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**SUPERMODEL
JOANNA KRUPA
VISITS DAR SERCA
PAGE 12**

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

**RORATY — AN ANCIENT POLISH CUSTOM IN HONOR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN • MUSHROOM PICKING, ANYONE?
MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS 1970 • A KASHUB CHRISTMAS • NPR'S "WAIT, WAIT ..." APOLOGIZES FOR POLISH JOKE
CHRISTMAS CAKES AND COOKIES • BELINSKY AND FIDRYCH: GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN • DNA AND YOUR GENEALOGY**

NEWSMARK

AMERICAN SOLDIER HONORED BY POLAND. On Nov. 12, Staff Sergeant Michael H. Ollis of Staten Island, was posthumously honored with the "Afghanistan Star" awarded by the President of the Republic of Poland and "Army Gold Medal" awarded by Poland's Minister of Defense, for his heroic and selfless actions in the line of duty.

The ceremony took place at the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in New York.

Ryszard Schnepf, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States and Brigadier General Jaroslaw Strózyk, Poland's Defense, Military, Naval and Air Attaché, presented the decorations to the family of Ollis, who shielded Polish officer, Second lieutenant Karol Cierpica, from a suicide bomber in Afghanistan.

Ollis, 24, died Aug. 28, in Ghazni Province, Afghanistan.

MORE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM DISCOVERED. The remains of as many as 200 people have been found in Bialystok, Poland, at the site of a former temporary prison used for interrogations and temporary imprisonment by the Soviet occupiers during the initial two years of World War II, and again after the "liberation" of Poland from the Nazis in 1944.

Poland's Institute of National Remembrance said one of the victims found had been shot in the back of the head, a Soviet execution method used also during the 1940 Katyn Massacre.

PNA TO SELL NYC LANDMARKS. New York's Polonia will lose two of its landmarks, as the Chicago-based Polish National Alliance will sell two buildings here.

The former headquarters of the Polish National Alliance of Brooklyn, at 155 Noble Street in Greenpoint, already has a potential buyer.

The second is a house at 180 Second Avenue in Manhattan, which is the home of the Pilsudski Institute. Directors of the Institute, which recently celebrated its 70th anniversary, have a lease through April 2015. The lease, however, does not state what happens should the PNA sell the building, currently valued at about \$7.6 million.

The Institute, which recently began digitizing its archives, has over 20,000 books and artifacts in its collection.

THE POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS was among the several dozen organizations — mostly from business, labor, and faith communities — invited to the White House for a meeting with President Barack Obama on immigration reform. PAC National Office Director, Dr. Barbara Andersen, represented PAC at the October 24 East Room meeting which heard the President call for "finishing the job of fixing a broken immigration system."

In addressing the group, Obama recounted the various shortcomings of the current immigration system and why enacting reform legislation was in keeping with the country's historic values and its economic and security interests.

At press time, the Clerk of the House reported that 99 Members of the House of Representatives (48 Republicans, 51 Democrats) had signed on as co-sponsors for H.R. 1354, the Jobs Originating through Launching Travel (JOLT) Act, which includes the waiver legislation.

STORM CLAIMS ICONIC STEEPLE. The main steeple of Detroit's historic Polish American St. Josaphat church will be coming down and replaced with a roof, following damage from a heavy winds, Nov. 18.

The steeple — an icon on the Detroit skyline — was seen swaying during the storm.

St. Josaphat is part of the newly merged Mother of Divine Mercy Parish, which also includes Sweetest Heart of Mary Church and St. Joseph Church in Detroit.

Kevin Piotrowski, parish council president, hopes a "guardian angel" could help the parish rebuild the steeple, but said safety was the foremost concern.

St. Josaphat is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Michigan State Historic Site.

BOŻE NARODZENIE PO GÓRALSKU

Dr. Thaddeus Gromada on Christmas among the Polish Highlanders

Dr. Thaddeus Gromada is professor emeritus of history at New Jersey City University, and former executive director and president of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America in New York. He earned his master's and doctoral degrees at Fordham University in New York under the mentorship of the Polish historian Oskar Halecki. The son of Highlander (*górale*) immigrants to New Jersey, Dr. Gromada has devoted his life to preserving and disseminating knowledge of Highland traditions. As a teenager, he founded — and still edits with his sister Jane Kedron — the bilingual *Tatrzański Orzeł* (Tatra Eagle, 31 Madison Ave., Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604), a quarterly propagating Highlander culture and events, and recently published a book, *Tatra Highlander Folk Culture in Poland and America*. Dividing retirement between North Carolina and New Jersey, he discussed Christmas in the Polish Highlands with John Grondelski, whose own roots lie in Gorlice.

Christmas is a special time of year in Poland, and you are proud of your family's Highlander (góral) traditions. Have you ever spent Christmas in the Highland regions (Podhale) of Poland? What was it like?

I am very proud of my Polish *góral* heritage, with its beautiful traditions and customs, but I never spent Christmas Day in Podhale. I came pretty close back in 1968 when I spent the first two weeks of December 1968 in Zakopane, Chocholów and other neighboring *góral* villages. Many Polish Americans still don't realize that December 6, his feast day, is the day that St. Nicholas—the real Santa Claus—brings gifts to children throughout Poland and Europe. It's not December 25. So I had the chance to help St. Nicholas bring all sorts of gifts, toys, candy and clothing

See "Boże Narodzenia Po Góralsku," page 5



PHOTO: THE EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND IN RIGA

A Polish American's Christmas in Poland

by Krysia Kmieć-Markowski

A Christmas filled with Polish traditions has always been a magical time for me, and the prospect of actually spending it in Poland, with my husband's family, was exciting. However, since I had always spent *Wigilia* with my family I prepared for my one-month winter trip to Poland with a mixture of emotions, as it would be my first Christmas away from home.

I met my husband Jurek in *The Lubliniacy Polish Song and Dance Ensemble* when he joined the group. Jurek was in the United States without his family and was invited to spend *Wigila* with mine, even before we were married. He had not spent Christmas or New Year's with his own family since arriving in the States, so I knew this trip would be especially meaningful for him. As a Polish American brought up with Old World season-



THE ROYAL ROUTE leading to Castle Square was decorated with elaborate umbrella-shaped streetlamp fixtures, which made the setting the perfect picture postcard.

al traditions, I was prepared to experience the customs in the setting of its origin... but how different would things be?

Our flight was scheduled to arrive in Poznań; Jurek's father was to pick us up and drive north to Szczecinek. However, with the heavy fog, after three attempts to land, the pilot landed the plane in Wrocław instead. We were then transported by bus to the other airport, and what should have been a three-hour

See "A Polish American's ... page 5

Mazowiecki Laid to Rest



WARSAW — A state funeral was held for Poland's first post-Communist prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Thousands attended the funeral in Warsaw, including Polish and European leaders. The president of the European Commission Manuel Barroso was among the mourners.

Mazowiecki, 86, was an author, journalist, philanthropist, politician and pro-democracy activist who served as an advisor to Lech Walesa and the Solidarity freedom movement. Foreign Minister

See "Mazowiecki," page 3

VIEWPOINT

A Polish Christmas

It's said that a pastor once began his Christmas sermon with the remark: "I am glad to see so many people here in church tonight. Please remember that the Lord wants us to keep His Day holy throughout the year, so feel welcome here. But do note—this is a church, even if it isn't decorated in poinsettias or lilies!"

There's a grain of truth here: people at Christmastime and Eastertide come home, return to their roots. In the Archdiocese of Washington, for example, there are annual campaigns to encourage Catholics to receive the sacrament of Penance worthily: "Come home at Christmas," "Come home at Easter."

The same is truth of *polskość*. Christmas is a time when lots of people remember their Polish roots, even if they don't during the rest of the year; even if they have long forgotten (or never learned) their ancestral language. The traditions of Christmas endure—especially the Wigilia table, especially the Pasterka (Midnight Mass). Those are things to which Poles have clung, in good times and in bad.

In this month's issue, we present various testimonies of Christmas in Poland, especially in the 20th century. Some are light; some are painful. Some talk of customs. Some talk of the Communist version of the "war on Christmas," the name not to be spoken. Some talk of walking across the Christmas snow. Some talk of Wigilia eaten amidst war, martial law, repression, and even genocide.

But the one thread uniting them all is how these traditions have bound Poles together, in weal and woe, throughout the ages. So, as we enjoy Christmas 2013 in a free land, as we prepare for the holidays, let us cling to those traditions.

Start early! Use an Advent calendar to prepare the kids for the season. Teach your kids about Święty Mikołaj and observe December 6 in your homes. Find out about the Polish Advent custom of Roraty.

Send out some Polish Christmas cards (the PAJ has some great choices for you). Do you have any family or friends in Poland? Make sure to send them a card. Use the chance to re-

new old ties or discover your family there. Put some opłatek in your cards for those who might recognize that custom. Learn to say "Wesołych Świąt!"

Prepare yourselves a traditional Wigilia table with the dishes of our heritage. Break the opłatek among yourselves. Deck out the choinka in Polish tradition (PAJ also has some great ornaments for you).

Make Christmas a time of spiritual growth. Take part in a Christmas retreat and Penance service. Come home at Christmas, especially through the sacraments, and attend Midnight Mass, the Pasterka, as a family together. Find a Polish parish (a disappearing phenomenon) and go to Midnight Mass as a family, receiving the Infant Jesus together.

Leave your kids the kinds of memories that will persist with them over the years, supporting them in good times and in bad, like they did for the people we discuss in this issue.

Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i szczęśliwego nowego roku!

Jajko Calls Investigation "A Cover Up"

WARSAW — In an interview with Poland's *Gazeta Polska*, USAF Brig. Gen. Walter Jajko (ret.) called Moscow's investigation of the April 10, 2010 Smolensk Plane Crash — which killed the Polish president and his entourage — "a cover up."

"In the case of Smolensk, we are talking about a pseudo-investigation, or rather — a cover-up — which is an insult, scandal, and crime committed with unimaginable arrogance," Jajko told the newspaper. "It is an expression of [Mos-

cow's] contempt for Poland's sovereignty and independence, and a slap in the face of all of humanity."

He said the crash may have been an assassination on Kaczyński because of his pro-American policies.

Jajko served as director of the Special Advisory Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense; was the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Intelligence Oversight); and held the position of Acting Deputy Undersecretary of Policy Support.

SPREAD THE WORD! If you are not one to save your copies of the PAJ, please pass this on to someone you think will benefit from learning about all our treasured Christmas customs and traditions.



Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from

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3. "Oskar Halecki (1891-1973); Eulogies and Reflections" edited by Thaddeus V. Gromada. Price: \$10.99 includes postage and handling.

Send checks to address above. To pay by credit card via Pay Pal visit www.tadgromada.wordpress.com

New Release by Ewa Angeli Features Kolędy in English Translation

LOS ANGELES — International artist Eve Angeli, a Polish artist permanently residing in Los Angeles, has released "In Night's Still Silence," a collection of Polish Christmas carols sung in English.

The album showcases the beauty of traditional Polish Christmas carols — some dating back to the eighteenth century — presented in traditional and contemporary settings.

The 12-song CD was produced in Los Angeles and Nashville by Tom Herzer, Henry Chrostek, and Angeli. The music was recorded in Nashville by Warren Hartman, who is Kenny Rogers' producer and musical director.

This is Angeli's third full-length recording. Her first two, "Hold on to Me" and "Butterfly Wings," received great reviews in both Europe and North America.

"I believe this album can become



a very important part of the dissemination of Polish culture," said Angeli of her latest studio effort.

The English translations for the kolędy come from the Polonie Society's books on Polish song and Christmas traditions.

"In Night's Still Silence" is available on cdbaby.com, Amazon.com, and iTunes.

To learn more about Angeli, visit www.ewaangeli.com.

Mazowiecki

continued from cover

Radoslaw Sikorski stated that he was "one of the fathers of Polish liberty and independence."

Mazowiecki was also in the forefront of Christian/Catholic intellectual activity in post-World War II Poland. He was influential in leading WIEZ, a Catholic intellectual monthly magazine published in Warsaw. Although subjected to severe censorship by the Communists, the publication maintained consistent high stature and reputation among Catholic intellectuals.

A firm believer in negotiated set-

tlements, Mazowiecki had a calming effect on some Solidarity hotheads pushing for a more radical agenda. But in 1989, the Soviet Union was still in place and had thousands of troops permanently stationed in Poland. After the USSR dissolved itself, a coup attempt by Russian hardliners could have potentially rolled back the Solidarity revolution. Without fanfare and bravado Mazowiecki patiently shepherded the country from a Soviet-style dictatorship and central planning to a parliamentary democracy and market economy.

ALMANAC



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December Grudzień

"The true Christian can nurture a trustful optimism, because he is certain of not walking alone. In sending us Jesus, the eternal Son made man, God has drawn near to each of us. In Christ he has become our travelling companion."

—John Paul II

- 1 **1944.** Tehran Conference. Poland is handed over to the Soviet sphere of influence.
- 3 **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, victor at the Battle of the Vistula, and post-World War I leader of a free Poland.
- 6 **ST. NICHOLAS** (Św. Mikołaj). Today is traditionally reserved for gift-giving in Poland.
- 9 **1990.** Shipyard electrician and Solidarity Trade Union leader Lech Walesa elected president of Poland.
- 12 **1970.** "December '70" Polish demonstrations against food price hikes.
- 14 **1970.** Government price hikes in Poland spark bloody labor protests on the Coast, Gdansk, Gdynia and Szczecin.
- 15 **1859.** Birth of Lazarus Ludovic Zamenhof, developer of Esperanto, in Bialystok.
1930. Birth of New York Yankee great Bill "Moose" Skouron.
- 18 **1929.** Birth of Cardinal Jozef Glomp.
- 20 **1982.** Death of Chopin advocate and pianist Arthur Rubinstein.
- 21 **ST. THOMAS** **1798.** 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 (CANTIUS).** 1473. **1895.** Death of Henry Kalusowski, Polish-born U.S. government official who translated the Russian documents dealing with the purchase of Alaska.
- 24 **DZIEN WIGILIJNY** **1798.** Birth of Adam Mickiewicz ("Pan Tadeusz"), considered Poland's greatest poet. **1854.** About 100 families from Upper Silesia arrive in Panna Maria, Texas to establish the first permanent Polish settlement in the United States. Fr. Leopold Moczygemba holds Midnight Mass under a large oak tree that still stands today.
- 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 **1983.** Pope John Paul II meets in prison with and forgives Ali Agca, who tried to assassinate the pope.
- 31 **ST. SYLVESTER** *Niech już wystrzelą korki szampana, A ty baw się świetnie do białego rana! Let the champagne corks become airborne, and you will play 'til early morn!*

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Roraty — An Ancient Polish Custom in Honor of the Blessed Virgin

by John Grondelski

Many Polish American Catholics know of the Polish Lenten devotion *Gorzkie Żale* (Bitter Lamentations), a sung series of prayers that commemorates Jesus' Passion and death. A number of the remaining Polish parishes in America still celebrate the devotion during Lent.

Fewer Polish American Catholics know there is also a Polish Advent devotion: *Roraty*. Surviving as an element of an older, more general Catholic tradition, *Roraty* is a series of special chants in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated in conjunction with the first Mass of the day, celebrated at dawn. The service usually begins between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m., with candlelight in a darkened church.

The name comes from the Latin words of the ancient prayer, "Rorate caeli de super" ("Send down the

dew from above" — Isaiah 45:8— perhaps now more understandable to Catholics, since the revised translation of the Third Eucharistic Prayer has the priest praying "Let your Holy Spirit descend on these gifts like the dewfall...").

Living in Warsaw, I remember large numbers of Catholics making their way in the crunching ice and snow to neighborhood churches in the early morning to prepare for Christmas by going to Mass during Advent — and honoring the Mother of God through the beautifully sung *Rorate* devotion.



RORATY begins with a candle-lit service. Above, altar servers and chorus members at last year's Mass at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish in Opole, Poland.

Preparing for Christmas also means spiritual preparation, i.e., trying to attend Mass sometime during the week during Advent. Unfortunately, fewer Polish American parishes celebrate *Roraty*. If there is one near you, try to go and discover this beautiful custom in honor of Our Lady.

If not, you can read more about it in Polish at www.roraty.art.pl/ or in English at www.catholicgene.wordpress.com. The latter offers a video clip of part of the service. For a longer video clip, see www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhWcmOvXXfQ.

You might also check some Polish Catholic radio stations, which sometimes stream *Roraty* live (at about midnight, Eastern time) — a likely candidate is Radio VIA in Rzeszów www.radiovia.com.pl/.

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Merry Christmas

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

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

- The Pauline Fathers -

Wesołych Świąt

*Przesyłamy Wam jak
najserdeczniejsze życzenia
z Amerykańskiej Częstochowej
- Duchowej Stolicy Polonii.*

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

- Ojcowie Paulini -

2013 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.

Dec. 31 - NEW YEAR'S EVE: Holy Hour after 5:00pm Vigil Mass.

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Boże Narodzenia Po Góralsku

continued from cover

to my many little relatives in Chochołów. What a joy to watch their smiling faces as they opened up packages!

Advent is wholly focused on anticipation of Jesus' birth. This solemn period starts on St. Andrew's Day, November 30: górale say, "Święty Andrzej, skrzypce zamyka" (St. Andrew shuts down the violin), and even take the precaution of tying the strings of their instruments! In Advent, there is no dancing or parties. Villages are quiet and peaceful, and strict fasting is the rule—not even animal fat was used to cook, only linseed oil. On Sundays, families made decorations to be hung on the Christmas tree on Christmas Eve ... no sooner.

While there are some customs universal to all Poles, there are some that are the special preserve of Poland's Highlanders, the górale. Can you describe some of those special Highlander Christmas traditions?

It would be difficult to determine which Polish Christmas customs are positively góral and which are not, but we can say the górale were best able to preserve those traditions. Christmas Eve was the most important event. This was a day to be on one's best behavior. Children were warned not to misbehave. Men did something good like go to the forest to chop trees for firewood or hunt rabbits and deer. Before sunrise they would go into the stables to incense the barn animals with the smoke of specially prepared herbs and greens. The busiest were the housewives (gazdziny), who had to prepare anywhere from nine to eleven courses for the most important supper of the year, which included cabbage soup

with peas, kwaśnica (sauerkraut soup), potatoes, lima beans, dumplings (kluszki), pierogi with cheese, prunes and sauerkraut, etc. A freshly cut spruce tree was decorated with objects made during Advent. Christmas Eve was a day people were not keen on visitors, especially women: if a woman were a visitor, it was thought to be back luck for the next year. There was a saying, "co się robi w Wigilije, to przez cały rok" (what is done on Christmas Eve will be done year round). So there was pressure on everybody, in view of the impending birth of Jesus, to be on their best behavior.

One tradition that unites all Poles is the Christmas Eve Supper, or Wigilia. What unique aspects does the Wigilia have in the Highlands?

The table is set in a special way to commemorate Christ's Birth in the manger: hay is spread over the table, covered with a linen cloth. In the center a depression is formed in which the housewife pours oats. She then places a large ceramic bowl atop them from which all family members eat. After each course, the bowl is examined to see how many oats stuck to it: if many oats stuck to the bowl in which cabbage soup was served, for example, it meant next year would be a good one for cabbage.

Before the meal, the father enters, praising Christ and placing a spruce branch (of usually three stems to suggest a cross) above the door. He does the same in his stable so that his animals will also be under God's protection. The family kneels at the table, prays, then eats. After supper is over, the gazda (husband) throws silver and gold coins into a bowl from which everyone washes

his hands. It's believed it will make them as durable and hardy as the precious coins that never rust. Girls go outside to listen for dogs barking, for it was believed their future husbands would come from the direction of the bark. Many barks meant many suitors. People then attended Pasterka, after which they rushed to get home first, because if they succeeded, it meant an early and great harvest. Christmas Day was strictly a family affair.

Tell us something about Polish Highlander Christmas songs, the pastoralki. How do they differ from koledy?

Polish Christmas carols have lost their regional character: one hears the same ones all over Poland. But there are some carols known as "pastoralki" (shepherds' carols) associated with folk regions like Podhale. They are old, traditional songs sung in the gwara góralaska (highlander dialect). The tradition of caroling is strong among Highlanders, starting immediately after Christmas and continuing until Epiphany (January 6). Carolers are usually led by a parade of strangely dressed persons: an angel with a long stick and big cardboard star; a devil; death; and a horned animal called a "toruń." So carolers not only sing, but present a short nativity play about the birth of Jesus and the slaughter of the innocents in Bethlehem. They are rewarded with food, drink, and coins.

Are there any special New Year or Epiphany customs in Podhale?

Górale celebrate New Year, but to a much lesser degree than Christmas Eve. Visits (podłazy) are made to friends and relatives, usually by young men who compose specially humorous rhymes to the accompa-



TED GROMADA (standing, with violin) inside his uncle's Tatra hut in the góral village of Chochołów. The children, a mix of relatives and friends — are peering in to see what will happen next. Gromada's uncle in the middle with the violin. This was taken in the 1960's when he was in Poland during research and visiting his family.

niment of folk musicians. The only unusual custom for the day was baking sweet breads (nowe latka) for young children and grandchildren.

As a young boy growing up in a góralaska rodzina in New Jersey in the 1930s, what special memories do you have of Christmas?

I grew up in Passaic—a textile and industrial city—in the 1930s and 40s. Wigilia was sacred, special, even magical, and my sister Jane and I looked forward to it. We were children of Highlander immigrants who arrived only in 1927, so our parents—Aniela and Jan—kept the customs and rituals faithfully. As a boy, I took them seriously and, as I grew older, insisted they be followed to a tee. Since it was a tradition to have hay under the tablecloth, I made it my business to find hay in urban Passaic, a real challenge, since there were no cows and not many horses around in an inner city. But I somehow managed to

find it, to my mother's delight. My father and I did not get a Christmas tree until Christmas Eve, because that was the tradition. There weren't many good trees left by then on Market Street, but they were cheap. I was on the lookout for appearance of the first star. There was one minor change from what I described above: we did not eat from a common bowl, but each had his own plate. I remember that the food was absolutely delicious and plentiful: soups, herring, pierogi, fish, stewed fruits, pastry. The atmosphere created by breaking and sharing the opłatek, when each member of the family extended special greetings to the others, and singing carols together is something I will treasure and never forget. As long as I live, I endeavor to recreate that feeling and spirit in my only family on Christmas Eve.

To learn more about Highlander culture, visit www.tadgromada.wordpress.com.

A Polish American's Christmas in Poland

continued from cover

trip to the intended destination, took seven hours.

It snowed a little each day, and even though it was cold outside, we could not resist taking multiple walks into the center of town each day. It was like a fairytale. We were prepared for winter's cold with boots, warm coats, hats, scarves and gloves, but were not prepared for the severely frigid temperatures Poland had in store for us. The coldest was -30 C which converts to -22 F. Jurek bought himself a sheepskin *kożuch* coat, and I borrowed my sister-in-law Halina's *kożuch*, which kept me toasty warm.

In the States, school children typically put snowflakes in their windows. I add a Polish twist on this and make *wycinanki* style snowflakes. I made some for my mother and father-in-law's windows and then had to make more for my two sisters-in-laws' windows. No one in Szczecinek had nicer decorated windows.

A TRIP TO WARSAW AND ORNAMENTS.

The week before Christmas, we traveled with my sister-in-law Barbara to Warsaw to visit my husband's niece Daria and her husband Karol, and also my friend Krzysiek Kurlej, the Impressariat-Manager of *Mazowsze*. We were able to attend a private rehearsal of *Mazowsze's* choir as they prepared for an upcoming Christmas concert and could bask in the glory of Poland's *koledy* sung live and in amazing voice.

The Royal Route (Nowy Świat into Krakowskie Przedmieście) leading to Castle Square was decorated with elaborate umbrella-shaped streetlamp fixtures, which made the setting the perfect picture postcard. The Royal Castle was lit with a snowflake projection lightshow and the cone-shaped tree was synchronized for effect. Giant-lit present boxes filled an area where tourists could take holiday photos. A Christmas fair — full of amusement rides was taking place near the Palace of Culture in the center of town; however we did not want to brave the evening's

cold to participate.

I was looking forward to finding and purchasing Christmas ornaments as 99% of our tree has always had ornaments made in Poland. It would surely be the perfect time to find them here. We didn't see any when we first arrived, but thought that for sure we'd see some the week before Christmas. We eventually saw some very unattractive, yet highly expensive ones in Warsaw. Most stores carry inexpensive plastic ornaments that are made in China. It seems that most of the beautiful Polish ornaments are exported; however I am told that Kraków has an impressive selection. Many homes still have small trees, but larger trees are now available and seem to be purchased by the modern crowd.

We were looking forward to spending Christmas away from all the consumer commercialization. The store windows were decorated nicely. Things have changed over the years, as Poland is more commercialized than before. Small and practical gifts are still exchanged; however in the stores one could hear young children requesting specific toys.

WIGILIA VARIATIONS. Christmas customs were first introduced to us at the home of my grandparents in Garfield, New Jersey, and now continue with my parents and family in Massachusetts. I was interested in experiencing the differences and regional variations in the way my husband's family celebrated as they are from a different area in Poland (north vs. south).

Having been home-schooled by my mother in Polish cooking, I was pleased to be able to contribute to the food preparation for *Wigilia* and the days to follow. Two days before, the kitchen was bustling with activity. Jurek's mother made the filling for the *kapusta pierogi*, and I made the filling for the *uszka* ("little ears" — a small and twisted version of *pierogi*, filled with flavorsome wild forest mushrooms). Since making the tiny-sized *uszka* is demanding, Jurek's mother had planned to buy them as they are now available

in supermarkets. I insisted that I would make them myself.

The day before the vigil, Halina and I settled down at the table to make the *pierogi* and *uszka*. The morning of *Wigilia*, Jurek and I made Polish vegetable salad (*salatka jarzynowa*), as this has become our tradition in recent years.

It seems that many of the new younger generation do not know how to prepare the basic staples of the *Wigilia* meal. While we were shopping for ingredients, some were shopping for already prepared or packaged *barszcz*, *pierogi*, and salads — losing out on a practice that trails down from our great-grandmothers to our mothers. It is this connection to our roots — our past that makes *Wigilia* a family tradition and a remembrance of those who are no longer with us.

After breaking the *opłatek* wafer and prayers, we enjoyed grape wine made by my father, which we brought with us. Depending on the area of Poland, *barszcz* *Polski* is *czzerwony* (red) or *biały* (white). The *biały barszcz z grzybami* (with mushrooms) is common in the southern regions — the area where my family originated from, so it is this variety that I grew up with. Here they are accustomed to *barszcz czysty czerwony* (a clear beet *consommé*). Since Jurek became part of the family, I make red for Christmas day; this year I would reverse the order.

I knew that there would be a lot of fish dishes served in the northern Baltic Sea region. In southern Poland it was less likely to be included in such variety in the *Wigilia* meal. We never had fish with my grandparents; but later introduced it when we started celebrating at home. We would typically have 2-3 dishes compared to the never-ending parade of fish creations here.

With all the focus on fish in the north, there is no room for the southern dishes of grains — *kasza* buckwheat groats and *jaglana* millet groats, or *kapusta z grochem* that I am used to having. The evening was capped with traditional fruit kompot and desserts, such as

Daria's *sernik* cheesecake, and a nut *lamançe* — something I've never tasted.

PASTERKA MASS. Having always attended Midnight Mass at a Polish church in Garfield, N.J. or Haverhill, Mass., I was exposed to the *koledy* carols and warmth of a mass in Polish. After St. Michael's was closed and directed to merge with two other parishes at the former St. Joseph's Church — now renamed All Saint's Church, the Polish choir continues to sing, but only on holidays. Although we still have the tradition of singing *koledy*, it has never been the same since our church closed.

That evening as we walked to church, I remembered how we once walked to church in Garfield. As the procession started, I felt transported back in time. Tears filled my eyes as I remembered what was and how Midnight Mass used to feel. There was a communal feeling here as the entire parish rose in voice singing the age-old *koledy*. This was the truth of a Christmas in Poland I had been in search of.

CHRISTMAS DAY — MEAT, MEAT, MEAT!

On Christmas Day I am accustomed to typically having ham and leftovers from *Wigilia*, but here they have numerous amounts of smoked and baked meats — *szynka*, *boczek*, *połędwica*, *kielbasa*, and *wędzona karkówka*. I made a large pot of the *biały barszcz* — everyone enjoyed it and was amazed that a Polish American could be so savvy at Polish cookery.

The age-old practices based in folk tradition and customs are slowly stepping aside to the modernization of a country that once held onto every aspect of its ethnic identity. Shifts in America's Polonia have been felt with the changes and challenges in our cultural institutions and church gatherings. Polish Americans cling with a deep nostalgia to the identity engrained in us by our parents. Despite an ever-changing world, what matters most is the sense of bonding, for a Polish Christmas is most importantly being with family.

CHRISTMAS STORIES

Why I Love Kolędy

by The Rev. Dr. Zygmunt Zieliński

The outbreak of World War II destroyed everything about our lives up to that point. The Germans chased us out of our apartment with nothing but the clothes on our backs. We couldn't even take the family pictures. Although the Germans — local Germans who collaborated with the Gestapo — shot my father in the Valley of Death near Chojnice, Bory Tuchowskie, on December 22, 1939, we didn't know about it on that first wartime Christmas, which we — my mother, three children, and aunt — spent in a small rental room in a village. We had a few potatoes and some cottage cheese that my aunt brought. It was really cold; our fuel was branches stolen from the woods.

I remember that Christmas in the most minute detail, although I was only eight years old at the time. My oldest sister and I, along with our neighbor's son (who was my age), went to the woods to get a Christmas tree. The snow literally reached my waist, but I only had summer shoes on — the ones I had when the Germans threw us out of our house. On the way back, we ran into a forest warden — a Pole, but a bureaucrat — who took our Christmas tree and axe, swearing at us up and

down. The things he took wound up in his boss's possession. We could have expected punishment, and even problems with the police in the nearby village, but his supervisor (who was later murdered in a concentration camp) was a human being and let the matter drop. He told us he would always give us a Christmas tree, but we couldn't take one by ourselves.

That year, though, there was no Christmas tree. There was no nothing, not even oil for the lamp. We sat with mom around the cast iron stove in the kitchen, eating baked potatoes with a dash of salt and some cottage cheese. The only illumination was a circle of light from the stove reflecting on the ceiling. At the time, it made an extraordinary impression on me. After that humble meal, we said the Rosary for my father (who was already dead two days), those who had died in battle, and for God's Mercy on us, because the threat of being taken to a concentration camp—or worse—existed all the time. During the prayers I, as a kid, kept squirming while kneeling on the hard floor as I thought of different things. I knew why we had no Christmas tree, but there were no presents, no visit from St. Nicholas, and we didn't go to Midnight Mass. I remember even asking Mom about Mass. She said it was because there was no priest: he had either been killed on the spot or taken off to a concentration camp.

That first wartime Christmas was strange. Of course it was clear that our normal lives up to that point were over, but why was it that a day that we had been waiting for so long had suddenly become unimportant? I don't remember the subsequent Christmases of the war as clearly as that first one, so completely different from the images that had previously encoded themselves in my childhood imagination. I asked myself whether every family was celebrating Christmas as badly as we were: none of the usual carp or other dishes that used to be on the table, no Christmas carols (we could not sing too loudly in Polish, because speaking Polish was prohibited). Carols hummed under one's nose were no source of joy; instead, they brought about an oppressive sadness. That's what I remember, which is why, until this very day more than 70 years later, nothing moves me more than a Polish Christmas carol.

The Rev. Dr. Zygmunt Zieliński is professor emeritus of modern Church history at the Catholic University of Lublin.

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Christmas 70 Years Ago in Volhynia

Poles in the eastern reaches of the Second Republic — the kresy — suffered successive hells during World War II. Originally occupied by the Soviets in 1939, Russian repression was replaced by German with Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. In those areas occupied by the Germans, local Ukrainians especially in two groups — the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army — collaborated with the Germans in the hope of winning an independent Ukraine. As that hope faded, these forces — led by nationalist Stepan Bandera — took matters into their own hands, unleashing a way of genocide against Poles, intended to ethnically cleanse the area, which reached its zenith in Volhynia in 1943. Altogether, at least 100,000 Poles died at Ukrainian nationalist hands.

by Ewa Siemaszko

Christmas 1943, the last Christmas in Volhynia and East Małopolska spent under German occupation, was observed amidst misery and trepidation. The raging terror and criminal genocide executed throughout 1943 on the Poles of Volhynia by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) had forced practically the entire rural population of Poles to abandon their villages. The situation was not as bad in East Małopolska, but the threat of mass scale butchery was spreading at the end of 1943, under the influence of the murder of individual Poles and Polish families. The Poles' tragic material situation was brought about by the Germans (who stole farm products, limited commerce, and assigned starvation rations for official work); wartime activities; and the destruction brought about by OUN-UPA.

Difficult circumstances notwithstanding, people everywhere tried to celebrate Christmas in a worthily festive manner. Mass that Christmas was celebrated only in the towns; with but a few exceptions (where there were strong self-defense organizations), the village churches no longer existed, victims of OUN-UPA arson. The universal shortage of foodstuffs made it impossible to observe the usual Wigilia dinner, e.g., in number or variety of courses. There was no poppy seed, fish, or pastries. Obtaining flour and especially fat was difficult. Many did not have Christmas trees, because going into the forest meant

risking being murdered. Many families spent Christmas in mourning for loved ones murdered by the Ukrainian nationalists, a campaign that had reached its zenith only six months before. People gathered at Christmas with family and neighbors, taking in strangers who had lost their homes. The future was so uncertain that many thought this would be their last occasion to be together.

It wasn't that the holidays — occasions to visit Ukrainian neighbors and exchange Christmas greetings — were irreversibly past. Counting on the fact that Poles might be off guard, attacks on them were not even discouraged during the Christmas season.

Counting on the fact that Poles might be off guard, attacks on them were not even discouraged during the Christmas season.

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army attacked Poles in six places on Christmas Eve: Łuck, Ołyka, Dworzec koło Równego, Bortnica, Sądów, and Połonka. More than 200 people — adults and children — were killed. The greatest casualties — 100 — took place in five suburbs of Łuck. The majority of victims were tortured so badly that the sight left a huge impression on the German soldiers who were doing local patrols. Several dozen Poles also died in a number of locales in the neighboring Tarnopol voivodeship, where the UPA's genocide had also been stirred up.

The UPA tried to rout the self-defenses in Zasmyki na Wołyniu on Christmas Day. At dawn, UPA forces moved on that village (which included numerous refugees from the locality along with its regular

population), attacking five smaller nearby settlements *en route*. Midnight Mass, which had been deferred to morning out of security concerns, was underway, forging a raised spirit of determination to survive. Upon hearing gunshots, the men in the Zasmyki self-defense force left the church and tried to support the self-defense groups in the settlements under attack. There was no lack of casualties, among both the defenders and the civilians. At the same time, the UPA attackers encountered another self-defense force in Witoldówka.

On Christmas Day 1943, a total of 116 people and 10 self-defense force members were murdered in eight localities in Volhynia. Similar Christmas attacks in the Tarnopol voivodeship took place in 1943, in which more than 80 people perished in seven localities, the greatest numbers in Dubie and Hnilice.

These desecrations of Christmas by people professing Orthodoxy and Greek Catholicism did not end then. Volhynian Poles were murdered in the village of Siniowce at Christmas 1944. Almost 200 Poles in 15 localities died at the hands of the UPA in the Tarnopol voivodeship either on Christmas Eve or in Christmastide 1944. A particularly monstrous crime took place in Ithrowica in that voivodeship where the pastor, Fr. Stanisław Szczepankiewicz, was hacked to death with axes. There were also macabre Christmas Eves in two county seats in Stanisławów voivodeship: almost 100 Poles were killed in Dolina and Kosów.

Ewa Siemaszko is a leading Polish researcher and author on the genocide of Poles in Volhynia. She (and her father Władysław) have written numerous books on this subject.

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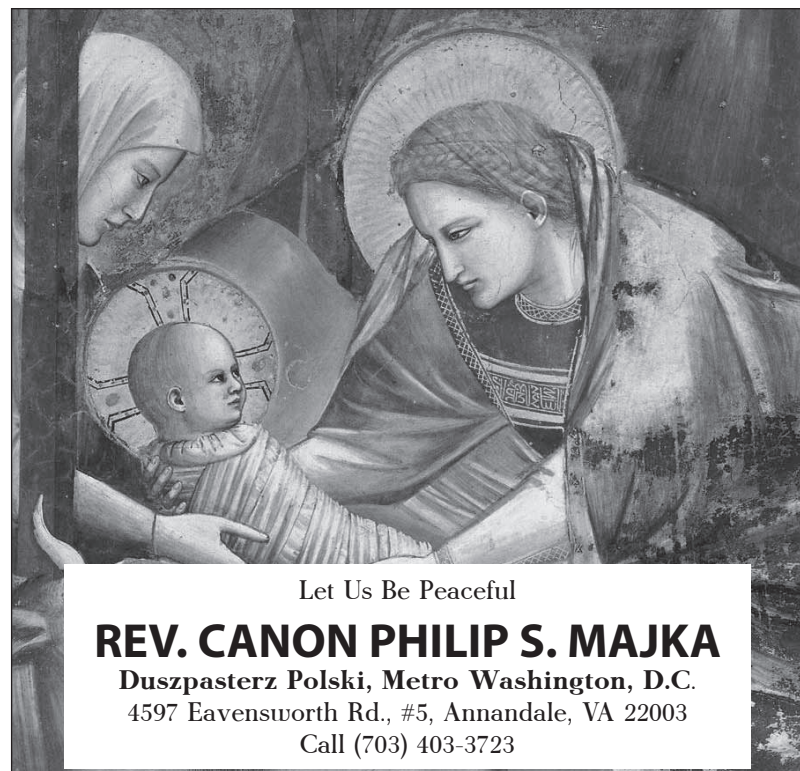
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CHRISTMAS STORIES

Memories of Christmas 1970

by Piotr Szczudlowski

As a result of price increases announced by the Communist Party days before Christmas, shipyard worker protests broke out in the Polish port cities of Gdańsk, Gdynia, and Szczecin in December 1970. In response, the Communists used massive armed force — including helicopter gunships— to suppress the workers. More than 40 were killed, 1100+ wounded, and 3000 arrested. The protests eventually brought down Party Secretary Władysław Gomułka, who was replaced by Edward Gierek — Editor.

More than 40 years — no mean amount of time — has passed since that holiday. Despite the years, memories of Christmas 1970 — which we by convention call the “Polish December” — have stayed in my mind. I was then a nine year-old boy, in fourth grade. I was living in my native Gdańsk, where the local Party headquarters went up in flames and where a lot of shipyard workers’ blood flowed, spilled by the militia’s bullets. I wasn’t an eyewitness to those events — parents naturally protected their children from the danger on the streets — but in my case, illness was also a cause. Due to my illness, I was staying in a closed sanatorium for children,

located in the quiet Gdańsk neighborhood of Oliwa, at the foot of a forest. The clinic was housed in a nice old German building that had been a health care facility even before the War; during the War, German soldiers were treated there.

We were surrounded by doctors, nurses, and caretakers. We went to school in the sanatorium, too; our teachers came from outside. There were undoubtedly those who carried out their work competently and with passion, but that neither had nor could have any influence on the ideological atmosphere in the sanatorium. Like the whole of the medical and educational system that existed in Poland at that time, it was completely secularized, i.e., it denied the fact that the majority of people there, adults and children, were overwhelmingly Catholic. The laicization of public life and, therefore, of individuals, was a priority of the Communist Party ruling Poland at that time. On the walls of our sanatorium there were no crosses. No chaplains came to visit. There were no Masses. There was no catechism. In such a secularized spirit, they also organized Christmas 1970. One thing above all — you couldn’t use the word “Christmas.” You said “the holiday.” They put up a Christmas Tree, decorated with colored ornaments, but neither on the tree nor near it were any

Christian symbols. Dinner on Christmas Eve was a little more festive and fancy than usual, but there were no prayers, no carols. There were even some sweets on the table, but nobody told us what we were celebrating. We only heard that it was the “holidays.”

My father visited me before Christmas and brought me an opłatek, telling me I should eat it on Christmas Eve. And that is what I did. Our unexpected guests on Christmas Eve were a few boars, who made their way beneath our windowsills in search of food.

The occurrence of the “December events” naturally made their mark on the atmosphere of the period. As a child in the sanatorium, I knew little of what was taking place on the streets of Gdańsk and nearby Gdynia. Nevertheless, we had a feeling of something terrible going on, something oppressive, though we didn’t know what. I remember watching TV before Christmas. On the black and white screen, I saw some “talking heads” and heard excerpts of speeches by Party functionaries, appealing for something, warning against something, teaching about something, threatening something ... everything in cold, death-like voices. Of course, I understood nothing of their words, I only felt the peculiar atmosphere of an otherwise undefined threat, an atmosphere seeping into the sanatorium

through the TV screen.

We loved visits from our parents but, because of the disturbances in Gdańsk and Gdynia on those December days, visitation was limited, on some days even cancelled. There were, however, messages that our parents did not want us to worry. The workers there kept up a tempered attitude: the children could not be partners to their conversations, and even among themselves they were measured, fearing that some indiscretion might carry professional “consequences.”

As I said, Christmas in the Oliwa sanatorium was observed in a secular way, completely ignoring the fact that the residents were baptized and came from Catholic families. That doesn’t mean we were subjected to some kind of political indoctrination. I don’t recall, during the year I spent there, that we celebrated some official state holidays, like July 22 or May 1 or the anniversaries of the Bolshevik Revolution. The doctors were focused on our health, the teachers on our education. Neither side displayed the zeal typical of Party activists.

Piotr Szczudlowski is a graduate of the Catholic University of Lublin, arrested in the 1980s for his *Solidarność* and free student activities. He is now a member of the third order of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Pius X.

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CHRISTMAS STORIES

A Kashub Christmas

The Kashubs are a distinct Slavic ethnic group with their own speech, inhabiting Pomerania in northern Poland, and numbering perhaps around 300,000. Their unofficial "capital" is Kartuzy. In the New World, leading centers of Kashub culture are found in Wilno, Ontario (where Kashubs have been settling since 1859), Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

by Fr. Władysław Szulist

The richest folk tradition among Kashubs is bound up with Christmastide, i.e., Christmas, New Year, and Three Kings. Children dress up in costumes and go from house to house throughout Advent, most often dressed as a devil, a chimney sweep, and a shepherd. Bells signal

their arrival at a home. Not everybody opens the door, because today there are lots of people who come around for commercial purposes. Once upon a time, after World War II, a whole ensemble would visit a home in Gostomko, where I come from: "Gwiozdcie" or "Gwizdze" (Star), "Dziad" (Old Man), "Baba" (Old Woman), "Zolnierz" (Soldier), "Niedźwiedz" (Bear), "Bocian" (Stork), "Kozioł" (Goat), and "Koń" (Horse). They would treat the inhabitants to a short theatrical program. The Chimney Sweep would remove the coal and ashes from the stove, the Devil would threaten the kids who did not know their prayers, the Angel would bless them, and the Soldier or the Policeman would keep order in the group (especially by restraining the Devil's wilder be-

havior). The whole group would get some money, then they would take off their costumes and everybody sat down to eat.

As regards the *Wigilia* itself, I remember that, right after the War, we only had soup made from dried fruits and bread and butter. The whole family would leave at about 10 o'clock on the wagon or by sleigh to attend Midnight Mass (*Pasterka*).

For Christmas, my grandfather would make a nut-shaped delicacy made from carrots, flour, and other specialties, which he put in a basket and we suffered for the long Christmas evenings. We didn't have Christmas trees after the war; that custom came only later to Kaszubia. It used to be believed that on Christmas Eve animals spoke with human voices and that water became wine.

On Christmas Eve, adults (and only adults) in Mściszewice would visit from house to house, giving short speeches and bringing greet-

ings to each other, a custom that continues to this day. On the coast, children (mostly boys) dressed in costumes would board trams or buses, singing carols, for which they would receive small presents or sums of money.

There were occasions when, on St. Stephen's Day, priests would be showered with oats as they descended from the altar.

Hunters still fire their rifles on New Year's Eve to greet the New Year. I still remember on New Year's Eve 1972-73, people in Mściszewice would bring wagons and buggies to the square in front of the Church and, if there was ice, they'd take sleds on to the middle of the lake.

Once upon a time, people used to tell each other's fortunes on New Year's Eve: about next year's harvest or whether one would or wouldn't marry. They would burn any leftover flax on the table, which

was supposed to bring good luck. They'd ring out the year with gongs or banging metal, while young people would play pranks on people, like taking off the garden gate, locking people in, or carrying the out-house away from the house.

Today, Kashub children do Christmas performances in their parishes and then represent their parishes at a festival in Sieraków.

Let me end with a traditional Kashub Christmas verse that we used to recite: "Janderny pón, janderna pani, janderna tetko, janderna wszétko, prosi o datka." (Robust sir, robust madame, strong child, everybody — a donation, please!)

Fr. Władysław Szulist, a historian and Kashub scholar, was ordained in 1959 and is now retired. He is recognized for his efforts to preserve Kashub culture and research its transplantation to North America.

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My First Christmas in Poland

by John Grondelski

Growing up in a Polish American home, I remember pieces of Polish Christmas traditions that we celebrated, but they had long been adapted by a family settled in America more than 60 years. My first completely traditional *Wigilia* was actually before December 24, as a freshman at St. Mary's College in Orchard Lake, Michigan, where we had our own student *Wigilia* before we went home for Christmas 1977. My first traditional *Wigilia* with Poles was at the Polish Pilgrim Home in Rome in 1992, where afterwards we attended *Pasterka* at St. Peter's Basilica, celebrated by Pope John Paul II. But my first *Wigilia* in Poland took place in Kościaszyn in



PAJ BOOK REVIEW CONTRIBUTOR John M. Grondelski celebrates a Polish *Wigilia* with his family in Rogers, Conn., Christmas 2011 (l. to r.): Aunt Wanda Mack; cousin Ashley Wheeler; Alexandra Grondelski; John Z. Grondelski; Dorota Grondelski; John Grondelski; his aunt Alice Guay; and his aunt (and PAJ subscriber) Bertha Kuszaj.

1994.

Where's Kościaszyn, you ask? About three miles from the Ukrainian border, perhaps 120 miles southeast of Lublin. I had gone there to meet the family of my girl (and now, my wife, Dorota) for the first time. I was then teaching at Seton Hall University in New Jersey, and flew to Poland to spend the holidays.

Back then, Finnair offered the cheapest flight, but you had a layover in Helsinki. Flying out on December 22, we landed in the Finnish capital at 9:00 a.m., as dawn was breaking. I had five hours to spend there, so I went into town. I stopped in the cathedral and met a priest decorating a Christmas tree — who turned out to be the Bishop of Helsinki. When I got back to the airport at 2:00 p.m., the sun was setting. They might have a midnight sun in summer, but they pay for it in winter.

Arriving in Poland, my priest-friend picked me up in Warsaw and put me on a bus to Zamość, where Dorota met me at 10 o'clock at night. The next day, December 24, we did a little shopping, then set out on the last bus for Kościaszyn. "Don't forget to bring my mother some flowers," she added. Her sister's husband had forgotten many years earlier, but my mother-in-law never forgot.

We got to a "nearby" village, the last stop, at about 3:15. The day was waning, it had snowed, and there was nothing there but a church, a cemetery, and the bus stop. I saw a snow-laden car in the distance, and

called out "Pani Kostrubiec, Pani Kostrubiec." Eventually, a gruff farmer's voice announced "nie ma tu zadnej Kostrubiec."

I looked at Dorota, who announced we obviously had to hike it, eight kilometers (4.8 miles) to her village. The road was icy, and the farmers — in keeping with the tradition of talking animals on Christmas Eve — had let their dogs out. We started walking. There were no cars, just an arch of snow-covered trees that looked a lot like Dr. Zhivago. Maybe half-way there, a truck came along and took us another two miles, dropping us off to walk the last one.

When we got home, cooking fish in the kitchen was Dorota's mom, ruddy-faced (although her flowers were frozen). "Where had you been?" Dorota asked. "I went to the bus stop, but there were only two people there, some guy and a woman in a white coat and some fancy hat, so I figured you missed the bus and I went home." To impress me, Dorota had spent much of her teacher's salary that month to buy a new coat, a hat, and a huge Christmas tree.

It was a warm *Wigilia* dinner, though we passed up walking four kilometers to the neighboring village for Midnight Mass, going instead on Christmas morning in the village chapel. Two and a half years later, we were married. And I'll admit: my mother-in-law is a great woman whom I really like.

John Grondelski contributes book reviews to the Polish American Journal.



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CHRISTMAS STORIES

Christmas in Silesia

by The Rev. Prof. Bernard
Kolodziej, S.Chr.

Upper Silesia, which had not been a part of Poland since the 14th century until after World War II, preserved the Polish language in its oldest forms. The eastern part of Upper Silesia avoided Germanization in large part because, although it was outside Poland's borders, from a Church perspective it belonged to the Diocese of Kraków. That separate ecclesiastical difference was, among other things, the reason for the great amount of singing in Upper Silesia, because people sang in church in Polish, hence many composers and organists created new hymns and folk music that was often sung in the Silesian dialect.

In Upper Silesia, proper preparation for Christmas began with the First Sunday of Advent.

For children, the first signal of Christmas' approach was the Feast of St. Nicholas, always marked on December 6. St. Nicholas usually came in the evening, dressed in a white robe or long coat, a chasuble or a cape and always in a bishop's miter. He usually arrived with two helpers: an angel and a devil. Depending on the children's "politeness" and behavior, children received presents and, from the devil, a symbolic strike with a belt. Then the children promised to amend their ways. Presents were simple and inexpensive: candy, clothing, toys. Children who were disobedient also received presents which included, for example, potato peels or pieces of coal.

Christmas Eve and the Wigilia Supper: traditionally, the Wigilia table is simple, covered with a tablecloth (usually white). A decorated Christmas tree — usually a spruce or fir — stood in the corner of the room. Among the items on the table were a cross, lighted candles, holy water, and the Bible. There was also a small plate with salt, sugar, a piece of bread, and money — so that these things would never be lacking. The Wigilia courses were traditionally, at a minimum five, up to twelve or more. They were usually simple, made mostly from products that were consumed on a daily basis.

There was, however, a big difference from an ordinary supper. The Wigilia began with a formal prayer, said individually or together, followed by a breaking and sharing of the *oplatek* and expressions of mutual forgiveness. Basic spices, berries, and fruits were on the table. The major foods were: potatoes; fried carp; and cabbage with peas or mushrooms. Specifically Silesian dishes included: a soup called *siemieniotka*, made from hemp seeds but often today substituted by a fish or mushroom soup, *barszcz*, or Silesian "thin" *zurek* (sour barley soup). The next Silesian dish is *moczka*, which looks like a loose marmalade made from dried smoked plums. After cooking, one adds raisins and other nuts or grated ginger mince-meat. Another Silesian delicacy is *makówki*, made from yeast bread covered with a milk and poppy seed sauce and soaked in raisins or nuts. Everything is assembled in layers and filled with the sauce. It's put aside for a few hours and usually eaten at the end of the meal or after Midnight Mass. There is also the usual fruit drink (*kompot*), made from dried fruits.

After the Wigilia supper comes the usual giving of gifts from under the Christmas tree, which it is said are brought by the Christ Child. Af-

terwards, there is carol singing (usually all the verses), which continues until all leave for Midnight Mass.

Midnight Mass always has a special, liturgically festive character in terms of celebration and singing. Before midnight, one still sings Advent songs, e.g., "Spuście nam na ziemskie niwy" but, right after midnight, the bells ring, the organ plays, alpine trumpets sound, and Mass begins with carols like "Bóg się rodzi" or "Silent Night" (Cicha noc).



When Święty Mikołaj (St. Nicholas) makes his rounds in Poland, he usually arrives with two helpers: an angel and a devil, who would give bad children potato peels or coal. This 1948 photo from Rdzawka shows Święty Mikołaj, an *anioł* and the *diabeł* visiting a school.

There is a traditional Silesian lunch on December 25: chicken soup with homemade noodles, black and white noodles, "blue" cabbage, *rolade* and sauce, fruit *kompot* and a special Silesian pudding-like dessert, *szpajza*, made in many variations. Leftover cold fish from the Wigilia supper is eaten later. The whole family usually gathers at the parents' house. After dinner, more gifts are exchanged, particularly for the children.

After Christmas, in addition to the "usual" caroling in church, carolers, shepherds and kings went around to houses singing. That custom, which still exists primarily in the villages, can last until the beginning of February.

In some places, on New Year's Day, gates and doors were removed and carried to the town square in front of the church. Its traditional meaning was that owners should pay attention during the New Year to new items around the house and garden. Silesian gardens are renowned for their well-kept and clean flowerbeds.

The Rev. Prof. Kolodziej is professor of Church history at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland.

Christmas in the Zamość Region

by The Rev. Prof. Edward Walewander

Christmas brings all the members of the family together, an occasion for memory. We most frequently remembered World War II and the German occupation. In our home, there were constant memories of daily life under German occupation, of endless shortages, and of hunger—the last of which frequently haunted many families.

We never sang "Silent Night" in the presence of certain neighbors. For them it would have brought back painful memories of life in the German concentration camps where, at Christmastime, they would have to listen to that carol over the loudspeakers while standing for hours in the cold for roll call.

Until this day there remains an old Christian tradition that, immediately prior to the Wigilia meal, the father of the family (frequently together with one of his children, his son if he prepares him for it) would festively carry in some hay to place beneath the tablecloth as well as a sheaf of wheat called the "King" (*król*). One wanted to have the blades as long as possible, because it was believed that next year's wheat would grow just as tall. The wheat symbolized the newborn Christ Child who, through His birth, should become the King of our lives.

The breaking of the *oplatek*—a Polish custom with roots stretching back to the Church of the first centuries—has a very religious character. The family prayed together, often on kneelers: the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Angelus. We also read the Gospel of the Nativity. If somebody in the family had died, we also prayed for his eternal rest. After the prayers, the father, mother, or the oldest person in the family briefly spoke. After this came a moment of sorrow for the wrongs one had done and a request for forgiveness. Only then was the *oplatek* broken. One made the sign of the cross before partaking of it.

On the second day of Christmas—St. Stephen's Day—"well-wishers" (*szczodracy*) visited homes very early in the morning. The "well-wishers" were children, most frequently boys, who visited families first thing in the morning, generously wishing them God's blessings (hence, the name). When they finished, they threw oats at everybody, a custom recalling St. Stephen's death by stoning. The "well-wishers" received some money as a reward, which is why they competed to get around everywhere as early as possible, thereby assuring a better profit.

People in the Zamość region, beginning with Christmas Eve and running through Christmas, St. Stephen's, St. John's (Dec. 27), New Year, and Three Kings, visited each other. Upon entering a home, they would express their wishes with the words: "Happiness and good health at Christmas (or New Year, etc.)." The formulaic response was always: "May God let us begin the New Year and happily await the next one!" (*Daj nam Boże ten rok sprowadzić i drugiego szczęśliwie doczekać!*). [Soil in the Krasnobrod region is poor, and families were often lucky to make it through the entire winter

with sufficient food—editor].

Preparations for Wigilia began over several days prior to Christmas. Traditionally one neither ate nor drank on Christmas Eve until the Wigilia. When the house had been thoroughly cleaned, one began decorating the Christmas tree with paper decorations, apples, gingerbreads (*pierniki*), candy, and Christmas balls.

The obligatory courses at the Wigilia meal included *kutia* (a sweet mixture of soft grains, poppy seed, and dried fruits), fruit drink made from dried fruits, red beet soup (*barszcz*), cabbage and peas, poppy seed rolls, fish, and herring.

Everybody made sure that the first person they saw on that day was a man ...

The hay used at the Wigilia table was fed to the farm animals on St. Stephen's Day to keep them from illness. It was believed that, thanks to the Wigilia hay, cows would give more milk. The wheat sheaves were made into small binders (*powrósta*) that were tied around fruit trees so that they bore more fruit.

Various customs and superstitions were connected with Christmas Eve. Everybody made sure that the first person they saw on that day was a man, which was supposed to predict success. Women were not supposed to visit others on that day. They were supposed to stay at home, because visits augured bad luck. People tried not to borrow money on Christmas Eve or during the holidays because that, too, foretold bad luck.

The Rev. Prof. Edward Walewander is professor of pedagogy at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland. He comes from Niemirówek in the Zamość region.

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Please note that our next multidisciplinary conference, the 72 Annual PIASA Meeting will be held in Warsaw, Poland, June 19-22, 2014. For further information regarding registration, flight and hotel discounts please see our website www.piasa.org

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RELIGION / Benjamin Fiore, S.J.

20 Years a Blessed



BLESSED MARY ANGELA TRUSZKOWSKA, foundress of the Felician Sisters.

As the Polish-American community looks forward to the canonization of Blessed John Paul II on Divine Mercy Sunday next year, we also celebrate the 20th anniversary of the beatification of **Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska**, foundress of the Felician Sisters. A painting was created in Rome for her beatification in 1993 by **Sr. Mary Colette Michniewicz, CSSF**. Those who wish Blessed Mary Angela's intercession for their needs can use this prayer:

God, our Father, I praise and thank you for the gift of Blessed Mary Angela, who lived your will in faith and trust, and lived your love in service to others. I pray in confidence, that through her intercession you will grant me the favor which I request. I ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

To assist your devotion to Blessed Angela the following items are available: Holy card with prayer, Litany of Blessed Mary Angela, Blessed Angela medal, Blessed Mary Angela brochure. Further information **Sr. Rita MarieVondra**, Presentation of the BVM, 36800 Schoolcraft Rd., Livonia, MI 48150

or visit www.feliciansisters.org.

HIDDEN PAINTING UNVEILED.

A mural painted by artist/army colonel, and parishioner of St. Peter's Episcopal Church **Ted Witonski** was recently unveiled for public display in the church at 346 W. 20 St., New York City. The mural, *Our Lord Blessing a Soldier and a Sailor*, was painted during World War II to honor our servicemen, but was concealed for 59 years behind a drape because some in the parish thought it favored militarism. Further information: (212) 929-2390 or visit www.stpeterschelsea.com/wordpress/.

MARCH FOR LIFE AND FAMILY IN GDAŃSK.

A Sunday in October brought thousands of Poles in Gdańsk to join a colorful march with banners and flags through the city where Solidarity was born. This fourth March for Human Life and Family, co-organized by Human Life International – Poland, was in support of the fundamental rights of the family and processed from the three crosses of the Solidarity monument to St. Mary's Basilica with stops for prepared testimonials on the protection of the conceived child, the dangers of in vitro procedures, the joy of having a large family, and promoting NaProTechnology for aiding conception. **Polish Senator Anthony Szymański** and Gdańsk's **Archbishop Leszek Sławoj Głódź** addressed the marchers on the importance of respect for family values by all, even public authorities.

FREE LEGAL AID TO THE NEEDY IN SPRINGFIELD.

Springfield, Ill.'s **Bishop Thomas Paprocki** has launched a volunteer legal services program for the poor in need of legal counsel for civil matters. He explained, "I have seen firsthand how civil legal aid can be a lifeline that enables families to save their home from foreclosure or evic-

tion, recover back wages from an employer, secure disability benefits or provide protection in domestic violence situations ... This program goes to the heart of preserving human dignity and empowers people to gain control of their lives again." The program was launched with the support of Catholic and non-Catholic lawyers as well as \$1.5 million in seed money from the diocese. Caritas Legal Services was created in belief that it is "fundamentally unfair and unjust to deprive the poor of legal protection for their lives that wealthy persons enjoy."

BISHOP REACTS TO ROSARY FOR GAY MARRIAGE IN CATHEDRAL.

Springfield's **Bishop Thomas Paprocki** reacted forcefully to the plan of the Rainbow Sash Coalition to stand before one of the weekday Masses and recite the rosary in support of the bill in the state legislature to legalize same-sex "marriage." Citing his duty as shepherd of his people to warn Christians not to profane God by asking Him to publicly degrade holy matrimony, Bishop Paprocki labeled the plan as blasphemous and stated that, with the assistance of police, persons wearing the rainbow sash would not be admitted to the cathedral, and those who stood to pray the rosary would be asked to leave. Gay activists reacted strongly in the media and attempted to contrast Bishop Paprocki's stance with what they interpret as that of Pope Francis.

UNFAIR ABUSE LAWSUIT BILL VETOED.

The bill passed by California's legislature to extend the statute of limitation on abuse cases as the charges apply to Church and private organizations and businesses while exempting public schools and government institutions (see last month's column), has been vetoed by California's **Governor Jerry Brown**. While the governor acknowledged that cases alleging abuse make "valid and profoundly important claims," the statute of limitations is part of a legal tradition of "fairness." He also noted the "significant inequity" of different treatment of abuse victims in public and private institutions.

PROF. BARBARA ENGELKING OF

Warsaw, Poland was named the recipient of this year's prize. Endowed by Prof. Jan Karski at YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in 1992, the \$5,000 prize goes to authors of published works documenting Polish-Jewish relations and Jewish contributions to Polish culture.

MODLITWY

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PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN. (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. Grateful thanks, R.K.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT. Holy Spirit, You who solve all problems, who light all roads so I can attain my goal. You who give me the Divine gift to forgive and to forget all evil against me and that in all instances of my life you are with me. I want this short prayer to thank you for all things and to confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you, even and in spite of all material illusion. I wish to be with you in eternal glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. Thank you Holy Spirit. That person must say this prayer for 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the favor requested will be granted, even if it may appear difficult. This prayer must be published immediately after the favor is granted, without mentioning the favor. Your initials should appear after the thank you. Thank You Holy Spirit. E.W.



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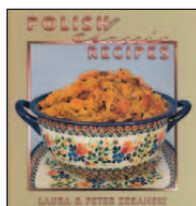
POLISH COOKBOOKS



POLISH CLASSIC DESSERTS
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By Laura and Peter Zeranski
2013. 96 pp. 8½ x 8½. Index. 100

color photos by Bob Rock

Organized by type and with titles in both Polish and English. From mazurkas and babas to pastries and beverages, these recipes are designed for the modern kitchen but retain their traditional roots. Each of the forty-five desserts are tested to perfection and paired with mouthwatering photographs and notes on Polish history and customs.



POLISH CLASSIC RECIPES
\$16.95
by Laura and Peter Zeranski
2011, 96 pp., h.c., index, 100 color

photographs by Matthew Aron Roth

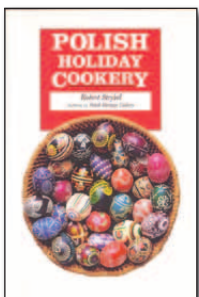
Designed for the modern kitchen yet retaining traditional roots, each heritage recipe in *Polish Classic Recipes* has been tested to perfection. Accompanied by notes on Polish holiday customs, history, and menu pairing suggestions, these dishes offer a flavorful sample of the Polish dining experience, as passed down from generation to generation.



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by Sophie Knab
337 pp., pb., Ill. Hippocrene Books

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POLISH HOLIDAY COOKERY
\$24.95
by Robert Strybel
248 pp., hc. Hippocrene Bks.



Polish Holiday Cookery acquaints readers with traditional Polish foods associated with various occasions and furnishes countless cooking tips and serving suggestions. This "instruction manual for the culturally aware Polish American" offers more than 400 recipes, along with a lexicon of basic foods and culinary concepts, ingredients and procedures, and sample menus. The clearly-written recipes facilitate the preparation of the dishes and their incorporation in the Polish American mainstream culture.

Polish Holiday Cookery covers holidays such as Christmas and Easter, as well as celebrations year-round. Ideas for banquets, picnics, dinners, and family favorites abound throughout, ensuring that cooks have a selection of dishes for any occasion.

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with full color dividers for individual sections, hardcover bounded by plastic spirals for ease of use while cooking. Two indexes for recipes—one in English and one in Polish will make it easy to find your favorite dish.

THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD POLISH COOKBOOK:
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96 recipes from the famed Polonia of Detroit. Breakfast, lunch, dinner pastries, pierogi, kluski, cream chipped beef, soups, desserts and more.

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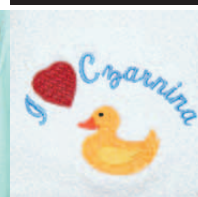
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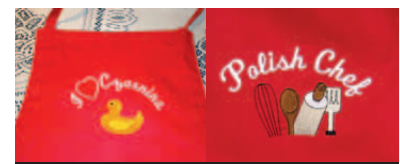
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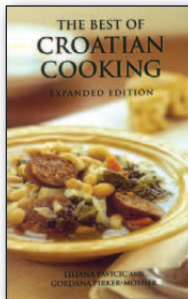
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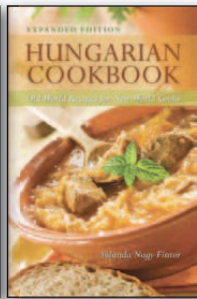
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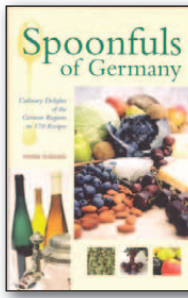
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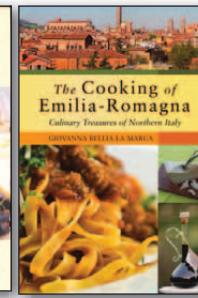
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HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO STYLE / Geraldine Balut Coleman

NPR's "Wait, Wait ... Don't Tell Me" Apologizes for Polish Joke

CHICAGO — During the October 26 broadcast of National Public Radio's (NPR) very popular, Chicago-based "Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me," Peter Grosz, the actor and television writer and host Peter Sagal verbally played around with the worn out "how many Poles does it take to screw in a light bulb?"

The joke was in such poor taste that that segment of the radio show not only prompted listeners to call NPR, email/write letters to NPR, but when Poland's Consul General Paulina Kapuścińska's letter accusing the show of xenophobia and prejudice reached the desk of Michael Danforth, Executive Producer of WBEZ 91.5 FM (NPR) Chicago, he felt that an apology was in order. This incident reached the *Chicago Tribune* as well. National Public Radio does serve a sophisticated audience and as Danforth stated "I can't disagree with your judgment that the content of our October 26 show was unsophisticated and insulting to the intellect of NPR listeners."

His letter to Kapuścińska apologized for a joke that listeners found "hurtful."

"Finding that right mix of irreverence and comedy is a risky business, and we sometimes step over the line. Never is it our intention to offend," he wrote. Kapuścińska responded by stating that she was happy that Mike Danforth apologized.

Below is the letter that Consul General Paulina Kapuścińska wrote to Michael Danforth, Executive Producer of WBEZ (91.5 FM) National Public Radio (NPR):

Dear Mr. Danforth,

I am writing to you following a number of phone calls that poured into my office from WBEZ listeners who felt offended by a distasteful joke about Poles which appeared on WBEZ's program *Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me* last Saturday, October 26, 2013 in an episode *Bluff the Listener*. The joke was about "how many Poles it takes to screw in a light bulb" and was told by the host Peter Sagal and Peter Grosz. Needless to say, it offended many Poles and Polish Americans. Jokes such as these offend your listeners in a number of ways:

Firstly, they are xenophobic in nature and present Chicago NPR (WBEZ) as promoters of prejudice, secondly, they are some of the most unsophisticated of jokes which offend the intellect of NPR listeners, and lastly, they promote untrue stereotypes about Poles and Poland.

For nearly a quarter of a century now, Poland has been Europe's success story because of its economic, scientific, and political achievements. In fact, many countries in Europe, Central Asia, and North Africa nowadays rely on Poland's example of good governance. This success would not have been possible without the intelligence and resourcefulness of the Poles. Therefore, offending the Poles' intelligence on a nationwide

broadcast is not only unjustified and hurtful, but it also paints an erroneous picture about a big European nation.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could see to this matter personally and rectify this distasteful situation by airing a suitable explanation in the next episode of the program in order to set the record straight with your listeners.

Yours sincerely,
Paulina Kapuścińska
Consul General of the
Republic of Poland in Chicago



l. to r.: MacEntee, Jensen, Heska, and Nitsch.

PGSA HELD CONFERENCE. The Polish Genealogical Society of America (PGSA) held its 35th annual conference on September 13-14 at the Hilton Hotel in Lisle, Ill. This conference offered something for everyone who attended, from how to use Google as one's search engine to navigating the Polish State Archives to the history of the Prussian Partition and its record keeping. The PGSA's 94-page program book was worth the trip to this conference. It is an excellent resource/research tool.

The PGSA was honored that four renowned experts in the area of genealogy were part of this conference. **Tomasz Nitsch** came from Warsaw, Poland to add his expertise in genealogy. He is a graduate of the Krakow University of Economics, majoring in informational technology and econometrics. He is chief information officer for the broadcast media enterprise, TVN S.A. More importantly, he is the founder and owner of Poland's *GenPol.com*, one of the most important genealogy websites in the history of the Polish internet. This website plays a very important role in helping to enhance genealogical knowledge.

The PGSA was delighted to have invited one of the country's most knowledgeable certified genealogists, **Ceil Wendt Jensen**, to its conference. Jensen has a Master's degree in education and is the founder and co-director of the Polonica American Research Institute, which is the Polish Mission's genealogy center in Orchard Lake, Michigan. She has conducted research throughout the United States and Poland. Additionally, she has authored four books related to Polonia history: *Detroit's Polonia*, *Detroit's Mount Elliott Cemetery*, *Detroit's Mount Olivet Cemetery and Michigan Polonia's Sto Lat: A Modern Guide to Polish Genealogy*.

Most recently, Jensen contributed to the new PBS series *Genealogy Roadshow*, in which its inaugural show took place in Detroit's historic Indian Village.

Ola Heska, who received her Master's degree in Russian philology from Lodz University, is a genealogist and translator, fluent in Polish, Russian, English, and Latin. Heska is also a decipherer of Old Russian handwriting. As a member of the PGSA, she offers her expertise to the PGSA. Another guest speaker was **Thomas MacEntee**, a genealogy professional who specializes in the use of technology and social media for genealogical research. He also spends his non-busy time writing blog posts, organizing the 3,000+ members of *GeneaBloggers.com*, and teaching online genealogy webinars and

more.

The PGSA took special time during its conference to honor **Annamarie Utroska**, a PGSA volunteer, by presenting her with its *Gwiazda Award*. This award is presented to a PGSA volunteer who has given much in time and talents. The PGSA's *Wigilia Award* was presented to **The Polish Museum of America** for the outstanding services and the support it has given to the PGSA. Accepting this award on behalf of the Museum was its president, **Maria Ciesla**.



Malgorzata Kot, Head Librarian, and Kozistka.

KORZISTKA RECITAL. Sunday, October 20, was a perfect afternoon to hold a piano recital at The Polish Museum of America (PMA). Those who endured the unexpected bumper-to-bumper traffic on the Kennedy Expressway received a special treat. Pianist **Michal Korzistka**, one of the leading Polish interpreters of Chopin's piano works, performed piano compositions of Frédéric Chopin and Witold Lutoslawski. Mr. Korzistka performed Chopin's *Andante Spianato et Grande Polonaise Brillante*, Opus 22, *Piano Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor*, Opus 35, along with a waltz and a ballade.

In addition to the Chopin pieces, Korzistka played Lutoslawski's *Piano Sonata*, *Bucolics*, and *Folk Melodies*. Proceeds from this soirée benefited the Rare Book Conservation Project of the Museum Library (PMAL). This project is devoted to the preservation of the PMAL's oldest books, one of which dates back to 1508. The cost of restoring and conserving one rare book is approximately \$500.00. Wish to donate to this project? To have your name placed in a rare priceless book? To memorialize a loved one? Contact the PMAL at 1.773.384.3352, Ext. 101 or by contacting the Library at PMALibrary@PolishMuseumOfAmerica.org.

PHOTO: KONRAD ZIELINSKI



Lt. Gov. Calley (center), Consul General Kapuścińska (2nd from left), and entourage.

CONSUL GENERAL TRAVELED TO LANSING. On October 15, Polish Consul General **Paulina Kapuścińska** traveled to Lansing and met with Michigan's Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley. She also took part in the first-ever Polish Day celebration at Michigan's State Capitol and met with State Senator Steven Bieda. During both meetings, topics concerning the prospects of cooperation between Poland and the state of Michigan were discussed.

Consul Kapuścińska went on to participate in the ceremony celebrating Polish Day at the Capitol, which, apart from speeches by the Lieutenant Governor and Consul General, featured performances by Polish dance groups, displays of artwork by young Polish American students, as well as many references to the shared Polish and American values and traditions.

The celebration was attended by many leaders and members of the Polish American community, including State Senators Mike Kowall and Steven Bieda and Polish American media. The event was spear-



Krupa visiting Dar Serca.

headed by Anna Bieciuk, a young Polonion from the office of Michigan Governor Rick Snyder. The Michigan locale was more than appropriate; one in nine Michiganians are of Polish ancestry.

SUPERMODEL KRUPA VISITS CHICAGO.

Joanna Krupa, Polish American supermodel and star of the reality show, *Real Housewives of Miami*, was in Chicago the

weekend of November 3-4. She spent time at the Gift From the Heart Foundation (*Dar Serca*) facility in Schiller Park, Illinois meeting with its staff and volunteers.

But more importantly, Krupa was there to visit with the special-needs children. The Gift From the Heart Foundation helps seriously ill and handicapped children from central and eastern European countries who can only receive special treatment available in the United States.

On Mon., Nov. 4, Krupa was the guest at a by-reservation-only event hosted by PAL-PAC, the Polish American Leadership Political Action Committee, a political organization formed for the purpose of addressing the social, civic, and business interests of the Polish American community. This appearance at Chicago's Gold Coast Public Hotel's Library Lounge coincided with the season finale of the *Real Housewives of Miami*. Guests were able to view this final episode of Joanna and Romain Zago's wedding on large screen monitors.



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POLONIA OF THE EASTERN GREAT LAKES / Michael Pietruszka

Bulhak's Photography Goes Digital

BUFFALO, N.Y. — **Molly Poremski**, curator of the **Polish Room** in the University of Buffalo's Lockwood Library is digitizing and cataloging the architectural and landscape photos of Polish photographer **Jan Bulhak** ... On November 3, Henryk M., Anna Cyzon and Dariusz Kozakiewicz starred in a tribute concert for Polish blues legend **Tadeusz Nalepa** at the John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre in Mississauga. A new CD of the music presented, "Prog Na Ktorem Siada Blues" is available in the Toronto area ... Polish actress **Kinga Mitrowska** headlined the production of "Variete" at the Mavo Academy of Arts and Music in Mississauga on November 9 and 10 ... WNY's Polish veterans marked **Polish Independence Day and Veterans Day** with a Mass at St. Stanislaus Church, the Mother Church of Buffalo's Polonia, on the 10th ... St. Luke's Productions brought their nationally touring one-woman play, "**Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy**," to three churches in the Diocese of Buffalo in early November ... The **Polish Cadets** of Buffalo held its Semi Annual Election Meeting at its Grant Street clubrooms on November 17 ... Former Niagara Falls City Historian **Paul Gromosiak** addressed the Niagara Polish Cultural and Historical Society meeting on "The History of the Echo Society Property" at the Niagara Hub on the 19th ... Kosciuszko Visiting Professor **Dr. Barbara Klaska** spoke to the November 20 meeting of the Polish Arts Club of Buffalo on the topic, "The Image of Poland in American 19th Century Historiography," and the "Snowbelters Quartet" performed at the Professional & Business Women of Polonia's dinner meeting at Salvatore's Italian Gardens ... The **Felician Sisters** at Villa Maria commemorated the 140th anniversary of the Felician Sisters in North America with a "Holy Hour" in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent Chapel in Cheektowaga on November 21 ... The Polish Consul General in Toronto celebrated Eddie Zawadzki's new book, "Poles in the New World: The New Generation" on November 22 ... The **Association of Priests for Polish Affairs** held its annual Mass for Deceased Clergy and Religious at Buffalo's St. Stanislaus Church on November 26 ... The **Polish Orphans' Charity** held its "White Christmas Dinner" at Toronto's King Edward Hotel on November 30 ... Also on the 30th, "**Andrzejki**" festivities were held at the UMC Great Hall and the John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre in Mississauga.

Polish rock legends "**Elektryczne Gitary**" will perform at the John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre in Mississauga, and the **District IX** on the **Polish Singers Alliance of America** will host its Annual Festival of Polish Carols at St. Stanislaus Church in Buffalo, on December 1 ... The University of Rochester's **Skalny Lecture and Artist Series** will present Dr. Michael Galas' lecture on "Progressive Synagogues in Poland as Centers of Patriotic Teaching in Goergen Hall on December 4; and a concert, "Music of Poland," featuring violinist Maria Raczka and pianist Ivanka Drianakova in Strong Auditorium on the 8th ... The WNY Division of the **Polish American Congress** will host the national organization's 70th anniversary meeting in Buffalo May 29 through May 31, 2014.

In preparing for the Christmas holiday, a number of WNY's Polonia organizations have already announced their events to celebrate the season. The **Chopin Singing Society** will hold its "Wigilia" at the Millennium Hotel in Cheektowaga on December 7. The **Pulaski Police Association of Buffalo & WNY** will mark the holiday with its Christmas party and installation dinner at the Polish Falcons Hall in Depew that same evening. The **Professional & Businessmen's Association** will host its Christmas party and elections at Orazio's Restaurant in Clarence on the 9th. The **Polish Cadets** of Buffalo will hold its Annual Holiday Dinner at their clubrooms on December 21.

To all my readers and your families: *Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i szczęśliwego nowego roku!*

Best wishes to you for a Merry Christmas, and a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2014!



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Keep up the good work!

Christmas Greetings to the Staff and all the readers of the Polish American Journal.

May your 2014 be filled with Happiness, Health, and Prosperity.

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Kerry Pays Visit to Warsaw

Top U.S. diplomat allays allies' e-spying concerns

Missile shield to be in place in Poland by 2018

U.S. defense sector eager to bid for \$45 billion upgrade

by Robert Strybel

WARSAW — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry recently paid a one-day whirlwind visit to Poland, his only European stop during a swing through the Middle East and Africa. It was also his first visit to Central-Eastern Europe since being appointed US diplomatic chief last February by President Obama.

Kerry held talks on defense cooperation and business ties with his Polish counterpart Radosław Sikorski and Prime Minister Donald Tusk and in the company of Defense Minister Tomasz Siemoniak visited Europe's largest military firing range at Drawsko Pomorskie on the Baltic coast. At a press conference, Kerry told reporters that his talks with Polish officials "have confirmed good strategic relations between the US and Poland." He also praised Poland's economic performance since it dumped communism in 1989 saying: "In less than 25 years, the Polish nation has transformed itself into an economic power and Poland's influence is felt throughout the transatlantic community."

The U.S. diplomatic chief was in Warsaw only weeks after American security services were accused of spying on European mobile-phone and Internet users including those of top government officials such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel. But both foreign ministers evaded direct answers when asked whether Polish leaders had been spied on. Sikorski would only say that there would be "further consultations between our intelligence services to help fight a common enemy." Kerry

said that it was important to maintain a balance between citizens' security and privacy, emphasizing that America's electronic surveillance had saved lives by preventing passenger planes from getting blown up and thwarting other terrorist acts.

Kerry was eager to keep the outrage generated by the eavesdropping scandal separate from forthcoming U.S.-European Union trade negotiations. He said the free-trade deal would create the most powerful marketplaces on planet Earth. "It will put millions of people to work, create new jobs, more opportunities and it is worth pushing for," he explained. Obama's envoy also promised his Polish hosts that part of an anti-missile shield would be in place in Poland by 2018.

Tensions between Warsaw and Washington erupted in 2009, when, in a bid to improve ties U.S.-Russian ties, Obama announced he was scrapping a Bush-era plan to install 10 long-range missile interceptors on Polish territory. He has since replaced it with a more mobile, scaled-back project, whose Romanian section is already under construction.

Kerry also praised Poland for modernizing its military facilities, stressing that American defense contractors were interested in taking part in the \$45 billion upgrade.

A professed Catholic, Kerry, began his Polish sojourn by visiting the grave of Catholic journalist Tadeusz Mazowiecki, post-war Poland's first non-communist prime minister, whose funeral had been held the previous day. Between talks with Polish leaders, he also found time to stroll down Warsaw's historic Krakowskie Przedmieście street with U.S. Ambassador to Poland Stephen Mull. Along the way he chatted with ordinary Poles and school children and munched on a baguette he had purchased at one of the local cafés.

General Rowny Honored by Kosciuszko Foundation

by Richard Poremski

The Washington (D.C.) Center of the Kosciuszko Foundation (KF) held its Annual 2013 Fundraising Dinner, Oct. 26, 2013 at the Army and Navy Club on Farragut Square. Tribute was paid to General/Ambassador Edward L. Rowny (Ret.) — the Guest of Honor — by KF President Alex Storozynski and its Washington representative Barbara "Basia" Bernhardt.

The fascinating history of Brigadier General Rowny's careers with the U.S. Army (42 years), and as President Regan's appointed Ambassador/Chief Negotiator to the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START), were recounted. A detailed description of the forgoing was published in the October 2013 issue of this newspaper in preview of this event.

To show Polonia's deep appreciation, General Rowny was presented with the KF's prestigious "Pioneer" award. Entertainment was provided by the Joy of Motion Dance Center, performing related ethnic dances. Renowned pianist Brian Gancz, of the National Philharmonic, performed Chopin and other melodies. Gancz also thanked the KF for its invaluable assistance in his early career, and for the opportunity to now return the favor.

Later, many of the 150 guests enthusiastically participated in the Grand Polonaise and general dancing.

As pictured above, a most memorable highlight of the evening occurred when General Rowny, now 96,



PHOTO: RICHARD POREMSKI

AND GENERAL ROWNY KEEPS ROLLING ALONG. General Edward L. Rowny and "Basia" Bernhardt

played the official U.S. Army theme song — "The Caissons Go Rolling Along" — on his trusty and ever-present harmonica, with guests participating by singing its popular lyrics.

In his congratulatory letter, Poland's Ambassador Ryszard Schnepf succinctly summed up the evening: "I would like to thank you all for being here and supporting the Kosciuszko Foundation and its future generation of scholars, who one day, as General Rowny did, may take part in shaping the history of the world."

Majewski Re-elected as Hamtramck's Mayor

by Geraldine Balut-Coleman

HAMTRAMCK, Mich. — On November 5, **Karen Majewski** won her third four-year term as mayor of Hamtramck, edging out former councilman and familiar foe, Abdul Algazali.

Majewski was born in the heavily-Polish Back of the Yards neighborhood on Chicago's Southside, but spent most of her childhood in Oak Lawn, Ill. To earn money for her college tuition, she was a factory worker and was the first member of her family to attend college. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in English from Southern Illinois University, and then went on to teach in Illinois, Missouri, Minnesota, and North Carolina. She then settled in Michigan to begin American immigration and ethnicity studies at the University of Michigan and went on to earn a Ph.D. in American Culture. As a graduate student, she lived just over the Hamtramck border in Detroit. Then in 1998, Karen settled in Hamtramck, where she lives with her husband, cartoonist and graphic artist, Matt Feazell.

Majewski, an active scholar and researcher, is a former Executive Director of the Polish American



Karen Majewski

Historical Association. She is on the Board of Trustees of the Dekaban Foundation, which facilitates faculty exchanges in the fields of agricultural, economic, and engineering between Polish universities and universities located in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, and the Michigan Municipal League. She is also a former member of the executive board of the Michigan Suburbs Alliance's Millennial Mayors Congress. In 2001, she organized the Detroit Historical Museum exhibit: *The Polish*

Presence in Detroit. Her award-winning book, *Traitors and True Poles: Narrating a Polish-American Identity*, was published in 2003.

Majewski continues to publish regularly and is a frequent speaker at conferences. She is project manager for the University of Michigan's Community Economic Adjustment Program Institute which assists midwestern communities impacted by the downturn in the auto industry.

She began public service as a member of Hamtramck's Historical Commission. She served on the city council and as city council president and mayor *pro tem* before being elected Hamtramck's first woman mayor in 2005. She was re-elected in 2009. Additionally, Dr. Majewski sits on the Board of Wayne-Metropolitan Community Action Agency and the Michigan Suburbs Alliance.

Majewski received 52 percent of the mayoral votes, and as stated in the *Detroit Free Press*, "Incumbent Mayor Karen Majewski faces strong challenges, but she is clearly the best choice for the part-time post that pays \$7,400 a year."

Andrea Karpinski also was elected to one of the three City Council seats.

Archbishop Reflects at "Wadowice on the Potomac"

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Chapter of the Friends of John Paul II Foundation honored Archbishop Carlos Maria Vigano during its annual "Wadowice on the Potomac," held at the Apostolic Nunciature in Washington, Oct. 19-20, 2013.

More than ninety guests recognized His Excellency for his dedication to the Church and for his promotion of the legacy of Blessed John Paul II.

The archbishop recalled when he was ordained a bishop by John Paul II, and of the sadness he felt after John Paul was shot. He spoke of John Paul's love of languages and how important it was to address his audiences in their native tongue. He remembered his passion for young people and his courage to have lived a life filled with human frailties.

The Chapter awarded the Archbishop a paperweight as a reminder of his work on behalf of John Paul II. The three dimensional art work included an image of the Archbishop, John Paul II and the Vatican flag. It was designed by Carla Tomaszewska of Maryland.



AMBASSADOR SCHNEPF (center) joined Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano (2nd from right), the Ambassador of the Holy See to the United States for an evening commemorating the Papacy of John Paul II.

The second day of celebration was at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at the altar of our Lady of Czestochowa. A mass was celebrated by Cardinal Maida and concelebrated by approximately fifteen priests including the rector of the shrine. The foundation took part in the unveiling of the Mosaic of John Paul II donated

by the Polish American Apostolate and the Chapter was acknowledged for its promotion of the legacy of Blessed John Paul and for arranging the reception after the service.

The Chapter hosted the reception at the Pontifical Institute of John Paul II for the Studies of Marriage and Family at McGivney Hall at Catholic University.

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Connecticut State Polka Celebration A Huge Success



LEGACY SECURED. On Sun., Nov. 3, a huge celebration was at the historic Polish National Home in Hartford. The hall quickly filled with polka fans and friends from Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Master of ceremonies Peter Danielczuk began the program detailing his long seven-year journey to secure Ray Henry's "Ballroom Polka" as the official Connecticut State Polka.

Danielczuk then introduced state representative Linda Gentile, who read the proclamation from governor Dannel P. Malloy. After the declaration, there was a resounding burst of applause that filled the historic ballroom. The Ray Henry Tribute Band — Polka Hall-of-Famer Dennis Polisky, Andrew Galarneau, Jim Turek, Greg Dolecki, Jim Bednarczyk, Stan Scott, Ron Pezda, Joey Milardo, and Eddie Skinger — launched into Ray Henry's theme song.

In attendance were polka dignitaries, IPA Polka Hall-of-Famers Billy Belina, Mitch Biskup; DJs Todd Zaganiacz, Helen and Charlie Curtin, John Prytko, Jr., Teri Arensman, Lucy Flossic, John Gladdis, John Hurchala, and Gary Szefflinski; PAC President John Ziobrowski; musicians: Eddie Biegaj, Rob Prytko, Marty Swiatek, Chris Zolkiewicz, Dave Goculowski, and more.

The chairman of the Ray Henry Tributes committee Ed Satkowski, along with his wife Irene and fellow committee members, were ecstatic for yet another milestone. Friends and followers of the late Ray Henry (nee Henry Mocariski) were deeply moved by the musical presentation that Polisky and the band performed.

POLKA INSIDER / Steve Litwin

Treasure the Memories

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

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

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

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

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

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

Nothing remains the same and the only thing constant is change. Think back to those days. Continue the traditions you can from your heritage, even in a modified form. Treasure those memories, those events, those times, because they are a gift. "Sometimes a memory is your best friend." From the *Polka Insider* and *Rosalinda*, Merry Christmas, *Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia!*

JUKEBOX / Steve Litwin

Heaven on Earth

There are polkas in heaven and you can also find them here on earth, especially on the new K&C Entertainment CD, "Honky Heaven."

Recorded live at Kuzmans Lounge in Girard, Ohio, the track list of this recording is a who's who of polka industry. The CD covers it all, from the music, to the performers, to introductions by DJs and promoters, to musicianship by the best.

If you want names, how about Joe Oberaitis, Charlie Tansek, Steve and Andy Fenus, Jim Kilian, Stas Golonka, Jimmy "K" Krzeszewski, Li'l John Nalevanko, Bobby Piven, Eddie Madura, Bernie Gorak, Sr., Rich Zebrowski, Marty Dzik, Randy Koslosky, Keith Stras, and more.

Classic is a term used a lot but it truly fits this musical product like a glove. With a selection of songs that cover the entire book, and 33 tracks of music and commentary you'll find your favorite tune on "Honky Heaven."

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To order, visit kncentertains.com or call (847) 468-0112.

MPA Holiday Dances

FRIDLEY, Minn. — Get into the holiday spirit at the Midwest Polka Association Holiday Dance, Sat., Dec. 7, at the Fridley Legion, 7365 Old Central Avenue NE.

Dr. Kielbasa will play for dancing and listening from 7:00-11:00 p.m.

In case of inclement weather, please call the Legion club at (763) 786-0920 to confirm that the dance will be held.

On Dec. 28, the MPA will present a "Pre-New Year's Eve Blast" at the Maplewood Moose Lodge, 1946 English St., Maplewood (corner of Frost Avenue and English Street).

Craig Ebel's DyVersaCo, will provide the music from 7:00 p.m. until midnight.

For location directions, call the Moose Lodge at (651) 776-2830.

A Special 98th Birthday Dance for Larry Trojanowski will be held Jan. 11, 2014 at the Maplewood Moose Lodge. Craig Ebel's DyVersaCo will play for dancing and listening from 7:00-11:00 pm. No gifts, please!

For information on any of the aforementioned events, email Danny Fabeck at dan.fabeck@gmail.com or call (763) 244-0152.

Bay City Musician Kowalski Honored

BAY CITY, Mich. — Stanley Kowalski, a Bay City polka musician, was honored October 6, 2013, when Mayor Christopher Shannon proclaimed October 6, 2013, "Stanley Kowalski Day."

Kowalski, who was recently elected to the Michigan State Polka Music Hall of Fame, treated the crowd to "Roll Out the Barrel" played on his accordion.

A proclamation commemorating the day the polka musician was inducted into the Polka Music Hall of Fame in Owosso was approved by the City Commission. The Hall honors polka musicians and promoters who are 50 or older and have played publicly for at least 15 years.

Holiday Magic

FLORIDA, N.Y. — Jimmy Sturr has released a DVD entitled "Holiday Magic." Filmed at the Kirby Center in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., it was originally released on VHS and is now available on DVD for the first time. Ninety minutes long, it features a 19-piece orchestra with special guests including Boots Randolph, The Polonaise Dancers, The Jimmy Sturr Singers, Irish Step Dancers and Lenny Gomulka.

Contact JS Productions, Box 1, Florida, NY 10921 or call (800) 724-0727.

Polka Fireworks 40th Anniversary

CHICAGO — Make plans to attend the 40th Anniversary of the Polka Fireworks Festival at the Seven Springs Resort, Champion, Pa., Wed. July 3- July 6, 2014.

Fourteen of the nations top polka bands will be on stage, including Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push, John Gora & Gorale, Dennis Polisky & the Maestro's Men, The Boys, The Knewz, Jeff Mleczo's DynaBrass, The Buffalo Concertina All-Stars, Tony Blazonczyk's New Phaze, The Nu-Tones, Ray Jay & The Carousels, Andy Fenus & The Trel-Tones, Henny & the Versa Js, Mike Charney's Crab Town Sound, The Mon Valley Push, and DJ Keny Olowin.

A Polka Mass will be celebrated on Sunday morning with music by Henny & the Versa Js.

Reservations are being accepted. Contact Tish Blazonczyk at: (708) 594-5182 or visit www.polkafireworks.com.

New Year's Eve Sold Out

BUFFALO — The Polka New Year's Eve Party at the Millennium Hotel is — at press time — sold out. If you wish to attend the event, which features music by Polka Country Musicians and Special Delivery, you can be placed on a waiting list. Call (800) 323-3331.

POLKA MEMORIES / Steve Litwin

If you have a special Polka Memory photograph to publish, email: pajpolka@verizon.net.



J & THE BRASSTONES. Northeast Pennsylvania. c. 1980.



PENNSYLVANIA POLKA KATS. Mayfield, Pa. 1980.

NOTES / Barbara Pinkowski

Thanks for the Memories!

Hi everyone! I have big news: I have decided that after writing for the PAJ for 26 years, this will be my last article. Mixed feelings of gladness and sadness fill my heart. I loved doing this, but I feel it is time to get a fresh look on the polka reporting.

Throughout all the years, I have met and spoken to many musicians, polka fans, and promoters. Many interesting and informative conversations were shared about the music and everything associated with it. Tons of photos I have taken fill my albums with remembrances of all the good times and fun at the social polka events. It was an honor and thrill for me to be named Polka Reporter of the Year by the United States Polka Association the last three years. So, thanks for all your comments and ideas, it was a pleasure to share our love for the music!

So, it's goodbye Barb and hello Jen!

As of 2014, **Jennifer Pijanowski** will be writing a polka column for this paper. Jen attends many polka functions both in and out of town and has a big circle of polka friends and connections. Her husband, Ricky, plays drums with our local band, The Touch. Welcome aboard, Jen!

INTERNATIONAL TALENT. Our area was treated to the sounds of great Canadian musicians when on Oct. 17, **Ed Guca** from Toronto and his band entertained at the Polka Boosters Club meeting. Then on Oct. 19, the talented **John Gora**

from Burlington joined the **Piatkowski Brothers** (Rob and Al), **Mark Trzepacz**, and **Matt Lewandowski** on stage at the Polish Villa II for a "Sweetest Day / Half Way to Dyngus Day" party. Lots of polka fans filled the Villa to hear the super sounds of this band. **Eddie** and **Roseanne Kutas** were happy to see such a large turnout.

A BUSY PLACE. It was a double-header at Potts Hall on Oct. 26 when **Ted Szymanski** had a sell-out for the trip to the Seneca Niagara Casino. Afterwards, it was a buffet dinner and music by **Special Delivery**. A couple hours later, **New Direction** had its Halloween party there with prizes awarded for costumes. Fun for everyone!

GET WELL ... wishes go out to **Sally Matyjas** from Lockport. Hope she is feeling better now ... to **Kim Rozek**, who is recouping from knee surgery on November 8 ... and to **Special Delivery's Dave Miesowicz**, polka's "Officer John McClane," who went under the scalpel November 13 for foot surgery.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ... **Matthew Misiak, Jr.** and **Kristen Galas**,



JENNIFER PIJANOWSKI and yours truly. Jennifer will start her column in next month's paper.



EDDIE KUTAS, John Gora, and Ken Krupski, at the "Sweetest Day" dance.

on their marriage on Nov. 2. Matthew is the son of polka musician and chiropractor, Matthew Misiak, and Karen Kozak.

WHAT A CROWD! Polish Night at the Fr. Justin Knights of Columbus in Cheektowaga, Nov. 2, was a huge success. Every promoter would love to see a hall as packed as this dinner-dance. Jim and Marie Brado did a fabulous job in the kitchen preparing food for 400 people! There was a patriotic start to the festivities with the presentation of the American,

Polish and Canadian flags and singing the three national anthems. There were many of our Canadian friends there including **John Gora** and his wife having a good time. **Lenny Gomulka & the Chicago Push** did a tremendous job. Many songs from his newest CD, "Save the Music," were played and enjoyed. When it was time to end after Lenny's last number, the crowd would not let him go and kept requesting more songs. He pleased the crowd by playing almost an extra half hour until it was "Turn out the Lights, The Party's Over!" They were stellar!

The **New Direction Band** also played and did an excellent job. **Gene Rzeznik** is back into polka music again. He is the new bass player with the band and does a great job. Before I even got to this

event, I was in the polka mood. My parish, St. James, now Blessed Mother Teresa, had a Polka Mass at 4:00 p.m. which **Special Delivery** played to a full church. The music sounded so good, it made you feel like dancing.

MERRY CHRISTMAS. I would like to wish all you dear readers my sincerest wishes for a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! May your life always be filled with love, laughter and music! *Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!*

UPCOMING

Dec. 7. Polka Variety Social Club Christmas Party at the Leonard Post-Music by Rare Vintage. Call Bill at (716) 759-8194.

Dec. 8. Response to Love Kolędy Dance at Potts Hall, 41 S. Rossler, Cheektowaga. Music by the New Direction, 3:00-7:00 p.m. Food, theme tray raffle and more. \$10.00 admission. Call 826-6575.

Dec. 8. Special Delivery plays at Metzger's Pub, 4135 Seneca St., West Seneca, N.Y. 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Dec. 14. Polka Boosters Club Christmas Party. Polish Falcons Hall in Depew. Sit-down dinner, open bar, and music by the New Direction. Call Chris at (716) 771-1076 for information.

Dec. 22. The Touch. Sportsmen's Tavern, 326 Amherst St., Buffalo. 3:00 p.m. start.

Dec. 23. Kolędy Night. Madonna Council K.of C. 755 Erie Ave., N. Tonawanda, NY from 8:00-11:00 p.m. with Concertina All Stars. Call 693-5470.

Dec. 29. Dianeagains at 2460 Clinton St., Cheektowaga, has Special Delivery from 4:30-7:30 p.m. The End!



SWEETHEARTS at the Sweetest Day dance: Sandra Lewandowski, Jennifer Maziarz, and Lori Stachelski.

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TOLEDO POLONIA / Margaret Zotkiewicz-Dramczyk

TAPS 30th Anniversary a Huge Success

Hats off to **Kevin and Judy Kwiatkowski** and the entire anniversary committee for the **Toledo Area Polka Society's** 30th Anniversary gala event held October 26.

TAPS was founded in 1982, and the membership of the organization formed in 1983. The charter officers were: president, **Tom Ross**; vice president, **Dick Reed**; secretary, **Dolores Ziemianski**; treasurer, **Ruth Silka**; and sergeant-at-arms, **Walter Ziemianski**, with an additional 24 charter members.

Early dances and meetings were held in members' houses and garages, and eventually, the activities took place in public settings. Dances were held at the Argonne Post of the American Legion in North Toledo, the Eagles Post 197 on Jackman Road in West Toledo, and up through the present, where dances take place at the Conn-Weissenberger Post of the American Legion on Alexis Road.

Over the years, TAPS dances featured dozens of the nations' top traveling bands, and numerous local bands. Individuals were honored with acknowledgement for years of membership, a practice that takes place to this day. Theme dances, summer picnics, and bus trips have all formed part of the history of TAPS.

To commemorate the history of TAPS, the anniversary committee, which coincidentally had 30 members, began meeting in early summer to map out the noteworthy evening. As well as planning the schedule, the committee came up with special touches such as an anniversary booklet, a complimentary CD, a continuous video loop of members past and present, 30 door prizes, and fall-themed fresh flower arrangements.

The enthusiasm generated by committee members paid off, as the dance was sold out, with well over 250 guests and standing room only after dinner.

Guests included several charter members, **Ray Jay** (who sat in with the band) and his wife, fans from as far away as Canada, Chicago, Maine, and Georgia, many people from Michigan, and of course the local Toledo polka fans. **Dan and Laura Mateja** from The International Polka Association presented TAPS with a congratulatory plaque midway throughout the evening. Toledo Polka Queen **Alyson Krajewski** was in attendance as well as several former polka queens.

Of course no dance would be memorable if not for the music. **Lenny Gomulka & the Chicago Push** filled those shoes perfectly. Lenny's newest release is "Save the Music" featuring Lenny and his son **Teddy**, and throughout the evening, Lenny played several new songs from this recording, in addition to crowd favorites. Lenny and the

band kept the diverse crowd dancing throughout the night, with everyone begging for 'one more time' as the evening concluded.

Special thanks go out to **Felix and Stella Sobceki** for their hard work on the video presentation, **Eric Hite** for his coordination and mixing of the CD featuring many Toledo bands who played for TAPS throughout the years, **Mike and Marie Marek** for their hard work on the anniversary booklet, **Allons-Y! Marketing** for the collation and printing of the book, and **Kevin and Judy Kwiatkowski** for not only coordinating the anniversary committee but for hours spent producing and packaging the commemorative CD.

Thanks also go out to the Polka Boosters of America, The International Music Association, The

Cleveland Polka Association, the Polish National Alliance, the Toledo Polish Genealogy Society, and the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America Toledo and Wyandotte societies.

On behalf of all of the Board members of TAPS, dziękuję to everyone who helped make the 30th anniversary celebration a premiere event.

As we say goodbye to 2013, don't forget to check out all of our dances in 2014. January 19, music is provided by **The Mixx**, February 23 will see **Duane Malinowski & Polka Jamboree** on the stage, and March's band will be the **Diddle Styx** from Michigan on the 30th. All dances are held at Conn-Weissenberger Hall, 2020 West Alexis Raod, with music from 2:00-6:00 p.m.

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POLISH CHEF / Robert Strybel

Christmas Day Meat Dishes

Following the traditionally meatless Christmas Eve supper, meat dishes of various kinds reign supreme during the long post-Wigilia season of Christmas and New Year entertaining stretching from Dec. 25 to Feb. 2. Here are some of the all-time favorites.

HUNTER'S BIGOS *bigos myśliwski*. This dish is as much at home at a gourmet banquet as it is bubbling in a pot over a forest campfire with hunters huddling round. Soak 1 oz dried bolete mushrooms in 1-1/2 c water several hrs, then cook in same water until tender, chop, return to liquid and set aside. Drain 3 qts sauerkraut, reserving liquid. If overly sour, rinse in cold water, drain again, squeeze dry and chop coarsely. Place in pot with 1 bay leaf, cover with cold water and cook uncovered about 60 min, stirring occasionally. Add about 2 qts various cooked cubed meat (beef, venison or other game, pork, veal, turkey, duck, smoked Polish sausage and/or cubed ham. in any proportion you like. Add the mushrooms and their liquid, 1/2

c chopped stewed tomatoes, 3/4 c chopped, pitted prunes and 2 peeled, diced large cooking apples. Toss ingredients to blend and bring to boil, reduce heat and cook uncovered on low 30 min. Mix again, cover pan and bake another 2 hrs at 325° stirring frequently. After switching off heat, leave bigos covered until it cools to room temp. Refrigerate over night. Add 1/2 c dry red wine and 2 buds mashed garlic and cook on low another 2-3 hrs, stirring occasionally. Reheat at 325° for 90 min before serving. If the bigos is not as tart as you want, stir in a little reserved sauerkraut juice. Season with salt, pepper, marjoram and crushed juniper.

ROAST TURKEY POLONAISE *indyk po polsku*. Wash and pat dry 8-12 lb turkey. Rub inside and out with salt and let stand covered at room temp 2 hr. Crumble up 12 - 15 slices stale French bread (or equivalent amount of chałka, kaiser rolls, buns, etc.) into bowl and drench with milk to barely cover. Mix and let soak. When soggy, grind with raw turkey liver and 5

– 6 raw chicken livers. Add: 4 egg yolks, beaten until creamy with 4 T soft butter and 1 T sugar; 1 c drained, pre-soaked raisins; 1 c ground blanched almonds; and 3–4 T chopped parsley. Season with salt & pepper, 1/4 t grated nutmeg and 2 pinches or so ground cloves. Mix well. Gently fold in 4 beaten egg whites and toss very gently. Mixture should be moist and soggy, as it firms up during roasting. Fill cavity loosely and sew bird up. (Note: This quantity is about right for a 10-lb turkey, so adjust the amount to the size of your bird.) Tuck ends of drumsticks under skin flaps and place in roaster. Rub all over with butter and place thin wide strips of salt pork on breast and drumsticks. Roast about 20-25 min per lb. When done, remove from oven and let stand at least 15 min before carving.

CHICKEN-BREAST CUTLETS *kotlety z piersi kurczaka*. Pound 4 skinned and halved chicken breasts

until only 1/4" thick. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, dredge in flour, dip in egg wash and roll in plain bread crumbs, shaking off excess. Fry in several T hot butter to a nice gold-brown (several min per side), drain on absorbent paper and serve immediately. Serve with rice or potatoes and mizeria or lettuce.

ROAST PORK LOIN WITH PRUNES *schab pieczony ze sliwkami*. Rub a 4-5 lb pork loin with salt, pepper, marjoram and 1–2 buds crushed garlic, place in roaster, smother meat with 2 sliced onions, cover and let stand at room temp 1 hr. Remove loin, pat dry, sprinkle with flour and brown on all sides in hot oil or lard to seal in juices. Return to roaster. Brown onions in the pan drippings and return to roaster. Add 1 c water and bake in 375° oven 1 hr. Meanwhile, soak 2 c unpitted prunes in water to cover 20 min, drain and add to roaster. Bake another 90 min or until meat is ten-

der but not overcooked.

MEATBALLS IN SOUR-CREAM SAUCE. *klopsiki cielece w smietanie*. Soak 1 stale, broken-up bread roll (about 1-1/2 oz) in 1 c milk until soggy. Run through meat grinder. mix with 1-1/4 lb ground veal, add 1 egg and work by hand until well blended and smooth. Salt & pepper to taste and (optional) add 1 T fresh chopped dill. Roll into walnut-sized balls, dredge in flour and lightly brown on all sides in 3 T butter. Whisk together 1-1/2 c meat stock, 3/4 c sour cream and 1 t or more flour until smooth and drench meatballs with mixture. Cover and simmer on low 30 min. Season sauce to taste with salt, pepper and lemon juice. Serve with mashed potatoes, rice or noodles and a non-creamed salad. Variation: Instead of meat stock, make sauce with 1 mushroom bouillon cube dissolved in 2 c water, 1/2 – 2/3 c sour cream and 1 heaped T flour.

NASZA KUCHNIA / Carole Hango-Hanlon

Mushroom Picking, Anyone?

Many years ago, my mother belonged to a group, the Club Polonaise in New Jersey.

The Club would always have a picnic at a park. After feasting, many would go for a walk; I would join them.

John Jaworski, whose wife, Agnes was a member of the Club, would hunt for mushrooms on the walk. He always instructed me never to eat the mushrooms. I was a child at the time and never realized there were poisonous mushrooms. I had grown up with mushroom soup and pierogi at wigilia. I had no idea there were poisonous mushrooms.

In 2011, I was listening to our National Public Radio affiliate in Washington, D.C., WAMU. Kojo Namaji hosted a talk, "Autumn Mushrooms — Dangerous and Delicious." (You can listen to the program from this link: <http://thekojonamdishow.org/shows/2011-09-28/autumn-mushrooms-dangerous-and-delicious>.)

Ray LaSala, president of the Mycological Association of Washington, D.C. (www.namyc.org) at the time, was one of the guests. I had no idea there was an association of mushroom hunters! I found the talk interesting and decided to attend a

future meeting. When I walked in, there were several tables of mushrooms that people had brought to the meeting. Some were edible and others poisonous.

I had never seen such a variety of mushrooms. I decided to go on their next foray.

If mushroom picking interests you, I encourage you to join a group, especially to learn how to identify mushrooms. If you are looking for a club in your state, visit the Mycological Association website to search for an affiliated club. Most of the clubs have forays where they will help identify the mushrooms you have found. There are many books on mushroom identification. You can find them at your local library, bookstore or on Amazon.com.

I encourage you to join a group. You will learn a great deal and meet a fascinating group of people who enjoy the outdoors.

Take a look at the web site www.fungi.com. You can even grow your own mushrooms.

If you have a mushroom story, submit it to the Polish American Journal for possible publication. Mushroom hunting practically defines our heritage.

I am currently interested in learning more about medicinal mushrooms: shiitake, enokitake, maitake, turkey tail and chaga, to name a few. Happy hunting!

PLEASE NOTE. There is risk in eating wild mushrooms! Get good books to help you identify the mushroom. Find an experienced teacher or a club. Mushrooms listed as edible in some field guides may not be edible in your area. In other cases, only certain portions of the mushroom may be edible. Ingesting poisonous mushrooms can be fatal.

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POLISH CHEF / Robert Strybel

Christmas Cakes and Cookies

POPPYSEED ROLL *strucla z makiem, makowiec*. For the filling: rinse well 2 c poppyseeds and drain. Place in pot, scald with boiling water and cook 15 min. Remove from heat, cover and let stand till cooled to room temp. Drain poppyseeds well and grind 2-3 times through fine-mesh strainer. Melt 1 T butter in skillet, add ground poppyseeds, 3 T honey, 1/2 c rinsed, drained raisins, grated rind of 1 lemon and 1/4 c chopped candied orange rind. Simmer, stirring constantly, on low heat 10 min and set aside. Add 1/2 t vanilla extract. When cool, beat 2 egg yolks with 3/4 c sugar until creamy and stir into mixture. Fold in 2 stiffly beaten egg whites. For the dough: mash 1-3/4 cakes yeast with 1 T sugar and 2/3 c warm milk. Stir in 1/3 c flour, cover and let rise in a warm place. After about an hr beat 2 egg yolks with 1/2 c sugar until creamy and add to yeast mixture together with 2-2/3 c flour and 1 whole egg. Work ingredients into a dough. Work in 4 T melted butter and knead until smooth and silky. Set aside in warm place to rise. When doubled in bulk, divide dough in two and roll out each piece 1/4" thick. Spread dough sheets with poppyseed filling leaving a 3/4" margin round the edges. Roll up and place in baking pan(s) to rise. Bake in preheated 390° oven about 50 min. Dust with confectioner's sugar or glaze with white icing. Optional: Soft icing may be sprinkled with chopped candied orange peel, slivered almonds, chopped walnuts or poppyseeds.

NUT-ROLL CAKE *strucla orzechowa*. The rolled-up yeast-dough cake may contain fillings other than poppyseeds. Prepare dough as for poppyseed-roll recipe (above). In dry skillet, toast 3/4 peeled hazelnuts (filberts) until lightly browned. When cool, chop and set aside. Grind 2-1/4 c chopped walnut meats and beat with 1 egg and 1/2 c sugar until smooth. Add the chopped hazelnuts and 1 jg rum (or 1 jg vodka flavored with several drops rum extract) and mix to blend. Spread rolled-out dough with mixture and proceed as in first recipe. Optional: Dust baked strucla with powdered sugar if desired. Variation: Almonds may be used in place of the walnuts and filberts to produce strucla migdalowa (almond-roll cake).

HONEY-SPICE CAKE *piernik*. Here is a very basic recipe for a cake often served during the Christmas-New Year season. Heat 1 c honey with 1 t honey-spice-cake seasoning (przyprawa do pierników) or pumpkin-pie seasoning (more or less according to preference). Add 1 c sugar and 2 eggs, mix well

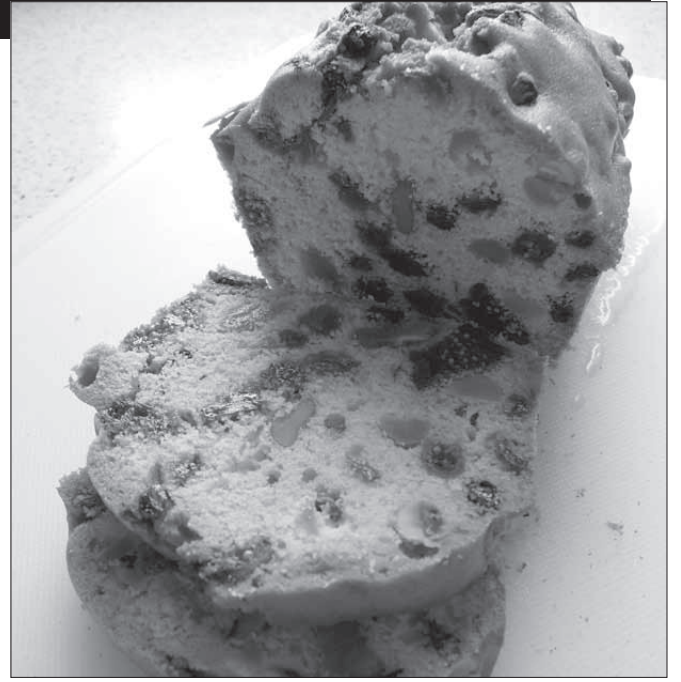
until blended and gradually add 3 c flour, mixed with 1 t baking soda. Knead well and set aside to rest about 1 hr. Better yet, prepare dough a day ahead. Spread dough on greased baking sheet and bake in 350° oven about 40 min. Cut into squares after it cools.

ALMOND KING CAKE *ciasto Migdalowego Króla*. At Three Kings festivities (Jan. 6), whoever finds an almond in his piece of cake becomes king or queen of the ball. Any of the honey-spice cakes, fruitcakes or almond-roll cake can serve this purpose. Simply insert a whole blanched almond into one serving of the cake.

ANGELWING PASTRIES *faworki, chruściki*. Beat together 3 eggs yolks, 1/3 c sour cream, 2 T softened butter, 1/2 t vanilla and 3 T 100 proof vodka or brandy (cognac). Gradually add 2 c flour, mixing well to blend. Knead dough about 15 min, beating it at intervals with a heavy wooden rolling pin. Place in bowl, cover with clean dish towel and set aside to rest in cool place 1 hr. Roll dough out thin, cut into 2"x6" strips, make a slit in the middle of each strip and pull one end through to form a bow. Fry in hot oil, shortening or lard on both sides to a light golden brown and remove to paper towel. Dust with confectioner's sugar. Usually limited to Mardi Gras in Poland, in Polonia this is a year-round favorite!

FRUITED HONEY-SPICE CAKE *piernik z bakaliami*. Heat 1-1/2 c honey to boiling, stir in 1 c sugar, bring to boil, simmer briefly and cool to room temp. Mash 1 cake yeast and dissolve in 1/2 c warm beer. To honey-sugar mixture add: beer-yeast mixture, 1 T butter, 4 beaten eggs and 4 c flour. Beat well. Add 1-2 t honey-spice-cake seasoning, 1-1/2 southern fruits (figs, prunes, dates, raisins, walnuts in any combination) chopped fine (raisins may be unchopped) and 2 T candied orange rind, chopped fine. Mix dough well to combine ingredients evenly. Spread on greased baking sheet and bake app. 40 min in preheated 350° oven. When cool, cut into squares.

HONEYLESS CARROT SPICE CAKE *piernik z marchwi bez miodu*. Scrape clean, wash and grate fine just over 1 lb carrots. Beat 4 egg yolks with 1/4 lb butter, add 1-1/2 c brown sugar, 1-2 t honey-spice-cake seasoning, 2 t baking powder, the grated rind and juice of 2 lemons and 1-1/2 c flour. Mix to



HOLIDAY FRUITCAKE BASIC *keks świąteczny*. Cream 2/3 c butter with 1 c confectioner's sugar, gradually stirring in 5 egg yolks. Add 1/2 c chopped walnuts, 2 T finely chopped candied orange rind and 1-1/2 c flour sifted with 2 t baking powder, then fold in 5 stiffly beaten egg whites. Mix to combine ingredients and add 2/3 c raisins, rinsed drained and floured. Transfer dough to well greased loaf pan(s), even out top and make a deep lengthwise slit in dough with knife dipped in melted butter. Bake app. 1 hr at 375° After cooling and removing from pan dust with confectioner's sugar.

combine ingredients. Stir in another 1-1/2 c flour and fold in 4 stiffly beaten egg whites. Transfer dough to greased, floured-cake pan and bake about 50 min in preheated 375° oven.

CHEESE-DOUGH APPLE TURNOVERS *rożki serowe z jabłkami*. Sift 1-2/3 c flour onto bread-board and combine with 1/2 lb ground or processed farmer cheese. Cut in 1/2 lb butter and 5 T sour cream and combine ingredients into a dough. Roll out 1/4" thick and cut into 2" squares Place an apple slice on square diagonally, bring ends of together over it and pinch ends together to seal. Transfer to ungreased baking sheet and bake in pre-heated 400 oven to a nice golden brown about 15 min. When cool, dust with confectioner's sugar.

J OY

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SPORTS / Tom Tarapacki

Belinsky and Fidrych: Gone, But Not Forgotten

Part I

Some athletes have fleeting moments of greatness before the fame and glory fades, but very few of them still remain in the public consciousness after the cheering stops. Two of those athletes who still capture the public's imagination decades after their playing careers ended are **Bo Belinsky** and **Mark Fidrych**.

Both Belinsky and Fidrych were talented Polish American pitchers with strong personalities, who had brilliant but short careers. Other than that, they had very little in common. Belinsky was a streetwise and cocky pool hustler from Trenton, New Jersey who dated Hollywood starlets; Fidrych was a humble, down-to-earth native of a small town in Massachusetts, who talked to his baseball and played with a child-like exuberance.

Bo Belinsky threw the first no-hitter at Dodger Stadium — and the first no-hitter by a rookie left-hander in baseball history — as a member of the expansion Los Angeles Angels on May 5, 1962. He's remembered for that, of course, but more so for his colorful playboy lifestyle that made him one of the most written about people in Los Angeles.

Robert Belinsky was born in 1936 on Manhattan's Lower East Side to a Polish Catholic father and a Russian Jewish mother. His father was a laborer who moved to Trenton to work at a plant that made steel wire for suspension bridges; later on he opened a TV repair shop in Trenton. Ed Belinsky had played baseball in the Coast Guard, and passed on the sport to his son. Young Bo also enjoyed shooting pool and

street brawling, and got his nickname from mid-weight boxer Bobo Olson.

His father prodded him to stay out of the pool halls and get more involved in sports, but Bo didn't play baseball his senior year at Trenton High School. Although he was not very motivated to play baseball, Bo had plenty of talent and was a lefthander as well, so he was signed by the Pirates after graduating in 1954. He later went to the Orioles. In the minor leagues Bo constantly got in trouble off the field, particularly when his roommate was Steve Dalkowski (Dalkowski, widely considered the fastest baseball pitcher ever, never made it to the majors due to his unpredictability on and off the field). Bo seemed to have enough ability and charm to escape whatever difficulty he got himself into. In 1961 his contract was purchased by the Angels. Even before he had pitched in a major league game, the ever-confident Belinsky held out for \$8,000. When the Angels offered \$6,500 for the year his response was: "I can make \$6,500 shooting pool." Although that statement was probably true, Bo finally signed a deal with the Angels after some highly-publicized salary negotiations.

Baseball had only recently come



BO BELINSKY made his major league debut with the Angels in April 1962, and won his first three starts.

to the West Coast, when the National League Brooklyn Dodgers moved to LA in 1958. In 1961 the American League added the Los Angeles Angels as an expansion team. The Angels had a decent team with some Polish American major league veterans like Ted Kluszewski, Steve Bilko and Ed Sadowski, but they struggled to compete with the well-established Dodgers in the LA marketplace. With the signing of Bo, however, the LA newspapers were soon writing more about Belinsky than about the Dodgers' Sandy Koufax and Don Drysdale.

Belinsky made his major league debut with the Angels in April 1962, and won his first three starts. Then it got even better. On May 5, 1962, after a night of carousing, Belinsky threw a 2-0 no-hitter against his old team, the Baltimore Orioles for his fourth straight win. It was also the first no-hitter pitched by a rookie lefthander, and the first major league no-hitter pitched in the state

of California.

The lefty with the outstanding fastball and screwball gave the newspapers plenty to write about, and not just about what he did on the diamond. He became an instant celebrity, driving to LA's trendiest hotspots in his candy-apple red Cadillac. Over the next couple of years the handsome bachelor dated some of Hollywood's most beautiful women, like Ann Margret, Connie Stevens and Tina Louise, and he was engaged to actress Mamie Van Doren. When he married (after retiring from baseball) his first wife was Jo Collins, a former Playboy centerfold. While playing in LA he also made numerous appearances on TV shows and in movies. Reflecting on his time with the Angels, he later said, "In those days it was all sex and champagne, champagne and sex. The two were a lot like each other. When it was good, it was good, and when it was bad, it was still pretty good."

After his fast start in 1962 Belinsky's wild life off the field hurt his pitching. He began the season 6-1, but was 10-11 with a 3.56 ERA when it ended. In '63 he won just two games, and spent part of the year in the minors. In '64 Belinsky was 9-8 with a 2.86 earned run average, but his season ended in August when the Angels suspended him after he punched a sportswriter for the *Los Angeles Times*. After the season, the Angels traded him to Philadelphia, where he posted a 4-11 record with a 4.61 ERA over two years. He then went to Houston, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, spending a lot of his time in the minors. Bo retired in 1970 with a record of 28-51 and a 4.10 ERA in eight major league seasons.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, after he was sent to the minor leagues, the Roman Catholic diocese that encompassed his hometown of Trenton issued a statement saying it hoped that he, like his pitching, would "fade into obscurity."

Even after leaving baseball, Belinsky never quite faded into obscurity. He worked for a Las Vegas car dealership, and was in high demand for public appearances. "You know, I've probably gotten more mileage winning 28 games in the majors than most guys who've won 200," he once said. "If I had won 250 games instead of 28, I would have made a few more dollars and gone broke a little later," he said.

Bo's alcohol and chemical dependency problems became worse after he left baseball, and he struggled mightily for a time. However, he said that he became a born-again Christian and had been sober since 1976. He died in Las Vegas at the age of 64 in 2001 of a heart attack.

Next: Bird Takes the Country By Storm.

BIG, BIG BUSINESS. The Phoenix Suns celebrated Polish Heritage night during their season opener against the Trail Blazers. Unfortunately, the Suns' Polish-born **Marcin Gortat** wasn't there — he was traded to Washington.

The Suns weren't necessarily honoring Polish heritage just because their starting center was born in Poland, but Gortat was to be a big part of the festivities. The event was planned in conjunction with the Arizona Division of the Polish American Congress, and special ticket discounts were offered.

In addition, Gortat he had flown

in 25 people from his native country for the week, including soldiers stationed in Afghanistan, the Polish Minister of Sport, the Polish ambassador and children from his basketball camp. But while they were arriving in Arizona, Gortat was catching a flight to Washington. Gortat told the *Washington Post*: "It was hard for me, at the beginning, but this is life. This is a business. The NBA is a big, big business."

But those who bought tickets for the game will get free tickets when Gortat and the Wizards visit Phoenix in January.

A 6-10 center from Lodz, Gortat is known as "The Polish Hammer." Other than the problems with Polish Heritage Night, Gortat is excited about being on a team that's a play-off contender. Gortat made the post-season in each of his first four seasons in the NBA with Orlando, and made it to the NBA Finals in 2009, but he has missed the playoffs the past three years in Phoenix.

KUBIAK RECOVERING. Houston Texans head coach **Gary Kubiak** was released from the hospital days after dropping to his knees during halftime of a Texans-Colts game.



The 52-year-old Kubiak felt dizzy and lightheaded, and was sent to a hospital in an ambulance. He was treated intravenously with tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), a clot-busting medication typically given to people who are suspected of having had a stroke. It works by breaking up clots so that blood can return back to the brain. A stroke is caused when blood flow to the brain stops, which stops the organ from receiving blood and oxygen. tPA can also be used for other conditions, like heart attacks, or for other neurological problems that are caused by blood clots.

Kubiak is the great grandson of Polish immigrants who settled in Texas in the late 1800s. A former NFL quarterback, he has coached the Texans since 2006.

THEY SAID IT

"Bo Belinsky had a Jewish mother and a Polish, Catholic father. During his early days in Los Angeles whenever Bo scored a victory, the papers reminded their readers that Bo was Jewish. When Bo lost, they reminded their readers that Bo was Polish."

— **Peter S. Horvitz** in *The Big Book of Jewish Baseball*.



"I was born apart. My mother was Jewish, my father Polish Catholic. To Jews, I was a p---k. To Poles, I was a k--e. I was removed — removed from people in my family, people in my school. Even in my youth, I didn't know where to park myself."

— **Bo Belinsky**, on his personal sense of alienation.



"Belinsky was the victim of neighborhood brawls, some because he was small, some because he was a kid with a big mouth, some because he was Jewish and Polish in a neighborhood that was Jewish, Irish, Polish, Italian and Swedish."

From Bo: Pitching and Wooing by Maury Allen with the Uncensored Cooperation of Bo Belinsky.



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THE PONDERING POLE / Ed Poniewaz

What was All of the Pondering About?

For the record, this is the 99th installment of the Pondering Pole. To recognize and celebrate the occasion, I would ask that you indulge me so that for this edition, let's look back at the purpose and goal originally set forth for the column. Let us reminisce a little if you will. Then for number 100, I want to offer up some thoughts and ideas on what might be (might we) accomplished in 2014 and beyond. As always, let's explore and "ponder" together.

Way back in 2005 I wrote: *I am constantly amazed at how many persons or historical events have a Polish connection or twist I was not aware of and am pretty sure Polonia and certainly most Americans are not as well. While most of us are familiar with the "Cs," Curie, Chopin, and Copernicus ... there are many lesser-known but equally interesting and significant stories about how our people are involved and have contributed in this country and elsewhere throughout history.*

I should have said constantly amazed to discover some of the hidden stars and gems of Polonia, to look where no one else was looking and to research those people, events, and stories that many of us did not know or realize. Since the project was an immense undertaking, part of the plan was to engage others in the "work." In my opinion, this has truly been a success both in revealing new notable persons of Polish extraction and by exciting a number of others of Polish extraction to join in the fun of the hunt. The final bonus of all this was that the research evolved towards analyzing and seeing more to the person or story than met the eye. "Why" became as important as "who" or "what" in this exercise. All of the aspects of being a "Pondering Pole" became truly satisfying to me and I think it helped others to think about it as well.

So over the last eight years I found out that **Jim Furyk** (future golf professional Hall-of-Famer), **Peter Cetera** of the rock group Chicago fame, **Meg Ryan**, Hollywood film star, and **Ryan Newman**, NASCAR driver are part Polish. That there is a Polish connection to the **Enron Scandal**, with one of the "most influential writers" of Ireland (**James Joyce**), in the Broadway musical *West Side Story*, in "String Theory," "Intelligent Design," at The Matchbox Bar in Chicago, with the television show *Flipper*, dancing the tango, film star **Audrey Hepburn's** ballet training, and with the movie ... ready: "**King Kong**"!

I became introduced to famous people such as **Tamara de Lempicka** (art deco painter), **John Szarkowski** (photographer), **Zbigniew Rybczynski** (music-video director), **Stanislaw Wyspianski** (renowned painter and contemporary of **Henrik Ibsen**, **Gustav Klimt**, and **Paul Gauguin**), and finally, **Michael Sokolski**, creator of Scantron, the multiple-choice testing method (Ugh!).

And, as they say in the commercials, there was "much, much more." For me, the more important thing in this long journey was the analysis and the lessons learned. That would be the "why" part previously mentioned and interspersed throughout. To my surprise, there was a profound Polish point in the topics of economics, theology, arts and literature, psychology, and at least twenty times in history. The Polish soul, heart, mind, blessing, tomato, and Angel Wings were examined. I believe I can explain now why the people that love us, love us, and I am beginning to understand why the people that don't aren't seeking therapy (although, many most likely are.) The latter also might be simply a lost cause or falls into the category of prerequisite, psychology – insane. For all of it though, what I can tell you: become your own Pondering Pole. I hope you find it as fulfilling and satisfying as I do.

That's what I'm talking about!

TIMING IS EVERYTHING. As substantiation for the 99th edition of the Pondering Pole, along comes a perfect gift. Gil Mros sends me an article he wrote for the Polish Genealogy Society of Minnesota (Summer 2013 pgs. 21-23) on the ancestral birthplace of **Benjamin Kubelsky**, better known as the comedian and television star **Jack Benny**. Is he Polish or not?

To make a long story short, yes he is. The remarkable and impressive thing though was the detective work involved in finding and compiling the list of clues that eventually lead to that conclusion. Here is one example for starters: Benny's wife consistently claimed his family was from Lithuania. True but then perhaps he came from a Polish town in Lithuania. What was the primary language of the family? How should immigration and census records be interpreted?

On and on with these and many other questions and considerations, the "whys," "whos," and "whats" just discussed. Eventually, when adding it all up, according to Gil, "I felt confident in stating that if Meyer

Kubelsky (Jack's father) spoke Polish and came from Poland, then he was indeed Polish." Wikipedia and other sources for Benny's ancestral background can now be corrected. As the team at the research bureau of the Pondering Pole like to say in a case like this, cza-czing!

POLISH OR NOT? Ashton Kutcher, actor, producer, model, and despite the last name and face is not Polish. Ethnic Celebs (<http://ethniclebs.com>) brings him in at 66% Czech. Count him though as another member of our Eastern European family.

A HEARTFELT *Wesołych Świąt* to all the Polish American Journal readers, advertisers, and staff. I am especially grateful to all of the folks that read the Pondering Pole, those that I have corresponded with, and those that have helped or contributed in any way for the last eight years. Dziękuję bardzo to you and joy and blessings at Christmas.


IF YOU HAVE A THOUGHT about this month's topic, a question, or have interesting facts to share, contact me at: Edward Poniewaz, 6432 Marmaduke Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63139; eMail alinabrig@yahoo.com. Don't forget to visit The Pondering Pole blog, ponderingpole.blogspot.com. The blog is a work in progress and I need to catch up on posting current and past articles.

N.B. If you send email, reference the Polish American Journal or the Pondering Pole in the subject line. I will not open an email if I do not recognize the subject or the sender.

Wesołych Świąt!
EDWARD J. PODGURSKI
Huron, Ohio

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THE OLD COUNTRY / Richard Poremski



EXHIBITING EQUINE CURIOSITY. Old Town, Warsaw. May 16, 1976.

DID YOU KNOW? / Robert Strybel

INTERESTING POLISH CHRISTMAS FACTS

- Traditionally, the Christmas Eve supper does not begin until the evening's first star appears in the sky. Small children were usually given the task of standing in the window and watching for the star, which was a good way to keep them from getting in the way of last-minute preparations.
- In the past, poor Polish families would decorate the evergreen bough ("podłaźniczka") hanging from the rafters with small pieces of wood wrapped in colored paper to imitate candy.
- One Polish folk-belief contends that farm animals are briefly able to speak with human voices at midnight on Christmas Eve. The downside of all this is that anyone who actually hears them will not live to see another Christmas.
- Poland's Christmas gift-giver once varied according to region. In some places it was the Christ Child himself, elsewhere it was an angel, a female personification of Christmas known as Gwiazdka, a bearded Gwiazdor (Father Christmas) or St Joseph. In other parts of the country it was Święty Mikołaj (St. Nicholas) who is now the most common holiday cheer-spreader and comes twice: on his feastday December 6th and on Christmas Eve.
- Because of the prime significance of Wigilia, Christmas Day is far less important to Poles than to Americans and West Europeans. St. Stephen's Day (Dec. 26th) is also a legal holiday in Poland, and St. John's Day (Dec. 27th) is widely celebrated in the countryside, but these are largely social occasions lacking the singular solemnity and symbolism of Christmas Eve.
- According to one Polish folk-belief, at midnight on Christmas Eve the water in wells turned to wine. But only those who had never sinned could actually taste it.

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POLISH CHILDREN'S HEARTLINE (a non-profit corporation, State of New Jersey) begins its 28th year of helping children. An all volunteer non-profit organization receiving generous donations from Polonia and American supporters makes it possible for over 2000 Polish children to be treated annually by cardiac surgeons and physicians in hospitals in Poland. As requested, equipment critical to pediatric care is provided to six hospitals in Zabrze, Katowice, Lodz, Suwalki, Bialystok and Grajewo. Contributions may be made in memory of and/or honor of family and friends. Each donation is tax exempt and acknowledged. We thank you for your support and ask for your continued support for much help is still needed. "If we don't help our Polish children, who will?" —Doreen Patras Cramer, President

For information call (732) 680-0680 or write **POLISH CHILDREN'S HEARTLINE, INC., 177 BROADWAY, CLARK, NJ 07066**. e-mail: childshart@aol.com website: PolishChildrensHeartline.org

AMERICAN POLONIA AT A GLANCE

CONNECTICUT

HARTFORD — The **Polish National Home** is celebrating the 30th Anniversary of its designation on the National Historical Registry at 2:00 p.m. in the main ballroom of the PNH, 60 Charter Oak Ave., Hartford, Dec. 8, 2013. Tickets are \$40.00 per person with choice of pork tenderloin or salmon entrée. For more information, contact Irene Syp Underwood at (860) 561-2336 or at itunderwood@netzero.net.

HARTFORD — The Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford will hold its annual **Szopka Festival**, Sun., Dec. 1, 2013, from 9:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Polish National Home, 60 Charter Oak Ave.

The Szopki (elaborate Polish Christmas mangers), which are made by area school children, will be on display and prizes will be awarded for the best. St. Mikolaj, the traditional Polish Santa, will be there to greet the children. There will be a variety of Polish imports and home-baked goods including babka, pierogi and kielbasa. There will also be arts and crafts, books, cards, jewelry and more. Admission is free, and the hall is handicap accessible.

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO — "Wigilia, Traditional Polish Christmas Eve Supper" will be held in the Sabina P. Logisz Great Hall of the Polish Museum of America, Fri., Dec. 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

The evening will include an explanation of the beautiful Wigilia traditions, sharing of the Polish Christmas wafer opłatek, delicious traditional Wigilia meatless meal, carols (kolędy) and a visit from St. Nicholas (Święty Mikołaj).

Cost is \$25.00 per person, 13 years and older; \$15.00 for children 4-12. Adults must accompany and remain with children. Reservations are required and there is limited seating. Please call (773) 384-3352, ext. 104 or email: pma@polishmuseumofamerica.org for further information. There is plenty of free parking.

MINNESOTA

SMACZNE! The Polish American Cultural Institute's 25th Annual Polish Soup Festival was held October 27 in Kolbe Hall in John Paul II School, Minneapolis. Guests sampled many of the dozen or so soups offered (servers gave eight ounces at a time—to allow room for as many soups as possible). Beverages, bread, and dessert were included in the admission price. There was also a children's area, vendors selling Polish foods and articles, and performance by Mosaics.

OPLATEK IN WINONA. The Polish Museum at 102 Liberty St. in Winona will hold an opłatek (Christmas gathering), Sat., Dec. 7. At the Polish Museum we celebrate the tradition with assorted Polish foods, desserts and beverages. Polish and traditional Christmas Carols are enjoyed by everyone gathering around our beautiful Polish piano. Free admission and open to the public. For information, call (507) 454-3431.

PACIM WIGILIA DINNER. The traditional benefit for PACIM's Dom Dziecka Children's Fund to support disadvantaged youths in Poland will be held at the Gasthof

zur Gemutlichkeit Restaurant, 2300 University Avenue NE, Minneapolis, Sun., Dec. 8, 2013. For information, visit www.pacim.org.

NEW YORK

BUFFALO — District IX of the Polish Singer's Alliance of America presents its Annual "Festival of Polish Christmas Carols," Sun., Dec. 1, at 3:30 p.m. at St. Stanislaus R.C. Church, Peckham and Townsend Streets on the East Side.

Admission is free.

NEW YORK — **Greg Adkins**, an amateur songwriter in New York City, has penned a Christmas tune based on a story about a pair of farmers in Poland who find themselves stranding in a blizzard as they try to make it home to their families. Adkins spun the story into a country song set in the desert. Adkins based his tune, "Cows Love Christmas," on a tale his grandmother, Teresa Witkowski, told him in the early '70s when she began visiting him and his family in Daytona Beach, Fla. from her home in Lancaster, N.Y., just outside Buffalo.

"Grandma Terry," who passed away in 1998, told her grandson the story of two farmers trapped in the Polish countryside by a snowstorm on Christmas Eve. The two

were forced to spend the night in a barn with a menagerie of farm animals. To their surprise, when they woke, they found the animals had decorated the barn with ribbons and bows and prepared traditional Polish Christmas dishes like pickled herring, pierogi, and kolaczki. The farmers and the animals celebrated together before the men rushed home to spend Christmas morning with their families.

You can watch and listen to the song at www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjWK_ztEyFE.

PENNSYLVANIA

UNOIONTOWN — The **Polish Heritage Club** will host its annual Wigilia (Christmas Eve Supper), Fri., Dec. 6, at 6:00 p.m. in the Polish Club Hall on South Mt. Vernon Ave.

Reservations are need. Please call Barbara Novsek at (724) 438-1036.

All are invited to come and enjoy the meatless meal, share opłatek, sing koledy, and receive specially-baked pierniki (Christmas cookies).

Last year, over 150 participants came from near and far to promote and enjoy this treasured tradition of our heritage.

St. Florian's Polish Soup Festival Serves Up Tradition

HAMTRAMCK, Mich. — Two men dressed in soldier camouflage uniforms stood in a makeshift booth, made to resemble a tent, and poured out bowls of military soup — pea soup. It wasn't a foreign outpost where this action took place. but the church hall of St. Florian Roman Catholic Church Sunday, Oct. 27. The occasion was the parish's second annual Polish Soup Festival.

Among the soups served, besides the pea soup, were mushroom, barley, tomato rice, dill pickle, beet, czarina (duck blood soup), chili, and a seasonal squash soup. Traditional Polish food (besides the soup) was also sold including: gołąbki, kielbasa, pierogi, kapusta. Contributing their time and talents, parishioners made the soups as well as a delectable array of desserts, including authentic Belgian waffles.

Polish entertainment displayed the dancing skills of the different-aged dance groups from the church while The Kielbasa Kings played the day and night away. A tin can auction, religious articles, a rummage sale, and Polish Christmas ornaments added to the list of attractions.

The Rev. Mirek Frankowski of the Polish order, Society of Christ Fathers is the pastor. Cindy Bonneau is the event director, assisted by her husband, Mike.

For more information, visit the St. Florian's website at www.stflorianparish.org.

— Michelle Odrobina



Gdy nadejdą miłe Święta,
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May we all strive for the common good of our country through the true spirit of respect, common sense and cooperation in adhering to the principles that made America great.

Ruth and the family of Korczak Lid Korczak.

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GENEALOGY / Stephen M. Szabados

DNA and Your Genealogy

Many genealogy researchers have begun using DNA testing to help answer questions in their family history and try to get past brick walls.

Our DNA consists of 23 pairs of chromosomes and the markers in each pair give us our individual characteristics. There are three different types of DNA tests (Y-DNA, mtDNA and autosomal) and each analyzes different pieces of our DNA. The results for each can be used to interpret or verify different aspects of our heritage.

Y-DNA tests can only be taken by male members of a family and close Y-DNA matches will predict a common ancestor within 15 generations. If possible, historical documents should be used to find the common ancestor. However, if this is not possible other factors need to be considered to confirm the validity of the DNA test results such as common areas of origins and common surnames.

MtDNA or Mitochondrial DNA test results are similar to Y-DNA. This type of DNA is passed down thru the mother to her children and the test can be taken by both male and female children. The results will help identify relationships to specific mothers. This is important because of the challenges due to problems with finding maiden names.

The Autosomal DNA test is a new test that many believe will be a major breakthrough in genealogical research. This test analyzes more than 700,000 DNA markers in our entire DNA make-up. The predicted relationships are based on how many segments are shared and the length of the segments. Autosomal testing adds an extra dimension to DNA testing because it can uncover relatives in any branch of the family tree.

Haplogroup is another genetic term that is given in the results of

DNA testing. DNA test results will indicate a Y-Haplogroup and a Maternal Haplogroup and these groups are used to predict the origins of your ancestors. These are based on DNA markers that have been found in people from specific areas and Haplogroups may be valuable to explain our anthropological origins.

The number of companies offering DNA testing has been expanding rapidly. The three major companies used by genealogy researchers are FamilytreeDNA, Ancestry.com and 23and Me. Ancestry.com and 23andMe offer only autosomal testing. FamilytreeDNA offers all three tests.

Submitting a DNA sample will not magically produce your entire family tree. In fact, your test results may not produce any matches at first. When you do have matches, they should be used as clues to possible relationships and you should always try to verify with genealogical documentation. DNA test results may help you get around a brick wall when the paper trail has been lost. Your results may point you in a new direction and may help you find new places to look for the documents you need. DNA matches may also help you jump over segments of your tree where documents are lost or sealed by a court.

If your results seem confusing, remember that scientific data is still being accumulated. The definitive results that we expect may still be in development. A very good source to answer many questions may be found online on the resource page for International Society of Genetic Genealogy at www.ISOGG.org.



Stephen M. Szabados is a regular contributor to the Polish American Journal, and the author of Finding Grandma's European Ancestors and Find Your Family History.

SURNAME CORNER / Robert Strybel

Looking for Birthplace

Q: I am searching for my grandparent's place of birth. I have three different spellings, and I would like to know if they are all the same or different places. They are: Czerniejewo, Czewojewo, Poznan (from a passenger list) and Juncewo (from a cousin who is researching). If you can help me with this question, I would be most grateful. Thank you.

**Dorothy Badzinski
helmenstine@att.net**

A: The three names you listed are all separate localities, not different spellings of the same place. Your grandfather must have listed Czewujewo in his travel documents. It is a small village in today's Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodship (province) in Żnin county. Juncewo is another village also in Żnin country. By contrast Czerniejewo is a small town of some 2,500 in the Wielkopolska region in Gniezno county just across the Kujawsko-Pomorskie border. All three localities are in the same general area of central northwest

Poland. Under Prussian occupation up until 1918, Czerniejewo was known in German as Schwarzenau.

FOR A CUSTOM-RESEARCHED analysis of your surname – its origin, meaning, number of users, where they live and coat of arms if any, kindly airmail a \$19 check (adding \$10 for each additional surname you wish researched) to: Robert Strybel, ul. Kaniowska 24, 01-529 Warsaw, Poland. For more information please contact: research60@gmail.com.

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MORE AND MORE LEAVING

According to as-yet unpublished figures from Poland's Central Statistical Office (GUS), over two million Poles were living abroad at the close of 2012. The data, seen by the *Rzeczpospolita* daily, marks an increase of about 70,000 since 2011 and 130,000 since 2010.

Some point to recent legislation as the reason.

In 2012, Poland's lower house of parliament passed a law raising the age of retirement to 67 for both sexes, in a bid to combat the changing ratio between workers and pensioners, which is currently 3:1, but may be as high as 1:1 in 2060.

Around 1.5 million Poles living abroad are below the age of 39 and 726,000 are between 25 and 34. The most dramatic phase of the exodus was in the first three years after Poland joined the EU in 2004.

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KULTURA / Staś Kmiec

Polish Music with a Polish Soul

CD REVIEW

Polish Violin Music – a CD recording featuring violinist Kinga Augustyn and pianist Efi Hackmey is dedicated to the Polish violin tradition in all its fascinating diversity. The album is an important contribution to the musical landscape of Poland – many of the recordings are world premieres, and much of the repertoire is virtually unknown.

The opening *Mazurka in G major, Op. 26* by Aleksander Zarzycki is a gem and sets the standard of quality of this magical CD. Rarely have I heard Polish music played with true temperament, nuance and with the elusive Polish soul. Ms. Augustyn speaks the language of the music and approaches the intricacies with refinement, restraint and finesse.

Organizations constantly feature winners of Polish music competitions who are technically proficient, but lack the understanding, subtleties, and sensitivity of the music's source. Is it because they are not Polish, or is it because they do not possess an innate sensitivity to the "voice" and language that the music speaks?

Zarzycki's virtuosic *Mazurka* was a staple of an older generation of violinists and a frequent recital showpiece. His music is emblematic of the romantic ethos of the nineteenth century. Augustyn devotes a sizable portion of the CD to his work and is the first violinist to record all of his violin pieces.

The balance of old and new can be found in the choice of composers. In addition to five pieces by Zarzycki, the offerings includes works by Zygmunt Noskowski, Piotr Drogdzewski, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Witold Lutosławski, and Karol Lipiński. Górecki and Lutosławski are preeminent figures of the twentieth century whose finely crafted music resonates with audiences all over the world. It is of great surprise that Górecki's *Little Fantasia, Op. 73* has never been recorded.



Kinga Augustyn

Efi Hackmey creates the perfect complement and support to the violinist's exquisite virtuosity. Augustyn's elegant playing and fearless panache are unfailingly musical. Capable of lyricism and bravura in equal measure, her sound is full-bodied and passionate.

This is a must-have CD – an excellent addition to a musical library and the perfect gift for the holidays.



Polish Violin Music is available for download online at www.naxos.com and www.classicsonline.com. CDs can be obtained through www.kingaugustyn.com; kingaugustyn@gmail.com, or at Radio Rampa – 133 Greenpoint Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11222.



Wesołych Świąt!

DR. JOHN NIZIOL
Clifton, New Jersey

TRAVELOGUE / Staś Kmiec

5 Days in Poland: The Jerusalem Path to Sobieski

Part IV

Aleje Jerozolimskie (*Jerusalem Avenue*) is the street that leads to the Sobieski Hotel in the business district of Warsaw. I took the healthy walk past the cafés, restaurants, coffee shops, and pizza joints – places like Grand Kredens, Café du Monde, and Amigos Restaurant, which sports a wonderful wózek wagon filled with planted field flowers. At *Domino's Pizza* you can get a *duża pizza* with one topping for 19.90 zloty (~\$6.35). Concert posters for coming attractions such as Paul McCartney, American bands *Green Day*, *Smashing Pumpkins*, *Exodus*, *Six Feet Under*, along with Polish bands *Kabanos* and *Lady Pank* plaster the brick walls. Past the billboards, city traffic, trolley cars, and under highway overpasses,

Jeruzolimiska. The village was abandoned shortly after its founding. Most of the Jews eventually moved to the city, but the name has been used in its plural form ever since.

Here the first railway station in Warsaw was built. The easternmost part became one of the most representative and the expensive areas of the ever-growing city in the late 19th century. The street was extended westwards in the early 20th century, and after Poland regained independence in 1918.

Most of the houses along the avenue, including priceless examples of Art Nouveau and modernist architecture, were destroyed in the aftermath of the Warsaw Uprising.



A TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY postcard view of Jerusalem Avenue.

I walked along a path full of history.

The Avenue is one of the principal streets of the city running through the City Center and linking the western borough with the bridge on the Wisła River and the borough of Praga on the other side of the river.

In 1774, August Sułkowski erected a small village for Jewish settlers in Mazowsze. The name of the village was *Nowa Jerozolima* (*New Jerusalem*), and the road to Warsaw was named in the singular – *Aleja*

Following World War II, Communist authorities demolished the remaining buildings. The northern side of the street is currently dominated by the gigantic Palace

of Culture and Science – jokingly referred to as “the gift from Stalin that Poland wanted to give back.” The only surviving part of the pre-war architecture is Warsaw's original main post-war department store, CDT “Smyk,” located to the south of the street.

Only slightly off-the-beaten track, I arrive at Plac Zawiszy 1 – the Jan III Sobieski Hotel, which opened in the new Democratic Poland in 1992. I have never stayed here, but my mother and sister Kryisia could not get over its modern style or the talking elevator. The hotel has since gone through several hands of ownership. Its first owner was a consortium of two state-owned banks; it was sold to a Polish-Austrian company, then a Norwegian company and a decision was made to turn it into a network of Radisson Blu. An overhaul of the building has been implemented in phases and will last until 2015.

The Radisson Blu Sobieski Hotel offers business district convenience and gracious accommodation with 435 rooms full of modern amenities, and two restaurants to serve guests. I enter, and ask the front desk clerk to contact Daria Stefanik.

— to be continued —

BRUSH UP / Polonia Media Network

Menu Items III

*m, f, n = male, female, neuter
 prepositions are joined to the next word*

indyk	(EEN-dihk)	turkey
filet cielęcy	(FEE-leht cheh-LEHN-tshih)	filet of veal
flaczki	(FLAHCH-kee)	tripe and vegetables cooked in bouillon
flądra	(FLOHWN-drah)	flounder
gęś pieczona	(gehnhsh pyeh-CHOH-nah)	roast goose
golanka	(goh-LAHN-kah)	pig knuckles
gołąbki	(goh-WOHM-kee)	cabbage rolls stuffed with meat and rice
groszek	(GROH-shehk)	green pea
groch	(grohh)	lentils
grochówka	(grohh-UUV-kah)	lentil or split pea soup
grzanka	(GZAHN-kah)	toast or crouton
grzyby	(GZIH-bih)	mushrooms



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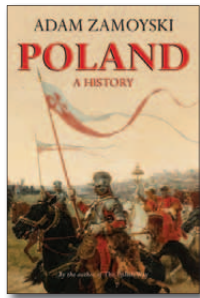
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NEW! POLAND: A HISTORY
by Adam Zamoyski
\$19.95
pb. 426 pp. 5.5 in. x 8.5 in.

A substantially revised and updated edition of the author's classic 1987 book, *The Polish Way: A Thousand-Year History of the Poles and their Culture*, which has been out of print since 2001. No nation's history has been so distorted as that of Poland. "...excellent and authoritative" ... "fresh, different, and brilliantly readable"

THE EAGLE UNBOWED:
Poland and Poles in the Second World War by Halik Kochanska. \$35.00



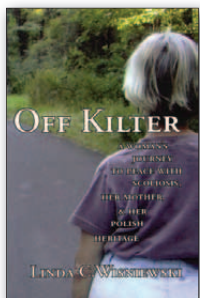
Harvard Univ. Press hc., 784 pp.; 6.125 x 9.25 inches. 32 halftones, 8 maps

Halik Kochanska tells, for the first time, the story of Poland's war in its entirety, a story that captures both the diversity and the depth of the lives of those who endured its horrors. Most histories of the European war focus on the Allies' determination to liberate the continent from the fascist onslaught. Yet the "good war" looks quite different when viewed from Lodz or Krakow than from London or Washington, D.C. *The Eagle Unbowed* provides in a single volume the first truly comprehensive account of one of the most harrowing periods in modern history.



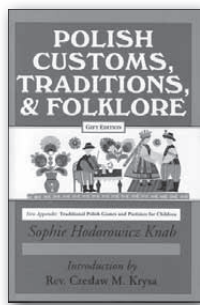
NEW! BE NOT AFRAID
by Heather Kirk
\$19.95
Borealis Press, 276 pp., pb.

Want to learn something about Poland and the movement that started the end of the Cold War in an easy-to-read, well-written book? *Be Not Afraid* is an introduction to the Polish non-violent resistance movement, "Solidarity." It involved ten million people over a period of ten years, freed Poland from Soviet domination, and contributed to the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. It killed no one.



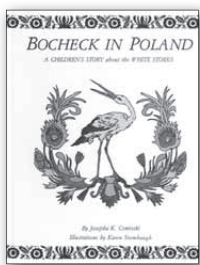
OFF KILTER: A Woman's Journey to Peace with Scoliosis, Her Mother, and Her Polish Heritage
by Linda Wisniewski
\$18.95
164 pp., pb.

Even before she was diagnosed with scoliosis at thirteen, Linda Wisniewski felt off kilter. Born to a cruel father and a long-suffering mother in a Polish American community in upstate New York, she learned martyrdom as a way of life. Only by accepting her physical deformity, her emotionally unavailable mother, and her Polish American heritage does she finally find balance and a life that fits.



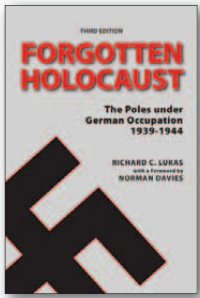
POLISH CUSTOMS, TRADITIONS, & FOLKLORE
\$16.95
by Sophie Hodorowicz Knab
340 pp., pb.
Hippocrene Books

Polish Customs, Traditions, & Folklore is organized by month, beginning with December and Advent, St. Nicholas Day, the Wigilia (Christmas Eve) nativity plays, caroling and the New Year celebrations. It proceeds from the Shrovetide period to Ash Wednesday, Lent, the celebration of spring, Holy Week customs and superstitions, beliefs and rituals associated with farming, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, midsummer celebrations, harvest festivities, wedding rites, name-day celebrations, and birth and death rituals. Line illustrations enhance this rich and varied treasury of folklore.



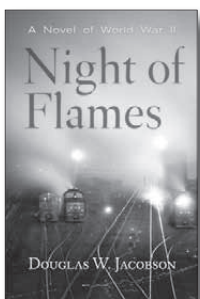
BOCHECK IN POLAND
\$11.95
54 pp., Polonie Publishing

A First Prize winner in a literary contest sponsored by the American Council of Polish Cultural Clubs, this is a delightful, captivating children's story about the life of storks and many of the Polish customs they encounter. Beautifully illustrated and educational, it will be thoroughly enjoyed by adults as well as children.



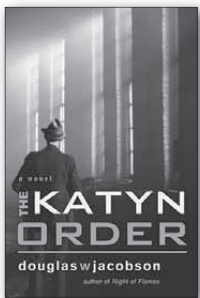
FORGOTTEN HOLOCAUST: The Poles Under German Occupation, 1939-45. Third edition
\$19.95
358 pp. pb.
Hippocrene Books.

Forgotten Holocaust has become a classic of World War II literature. As Norman Davies noted, "Dr. Richard Lukas has rendered a valuable service, by showing that no one can properly analyze the fate of one ethnic community in occupied Poland without referring to the fates of others. In this sense, *The Forgotten Holocaust* is a powerful corrective." The third edition includes a new preface by the author, a new foreword by Norman Davies, a short history of ZEGOTA, the underground government organization working to save the Jews, and an annotated listing of many Poles executed by the Germans for trying to shelter and save Jews.



NIGHT OF FLAMES: A Novel of World War Two
by Douglas W. Jacobson
\$16.95
384 pp. pb.,
McBooks Press

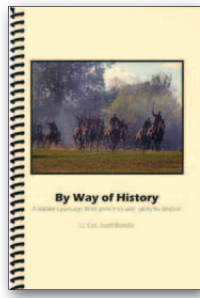
In 1939 the Germans invade Poland, setting off a rising storm of violence and destruction. For Anna, an assistant professor at a university in Krakow; and Jan an officer in the Polish cavalry, the loss is unimaginable. Separated by war, they must find their own way in a world where everything they ever knew is gone.



THE KATYN ORDER
by Douglas W. Jacobson
\$24.95
384 pp. hc.,
McBooks Press

American Adam Nowak has been dropped into Poland by British intelligence as an assassin and Resistance fighter. During the Warsaw Uprising he meets Natalia, a covert operative who has lost everything. Amid the Allied power struggle left by Germany's

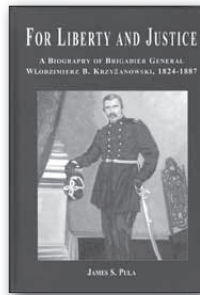
defeat, Adam and Natalia join in a desperate hunt for the 1940 Soviet order authorizing the murders of 20,000 Polish army officers and civilians.



BY WAY OF HISTORY: A Soldier's Passage from Peace to War, Glory to Despair by Lt. Col. J. Bokota, tr. by Stan Bokota
\$13.95, 174 pp.
Spiral bound, pb.

An eyewitness account of World War I and World War II events, last cavalry charges and the defeat of the Red Horse Army at Komarow in 1920, the battle of Bzura and Warszawa in 1939; the AK struggles, finally description of the moral and physical destruction of Poland by the Soviet regime in the years 1945-70. The events so well described, although interesting, are not as fascinating as the man himself, who comes through in these recollections.

FOR LIBERTY AND JUSTICE: A



Biography of Brig. Gen. Włodzimierz B. Krzyzanowski, 1824-1887
\$29.95
by James Pula.
335 pp. plus
introduction. 112 illustrations, hc.
1978, 2010

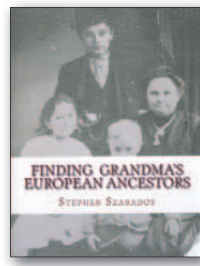
This lavishly illustrated biography of a major Polish American figure of the 19th century, tells the story of a Polish revolutionary exiled to America where he rises from private to general during the Civil War.

TREASURED POLISH SONGS WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS



\$24.95
350 pp., hc
Polonie Publ.

A magnificent collection of Polish songs with musical scores for voice and piano accompaniment. Included are folk songs, lullabies, religious, art songs and ballads, solo and quartet arrangements and more. Enhanced with colorful Wertens illustrations, the book features authentic Polish lyrics with beautiful English translations. Ideal for both musician and appreciative listener alike.



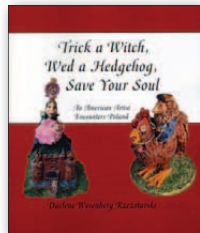
FINDING GRANDMA'S EUROPEAN ANCESTORS
by Stephen Szabados
\$14.95
128 pp., pb.

This is a "must have" book to find your European ancestors. The author uses his experience to help you identify the available resources that you can use to find your own ancestors. The book includes many sample documents, current websites and books that will be useful for your genealogical search. Even if you are not a beginner, this book will give you helpful tips that may be the one you need to locate that missing relative.



NEW! POLISH GENEALOGY: Four Easy Steps to Success
by Stephen Szabados
\$19.95
164 pp., pb.

This book is designed to give the researcher the tools needed to research their Polish ancestors and find possible answers to the origins of their Polish heritage. The book outlines a simple process that will identify where your ancestors were born and where to find their Polish records. Traditional sources are covered but it also discusses many new sources for Polish records that have been implemented by genealogy societies in Poland. The book covers the most up-to-date collection of sources for Polish genealogy.

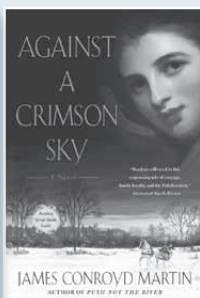
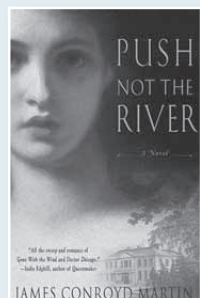


TRICK A WITCH, WED A HEDGEHOG, SAVE YOUR SOUL: An American Artist Encounters Poland
by Darlene

Wesenberg Rzeztarski. Wecker Press, 2012. 88 pp., pb. \$19.95

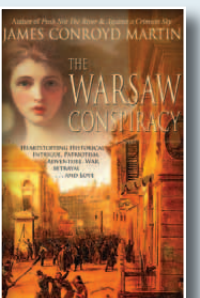
After the fall of Communism, Rzeztarski's husband had an amazing first meeting with Polish cousins, introducing the couple to the rich world of Polish and familial history, so intertwined as to become a microcosm. Rzeztarski brings an outsider's appreciation and an artist's intuition through tales of family, of national identity, and of the enchanted world of fairy tale and myth. Profusely illustrated in color.

JAMES MARTIN TRILOGY PACKAGE



Purchase all three of James Conroyd Martin's award-winning novels about a Polish countess who lived through the rise and fall of the Third of May Constitution years, a time of great turmoil, and almost \$10.00! Vivid, romantic, and thrillingly paced, the novels has been called "Poland's Gone with the Wind."

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"Be not afraid" on obverse.

BY FLORENCE WASKIELEWICZ CLOWES

POLISH FOLK LEGENDS — \$14.95

Infinity Pub., 2010, 208 pp, pb.
Forty legends collected in Poland or researched in many books and periodicals, including Poland's first written history by Muenster in 895 that states King Popiel reigned in Polonia 246 years before Christ.

OLD SECRETS NEVER DIE — A Bashia Gordon Mystery — \$14.95
Mystery — \$14.95
with Lois J. Blackburn *Infinity Publishing, 2007, 220 pp, pb.*

Bashia Gordon, semi-retired interior decorator and amateur sleuth, is at it again. When she learns her friend Connecticut State Trooper Mark Jankowski, is investigating the death of one of her clients, Gladys Goodell, her curiosity takes over. Soon a mummified baby is found in the old Goodell home. None of the Goodell sisters ever married. Whose baby could this be?

BONES IN THE BACKYARD — A Bashia Gordon Mystery — \$14.95
with Lois J. Blackburn *Infinity Publishing, 2001, 198 pp, pb.*

In the quiet corner of northeastern Connecticut, semi-retired interior decorator, Bashia Gordon, turns amateur sleuth when she and her Peace Corps friend, Dottie Weeks, uncover a fragmented skeleton in a septic tank. How did it get there? Who is it? Could the bones be the wealthy eccentric who disappeared years ago?

A HISTORY OF POLISH AMERICANS IN PITTSFIELD, MASS., 1862-1945
\$14.95 *Palmetto Press 2004. 152 pp., 5.5" x 8.25," photographs, pb.*

Using church records, organization brochures and oral histories, the author has compiled a valued history of the Polish community in Pittsfield, originally formed when nineteenth and twentieth century Polish immigrants came to the area seeking work in the wool mills.

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BOOKS IN BRIEF / Florence Waszkelewicz Clowes MLIS

Turf Wars in Detroit

THE POLISH GANG, 1929
by *Karl J. Niemiec*
Lap Top Publishing, 2013
224 pp., \$12.00

It was a time of prohibition, and the Roaring Twenties. Detroit was rife with crime in 1929 including murders, kidnapping, amidst prohibition and the stock market crash. This slapstick comedy, reminiscent of the Hatfields and McCoys, centers around the heads of Italian (the Mangione family) and Polish (the Niemiecs) families. With property on Lake St. Clair, a sign of old money, the Poles work on buying more land while the Mangiones dream of blending in with the Gosse Point society. The Niemiec family group, including three sons, a daughter, run a well-established bar and restaurant on the West Side.

Two young teenagers in the families often meet, and when Nicole is found drunk and naked late one night, her father, Bartolomeo Mangione immediately blames it on Bronislaw Niemiec and war is declared. He hires a murderer to wipe out the Niemiec family. The young couple, in the meantime, is baffled by their elder's response. A slapstick comedy plays out as the Poles set out to kidnap Nicole at the crooked District Attorney's Fourth of July party. Meanwhile illegal drugs are being smuggled across the Detroit River by the Polish gang and liquor flows from their corner bar and restaurant.

The book is full of rough language by the gangs as the two groups fight over territory and lake property. It's a squabble that has

no end, until the killings, drugs and booze makes the two families realize something must be done.

THE ERRAND OF THE EYE
photographs by *Rose Mandel*
by *Susan Ehrens, Prestel Publishing, 2013, 127 pps., \$39.95.*

Born in Poland, Rose (Rosalie Reich, 1910-2002) and her husband escaped the Holocaust and emigrated to California in 1942. She was fluent in French, Polish, and German, but her English was inadequate for a career in child psychology or education (which she studied in Europe), and instead turned to photography.

She enrolled in the California School of Fine Arts, studying photography as an art form, developing her skills under Edward Weston, Ansel Adams and Minor White. Using a tripod-mounted 4 X 5 view camera, she developed an artistic vision and creative energy for abstract art, with nature becoming her primary subject. She left the student class to become senior photographer in the art department at the University of California, Berkeley, where she was employed for the next two decades.

This oversized book is part of the exhibition of Mandel's photography held in the de Young Museum in San Francisco from June to October of this year. She spoke through her photographs. The streets of San Francisco and photographs of people in a relaxed atmosphere, juxtaposed images and reflections and vibrant nature are included. The book contains over 200 illustrations of her work, as well as a chronology of her life and exhibition history.

OBITUARIES

Honorable Benjamin C. Stanczyk

The Honorable Benjamin C. Stanczyk, 98, a native Detroiter, was born on Easter Sunday in 1915, and was one of the oldest living graduates of the University of Michigan Law School. He became a Detroit Common Pleas Court Judge in 1957, and after retiring from the bench in 1975 worked as a visiting judge and arbitrator in Southeastern Michigan until 1999.

A World War II veteran, he was a driving force in several veterans' organizations, a recognized leader in the Polish community and a life-long member of the Lions Club.

"Nourished with a big Polish heart, Stanczyk became the most ac-



tive Polish American in Michigan's Polonia, perhaps in its history," said

retired Judge Donald Binkowski.

"A man of many interests, Ben photographed many individuals active in stara Polonia and was present when many prominent Poles from all over the world visited Detroit. Then he had them preserved for history by donating them to the University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library.

With his activist father-in-law, Anthony Wojsowski, and others, Stanczyk published "Poles in Michigan."

Stanczyk developed an abiding hobby in collector watches and guns as well as photography.

Blanche Schneider, 100, Active in Community

Blanche T. Schneider passed away in her sleep in Warminster, Pa., October 27, 2013 just 32 days short of celebrating her 101st birthday. She was a long-time member of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa and a member of the Polish Women's Alliance of America.

Born in Philadelphia, she was the daughter of the late Frank and Karolina (Zyla) Trybala, both from Poland. She was the wife of the late

A. Groh Schneider, Sr., Esq. (Ret. Captain USNR) with whom she had shared 56 years of marriage.

Schneider taught teach kindergarten in the Philadelphia School District, and also taught English and American Citizenship to hundreds of newcomers to America seeking their U.S. citizenship.

She was also an instrumental part in the growth and success of Schneider Funeral Home, a family owned business founded in 1870.

She and her husband built a new funeral home in Hatboro in 1960.

Schneider was a member and past president of Hatboro-Warminster Welcome Wagon and a member and past president of The Crooked Billet Woman's Club of Hatboro. In 1965 she received the Most Outstanding Merit Mother award presented by the American Mothers Committee of Pennsylvania.

Emily Pinter, Dance Instructor, Hall of Fame Member

Emily Pinter, nee Mucha, 84, long active in Chicago's Polonia, died October 21, 2013, in Florida.

At age 16, while dancing with the Alliance of Polish Clubs group, the dancing instructor took ill, and Emily was asked to take over the class. The following year she was hired full-time, launching her on a career of dancing. In 1948, Emily directed her first recital. She continued with musical lessons on piano, accordion and clarinet at Northwestern University School of Music.

She joined an international folk dance group and became a piano accompanist. She taught ballroom and polka dancing at Arthur Murray Studios and Aragon Ballroom.

Pinter organized the Polish Festival Dancers, a young adult group, which became quite popular performing in Chicago and St. Louis. She attended various Folk Dance Camps throughout the country, teaching and studying new dances.

For many years she taught the children of the PRCUA groups at seven different parishes throughout Chicago. In addition, she has two private groups on the north side, and one on the south side. In 1973, she was instructor at the PNA College in Cambridge, Pa.

Emily assisted Chet Gulinski on WOPA Radio & Chet Schafer on WTAO. She participated in many Polka Stage Shows produced by

Chet Schafer.

In 1969, Emily became involved with the IPA where she served as director for two years, treasurer for eight years and the first woman president for two years. She served as chairperson of the Annual Awards Banquet for many years. She is a recipient of the Antonina Blazonczyk Award for her dedication to the polka field.

She worked full time for Kemper Insurance Co. as an executive assistant for 27 years and then as a secretary for 11 years for Storgaard Construction Co.

AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

The conductor on a train from Wroclaw to Lublin, Poland, was surprised to learn passenger Maria Kus had just given birth.

"It was at 6:00 a.m. when we set off. I hadn't even sat down when a gentle pain started," said Kus. "Nothing suggested what was going to happen."

The new mother who was traveling home to Skarzyska Kamienna, said the birth — about three weeks early — was painless and that it took only a few seconds.

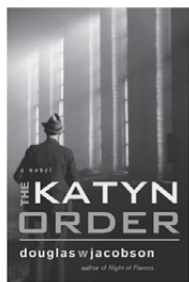
The railroad later phoned Kus with its congratulations, and awarded her daughter Kinga free travel on all of the company's trains until she reaches twenty-six years of age.

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"Compelling authenticity and evocatively rendered detail will captivate history buffs and thriller fans alike."—*Library Journal*

"Jacobson follows his debut, *Night of Flames*, with another solid WWII thriller. The author makes the bloody fight for Warsaw both exciting and suspenseful." —*Publishers Weekly*

At the end of World War II, Polish-born American Adam Nowak joins the Resistance and meets covert operative Natalia Kowalska. After Germany's defeat, Adam and Natalia are ordered by British intelligence to find the 1940 Soviet directive mandating the executions of more than 20,000 Polish officers and civilians. If they can find the Katyn Order before the Russians do—they may change the fate of Poland.



"Jacobson brings an important but widely unknown chapter of the second world war to vivid life." —John Shors, author of *Beneath a Marble Sky*

"A heart-stopping love story set against the grotesque reality of the Warsaw Rising. A knockout." —James Conroyd Martin, author of *Push Not the River*

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— Luke 2:34

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B. 7.4 inch Blown Glass Traditional St. Nicholas

Dressed in traditional Bishop garb, this figurine wears a mitre on his head decorated with gold colored accents and a maroon vest on his shoulders. The whole outfit is adorned with the golden crozier and three apples on the bible that Saint Nicholas holds in his hands. Measures 7.4" H. #570504 - \$39.95

Greeting Cards

Each set of cards displays a Polish sentiment on the inside. Designs vary, so you may not get exactly what is shown. Envelopes included.



Religious Christmas Cards, Set of 5
#PCS722 - \$13.95



Greeting Cards with Ribbons and Bells, Set of 2
#PCS705 - \$11.95



Greeting Cards with 3-D pop-up pictures, Set of 2
#PCS703 - \$11.95

2014 Calendars



2014 Polish Folk Art Wall Calendar

This gorgeously designed 14 month calendar is inspired by the art of Łowicz Wycinanki (Polish Paper Cutting), where vibrantly colored paper is cut to create masterful motifs of the imagination. The graphic setting of the calendar is based on works of Mirosława Stefaniak.

Calendar features:
Weekdays & Months in Polish & English
Male's & Female's Polish Name Days
Polish Holidays
Week order begins on Monday
Measures 9.25" x 13.25"
#CZW13554 - \$14.95

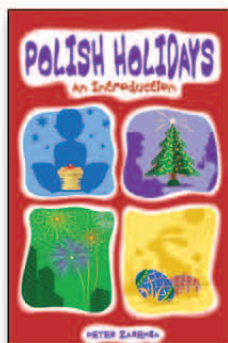


2014 Poland in Watercolor Wall Calendar

This calendar features beautifully depicted scenes from 14 different cities of Poland in watercolor. Among the featured cities are: Kraków, Gdańsk, Warszawa, Sopot, and more.

Calendar features:
Weekdays & Months in Polish & English
Male's & Female's Polish Name Days
Polish Holidays
Week order begins on Monday
Measures 9.25" x 13.25"
#CZW13042 - \$14.95

Christmas Books



Polish Holidays: An Introduction

This handy introductory guide to Polish holidays provides factual information in an easy to digest packet. Contained within is information, recipes, and/or songs for the Harvest Festival (Dożynki), All Saints' Day (Zaduszki), St. Nicholas' Day (Mikołajki), Christmas Eve (Wigilia), Christmas (Boże Narodzenie), New Year's Eve (Sylwester), Three Kings (Trzej Królowie), Carnival (Karnawał), Fat Thursday (Tłusty Czwartek), and Easter (Wielkanoc). SoftCover. 8.5" x 5.5", 28 pages. English. #BK2573 - \$9.95

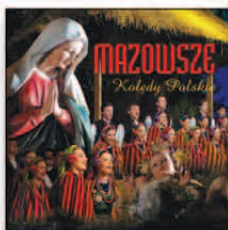


Polish Carols Songbook with CD

Holding on to the beautiful tradition of singing Polish Christmas carols, we give you a large collection of the most beautiful Polish carols. You will find in it lyrics and musical notes to 51 compositions. Along with the book is enclosed a CD with specially chosen compositions.

Songs include: *Wśród nocnej ciszy, Dzisiaj w Betlejem, Gdy się Chrystus rodzi, W żłobie leży, Anioł pasterzom mówił, Bracia patrzcie jeno, Hej, w dzień Narodzenia, & more.* #BK2706 - \$19.95

Christmas Carols on CD

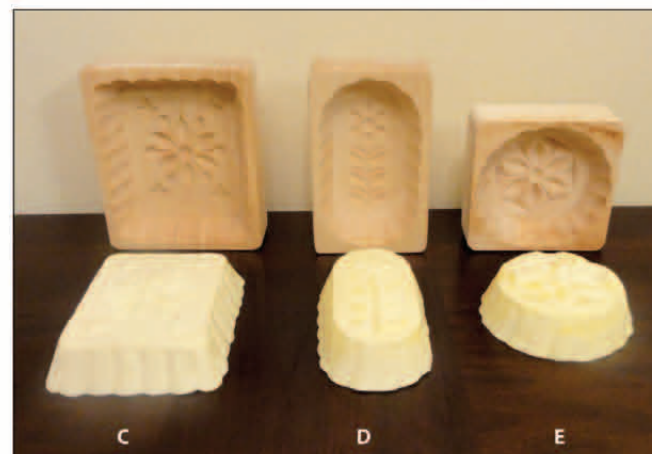


Mazowsze Ensemble on CD - Kolędy Polskie

19 of the most well known Christmas Carols performed by Poland's most popular folk music group

Songs include: *Bóg się rodzi, Gdy się Chrystus rodzi, Wśród nocnej ciszy, Pójdźmy wszyscy do stajenki, Jezus malusienki, Dzisiaj w Betlejem, & more.* #MAZCD003 - \$24.95

Butter Molds



C. Rectangle w/Star Top & Scalloped Edges

Measures 5.0" L x 4.25" W x 1.25" H
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E. Circle with Star Top & Scalloped Edges

Measures 3.75" L x 3.75" W x 1.25" H
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Harfa Mens Choir - Najpiękniejsze Kolędy Polskie

These 18 Polish Christmas songs were performed by the Harfa Men's Choir directed by Jan Węcowski. Recorded in the PWSM Concert Hall in Warsaw, February 1997.

Songs include: *Wśród nocnej ciszy, Dzisiaj w Betlejem, Gdy się Chrystus rodzi, & more* #MTJ10046 - \$19.95

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Ludowa Nuta to Perform in Brooklyn



LUDOWA NUTA. Polish-Canadian folk chorus to perform in New York.

BROOKLYN, N.Y. — Ludowa Nuta Choir and Kapela will sing at the 7:00 p.m. Mass at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Greenpoint, Sat., Dec. 7. This folk chorus from southern Ontario, formed just eight years ago, has already made a reputation for itself and become a favorite not only in Canada, but also in the United States and Poland.

The one and only goal of Ludowa Nuta is to promote Polish folk music, said director Vick Dudalski. Its colorful, traditional costumes are all made in Poland and their rep-

ertoire comprises songs from various regions of Poland. The chorus is accompanied by a typical Górska Kapela, and a Kaszubska Kapela. The performances are enhanced by some lively anecdotes and skits about Polish folk traditions.

On December 7, the choir will feature liturgical (Advent) music at the Mass and a Kolendowanie concert, a medley of pastoralki from Żywiec, Spisz and Beskid Śląski regions of Poland.

Hazleton Polonaise Society To Hold Wigilia

HAZLETON, Pa. — The Greater Hazleton Area Polonaise Society will hold its 37th Annual Wigilia, Sun., Dec. 8th, at 2:00 p.m., at the Lobitz Fountain Room.

A 13-course meatless meal will be served, which will include mushroom soup, potato babka, pierogi, haddock, and more. Beverages will be served, and a bottle of wine will be part of each table setting.

The evening will begin with the lighting of the Advent Wreath, the Blessing of the Nativity Scene, Blessing of the Food, fol-

lowed by a reading of the Gospel of St. Luke by the Rev. Boguslaw Janiec.

The Polonaise Chorus will sing “Chica Noc” and “Oh Come All Ye Faithful.”

Oplatek will be blessed and shared before dinner.

Following dinner, the Polonaise Chorus will sing kolędy, accompanied by Tom Kopetskie on accordion.

For more information or reservations, call Olga Morga (570) 929-2012; or Tom Kopetskie (570) 454-4397.

Lira Holiday Concerts in Pittsburgh and Chicago



THE LIRA SINGERS, a popular part of the Chicago-based Lira Ensemble.

CHICAGO — The Lira Ensemble, which specializes in Polish music, song and dance, will present two concerts this Christmas season, titled “Polish Carols, Song & Dance” featuring the Lira Singers, Lira Dancers and Lira Orchestra.

The concerts will be:

Sun., Dec. 1, 2013 at 3:00 p.m. at the Dominican University Performing Arts Center, 7900 West Division St., River Forest, Ill. For tickets, visit events.dom.edu, or call the DUPAC Box Office at (708) 488-5000, or LIRA at (800) 547-5472, and;

Sun., Dec. 15 at 4:00 p.m. at Carnegie Music Hall, 440 Forbes Ave., in Pittsburgh, Pa., For tickets, call (773) 508-7040 or (800) 547-5472.

The concerts feature Polish carols of various styles, and also popular Polish holiday music. This concert offers the rare opportunity to hear Polish carols played by an orchestra. The Lira Ensemble will also perform works by Polish master composers such as Frederic Chopin, Stanislaw Moniuszko, and Witold Lutoslawski, one of the most respected Polish composers of the 20th century.

Guest star at both concerts is 14-year-old Daniel Szefer — a piano prodigy who will

perform music of Frederic Chopin, including the “Andante Spianato” and “Grand Polonaise Brillante.” Despite his young age, Szefer has already performed around the United States and has won first or second prizes at prestigious piano competitions.

Lucyna Migala of Chicago’s WCEV, who is artistic director and general manager of the Lira Ensemble, will narrate the concerts in English, demonstrating some Polish holiday traditions and will offer a bit of the history and tradition behind the music and dance performed.

The Lira company is artist-in-residence at Loyola University Chicago and is the nation’s only professional performing arts company specializing in Polish music, song and dance. The mission of the company is to bring the best of Polish culture into American life.

Both theaters open at half an hour before the concerts. Lira recordings will be available for purchase in the two lobbies.

Tickets for “Polish Carols, Song & Dance” are very reasonably priced so that families can attend — from \$35 to \$58, with discounts for groups of 20 or more and half price tickets for children under age 16 in all price ranges.

All seats are reserved.

*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 2014.

