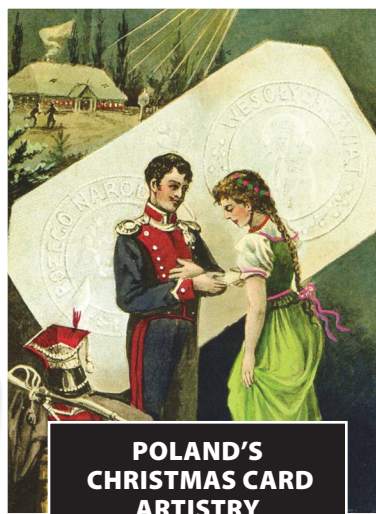


POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

ESTABLISHED 1911

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DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION AND CONTINUANCE OF POLISH AMERICAN CULTURE



POLAND'S
CHRISTMAS CARD
ARTISTRY
PAGE 7

PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT BOSTON, NEW YORK
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A POLISH CHRISTMAS IN TEXAS • TRIED AND TRUE WIGILIA RECIPES • DOMBROWSKI COMES HOME
PLANS ANNOUNCED TO RESTORE MILWAUKEE'S KOSCIUSZKO MONUMENT • SUBLIME MUSIC AT THE CONSULATE
INAUGURAL MASS AT BLESSED MARY ANGELA TRUSZKOWSKA PARISH • A MODEL FOR THE FUTURE

NEWSMARK

PULASKI CITIZENSHIP APPROVED. As of November 6, 2009, Gen. Casimir Pulaski is an American Citizen. President Barack Obama signed H.J. Res. 26, a joint Senate and the House resolution, which proclaims honorary citizenship posthumously.

Pulaski came to Gen. Washington's aid on the advice of Benjamin Franklin, who told Washington that Pulaski was "renowned throughout Europe for the courage and bravery he displayed in defense of his country's freedom."

Pulaski commanded a cavalry detachment helping to cover Washington's retreat from Brandywine, Sept. 11, 1777. As brigadier general, Pulaski served Sept. 1777-March 1778 as first overall commander of the Continental Army's cavalry. He died from wounds after the October 1779 siege of Savannah.

"Pulaski made the ultimate sacrifice for this country, and he deserves nothing but the highest honor and recognition for his service," said Ohio Democratic Rep. Dennis Kucinich, who had been pushing for the honorary citizenship since 2005.

In 1929, the U.S. Congress declared October 11 to be Pulaski Day in the United States.

ACCENTUATING THE POSITIVE. Polish Ambassador to Israel Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska, called for Israelis and Jews around the world to focus less on the atrocities committed in her country by the Germans during the Holocaust, and more on the centuries of Jewish thought and philosophy that once flourished there.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with The Jerusalem Post, Magdziak-Miszewska, who sits on the International Auschwitz Council and has a deep affection for her country's Jewish history, said, "When thinking about Poland, I hope Jewish people will remember the entire history of the Jewish people there."

She urged Jews around the world to think back further than the Holocaust and realize the deeper connection and impact Jews had on her country.

Referring to Poland as the "world's biggest Jewish cemetery," the ambassador emphasized that this was not only due to the slaughter of millions of Jewish Poles at the hands of the Nazis or even their fellow countrymen during World War II, but also because of "1,000 years of Jewish history in Poland."

USING TECHNOLOGY TO TEACH. Following the launch of its own channel on YouTube, the Polish authorities in charge of Auschwitz Museum have launched an official site for the former Nazi death camp on the social networking website Facebook.

A spokesman said the move was aimed at reaching the younger generation and educating them about the Holocaust.

It follows the launch by Auschwitz — now a state museum — of a YouTube channel earlier this year.

More than a million people were murdered by the Nazis at Auschwitz during World War II.

"We're always trying for new ways of reaching people, and in today's world one of the most popular tools is the internet, and on the internet millions of people use Facebook," said Auschwitz Museum official Pawel Sawicki.

URBAN OVERLOOKED AGAIN. The Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee has once again overlooked requests for a USPS postage stamp in honor of the late World War II hero, Lt. Col. Matt Urban. Petitions for Urban's image on a stamp have fallen on deaf ears for years, much to the frustration of Polish Americans and World War historians who have lobbied for recognition.

Supporters of Urban are gathering signatures to name the new federal courthouse in his hometown of Buffalo, N.Y. named in his honor. The petition can be signed online at www.ipetitions.com/petition/MattUrban.

*Wesołych Świąt
i Szczęśliwego
Nowego Roku!*

W ten wigilijny dzień zaśniewony,
kiedy w kościele uderzą dzwony,
przyjmijcie gorące życzenia radości,
a w Nowym Roku szczęścia,
zdrowia i pomyślności

In the snowy days of Christmas,
when the church bells ring,
accept warm greetings of joy,
and on New Year's,
luck, health and prosperity

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



A Step Back in Time Christmas — Polish Folkways in America

Some Traditions, Once Thought
to be Bound for Obscurity,
Remain Strong Today

by Helen Stankiewicz
Published in 1949

Polish Christmas folkways were celebrated in America with scarcely any change in the decades from 1880 to 1910; even today the principal features survive wherever there is a small Polish community. The four weeks of Advent were strictly observed, with fasting and cessation of gayety.

Preparations for the manger, the tree and Christmas Eve supper were started in good season. The organist or the Sisters made the wafers and either they or the altar boys took them to the homes of parishioners or the parishioners would call to buy them at the rectory or the Sisters' home. If there were married children or brothers and sisters living

at a distance, a few pieces would be sent to them in a letter or card. Wafers received from Poland were particularly cherished. The custom of breaking the wafer, either dry or spread with honey, among the participants in the Christmas Eve supper and guests who came in later persists to this day, though it is no longer as universal as it was forty years ago.



TRADITIONS such as the sharing of oplatek, have survived for centuries and to this very day define Poles and their descendants.

the family's food — the field (grain), the garden (vegetables), the orchard (fruit), the woods (mushrooms), the water (fish) — must be represented, was forgotten early and most of the peas and grain dishes disappeared long ago. But cheese and sauerkraut pastries (pierogi), fish in various forms, fish or mushroom

See "Back in Time," page 5

A true Polish World War II Story Christmas in Katyń

by Robert Strybel

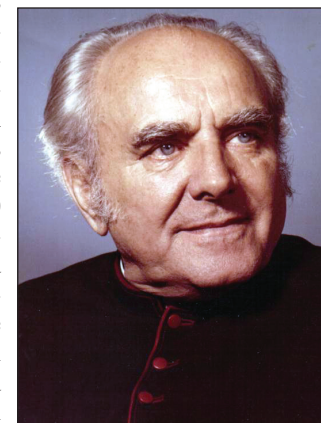
My good friend and former Orchard Lake colleague, the late Monsignor Zdzisław Peszkowski shared the following experiences both orally and in his written memoirs. A 21-year-old cavalry captain in 1939, he was among the some 22,000 Polish officers captured by the Soviets and one of a handful who survived the ordeal that would later become known as the Katyń Forest Massacre.*

The great importance of those POWs attached to their Catholic faith and Polish tradition may be an eye-opener to those Poles who have drifted away from one or both. The Poles imprisoned in an abandoned Orthodox monastery-turned-dungeon at Kozielsk, took considerable risks to secretly hear the Word of God, receive the sacraments and uphold their an-

cestral heritage without their Soviet captors' knowledge. In that way they were a lot like the early Christians worshipping in catacombs.

When Christmas 1940 was approaching, the then-Captain Peszkowski asked the friendly prison cook Wańka (Russian for Johnny) for some flour for oplatki. Wańka's eyes mysteriously lit up and he asked Peszkowski to step outside into the snow. He looked about to make sure no-one was watching and then whispered "Ojciec nasz, któryś jest w niebie...", and then went on to recite the Hail Mary in strongly eastern-accented Polish. He too was a Pole whose family had been Russified, because admitting to being Polish or Catholic back then was not looked upon kindly by the Soviets, to say the least.

See "Peszkowski," page 5



MONSIGNOR ZDZISŁAW PESZKOWSKI: late priest, then a captain, befriended a prison cook, who provided flour to make oplatki for Polish POWs.

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Card 202	.75	.50				6.00	
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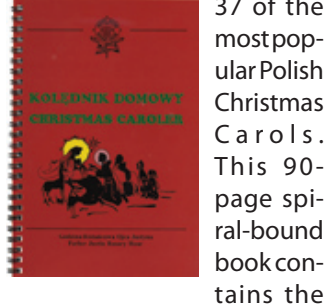


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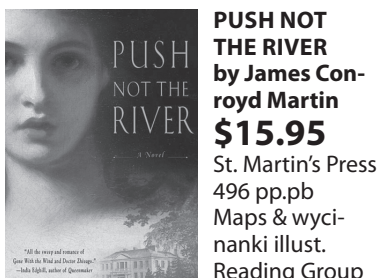
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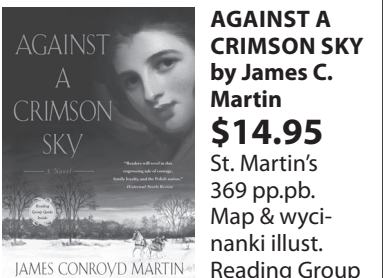
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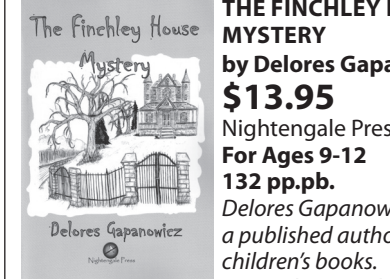


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 496 pp.pb
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AUTOGRAPHED! This book club favorite is based on the real diary of a Polish countess who lived through the rise and fall of the Third of May Constitution years, a time of great turmoil. Vivid, romantic, and thrillingly paced, the novel paints the emotional and memorable portrait of the metamorphosis of a nation—and of Anna, a proud and resilient young woman, and Jan, her soldier-husband. Critics have called the story Poland's Gone with the Wind. "The story is well paced and compelling, the historical detail plentiful yet not overwhelming, and the characters engaging and true to the period." ~The Historical Novels Review. The author is the winner of the 2007 Gold Medal for Literature from The American Institute of Polish Culture.

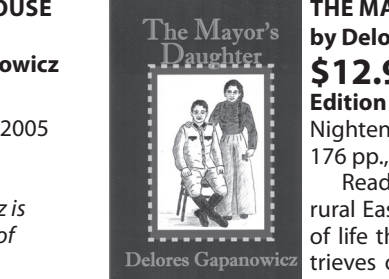


AGAINST A CRIMSON SKY
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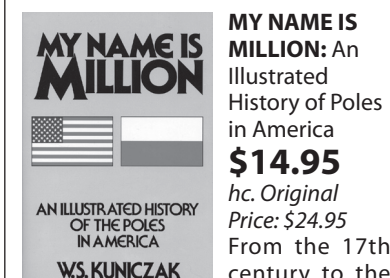


THE FINCHLEY HOUSE MYSTERY
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 For Ages 9-12
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 Delores Gapanowicz is a published author of children's books.
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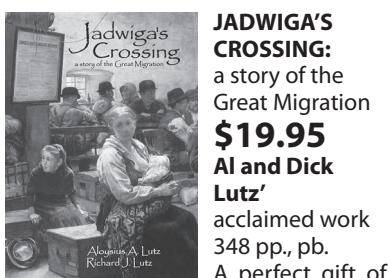


THE MAYOR'S DAUGHTER
 by **Delores Gapanowicz**
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 Nightengale Press, 2007
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 Readers will discover what life was like in rural Eastern Europe before World War I, a way of life that has changed forever. This book retrieves one family's heritage and allows us all to connect with our own. Gapanowicz wrote "The Mayor's Daughter" about her parents because she wanted the grandchildren in her family to have some idea of the life in Eastern Europe before her family emigrated. The stories were told to the author by her parents before they passed away. These tales show that young people on farms in Europe didn't spend their time only milking cows and picking potatoes. They played tricks on friends, went to wedding celebrations and dances, and flirted with other people their age. They also experienced tragedy and loss. Their lives were a mixture of the sweet and bitter, not unlike the lives of people everywhere.

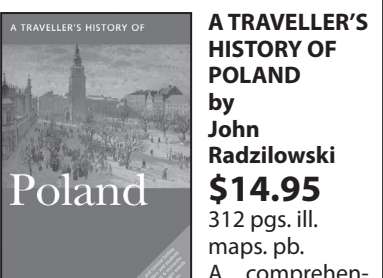
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 A comprehensive historical survey guides travellers through a general history of the people and places of Poland from pre-history to today. Includes a full chronology, a list of monarchs and rulers, a gazetteer, historical maps.

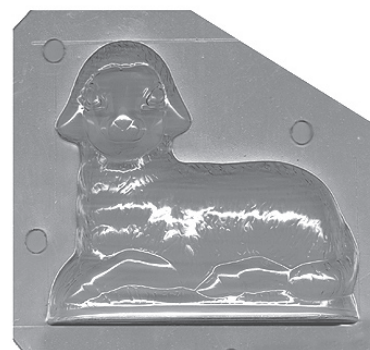
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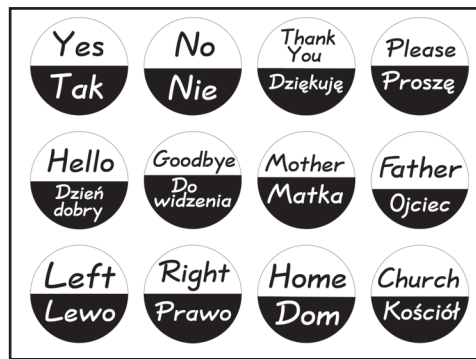


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ALMANAC

December • Grudzień

Mówią do pasterzy:
którzy trzód suych strzegli,
aby do Betlejem
czym przedzej pobiegli,
bo się narodził Zbawiciel,
wszego świata Odkupiciel.

Shepherds, hear this message:
"God now lives among us.
Go to the city,
find the lowly stable.
You will find Him in a manger,
Christ, our Savior, Lord,
and Maker."
—From the Polish carol "Gdy się
Chrystus Rodzi," translated by
Rev. Czesław Krysa.

- 1 1896. Death of explorer **Stefan Rogodzinski**, famous for exploits in Africa.
- 3 1899. Founding of the **Polish Beneficial Association**, Philadelphia.
1854. About 800 Polish settlers arrive in Galveston, Texas after a nine-week voyage. The walk over 200 miles from the port to Panna Maria, where they hold Christmas Eve Mass outdoors.
- 4 **ST. BARBARA**
Niechaj każdy pamięta, jaka Barbara, takie święta.
Let everyone remember: as (the weather on) St. Barbara's Day, so the holidays.
- 5 1867. Birth of **Josef Pilsudski**, Polish military leader.
- 6 **ST. NICHOLAS**
1970. German-Polish pact acknowledges **Oder-Niese Polish border**.
- 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**, developer of **Esperanto**, the International Language, in Białystok, near Lithuanian, Poland and Bjelorussia borders.
- 19 1852. Birth of Polish Jewish scientist **A.A. Michelson**, 1907 Nobel Prize winner in Physics..
- 20 1982. Death of Chopin advocate and pianist **Arthur Rubinstein**.
- 21 1898. In Paris, **Marie**, 31, and **Pierre Curie**, Polish and French chemists, discover radium.
- 22 **1982. Richard Trumka** sworn in as president of United Mine Workers.
- 23 **ST. JOHN KANTY**
1937. Birth of first Polish American astronaut, **Karol Bobko**.
1895. Death of **Henry Kalusowski**, Polish-born U.S. government official who translated the Russian documents dealing with the purchase of Alaska.
1981. In response to declaration of martial law in Poland, President Ronald Reagan declares economic sanctions.
- 24 **DZIEŃ WIGILIJNY**
Niech Panna pszeniczna, Betlejemska, zamieni smutek w kolędę!
May the Mother of Bethlehem, the wheaten Maiden, change your every sorry into a carol!
- 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 1918. **Powstanie Wielkopolskie** (Greater Poland Insurrection) begins.
- 30 1994. Consecration of **Bishop John W. Yanta, D.D.**, at Panna Maria. He is the first Polish American Texan given this honor.
- 31 **St. Sylvester's Day**. Please do not drink and drive.

This paper mailed on or before
November 28.

The January 2010 edition will be
mailed on or before **Jan. 2.**

JUST BETWEEN US / Mark Kohan

No Time Like the Present

When I think of Christmas past, I think of how fortunate I was to have witnessed standing-room-only midnight masses at some of Buffalo's greatest Polish parishes.

One memory I will treasure forever is being able to sing with the choir at St. Barbara's in Lackawanna, the parish of my birth, for its last Christmas Mass. What I wouldn't give to do that again. The church is now shuttered, and the only voices one can hear are those of ghosts. What stories they could tell!

I think about the other churches that were once filled for the holidays. I am sure, like me, many former parishioners wish they could go back for just one more Mass. Somewhere, in the back of my head, that is a remote possibility, though in

reality I know it will never happen. St. Barbara's is still standing, which gives hope. But what about the other parishes whose buildings have been torn down, sold to dreamers, or are just left standing? There is no going back. All that remains are memories. It saddens me to think of our children and grandchildren, who will never experience such ethnic ceremony. What do we have give them?

The answer is "a lot." Granted, a packed non-ethnic Mass is as spiritually rewarding as a Polish Mass, but apples are apples and oranges are oranges. We must turn to other traditions that have withstood the test of time. This includes everything from wigilia and watching for the first star, to sharing oplatek and caroling. You don't have to make

your Christmas a Polish one from top to bottom, but do not abandon any family tradition or custom because "the children won't understand," or "now that grandma's gone ..." or any other excuse. Christmas is a special time for all; especially for children. Spice it up with some Polishness. You will be investing in your family, and the benefits will pay dividends for generations to come.

Don't wait until next year — do it now! Search through the pages of this edition of the PAJ. They are packed with traditions, customs, recipes, and folklore you can share with your family. Many articles from Christmas editions past have been published on the internet on our website. Just follow the links from our On-line Library.

Wesołych świąt!

We wish every one of our readers and their families a very Merry Christmas.

We extend special Christmas greetings to the fraternal benefit societies which use the Polish American Journal as their official newspapers: The Association of the Sons of Poland, The Polish Beneficial Association, and the Union of Poles in America / PNA District 17. We thank our advertisers and sponsors. Without their support, this edition would not be possible. Please take note of the ads on the page 6 of this edition, which are all from Polonia's clergy. Their support is proof of the Christmas message, which has always held a special meaning in the hearts of Poles and Polish Americans.

And we thank you, our readers, who we have the pleasure of serving all year long, but most of all at Christmas. Your desire to learn more about your heritage keeps us going!

Wesołych świąt! Szczęścia, zdrowia, powodzenia w dniu Bożego narodzenia!

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 -



2009 CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

- Dec. 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE: Vigil Mass at 5:00pm in English. Midnight Mass in Polish. Procession to manger. Sharing of the Christmas wafer (Oplatek) after Mass in Cafeteria.

- Dec. 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY: Masses in Polish at 8am, 10am & 12:30pm; in English at 9am, 11am, 2:30pm & 5pm.

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*Niech Boże Dziecię Jezus
Chrystus błogosławi Wam
i obdarza zdrowiem.*

- Ojcowie Paulini -

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NEWSWIRE

MONUMENT RESTORATION PLANNED. The Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee — Polanki — in cooperation with the Lincoln Village Business Association, is spearheading an effort to restore the city's monument of the Revolutionary War hero Tadeusz Kosciuszko. Unveiled in Kosciuszko Park in 1905, the monument has developed severe problems that threaten its survival. It is estimated over \$150,000 is necessary to restore it; otherwise, the monument may have to be removed. For more information, visit www.rkmmilwaukee.org.

PAHA FOREGATHERING. The Polish American Historical Association will convene its annual PAHA 2010 conference in San Diego, California at the San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina, January 8-9, 2010.

Ann Hetzel Gunkel from Columbia College in Chicago will chair the session entitled "Twentieth Century Polonia." Among the speakers on her panel are Pien Versteegh on "Learning to Move Up: Educating Poles in the United States, 1900-1930"; Stephen Leahy on "The South Side of Milwaukee and Public Opinion on Civil Rights, 1958-1968"; Brian McCook on "Z Polski do Anglii: The Polish Conservation Corps and the Making of Polish Britons," and Maja Trochimczyk on "An Archangel at the Piano: The Images of Paderewski and His American Audience." In another session, Neal Pease of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee will discuss his new book published by Ohio University Press in 2009 entitled "Rome's Most Faithful Daughter: The Catholic Church and Independent Poland, 1914-1939." See the PAHA website for details at www.polishamericanstudies.org.

GENEALOGISTS TO MEET. United Polish Genealogical Societies will hold its annual conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 28-May 1, 2010. PGS-Michigan has planned this event in conjunction with NGS, assuring us that there will be considerable emphasis on the Polish connection. All lectures will be at the Salt Palace Convention Center. Rooms have been arranged with four hotels. The four-day seminar is \$175. For more information check www.ngsgenealogy.org.

www.polamjournal.com
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A Step Back in Time

continued from cover

soup with noodles, herring and boiled potatoes, dumplings with plums or poppy seeds, stewed prunes with lemon peel or a compote of dried fruit and poppy seed cake appear on every table to this day.

THE RULE about the odd number of dishes is observed quite generally, though, as in Poland, there is no prescription as to a precise number — usually it is nine or eleven. Care is taken, too, about the number of persons to be placed at the table. In Poland the number must be even or, according to the common belief, one of the number will die during the year. In America the number thirteen is avoided, less, apparently, on the score of being odd than on the score of being an unlucky number generally — a superstition obviously acquired here since in Poland thirteen is not considered particularly ill-omened. The belief that it is an evil omen if a person seated at the Christmas Eve table does not cast a shadow has survived in scattered localities.

A correspondent in Detroit reports that it is customary there for all to look behind them to see if their shadow is there, otherwise, the year will bring bad luck, such as illness or death. But, the correspondent adds, the head of the house sees to it that the light is so placed that everyone will cast a shadow. A correspondent from Newark reports that in her home when she was a child, if there were thirteen to be seated, her mother would not sit down but would serve; otherwise one of the thirteen would surely die, especially if he did not throw a shadow on the floor. The belief is scoffed at now, the correspondent writes, but thirteen at table is avoided just the same.

Straw or hay under the tablecloth was used in the early days when available, and straws were pulled to tell fortunes, but it is seldom seen now except as a conscious revival, a deliberate effort to give a Polish touch to the occasion. The practice of putting a sheaf of each of the four

principal grains in the corners of the room did not cross the ocean at all. Like other strictly agricultural customs, it could not be transplanted to an urban setting. The food is left on the table at the end of the meal in Detroit for guests who may come in during the evening. The fact that the custom has its origin in leaving or putting aside some of the food for departed members of the family is quite forgotten.

A MANGER IS SET UP in every church and in many homes. Homes in which there are children always have a tree. This was not always the case in country homes in Poland. The trimmed top of a tree (*podłaźnik, podłaźniczka*), hung from the ceiling, did not come to this country; neither did the paper-and-straw “spiders” inspired by it. The “spider” is seen occasionally now, as a decorative object brought from Poland in the years before World War II.

Christmas tree decorations in the early days were much the same as those in Poland at the time — walnuts wrapped in silver and gold foil, bright red apples, gingerbread in fancy shapes, candy canes and chains made of glossy colored paper. Now these old-fashioned trimmings are seen infrequently; their place has been taken by glass globes, tinsel and other ornaments obtainable in the ten-cent store.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE FIRST STAR is still watched for as a signal for beginning supper. Devout families in the early days sometimes knelt in prayer after sighting the star; now this is rarely seen. But the wishes which are exchanged at the breaking of the wafer are, for the most part, couched in the form of a prayer: God bless you, God give you happiness — *Daj Ci Boże szczęście*.

And the star continues to be commemorated in the name *gwiazdka* — the little star; it is applied to the holiday — usually, however, without realization of the origin of the name, just as is the case in Poland.

In St. Hedwig's parish in Trenton, N.J., there is a communal Christmas Eve supper with the pastor acting as host, breaking the wafer and exchanging good wishes and blessings with his parishioners.

AFTER SUPPER, in former days, the candles on the tree were lighted by the entire family or by the children alone; then followed carol singing by the entire family. After that, the father or mother would tell old Polish Christmas legends and how Christmas was celebrated in the old country. The fact that there the Christmas wafer was taken to the beasts in the stable before it was offered to the family was also told — also the belief that the farm animals spoke in human voices at midnight.

In the course of the evening neighbor carolers would probably come in and sing for the family; in the early days here, as in Poland, groups of boys and young men went about, beginning on Christmas Eve and continuing through the holidays. They usually carried a *szopka* — a miniature stable, with figures of the Holy Family, the shepherds and the animals, mounted on a pole or a platform, to be carried shoulder-high. The star carried by carolers in Poland was less frequently seen and the term *gwiazdor* — the star boy or star man — applied in some sections of Poland to the boy or man who carried the star, came to be applied here solely to Saint Nicholas, not the mitred bishop of Polish hagiology but the jolly St. Nick of the reindeer and sleigh. The custom of caroling has largely passed away here, as has carol singing in the family circle, but the old Polish carols are still sung at Midnight Mass in the churches, by children in the parochial schools, at performances of Christmas plays and at gatherings of various clubs and circles held during the holiday season. But the custom of retelling the old Christmas legends persists. There are probably few children of Polish ancestry who do not know that in Poland the cow, the sheep and the donkey speak in human voices on Christmas Eve.

THE CUSTOM OF THE MID-NIGHT MASS persists in all Polish parishes. The churches are filled with worshippers though attendance is not as general as it was in Poland or in the early days here.

The custom of gift giving, not general in Poland, has undergone both modification and extension here. In some parts of Poland, Saint Nicholas made his rounds on December 5th, questioned the children on their catechism and either spanked them if they answered poorly or rewarded them with sweets and small gifts if they answered well. During the Christmas holidays, carolers and other young visitors were given sweets or other food from the table or the tree. In America, Saint Nicholas became Santa Claus and comes on Christmas Eve. Following the American custom, he brings gifts not only to children but to adults. Card sending too is now general among Polish Americans.

Presentations of the Christmas play, *Jaselka*, are given to this day in many communities, annually in some, at longer intervals in others. Usually they are given in Polish by groups of children in parochial schools, by young people from a church organization or by a dramatic society. In 1934 in New York City a group of Polish American university women gave a presentation of *Jaselka* in English.

NEW YEAR'S EVE was not observed with any degree of ceremony by the country people in Poland but in the cities the people danced the New Year in as they do in cities the world over. In America the city rather than the country custom was adopted and St. Sylvester Day balls (*bale sylwestrowe*) are held by the dozen in all Polish American communities to this day. New Year's Day itself, though felt as less important and less sacred than Christmas Day, is marked by attendance at Mass by the more devout, by a festive dinner and visits to friends. Many people, both old and young, still take its measure as an indication of the coming year's fortune. The making of New Year resolutions, a custom not known in Poland, is spreading among the younger people. In keep-



IN 1949, Zand wrote the practice of inscribing the initials of the Three Kings (Kacper, Melchior and Baltazar) above one's door on their feastday was disappearing. It has, in fact, not. An informal survey by the editor found almost all who were asked still observe it. However, today the script is usually placed over one door, the main entry to the home.

ing with the American custom, the young people stress New Year's Eve, the older people in keeping with the old world tradition stress New Year's Day.

EPIPHANY, the Feast of the Magi, (*Trzech Króli*, the Three Kings, in Polish), was celebrated for a long time in the same manner as in Poland. Chalk, gold, and myrrh were blessed in church and the letters KMB separated by crosses were written with blessed chalk on all doors of the home. In some parishes the priest or the organist came to write the letters. The custom of blessing the symbolical gifts of the Magi persists to this day, and boxes containing a piece of white chalk, some golden juniper berries and a thimbleful of myrrh may be obtained from the altar boys in some parishes, from a local druggist or by mail from Buffalo where a prominent Polish druggist puts up greater quantities of them each year. But the writing of the letters K+M+B is rapidly passing away. One still sees them occasionally but then only on one door, not on all doors as in former times.

In most homes, however, the inscription is lacking entirely. An aunt of the author in Buffalo, a very devout woman, who was brought to this country as a child of two, confessed that she writes it but in such a place that it may not be seen by scoffers — on the narrow, top edge of the door, facing the ceiling, where only the eye of God can see it.

❖ ❖ ❖

The late Helen Zand, a native of Poland, who was brought up in Buffalo, N.Y., was a noted author, teacher, and social worker. A member of the faculty at Gannon College as lecturer in Sociology and Polish, she wrote many articles on the topic of Polish folkways.

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Merry Christmas

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Peszkowski: "We sent the youngest man present to see if the evening star was shining, according to our tradition."

continued from cover

Peszkowski got some coarse, rye flour for the *opłatki* and communion wafers. Amongst those imprisoned at Kozielsk was a priest, whose identity fellow-prisoners had kept a secret and referred to him only by his rank as "the captain." (Peszkowski himself would not be ordained until a decade after the war in America). Every so often the word would go around that "the captain is going for a walk" and prisoners would scurry to join him. That was the only way they could make their confession. That seemed to take forever, because only one person accompanied the priest at a time, and the walks were few and far between.

As Christmas approached, the Soviets twice carried out unannounced searches and roll-calls. Nevertheless, the prisoners managed to clandestinely prepare *opłatki* which turned out brownish, brittle,

and similar to Jewish *matzoh*.

"We sent the youngest man present to see if the evening star was shining, according to our Polish tradition," Peszkowski recounted his *Wigilia* in Soviet captivity "The oldest man read an extract from the Bible which I had copied from the missal of a certain major." Someone was always posted on watch outside. Bits of food were placed on a bed-sheet pretending to be a tablecloth, and there were even tiny gifts for everyone. But their attempt to quietly sing *kolędy* failed. Some of the prisoners shared their experiences of the preceding Christmas, but most wanted to be alone with their thoughts and returned to their bunks.

Midnight Mass was not even attempted. During the long months as a Soviet POW, Peszkowski was able to attend a clandestine mass only a handful of times. Such masses were

sporadically attended in turn by small groups of prisoners who had to appear to be sitting around and chatting. On that Christmas Eve the Soviet guards and *politruks* (political-indoctrination officers) arrived at 10:30 p.m. "They only shook their heads in disgust when they saw spruce branches in the middle of the room between our bunks and the white sheet with our wafer and carved wooden crib which had taken one highland (*Góral*) lieutenant a month to create," Peszkowski recalled.

Nobody seems to have been interrogated or punished for engaging in such "illegal propagation of religious superstition," as the Stalinist penal code referred to religion. Did the Soviet POW camp officials already know what fate was in store for the Polish POWs and were under orders not to unduly torment their captives?

Whatever the case, Peszkowski would later be among the Polish POWs who joined the army of General Władysław Anders which led thousands of Polish troops and civilians out of the Soviet Union. After leaving Stalin's "inhuman land," Peszkowski cared for Polish orphans in India for a time and eventually made his way to England. From there he traveled to America, where he became a priest and went on to teach courses in Polish and theology at the Polish Seminary in Orchard Lake, Michigan until his retirement. He then returned to Poland and served as the chaplain of the *Katyń Families' Association* until his death in 2007.

* *Katyń* has become a code-name for Stalin's illegal execution of some 22,000 Polish officers and soldiers at three known death sites: *Katyń*, *Kharkiv* and *Mednoye*. Of that number, some 7,000 victims have never been accounted for.




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from

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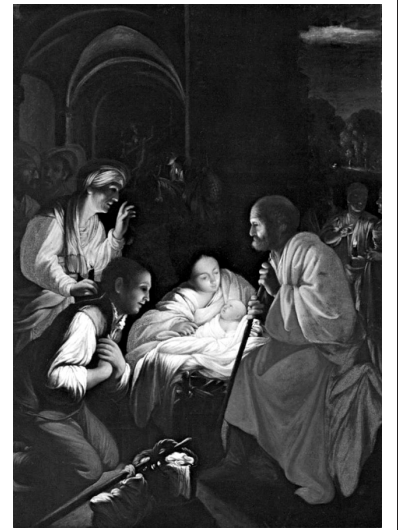
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Christmas Cards from Poland: Masterpieces of Artistic Cultural Imagination

by Staś Kmieć

With the ease of internet e-cards and shifting sentiment, the old-fashioned tradition of sending handwritten Christmas cards may seem passé; however there is a rich tradition and a galaxy of art that can be found in collections of vintage holiday postcards and single-fold cards from Poland.

The Christian culture had an immense effect on the history of many nations, particularly Poland. Many are unaware of the profound correlation between religion and ethnic customs, art or literature. It is this deep influence of the Christian culture combined with aspects of Polish tradition that makes our religious experience completely unique. With the loss of Polish churches in the United States, this is a point not easily understood by the church's hierarchy.

These customs are wholly integrated with our holidays and festivities which have their roots in the ethos of Christian belief. Poles cherish their holiday customs, whose richness and variety are extraordinary. They play a special role in the history of the Polish nation, for which life without Christmas Eve, Easter, Corpus Christi and All Soul's Day, among so many others, is difficult to imagine.

Evangelical events which gave rise to Christian holidays, as well as fascinating customs derived from both church tradition and secular rites, have long inspired a wide range of artists. Scenes of the Nativity were immortalized in paintings by great artists. In the period of such masters as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Rafael and Rembrandt, these works of art were regarded as classical religious paintings.

It was not until the end of the previous century that the festive paintings of Polish folklore depicting holiday customs made its appearance. This work reached its prime only in the first four decades of the 20th century. The themes became popular with the editors of festive cards, and artists eager to have their work printed on the cards, increased their visibility and chances for successful careers. Public expectations and demand also played a consid-



BY WALERIAN KRYCIŃSKI, author of numerous church polychromes and many Podhale mountain themes.

it has existed for just over a hundred years. Holiday cards presented the reprints of works of ancient masters, as well as contemporary artists. A postcard became a means of propagating art, tradition and customs and its popularity made it available to millions throughout the world.

Poland takes pride in the greatest theme diversity of festive cards, which resulted from both the immense richness of its holiday customs



THE ART DECO STYLE of Zofia Stryjeńska used decorative effects of folklore and vivid coloring transplanting the Nativity into a Polish landscape.

and the vital importance of Polish national tradition. To link these customs with religious life and church doctrine, an attempt was made to present the Scripture and evangelic history in a simple way by identifying them with national features.

THE IMAGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY and Nativity scene was adapted to local tradition to form an artistic imagination based upon folklore. Folk-attired peasants, shepherds and *górale* from the mountain regions carried gifts from their homeland to the Bethlehem

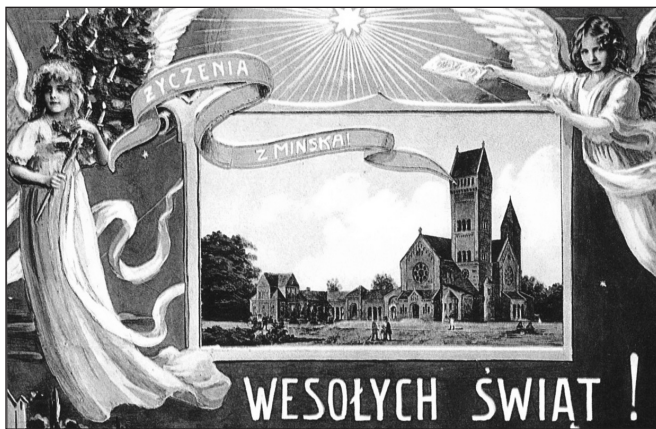


AROUND 1910 ŚWIĘTY MIKOŁAJ appeared on postcard designs by Leonard Winterowski.

erable role in the increased popularity of these cards.

The tradition of sending holiday wishes on postcards began in Western Europe and the United States at the end of the 19th century. In Poland,

stable located somewhere in Poland; and the Wise Men were sometimes portrayed as various Kings of Poland. They were guided by the same star which had appeared over Bethlehem on the night of



CHRISTMAS TRAVEL CARD from Poles living in Minsk.

Christ's birth, but here it was shining over the regions of Podhale, Mazowsze, and Podlasie. Two different threads — folk and Christian were plaited into one vivid whole. Expressions of faith which adorned country churches, inspired professional artists and stamped their mark on Polish culture and art.

Accepted by cultural circles and true to the roots of Polish tradition, this concept survived significant historical turmoil. Due to partition between three invaders, Poland had been crossed out from the political map of Europe until 1918. During this time cards were a means of preserving national identity.

In the years 1908-10 Leon-



NOSTALGIC AND SENTIMENTAL CARDS for loved ones in battle by M. Adamczewski.

ard Winterowski depicted the Polish nativity with the inscription "Wesołych Świąt." His illustrations were dominated by folklore themes, with accents of patriotism, history and the Polish eagle and flag. In 1910 Święty Mikołaj (Saint Nicholas) appeared on his postcard designs for the *Zorza* firm in in Lwów. He later illustrated for Austrian and German firms under the name *Winterovsky*.

In the first decade of the century Old Poland themes before or in a manor were becoming popular, along with depictions of the *Ulan* (Lancer) with a young maiden or a horse, reminiscent of the veterans of the revolution. Color postcards began production in 1912 by the Kraków publishing house *Wisła*.



THE BREAKING OF THE OPLATEK at Wigilia Christmas Eve dinner table of the Huculszczyzna by O. Kurylas

Before obtaining independence, the spirit of realism was interwoven with national and historical elements. With relatively lax censorship, Galician artists exposed patriotic aspects on their cards. After regaining its independence the country became a multi-national state. Poles became acquainted with customs cultivated by other ethnic groups adopting many of them in a modified form.

ALTHOUGH POLISH CARDS did not correspond precisely to historical truth or reality they became embedded into the public's consciousness. The array of recognized painters working in this medium included Julian

heritage of its ancient elements, as well as rural landscape with views of the *Podhale* mountain region and *Huculszczyzna* (now a part of Ukraine). It was one of the few periods in the history of Polish art that fully emphasized the diversity of artistic attitudes resulting from a differing philosophy of life and generational gaps.

In the 1920s and 30s the Art Deco style emerged in Polish Applied Art. This new movement took roots



DEPICTIONS BY J. WASILEWSKI of the *Ulan* with a young maiden were reminiscent of the veterans of the revolution.

in Modernism recognized in fantasy, passion, romantic vision, rhythmical structure with a clear simplified outline and dynamic presentation of movement. A high degree of stylization, decorative effects of folklore and vivid coloring were the elements that enchanted people to the unique unconventional character of the work.

Stryjeńska, Boratyński, Paradowski-Poraj, Eugeniusz Didyk and Alfred Żmuda, among others combined tradition with novelty. Episodes from the Bible were implant-



IN THE POLISH BETHLEHEM of Leonard Winterowski, the Wise Men were portrayed as Kings of Poland.

ed into a Polish landscape and national reality, utilizing the Kraków *szopka* (manger scene crèche), *kolędnicy* (carolers), their masks, disguises and handheld *gwiazda*-star

to create a genuinely Polish mood. The *Galicia Folk School Society* and *Artistique of Warsaw* were among some of the main producers of Christmas postcards during this period.

Nationalism was evidenced in cards portraying holiday homage to literary figures, such as Bolesław Prus, Maria Konopnicka, and Juliusz Słowacki. Fragments of Polish *kolędy* (carols) were often printed on cards, and the *oplatek* was depicted either in the forefront, or in the action of a family at the *Wigilia* Christmas Eve dinner table or by the *choinka* (tree) breaking the symbolic wafer.

Nostalgia and sentimentality appeared with thoughtful reminiscences of the *Wigilia* Christmas Eve dinner being missed by a loved one — from the battlefield or from a distant country. There was a point when cards evolved as Travel postcards depicting a parish church or historical structure shown with a "Wesołych Świąt" greeting from that town as a reminder of one's homeland for those who left Poland.

When the cards became single fold there was room to include a symbolic *oplatek* and a personal message and sometimes a family update.

The universal inscription to include on a card is: *Zdrowych i radosnych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia oraz Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku* (Wishing you a healthy and joyous Christmas and a luck-filled New Year). A more private version: *Niech czas Bożego Narodzenia upłynie w atmosferze radości i miłości, a Nowy Rok spełni wszystkie wasze marzenia* (Let this Christmas time be full of joy and love and the New Year makes all your wishes come true).

IN CURRENT TIMES, the tradition and design of Polish cards has been lost in the commercialism of the holiday in Poland and throughout the world. Santa Claus, reindeer, holly, mistletoe, and cuddly dogs and cats have replaced the Nativity scene or its Polish folklore equivalent. The delightful Old World cards are difficult to obtain, but shopping around one can find their own truly religious or Polish religious expression for the holy days of the Christmas season.

AN ASSORTMENT of Polish Christmas cards are available from the *Polish American Journal Bookstore* (see page 2 or visit: www.polamjournal.com/Bookstore).

A Polish Christmas in Texas, 50 Years Ago

A December 1959 Interview of Agnes Brysch, Daughter of Polish Settlers in Panna Maria, Texas

Forward by Elaine Moczygamba
Panna Maria Historical Society

In 1854, about 800 Poles—one hundred families from Upper Silesia—arrived in the port of Galveston, Texas. Led by Father Leopold Moczygamba, a Conventual Franciscan, they hired Mexican carts to haul their farm implements, featherbeds and—from their parish church in Poland—a heavy cross and a bell. They walked, some in boots, some barefooted, miles to the site of their settlement. During this walk there were births and deaths, hunger and exposure. They arrived on Christmas Eve, 1854. Beneath a large oak they offered their first Midnight Mass, placing their new community under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception. Thus was founded the town of Panna Maria (Virgin Mary), Texas, the oldest Polish settlement in America. The families camped out until they could put up huts of mud, straw or wood, later building in stone.

Vincent Brysch provided a copy of a December 24, 1959 San Antonio newspaper story entitled "Panna Maria Set For 105th Nativity Feast" by Sigman Byrd that involved an interview of his grandmother Agatha Kopuscinski Brysch, mother of Vincent's father Felix.

By 1959, none of Panna Maria's first Polish pioneers were alive, but Agatha Kopuscinski, born in Poland January 4, 1874, had arrived in or after 1890. She married John Brysch on January 29, 1895,

in Panna Maria. John (1872-1956) had been born in Panna Maria to Frank and Anna (Pawelek) Brysch. Frank and his brothers had come to Panna Maria with his parents Michael and Lucia (Lipp) Brysch.

The following is an excerpt from Sigman Byrd's article. Agatha was about 12 days away from her 86th birthday when the interview occurred before December 24 of 1959. 1959 was one of several years that Felician Sister Mary Constance, the second grade teacher and music instructor at Panna Maria Elementary School, had the children singing koledy in procession down the church aisle after the adult choir had finished their koledy. Byrd began with a description and short history of the area. Thereafter came this excerpt:

None of [Panna Maria's 800 original] pioneers lives today. And of the native Poles who came in later migrations to this community named for the Blessed Virgin, only one is still alive.

She is Agnes Brysch, 86, who lives in her own little house on a farm two miles northwest of the church. Mrs. Brysch's husband, John, also born in Poland, died four years ago at the age of 83. Of their 14 children, one, Paul, lives nearby on the same farm with his own family.

Mrs. Brysch is a doll of a lady, about 4 1/2 feet tall, with bright blue eyes and dresses that reach to her ankles. Until about five years ago, she used to walk two miles to the church every morning except in bad weather, following a trail through heavy brush, for the 6:30 Mass. She

speaks almost no English, and it's hard for her to recollect back to the days, almost 70 years ago, when she lived with her parents in Upper Silesia. She does remember that, until she was 17, she worked as a laborer, planting pine seedlings in a reforestation program for the German authorities then-occupying that area.

Something that she remembers well is the traditional Polish Christmases of her childhood. And particularly the Wigilia, the Christmas vigil supper, eaten when the first star shines on the eve of the holyday, at a table with straw strewn under a white cloth.

"As long as I live, there will be a Wigilia in my house on the night before Christmas."

With her nephew, Felix Mika, acting as interpreter, Mrs. Brysch told me:

"As long as I live, there will be a Wigilia in my house on the night before Christmas. In the old country we were poor, but we always had nine different dishes for Wigilia. I do the same. This year, I will have—let me think, now—cabbage, prunes, pears, potatoes, bread, coffee cake, raisins, apples and barszcz. Yes, you can call it borsch if you want to.

"At my Wigilia, everybody is welcome. But this time maybe nobody comes. Well, all right. Then I will eat with the little Chrystus, the Blessed Panna, St. Joseph and St. Anthony for company."

She waved an explanatory hand toward a shelf that held votive candles and many statues.

And all around the walls of her living room hung big holy pictures,

hand-framed by her husband. Among them was her own First Communion picture, given her 77 years ago.

Felix Mika and I visited many homes, stores and farms in and around Panna Maria, and everywhere we found the most meticulous and devout preparations for Christmas going on. Poles are like that, even Polish Americans; more practical Christians than they, are not to be found.

Back at the village, in the church that is the spiritual center of every human life in this community, the choir was rehearsing an old koleda. A haunting song, like so much of the Polish music, at once somber and lively.

"Aniół pasterzom mówił: Chrys-



An unidentified priest stands outside Immaculate Conception Catholic church in Panna Maria with Agnes Brysch and her husband, John, after a mass celebrating 60 years of marriage. The year was 1955.

tus się wam narodził!" sang the men, women and children to the organ's diapason. "The angel gave the news to the shepherds, Christ is born to us today!"

◆ ◆ ◆

Agatha lived until January 29, 1963, and died at age 89, three years after this December 1959 interview.



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ART SCENE / Staś Kmieć

Review: Sublime Music at the Consulate



Kinga Augustyn and Justyna Maj

The *De Lamar Mansion Salon of Arts & Ideas*, a series of cultural events organized by the Polish Consulate in New York which began in 2006, presented their second concert of the season with a violin-piano recital honoring the anniversary of the famed composer **Niccolò Paganini's** birth. The series allows a showcase for young Polish artists, and opens the doors to American audiences to view the architectural wonders of the residence of the Consulate General of Poland, listen to fine music, and gain a greater appreciation of Polish compositions.

Violinist **Kinga Augustyn**, accompanied on piano by **Justyna Maj** began the first half with familiar traditional selections: Brahms *Sonata No. 1, Op. 78*, Paganini's *Cantabile*, and Fritz Kreisler's standard melodic chestnut, *Liebesleid, Liebesfreud*.

Augustyn exhibits extraordinary technical assurance, virtuosity and fastidious musicianship. She subtly "feels" the music in her body positioning and posturing and expressive eyelids and brows.

The second half of the program elevated the evening to a sublime level - beginning with Luciano Berio's avant-garde *Sequenza VIII* (1976).

Eerily pure, haunting, passionate and atmospheric is the three-piece cycle *Mythes* by Polish composer **Karol Szymanowski** (1882-1937). Written in the spring of 1915 and dedicated to Zofia Kočańska, wife of the accomplished violinist Paweł Kočański, who premiered the piece with Szymanowski, the poems ("La Fontaine d'Aréthuse," "Narcisse," and "Dryades et Pan") for violin and piano are the quintessence of the composer's concept of impressionism. Together with the great violinist, Szymanowski created a new violin style.

The violin technique required to perform *Mythes* is considerable and was well-matched in this masterful interpretation. The piece is filled with double stops, harmonics, quarter tones, and glissandi, and the composer calls for simultaneous arco bowing and left-hand pizzicato. *Mythes* opens with a shimmering wash of sound in the piano suggesting splashing water. At the piece's conclusion is the flashy dance of the Dryads interrupted by Pan's flute, suggested by harmonics on the unaccompanied violin.

The evening concluded with the complex Romantic

period salon piece *Mazurek in G Major* by **Aleksander Zarzycki** (1834-1895). Zarzycki a Polish pianist, composer and conductor is the author of piano and violin compositions, mazurkas, polonaises, Krakowiaks, and songs. In 1871 he co-founded and became a first director of the Warsaw Music Society (*Warszawskie Towarzystwo Muzyczne*).

Maj's accompaniment aptly complimented the program, and matched the idiosyncratic shifts with precision. Augustyn is making the rounds with varying programs at Polish organizations, such as The Kosciuszko Foundation. The programs, as in this case, are not solely of Polish compositions. Her understanding and interpretation of Polish music are supreme - her performances should not be missed.

Polish Compositions Open Season



Monika Fabijańska, director, Polish Cultural Institute; composer Paweł Mykietyń; and Anna Perzanowska, PCI Music Programming.

Symphony Space, in association with the **Polish Cultural Institute** in New York brought the musical talents of the **The Del Sol Quartet** to play music by Polish composers Paweł Mykietyń and Paweł Szymański, Mexican composer Gabriela Ortiz, and Cuban American composer Tania León in their season opener of "Poland meets Latin America" - a concert of music that was edgy, rhythmic, rhapsodic, and cutting edge.

Mykietyń is an emerging new force in Polish music. His work ranges from chamber music, symphonies, theater, opera and film. At the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival his musical accompaniment filled the theatre with crashing gothic chords in the theatrical production of *The Dybbuk*; while scratchy musical sounds echoed in Krum. His work can also be heard as the underscore of Andrzej Wajda's latest film *Tatarak* (*Sweet Rush*).

"I take my inspiration from life," said Mykietyń at the reception following the performance. "I use a mathematical approach to micro-tonal compositions, which in this new-age of technology are simulated on the computer."

Works of Salamendra-Dvornicky on Exhibit

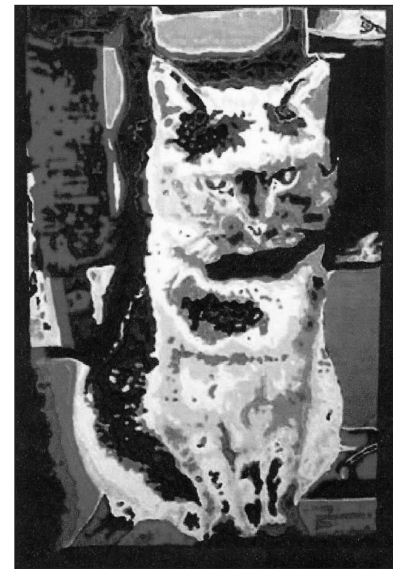
ELMIRA, N.Y. — Felicia Salamendra-Dvornicky, originally from Dundee, N.Y. and now living in Elmira, N.Y., is a self taught, award-winning Folk Artist of Polish-American descent and enjoys creating in all forms of art. She is a member of the Polish Arts Club of Elmira.

Her work has been featured at 911 Gallery, Da Vinci Art Alliance exhibitions, and Bartrams Gardens in Philadelphia, Pa., as well as Millville, N.J. and Harrisburg, Pa., where she has won numerous prizes, including Best of Show.

Pictures of her work appeared in "The Inferno" artist newspaper. She is also involved with Community Arts of Elmira at the Langdon-Pratt Mansion on Lake Street, for several years and also has had her work on display in the Chemung Valley History Museum, Arnot Art Museum, The ARTS of the Southern Finger Lakes, Arnot Mall Art Shows, Corning Community College Alumni Show, One Woman Show for the year 2007 in the Sawtelle Gallery at Roberson Museum of Arts and Sciences as well as featured artist in their museum store in Binghamton, N.Y., Hammondspoint Art Shows (Best of Show in Watercolors), Esperanza, (Best of Show in Batiks), Glenora Music and Art Festivals, etc.

She has appeared on TV station WSKG in a show about 16 Folk Artists and was chosen as one of those artists to have several of her paper cuttings travel from Albany to all the major museums and art galleries across New York State for three years. This show is shown several times a year.

Felicia's 24 pieces of artwork are being featured now, in a Solo Show



Footsie. Felicia Salamendra-Dvornicky

of Oil Paintings, Watercolor Paintings, Batiks, Wycinanki (Polish Paper Cuts), Fabric Appliques, Acrylic Paintings, and Cut Paper Designs. Her work is located on the Third Floor of Elmira City Hall, corner of East Church and Lake Streets. It will run through January 2010.

Gallery Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. (Free and Open to the Public). There is an elevator to the Third Floor.

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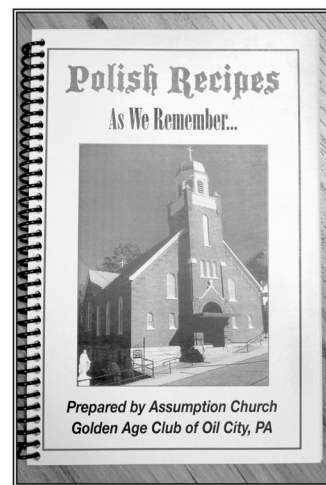
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 i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku*



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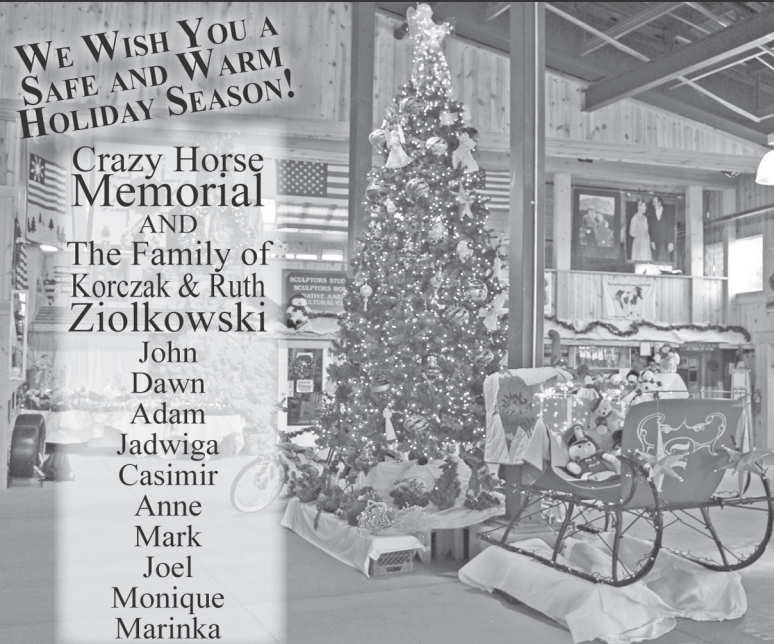
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KULTURA / Staś Kmieć

Travelogue – Adventures in Poland

Part X

Sukiennice – Krakow's First Shopping Center

From *Kosciol Mariacki* I stepped out into the sunlight of the busy *Rynek Główny* marketplace, where one is greeted by the statue monument of 19th century Romanticism poet Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), which boldly stands in the eastern part of the square. The figures at its base represent Poland, Poetry, Science and Courage. The work of Teodor Rygier was erected in 1898, dismantled by the Nazis in 1940 and then re-erected in 1956. In 1968 the banning of one of Mickiewicz's patriotic plays, *Dziady*, rich in anti-Russian overtones, led to massive riots at the statue. The monument remained a focus of dissident interest throughout the years of the



LONG BEFORE there were malls, there was the Sukiennice.



GLASS ORNAMENTS, like these in folk costume, can be found at the Sukiennice.

Communist regime. In December it is the setting of the annual Kraków Christmas *szopka* competitions.

Directly behind the statue is the **Sukiennice Clothiers' Hall**, which dominates the center of the Main Market Square — once a major centre of international trade and a marketplace with a virtual city of stalls. Traveling merchants met there to discuss business and to barter. During its golden age in the 15th century, Sukiennice was the source of a variety of exotic imports from the East — spices, silk, leather and wax; while Kraków itself exported textiles, lead, and salt from the mines at Wieliczka.

As one of the first shopping malls in Poland, the Sukiennice outshines the new multi-level shopping arenas in today's modern Poland. It has history, it has style and it has folk crafts — for this traveler those are the items that intrigue the most.

The Sukiennice has always been the main shopping experience of any trip I have taken to Poland. It is always the place where I could buy unique and meaningful Christmas presents. Having already perused the wares on my first night encounter, I was prepared to have a shopping excursion in this famed site.

I spotted two glorious ornaments of costumed Góral-skie maidens for my sisters, Krysia and Danusia that epitomized their character. I quickly made the purchase. I learned over the years that if you like something, don't wait — buy it, otherwise it will be gone.

I ventured into the store on the outside of the marketplace that specialized in wood, straw and paper ornaments and Kraków *szopki* (manger scenes). Six years prior, I bought an enormous 4-foot tall prize-winning *szopka* that I sent back home. The purchase has since found its home on exhibition at libraries, schools and churches.

I was immediately drawn to a brilliant small illuminated metal *szopka*. I asked the price and if it could be used in the electric current of United States. It had an adapter for international use, but the price made me flinch. It was about 10

times the price of the earlier *szopka*. I thanked the owner and told him my thoughts on the price and that I would consider it, but would need to reconsider evaluate such a purchase. The prices are dearer than



This illuminated *szopka* caught my eye ... but not my wallet.

in the Communist era, so the buyer must now be more selective and discriminating.

The wooden merchants' booths sell articles aimed at the tourist trade including: carved wooden chess sets, plates, boxes and sculptures, amber jewelry, crystal, leather goods, genuine craft items from the Podhale mountains and thick woolen sweaters and socks from the mountains, slippers, costume items and the tourist "sukiennice" vest. Thinking about the holidays there are beautifully carved wooden manger scenes, the *Szopka Krakowska*, and hand-blown glass ornaments. The Sukiennice possesses a rare shopping experience and a cornucopia of Christmas presents just waiting to be given.

Next issue — The history
of the Sukiennice

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The Polish Gift of Life, Inc. thanks our generous supporters, who, for over 30 years have made it possible for us to help sick Polish children. We are able to bring many children who needed life-saving surgery or procedures to the United States. This past year, 14 children have been operated on by Dr. Edward Malec, who has relocated to Munich, Germany, from Poland. We purchased needed equipment requested by Pediatric Hospitals in Poland. Once again, thank to you, we were able to fill some of these heart-rendering requests received from orphanages throughout Poland. This list for aid is long, but with your continued support, we will be able to provide Polish children with the precious "Gift of Life." For more information, please call (516) 746-1532.

POLAND FIGHTS / Douglas W. Jacobson

70 Years Ago This Month

In the book entitled, *The Cavalry of World War Two*, Major Henryk Dobrzanski is described as someone who loved fast horses, beautiful women and good wine. But Dobrzanski, whose nickname was Hubal, was also one of the most steadfast officers of the Polish cavalry during the September, 1939 campaign. Hubal was assigned to the 110th Uhlan Regiment of the Reserve Cavalry Brigade as deputy commander. On the night of September 24th, after being forced to withdraw from numerically-superior Soviet forces in the area of Grodno, Hubal's commanding officer ordered the regiment to disband. Hubal refused and announced that he would take over command himself and lead the regiment to Warsaw.

Hubal and his regiment had already reached the outskirts of the capital when the news of Warsaw's capitulation reached them. Hubal reacted by ordering the regiment into the forest along the right bank of the Vistula and marching southwest where they hoped to break

through to Hungary or Romania and eventually on to France. After several fierce battles with German units along the way, Hubal decided to stay in the Kielce region and wait for Allied relief in the spring. He vowed to never take off his uniform until Poland was free.

While Germany and Russia eventually prevailed by forcing the Polish army into a two-front war with no allied assistance, the Poles inflicted enormous casualties upon their enemies.

When the last Polish forces were defeated at the Battle of Kock on October 5th Hubal continued to wear his uniform and thus became the first partisan commander of World War Two. His "Phantom Unit" continued to evade all attempts at capture while carrying out ambushes and raids on German military units

well into the spring of 1940. While the Phantom Unit never included more than 300 men, the Germans ultimately fielded a force of more than 8,000 troops, including Panzer units and the Waffen-SS before finally defeating Hubal and his loyal partisans.

The story of Hubal and his men is only one of tens of thousands of stories of Polish soldiers who refused to quit after the capitulation. In fact, the government of Poland never surrendered at any time during World War II. On September 27th, the day before the capitulation of Warsaw, an emissary of Marshal Smigly-Rydz arrived covertly in the besieged city with orders to form an underground resistance organization. It was another step in the evolution of the largest and most well-organized resistance effort in all of Europe.

While Germany and Russia eventually prevailed by forcing the Polish army into a two-front war with no allied assistance, the Poles inflicted enormous casualties upon their enemies. German losses in particular were much higher than their own high command ever envisioned, with over fifty thousand dead or wounded, two hundred airplanes lost, along with thirty percent of their armored vehicles. During the September campaign in Poland the German Wehrmacht was forced to use more than twice the ammunition and artillery shells than they would need against France the following spring.

Katyn Author Allen Paul Decorated

by Richard Poremski

WASHINGTON, D.C. — It was a very proud moment for Allen Paul — author of "Katyn: The Untold Story of Stalin's Polish Massacre" (1991/2007) — when Ambassador Robert Kupiecki invested him with the gleaming Commander's Cross, Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland. The ceremony took place on April 2, 2009 at Poland's embassy before a large gathering of family, friends and Polonia.

Allen Paul thanked Ambassador Kupiecki for his warm introduction, and Poland and all Poles for the high honor they bestowed upon him. With no direct connection to Poland, Paul said that he authored the book because he is a reporter at heart and recognized Katyn as a most tragic story that needed to be told again, but this time in a personal, humanizing manner.

Paul painstakingly examines Stalin's infamous act of genocide whereby he ordered his Soviet NKVD to murder over 15,000 captive Polish Army officers, officials, professionals and intelligentsia. The tragic event took place in the Katyn Forest, near Smolensk, Belorussia in the spring of 1940, early in World War II. Recent scholarly research



PHOTO: RICHARD POREMSKI

MEDAL CEREMONY AT EMBASSY. Ambassador Robert Kupiecki (left) is shown presenting Allen Paul, author of the book "Katyn," with the Commander's Cross, Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland, at the Embassy of Poland this past April.

now places the known number of the select Polish victims at approximately 22,000, a number which includes tallies from other now-known NKVD execution sites.



Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku 2010

The Polish Gift of Life would like to thank all our generous supporters who, for over years, have made it possible for us to help sick Polish children.

A well-known pediatric cardiologist named Dr. Edward Malec has performed fourteen open-heart surgeries on Polish children last year, 2008, with financial aid from The Polish Gift of Life, Inc. This year, 2009, through your generosity, the Polish Gift of Life, Inc. had several children from Poland go to Munich, Germany for open-heart surgery. We have a waiting list of children for surgery.

Your financial support will allow us to continue to give the Polish children the precious "Gift of Life."

For further information, please contact us at:

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RELIGION / Benjamin Fiore, S.J.

Dunkirk Celebrates Parish Inaugural Mass

DUNKIRK, N.Y. — Many generations of Polonia gathered in prayer and praise at the newest PolAm Roman Catholic parish of **Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska**, which celebrated its Inaugural Mass, Oct. 11, 2009. The 9:00 a.m. Eucharistic Banquet united parishioners of all ages, senior, teens, families, and societies, who joined in welcoming over seventy-five representatives of Western New York's Felician Sisters to mark the final merger of Ss. Hyacinth & Hedwig Churches into one parish. Parishioners joined with sisters in honoring their shared patroness, Blessed Mary Angela, in the first, world-wide, parish bearing her title.

Fr. Czeslaw M. Krysa, pastor, remarked, "None of us but the Lord God put this all together."

The new parish is named after Blessed Mary Angela, whose intervention is credited with curing Dunkirk native Lilian Halasinski of neuropathy. The healing was recognized by the Vatican as the miracle moving Mother Mary Angela's cause to beatification by Pope John Paul II in 1993. Halasinski lived across the street from the parish Lyceum. She passed away in 2008.

Parish and guest organists with choir members melded contemporary music with beloved traditional hymns in the two languages of the new parish's faith heritage: English and Polish.

The parish is located at 295 Lake Shore Dr. E., Dunkirk, NY 14048.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO ... Five Holy Martyrs Parish, Chicago, Ill., on its 100th anniversary as well as the 30th anniversary of the visit of Pope John Paul II (his third visit to the parish following two as cardinal) ... **Very Rev. Fryderyk S. Banas**, pastor of Holy Cross Parish, PNCC, in Ware, Mass. On the 59th anniversary of his ordination. After his ordination in Scranton by the late Bishop John A. Misiaszek, he was assistant to the late bishop John Z. Jasinski and served as pastor of Holy Rosary PNCC cathedral in Buffalo ... **Fr. Felix Pyzowski** on the 50th anniversary of his priestly ordination. Fr. Pyzowski is pastor of Holy Trinity PNCC Parish in Washington, Pa. ... McKeesport,

Pa., on the 50th anniversary of the International Village festival. **Holy Family PNCC** parish participated in the festival all 50 years. This year the parish sponsored a performance of the Lajkoniki Dance Troupe, under the direction of **Mr. Frank Pociask** ... **Very Rev. Marcell Pytlarz** for 45 years of service as pastor at Holy Trinity PNCC parish in New Castle, Pa. Fr. Pytlarz was a member of the Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol Commission and one of the founders of the American-Polish Central Committee that promotes Polish cultural events in the area. The banquet where he was honored was also his retirement banquet. He is replaced as pastor by **Rev. John Renciewicz**.

DIVINE MERCY ANSWERS TODAY'S ILLS. **Dr. John Bruchalski** a former abortionist, believes that Our Lady of Guadalupe enlightened him about the destructive nature of his work. He also believes that Jesus' divine mercy affected and forgave him. As a result, he sees that Devotion to the Divine Mercy is an answer to the pessimism, scepticism, relativism and cynicism of today's world. "I know," he says, "that if you take time and engage Christ, He will speak to you. Divine Mercy gives us hope. And when you're in the sloop, you need hope."

EDITOR ON FACEBOOK. **Friar Fr. Piotr Lenart, OFM Conv.**, based at Niepokalanów, is editor of St. Kolbe's magazine *Knight of the Immaculate*. He has a Facebook fan page and is also on Skype.

STO LAT TO ... Knights of Columbus scholarship winners: **Andrew J. Nalepa, Marienicole Nowak, Joseph R. Wawrzynski, Scott N. Wisniewski**

NO! TO ABORTION IN POLAND, About 3,500 people took part in the Fourth Annual National March for Life and Family in Warsaw at the end of May. The event was organized by



PHOTO: P. BIALASZEWSKI

NEW PARISH NAMED AFTER BLESSED MARY ANGELA TRUSZKOWSKA. Sr. Andrew, sacristan; Fr. Krysa, pastor; Sr. Rachel, pastoral associate; and Sr. Bronisia, archivist, gather around the statue of new patroness, Blessed Mary Angela.

the **Fr. Peter Skarga Association for Christian Culture and Fundacja Pro.** Despite torrential rains the march went on as planned with brass and bagpipe band accompaniment. Representatives from France, Germany, Slovakia, Ukraine, and the US joined their Polish fellow marchers. The European Union Treaty gained recent approval because of the insertion of exemptions from European Union pressure and sanctions for member-countries with pro-life constitutions. This was one of the aims of the march.

NATURAL REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY TAUGHT. **Dr. Thomas Hilgiers**, an Omaha, Nebraska-based obstetrician/gynecologist and director of the Pope Paul VI Institute trained more than a dozen physicians and medical professionals in Lagos, Nigeria and Lublin, Poland in **NaProTECHNOLOGY** (Natural Procreative Technology), a women's health science that monitors a woman's reproductive and gynecological health. Eight physicians in Lublin join over 400 practitioners worldwide who are certified to serve as natural family planning medical consultants using the Creighton Model Fertility Care System, developed at the Pope Paul VI Institute.

PRAYERS DELIVERED AT WESTERN WALL. More than 31,000 prayers from thousands of visitors to the exhibit *Blessing to One Another: Pope John Paul II and the Jewish People* at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Penn., were brought to the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Inserting prayer slips of paper into crevices among the stones of the wall near the site of the former Jewish Temple has been a long-standing religious tradition among Jewish and other pilgrims to the site. The 31,000 prayers, inserted into a replica of the wall at the exhibit, were delivered to the actual wall by **Rabbi Abie Ingber** and other officials from Xavier University, which hosted the exhibit. The touring exhibit will travel in the next months to the Holocaust Museum of Houston, Canisius College/Karpeles Museum in Buffalo, and the Maltz Museum in Beechwood, Ohio.

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.

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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Some activities include: serving as a liaison between American and Polish academic circles; publishing *The Polish Review*, a scholarly, multi-disciplinary quarterly; operating The Alfred Jurzykowski Memorial Library and Archives; organizing annual scholarly conferences; organizing lectures, symposia, authors' evenings, and exhibits.

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POLONIA EAGLE OF THE EASTERN GREAT LAKES / Michael Pietruszka

Christmas Celebrations

BUFFALO, N.Y. — The Christmas season always brings out the best in our local Polonia Community. The importance of family, Church and tradition are remembered and reinforced by our observance of this holiday. 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 with your families and friends:

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

- CHOPIN SINGING SOCIETY WIGILIA. 6:00 p.m. - Millennium Hotel, 2040 Walden Avenue, Cheektowaga - \$25.00 - Hon. Ann Mikoll (685-9466)
- OLKA VARIETY SOCIAL CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY. Len Zak (896-1476)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

- CORPUSCHRISTICENTENNIALMUSIC SERIES POLISH MASS (Featuring the Ludowa Nuta Polish Canadian Folk Choir) - 10:00 AM - Corpus Christi Church, 199 Clark Street, Buffalo - (896-1050)
- FESTIVAL OF CAROLS. 3:00 p.m. - St. Stanislaus Church, Fillmore Avenue & Peckham Street, Buffalo

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12

- BUFFALO POLKA BOOSTERS CHRISTMAS PARTY. Depew Polish Falcons, 445 Columbia Avenue, Depew - Chris (892-7977)
- SUNYAB POLISH STUDENT ASSOCIATION WIGILIA. St. Stan's Social Center, Fillmore Avenue and Peckham Street, Buffalo - Marek Niec (645-2494).
- OLISH HERITGE SOCIETY OF ROCHESTER WIGILIA DINNER. Kearney Hall, St. John Fisher College, 3690 East Avenue, Rochester - Maria Weldy (585-248-0152)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20

- POLISH ARTS CLUB OF BUFFALO WIGILIA. 1:00 p.m. - Protocol Restaurant, 6766 Transit Road, Williamsville - Stan Nowak (837-2061)
- POLISH AMERICAN CITIZENS CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY. PAC Clubrooms, 385 Weaver Street, Rochester - (585-266-7215)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

- “POLISH CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE” (Featuring the Polish Heritage Dancers of WNY). 2:30 p.m.; 7:30 p.m. - Lancaster Opera House, 21 Central Avenue, Lancaster - \$15.00 - (683-1776)
- KONZERT DZISIAJ W BETLEJEM. 4:00 p.m. - John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre, 4300 Cawthra Road, Mississauga, Ont. - \$C15.00 - (416-253-5367)

All telephone numbers are in area code (716) unless otherwise noted. All events and activities are subject to cancellation and rescheduling by the sponsoring organization without notice.

WNY'S POLISH FILM FESTIVALS. November presented an excellent opportunity for WNYers to explore the many nuances of Polish cinema. Two local Polish film festivals screened a myriad of Polish films covering many genres.

The **Permanent Chair of Polish Culture** at Canisius College hosted its 4th Annual Polish 4th Annual Polish Film Festival November 5 through 8 at various locations around WNY. This year's offerings included “Kinematograf,” “Mala Moskwa,” “General Nil,” “Children in Exile: Recollections of Children Deported to the Soviet Gulag,” “Rysa” and “Ile Wazy Koń Trojański?”. One of the highlights was an opportunity to meet Polish director, Waldemar Krzystek. More details on this festival can be found at www.canisius.edu/polish/events.asp.

The **2009 Rochester Polish Film Festival**, sponsored by the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies at the University of Rochester and the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester, was held at the Little Theatre in Downtown Rochester November 14 through 18. This year's theme was the past, present and future of Polish cinema. The festival opened with a panel discussion on “New Trends in Polish Cinema and the American Connection” featuring Małgorzata Szum (Polish Embassy Culture and Public Relations Attaché), Jacek Bławut (film director), Magdalena Piekorz (film director), Małgorzata Kozuchowska (actress) and Sheila Skaff (Polish Cultural Institute). This year's films included “Too Soon to Die,” “The Actors,” “Before Twilight,” “Woman Wanted,” “Preserve,” “Mother,” “Drowsiness,” “Tomorrow We Are Going to the Movies,” “The Loneliness of a Short-Order Cook,” “My New Life,” “What the Doctors Say,” “Anna's Little Lies,” “The Glass Trap” and “God's Little Village”. Descriptions of the films presented at this festival are available at www.rochester.edu/college/PSC/CPCES/events_pff.html.

40 UNDER 40 HONOREE. BUFFALO BUSINESS FIRST has named **Martin Biniasz** as one of their 40-Under-40 award recipients for 2009. 40 honorees, all under the age of 40, are being recognized for their records of professional success and community involvement. A five-member, independent judging panel made the selections.

Biniasz joined Western Regional Off Track Betting and Batavia Downs Casino as Marketing Director in 2007. Since his arrival, the company has experienced growth in both traditional race wagering and video slot gaming.

Biniasz currently volunteers as



Chairman of the City of Buffalo's Broadway Market Advisory Task Force. In 2009, Biniasz oversaw the development of a 2009 Easter season marketing plan that resulted in a customer increase of over 100K+ and a collective vendor revenue increase of approximately 35%.

To promote a unique Buffalo tradition, Biniasz co-founded Dyngus Day Buffalo. The company provides marketing and promotional support to the region's Dyngus Day party sites and promotes Buffalo, New York as the Dyngus Day Capital of the World. Biniasz is also the co-founder of Buffalo's annual Dyngus Day Parade. His efforts have resulted in a year-round resurgence in the interest of the City's Polonia Historic District. In 2009, Dyngus Day was named, “Coolest Local Tradition,” by Buffalo Spree Magazine.

In 2004, Biniasz was recognized for his work in promoting the heritage of Buffalo's Polonia as the Ampol Eagle newspaper's Citizen of the Year. He is also board member of the Permanent Chair of Polish Culture at Canisius College.

IF YOU HAVE AN ITEM for this column, please send the information to: POLEGL, P.O. Box 223, Niagara Square Station, Buffalo, NY 14201-0223; e-mail pietruska@verizon.net.

For more information on what's going on in the Polonia of the Eastern Great Lakes, visit my website at: www.polegl.org.

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Dedicated Section of Highway Recognizes Gold Star Mothers



HIGHWAY DEDICATED. The Gold Star Mothers Memorial Highway was dedicated this past August. The road runs between Manistee and Cadillac, Mich. Pictured are Gold Star Mothers Carole Schierholt and Valerie May; Medal of Honor recipient Duane Dewey; Gold Star Mother Cora Steffens; Navy veteran and leader of the naming project Robert Gancarz.

Bob Gancarz — a Polish American Journal subscriber, Navy veteran, Catholic War Veterans commander, a member of the Polish Legion of American Veterans, and member of five other veterans groups — saw his work come to fruition with the naming of a 45-mile section of Michigan Highway M-55 re-named in honor of Gold Star Mothers.

Gold Star Mothers are the mothers of military men and women who died in service to the United States.

It took Gancarz, with the help of a state senator, over two years to get the highway naming approved by the state legislature and signed into law by the governor.

A Renovated Paderewski Room

CHICAGO — The re-opening of the historic **Ignacy Jan Paderewski Room** at the Polish Museum of America had been a long anticipated event. After 14 months of extensive updating, repair, renovation, painting and conservation, the Museum's Paderewski Room Renovation Committee with generous *gratis* supplies and *pro bono* services from qualified and dedicated contractors, tradesmen, craftsmen and artisans, had the re-opening of the Paderewski Room. This took place on Friday, November 6. Special tours of the Paderewski Room were given. This by-invitation-only gala introduced those in attendance the first view of precious photographs, documents, papers, other Paderewski-orientated memorabilia, and much more.

The January 2010 issue of POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL will report on the historic re-opening.

—Geraldine Balut-Coleman

Memorial Erected



BOB GANCARZ chaired a group of veterans and friends of veterans in the construction of a veterans monument on the Mason County Courthouse grounds in Ludington, Mich. Ninety-seven year old D-Day liberator and friend Leonard Tomaszewski, poured a mixture of Omaha and Utah beach sand into the base of a flagpole erected at the monument site. The sand was procured by Gancarz when he traveled to northwest France for the 60th anniversary D-Day ceremonies on June 6, 2004.

Tomaszewski was a member of the U.S. Army that landed on Omaha Beach, Normandy, June 6, 1944. He was a member of the 531st Engineers Shore Regiment.

Gancarz began his efforts at honoring those who have defended America when, shortly after 9/11 in 2001, he led a two-year drive which resulted in the naming of a highway between Scottville and Ludington, Michigan, as Veterans Memorial Highway. He then spearheaded a movement which resulted in the erection of a veterans monument in our Saint John Cantius parish cemetery in Free Soil, Mich., along with the winter placement of wreaths on the veterans' graves.

Gancarz is currently leading a group of veterans in the enhancement and enlargement of an older veterans monument in Manistee, Michigan.

"In the Name of Their Mothers"



CHICAGO — Several months ago, the Hallmark Channel presented "*The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler*," a Hollywood version of Irena Sendler and how she saved 2,500 Jewish children imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto from certain death at the hands the Nazis. However, an extraordinary film, "*In the Name of Their Mothers*," documents, in detail, the risks taken by Irena and her collaborators and includes interviews with Irena, a few organizers and participants who aided in this dangerous rescue, and several children whose lives were saved. This documentary film, produced by Mary Skinner and 2B Production and supported by many Chicago Polish American organizations and the Polish Consulate in Chicago, had its national premiere at the Copernicus Foundation theater, Nov. 22. This event included a "Meet the Producer" question-and-answer reception after the viewing of the film.

Washington's Generals



MOUNT VERNON, Virg. — "George Washington and His Generals," is the largest and most diverse gathering of materials related to Washington's officers ever assembled, and pays tribute to Polish support of the American Revolution and to the establishment of American democracy. Poland's Tadeusz Kosciuszko, who was a brilliant military engineer, proved to be invaluable to the commander-in-chief. His portrait is on loan at Mt. Vernon from the embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington D.C.

The exhibit is on view every day through January 10, 2010.

Pictured above are: Architect Julian Kulski, "George Washington," Polish Ambassador Dr. Robert Kupiecki and his wife Malgorzata, Ben Stefanski and Cherie Dimmerling. Stefanski represented the Polish American Cultural Center of Cleveland at the gala opening of the exhibit in Mount Vernon.

KF Celebrates Tadeusz's Name Day



Alexandra, Andrzej, and honoree Mariola Golota

CHICAGO — On October 28, 1792, the *Imieniny* (Name's Day) of Kosciuszko, Prince Czartoryski held a party at the Sieniawa Palace honoring him. As history reveals "Russia had just crushed Poland's army, outlawed the May 3 Constitution and banned the *Virtuti Militari* medals given to Polish heroes." Polish officers, "who received these medals, sent the blue ribbons ... to their wives and girlfriends." At this party ... "women wore white dresses with black and azure sashes and braided their hair with the blue ribbons from the medals. The women also fashioned a garland crown on Kosciuszko's head made from branches and leaves from an oak tree planted 100 years earlier by King Sobieski."

This year, in conjunction with the celebration of Tadeusz's Name's Day, the Chicago chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation (KF) chose

to honor that individual who, through his/her time and effort contributed to the Foundation. Its honoree was **Mariola Golota**. Mariola, along with her husband, Andrzej, supported the Foundation by presenting their daughter, Alexandra as a debutante at the prestigious KF Annual Ball in New York City this past April. This debut is considered a milestone. This was the first time that the Chicago chapter has had a debutante at the Ball. Mariola is a graduate of Rosary College and received her Juris Doctor degree from Loyola University Chicago. She is a member of the KF and the Legion of Young Polish Women and has a successful law practice, serving primarily the Polish and Polish American community. The Golota family is a generous contributor to charities benefiting orphanages and care centers in Poland.

—Geraldine Balut-Coleman

PAHA

www.polishamericanstudies.org

The Polish American Historical Association was established in December 1942 as a special commission of the The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America to collect, compile and publish information about Polish Americans. In October 1944, it was reorganized as a national American society to promote study and research in the history and social background of Americans of Polish descent. The Association, which was incorporated under the laws of Illinois in 1972, strives to assist and cooperate with all individuals and organizations interested in Polish American life and history. Contributions in support of the work of the Association are tax-exempt. Regular one-year membership to the Association is \$30.00.

I am interested in becoming a member of PAHA. Enclosed is a check or money order for \$30.00 made payable to the Polish American Historical Association.

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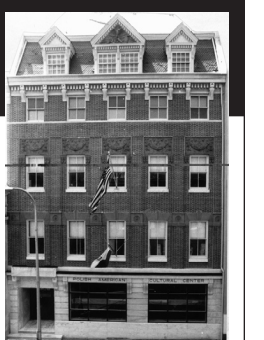
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POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION AND CONTINUANCE OF POLISH AMERICAN MUSIC

POLKA INSIDER / Steve Litwin

Look Forward to Christmas

Polkas are not the same as they once were. Yes, they still sound the same, are the same 2/4 tempo, and still make you want to dance. However, dances that years ago would draw 400-500 people now draw 100-140. Bands are fewer in number, but that makes us realize those that are still playing, are more dedicated and more important to the overall picture we all call polkas.

However, let's push this concept another step forward and understand that nothing is the same anymore. How many times do you say that a week? My Babcia Rose almost never spoke English; my Dziadek Joseph would sing "Czyja Ta Dziewczyna" without ever thinking of the words in English. Yet, today we have some polka bands that never use the word "polka" on their CDs, and others who never sing in the tongue of their heritage.

Moving up yet another step, Christmas is not the same as it once was. Yes, we still celebrate the birth of the Christ child, but do we still celebrate it as our family did, honoring the traditions of our ancestry? It is up to you, yes *you* holding this issue of the POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL, to keep and maintain the traditions we all knew and all grew up with. That includes wigilia and koledy and the rich traditions we all know.

Whether it be Eddie Blazonczyk's Versatones singing "Twinkle Toes" or the koledy nights of years ago, revive these feelings for this holiday season. In today's world, it's all about adjusting to change, so why not modify the traditions of old while still retaining something from the days of those family Christmases. Share

oplatek, make your wigilia a mixture of old and new foods, play koledy along with White Christmas and Rudolph during the season.

But, why wait until Christmas Eve? Most of us recall those great Christmases of our youth when our Grandfathers sang "Dzisiaj w Betlejem," or you couldn't wait for the tree to be put up, or it seemed like every radio station played continuous carols. We all know the commercial holiday season starts too early each year and that shouldn't be. However, we could all fill our homes with that Christmas spirit, starting in early December.

Look forward to the holiday and reclaim that anticipation of your childhood. Start playing those Polish koledy and polka Christmas recordings early, as you write your cards and wrap those packages. Why not purchase some of those recordings and send them as "early" gifts, sharing the ethnic essence of the season with friends and family? Awaken the heritage in family members that may have forgotten the joys of a Polish polka Christmas.

IN AN AGE WHEN WE ALL SEEM to never have enough time, let's make time to "Christmas oberek" around the tree, enjoy the special meaning of that old ornament, and delight in the Polish lyrics we all learned as children. Make it a polka Christmas. Make it a Polish Christmas. Make it a Christmas of old.

To everyone, Adele and I send wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. *Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia!*

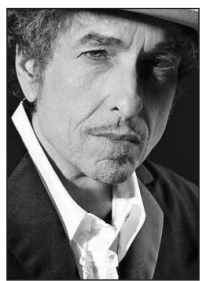


KOLEDY RECORDINGS, like the Polish American Journal's "Polish Village Christmas," are a great way to get into the spirit of a Polish Christmas.

POLKA PLATTER / Prepared and Distributed by the Polonia Media Network

THE POLISH FREIGHT & MUSIC CO. broadcast live from the Ukraine on October 18 in the first presentation of its kind in Polka Radio anywhere in the world. Bryan Palacz and his wife Irena hosted the special program. The program is based in Cleveland, Ohio, at local radio station WJCU (88.7 FM) and is heard via the web at www.wjcu.org.

"SHRINEPALOOZA," presented on October 24, 2009, featured the Polish Muslims, billed as "locally themed polka rock parodists," whatever that may be. The event, which included many local musical personalities, was a benefit for the Royal Oak Shrine Catholic High School's Performing Arts Department in Royal Oak, Michigan.



BOB DYLAN does what has been described as a "rollicking polka version" of "Must Be Santa" on his new CD "Christmas in the Heart." One listener called it "fantastic" ... which isn't surprising.

THE INTERNATIONAL POLKA ASSOCIATION (IPA) has initiated its own channel on YouTube at www.youtube.com/user/ipavideo. For starters, it offers video of five

bands that appeared at the 2009 IPA Festival including Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push, George Steven's Doubleshot, Tony Blazonczyk & New Phaze, Jerry Darlak & Buffalo Touch and Polka Family.

LENNY GOMULKA & CHICAGO PUSH played at the annual fall dance in Burlington, Ontario, on November 6, 2009, alternating with John Gora & Gorale at the Polish Hall. It was a rare Canadian appearance for Gomulka's aggregation.

TED WOZNAK, drummer of the legendary Harmony Kings, died on October 27, 2009, at the age of 92. All his friends and fans knew of his love of polka music and a good joke.

MIKE MATOUSEK AND MIKE ZIEMSKI, masterminds behind "Polkamotion By The Ocean," were special guests October 28, 2009, in the polka chat at www.bestpolkabands.com. Matousek is in the Polka Music Hall of Fame, is with Charm City Sound, The Boys From Baltimore and Full Circle, operates polka cruises, and both Mikes are heard via 247polkaheaven.com.

IF YOU NEVER WITNESSED the spectacular opening of a Jimmy Sturr show, you can do so by visiting www.youtube.com/watch?v=YubOqPNkYIg for a glimpse of Polkapalooza 2009 at Windsor Casino, Windsor Ontario,

Canada. The video leaves something to be desired, but the excitement remains and the audio is good.

A NEW SLOVENIAN-STYLE polka show has been added at the Polka Jammer Network. Called the "Slovenian Polka Hop," it is hosted by Jim Kucharski and features the best in Slovenian style accordion-button box polkas and waltzes. The show airs on Monday afternoons from 1:00-2:00 p.m. EDT. Catch it at www.polkajammernetwork.org.

JOHN GORA reports that Hank Guzevich of Polka Family was a hit at the Pod Papugami [Under the Parrots] club in Wroclaw, Poland, when he sat in with a popular blues band. "They wanted to test him out when they played the first song in concert," wrote Gora, who is already planning for another trip next year, "but Hank had no problems."

THE DANA LIBRARY of polka vinyl records from decades ago is being restored and is expected to be available in several months. As with other remastered recordings, the restored versions could sound even better than the originals.

VIRGIL BAKER of Rockford, Robert Kolo of Bloomfield Hills, Bob Osantoski of Bad Axe and Jeff Stasa of Corunna were inducted into the Michigan State Polka Hall of Fame on October 4, 2009.

FM Radio Returns to Amsterdam with Christmas and Polka Music

AMSTERDAM, N.Y. — There's something new in the air in the eastern Mohawk Valley—an FM radio station that is paired with longtime AM favorite, 1570 WVTL.

And—they're playing Christmas music.

Lite 104.7 on the FM band and AM 1570 WVTL, both broadcasting from the same location in the Amsterdam area, are part of the Roser Communications Network of top rated Mohawk Valley radio stations.

"This new FM/AM combo is designed for in-home or in-office listening," said Roser Communi-

cations chief Ken Roser.

The new FM/AM combo continues to carry local news, talk and music on the Bob Cudmore Show weekday mornings from 6:00-9:00 a.m. Jason Aiello continues as operations manager of both stations.

Lite 104.7/WVTL also carries weekend ethnic programming with Sal and Dominic Megna with the "Italian Show" Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to noon and John Lesniewski and Bob Pawlak with "Polka Magic," Sunday from noon to 2:00 p.m.

The stations will broadcast high school football and other programs of local interest.

Eddie Forman Orchestra is "Movin' On"

HADLEY, Mass. — The recording, *Movin' On*, is full of dreams and recollections of Eddie Forman and the E.F.O., who excel at bringing new levels of lyrical and expressive purity to the polka music field. Their hearts and heartfelt personalities are evident throughout this new release. This is a recording which accurately shows what the band brings to stages, audiences and to their polka music fans. It grasps the polka music tradition that gave Eddie Forman a solid presence in our time.

The E.F.O. is dedicated to the art of playing music and entertaining their fans. This E.F.O. recording is full of color and life, much like the polka atmosphere itself. So waste no time and put this in the system and see if you can keep your toes from tapping. We bet you can't.

The recording features 18 songs and is on the EFO label. Contact: Eddie Forman, P.O. Box 148, Hadley, MA 01035 or email: eddieforman@charter.net.

Starr Records Re-releases

"Double Magic" as Double CD

FLORIDA, N.Y. — Starr Records has just re-released two CDs in one, called Double Magic. The two CDs, originally released in 1990, paid tribute to the music of Bernie Witkowski, one of the most popular polka bands of the 1950s and 60s. The CD features not only the Jimmy Sturr band but the clarinet of Joe Magnuszewski and the accordion of Gene Bartkiewicz, who both performed with Jimmy during that period. The CD features 24 songs: 17 instrumentals and seven vocals, and is available from Starr Records, Box 1, Florida, NY 10921. It's definitely "Double Magic" at its best.

share some of their thoughts, voice comments, and read comments from other people with similar interests.

Visitors can offer their two cents on polkas, polka music, polka dancing, the state of the polka industry and more. They can post comments, thoughts, feelings and opinions and let their voices be heard.

Polkas United invites everyone to discuss polka music so this music genre can move forward and grow. Join with others to have a positive conversation and increase the popularity of polka music. Over 200 people have become members as of June 2009.

Polkas United is not a polka club or polka organization. No one stands to profit from this endeavor. It is a place where everyone can use their computers and the internet to talk about all segments of polkas. All generations of polka fans, dancers, musicians, promoters, DJ's, club owners, news writers, composers, record producers, recording studios, and more are welcomed to join those already on the forum.

Musician Mike Stapinski is the originator and administrator of Polkas United. Email: forum@polkasunited.com.

Musician Soldridge Passes

CHICAGO — Jimmy "Squeezeie" Soldridge passed away late on October 10, 2009, of a massive heart attack. He was an accomplished musician and master accordionist, having made appearances at various festivals in Europe, Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

He served in the United States Marine Corp Band as a trombonist, where his accordion had to take a back seat. After leaving the Marines, Soldridge performed at clubs, taverns, and festivals across the country.

His admiration for "America's Polka King," Frankie Yankovic, would be his inspiration and love for Austrian/Slovenian music. Soldridge's music went from recreational to professional, when he formed his own band, the Happy Yanks.

Soldridge and Judy Stringhill promoted polkas on WWVA Radio (1170 AM, Wheeling, W.V.) for many years.

Celebrate National

Polka Month With IPA

CHICAGO — Every January, the International Polka Association has held its Festival of Chicago Bands. This all-day, fun-filled affair will take place Sun., Jan. 17, at Glendora Banquets, 10225 S. Harlem Ave., Chicago Ridge. Doors open at 11:00 a.m. with music at 11:30 a.m.

Performing throughout the day will be Full Circle, Music Company, Downtown Sound, Freeze Dried, New Phaze, Jake Mikrut & his All Stars, Joe Walega's Happy Hearts, Lenny Zielinski's "D" Street, Brighton Park Connection and Eddie Korosa Jr. & the Boys from Polonia.

Admission is \$12.00 per person. Show your IPA membership card and get \$1.00 off door admission.

Tune in to the IPA radio show on WPNA, 1490 AM, Chicago, or via the Internet at: www.wpna490am.com, on Sunday mornings from 10:00-10:30 a.m. for more information.

New Internet Forum Set Up

NAPERVILLE, Ill. — Polkas United, a new free online forum that is designed for all aspects of polka music and the people familiar with polka music, is now available on the internet at: www.polkasunited.com.

Using the technology of the internet, the forum is available to help those who love polka music, unite. It is organized in a way in which everyone familiar with polkas can

NOTES / Barb Pinkowski

Is it Christmastime Already?



Who is that masked accordion player? It was none other than Kevin Solecki, who made a guest appearance with PhoCus at the Lily of the Valley Halloween dance.

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Hi everyone! I can't believe the trick-or-treaters have come and gone, the turkey dinner leftovers are finally finished, the leaves have fallen off the trees, and it's time to prepare for the Christmas season. As always, so much to do and so little time! But somehow, we all get through it and survive this hectic season.

JUST LIKE OLD TIMES. On November 7, it was back at the former St. Michael's Parish Hall, which is now Queen of Angels Parish, to

hear the great sounds of **Lenny Gomulka & the Chicago Push**. It has been many years since a dance has been held there.

I have so many fond memories of the dances there many years ago. Joe Litwin used to bring Eddie Blazonczyk in every year the first Saturday after Easter. It was a tradition and always drew large crowd, sometimes numbering over 800 people.

Dan Polinski, who used to bring in The Polka Family to St. Barbara's, was the promoter for this dance, and said they had over 200 in attendance. (St. Michael's and St. Barbara's merged). It was nice to be back at this hall, a nice dance floor with plenty of room, tables comfortably set up, and the super sounds of the band, which played the night before in Burlington, Ontario, with John Gora to a big crowd.

NEW OFFICERS. Congratulations to the officers of the **Polka Boosters Club**. The current slate of officers has been unanimously voted in for another two years. Chris Tanski, pres.; Ron Moscoe, v.p.; Ed Reska, treas.; and Irene Weich, sec. hold the main offices, and the board members are: Arlene Krzeminski, Norb Pacer, Dave Picciano, Barb Pinkowski, Maria and Ted Szymanski, and Barb



Yours truly, Barb Pinkowski, and John Bartley, who now resides in Washington state.

and John Zwawa.

The new Officers in the **Polka Variety Social Club** for 2010 are: President Dick Szykowny; Vice-President Bill Janish; Secretary Marcia Szykowny; and Treasurer - Pauline Janish.

Len Zak, who has been president of the club for the past ten years, will now serve on the board. We wish them all the best in their new positions!

IN SYMPATHY. Our sympathy goes out to the family of **Donald Radko**, former Polka Boosters board member, who passed away on Oct. 15. He resided in St. Petersburg, Florida ... Also, another Polka Boosters member, **Bernard Pazderski**, passed away on Oct. 20 and our condolences go out to his family. May they rest in peace.

HARD TIMES. The Hard Times Halloween Dance at the Knights of Columbus in Lancaster on Oct. 31 was a huge success. A big crowd enjoyed a nice variety of music by **Rare Vintage**, and the reasonable food and drink prices. Prizes were awarded for best costumes.

At the Lily of the Valley Hall, **Phocus** and **Nickel City** did a fine job entertaining there on Halloween night. Phocus concertina player



Jennifer Sikorski, Lenny Gomulka, Arlene and Dave Gawronski, and Carol Machelski at Queen of Angels Parish Hall. The November dance at the former St. Michael's Hall was the first there in many years.



Lenny Gomulka has played at the former St. Michael's hall since the mid-1970s. Above are current band members (l. to r). Kevin Adams, Gomulka, Matt Rosinski, and John Mikos.

Jeff Osika has left the band and Bob Wroblewski is still on sick leave so Ken Machelski and Robin Pegg filled in. The four guys that play in Nickel City sure do make some good music; Mike Kurdziel, John Rogala, Frank Zeczak and Eddie Szramka do an excellent job! There also were prizes given for best costumes. It was good to see several people who came out after being sick: Ron Handzlik, Al Bakowski and Bob Wroblewski are much better now, we're happy to say! Also, it was good to see John Bartley, violin player formerly with Happy Richie. John has moved to Tacoma, Washington and was visiting our area. John did a wonderful job with that fiddle during his gigs with a couple bands.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 5. Polka Variety Polka Club Christmas Party at the Leonard Post on Nagel Dr. in Cheektowaga. Contact Len Zak for more information. 896-1476

Dec. 12. Polka Boosters Christmas Party at the Polish Falcons Hall, 445 Columbia Ave., Depew, N.Y. Sit-down dinner, open bar and mu-

sic by the Bedrock Boys. For tickets and more information, call Chris at 892-7977.

Dec. 19. Jerry Darlak & the Touch will be at Artie's Tavern in the afternoon for Christmas caroling and koledy

Dec. 20. Jerry Darlak & the Touch are at the Sportsmen's Tavern on Amherst St. from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for polka dancing, romancing, Christmas, football and polkas.

Jan. 2, 2010. The Piatkowski Brothers and Concertina All Stars at the Potts Banquet Hall, 694 South Ogden St., Buffalo for a "Warm Up Polka Party: Hot Polkas and Hot Chili" to start out the New Year and to celebrate January as National Polka Month. Tickets are \$10 which includes a bowl of chili. 7:00 p.m. to midnight. 826-6575.

MERRY CHRISTMAS. I would like to extend my sincerest wishes to all of you for a Christmas season filled with love, peace and joy. Hope the Christ child will bless you and Santa will bring you everything you wished for.

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POLKA PARADE / Prepared and Distributed by the Polonia Media Network

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

ONGOING**Every Tuesday**

- Illinois. The Major Pensionaires at Major Hall, 5660 W. Grand Ave., Chicago, Ill., 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Every Wednesday

- Illinois. Tony Paliga's Morning Stars at the Stardust, 5688 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, Ill., 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., \$4.
- Illinois. The Midway Cavaliers at Ma-benka's Restaurant, 7840 S. Cicero Ave., Chicago, Ill., 7:00-10:00 p.m., free admission.

Every Friday

- Illinois. Joe Walega & the Happy Hearts at the New Warsaw Restaurant and Banquets, 6250 W. 63rd St., Chicago, Ill., 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., \$5.
- Florida. Bee Sharps at the German American Society of Pinellas County, 8098 66th St. North, Pinellas Park, Fla. 7:30-11:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 5

- Arizona. John Gora & Gorale at the Pulaski Club of Arizona, 4331 E. McDowell Rd., Ariz., 6:00-10:00 p.m.
- Delaware. Tommy Thomas Trio at the Snowball Dinner-Dance, New Castle Moose, 29 S. Mercer St., New Castle, Del., 7:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.
- Maryland. Polka Family at Blob's Park, 8024 Max Blobs Park Rd., Jessup, Md., 8:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.
- Minnesota. Doctor Kielbasa at the Holiday Dance of the Midwest Polka Association, North Air Event Center, 6831 Hwy. 65, Fridley, Minn., 7:00-11:00 p.m., \$8, \$7 members.
- New Jersey. Eddie Forman Orchestra at a Christmas Party, Bayway Polish Club, 625 Pulaski St., Elizabeth, N.J., buffet dinner 2:00 p.m., music 4:00-8:00 p.m., with buffet \$25, dance only \$15.
- New York. The Jimmy Sturr Christmas Show at the Paramount Theater, Middletown, N.Y., 3:00 p.m.
- New York. Golden Tones at the United Polka League Christmas Party, Roselawn Banquet House, 446 Main St., New York Mills, N.Y., 8:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.
- New York. Eddie Derwin & the Polka Naturals at St. John's Memorial Center, 1 St. John's Pkwy., Johnson City, N.Y. Check locally for details.

Sunday, December 6

- Arizona. John Gora & Gorale at the Pulaski Club of Arizona, 4331 E. McDowell Rd., Ariz., 1:00-5:00 p.m.
- Florida. Polka Classics at Polish American Pulaski Club, 3621 W. International Speedway Blvd, Daytona Beach, Fla., dinner 1:00 p.m., 2:00-5:30 p.m.
- Florida. Bee Sharps at the Polish American Club, 4616 Darlington Rd., Holiday, Fla., dinner 1:00 p.m., music 3:00-6:00 p.m.
- Florida. Florida Honky Band at the St. Petersburg Polish Society, 1343 Beach Dr. S.E., St. Petersburg, Fla., dinner 3:00-4:30 p.m., music 4:00-7:00 p.m., dinner \$8, music \$5 members, \$7 non-members.
- Maryland. Tommy Thomas Trio at a

Christmas Dinner-Dance, the Glen Burnie Moose Lounge, 1911 Crain Hwy. South, Glen Burnie, Md., 1:00-6:00 p.m.

- Massachusetts. Mark VI at the Polish American Citizens Club, 355 East St., Ludlow, Mass., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Michigan. Big Daddy Lackowski at a Christmas Celebration, Utica K of C, 44425 Utica Rd., Utica, Mich., 2:00-7:00 p.m.
- Michigan. Natural Tones at a Polka Bosters of America dance, Msgr. Hunt K of C, 7080 Garling, Dearborn Heights, Mich., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- Michigan. The Natural Tones with Rick Lasecki at the Polka Booster Club of America dinner-dance, Msgr. Hunt K of C, 7080 Garling Rd., Dearborn Heights, Mich., dinner 1:30 p.m., music 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Michigan. Ted Lange & Squeezebox at the LFA Hall, 2323 Amelith Rd., Bay City, Mich., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- New Jersey. The Jimmy Sturr Christmas Show at Felician College, Lodi, N.J., 3:00 p.m.
- New Jersey. Eddie Forman Orchestra at a Christmas Party, Bayway Polish Club, 625 Pulaski St., Elizabeth, N.J., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- Ohio. Duane Malinowski at Bavarian Haus, Route 18, Deshler, Ohio, 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Ohio. Hank Haller at the American Czechoslovakian Club, 922 Valley St., Dayton, Ohio, 3:00-7:00 p.m., \$13.
- Pennsylvania. Stanky & the Coalminers at the Dupont VFW, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. Shoreliners at Mother Cabrini Church, 214 N. Shamokin, Shamokin, Pa., 3:30-6:30 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. Golden Tones at the Christmas Party of the American Psychological Association, Lobitz, Pa. Check locally for details.
- Rhode Island. Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push at a St. Nick's Dance, German Cultural Club, 78 Carter St., Pawtucket, R.I., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- Wisconsin. Paper City Sounds at Bullshooters Saloon, 7802 Meadow Rock Dr., Weston (near Rothschild), Wis., 2:00-6:00 p.m.

Friday, December 11

- Ohio. Duane Malinowski at Connie's Celebration Banquet Hall, 6195 Lewis Ave., Toledo, Ohio, 7:00-10:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. Polka Magic at the Dupont VFW, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 7:00-11:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 12

- Connecticut. Eddie Forman Orchestra at a dinner-dance, the Polish Home, Windsor Locks, Conn., dinner 6:00 p.m., music 7:00-11:00 p.m.
- Massachusetts. Dennis Polisky & the Maestro's Men at the Polish Naturalization Independent Club, 290 Milbury St., Worcester, Mass., 5:00-9:00 p.m.
- Michigan. Natural Tones at Pulaski Hall, 1401 S. Grant St., Bay City, Mich., 7:00-11:00 p.m.
- Minnesota. Doctor Kielbasa in a Holiday Show at Doc's Sports Bar and

Grill, 34427 Majestic Pine Dr., Sturgeon Lake, Minn., 8:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m., free admission.

- New Jersey. Polka Family at the Bayway Polish Club, 625 Pulaski St., Elizabeth, N.J., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. The Jimmy Sturr Christmas Show at the State Theater, Easton, Pa., 3:00 p.m.
- Wisconsin. Ted Lange & Squeezebox at Amerahn Ballroom, 9480 Hwy. 45N, Kewaskum, Wis., 1:00-6:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 13

- Arizona. John Filipczak & the Classics and Bob Doszak at the Golden Sun Resort, 999 W. Broadway Rd., Apache Junction, Ariz., 12:00-5:00 p.m.
- Arizona. Varitones at a Christmas Party-Dinner, Pulaski Club of Arizona, 4331 E. McDowell Rd., Ariz., dinner 1:00-3:00 p.m., music 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Connecticut. Dennis Polisky & the Maestro's Men at the Polish American Citizens Club, 541 N. Main St., Bristol, Conn., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Florida. Polka Classics at the Polish American Social Club, 7500 U.S. Highway 1, Vero Beach, Fla., dinner 1:00 p.m., music 2:00-5:00 p.m.
- Florida. Jersey Polka Richie at the Club Christmas Party, the Polish American Club, 4616 Darlington Rd., Holiday, Fla., dinner 1:00 p.m., music 3:00-6:00 p.m.
- Florida. Sounds of the South at the St. Petersburg Polish Society, 1343 Beach Dr. S.E., St. Petersburg, Fla., dinner 3:00-4:30 p.m., music 4:00-7:00 p.m., dinner \$8, music \$5 members, \$7 non-members.
- Illinois. "Breakfast with Santa," sponsored by the International Pokka Association (IPA). Breakfast; visit by Santa with goodies for the kids. Music by Lenny Zielinski & the D-Street Band. Polonia Banquets, 4604 S. Archer Ave., Chicago, Ill. Doors open 10:30 a.m.; breakfast 11:00 a.m. followed by Santa; music 12:00-4:00 p.m. IPA Members and children under 12 free; non-members \$10.
- Maryland. Tommy Thomas Trio at the Senior's Christmas Dinner-Dance, the Glen Burnie Moose Lounge, 1911 Crain Hwy. South, Glen Burnie, Md., 1:00-6:00 p.m.
- Massachusetts. The Jimmy Sturr Christmas Show at the Calvin Theater for the Performing Arts, Northampton, Mass., 3:00 p.m.
- Michigan. Casuals of Ohio at the Warren Polka Boosters, Utica K of C Hall, 4425 Utica Rd., Sterling Heights, Mich., 1:30-7:00 p.m.
- Michigan. Lake Town Sound at the Silver Derby, Crump, Mich., 4:00-8:00 p.m.
- New York. Eddie Forman Orchestra at the Polish Home, Port Washington, N.Y., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Ohio. Randy Krajewski at a Toledo Area Polka Society dance, Conn-Weissenberger American Legion Hall, 2020 Alexis, Toledo, Ohio, 2:00-7:00 p.m.
- Ohio. Duane Malinowski at the Polish Club of Dayton, 1470 Valley St.,

Dayton, Ohio, 3:00-7:00 p.m.

- Pennsylvania. Eddie Derwin & the Polka Naturals at a Christmas Dance, Dupont VFW, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. Polka Family at Lakeside Ballroom, 40 Crystal Ln., Barnesville, Pa., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. Golden Tones at the Lebanon Polka Pals Christmas Party, St. Mary's Hall, Cornwall, Pa. Check locally for details.
- Wisconsin. Bobby Danczyk & Polish Memories at Bullshooters Saloon, 7802 Meadow Rock Dr., Weston (near Rothschild), Wis., 2:00-6:00 p.m.

Friday, December 18

- Ohio. Duane Malinowski at the Maumee Elks, 139 W. Wayne St., Maumee, Ohio, 8:00-11:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 20

- Illinois. Wigilia Dinner-Dance. Music by Downtown Sound. Family style dinner, Polish wine on table. Polonia Banquets, 4604 S. Archer Ave., Chicago, Ill. Doors open 11:30 a.m.; Polka Mass with music by Dennis Motyka 12:00 p.m.; dinner 1:00 p.m.; music 2:00-6:00 p.m. Tickets \$25; teens 13-17 \$15; children 4-12 \$10. Reservations required. Call (773) 523-7980.
- Florida. Bee Sharps at the St. Petersburg Polish Society, 1343 Beach Dr. S.E., St. Petersburg, Fla., dinner 3:00-4:30 p.m., music 4:00-7:00 p.m., dinner \$8, music \$5 members, \$7 non-members.
- Maryland. Tommy Thomas Trio at the American Turners Rossville, 9124 Lenings Ln., Baltimore, Md., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- Michigan. Duane Malinowski at the American Legion Hall, Hickory Park, 11601 Lewis Ave., Ida, Mich., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Ohio. Duane Malinowski at the American Legion, Hickory Park, Ida, Mich., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. Joe Lastovica & Polka Punch at a Christmas Dance, Dupont VFW, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. Henny & the Versa J's at Dave's Christmas Party, Yukon Slovenian Hall, 137 Yukon Ave., Yukon, Pa., 3:00-8:00 p.m.
- Wisconsin. Music Connection at Bullshooters Saloon, 7802 Meadow Rock Dr., Weston (near Rothschild), Wis., 2:00-6:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 27

- Arizona. John Filipczak & the Classics at the Greenfield Village Polka Club, 111 S. Greenfield Rd., Mesa, Ariz., 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Florida. Ed Bilinski & the Southern Sounds at the Polish American Club, 4616 Darlington Rd., Holiday, Fla., dinner 1:00 p.m., music 3:00-6:00 p.m.

- Florida. Northern Sounds at the St. Petersburg Polish Society, 1343 Beach Dr. S.E., St. Petersburg, Fla., dinner 3:00 p.m., music 4:00-7:00 p.m.
- Massachusetts. Eastern Sound at the Polish American Citizens Club, 355 East St., Ludlow, Mass., 3:00-7:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania. Shoreliners at a Christmas Dance, Dupont VFW, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00 p.m.
- Wisconsin. Pat Zoromski & the Boys From Polonia at Bullshooters Saloon, 7802 Meadow Rock Dr., Weston (near Rothschild), Wis., 2:00-6:00 p.m.

Thurs., Dec. 31 - New Year's Eve

- Illinois. New Year's Eve Celebration with Tony Blazonczyk & New Phaze. Family style dinner, cash bar, party favors, sweet table after after-midnight buffet. Doors open 6:30 p.m.; dinner 7:30-9:00 p.m.; music 9:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. Advance tickets \$40 required. Call (815) 530-5917.
- Illinois. New Year's Eve Dinner-Dance with the Ampol Aires at White Eagle Banquets, 6839 N. Milwaukee Ave., Niles, Ill. From 7:00 p.m.
- Maryland. New Year's Eve Party with the Tommy Thomas Trio at Our Lady of Fatima School Hall, 6400 E. Pratt St., Baltimore, Md., 8:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.
- Michigan. New Year's Eve Party with Polka Music Sound at the Bad Axe K of C Hall, 1038 S. Van Dyke Rd., Bad Axe, Mich., 6:00 p.m.-12:30 a.m.
- Michigan. New Year's Eve Celebration with Big Daddy Lackowski at the Karl Stitt Post, 23850 Military Rd., Dearborn Heights, Mich., 8:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m.
- New Jersey. New Year's Eve Celebration with Polka Family and DJ Bruce Z at the Bayway Polish Club, 625 Pulaski St., Elizabeth, N.J., 8:00 p.m.-1:30 a.m., \$55.
- Ohio. New Year's Eve Celebration with Frank Moravcik at the American Czechoslovakian Club, 922 Valley St., Dayton, Ohio, 9:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.
- Ontario. Sylwester Party with John Gora & Gorale at the Polish Alliance Hall, 1015 Barton St., Hamilton, Ont., Canada. Check locally for details.
- Pennsylvania. New Year's Eve Extravaganza with John Stevens & Double-shot and the Dynamics at the Dupont VFW, 403 Main St., Dupont, Pa., 7:30 p.m.-1:00 a.m.

SUPPORT THE PAJ PRESS FUND

In 1971, a voluntary fund-raising campaign was launched by a group of loyal readers of the Polish American Journal entitled "We Love the PAJ Press Fund" in order to help cover rising postage, material and production costs.

Donations to the PAJ Press Fund are also used to support our reader services (postage, telephone, research, etc.), provide newsclippers with stamps and envelopes, and cover extraordinary expenses in producing the paper. **The Polish American Journal is not a profit-making venture.** Thanks to its dedicated staff, the PAJ is published as a "public service" for American Polonia.

Donations to the PAJ Press Fund will be acknowledged in the paper unless otherwise directed by the contributor.

A sincere "THANK YOU" for their donations to the PAJ PRESS FUND: Michael Antosh, Aurora, Colo.; Gerald Dajnowicz, Detroit; Eugene Golomb, Rochester, N.Y.; Michael Jurek, Oak Ridge, N.J.; Edward Kwiatkowski, St. Petersburg, Fla.; Genevieve Trzeciak, Appleton, Wisc.; Mary Wiernasz Wozniak, Newmarket, N.H.; and two "Friends of the PAJ." Dziękujemy! The PAJ thanks all who donated to the Press Fund.

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HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO-STYLE / Geraldine Balut Coleman

Beyond the Uprising

CHICAGO—On October 10, The Polish Museum of America had the privilege of hosting **Maria Chudzinski**, freedom fighter, and Cynthia Grant Bowman, author, as they presented and signed the biographical account, "Beyond the Uprising: A Polish Girl's Journey," written by Cynthia Grant Bowman, professor of law at Cornell Law School in Ithaca, New York. Guests listened to selected readings from the book along with a multi-media presentation.

This biography is "an engaging story of a charming and resourceful Polish girl from a privileged background whose youth, education and subsequent life were interrupted and transformed by World War II. Like so many others, she participated in a passionate but tragic battle for her country, and lost everything - her family, her home, her lifestyle, and her country. Her struggle to find herself as an émigré and to create a life for herself in a new country reflects the courage and resourcefulness of her whole generation." Intrigued by Maria's past, Professor Bowman asked Maria to tell her story. Ms. Bowman writes how Maria, as a



MARIA CHUDZINSKI

teen-ager, joined the underground resistance (Home Army); how she fought during the 1944 Warsaw Uprising; and how she was taken prisoner by the Germans when the city fell. In 1945, Maria moved to England, where she was a member of the Polish Air Force, and, in 1952, settled in Chicago. Supportive of her Polish heritage, Mrs. Chudzinski has been very active in Chicago's Polish American community. Ms. Bow-

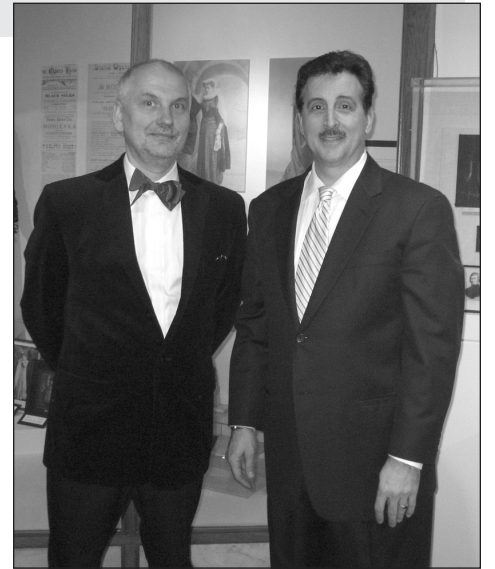
man first met Maria while she was teaching at Northwestern University Law School, where Maria worked in the international section of the law library.

MUSIC FROM MUSEUM ARCHIVES. The Polish Museum of America (PMA) presented "Music from the Polish Museum of America Collection." A concert featuring tenor, **David Oleszewski Troiano**, and pianist, **Michal Korzistka**, was held on November 1 in the Great Hall of the Museum. Attendees had the wonderful opportunity to listen and hear rarely-heard musical treasures from the Museum's Music Archives. Korzistka performed music by Chopin and Szymanowski, and Troiano sang *Krakowiacek* by E. Wasilewski, *Ted Jeden Dzień* by Michal Jaworski and *Po Sierokiem Jasnje Niebie* by S. Niewadownski, among others. David is a renowned soloist, choir director, and organist from Michigan and earned his Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Michigan. He performs musical works using his diverse talents in diverse settings. He has performed throughout the United States, Canada, Bahamas, Poland, Portugal, and Mexico. Michal is one of Poland's leading interpreters of Chopin's piano works. He was born in Bielsko-Biala and is a professor

of music at the University of Silesia in Cieszyn, Poland. Professor Korzistka completed his post-graduate studies at the Academy of Music in Warsaw. He has performed in concerts throughout Poland and abroad. This was Michal's second appearance the PMA.

THE POLISH WOMEN'S VOICE: 99 YEARS STRONG.

November 3 marked the 99th anniversary of the first issue of the *Glos Polek* (*The Polish Women's Voice*), the monthly newspaper published by the Polish Women's Alliance of America (PWAA). The first attempt to publish *Glos Polek* was discontinued after only two years due to a lack of funds, but the PWAA's second attempt was successful, and has been a welcomed publication for its members. In 1910, the newspaper was a weekly publication, written completely in the Polish language. The mission of publishing *Glos Polek* was and continues to be to educate PWAA members on cultural topics, to help preserve Polish heritage, and to continue to keep membership informed of the latest PWAA news. Today, this 99-year-old publication, written both in English and Polish,



Michal Korzistka (left), and David Oleszewski Troiano presented Music from the Polish Museum of America Collection.

has changed into an updated color-formatted news magazine. But the primary objective of the *Glos Polek* remains the same: to keep readers informed about the latest developments in the organization, in their communities, in Poland, and in the world.

A centennial celebration of the newspaper will be held in November 2010 and all interested will be informed about the centennial events which presently are in the planning stage. There are but a few newspapers or magazines in the United States that have been owned, edited, and published by women for 100 years without interruption. The PWAA is proud of this accomplishment and "The Polish Women's Voice."

FOLKERT PIANO RECITAL. On October 10, patrons filled the Recital Hall of Northeastern Illinois University's Fine Arts Building to hear a piano recital performed by Polish-born pianist, Piotr Folkert. Hosted by the Polish Arts Club of Chicago, Folkert performed music of Bach and Chopin. A highly-regarded pianist, Piotr has won consistent critical acclaim worldwide as a soloist, recitalist, orchestral performer, as well as a recording artist. He has an active performing schedule which takes him to the great concert stages of North America with frequent engagements at Carnegie Hall, in addition to engagements in Europe, Australia and the Far East. Folkert received his Master's degree from the Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice, Poland. He continued his studies at Yale University, Indiana University, and Mannes College of Music in New York City.

MANYA - A ONE WOMAN PLAY. The Chicago area theater-going community had the exciting opportunity to attend "Manya - A Living History of Marie Curie." This one-woman dramatic production detailed some of Madam Curie's struggles and triumphs. It gave insights into an academically-talented woman and revealed the "human character" of a complex person. Maria was a woman who could not be stopped, who was intensely private and devoutly Polish, and who succeeded in winning the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in a male-dominated scientific arena. Sponsored by Northwestern University's Graduate School, its International Institute for Nanotechnology, the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science as well as the Alumni of Northwestern University, this play was held on October 15 - 17 at Ryan Auditorium Theater on the Evanston campus. Actress and writer, Susan Marie Frontczak, presented an emotional and exciting portrayal of Marie Skłodowska Curie. This play has been performed over 200 times in 21 states for almost nine years.

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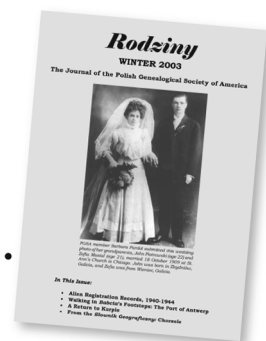
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AMERICAN POLONIA AT A GLANCE

CONNECTICUT

HARTFORD — The annual **Szopka Festival** sponsored by the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford was held at the Polish National Home, Nov. 29. Books, holiday items, Polish foods, and Polish imports were available at the numerous booths throughout the festival ballroom. The proceeds from this event will be used to support the scholarship fund of the Polish Club awarded to college bound students.

The Festival derives its name from the Krakovian szopka (traditional Polish Folk art) which had its origin in the 19th century in Poland. This year the competition, inviting students to design their own szopki which then were judged and awarded prizes, was extended to include children and grandchildren of members.

The Festival was chaired by Louis Maglaty of West Hartford and Edward Farley of New Britain. The public was invited free of charge as has been the custom in the past. The well known Polish restaurant at the Polish National Home served dinners beginning at 11:30 in the morning.

The Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford is an affiliate of the American Council for Polish Culture, a national organization.

MICHIGAN

EASTPOINTE — You can support the **American Polish Assistance Association** by stopping by its gift shop, located at 23801 Gratiot. It is located at the basement floor of the Gratiot Office Plaza. This winter, AAPA will have numerous folk art items, Polish Christmas cards,

ornaments, jellies, Boleslawiec pottery, dolls, and more.

The office hours are normally Wednesday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., or by appointment (586) 778-9766. AAPA suggests calling before making the trip, in case they are short staffed.

MINNESOTA

MINNEAPOLIS — The **Sacred Heart of Jesus** parish is hosting its 2nd Annual Christmas Bake and Craft Sale on Saturday December 5, 2009. 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the church hall, 2114 5th St. NE. There will be an array of wonderful tasting baked goods, beautiful craft items and a variety of **pierogi for sale** (potato cheese, prune, apple and sauerkraut). For more information call (612) 781-9328

MINNEAPOLIS — The **Polanie Club of Minneapolis and St. Paul** wishes to share Poland's most beloved holiday celebration by hosting a traditional Christmas Eve dinner, **Wigilia**, Sun., Dec. 6, 2009, at Jax Café, 1928 University Avenue N.E. The cost for this non-profit event is \$35 per person and includes tax and gratuity. The social hour begins at 5:00 PM, with dinner at 6:00 PM followed by music and kolędy (the singing of Polish and American carols). For information and reservation please call Fran Chorzempa (651) 639-1464, Marie Tromiczak (763) 566-2132 or Marta Swica (651) 638-9577.

MINNEAPOLIS — The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota will hold a traditional **Wigilia Dinner** to benefit disadvantaged Polish children on December 13, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at Gasthof

Restaurant located at 2300 University Avenue NE, Minneapolis. This community Christmas Eve celebration features sharing of the oplatki, eating traditional foods, and singing Christmas carols in Polish and English. Tickets available online at www.pacim.org. For more information, call Mietek Konczyk at (651) 222-7455.

MINNEAPOLIS — Join the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota in **singing kolędy** on Sunday, January 3, 2010 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Catholic Eldercare, 817 Main Street NE, Minneapolis. 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) 591-9602.

MISSOURI

ST. LOUIS — The **Polish American Cultural Society** of Metropolitan St. Louis will hold its annual **Wigilia**, Tues., Dec. 8, at the Glen Echo Country Club.

The society's Choral Group will perform Sat., Dec. 12 at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snow's "Way of Lights" ceremony.

For information about either event, please call (314) 868-6911.

NEW YORK

BINGHAMTON — During the winter months of December through February, the **Kopernik Observa-**

tory will only be open one special Friday night each month with guest lecturers and night time viewing (weather permitting). Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Program begins at 7:00 p.m.

This year's Winter Lecture series includes:

December 11: Prelude to the Geminid Meteor Shower.

December 13-15: Geminid Meteor Shower — Clear Only Program. Call the Observatory at 5:00 p.m. for sky conditions.

January 15 and February 19: Winter Skies. Come and join the Kopernik Astronomical Society for a winter Friday evening of guest speakers and casual astronomy!

Saturday February 6, 2010: Winter Star Party. The Kopernik Astronomical Society will hold its annual Winter Star Party, regardless of sky conditions! Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

Call (607) 748-3685 or check www.kopernik.org for a list of guest speakers and other details for both the Winter Lecture Series and the Winter Star Party.

PENNSYLVANIA

UNIONTOWN — Since 1979, the **Polish Heritage Club** re-enacts the popular Polish Christmas Eve supper or **Wigilia**. This year's event will be Fri., Dec. 18th at the Polish Club Hall on So. Mt. Vernon Ave. at 6 p.m.

After citing the first star of the evening, President Helen Sobek will call upon Club Chaplain, the Rev. Canon Joseph L. Sredzinski to read the Nativity story in Polish and to lead the Invocation. Participants will then share oplatki with each other along with holiday greetings

of forgiveness, love and the best for the coming New Year.

The public is most welcome to come with required reservations by phoning Cathy Duhon at (721) 439-4406 or Helen Sobek at (724) 326-4282 by December 15.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The **National Gallery of Art** continues to offer guided tours in Polish. The next one will take place on Fri., Dec. 11 and will include both West and East Building Highlights — artworks from 13th to 19th centuries and 20th-century art. We meet respectively at the Rotunda of the West Building at noon and at the East Building Information desk at 2:00 p.m. Each tour takes approximately one hour (and you can follow either of them independently).

Please, check the calendar of events at www.nga.gov/programs/tours/#foreign.

In addition, it is possible to book free one-hour tours (in Polish) for groups, three weeks to four months in advance. For appointment, call (202) 842-6247

As always, all tours and events organized by the National Gallery of Art are free and open to public.

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POLISH CHEF / Robert Strybel

More Tried and True Suggestions for Your Wigilia Table

Part 2 of 2

Now is the time to start planning your Christmas Eve menu. Here are some classic recipes for wigilia table, each more delicious than the next!

WIGILIA CLEAR BEET SOUP (czysty barszcz wigilijny). Scald 2-3 dried bolete mushrooms with 1 c boiling water and let stand 2 hrs, then cook in same water until tender and set aside. Peel and dice: 5 med beets, generous slice of celeriac (or 1 stalk celery), 3 med carrots and 1-2 parsley roots. Place in pot containing 2 qts water, 2 bay leaves, 3 grains allspice and 1 generous T salt and cook until tender. Strain, reserving cooked vegetables for the salad (below). Add the mushroom liquid (reserve mushrooms for uszka – below), sour to taste with several T cider vinegar or about 1/2 c sauerkraut juice, add a jigger dry red wine (but no more!) and season to taste with salt, pepper, marjoram and a bit of sugar. Let stand covered for flavors to blend or – better yet – refrigerate overnight and reheat to serve. Serve with uszka (below).

LITTLE-EAR DUMPLINGS (uszka). Drench 2 oz dried bolete mushrooms with 2 c hot water and let stand 2 hrs, then cook in same water until tender. Soak 1 slice French bread in 1/2 c warm water until soggy. Chop and sauté 1 coarsely-chopped onion in 2 T butter until tender and lightly browned. Pass mushrooms, onion and squeezed-out pre-soaked bread through food chopper or process briefly. Add 1/4 c bread crumbs, stir in 1 egg white, salt & pepper to taste and mix well. Filling should be on the stiff side, so if it's mushy, stir in a little more bread crumbs and set aside. Sift 1 c flour onto bread-board, work in egg yolk and just enough water to bind ingredients into a dough. Knead until smooth, roll out very thin and cut into 1-1/2" squares. Place a little filling on each square, fold 2 opposite points together to form a triangle and pinch shut. Gently pull 2 ends of the triangle together into a ring and pinch them together. Cook in lightly-salted boiling water without crowding until uszka float up. Remove with slotted spoon and serve in clear beetroot soup.

CREAMED HERRING WITH APPLE (śledź w śmietanie z jabłkiem). Drain a 14-16 oz jar of



POLISH PANCAKES (racuszki). Beat 2 c buttermilk with 2 eggs. Beat in 2 c + 2T flour until smooth. Stir in 1 t baking powder, 1 t baking soda and 1/2 t vanilla extract. Spoon batter into 1/4" deep hot oil, fry roughly 3" pancakes to a nice golden-brown on both sides. Add more oil as needed. Drain on paper towel. Serve hot, dusted with confectioner's sugar or topped with fruit mixture: preserves, jam, plum butter, fruit syrup or canned pie filling of choice.

marinated herring, discarding onion and spices. Cut herring into 1 1/2 inch or so serving-size pieces, plunge into a large pot of cold water for 1 min. Drain well in sieve until all dripping stops. Arrange pieces of herring on serving dish. Drizzle with juice of 1 small lemon (through a sieve to catch the pits). Coarsely grate 1 cored, peeled, small tart apple and mix with herring pieces. Arrange on serving dish. Slice 2 small onions wafer thin, break into rings and intersperse with herring. For-blend 1/2-1 c sour cream, 1 t confectioner's sugar and 1 T prepared horseradish and pour over herring. Refrigerate covered several hrs before serving with boiled potatoes or rye bread.

HERRING SALAD (salatka śledziowa). Drain 8 oz. jar marinated herring and discard onions and spices. Dice or cube herring and place in salad bowl. Add 2 c cold, cooked diced potatoes, 2 peeled, diced apples, 2 diced onions and 2 chopped dill pickles. Toss gently and fold in sauce: fork-blend 1 c mayonnaise with 1/2 c sour cream and 1-2 T brown prepared mustard. Salt & pepper to taste. Chill at least 2 hrs before serving.

FISH BAKED IN CREAM (ryba zapiekana w śmietanie). Rinse well and pat dry 2-3 lbs fresh or thawed fillets (walleye, pike, lake perch, whitefish, catfish, buffalo fish, etc.), salt well and refrigerate several hrs

or overnight. When ready to use, rinse and pat dry. Fry 3 thinly sliced onions in 3 T butter until transparent. Pour pan drippings into baking pan large enough to accommodate the fish and sprinkle with 2 T finely chopped fresh parsley. Place the fillets on top. Dot generously with cold butter and sprinkle with juice of 1 small lemon. Sprinkle top evenly with 2 T plain bread crumbs and bake in 360° oven 25-30 min or until done. Fork-blend 1 c sour cream with 2 raw egg yolks and 2 T finely chopped fresh dill and pour over fish and bake another 10 min or so. salt & pepper to taste.

STEWED SAUERKRAUT & MUSHROOMS (kapusta z grzybami). Drain 1 qt sauerkraut, reserving juice. Swish sauerkraut around in a large pot of cold water, drain in colander, press out moisture, and chop coarsely. Place sauerkraut in pot, scald with boiling water to cover, add 1 bayleaf, 3 grains allspice and 6-8 peppercorns and bring to boil, then reduce heat and cook uncovered on med. heat about 1 hr. Towards the end add a crushed mushroom bouillon cube. Replace water that evaporates and stir occasionally. While sauerkraut cooks, in 3 T butter or oil fry up 8 oz. diced fresh Portobello mushrooms and 2 chopped onions on med high heat, stirring frequently, until fully cooked and browned (about 15 min). Combine drained cooked sauerkraut and

mushrooms, transfer to casserole, stir in 2-3 canned anchovy fillets, finely chopped. Sprinkle with 1 t sugar and a few dashes of pepper. Bake covered in 350° oven 1 hr. This can be made a day ahead and reheated just before serving. If too watery, stir in a little flour and bake several min longer.

HOME-MADE PIEROGI (pierogi domowe). Set at large pot of salted water (1 t salt per qt water) on to boil. To 2 flour on board add 1 c sour cream, 1 small egg and 1/2 t salt. Work ingredients together to form a smooth dough and knead on floured board until smooth and elastic. Roll out thin on floured surface and cut into rounds with drinking glass or biscuit cutter. Place a spoonful of filling (see below) on each dough circle slightly off center, fold larger dough flap over it and pinch edges together well. Cook in boiling water in batches so as not to crowd, stirring gently with wooden spoon. When they float up, cook another 2-3 minutes. Test 1 for doneness. While they cook, proceed the same way with the remaining dough. Remove cooked pierogi with slotted spoon.

CHEESE & POTATO PIEROGI FILLING (ruskie pierogi). Simmer 1 finely minced onion in 2 T butter until tender and just starting to brown. Combine 2 c cold mashed potatoes with 1 c mashed farmer cheese (twaróg). Add the onion and mix ingredients into a uniform consistency. Salt & pepper to taste and use mixture to fill pierogi. Cook as above.

SAUERKRAUT & MUSHROOM PIEROGI FILLING (pierogi z kapustą i grzybami). Drain and rinse 1 qt sauerkraut, squeeze out moisture and chop rather fine. Transfer to pot, scald with boiling water to cover, add 1 bayleaf, 3 grains allspice and 1 mushroom bouillon cube, bring to boil, reduce heat and cook about 1 hr. Meanwhile, in 3 T butter or oil fry up 6-8 oz

diced fresh Portobello mushrooms and 2 chopped onions on med high heat, stirring frequently, until fully cooked and browned (about 15 min). Set aside. Drain cooked sauerkraut in colander. When cooled to room temp, press out as much moisture as possible, otherwise the pierogi may fall apart while cooking! Combine sauerkraut and mushroom-onion mixture well, salt & pepper to taste and use mixture to fill pierogi. Cook as above.

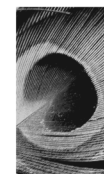
PLUM-BUTTER PIEROGI (pierożki z powidlami). Prepare dough as in pierogi-dough recipe above but cut it into smaller circles with juice or wine glass. Combine 1 c imported Polish powidła (plum butter) with 1/2 c ground walnuts and at least that amount of plain bread crumbs. Mixture should be on the thick side so it doesn't run out. Fill, seal and cook as above. Serve topped with melted butter, butter-browned bread crumbs or sour cream.

Po Obiedzie — After Dinner

WIGILIA WHEAT PUDDING (kuttia). Scald 1 c cracked wheat or bulgur wheat with 2 c hot water and let soak 30 min. Add 1 t salt, bring to a boil and cook covered until tender (30-60 min). Add a little more boiling water if it gets too dry. Stir in 1/2 c poppy seeds (rinsed and drained) or 1/2 c canned poppyseed filling and 1/2 c plumped raisins. Cook 1 c honey with 2 c water 20 min. When cooled to room temp, pour over wheat-raisin-poppyseed mixture. Optional: Some ground or chopped walnuts or almonds as well as 1/2 t vanilla extract may be added.

WIGLIA GRAIN & FRUIT DESERT (kasza z owocami). Place 4 c cooked pearl barely, millet groats (kasza jaglana) or rice on serving dish and drench with about 2 c of either of the above stewed fruit compotes, canned cherry or apple filling or preserves of choice.

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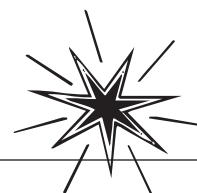


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Polish Christmas Concepts, Projects, and Tips

Part 2 of 2
 (continued from last month)

by Robert Strybel

The purpose of this column is to help fellow-Polish Americans explore and share various aspects of our beautiful Polish Christmas heritage in their family circles as well as in their clubs, parishes, neighborhoods or general community. Everyone must decide for themselves which of the entries are of only historical interest and which might be successfully introduced and cultivated in an American setting.

Each entry could be the topic of a school composition or essay and many entries could form part of a Polish trivia quiz. There are no copyright restrictions on this column, because the name of the game is sharing our Polish cultural legacy far and wide. Anyone so inclined is free to photo-copy or otherwise reproduce this article in full or in part in their club newsletter, parish bulletin, printed Christmas program or on the Internet.

CHRISTMAS WAFER (oplatek). This thin plain white wafer with nativity scenes stamped thereon is probably Poland's single most important ritual artifact of Christmas Eve. Sometimes referred to as "chleb anielski" (angel bread), it is shared by family members before the start of the Wigilia supper. Children sometimes get to dip theirs in honey. Colored opłatki are fed to farm animals.

OPŁATEK GATHERING. Other than the Polish Christmas wafer, the term opłatek also describes a social get-together at which the wafer is broken and shared outside the family circle. This may be at school, workplace, parish or club. Sometimes a snack is served (cake and coffee, a glass of wine, hors d'oeuvres, salty snacks, etc.), but usually not a full meal, and a kolędy sing-along may be included.

COMMUNITY WIGILIA (Wigilia grupowa). Usually held before Christmas for a larger group, it is often referred to in Polonia as an Oplatek-Dinner. Whether or not a Polish Christmas bazaar and/or bake sale accompanies the event, it is usually a good fund-raiser which helps promote our heritage at the same time.

POTLUCK WIGILIA. This is a good way for families and clubs to reintroduce the Wigilia tradition from which they have drifted away. Simply Xerox typical Wigilia recipes (from a Polish cookbook or the Polish Chef column) and allow participants to draw them out of a hat. Everyone prepares and donates the dish they drew. For larger crowds, there may be doubles or even triples of each recipe.

CHRISTMAS EVE (Wigilia). To the people of Poland and those of Polish ancestry around the globe Wigilia is the single most important occasion of the year, since its symbolism combines the values Poles cherish the most: God, country and family. Everything about this occasion is special: the appearance of the first star, hay under the table-cloth, the extra place-setting, opłatek-sharing, special meatless menu comprising the bounty of field, forest and rivers. Families sing the age-old kolędy (carols) and recall old-fashioned lore said to predict the future before heading for Pasterka (Midnight Mass).

GIFT OF HERITAGE. For those on your gift list consider choosing something that will remind him or her of our beautiful Polish traditions. It could be a book, recording, decorative item, something in amber or crystal, a wood-carving, wall-hanging, a folk doll or a bottle of Polish spirits. A Polish-themed wall calendar or a gift subscription to the POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL (800-422-1275) is also worth considering.

SHEPHERDS MASS OR MIDNIGHT MASS (Pasterka). Traditionally held at midnight (although some Pol-Am parishes have been holding it earlier in recent years), it is a fitting culmination for the most beautiful day in the year. The faithful lift up their hearts to God as the church resounds with the majestic strains of Polish kolędy. Even if you have to drive across town or to a neighboring community to attend a Polish-style Pasterka, it will be well worth the time and effort!

CHRISTMAS DAY (Boże Narodzenie). In Polish tradition it is somewhat anti-climactic, because everything of importance has already taken place on Christmas Eve, culminating in Midnight Mass.

Poles, who have attended Pasterka, usually go to Mass again on Christmas morning. It is a day of feasting and visiting with relatives. Unlike Wigilia, there is no special food, only typical company fare: appetizers, salads and relishes, roast fowl, pork, veal, bigos, etc.

ST. STEPHEN'S DAY (Dzień Świętego Szczepana). December 26th is a national holiday in Poland commemorating the first Christian martyr who was stoned to death. More devout families start the day with Holy Mass and later invite or visit good friends for holiday refreshments and fellowship. Known in Poland as the Second Day of Christmas, in Canada and other Commonwealth countries it is called Boxing Day.

POLISH CAROLERS (kolędnicy). Traditional Polish folk carolers, who carry a pole-mounted star and a portable Christmas crib, either don regional costumes or wear garb meant to resemble King Herod, an Angel, Devil and Death (the Grim Reaper). Other typical characters are a peasant couple, Jewish merchant, soldier, priest and Gypsy. The Three Wisemen are added on or around Jan. 6. In the New Year a bear, wild ox, goat and stork are often added.

NEW YEAR'S EVE (Sylwester). Once a night of fortune-telling games, it is now celebrated at balls and house parties, in pubs, clubs and discos. Pol-Am groups holding such celebrations would do well to kick off the dancing with the Polonaise — a regal dance in which couples promenade around the hall. At the stroke of midnight, champagne corks pop and merry-makers kiss, hug and exchange wishes of "Szczęśliwego Nowego roku!" In addition to "Auld Lang Syne," be sure the band knows how to play "Jak szybko mijają chwile."

FEAST OF THE THREE KINGS (Święto Trzech Króli). On the Epiphany (Jan.6), figures of the Three Wisemen are added to Christmas cribs, and at church the faithful receive blessed chalk, with which to inscribe K+M+B 2010 over their doorways. The chalk is used to inscribe the initials of the Three Kings over the entrance to the home: K+M+B 2010.



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BOOK REVIEW / John M. Grondelski

An Anthology of Polish Literature

POLISH LITERATURE
FROM 1918 TO 2000:
AN ANTHOLOGY

Edited by Michael J. Mikoś
Slavica Publishers, 2008,
Hardbound, \$44.95, pp. 490
To Order: 1-812-877-SLAVICA
or Slavica, 2611 East 10 Street,
Bloomington, IN 47408-2603

Anyone interested in Polish literature — be it a general reader who just wants to see what it's like, a Polish American who wants to learn about his heritage, or a student wanting a thorough comprehensive overview of this subject—owes an inestimable debt to Michael J. Mikoś. With this volume Mikoś, professor of Polish at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, completes a six volume set that provides English readers with a comprehensive translation of the major authors of Polish literature from the Middle Ages to the end of the twentieth century.

The current volume, which surveys Polish literature from Poland's recovery of independence in 1918 through the year 2000 is, in some ways, the hardest to write. It is always perilous to try to pass judgment on one's own times by trying to separate the lasting from the passing. This task is doubly complicated in Poland's case where, as Mikoś notes in his preface, the ideological agenda of the communist dictatorship often promoted writers whose talent, in charity if not in truth, might be called mediocre, while censoring and suppressing genuinely significant writers. Notwithstanding those challenges, however, the editor gives us a "heaping helping" of 62 authors and 218 excerpts.

Mikoś does not intend to reinvent the wheel. Where English translations of major works by major authors (e.g., Miłosz, Herbert, Mrozek et al.) are available, he does not reproduce them. Paradoxically, his selectivity serves the anthology by freeing up space for other works, both by those authors and by others

who are less frequently translated but who nevertheless deserve a wider readership.

The selection of writers in this anthology is impressive. Selections from pre-World War II authors include: Tuwim, Słonimski, Lechoń, Wierzyński, Iwaszkiewicz, Iłakowiczówna, Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska, Broniewski, Przyboś, Gałczyński, Czechowicz, Baczyński, Gajcy, Witkiewicz, Kaden-Bandrowski, Dąbrowska, Kuncewiczowa, Nałkowska, Schulz, Wittlin, Vincenz, Kossak-Szczucka, Malewska, and Gombrowicz. Post-war writers include: Wat, Miłosz, Borowski, Różewicz, Świrszczyńska, Białoszewski, Herbert, Szymborska, Hartwig, Stachura, Grynberg, Twardowski, Marek-Rymkiewicz, Zagajewski, Świetlicki, Parfiński, Parandowski, Szaniawski, Pruszyński, Wańkiewicz, Mackiewicz, Andrzejewski, Herling-Grudziński, Szczepański, Odojewski, Jeleński, Tyrmand, Lem, Brandys, Konwicki, Mrozek, Myśliwski, Hłasko, Kapuściński, Nowakowski, Huelle, and Tokarczuk. Mikoś introduces each group with a preface that provides an historical and cultural context for what was going on in Poland when the authors were writing. Each individual author is introduced by a brief biography.

Know a friend who likes literature? This book is a perfect Christmas gift, and doubly so for Polish Americans. Don't know these authors? Let Michael Mikoś introduce them to you with his well-chosen selections that will whet your appetite for more. For those with whetted appetites, Mikoś provides a thirty page "selected bibliography" of English translations of individual authors whose better acquaintance you'll want to make. If you are a fan of good literature or poetry, be assured your "Amazon Wish List" will be full, so why not get started with this superb, magisterial, yet very readable introduction?

**KATYŃ: A CRIME
WITHOUT PUNISHMENT**
Edited by Anna M. Cienciala,
Natalia S. Lebedeva,
and Wojciech Materski
Yale University Press, 2007
HB, \$50, pp. 560.

Another recommendable "stocking stuffer" is Anna Cienciala's *Katyń*, published in Yale's prestigious "Annals of Communism" series. As stated before, this book is the authoritative English language study of the brutal murders of Polish soldiers by the USSR in 1940. Cienciala provides a narrative account of what happened from the Soviet invasion of Poland September 17, 1939, the murders in the spring of 1940, the subsequent Soviet cover-up, and contemporary Russian attitudes.

What makes her book doubly valuable is that the narrative is accompanied by a rich selection of 122 English translations of primary source documents, mostly from Soviet archives, that shows that *Katyń* is not a matter of historical revisionism but a neuralgic and live issue.

No Polish American should be without it, or without the now available English version of Andrzej Wajda's "Katyń," (Polish with English subtitles, \$24.49, www.amazon.com).

BOOKS IN BRIEF / Florence Waszkelewicz Clowes, MLIS

Winkowski's Ghost Files

THE BOOK OF ILLUMINATION:
A Novel from the Ghost Files
by Mary Ann Winkowski
and Maureen Foley
Three River Press, 2009
310 pp, \$14.00

Do you believe in ghosts? Do spirits tap you on the shoulder? If so this is a book for you.

Anza O'Malley has the ability to see and talk with ghosts, and help them leave this world when they are held back for some reason. She is a single mom, with a son, Henry. She is still in love with Decan, their father, who is married and has two children. The six of the have a modern-day relationship: friendliness and love, exchanging children over the weekends.

She receives a call from Sylvia, a bookbinder for the Boston Athenaeum, who has been entrusted to repair a rare collection from Phineas Winslow, a wealthy Bostonian. There has been a strange happenings in her office and Sylvia is frightened. When Anza enters the Athenaeum's workroom, she immediately sees two ghosts: monks from ancient times, who are really angry. They tell her they need to see the Bishop, immediately. They need to make sure the manuscript is in safe keeping. There has been debate over the centuries on the authenticity and

even existence of the Book of Kells. Few have seen it. Sylvia hides it in her apartment but it is soon stolen. They keep it a secret, hoping Dec, who is a detective, can find it. Dec receives the help of con artist who has been given a lighter sentence through Dec's help. They shadow shady art dealers in search of the manuscript.

In the meantime, they are allowed to peruse through the remaining book collection at the Winslow home. Anza encounters another ghost, John Grady, Winslow's butler, who cannot rest because he must find the deed to the Swansea home. He knows it is a child's book, but is unable to locate it. Anza promises to help.

Between her escapades Anza is constantly interrupted to pick up her son from kindergarten, bake cupcakes or make a costume. A light relationship with another man tends to distract from the plot, as well as the relationship with Dec, but creates imaginative characters.

Winkowski and Foley provide a vivid description of the Boston area and an explanation of the capability of some people to encounter ghosts. Winkowski is a paranormal investigator, worked with several federal agencies and a consultant for the CBS series, *The Ghost Whisperer*.

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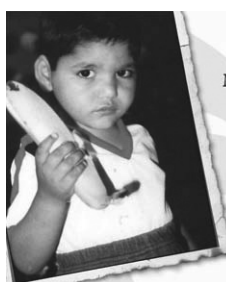
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An Adoption
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Bulgarian Boy

The Mom with the Red Lipstick

Written by:
Lydia M. Kordalewski
As told by Nicholas to his mother
on the way home from the orphanage

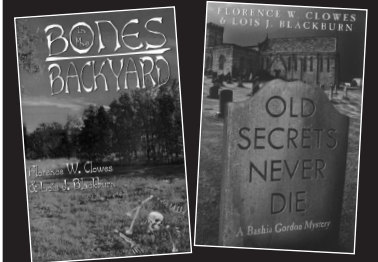
The **Mom with the Red Lipstick** is an emotional and moving story told by a little boy of his earlier life in a Bulgarian orphanage on the way home to the United States with his new mom. His mom shares her emotions, struggles, and unconditional love of a boy, who became her son on a wonderful spring day in Bulgaria.

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An autographed copy is available for \$14.00 plus shipping. For more information, please contact the author at momredlipstick@aol.com

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The National Polish Center, Inc.

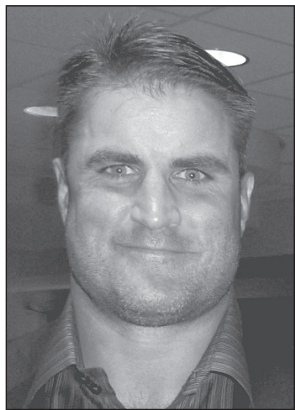
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SPORTS / Tom Tarapacki

Still Hanging Around

Houston Texan **Jeff Zgonina** (inset, below) is 39, the second-oldest nonkicker in the NFL (second to Brett Favre) was featured in an October 19th article in SPORTS ILLUSTRATED by Tim Layden. Zgonina has played 17 seasons on the interior defensive line and special teams for eight franchises, including the Steelers, Falcons, Colts, Rams, Dolphins and Raiders. He has started just 63 of his career 208 games, and he has never been paid more than the NFL minimum (currently \$860,000) for a season's work.



A seventh round pick of the Steelers in 1993, the 6'2", 290-lb. Zgonina has never been a star. However, he has always been a durable, steady and reliable player. In addition, as Layden put it: "At every stop in his career Zgonina has been regarded as a unifying locker room force, less through cheerleading than through gruff, old-school ballbusting that could border on hazing." Layden added that "Young players follow him like puppy dogs into film sessions" because of his extensive knowledge of the game.

Jeff was a high school star, playing defensive end, nosetackle, offensive guard, tight end and fullback at Carmel High in the Chicago suburbs. He went to Purdue, where

he played one year at linebacker before moving to the line.

Jeff's father, Casimir, played guard at St. Ambrose College in Davenport, Iowa, and later started and ran his own printing company, Uni-Label & Tag in Elk Grove Village, Ill. Nine years ago Jeff and a partner started a company that raises bucking bulls for rodeos, the "Mo" Betta Bull Company. They own more than 100 bulls for competing and breeding. The company is going well, but Jeff apparently is not ready to work there full-time just yet.

PLAYING IN PAMPERS? Poland's new soccer coach **Franciszek Smuda** said things "couldn't be worse" in the country's sport but that he was capable of picking up the national team after a disastrous qualifying campaign for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. Smuda cautioned that Polish players have to be mentally strong or they will face teams like England "in pampers."

"We are capable of making a strong team and a good atmosphere around the representation and (the Polish football association) PZPN," Smuda told reporters in Warsaw. "We will build the team reasonably, but nobody will wait for results until

2012." A recent corruption scandal has marred the association's image as Poland prepares to host the prestigious Euro 2012 football championships with co-hosts Ukraine.

Poland fired its previous trainer Leo Beenhakker in September after a 3-0 loss against Slovenia ended the country's hopes for qualifying for the World Cup finals. Stefan Majewski served as interim coach for two matches before Smuda took over. Majewski guided the team to defeats against Czech Republic and Slovakia. The 61-year-old Smuda has managed several Premier League teams in Poland. He also played professionally in Poland, the US and Germany.

A SAFE BET. **Caroline Wozniacki**, a 19-year-old ranked sixth in the world, created a surprising controversy when she retired from the first-round match at the Luxembourg Open. She was on her way to a win over Anne Kremer of Luxembourg when she suffered a hamstring injury. Since her injury would prevent her from playing in the next round, and because her opponent was from Luxembourg, Caroline's father, Piotr, told his daughter to retire before winning. His comments, spoken in his native Polish, were picked up by microphones and heard by viewers watching the match on the Internet. His comments during the match led to a surge in online bets for Kremer to win.

For her selfless actions, Wozniacki was investigated by the Tennis Integrity Unit. In all likelihood, Caroline Wozniacki will be cleared of any wrongdoing, but it's still disappointing that she's set to be investigated after her act of sportsmanship. Obviously, Caroline is guilty of nothing other than allowing Kremer to advance to the second round in front of her hometown fans. If the WTA is really concerned, they can just take the microphones off the courts.

Caroline's parents, Piotr and Anna Wozniacki, have both been



JIM DOMBROWSKI (center) recently returned home to accept induction into the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame. Dombrowski retired from pro football in 1996 after 11 years with the Saints.

professional athletes. Anna played volleyball for Poland, and Piotr can look back on a career as professional soccer player. The Polish couple moved to Denmark in the late 80s when Piotr went to play for a Danish soccer club.

YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN. **Jim Dombrowski** recently returned home to accept induction into the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame. He started at Williamsville South HS before going on to an All-America career as an offensive lineman at Virginia. A leader on and off the football field, Jim won numerous accolades as one of the finest student-athletes in the history of the University of Virginia. He received the NCAA Today's Top Six Award for his combined athletic ability, academic achievement, leadership characteristics and campus involvement.

He was the sixth overall pick in the 1986 draft, the highest ever for a player from the Buffalo area. As with Virginia, he anchored the offense and helped the program rise to success. Dombrowski retired from pro football in 1996 after 11 years with the Saints.

Jim had planned on going to medical school, but with two young sons at the time, he didn't want to spend a lot of time away from his

family in Louisiana. He also thought about coaching, but passed it up for the same reason. Instead, he became a financial planner. However, as his sons have grown older he has become more active coaching their teams.

Dombrowski was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame earlier in the year.

EARLY START. Penske Racing announced that **Brad Keselowski** will compete in the final three NASCAR Cup Series races of the 2009 season, replacing driver David Stremme in the No. 12 Penske Dodge.

In September, Penske Racing announced that Keselowski would join the team full-time beginning in 2010. The 25-year-old native of Rochester Hills, Mich. will drive the No. 12 Penske Dodge in the Cup Series next season and he will also compete for the team in the No. 22 Discount Tire Dodge in the 2010 Nationwide Series.

Brad is leaving JR Motorsports, the team owned by close friend Dale Earnhardt Jr. "What made it easier for me was to have Dale's blessing to do it," said Brad. He was one of the people who actually pushed me fairly hard to take the deal." The move will give Keselowski some time to work with his car before the 2010 season.



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BABA JAGA'S CORNER / Agnieszka Raducka

My Trip to Lithuania

This month's guest columnist, Agnieszka Raducka, has an M.A. in Literature from Jagiellonian University in Krakow. She is finishing her M.A. at Dallas Baptist University in ESL and Reading.

This summer she worked as a volunteer to teach English in summer courses organized by Lithuanian Christian University in Klaipeda.

Traveling allows living with a different-than-usual schedule and seeing things from a different perspective. That is why people say traveling is educational. I agree, I myself live in a different culture (Arlington, Texas), far from my native Poland. I speak a different language, and eat different food than I used to. It is challenging, and at times frustrating. At the same time, however, it gives me a chance to understand things better by seeing them from a completely different angle. It takes a certain humility and courage to be "a stranger".

This summer I traveled to Lithuania. I volunteered to teach English to students from the former Soviet Republics (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Kazakhstan and Moldavia) and Poland. Lithuania is one of three Baltic countries along with Latvia and Estonia. It is next to Poland, my homeland. It has also close ties to Poland.

Lithuanian Christian University is an international educational institute founded in 1991 in Klaipeda, Lithuania. Klaipeda is one of the largest port cities on the Baltic Sea, rich in culture and history. The city connects Russian and Western European businesses and history. LCC is now part of Klaipeda's intellectual and cultural community and is recognized nationally and internationally as a liberal art institution providing service for 600 students from 21 different countries.

Teaching is two-way street. With an open mind and a humble attitude we can learn from our students as much as possible. Hopefully they benefit from our teaching. I want to stress this statement, as it helps me stay balanced and appreciate the opportunity to learn. In Klaipeda, where we stayed, I met young people eager to learn English, and get know the world, which had been closed to their parents and grandparents. There are many things I would like to tell about these young people. Most of them had a good attitude and worked hard on their language skills. It was a pleasure to work with them. We learned from each other every day. I taught a pre-intermediate class that consisted of 16 students. They came from Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus, Russia, Poland, and Moldavia. Most of them were high school students. One person is working on his PhD, others were professionals: an engineer, a teacher, a lawyer, a medical doctor (psychiatrist), a pastor, and a businessman. As far as their ability in speaking English, they were on the same level. The varieties in age, education and backgrounds created an interesting and inspiring atmosphere for all of us.

Besides teaching/learning English six hours a day, there was time for sharing and discussion, for intellectual and spiritual growth. The students shared their cultures giving amazing performances. I was surprised how talented they were. There were students in this summer school of English, which needed more attention, than others. I can

only hope that those three weeks together would help them not only to speak better English, but also grow as people. Certainly, it helped me. I learned how similar human beings actually are no matter where they live.

There is always the question of who receives more from the helping situation, the helper or the recipient. Giving is rewarding. It is a source of pleasure. Yet this is not what I am talking about. I am thinking about helping by giving time and atten-

tion, about being there without distraction. I am thinking also about standing up on the right side, often against my own fears and against the crowd. This action does not necessarily bring the pleasures of giving but is right thing to do.

So, I am keeping asking myself who has received more during our three weeks in Klaipeda, my students or myself? I know I have received a lot. I hope I encouraged them in some way to keep looking for the real deal in their lives.



Side altar with Mickiewicz image at the student chapel at the Vilnius University.



The author stands in front of the Vilnius (King Batory) University gate. Above the gate there is a sign that Adam Mickiewicz was a student there. Mickiewicz is the considered the greatest Slavic poet alongside Pushkin. He is of Polish-Lithuanian origin.

Kudos for Grondelski



JOHN M. GRONDELSKI, right, receives a State Department "Meritorious Honor Award" from U.S. Ambassador Donald Beyer at the American Embassy in Bern, Switzerland, October 2.

Grondelski, Deputy Chief of the Consular Section, was commended for cutting visa waiting times in Bern, which had grown in 2007-08 to over 50 days due to understaffing. He is a book reviewer for the POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

- The **Polish Gift of Life** observed its 30th year of assistance to Polish children in need of medical attention. The organization held its Annual Luncheon November 22 at the Inn in New Hyde Park, N.Y. Polish Gift of Life is a 501 (c)(3) Public Charity organization and all contributions are tax-deductible. All donations can be sent directly to: Polish Gift of Life, Inc., P.O. Box 273, Albertson, NY 11507. To learn more, visit www.polishgiftoflife.org.

- Another important organization is the **Polish Children's Heartline**,

which has been providing humanitarian assistance to Poland since 1985. It held its annual fundraiser Sept. 13 at the Robert B. Meyner Reception Center in Homdel, N.J. in September. To make a donation to this worthy cause, send check to PCH at 177 Broadway, Clark, NJ 07066-1849, or visit www.polishchildrensheartline.org.

- The **Polish Museum** at 102 Liberty Street in Winona, Minnesota, held a dedication and blessing of a new 160-foot Mural at the museum's annex, August 15. The mural is a time line of Winona's Polish set-

ters, most of whom were from the Kashubian region. The mural's creation was a two-year undertaking.

- The **Alliance College Alumni Association** held its reunion in Cambridge Springs, Oct. 9-11. Former students and their families enjoyed a bonfire, visits to memorabilia rooms, children's Polish folk dance workshops, a Mass, and more. If you are a grad, you are encouraged to join the alumnae group. Write to Leslie Rachocki, treasurer, 1169 Sylvania Road, Cleveland Heights, OH 44121, e-mail lrachocki@ameritech.net.

Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year.

Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union wishes its Members, Friends, and the entire Polish community a peaceful and joyful Christmas and financial success in the New Year 2010.

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PONDERING POLE / Edward Poniewaz

A Model for the Future

Did you take the Piast survey? What are you waiting for? Don't make me call you during dinner.

Have you got that coffee table book of the most beautiful and important Polish American churches published? What are you waiting for? Don't make me ... whatever.

This year the Christmas message is about hope and the future and it is a tale of two women religious orders with Frank in their name. One is the Franciscan Sisters of Mary (www.fsmonline.org/) and the other is the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (www.fsolph.org/). The first followed the Christian directive to heal the sick; the latter fulfilled the need to serve by teaching the Polish immigrant children.

Recently the Franciscan Sisters of Mary completed a documentary film entitled "Continue Courageously" featuring the stories of a number of the sisters about their life in the community and as healthcare givers. It is a very loving record of how these women preserved what has grown into a major healthcare system in the Midwest. The youngest sister is in her 50s and the major focus of the order has become how to transition the heritage and mission to the lay persons currently managing and staffing the over 15 hospitals and facilities of SSM Healthcare.

THE MISSION NOW, based on a logical and prayerful conclusion, is to pass the torch of a loving and caring concern for the sick, not to a new generation of sisters (it just isn't reasonable or needed any more) but to the thousands of nurses, doctors, and administrators doing the work they did throughout their lives. The part the sisters played is in the sunset stage, but others are needed to

"continue courageously" into the future to further what was begun over 135 years ago.

The original SSM nuns came from Germany and the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help were founded by three Polish women who answered the call in 1901, in St. Louis, Missouri. The OLPH sisters continue their "mission" and are still teaching. In a similar way to the SSM order though, the job of teaching as a religious vocation is not as needed or reasonable any more simply because so many of the children they taught are now themselves well educated and teaching. These women have transitioned into many other areas of Christian ministry more suited for "society's current needs" and the circumstances of our era.

They are "responding to the needs of God's people in 16 states" but in various other ways. Perpetual Help sisters are involved in pastoral ministry in parishes, prisons and women's shelters, centers for spiritual renewal, and with victims of abuse. There is an "Earth" tab on their web site. The impression is that this order fully intends to continue as a viable religious entity and as servants of the people. The vocation tab is also a major link on their web site.

The state of these two amazing groups of women illustrates two aspects of the current state of Polonia. On the one hand, there are many parts of our heritage that we are handing to others, non-Poles, to keep and preserve for us: the food, the music, the history and culture, and even some of our institutions and organizations. We give our recipes and stories to libraries, to publishers, to documentarians, and to schools. A good transition requires a lot of work and seems like a natural and logical course in American

society but we have to keep going. Think of how so many of us cherish and admire our Native American past.

THE OTHER ASPECT is how we transition our true Polish character to the young people in the community. While the old timers, our "greatest generation" pass on, there are millions of baby boomer Bob and Debbies, some fully born of the Polish ghetto, some with one leg in that world, and some that are the children of the boomers, the Seans and Madisons, the 25 percenters, that will walk in the parade, make the pierogi, or give up a dzien do-bry if we teach and entice them just enough to get hooked for things Polish.

The beautiful histories of the Franciscan Sisters give me a lot of hope, especially at Christmas time that our legacy and traditions and the good things about our people will endure for the future. My only question this month is, will you help? Think of a way to make it endure and then do it.



I want to wish all of the Polish American Journal readers, their families, friends, and why not, Andre' Rieu and Will Ferrell, a heartfelt Wesolych Swiat for the Christmas season and God bless and good luck for the New Year.

If you have a thought about this month's question, have a question of your own, or have interesting facts to share, contact me at: Edward Poniewaz, 6432 Marmaduke, St. Louis, MO 63139; e-Mail alinabrig@yahoo.com.

Note: If you send e-Mail, please reference in the subject line about the Polish American Journal or the Pondering Pole. I cannot open an eMail if I do not recognize the subject or the sender.

"Polonian of the Year"



(front, l to r.): John Bartus, president; Valerie DeDepersis, honoree; Cynthia Maleski Groch, Esq., director; and Theodore Michalak, 2nd v.p.; (back, l. to r.): John Petrus, treasurer; Dr. Andrzej Groch, director.

PITTSBURGH—The Kosciuszko Foundation, Pittsburgh Chapter, honored **Valerie Urbanek Wojciak DePersis** as "Polonian of the Year" at its 25th Annual Polonian luncheon held at the Main Ballroom of the University of Pittsburgh.

Teacher, businesswoman, leader within the Polish community, wife and mother, DePersis has a long record of community service. Among her many activities and accomplishments are: member and officer of the Women's League of Voters; Polish American Congress National Committee on Religious Affairs; Loyola University President's Advisory Board; teacher in a Catholic girl's high school; establishment of the DePersis-Urbaneck Fellowship in Women's History at Loyola University in Chicago.

John Bartus, President of the Pittsburgh Chapter opened the program with an invocation by Rev. Canon Joseph L. Sredzinski. Accomplished harpist Philomela Wyble performed several musical selections.

Bartus introduced the honoree who presented Edward DePersis, her husband of nineteen years. They

have eight children and are proud grandparents of sixteen grandchildren; many of them were in attendance.

The honoree was presented with proclamations from state and local officials proclaiming "Valerie Urbanek Wojciak DePersis Day." The program concluded with the presentation of gifts by the Kosciuszko Foundation, Polish Cultural Council, with special

recognition by representatives of Polish Falcons of America and other organizations.

—Theodore Michalik

GENEALOGY

What's in a Name?

by Robert Strybel

While many Polish last names were based on one's occupation, many others were based on someone's characteristics: Gwizdała (whistler), Garbaty (hunchbacked), Chudy (thin), Paluch (big-fingered) and Glowacki (big-headed). Typical peasant names were derived from common objects, tools and animals including Zajac (hare), Lopata (garden spade), Kozioł (billy goat), Słoma (straw), Sikora (titmouse, a bird) and Kwiatek (flower).

A great many people were named on the basis of who their fathers were: Pawlak (Paul's kid), Piekarczyk (baker's son), Pietrzak (Pete's boy), Marcinkiewicz (Martin's son) and Andrzejczak (Andy's kid).

For a custom-researched analysis of the meaning and derivation of your Polish last name, how many people share it, where they live, and whether a coat-of-arms goes with it, please airmail a \$16 check (adding \$7 for each additional surname) to: Robert Strybel, ulica Kaniowska 24, 01-529 Warsaw, Poland.

HERITAGE / Ellye Slusarczyk

An Ice Age Reminder

The Ice Age of long ago has left many reminders of its presence here on Mother Earth. One of these reminders is a rock, gigantic in size.

Would you like to view this rock?

Then plan a visit to Tychowa. This massive stone was left by an Ice Age glacier. If you wanted to know its measurements, you would discover it is 144 feet in circumfer-

ence, 12 feet in height, 52 feet in length and 36 feet in width.

This massive rock has a name — Triglav. In pagan times, Triglav was a pagan god who worshipped on this spot. This pagan god also has temples in Szczecin and Wolin.

Strangely enough, an effigy of Christ crucified sits atop Triglav. In a nearby glen lies a cemetery, an interesting place to visit. Walk in the silence of the moment and bask in

the serenity all about.

As you might have guessed, Triglav is the largest rock to be found in Poland. After World War II, this rock was given this name — the first monument of nature in the Koszalin Range.

Perhaps someday you will have the opportunity to see Triglav with your own eyes. Then, first hand, you can enjoy this wondrous work that nature created.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS BRUSH UP

Polish Christmas Things

Here are some concepts and ritual artifacts associated with Polish-style Christmas.

- aniołek little angel (St. Nick's helper)
- Boże Narodzenie Christmas
- choinka Christmas tree
- dzielenie się opłatkiem sharing Christmas wafer
- gwiazda betlejemka star of Bethlehem
- jasełka nativity play
- kolęda Christmas carol
- kolędnicy carolers
- opłatek Christmas wafer
- prezenty pod choinkę Christmas gifts (under the tree)
- siano hay
- szopka same żłóbek (below), or Christmas/New Year's puppet play
- Święty Mikołaj Saint Nicholas
- Wigilia Christmas Eve
- Herody skit about the evil King Herod
- żłóbek manger scene, nativity set

American Christmas Things

Here are some ways to describe American Christmas items in Polish.

- Christmas party zabawa gwiazdkowa, choinka
- Christmas wreath wieniec świąteczny
- holly ostrokrzew ivy bluszcz
- mistletoe jemiola
- Santa Claus gwiazdor
- elves krasnoludki
- reindeer renifery
- North Pole biegun północny
- Christmas stocking skarpeta świąteczna
- Christmas shopping zakupy świąteczne
- Christmas special (sale) obniżka, promocja świąteczna
- Christmas dinner obiad świąteczny
- Christmas play przedstawienie świąteczne
- snow śnieg
- snowball kula śnieżna
- snowy śnieżny

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ASK ANDZIA ABOUT AMBER / Andzia Chmil

A Brief History of Baltic Amber

Part II

The Romans used amber in a number of different objects, including coinage. They apparently valued amber even more than the fair-haired Baltic slaves, the harvesters of amber, who often were taken back to Rome as well. Amber has been mentioned by Homer in the ODYSSEY, and it has been written by Pliny the Elder that the price of a small single piece of amber sculpture was worth more than a healthy slave.

We learn from the GREAT BOOK OF AMBER that in the time of Nero, an expedition was sent by Julianus to the Baltic Coast to procure amber. It was brought back in such abundance that the "stage set" for the fight [gladiatorial] were based exclusively on amber. Even the "mesh" used for restraining wild animals and covering the podium had a piece of amber in every knot." (Pliny, NATURALIS HISTORIA, XXXVII).

The Dark Ages descended and a period of great social unrest and migration began. By the 1100s, Gdansk served as the main center of amber production. The introduction of Christianity resulted in the popularization of the cross as an amber motif. After the Teutonic Knights returned from the Crusades, in the latter part of 1200 A.D., they became absolute rulers of Prussia and the Baltic sources of amber, as well as the manufacture of amber objects — mostly religious objects such as Paternoster beads (Christian rosaries). The Knights ruled with an unyielding fist. Anyone caught with a piece of amber that was not part of a rosary was subject to severe punish-



Malbork Castle

ment and, often, hanging. Art prints (lithographs) from that time commonly depict amber fisherman portrayed along with gallows, a grim warning to all who would appropriate amber for themselves.

On my first trip thru Poland, I viewed the Marlborck Castle (one of the great castles of the Teutonic Knights) for the first time from a train window. I thought I was dreaming ... crumbling walls, courtyards, turrets with banners flying, a moat ... I was fortunate enough to return a few years later. The amber collection in Malbork Castle has over 2,000 cataloged pieces and is eclectic, from ancient pieces made by man's early workings to contemporary work of amber artisans today.

From Malbork Castle, the Teutonic Knights ruled with an iron fist. They seized control of the amber industry, breaking apart the guilds in Gdansk, sending the tradesmen to Konigsberg (Kaliningrad, Russia) and amassing copious amounts of amber. They kept the craftsmen and the amber apart because they laid claim to every speck of amber and did not want any worker to be able to keep or hide any. During

the reign of the Teutonic Knights there were gallows along the Baltic, and any man unlucky enough to be found with a nugget of amber in his pocket was hanged and left hanging as a warning to all. The only amber object a person was allowed was a rosary.

Visiting the Malbork Castle in eastern Poland gave me a real sense of history and put things into perspective. The Knights who so cruelly ruled there were massacred by the Polish-Lithuanian army at the battle of Grunwald in 1410, and the castle was sacked. There are no remains of the Knights at the great castle, yet much of amber that was there and had been created millions and millions of years before them lives on to this day.

THE OLD COUNTRY / Richard Poremski



LABORING IN THE VERTICAL PLANE. Lublin, Poland. May 18, 1976.

TRIVIA TIME / Ellye Slusarczyk

"May A Bright Star Shine Over Your Home"

- Children on the Feast of the Three Kings were greeted at households with a. seasonal carols b. special holiday bread c. oranges
- Szczodraki* is a. bread b. pie c. cake
- St. Kinga was inspired to create a nativity set by a. St. Francis of Assisi b. St. Nicholas c. St. Adelbert
- The Szopka Krakowska became an urban art form when a source of income was needed in off-season by a. Gdansk shipyard workers b. salt miners c. Vistula raftsmen and workmen
- Traditionally, a *Wigila* supper has a. four courses b. five courses c. six courses
- Szopka is a. a folk craft b. miniature farm scene c. gated village
- Originally, *oplatek* were baked by a. local maidens b. village priests c. monks
- "May a bright star shine over your home" is a favorite blessing at a. Wigilia b. Feast of the Three Kings c. New Year's Eve
- The Bonarka City shopping center is located just a few miles from a. Warsaw b. Sopot c. Krakow
- "If I can't speak anymore, it's time for me to go" was said by a. Casimir Pulaski b. Pope John Paul II c. Donald Tusk

ANSWERS. 1. b special holiday bread 2. a bread 3. a St. Francis of Assisi 4. c Vistula raftsmen and workers 5. b five courses 6. a folk craft 7. c monks 8. a Wigilia 9. c Krakow 10. b Pope John Paul II.

CIEKAWOSTKI / Martin S. Nowak

A Little Bit of This and a Little Bit of That

RENDZINA is an English word of Polish origin. It is derived from the old Polish word *rzędzić*, meaning to chat or to complain incessantly. It describes a type of dark grayish-brown soil, rich in humus and with a limestone or chalk content. It is one of the first stages of soil as it breaks down from rock. It is found throughout the world and is quite stony. To the Polish farmers dragging their plows through this soil, the squealing noise emanating sounded like a high-pitched voice, hence the name.

1964 REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL candidate Senator Barry M. Goldwater had Polish Jewish roots. The senator's grandfather Michel Goldwasser was born in Konin in Russian Poland and immigrated to England in 1848 where he changed his name to Goldwater. Four years later he came to America. His son Morris married an Episcopalian and converted to Christianity. Morris' son was Barry Goldwater. The senator's distant cousin John L. Goldwater was a comic book publisher who in 1941 came up with the idea for a comic featuring a group of American teenagers. Thus was born Archie comics including the characters Jughead, Betty and Veronica.

THADDEUS SOBIESKI CONSTANTINE LOWE was Chief of the Army Balloon Corps for the Union in the Civil War. He is sometimes identified as of Polish descent, but he was not. He was named after the hero in the 1803 novel Thaddeus of Warsaw by Scottish author Jane Porter, Thaddeus Constantine Sobieski. It was his mother's favorite book and was very popular in the early 1800s. Thaddeus Kosciuszko

himself read it, and sent the author his portrait, a medal and a lock of his hair. It tells the story of a fictional hero fighting under Kosciuszko's forces in the 1794 battles against the Russians.

PULASKITE is a type of rock named for Pulaski County, Arkansas, which was named after Polish American hero Casimir Pulaski. It was first identified there in 1925. It is a coarse, bluish-gray nepheline-bearing alkali feldspar syenite, similar to granite but with quartz absent or present in only small amounts. *Rozumiesz?* Also called blue granite, Magnet Cove granite, or Fourche Mountain granite.

THE GREAT PORTUGUESE EXPLORER Vasco da Gama was the first European to reach India by sailing around the southern tip of Africa in 1498. There he was surprised to meet a bearded European who called himself Yusuf Adil. Seized by da Gama as a source of information about India, this man was taken to Portugal. He said that he was a Jew who had converted to Islam, and now he was forced to convert to Christianity and took the name Gaspar da Gama. Gaspar's original name is not known, but he was born about 1450 in Poznań, Poland. He became a pilot of Vasco's fleet and many believe he was the first European to set foot in what is now Brazil. He eventually returned to India and died there in battle in 1510.

MATKA is the Polish word for mother, but it is also the name of a silk fabric produced in India. It is used mostly in upscale home furnishings such as draperies and upholstery, but more recently has

become somewhat trendy in the apparel world. *Matka* is also the name of a numbers gambling game popular in India.

ACONCAGUA in western Argentina is the highest mountain peak in the western and southern hemispheres at 22,841 feet. In 1934 a Polish team consisting of Konstanty Narkiewicz-Jodko, Stefan Daszinski, Wiktor Ostrowski and Stefan Osiecki climbed a new route to the summit over a large glacier on the east slope. Since then this has been called the Polish Route and the field of ice has been named the Polish Glacier (Glacier de los Polacos). It is the most popular route to the top.

CZESŁAW SŁANIA (1921-2005), a Polish born Swede, engraved more postage stamps than anyone in history, more than a thousand. He produced stamps for 29 countries, including for the U.S. the Grace Kelly and Dean Acheson stamps of 1993 and the 2001 stamp commemorating the first Nobel Prize. During World War II he forged documents for the Polish underground and defected to Sweden in 1956. Serious stamp collectors recognize him as the greatest artist-engraver of all time.

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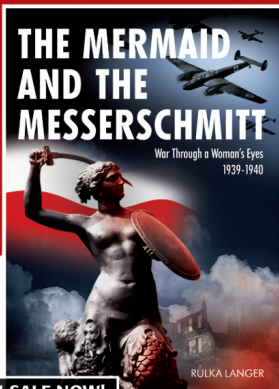
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