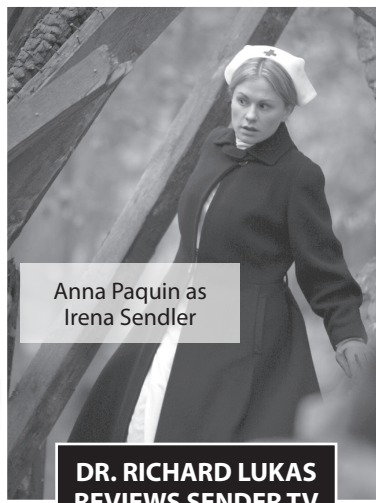


# POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Anna Paquin as Irena Sendler

DR. RICHARD LUKAS  
REVIEWS SENDER TV  
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PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT BOSTON, NEW YORK  
AND ADDITIONAL ENTRY OFFICES

OVERDUE: MATT URBAN USPS STAMP • SUPPORT GABRESKI MEMORIAL • A TALE OF TWO CHURCHES  
THE MAGIC OF ST. JOHN'S EVE • ALL-TIME POLISH AMERICAN BASEBALL TEAM • ZIMMERMAN PROTESTS POLICY  
A GIFT TO AMERICA • SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE SALUTES PODHALANKA • KUDOS FOR SZAREJKO

## NEWSMARK

**MINISTERS MEET.** Poland's foreign minister arrived in Moscow May 5 for meetings with his Russian counterpart on energy and defense, amid tense relations between the Kremlin and Warsaw.

One of the aims of the Moscow talks will be setting the ground for a planned visit of Russian PM Vladimir Putin to Poland for the 70th anniversary commemorations of the outbreak of World War II. The main event is to be held in Gdansk, September 1.

Foreign Ministers Radek Sikorski of Poland and Sergei Lavrov of Russia met for the process of "normalizing relations," said the Polish Press Agency.

The meeting also showed that Russia now sees Warsaw as a serious player in the EU, and not as an "anti-Russian troublemaker," the daily WYBORCZA commented.

The meeting will discuss the so-called Eastern Partnership and the United States missile shield to be built in Poland: both controversial topics that have raised tensions between Poland and Russia.

**SAVE HISTORIC SHIPYARD, SAYS WALESIA.** Former Polish President Lech Walesa asked European politicians to save the struggling Gdansk shipyard, the cradle of the pro-democracy Solidarity movement that he founded.

The yard has been under pressure for years with the threat of bankruptcy. The money-losing business has been kept alive with state subsidies, putting Poland at odds with the European Union.

"The Gdansk shipyard is the one where the transformation of Europe started," Walesa told a congress of the European People's Party, a grouping of center-right parties that is the biggest in the European Parliament.

"Please take a moment and think what can be done to prevent the destruction of this first monument of our victory in Europe and in the world," Walesa said, winning applause.

Poles have a strong emotional attachment to the Gdansk shipyard, a symbol of the demise of communism.

**BODY OF SLAIN POLE LAID TO REST.** The remains of a Polish geologist beheaded by militants in Pakistan were buried in his hometown of Krosno, in a ceremony attended by state and local authorities and city residents.

Piotr Stanczak, 42, was kidnapped close to the Afghan border on Sept. 28, 2008 while on a project for a Krakow-based geophysics company that surveys oil and gas fields for Pakistani authorities.

In return for his freedom, the abductors had demanded the release of some imprisoned militants, a condition the Pakistani government refused to meet.

Stanczak was held hostage until his captors beheaded him Feb. 7 in a killing they videotaped.

**A CHANCE TO PROVE INNOCENCE.** If you hold a leadership position in the Polish American Congress and have been accused of collaborating with the Secret Services of the Communist regime, now is your chance to prove your accusers wrong.

Following up on an October 2008 By-Law amendment, which made former collaborators ineligible to hold office within the organization, the PAC recently passed a lustration resolution. This urges all persons in leadership positions in the PAC — who hold or have held postwar Polish citizenship — to apply to Poland's Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) for disclosure of documents relating to their involvement with the Security Services of the Polish People's Republic.

The IPN is based in Poland and its mission is to study crimes perpetrated by Nazi Germany and the Communists against Poland and the Poles. Current Polish law allows for the release of lustration documents only to principals — only an individual can request vetting by the IPN in order to determine if, and in what ways, he or she was or was not involved with the Security Services of the Polish People's Republic.

## In Step With Success



**RAPHAELLE ZIEMBA** of the The Lira Dancers twirls in a costume from the southern Rzeszów region. The dance group is part of the Lira Ensemble, which has been entertaining and enlightening audiences for 44 years. The nation's only professional performing Polish American arts company, Lira brings the best of Polish Culture into American life through orchestral and vocal music, dance, and informative English language narration. *Story on page 4.*

### Arabs to Build New Town in Poland

Arab company Limitless intends to purchase a tract of land in Chrzanow, on which they will build a town replete with shopping centers, apartments, office buildings and sports facilities. They are also interested in buying land in Warsaw, Katowice, and Wroclaw. The company, a property division of investment giant Dubai World, entered Poland in 2007 and intends to complete land purchases by September, 2009. Once the land purchase in Chrzanow is finalized, construction is anticipated to last about thirty months.

## The Vanishing Polish Ethnic Parish in America

by Rev. Richard Philiposki S.Ch.

In 1854, the first Polish Roman Catholic Parish in America was founded in Panna Maria, Texas.

After the Civil War, began the first larger waves of immigrants from Prussian (German) occupied Poland.

Before the end of the 19th century, waves began also from Russian Poland (Kingdom of Poland) and Galicia (Austrian Poland) right up to World War I and then following the war to the mid 1920s, when restrictive legislation greatly reduced the numbers of immigrants allowed from Eastern and Southern Europe. It is estimated that somewhere around 800-860 churches were established as personal national parishes in many dioceses of the New England, the Northeast and Great Lakes area.

Smaller numbers were found farther out in the Midwest and very few in the West and almost none in the South. Wherever the Polish immigrants came

in significant numbers, the first priority was to have a church congregation, where the language and many religious traditions from the old country could be reestablished in the new world.

Also it was important that the new generations of children born here be



taught the catechism and other subjects in the Polish language to connect with their parents and their heritage. They often built elaborate churches and parish complexes and expected that many future generations would be served by these structures!

Today there is an alarming accelerating increase in the suppression (closing), merging and clustering of these ethnic

parishes founded by either our parents, grandparents or great grandparents. As a priest of the Society of Christ for Polonia and as a student of ethnic parochial history and geography, I have studied the annual Official Kennedy Catholic Directory as well as diocesan sources to monitor

the increasing disappearance of these parishes that is reaching an accelerated rate.

On March 14th, the Bishop of Cleveland announced the closing (among others) of most of the remaining Polish ethnic parishes in the city and diocese (St. Casimir, St. Hyacinth, St. Barbara, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Corpus Christi, St. Hedwig in Lakewood, St. Stanislaus in Lorain, Holy Cross in Elyria and St. Hedwig in Akron. Earlier Transfiguration, St. Mary of Czestochowa and St. Josaphat in Cleveland were closed.

Other archdioceses and dioceses such as Detroit, Boston, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Albany, Scranton, Milwaukee, and See "Vanishing ...," page 4

## Note by Polish Catholic Auschwitz Inmate Discovered 65 Years Later

OSWIECIM, Poland — In a pure stroke of luck, a bottle containing the names of World War II death camp prisoners was found in April by workers demolishing a wall in what is now a school, but was part of the Nazi facility Auschwitz, built by the Germans in Oswiecim, Poland.

The note in the bottle written September 20, 1944 included the names and Auschwitz ID numbers of six Polish Catholics and one French Jew, at the time ages 18 to 20.

Three of the men on the list are still alive, including Wacław Sobczak, who hid the bottle, a last sign of life as he prepared to die.

"I put the bottle in the wall," Sobczak, 84, who survived Auschwitz but still bears the ID number — 145664 — the Nazis tattooed on his forearm, told the AFP news agency via telephone from his home in Wrabczyn, western Poland.

"It was an attempt to leave a trace of our existence as we thought we were going to die," said Sobczak, sent to Auschwitz in 1943 as a slave laborer.

"We were taught how to be masons by engineers and master masons, primarily French Jews," said Karol Czekalski, 83, another of the Poles named on the list, which was formally handed over to the Auschwitz-Birkenau.

After news of the bottle's discovery spread, a Swedish woman identified the man who wrote the list — Bronisław Jankowiak, Auschwitz ID number 121213 — as her father.

"I recognized the handwriting. It must be my father's handwriting," said Irene Jankowiak, 49, of Uppsala, north of Stockholm.

"I'm surprised that these Poles put me in this bottle," said Albert Veissid, of Lyon, France, the only Jew on the list. "I knew their faces, but didn't remember the names."

The Poles — all Christian — spoke simple French, and worked on building sites while Veissid worked beneath them, securing a bunker, he said.

They brought him marmalade and other stolen provisions during the day, then came at night to retrieve them, he said.



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FORUM / Chester Lipinski

## Support Fund Drive for Gabreski Memorial

At the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado a permanent gallery honors the heroes of American aviation. It is a place where future pilots can gain inspiration from the exploits of their predecessors. Among the honorees are the Wright brothers; Gen. Hap Arnold, who led the Army Air Corps in the European Theater during World War II; and Gen. Billy Mitchell, who is regarded as the father of the Air Force.



FRANCIS GABRESKI

There are now also a number of bronze busts and statues of others who have played a role in the growth of the Air Force. An opportunity has presented itself to add one member to this gallery of aviation's heroes, Col. Francis Gabreski.

Gabreski was a Polish-speaking American Pole, whose parents emigrated to the United

States in the early 1900s. During World War II he distinguished himself as a pilot at Pearl Harbor, and in 1942 was one of the few select pilots allowed to join a brigade of volunteers who joined the British Royal Air Force. Because of his abilities as a pilot and versatility in the Polish language, he was assigned to the Polish 315th Spitfire squadron. During his tenure with the RAF and the Polish Air Force, he was able to hone his tactics and assist the American forces in developing their tactics, as he rejoined them in 1943. Credited with 33 1/2 enemy destroyed, he was the Euro-

pean theater's top American Ace.

Downed over Germany in 1944, he was imprisoned in a German stalag where he endlessly toiled to preserve the men under his command.

After World War II, Gabreski rejoined as the Air Force, which was now a separate branch of the military. He went to Korea, where as a Wing Commander and jet pilot. He once again distinguished himself as an ace, one of the few pilots that were recognized as aces of both wars.

After the war he commanded several tactical squads and brigades.

The United States Air Force Academy has recently reserved a place dedicated to the memory of Colonel Gabreski. We feel we Poles should properly honor him by hav-

ing a bronze bust of him placed in this area of honor, where he can serve as a symbol of Polish courage and unselfish patriotism.

We have located a Polish sculptor who is eager to make the bust for about \$12,000. If we can raise the funds soon he can get started and the emplacement and dedication could happen as early as this Summer or Fall. He has just had dedicated a full size statue of our beloved Polish Pope John Paul II here in Denver.

We ask the readers of the Polish American Journal for financial support of this most honorable project to honor our Polish hero. We should take every opportunity to remind the citizens of this country that Poles have played a very significant part in the development the United States. Gabreski is another in the company of Pulaski and Kosciuszko, who have served to preserve the freedom of the United States.

Please help us to install this very deserving Polish hero in this place of honor at the Academy.

You can forward your checks to:  
**Francis Gabreski Memorial Fund**  
**West Fargo Bank**  
**66 West Springer Drive**  
**Highlands Ranch, CO 80129**

or you can contact me personally at (303) 683-1501 to participate in this project.



*Chester Lipinski, of Highlands Ranch, Colorado, is a World War II Army Air Corps veteran.*

QUOTES / compiled from news sources

## And Why Would That Be a Joke, Mr. Kamen?

"NO JOKE. A Clintonite gets an embassy! Lee Feinstein, who was Hillary Rodham Clinton's national security director on the campaign and principal deputy director of the State Department's policy planning shop in the Clinton administration, is the pick to be ambassador to Poland. Okay, it's Warsaw, but Poland is an important post."

—WASHINGTON POST "In the Loop" columnist **Al Kamen**.

"She had a very hard life, so I guess that's how she survived that long — she was tough."

—**Jan Kaminski, 73**, on the passing of his mother, *Eufrozyna Kaminski, 111*, believed to be the second-oldest living person in Canada. *Eufrozyna survived three years in a Siberian concentration camp and many years in Tanzania as a postwar refugee before settling in 1950, at age 52, in Ottawa.*

"I think it made him suffer, he wanted to forget it. We asked our parents to write, to leave testimony, but they never wanted to."

—**Margareta Jankowiak**, whose father — the late *Bronislaw Jankowiak, a Polish POW* — wrote the names and numbers of seven *Auschwitz prisoners including himself on a scrap of paper and placed it in a bottle. The bottle was discovered this past April.*

"I know you've been dealing with the emotion of it, the frustration of it, maybe even the anger of it."

—**Jill Lajdziak**, general manager of GM's Saturn line, in a video to Saturn dealers. *The line asked the dealers to hold on while it shopped for a potential buyer.*

"Clearly, our regulatory system ... failed miserably, and we must rebuild it now."

—**Rep. Paul Kanjorski (D-Pa.)**, on how the alleged \$50 billion fraud involving Wall Street figure *Bernard L. Madoff reflects deep, systemic problems at the Securities and Exchange Commission.*

"The Ranbaxy case is yet another example of the need for significant

reform at the FDA."

—**Rep. John D. Dingell (D-Mich.)**, on the Food and Drug Administration's handling of prescription drugs imported from India's *Ranbaxy Laboratories. The FDA reported Ranbaxy did not properly test its drugs, yet for three years "continued to drag their feet while American lives were at risk," said Dingell.*

"The dollar has gained a full 50% on Poland's zloty, meaning that \$100 can now get you a \$150 hotel room in Warsaw."

—FORBES MAGAZINE, citing *Poland as a top travel destination.*

SPEAK UP / Letters to the Editor

## No Laughing Matter

Dear Editor,  
 Please do not refer to anti-Polish slurs as Polish jokes.

Please, never again waste space in the Polish American Journal by

inserting a photo of Arlan Spector, or any others who ridicule anything Polish!

**Jacob M. Dvornicky**  
*Elmira, New York*



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**STAMFORD COUPLE HONORED.** The Annual Polish Day at the State Capital in Hartford honored several Connecticut residents for their contributions to the community and the state. Among those honored were Patricia A. Koproski and Alexander R. Koproski of Stamford, Conn. The Koproskis are the founders of the National Polish Center in Washington, D.C., and are active in the Holy Name of Jesus Church in Stamford and the Polish American Cultural Society of Stamford.

The Polish American Cultural Society hosted Polish Constitution Day on May 3rd at the Holy Name Athletic Club and Kosciuszko Park.

Pictured above are Alexander Koproski, Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz, and Patricia Koproski, in the Hall of Flags at the state capital.

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

## Enlightening Audiences: The Lira Ensemble of Chicago

by Staś Kmiec

The Polish American population of the Chicago area has an active and rich cultural life. One of its most successful and enduring ethnic arts organizations, The Lira Ensemble has been entertaining and enlightening audiences for 44 years. As the nation's only professional performing arts company, their success lies in bringing the best of Polish Culture into American life through orchestral and vocal music, dance, and informative English language narration.

The name of the company, "lira," is the Polish word for "lyre," a traditional symbol of music.

**IN RESPONSE TO THE POLISH JOKE.** The company was established back in 1965, to be a positive response to the then-popular occurrence of the offensive Polish joke. It was also a way to disseminate that Polish musical culture consists of more than polka music. Lira focuses on artistic achievement with the highest quality in its work and creates a tradition of professionalism in Polish-American Arts and Polish Arts in this country.

**DIRECTOR LUCYNA MIGALA.** The ensemble's driving force is its artistic director and general manager, Lucyna Migala. The Lira Singers was co-founded by Alice Stephens, a Lithuanian American, and her student, Ms. Migala as an amateur youth group. Under Migala's current direction the ensemble continues to grow.

Born in Poland, she came to America as a young child with her family. Her parents, Joseph and Slawa were prominent in Polish-language broadcasting, and Lucyna followed in their footsteps. With a degree in journalism from Northwestern University and fellowship

at the Washington Journalism Center, she spent 13 years as a writer, reporter and producer for NBC News, based in Chicago, Cleveland and Washington, D.C.. Along with other members of her family, she created WCEV/1450 AM, one of Chicago's major multi-ethnic radio stations.

Ms. Migala is the recipient of an Emmy for her work in television, an award from the Chicago Commission on Human Relations for her work in radio, and the Cavalier's Cross of Merit from the president of Poland.

"There is so much wonderful Polish music yet to perform and so many terrific folk and historic dances that we have not yet presented," said Ms. Migala. "Our work will not be done until every American is aware of the rich thousand-year heritage that immigrants from Poland brought with them to these shores – a culture that they treasure and enjoy and pass on to their children and grandchildren."

**RECORDINGS AND CROSS-ETHNIC OUTREACH.** The ensemble is well-known for its nine recordings beginning with records, then tapes, and now CDs. These collections of folk songs, carols, Marian hymns, and other Polish songs are a necessary addition to any Pole's music library. The Lira Singers have also recorded a cassette of original songs that teach Polish phrases and Polish prayers.

The company's motto is to perform the Arts of Poland and America, so naturally American music is an integral part of its repertoire. Bridging the language gap, Lira has commissioned about a dozen bi-lingual Polish/English arrangements of folk, patriotic and other music from both cultures which reach beyond those of Polish descent.

When other ethnic groups be-

gan moving into traditionally Polish neighborhoods, Lira responded by producing cross-ethnic concerts at churches and schools in such areas. Lira also fostered a dialogue between American Jews and Polish Americans, creating concerts of Polish-Jewish music, which it brought to prominent synagogues in the Chicago area to observe important anniversaries of World War II and the Holocaust. The Chamber Chorus and percussionists were invited to perform at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. during World War II commemorations.

With Lira, heritage counts less than talent, accomplishment and commitment to the company. Many Lira artists are not Polish at all. The company includes many talented African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and artists from many other ethnic groups.

**PERFORMANCES.** The Lira Ensemble is artist-in-residence at Loyola University Chicago and is divided into:

- **The Lira Singers**, the female ensemble which is the core of the company, is made up of eight to fourteen women who perform in three or four part harmony.
- **The Chamber Chorus** compliments the Singers with eight to twelve male vocalists.
- **The Symphony** is made up of 50+ professional instrumentalists with Paul Dijkstra and Philip Seward as Co-Conductors. The musicians also appear as the Lira Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, String Quartet, Piano Quintet, Piano Trio, and Woodwind Quartet.
- **The Lira Dancers** – An addition since 1994, the troupe of 14 dancers was co-founded by Anthony Dobrzański who served as

choreographer and dance director from 1994 through 2003. Iwona Puc, who received her certification as a Dance Instructor from the Rzeszów's Provincial House of Culture, is the current choreographer. The dancers are either professional dancers or have come out of local groups.

- **The Children's Chorus** – "Dzieci" was created in 1987 as a community chorus of boys and girls, ages 7 through 16.

The Lira Ensemble performs about 80 concerts annually in both traditional arts venues and neighborhood sites and has won praise from critics and audiences in both Poland and the US. Its artistic standards earned the company the opportunity to perform alongside the Sarasota Opera in Florida, the Chicago Symphony Chorus, and the Chorus of the Lyric Opera.

Lira's concerts of new music and the music of major Polish composers provide an opportunity to introduce American audiences to repertoire unknown to them.

The distinguished artistic advisors to the Lira Ensemble include composer/conductor Krzysztof Penderecki, composer/conductor Stefan Stulgrosz of Poznań, composer/percussionist Marta Ptaszyńska, pianist and Chopin specialist Daniel Pollock of Los Angeles; and composer Henryk Górecki.

Performances range from 15-minute presentations to two-hour concerts featuring all five groups. Lira regularly performs at Polish-American community events, and as a community outreach to the elderly, Lira makes a series of appearances in senior and nursing homes.

Vocalists and instrumentalists perform at wedding ceremonies, parties, special events, and funeral services offering a wide variety of



The ensemble's driving force is its Emmy award-winning artistic director and general manager, Lucyna Migala.

musical services, and present classical and jazz repertoire, as well as Polish favorites.

"Our plans for Zapraszamy! – An American Celebration of Polish Song and Dance (a program originally announced in 2002) are not dead, but are on hold until the economy is much healthier, said Ms. Migala. "Meanwhile, Lira is performing in major theaters and concert halls in Chicago and in an ever-growing number of other cities."

Since 1993, the Board of the Lira Ensemble has organized annual tours of Poland. Income from the tour helps support their work with a portion of the cost of each tour being tax deductible.

For additional information contact: 1 (800) 547-LIRA, lira@liraensemble.com or www.liraensemble.com.

## The Vanishing Polish Ethnic Parish in America

continued from cover

Toledo, among others, also closed Polish parishes in recent years. More closings will certainly be coming in other dioceses soon.

### Who or what factors are to blame for the vanishing Polonia Parish?

The reasons behind the decline and vanishing of Polish ethnic parishes are varied. Most often the following factors are the contributing reasons: 1) decline in membership numbers 2) declining neighborhoods that have undergone racial change – "white flight" or influx of other groups such as Hispanics, "Yuppies" and non Polish Catholic residents. 3) Lack of newer waves of immigrants from Poland into the area. 4) Shortage of priests to staff such parishes. 5) Depleting financial means to maintain aging and now oversized parish buildings. 6) The failure of parishes to relocate their churches to new locations in suburbs to which their members were moving. 7) Poor emphasis on language retention (Polish in the liturgy and Polish language classes) and often de-emphasizing Polish traditions and customs.

The decline had its real beginning after World War II when thousands of men returned from the service to establish families and look beyond the older ethnic neighborhoods of their childhood. The desire for a new home, often in a suburb with more land and green space for their children, was frequently a factor. Intermarriage outside of the Polish ethnic group was also a reason to disassociate oneself from the ethnic parish. Demographic changes in Polish ethnic neighborhoods often caused an exodus out of the old parish.

The "de-polonization" process that took place such as: 1) Dropping the teaching of the Polish language even when the majority of students in the parish parochial school were of Polish ancestry. 2) Failure to bring Polish into the vernacular liturgy (Mass) after the Vatican II in some parishes. 3) Not incorporating singing of Polish hymns at English Masses, 4) Discontinuing Polish religious traditions, i.e., Corpus Christi Procession, Easter "Rezurekcja"

We often would like to blame either the bishop or diocesan officials for the closing of our parishes, or blame the influx of non Polish background people (African-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans or other minorities into a Polish parish neighborhood. But the real blame has to also fall on our own people, Polish Americans by the tens of thousands who abandoned the parishes that their immigrant ancestors sacrificed to build!

Even though we think nothing of driving a half hour or more to a favorite shopping mall, sports arena, casino etc., it seems we cannot make the sacrifice of driving occasionally to the ethnic parish to which we owe our faith formation and heritage.

**ARE THERE EXCEPTIONS** to this negative process of Polish parish closings? Yes, I'm happy to report that there are some. Society of Christ Fathers in the past several years have either opened, purchased or constructed new Polish Parishes or Missions in places like Phoenix, Arizona (Our Lady of Czestochowa), Lombard, Illinois (Divine Mercy), Pompano Beach, Florida (Our Lady of Czestochowa), Houston, Texas (Our Lady of Czestochowa),

San Jose, California (St. Brother Albert) and San Diego (St. Maximilian Kolbe). Also some Parishes that were slated for closing were rejuvenated such as St. Peter & Paul in Tacoma, Washington, St. Stanislaus in Portland, Oregon and Holy Trinity in Chicago. Many of the above places are either in the Sunbelt of the West or South, or where there has been a significant influx of Polish speaking Catholics such as the Chicago, Brooklyn and New Jersey.

What about those still serving and struggling Polonia Parishes where there is no new or significant number of Polish speaking Catholics? What can be done for them to have a chance at survival?

1. Keep at least minimal Polish language usage-Mass, even if with English homily on Sunday.
2. Emphasize the beauty of Polish Hymnology with the singing of Polish hymn (even alternating with stanzas translated into English) at English Masses.
3. Establish Polish Language Classes for adults, youth and children on Saturdays or weekday evenings.
4. Make the parish bulletin more bilingual. Putting days of the week in Polish next to the English. Using expressions like "Bóg Zapłać," ("God Bless") "Dziękuję" ("Thank you") or "Sto lat," ("Happy Birthday.")
5. Use often the traditional Christian greeting in Polish of "Niech Będzie Pochwalony Jezus Chrystus" between priest and people.
6. Celebrate the seasons with traditional social gatherings such as "Oplatek" Dinner

and Dance after Christmas, "Święćca" a parish Easter Brunch in the parish.

7. Remember the parish patronal feast day with an "Odpust" special Mass and meal or mini-festival.
8. Organize parish pilgrimages and tours to Poland. Encourage, and if necessary even subsidize some youth to go and discover the beauty of their ancestral homeland
9. Create an auxiliary association of Friends (Koło Przyjaciół) of Former Parishioners, send them a newsletter, have school reunions and picnics. Inform them of what is going on in the parish. Send them special offering envelopes (Christmas, Easter).

Encourage all Catholics of Polish ancestry or heritage to adopt and support a Polish Parish (either the one in which they or their family had their origins or another one chosen by them) by rejoining or at least maintaining dual membership, and make an effort to come at least once a month and give financial support to those parishes now in great need

If our so-called Polish ethnic parishes make an effort to reemphasize their ethnic heritage and distinctness, and if only a significant minority of practicing Roman Catholics of Polish ancestry would make an effort to reconnect in some way with their roots, then perhaps we would see a halt to the vanishing and disappearing Polish ethnic parish in America.



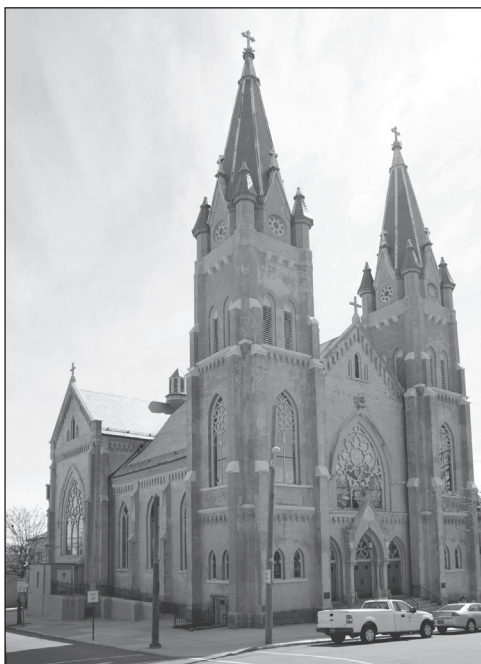
Rev. Richard Philiposki S. Ch. is pastor of the twinned parishes of St. Adalbert and St. Hedwig in Toledo, Ohio. For more information, visit [www.stadalbertsthehdwig.org](http://www.stadalbertsthehdwig.org).

# A Tale of Two City Churches

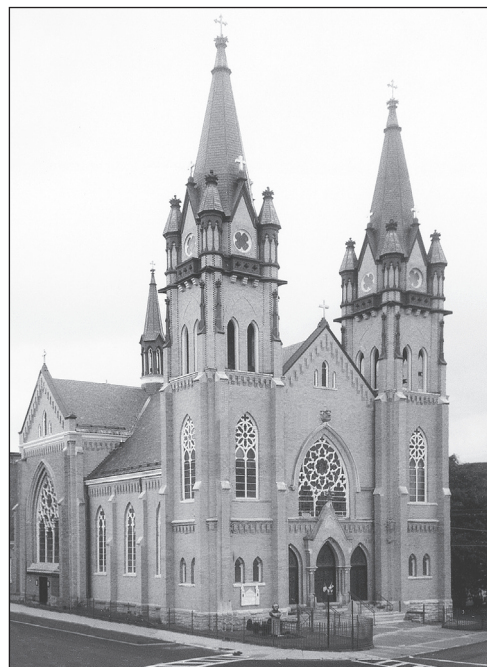
by Edward A. Lipka

There's an old saying, "You really don't miss something until it's truly gone."

This adage has been utilized in many different situations, specifically people, places and things. Whether you are a member of a church or a particular faith, you must have noticed over the past several years, the large number of churches being closed and/or consolidated in various Catholic Dioceses across the nation, particularly in cities where many different cultures and people of ethnic backgrounds are established. I am especially concerned about the increasing numbers of Polish RC Churches that have closed in the past



ST. HEDWIG, Wilmington, Del.



ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA, Adams, Mass.

also in 1904 and named St. Stanislaus Kostka. These churches are of neo-gothic design, built in the shape of a cross and have twin steeples that rise to a height of about 135 feet. Although the exterior brick colors and the artistic interiors are also different, one look at these two immense structures and it's easy to see the Mr. Brielmaier was the master designer here. In fact, the Brielmaier family, which is still in business today, pride themselves in designing some of the most beautiful churches, schools, altars in the nation. The ornate detailing that still remains on St. Stan's spires, was also originally part of St. Hedwig, but was removed during renovations in 1960 because the wood behind

the copper decorations had rotted. The third smaller spire located in the center of the nave on St. Stan's Church was also originally on St. Hedwig, but was also removed in 1960, when a new slate roof was installed. Even the "gingerbread filigree" style window frames are identical. Despite some differences in detailing, the basic design and artistic enhancements are breathtakingly obvious.

We, here at St. Hedwig, are in the process of major restoration of the total exterior of the building; the first major exterior work done since 1960. We are planning for the future of our parish and the preservation of our sacred worship space. On the other hand, our "sister" church (St. Stan's) is fighting to keep its doors open as the Diocese of Springfield recently consolidated three regional churches, which shut the doors of St. Stan's. We all have a unique opportunity to step up and preserve a vital part of our heritage's past and keep our immigrant forefathers' dreams alive.

**PIEROGI HELP PAY FOR COLLEGE EDUCATION.** Scholarships, part-time jobs, loans, financial aid, and credit are all common ways students pay for tuition. However, one student at the University of Michigan-Dearborn is paying for her education in an unconventional way: selling pierogi.

Senior Andrea Dudek is taking her Polish heritage and turning it into something profitable with the help of her mother and grandmother, using a recipe that has been passed down over many generations. Her family escaped Communist Poland to come to America before she was born. She has attended Polish school for over 16 years where she danced Polish Folk Dance and took language classes.

Dudek is working for a Bachelors of Business and Administration with a major in Human Resources. If this does well, Dudek is considering opening a kitchen and starting her own business.

"One thing I've always been passionate about is my Polish heritage. If I could start a little business around a part of that, it would be the best job in the world," said Dudek.

Anyone interested in purchasing pierogi and helping her finish school can contact Dudek at (734) 516 - 9287 or by e-mailing zybrowka769@yahoo.com.

# "A Gift to America"

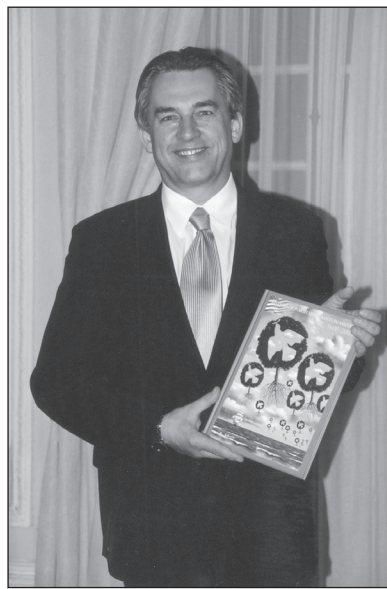
by Richard Poremski

WASHINGTON, D.C. — It seemed like a good idea at the time, and turned out to be an excellent one. Counselor Mariusz Brymora, chief of the Culture, Press and Public Relations Office at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland here, wanted to undertake a commemorative project to celebrate Polish immigration to America that began with the first Poles who arrived in the new English settlement of Jamestown, Virginia in 1608.

Encouraged by Ambassador Robert Kupiecki, Brymora teamed up with Professor James S. Pula, of Purdue University, to write their book "400 Years of Polish Immigrants In America, 1608-2008." The resulting large format album was published in 2008 to coincide with the 400th Anniversary of Jamestown, whose Polish contingent of the settlers represented the vanguard of all the Polonia in America today.

The work is divided into three sections: Icons of the Past, Icons of Today, and More Icons. One hundred individuals of Polish blood were chosen to appear therein. They were chosen for their outstanding achievements that brought them fame and the appreciation of their fellow man. The selection of persons presented is by no means complete, nor was it ever intended to be, as per the authors' intent. To be inclusive of all worthy Poles would be a task impossible to complete, which, it would seem, is something of a very pleasing conclusion.

Basically, almost each featured person is given a full dedicated page with their likeness or photo displayed. A small sampling of those represented in the publica-



tion includes: Tadeusz Kosciuszko (Polish/American patriot), Helena Modjeska (actress), Ralph Modjeski (bridge engineer), Joseph Karge (Civil War general), Florian Znaniecki (philosopher), Kazimierz Funk (scientist), Francis Gabreski (World War II flying ace), Stefanie Powers (actress/Star), and Andrew V. Schally (medicine).

The list goes on. Included in the hardcover version is an equally-informative companion CD titled "Global Jamestown and the Poles," with renowned Polonia historian John Radzilowski as an author. Two key artistic contributors to the project were Rafal Olbinski, who designed the book's front cover, and Marcin Bondarowicz, who drew the needed portraiture in the absence of any featured persons' photograph.

The publication was financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, under the patronage of Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski, who, in its introduction, penned a familial letter addressed to all Americans of Polish descent.

And Mariusz Brymora went one step farther: Anyone visiting the Polish Embassy over the past several months would immediately be attracted to a group display of five triangular columns, each seven feet tall. Twelve personalities selected from the book were portrayed on the three faces of each column. Another beautiful and professionally executed compliment was being paid by Poland to American Polonia, and another gift given.

**IMMIGRANTS CHRONICLED.** Editor and coauthor Mariusz Brymora is depicted above holding his book "400 Years Of Polish Immigrants In America, 1608-2008," amid a related exhibit at the Embassy of Poland in Washington, D.C. on March 2, 2009.

**PLAQUE REMEMBERS FOUNDERS.** A focal point for Portland, Maine's Polish community is celebrating its place in history. The St. Louis Catholic Church on Danforth Street dedicated a plaque May 3 to honor its founders. The church was built by Polish immigrant in 1924.

It is the only Polish-speaking parish in the northern New England states of Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire.

Maria Dyro unveiled the new plaque. At 96 years old, she the church's oldest living member.

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## John Paul II Inspires Rock CD

A Canadian Catholic rock band came out with an album based on **John Paul II's** "Theology of the Body," which presents an integrated vision of the human person as body, soul and spirit as well as his answer to society's trends that have portrayed the body as an object of pleasure or a machine for manipulation.

The band, Critical Mass, aims to send a message that will influence youth in a direction different from that intended by popular culture, says lead singer **David Wang**. "It's an album about love, sex, and communion, but from a Catholic viewpoint."

The album is currently available only as a download on the band's website [www.catholicrock.com](http://www.catholicrock.com).

**STO LAT TO ...** **Msgr. John Kasza**, appointed dean of studies at Ss. Cyril & Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Mich.

**Cass Jendzurski**, a founder and coordinator of Songs for the Journey, a Lancaster-based volunteer organization in Pennsylvania that provides music at the bedsides of those passing from life to death.

Fourth grade teacher **Cynthia Gotowski** at Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Middletown, Pa., on receiving the "Teacher of the Week" award. Her award was a bushel of apples from Brown's Orchards, which she shared with her class.

**Henry Maziarczyk, Janusz Nieduzak and Wanda Slawinska** on being presented awards by the Western NY Polish American Congress at the annual święconka at St. Stanislaus RC Parish in Buffalo, N.Y. Maziarczyk had to dig his own grave before he stood before a German firing squad in World War II. A soldier friend nicked his shoulder so that he would be able to feign death and later escape.

**Thomas Rutkoski**, of Evans City, Pa., a Catholic author and evangelist, on being selected as a semi-finalist for Energizer's Keep Going Hall of Fame in recognition of his charitable work supporting orphans overseas. Fallen away from the church for 27 years, Rutkoski, a photojournalist for a local television station, went on assignment to Jerusalem where his conversion began. After a visit to Lourdes he gave

up his television career and devoted his life to telling people across the world about how God changed his life. A Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus, he founded Gospa Missions, a foundation dedicated to evangelization and humanitarian works such as retreats, conferences, prison ministry, healing ministry speaking engagements, publishing and humanitarian efforts. His four last books are "Apostles of the Last Days," "Miracles and How to Work Them," "Great Divide," and "My Scriptural Rosary."

**FESTIVAL OF POLISH ORGAN MUSIC.** St. Florian R.C. Church in Hamtramck, Mich., will present the third concert of Polish organ music on Sunday, June 7, at 4:30 p.m. The organist will be **David Troiano**. Admission is free; free will offerings will be accepted. Info: (313) 871-2778.

**FINAL INSTALLATION OF CHURCH CARVING.** **Fr. Walter Madej**, a wood carver, has completed his installation of carvings at the PNCC Holy Rosary Cathedral in Lancaster, N.Y. He began his work of religious carving for the church in 1992 and put the finishing touches on a side altar at the end of March.

**A MOTHER'S SACRIFICE.** **Fr. Maciej Pawlowski, SM**, school chaplain at Notre Dame and Marist Academy in Pontiac, Mich., is alive today because his mother refused to abort him when she was diagnosed with liver cancer during her pregnancy. She lived for three more years before her painful death. Fr. Pawlowski recalls her in a picture of him walking toward her with her arms wide open and smiling, and he says he can still see her smiling and welcoming me back with her arms wide open.

**CARE FOR THE CHRONICALLY ILL AND DYING.** **Dr. Christina Puchalski** is the author of "A Time for Listening and Caring: Spirituality and the Care of the Chronically Ill and Dying."

"Many people equate healing with cure," she says. "Healing is much broader. Even in the face of an incurable illness, or in the face of dying, people can find healing."

Her book explores the ways of finding inner peace or feeling, much of it through spiritual beliefs.

**ST. ZYGMUNT FELINSKI.** Pope Benedict XVI recently canonized **St. Zygmunt Felinski**, former archbishop of Warsaw and founder of the Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary. Born in Wolynia (currently in Ukraine) in 1822, he was deported to Russia and, after being freed, worked among poor farmers in Ukraine and Poland. He died in 1895.

**JOHN PAUL II FOUNDATION IN ROME.** The Foundation's Documentation and Research Center, under the leadership of **Msgr. Jan Glowczyk** and **Fr. Andrzej Dobrzynski** marked the 30th anniversary of the late pope's election with a symposium entitled "John Paul II—Vatican Council II."

**Fr. Ryszard Krupa, SCJ**, reported that the scholarship program for students in West-Central Europe provided for 144 students to study at the Catholic University of John Paul II in Lublin. Scholarship students come from Belarus, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, Russia, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine.

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO ...** All Saints RC Church, formerly St. Joseph-St. Benedict's Church, in Kansas City, Kansas, on the 25th anniversary of their Polski Day celebration. The celebration commemorates the signing of the Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791. A special Polish Mass was on the program along with a parade, Polish dinner, and entertainment on the Church grounds.

**ANNUAL CONCERT MEMORIALIZING JOHN PAUL II.** St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City presented the annual concert in memory of John Paul II "Do Not Quench the Spirit - Duchą nie gaście" in early April. Organist **Wojciech Różak** played a selection of German and French organ pieces while **Paul Savior** spoke words of the former pontiff.

**CORPUS CHRISTI NEEDS A ROOF.** After a ferocious windstorm tore a good part of the slate tiled roof from Corpus Christi Church in Buffalo, NY, the Pastor **Fr. Anzelm Chalupka** is working to raise funds to match a grant of \$450,000 from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund for the roof's replacement. He hopes that generous donors will bring in the remaining \$130,000 before long.

**NEW CHURCH WINDOW FEATURES ST. FAUSTINA.** St. Andrew's RC Church in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, celebrated its 75th anniversary by installing stained glass windows over the past seven years. The last window, dedicated on Divine Mercy Sunday and donated by the parish's Divine Mercy Group, depicts St. Faustina Kowalska. A painting of the Divine Mercy image was also blessed at the church.

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### Hot Seller

**WARSAW** — The **Rev. Ksawery Knotz's** new book is flying off the shelves in Poland.

In it, he has a message for all married Catholic couples out there: there's nothing wrong with a steamy sex life.

In fact, it's a good thing. In his new book "Sex as you don't know it: For married couples who love God," the Polish friar provides a theological and practical guide for Catholics that has little in common with traditional views of the Roman Catholic Church.

"Some people, when they hear about the holiness of married sex, immediately imagine that such sex has to be deprived of joy, frivolous play, fantasy and attractive posi-

tions," Knotz writes.

But Knotz, a Franciscan friar, wants to change all that.

His book aims to sweep away the taboos and assure Catholic couples that good sex is part of a good marriage.

### Going Green

**LIVONIA, Mich.** — **Madonna University**, sponsored by the Franciscan sisters, is currently building Livonia's first certified "green" building. The environmentally friendly 60,000 sq. ft. building will cost \$20M and will host programs in nursing and television production.

The university hopes to have some of the construction costs funded through the stimulus package announced by President Obama.

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### MODLITWY

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

**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. Thank you for your help. A.D.

**PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.** Holy Spirit, You who solve all problems, who light all roads so I can attain my goal. You who give me the Divine gift to forgive and to forget all evil against me and that in all instances of my life you are with me. I want

this short prayer to thank you for all things and to confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you, even and in spite of all material illusion. I wish to be with you in eternal glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. Thank you Holy Spirit. That person must say this prayer for 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the favor requested will be granted, even if it may appear difficult. This prayer must be published immediately after the favor is granted, without mentioning the favor. Your initials should appear after the thank you. Thank You Holy Spirit. A.D.

**THANKSGIVING NOVENA TO ST. JUDE.** Holy St. Jude, Apostle and Martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, near the kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need. To you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present and urgent position. In return I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked. (Say three Our Fathers, Three Hail Marys, Three Glory Be's). St. Jude pray for us and all who invoke your aid. Amen. Publication must be promised. This prayer is to be said for nine consecutive days. This novena has never been known to fail. My prayers have been answered. M.H.R.

KULTURA / Staś Kmieć

## Travelogue – Adventures in Poland

### Part VI

On ul. Nowy Świat, a stop at Egzotyka, an exotic bird shop that I had visited on my last trip, was all I needed to do before continuing on my foot-excursion to the Old Town. The store is filled with a variety of parrots and smaller birds, and my intention was to pick up a toy for my parrot "Patty" back in New York.



Nicholas Copernicus monument

**ALONG KRAKOWSKIE PRZEDMIEŚCIE.** Near the Warsaw University campus and the Copernicus monument the street changes into Krakowskie Przedmieście, one of the most elegant streets in Warsaw, which runs all the way to the Royal Castle. Some of the houses are former palaces, often occupied by embassies, the British Embassy being one of them.

The **Nicholas Copernicus Monument** (*Pomnik Mikołaja Kopernika*) honors the founder of modern astronomy. The statue itself was built in 1830. During World War II the Nazi's placed a bronze plaque insinuating that the great man was, in fact – a German. In 1942, a boy scout called Alek Dawidowski, eluded the guards and removed the plaque. With fury, the Nazis removed the statue, hid it in the Śląsk territory and dynamited other surrounding monuments. The statue was recovered in the years following the war, while Dawidowski has entered Polish folklore, as a result of his bravery. The plaque at the center of the controversy can be viewed in Warsaw's History Museum.

No Chopinologist can leave Warsaw without first visiting the final resting place of his heart at the **Holy**

**Cross Church** (*Kościół Św. Krzyża*). Added to the church in 1882 his heart was sealed in an urn and then placed behind a tablet bearing his likeness specially carved by Leonardo Marconi. Designed by the royal architect, Jakub Bellotti, this astonishing Baroque creation was completed in 1696, though through time would see numerous additions.

Throughout history the church has played its role in Warsaw's glories and calamities. Devastated during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944 the church was painstakingly rebuilt at the end of the war and is today a feast for the heart, eyes and soul.

**The Zamoyski Palace**, designed by Marconi is a neo-renaissance pearl and was the scene of a failed assassination attempt on the Russian governor in 1863. Infuriated Cossack troops reacted by hurling a piano, once played by Chopin, out of the window. Today the drama is relegated to dancing in the basement club or dining on the elegant ground floor.

**Bierhalle** at number 64 offers Warsaw's best beer right from the tap, and this leads us to a glimpse of the Old Town.

**OLD TOWN.** It's hard to believe that by the end of 1944, all that was left of the Old Town of Warsaw was just a skeletal set of ruins. When U.S. General Dwight Eisenhower visited Warsaw immediately after the war he was moved to comment, "I have seen many towns destroyed, but nowhere have I been faced with such destruction."

The Old Town begins at *Plac Zamkowy*, and under the **Zygmunt Column**. There isn't a more popular meeting spot in the city, and there's not a minute of the day when the steps to the statue is not besieged by dating couples. Erected in 1644 by Zygmunt III's son, Władysław IV, the twenty two metre column was originally designed by Italian architects Augustyn Locci and Constantino Tencalla, and the figure of Zygmunt ranks as Poland's second oldest monument – the oldest being the Neptune Fountain in Gdańsk.

Local legend asserts that Zygmunt rattles his sabre whenever Warsaw is in trouble, an occurrence that was first reported during the 1794 Kościuszko Uprising and aga-

in during World War II. During the Warsaw Uprising, the column took a direct hit from a tank shell and came crashing down. Amazingly Zygmunt survived intact, losing only his sword, and he was returned to a new perch in 1949.

More a palace than a castle, **The Royal Castle** (*Zamek Królewski*) is the pride of Warsaw, reconstructed from a pile of rubble between 1971 and 1984 at an incredible cost. Much of the funding for rebuilding came from the generous donations of exiled Poles. Dating back to the 14th century, the castle had been the residence of Polish kings, later the president, and then the seat of parliament.

My return to the Old Town brought me once again to the *PolArt* shop to purchase the man's Lowicz hat I had admired and contemplated over at the beginning of my trip. It was beautifully elaborate and expensive, and now it was a part of my costume wardrobe.

The center of the square was occupied by a town hall during the 15th century. It was pulled down in 1817 and never replaced. Today in

Warsaw's best loved monument, *Syrenka* in Warsaw's Old Town.

the center stands a couple of water pumps dating from the 19th century, and Warsaw's best loved monument, **Syrenka**. Cast in 1855 this mermaid's form graces every bus, tram and coat of arms you'll find in the capital.

Street artists abound in this area, the most famous is Piotr Bol, an odd, cloaked little man who plays



Architectural delights along Krakowskie Przedmieście.

one of Europe's last music boxes with a parrot alongside him.

Warsaw's oldest restaurant, which dates back to the beginning of the 16th century is **U Fukiera** at 27 Old Town Market Square. The culinary tradition of the Fukier family turned this place into Warsaw's top winery. Today the restaurant is in the hands of the Gesslers, and their guest list reads as a "Who's Who" of stage, screen and world politics.

Magda Gessler, one of the best known restaurateurs in Poland, designs interiors and menus, as well as ambiance. She brings back the oldest, most unusual and forgotten Polish tastes. Magda spent her childhood and early youth away from Poland. Upon her return to Warsaw in 1989, she hoped to find the flavors of her Grandmothers' kitchen, scents of her old family home, and the opulence of true, Polish cuisine. Her expectations and memories were confronted with reality — Poland had forgotten its sophisticated palate. The rich and full flavors of Polish cooking had been substituted with bland, simplistic and uninspiring tastes. It was then that Magda decided to bring back Poland's brilliant cuisine.

**U Fukiera's** distinguished interior breathes tradition: many Polish paintings on the walls, flickering candles, crystal and silver glitter on the tables, complemented with antique furniture, and from the windows — a classic view of the Old Town.

Crowning the set of defensive walls which once protected the city is the **Barbakan**, a fearsome ro-

tund structure that dates from 1548 and was apparently the work of a Venetian architect. Today it serves as a bridge between Old and New Town.

Leaving the square is the **ul. Kamienne Schodki**. Not only is this the longest stairwell in the Old Town, it's also where Napoleon stood in 1806, pensively staring eastward on the eve of his campaign on the plains of Russia.

Past the *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*, I continued my journey to the **The State Ethnographic Museum** (*Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne* at Kredytowa 1). After months of renovating and adapting, the museum has a new interior arrangement. The museum's permanent exhibitions are devoted to Africa, Australia and Oceania. The top floor provides a good introduction into the country's rural heart, with a fine assembly of Polish costumes, folk art and crafts.

The exhibition: *Granice* (Borders) was a unique find. A collaborative photographic project by New York based Piotr Sikora and Piotr Bondarczyk, in conjunction with the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in New York, the collection contained portrait shots of indigenous people from across the globe dressed in Polish folk costumes. Recently Poland has opened its once closed doors, to many new people, cultures and ethnic groups. The fascinating exhibition reflected this current trend, documents these new residents, and in the process makes the viewer aware of the huge social changes taking place in Poland today.

◆◆◆

Next month: *Final night before the train ride to Kraków, and a Zofia Stryjenska Exhibition.*

### Bruce Willis Endorse Polish Vodka



WILLIS: Na zdrowie!

(Polish Market) —American celebrity actor Bruce Willis is to advertise Polish Sobieski vodka. According to the four-year contract, the actor will earn USD \$16 million, *RZECZPOSPOLITA* daily reports.

The ad campaign is to kick off this month. The Sobieski vodka ads will appear in Spain, France, Baltic States, Ukraine and China, where the vodka brand is to be sold for the first time. Belvedere, the owner of the brand, believes that the product advertised by Willis will become one of the three most popular vodkas in the world within three years. According to a ranking by *Impact* magazine, Sobieski is currently the 7th most popular premium vodka in the world, said *GAZETA WYBORCZA*.

Pop star and comeback queen Britney Spears will put on the largest show a Pol-

ish audience has ever seen on July 24. The tabloid favorite is touring Europe to promote her sixth and latest studio album "Circus." Spears' show in Warsaw will be held under a giant circus tent at the Horse Racetrack in Sluzew, a southern district of Warsaw.

### Spears Poland-bound

Pop star and comeback queen Britney Spears will put on the largest show a Polish audience has ever seen on July 24. The tabloid favorite is touring Europe to promote her sixth and latest studio album "Circus." Spears' show in Warsaw will be held under a giant circus tent at the Horse

Racetrack in Sluzew, a southern district of Warsaw.

### Weak Economy Helps Travelers

Tourists will find traveling to Poland cheaper this year.

The worldwide economic crisis has left Poland one of the least expensive countries in the world. Services and prices are 50% lower than a year ago, making Poland attractive both to tourists and to investment, says *FORBES* MAGAZINE.

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## HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO STYLE / Geraldine Balut Coleman

## Mayor's Reception at Art Institute



l. to r. George Migala, Lester Surowiec, Mayor Daley, Alan Krashesky, Edward Mika



Mayor Daley accepting Papal Blessing from Theresa Buckner

CHICAGO — On April 23, Richard M. Daley, Chicago's mayor, hosted a Polish Constitution Day reception in the School of Art Institute of Chicago Ballroom. Over 450 guests attended this event which was coordinated by Megan MacDonald, Executive Director of Special Events for Mayor Daley, and Theresa Buckner, Vice-Chair of the Polish Constitution Day Parade.

Mistress of Ceremonies was Patricia Jackowiak from Chicago's Judiciary Department.

Welcoming all to this event were Zygmunt Matynia, Consul General of the Republic of Poland; Thaddeus Czajkowski, President of the Alliance of Polish Clubs and Chair of the Polish Constitution Day Parade Committee; and Mayor Daley. Representatives from almost every Polish and Polish American organization were in

attendance. Mayor Daley awarded "Certificates of Appreciation" from the city of Chicago to four individuals for their contributions to the Chicago Polonian community. Those individuals were George Migala, civic activist and owner of AM Radio MCEV 1450; Lester Surowiec, international businessman, social activist and philanthropist; Alan Krashesky, popular TV news reporter/journalist and anchorman for WLS-TV Chicago (ABC TV) and Emmy Award winner; and Edward Mika, former president of the Alliance of Polish Clubs. A special moment transpired when Theresa Buckner presented a gift to an overwhelmed and moved Mayor: a Papal Blessing from Benedict XVI in honor of the Mayor's birthday and his 20th year anniversary as Mayor of the City of Chicago.

## PWCC HOLDS FUNDRAISING LUNCHEON.

On April 25, the Polish Women's Civic Club (PWCC) held its annual Palm Sunday Luncheon and Scholarship Fundraiser at the Avalon Banquets in Elk Grove Village, IL. More than 300 men, women and children attended this festive celebration. Welcoming all to the luncheon were Alicia Dutka, Chair of the event, and the PWCC's President, Ann Burzycki. Mariusz Borowicz, a scholarship recipient, gave the invocation. Krystyna Kowalik, also a scholarship recipient, hosted the children as the "Easter Bunny" and distributed baskets to eagerly awaiting children. Elizabeth Cebula, the third scholarship recipient, promoted the luncheon's raffle along with Mariusz and Krystyna. Dr. Robert Dutka provided luncheon-time entertainment which included a "sing along" with the luncheon's guests. Profits from this fundraising event are earmarked for the PWCC's Scholarship Fund.



l. to r: Donald Gutowski, Krystyna Kowalik, Judy Baar Topinka, Maria Krakowska

Over the years, the PWCC has awarded over \$500,000 to deserving students enrolled in either un-

dergraduate or graduate programs at universities/colleges throughout the Chicago area.

— the tastiest food of the trip." It was Podhalanka, a very plain, much understated Polish restaurant, which one could very easily pass by.

Nothing inside this restaurant has changed, photos of John Paul II abound, a plain linoleum floor, and a 1950s style counter, tables and chairs. Located in the historic "Polish Triangle" (Division/Milwaukee/Ashland Streets), once a bastion for all things Polish, Podhalanka has quietly stood by as the area began its gentrification process. Helena Madej opened her restaurant in 1981, after arriving from Krakow. Katz mentioned that her Polish-born grandmother was a wonderful cook, but somehow she had "gotten the impression that Polish cuisine, on the whole, was bland, greasy and heavy. Podhalanka set me straight." Katz especially enjoyed the white borscht — with its lemony taste and slices of smoked sausage and hard-boiled egg creating a symphony of flavors, and, to her surprise, the cost was \$3.20 with fresh rye bread and butter included.

Helena's masterpiece, according to Katz, is "zrazy wisprzowe zawijane — rolled pork stuffed with carrots and celery." Helena attributes her success to using only the freshest of everything.

## "Freedom '89 — Born in Poland"

On Friday, May 29, a special celebration will take place at Chicago's famous Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park. "Freedom 89- Born in Poland," a celebration sponsored by the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland and Stoleczna Estrada will commemorate the June 4, 1989 fall of communism. This 20th anniversary concert will feature a multimedia Chopin concert, which will include noted classical Polish pianist, Janusz Olejniczak and jazz pianist Leszek Możdżer, along with other noted Polish musicians and vocalists. The guest of honor is to be Lech Walesa, former president of Poland and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

## Polish Pride Parade



l. to r.: Paul Odrobina, Jozef Zawadzki, Senator Roland Burris, Frank Spula, Mayor Daley, Bishop Paprocki, Malgorzata Kiesz, Maria Pappas

May 2, such a perfect day for a parade! The 118th Annual Polish Constitution Day Parade, once again, celebrated the first democratic constitution in Europe and second only in the world to the USA constitution. Chicago's Columbus Drive was the place to be with four lakefront blocks filled with 133 parade entries including Polish schools, not-for-profit organizations and bands. Approximately 250,000 participants and spectators expressed their Polish pride. Those who were unable to attend were given the opportunity to view the parade live via Chicago's WLS TV, with commen-

tary by host, Alan Krashesky, and Anna Ziolkowski Sobor, an active member of Chicago Polonia. This year's Grand Marshall was Frank Spula, President of the Polish American Congress and the Polish National Alliance. Vice Marshalls were Malgorzata Kiesz, Chicago Polonia's well-known advocate for breast cancer awareness, and George Migala. This year's parade queen was Natalia Kukulka, a senior attending Glenbrook South High School, located in Park Ridge, IL. As is the custom, numerous state and city officials, along with Polish dignitaries, participated in the parade.



Back row, l. to r.: Pawel Pietrasieński, Frank Spula. Front row, l. to r.: Zygmunt Matynia, Lidia Filus, Adam Budnikowski, Sharon Hahs, Prof. Marzenna Weresa of WSE, Janet Fredericks

## Smithsonian Magazine "Salutes" Podhalanka

Chicago's Polish cuisine takes center stage. The May issue of SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE has an extensive article entitled "Chicago Eats."

The article, written by New York-based arts and culture reporter, Jamie Katz, gave an interesting and historical perspective on numerous Chicago neighborhoods: Maxwell Street, Pilsen, Albany Park, Hyde Park, and "Polish Broadway". Katz explored Chicago looking for "authentic old country eateries" scattered throughout those ethnic neighborhoods, from an educational stroll through the present-day Maxwell Street to Mexican — orientated Pilsen area and President Obama's Hyde Park, all in Chicago's South Side, then up to the North Side areas of Albany Park and Devon Avenue with its Indian, Jewish, "kosher Chinese", Turkish, Bulgarian and Balkan specialty stores and restaurants.

But Katz "found the Holy Grail

**HONORS POLAND.** On April 28, Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) held a special luncheon honoring Deputy Rector Dr. Jacek Przybylski of the Czestochowa University of Technology. Dr. Przybylski presented an interesting lecture on "Creating Entrepreneurship at Polish Technical Universities."

Then on May 4, the University honored Rector Dr. Adam Budnikowski of the Warsaw School of Economics (WSE). Sharon Hahs, Ph.D., President of NEIU; Janet Fredericks, Ph.D., Dean of the University's Graduate College; Zygmunt Matynia, General Consul of the Republic of Poland; and Lidia Filus, Ph.D., faculty member of NEIU, all of whom were instrumental in the planning of the NEIU and WSE consortium, gave introductory remarks focusing on NEIU connection to Chicago's Polonian commu-

nity and student exchange programs between NEIU and the Warsaw School of Economic.

Dr. Budnikowski's presentation, "Environmental Conflicts in the World Economy", brought attention to the significant reasons of international environmental conflicts and listed a review of some of those conflicts such as, but not limited to, air, land, water resources and mining issues. Observations on these conflicts are complicated, political, and/or nationalistic, and involve free trade issues and globalization versus a clean environment. Since lecture time was limited, guests were unable to actively discuss this very controversial topic.

Dr. Budnikowski ended his lecture on a lighter note. He mentioned how overwhelmed he was by attending Chicago's Polish Constitution Day Parade.

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## Szarejko Cited by Poland

NEW YORK — As an American citizen, Chet Szarejko (center) has never worn a Polish Army uniform.

But what he is wearing in the photo above is Poland's Cross of Merit awarded in the past to many Polish war veterans and Holocaust survivors.

In ceremonies commemorating Poland's May 3rd, 1791 Constitution, Poland's Consul General Krzysztof Kasprzyk (right) presented Szarejko with the decoration for his efforts to promote the cause of Poland in the U.S., particularly New York City.

Looking on is Frank Milewski (left), president of the Downstate New York Division of the Polish American Congress where Szarejko is vice president and chairman of that organization's Political Activities Committee.

Szarejko spent nearly three years assisting Consul General Kasprzyk in clearing the way for placing a statue of Jan Karski in front of the Consulate on Madison Avenue and E. 37th Street in Manhattan.

Earlier last month, New York City designated that intersection "Jan Karski Corner," said Milewski. He also noted that Szarejko is well known and highly regarded in New York for the many years he has devoted to the advancement of good will and understanding among the ethnic groups who live there.



## POLONIA EAGLE OF THE EASTERN GREAT LAKES / Michael Pietruszka

### Byczkowski Finally Honored

BUFFALO, N.Y. — After a 65 year wait, World War II veteran **John Byczkowski** was honored as a Knight of the French Legion of Honor and accepted the U.S. Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions during the D-Day invasion at ceremonies held at VFW Post 6251 in Cheektowaga at the end of April ... Lancaster High School sophomore Eric Van Pyrz has produced a tribute film honoring **Mark and Thomas Sokolowski**, the twin West Seneca soccer players who were killed in a tragic automobile accident last year, to provide funds for the Sokolowski Scholarship Fund at West Seneca East High School. Additional information is available at [www.world2kids.org/sokolowski](http://www.world2kids.org/sokolowski) ... **Marylou Borowiak** has been named president of the Food Bank of WNY ... **Sr. Marietta Pawlowski** and **Sr. Joan Marie Wiczorek** marked 80 years of religious life in the Felician Order at a special Mass celebrated by Buffalo Bishop Edward Kmiec in St. Joseph Cathedral on May 2.

Villa Maria College in Cheektowaga named **John Daly, Sr. Mary Angelica Bielski** and **William Nowakowski** to its board of trustees ... **Joseph Macielag, Roger Puchalski, Richard Solecki** and **Dr. Thomas Witakowski** were honored at an event marking the 65th anniversary of the Battle of Monte Cassino and the 55th anniversary of the founding of Polish Veterans of World War II (SPK) Post #33 at Buffalo's St. Stanislaus Church on May 2 ... Former Erie County Legislator and Polonia activist **Ray Dusza** passed away on May 3 ... Polish veterans in Buffalo and Rochester marked Polish Constitution Day with commemorative Masses and programs.

U.S. Senator Charles Schumer recommended **William Hochul** to fill the vacancy in the position of U.S. Attorney for the Western District of New York ... May 8th brought Rev.

**Tadeusz Isakowicz Zaleski's** book tour in support of "My Illegal Life" to Mississauga, Ontario's John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre ... The St. Catharines, Ontario Canadian **Polish Club** held an Open House as part of the Niagara Folk Art Festival on May 10 ... **Michael Schudrich**, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, addressed the topic, "The Revival of Jewish Life in Poland: Is It Really Happening?" at Toronto's Beth Haborim Congregation on May 11.

The work of Polish cinematographer **Jolanta Dylewska** was presented in the form of the film "Tulpan" as part of the 2009 Rochester High Falls International Film Festival ... Greg Kinal spoke to the **Polish Genealogical Society of NYS** on the topic of early 20th century immigration on the 14th ... On May 15, the **Polish Heritage Society of Rochester** held its annual meeting at St. John Fisher College and the University of Toronto's Polish Student Association hosted its Formal at the SPK Hall on Beverley Street ... The **Kalina Singing Society** presented its 108th Anniversary Concert in the Millennium Hotel in Cheektowaga on May 16 ... **St. Stanislaus Parish** on Buffalo's East Side hosted the 5th Annual Service to Honor Pope John Paul II and the Professional and Businessmen's Association held its Annual Memorial Mass at Corpus Christi Church on May 17 ... The **Professional and Business Women of Polonia's** Scholarship Dinner took place at Michael's Banquet Facility in Hamburg on the 21st ... On May 23, the **Harmony Polish Folk Ensemble** performed at the Fantasy Island Theme Park in Grand Island

The **Polish Army Veterans Association of America** (SWAP) held its 30th National Convention in Grand Island the last weekend of May ... On May 29 and 30, the **7th Annual Polish Heritage Festival** featured performances by the John Gora Band, Jerry Darlak & the Touch, Mon Valley Push, Anya, Kujawiacy Polish Song and Dance Ensemble, Sugar & Jazz Orchestra and the Ludowa Nuta Polish Choir at the Hamburg Fairgrounds ... The **Joseph S. Skalny Welcome Center** will be dedicated on the St. John Fisher campus in Rochester on June 12 ... The WNY Division of the **Polish America Congress** is hosting a bus tour to the Polish Veterans Pilgrimage in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario on June 14. Local attorney Craig Bucki will be the keynote speaker at the ceremonies commemorating Haller's "Blue Army" after the parade. For details, please contact Mira Szramel at (716) 681-6739.

WNY Polonians have expressed concern over Canisius College's rental of its Marie Maday Theatre to

Kaleidoscope Theatre Productions for a run of David Ives' "Polish Joke" in late June ... The 49th International Convention of the **Polish Singers Alliance of America** will be held at the Millennium Hotel in Cheektowaga at the end of May 2010.

**CITIZENS OF THE YEAR.** The AM-POL EAGLE, WNY's weekly Polonia newspaper, honored its 2008 Citizens of the Year at Kloc's Grove in West Seneca on May 3. This year's honorees were Anthony Bajdek (National Honoree), Chopin Singing Society's Production of "Flis" (Art/Drama), Mazurek Bakery (Business), Mary Holland (Non-Pole Community Leader), Harmony Polish Folk Ensemble (Community Organization), Andrzej Golebiowski (Culture), Rev. Charles Jagodzinski (Education), Hon. Catherine Rybczynski (Government), Dr. Kevin Cichocki (Health/Medicine), Florence Oleszak (Individual in Organization), Hon. Michael Pietruszka (Law), Chris Byrd (Media), Alfreda Mieczyjak, Krystyna Pienkowska and Jozefa Solecki (Military/Veteran), Jerry Darlak & the "Touch" (Music), Hon. Scott Bylewski (Politics), Rev. Anzelm Chalupka (Religion), Jenn Stuczynski (Sports) and Corrine Lasek (Youth).

**SYRACUSE POLISH FESTIVAL.** The **Polish Scholarship Fund of Syracuse** announced that Lenny Gomulka & the Chicago Push, the Cracovia Dance Group, Lechowia Dance Company, Salt City Brass, Ashley Cox, Tatry Polish Folk Ensemble, Figiel Brothers Band, Dennis Polisky & the Maestro's Men, Fritz's Polka Band, Jerry Darlak & the Touch, Little Poland Dance Ensemble and Al Piatkowski will perform at the 55th Annual Syracuse Polish Festival in Clinton Square on June 19-21. More information is available at [www.polishscholarship.com](http://www.polishscholarship.com).

♦ ♦ ♦  
If you have an item for this column, please send the information to me by the 6th day of the month preceding the month in which you would like the item to appear (i.e. June 6 for the July edition) at: POL EGL, P.O. Box 223, Niagara Square Station, Buffalo, NY 14201-0223.

My e-mail address is: [pietruszka@verizon.net](mailto:pietruszka@verizon.net).

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

### Ruminski in "The Barber of Seville"

BUFFALO, N.Y.— Nickel City Opera will be presenting "The Barber of Seville" at the Riviera Theater, Fri., June 26 at 8:00 p.m., and Sun. June 28 at 2:30 p.m.

This is a co-production with the Ottawa Pocket Operat directed by David Macadam and The Eastern Festive Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Zach Kampler.

Tickets are on sale now at The Riviera (716) 692-2413, M-F 9:00-4:00 and (718) 625-4667 after 4:00 p.m. weekdays and on Saturday. "The Barber of Seville" stars John Packard, Benjamin Brecher, Valerian Ruminski, Nadia Petrella, Rosemarie Serrano, Christopher Mallory and more.

Ruminski is a graduate of the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia and of SUNY-Buffalo. He has performed with some of the

great opera companies in the United States and abroad including The Metropolitan Opera, NYC Opera, Dallas Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Minnesota Opera, Opera de Montreal, Michigan Opera Theatre, Opera de Monte Carlo, Opera Ireland, as well as Carnegie Hall. In addition to his international performing schedule, he is an adjunct professor teaching voice at SUNY-Westchester. In addition to the opera at the Riviera, upcoming performances include: June 7 — Abiquiu Festival, New Mexico (Bukowski Song Premiere); Sept. 2009 — "Magic Flute" (Sarastro) Ottawa Lyra Opera; Oct. 2009 — Wagner Society of D.C., ESP Concert Series; Oct.-Nov. 2009 — Macbeth (Banquo) Opera Ireland (Dublin); and more. For details, visit [www.valerianruminski.net](http://www.valerianruminski.net).



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## TRADITIONS

### Myth, Mystery and Magic

## Sobótki – St. John's Midsummer Night's Eve

by Staś Kmieć

*Sobótka Święto Jańska* (the Midsummer Night's ritual of St. John's Eve) has its origins in the pagan rites of the sun, fire and water. On the shortest night of the year (June 23 – the summer solstice) the lighting of bonfires, communal games and the burning of herbs foretold the future concerning love and marriage.

Maidens dressed in white, with wreaths of yellow and white wildflowers upon their heads, set candled wreaths afloat on lakes and rivers, which later were fished out by young men who followed the wreaths in boats or reached from the shore with poles. The wreath was an omen for the woman, good or bad, depending on who retrieved it, and whether it was caught or sank.

If the wreath returned to shore, the girl would never marry; if it sank, she would die young and if it flowed down the river with its candle still burning, she would be married with good fortune and happiness. If the candle stops burning or the wreath drowned, it meant that girl would not find a boyfriend or get married in the coming year. It was the best of luck if the boy who the girl had secretly loved fished-out the wreath from the water.

According to Slavonic legends, the Eve is filled with myth, mystery and magic. Animals speak in human voices, the earth shimmers in transparency and the barren fern (*kwiat paproci*) blooms for one brief moment at midnight with a flaming flower. The bravest individuals ventured into the forest to seek out this special fern flower as it was believed that the flower had magical powers, and anyone who found it would attain immense happiness, wisdom, love, and the ability to find treasures.

Certain plants and herbs would take on magical properties, which enabled remedies for illness. Couples would leap over bonfires, which warned off sickness and brought about a successful marriage.

Before Catholicism, the magical night was called *Noc Kupaly* to honor *Kupala*, a Slavic goddess of love and fertility. After the introduction of Christianity in the 10th century, this pagan festivity was adapted to Christian feast days, thus it was celebrated on St. John's Eve. For centuries thereafter, the Church tried to stamp out the traditions associated with this pagan holiday, but failed. It is difficult to erase a part of a nation's culture. Garlands would adorn the monstrose at Mass; wreaths and herbs were sprinkled with holy water, and later were hung around holy pictures and doors, where they remained for the entire year.

As late as the 16th century, villagers and the nobility from the manor came together to celebrate *Sobótka*, emphasizing the communal spirit of the rite.

The great poet Jan Kochanowski immortalized this custom in his *Pieśni Świętojańskiej o Sobótce* (Songs of



Members of the Lublin Polish Song and Dance Ensemble of Haverhill-Boston enact the ancient ritual of *Sobótki*.

St. John's Eve), and William Shakespeare used it as the theme of his *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

When Polish territory was annexed by Austria, especially after Kraków was incorporated into Austro-Hungarian state, the ritual became a patriotic manifestation. Before World War I celebrations were organized by institutions such as the Polish Gymnastic Society, *Sokół*. After World War II it became a large-scale open-air performance event.

In Poland *Sobótki* had been re-enacted in outdoor theater spectacles of ancient songs and dances by Kazimiera Walczak ("Mamcia") at the *Course for Instructors of Polish Artistic Ensembles* in Lublin; however due to age, her contribution to culture is no longer possible. In performance, the legacy is continued by her instructor "disciples" of Polonia ensembles around the world.

After martial law was introduced in 1981, events were not officially re-organized until 1992. As a modern day mass cultural event it is now known in Poland as *Wianki*. In Warsaw, small ingenious motor-powered boats with battery-operated wreaths travel down the Wisła River; there is live music, a fireworks display and a competition for the most beautiful wreath. Similarly the event takes place annually in Kraków at the bend of Wisła River, near the Wawel Hill.



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## The Barber of Seville



John Packard as Figaro  
Nadia Petrella as Rosina  
Christopher Mallory as Bartolo  
Valerian Ruminski as Basilio  
Rosemarie Serrano as Berta  
Directed by David Macadam and  
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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 \$30.00.



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

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### Wins Kosciuszko Foundation Piano Competition

NEW YORK — Lee Ko-Eun, a student of Jerome Lowenthal at the Juilliard School, won the \$5,000 First Prize in the Kosciuszko Foundation's 2009 Chopin Piano Competition.

Ms. Lee, a 22-year old Master's candidate, also won the \$500 Jan Gorbaty Memorial Prize for the best performance of a work by Chopin.

After studies in her native Seoul, Korea, she continued at the Walnut Hill School and New England Conservatory before entering the graduate program at Juilliard.

Second Prize of \$2,500 was awarded to Yang Song, a 17-year-

old student of Philip Kavin at the Manhattan School of Music.

Third Prize of \$1,500 was awarded to Victoria Chan, a 20-year-old student at Columbia University, where she is studying sociology and is in the pre-med program.

The Competition was held on Fri., April 3, at the Kosciuszko Foundation's Upper East Side headquarters.

The Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competition was established in 1949, in honor of the hundredth anniversary of the death of Frederic Chopin.

### Writing the Diaspora

CHARLESTON, III. — Christina Pacosz and Dr. John Z. Guzlowski, Professor Emeritus at Eastern Illinois University, have edited two issues of the journal *KRITYA* that feature poetry by Polish, Polish-American, and Polish Diaspora poets. The editions are available online at [www.kritya](http://www.kritya). While commentary on Polish and Polish-American poets and poetry are available on Dr. Guzlowski's blog, "Writing the Polish Diaspora," at [www.writingpolishdiaspora.blogspot.com](http://www.writingpolishdiaspora.blogspot.com).



## How Will You Be Remembered?

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

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# Polka MAGAZINE

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## POLKA PATTERN

Prepared and distributed by the  
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**THERE WAS A RUMOR** that Gene Mikrut, an accordionist dubbed "The One Man Trio," had a heart attack and it seems that many people assumed that his playing days were over. The truth is that he had a cancerous lymph node in my throat. With the exception of getting two replacements during the week he was in the hospital, he did not miss a playing engagement, even though he had daily chemo and radiation treatments from June through December. He is doing fine and available for engagements.

**THE LARGEST FREE** folk festival in the nation is happening once again this summer, from July 24-26, 2009 in Lowell, Massachusetts. The Lowell Folk Festival has brought an international array of folk music, ethnic foods, craftspeople and artisans to New England every summer for more than 20 years.

**THE WISCONSIN POLKA HALL** of Fame held its Spring Dance at Bullshooter's in Weston, Wisc., featuring Gary's Ridgeland Dutchmen and the Polish Connection, a combination of oompah and Polish style polkas. There was separate awards ceremony to honor the late Ray Rhyner, and Bobby Art, also known as Uncle Otto.

**THE POLISH AMERICAN** Citizens Club (PACC) in Bristol, Connecticut, has a new website at [www.bristolpacc.com](http://www.bristolpacc.com). The latest polka dance schedule is up and ready to be viewed. The kitchen and full bar are always open on polka dance days, so you can eat, drink, dance and be merry.

**A NEW RELEASE** by Danny Mack salutes Li'l Wally (Walter Jagiello), who passed away in 2006. Mack salutes his old friend with a self-penned tune, "Remember Li'l Wally" and an endearing special arrangement of Wally's "Memories Waltz." The limited edition CD single is available from Danny Mack while supplies last.

## POLKA INSIDER / Steve Litwin

### If You Want Something Done ...

Surrounded by thousands of photographs, hundreds of cassette tapes, cabinets of video tapes, files of documents, folders of flyers, boxes of T-shirts, stacks of sheet music, shelves filled with vinyl, I found my mind drifting back to the polka dinosaur column published in the PAJ decades past. I'm not sure if I fall into the polka dinosaur category, the polka packrat category or the polka historian category but there is little doubt I live in multiple time zones of life.

Yes, I hate to throw anything away so I'll accept the packrat label. In the past six months converting VHS tape to digital video files and making them available on several

## Centennial Celebrations at Five Holy Martyrs



**GOOD TIMES** band at Five Holy Martyrs

CHICAGO — As Five Holy Martyrs begins its 100th anniversary celebrations, this soon-to-be century-old parish on Chicago's South Side held its first Polka Mass. On April 18, approximately 250 parishioners attended Mass at which polka and waltz music was played by Dennis Motyka and the Good Times Band. Five Holy Martyrs will have a series of special events as it approaches its milestone, culminating with a special celebratory Mass on Nov. 1, 2009. (G.C.)

## IPA Hall of Fame and Music Winners

CHICAGO (PMN)—The International Polka Association (IPA) announced the names of the persons to be inducted into the Polka Music Hall of Fame and the winners of the 2008 Polka Awards on its radio show of May 3, 2009. The inductions and awards will take place at the IPA Festival, August 6-9, 2009.

The following have been elected to the Polka Music Hall of Fame:

- Joe Oberaitis – Living Category
- Stas Bulanda – Living Category
- Eddie Habat – Deceased Category



**POLISKY.** Leader of top instrumental group.

An inductee in the Pioneer Category will be announced at a later date.

The following will receive a 2008 Polka Music Award:

- Favorite Female Vocalist: Stephanie Pietrzak
- Favorite Male Vocalist: Lenny Gomulka
- Favorite Instrumental Group: Dennis Polisky & the Maestro's Men
- Favorite CD: "4th Edition" by the Knewz
- Favorite Song: "Polka Memories" by Stephanie Pietrzak

The inductions will occur and the awards will be presented at a banquet on Saturday, August 8, during the three-day IPA Festival at the Doubletree Hotel in Independence, Ohio, just south of Cleveland.

For details about the festival and the International Polka Association visit [www.internationalpolka.com](http://www.internationalpolka.com).

internet websites has been a priority. As a parallel effort, hundreds of polka photographs from the past 45 years have found their way to the scanner and are now posted on [polkamemories.com](http://polkamemories.com) as a combined worked effort shared between Jimmy K and the Polka Insider.

Internet sites such as [myspace.com](http://myspace.com) have also become holding bins for polka videos, photos and history. Preserving these bits and pieces of polka history is being done by many individuals throughout the digital world. Obviously there are more than just a few of us who are captured by this passion to preserve and publish what was.

What I haven't seen is a con-

certed effort by the "official" polka organizations to lead or even join this effort. There are thousands of recordings that will be lost, tens of thousands of photographs that will fade and become brittle with age and collections of memorabilia from the glory days of polka music that will end up in landfills unless everyone joins this campaign, including those who were created to promote and preserve polka music.

In the meantime we invite you to visit [www.myspace.com/concertinaman](http://www.myspace.com/concertinaman) and the polkaeditor id on [youtube.com](http://youtube.com). These are both works in progress but we are making an attempt to preserve the history of this music we all love and enjoy.

## Johnny Hyzny Passes

by Donald J. Ptak

CHICAGO — A giant in the polka field, Johnny Hyzny, passed away on April 15, 2009.

Hyzny, a band leader, radio show host and business proprietor of the Personality Lodge, was honored in his hometown when current and retired musicians did a live musical tribute to his life at his wake at the Richards-Midway funeral home. Over 200 guests attended. A memorial mass at St. Joseph Church in Summit and interment at resurrection cemetery was attended by the most guests ever for a polka celebrity.

An Air Force veteran, he was honored by the Argo-Summit American Legion and Chicago Midway Airport aviation Police. Prior to the

services, local radio personalities did on-air eulogies and announced details of the final services for Hyzny.

Among various fund raisers held by Hyzny the current one to erect a monument at Resurrection Cemetery dedicated to the musicians and men and women of polka music was to be his last prior to retirement. The monument which will be erected and dedicated this summer will bear testimony to Hyzny's untiring efforts to honor his followers and fans.

Hyzny would not want anyone to be sad but be joyful for a wonderful productive life.

In his own words: "Life is short — enjoy yourself!"

## Polka Fireworks Celebrates 35th Year

CHAMPION, Pa. — The 35th Annual Polka Fireworks will take place at the Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Wed. July 1- Sun., July 5, 2009

Featuring 18 of the nation's top polka bands under one roof, this event is often referred to as the "queen of festivals," with live music in several venues, polka workshops, poolside parties, jam sessions, and more, all at a 14,000-acre resort that allows you to park your car and not need it until you leave for home.

Polka Fireworks 35 is a fest for the entire family.

For more information visit [www.polkafireworks.com](http://www.polkafireworks.com) or [www.versatones.com](http://www.versatones.com).

## Cleveland Polka Association's Two Buck Blast!

PARMA, Ohio — The Two Buck Blast will take place Sat., June 6, 2009 at St. Sava's Picnic Grove, 2300 W. Ridgewood Drive, Parma.

Music will be provided by Mon Valley Push from Pennsylvania.

Doors open at 3:00 p.m. with music from 4:00-8:00 p.m.

Admission is \$2.00 for members and \$10.00 for non-members, but this includes a one-year C.P.A. membership! No BYOB, no coolers/picnic baskets. Cash bar and food will be available. \$1 beers, \$1 hot dogs, \$1 shots.

## The Unbelievable True Story of the Accordion-Playing Merman

EXETER, N.H. — A world premiere theatrical adventure by and about Gary Sredzienski premiered May 7-17 at the Dinner Theatre at the York Harbor Reading Room, one of the most distinctive private clubs on the Atlantic Seacoast.

A hilarious and fascinating evening of storytelling, music, and environmental message. Sredzienski, a 2006 Grammy nominee and popular host of the weekly radio show "Polka Party" since 1987, is acknowledged as one of the American masters of the accordion. He is also an eco-activist widely known for his "hobby" — heroic mid-winter swims of the tidal creeks of the Piscataqua basin, where he has excavated objects dating back to the 17th century.

He made even bigger waves in 2007 when he swam seven miles to the Isles of Shoals in 9° weather, a feat that required months of training and a self-customized blend of high-tech swim gear. Some

believe him to be an amphibious creature, and he is known to many citizens of the Seacoast as simply "The Creek Man."

This original show offered Sredzienski a new stage for his extraordinary talents as he spun tales from his vaudeville career (beginning at age ten), offered hilarious and up-close portraits of sea creatures from monkfish to snapping turtles, and shared hair-raising accounts of his fabled swims.

Including original songs such as "Get Yourself a New Hobby" and "Tidal River", Creek Man is fascinating, and — like its star and subject — one-of-a-kind.

## Al "Jolly Joe" Truskowski Passes

HANOVER, Pa. — Alexander "Jolly Joe" Truskowski, 64, of Hanover Township, died Thursday, April 23, 2009. Performing as Jolly Joe and the Bavarians, Truskowski, an accordionist, had been involved with polka music for over 52 years.

His band was the first to record "The Chicken Dance" in the United States, and also released a variety of recordings. Elected "Polish Citizen of the Year" by the POLISH AMERICAN WORLD in 1983, Truskowski especially enjoyed performing at nursing facilities and spending time with fellow veterans.

He was a Polka DJ for over 37 years at various radio stations in Northeastern Pennsylvania, most recently hosting his original "Jolly Joe's Bavarian Bandstand," 1340 AM WICK, Scranton.

Truskowski was a member of the Good Shepherd Polish National Catholic Church, Plymouth, a member of AMVETS Post 59, VFW Post 5267, Catholic War Veterans Post 274, Vietnam War Veterans, Pittston, and the D.A.V.

He was laid to rest at St. Mary's Cemetery with Military funeral services.

## Just Like Old Times

FAYETTEVILLE, N.Y. — Al Piatkowski says that polka music isn't your grandparents music anymore, but many people still like the style of polka music to which they listened and danced.

"It was a time when the songs were simple and the PA systems were tiny," said Piatkowski.

Those who ventured out to the Bayway Polish Home in Elizabeth, N.J., on May 3, when The Piatkowski Brothers Band made their first New Jersey appearance, heard that sound of times gone by.

For a small sampling of their sound visit [www.PiatkowskiBrothers.com](http://www.PiatkowskiBrothers.com).

## NOTES / Barb Pinkowski

## Summer is Around the Corner!

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Hi everyone! It is my favorite part of the year, a time when we are approaching summer and looking forward all the events and polka doings that are held outdoors. Summer, here we come!

Well, it was two weeks in a row at the comfortable and spacious Lily of the Valley Hall in Cheektowaga, N.Y., where Mike Kurdziel is the manager.

On April 25, **Eddie Blazonczyk, Jr. & the Versatones** played to a moderate crowd, and treated us to some excellent polka music. It was good to see some out-of-towners in for this one. Eddie was gracious and friendly to all, mixing with the fans in between sets.

The **Nickel City Band** did an outstanding job also and included some English numbers for a nice variety which the crowd enjoyed. For four guys, they sounded really good! Mike Kurdziel, Johnny Rogala, Frank Zeczek and Eddie Szramka got it all together very well!

The following week, May 2, we welcomed a new band called **The Alliance**, which made its debut on this evening. Matt Lewandowski (bass and vocals) is the leader. Other members are: Rich Kois (trumpet and vocals); Joe Dipyatic (trumpet); Jim Adameczyk (accordion and vocals); Eric Bakowski (concertina); and Mike Dipyatic (drums). The band does a variety of old, new and cross-over tunes, and sounded just great. A big crowd was on hand for this special occasion. It was nice to see some new faces including many young polka fans! The excitement was there as witnessed by the many fans up in front of the band watching and cheering.

This was the day of the Kentucky Derby and, as tradition has it, a couple young ladies showed up wearing big hats and they looked so cool and fashionable.

It certainly is wonderful to have a new band especially one with so many talented musicians. The Alliance has a CD out entitled "Better

Days to Come," which features a balanced mix of tunes sure to please everyone.

**Barb Bakowski** mentioned to me that thru her job in Washington, D.C., at Walter Reed Hospital, she had the honor of meeting President Obama. It was quite a memorable moment for her.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ... Diane Raczkowski and Jim Raczkowski** on the birth of a new granddaughter on May 2. This was daughter Leanne's second child. Their other daughter, Jennifer, is also expecting soon so their family is growing ... **Justin Kohan**, who earned the Hamburg High School Band's "Award of Excellence," for his dedication to and achievements with the band.

**GET WELL WISHES ...** for a very speedy recovery go out to Joey Kurcz and Emily Janiga. May good health return to them soon.

**HAPPY FATHER'S DAY.** I'd like to extend my best wishes to all the dads out there for a very Happy Father's Day.

You know you are needed and loved—enjoy your special day!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 3 – Polka Variety Meeting at the Lily of the Valley Hall, 2379 Union Rd., Cheektowaga, NY. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Music starts at 8:00 p.m. for info call Len at 896-1476
- June 6 – Opening of Lamm Grove, 962 Wehrle Dr., Williamsville, N.Y. with Ray Jay and the Carousels – Happy Hour from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. Music from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. Food and refreshments available at reasonable prices. Call Bob at 837-3582.
- June 7 – Polka Sunday at Potts Hall, 697 South Ogden St., Buffalo, NY with Cityside from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- June 14 – Jerry Darlak & the Touch at the Sportsmen Tavern, Grant and Amherst Sts., Buffalo. Music from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- June 23 (Tuesday) – Polka Boosters



**EDDIE BLAZONCZYK & THE VERSATONES** at Lily of the Valley Hall.



**LENNY GOMULKA and SCRUBBY SEWERYNIAK** share a vocal at the Leonard Post on Dyngus Day.



**JACKIE SCHMID**, the lady who runs some of the most successful dances in Buffalo, including the Dyngus Day party at the Leonard Post.



**EDDIE SZRAMKA**, trumpet player with Nickel City Notes, whips up the crowd at the Lily of the Valley

Meeting at the Polish Falcons Hall, 445 Columbia Ave., Depew, N.Y. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Music starts at 8:00 p.m. Everyone welcome! Call Chris at 892-7977

- June 25 - Cityside at the Orchard Park Pavilion behind the school from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Bring your lawn chairs.
- June 27 – Pig Roast at the Lamm Grove, 962 Wehrle Dr., Williamsville, NY from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with a variety of music by the Bedrock Boys. Tickets are \$18 advance or \$20 at the door which includes pig roast dinner, beer, pop and the music. For more info call Dave at 684-7336
- June 27 — Cityside at the Lackawanna Centennial Celebration at Veterans Stadium, Entertainment Tent, South Park Ave., Lackawanna, N.Y. Music from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

- June 28 – St. Andrew's Lawn Fete – Crocker St., Sloan, N.Y. - Cityside plays the Polka Mass at 11:00 a.m. and then entertains in the beer tent from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.
- June 28 – The Knewz plays at St. Andrew's Lawn Fete from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- June 28 – OLC Lawn Fete – Clinton St. near the Buffalo – West Seneca City Line - Jerry Darlak & the Touch play in the beer tent from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- The new date for the the Polka Boosters Picnic which will be held on Sat. July 11 from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Lamm Grove, food, refreshments, Chinese Auction and music by the Knewz. Members cost is \$15 and non-members cost is \$18. For more info, call Chris at 892-7977.



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**31st Annual AMERICAN FESTIVAL**  
*Committee presents*  
**July 17TH-19TH 2009**

Schedule Subject to Change Without Prior Notice

**Friday, July 17**

4:45 p.m. The Knewz Orchestra - Buffalo, NY – in Pavilion  
6:00 p.m. Polish Heritage Dancers - Buffalo, NY  
7:00 p.m. Polka Family Band - Bloomsburg, PA  
8:15 p.m. Rick Gazda Band - Voorhees, NJ  
9:30 p.m. Polka Family Band - Bloomsburg, PA  
10:30 p.m. Rick Gazda Band - Voorhees, NJ

**Saturday, July 18**

2:30 p.m. The Knewz Orchestra - Buffalo, NY – in Pavilion  
4:30 p.m. Mass Celebrant & Homilist: Rev. David W. Bialkowski, Pastorm St. John Gualbert Parish Guest Choir - Quo Vadis / Honor Guard - St. Maximilian Kolbe Assembly  
5:30 p.m. The Knewz Orchestra - Buffalo, NY – in Pavilion  
6:15 p.m. Harmony Polish Folk Ensemble Cheektowaga, NY  
7:15 p.m. Maestro's Men - Colchester, CT  
8:15 p.m. Polish American String Band (aka "The Mummies") - Philadelphia, PA  
9:15 p.m. Maestro's Men - Colchester, CT  
10:30 p.m. Polish American String Band

**Sunday, July 19**

3:00 p.m. Polish American String Band  
4:15 p.m. Bud Hundenski & The Corsairs - Coraopolis, PA featuring Joe Macielag  
5:30 p.m. Maestro's Men - Colchester, CT  
6:45 p.m. Bud Hundenski & The Corsairs - Coraopolis, PA featuring Joe Macielag  
8:15 p.m. . . . Maestro's Men - Colchester, CT

PLEASE NOTE: All Performances Will Take Place At The Outdoor Cultural Center in Town Park on Harlem Road, unless noted. Food Will Be Available During The Festival Catered by Alice Nowak, Polish Villa and Ray's Catering. Demonstrations Will Be Featured Throughout The Weekend As Well. The General Pulaski Parade Will Take Place on Sunday, July 19th at 1:30 p.m. The Parade Will Start At Thruway Mall, Continuing North on Harlem Road, Ending At Town Park

**IN BRIEF**

**NEW SHOW.** The programming department at 247PolkaHeaven.com has assigned "Broad Band Polkas" to a regular time slot. The show will now be heard every Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. ET. In addition, the program will also air several times throughout the week.

**STREAMING ALONG.** After 15 years on the air, WUTQ (1500 AM, Utica, N.Y.) from which Gary Sroka broadcasts has finally begun streaming. Fans can now log onto www.1550wutq.com to hear the "Saturday Polka Review" from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ET.

Sroka features push, honky, eastern and some Polish folk tunes, rounded out with local announcements and dedications.

**ON JAMMER.** Kenny Konopka's "Polka Café" is now streaming for three hours on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ET on www.polkajammernetwork.org.

**COFFEE BREAK.** Frank Sumislaski's "Polka Coffee Break" polka program returned to Friday mornings on February 20, 2009, 8:00-10:00 a.m. The show is heard via WHUS Radio (91.7 FM) emanating from Storrs, Connecticut.

**FATHER'S DAY DANCE.** The Polish American Club of Miami (1250 NW 22nd Ave., (305) 635-2240) will hold its General Club Meeting, June 21, at 1:30 p.m. followed by Father's Day Dinner Dance at 2:30 p.m.

**KICK UP YOUR HEELS.** The Polish American Pulaski Club (3621 International Speedway Blvd-West, Daytona Beach, Fla., (386) 258-7059) presents the following dinner dances for the month of June. All will be held from 1:00-5:00 p.m.:

- June 7. Music provided by Ed Bilinski & the Sounds of the South.
- June 14. Ron Luznar and the Polka Pals.

- June 21. Father's Day Dinner & Dance. Music provided by Dan & the General Pulaski Band.

- June 28. Audrey and the Polka Classics
- On Sat., June 20, a membership meeting will be followed by a luncheon/social hour from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**OFF THE AIR.** If you were in the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton area in mid-April, you would not have been able to get anything more than static on your radio when you tune into the former frequency of WARM-AM, which carries polka programming among other things. The Citadel station went off the air and a message on its website simply thanks listeners for their support. Former WARM polka show personality Sam Liguori told the SCRANTON TIMES-LEADER that "WARM is done. Unless there's a miracle, they ain't coming back."

The station's backup transmitter failed and in would be very expensive to repair.

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Saturday August 15 2pm-12 Midnight  
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Sunday August 16 1pm-9pm  
New Brass Express  
Stephanie & Her Honky Band  
Versatones

Monday August 17 Noon-9pm  
Ted Lange~Rhythm Playboys  
Walt Groller~Leon Olsen

Tuesday August 18 Noon-9pm  
Walt Groller~Leon Olsen  
Steve Meisner~Rhythm Playboys

Wednesday August 19 Noon-9pm  
Steve Meisner~Jim Busta Band  
Ted Lange~Greg Anderson

Thursday August 20 1pm-9pm  
Big Daddy Lackowski~Pan Franek  
Jimmy Sturr

Friday August 21 3pm-Midnight  
Pan Franek~Polka Family  
Jimmy Sturr  
HUBCAPS

Saturday August 22 2pm-Midnight  
Ethnic Jazz~DynaBrass~Polka Family  
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BAND LINE-UP SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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**SUNDAY, August 9th**  
Annual Election of Officers and Convention Meeting (IPA Members Only)  
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1-800-867-6552

Visit the IPA website at: [www.internationalpolka.com](http://www.internationalpolka.com)

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Doors Open 5pm | Bands 6pm - 12am  
Kitchen - Full Menu 5pm - 10pm | Lite Fare 10pm - Close

- Full Circle (featuring 4 IPA Polka Hall of Fame Musicians!)
- Rick Anton and the Polka Stars

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18**  
Doors Open 5pm | Bands 6pm - 12am  
Kitchen - Full Menu 5pm - 10pm | Lite Fare 10pm - Close

- The Alliance (Buffalo's Newest Polka Band!)
- Eddie Forman Orchestra
- Boys From Baltimore

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19**  
Doors Open 4pm | Bands 5pm - 12am  
Kitchen - Full Menu 4pm - 10pm | Lite Fare 10pm - Close

- Full Circle
- The Knewz
- The Maestro's Men
- The Polka Family

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20**  
Doors Open 10:30am | Band 12:30pm - 4:30pm  
Kitchen - Full Menu 12:30pm - 4:30pm

- Polka Mass at 11:00am
- Tommy Thomas Trio

**For ticket information in your area, contact:**

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Robert Funk ..... 302-645-5388

**Florida**  
Brad Turk ..... 352-237-5654

**Maryland**  
Jay and Janice Lochner ..... 410-694-0201 (Jay has "Stay-With-Us" packages with rooms next to convention center!)

**Mike and Ann Marie Matousek** ..... 410-729-9697  
Tommy Thomas ..... 410-285-5036 (Tommy is running a one-day bus trip from Baltimore on Sunday!)

**Gil Ziernski** ..... 410-388-1998 or 302-436-4854  
**Mike Ziernski** ..... 410-654-4724

**New Jersey**  
Joe Rupnik ..... 856-667-6956

**New York**  
Jerry Rymanowski ..... 518-235-8356

**Ohio**  
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## POLONIA LIFESTYLES / Robert Strybel

## The Polish Wedding in a Nutshell

Part 2 of 2

**NUPTIAL (ZAŚLUBINY):** The bride and groom walk up to the altar together, preceded by their groomsmen and bridesmaids. The parents and other guests are usually already seated when the bridal party enters the church. The father need not “give away” the bride, because she is not a piece of property, although that alien custom is observed by some Polish Americans. The bride and groom kneel on special kneelers set up in front of the main altar and sit on chairs directly in back of them for the duration of the wedding. During the double-ring ceremony, the bride and groom repeat their vows after the priest and place wedding bands on each others right ring fingers. At some Polonian weddings the wedding bands are placed on the left hand the English way. Some brides place a floral bouquet at the church’s side altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. At the back of the church, in its vestibule or (in good weather) just outside the newlyweds receive cut flowers from the guests along with best wishes. The most typical goes: “Wszystkiego najlepszego na nowej drodze życia” (All the best on your new road through life).

**WEDDING HOST AND HOSTESS (STAROSTA I STAROŚCINA).** An important function at a traditional Polish wedding is performed by the “starosta weselny” (wedding host), a kind of emcee chosen when the groomsmen and bridesmaids are selected. It should be a jovial, sociable person not afraid to give a speech, propose toasts, tell jokes, coordinate things and make sure wedding guests are having a good time. The “starościna weselna” (wedding hostess) oversees the wedding, makes sure everything is running smoothly and often offers the bread & salt welcome and officiates at the unveiling. This should be a well-organized, quick-thinking person who doesn’t panic if something goes wrong and calmly moves on to Plan B.

**BREAD & SALT WELCOME (WITANIE CHLEBEM I SOLĄ).** At the entrance to the wedding-feast site the bride and groom are greeted with the traditional bread and salt welcome. The groom sprinkles the bread with salt, the newlyweds kiss the loaf, each takes and eats a piece of bread. There is often a single glass of wine or vodka on the tray from which they both drink and then smash the glass on the floor. The bread symbolizes prosperity and abundance, the salt is to preserve their love, marriage and family and the drink is a sign of the good cheer which the newlyweds will enjoy with their loved ones over the years.

**WEDDING ORATION (ORACJA WESELNA).** The wedding party, often including the officiating clergyman, is seated at the head table, traditionally the middle section of a series of rectangular tables, joined together horseshoe fashion. (This single table symbolizes unity, whereas the round tables of eight so common nowadays represent dispersal!) When all have been seated, the wedding host delivers an oration roughly along these lines: “We have gathered here today to celebrate to joining in holy matrimony of ..... (name) and ..... (name). Dear Newlyweds, your carefree years have come and gone. From today on, you will travel through life together, and side by side you will grapple with the difficulties and challenges it presents. As the wedding host, on behalf of all your loved ones gathered here today, let me wish the both of you all the best – a harmonious marriage, good health, abundance, the fulfillment of all your dreams and many beautiful, healthy children. Let us all now raise a toast to the Bride and Groom: Ad multos annos!” At that point the guests repeat “Ad multos annos”, down their drinks and break into a chorus of “Sto Lat”.

**WEDDING FEAST (UCZTA WESSELNA).** Family-style serving is

traditional as is the menu. It usually includes home-made chicken noodle soup, roast chicken, pork roast, pork cutlets, side dishes, salads and desserts. Food and drink are on the table throughout the wedding, and in addition to all the cold dishes (ham, sausage, jellied pigs feet, herring, deviled eggs, etc.), three or four hot meals may be served in the course of the wedding. These often include clear beetroot barszcz with pasta, bigos, tripe soup, gołąbki, steak roll-ups and a crack-of-dawn eye-opener: a steaming bowl or cup of żurek (tart, thirst-quenching ryemeal soup).

**FIRST DANCE (PIERWSZY TANIĘC).** After all have eaten and drunk their fill during the first stage of the feasting, the bride and groom take to the dance floor for the first time that evening, as guests gather around them and watch. Only after the first dance do wedding guests join in. At Polish-American weddings, the father sometimes has the first dance with the bride. A “Tatusiu Waltz” was produced by Michigan’s Big Daddy Lackowski to reflect that Polonian custom.

**UNVEILING CEREMONY (OCZEPINY).** This is the highpoint of a traditional Polish wedding, as it marks the bride’s ceremonial transition for maidenhood to wifehood. She sits at the center of the dance floor as guests gather round, and her bridal veil is removed to the tune of traditional ditties such as the “Hop Song” (“Piosenka o chmielu”), “The Cherry Has Fallen” (“Spadła wiśnia”) or (especially in Polonia) “12 Angels”. The bride is then fitted with a special wife’s cap or apron.

**DANCING WITH THE BRIDE (TANIĘC Z PANNA MŁODĄ).** Male guests make a donation for the privilege of dancing with the bride, and the maid of honor collects the money in a bowl or basket. The guest often gets a shot of vodka to down before giving the bride a twirl round the dance floor. In recent times, the custom has expanded to enable female guests to dance with the groom. That often generates humorous, tongue-in-cheek rivalry to see who raises the most “cradle cash” (“na kołyskę”).

**FOLLOW-UP CELEBRATION (POPRAWINY).** The Sunday following a Saturday wedding is the time for a less formal follow-up celebration. After sleeping of the previous night’s festivities and attending Sunday Mass, guests begin trickling back to the wedding site or the bride’s home for more food, drink, music and general merriment. It is considered a sign of respect towards the family and wedding guests for the newlyweds to attend the event, as they’ll have plenty of time to go off on their honeymoon. At one time, the poprawiny lasted several days, but that is becoming rare, except in the Polish countryside.

**HONEYMOON (PODRÓŻ POŚLUBNA).** In the peasant culture of yesteryear, “przenosiny” was held after the wedding, where by the bride and her dowry (household goods, bedding, etc.) were transported by horse cart to the groom’s home and normal married life began. The honeymoon trip is a rather recent innovation, but it has widely caught in town and country alike. But considerate Polish newlyweds still wait until all the festivities, including poprawiny, have ended before heading off.

## POLISH CHEF / Robert Strybel

## The Foods of a Polish Wedding

Part 2 of 3

Here are some more dishes enjoyed at Polish weddings on both sides of the Atlantic.

**STUFFED CABBAGE ROLLS (gołąbki):**

Combine 1 lb raw ground pork and/or beef with 4-6 c undercooked rice, 1-3 chopped butter-fried onions and 1 egg. Add heaping T fresh chopped dill. Mix well and salt & pepper to taste. Place oblong portion of filling at base of wilted, parboiled cabbage leaves with thick center vein removed, roll up and place snugly in roasting pan in no more than two layers. Drench cabbage rolls in roasting pan with 3 c boiling water in which a mushroom bouillon cube has been dissolved. Bake covered at 350° 1 hr. Reduce heat to 325° and cook another 2 hrs. Meanwhile, wash and slice or dice 16 oz fresh Portobello mushrooms and simmer in 2-3 T butter with a finely chopped onion until cooked (about 15 min), stirring frequently. Fork-blend 1 c sour cream with 1 heaping T flour until smooth and gradually add 2 c hot water in which a mushroom cube has been dissolved. Simmer 10 min and salt & pepper to taste. Serve gołąbki drenched with mushroom gravy.

ter until tender. After draining well and steaming off moisture, mash well or run through ricer. Remember: Real Polish mashed potatoes are light and fluffy and contain no milk or butter.



**FOR GENERATIONS,** gołąbki were standard fare at Polish American wedding receptions. Today, it may be hard to find a caterer who knows how to prepare delicious stuffed cabbage rolls, but finding one who does will certainly impress your guests.

**VEGETABLES POLONAISE (jarzyny po polsku):**

Cook vegetables of choice (cauliflower, wax or green beans, Brussels sprouts, carrots, peas, peas & carrots, etc.) in lightly salted water until tender, drain well and transfer to serving platter. In saucepan heat 3-4 T butter until it bubbles, stir in 2-3 T plain (unseasoned) bread crumbs and 1/4 t salt and simmer, stirring frequently, until it is browned. Spoon the browned bread-crumbs topping over the vegetables.

## — DINNER SALADS —

**CUCUMBER SALAD (mizeria):** Combine peeled, thinly sliced cucumbers with 1 onion (of similar circumference) sliced wafer thin. Sprinkle with salt and freshly ground pepper, 1/2 t sugar and 2 T cider or more cider vinegar. Lace with 1/2 c (more or less) fork-blended sour cream.

**POLISH LETTUCE SALAD (zielona salata po polsku):**

Twist off and discard the core (that holds the leaves together) from 2 heads of Boston or bib lettuce. Separate the leaves, tear larger ones into 2 or 3 pieces, wash well, dry, place in serving dish and scatter 8 - 10 thinly sliced radishes over it lettuce. Fork-blend 2/3 - 3/4 c sour cream with juice of 1/2 a lemon, 1/4 t salt and 1/2 - 1 t sugar and pour over lettuce. Garnish with chopped chives.

Next month: conclusion, with cold side dishes.

**BAKED FRESH KIELBASA (biała kielbasa pieczona):**

Arrange 3 lbs fresh kielbasa in a single layer in baking pan. Drench with 12 oz beer and enough water to barely cover kielbasa and bake in 375° oven. Turn sausage over when half the water has evaporated. It is ready when all water disappears and sausage begins to brown.

**KIELBASA & SAUERKRAUT (kielbasa z kapustą):**

Drain 2-3 qts sauerkraut and rinse in cold water. Drain, press out moisture, chop, place in pot, scald with boiling water to cover, add 1 bay leaf and cook uncovered 45. Drain and transfer to baking pan. Cut 2 lbs smoked kielbasa into 2” or 3” pieces and mix with sauerkraut. Sprinkle with caraway seeds and season with several dashes liquid Maggi seasoning. Bake in 350° oven 90 min or so. Leave in oven 30 min after switching off heat. Taste improves with each reheating.

**POLISH MASHED POTATOES (kartofle tluczone):**

Cook 2-1/4 lbs peeled potatoes in lightly salted wa-

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## BOOKS IN BRIEF / Florence Waszkelewicz Clowes, MLIS

## The Untold Story of Poland's Forces in World War II

### NO GREATER ALLY

*The Untold Story of Poland's Forces in World War II*  
by Kenneth K. Koskordan  
Osprey/Random House, 2009,  
black and white photos, maps,  
index, bibliography, notes,  
304 pp., \$24.95

Koskordan presents a moving history of the long Polish involvement in World War II, with many details of brigades, air squadrons, and infantry divisions under the Home Army or with the Allied Forces.

For *Your Freedom and Ours* has been Poland's motto for centuries. But it showed the naivety of the Poles in thinking other nations would honor their pacts. It was the Poles that broke the German Enigma code even before the war started. They offered it to the British, who received most of the credit for it.

Repeatedly they were deceived. Both Britain and France, who had pledged their support to Poland then stilled to honor their pacts with the country. And when they did, there was little actual support. The Sovi-

ets stood by while the German swept through Warsaw, destroy everything in its path, and waited at the bridge to come in and take over.

When the Polish Air Force regrouped and trained under the arm of the Royal Air Force, they astonished others with their daredevil feats. They made up 1/3rd of the 350 pilots in the RAF. Yet, at war's end they were not allowed to march in Britain's Victory Parade. Finally, in the Yalta treaty made by Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin, Poland became a pawn to satisfy others.

The war may have ended in five and one half years, but it took another forty years for Poland gained total independence. The Polish Government in Exile, which had fled to Britain after the conquest of Poland, continued to operate until 1991, when Poland and long last, was free to hold elections and operate its own government.

Koskordan has shown the bravery and undaunted spirit of the Polish people. He has provided details of the Home Army, the Polish Air

Force, the many cavalry and infantry divisions, their battles in Europe and Africa and a history of the atrocities against the Polish population as well as testimonials from twelve Polish people. They were soldiers, school-girls, boy scouts, farmers, doctors and lawyers, determined to aid in saving their nation and their lives.

All walks of life were involved in this war, many deported and never able to return. But the glory of their deeds remains forever.

### POLISH RE-ENACTORS HANDBOOK

*A Guide to 17th Century Living History in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth*

by Eryk Stefan Jadaszewski  
Create Space, Polish Hussar Supply, 2008. \$19.95.

The book was designed to expand the reader's knowledge in developing a period persona, historically accurate costumes, weaponry and tools used in the 16th and 17th centuries in central and Eastern Europe and inspiration in joining or starting

a local group. Today there are many established groups who provide re-enactments throughout the country.

Jadaszewski's chapters beginning with a history of the Commonwealth Region and the peoples of the 17th century with outstanding full color pictures of costumes and tools. A suggested list of basic equipment, sources of purchase, ethics and standards used in starting a group, songs and toasts as well as a short history of religion.

One chapter includes a period glossary, with a Polish word, translation and phonetic spelling of words and phrases. Other chapters include foods and utensils of the time and mannerisms commonly found with the noble groups. The remainder of the book includes

Many clear pictures of Hussar armor, the Cossacks, the Light Cavalry, Infantry, Artillery, Polish noblewomen, townsfolk and merchants.

Anyone interested in becoming a Polish re-enactor and starting a group will treasure this trove of information.

### POLAND TO AMERICA

by John Konderia  
Rosedog Books, 2008, \$14.00

This family saga begins in Bielitz Poland, in 1910. What follows is a story of their lives in Poland, where Anton learned to become a blacksmith and later a machinist. Anton made five trips, the first as a stow-away, to America and back, in attempts to get work and bring Filomena, his wife to America. Finally, with permanent work and his wife at his side, they began a new life in Dallas, Texas.

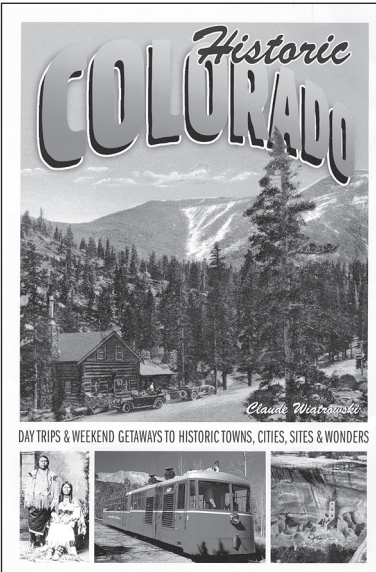
John, born in 1926, grew up on Dallas, served in the Navy during the war, married and raised children of their own. Before he died he relayed the story of his parents, life in Poland, and the early days in Texas, striving to provide a better life for the growing Konderia family. Family photos are included. The Konderia family, in two generations, produced engineers, athletes, servicemen, a professor, priest, salesmen, mechanics and business owners. From a humble beginning, the family continues on.

### NEW BOOKS

## Waitrowski's Newest Explores Colorado's Colorful History

OSCEOLA, Wisc. — From mining relics high on Colorado's mountainsides to plush historic hotels in its large cities, author Claude Waitrowski has selected the best historic places to visit—locations with the most historical significance, in the most wildly beautiful settings, and with the most to see and do. His book *Historic Colorado* uncovers the secret that much of that state's history can be explored without miles-long hiking trails or scary four-wheel-drive paths. Though the book is enjoyable without visiting Colorado, its many maps and travel directions make it the ideal guidebook. In fact, the author's eye-popping color photos will convince the reader to visit the Centennial State. Colorado is littered with thousands of historic places and the book lists hundreds of the greatest places and how to find them.

Though museums chronicling Colorado's history are included, there is much more here than museums. The author explores the best of the many cliff dwellings once occupied by Ancient Puebloans who lived here before the arrival of Europeans. Settlers established San Luis, Colorado's oldest town, in 1851 and the book includes a photo of its Catholic Church. Europeans brought mining and agriculture as well as railroads. A huge abandoned sugar beet plant, mines and mills that processed gold and silver, and railroad water tanks and round-houses are just some of the historic places listed. The book guides the



reader to buildings in ghost towns that were home to those that lived and worked here. Stories of individuals important to Colorado's history round out the book. A rare historic photo shows "Doc Susie" Anderson who was a pioneer medical provider in this ruggedly beautiful land. One surprise is an appearance by Glen Miller, the most famous band leader of the Big Band era, who grew up in Colorado.

Readers will also find historical experiences in which they can actively participate. Steam trains still haul passengers over one hundred miles of narrow-gauge tracks, remnants of thousands of miles that once crisscrossed Colorado's high country. Mine tours begin high in spectacular locations to plunge deep

into the mountains themselves. An old mill perched on a mountainside offers self-guided explorations of its labyrinth of machinery. A boat trip carries history seekers along the path of a long-gone railroad. Historic home tours present a variety of experiences from modest cabins of miners to huge mansions of industrial barons. In fact, the author identifies the best such mansion as being in Pueblo, a city not unlike a petite version of Chicago, Detroit or Buffalo.

Claude Waitrowski has lived in

Colorado since 1975. He is also the author of the book *Railroads of Colorado*. His knowledge of Colorado history is a consequence of his long-term explorations of the state. Historic Colorado is 256 pages of enjoyable reading with 13 maps, 125 color photographs and 41 historic black & white photos. An appendix lists a web site for almost every historic place mentioned. Published by Voyageur Press, the book is available in bookstores everywhere as well as online. It is an outstanding value at a modest \$22.99.

### Kudos for Cutietta

LOS ANGELES — Bogdan Zdrojewski, Poland's minister of culture and national heritage, on his first visit to Los Angeles, decorated USC Thornton School of Music Dean Robert A. Cutietta with his country's Gloria Artis medal on April 23.

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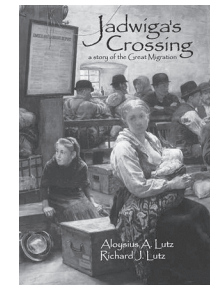
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AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE POLES IN AMERICA  
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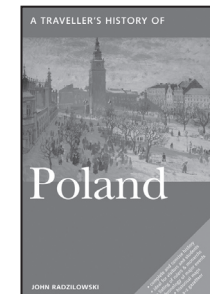
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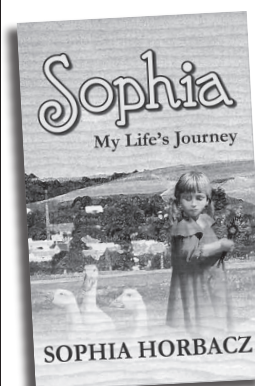
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**A TRAVELLER'S HISTORY OF POLAND**  
by John Radzilowski  
312 pgs. ill. maps. pb.  
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### SOPHIA

Sophia is Sophia Horbacz's life story, from three years old to the present. She was born in the little village of Ruszelczyce, Poland during World War II. Her father was killed and her mother was left with five small children. Family struggles during that time were tremendous. In 1961 they were lucky to be able to come to the United States.

The toughest time in her life was when she struggled with her husband's drinking problem and his bipolar disorder. She thanks God for helping her through that time of her life. Paperback. 164 pages. ISBN-13: 9780982254080

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SPORTS / Tom Tarapacki

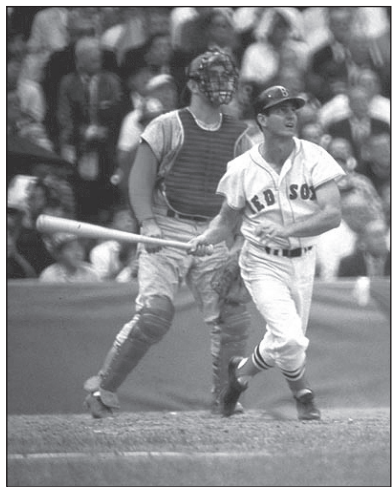
THE POLISH AMERICAN JOURNAL'S

All-Time Polish American Baseball Team

I've always gotten a great response from my readers regarding the All-Time Polish Baseball team, so here it is again.

**OUTFIELD**

**Stan Musial, Al Simmons, Carl Yastrzemski, Barney McCosky** — Of my four outfielders, the first three are Hall of Famers: Musial, Simmons (Szymanski) and Yaz. McCosky (his last name is actually derived from his Lithuanian Father's name — his mother was named Magdalena Rutkowski) is right up there with them. In an 11-season career, McCosky was a career .312 hitter and an excellent outfielder. If he hadn't lost three seasons to military service and suffered serious back problems, he'd likely be in Cooperstown, too. This is such a great outfield that outstanding players like Tom Paciorek and John Kruk were left on the bench.



CARL YASTRZEMSKI

**FIRST BASE**

**Ted Kluszewski.** "Big Klu" is remembered as the slugger with the big arms who had five seasons of 100 RBI or more and led the NL with 49 homers and 141 RBI in 1954. Despite his size and power, he was an excellent hitter who batted .300 or better seven years in a row and was difficult to strike out, and a very smooth fielding first baseman. Yankee greats Bill "Moose" Skowron and Joe (Kollonige) Collins were runners-up.

**SECOND BASE**

**Bill Mazerowski.** A Hall of Famer and widely considered the best defensive second baseman ever, "Maz" was an easy choice here.

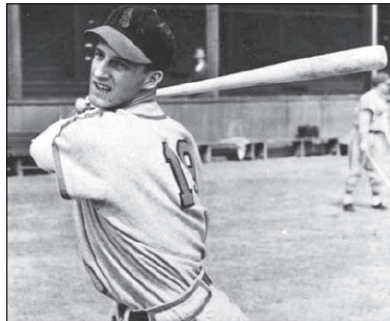
**SHORTSTOP**

**Alan Trammell.** Tony Kubek held down this position until Trammell (his mother was Anne Panczak) retired with 2,365 hits, 1,231 runs scored, 185 home runs, 1,003 runs

batted in and four Gold Gloves.

**CATCHER**

**Frankie Pytlak.** I chose Pytlak over John Grabowski, Stan Lopata and Carl Sawatski. Smallish and often injured, Pytlak was a very good hitter (he batted over .300



STAN "THE MAN" MUSIAL.

three times) and was a fine fielder in the 1930s and 1940s, mostly with Cleveland.

**THIRD BASE**

**Whitey Kurowski.** The hero of the 1942 World Series was an excellent all-around third baseman for the St. Louis Cardinals — despite the fact that childhood osteomyelitis left him with his right arm shorter than his left.

**UTILITYMAN**

**Tony Kubek.** With Trammell getting short, Kubek gets the nod here ahead of Bob (Bialogowicz) Bailor and Ted Kubiak. The latter two were more of the traditional utilitymen, but Kubek first appeared on a New York Yankee roster as a utility ballplayer before replacing Gil McDougald at shortstop. He also filled in at several infield positions and the outfield during his career. He retired prematurely at age 29 due to serious neck and back problems, possibly costing him a place in Cooperstown.

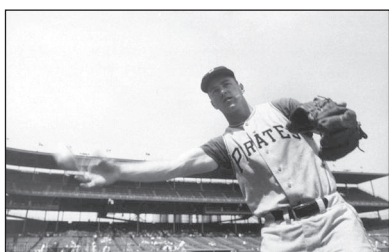
**DESIGNATED HITTER**

**Greg Luzinski.** "Bull" was chosen over Richie Zisk by virtue of his greater home run production. Both played around the same time — 70s and early 80s — and were prototypical DHs: big, powerful guys with bad knees. Luzinski hit .276 with 307 homers. Zisk hit just 207 homers, though he batted 11 points better over his career, .287.

**RIGHTHANDER PITCHERS**

**Stan Coveleski, Phil Niekro, Jack (Paykos) Quinn**

Niekro (318-274) and Coveleski (215-142) were Hall of Famers, but Quinn should be. He had a 247-217 career, and when he retired in 1933, he was the oldest man to win a ML game (49) and to hit a HR (47). In



BILL MAZEROSKI

1928, at age 45, his record was 18-7 with a 2.90 ERA.

Other great righties included Joe Niekro (221-204), Steve Gromek (123-108) and Hank Borowy (108-82).

**LEFTHANDER PITCHERS**

**Frank Tanana, Eddie (Lopatynski) Lopat, Johnny (Podrus) Podres**

Tanana (240-236), Lopat (166-112), and Podres (148-116) all had long and impressive careers. Both Lopat (4-1, 2.60 ERA) and Podres (4-1, 2.11 ERA) also had great success in World Series play. Just missing out was the underrated Harry Coveleski, Stan's older brother, who had an 81-55 record and 2.39 ERA.

**BULLPEN**

**Casimir "Jim" Konstanty, Ron Perranoski, Moe Drabowsky**

Konstanty was the first relief pitcher to be named MVP. That happened in 1950, when he led Philadelphia to the pennant with 16 wins and 22 saves, both NL highs. Perranoski was one of the premier relief pitching specialists in the major leagues from 1961 to 1973, posting a 79-74 record, 179 saves and a 2.79 ERA in 737 games covering 1,237 innings. The Polish-born Drabowsky, pitching mostly in relief, won 88 games and in 1966 and 1970 played a big role in the Baltimore Orioles win World Series championships.

**MANAGER**

**Danny Ozark.** There weren't a great many Polish American managers in the big leagues for me to choose from — Johnny Goryl and John Lipon come to mind — but Danny Orzechowski was a pretty good one. He posted a 618-542 record managing Philadelphia and San Francisco, and his Phillies won three NL Eastern Division titles from 1976 to 1978.

**THEY SAID IT**

"I remember begging my father to take me to see Fidrych pitch. There was a big crowd that day in Cleveland — well, 37,405, which passed for a big crowd in Cleveland back then — and the only two things I really remember is that we had to park what seemed like miles away from the stadium and I got to see Fidrych get on his hands and knees and manure the pitching mound. As it turned out, he did not pitch well that day — the aging Boog Powell got him for three hits — but I left the stadium feeling like I had seen a star."

— Joe Posnanski, in his online column for SPORTS ILLUSTRATED. The sports columnist at The Kansas City Star since 1996, Posnanski has twice been named the best sports columnist in America by The Associated Press Sports Editors.

♦ ♦ ♦  
"You couldn't help but love this guy. The guys on the other teams loved him."

—Former Detroit Tiger Willie Horton on former teammate Mark Fidrych.

CHANGING TIMES

What Would King Jan Think?

LOS ANGELES—Actress Leelee Sobieski is attempting to revive her career by shedding her threads, which works well for many female actresses. Sobieski plays a porn star in her latest flick, "Finding Bliss."



In the film, Sobieski plays an aspiring filmmaker who takes a job at a porn studio, planning to use the company's facilities to secretly film her own movie after hours.

This role is a far cry from her other roles in such films as Joan of Arc in "Here on Earth." The actress is a distant relative of Poland's King Jan III Sobieski (1629-1696), one of the most respected monarchs of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, from 1674 until his death.

More to Say

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Mika Brzezinski doesn't mince words about what happened when CBS dropped her as a correspondent two years ago.

"Nobody wanted me," she says. "I spent a year looking for a job. You spend ten years at a place, you gave your heart and soul and blood for it, and all of a sudden it's over? I was 40 and, quote, fired, and I'm sure people were thinking, what's wrong with her?"

No one is asking that now. Brzezinski has parlayed her role as co-host of MSNBC's morning show, with Joe Scarborough, into a syndicated radio show with the former congressman and a brand-new book deal. She is, for the first time, bursting with opinions.

"I've been in a box as a journalist for 20 years," she says. "That is a very safe and lazy place to be. You can hide behind objectivity. It is much harder to put yourself out there."

Oh, That Prawo Jazdy!

DUBLIN (Reuters) — Irish police have solved the mystery of a Polish repeat offender, who clocked up 50 traffic offenses on different addresses and who was never caught, after one officer noticed his name meant "driving license" in Polish.

An internal police memo cited by Irish papers said officers taking details of Polish traffic offenders had been mistakenly using "Prawo Jazdy," printed in the top right corner of the driving license, as the holder's name.

"Prawo Jazdy" is actually the Polish for 'driving license' and not the first and surname on the license," the police memo said. "It is quite embarrassing to see the system has created Prawo Jazdy as a person with over 50 identities."

A police spokesman declined to comment on the reports.

About 200,000 Polish people flocked to Ireland during the boom years of its "Celtic Tiger" economy, but a poll in November indicated a third of them planned to leave due to recession.

Spitfire Backfire

LONDON — The British National Party launched an anti-immigration campaign harking back to the Battle of Britain, but it features a Polish Spitfire. The poster, part of the European elections campaign, featured the Spitfire and the words "Battle for Britain."

The party is campaigning against



**GREAT MOMENTS IN XENOPHOBIA.** British National Party anti-immigration poster featured a Spitfire belonging — ironically — to 303 Squadron of the Polish Air Force.

allowing Europeans into Britain. But historians noted that the fighter was actually part of the RAF 303 Squadron, which was made up of expatriate Poles.

In the Battle of Britain Poles shot down 203 Luftwaffe aircraft which stood for 12 per cent of total German losses in the battle.

A Royal Air Force museum spokesman said told London's DAILY MAIL: "The Spitfire in the poster can be identified as belonging to 303 Squadron of the Polish Air Force by the code letters RF painted in front of the RAF roundel."

The BNP insisted they knew all along about the plane's background, saying the plane is a symbol of Britain's struggle at the moment.

"It's not a question of disliking the Polish people — it's just a question of economics," said a BNP spokesman.

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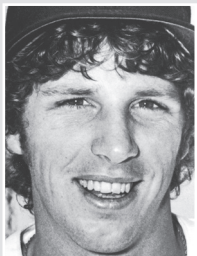
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Farewell to "The Bird"

Autopsy results showed that Mark "The Bird" Fidrych, who pitched five seasons in the majors with Detroit, passed away due to accidental asphyxia by suffocation. Fidrych, who was 54, was found dead underneath a Mack dump truck on his farm.



Fidrych, who pitched for the Tigers from 1976-80, was named the American League Rookie of the Year and was a two-time All-Star and started the 1976 Midsummer Classic. During his rookie cam-

paign, Fidrych compiled a 19-9 record with a 2.34 ERA and had an amazing 24 complete games. His fun-loving manner captured the imagination of fans, but injuries cut short a promising career.

After his baseball career ended in 1983 he settled in Northborough, Mass., close to where he grew up. He lived on a 107-acre farm, and owned his own trucking company for a time.

Fidrych's death came just days after he learned that he was to be inducted to the National Polish-American Sports Hall of Fame in a ceremony at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy on June 18.



REVIEW / Dr. Richard Lukas

## The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler

Historians have succeeded in unearthing the evils of the Holocaust era. But they have been far less conscientious and resourceful in revealing to us the thousands of heroes and heroines in all countries of German-occupied Europe who took enormous risks in helping others during the Nazi era.

Many years ago, Rabbi Harold Schulweis observed that society needs heroes and heroines — these exemplars of good — to teach us and our children about goodness. We need them as a counterweight to the evil of Nazism and what it perpetrated upon Jews and gentiles.

Film makers have been even slower than historians in celebrating the heroes and heroines of the Holocaust era. Finally, almost seventy years after the event, a made-for-television drama about the extraordinary achievement of Irena Sendler was presented by the Hallmark Hall of Fame on Sunday, April 19, 2009. Based on a book by Polish actress, Anna Mieszkowska, "The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler," does a competent job of informing audiences of the compelling story of sacrifice and courage of one of the authentic moral giants of our time.

Unfortunately, screenwriters John Kent Harrison and Lawrence John Spagnola failed to offer any insights into what motivated Sendler in her mission to save the lives of

2500 Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto. A few scenes of Irena's early life with her father, who practiced social justice in his daily life as a physician, and her years as a student at the University of War-

saw, where she sided with Jewish students against some anti-Semitic thugs, would have provided the necessary context for her selfless mission later in life.

Although there are some very riveting and emotionally tense moments in the film, Harrison and Spagnola fail to maintain consistently the level of tension that Sendler's remarkable story deserves. Anna Paquin, who bears a strong resemblance to Sendler as a young woman, delivers a fine performance. Seasoned actors Marcia Gay Harden, who plays Sendler's mother, and Goran Visnjic, who plays Sendler's love interest, also deliver convincing performances.

Harrison and Spagnola should be commended for including the poignant comments of Irena Sendler shortly before her death concerning the heroism of Jewish mothers who gave up their children to save them from certain death and the torments experienced by Polish mothers who had to return them to

Jewish relatives and agencies who reclaimed the children at the end of the war.

**IT IS AXIOMATIC** that most filmmakers take substantial liberties with historical facts. "The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler" is no exception. Minor departures from historical accuracy can often be justified in the making of a film. But major distortions, exaggerations, and omissions are inexcusable. In "The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler," Goran Visnjic, who plays Stefan, a Jew whom Irena loves and marries after the war, has a more prominent

role in the film than he did in reality. Interviews, reports and testimonies by and about Irena Sendler that I have read do not even mention him. One of the worst omissions in the film was Irena Schultz, who loyally worked side by side with Sendler from the beginning of Polish relief efforts in the Warsaw Ghetto.

Ironically, had Harrison and Spagnola relied on Sendler's own account of the night of her arrest, they would have had an accurate and far more dramatic rendition of what happened than the inaccurate dull episode they concocted. In the film, two or three rather diffident Gestapo agents arrive at Sendler's apartment, where Irena, her mother and a colleague in the underground are present. Stefan is there, too, but scurries into a wardrobe to hide before the Germans enter the apartment. Irena is arrested and taken to prison.

In reality, there was a large number of Gestapo agents who banged so hard on the apartment door that Irena thought the hinges would come off. The Germans tore up the apartment looking for incriminating evidence against Sendler. They even ripped up floor boards. Before this tense and threatening situation developed, Sendler had the wit to throw the list of names of Jewish children, who had been saved to her colleague, who hid the incriminating information in her undergarments.

The film accurately treats Sendler's confinement and brutal torture at Pawiak, the infamous prison in Warsaw where hundreds of Poles

died, but fails to acknowledge the specific role of Julian Grobelny, head of Zegota (The Council for Aid to Jews), who arranged the bribe that freed Sendler from the clutches of the Gestapo. The movie has Sendler giving Grobelny the names of the rescued Jewish children when, in



Irene Sendler (Anna Paquin) grabs the arm of a Jewish child (Rebecca Windheim) as the Germans pursue.

fact, she recovered the list from her friend and buried it in jars under a tree, where they remained until the Warsaw Uprising of August-September, 1944. She dug up the jars and held them until the end of the war, when she gave them to Adolf Berman, head of the Jewish Committee.

These inaccuracies could have been avoided had the producers and writers hired qualified historical advisers, who are conspicuously absent from the film's credits.

**VIEWERS UNFAMILIAR** with wartime Poland and Polish efforts to assist Jews through the RADA (Central Welfare Council) and later Zegota might easily gain the impression, as many film critics did, that Sendler and a small group of colleagues, mostly women, were

entirely responsible for saving 2500 Jewish children.

As Sendler herself said, "I couldn't have done it alone." Her best estimate was that it took ten or twelve Poles to save the life of one Jewish child. Sendler often mentioned the janitors who led the children

and their escorts through the labyrinth of corridors and cellars of two of the exits from the ghetto; the ambulance, tram and lorry drivers who transported the children to safe havens; the people who provided forged documents and money to enable the success of the operation; the physicians who helped with passes for Sendler and her co-workers to move freely in the ghetto and provided thousands of vaccinations for children and adults; the Polish families who gave temporary or permanent homes to the children; and the convents of several religious orders, including the home of Father Gabriel Boduen in Warsaw, who hid the Jewish children.

None of this detracts from Irena Sendler, who was the heart and soul of the Polish underground conspiracy to save Jewish children. Despite some limitations and inaccuracies, "The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler" is a pioneer film of a compelling story of sacrifice, courage and goodness. Irena Sendler not only saved Jewish children but also humanity's soul.

◆◆◆

*Dr. Richard C. Lukas is a retired professor of history.*

*He has taught at universities in Florida, Ohio and Tennessee. He is the author of eight books and numerous articles and reviews. His acclaimed books include: The Forgotten Holocaust, Did the Children Cry? and Forgotten Survivors.*

ART SCENE / Staś Kmieć

## Pianist Krystian Zimerman Shuns States in Protest

Poland's **Krystian Zimerman**, widely regarded as one of the finest pianists in the world, created a furor on April 26 in his recital debut at Walt Disney Concert Hall when he announced from the stage that this would be his last performance in America — in protest of the nation's military policies overseas and particularly in Poland.

He had made a similar same threat in 2006, stating he would not return until George W. Bush was out of office.

Approximately three dozen in the audience walked out, some shouting obscenities. "Yes," Zimerman answered, "some people when they hear the word military start marching."

Others remained but booed or yelled for him to shut up and play the piano. But many more cheered. He responded by saying that America has far finer things to export than the military, and he thanked those who support democracy.

At least some of his reproach appears to be personal, but many in



**Zimerman:** not happy with Obama decision.

the classical music world thought it might have been logistical. Zimerman travels with his own Steinway grand piano, which he custom-altered himself. Shortly after 9/11 attacks, amid heightened security his instrument was confiscated at JFK Airport when he landed in

New York to give a recital at Carnegie Hall. Apparently because the piano's glue resembled a compound used in explosives, the Transportation Security Administration decided to take no chances and destroyed the instrument.

In 2006 he tried to travel with his own piano again, only to have it held up in customs for five days and disrupt his performance schedule.

During a recent performance at Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall, he delighted his audience by making sly reference to his approval of Barack Obama in the White House. But Zimerman appears to have been upset by Barack Obama's decision, announced this month, to maintain the Bush-era policy of installing a missile defense shield in Poland and the Czech Republic.

After his declaration, Zimerman turned to the piano and played the Karol Szymanowski's "Variations on a Polish Folk Theme," with such passion and intensity that the stunned audience gave him multiple ovations. There was no encore. The cheers at the conclusion were reported as "deafening."



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IN MEMORIAM

Zygmunt Kordalewski,  
World War II Slave Laborer



**ZYGMUNT KORDALEWSKI**, lost his battle with congestive heart failure four days before he was to celebrate his 54th wedding anniversary. Born on January 1, 1921 in Buszkowek, Poland, he was 19 years old when he was kidnapped off of the streets for execution and sent to a firing line. At the last moment, he was saved and sent to a World War II Slave Labor Camp in Germany, where he suffered years of mental and physical abuse. Released at the end of the war, he emigrated to Canada and found a job in a gold mine. He met his wife Maria at a local dance and later moved to Detroit, and then settled in Los Angeles, working as a tool and die machinist. The family decided to move to North Miami, where he spent his last 19 years enjoying life with his wife, daughter, and grandchildren.

"Standing proud at 6' 4", he was always fighting for his rights," said daughter Lydia Kordalewski.

Kordalewski's viewing and funeral were attended by many North Miami City officials and special condolences were sent by Bishop T. Wenski from Florida.

**REV. WLADYSLAW REKAS**, was the Chaplain for the Polish Army Veterans Association, Post 1 and SPK Post 33 in Buffalo, N.Y., as well as a member of various other Polish veteran and civic organizations.

The "New" Polonia?

More and more Polish Americans can be found networking on today's popular social internet sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter.

Facebook probably has largest number of Polish American polka fans, using it as a place they can talk about upcoming dances, festivals, and other events. There are also Polish and Polish American groups for a variety of interests, from writing to sports. One of Facebook's most popular applications is "Polish Stuff," which allows members to send virtual gifts to one another.

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PONDERING POLE / Edward Poniewaz

Pop

Once thing I have heard over and over about the old timers, our parents and grandparents, is they didn't like to talk much about their childhood or families when they first immigrated to the United States. One reason is that they were ashamed about their living conditions and were so totally immersed in the day to day business of survival that they blocked any memories about growing up out of their mind. Soldiers are like that. They typically are pretty mum about "the war," especially if they saw combat. War and the ghetto are hell.

My father was like this; he didn't have a great catalog of impressions of growing up in the North side of St. Louis or if he did he never seemed to want to dwell on them too much. He would however, occasionally throw out a line or story about his past that stuck in my memory. All it takes is an article in the paper or an event on the news that recalls what he said.

Another summer and the start of baseball season and every summer and baseball season here in St. Louis you find a mention about Stan "the Man," Stan Musial. The Man is getting way up in years but we love him. Not long ago, I saw a nice tribute to his life written by his daughter. As many of these sentimental blops as I have seen, I never get tired of them. This one is loaded with glorious characterizations — "Stan the Man could not allow anyone to see him at less than his best" but they pick up my spirits.

Pop would often say to me, "Stan Musial wouldn't do that," and he wasn't talking about making a pitch or catching a ball. "Stan Musial wouldn't do that" applied to school work, chores, or how you treated people. "Stan Musial wouldn't do

that" was code for not allowing anyone to see you at less than your best. Tell me about a guy who thinks Michael Jordan or Mickey Mantle or Tiger Woods is God. I have a pretty good idea that all of the immigrant Polish boys in Walnut Park thought of Musial as the closest thing to God. Next to their moms of course.

Pop would often say to me, "Stan Musial wouldn't do that," and he wasn't talking about making a pitch or catching a ball.

Then there is Biddle Street.

Recently the Hallmark movie about Irena Sendler was shown about her heroics in World War II in saving thousands of lives, in particular the lives of the Jewish children marked for extermination by the Germans. It has only been a couple hundred years after World War II that a movie has finally been made showing how the Poles tried to help the Jewish people and "objected" to the Germans trashing and leveling their country. This movie is nice support on behalf of Polish-Jewish relations or whatever that is.

Pop had a story that I think perfectly illustrates the long history of the two groups throughout their long history together in Poland and how that apparently spilled over in the new world, even in the crowded and noisy and smelly streets of the Biddle market area in turn of the century St. Louis. Biddle stands for Biddle Street and was like Orchard Street in the lower East side of Manhattan. Every major U.S. city and neighborhood had one: it was near where the immigrant people lived and went to buy things like food, clothing, and supplies, and many of the merchants, as in Eastern Europe and New York, were Jewish.

Pop told the story of going to Biddle Street with his mom, my grandma Casimira, every week. "Every week I went with my mother to the Biddle market to buy a chicken. Each time mom would pick one out from the same place owned by this Jewish guy. Then they would get in a big argument over the chicken. He would hold it on the scale to weigh it. While he had it on the scale, mom would be screaming that he was weighing down the scale. He would yell back at her that if he let go of the chicken it would fly away!" My father would shake his head and say, "Every week they would go through the same thing."

It is a funny story but it really is — in my opinion — the essence of the relationship between the Jewish and Polish people. The peasant thinks the business man and the market are trying to cheat her and the merchant is trying to "hold" on to and deal with his customers without making it seem like he is taking advantage of them. Both need each other to live; both find themselves thrust into unavoidable and unpleasant circumstances at times. Ultimately they work it out because of the power of the market. Hopefully the power of God intervenes. Ultimately, it all comes back to the chicken.

**THE SARAGOSSA MANUSCRIPT** is a Polish film from the 1960s that according to Wikipedia is one of Scorsese's, Coppola's, and Bunuel's favorite films. It is currently in my queue at Netflix. I can't wait to see what all the hubbub is about. One thing I want to pass on to you. The cast is a definitive list of indigenous Polish names. From Alina to Zdzislaw. If you need a real Polish name, check the cast list for *The Saragossa Manuscript*. You will find it.

**THE C SECTION** of THE NEW YORK TIMES for Saturday, April 25, 2009, featured a story about Thomas Sadoski. He is currently starring in the Broadway production of *reasons to be pretty* and in this piece he is compared to film and stage notables such as Jane Fonda, James Gandolfini, and Jeremy Irons, also performing currently on the Great White Way. According to Patrick Healy, "Mr. Sadoski (sah-DAH-ski) has emerged as a classic New York theater success story: after years of working Off Broadway, he is drawing praise not only for *reasons to be pretty* but also for his role this winter in the Second Stage Theater production of *Becky Shaw*, for which he has been nominated for a Lucille Lortel Award for featured actor."

Next month there will be a quiz on Polish-American slang such as What is an Uncle Stan? What is the P-word? What is a jab or drive-by?

**QUESTIONS FOR JUNE:** Got any stories? Got any stories about drive-bys? Have you seen *The Saragossa Manuscript* and how many stars do you give it? Have you seen the production of *reasons to be pretty* and what is your opinion of Thomas Sadoski? Is Thomas a polski?

Dziękuję bardzo to Mirek Denisiewicz and Jack Jackowski on the information about Thomas Sadoski and *The Saragossa Manuscript*.

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

If you e-Mail me, put a reference in the subject line about the Polish American Journal or the Pondering Pole. I cannot open an e-Mail if I do not recognize the subject or the sender.

Polish Falcons Aid Society  
Wins "Club of the Year" Honor

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — The Polish Falcons Aid Society will be awarded Club of the Year honors during this year's Pulaski Days celebration, to be held Oct. 1-4.

The group will be recognized for its achievement during the event, which is held annually during the first full weekend of October to honor General Casimir Pulaski, a Polish immigrant who gave his life for liberty during the American Revolution. This year's Pulaski Days will be the festival's 37th year.

In considering the Falcons for the award, the Festival committee recognized the hall's solid support of Pulaski Days with their participation in the event each year, their emphasis on maintaining the availability of quality ethnic Polish music and food throughout all four days of the event, and the recently completed remodeling of the group's facility.

In addition to their support of the festival, the Falcons also give scholarships each year to two children from Sacred Heart of Jesus School.

Three Generations of Family  
and Orchestra United in Music

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif. — When the Orange County Mormon Choral Organization needed a great soloist on viola for its 2007 Christmas concert at the Orange County Performing Arts Center, concertmaster Barbara Bell approached one of her San Clemente neighbors. Weneta Kosmala's father, Jerzy Kosmala, is one of the world's top violists, a teaching professional who travels the globe, performing and instructing. Would he agree to sit in with a 70-piece volunteer orchestra, backing a choir of more than 300 adult and child volunteers? The answer was "Absolutely." This was a chance for him to perform alongside his daughter Weneta and his granddaughter Kasia before an audience of 2,000 in one of America's finest concert halls.

The three generations of Kosmalas — Polish-born Jerzy and Weneta and California-born Kasia, 10 — played in the Mormon Choral Organization's Easter concert, "The Lord is My Shepherd," before a full house at the Performing Arts Center.

One day, Kasia's brother Stefan, 7, may join in. He already plays violin at family gatherings.

BRUSH UP / Prepared and distributed by the Polonia Media Network

Weather, Part II

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

klimat	(KLEE-maht) m	burza	(BUUH-zhah) f
climate		storm	
chmura	(hhmuuh-rah) f	blyskawica	(bwihs-kah-VEE-tshah) f
cloud		lightning	
mgla	(mgwah) f	grzmot	(gzhmocht) m
fog		thunder	
mróz	(mruus) m	wiatr	(vyahtr) m
frost		wind	
grad	(grat) m	słońce	(SWOYN-tseh) n
hail		sun	
upal	(UUH-pahw) m	wschód słońca	(FS-huut SWOYN-tshah) m
heat		sunrise	
lód	(luht) m	zachód słońca	ZAH-huut SWOYN-tshah) m
ice		sunset	

