

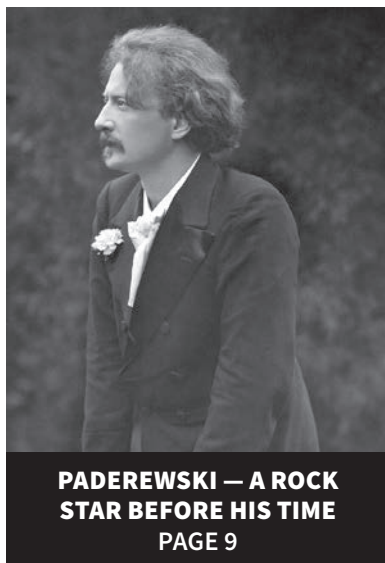
POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION AND CONTINUANCE OF POLISH AMERICAN CULTURE

ESTABLISHED 1911

JANUARY 2020 • VOL. 109, NO. 1 • \$2.25

www.polamjournal.com



PADEREWSKI — A ROCK STAR BEFORE HIS TIME
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PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT BOSTON, NEW YORK AND ADDITIONAL ENTRY OFFICES

USDOJ ATTORNEY THREATENS AUSCHWITZ MUSEUM • A DECADE IN REVIEW • FELICIAN SISTERS CELEBRATE
POLAND WANTS TO BUY NAZI DEATH CAMP SITE • FLAVOR OF POLAND™ TO AIR • EASY HOME-MADE SAUERKRAUT
THE FIRST SUPERMAN • SURVIVOR TALE NOW IN THREE LANGUAGES • KEEGAN-MICHAEL KEY'S POLISH ROOTS

NEWSMARK

Poland, Baltic states under special NATO protection

At the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's latest London summit, all 29 member states voiced support for an updated defense plan to provide special protection to countries most vulnerable to possible Russian aggression. The arrangement encompassing Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia was accepted after Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan agreed to back it. He had threatened to reject the plan unless NATO accepted Turkey's designation of certain groups as terrorists, including the Kurdish YPG militia. Such NATO decisions require unanimity, so Turkey's dissent would have blocked the plan. "Through the presence of NATO forces in Poland and in the Baltic countries, we are sending Russia a very strong signal: if there is an attack on those countries, the whole alliance will respond," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg summed up the summit.

Amazon Pulls Insolent Gift Items

(WIRED) The day before Cyber Monday, Amazon's largest shopping event of the year, the company faced yet another controversy over offensive items for sale on its site. On Dec. 1, 2019, Amazon removed Christmas tree ornaments, a bottle opener, and other products featuring pictures of Auschwitz, the largest Nazi concentration camp where historians estimate more than a million people were killed during the Holocaust. The company took down the products after the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum publicly called on Amazon to act.

"Auschwitz on a bottle opener is rather disturbing and disrespectful," a tweet from the museum's official Twitter account read.

"All sellers must follow our selling guidelines and those who do not will be subject to action, including potential removal of their account," a spokesperson for Amazon said in a statement. "The products in question have been removed." Amazon's policy on "Offensive and Controversial Materials" bans the sale of "products related to human tragedies and natural disasters," except for books, movies, and music.

Polish anti-terrorist sets record straight

Lukasz Koczocik, 38, a kitchen porter employed at London's Fishmongers Hall, was hailed by media around the globe for helping to incapacitate a Muslim terrorist "with a five-foot-long narwahl tusk." The attacker, 28-year-old Usman Khan, had stabbed two Cambridge University students to death and injured several others. Seeing this, Koczocik grabbed a decorative pike and gave chase to the terrorist. Two others used fire extinguishers to subdue the fleeing Muslim, who was shot dead by police arriving on the scene. The Pole, who got stabbed in the hand, downplayed the heroism. "I acted instinctively and grabbed the first thing at hand, a lance," he said. He was taken to hospital but soon released after his wound was dressed. Queen Elizabeth praised "the brave individuals who put their own lives at risk to selflessly help and protect others."

Tokarczuk receives Nobel literature prize

Polish Nobel Prize-winning author Olga Tokarczuk received her diploma and gold medal from King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden at a glittering ceremony in Stockholm. She was wearing a dress she said was a tribute to suffragettes and the first woman writer to receive the prize 110 years ago. Tokarczuk in a speech thanked everyone who stood behind her as she wrote her books. She also spoke of the inspiration she took from science. Meanwhile, residents in Wrocław, her home city in southwestern Poland, watched the ceremony on a big screen mounted in the Old Town Square.

Texas Poles Revisit Roots



PHOTO BY MICHAEL DEMBINSKI

THE POLISH AMERICAN COUNCIL OF TEXAS (PACT) held its Annual Meeting in Bandera, the "Cowboy Capital of the World." The all-day event was hosted by St. Stanislaus Catholic Church, which was founded by Polish settlers in 1855. The celebrations attracted almost 400 people who were a lively part of the crowd at the Bandera County Courthouse, a colorful parade, Holy Mass, and a festive gala. *Story on page 10.*

Poland Will Soon Be Flying F-35s Meant To Fight Off Russia

And Moscow isn't pleased

by Sebastien Roblin
The National Interest

Key point: NATO comes with more than political commitments

In February 2019, the Polish ministry of defense issued plans to procure thirty-two "fifth-generation [stealth] jets" for its Harpia fighter program to replace the Polish Air Force's aging Soviet-era MiG-29 and Su-22 jets.

As the F-35 Lightning II is currently the only fifth-generation stealth fighter on the market—unless you count the Su-57 sold by Russia, Poland's chief potential adversary—there's little doubt as to which aircraft is being referred to. In April 2019, the United States confirmed it was considering selling F-35s to Poland, as well as Greece, Romania, Singapore and Spain.

Previously, the Harpia program placed the F-35 had in competition with faster and more agile 4.5-generation Typhoon, Super Hornet and F-15X jet fighters. By canceling the competition, the Polish government reveals it

believes the survivability advantages offered by the F-35's stealthy radar cross-section and the abilities of its networkable sensors outweighed its shortcomings as a dogfighter or interceptor. One issue, for example, is that S-400 surface-to-air missile batteries in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad could theoretically interdict over half of Polish airspace.

However, Warsaw's ditching of the competition may reflect concerns over the high accident rates of its aging MiG-29s, as well as decreasing F-35 unit costs to around \$80 million per plane. Supposedly, Poland could begin operating F-35s as soon as

2024.

The F-35 would mark a new chapter in the PAF's long and eventful history in aerial warriors—and mark a return to a pilot-centric paradigm air warfare the Poles were once famous for.

Prior to World War II, Poland dedicated only \$2 per capita of defense spending to military aviation compared to \$100 for the German Luftwaffe, then the most advanced

Merkel Emphasizes German Guilt

OSWIECIM, Poland — For the first time in her 14 years as Germany's chancellor, Angela Merkel paid a visit to Germany's grim former extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau.

"I am deeply ashamed of the barbaric crimes committed here by Germans. The suffering, death in gas chambers, cold, famine, pseudo-medical experiments, forced labor to the point of total collapse — all that is incomprehensible to the human mind," she told reporters.

Rather than the term Nazi, which has been used to dilute or shift German guilt, Merkel clearly stated: "Germans bear responsibility for the Holocaust."

From Germany she brought a donation of \$66.3 million towards the preservation of the site, now a museum. Merkel was accompanied on her tour by Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki. Both government chiefs laid wreaths at the camp's Wall of Death.

A total of 1.1 million people died at the camp, some 90 percent of them Jewish.

See "Polish Air Force," page 8

ALMANAC

January  Styczeń

*Jak Nowy Rok jasny i chłodny,
będzie roczek pogodny i płodny.
New Year clear and bright,
brings a fruitful year of delight.*

1 NEW YEAR'S DAY

*Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!
Happy New Year!*

3 **1795.** The Third Partition of the Lithuanian Polish Republic was made between Russia and Austria.

4 **1944.** Soviet troops cross Polish border.

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

6 FEAST OF THREE KINGS

On this day, K+M+B (the initials of Kaspar, Melchior and Baltazar the three kings who visited the Holy Infant) are inscribed above main entry of one's home. Often this is done by one's priest. From this date until February 2, pastoral visits (*kolęda*) to the homes of parishioners are held to update parish records, discuss any family problems and bless the family and home.

7 **1882.** Death of Jan Józef Ignacy Łukasiewicz (b. 1822), who in 1856 built the world's first oil refinery.

8 **1918.** President Wilson announces his "Fourteen Points," the 13th calling for a free Poland.

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

11 **1920.** The League of Nations was established as the Treaty of Versailles went into effect. The Free City of Danzig (Gdańsk) was constituted by the treaty.

13 **1982.** The Mass for the Nation by father Jerzy Popiełuszko at the Church of St. Stanislaus Kostka

14 **2009.** Death of former U.S. Ambassador to Poland, Nicholas Rey (b. 1939) in Washington, D.C.

15 **1797.** In St. Petersburg, Russia, Prussia, and Austria signed and act that terminated the Lithuanian-Polish state.

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

17 **1732.** Stanisław II August Poniatowski, last king of Poland.

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.

20 **2000.** Poland expels 9 Russian diplomats under allegations of spying.

21 GRANDMOTHER'S DAY (Poland)

22 GRANDFATHER'S DAY (Poland)

23 **1940.** Jan Ignacy Paderewski became premier of Polish government in exile.

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

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

26 **1934.** Germany signed a 10-year non-aggression pact with Poland.

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

28 **1886.** Artur Rubinstejn, pianist, was born in Lodz, Poland.

29 **1846.** Birth of Karol Olszewski, scientist who liquified gases. (d. 1915)

30 **1667.** Lithuania, Poland and Russia signed a 13.5 year treaty at Andrusov, near Smolensk. Russia received Smolensk and Kiev.

31 **1887.** Death of Włodzimierz Bonawentura Krzyżanowski (b. July 8, 1824), Civil War general. Krzyżanowski enlisted as a private two days after President Abraham Lincoln called for volunteers in early 1861. He recruited a company of Polish immigrants, which became one of the first companies of Union soldiers.

This paper mailed on or before **January 2, 2020.** The February edition will be mailed on or before **January 31, 2020.**

EDITOR'S DESK

New Year Brings Changes to the PAJ

by Mark Kohan

"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one that is most adaptable to change."

Although attributed to Charles Darwin, there is no evidence he said or wrote the above. Regardless, it is a theme true throughout time, whether Rome's "adapt and adopt" appropriation of Greek culture, or Apple's change from a computer company to the leader in smart phone technology.

Which is where the *Polish American Journal* finds itself as it starts its 110th year of publication.

Much has changed since the newspaper began as the Polish-language *Zorza*, in Pittston, Pa. 109 years ago. The PAJ and its successors — *The Republika* and *Gornik Pennsylvanski* — provided a link to family and friends in Poland, and translated life in America for those versed solely in their native tongue. Those newspapers, merged and — now printed in English — represent today's *Polish American Journal*.

I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE the changes I've seen and written about in my 37 years as editor. I that time we have published news about a Poland freed from communist control; the end of the Soviet Union (and hope lost for a true republic by seemingly autocratic rule); the death and canonization of Pope John Paul II; Poland in NATO and as a member of the EU; a U.S. military presence in Poland, and most recently, Poland's entry into the U.S. Visa Waiver program.

Shortly after the first free elections in Poland following the success of the Solidarity movement and Roundtable Talks, I received a telephone call from Msgr. Anthony S. Czarnecki, who at the time was director of the Office of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The monsignor had one terse question for me:

"So, what are you going to write about now?"

Taken aback at first, I soon realized the monsignor was asking what purpose the *Polish American Journal* would serve in American Polonia now that the campaign for a free Poland was over.

Luckily for the paper and its staff, there was much to write about. And, even with all the changes we have witnessed in my three-plus decades here, that is still very much the case.

Granted, our focus has become much smaller as the news industry switches from print to digital technology. News that once took weeks to cross the Atlantic now happens in real time on phones we pull from our pockets and purses. Most of us are two or more generations away from family in Poland who really do not need our help. Unless we are recent immigrants or grew up in immigrant households, our Polish is limited to what we learned as children. The Roman Catholic Church, which has defined our culture, has been hit by every stone that assimilation could find to throw at it — not to mention its myriad other problems. And gone are the Polish (and Irish, German, and Italian) neighborhoods, where one felt at home in any part of the country.

SO, WHAT ELSE is there to write about?

Quite a bit, actually.

There are still tens of thousands of Polish Americans who take great pride in their heritage. Among the topics most often discussed in email, letters, and tele-

U.S. Department of Justice Attorney Threatens Auschwitz Museum

NEW YORK — The New York Post reported a U.S. Department of Justice attorney got into a bizarre dispute with the Auschwitz Museum, going so far as to publicly and privately threaten them on Twitter.

DOJ attorney McKay Smith accused the museum of blocking accounts belonging to Jewish women and harassing several of his followers.

"@AuschwitzMuseum if you ever intimidate my followers via DM again, or you try to intimidate strong Jewish women who lost family members at Auschwitz, I will confront you. Personally. That's a promise," Smith said in a Dec. 11, 2019 tweet.

"Don't ever test me again, @pawel_sawicki Ever again," he add-

ed, tagging the museum's press officer who runs the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum's Twitter account. Smith also sent Sawicki a number of private messages where he additionally threatened to "come after" him.

Sawicki said Smith deleted one of his tweets where he accused Sawicki of siding with Holocaust deniers. "I have been working at the memorial for over 12 years and I think I was never disrespected with such a personal false accusation," said Sawicki.

phone calls to the PAJ office are: the image of Poles and Polish Americans in the media (anti-Polish jokes are still commonplace, and, for example, reruns of openly defamatory television shows such as "All in the Family" and "Laugh In" perpetuate a negative image of Poles); the role of Poland on the geopolitical stage; genealogy; arts and entertainment; sports; traditions and customs (recent example: we have received nothing but rave reviews of Staś Kmiec's December 2019 feature on the superstitions and folklore surrounding Christmas); travel to Poland and Europe; and cooking.

WHILE THIS GIVES US AN OUTLINE for where to point our editorial compass, it still does not address the gorilla in the room, which is a decrease in subscriptions and advertising revenue. Demographics dictate a shrinking subscription base as the percentage of people in the United States who take interest in their European roots likewise shrinks. As that diminishes, so does the funding to keep alive Polish clubs, organizations, and businesses that specialize in Polish-oriented topics. (Hippocrene Books, for example, was once the prime publisher of Polish-subject books. Today, its Polonian inventory is virtually nil). As far as advertising, the PAJ is in a Catch-22 situation: because we are a national newspaper, we have trouble attracting regional advertising; conversely, advertising agencies see ethnic newspapers as serving too narrow of a market. This leaves us to reach out to businesses, religious, cultural, and philanthropic organizations serving the Polish American market. These, too, are feeling the money crunch, and, as my mom would say: "*takie buty*."

A YEAR-END REVIEW of PAJ income and expenses finds us "just about" breaking even, but projections of increased printing and mailing costs do not bode well for us in 2020. Though an increase in subscription prices was considered, it was ruled out, as many of our readers are on fixed incomes. An analysis of decreasing the page count found the cost savings nonexistent. And while we have seen an increase in digital subscriptions, it has not been enough to carry us throughout the year. The sale of books and Polish gift items has grown thanks to marketing on social media like Facebook and Twitter. However, the percentage of sales from books has decreased over the past five years. We attribute this loss of sales to direct marketing by publishers and authors, and, of course, Amazon.com. To paraphrase a one-time advertiser who was forced to close his pierogi business because chain supermarkets were offering Mrs. T's at one-third the cost of his, "I can't fight someone who buys pierogi by the boxcar load."

The solution agreed upon was to decrease the PAJ's publication schedule to ten issues a year, rather than 12. We will do so by dropping the two lowest-income months for advertising — June and August — and creating two new merged editions, May-June and July-August, which will be larger in content. The balance of the publishing schedule will remain the same.

WE ARE CONFIDENT this will keep the *Polish American Journal* in the black and available to serve the needs of its subscribers.

Thank you for letting me put the PAJ's cards on the table, and most of all, thank you for being a loyal subscriber. We will continue to adapt to change as best we can and will keep publishing as long as it's possible. Darwin (or whomever) would expect no less.



Smith

ed, tagging the museum's press officer who runs the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum's Twitter account. Smith also sent Sawicki a number of private messages where he additionally threatened to "come after" him.

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POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

*Dedicated to the Promotion
and Continuance of
Polish American Culture*

ESTABLISHED 1911

IGNATIUS HAJDUK • Founder 1911-1920
JOHN DENDE • Publisher 1920-1944
HENRY J. DENDE • Publisher 1944-1983

USPS 437-220 / ISSN 0032-2792

Published monthly in four editions
(Buffalo, Polish Beneficial Association,
National, and Digital editions) by:

PANAGRAPHICS, INC.

P.O. BOX 271

N. BOSTON, NY 14110-0271

(800) 422-1275

(716) 312-8088

info@polamjournal.com

www.polamjournal.com

PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT
BOSTON, N.Y. AND ADDITIONAL ENTRY
OFFICES

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to:

POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

P.O. BOX 198

BOWMANVILLE, NY 14026-0198

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TO ADVERTISE IN THE PAJ CALL

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Regular rate:

\$12.50 per column inch

Non-profit rate:

\$10.00 per column inch

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A Decade in Review

by Matthew Stefanski

Happy New Year! The transition from one calendar year to the next always offers an opportunity to reflect on the past twelve months, to take stock of what has been accomplished and to set goals for the New Year. This year, however, is especially significant as the new year brings with it a new decade. As such, it is a fitting time to take a look back at the past ten years and highlight some of the standout moments this past decade has provided for Poland and Polish-Americans. The list is in no particular order, by no means exhaustive, and based on my own subjective recollection of the decade.

The Explosion of Witcher-mania

The 2010s were a breakout decade for Poland's video game industry thanks, in large part, to *The Witcher*. Released in 2015, *The Witcher 3 Wild Hunt* quickly became a global phenomenon, selling more than six million copies and being declared "Game of the Year" at the prestigious Video Game Awards, among other accolades. The video game was developed by Polish studio CD Projekt Red and is based on novels written by **Andrzej Sapkowski**. *The Witcher* mania is set to continue into this decade, as just a few days ago Netflix released a TV drama series by the same name. The series chronicles the protagonist Geralt of Rivia, a mutated monster-hunter for hire, as he journeys towards his destiny in a turbulent world where people often prove more wicked than beasts. The success of *The Witcher* is also a reflection of the growth seen in Poland's burgeoning video game industry, which is increasingly producing fantastic games that are receiving international recognition and following.

Nobel for Tokarczuk

Just a few weeks ago, **Olga Tokarczuk** joined the ranks of literary giants and became the sixth Pole to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature, which was presented to her, "for a narrative imagination that with encyclopedic passion represents the crossing of boundaries as a form of life." This recognition comes more than 20 years since **Wisława Szymborska** last received the award in 1996.

Tokarczuk's works have been translated into dozens of languages, and in 2018 she became the first

Polish writer to win the prestigious Man Booker International Prize for her 2007 novel *Flights (Bieguni)*.



Tokarczuk

In her Nobel acceptance speech, Tokarczuk declared, "... all the female creators who boldly exceeded the limiting roles society imposed on them, and had the courage to tell their story to the world loud and clear. I can feel them standing behind me. We really have won the Nobel!"

And the Oscar goes to ...

The pantheon of Polish cinema is filled with incredible talent and iconic works. No shortage of Polish works had been nominated over the years for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language film, from **Andrzej Wajda's 1975 *The Promised Land***, to **Agnieszka Holland's 2011 *In Darkness***. And yet, ever since the Oscar was first instituted in the 1950s, the award had alluded Polish filmmakers. Until this decade, that is. **Pawel Pawlikowski's** stunning black and white film *Ida* captured the attention, and hearts, of the Academy in 2014 and was selected as Best Foreign Language Film, becoming the first Polish film to receive the long-coveted award. Pawlikowski would go on to be nominated again in 2018 for *Cold War*.



Sports Victories

The past decade offered Polish sports fans a wealth of opportunities to celebrate victory. At the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Poland won six medals include four gold medals. In all previous Winter Olympics, Poland had up to that point only won a total of four medals. Thanks to ski jumper **Kamil Stoch**, who won two golds, and Polish speed skaters who won three medals including a gold by **Zbigniew Brodka**, as well as cross country skier **Justyna Kowalczyk** who won gold with a broken foot, Poland shattered its winter Olympic medal record.

But that was just one of many athletic feats of this decade. In cycling, **Rafał Majka** became the first Pole to win two stages of the Tour de France. **Michael Kwiatkowski** won



Stoch

Gold in the 2014 UCI Road World Championships, becoming the first Polish cycling world champion. In Volleyball, Poland won the Men's World Championship, and best of all it happened on home court!

This decade also saw **Marcin Gortat** emerge as a world class basketball player, a reliable starting center in the NBA where he also promoting Poland by organizing numerous popular Polish Heritage Night celebration. In Soccer, Poland co-hosted the European Championships in 2012 with Ukraine, and in 2016 advanced for the first time ever to the Quarter Finals of the tournament. Captain **Robert Lewandowski** is considered among the best players in the game and is a top goal scorer.

Surly there are many other accomplishments to celebrate, from hammer thrower **Anita Włodarczyk** winning back to back Olympic gold medals in London (2012) and Rio (2016) all while setting a new world record, to Polish-American fencers **Dagmara Wozniak** and **Monica Aksamit** winning bronze for the USA at the Rio Olympics. Let's not forget the whimsical win by the Polish National Soccer Team in 2014 against Germany, the first time Polish footballers managed to win against Germany in 93 years. This past decade provided so many sports accomplishments to celebrate, let's hope the next is just as rewarding.

A member of Congress from Stupsk

The 2018 U.S. midterm elections saw over 90 new members of Congress elected including **Tomasz Malinowski** representing New Jersey's 7th Congressional District.



Malinowski

Born in Stupsk, Poland, at the age of 6, Malinowski immigrated with his mother to America and settled in Princeton, N.J.. A Rhodes Scholar and former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor under President Obama, Congressman Malinowski proudly highlights his immigrant roots. With his election Congressman Malinowski became the first Polish-born member of Congress since Congressman Thaddeus Machrowicz, who represented Michigan's 1st Congressional District from 1951 to 1961.

Poland Joins the VWP

In the '90s Poland joined NATO, in the 2000s the European Union, and now finally, in 2019, Poland

joined the U.S. Visa Waiver Program, which allows Polish citizens to travel visa free to the United States for up to 90 days. Polish citizens are now afforded the same rights as most other citizens of European Union member states when it comes to travel to the United States, correcting a long overdue blot on U.S.-Poland relations.

U.S. Forces Deploy to Poland

The past decade has seen a dynamic intensification of U.S.-Poland military and defense cooperation, most notably in Europe. While in previous years Polish and American forces have trained and served together in operations around the world, there was not a U.S. presence in Poland, until this decade. In 2012, the first U.S. military unit to be stationed on Polish soil arrive



Smolensk plane disaster victims First Lady Maria Kaczyńska and President Lech Kaczyński.

at the Lask Air Base. Since then, the American presence in Poland has grown exponentially, which today includes U.S. forces as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup in Orzysz, American forces at the Naval Support Facility Redzikowo, and an American Armored brigade combat team headquartered in Zagan, among others. This tightening of cooperation ensures that U.S., Polish, and allied forces maintain greater interoperability and are better prepared to ensure that all of NATO is defended.

Anniversaries Galore

Poland celebrated a number of important and symbolic anniversaries this past decade, from 30 years in NATO to 100 years of **Poland-U.S. diplomatic relations**, but most importantly it celebrated **100 Years of Rebirth** following the reconstitution of an independent Po-



U.S. soldiers arrive in Zagan as part of NATO deployment, 2017.

land in 1918. A rebirth that countless Polish-Americans contributed to, whether it was through financial support, by advocating the Polish cause in America, or by serving in the Polish Blue Army during World War I. These important milestones in history were celebrated around the world.

In Memorium

As we celebrate all the noteworthy feats that have occurred over the past decade, let's also pause and reflect on some of the painful events that have also occurred during this

time and remember all those who have died. The 2010 Presidential Plane Disaster in Smolensk, Russia claimed the lives of **Polish President Lech Kaczyński, First Lady Maria Kaczyńska** and 94 others, including among them the last Polish President-in-Exile **Ryszard Kaczorowski** and famed

Solidarity hero **Anna Walentynowicz**. This tragedy dramatically impacted Polish society and cast a long shadow over the decade, resulting in increased polarization and division in the country which remains to this day.

In addition to the above mentioned dearly departed, numerous renowned Poles and Polish-Americans passed away this past decade, including **Stanisław Barańczak, Władysław Bartoszewski, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Anna Cieniała, Edward Równy, Tadeusz Różewicz, Wisława Szymborska, Andrzej Wajda, Władysław Zachariasiewicz** and many others. We remember them all.

May the New Year and new 2020 decade bring you and your family, Poland, the United States, and the Polish-American community continued well-being, peace and prosperity.

Poland Wants to Buy Site of Nazi Death Camp in Austria

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Poland's prime minister said his government wants to buy from Austria the site of the former Nazi German death camp Mauthausen-Gusen, where tens of thousands of Poles were killed during World War II.

Premier Mateusz Morawiecki said the intention is to preserve the memory of some 120,000 of the camp's victims, who included many Polish intellectuals.

Set up in 1938 in Austria, Mauthausen-Gusen was the first death camp that Nazi Germany operated in a country that it had occupied. Until its liberation by Allied troops in 1945, some 335,000 people had

been held there in conditions that led to massive deaths. The inmates included critics of Nazism, communists, homosexuals, Polish intellectuals, Spaniards, and Russian POWs.

Poland's government says temporary housing developments and business firms that cover a part of the site do not befit its nature. Warsaw has offered to buy the site from Austria in order to preserve it for history, Morawiecki said, but did not explain how the purchase could be carried out.

"We cannot allow this site of a former annihilation camp to be turned into some site not worth me-

morializing," Morawiecki said.

The Mauthausen-Gusen site was chosen because of the nearby granite quarry, and its proximity to Linz. Although the camp was controlled by the German state from the beginning, it was founded by a private company as an economic enterprise. The granite mined by slave laborers had previously been used to pave the streets of Vienna.

Mauthausen initially served as a strictly-run prison camp for common criminals, prostitutes and other categories of "Incorrigible Law Offenders." It was then converted to a labor camp for the incarceration of political prisoners.



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BOOKS IN BRIEF

Two New Works from the Contemporary Writers of Poland Series

reviewed by Mary E. Lanham

FLYING BETWEEN WORDS – CONTEMPORARY WRITERS OF POLAND

Edited by Danuta Blaszk and Anna Maria Mickiewicz

Dreamsee Little City, 2015, 109 pgs.

Poetry, memoirs, and short stories fill this aviation-themed collection in the Contemporary Writers of Poland series. The series is comprised of several other titles including *The Other Side of the Screen*, *Legendary* and *On Life's Path*.

Flying Between Words pays tribute to the 100-year history Poland has with the world of aviation. The compilation examines the strong relationship the country has with this industry as well as the more dramatic and sometimes tragic events in its past. The book contains works by many writers such as Ewa Zelenay, and John Z. Guzowski. Ewa Zelenay, a poet, journalist, writer, and the head board member of the Polish Union of Literature at the time of the book's publication, worked as a flight attendant for several years. Her contribution to

the anthology is reflective of her experiences in the airline industry. A few of her poems that are included are "Ascension," "before departure," and "halfway to the stars." John Z. Guzowski has been writing and releasing his books for the past 40 years. Some of his titles include *Lightning and Ashes*, *Echoes of Tattered Tongues: Memory Unfolded*, and *True Confessions – 1965 to Now*. These take the form of poem memoirs in which Guzowski not only reflects on his own past, but his family's as well. Guzowski's parents were slave laborers in a Nazi work camp and Guzowski himself was born in a refugee camp in Germany shortly after the end of World War II. Afterwards, he and his family emigrated to the States as displaced persons and eventually ended up living in Chicago. He recently won the 2019 Skalny Civic Achievement Award from the Polish-American Historical Association.

Credit must be given to the authors and editors of *Flying Between Words* for creating an enthralling text with the somewhat esoteric theme of aviation. Each voice contributes something unique to the song: from the history of aviation, to the melody of a former LOT flight attendant, and the thunder of a plane crash. And with conductor's batons in hand, Blaszk and Mickiewicz, bring it all to-

gether beautifully. It is a truly fine collection that even the worst acrophobic could enjoy.

IN HONOUR OF THE ARTIST

Edited by Anna Maria Mickiewicz

Dreamsee Little City, 2018, 148 pgs.

Continuing in the same Contemporary Writers of Poland series is *In Honor of the Artist*. As the title implies, the anthology of poems, essays, and prose works pays tribute to artists who have gone before. Much of the works are dedicated to writers and poets such as Milosz, Rosewicz, and Ginsberg. Though painters such as Dali, van Gogh, and Monet are also honored.

Polish, American, and British poets and essayists are included in this anthology. One poem, entitled, "Starry, Starry Night" by Moira Andrew and dedicated to van Gogh evokes the frantic energy and use of color in his paintings. A small excerpt is below:

"You know that painting you did, / the one with black cypress trees / corkscrewed against a night sky? / Not that they were black to you, / of course, nor was the vio-

lent sky. / Black, you said, is a mixture / of blue and violet, yellow and / green. How right you were."

When creatives pay homage to the creatives, two outcomes are possible, those honoring their predecessors try to capture the greats' tone and voice — often failing in their masquerade of their heroes. Or they find inspiration in the pens and paintbrushes of the masters, and using their own voices and talents create new art that stands on its own, with a nod to the original creators. Thankfully, *In Honor of the Artist* is the latter of these two options. The authors add to the body of the diasporic literature by taking Polish thoughts, dreams, and ideas, and recontextualizing them to the English tongue. This Polish undertone is ever-present, even when the inspiring artist is not of Slavic origin. The historical and personal stories in this text have a subtle, creative flair, that allows you to taste the nightclub, smell San Francisco, and hear behind the walls of the Communist Bloc.

In Honor of the Artist has a morsel for every one of your Polish tastes, historical, literary, poetic, and reflective. It is a small text, but a contemplative read and worthy of the clicks necessary to acquire it.

BOOK REVIEW

Two Villages and a Forest of Polish Heroes

reviewed by Mark Dillon

WAR AND RESISTANCE IN THE WILDERNESS

by Donna B. Galwell

Blendon Woods Press

2019, 213 pgs.

The villages of Niwiska and Blizna lie a dozen or so kilometers east of Kolbuszowa in the Carpathian foothills. Niwiska is the larger of the two, with some 1,500 residents today compared to 250 or so for Blizna. From this area comes a new novel that captures a unique global aspect of the Polish experience of Nazi terror during World War II, and the consequences of the Russian occupation that followed.

Polish-Swedish heritage author Donna B. Galwell's third book in two years focuses on her extended ancestral family and neighbors' survival in an area that, in the 16th century, was originally a holding of the noble Tarnowski and Jablonski families, and later sold to the Hupka family.

In mid-September 1939, as the

Battle of Modlin began near Warsaw, Niwiska manor owner Dr. Jan Ernest Hupka finds they world they know violently disrupted as a German tank column led by a strutting SS colonel confiscates his home, Galwell writes.

Nazi plans unfold to evacuate and destroy many of the neighboring farms and homes to make way for Camp Hiedelager, the largest SS training camp outside Germany, one that built the ranks of the 14th Waffen SS Galicia Division, a unit composed largely of Ukrainians.

Galwell uses the letters and papers of Niwiska residents, notably Anna and Stacia Grabiec, to recreate what happened between 1939 and 1945. It provides emotionally impactful context that:

- helps the reader's understanding the brutal environment of the period;
- illustrates how villagers were confronted daily with painful moral choices and;
- depicts how villagers' will to resist grew as the stakes grew ever

higher.

Niwiska's and Blizna's outsized roles in history are also told through the eyes of Home Army (AK) partisans such as Josef Bryk and Fr. Jan Kurek. One gets an inside look not only at villagers' role in witnessing evil and deciding to resist in ways great and small, but also life and death in the Ravensbruck concentration camp for Stacia. In 1943-1944, villagers recovered parts and provided intelligence about some of the more than 100 V-2 rockets that were tested in and around the area — information that was vital to the Allied war effort.

War and Resistance builds on Galwell's first book, published in January 2017, *Travel to Your Roots*, an outgrowth of her genealogy travels to the Podkarpackie region of Poland. To her credit, she's combined both family stories with extensive research.

The result is a work that feels fully authentic, and provides valuable insight even if one's heritage is not Polish.

LITERATURE

Polish Survivor Tale Now in Three Languages



Author Shawver with English, Polish, and Czech editions of *Henry*.

PHOENIX, Ariz. — The award-winning nonfiction biography *HENRY: A Polish Swimmer's True Story of Friendship from Auschwitz to America* is now available in three languages: English, Polish, and Czech.

This true story is both a witness to the Holocaust through Polish eyes and the story of how Henry Zguda, a Polish Catholic competitive swimmer, survives Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps by his wits, humor, luck, and friends. At times humorous, always gut-honest, this account fills a huge gap in historical accounts of Poles during World War II. Henry's story is backed by authentic documents and photos reprinted throughout the book, combined with meticulous research, that included a trip to Poland and Germany in 2013. Henry Zguda was from Kraków, Poland.

Katrina Shawver is an experienced writer, speaker, and long-time history geek. She wrote for the *Arizona Republic* for eleven years. In 2002, she met Henry Zguda and soon offered to write his incredible story. The Polish American Congress, Arizona division, awarded Shawver its 2018 Polish Heritage Award for "her contribution to the documentation of the suffering inflicted on Polish people during the Holocaust."

Shawver is a Road Scholar for

Arizona Humanities, the Arizona affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities for 2019-2021, and she served as Writer in Residence for the Glendale Public Library in Spring 2019.

Both the English and Polish editions can be ordered from any country worldwide via the online seller Book Depository at <https://www.bookdepository.com/>.

The Czech edition can be ordered from any Czech bookseller, under the author name of Katrina Shawverová.

The U.S. edition is available in hardcover, softcover, and eBook formats. It is available at most online booksellers, including Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and others.

Found in Translation Award Ceremony

NEW YORK — In 2019, the Polish Book Institute, the Polish Cultural Institute New York, and the Polish Cultural Institute in London chose to recognize Madeline G. Levine for her translation of *Collected Stories* by Bruno Schulz, published by Northwestern University Press in 2018. The selection was the product of long deliberations. 2018 saw a range of masterful Polish works published in English and representing both the classical canon and vanguard of voices shaping Poland's literary landscape.

The translations eligible for this year's award were rendered by promising newcomers as well as experienced translators with already lauded careers. The jury chose to recognize Levine's translation for its fluency and fidelity to the rare and often elusive complexity of Schulz's prose.

An award ceremony, held Dec. 10, 2019 at the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in New York, was accompanied by a panel discussion on translation with laureate Madeline G. Levine and Mike Levine, former editor at Northwestern University Press, moderated by Eliza Rose, Laszlo Birinyi Sr., Fellow in Central European Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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GENEALOGY

Viewing Film Images at Familysearch.org

by Stephen M. Szabados

There have been more changes at Familysearch.org about how we can view the digital images from the vast library of FHL films. These films have been an essential source for documents in my past research efforts and are still an important source. However, recent changes have placed roadblocks in my path and limit my access to some films.

In 2017, Familysearch.org changed access to its film catalog that it has for genealogical records. It discontinued renting copies of the films and made digital images for the records on most of their films and allowed us to view them on computers from various locations. However, recent changes limit where we can see the images. Before FamilySearch discontinued renting their films, we could view all films at affiliate libraries or Family History Centers. However, recent changes restrict viewing certain images at Family History Center only or by church members only.

We can determine where we can view the digital image by finding the film in the film catalog, and looking at the icon on the far right will tell us where to view the film. If there is a roll of film, we can view the film only at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. If there is a small camera-shaped icon on the far right, we can view the film online. If there is a key over the camera, we cannot view the image at our present location. Clicking on the camera icon will tell us where to view the digital images of the records. If the key is missing above

the camera, we can click on the key icon, and the digital images of the documents will appear. If the key is above the icon, one of three error messages will appear when we click on the camera icon:

- To view these images, do one of the following: Access the site at a family history center or affiliated library.
- To view these images, do one of the following: Access the site at a family history center.
- You may be able to view this image by visiting one of our partners' sites or the legal record custodian (fees may apply).

Note this replaces an earlier error message that indicated that the image could be viewed at a Family History Center but only to Church Members. (Basically, this option means that you can see the images only on the films in Salt Lake City.)

My strategy is first to try to view the film from home. If available from home, my research will progress faster because this is the most convenient option. If the key is above the camera icon, click on the icon to see where you need to go to view the digital images for the film and plan your trip.

I try to visit affiliated libraries because they usually have hours and locations that are more convenient. Before visiting a Family History Center, I review their hours and site instructions very carefully because some are open only by appointment. I also have the phone number for the Family Center with me, because entry to the building may be a challenge.

Family Celebrates Fifth Generation at Detroit's Historic St. Hyacinth

DETROIT — Not many American families can claim five generations as parishioners of the same church.

Jeffrey and Stephanie Quesnelle, fourth-generation parishioners of St. Hyacinth Parish on Detroit's East Side, Poletown, understood that.

When their daughter, Esther Catherine Renee, was baptized on July 21 at St. Hyacinth, she would be part of that fifth generation.

Members of Stephanie's family first became members of St. Hyacinth in 1914, seven years after the church's founding. Esther's baptism brought back a century of memories for this family. In 1914, Polish immigrants, Joseph and Katherine Jackowski, were married at this historic Poletown parish. Stephanie's grandparents' on her mother side had moved into this neighborhood in 1909, and the Jackowski (Jackowski) have been parishioners ever since. Joseph Jackowski, Stephanie's father, reminisced about his memories of St. Hyacinth. "I attended St. Hyacinth grade school for eight years, was baptized here, had my first Communion and Confirmation here, and my wife, Donna,



PHOTO: DAN MELLOTT

Quesnelle and Jaczkowski family

and I were married here in 1988."

Between 1914 and 2019, the Jackowski family, Stephanie's maiden name, has been a staple at St. Hyacinth. Stephanie's father, Joseph Jackowski, is the son of Walter and Virginia Jackowski. They, like Joseph and Katherine, were also married at St. Hyacinth and were active members until they moved out of the neighborhood in the 1980s. They continued to be part of the parish. Even though the Quesnelle family lives in Royal Oak

and the Jaczkowskis live in Clinton Township, suburbs of Detroit, they all consider St. Hyacinth their home parish.

Stephanie and Jeffrey were married at St. Hyacinth in 2016. She mentioned that she couldn't imagine being married anywhere else. And so it came to be that 105 years later, Joseph and Katherine Jackowski's great-great-granddaughter was baptized at this historic Polish church in Detroit.

— Geraldine Balut Coleman

Keegan-Michael Key's Polish Roots



Keegan-Michael Key is an American actor, comedian, writer, and producer. He has often worked with Jordan Peele — together the two are known as Key & Peele.

He was adopted by a black father, Michael Eugene Winfield Key, and a white mother, Patricia Walsh, who has Irish and German ancestry. His biological father, Leroy McDuffie, is black. His biological mother, Carrie Herr, is white, of half Polish and half Belgian Flemish ancestry. Her father (Key's maternal grandfather) was Gerald Walter Kudsin (the son of Walter Thomas Kudsin and Ma-

rie Poczniński). Gerald was born in Detroit, Michigan. Walter was born in Pennsylvania, the son of Polish parents, Thomas Kudsin and Sophia/Sophie Rynkiewicz. Marie was born in Michigan, the daughter of Polish parents, Anthony Poczniński and Angeline F. Dolecki.

Key co-created and starred in Comedy Central's sketch series *Key & Peele* (2012–15) and co-starred in USA Network's *Playing House* (2014–17). He spent six seasons as a cast member on *Mad TV* (2004–09) and has made guest appearances on the U.S. version of *Whose Line is it Anyway?* on The CW. He also

appeared in the first season of the FX series *Fargo* in 2014 and had a recurring role on *Parks and Recreation* from 2013–15. He hosted the U.S. version of *The Planet's Funniest Animals* on Animal Planet from 2005 until the series' end in 2008.

Key has had supporting roles in several films, including *Pitch Perfect 2* (2015), *Don't Think Twice* (2016), and *Toy Story 4* (2019). Also in 2015, he appeared at the White House Correspondents' Dinner as the character Luther, President Barack Obama's anger translator. In 2017, he made his Broadway debut in Steve Martin's *Meteor Shower*.

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THE KORWIN COAT OF ARMS was shared by the nobles of several dozen Polish families including: Bieńkowski, Chrzanowski, Gałczewski, Gosiewski, Jagodziński, Joachimowicz, Karaczyński, Kossakowski, Krukowski, Lisowski, Materna, Michalski, Orzeszkowa, Piotrowski, Prendowski, Sakowicz, Sereżyński, Terajewicz, and Wendrychowski.

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RELIGION

Relic of Jesus' Manger Finds Its Way Back to Bethlehem

by Benjamin Fiore, S.J.

Fr. Rami Asakrieh, Franciscan pastor of St. Catherine's Church adjacent to the ancient Basilica of the nativity in Bethlehem welcomed a fragment of the manger sent by Pope Francis to the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Places in Israel. The relic has been placed in a grotto of St. Catherine's until a permanent place for it is determined. **Stanislaw Cardinal Rylko**, archpriest of the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome, where the manger has been venerated for centuries, said in a letter that he wished that the "veneration of this illustrious relic can open the hearts of many men and women, adults and youngsters, the elderly and children, to receive with a renewed fervor of faith and love the mystery that changed the course of history."

Catholic Judge Denied Communion

Fr. Scott Nolan privately counseled **Judge Sara Smolenski** not to present herself for communion in view of the fact that she claimed to be married to another woman. The

judge broadcast the decision of her priest in the media and created a flurry of controversy.

Fr. Nolan has Canon Law 915 on his side which states that those "obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin" are not to present themselves for the Eucharist. The next canon 915 cautions all Catholics who are in a state of mortal sin to forgo receiving communion until they are absolve in confession.

The judge's attempted marriage is a public, formal, and irremediable denial of Church teaching about marriage. Grand Rapids, Mich. **Bishop David Walkowiak** supported Fr. Nolan's action in a letter he wrote after the judge went to the press with her grievance.

Saving the Environment and God's Gift of Food

Gary and Gina Wieczorek, of Buffalo, N.Y., noticed that a great deal of unpurchased food was being thrown into dumpsters in town, while on the farm much of the fruit and vegetables remained unpicked. Since it is a matter of timing for the farmer to pick the produce at their most desirable and sellable peak,

and a matter of supply and availability for restaurants and other large produce consumers, they set to work to solve both issues. With the help of tech gurus **Dan Magnuszewski**, Jack Greco, and Pat O'Brien, they developed an app that links farmers to bulk consumers such as restaurants and caterers. This enables the consumers to know what is available and the farmers to publish the price. The Wiecezoreks then deliver the produce by the next day. They already work with some schools and hope to expand to hospitals and similar institutions. Feeding the hungry with the best food and helping the farmers maintain a healthy growing environment achieves a great result.

Sto lat to ...

Fr. Phillip Bochanski, on his reception of papal honors in recognition of his work in the Courage apostolate, which is a ministry to help people with same-sex attraction. Courage International is based in Bridgeport, Conn. and through pastoral support, prayer support, and fellowship help people with same-sex attraction to life chaste

lives according to Catholic teaching. Bochanski was nominated for the honors by Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia, Pa.

Fr. Cole Webster of the Diocese of Buffalo, on being admitted to the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher. At a ceremony at St. Patrick's cathedral in New York City. Fr. Webster serves as administrator of St. Aloysius Gonzaga parish in Cheektowaga, N.Y. The order is the only lay institution of the Vatican State charged with the task of providing for the needs of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and for all the activities and initiatives that are necessary to support the Christian presence in the Holy Land.

Mike Worobec and **Rich Kruger**, who presented their handcrafted altar to the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul convent in Lake Wylie, S.C. They are members of Knights of Columbus Council #14475.

Fr. Stan Roz, a Polish-born priest, has just been appointed to serve the Alaskan towns of Chefnak and Newtok. The Fairbanks diocese where he serves has only 18 priests and covers most of Alaska.

Fr. Roz will assist Bishop Zielinski in this challenging corner of the Church.

Fr. David Berezowski of Canada's Military Ordinariate; **Fr. Tavis Goski**, Ottawa; **Fr. Daniel Janulewicz**, OMI, Winnipeg, who along with nine other priests, form the "Flying Fathers," a hockey team that plays for charity and good cheer. The current team is a revival of a legendary hockey team from the 1960s and 1970s that played across North America and Europe.

Forbidden Art Exhibition

On display at the National Liberty Museum in Philadelphia, is an exhibit *Forbidden Art*, which is comprised of hand-picked items from the collection of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Poland. Twenty powerful images of fragile and rare examples of art made illegally in the concentration camp are exhibited. They document the harsh reality of the camp. Each piece is accompanied by a historical commentary and excerpts from archival accounts. The exhibit, which opened on Nov. 11 will continue until April 12, 2020.

North American Province of Felician Sisters Celebrates 10th Anniversary

BEAVER FALLS, Pa. — The date Nov. 21 holds great significance for the Felician Sisters. They were founded in Poland on the Feast of the Presentation of Mary, Nov. 21, 1855, when Mary Angela Truszkowska knelt before an image of the Blessed Mother and consecrated herself totally to God. Nineteen years later, on November 21, 1874, the first five Felician Sisters to serve in North America arrived at their new home in Polonia, Wisconsin, where they had been called to help minister to the immigrant and indigenous families of the area. Then, on Nov. 21, 2009, the Sisters would take another great step in the evolution of their community as the eight North American provinces joined forces as Our Lady of Hope Province.

Felician Foundress Blessed Mary Angela directed her Sisters to "serve where you are needed,"

so it comes as no surprise that once they landed in North America, their charism and their ministries spread throughout the continent. Today, the Felician Sisters serve in ministries in California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas and Wisconsin. They also serve in Mississauga, Toronto and Tulita, Canada, and Jacmel, Haiti.

IN 2009, THE SISTERS MERGED

the eight provinces across the continent into Our Lady of Hope Province, allowing for a pooling of their resources, the most important of which was the Sisters themselves. With one governing body instead of eight, more Sisters were free to minister in "total availability" to those in need, and that tactic has

served them well over the past 10 years.

The Felician Sisters have always been dedicated to meeting the needs of the time, and that means adapting to the needs of the people. They have turned schools into outreach centers, orphanages into affordable housing projects, and convents into homeless shelters.

In the decade since the formation of Our Lady of Hope Province, the Felician Sisters have continued to follow the directive of their foundress to "serve where you are needed."

Currently, the Sisters are launching several new initiatives, including Deo Gratias Ministries in inner-city Detroit and the Our Lady of Grace Affordable Housing Project in Newark, Delaware. In addition, some of their current ministries, such as the Blessed Angela Spirituality Center in Pomona, California, and St. Felix Centre in Toronto, Canada, are expanding to meet the needs of victims of human trafficking, migrant families and those who are homeless.

In a time when there is so much need, the Sisters continue to listen to the cries of the poor and respond. In doing so, they have been innovative, creative and sometimes even counter-cultural. They continue to serve immigrant families, on the border and in detention centers. They not only minister to the marginalized and those living in poverty; they live among them. In the spirit of St. Francis, they go where no one else will go, bringing compassionate service to those society would seemingly prefer to forget.

The Felician Sisters of North America are a congregation of women religious, inspired by the spiritual ideals of their Foundress Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska and Saint Francis of Assisi. Their leadership is based in Beaver Falls, Pa., but their ministries extend across the United States, Canada, and Haiti.

Szopka Contest Winners Announced

HARTFORD,

Conn. — The 39th

Annual Szopka Festival and Competition, sponsored by the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc., was held at the Polish National Home in Hartford on Sun., Dec. 1. Despite forecasts of a significant snowstorm that day, hearty visitors from Connecticut and beyond enjoyed the colorful atmosphere of a Polish Christmas Fair and the magical display

of Krakowian szopki, the brightly decorated and elaborate creches created by area school children for cash prizes.

More than twenty young artists working in teams participated in the competition, resulting in twelve amazing entries to be judged. The following awards were made:

First Prize: Maya and Jameson Fisher from St. James School in Manchester

Second Prize: Stefaniya Barbieri and Mary LaMonica of St. James School in Manchester

Third Prize: Tiffany Barbieri and Johanna Monak from St. James School in Manchester

Honorable Mention: Avery and Hudson Prewo of St. James School in Manchester

Most Traditional Szopka Award: St. Matthew School in Forestville

The Club is very grateful to Marek Czarnecki, competition chair, who visited the schools to lecture on the history, meaning, and development of szopka making; Carol Oleasz-Grondin, who worked with and encouraged students at St. James School in the art of szopka making; and Elzbieta Zagula of St. Matthew School. All proceeds generated from the Szopka Festival benefit the Club's Jennie Marconi-Javorski Scholarship Fund.

The mission of the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc.

is to share and promote Polish heritage and culture with members of Polonia and the general community. A cordial invitation is extended to anyone interested in joining the Club. A membership application form, as well as further information, can be found on the Club's website www.polishculturalclub.org or by calling (860) 659-0356.

1st Prize Winner, Created by Maya and Jameson Fisher from St. James School in Manchester.

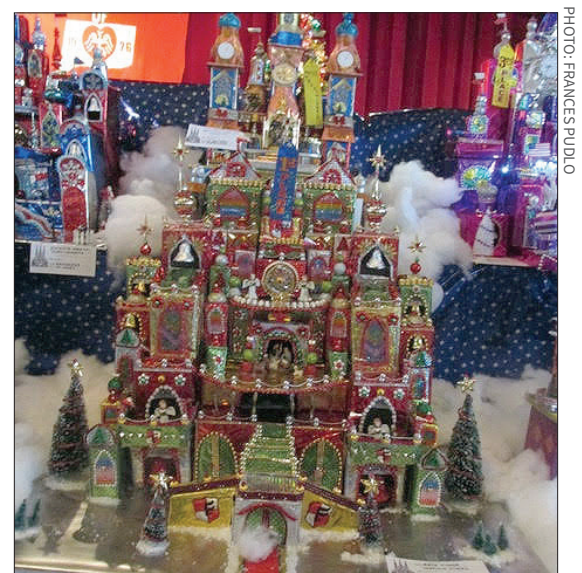


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MODLITWY

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

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HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO STYLE

Loyola University Chicago Holds Pucinski Conference



(l. to r.): Owsiany, Pogorzelski, Balanoff, Olchawa, McLees, Pucinski, Pacyga.

CHICAGO — Loyola University Chicago (LUC) hosted a November 15-16 conference and a series of student leadership workshops entitled “Roman Pucinski and Polish American Politics.” Held at its Lakeshore Campus, the conference introduced high school and college students and visitors to the concept of building a new generation of Polish American political activists as shown through the life and leadership of Chicago politician Roman Pucinski. The goal was to promote a better understanding of the local, state, and federal levels of politics and to inspire future leaders.

The conference began with welcoming remarks by Thomas Regan, S.J., dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Piotr Janicki, consul general of the Republic of Poland at Chicago; and Bożena Nowicka McLees, director of Interdisciplinary Polish Studies at LUC. The keynote speaker of the morning session was **Dominic Pacyga**, professor emeritus, Columbia College of Chicago, who spoke on “Polish American Politics in Chicago.” Following his presentation, there was a panel discussion on the topic of “Political Agendas of the Polish American Community.” Panelists included **Matt Olchawa**, Ph.D. candidate at Jagiellonian University, who added a commentary “From Parishes to Politics.” He was followed by **Tom Balanoff**, president of SEIU Local 1; **Richard Owsiany**, president of The Polish Museum of America, and **Daniel Pogorzelski**, writer and editor of “Forgotten Chicago.” Also, **Dr. Joanna Wojdon**, University of Wrocław, discussed the Polish American Congress.

Later, another panel presentation covered “The Life and Career of Roman Pucinski.” The featured speakers were Dr. Joanna Wojdon and **Dr. James Pula** of Purdue University. The later part of the afternoon featured a discussion on the

topic, “Remembering Congressman and Alderman Roman Pucinski.” The first day ended with the **Honorable Aurelia Pucinski**, Judge of the Illinois Appellate Court and daughter of Roman Pucinski, providing closing remarks.

The November 16 morning conference began with welcoming remarks by **Bożena Nowicka McLees** and **Aurelia Pucinski**. This day’s opening remarks were presented by **Nancy Kaszak**, Illinois House of Representative’s 34th District (1993-1997), and attorney **Conrad Nowak**.

The last portion of this two-day workshop included a series of small discussion groups on relating the importance of getting involved in the 2020 national census, local and state politics, developing public speaking skills, and learning about the political culture in Washington, D.C.

The organizers of the two-day conference thank LUC, the Polish American Congress Education Commission, and the Polish Consulate for supporting this educational endeavor.

POLISH ARTS CLUB CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS. As the holiday season began in Chicago, there were many holiday concerts, luncheons, markets, and festivals. Among them was the December 8th Polish Arts Club of Chicago’s Christmas Luncheon, which eighty guests attended.

The Park Ridge Country Club was the site of an afternoon of Christmas spirit. Guests gathered to enjoy cocktails, meet and greet friends, listen to a wonderful concert, dine on a special luncheon, and participate in the PACC’s annual raffle. The raffle prizes included choice wines, specialty books, genuine Polish pottery, interesting novelty items, and much more.

After a special concert per-



PACC Board

formed by **Joanna Turska**, flutist, and **Jeff Kust**, classical guitarist, **Geraldine Balut Coleman**, president of the PACC, welcomed guests. **Ed Kunzman**, PACC director, provided a thoughtful invocation. After the sharing of *oplatek* among friends and guests, the lunch began. Following the luncheon, Coleman reminded the guests of the PACC’s annual general meeting in April 2020 and its 82nd Exhibit of Art and Sculpture in May 2020. The holiday program continued as numerous guests became winners of some of the PACC’s extraordinary raffle prizes. Youngsters **Matthew and Isabella Dykas** enjoyed drawing the over 50 winning raffle tickets. A special thank you to **Alicia Dutka**, PACC’s financial secretary, for organizing the entire raffle.

LIRA- A POLISH CELEBRATION. The **Lira Ensemble, Artist-in-Residence at Loyola University Chicago**, has had a very busy schedule, starting off with its annual celebration of Polish carols, patriotic songs and folk songs coupled with vibrant dance performances. On November 30, over 600 guests had the opportunity to view their performance at the **Macomb Center of the Performing Arts in Clinton Township, Michigan**. The Lira Ensemble and its Chamber Players also hosted special guests, the **PRCUA’s Gwiazda Dancers of Hamtramck, Michigan**. The performance honored the 75th Anniversary of the Michigan Division of the Polish American Congress. The program began with a brief film, “Discover Poland,” produced by the Foundation for Polish Community Education and narrated by **Lucyna Migala**, co-founder, artistic director, and general manager of the Lira. Afterward, the Lira Dancers performed to Chopin’s Military Polonaise. The remaining first portion concert included the

singing of patriotic songs followed by a series of Polish Christmas carols. It ended with the Lira singing the well-known Maiden’s Chorus from Stanisław Moniuszko’s opera, “*Straszny Dwor*” (The Haunted Manor).

Following an intermission, the concert continued with the dancers and orchestra performing the Highland Dances from Moniuszko’s opera, “*Halka*.” The concert continued with more folk music performed by the Lira Singers, the Lira Chamber Players, along with dancers.

To the delight of the audience, the sentimental folk tunes included an audience favorite, “*Kukuleczka Kuka*” (The Cuckoo Bird). The PRCUA’s Gwiazda Dancers pleased the audience by performing dances from Poland’s Lublin Region. The two-and-a-half hour concert ended with a rousing rendition of the Cracovian Suite presented by the entire Lira Ensemble.

The Lira Singers also appeared as guest artists with the Northbrook Symphony Orchestra on December 7 at a sold-out performance at Our Lady of the Brook church in Northbrook, Illinois.


On December 8, the Lira Ensem-

ble performed a two-hour concert, similar to its Michigan concert at the North Shore Center of the Performing Arts in Skokie, Illinois. There the Lira Ensemble presented its much-anticipated “A Polish Celebration.” This year it added super-titles to the performances. English translations of all Polish songs were projected above the stage. For its 54th season, the Lira presented a new program which included patriotic music and scenes from Moniuszko’s operas, “*Halka*” and the Maiden’s Chorus from “*Straszny Dwor*” (The Haunted Manor). Additionally, memorable Polish carols, spirited folk songs, and choreographed Polish court and folk dances, and beautiful chamber music were part of this concert. The Lira Singers and the Lira Chamber Players were performed under the direction of conductor **Mina Zikri**. Choreography was under the direction of **Iwona Puc**.

This year’s program not only celebrated the Christmas season, but also commemorated the 80th anniversary of the start of World War II with the German attack on Poland, the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Poland’s rebirth in 1918-1919, and the bicentennial birthday celebration of Polish composer, Stanisław Moniuszko.

The Lira Ensemble’s mission is to bring the best of Polish culture into American life. This concert was made possible through the financial support of individual donors, the Copernicus Foundation, the Illinois Arts Council, the Kochton Foundation, and the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation. It was also made possible under the patronage of the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland.

On January 5, Lira will hold an Epiphany Concert of Polish and American carols at St. Thomas Becket Church in Mount Prospect, Illinois.



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Häagen-Dazs’ Polish Connection

The American ice cream brand Häagen-Dazs was founded by Polish Jews Reuben and Rose Mattus in Brooklyn Heights, N.Y., in 1961.

Reuben was born in Poland in 1912; Rose was born in Manchester, United Kingdom to Jewish parents, who had emigrated from Poland.

Starting with only three flavors: vanilla, chocolate, and coffee, the company opened its first retail store in Brooklyn, on Nov. 15, 1976. The business now has franchises throughout the United States, as well as in Japan, the United King-

dom, Australia, India, China, Lebanon, New Zealand, Peru, and Brazil.

Reuben Mattus invented the phrase “Häagen-Dazs” in a quest for a brand name that was purportedly Danish-sounding. The term actually does not exist in the Danish or any other known language; and Danish has neither an umlaut ä (the ligature æ is the corresponding counterpart) nor the zs letter combination. According to Mattus, it was a tribute to Denmark’s exemplary treatment of its Jews during the

Second World War, and included an outline map of Denmark on early labels. Mattus felt that Denmark was also known for its dairy products and had a positive image in the United States.

His daughter Doris Hurley reported in the 1999 PBS documentary “An Ice Cream Show,” that her father sat at the kitchen table for hours saying nonsensical words until he came up with a combination he liked. The reason he chose this method was so that the name would be unique and original.



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

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

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MINNESOTA VOICE

Treasured Recipes Gathered in Secret at Auschwitz

by Mark Dillon

All survivors of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the Buchenwald labor camp took with them painful memories of oppression, starvation and acts of barbarism.

One young woman from what is now Slovakia gathered 600 family secrets from her fellow Hungarian Jewish prisoners at the nearby Hessich-Lichtenau munitions factory, recipes which her Minnesota daughter Eva Moreimi now shares in a new unique memoir entitled *Hidden Recipes*.

On tiny scraps of paper that were labels for ammunition for landmines and airplane bombs, and discarded Nazi inventory forms, Eva's mother Ica (Elena) wrote instructions on how to make cookies, sour cherry cake, chocolate almond torte and cinnamon-walnut wasp nests.

A small pouch sewn into the lining of her ill-fitting coat held a host of kitchen memories, and hopes, Eva writes. It was saved from both the ovens of Nazi evil, and the hell's kitchen that was communist Czechoslovakia. After arriving in the United States, they initially settled in Cleveland in the early 1970s.

Lessons that need to be retold

Originally intended only as a family legacy, first-time author Eva decided to share the family's Holocaust experience with the world as an educational reminder for current and future generations. She created her own self-publishing company

SecondGen Press LLC and, after more than 18 months of work, released her book last month just before Thanksgiving.

"All my life I heard the stories of my parents and many years ago I interviewed my parents, so I already gathered all the information before. My intention was to write down the family history to my children and grandchildren only," explained the retired mother of three and grandmother of six.

A public sphere relapse into poisonous behavior convinced her to go further. "These past years I have been seeing so much hatred and prejudice around us and a rise in anti-semitism that I decided to tell the story of my parents to a wider audience. It is very important to tell these stories so that Holocaust will never happen again," Eva says.

Eva's parents, Ica and Erno, lived in Plesivec, that part of southeastern Slovakia taken by fascist-led Hungary in 1938 after the dismembering of Czechoslovakia at Munich. Ica was rounded up with Hungarian Jews in June 1944 and deported to Auschwitz while Erno was sent on forced labor assignments in Hungary that ended when he escaped in November 1944 just after the Slovak National Uprising.

Touched by the Angel of Death

Eva's book contains many anecdotes that illustrate how life changed for good or ill at a moment's notice. For example, upon arrival at the separation line at the

Auschwitz concentration camp, Eva writes that Ica's courage was such that she pleaded with the notorious Dr. Josef Mengele after he decided Ica's mother, Jan, would immediately go to the gas chamber, but that Ica and her sister Babi, would be made laborers.

Eva writes: Ica quickly took hold of her mother's arm and addressed Mengele in German. "Please allow my sister and me to stay with our mother," she said. Mengele looked at her, grabbed her by the arm and pushed her to the right side."

Her book then notes that a Polish Jewish prison inmate later approached Ica to let her know how unusual the encounter was, adding that "usually he never touches Jews."

Voice of Her Parents

Eva's work is concise and refreshingly direct, unembellished with literary flourishes or parochial nostalgia of the kind that some Minnesota-focused memoir writers and commercial publishers seem to favor. Absent, too, are polemic politics. Just enough historical background is provided to give appropriate context and meaning. It makes for a very emotionally impactful story of one family's struggle for survival.

"I decided to self-publish from the very beginning," she said. "Doing it on my own and having full control was something that worked for me the best. I am telling their story and using my parents' voice.



Author Eva Moreimi (center) poses with her granddaughter, Isabelle Calderon, and daughter Corinne Calderon at the Sabes Jewish Community Center in St. Louis Park, Minn. on Nov. 24 as they launched Moreimi's first book, *Hidden Recipes - A Holocaust Memoir*.

I am telling it as I heard it many times during my lifetime. It was very difficult for me to write about the many painful experiences and hardships that my parents, grandparents and other family members endured, but I knew that I must tell the story as it happened."

Ica's collected recipes and modified versions of recipes of her fellow prisoners aren't just in Eva's new book. Some remain part of the Moreimi family's current multi-generational dinner table and baking activities.

"I make the Linzer cookies most often, they are one of my most favorite cookies," Eva says. Linzer cookies are named after the Austrian town of Linz, date to the period

of Habsburg rule and the Austrian Hungarian Empire, and typically have raspberry, red currant or apricot filling around a shortbread-like cookie.

Last month, Eva held her first television interview with the NBC affiliate in Minnesota (KARE-11) the day before Thanksgiving. She plans to give a talk about her book as part of an afternoon-long webinar conference on Czechoslovakia and the Holocaust hosted by the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International in Mendota Heights, Minn. on January 25.

For more details, go to cgsi.org
Note: *Hidden Recipes* is available on amazon.com and at Barnes & Noble.

F-35s will grant Polish pilots a new platform

continued from cover

air arm in the world. While the PAF fielded modern P.23 attack planes and P.37 bombers, its P.11 and older P.7 fighters were badly outdated—even more so than most other early-war Allied aircraft.

While the "outdated" French MS.406 and British Hawker Hurricane had top speeds of 300 and 342 miles per hour, and armaments of eight machine guns and two machine guns plus a cannon respectively, the gull-winged P.11 could attain only 242 miles per hour and carried two machine guns.

But despite these deficiencies, Polish pilots received an unusually good training program and acquired a romantic reputation for their bold maneuvers. Moreover, the Polish Air Force prepared for war with a network of secret satellite airfields from which Polish fighters could harry invaders.

WHEN WAVES OF NAZI BOMBERS

flew over the border on September 1, 1939, to bombard Warsaw and destroy the PAF on the ground, they blasted outdated or inactive aircraft while the PAF's frontline squadrons escaped unscathed on the satellite fields. Nazi propaganda nonetheless falsely claimed to have destroyed the PAF in three days.

In fact, in the first six days of combat, Poles flying outdated P.11 shot down over 105 Nazi warplanes for the loss of 79 of their own. Meanwhile, according to German army accounts, Polish bombers inflicted enough damage to knockout 28 percent of the tanks of the 4th Panzer Division and delay the XCI Panzer Corps for two days.

Of course, the PAF could not overcome the Nazi's overwhelming numerical, technical and geographic advantages—even more so when the Soviet Union invaded from the east to claim its share of Polish territory. Ultimately, hundreds of PAF pilots fled across the border to Romania, along with 150 aircraft which were promptly confiscated. However, many of the aviators then managed to escape to France, a historical ally of Poland, and served with the French Air Force.

As Panzer tanks rolled into the low countries, Polish pilots of the I/145 "Warsaw Squadron" received thirty-five pokey Caudron C.714 monoplanes. They were deemed so underpowered the French war minister promptly ordered the type withdrawn, but lacking alternative mounts, the Poles flew C.714s into battle anyway and shot down twelve to fifteen German bombers and fighters for nine losses in four days.

OTHER POLISH SQUADRONS

in French service flying MS.406s and excellent Bloch MB.151, FK.58 and Dewoitine D.520 fighters contributed to a total of roughly fifty-three kills.

Once again, the Poles were forced to evacuate—this time to the United Kingdom. The British gave the Polish pilots an initially cool reception, requiring they swear an oath to King George, disallowing their use of national flags, uniformly ranking them as mere Pilot Officers, and assigning them British minders who doubted their discipline and seethed over their tendency to communicate in Polish over the radio during combat.

But the UK faced a desperate pilot shortage as the RAF battled daily Luftwaffe raids during the Battle of Britain, so in August the veteran Polish fliers of 302 and 303 squadrons were finally deployed in the Battle of Britain.

THE 303 SQUADRON

particularly claimed an extraordinary 126 aerial kills for the loss of seven pilots, though historical research can verify only roughly half the kills. Even by that conservative figure, 303 was the highest scoring Hurricane unit of the Battle of Britain, and had the best kill-to-loss ratio, at 2.8:1.

Over the next five years, over nineteen thousand Polish personnel would serve in the RAF operating everything from Mustang fighters, Mosquito night-fighters, Lancaster heavy bombers and sub-hunting patrol planes. Such was their reputation, American writer Ralph Ingersoll observed: "they say the girls cannot resist the Poles, nor the Poles the girls."

However, the UK-based Polish fliers reception turned for the worse postwar, as their homeland had been reoccupied by a Red Army not keen on inviting the government-in-exile back.

Thus the postwar Polish Air Force was reformed drawing from Polish pilots who fought with the "Air Force of the Polish Army"—a unit organized by the Soviets in 1943 which had grown to sixteen thousand personnel by the end of the war. The force includes regiments of Yak fighters, Il-2 Shturmovik ground attack planes, Po-2 utility/night raiders, and speedy Pe-2 twin-engine bombers.

The Soviet-aligned Polish avia-

tors primarily flew ground attack missions, claiming destruction of numerous ground targets as well as sixteen enemy aircraft, for the loss of thirty-six aircraft and twenty-five pilots killed. Postwar, this evolved into the reconstituted PAF.

Equipped with Soviet fighters, many domestically manufactured in Poland itself, the PAF naturally adopted Soviet-style tactic centered around ground controllers.

While Ground Control Intercept is used by all modern air forces, the Soviet pilots relied on it to a greater degree. Relying on ground-based radars compensated for the weaker radars on many Soviet fighters, as well fit in with the Soviet Union's more defensive aerial posture attempting to guard its vast aerial frontiers.

Reliance on GCI also reflected a broader tendency in Soviet military culture to minimize use of initiative by low-ranking frontline combatants in favor of decisions made by mid- and high-ranking officers. Though intended to control the chaos inherent to warfare, this policy could render Soviet units inflexible

and slow to react to changing situations.

WHEN THE POLISH AIR FORCE

was finally folded into NATO in 1999, Western pilots remarked upon how Polish pilots had been trained to rely upon ground control for routine combat tasks. While the PAF acquired multi-role F-16C/D jets with significantly better situational awareness and networking capabilities than their Soviet stablemates, its MiG-29s and Su-22s could not be easily upgraded to fit in with Western network-centric warfare.

Warsaw's apparent decision to acquire F-35s will grant Polish pilots a new platform that not only has powerful sensors, but which can serve as a node, networking its sensor data to enhance friendly forces on ground and air. While the Lightning II may lack the flashy agility of 4.5-generation jets like the Typhoon one might associate with Polish military aviation's dashing reputation, its ability to penetrate deeper into contested airspace may once again place Polish combat pilots back in the pilot's seat.

Supreme Court warns Poland may have to leave EU

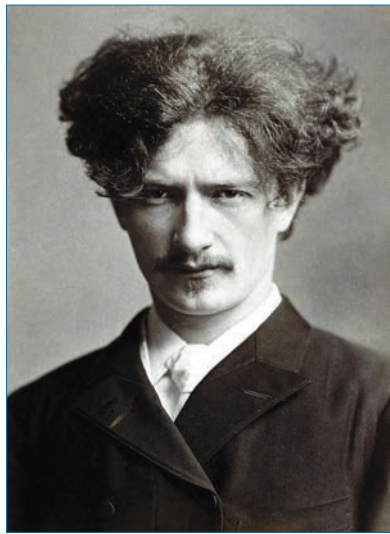
WARSAW (BBC) — Poland could be forced to leave the EU over judicial reform proposals, the country's Supreme Court has warned. Current proposals would allow judges to be dismissed if they questioned the government's judicial reforms. Judges say the proposals threaten the primacy of EU law and could be an attempt to gag the judiciary. Poland has already been referred to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) regarding rules for judges.

Under the proposals put forward by the ruling Law and Justice party government, judges can be punished for engaging in "political activity." Judges questioning the legitimacy of judges nominated by the National Council of the Judiciary could be handed a fine or in some cases dismissed.

The ruling party claims changes are needed to tackle corruption and overhaul the judicial system, which it says is still haunted by the communist era.

KULTURA

Paderewski – Rock Star!



by Staś Kmieć

One of the most celebrated public figures of the early 20th century, **Ignacy Jan Paderewski** (above)—the renowned Polish classical pianist, composer, statesman, politician and philanthropist — is suddenly a hot stage property. More than 20 diverse new musicals celebrating his life and legacy have come about due to an initiative known as the *Paderewski Musical Project*, that was launched in 2017 by the *Adam Mickiewicz Institute*, a government-funded cultural outreach organization based in Warsaw.

A team of judges selected seven new works for additional development. Three of the winning entries have moved forward to full productions. Some will be staged in Poland, as well as in the U.S., and songs from all seven will be featured on a Paderewski-themed CD.

Back in 1992, *Metro* — a musical from Poland — played on Broadway, but did not fare well. The idea of this project and engaging American artists to create the work was the brainchild of Joanna Klass.

One of the top entries in the competition was *Virtuoso* — a

Broadway-style musical drama by New York-based composer and librettist Matthew Hardy. I was invited by Mr. Hardy to attend the live concert recording of his work. With a contemporary edge, refreshing approach and an American musical theater sensibility, the story is engaging and honest; the lyrics — thoughtful, clever and moving with memorable, varied and exciting music. A new musical telling an old story in a new way. The musical will travel to Poland's *Teatr Muzyczny* in Poznań, for collaborative development with Polish artists, where it will be showcased for an audience in 2020.

An opera — *Three Paderewskis*, with book and lyrics by Oliver Mayer and music by Jenni Brandon, was chosen as a winner of the 2018-19 American Prize in Composition. Three incarnations of Paderewski defy racial or gender specificity. The set-free chamber opera for nine singers was performed in Los Angeles in October, and received its official world premiere in November at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

The event was a gala to celebrate the 101st anniversary of the regaining of Polish independence in 1918, and the centenary of Polish/American diplomatic relations.

Memory Laws (formerly titled *Paderewski! Paderewski! Paderewski!*) is an avant-garde movement work written by Rachel Jen-

drzejewski and composed by Chris Hepola and Jenna Wyse—developed in cooperation with Tricklock Company of Albuquerque, N.M., and through a residency at Massachusetts' Mass MoCA Arts Center. Evoking Paderewski's life only in archive film images, the cast of three women in white reinforce the piece's female-centered approach. The show traveled to the *International Theatre Schools Festival* in Warsaw in October.

Paderewski's popularity and appeal, particularly to female patrons, achieved "Elvis" status in the United States. A classical music prodigy, his celebrity outshone and outclassed all competition. With over 30 popular piano concert tours



to cities across America, (beginning in 1891 with the first solo performance at Carnegie Hall in New York City), he was the highest-paid musician in the world up to that time. He was irresistibly handsome, magnetic, and had wild mane of hair, that generated a Beatles-style "Paddy-mania."

Jewish Theater of Warsaw in New York

The Jewish Theater Ester Rachel and Ida Kamińska (*Teatr Żydowski Estery Rachel i Idy Kamińskich*) was formed in 1950

when two theater troupes — Lower Silesian Jewish Theater in Wrocław and the Jewish Theater in Łódź — merged. In 1955, the theater moved to Warsaw, and is currently the only Jewish Theater company in Poland. The repertoire includes classics from Yiddish theater and literature, as well as cabaret and plays with Jewish themes.

Every year in late summer, the streets around Grzybowskiego Square ring with the sounds of klezmer music.

The triangular patch of land in the heart of downtown Warsaw was part of the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II and is just a stone's throw from the Nożyk Synagogue, the city's only surviving pre-war shul.

Today, it is host to one of the clearest markers of the resurgence of Jewish culture in Poland: *Singer's Warsaw Festival of Jewish Culture*. Now in its 16th year in Poland, the festival came to New York for the second time this past November. The celebrated

Polish Jewish cultural event was launched in 2004 by Golda Tencer, an actress who is the Artistic Director of the Jewish Theatre of

Warsaw. The festival offers a broad menu of cultural offerings including contemporary theater, film, and visual presentations.

I attended a powerful performance of *Mur* (The Wall) — a monodrama featuring the extraordinary Ewa Dąbrowska of the Jewish Theater.

The play (in Polish) is inspired by the true story of Irena Sendler who, during World War II, saved the lives of 2,500 children by smuggling them out of the Warsaw Ghetto. With only a single

suitcase and a simple charcoal dress, Dąbrowska fully embodied a character — rich in story and courage with determination and reserve.

The larger company presented Itzik Manger's play *Humesh Lider* in Yiddish — directed by Andrei Munteanu with a score by Dov Seltzer. The comedy featured biblical characters living in a small Polish city in the 1920s.)



Dąbrowska as Irena Sendler, with the suitcase she used to smuggle Jewish children out of the Warsaw Ghetto.

"Flavor of Poland" to Air on Public Television

CHICAGO — "Flavor of Poland" is a brand new, culinary-travel television series which will, for the first time in the history of American Public Television, present the country of Poland to American TV viewers like they've never seen it before.

The 13-episode series will highlight the beauty, traditions, monuments, history as well as the current modernity of Poland along with a full range of its unique flavors, both the old and the new.

The American TV viewer will be taken along for a journey through Poland by host Aleksandra August — an American actress of Polish descent, born in Poland and raised in the United States.

In every episode of the series August visits a specific region of Poland (a total of 13 regions and over 30 cities and towns) teaching viewers about the local history and heritage, showing them the area's iconic monuments, sharing its culture and uniqueness. Along the way she uncovers the secrets of Polish cuisine, both the historical riches full of exceptional traditions, as well as its modern tastes, sharing them all with U.S. television viewers. The characteristic dishes that August discovers in each region of Poland that she visits then become the basis for recipes that she recreates in her own kitchen — a cooking segment featured at the end of each episode.

For several years the program's

authors and producers — Edyta Ślusarczyk and Robert N. Wachowiak from Independent Film Factory, Inc., together with WTTW (Window to the World), one of the leading APT stations from Chicago — worked to create an ideal program formula that would successfully promote Poland around the United States. They are confident "Flavor of Poland" will satisfy even the most demanding tastes of American Public Television viewers.

The series will appear on American Public Television beginning January 2020 and will be presented via APT stations throughout the United States over the next three years, to which 300 million Americans have access!

ABOUT THE PRODUCERS. "Independent Film Factory" is a film and television production group. Among its achievements is the documentary film about Andrzej Gołota "Endrju," which received a significant award at the Polish Film Festival in America in November 2014, and the prestigious Silver Hugo Award at the American Television Film Festival in Chicago in 2015. In 2016 the group produced a documentary film — "It all started in Greenpoint,"

"Falcons of Freedom" ("Sokoły Wolności," 2017), the company's most recent documentary production, introduces and examines the roles of the United States and Can-

ada and their Polish communities in the fight for Poland's independence during World War I. The story is told through the prism of a young American of Polish descent who is looking for his roots. The film is very universal in that it talks not only about the importance of the fight for freedom but also about the essence of who one is and where one comes from. The film's value is further enhanced by unique archival footage from the World War I period which had never been shown publicly before.

The official Flavor of Poland website was launched Dec. 27, 2019. Information and updates about viewings is available on the site www.flavorofpoland.com.

UN Holocaust Remembrance Day Observations to Honor 75th Anniversary of Auschwitz Liberation

BUFFALO, N.Y. — In commemoration of UN Holocaust Remembrance Day, honoring the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, The Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo and the Permanent Chair of Polish Culture at Canisius College, is presenting a book talk by former Washington Post war correspondent, Jack Fairweather, on his 2019 book, *The Volunteer: One Man, an Underground Army, and the Secret Mission to Destroy Auschwitz*, about resistance fighter, Witold Pilecki, who infiltrated Auschwitz, smuggling out reports to the Allies on the death within its gates.

The presentation in the Regis

Rooms of the Richard Winter Student Center, 81 Hughes Avenue on the Canisius College Campus on Jan. 22, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. will be preceded by a brief memorial featuring Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra's Cellist Robert Hausmann playing Ravel's *Kaddish*, which he offered as a memorial in the German Concentration Camp, Auschwitz, during the BPO's tour of Poland. The Yad Vashem Exhibit, The Auschwitz Album, will also be on display. A reception will follow.

AN ADDITIONAL COMMEMORATION PROGRAM will be offered on Jan. 27, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at Rosary Hall on the Daemen College Campus, 4380 Main St., Amherst featuring second-generation speaker, Wendy Weisbrot, on her late father, survivor Joe Diamond. Daemen will host The Auschwitz Album Exhibit that evening, and it will be on display at the Canisius College Library Exhibition Hallway during February.

Admission to the events are free and open to the public. A book signing will follow the Jan. 22 event.

Additional co-sponsors are The Jewish Federation, Polish Arts Club of Buffalo, the Center for Polish Studies at Daemen, Polish American Congress - WNY Division, Polish Legacy Project and the Kosciuszko Foundation - WNY Chapter.

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PACT Holds 2019 Annual Meeting in Bandera

by Elaine Mazurek Stephens

BANDERA, Texas — The Polish American Council of Texas (PACT) held its Annual Meetings on Nov 16, 2019 in Bandera, the “Cowboy Capital of the World.” Each year the event is held in a different community in Texas. 2019’s all-day activities were hosted by St. Stanislaus Catholic Church, which was founded by Polish settlers in 1855. The celebrations attracted almost 400 people who were a lively part of the crowd at the Bandera County Courthouse, a colorful parade, Holy Mass, and a festive gala.

In the early hours of the day, the PACT held its annual membership and directors’ meetings in the St. Joseph parish hall at St. Stanislaus, decorated in a cowboy theme, where the parish graciously provided a delicious breakfast.

Following the business meetings, the sunny autumn day led all to the historic Bandera County Courthouse, where the Bandera County Commissioners Jody Rutherford and Bruce Elikor, Mayor Pro Tem Rebeca Gibson, and Mayor Suzanne Schauman, along with Bandera Sister City Partnership Ambassador Elenora Dugosh Goodley, and local dignitaries extended an official welcome to PACT. The National Anthem was sung by Yessica Krozel in Polish and English. Commissioners Rutherford and Elikor presented a Texas Historical Plaque to Consul General Rusiecki. Bandera Mayor Schauman presented Mrs. Rusiecki with a bouquet of Texas Flowers. PACT President, Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz, shared historical and cultural information about the Polish settlements in Texas, their contributions to the heritage of Texas, especially music, and the rich Polish-Texan culture shared by hundreds of thousands of Texans.

The crowd was entertained by



Young Texan gorale in their finest.

performances on the Courthouse lawn by the Mini Wawel Dancers from Houston and several wild west performers including Kelly Scott and his Chuck Wagon, Wes Hatch and his Longhorn, “Redneck,” Bandera Cowgirls, Brothel Babes, Bandera Cattle Company Gunfighters, and World Champion Trick Roper, Will Fitzpatrick.

Following the Courthouse activities, a procession of Polish-Texans and cowboys walked a few blocks to the historic St. Stanislaus Catholic Church, led by the violin artist-fiddler Gerald Payne, playing Polish and Texan melodies as the colorful group, dressed in traditional Polish and Cowboy attire, carried U.S., Texas, Poland and Papal flags, along with banners representing the regions all over Texas where communities of Polonia still thrive today.

At the church, Mass was celebrated by Monsignor Franciszek “Father Frank” Kurzaj from Poland, who has been in Texas since 1987 and the parish priest in Bandera since 2017. He said, “In 1855, a group from Silesia (Poland) came to the hill country from San Antonio and started a new life in Texas. The first thing they did was to build

a church named in honor of bishop and martyr St. Stanislaus, who in 1079 was killed by King Boleslaw and canonized in 1253 in Assisi Italy. The church of St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr was built in Pluznica Wielka, the town where Father Leopold Moczygemba was born and from which many of the immigrants from Europe came to Texas.”

Kurzaj is the president of the Father Leopold Moczygemba Foundation and has led annual pilgrimages to Poland for many decades, helping many to connect with their ancestral roots. He said, “It was great to see people with Polish roots from all over Texas visiting Bandera today and participating in the Holy Eucharist here at St. Stanislaus while singing Polish songs and wearing traditional costumes, such as worn in the Goral region, all of them giving thanks for the grace of now being citizens of the United States.”

At the end of the Mass, Father Frank had time to talk to some of the children wearing Polish attire, asking them where their parents were from. Most parents of the Mini-Wawel children were born in

Poland. A few were born in the U.S. “I realized that some of the children are already third and fourth generations of Polish in Texas,” he said.

Following Mass, many visitors spent time reflecting on the Polish families listed on the large granite, commemorative marker erected just outside the church doors. The visitors then walked a few feet to the church cemetery where the same surnames appeared on every row of old and new headstones under the

The crowd grew larger as a traditional cowboy barbecue lunch was served, following a blessing by the PACT Founder, Bishop Emeritus John W. Yanta, D.D., of the Amarillo Diocese. The meal at the Farm Country Club, just north of Bandera, was catered by Bill Miller’s. Performances by the stunningly beautiful Dance Group Wawel, Babcia Wawel, Ed

Winiarski, and Mini Wawel fascinated the crowd. Almost everyone in attendance joined in to dance the Polish Polonaise, a regal yet fun dance similar to the Grand March held at many Polish weddings in Texas.

An Award of Appreciation was presented to the event coordinator, Debbie Brzezinski, who, with a talented team of volunteers, created a unique and well-organized day for PACT, even painting 300 “Polish-Texan” eggs for the table decorations. “They did an outstanding job,” said Bishop Yanta and everyone in attendance. The silent and live auctions raised more than \$4,000 for the PACT scholarship program.

The highlight of the gala was the PACT 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award presented posthumously to the late Rev. Stanislaw Oleksy

S.D.S., who, as former pastor of St. Stanislaus, was in charge of restoring the church and renovating the interior of the beautiful painted church. Rev. Kazimierz Oleksy, accepted the award on behalf of his late brother.

The 2020 annual meeting of PACT will be held on November 14 in Anderson, Texas, to be hosted by the St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Church. PACT has a state-wide membership of people, families,



Bishop Emeritus John Yanta, the great-grandson of Polish immigrants who were part of the founding of Panna Maria, Texas, was among the dignitaries at the PACT meeting. He was the first Texan of Polish descent to become a bishop.

organizations, students, and businesses. The nonprofit organization distributes a colorful annual directory free of charge to 3,500 people across Texas at events and festivals. The directory can be viewed in a virtual flip-book on its website PolishAmericanCouncilofTexas.org.



Elaine Mazurek Stephens is 1st Vice President of the Polish American Council of Texas.

DONATIONS TO PAJF ARE DEDUCTIBLE. We ask our readers to consider a donation to the Polish American Journal Foundation. The PAJF is a 503c nonprofit organization, the funds of which are used for the promotion of Polish American culture. Learn more by turning to page 15 in this month’s edition.

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POLISH CHEF

Treats of Polish Karnawał

by Robert Strybel

Mardi Gras is more than just Rio and New Orleans. In fact, in our Polish heritage things are not limited to just the weekend before Ash Wednesday. This year the Karnawał (pre-Lenten carnival season) runs from New Year's Day (January 1) through *Ostatki* or Shrove Tuesday (February 25).

Here are some recipes that can help set the Karnawał air:

ROAST PORK LOIN WITH PRUNES (schab pieczony ze śliwkami). Rub a 4-5 lb. pork loin with salt, pepper, marjoram and 1-2 buds crushed garlic, place in roaster, smother meat with 2 sliced onions, cover and let stand at room temp 1 hr. Remove loin, pat dry, sprinkle with flour and brown on all sides in hot oil or lard to seal in juices. Return to roaster. Brown onions in the pan drippings and return to roaster. Add 1 c. water and bake in 375° oven 1 hr.

Meanwhile, soak 2 c. unpitted prunes in water to cover 20 min and add to roaster. Bake another 90 min or until tender but not overcooked. Cut the loin in 2 to see if it is no longer pink inside. Serve with rice and a grated carrot, apple, horseradish salad.

BREADED PORK CUTLETS (kotlety schabowe). Cut bones away 6 center-cut pork chops or slice bone-

less center-cut pork loin 1" thick and pound with meat mallet pound on both sides until 1/4" – 1/3" thick. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and a pinch of marjoram and/or garlic powder if desired. Dredge in flour, dip in egg wash and roll in fine, plain bread crumbs. Gently press breading into cutlets so it stays put during frying. Fry to a nice golden brown on both sides in hot lard, vegetable shortening or oil, drain on paper towel and serve immediately.

Optional: For super-tender cutlets, transfer cutlets to baking pan, add 2-3 T pan drippings and 2 T boiling water, cover and seal with foil and let simmer in 350° oven 30 min.

KIEŁBASA AND SAUERKRAUT (kielbasa z kapustą). Preheat oven to 390°. Place 2-1/2 lbs. fresh kielbasa in one layer in baking pan greased with 1 T lard or butter. Cut 2 onions into quarters and slice each quarter quite thin, spreading onions on and around the kielbasa. Bake 15 min, then reduce heat to 350°, add 1 c. hot water and bake another 40 min. Meanwhile, drain 2-3 qts. sauerkraut and rinse in cold water. Drain, press out moisture, chop coarsely, place in pot, scald with boiling water to cover, add 1 bay leaf and cook uncovered 45 min. Drain and transfer to baking pan. Cut baked fresh kielbasa prepared as above into 3" pieces and mix

with sauerkraut. Season kielbasa pan drippings with 1 t liquid Maggi seasoning and add to sauerkraut.

Optional: Sprinkle with 1/2 – 1 t caraway seeds. Bake in 350° oven 60 min or so. Leave in oven 30 min after switching off heat. Taste improves with each reheating.

HUNTER'S BIGOS (bigos myśliwski). Soak 1 oz dried bolete mushrooms in 2 c. water several hrs, then cook in same water until tender, chop, return to liquid and set aside. Drain 3 qts. sauerkraut, reserving liquid, rinse in cold water, drain again, squeeze dry and chop coarsely. Place in pot with 1 bay leaf, cover with cold water and cook uncovered about 60 min, stirring occasionally. Transfer drained sauerkraut to baking pan and add some or all of the following: 2 qts. various cooked cubed meat (beef, venison, pork, veal, turkey, duck), 3 c. smoked Polish sausage, the mushrooms and their liquid, 1 c. stewed tomatoes, chopped, 1 c. pitted prunes, chopped, 1/2 c. dry red wine, 2 buds crushed garlic, 2 diced large cooking apples. Toss in ingredients to blend and bake uncovered in 350° oven 30 min. Mix again, cover pan and bake another 2 hrs at 325°. After switching off heat, leave bigos covered in oven until it cools to room temp. Refrigerate overnight. Reheat at 325° for 90 min before serving. If bigos appears too moist, dust with 1 or more



MEAT-FILLED PIEROGI (pierogi z mięsem). *For the dough:* Sift 2-1/4 to 2-1/2 c. flour onto bread-board. Sprinkle with 1/2 t salt. Deposit 1 small egg at center and use knife to mix outlying flour into egg. Gradually add about 1/2 fairly hot water in a thin stream and work mixture by hand into a dough, gradually working in 1-2 T salad oil. Knead well until dough is smooth and elastic and no longer sticks to hand. On lightly floured board, roll out thin 1/3 of the dough, leaving the remainder under a warm inverted bowl so it doesn't dry out. With drinking-glass or biscuit-cutter cut dough-sheet into rounds. Place a spoonful of filling just off center of each dough round, cover filling with larger dough flap and pinch edges together to seal. Cook in boiling lightly salted water. When they float up, cook a bit longer. Test one for doneness.

For the filling: Soak a crumbled-up stale bread roll in water. Dice 1" square pork fatback and brown lightly with 2 finely chopped onions. Grind 3/4 lb. cooked beef, pork or dark-meat turkey or any combinations thereof together with the onions and squeezed-out roll. Mix well and salt and pepper to taste. Add 2 T bouillon if very dry. Serve garnished with *skwarki* and/or fried chopped onions.

T flour, mix well and bake another 15 min. If the bigos is not as tart as you want, stir in a little reserved sauerkraut juice. Season with salt, pepper, marjoram and crushed juniper. Serve with mashed or boiled whole potatoes or rye bread.

keep in warm place until doubled in bulk (about 20 min). Fry *paczki* in hot (365°F) fat to a nice golden brown on both sides. Transfer to absorbent paper and sprinkle with powdered sugar while still hot.

PĄCZKI (pączki). Beat 12 egg yolks with 1 t salt at high speed until mixture is thick and piles softly (about 7 min). Separately, add 2 pkg active dry yeast to a bowl containing 1/4 c. warm water to soften. Cream 1/3 c. room-temp butter or margarine, gradually adding 1/2 c. sugar, until fluffy. Stir 1 c. flour into yeast mixture. Add 3 T rum and 1/2 c. pre-scalded whipping cream, then beat in another 1 c. flour and stir in another 1/2 c. of whipping cream. Beat in another c. flour and the yolk mixture, beating about 2 min. Gradually beat in 1-1/2 c. flour and continue beating until air blisters appear in dough. Cover dough with plastic wrap and place in a warm place to rise. When doubled in bulk, punch down, cover again and when it rises again, punch it down. Roll dough out on floured board 3/4" thick. Cut into 3" rounds. Place a spoonful of very thick jam (*powidla*, rose-hip jam) at center of half the rounds. Brush edges of rounds with water and top with remaining rounds. Pinch edges together to seal and shape snowball-fashion into balls. Cover *paczki* and

ANGEL WINGS, BOWKNOTS (chrust, faworki). Sift 2 c. flour onto board. Make well at center and deposit therein 5 egg yolks, 1 T butter, 2 T sour cream, a pinch of salt and 1 T 6% distilled vinegar or 190-proof grain alcohol. (Optional: 1/2 t vanilla or rum extract may be added if desired.) Work into a dough and knead well (about 15 min) until dough is glossy and full of small holes when cut in half. Beat dough with rolling-pin on all sides – the more air forced into the dough, the lighter the pastries will be. Roll out as thin as possible on light floured board, sprinkling top of dough sheet with a little flour. With pastry-wheel or knife cut dough sheet into 1 to 1-1/2" strips, then cut strips at an angle into 5" pieces. Cut a 1-1/2" vertical strip down center of each piece and gently pull one of the ends through the slot to form a bow. Heat at least 1-1/2 lb. lard or shortening (or oil) in deep pan or electric skillet to 350°. Deep-fry to a light golden-brown on both sides and remove to absorbent paper. Fry in batches so they are not crowded and can float freely. When slightly cooled, dust with confectioner's sugar.

READER'S RECIPES

Easy Home-Made Sauerkraut, *Kiszona Kapusta* (Pickled Cabbage)by Barbara Betlejewska
West Salem, Ohio

INGREDIENTS

- 2-3 carrots
- 2-3 cloves garlic
- About 1 1/2 heads green cabbage
- 1 1/2 T non-iodized salt

SUPPLIES

- kitchen scale
- 2 wide-mouth 1-quart canning jars
- 2 4-oz "jelly" canning jars
- 2 wide-mouth plastic storage lids if available

Remember the huge crocks that our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents used to make *kapusta* and dill pickles? Well, now you can make them at home in family-friendly quantities using a method almost as easy as making a salad!

Wash the outer surface of your cabbages with water and drain and blot dry. Place a large bowl on the scale, and either zero out the weight of the bowl or add the weight of the empty bowl, to your weight calculations. Peel and grate 2-3 carrots. Finely mince 2-3 garlic cloves. Add both to the bowl. You may create your own vegetable combinations, but always have at least 75% of the weight in cabbage and no more than 25% in "flavoring" ingredients like carrots and garlic. Discard the limp outer leaves of the cabbage. Set aside two inner, cleaner leaves for later use. Quarter the cabbage, leaving the core in so the cabbage is easier to slice. Finely slice the cabbage.

Important: Add cabbage to your bowl until the total weight is 2.6 pounds if you zeroed out the bowl weight or add 2.6 pounds to the Tare weight of the bowl. You must

be meticulous about the weight and the amount of salt so the cabbage ferments properly.

Sprinkle the vegetables in the bowl with 1 1/2 T salt measured precisely. Let rest for 30-45 minutes. Then massage and squeeze the vegetables vigorously until moist, thus creating your brine. The fresher the cabbage, such as during the fall harvest, the easier the brine appears. You should see a nice puddle of brine in the bottom of the bowl, after 15-45 minutes.

Divide the mixture in half and pack each half by handfuls into your two clean, washed jars, periodically pressing the mixture down with a spoon or your hand so that air pockets are eliminated. The mixture should fill about 3/4 of your quart jars, leaving plenty of "head space" for fermentation gas. Pour any brine left in the bowl equally into the two quart jars. Place the cabbage leaves that you saved earlier (or use a piece of parchment paper cut to fit) on top of the vegetable mixture to "trap" the pieces below the brine. Weigh it all down with the jelly jars, right side up with the lid removed, then lightly screw on the wide-mouth jar lid. Since the jar lid is only on loosely, the CO2 gas which builds up during fermentation can escape. Label the jar lid with the date you started fermenting. The brine should cover the cabbage completely by about an inch. If you do not have enough brine after waiting several hours, make additional brine by adding 3/8 t salt to 1/4 c water. Remove the jelly jars, pour in enough brine to cover by about one inch, and replace jelly

jars. Place your jars in a quiet corner of the house out of direct sunlight to ferment. The best temperature is between 65 and 75 degrees. Ensure that the brine level stays an inch above the vegetable level during the first week of fermentation. If the level drops later on, that's okay.

Ferment for 1-4 weeks, according to your taste. If successfully fermented (looks, smells, and tastes



good), store in the refrigerator for up to a year. Use as a condiment or enjoy a forkful or two of beneficial probiotics with meals. Heating will destroy the probiotic bacteria, so enjoy your *kiszona kapusta* either cold or at room temperature.

For more information, see www.makesauerkraut.com. And if you'd like to make large quantities of *kiszona kapusta*, see *Polish Heritage Cookery*, by PAJ's Polish chef, Robert Strybel, for complete instructions.

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Do you have a favorite recipe you'd like to share with fellow readers? Email to the PAJ at editor@polamjournal.com, re: Reader's Recipes. Be sure to list ingredients as above.

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SPORTS

The First Superman

by Tom Tarapacki

It has been documented that the model for Superman in the classic Fleischer Studios animated shorts was a Polish American wrestler by the name of **Karol Krauser**.

It is believed he was born **Karol Piwoworczyk** on August 24, 1912. Some sources say he was born in Holyoke, Mass., others say Krakow, Poland. He started wrestling in the late 1930s, billed as "The Polish Apollo" or "the Polish Adonis."

A dedicated weightlifter and all-around athlete, at 5'11", 200-lb., Karol had an extraordinary physique. That's why the Fleischer Studios in Florida hired him as a model in 1939. Soon afterwards, Paramount Pictures approached Fleischer about producing a series of animated Superman shorts, based on the character drawn by Joe Shuster in "Action Comics" and "Superman" comic books. Interestingly, it is thought that Schuster had modeled his Superman after Zishe Breitbart, a Jewish Pole who was a popular circus performer and vaudeville strongman of the post-World War I era.

At the time, some animators used a technique known as "rotoscoping" in which real-life figures were traced in ink to make the animated figures more realistic. It's not known if Krauser was used in that particular manner, but Krauser was definitely the Fleischer model for Superman, according to supermanhomepage.com. The image appeared in the 1941 animated film.

When Karol went back to wrestling he was frequently billed as "The Polish Superman" or simply "Superman." Ironically, Karol had his greatest success when he portrayed one of the original Mad Russian Kalmikoff Brothers in the 1950s and 1960s. Karol's "brother" Ivan was actually Edward Bogucki, another Polish American. They grew beards and wore Russian hats, and were among the top villains in wrestling during the Cold War.

Karol married Zosia Burska, one of the early female wrestlers, in 1945. The best man at the wedding was Stan Laurel of Laurel and Hardy fame. Krauser was still wrestling when he died of a heart attack at age 52, immediately following his wrestling match in Salt Lake City on September 12, 1964.



Superman: Karol Krauser as model for Superman, hanging with best man Stan Laurel.

ALL IN A NAME. Dan "Ski" Stepniewski was a native of Milwaukee who dropped out of school to join the Marines. During his four-year service hitch, Stepniewski won 41 of 43 boxing bouts and the All-Marine 175-pound championship.

Dan left the service and turned pro boxer in 1963, and his managers convinced him to change his name to "Big Ski Goldstein, the Hebrew Bomber."

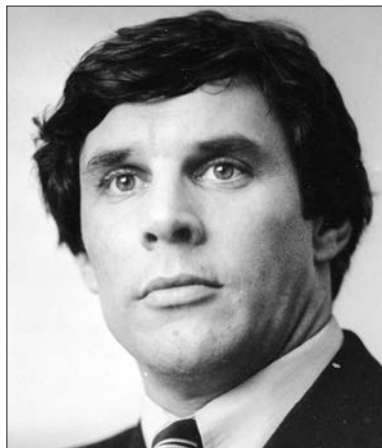
"It was an economic decision," Stepniewski said. "They thought it'd sell more tickets. I was skeptical. I look very Polish." The hardest part for Dan was keeping his story straight. "I couldn't remember who was supposed to be Jewish, my mother or father." But the ruse worked, and in 1963, *Boxing Illustrated* magazine ran a long profile on "A Heavyweight Named Goldstein" who was "giving rise to long dormant hopes for a Jewish heavyweight champion."

Stepniewski emerged as an exciting and colorful heavyweight, winning his first nine bouts by knockout. "Ski Goldstein" was considered a rising star, but due to injuries he retired from the sport with a 14-6 record in 1969. He later used his real name while coaching amateur boxers in Escondido, Calif., and running a successful real estate business before his death a few years ago.

"POLISH PRINCE" MADE HIS MARK AT DELAWARE STATE. Joe Purzycki was recently inducted

into the Delaware State Athletics Hall of Fame, an event that recalled one of the most compelling stories in college football history.

Purzycki took over a long-struggling football program that,



Joe Purzycki: "Polish Prince" or "White Hope"?

in November 1980, lost a game to Portland State University, 105 to 0. Perhaps even more daunting, he also became the first white football coach at an Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) institution.

The Newark N.J. native had been an outstanding defensive back at the University of Delaware. He graduated in 1971 and won a state title as a high school coach before returning to his alma mater as defensive backfield coach in 1978. The next year the Blue Hens won the Division II title.

DelState's new athletic director, Nelson Townsend, and the college's board of trustees decided on the 33-year-old Purzycki as the head coach in 1981, creating a firestorm of protest on campus. The school paper contemptuously referred to Purzycki as "the Polish Prince," and students organized rallies. Joe received death threats, and his office was broken into and trashed. Only three players attended Purzycki's first team meeting; 17 quit the team, 13 of whom gave up their scholarships.

"I said, 'Nelson, I don't know if this is going to work,'" Purzycki recalled telling Townsend after his second day on the job. "It was kind of like sitting in front of your dad or your big brother while he tells you about life. It was just amazing."

Townsend responded: "We are not letting a bunch of 18-year-old kids tell us what to do ... Joe, you and I have bigger things to accomplish here."

They did accomplish bigger things, and pretty quickly as well. In Purzycki's first season his record was same as the year before, 2-9, but the opposition scored 226 fewer points. The team's record then improved each ensuing year, from 4-7 to 7-3-1 to 8-2.

Bigger schools took notice, and

Kobiet, Poland's top women's basketball league, helping the team to a third-place finish. She also represented Poland in the 2017 U-20 Women's European Championship, where she averaged 9.5 points and 4.0 rebounds per game. Her older sister, Ola, plays at Utah.

GOODBYE 2019, HELLO 2020. I often hear from readers that Polish Americans aren't as prominent in sports as they were in the 1940s and 1950s. That may be true, but there



Anna Makurat: Not in Poland anymore.

in 1984 Purzycki was hired by James Madison University. As the *Wilmington (Del.) News Journal* noted at the time: "It is ironic that Purzycki's departure cast such a pall over Delaware State, for his arrival in 1981 was met by little more than anger and bitterness."

Purzycki eventually left coaching to become a banking and credit card executive. Now 72, he recently published a book about his time at DelState, "Mr. Townsend and the Polish Prince." We'll review it in the February 2020 PAJ.

PERIOD OF ADJUSTMENT. Anna Makurat, a 6'-1" guard from Sierakowice, Poland, is adjusting to playing for the 11-time national champion University of Connecticut Huskies. "Basketball in the United States is a big deal," she said. "Nobody really watches women's basketball overseas. It's crazy. I love it here."

The highly recruited freshman pointed out that: "I think the pace of playing here is much higher. In Europe, everybody's focusing on set-ups, playing slow, but here it is much more fast break. You need to be more aggressive on defense. It's a little bit different."

Anna is slowly getting comfortable. Makurat had a reputation as a strong shooter, but her passing has been more impressive early in the season. "She knows what to do with the ball, she knows where it's supposed to go, she knows what the next pass is supposed to look like," coach Geno Auriemma said. "She's got a great feel for the game of basketball, but the fact that the ball's not going in has kept her from feeling really confident offensively."

Anna played the last two seasons for Arka Gdynia in the Basket Liga

have still been a lot a great ones in recent years, and in a wide variety of sports as well.

Just consider the outstanding athletes of Polish heritage who retired from sports over the past year or so. In fact, they included some of the top names in their fields. There's **Rob Gronkowski**, perhaps the greatest tight end to ever play in the NFL; **Sebastian Janikowski**, the Polish-born NFL kicker who broke numerous records; **Dirk Nowitzki**, a German of Polish heritage who was probably the greatest European to ever play in the NBA; **Troy Tulowitzki**, a five-time All-Star shortstop; **JR Celski**, the three-time Olympic speedskating medalist; and **Lee Stempniak**, a veteran NHL defenseman. That's a very impressive list!

POLAND WINS WORLD CUP TEAM EVENT IN KLINGENTHAL. Polish ski jumpers on Dec. 14, 2019, won the team event at the World Cup in Klingenthal, Germany.

The Polish squad, comprising Piotr Żyła, Jakub Wolny, Kamil Stoch and Dawid Kubacki, finished ahead of Austria and Japan.

In November, Poland took third place in the World Cup season-opening team competition in their home country, finishing behind winners Austria and runners-up Norway.

The 2019/2020 ski-jumping World Cup circuit features a total of 36 competitions, including six team events, in various countries.

The series will come to Poland again this season for events in the southern mountain resort of Zakopane, Jan. 25-26. Polish ski jumpers dominated last World Cup season as a team, winning the circuit's Nations Cup overall.

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SCHOLARSHIPS

**Kosciuszko Foundation
Accepting Applications**

NEW YORK — The Kosciuszko Foundation, an American Center for Polish Culture, is accepting scholarship applications for the **Fall 2020/Spring 2021 academic year**. Among the scholarships available to Americans of Polish descent are scholarships for:

- graduate level studies – any major;
- a female resident of Massachusetts for studies in medicine;
- undergraduate studies for Massachusetts residents;
- undergraduate studies for Polish American Club of North Jersey members;
- undergraduate studies for PNA Brooklyn, USA, Group #1903;
- undergraduate studies in Nursing, Teaching and Business for residents of New Jersey;
- undergraduate studies in the Natural Sciences (min. GPA 3.5);

Scholarships will be awarded for full time studies only. Qualified applicants are required to complete an on-line application form, submit a financial information form, essay, official transcripts (three years), two letters of recommendation, proof of Polish ancestry, photo, curriculum vitae, a \$35 application fee and where applicable, letters of admission to college or graduate study programs. The deadline for undergraduate scholarships is January 15; graduate level scholarships is January 22 and the scholarship in the Natural Sciences is February 3. Details may be found at: <https://www.thekf.org/kf/scholarships/tuition/>

Kosciuszko Foundation's Tuition Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis to American students of Polish descent for studies in the United States and at English Schools of Medicine in Poland.

**Looking for Berks County
High School Seniors**

READING, Pa. — On Saturday, April 25, 2020, the **Polish American Board of Education of Berks County** will be awarding ten college scholarships totaling \$25,000 to Berks County high school seniors of Polish American descent. Applicants for the scholarships can obtain application forms and guidelines in the office of the guidance counselor in all Berks County high schools. They are also available in the Polish-American Cultural Center, Suite 509, in the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts, 201 Washington Street, Reading, and they can be downloaded from the PABEBC website at www.pabeberks.org.

Completed application forms are due no later than Saturday, March 28, 2020, to the PABEBC Scholarship Secretary, Ronald Savitski, 159 Texter Mountain Rd., Wernersville, PA 19565-9442; (610) 207-7065. In conjunction with the PABEBC scholarship awards program, the **Polish American Heritage Association of Berks County** is awarding a \$1,000 scholarship to a Berks County high school student of Polish American descent. The guidelines for obtaining this scholarship are also available in the office of the high school guidance counselors, the Polish American Cultural Center in the GoggleWorks or by contacting Sandy Lubas Hummel, the scholarship chairperson for the PA-HABC at sahummel@ptd.net or by telephoning her at (610) 207-7065.

— *Mary Ann Zerkowski*

**CSF Announces Three
\$7,000 Scholarships**

CHICAGO — The **Chicago Society Foundation**, affiliated with the Chicago Society of the Polish National Alliance, Lodge #1450 of the PNA, announces that it again

will be funding up to three \$7,000 scholarships for the 2019-20 academic year through its James and Lillian Kulze Scholarship Fund. Jim Kulze, a former president of the Chicago Society, and his wife, Lillian, generously endowed the Fund to be able to provide meaningful scholarship support benefiting worthy student scholars each and every year.

These scholarship awards are available to U.S. residents of Polish descent with demonstrated financial need who are pursuing academic studies in college, graduate or professional school.

Initial applications will be accepted through Feb. 15, 2020. Selections will be made in April 2019 for the subsequent fall academic term. Forms, dates and other information regarding selection criteria and requirements will be found on the Society's website, www.chicagosocietypna.org.

POLAND'S SENATE VOTED to designate 2020 as the year of Jan Kowalewski, honing the Polish cryptologist who helped his country stop the 1920 Bolshevik invasion at the gates of Warsaw. An expert mathematician and linguist, as an army officer Kowalewski was credited with deciphering Soviet military codes which informed the Polish side about what the enemy was planning.

The Senate resolution also hailed the achievements of Polish science and engineering in the years following Poland's re-emergence as an independent country.

EIGHT PEOPLE, INCLUDING FOUR CHILDREN died during a serious gas explosion Dec. 4, 2019 in a residential building in the southwestern Polish town of Szczyrk. Rescue operation took place overnight, involving over 100 firefighters. One was hurt.

POLAND IN BRIEF

According to a statement by the Polish state gas company Polska Spolka Gazownictwa (PSG), the most likely cause of the tragedy was damage to a gas pipeline during works carried out by an external company, Aqua Works.

A TOTAL OF 471 MEMBERS of the 751-seat European Parliament have voted to condemn Poland's proposed anti-pedophile law, which criminalizes encouraging sexual activity among minors. It opposes the World Health Organization's recommendations to teach kindergartners and grade-school pupils how to "enjoy their bodies" by masturbating. The bill states that teachers and others working in education and child care who promote or encourage sexual activity by minors could face up to three years in prison. In many West European schools, early sexualization of young children is a standard part of sex education.

IN MEMORIAM

Rev. Frank J. Milienewicz, led Middle Eastern Church in Alabama

The Rev. Frank J. Milienewicz was a Polish-American priest from Pennsylvania who led a Middle Eastern church Birmingham, Alabama for 32 years. He was pastor of the 400-member St. George Melkite Greek-Catholic Church from 1988-2017.

Milienewicz died Dec. 11, 2019. He was 72.

After retiring in 2017, he became pastor emeritus. He suffered from poor health in his later years.

Bishop Nicholas Samra, his supervisor in the Greek-Melkite Church, said Milienewicz never gave up a sense of joy. "He was happy with being a priest," he said. "Father Frank served, Father Frank loved, Father Frank had joy."

The Rev. Mitch Pacwa, who took over as host of the "EWTN Live" TV show after the retirement of the late EWTN founder Mother Angelica, said he bonded with Milienewicz because they were both of Polish descent.

"Whenever I visited Chicago, I brought him back Polish sausage," Pacwa said in an interview after the funeral. "It wasn't good for his health, but he liked it."

St. George Church, on Birmingham's Southside, was founded in 1921 by Lebanese and Palestinian immigrants. It's known regionally for its Middle Eastern food festival, which started 38 years ago. Milienewicz took part in the food festival for 32 years.

"He was wonderful at speaking with and knowing and loving people," said the Rev. Richard Saad, of neighboring St. Elias Maronite Catholic Church, which was also founded by Lebanese immigrants and has a Middle Eastern food festival. "He wanted to do it the best he could until he died, and he did that."

When Milienewicz arrived in Alabama from Pennsylvania in 1988, he had no family in the South.

"He truly became a father figure to everyone here," said church member Jeremy Ritchey. "He was our mentor and a fun friend. He gave everything to this parish. He embraced that we were his family, and that's why he stayed here after he retired."

**Wincenty Knapczyk, 96,
Decorated Army Veteran**

Wincenty Knapczyk, 96, passed away at The Veterans Affairs Medi-

cal Center in West Haven, Conn. The oldest of seven children, he was born May 30, 1923 in Baranovich, Poland to Franciszek and Jadwiga Knapczyk. On Dec. 26, 1948, he married Helena Kubowicz in Nottingham, England. They bonded in their pride of attaining American citizenship; connection to their beloved Poland; and joy in spending time with family. Wincenty retired from Sikorsky Aircraft in Stratford, Conn. in 1993.

Knapczyk devoted his life to his family and to the Polish American community. He was an honored and decorated World War II Veteran. In 1942, he joined the Polish Army under the command of General Wladslaw Anders and served in Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt and on the front in Italy. After the war, he was a leader in both Polish Veteran and fraternal organizations. Most recently, he served as National Commander of the Polish Army Veterans of America. Among his many honors in the United States, Italy, England, and Poland was special audience with Pope Francis and being decorated with the Commander's Cross with the Star of the Order of Polonia Restituta by Poland's president, Andrzej Duda.

Knapczyk was laid to rest at The National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pa. Donations in his memory may be

made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

**Mary (Kozikowski) Labun, Past
President of Women's Auxiliary**

Mary (Kozikowski) Labun, 94, of Feeding Hills, Mass. Died Dec. 17, 2019, after a short illness. Born on October 3, 1925 in Suffield, Conn., the daughter of the late Walter and Annie (Lucay) Kozikowski worked at the Army Air Base at Bradley Field, before moving to Washington D.C. to work for the U.S. Navy Department at the end of World War II. Returning home, she worked as a bank teller. In 1949, she married Frank Labun and settled in Feeding Hills where they spent 63 years together before Frank's death.

Labun worked over a decade as office manager at Frederick's Jewelers in Springfield, Mass.. She was a communicant of Sacred Heart Church in Feeding Hills where she served on the Parish Council. She also was a charter member of the Polish American Club Women's Auxiliary in Feeding Hills where she served as president. An advocate for the importance of education, she was active in the local PTA, serving as president for several years.

Labun was a fashion aficionado who prided herself on having a strong sense of etiquette and decorum.

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THE PONDERING POLE

Is Nationalism a Dirty Word?

by Ed Poniewaz

First there were tribes, then principedoms, then kingdoms, then nations. The people of the nation feel a connection and an allegiance to an area or land governed by law and a leader. When there is a lasting and strong connection then Nationalism becomes more apparent and prominent. Some do not like the nationalist or patriotic spirit because it can be exclusionary or aggressive; others are ambivalent or unaffected by it.

Poles are typically seen as having a nationalist character and those from the outside often interpret it negatively. That view of Nationalism historically was linked to anti-Semitism and more recently it is described as xenophobia or as an anti-Western bias. I remember watching a documentary where the narrator described Poland as “one of the most nationalistic countries in Europe” prior to the start of World War II with the implication that, not only would the nation proudly resist invasion by the Nazis but also that Polish-Jewish relations leading up to the war were inspired by this Nationalism. Perhaps Poland’s nationalist spirit has engendered some counter-productive behavior, but on balance, I believe it has been tantamount for the well-being and survival of the nation.

Continuing with the theme of Nationalism, there is an online article with a twist on that subject as it relates to Poland and many of the countries in Eastern Europe. The article is *Economic Nationalism Made Eastern Europe More Resilient* by Leonid Bershidsky. The point of the piece is how fluctuations in the business cycles in Germany affect the economies of countries like Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary because of their close relationship with their large and powerful neighbor, Germany. This “dependence” on the German economy has prompted observers to peg Poland and others as “colonies” or subjects of the German Republic.

As Bershidsky points out though, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic especially have withstood downturns in Germany because they have instituted “expansionary fiscal policies” and they have employed a “conscious strategy of export diversification.” From the article:

“Hungary and Poland have also reduced their export dependence on Germany by 10 percentage points and 7 percentage points respectively during the same period, but they’ve done more than just weaning themselves off Europe’s biggest economy. Poland, for instance, now produces more finished products than intermediate goods such as parts, which wasn’t the case at the turn of the century.”

This is great news and although relations with their large and powerful neighbor are fine and prudent and reasonable, I do hope they shake off the grip Germany has on the many aspects of national sovereignty that would smell of dominance. It will be refreshing to realize that these Eastern European peoples are finally emerging as truly independent and resourceful nations. If that movement, even in terms of the economy, is concerned is called Nationalism, then so be it. Please read the article to get the full story.



Another Polish Celebrity

Izabella Miko (above) is a Polish born actress who has worked in television and film for thirty years. She is listed as an actress, dancer, producer, and environmental activist. Born Izabella Anna Mikolajczak, January 21, 1981 in Lodz, Poland, Izabella began her career in the arts as a ballet dancer and, after an injury, moved more into acting. While already established in Poland’s film industry, her big break came in the United States when she received a part in the movie *Coyote Ugly*. This was followed up with a starring role in the film *The Forsaken*. She has appeared in recurring roles for the television shows *Deadwood* and *Chicago Fire*. Recent endeavors include a part as Cassie in the 2018 movie *The Rake* and as Helen Hirsch in the television series *The Hunt*. Beauty, talent, and a woman working between two universes, Pollywood and Hollywood, Izabella Miko.

Polish or Not?

In the movie *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, the setting is a fictional country called “Zubrowka.” Zubrowka as we know is a special kind of Polish vodka. The name used in *Grand Budapest* was chosen, I suppose, to be facetious, quaint, or perhaps even satirical. If you know why, let me know.

There is a new 3D computer-animated movie now playing called *The Addams Family*, a sequel to the original *The Addams Family* film released in 1991. A theme that runs throughout is the character Pugsley’s “Mazurka,” a “rite of passage that every Addams family member takes.” Is this Mazurka then, also facetious, quaint, or satirical? Perhaps the writer used the same inspiration and motive that was employed in *Grand Budapest* and we hope this it is also a harmless one. I happen to love the unusual nature (by Western standards) of the Polish words and names. As a matter of fact, I once suggested to my artist daughter to do a whole series of prints with variations on just the name/word Poniewaz. There are other spectacular names of course.



Dziękuję bardzo to Jack Jackowski for the many leads provided in the last month. He knows, as I do, that there is a whole world out there full of interesting people, places, and events that have a Polish connection.

If you have a thought about this month’s topic, have a question, or have interesting facts to share, contact me at: Edward Poniewaz, 6432 Marmaduke Ave., St. Louis, MO 63139; email alinabrig@yahoo.com. N.B. If you send email, reference the PAJ or Pondering Pole in the subject line.

TOLEDO

PCCAB Inducts New Members

TOLEDO, Ohio — On November 16, the Polish Cultural Center Advisory Board in Toledo, Ohio held its second local Polish Hall of Fame induction banquet at the Brandywine Country Club in Maumee, Ohio. The induction ceremony was preceded by a socializing hour and dinner. In attendance were 130 people who attended to honor those being inducted and in support of the construction of the three-million dollar Polish Cultural Center in the Marina District of Toledo.

Inducted into the Hall of Fame, were: Edward Banachowski; Rosemary Chorzempa; Jacqueline Konwinski; Walter Palicki; Michael Pence; Jack Sparagowski; Marion and Wladyslawa Wojciechowski; and Joe Zychowicz. These inductees support the efforts of keeping visible the culture and traditions of their Polish heritage and ancestry. In attendance at the ceremony were many individuals that are not of Polish ancestry but continue to support cultural events in the area by the many Polish organizations.

Honoree Ed Banachowski was born and raised in the Toledo Polish Village, A World War II Navy veteran, and graduate of the University of Toledo, he was a Sears sales representative for 35 years.

Rosemary Chorzempa is the author of two children’s books on genealogy. She also wrote *Polish Roots* in 1993 for adults, and its 2014 updated second edition in 2014. Chorzempa hosts workshops, genealogy lectures, and pisanki-making classes.

Jackie Konwinski, a parochial high school teacher for 20 years, is president of the Toledo-Poznan Alliance, and is currently writing and editing a book on Toledo Polish leaders 1870 to present.

Walter Palicki serves on several Polish executive boards. Employed 33 years as public school teacher and librarian, he volunteers in many Polish organizations, and is known for donating many Polish books he has acquired.

Mike Pence is deacon at St. Hyacinth Church, director of the annual church festival, and promotes his heritage at talks about growing up in a Polish neighborhood and the importance it holds in his life.

Jack Sparagowski, an Air Force veteran, is the owner of a drug testing company, and was once named one of the top 25 young business owners in the United States.

Marian and Wladyslawa Wojciechowski. Marian was a member of the Polish Calvary in

World War II and awarded Poland’s highest medal for bravery. The veteran was arrested by the Gestapo and was a prisoner at three different concentration camps. Wladyslawa, also arrested, escaped while being taken to be executed at Ravensbruck. She hid from her Nazi persecutors until she was found by a U.S. soldier. She met Marian in a detention camp, and they married. She worked as an inspector at a large manufacturing company.

Joe Zychowicz is the owner of a second generation Polonian grocery store, which was begun by his father and uncle. Active in community events to bring an awareness to the Polish culture, he initiated Polish American Night at Toledo’s baseball and hockey games.

On display at the event was a historical marker recovered by the PCC Advisory Board that had been stolen from the Polish neighborhood many years ago. The historical marker has on one side the history of the first Polish families to arrive to the Toledo area and on the other side background information about St. Hyacinth Church in the Polish neighborhood which was established in 1892. It will become a permanent fixture at the PCC building upon completion.

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Polish American Journal Foundation

The PAJF is a non-profit 501c3 organization established to promote Polish and Polish American culture and traditions among members of the public and other Polish and Polish American groups. It does this by organizing and supporting special events, networking, and providing consultation to individuals and groups, which seek to learn more about the Polish community in the United States.

As a national newspaper serving Polish immigrants and their descendants since 1911, the Polish American Journal has a unique perspective on the shortfalls — primarily funding — that have prevented many great projects from getting off the ground. We also have grown increasingly frustrated to see students — future leaders, who are passionate about Polonia — seek other areas of study because they could not secure something as simple as airfare to study in Poland or abroad. Likewise, we see so many talented academicians, scholars, artists, folk groups — the list goes on — whose special projects or areas of study have been dropped for lack of funds. In many cases, state or federal arts or cultural funding is available, but these groups cannot afford processing fees to meet application requirements. It is time to start helping our own.

MEMBERSHIP. Donations are accepted in any amount. All donations will be acknowledged and may be used as charitable contributions on your tax return. As a member, you can suggest any worthwhile cause: a donation to a local Polish American museum; veteran’s group; scholarship fund; dance group, etc. Our board reviews these suggestions and creates a ballot of the most-requested causes/recipients, which will then be voted on by current members. (Membership is yearly, starting with the date of your most recent donation). All members reserve the right to abstain from being a voting member. Membership levels start at “Friend of the PAJF” (Any amount up to \$49.99); “Individual” (\$50.00); “Family” (\$100.00); “Sustaining” (\$250.00); “Patron” (\$500.00);



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POLONIA PLACES

SPEAK UP

St. Anthony of Padua, Cumbola, Pa.

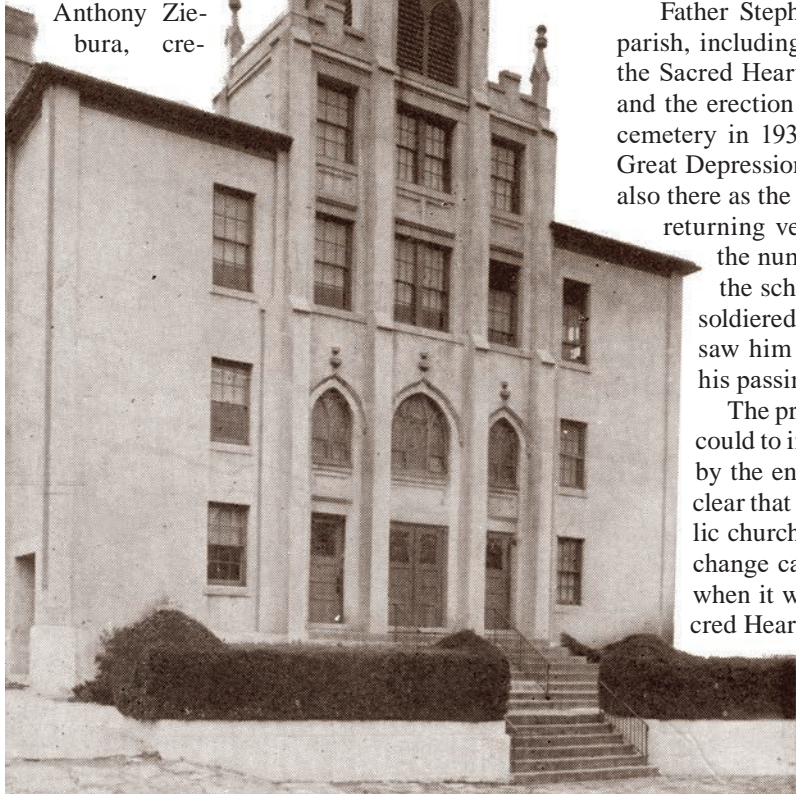
by Gregory L. Witul

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA PARISH
219 Market St.
Cumbola, Pennsylvania
Status: Closed

Today, Poles can be found in every corner of the United States. From Seattle, Washington to Phoenix, Arizona and central Florida to Augusta, Maine, Polish footprints have been left. And while it's no surprise to find large Polonias in major cities, it can be when towns of less than seven hundred are majority Polish. Nowhere is this better exemplified than the Eastern Pennsylvania community of Cumbola, and the Polish American Catholic Church that was established there.

As Poles immigrated to Pennsylvania, enticed by the opportunities in the coal fields, they settled as close as they could to their jobs. Forming a colony in Cumbola between the areas of Pottsville and Lansford/Summit Hill, this tiny community of Poles desired a parish so they could worship in their own ways and have a religious center where they could celebrate the old customs of *wigilia* and *swieconka*.

In October 1907, Rev. Francis Froga of Minersville organized the little band of Poles and formed St. Anthony of Padua Parish. The first services were held in the public school building and was gathered to build a church. This effort got in 1908 when Anthony Ziebura, cre-



ated the Society of St. Anthony, a group that would be the backbone of the fundraising work. By the end of the year, a plot was purchased, a wooden church built, and Rev. Ziebura installed as the first permanent pastor.

A number of priests would call St. Anthony home over the next couple of years. In 1910, members of the parish organized Polish National Alliance, Lodge 1163 and during the tenure of Father John Dudzik, the 12 acres outside Port Carbon that would become the parish cemetery were purchased.

The next great expansion happened in 1922 when Father Peter Bienko added a school to the campus that was staffed by the Bernardine Sisters of St. Francis, based in Reading. Father Bienko's successor, Rev. Stephen S. Krystyniak had even bigger plans for the small parish. Father Krystyniak envisioned a unified building for his congregation, one with a church, a school, and a convent for the sisters, all under one roof. The old wooden church was moved and converted into a hall, and in its place contractor Howard Flail brought forth a \$72,000, four-story wonder that met all of Krystyniak desires.

Inside, the church was decorated with statuary and stained glass windows that told the story of the community. The window of St. Peter receiving the keys from Christ was topped with a miner's hat, pick, and shovel, while the Good Samaritan window donated by Dr. Carroll was accented by a caduceus, and the "Let the little children come to me" window depicted the actual children of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Kaminski, the pane's sponsor.

Father Stephen would see other additions to the parish, including the personal donation of a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the parish lawn in 1931 and the erection of a large granite cross in the parish cemetery in 1933. He guided the parish through the Great Depression and the Second World War. He was also there as the parish he built up slowly declined. As returning veterans left for college or better jobs, the numbers of parishioners fell and in 1955, the school closed due to lack of students. He soldiered on and his dedication to the parish saw him rise to the rank of monsignor before his passing in March of 1973.

The priests that followed would do what they could to improve the parish and community, but by the end of the millennium it was becoming clear that change would be coming to the Catholic churches of the Diocese of Allentown. That change came to St. Anthony of Padua in 2008 when it was merged with Holy Family and Sacred Heart Church of New Philadelphia and became Holy Cross Church. Unable to maintain a location in Cumbola, the St. Anthony location was closed that July, ending a century of Polonia in the tiny Pennsylvania community.

Now and Then



St. Stanislaus in Amsterdam, N.Y., 2019.

Dear Editor:

Regarding the photo that accompanied the historical profile of my home parish of St. Stanislaus in Amsterdam, N.Y. (PAJ, Dec. 2019), I was both shocked and appalled that, of all of the current beautiful photos of St. Stanislaus Church which abound on the internet, you selected the single, most hideous photo of my church I have ever seen.

In all of my 68 years of living just a block away from the church, which was placed on the National Register of Historic Places a few years ago, I have never seen that photo which makes a stately and noble house of worship look like a dingy, dirty, and run-down tenement house. If it were not for the bell tower of the parish school

visible in the background, I would have never recognized the church, which looks absolutely nothing like that currently. A decorative street level portico and rampparts were added I'm guessing in the 1930s entirely changing the appearance of the church.



Your paper owes the good people of St. Stanislaus Parish and the people of Amsterdam, with its sizable Polish American population, an apology, a photographic retraction, and the publication of a current photo that is in good taste and reflective of fine architectural aesthetic of that church.

I have attached current photos of St. Stanislaus Church for your consideration.

Robert Jarek Wojcik
Amsterdam, New York

ASK OUR MAN IN WARSAW

How Many Lives Lost?

Q: What percentage of Poles were killed during World War II? In both combat and otherwise?

Thomas Napierkowski
Colorado Springs, Co.

A: The estimate generally given

is over one-fifth. The estimate of six million Polish citizens given after the war (1947) did not include the 500,000 to 572,000 killed by the Soviets in combat or through execution, exile, and other causes. Exact figures for any war, revolution or other violent upheaval, especially one lasting six years, are impossible due to the many missing and unaccounted for. Percentage-wise, Poland lost more population than any other country in the European theater, and the figure 22.2% is often encountered.

Q: Would you happen to know how did the days of the week got their names in Polish?

Christina Gutt
Rochester, N.Y.,

A: Starting with "niedziela" (note that Polish days of the week are not capitalized in Polish) which is derived from "nie działać" (not to work since Sunday is a freeday); "poniedziałek" = after Sunday; "wtorek" from "wtóry" (second) meaning the second workday of the week; "środa" from "środek" (middle, center) = midweek; "czwartek" from "czwarty" (fourth) = 4th workday; "piątek" from "piąty" = 5th workday; "sobota" from "sabbath" (Sabbath).

◆◆◆

Kindly airmail all Polish/Polonian-related queries to: Robert Strybel / ul. Kaniowska 24 / 01-529 Warsaw, Poland; or email them to: strybel@interia.pl.

Send Valentine's Day Greetings



The Polish American Journal will dedicate a page of the February 2020 edition to readers who wish to share memories past and present about their significant others

YES! I would like to share a story about my sweetheart with readers of the Polish American Journal. Enclosed is my story and my donation to help the PAJ cover the costs of this special edition.

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DANCE TIME

A Little Krupnik to Start the Holidays

by Jennifer Pijanowski

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Polka music resounded as Buffalo Distilling dedicated the release of its 2019 Barrel Aged Krupnik, kicking off the holiday season in Western New York. The packed bar and wonderful polka music courtesy of **Special Delivery** created a jovial atmosphere to indulge in the delightful honey liqueur.

Special Delivery provided a mix of traditional polka music, cover tunes, and liveliness that kept the crowd captivated. Buffalo Distillery pays homage to the roots of their proprietary aged krupnik by proudly flying the Polish flag outside the establishment, welcoming the talents of Special Delivery, and serving up delicious pierogi to celebrate another batch of their very popular One Foot Cock krupnik.

The band wrote and dedicated "The Twelve Days of Krupnik," and welcomed the crowd to join in with song sheets they provided.



Michael Gartler and Barb Olesky at the Turkey Trot at Potts.

WALTER OSTANEK has been playing accordion since a very young age and formed his own band in 1957. Canada's Polka King has received 21 Grammy nominations and has actually won three of the prestigious awards.

We were lucky enough to see him in a rare performance at Potts Banquet Hall with **Buffalo Touch**, who substituted as his band for the evening. Ostanek's personality and talent exude from the stage and his talent is absolutely magical. From the moment he took the stage the dance floor was packed.

Never playing with him in the past, the Touch did a tremendous job following his lead, and creating a solid ensemble. It is easy to see why Ostanek has had so much success, recording over 100 albums, being inducted in the International Polka Association Hall of Fame and The National Cleveland Style Hall of Fame are just a few of the accolades from his career.



Jimmy Lacki and son Lucas with Walter Ostanek.

Still keeping a very busy schedule at 84, Ostanek took some breaks from playing and performing so the Touch got a chance to play their fan favorites. Always quick to entertain the crowd, the band easily maneuvered from their Polish polkas back to Ostanek's Slovenian style.

Music continued non-stop as **Polish Pride** took to the stage playing polkas, waltzes, and even some crowd pleasing rhinelanders. The orchestra, which consists of over a dozen members, gives musicians who share a love of polka music the opportunity to actualize their dream of playing. Under the direction of Frank Zeczak and Tony Rozek, band members get together weekly to rehearse a host of familiar polkas tunes. It is impressive to see such a wide variety of ages and talents work together to perform the music they love.

Those who attended really got an evening of unforgettable entertainment.

POLISH NOOK

in Niagara Falls welcomed a sell-out crowd for **New Direction**. The family-owned restaurant was filled to capacity as polka lovers danced to some wonderful polka music. **New Direction** has recently had some changes in the band and it has added a new layer of texture. With Art Gaylor on accordion and Ed Szramka on the trumpet, the band has a fuller sound than ever before.

Dancers were quick to take advantage of the wonderful music, packing the beautiful dance floor at the Nook. For just a \$12.00 admission, a large Polish buffet was offered to everyone in attendance. After a full set of dancing, it was off to enjoy the delicious food and quickly back again to dance off

those calories. The Polish Nook has an intimate atmosphere which celebrates its Polish history and prides itself on the success they have had since opening in 1964. Stay tuned to see when **New Direction** will be back and make your way there for an unforgettable experience.

AFTER CELEBRATING THANKSGIVING in my hometown



Members of Polish Pride turn up the heat at the Turkey Trot.

of Wheeling, W.V., we made our way back a few days early to catch **Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push** at Blessed Mary Angela Parish in Dunkirk, N.Y. Over 250 people were in attendance for the Koledy Night featuring Lenny. This was a benefit for St. Gianna Pregnancy Outreach Center and it proved wild-



Lenny Gomulka and accordionist Richie Zebrowski at Blessed Mary Angela Parish in Dunkirk, N.Y.

ly successful.

The evening started out with a cocktail hour before a quick welcome by the Parish priest who blessed *oplatek* for all of us to share. The sharing of the wafer is a special tradition that, despite not growing up in a Polish household, I truly appreciate. The sentiments and love shared through the breaking of the bread together created the



Ostanek and members of The Touch.

beginning of a beautiful evening.

Next guests were treated to a huge Polish platter including Pol-

rishioners and her daughter Becky is a volunteer with St. Gianna's, the organization the event benefitted. I cannot express what an incredible time everyone who attended this fundraiser had. I would like to send a huge thank you to Lenny Gomulka and the band for sharing their talents and dedicating their time to polka music.

On a holiday weekend when most of us are getting a chance to relax and enjoy some family time, these gentleman spent hours traveling to play in Buffalo at Potts Banquet Hall on Friday, then to Dunkirk on Saturday, and back home to return to their day-to-day responsibilities on Monday. I am grateful that their sacrifice allows all of us the opportunity to enjoy this music which we treasure. Supporting these musicians and the promoters who take a chance on running an event will ensure that polka music will continue and we will reap those benefits. Blessed Mary Angela Parish also announced that they will be welcoming Lenny back along with Special Delivery on August 9, 2020 for their parish lawn fete.

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL POLKA ASSOCIATION in celebrating National Polka Month for a two-day event. The Warm-Up Dance will be held on Sat., January 18, 2020 with music provided by **Lenny Gomulka & Chicago Push**. The event takes place from 8:00-10:00pm at Polonia Banquets 4604 S. Archer Ave. Chicago. Admission is just \$15.00 and tickets will be sold at the door.

You can head back to Polonia Banquets on Sun., Jan. 19, for the 51st Annual Chicago Festival of Polka Bands. The doors will open at 11:30 a.m. with non-stop polka action starting at noon. Your \$15.00 admission will give you a day of entertainment including **Tony Blazonczyk's New Phaze, Music Company, Windy City Brass, Freeze Dried, Tri-City Drive, I.P.A. Tribute Band, and The D-Street Band**. For those traveling from out of town, hotel accommodations can be made by calling

See "Chicago Festival ...," next page

An Interview with John Gora and Ed Guca

by David J. Jackson

photographs by
Les Kapuscinski

There are about 20 million people with Polish ancestry living outside of Poland. Of these, about 10 million live in the United States, while just over a million live in Canada. This Polish diaspora is a diverse group of people with varied connections to Poland and different ways of expressing their ethnic heritage. Polish-Canadians John Góra and Ed Guca have worked tirelessly for decades promoting Polish culture in both Canada and the United States.

Recently I had the opportunity to sit down with Góra at his home in Burlington, Ontario, Canada. Over a delicious lunch of homemade Polish tomato soup, *paćzki* and tea with Polish honey, we discussed his current recording called "My Polish Roots and Beyond," along with a number of other topics concerning polka music and Polish culture in North America.

We began by talking about how many tracks are on the new CD, and the wide variety of styles. It's a long recording, with 19 tracks, but it could have been even longer. Góra said the band recorded 25 songs and had to leave six tracks off because CDs can hold only 74 minutes of music. "You have to give people a lot of variety, even at dances, you cannot kill them with just polkas. You have to, in my opinion, give them a slow one too," he said.

Many different factors seem to go into song selection. "On the last album 'Butterfly,' that was a big hit in the early 70s in Europe. I never knew what the words meant, but that I just remember the melody. Same thing with 'Goodbye My Love Goodbye.' I didn't know what the words mean, but I heard the melody and I remembered the melody. The same thing with 'Traveling man.' I came here and I kind of like the chords on it," Góra, who came to Canada in 1974 said. Clearly, a number of personal factors influence the selection of which songs to put on a recording.

"My Polish Roots and Beyond," presents songs with various tempos, and it also includes Polish and English vocals, classic polka songs, and pop covers. I asked Góra about the choice to include some disco polo songs on the recording.

"Disco polo is a fad that came on in the 80s in Poland. There were a lot of folk songs, but they put them into a modern beat, added a little

dance beat. Modern synthesizers came out that play the beat, and you press a note on the left side and you got your chords automatically. Everybody became instant musician because it's so easy to operate. It's stuff that you hear at weddings in Poland and in the bars." It's also stuff you get to hear on "My Polish Roots and Beyond."

I asked Góra how a young immigrant from Poland got into polka music in the 1970s. "When I came to Canada, somebody put on a Li'l Wally record with all these lovely songs. And I said, 'I already know this melody. I love these words.' So that's what started it with Li'l Wally and many other bands before him. They took the folk music, they put



on this latest CD actually, I changed quite a few songs, for example, "Tatus I Mamusia" I changed the words, the Polish words completely, and the English ones I wrote. As far as writing more songs, I find that people like to dance and sing along to songs they grew up with. They (new songs) don't go over so well in my opinion." I appreciate Góra's modification of older songs, and agree with him about new songs not going over well. This is unfor-



Guca (left) and Gora (above)

tunate, because once upon a time the old songs we all love so much were new songs that people gave a chance. If we want polka music to remain a vital artistic form, we have to let artists create new songs.

"... we have to reach out to the side if we want the music to survive."

After Góra and I had been speaking for a while, John's friend and Canadian polka legend Ed Guca and his wife Wanda, arrived so that we could talk a little about the polka scene in Canada, and the largest Polish festival in North America: The Roncesvalles Polish Festival in Toronto, which is held every year in September.

We began by talking about the origins of the festival, and how Guca was tasked with arranging the music, eventually creating a Polka Mania stage where the biggest polka bands in North America now regularly come and play before huge audiences. The festival brings in 150,000 people a day over its two-day run, and Góra says seventy percent of attendees are non-Polish.

Guca said that the young band Box On has had great success at the festival, and has been attracting a younger audience for polka music.

"They're a big hit. All of a sudden, young people are coming to the festival, the crowd would just multiply in front of them. That's excellent. And they say 'whoa, they're good.' They've got the good music and they play good music. They're entertaining. They move around they jump around. They twirl

their instruments." Guca and Góra seemed very encouraged that the right kind of polka bands, with talented musicians and real showmanship, can attract a younger audience to polka music.

Guca and Góra discussed some of the differences between Polish festivals in Canada and the United States. One difference they noted is that, in the United States, there are festivals that are completely polka-oriented, while in Canada there are "Polish Days" in various cities, with a focus on music, food, and culture. This led us to a discussion of one of the most interesting aspects of the Roncesvalles Polish Festival and Canada's policy of multiculturalism. "That's the reality. Canada is very multi-cultural. You will find at any of the festivals, whether it's the Polish, the Italian or Greek or anything, you

will find not only that type of food or entertainment, it will be multicultural. Because you want all different types of people to come and see you at the Polish festival. We don't want just Polish people," Guca said. He added that, in the days leading up to the festival, dozens of restaurants of various ethnicities add something Polish-themed to their menus, creating unique hybrids of Polish food and their own kinds of food. However, Guca did draw the line with music. "I will not put anything but Polish entertainment on the stages," he said.

Polish culture lives and grows outside of Poland because of the hard work of people like John Góra and Ed Guca. Make your contribution by attending an event in your own community!

David J. Jackson, a professor in the Department of Political Science at Bowling Green State University, is also a polka DJ.

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Chicago Festival of Polka Bands

continued from page 17

Sleep Inn Midway Airport at (708) 594-0001 and mentioning the "IPA Polka Rate" to receive discounted pricing.

National Polka Month celebrations continue on Sunday January 26th at Glendora House, 10225 S. Harlem Ave., Chicago Ridge, Ill., featuring the music of **Jimmy Killian & Honky Chicago**. Admission is only \$10.00 and the band will play from 1:30-5:00 p.m.

The Cleveland Polka Association will be hosting a Lounge Party with music by **Those Guys** on Sunday January 26, 2020. The Lounge Party will be held at Holiday Inn, 6001 Rockside Rd., Independence, Ohio from 2:00-6:00 p.m. Admission is just \$12.00 and there will be plenty of food and drink specials. You can contact Elaine at (216) 496-0223 for more information.

Don't forget to make plans to attend the 15th annual IPA Hall of Fame Benefit Dance. The event will be held on March 7 & 8, 2020 at The Polish American Citizens Center, 355 East St. Ludlow, Mass. This year's benefit will honor the music of IPA Hall of Famer **Eddie Guca**. This blockbuster weekend kicks off on Saturday with music by **John Gora & Gorale**. The Saturday dance is from 7:00-11:00 p.m. and admission is \$15.00. Sunday, three talented bands will share the stage to celebrate Eddie Guca and his musical talents. **Lenny Gomulka, Eddie Forman Orchestra, and Dennis Polisky & Maestro's Men** will provide the entertainment from 2:00-7:00 p.m. Admission for Sunday's performance is \$20.00 and you must purchase your tickets in advance. You can contact Linda K (908) 963-0890 for ticket information. Rooms are available at Holiday Inn Express, 321 Center St., Ludlow, Mass. for \$125.00/night by using the code IPA 2020. You can make your room reservations by calling (413) 589-9300. Don't delay making your plans to attend as this event sells out each and every year.

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ziobrowskijohn@gmail.com

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- Dennis Polisky / Eddie Forman PACC Ludlow, Mass. 2-7 (413) 592-0367
- Tony Blazonczyk Glendora Banquets Chicago Ridge, Ill. 1:30-6 (708) 425-3686

JANUARY 4

- John Gora Polish Home Syracuse, N.Y. (315) 471-9348

JANUARY 5

- John Stevens VFW Dupont, Pa. 2-6 (570) 650-0436

JANUARY 12

- John Stevens Polish Club Vero Beach, Fla. 2-6 (518) 429-8995
- John Stanky VFW Dupont, Pa. 2-6 (570) 650-0436

JANUARY 16

- Special Delivery. Tehan Post, Blasdell, N.Y. (716) 826-1949/

JANUARY 18

- John Gora Polish Alliance Hamilton,

JANUARY 16

- John Stevens St. Mark Evangelicalist Summerfield, Fla. 4:30-8:30 (352) 347-9317

JANUARY 19

- George Tarasek VFW Dupont, Pa. 2-6 (570) 650-0436

JANUARY 26

- Polka Connection Polish Hall Madison, Ill. 2-6 (618) 977-9102
- John Stevens PACC Ludlow, Mass. 2-6 (413) 592-0367
- Local Boyz Our Lady of Hope Dundalk, Md. 2-7 (410) 477-5200
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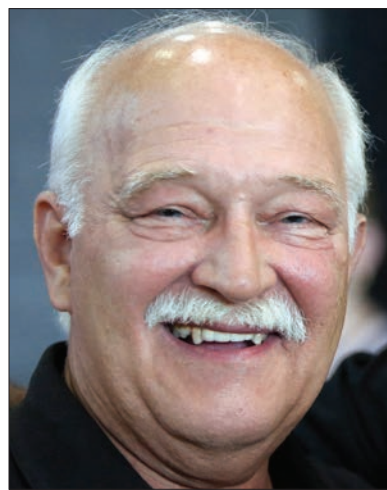
Michael Nowakowski, Owner of Sunshine Record Label, Musician, Hall of Fame Member

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Mike Nowakowski, owner of polka music's Sunshine recording label, musician, vocalist, and polka hall of famer, passed Dec. 6, 2019 at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.

He was 66.

Buffalo born and raised, Nowakowski started his own polka band at age 12 and was involved in the polka music field for over 50 years proving successful in all aspects of the industry. While recognized as an outstanding musician, he was president and executive producer of his own Sunshine record label since 1984, a company he formed with his friend John Boranski. Upon Boranski's passing, Nowakowski assumed all details of the business.

Sunshine boasts over 120 bands in its catalog — including some of polka music's most elite — making it a major label in the industry. The Sunshine label also became home to several specialty recordings, including the ever-popular "Polkas for Children" series and several CDs and cassettes produced for Christmas and other holidays. Its reach extended to over 350 radio stations, as well as promoters and music reviewers across the United States and Canada. Many of the bands on the label have gone on to



Nowakowski was a member of The Knewz, Dynatones, and his latest group, The Touch.

He recorded several full-length albums as an accordionist and was a featured pianist on several others.

In 2004, Nowakowski was inducted into the International Polka Association's Polka Music Hall of Fame; the following year, he was inducted into the Buffalo Music Hall of Fame.

Active in promoting and chairing many polka functions in the Buffalo area, Nowakowski was one of the originators of the Can-Am Polka Days. He was involved with numerous polka organizations and served on the board of directors of the Buffalo Polka Boosters. He was also a member of the United States Polka Association and was an elector of the International Polka Association's Hall of Fame. Nowakowski was a voting member of both the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and its Producers and Engineers Wing.

While performing regularly, Nowakowski was a senior records inventory clerk for the Erie County Court from 2003 to 2015. Previously, he drove a school bus for First Student in West Seneca from 2001 to 2003.

national prominence with the help of Sunshine's promotion.

Recordings on the Sunshine label earned sixteen Grammy-nominations. Nowakowski himself received a nomination in 2002 for his accordion work on Jerry Darlak & the Touch's album "Let the Good Times Roll," and again in 2003 on "Polkas in Black & White."

After his first band, The Variatones, he played with the Modernaires from 1971 until 1976 and then formed Sunshine, which recorded several albums and played for over fifteen years throughout the United States and Canada. The group also performed in Poland.

After Sunshine disbanded,

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NAME	BORN	DIED	KNOWN FOR	CITY, STATE
1 Steve Ostage	1922		Bandleader	Wisconsin
1 Joe Walega	1936	6/15/16	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Chicago
3 Li'l Teddy Pasterniak	1953		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Wisconsin
4 Gary Coddington	1952		Musician / Vocalist / Arranger	Pennsylvania
6 Bill Kovatch	1944		Polka D.J.	Pennsylvania
7 Lou Kryger	1929	1/28/14	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist (Kryger Bros.)	Pennsylvania
7 Steve Kaminski			Musician / Vocalist	New Jersey
7 Mark Wasilewski	1953		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Pennsylvania
8 Laura Bruzdinski Mateja			Vocalist IPA Tribute Band	Chicago
9 Bob Bobin	1950	1/14/98	Musician / Vocalist / Arranger	Chicago
10 Brian Chenkus	1966		Musician (Bass) / Vocalist	Massachusetts
11 Walt Wagner			Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Delaware
11 Joanne Deardorf			Former DJ & Promoter	Pennsylvania
11 Stan Galant	1947		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Altoona
11 Dr. Amil Langford	1952		Musician (Drummer)	Pennsylvania
11 Frank Liszka	1953		Bandleader (TBC) Vocalist (The Boys)	Ohio
11 Marko Polka			Polka D.J. WQTW Radio	Latrobe
12 Richie Dombrowski			Musician / Vocalist (PCM)	Connecticut
12 Paul Brozek	1963		Musician / Vocalist	Massachusetts
12 John Banashak Sr.	1913	5/18/63	Musician (Bass) / Vocalist	Pennsylvania
13 Dave Cole	1960		Promoter	New Castle
14 Eddie Siwicki	1923	2015	Bandleader / Musician	Massachusetts
14 Stan Raiczuk	1964		Musician -Drummer	New Jersey
15 Bob Koziel	1952		Polka D.J. WMCE	Erie
15 John Jaworski	1947		Musician / Vocalist	Chicago
16 Zosia Piotrowski			Vocalist	Michigan
17 Dee Dee Ogrodny			Musician / Vocalist (Versa-J's)	Pennsylvania
17 Al Piatkowski	1959		Musician / Vocalist	New York
18 Nick Nidoh	1956		Musician / Vocalist	Pennsylvania
21 Jim Bogdon	1939		Musician / Vocalist	Pennsylvania
23 Mitch Kupiec	1936		Polka D.J.	Massachusetts
23 Bob Siwicki	1949		Musician	Massachusetts
23 John Linda	1953		Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist	Ohio
24 Matt Wasilewski	1935	11/17/17	Bandleader / Musician / DJ / IJ	Pennsylvania
25 Wally Maduzia	1942		Musician / Vocalist	Chicago
26 Tony Krupski	1942	7/2/18	Bandleader/Musician / Vocalist	Buffalo
28 Bill Shibilski			Polka D.J. / IJ (Promoter)	New York
28 R. J. Bogdon			Musician (Drums)	Pennsylvania
30 Del Sinchak	1935		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Youngstown
31 Ray Lucotch, Jr.	1955		Musician / Vocalist (Dynasonics)	Pennsylvania

INTERNATIONAL

U.S. Visa Waiver Feted on Polish Independence Day

by Richard P. Poremski

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Poland's 101st Independence Day — in the year of the Centennial of Poland-U.S. Diplomatic Relations — was celebrated on Nov. 7, 2019 at the residence of Polish Ambassador Piotr Wilczek. Also being co-celebrated was the 90th Anniversary of LOT Polish Airlines (Polskie Linie Lotnicze), and the inclusion of Poland into the U.S. Visa Waiver Program (VWP). More than 500 guests attended — including officials and representatives from Poland, the international diplomatic corps with their military attaches, the U.S. Congress, administration and armed forces, European Union and World Bank. Also included were various luminaries, think tank administrators, and the extended Polonia.

Ambassador Piotr Wilczek, in his remarks, recounted the history of Polish-U.S. relations over the past 100 years. He cited examples of the two countries "dynamic and positive relationship" during the past three years of his tenure. They included mutual security agreements, health and business accomplishments, border security and immigration issues, and space exploration cooperation between the Polish Space Agency and NASA. In closing, Ambassador Wilczek stated that "Poland is a dependable and



Invited speakers during the Polish Independence Day ceremonies at the residence of the Polish Ambassador (l. to r.): David Pekoske, acting U.S. Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security; Rafal Milczarski, chairman and CEO of LOT Polish Airlines; and guest of honor Stephen Biegun, nominee for U.S. Deputy Secretary of State.

full-fledged partner with the United States with untold future possibilities."

The U.S. VWP was a main focus of the speeches delivered by the ambassador and the invited speakers. Ambassador Wilczek intoned that "The United States demonstrated our strong ties on the 101st Anniversary by including Poland in the Visa Waiver Program." He thanked all the members of the U.S. Congress for crafting legislation to fix this long-standing issue. "On November 11 — on Polish Independence Day — Poland will become

the 39th member of the Visa Waiver Program. The Visa Waiver Program was very important on our to-do list in our bi-lateral relations. It brings our communities closer together and enhances many business opportunities and the existing trade landscape."

Ambassador Wilczek also thanked the previous ambassadors and their staffs who for years have raised this issue with U.S. government officials, the Polonia that worked tirelessly campaigning for

the VWP as an issue of the utmost importance, and the many business partners involved. But the ambassador also made it clear that: "Poland did its homework. Our membership in the Visa Waiver Program is no reward, credit or gratification. Poland forged all necessary agreements and completed all necessary requirements." He thanked the President of LOT Polish Airlines, Rafal Milczarski, for "his inspiring visionary leadership to establish the visa coalition." LOT was also praised for its underwriting of the evening's elaborate reception.

"Ladies and Gentlemen ... we did it!" spoke a jubilant Rafal Milczarski, president of LOT Polish Airlines.

"After 30 years we did it by actually meeting the criteria by lowering the percentage of rejections by the United States," said Milczarski, who thanked a number of Polish and American companies that participated in a joint initiative that was started by LOT — *Visa Free to the USA* — with much public support. Milczarski concluded his remarks on a philosophical note, saying "The Visa Waiver Program was a thorn in the foot of the Polish American relationship that has now been removed ... and now we can firmly walk together to a much greater future."

Guest of Honor David Pekoske - acting U.S. Secretary of Homeland

Security, stated in his remarks that "I'm very excited about the opening of the Visa Waiver Program, it will greatly facilitate travel between Poland and the United States," and that Poland met the difficult entry requirements. He thanked Poland for its security partnership with the United States and said that it greatly improves the security of our people.

Stephen Biegun, nominated U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, firstly stated that he was very proud to be a Polish American. Then he recounted how Poland and the U.S. have worked together in NATO and as military allies and partners in many ways around the world. He spoke that "The United States and Poland have many things to celebrate this year: Poland's 15th anniversary of entry into the European Union; the 20th anniversary of Poland's entry into NATO; the 75th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising; the 76th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising; and the 100 years of diplomatic relations between Poland and the United States.

In concluding his Polish Independence Day speech, Ambassador Wilczek voiced a most profound declaration: "I'm proud to say that our current relations with the United States are the best they can be in all our history. May they continue to flourish for 100 years and beyond."

POLONIA AT A GLANCE

MASSACHUSETTS

NORTHAMPTON — The Polish Heritage Committee of Northampton is sponsoring a **Polish Christmas Carol Sing-Along**, Sunday, January 5, 2020, 2:00 p.m. at St. Valentine's Church, 127 King Street, Northampton. All friends of Polonia are cordially invited to attend. The carols will be led by singers from area church choirs. An afternoon of music and fellowship is surely to be enjoyed by all. Refreshments will follow the event (in the parish hall of the church).

NEW JERSEY

BERLIN — Sun., Jan. 5. St. Joseph Rosary Society Annual **Oplatek Luncheon**, Lucien's Manor, 81 West White Horse Pike. Starts at noon; for more info or reservations call Pat (856) 310-1783.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA — Sun., Jan. 12. St. Adalbert Polish Language School Annual Christmas Program, "Jaselka," St. Adalbert Auditorium, Thompson St. and Allegheny Ave., Port Richmond section of Philadelphia. Noon; admission is free. For more info, call Danuta Eichler (267) 251-3776.

PHILADELPHIA — Sun., Jan. 12. **Polski Uniwersytet Ludowy Lecture** in the English Language. Associated Polish Home, 9150 Academy Rd., Philadelphia. 3:00 p.m. Richard Brzozowski will be speaking on the "History of the Polish American Museum in Fort Washington, N.Y." For more info, call (215) 624-9954. Admission is free and all are invited to attend.

PHILADELPHIA — Sat., Jan. 25. St. John Cantius **Polish Language School Carnival Ball**, St. John Cantius Parish Hall, 4415 Almond St. 8:30 p.m. Dinner and music by Simone Band. Tickets may be

purchased at Polus (215) 425-8560. Open to the public. For more info call Elizabeth (215) 776-7311.

PHILADELPHIA — All are invited to the **annual tribute ceremony** honoring American Revolutionary War Hero and freedom fighter for Poland Gen. Thaddeus Kosciuszko. The event will mark the 274th anniversary of his birth, and the 203rd anniversary of his death. Sat., Feb. 1, 2020. The event starts at noon at the Kosciuszko House, 3rd & Pine Sts. This event is presented by the Polish American Congress Eastern Pennsylvania District in conjunction with the Polish American Cultural Center Museum in Historic Philadelphia. A luncheon at the Polish American Cultural Center Museum will follow the ceremony. For information or luncheon reservations call (215) 922-1700; email info@PolishAmericanCongress.com.

READING — During 2020, the **Polish-American Board of Education of Berks County** will celebrate its 75th Anniversary.

Among events plans for this year are its Holiday/Installation Dinner. Giannotti's Country Manor Restaurant & Bar, 3118 Pricetown Rd., (Route 12). Starts at 1:30 p.m. For more info, call Sandy Lubas Hummel (610) 207-7065.

As of 2019, the organization has awarded 321 scholarships totaling almost \$700,000. A reunion of scholarship recipients is being planned in conjunction with the PA-BEBC annual scholarship awards dinner to be held at the Inn of Reading on Sat., April 25, 2020. Past recipients should visit the Board's Facebook Page or its website at www.pabeberks.com.

RANDOR, Pa. — The League of Women Voters of Radnor Township recognized **Dorothy Orlichowski**

with its 2019 Civic Participation Award for her years of service to the community.

Orlichowski began participating in the civic life of Radnor Township in 1977. She organized a book club (which still meets every month), served as secretary of the Saturday Club, which was dedicated to improving lives of women, children and families in the area, and is a trustee of the Radnor Memorial Library. She currently serves in

her third term as vice president of the League of Women Voters. Orlichowski was elected to serve on the board of School Directors, where for seven years she was a member of the finance committee.

Besides being active with the Radnor Township, Orlichowski is very active with the Polish community. She was a volunteer at the Polish American Cultural Center Museum in historic Philadelphia, where she still is a member.

Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku
Happy New Year



The
Polonia
Foundation
of
Ohio

9999 Granger Road, Garfield Heights, OH 44125
Monica Sochecki, President / (216) 849-1292

Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!

Happy New Year

**Polish Singers
Alliance of America**

www.polishsingersalliance.org

**DISTRICT VII CHRISTMAS CONCERT
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2020**

1:00 p.m. Mass followed by Concert
St. Stanislaus Church, 607 Humboldt St., Brooklyn, N.Y.

Join us for our 52nd International Convention at the Millennium Hotel in Buffalo, N.Y. May 22-24, 2020. For information visit www.polishsingersalliance.org or email Mary Lou Wyrobek at wyrobekml@gmail.com

The Polish Singers Alliance of America was founded in 1889 and is the oldest Polish American Cultural Organization in America

