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

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NEWSMARK

Poland Loosens Coronavirus Lockdown

(Radio Poland) Poland began to ease its coronavirus lockdown for the first time, though COVID-19 cases were on the rise. Under new rules that came into force on April 20, more customers are allowed into shops, while parks and forests have reopened to the public.

In another change, children above 13 can move around in public without being in the company by an adult. Previously, young people under 18 were allowed outdoors only when accompanied.

Poles still have to wear face masks or scarves in public and keep their distance from others.

Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said the restrictions imposed to curb the epidemic would be relaxed in four stages, but the timing would depend on the progress of the disease.

Now, shops of up to 100 square metres (a little more than 1000 sq. feet) can serve four customers per till at any one time, while larger stores are allowed to have one customer per 15 square metres. The latter rule also applies to people in churches.

As of April 23, health officials in Poland reported 10,346 COVID-19 cases, including 435 fatalities.

Doctors on Medical Mission to Chicago

(PAP) Poland is sending doctors and supplies to Chicago to help the American city fight the COVID-19 epidemic and to acquire knowledge necessary to deal with the pandemic in their country.

"This expertise is desperately needed in Poland," Defense Minister Mariusz Błaszczak told Polish Radio. "This expert knowledge is extremely important to us."

Sending Polish medics on the mission to the United States was one of the topics of April 18 talks between Polish and U.S. presidents Andrzej Duda and Donald Trump.

Earlier, Duda's aide Krzysztof Szczerski said that the medics are to support the local health service and also assist in the treatment of virus-infected patients.

Samaritan Spirit Grows Amid Pandemic

Some 100,000 volunteers across Poland have joined parish pandemic relief efforts providing assistance to the needy in all of Poland's 44 Roman Catholic dioceses. According to Episcopate spokesman Father Paweł Rytel-Andrianik, that includes food supplies, warm meals for senior citizens and people under quarantine, as well as the collection of hospital equipment. Spiritual and psychological assistance is also provided.

Members of the Scouting movement, schoolchildren, sports clubs, and various organizations are all helping out. Radio and TV stations, as well as newspapers, have launched fund-raising drives to provide hospitals with much-needed medical supplies. Restaurants are donating meals for overworked healthcare workers, and many people are shopping for home-bound elderly neighbors.

Parliament OKs More Support

Poland's parliament has approved a plan to offer more support to the economy amid the coronavirus epidemic.

Last month, the Polish government unveiled a new package of measures, worth over PLN 11 billion (USD 2.64 bn), to help the economy weather the virus crisis.

Polish MPs night voted to back the planned new measures, overriding 50 of 95 modifications introduced earlier by the upper house of parliament, the Senate, public broadcaster Polish Radio's IAR news agency reported. The legislation, which the government says aims to extend further relief to employees and businesses hit by the coronavirus, went to President Andrzej Duda for signing into law.

Development Minister Jadwiga Emilewicz said companies employing 10 to 49 staff would be allowed to pay 50 percent less in social security contributions under the new measures.

COVID-19 and the Polish Spirit

by Staś Kmieć

It is our hope that when readers receive this month's issue of *The Polish American Journal*, the world is well on its way to recovery from the effects of the insidious Coronavirus (COVID-19). At press time, the global majority was in a standstill state – limiting any movement beyond the confines of their private residence and avoiding physical interaction. The situation is complex and evolving rapidly. This provided a unique challenge, but also a time of diversion from daily responsibilities and a state of reflection and resilience.

The Polish people, our ancestors, and particularly Polish Americans who have paid attention to their heritage, will overcome this. We were raised by parents and grandparents who taught us to be frugal and resourceful. They could make a week's worth of soup out of chicken bones and an onion and knew how to stretch a pound of flour and a limited supply of milk and eggs into five meals.

We are reminded by their voices telling us to be patient and not panic, as we are experiencing the biggest threat in decades, and this country is not alone. All over the world we are seeing the devastating



PHOTO: DIOCESE OF ŁÓDŹ

One of the most endearing images of the Polish spirit in action is demonstrated by nuns, who have turned convent sewing rooms into tailor's workshops. Above, the congregation of the Carmelite Sisters of the Infant Jesus in Łódź assemble protective masks for doctors, nurses, and staff at the nearby Zgierz hospital.

impact of this invisible killer.

A History of Polish Quarantine

Since the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in China, people have been making obvious parallels with other major pandemics in history, most notably the Bubonic Plague, or "Black Death." Before the first confirmed case of Coronavirus in Poland, authorities were not doing much

aside from propagating the optimistic claim that Poland would not be as affected by the virus as other countries – as if Poles may have some form of genetic immunity to pandemic diseases. They pointed to the history that, in the 14th century, Poland remained free of the deadliest plague to ever strike the continent – the staggering devastation of the Black Death, which killed 80% of the population in almost all of Eu-

rope. The epidemic was probably the most widespread and lethal to have struck Europe over the centuries. Though the plague largely spared some parts of medieval Europe, including the Kingdom of Poland, in coastal areas of the Low Countries (now The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg), the Italian city-state of Milan, and the

See "Polish Spirit," page 3

World-class Composer Penderecki Dies at 86

KRAKOW — Polish and world culture sustained an irreparable loss recently with the death of music giant Krzysztof Penderecki.

A prolific composer, dynamic conductor and charismatic professor, who had educated several generations of music students, he died in his adopted hometown of Kraków at the age of 86. Up until his death, Penderecki was widely regarded as one of the world's greatest living composers. A master of large, often monumental musical forms, his specialty were oratorios, symphonies, and operas. The oratorio "Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to St. Luke" (1966), his greatest religious-themed work, was followed by compositions honoring the victims of Hiroshima, Auschwitz, and Katyń.

Penderecki also produced numerous smaller sacred



Among Penderecki's best known works are "Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima," "Symphony No. 3," his "St. Luke Passion," "Polish Requiem," "Anaklasis," and "Utrenja."

and secular works including choral pieces, concertos, and chamber music. His music was also featured in such Hollywood movies as *The Exorcist*, *Twister*, *Wild at Heart* and *Shining*. Penderecki, whose creativity de-

defined the Polish music scene of the latter half of the 20th century and into the 21st, ranks among such Polish musical greats as Chopin, Moniuszko, Paderewski, Szymanowski, Lutosławski, Górecki, and Kilar.

John Krasinski Brings Some Good News to YouTube

(NPR) In this era of social distancing, few celebrities have carved out a social media presence as appealing as those of Emily Blunt and John Krasinski. They're married, so they get to share their isolation — and they've been filling the time with a kindhearted weekly YouTube show they call *Some Good News*.

As the title suggests, it's a roundup — anchored by Krasinski, with input from special guests — of day-brightening stories about people doing good in the world. The show's second episode rolls along amiably enough until about midway through, when Krasinski welcomes a 9-year-old named Aubrey.

Inspired by a tweet ex-

See "Some Good News" page 4

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A Greater Sense of Humanity

by Mark Kohan

Hopefully you are faring well during the pandemic. To those who have lost family members and friends, our deepest sympathy.

It is easy to mislay hope with daily newscasts and briefings reminding us of the staggering number of lives lost or forever changed because of the Coronavirus.

This event has tested our nation's mettle. We have learned much, including the need for better preparation for another such invasion. This includes improved testing, increased reserves of medical space and equipment, and greater cooperation between federal, state, and local leaders. Sadly, it took a virus from China to help America separate the wheat from the chaff, and time will tell who gave us the truth.

Hopefully, we have learned we must not place the bulk of our pharmaceutical and medical equipment manufacturing outside this country. Some claim this will raise costs exponentially. The price of medical care has been an election topic for decades, yet folks still struggle to pay for prescriptions and premiums for basic protection. I cannot imagine the costs associated with the pandemic. I am not an economist, nor do I believe in government control of private industry, but new standards have to be set if we wish to avoid what are going through today.

There are silver linings. Many I have heard from subscribers and customers who have been in contact with me the past several weeks. Here are some highlights:

There will be a greater sense of humanity, as many of us are seeing now. Because we have been forced to slow down and think of others, we now know how valuable just a simple "hello" or two-minute conversation can be. "People are kinder to one another," noted one caller.

"Easter seemed empty without family at our table, which made us appreciate them even more.

I cannot wait to hug my granddaughter again."

There will be a greater influence placed on the Arts. Many have said they have turned to music, watching plays and musicals on TV and the computer to pass the days. "I've seen 'West Side Story' at least a dozen times," one lady told me. "But watching it again under these circumstances — for some reason — made me understand the genius behind it."

Another person told me "the internet polka radio shows are now my constant companion." He said he forgot "how good a lot of these songs are."

Many have found time to fit the Bible and televised daily Masses into their lives. We have time now to stop and admire the simplest of things "and find God's goodness in my emerging lilies," said another.

One of my favorites is from a lady from Maryland, who told me "thank God I was raised Polish. I could stretch a chicken, some flour, and a few eggs a couple of weeks. My Depression-era immigrant parents taught me well."

May-June and August-September Editions Combined

The May and June editions of the *Polish American Journal* are combined into one edition. There will be no June edition. Likewise, the August and September editions will be combined. This decision was made and announced last year in order for the newspaper to ensure financial stability.

We had planned to make the combined editions larger (i.e., an additional four to eight additional pages than the standard 20-page paper), but the cancellation of events has left advertising revenue at a stand-still. We are deeply indebted to those advertisers who provide products and services still available during the pandemic. Please show them your support.

ALMANAC

May ☀️ Maj

"Everything must go its own way. One has to plow in order to sow, one has to sow in order to harvest, and what is disturbing has to be weeded out, like a bad weed."

— **Władysław Reymont** (b. May 7, 1867), Polish novelist and the 1924 laureate of the Nobel Prize in Literature.

- ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER. 2004.** Accession of **Poland** to the **European Union**.
- 1978.** Polish mountain climbers reach the South Kanchen peak in the Himalayas.
- FEAST OF MARY, QUEEN OF POLAND ŚWIĘTO TRZECIEGO MAJA** Polish Constitution Day.
- 1870.** Birth of **Zygmunt Stojowski**, concert pianist, and champion of the independent Polish nation in 1918.
- 1819.** Birth of composer **Stanisław Moniuszko**. (d. 1872)
- 1846.** Birth of novelist **Henryk Sienkiewicz** (d. 1916), who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1905.
- 1982.** Birth in Warsaw of dancer **Edyta Sliwinska**.
- 1794.** Issuance of **Proclamation of Połaniec** by Tadeusz Kościuszko. It partially abolished serfdom in Poland, granting civil liberties to all the peasants.
- 1867.** Birth of writer and Nobel laureate **Władysław Reymont** (d. December 5, 1925).
- VE DAY (U.S.) ST. STANISLAUS**
- 1667.** Death of **Marie Louise de Gonzague-Nevers**, French Queen of Poland (1645-48).
- MOTHER'S DAY (U.S.)**
- 1364.** Founding of **Jagiellonian University**
- 1889.** Founding of the **Polish Singers Alliance of America**.
- 1792.** Signing of **Targowica Confederation**, a union of Polish and Lithuanian magnates who

opposed the Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791, and resulted in two Russian armies invading the Commonwealth without a formal declaration of war.

- 1942.** Founding of the **Polish Institute of Sciences in America**, in New York.
- ARMED FORCES DAY (U.S.)**
- 1025.** Death of **King Boleslaw Chrobry** (Boleslaus the Brave).
- 1920.** Birth of **Karol Wojtyła** in Wadowice, Poland, named Pope John Paul II, October 16, 1978.
- 1881.** Birth of Polish **General Władysław Sikorski**. (d. 1943) He lead the Polish government-in-exile during World War II.
- 1674.** Coronation of **Jan Sobieski**.
- 2010.** **Mikołaj Kopernik** (1473-1543) reburied by Polish priests as a hero, nearly 500 years after he was laid to rest in an unmarked grave.
- 1939.** Hitler proclaims he wants to move into Poland.
- MEMORIAL DAY (U.S.)**
- 1861.** Death of **Capt. Constantine Blandowski**, first foreign-born officer to die in the Civil War.
- 1903.** Birth of **Al (Szymanowski) Simmons**, Hall of Fame baseball player for the Philadelphia Athletics.
- 1953.** Defection to the West of Polish pilot **Lt. Francis Jarecki**, thus allowing the first close look at the new Russian MiG fighter.
- 1993.** Death of **Andrzej Wasowski**, 69, pianist, in Washington, D.C.
- 1944.** **Polish American Congress** founded in Buffalo, New York.
- 1981.** Death of Polish Primate and staunch anti-communist **Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński**.
- 1792.** Great Sejm, which ratified Poland's Constitution of May 3, 1791 ends.
- 1913.** Birth of **Tony Zale** (Zaleski), middleweight champion from 1940-48.

"The Pole listening to Chopin listens to the voice of his whole race."
— Ignacy Jan Paderewski

- 1913.** Birth of **Jerzy Pniewski**, physicist. In 1952, he helped discover the elementary particle known as hypernuclear material.
- 1343.** Signing of the **Treaty of Kalisz**, a peace treaty signed by King Casimir III the Great of Poland and the Teutonic Knights.
- 1890.** Death of **Oskar Kolberg** (b. 1814), ethnographer who specialized in Polish folklore.
- 1960.** Death of **General Józef Haller**, commander of Polish units under French Command in 1916 during World War I.
- 1944.** Death of **Józef Beck**, Polish statesman, diplomat, military officer.
- 1929.** Birth of **Boguslaw Schaeffer**, Polish composer, musicologist, and graphic artist.
- 1982.** President **Ronald Reagan** and **Pope John Paul II** meet in the Vatican.
- 1949.** **Emanuel Ax**, pianist (Artur Rubinstein Competition winner, 1974), born in Lvov, Poland.
- 1922.** **Joseph (Tykocinski) Tykociner** publicly demonstrates for the first time that sound movies are possible.
- ST. MARGARET**
Ze świętą Małgorzatą zaczyna się lato.
Summer begins on St. Margaret.
- CORPUS CHRISTI**
Boże Ciało, a religious feast day marked by Eucharistic processions down city streets and country lanes.
- 1857.** Birth of **Antoni Grabowski**, Polish chemical engineer known for compiling the first chemistry dictionary in the Polish language.
- 1907.** **Stanley (Kiecal) Ketchel** wins the middleweight boxing crown.

Late Papers

While it was beyond our control, we received many calls about late delivery of the April 2020 edition. This was due to the stress the United States Postal Service faced (and continues to face) because of the pandemic.

We appreciate your patience during this time.

Remember Our Veterans

Depending on your location, you may or may not be able to visit cemeteries or attend functions honoring the brave men and women who defended our freedom when our country called in its time of need. Memorial Day is the time to honor the price these courageous veterans paid on our behalf.

We should match the commitment of these men and women with the assurance that veterans and their families are not homeless, hungry, unemployed, or unable to receive medical treatment. We must continue to care for those who sacrificed their lives to preserve our country and our freedoms.

It's so easy to forget the blessings of liberty we take for granted. Even in these challenging times — with the threat of coronavirus around every corner — liberty is still second nature to us, and for this reason, we should never fail to appreciate its potency.

Our New Heroes

From paramedics and grocery store clerks, to respiratory specialists and cleaning staff, America is blessed with a new set of heroes. These are the people who continually risk their lives to care for the sick, elderly, and infected during one of the most difficult times in our nation's history. Please remember to thank them, and to keep them in your prayers.

June ☀️ Czerwiec

- FLAG DAY (U.S.)**
- 1298.** Death of **Blessed Jolanta**.
- 1983.** (June 16-23) Second pilgrimage of **John Paul II** to Poland.
- 1861.** The first telegraph message is sent from an airborne balloon by **Thaddeus Sobieski-Lowe**.
- 1949.** Birth of **Lech Kaczynski**, former president of Poland from 2002 to 2010.
- 1793.** Birth of **Aleksander Fredro** (d. 1876), Polish dramatist noted for his comedies.
- FATHER'S DAY (U.S.)**
- 1866.** Birth of **Kazimierz Zorawski**, renowned mathematician.
- ST. JOHN'S EVE**
This Polish midsummer festival of pagan origin is celebrated with bonfires and with candlelit wreaths set afloat on rivers. It is believed that the forest comes to life this night.
- 1914.** Birth of **Jan Karski**, Polish World War II resistance fighter and scholar.
- 1447.** Coronation of **Kazimierz IV Jagiello**.
- 1295.** **White Eagle** made symbol of Poland.
- 1697.** Election of **August II the Strong**.
- 1919.** **Treaty of Versailles**, making Poland a free nation, signed by I.J. Paderewski today.
- 1964.** **Most Rev. Stanislaus Brzana** became bishop of Diocese of Buffalo. First Polish American to do so.
- 1989.** **Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski** announced he would not run for Poland's new presidency, saying the people viewed him as the man who imposed martial law.

This paper mailed on or before **April 28, 2020**. The July 2020 edition will be mailed on or before **June 30, 2020**.

COVID-19 and the Polish Spirit

continued from cover

Kingdom of Navarre (now Basque Country in Spain), deaths did occur, but on a much smaller scale.

One key reason attributed to the low rates of contagion was the decision by King Kazimierz Wielki (Casimir the Great) to close the country's "borders" shortly after the initial reports from the west and establish internal quarantines. It related to medieval walled-cities and refusing entry to obviously infected individuals. This increased Poland's natural isolation, both from the outside world and between the settlements within the country – generally smaller and less connected than elsewhere in Europe.

Travel time also played an important factor. With the amount of time it would take for the plague to kick-in — between 24 to 72 hours to get sick compared the time to reach Poland by horseback or on foot — anyone that was sick would clearly not be let into the city walls.

Lower death-rates of Jews during the plague can be attributed to the adherence of sanitary practices in Jewish law. Simple but regular actions, like washing hands many times throughout the day or that one must not eat food without washing one's hands, leaving the bathroom and after any sort of intimate human contact may be considered basic hygiene in the 21st century, but it was not in the 14th century.

As the historic scapegoats of Europe, the minority Jewish population of Europe had been blamed for the spread of the disease elsewhere – because their higher standards of cleanliness took them a further distance out of towns to find washing wells and as a result, they came into contact with more people. After the disease they were persecuted for this false accusation and migrated to the one area of Europe that had not had the disease – Poland, where they would not be blamed for it. King Kazimierz Wielki offered a safe haven in *Paradisus Iudaorum* (Paradise of the Jews), as Poland became known. This population would thrive for centuries until the atrocities committed in World War II.

As some parts of Europe were spared of the Black Death, can this tell us something about where the coronavirus will or won't spread? On a virologic level, it's impossible to compare the two; however, there are parallels. The Black Death plague is a flea-borne bacterial disease, carried by rodents that jumped to humans. Coronavirus is a strain of severe acute respiratory syndrome transmitted primarily via respiratory droplets.

The Plague was brought from China to Europe in the 1330s by rodents hitching rides with traders. The infection was typically transmitted to humans by fleabites. Italy was hit hard by the epidemic. Cities like Venice and Pisa lost three-quarters of their population. The



Social media was abuzz with photos of selfless people helping out with the shortage of protective face masks by sewing the much-needed supplies on their own. Among them, posts showed 96-year old Polish lady, Pani Janina spending her days sewing masks for medical personnel. "In a world full of Kardashians, be a Pani Janina."

disease followed the traditional trading routes north, racing forward each spring as a new generation of fleas was ready to spread the infection.

The Plague's three manifestations were bubonic (causing painful swellings), septicemic (infecting the bloodstream) and pneumonic (choking off breathing, and transmittable via coughing). Left untreated – as was inevitably the case in the Middle Ages – bubonic plague had a mortality rate of about 50%; the other two, virtually 100%. In a relatively brief period — five short years — it is estimated that it killed as many as 25 million – a third of Europe's population at the time.

Another asset to slowing the spread of disease was Poland's climatic position in Europe. Fleas are active in summer temperatures. Poland's temperate seasonal climate may have mitigated the spread of the plague, as it was colder than Southern and Western Europe.

The absence of plague in Bohemia and Poland could also center on cats. Western Europe was undergoing the mass persecutions of the Inquisition, during which the eye of suspicion fell not just on heretics, but also cats, which were exterminated and massacred as the incarnation of the devil. All of this bypassed Poland, which meant that cats at that time lived peacefully. Killing a cat was a shameful act. Cats killed rats, the fleas on which transferred plague germs. No rats meant that the plague could not spread.

Globally, Smallpox was responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths each year – peaking in the 18th century. It remains the only infectious disease to be completely eradicated. Cholera became widespread in the 19th century and remains a major problem in areas without a clean water supply. The worst pandemic of the 20th century was the Spanish flu. It killed up to 100 million. One-quarter of the world's population has been infected with tuberculosis. Malaria is always a threat in tropical regions. Neither currently are considered pandemics. The only other disease classified as such today is HIV/

AIDS – first identified in 1981.

Cases in Poland

Would history repeat itself 700 years later? Apparently not. The first confirmed case of coronavirus in Poland was officially announced on March 4. It was diagnosed in the city of Zielona Góra in the western province of Lubuskie. The infected individual traveled back from Germany by bus.

The virus spread rapidly, but authorities acted quickly to counteract it, taking what seemed like extreme measures. Poland was placed in an official "State of Epidemic" – a pandemic lockdown, the #zostajędomu action (#stayhome). Citizens were instructed to stay at home and risk large fines for ignoring restrictions on movement and gathering. Events were cancelled or moved online; cultural institutions, museums, hotels and many non-essential shops were closed. Restaurants are permitted to do takeaway and delivery only. Foreign entry into Poland was prohibited; international air and rail links suspended.

As of April 23, health officials in Poland reported 10,346 COVID-19 cases, including 435 fatalities.

The Polish government announced that PLN 200 million (Polish zloty) will go to Polish entrepreneurs and scientists who work on diagnostics, treatment and prevention of viral diseases. European funds under the Fast Path "Coronavirus" competition will help counter the spread of coronavirus pandemics, including SARS-CoV-2.

Poland released an app which requires people in quarantine for COVID-19 to periodically send selfies of themselves on request to prove they're sticking to their quarantine. If users don't respond to a request for a selfie within 20 minutes the police will be alerted. It is intended for people quarantining for 14 days after returning from abroad. The Polish government is reportedly automatically making accounts for suspected quarantine patients. The purpose of the app isn't solely to punish people breaking quarantine, it also helps to connect with the social services or request help with urgent supplies.

Although demanding selfies is unique, Poland is not the only country to introduce unusual and invasive measures using people's phones to contain and control the spread of the coronavirus. Singapore has asked citizens to download an app which uses Bluetooth to track whether they've been near anyone diagnosed with the virus, and

Taiwan has introduced "electronic fences" which alert police if suspected patients leave their homes.

Making Masks

Social media was abuzz with photos of selfless people helping out with the shortage of protective face masks by sewing the much-needed supplies on their own. Among them, posts showed "96-year old Polish lady, Pani Janina spending her days sewing masks for medical personnel. In a world full of Kardashians, be a Pani Janina" and "Babcia Michalinka również jedzie z tematem" (Grandmother Michalinka is also going with the flow).

One of the most endearing images is the frontline strength of the The Congregation of the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Conception (*Zgromadzenie Sióstr Służebniczek Niepokalanie Poczętej*) – a Catholic congregation founded in 1850. The apostolic and charitable community serves others by helping the poor and the sick. An organized army, they are active on the battlefield fighting against coronavirus. In various countries where the pandemic has spread, the nuns mainly serve as nurses in hospitals, but also open their monasteries to help the poorest and families affected by coronavirus infection. The *Służebniczki Dębickie* sisters joined in the campaign of sewing protective masks.

Taiwan sent half a million protective masks to Poland as part of a larger aid initiative to help fight the spread of coronavirus – sending a total of 10 million to those countries severely affected by the pandemic. Two million will be sent to the U.S., one million to 15 diplomatic allies and the remaining seven million to Italy, Spain, Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, the Czech Republic, Great Britain and Switzerland.

A stylish Polish alternative has shown up on Amazon.com and other internet sites – it is the *wycinanki*-themed folk-art mask. Instructions on how to make a simple mask from a bandana, handkerchief or Polish kerchief can be found on YouTube – <https://youtu.be/aicdy-HIoCoQ>

Move over Lysol and Clorox

From CNN sites to Facebook, the word was out – *Spirytus* kills the coronavirus. In Japan, fear of an epidemic took its toll on supplies. When disinfection became an obligation, even in the country of Cherry Blossoms, people remembered about Polish spirits. It became such a commodity that it was bought out of most Japanese stores in days.

Spirytus, a rectified spirit from Poland bottled at the extreme ABV of 95%, is often used as a base f o r

homemade liqueurs and other infusions and is strongly advised not to be consumed straight up. As the urgent need for medicines, disinfectants and hygiene resulted in shortcomings at the stores, many Poles rushed to buy the potent alcohol.

Before my exodus on March 12 from Manhattan to my house in upstate New York for lockdown, I made a trip to Greenpoint, Brooklyn to *Polemost Liquors* on Manhattan Ave. While purchasing a few bottles, one of the owners spoke with an older patron, who was overjoyed to find a bottle. She showed how she made hand sanitizer by mixing aloe and the alcohol in a large pickle jar, she also mentioned how a medicinal drink to warm the throat and soul could be made with a mix of lemon juice, honey, ginger, *spirytus* and boiling water. Not to waste the Polish product, my plan was to make a nice medicinal *krupnik*, as I could get *Everclear* grain alcohol for disinfectant. The patron planned to put hers in proportion with water into a small spray bottle and keep it in her purse to constantly clean her hands.

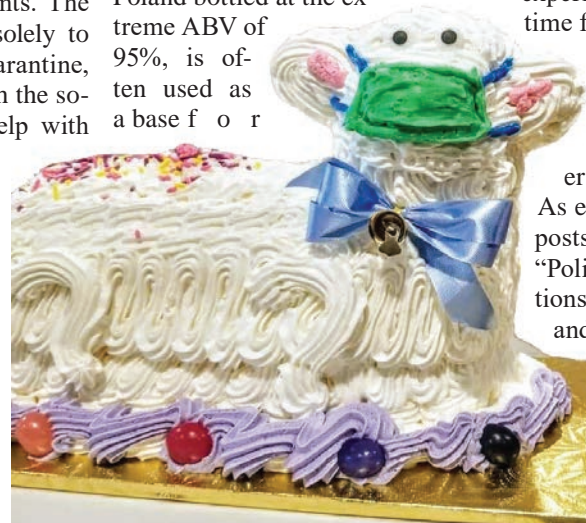


Setting aside the *spirytus* to make medicinal *krupnik*, the author decided to use *Everclear* grain alcohol for disinfectant.

Comfort Food and Easter

Being confined primarily to a stocked house, but with varying amounts of specific supplies, I had to be inventive and resourceful. Like most, I grew up in a Polish household and was subliminally taught extremely well by my mother. As bread supplies were limited, I chose to bake a fresh loaf every two to three days. Yeast became a factor, even resorting to old packets in the freezer from 2018 and 2010. Eventually a stash was found for Staś from a private supplier on eBay. I have since passed this information on to other Polish friends in need. Cakes, stews and other Polish experiments that I never had the time for were finally explored.

With a "normal" supply of my mother's and aunt's *pierogi* already in the freezer, I was set to go, but others had to fend for themselves. As evidenced from all the *pierogi* posts on Facebook sites such as "Polish Culture, Food and Traditions," "Polish Food, Traditions and Fun," "Polish/American" and "Polish Culture and Traditions," many made their own. I got some great homemade farmer's cheese recipes made from buttermilk, milk and vinegar, or



Mouth and nose coverings have become part of our daily lives, evidenced by this masked *baranek* cake.

continued on next page

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Covid-19: There is always a spiritual purpose behind everything that's happening

continued from page 3

milk and sour cream.

The cleverest marketing email strategy came from *Mamuška Polish Kitchen and Bar* in London – “We know you’ve got all that toilet paper stocked up already, but did you think about getting a proper pile of white, soft, delicious... PIEROGI? Now’s your once-in-a-lifetime chance to STOCKPILE those frozen pierogi!”

To promote their extensive reserve of Polish liquors they issued – “Go outside... or bring that grass in! If you haven’t tried the *Żubrówka* Bison Grass yet — let us tell you — it has a real a blade of grass inside!”

If you order via their own delivery system - they deliver beers, wines, and vodka too. If you live just outside the delivery zone, you can call them and the team on site will let you know if they can take your order and deliver – what Polish hospitality! Their motto – “Stay home, let us do the work! Don’t cook by yourself, leave it to Mama!”

Now more than ever, the traditional food of the holidays connects us. Easter was approaching and though I was prepared to have it in private confines, I did not have all the ingredients, nor was I preparing for a family of guests. My email box was filled with fundraising pleas, event cancellations and general coronavirus notifications. There were also delivery promotions from Polish food companies. I clicked onto Greenpoint’s *Sweet-Poland.com* for an assortment of *kielbasy*, *babka*, breads, *borownik* mushrooms, horseradish *chrzan*, and a *zurek* - white *barszcz* base. Then there were handmade poppy-seed-raisin *makowiec* and walnut *rogaliki* from *Butter Maid Bakery*



Masks of every possible style can be found on the internet, including these wycinanki-themed ones.



Mollie B and Ted Lange hosted a Drive-thru Polka Party in a church parking lot in Ridgeville, Ohio.

in Boardman, Ohio. An order for my parents in Mass., for my aunt in N.J. and one for me.

I dyed some eggs a pale blue with frozen blueberries and vinegar. To make *zakwas* for the *biały barszcz*, I used the last 1/4 cup of rye flour, two slices of rye bread, minced garlic and warm water. As a science experiment, it sat by the heater for four days to ferment. Along with the soaked mushrooms, this brought the quality of my Easter soup up a notch. I found a special Easter basket blessing by our Pope John Paul II online, and I was set to go!

Religion and Worship

In times of war, famine and times like now, those who are religious will turn to their faith and for those whose faith has been dormant, it is a time to rediscover it. As Christians began Holy Week leading up to Easter Sunday, many churchgoers attended church services virtually – not in person.

Self-quarantined in our homes to avoid doing harm to ourselves, our loved ones, and society – family gatherings such as the Easter *Święconka* and the Passover Seder have taken on new meaning, as many ventured into having a virtual connection through the internet. Our celebrations were smaller, yet perhaps more meaningful. We are, after all, living through a plague of our own, one deserving of inclusion in the list of the Ten Plagues that God meted out against the Egyptians.

Whether in terms of health or finances, the plague of the coronavirus will leave no community untouched, no family unscathed.

Diversion Entertainment

There have been lots of entertaining posts from Broadway casts, whose performances were shut down and livestream recording of theater, dance, concerts, and opera. I have posted quite a few myself.

On the Polish side there was a *Drive-thru Polka Party* held in Ridgeville Corners with Mollie B and Ted Lange. Music lovers in northwest Ohio were treated to a free polka drive-thru in the parking lot of St. Peter’s Church, giving them the chance to forget about the coronavirus pandemic for a half hour. “Drive Thru Polka with Mollie B and Ted Lange in Ridgeville Corners, Ohio” can be seen on YouTube. *Virtual Mollie B Polka Party - Out The Window Polka* reached out to polka dancers across the states for an interactive online experience

Mollie B is the host of the “Polka Party” radio show on Rural Radio, Channel 147, and *kneiradio.com* and the “Polka Party” on RFD-TV

If you’re looking for something different to watch on TV, a new season of the hit series *The Good Fight* is streaming on CBS All Access. Christine Baranski plays Chicago lawyer Diane Lockhart. “Everybody is sitting at home and looking for good content. This is the only show that really plays its characters in the world we live in. It’s a very relevant show,” said Baranski. “Obviously it doesn’t address this current health crisis yet, we got shut down like the rest of the shows by mid-March. I sure will address this in the future. I don’t know where we’re headed, none of us know where this is going, we’re just all going there together.”

Cancelled or Postponed

As our lives have been put on hold, so have many Polish cultural events have been rescheduled or in limbo. The Kosciuszko Foundation decided to cancel the 85th Annual

Fundraising Dinner & Ball that was scheduled for April 25th. The event may be postponed until later in 2020 or ultimately canceled.

While we are dealing with uncertain times, the potential cancellation of Polish festivals and events means a loss of advertising for *The Polish American Journal*. In addition to subscriptions, this is much needed revenue to keep us in print. Please renew your subscriptions and pass on the word to your friends and family, who now more than ever are seeking to be connected to their heritage and rediscover the joy of reading and learning during this enforced break. Subscriptions are available on digital form or print.

Hopefully, COVID-19 will see a lesser existence than outbreaks of the past and be relegated to the dustbin of history – sooner rather than later.

These moments will unite us. Despite the inflicting chaos, there is always a spiritual purpose behind everything that’s happening which prompts us to probe for what is the essence of our lives as Poles. We must do what is important for us and our families and continue to help others, as we were taught. We’re all together in this world that’s being kept apart. Like the countless years of oppression, World Wars and struggles, this too shall pass.

Some Good News

continued from cover

pressing sadness that Aubrey would have to miss her much-anticipated trip to see *Hamilton* on Broadway, Krasinski and Blunt inform a star-struck Aubrey that they’ll be flying her to see the show once Broadway reopens. But then, given that Blunt starred in *Mary Poppins Returns* with one Lin-Manuel Miranda, they decide to top themselves: the



Blunt and Krasinski. Husband and wife filling their time with a kindhearted weekly YouTube show they call *Some Good News*.

entire (socially distanced) original cast of *Hamilton* performed for Aubrey on Krasinski’s show.



Ortiz

professionals from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

Krasinski, who rose to fame on “The Office,” told the nurses and respiratory therapists that he heard they were big Red Sox fans.

“I know we’re all missing baseball season, but that doesn’t mean I can’t bring baseball to you,” Krasinski said before bringing on

Ortiz, who hailed the medical professionals.

“I gotta tell you guys from the very bottom of my heart how much I love and respect you for what you guys are doing,” Ortiz told the group.

“Big Papi,” as Ortiz is known, then informed them that the Red Sox organization was gifting the hospital staff four tickets to their games for life.

Krasinski had the group head outside to “the most sanitized duck boat in America,” which took them to Fenway Park where the jumbotron featured videos of the mayor of Boston, the governor of Massachusetts and the entire Red Sox team applauding for the health professionals.

The group then threw out the first ceremonial pitch of the season.

CANCELLATIONS

Pierogi Fest Among Called-Off Events

CHICAGO (CBS) — Pierogi Fest in Whiting, Indiana, one of the wackiest summer festivals in the nation, has been postponed for a year, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

“With all of the concerns about social interaction, we feel it is best to cancel this year’s event and focus on 2021 when we can once again provide the quality and fun event that everyone expects,” Pierogi Fest chairman and co-founder Tom Dabertin said in a statement.

The annual summer festival, which celebrates all things Eastern European, and draws more than 300,000 people, had been scheduled for July 24-26 in downtown Whiting. Instead, it won’t return until July 23-25, 2021.

Pierogi Fest is run almost entirely by a group of nearly 600 volunteers. The festival features tons of food, including pierogi (of course), and other Polish treats, hot dogs, ice cream, Mexican food, and more. There’s also plenty of beers and wines, and music all day long. Last year’s festival included more than 90 food booths and five stages of entertainment.

TripAdvisor has named Pierogi Fest one of the wackiest festivals on the planet, and Oprah Winfrey named it one of

her favorite things to do for five years straight. It’s also been named *The Times* of Northwest Indiana’s Best Festival for 15 years.

Pilgrimage to Niagara-on-the-Lake

The annual Pilgrimage to Niagara-on-the-Lake, which pays tribute to the recruits of Gen. Haller’s World War I army who lost their lives to the Spanish Flu, has been cancelled. The event was originally scheduled for June 14, 2020. After very careful consideration, the executive of the Canadian Polish Congress Niagara District, decided to cancel this year’s Pilgrimage, and announced the memorial has been rescheduled to June 13, 2021.

Polish and Polka Events

The Polka Jammer (www.polkajammernetwork.org) has been maintaining a list of cancelled Polish-American and polka events. At press time, these events are among those postponed:

- May 1-3. Wisconsin Dells Polka Fest & Expo
- May 3. Bayway, N.J. Polish Club Cinco de mayo Dance
- May 3. Polish Constitution/Cinco de mayo Dance, Chicago.
- May 3. Dance. PACC Ludlow, Mass.
- May 8. Dance, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. Parma, Ohio.
- May 17. Pierogi Fest. Pulaski Park, Three Rivers, Mass.
- June 7. Mohawks 21st Annual Polka Mania, Hammond, Ind.
- June 12-14. Milwaukee Polish Fest, Henry Maier Festival Park, Milwaukee, Wisc.
- June 18-20. Ocean Beach Polka Days, New London, Conn.

The following organizations have cancelled events until further notice:

- Pulaski Club of Phoenix Arizona
- German American Society of Pinellas County Florida
- St. Petersburg Florida Polish American Society (PAS)
- Polish American Pulaski Association of Holiday, Florida

RELIGION

Ticketing Sidewalk Counselors and Prayer

by Benjamin Fiore, S.J.

An 86-year-old grandfather praying outside an abortion center was ticketed for violating San Francisco's Shelter-in-Place order to deal with the coronavirus epidemic. **Ronald Konopaski** was outside a Planned Parenthood facility and was ticketed because he was outside but not on an essential errand (grocery shopping or getting medicines). Konopaski argued that he was providing an essential service by offering women seeking abortion a choice to keep the baby and find help for other difficulties, which the abortion center denies to the patient. He also argued that his First Amendment right of free speech was being denied him. **Terrisa Bukovinac**, another pro-Life protester outside the clinic argued that the city halted all elective medical procedures. A letter from her attorney pointed out that abortion is elective "by definition" and is "the number one cause of death in America" today. Another aspect of the opposition to keeping abortion centers open during the corona virus crisis is the fact that while hospitals are short of protective equipment (masks, gloves, garments) these are being used in abortion centers for elective procedures that are not as life-threatening (except for the baby in the womb) as the corona virus.

Similarly, in Greensboro, North Carolina, Pastor **Keith Pavlansky** of Personhood North Carolina reported that members of his group, with face masks, hand sanitizers, and keeping social distance, were nonetheless ticketed for violating the city's stay-at-home order. They argue that they offer women a choice of ultrasounds, pregnancy care,

pre-abortion, and post-abortion counseling, all of which are considered essential services in North Carolina. Moreover, in the abortion centers, women are in enclosed areas with cramped spacing. In Buffalo, N.Y., prayer continues outside the most active abortion center in the area but to forestall arguments such as those in San Francisco and Greensboro, the pro-Lifers, **myself included**, will stay in their automobiles, post pro-Life signs, and pray using conference call technology on their cell phones.

Chinese Regime Held Morally Culpable

Charles Cardinal Bo, Archbishop of Yangon, Myanmar (formerly Burma) called The Chinese Communist government to be at moral fault for their negligent attitude toward the coronavirus when it began to take hold in Wuhan and other parts of China. He cites the vulnerability of Burma, on the border with China and with poorly developed health care along with widespread poor living conditions and several refugee camps. The suppression of information about the disease by the Chinese authorities allowed it to take root and spread widely. Doctors, reporters and others were arrested or disappeared in the government's attempt to conceal the truth and avoid a negative image for China. Cardinal Bo called China "a threat to the world" as a result of these devious actions. Citing Professor **James Kraska**, a law professor at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, Cardinal Bo argued that China is legally responsible for COVID 19 and claims against it could be made in the trillions of dollars.

A Solitary Funeral

The funeral of Archbishop **Daniel E. Pilarczyk**, emeritus archbishop of Cincinnati, Ohio and former head of the U.S. Bishops' Conference, was held in an empty cathedral due to the current pandemic. The funeral Mass was live-streamed to the archdiocese and a public memorial Mass was put off until the epidemic crisis eases. His private funeral mirrors countless others such funeral masses taking place throughout the country due to the epidemic. (Full obituary on page 16).

Pro-Life Democrat Ousted in Primary

Illinois Representative Daniel Lipinski, a devout Catholic, lost his bid to run as a Democrat to retain his seat in the House of Representatives. Targeted by pro-abortionists for years, out-of-state money from NARAL, Planned Parenthood and the like helped his challenger, pro-abortionist Marie Newman to victory in the Democratic primary election. Lipinski had held his seat since 2004 after taking it over from his father who held it for 22 years before that. His primary loss makes the pro-Life voice in the Democrat party virtually silenced with the exception of a few outliers in Louisiana.

Called to Serve in Alaska

Piotr Oprych, a native of Bored Szlachecki, near Kraków, Poland, transferred from his seminary in the archdiocese of Kraków to Orchard Lake Seminary in Michigan in order to serve where he felt most needed. That place is the remote but geographically extensive diocese of Fairbanks, Alaska, which cov-

Polish Church Suffers Tornado Damage



NEW KENSINGTON, Pa. — Much of the roof of Saint Mary of Czestochowa R.C. Church was torn off in the morning hours of April 8 by a tornado that touched down in the region.

Fortunately, no one was hurt, according to pastor, Msgr. Michael Begolly, but the century-old church suffered serious structural damage. In addition to the severe roof damage, one of the church's steeples was also impacted, which may require it to be removed if it is found to be structurally unsound. At the time of this writing efforts are underway to temporarily

cover the church with a makeshift roof made up of tarp and plywood.

The history of St. Mary of Czestochowa Church was described by Gregory Witul in his Polonia Places column in the February 2017 edition of the *Polish American Journal*. The parish was founded in 1893 and the current church building dates back to 1912. The now-closed Saint Mary of Czestochowa grade school was attended by the late Stephanie Kwolek, renowned Polish-American chemist and inventor of Kevlar.

— Matthew Stefanski

ers most of the northern half of the state. His mentor priest at Orchard Lake had served in Alaska himself some 20 years ago and another friend mentioned Fairbanks bishop **Chad Zielinski** to him.

After a two-week stay with **Fr. Stan Jaszek**, a Polish missionary priest stationed in North Pole, Alaska, near Fairbanks, Piotr was drawn

to serve in Alaska himself. He did his pastoral year in the diocese of Fairbanks, working alongside the diocese's 20 priests who work to serve Catholics in 38 villages across northern Alaska. He looks forward to ordination as a transitional deacon this year and to the priesthood in 2021.

Father Majka to Celebrate 55th Anniversary

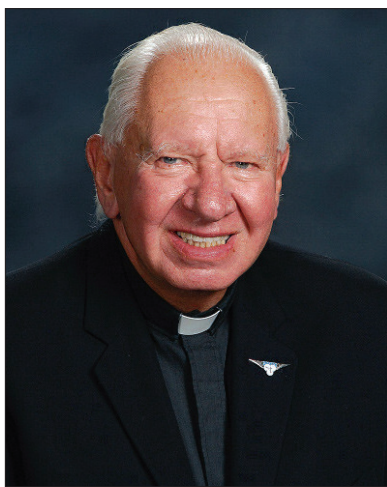
WASHINGTON, D.C. — Marking an impressive milestone, Father Philip S. Majka celebrated his 55th anniversary of priesthood. Born in New Britain, Conn., on April 22, 1938, to Stanley and Helen Majka, he attended Israel Putnam and Washington Jr. High Schools, New Britain; St. Thomas Seminary, Bloomfield Conn.; Queen of Apostles Seminary, Madison, Wisc.; and SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Mich.

He was ordained May 1, 1965, at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Richmond by Bishop John J. Russell. He celebrated his first Mass at Holy Cross Church in New Britain.

He served as associate pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Alexandria, 1965-67; St. Mark Parish in Vienna, 1967-70; Good Shepherd Parish in Mount Vernon, 1970-72; St. Michael Parish in Annandale, 1972-75; and St. Mary Parish in Alexandria, 1975-76.

He was named founding pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Lake Ridge in October 1976. He also served as pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Warrenton and St. Patrick Parish in Fredericksburg, before being assigned as parochial vicar of St. James Parish in Falls Church.

Father Majka received an award from the John Paul II Foundation in 1996 in Washington, D.C., and was honored with a national award by the Polish American Priests Association in April 1999. He received



Father Majka has served as the Catholic chaplain at Dulles International Airport since June 2006.

the Cavaliers Cross of Merit from the Polish Government for his service to the Polish American Community in 1999.

Father Majka served as chaplain to various Knights of Columbus Councils throughout Northern

Virginia, to the Serra Club, to the Alhambra Club and to the Fairfax County Fire Department. He also is a member of various Polish American organizations, served as chaplain to the Polish Community of the Metropolitan Washington area, and acted as host in both 1969 and 1976 for Cardinal Karol Wojtyla (later Pope John Paul II) during his visits to Washington.

Father Majka has served as the Catholic chaplain at Dulles International Airport since June 2006. He was elected vice president of the National Conference of Catholic Airport Chaplains in 2010.

Presently, he resides at the St. Rose of Lima Priests Retirement Villa in Annandale, and continues his chaplainships. His kindness has endeared him to all who know him.

*O grzmot w maju nie szkodzi,
sad dobre obrodzi.*

*No matter is thunder in May, the
orchard is already on its way.*

MODLITWY

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POPE FRANCIS'S PRAYER TO MARY DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC. O Mary, you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm. You, Salvation of Your People, know what we need, and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. Amen. Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

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

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Small Towns in Podlasie Await Exploration

Polish Tourism Organization Urges “Don’t Cancel – Postpone” and “Poland Will Wait”

by Matthew Stefanski

As you’re reading this, hopefully the worst of the coronavirus pandemic has subsided, although some form of social distancing procedures may last for quite some time. The Polish Tourism Organization put out a notice urging travelers “Don’t Cancel – Postpone” and that “Poland Will Wait.” That being said, it isn’t too early to start thinking about places to visit once it is safe to resume travel and recreation.

When planning your next trip to Poland, be sure to consider visiting some hidden gems outside the usual tourist hotspots. Below are two such small towns in Podlasie — a region in Northeastern Poland — that can be visited on a day trip from Warsaw. They are sure to provide visitors with a unique, fascinating and insightful experience.

The small town of Tykocin lies on the river Narew near the outskirts of Białystok, about an hour and a half drive from Warsaw. The town’s history stretches back to the 15th century, and over the years it has on occasion hosted various kings and royal officials. It was at the Tykocin Castle that King August II the Strong established the Order of the White Eagle in 1705, Poland’s preeminent order of chivalry which remains in use to this day as the highest state distinction presented by the president.

ON THE TOWN’S MAIN SQUARE stands a historic monument of Stefan Czarnecki, a famed Polish nobleman and military commander who is mentioned by name in the Polish national anthem for his military leadership during the Swedish invasion of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th century. The stone statue, believed to have been erected in 1763, is considered to be the second oldest existing sec-



The interior of the historic synagogue in Tykocin, now a museum.

ular monument in Poland following the King Zygmunt Column in Warsaw’s Old Town.

Although Tykocin currently has only about 2,000 residents, more than 80,000 tourists visit this quaint town annually, and many of them come to see the renowned Tykocin Synagogue.

Throughout most of Tykocin’s existence, Jewish residents played a significant role in the town’s community, until Jewish life was ended by the Holocaust. Before the outbreak of World War II, Jews made up 50% of the town’s population. Now all that remains is the synagogue.

Constructed in 1642, the Tykocin synagogue is the second largest and one of the oldest synagogues in Poland. Andrzej Lechowski, the director of the Podlaskie Museum which oversees the synagogue, has described it as, “one of the most important Polish historical sites.”

The synagogue recently underwent a multi-million złoty restoration, co-financed by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the European Union,

which restored the it to the splendor it would have had during the inter-war years.

The structure’s beautiful interior is decorated with meticulously written Hebrew lettering on the walls and ornately painted elements. An audio guide in numerous languages is available to contextualize and educate the visitors about the history of this site, the community that worshipped here, and the various elements found within. The moving visit to the synagogue beckons the visitor to think, reflect and remember those who are missing from this house of worship: the worshippers.

You can learn more about Tykocin’s Jewish past on the Polin Museum’s Virtual Shtetl Website: shtetl.org.pl



A 19th century icon on display at the Icon Museum in Supraśl.

NOT FAR FROM TYKOCIN, on the other side of Białystok, lies the slightly larger town of Supraśl, population 4,500. Here stands the Monastery of the Annunciation belonging to the Polish Orthodox Church. It was founded in the 16th century and has a long and winding history. In 1939 it was occupied by Soviet forces following the annexation of Eastern Poland by the Soviet Union. Later, the church was demolished by Nazi German troops, and the complex was used as an agricultural school by the Polish Communist authorities after the war. Since 1989, the complex once again serves as an Orthodox Monastery, and is open to visitors who can learn about the Orthodox faith and customs during tours of the grounds.

Adjacent to the monastery is the Icon Museum, another branch of the Podlaskie Museum. The icon museum has the largest collections of icons in all of Poland. Icons are religious works of art prevalent in Eastern Orthodoxy which are considered by faithful to be sacred and are used in religious devotion. Visiting the museum is only possible at certain times and with a tour guide. That’s because the Icon Museum is no typical museum, with four walls and paintings hanging therein. But rather, it is a museum that presents sacred art, and does so with care.

Each of the museum’s rooms are specially prepared to display carefully selected icons, with minimal lighting to protect these fragile and sacred objects. One room is stylized like an old stone cave, with icons on display within hallowed nooks. Another room is made to look like an old single-room house, with icons adorning the interior as they would in a peasant’s home a century ago in Podlasie.

The museum curators put great thought into the display of the icons, which range from the historic to modern variants. This unique visiting experience makes for a very fascinating visit, whether you are interested in art, history, religion, or simply want to learn more about this historic medium of religious expression.

A visit to such small towns as Tykocin and Supraśl can leave just as meaningful an impact on visitors as the usual tourist centers and large cities. There are so many fascinating places to explore and stories to be uncovered simply by going off the beaten path.

I hope you can find some for yourself to explore in the not-too-distant future.

Poland – Land of the White Eagle

A bird seen on buildings, flags and coins, not in nature

by Robert Strybel

WARSAW—Anyone coming to Poland and hoping to catch a glimpse of a white eagle in the wild or even at a zoo is out of luck. Such a species does not exist in nature and never has. But there is no shortage of the nation’s white eagle emblem on public buildings, monuments and war memorials, on Polish ships at sea, on coins and paper money as well as numerous souvenirs.

One legend maintains that Poland’s legendary Prince Lech came upon a white eagle’s nest, took it to be a lucky omen and decided to build his castle there. He named the settlement Gniezno (place of the nest), and it was to become Poland’s first ancestral capital. His two brothers Czech and Rus went on to set up Bohemia (today’s Czech Republic) and Ruthenia (now Belarus and Ukraine)..

Poland’s national emblem was patterned on the mostly brown-feathered “orzeł bielik” or White-tailed Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), and is a close relative of America’s Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). Did the legendary Lech see the eagle in bright sunlight that made the bird seem white? Or was it a rare albino

specimen? The answer is buried in the mists of lore and legend. The fact remains, however, that for centuries it has been the white eagle that has ruled the roost on heraldic shields, medieval banners and various emblems.

The first known depiction of the Polish eagle appeared on the denarius coin minted during the reign of Boleslaus the Brave, Poland’s first king, crowned in 1025.

The oldest surviving portrayal of the Polish eagle emblem appeared on a denarius coin from the reign of Boleslaw Chrobry (Boleslaus the Brave), Poland’s first monarch. The crude etching on the coin has led to a debate among scholars to whether it truly depicted an eagle, or maybe a peacock, rooster or dove.

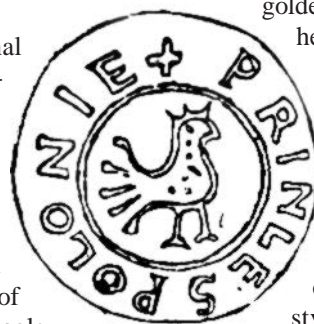
The eagle subsequently eagle on the seals of several Dukes of Poland’s founding Piast dynasty) in the years 1222-1236.. But it was Przemysł II, Duke of Wielkopolska (Poznań region) who first placed a golden crown on the eagle’s head and served as Poland’s king for one year. All the Polish kings who came after him followed suit, although the designs varied depending on a given century’s dominant heraldic style.

When Poland was partitioned in the late 18th century by its three aggressive neighbors – Russia, Prussia and Austria – the white



eagle was replaced by the emblems of the occupying powers. But it still seen on the banners of Polish insurrectionists fighting to regain their country’s independence throughout the 19th century and on into the 20th. When Poland finally re-emerged as an independent state in 1918, the crowned white eagle became the official emblem of the Rzeczpospolita Polska (Republic of Poland).

The eagle again went underground following the fourth partition of Poland by Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in 1939. The country emerged from World War II as a Soviet puppet state 20% smaller than before the war. The communist regime stripped the eagle of its crown as if to proclaim that Poland was no longer a fully sovereign state. But the pre-war Crowned Eagle was upheld by Polish communities world-wide and it officially reappeared in Poland in 1989, when Poles finally threw off the Soviet yoke.



Denarius coin eagle.

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Lewandowski Donates One Million Euros

WARSAW — Polish pro soccer player Robert Lewandowski donated one million euros (about \$1.3 million USD) to battle coronavirus pandemic. The donation went to “We Kick Corona,” a campaign which helps those in health service and social workers fight the spread of the coronavirus. For his life and deeds, Lewandowski has been called a “Polish Legend” by his countrymen.

Lewandowski, born in Warsaw in 1988, plays as a striker (center-forward) for Bayern Munich and is the captain of the Poland National Team. His father was a Polish judo champion and also played soccer in the second division of Hutnik Warsaw. His mother played volleyball for AZS Warszawa, and his sister also plays volleyball and played for the U21 national team. His wife, Anna, won the bronze medal at the Karate World Cup in 2009. They have a daughter, Klara.

A practicing Catholic, Lewandowski met Pope Francis in 2014 when Bayern Munich visited the Vatican after a win over A.S. Roma in the UEFA Champions League. He was named the Polish Sports Personality of the Year in 2015 and also that same year became the IF-FHS World’s top Goal Scorer of the Year. In 2017, after a decade of studies, he received a degree in Physical Education with coaching



Lewandowski. Donated about \$1.3 million USD to battle coronavirus pandemic.

and management from the Academy of Sport Education in Warsaw.

Today, Lewandowski’s net worth is \$45 million. Throughout their careers, he and his wife have donated to and also helped raise money for many charitable organizations. To name only a few, they raised more than \$150,000 for Warsaw’s Children’s Memorial Health Institute, they raised funds for the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity for years and donated \$100,000 for the treatment of three-year-old Cyprian Gawel.

In addition to his considerable philanthropy, Lewandowski also invests in several start-up enterprises, websites, and e-commerce.

Continuing our Genealogical Research during the Shutdown

by Stephen M. Szabados

Are you bored? Are you becoming a couch potato?

Our libraries, historical museums, and Family History Centers are closed. How can we do research?

Actually, now is a great time to do all the research we have been putting off because we did not have the time.

Before the shutdown, there are many online opportunities, and many were free. Today, genealogy groups and companies are adapting to this new situation and trying to make many more resources available.

FROM HOME, WE CAN DO THE

FOLLOWING: Officials have closed libraries, but online resources are still available from your home. An added feature is that Ancestry is allowing access to AncestryLibrary Edition from home. This database is an excellent addition to our online arsenal during the shutdown. Do not forget to scour through newspapers.com pages for your ancestors if your library has this fantastic resource in their collection. HeritageQuest and MyHeritage

are two other useful resources that some libraries offer.

One downside to having your library closed is no access to FamilySearch’s film library. So far, FamilySearch has not flipped a switch and made these digital images available from home. However, you can go to your library’s parking lot and should be able to connect to the library’s server as if you are inside the building. From the parking lot, you should have access to FamilySearch’s film library. This method is not the best-case solution but the only one available.

Some people have reported that they have been able to access Family History Files from the parking lot of their Family History Center. However, I believe that you may need a church sign-on to do this.

Lastly, do not forget the free websites we used before the shutdown for Polish records such as Geneteka, Metryki, Polish National Archives, and many more. (see the list on PGSA at <https://pgsa.org/polish-sites/>)

Do not forget last month’s genealogy column – this is a great time to organize and start writing your family history. The method I described helps you organize your information to do better research, but it is also the beginning format for your family history. Get organized now.

NOW IS A GREAT TIME to improve your genealogical skills and knowledge. Genealogy conferences and local society meetings are canceled, but many groups are going online. Some state societies have been using online webinars, but now I see some local societies have begun using this format. In fact, I gave my April program to the DuPage County Genealogical Society as an online webinar. I have also seen some

groups rescheduling their in-person conference to online webinars.

Other sources for online webinars on videos:

The Learning Center on FamilySearch.org has a vast collection of videos on most genealogical topics. This resource is free, and probably my first choice for a genealogical educational resource.

Another great resource is the webinar library at FamilyTreeWebinars.com. This library is a collection of webinars that have been recorded from the live presentation. There is an excellent selection of topics, and all are well-done. The most recent webinars are free to view for a limited time after the live presentation. You will need a subscription to view the entire collection. The subscription costs \$49.95 is worth it.

So, stop being a couch potato. Keep going on your family history research. You have more time to do more.

Remember to have fun.
Niech Bóg Wam Błogosławi i otoczy opieką.
God Bless and Stay Safe.

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PLEASE HELP US HELP OUR OWN COMMUNITY. JOIN THE...

Polish American Journal Foundation

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

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

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



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To order, kindly mail a \$19 personal or certified bank (cashier’s) check or money order (adding a cut-rate \$15 for each additional surname you wish to have researched) to Polonia’s long-standing Warsaw correspondent and onomastician (name researcher): **Robert Strybel, ul. Kaniowska 24, 01-529 Warsaw, Poland.**

IMPORTANT: FOR THE DURATION OF THE CORONAIURUS LOCK-DOWN, INTERNATIONAL AIR MAIL SERVICE IS NOT AVAILABLE. PLEASE SEND YOUR ORDERS ONLY BY SURFACE MAIL (If you include your email address, you will receive the results electronically without delay!)

Included is a helpful genealogical contact sheet to help check your family records in Poland, track down ancestral homesteads and possibly even turn up long-lost relatives. For more information, please contact: strybel@interia.pl.

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POLISH CHILDREN'S HEARTLINE (a non-profit corporation, State of New Jersey) begins its 35th year of helping children. An all volunteer non-profit organization receiving generous donations from Polonia and American supporters makes it possible for over 2000 Polish children to be treated annually by cardiac surgeons and physicians in hospitals in Poland. As requested, equipment critical to pediatric care is provided to seven hospitals in Zabrze, Katowice, Lodz, Suwalki, Bialystok, Grajewo, and Ostroleka. Contributions may be made in memory of and/or honor of family and friends. Each donation is tax exempt and acknowledged. We thank you for your support and ask for your continued support for much help is still needed. "If we don't help our Polish children, who will?" —Doreen Patras Cramer, President

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

HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO STYLE

LYPW's 81st White and Red Ball

by Geraldine Balut Coleman

CHICAGO — Once again, the Legion of Young Polish Women (LYPW) culminated another successful philanthropic year on March 7, as 350 guests gathered in the Grand Ballroom of the Hilton Chicago to celebrate the LYPW's 81st Annual White and Red Ball (*Bal Amarantowy*) and the presentation of its 2020 debutantes. The Ball chair this year was **Lori Hilsen Cioromski**; **Peggy Tancula Vignocchi** served as co-chair.

The evening began with welcoming remarks by the Legion's president, **Kathy Lesny Evans**, the singing of the national anthems of Poland and the United States, and an invocation by Rev. **Stanislaw Jankowski, C.R.** After dinner, 12 members of the LYPW and their partners danced the elegant *Polonez*, a traditional melody, "Pożegnanie Ojczyzny," ("A Farewell to the Homeland"). Chair Cioromski introduced this year's Master of Ceremonies, **Frank J. Spula**, president of the Polish American Congress and the Polish National Alliance. He then introduced each of this year's five debutantes — **Olivia Bochnak**, **Sophia DeMonte**, **Mia Incledon**, **Alexandra Noble**, and **Eliza Wszolek**. Once the presentations were complete, Ms. Vignocchi announced the Charity Rose Appeal asking guests, through the appeals of debutantes, to give generously. At approximately 11:00 pm, President Kathy Lesny Evans announced this year's queen



(l. to r.): Eliza Wszolek, Sophia DeMonte, Mia Incledon, Olivia Bochnak, and Alexandra Noble.

and the runners-up. The crowning of the queen was done by Jessica Vignocchi, the 2019 Queen.

The 2020 Queen is **Mia Incledon**, first runner-up is **Sophia DeMonte**, and second runner-up is **Olivia Bochnak**. At 11:30 pm, 11 post-debutantes and their partners danced the energetic *Bialy Mazur*. Throughout the evening, all enjoyed the dancing to the music of the Anthony Kawalkowski Orchestra.

Looking to the future, the 82nd White and Red Ball will be held on February 27, 2021, at the Hilton Chicago. Any young lady interested in becoming a debutante, can contact the Legion at contact@lypw.org.

CHICAGO POLONIAN CANCELLATIONS. With the virus pandemic

SCHOLARSHIPS

AIPC Offering Financial Aid for Students

The **American Institute of Polish Culture** is accepting applications for the 28th season of the **Harriet Irsay Scholarship Award**. \$1,500 will be given to the brightest and most well-rounded students in America.

Application deadline is July 15, 2020.

For an application and more information, visit www.ampolinstiute.org.

To date, over 330 students have benefited from Irsay's generosity.

The AIPC also announced a new scholarship. The **Lennox Family Excellence Award** will grant

a \$1,500 scholarship to a full-time university student pursuing a degree in education (teachers, administrators, and policy makers, etc.) Applications for this can also be found on the AIPC web site, or by emailing assistant@ampolinstiute.com or info@ampolinstiute.com.

Competition offers \$5,000 First Prize

TORRANCE, Calif. — The **Polonia Institute** is accepting entries for its 2020 Historical Essay Competition Competition.

To this day, Katyn remains the greatest unpunished crime of

World War II. On the 80th anniversary of the mass extermination of Polish nationals by the Soviet Union in Katyn and other locations throughout the USSR and mass deportations of their families, Polonia Institute encourages the study of events leading up to the denial of justice to the victims of Katyn, its causes, consequences, and possible remedies.

The competition is open to adults who are 18 years of age as of August 1, 2020. First prize is \$5,000, and additional monetary awards will be offered. Additional essays may be considered for recognition and publication.

The deadline is August 1, 2020; entries are required to be sent to the Polonia Institute by both eMail and regular mail, with a postmark date of August 1, 2020. For information, visit www.poloniainstitute.net/

The Explosion at the World's Fair in 1940

by Basia Szydłowski

Currently the Polish American Museum, Port Washington, is closed due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

One of the displays visitors have been interested in is the 1939 New York World's Fair Exhibit, which features, posters, photos, maps, and artifacts.

The World Fair, which featured the theme: "Dawn of a New Day," opened on April 30, 1939. The vast land of Corona Park, Queens was transformed into a playground with expansive displays from 60 countries.

In the British Pavilion, visitors could marvel at the Magna Carta and the Crown Jewels. The Polish Pavilion featured 150 contemporary paintings. The USSR built a life size replica of a Moscow metro station, and the restaurant *Le Pavilion* would move to Manhattan after the Fair.

In the fall of 1939, Adolph Hitler set into motion the events that would start the Second World War. On September 1, when Poland was invaded, the Polish Pavilion was draped in large black cloths. The Czechoslovakia Pavilion did not open.

The fair closed in October and reopened again in April 1940. On Independence Day 1940, in Flushing Meadows Park, the science fiction landscape was drawing thousands of visitors daily when suddenly it was torn apart by a bomb blast.

Detective Joseph Lynch was a college graduate and trained pharmacist from the Bronx who had plans to open his own pharmacy, but the Great Depression led him to seek a more stable way to support his wife and five children. He joined the New York City Police Department, where his high level of education quickly propelled him to the rank of the Bomb and Forgery Squad. On July 4, Lynch was on call, enjoying the holiday at home. However, about an hour before he was due to finish his shift, he received a call that a suspicious package had been reported at the Fair.

He raced to the Polish neighborhood of Greenpoint, Brooklyn to pick up his partner, Ferdinand

Socha. Socha was also college educated and studied medicine. Like Lynch he was accelerated to the bomb squad. He was off duty that day but volunteered to accompany his partner to Flushing Meadows Park to investigate.



It was never determined who planted the bomb that killed Detectives Joseph Lynch (left) and Ferdinand Socha at the World's Fair.

At the popular British Pavilion, the telephone switchboard operator received an anonymous call saying that there was a bomb planted in the exhibit. The caller claimed the place was going to blow up and she should "get out." A suspicious package had, indeed, been discovered by an electrician in the ventilation room in the upper level of the British Pavilion. Patrol officers cautiously removed the package to a remote area behind the Polish Pavilion, where it would wait for the Bomb Squad. The two NYPD detectives dressed in regular suits arriving on the scene, could hear the package still ticking. Back then, the bomb squad had little in the way of protective clothing and safety equipment.

Using a pocketknife, Socha cut a small hole in the package. Lynch was looking through tentatively when it exploded. Estimated to be equivalent of 12 sticks of dynamite, the blast carved a hole in the ground five feet wide and three feet deep, immediately killing the detectives.

Patrolman Emil Vyskocil, who had been hurrying bystanders away when the bomb exploded, suffered terrible injuries from shrapnel fragments to his back and legs. Detectives William Federer, Martin Schuchman, and Joseph Gallagher were also badly injured in the blast.

The Police Department quickly began an investigation into the tragedy, but eighty-one years later, the NYPD are still looking for answers. The case of the exploding bomb at the World's Fair remains one of the NYPD open cases while the \$26,000 reward remains unclaimed.

JOURNALISM HONOR. Mark Lukasiewicz, dean of the Lawrence Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University, Hempstead, Long Island was named one of the nation's top journalism educators for 2020 by Crain's *News Pro* magazine. He was nominated by students, *News Pro* readers, and members of leading journalism organization.

REMINDER

May and June Editions Combined

This month, subscribers will receive a combined May and June edition of the *Polish American Journal*. This replaces the June edition. The July 2020 edition will be mailed on or before June 30. Deadline for copy is June 10, and advertising space must be reserved by June 12.

As the PAJ is now published only 10 times a year, the August-September editions will also be combined.

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MINNESOTA VOICE

New Book Explores Lives of Immigrants on Poland's Lucky Ship, the *M.S. Batory*

by Mark Dillon

photos by Barbara Caillot and Alexandra Karkowska)

Janina was just 19 when she boarded the Polish ocean liner *M.S. Batory* that left the port of Gdynia in late August 1939. Her main goal was to see the New York World's Fair.

Janina's lucky ticket not only enabled her to escape the outbreak of World War II during the 10-day voyage across the Atlantic, but also allowed her to meet fellow traveler Piotr Koszarski, a Polish American who would then rescue her from detention on Ellis Island and propose to her in early September 1939.

Mrs. Koszarski will turn 100 on June 20 in Fairlawn, N.J. Hers is one of more than 50 oral histories gathered by two Polish women in a new book called *Marsz Marsz Batory* that chronicles the experience of Polish immigrants on the *Batory* from the late 1930s to 1960s. Some 270,000 people crossed the sea to the United States over 33 years aboard what would be the last ship of her kind.

Aleksandra Karkowska and Barbara "Basia" Caillot Dubus spent more than a year of research across North America on the book. They wanted to share their learnings from March 19 to April 5 on a three-city book tour that included New York, Chicago and Minneapolis. However, the COVID-19 related travel ban from Europe scuttled their plans.

"We met *Batory* passengers in New Jersey, New York, Brooklyn, Santa Cruz and San Jose, California. We also met them in Canada. We went to Montreal and Ottawa for interviews," Karkowska said of the project just before their recent trip to the United States. "We also

interviewed passengers in Warsaw, the Zakopane area and Gdynia."

Beginning with a maiden voyage in 1935, travel on the *Batory* was more expensive and more luxurious compared to what most 19th and early 20th century immigrants had to endure in steerage on the journey to America on British- and German-run ships. The 14-ton ship was about half the size of the *S.S. Normandie*, a large French ocean liner of the same period.



NEAR, FAR, WHEREVER YOU ARE. Janina and Piotr Koszarski met on the M/S *Batory* in 1939, just as the ship escaped the onset of World War II. He proposed on Ellis Island.

A typical ticket on the *Batory* in 1947 cost \$249, or \$2,900 in today's dollars for a 10-day trip. That compares with \$25 to \$35 (\$800 to \$1,000 in today's money) on a major turn of the 20th century steamer such as the *S.S. Kaiser Wilhelm II*.

"We need to remember that it was communist time and officially you could not get foreign currency," Karkowska explained. "The ticket cost six months average salary (for a typical Pole). During the communist time, we did not have passports at homes. You had to ask the officials. You had to prove and explain where you wanted to go,

why, what for. People waited for documents for years. It was very humiliating."

Fruit of a Franco-Polish friendship

Karkowska is originally from Elbląg near Gdansk while Caillot Dubus was born in Paris. They met five years ago in the Sadyba district of Warsaw, where they both lived at the time and decided to chronicle stories that touched their hearts and minds.

"We wanted to do something for our oldest neighbors. We visited and talked with them about their childhoods. We collected such great material that we decided to make a book out of it," Karkowska said.

That was several titles ago. The two women founded the Originals

land between Nazi Germany and Russia. News of war came at dinnertime aboard ship, when the ship was off the shores of Canada. An American destroyer then escorted her safely to New York, where 642 passengers, including 352 U.S. citizens, disembarked.

Batory's luck continued even as her sister ships *M.S. Chrobry* and *M.S. Pilsudski* were sunk in 1940. She assisted in carrying British troops to Norway and evacuating them from Dunkirk, Under heavy

the United States for their first book tour and catalyzed their interest in American Polonia. Learning more about one's roots, they say, allows for conscious and creative action in the modern world.

"We both have emigration experience: Basia's father is French and her family was always living between (Podhal), Poland and France. As for my family, my mom and brother live in the U.S.; I decided to stay in Poland" Karkowska said.

For Karkowska, writing is a sec-



On the docks: Ciela Anna Kowalczyk and the Pabin family pose on their journey.

escort, she brought 2,950 crates of gold bullion from the Bank of England to the Bank of Canada as well as Polish tapestries and historical artifacts to Canada that had been at Wawel Castle in Krakow at the outbreak of the war. This was in July 1940 a few weeks after a conquered France had surrendered to the invading Germans. A month later the *Batory* left Liverpool to transport 480 children to Australia.

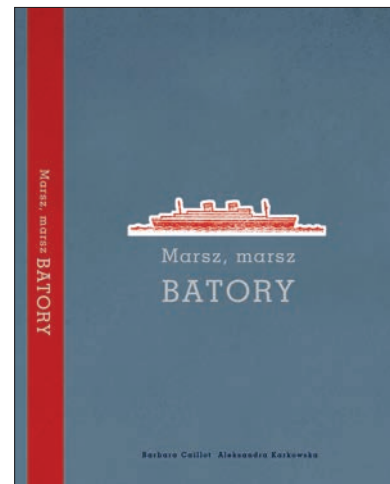
After World War II, the *Batory* resumed regular passenger service

and career. An economist by training, for several years she worked for international corporations in Poland and abroad, where she managed organizational procedures. She is also vice president of the socio-cultural society Miasto Ogród Sadyba, and organizes the Open Gardens Festival there.

Caillot Dubus has been in Poland since 1999, has a background in journalism, cultural studies and cultural marketing, and serves as the duo's photographer, document-



A CAPTAIN COURAGEOUS. Capt. Eustazy Borkowski near the bridge of the *Batory*, which he guided safely into New York Harbor the first week of September 1939, and then anchored near Yonkers on the Hudson River.



COVER of *Marsz Marsz Batory*

Publishing House in 2015 and became the authors of intergenerational-themed books — *Bananas with Powdered Sugar* (*Banany z cukru pudru*) in 2015, *Looking at Giewont* (*Na Giewont się patrzy*) in 2016 and *Seagull on a Stick* (*Mewa na patyku*) in 2019. *Looking at Giewont* is about the childhood of the oldest highlanders living in the Tatra Mountains.

Karkowska and Caillot Dubus have also authored a series of interactive notebooks: *Grandma! Grandpa! Please tell me! a genealogy work*, *Holiday notebook*, *Na Świętkę*, a *Tatra notebook* and *Bas in Batory* (*B jak Batory*), a notebook about the lucky history of the *Batory* as a ship.

Says Karkowska "We are passionate about travel, photographs and books. We are community activists. We merge our passions with our talents to capture stories lingering inside people's minds, to reawaken precious memories and to pass them on to others."

A treasure ship

In 1939, *Batory* left Gdynia amid the signing of the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact that carved up Po-

"I was brought up to believe in free will. Although I came to doubt all revelation, I can never accept the idea that the Universe is a physical or chemical accident, a result of blind evolution ... I still cling to some truths which I think all of us might accept some day."

— Isaac Bashevis Singer



BON VOYAGE. Authors Aleksandra Karkowska and Barbara Caillot Dubus interviewed more than 50 *Batory* passengers.

through 1968. *Marsz Marsz Batory* tells the stories of these immigrants, including noted Polish photographer Ryszard Horowitz, who arrived in 1959 and was interviewed for the book.

The book *Na Giewont* brought Karkowska and Caillot Dubus to

ing different cultures and customs. She is a member of Press Club Poland and the Association of Polish Art Photographers. Her own book *Thekla i jej chłopakowy świat* was named the book of the year in 2010 by The International Board on Books for Young People.

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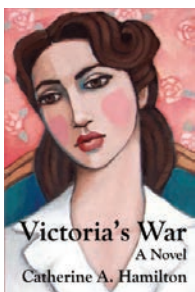
BOOKS IN BRIEF

Ripped Away from Normalcy

by Mary E. Lanham

VICTORIA'S WAR: A NOVEL

By Catherine A. Hamilton
Plain View Press, 2020, 266 pgs.



Eager to start her life at the University of Warsaw to study literature, Victoria Darski's plan is suddenly put on hold when Poland is invaded by Nazis in 1939. In denial about what is happening to her town and her country, Victoria waits for everything to go back to normal until the one fateful day her life is changed forever. Nazi soldiers storm into her home reaping a path of destruction and she is ripped away from any chance of normalcy.

Two years later, still living in the same town, she and her mother were slave laborers made to sew uniforms for Nazi soldiers. Normally meek and mild, Victoria is spurred to little acts of rebellion like sewing straight pins into the collars of the shirts, and a friend convinces her to join up with a resistance. After the SS discover their secret resistance meeting, Victoria and her friend are auctioned off to the highest bidder and once again she is torn away from familiarity. Cruelly treated by her new owners, Victoria's hope and faith waver. A surprising act of kindness from an unexpected new friend may give her the strength she needs to fight back against the enemy.

The author describes her scenes

in vivid detail. The excerpt below depicts the palace where Victoria and thousands of other women were taken to be sorted.

"Red velvet curtains hung at the windows. Crystal chandeliers and elaborate medallions decorated the ceiling. Machine guns in men's hands clashed with the elegance. In the prince's day, a Chopin polonaise or mazurka was most certainly played by an orchestra of strings and piano here while smartly dressed guests danced the waltz or quadrille. A surreal backdrop for the knee-high-booted Nazis prodding kidnapped Polish citizens. There was no end to the boots and balloon trousers and Nazi sleeve patches and packs of dogs in small kennels."

Although this is a novel, Hamilton has based her characters and story on amalgamations of actual people and their experiences. She includes a list of books and articles she used for references. Also contained in the book is a discussion guide with thought provoking questions about the motivations of the characters. With her first novel, Hamilton adds a unique voice to the chorus of World War II fiction.

Originally from Oregon, Catherine A. Hamilton is a freelance writer who has published numerous articles and poems in newspapers and magazines. Prior to publishing her debut novel, Hamilton released a book of poems titled, *Nine Days: poems remembering John Paul II*. In her free time, she enjoys reading, hiking, cooking, and gardening. Hamilton lives in the Portland area with her husband.

DID YOU KNOW? Polish is a West Slavonic tongue, spoken by 38 million people in today's Poland and, with varying degrees of fluency, by perhaps another 10 to 15 million abroad. It belongs to the same language family as Czech, Slovak and Wendish (Sorbian).

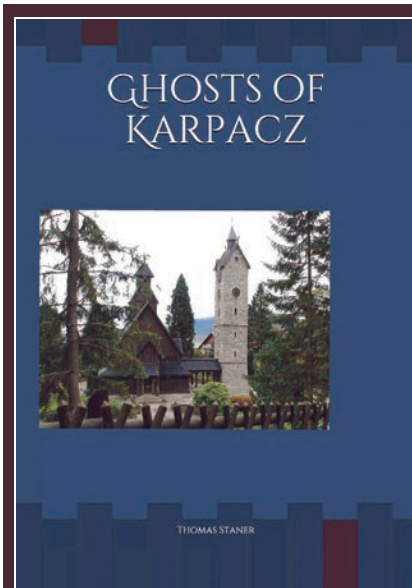
Robert Kujawa (stage-name: Bob Kames), who created the

world-famous "Chicken Dance," died of prostate cancer at 82. The Milwaukee PolAm had performed with Lawrence Welk, had his own TV program and recorded more than 70 albums.

The brothers Lech, Czech and Rus according to legend set off into the world, Lech saw a white eagle in its nest, regarded that as a good

omen and decided to set up his realm where the city of Gniezno now stands. Czech traveled south to create Bohemia, and Rus moved east and established Ruthenia.

Elections in Poland have traditionally been held on a Sunday to ensure a better turnout. A great many Poles visit the polls on their way home from Sunday Mass.



Interested in the possibility of multiverse and a good story?

GHOSTS OF KARPACZ

by Thomas Staner, MD

Cindy Kowal is looking for answers ... answers from science. A transplant from Central Europe few Americans know, she has brought to Alabama a hereditary curse. Far from the nidus of terror, she hopes an education in psychology might cast some light on the infliction, searching for a rational explanation to the Ghosts of Karpacz, that has permeated her family for countless generations. When spells begun, they provide the local medical community, the patient of a lifetime. Dr. Thad Stevens, neurologist, understands the singularity of her case and joins Cindy in her efforts to find a reasonable explanation. He and consulting specialists, perform an in depth analysis of their patient, including a Cat scan, EEGs, and MRI, even an attempt at psychoanalysis, eventually concluding brain surgery the best option. Each step only deepens the mystery of her condition. Soon her events will become part of an "Old World story." But the answer from science, appears as unreasonable, as the myth itself.

Thomas Staner, MD, is a Board Certified Neurologist and Board Certified Neurosurgeon.

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Poland Refutes Absurd Russian claim

WARSAW — The Polish Foreign Ministry summoned Russian ambassador Sergey Andreyev and expressed its indignation at the "absurd" claim that Warsaw had refused to let Russian planes carrying aid to virus-struck Italy pass through Polish airspace.

The Polish foreign ministry added that false information "which divides nations is particularly reprehensible when our common task should be fighting off the deadly pandemic which knows no borders."

The source of the claim was Russian Senator Alexei Pushkov,

who had tweeted: "Poland did not let Russian aircraft carrying aid to Italy pass through its airspace. That is meanness at the public-policy level."

That disinformation, which made headlines across Russia, was typical of the kind of propaganda and unconfirmed rumors that play a key role in Russia's ongoing hybrid war on the West.

— Robert Strybel

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WORLD WAR II

75 Years Later: The Liberation of Magdeburg: American Troops Discover Polish Slave Labor Camps

by Catherine A. Hamilton

To this day, most Americans don't know that at least 1.7 million Polish Catholics were captured, kidnapped, or otherwise conscripted into the largest, most secretive wartime slave labor operation in modern history.

In early April of 1945, the Thirtieth Infantry Division of the U.S. Army National Guard advanced toward the city of Magdeburg, Germany. Under the command of Major General Leland S. Hobbs, their orders were to liberate the citizens of Magdeburg from the tyranny of Nazism that held sway there under Adolf Hitler, who had commanded his generals to continue to fight a war that was already lost. On their way to Magdeburg, the Thirtieth Infantry Division sacked enemy pockets and took the nearby towns of Hamelin on April 7 and Braunschweig on April 12.

On April 13, 1945, the Thirtieth Infantry Division rolled into the city of Magdeburg; there began the little-known, albeit important, battle at the war's end, called the Battle of Magdeburg. Did the American soldiers know that some twenty thousand Polish slave



U.S. tanks rolling through Magdeburg during liberation.

laborers were prisoners of Nazism in Magdeburg and the surrounding areas; an estimated total of at least 1.7 million ethnic Poles were held forcibly as slave laborers (*Zwangsarbeiter*) across German-occupied Europe.

"Unknown to U.S. at the time of the beginning of the Battle of Magdeburg, was the fact that there was a substantially sized slave labor camp housed in the outskirts of the city," reported First Lieutenant Frank W. Towers of the Thirtieth Infantry Division.



General Dietmar's surrender to American troops.

From April 13 to April 18, the Thirtieth fought German forces in fierce scrimmages until they reached the Elbe River, where they met Russian troops headed for Berlin. The Americans took control of the city west of the Elbe, and on April 26, German General Kurt Dietmar surrendered Magdeburg to Major



Graczyk DP camp ID.

General Hobbs.

According to First Lieutenant Towers, the American liberators "ordered" local Germans "to take some of the slave laborers into their homes, and to care for them."

Confirming the lieutenant's report, Katherine (Ponczocha) Graczyk, an ethnic Pole who was liberated from an agricultural labor camp near Magdeburg, said in an interview, "I was rescued from the German farm camp on April 18, 1945 by the Americans. But before we rode off in those Army jeeps, the officer in charge ordered the farmer and his wife to fix U.S. all a big supper. It was the first time I'd had meat or cheese in five years! Five long years and all I was given to eat was potato soup!"

Polish forced labor survivor Michael Adamski, born in Wozniki-Sieradz, Poland, was arrested at the age of thirteen by German soldiers who busted into his family's house before dawn. Michael, his parents, and his two sisters were taken to a transition camp, an empty factory commandeered by the Nazis, where they were locked up for a week before being transported by train to yet another camp near Magdeburg. The family was separated and assigned to different slave labor work sites. Michael spent the war in forced labor at a small machine factory "Rudolf Machine Werke," where Polish slave laborers were kept in barracks, "... until the liberation by American forces in April 1945. Freed from our German masters we were advised by the Polish Liaison officer representing the Polish Government in Exile to move to a newly set up camp."

Hundreds upon hundreds of the children of Polish World War II-era emigrants living in the United States and Canada today have the name of Wildflecken on their birth certificates. As German sergeant major Heinz Leitsch, a non-commissioned officer in the Bundeswehr, and friend of U.S.-Army troops arrangements of return reunions to Magdeburg in 2020 writes, "Many of these, who are today in their fifties [now seventies], may have asked themselves for many years where this mysterious place, Wildflecken, might be? Is it a village, a city, or simply only the name of a camp? Yes, they knew they had been born in a camp in Germany, but often their parents were silent regarding more details of the circumstances."

According to Leitsch, when U.S. Army units advanced toward Magdeburg in April 1945, they first overran a German troop camp named Wildflecken. The military camp was thought to be defended by SS troops,

but only a few shots were fired. The Americans found a few buildings that housed wounded German soldiers who quickly surrendered. The size of the camp quickly drew the attention of the United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration, a refugee organization working to find suitable accommodations for the eleven million forced laborers who had been displaced from their formerly occupied homelands. By May 1945, about twenty thousand Polish displaced persons were gathered in Wildflecken.

The situation in Magdeburg changed quickly when the liberation authorities realized the danger many Poles would face if they returned to Soviet-occupied Poland. Additionally, Magdeburg was overrun by the Soviets. For their safety, twenty thousand displaced Polish slave workers, including Michael, were moved by cattle train to the Wildflecken displaced persons camp.



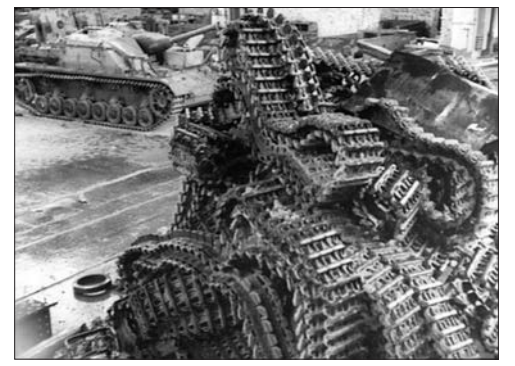
Bulletin board with Poles wearing the letter P. Ethnic Polish Catholics who were forced labor workers in Germany wearing required clothing patches. Also pictured are released workers in DP camps in Germany after the war over Nazism was won.

Secret Nazi Slave Labor Operation

By August 1945, an estimated total of 2.8 million Poles, including those from the Eastern territories occupied by the Russians in September 1939, had been forced into slave labor by Nazi Germany (excluding prisoners of war), nearly half of them women. All were at the compulsory service of the totalitarian Nazi state. Many did not survive, dying of malnutrition, disease, mistreatment, and torture. Estimates of the number of people abducted by the Nazis from twenty different European countries are set at twelve million to fifteen million, two-thirds of them from Eastern Europe. By April 1945, one-third of Germany's agricultural workforce consisted of forced laborers, mainly from Poland and other Eastern territories.

Why Magdeburg?

Magdeburg was a key city in the Nazi war machine, serving as both a train cargo junction and a hub of military defense in-



Slave laborers were forced to work at Grusonwerk, where tanks were made. Above: tank tracks waiting for installation.

dustry. Krupp's Grusonwerk in Magdeburg made tungsten steel and Tiger tanks. Krupp exploited an estimated 100,000 POWs, concentration camp detainees, and Polish, Russian, and Jewish slaves. The Krupp Corporation fully embraced the Nazi ideology; they considered Slavic and Jewish slave laborers to be subhuman, and their treatment of slave laborers was particularly brutal.

The Junkers Jumo 211A was also built in Magdeburg and used slave laborers. It is important to note, however, that Hugo Junkers, an aviation pioneer, did not cooperate with the Nazis' order to make warplanes; instead, he insisted on working on his passenger plane project. When Hitler came to power, he seized Junkers's patents and factories and put Hugo on house arrest, where he later died.

Thousands of POWs and forced laborers were made to work in the armament factories in and around the vicinity of Magdeburg.

How Did This Happen So Quickly after the Invasion of Poland?

The Nazi regime had planned for the use of forced labor before the start of the war. Hermann Goering, chief of the Four-Year Plan; Fritz Sauckel, plenipotentiary general for slave labor recruitment; Fritz Todt, director of the Todt Organization; Albert Speer, replacement director of the Todt Organization; and Hans Frank, who would be assigned governor of the General Government, were responsible for executing Hitler's slave labor campaign. Each man implemented a unique component of the brutal forced labor system—a network that allocated enslaved workers to swathes of German companies: chemical and munitions factories, government and military facilities, private farms, and privately owned businesses, including bakeries and family-run workshops. According to Ulrich Herbert, author of "Hitler's Foreign Workers: Enforced Foreign Labor in Germany under the Third Reich," (1997), by late 1939, just months after Hitler invaded Poland, 300,000 ethnic Poles had already been conscripted into forced labor.

In a meeting on May 23, 1939, with German General Goering and two other Nazi commanders, Hitler said, "The possession of extensive areas in the East will be advanta-

see "Liberation of Magdeburg," page 13



Under the eyes of U.S. GIs, POWs are released from prison during the liberation of Magdeburg.

Liberation of Magdeburg



U.S. 9th Army 30th Infantry Division and 2nd Armored Division tracked vehicles approach Magdeburg, 1945.

continued from page 12

geous ... The population of non-German areas will perform no military service, and will be available as a source of labor."

In a letter to the Third Reich employment offices dated November 25, 1942, Sauckel wrote, "In agreement with the Chief of the Security Police and the SD, Jews who are still in employment are, from now on, to be evacuated from the territory of the Reich and are to be replaced by Poles, who are being deported from the General-Government."

These ethnic Poles were taken off the streets in occupied cities, towns, and villages. Some estimates report four hundred to one thousand were detained per day. They were then taken to transition camps

Despite the fact that two million Poles were slaves under the German Third Reich, most of them were not paid more than a stamp ... But forced laborers—people, generally non-Jews, deported to Germany mainly from Eastern European countries, including Poland and Russia—have not often been compensated.

to be sorted for suitability. At one such transition camp in the General Government near the city of Czechochowa, 147 Poles were sent into forced labor in Germany during the month of February 1940, and 4,922 more in March that same year. Sophie Hodorowicz Knab, in *Wearing the Letter "P": Polish Women as Forced Laborers in Nazi Germany*, writes, "The Germans ordered that workers undergo a delousing procedure in transit camp ... The head and pubic area was shaved." This process could last several days or more, before "sanitized workers" were sent by train to "auction style" trading events across Germany, where they were sold for what amounted to pocket change.

Governor Frank of the General Government of the Third Reich wrote in his diary for May 10, 1940 regarding Field Marshal Goering's order to deport a million workers: "The arrest of young Poles when leaving church service or the cinema would bring about an increasing nervousness of the Poles. Generally speaking, he (Goering) had no objections at all if the rubbish, capable of work yet often loitering about, would be snatched from the streets. The best method for this, however, would be the organization of a raid, and it would be absolutely justifiable to stop a Pole in the street and to question him what he was doing, where he was working, etc.," documents the Yale Law School, The Avalon Project.

Sadly, in addition to the work camps, brothels were set up by the Third Reich. By 1942, as many as five hundred brothels for the use of Wehrmacht and SS officers were in operation, often in confiscated hotels. As early as 1941, the office of Władysław Sikorski, the prime minister of the Polish government-in-exile in London, issued a statement describing the kidnapping of Polish women for sexual slavery in brothels. Other young girls were reportedly being sexually exploited at the work sites in Germany as well. Magdeburg was no exception.

In The End

In 1945 to 1946, Fritz Sauckel, Albert Speer (the replacement director of the Todt Organization), Hermann Goering, Hans Frank, and others were tried at the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. Sauckel, Goering, and Frank were sentenced to death by hanging on October 1, 1946. On October 16, 1946, Sauckel and Frank were hanged. Goering committed suicide the night before the sentence was to be carried out. Speer served his twenty-year sentence and died in 1981.

Despite the fact that two million Poles were slaves under the German Third Reich, most of them were not paid more than a stamp. *New York Times* journalist Roger Cohen, in his article "German Companies Adopt Fund for Slave Labors," reported that "since the end of World War II, the German Government has paid out about \$80 billion in war reparations and aid, most of it to Jews who survived concentration camps or fled. But forced laborers—people, generally non-Jews, deported to Germany mainly from Eastern European countries, including Poland and Russia—have not often been compensated."

For the Poles liberated in the vicinity of Magdeburg, the journey from liberation to repatriation or emigration was a long one, taking up to five years or longer. The war was over, but life in the DP camps was bitter sweet. "The victory parades began," said slave labor survivor Katherine Graczyk, "but I still was not free. I had no country to go home to. The Communists had occupied Poland." Couples were married, children were born, and loved ones were buried in DP camps.

Now, 75 years later, we honor the memory of those Poles liberated by U.S. troops.

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Holy Cross PNC Church
2311 Pulaski Street
Hamtramck, Michigan
Status: Open

by Gregory L. Witul

When Holy Cross Polish National Catholic Church was established in 1922, as Our Lady of Czestochowa church, the history of Independent Polish Church movement in Hamtramck was already six years old. The first independent Polish parish was established on Conant Street in 1916. Led by Father Stanislaw Weglarz, legal action by the Roman Catholic Church put an end to this break-away church. Four years later the first National Catholic Church in Hamtramck was started by Father Mazur, at the corner of Yemans and Charest Streets. This parish too was short lived, but the congregation was able to sell their parish building and with those proceeds moved to Pulaski Street. There, Father John Brzozowski was able to establish Our Lady of Czestochowa PNC Church.

With funds and a location, Father Brzozowski quickly began construction on a parish hall. By the end of autumn, the lower part of the building was completed and Bishop Hodur blessed the edifice on November 12, 1922. As soon as the parish was dedicated, the parish's first social organization was formed: the Maria Konopnicka Society.

As with many newly established PNCC parishes, there were a number of priests in and out of the

church in its early years. The most notable of these early shepherds was Father Jan Jasinski, the future Bishop of the Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese. It would be under Father John Ziembra's watch that the rest of the church would be completed. Bishop Leon Grochowski dedicated the finished structure November 22, 1925.

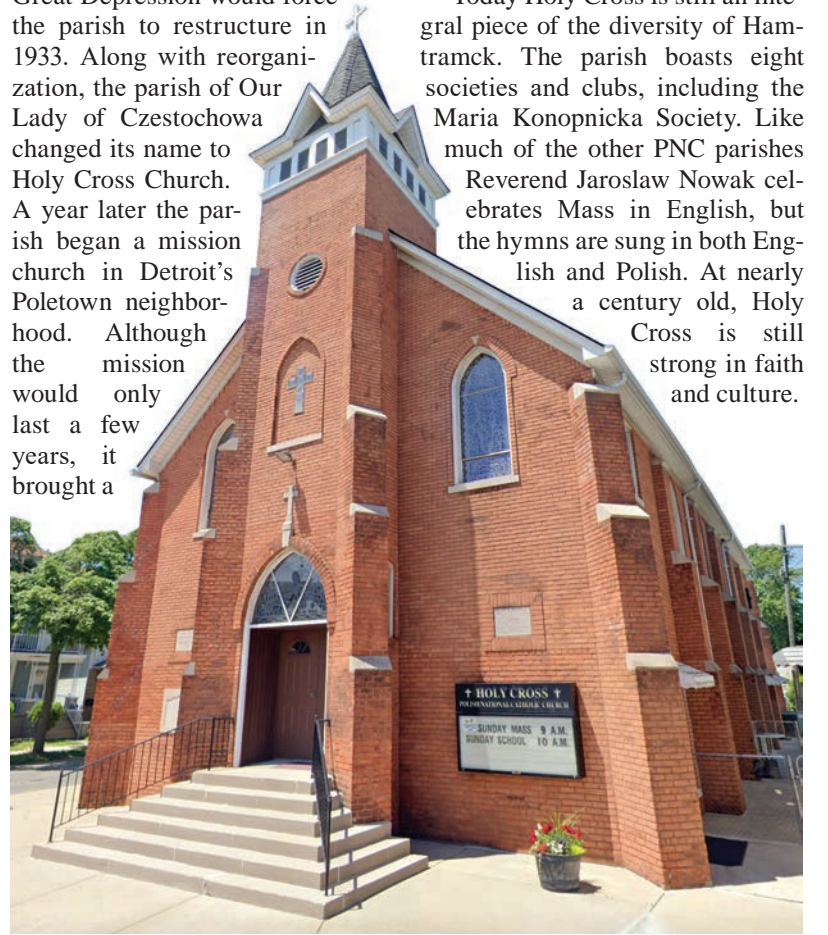
The church would have its ups and downs over the next half decade, and the hard economic times of the Great Depression would force the parish to restructure in 1933. Along with reorganization, the parish of Our Lady of Czestochowa changed its name to Holy Cross Church. A year later the parish began a mission church in Detroit's Poletown neighborhood. Although the mission would only last a few years, it brought a

number of families to the home parish.

Over the years the church would be updated, the parish family would grow, and the members would participate in PNCC events across the nation. The entire church building would be upgraded in the 1960s. Windows designed by Polish stained-glass artisan Dudzinski, and produced by the Venelli Family of Florence, Italy replaced the plain panes.

Today Holy Cross is still an integral piece of the diversity of Hamtramck. The parish boasts eight societies and clubs, including the Maria Konopnicka Society. Like much of the other PNC parishes

Reverend Jaroslaw Nowak celebrates Mass in English, but the hymns are sung in both English and Polish. At nearly a century old, Holy Cross is still strong in faith and culture.



LANGUAGE

Polish Contributions to English Vocabulary

by Robert Strybel

(sometimes) marjoram.

Most folks today are familiar with *pierogi*, *kielbasa*, and *paczki* (and all their atrociously-spelled variations), but the Polish language has contributed more to the English dictionary than most people know. Here are some prime examples:

BABKA: This tall, yeast-raised, egg-dough bread, baked for centuries in Poland at Easter time and for other festive occasions, is becoming increasingly popular and recognizable in America.

BRITZKA: A kind of horse-drawn carriage; its name, it is traceable to the Polish word "bryczka."

DROSHKY: An open horse-drawn carriage known in Polish as a "dorożka." It served as the pre-automotive city taxi.

GHERKIN: The Polish word "ogórek" and/or its close Russian cousin "orypeti" (pronounced: aw-goo-rets), used to describe a fresh cucumber or a cured one (like a dill pickle) went into German as "Gurke" and into English as "gherkin."

KIELBASA: The Polish generic term for sausage, in America kielbasa refers to garlicky Polish sausage, containing mainly pork and seasoned with salt, pepper and



KONIK: The Konik is a Polish-originated species of small, primitive, semi-feral horses evolved from the wild tarpan. Konik is the diminutive of the Polish word for horse "koń" and literally means "little horse."

MAZURKA: A folk dance of the Mazowsze/Mazury region, made world-famous by the compositions of Poland's renowned composer Fryderyk Chopin.

MAZURKA (2): A flat filled cake known as mazurek in Polish and usually associated with Easter.

MEAD: This old honey wine, derived from the Polish word for honey ("miód"), traces its roots to the medieval Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, once Europe's largest land empire.

OBEREK: A lively Polish folk dance in 3/4 time – something like a very fast waltz.

OGONEK: The diminutive of Polish ogon" (tail), "ogonek" means little tail and is the official English

name of the diacritical mark beneath the Polish nasal vowels "ą" and "ę."

PACZKI: Pronounced PUNCH-key, these jam-filled doughnuts have seen their popularity grow in the United States in recent decades. Their nationwide launch took place in the late 20th century in Detroit's once predominantly Polish enclave-suburb of Hamtramck.

PIEROGI: Dough pockets or filled dumplings containing a variety of different fillings, both savory and sweet.

POLKA: This Czech folk dance became hugely popular on 19th-century Europe's ballroom scene. The Czech word "půlka" means one-half, a reference to its lively 2/4 beat. But because the Polish word "polka" means Polish female, the mistaken notion that this dance was something quintessentially Polish spread across America.

POLONAISE: A stately, processional dance originally known in Polish as "Chodzony" (walking dance), it was immortalized by Poland's great 19th-century composer Fryderyk (Frédéric) Chopin. "Danse polonaise" was French for "Polish dance" which in English got abbreviated to just Polonaise.

POLONAISE (2): Butter-browned bread crumbs used as a garnish for cooked vegetables and pasta are known by this term in international cuisine. Cauliflower Polonaise is a prime example, and a very delicious one to boot!

continued next edition

SPORTS

Remembering Stram's Super Bowl Win

by Tom Tarapacki

It's hard to believe that it was just over 50 years ago that **Hank Stram** and the AFL Kansas City Chiefs trounced the heavily favored NFL Minnesota Vikings, 23-7, in Super Bowl IV. Even today, the January 1970 contest is a favorite of fans who love to watch Stram's colorful sideline antics as recorded by NFL Films.

Henry Louis Stram was born in Chicago in 1923, and was raised there and in Gary, Indiana. At one time his Polish-born father, Henry Wilczek, challenged and defeated the Barnum & Bailey wrestling champ. He was then hired to replace the fallen champ, and traveled with the show. Wilczek wrestled under the name of Stram, and later adopted it as the family name. Later he worked as a clothing salesman and tailor.

Young Hank was small but an excellent athlete. One of his inspirations was Tony Zale, the middle-weight boxing champion in the 1940s and a family friend. Not only was Zale Polish (his real name was Zaleski) and from Gary, but he was about the same height as the 5' 7" Stram. Stram went on to play half-back at Purdue, his collegiate career interrupted for three years of military service in World War II. After graduating college in 1948 he became an assistant coach at Purdue, and later at SMU, Notre Dame and Miami of Florida.

In 1960 the AFL was created and Lamar Hunt, owner of the AFL Dallas Texans, was unable to attract a big name coach. He then thought of Stram, who was an assistant at SMU when Hunt played there as a backup. The little-known Stram took over the Texans and, despite his lack of head coaching experience, led Dallas to an AFL title in 1962. The Texans became the Kansas City Chiefs the next year and Stram continued his success.

In 1967 the Chiefs had the chance to play in the first-ever Super Bowl, a game they lost to NFL champion Green Bay, 35-10.

Stram and the Chiefs got another shot at the NFL in 1970. Super Bowl IV was to be the last game for the AFL before it would be merged into the NFL. Kansas City returned to the Super Bowl by beating the Raiders and Jets in the playoffs. KC faced Minnesota, which had led the NFL in total points scored and fewest points allowed. However, the outcome was never in doubt, as the Chiefs crushed the "Purple People Eaters," 23-7. The Chiefs' win evened the head-to-head series between the two leagues at 2-2, and removed many doubts about the AFL's legitimacy.

Stram coached Kansas City several more years, and spent a couple of seasons with New Orleans before retiring in 1977 with a career record of 136-100-10. After he left coaching, he became an acclaimed TV and radio analyst. It wasn't until 2003 that Stram, then confined to a wheelchair, was finally inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. The honor came nine years after the induction of Bud Grant, the coach he defeated in Super Bowl IV.

Today Stram is considered one of pro football's great innovators, having pioneered such formations as the moving pocket and the two tight end offense. He was the first coach



Stram won big 50 years ago.

to have mini-camps, the first coach to hire a strength and conditioning coach year-round, and even the first pro coach to use Gatorade. A keen evaluator of talent, he helped break down racial barriers by bringing in players from traditional African-American colleges, including Willie Lanier, pro football's first black middle linebacker.

Yet Stram is best remembered for that win in Super Bowl IV, and for more than the final score. That day he became the first coach to wear a wireless microphone. When asked to do so by NFL Film's Steve Sabol, Stram responded that there would have to be "some coin of the realm." When Sabol offered \$250, Stram countered: "That wouldn't pay my dry-cleaning bill." They eventually agreed on \$500, and it was worth every cent. A tremendous motivator, Stram was naturally gregarious and had a creative vocabulary. As Kansas City rolled over Minnesota, Stram gleefully threw out memorable one-liners like "let's matriculate the ball down the field," or, after a play succeeded, "this is like stealing." Fans had never gotten such insight into a big game, and Stram's dynamic personality made it all the more fascinating.

Thanks to Hank Stram, the game's highlight show became, according to Sabol, "the most popular Super Bowl film we've ever made." Stram passed away in 2005, but he lives on through his memorable sideline performance in Super Bowl IV, as captured by NFL Films.



Olejniczak helped keep the Packers in Green Bay

HE KEPT THE PACKERS IN GREEN BAY. When we talk about the significant figures in sports, we usually bring up the players and coaches. While **Dominic Olejniczak** never played for or coached the Green Bay Packers, he played a very important role in the history of that franchise.

The Green Bay Packers struggled during the early days of pro football. The team came close to shutting down, but was saved by selling shares of the Packers to the community in 1923. Share sales were limited so that no individual could gain control over the club, and shareholders received no dividend. The shareholders elected a board of directors and an executive committee to run the publicly-owned non-profit.

That model worked out pretty well for Green Bay on and off the field. "Tittletown" soon won six NFL championships, including three straight from 1929 to 1931. After World War II, pro football started to grow, but the Packers struggled. The city's small size (the population was 46,205 in 1940) was a problem, as well as the team's poor performance on the field.

At that time, Dominic Olejniczak, a Green Bay native and real estate broker, was serving as the city's mayor. In 1950 he was also named to the Packers' board of directors, and he led a civic drive that sold more shares to raise \$100,000 for the cash-strapped franchise. Two years later he was named to the team's executive committee. When the NFL threatened to force the Packers to move to Milwaukee if a new stadium wasn't built, he became involved in the funding and construction of New City Stadium (later called Lambeau Field), which opened in 1957.

Olejniczak became president of the Packer Board in 1958, when the team hadn't had a winning season in ten years. In his first year the team posted their worst season ever: 1-10-1. "I can remember him taking me to a game and seeing him hung in effigy," recalled Dominic's son, Tom. "It was a pretty interesting start."

The Packers then started looking for a new coach, and Olejniczak headed the search committee. He pushed for a controversial choice; a little-known Brooklyn-born New York Giants assistant named Vince Lombardi. Despite much opposition, Olejniczak got the board to approve his candidate. Lombardi became the team's head coach and general manager in 1959 and immediately turned the team around. He led the Pack to five world championships over a seven-year span, including victories in the first two Super Bowls. Lombardi was winning championships, and Dominic was busy setting fiscal policies that built up a multimillion-dollar surplus.

The team didn't do as well on the

field when Lombardi left as coach in 1967, but the franchise was in a solid position for the future. Olejniczak served as president until he resigned in 1982. He had been in that unpaid position for 24 years, more than anyone in the team's history. Olejniczak was then named the first Packer chairman of the board and served in that role until he died at age 80 in 1989. One of his two sons, Tom, is a lawyer and long-time Packer board member, and was elected to the seven-man executive committee in 2013.

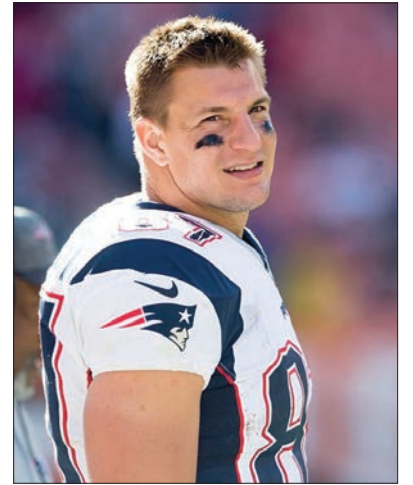
Today the Green Bay Packers are the only community-owned franchise in American professional major league sports. It's also one of the NFL's most successful teams, despite being the league's smallest city (now just over 100,000) and having ticket prices that are among the lowest in the league. You may not have ever heard of Dominic Olejniczak, but his foresight, hard work and community spirit have helped make the Green Bay Packers what they are today.

SPORTS HALL OF FAME PUSHES INDUCTION TO THE FALL. The National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame (NPASHF) has decided to delay its 2020 induction banquet, originally scheduled for June 18, 2020. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the NPASHF board of directors has approved delaying the induction banquet till the fall of 2020, targeting October 29 or November 5 as alternative dates for the induction banquet.

"It is still our goal to honor this year's inductees — World Series Champion catcher A.J. Pierzynski, three-time Olympic medalist speed skater J.R. Celski, NFL Hall of Famer Bronko Nagurski, and all-star pitcher Mike Krukow — into the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame," said chair David Jansen, "We will continue with the award of Stan Musial Scholarships to six deserving high school seniors."

The NPASHF will confirm the specific date for the banquet in early July.

RASSLIN' NEWS. **Rob Gronkowski** had many accomplishments during his 10-year NFL career, but now he has a new one. Gronkowski, who was serving as host of the taped WrestleMania studio event, jumped into the fray and was crowned the WWE 24/7 champion. The WWE



Gronkowski is returning to NFL after some off-field achievements.

24/7 championship was created in 2019, and it frequently changes hands across a variety of WWE platforms. The title has been held by several non-wrestlers, including NASCAR driver Kyle Busch.

The former Boston Patriot (who, at press time, was traded to the Bucs to be reunited with Tom Brady), has among other things been a CBD entrepreneur, NFL analyst for Fox, television special co-host and contestant on "The Masked Singer."

Meanwhile, **Brock Lesnar**, the former MMA champion, lost at Wrestlemania before an empty arena due to the coronavirus pandemic. His defeat to Drew McIntyre ended the 42-year-old "Beast's" fifth reign as WWE champion.

POLISH POWER. According to ethnicelebs.com, one of baseball's top current pitchers and a great hitter from the recent past have Polish ancestry.

Zack Greinke, the standout pitcher currently with the Houston Astros, is Polish on his mother's side. The paternal grandmother of the six-time All-Star was Eleanor Stella Skonieczny. Her parents were Victor and Julia (Mieszewicz) Skonieczny. Greinke is also German, Belgian, English, Scottish and French-Canadian. An outstanding all-around player, he won six Gold Gloves and two Silver Slugger Awards.

Steve Garvey, the former All-Star first baseman, also had a Polish grandmother. She was Mary Nalevaika, the daughter of John and Winifred (Bozenski) Nalevaika. Garvey's also German and Irish. One of the game's most popular players of his era, mostly with the Dodgers, he was a ten-time All-Star and the 1974 NL MVP.



Become a member today

Polish American Historical Association

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

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

Polish American Historical Association
Central Connecticut State University
1615 Stanley Street, New Britain, CT 06050
www.polishamericanstudies.org

FILM

Polish American Baseball Stars in Film

by Joseph Zurawski

After almost fifty years of marriage, Lil, describes the life they have lived together, as “just a wonderful life.” She asks her husband how he would describe it. With his ever-present smile, **Stan Musial** replies, “a fairy tale.” *The Legend of Stan the Man* (1985) reveals that “fairy tale” in rich detail documenting the life and influence of one of the greatest baseball players in American history. Perhaps, only in a dream would a baseball manager send in a 14-year-old water boy for the adult American Legion baseball team in Donora, Pennsylvania to pitch relief in the first inning. Stan Musial gladly accepted the assignment, promptly striking out 15 batters in six innings.

Baseball was Musial’s game, even though he could have gone to the University of Pittsburgh with a scholarship to play basketball. But he got his mom to convince his dad to sign a contract to allow him to play for the St. Louis Cardinals organization. Musial earned \$65 a month in the minors and then was called up late in 1941 to become a member of the St. Louis Cardinals. A shoulder injury kept Musial from a promising pitching career. However, Branch Rickey, the Cardinals general manager, saw Musial bat and was convinced he would become a great hitter. Rickey firmly said, “I don’t want anyone to talk to him on how to hit.” The Cardinals won the 1942 World Series beating the New York Yankees in three straight games in New York with **Whitey Kurowski** hitting a home run in the ninth of the final game to win it for the Redbirds.

Musial had a great year in 1943 and was named the Most Valuable Player in the league. Although his future with the team seemed secure, living arrangements were difficult. Without a car, the young family had to get an apartment close to the stadium so Musial could walk to work.

THE RIVALRY BETWEEN the Brooklyn Dodgers and St. Louis Cardinals was intense. Oddly, when Musial was in the on-deck circle, Brooklyn fans would talk about “The Man.” Musial would “feast” on Brooklyn pitchers. He talks about those series when he would bat 13-15 or 9-11. Even though he would likely be the man to produce a Cardinal win at Ebbets field, Brooklyn fans would often give Musial a standing ovation when he came to bat.

Musial wanted to get his 3,000th hit in St. Louis. That came in Chicago in a game when, as Harry Carey described it, “a Polish guy named Drabowsky served it up and Musial smacked it.” Carey also recalls the day Musial hit five home runs. He claims that Willie Mays made three great catches that kept Musial from hitting eight home runs that day. Musial admits that he came up for his last at-bat determined to hit a sixth home run. “And? ...” someone asks. He laughs, and says, “Yeah, a pop up.”

Musial spent a lot of time in his final year with **Carl Sawatski**. Both had similar backgrounds from small coal-mining towns in Pennsylvania. Once, when Musial struck out on three pitches in his first at bat, he sat next to Sawatski on the bench and told him he would hit

a home run the next time up. Musial did. Only then did the others believe what Musial said before. As Lil explains, “They understood each other well.”

Stan “The Man” Musial (1985) is an ESPN Classic, Sports Century documentary that highlights many great and difficult periods in his life: living in the Donora Smog in his early years, the poor pitching record he had when he joined the minors, the possibility of his being traded to the Phillies (he publicly stated he would quit baseball if traded), his refusal to join a newly-formed Mexican league for a guaranteed \$100,000. The respect Musial had for the game and for every person could not be more clearly documented than when the Cardinals “almost” refused to play the Brooklyn Dodgers. Jackie Robinson was scheduled to play his first game in the major leagues. In the Cardinal clubhouse before the game, there was a question whether a vote should be taken. Musial made it clear there would be no vote and the team was there to play ball. Throughout his career Robinson would always credit Stan Musial for standing up for him.

MUSIAL HAD FANS EVERYWHERE. Even in the middle of an ocean, even in the *Lifeboat* (1944) carrying the survivors from an American ship torpedoed by the Germans in World War II. There is a glimmer of a comforting balm for the man who just endured an amputation of his leg. He was delirious with pain but said, “What a day for a ball game. Look at the way Stan Musial’s been clouting them out.”

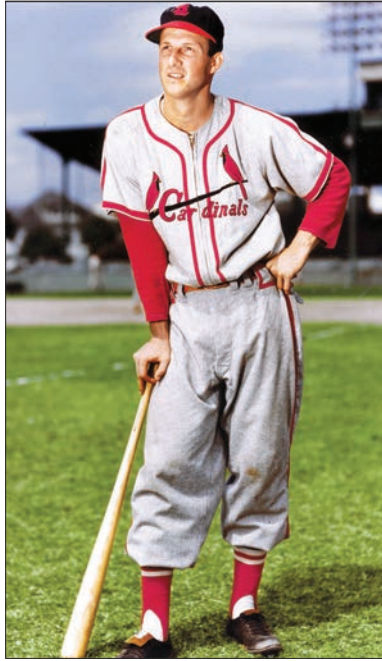
Years later, in *Long Gone* (1987), a hopeful rookie in the same group with Musial, claimed he didn’t make it to the Cardinals, even though he “hit the ball harder, but Stan Musial had a prettier swing.” This film also has Bart Polanski who is really a “good” friend to the manager of a minor league team who sets up the manager with a tempting but very “bad” deal. There’s also an ump, Stan Babiarz.

Two of the many personal touching film tributes to Musial include *Stan Musial’s Last Game* (1964) by Arnold Nano (produced by Jon Leonoudakis and found in *The Sweet Spot: A Treasury of Baseball Stories*) and *Remembrance of a Baseball Legend* (2018, available on YouTube) by Dr. James Palermo.

In 1953, the St. Louis Cardinals featured “The Polish Falcons,” with the team’s home run leaders: Stan Musial (30), **Steve Bilko** (21), **Ray Jablonski** (21), and **Rip Repulski** (21). Also on the team were **Eddie Stanky** (manager), **Tom Poholsky**, **John Romanoski**, **Joe Presko**, and briefly, **Fred Maroleski**. Much was expected in 1954 as reflected in *Let’s Train with the Cardinals* featuring the same players particularly Musial with his family and one of his home runs in slow motion. Musial also appears in *St. Louis Cardinals: Baseball Heaven* (2006).

The first player mentioned in *42: The Jackie Robinson Story* (2013) is Stan Musial. The first shown player hitting is Stan Musial. In the first actual scene of the film we see Eddie Stankey’s name at the top of the line-up and a few notches below there is **Eddie Basinski**. But the attention is on the difficult time Jackie Robinson had in breaking into

organized baseball. After playing in Montreal, Robinson is brought up to play for the Brooklyn Dodgers. Several players start a petition to bar Robinson from the teams. Stanky is one of the few players who refuses to sign the petition. On the first day of the season, when Robinson arrives in the clubhouse, **Gene Hermanski** extends his hand to him and says, I’m Hermanski, Welcome to Brooklyn.”



Stan “The Man” Musial is one of the greatest baseball players in American history, both on and off the field, making him the topic of conversation in scripts.

In a game against the Phillies, their manager is particularly abusive towards Robinson. Stanky approaches the skipper, saying, “Don’t you know he can’t fight back?” The exchange continues until an umpire separates the two. In another game, Robinson is spiked at first base. Stanky runs to assist him. Stanky is hot and says the Brooklyn pitcher should bean the next batter. Robinson is the calming influence insisting, “Just get him out.” By the end of the film, Stanky is a cheering section for Robinson, encouraging, daring an opposing pitcher to pitch a strike to Robinson, “He got sumptin’ for you.” Robinson gets a good pitch and smacks a home run.

(Note: Musial’s role in the scene where Robinson was spiked was deleted since Robinson wanted to strike back, and Musial appeared to agree with him. Whitey Kurowski was also in earlier scripts but was cut in the final production.)

The Polish American All-Stars did quite well in the *1949 MLB All-Star Game*. The five in that game had a most respectable combined batting average of .545. Stan Musial went 3-4 with a home run in the first inning. **Andy (Pruchka) Pafko** was 1-2 and a walk. **Eddie (Tkaczuk) Kazak** was 2-2. **Cass (Kwietniewski) Michaels** was 0-2 but he did score a run and was the fielder on two double plays, and **Andy (Wasal) Seminick** went 0-1 but did get on base as a hit batsman. There is a question about Seminick’s background but his dad was born in Nowy Sacz.

Eddie Waitkus, Lithuanian American, who spoke fluent Polish did not appear in the game.

Guest and Cameo Roles

Polish American Baseball players made guest or cameo appearances in several films. Others were presented in archive footage. These include: *Kid From Cleve-*

land (1948), **Steve Gromek**; *Safe at Home*, (1962), **Ralph Houk**; *One in a Million: The Ron Leflore Story* (1978), Ralph Houk 1978; *Major League* (1989) **Dan Mikorski**, **Steve Knurowski**, **Paul Sikorski**, **Dale Wnuk** and **Dave Wnuk** acted as Yankee baseball players; *When It Was a Game*, (1991) **Whitey Kurowski**, Stan Musial; *Michigan and Trumbull*, (1999) **Alan Trammell**; *61* (2001) Ralph Houk, **Bill “Moose” Skowron**, **Tony Kubik**; *High Hopes: The Anatomy of a Winner* (2003), **John Kruk**; *Faith Rewarded: Historic Season of the 2004 Boston Red Sox* (2004), **Doug Mientkiewicz**; *Reverse the curse of the Bambino* (2004) **Carl Yastrzemski**; *Wait ‘til This Year* (2005), Carl Yastrzemski; *Champions of Faith: Baseball Edition* (2007) **A.J. Pierzynski**; *Pride against Prejudice: The Larry Doby Story* (2007) Steve Gromek; *The Lost Son of Havana* (2009), Carl Yastrzemski; *Knuckball* (2012) **Paul Konerko**, **Hank Majeski**, **Phil Niekro**; *14 Back* (2018), Carl Yastrzemski.

Baseball Films Featuring Pol Ams

Big Adam Polachuk, a teen, who “runs kind of funny,” reports to the New York Giants camp in *The Big Leaguer* (1953). He’s from a small mining town in Pennsylvania. He is not quite like the other eager ballplayers: when he makes a bad throw to first base, he apologizes. A newspaper reporter notices Polachuk and is impressed since he “looks like a ballplayer.”

After the first cut is made and Adam survives, an article about Adam appears in Adam’s hometown newspaper, *Pittston Clarion*. He explains to the niece of the manager that his father believes Adam is attending school. After the niece tells Adam, “Your running out on your own life,” Adam decides to remain in the camp.

The final day of camp is a game between the Giants rookies and the Brooklyn Dodgers rookies. Mr. Polachuk, Adam’s dad, arrives for the game. He is determined that Adam leave the team and report to school. The manager promises Mr. Polachuk that Adam will be off the team after the game. During the game Mr. Polachuk is seated next to a dad of one of the players who highly compliments Adam and expounds on the exploits of those making it to the big leagues:

“Why, even the son of Italian immigrants, Joe Dimaggio not only made it, but is being paid \$100,000 a year to play for the Yankees.”

When Mr. Polachuk asks, “Suppose it’s a Polish boy?” He is assured that talent determines a big leaguer and Adam has talent. After the game, Mr. Polachuk supports Adam’s assignment to the Big League system for the princely sum of \$150 a month. Adam wasn’t the only Polish American at the Giants camp, the starting shortstop listed on the chalkboard was Jasinski.

The Legend of Pinky Deras is the tribute to the greatest Little League player of all time. Inducted into the National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame in 2011, Deras pitched for the Hamtramck Little League Baseball Team on their way to the 1959 world championship. That season Deras was 18-0, pitching, with 16 shut-outs, 10 no-hitters, and averaging 2.8 strikeouts

a game. He was also an outstanding batter hitting 13 homers in 13 tournament games and 33 for the season with 112 RBIs and a .641 average. **Tom Paciorek**, a teammate of Deras on the World Championship Hamtramck Pony League team in 1961 also appears.

Many displaced families from Poland came to New York during World War II. *The Greenie* (1942) is a film about American boys teaching a newly-arrived lad from Poland the game of baseball.

In *For the Love of the Game* (1999) Billy Chapel, an all-star pitcher with the Detroit Tigers, has, it turns out, a big game looming at the end of the season. **Gus Sinski** is his ever-observant and trusted catcher: did Billy flinch when he was putting a bag in the overhead on the plane? After the manager wants to substitute for Sinski since he isn’t hitting and is slow, Billy insists Sinski is the catcher for the game. Sinski has the big hit in the game, hustling a double and scoring a run.

Joe (Stosh) Stoshack is featured in *The Winning Season* (2004). Joe is a baseball card collector and finds a Honus Wagner card, the most valuable baseball card in history. Joe is featured in *Baseball Card Adventures*, a series of 12 books, each about a prominent baseball player. In a little league game, Joe gets tired of insults about his Polish heritage. He charges the mound with his bat ready to give the perpetrator some advice. Joe is banned from Little League. He’s also given an assignment to write a report on an influential African-American. He selects Jackie Robinson.

Did you know a **Moose Skowron** baseball card was worth \$65 in 1993? Find out what it leads to in *Needful Things* (1993).

Coach Pajersky and his son, **Caleb Pajerski**, are the spellings in the film’s sub-titles and cast of characters for a father and son in *Home Run* (2013). Both are intense, aggressive and demanding. Coach Pajersky even benches his own son Caleb for striking out. The setting is a small town in Oklahoma.

After a few years’ absence, **John Zbikowski** is greeted as, “the best baseball player I ever saw.” The greeter is commissioner of Little League Baseball and candidate for city council. John is no longer playing baseball. He is a bookie, takes care of his elderly father who was released from jail. He re-greets and seduces a high school acquaintance, for whom he “steals” a large TV, who has a son, who Zbikowski befriends so he can introduce betting on little league games. Zbikowski is a cunning manipulator blaming everyone (usually in very vulgar language) for his shortcomings and commitments... until he begins to repent and paints over his name on the Little League’s Wall of Fame continuing his efforts in making his past deeds *All Square* (2018).

Richie Rich (2015) is young boy billionaire with no friends but a strong desire to play baseball with others since he can really smack a ball. He seeks out a sand lot game. As events unfold, there is a girl pitcher, **Gloria Parzinski**, who makes a \$10 bet with Richie that he can’t hit her pitching. The group of players gets along well, and Mrs. Parzinski makes arrangements to travel to Richie’s estate for a game.

IN MEMORIAM

Walentyna Janta-Polczyńska, Confidante to Sikorski

NEW YORK — Walentyna Janta-Polczyńska, secretary and confidante to former World War II era Polish Prime Minister-in-exile Władysław Sikorski, died on April 2 in Queens, at the age of 107. She was one of the last surviving members of the Polish government-in-exile, formed after Nazi Germany invaded Poland.

When Poland was invaded in 1939, Janta-Polczyńska was studying English in London and was soon hired by the Polish embassy. Then, she was promoted to personal secretary to General Władysław Sikorski, the prime minister of the Polish government-in-exile and commander of the Free Polish Armed Forces, and became his confidante, said the *New York Times*, which reported her passing.

The daily noted that Janta-Polczyńska, as the chief translator for the Polish cabinet, attended meetings with foreign leaders, including Winston Churchill.

She performed two intelligence roles for the Polish resistance movement. In one, she translated and prepared reports by Jan Karski, the underground courier who was among the first to deliver eyewitness accounts of atrocities against Jews in the Warsaw ghetto prior to being deported to extermination camps.

Her second role was to assist in organizing, and being one of the first announcers for, "Swit" (Eng. "Dawn"), a clandestine radio station that broadcast to Poland from an intelligence complex in England.

Her last mission for General Sikorski was assisting in the organization of his funeral arrangements; he was killed when his plane crashed shortly after takeoff from Gibraltar in July 1943. Walentyna Stocker (Walentyna Janta-Polczyńska) was born on February 1, 1913, in the city of Lviv, which was then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and is now located in western Ukraine. Her father, Ludwik, worked in the mining industry

and hailed from an English family that had initiated oil exploration in the region.

In 1939, she commenced studies in England and while there was briefly married to Wilhelm Pacewicz, a Polish navy officer.

"After the war, she was assigned to the Women's Auxiliary Service and given the rank of second lieutenant in the Polish army," the daily wrote.

She served as a translator for the Americans stationed in Frankfurt, Germany. During this time, she mostly debriefed Polish former prisoners of war and concentration camp inmates who had been victims of medical experiments.

In 1947, she emigrated to the United States with her mother (her father had died before the war). Two years later, she married the journalist and poet Aleksander Janta-Polczyński.

The couple lived in Buffalo, N.Y., before opening their bookstore in New York City and transforming their home into a meeting place for the Polish émigré elite. Visitors included literary figures like Zbigniew Herbert, Jerzy Kosiński, Jan Kott, and the Nobel laureate Czesław Miłosz.

Janta-Polczyńska cooperated with numerous Polish organizations in the United States, including the Piłsudski Institute of America, a scientific research organization and archive in Brooklyn, and the Kościuszko Foundation in Manhattan.

After her husband died, she donated much of their collection of maps, documents, prints and manuscripts to the National Library in Warsaw.

In 2011, she was awarded the Medal of Merit for Polish Culture by Poland's Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, and in 2016 she received the Jan Karski Eagle Award.

Her ashes will be interred alongside her husband's in Warsaw's Powązki cemetery, NYT said.

Jerzy Głowczewski, Last Polish World War II Fighter Pilot

NEW YORK — Jerzy Głowczewski, the last living Polish fighter pilot who fought in World War II, died in New York, April 13, 2020, at the age of 97.

Born on November 19, 1922 in Warsaw, he fled Poland soon after the Nazi and Soviet invasions of 1939, making his way, through Romania, to Palestine, where he later graduated from a Polish high school in Tel Aviv.

He then joined the Polish Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade and, having undergone flight training in Britain, was posted to fly Spitfires in the No. 308 "City of Kraków" Polish Fighter Squadron.

He was decorated with the Polish Cross of Valor three times.

After the war, Głowczewski lived for a short period in France, before returning to Poland in 1947.

He graduated from the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw University of Technology, and worked on some of the city's post-war reconstruction projects.

He left for the United States in the early 1960s, where he lectured at the North Carolina State Uni-

versity and pursued a career as an architect in the United States and Arab countries.

Głowczewski is the author of three volumes of memoirs: *Accidental Soldier* (2003), *Optimist After All* (2004), and *The Last Fighter Pilot* (2017).

In an introduction to *Accidental Soldier*, which has been published in the United States in an English translation, Głowczewski wrote: "I have lived on the edge of a precipice, yet have somehow managed to miss the worst fate. I have been steps away from death, a refugee fleeing deportation, starvation, and death camps.

"While fighting on two fronts during World War II, I had been shot at innumerable times; while in combat, I have without a doubt caused the death of others.

"After the war's end, living under a Soviet-imposed communist regime, I was spared torture and prison. And I did not choose emigration, but circumstances forced me and my wife and daughter to accept it."

— Radio Poland

Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archbishop Emeritus of Cincinnati, Theologian, and Author

Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archbishop Emeritus of Cincinnati and a nationally prominent churchman, educator and author of popular books about Catholic themes, died at the age of 85.

"Among his brother bishops, Archbishop Pilarczyk was recognized as one of the outstanding churchmen of his time," said his successor, the Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr, Archbishop of Cincinnati. "They elected him not only president of what was then the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, but also chair of every significant committee of the bishops' conference.

Pilarczyk was born in Dayton, Ohio, on August 12, 1934. After studies at the Pontifical Urban University in Rome, he was ordained a priest on Dec. 20, 1959. His ordination as bishop in 1974 and installation as archbishop in 1982 also were on Dec. 20. His resignation as Archbishop of Cincinnati was accepted by Pope Benedict XVI on Dec. 21, 2009, the day after the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. At the time he was the country's longest-tenured archbishop and the longest serving active bishop. In retirement he continued to serve generously in administering the sacraments.

The archbishop's distinguished service to the American church included terms as vice president (1986-1989) and president (1989-1992) of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. He also chaired many committees of the conference, including those on education, liturgy, and doctrine.

"A theologian and classicist viewed by many as the U.S. hierarchy's smartest bulb, there's seemingly not a national post-Pilarczyk hasn't held," commentator Rocco Palmo wrote on his Catholic blog "Whispers in the Loggia" in December 2007. "Atop the list: board-chair of the Catholic University of America, chair of ICEL (International Committee on English in the Liturgy), chair of the bishops' committees on Doctrine, Liturgy and Priorities and Plans – and, of course, vice-president and president of the episcopal conference." Palmo later (September 2008) wrote that he was "regarded by many of his confreres as the leading intellect among the U.S. bishops."

Archbishop Pilarczyk wrote

Charles T. Peszynski, Past PAC of Buffalo President

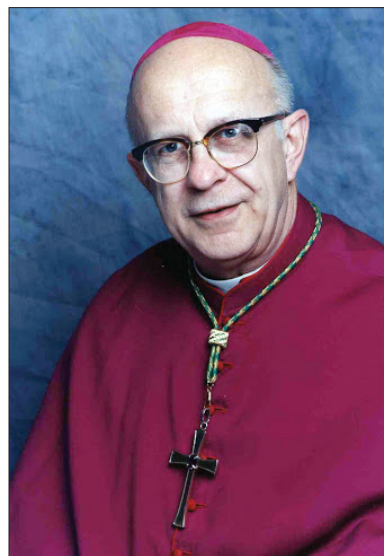
Charles T. Peszynski, 78, a past president of the Polish Arts Club of Buffalo (2010-2013 and 2015-2017), died April 14, 2020.

He was a retired Buffalo Schools Teacher of 36 years, where he taught history at McKinley High School.

In retirement he and his wife Loretta were very active members

DID YOU KNOW? Poland has four Catholic churches: The Roman Catholic Church, commanding the allegiance of more than 90% of Poles, the tiny Polish-Catholic Church, offshoot of the Scranton-based Polish National Catholic Church, and the even smaller Old Catholic Church of the Mariavites and the Catholic Mariavite Church, the latter having woman priests and bishops.

— Robert Strybel



more than a dozen popular books and many pamphlets and articles. His best-selling book was *Twelve Tough Issues: What the Church Teaches – and Why*, subsequently revised as *Twelve Tough Issues – And More*. His most recent were *When God Speaks* and *Live Letters*. As he approached the end of his ministry as archbishop, he launched the "Grateful Believers" initiative to heighten awareness of God's blessings and the proper response in stewardship. He wrote a score of articles for *The Catholic Telegraph* and invited dozens of others to share their own stories as grateful believers. In retirement, he wrote and recorded a daily 90-second homily on the Gospel reading of the day, "Sharing the Word," which was heard on the Internet and broadcast over more than 100 radio stations. In 2011, he was honored by the Salesian Guild as Catholic Communicator of the Year.

Other major achievements of Archbishop Pilarczyk include:

- At a time when many dioceses chose or were forced to close seminaries, Archbishop Pilarczyk presided over a seminary that improved academically and physically. In addition to training future priests in its Mount St. Mary's division, the Athenaeum of Ohio is also a training center for lay ministry. Its Lay Pastoral Ministry Program was one of the first in the country (1975).
- Archbishop Pilarczyk ordained more than 100 priests and three bishops. He conferred confirmation on more than 74,000 people.
- In a proactive response to the declining number of priests available, Archbishop Pilarczyk created the "Futures Project." In

addition to developing new strategies to increase vocations, the project also created 100 pastoral regions that will provide a structure for the archdiocese to operate the current parishes with as few as 100 pastors.

- He was a strong supporter of Catholic radio in the archdiocese, making a substantial contribution from the Archdiocese toward the purchase of Sacred Heart Catholic Radio 740 AM and frequently appearing on the air. The station began with a broadcast blessing from Archbishop Pilarczyk on Jan. 1, 2001. He also encouraged *Radio Maria*.

While demographics led to the closing and merging of schools and parishes in the Archdiocese, as throughout the country, Archbishop Pilarczyk had the joy of dedicating 37 new churches or chapels and rededicating 25 in his years as archbishop. Although only 44th in size among dioceses around the country, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati has the sixth largest network of Catholic schools.

In addition to a doctorate in sacred theology from Pontifical Urban University (1961), Archbishop Pilarczyk held an M.A. in classics from Xavier University in Cincinnati (1965) and a Ph.D. in classics from the University of Cincinnati (1969). Every major college and university in Cincinnati awarded him an honorary doctorate, including Hebrew Union College / Jewish Institute of Religion (1997). The University of Cincinnati's College of Arts and Science also named him a Distinguished Alumnus of the Year in 2001.

He had a strong interest in education. From 1963 to 1974 he was on the faculty of the former St. Gregory Seminary in Cincinnati, the last six years as Rector. While auxiliary bishop of Cincinnati from 1974 to 1982, he was Director of Educational Services for the Archdiocese.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati is the 44th largest Catholic diocese in the country, with more than 450,000 Catholics, and has the fifth largest Catholic school system in terms of enrollment with more than 40,000 students. The 19-county territory includes 211 parishes and 110 Catholic primary and secondary schools.

Peszynski was preceded in death by his wife Loretta M. (Urso) Peszynski, and is survived by children, nieces, and nephews.

Donations in his memory may be made to St. Luke's Mission of Mercy, 325 Walden Ave., Buffalo, NY 14211 / (716) 894-4476.

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THE PONDERING POLE

May is the Month for Feminism

by Edward Poniewaz

In the Catholic tradition, May is the month for Mary, Mother of Jesus, and having grown up in a Catholic ghetto, we always had a May crowning at our grade school in honor of her. Polish churches traditionally have a May crowning as Mary is the beloved mother, protector, and revered patron of Christian Poland. Mary was also a favorite of Saint Pope John Paul II. Pope John Paul has said that the Black Madonna Shrine, a Marian shrine, is “a bastion of faith, spirit, and culture.”

For some other Christians, even some Catholics, American progressives, and liberally minded persons in general, John Paul II — though they acknowledged him as a sincere and enthusiastic believer — was culturally and theologically backward. He wasn't perceived as “woke,” as Pope Francis is in this country. In an article about the new book by Sue Ellen Browder, entitled, *Sex and the Catholic Feminist* (Ignatius Press/Augustine Institute, January 2020), we learn that Saint Pope John Paul II was really a feminist.

Yes, a feminist. I have not read the book and maybe this is just news to me, but what a nice thing, even an astounding thing, to hear about him especially in the month of May, the month for Mary. Come to think of it, I guess it is possible to make the case that Mary was a feminist in her own right. At the wedding feast in Cana (John 2:1-11), Mary tells the servants, “do whatever he tells you.” Those simple words are full of power and meaning and in a certain way, how appropriately it ties to the topic.

Browder, who is Catholic, pro-life, and calls herself a feminist, observed that, “during his pontificate, John Paul II urged Catholics not to reject feminism but to embrace a ‘new feminism’ and, in private audiences, called himself ‘the feminist pope.’” In 1988 the pope wrote the apostolic letter “Dignity and Vocation of Women” and I would encourage you to read it. In this letter, Saint John Paul II discusses many different sides of womanhood such as women as presented in scripture, women as beings juxtaposed to men, and woman, Mother of God. Here is a line from the letter, perhaps as a thought from Saint John Paul II to carry with you: “The personal resources of femininity are certainly no less than the resources of masculinity: they are merely different.” Amen.

Amen I say to you, also, that Sue Ellen Browder is not the only woman that has John Paul II's back. Well before *Sex and the Catholic Feminist*, a paper appeared in *Crisis* magazine in 1997 entitled “The Pope's New Feminism.” It was written by Mary Ann Glendon, United States Ambassador to the Holy See from 2004 to 2009. I would encourage you to read it. This is another extraordinarily worded effort to show the Church's and especially John Paul II's attitude and concern towards women. She mentions the Pope's “new feminism” principle and adds a new dimension that speaks of his humanity and his heart.

By the mid-1990s, it was clear that one of the great achievements of the papacy of John Paul II has been to give greatly increased life and vigour to the Second Vatican



In 1988, John Paul II wrote the apostolic letter “Dignity and Vocation of Women.” In it, he discusses many different sides of womanhood, such as women as presented in scripture, women as beings juxtaposed to men, and woman, Mother of God.

“The personal resources of femininity are certainly no less than the resources of masculinity: they are merely different,” said the future saint.

Council's fertile statements on women. In a remarkable series of writings, he has meditated more deeply than any of his predecessors on the roles of women and men in the light of the word of God ... No one who reads these messages can fail to be impressed by the evident love, empathy, and respect John Paul II holds for womankind, nowhere more manifest than in his compassionate words to unwed mothers and women who have had abortions. The image that comes through is of a man who is comfortable with women, and who listens attentively to their deepest concerns.

The words “comfortable with

women” in that last sentence is, as they say in the MasterCard commercial, priceless. “New feminism,” compassionate, comfortable, and listens are totally contrary to anything you would have ever heard presented in the American media, but it is refreshing to hear again how relatable Pope John Paul II was to the faithful, especially women. But we always knew that and maybe it ties in very nicely to a guy who professed to be “the feminist pope.”

Polish or not?

ECM stands for “Edition of Contemporary Music” and was the “inception of producer Manfred Eicher of ECM records.” ECM is a number of things (musical classifications, recording sonics, and specific artists) but it also includes avant-garde jazz. In my *Rough Guide Book of Playlists* (Rough Guides Ltd., London, 2007), the description for **Jan Garbarek** says: “The cathedral-toned Norwegian saxophonist ... defined the ‘ECM sound.’”

Garbarek, born in Mysen, Norway in 1947 is the son of a Polish World War II prisoner of war and a “farmer's daughter” from Norway. His inspiration began as a teenager when he heard John Coltrane on the radio and he subsequently learned to play the saxophone. His journey as a musician spans fifty-five years and over that time he has composed, conspired and played with some of the finest musicians in the jazz world, and has incorporated a number of different influences such as Indian and Eastern music, medieval polyphony, and Scandinavian folk melodies.

He apparently is well aware of his Polish lineage as he was a regular at the Polish Jazz Jamboree in Warsaw from 1966 to 1973 and has performed a number of times in Poland since then. As for his ability, I did some time on YouTube to see if he is the real deal. Check him out yourself but be sure you listen to “Brother Wind March.”

Remember the character Millie Swanson on *Mayberry R.F.D.*? Millie was played by **Arlene Leanore Golonka**, who was born in Chicago in 1936 and is of Polish descent. She roomed with Valarie Harper for a time and had numerous supporting roles over the years in film and television. Besides *Mayberry*, she appeared in TV series such as *The Flying Nun*, *I Spy*, *That Girl*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *M*A*S*H*, *All in the Family*, *Taxi*, and *Murder, She Wrote*. Arlene could play cute and perky as well as sexy and had a wonderful career as an actress and as an acting coach.

Remember Mary this May, Happy Constitution Day, and hopefully by the time you receive this edition of the *Polish American Journal* the virus-crisis will have subsided and we will all be enjoying the summer, out, and working and buying stuff. If you have a thought about this month's topic, have a question, or have interesting facts to share, contact me at: Edward Poniewaz, 6432 Marmaduke Ave., St. Louis, MO 63139; email alinabrig@yahoo.com.

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

POLISH CHEF

Be Sure to Get Enough Fresh Vegetables

by Robert Strybel

The benefits of eating a variety of fruits and vegetables is crucial to good health, which is very important under current conditions. Whether making a trip to the supermarket or ordering for delivery, add some of the items from these Polish favorites to up your intake of colorful, fresh food.

FRESH TOMATO SOUP (zupa ze świeżych pomidorów). If you have been raised on canned tomato soup, you probably don't realize how good the made-from-scratch variety can be. And it's super easy too! Simply wash and cut into quarters 2-1/4 lbs fresh, vine-ripened, in-season local tomatoes and simmer in 2 T butter in saucepan or skillet until tender (only a few minutes), stirring with wooden spoon frequently. Force mixture with wooden pestle or spoon through sieve into 8 c meat stock, bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Fork-blend 1/2 – 3/4c sour cream with 1 heaped T flour until smooth and add 1/2 c hot soup 1 T at a time, stirring constantly. Stir sour cream mixture into soup pot and return pot to flame. Simmer but do not boil around 10 so flour loses its raw taste. Season to taste with salt & pepper and serve over cooked egg noodles or rice.

TOMATO SALAD (salatka z pomidorów). Wash and slice 2-3

firm tomatoes and arrange on large serving dish in a single layer. Chop 1 med onion fine. Salt & pepper tomatoes and sprinkle with a little lemon juice. Sprinkle a little chopped onion at center of each tomato slice. Variation: Slice, arrange and season tomato slices as above. Slice 2 small onions wafer thin and arrange on top of tomato slices. Sprinkle salad with chopped chives or green onions. Note: This salad is very good dressed with vinaigrette. It can also be dressed with liquefied sour cream, but it should be added just prior to serving — otherwise the salad will become “soupy.”

CREAMY CUCUMBER SALAD (mizeria). This is a classic Polish salad that many PolAms remember from their Polonian childhood. Peel 2 nice-sized cucumbers and slice into thin rounds. Sprinkle with salt and let stand 30 min. Pour off liquid. Sprinkle with freshly ground pepper, 2-3 pinches sugar and 1 T lemon juice or cider vinegar. Lace with 1/2-2/3 c fork-blended sour cream Optional: Add a small onion sliced wafer thin and/or garnish with finely chopped fresh dill.

LETTUCE SALAD, POLISH STYLE (zielona sałata po polsku). For a genuine Polish-style lettuce salad, select Boston or bib lettuce (rather than iceberg, leaf, romaine or other varieties). Twist off and discard the core that holds the leaves together. Separate the leaves and wash well,

dry on paper towel and place in shallow serving dish. (Polish style-lettuce salad is not ordinarily served in deep salad bowls.) If the leaves are quite long, tear each into 2 or 3 pieces. To dress 2 small to medium heads 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. Variations: 1) after dressing the lettuce decorate the top with 2 sliced hard-cooked eggs and dust with paprika; 2) scatter 8-10 thinly sliced radishes over the lettuce before or after dressing with sour-cream sauce; 3) scatter 4-5 chopped green onions over lettuce before or after dressing; 4) garnish the basic recipe or variants 1-3 with chopped chives.

SPRING-ONION SALAD (salatka ze szczypioru). Wash well, drain and chop 4 bunches of green onions (green tops and white bulbs). Sprinkle with salt & pepper and drench with sour-cream sauce as in lettuce Polish style (above). 2-3 diced hard-cooked eggs may be added.

RADISH, CUCUMBER, GREEN-ONION SALAD (surówka z rzodkiewek, ogórka i szczypioru) Trim, wash, dry and slice 2 bunches radishes. Peel and slice thin 1 cucumber. Chop 4-5 green onions. Toss ingredients together and dress with sour-cream sauce as in Polish-style lettuce (above). Optional: Garnish with 2-3 sliced hard-cooked eggs and dust lightly with paprika.

QUICK & EASY PICKLES (pikle szybkie i łatwe). In saucepan combine 1 c 6% distilled vinegar, 1/4 c water, 1 T salt, 1/2 to 1 c sugar, several peppercorns and grains allspice, 1 bayleaf, 1 t mustard seed and 2 buds garlic and bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer about 10 min. Set aside. In large bowl combine 1-3/4 lbs small cucumbers, peeled and sliced 1/4” thick, 2-3 small onions thinly sliced, 1 green bell pepper (minus seed portion) diced. Drench with warm marinade through sieve to catch the spices, cover with dinner plate and let stand on counter until cooled to room temp. Pack into small jars with twist-off lids, seal and refrigerate. Ready the next day.

DILLED NEW POTATOES (młode kartofelki z koperkiem) This is probably the Poles' favorite form of potatoes, and most look forward to summer when the season's first, tiny new potatoes become plentiful. If you can get real, walnut-sized new potatoes, instead of peeling them use a nylon scrubber to scrub away the thin skins under cold, running water. Place 2-1/2 lbs scrubbed new potatoes in pot, cover with boiling water, add 2 t salt and cook on med heat about 30 min or until fork-tender. Drain. Dot with butter (about 1 T) and garnish with finely chopped fresh dill. Toss gently to evenly coat potatoes with melting butter and dill. They make a nice summer lunch or light supper

served with a bowl of cold buttermilk or sour milk.

VEGETABLES POLONAISE (jarzyny po polsku z masłem i tartą bułką). Vegetables cooked in lightly salted water until tender (especially cauliflower, wax beans, potatoes, Brussels sprouts, carrots, cabbage and potatoes) as well as pierogi, egg noodles and potato dumplings (kopytka) are excellent when garnished with butter-browned breadcrumb topping. Heat 2-3 T unsalted butter until bubbly and add 2-3 T plain dry bread crumbs, simmer, stirring frequently, until nicely browned. Spoon mixture over hot, well-drained veggies, pierogi, dumplings or noodles.

STRAWBERRIES & SOUR CREAM (truskawki ze śmietaną). Hull and wash strawberries and drip-dry. Leave small berries whole. slice larger ones in half and the largest into quarters. Serve dusted with confectioner's sugar and a dollop of sour cream on each portion.

HONEYED CUCUMBERS (ogórki z miodem) This may sound strange if you've never had it, but try it and you may well exclaim: “Hey, this is better than watermelon!” And its super-easy to prepare. Peel a cucumber or two, cut in half width-wise and then slice the halves into spears. Arrange on serving dish, drizzle with honey and enjoy!



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DANCE TIME

Life Without Polkas? No!

by Jennifer Pijanowski

As I have mentioned in several articles in the past, I did not grow up listening to polka music. The first dance I attended was well over twenty years ago and now I am lucky enough to attend a minimum of five polka events each month. Buffalo has been very blessed to entertain polka audiences through the large number of bands, dances, and festivals that are hosted right here in our hometown. Those events that I had always taken for granted, came to a screeching halt in mid-March when the unfortunate event of COVID-19 hit all of us. Slowly, I watched as, one by one, as dances and polka club meetings were cancelled.

I thought this might last a few weeks, but we would be back on track for the long-awaited Crusade reunion dance at the end of the March. Then suddenly, that was also cancelled with hopes of re-scheduling sometime in the Fall.

As life began to change, with restaurants and bars closing and non-essential businesses being put on hiatus, the overwhelming doom continued with the cancellation of Dyngus Day 2020 events. As I was processing this, I thought to myself, how can someone who didn't grow up with this music feel such a sense of emptiness with these events not taking place.

Immediately I remembered a video Kevin Adams posted a few years ago and I rushed to watch it on YouTube. The video entitled "Life Without Polkas," showcases pictures of polka fans from the United States and Canada enjoying a variety of dances and festivals. The soundtrack to these memories is Prime Drive's "Life Without Polkas," released in 1996. I had listened to the song many times but this time was vastly different. The lyrics echoed through my head as I realized I wouldn't be sharing the laughter, fun, and memories of so many events with people that I truly cherish.

The lyrics start:

Just stop to think what polka music means to folks like you and me, a weekend polka dance, there's no place I would rather be.

The refrain:

*I'd hate to see what life would be like without polkas,
The music that I've always loved that means so much to me.
I'd hate to see how life could be for polka fans like you and me.
I'd hate to see what life would be without polkas.*

I knew that I would miss my polka friends but thankfully there have been so many ways for us to keep in touch and enjoy the music we all love.



Val's Dyngus Day Celebration, 2014. Buffalo. Alicia Iwanczuk, Stephanie Bieniek, Lynn Thull, Kayla Urbanczyk, Chris Sikorski, Dawn Rosinski, and Sue Oginsky



Seven Springs Polka Fireworks 2009. Lynn Chwojdak, Mark Kaczmarek, Terri Greene, and Michelle Bojczuk.

POLKA JAMMER NETWORK has been on in our home pretty much nonstop since mid-March, getting us our polka fix and allowing us to occasionally join in the chat room. The IJs have been doing an incredible job working endlessly to satisfy our yearning for our favorite music and to be connected to other polka fans.

I have noticed more fans in the chat room, requesting their favorites, and reminiscing of past bands, dances, albums, festivals, and memories. I also want to thank the entire local list of polka DJs around North America who have continued to keep upbeat music playing both for their local audiences and in many cases for out-of-towners who can listen online. A lot of time and effort is put into these shows and it becomes more difficult in times like this when the future is uncertain and sponsorships begin to lag. We definitely want polka music to continue on the radio and internet

so please support these shows in any way possible.

MANY POLKA MUSICIANS have been offering entertainment for polka fans via Facebook and YouTube. International Polka Associations Hall of Famers **Mollie B & Ted Lange** have been posting a video every day for our enjoyment. Sometimes it is a live video of them performing, others are a prerecorded video but every one of them brings joy while watching. One of my favorites included "Don't Cry Anna" polka that had a unique surprise: Mollie was playing in Ohio and recording on her phone while her dad was playing concertina while recording in Wisconsin. The two were showcased in a video side by side and it is extraordinary. It is amazing how much technology is able to connect us through this time. Mollie and Ted did a drive-through polka event in a local church parking lot and even a live



Seven Springs Polka Fireworks, 2019. Kevin Adams, Adam Biskup, Rich Benkowski, and Les Kapuscinski



IPA Convention 2018. Buffalo. Gary, Brianne, Maverick, Matti, and Mason Brueggen

in-home concert. You can check out all of the daily posts and more on [YouTube.com/Mollie By](https://www.youtube.com/MollieBy).

Another Polka Hall of Famer, **Gary Brueggen**, has taken time to post live polka videos from his basement with his incredibly sweet and talented family. These phenomenal videos include Gary playing concertina, his wife **Brianne** on piano, son Mason on the drums, with high spirited daughter **Matti** singing, and their youngest son **Maverick** usually making an appearance in the background playing. Gary is not only an outstanding musician but a sensational person as well.

I was lucky enough to have met him several years ago in Milwaukee at the Polish Festival and his honest-to-goodness personality was blatantly obvious. A few years ago, we got to spend some time with him and his family in Buffalo when he was inducted into the Internal Polka Hall of Fame. I know that many feel the same about this terrific family and have fallen even more in love with them while tuning in for their family videos.

If you haven't already, go to YouTube and subscribe to Gary Brueggen to watch these amazing videos. Gary, the band leader of Gary's Ridgeland Dutchmen from Wisconsin, has been playing polka

music since he was five years old when his parents bought him his first set of drums; he played his first job at the age of nine. He was given a concertina at age 10 and eventually took over the leadership of his family band becoming a favorite in the Midwest. When reflecting on these isolating times, I reached out to Gary to get his favorite polka memory and he quickly responded. Gary recalled the weekend of September 14-16, 2001.

"This was the first weekend after 9/11 happened," he said. "We were scheduled to play at the Corn Palace in Mitchell, S.D. for a weekend festival. After the events, no one was sure of what to do, but the committee decided to keep the weekend. It worked out to be one of the biggest weekends they'd had for quite a while. By then, people did not want to watch TV and wanted to be out and listen to music and be with their polka friends. At the end of the weekend, all of the bandleaders received Keys to the City of Mitchell for their good works and lifting spirits in a very difficult time. We were honored to have been a part of that and it's a memory that will last for a long time."

After hearing that story, I know that I am eager to attend the first festival of this year and feel that positivity and enthusiasm.

Rick and I have been keeping in touch with our polka friends via phone calls, FaceTime, Facebook,



United States Polka Association 2014. Diane Nowakowski, Lenny Gomulka, and Mike Nowakowski.

and online meeting apps like Zoom. I dread to think what life would be like without polkas because, after only a month, I am yearning for some live upbeat music and time spent with my treasured polka family. My hope is that polka festivals and dances resume soon and that we are all able to get together. This is a reminder not to take these amazing musicians for granted and to support every possible polka event you can in the future.

Hold tight to those memories spent dancing and listening to your favorite song, musicians, and bands. Those heartwarming memories make me realize that life without polkas is simply not a life that I would enjoy living. I wish you all health and safety until we can see each other again for a well-earned celebratory *na zdrowie*.

MAY POLKA BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays courtesy Li'l John's Polka Show, WAVL Radio 910 AM and 98.7 FM, Saturday 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., and on the web at www.987jack.fm. Live streaming at www.PA_Talk.com. For information, write to: 121 Seminole Dr., Greensburg, PA 15601; (724) 834-7871; johnnalevanon@aol.com.

2	Dave (Nigel) Kurdziel	1968	Musician (Bass) / Vocalist	Grand Rapids, Mich.
4	John Stanky	1939	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Nanticoke, Pa.
5	Erik Volek	1978	Musician (Drums)	N.Y.
6	Al Soyka	1922 4-5-13	Bandleader / Musician	Conn.
10	John Demerski	1935 6-2-15	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Conn.
10	Lenny Zielinski		Bandleader / Musician	Chicago
12	Allen (Abe) Carrick	1948	Musician (Drums)	Pa. / Ariz.
13	Big Joe Siedlik	1934 1-1-15	Promoter / DJ	Omaha
14	Stacey Morris		Musician / Vocalist (Nutones)	Pa.
16	Gary Krupski (Krew)		Musician / Vocalist (Krew Bros.)	Cheektowaga, N.Y.
16	Eddie Korosa Jr.	1958	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Chicago
16	Chris Bogdon	1971	Musician / Vocalist	Pa.
17	Ray Kovac	1936	Bandleader / Musician (Al Ray Combo)	Ohio
17	Dave Pietrzak	1945	Musician / Vocalist	Cleveland
18	Don Evans	1927 4-24-04	Polka DJ. (WEEP)	Pittsburgh
18	Eddie Swiderski	1939 4-19-71	Musician / Arranger (Naturals)	Chicago
18	Robyn Mrozinski	1976	Musician / Vocalist	Minneapolis
19	Karl Lukitsch		Bandleader / Musician	Pa.
20	Ryan Ogrodny		Musician / Vocalist	Pittsburgh / Nashville
21	Mitch Biskup		Vocalist / Raconteur (Golden & New Brass)	Ludlow, Mass.
22	Ray Soyka	1924	Vocalist (Al Soyka Orch.)	Conn.
22	Greg Novak		Musician / Vocalist	Chicago
22	Tom Kula	1936 10-21-18	Musician / Vocalist (Ampol-Aires)	Chicago
22	Chet Schaffer	1922- 4-11-2018	DJ / Producer (Chicago Polka Records)	Chicago
22	Steve Fornek		Bandleader/Musician/ Vocalist	Chicago
22	Henny Jasiewicz	1945 4-25-17	Bandleader Vocalist (Henny & Versa-Js)	McKeesport, Pa.
23	Vinny Horoschock		Musician (Stanky & Coalminers)	Nanticoke, Pa.
23	Matt Gregg Jr.		Bandleader / Vocalist	Pa.
24	Ann Golembewski		Promoter / DJ	Conn.
24	Rich Suckiel		I.J. (Polka Jammer)	N.J.
24	Jas Prasnyski	1925 1-4-96	Musician / Vocalist (Conn. Twins)	Conn.
24	Stas Prasnyski	1925 11-24-14	Musician / Vocalist (Conn. Twins)	Conn.
26	Marisha Data (Mary Gribac)	1910 10-12-72	Musician / Arranger / DJ	Chicago
26	Jimmy Soldridge	1942 10-10-09	Bandleader / Musician / DJ	Pa.
27	Jersey Polka Richie	1958	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Fla.
29	Louie Jedlowski	1947 7-30-07	Musician (Trumpet)	Chicago

JUNE POLKA BIRTHDAYS

1	Derryl Schmitz	1960	Musician / Bandleader / Vocalist	Mich.
3	Steve Muchoney	1944	Musician / Vocalist	Pa.
3	Eddie Forman		Bandleader / Musician /Vocalist	Mass.
4	Rich Sendra	1942	Musician (Original Versatones)-	Chicago
5	Ray Budzilek Sr.-	1929 6-21-82	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Ohio
5	Big Steve Krzeminski	1945 - 11-6-99	Bandleader / musician / Vocalist / DJ	Buffalo
5	Rich Biela	1952	Musician (Drums)	Ohio
6	Steve Gibala	1978	Musician / Vocalist	Pa.
7	Rich Benkowski	1955	Musician (Original TBC)	Ohio
8	Rose Zelinski		Musician / Vocalist (Jolly Js)	Ohio
9	Bob Earl	1960	Musician / Vocalist	Toledo
9	Dave Smialowski	1970	Polka DJ.	New Castle, Pa.
10	Fred Brozek	1934	Lyricist / DJ WTCC	Mass.
11	Ed Ostry		Polka DJ.	Ohio
11	Major Mel Himes	1957	Polka DJ.	Erie, Pa.
12	Chet Kowalkowski	1939	Musician / Vocalist (Versatones)	Chicago
14	Don (Porter) Baptiste	1939	Musician (Trumpet) / Ha-Lo Musician	Mass.
14	Henry langlois		D.J. / Record Collector	Rhode Island
15	Jeff Volek	1976	Musician / Vocalist	Pa.
17	John Stevens	1976	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Pa.
18	Chester J. Jakoski	1933 10-16-07	Polka DJ. / Promoter	Pittsburgh
18	Eddie Madura	1939 12-25-16	Musician (Casinos) Bel-Aire Studio Musician	Chicago
18	Rick Gazda	1952	Musician / Bandleader	Philadelphia.
19	Jimmy Homel		Musician	Chicago
20	Sil Martini	1932 11-13-08	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist (Invictas)	Pa.
20	Bob Bajek		Musician (Trumpet) Polka Dot -5 / Lush Band	Chicago
20	Bill Czerniak	1946 4-18-02	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Minn.
20	Steve Spitek	1964 2002	Musician (Drums)	Pa.
21	Dan Gury	1931	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist / Arranger	Mich.
21	Peter Shalins	1946 3-31-2014	Bandleader / Musician	N.Y.
23	Rich Raclowski	1961	Musician / Vocalist	Wisc.
23	Jolly Joe Truszkowski	1944 4-23-09	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist / DJ	Pa.
24	Molly Busta		Musician / Vocalist (Squeeze Box)	Ohio
26	Francis (Lefty) Lewandowski	1932 1993	Musician (Trumpet) Lush Band	Chicago
27	Bryant Gambu	1956	Musician	Chicago
28	Julie (Julcia) Dusseault		Vocalist / DJ/ Promoter Happy Louie's Wife	Mass.
28	Randy Krajewski		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist-Toledo	Toledo
29	Bob Frydryk	1958	Musician / Vocalist (EFO)	Mass.
29	Ron Urbanczyk	1955	Bandleader (New Direction)	N.Y..

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Bobeks Return to “Family Feud”



Members of the Bobek family returned to compete on “Family Feud” Monday, April 13.

CHICAGO — The five Bobek siblings, whose musical talents and Polish heritage took them all the way to the “Family Feud” show, returned to the show for its season opening, April 13. At their appearances in February, they won back-to-back shows, and \$20,000 in prizes. Upon their return, they more than doubled that amount.

“We were winners just for being selected,” says Jan Bobek of Bolingbrook, the middle of the five siblings who now teaches music and orchestra at Willowbrook High School.

“Just being flown out to Universal Studios in Hollywood was a dream come true,” he adds. “We felt like movie stars, so for us it was a win from the start.”

Besides Jan, the Bobek family includes Jeff Gal of Bartlett, Danuta Gal of Wood Dale, Matt Bobek of Harwood Heights and Dan Bobek of Chicago.

The three youngest brothers perform in a family band called Kapela Hajducy, which plays at Polish festivals and regularly at the Highlander House on Chicago’s Southwest Side. All of the siblings grew up immersed in music and their heritage.

“There was no question in our

house,” Jan Bobek adds. “We all learned to play the violin.”

In the first episodes, host Steve Harvey even played tambourine along with them as they performed a quick song they wrote for “Family Feud.”

“Being on set was so surreal,” says Matt Bobek, who teaches physical education at Lane Tech High School in Chicago.

“Nothing can truly prepare you for the nerves you experience in the spotlight,” he says. “We had pep talks between takes, we encouraged one another, and kept a positive attitude throughout the taping.”

When their first episode aired — many months after it had been taped — the large extended family gathered together for a party to watch. This time, given the social distancing order, they will gather together virtually to see their episode.

“Our preparation, love and support for one another helped us succeed,” Matt Bobek says. “We practiced daily and watched the show religiously. We were there to have fun, but like any other family, we wanted to win. It was a life-changing experience that brought us closer together.”

Ray Toloczko - First Rate Artist in the “Second City”

by Geraldine Balut Coleman
photos by the author

Blazing yellows, brilliant pinks, and extraordinary jewel-like colors encased in black calligraphic lines characterize many of **Raymond Toloczko’s** paintings. The colors that he used are impressively strong. Toloczko also challenged the traditional palette, often creating his own colors. He loved to use magenta, red, and orange in his artistic style that was like no other. Meticulously detailed, and yet at times puzzling, many of his paintings are refreshing and vigorous. His subject matters range from portraits, still lifes, nudes, flowers, landscapes, and expressions of religious themes.

The paintings resulting from his travels in Poland imagine original views of Krakow, Warsaw, and Poznan. His **Krakow** landscape view of the Wisla River and Wawel Castle with picnickers shows interesting

1951. Various scholarships and grants enabled him to attend the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Madison, Maine and the Instituto Allende, San Miguel de Allende, in Guanajuato, Mexico. He spent approximately five years working and living in Mexico, at which time he sold many of his Mexican-oriented paintings to support himself. Additionally, he spent a year traveling throughout Europe, making Venice his headquarters, painting and exhibiting throughout Europe. Once he returned to the Chicago area, he began exhibiting his works locally at such sites as at the Palmer House, the Cliff Dwellers, the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, the Cudahy Memorial Library at the Loyola University Chicago, the Loyola University Museum of Art (LUMA), and the Evanston Art Center in Evanston, just to name a few. Throughout the late 1950s and mid-1960s, Toloczko won numerous awards including several from the Polish Arts



Last Supper



Black Madonna

subtleties.

Toloczko is an artist who is hard to categorize, because he is so original. He isn’t associated artistically with any artist or any artistic movement. He once said “Even after some 20 years in the Chicago art scene, I am still searching for my “audience.” But his audience has found him.

The brightest of his colors

can be seen in “**Angels Have a Picnic on a Polish Mountain Top,**” or simply “**A Polish Picnic.**” It was an outstanding Kościuszko Foundation award-winning painting that toured the United States and was then exhibited at the American Embassy in Warsaw. Looking at the painting, the viewer sees angels not just having an ordinary picnic, but dining on Polish culinary specialties - cabbage, mushrooms, pierogi, ham, and kielbasa. There are even a couple of artichokes, a favorite vegetable of Toloczko’s. His stunningly eye catching works include the pensive and haunting “**Last Supper,**” a unique version of the “**Black Madonna,**” an interesting “**Bagel Lady,**” and the mystic “**Procession.**”



A Polish Picnic

Club of Chicago, the American Council of Polish Culture, and the Pauline Palmer Award from the Art Institute of Chicago. He was the first recipient of the National Polish Arts Club Award. In his later years, He was a part-time art instructor at Loyola University.

Perhaps his crowning achievement was his design of the stained-

glass windows at St. Cyprian Catholic Church in River Grove, Illinois. The Sanctuary Wall, measures 20 feet by 40 feet with ten 4-foot by 10-foot windows. Collectors of his artwork are located throughout the United States, Mexico, and Europe, and a large collection of his original paintings, drawings, and limited edition prints of Toloczko’s works have been retained by his family.

Through his creations, he left a legacy of vividly painted canvasses and intricate drawings. His imagination took him on a wild chase of daydreams, beauty, and laughter in art.

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