

POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

ESTABLISHED 1911

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THE ANNIVERSARIES OF 2014 • FOR DISNEY'S JIMMY KIMMEL, A LESSON UNLEARNED • "SAVE OUR STEEPLE"
BISHOP PAPROCKI CORRECTS THE MEDIA • EAST GERMANY OR WEST POLAND? • TIMELINES IN GENEALOGY
COMFORT FOODS LIKE BABCIA USED TO MAKE • A MEAL FIT FOR A KING • SYMBOLS, GESTURES & SUPERSTITIONS



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

NEWSMARK

WARSAW OFFERS INTERCESSION. Poland is offering to mediate between the sides of the standoff in Ukraine.

Marcin Wojciechowski, a spokesman for Poland's Foreign Ministry, said that the use of force does "not serve a peaceful solution of the conflict" but makes Ukraine lose credibility. He said Poland has offered to mediate, if Ukraine asked for it.

Poland's former President Aleksander Kwasniewski recently negotiated on behalf of the EU on an association agreement, which was shelved by Ukraine's President Viktor Yanukovich under pressure from Russia. Kwasniewski also served as mediator in Ukraine's 2004 presidential election dispute.

BOMB SCARE PROVES FALSE. Police evacuated 5,000 people from offices of five ministries in Warsaw on Dec. 6, after receiving email bomb threats. No bombs were found following the evacuations.

Police spokesman Krzysztof Hajdas said the threats were sent to the infrastructure, defense, economy, health, and culture ministries.

Police experts are trying to identify the authors of the emails, who could face up to eight years in prison.

KOSCIUSZKO MONUMENT RESTORED. Milwaukee's newly-restored monument of the Polish-born, American Revolutionary War hero, General Tadeusz Kosciuszko, was rededicated, November 11. Fittingly, it was Veterans Day in the U.S. and Independence Day in Poland.

The statue of the general upon his horse is located in Kosciuszko Park at West Lincoln Avenue and 9th Place.

Restore Kosciuszko Monument Committee (RKMC) of Polanki, Inc. Milwaukee County, and the City of Milwaukee rededicated the monument with a special program.

The bronze statue came to be in the early 1900s through the private donations of many of Milwaukee's Polish citizens. Italian sculptor Gaetano Trentanove was commissioned to create the piece, which was cast in Florence, Italy and shipped to Milwaukee. In June 1905 the monument was dedicated.

To fund the necessary conservation work, RKMC raised over \$300,000 through contributions from hundreds of individuals and organizations. Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee also contributed a combined \$110,000 to upgrade the site surrounding the monument.

For more on the restoration, visit rkmmilwaukee.org.

POLISH TEAM IN TOP 10 DISCOVERIES. A Polish team's work at a royal tomb in Peru has been counted among the "Top 10 Discoveries of 2013" by the Archaeological Institute of America.

The find is remarkable as it represents the first instance that a royal burial complex that had not previously been looted was explored by archaeologists.

The tomb contains the remains of four royal women of the Wari Empire, which existed prior to the Incas, from about 500 AD to 1100 AD.

The project was led by Dr. Milosz Giersz from the University of Warsaw, aided by archaeologists from the Catholic University of Peru.

DISHWASHER MANUFACTURERS CLEANING UP. The production of large appliances is booming in Poland, with record levels of eighty percent of those appliances now being exported. An estimated 20,000 Poles are employed in the home appliance sector and "Poland is becoming the European leader in the production of large home appliances," said Wojciech Konecki, director of Poland's Association of Manufacturers of Home Appliances.

Demand for Polish appliances like dishwashers, washing machines and refrigerators has risen dramatically in Eastern Europe. Russia is now the fourth largest importer of Polish appliances. Konecki said the Association is working diligently on increasing markets in France, Germany, Britain, and Italy.

"Wałęsa" Presented at Capitol



PRESCREENING INTERVIEW. Shown above is Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa (l.), interpreter Marcin Zmudzki and former U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd during the more than 45 minutes interview and conversations that preceded the screening of the new Wałęsa biopic. Wałęsa had just received a long standing ovation and thunderous applause after 24 years since his last visit to the Capitol and Congress. Projected on the movie screen behind and above them is a photo of the two men together in Poland in 1983. *Story on page 4.*

Polish Female Spies Among Immortalized

LONDON — Prince Charles was joined by the Polish ambassador to the UK at the unveiling of a monument to female agents, including two Poles, who aided resistance movements in occupied Europe.

The marble and granite memorial has been erected in the village of Tempsford, Bedfordshire, where most of the 75 female agents set off on their missions from the now defunct RAF airbase.

The monument includes a mosaic of a dove against a full moon — the agents were invariably dropped at night — and eighty villagers, including children, helped insert the 600 pieces.

Prince Charles added the final piece, where he was joined by Polish ambassador to the UK, Witold Sobkow, among other dignitaries.

Among those inscribed
See "Spies," page 4

A TALK WITH ...

Mieczyslaw Biskupski, President of the Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences of America

Dr. M.B. (Bolek) Biskupski holds the Blejwas Endowed Chair in Polish & Polish American Studies at Central Connecticut State University, and is the current President of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America (PIASA), headquartered in New York. Author of more than ten books and recipient of the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland, he holds a doctorate from Yale. He has taught at Yale, St. John Fisher College in Rochester, and been a visiting scholar in Warsaw and Budapest. He spoke about PIASA with John Grondelski:



Dr. M.B. (Bolek) Biskupski

Your election as President represents something of a passing of the torch: after long-serving Polish scholars like Oskar Halecki and Feliks Gross, you are the first Polish-American PIASA President and, with Dr. Thaddeus Gromada's retirement and Dr. Bożena Levan's accession, there's been a change of the guard. How do you evaluate this moment in PIASA's history?

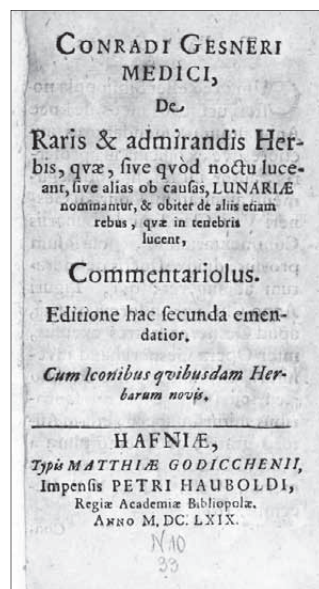
This is a critical moment. We must redefine our relationship with Poland and we have decided to make closer cooperation our goal. Recently we have agreed with PAU to assist us in the publication of *The Polish Review* and add their representatives to the editorial board. These gives us a much better chance

of monitoring Polish scholarship and have more critical attention in Poland devoted to scholarship produced in North America. This

is but one example; we have also increased greatly our cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, the University of Warsaw, the IPN, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Poles are now in a position to be substantially helpful and we wish to work with them for our mutual benefit. The "changing of the guard" aspect is also important. In passing, it should be noted that Dr. Gromada was born in the United States. Executive Director Levan and I work in close harmony and share responsibilities. She has done a splendid job in managing the financial and daily affairs of the Institute. She controls the day-to-day running of the Institute—among other things—and I am free to concentrate on fewer but larger matters like the Annual Conference. Having all these responsibilities concentrated in one person proved quite overwhelming.

PIASA was founded by émigré scholars in the dark days of World War II, to continue the work of the Polska Akademia Umiejętności, and was later the voice of free Polish scholarship during Communism. Poland is free today—what is PIASA's mission now?

See "A Talk with ...," page 3



Copernicus's "Little Commentary" Turns 500

by Ray Cavanaugh

2014 will mark the 500th anniversary of Toruń native Mikołaj Kopernik a.k.a. Nicolaus Copernicus coming forth with his *Commentariolus* (or "Little Commentary"). Consisting of some 40 pages, this work presented the revolutionary notion of a heliocentric universe, in which the earth orbits the sun — as opposed to a geocentric universe, in which the sun (and everything else) orbits the

See "Copernicus ...," page 4

ALMANAC



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January Styczeń

Dużo szczęścia, zdrowia i powodzenia, to tradycyjne, najszczerze życzenia. Nowy Roku szczęśliwego, niech obficie da, co ma najlepszego!

Lots of happiness, health and success, Are wished at New Year meetings, So let us share with abundance sincere and generous greetings.

1 NEW YEAR'S DAY

1467. Birth of **Zygmunt I Stary**, Renaissance king of Poland.
1919. Birth of Polish American actress **Carol Landis**.

3 1795. **Third Partition** of Poland.

5 1173. Death of **Bolesław IV the Curly**.

6 FEAST OF THREE KINGS

On this day, the initials K+M+B and the year are inscribed by one's priest above the home's main entry.

8 1681. The **Treaty of Radzin** ended a five year war between the Turks and the allied countries of Russia and Poland.

9 1797. **Jan Henryk Dabrowski** organizes his legion in Italy, and thus honored by having his name included in the Polish National Anthem.

15 1582. Russia cedes Livonia and Estonia to Poland, losing access to Baltic.

11 1953. Death of opera singer **Marcella Sembrich-Kochanowska** (b. 1853).

15 1920. The United States approved a \$150 million loan to Poland, Austria and Armenia to aid in their war with the Russian communists.

17 1919. **Ignacy Jan Paderewski**, 58, pianist, composer, becomes first premier of the newly created Republic of Poland.

17 1945. Warsaw is cleared of German resistance by forces of the 1st Belorussian Front. A Polish unit fighting with the Red Army is involved in the final attacks.

18 1943. Jews in **Warsaw Ghetto** began an uprising against the Nazis.

19 1967. Death of **Casimir Funk** in Albany, N.Y., Polish-born biochemist who discovered vitamins.

Bój się w styczniu wiosny, bo marzec zazdrośny
Beware of spring in January, for March is jealous.

21 1268. **Pope Clement IV** gave permission to Poland's King Premislaus II to take over Lithuania and establish Catholicism.

22 1863. The **January Uprising** in the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth against the Russian Empire. It began this day in 1863, and lasted until the last insurgents were captured in 1865.

24 1507. Coronation of **Sigismund I the Old**.

25 1913. Birth of pianist and composer **Witold Lutoslawski**.

26 1934. Germany signed a **10-year non-aggression pact** with Poland, breaking the French alliance system. Germany violates with pact on Sept. 1, 1939 when it invades Poland.

27 1861. Birth of engineer **Ralph Modjeski**.

28 1573. Signing of the **Warsaw Confederation**, the formal beginning of religious freedom in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

31 1887. Death of **Włodimirz Bonawentura Krzyżanowski** (b. July 8, 1824), Civil War general.

This paper mailed on or before **January 1**. The February edition will be mailed on or before **January 30**.

VIEWPOINTS

The Anniversaries of 2014

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Those famous words, from Spanish philosopher George Santayana's book "The Life of Reason," are especially apropos for Poles and Polish Americans this year, as 2014 marks several anniversaries that are foundational in twentieth-century Polish history.

One hundred years ago, in 1914, World War I began. When the First World War began, there was no Poland—and there had not been since 1795. That war, many battles of which were fought on Polish soil, with Polish conscripts shooting at each other in the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian occupiers' armies, would end with Poland's recovery of independence in 1918.

Seventy-five years ago, in 1939, World War II began. A country that had been free for hardly a generation was the target of two genocidal totalitarianisms: German Nazism and Russian Communism. The six long years of war would end with Poland as "victorious ally" with one-fifth of its people dead (including almost all its Jewish population), one-third of its territory stolen, and subject to approximately fifty years of alien rule.

Twenty-five years ago, in 1989, the nightmare of communism officially ended. A generation has now grown up in a free Poland, and Poland is now a member of NATO. Moscow

still believes it has hegemon's rights in Eastern Europe, but at least Warsaw (and Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, Bucharest, and Sofia) can largely determine their own fates freely.

History is a strange and dangerous thing. As Fr. Sławomir Zabraniak points out in an essay in this issue, history can be uncomfortable. In Poland, there are some books that suggest our national uprisings were insane. In North America, four academic presses in the past year published books complaining about the treatment of Germans (twice), Ukrainians, and Lemko peoples at the hands of Poles during World War II. Geopolitics on the one hand says "don't raise the issue of Russian theft of Polish soil in World War II," while being a good "European" and "EU member" suggests toning down memories of German barbarism. Back in Poland, lots of people — the two million or so who collaborated in sustaining communism for 50 years — would like us to forget about their sordid personal histories behind a gruba kreska.

Given the abuses of history, a good resolution in 2014 would be to remember and recover our history. There's plenty to remember. And it's not just the past: in four short years, we'll mark the centennial of Polish independence. In 1918, Poland returned to European maps. That event deserves a real feast ... and it's time for world Polonia to start planning for it now.

Happy New Year! Do siego roku!

Celebrating the New Year in Poland is about spending some time with close friends and family members, and spreading happiness and cheer.

While some prefer to celebrate at home, others plan a party in restaurants, night clubs, dance halls, and neighborhood taverns. New Year's Eve is also a time when our hearty kin attend open air concerts, organized in many places throughout the country.

A bottle of champagne is a necessity for a midnight toast. Magnificent dishes are also prepared, and range from hors d'oeuvres to bigos.

There are some who wish to get close to the nature. The preferred places are the marvelous Tatra Mountains, from where one can see the beautiful sunrise of the first dawns of the New Year rising over the mountains range. Also, since it is the time of the year when Poland is in

dry cold weather, with a little powdery snowfall, many people spend New Year's Day skiing or sledding. Some people plan forest parties, complete with bonfires, and singing and dancing around it the whole night.

Tradition dictates that no one should be lonely for the day. Another says good luck will be yours throughout the year if the first person to greet you on the New Year is a male. A common New Year greeting is "do siego roku," or "well wishes to you."

In some parts of rural Poland, windows and doorknobs are smudged with tar or ashes, or to hide pots that were left drying on a fence. Doing such things is traditionally believed to symbolize for driving out the old year, and welcoming the New Year. Some parts of the country have people baking donuts, with a belief that it will bring wealth in the coming year.

Trzech Króli, The Feast of Three Kings

January 6th is an important day, not only in the Catholic calendar, but on the Polish one as well. The Feast Day of Three Kings (Trzech Króli) finds religious parades organized in many Polish cities, the biggest in

Krakow and Warsaw. All supermarkets are closed, only some small family-owned shops are open. Restaurants are usually open but frequently after the parades are over. Museums are usually closed.

It is on this day, Poles take small boxes containing chalk, a gold ring, incense and a piece of amber, in memory of the gifts of the

Magi, to church to be blessed. Once at home, they inscribe the date and "K+M+B" with the blessed chalk above the main entryway of the home. This is said to provide protection against illness and misfortune for those within. For 2014, it should be written "20 K+M+B 14." The letters, with a cross after each one, stand for names of the Three Kings — Kaspar, Melchior and Balthasar.

They remain above the doors all year until they are inadvertently dusted off or replaced by new markings the next year.

POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

Dedicated to the Promotion and Continuance of Polish American Culture • Established 1911

USPS 437-220 / ISSN 0032-2792

The Polish American Journal is published monthly in four editions (Buffalo, Polish Beneficial Association, Association of Sons of Poland, and National editions) by:

PANAGRAPHICS, INC.
P.O. BOX 271
N. BOSTON, NY 14110-0271

PHONE: (716) 312-8088

E-MAIL: info@polamjournal.com
www.polamjournal.com

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

POSTMASTER—Send address changes to:
POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL
P.O. BOX 198
BOWMANSVILLE, NY 14026-0198
www.polamjournal.com

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DEFAMATION WATCH

For Disney's Jimmy Kimmel, A Lesson Unlearned

In the opening monologue of the Dec. 4, 2013 *Jimmy Kimmel Live* show, Kimmel told Polish jokes, first as examples of their abundance in the 1970s, and then following a video recording of failed hand-glider take off by a Pole. After seeing the video, Kimmel asked if it was time to start telling Polish jokes again.

To view the show, visit the ABC site, and search for the Kimmel show of Dec. 4.

In November, Kimmel and ABC were forced to apologize after the late night host poked fun at Chinese people. Kimmel then apologized a second time for his controversial "Kill Everyone in China" segment to a group of protesters who set up shop in front of the Hollywood studio where the series is taped. Protestors called on ABC to fire the late-night host.

Frank Milewski, chair of the Polish American Congress Anti-Bigotry Committee, has taken up the issue with the Walt Disney Company, which owns ABC. Supporting letters of protest may be mailed to: Anne Sweeney, President, Disney-ABC Television Group, 77 West 66th St., New York, NY 10023.

NBC Continues Cheap Shots

On the December 14 broadcast of NBC's *Saturday Night Live*, Weekend Update host Seth Meyers asked:

"Why is Santa so dumb?
"Because he is North Polish."

This is not the first time *Saturday Night Live* has told Polish jokes, nor is it Meyers' first time telling them on the fake news segment of the show.

Address letters of protest to Steven Burke, CEO, NBCUniversal, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112.

"Save Our Steeple"

DETROIT — The parish that operates St. Josaphat Roman Catholic Church is putting out an SOS — Save Our Steeple.

Despite projected costs that church officials acknowledge would put repair of the wind-damaged structure beyond their reach, Mother of Divine Mercy Parish — comprised of St. Josaphat, Sweetest Heart of Mary, and St. Joseph parishes — launched a fund-raising campaign to do just that. An 8-foot by 20-foot sign promoting the Save Our Steeple campaign was placed facing I-75.

Kevin Piotrowski, parish council president, said the outpouring of concern from people across the region who want to save the iconic 112-year-old piece of Detroit's skyline convinced church officials to try to raise money to save the structure.

The steeple, which is visible from I-75 on Detroit's east side, was damaged in November when heavy winds from a severe storm pounded the region, cutting power to hundreds of thousands and leading to several deaths.

Anyone interested in making a donation for the steeple's repair can send a check payable to St. Josaphat Church, and mail to: 4440 Russell St., Detroit, MI 48207. "Steeple fund" should be written on the check. You can also make a donation on-line at <http://motherofdivinemersey.com/2013/12/03/save-our-steeples/>.

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Krupa Thanks Polish Military



WARSAW— Polish-born supermodel and *Real Housewives of Miami* star Joanna Krupa sent a letter to Poland's Minister of National Defense Tomasz Siemoniak congratulating him for replacing the use of animals in all military medical training exercises with modern simulators after discussions with PETA and its international affiliates.

The Polish military opted to change its policy after PETA provided information on the superiority of human-patient simulators and nearly 30,000 concerned people around the world urged the switch through PETA's website.

Poland's decision means that more than 80 percent of NATO nations are now training service members without harming any animals, leaving only a handful of countries, including the United States, still using animals.

"The U.S. is so progressive in so many ways, but in this instance, the Old Country has it beat," said Krupa. "I am so proud of my homeland for taking such a strong stand against cruelty to animals."

Concert Remembers President Kennedy

WARSAW — The young men's choir of St. John the Baptist Archdiocesan Cathedral, better known as Cantores Minores, celebrated its 23rd anniversary, Nov. 22, 2013 the feast of St. Cecilia, patroness of music and musicians. It was on this date in 1990 that the choir gave its first concert.

This year the choir marked its anniversary with Mass followed by a concert at the Church of the BVM Mother of the Church, in the Mokotów district of Warsaw.

The concert also commemorated the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy with a performance of the first

movement Randall Thompson's patriotic cantata, *The Testament of Freedom*. Set to the words of Thomas Jefferson, "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time; the hand of force may destroy, but cannot disjoin them," the cantata was composed during World War II.

In its 23-year-old history, the choir has played an active roll in Warsaw's musical life. Most recently, the choir travelled to Uppsala, Sweden. A week later in Warsaw, the choir took first place at the 9th International Choral Festival Varsovia Cantans. The choir also singing at the funeral mass of former Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki.

A Talk with Mieczyslaw Biskupski

continued from cover

We have a double mission: to acquaint scholars on Poland in the United States with Polish research, and to alert Poles in the homeland to what their colleagues in North America are producing. It is frustrating to see how little Polish scholars know about our work.

How would you evaluate the situation of scholars in Poland today, when government subsidies are disappearing and academic salaries are often low? Once upon a time, "professor" at least carried social respect. What is the situation of Poland's intelligentsia today?

"Professor" is still a very dignified title. It is true that the salaries of our colleagues are lower than we should like them to be but at least there are monies to compete for which are distributed without political prejudice or at least no more than in the U.S.

Thirty years ago, with the election of a Polish Pope, the rise of Solidarity, and the fall of the Iron Curtain, Polish studies had something of a heyday. What is the situation of Polish studies in America today? What would you tell a young scholar, writing his doctorate and aspiring to the professoriate, about specializing in Polish subjects?

This is a difficult question. The standard answer is that the field is in decline: membership in the Institute is lower than it was several years ago, for example. On the other hand, chairs in Polish studies have recently opened or are in that process: two at Illinois, one at Colum-

bia, another at UMich Dearborn. This has—and will have—a stimulating affect, as does the growth of our sister organization, the Polish Studies Association. I am not pess-

"It is frustrating to see how little Polish scholars know about our work."

mistic. There is one concern I have, however, and that is the tendency of academic press not to publish high quality manuscripts in Polish studies because they argue they have no extant list in East Central European Studies in general or Poland in particular. Well, if you do not publish these books you will not have a list! It can be very frustrating and I do not think our colleagues in, say, American History, realize that they have such greater opportunities for publication.

What are some of the activities of PIASA today?

Our central activity—and one that has occupied much of our attention—is the convening a World Congress of the Institute in Warsaw in June 2014. This has been in the works for two years and has been my dream for a decade. We already have the honorary co-sponsorship of the University of Warsaw—where the Congress will be held and they are providing all our facilities without charge, a great boon; the sponsorship of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the generous support of the IPN (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej), and the tremendous cooperation of the Polish History Museum, as well

as the Museum of the Warsaw Uprising; the list is still growing. And from the American side, the Polish American Historical Association, the Kościuszko Foundation, and the Blejwas Endowed Chair in Polish Studies at Central Connecticut State University are all co-sponsors. We shall have more than 40 panels stretching three days as well as a museum day preceding the Congress. We estimate about 200 participants, possibly more, as well as attendees not presenting papers — a large affair.

PIASA publishes a quarterly journal, Polish Review. How is it doing, and what do you see as its mission today?

We have had a rough patch with changes in the editorial staff, but with the intellectual and financial support of the PAU we anticipate that the Review is just beginning its great days. The Congress in Warsaw should be a major source of new submissions.

Play the prophet: describe what you think Polonia will look like in 2038 (25 years down the road), and what do you think PIASA's role will be in it?

Obviously a very difficult question. My hope would be a community conscious of its origins, loyal to its Polish traditions, and in closer touch with our common homeland. Even if this number be smaller than it is today, The Institute will be a larger and more important focus for the collection and dissemination about the millennial history and culture of our beloved Poland.

FORUM / Rev. Dr. Sławomir Zabraniak

Some Reflections on Great Anniversaries

2014 is a year flush with many anniversaries important to Poles. Together, they make up a mosaic we might call "freedom and sovereignty." Ever since the Bar Confederation (1768-72)—the first great movement in defense of the country's sovereignty—as well as the reforms at the end of the 18th century, Poles lived in the hope of recovering their freedom in the ensuing decades. The period of national subjugation was interrupted by uprisings in one partition after another which, while failing to bring the independence thirsted for, nevertheless kept hope for its recovery alive in successive generations. Only gradually did Poles come to the awareness that war among the partitioning powers could bring them the freedom they desired. That occasion came 100 years ago, in 1914, with the outbreak of World War I. From the ashes of the three partitioning powers, a free Poland arose. After 123 years of slavery, suffering, and hope, a free Polish state returned to the world's map. The cooperation of various groups and politicians bore fruit. The statesmen of that era were able to raise themselves above their differences and fight for the common good, for Poland. The new state was able to stand in defense of its borders and its rights. In the course of 21 years, it reared the next generations, prepared to give their lives for the defense of their country in that tradition of independence.

The Second World War, which began 75 years ago, was a great test of patriotism and love of freedom. Poles stood in defense of their country against both German and Soviet invaders. Following the fall of the September campaign, Poles kept fighting on various fronts. Although they were sold out by their Allies to Joseph Stalin, they did not give up. The Warsaw Uprising (August 1-October 2, 1944, 70 years ago) was the last organized uprising for freedom.

Poles have survived as a nation because there were people ready to sacrifice themselves for Poland.

AFTER WORLD WAR II came the time of

"brotherhood" with the Soviet Union and another wait to recover sovereignty. That occasion arrived with the gradual dissolution of the Communist Empire. 1989—25 years ago—is celebrated as the date of Poland's liberation from Soviet domination. There came the June elections and great hopes. The Third Polish Republic was born. Poland, after several decades of subjugation behind the Iron Curtain, again became a sovereign state. In 1999—15 years ago—it joined NATO and in 2004—10 years ago—the European Union. Many Poles believed that those decisions guaranteed Poland a secure future and full rights in the world's family of nations.

Today, from the perspective of the years, we can consider various reflections and pose questions about those anniversaries which fall this year. We hear ever more frequently in books and the media that the Poles were and remain a bit too hot-headed. They are too proud and imprudent. They demand and expect too much. Some authors have said that all the uprisings for freedom, the September campaign, the struggle against the Nazi and Soviet invaders, and the Warsaw Uprising were all mistakes, which shed blood unnecessarily. We needlessly poured out human life rather than make some deals and collaborate.

Shouldn't we recognize those voices as capitulationist? Aren't they defeatist, even traitorous? Can one put one's fate without fear into others' hands? Can we naively believe that others will defend us when we ourselves surrender?

INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS frequently alter the course of history, crowds less frequently so. Poles have survived as a nation because there were people ready to sacrifice themselves for Poland. They had a fire within themselves with which they inflamed others. There are people in Poland's history for whom sacrifice for their country and its freedom was

the content of their lives. They worked for her, fought for her, and gave their lives for her. Starting with the Bar Confederates and including: students of the Officers' School; participants in the wars in defense of the May 3 Constitution, the Kościuszko Insurrection, the Napoleonic Wars, the November Uprising, the Spring of Nations, the January Uprising, and the political activists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the idea of a free Fatherland survived and was passed to the next generations of Poles, even if born as Austrian, Prussian, or Russian subjects. Thanks to those people—often persecuted, frequently jailed or exiled to Siberia and elsewhere—the idea of a free Poland never died, and young people felt themselves Poles.

Polish culture developed, enriched by various artists, during the time of the Partitions. It attracted many foreigners who assimilated and felt themselves Poles. We still draw from its riches. But for how long? Is the contemporary trend towards homogenization, to eliminating differences, constitute our loss? Can we maintain a Polish identity in a so-called "united" Europe?

Discussion — even controversy — about Polishness, its preservation and identity — has gone on for years.

Discussion — even controversy — about Polishness, its preservation and identity — has gone on for years. There are even voices claiming that "being Polish is abnormal." Recently, there have been voices questioning the sense of marking certain anniversaries. Most recently, critics have taken aim at our uprisings. Some say they were lunacy. One need only examine the "contributions" of some works deemed historical, like "Insanity '44, or how the Poles gave Stalin a present in starting the Warsaw Uprising" or "The Ribbentrop-Beck Pact, or how the Poles could have conquered the USSR at the Germans' side."

BUT IS A POSITIVE BALANCE — political, military, or economic advantage — all that matters? Have freedom, love of country, honor, and sacrifice all lost their meanings? Have

they ceased being valuable? Does an awareness of one's history marked in blood and sacrifice no longer benefit today's "European on the Vistula?" Can't one be a Pole and a European at the same time?

THESE SAD THOUGHTS manifest themselves when we examine the activities of people responsible for our country's future and the education of the next generation. One gets the impression that they are distant from the caliber of people who struggled for a free Poland during the era of the Partitions. They are far removed from people of the stature of Józef Piłsudski, Roman Dmowski, and Ignacy Paderewski.

For them, Poland was more important than their private or partisan interests. It seems that sense of responsibility for one's country is lacking in contemporary politicians as well as many ordinary Poles. Isn't the reduction of hours for history classes adopted by the Ministry of National Education an example of this?

Marking anniversaries makes sense only when we are able to draw lessons from them that build us up, morals that people today can learn from and try to build a better future. Let us hope that is what happens in 2014. Let us hope that people responsible for leading Poland learn from the events of the past and draw conclusions for themselves.

There does not seem to be a problem with caring for the past at the local level: there we see more and more initiatives "from below" intended to deepen awareness of our history and roots. Ever more local institutions seek to commemorate the history of their "little Fatherlands," a history of which they are proud and for which for the common good they show initiative. Let us hope for some similar and vibrant interest on a national scale.

✠ ✨ ✨

The Rev. Dr. Sławomir Zabraniak teaches history at the University of Rzeszów, Poland.

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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

Wajda's "Wałęsa" Presented at U.S. Capitol

by Richard Poremski

WASHINGTON, D.C. — As arranged and promoted by Poland's Ambassador Ryszard Schnepf, the biopic "Wałęsa. Man of Hope" had its U.S. debut at the U.S. Capitol, December 4, 2013. In attendance were members of Congress, government officials, dignitaries, Polonia, and a coterie of news media — mainly Polish. The movie's previous October 6 scheduling had to be cancelled due to the U.S. government shutdown.

The event is directly related to the on-going "Celebrating Poland's Path to Freedom and its Partnership with the United States" campaign.

The biopic is "an extraordinary story about an extraordinary man" said Schnepf, who shared opening remarks with U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), a member of the Senate Poland Caucus. "Poland and the Polish people will never forget the word 'Solidarity' and the support we received, particularly from the United States in our greatest hour of need," said Schnepf.

"When Lech Wałęsa jumped over the wall at the Gdansk Shipyard, he took the whole world with him!" said Mikulski.

Both recounted Wałęsa's trails, tribulations, and triumphs, which forever changed the face of communist-dominated Poland and led to the fall of the Berlin Wall. That was followed by new-found freedom in other subjugated counties of Eastern Europe, and the unbelievable implosion of the Soviet Union. Wałęsa sat in the front row of the audience, listening intently with a serious look on his face when not bowing his head in modesty.

Former U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd then conducted a pre-movie interview of Wałęsa — past-President of Poland (1990) and Nobel Prize Laureate (1983) — with the expert assistance of interpreter Marcin Zmudzki. The conversation flowed freely since both gentlemen have been friends since the 1980s Solidarity days. Many interesting and serious questions were asked, and many interesting profound and frank answers were given at length. Wałęsa proved to be a master of the one-liners with his humorous, wry and clever answers, which often had the audience laughing in stitches — as most worthy of a true raconteur.

When asked about his former nemesis General Jaruzelski — the imposer of martial law in Poland — he said "it's simple, I won and he lost."

Wałęsa, now 70, reminded the audience his earthy, and sometimes edgy, philosophy of life came with a price, a point underlined in a 1981 factual interview presented in the movie.

He said he already saw his post-revolutionary life as all downhill, as often the situation with revolutionaries.

"Life creates new heroes," he said, "and new heroes always find it easiest to beat up on previous heroes. I call them young wolves. They say they would have done it better, and maybe they're right. But they weren't there."

The "Wałęsa" screenplay is 128 minutes long. It is presented in Polish with English subtitles. It documents the story of Wałęsa and the Solidarity trade union movement that eventually freed Poland from

imposed communist control by the Soviet Union. The vehicle of the biopic is Wałęsa's 1981 interview with Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci, just a few months before Poland declared martial law. It recounts in flashback scenes the previous 15 years of Wałęsa and Solidarity activism.

"Wałęsa" is Poland's entry for "Best Foreign Film" at this year's Academy Awards.

Janusz Glowacki wrote the story and screenplay. Robert Wieckiewicz plays Wałęsa, and Agnieszka Grochowska plays his wife, Danuta.

Glowacki said he wanted to portray Wałęsa "as a man of flesh and blood, a leader of great strength but also someone who had his weaknesses.

"It's not just going to be romanticism. There will be irony, too," said Glowacki.

The film is directed by Oscar-winning Andrzej Wajda, who said he set out to make a film in order to "shine a new light on Lech Wałęsa." As a biopic, Wajda used real news material, as the feature strives to "give testimony to the truth," he said.

The biographical project was condoned by Wałęsa without any personal input.

Wajda said he considered the making of "Wałęsa" to be his hardest professional challenge to date. He consequently quoted the famous and oft-repeated slogan of it's hero: "nie chcem, ale muszem" — "I don't want to, but I have to."

To view a trailer of "Wałęsa. Man of Hope," log onto the web site www.youtube.com and enter the movie's title in the search box.

Copernicus's "Little Commentary" Turns 500

continued from cover

earth. So, after having long been regarded as the center of the universe, the earth had become a "mere speck." This new status posed a danger to the Scriptures, which assumed that everything had been created for the use of man. Copernicus's ideas were very troubling, and in his day thousands had been burned at the stake for far less.

William Manchester's *A World Lit Only By Fire* tells how in 1514 Copernicus circulated his "Little Commentary" among colleagues in the scientific community. "Little" is, of course, an ironic word given the magnitude of its contents; Copernicus was — literally — about to change the way people view this planet. Like any good scientist, he backed up his pronouncements with quantitative data. And what did Mr. Copernicus get for such grand contributions?

Scorn.

At least from many, among whom were some of the world's most prominent men, including Martin Luther, who wrote of Copernicus: "People give ear to an upstart astrologer...this fool wishes to reverse the entire scheme of astrology." In that era, the words "astrology" and "astronomy" were interchangeable. A widespread distinction between the two fields was not made until the 1700s. Luther's position actually went beyond ridicule and into the arena of sabotage, as he wielded his mighty influence to suppress publication of Copernican works whenever and wherever

he could.

Despite such antagonism, Copernican ideas would, indeed, alter "the entire scheme" in the fullness of time, but not before the astronomer died, largely unappreciated, in 1543 in the northern Poland town of Frombork. Manchester's book describes Copernicus as having been "excessively cautious" and hesitant to publish his work or declare his findings to Church authorities. This cautiousness, however, might well have spared him from the torments of the Inquisition.

As long as Copernican astronomy was presented as a hypothetical notion, the Vatican was willing to look the other way. But when the more brash personality of astronomer Giordano Bruno wrote that a heliocentric universe was undeniable fact, the Church gave him a date with the flaming stake. Later, the even more prominent Galileo Galilei was induced — under threat of similar immolation — to retract this whole business about the earth going around the sun. For many years, heliocentricity would remain a sensitive subject for the Vatican. In fact, until as recently as 1828, the Church forbade the reading of certain Copernican excerpts that "asserted [his findings] to be more than a theory."

No matter how much material the Church sought to forbid, the Copernican solar system "would not go away." It was simply too enormous — both literally and in terms of its impact. However subdued his personality, Copernicus's new concepts

threatened the idea that "all knowledge had been forever fixed by God," and that, basically, there was nothing more to know. This was a perspective left over from medieval Christendom, where the pursuit of discovery — even mere curiosity — was heretical. This earthly life was, in a sense, irrelevant — unless, of course, one engaged in behavior that jeopardized one's immortal soul.

How things have changed. Five-hundred years after the "Little Commentary," ongoing scientific innovation continually changes our way of life. Gone now are the days of the lone wolf scientist rocking the world with an individual discovery. In this 21st century, large teams of scientists are required to elucidate even the smallest fragment of knowledge. And yet there is far, far more to know — likely beyond that which even Copernicus could have imagined.

Spies

continued from cover

on the memorial is Krystyna Skarbak (aka Christine Granville), a Polish countess dubbed "Churchill's favorite spy," who was dropped into occupied France in July 1944.

Also honored was Elzbieta Zawacka, who — after her parachute training in the UK — became the only woman to join the ranks of the crack Polish underground formation "The Unseen and Silent" (Cichociemni).

All in all, some 13 nationalities are represented. All of the agents underwent training in the UK.

THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE / Anna Swierczewska

Diverging Paths on the Road to Acculturation

PART I THE IMPORTANCE OF THE POLISH LANGUAGE

Editor's Note: This series by Anna Swierczewska, who came to the United States in 1983 as a political refugee, describes the different ways Anna and her twin sister came to terms with their Polish identities.

INTRODUCTION.

Many immigrants face difficulty when it comes to maintaining their language and culture in a foreign land. They struggle with finding their own identity in a bicultural and bilingual society. I chose to write about this issue because I am one of those immigrants dealing with this very problem. The following is a reflective memoir, which will develop the topic of adaptation, assimilation, and acculturation into American society of two twins, my sister and I, and the diverging paths that we ultimately followed regarding our own cultural identity.

Maintaining culture and language loyalty is a constant and ongoing effort, which is only as strong as the resources around you. This memoir will explore the question of how language and culture are retained among immigrants, and attempt to analyze my own family's success of this maintenance (or lack thereof). It will also discuss some of the key factors that have been essential to my successful and continued

guage with political independence, and they are proud of its having survived successive attacks over the centuries and proud of its cultural achievements.

Along with strong language identity, solidarity and nationalism are prevalent among Polish people. This is the result of a communist dictatorship that existed in Poland in the 1980s and was the main rea-



The author (right) and her twin, Magdalena.

son for migration to the United States. Although many did not want to leave, they did so as their only choice was between leaving and being imprisoned. This was the case with my family. When you are forced to leave your home and live in a different country where your cultural values and language are not shared or valued, assimilation is met with resistance. In fact, you do what you can to hold on to the little that you have left of what you remember.

The following account is an example of how one twin's loyalty to her native culture and language challenges her twin's opposing loyalty to her host country, and which raises the following question: to what extent has nurture vs.

nature played a role in who we are today and the diverging paths that we took towards building our individual cultural identity?

Next month: The Beginning.

Anna Swierczewska was born in Warsaw, Poland, and emigrated to the United States in 1983 as a political refugee with her parents and twin sister. Her first two years of college were spent in France and Spain. Swierczewska received her M.A. in Liberal Arts from the University at Charlotte, N.C., and plans on pursuing a Ph.D. in Translation Studies in the near future. She currently works as a high school teacher of French and Spanish, as well as a freelance translator and proof-reader. Most recently, Swierczewska has been working on her grammar book series in French, Spanish, Italian and Polish, which she hopes to publish by next year.

It is important to understand that the ties between ethnicity and the Polish language are historical and are the consequence of the persecution of language during most of the nineteenth century due to the partition of Poland.

culture and language loyalty as well as those factors that have impeded on the same success for my twin sister, and have, instead, resulted in a certain level of culture and language loss.

LANGUAGE IDENTITY. Before I begin my story, I should first clarify the importance that the Polish language has for its people and the significant role that it has played in the shaping of my own cultural identity. Speaking Polish is more than just a means of communicating; it is a core family value and an identity-marker. For my family and me it has been the focal point of our developing relationship and, at times, struggling bilingual and bicultural upbringing.

The Polish language has always been linked to nationalistic feelings among Poles. It is important to understand that the ties between ethnicity and the Polish language are historical and are the consequence of the persecution of language during most of the nineteenth century due to the partition of Poland. Therefore, Poles associate the lan-

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TRAVELOGUE / Staś Kmieć

5 Days in Poland

Part V
A Fascination with
Anna German

From an upper floor of the Sobieski Hotel, my brother-in-law's niece Daria Stefanik exited the elevator and greeted me at the front desk. We exchanged items and she invited me for an extended meeting at one of the hotel's two restaurants – *Trylogia*. I explained the short nature of my visit to Poland and today's speedy encounter, as I needed to return for a rehearsal for tonight's Kiepusza Award ceremony. From among the *crème brûlée*, *tiramisu*, chocolate and ice cream desserts, I chose the authentically Polish apple *szarlotka* with *Advocat* topping.

In a sophisticated atmosphere of stylish red chairs and stately wood, we chatted while sampling the warm deliciously-perfect dessert with a fine *cappuccino* coffee. The meeting was short, and with apologies I promised a substantial visit upon the next return trip.

Retracing my steps, I hurried along Aleje Jerozolimskie to the train station – with just one quick stop to make at the *Empik* store in the luxurious *Złota Tarasy* Mall adjacent and connected to the station. This store and *Trafik* are like the Barnes & Noble of Poland. These superstores are a welcome change from the Communist era, when one would have to search for books and records – then tapes – later CDs at specialty music shops and *Antykwariat* vintage bookstores.

Stylized as *empik*, the commercial chain sells books, international press, media (films, music, computer software). The chain also owns a photo company, *Empik Foto*, as well as a foreign language school, *Empik School*.

From its beginnings during Communism as *Klub Międzynarodowej Prasy i Książki* (International Book and Press Club), the store was given its current name when it was taken over by Jacek Dębski, Janusz Romanowski and Yaron Bruckner in 1991. *EMPIK* has over 150 stores in Poland and 22 in Ukraine.

Prior to my visit, I had read that all of Poland was buzzing about the singer Anna German, as a Russian-Polish miniseries about her life was being watched by a weekly audience of over 6 million. In combination with Russia and Ukraine the total viewing public was over 20 million.

My mission was to buy the DVD of this program. I had fallen under the spell of this extraordinary artist many years ago when I saw her perform live at John Hancock Hall in Boston. She was part of a variety program brought to the United States by Chicago impresario Jan Wojewódka. She was the star attraction and I was transfixed and mesmerized by her statuesque beauty and that amazing voice.

Her “*Piosenka Moja*,” “*Tańczące Eurdyki*,” “*Come back to Sorrento/Wróć do Sorrento*,” a duet “*Byle tylko ze mną*” sung with Krzysztof Cwynar, along with a rendition of “*Sunny Boy*” are forever etched in my memory. At my young age, I was very aware of her impeccable pronunciation of the Polish language – for me a lesson on how to maintain all the intricate sounds while singing... something one does not always encounter with Polish vocalists. Her version of the Christmas carols “*Gdy śliczna Panna and Lulajże Jezuniu* – originally made as “*pocztówki*” postcard records are indelible for their sincerity and interpretation.

Occasionally, a singer captures the hearts of an entire nation. Anna German was one of the most loved singers not only in her home country, but the entire Soviet Union. So popular that Lucia Thijssen describes her as an “*East-European Lady Di*.” Tickets to her concerts sold out hours after being released. She was photographed with cosmonauts and an asteroid was named after her.

Anna German's personal story is tragic but not unfamiliar for someone living during that time. Who was this beloved star, known all over the world for having the voice of an angel?

A Polish singer immensely popular in Poland and in

the Soviet Union in 1960s-1970s, Anna Wiktorina German released over a dozen music albums with songs in Polish, as well as several albums with Russian repertoire. She also sang in English, Italian, Spanish, Latin, and German.

Surprisingly enough this icon of Polish music was of Russian, German, and Dutch origin and her road to Poland was a difficult one. Born in northwestern Uzbekistan (then part of the USSR), her parents as well as other Soviet Germans were banished to this Central Asia province after Nazi Germany had attacked the USSR.

Anna's mother was the descendant of a Plautdietsch (Dutch/Low German) speaking Mennonite colony invited to Russia by the Empress Catherine the Great. Her father, Eugen (Eugeniusz) Hörmann (*Герман* in Russian, transferred to *German* in Polish) was an accountant of German descent – born in Łódź, Poland, who in 1937 during the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs- NKVD's anti-German operation was arrested on false charges of spying, and executed.

The family fled to Tashkent, and was later deported to Kyrgyz and Kazakh. Her mother married a Polish Army officer and was able to apply for repatriation to Poland. In 1946 they relocated to Warsaw, settling in Nowa Ruda, before moving to Wrocław.

Anna graduated from the Geological Institute and began her music career at the student *Kalambur* Theater in 1961. In 1963 she was on the stage at the prestigious Sopot festival, where she won second prize. The following year she won second prize at the Festival of Polish Songs in Opole, and two awards at the Festival in Sopot. In 1965 Anna won first prize at Opole for her song “*Zakwitnę Róża*.”

She was invited to Italy and signed a multi-record, three-year recording contract with Italian record label *Discografia Italiano*. In Italy Anna survived a severe, near-fatal car crash; it took her three years to recover from her injuries, during which time she wrote an autobiography and hosted a radio show.

After a long rehabilitation period, she returned to the stage in 1972 and resumed her career – performing in France, Belgium, Germany, the United States, Canada and Australia, as well as in most countries in the Soviet Union. She released records in Poland, the Soviet Union and Italy.

She married Zbigniew Tucholski; their son, Zbigniew, was born in 1975. Diagnosed with bone cancer, she spent the last years of her life composing spiritual songs, which she recorded on a portable recorder in bed. She died on August 25, 1982, and was buried in Warsaw.

Anna German fascinated the public with her beautiful, strong, vibrating, clarion voice; with her unique appearance, and her own, very special lyrical style. Her voice was never forgotten, which is obvious by the numerous reissues of her albums and documentary films made about her.

A singer with the divine voice of an angel, she lived a bright but uneasy life. The power of her legend is a testament to her immense talent as an artist as she lives on in the hearts of thousands all over the world who have loved her for years, and in the hearts of many others who have only just come to know her.

I knew I would have to revisit what appeared to be a spectacular mall, but as time was ticking I headed up the escalators and directly to *empik*. I was greeted by displays of Anna German CDs and books, but I wanted the DVD. Following that memorable performance in Boston, during every visit to Poland – in addition to folk music, I bought recordings of Anna German. I dashed to the film section and inquired... to my dismay it was too soon after the TV premiere and the DVD version had not yet been released. To pacify my interest, I bought 3 CDs for my mother, and a biographical book; then I hurriedly made my way to the train platform to head back to Karolin and the Kiepusza Awards.

...to be continued

Polish American Historical Association to Meet in Washington, January 3-4

PAHA to explore social, historical, and cultural aspects in the lives of Polish émigrés and exiles in America

LOS ANGELES — On January 3 and 4, 2014, one of Polonia's most venerable organizations will hold its Annual Meeting at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington D.C. The conference will gather over 30 scholars presenting their current research during eight scholarly sessions dedicated to such topics as: Protest and Exile, Polish Immigrant and Ethnic Women, Between the Revolutionary War and World War II, Polish Immigrant and Ethnic Identities, Religious Leaders and Communities, and Stories of World War II. Individual presenters will discuss: Pułaski's burial, Polish troops in the American Civil War, General Bolesław Wieniawa-Długoszowski, Pope John Paul II in America, World War II mementos and family histories, Polish children in exile, Polish-Jewish émigré composers and their inclusion into Polish music history, writings by women, American support for Warsaw in 1944, Polish-American press in Canada and the U.S., careers of second generation émigrés, Polish documents at the Library of Congress, dialects in Polish folk theater, and much more.

A special book forum will be dedicated to Mieczysław B.B. Biskupski's *The United States and the Rebirth of Poland, 1914-18* (with comments by noted historians Prof. Neal Pease, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Prof. James Pula, Purdue University North Central). The Conference will end with a screening of Mariusz Kotkowski's *Pola Negri: Life is a Dream in Cinema* held on Saturday, January 4,

2014: 5:30 PM at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Jefferson Room (2660 Woodley Rd NW, Washington, DC 20008, tel. 202.328.2000).

PAHA Annual Awards for research in the field of Polish American Studies will be announced during the Annual Awards Banquet on Friday, January 3, 2014. Conference registration is open on PAHA Website: www.polishamericanstudies.org.

ABOUT PAHA. The Polish American Historical Association is a non-profit, tax-exempt, interdisciplinary organization devoted to the study of Polish American history and culture. Founded in 1942 as part of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, PAHA became an autonomous scholarly society in 1948. As an affiliate of the American Historical Association, PAHA promotes research and dissemination of scholarly materials focused on Polish American history and culture, and its European origins. PAHA publishes a newsletter and a biannual scholarly peer-reviewed journal, *Polish American Studies* (available from the University of Illinois Press). The organization sponsors an annual conference, in conjunction with the American Historical Association, which serves as a forum for ethnic studies.

LAPSUS CALAMI. In the December 2013 PAJ, Gen. Ed Rowny (ret.) was identified as a one-star Brigadier General. He is a three-star Lieutenant General.

In the review of the book, “The Polish Gang” (December 2013), illegal alcohol, not drugs, were being smuggled to the United States from Canada.

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POLISH-JEWISH RELATIONS

Holocaust Survivor Reunites with Polish Rescuer

NEW YORK — **Leon Gersten** survived the Holocaust because of **Czeslaw Polziec** and his family. He was able to properly express his gratitude for the first time in 69 years, as the two men reunited at John F. Kennedy Airport to celebrate Hanukkah and Thanksgiving together.

For over two years, Gersten and four of his family members stayed hidden in the attic of Polziec's family, who sheltered them from the Nazis. Despite the fact that the Polziecs had barely enough food to feed their five children, they managed to take care of the Gerstens, too.

"I am alive because of them," Gersten told CNN, referring to Polziec and his family. "They are heroes."

The Polziecs built an underground bunker that they could conceal with a grain storage bin in case of a search. When their farm was raided by Polish Nazi collaborator, Polziec's father suffered a severe beating, but the family continued to protect the Gerstens until the area was liberated in 1944.

Though Polziec is Catholic, he and Gersten lit Hanukkah candles together, then had a formal Thanksgiving dinner.

Several generations of Gersten's family, including a granddaughter, made the trip from Israel to meet Polziec.

The reunion was made possible by The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous.

Righteous Among Nations Medal Donated to Museum

WARSAW, Poland — A Polish man who helped save Jews from the Holocaust has donated World War II documents and distinctions he received from Israel to a Jewish history museum opening in Warsaw.

The Museum of the History of Polish Jews said Wednesday that 91-year-old Wladyslaw Bartoszewski has offered fake documents of Dr. Leon Feiner, a Jewish resistance leader, a ring made in the Lodz Ghetto in 1942, wartime media reports about the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, his own medal of the Righteous Among Nations and other memorabilia.

Bartoszewski co-founded the Zegota organization, which gave Jews fake documents and placed them with Polish families.

The Museum of the History of Polish Jews opened its doors to the public in April 2013. It currently functions as a cultural and educational center with a rich cultural program, including temporary exhibitions, films, debates, workshops, performances, concerts, lectures and more.

The opening of the Core Exhibition, presenting the thousand-year history of Polish Jews, is scheduled for the beginning of 2014. It will narrate the 1,000-year story of Polish Jews, a history museum officials say is not widely known and is often gets lost in Holocaust remembrance. An estimated 3.5 million Jews were residing in Poland prior to the Holocaust, making it the largest Jewish community in the world.

Last veteran of Polish-Soviet War Dies

TURSK, Poland — The last veteran of the 1919-1921 Polish-Soviet War has died at a nursing home in western Poland.

Captain Jozef Kowalski, who was born in 1900, was due to turn 114 in February.

As a young cavalryman he fought as a lancer against the Red Army in the fabled Battle of Komarow on August 31, 1920.

The clash, near Zamosc in south east Poland, marked the largest cavalry battle in European warfare since 1813.

Polish commander Juliusz Rommel routed the Russian forces, providing a crippling blow to the Red Army's cavalry.

Within days Poles had won a

subsequent victory in the Battle of Warsaw, the so-called "Miracle on the Vistula," during which the Red Army was repulsed from the gates of the Polish capital.

Kowalski later served in the Second World War, during which he endured a period of imprisonment in a German forced labor camp.

Three years ago, on his 110th birthday, he was awarded the Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta by President Bronislaw Komorowski.

British Ambassador in Warsaw during the Polish-Soviet War Lord'Abernon concluded that the Polish victory had "saved Central, and parts of Western Europe from... the fanatical tyranny of the Soviet."



RELIGION / Benjamin Fiore, S.J.

Bishop Paprocki Corrects the Media and Politicians**BISHOP PAPROCKI**

After the Illinois legislature passed a law redefining marriage to include same-sex couples, **Bishop Thomas Paprocki**, RC bishop of Springfield, Ill., the state capital, gathered the faithful for prayer in the diocese's cathedral to counter the presence of the devil "not only in the tempting or tormenting of persons, but in the penetration of things and places in a certain manner by their activity, and in various forms of opposition to and persecution of the Church. Derided in the mainstream media for conducting an "exorcism", bishop Paprocki held his ground both explaining what the meaning of an exorcism is and also correcting misconceptions in the media about recent papal statements. Against politicians who justified their vote by referring to the pope's statement "Who am I to judge?" and declaring "As a Catholic follower of Jesus and the pope, Pope Francis, I am clear that our Catholic religious doctrine has at its core love, compassion and justice for all people" (Re. Linda Chapa LaVia), bishop Paprocki noted that the pope in 2010 said that "same-sex marriage comes from the devil and should be condemned as such."

BISHOP ZUBIK STANDS FIRM AGAINST HHS MANDATE. Pittsburgh's RC **Bishop David Zubik** told a district judge that he would not comply with the HHS Mandate to provide health care plans that cover contraceptives, abortifacients and sterilization at no-copay. Noting that the mandate endangers "the integrity of our beliefs" he charac-

terized it as "a slap in the face that says 'to Hell with you!' to Catholics and religious freedom." The refusal could lead to the shutdown of Catholic schools in the diocese since the fines connected with non-compliance would amount to \$2.8 million a year. A narrow exemption for some religious organizations has been delayed until Jan. 1 but even this exemption does not cover religiously-affiliated organizations such as Catholic Charities, parochial schools, adoption centers, and homeless centers. Litigation before the courts continues in various states.

WALKWAY NAMED FOR SENDLER. A walkway in Warsaw has been named in honor of **Irena Sendler**, the Polish woman who is credited with saving 2,500 Jewish children during the Holocaust.

The walkway is in the former Warsaw Ghetto between a monument to the Jews who fought in the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising and the new Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

Sendler was a social worker who smuggled Jewish children out of the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II, when Poland was occupied by Nazi Germany. The children were placed with Christian families and in convents and given new names. Sendler died in 2008.

President Bronislaw Komorowski and Warsaw Mayor Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz presided over the naming ceremony. Sendler's daughter Janina Zgrzemska was also present.

KRAKOW ARCHBISHOP INVITES RUSSIAN PATRIARCH. **Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz** invited **Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill I** to attend the World Youth Day in Krakow in 2016. This may result in a historic meeting between the Russian patriarch and the pope, who is also expected to attend the World Youth Day As Cardinal Dziwisz notes, a meeting between the two church leaders would be more realistic and less problematic in Krakow than it would be in either Rome or Moscow. With a little less than three years before the World

Youth Day there is ample time to prepare for such a meeting. Although the invitation was issued through Metropolitan Hilarion, chairman of the Department of External Relations for the Russian Orthodox Church, it is not known how the patriarch will respond to it.

POPE'S AIDE TO THE POOR. **Archbishop Konrad Krajewski**, the Vatican Almoner, is tasked with carrying out the pope's personal charities among the poor. The centuries-old position of handing out alms has been given a new face by Pope Francis. The pope told the Polish almoner "You can sell your desk. You don't need it. You need to get out of the Vatican. Don't wait for people to come ringing. You need to go out and look for the poor. As a result, he visits homes for the elderly in the name of the pope, writes checks to the needy in the name of the pope, and even gave immigrant survivors of a boat sinking phone cards so they could call their loved ones back home. To raise money for this charity, Archbishop Krajewski sells parchments for weddings, baptisms or priestly ordinations with the name of the recipient and an apostolic blessing written in calligraphy.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO ... The Felician Sisters in North America celebrating 140 years of ministry which began in 1874 when **Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska** sent the first five Felician sisters from Poland to minister here.

BUFFALO MASS MOB. Buffalo's Basilica of St. Adalbert was filled to capacity with worshipers for a special mass of remembrance. The numbers of participants in the congregation were swelled by the Buffalo Mass Mob members. This is a nondenominational grassroots network that attends services at religious edifices that are architecturally significant, but rarely visited.

THE POLISH ROSARY GUILD of Holy Cross Church in Minneapolis invites all to come and say the rosary in Polish. The service is held one half hour before the Sunday 11:30 Mass and the Friday 7:00 Mass. After the Masses, prayers are said for the dead. Forms are provided for people to write down the names of their deceased friends and family members, or you can put them on a plain sheet of paper and put the sheet in an envelope along with a donation.

Nativity Plays In Philadelphia and Doylestown

PHILADELPHIA — Sun., Jan. 5. St. John Cantius Polish Language School Christmas Program, "**Jaselka**," St. John Cantius Parish Hall, 4415 Almond Street, Bridesburg section of Philadelphia, following the 11:30 a.m. Mass. Everyone invited. Info call Beata Zuk (215) 788-6122.

DOYLESTOWN — Sun., Jan. 5. Our Lady of Czestochowa Polish Language School Christmas

Program, "**Jaselka**," Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Ferry Road, during the 12:30 p.m. Mass. Info call the shrine (215) 345-0600.

PHILADELPHIA — Sun., Jan. 12. St. Adalbert Polish Language School Annual Christmas Program, "**Jaselka**," St. Adalbert Auditorium, Thompson Street and Allegheny Avenue, Port Richmond section of Philadelphia. Noon. Free. Info call Danuta Eichler at (267) 251-3776.

MODLITWY

PUBLICATION OF PRAYERS. The Polish American Journal gladly accepts prayers ads for publication. They must be received by the 10th of each month, prior to the month of publication, and must be pre-paid at the cost of \$15.00 each, which can be paid by check or charge. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please call 1 (800) 422-1275 or (716) 312-8088. Send to: Polish American Journal, P.O. Box 271, N. Boston, NY 14110.

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, J.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. J.K.

Canonization of Bl. John Paul II

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CIEKAWOSTKI / Martin Nowak

East Germany or West Poland?

Before the founding of the Polish nation in 966 and for decades afterward, Polish Slavic tribes lived west of the Odra River in what is now German territory. Germans eventually pushed eastward and overwhelmed the Slavs even as Poland was expanding to its own east.

These conquered Slavs were either killed, fled east to Poland or stayed put and were incorporated into the Germanic principalities and dukedoms, often as slaves. Today about 50,000 descendants of these Slavs, called Wends or Sorbs, are a recognized minority group in eastern Germany in an area known as Lusatia, to the immediate west of Poland's Silesia.

The Sorbs carry on their culture through various organizations, active use of their Slavic language and ceremonial dress. The legacy of these ancient Slavs also lives on in today's world in the names of places we all recognize as German but which in fact have their roots in old Slavic proto-Polish languages.

The name Lusatia (Polish: Łużyce), the area of Germany where the Sorbs live today, is derived from the Sorbian word luzicy, akin to the Polish kałuża, meaning "water hole" or "pool."

The name of the German city of Chemnitz comes from the Sorbian kamenica and means "stony brook." It was an early Slavic settlement and even in Polish today it is called Kamienica.

Leipzig, long associated with the composer Johann Sebastian Bach, was also an old Slavic village and its name comes from the old Slavic word lipsk, which means "place of the linden trees." The modern Polish word for linden is lipca. The city is called Lipsk in Polish today.

Around the year 1200 a Slavic settlement formed on the site of the modern German city of Dresden. It was called Drezdany in old Sorbian and it means "riverside forest." Another connection between Poland and Dresden is the fact that King August II the Strong of Poland (1697-1733) was a German from that city who was also prince-elect of the German state of Saxony. He was succeeded in both positions by his son August III (1733-1763), also a native of Dresden. Both men spent much of their time and efforts in Dresden, especially August III, who was essentially an absentee Polish king.

The small city of Brandenburg, from which the German state of Brandenburg takes its name, was originally a Slavic town called Brenna, later Brunabor, and it takes its name from the old Slavic word for "swamp." It was not until 1157 that the Germans conquered Brunabor



PHOTO BY ADAM BRZYCKI/GETTY IMAGES

Sorb egg painter Melanie Baier sends a text message on her mobile phone at the annual Easter egg market on March 16, 2013 in Schleife, Germany. Easter is a particularly important time of year for Sorbs, a Slavic minority in eastern Germany, and the period includes the tradition of painting Easter eggs that include visual elements intended to ward off evil. Many Sorbs still speak Sorbian, a language closely related to Polish and Czech.

and renamed it Brandenburg. During the Cold War the Brandenburg Gate in divided Berlin became a symbol of that tense stand-off between the East and West.

Potsdam is the city outside Berlin that gave its name to the Potsdam Conference among Allied leaders following Germany's World War II defeat that affirmed the infamous agreements made at Yalta by Churchill, FDR and Stalin. It gave control of Poland to Soviet communists and shifted its borders. Potsdam was a Slavic town founded in the seventh century and originally called Poztupimi, which means "beneath the oaks" in old Slavic.

Finally, the German capital city of Berlin was originally a Slavic fishing village. Its name is derived from the old Slavic word meaning "bog" or "marsh," berl. It was apparently founded in the 800s. But it was in 948 that the Germans first took control of Berlin and it took another 200 years before they definitively drove the Slavs out.

Following World War II the Sorbs-Wends of Lusatia pushed to have their entire area included within the borders of the new Poland. But this was rejected. In fact, a few thousand Sorbs residing in a tiny part of Lusatia included in the new Polish territory were forcibly moved westward to be inside the new German borders.

Of course, today it would be absurd for Poland to claim any part of Germany as belonging to it based on ancient history. Just as absurd as in the late 1940s, when millions of Germans and Poles were forcibly removed from their ancestral homelands and resettled within the new borders of Germany and Poland, whose lines had been shifted westward by the Allies.

POLONIA ON FILM / Joseph W. Zurawski

Tomorrow, the World! (1944)

Drama

Distributor: United Artists

Director: Leslie Fenton

Screenplay Writer: Ring Lardner, Jr., Leopold Atlas

Featuring: Fredric March, Rudy Wissler (as Stan Dombrowski)

Tomorrow, the World! was awarded the first "Writer's Award" by the Hollywood Writer's Mobilization "in recognition of [the film's] superior merit as dramatic entertainment, blended with timely and significant idea content, representative of the best in current thought."

Emil, a young teen, comes to the United States from Germany during World War II to live with his uncle. From the moment he arrives he tries to convince everyone he is a committed Nazi and slashes the picture of his father who, he claims, committed suicide. He wears his Nazi uniform to dinner, manipulates all situations, makes enemies in school, and speaks freely about his hatred of Jews, Poles and Catholics. To him, "America is a cesspool." He wants to help the Nazis in any way possible.

Two things happen that turn Emil around in his mission, or what he thinks it is, in serving his Father-

land. He confronts his teacher, Leona — in the most vulgar of ways — about her being Jewish. Leona slaps Emil across the face. That shocks Emil, who at this point in the film is a very self-assured and arrogant young man, and "Aryan Superman," who is shocked by not only being whacked by a lowly woman, but a Jewish one at that.

Next, Emil gets into a fight with fellow student Stanley Dombrowski. Stanley, being a Polish-American, is — in Emil's mind — inferior. Stanley takes him on and gives Emil a bloody nose. He later forces Emil, with their teacher Miss Richards looking on, to apologize to him in front of all his classmates.

Tomorrow, the World! was a propaganda film, meant to uplift the spirits of an American nation three years into the war effort. As much as Emil built up the Nazis as superior, expressed his hatred of Jews and Poles, lied, deceived, even became physically abusive for his cause, it was the Jewish teacher who showed him compassion and the Polish classmate, Stan, who proved that truth, integrity and standing up for what is right will prevail.

Polish Americans may have felt

a sense of satisfaction as Stan seeks out Emil after his assault on a girl who prepared a party for him. In a long fight scene, Stan, the Polish American, manages to subdue the Nazi who preached world domination.

In the last two minutes of the film Emil has a conversion, says he was tortured, he is mixed-up, his father was really a hero. The Jewish teacher implores his uncle, to whom she was engaged, to spare him from jail or a detention home and keep him in his care.

Unfortunately, even though the script strongly implied that Poland would be victorious in its conflict with the Nazis, Poles were not able to conquer the Nazis as successfully as Stan was able to handle Emil.

❖ ❖ ❖
Joseph W. Zurawski is author of Poland: The Captive Satellite: A Study in National Psychology; Polish American History and Culture: A Classified Bibliography; Polish Chicago: Our History, Our Recipes; six regional histories (Niles, Illinois, Door County, Sister Bay, Keweenaw County, Liberty Grove, Saukville) and Sturgeon Bay Shipbuilding.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Pulaski Scholarships for Advanced Studies, 2014

WEBSTER, Mass. — The Pulaski Scholarships for Advanced Studies program, which was initially endowed by the Conrad R. Walas family, is administered solely by the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC).

Any applicant must be a U.S. citizen and of Polish ancestry. He or she must be a classified graduate student enrolled at an accredited university in the U.S. and must have completed at least one year of studies at the graduate level. Prior winners of an ACPC Pulaski Scholarship are ineligible.

Qualified applicants must send all of the materials described in the Council's website www.polishcultureacpc.org so that they are received on or before March 15, 2014. Original copies of all materials must be mailed to the chairman and duplicate copies to the other four ACPC Pulaski Scholarship Committee members.

Five \$5,000 scholarship grants are available for the 2014 competition. Questions concerning the requirements should be directed to Mr. Marion Winters, 51 Camille Rd., Webster, MA 01570; (508) 949-0160; mvwinters@charter.net.

All materials submitted by applicants will become part of the records of the American Council for Polish Culture and will not be returned. Late, incomplete or unsigned applications or documents will not be accepted or returned for correction. The decisions of the ACPC Pulaski Scholarship Committee are final and not subject to review.

The Majer and Lakowski Families Memorial Scholarships Available

CHICAGO — The Polish American Congress Charitable Foundation (5711 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60646 / (773) 763-9942) announced the availability of The Majer and Lakowski Families Memorial Scholarships.

The scholarship is open to full-time undergraduate and graduate students majoring in engineering or business administration. The recipient must attend a public state university or college. The amount of the scholarship is equal to the annual state-resident (in-state) tuition.

Scholarships are renewable annually, with merit and need taken into consideration. Candidates not selected can reapply annually. Preference shall be given to applicants who will be juniors, seniors, or graduate students in the fall term.

To obtain an application, send a request by mail to PACCF (address above) or an application can be printed from the PACCF website at www.paccf.org

Applications must be submitted by March 15, 2014.

New Officers Take Over

SYRACUSE — The Polish Scholarship Fund, Inc. announced its officers for 2014. Mirka Banach now leads the organization as president. Vice-presidents are Andre Siok and Nancy Cummings. Ivona Popiel is treasurer, and Don Dutkowsky is secretary.

The Polish Scholarship Fund helps talented students of Polish descent achieve their academic goals by providing them with financial assistance. The PSF seeks to increase the number and value of the scholarships through organizing public events that promote Polish culture, heritage, history and traditions. In its years, it has awarded over \$300,000 in scholarships to deserving students.

The annual Polish Festival in Syracuse's Clinton Square is one of these events. Next year the PSF will host its sixtieth annual Polish Festival on June 20, 21 and 22 at Syracuse's Clinton Square. The festival will include a variety of entertainment, including polka bands and Polish dancers, as well as Polish foods and beverages.

For more information, visit www.polishscholarship.org.

POLISH FOOD is still being served Thursday evenings at Marino's, 7365 Old Central Avenue NE in Fridley, Minn.. Food service runs from 5:00 until 8:00 and polka music with Andy Zurbey and Craig Ebel from 6:00 until 9:00. "The prices are reasonable and the food pretty authentic," says Judith Blanchard in her Pol-Am newsletter. Take-out is also available if you want to pick up something on your way home from work: (763) 786-0920.

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HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO STYLE / Geraldine Balut Coleman

A Meal Fit For A King

CHICAGO — It was truly a special treat for those who placed a reservation (limited to 100 guests) for the annual “King’s Thursday Dinner.” The event was hosted by the Warsaw Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI) in partnership with Poland’s Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, a province in mid-northern Poland in which Toruń and Bydgoszcz are located. The magnificent gourmet culinary event took place on November 14 at the Sheridan Shore Yacht Club in Wilmette, Illinois. This eleven-course Polish-inspired dinner was held to celebrate the Independence Day of the Republic of Poland and featured master chefs **Artur Moroz** of the acclaimed **Bulaj** Restaurant in Sopot, Poland and **Mark Grosz** of the award-winning **Oceanique** Restaurant in Evanston. Also providing entrée delights was caterer **Tom Rybinski** and the Pâtisserie Sweet Table was donated by **Bogna Iwanowska-Solak**, owner of Oak Mill Bakery.

On November 11, prior to his visit to Chicago for this culinary event, **Artur Moroz** presented an exclusive meal for the President of Poland and his esteemed guests during the Polish Independence Day celebration at the Royal Castle in Warsaw.

Mark Grosz is owner and executive chef of Oceanique, an eclectic seafood restaurant in the French American style. Since 1993, Oceanique has been ranked as the #1 seafood restaurant in the Chicago area by the prestigious *Zagat* Guide. Oceanique has also won *Wine Spectator* magazine’s coveted “Best of Award of Excellence” every year since 1994, and is recognized as having one of the 750 best wine lists in the world.

Poland’s last ruling monarch, King Stanisław Poniatowski (1732-98), was a patron of the arts and famous for hosting “Thursday Dinners,” (*obiady czwartkowe*) to which he would invite prominent politicians, thinkers, and writers of his time. The dinners were first held in the Royal Castle in Warsaw, then later in the Water Palace.

The evening’s event not only celebrated the Polish Independence Day of November 11, but also the European celebration of St. Martin’s Day, in which goose dishes are prepared and is considered the last day to celebrate before Advent begins.

Some of the courses served at the event were: wild Maine sea scallops with watercress and kimchi; boar terrine with wild berry gelée and horseradish mousse; beet salad with goat cheese served with borscht and bacon; ginger anise green apple pork belly and dill slaw bruschetta; slow-roasted trout with port essence; King’s goose three ways: sous vide, salt baked, and fried with red cabbage; and gingerbread sauerkraut with wild mushrooms. Wine pairings were also included with this gourmet cuisine.

CONSUL GENERAL WRITES LETTER TO TRIBUNE. When Mavis Batey died on November 12, there were many obituaries written of her and her accomplishments. Douglas Martin’s obituary in the *New York Times* was syndicated,



Chefs Moroz, Grosz, and Rybinski.

Elaine Woo wrote Batey’s obituary in the *Los Angeles Times*, Emily Langer’s could be read in the *Washington Post* and Michael Smith’s was in the *Guardian*, and that which appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* was Elaine Woo’s.

What makes this an interesting story was the title of the obituary: **Mavis Batey dies at 92; renowned code-breaker for Britain in WWII.** “Among Bletchley Park’s brilliant decoders, Mavis Batey stood out. Her work led to a British victory over the Italian Navy, and she was the first to crack the German spy service’s code.”

It is important to note that each and every obituary had no mention of the Polish cryptologists and their crucial involvement in being “code breakers.” Perhaps, in light of this

war, it is important to note what British mathematician and cryptologist, John Irving Good (Isador Jacob Gudak) and a member of the Bletchley Park code breaking team, had to say about Rejewski. Good regarded one of Rejewski’s theorems instrumental in the Enigma’s cipher as the “theorem which won the Second World War.” He further mentioned that Europe needed the Poles and how much the Poles were underestimated. The Poles did the impossible – they deciphered victory.

After reading Mavis Batey’s obituary, Consul General Paulina Kapuścińska, wishing to supplement the Enigma Machine decryption story with important facts about the crucial contributions made by Polish cryptologists, stepped forward with a letter to the *Chicago Tribune*, which was published by the newspaper on December 3, 2013. Consul General Kapuścińska’s letter follows:

Dear Chicago Tribune Editor,

Thank you for your interesting article about the late Mavis Batey who helped to break the codes of the German Enigma machine in WWII. I was saddened to read the news of her death and I offer her family and friends my sincere condolences. She was one of Bletchley Park’s brightest minds and a great hero of WWII.

It is also well known that Bletchley Park’s success largely followed from the fact that the German Enigma codes were first broken in 1932 by the Polish military intel-

on decrypting ciphers possible. In Warsaw, just before the outbreak of WWII, the Polish military intelligence introduced French and British agents to their Enigma-decryption techniques and equipment. The Polish success enabled Britain to successfully continue the decryption efforts and substantially aided the Allies in their military operations. Without these techniques and technology, Bletchley Park’s work on the decryption would not have been possible. The decryption was based on the methods and instruments invented and developed by the Polish military intelligence.

These historical facts are a wonderful example of a major Allied success that should never be forgotten or passed over for a number of reasons, not least for the sake of respect for all the heroes and their great contributions to victory in WWII.

Paulina Kapuścińska
Consul General of the Republic
of Poland in Chicago

limped off – stunned. Amy Silverman, Bryce’s owner, started searching everywhere. She decided to go onto Facebook and ask for help by posting her dog’s photo as well as her phone number.

Three days later, about a half mile away in the town of Deerfield, two little girls noticed a tired, hungry, and injured dog in their grandfather’s backyard. Their grandfather, Zbigniew Cianciara, just happened to be on the phone talking to one of his daughters, Eva Banka, who was in Poland. He mentioned that he saw an injured dog. Cianciara recalled that his daughter just saw the black dog on her Facebook account. Eva said she would call the Silvermans. Well, Silverman’s phone rang. The voice at the other end said, “Hi, is this Amy? My name is Eva and I am calling from Poland and I found your dog.”

Silverman says of social media now, “I may not want to know what you had for dinner last night, (but) there are certainly great reasons to



Consul General Kapuścińska, Consular Minister Eriusz Rybacki, and Mrs. Danuta Wałęsa.

DANUTA WAŁĘSA VISITS CHICAGO. Danuta Wałęsa, wife of Nobel Peace Prize recipient and former President of Poland Lech Wałęsa, paid a visit to Chicago at the invitation of the Polish Film Festival in America. Mrs. Wałęsa held a press conference at the Polish Consulate with the media and representatives from the Polish American community regarding Andrzej Wajda’s latest movie, “*Walesa: Man of Hope*,” and her book “*Danuta Wałęsa: Dreams and Secrets*,” written by Piotr Adamowicz, who accompanied her during this Chicago visit.

While in Chicago, Mrs. Wałęsa accepted the *Wings Award* on behalf of Andrzej Wajda. This award was presented by the 25th Polish Film Festival in America Committee, honoring Wajda for his significant contributions to Polish cinematography abroad. The award was announced at the opening gala of the Polish Film Festival on November 9, 2013 in Chicago.

WOMAN IN POLAND HELPS HIGHLAND PARK OWNERS FIND MISSING DOG. It is truly a small world! A dog lost in Highland Park, Illinois, a northern suburb of Chicago, was found through a phone call from a woman in Poland. How could this be?

It appears as though Bryce, a dog owned by the Silverman family of Highland Park, was lost and then found in a very special way. Apparently Bryce chased a truck down the street, was hit, broke his leg and

post and get help.”

Bryce was found, had surgery on his broken leg, and is thrilled to be home with his loving family. He will be fine, thanks to Facebook, Pan Cianciara, and Eva Banka. “He’ll have to wear a metal brace for 12 weeks, but he’ll be fine.”

POLISH JAZZMEN PERFORMED IN CHICAGO. On November 6, the Polish jazz trio, Shofar, performed at the Chicago Cultural Center. With expert improvisational skill, this trio worked to blur the boundaries between traditional Hasidic music and free jazz. The group explicitly embraced the Jewish musical tradition, performing compositions that followed the forms of “*nigunim*,” improvisational religious vocal music, and “*freylaks*,” more rhythmic pieces derived from Jewish liturgy. The trio features three pillars of Polish improvised music, reedist **Mikolaj Trzaska**, guitarist **Rafael Roginski**, and drummer **Macio Moretti**.

This concert was part of the 2013 Umbrella Music Festival, which ran from November 6-10. The *Chicago Reader* lauded it as “the most impressive and adventurous jazz event of the year.” What made this festival more appealing was that it had two nights of free concerts, notably the **European Jazz Meets Chicago** Concerts, co-presented by Umbrella Music and eight European consulates and cultural organizations, including the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago.

Independence Day Celebration at Consulate



Some of the decorated recipients.

On November 11, representatives from the Polish American community, the Chicago Consular Corps, Illinois and Chicago officials, as well as members of academia and the business world, participated in Poland’s National Independence Day celebration at the Polish Consulate.

Speaking to the guests, Consul General Paulina Kapuścińska stated that Poland had regained its independence after 123 years of partitions and oppression by its enemies. Consul Kapuścińska emphasized the role of modern Poland in maintaining excellent relations with her neighbors and her goal of promoting democracy throughout the world.

Polish state medals, Cross of the War Order of *Virtuti Militari*, Cross of the Order of *Polonia Restituta*, Cross of the Order of Merit

of the Republic of Poland, Cross of Freedom and Solidarity, Cross of the Siberian Exiles, Honorary Medal of Merit for the Protection of Children’s Rights, the *Pro Patria* Medal, as well as the promotion to the rank of captain, were presented to honorees that evening.

After the official portion of the celebration was completed, guests were treated to a piano recital by Igor Lipiński, who performed a composition by Fryderyk Chopin and Ignacy Jan Paderewski.

National Independence Day is a public holiday in Poland and is celebrated every year on November 11 to commemorate the anniversary of Poland’s resumption of an independent statehood in 1918, after 123 years of partitioning by Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

ligence cryptologists: *Marian Rejewski, Jerzy Rozycki and Henryk Zygalski, whose role, however, is not mentioned in the text. Their breakthrough made further work*

POLONIA OF THE EASTERN GREAT LAKES / Michael Pietruszka

Holiday Celebrations

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Our Polonia organizations celebrated the holiday season in a variety of different ways. Saturdays in December brought the traditional Kriskindlemart to Buffalo's historic **Broadway Market** ... The **Ludowa Nuta Choir** from Hamilton, Ontario performed at Buffalo's Corpus Christi Church with a typical "Goralska Kapels," and District IX on the **Polish Singers Alliance of America** hosted its Annual Festival of Polish Christmas Carols featuring the Chopin Singing Society, Chopin String Ensemble, Kalina Women's Chorus and Ludowa Nuta at St. Stanislaus Church in Buffalo, on December 1 ... The **Polish Student Association** and Polish Department of the University of Toronto hosted a "Wigilia" potluck at the Centre for International Experience, and the **General Pulaski Association** held its Annual Holiday Party at the Polish Villa II Restaurant, on December 3.

At Arty's Place in Buffalo's Historic Polonia District on December 13 ... On December 14, the **Polish Heritage Society of Rochester** hosted its "Wigilia - Polish Christmas Dinner" at St. John Fisher College.

On December 15, the **Msgr. Adamski Polish Saturday School** presented its "Jaselka" Christmas play at the St. Stanislaus social center, the **Polish Arts Club of Buffalo** held its Annual "Wigilia" and "Oplatek" at Salvatore's Italian Gardens in Depew, and the **Syracuse Polish Home** held its "Polish Heritage Wigilia" at its Park Avenue clubrooms ... The **Polish Cadets of Buffalo** held its Annual Holiday Dinner at their Grant Street clubrooms, and the **Adam Mickiewicz Library & Dramatic Circle** hosted its Christmas Party at its Fillmore Avenue clubrooms, on December 21.

The Melody Lane Band provided the music for the **Syracuse Polish Home's** "Oplatek Gala Dinner Dance" on December 28 ... "Tru Color" performed at the Msgr. Adamski **Polish Saturday School** New Year's Eve Party at the St. Stanislaus Social Center in Buffalo.

POLONIA TIDBITS. Bob Krawczyk recently announced that he will no longer be organizing polka events at the Lamm Post in Williamsville ... The churches of WNY's Polonia were highlighted in Bruce Fisher's "The Francis Landscape" in the December 5 issue of the Artvoice weekly newspaper ... As the very successful run of Buffalo playwright **Tom Dudzick's** comedy "Miracle on South Division Street" closed at the Kavinoky Theater, Desiderio's Dinner Theatre in Lancaster opened Dudzick's "Greetings," which will run through January 25.

The **Niagara Polish Cultural and Historical Society** elected the following leadership for the new year: Constance Emmons (president), Michael Parsnick (vice-president), Christine Sanborn (secretary), Patricia Frederick (treasurer), Wanda Slawinska (trustee) and Alfred Karney (trustee) ... The **Professional & Businessmen's Association** has expanded its presence on social media by establishing LinkedIn and Facebook groups ... The University of Rochester's **Skalny Lecture and Artist Series** presented 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 Driankova** in Strong Auditorium on the 8th.

The **Polish Arts Club** of Buffalo held its Annual Meeting at the Harlem Road Community Center in Amherst on December 11. After the business meeting, Anthony "Antek" Rudnicki presented on his book, "Bipolar Buffalo" ... The WNY Division of the **Polish American Congress** held its quarterly general membership meeting at the Msgr Pitass Center of St. Stanislaus Parish on December 12. Plans for the national organization's 70th anniversary meeting in Buffalo May 29 through May 31 were discussed ... **Janusz Zaorski's** film, "Siberian Exile," was screened at the Central Parkway Mall in Mississauga, Ontario on December 14 and 15.

The Polish Arts Club of Buffalo announced that it will be presented with an award by the **Polish American Historical Association** at the Polish Embassy in Washington, D.C. on January 3; and that Kyle Baran, a junior theatre major at Niagara University, and Mary Jane Masiulionis, a graduate student at SUNYAB, will be awarded scholarships at the group's installation luncheon to be held on January 26 at Gregor's Garden Grove in West Seneca.

January is National Polka Month. The new polka year begins with the **Warm Up Polka Dance** featuring PhoCus and the Buffalo Concertina All Stars at the Potts Banquet Hall in Cheektowaga on January 11.

If you have any item that you would like to have included this column, please send the information by the 6th day of the month preceding the month in which you would like the item to appear (i.e. January 6 for the February edition) at pietruszka@verizon.net.

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IN TIMES PAST



"MRS. BISSIE AND FAMILY (POLISH). July 1909. Bottomley Farm, Rock Creek. They all work in the berry fields near Baltimore in summer and have worked at Biloxi, Mississippi, for two years."

From glass negative by Lewis Wickes Hine.

To order print, visit www.shorpy.com.

Do you have an old photo you would like to share with our readers? Send photos to: "In Times Past," Polish American Journal, P.O. Box 271, N. Boston, NY 14110. Please provide a brief description. Digital copies — jpg or tif, 300 dpi at 100% reproduction size (approx. 4 inch width) — with descriptions may be e-mailed to editor@polamjournal.com. All photos will be returned.

Engineer Says Education is Key to Preventing Tragedy

OAKLAND, Calif. — Imagine being an engineer operating a 6,000-ton train going 55 m.p.h. and not being able to stop quickly enough when you see someone on the tracks ahead of you.

This engineer wants to remind you that there's somebody behind those controls.

Kevin Gniadek, a 35-year-old Amtrak engineer from Oakland, knows the feeling well. An engineer for 12 years, he's had six or seven incidents — hitting a person or a vehicle on the tracks — but his first fatality happened two years ago shortly after leaving the San Jose station.

"It was mid-day, about 3:00, and we were just coming around a curve under an overpass," Gniadek recalls. "I wasn't going that fast, maybe 40 m.p.h., and realized there was someone, he might have been inebriated, lying in the middle of the track." Gniadek immediately put the train in emergency mode and saw the man, curled up in a semi-fetal position, his feet hanging over the rails, his face tense with shock. He knew hitting the man was unavoidable.

What happened next is common to most engineers after hitting someone. "Alone in the cab, you

refers to as "strikes" — a train hitting either a person trespassing on or near tracks or a vehicle trying to race through a crossing before the train arrives — are a casualty of the profession, one that almost every engineer has endured. "It only takes about 5-10 seconds for a train going 79 m.p.h. to clear a crossing," he says, adding it's a common sight to see drivers pull out and around



ENGINEER KEVIN GNIADEK guides an Amtrak train on the tracks through Richmond, Calif. Gniadek says he's experienced several collisions in his 12 years as an engineer. Railway officials from Amtrak and Union Pacific are beefing up enforcement and launching a public awareness safety campaign after several high profile accidents along Amtrak's Capitol Corridor.

closed gates in a mad dash to beat the train.

"Their perceptions of trains coming at them on the ground are skewed. Before you realize how fast it's coming it's on top of you and it's too late. What can be so important to make them not wait 30 seconds? You're going to risk your life for that?"

Education, Gniadek says, is key to preventing incidents. He warns his three kids that hanging out around trains and tracks is dangerous, trespassing, not a game.

"The railroad tracks and the surroundings are not a playground; trains are to be respected," he says.

"The railroad tracks and the surroundings are not a playground; trains are to be respected"

may curse or go through emotions: first adrenaline, then sadness, and finally, anger," says Gniadek. "You realize you just saw another person die, and that you were the last person to see them alive. You're exhausted afterwards, you analyze everything. The entire crew is traumatized, especially the conductor who has to get out and investigate," said Gniadek.

"That's awfully sad; it's tragic for all of us."

According to Gniadek, what he

"IT'S A VERY BIG OBJECT moving fast and can't stop easily, and there's somebody behind those controls. We react very fast when we do see something because one second can make the difference between an incident happening or not. It's always in the back of your mind: 'Is this the day I'm going to strike somebody?'"

Through the Polish Union of America we are offering products from the following fraternal:

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EVENTS

Polish Festival – Alive and Well in Portland, Oregon

by Andrew Kozlowski

LOS ANGELES — Recently we have all heard discussion about the future of Polonia, in particular about the demise of Polonia institutions such as Polish Homes, picnic grounds, Polish parishes.

A recent Polish American Journal article asked “Is Our Polonia Doomed to Extinction?” The article laments the extinction of many Polish neighborhoods such as Milwaukee Ave in Chicago, or the once mainly Polish city of Hamtramck, Michigan.

“In its heyday, you would hear Polish spoken on the streets and could do all your shopping and attend all our business in that language,” states the article. Today many older Polish Americans see the Polish churches they were married in or the Polish schools they once attended closing down. The same can be said for the Dom Polski social halls. Some are still operating today, but it’s a far cry from the days when they were the hubs of local Pol-Am community.

I myself experienced this change recently when I travelled for my high school reunion



MOST OF THE FESTIVAL ATTENDEES are non-Poles but they enjoyed Polish food, beer, and music.

seeing the blazing of new trails by Polonia in Portland, Oregon, where the annual Polish Festival is alive, well, and growing each year.

I was invited to attend this event by an old friend, Roman, who had moved to Portland from California about 25 years ago—and, this year, was in charge of this festival. I had wanted to visit the Polish Festival in Portland for a number of years after hearing that it was one of the largest Polish Festivals in the Northwest. As the invitation came with lodging and a personal guide, it was difficult to refuse Roman’s offer, hence my wife and I boarded Southwest one Friday to spend a weekend with Roman and his lovely wife Dorota at the festival.

In previous years as many as 15,000 people attended the Festival celebration recognizing Oregon’s historic Polish neighborhood. “The celebration is the largest Polish festival in the Western United States,” said Roman Sobolewski, who is also the President of Polish Home Association of Portland. The actual attendance figures are approximate since the festival does not charge admission. This year’s attendance may have been hampered by rain showers on Saturday, and rain and strong winds on Sunday, but nevertheless,

the organizers said the attendance has grown steadily over the past 20 years—so much so that they do very little advertising and rely solely on the word of mouth to relay news about the festival.

The 2013 Festival, which is also considered one of Oregon’s premier ethnic events, celebrated its 20th anniversary and was held 21-22 September on the grounds of the Polish Library Hall and St. Stanislaus Church.

The festival ran from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Saturday and from noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday, with a Saturday night street dance and continuous stage entertainment outside and inside the Polish Home. The beer garden was open through the entire festival, with long but fast moving lines for Zywiec beer. Interestingly enough, beer could be taken

anywhere within the festival grounds yet the festival goers were well behaved and there was no evidence of excessive consumption of brewski.

The Festival is run jointly by St. Stanislaus Church and Polish Library Building Association. The six-member committee, with three members from the church and three from PLBA, jointly administer the festival and share the profits.

PORTLAND DOES NOT have a large Polish American population, nor does it receive any new immigrants from Poland; in this way, it is similar to many other areas of the United States.

A little bit of background on the history of Polish Americans in Portland is in order: Portland’s first Polish families were predominately from the Carpathian Mountains of southern Poland and eastern Poland near present-day Ukraine. The families created a Polish National Alliance chapter in 1892



RAINY WEATHER did not spoil the festive atmosphere.

and built the historic St. Stanislaus Roman Catholic Church in 1907 and Polish Library Hall in 1911. Both landmarks display Romanesque architecture common in southern Poland, and have been officially recognized as state historic sites. Today, the pastor of St. Stanislaus Parish is Fr. Piotr Dzikowski who enthusiastically continues growth of the parish and the Polish Festival.

This year’s festival had a wide variety of entertainment. Saturday’s schedule included many genres of music such as jazz, modern dance, and accordion music, with performances by Polish folk dance groups from as far away as Vancouver, Canada. Between 5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., the Oregon Polka Beats performed and stirred up the crowds. There was also a polka dance contest, which was a big crowd pleaser. Separate contests were held for children and adults, though children could dance with adults if they chose to. My lovely wife Liz and I represented Los Angeles by winning second place in one such contest.

The evening concluded with a two-hour



ROMAN SOBOLEWSKI (Festival chair), his wife Dorota, and Liz and Andy Kozlowski

Street Dance on the main stage with Chervona, an international, East-European flavored band. The six-person band played euro-disco type music of mainly Polish and Russian songs. Chervona’s concert was a huge success. A crowd of well over a thousand partied till the end, singing along with the band and dancing in front of and on the stage. Even if one was not of Polish descent, they were invited to have a wonderful time at the concert.

The menu was somewhat limited but included the traditional Polish staples: pierogi, potato pancakes, kielbasa, and bigos, along with delicious paczki and other pastries. Typically 15,000 pierogis are ordered for this event as are 6,000 bottles of Polish beer and wine. Four bartenders on duty during the entire festival meant that the lines, while sometimes long, were not excessive. One huge plus of this festival was very convenient free parking next door, courtesy of a local medical plaza.

We had a memorable time, rainy weather notwithstanding, and are very glad that we had an opportunity to see the 20th anniversary Polish Festival. Perhaps this is what was meant by the old adage: “Go West, Young Man, go West!”

As was the case for every year of its twenty-year existence, the Festival was a huge success, not only financially but also in promoting the image of Polonia in Portland. Today, the event is so well-known that Portlanders come every year without invitation. In fact, about 90% of the participants are of non-Polish background.

PERHAPS THIS IS AN EXAMPLE of the innovative thinking and blazing new trails to redefine ourselves to which the Polish American Journal refers? If we can no longer sustain ourselves as a strictly Polish-American community, do we perhaps need to reach out to our neighbors and invite them to share our culture, accomplishments, food, and yes even some Zywiec?

This is something to think about.



LONG LINES right from the opening for *placki ziemniaczane* (potato pancakes) – probably the most popular entrée. On the right is the Portland Polish Library (Polish Home).

to Jersey City, N.J. My old church, Our Lady of Czestochowa, now serves the local integrated community and hardly mentions the fact that it was a Polish Parish for almost 100 years of its existence, although it does retain the Czestochowa name. The same can be said for the White Eagle Hall on Newark Ave., where weekly Polish dances were held when I was growing up. *Polankas* that my friends and family used to go to each summer—with Budd Lake, Morskie Oko, and Somerville as the most prominent of these picnic grounds—have long been closed.

The Polish American Journal article concludes by stating, “It appears then that Polonia will have to think innovatively, blaze new trails and redefine itself or perish!”

I am happy to report that perhaps we are

PROMOTION

Thinking ahead to Fat Thursday and Tuesday!

by Robert Strybel

A discussion one can occasionally hear across Polonia at this time of year may go as follows. A 3rd or 4th-generation Polish American is convinced that that Pączki Day is celebrated on Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras), the day before Ash Wednesday (This year, March 5). But a more recent arrival from the Old Country may insist that it is on Thusty Czwartek (Fat Thursday), the last Thursday before Lent. Both are right, but why argue?

Instead, why not consider holding one ultra-mega-super six-day Pączki Weekend in your community, starting on Fat Thursday and running on through Shrove Tuesday.

There are two main advantages to that approach: six days of fund raising can produce considerable proceeds for worthwhile Polonian

causes. And there’s the important element of Polish-heritage promotion – this will also expose more people to the pre-Lenten delicacies and merriment of Polish-flavored pączki events. Here are some things to consider.

PĄCZKI DAYS. Rather than a single “Pączki Day”, put it in the plural, kick things off on Fat Thursday and continue on over the weekend on through Shrove Tuesday. But it is essential to do a lot of advertising beforehand to educate the public and stimulate interest.

VOLUNTEERS OR OUTSOURCING? In old Polonia, it was never a problem to get volunteers to make pierogi or fry pączki. That is a great cost-saver and fellowship booster wherever that is still possible. When

free labor is no longer available, outsourcing from a Polish bakery is the next best thing. With quantity orders, a discount can usually be expected.

PĄCZKI FESTIVAL/CONTEST. This variation of a Pączki Sale would add an element of rivalry by giving visitors a choice of pączki produced by various bakeries, parish societies, clubs or individual homemakers. It could include a competition with a panel of judges evaluating and giving prizes for the best pączki or even a pączki-eating contest.

PĄCZKI PARTY/PĄCZKI BALL. The above headings could cover anything from a pączki and coffee gathering with a take-home opportunity, an afternoon tea dance, an

evening dance or even a full-fledged Mardi Gras Ball (see below). Whatever the case, it goes without saying that pączki should be in good supply.

WHAT ABOUT CHRUSCIKI? In addition to pączki, another Polish pre-Lenten treat are faworki (better known in Polonia as chrusciki). These delicate powder-sugar-dusted pastries are also good sellers, but have one drawback: they do not stand up well to transport, handling and other forms of jostling!

POLISH MARDI GRAS BALL. Usually a gourmet feast precedes the dancing which starts with the Grade Polonaise. A typical attraction of a Polish Mardi Gras Ball is electing a king and queen of the

ball. The best-dancing couple may be chosen by applause or ballot. Besides a good dance band or DJ, a Polish folk-dance ensemble could provide added entertainment.

SLEIGHING PARTY. Weather permitting, some of the fun of an Old World kulig can be re-enacted in an American setting. If you cannot get a sleighload of live musicians, a single musician (accordionist, guitarist) or even recorded music could enhance the occasion. The kulig should take participants to a specific destination (a cabin in the woods or a crackling bonfire). In addition to plenty of pączki, good kulig refreshments are bigos, kielbasa roasted over a bonfire, rye bread slathered with salt-pork spread (smalec domowy) and hot tea flavored with lemon and/or rum.

Polka MAGAZINE

POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION AND CONTINUANCE OF POLISH AMERICAN MUSIC

POLKA INSIDER / Steve Litwin

If I Had a Wish ...

Happy New Year 2014. It doesn't seem possible that over twenty years have past since the first "Accord-ion To Steve" column was penned. Starting further back in 1968, those first news bits were sent to Stan Saleski's Polka News in Connecticut and now this year marks the start of my 46th year of writing for polka music.

With a dozen new months ahead, this is the perfect time to plan a path and create a polka wish list. Some people may refer to it as a dream sheet but dream it or wish it, the results can be the same.

So, without further ado, the Polka Insider presents his polka wish list for 2014 or as written by a Johnny Wanderlich, "If I Had A Wish, What Would It Be?"

IF I HAD WISH...

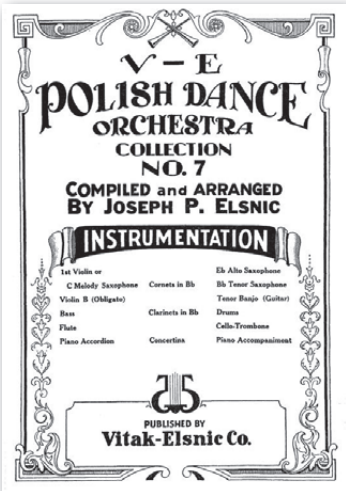
- not only would dance attendance increase but so would the number of dances
- some of those polka activists, columnists and promoters who have left the polka scene, would resurface again making contributions.

- clubs, bands and promoters would learn to promote, use publicity properly, and not blame their problems on everyone but themselves.
- "Spanish Eyes" would not be played at a polka dance.
- established festivals would reign supreme and new festivals would be born.
- concertinas would be elevated to a new high — perhaps
- former festivals would be redeveloped and be successful.
- Polka DJs would realize that people want music and not endless ego trips filled with constant self-praising talk.
- new bands would develop with musicians in their 20s so polkas would have a future.
- promoters would recognize those that have supported them, and the industry, throughout the years.
- fans would realize the expenses involved in promoting a dance and booking a band and accept that (just like \$1/gallon gas) the days of the \$3 dollar admission are in the past.
- the "Chicken Dance" would cease to exist.
- circle waltzes, 50-step line dances and four corner square dances would not be found on the polka dance floor.
- January would really be "National Polka Month" and 2014 would be "Polka Year."
- those people who ask for free copies of the Polish American Journal, would subscribe.
- dance conflicts would become a thing of the past, to avoid dances becoming a thing of the past.
- Everyone would realize that the "Electric Slide" is not a polka, does not belong at a polka dance and should not be played by a real polka band.
- press releases and promotional information would arrive earlier, so that they can be published on a timely basis.
- bands would realize that loud is not better.
- and, everyone would promote for the good of polka music.

If you had a wish, what would it be?

Vitak-Elsnic Celebrates 120 Years of Publishing with New Music Books

WHITE STONE, Virg. — The Vitak-Elsnic (V-E) legacy goes back nearly 120 years to its founding in 1895 in Cincinnati, Ohio. During the heyday of European ethnic music, V-E music was played by bands from the plains of the Dakotas to the steel mills of Pennsylvania to the hill country of Texas. In fact, one of the most well-known musical artists of the 1930s, Minnesotan "Whoopie John" Wilfahrt (Whoopie John was the second artist signed by Decca; Bing Crosby was the first), featured many V-E songs when his band played. Many



GENERATIONS of polka fans have danced to the music found in Vitak-Elsnic books.

things have changed in the music industry over the years, but the melodies, harmonies and countermelodies of the "happy music" found in the V-E library are changeless.

In September of 2013, Music Publishers of America, LLC (MPA) acquired the assets of the Vitak-Elsnic Music Company. The owners of MPA include Todd Harris, who had been the sole owner of V-E since 2009. Joining Todd in the new venture are Todd's brother Steve Harris and cousin Cal Massmann. These three men all share a love of the music and are committed to building upon the platform most recently managed by Todd, carrying on the tradition of all previous owners of the business going back to Louis Vitak in 1895.

MPA was founded to publish,

promote and preserve America's historical and cultural music. Over the next year, MPA intends to continue to improve the customer buying experience on the website, and to expand its distribution network beyond the existing website store.

Persons interested in possible commission arrangements in selling V-E music are invited to email Steve Harris at: steve@musicpublishersofamerica.com.

The V-E library of "polka" music consists of over 1,000 publications. The vast majority of this music was last published over 50 years ago. But

there's plenty of good new music and arrangements out there, and the company is seeking out and wants to publish some of the best. Over time, they plan to not only add new inventory in the polka genre, but also to add other musical genres to the business. Persons who have any music they may be interested in getting published, should send details to Steve Harris.

If you are looking for new music for your band, the first new publication by V-E in over 50 years was this year's publication from Ernie Broeniman, titled "Ernie's Old Time Band Folio # 1." This folio contains 15 new arrangements of classic V-E music, ranging from standards such as Beer Barrel Polka to new arrangements of little-known music in the V-E library, such as the Tea Par-

ty Waltz. These old V-E tunes have been rearranged for today's modern concert band instrumentation, but can also be scaled down to fit the instrumentation of smaller polka bands. And a first for V-E: there is a full conductor's score!

Ernie Broeniman is active in the Wisconsin School Music Association as a clinician and Adjudicator. He is also the conductor and artistic director of the professional European show band, Dorf Kapelle.

Visit V-E at www.vitak-elsnic.com/shop or call 855-NUMUSIC (toll-free in the United States). Note that all orders now can only be placed through the website. Payment currently is accepted only through PayPal, although this is another area for future development to improve the customer experience.

Snail mail can be sent to: Steve Harris, Music Publishers of America, PO Box 696, White Stone, Virginia 22578. Email inquiries may be sent to steve@musicpublishersofamerica.com.

POLKA PATTTER / Polonia Media Network

It seems that "It's Polka Time!" with Craig Ebel never ceases to add more radio stations to its already long list. This time it's more polka for the Lone Star State. The show is heard as of December 1, 2013, on Sunday afternoons from 2:00-4:00 p.m. over KCTI (1450 AM) in Gonzales, Texas. In case you're counting, it joins 24 other stations across the United States.

Don't ever think that the polka field hasn't adopted the latest techniques. Bel-Aire Recordings held an online sale from Black Friday through Cyber Monday. All items

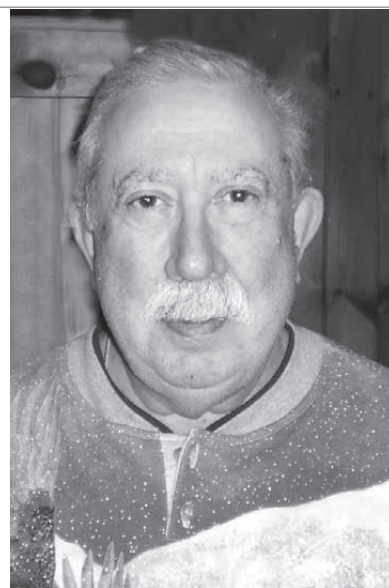
Guyette Marks 26 Years on Radio

WEBSTER, Mass. — He's 100% French but **Bob Guyette** has been playing polka music on the radio airwaves for 26 years. After seeing his first polka band, Al Soyka, at Lakeview Ballroom in Mendon Massachusetts, Guyette fell in love with the music, learned to dance the polka and met his wife at a polka dance.

When their son Jeffrey was three years old he started attending his first polka dances along with his parents. Jeffrey later started a polka show called "Polka Festival" in September 1989 at the age of 18. In September 2006, Jeffrey and his wife relocated and Bob took over the radio show.

The "Polka Festival" show can be heard Monday, 6 to 8 p.m. and the "Polka -a-Go-Go" show can be heard on Wednesday 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

"Polkas in the Morning," an automated playlist system-computer generated music program is heard seven days a week beginning at 6:30 a.m. All shows are on WNRC 97.5 FM Nichols College Radio. Requests can be phoned in at: 508-



943-8320 during the live shows. All radio shows are also available on the internet at www.nichols.edu/wnrc and www.live365.com/wnrc.

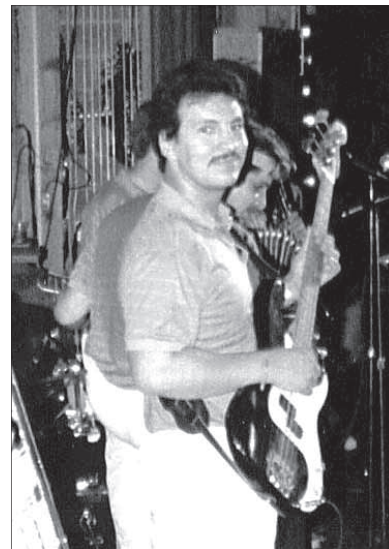
Send dedications and information on polka related events to Bob Guyette at: 122 Lake Street Apt#1 Webster MA 01570. Email dedications can be sent during the live shows at polkabob2005@msn.com.

POLKA MEMORIES / Steve Litwin

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



RITA on drums with Polka Jamboree. 1983.



VINNY BOZZARELLI. Polka Fireworks Festival, Champion, Pa. 1984.



EDDIE OLINSKI ORCHESTRA, Buffalo, N.Y. circa 1960. (front, l. to r.): Carl Suhr, Eddie Olinski, Herky Winkowski; (back, l. to r.): Larry Struzik, Bob Radominski, Wally Pigeon, John Kuzma, Matt Kantor, and Al Carlin.

on the website were discounted by 20% for four days. Sorry if you missed it; the sale is now long over.

The International Polka Association (IPA) and the United States Polka Association (USPA) will present a joint dance at the Holiday Inn, Strongsville, Ohio, in October, 2014. The Cleveland Polka Association (CPA), which made it a threesome last year, is not planning to participate this time.

The networks of 247Polkaheaven announced the launch of 247ChristmasHeaven starting on November 29, 2013. The new net-

work features Christmas music from all styles and genres of music. Classic artists from Billie Holiday, Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald, to country treasures from Tanya Tucker, Merle Haggard, Dolly and today's Nashville stars, plus the greats of the Classic Rock era up to today's favorites. Log on at the <http://www.247Polkaheaven.com> homepage and click on the link for 247ChristmasHeaven. Enjoy the beautiful sounds of Christmas, without commercials, courtesy of all the IJ's of 247Polkaheaven.

DANCE TIME / Jen Pijanowski

A Time for Beginnings

BUFFALO, N.Y. — It is the time of year for resolutions, optimism, and a fresh perspective as we look forward to a new beginning — Happy 2014 everyone! I am thrilled to be starting my year off undertaking this new endeavor. Thank you Barb Pinkowski for 26 years of loyalty to polka reporting. Congratulations on all of your accomplishments and retirement.

Just a brief note about myself to get everyone acquainted with me. My name is Jennifer Pijanowski and I reside in Cheektowaga, N.Y. I grew up in the small town of Wheeling, W.V. and moved to Western New York after meeting my husband, Ricky, 15 years ago. Within the first few minutes of meeting him at a restaurant in Ohio, he told me that he played drums in a polka band from Buffalo. With that comment, I quickly responded “A polka band?” thinking the usual stereotype of oompah, tubas, and accordions. He replied, no it is great music, you would love it.

During our conversations over the next several months, he invited me to a polka festival about 90 minutes from my home. It was the Fall Polka Festival in Seven Springs, Pa. I told him that I would think about it and we would keep in touch.

Well, I reluctantly drove to that festival not knowing exactly what to expect. I can still remember walking into the dance hall and hearing Eddie B wailing “My Mary Lou” when I entered and instantly fell in love with the music. That day I

was transformed thanks to its atmosphere, the people, and the culture surrounding polka music. I consider the generosity of my husband taking me to that first festival one of the greatest gifts he has ever given me. Polka music and the people who love it have taken me in and made me a part of their family. I have had more fun over the past 15 years than I ever thought possible. I am thrilled to have been given the chance to share my love and passion for the music with all of you. Thank you to Mark Kohan for giving me this opportunity.

WE ARE VERY LUCKY in the WNY area to have so many local bands. There is at least one occasion a week to get out to a venue and hear a polka band—this month was no exception. **Buffalo Concertina All-Stars** filled Potts Banquet Hall for the Turkey Trot Dance. The dance floor remained lively the entire night as everyone enjoyed dancing to the honky tunes the band

belted out over and over again. The camaraderie of this band makes it a pleasure to watch them. To complete the night, patrons were treated to a turkey sandwich during one of the breaks. It was an evening that certainly satisfied everyone’s taste.

Old and new members alike flocked to the Buffalo Polka Booster meeting this month to hear the **Knewz**. The band members take such pride in their music and it shows with every note they play. We don’t get the pleasure of seeing them often enough in Buffalo, but this month was an exception. They also performed the Pre-Thanksgiving Party at Polish Villa II. Eddie and Rosie Kutas’ allegiance to Polish culture and polka music makes attending any event there a pleasure. This yearly event always draws scores of polka enthusiasts who enjoy this evening of dancing and socializing the night before indulging in their Thanksgiving feast. I cannot think of a more fitting way to spend time being thankful for the gifts in our lives than being surrounded by friendly folks and heartwarming polka music.

The hospitality of the Angola VFW was incredible during its recent Polish night. Patrons delighted



Mark Trzepacz, Steve Hayest, and Tommy Wanderlich filling in with Tru Heritage at Ray’s in Buffalo.

in the sounds of the **Buffalo Touch** as well as a Thanksgiving buffet complete with all the trimmings—and free admission. They invite polka supporters to attend these dance/buffet events a few times each year.

ANOTHER ATTRIBUTE of Buffalo is that we still have cozy corner taverns. Lately, these taverns have been hosting different bands on Saturday and Sunday evenings. Making a trip to see a band in the small taverns is an endearing atmosphere. It is just like a neighborhood gathering with everyone standing at the bar, taking a whirl around the dance floor, and chatting in between sets. Ray’s Lounge was recently filled to capacity for a dance with **Tru Heritage**. Eric Bakowski, Mark Trzepacz, Steve Hayest, Chris Bukowski, Jimmy Adamczyk, and Tommy Wanderlich kept the dance floor hopping throughout the evening. It was fun to hear people at the bar chatting about their memories of Ray’s years ago. It was evident that many were



Members of the Third Warders’ Polka Club at the Polish Nook in Niagara Falls.

remiscing about a simpler time when the hall would host dances and only couples were permitted into the dance hall—all the singles had to stay in the front bar.

A FEW OTHER TAVERNS have also gotten in on the polka action. Anchor Inn and Dianeagains in Cheektowaga have been having a Sunday polka party once a month. Anchor has **Phocus** from 4:00-7:00 p.m. once a month with Polish food specials. Phocus draws their own following but it is fun to watch the regulars in the bar start to tap their feet along with the music while watching the football game. During the breaks, it is a pretty sure bet that someone will be playing polkas on the jukebox. Dianeagains has recently reopened and I admire that this bar owner has embraced polkas. **Special Delivery** drew a very diverse group this month. There was a young group of twenty-somethings in the bar area, sporting Polish t-shirts and sweatshirts and clinking their glasses yelling “na zdrowie” between songs. While most bands struggle to find a vocalist, Special Delivery showcases every band member’s vocals. Their transition from polkas to American music is flawless. Each musician has their niche and the band utilizes that to its full advantage.

Lastly, Polish Nook in Niagara Falls also threw their first Sunday Polka party with **New Direction**. It was there that I got to chat with Clara (mother of Christine “Potts” Poczciwinski), who was celebrating her 90th birthday. When I asked how long she had been listening to polkas, she put her hands up and said “forever.” She wasn’t able to dance, but her smile told a story of the memories she has had over the years. Clara bobbed her head and gave me her recipe for a long happy life. “Good friends, taking care of others, laughter, music, and vodka.” That sounds like a winning combination to me!

It was a day fit for a celebration and New Direction did an outstanding job of providing the backdrop for the festivities.

If you haven’t gone to any of these taverns yet, please attend next time. We have to embrace the willingness of the businesses to support ethnic music. Without them, the opportunity would not be there to spend an afternoon with friends and fantastic music.



Bryan Kurdziel, Katelyn Slutiak, Lori Urbanczyk, Brian Urbanczyk, and Cara Pijanowski.

CHICAGO

Jan. 18. IPA Festival of Bands Warmup Dance featuring Lenny Gomulka 6:00-10:00 p.m. (\$12.00 /2 day pass \$20.00)

Jan. 19. IPA 45th Annual Chicago Festival of Bands featuring Polka Generations, IPA Tribute band, Freeze Dried, Jim Polanski & Chicago NuTones, Music Company, Lenny Gomulka, Bill Gula & Chicago Image, Lenny Zielinski & D Street Band, Eddie Korosa Jr. & the Boys from Illinois, and Tony Blazonczyk’s New Phase. 11:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. (\$12.00/ 2 day pass \$20.00)

CLEVELAND

Jan. 11. Hangover Dance featuring the Knewz. Holiday Inn, Strongsville, Oh. 8:00 p.m.-midnight (\$12.00). \$62.00 room rate, Holiday Inn (440) 238-8800.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Wheeling Polka Festival, Oglebay Resort, Wheeling, West Virg., March 28-30. Call (800) 624-6988 for package prices. Bands include Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push, The Knewz, The Boys, Henny & the Versa Js and more.



Barb and Al Bakowski celebrating their 34th wedding anniversary at Ray’s.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January is National Polka Month, so go out and support a polka dance. It is our responsibility to keep this music alive for generations to come. Here are a few opportunities for you to celebrate National Polka month.

BUFFALO

Jan 1. Phocus, New Year’s Hangover Dance, Pott’s Banquet Hall 41 S. Rossler St., Cheektowaga—2:00-6:00 p.m.

Jan 11. Phocus and Buffalo Concertina All-Stars, Winter Warm Up Polka Dance, Potts Banquet Hall, 7:00 p.m.-midnight.

Jan 12. Special Delivery, Dianeagains, 2460 Clinton St., Cheektowaga (free).

Jan. 18. New Direction, Broadway Market, Buffalo, Noon-3:00 p.m.

Jan. 19. Phocus, Anchor Inn Polka Sunday, Anchor Inn, 2437 William St., Cheektowaga 5:30-9:30 p.m. (free)

Jan. 25. New Direction CD Release Party, Potts Banquet Hall, 7:30-10:30 (\$7.00)

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TOLEDO POLONIA / Margaret Zotkiewicz-Dramczyk

A New Board at TAPS

Happy New Year to all of my readers. Here's hoping 2014 brings plenty of polka opportunities near and far.

The Toledo Area Polka Society is ramping up for its 31st year, and after the success of the anniversary dance, the Board hopes to create even more enthusiasm for the local polka scene with new promotional ideas, new guest bands, a TAPS website, and more.

The new slate of TAPS Board members is: **David Jackson**, president; **Mike Marek**, immediate past president; **Larry Holt**, vice-president; **Carol Holt**, treasurer; **Margaret Zotkiewicz-Dramczyk**, secretary; **Tony Groch**, sergeant-at-arms, and **Jean Rybka**, Sunshine lady.

On that note, the Nov 17th TAPS dance was well attended yet bitter-sweet, as Chicago's **Downtown Sound** made one of its final appearances. I have enjoyed this band only a handful of times in my travels, yet I felt as if I were saying goodbye to old friends as they played the last set. And even though they had a gig or two left in Chicagoland, I knew it was my last time to hear their music. Best of luck to all of the members of DTS in future endeavors.

Thanksgiving brought the company of my family and friends, and also a chance to dance off some of the holiday feast, as **The Project** played at the PRCU Hall in Wyandotte the night after TG. The Project includes John Zelasko, Jr., Pete Dardzinski, John Okrezik, Eddie Siwec, Frankie Liszka, Mike Maduzia, and Dave "Nigel" Kurdziel, and wow, did they rock the hall. The power in that group of musicians is infectious, and it certainly didn't feel like four hours had passed when it was all over. The Project needs to come around more often!

CONCERT MUSIC. I always try to wrap off Thanksgiving weekend by attending the Fall-Winter Concert by the **Polish American Concert Band**, and so I did, making my way for the first time in several years to

the re-opened Ohio Theatre on La-Grange Street. This is the showcase event for the PAC Band, and being that it was back at the Ohio made it even more memorable.

The PAC Band these days is under the direction of Randy Bialecki. This year's program, the 27th annual, featured two acts and an intermission. The concert opened with "Jeszcze Polska Nie Zginela" and continued with six more pieces. A highlight of this first act was the Cole Porter tune "Begin the Beguine," which featured a mini band consisting of trumpet player Stas' Rutkowski's grandkids under the 'direction' of band member Rick Lavoy to give this song an authentic sound. Another of Stas' grandchildren jumped up to be the guest conductor, which has long been a treat for the audience.

During intermission this year, a local group, the **Honey Creek Preservation Jazz Band** provided listeners with a quite different feel as they played several old time tunes that aren't heard that often these days, and used traditional instruments including a banjo.

The concert continued in the second half with seven additional songs, including the Armed Forces Salute, during which audience members who have served in each of the U.S. military branches are honored as the theme songs are played. "The Polska Powstaje," which was arranged by local priest Fr. Przybylski, was a favorite piece as well. Well done and congratulations to Randy and the band for another successful performance.

STOP BY. Before I wrap up this column, I want to mention that a great way to keep in touch with the Polish community in Toledo is through www.PolishToledo.com. This site lists "all things Polish" and welcomes visitors. If you happen to be passing through town or just interested in what's going on in the Polish community in NW Ohio, this is the site to visit.

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THE OLD COUNTRY / Richard Poremski



SISTERS OF THE WOODEN NECKLACE. Old Town, Warsaw. May 16, 1976.

BRUSH UP / Distributed by Polonian Media Network

Menu Items

ai is like "eye"

A preposition joins with the next word

kawa (KAH-vah).....	coffee
kawa ze śmietanką (KAH-vah zeh SHMYEH-TAHN-kown).....	coffee with cream
kawa z ekspresu (KAH-vah zek-SPREH-suh).....	espresso
herbata (hehr-BAH-tah).....	tea
jajka (JAI-kah).....	eggs
jajka sadzone (JAI-kah sahd-ZOH-neh).....	fried eggs
jajka na boczku (JAI-kah nah BOHCH-ku).....	eggs with bacon
jajka na szynce (JAI-kah nah SIHN-tseh).....	eggs with ham
jajka w majonezie (JAI-kah vmaj-oh-NEH-zeh).....	hard boiled eggs in majonaise
jajecznicza (jai-ehch-NEE-tshah).....	scrambled eggs
dżem (djehm).....	jam
naleśniki (nah-lehzh-NEE-kee).....	crepes/pancakes
naleśniki z dżemem (nah-lehzh-NEE-kee zdjehmehm).....	crepes/pancakes with jam
naleśniki z serem (nah-lehzh-NEE-kee ZEHR-ehm).....	crepes/pancakes with soft, white cheese

SYMBOLS, GESTURES & SUPERSTITIONS / Robert Strybel

Every nation has its own system of notions, beliefs, signs, symbols and ways of doing things, whose origin is usually buried in the distant past. The Polish people are no different in that regard. Some notions have been borrowed, other are indigenous. Pagan superstitions have intermingled with Christian customs, and often the justification for a certain practice is no longer widely known – it's just the way things are done. Many old habits have fallen by the wayside, whilst others are limited to a certain region or even a single town or village. Here are some that are encountered with varying frequency.

CARP SCALE ATTRACTS

MONEY. This past Christmas many a Pole placed a scale from a Christmas Eve carp in their coin purse, as that is said to attract money all year long. That is not difficult, because carp and herring are the traditional fish of Wigilia.

PEARLS MEAN TEARS. A bride-to-be should never wear a string of pearls on her wedding day as they symbolize tears and foretell a sad marriage.

NOT OVER THE THRESHOLD. It is regarded as bad luck to shake hands or embrace someone over a threshold. Don't be surprised if you hear a Pole say "Nie przez próg!" when you offer him your hand over a threshold.

THE PONDERING POLE / Edward Poniewaz

So Now What?

Way back in the January 2013 edition of the Pondering Pole it was mentioned that we are in the last leg of the hundred-year immigration experience. It takes a hundred years to "complete" the journey from ancestral homeland to where the children and grandchildren of the immigrants become fully integrated and ingrained in the new country and society. Well, it's a year later and it is fitting that, for the 100th edition of the Pondering Pole, we discuss and "ponder" what is to become of the American Polish experience in the remaining 25 years of the journey. Since I don't know about an existing template for this kind of thing, here is an outline: what does our Polish presence look like today, why are we doing this, and what are the goals and how do we accomplish them?

While my rich involvement with the American Polish community has always allowed for variation, the difference was primarily timing: the immigrants and their children lived from the early and middle part of the twentieth century, many Poles came after World War II as displaced persons, they came after the Solidarnosc revolution in the eighties, and they have trickled in as professionals from modern Poland looking for work, opportunity, and affluence. While their perspectives were somewhat diverse, the defining and unifying feature of all of these movements was that they are fully Polish. They were totally Polish in the sense that they understood and claimed Polish culture and in many cases, the Polish language, first.

The variation is still there but today's younger Polonia has taken on a different character and approach. The new Polish American can be defined primarily by his or her nature. It is not so much a question of when or how the person got here; the question is whether they claim to be Polish, or not. Polish people in the United States can be grouped in four categories: they are living it, they promote Polish and Poland, they are casual observers and participants, or they are not interested.

IT IS TRUE THAT REAL POLISH people still live in the United States. They assume and claim the culture and speak the language. They are Polish first in no uncertain terms, just like all immigrants throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Promoters like being Polish so much that they retain a tie to the culture by working at the event, having membership at the church and attending Mass, making the food, and still have associations with other Poles. While Polish is a significant part of their lives, it is not the primary focus. America is not their adopted country, it is their country. The

casual observer will pay respects to the past and ancestry by occasionally participating with the community. This is an exercise in fun and reminiscing but the effort is a small part of their lives. They are 10 percenters at best. The final group, the largest, will most likely be mixed-Polish by parentage, or they might carry a Polish name, or even be a recent immigrant but have no inclination to acknowledge or exist as a Polish person. It is just not important to them as it is not important to most Americans. With this kind of mix, what can American Polonia aspire to going forward? Why are we doing this?

THE "WHYS" I would summarize with three "Ls": legacy, livelihood, and love. As mentioned many times over the years in the Pondering Pole, Polish does not get the props (proper respect) or the press other ethnic groups do. The awareness of who we are and what we have accomplished is many times diminished. Bolstering and promoting our legacy then is a worthy and needed reason. And if how we are viewed by others is less than acceptable, then improving the attitude and perception of others towards us can only help to sweeten our livelihood such as with our jobs, in school, in the community, and in our relationships with friends and family. Finally, if there is a place in our heart for Polish culture, history, and background merely because we love it, shouldn't that by itself be enough motivation for promoting Polonia? And by extension, if you love something or someone, don't you want others to feel the same way? The truth is, for some of us, we are Polish and we love it and that is why we live it, promote it, and participate in it.

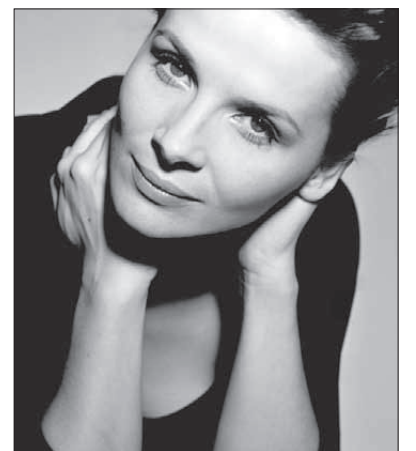
So we know who the players are and we know why we do it. Now the big, big question for January (and I invite you think long and hard about this yourself) is: How can we accomplish what we want to see continue and endure?

A standard answer is we need more of this and more of that and certainly we do. We need more liveries, contributors, promoters, and more participators. We need to cover the bases like stocking the libraries with Polish-themed books, finding folks to take over when we are gone, and preserving the places we hold dear. Yes, we need people and covered bases and that is a good outcome. Rather than concentrate on the numbers though, I feel like we should focus more on the method and approach and the numbers and assurances will come. In all of the cases where I have observed that a "new" Polish person has come on board, there was a transformation in their view of Polonia and then they became transformed.

TO KNOW THYSELF is one of the great purposes and experiences for a human being, and introducing a Polish person to their heritage is a great way to start. A friend told me she gives the Polish American Journal to her nephew each month and that small bit of information made my day. He didn't have to read it but if it wasn't given to him, if it wasn't even near him, he wouldn't have had the chance to be transformed. I have seen this over and over again with young people introduced to Polish dance, the festival, or cooking the food. The tangible, real, personal interaction, I believe, makes the difference.

Being Polish is not a religious

experience (though that can be debatable) and I don't want this to sound like joining a cult, but as fast as the world is moving, with all of the changes we are experiencing, with how technical the world is becoming, with how artificial our everyday lives are, learning about the sights, sounds, and smells of an ethnic culture—our culture—is a great way to stay in touch with humanity. We hear about the void that lies within the young people in our society. I believe one way that it can be filled is by self-awareness and meaning that is found through an understanding of your Polishness. Ask someone to join you; invite somebody into your world. If you can influence one other person, no matter if she or he is 100% or 0% Polish to appreciate it as I do, then I have hope that Polonia will continue and endure.



JULIETTE BINOCHE, the famous award-winning French actress has a partial Polish background and an amazing story. Her mother was born in Częstochowa, and her Catholic grandparents were imprisoned at Auschwitz because they were considered to be intellectuals by the Nazi occupiers.

POLISH OR NOT?

A fascinating find on the EthnicCelebs website (ethniccelebs.com): Juliette Binoche, the famous award-winning French actress and star of Krzysztof Kieslowski's *Three Colors: Blue*, has a partial Polish background and an amazing story. According to EthnicCelebs:

Juliette's mother was born in Częstochowa, Poland. Juliette's maternal grandfather was of Belgian (Walloon) and French descent, and Juliette's maternal grandmother was of Polish ancestry. Juliette's maternal grandparents, who were Catholic, were imprisoned at Auschwitz because they were considered to be intellectuals by the Nazi occupiers. Juliette's maternal grandparents were active in the theatre.

As mentioned last month, I am very grateful to all who read the Pondering Pole, to those that I have collaborated and corresponded with, and those that have contributed in any way toward producing the 100 issues I have been blessed to write. Sto lat to all of you, dziękuję bardzo, and good luck in 2014.

If you have a thought about this month's topic, an answer to the question, a question of your own, 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.

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SURNAME CORNER / Robert Strybel

Birth Records in Poland Released by Court Order

Finding one's biological family can be traumatizing

ADOPTED FROM POLAND SEEK BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

WARSAW—Back in the 1970s and '80s a number of childless Polish-American couples made their dreams come true by adopting a Polish orphan. If it was medically possible for them to have a family the natural way, they considered becoming adoptive parents to a baby of their own ancestral heritage to be the next best thing.

That was relatively easy back then. Being of Polish descent and affidavits from a parish priest or a PolAm organization that a given couple cultivated its Polish heritage induced Polish judges to award custody. Since then, however, things have become far more difficult.

Under more restrictive international laws, to which Poland is a party, procedures have been tightened. Polish citizens get the first crack at adoptable infants, and the proverbial "blue-eyed baby boys" and "cute blond-haired little girls" are understandably the first to find new families. Non-Polish citizens have to settle for those orphans which no Polish couples were interested in adopting — youngsters with birth defects, older children over 10 years of age or two or three siblings which should not be separated.

But time goes on, and the orphans adopted decades ago have long since reached adulthood and often set up families of their own. Many

of them have found out they were adopted, and some of those want to know who their birth mother or both biological parents were. In recent months, I have received a number of inquiries along those lines. The question should be asked not only whether that is possible but also is it advisable? Often the interests of three separate parties — the adoptive parents, the adopted child and the biological parents — come into conflict. At times the child's biological siblings also get involved.

On the one hand, everyone has the right to know who his or her actual parents were or, if the father is unknown, who the biological mother was. But the adoptive parents who had showered the orphan with love and raised it as their very own may feel their family will be endangered. The biological mother, who by now may be living in a stable family relationship, often resents someone dredging up her past and revealing her out-of-wedlock misadventure as a teenager.

One adopted Pole put it this way: "Ever more often I keep thinking about finding my biological parents. I was adopted at the age of 18 months by a magnificent couple but I would like to get to know my real parents." Another expressed misgivings over the situation: "My adoptive parents never told me about my biological family and I'd really like to know. Whenever I bring it up, my (adoptive) mother cries, and I don't know what to do."

MANY ADOPTIVE PARENTS, especially those who have concealed

the adoption, fear the child they raised may reject them if he finds his real parents. But the participant of one Internet forum bluntly replied: "Why would you want to cause those who adopted you heartache and grief after they have given you their love and are emotionally attached to you. Why should you be concerned with your birth mother who gave you away like a useless rag-doll?"

Still, there will always be those who want to satisfy their curiosity. Attorney Bartosz Majerski of the Iuridica Law Office (<http://www.iuridica.com.pl/en/law-firm-iuridica>) told this reporter that an adopted person must file a motion for access to birth records with the court that handled the adoption process. Normally that requires engaging a good lawyer specializing in family issues. Anna Gutowska (anna.adopcje@gmail.com), who herself learned at the age of 12 she had been adopted, did everything in her power to track down her birth parents. Now she is helping others in the same boat to find their biological roots.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN an adopted person finally locates his/her birth mother or biological parents? Often there is surprise, disappointment and regret. Learning that one was born to a pathological family marked by domestic violence and substance abuse can be a traumatizing revelation. It may be less of a shock if a teenaged mother simply lacked the funds to raise a child or was forced to do so against her will by her parents. In some cases, the child and birth mother have been known to establish regular ties. But whichever scenario unfolds, finding one's biological parents is always a major emotional experience for all parties involved.

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GENEALOGY / Stephen M. Szabados

Timelines in Genealogy

Timelines have proven to be very helpful in my genealogy research. I use timelines to help explain the information that I include in the summaries for family members. My summaries focus on the individuals. The timelines allow me to capture the total picture of the family's arrival in America or the migration of some pioneer family branches across America from the east coast to the west coast. Timelines are also an important tool to organize and assess the tremendous amount of information I have uncovered for my family history.

The timeline is a visual tool that should show events in chronological order. It can show gaps and inconsistencies in the information that you have found for your family history. Identifying gaps will help resolve data conflicts and show you where you should direct your next efforts at gathering information.

A family timeline showing locations and dates will indicate the movements of the family and point to possible new locations to look for documents. More documents can be found from these clues and thus fill in more of the gaps. Also the information found in these new documents can point to more areas to look for family history. This will help explain the what, where and when of some of the events.

Timelines should list all direct ancestors and their siblings. This

will help you view the data as it relates to the family group and give you a better and more complete picture of the family. This will help explain events as they relate to the individual family members.

Timelines can also be used to examine your family history in a historical perspective. After entering your family events in your timeline, enter various historical events that may have affected your ancestors. This will help explain the historical context of certain events in the family history and possibly show the significance of your family events. On my timeline a move to Detroit, Michigan was explained by employment during World War I at a war factory.

The completed timeline will give a basic outline for your family history and should help add a treasure trove of information.

USE TIMELINES. I guarantee that they will lead you to be more successful in your genealogy research and will make your family history research more complete and exciting.

❖ ❖ ❖

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

"Return to Your Roots" Tour

ORCHARD LAKE, Mich. — The Polish Mission, and the Polonia Americana Research Institute (PARI), the Polish Mission's genealogy center, announced a new genealogy tour to Poland. This engaging tour will allow travelers to focus on the many historical and unique sites found in the Krakow and Zakopane area. In addition, one day will be devoted to visiting the National Archives. Here, an opportunity for personal research with assistance from local researchers will be available. Also, a day has been set aside for travelers to visit their near village or town where they will have the opportunity to walk in their ancestors' footsteps, visit family churches, see local sites and perhaps meet with relatives.

Highlights of the trip include visits and toursto: the Wieliczka Salt Mine, the Royal Castle, Krakow Old Town, Auschwitz and Berkenau, Wadowice (former home to Pope John Paul II), the Museum-Schindler Factory, the Underground World of Krakow's Past, the former Jewish District—Kazimierz, and much more. While most of the time will be spent in Krakow, an overnight of the beautiful artist town Zakopane has been planned with special events included.

The tour will be fully escorted by: Ceil Wendt Jensen, Certified Genealogist and Director, Polonia Americana Research Institute (PARI), the Polish Mission's genealogy center; Carole Schaffer, Founder and CEO of the Global Alliance of Travelers



CEIL WENDT JENSEN

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For further information, please contact Carole Schaffer at carole@gatsea.com.

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BOOKS IN BRIEF / Florence Clowes MLIS

BOOK REVIEW / John M. Grondelski

What You Need to Know, Essentially

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO BEING POLISH

50 Facts & Facets of Nationhood, by Anna Spysz and Marta Turek, *New Europe Books 2013*, 314 pps., photos, maps, index, suggested readings, \$17.95

This book is chock full of interesting information for both Americans and Americans of Polish descent. It is divided into five parts, Poland in Context (nature, tales, history, war, communism, religion), Poles in Poland, (Polish mentality, men and women, food, drinking, school, holidays and traditions), Poles in the Limelight (writers and poets, theater, film, scientists, sports) Poles Around the World, (nationhood, exile and emigration, new neighbors, Polonia), and Poles in a Nutshell (the Essence of Polishness). The book contains many illustrations, suggested further readings, and the changing borders of Poland.

The authors are two women who were both born in Poland, emigrated to United States at an early age and returned to Poland in their early 20s. Anna Spysz earned her MA at Jagiellonian University in Central and East European Studies in Krakow. Marta Turek received her MA in English Linguistics from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan.

EARTH AGAIN

poems by Chris Dombrowski, Wayne State University 2013, 82 pps.

Take a deep breath, as you are transported into the things of the earth, the waters, the fruits and word play of a lovely body.

Dombrowski's poetry is something we need in this harried world. Some of the poems are pages long, others a paragraph or two. Still another is a lengthy single sentence describing the chills one receives while listening to good music. Here is a chance to savor the vivid descriptions of common elements around us.

MY MOTHER'S SECRET

by J.L. Witterick

G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2013
195 pps., \$19.95

Based on a true story, the lives of two Jewish families hidden by a Polish mother and her daughter draws the reader into their world of fear, famine and courage to do what's right. Franciska Halamajowa and her daughter Helena sheltered fifteen Polish Jews and one German army defector in tiny nooks of her Sokal cottage from the Nazis, and from one another, for two years! The story is told in the voices of four characters.

All the while the mother and daughter posed as Nazi sympathizers and were often granted favors in the form of food or leniency. Scarcity of food, cold harsh winters and the constant fear of being exposed by the Nazis, and even neighbors, challenged their determination to help their fellow man.

The author and her family emigrated to Canada from Taiwan in the late '60s with \$200 to their name and only their father able to speak English. Today she is president of Sky Investment Counsel and one of Canada's most successful businesswomen.

The Genius of Oskar Halecki

Thaddeus V. Gromada, ed.

OSKAR HALECKI (1891-1973): EULOGIES AND REFLECTIONS

Hasbrouck Heights, NJ:

Tatra Eagle Press, 2013. pp. 71,

paperback, \$7.95, illustrations.

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by John M. Grondelski

Postwar American Polonia was enriched by many giants who found a new home in the United States as the Iron Curtain imprisoned Poland. The Polish intelligentsia played a major role in that postwar *emigracja polityczna* and, given the genocide suffered by intellectuals in Poland at the hands of Nazis as well as Soviets and their "Polish" lackeys, we can be grateful that some of Poland's great prewar intellectual tradition survived on these shores.

One intellectual giant of that emigration was historian Oskar Halecki. Earning his habilitation degree in 1915, he had a distinguished academic career at the University of Warsaw as well as contributing his services to Polish diplomacy before World War II. He then led an equally distinguished academic career in America, serving as Professor of History at Fordham University in New York, an originating *spiritus movens* of the Institute on East Central Europe (now the East Central European Center) of Columbia University, and a key founder of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in New York. His publications, mostly focused on medieval and early Renaissance Poland, remain valuable not just for their originality, depth, and erudition,

but because they extracted the abiding lessons that could be learned from that period and articulated a coherent Christian vision of history. Lest anyone question the value and relevance of such an approach, consider the controversy that roiled the European Union at the beginning of the millennium when it had to decide whether or not to acknowledge in its Constitution that Christianity was one of the primary formative forces that made Europe what it is today.

Halecki strove mightily to show that the history of Central Europe, the lands between the Germany and Russia, from the Baltic to the Balkans, was an integral part of larger European history. That historical amnesia still afflicts American and Western European intellectual life: I remember, twenty years ago, visiting an art museum in a large American city, which displayed a map of centers of medieval culture. The lands east of Berlin were empty, *terra incognita*—no Kraków, no Prague. The alternate forgetfulness (on view during the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s) was American ignorance wrapped up in the excuse of Central Europe as "a confusing bedlam of cultures, languages, and peoples," populated by whirling polka dervishes in kerchiefs that nobody could understand.

But when Halecki was active, there was an even greater threat: an intellectual version of FDR's political betrayal, by subsuming the history of Central Europe under Russian history, treating Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, etc. as mere appendices of a larger Russian story. Halecki trained a whole generation of American historians to resist that false paradigm.

One of those whom he trained was Ted Gromada, now professor emeritus of history at New Jersey City Univer-

sity and himself a long time driving force (along with his wife, sister, and brother-in-law) in the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences. Gromada pays tribute to his doctoral mentor with this little book, published on the 40th anniversary of Oskar Halecki's death. The book brings together eulogies delivered in Halecki's honor at a memorial service in October 1973, a month after Halecki died of a stroke.

The eulogies are not just "nice things said about a dead guy." They provide a good overview of the Halecki's work as well as the esteem in which it was held by his peers, in American, Polish, and Central European scholarly circles. Halecki was no narrow nationalist, and his respect for the cosmopolitan pluralism of medieval/Renaissance Poland is reflected in the tributes by Ukrainian and Lithuanian scholars at Halecki's death. Gromada rounds out the book with a general biography of his mentor and reproductions of letters of condolence from people like Karol Wojtyła, Philadelphia's Cardinal Król, Bishop Wesoły (the Polish Episcopate's representative to all Poles abroad), *et al.* Too bad he didn't include a bibliography of Halecki's works in English.

A timely tribute to a great historian and committed Catholic, Halecki's life was perhaps best summed up by Father Robert Trisco, a long-time Church historian and official in the American Catholic Historical Association: "If we are seeking contemporary Christians whose causes might be promoted in order to provide models for living in the world but not according to its norms, for raising [its] consciousness of its true purpose and destiny, for fusing religious, scholarly, and patriotic ideals in a fruitful life, then perhaps we need look no farther than . . ." Oskar Halecki.

NEW BOOKS / John M. Grondelski

The Women Who Killed for the Führer

Wendy Lower

HITLER'S FURIES: GERMAN WOMEN IN THE NAZI KILLING FIELDS

Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 2013. HB, Pp. 270, \$20.80 (web price; e-book available, \$26)

To order: www.hmhc.com

When most people think of Nazi cruelty, they imagine an armed, jackbooted soldier. Wendy Lower wants to change that. She wants you also to imagine the women who killed for the Führer, "Hitler's Furies." ". . . [T]he collage of stories and memories, of cruelty and courage . . . helps us to see what human beings—not only men, but women as well—are capable of believing and doing" (p. 203).

Lower, professor of history at Claremont McKenna College, follows the stories of ten such women before, during, and after World War II. Before the War, most were usually the girl next door (which was, after all, the Nazi ideal. "German men should mate with the girl next door, not the urbanite or the Hollywood-style vamp." — p. 25). They were often small town girls or working girls in cities like Vienna or Berlin, with limited options. Lower calls them the "lost generation" because of the radical changes they experienced during their youth. Born during or after World War I, they grew up in the politically and economically unstable Weimar Republic to come of age just as Hitler began feeding Germans a steady diet of racism, nationalism, and imperialism.

Hitler's *Drang nach Osten* was nothing new: the Teutonic Knights coveted the plains of Central and Eastern Europe back in the Middle Ages. But, with the outbreak of the Second World War, the patriotic push East resonated with another trope, with German fascination (starting with Karl May) with the American Wild West. Occupied Poland and

Ukraine were Hitler's "Wild East," populated by savages who needed to be controlled, eliminated, or civilized (p. 35). (One should add that images of the "Wild East" are not that alien to Americans, either. Not a few American historians have written off the lands east of Berlin, in blame-the-victim-for-your-ignorance fashion, as a "crazy quilt of incoherent national feuds," with baneful consequences for both America and the peoples involved.)

As if heeding a 20th century Horace Greeley, German girls responded to the call "Go East, young woman!" They went in typical female roles: as nurses, secretaries, teachers, and wives. But the all-encompassing Nazi culture of death had already perverted these professions and roles to total ideological loyalty. Nurses might care for wounded German soldiers and then administer lethal injections to the handicapped and elderly as part of the Nazi euthanasia program. (Lower suggests that they might also have even killed some German soldiers, though she admits the evidence for this remains unclear. If Nazi medical ethics were essentially Nietzschean "survival of the fittest," is it not plausible to think that "gravely injured and shell-shocked soldiers" (p. 123) were also not dispatched?) Stenographers and secretaries take dictation which, in the Nazi East, included typing orders for street roundups and executions, provisioning for ghetto liquidations, and bills of lading to send *der Dreck* ("garbage"—p. 104) to be gassed. Wives might create domestic sanctuaries for their "overworked" husbands, but the latter's stress came from routinely killing other people. And what happened when the lady of the house got her own taste for blood?

Poland, Ukraine, and Belarus are the primary places where these crimes occurred. Indeed, Poland was the primary venue, because many of the places Lower speaks of under

their contemporary Ukrainian or Belarusian names were Polish territory in 1939. She shows how these women were witnesses, accomplices, and even perpetrators. Like secretary Ilse Struwe, who witnessed a 4 AM Sunday morning deportation of Jews in Równe (Rivne) from the window of her room. Like Annette Schücking (the most anti-Nazi of the group), whose routine nursing duties included trips to a Równe warehouse to obtain clothing "supplies" that had been confiscated from Jews. Like secretary Liselotte Meier, who regularly joined other Germans in Lida (then Poland, now Belarus) in "hunting" expeditions—except the targets were people. Like wife Vera Wohlauf, who married up in her second nuptial to an SS officer, and whom witnesses say was active (with a whip) during the deportation of Jews in Międzyrzec Podlaski. Like Erna Petri, a wife who took over an old *szlachta* estate near Łwów. One day, riding home, she saw some Jewish children hiding in the bushes, so she coaxed them out, brought them home and fed them . . . and then took them into the garden and shot each one in the back of the head with a pistol.

Lower's book shows how genocide knows no gender. It also shows how, in a society which embraces a culture of death and implements it in its laws, it is extraordinarily difficult for anybody, no matter how much in conscience they dissent, no matter how far they think they are removed, from getting their hands dirty.

The weaker parts of the book are the musings of why people do these kinds of things. There is some ruminating about the usually-cited causes: authoritarian upbringing, pervasive anti-Semitism, patriarchal smothering of female agency, etc. But the mystery of sin has been a human focus ever since Adam and Eve discovered what paltry gods they had be-

come and St. Paul wondered about why it is so hard to do the good and so easy to do the bad.

Lower's book shows how genocide knows no gender.

In one place, Lower points out how run-of-the-mill these women were: some were Catholics, some were Protestants. Although perhaps not directly the subject of this book, the reviewer would welcome a study of what perverted notion of Christianity these women held. I suspect their "faith" was either simply not there, had been diluted by Nazi attempts to revive Nordic mythology and fuse it with Christianity, or some version of "cafeteria Christianity" ("I personally don't like the Fifth Commandment.") Christianity should not wholly shoulder the burden for the secularized who once upon a time had baptismal waters poured on them.

Lower carries the stories of these women to the present. Although they are dead, many died relatively recently. Almost all went on to live normal lives in West Germany or Austria. To what degree their being women helped them evade accountability for their actions is a question Lower explores. In fact only one—who settled in East Germany—got prison time.

A fascinating look into how women played roles in the Nazi Holocaust, this study reminds us that women's moral agency can serve good—and evil. Considering how Ukrainian women helped their men perpetrate the Volhynia massacres of 1943-44, the reviewer was not as surprised as perhaps Lower seemed initially to be that mass murder is not always a sexually segregated act. A good read with many illustrations and ample notes.

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SPORTS / Tom Tarapacki

Belinsky and Fidrych: Long Gone but Not Forgotten

Part 2

Several years after Bo Belinsky pitched his final major league game, another Polish American pitcher became a national sensation. **Mark Fidrych** had little in common with Belinsky, but he also had a brief but brilliant moment in the public spotlight.

Mark Fidrych was the biggest name in baseball in 1976. The 21-year-old righthander enthralled fans with his child-like enthusiasm and unpretentiousness at a time when the public was tired of hearing about baseball's rising salaries and labor strife brought on by the end of the reserve clause.

Fidrych grew up in the central Massachusetts town of Northboro. His father, Paul, a second generation Polish American, was a public school teacher. Paul had been a very good all-around athlete, and his son followed in his footsteps. In the excellent biography *The Bird: The Life and Legacy of Mark Fidrych*, Author Doug Wilson quoted friend Jay Jablonski: "His dad was always out in the yard with him...not just playing catch, but Fidrych pitching to him." The elder Fidrych taught his son his old-school work ethic, but encouraged his individuality.

Young Mark wasn't a troublemaker but was always active, full of energy and a bit eccentric. His hyperactivity probably led to his famous on-field antics. In between pitches, he would do things like grooming the mound and talking to the baseball. He said that he was really talking to himself, not the baseball. Fidrych also told *The Sporting News* that his mannerisms were "just my way of concentrating and keeping my head in the game."

After playing at Algonquin High School, Fidrych was drafted by Detroit in the tenth round in 1974. Tall (6-3) and lanky with a headful of curly blond hair, he picked up the nickname "Bird," after Big Bird of TV's Sesame Street. One of the coaches who helped Fidrych along the way was John Grodzicki, a roving hitting instructor for the Tigers farm system. Grodzicki had been a top pitching prospect for St. Louis, but shrapnel wounds he suffered to both legs while serving in World War II as a paratrooper derailed his playing career. As Wilson wrote, Grodzicki convinced the Bird to give up his knuckleball and replace it with a change-up. But Grodzicki provided more than instruction and advice: "Later Grodzicki would frequently stop by the players' trailer to fix up a batch of his famous golabki, a cabbage dish stuffed with ground beef, peppers and whatever else he felt like throwing in at the time."

Fidrych developed into a top prospect, but he made the Tigers' 1976 major league roster mainly because the team had just lost its two best pitchers, Mikey Lolich and Joe Coleman. Fidrych didn't start a game until May 15, pitching a two-hit complete game victory over Cleveland. In his second start playing in his native Massachusetts, he held Boston to six hits and two runs in a 2-0 loss. Asked how he felt giving up a home run to Red Sox legend Carl Yastrzemski, the Bird said "It blew my mind."

Fidrych had outstanding control



MARK FIDRYCH was the biggest name in baseball in 1976.

and a very good fastball. However, what really caught the attention of fans and players alike was his personality. They had never seen a major league pitcher get down on his hands and knees to pat down the mound, or shake hands with his infielders after good plays. Fidrych's genuine exuberance was refreshing, especially because of so much of the baseball talk at that time was about money issues. Fans started packing Tiger Stadium when Fidrych pitched at home.

THE BIRD EMERGED as a national figure during a Monday Night game on ABC-TV at Tiger Stadium against the Yankees on June 28, 1976. More than 47,000 fans attended the game, and another 10,000 were reportedly turned away. When Fidrych shut down the first-place Yankees, 5-1, they chanted "We want Bird" and refused to leave until he came out for a curtain call. TV viewers, most seeing him for the first time, were captivated by the charismatic pitcher who seemed to have so much joy for the game.

Some of the Yankees thought that Fidrych was trying to show them up with his on-field antics, but Tigers right fielder Rusty Staub said: "It's no act. There's nothing contrived about him and that's what makes him a beautiful person... He's different. He's a 21-year-old kid with a great enthusiasm that everyone loves. He has an inner youth, an exuberance."

Although he had fun, Fidrych worked hard and was very serious about his pitching. Despite his antics he also worked very fast on the mound, and had a high percentage of complete games.

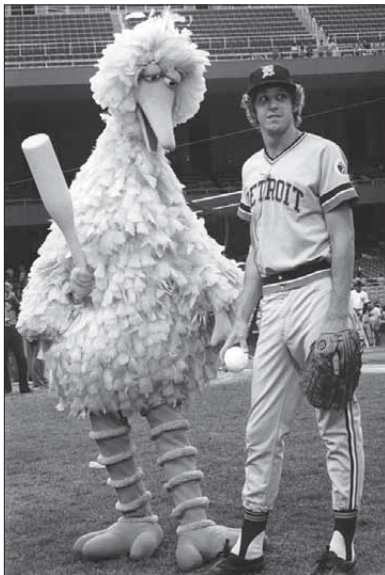
A bachelor, Fidrych had a simple lifestyle, driving a green subcompact car and living in a small Detroit apartment. He once said: "Sometimes I get lazy and let the dishes stack up, but they don't stack too high. I've only got four dishes."

Fidrych finished 19-9 for the fifth place Tigers with 24 complete games and a 2.34 ERA — both AL-bests. He was named AL Rookie of the Year and finished second in the Cy Young voting. Everyone wanted to know more about him, and his smiling face appeared on numerous national publications from *Sports Illustrated* to *Rolling Stone*.

Unfortunately, the Bird phenomenon didn't last long. During spring training to start the 1977 season, Fidrych injured his knee while shagging flies. After surgery he returned to the mound in May, pitching well and again drawing big crowds of

"Bird Watchers." However, in a game in July he felt his arm "go dead." He made two more starts, but struggled with control.

In 1978, Fidrych came back to pitch an Opening Day complete-game win, and then managed only one more complete-game win. He made only four starts in 1979, as he tried to regain his control. He had nine starts in 1980, winning his final major league start in the last game of the 1980 season. After spending all of 1981 in the minors, he was released by Detroit and signed with Boston. After playing in their minor league system for a couple of years Fidrych finally retired in 1983. His major league record was 29-19 and a 3.10 ERA. In 1985 Fidrych went to famed sports Dr. James Andrews, who diagnosed the problem as a



Tall (6-3) and lanky with a headful of curly blond hair, Fidrych picked up the nickname "Bird," after Big Bird of TV's Sesame Street.

torn rotator cuff. Andrews operated successfully, but it was too late for Fidrych's baseball career.

Fidrych went back home to Massachusetts, where he became a licensed commercial truck driver and later purchased a farm. He married his wife, Ann, in 1986, and they had a daughter, Jessica. He once told the *Boston Globe*: "I got a family, I got a house, I got a dog. I would have liked my career to have been longer, but you can't look back." He was still popular with baseball fans, and spent much time with charitable activities.

FIDRYCH WAS ELECTED to the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame in early 2009, but never made it to his induction. Tragically, on April 13, 2009, he died from accidental asphyxia by suffocation while working under a truck. He was 54.

Alan Trammell, who was a rookie shortstop with Detroit in 1977, was one of many who mourned his passing. "He was very genuine. It was not an act. He never changed. He liked to have a good time. You'd go over his house and he'd make dinner. That's the type of guy he was."

STELMASZEK IS HOME

After more than four decades of living the baseball life, Rick Stelmazek was back home in South Chicago this season. He was fired last year from his position as bullpen coach for the major league Minnesota Twins. Stelmazek spent 32



STELMASZEK

consecutive seasons on the Minnesota Twins' coaching staff and was the longest-tenured coach in the team's history. His firing was part of a coaching shuffle that followed consecutive last-place finishes.

The Chicago native was drafted by Washington in the 11th round of the 1967 draft, and played for the Senators and several other major league organizations. After retiring as a player at the end of the 1978 season, he was hired on as the manager of Cedar Rapids, and was named Midwest League manager in 1980. He then joined the Twins' major league coaching staff under another Polish American, Johnny Goryl. During his coaching tenure with the Twins, Stelmazek was a member of two World Series championship teams in 1987 and 1991.

"I'm not going to cry in my beer about what happened," he said. "That's just the way the business works. I look at the bright side."

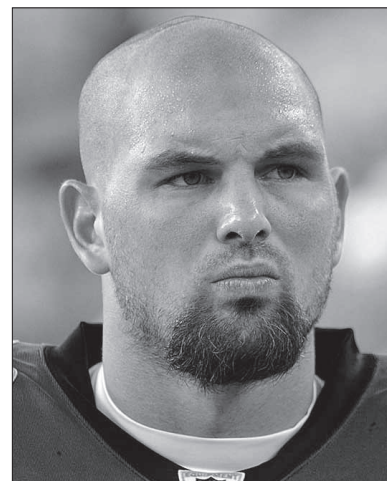
Stelmazek's keen sense of humor kept the clubhouse loose. At one point, he and Polish-American Twins Doug Mientkiewicz, Corey Koskie, A.J. Pierzynski started calling themselves "The Pole Patrol."

Stelmazek and his wife, Kathie, have been married over 40 years and have a son, Michael. He lives a block from where he grew up, in the Chicago neighborhood now known as "Slag Valley."

CHICAGO FIRE

Chicagoland native **Tom Zbikowski** recently announced that he has given up the NFL—for the Chicago Fire Department. He had been released by the Chicago Bears in August.

He told the *Chicago Tribune's* David Haugh that "Football got old to me... I enjoyed my first two years in the NFL because it was a challenge.... I enjoyed high school



ZBIKOWSKI

and college much more."

Very proud of his heritage, Tommy Z would wear a lucky t-shirt under his pads displaying a bald eagle flanked by a Polish flag and an American flag.

At Notre Dame the two-time captain started all 48 games in his career at safety, and was named a second-team Walter Camp All-American in 2006. Zbikowski was selected by the Baltimore Ravens in the third round of the 2008 NFL Draft with the 86th pick overall. He later signed with Indianapolis in 2012 and started at safety in 11 games. He then signed with Chicago in 2013.

To lose weight, Zbikowski began taking a diuretic banned by the NFL. After he was waived by the Bears, he got a four-game suspension. Zbikowski is embarrassed by the perception some might have that he'd used a performance-enhancing drug. "I don't want that label of a guy who took a PED because as much as I'm a hustler, I don't like cheating," he said.

Tommy Z was also known as a heavyweight boxer. A Golden Gloves boxer since age nine, he had an amateur record of 60-13. As a Notre Dame senior he made his pro boxing debut at Madison Square Garden. He was led into the ring by Fighting Irish teammates carrying a Polish flag, and then knocked out his opponent in the first round. He's 4-0 as a pro, with his last fight in 2011, and wants to fight competitively again.

"I've had an extremely blessed life and I saved three-quarters of my money, so I can do whatever I want and I want to be of service to a community," said Zbikowski. Zbikowski's father, Ed, a brother, and grandfather have worked as firefighters in the Chicago area.



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Comfort Foods Like Babcia Used to Make

In different Pol-Am families it may be mamusia (mama), babcia (granny) or prababcia (great-grandmother), maybe even a stray ciocia (aunt) or two, or even an Uncle Staś, known for his unmatched home-made kielbasa. But nearly all of us occasionally think back to those Polish treats of our childhood. Some call them comfort foods – dishes that conjure up memories of mouth-watering scents wafting in from the kitchen and heart-warming dishes that simply made people feel good about themselves, their families and their heritage. Traditional comfort foods include not only the old standbys such as pierogi and gołąbki, but also various regional favorites to which families have added their own personal touches over the years. Here are some of them worth trying.

POTATO BABKA (baba kartoflana). Grate 2-1/4 lbs peeled potatoes into sieve placed over container to catch drippings. When drippings have settled, pour off clear liquid and add remaining white sediment (potato starch) to grated potatoes. Dice 3/4-1 lb slab bacon or thick-sliced bacon and fry into golden-brown nuggets. To grated potatoes add bacon nuggets and some of the

drippings (in old peasant cookery every last drop of drippings was used!), 3 eggs, 1-2 grated onions, 2-3 buds crushed garlic, salt & pepper and mix well. Grease baking pan dish with bacon drippings, add potato mixture no more than 2 high and bake in preheated 375° oven 1 hr or until done. Serve hot with sour cream and hot tea.

COUNTRY-STYLE SCRAMBLED EGGS (jajecznica po wiejsku). Allow half a slice thick-sliced bacon, diced, and 1/2-inch piece smoked kielbasa, skinned and diced, and a diced onion slice for every 2 people. Fry up ingredients, turning with spatula until lightly browned. Bacon should be tender, not crisp! Add 2 eggs per person and cook like sunny-side-up eggs until white is slightly set. Break up eggs with spatula and fry until as soft or firm as you like. Serve with rye bread and unsalted butter for Sunday breakfast.

DROPPED DUMPLINGS (kluski kładzione). Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to boil. Break 1 egg into bowl, add 1 c flour, sifted, 1/4 t salt and just enough water to form a thick batter. Beat with spoon until air blisters appear. Scoop up portions of batter in the shape of

small, elongated dumplings and drop into boiling water. Dip spoon into boiling water between additions. When all dumplings are in pot, give it a stir, cover and cook 3-4 min. Remove with slotted spoon and drain in colander or sieve. These dumplings are a meal in themselves, dotted with butter, drenched with sour cream or garnished with golden-brown pork cracklings (skwarki). Without such toppings they are an accompaniment to stews and gravy-type meat dishes (instead of potatoes, rice or pasta).

POLISH PORK STEW (gulasz wieprzowy). Rinse and pat dry 1-1/2 lbs cubed stewing pork. Shake meat in flour-filled plastic bag to coat evenly. In heavy skillet, brown meat on all sides in 3 T hot fat. Remove meat from skillet with slotted spoon and lightly brown 3 sliced onions in the same drippings. Return meat to skillet, add 2 - 3 sliced carrots, 1 small diced turnip (optional), 1 bay leaf and 1/2 c beer. Reduce heat and simmer covered on low heat 45 - 60 min or until meat is tender, stirring occasionally. Add a little water if stew begins to sizzle. Drench with 1/2 c sour cream fork-blended with 1 T flour and simmer briefly. Dilute with meat stock or water if too

thick. Season with salt & pepper, 1/2 t sweet paprika, 1/2 t marjoram, 1/2 t crushed caraway seeds and 1 bud crushed garlic. Stir ingredients and simmer briefly. Garnish with chopped parsley if desired. Serve with dropped dumplings (above) or groats (buckwheat, barley, millet) of choice.

HEARTY POTATO SALAD (salatka kartoflana) Cook 2-1/4 lbs potatoes (preferably in jackets) until fully cooked but still firm, and set aside to cool. Peel and dice potatoes. Dice 2 peeled cucumbers and 1/3 lb skinned smoked kielbasa and combine with potatoes. Add 1 bunch chives, chopped, and 1/2 bunch chopped fresh dill. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, marjoram and caraway and lace with about 1 c sour cream.

MILK SOUP WITH PINCHED NOODLES (zupa mleczna z zacierką). Bring 1 qt milk to boil. Stir a little hot water into 2 heaping T flour to form a stiff dough. Pinch off small pieces, rub between fingers and place on lightly floured board to dry. Add noodles to boiling milk, cook several min and ladle into soup bowls. Allow diners to season their soup to taste with salt or sugar. A

cold-weather breakfast food!

PORK HOCKS & SAUERKRAUT (golonka w kapuście). Wash and rinse 4 pork hocks (allowing 1 per person). Place in pot and scald with boiling water to cover. Add 1 t salt, bring to boil and skim off scum until no more forms. Add 1 portion diced soup vegetables (carrot, celery, parsley root, onion), 5 peppercorns, 2 buds garlic and 1 bay leaf, reduce heat and cook covered 90 min. Separately, cook 1 qt drained, rinsed sauerkraut in 3 c boiling water 1 hr. Transfer half the sauerkraut, drained, to roasting pan or large casserole, place the hocks on top of it, smother them with remaining sauerkraut, add 2 c hock stock and bake covered in 325° oven 1 hr or until hocks are fork tender. Thicken kraut a little flour if desired.

HIGHLANDER TART MUSHROOM SOUP (góralski barszcz grzybowy). Soak 1 c dried mushrooms (scrubbed well to remove all grit) in 1 qt boiling water and let stand 2-3 hrs. Add another qt water and 1 c sauerkraut juice and cook covered on low 2 hrs. Whiten with 3/4 c sour cream fork-blended with 2 T flour. Salt & pepper to taste.

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THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD POLISH COOKBOOK:

Hamtramck, Detroit and Beyond — \$10.00 by Elna Lavine, 44 pp., sc.

96 recipes from the famed Polonia of Detroit. Breakfast, lunch, dinner pastries, pierogi, kluski, cream chipped beef, soups, desserts and more.

POLISH GIRL COOKBOOK

\$10.00 by Eva Gerweck, 44 pp., sc.

Another cookbook full of recipes from Detroit's Old Polish neighborhoods. Appetizers, entrees, breads, desserts, and more! Upper Peninsula style pastries, potato salad, pastries, babka, breads, and more.

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This unique cookbook actually replicates recipes taken from menus of Motor City and surrounding area restaurants. It shows you how to make an entire menu right in your kitchen that tastes and smells just like the restaurant. Soups, salads, dressings, sandwiches, stuffed cabbage, and more.

POLISH PIEROGI: From the Old Country to the Old Neighborhood
\$10.00 by Eva Gerweck, 48 pp., sc.

A collection of "secret" recipes, tips, and more for not only fillings and toppings, but a variety of dough recipes as well. Over 150 recipes with regional variations, from California to New York!



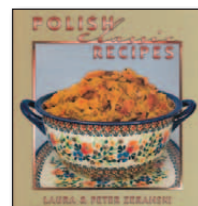
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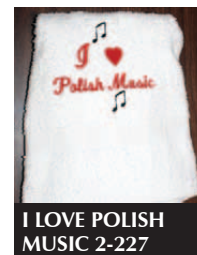
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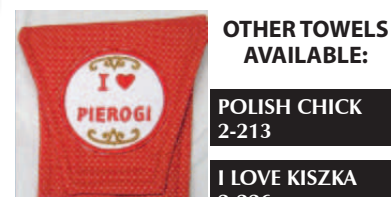
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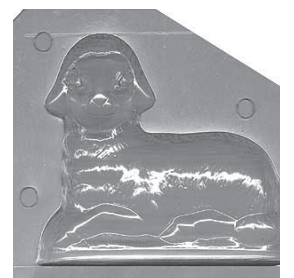
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AMERICAN POLONIA AT A GLANCE

CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO — November 2013 marked the 150th anniversary of the founding of **The Polish Society of California**. The occasion was marked by a grand celebration at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco, a venue chosen in part because that was where the first meeting of the United Nations took place in 1945. Poland had not been invited to participate, an irony not unnoticed by at least one distinguished guest who, as will be revealed below, ensured that Poland would not be entirely forgotten.

But this year, the event was not a meeting but a celebration aptly titled "From Pioneers to Silicon Valley," providing perfect bookends for the multi-volume history of Poles in California. Those first pioneers were talented and exciting people: writers, cartographers, physicians, lawyers, engineers, businessmen and, of course, the celebrated actress, Helena Modjeska.

For more on the Poles who found their way to California, go to www.pgsa.org and look for this article on the Home Page under "Did You Know?"

—*Cosmopolitan Review*

MICHIGAN

The Polish Mission, contributors to the PBS show "Genealogy Roadshow" is pleased to announce a "Return to Your Polish Roots Tour" to Krakow and Zakopane.

The tour will allow travelers to focus on the many historical and unique sites found in the Krakow and Zakopane area. In addition, one day will be devoted to visiting the National Archives. Here, an opportunity for personal research with assistance from local researchers will be available. Also, a day has been set aside for travelers to visit their near village or town where they will have the opportunity to walk in their

ancestors footsteps, visit family churches, see local sites and perhaps meet with relatives.

Highlights of the trip include visits and tours, led by local tour guides, to: the Wieliczka Salt Mine, Wawel (the Royal Castle), Krakow Old Town, Auschwitz and Birkenau, Wadowice (former home to Pope John Paul II), the Museum-Schindler Factory, the Underground World of Krakow's Past, the former Jewish District—Kazimierz, and much more. While most of the time will be spent in Krakow, an overnight of the beautiful artist town of Zakopane has been planned with special events included.

The tour will be fully escorted by: Ceil Wendt Jensen, certified genealogist and director, Polonia Americana Research Institute (PARI), the Polish Mission's genealogy center; Carole Schaffer, founder and CEO of the Global Alliance of Travelers Seeking European Ancestry (GAT-SEA); and local, English-speaking tour escort.

For further information, please contact Carole Schaffer at carole@gatsea.com.

Deposits must be received by January 31, 2014.

NEW JERSEY

WALLINGTON, N.J. — The **Polish American Poets Academy** has announced its latest contest, this one for a poem dedicated to Blessed John Paul II.

The Academy was founded in June, 2003. Its mission is to support Polish American poets at all stages of their careers and to foster the appreciation of poetry.

In 2005 the Academy was named John Paul II Polish American Poets Academy in honor of the Holy Father John Paul II, who was an honorary member of the Academy. Located in Wallington, New Jersey, it is a literary and educational institution with 501 (c) (3) status (tax-

deductible donations).

For more information, write to Barbara Alex Aleksandrowicz, P.O. Box 3163, Wallington, NJ 07057; e-mail jpiipapa@mail.com.

CAMDEN — Sun., Jan. 5. St. Joseph Church **Wafer Luncheon** at the Royal Cracovia Restaurant, 510 S. White Horse Pike, Magnolia, N.J. 12:30 p.m. Info/Reservations call Pat (856) 310-1783.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA — Everyone is invited to attend the annual tribute ceremony honoring American Revolutionary War hero and freedom fighter for Poland, **General Thaddeus Kosciuszko**, Sat., Feb. 1, 2014 at noon.

The event, sponsored by the Polish American Congress Eastern Pennsylvania District, will be held at the Kosciuszko House, 3rd & Pine Streets in historic Philadelphia.

A luncheon will follow the ceremony at the Polish American Cultural Center Museum.

For additional information or luncheon reservations call: Polish American Congress at (215) 739-3408 or call the Polish American Cultural Center, Mon.-Fri., 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. at (215) 922-1700.

This year marks the 268th Anniversary of Kosciuszko's birth.

PHILADELPHIA — Sun., Jan. 12. **Polski Uniwersytet Ludowy Lecture** in the Polish Language, Associated Polish Home, 9150 Academy Road, Northeast Philadelphia, 3:00 p.m. Speaker: Dr. Krystyna Berger, sociology expert. Topic: "Assertiveness, the benefits of its control in relationships with others." Info call (215) 624-9954. All are invited to attend. Free.

READING — Sun., Jan. 5. **Polish American Heritage Association of Berks County Installation Dinner**, Mountain Springs Restaurant, 2619 Hill Road. 1:00 p.m. For info call Marilyn (610) 779-5523.

PHILADELPHIA — Sat., Feb. 8. **Polish Police Association of Philadelphia Annual Founder's Day Banquet**. King's Caterers II, 4010 New Falls Road, Bristol, Pa. 6:00 p.m. to midnight. Continuous music, cocktail hour, surf and turf sit-down dinner and a six-hour open bar. Info call Edward McCloskey (215) 425-4783.

Embassy Celebrates 95th Independence Day



ORDERS OF MERIT AWARDED. The highlight of Poland's independence celebration occurred when varying degrees of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland were bestowed by Ambassador Ryszard Schnepf upon the three honorees pictured above, from left: U.S. Congressman John Dingell — "The Commander's Cross," bestower Ambassador Schnepf, Multicultural Media Executive Walter Kotaba — "The Officer's Cross," Director and Conductor of the National Philharmonic Orchestra Piotr Gajewski — "The Knight's Cross."

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Over 250 guests attended the annual proclaiming of Poland's Independence Day, observed November 15, 2013, at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland under the auspices of Ambassador Ryszard Schnepf. The attendees comprised a broad cross section of official-Washington, diplomats, international military corps, luminaries and Polonia. And it must be noted that everyone partook of the Polish-European buffets and deserts created by Chef Andrzej Bielak after the ceremonies.

Remembering the resurrection of Poland on November 11, 1918 at the end of World War I, Ambassador Schnepf stressed during his extensive patriotic remarks and historical references that "the anniversary of Poland's Independence Day should be a celebratory occasion, a manifestation of a national sense of pride and our mutual accomplishments as a nation."

The ambassador also said this was a good year for Polish-American relations, and cataloged several high level bilateral diplomatic exchanges that occurred. In concluding his remarks, the esteemed and highly decorated Wladyslaw

Zachariasiewicz, the spry 102 years-old living legend of both Poland and Polonia, was duly recognized and appreciated to the audience, with the favor being gratefully returned by him.

Congressman Dingell, the longest serving member of the U.S. Congress, spoke on behalf the Order of Merit honorees. As a very proud son of Polonia, he remembered at length — with examples and vignettes — the courage, strength and perseverance of Poland: The spirit of its people never wavered during the very dark days of World War II or later under onerous communist domination. But in the end the home-grown Solidarity movement triumphed over all, and Poland made its self a free nation once again.

The finale of the official program was the audience participating in the enthusiastic singing of "My, Pierwsza Brygada" ("March of the First Brigade") — the iconic Polish Army song — led by Ambassador Schnepf himself from the podium.

"And I anticipate that this song will become an annual tradition on this day here at our embassy," he said.

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Another Year, Another Wonderful Polonaise Ball

PHILADELPHIA — The Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia held its annual Polonaise Ball and Awards Presentations at the Torresdale-Frankford Country Club in Northeast Philadelphia, Nov. 16, 2013.

The evening was enjoyed by over 100 guests.

Marie Hejnosz, PHS president, greeted everyone as they arrived. In the President's Room cocktails and hor d'oeuvres were served. Violinist Alice Marie Quirk entertained during the cocktail hour.

Brother Michael McGinniss, president of LaSalle University offered the invocation. After dinner was served, Edward Turzanski, VP & Professor at LaSalle University — a well known



Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia Annual Polonaise Ball and Awards Banquet. (l. to r.): **Peter Obst**, director; **Marie Hejnosz**, president of Polish Heritage Society; and **Edward Turzanski**, award honoree.

leader in the Polonia community — was presented the Achievement Award.

A representative from the Polish Consulate in New York, Mateusz Stasiak, bestowed to Mr. & Mrs. Boni-

facy Obst, "The Medal for Long Marital Life," and to Joseph Zazyczny, "The Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland." A truly memorable evening, which was cherished by all in attendance and particularly family and friends of the honorees.

The PKM Dancers entertained, including a special dance with audience participation to the Polonaise.

Music was also provided by the Dennis Ostowicz Band. The dance floor was full of a happy crowd.

The evening concluded with an auction, made up of wonderful gifts donated by members, friends and supporters.

Credit for the successful event was given the Polonaise Ball Committee — Irene Musman, Jim Malinowski, and Jean Joka; the Executive Board, and members.

All proceeds from the Ball benefit the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia Scholarship Fund.