saint of Miracles. O gentle and loving St. Anthony, whose heart was ever full of human sympathy, whisper my petition into the ears of the Sweet Infant Jesus, who loved to be folded in your arms; and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours. Amen. (Then say the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be). J.B.

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## POLAND

## Mosbacher Says Goodbye

### Ambassador Differed with Ruling Party Over Media Freedom

WARSAW — In her farewell message, outgoing U.S. ambassador to Warsaw, Georgette Mosbacher, said she was proud of her work to advance bilateral ties during her tenure, and she harbored a deep affection for the Polish people.

Mosbacher stepped down as U.S. ambassador to Poland a day before Joe Biden was sworn in as the next president.

One of the greatest honors of my life was when President Trump asked me to become the United States ambassador to Poland," she said in a video message released on the eve of Biden's inauguration.

"I am incredibly proud of our joint work to advance U.S.-Polish relations," she added.

Every minute I have spent in Poland has been a joy, and I have a deep affection for the Polish people," she also said. "Sadly, my time here has come to an end."

Looking back at her time in Warsaw, Mosbacher listed some of her accomplishments during her tenure as ambassador:

Thanks to the incredible work of my team here at the embassy, I am especially proud that during my tenure Poland joined the Visa Waiver Program. This is a historic milestone that ensures our people-to-people ties remain strong for decades to come.

"We've also delivered on energy security by signing a nuclear inter-governmental agreement to help Poland decisively move ahead in building nuclear power plants with American technology.

"Throughout my tenure, I have



**Mosbacher:** Polish-U.S. relations are strong and likely to stay that way with Biden's presidency.

consistently and successfully advocated for the Three Seas Initiative as a means of driving regional economic growth and bolstering trans-Atlantic ties.

We have strengthened the eastern flank of NATO by signing the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement and establishing the 5th Corps Forward Command in Poznań.

"These accomplishments will last long after I've left, leaving an indelible mark on the enduring friendship, partnership and alliance between the United States and Poland."

Mosbacher took up her post as ambassador to Poland in September 2018. Her tenure was not without controversy. Shortly after being appointed, she told *The Seattle Times* Poland was responsible for the re-emergence of anti-Semitism across the continent of Europe because of a law which criminalizes blaming Poland for the actions of Nazi Germany on its soil during the Ho-

locoust.

Prior to her appointment, Polish President Andrzej Duda stated that if Mosbacher were appointed as the new U.S. ambassador to Poland, she would be accepted, despite having made "unnecessary and mistaken" comments about the country.

In November 2018, she triggered anger in Poland with a letter to the prime minister that took his government to task over its treatment of a U.S.-owned independent television station.

The letter, circulated in Polish media, misspells the last name of Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki and addresses him with the wrong title, as well as misspelling the name of the interior minister.

Mosbacher said she wrote to express "deep concern" over government treatment of TVN, a Polish broadcaster owned by the U.S. company Discovery. The station is seen in Poland as representing a liberal viewpoint critical of the conservative government.

Polish commentators said they found the tone and the mistakes to be disrespectful.

Mosbacher made similar remarks about media freedom in a meeting in parliament, prompting deputy prime minister, Jaroslaw Gowin, to cancel a meeting with her.

In her farewell message, Mosbacher also told the Polish people she would miss her time in their country and that she intended to come back and visit often.

In January, Mosbacher said in a statement that Polish-U.S. relations were strong and likely to stay that way after Joe Biden takes office in Washington.

## Fewer Vaccines force Poland to change plans

WARSAW — A move by pharmaceutical firm Pfizer to reduce the supply of its COVID-19 shots has forced Poland to change its vaccination plans, the prime minister's top aide has said.

Michał Dworczyk, who is spearheading the government's inoculation drive, said the country would be able to vaccinate 130,000 medical staff the third week of January instead of 330,000, as originally planned.

But he added that a second dose of the vaccine was guaranteed for everyone who has already received a first shot. Two doses several weeks apart are needed by people being inoculated.

Dworczyk, who is the head of

the Prime Minister's Office, said that vaccinations of people aged over 70 started on January 25, according to plan.

He added that 176,000 Pfizer vaccines were delivered to Poland on January 18, instead of the 360,000 originally expected.

Pfizer said it would temporarily reduce its vaccine deliveries to Europe while it upgrades its production capacity.

Healthcare workers are the top priority group in Poland for inoculation, followed by nursing home residents, people over 70, police, soldiers and teachers.

Citizens over 80 have been able to sign up for COVID-19 shots since January 15. On January 22,

registration will open to those in the 70+ age group.

On January 18, Poland began vaccinating elderly people living in care homes. Around 70,000 nursing home residents were inoculated in the week-long effort. That same day, Poland reported 3,271 new coronavirus infections and 52 more deaths, bringing its total number of cases to 1,438,914 and fatalities to 33,407.

The European Union, of which Poland is part, has struck deals to secure vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech, AstraZeneca, Moderna, CureVac, Sanofi-GSK, and Johnson & Johnson.

## Accident Turns Serendipitous

TORUN, Poland — A villager in the hamlet of Jezuicka Struga in northwest Poland found a cache of 17-century coins after falling off his bike while mushroom hunting.

Bogusław Rumiński was looking for mushrooms in a wooded area near his home when a fall from his bike threw him into the undergrowth where he found a bunch of coins lying next to him. Upon looking closer, he found about sixty more coins. He then contacted the regional Conservation Office to report his discovery.

Rumiński returned to the site the next day accompanied by Con-

servation officers who after using a metal detector, found more coins. Interest in the find increasing, another group of officials came to the site the very next day bringing with them an archaeology professor from Poznań's Adam Mickiewicz University. Yet another thirteen coins were found, bringing the total find to eighty-six.

The coins date from between 1657 and 1667, during the reign of Jan II Casimir. Researchers believe that the coins were hidden soon after their production. Although some of the coins had a green/blue patina, other coins were in mint con-

dition. Judging by the dates on the coins, they were minted soon after wars between Protestant Sweden and the Catholic Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (the Deluge) which wrought destruction throughout the Polish-Lithuanian area.

The coins were brought to the regional Conservation Office and after restoration, will be donated to the Jan Kasprowicz Museum in the district where the coins were found. The Conservation Office will appeal to the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage to reward Bogusław Rumiński for having lawfully notified authorities of his find.

## Bell stolen by Nazis to be Returned

(BBC) — A church bell that dates back to 1555 will be returned to its home in Poland, 77 years after it was plundered by the Nazis in World War II.

Parishioners at Slawiecie in southern Poland began searching for the church's old bell two years ago. They were in luck because, as the Münster diocese in Germany explained, the Nazis melted down some 80,000 bells to make weapons or ammunition.

The bell was eventually tracked down to Münster by the Polish church's pastor.

According to the diocese, Marian Bednarek found the 880-lb. bell listed in a book. It had been sitting for decades unnoticed with two other bells in a courtyard at the city's Catholic Church court.

After the war, some bells that had not been melted down for their metal content were returned, but 1,300 bells that had been seized in eastern territories such as Poland were kept initially in a bell cemetery in Hamburg. Photos of them were kept in an archive in Nuremberg.

The diocese said that British military authorities had banned the return of bells to the east, and in-



PHOTO: MÜNSTER DIOCESE

The bell has been sitting in a church courtyard in Münster for decades.

stead they were loaned out to parishes across the old West Germany.

The bell will not be sent back to its original home just yet because of the coronavirus pandemic.

When it does finally arrive at St Catherine's church, it will be on permanent loan as officially it is now owned by the German government.

"After 77 years, waiting another month or so doesn't really matter," Hans Manek, a former resident of Slawiecie, told the Catholic Church in Münster.

## Kraków May Welcome First-ever Female Bugler

KRAKOW — After 24 years, Jan Sergiel, the bugler from St. Mary's Basilica Bugle Tower in Kraków will start a well-deserved retirement, so the local fire department has announced it is recruiting for his post. Among the candidates is Marta, who may become the first ever female bugler in the city's history.

Two people will replace Sergiel following the recruitment process. The winners will be announced at the turn of February and March.

The Kraków bugler works 24 hours a day, followed by a 48-hour break. They play the bugle every full hour. Candidates for the job must also be fit and agile: the workplace is a small room located at a height of 265 feet. To climb St. Mary's Tower, a bugler has to climb 272 stairs, which takes around three minutes.

Once their *curriculum vitae* and application are assessed, the candidate will have to pass a trumpet test and a fitness test. Among other requirements, the candidate has to be Polish, have a clean record and have no fear of heights.

The bugle call of St. Mary's Basilica is played in four directions of the world: for the king, for the mayor, for visitors coming to Kraków, and for the commander of the local fire brigade.

Other tasks for the bugler include playing religious and historical melodies during specific ceremonies, such as holidays, receiving tourists at St. Mary's Tower and giving interviews about St. Mary's Tower and the bugle call.

**THE LEGEND OF KRAKÓW'S BUGLE CALL.** It is not known exactly to when the origins of Kraków's bugle call date back. The first documented mention of the melody comes from 1392.

Centuries ago, a guardian from the tower played a bugle call to warn citizens against danger — fire or an enemy assault. At its sound, the city

gates were opened and closed.

Legend has it that in 1241, the guard in the tower saw a horde of Tatars. As he played the alarm, an arrow from a Tatar bow pierced his throat. The trumpeter died and the melody broke off abruptly, and so does the Krakow bugle call today.

## Wave of Polish grocery explosions in Holland

TILBURG, Netherlands — An explosion at a Polish deli in the town of Tilburg that seriously damaged the building and neighboring properties was the latest in what appeared to be a wave of such incidents. The shop's façade bore the Polish words *Warszawa* (Warsaw) and *Piekarnia* (bakery). It was the fourth such attack in a month on groceries and supermarkets stocking imported Polish food products and catering mainly to local Polish immigrants.


All the shops are operated by Kurds. Police are investigating whether the latest explosion is linked to the three previous attacks. It was not immediately clear whether the incidents were anti-Polish in nature or motivated by intra-ethnic rivalry within the Kurdish community.

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## GENEALOGY

## Finding Our Polish Ancestors – Step One

by Stephen M. Szabados

How can we find the Polish records for our immigrant ancestors? Most are available online and are cataloged by the name of the town where officials created the record. So, we need to find documents or stories that will give us town names. Finding documents that list town names is critical to compiling a list of the possible town where they left.

Here is the list I used to find these clues:

### DOCUMENTS AND LETTERS FROM THE OLD COUNTRY.

Look in the shoeboxes and desk drawers for the papers your immigrants saved. I was lucky when researching my grandfather's origins because I found a copy of his birth record. He needed to prove his age for his Medicare application. The document listed the village where he was born, the parish of his baptism, and the diocese. We also found copies of birth records for my wife's great-grandparents that they brought with them. Note: officials, clerks, and priests transcribed these copies, and we should find the original registers later.

**FAMILY ORAL HISTORY.** Interview older relatives for immigration stories because this may be a great source of clues. However, be careful. Many immigrants gave the name of a large city and not the

small villages where they left. Also, the town name may have a phonetic spelling. Still, use all town names as clues to be sorted out when you have completed your list.

**MARRIAGE RECORDS.** Civil and church records may list where the bride and groom were married. I was lucky and found town names listed on these records for my ancestors. I also found many Polish priests insisted on listing in the church marriage registers where the bride and groom were baptized

**NATURALIZATION PETITIONS.** In 1906, the U.S. Congress changed the immigration law and required specific additional information in the naturalization petitions. The petition then included when and where the immigrant arrived. It also listed when and where they were born.

**PASSENGER MANIFESTS** have various formats, but all have columns indicating their last residence, and some include where the passengers were born.

**DEATH RECORDS** such as death certificates and obituaries may include information, but not always. Another caution is that these documents may not have accurate information because the person giving it may not know what is correct.

**DO NOT STOP THE SEARCH WHEN YOU FIND ONE NAME.**

Collect as many names as possible. Save all of the names that you find even if you believe the spelling is not correct. Remember that some clues give a phonetic spelling. Save every name because most countries have multiple locations for towns with the same name. So, you will need to have more than one place name to point the way.

Additionally, you should research the documents of children, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and friends of your ancestors if they were born in Poland. The place names on documents for these relatives should point to the same area as your ancestors.

This process is similar to solving a jigsaw puzzle. The town names are on the pieces, and the completed jigsaw puzzle is similar to a map showing most of the town names from the list that we compiled.

After you have exhausted your search through the documents, you will find that one of the names may be the name of the county (powiat), another one the township (gmina), another town will be the location of the parish church. Other towns on your list may be surrounding villages. All are needed to find your ancestors. You will know where you are going when you see the cluster of the names on a map.

Next month, I will cover using our list and gazetteers to find where we can find our ancestors on a map.

## AMERICAN POLONIA

## New Leadership Team at PACIM

MINNEAPOLIS — The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota elected a new team of officers on January 7, 2021.

Edyta Dudek, a computer science teacher at the University of Minnesota and former Director of the Women in Science and Engineering Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago, was named president; Adam Ramczyk, vice president; Mark Dillon, treasurer and Maciej Skorupski, secretary.

This followed general elections

on December 19 at the group's annual membership meeting that filled seven of nine board director positions.

It was the first time in the group's three-decade history that elections were conducted electronically and absentee ballots accepted.

New bylaws were also adopted that included provisions related to elections, board duties, term limits, and pre-election disclosure of conflicts of interest and relevant background.

## Radio Program Extends Time

BUFFALO, N.Y. — The Polish American Radio Program is expanding to 1.5 hours of programming in 2021.

The program will now air on Saturdays from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and every Sunday from 4:00-5:30 p.m. (ET), worldwide on Webradio.com

The program presents music from Poland introduced in English, by host Andy Gołębowski. Musical

styles range from folk to classical, from jazz to patriotic, and spiritual. Previous programs can be heard anytime, at Webradio.com under "Previous Episodes."

In addition to the online signal, the program can also be heard on WEBR 1440 AM in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

For more information, call (716) 510-7562.

## Poles Top List of National Language Speakers at Home

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Speaking the national language at home is less common in some European countries.

Not surprisingly, people in the European Union overwhelmingly speak their own country's national language when they are at home. But in some EU nations, sizable minorities speak something other than the national language in their household.

While most in Europe speak their national language at home, the share varies substantially by country. Across 14 EU countries surveyed by Pew Research Center in 2019, at least eight-in-ten adults say they speak their coun-

try's official national language at home, including nearly everyone in Poland (100%), Greece (98%), Hungary (97%), France (97%) and Italy (96%). Very small percentages in these five countries speak another language at home, including 1% of people in Greece who speak Albanian and 1% of people in France who speak Arabic. (If survey respondents indicated they speak more than one language at home, they were asked to pick the language they use most often. The survey did not ask about languages that people may use at work or may have learned in school.)

In other EU countries, the share of adults who speak the national

language at home is smaller, including 90% in Germany, 89% in Slovakia, 81% in Spain and 80% in Bulgaria. These more diverse linguistic environments sometimes reflect immigration patterns or unique local conditions.

Across the Atlantic, meanwhile, most in the United States (79%) report that they speak English at home, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 American Community Survey. Roughly 13% of adults in the United States speak Spanish most often.

The U.S. does not have an official language, though 31 states have passed legislation making English their official language.

## Give your kids and grandkids a gift of their personal Polish heritage!

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If interested, kindly airmail a \$19 personal or bank (cashier's) check or money order (adding \$15 for each additional surname you wish to have researched) to Polonia's long-standing Warsaw correspondent and name researcher: Robert Strybel, ul. Kaniowska 24, 01-529 Warsaw, Poland

You will also be able to check your family records in Poland, track down ancestral homesteads and graves or possibly even turn up long-lost relatives thanks to a helpful genealogical contact sheet included with each order. To receive the results via email or for more information please contact: strybel@interia.pl.



The Prawdzic coat of arms was shared by the szlachta (gentry) lines of over 500 variously surnamed Polish families including: Baranowski, Ząb, Dąbski Sowiński, Bielski, Lang, Cybulski, Szuba, Trębski Rudzki, Dobrowolski and Gołębowski.



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## MINNESOTA VOICE

# Remembering Blanche Bernice Krbechek, a Kashubian Renaissance Woman

by Mark Dillon

A University of Michigan MBA who played Kashubian sheepskin bagpipes. The founder of an international genealogy group who sang with Holy Cross Church choir in Minneapolis. A maker of lace for Polish dancers and decorator of Polish eggs who translated Kashubian literature into English.

Blanche Krbechek was all of these, and more. The native of Dearborn, Mich. and long-time Minnesota resident died at age 83 on Nov. 11 in Chojnice, Kashubia, Poland, having fulfilled the dream of returning to the land of her ancestors a decade ago.

"We are grateful for her beautiful and truthful life," said Fr. Cyprian Czap, Parochial Vicar for Polonia at Holy Cross, at a memorial Mass for Krbechek on December 2. "She gave all of her time and talents and energy to serving people."

Adds Edyta Dudek, the newly elected president of the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota (PACIM), and a fellow choir member: "Blanche was a very kind and special person. When you talked with her, you felt she was

genuinely interested in you as a person."

Krbechek's leadership skills matched her artistic and musical talents. She founded and was the former president of the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota and the founder and president of the Kashubian Association of North America for which she published the quarterly periodical *Friend of the Kashubian People*.

A 1997 article states that, in founding the periodical, Krbechek described what she saw as a need for Americans whose ancestors had arrived a century earlier from the Baltic coast and points nearby to understand their true Kashubian identity rather than assume they were German based on U.S. records.

"People were excited when they found naturalization papers telling that their ancestors renounced allegiance to the King of Prussia," she wrote. "First, they had to learn about the Partitions" and then "it was time to realize they were not simply Polish, but actually belonged to a special group of Poles, an ethnic minority – the Kashubs."

At the Polanie Club, a Minnesota Polish women's club, Krbechek



Kashubian Polish American Blanche Krbechek with her sheepskin bagpipes. She founded and was former president of the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota and president of the Kashubian Association.

served as treasurer. Former president Marta Swica remembers her as a person of exceptional intelligence and organizational talents whose knowledge made her "a great asset" to the group.

Krbechek translated works of Kashubian literature in collaboration with her friend Stanislaw Frymark,

Alicja Frymark, and Katarzyna Gawlik-Luiken. This included *The Life and Adventures of Remus*. Gdańsk: Instytut Kaszubski w Gdańsku, 2008. In 2011, Krbechek and Frymark published *The Four Leafed Clover*, an English translation of Anna Łajming's 1985 short story collection *Czterolistna Koniczyna*

Krbechek's artwork included Polish paper cuttings such as an exhibit called *The Griffins at Play*. A mythological black griffin on a gold coat of arms background is Kashubia's regional culture symbol.

For her art, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland awarded Krbechek the Gloria Artis medal. Some of her paper cuttings are on exhibit at the Polish Cultural Institute and Museum in Winona, Minn.

At annual Minneapolis Polish social events such the former Bal Karnawałowy, a marti gras seasonal gala, Krbechek would perform with the Dolina Polish dance group, PACIM members recall. She made dresses for Polish dancers as well.

She is survived by two sons, John and Randolph Krbechek and two grandchildren. Her parents were Otto and Blanche (Pelagia) Pepliski Mueller and her husband was the late LeRoy Krbechek.

In its winter 2020 *Nowy Wiarus* newsletter, the Winona museum said Krbechek's "gracious smile, sparkling eyes and generous spirit will be deeply missed."

## INTERNATIONAL

## Urban Explorer Brings attention to Abandoned Memorabilia



Among the relics was a hand-embroidered "Bóg, Honor, Ojczyzna" (God, Honor, Fatherland) banner, that would have been carried by Polish veterans at parades and ceremonies.

MANCHESTER, U.K. — Photographs revealed incredible remains of abandoned memorabilia in a neglected club for World War II veterans, including banners, Polish flags, paintings, books and documents belonging to the post-war Polish community in Manchester, United Kingdom.

The author of the photographs, known only as Matt, published them on his urban exploration Facebook page "Lost Places and Forgotten Faces."

The memorabilia include veterans' banners, flags, paintings, books and documents belonging to the post-war Polonia in the city.

The club had a large concert hall, game room, information office, lounge, library, restaurant, welfare offices; a Saturday school was also

opened later.

"I was in complete shock and awe, not only with how many items were still in the building, but also what the items represented," Matt told *The First News*, adding it was "almost like finding a lost treasure."

"It's a shame to see the state of the place," he said, "not only the

vandalism but the number of books and religious materials still left sitting in there."

It is not known why the Association of Polish Veterans left all the things behind. Matt's photographs were shared by Polish internet users, eventually reaching Polish diplomatic authorities in the UK.



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john@niziol.com

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## Schools in East Germany now Offering Polish as a Second Language

LÖCKNITZ, Germany — Schools in Eastern Germany are electing to offer Polish as a second language over English, Spanish, and French.

Decades ago, Germany regarded Poland as a labor source and the place to get cheap cigarettes. All that has changed in the last ten years for the people of East Germany who increasingly feel that Berlin has left the area behind because of the aging population now living in desolate villages, abandoned by the younger populace who left the area to pursue more prosperous lives in other places.

One example is the German village of Löcknitz, a mere ten-minute drive from the Polish border. Seeking a better economic future, residents there are increasingly looking at Poland to provide that stability.

Poland has become an Eastern Europe economic powerhouse since

joining the borderless EU back in 2007. Schools in the area, such as the Randow-Spatzen kindergarten in Löcknitz, hang posters in German telling students to "Secure advantages with Polish" and include maps of the German-Polish border area complete with bullet points showing why learning the Polish language would give children a head start.

The first Polish language textbook for German high school students was introduced in 2009. At that time, just over 500 students in the eastern German province of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania were studying Polish.

Today that number has increased to over 1300 students and the report from the country's provincial Education Ministry is that the demand for Polish language instruction is growing. Dozens of schools are now offering Polish language courses.

## French Mobile Company Eyes Polish Operations

PARIS/WARSAW — French telecommunication provider Iliad offered to buy Polish mobile group Play in a \$4.2 billion deal. The offer got a cool reception from investors, as the company already faces heavy investments in France and Italy.

The surprise bid would allow Iliad, controlled by French tycoon Xavier Niel, to become Europe's sixth largest mobile operator, in a further expansion of the company's business outside France, where its low-cost mobile offers shook up the market nearly a decade ago.

Iliad has already bought a minority stake in Ireland's eir and launched in Italy in 2018.

The fierce price competition hit sales revenues overall in the Polish market, which are now stabilizing.

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FOLKLORE

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- 2-703 Busia: School Days on the Farm with My Polish Grandmother ..... \$15.00 by Leonard Kniffel / More from Kniffel's childhood growing up with his Polish grandmother in rural Michigan. "Brilliant memoir..." Hamtramck Museum Director Greg Kowalski.
2-704 Both Busia Books by Kniffel ..... \$20.00 PAJ Bookstore special. (Seasons on the Farm and School Days). SAVE \$10.00!
1-659 Poland: A History ..... \$19.95 by Adam Zamoyski / Revised and updated edition of the author's classic 1987 book, The Polish Way.
1-660 Choral Patriotism ..... \$14.95 by Stanislaus Blejwas / History of the Polish Singers Alliance of America.

HOLIDAYS

- 2-648 A Polish Christmas Eve..... \$26.95 by Rev. Dr. Czeslaw Krysa, S.T.L. / A quick and easy reference to folklore, stories, recipes, carols and decorations, with photos, illustrations, glossary, pronunciation guide, and more.

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2-401 The Chopin Trilogy sc ..... \$39.95 by David Trawinski / Interconnected novels tell the story of retired CIA officer Wisniewski, called to solve a drowning of an aerospace executive in Amsterdam.
1-161 Polish Fairy Tales ..... \$7.95 by A.J. Glinski / Trans. by Maude Ashurst Biggs. Classic tales provides a marvelous glimpse into the world of Polish legend and folklore from the mid-nineteenth.
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2-679 Polish Folklore and Myth ..... \$12.95 by Joanne Asala / Engaging folk stories includes with wycinanki illustrations.
2-612 Boy Who Wanted Wings sc ..... \$14.95
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2-203 Polish Pierogi ..... \$10.00 by Eva Gerwecki / Collection of over 150 recipes with regional variations, from New York to California.
2-302 Polish Restaurant..... \$10.00 by Jonathan Becklar / Replicates recipes taken from menus of Motor City.
2-301 Polish Girl Cookbook ..... \$10.00 by Eva Gerwecki / Another cookbook full of recipes from Detroit's Old Polish neighborhoods.

RELIGION / SPIRITUALITY

- 1-675 Seasons of the Slavic Soul..... \$14.95 A Quest for an Authentic Polish Spirituality by Claire M. Anderson. The Slavic spiritual tradition holds that everyday holiness thrives on seasons.

WORLD WAR II

- 1-662 The Volunteer ..... \$25.95 by Jack Fairweather / The true story of Polish resistance fighter Witold Pilecki's infiltration of Auschwitz.
2-642 Wearing the Letter "P" ..... \$19.95 by Sophie Hodorowicz-Knab / An unflinching, detailed portrait of a forgotten group of Nazi survivors.
2-674 The Color of Courage ..... \$19.95 by Julian E. Kulski / Remarkable diary of a boy from ages 10 to 16, who waged his own private war against the Germans.

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## BOOKS IN BRIEF

## Help for English-Speaking Katyn Massacre Historians

review by Mary E. Lanham

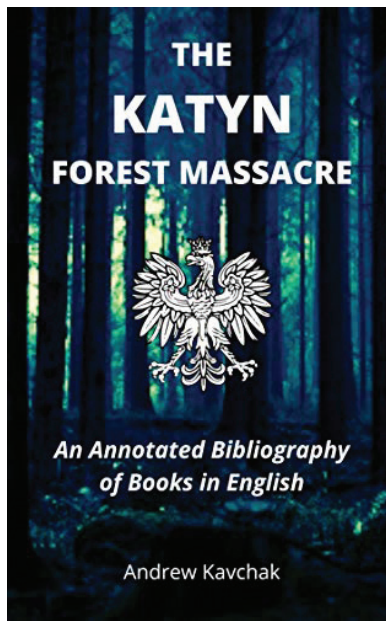
*The Katyn Forest Massacre: An Annotated Bibliography of Books in English* by Andrew Kavchak  
Andrew Kavchak 2020, 242 pp.

In the early 1990s, a secret that was kept for forty-seven years was revealed to the world. The release of this secret once and for all laid to rest who killed almost 22,000 Polish officers that were found in mass graves in 1943. For almost five decades, the Germans blamed the Soviets for the slaughter at Katyn and the Soviets blamed the Nazis. When the truth was finally revealed that Stalin signed off on the mass murder, it brought to light a half century coverup by the USSR.

One of the victims of this massacre was Andrew Kavchak's grandfather, Stanislaw Kawczak. Andrew first learned about what happened to his grandfather as a child. His father accumulated books about the Katyn massacre and spoke at an unveiling ceremony for a monument commemorating the massacre in 1980. As an adult, Andrew, who avoided reading his father's books when he was young, became driven to learn all he could about this heinous series of events. Following in his father's footsteps, Kavchak began collecting books on the topic, reading more and more. This work is an effort to curate resources in English about the massacre and the deception perpetrated by the Soviet government.

Kavchak examines the published works of over 30 individuals and organizations who contributed to the collective memory of the monstrous acts that transpired in the 1940s and as well the calculated obfuscation that followed.

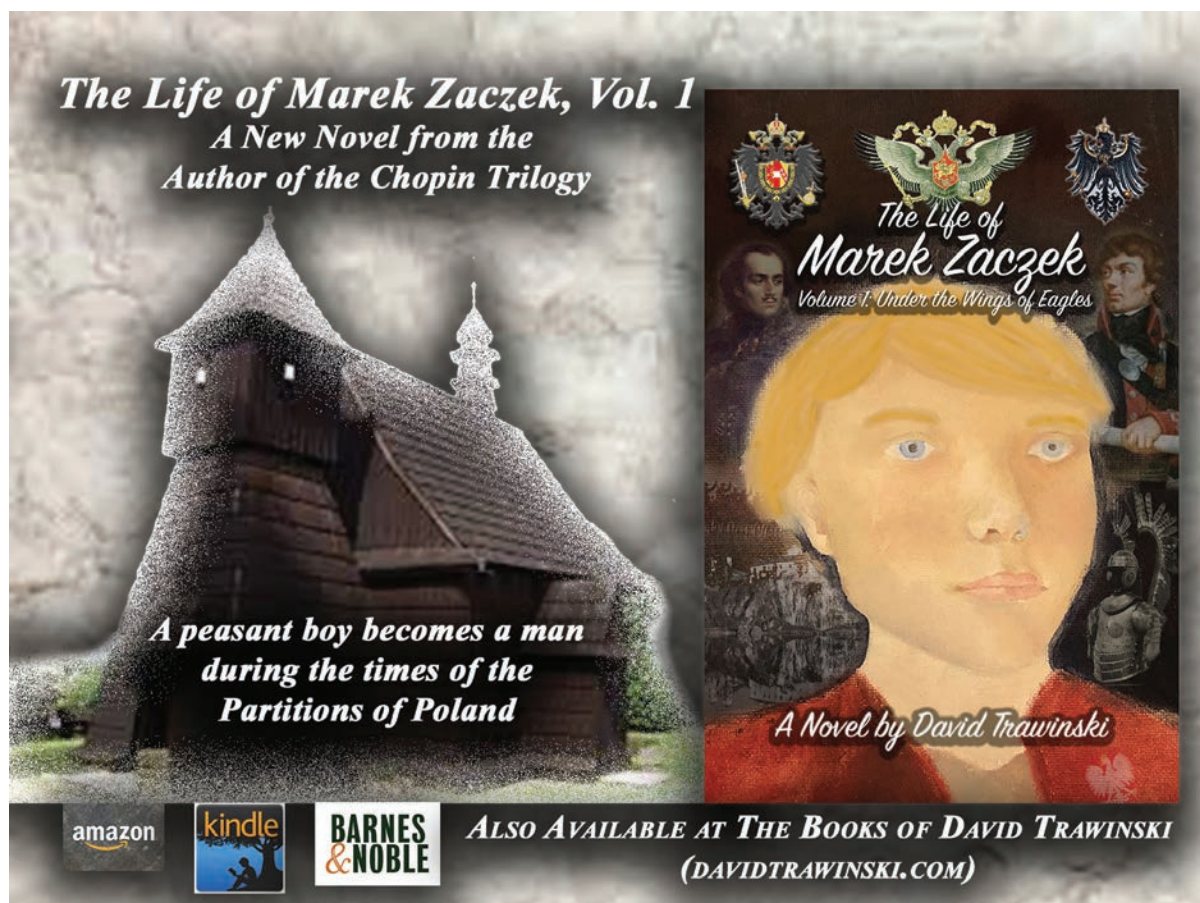
One such work that Kavchak features is that of Janusz Zawodny, a Polish army soldier, political scientist, and historian. In 1962, Zawodny's book, *Death in the Forest: The Story of the Katyn Forest Massacre* was published. Zawodny's Master's thesis in 1951 became the basis for his book. He researched primary resources about the topic including interviews with one hundred and fifty former POWs of the Soviets.



It remains, as Kavchak states, a perennial classic on the topic.

Kavchak's annotated bibliography on the Katyn Forest massacre is a well-rounded work and is a must-have for those looking to learn more about this long-covered up tragedy.

◆ ◆ ◆  
Andrew Kavchak studied political science and law and made a career in public policy in the federal civil service. He has since retired to take up writing. His other titles include *Remembering Gouzenko: The Struggle to Honour a Cold War Hero* and the English translation of his grandfather's memoirs titled *Dying Echoes: Memoirs of The War 1914 - 1920*. Born in Montreal, Canada, Kavchak later moved to Ottawa where he resides with his family.



## BOOK REVIEW

## Pulled out from under them: A memoir on the struggles of Amsterdam, N.Y.'s Polish community

review by Mark Dillon

*Too Long Ago: A Childhood Memory. A Vanished World* by David Pietrusza  
Church & Reid Books  
November 10, 2020, 325 pp.

In 1946, Hollywood celebrated the personal actions of a fictional banker who saved the close-knit family town of Bedford Falls from becoming a shadow of its former self.

Real life in the historically Polish community of Amsterdam, N.Y. from the 1960s onward has not been nearly as kind. However, this hasn't stopped one of the rug mill town's native sons, David Pietrusza, from sharing captivating memories as a Polish American Catholic.

With warmth, sincerity and a bit of saltiness, Pietrusza uses personal memoirs to detail the transformation of a 19th and early 20th century seat of Polish American traditions, faith and factories in *Too Long Ago: A Childhood Memory. A Vanished World*.

One gets a feeling of listening to stories on the porch of one of Amsterdam's two-story wood-frame duplexes on a lazy, hot, summer night or having a winter fireside chat with a Roosevelt-era uncle. That makes the 308-page *Too Long Ago* worth a read, even if one's roots are far from the banks of the Mohawk River and the Erie Canal.

From a genealogy perspective, Pietrusza's writing is frustrating.

The book lacks an index, which — given the likely readership of folks familiar with the city who might look to see if neighbors, family, businesses and institutions are mentioned — is a disappointment.

Within a casual style, Pietrusza slips in thoughtful tidbits of Polish history and insightful comments that give a multi-century perspective to the joys and struggles of Polish immigrants from the Austria-Hungarian partition, as well as a community that was once one of New York State's larger concentrations of Lithuanian Americans.

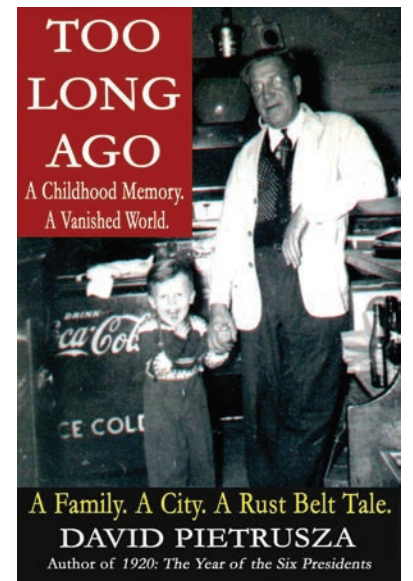
Baby boomer Catholics will enjoy Pietrusza's liturgical sidebars that recall just how genuinely important faith and church life was and is for many Polish Americans. It is a refreshing departure from memoirs of lapsed Catholic writers who vent a pedantic desire to "overcome" their religious and ethnic identity.

A less satisfying aspect of Pietrusza's work that it does not provide much analysis of the socio-political forces that undermined Amsterdam's vitality. Why does a town that once boasted of having the most millionaires per capita and gave the world Kirk Douglas and Cabbage Patch Dolls now have half the population it did in 1930 and a poverty rate nearly three times the national average?

The answer is economically complex. Still, Pietrusza's page 96 observation from Norman Davies that "crippling taxation" and "an inordinate number of petty officials" were major factors in why Poles left Galicia in the late 19th century also seems appropriate for why hundreds of Poles left Amsterdam in the late 20th.

One of the book's funnier stories is how Pietrusza's mom got John F. Kennedy's autograph when presidential candidate Kennedy came calling. In playful ways, Pietrusza makes no secret of his unwavering Democratic Party loyalties. At the same time, Pietrusza, a former Amsterdam city councilman, downplays whether decades of party opportunism and lip service to the Polish community might have contributed to making his childhood world vanish.

One can only wonder how the history of Amsterdam and New York since the 1970s might have been different if one of its daugh-



ters, the ambitious Lt. Gov. Mary Anne Krupsak — whom, Pietrusza notes, had soundly defeated Mario Cuomo during her brief rise to power — had not bucked the party machine, and then incurred its wrath, allowing the Cuomo dynasty to ascend.

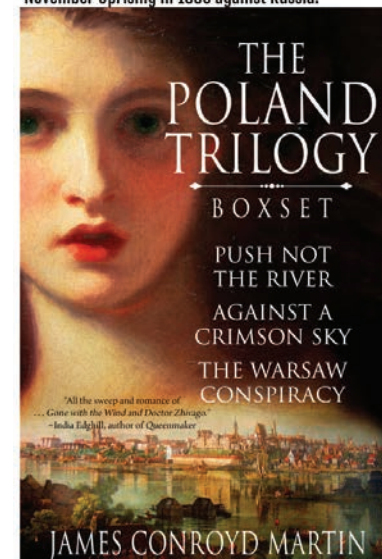
This Reagan-generation reviewer needs to make some disclosures: Amsterdam was not my hometown, but as a child I went there to visit my grandfather (who was originally from Libusza, Poland, a neighboring village to the Pietruszas' Lipinki), as well as extended family on Hibbard St., Vrooman Ave., Mathias Ave. and Frederick St.

One uncle was Joseph Dylong, a school principal who was an officer in the N.Y. Central Division of the Polish American Congress and helped many Poles become citizens. Another uncle ran Bryk's Market, famous for homemade kielbasa. An aunt was a senior officer at Amsterdam Savings & Loan Association, "The Polish Bank" that Pietrusza describes in his book, founded by Krupsak's ancestor Michael J. Wytrwal of Krakow. My family memory is of a customer-friendly bank rather than the stereotype about which the book jokes.

Like the fictional George Bailey, Amsterdam S&L employees took care that customers did not make an excess withdrawal in haste or fear, or were doing something worse. Sadly, 25 years after going public with \$125 million in deposits, all that remains at 161 Church Street, the bank's former headquarters, built on the site of Pietrusza family gatherings, is an empty shell up for sale.

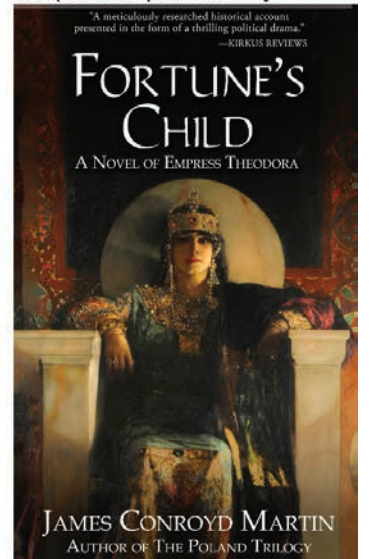
### Perfect Gifts for the Reader

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## NEW BOOKS

## The Commonwealth has a hero in Griffin Brady's *The Winged Warrior Series*

In *The Heart of a Hussar*, the first book of Griffin Brady's Winged Warrior Series, Jacek Dąbrowski, a ferocious warrior in a company of winged hussars. He dreams of gaining the king's recognition and manor lands of his own, battling the Muscovites and Tatars threatening Poland's borders.

After a battle that kills his lieutenant and puts him in the cross hairs of his superior, Dąbrowski deviates from his ordinarily unemotional mindset and rescues fifteen-year-old Oliwia from her devastated Muscovite village. His act of mercy sets into motion unstoppable consequences that ripple through his well-ordered life — and cause him to irretrievably lose his heart.

Meanwhile, his treacherous captain and a mysterious enemy looming on the horizon threaten to destroy everything Dąbrowski holds dear.

In *The Winged Warrior Series*, Brady's debut in the historical fiction genre, Dąbrowski's fortitude will be tested again and again as he endures battles no man should in his fight to reclaim his life, his country, and his love. Purchase *The Winged Warrior Series* on Amazon now.

*The Heart of a Hussar*, Book One in *The Winged Warrior Series*, has received recognition as the third-place winner in the Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers' 2018 Colorado Gold Contest and a finalist in the Northern Colorado Writers' 2017 Top of the Mountain Award.

Brady stumbled into the world of Polish winged hussars while doing research for another novel and has been avidly researching and writing about them ever since. "I was hooked," she says of this discovery. "I fell in love with their rich history of nobility, discipline, and valor and immersed myself for weeks in Poland among historians in the very locations in the novel."

Brady weaves her knowledge and passion for this history into her writing: "The more I learn, the more inspired I am to bring their underrepresented stories to light."

Find more information about Brady and her work on her website at [www.griffin-brady.com](http://www.griffin-brady.com) or by emailing her at [griffin@griffin-brady.com](mailto:griffin@griffin-brady.com).

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## HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO STYLE

## Congratulations to Judge Diann Marsalek



Judge Marsalek and Illinois Congressman Michael Quigley.

by Geraldine Balut Coleman

CHICAGO — On January 4, Timothy Evans, Chief Justice of the Circuit Court of Cook County, appointed **Diann K. Marsalek** to be the first acting presiding judge over all traffic courts. This is a newly created position.

Since May 2014, Judge Marsalek has been the supervising justice of the First Municipal District's Traffic Court, where she oversees judges assigned to traffic court as their first assignment. She was part of a committee that worked on improving the training of new judges and has trained approximately 150 judges.

Marsalek, a lifetime Chicagoan, was raised in Chicago's North Side Lakeview neighborhood and graduated from the former Immaculata High School. She went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts Degree in political science from DePaul University followed by a Master's in sociology from DePaul as well. She went on to acquire her law degree from Northern Illinois University (NIU). While a student at NIU, she was active in its Women's Caucus and served as president of the Student Bar Association. She has comment-

ed that her favorite law classes were Constitutional Law, Domestic Law, and Juvenile Law. In her last two years of law school, she clerked in the Illinois attorney general's office. After graduation, Marsalek continued working there for 14 years working primarily on issues relating to the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Marsalek was first appointed to the Cook County bench in 2011 as a deputy clerk of the Court. She later served as chief legal counsel for the Department of Corrections, as an assistant attorney general, and as a legal advisor to the Illinois Secretary of State. She has had extensive jury trial experience in civil rights cases heard before the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

As a result of the November 6, 2018 election, Marsalek retained her judgeship on the Cook County Circuit Court with 78.8% of the vote.

She has affiliations with the Advocate Society for Polish American attorneys, the Justinian Society for Italian American lawyers, and was president of the Central Lakeview Neighbors. She also served as president for the Illinois Judges Foundation and on the board of directors of the Illinois Judges Association. She is the daughter of Edward Marsalek, retired judge of the Cook County Circuit Court, Housing Division.

**SCHILLER PARK RESIDENT FINDS IMPORTANT CONNECTION TO CHICAGO'S POLONIAN HISTORY.** As far back as **Kenneth Sherman Michaels**, 87, of Schiller Park can remember, his family roots were assumed to be Norwegian on his mother's side and German on his father's side. It was 12 years ago while watching a PBS-TV, WTTW Channel 11, program about Polish Americans in Chicago that he discovered that his paternal ancestors were Polish. He didn't think much about it. Then in September 2020, he learned that one of his ancestors, **Anton Schermann**, also known as Antoni Smagorzewski, also known as Smarzewski in various historic documents, was an outstanding Pole who was a social activist, an entrepreneur as a cabinet maker, a grocery store owner, and butcher shop owner. And, as some sources indicate, the first Polish settler in Chicago. Coincidentally, his wife's maiden name was Schermer.

**Carol Michaels**, Kenneth's wife, happens to have a genealogy hobby. So she began to research her own roots and also her husband's. Using traditional methods, she didn't get



Kenneth Sherman Michaels and Carol Michaels.

very far, until Kristen Bellendir, the Michaels's granddaughter, discovered Anton Schermann and many more details about him through *ancestry.com*.

The documents showed he was responsible for bringing thousands of immigrants to the Chicago area and for helping them with room and board and finding employment. Among some of his other accomplishments were helping to organize the St. Stanislaus Kostka Society, donating land for the church, and becoming the founder and first president of the church.

According to additional sources, Anton's family line is known for its longevity. His mother was said to have lived to be 99, his grandmother until 106, and his maternal grandmother to 116 years of age.

When the COVID-19 pandemic ends, the Michaels family intend to visit The Polish Museum of America and Graceland Cemetery, where the Schermanns are buried. That family history, which they now follow thanks to their own curiosity, the help of their granddaughter, and internet technology, now has added new historical family names and facts. This new family tree will be an inspiration to the Michaels children, grandchildren, and more family members in the future.

**HISTORICAL POLISH PARISHES HAVE NOT CHANGED, BUT...** It's now official, but still a bit confusing. Another round of parish consolidations and closings was announced by the Archdiocese of Chicago on December 18, 2020. Changes that were made in the Northwest Side Jefferson Park neighborhood include **St. Constance**, a heavily Polish parish, and **St. Robert Bellarmine** will be merging with both churches offering Sunday worship services. This means that both churches will be preserved under a single new name. Also, **Our Lady of Victory** will be closed by the end of 2021 and eventually sold. **St.**

**Bartholomew** and **St. Pascal** will also merge, offering two Sunday Masses in one location. **St. Viator** and **St. Wenceslaus** will merge into one parish with two "centers of worship." The church buildings will not be sold.

Thus far, 13 churches on the North Side and Northwest Side of Chicago have undergone another round of restructuring ordered by the Archdiocese of Chicago under its Renew My Church initiative. **St. Cornelius**, **St. Tarcissus**, and **St. Thecla** have already merged into **St. Elizabeth of the Trinity**. No changes were expected for the historic and oldest Polish parishes: **Holy Trinity**, **St. Stanislaus Kostka**, and **St. John Cantius**, which will undergo only minor administrative updates. All mergers are to take effect on July 1, 2021.

Cardinal Blase Cupich will choose the new parish names with input from parishioners, but the names of the schools will not change. In addition, there will be five schools: **St. Constance**, **St. Pascals** (Pope Francis Global Academy), **St. Elizabeth of the Trinity**, **St. Robert Bellarmine**, and **St. Viator**, that will cease to be administered by individual parishes and will come under the direct supervision of the Archdiocese.

The Renew My Church initiative, originally announced by Cardinal Cupich in February 2016, determined that the restructuring of the parishes was necessitated by the declining number of parishioners, the shortage of priests, parish financial problems, and the need for major renovations at some churches and school buildings.

The Archdiocese of Chicago estimated that, by the end of 2030, there will be approximately 240 priests to minister to the current 344 parishes. Currently there are 750 clergymen including retired priests. In the 1980s Chicago had more than 1,260 priests.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Since **Auschwitz** has been so widely associated with the Jewish Holocaust, not many people know that the German death camp's first prisoners were Polish Catholics. Only later did the first Jewish shipments begin arriving.

**You can find interesting things** about Polish music and culture, learn the words and guitar chords to various Polish hymns, songs and carols as well as hear different kinds of Polish music online at

[www.poloniamusic.com](http://www.poloniamusic.com).

There are two words for "uncle" in Polish: "stryjek" is the father's brother and "wujek" — the mother's brother. But that distinction is being increasingly blurred and "wujek" is becoming the standard word for uncle.

The village of **Żywkowo** in northern Poland's Mazury region is the country's stork capital. More storks build their nests there than in any other Polish locality.

## Great Winter Reading

The Diary of Countess  
Anna Maria Berezowska



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EDITED BY JOHN A. STELNICKI AND IRIS HART

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## POLISH CHEF

## FOOD

# Polish Lenten fare: zur, fried fish, herring, pancakes, pierogi

by Robert Strybel

Wondering what to serve your family during Lent? Or how to provide added attractions to the same old parish or club fish fry? Here are some typically Polish Lenten dishes to consider.

**HERRING IN OIL (śledź w oleju):** Drain 12 – 16 oz. jar marinated herring, discarding onions and spices. Plunge into cold water, drain and pat dry. Halve and slice thin 2 onions, place in pot, scald with boiling water and after 1-2 min drain. Combine herring and onions, place in clean jar and drench with salad oil of choice to cover. Refrigerate overnight. Serve with plain boiled potatoes or rye bread.

**FRIED FISH (ryba smażona):** Wash and dry 2 -3 lbs fresh-water or ocean fish fillets. Sprinkle with lemon juice, intersperse with onion slices, salt well and refrigerate several hrs or overnight. When ready to use, discard onions, rinse fillets, dry on absorbent paper, salt & pepper, dredge in flour, shaking off excess, and fry on both sides in hot oil until golden brown on the outside and fully cooked on the inside. Serve with horseradish sauce: 1 part prepared horseradish and 1 part sour cream plus a bit of sugar to taste.

**LENTEN RYEMEAL SOUP (postny zur):** In pot combine 4 c water, a chopped onion and cook until onion is tender. Add 2-3 c “żurek” (bottled liquid ryemeal sour available at Polish delis), 1/4 of a mushroom bouillon cube and 1 bud crushed garlic. Stir in 2 T flour dissolved in 1/2 c water, bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer 2-3 min. Season with salt, pepper and marjoram and serve over hard-cooked egg slices and cubed farmer cheese and/or cubed cooked potatoes. Provide horseradish for those who want a zingier soup.

**CRÊPES (naleśniki):** In bowl combine 1 scant c milk with 2 beaten eggs and 1/8 t salt and whisk until smooth. Gradually add 1 1/4 c flour, sifted, whisking constantly until lump-free and air blisters appear on surface. Whisk in about 1 c water – or just enough to get a thin, pourable batter. Lightly grease frying pan with crumpled-up paper towel dipped in oil. (Note: Special non-stick crêpe pans are available!) Pour in a little batter, tilt frying pan to coat entire surface and fry on fairly high heat. Flip crêpe over and cook briefly on other side. Stack fried naleśniki on inverted dinner plate. Re-grease pan before adding more batter. Fillings include savory cheese (farmer cheese mashed with sour cream), sweet cheese (farmer cheese mixed with sugar and



**POTATO PANCAKES (placki kartoflane):** Grate 2-1/4 lbs peeled potatoes (by hand or in food processor), transfer to sieve and let drip into bowl. Allow drippings to settle, pour off liquid from top and add the white sediment (starch) to the grated potatoes. Add 1-2 grated onion, about 2 T flour, 2 eggs and salt & pepper. Mix well and spoon batter into hot fat. With spatula flatten pancakes slightly, since thin ones cook better. Fry to a nice crispy, golden brown on both sides and drain on absorbent paper. Serve immediately sweet or savory (just salted a little).

raw egg yolk, jam or preserves of choice (imported Polish powidła [plum butter] is excellent). Provide sour cream.

**RAISED PANCAKES (racuchy):** Beat 2 c sour milk or buttermilk with 2 eggs. Beat in 2 c + 2 T flour until smooth. Stir in 1 t baking powder and 1 t baking soda. (Optional: Add 1/2 t liquid vanilla extract to batter if desired.) Spoon batter into 1/4" deep hot oil, fry roughly 3" pancakes to a nice golden-brown on both sides and drain on absorbent paper. Add more oil to frying pan as needed. Serve hot, dusted with confectioner's sugar or topped with preserves, jam or plum butter (powidła).

**PIEROGI DOUGH (ciasto na pierogi):** Combine 2 c flour, 1 c dairy sour cream, 1 small egg and 1/2 t salt. Work ingredients together to form a smooth dough and knead briefly. Roll out 1/3 of the dough lightly floured board, leaving the remainder under a warm inverted bowl so it doesn't dry out. With drinking-glass or biscuit-cutter cut dough-sheet into rounds. Place a spoonful of filling (see below) just off center of each dough round, cover filling with larger dough flap and pinch edges together to seal. Cook in boiling lightly salted water. When they float up, cook a while longer. Test one for doneness.

**CHEESE & POTATO PIEROGI (ruskie pierogi [z serem i kartoflami]):** Cook 1 lb peeled potatoes in boiling salted water until tender, drain, mash and set aside to cool. To potatoes add 1/2 lb farmer cheese or dry cottage cheese, mashed with potato-masher or processed to a ground-like consistency in processor, 2 finely chopped onions sautéed

in 2 T oil or butter until tender and lightly browned. Mix ingredients well and season with salt & pepper. As toppings, provide sour cream (or plain low-fat yogurt for dieters) or chopped onions fried in oil.

**CHEESE PIEROGI (pierogi z serem):** Combine 3/4 lb farmer cheese or dry cottage cheese, pulverized to a powder in food-processor, 1/4 t salt, 2 t sugar, 1 T lemon juice and 1 raw egg yolk into a smooth filling. The cooked pierogi may be served with melted butter, confectioner's sugar, sour cream or plain yogurt (for weight-watchers).

**POTATO & ONION PIEROGI (pierogi z kartoflami):** Cook 6-7 med potatoes until tender, drain well, steaming off moisture, and mash thoroughly are put through ricer. Dice 2-3 onions and fry in a little oil, stirring until full cooked and golden brown. Combine with mashed potatoes and salt & pepper to taste. If filling seems to soft and mushy, add a heaping T or so plain dry bread crumbs.

## Polish Museum in Switzerland gains Paderewski memento

The Polish Museum in Rapperswil, Switzerland, has added an extraordinary piece to its collection of mementoes connected to Ignacy Jan Paderewski, the celebrated pianist, composer and statesman: an original pianola roll with a recording by the musician.

Switzerland is also home to Paderewski's black Coupé de Ville Cadillac, which recently was put on the sale bloc. The automobile from 1928 was created by Gangloff Genève Zurich, and has a mileage of just 569 miles.

## The Polish-Jewish Food Connection

Bagels, Challah, Latkes ...

by Barbara Betlejewska

Bagels, challah, and latkes are often thought to be Jewish, but are they really?

Most of the entire world's Jewish people lived in Poland for about a thousand years and probably borrowed these and many other Polish dishes. Likewise, there are many Jewish dishes that have made their way into Polish cookbooks, too.

Jewish latkes (potato pancakes), for example, are known in Polish *placki ziemniaki* (plats-kee zyem-nyah-kee) or *placki kartoflany*. There is really no difference between Jewish and Polish rye bread.

How do we know that these are really Polish cuisine and not the other way around? No one knows with complete certainty. Jewish bread maven and cookbook author Stanley

Ginsberg said wherever Jews established communities in Europe they adopted the local breads — perhaps modified slightly to reflect the strictures of Jewish dietary laws. And so, the dark, sweet-sour ryes of Lithuania are really every bit as Jewish as the light caraway ryes of southern Poland and Ukraine.

## February 9 is National Bagel Day. Grab a half-dozen or so and enjoy the ancient recipe that has its roots in Poland.

Jews reached Poland in the Tenth Century, and Russia in the Twelfth. Along the way, single young men occasionally married local women. The European girls brought their cooking and baking skills with them, as the men of that era seldom cooked or baked at home. Could this explain why the Polish braided sweet bread *chalka* (hhaow-kah) is as loved as its Jewish version, known as *challah*. (If you google “foto chalka,” you will find hundreds of photos of all different types of home-baked Polish variations on this recipe with many different fillings and toppings.)

Another place where recipes mingled were in the kitchens of wealthier Jewish households, where

Polish peasant girls were often hired out to work as cooks and domestic help.

From the founding of the Kingdom of Poland around 1025 through the early years of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth created in 1569, Poland was the most Jewish-tolerant country in Europe. Known as *paradisus judaeorum* (Latin for “paradise of the Jews”), Poland became a shelter for persecuted and expelled European Jews and the home to the world's largest Jewish




Polish braided sweet bread *chalka* (hhaow-kah) is as loved as its Jewish version, known as *challah*

community of the time. According to some sources, about three-quarters of the world's Jews lived in Poland by the middle of the 16th century, where — because of Polish laws — they functioned as a “middleman” minority. There, they managed the estates of nobles, ran most small businesses, and became money lenders.

If there is one food we know the Jews borrowed from the Poles, it is the bagel. In her 2009 book, “The Bagel: The Surprising History of a Modest Bread,” Maria Balinska discounts the popular legend that it was invented in 1683 as a stirrup-shaped tribute to the Polish king Jan Sobieski, who saved the city of Vienna from Turkish conquest. That's a catchy story, but bagels had already been mentioned in written records from Kraków, Poland as early as 1610, and a similar-looking ringed Polish bread called *obwarzanek* (ohb-va-zhah-nek) dates back to 1394. The Polish noun *obwarzanek* derives from the verb *obwarzać*, “to parboil,” which refers to the distinctive technique of boiling the dough before baking. If you are so inclined to make your own, *Polish Heritage Cookery* by Robert and Maria Strybel includes a recipe for *obwarzanek*.

Baker guild laws prevented Jewish bakers from making *obwarzanek* until King Jan Sobieski granted them permission to do so. Their version became the popular Jewish bagel, which comes from Yiddish *beygl*, which comes from Middle High German *boug*, meaning ring. Polish Jews immigrating to the United States brought bagels with them, and now you can find this tasty treat everywhere.

By the way, February 9 is National Bagel Day, so be sure to grab a half-dozen or so and enjoy the ancient recipe that has its roots in Poland.





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# PAHA Announces 2020 Awards and Prizes

CHICAGO — Every year, the **Polish American Historical Association** (PAHA) recognizes scholars, community activists, artists, long-serving PAHA members, and organizations committed to promoting all aspects of the Polish American experience.

It usually celebrates its awardees during an official awards ceremony that accompanies its annual conference, which takes place every year in January. Due to the ongoing public health crisis, PAHA has decided to cancel its conference, and thus will not have an opportunity to celebrate the 2020 awardees in person in January 2021, as originally planned.

PAHA hopes to be able to recognize their impressive achievements in January 2022, when it meets for its annual conference and awards ceremony in New Orleans.

## 2020 Awardees



Pacyga

**Oskar Halecki Prize**, which recognizes an important book or monograph on the Polish experience in the United States, goes to **Dominik Pacyga's American Warsaw: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of Polish Chicago** (University of Chicago Press, 2019).

The book is a masterful example of how the highest academic research standards can be implemented to produce a captivating and wide-ranging narrative for readers in academia and far beyond. Pacyga's *American Warsaw* is a must-read for anyone interested in migration, evolution of ethnic communities, process of acculturation in the United States, and the history of Chicago. The book "chronicles more than a century of immigration, and later emigration back to Poland, showing how the community has continually redefined what it means to be Polish in Chicago. [Pacyga] takes us from the Civil War era until today, focusing on how three major waves of immigrants, refugees, and fortune seekers shaped and then redefined

the Polonia. Pacyga also traces the movement of Polish immigrants from the peasantry to the middle class and from urban working-class districts dominated by major industries to suburbia. He documents Polish Chicago's alignments and divisions: with other Chicago ethnic groups; with the Catholic Church; with unions, politicians, and city hall; and even among its own members. And he explores the ever-shifting sense of *Polskość*, or "Polishness."

**The Joseph Swastek Prize**, which is awarded annually by the editorial board members of *Polish American Studies* for the best article published during the previous year in a given volume of *Polish American Studies*, goes to **Joshua C. Blank** for his article "Stills in the Hills: Moonshine Memories from around Canada's First Polish Kashub Community" (vol. 76, no. 1, Spring 2019). According to the editorial board, Blank's essay engages in meaningful scholarship in the area of food studies, examining the formation of ethnicity through the lens of consumption, while highlighting an understudied experience of Canadian Kashubs. The author combines anthropological and historical research to present a topic of important social and cultural consequences in the diaspora.



Sloma

**Skalny Civic Achievement Award** honors individuals or groups who advance PAHA's goals of promoting research and awareness of the Polish American experience and/or have made significant contributions to Polish or Polish American community and culture. This year's Skalny goes to **Robert A. Sloma**. Sloma, native of Syracuse, N.Y., is an archaeologist by profession who also researches and writes about Polish American topics. He is currently working on a larger project on a Syracuse Police officer from the early 20th century, Janusz Korwin Bienkowski, who,

in addition to being a police officer, was a very gifted painter. Sloma is also the founder and an avid contributor to Spokolonia, the "Virtual Dom Polski" of Spokane's Polish community. Spokolonia promotes and propagates topics pertinent to Polonia. In addition, Sloma organizes demonstrations of Polish gardening and cooking, both in person and online.



Pease

**Amicus Poloniae Award**, which recognizes significant contributions enhancing knowledge of Polish and Polish American heritage by individuals not belonging to the Polish American community, goes to **Dr. Neal Pease**. Pease is professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he specializes in the history of Poland and Central Europe, Christianity (especially Catholic Church), modern Europe, and sport, particularly baseball in the United States. His 2009 book *Rome's Most Faithful Daughter: The Catholic Church and Independent Poland, 1914-1939* is a co-winner of the 2010 Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies /Orbis Book Prize for Polish Studies. He has also published numerous articles on 20th-century Polish history, history of the Catholic church, and history of sport, including history of Polish American contributions to Americans sports. Among his numerous contributions to the field of Polish and Polish American Studies, Pease has served as editor in chief of *The Polish Review*, board member of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America, and member of the editorial board of *Polish American Studies*. He has also been a long-serving board member of PAHA. Pease is currently the organization's first vice-president and in January 2021, he will begin his

term as PAHA's president.

**James Pula Distinguished Service Award** is given occasionally to a member of PAHA who has rendered valuable and sustained service to the organization. This year, the award goes to **Dr. Anna Mazurkiewicz**.

Mazurkiewicz is associate professor in the History Department at the University of Gdansk. Her areas of research and teaching expertise include the United States after World War II, U.S.-Polish diplomatic relations, media system in the United States, U.S. policy towards the countries of East Central Europe, political activity of refugees from East Central Europe in the United States after World War II, and political emigration from East Central Europe in 1945-1989. She has been a long-serving member of PAHA and in the years 2017-2018 served as the organization's president. Although Mazurkiewicz is an accomplished researcher and university educator, this award recognizes her truly exceptional service for PAHA. In the words of one PAHA member who nominated her for the award, "Ania has been a mainstay of PAHA for many years, organizing conferences, including the eminently successful 75th anniversary celebration in Chicago, serving as *Polish American Studies* book review editor for Poland, obtaining grants to support PAHA activities, and promoting the organization to potential new members. In addition to her direct activities in PAHA, she has also supported the organization by arranging co-sponsorships and other public relations exposure, arranging for PAHA members to be invited to and attend international conferences, and editing for the publication of the excellent volumes that came from one of her Gdansk conferences and featured several PAHA participants."

**Creative Arts Prize** recognizes the contributions in the field of creative arts by individuals or groups who have promoted an awareness of the Polish experience in the Ameri-



Drs. Pula and Mazurkiewicz

cas. We are thrilled to award two Creative Arts Prizes in 2020, one to author and educator **Leslie Pietrzyk** and one to **PRCUA Gwiazda Dancers**.



Pietrzyk

**Leslie Pietrzyk** is a writer and teacher of creative writing. Two of her novels, *Pears on a Willow Tree* and *Reversing the River*, deal with the Polish experience in America and explore what it means to be Polish or Polish American in the United States. She has also published novels *Silver Girl* and *A Year and a Day* as well as a collection of related short stories, *This Angel on My Chest*. Her short fiction has appeared in *The Gettysburg Review*, *The Iowa Review*, *New England Review*, *The Sun*, *TriQuarterly*, and *Shenandoah*. She holds a B.A. in English/Creative Writing from Northwestern University and an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from American University. She lives in Alexandria, Virginia, and teaches in the Masters in Writing program at Johns Hopkins University, as well as the Low-Res MFA at Converse College.

**PRCUA Gwiazda Dancers** was founded in 1960 and is based in Hamtramck, Mich.. The group strives to promote and preserve Polish folk culture through song and dance in the Metro Detroit area. In addition to its folk performances (over 30 in 2019), the group seeks to enrich its community through volunteer events yearlong. These include the Empty Bowls Project with Cass Community Social Services, the Give Thanks Event with the Boll Family YMCA, and various outreach programs to aging and disabled veterans in conjunction with the Polish Legion of American Veterans. The director, choreographer, officers, dancers, and their families consistently work to promote Polish folk culture, the Polish experience, and the city of Hamtramck.



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## Polish American Historical Association

The Polish American Historical Association was established in December 1942 as a special commission of the The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America to collect, compile and publish information about

Polish Americans. In October 1944, it was reorganized as a national American society to promote study and research in the history and social background of Americans of Polish descent. The Association, which was incorporated under the laws of Illinois in 1972, strives to assist and cooperate with all individuals and organizations interested in Polish American life and history. Contributions in support of the work of the Association are tax-exempt.

Regular one-year membership to the Association is \$40.00. (\$25.00 for students) made payable to the Polish American Historical Association.

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## SPORTS

# Hall of Famer Phil Niekro dead at 81

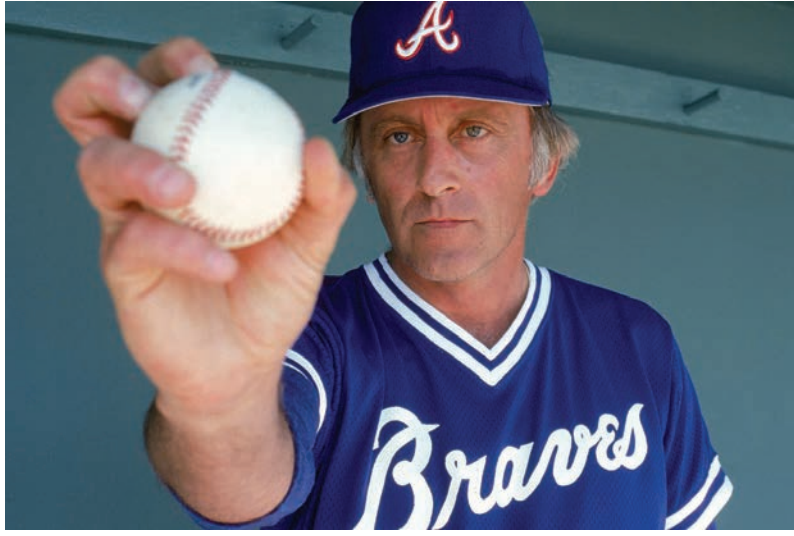
by Tom Tarapacki

Beloved Hall of Fame pitcher **Phil Niekro** passed away after a battle with cancer at the age of 81. Over his 24-year playing career, Niekro had 318 wins, pitched 5,404 innings and recorded 3,342 strikeouts. He also won five Gold Gloves for his fielding.

Phil's grandfather, Jozef Niekra, was born in Poland and came to West Virginia in 1901, where he found work in the coal mines. He married Magdalena "Maggie" Mieszegr, also a Polish immigrant. They Americanized the name to Niekro, and in 1913 Phil Niekro, Sr. was born. Both his parents died before he turned five, and the community helped him get through school until he was 15, when he also went into the mines. He married another Polish immigrant orphaned young, Henrietta "Ivy" Klinkoski. They had three children, Phyllis, Phil, Jr., and Joe, and settled in Lansing, Ohio, seven miles west of Wheeling, W.V.

Phil Jr. grew up in the Ohio Valley, which produced some outstanding athletes, including fellow Hall of Fame (Polish and Baseball) member Bill Mazeroski and Phil's childhood best friend, basketball great John Havlicek (John was of Czech descent on his father's side and Croatian on his mother's). Phil's dad hoped that his son would have a better life than one spent working in the mines. He encouraged athletics, and even taught him the knuckleball, which became Phil's signature pitch. Hard to hit, catch and pitch, Niekro was one of the rare pitchers to throw it effectively. The goal of a knuckleball is to eliminate almost all of the spin on the baseball, causing it to flutter unpredictably on its way to the plate.

Phil was also an outstanding basketball and football player, but opted for a baseball contract with the Braves in 1958. He made it to the majors in 1964, and by 1967 Niekro was one of the top pitchers in the big leagues, leading the National League that year with an ERA of 1.87.



Phil Niekro

A 23-13 season in 1969 established the late-blooming Niekro as one of baseball's best. He was also one of the most durable, averaging 335 innings a season from 1977 through 1979. He was the last pitcher to post back-to-back seasons of at least 300 innings pitched. Niekro threw a no-hitter against the Padres on Aug. 5, 1973.

"Knucksie" won his 300th career game on the final day of the 1985 season by throwing only one knuckleball — on the last pitch of the game.

Niekro and his late brother Joe broke the record for the most victories by a brother combination with 539, previously held by Jim and Gaylord Perry. Phil's 24 major league seasons also included stints with Yankees, Indians and Blue Jays. Niekro finished with a record 318-274 and a 3.35 ERA.

Playing for the lowly Atlanta Braves for 21 of his 24 seasons, Niekro never got the chance to pitch in a World Series.

Niekro was known for his passion for the polka, and once said that his main form of exercise was polka dancing. Friend Jimmy Sturr even recorded the "Hey! Niekro Polka" in his honor. When he beat the record set by the Perry brothers in 1987, while pitching for Cleveland, Phil commented "you can't find good polka music on a Tuesday night in Cleveland. If it had been Saturday, I'd have raised some

hell!"

Known as a humanitarian, Niekro was honored with the Lou Gehrig Award, Roberto Clemente Award and Brian Piccolo Award. He managed the Silver Bullets, an all-women baseball team, in the late 1990s. Niekro was elected to the Polish American Sports Hall of Fame in 1990 and the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1997.

"He is for sure one of the most beloved Braves of all time, there's no question about that," said former Braves pitcher Tom Glavine. "Obviously his statistics are what they are as a baseball player. You just don't hear many people, if any, ever say anything bad about him. I've never heard anybody say they didn't like Knucksie. That says a lot."

**STEFANSKI STAYED HOME, BUT BROWNS STILL WON.** The Cleveland Browns secured a 48-37 win over the Pittsburgh Steelers in the AFC Wild Card round, even though head coach **Kevin Stefanski** could not be with the team due to a positive COVID-19 test. As Stefanski watched from his basement at home, the Browns got their first playoff victory since 1994.

The 38-year-old rookie coach couldn't have any contact with his

players or coaches during the game. However, as soon as it ended, the team called Stefanski and welcomed him to their postgame celebration.

"It's Kevin's team," said special team coordinator Mike Priefer, who filled in for Stefanski as acting head coach. "The foundation has been set."

**BEST OF THE BEST.** Travis Kelce of the Chiefs made his third appearance on the official NFL All Pro team as a unanimous selection. He just completed his fifth consecutive 1,000-plus-yard season, and his 1,416 yards established a new single-season record for tight ends.

Patriots' **Gunner Olszewski** was named first team punt returner.

the Treble — the Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup — in 2019-20. He also led Poland to Euro 2020 qualification and was named the 2019-20 UEFA Men's Player of the Year in October. He was considered the leading candidate for the prestigious Ballon d'Or Award, but that was canceled due to COVID-19.

**HISTORIC SEASON.** Travis Kelce enjoyed one of the best seasons a tight end has ever experienced in the NFL. The 31-year-old Kansas City Chief had 105 receptions for 1416 yards and 11 TDs, finishing the season just 119 receiving yards away from leading the entire league. That's something unheard of for a tight end, especially consid-



Lexi Donarski (right), Iowa State's five-star recruit.

The undrafted free agent averaged 17.2 yards a return his season.

Saints' right tackle **Ryan Ramczyk**, despite having off-season knee surgery and suffering a concussion during the season, was named second team All Pro.

**Tyler Biadasz** of Dallas, a first-year offensive lineman out of Wisconsin, was named the All-Rookie center by the website Pro Football Focus.

**OUTSPOKEN KRZYZEWSKI.** Duke basketball coach **Mike Krzyzewski**, a former Army captain, was very critical of the insurrection at the nation's capital. "Everyone who was involved, they should be prosecuted. And our leaders, our politicians who spoke up in support of that, should be chastised. There's no question about it. This is not about being a Republican or a Democrat, it's about being a damn American."

The 73-year-old went on to say: "People say that's not who we are, that is who we are right now. It is who we are. We need to change who we are. We need to get back to the basic principles that have founded this country." The winningest coach in college hoops history added: "I'm used to being on a team. Our country needs to be a team again."

**MORE HONORS FOR LEWANDOWSKI.** Robert Lewandowski became the first Pole to win the Best FIFA Men's Player Award, presented annually by the soccer's governing body, FIFA, to the world's best men's player since 2016.

Lewandowski's incredible 55 goals helped Bayern Munich win

ering that he was rested for the final regular season game.

Kelce also became the only tight end in NFL history having two seasons with over 100 receptions. His 105 receptions beat out his own record of 103 receptions, the most in franchise history.

**FULFILLING HER POTENTIAL.** Lexi Donarski was just 14 years old when she met with Iowa State women's basketball coach Bill Fennelly. She and her parents, Dave and Pam, received a surprising offer. Even though Lexi had yet to play in a high school basketball game, Fennelly offered her a basketball scholarship. He and his staff had scouted her enough to believe that she would become a top player. "I was hoping that it would come eventually," said Donarski, whose family has long had close ties to the Iowa State program. "But I didn't expect it to happen then."

She then went about proving Iowa State right. Coached by her dad at Aquinas High School, Donarski averaged 14.2 points per game as a freshman and 15.2 points as a sophomore. Then, during Donarski's junior year, she averaged 23.2 points, 5.8 assists and 2.8 rebounds per game. She then averaged 24.2 points, 6.9 assists, 5.5 steals and 4.5 rebounds per game in her senior campaign. Lexi also led the team to a pair of state titles.

Donarski turned out to be a McDonald's All-American and a five-star recruit, but she never wavered about joining I-State. The 5-11 freshman guard is already doing great, ranking second on the Cyclones in scoring (11.9) and assists (2.0).

## Zegarowski Leads Bluejays

**Marcus Zegarowski (right)**, a junior point guard for the Creighton Bluejays, is considered one of the nation's top basketball players. Last season the 6-1, 165-lb. guard had 16.1 points, 5.1 assists and 3.8 rebounds per game, and ranked third in the Big East in assists per game (5.1), third in three-point percentage (.424), and sixth in points per game (16.1).

Zegarowski came to Creighton following an incredible high school career. He attended Hamilton-Wenham (Mass.) HS, where as a freshman he averaged 20 points per game and, alongside twin brother Max, led the team to an undefeated season and the school's first-ever Division 4 state basketball championship. Both Zegarowskis transferred to Tilton in New Hampshire. There, as a senior, Marcus averaged 23 points, six rebounds and five assists for a team that finished 28-4 and won the NEPSAC Class AA Championship.

Marcus is the son of Zach and Mandy

(Carter) Zegarowski. Marcus' twin brother Max plays for Franklin Pierce, and sister Masey plays point guard at Bryant University. Half-brother Michael Carter Williams plays for the NBA Orlando Magic.

Both of his parents were outstanding athletes as well. Dad Zach Zegarowski starred for the UMass Lowell men's basketball program in the mid-'90s where he led the River Hawks in scoring at 16.8 per game and assists at 4.2 per game as a senior. Zach's wife and Marcus' mother, Mandy, was a standout at Salem State University. Both later went into coaching. In 2002 Zach and Mandy founded Mass Hoop Elite, a comprehensive AAU basketball program that offers camps and training clinics and various other services.

Marcus was named one of 50 preseason candidates for the Naismith Trophy and a preseason All-American. He currently leads the Blues Jays in scoring and assists.



## MUSIC

## Frank Sinatra First Major Artist to Record Polish Song



Fred MacMurray, Alida Valli, and Frank Sinatra on the set of RKO's "Miracle of the Bells," released in 1948.

Most of us think Bobby Vinton was the first major American artist to record a song in Polish, with "My Melody of Love" in 1974, but Frank Sinatra achieved that distinction over 25 years earlier, with "Ever Homeward."

The song is featured in the 1948 movie, "Miracle of the Bells," which is based on the novel of the same name by Russell Janney. Both the book and movie are one of the first, and still one of the few portrayals of Polish Americans in mainstream American media.

"Miracle of the Bells" revolves around a struggling, young Polish American actress, now known as Olga Treskovna, but born Olga Trocki. The role of Olga was played in the film by the actress Valli, a discovery of legendary producer David O. Selznick, who was unsuccessful in making her as popular in the United States as she was in her native Italy.

Ms. Trocki sings "Ever Homeward" first in the film, entirely in Polish. It's a song she learned while growing up in the coal fields of Pennsylvania. She sings it while reminiscing about the past with her mentor, Hollywood agent William Dunnigan, played by Fred MacMurray.

With a little help from Dunnigan, Olga Trocki finds stardom when she gives a brilliant portrayal of Joan of Arc. But just as she is beginning her climb to the top, Olga meets an

untimely death. Dunnigan then assumes the task of making funeral arrangements in her hometown, in accordance with her wishes.

Towards that end, he comes into contact with Polish American priest, Fr. Paul, played by Sinatra.

Dunnigan's desire to ensure a legacy for Ms. Trocki's artistic achievement — a gift Olga intended for the humble people of her hometown — unleashes an unusual chain of events during the planning of her memorial service.

Sinatra reprises an abridged version of "Ever Homeward" in the movie, but only in English.

However, he did record a studio version, with the middle part having been sung in Polish. This is available on the 12-CD set, "Frank Sinatra, The Columbia Years 1943-1952: The Complete Recordings." The song is also featured on a much smaller set called "Frank Sinatra, Complete V-Disc Recordings," however, this set of specially recorded songs during World War II may or may not include the Polish lyrics.

You can also find copies of it on YouTube by searching for "Frank Sinatra, Ever Homeward."

Sinatra's song never became a hit like Vinton's, but how many of us knew that singing in Polish was fashionable, much less even allowed in Hollywood, more than 70 years ago?

## The Fighting Seabees

by Joseph Zurawski

*The Fighting Seabees* (1944)  
War, Drama, Romance  
Director: Edward Ludwig  
Screenwriters: Borden Chase, Aeneas MacKenzie  
Distributor: Republic Pictures  
Featuring: John Wayne, Susan Hayward, Leonid Kinskey (as Johnny Novasky)

Islands in the Pacific were not prepared for warfare in 1942. There were neither sufficient air strip runways nor rudimentary accommodations for the thousands of U.S. military forces and equipment which had to be transported to the area to conduct the war and an assault on the Japanese mainland.

Construction crews were in heavy demand in the Pacific arena. An experienced construction crew owner is concerned since his civilian (unarmed) workers were attacked and sustained heavy losses while working in the South Pacific. He blames the Navy Commander but agrees to go to Washington to discuss establishing Construction Battalions (CBs spelled Seabees) who would be armed. The construction company owner does not like the time period and red tape necessary for training crews. He angrily



Russian-born actor Leonid Kinskey plays Johnny Novasky in *The Fighting Seabees*.

leaves and says the crews will defend themselves.

While the construction crew is working on an island air strip, the Japanese attack and kill three construction workers. The crew chief tells the men to get armed and they venture into a trap set by the Japanese and sustain heavy losses. This time the construction crew owner agrees to have his men trained for Navy duty. They build an oil depot. The crew foreman is shot and there is a battle with Japanese troops who have landed and the Navy (now of-

ficially called, Seabees) supported by U.S. planes from battleships in the area. The Japanese forces are split and the Seabees are victorious. They return to Washington and receive a citation from the President for courage under fire.

The script prepared for *The Fighting Seabees* follows a format similar for most other war films prepared during the war. There is unity in the diversity of characters. There is Chico, there is an Irishman singing about Ireland. And there is Johnny Novasky. Even though he had one of the major roles, it appears he was a last minute addition to the cast. His "accent" noticeably changes from European at the beginning of the movie to a more refined Anglo-Saxon after a few scenes. Nevertheless, Johnny Novasky is recognized by the other men, one of whom remarks, "Did you see Johnny in action?" He is a very positive character and gets along with brass and the rest of the construction crew.

Action scenes are well done but the romance between the construction crew owner and the Navy Commander both "in love" with a war correspondent who accompanies the Seabees, seem contrived, if not out of place.

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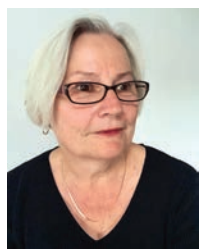
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### Customs, Traditions and More

If you are interested in Polish customs, traditions, and food you may be interested in the words and works of long-time PAJ contributor Sophie Hodorowicz-Knab. Her most recent book is about Polish women during World War II.

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## THE Pondering POLE

## The Amazing Father Dzierozynski

by Edward Poniewaz

I missed mentioning this last month. How about a few Polish New Year resolutions?

- I do not hear it much anymore but try steering away from "I'm proud to be Polish." No other ethnic group says "I'm proud" unless they have a deep-seated inferiority complex. They are just Black, Asian, Italian, Jewish, or Irish. Pride is one of the deadly sins anyway. Simply stated, you are what you are. What you become is all you — with Polish factored in.
- Learn how to pronounce the names properly. Anglicizing is accepted of course but knowing the real pronunciation should be a part of who you are. A part of who YOU are. Takes a little work but Polish is a relatively easy language to learn and useful where Polish "is spoken."
- Resolve (and this applies to anything in your life) that if you want or need something done, do it yourself. If you think Stan or Jadzia or Brian or Ashley is going to do it, they might, but more than likely they won't. Get involved. Take it on.
- Knowing history and culture are so important for one's emotional, psychological, and intellectual well-being. To illustrate, here is an excerpt from a recent political presentation:

...If you have no idea what came before you, you have no idea of what normal is and you cannot understand the consequences of what is happening now. If you can't look to the past [then you can't] understand the consequences of the same behavior in another time. The root of wisdom is knowing what happened before, I mean, that is the road map.

Our history and culture seem to be well documented so there are abundant choices. It truly will help you understand the "road map."

For instance, in his book, *Poland, A History* (a must read), the author Adam Zamoyski says this: "In 1564 Hosius brought the Jesuits to Poland, to reconquer the hearts, and more specifically the minds, of the Poles..."

Thus, Cardinal Stanislaw Hosius, seemingly a great man for a number of reasons, established the Society of Jesus in Poland where they would be important and significant initially for the Counter-Reformation and for centuries there-after. This sets the stage and narrative for the life of Franciszek Dzierozynski, "a Polish Catho-

lic priest and Jesuit who became a prominent missionary to the United States."

I learned about Father Dzierozynski many years ago as being connected to the founding of St. Louis University. Lately I saw his name in a book by local radio talk show host Charlie Brennan called *Amazing St. Louis* (Reedy Press, Saint Louis, 2013). The chapter involving Dzierozynski is entitled Jesuits Built SLU (St. Louis University) with Slaves. That does not sound good because a.) it says the Catholic order Society of Jesus owned slaves, and b.) Father Dzierozynski was involved with it. Hold on, there is more good from this story than the title lends.

Brennan got his material for this chapter from a historian by the name of C. Walker Gollar. Most of the bad stuff that happened to the slaves (before working on the site that eventually would become SLU in 1829) was when the Jesuits initially settled in Florissant, Missouri (located ten miles from St. Louis) in 1823 and it derived from the priest in charge, Father Charles Van Quickenborne. He was tough and unyielding in his temperament and even cruel in his treatment of the slaves.

Slaves were used to serve at the "priests' farm" in Florissant known as St. Stanislaus Jesuit Novitiate which later became St. Stanislaus Seminary. The building is currently used by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

However, concerning Father Dzierozynski ...

In 1847, the superior of the United States Society of Jesus, Francis Dzierozynski, visited Florissant and ordered improvements to the slaves' inadequate quarters. He also granted approval for one slave to return to Maryland to visit his children — a directive Father Van Quickenborne ignored.

Father Dzierozynski also "instructed the St. Louis Jesuits to only sell their slaves with his permission and then only 'to humane and Christian masters' who would purchase them for their own use." We can analyze why these religious people would own slaves, what was their rationale, and whether this simply was just another strange chapter in the life of the church. On balance though, the life, career, and



Marsha Mason with Richard Dreyfuss in a publicity still from "The Goodbye Girl" is the daughter of Helena Rakowski.

During his term as the superior of the order, he continued teaching at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky, "reconciled the Society of Jesus and the Corporation of Roman Catholic Clergymen," and as previously mentioned, was involved in the management of the Florissant and St. Louis facilities in Missouri. His administration in the affairs of the Jesuits in the United States had him directly involved with people such as John Quincy Adams, Roger Taney, Henry Clay, and Pope Pius VII.

During and outside his time as superior of the order, he was a fighter for things he thought right and progressive in his thinking on many issues. To the the core and in the spirit of the Jesuits, he was a teacher and spiritual leader of men and women. To summarize his life in a few words, he took his vocation to heart and he made a difference.

**POLISH OR NOT?** *The Goodbye Girl* is Polish! Or is she? **Marsha Mason**, born April 3, 1942, (in St. Louis, Missouri, no less!), is an American actress, director, and businesswoman. I fell in love with her when I saw her in the movie *The Goodbye Girl* with Richard Dreyfuss in 1977. Other well-known films she appeared in are *Cinderella Liberty*, *Only When I Laugh*, and *Blume in Love*. She was nominated four times for the Academy Awards, won two Golden Globes, and received an Emmy for her work in the television show *Frazier*, playing the character Sherry

Dempsey. Sherry was the girlfriend of Martin Crane, Frazier Crane's father, a character I found fun and appealing.

Mason has had quite a career in film, theatre, and television and we salute her for it. Her mother is Jacqueline Helena Rakowski. Marsha Mason, Polish or not?

The October *Polish or Not?* fea-

and stars in the upcoming HBO series "The Many Saints of Newark," in which he plays a young Tony Soprano, the character his father made famous.

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY**, and if you are a target, I hope Cupid's arrow finds you. Whatever your status, give someone a bouquet or



PHOTO: SCOTT NELSON

Actor James Gandolfini died of a cardiac arrest in 2002 while on holiday with his son. Here he is seen at the Emmy Awards in 2000 with his ex-wife Marcy Wudarski, with whom he has his son, Michael.

And-tured partners or spouses of famous people who were Polish. Here is another one with a twist. **James Gandolfini** was actor of high repute, mostly for his role in the television series *The Sopranos*. He was married to **Marcy Wudarski** and they had a son, Michael Gandolfini.

According to ethnicelebs.com, Marcy is mostly Polish and a quarter Slovak (Wudarski, Chyczewski, Orosky, Pavlisko) which makes Michael about half Polish. He is an up-and-coming new face in Hollywood

with a small act of love and kindness. If you have a thought about this month's topic, have a question, or have interesting facts to share, contact me at: Edward Poniewaz, 6432 Marmaduke Ave., St. Louis, MO 63139; email: alinabrig@yahoo.com.

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## DANCE TIME

# Polka Clubs Cautious but Optimistic

by Jennifer Pijanowski

As we enter 2021, many local polka clubs that have been in existence for decades are now facing an unknown future with the pandemic continuing to loom over us. Most states remain under strict social distancing guidelines that have impacted the calendar of every polka lover in our country. I know firsthand that these cancelled events and meetings have adversely affected our local polka clubs in Buffalo. It is not surprising, given the fact that we are now nearing a year since members have been allowed to meet. Polka clubs provide not only a means to enjoy polka music and dancing, but are also rooted in tradition, socialization, and community. I recently reached out to a few polka clubs to get their take on the future of their organizations.

**CLEVELAND POLKA ASSOCIATION.** Elaine Mekruit, president of the Cleveland Polka Association was eager to update me with her buoyant outlook on the future of club events. I asked Elaine how 2020 was for them and she informed me that they held a total of four dances last year. Their February dance was held as a joint dance with the United States Polka Association and took place right before the COVID 19 hammer fell. Two of these events were held outdoors at the Saint Sava's picnic grove which is very typical during the summer months and followed all state restrictions. In October an indoor



Cleveland Polka Association members at the organization's September 2020 dance.

dance, which also met all guidelines imposed by the Governor of Ohio was held as their last event of 2020. Their monthly membership meeting was held in the early fall, but everything afterwards had to be cancelled including their January 2021 event. The next scheduled polka event is February 22 as a joint event with USPA. Mekruit is holding out hope that the new guidelines given by their governor will allow the event to take place. Elaine stated "We will discuss and plan according to his rules. We will cancel if we feel it would not be in the best interest of all in attendance."

I asked Elaine about her communication with club members during the absence of meetings and she said: "We stay in touch with

our members. The entire board is open to all calls from our members. When they call, it is brought to my attention and then discussed with the board. I feel my presidency isn't about me (we, as a board, all have input) and then vote majority rules. Our board consists of dedicated people who go beyond to make it great! That is why we are such a strong organization." CPA has come up with ways to encourage attendees to come back by having raffles at dances for an upcoming dance ticket. They also have a membership card that gets stamped. After attending a specific number of dances and meetings the member's name is entered in a drawing for \$50.00 gift certificates. Elaine is doing everything pos-

sible during these stressful times for the club and she tells me that, if something comes up that was not in their monthly news bulletin (which reaches their 900+ members), they have a news blast letter that goes out to keep all members informed. The CPA bulletin will promote any polka dances in the U.S. at no cost if you reach out for them with info. There are three Polish radio stations in Cleveland and Elaine informed me that she is a guest on them quite often promoting the club. You can keep updated on changes for their February dance and future events by visiting their website [www.cpa-polkas.com](http://www.cpa-polkas.com)

**TOLEDO AREA POLKA SOCIETY.** Judy Kwiatkowski vice president of the Toledo Area Polka Society (TAPS) also responded with updates on their club, saying: "Our club was totally 'out of business' in 2020. We have already cancelled our March/April 2021 dances but hope to pick back up in June (fingers crossed)."

She shares the sentiment that "Everyone in northwest Ohio is chomping at the bit to get together with our 'polka family' very soon!" TAPS had a show-stopping schedule for 2020 including Up-Town Sound, Dynabrass, Randy Krajewski, and The Boys; unfortunately every event had to be cancelled. The club has high hopes that they can get back to some kind of normal this summer and hold events. Judy will be keeping me updated and I will communicate



Charlie Tansek, recently honored by the CPA, attended the club's October dance.

any upcoming events for TAPS in future articles. You can also visit their website [www.tapspolkas.com](http://www.tapspolkas.com). If you get a chance, check out their Christmas photo album from 2019 — it looks like members had a very memorable time. As I was scrolling through the pictures, I instantly wanted to be a part of this lively bunch.

**BUFFALO POLKA BOOSTERS.** As mentioned in past articles, I have been a member of our local Buffalo Polka Boosters Club since moving to Western New York over 20 years ago. Our last club meeting was in February 2020, a year in which we had many surprises planned to cel-

See "Buffalo Polka Boosters," next page

# Loss of Ron Urbanczyk Will be Felt for Years to Come

by Jennifer Pijanowski

The Buffalo, N.Y. polka scene is once again mourning the loss of one of its own. Ron Urbanczyk was constant fixture, not only at our local clubs and events, but at polka festivals around the country. You could always count on Ron for a lively conversation about so many subjects but most importantly his family and polka music. His presence will be missed by anyone lucky enough to have called him our friend.

The last time I spoke with Ron, which was just before he went into the hospital, he told me that he was there at my first polka event. I didn't know that all of these years, and I am grateful that he took the time to share that with me.

Ron's adoration for his wife and children was something that I had always admired and his love for polka music was infectious. His son Brian was gracious enough to share with me that Ron's musical influences included Li'l Wally, Marion Lush, Eddie Zima, Casey Siewerski. It is clear that Urbanczyk added his own unique flair as he sharpened his polka artistry writing many of his own songs.



Our thoughts and prayers remain with his wife Kathy, daughter Lori, Brian, and his wife Kayla as they walk through this very difficult time. We know that Ron is up in heaven playing that concertina with some polka greats and watching over us. His loss is definitely reminder to hug those you love a little tighter and make sure people know how much they mean to you.

**RONALD K. URBANCZYK**, a West Seneca resident who leaves a musi-

cal legacy, died December 16. He was 69.

Born in Lackawanna to the late Bronislaus and Adele Urbanczyk (Bodziak), he graduated from Lackawanna High School in 1969, then received his bachelor's and master's degrees in Industrial Technology from Buffalo State College.

Urbanczyk worked in the printing industry at Moore Business Forms for 28 years, ultimately serving as Director of Productivity and Waste Management. He

also worked as a project manager for Delphi, Avox, HSBC, and PCB Piezotronics before retiring in 2015.

Apart from his family, Urbanczyk's greatest passions were Buffalo sports teams, organizing fundraising events, and promoting polka music. A season ticket holder of both the Bills and Sabres, Urbanczyk enjoyed tailgating and attending games for the past 60 years. He also ran the annual St. John Vianney Lawn Fete for several years in the 1990s.

A lover of polka music, Urbanczyk learned to play accordina at a young age, and started his first band at age 15. Later, he played concertina and bass guitar with the Pole Cats. After a brief hiatus, Ron resumed performing on stage with band such as the Steel City Brass, Honky Hoppers, Bedrock Boys, Buffalo Concertina All Stars, and City Side Band through the 1990s and 2000s.

In 2005, Urbanczyk wrote the dinner theatre musical, *Stas and Stella's Mostly Traditional Polish Wedding*, featuring the music and traditions of an old-time Polish wedding as celebrated in Western New York. Over 50 productions of the musical were performed at local

restaurants and banquet halls. This production earned him the honor of 2006 *Am-Pol Eagle* Citizen of the Year in Art/Drama.

In 2009, Urbanczyk started The New Direction Polka band, recording three CDs which included 15 original compositions. New Direction performed annually at many local church and town festivals. Throughout his musical career, he performed at polka festivals and dances across the United States and Canada, and internationally on trips to Poland, Germany, Aruba, Curacao, Nassau, St. Thomas, Punta Cana and St. Maarten.

Urbanczyk was inducted into the Buffalo Music Hall of Fame in 2011 and the World Concertina Congress Hall of Fame in 2016. He also taught several students to play bass guitar and concertina, and was the host of an internet radio program, The Buffalo Polka Connection show, on 24/7 Polka Heaven.

In addition to his wife and children, he is survived by a brother Daniel (Judy); brother-in-law of the late Ronald (Ellen) Dreja; and also by nephews and nieces. A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated on December 21 at Queen of Angels in Lackawanna, N.Y.

# Buffalo Polka Boosters

continued from previous page

celebrate its 50th anniversary.

During the course of this past year, the club lost a total of 25 members and past members. One of the most devastating losses was of long-time board member **Ron Moscoe**. Ron was a lively dancer who always brought many ideas and innovations to our club. His upbeat spirit was a treasure to all of us.

As I spoke with our president, Chris Tanski about the future of the club, she sounded hopeful for a time when it was safe to return. She added that "I have been in contact with some of our members, either personally or they have reached out to me. Also, I have been in contact with Polish Falcons and set monthly dates for meetings in the event that we are able to resume at some point. It will only be as long as state and CDC guidelines allow us to do so."

There is some concern about whether the elderly members, who make up quite a large percentage of the club, will feel safe enough to return to monthly events. Tanski said "after speaking to some members they are not sure they will attend at all because of the virus. And attendance being held to a minimum will not be feasible for the club financially." Masks, social distancing, dancing this all comes into play so that members will feel safe when



Ron and Nina Moscoe at the Pulaski Club of Arizona for a 2019 John Gora weekend. Ron was very active in the Buffalo area's polka scene, as a fan, promoter, and organization officer.

we can all meet again.

Tanski and the board are anticipating the return of live events. "We're hoping that 2021 gives us some type of relief so we can meet again. People should really think about getting the vaccination as this may help bring this virus to an end. I am praying to God for a little bit of help there."

NYS guidelines are very strict at this time, so there are no events scheduled as of now for 2021 for Buffalo Polka Boosters.

# FEBRUARY POLKA BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays courtesy Li'l John's Polka Show, WAVL Radio 910 AM and 98.7 FM, Saturday 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., and on the web at www.987jack.fm. Live streaming at www.PA\_Talk.com. For information, write to: 121 Seminole Dr., Greensburg, PA 15601; (724) 834-7871; johnnalevanon@aol.com.

2	Tommy Reder	1939		Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist	Michigan
2	Jody Maddie	1959		Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist	Ohio
3	Joe Grenda	1953		Musician / Vocalist / Arranger	Pennsylvania
3	Joey James	1942		Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist	Illinois
5	Freddie Bulinski	1947		Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist / IJ-	Maryland
6	Richie Gomulka	1942		Musician / Vocalist / IJ	Illinois
6	Bobby Szelc	1948		Musician / Vocalist (Dynasonics)	Pennsylvania
6	Ryan Lucotch	1980		Musician (Drummer)	Pennsylvania
7	Mike Turik	1955		Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist	Ohio
7	Eddie Biegaj	1962		Musician / Vocalist / IJ	New Jersey
12	Patty Jakubiak	1940	1/27/11	Musician / Vocalist / DJ	Connecticut
12	Walt Groller	1931		Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist	Ohio
12	Eddie (Cuban) Kusiolek	1931		Musician (Drummer, Polish All-Stars)	Pennsylvania
12	Mike Magdon III	1957		Musician (Drummer)	Pennsylvania
13	Eddie Grzyb	1935		Musician / Promoter / DJ	Massachusetts
13	Gerry Kaminski	1959		Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist	Michigan
14	Fran Sopkovich	1934		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Pennsylvania
14	Freddy K. Kendzierski	1950		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist / IJ	New Jersey
15	Paul Dearthoff	1920	3/18/07	D.J. / Promoter	Pennsylvania
15	Happy Steffan	1942		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Pennsylvania
15	Frank Stetar	1976		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Pennsylvania
15	Li'l Lenny Klamet	1949		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Ohio
16	Jolly Joe Timmer	1930	7/27/16	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist / DJ	Pennsylvania
16	Rich Tokarz	1949	4/22/14	Musician / Vocalist / Arranger	Indiana
16	Lori Ebel			Musician / Vocalist	Minnesota
17	Bernie Goydsh	1940	6/28/15	Bandleader / Musician / Promoter	New Jersey
18	Leo Stanek	1930	2/10/12	Polka D. J.	Pennsylvania
18	Al Volek Sr.	1949		Musician / Vocalist (Invictas)	Pennsylvania
18	Vinny Bozzarelli	1958		Musician / Vocalist (Sounds)	Pennsylvania
20	Eddie Zima	1923	7/28/66	Bandleader / Musician	Chicago
20	Barefoot Becky			Bandleader / Vocalist / Bandleader	Iowa
22	Ray Malach	1941		Musician / Arranger (Malac Bros.)	New Jersey
23	Jo Jo Visniewski			Polka D. J.	Irvona, Pa.
23	Jerry Halkowski			Musician / DJ	Wisconsin
24	T.K. Frank Proszowski			Promoter / Distributor	Pennsylvania
24	Li'l Jas Lesniewski			DJ	New York
24	Eddie Zavaski, Jr.	1954		Musician / Vocalist	Connecticut
24	Matt Lewandowski			Musician / Vocalist	New York
25	Casey Siewierski	1921	1995	Musician / Bandleader	Chicago
26	Ted Szymanski	1948		Musician / Bandleader (Special Delivery)	Buffalo
26	Joe Fiedor	1931	11/12/77	Musician / DJ / Promoter	Pennsylvania
26	Tom Andrasick	1961		Bandleader / Vocalist (PA Express)	Pennsylvania
27	Teresa Zapolska		5/8/12	Musician / Vocalist / DJ	New York
28	John Salov	1944		Musician (Polka Quads)	Pennsylvania
28	Joe Godina			Polka D. J. / I.J.	Pennsylvania
29	Joe Dipiatic	1952		Musician (Sounds)	Pennsylvania

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### Experimental Treatment Believed to Save Woman's Life

BUFFALO, N.Y. — A judge ordered Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital to give a Covid-19 patient an experimental treatment, and her family and attorneys say they believe that saved 80-year-old Judith Smentkiewicz's life.

The drug Ivermectin — a pill sometimes used to treat children with head lice or to rid dogs and cats of worms — is not yet approved by the federal government for use against Covid-19. But Smentkiewicz's son and daughter call it "a miracle drug" in their court papers.

So do her attorneys, Ralph C. Lorigo and Jon F. Minear.

"This lady was on a ventilator, literally on her deathbed, before she was given this drug," Lorigo told *The Buffalo News* about Smentkiewicz, a Cheektowaga resident. "As far as we're concerned, the judge's order saved this woman's life."

Lorigo said one doctor at the hospital allowed the patient to be given the drug, but after she had been given one dose, another doctor at the hospital refused to allow further doses. He said family members went to court to force the hospital to resume treatment with Ivermectin. State Supreme Court Judge Henry J. Nowak sided with them.

Dr. Thomas A. Russo, one of the region's leading experts on infectious diseases, said he was glad to hear that Smentkiewicz is doing better, but he said people should never jump to conclusions about Ivermectin or any other drug based on one patient's outcome.

"There are some indications that this drug may have some merit in treating Covid-19 ... Yes, it is possible that it helped this woman," Russo said. "But the trials and testing are ongoing. We don't have definitive data yet to show it does help. Presently, it is not recommended as a treatment for Covid-19."

Russo is the chief of infectious diseases at the University at Buffalo's Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. He has no involvement in the Smentkiewicz case.

The patient's son, Michael Smentkiewicz, said hospital officials had told him and his sister, Michelle Kulbacki, on Dec. 31 that their mother's chance of survival — as an 80-year-old Covid-19 patient on a ventilator — was about 20%.

He said doctors at the hospital also told the family that Smentkiewicz would probably be on a ventilator in the Intensive Care Unit for at least a month.

"We did a lot of our own research, we read about Ivermectin ... The results sounded very promising, and we decided we had to try something different," Michael Smentkiewicz said. "We pressured the doctor in the ICU to give it to her. He finally agreed."

On Jan. 2, Smentkiewicz was given her first dose of Ivermectin, and according to court papers filed by her family, she made "a complete turnaround."

"In less than 48 hours, my mother was taken off the ventilator, transferred out of the Intensive Care Unit, sitting up on her own and communicating," Kulbacki said in a court affidavit.

But after her mother was transferred to another hospital wing away from the ICU, doctors in that unit refused to give her any more doses of the drug, and her condition quickly declined, the family said in court papers.

"We were astounded when they refused to give her any more doses," Michael Smentkiewicz said. "That's why I called Ralph Lorigo and we took the hospital to court."

— Dan Herbeck, *The Buffalo News*

### St. Casimir Church, South Bend, Ind.

by Gregory L. Witul

*St. Casimir Church*  
1308 West Dunham Street  
South Bend, Indiana  
Status: Open

For the last 150 years South Bend, Indiana has been the destination of a number of immigrant groups. As each one settled into the city, they would start their own church to meet their specific needs. The Belgians began Sacred Heart Church, St. Stephen's Church was formed by the Hungarians, Ss. Peter & Paul Eastern Orthodox Church was home for the Serbians, and the Poles established St. Casimir Church in South Bend's West Side.

Poles began moving into South Bend as early as the late 1860s. These first Poles attended St. Patrick's church before starting their own parish, St. Hedwig's, in the West Washington neighborhood in 1877. As the parish grew and more families began living on the south side of the Grand Trunk Railroad tracks, Father Valentine Czyzewski gathered these households and suggested to them that they may want to start a parish of their own. From that meeting, a committee was formed, money was raised, a site selected, and a construction of a combination school and church begun. On June 11, 1898, Father Anthony Zubowicz, C.S.C. was appointed the first pastor and the parish of St. Casimir Church was born. For just under a year, the parishioners gathered at St. Hedwig's for Mass until March 4, 1899 when St Casimir was dedicated and the first Mass held.

When school began, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth were brought in as teachers. In less than a decade, school enrollment would balloon from a few dozen to nearly 600 children. Much like the school, the parish developed at a break-neck speed and along the way suffered some growing pains.

A group of parishioners at nearby St. Adalbert's became upset with their priest and formed a Polish National parish, upsetting the neighborhood. Then the clergy of St. Casimir's had a dustup with the Polish Falcons which led to a mini riot and a regime change at the parish. To handle the fallout Rev. Stanislaus Gorka was installed as par-

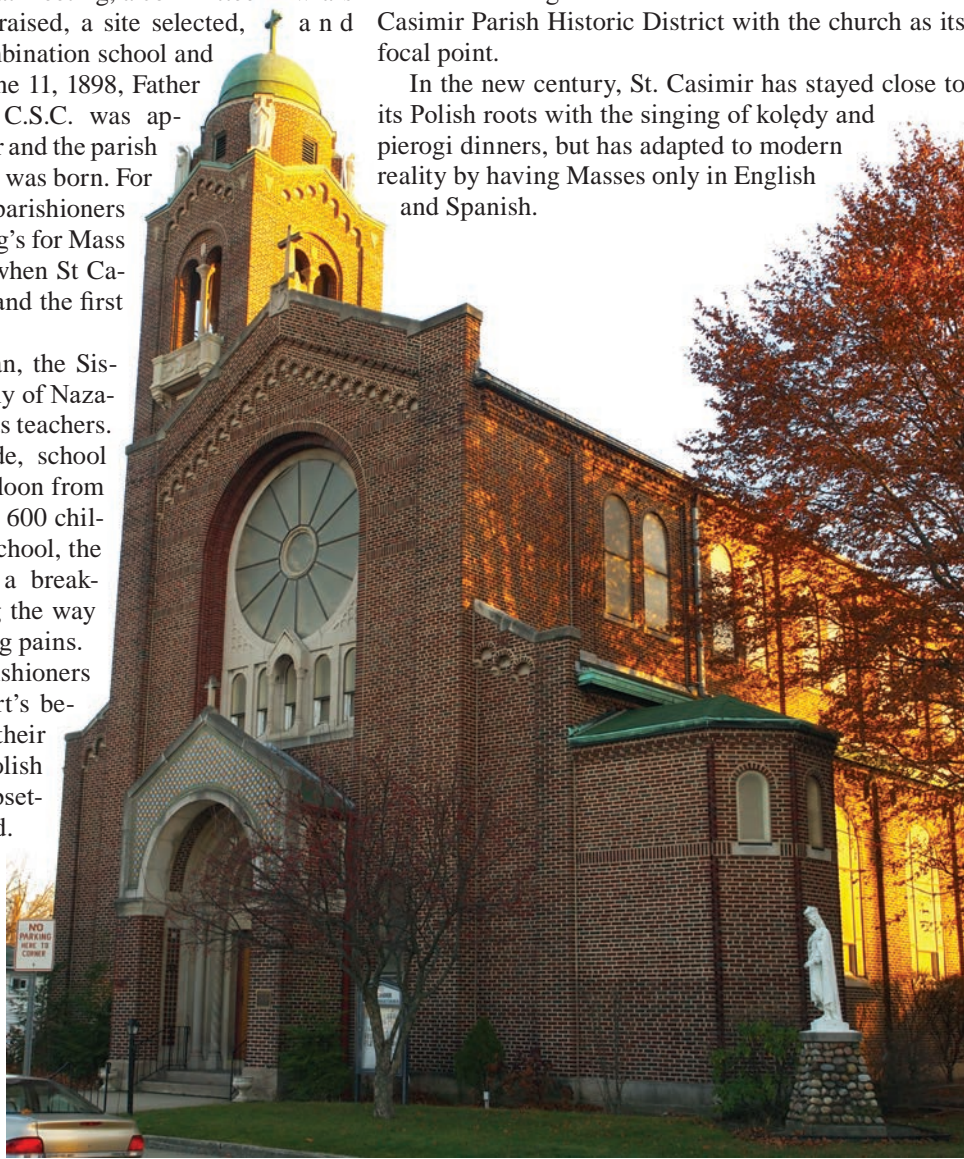
ish priest and over the course of two years was able to heal to wounds of the unrest.

Father Gorka would go on to have an amazing tenure at the parish, building a new parish hall in 1917, raising a convent in 1919, and remodeling the rectory in 1922. In 1923 he oversaw the parish's most ambitious project in its 25-year history, a new church. In January a building committee was formed and in short order the Chicago firm of Worthmann & Steinbach were selected as architects. Bishop Paul Peter Rhode of the Diocese of Green Bay laid the cornerstone in September of 1924 and Bishop John F. Noll blessed the completed building in November 15, 1925.

To inspire his parishioners and with the help of nearly 50 donors, Gorka decorated his church with fine murals and filled the windows with beautiful stained glass. A number of the crystal saints were of Polish inspiration, including St. Casimir, St. Hedwig, both Ss. Stanislaus, St. Bronislava and St. John Cantius.

Over the next century St. Casimir would be a beacon for its neighborhood, adapting to demographic changes, church closings, and families moving out of the city. The parish would start sharing pastoral leadership with St. Stephen's in the early 1990s and in 1997 the National Register of Historic Places created the St. Casimir Parish Historic District with the church as its focal point.

In the new century, St. Casimir has stayed close to its Polish roots with the singing of kolędy and pierogi dinners, but has adapted to modern reality by having Masses only in English and Spanish.



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