

POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

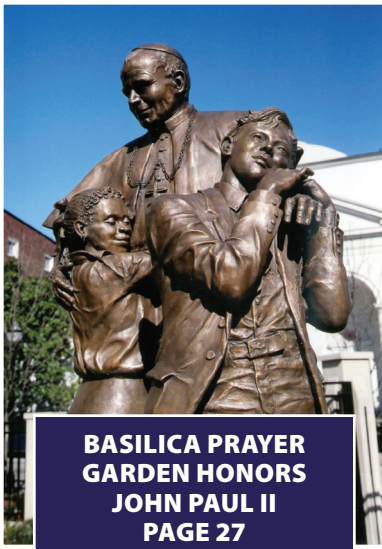
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DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION AND CONTINUANCE OF POLISH AMERICAN CULTURE

**POLISH POST RELEASES JAMESTOWN STAMP • POLAND TO EXHUME WWII LEADER'S BODY • WIGILIA PLANNING: PART II
BREAKING OPLATEK WITH JANE KACZMAREK • CENSUS BUREAU SEEKS BILINGUAL SPECIALISTS
ARMIA KRAJOWA AND GERMAN V-2 ROCKETS • ORCHARD LAKE SCHOOLS NAMES NEW DIRECTOR OF POLISH MISSION**

PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT BOSTON, NEW YORK AND ADDITIONAL ENTRY OFFICES



BASILICA PRAYER GARDEN HONORS JOHN PAUL II
PAGE 27

NEWSMARK

TADEUSZ BEDNARSKI PASSES. Tadeusz "Ted" Bednarski, president of the Association of the Sons of Poland and a former World War II underground army courier, died Nov. 3. A member of the Mazowsze Song and Dance Ensemble, he defected by jumping from the second story window in Berlin and escaping to the western side. Bednarski was the recipient of many awards and medals for his work within the Polish community. *Full obituary on page 26.*

POLAND, EC REACH DEAL ON POLISH SHIPYARDS. The European Commission has reached a compromise with Warsaw regarding Polish shipyards. Poland has responded positively to EU Competition Chief Neelie Kroes that it accepts EC's suggestions on how to rescue the historic yards.

According to the agreement, EC will give a legal guarantee that new owners of the yards will not be burdened with the return of state aid, which amounts to billions of dollars. Investors will have the opportunity to obtain the yards during a public offering debt free, free of state aid and without production limits.

The state treasury, however, maintains that the government did not agree with the abolishment of the ship production, but did agree to the other conditions as outlined by the EC.

Brussels hoped that the Polish government would agree to all elements that include the selling, paying of debts and liquidation of the industry, which according to them, would allow for new industry to emerge and current yard workers to keep their jobs.

MIKULSKI PUSHES STATE DEPARTMENT. Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) urged the State Department to help Poland gain entry into the U.S. Visa Waiver Program. The State Department recently announced the addition of seven new countries to the plan. Poland was not included. Poland has been working for a number of years to gain entry into the program, which makes it easier for citizens of designated countries to travel the United States for tourism or business up to 90 days. Polish citizens who want to travel to the United States now face a visa application process that is burdensome and time-consuming.

"Poland is an important NATO ally and a member of the European Union, but America's visa policy still treats Poland as a second-class citizen when we tell a grandmother in Gdansk she needs a visa to visit her grandchildren in America," said Mikulski.

SIKORSKI: POLAND WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA. Poland wants good relations with Russia, but is concerned about some elements of Russian policy including the decision to increase the military budget, Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski said.

"Russian military budget grows very fast," Polish news agency PAP quoted Sikorski as telling a CNN program.

The Polish foreign minister underlined that Poland's sensitivity to the problem was understandable because Poland was a NATO border country, weaker than some other big states in Europe.

"Poland also has important economic ties with Russia including trade exchange worth 14 billion euros. Poland doesn't want to endanger it," the minister said.

Asked whether he was afraid of Russia, the foreign minister replied he did not want another cold war as it was in the interest of neither side.

PIAST INSTITUTE STUDIES ELECTORATE. The Piast Institute, a national center for Polish and Polish American affairs headquartered in Hamtramck, Mich., is conducting a study on Polish American voting habits.

According to Institute president, Dr. Thaddeus Radzilowski, the Polish American voting patterns have been varied over the years. "Their historical experience and their cultural values have significantly shaped their voting behavior," said Radzilowski.

The Institute was recently commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland to conduct a study of the Polish American electorate.

One of the aspects of the study was an online survey. It consisted of 35 questions and was completely anonymous.

A study of Polonian voting patterns has not been conducted among Polonia since the early 1980s. Knowledge compiled by this study can be instrumental to the future of the Polish American community, said Virginia Skrzyaniarz, executive director at Piast.

W żłobie leży!
któż pobieży
kołędować
Małemu,
Jezusowi,
Chrystusowi,
Dziś nam
narodzonemu.
Pastuszkowie
przybywajcie,
Jemu
wdzięcznie
przygrywajcie
Jako Panu
naszemu.

Wesołych
Świąt
Merry
Christmas



**In a manger sleeps the infant.
Hasten all to find him there.
Little Jesus, to use heaven sent,
Blessings with us all to share.
Hurry, shepherds, kneel before Him,
Play sweet music like the Seraphim,
Worship Him as Lord and King.**

—From the Polish Christmas Carol
"W żłobie leży," translated by Zofia Kowalska McGinn.

Rough Start

Poles Stumble in Effort to Win over Obama

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Relations between Poland and the U.S. president-elect got off to a less-than-stellar start after a statement by the Polish Presidential Chancellery's web site said plans to place a U.S. missile base on Polish soil were still on. The statement was issued after Barack Obama spoke by telephone to Polish President Lech Kaczynski, Nov. 7.

An Obama aide said the president-elect made no such promise. Denis McDonough, the Obama Campaign's Foreign Policy Coordinator and Spokesman said the president-elect "made no commitment on it."

Kaczynski's office quickly backtracked.

"The issue of military co-operation was indeed touched upon during the [telephone conversation, Nov. 7] between Kaczynski and Obama, but the president-elect did not make any promises concerning the antimissile shield," said Polish presidential aide Michal Kaminski. This was the opposite of what another aide, Piotr Kownacki said Nov. 8. Kownacki claimed Obama said "that the missile-defense project would continue."

Obama has always been skeptical about the plans to deploy elements of the U.S. defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic, and stressed that the funds for the project should be assigned only after the system's reliability has been fully confirmed.

See "Poles Stumble," page 8

At the Wigilia Table



by Stas Kmiec

Polish customs, especially at Christmas time, are both beautiful and meaningful. They are the foundation which distinguishes our culture and are our unique and personal way of celebrating our religion, the seasons, and family celebrations. Despite the elimination of Polish parishes throughout the United States ancient Polish Christmas customs, such as the *wigilia* Dinner and the breaking of *oplatek* are preserved in the homes of practicing Polish families abroad.

Wigilia comes from the Latin word *vigilare*, "to keep watch," and literally means "eve." Although its origins have a religious direction, Christmas in Poland is an exceptional and unique experience—a spiritual, mythical family celebration, different from those in other countries. Its important symbolism remains a rarity in our world of today. There are traces of these traditions from the time of ancient Slavic tribes.

See "At the Wigilia Table," page 9

USE FORM BELOW FOR ALL ITEMS ON PAGES 2 and 3

Use form on back cover for items displayed on back cover

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	Individual .75 each	50 or more .50 each	Packages of 10 / \$6.00	TOTAL
Card	QNTY.	Each	QNTY.	Each
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Card 302		.75		6.00
Card 303		.75		6.00
Card 304		.75		6.00
Card 201		.75		6.00
Card 202		.75		6.00
Card 203		.75		6.00
Card 204		.75		6.00
Card 205		.75		6.00
Card 206		.75		6.00
Card 102		.75		6.00
Card 103		.75		6.00
Card Assortment (2 of each 12 cards)				\$13.95

CHRISTMAS CARD TOTAL >

OPLATEK (Christmas Wafers)	QNTY.	Each
SMALL (5 individual wafers)		\$3.00
LARGE (5 with decorative envelope)		\$5.00

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CD RECORDINGS	QNTY.	EACH
POLISH VILLAGE CHRISTMAS VOL. II		\$15.00
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CANDLES BIRTHDAY CARD		\$2.50

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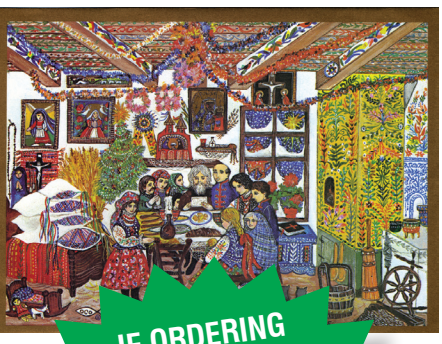
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EXP. DATE CARD SECURITY CODE

DAYTIME PHONE ()

Bring some Polish spirit back into your Christmas with gifts from the
Polish American Journal Bookstore
 Selling books and Polish Heritage items since 1988

OPLATEK • Polish Christmas Wafers

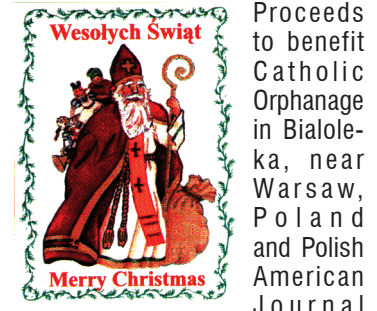


IF ORDERING OPLATEK ONLY, USE FORM ON NEXT PAGE TO SAVE MONEY ON SHIPPING CHARGES!

Keep this beautiful tradition alive in your family! Practice the ancient Polish custom of sharing the Christmas wafer with family and guests. Many people place a piece of oplatek—a thin wafer, made of flour and water—in each Christmas cards to family members and friends. Each Polish Christmas Wafer is embossed with religious scene.
SMALL (2 x 3½ in.) individual wafer w/glassine envelope—**5/\$3.00**
LARGE (6¼ x 3½ in.). Comes with decorative envelope (shown) depicting wigilia with history on back—**5/\$5.00**

STICKERS

Wesolych Swiat / Merry Christmas

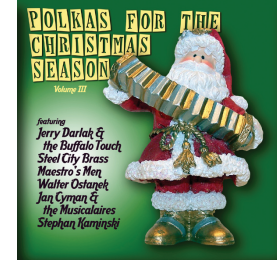


Proceeds to benefit Catholic Orphanage in Bialoleka, near Warsaw, Poland and Polish American Journal Press Fund. 1¼" x 1½". 16 stickers to a sheet. Stickers are perfect for presents, christmas cards, etc.
\$4.00 per sheet. (If ordering stickers only, shipping is \$1.00 per every four sheets).

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Koledy and pastoralki performed old country by the nation's top Pol-Am entertainers. Vocals and music by John Bartley, Eddie Biegaj, Mitch Biskup, Patricia Blust, Lenny Gomulka, John Jaworski, Kyle Kohan, Mark Kohan, Jim Kucharski, Jackie Libera, Joe Macielag, Mike Nowakowski, Robin Pegg, and Larry Trojak



Still available! The PAJ's **Polish Village Christmas Vol. I** Koledy and pastoralki—many long forgotten—featuring the nation's top vocalists and musicians on this top-selling CD. Performed with Gorale-style instrumentation (violin, double bass, clarinet and concertina).
Compact Disc—\$15.00

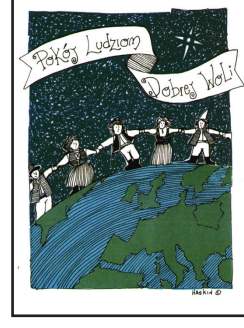
Polkas for the Christmas Season Volume III • Only \$12.95
 Featuring: Walter Ostanek • Jerry Darlak & The Buffalo Touch • Steel City Brass • Maestro's Men • Walter Ostafek • Jan Cyman & The Musicalsaires • Stephen Kaminski

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A beautiful way to say "Merry Christmas" in Polish! Designed exclusively for the Polish American Journal by renown folk artists Doris Sikorsky (cards 301-304), Basia Frackiewicz (cards 201-206) and Daniel Haskin (cards 101 and 103), these 4¼" x 5½" full-color cards—with greetings in both Polish and English—will brighten up everyone's home.

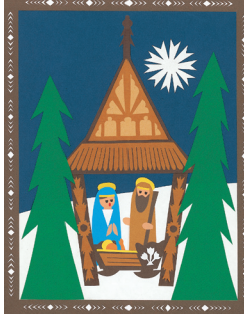


CARD 102



CARD 103

All cards contain greetings in both Polish and English.
 A perfect way to say Merry Christmas with friends and relatives across the street or across the country.



CARD 201



CARD 202



CARD 203

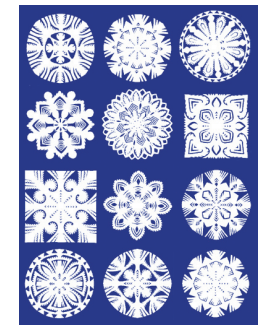


CARD 204

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CARD 205



CARD 206



CARD 301



CARD 302

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 Go to our Christmas Store at www.palamjournal.com



CARD 303



CARD 304

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KOLEDY SING-ALONG BOOK

Kolednik Domowy • Christmas Caroler

With Music and Lyrics in Poland and English
Published by the Fr. Justin Rosary Hour

Now you can sing-along to 37 of the most popular Polish Christmas Carols. This 90-page spiral-bound book contains the words and music plus English translations that can be substituted for the Polish ones. Published by the Fr. Justin Rosary Hour in 2003, the book also contains a message from the Rosary Hour director, an explanation (in Polish and English) of Polish Carols by the late Msgr. John R. Gabalski of St. Stanislaus Parish in Buffalo, N.Y., plus Pope John Paul II words about the importance of koledy to the Polish nation. Thirty-seven songs in all, including "Aniol Pasterzom Mowil" ("Shepherds Heard the Angels Say"), "Bog Sie Rodzi" ("God is Born"); "Bracia, Patrzcie Jeno" ("Look the Heaven, Brethren!"); "Dzisiaj w Betlejem" ("Today in Bethlehem"); "Oj Maluski" ("Oh My Little One"), and many more!

22 Christmas Caroler

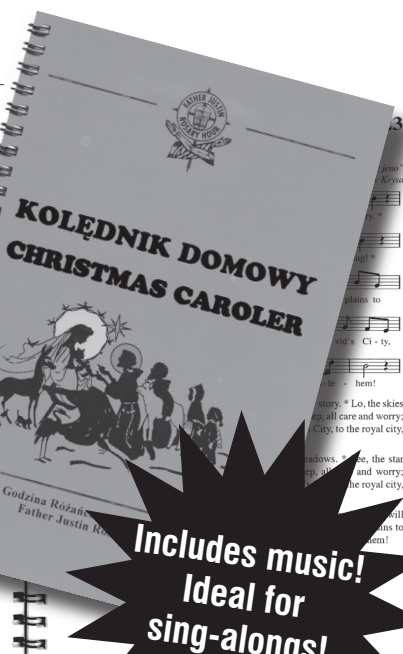
7. Bracia, patrzcie jeno

Tekst i mel. według Teofila Klimonskiego



1. Bra - cia, patrz - cie je - no, jak nie - bo - go - re - je!
Znać, że coś dzie - nie - go w Bet - le - jem się dzie - je.
Rzuć - my budy, war - ty, sta - da! Nie - chaj ni - mi Pan Bóg wle - ci - ty.
A my do Bet - le - jem, a my do Be - le - jem.
2. Patrzcie, jak tam gwiazda światłem swoim mig - a!
Pana swego ściga. * Krokami sniałym i wesolym * Spis - z czołem * Przed Panem w Betlejem, przed Panem w Betle - jem.
3. Wszakże powiedziałem, że cuda ujrzymy. * Dziecią - ło zobaczymy. * Patrzcie, jak kładzie ob - rą - ce * W żłób - ko. * W szopie przy Betlejem, w szopie przy Betlejem, przy - jem.
4. Jak prorok powiedział: Panna zrodzi syna, * Dla ni - nowina: * Nam zaś radość w tej tu chwili, gdyśmy Pan - a przy Betlejem, w szopie przy Betlejem, przy Betle - jem.
5. Betlejem, miasteczko w Judda sławne łęcznie, * Pamiętnym się stał nam kraj i wszędzie: * Ucieszymy się więc, zionkowie, * Pana tegoż już uczyniwe, * W szopie przy Betlejem, w szopie przy Betlejem, przy - jem.
6. Ochodząc pamiętkę odwiedzin pasterzy, * Każdy czcił Boga, co w Chrystusa wierzy. * Niech się cieszy i raduje, * Ze Zławcę swego znajdzie * W szopie przy Betlejem, w szopie przy Betlejem, przy - jem.

Published at \$7.00,
available now for only
\$5.00



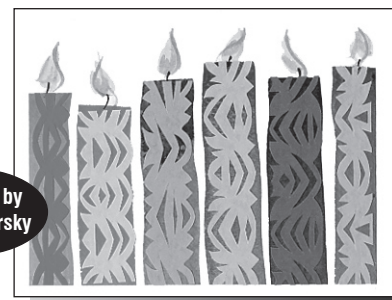
Includes music!
Ideal for
sing-alongs!

BIRTHDAY CARDS

Wycinanki-Style Birthday Cards



CARD 400 ("Sto lat") (left)
4 1/4" x 5 1/2" with envelope Full color design with Polish and English greeting inside.



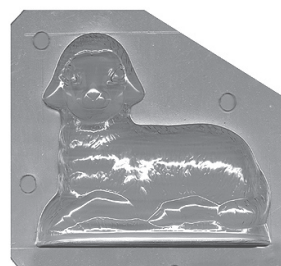
CARD 401 ("Candles") (above)
5 1/2" x 4 1/4" with envelope Full color design with Polish and English greeting inside

Designed by
Doris Sikorsky

All CXards Printed on Glossy Stock
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10 or more cards:
\$2.00 each

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Small 3-1/2" width by 3" tall—# 1-600 \$5.95
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BOOK BONANZA

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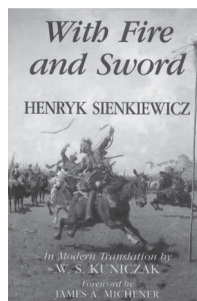
In the year 1608, a contingent of skilled Polish artisans arrived in the Jamestown colony and founded one of America's first export industries. Poles were among the intellectual and political leaders of Peter Stuyvesant's colony of New Amsterdam. And the great military strategists Thaddeus Kosciuszko and Casimir Pulaski are among the unsung heroes of the American Revolution. The election of a Polish pope, John Paul II, in 1978 changed dramatically the perception of Poland in the United States, as it also roused a new feeling of pride in Polish heritage among the ten million Americans of Polish descent. From the seventeenth century to the present, men and women of Polish descent have made important contributions in every area of American life—industry, finance, politics, science, sports, labor, theater music, art and education, to name only a few. Most of their names will not be found in American history books. But many of their names and stories are included in this richly illustrated history of the Poles in America. *My Name is Million* is also the story of those millions of Polish Americans whose quest for the American dream began in the mines, mills and factories of America—those whose dreams of and whose role in American life have, until now gone unrecognized. Originally published in 1978, *My Name is Million*, long out of print, is here reissued in a new format with a new index of names.

MY NAME IS MILLION



AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE POLES IN AMERICA
W.S. KUNICZAK

Original new, hard-cover editions of Sienkiewicz's "With Fire and Sword" and "Fire in the Steppe" published by the Copernicus Society of America and translated by W.S. Kuniczak. ("The Deluge" is sold out. Sorry)



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We offer oplatki in two sizes:
SMALL (2 x 3 1/2 in.) individual wafer w/glassine envelope—5/\$3.00
LARGE (6 1/4 x 3 1/2 in.). Comes with decorative envelope (shown) depicting wigilia with history on back—5/\$5.00
Each Polish Christmas Wafer is embossed with religious scene.

	QNTY.	Each
OPLATEK (Christmas Wafers)		
SMALL (5 individual wafers)		\$3.00
LARGE (5 with decorative envelope)		\$5.00

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"POLISH BABY" BIBS



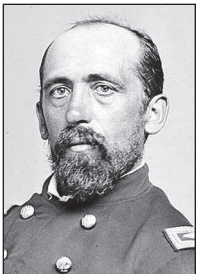
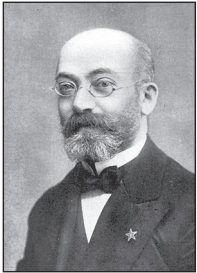
Cotton bibs. Red fabric with machine embroidered words. (Fabric may differ slightly from picture). \$9.00 each.
Bibs will be shipped separately from The Polish Peddler® in Hinckley, Ohio

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ALMANAC

December • Grudzień

- 1 1896. Death of explorer **Stefan Rogodzinski**, famous for exploits in Africa.
- 3 1983. Death of Hall of Fame golfer Al Watrous.
- 4 **ST. BARBARA**
- 5 1867. Birth of **Josef Pilsudski**, Polish military leader, victor at the Battle of the Vistula, and post-World War I leader of a free Poland.
- 6 **ST. NICHOLAS**
Today is traditionally reserved for gift-giving in Poland.
- 8 2000. Death of **Fr. Walter E. Pelczynski**, MIC, founding director of the Marian Helpers.
- 9 1990. Shipyard electrician and Solidarity Trade Union leader **Lech Walesa** elected president of Poland.
- 12 1981. Declaration of martial law in Poland.
- 15 1859. Birth of **Lazarus Ludovic Zamenhof** (right), developer of **Esperanto**, the International Language, in Bialystok, near Lithuanian, Poland and Byelorussia borders.
- 16 1922. Death by assassination of Poland's first president **Gabriel Narutowicz**.
- 18 1929. Birth of **Cardinal Jozef Glomp**.
- 21 **ST. THOMAS**
1898. In Paris, **Marie**, 31, and **Pierre Curie**, Polish and French chemists, discover radium.
- 23 **ST. JOHN KANTY**
1937. Birth of first Polish American astronaut, **Karol Bobko**.
1925. Founding of the **Kosciuszko Foundation** in New York City.
- 24 **DZIEŃ WIGILIJNY**
Abyśmy się doczekali następnej Wigilii!
May we meet next year at this time to celebrate the Vigil!
1798. Birth of **Adam Mickiewicz** ("Pan Tadeusz"), considered Poland's greatest poet.
- 25 **BOZE NARODZENIE**
According to Polish tradition, the 12 days of Christmas predict the weather for next 12 months.
- 26 **ST. STEPHEN**
1655. Swedes withdraw from Poland.
- 27 **ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST**
1918. **Powstanie Wielkopolskie** (Greater Poland Insurrection) begins.
1983. **Pope John Paul II** meets in prison with and forgives Ali Agca, who tried to assassinate the pope.
1892. Death of **Joseph Karg** (right), Polish American general in Union cavalry and later professor at Princeton.
- 29 1966. Celebration of the **Polish Millennium** of Christianity.
- 30 1959. Birth of Actress **Tracey Ullman** ("Tracey Takes On").
1977. President **Jimmy Carter** visits Poland.
1994. Consecration of **Bishop John W. Yanta, D.D.**, at Pan-ama Maria. He is the first Polish American Texan given this honor.
- 31 **ST. SYLVESTER**
Please do not drink and drive.



VIEWPOINT

Birth of Christ Reminds Us of Life's Cycles

We celebrate the miraculous birth of Christ for many reasons. First and foremost, we rejoice in the coming of Our Lord to our domain, a gift our Father chose to share with His children.

Christmas is the beginning of the cycle of Jesus's birth, death, and rebirth. It is a time, amplified by the New Year, to start over, to look at things in—if not a new way—in a better way. It is a time to gain a healthy perspective on things.

This must be the case with our Polonia. It has been a very interesting year: Poland is preparing for a U.S. missile base within its borders (much to Russia's objections), while at the same time, this dedicated ally on the U.S. war on terror was again insulted by the Bush Administration by not being included in the latest Visa Waiver program.

We lost many great people this year: World War II heroine Irena Sender; Polish politician Bronislaw

Geremek; Polish volleyball star Agata Mroz, who died after postponing a bone marrow transplant in order to allow her daughter to be born; U.S.-Polonia historian and author Francis Kajencki; physician, humanitarian, and philanthropist Dr. Stefan Wilk; U.S. Polish-born Marine Pfc. Dawid Pietrek; U.S.-Poland humanitarian Jan Wydro; decorated hero of Omaha Beach Sgt. Raymond Strojny; artist and illustrator Alice Bak; and Leonard J. Suligowski, director of Polish Nobility Association Foundation.

Struggles within the Roman Catholic Church, including the excommunications in St. Louis over property rights at St. Stanislaus Kostka, continue. Many more Polish American parishes were shut down, and more are on the chopping block. Buffalo, N.Y. was amongst the hardest hit in 2008, but was not the only city forced to deal with the closings.

We saw a presidential election

that spent millions in advertising, but not a penny in ethnic media. A few days before the election, McCain met with a group of Polish American activists representing Polish American communities in California, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. To us, this was too little, too late. The lack of respect months before the election sent a message that neither party viewed any of America's ethnic communities as deciding factors in the election, a disturbing notion, considering the millions who identify themselves by their ethnicity.

It is time to "acknowledge and continue," as a good friend of mine always says. The New Year is a time to marshal what resources we have left and use them to better ourselves. It is a time to make our list of resolutions, including ones that can better our community, such as putting an end to bickering; offering negative opinions (warranted or not) of fellow Poles; and swallowing our pride

when someone else makes positive strides. We can stop talking about passing our heritage and culture on to our children and grandchildren and do something about it. We can channel our resources into Polish American organizations, be they academic, social, religious, or cultural. If you can't attend a function's fundraiser — still buy a ticket, it makes a difference. You may not be happy your Polish parish was forced to merge with another church, but you can make sure the traditions of your ancestors are not forgotten in your new parish. Instead of complaining that your club's annual Polish night does not attract the crowds it once did, perhaps you can form a committee to focus on how you can bring more people in.

This list goes on. But that is the miracle of getting a second, third or thirtieth chance. We all know what we have to do. Let's make 2009 the year we do it.



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 DECEMBER 31

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JUST BETWEEN US / Mark Kohan

Contact Obama Headquarters on Visa Issue

Last month's cover story, "Poland Left Off Visa Waiver List," generated many telephone calls, e-mails, and letters. All agree it is of great importance the Obama Administration be reminded of the history the United States shares with Poland.

We urge our readers to contact President-elect Obama's Headquarters and tell them Washington owes Poland an exemption on the Visa Waiver Program because of Poland's long-standing allegiance to the United States. This includes such recent demonstrations as Poland's military help in Iraq, and its willingness to accept a U.S. missile base on its territory. Write or call: Obama for America, P.O. Box 8102, Chicago, IL 60680; (866) 675-2008. His office will only accept #10 envelopes. All other mail will be re-

turned to sender.

CHRISTMAS REMINDERS. As you see, our paper is full of items that make wonderful gifts. You may notice that some the items sold by the Polish American Journal are available from other distributors. While you may wish to order from other sources—and that decision is entirely yours—please remember the money generated from sales made through the PAJ goes directly back into the paper. We count on income generated from our holiday issues to help us publish throughout the year.

The Polish American Journal offers Christmas wafers (oplatki) in two sizes. In addition to its place at the Wigilia table, oplatek is often broken into smaller pieces and

mailed in Christmas cards to family and friends across the miles.

EARLY PRINT AND COPY DEADLINES. To meet holiday printing schedules, please note these deadlines for the January 2009 edition of the PAJ:

ALL COPY DEC. 3
 AD RESERVATIONS DEC. 10
 ALL ADVERTISING COPY DEC. 12

Copy (press releases, announcements, etc.) received after these dates will be considered for publication in the following issue.

WESOLYCH SWIAT! From our office to your home, we wish you a most joyous Christmas and health and happiness in the New Year. We thank our advertisers and patrons for a most successful edition. Please be sure to share it with family members and friends.

HOLIDAY HOURS. So staff members may enjoy Christmas with family and friends, our office will close Wednesday, December 24 and reopen Monday, December 29. We will close again New Year's Eve, Wednesday, December 31, and reopen Monday, January 5.

Census Bureau Seeks Bilingual Specialists to Conduct Outreach in Local Communities

NEW YORK—The U.S. Census Bureau is gearing up for the 2010 Decennial Operation, and is preparing to mobilize the largest temporary civilian workforce in history.

The Bureau is seeking bilingual Partnership Specialists to conduct outreach in local communities. Census Partnership Specialists are responsible for developing contacts with faith-based groups; schools; media outlets; businesses and other

grassroots entities in communities. Applicants are being sought in New York and New Jersey for bilingual speakers in several languages, including Polish.

To apply, please visit www.census.gov. Click on Regional Offices, then click on your state, then click on Regional Employment and scroll down the page. The job links and application deadlines will appear.

Merry Christmas

*May the Infant Jesus,
 the promised Messiah,
 enlighten you with His
 grace and love.*

*We wish you and your
 loved ones a truly blessed,
 peaceful and grace-filled
 Christmas.*

- The Pauline Fathers -



Wesołych Świąt

*Przesyłamy Wam jak
 najserdeczniejsze życzenia
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*Niech Boże Dziecią Jezus
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- Ojcowie Paulini -

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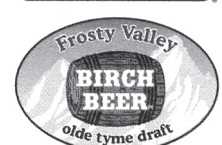
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Three-Course Wigilia Suppers

Part 2 of 2

Traditionally the five-course Wigilia supper was once the most modest spread, found even in the poorest of homes. Seven, nine and 11-course suppers were standard in better-to-do households, and in some parts of Poland a 12-course meal was typical. However, many Polish American households nowadays comprise only one or two members, and do not do much cooking anymore, so even a three-course supper may be quite a challenge to some.

3 CLEAR BEETROOT SOUP (czysty barszcz czerwony): In pot combine 3 c beet juice (from canned beets), 2 c apple juice and 3 c vegetable bouillon (homemade, canned or bouillon-cube type). Bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer briefly. Add 2 T vinegar and season to taste with a little garlic powder, liquid mushroom extract, pepper, sugar and a pinch of marjoram. Simmer a few min, switch off heat and let stand a few min covered for flavors to blend. Note: This soup can also be made with liquid beet concentrate (koncentrat barszczu), available at Polish delis. There you can also find Krakus and Hortex brand heat-and-eat barszcz in 1-liter cartons. Serve with hot, hand-held pasties (below).

PASTIES (paszteciki): Open a can of refrigerator crescent-roll dough. Place a spoonful of filling on each piece, roll up, pinch sides shut and bake according to package directions. For the filling, combine 1 c cooked rice, 5 chopped hard-cooked eggs, 2 diced onions sautéed in 2 T butter until lightly browned. Combine ingredients with 1 small

beaten uncooked egg, 1 - 2 heaping T. chopped fresh or frozen dill and salt & pepper to taste.

CREAM-BAKED PIKE (szczupak zapiekany w śmietanie): Rinse well and pat and dry 2 lbs northern pike, walleye or sea pike (hake) fillets, sprinkle with juice of 1 lemon, salt well and refrigerate several hrs or overnight. Pat dry. Place 2 T butter in casserole and heat in oven. Place fillets in casserole and roll in the hot butter to coat all sides. Bake in 375° oven uncovered about 15 min. Meanwhile, in saucepan melt 2 T butter, stir in 1 T flour. Remove from heat, stir in ¾ c. fork-blended sour cream, add ¼ t salt, return to heat and simmer until bubbly, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir in 1 t lemon juice. Pour sauce over fish and bake about 15-20 or until fish is fully cooked. Dust with paprika and garnish with chopped parsley just before serving.

NOODLES & POPPYSEEDS (kluski z makiem): In pot combine 2 c poppyseed with plenty of cold water and swish around with hand. Pour off any impurities that float up. Drench with cold water again and drain through fine sieve. Place poppyseeds in pot, scald with boiling water to cover and simmer on low until poppyseeds disintegrate between fingers (about 40 min.). Drain in fine sieve, pressing out moisture. Pass through fine strainer of meat-grinder twice or through special poppyseed-grinder once. Or process them in food-processor several min until puréed. In saucepan melt 3-1/2 T. butter, add poppyseeds, 1/2 c sugar, 1/2 t grated lemon zest and 1/2 c honey and simmer 15 min or on low heat, stirring frequently. Add 1/4 t vanilla extract and/or several

drops of almond extract. *Optional:* 1/3 - 1/2 c plumped raisins may be added. Toss with cooked egg noodles and serve room temp or chilled. Note: A store-bought canned poppyseed pastry filling can be used if you lack the time and/or energy to make it from scratch.

4 PICKLED HERRING (śledź marynowany): Store-bought pickled or marinated herring is good just as it comes from the jar, and it's a great time-saver. Drain, discarding onion and spices, and serve with boiled potatoes on the side as a traditional Wigilia entrée.

BATTER-FRIED MUSHROOMS (grzyby smażone w cieście): Soak 12 large dried bolete mushroom caps of roughly equal size in warm water 1 or more hrs or overnight. Add 1/2 t salt and cook in same water at a gentle boil until fully cooked but still firm. Carefully remove mushrooms, drain and dry on absorbent paper. (Save water in which mushrooms cooked for other purposes: soups, gravies, sauerkraut dishes, etc.) For the batter, combine 3/4 c flour, 1/2 t baking powder, 1/2 t salt, 1 t oil and several dashes pepper, stir in 1 c milk and 1 beaten egg and whisk until smooth. Let stand 30 min. Dredge cooked mushroom caps flour, shaking off excess, dip in batter to cover and fry in 1/2" hot oil to a nice golden-brown on both sides. Add more oil to skillet as needed. Drain on absorbent paper and serve hot as a dish in itself or a hand-held go-together with clear red barszcz.

POPPYSEED ROLL (makowiec, strucla z makiem): Sift 3 c flour onto bread board and cut in

continued on next page

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Merry Christmas

& Happy New Year

During the year, in the rush of events and everyday duties, we tend to overlook the important friendships that are the true basis of business relationships. One of the great pleasures of the Holiday Season is the opportunity to exchange cordial greetings with those whose friendship and goodwill we value so highly.



In the spirit of the season it is our pleasure to say "Thank You" and extend our sincere appreciation for the very pleasant association we enjoy with our customers.

May a bright and prosperous New Year bring happiness to you and your loved ones.

ADAMBA IMPORTS

Three-Course Wigilia Suppers: Maintaining Tradition with Less Prep Time

continued from page 6

1/2 lb butter, chopping to achieve a groat-like consistency. Add 2 eggs and 3 yolks, lightly beaten, 1/2c sour cream, 1 scant confectioner's sugar, 1 t grated lemon zest, 1/2 t vanilla and 1 cake yeast mashed with 1 T sugar. Quickly work ingredients into a dough, adding a bit more sour cream if it is too stiff to handle. Divide in two and roll each half out into a roughly 10" x 14" rectangle. Spread each rectangle with commercial poppyseed filling, leaving a 3/4" margin round the edges, and roll up jelly-roll fashion. Transfer to baking pan, cover with cloth and leave in warm place to rise. Bake in preheated 390° oven 40-50 min. Drizzle with plain white icing and sprinkle with raisins and/or shaved almonds.

5 CLEAR MUSHROOM SOUP (czysta zupa grzybowa): Wash well, drain and dice 6 oz. fresh portobello mushrooms,

rooms, simmer with a small chopped onion in 2 T. butter 10-15 min. or until fully cooked. Place in pot, add 6 c. water and 1 mushroom bouillon cube and simmer covered 10 min. Season to taste with salt, pepper and a dash of vinegar. Garnish with a little fresh chopped parley, if desired, and serve over cooked egg noodles or lasagna cut into 1" squares.

FRIED FISH (ryba smażona): Wash and dry 2-3 lbs very fresh or thawed fish fillets (pike, carp, walleye, lake perch, catfish, bass, cod, hake, pollock, haddock, etc.), sprinkle with lemon juice, intersperse with onion slices, salt well and refrigerate several hrs or overnight. Rinse and pat dry, salt & pepper, dust with paprika, dredge in flour, shaking off excess, fry on both sides in hot oil until golden on the outside and fully cooked on the inside.

HORSERADISH SAUCE (sos chrzanowy): Fork-blend 2/3c mayonnaise, 1/3c sour cream and 1-2 heaping T prepared horseradish. Season to taste with lemon juice, sugar and a pinch of salt and serve with fried fish.

NOODLES & PLUM BUTTER (kluski z powidłami): Cook a package of egg noodles in lightly salted water until tender (a while longer than the Italian-style "al dente" time given on the package!). Drain, turn out onto serving platter, dot with butter and spoon some powidła (imported Polish plum butter) over it.

6 CHRISTMAS EVE RYMEAL SOUP (żurek wigilijny): Soak 4-5 dried Bolete mushrooms several hrs or overnight in 2c water and cook in same water until tender. Slice or

dice cooked mushrooms and add together with mushroom stock to 3c vegetable stock. In it cook 2-3 diced potatoes. When potatoes are fully cooked, a 1c liquid rye sour (żur) or to taste, bring to boil. and remove from heat. Fork-blend 1/2-3/4c sour cream with 1 T flour until smooth and stir 1c hot soup into mixture, 1 T at a time so sour cream doesn't curdle. Slowly stir in sour-cream mixture into soup and heat gently several min but do not boil, stirring constantly. Season with salt, pepper and several pinches marjoram.

MUSHROOM GOŁĄBKI (gołąbki z grzybami): In 3 T butter, margarine or oil sauté 12 oz fresh wild or store-bought portobello mushrooms (washed and diced) with 2 med chopped onions. Combine with 3-3-1/2c preferably slightly undercooked rice, barley or buckwheat groats, cooked with 1 mushroom cube. Add 1 raw egg and mix to blend ingredients. Salt & pepper to taste and (optional) garnish with 1 T chopped fresh parsley. Spread pre-wilted cabbage leaves with mixture, tuck in side and roll up as usual. Arrange snugly in no more than 2 layers in roasting pan or casserole drench with 3c vegetable stock and bake in preheated 350° oven at least 2 hrs. Serve drenched with mushroom sauce (made by combining and bringing to boil 3c water, 1 mushroom bouillon cube and 1 can cream of mushroom soup; after switching off heat, stir in a heaping T sour cream).

WARSAW FRUIT CAKE (keks warszawski): Beat 5 eggs with 1-3/4c confectioner's sugar until creamy. Cream 3/4c butter with 1 t vanilla extract until light and

fluffy, then beat in 1/4c milk and 1/2 t salt. Sift 1-1/2c flour with 2 t baking powder, add to butter mixture and mix well. Fold in egg mixture and another 1-1/2c flour. In cornstarch-filled plastic bag place 1c chopped prunes and figs, 1/2c raisins and 3/4c chopped walnuts and shake to coat thoroughly. Fold into dough and mix to distribute evenly. Transfer dough to well-greased, bread-crumbsprinkled loaf pan(s) and bake in preheated 350° about 50 min.

7 HERRING SALAD (salatka śledziowa): Drain 8 oz jar marinated herring and discard onions and spices. Dice herring and place in salad bowl. Add 2c cold, cooked diced potatoes, 2 peeled, diced cooking apples, 2 chopped onions, 2 chopped dill pickles and 1 t. chopped fresh parsley. Toss gently and fold in sauce: fork-blend 1 1/2 c. mayonnaise with 1/2 c. sour cream and 1-2 T. brown prepared mustard. Chill at least 2 hrs before serving. Optional: for a gourmet twist add 1 heaping t. capers.

CHEESE & POTATO-FILLED PIEROGI (pierogi z kartoflami i serem): For pierogi dough, sift 2 1/2 c. flour onto board, sprinkle with 1/2 t salt, deposit whole egg and 1 T salad oil at center and blend ingredients. Add about 1/2 c. water a little at a time, working the dough constantly to absorb it. Knead dough until smooth, roll it into a ball and let it rest beneath a warm inverted bowl 10 min. Meanwhile, prepare the filling: cook 1 lb potatoes in lightly salted water until tender. Drain and cool. Add 1/2 lb crumbed farmer cheese and mash together with the potatoes until mix-

ture is uniform. (If you like, you can whirl 1/2 lb dried cottage cheese in food-processor to a fine powder and use it instead of the farmer cheese.) In 2 T oil lightly brown 2 chopped onions and add to mixture. Mix well and salt & pepper to taste. Roll out dough thin on floured board, cut into rounds with glass or biscuit-cutter, place a spoonful of filling at center of each round, fold in half, pinch edges together to seal. Cook in batches in a large pot of boiling salted water. Cooking time is roughly 10 min., but test one for doneness just to be sure. Serve with melted butter, sour cream or butter-fried bread crumbs. Note: If you can't make them from scratch, use store-bought pierogi.

CRANBERRY JELLY DESERT (kisiel żurawinowy): In pot combine 2c raw cranberries, 2 cloves and 1c water, bring to boil and cook until the skins of the cranberries pop. Discard cloves. With wooden pestle or spoon force cranberries through metal sieve (a plastic one may melt!), using rubber spatula to scrape scrapings from bottom of sieve into a clean pot. Add 1c sugar and a pinch of cinnamon (optional) and simmer until sugar dissolves. Dissolve 3T+1t potato starch (or cornstarch) in 1c cold water and add to cranberries. Simmer a few min, stirring constantly, and transfer to bowl, cover and let stand until cooled to room temp. Serve at room temp or chilled, topped with super-easy vanilla sauce: beat 2 T instant vanilla-pudding mix powder (more or less) with 3/4c cold milk to get a nice, pourable sauce.

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The Polish Gift of Life, Inc. would like to thank all of our generous supporters, who, for over 28 years, have made it possible for us to help sick Polish children. Many children have been brought to the United States for live-saving heart surgery, which was not available to them in their own country. This year, we sent therapy equipment and medical supplies to an Orphanage, also an EKG machine was sent to a rehabilitation center. We provided much-needed medical equipment and supplies to several hospitals in Poland. A 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitor with software, cuffs, battery charger and batteries, an ambulatory Doppler machine, and a pulsometer was sent so that more children can be helped. Your financial support will allow us to continue to give Polish children the precious "gift of life." Thank you.

Poles Stumble in Effort to Win Over Obama

continued from cover

CHANGE IN FOREIGN POLICY?

The election of Obama spells changes in U.S. foreign and domestic policies, one that could see focus shifted to shoring up American's ailing economy. This has some foreign leaders who rely on U.S. support worried. Others, like Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski, are more pragmatic in their thinking.

"As for missile defense, I assess chances to continue the program at over 50%. The treaty will be implemented if Poland and the Czech Republic ratify it and if the Congress allocates the funding for it," Sikorski said.

"On the other hand, a president voted for by over 90% of black U.S. residents, a president who wants to look after the poorest part of American society, will probably seek funds for social programs in other areas of the budget," he said.

On other policy matters concerning Poland, an idea of how Obama intends to proceed can be gained from a speech he gave when President Kaczynski was visiting Washington in July 2007. On relations with countries to the east of Poland, Obama said: "America and Poland should stand together to help Ukraine build a strong and stable democracy, and to help the people of Belarus regain their human rights. We also share an interest in working with Russia to meet common security threats and to encourage Russia's integration into Western institutions. But we should also embrace, not abandon, those in Russia working to preserve their

hard won liberty, and draw clear lines against Russia's intimidation of its neighbors. 21st Century Europe cannot be divided into 19th Century spheres of influence."

On the Visa Waiver Program— an issue of particular importance to Poles, many of whom feel that still having to obtain a visa before visiting the United States shows a lack of gratitude after Warsaw's staunch support for the "war on terror"—

Obama appears to have good news: "We should work to include countries like Poland that are members of both the EU and NATO into the Visa Waiver Program. Today's visa regime reflects neither the current strategic relationship nor the close historic bonds between our peoples, and is out of date. These are important steps, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to implement them," said Barack Obama.

ONE IN EVERY CROWD. If the missile-assurance debacle wasn't enough, President Kaczynski was forced to issue an apology for "astonishing, unacceptable and racist" remarks by a member of parliament from his party.

Artur Gorski, who is well-known in Poland for his often controversial comments that have upset members

of his own conservative Law and Justice party, called Obama a "black crypto-communist" and a "naive individual whose election must delight al-Qaeda."

Officials in Washington instructed the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw to demand an official apology from the Polish government as soon as possible.

"Those comments were despicable and outrageous and don't warrant any kind of response," said State Department spokesman Robert Wood.

Kaczynski issued the expected apology, saying, "These are the kind of highly odd views that this member of parliament is well known for. Clearly neither I, nor the vast majority of the party, share views of this sort."

The gaffes have Poland's foreign minister working overtime. In trying to clear up the discrepancy for the missile issue, Sikorski told Polish TVN24 "It felt very unpleasant to have to make excuses for Poland to the U.S. Department of State."

He added that if he were President Lech Kaczynski, he would change his aides. "Such friction at the very beginning is likely to overshadow the future co-operation. [...] I fear that now Obama won't be in a hurry to phone Poland again."

QUOTES

It's Like a Fairy Tale

compiled from news sources

"You can be an immigrant, you can be a different color and become president. It's like a fairy tale."

—*Poland's Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski, on the election of Barack Obama to the U.S. presidency.*

"I'm happy about the challenge we are seeing. Change is needed and this is why an outsider was chosen to make change."

—*Poland's anti-communist Solidarity icon and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Lech Walesa, on how he hopes President-elect Barack Obama will lead the United States out of its political and economic crisis.*

"America is a land where amazing things can happen. America makes its own share of mistakes, but Americans are able to correct their mistakes much faster than other countries."

—*Pawel Dobrowolski, a Harvard-educated analyst for Instytut Sobieskiego, a Polish think tank, on the election of Obama and its impact on international relations.*

"From time to time plans come from the side of our Russian neighbors to place different rockets in different places."

—*Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, dismissing Russia's plans to place missiles on its border with Poland in response to the planned U.S. missile base on Polish territory. Hours before the Polish border missile announcement, Russian President Dmitri Medvedev said Moscow would deploy short-range missiles in its Baltic Sea enclave of Kaliningrad.*

"... this last second attempt to gain Polish votes strikes me as nothing more than pure pandering on his

Award-Winning Actress Keeps Tradition Alive



"I come from a big Midwestern Polish family, and a favorite Christmas tradition is one that we used to do with my grandmother every year. It was the sharing of the opiatek, which is a big wafer. Everyone would break off a piece and wish one another well. Now that I live in Los Angeles, it's something that bonds my own family and gives a Polish meaning to Christmas."

—*Jane Kaczmarek*

part ... It's as if we are ignored until the last minutes and ... as an afterthought ... (they were) thinking, 'let's see if we can woo some Pol-Am voters over to us.' I call it pathetic and a typical display of how inept his campaign has been."

—*Grand Rapids attorney Jeff Portko, on how the McCain-Palin ticket ignored the Polish American electorate, until days before the election.*

"If I can't speak any more, it's time for me to go."

—*Words of the late Pope John Paul II, after his last public appearance from his window overlooking St. Peter's Square, when, debilitated by Parkinson's disease and other maladies and overcome with emotion, he did not manage to pronounce any words, as recently revealed long-time aid Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz. John Paul died several days later at age 84.*



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At the Wigilia Table

continued from cover

No other event contains such richness, and such an amount of time-honored customs, lore and legend.

Over the centuries, these timeless traditions have continued to strengthen the sense of religious and national identity of Poles throughout the world. The traditions vary in each region of Poland.

It is believed that whatever occurs on *wigilia* has an impact on the coming year. So, if an argument should arise, a quarrelsome and troublesome year will follow. In the morning, if the first visiting person is a man, it means good luck; if the visitor is a woman, one might expect misfortune. The arrival of the mailman signifies money and success in the future. To assure good luck and to keep evil outside, a branch of evergreen is hung above the front door. Old grudges end as this is the time to forget old ill feelings and to exchange good wishes.

Christmas Eve is at first a day of fasting, then of feasting. The whole family gathers and waits for the appearance of the first star in the skies. With its first gleam, they all approach the *Wigilia* table

THE SETTING. The table is set with an impeccably white tablecloth, symbolizing the purity and the holiness of the Babe of Bethlehem. A thin layer of hay is spread on the table before it is covered in remembrance of the hay-filled manger where Jesus was born.

Some maidens predict their future from the straw. After supper, they pull out blades of straw from beneath the tablecloth. A green one foretells marriage; a withered one signifies waiting; a yellow one predicts spinsterhood; and a very short one foreshadows an early grave.

In farm homes, sheaves of grain—wheat, rye, barley and oats are tied with colored ribbons and placed in the four corners of the room to insure a good harvest in the coming season.

TRADITION OF THE EMPTY PLACE. A lit candle in the window symbolizes the hope that the Christ child, in the form of a stranger, may arrive to share *Wigilia*. An extra place is set at the table for the unexpected guest—a belief which stems from the ancient Polish saying—"Gość w dom, Bóg w dom" (A guest in the home is God in the home).

It is the belief that no one should be left alone at Christmas, so an acquaintance or unexpected guest, or wanderer are welcomed to the meal—a reminder of Mary and Joseph's search for shelter. Anyone who comes into a Polish house on this evening will sit at this place and treated as a member of the family and share the meal.

It also represents a place for family members who have passed away. This symbolic gesture comes from a pagan belief that on this night souls of the deceased may visit their families under different forms (i.e. stranger, homeless person or a ghost looking for a warm meal). The dinner leftovers are left for the wandering souls, the soup vase is not washed immediately to allow the souls to take some refreshments. In addition, people use to blow on the chair before taking a seat, whisper

apology to the soul that could have been resting on that seat. To avoid startling or hurting the ghosts, it was not allowed on Christmas to spit, sew, or chop wood.

The typical ingredients of Christmas Eve feast are grains, poppy seeds, honey and mushrooms, all of them are also typical for Slavic pagan funeral wakes. Bringing cooked wheat to the cemetery for the funerals or All Souls day is still a vivid tradition among Slavs in southeastern Europe, even if forgotten in Poland.

THE FIRST STAR. The festivities begin with the appearance of the first star in the heavens. After sunset, the youngest family member eagerly watches for the first star, thinking it is the same star that guided the three Wise Men to Bethlehem. Once sighted, the child announces that the star has appeared. All lights are turned off, candles are lit at the table, and the guests surround the table.

An even number of people must be seated around the table or tradition states someone may pass away in the coming year.

BREAKING OF THE CHRISTMAS WAFER. In the center of the table on a plate with hay covered by a white doily or cloth napkin is the Polish Christmas wafer, *oplatek*. Symbolizing the Christ Child, the thin unleavened wafers are baked from pure wheat flour and water, and rectangular in shape. The *oplatek* is identical in composition to the Host used during Holy Communion and is embossed with Christmas related religious images, such as the nativity scene, Virgin Mary with baby Jesus, and the Star of Bethlehem.

Beginning with a blessing, the oldest member of the family breaks off a small piece of the *oplatek* wafer and gives it to family members and friends in succession, as a token of goodwill, exchanging mutual wishes for happiness and health. This ceremony is enacted between the parents and their children, as well as among the children and guests.

Those who are no longer alive are particularly remembered at this moment. Putting aside any past grievances, the breaking of the wafer also represents mutual sacrifice and sharing - even our last scrap of bread.

A sample blessing can take the form of:

• *Na szczęście, na zdrowie z Wigilia!*

Health and good fortune this Wigilia!

• *Abyśmy się doczekali następnej Wigilii!*

May we meet next year at this time to celebrate Wigilia!

• *Życzę zdrowia, szczęścia i fortuny, a po śmierci niebieskiej korony!*

May you be blessed with health, good fortune, and happiness, which do not tarnish over the years. And may you receive a crown in paradise!

• *Niech zawsze nad naszym domem świeci złota gwiazda!*

May a bright star always shine over your home!

• *Niech Panna pszeniczna, Betlejemska, zamieni smutek w kolebę!*

May the Mother of Bethlehem, the wheaten Maiden change your

Pierogi – Made with Love A Personal Recollection

Wigilia is the time for every Polish household to indulge in the pleasure of *pierogi*. I profess these delicious dumplings are my favorite food. I have become a connoisseur of the perfect *pieróg*, because I was brought up with the highest standard of this traditional time-honored culinary art form. My family's homemade *pierogi* contains the most special ingredient—they are made with love.

My *Babcia* was a master of *pierogi*-making and it is this tradition that she passed on to my mother and my *Ciocia Stella*. Although there is a distinct similarity to their three styles of *pierogi*, there also was a unique and special quality to each.

When my grandparents were alive, the families all gathered in Garefield, N.J. for *wigilia* at their home. All types of *pierogi* were served to feed the masses, filled with cheese (*z serem*), potato and cheese, and *kapusta* (a unique recipe, which the words "cabbage" or "sauerkraut" do not justly describe). My *Babcia* would also make a limited amount of a special *kapusta* with potato *pierogi*, that were exclusively hidden for my Uncle *Stas*, as it was his favorite.

Although I delight in any style of homemade *pierogi*, my favorite is *kapusta*; cheese with vanilla is a close second. I am spoiled on the best *pierogi*, perhaps I am a "pierogi snob"—analyzing and comparing *pierogi* against my family's tradition. I have sampled countless versions of *pierogi* throughout the United States and Poland, and although they vary in quality, I have rarely found a *pieróg* I didn't like.

Babcia would differentiate the type of *pieróg* by

every sorrow into a carol!
 • *Niech się spełnia wszystkie marzenia!*

May all our dreams come true!

It has been suggested by Polish ethnographers that the sharing of this bread wafer at the *wigilia* table is a modification of what was once the sharing of ritual bread called *podplomyk*. This was thin, flat bread traditionally baked before placing the loaves of bread dough in the oven. The appearance of this bread in conjunction with the *oplatek* gave rise to the conjecture that it was an early form of the bread wafer.

The word "oplatek" derives from the Latin word "oblatum," meaning sacred bread. Made of unleavened dough, it first began to be used in the 10th century as a liturgical wafer. In Poland the tradition of baking wafers in engraved metal forms, and of using these wafers for sacral and secular purposes dates back to the Middle Ages.

The tradition traces its origins to the times of early Christianity and is seen as non-sacramental.

By the 15th century, bread wafers were being made on a larger scale for popular use. Wafers were used as snack with wine, as a seal for letters, and for making Christmas decorations called *światy* (globes). Developing simultaneously with the spread of wafers was the art of iron engraving. Rectangular shaped irons, the insides engraved with various religious motifs, were used to emboss scenes on the wafer. The dough was poured on one side, the other half closed over, and the iron held over a fire until the wafer was baked.

Initially wafers were baked by monks, but in the 15th century the production of wafers was transferred to the lay servants of the church. Workers wore liturgical garments and sang special hymns during the process. By the middle of the century, monks and nuns were given the privilege of making such wafers.

As a custom, *oplatek* originated in Poland and was widely spread as far back as the 17th century. It was

the part of *szlachta's* (Polish nobility) culture and the custom has spread throughout the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and neighboring countries.

In the 19th century in the aftermath of the partitions of Poland it gained patriotic subtexts as the common wish during sharing of wafer became the wish for Poland's regaining its independence. Since that time *oplatki* were embossed with religious images. The origin of sending *oplatek* goes back to the 19th century partitioned Poland, when people were sent to Siberia as a punishment for taking part in uprisings during that period. It was then, that the custom of sending such wafers, accompanying tribute, family warmth and good wishes to all those in prison camps, appeared.

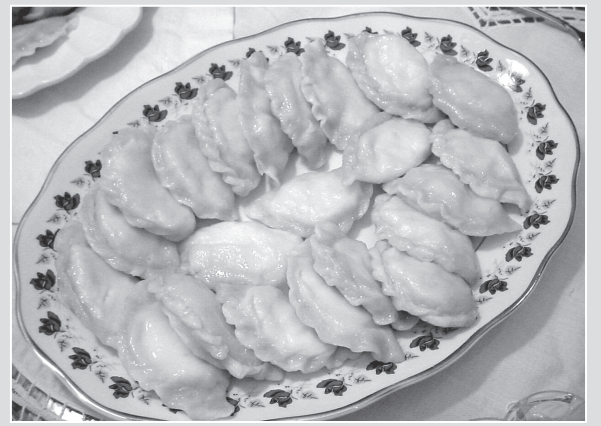
In the 20th century the custom went beyond families and gained another meaning: the meeting of present or past co-workers, students, friends, or in the United States as organized parish dinners.

Traditionally, pure white wafers are broken and shared with family, while colored wafers are given to family animals. This symbolizes respect for animals' part in the witness of Christ's birth in Bethlehem in the stable. According to Polish tradition, it is believed that on this special night animals are granted the power of speech, thus nearing humanity. Among farmers, a popular ritual is the blessing of the fields with holy water and the placing of crosses made from straw into the four corners of the barn.

In Poland, colored wafers are also used to make Christmas tree decorations.

In the past, the wafers were distributed by the church organists and were distributed from house to house in the parish during Advent. Today, they are produced commercially and are sold in religious stores and houses.

Oplatek continues to be sent in a greeting card to loved ones away from home. The tradition has been adopted by other parts of Catholic



how she sealed it—either utilizing the scallop method or a braided technique. A multitude of *pierogi* by three experts with three similar, yet different styles made their way to our *Wigilia* table and I was always in "pierogi heaven." *Babci* took great satisfaction when she witnessed that the extended family enjoyed the *pierogi*.

With the passing of my grandparents, our *Wigilia* celebration changed, and mine was relocated to my hometown in Massachusetts. Although *uszki* (the little potato dough, mushroom-filled crescent spheres)—a distant cousin to *pierogi*, were not a part of our Rzeszów region tradition, we eventually adopted them into our menu.

Pierogi have a special place on the *Wigilia* table, whether mail or deli ordered or homemade "with love" they are an absolute necessity and important element that must be treasured and, of course, tasted.

Part I in a continuing series—Stas Kmieć

such as Lithuania, Slovakia, and Ukraine.

THE CHRISTMAS EVE WIGILIA DINNER. The number of dishes vary from region to region and are traditionally established to be either twelve or an odd number (as in the southwestern Śląsk region). The number twelve is symbolic of the number of months in the coming year as well as to celebrate the twelve disciples of Jesus.

In the olden days, the number was determined by the affluence of a given household may often determine the number of courses served—aristocratic families serving eleven dishes, the nobility—nine, and the peasantry—seven.

The meatless meal symbolizes the cleansing effect of abstinence in preparation for the great event at midnight. The first course is soup—the most common is a clear beet broth (*barszcz*) with tiny mushroom-filled dumplings (*uszki*) floating within, clear mushroom soup served over egg noodles or even a soup called *siemieniotka* which is prepared from hemp seed and served with buckwheat groats (*kasza gryczana*). Fish dishes include herring, marinated, in oil or in sour cream and carp in various forms: fried, baked, in raisin sauce or in aspic.

The beloved Polish *pierogi* with various meatless fillings, buckwheat groats, *kapusta* stewed with mushrooms and/or peas are some of the many foods that can be served.

Sweet dishes such as almond soup, noodles and poppyseed, wheat and honey pudding, rice and apple casserole and traditional cakes include poppy seed rolls, fruit cakes, and honey-spice cakes round out the meal.

A *kompot* (stewed fruit dessert or beverage), made of 12 different fruits honors the twelve Apostles. Although drinking is rather subdued, often a hot honey-spice cordial known as *krupnik* is served.

At midnight, all attend *Pasterka* or Midnight Mass.

Christmas Crib Polish Style

by Robert Strybel

Christmas crèches, cribs or nativity sets are things we take for granted, but probably few Polish Americans know that it was St. Kinga (1234-1292), the Hungarian-born wife of Poland's Boleslaw the Bashful, who first brought them to Poland. Kinga (also known as Kunegunda) greatly admired the Italian, St. Francis of Assisi, who had set up the first Christmas crib in a church in 1223. The story of Jesus' birth was portrayed by life-size statues or re-enacted by people (usually monks or seminarians) for the benefit of largely illiterate medieval congregations. In time, these portrayals became increasingly elaborate. Eventually, nativity puppet stages emerged, and in the 18th century the mechanized crèche first made its appearance. The well-known 18th-century historian, Rev. Jędrzej Kitowicz, thus described one such nativity scene:

"There was the little person of Lord Jesus, and standing to the side Mary and Joseph, bent over in a sign of great affection and admiration. Above the stable, were angels soaring on wings and seeming to sing 'Gloria in excelsis Deo'. On either side of the stable were peasants and little shepherds, some tending their flocks, others sleeping, still others hastening to the stable with sheep and goats in their arms, and

among them characters expressing every human estate: lords riding in carriages, nobles and burghers on foot, peasants carting timber, grain and hay, leading oxen, ploughing fields, selling bread, farmwives milking cows, Jews displaying various goods for sale and similar such human endeavors."

The Polish nativity scene is usually portrayed in a wooden, often thatched-roof stable, or something that resembles a country church or the housing of a wayside shrine.

As more and more secular, even humorous elements began creeping in, the once pious congregations began acting more and more like audiences watching jugglers and other entertainers at open-air markets. They pushed, shoved, crowded around the jaselka (nativity scene), laughed and shouted. In fact, things got so unruly that in the mid-18th century Church authorities banned such nativity presentations from churches. The custom was taken over by poor students who entertained townsfolk by donning makeshift "biblical" costumes or staging nativity puppet shows house to house.

Unlike the grotto-type shelter

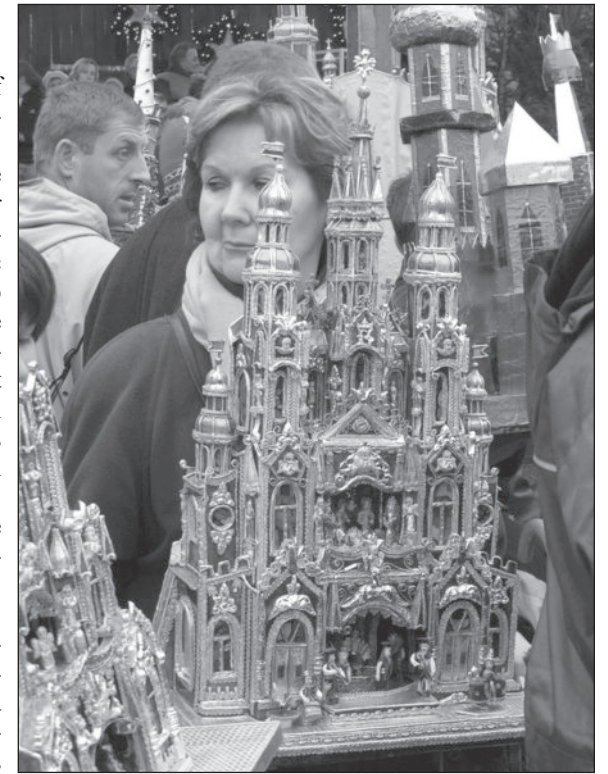
used to depict Christ's birthplace in Italy and other southern lands, in Poland the nativity scene was usually portrayed in a wooden, often thatched-roof stable, or something that vaguely resembled a country church or the housing of a wayside shrine. The Christmas crèches ranged from the primitive-rustic model typical of the countryside to more refined styles encountered in towns. But absolutely nothing could compare with the breathtakingly beautiful Szopka Krakowska (Kraków Crèche).

The Szopka Krakowska is an urban art-form of relatively recent vintage. It all started round the mid-19th century, when Vistula raftsmen and workmen needed a source of income during the off-season. Some began whittling nativity figurines and fashioning "stables" in which to display them, but they seemed to draw a lot of their inspirations from the towers and steeples of Old Royal Kraków. What evolved was a several-story structure far more reminiscent of an Old World Cathedral or story-book castle than the humble stable of Bethlehem.

A crèche-making contest, held each year in early December in Kraków's Rynek Główny (Main Marketplace) goes back only to the 1930s, making it a relatively recent custom, as Polish traditions go. Contestants display their entries

round the base of the Adam Mickiewicz Monument, and they can be admired all year round at the nearby ethnographic museum. And to think that these shimmering masterpieces are put together from such flimsy materials as cardboard, thin strips of wood, colored cellophane (for the stained-glass windows), and metallic foil.

Since the collapse of communism in 1989, a new form of nativity tableau has made the scene. Known as a "living crèche", it incorporates live animals and displays some of the features of a petting zoo. Adding rabbits, pigeons, llamas and Shetland ponies to the sheep, cows and donkeys may not be biblically correct, but this approach does capture the attention and pique the interest of preschoolers. After Mass they beg their parents to take them



A crèche-making contest is held each year in early December in Kraków's Main Marketplace. Contestants display their entries round the base of the Adam Mickiewicz Monument, and they can be admired all year round at the nearby ethnographic museum.

to the stable, usually situated on the parish grounds. This form of grass-roots "evangelization" is highly recommended, because it forcefully reminds youngsters at an early age why we celebrate Christmas in the first place.



With Respect
for the
Journal's Mission
MARY MAZUREK HESLIN
Polish Cultural Club of
Greater Hartford



The beautiful melodious Polish Christmas carols (kolędy) may be enjoyed by all Sun., Dec. 7, at 3:00 p.m. at St. Stanislaus Roman Catholic Church, Buffalo, N.Y., as Choirs of District IX Polish Singers Alliance of America will present their 28th Annual "Festival of Christmas Carols (Kolędy)." All are invited to attend. Wishing you a blessed and joyous holiday season.



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The Slavophile Society was organized in 1972 with the aim to preserve the rich culture and traditions of the Slavic peoples, many of whom had settled in the State of Maine over the last 200 years. From the onset, the Society hosted regular dinner dances where Slavic ambience was captured through music, song and dance as well as by specially prepared foods. This tradition continues through monthly potluck dinner meetings where members and guests break bread and hear lectures or musical treats. Each Spring, the Society sponsors a workshop on the art of egg decoration, or Pysanky, where attendees learn about the significance of the folk symbols and their relation to Easter traditions.

Shortly after its incorporation, the Society formed a Slavophile Folk Orchestra, whose members became proficient players on the balalaika and domra. The Orchestra concertized throughout central and southern Maine, often augmented by an accordion, singers, and dancers. Of recent date the Society has sponsored the Downeast Chorus in performance of choral music by Rachmaninoff, Czajkowsky, Dvorak, and Szymanowski. Further a fellowship was established at the University of Southern Maine to promote research on the Slavic presence in Maine. Travel grants have been awarded to students in internship programs.

If you are interested in learning more about The Slavophile Society, you may write to:



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A Belated Chicagoland Wigilia

A Polish American Christmas Tale

by Robert Strybel

Chudge (as Brian was called by his friends who couldn't pronounce Chojnacki) was aimlessly strolling through a shopping mall in Dallas a few days before Christmas. The sunny, mild weather seemed thoroughly "un-Christmassy" to this 28-year-old Chicago-bred Pol-Am. Sure, there was no shortage of grinning plastic Santas, snowmen, reindeer, elves, fake holly wreaths, blinking lights and all the other well known bright but meaningless commercial glitter. All of a sudden, from a music shop came the words "...i słowo ciałem się stało i mieszkało między nami." "A kolęda here of all places!" he thought to himself, and it really freaked him out.

Before he could go inside to inquire, an unfamiliar song blared forth: "Un flambeau, Jeanette, Isabelle, un flambeau courons au berceau..." The sales clerk showed him a CD labeled "Christmas Around the Globe" which he bought just for that one Polish selection "Wśród nocnej ciszy". That melody and those words stirred something in Chudge way deep down. It took him back to his Polonian Christmases in Chicago—Wigilia at Busia's, a tradition his mother had continued in Cicero after her mother passed away. He thought back to grandpa and later his dad breaking and passing around the opłatek and to all those fabulous dishes he had been raised on. They would sing kolędy, pass out presents

and, if the weather was decent, often drive across town to Pasterka at majestic, old St. Hyacinth's in the old Polish neighborhood known as Jackowo.

Last year had been his first Christmas away from home and he spent it all alone in his studio apartment sobering up after tying one on with a few of the guys from his company on Christmas Eve. He wondered what his holidays would be like this year and whether any of his married colleagues would invite him over for Christmas dinner. But that "Bóg się rodzi," which he played over and over at his apartment, touched off an irresistible urge to go home for Christmas. The thought of a Pizza Hut meal on Christmas really turned him off, and he didn't even know if they would be open.

Why hadn't he thought of it sooner? Now it was impossible to book a plane seat. Someone suggested Amtrak. More than 30 hours on a train was hardly an inviting prospect, but he had no choice. As it turned out, his train ground to a halt in blizzard-swept Kansas and it took much longer than planned to reach his destination. But he had informed his family of the delay by cellphone,

so on December 26th dad was there to pick him up at the train station. When he finally climbed the porch and opened the door of family's neat but modest Chojnacki home, he couldn't believe his eyes.

There was Mother holding a plate of opłatek and welcoming him to the table, beautifully set with tufts of hay protruding from beneath a snowy-white table-cloth, glowing candles, platters of food and the soft strains of Mazowsze singing kolędy in the background off an old vinyl record. There was his older brother Tim, a priest, Sis who had driven up from Indianapolis with her husband and three kids, Ciocia Harriet and Uncle Władziu—the whole gang!

"But it's already a day after Christmas!" Chudge exclaimed. "So we're having two Wigilias this year, because our prodigal son has just come home. There's no law against that, is there?" joked mother with a loving smile. And then they all began breaking off and sharing bits of opłatek, tenderly embracing, kissing, wishing each other health and happiness, each nostalgically recalling the Christmases of bygone years. There was hardly a dry eye in the crowd!

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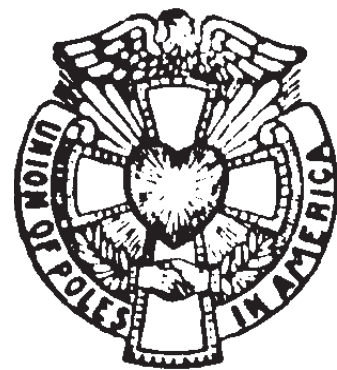
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PAC Hails Long Island Members

NEW YORK—Rev. Janusz Lipski (photo, center), associate pastor of St. Hedwig's Church in Floral Park, N.Y., was one of four honorees the Congress distinguished at its 2008 Awards Banquet at the Polonaise Terrace in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Fr. Lipski is shown here with Downstate N.Y. Polish American Congress President Frank Milewski (left) and Executive Vice President Vincent Brunhard, Jr.

Other individuals receiving the PAC designation were Dr. William Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights and Bogdan Chmielewski, CEO of the Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union.

Rev. Lipski is chaplain of the newly-formed Long Island Chapter of the Congress. After Poland's Solidarity Movement brought down the Communist system in 1989, Fr. Lipski was sent on assignment to Montreal, Canada before going to St. Hyacinth's Church in Glen Head, Long Island. On completing eight years there, he came to St. Hedwig's in 2006.

The Congress also honored the Polish Singers Alliance of America, District Seven with its 2008 Organizational Award for Distinguished

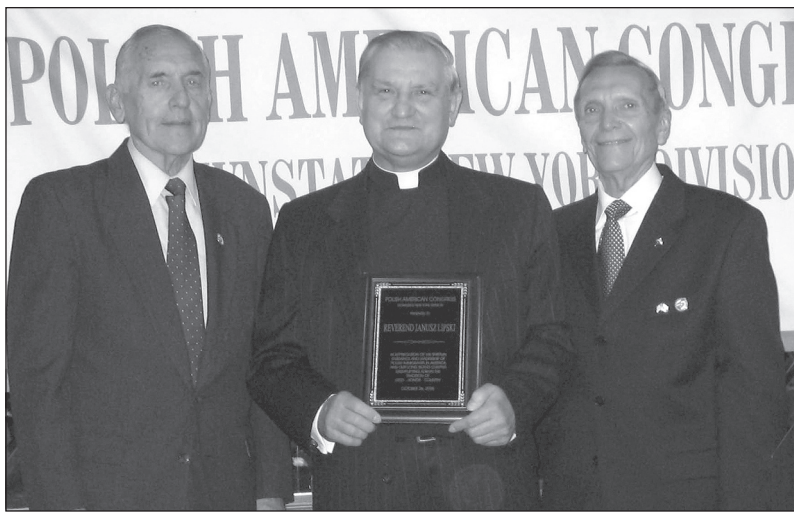


PHOTO: POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

Service.

The Polish American Congress also presented its 2008 Organizational Award for Distinguished Service to the Polish Singers Alliance of America, District Seven, which was accepted by its president, Janusz Wolny.

The Polish Singers Alliance of America was established in 1889. Its member choirs and choral groups aim to preserve the Polish heritage of music and song and to promote the works of Polish composers.

Wolny is also a longtime member of the famous Oginski Men's

Choir which regularly performs at Polish patriotic and religious observances on Long Island. He is a resident of Hicksville, N.Y.

"Individuals like Janusz Wolny and Father Lipski typify the caliber of the people who constitute the foundation of the PAC's Long Island Chapter. Their contribution bodes well for our success," said Richard Brzozowski who heads the new unit formed by the Downstate N.Y. Division of the Polish American Congress.

Books Donated on Anniversary

STAMFORD, Conn.—The Polish American Cultural Society of Stamford celebrated the 400th anniversary of the first Polish settlers and artisans at the Jamestown Virginia Settlement. The Society provides annual scholarships for deserving students of Polish heritage entering college each fall. It donated several copies of Arthur Waldo's "Jamestown True Heroes" for each school's media center. The book tells of the contributions of the first Polish settlers to what is currently the United States of America.

Pictured above are President Al Koproski, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joshua Starr, and Patricia A. Koproski, scholarship chairperson.



Kudos from Comptroller



PHOTO: MARLA S. MARITZER

City Comptroller William C. Thompson, Jr. with honorees and co-sponsors at his Polish American Heritage Month celebration at Surrogate's Court. Pictured (l. to r.) are: Frank Milewski, President, Polish American Congress, Downstate New York Division; Joseph E. Gore, Esq., President, Kosciuszko Foundation, Inc.; Monsignor Peter Zendzian, Holy Cross R.C., Maspeth, Queens; Helen Mary M. Tyszka, Trustee and Corporate Secretary, Kosciuszko Foundation Inc.; Rev. Marek Suchocki, St. Stanislaus Kostka, RCC, Staten Island; Thompson; Journalist Ewa Kern-Jedrychowska; Vincent Brunhard, Jr., Executive Vice President, Polish American Congress-Downstate New York Division, and First Vice President, Pulaski Association of Business and Professional Men, Inc.; Richard Zawisny, President, General Pulaski Memorial Parade Committee, Inc.; and, Joseph W. Wiczczak, Editor Emeritus, The Polish Review and Professor Emeritus of History, Bronx Community College-The City University of New York.

NEW YORK—New York City Comptroller William C. Thompson, Jr. honored four leaders at his Polish American Heritage Celebration at Surrogate's Court in Manhattan. The event was co-sponsored by the General Pulaski Memorial Day Parade Committee, Inc., Kosciuszko Foundation, Inc. and the Polish American Congress-Downstate New York Division.

"Tonight, we pay tribute to the memory of the Polish New Yorkers who—in many cases—literally built this city," Thompson said. "Polish Americans have played an essential role in building our nation and our city into what they are today. There simply is no New York without Polish New York. The history of this city and the history of the Polish American community here, are deeply entwined."

Thompson presented the first award to Vincent Brunhard, Jr., who serves as Executive Vice President of the Polish American Congress-Downstate New York Division, and first vice president, Pulaski Association of Business & Professional Men, Inc.

The second award was presented to journalist, Ewa Kern-Jedrychowska, who was born and raised in Warsaw, Poland, and moved to

the United States in 2001, settling in Queens. In 2003, she began working full-time for the Polish Daily News, where she covers stories about Polish immigrants in the United States.

Helen Mary M. Tyszka, a Trustee and Corporate Secretary of the Kosciuszko Foundation, received the third award. Thompson noted her work as the Foundation's Treasurer, and volunteering on the annual fundraising ball. Tyszka also is affiliated with the WorldatWork Society of Certified Professionals, Ladies Auxiliary of the General Casimir Pulaski Post 24 of the Polish Legion of American Veterans, Polish Children's Heartline, and as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist at the Parish of St. Joseph on Long Island.

The final honoree was Joseph Wiczczak, who serves as Professor Emeritus at Bronx Community College and Editor Emeritus of The Polish Review. Wiczczak is past President of the Polish American Historical Association, a member of the board of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences, and past Chair of the Polish National Catholic Church Commission on History and Archives.

The Wianek Polish Folk Dance Company performed at the event.

Soprano Mruczek to Sing at Epiphany of Our Lord Concert

BUFFALO, N.Y.—St. Stanislaus Bishop & Martyr Church, 123 Townsend St., will host the Epiphany of Our Lord Concert, Jan. 4, 2009, featuring Brittany Mruczek, soprano vocalist.

This is a free concert and open to the public.

The concert will be held at 4:30 p.m. and feature a special Holy Water Blessing and distribution by Bishop Edward M. Grosz, D.D., V.G.

Mruczek will also be the special guest vocalist at the 11:00 a.m. Mass at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Buffalo, 435 Amherst St., Buffalo.

A graduate with honors, of Notre

Dame High School, Batavia, N.Y., Mruczek is currently a sophomore at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Postdam, where she is majoring in vocal performance and education.

She has been able to show her well rounded entertaining talents in song, dance and acting with her appearances in the Batavia Players Summer Youth Theatre productions of "The Sound of Music," "Annie," "Anything Goes," and others.

The former Teen Miss Buffalo through the Miss America pageant system also attended the Eastman School of Music where she was the multiple year recipient of the Clase Vocal Scholarship in Honor of Renee



Fleming. She has also studied piano, modern jazz and ballet. Mruczek was crowned Miss Western New York in 2006 and was one of the debutantes at the Kosciuszko Foundation in New York City in 2007.

Mruczek has competed in many vocal competitions including the annual Empire State Competition held at Syracuse University, where she received a perfect score in voice. She won the New York State Heidi Killian Voice Competition in her junior year of high school and the Genesee Voice Competition in her senior year.

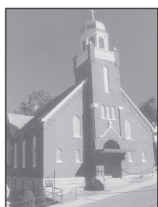
Mruczek has performed at numerous events at St. Joseph Church and Sacred Heart Church in Batavia, St. Stanislaus and St. John Kanty churches in Buffalo, the Our Lady of Fatima National Shrine in Lewiston and Most Precious Blood Church in Angola, N.Y.

At her most recent performance, Mruczek was one of the three Polish Sopranos that performed at the Canisius College Montante Cultural Center in Buffalo.

Mruczek has also helped raise countless funds for various charities with her vocal talent including, Jim Kelly's Hunters Hope Foundation and Buffalo-Rzeszow Sister Cities, Inc.. She has also just released her first CD, "The Hymns of Mary," where a portion of every sale will be donated to the Alzheimer's Association. Her CD will be available for purchase after the concert.

Mruczek has also received honors from the Pulaski Association as an outstanding young Polish American and the 2005 Am-Pol Eagle Citizen of the Year Award in Art and Drama.

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POLONIA OF THE EASTERN GREAT LAKES / Michael Pietruszka

Christmas Celebrations

BUFFALO, N.Y.— As always, the Christmas season brings out the best in our WNY Polonia Community. We let our pride in our Polish heritage shine for all to see. Many Polonia organizations bring their extended families together for a Wigilia celebration which they share with the entire community.

To get into the holiday spirit this year, please consider participating in some of the following Polonia Christmas activities in WNY with your friends and families:

SATURDAY, 12/6

- POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY OF ROCHESTER KRAKOW CRECHE DISPLAY & WIGILIA. 5:30 p.m. Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester Museum & Science Center, East Avenue, Rochester
- CHOPIN SINGING SOCIETY WIGILIA. 6:00 p.m. Fr. Justin Council Knights of Columbus Hall, 2735 Union Road, Cheektowaga. \$25.00. Hon. Ann Mikoll (685-9466)
- POLKA VARIETY SOCIAL CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY. Len Zak (896-1476)

SUNDAY, 12/7

- POLISH SINGERS ALLIANCE OF AMERICA DISTRICT IX SACRED CHRISTMAS CONCERT. 3:30 p.m. St. Stanislaus Church, Fillmore Avenue & Peckham Street, Buffalo

SATURDAY, 12/13

- BUFFALO POLKA BOOSTERS CHRISTMAS PARTY. Polish Falcons Hall, 445 Columbia Avenue, Depew. Chris Tanski (892-7977)

SUNDAY, 12/14

- POLISH ARTS CLUB OF BUFFALO WIGILIA. 1:00 p.m. Protocol Restaurant, 6766 Transit Road, Williamsville. Stan Nowak (633-4390)
- "LESSONS & CAROLS (Featuring the Canisius H.S. Chamber Singers). 2:00 p.m. Assumption Church, 435 Amherst Street, Buffalo

SAT., 12/27-SUN., 12/28

- "POLISH CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE (Featuring the Polish Heritage Dancers of WNY). 7:30 p.m. (Sat.); 2:30 p.m. (Sun.). Lancaster Opera House, 21 Central Avenue, Lancaster. \$15.00. (683-1776)

SUNDAY, 1/4

- EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD CHRISTMAS CONCERT (Featuring Brittany Mruczek). 4:30 p.m. St. Stanislaus Church, Fillmore Avenue & Peckham Street, Buffalo

POLITICAL POLONIA. WNY Polonia did well in November's General Election. Successful Pol-Am candidates for public office included:

- Hon. John Michalek. NYS Supreme Court (8th Judicial District)
- Hon. William Stachowski. NYS Senator (58th District)
- Hon. George Maziarz. NYS Sena-

tor (62nd District)

- Hon. Dennis Gabryszak. NYS Assembly Member (143rd District)
- Hon. Michael Pietruszka. Erie County Court Judge
- Hon. Francis Kulczyk. Lackawanna Council Member (3rd Ward)
- Hon. Deborah Bucki. Amherst Town Clerk
- Hon. Stanley Kaznowski III. Cheektowaga Council Member
- Hon. Daniel Kuligowski. Collins Town Justice
- Hon. Deborah Chimes. Orchard Park Town Justice

POLISH FILM IN WNY. Two Polish film festivals took place in WNY during the month of November. The first was sponsored by the **Permanent Chair of Polish Culture at Canisius College.** The films were screened at the Canisius College Student Center, the Palace Theatre in Hamburg and the Adam Mickiewicz Library from November 6 through 9. This year's films included "Stone Silence / Kamienna Ciszka," "First Day / Pierwszy Dzień," "Twists of Fate / Korowod," "Lejdis," "Katyn," "52%" and "When the Sun was A God / Stara Basn."

The second festival was held at the Little Theatre in Downtown Rochester from November 15 through 19. This festival was sponsored by the **Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies** at the University of Rochester and consisted of a Jerzy Stuhr retrospective. Mr. Stuhr participated in a panel discussion with local film experts on the opening day of the festival. This year's films included "Camera Buff / Amator," "Twists of Fate / Korowod," "List of Lovers / Spis Cudzołoznic," "The Big Animal / Duze Zwierze" and "Three Colors-White / Trzy Kolory-Bialy."



Polska Chata Deli owner Margret Gorniak at the deli's new location at 32 Vinedale Avenue in Rochester. For more information, please visit: www.polskachata.us.

POLONIA TIDBITS. Hon. Jerzy Stepien, former Chief Justice of the Polish Constitutional Tribunal, presented the topic, "Judicial Independence and Politics in Today's Poland" as part of the University of Rochester's Skalny Luncheon Lecture Series on November 3 ... The **Syracuse Polish Home** held its Annual Election Day Polish Dinner on

November 4 ... **Rev. Czeslaw Krysa** celebrated the Annual Mass for Deceased Polish American Clergy and Religious at St. John Gualbert Church in Cheektowaga on the 5th ... Buffalo **Bishop Edward Kmiec** participated in the Roman Catholic / Polish National Catholic dialogue meeting in Baltimore on November 6 and 7 ... The **Dunkirk Kosciuszko Club** hosted its Annual Turkey Party on November 7 ... On the 9th, **Polish Independence Day** was marked by observances at St. Stanislaus Church in Buffalo and St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Rochester ... Also on November 9, Toronto's **Lodzer Centre Holocaust Congregation** hosted Professor Dorota Glowacka's lecture "Shhh! I Am Talking Now: Representations of the Holocaust in Recent Polish Literature."

WNED-FM, WNY's classical music station, presented Bill McGlaughlin's Exploring Music series "Muzyka Polska / Polish Music," during the week of November 10 ... On the 16th, the new Our Lady of Czestochowa and Pope John Paul II Shrine at Rochester's **St. Stanislaus Kostka Church** was blessed ... November 21 brought Agata Wolska's presentation, "World War II Plunder and Recovery of the Magnificent Wit Stwosz Altar," to the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.

Dr. Kazimierz Braun's new play, "The Tales of Pola Negri," premiered at the Burnhamthorpe Library Theatre in Mississauga, Ontario the weekend of November 21 through 23 ... The **Polish Heritage**



Hon. Jerzy Stepien, former Chief Justice of the Polish Constitutional Tribunal, with Dr. Ewa Hauser, former Director of the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies, and Erie County Judge Michael Pietruszka at the Chief Justice's lecture, "Judicial Independence and Politics in Today's Poland" at the University of Rochester on November 3rd.

Society of Rochester presented its Youth Talent Show at the Rochester Medical Academy on the 22nd ... Many Polish American groups from around the area celebrated Thanksgiving with polka dances.



If you have an item for this column, send information by the 6th day of the month preceding the month in which you would like the item to appear (i.e., December 6 for the January 2009 edition) at: POLEGL, P.O. Box 223, Niagara Square Station, Buffalo, NY 14201-0223. My e-mail address is: pietruska@verizon.net.

For more information on what's going on in the Polonia of the Eastern Great Lakes, including a calendar of upcoming events, an organizational directory and interesting links, visit www.polegl.org.

Friends of Poland Celebrate 25th Anniversary

NEW BEDFORD, Mass.—The Friends of Poland, an organization with members throughout New England and New York, held its Annual Fund Raiser and also celebrated its 25th anniversary at the Wamsutta Club. This was preceded by a Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church.

Among those in attendance were Consul Przemyslaw Balcerczyk, his wife and son; State Representative Robert Koczera and wife Ann; Rev. Roman Chwaliszewski; Jean Babiec, mistress of ceremony; founder and Vice President Thad Irzyk and wife Gloria; President Walter Jarnot and his wife Del; Mayor Scott Lang, Mayor of New Bedford; and Ms. Schall, City Solicitor.

Rep. Koczera presented a proclamation from the State House, and also citations to the president and vice president. Mayor Lang presented a proclamation to the President Jarnot, and Consul Balcerczyk of gave a brief talk.

Jarnot presented various members with a memento of an eagle with their name inscribed on the base. This was for their continuous help, whether physical or monetary.

Making up the events committee were: Jean Babiec, chair; Kathleen Gioiosa, co-chair; Alice Belina; Helen Arabasz; Julie Roszkiewicz; Bernice Fastoso; and Cheryl Babiec.

Over the years, the Friends of Poland have sent several ambulances to Poland. The next one to be sent out was on display in the parking lot.

The Polish Union of America
would like to wish you and your family a
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO STYLE / Geraldine Balut Coleman

Chicago Polonia Honors Irena Sendler and "Life in a Jar"

CHICAGO—"Protestant kids from rural Kansas discover a Polish Catholic woman, who saved Jewish children." The Chicago Public Library (CPL) ended its month long celebration of Polish American Heritage Month with a reception hosted by Adult Services of the CPL and the Polish Consulate.

This event, organized by Maria Zakrzewska, Chair of the Polish American Services Committee of CPL, was held to memorialize Irena Sendler and to honor Megan Stewart-Felt and Norm Conard, two originators of "Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project," in addition to Irena's personal translator, Kinga Krzeminska.

Following the reception, guests traveled to the Cindy Pritzker Auditorium of the Harold Washington Library to view the film version of the play and to discuss the personal experiences these individuals had with Irena. "Life in a Jar" started as a National History Day project in September 1999 by four students from Uniontown High School (Kansas) and is in its ninth year of inter-



I. to r.: Norm Conard, Zygmunt Matynia, Anna Szpindor-Watson, M.D., Megan Stewart-Felt, Grazyna Migala, Geraldine Balut Coleman, and Maria Zakrzewska.

national outreach. As of November 2008, the play has been performed 250 times.

This moving tribute to Irena Sendler is a great testimony, one of courage, valor and love, in addition

to a life of respect for all people, regardless of race, religion and creed. Sendler, who rescued 2,500 Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II, was a member of the Polish Underground, Żegota.



I. to r.: Matthew Sackel & Patricia J. White of Illinois Holocaust Museum, Kinga Krzeminska, Maria Zakrzewska and Zygmunt Matynia.

"Life in a Jar" continues to 'repair the world' and honor Irena Sendler. When the project started in 1999, Irena was somewhat unknown, but today, an internet search shows approximately 74,100 websites with

information about Irena Sendler, a 2007 Nobel Peace Prize nominee. This event was co-sponsored by the Adult Services of the CPL and the Kosciuszko Foundation, Chicago Chapter.



MAŁY LAJKONIK HONORS POLISH CULTURE. Audiences were delighted to watch and listen to the Maly Lajkonik Song and Dance Ensemble, as it danced with its young "hearts and sole," presenting the richness of Polish folk dancing in celebration of Polish American Heritage Month at Chicago's Oriole Park and Jefferson Park Libraries. Under the choreographic direction of Halina Misterka and Malgorzata Lyda, Lajkonik, established in 1991, has been an active promoter of traditional Polish song and dance and is located at the Holy Trinity Polish Mission Church in Chicago's historic "Polish Triangle."



I. to r.: Wallace Ozog, Lidia Filus, and Joann Ozog.

NEIU & COUNCIL OF EDUCATORS CELEBRATE. On Oct. 24, approximately 250 attendees enjoyed an evening of festivities, as Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) and the Council of Educators in Polonia (CEP) held their joint 11th Annual Polish American Heritage Month celebration. This event was an opportunity for NEIU and CEP to honor members of both the Academic and the Polish American community for their contributions to education and community service. Several members of the metro-Chicago area were presented awards. Murrell J.H. Duster, Dean of Academics Development/Diversity and Multicultural Programs of NEIU received SPECIAL recognition for her distinguished career in higher education and her outstanding service to numerous Chicago-based cultural and educational agencies. Both Wallace Ozog, president of the Polish Roman Catholic Union and Chairman of The Polish Museum of America (PMA) and his wife Joanne Ozog, Membership and Events Coordinator of the PMA, who was instrumental in establishing the PMA's "Save the Book" campaign, its Polish heritage workshops, and the Restoration Project in the Rare Book Collection of the PMA, received the "Community Service" Award.

This year's "Educator of the Year" was Helena Danielska, who for over two decades has taught mathematics in Chicago's Foreman High School Bilingual Program. The "Alumni in Education" award went to



Lucyna Migala and Zygmunt Matynia.

Leonard B. Fink, former Chair of Chicago's Kelvyn Park High School Science Department. An additional award was given to the Polish Women's Alliance of America (PWA) in honor of its 110th anniversary. The evening began with Susan Appel Bass, Director of Alumni Relation for NEIU, and Dr. Lidia Filus, professor of mathematics at NEIU and president of Council of Educators in Polonia, welcoming all who attended. This year's Mistress of Ceremonies was Lucyna Migala, Artistic Director of the Lira Ensemble, who added her extraordinary charm throughout the evening. Greetings at this event were made by Sharon Hahs, President of NEIU and Zygmunt Matynia, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland. Guest speakers were Maria Ciesla, President of PMA who spoke on "400 Years of Polish Immigrants in America: Pride and Partnership," and Mary Mirecki Piergies, Editor of *Glos Polek* who presented "A Brief History of the PWA: How It All Started...and Continued for 110 Years." As in the Polish tradition, the evening would not have been complete without entertainment and food. Outstanding entertainment was performed by pianist Ewa Kobak, along with soprano and pianist, Katarzyna Dorula and Philip Seward, of the Lira Ensemble, as well as Polish folk dancing performed by the Polonia Song and Dance Ensemble. A light buffet supper was provided by Kasia's Delicatessen and Oak Mill Bakery of Chicago.

PAC Holds 39th Annual Gala

The Illinois Division of the Polish American Congress (PAC) held its 39th Annual Gala at the Avalon Banquets in Elk Grove Village, Ill., Oct. 29. To celebrate Polish American Heritage Month, the PAC honored its own by awarding Dr. Charles F. Merbs with its Polish American Heritage Award.

Dr. Merbs, a renowned forensic anthropologist, examined and investigated the DNA remains of Casimir Pulaski. This prestigious award is conferred upon an American of Polish descent who has distinguished herself or himself in her/his chosen field of endeavor.

The PAC's Civic Award was given to the Honorable Robert Fioretti, Chicago's 2nd Ward Al-

derman and a seasoned federal and state court litigator. Fioretti claims his Polish roots on his mother's side.

The Sport-Youth Award was awarded to Lawrence Langowski, who competed in the heavyweight freestyle wrestling competition, representing Mexico at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

Receiving the PAC Historic Award was the Polish American Contractors and Builders Association (PACBA) for its tireless efforts in designing, building, and promoting the "Jamestown Project," a traveling float, which commemorates the 400th anniversary of the first Polish settlers in Jamestown, Virginia.

UNESCO Exhibit Opens

The Polish Museum of America (PMA) and the Polish Teachers Association of America (PTAA) collaboratively opened a photographic exhibit of UNESCO-World Heritage Sites in Poland.

This exhibit, prepared by Maciej Rymkiewicz from the National Heritage Board of Poland in Warsaw, acquaints its viewers to the vibrant histories of the thirteen World Heritage Sites located in Poland.

This exhibition was curated by

Alicja Nawara of the PTAA and Monika Nowak, the PMA's graphic art collection curator.

Inclusion into UNESCO's World Heritage Series is a very prestigious recognition, reserved for only those sites that form part of the cultural and natural heritage, which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value. This wonderful exhibit will be on display until Nov. 16.



How Will You Be Remembered?

Many people talk about leaving gifts to worthy causes, but don't have a will, and do not realize it requires a will to do so. The laws of most states make it quite clear that personal property goes automatically, by law, to your nearest relatives, even if they are quite distant ones, unless you have a legal will that says otherwise. If you have no relatives, it goes to the state. More than half of all adult Americans die without having made their wills. Most of them undoubtedly planned to do so, but never got around to it. Some had wills but didn't keep them current. When you have a will, you should update it every few years as conditions change. Also, always name an executor who will carry out your wishes. Besides money, non-cash possessions can also be used as contributions and various donation plans can be carried out. Be a philanthropist: leave your stocks, bonds, real estate, art, valuable collections or insurance to continue the Polish American traditions. Your will is the most important way of giving. When you are gone, it is a legacy that is not forgotten. In your will, you can specify what you would like your donation to be used for. For help in making your will, contact a competent lawyer. **The National Polish Center, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations that needs your help and legacy.**

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Polka MAGAZINE

POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION AND CONTINUANCE OF POLISH AMERICAN MUSIC

POLKA INSIDER

Sometimes a Memory is Your Best Friend

by Steve Litwin

Christmas is around the corner. It may not be what it was in your childhood days, but it's still a special time. In days past, grandparents often lived within walking distance of your house. In many cases, cousins were all within the toss of a rock and, as with our family, Christmas meant visiting every relative's house during the holidays.

Midnight Mass was special and now there is no Midnight Mass at our church. As a matter of fact, even the church we once called our own is gone. Fortunately, the church from my childhood is still alive and remains in my heart even if it is 200 miles away.

Growing up in the Buffalo area, I can remember my grandfather playing polkas on the harmonica or tuning in Stan Jasinski on the radio. The *Polka Beehive* program and *Pic-A-Polka* show were never missed during my youth. This music was even more present at Christmas time. It meant celebrating the birth of our savior, music, singing, koledy and the endless tables of food. We were never money rich but the riches we had went far beyond cash.

Of course you couldn't live in Western New York and not shovel snow or take accordion lessons. To this day, many decades later, I can still play koledy on the accordion without music and can still shovel snow. Don't ask me for the correlation between those two.

Musically, what began in the kitchen of my Dzia's house continued to the corner of 6th and Oliver and the famous Koledy Nights at Litwin's Blue room. After we all went through Uncle Tony's song charts, singing several songs at least twice, it became polka time. Every Polish standard you could think of was on the list and the accordion was passed from Stan, to Bob, and to some young guy named Steve. Bucky or Butch handled the *tarka* and the hours seemed to last forever.

Snow meant slippery sidewalks and icy roads but it also meant Christmas and Koledy and holiday polkas. For several brief weeks all those great polka Christmas recordings were dusted off and played almost continually. From the Palas, to Wally, to Blaz, those melodies of the season warmed the heart, put joy in our days, and brought back memories of Christmas pasts.

Nothing remains the same and the only thing constant is change. Think back to those days. Continue the traditions you can from your heritage, even in a modified form. Treasure those memories, those events, those times, because they are a gift. Sometimes a memory is your best friend.

From the Polka Insider and Rosalinda, Merry Christmas, Wesolych Swiat Bozego Narodzenia!

K-Notes Celebrate 25th



PHOTO: JIM RIGELSON

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—The K Notes polka band from St. Louis gathered for a 25th reunion performance Nov. 9 at the fall festival of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in North St. Louis.

The band, which performed in the 1970s and early 1980s, consisted of members (l. to r.): Rick Romeo (drummer and vocalist); Clarence Kozuszek (accordionist and organizer of the reunion); and Paul Wehrle, guitarist.

Pillar Takes Time Out Citing Economy, Cancels Polkabration

UNCASVILLE, Conn.—Dick Pillar regrets to inform the polka public that after much consideration and soul searching, two major Pillar events planned for 2009 will be put on hold for a year until 2010.

Regarding the 44th Annual July Polkabration, Pillar was informed by the Mohegan Casino Sports & Entertainment Department that the ballroom for Saturday July 25th had been contracted out for a private engagement. The Mohegan Tribe, which have assured Pillar that Polkabration is always welcome at Mohegan Sun, suggested that an alternate date be considered. When no suitable alternate date could be found—one that would not conflict with any other major polka summer event—Pillar decided to wait until next year to reschedule a 2010 Polkabration.

In regards to the Annual Fall Polka Weekend, after extensive ne-

gotiations with hotel management, Pillar could not agree to additional terms and conditions which might have required a change in some top bands, as well as changes in other features of the weekend for which they have been known. It was thereby decided to eliminate the 2009 weekend in the hopes that a 2010 event can be scheduled.

Another major factor in Pillar's decision is the current state of the economy, which has had an impact on attendance at polka events. Dick and JoAnne hope that the economy will rebound within the next year, allowing more fans to participate in future polka events.

For the latest information on Pillar events, refer to our web site at www.dickpillar.com.

The Pillars thank the polka fans, bands and promoters who have supported them throughout our many years, and sincerely look forward to providing more great polka events in 2010.

"After 52 years of promoting polkas it is appropriate that we take a brief time out," said Pillar. "Please stay tuned for future announcements."



Pillar

POLKA JUKEBOX / Steve Litwin

Phase One Complete and Polkas for Charity Redux

PHASE ONE: COMPLETE! the latest offering by Tony Blazonczyk's New Phaze, satisfies the listener with a full buffet table of appetizing musical dishes. Starting with the slick piano of John Krawisz on the lead track, "One in a Row," to the autobiographical "Seeing My Father in Me," to the traditional "Fisherman's," this Bel-Aire CD provides something for every polka diet.

The melodic message in "Just Another Phase" an original by Okezesik and Borsuk is followed by "Hey Zosia," a great Lush tune. Zima's "Club House" and Motyka's "Good To Be Back Home" fit nicely into the entire 15-track package.

Tony Blazonczyk is the bassman with, Timmy Okrzesik on drums, Tim Jagodzinski solid on concertina, Al Jelinek on accordion, George Borsuk on trumpet, Jan "the vocal man" Cyman on trumpet and John Krawisz making the piano a key (no pun intended) instrument.

Phase One Complete! is on the Bel-Aire label. Tony Blazonczyk's New Phaze has completed phase one. Can't wait for phase two. Visit them on the internet at: www.new-phaze.net.

POLKAS FOR CHARITY began with Ted Borzymowski and has now raised close to \$25,000 for the St.

Mon Valley Push Christmas Dance

YUKON, Pa.—The Mon Valley Push will hold their Fourth Annual Christmas Dance on Saturday, December 13 at Yukon Slovenian Hall. The dance will begin at 6:00 p.m. and go until 11:00 p.m. with music by the Mon Valley Push. There will also be a full buffet of homemade

food. Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. Children 13 and under admitted free if accompanied by an adult. A cash bar will be available along with door prizes. For tickets or more information call Frank at (724) 938-0150 or e-mail frank@monvalleypush.com.

Sturr's Share the Wine Weekend

FLORIDA, N.Y.—The Hudson Valley Resort and Spa in Kerhonkson, NY is the place for the Share the Wine weekend featuring Jimmy Sturr and his Orchestra, April 24-26, 2009. Sharing the polka stage with Sturr will be the Eddie Forman Orchestra, Joe Stanky and the Ca-

dets, Ed Derwin's Polka Naturals, The Del Sinchak Orchestra and the Johnny Dee Orchestra.

On the internet visit Jimmysturr.com or Hudsonvalleyresort.com. Write: Box 1, Florida 10921 or call: (800) 724-0727.

POLKA PATTEN

- Chicago polka musician **John "Foo" Furmaniak** had a rough time in October, when he underwent a quadruple by-pass operation. All reports, though, say he is doing well. Naturally, he was said to have kept the nurses laughing with his special brand of humor.
- Here's good news for a lot of polka fans in the east. Mike Surratt & the Continentals reports that he spoke with Max Eggerl and he is renovating **Blob's Park** in Jessup, Maryland. The popular site may reopen by January 1, 2009.
- The **Pulaski Day Parade** returned to Poughkeepsie, N.Y., on October 8, 2008, after several years absence. After the parade there was dancing to the music of Polka Family and those in attendance said it was reminiscent of "the good old days." Likewise, many marched in Polish costumes with their Marshall and Miss Polonia.
- "The **Casey Homel Tribute Concert**" a double-disc DVD set is available at www.caseytributeconcert.com. Disc 1 features the music of Casey Homel's *World's Honkiest Polka Band* with special guest Wally Maduzia on concertina and Jimmy Homel's *Changing Times*. Disc 2 contains a special polka jam session with Casey's friends and family. The emcee of this event was Chicago's Richie Gomulka. A portion of the DVD sales will go to benefit the American Diabetes Association.
- Polkas For Charity** presented a dance to benefit the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and The Fox Chase Cancer Center, Oct. 12, 2008. The event in Gilbertsville, Pa., featured the Boys From Baltimore, a band which has not performed together in years. Also performing were dancers Matt and Elaine Bonowitz.
- The 13-year-old polka fiddling

sensation **Brien Ahern** appeared with the Steve Drzewicki Band at a Halloween Dance on October 25. If you haven't seen this youngster in action, check out www.youtube.com/index and type in "Drzewicki."

The **Michigan State Polka Music Hall of Fame** bestowed honors in October upon Terry Dekoski, Casey Grocholski, Millie Okapal, Vladimir "Jack" Pesik (Deceased) and Eddie Siwiec. Music for the event was supplied by Eddie Siwiec & the Natural Tones and the Czech Us Out Band in Owosso, Michigan.

A special tribute honoring **Happy Louie and Julcia** took place at the Krakus Festival at the International Basketball Hall of Fame and Museum in Springfield, Massachusetts, on October 25. Performing for the event were Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push, the Eddie Forman Orchestra and Echo. Proceeds went to the Center for Discovery and Learning at Elms College in Chicopee.

Peppermint Studios was chosen by WKBN TV 27 and Fox Youngstown to be featured on their "Salute To Success." The report gave Mel Sinchik and Gary Rhamy a chance to show the viewers how important polka music is to their business. The newscast is available for viewing on the internet at www.wkbn.com/promo/8488217.html. Select Peppermint Studios. Rhamy thanks all the polka people who have supported them throughout the years.

Fritz's Polka Band from Verona, N.Y. won an Upper State Independent (USI) Award in the International category. The awards show was held at the Palace Theatre in Syracuse, N.Y., November 8.

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Noltkamper Band, Dynabass, John Gora & Gorale, Gary's Ridgeland Dutchmen, Polka Country Musicians, The Eddie Forman Orchestra, The Crawdaddies, Charm City Sound, Verne & Steve Meisner, Freeze Dried, Lenny Gomulka and Chicago Push and The Polkas for Charity Band.

Help continue the effort. Support the project. Get the Polka Fever today. Check them out on the internet at: www.polkasforcharity.com or order the CD by sending \$17.00 (includes \$2.00 shipping and handling) to: Polkas For Charity, P.O. Box 835, Fallston, MD 21047-0835. They make great Christmas gifts!

NOTES / Barb Pinkowski

Honky Style Polkas Always a Hit

BUFFALO, N.Y.—Well, the trick and treaters have come and gone (so cute), the elections and all the political advertising are over (thank God), and we all had our fill of turkey and all the trimmings (so yummy).

It's already that time of the year to wish each and every one of you a joyful holiday season. My sincerest wishes for a very Merry Christmas to you and yours. I hope Santa Claus is very good to you. This is usually such a hectic time with so much to do and so little time. The most important thing to remember is that this is the birthday of Jesus. Enjoy this season. May peace, love and joy be with you all year through.

BOX SQUEEZERS. On Oct. 11, a band called **Squeezebox** took the stage at the Potts Banquet Hall. Too bad there was such a small turnout for this dance. This unique group consists of Ted Lange, Mollie Busta and Dave Burner — all from Ohio. They have a diverse playlist featuring English, Czech, German and Polish music and vocals. With just three band members, this band is very entertaining and does a wonderful job. This band is an offshoot of the Bratwurst Boys, which was formed by members of Toledo Polkamotion and has evolved into the present trio. Their current CD entitled "Squeeze Me," has eight polkas, two waltzes and six foxtrots, and they are already working on their second recording. Don't miss them the next time they come to town—you won't be disappointed.

KING OF HONKY. On October 18, it was Honk-toberfest at the Lamm Post Grove featuring **Stas Golonka** & his Honky Band and a reunion of the **Honky Hoppers**. It was a cool day and a few people mentioned it might be too cold to be in the grove. However, with the overhead doors closed and some patio heaters, the grove was warm and toasty and very comfortable. It is so much more fun to be in the grove than in the hall. I am glad there was a big turnout for this dance. Good to see so many people enjoying themselves. Both bands were outstanding and it truly was filled with the best honky sounds around. It was good to see the reunion of Rich Kurdziel, Casey Kliszak, Ricky Pijanowski, Billy Barnas, Dennis Paner, and Frank Zeczak. They sounded so good I wish they would get back together.

And, of course, Stas Golonka did his familiar songs and vocals as only he does. For this job, he was joined

on stage by Eric Bogdan on clarinet and sax, Chris Bogdan on concertina and accordion, Mark Trzepacz on trumpet, and Sonny Wanderlich on bass. Eric and Chris also play with Henny & the Versa Js. It was great to see John and Darlene Patrick from Pittsburgh. They are such superb dancers! It was the last dance in the grove until next spring—how sad.

SCARY! This is the first year in quite a while that there was no Halloween dance. I remember for many years the Polish Falcons Club in Depew had one and also some were held at the Potts Banquet Hall. It was always so much fun watching the parade of people and their imaginative costumes. Maybe next year someone will run one.

IT PAYS TO POLKA. A Halloween Polka Dance for Congressman **Brian Higgins** was held Thurs., Oct. 30 at the VFW Leonard Post in Cheektowaga. Music was supplied by The Knewz. The jam-packed hall must have been good luck for Higgins, who easily re-won his seat as a Western New York rep in Congress.

CHRISTMAS DANCES. On Dec. 6, the **Polka Variety Social Club** will have its Christmas Party at the Lily of the Valley Hall, 2379 Union Rd., Cheektowaga, N.Y. For more information on this, call Len Zak at 896-1476.

On Dec. 13, the **Polka Boosters Club** will hold its annual Christmas Party at the Polish Falcons Hall, 445 Columbia Ave., Depew, N.Y. There will be live music, a sit-down meal, and an open bar. For information and tickets, please call Chris Tanski at 892-7977.

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STAS GOLONKA came to town October 18, and smiled for the camera with (l. to r.), Joanne Picciano, Barb Pinkowski, and Pat Mazur.



SQUEEZEBOX. Dave Burner, Mollie Busta, and Ted Lange of Squeezebox, which made its appearance at Potts Hall in Buffalo.



HONKY HOPPERS REUNION. Rich Kurdziel takes the lead vocal as Dennis Paner (trumpet) and Casey Kliszak (concertina) concentrate on their music.



ERIC BOGDAN (saxophone) and Sonny Wanderlich (bass guitar) were just a few of the guest musicians who helped Golonka when he came to town.

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On behalf of the entire OWL PICNIC COMMITTEE,

we extend a most sincere "Thank You" to our volunteers, our vendors, our donors, benefactors, and supporters for making the Owl Picnic 2008 another success. Through selfless efforts of our committee, numerous contributors, and sacrifices of many, the Owl Picnic will be able to place a smile on the faces of those less fortunate. Good Bless!

Merry Christmas and a
Happy and Healthy New Year to All!

Dziękujemy bardzo!
See you August 23, 2009

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We believe the following information to be correct, but it should always be verified before traveling long distances or expending funds.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

- **Connecticut.** Dick Pillar & his Orchestra at the Pillar Holiday Spectacular, Aqua Turf Ballroom, Plantsville, Conn., dinner, caroling, special events, 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$35. For details visit <http://www.dickpillar.com/flyers/christmas08.htm>.
- **Michigan.** Jerry Robotka at Crystal Gardens, 16703 Fort St., Southgate, Mich., 6:00-9:00 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

- **Wisconsin.** Ted Lange's Squeezebox at the 20th anniversary dance of the Central Wisconsin Polka Club, Rib River Ballroom, 3237 State Hwy. 29, Marathon, Wis., 7:00-11:00 p.m., \$7.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

- **Minnesota.** Doctor Kielbasa at the American Legion Post, 12450 Park Blvd., North Champlin, Minn. 7:00-11:00 p.m.
- **New Jersey.** Eddie Forman Orchestra at a Christmas Party, Bayway Polish Home, Elizabeth, N.J., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- **New York.** Jimmy Sturr & his Orchestra with Jay & the Americans in a Holiday Spectacular at the Paramount Theater, Middletown, N.Y., 3:00 p.m.
- **New York.** Eddie Derwin & the Polka Naturals at Bill Flynn's Christmas Party, St. John Church Hall, Johnson City, N.Y. Check locally for details.
- **Wisconsin.** Ted Lange's Squeeze Box at Amerahn Ballroom, 9480 Hwy. 45N Kewaskum, Wis., 2:00-6:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

- **Arizona.** John Filipczak & the Classics and Bob Doszak at Fountain of the Sun, 540 80th St., Mesa, Ariz., 12:30-5:30 p.m.
- **Florida.** Honky Tonk Polka Band at the Polish American Society of St. Petersburg, 1343 Beach Dr. SE, St. Petersburg, Fla., dinner 2:30-4:00 p.m., \$7.50; music 4:00-7:00 p.m., \$5 members, \$7 non-members.
- **Michigan.** Misty Blues at a Polka Boosters of American Dinner-Dance, Msgr. Hunt K of C, 7080 Garling, Dearborn Heights, Mich., 1:30-7:00 p.m.
- **Michigan.** Polkalodians at Silver Derby Lounge, 506 N. Garfield rd., Linwood, Mich., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- **Michigan.** Natural Tones at Pinsetters Lounge, 1205 Washington Ave., Bay City, Mich., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- **Michigan.** Ted Lange's Squeezebox at the LFA Hall, 2323 Amelith Rd., Bay City, Mich., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- **New Jersey.** Eddie Forman Orchestra at a Christmas Party, Bayway Polish Home, Elizabeth, N.J., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- **New York.** Jimmy Sturr & his Orchestra with Jay & the Americans in a Holiday Spectacular at the Kirby Center, Wilkes Barre, Pa., 3:00 p.m.
- **Ohio.** Glass Town Sound at a Toledo Area Polka Society Dance, Conn-Weissenberger Legion Hall, 2020 Alexis, Toledo, Ohio, 2:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** George Tarasek & the Polka Partners at the VFW Hall, 403 Main St., Dupont, N.Y., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Golden Tones at the APA Christmas Party, Lobitz Catering, Hazelton, Pa., 3:00-8:00 p.m.
- **Wisconsin.** Polish Connection at Bullshooters, 7802 Meadow Rock Dr., County X Rd. and Weston Ave., Weston, Wis., 2:00-6:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

- **Arizona.** Varitones at the Sunrise RV Resort, 1403 W. Broadway Rd., Apache Junction, Ariz., 6:30-10:00 p.m.
- **California.** Craig Ebel & DyVersaCo at the Sons of Italy Hall, 9420 Sierra

- Ave., Fontana, Calif., 6:00-10:00 p.m., \$10.
- **Connecticut.** Eddie Forman Orchestra at the Polish Home, Windsor Locks, Conn., 6:00-11:00 p.m.
- **Massachusetts.** Dennis Polisky & the Maestro's Men at the Quo Vadis Club Christmas Dinner, Polish Naturalization Independent Club Hall, 290 Millbury St., Worcester, Mass., 5:00-9:00 p.m.
- **Michigan.** Natural Tones at a Christmas Dance, Pulaski Hall, 1401 S. Grant St., Bay City, Mich., 7:00-11:00 p.m.
- **New Jersey.** Polka Family at the Bayway Polish Home, Elizabeth, N.J., 8:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Jimmy Sturr & his Orchestra with Jay & the Americans in a Holiday Spectacular at the State Theatre, Easton, Pa., 3:00 p.m.
- **Wisconsin.** Norm Dombrowski & the Happy Notes at a Christmas Dance, Rudolph, Wis. Check locally for details.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14

- **California.** Craig Ebel & DyVersaCo at the Sons of Italy Hall, 9420 Sierra Ave., Fontana, Calif., 2:00-6:00 p.m., \$10.
- **Florida.** Melotones at a Christmas Dinner-Dance, General Pulaski Citizens Club, 6221 SE 113th St., Belleview, Fla., 1:30-5:00 p.m.
- **Florida.** Northern Sounds at the Polish American Society of St. Petersburg, 1343 Beach Dr. SE, St. Petersburg, Fla., dinner 2:30-4:00 p.m., \$7.50; music 4:00-7:00 p.m., \$5 members, \$7 non-members.
- **Massachusetts.** Jimmy Sturr & his Orchestra with Jay & the Americans in a Holiday Spectacular at Symphony Hall, Springfield, Mass., 3:00 p.m.
- **Michigan.** Diddle Styx at the Warren Polka Boosters, K of C Hall, 44425 Utica Rd., Utica, Mich., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Michigan.** Natural Tones at Pinsetters Lounge, 1205 Washington Ave., Bay City, Mich., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- **New York.** Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push at the Polish Community Center, 225 Washington Ave. Ext., Albany, N.Y., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- **New York.** Eddie Forman Orchestra at the Polish Home, Port Washington, N.Y., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Ohio.** Frank Moravic at an International Music association dance, Conn-Weissenberger Legion Hall, 2020 Alexis, Toledo, Ohio, 2:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Ohio.** Duane Malinowski at the Polish Club Hall, 1470 Valley St., Dayton, Ohio, 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Ohio.** Ted Lange's Squeeze Box at Bavarian Hall, Deshler, Ohio, 4:00-9:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Eddie Derwin & the Polka Naturals at a Christmas Party, VFW Hall, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Golden Tones at a Christmas Party of the Lebanon Polka Pals, St. Mary Church Hall, Cornwall, Pa., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Polka Family at a Christmas Dance, Lakeside Ballroom, Barnesville, Pa., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Ray Jay & the Carousels at a Christmas Dance, White Oak Legion Hall, White, Oak, Pa. Check locally for details.
- **Wisconsin.** Chad Przybylski & the Polka Rhythms at Bullshooters, 7802 Meadow Rock Dr., County X Rd. and Weston Ave., Weston, Wis., 2:00-6:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

- **California.** Roger & the Villagers at the Orange Grove Polka Club, garden Grove Elks Hall, 11551 Trask Ave., Garden Grove, Calif., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- **Florida.** Sounds of the South at the Polish American Society of St. Petersburg, 1343 Beach Dr. SE, St. Petersburg, Fla., dinner 2:30-4:00 p.m., \$7.50; music 4:00-7:00 p.m., \$5 members, \$7 non-members.
- **Massachusetts.** Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push at a Kolędy Dance, Polish American Citizen's Club, 355 East St., Ludlow, Mass., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Michigan.** Duane Malinowski at the Ida American Legion Hall, 11601 Lewis Ave., Hickory Park, Ida, Mich., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Joe Lastovica & Polka Punch at the VFW Hall, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Polka Family at a Coal Crackers Christmas Dance at Lakeside Ballroom, Barnesville, Pa., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- **Pennsylvania.** Henny & the Versa J's at Dave's Christmas Party, Slovenian Hall, Yukon, Pa., 3:00-8:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

- **Minnesota.** Twin Cities Soundz at the North Air Event Center, 6831 Central Ave., Hwy. 65, Fridley, Minn. 7:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

- **Arizona.** John Filipczak & the Classics at Greenfield Village RV Resort, 111 S. Greenfield Rd., Mesa, Ariz., 1:00-5:00 p.m.
- **Florida.** B Sharps at the Polish American Society of St. Petersburg, 1343 Beach Dr. SE, St. Petersburg, Fla., dinner 2:30-4:00 p.m., \$7.50; music 4:00-7:00 p.m., \$5 members, \$7 non-members.
- **Pennsylvania.** Shoreliners at the VFW Hall, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- **Wisconsin.** Polka Misfits at Bullshooters, 7802 Meadow Rock Dr., County X Rd. and Weston Ave., Weston, Wis., 2:00-6:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

- **Michigan.** Natural Tones at Pinsetters Lounge, 1205 Washington Ave.,

Bay City, Mich., 4:00-8:00 p.m.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

- **Arizona.** Don The Polish K8id and Lorraine at Florence Gardens, 3830 N. Florence Blvd., Florence, Ariz., from 10:00 p.m.
- **Connecticut.** Dennis Polisky & the Maestro's Men at St. Joseph's Polish Society, 395 S. Main St., Colchester, Mass., dinner 7:00 p.m., music 7:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m., \$35.
- **Florida.** Melotones at the General Pulaski Citizens Club, 6221 SE 113th St., Belleview, Fla., 7:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m.
- **Florida.** Northern Sounds at Campers Village, Ocala, Fla. Check locally for details.
- **Michigan.** Natural Tones at the Bad Axe K of C Hall, 1038 S. van Dyke, Bad Axe, Mich., 8:00 p.m.-12:30 a.m.
- **Michigan.** New Brass and DynaBrass at the PRCUA Hall, 1430 Oak St., Wyandotte, Mich., 8:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m., \$45.
- **Michigan.** Coachmen at the American Polish Century Club, 33204 Maple Ln., Sterling Heights, Mich., 8:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m.
- **Michigan.** Steve Dzewicki at Pulaski Hall Bar, Farrgut St., Bay City, Mich., 8:30 p.m.-1:00 a.m., no admission charge.
- **Michigan.** Big Daddy Lackowski at the Polka Boosters of America, Msgr. Hunt K of C Hall, 7080 Garling, Dearborn Heights, Mich. For details call (734) 422-1901
- **New Jersey.** Polka Country Musicians and DJ Bruce at the Bayway Polish Home, Elizabeth, N.J. Check locally for details.
- **Ohio.** Ethnic Jazz at the Byzantine Hall, 1900 Carlton Rd., Parma, Ohio, 7:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m.
- **Ohio.** Frank Moravic at the American Czechoslovakian Club, 922 Valley St., Dayton, Ohio, dinner 7:00, music 9:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.
- **Ontario.** John Gora & Gorale at the Polish Alliance Hall, 1015 Barton St., Hamilton, Ont., Canada. Check locally for details.
- **Pennsylvania.** Jolly Joe (Alex Truskowski) & the Bavarians at First Night, Hazelton, Pa., 6:00-10:00 p.m.

Honky-Style Christmas Released on Chicago Label

CHICAGO—The first of its kind, "A Honky Style Christmas" by Stas Bulanda & Old School Review, featuring Chet Kowalkowski, just came out on Chicago Polkas.

Stas Bulanda and Steve Fornek put together sixteen selections, which they deemed fitting and proper. "Kubus The Polish Reindeer" joins the yuletide line-up along with "Polka Sleigh Ride," "Honky Style Christmas Polka," "Dear Daddy," "Presents From Santa," "Christmas-time Waltz," "Christmas Oberek," "Hej Koleda," "Merry Christmas Greetings," and "Happy New Year Wishes." Six favorite Polish kole-dy are included: "Aniol pasterzom mowil," "Lulalie Jezuniu," "Gdy sie Christus rodzi," "Cicha noc," and "Narodzil sie Jezus." (See advertisement).

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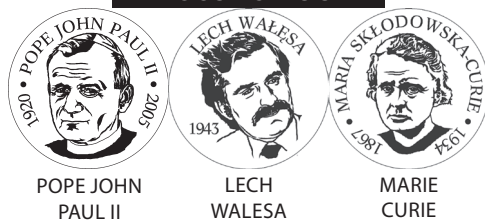


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RELIGION / Benjamin Fiore, S.J.

Chumiecki Named Director of Polish Mission at Orchard Lake

ORCHARD LAKE, Mich.—**Marcin Chumiecki** was appointed director of the Polish Mission at the Orchard Lake Schools, an initiative from the Chancellor's Office to re-invest in the campus' status in Polonia.

Chumiecki, a native of Bielsko-Biala, Poland, was baptized by then Cardinal of Krakow, Karol Wojtyla. Before coming to Michigan in 2000, he worked in marketing, public relations, and sales. He became a United States citizen in 2004.

"The Polish Mission of Orchard Lake Schools is in its infancy. It will take the extended Polonian family to nurture and develop it into a healthy, productive, and proud foundation," said Chumiecki. "While preserving the 19th and 20th centuries' legacy we've inherited, we are preparing for the future."

The Orchard Lake Schools will celebrate two milestones in 2009 and 2010: the 100th Anniversary of Polish Seminary at Orchard Lake, and the 125th Anniversary of the Founding of the Polish Seminary, respectively.

Chumiecki said he will rely on guidance and manpower from Poland's Ministry of Culture and National and State Archives—as well as archives and foundations here in the United States—to preserve, process, and promote Orchard Lake's many hidden treasures, which include museum collections, works of art, and archives.

JOHN PAUL II SURVIVED SECRET 1982 STABBING. The late Pope John Paul was wounded by a knife-wielding priest in 1982, a year after he was shot in St Peter's Square, but the injury was kept secret, his former top aide says in a documentary film.

Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz also discloses that when John Paul was unable to pronounce words several days before his death in 2005, he told his aides that if he could not speak any more the time had come for him to die.

Dziwisz, who is now cardinal of Krakow, Poland, was John Paul's private secretary and closest aide for nearly 40 years, including all of his 27 years as pontiff.

The documentary, called "Testimony" and narrated by British actor Michael York, is a film version of a memoir published by Dziwisz last year but with some additions.

On May 12, 1982, the pope was visiting the shrine city of Fatima in Portugal to give thanks for surviving a first assassination attempt a year earlier on May 13, 1981, when he was shot in St. Peter's Square by Turkish gunman Mehmet Ali Agca.

A crazed ultra-conservative Spanish priest, Juan Fernandez Krohn, lunged at the pope with a dagger and was knocked to the ground by police and arrested. The fact that the knife actually reached the pope and cut him was not known until now.

"I can now reveal that the Holy Father was wounded. When we got back to the room (in the Fatima sanctuary complex) there was blood," Dziwisz says in the documentary.

The pope carried on with the trip without disclosing his wound.

Krohn was arrested and served several years in a Portuguese prison before being expelled from the country.

After screening the film, Pope Benedict XVI referred to John Paul II as his "great predecessor" and declared that he was sure he was with us, looking at us from heaven. The soundtrack is by Poland's Robert Janson and the Greek composer Vangelis. The film has English, Italian and Polish versions.

FELICIANS GO GREEN. As part of the \$15 million renovations to their motherhouse in Cheektowaga, N.Y., the Felician sisters are installing an advanced, environmentally-friendly geothermal system that uses deep groundwater to heat and cool the building. While the residence will be used for the aged and infirm members of the congregation, it will be designed to be able to accommodate senior housing or a nursing home if the sisters no longer can occupy it. Plans to convert the former Villa Maria Academy building to senior housing fell through. This spurred the sisters on to the current renovation project so that their residence can still anchor and stabilize the already distressed neighborhood on the Buffalo-Cheektowaga border. The sisters estimate a full return on the expenses for the system through utility cost savings in six years. **Sr. Francesca Buczkowski**, a member of the building committee, noted, "We're Franciscan, so that was one of our top priorities, that we didn't want to jeopardize the environment, but enhance it."

CROSIER AT THE SYNOD. **Master General Glen Lewandowski, O.S.C.**, who taught scripture at the School of Theology in Abepura, Papua from 1981-2003. The Crosier father's missionary and scriptural expertise were called on by Pope Benedict XVI, who invited him to participate in the synod of bishops held in Rome in late October to consider the Scriptures and the life of

the Church.

REUNION OF ALUMNI. **Walter Piatek** and some 200 fellow graduates of the now-closed St. Joseph Grammar School in South Camden, N.J., attended Mass celebrated by the pastor **Fr. Edward J. Lipinski**, himself a graduate of the school, and the reunion that followed.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO ... St. Josaphat RC Parish in Duluth, Minn., which celebrated its 100th anniversary by getting a new roof. **Fr. John Kutek** commended his parishioners for the many ways they are working to make the parish stronger ... The **Very Rev. Fryderyk S. Banas**, pastor of Holy Cross Parish, Polish National Catholic Church, observing his 58th anniversary of ordination to the holy priesthood. Father Senior Banas was ordained on October 19, 1950 by the late Bishop John A. Miaszke in St. Stanislaus First Parish PNCC in Scranton, Pa. A special blessing was bestowed upon him and the five other neopresbyters by the organizer of the Polish National Catholic Church, the late Prime Bishop Francis Hodur. He celebrated his First Mass in Holy Mother of the Rosary Church, Chicopee, Mass. on October 22, 1950.

Father Senior Banas served as pastor in the following parishes: St. John the Baptist, Hazleton; Ss. Peter & Paul, McAdoo; and St. Adalbert, Dickson City, Pa.; Holy Mother of the Rosary Cathedral, Buffalo, N.Y.; Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Fall River, Mass.; and the Holy Cross Parish, Ware, Mass., since May 15, 1989.

THE CHURCH IN POLAND. Priests from around Europe flocked to the Polish city of Kielce for the ninth annual SacroExpo, a religious goods trade show, which featured 250 exhibitors. Items for sale included everything from cassocks, rosaries, statues, to pews, altars, and bells. **Fr. Stanislaw Szalda** was in the market for a heating unit for his church's confessional.

Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz has lowered the retirement age of priests from 75 to 70, in an effort to put younger clergy into top positions in the archdiocese of Kraków.

SURPRISE GIFT. During the annual pet-blessing ceremony at St. Sebastian RC Parish, Dearborn Heights, Mich., the parish surprised two Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph who minister in the parish grade school. **Srs. Geraldine Kaczynski** and **Stephen Hadrych** were given the keys to a new car. The gift from the parishioners was in recognition of their tireless efforts at the school

and parish. "They are wonderful ladies, dedicated to the kids, to the parish—very, very wonderful women," said parishioner Rosann Gomez. "They give so much and they don't ask for much in return." Their previous vehicle became increasingly unreliable for their travel to and from their provincial house in Hamburg, N.Y.

STO LAT TO... Fr. Maciej Mankowski, appointed pastor of St. Mary and St. Joseph RC parish in Newton Falls, Ohio. The parish is the result of a merger of two separate parishes in the diocese of Youngstown. Rhode Island RC clergy **Fr. Przemyslaw Lepak** appointed assistant pastor of St. Brendan's Parish, Riverside; **Fr. Jacek Ploch** appointed assistant pastor of St. Kevin's Parish, Warwick; and **Fr. Lukasz J. Willenberg** appointed assistant pastor of St. Luke's Parish, Barrington.

The Polish Community Home of Herkimer, N.Y., on being honored by Catholic Charities with the 2008 Window of Hope Award for generously giving time, effort and funds to many groups, organizations and projects throughout the Herkimer area. Home board member **Walt Czuryla** said the club's ambitions to help others around the community were planted years ago when immigrants originally founded the club.

LOOTED ART DISCOVERED. A gold-and-enamel Limoges Passion crucifix, stolen during World War II from the **Czartoryski collection** was found in a dumpster in the Austrian town of Zell filled with the belongings of a deceased hotel owner. The woman who found it kept it under her couch because her children disliked it. At the suggestion of a friend she had it examined and found it to be an 800-year-old artifact that had once been in a col-

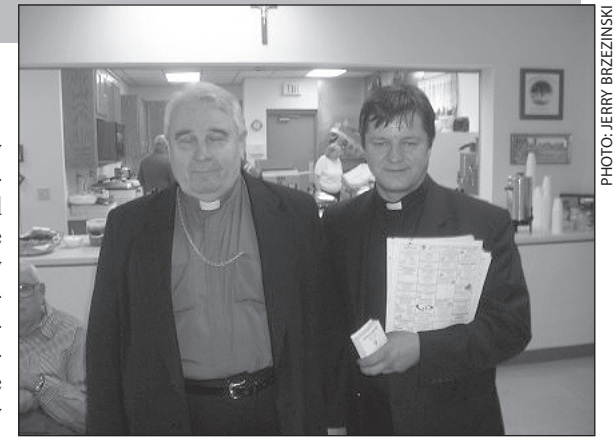


PHOTO: JERRY BRZEZINSKI

100 YEARS FOR OUR SAVIOR PNCC. Our Savior PNCC, 706 9th St. in Mosinee, Wisc., recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. Pictured above are Bishop Jan Dawidziuk and Fr. Marion Talaga, pastor. The celebration was held on October 19, 2008. A Polish lunch was served after the services.

lection in pre-war Poland. The work remains in the local museum until ownership questions are settled.

Poland is seeking the return of two 16-century altar pieces looted by the Nazis during World War II and eventually finding their way to Turkmenistan, which is north of Afghanistan. The works, "The Ascension" and "The Annunciation," were taken from churches in Szamotuly and Mądre in 1941 and placed in a Nazi-run museum in Poznan. A German journalist came upon the remains of "The Ascension" in a museum in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. **Wojciech Kowalski**, the foreign ministry official in responsible for the restitution of looted art, said Poland would send a medieval art expert to Ashgabat this year to confirm the authenticity and origin of the works to local authorities.

MORE DOWNSIZING PLANS. The diocese of Allentown, Pa., will reduce the number of parishes from 151 to 104 according to an announcement by **Bishop Cullen** who cited population shifts, waning vocations to the priesthood among other reasons. The RC Diocese of Camden expects to reduce its parishes from 124 to 66. Some of the mergers previously announced by **Bishop Galante** are on hold while the diocese deals with an unexpected problem with a real estate agent handling diocesan property sales who is accused of unethical practices. In the RC diocese of La Crosse, Wisc., **Bishop Jerome Listeki** hopes to cut the number of parishes by more than half from 165 to 75.

MODLITWY

PUBLICATION OF PRAYERS. The Polish American Journal gladly accepts prayers ads for publication. They must be received by the 10th of each month, prior to the month of publication, and must be pre-paid at the cost of \$15.00 each, which can be paid by check or charge. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please call 1 (800) 422-1275 or (716) 312-8088.

ST. JUDE NOVENA. May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy on us. St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us. St. Jude, helper of the helpless, pray for us. Recite nine times a day. By the 8th day, your prayer will be answered. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised. Thank you St. Jude

and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I.C.S.

PRAYERTOTHEBLESSEDVIRGIN. (Never Known To Fail). Oh, most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart and succor me in my necessity (make request). There are none that can withstand your power. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (three times). Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands (three times). Say this prayer for three consecutive days and then you must publish and it will be granted to you. Thank you for your help. A.D.

PRAYERTOTHEBLESSEDVIRGIN. (Never Known To Fail). Oh, most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart and succor me in my necessity (make request). There are none that can withstand your power. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (three times). Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands (three times). Say this prayer for three consecutive days and then you must publish and it will be granted to you. Thank you for your help. M.L.

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SPORTS / Tom Tarapacki

He's Got a Job!

Marcin Gortat, who made the roster of the Orlando Magic last season, has been added to the Magic's regular rotation by coach Stan Van Gundy.

Gortat was a second round draft choice of the Phoenix Suns in 2005 and traded to Orlando. A 6'11" and 240-lb. center/power forward, he has showed steady progress. Gortat saw sporadic minutes last year until the playoffs, when he emerged as a steady contributor.

Van Gundy said he is "intrigued" by the athleticism of the 24-year-old Gortat, who once won a bet with assistant coach Patrick Ewing that he could dunk from the free-throw line. Gortat used to be an amateur soccer goalie in Poland and has amazed teammates with ball tricks. Gortat's skills now seem to be catching up with his physical ability. Assistant coach Brendan Malone works with Gortat and has seen "significant improvement in his body, his game, his confidence." His job is run, defend, rebound. He'll get better the more minutes he plays. He has great feet. His jump shot is better and he can now make ten free throws in a row." Asked how much Gortat has progressed, General Manager Otis Smith said, "light years."

ONE OF THE BEST. This season New England kicker **Stephen Gostkowski** has emerged from the shadow of his legendary predecessor, former Pats and current Colts kicker Adam Vinatieri. Gostkowski connected on 16-of-17 field goal attempts at the halfway point of the season, earning AFC Special Teams Player of the Month honors for October.

Gostkowski also has proven to be very capable on kickoffs. His strong leg has helped keep the ball away from many talented return men, with 12 touchbacks through the first seven games.

Vinatieri was known for his clutch, game-winning kicks, but Gostkowski hasn't been given many of those opportunities. "He doesn't

get caught up in those comparisons," long snapper Lonie Paxton said. "We don't try to. It all comes down to making kicks. I know he's just trying to work as hard as possible and be a solid piece of the puzzle that we can always count on."

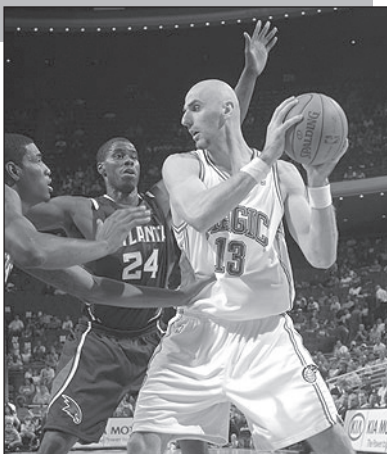
"There isn't one kicker in the NFL that doesn't respect and admire everything he's done as a field goal kicker," Gostkowski told the Boston Herald in reference to Vinatieri. "I've met the guy three times—each time we've played them. He's a nice guy, a great kicker, but it's not like there's some built-up animosity ... As long as I'm doing a decent job of helping this team win, I'm happy."

Gostkowski admitted that he didn't know that the Special Teams honor existed until he won it, but he reacted with typical modesty. "It's always nice to get an individual accolade or award, but you don't play for those reasons. You play to help the team win and just try to do your best every game."

LOOKING FOR WORK. At press time **Bruce Gradkowski** isn't on an NFL roster, but the Pittsburgh native has been auditioned by a number of NFL teams for a QB job.

He was drafted by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the sixth round of the 2006 NFL Draft after playing collegiately at Toledo. Gradkowski enjoyed early success with Tampa Bay and showed a lot of promise, despite being the 11th QB taken in the draft. However, he later struggled and was waived in 2008. He was claimed off waivers by the Rams, but did not make the final roster.

STILL RUNNING. Henry **Sypniewski**, 90, continues to break running records. He recently shattered a national record for his age group when he ran the Syracuse (NY) Festival of Races 5K in 33 minutes and 46 seconds. The former record stood at 40:32. "I was hoping to break it," Sypniewski said after the race. "It was kind of cool at first, but once I warmed up it was



Marcin Gortat has been added to Orlando Magic's regular rotation.

fine. The course is a lot of here-and-there, so it was an interesting course to run. I really gave it everything the last 200 yards. I could hardly talk and stand when I was done, but I did it."

Sypniewski, of the Buffalo suburb of Cheektowaga, was the only entrant in his age group in the race, but wanted to beat his own 5K record of 33:50, set in mid-August in Buffalo. On Labor Day, he ran a 15K race in 2 hours, 2 minutes and two weeks later, ran a half-marathon in Erie, Pa., in 3:04:05.

A Golden Gloves champion in 1937, Henry ran cross country in high school but only started running in road races in his 70s. He did so well he kept running. He trains by running two days a week, walking for about 90 minutes four days a week and then takes one day off. "It's a challenge and that's why I do it," he said. "I think deep down all runners have an inferiority complex, and we all want to prove to ourselves that we do it."

THEY SAID IT

"I could marry an American girl and get my citizenship real quick. But why would I want to get married?"

—Polish native **Marcin Gortat** of the Orlando Magic, joking about his desire to become a U.S. citizen.



"As soon as I hit it I started celebrating because I knew I hit it good. That's probably one of the best, I've tried longer ones ... but this one is up there. It's number one."

—Oakland Raider kicker **Sebastian Janikowski**, after kicking a 57-yard field goal in overtime to beat the NY Jets. It not only broke his own franchise record, but it was the longest field goal in overtime in NFL history.

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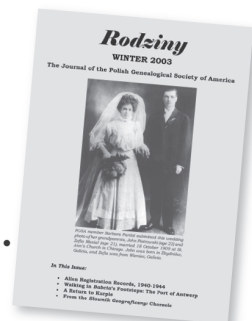


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OL Alumni Honored



ORCHARD LAKE, Mich.—The Orchard Lake Alumni Association honored Rev. Msgr. Edward Wawerski and Anthony Matrejek at its annual Red & White Ball held Nov. 9 at the Polonaise Terrace in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Both are members of the Downstate N.Y. Division of the Polish American Congress. Matrejek has been the Division's treasurer for many years and is active in several other Polonia organizations. Msgr. Wawerski is pastor of both St. Hedwig's Church in Floral Park and St.

Ladislus Church in Hempstead.

The above photo was taken as the honorees were being congratulated by Downstate N.Y. Division president Frank Milewski and Richard Brzozowski, who heads the Division's Long Island Chapter.

Shown are: (from left to right): Milewski, Matrejek, Msgr. Wawerski, and Brzozowski.

The Orchard Lake Schools of Orchard Lake, Michigan include Ss. Cyril & Methodius Seminary, which trains many priests who come to the United States from Poland.

BOOK REVIEW / John Grondelski

Zagajewski: A Master of Allusions

ETERNAL ENEMIES

by Adam Zagajewski
New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2008. HB, pp. 116, \$24.00
To order: <http://us.macmillan.com/eternalenemies> or (888) 330-8477

It is with a degree of trepidation that I write this, aware that any review of poetry today is written after the modernists and postmodernists overthrew form in favor of blank verse, and I am no partisan of that turn. My task is doubly complicated when the poetry is in translation: here, more than anywhere, the Italian adage *traduttore, traditore* (the translator is a traitor) can come into play. (I did not check Zagajewski's original, but Clare Cavanagh has regularly translated his works into English). But the appearance of a contemporary Polish poet in English translation and his publication by a leading literary house like Farrar, Straus, and Giroux brace me to overcome those fears and attempt the task. Any book of poetry today is likely to have a limited audience as well as publication run, so bringing such a work to Polish American readers' attention is even more important.

Adam Zagajewski (1945-) was born in Lwow. Banned from publication in Poland after 1975, he taught in Houston, then made a home in Paris and has finally returned to Krakow. He was decorated with the "Krzyzem Oficerskim Orderu Odrodzenia Polski" in June 2008 by Polish President Kaczynski. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux have published previous collections of his poetry.

Eternal Enemies is a collection of 76 poems, taking its name from the author's "Epithalamium." "Only in marriage do love and time/eternal enemies, join forces./Only love and time, when reconciled/permit us to see other beings/in their enigmatic, complex essence" // (p. 88). The thoughts remind one of the reflections of Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II) in his play "Przed sklepem jubilera" (The Jeweler's Shop). There Wojtyla teaches that love, reaching for eternity, comes up against the limited span of finite human existence, the tension being resolved only in sacramental marriage where the natural dynamic of love can attain its true dimension, the only dimension worthy of the name "love." It attains that dimension precisely by the risk and decision of free choice to love. True, love involves risk, but a life worth living is never risk-free. As Zagajewski observes: "Life paired

is doubtless more difficult/ than solitary existence—/ just as a boat on the open sea / with outstretched sails is trickier to steer / than the same boat drowsing at a dock, but schooners / after all are meant for mind and motion / not idleness and impassive quiet" (p. 88).

The task of living and engaging with life permeates Zagajewski's writings. The poet is intolerant of idleness, of the observer's disinterested distance. Life is no spectator sport. Reflecting on tourists who meander through the ruins of long lost cities (Pompeii comes to mind) Zagajewski speaks of how "you suddenly surface in a city that no longer is / you turn up abruptly in a vast city / that really isn't there. / Bathhouse walls are bone-dry./ The kitchen holds no herbs, / the bedroom is sleepless. / We enter homes, gardens, but no one greets us" // (p. 72). Yet, even in such places, just as you are ready to succumb to the silence and loss, "a wind stirs, a sea wind / bearing the promise of freshness. / A gate in a wall leans open / and you glimpse life stronger than oblivion . . ." // (p. 73). Love is stronger than death, observed the Biblical writer (Song of Songs 8:6), and that is why it must stretch beyond temporal finitude, beyond time to grasp eternity. If love and time are enemies, it is because love cannot fit within time's stingy confines.

But love becomes incarnate in concrete persons, which is why it draws us out of ourselves, out of our sheltered but ultimately sterile har-

bors into the fruitfulness of shared existence. As an artist, Zagajewski is acutely aware of the need for persons to share art. That is why he quotes approvingly from Conrad Aiken: "Music I heard with you was more than music" (p. 44). That is why writing about someone playing an organ in an empty church, he can call out "If only I could see the organist/ Catch sight of his face, his eyes!" (p. 100). That is why, observing a boy sitting opposite him on a train, a lad with a blank stare on his face but an alert kitten in his jacket, Zagajewski writes: "The two-headed boy sitting across from me / made richer by an animal's unrest" (p. 55).

Now I do not want to suggest that Zagajewski necessarily has a personalist or Catholic agenda, although I have interpreted him in that manner. To appreciate him, one needs some grasp of his rich use of allusions: allusions to contemporary Polish intellectuals (like Miłosz, Kantor, Wat, and Brodsky); to places in Europe (like Rome, Syracuse, Verdun, or Noto) and to the geography of Krakow and southern Poland (like ulica Długa or Karmelicka and places like Bytom and Stary Sącz). Zagajewski's poetry cannot be rushed. Like a fine brandy, it must be savored, something to be meditated upon on a long, cold winter evening. This book would be an ideal gift for friends who enjoy contemporary literature.

Dr. John M. Grondelski writes from Bern, Switzerland.



To all of Polonia
Merry Christmas
and a
Joyous New Year

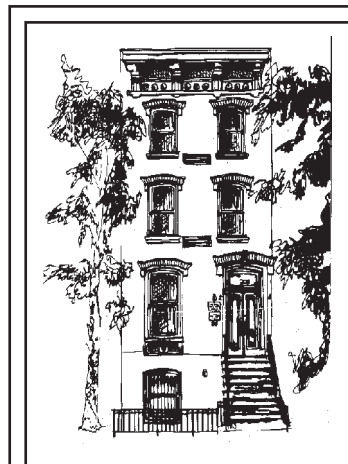
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Poland's Armia Krajowa and German V-2 Rockets in World War II

by Douglas W. Jacobson
Part One of Two

Buried deep in a mountainside in the small town of Peenemunde on the Baltic Sea, German scientists were hard at work on the most secret and insidious weapons known to mankind during the dark years of World War II—the V-1 and V-2 rockets. While rumors of these developments had been floating around Allied intelligence circles, it was not until the winter of 1942 that they were taken seriously. This occurred following a secret report dispatched to London from the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa or AK). The report included information gathered by an AK agent working at the Czech steelworks plant in Witowice who had learned of top secret tests being conducted by the Germans utilizing very special steel alloys and advanced manufacturing techniques to produce large steel cylinders.

Further undercover espionage activities by AK agents revealed the secret testing facility at Peenemunde. In the summer of 1943, one particular agent, posing as a forced laborer, was able to create sketches of the testing facility, which was now close to producing V-1 rockets, or “flying bombs” in large-scale quantities. Through a complex network of secret agents and safe-houses his report and sketches made their way to the AK commanders in Warsaw and then to Allied intelligence authorities in London.

On August 17, 1943 the RAF sent 586 heavy bombers on a night raid of the Peenemunde facility. The RAF dropped more than 2,000 tons of high explosives and incendiary bombs which forced the Germans to shut down the testing operation. While extensive damage had been done, the raid unfortunately did not completely destroy the facility. But as a result the Germans relocated the testing operation to Poland where work commenced on the next generation of these deadly rockets, the V-2.

The new testing facility was constructed in a heavily forested region of southern Poland near the deserted village of Blizna. While the Germans took elaborate security precautions to camouflage their activi-

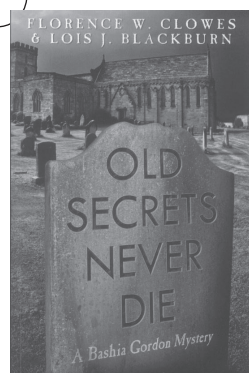
ties, agents of the AK—including elderly peasant women and young children—soon discovered the presence of the new testing facility and kept it under close surveillance. Reports of the site's activities were again transferred via secret couriers to Warsaw and on to London detailing the construction of specialized buildings, anti-aircraft batteries, and a new railway line into the deserted town.

Eventually the Germans began testing the deadly V-2 rocket by firing them from launch pads near the Blizna site. These bullet-shaped rockets would streak skyward from the forest, reaching incredible altitudes before crashing indiscriminately to earth in the Polish countryside, often inflicting serious injuries and deaths.

Instead of fleeing the area, the local Polish peasants, working closely with the AK, took it as a challenge to race to the crash sites and collect rocket fragments before the SS got there. These bits of steel, glass and wires, along with photographs of the rocket launches were forwarded on to Allied intelligence experts who were desperate to learn the secret of the deadly enemy weapons.

Next: How the AK recovered an intact V-2 rocket.

Douglas W. Jacobson is a World War Two history enthusiast and author. The story of the AK and the V-2 rockets was memorialized in his award-winning book, Night of Flames: A Novel of World War Two.



Old Secrets Never Die by PAJ Book Reviewer **Florence W. Clowes** and **Lois J. Blackburn**. Published by **Infinity Publishing**. Available from the author for **\$14.95** plus **\$3.50** s&h at **8265 93rd Ave., Vero Beach, FL 32967**. Autographed copies are available upon request.

Have You Read...?

A murder mystery featuring Polonia's amateur sleuth, the second in a series of crime-solving capers in Northeastern Connecticut.

Yoga Therapy, Secret Lives, When to Plant, and Poetry in Polish with Translation

YOGA BEYOND FITNESS

by Tom Pilarzyk, Ph.D.
Quest Books, 2008
notes, bibliography, index, 270 pp., \$17.95

Pilarzyk provides a study of the evolution of an age-old spiritual, meditative practice to a pop culture phenomenon.

Most of the 70,000 yoga teachers today have gone from a spiritual to a secularized yoga, from pretzel-like poses to a big business. Pilarzyk takes the reader on his life-long journey of yoga, to retreats, such as Shadowbrook in Lenox, Massachusetts, for Kripalu spirituality with spicy Indian philosophical influences. That community underwent drastic changes after a sex scandal and now casts itself as an educational center devoted to personal societal and global transformation. There are many other centers throughout the United States and Canada, offering yoga as a holistic lifestyle.

Yoga therapy is a spiritual path, and can be a medical path as well. Some wellness centers will state, in fine print, “commitment to years of practice of yoga is required”. Others see yoga stripped of its spiritual philosophical, and psychophysical moorings and transformed into the in-thing to do—occasional exercise, occasional meditation and frequent marketing of clothing, candles and equipment.

Meditations inspired by Tibetan

Buddhism from prayer-like chanting became a pop culture and a full fledge industry. Kirtan chants are being transformed into the world music scene with concerts and CD recordings.

Yoga teaches us to look within ourselves, to listen to our inner wisdom, to listen to our body. Pilarzyk believes this yoga will outlive the mass advertising, big business culture of today.

THE RED PRINCE

The Secret Lives of a Habsburg Archduke
by Timothy Snyder
Basic Books, 2008
bibliography, index, illustrations, notes, maps, 320 pp., \$ 27.95

This non-fiction covers a large period of European history, with the continent ruled by empires. The Habsburgs were renowned as Europe's grandest family and longest ruling dynasty. The end of the World War I had dismantled the monarchy and nationalism reigned across Europe.

Historian Snyder examines the life of Archduke Wilhelm von Habsburg (1895-1948) in an intriguing, personal way. Raised to be a Polish king, Wilhelm rebelled against his father's plans and tried, instead to become king of Ukraine. He loved the Ukrainians, constantly wearing the embroidered smock under his uniform, learned the language and commanded Ukrainian troops. When his dream of a unified Ukraine collapsed after World War I, he became, by turns, an ally of Germany, a notorious French lover, an angry Austrian monarchist, an opponent of Hitler and a British spy.

Snyder, a Yale University Professor, is an acclaimed historian who researched archives across Europe to provide the lively, determined, scandalous life of Wilhelm at a time when the continent was in turmoil. The book is an interesting, readable history, complete with the hopes and dreams of a ruler who died in a Soviet prison.

Also included is a chronology of the Habsburg history, an imperial family tree, notes on terms and

language as well as biographical sketches.

WHEN PERENNIALS BLOOM

An Almanac For Planning and Planting
by Tomasz Anisko
Timber Press, bibliography, index, 510 pp., \$59.95

This oversized book is rife with full-color pictures of hundreds of perennials on every page, with a description of the plant, its varieties and a flowering period chart. Perennials are plants that are able to repeatedly renew themselves. Their longevity is due to timing of meristems converting from the vegetative to the floral state.

As a practical tool, profuse advice is given on creating a garden of season-long flowering combining perennials for the best impact of color and what environmental factors effect bloom time.

Home gardeners will love the thousands of beautiful photographs and informative nature of the book. It will also be a great asset to landscape professionals who need to anticipate a plant's peak display to plan layouts.

Anisko, Curator of Plants at Longwood Gardens, has provided photographs of various root systems, how perennials respond to the environment, and an encyclopedia of their bloom time. He refers to the work of Curators in Moscow, Poznan, Gdansk, St Louis, Sweden, and Pennsylvania.

He also notes the first botanical records are probably the ones in Krakow, that date back to 1470, with dates of flowering, fruiting and other phenomena, published in Herbarius, an early herbal published in Mainz, Germany.

The book is a beauty to behold and study.

PULAPCE WOLNOSCI, TRAPPED IN FREEDOM

second edition
by Mirosława Kruszevska
edited by Edward Dusza
PNA, 28841 23rd Ave So. Federal Way, WA 98003
2008, 164 pp., \$14.95
(includes mailing)

This bilingual book of poetry clearly spells out the dilemma in which emigrants find themselves while adapting to a foreign land, the reality so different from the dream.

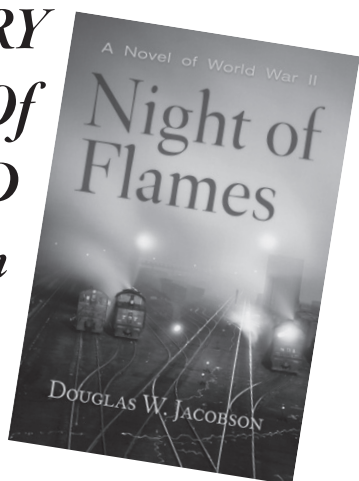
One of the most famous emigrants, Czeslaw Milosz continually felt like a stranger in a strange land, even though he lived in America for over twenty years. So, too, with Kruszevska, who has been here a quarter of a century.

First published in Poland as a poet and journalist, she produced her own poetry and music program Polish Radio Gdansk in 1977. She has been published worldwide, often without her permission.

The poems were written over several decades since leaving Poland. They are grouped into five categories—Polish Reminiscence, Traiskirchen (a refuge camp), American Pictures, Immolation and Youth. The poems speak of tragedy, tenderness, longing, envy and happiness, the moods of a poetess for all to see and feel.

THE STORY OF POLAND In WORLD WAR TWO

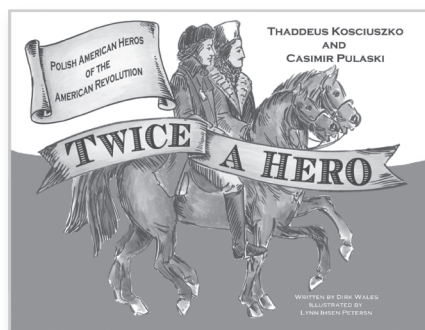
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AMERICAN POLONIA AT A GLANCE

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO—The **Polish Museum of America** has two events planned this month to enhance your Polish Christmas.

On Fri., Dec. 5, a **Polish Adult Wigilia** will be held at the Museum, which will offer an 18th Century Polish cottage decorated for Christmas; sharing of opłatek; a traditional meatless meal; singing of carols; ornament making; and a gift from Sw. Mikolaj. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and program at 7:00, followed by dinner. Call (773) 384-3352 x104 for reservations. PMA members' price is \$30.00, \$35.00 for non-members.

A **Family Wigilia and Workshop** will be held Sat., Dec. 13 from 10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., offering the same as above, but geared for children and families. Admission is \$15.00 for children, \$25.00 for adult PMA member; and \$30 for non-members. Call (773) 384-3352 x104 for reservations.

MINNESOTA

MINNEAPOLIS—The **Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota** will hold a traditional Wigilia dinner to benefit disadvantaged Polish children on Dec. 14, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at Gasthof Restaurant located at 2300 University Avenue NE, Minneapolis. This community Christmas Eve celebration features sharing of the opłatek, eating traditional foods, and singing Christmas carols in Polish and English. If you cannot attend the event and wish to donate to this cause, please send your check made out to PACIM-Children's Fund to PACIM, PO Box 18403, Minneapolis, MN 55418-0403. For more information, call Judith at (762) 571-9602.

MINNEAPOLIS—You can join the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota in **singing kolędy** on Sun., Jan. 4, 2009 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at Catholic Eldercare, 817 Main Street NE. Meet in the Atrium at 1:00 p.m. to practice prior to caroling. People are also invited to attend a Christmas sing-along at River Village, 2919 Randolph Street NE, Minneapolis at 3:30 p.m. Words and music provided by Bob Gacek and his accordion. If there is illness at

Eldercare, we will immediately go to River Village. Call on Saturday to confirm. For more information, call Judith at (763) 571-9602.

MINNEAPOLIS—Mark your calendars for **Bal Karnawalowy**, the Annual pre-lenten dinner/dance offered by the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota. This year's event will be at the James J. Hill Library, Feb. 21, 2009. For more information, call Judith at (763) 571-9602.

MISSOURI

ST. LOUIS—The **Polish American Cultural Society of Metropolitan St. Louis** will hold its annual Wigilia, Tues., Dec. 9, at Glen Echo Country Club, 3401 Lucas and Hunt Rd. On Sat., Dec. 13, members will gather at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Snows, 442 South De Mazenod Dr., Belleville, Ill., for a performance of Christmas Carols. For more information on either event, call (314) 869-2399.

NEW JERSEY

ATLANTIC CITY—**Charlotte L. Androckitis**, general secretary of the Polish Union of U.S.A., headquartered in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., was installed as president of the New Jersey Fraternal Congress. She has served on the NJFC board for the last eight years, and has been a member of many committees during that time. Androckitis previously served as president of the Pennsylvania Fraternal Congress, and currently is president of the Fraternal Societies of Northeastern Pennsylvania. The installation took place at the 75th Annual Meeting of the NJFC, held at the Hilton Hotel.

PENNSYLVANIA

WILKES-BARRE—**Mary Ann Arnold** was named Polish Union of the U.S.A.'s 2008-2009 "Fraternalist of the Year." She was presented with a plaque and monetary gift by Emily Huber on behalf of the Polish Union.

DeAnna Simone Namowicz of Nanticoke was selected as Miss Polish Union U.S.A. 2009 at the organization's Polka Afternoon held at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Scranton. She is a junior at Holy Redeemer High School and is involved

in SADD, the National Honor Society, peer tutoring, and the John Casablanca Acting and Modeling School.

PHILADELPHIA—On Sun., Dec. 7, a **Polski Uniwersytet Ludowy Lecture** in the Polish language will be held at the Associated Polish Home, 9150 Academy Rd. at 3:00 p.m. Speaker: Regina Gorzkowska-Rossi. Topic: "Sztuka sakralna—zanikające dziedzictwo." Free. Info call (610) 532-2422 or (215) 624-9954.

PHILADELPHIA—A Christmas Bazaar will be held at **St. Stanislaus Hall**, 3rd and Fitzwater Streets, Sun., Dec. 7, noon to 4:00 p.m. Games of chance, food, and more. For info call the rectory at (215) 468-1922. Open to the public.

PHILADELPHIA—A Polish Christmas Open House will be held Sat., Dec. 13 at the Polish American Cultural Center Museum, 308 Walnut St., 11:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Free. Call (215) 922-1700 for details.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The **Pope John Paul II Cultural Center** in Washington, D.C. presented a concert honoring Krzysztof Penderecki on his 75th birthday, Nov. 7. The event featured violinist Patrycja Piekutowska and pianist Beata Bilinski. On Nov. 9, the Center presented a concert by pianist Marc Laforet. Both events were directed by the Center's artistic director, Małgorzata Markowska. The events were sponsored by the Consular Division of the Embassy of Poland, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Miedzynarodowy Festival,



LEGION MŁODYCH POLEK. The Legion of Young Polish Women in Chicago was busy this past month holding its annual election of officers, as well as hosting a second debutante tea to honor its prospective debutantes. This wonderful event was held at the Ridgemoor Country Club in Chicago. The 70th Annual White & Red Ball, a black tie gala, chaired by Grazyna Migala, will be held Feb. 21, 2009 at the Hilton Chicago. Those interested in further Ball information can email: gbalute@sbcglobal.net.

Pictured above are this year's queen and prospective debutantes.

Adam Mickiewicz Institute, and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

The **Polish American Arts Association of Washington, D.C.** invites all to its 2008 Annual Wigilia, featuring traditional Polish food, Fri., Dec. 12, 2008. Reception at 6:30 p.m.; dinner at 7:30 p.m. at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, 2640 16th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. For additional information, contact Sharon Brzostowski at (301)-353-9275; sharonbrz@verizon.net. Tickets: \$85.00 for adults; children under 13 years, \$45.00.



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Poland to Exhume Sikorski's Body

WARSAW—Prosecutors have announced they will exhume the body of the country's World War II prime minister. Gen. Wladyslaw Sikorski will be exhumed as part of an inquiry to decide whether his death in a plane crash in Gibraltar in 1943 was an accident or murder.

A British investigation ruled that it was an accident, but some historians in Poland believe Sikorski died as a result of foul play.

Poland's president and prime minister are backing the inquiry.

The general's body rests in a crypt at Krakow Cathedral, where it lies next to Polish monarchs and national heroes.

Prosecutors say it may provide clues to help them determine whether Gen Sikorski was assassinated.

During the war the general was prime minister of the Polish government-in-exile in London. In July 1943, the Liberator aircraft he was

traveling on together with two British MPs, crashed into the sea just seconds after it took off from Gibraltar. A British investigation at the time found the plane's controls had jammed. But a separate Polish investigation did not rule out he may have been murdered.

The general's death has produced several colorful conspiracy theories despite a lack of evidence.

At the time Sikorski had demanded an investigation into allegations that Poland's then ally, the former Soviet Union, had massacred more than 20,000 Polish officers in the forests of Katyn three years earlier.

Some even believe British Prime Minister Winston Churchill may have ordered his death to preserve good relations with Stalin. However, prosecutors have said they are investigating a "communist crime," suggesting that the suspicion falls on the former Soviet Union.

Polish Post Releases Jamestown Stamp

WARSAW—Polish Post (Poczta Polska) released a new stamp marking 400 years since Poles arrived in America.

An Indian profile accompanied by a drawing symbolizing a Polish settler from 1608, are placed against a background containing an outline of both continents. Sets of six stamps are printed on decorative sheets. The First Day Cover presents a map of America and an outline of a sailing ship. The same decorative motive is present in an occasional date stamp, used in

Warsaw I Postal Office.

In October 1958, the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the first

Poles to America was celebrated. The Congress of the Polish Community in the United States (Polonia) received regards from U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower. To commemorate that event, the Polish Post had issued two anniversary postage stamps, one of which contained a picture of "Mary and Margaret," and the other—a group of Polish settlers.



Christmas Greetings
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Las Cruces,
New Mexico

WALTER R. KAZMIER

A New Twist to an Old Tradition

"Szopka" making workshops attract enthusiastic following.

PITTSBURGH—At workshops and kitchen tables around Western Pennsylvania and upper New York State, dozens of eager craftsmen are putting their final touches on their "szopka Krakowska" or Cracovian Christmas crèche. The newest in a long-line of traditional craftsmen, these talented artisans are preparing for upcoming annual exhibitions of their work in Rochester, New York, and in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A folk craft with roots in the Middle Ages, when they served as puppet theaters in churches of Krakow, Poland, the szopka ("shop-kah"; plural: "shop-key") is now a revered holiday tradition in Krakow and its environs. It has come to the United States thanks to the efforts of the Krakow Crèche Workshop, an educational endeavor founded by artist-educator, David Motak, who has been offering formalized, step-by-step szopka building workshops for six years.

To date, nearly 250 individuals have studied szopka building through the Pittsburgh-based artist's hands-on classes, where he provides simple patterns, building materials and a basic method to construct their own customized, lighted 36 inch szopka. In addition to conducting szopka workshops in Pittsburgh, Motak travels to various locations throughout the county to teach this unique Polish folk craft. He recently completed a two-day workshop in Rochester, New York, sponsored by the Rochester Polish Heritage Society. This year's Pittsburgh project consists of one, six-week workshop and two free "mini" szopka workshops for children and their families at the Pittsburgh Children's Museum. This is the sixth year of the Pittsburgh workshops and the second year of the Rochester classes.

All completed szopka pieces will be presented at special public exhibitions in both cities.

To ensure authenticity, Motak maintains close ties with prominent szopka artisans, and he travels to Krakow frequently to study with these master craftsmen, many of whom are top prize winners in the annual Krakow szopka competition. He also has developed relationships with key cultural institutions that promote the szopka tradition, including the City of Krakow History Museum and the Krakow Ethnographic Museum. Motak also leads an annual "Holiday Tour To Poland" featuring cultural activities, Krakow's annual szopka competition and meetings with prominent szopka makers.

The annual szopka exhibitions have now become one of newest holiday traditions in both Rochester and Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh event is featured annually in local media, including WQED public television's *On Q* news magazine. This year's event will be held on Sun., Dec. 14 in the Cloister of the Frick Fine Arts Building, on the University of Pittsburgh main campus in the Oakland section of the city. The exhibition is scheduled from 1:00-4:00 p.m. and includes a Polish Holiday Reception, ethnic food and music, in addition to the display of nearly 30 szopki made this year by Motak's students. Szopki from the Rochester workshop will be featured at the Polish Heritage Society's annual Wigilia Celebration on Sun., Dec. 6 at the Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester Museum and Science Center at 5:30 p.m.

This year, an added attraction at Pittsburgh's Szopka Exhibition will be a preview of *The Poles in Pittsburgh: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, a multi-panel exhibition on the history of Poles in Western Pennsylvania.

The display was recently de-



David Motak and a beautiful szopka created at one of his workshops.

veloped by Motak for the Polish Cultural Council of Western PA to celebrate the achievements and contributions of Poles in the region. The display consists of five large professionally produced display panels incorporating vintage illustrations, graphics and text in a dynamic visual arts presentation. *Poles in Pittsburgh* takes the viewer on a visual journey from the establishment of the Polish State in 1966, to the key roll that Poles played in the Jamestown Colony in 1608, through their contributions to Pittsburgh's industry, economy and culture. The display also presents various aspects of Polish American life and traditions, as well as the community's culinary contributions, religious life and "Polonia Today." The exhibit will travel to various locations in Western Pennsylvania throughout 2009.

For further information on the Szopka Project and Poles in Pittsburgh, please contact David Motak at (412) 835-0539 or email: contact@cracowcrafts.com. Information can be also found at the szopka project web site: www.cracowcrafts.com.

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Parade Float Encourages Poles to Go To the Polls



BROOKLYN, N.Y. —The Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union presented a colorful take on the institution's commitment to convenience and technology, while also paying tribute to its rich history and heritage at this year's Pulaski Day Parade in New York.

This year, the annual parade, held October 5, celebrated the 400th anniversary of the arrival of Poles in America.

With its Mobile Branch leading the way down Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, the PSFCU impressed the thousands of onlookers with its colorful display, Polish music and scores of children dressed in decorative Polish folk costumes.

"The Pulaski Day Parade is a special time for all Polish Americans, but especially for our Credit Union because we are able to take center stage to let everyone know how deeply committed we are to this community," said Bogdan Chmielewski, chief executive officer of the PSFCU.

At this year's parade, the credit union encouraged its members to be active in the November elections.

Stressing the importance of having their voices heard at the ballot box, the PSFCU urged all parade-goers to register and vote this year. One sign on its float proclaimed: "We are stronger with each vote."

The PSFCU was founded in 1976 by a group of Polish immigrants to help other ethnic Poles obtain mortgages. It now has 11 branches in New York and New Jersey, and an operations center in Fairfield, N.J. It is the largest ethnic credit union in the United States, and has nearly \$1.2 billion in assets, and serves more than 70,000 members throughout New York and New Jersey.

THE PONDERING POLE / Edward Poniewaz

'Tis the Season for Children

I was going to write a column loaded with heavy philosophical stuff like "if I had my life to do all over," with an *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (which translated means a defense of one's life) written by Cardinal John Henry Newman, thrown in there. I'll save it for 2009. Lately there are a lot of new babies in my life, so I thought my few words and time would be better spent talking about the children during this Christmas season.

Christmas is for young people. The center point of the story and idea is a tiny baby and we imagine Him quiet in restful sleep. The older I get the more I understand the need to cherish every single day of a child's life. One key element for my interest in all things Polish is to change the hearts and minds of our neighbors so that no Polish kid will ever be mocked, teased, pre-judged, or ignored simply because he or she has a Polish name or is of Polish descent. Just like the angels of the Lord protected the baby Jesus, keeping watch over Polonia is another way to protect our little ones.

And from the manger and swaddling clothes to quiet restful sleep in a five star hotel. There is a mention of the Kuwait Kempinski Hotel in Dick Morris' book *Fleeced*. "Kempinski Hotels is Europe's oldest and most established luxury hotel collection" (www.kempinski.com/en/kempinski/history.htm). The name Kempinski belongs to Berthold Kempinski who was born on October 10, 1843, in Raschkow in Posen.

In 1862, his brother, Moritz, opened a specialist wine shop in Breslau, also in Posen, called M. Kempinski & Co., which Berthold joined two years later. They worked hard at their enterprise together and ten years later, in 1872, Berthold and his wife, Helene, moved to Berlin and opened a wine shop under the same name, which they soon expanded into a restaurant with rooms. Berthold was ambitious and, seeing his new venture was proving successful, wanted to expand even further. He searched for a suitable location and, in 1889 he opened a restaurant in the Leipziger Strasse with several dining rooms, the biggest restaurant in Berlin at this time. (www.kempinski.com/en/kempinski/history.htm)

The Kempinskis were apparently Germanized Poles and the culture of this hotel enterprise is a German creation with German management. I do like the fact that this world famous and upscale company retains

its Polish name. Question for December, what, if any are the Polish roots for the Kempinski family?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. UFC welterweight Josh Koscheck, Polish?
2. Jim Zorn, Washington Redskins coach, Polish?
3. Edie Adams, actress, Polish?
4. Jack Kemp, former NFL quarterback and coach, is he originally a Kempinski?

A very sincere and heartfelt *Wesoły Swiat* and *dziękuję bardzo* to all of the Polish American Journal readers from the *Pondering Pole*. Hope you have a happy and blessed Christmas.



If you have an answer to the question this month, a previous month's question, have a question of your own, or have interesting facts to share, contact me at: Edward Poniewaz, 6432 Marmaduke, St. Louis, Missouri 63139; e-Mail alinabrig@yahoo.com. (N.B. If you send e-Mail, please reference in the subject line "Polish American Journal" or "Pondering Pole." I will not open an e-Mail if I do not recognize the subject).

Ellis Island Immigration Museum to Expand Under New Name

NEW YORK—Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne joined The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc. and the National Park Service in unveiling the plans for a significant expansion of the Ellis Island Immigration Museum to be called "The Peopling of America Center." This new Center will enlarge the story currently told of

the Ellis Island Era (1892-1954) to include the entire panorama of the American immigration experience, with exhibits dedicated to those who arrived before Ellis as well as those who arrived post-1954, up to the present.

"This expansion will not only significantly broaden the scope of this wonderful museum's content,

but also its relevancy to the more diverse audiences who visit America's national parks today," said Kempthorne. He also said the Ellis Island Museum will be renamed Ellis Island: The National Museum of Immigration."

\$2.3 million has been committed to the new Center as part of the National Park Service Centennial

Challenge Initiative, and the Bank of America Charitable Foundation is providing \$1.5 million in matching funds, along with a \$1 million match by the Annenberg Foundation.

The Peopling of America Center is expected to be completed in 2011. For further information visit www.peoplingofamerica.org.

*Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year*



*Polish and Slavic Federal Credit Union
wishes its Members, Friends, their Families
and the Polish community a peaceful and joyful Christmas,
as well as success and happiness in the New Year 2009*

BABA JAGA'S CORNER / Jagoda Urban-Klaehn

Are Those Born During Communism a Lost Generation?

Is my generation the lost generation? We were born in the '50s, '60s or '70s, and raised during communism, therefore we never learned the virtues of capitalistic society which we live in now.

It is hard to imagine how much Poland changed during the last twenty years. One can argue, the whole world changed, the progress is much faster now than ever before but... Poland went not only through the civilization progress like almost any other country but it drastically changed its economic system.

Our progress was delayed during communism when life became so much easier for Western European societies. Therefore, when Eastern Europe finally opened its borders, when the Berlin Wall fell and when we joined the European Union, Poland had to take much bigger steps to catch up with the rest of Europe.

It was uneasy to live during communism. It is hard for me to imagine having to go back to these times. We had to get used to the state of nearly permanent economical crisis on '60s, '70s and '80s and the constant imbalance between the supply and demand.

The crisis of the '80s was the worst since it was followed by brief prosperity period during the first half of the Gierek's decade (1971-76). Edward Gierek became the first secretary of Polish Workers Party (PZPR) after the strike of the shipyard workers in Gdansk in December of 1970. The strike was a consequence of drastic increase in prices of basic food products. During communism, all basic food products had

their prices fixed. For example, the price of a butter bar was the same everywhere. When Gierek was elected the new first secretary, which was the equivalent of being a leader of the country, he made lots of promises. He promised to keep the food prices on the same level as before. He also promised a better standard of life for everybody. He had grandiose ideas. He invested in huge industrial projects: new highways, a huge steelwork in Katowice. In order to do so he had to take expensive loans from abroad.

When Eastern Europe finally opened its borders, when the Berlin Wall fell, and when we joined the European Union, Poland had to take much bigger steps to catch up with the rest of Europe.

People got used to a better, more comfortable life. Gierek was a real statesman, he lived abroad before, he knew some foreign languages, he was able to obtain big loans which eventually had to be paid. As a consequence, Poland was almost bankrupt by the late '70s and Poles had to carry a heavy burden of debt, which steeply reduced our standard of living. The economy crashed drastically, those ambitious industrial projects had to be limited or cut, our currency was devalued, it became worthless. The demand for basic products (food, soap, washing pow-

der, gasoline, etc.) was much higher than the supply. It did not help that Poles became used to the old good times of the beginning of the Gierek administration and did not want to reduce their standard of life.

From the end of the '70s until the end of the '80s, Poland went through the period of inflation and then hyperinflation. We were earning millions (in Polish currency *zloty*) but it was almost impossible to buy anything except for rationed products. Exported goods became a luxury. The prices for oranges, banana and coffee skyrocketed on the black market.

The initial transition from communism to capitalism was very fast. It all started in 1988 with the last communistic government of Mieczyslaw Rakowski who was previously a main editor of "Polityka"—a respected journal. Rakowski's government allowed the market to dictate the prices for basic products. I remember I was working as a tour guide in Eastern Germany that summer. I called my mother home worrying how my family is surviving the sudden change. My mother sounded comforting. According to her, the food prices increased indeed, but they stabilized at some realistic level so that finally the majority of products were available on the market without standing in long lines for many hours.

The small businesses grew everywhere. I remember walking through the center of my hometown Krakow and seeing sudden changes. The stores were growing like mushrooms after a good rain, and streets were

cleaner and more colorful. Unfortunately, the progress was uneven. In my work place—the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Krakow—the clock was stopped. Many highly educated people worked there but the salaries were low and they were not keeping pace with the rest of the society. Many people either went to work abroad temporarily or stayed there forever, since they could not see their future in Poland. This was not a new trend, young and highly educated people were leaving Poland in big numbers since the beginning of the '80s and this trend continued until the beginning of '90s. In the early '90s some good paying jobs were created in the Polish banking industry and these jobs were taken by many of the Physics and Math graduates.

So, what really happened to my generation after the communism was gone? More about it in the next column.

❖ ❖ ❖
Visit my website at
www.polishsite.us



Christmas Greetings from
**EDWARD and
ROBERT
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Henderson, Nevada
to Relatives and Friends in
South New Jersey

POLAND IN BRIEF

POLICE SAY A GARDENER tending a lawn at Warsaw University found a World War II-era mortar grenade, which forced the evacuation of nearby university buildings.

Police say the worker digging with a spade in the library lawn found the 14-inch eight-pound grenade. They say that no one was hurt when some 300 people left the buildings. The grenade was taken to a military facility where it was detonated.

Warsaw was heavily bombed by Nazi Germany during the war. Unexploded bombs and grenades are still found regularly.

EUROPE'S BIGGEST SHOPPING CENTER will be built next year in Krakow, by Hungarian developer, TriGranit. The Bonarka City center will be located just over two miles from Krakow's Old Town and will contain about 110,000 square meters of shopping floor area. The Center will cost \$6.4 million to construct. Offices and apartments will be built later. The project is expected to create over 5,000 new jobs.

KRAKOW WAS CHOSEN as the world's second-most favorite city in 2008 by UK's Guardian. Just under 18,000 of Guardian readers returned completed questionnaires in which they voted for the best tourist destinations, attractions, restaurants, etc. The annual survey cited Krakow the "favorite overseas city" besting all competitors except Sydney and well ahead of San Francisco, Vancouver and Singapore.



Merry Christmas

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AND PEACE BE YOURS THIS
CHRISTMAS AND ALWAYS.



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THE OLD COUNTRY / Richard Poremski



Steaming Around the Bend. Rzeszow, Poland, May 20, 1976.

OBITUARIES

Tadeusz Bednarski, War Hero, Singer, and President of the Association of the Sons of Poland

PASSAIC, N.J.—Ted Bednarski, a World War II and Cold War hero, noted vocalist, and president of the Association of the Sons of Poland fraternal benefit society, died November 3, 2008. He was 79.

Bednarski was born into a noble family on an estate near Lwow, Poland. As a child during the Second World War, he served the underground army as a courier. He was fluent in Ukrainian and frequently carried messages concealed in a metal container of milk, in the lining of his jacket, etc. Even though he was stopped many times by Nazi soldiers, no one was able to discover that he was Polish or that he might be

a carrying important documents sent by the officers of the Polish underground, in which his father served. Years later, he joined the Mazowsze Song and Dance Ensemble and during a performance in Berlin, he jumped from a second story window and escaped to the American side. He was taken into Radio Free Europe where he worked under the pseudonym of Leszek Jablonski.

Besides singing classical songs, Bednarski also performed songs written especially for his tenor voice and was a very popular performer and well known in Poland in spite of the secrecy that existed among the listeners. While still being engaged

as a member of the Radio Free Europe Team, he was sent to Rome as an undercover agent. His official capacity was as a student at the Conservatory of Saint Cecilia where he studied voice and performed in concerts while continuing to serve as a courier for the Americans in their fight against communism through Radio Free Europe.

Once in the United States, he devoted much spare time to his love of Polish song. In the early years soon after his emigration, he performed on Polish radio and television programs, and gave many guest appearances at banquets and concerts. He also joined the Polish Singers Alliance of America, first as a member of the Chopin Singing Society #182 of Passaic and later with the Aria Chorus #303 where he served as president for a decade. In May of 2000, Bednarski was elected to the position of president of the Association of the Sons of Poland, a Fraternal Benefit Society organized in 1903. He spent the past eight years traveling throughout the metropolitan area as an ambassador of this organization, which he proudly acclaimed as being recognized by the Second Republic of Poland with the coveted Gold Medal of Service.

He also served as Director of the Polish Cultural Center in Passaic. On May 18, 2003, he was named 'Citizen of the Year' by the Polish American World and on November 13, 2003, for his many years of service to Poland and the Polish Community, he was awarded the Officer's Cross of Service from President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland.

Bednarski was a parishioner of St. Joseph's RC Church, Passaic, and worked as a tool polisher for West Co., in Kenilworth for 15 years, retiring nine years ago.

He and wife Jane (Berdnik) were married for 48 years. Bednarski was the father of Christopher (Rachel) of Clifton, brother of Aniela Zusczyk and Janina Bednarski both of Poland, and grandfather of Matthew and Rhiannon.

He was laid to rest at St. Michael's Cemetery in Hackensack after a service at St. Joseph's RC Church in Passaic.

State Speaks
"Polish" to Parents

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—This past October 23, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), a state of Illinois agency, conducted a training session—entirely in Polish—for high school counselors and members of the Polish American community. With Polish American students comprising a growing number of elementary, secondary and college student populations in Illinois, the ISAC made Polish American educational concerns a year-round priority.

The purpose of these sessions is to reduce language barriers for Polish-speaking students and their parents regarding the availability of college financial aid programs, and to help them navigate through the often confusing process of applying for college admissions.

With approximately 6,668 (FY 2006) Polish-speaking students in Illinois, second only to Spanish, reducing the language obstacle will hopefully ease the stress level of college-bound students and their parents.

—Geraldine Balut-Coleman

CIEKAWOSTKI / Martin S. Nowak

Lee of Britain, Poland, and America

When Englishman Charles Lee was denied a military appointment by King George III in 1773, he left for America to seek adventure. Lee was not a stranger to the 13 colonies, having fought alongside Washington in the French and Indian War, and having accumulated vast land holdings in North America.

When he arrived here, he immediately began courting and schmoozing the leaders of the independence movement, eager for action. Lee had always been an advocate for personal liberty and he greatly admired the American leaders and their ideas. When the Revolutionary War broke out, he became second in command to Washington. But the two men did not get along. Eventually, Lee was relieved of his command for insubordination, court-martialed and released from duty in 1780.

So what is the Polish connection? Charles Lee was a professional soldier who hired himself out to countries who would pay him decently and promote his advancement. He found such opportunities not only in England, but also in America and Poland. After his exploits in the French and Indian War, Lee had sought further adventure attached to a British unit helping Portugal in a fight against Spain.

After that he saw more opportunity on the continent. Poland came to the fore because her new king, Stanisław Poniatowski, was expected to raise a new army. Lee obtained letters of recommendation, including one from an English friend of Stanisław, and arrived in Warsaw in March 1765. The King was impressed enough to appoint Lee his personal aide-de-camp. But Lee was basically a courtier, not in military service. He developed a true friendship with King Stanisław and considered him a kindred soul both personally and politically, especially in the King's promotion of personal liberty. Lee claimed that Stanisław was worth more than the whole British royal family, for whom he had a great contempt.

The Englishman gained a fair knowledge of the Polish language. He complained about the wine and the climate in Warsaw, and claimed that its remoteness from the west made life there dull. He called the people "vicious" and "wretched beyond belief" and blamed it on slavery, more accurately the serfdom that still existed in Poland. He decried the fact that Prussia and Russia and the Polish gentry would not let the enlightened King Stanisław make reforms.

But Lee longed for action. Finally, after several months the King sent him on a mission to Constantinople with the Polish ambassador to Turkey. Lee became sick with rheumatism while crossing the freezing Balkans, and once in Turkey he escaped with his life as an earthquake destroyed his house.

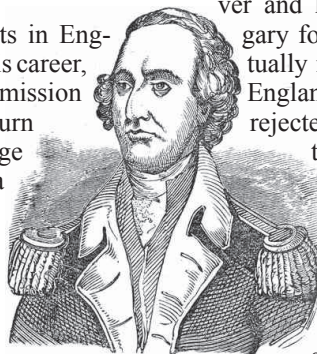
By this time, events in England seemed to favor his career, so Lee received permission from Stanisław to return there. But King George refused to give him a military position. He turned once again to Poland and this time Stanisław promised to use his influence to secure for Lee a command in Czarina Catherine's Russian army against the Turks. When he returned to Warsaw in 1769, Poland was in disarray as the forces of the Confederation of Bar had taken up arms against King Stanisław and Russian domination of Poland. Two of the Confederates were Kazimierz Pułaski and his father.

The King made Lee a Major General in the Polish army and conferred upon him the Order of St. Stanisław. But he did not see action against the Confederates. He spent some time

teaching English to a young Polish lady to whom he proposed. He was turned down. He eventually departed for Russia, but his appointment to a command was not granted, and he was just an observer of the operations against Turkey.

Lee became ill with a severe fever and hurried west to Hungary for treatment. He eventually made his way back to England and was once again rejected for further duty in the British army. He had enough of the British royals and it was at this point that he left for America.

Charles Lee was a true believer in personal liberty, and his views were undoubtedly reinforced by his friendship with King Stanisław. But he was basically an opportunist. Decades after his death in 1782 a document was discovered that showed that General Lee had given American battle plans to the British while he was their prisoner during the Revolutionary War in 1777. The reason for this treason is unclear. Possibly to save his own skin, or to play both sides of the fence in case the British won the war.



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BRUSH UP / Prepared and distributed by the Polonia Media Network

Fruits and Nuts

Phonetic hh is like ch in loch • Phonetic ai is like eye
m, n, f denotes male, female, neuter

brzoskwinia.....(bzhohs-KFEE-nyah) f	truskawka(truhs-KAHF-kah) f
peach	strawberry
gruszka.....(GRUHSH-kah) f	arbuz.....(AHR-buhs) m
pear	watermelon
ananas.....(ah-NAH-nahs) m	poziomka.....(poh-ZHOHM-kah) f
pineapple	wild strawberry
śliwka.....(SHLEEF-kah) f	migdał.....(MEEG-dahw) m
plum	almond
rodzynka(roh-DZIHN-kah) f	orzech ziemny(oh-ZHEH-shehk ZHEHM-nih) m
raisin	peanut
malina.....(mah-LEE-nah) f	orzech włoski(oh-ZHEHH VWOHS-kee) m
raspberry	walnut
wiśnia.....(VEESH-nyah) f	
sour cherry	

continued next month

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Basilica Prayer Garden Honors Pope John Paul II

by Richard Poremski

BALTIMORE—Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien expressed hopes that the new corner garden would "Reflect the love of God that was so evident on that October day in 1995" during its dedication here on October 28, 2008.

The new prayer garden is located in downtown Baltimore, adjacent to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This magnificent church, also known as The Baltimore Basilica - America's First Cathedral, was dedicated in 1821 after 15 years of construction.

The focal point of the \$1.5 million oval-shaped garden is the seven-foot-tall bronze sculpture of the late Pope John Paul II, which stands at one end of the garden's center lawn. Baltimore native Joseph Shepard crafted the sculpture in his Pietrasanta, Italy studio. The artist's work is based upon a photo of the Pope being greeted by enthusiastic children upon his arrival at Baltimore-Washington International Airport on October 8, 1995.

The pocket-garden features dogwood trees, rose bushes, flowers and other plantings that border its perimeter pathway. It was designed by the internationally-known landscape architect firm of Mahan Rykiel Associates. Baltimorean Scott Rykiel, the lead architect, was especially proud of his work, given his Polish-American heritage. Rykiel is also noted for his winning landscape design for the National Katyn Memorial located in the nearby Harbor East neighborhood.

Given the renewing nature of a



PHOTO: RICHARD P. POREMSKI

SCULPTURE CAPTURES MEMORY OF HISTORIC PAPAL VISIT. The above sculpture depicts Pope John Paul II embracing two enraptured children upon his Baltimore, Maryland arrival in 1995

garden, and in the true spirit of the diverse ecumenical fellowship that is also featured in this one, Cardinal William H. Keeler, in his blessing, said "...May this garden be a living memorial to religious freedom."

HERITAGE / Ellye Slusarczyk

A Very Special Bread

Have you baked *szczodraki*?

Give us some also. You will be remembered by the Lord Jesus and St. John.

Little children caroling, on the eve of the Feast of Three Kings, would greet those in households they visited with this time-treasured song. Then they anxiously awaited their treat of this very special bread. The evening itself had the special name of *Szczoday* because this was a most bountiful, most special evening.

Szczodraki a holiday bread, was made of wheat or rye flour, kneaded with the utmost of care. It was important that the bread maintain its shape while baking. Different areas of Poland had their own unique shapes. The crescent shape was

most popular. However fat little cats, people figures, the Bethlehem star, and even a friendly goat were skillfully shaped and then baked to perfection.

The specially-shaped breads made the hungry and poor children very happy. Knocking on neighbors' doors, the children offered wishes for a most bountiful year. With holiday wishes in return for the caroling and friendly greetings, the lady of the household handed out the bread.

Polish families, gathered around a fire for warmth, family caroling, and enjoying the well prepared, artistically shaped wheat bread. Hence, a celebration of *Szczoday* was enjoyed by all, both young and old.

TRIVIA TIME / Ellye Slusarczyk

1. The *Raj* (Paradise) is a a) cave b) monastery c) fortress
2. Busko Zdroj, a spa town, is known for its a) sun b) elevation c) churches
3. Poor quality gypsum soil results in a lack of a) beaches b) lakes c) forests
4. Spring Adonis is a a) village b) spa c) flower
5. One of Poland's largest excavation pits of a man-made sulfur quarry is in a) Tarnobrzeg b) Opatow c) Ujazd
6. Brigadier General Franciszek Kleeberg died in a) 1988 b) 1931 c) 1941
7. Scenes from Sienkiewicz's books can be viewed in a) a village church b) roadside billboards c) a mould made by the Polish people
8. Wojciechow has Poland's only Museum of a) Embroidery b) Blacksmithery c) Coat-of-Arms
9. Rudolph Weigl discovered the a) typhus microbe b) penicillin mold c) aluminum
10. Bill Mazerowski was a great a) pitcher b) out-fielder c) second baseman

ANSWERS. 1.a cave 2.a sun 3.c forests 4.c flower 5.a Tarnobrzeg 6.c 1941 7.c a mould made by the Polish people 8.b blacksmithery 9.a typhus microbe 10.c second baseman

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