

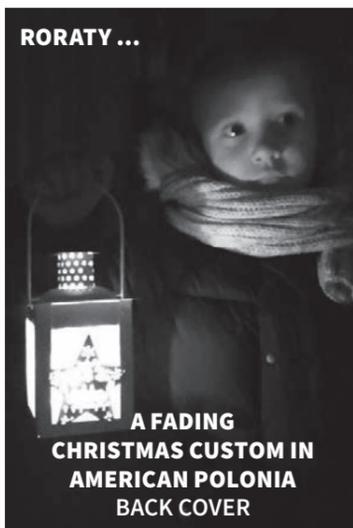
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RORATY ...

A FADING CHRISTMAS CUSTOM IN AMERICAN POLONIA
BACK COVER

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

Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia!

NEWSMARK

TROOPS TO STAY “FOR A LONG TIME.” President Joe Biden has told public broadcaster Polish Radio that U.S. troops will remain stationed in Poland and other NATO countries “for a long time,” as Russia wages war on Ukraine. Biden made the declaration at a White House briefing. John Kirby, the U.S. National Security Council’s Coordinator for Strategic Communications, told Polish Radio that Biden deployed an additional 20,000 U.S. troops to Europe in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

TOTAL REFUGEE COUNT AT 7.61 MILLION. In mid-November, Poland has taken in over 7.61 million refugees fleeing Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the Polish Border Guard agency reported. Meanwhile, more than 5.8 million people have left Poland for Ukraine since February 24, the agency also reported. A deputy interior minister said Poland was home to some 1.3 million Ukrainian refugees after many who had fled Russia’s invasion decided to return to their country. Seventy-six percent of Poles are in favor of accepting refugees from war-torn Ukraine, according to a recent survey.

HOLDS DRILLS TO PROTECT INFRASTRUCTURE. (PolskieRadio.pl) Poland’s security services, including the Internal Security Agency (ABW), held joint exercises to practice ways to protect the country’s critical infrastructure against attacks by unmanned aerial vehicles. The drills took place at a training ground in the southern Polish town of Lubliniec in late October, the biznesalert.pl website reported.

They followed a recent wave of Russian attacks against Ukraine’s critical infrastructure using Iranian loitering munitions, or kamikaze drones, according to biznesalert.pl.

POLISH, SLOVAK PMS OVERSEE MILITARY EXERCISES. Polish and Slovak prime ministers were on hand to oversee major allied military exercises in southeastern Poland featuring troops from four Central European countries as well as the United States and Britain.

The Puma-22 drills are the biggest war games this year by Central Europe’s Visegrad Group (V4), a regional cooperation platform that brings together Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary, Polish state news agency PAP has reported.

Poland was represented at the event by troops from its 18th Mechanized Division, who were exercising near the southeastern town of Nowa Dęba, according to officials.

The division’s spokesman, Maj. Przemysław Lipczyński, told reporters the aim of the exercise is “to enhance the interoperability of the participating forces and to test their ability to plan, organize and execute tactical action in tandem with allies.”

Some 2,000 soldiers with around 300 pieces of military equipment were taking part in Puma-22, practicing “scenarios that draw on the lessons of the war in Ukraine,” officials told reporters.

MURAL IN PRAGUE HONORS POLISH ANTI-COMMUNIST PROTESTER. A mural has been unveiled in Prague to pay tribute to Ryszard Siwiec, a former Polish Home Army soldier who set himself on fire in protest of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia more than 54 years ago. The mural, which was created by local artists and unveiled in November, is on a street in Prague 3-Žižkov named after the Polish anti-communist protester and next to a monument honoring him.

On the night of August 20, 1968, Soviet-led Warsaw Pact forces invaded Czechoslovakia to put a stop to liberal reforms.

Less than three weeks later, Siwiec protested the move by dousing himself in paint thinner and setting himself ablaze during an official harvest festival in central Warsaw, where some 100,000 people had gathered. Before setting himself on fire—an idea he may have borrowed from monks protesting the Vietnam War—the 59-year-old wrote his will and recorded an anti-communist manifesto which ended with the words: “Hear my cry, the cry ... of a man who loved his own freedom and that of others more than anything else, more than his own life.” He left his wife a letter in which he said: “Forgive me, it could not have been any other way.”

Siwiec died in hospital four days after later.

His protest went largely unnoticed. The authorities said Siwiec was mentally ill and film footage of Siwiec in flames did not emerge until after the fall of communism. He was posthumously awarded Czech, Slovak, and Polish state distinctions.

St. Nicholas was an early Christian bishop from Myra in Asia Minor during the time of the Roman Empire.



St. Nicholas of Bari. Anonymous, c. 1665-70. Museo de la Trinidad, Madrid

Six Different Santas

The Myths and Maths of Christmas in Poland

by Marek Kępa
Culture.pl

Most Poles receive their Christmas presents from Santa Claus – in this aspect, there’s nothing really exceptional about Poland. But did you know there are five other mystical figures dishing out gifts during the winter holiday season too? Here are the myths and even the maths when it comes to getting presents in Poland.

YOU’VE HEARD OF THE FIRST GUY. As early as the 15th century, children were told that St. Nicholas, a bishop who lived in the Mediterranean town of Myra at the turn of the third and fourth centuries, would bring them presents at Christmas. St. Nicholas was chosen as the “patron of gifts” because in his life he was famously generous to the needy. That this Catholic and Orthodox saint was a popular figure in medieval Poland can be seen by the long list of people named after him, including the famous 16th-century writer Mikołaj Rej, and the poet Mikołaj Sep Szarzyński.

In the old days, Santa Claus (imagined as a bishop) was especially popular in Eastern Poland, but today he’s responsible for bringing presents to households all over the country – without a doubt popular culture has boosted the prominence of this familiar bearded old-timer, even if it has altered his image to resemble a can of Coca-Cola.

See “Six Santas,” page 4

De-escalation in Poland Film Opens about Cardinal Wyszyński

KYIV, Ukraine — Polish and NATO officials confirmed a missile that struck near the village of Przewodów, 4.3 miles from the Ukrainian border, was likely unintentional and not a targeted launch by Russia. The projectile struck an area where grain was drying, killing two people. The initial findings significantly eased concerns the incident would trigger a response by NATO. The 30-member bloc, which counts Poland—but not Ukraine—as a member, has a mutual defense agreement in the event of military attacks.

Polish President Andrzej Duda suggested the accidental strike came from an errant Ukrainian air defense missile as the country attempted to defend against a daylong barrage of missiles from Russia.

The Ukrainian military said it shot down 77 of 90 missiles fired by Russia on the day of the attack. Russian forces were targeting power generation and transmission infrastructure. Close to five million Ukrainians are without electricity, heating, and in many cases drinking water, as winter approaches.

U.S. Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff — the nation’s top military officer — said in the aftermath of the missile explosions in Poland he tried to reach out to his Russian counterpart but was not able to get through. Milley said his staff tried to get Russia’s top-ranking military official Gen. Valery Gerasimov on the phone to discuss the incident with “no success.”

Milley did not elaborate on the efforts, but the lack of communications raised concerns about high-level U.S.-Russian communications in a crisis. A strike against Poland, a NATO member, could have risked a larger conflict if it turned out that Russia had launched the strike.



Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński (left). His stand against National Socialism and Communism earned him hero status. It was Wyszyński who urged Cardinal Karol Wojtyła (right) to accept his election as pope.

WARSAW — A new film that tells the story of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, a former Polish Catholic leader who is widely remembered in the country as the “Primate of the Millennium,” opened in theaters on November 11, Poland’s Independence Day.

Wyszyński was at the helm of the Catholic Church in Poland as its Primate from 1948 until his death in 1981. The movie, entitled *Prophet*, focuses on his defiance against the country’s communist authorities.

The title is taken from the name of an operation masterminded by the communist regime and aimed at destroying the Church. Code-named “Prorok” (Prophet),

See “Wyszyński ...,” page 9

ALMANAC

EDITOR'S DESK

December Grudzień

"Get to know other worlds,
if only for comparison."
— Wisława Szymborska

- 1 **1873.** Founding of the Polish Roman Catholic Union.
- 2 **1948.** St. Louis Cardinal Stan Musial named National League MVP.
- 3 **1854.** About 800 Polish settlers arrive in Galveston, Texas after a nine-week voyage. The walk over 200 miles from the port to Panna Maria, where they hold Christmas Eve Mass outdoors.
- 4 **ST. BARBARA**
- 5 **1925.** Death of Nobel laureate Władysław S. Reymont.
- 6 **ST. NICHOLAS (SW. MIKOLAJ).** Today is traditionally reserved for gift-giving in Poland.
- 7 **1279.** Death of Bolesław V the Chaste
- 8 **1941.** Chelmno extermination camp opened in Nazi-occupied Poland.
- 9 *Kto rano wstaje, temu Pan Bóg daje. Whoever gets up in the morning, God gives to him.*
- 10 **1944.** Death of John Dende, publisher of *Republik-Gornik*, the forerunner to the *Polish American Journal*.
- 11 **1949.** Johnny Lujack of the Chicago Bears passed for 468 yards and six touchdowns in a 52-21 rout of the Chicago Cardinals.
- 12 **1981.** In Poland Gen. Jaruzelski imposes martial law.
- 13 **1570.** Signing of the Treaty of Stettin concludes the Northern Seven Years' War.
- 14 **1970.** Government price hikes in Poland spark bloody labor protests.
- 15 **1859.** Birth of Lazarus Ludovic Zamenhof, developer of Esperanto, the International Language, in Białystok, near Lithuanian, Poland and Byelorussia borders.
- 17 **1970.** Riot police opened fire on workers protesting food price increases and 44 people were killed in Gdańsk, Gdynia, Szczecin, and Elbląg.
- 18 **1929.** Birth of Cardinal Józef Glemp.
- 19 **1852.** Birth of Polish Jewish scientist A.A. Michelson, 1907 Nobel Prize winner in Physics.
- 20 **1982.** Death of Chopin advocate and pianist Arthur Rubinstein.
- 21 **ST. THOMAS**
- 22 **1955.** Birth of actress Jane Kaczmarek.
- 22 1990. Lech Walesa sworn in as president of the Third Republic of Poland.
- 23 **ST. JOHN KANTY (CANTIUS).** 1473. **1937.** Birth of first Polish American astronaut, Karol Bobko.
- 24 **DZIEŃ WIGILIJNY**
- 25 **1798.** Birth of Adam Mickiewicz ("Pan Tadeusz"), considered Poland's greatest poet.
- 25 **BOŻE NARODZENIA**
According to Polish tradition, the 12 days of Christmas predict the weather for next 12 months.
- 26 **ST. STEPHEN**
Na Święty Szczepan, każdy sobie pan. On St. Stephen's Day, everyone is master.
- 27 **ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST**
- 28 **1918.** Greater Poland Insurrection begins.
- 29 **1820.** Birth of Tytus Chalubinski, Polish physician who established the famous tuberculosis sanatoria in Zakopane, Poland.
- 30 **1977.** President Jimmy Carter visits Poland.
- 31 **ST. SYLVESTER**
Niech już wystrzelą korki szampana, A ty baw się świetnie do białego rana! Let the champagne corks become airborne, and you will play 'til early morn!

A Wesolych Świąt to All!

by Mark Kohan

The staff of the *Polish American Journal* would like to send wishes for a blessed and merry Christmas to all our readers and sponsors. Your support enables us to keep alive the traditions and beliefs of our shared heritage, not only at Christmastime, but throughout the year. Because we consider each one you part of the PAJ family, we symbolically break the opłatek with you, and ask that God may bless you with health, wealth and happiness.

THANK YOU, ST. JOHN. If you are reading this edition of the PAJ, you can thank St. John Bosco, patron saint of editors and publishers.

In late October, a new internet router was set up in the PAJ's office. For two weeks, we operated on minimum internet service. Mind you, over 75% of our business is conducted through the internet. This caused us major delays in setting up Christmas advertising, sending and receiving orders, and correspondence with staff, writers, and vendors.

The trouble, it turns out, was a conflict between Google (you know who they are) and Verizon, our internet service provider, and we have the hefty invoice from the IT firm we use to prove it.

And if that wasn't enough, the storm that hit Buffalo starting Nov. 17 snapped a tree limb, which landed on wires leading to our office. Luckily, the power — albeit flickering — remained on while we worked on the paper.

There is more, but I will spare

the Dickensian twists and get to the happy ending: We are at 90% predicament footing, and hopefully — by the time you receive this edition — things will be back to normal.

A POLISH CONNECTION TO "SILENT NIGHT"? Every country has a beloved Christmas carol. The French have "Pour Bien Chanter Noel." The English sing about the "Good King Wenceslas." From Poland, we have a carol that was first composed as a coronation Polonaise for King Władysław Waza in 1632. Two hundred and forty years later, the poet Franciszek Karpiński wrote the words to that Polonaise and it became known as "Bóg się rodzi," often called the Queen of Polish carols because of its character and lyricism.

*Bóg się rodzi, moc truchleje,
Pan niebiosów obnażony!
Ogień krzepnie, blask ciemnieje,
Ma granice Nieskończony.
Wzgardzony, okryty chwałą,
Śmiertelny Król nad wiekami!
A Słowo Ciałem się stało
I mieszkało między nami.*

*God is born, great powers tremble,
Lord of Heaven lies forsaken.
Fire is frozen, splendor darkens,
feeble nature God has taken.
Lowly born, yet Lord to Praises,
Mortal yet the King of Ages.
Now indeed the Word made
Flesh has come on earth
to dwell among us.*

While every country may have its favorite carol, there is one that is universally known. It was composed high in the Austrian Alps in

1818 by a village organist, Franz Gruber; words to it were written by the village priest, Father Joseph Mohr.

The song? "Stille Nacht," known in Polish as "Cicha Noc," and in English as "Silent Night."

Neither Gruber nor Franz composed another piece of music or prose, and both died without knowing their hastily-written carol would be sung in every language the world over. However, almost 150 years before Gruber and Mohr created "Silent Night," a monk with a Polish connection had written:

*Lo! in the silent night
a child to God is born,
And all is brought again that
ere was lost or lorn.
Could but thy soul, O man,
become a silent night?
God would be born in thee
and set all things aright.*

The monk, Angelus Sileius, was born Johannes Scheffler to Stanislaus Scheffler (c.1562–1637) and Maria Hennemann (c.1600–1639). Stanislaus was of Polish ancestry and was a member of the lower nobility. He dedicated his life to the military, was made Lord of Borowice, a village in the administrative district of Gmina Podgórzyn. He received a knighthood from King Sigismund III. A few years before his son's birth, he had retired from military service in Kraków. Maria, who bore Johannes in 1624 in Breslau, Silesia (Polish: Śląsk; now Wrocław, Poland) was the daughter of a local physician with ties to the Habsburg Imperial court.

An enthusiastic convert and

priest, Silesius worked to convince German Protestants in Silesia to return to the Roman Catholic Church. As a religious poet, he is best remembered primarily as the author of "Der cherubinischer Wandersmann" (1674; "The Cherubic Wanderer"), considered a major work of Roman Catholic mysticism.

Were Mohr's famous words influenced by Sileius' poem? We may never know. Regardless, the words and melodies that bring us closer to the miracle of God's birth among us hold a special place in our hearts, no matter what language they are sung in.

TAX DEDUCTION. Please consider a donation to the Polish American Journal Foundation, a 503c non-profit organization. Funds are used for the scholarships and to help other Polonian non-profits. Learn more by turning to page 23 in this month's edition.

PLEASE PRAY for the eternal rest of longtime PAJ supporter, Rev. James J. Meszaros (March 18, 1939–Nov. 15, 2022), a retired priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn. Condolences may be sent to: Rev. Msgr. Thomas C. Machalski, Sacred Heart of Jesus, 215-35 38th Ave., Bayside, NY 11361.

FINALLY, THIS CHRISTMAS-TIME, remember all serving in the Armed Forces, both at home and abroad. And please do what you can for those for whom the season will be neither merry nor bright because circumstances beyond their control.

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of Buffalo, New York, wishes all Polonia
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i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku

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Wigilia. Dec. 3, 2022. 6:00 p.m. Polish Falcons, Depew, N.Y.

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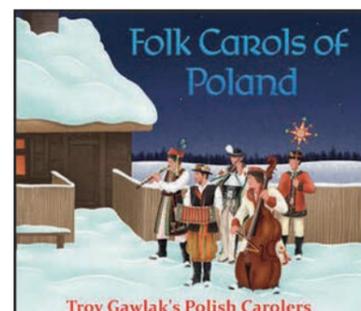
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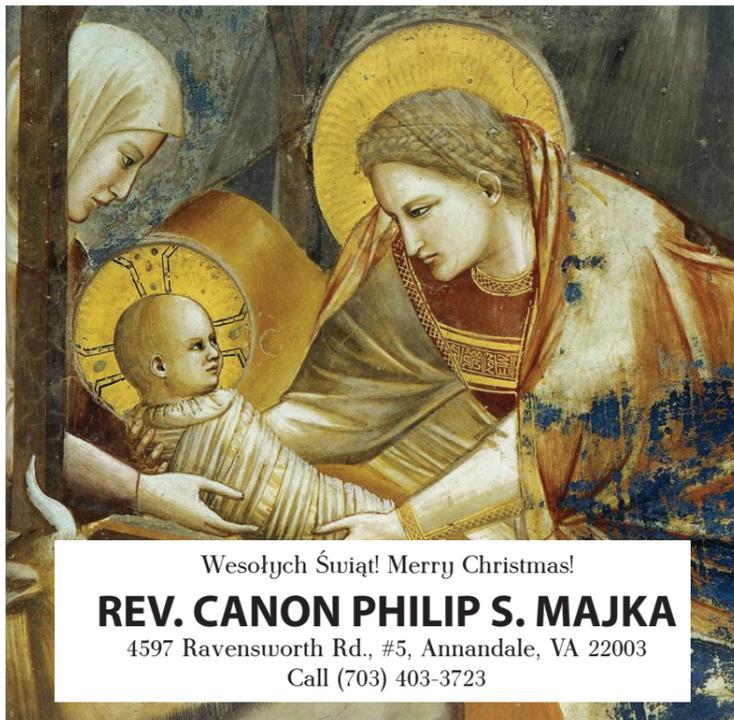
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Do Betlejem pośpieszajcie,

Przywitać Pana.”

In the Midnight stillness sounds a joyful call:

“Arise, O Shepherds, come you one and all.

Taking gifts as you are able,

hasten quickly to the stable,

Come and greet the Lord!”

A very blessed Christmas to all as you come to Christmas Masses.

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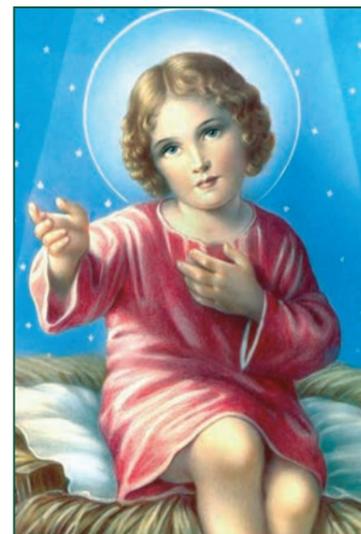
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FORT EDWARD, NEW YORK

Six Santas: Gwiazdor is an older fellow dressed a bit like a bishop

continued from cover

THERE'S A STARMAN WAITING IN THE SKY. But that's not to say that every Pole gets their presents from Santa. On the contrary, there are a surprising number of other possibilities, often of a regional character. For instance, one from western Poland sounds like it may have been an influence on a particular David Bowie song ... Here's what pop singer Dagmara Melosik from Poznań has to say:

"After Christmas Eve supper, the doorbell would ring and the kids would rush to the door to see if Starman had come in person or, being busy at Christmas, if he had only left the gifts in a sack in the house somewhere. Me, I've seen him many times, he was always very nice to us (although he had the traditional birch with him) and often after giving us a gift, he'd give us a task, like singing a Christmas carol."

Who is this Starman? In Polish, he's called *Gwiazdor* and he's an older fellow dressed a bit like a bishop. He not only carries presents with him but also the aforementioned birch switch – if you've been bad, you'd better watch out. The Starman tradition is closely linked to the western region of Greater Poland, where it was especially strong in the 19th century.

The Starman is probably connected to the ancient tradition of caroling, namely going door-to-door and singing carols. Typically, carolers would go around in groups and one would carry a staff with a

star on top. That role is said to have evolved into the figure of the gift-bringing Starman.

IS THAT AN ANGEL? OR A GENEROUS STAR? The Little Angel, another traditional gift-bringing entity is said to be a spin-off from the Starman. Like the ex-caroler, it is believed to come from another world and like him it is associated with the well-wishing spirits of our ancestors.

The Little Angel — *Gwiazdka* — brings presents to some families in Greater Poland, but its primary area of operation lies in the south, in the region of Lesser Poland. Sometimes the angel appears in person (some might say they are some dressed-up family member, but that could surely never be the case), while on other occasions, they just fly by unseen, discreetly leaving the presents below the Christmas tree.

In southwest Poland, the presents are often brought by an actual star. Young ones keenly watch the skies on Christmas Eve, waiting for the appearance of the first star, knowing that this event magically causes their presents to arrive beneath the tree.

This old tradition references the biblical episode when the Magi, or Three Kings, visited the new-born Jesus to pay their respects. They knew how to find him after seeing the so-called Bethlehem Star in the sky. In Poland, this motif is so strongly associated with the season that Christmas Eve itself is often simply called *Gwiazdka* or "The Little Star."

continued on page 5

Gwiazdor's Pre-Christian Roots



Gwiazdka and Gwiazdor

According to the Union of Slavic Communities of Slavic Native Belief, a group founded in 1997 to study pre-Christian diets and practices, **Gwiazdor** (or **Gwiżdż**) is a character who asks about good and bad deeds, and brings gifts during and after Christmas (originally after winter solstice) in the Polish folklore. He appears mainly in the regions of Kashubia (where his name is spelled **Gwiżdż-dór**), some parts of Warmia, provinces of Greater Poland, Kuyavia-Pomerania and Lubuskie.

Gwiazdor wears a mask with a beard, a long coat made of either hairy fur or woven straw, sometimes appears wearing a high "crown" of woven straw, and his accessories are bells and various types of rods. He often carries a

bag with small gifts for the children, in which he also keeps small birch-rods (*rózcgi*) as a "gift" for those who weren't dutiful during the year. His name is derived from the word *gwiazda* meaning a star, and can be translated roughly as a Star-Man or Man of the Stars.

He is a unique character based on a certain archetype of an old all-knowing man arriving from the underworld, possibly based on old-Slavic winter deities, but in the modern Poland his name is often used as a synonym for the Santa Claus. In other regions of Poland the same type of character was appearing under the different names, for example **Wigiliorze** / **Wiliarze**, **Starcaki**, **Józefy** (often in plural forms).

Gwiazdor was often accom-

panied by **Gwiazdka** (literally a "Little Star") — a mysterious woman dressed in a long white dress, often covering her face and wearing a flower wreath. Her costume included elements made of straw, flowers, and many colorful ribbons or a veil. Over the course of time she was gradually replaced by a typical figure of an angel (still called a *Gwiazdka* in most of the cases). In the modern days she often appears also as a figure of a veiled bride.

They're closely connected to the custom of **kolędowanie** (known in English as **koliada** / **koleda** or "Slavic caroling"), winter ritual of pre-Christian roots later incorporated into the celebrations of Christmas, New Year's and carnival season (*zapusty*). They arrive with a larger group of people dressed in various symbolic costumes who stroll from house to house to sing traditional carols in exchange for sweets, drinks or small money, and have fun or pull harmless pranks with the householders. The groups of **kolędnicy** (carolers) can be spotted from the evening of the Christmas Eve up until the day before Ash Wednesday (which usually falls in the beginning of February). Important in that context is the traditional custom of waiting for the "First Star" to appear on the sky before dining on the Christmas Eve in Poland.

Source: <https://www.rodnovery.ru/en/articles/865-gwiazdor>

WESOŁYCH ŚWIĄT BOŻEGO NARODZENIA DLA MOICH PRZYJACIÓŁ



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND BEST WISHES TO MY FRIENDS
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Six Santas: Some Orthodox Poles have their presents delivered Dziadek Mróz

continued from page 4

THE BABY VS. THE OLD MAN.

Also, in the South of Poland, in Silesia, *Dzieciątko* or the Christkind is responsible for delivering the presents: yes, the Baby Jesus himself brings the goodies, passing through unseen. The tradition of *Dzieciątko* which means “little child” in English, came to Poland via Czechia and is closely linked to the Protestant story of the gift-bringing Christkind, as started by Martin Luther.

The tiny baby Jesus hauling all those presents around is probably the most impressive of our spectacular six, when you really think about it. Meanwhile, in the eastern parts of Poland, comes his direct opposite.

DZIADEK MRÓZ. In the east, some Orthodox Poles have their presents delivered by the so-called Grandfather Frost, or *Dziadek Mróz*. He first started bringing presents on a large scale in 19th-century Russia, having been popularized for example by Rimski-Korsakov's opera *The Snow Maiden*.

Old legends often do not present *Dziadek Mróz* in a positive light. In old beliefs, he was associated with a cruel old man who combined the worst features of three Slavic deities: *Pogvizda* (god of winds and weather), *Zimnik* (god of winter) and *Korochun* (underworld). What did he do for entertainment? He froze people, kidnapped children and demanded ransom gifts for the return of the child. It was only in more recent times the image of this figure

was completely reversed, taking on the features of Santa Claus.

To some Poles, *Dziadek Mróz* is a controversial figure as he reminds them of the times of Russian domination – the Soviets purportedly tried to get him to replace the more religious seasonal figures since he was considered more secular.

BUT WAIT, WHAT DAY DO WE GET THE GOODS? The question about when one receives presents during the Christmas season, as opposed to from whom, is of course an entirely different one. Note that, unlike many other countries, in Poland the gifts are received the day before Christmas, a tradition that goes way back:

The ancient Romans called the first day of each month *calendae*. So, the start of the new year was also described with this term and was merrily celebrated under the name *Festum Calendarum*. In the Middle Ages, the new year started on December 24, so naturally, the traditions of Ancient Rome that had influenced the European nations introduced the word *calendae*, in a transformed version, to many languages. That word became linked to the Christmas Holidays and to giving New Year's presents.

This charming quote from the *Old Polish Encyclopedia*, written in the years 1900-03 by the renowned Polish ethnographer Zygmunt Gloger, explains not only why presents usually appear Christmas Eve, that is on December 24, but also why New Year's is linked to this tradition.

The custom of giving gifts on

Christmas Eve and on New Year's called “the carol” (*kolęda*) is very old. Herbert (a 16th-century lawyer and historian) wrote in the times of Sigismund Augustus that “Children run around on New Year's and friends gift one another, especially their lordships gift their servants, the rich give to the poor, wishing each other all the best on New Year's.”

One has to say, however, that nowadays the custom of giving presents on New Year's is very seldom observed in Poland. Nevertheless, the date is a traditional one and from time to time, it pops up in the context of Christmas presents.

On the other hand, the tradition of giving gifts as early as December 6 is doing very well indeed. This old and very traditional custom originates from the fact that long ago the Church designated this date as the day people should remember St. Nicholas, the aforementioned bishop of Myra. That also makes it the name day for all people called Nicholas everywhere.

So, December 6, affectionately called *Mikołajki*, is typically for giving smaller presents, like sweets. Nowadays, it is treated as a kind of warm-up before the serious present-getting on the 24.

16,777,216 WAYS TO GET A PRESENT. To make things even more complicated, let's not forget the Orthodox Christians. Accord-

ing to a 2011 census, the second biggest religious group in Poland after the Catholics are the Orthodox Christians (about 150,000 people).

If you weren't aware, the Orthodox use a calendar of their own. According to that one, the Julian calendar, all three of the mentioned occasions – Christmas Eve, New Year's and *Mikołajki* – each occur thirteen days later than they do in the Gregorian calendar that most people are used to.

So nationwide, that gives you not three, but six traditional dates to get presents. If you cross that with the six traditional present-giving entities – Santa Claus, Starman, Little Angel, Christkind, the first star and Grandfather Frost – that gives you an enormous number of potential ways to get presents.

In fact, the number of possibilities is so overwhelming that *Culture.pl* needed the help of a professional mathematician to get it right. Here's what the Warsaw-based Anna Bulażewska has to say about the maths of Christmas presents in Poland:

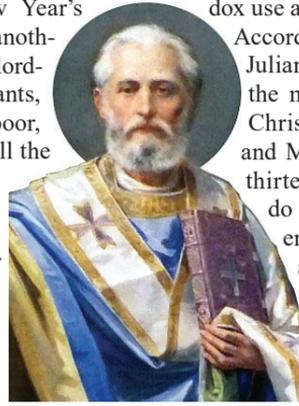
Let's imagine that someone comes from a family that respects all these traditions. Now let's see how many different possibilities of getting a gift that person has on a single occasion. Assuming that each gift-bringing entity can either bring one gift or none at all leads us to the number of 64 total possibilities. Now let's see what happens

when we take into consideration all six different dates for getting presents. Like before, the gift bringers can do as they see fit, either bring a present or not. That means that each of the 64 possibilities from the first occasion can be combined with each of the 64 possibilities from the next occasion and so on. So... a single person can receive a present in $64 \times 64 \times 64 \times 64 \times 64 \times 64$, that is 16,777,216 different ways.

Yes, there are 16,777,216 possibilities when it comes to receiving Christmas presents in Poland. Fantastic news, everybody! Especially for those of you worried that some of the seasonal six might consider you more naughty than nice.

Still, let's try to remember that during Christmas, the people around you matter the most, like on all days as a matter of fact. So having a nice time with your family and friends is possibly more important than hoarding a great heap of gifts... That's not to say, though, that a nice little Christmas present (or six) isn't appreciated...

Marek Kępa is a journalist and musician from Warsaw, and involved with Culture.pl for many years, first as a translator, later as an author. His voracious appetite for all things Polish has led him to write about painting, folk art, customs, history, literature and music. Kępa is also a blues guitarist and singer, performing under the stage name Mr. Marulin.





**Anioł pasterzom mówił:
Chrystus się wam narodził
w Betlejem, nie bardzo podłym mieście.
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 (See chart on page 7 for Priority Mail prices)

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 Inside greetings in Polish and English
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Card 451
Carolers with Szopka

“Do szopy, hej pasterze ...
 “To the stable, hey shepherds, to the stable ...



Card 453 — Holy Family

“Maryja Panna, Maryja Panna Dzieciatko piastuje ...
 “The Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary, nurses the Child ...



Card 455
Polish Mountaineer Group

Na szczęście, na zdrowie, na to Boże Narodzynie ...
 Good fortune and health to you this Christmas ...



Card 452
Christmas Eve First Star

Niech zawsze nad waszym domem świeci złota gwiazda!
 May a gold star always shine over your home.



Card 454
Polish Christmas Wafer

Na szczęście na zdrowie z Wigilią!
 Health and good fortune this Vigil!



Card 456 — Three Kings

Trzej Królowie — Kacper, Melchior i Baltazar — podążali za Gwiazdą Syna Bożego ...
 The three Wise Men — Kaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar — followed the star of God's Son ...

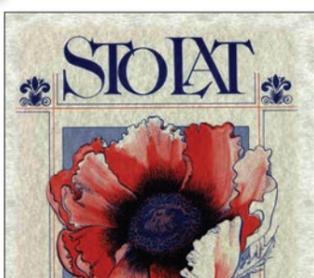
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 May you live 100 years!



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Traditions and Recipes, Decorations and Song
 by Rev. Czesław Michał Krysa

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POLISH CHILDREN'S HEARTLINE (a non-profit corporation, State of New Jersey) begins its 37th 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

Make checks payable to The Polish Children's Heartline, and mail c/o Doreen Patras Cramer, 87 Deerfield Dr., Manahawkin, NJ 08050
For information call: (732) 680-0680 • e-mail: childshart@aol.com • website: PolishChildrensHeartline.org

RELIGION

Remembering Ancestors, Veterans, and Polish-American Priests

by Benjamin Fiore, S.J.

At a Mass in the Resurrection Mausoleum in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Cheektowaga, N.Y., on the Sunday before All Saints and All Souls, **Fr. Czesław Krysa**, administrator of St. Casimir's Church, concelebrated a Mass with members of the Association of Priests for Polish Affairs, with the musical accompaniment by joined the Chopin Singing Society.

The Polish Genealogical Society provided genealogical information about the families of those attending and prepared a list of ancestors remembered explicitly at the Mass.

Afterwards, some participants processed to the gravesites of soldiers buried in the cemetery, while others visited the graves of their loved ones to place candles on them, the founder of the Chopin Singing Society, **Bolesław Michalski's** grave was visited by director **Dr. Thomas Witakowski** and members of the society, who decorated it with flowers on this, the 123rd anniversary of its founding.

CHANGES AT PONTIFICAL ACADEMY SEND MIXED MESSAGES. **Pope Francis** recently appointed new members to the Pontifical Academy for Life, founded by St. John Paul II to study the theology supporting the church's position on contraception, abortion, and other life issues.

One new appointee, **Fr. Humberto Miguel Yanez, S.J.**, teaches contraception might be morally licit under certain circumstances. Another appointee, **Mariana Mazzucato**, is a self-declared atheist

and pro-abortion speaker. The head of the Academy, **Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia** has been criticized for lacking proper academic credentials for his position, and has come under scrutiny for his teaching on divorce and remarried couples. In 2007, the archbishop paid an artist to paint a homoerotic mural in his church. The massive mural still covers the opposite side of the facade of the cathedral church of the Diocese of Terni-Narni-Amelia, and includes an image of the archbishop himself.

While Pope Francis tries to promote dialogue as a way to present the Church's teaching and appoints persons of varied perspectives, going so far as to change the Academy's statutes (and eliminating the requirement that members profess themselves to be pro-life), his choices for the Academy dilute its original purpose and lead to confusion as to the Church's teaching on pro-life matters.

SPEAKING OUT FOR LIFE AND AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY. Miami's **Archbishop Thomas Wenski** spoke out in favor of a life sentence for the murderer of more than a dozen children and teachers at a high school in parkland, Florida. The life sentence will keep **Nikolas Cruz** in prison with no possibility of parole for the rest of his life. Wenski noted that "human dignity – that of the convicted as well as our own – is best served by not resorting to the extreme and unnecessary punishment of capital punishment." He also referred to the Catholic Catechism, updated by Pope Francis, which describes the death penalty as "inadmissible"

and "an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person." St. John Paul II also taught that Christians are to be "unconditionally pro-life" and that "the dignity of human life must never be taken away, even in the case of someone who has done great evil." Pope Benedict XVI also urged world leaders to make "every effort to eliminate the death penalty."

RED ROSE RESCUER-PRIEST RECEIVES SPLIT VERDICT. A court in Westchester, Pa., sent down a split verdict finding **Franciscan Fr. Fidelis Moscinski** guilty of two misdemeanor charges but not guilty of felony trespass and misdemeanor resist for their rescue demonstration distributing roses and pro-life literature at a Planned Parenthood abortion venue. Fr. Moscinski still faces charges by the Department of Justice for violating the law prohibiting blocking access to abortion centers.

TELLING THE TRUTH. **Profs. Robert Senkewicz and Marie Beebe**, in their book *Junipero Serra: California, Indians, and the Transformation of a Missionary*, set the record straight about the much-maligned Saint and apostle of California.

While the biased view of the saint is that he was a "moral monster" (and designated as such in a bill passed by the California Assembly), the book pushes back against this slander.

Pope St. John Paul II prayed at St. Junipero's tomb in Carmel, Calif., and praised his work to develop both the society and the Church where he worked. Allegations of enslavement of Indians, mutilation, genocide, and assault on women are all unsubstantiated misinformation and a false narrative about the missions. Pope Francis emphasized his holiness and significance as the first

Hispanic saint in the United States, and as a founder of the Church in this country.

SAINT JOSEPH'S CELEBRATES 130TH ANNIVERSARY. On Sun., Oct. 23, 2022, the people of Saint Joseph's Church, 1010 Liberty St., in Camden, N.J., marked the parish's 130th anniversary. Saint Joseph's Church is the Polish Apostolate of the Diocese of Camden.

The celebrant of the bilingual Mass (Polish and English) was **The Most Reverend Bishop Dennis J. Sullivan, D.D.**, Bishop of Camden. Concelebrants were: **Rev. Adam Cichoski**, Cathedral Rector; **Rev. Stephen Robbins**, Parochial Vicar; **Rev. Edward Lipinski**, former pastor; **Rev. Piotr Szamocki**, former pastor; **Rev. Gerald Cruz**; and **Rev. Jack Kolodziej, OSFS.**

The Anniversary celebration began with a procession to the church, which included the Knights of Columbus, banners of the various church societies, gift bearers and lecturers, several clergy that have served Saint Joseph's over the years, the Bishop, and the altar servers. **Fr. Adam Cichoski** welcomed Bishop Sullivan, the clergy, and the congregation.

During the homily, Bishop Sullivan complimented the people of Saint Joseph's for 130 years of outstanding service to their Catholic faith and their Polish heritage.

After the Mass, Fr. Cichoski complimented the people who served as coordinators of the 130th Anniversary, **John Uecker** and **Pat Kwoka**, and all the committee members, and Saint Lucia's Choir, under the direction of organist **Stephen Obarski**, which provided beautiful singing in Polish and English during the Mass.

Following the Mass, a magnificent banquet took place at the

Adelphia Restaurant. In addition to a luncheon, entertainment was provided by the Polish American String Band.

Fr. Cichoski thanked everyone who attended the banquet and everyone who has supported the church over the years. He also extended best wishes to all, and not only *sto lat*, but *dwiescie lat* (which means 200) for the years of faith, friendship, and heritage.



Pat Kwoka

KWOKA RECEIVES 2022 MONSIGNOR STRENSKI AWARD. **Pat Kwoka** of St. Joseph's Church in Camden, and community contact for the Polish American Heritage Association (PAHA) of Camden County, was awarded the 2022 Monsignor Arthur B. Strenski award, on Oct. 30, 2022.

The award is presented to an individual who embodies the qualities of Msgr. Strenski's extraordinary leadership, insight, confidence, sacrifice, and perseverance in serving others. Msgr. Strenski served as pastor of Saint Joseph's Church from 1934 until 1965, and always stressed the importance of faith, community, and education.

The plaque was awarded to Kwoka "For devoted commitment to the Polish American community and the needs of others following the example of Monsignor Arthur B. Strenski."

St. Adalbert's Granted Landmark Status

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Buffalo's Common Council approved landmark status for St. Adalbert's R.C. Church.

The 1891 building was designated a basilica in 1907.

In 2007, the Diocese of Buffalo announced it would close the beloved parish along with 20 others, but parishioners appealed to the Vatican, which in 2011 determined St. Adalbert's had to remain open as a place of worship.

Mass is celebrated four times a year at the site, as well as funerals and other special services. Regular weekend liturgies are celebrated at nearby St. John Kanty Church on Broadway.



**Wesołych Świąt,
Bożego Narodzenia**
from the Central Administration
and District IX of the Polish
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Wyszyński: Priest Wanted by Gestapo

continued from cover

the operation involved hundreds of agents who followed Wyszyński's every move.

Prophet is a feature film directorial debut for acclaimed Polish filmmaker Michał Kondrat, whose credits include such documentaries on Christian themes as *Purgatory* and *Faustina: Love and Mercy*.

Wyszyński is portrayed by Sławomir Grzymkowski. The cast includes a host of prominent Polish and Italian actors. Some 4,000 extras and 40 stuntmen took part in the shooting of the film.

The cardinal's dialogues with communist party leader Władysław Gomułka and Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz are based on the

transcripts of their conversations that were made by the communist security service.

The 126-minute film was released in some 500 cinemas across the United States on November 15 under the title *Prophet: The Man Who Paved the Way for Pope John Paul II*.

Wyszyński was ordained a priest in 1924 at the age of 23. He then studied in Poland and abroad for several years before taking residence in the city of Włocławek, north-central Poland, where he taught at a seminary and served the local community.

During World War II, Wyszyński was forced to leave the city because

he was wanted by the Gestapo, the Nazi German secret police. He found refuge at the Institute for the Blind in Laski near Warsaw and became a hospital chaplain during the 1944 Warsaw Uprising against the Germans. He also provided religious services for Poland's underground Home Army.

Wyszyński was made a bishop in 1946 and received a cardinal's red hat in 1953. He was imprisoned by the communists between 1953 and 1956. He died of cancer on May 28, 1981, at the age of 79.

Wyszyński was beatified in 2021. In the Catholic Church, beatification is one step short of being declared a saint.



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CHRISTMAS BRUSH-UP

Boże Narodzenie. Literally "God's Birth," the standard Polish word for Christmas.

Choinka. Christmas tree.

Drzewko. Common term for Christmas tree in southern Poland.

Gwiazda Betlejemka. Star of Bethlehem; also name also given to the poinsettia.

Jasełka. Nativity play, usually staged by children.

Kolęda. Christmas carol.

Kolędnik. Caroler.

Nowy Rok. New Year's Day.

Oplatek. White unleavened Christmas wafer; also name of a social gathering which involves the sharing of oplatek.

Pasterka. Shepherd's Mass (Christmas Eve Midnight Mass)

Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku. Happy New Year.

Siano. Hay, a symbol of Christ's humble birth in a manger.

Szopka. Christmas crib.

Święto Trzech Króli. Feast of the Three Kings.

Wesołych Świąt. Merry Christmas.

Wigilia. Christmas Eve, literally: the Vigil.

Żłóbek. Christmas crib or Nativity set.

Wesołych Świąt
Bożego Narodzenia

**POLISH AMERICAN
CULTURAL CENTER**

Cleveland, Ohio
polishcenterofcleveland.org

As the
CLEVELAND SOCIETY OF POLES
begins its 100th year of service to our community,
we wish you a very ...



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dennisgalicki@gmail.com

Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia

LOWELL POLISH CULTURAL COMMITTEE

Lowell, Massachusetts



Święta Łucja głosi, jaką pogodę styczeń przynosi.
St. Lucy (Dec. 13) forecasts January's weather.

Merry
Christmas
& Happy
New Year

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We wish all
of Polonia a Very
Merry Christmas
and a Happy
New Year!



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MINNESOTA VOICE

Amid record drought, 200 years of Poles on the Mississippi

By Mark Dillon

In 1823, Jan Wasilewski became the first of a small group of former British soldiers of Polish heritage to emigrate to a country they had fought against a decade earlier. Wasilewski moved from Manitoba to seek opportunity at what would become Fort Snelling, under construction along the Mississippi River in the Minnesota territory.

Kathi Jo Jankowski, whose Polish family moved from the Lawn-dale neighborhood of Chicago two generations ago to the Mississippi River's Rum River tributary in Anoka County, Minnesota, fights a different battle nowadays as a research ecologist for the U.S. Geological Survey.



Mississippi River water quality inspector Kathi Jo Jankowski say she was inspired to a career with the U.S. Geological Survey canoeing on the Rum River in the suburbs north of Minneapolis.

As the river's water quality inspector for an area from the Mississippi's headwaters to St. Louis and Cape Girardeau, Mo., Jankowski is on the front line of monitoring the effects of climate change. Not since Wasilewski's time has the water level been so low.

The retreating waters of the Upper Mississippi, down about a foot from pre-drought levels, provide an opportunity to glimpse the region's frontier past, even as shellfish and animal life, such as endangered freshwater mussel species and rare canvasback ducks, struggle to survive.

"We may see logs embedded in the riverbank that have not been exposed to air for a century and a half," says Jankowski, whose office is in Wisconsin.

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER originates at Lake Itasca in northwest Minnesota and flows for 2,340 miles to the Gulf of Mexico at speeds of 1.2 to 3 miles per hour. Some 29 locks from Minnesota to Illinois regulate water flow as the elevation drops 420 feet, according to the National Park Service.

To keep tabs on water quality, Jankowski collects water samples from the USGS's monitoring stations at key points such as Lake Pepin on the Minnesota-Wisconsin border and La Crosse on the Wisconsin-Iowa border.

The drought has the potential change the water's nutrient mix if more chemicals from the river's industrial past and fertilizers from farming are released. Among the things that she checks are levels of nitrates, nitrites, ammonia and phosphorus.

"The river is a critical habitat for

40% of North America's migratory birds," Jankowski notes.

Canvasback ducks are North America's largest diving duck, regal-looking birds with rust-colored heads, black breast, white body and black tails. They are particularly vulnerable to drought conditions and dependent on the marshes around the Mississippi Flyway, according to Jankowski and Ducks Unlimited, a conservation group.

In September in St. Louis, Jankowski co-presented a report on the ecological state of the river and related trends to the Mississippi Cities and Towns Initiative, a group representing municipal and regional public officials and cultural groups that spans from St. Cloud, Minn. down to Baton Rouge, La. Group leaders then shared that input at the COP 27 global climate change summit in Egypt in November.

Even as the drought has made the river has more challenging for fish and waterfowl, its human recreational use has grown. In Minnesota, that's seen on Lake Pepin, a natural glacially-formed bulge in the river as much as two miles wide, and pre-drought, as much as 21 feet deep. The lake attracts boat clubs such as the Syrena Sailing Club, whose Polish American captain Mirosław Tadesz Wudarski, offers summer cruises and sailing lessons on his 31-foot Catalina yacht through the PACIM group in St. Paul.

LUMBER'S POLISH ROOTS.

When Polish immigrants arrived in large numbers in the mid and late 19th century, the Upper Mississippi had a much different function. It was a key shipping channel for lumber from the forests of northern Minnesota. Winona, Minn. was a hub, and Poles from the Kashubian region were a large portion part of the labor force that processed logs that were floated down river. That history is celebrated in exhibits at the Polish Cultural Institute Museum, located at the former Laird, Norton & Co.'s lumber company offices.

Winona's first Polish immigrants were the Von Bronk family. Jacob and Franciszka Von Bronk of Wiele sailed from Hamburg, Germany to Quebec on the German ship SS Elbe in May 1859, and arrived just ahead of the 1860 U.S. census, according to bambenek.org, a Kashubian genealogy website. By 1892, at the height of the logging era, Winona mills produced 148



Nie woda. The water flow over Minnehaha Falls of Minnehaha Creek in Minneapolis, which empties into the Mississippi River, had slowed to trickle, as of Nov. 10. The region's drought began in 2020.

PHOTO: MARK DILLON

million board feet of lumber and 89 million wood shingles, making it one of America's largest sawmilling centers.

EMERGING BOTTLENECKS. Nowadays the river's key commercial traffic are grain barges in the Upper Mississippi and coal barges at the convergence point with the Ohio River, most with corn or soybeans bound for Asia or Europe. A shallower channel has slowed traffic, adding to global grain and energy supply chain problems that began with Russia's February invasion of Ukraine.

For example, Minnesota-based Cargill's riverfront loading facilities in Hickman, Kentucky, and Keithsburg, Illinois both temporarily stopped taking new deliveries of soybeans from surrounding farms in October because of the low water. So grain that could already be on its way overseas will be weeks or months late.

It takes about nine feet of water for barges to safely transverse the river. Water levels now average six feet in the Upper Mississippi, Jankowski says, which is requiring more dredging to reduce the risks of barges running aground. Some feeder tributaries such as Minnehaha Creek in the western Minneapolis-St. Paul suburbs, are down to a trickle or gone dry. (See photo above).

That's changing the wildlife habitat, allowing riverbank plants that thrive in mud and drier conditions to flourish while making it harder for both native fish and invasive carp, Jankowski explains.

THE MISSISSIPPI'S FIRST POLISH SETTLERS.

Coming from Canada, probably by horse, mule or ox cart, Wasilewski would have seen the river in its natural state 200 years ago, with only a small fort led by U.S. veterans of the War of 1812 under construction on the bluffs overlooking the strategic confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.

Not much is known about Jan Wasilewski, whose name is misspelled as Wassoliski in Manitoba records. However, people with the Wasilewski surname, and variations thereof, have made important contributions to Minnesota history.

College teacher Eleonora Wasielewska was the nation's first Grey Samaritan nurse during World War I, and Stanley Wasielewski (shortened to Wasie) founding a major Minneapolis trucking business that would give rise to the Wasie Foundation philanthropic organization. It is not clear genealogically how or if all the Wasielewskis are connected. Some Minneapolis Wasielewskis came to the U.S from Poland in the 1890s.

One fact that is known is that three years after Jan Wasilewski's arrival in 1823, the first group of Polish settlers, probably about a dozen people — some who fought for the British in the De Meurons regiment during the War of 1812 in upstate New York and Canada — arrived in autumn 1826 around what is today St. Paul when Col. Josiah Snelling commanded Fort Snelling.

They were among a party of 243 people that on June 24, 1826 (St.

John's Eve) emigrated from the Selkirk settlement of Red River area of Manitoba near present day Winnipeg and followed the ox cart trail to Fort Snelling, historians in Manitoba and Ontario estimate.

It be believed some of the Polish men may have had Native American wives, and it is speculated that a combination of a poor farming conditions and famine in Manitoba and social isolation from the largely Scottish heritage Selkirk settlers and Native American community prompted a move south.

A DIFFERENT STORY IN ST. LOUIS.

On the St. Louis waterfront, the first Poles came about a decade from the Eastern United States for a very different reason. In October 1841, some were among the early members of the United Hebrew Congregation formed at Broadway and Locust Street a few blocks from the Gateway Arch. Polish Catholics built the St. Stanislaus Church in 1891.

From a water management perspective, St. Louis today faces a different Mississippi challenge — flash flooding. During a 15-hour period on July 26 this past summer, more than nine inches of rain fell, 7.68 inches of which fell in just six hours, according to the National Weather Service.

Despite dry conditions prior to the event, rainfall amounts and rates caused widespread impacts to property and wildlife, the NWS reported. One St. Louis suburb affected was Florissant where an annual Polish Festival is sponsored by a Polish Falcons nest.

A flood can compromise water quality because of all the farm and road run off, leaching of chemicals and other toxins from submerged vehicles and homes. Nutrient levels in the river also typically rise after a flood, Jankowski noted.

Before this summer, St. Louis was hit with major floods in 1951, 1973 and 1993, with the 1993 one being the most devastating, causing \$15 billion in property damage as waters rose to 49.5 feet, 20 feet above flood stage. St. Louis' primary flood wall is located in the city's Kosciuszko neighborhood, primarily a warehouse/industrial zone.

SIX BRIDGES BY MODJESKI.

One of Mississippi River's most visible Polish influences are six bridges that span the river designed by engineer Ralph Modjeski from 1896 to 1935 in Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Tennessee and Louisiana (See list).

Polish Points of Interest On / Near the Mississippi River

ST. PAUL-MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

- Crosby Creek Farm Park. First settlers arrive in 1823-1826 to a riverbank area opposite Fort Snelling ifrom Manitoba Canada.
- Church of St. Stanislaus. Founded as a Polish/Czech congregation in 1872, it was taken over by Czech parishioners in 1880 as the Poles left to form St. Adalbert's in another part of town.
- Historic Main Street Park. Site of the former Twin Cities Polish Festival
- Boom Island Park. Site of the Slavic Experience Festival

LAKE PEPIN, MINN.

- Syrena Sailing Club

WABASHA, MINN.

- National Eagle Center Museum and eagle care facility that showcases eagle species, including European golden eagle and use of eagles in European monarchical history.

WINONA, MINN.

- The Polish Cultural Institute & Museum. Former Laird, Norton & Co. lumber company offices.
- Basilica of St. Stanislaus Kostka. Built 1895.

ST. LOUIS, MO.

- McKinley Bridge. Designed by Polish Engineer Ralph Modjeski in 1910

- St. Stanislaus Kostka Church. Polish Cathedral style, built 1891
- St. Agatha Polish Roman Catholic Church. Built 1885
- Polish Heritage Center. 400-person banquet/event facility
- Orthodox Synagogue site. United Hebrew Congregation formed 1841, Czech and Polish heritage.
- Kosciuszko-Industrial neighborhood, home to a 1.9 mile Mississippi River Floodwall, longest of its kind

THEBES, ILL.

- Thebes Bridge. Railroad rridge designed by Ralph Modjeski in 1905

MOLINE, ILL.

- Interstate 74 Bridge. Designed by Ralph Modjeski in 1933

ILLINOIS/IOWA

- Government/Arsenal Bridge. Designed by Ralph Modjeski in 1896, connects Rock Island, Ill. and Davenport, Iowa

MEMPHIS, TENN.

- Harahan Bridge. Designed by Ralph Modjeski in 1916

JEFFERSON PARISH, LA.

- Huey P. Long Bridge. Designed by Ralph Modjeski in 1935, part of Route 90

HAPPENINGS: CHICAGO STYLE

Friends of PMA Gather at Historic Glessner House

by Geraldine Balut Coleman

CHICAGO — On October 22, with approximately 100 guests in attendance, the Polish Museum of America (PMA) held its 130th Anniversary Celebration of Ignacy Jan Paderewski at the National Historic Landmark Glessner House on Chicago's South Side.

Paderewski made his first appearance in Chicago on October 22, 1892, 130 years ago. He later returned to Chicago to perform his *Piano Concerto in A Minor, Opus 17*, to open the concert series held at the World Columbian Exposition in May 1893.

This year's October 22 event, not only included a reception and concert, but also remarks by **William Tyre**, the Glessner House curator, who spoke of Paderewski's relationship with Theodore Thomas, the founder and first music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and John J. and Frances Glessner, financial supporters and admirers of Paderewski.

The evening's program began with a monologue performance by **Barbara Kożuchowska** portraying Antonina Paderewska-Wilkonska, Ignacy's sister. The musical portion featured soprano **Mirosława Sojka Topor**, who sang three songs written by Paderewski: "*Chłopca mego me zabrali*" (They Took My Boy); "*Tylem Wyttrwał*" (Pain Have I Endured); "*Gdy ostatnia Róża Zwiędła*" (The Days of Roses are Vanished). Topor was accompanied by **Kamil Bundyra**.

In the third portion of the program pianist **Youssef El Yakine** performed piano compositions by Fryderyk Chopin and Paderewski including Chopin's *Minute Waltz, Opus 64, No. 1*, and his *Waltz in E Minor, Opus Posthumous*. He went on to play Paderewski's *Minuet in G Major, Opus 14, No. 1*, and *Cracovienne Fantastique in B Major, No. 6, Opus 14*.

The Paderewski works were performed on the Glessner's 1887 Steinway piano, which Paderewski played during his visits to the Glessners. The Glessner House was saved from demolition in 1966 and restored to its late 19th C. appearance and still contains most of its original furnishings including the Steinway piano.

Tobor, from Poland's Tatra Mountain region, is well known in Polonia and beyond and specializes in Polish Highlander music. She received her musical education at Kraków's Academy of Music and completed her bachelor's in music from Chicago's Roosevelt University and her master's degree, also



Barbara Kożuchowska

PHOTO: MALGORZATA KOT

in music, at DePaul University. Her classical music artistry blends well with her Highlander musical style. She is considered one of Chicago's most talented and prominent singers.

Bundyra, from the Podkarpacie region of Poland, is also a graduate of Kraków's Academy of Music. After his graduation, he became a music teacher in Kraków and Lubaczów. But since 2018, he has been an instructor of theory and piano as well as a choir and chamber music accompanist for the Academy of Music of the Paderewski Symphony Orchestra (PaSO) in Chicago.

El Yakine, born in Connecticut, showed great interest in music at a very young age, often playing on an electric keyboard. At seven years of age, Youssef enrolled in piano lessons at PaSO. He has since performed many concerts and in competitions throughout Chicagoland. He also plays the violin and participates in the Symphony and Chamber Orchestras and the Jazz Ensemble at Elk Grove High School.

Kożuchowska was born in Augustów, Poland, and emigrated to Chicago in 1959. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree in theater and communication from the University of Illinois in 1976. Kożuchowska became involved in a multitude of Polish theater groups and has performed with the Ignacy Jan Paderewski and Stanisław Moniuszko choruses. She has devoted many years to working with Polish Saturday schools preparing them for artistic performances. From 1989-1997, she produced and co-hosted the very popular Bob Lewandowski TV show, and from 1998-2010, she hosted her own Polish language radio show, "*To i owo - tu i tam*" (This and that - here and there). In 2011, Kożuchowska was recognized by the Archdiocese of



l. to r.: Kamil Bundyra, Mirosława Topor, and Youssef El Yakine

PHOTO: MALGORZATA KOT

Chicago with the "Christi Fideles" award for accomplishments on behalf of the Catholic Church. Since 2016, she has served as a PMA tour guide and its Operations Manager.

PAC-IL HOLDS 52ND HERITAGE AWARD BANQUET.

The Polish American Congress - Illinois Division (PAC-IL) held its 52nd Annual Polish American Heritage Banquet on October 30 at the Allegra Banquets in Schiller Park, Ill. Over 300 people attended to honor special individuals or organizations for their outstanding contributions to America's Polonia by Polish Americans, who have excelled in their personal and professional endeavors, and who have shown pride to their Polish heritage. They have, in their own special ways, continued to promote Polish culture and history and the importance of charitable works within Polonia and beyond, with the PAC-IL as it continues to play a crucial role in supporting local and national initiatives which are of vi-

tal importance to Polish Americans.

The evening began with **Michael Niedziński**, president of the PAC-IL, and **Bożenna Haszłakiewicz**, vice president and chair of this year's event, welcoming guests. Niedziński voiced his concerns about the current political crisis in Ukraine. He emphasized the importance of solidarity among countries in the Western World. **Paweł Zyzak**, consulate general of the Republic of Poland, commended the PAC-IL for its positive multi-generational and multi-dimensional impact in promoting Poland and Polishness in the United States. **Serhiy Koledov**, consulate general of Ukraine, thanked the PAC-IL for nurturing Polish pride and for Poland's commitment to provide safe shelter for Ukrainian families, and for educating Ukrainian children.

The evening's artistic program featured **Mirosława Sojka Topor**, soprano, and **Khary "KF Jacques" Laurent**, a versatile bass baritone, opera singer, rapper, and voice-

over artist. Much to the delight of the guests, they performed the beautiful aria, "*Usta milcza dusza śpiewa*" (Mouth is silent, the soul sings) from Franz Lehar's operetta, "Merry Widow."

After the aria, Niedziński and Haszłakiewicz presented this year's Polish American Heritage awards. The honorees were: **James Robaczewski**, president of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, recipient of the Heritage Award; **Lady Blanka Rosenstiel**, Polish American philanthropist and president of the American Institute of Polish Culture, recipient of the Life Achievement Award; **Dariusz Godlewski**, president of Financial Wealth Alliance, recipient of the Business Award; and **Lukasz Dudka**, general manager of the *Polish Daily News*, recipient of the Community Service Award. Accepting on behalf of the **Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union** was Robert Radkowski, recipient of the Philanthropic Award. Also receiving awards were: the **Tadeusz Kościuszko Polish Saturday School**, as it celebrates its 70th anniversary, recipient of the President's Award; and two recipients of the Artistic Award, **Barbara Kożuchowska**, actress and docent at the Polish Museum of America, and **Julita Mroczkowska-Brecher**, actress and founder of the Ad-Hoc Theater.

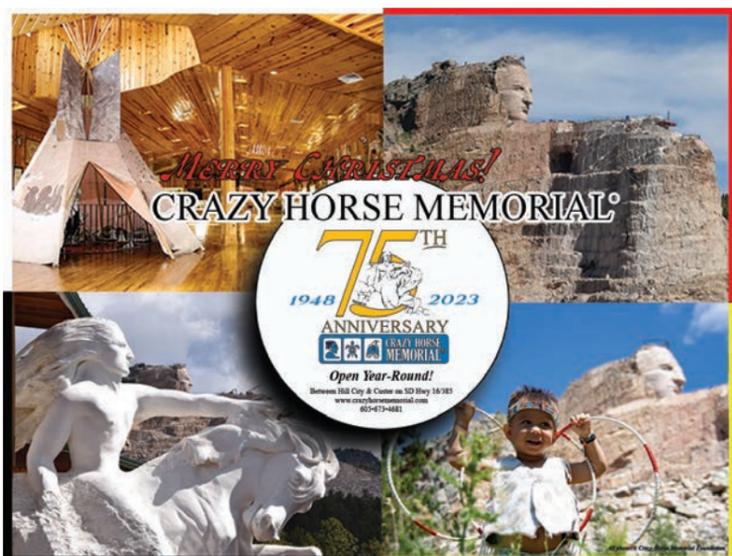
Special recognition was given to **Małgorzata Bąk-Guzik** for her two years as consul of the Republic of Poland in Chicago for strengthening cooperation in the alliance between Poland and Polonia.

Following the awards, the honorees and guests enjoyed dancing the Polonez along with members of the **Polonia Song and Dance Ensemble**.



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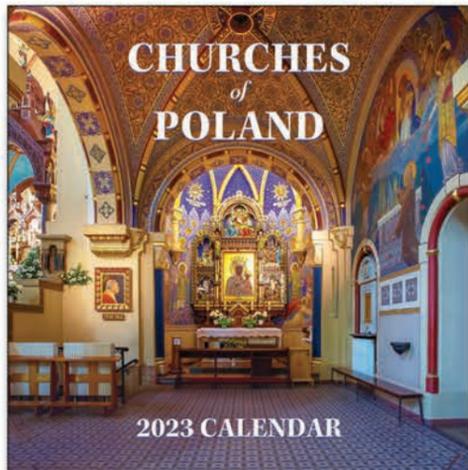
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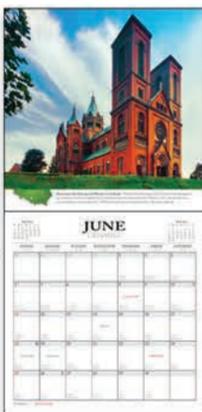
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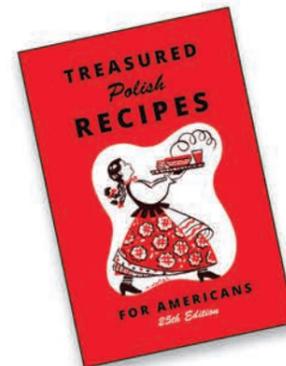
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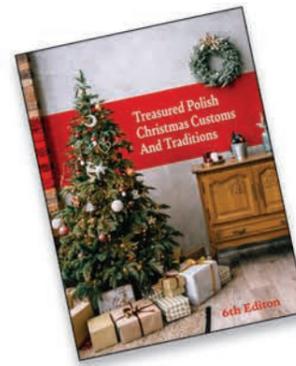


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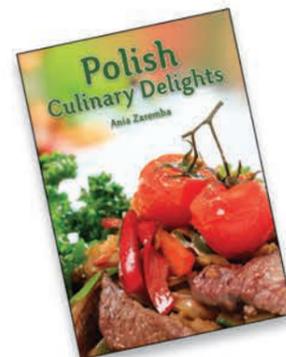
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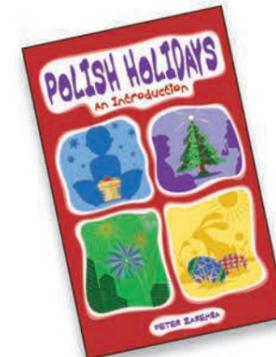
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BOOK REVIEWS

Love and Dedication on All Accounts

THE FOREST SOLDIER

Kotwica Publishing
By John Roman Nurt

Disclaimer: The reviewer, David Trawinski, assisted the author and his family in the publication of this title.

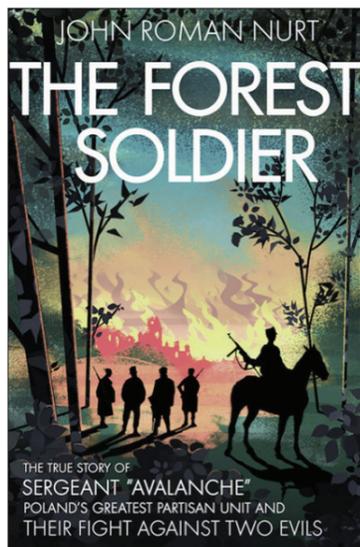
Perhaps the most interesting of times in life is when a crescendo of drama echoes from one generation to the next. That is exactly what has occurred in the publication of this title detailing the World War II heroics of the author's father as a partisan fighter of the Polish Home Army. Those dramatic accountings are the definitive initial thunderclap of heroism; the author's own race with cancer to finish and publish the story he had labored over for decades, with the greatest respect and love, is the triumphant echo.

"The Forest Soldier" details the incredible heroism of author John Roman Nurt's father during World War II in Eastern Poland. The book opens with the father, Józef Niedźwiecki, finding himself physically exhausted in Lwów, having tirelessly fought the invaders for weeks, only to receive news that the Polish leadership had come to the decision to end all military resistance to the Nazis and Russians who had invaded the country's sovereign territory on September 1 and September 17, 1939, respectively.

The story is itself amazing from the progression of Józef's incredible acts of bravery, including escaping from a Soviet prison train enroute to the holding camps for the massacre at Katyń; leading the successful uprising against the Nazis in their eastern hometown of Iwieniec; escaping into the surrounding forests; being captured, imprisoned, interrogated and then again escaping from the Soviets; and then leading an epic defense of the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising. In the later throes of the war, Józef Niedźwiecki discovered the secret order of the Soviet Red Army, then engaged directly in conflict with the Nazis, to not only capture, and disarm any Polish partisans, but authorizing the Russians to shoot any Poles who resisted. For his war heroics, Józef Niedźwiecki was awarded four separate Medals of Valor (the most allowed) and Poland's highest military recognition, the *Virtuti Militari*.

What is even more amazing than all this is the genuine love with which this story is told. It is not only

the love held for the author's father, but also for his uncle and two aunts who also played critical roles in the resistance against the invaders. Even the cultural immersion pro-



vided by the included lyrics to Polish wartime odes and ballads, along with the words of the Oath of Home Army, gives the reader the feeling of the love of country and duty held by the Polish Home Army.

John Roman Nurt has done a masterful job of weaving the indisputable wartime facts into a tapestry adorned with brightest threads of family lore handed down from one generation to the next. It is these tales that Nurt uses with great skill and artistic license to give voice to the dialogue between characters in some of the book's most touching moments. And the descriptive writing of Nurt is as powerful in projecting the setting as in any World War II narrative that I have read, be it fictional or factual. And amazingly, this story is truly factual.

It is no surprise that Nurt loves and respects his father who sur-

vived the war, married, came to America to establish his family, and lived out his days as a model citizen until his death in 1989. John Nurt felt compelled to spend the better part of two decades researching the stories his father told him as a boy, reaching out to third party soldiers and partisans who could validate the veracity of the tales. He spent his free time searching for and reviewing whatever documents were available, be they in English, Polish or even Russian (as was the Red Army Secret Order).

As for the thunderous echo that I mentioned in the opening of this review that rang out across generations, it is clear in reviewing this book that "The Forest Soldier" was an amazing labor of love for John Nurt to undertake. The fact that the author completed the book while he was fighting a terminal case of cancer speaks volumes to his desire not to leave unfinished his testimony of exactly how great a man his father was. It became a family enterprise, with John's sister Lara editing the text, and other members of his family providing the cover art, and even translating documents from the Polish as needed.

With all so lovingly having completed their assignments, John Nurt passed from this earth having had held in his hand a copy of his work, his tribute to his father, delivered only days before. The loving and dutiful son worked literally throughout the final days of his own life to make sure his father's accomplishments were not to be forgotten. I can think of no greater demonstration of love than to spend those most precious last rays of life illuminating not your own accomplishments, but those of another.

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Fiddler in Yiddish returns to the New York Stage

NEW YORK — *Fiddler on the Roof in Yiddish* returned for a limited engagement at Manhattan's New World Stages in November and will play through January 1. The **National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene** production features a number of actors and creative team members of Polish descent, including **Steven Skybell**, who recreates his award-winning performance as *Tevye*, a milkman, navigating family, faith and changing traditions in the little *Shtetl* village of Anatevka.

Fidler Afn Dakh was a runaway hit in 2018 and won the Drama Desk Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, a New York Drama Critics Circle Special Citation, an Off-Broadway Alliance Award for Best Musical Revival, and a Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Musical - Steven Skybell.

The original 1964 production was directed and choreographed by the legendary **Jerome Robbins**, whose father's hometown was Różanka/Rozhanka, near Warsaw and used a visit to Poland as his influence. This acclaimed production has direction by the Oscar and Tony Award-winner **Joel Grey** and features elements of Robbins' choreography. The rich Yiddish translation by **Shraga Friedman**, adds new depth and dimension to the most well-known Jewish musical in the world. Born in Pre-World War II Warsaw, Friedman and his family were forced to flee their Nazi-invaded hometown in 1939.

Both sets of Skybell's grandparents were from Poland – his mother's parents were from Warsaw, and his father's father was from

the northeastern town of Suwalki. His family name was "Skibelski." When he joined the actors union he changed the "i" to a "y" to become Skybell. He sits on the Honorary Board of the organization *Friends of Jewish Heritage in Poland*.

The production staging and new choreography were created by **Stas Kmieć**. No stranger to our subscribers, Kmieć is PAJ's Culture Editor and an authority on ethnography and folk culture. The *New York Times* said *Fiddler on the Roof in Yiddish* "offers a kind of authenticity no other American *Fiddler* ever has."

"The Jewish heritage is an integral part of the history of Poland and its cultural tapestry. I am fortunate to have been connected to this musical drama, as it draws from not only the Old-World traditions of my ethnicity, but also my experiences, studies and research in Poland," said Kmieć. "It is a wonderful opportunity to revisit Yiddish *Fiddler* with *Folksbiene Theatre* and I look forward to a continuing relationship of exploring and creating exciting theater."

There is interest for Kmieć to direct productions of *Korczak*, a musical drama about the Polish Jewish educator and children's author Janusz Korczak and *The Dybbuk*, the renowned Yiddish play of mystical love by S. Anski, set in *Wolyn* and *Podole*.

The artistic director of NYTF, **Zalmen Mlotek** serves as the production's musical director and conductor. His father was born in Proszowice, northeast of Kraków, moved soon to Warsaw, and fled Po-



PAJ Culture Editor Stas Kmieć, an authority on ethnography and folk culture, created the production staging and new choreography for the show.

land on September 3, 1939. Zalmen has been to Poland numerous times – as a guest of the Polish government and the Kamińska State Yiddish Theater in Warsaw, as well as Kraków music festivals.

"The fictional Anatevka of *Fiddler on the Roof* is based on shtetls that were located outside of Kyiv in present-day Ukraine. We can't help but think of the displaced residents of Anatevka while a new generation of refugees are fleeing their homeland due to the current crisis," commented Mlotek.

Tony Award-winning Lighting Designer **Peter Kaczorowski** hails from Buffalo, and has designed for 58 Broadway productions.

Also starring in the production is **Jennifer Babiak**, reprising her celebrated role as *Golde*. Associate artistic director of *Folksbiene* and the associate director of *Fiddler*, **Motl**

Didner traveled to Poland in the summer of 2007 to teach a Yiddish theater workshop at the summer Yiddish course in **Śródborów**, near Otwock. His family was from what had once been the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and his surname had been spelled Dydner and changed after arrival in America.

Mikhl Yashinsky plays *Mordkhe*, the Innkeeper. His great-grandfather was named Joseph Weiss and came to this country from Białystok in the 1910s. Joseph was born with the last name Biały, after his hometown, but upon immigrating, the name was changed to Weiss, which means "white," just as his original surname did. He has been engaged in translating the memoirs of the "mother of Yiddish Theatre," Ester-Rokhl Kamińska, who made her career traveling around Poland and eventually founded her own troupe

in Warsaw. His translation will be published by Bloomsbury next year.

Zisl Slepovitch is the onstage and lead clarinetist in the production. Fluent in Polish, he was born in Minsk, Belarus, then Soviet Union. His father had learned Polish as a teenager, taught the language to his mother, and his sister. A Jewish ethnomusicologist and klezmer musician, he returned to Poland multiple times to perform at festivals, make records, and present at conferences in Warsaw, Wrocław, Kraków, Lublin, Sejny, and other places.

Kat West, the production supervisor has both sets of her father's grandparents who immigrated over at the same time – the Wesolowski and Zawadzki families. With a birth surname of Wesolowski, it was shortened to West when she was a child because of discrimination.

As the holidays approach, many celebrate Chanukah or Christmas. Zisl tells his daughter Dinah the story of the Maccabees, they make *latkes* (potato pancakes), play dreidel, perform lots of traditional songs. As a Catholic family Kat breaks *oplatek* wafers at Christmas Vigil dinner, an extra plate is set at the table with hay under it. For Motl, Chanukah would not be Chanukah without *latkes* and *pontshkes* (like *paczki* doughnuts). Kmieć will celebrate a full-blown *Wigilia*, sing *kolędy*, decorate the *choinka* and relive the traditions of our ancestors, along with the tradition of *Fiddler*.

Fiddler on the Roof is presented in Yiddish with English supertitles. nytf.org/fiddler



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POLONIA PLACES

Club Rom-Way in Buffalo, N.Y.

by Gregory L. Witul

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One constant in my life has been attending midnight Mass at Christmas. Of all the Masses from my youth, one has always stuck out in my memory, not for the pageantry or pomp of the service but for an almost passing event after. One year we attended St. John Kanty's midnight celebration in Buffalo's far east-side and walked out of the church into heavy snow. Directly across the street, an older gentleman full of Christmas spirits was waving and shouting "Merry Christmas" to the congregants as we left for home. Making his way across Broadway towards the church he was still loudly wishing everyone "happy holidays," when he took a header into a snowbank and fell silent. My father and grandfather rushed over and pulled the guy out of the snow and made sure he was all right. While straightening himself out, the man confessed he may have had "a little" too much to drink at Club Rom Way. We walked him the little ways to his apartment and, after making sure he was safe inside, headed home ourselves. Ever since this little encounter I have associated the old Club Rom Way with Christmas.

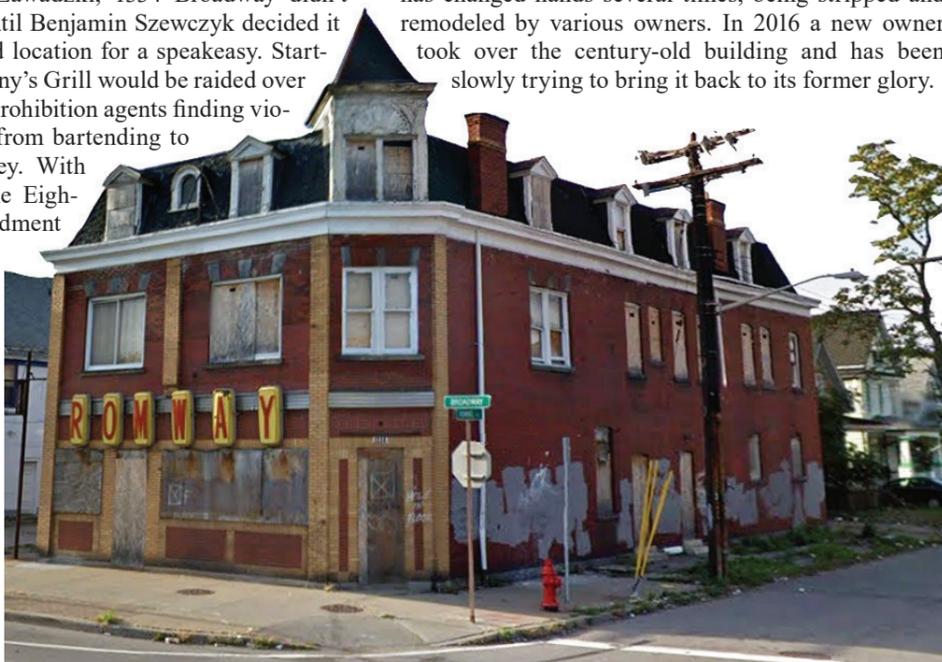
The northwest corner of Broadway and Rommel Ave. was a watering hole for generations but started its life in 1910 as the shop of John Tomaszewski. Designed by Buffalo's famous Polish American architect Wladyslaw H. Zawadzki, 1334 Broadway didn't become a bar until Benjamin Szewczyk decided it would be a good location for a speakeasy. Starting in 1926, Benny's Grill would be raided over five times with Prohibition agents finding violations ranging from bartending to distilling whiskey. With the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment Benny and his wife Mary ran the location as a legitimate bar and restaurant until the middle of the Second World War.

Seeing an opportunity, Peter A. Niciszewski, an Alliance College graduate and his

brother-in-law Raymond S. Raczyk took over 1334 Broadway in 1943. To name their club, the duo took the first half of Rommel, the last half Broadway, married the two together and got Rom Way. Club Rom Way quickly became one of the preferred drinking establishments in the Belt Way area, and the in-laws ran it together for 17 years. In 1960 Peter bought out Ray's interest in the bar and as the sole owner began to make some changes. The first thing Peter did was rebrand the restaurant from being just another polka bar into country and western music destination. Soon they were throwing "Country Western Jamborees" with local and regional acts like Smokey Weaver & the Tune Weavers, Wally Weber, Bob Burke, and Mike Isula. But while the music was western, the food coming out of the kitchen was still pierogi, czarnina, sausage, and on Friday, a fish fry.

Through the 1970s and 80s, Mr. Pete had no problem keeping his customers happy. While other taverns were closing in the '90s, the Club kept on going with a steady stock of regulars, even on Christmas Eve. Even the devastating loss of his wife in 1991 did not end Niciszewski's tenure behind the bar and at the turn of the new millennium, the 87-year-old barkeep still had the strength to pull a beer. But four years later, age finally caught up with Niciszewski and in December of 2004, Peter closed the doors of Club Rom Way one last time. Less than a month later Peter A. Niciszewski passed away of brief illness.

Since the closing of Club Rom Way 1334 Broadway has changed hands several times, being stripped and remodeled by various owners. In 2016 a new owner took over the century-old building and has been slowly trying to bring it back to its former glory.



Berks County PAHA Wigilia Dinner

READING, Pa. — The Berks County Polish American Heritage Association will hold its annual Wigilia Dinner at the Double Tree by Hilton, 701 Penn St., Reading, on Sun., Dec. 18, 2022. The doors will open at 4:15 p.m.

The cost of the dinner for members is \$65, non-members \$75; student members under the age of 12 \$45, non-member students over the age of 12 \$50. Deadline for reservations is December 9, 2022.

After dinner, PAHA will hold a raffle for donated items. If you would like to contribute an item or items, please contact Henry Pruski at (610) 372-1279 after 7:00 p.m. (If you are donating a basket, please make sure it is complete and ready to go.) This is a fundraiser in support of the

Polish American Cultural Center at the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts.

Larsen to Lead Architects Association

MINNEAPOLIS — Dagmara Larsen, a principal at MSR Design in Minneapolis, has been elected president of the Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Larsen, originally from Gdansk, Poland, specializes in library design and her work was featured in the Journal's September 2020 issue after she earned the

chapter's Young Architect award for professionals in practice less than a decade. A recent firm project is the new Missoula, Montana Public Library, which includes a demonstration kitchen to teach culinary literacy. The library design has earned the International Federation of Library Association's Systemic Library of the Year Award for 2022.

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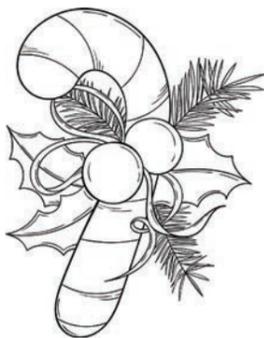
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IN MEMORIAM

Very Rev. Senior Fryderyk S. Banas

Very Rev. Senior Fryderyk S. Banas, 33-year pastor of the Holy Cross Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC) of Ware, Mass., passed away suddenly on July 18, 2022 in the parish rectory.

Banas was born in Chicopee, Mass. to the late Stanley Banas and Valaria (Szczepanek) Banas. A 1947 graduate of Chicopee High School, he attended Savonarola Theological Seminary in Scranton, Pa., and in 1950 was ordained to the holy priesthood by the late Bishop John A. Misiaszek. He was one of six newly ordained priests who received a special blessing from the organizer of the Polish National Catholic Church, the late Prime Bishop Francis Hodur.

Banas celebrated his first solemn High Mass on October 22, 1950, in the Holy Mother of the Rosary Church in Chicopee, the church in which he was baptized, received his First Holy communion, confirmed, and reared. He was elevated to Senior Priest in 1964 by the late Prime Bishop Leon Grochowski.



Banas served parishes in Buffalo, N.Y., Hazleton, Pa., and McDoo, Pa. For 23 1/2 years, he was the pastor of St. Adalbert's Church in Dickson City, Pa. In 1979, Banas returned to New England and was the pastor of Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Fall River for the next decade. In 1989, he assumed the pastorate of Holy Cross Church in Ware, where he remained for the next 33 consec-

utive years.

Banas dedicated his life to the PNCC. He served on numerous commissions of the church. He served as national director on the board of directors of the Polish American Congress representing the PNCC. Banas served two terms on the Polish National Union of America. He was the chaplain for the United Choirs of the PNCC and served 20 years as secretary for the Central Diocese Clergy Conference.

Banas was an instructor at the Savonarola Theological Seminary in Scranton, for many years, teaching moral theology, liturgy, ideology of the Church, and the Polish Language.

Banas was pre-deceased by his beloved mother, Valaria who assisted him as companion, co-worker and inspiration for 32 years up to the time of her death in 1984. He leaves his nephew and caregiver, Eugene Kulas of Ware; cousins; family in Poland; his parish family and many friends.

Henry Naruszewicz, Bronze Star Recipient; 106

LOWELL, Mass. — Henry W. Naruszewicz, a long time Lowell resident, passed away at the age of 106 on October 18, 2022. He was the husband of the late Stella A. (Kasprzyk) Naruszewicz.

Born in Salem, N.H. on January 3, 1916, he was a son of the late Walter and Mary (Szymanowska) Naruszewicz, and a graduate of Johnson High School, which was located in North Andover.

A Bronze Star Recipient, Naruszewicz served with George Patton's 3rd Army during World War II and was a participant of the Battle of the Bulge. Naruszewicz was recognized by the French Government with the French Medal of Honor and took the Honor Flight to



Washington, D.C. where he visited the World War II Memorial. He was also mentioned in the book "The

Rifle," written by Andrew Biggio written about World War II heroes. He was a life member of the Dracut American Legion, Post 315 and was nominated a "Veteran of the Quarter" for the City of Lowell.

The oldest parishioner of the Holy Trinity Polish Church, where he belonged since 1940, Naruszewicz was awarded with the key to the City of Lowell on two separate occasions.

An avid auto enthusiast, he also golfed into his late 90s and enjoyed gardening into his 100s.

Donations in his memory may be made to the charity of one's choice or to the Holy Trinity Polish Church, 340 High St., Lowell, MA 01852.

Dr. Joseph Wiczerzak, Eminent Academician

Dr. Joseph Walter Wiczerzak, 91, whose distinguished academic career included tenure as a European history professor at Bronx Community College where he taught for over twenty years, passed away on September 10, 2022, in Greenwich, Conn.

Wiczerzak attended Stuyvesant High school as a science major, graduating in 1946. In 1952, he earned a BA from Brooklyn College. During the Korean War in 1952-1955, Wiczerzak served in the US Army as a translator in the rank of sergeant. Under the GI Bill, Wiczerzak earned his M.A. and then Ph.D. in European history from the New York University. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and was fluent in several lan-

guages.

Wiczerzak was also the Editor-in-Chief of *The Polish Review*, a quarterly journal of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, for seventeen years. He was active in the Kosciuszko Foundation, Polish American Historical Association (President, 1970; Miecislau Haiman Award, 1980), and the Polish National Catholic Church, serving for many years as Dean of Students at the Savonarola Seminary in Scranton, Pa.

In 2008, Wiczerzak was honored with a City of New York Commendation for inspiring generations of students at Bronx Community College, and for his scholarly achievements. Among others, he authored *A Polish Chapter in Civil*

War America: The Effects of the January Insurrection on American Opinion and Diplomacy (1967); and edited *Bishop Francis Hodur: Biographical Essays* (1998). Together with Theodore L. Zawistowski, Dr. Wiczerzak worked to create the PNCC History and Archives Commission, which he eventually chaired and served as editor of the scholarly journal, *PNCC Studies*. He also served on the Bishop Hodur Biography Commission of the Central Diocese PNCC.

Outside the world of scholarship, Wiczerzak loved to sing, including in concerts of the PNCC United Choirs of the New York-New Jersey Seniorate.

Michael B. Zielinski, Teacher and Administrator

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Michael B. Zielinski, of Amherst, a retired teacher and administrator at Maryvale High School, died Aug. 29 after a period of declining health. He was 77.

Born in Buffalo, the younger of two children, he grew up in the Black Rock neighborhood, attending Assumption School and Cardinal Dougherty High School. He enlisted in the Army and served in military intelligence at Fort Bragg,

N.C., hoping to join the CIA, until he suffered a serious leg injury when his motorcycle was struck by a drunken driver on the base.

After recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, he returned to enroll at Canisius College, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees. He later completed a master's and doctorate at the University of Buffalo.

Dr. Zielinski retired in 2000 after 30 years in the Maryvale schools.

Beginning as an English teacher, he was English Department chairman, then became an administrative assistant in 1988.

He worked in the district's bus transportation office, then was appointed assistant high school principal in 1990 and named interim principal in 1999.

He was a member of Assumption Catholic Church, the West Side Rowing Club, and was a life member of Disabled American Veterans.

POLISH CHEF

Preparing for Wigilia: A Few More of Babcia's Classics

by Robert Strybel

Part II

Here are more favorite dishes of Polish Wigilia, Christmas Eve supper – the most important family celebration of the year. Some recipes have been simplified somewhat and adapted to today's more convenient ingredients and less labor-intensive procedures.

FISH POLONAISE (ryba po polsku): Rinse, pat dry, salt & pepper and flour-dust 2-3 lbs very fresh perch, pike, walleye, whitefish or other firm fillets and fry in hot oil on both sides until fully cooked. Drain fish on paper towel, transfer fish to serving platter and keep in warm oven. In saucepan, melt 3 T butter and switch off heat. Add 4-5 finely chopped or ground hard-boiled eggs and toss to coat evenly with butter. Add 2-3 T fresh or frozen finely chopped dill and salt & pepper generously. Toss to blend ingredients. Sprinkle fish with lemon juice and garnish with Polonaise (hard-boiled-egg) topping. Serve immediately.

FISH IN HORSERADISH SAUCE (ryba w sosie chrzanowym): In 6 c home-made or bouillon-cube vegetable stock containing 2 T vinegar cook 2-3 lbs perch, pike, walleye, whitefish or other firm fillets until fish is done and flakes readily (10-15 min depending on thickness of the fillets). Transfer fish to serving platter and keep in warm oven. In saucepan lightly brown 2 heaping T flour in 2 heaping T butter, gradually add 1 c or more fish stock, stirring until smooth. Stir in 1/4 - 1/2 c prepared horseradish and 3/4 c sour cream. Simmer, stirring constantly until thick and bubbly. If too thick, dilute with a little more stock. Season to taste with salt, pepper, lemon juice and sugar. Drench fish with sauce and serve at once.

TROUT WITH MUSHROOMS (pstrąg z pieczarkami): Rinse 4 dressed rainbow trout (with head attached), pat dry, sprinkle with salt & pepper, dredge in flour and fry in 1/2-inch hot oil on both sides until done to a nice golden-brown. Meanwhile, in 2 T butter sauté 8 oz fresh, washed, white, sliced mushrooms until fully cooked. Turn trout onto lettuce-lined platter, garnish

with mushrooms, placing some into cavities, decorate with lemon slices and parsley sprigs and serve.

SAUERKRAUT & PEAS (kapusta z grochem): Soak 1 c whole yellow peas (sometimes called field peas in English) in plenty of warm water overnight. Next day, cook in same water until tender. Separately, prepare sauerkraut as in preceding recipe, adding only 4 oz diced Portobello mushrooms fried up with chopped onion. When sauerkraut is fully cooked, combine with the cooked drained peas. Season to taste with salt, pepper and marjoram. If too wet, thicken with a little flour and simmer briefly.

SAUERKRAUT & NOODLE SQUARES (kapusta z łazankami): To either of the above sauerkraut dishes add 2-3 c hot cooked flat egg noodles or lasagna cut into 1" squares, toss and serve.

MUSHROOM GOŁĄBKI (gołąbki z grzybami): In 3 T butter, margarine or oil sauté 8-12 oz fresh Portobello mushrooms, washed and chopped fine, with 2 med chopped onions. Combine with 3 to 3-1/2 c preferably slightly undercooked rice, barley or buckwheat groats, cooked with 1 mushroom cube. Add 1 raw egg and mix to blend ingredients. Salt & pepper to taste and (optional) garnish with 1 T chopped fresh dill and/or parsley. Fill pre-wilted cabbage leaves as usual, drench with 3 c vegetable stock (in which 1 mushroom cube has been dissolved) and bake in preheated 350° oven at least 2 hrs.

POPPYSEED FILLING (masa makowa): Although not a dish in itself, this filling is used in a number of typical sweet Christmas Eve dishes. In pot combine 3 c poppyseed with plenty of cold water and swish around with hand. Pour off any impurities that float up. Drench with cold water again and drain through fine sieve. Place poppyseeds in pot, scald with boiling water to cover and simmer on low until poppyseeds disintegrate between fingers (about 40 min). Drain in fine sieve, pressing out moisture. Pass through fine strainer of meat-grinder twice or through special poppyseed-grinder once. Or process them in food-processor several min. until puréed. In saucepan melt 3/2 T but-



POPPYSEED COOKIES (ciasteczka makowe): Cut 1/4 lb butter into 2-3/4 c flour with pastry blender or two knives. Add 2/3 c confectioner's sugar, 2 t baking powder, 2 slightly beaten eggs, 3 T sour cream and 3 T poppyseeds and knead dough until easy to handle. Refrigerate for at least 30 min. Roll out dough 1/4" thick and cut into desired shapes (circles, crescents, diamonds, etc.). Bake 10 minutes in preheated oven at 375° or until edges begin to brown.

ter, add poppyseeds, 1 c sugar, 1/2 t grated lemon zest, 3 T honey and 1/3 c plumped raisins and simmer 15 min. or so, stirring frequently. About 1/4 t. vanilla extract and/or several drops of almond extract may be added. Note: Canned poppyseed filling is available, but it is nowhere as tasty as the real thing!

NOODLES & POPPYSEEDS (kluski z makiem): Cook 1 lb pkg of wide or medium-wide egg noodles in lightly salted water until tender. Usually, they should be cooked a little longer than the "al dente" directions on package. Dot hot, freshly-drained noodles with a little butter and stir in 1 c or more poppyseed filling (above). Toss gently to evenly distribute. May be served warm, room temp or chilled. Some like to pour a little coffee cream over their portions. Canned poppyseed pastry filling may be sued instead.

GRAIN & POPPYSEED DESSERT (kutia/kucja): Prepare 2 c bulgur wheat according to pkg directions. Leave wheat in pot until cooled to room temp. Stir in about 3/4 c poppyseed filling (more or less to taste). *Optional:* 1/4-1/2 c ground or chopped almonds or walnuts may be added. *Variations:* Kutia can also be prepared using cooked rice or barley in place of the wheat.

RICE & FRUIT DESSERT (ryż z owocami): Transfer 4 c hot cooked rice to serving platter, dot with butter and top with fruit topping of choice: stewed fruit (above), canned cherry or apple-pie filling, strawberry or cherry preserves or powidła (Polish imported) plum butter. Variation: Cooked barley may be substituted for the rice.

CHRISTMAS DRIED-FRUIT COMPOTE (kompot wigilijny): Soak 12 - 16 oz pkg mixed dry fruit, 3 - 4 dried figs, 4-5 pitted dates and 1/2 c raisins in water to cover 2 hrs. Add a little water if all has been absorbed and cook about 20 min on med-low heat from the time boiling begins. *Optional:* 1 small sliced lemon (which has been scrubbed well before being sliced) and a pinch of cinnamon may be added before cooking. Chill and serve in dessert bowls. Note: Christmas Eve compote may be made with prunes alone or prunes & raisins or prunes & figs. It may also be expanded into the traditional 12-fruit compote

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

HOT HONEY-SPICE CORDIAL (krupnik staropolski): In saucepan combine 1 c honey, 1 t vanilla extract, and 1/8 t each: ground cinnamon, cloves, ginger, allspice and pepper and 1/2 t lemon zest. Bring to gentle boil, stirring frequently, and simmer until honey just begins to brown. Remove from heat, cover and let stand 10 min. Stir in 3 c 100 proof vodka, cover and let stand 10 min for flavors to blend. Heat briefly without boiling. Strain through cotton or cheesecloth-lined funnel into serving decanter. Serve hot in shot glasses.

GLOW WINE (grzaniec): Peel and slice 1 lemon and 1 small orange, place in saucepan, add 1 qt dry red wine, 1/2 c confectioner's sugar, a dozen cloves, several grating of nutmeg and 1/2 t cinnamon, stir and heat but do not boil. Switch off heat and (optional) add 1/2 c brandy (imported French or domestic). Strain and serve hot.

HOT MULLED BEER (piwo grzane korzenne): In pot combine 1 qt lager, 3 T sugar or fruit syrup or honey (more or less to taste) and a pinch each of ground cinnamon, cloves, ginger and pepper. (In a pinch, pumpkin-pie seasoning can be used instead.) Heat to just below boiling, stirring to dissolve sugar (if used), and serve immediately.

(said to symbolize the 12 Apostles or the 12 days of Christmas) by adding other fruit not contained in the dried-fruit mixture such as dried cherries and currants as well as fresh orange wedges. of choice: preserves, jam, plum butter, fruit syrup or canned apple or cherry pie filling.

TEA-FLAVORED FRUITCAKE (keks herbaciany): In bowl combine 1-1/4 c mixed dried fruit (chopped figs, candied orange rind, pitted prunes and dates – all coarsely chopped) and whole raisins. Add 1/4 c chopped walnuts, 1 slightly heaped c sugar and drench with 1 c cold strong tea, cover and let stand overnight. Next day, sprinkle slightly heaped 1-1/2 c flour with 2 t baking powder. To tea & fruit mixture stir in the flour and 2 beaten eggs and beat to blend ingredients. Transfer batter to buttered narrow loaf pans, dot top with butter and bake about 50 min in preheated, slow (about 330°) oven.

ANGELWING PASTRIES (faworki, chruściki): Beat together 3 eggs yolks, 1/3 c sour cream, 2 T soft-

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BRIAN MATULEWICZ
Upper Gwynedd, Pa.

Wesołych Świąt!
Merry Christmas!

Elaine Webb
Prairie Village, Kansas

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Bal Młodzieżowy II set for January 28

CLEVELAND — **Bal Młodzieżowy II: the Debutante & Cavalier Crystal Presentation Ball** will be held Sat., Jan. 28, 2023 at Tremont City Side Ballroom. Organizers are inviting all young women and young men ages 15-23 to participate. Applications are now being accepted.

This event has yielded nearly 300 participants over the years in the greater northeast Ohio community. Under the direction of Dr. Mitchell Bienia, the debutante – and now squire – event has received many accolades from participants and parents alike.

“The ceremonies are keeping with old world tradition where the Royalty of Europe introduced their young adult children to society,” ex-

plains Bienia. “All too often young people get caught up in modern society’s expectations and miss out on some of the basic elegance available to them. This is an opportunity for a parent or grandparent to provide that for their student.”

At the dinner dance event, each girl wears a white gown, the man a tuxedo and is presented by their parents and a military escort in a Grand Polonaise & Waltz. Scholarship opportunities will be available to reward community service projects and essay composition.

To register to participate or reserve event tickets for the Crystal Presentation Ball, students, parents or grandparents should call (330) 646-4082 or visit the website www.polishyoungstown.org/ball.

Polonaise 2023 Tickets Available

MIAMI — Tickets are now available for the **International Polonaise Ball Golden Jubilee**, Sat., Feb. 11, 2023 and Special Brunch on Sun., Feb. 12, 2023. The event will be held at the Eden Roc Hotel Miami Beach. “Early Bird” prices close on Dec. 5.

This event is the single, largest fundraiser each year for the American Institute of Polish Culture. Whether it be with your attendance, or a donation instead, every contribution to the Ball is paramount to supporting current, as well as future, cultural and educational projects by The Institute.

For more information, visit <https://ampoloinstitute.com/>.

PACC Officers



PACC HELD ANNUAL MEETING. The **Polish Arts Club of Chicago** held its annual luncheon meeting on October 23 at the Lone Tree Manor in Niles, Illinois, to update attendees on the activities of the club during the pandemic. Members were asked to volunteer to serve as new officers. Thus, the new president will be **Theodore Makarewicz**; the financial secretary will be **Anne “Happy” Oerke**; and the treasurer will be **Sujata Banerjee**. The office of recording secretary is still open. The installation of officers will take place in 2023.

PHOTO: MARK DOBRZYCKI

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If interested, kindly airmail a \$19 personal or bank (cashier’s) check or money order (adding \$15 for each additional surname you wish to have researched) to Polonia’s long-standing Warsaw correspondent and name researcher:

Robert Strybel, Robert Strybel, ul. Heroldów 25/36, 01-991 Warsaw, Poland. You will also be able to check your family records in Poland, track down ancestral homesteads and graves or possibly even turn up long-lost relatives thanks to a helpful genealogical contact sheet included with each order. To receive the results via email or for more information please contact: strybel@interia.pl.



The Prawdzic coat of arms was shared by the szlachta (gentry) lines of over 500 variously surnamed Polish families including: Baranowski, Ząb, Dąbski, Sowiński, Bielski, Lang, Cybulski, Szuba, Trębski, Rudzki, Dobrowolski and Gołębiowski.

GENEALOGY

Save your Polish Christmas Traditions

by Stephen M Szabados

The Christmas season is approaching, and it is a vital time of celebration for your Polish family. Celebrating holidays and special events gave your ancestors an overall rhythm to their lives during the year, and most immigrants tried to continue this in their new homes. So Christmas was a special time for them, setting the tone for the start of the year.

It is a magical season and an excellent time for most families to get together. The season helps people forget the cold dark realities of winter. Many seem to transport their minds to a better place by enjoying the festive celebrations surrounding Christmas activities. It can also be an exciting time to add to family history research. Memories of these traditions and celebrations can be vital to your family history.

Have you been saving memories of your Christmas gatherings? Now is a great time to start if you haven’t been writing them down and capturing them in photos. Remember, photos give us a visual perception, and words can highlight the details. So capture them now while your memories are still sharp. The details help bring your ancestors back to life.

As a start, here are some questions I ask: Did your grandparents describe their Christmas celebrations in Poland? Did your family gather on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day? What dishes did they serve? What was the filling in your pierogi? Did you have a cucumber salad? What was the soup - mushroom or chicken? How did they

prepare the potatoes? Was ham on your grandmother’s table, or did she serve the more traditional fish recipe? What were the desserts?

Did someone save the recipes? Are they still using them today?

Honor your ancestors by celebrating their Christmas traditions and enjoy the spirit of Christmas every day.

I loved all the dishes my grandma served, but the sauerkraut pierogi and poppy seed cake were my favorites. Grandma’s pierogis were perfect. They were still hot when they got to the table, and I always started eating them first after daubing them with sour cream. All of the other food was delicious, but I was still careful to leave room for the poppy seed cake. Grandma’s cake was moist, sweet, and the perfect end to the feast.

Your Christmas memories are a magical portion of your family history. So keep honoring your Polish ancestors by celebrating their Christmas traditions and remember to enjoy the spirit of Christmas every day. Their lives are major building blocks for our roots in America.

Capture them and share the pages and photos from past Christmas days with your brothers, sisters, and cousins, and more stories will flow. Save your memories in a written family history so your family can know their ancestors better. Those words will be an extraordinary gift to your grandchildren and great-grandchildren when they read your family history.

Niech gwiazdka Betlejemska
rozświetla Wam życia mrok,
a Boże Dziecię sprawi
że wspaniały będzie Nowy Rok!

JOSEPHINE KASZUBA-LOCKE

In memory of my parents, Kamylla (Dombrowski) and Czesław Kaszuba

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SPORTS

“Dealing Dave” Did it Again

by Tom Tarapacki

With his recent work in Philadelphia, **Dave Dombrowski** has now helped build four different franchises (Marlins, Tigers, Red Sox, Phillies) into pennant-winners. Though his Phillies fell a bit short this year, the Chicago native has won the World Series twice, with the Marlins in 1997 and the Red Sox in 2018.

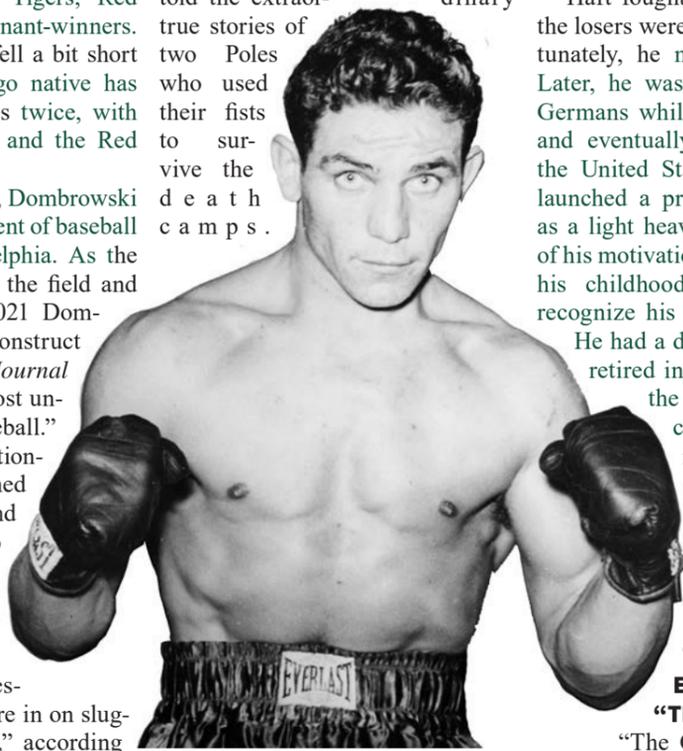
In December 2020, Dombrowski was named the president of baseball operations in Philadelphia. As the Phillies struggled on the field and in ticket sales, in 2021 Dombrowski decided to construct what *the Wall Street Journal* called, “one of the most unusual rosters in baseball.” Going against conventional wisdom, he signed Kyle Schwarber and Nick Castellanos, two designated hitter-type sluggers known for defensive liabilities.

“The signings sent an obvious message: The Phillies were in on slug-ging, out on defense,” according to *WSJ*. That unique approach helped Philly hammer the Cardinals, Braves, and Padres before losing to Houston in the Series.

“We aren’t here without him,” Phillies owner John Middleton told *USA TODAY*. “We are watching a guy that is historically great. One hundred years from now, when they ask, who are the best GMs in the history of the game, Dave Dombrowski may just be the best.”

MOVIE TELLS OF POLISH BOXERS IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

During World War II, many people imprisoned in German concentration camps across Europe had to literally fight to stay alive. A couple of acclaimed recent movies have told the extraordinary true stories of two Poles who used their fists to survive the death camps.



Hertzko “Harry” Haft

“THE SURVIVOR” TELLS OF HARRY HAFT’S ORDEAL. “The Survivor” is a 2021 drama directed by Barry Levinson, whose resume includes “The Natural.” It stars Ben Foster as **Hertzko “Harry” Haft**, a Jewish Pole born in 1925 in Belchatów. Haft was imprisoned by the Germans as a teenager after the start of World War II.

An SS officer decided to train the athletic young man as a boxer and had him compete in the ring

for the entertainment of the Nazis beginning in 1943. The fights took place at the Jaworzno camp, which was situated at a coal mine north of Auschwitz.

Haft fought fellow inmates and the losers were often executed. Fortunately, he managed to survive. Later, he was able to escape the Germans while on a death march, and eventually made his way to the United States. At age 22, he launched a pro career, competing as a light heavyweight boxer. One of his motivations was the hope that his childhood sweetheart would recognize his name and find him.

He had a decent pro career, but retired in 1949 after losing to the great Rocky Marciano. Although Haft made a good life for himself, the trauma he suffered during the war was with him for the rest of his life.

TEDDY PIETRZYKOWSKI WAS “THE CHAMPION.”

“The Champion” (or “The Champion of Auschwitz”) is a 2020 film that tells the story of **Tadeusz “Teddy” Pietrzykowski**. It was written and directed by Maciej Barczewski the grandson of Holocaust survivors, and stars Piotr Głowacki as Pietrzykowski.

A Christian Pole born in Warsaw, Pietrzykowski served with the Polish Army when war broke out. He was one of the first prisoners taken to Auschwitz, one of the 728 Polish Christians and 20 Polish Jews who were part of the first mass transport to the concentration camp

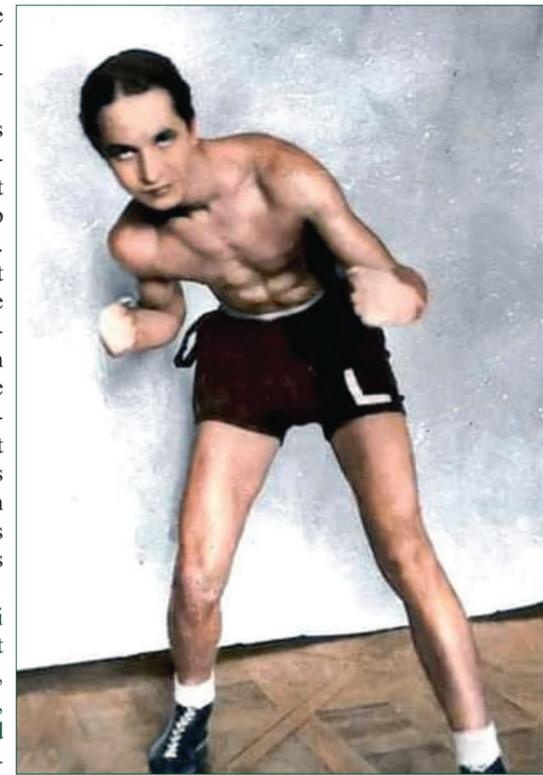
in 1940. Before the war, Pietrzykowski was a bantam-weight boxer.

The Germans started the boxing program at Auschwitz to keep their men amused. Pietrzykowski got involved when he was promised extra rations, which he would share with the other inmates. He wasn’t big, but he was able to defeat much larger opponents with his quickness and agility.

Pietrzykowski went on to fight dozens of matches, against inmates, Germans, and even some professionals. He won all but one — though he won the rematch. By winning, he was able to obtain medicine and other special privileges for himself and his fellow inmates.

Pietrzykowski was transferred to other camps in 1943 before ending up in Bergen-Belsen, from which he was liberated in April 1945. He returned to boxing after the war and had a good deal of success until illnesses derailed his career. He then coached youth boxers in Bielsko-Biala until his death in 1991.

NEW TECHNOLOGY IN DUBBING. Although it’s a Polish movie, you can watch “The Champion” in Eng-



Teddy Pietrzykowski was “The Champion”

lish without subtitles. It was the first full theatrical feature film to be converted to English using neural rendering, which was done by the Tel Aviv-based company Adapt Entertainment. All of the performances were changed so the actors not only are voiced into English, but their faces were altered so the actors are also visibly speaking English as well.

These two movies, now both streaming, show the depravity of those people responsible for the death camps, as well as the strength and resolve of the Polish people in the midst of unspeakable evil.

PHILATELICS

Beware of Forgeries

by Barbara Szydłowski

Over the last decade, there’s been a growth in the number and variety of forgeries of Polish philatelic material being offered and sold in traditional auctions and on eBay, reports Hank Bieniecki in his article “Classic & Modern Digital Forgeries of Poland” in a recent edition of *Polonus Polish Philatelic Society Bulletin*. Classic forgeries created the need for experts who could certify if the stamp was genuine or a forgery. Informed collectors should not need an expert to determine if a stamp is a modern digital forgery. Stamps produced digitally should be classified as “replicas,” rather than forgeries.

Forgeries of the “Poland Number One” (the first stamp ever issued in 1860) are far rarer than the genuine stamps: only two types are known. The number of each type produced was very limited. The primary rea-

son for submitting a Number One to an expert is to determine the color, paper type, and condition, not whether it is genuine. Over the last 150+ years many examples were repaired, re-perforated, etc.

For every genuine copy of Poland Number One offered by sellers on eBay, multiple examples of modern digital replicas are offered at a price that are a fraction of the cost of a sound genuine number one.

To learn more, contact Bieniecki at hank@bildtmp.com.



POSTMARKS. “A Gem of Polish Philately” is the article by Dr. James Mazepa on the first postmark of Warsaw.

“The first postmark on Polish letters indicating their origin appeared early in the 1700s,” said Mazepa. “These were



handwritten notations, such as ‘na poczta Lwowska’ known from 1714 and ‘na poczta Warszawska’ recorded in 1721.”

The oldest postmarks are wax seals, introduced around 1760, which usually included the town name in Latin, with a crown, and posthorn. There are many different varieties and sizes of these seals and they can be found in black or red ink.

The earliest recorded inked postmark is from Zamosc in 1768. Warsaw began using inked postmarks in 1778 and had three types in use up to 1794.

CHRISTMAS STAMPS. The holidays are upon us, and over the years, Poland has issued stamps to celebrate Christmas.

In 2017, the “A” stamp denomination of (2.60zł) portrays Mary standing and holding Baby Jesus. The “B” stamp denomination of 3.20zł shows Mary and Baby Jesus accepting gifts the Magi, who followed the Star of Bethlehem. The 6 zł stamp denomination shows Mary’s visit from the Archangel Gabriel, who announced that she would give birth to Jesus. The designer of this set of three stamps is Agnieszka Sancewicz.

Uncle Tadz,
We fondly
remember
Babci’s wigilia
gathering in the
basement of 86
Maple Avenue,
as we faithfully
commemorate
our awesome
Savior’s birth.
Love, Davey



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Up to the Task

An Interview with Dr. John Radzilowski, director of the Polish Institute of Culture & Research in Orchard Lake

Part 2 of 3

by Alicja Karlic

AK: Three people are the team that helps you organize and run the Polish Institute. Can you introduce them to the Polish Weekly readers?

JR: I am very fortunate to have three very capable Polish ladies assisting me.

Sr. Genowefa Potaczala, SChr., is our archivist. She has master's degrees in theology, history, and education and great experience as an educator working with Polish and American schools in Chicago and New Jersey. Sister is very keen about preserving our collections and is particularly interested in the history of Polish American parishes. Our archives are rich in material on this topic. In the future, we hope to create an atlas of Polish parishes in North America under her direction. Sister Genowefa's major duties relate to caring for and overseeing the archives. This is quite challenging due to the problems I listed because to have a proper archive, things have to be arranged in the correct way and not simply moved around randomly or put in boxes. In addition, she has been assisting me with the book collections and has oversight of the collections of books and periodicals that we have.

Our curator is Agnieszka Przychodnia. She has the task of overseeing our art collection and researching and creating an inventory of art. She is extremely well-qualified and has worked in Museum of King Jan III Sobieski in Warsaw and the Office of the Capitol City Conservator of Monuments. Over the past few months, she has uncovered facts about items in our collection showing that we hold items of high artistic and cultural value. For example, we had two marble

statues labeled as "Roman muses" which she researched and found they were in fact valuable statues of two Old Testament women by a well-known 19th century Italian sculptor, Giovanni Lombardi.

Anna Bieciuk is our Associate Director for Polonia Affairs. Her main task is the development of our public programs, social media, website, communication, and outreach. She is highly energetic and capable with lots of fresh ideas. She is especially interested in inviting to our Institute and to OLS segments of Polonia who may not know about us or were not involved here in the past, in addition to those who are our regular friends and supporters.

This is a very small staff, but it is powerful and able to accomplish a great deal.

AK: Much information and concern about the liquidated library of Cardinal Adam Maida appeared on social media. What happened with the books? I know that you and Sister Genowefa looked over these books. Will the preserved books begin a new library for the Institute? Do you also have such plans?

JR: As I noted above, I did not expect the closing of the library when I arrived. There was no clear plan of what to do with the library after the closing of the seminary since the Prep had no need for it. There was no one to take charge of it. Most of the "information" that appeared on social media about the library is false. One of the features of social media has been the spread of the idea that there are some deep plots afoot to do this or that to OLS. The problems we had at the library were caused more by lack of any clear plan and lack of communication, particularly when they had some high school students with work hours so they decided to use

them to pack books. Had there been the dark conspiracy that some allege, things would have proceeded much more smoothly! In the end, it was the Institute (i.e., me) that had to step in to make a plan because there was no one else. What do you with more than 80,000 books? It is not like you can put them in the corner somewhere and decide later what to do. We had to step in and take charge of this. Inevitably, whoever took on that role would get blamed for something awful by those whose have many hours each day to spend imagining conspiracies. As the joke goes, "no good deed goes unpunished." This is how I ended up compared to Hitler by those nice people on social media!

So, Sister Genowefa and I packed or repacked many thousands of books. We are primarily focused on saving all books on Polish topics (or related to Polish topics) and theology and religious books that may be of help in creating a library for the center dedicated to Pope St. John Paul II that is now being formed with Fr. Witek. This is the core of the collection. The plan is to develop research library collections to support both our Institute with its museum and archival collections and to further research and understanding of the life, teachings, and ministry of the Great Saint. Of course, in addition to the books from library, the Institute already had many thousands of books, so one of the next big tasks will be to make a complete inventory of all the books we have to identify gaps and duplications. I wrote a statement explaining this process in a little more detail which is still on our website.

AK: At what stage of implementation is the project honoring the graves of Haller's soldiers? I call it

the project of Henrietta Nowakowski, a project that the Polish Institute is implementing jointly with the Institute of National Remembrance. It has been going on for the fifth year.

JR: I agree that this should called Pani Nowakowski's project because of all the work she has done! I am happy to say that we are moving forward. This week we received the long-awaited funds from Institute for National Remembrance in Poland. The grave markers are to be shipped soon or so our partners in Poland have told us. Working with all large government bureaucracies is always time consuming and requires filling out many forms, sometimes in two or three versions. This is even more the case when the government is located across the ocean. I have not announced any dates for completion because there have so many starts and stops along the way that people have become jaded. I am praying that all the work can be finished yet this fall. "Hold your thumbs" for a warm autumn so the ground doesn't freeze. Once we know when the memorial and new gravestones will be in place, we will announce an event to dedicate the gravestones and bless the memorial.

AK: Have you seen the so-called Royal Letters preserved by the Museum conservation workshop in Grębocin in Poland? What about hundreds of letters written by students of Polish schools in 1922 to Americans as an expression of their gratitude. Did they come back to the Polish Institute after the conservation in Poland?

JR: This was an example of the problem I mentioned in my answer about the past problems of the Mission/Institute. In 2019, the Polish ministry of Culture and National Heritage sponsored a program

where paper documents from collections abroad would be sent to Poland for needed conservation work at the Museum of Literature and Printing in Grębocin, a professional museum with a good reputation. Both the Mission/Institute and the Polish Museum of America (PMA) in Chicago sent items. In our case it was the letters from schoolchildren as well as some of the royal letters. The PMA sent some of its valuable posters. Of course, since 2019 many things happened, in addition to COVID there was the controversy with the former director and the former chancellor and no one was in charge here. Important correspondence with our partners in Grębocin was lost or misplaced (especially emails). When I came, I found just a few items in the files. Fortunately, with the help of Sr. Genowefa and Ms. Malgorzata Kot at the PMA, we were able to establish basic facts. Most of the Royal letters have been returned. There remain a couple that we haven't accounted for, but this may be a question of them being in our possession but misidentified. There was no point in time when we had a definitive list of the royal letters owned by OLS that we can compare to what we have now. According to a list prepared in ca. 2009/10 we have accounted for nearly all the letters. The children's letters (and the posters belonging to PMA) remain in Poland for now. These items were exhibited in a number of museums in Poland, most recently in Szczecin. We are working cooperatively with our friends in Chicago and have been in contact with the museum in Grębocin which is cooperating as well. The letters are safe and we will arrange for their return soon.

conclusion next month

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

FROM THE

Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc.

*Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia
i szczęśliwego Nowego Roku*



Wszystkiego najlepszego z okazji
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i pomyślności.

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health, happiness, love
and prosperity.

**IRENE C. WODKIEWICZ
WHEAT**

*in memory of
Lawrence R. Wheat*



To my relatives and friends —
Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia
i szczęśliwego Nowego Roku 2023!
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

ALICE M. ZACHAREWICZ
East Nassau, New York

DANCE TIME

OLC Festival and Fair is One of the Country's Best

by Jennifer Pijanowski

After years of trying to make the trip to Doylestown, Pa., this year plans worked out for my husband Rick and me to attend the Polish American Family Festival and Country Fair at **The National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa**. After hearing so many stories from those who had visited the festival in prior years, I had very high expectations. As we drove onto the breathtaking grounds of the Shrine, I knew immediately that the weekend would be well worth the trip. The campus is built on Beacon Hill, which is the highest



John Gora & Gorale at OLC Polish American Festival in Doylestown.



Josh and Terri Greene, TJ and Melanie Salonick at OLC Polish American Festival, Doylestown, Pa.

point in beautiful Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Upon arrival, you are greeted by a majestic statue of St. John Paul II with raised, open arms showcasing a tribute to his unceasing efforts towards bringing all nations of the world together in peace. The main church is located a few steps away and you could spend hours exploring this sacred space. Inside the lower church there is a replica of Our Lady of Czestochowa that mimics that found in Jasna Gora, Poland. There are also four side chapels: St. Paul the First Hermit, Our Lady of Nazareth, Divine Mercy, and Our Lady of Guadalupe. There is also Candle Chapel located in the base of Bell Tower. The Chapel is aglow with nearly 1000 candles, 800 of which are memorials with inscription plates.

After spending over an hour exploring the magnificent church and chapels, I made my way over to the visitor center. This center was filled with information, inspiration, museums, and a gift shop packed full of anything you could possibly imagine. From books, Christmas ornaments, Polish goods, statues, Polish snacks, and more, it was almost impossible to leave without making a purchase.

After perusing for quite some time, we finally made it out to the

festival grounds. Walking through the festival gates we were greeted by a seminarian from the Shrine who welcomed us to the festivities and explained that all proceeds go to maintaining the 170 acres of property on which the shrine is built. There was a feeling of high energy and hospitality the moment you walked through the entrance. Attendees and volunteers were sporting Polish attire and truly transformed the grounds into a miniature Poland. Authentic food, dance, and many attendees speaking only Polish, made this a much different aura than most polka events I had ever attended.

We made our way over to the beer tent where many of the priests who reside at the shrine were serving ice cold beer. We could hear the wonderful sounds of polka music in the distance so we headed in that direction. **John Gora & Gorale** had quite a crowd gathered around the Village Stage where they were performing. The band has quite a following at this festival as Gora takes the time to chat with folks and takes interest in knowing exactly what the crowd wants to hear. While it was our intention to stroll on to see more of the grounds, we couldn't tear ourselves away from the fantastic show Gora put on and the electricity of the crowd.

On Sunday we returned for a beautiful Mass followed by a delicious lunch of pierogi, kielbasa, and placki ziemniaczane. We then made our way to watch Polish dancers, **The Polish American String Band**, and take advantage of the Polish vodka tasting (which included five vodkas we had never even heard of), and more polka music featuring **Polka Family**. It was a little rainy but that did not keep crowds from showing up to support the event. Festival organizers were happy that 2022 brought record breaking crowds over the two weekends.

There is so much to explore at this event including dozens of distinctive vendors selling Polish attire, pottery, jewelry, handmade wooden items, and intricately decorated gingerbread cookies. It is incredibly easy to understand why this festival has been taking place for over 50 years. It is my intent to make the journey to Bucks County every September to support this little piece of heaven on earth and enjoy a rewarding weekend at this unique festival.

GONE TOO SOON. Our polka world, especially here in Western New York, suffered a terrible loss with the recent passing of **Bob Zielinski**. He was one of the nicest humans that I ever had the pleasure to know, always smiling and offering a kind word whenever I would see him. We would chat about country and bluegrass music and he always show such a genuine interest in everyone. Zielinski away on Oct. 25, 2022, leaving behind his beloved wife Rose Ann. He is the loving father of Andrew (Michelle) and Peter (Georgina) Bojczuk and cherished grandfather of Hannah, Brandon,

and Joseph Bojczuk.

Zielinski was born on September 7, 1948 and is the son of Edwin and Jessie (Ochal) Zielinski. In 1966, he completed his high school education at Burgard High School where he studied Auto Mechanics. He perfected his skills as a precision grinder. Zielinski was employed at Westinghouse and most recently retired from Curtis Screw Company, Inc. In the late 1960s, the Vietnam War was raging, and Zielinski answered the call of duty, proudly serving his country in the U.S. Army.



Zielinski

Years later, he would meet his beautiful bride to be at a dance. On June 11, 1988, Bob and Rose Ann were married and were only months shy of celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary. He was a devoted family man and was especially proud of his grandchildren.

Zielinski worked hard supporting his family, but he also knew how to have fun. He was a talented musician and song writer. He played the concertina with the Concertina All Stars for over 20 years. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Polka Boosters Club. He loved to talk with people, resulting in many, many friendships. Zielinski had a pleasant disposition, was happy, loved to joke around, was always ready with a funny story to share, and enjoyed traveling. And of course, Zielinski was an avid Bills fan.

It should not be overlooked that Zielinski was the author of many polkas, including "Honky Style" polkas, which he co-wrote with the late Happy Richie Bojczuk. Perhaps one of his proudest moments was when Eddie Blazonczyk recorded his "Please Stop the World" polka. Many of his other songs have been

re-recorded by groups across the United States, and are enjoyed by fans everywhere.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his entire family during this time of sadness and grief.

CHRISTMAS PARTY. Buffalo's **Polish Pride** band is hosting a "Family Polka Christmas Party and Dance," on Sat., Dec. 11 at Potts Banquet Hall, in the Clinton-Rossler Plaza. The event, 6:00-9:00 p.m., is only \$5.00, and free for those 18 and under. For info, call (716) 824-6092.

LOOKING AHEAD. As the end of 2022 rolls around, it is time to start making plans for 2023! What better way to kick off the new year than planning a trip to sunny Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The Southernmost Polka Band, Polka Country Musicians, and The Polka All Stars will be performing from Feb. 1-5, 2023 at South Florida Polka Associations "Fun in the Sun" Winter Polka Getaway at Ocean Sky Hotel & Resort. Visiting South Florida Polka Association on Facebook or email Maryroseoflpa21@aol.com.

Holy Toledo Polka Days has announced its upcoming festival for 2023. The fest is moving to a new venue, the Holiday Inn & Suites Toledo Southwest located off of I-75 and Route 20 in Perrysburg. This is a brand-new hotel in an excellent location just south of Downtown Toledo. The dates are April 13-16. The DynaBrass, The Boys, Tony Blazonczyk's New Phaze, Michael Costa & The Beat, Polka Country Musicians, PolkaMojo, Holy Toledo Jam Band, and DJ Kenny Olowin are the confirmed entertainment.

An online room reservation system is now available. Standard Double Queen, King with Trundle and King rooms are \$132 per night plus applicable taxes. Suites are \$179 per night plus applicable taxes. The hotel has a two-night minimum stay for reservations. The Holy Toledo Group rate is available for Thur., April 13, Fri., April 14 & Saturday April 15, 2023.

If you have any questions about hotel reservations, please do not call the hotel, please contact Joe Zalewski via email at joez@holytoledopolkadays.com or call (419) 351-5031.

For more information and the link to the online hotel reservation system, please visit <https://holytoledopolkadays.com>.

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POLKA CALENDAR

Compiled by John Ziobrowski

To list your event, please send date, band, location, times, and contact number to:
ziobrowskijohn@gmail.com

DECEMBER 3

- Jimmy Sturr — Paramount Theater, Middletown, N.Y. 3:00 p.m., (845) 346-4195
- Dennis Polisky — PNI Club, Worcester, Mass., 5:00-9:00, (508) 361-2860
- Lenny Gomulka — American Legion, Hackensack, N.J., 6:00-11:00, (908) 209-9843
- Tonys Polka Band — Roseland Ballroom, New York Mills, N.Y., 4:00-8:00, (315) 736-5030
- New Brass Express — Holy Spirit Party Ctr. Parma, Ohio, 7:00-11:00, (216) 496-0223
- Mike Surratt — White Rose Ballroom, York, Pa., 7:00-10:00, (717) 818-5369
- LiveWire — Raisin Cane, Almond, Wisc., 7:00-10:00, (715) 366-2266
- Mike Surratt — White Rose Banquets, York, Pa., 7:00-10:00, (717) 848-5369

DECEMBER 4

- Jimmy Sturr — Cadillac Ranch, Southington, Conn., 2:00-6:00, (860) 621-8805
- Joe Stanky — VFW, Dupont, Pa. 2:00-6:00, (570) 650-0436
- Lenny Gomulka — PACC, Ludlow, Mass., 2:30-6:30 (413) 283-4596
- John Gora — PRCUA Misiuda Hall, Toledo, Ohio, 2:00-6:00, (419) 351-5031
- New Direction — The Nook, Niagara Falls, N.Y., (716) 282:00-6:00,712

DECEMBER 6

- Jimmy Sturr — Log Cabin, Holyoke, Mass., Noon, (413) 535-5077

DECEMBER 11

- Dennis Polisky — St. Joseph Polish Club, Colchester, Conn., (860) 334-8288
- Eddie Forman — Polish Cultural Center, Clark, N.J., 2:00-6:00, (413) 283-4596
- John Stevens — VFW, Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00, (570) 650-0436
- Polish Pride — Potts Banquets, Buffalo, N.Y., 6:00-9:00, (716) 824-6092.

DECEMBER 12

- New Brass Express — PRCU Hall, Wyandotte, Mich., 2:00-6:00, (248) 881-6819

DECEMBER 18

- Jimmy Kilian — Lone Tree Manor, Nilus, Ill., 12:30-3:30, (847) 209-1385
- Dick Tady — Kinloch Fire Hall, New Kensington, Pa., 2:00-6:00, (412) 260-9725
- John Stanky — VFW, Dupont, Pa., 2:00-6:00, (570) 650-0436

DECEMBER 28

- New Direction — Hofbrauhaus, Buf-

falo, N.Y. 6:00-9:00, (716) 939-2337

DECEMBER 29

- New Direction — Hofbrauhaus, Buffalo, N.Y., 6:00-9:00, (716) 939-2337

DECEMBER 31

- Polka Country Musicians / Mike Costa — Embassy Suites, Independence, Ohio, 7:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. (908) 209-9843

JANUARY 1, 2023

- Mike Costa / Polka Family — Embassy Suites, Independence, Ohio, 2:00-8:00, (908) 209-9843
- Dennis Polisky / Eddie Forman — PACC, Ludlow, Mass., 2:00-7:00, (413) 283-4596
- Tony Blazonczyk — Royal West Banquets, Willow Springs, Ill., 1:30-6:00, (708) 839-5200.



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- Dec. 4 John Stanky & The Cadets
- Dec. 11 John Stevens
- Dec. 18 Christmas Party
John Stanky
- Dec. 25 Christmas / No Dance

- 2023 -

- Jan. 8 John Stanky
- Jan. 15 George Tarasek
- Jan. 22 John Stanky
- Jan. 29 Golden Tones

- Feb. 5 The Polka Boys
- Feb. 12 John Stanky
- Feb. 19 George Tarasek
- Feb. 16 John Stevens

- Mar. 5 Joe Stanky
- Mar. 12 Golden Tones
- Mar. 19 Swingmasters
- Mar. 26 John Stevens

- Apr. 2 PA Villagers
- Apr. 9 Easter / No Dance
- Apr. 10 Dyngus Day
Joe Stanky (5-9)

- Apr. 16 Swingmasters
- Apr. 23 John Stevens
- Apr. 30 George Tarasek

- May 7 The Polka Boys
- May 14 Golden Tones
- May 21 John Stanky
- May 28 PA Villagers

Steven J. Litwin, Polka Columnist, Former PAJ Associate Editor

BINGHAMTON, N.Y. — Steve Litwin, former editor of the *Polish American Journal's* Polka Magazine, died Sun., Oct. 23, 2022 in Vestal, N.Y.

Born July 6, 1947 in the Polish American working-class Buffalo suburb of North Tonawanda, N.Y., Litwin was surrounded by Polish culture and polka music since birth. He began accordion lessons at age seven from his uncle, a musician and music teacher, and gravitated to playing polkas, waltzes, and ober-eks. He said his grandfather, who entertained the family by playing Polish folk songs and polkas on the harmonica, inspired his love for Polish and polka music.

Active in the Dom Polski (Polish Home) in the heart of North Tonawanda's Polonia, he began his career as a promoter by running dances at the Oliver Street center in the late 1960s, and later ran events for nearby lounges, clubs, and veteran halls. At that time, Litwin began submitting articles to the *Polka News*, a monthly published in Connecticut.

His 1973 marriage to Adele Jachimowicz — who he met at New Brass dance in Binghamton — re-located him there, where he found work as an electrical designer at Keytronics in nearby Endicott. In 1983, he took employment at Universal Instruments Corp. in Binghamton. He worked there until his retirement. The couple lived in Adele's childhood home in the city's St. Stanislaw neighborhood.

With Adele, whom he affectionately referred to as "Rosalinda Polka Dancer," the couple ran and attended polka events throughout southern New York State and northeastern Pennsylvania. Along with teaching polka dance lessons, they started and edited a local polka club news bulletin entitled *Polka Press*.

In the early 1970s, Nebraska's *Polka World* solicited his work and his "Accordion to Steve" column became a regular feature of that publication. Throughout the next decade, his columns appeared in various polka and Polish American newspapers, including the *Polish American World*, *Am-Pol Eagle*, and *Polonia Reporter*. In December 1989, Mark Kohan, editor-in-chief of the *Polish American Journal*, named Litwin editor of the paper's "Polka Magazine" section. He continued to pen his "Polka Insider" column, which grew to include recording releases, photo essays, event announcements, and opinion pieces.

An early proponent of the internet, Litwin was the first to develop the Polish American Journal's web



Steve and Adele Litwin. Late couple was recognized by Blazonczyk family for initiating concertina "Jam Sessions" at Polka Fireworks festival.

site. He later began a feature of that site, known as the Polka Musicians' Database, a listing of both professional and amateur musicians featured on recordings across the United States and Canada.

Litwin was the author of numerous polka LP and CD liner notes, which included recordings by Eddie Blazonczyk's Versatones, The Brass Connection, Bay State IV, Bill Czerniak's Concertina Band, John Nyschot Orchestra, Steel City Brass, and others. He also wrote the liner notes for the New York State Council on the Arts project *Polkas for Children*, which was produced by the Polish Community Center of Buffalo. Additionally, he wrote the liner notes for that organization's two other polka projects, *A Kolberg Sampler*, and the second volume of *Polkas for Children*.

Over the years, Litwin took thousands of photographs and videos of polka events from Chicago to the East Coast. His work was featured on the Dynatones' 1982 recording *Live Wire*, and on Eddie Blazonczyk's *Polka Festival* album.

In 1976, Litwin took interest in the Chemnitzer concertina, an instrument featured in many Polish American style polka bands. Under the influence of Buffalo-based Chemnitzer teacher Joe Nowotrya, Litwin joined area musicians Casey Kliszak, Ed Rajewski, Richie Kurdziel, Sr., and others at impromptu jam sessions in festival parking lots, halls, and at campsites. In 1983, he and Adele began the first of a decades-long tradition

at the annual Polka Fireworks Festival in Champion, Pa., known as the Concertina Jam Session. The gathering of concertina players started as an *ad hoc* meeting in the Litwin's hotel room, and grew to an annual on-stage event, still run to this day at the Seven Springs Resort in western Pennsylvania. The annual acoustic event allows players of all levels to perform with some of the top polka musicians in the country, and serves as a meeting point to discuss, buy, sell, and trade the unique instrument.

The recipient of many awards and honors, in 1995 he was cited by Buffalo's "Past and Present Honoring Committee" for his promotion of concertina music. The Blazonczyk family, hosts of the Polka Fireworks Festival, honored him and Adele in 2003 for hosting the Concertina Jam Session. Litwin was inducted into the World Concertina Congress Hall of Fame in 2004, and in 2014, he was named recipient of the International Polka Association's "Joe Jozwiak Achievement" award.

In addition to polka music, Litwin was a passionate history buff and antique collector. His love for his hometown led him to donate countless artifacts and photographs to the North Tonawanda History Museum.

Preceded in death by Adele in 2017, Steve is survived by his sister, Margaret (Peggy) Bennett and her family, numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.

— Mark Kohan

Jean M. Buzinski Calvert



October 20, 2022.

She was born October 21, 1953 in Mt. Clements, Mich. to Marion "Mike" Buzinski and "Polka Annie" Szymanek Buzinski.

After high school, Calvert became a Floating Manager for the Art Van Furniture Company, and lived in Frazer, Mich.

Proud of her Polish heritage, she was one of the founding members of the "Michigan Rowdies," a group of polka fans that sponsored dances and supported polka events across the country.

She moved to New Castle, Pa. in 1984 and was employed by Verizon, where she worked until her retirement in December of 2012.

Jean and musician Robert "Bobby" Calvert were married in 2001. The two met at a polka dance where Bobby was playing with TBC. Through their love of polka music, the two made many friends across North America.

Jean Calvert was active in the Polish American Citizens of Lawrence County and was a hard worker for all the events the organization sponsored.

Donations in her memory may be made to Meals on Wheels.

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3	Joe Tiberi		Musician	Pa.
4	Gene Wisniewski	1922 3/7/02	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Rockville, Conn.
4	Jack Beachly III		Musician / Vocalist	Pa.
6	Li'l Richard Towalski	1944 3/28/01	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist / DJ	Chicago
7	Alex Meixner		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Fla.
7	Seth Dzrewicki	1980	Polka D. J.	Mich.
8	Steve Coblisch	1948-	Polka D. J. / Promoter	N.Y.
8	Rocco Naples	1986-	Musician / Vocalist	Pa.
9	Paul (Pookie) Kuharski	1926 6/11/08	Polka D.J. / Promoter	Dubois, Pa.
9	Bob Zielinski	1948 8/23/14	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Toledo, Ohio
10	Pan Franek Piotrowski	1955	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Mich.
11	Eddie Slomkowski		Polka D. J.	South Carolina
13	William Binkiewicz	1963	Bandleader / Musician	Ohio.
15	Darrell Weltin		Bandleader / Musician (New Brass Express)	Mich.
17	Frank Gibala	1943	Musician / Vocalist (Bell-Hops & Versa Js)	Pa..
17	Dennis Motyka	1950	Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Chicago
18	Ray Budzilek, Jr.	1960	Musician (Drummer)	Cleveland
18	Michael Biela	1987	Polka D. J. / Promoter	Wheeling W.Virg. /Ohio
19	Johnny Bomba	1921 9/13/18	Bandleader / Musician	Chicago
19	Tom Goldyn	1955	Musician / Vocalist (Special Delivery)	Buffalo, N.Y.
20	Chet "Hoot" Filipiak	1929 11/1/14	Musician (Hi-Notes / Marion Lush Band)	Chicago.
23	Ken Bartkowiak		Bandleader / Musician / Vocalist	Indiana
25	Kristine Piotrowski		Musician / Vocalist	Mich.
27	Alicia Yesenowski	1933 11/12/11	Polka D.J. / Promoter	Central City, Pa.
27	Helga Leonard		Polka Tour Guide	Pa.
27	Gary Rhamy		Recording Engineer / DJ	Youngstown
28	John Huchrowski	1927 9/3/16	Musician (Violin) / Vocalist	Pa.
28	Lynn Richnafsky		Polka DJ	Uniontown, Pa.
29	Judy Spatak	2/6/09	Polka Promoter / Columnist	Pa.
31	Kathy Blazonczyk	1966	Promoter, Recording Executive	Chicago



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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); "Benefactor" (\$1,000.00); and "Chairman's Circle" (\$2,500.00 or more).

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Merry Christmas! HRUKUS HELLRAISERS

Praising Panek



TONY PANEK (center) of WJOB Radio (Hammond, Ind.) is congratulated by fellow radio personality Philip Potempa (left), and Ann Scamerhorn of the Polish-American Cultural Society of Northwest Indiana (right) on his receiving the Civic Award during the Polish American Congress Indiana Division's 23rd Annual Heritage Awards Banquet held Nov. 6th at the Innsbrook Country Club in Merrillville, Ind.

In recent years, Panek's "Region Rush Hour" drivetime radio show and "Panek in the Region" web series (presented on www.jedtv.com) highlighted many Polish-themed events and organizations that celebrate Polish heritage.

Panek was also recently chosen as the new "Mr. Pierogi," the iconic mascot of the popular summertime Pierogi Fest held annually in Whiting, Ind.

The St. Raphael Kalinowski Polish Language and Dance School of the PRCUA (Munster, Ind.) was honored with the Heritage Award, with three representatives of the school each receiving Distinguished Service Awards (Monika Otworowski, past-president of the Parent Club; Agata Wilgocki, dance instructor; and Malgorzata Czachor, school principal). Attendees were also entertained with a performance by the school's "Mała Polska" dance troupe, comprised of nearly 30 children ranging in age from six years old through high school.

PNA To Hold Quadrennial Convention

CHICAGO — The Polish National Alliance announced that its 49th Quadrennial Convention will be held August 29-31, 2023 in Chicago, the hometown of its headquarters.

The organization currently has more than 230,000 members, making it the largest ethnic fraternal insurance society in the United States. For details, visit <https://pna-znp.org/>.

Roraty, a Fading Christmas Custom in American Polonia



Roraty in the church of Our Lady of the Rosary in Poznań, 2019. PHOTO: PIOTR SKORNICKI / AGENCJA WYBORCZA.PL

by John Grondelski

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

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

The name comes from the Latin words of the ancient prayer, "Rorate caeli de super" ("Send down the dew from above" — Isaiah 45:8—perhaps now more understandable to Catholics, since the revised translation of the Third Eucharistic Prayer has the priest praying "Let your Holy Spirit descend on these gifts like the dewfall...").

The *Roraty* ceremony originated in the 13th cen-

tury during the reign of King Boleslaw Wstydlivy (the Bashful), who was the husband of St. Kinga. According to historical documents, a representative of every social state lit one candle of a specially prepared seven-branch candelabrum in the cathedral at the early morning service, starting with the king. As each man lit his candle he proclaimed: "Paratus sum ad adventum Domini" / "Gotow jestem na przyjscie Pana" ("I am ready for the coming of the Lord!") After the king lit his candle, he was followed by the cardinal primate, then a senator, a nobleman, a knight, a townsman, and finally the seventh candle was lit by a peasant farmer.

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

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

*Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year*

*Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union wishes its Members, Friends,
and the entire Polish community a peaceful and joyful Christmas
and financial success in the New Year 2023.*



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