

## Rochester Polonia News

Polish Heritage Society  
Of Rochester

PO Box 17368  
Rochester, NY 14617

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## Polish Heritage Society of Rochester



presents ...

### “Wigilia” A Polish Tradition

Ed and Bobbi Przybyłowicz

Rochester  
Polonia  
News

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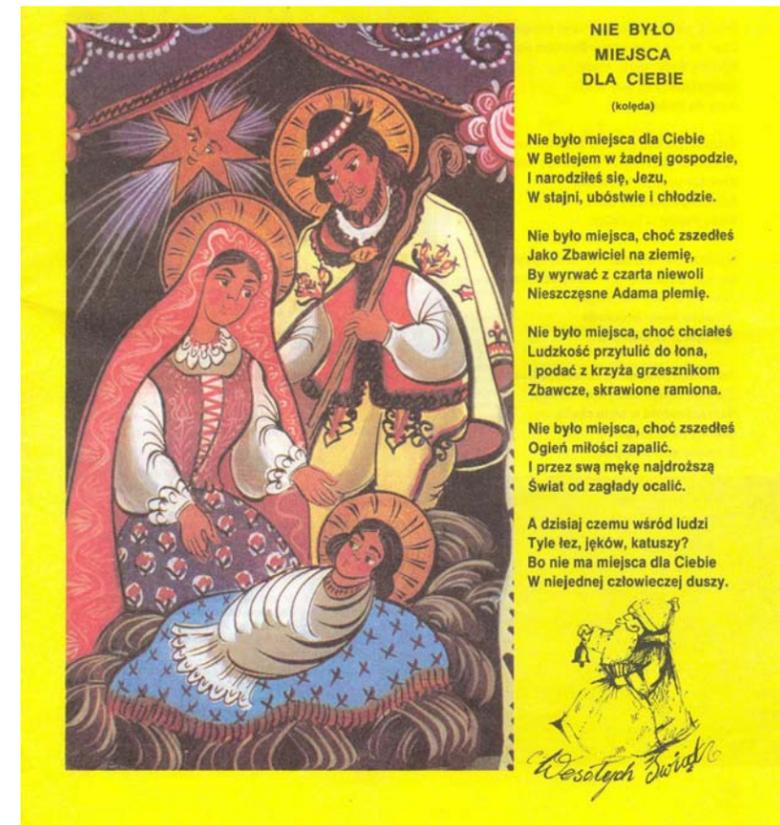
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NIE BYŁO  
MIEJSCA  
DLA CIEBIE

(kolęda)

Nie było miejsca dla Ciebie  
W Betlejem w żadnej gospodzie,  
I narodziłeś się, Jezu,  
W stajni, ubóstwie i chłodzie.

Nie było miejsca, choć zszedłeś  
Jako Zbawiciel na ziemię,  
By wyrwać z czarta niewoli  
Nieszczęsne Adama plemię.

Nie było miejsca, choć chciałeś  
Ludzkość przytulić do łona,  
I podać z krzyża grzesznikom  
Zbawcze, skrawione ramiona.

Nie było miejsca, choć zszedłeś  
Ogień miłości zapalić.  
I przez swą mękę najdroższą  
Świat od zagłady ocalić.

A dzisiaj czemu wśród ludzi  
Tyle łez, jęków, katuszy?  
Bo nie ma miejsca dla Ciebie  
W niejednej człowieczej duszy.



The Polish “Wigilia” celebration begins when the first star appears in the night sky - traditionally a sign that Christ is coming. “Wigilia” comes from the Latin word, “vigilia” which means to be vigilant or watchful. Many children wait eagerly by the window for the signal that the Christ Child is coming so the

festivities can begin! Of course, there's plenty of preparation beforehand since the meal is huge. Traditionally the “Wigilia” dinner is served in many courses. Some traditions insist that there must be an odd number of courses, either seven, nine, eleven or thirteen and that an “odd number” of people should be

seated at the table, otherwise, according to some Polish belief, some of those at the table will not live to see another Christmas! Another tradition is that there must be 12 dishes served, representing the 12 months of the year and the 12 Apostles. No meat is served at the “Wigilia” meal.

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## “Wigilia” A Polish Tradition



Often an extra place is set at the table in memory of a departed loved one, or in case an unexpected guest should stop by, perhaps Jesus himself. This fulfills the Polish adage, “a guest in the house is God in the house.”



The table setting for “Wigilia” is very important. The table cloth is always white, symbolizing Mary's veil.

Sometimes, the four principal grains are placed on the table - or in each corner of the room: wheat, rye, oats, and barley to signify “a good harvest in the next year.” A lighted candle is placed in the window to symbolize the hope that the God Child, in the form of a stranger, might come to Wigilia that night. Before sitting down to the “Wigilia” supper, family members share “oplatek” - a traditional unleavened wafer like the

communion host used in churches. But it is larger (4 by 6 inches) and imprinted with religious scenes like the Nativity. Each person around the table has a piece of “oplatek” to share with the others at the table. As the wafer is broken and shared, each person shares thanks for blessings of the past year and wishes for the New Year.

The “Wigilia” feast begins with soup often “barszcz”, a beet soup, which sometimes has several small “pierogi” or “uszki”- filled with mushrooms. Some families prefer a traditional mushroom soup instead.

Then an appetizer course of several kinds of herring, “sledzi”, either in wine vinegar, sour cream or as an aspic may be served. Mushrooms, “grzyby”, a favorite in Poland at any time of the year, are served either warm or pickled. The main entrée is baked fish - often carp (a European variety that differs from that found here in the States). However, other kinds of fish are served typically salmon, whitefish or haddock. Accompanying the fish are “pierogi”, usually



filled with sauerkraut and mushrooms, or potatoes and cheese. Another dish can be meatless cabbage rolls, “golabki” filled with mushrooms. Salads of root vegetables such as carrots, turnips are also served. Buttered potatoes and noodles with poppy seed or with sauerkraut often round out the main entrée.

“Kutia”, a poppyseed pudding is served in Eastern Poland for dessert. Other desserts are “piernik”, a honey spice cake, “makowiec”, a poppy seed cake and/or gingerbread. A fruit compot is always a favorite.



After dinner, the Christmas tree adorned with many hand-made ornaments, is lighted. There are apples, nuts, candies, hand-painted eggs, sometimes, small toys. In some homes the gifts are opened on Christmas Eve, before the family attends “Pasterka”, Midnight Mass.

Of course, no celebration would be complete without music and singing of “kolędy” – Polish Christmas Carols. Some of them date back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century and nearly 2000 “kolędy” have been published or written down. Most of them are anonymous. In Poland, “kolędy” are never sung until Christmas Eve and in some homes, the meal begins with the traditional carols.



## Ted Antczak, Artist

Marianne Antczak

*Ted Antczak was born in Rochester, NY. His roots are firmly set in Polish Town. He was born on Hudson Avenue, directly across from St. Stanislaus Church, in the house that currently stands next to the Pulaski Library building. His parents ran an ice cream parlor (“Charlie’s Delicatessen”) there until they sold the house and built a new residence at 848 Norton Street. It remained the Antczak family homestead for over 70 years. Like many children raised in the neighborhood, Ted graduated from St. Stanislaus School and Franklin High School.*

Although he made his living as a clerk in the US Post Office, retiring from the Accounting Department in 1980, Ted has doodled, drawn, painted and created varied works of art throughout his life. Some of his earliest works were painted on scrap cardboard fabric bolts brought home to him by his father, a tailor at Hickey-Freeman.

Ted is primarily a self-taught artist, augmenting his skills through study at the Aurora Pottery Studio, Nazareth College, and the Creative Workshop of the Memorial Art Gallery under the guidance of Jeannie Lindsey. He has also participated in a number of workshops with artists who demonstrate a variety of styles. An avid reader who has always been willing to experiment, Ted’s works have included plaster of Paris sculptures, collages (his self-prescribed therapy for a broken elbow), silk screen prints, and pottery (stoneware, porcelain and raku). At present, he is concentrating his work on oil and watercolor paintings.



## Opening Remarks at the Mass of Thanksgiving

*The following is the "Welcome" given by Thomas I. Orczyk at the St. Stanislaus Kostka Church Restoration Campaign Closing Liturgy on November 14, 2004. Mr. Orczyk is the Parish Council Chairperson and President of Friends of St. Stanislaus, Inc.*

Niech Bedzie pochwalone Jezus Chrystus! Blessed be the name of Jesus Christ!

We are assembled here today to celebrate another milestone in the long history of our beloved St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish. We have been a vital and prayerful faith community representing the American Polonia since 1890 when we were canonically incorporated into the Diocese of Rochester, New York. We have experienced the historical events of the world in the 19th, 20th, and now, the 21st centuries with courage and the faith that was brought to this community from our common heritage and forbearers from Poland. With prayerful hearts, and a unique ethnic courage based on our Christian spirituality that was forged in

the plains and mountains of Polska, we have been a pillar in our community and diocese of faith!

Several years ago you were asked to support a restoration campaign to preserve this house of God, so that it would continue to be the symbol of our spiritual union, and a home to worship Him. Many of us have begun our lives in this hallowed building through Baptism. We have received the Eucharist, were confirmed, married, and had our sins forgiven here. And many of us have already passed on to the Beatific Vision at our deaths and Christian burials.

This sanctuary was completed in 1907, and through the years has received many embellishments in order to demonstrate our effervescent spirituality, and to enhance our liturgical celebrations, devotions and personal meditations. But, like our human condition, this structure has aged and needed a physical lift. You had been called on to keep this sacred edifice as a sound structure for our worship, and grate-

fully you have responded outstandingly through the restoration campaign begun several years ago and today, realizing its culmination. You have continued to secure our home for the purpose of our immediate spiritual experiences, and for the future. May Our Lord Bless you, and our spiritual mother, Mary, continue to intercede for us. And, May good St. Stanislaus Kostka keep us ever faithful to our creed. Thank you! Bog Zaplac!

As we gaze of the magnificent Trinity, angels, seraphs Litany of Polish saints and heroes enthroned in its apse over this sanctuary let us constantly reflect on the words inscribed above. *Benedictus Domus in Sanctus Suis - Blessed be Your Sacred House*, inscribed many decades ago. This is the sanctuary of our faith and credo.

Let us now pray the Eucharistic Liturgy together, and raise our hearts and hymns in thanksgiving for our home of faith!



## Krakow-Rochester Sister Cities Committee

Michael Leach



October has been a busy month

October 2<sup>nd</sup> started out chilly with grey skies, but several hundred people gathered in Charlotte nonetheless to celebrate the opening of the Col. Patrick O'Rorke Bridge, the new lift bridge that replaces the Stutson Street Bridge over the Genesee River. The bridge is named after the Irish immigrant who graduated at the top of his class at West Point in 1861 and served with Union forces in the American Civil War.

International Sister Cities of Rochester was represented in the parade of community and veterans groups by St. John Fisher College students committed to community service, including Polish-American Michelle Pyzik of Rochester, who proudly carried the Polish flag to represent the Kraków-Rochester Sister Cities Committee.

Michelle, who attends St. Stanislaus Church and danced with the Polish dance group "Polonez," is also a recipient of a Polish Heritage Society of Rochester scholarship. We're pleased and proud to see that PHSR support has helped her continue and broaden her contributions to our community. Thank you, Michelle!

Szymon Pastuszczak and Mariusz Biegaj, Association for Teen-Age Diplomats exchange students from Kraków, were greeted by Mayor William A. Johnson, Jr., and representatives of other International Sister Cities of Rochester committees at a City Hall reception in mid-October.

Mayor Johnson welcomed Jagiellonian University Vice-Rector Prof. Maria Nowakowska and Director of International Programs Renata Dobrowolska at the International Sister Cities of Rochester Annual Reception, October 14<sup>th</sup>. They were visiting the University of Rochester and its Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies prior to their participation in the ceremonies to inaugurate the new president of the University of Buffalo, a partner university of the Jagiellonian. The University of Rochester is also a partner of the Jagiellonian since 1995.

Wojtek Przeździecki and Michael Leach represented the KRSCC at an ISCOR information booth at the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers conference on Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>.

On Tuesday evening, November 16<sup>th</sup> the committee hosted a small dinner at the Olive Tree Greek restaurant for Jerzy Stachura, MD, Ph.D., Dean of Faculty of the Jagiellonian University Medical College in Krakow, Poland, and Piotr Laidler, Ph.D., Dean of the English Language program at Jagiellonian. The purpose of their visit was to re-sign the affiliation agreement between the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Jagiellonian University Medical College. Since 1995, both medical schools have maintained an active exchange program involving medical students, resident physicians and faculty. Directed by Dr. Ralph Józefowicz, Professor of Neurology and Medicine at UR and a member of the KRSCC steering committee, this exchange program has brought about 50 Jagiellonian University medical students to UR for clinical rotations; in addition, 50 UR medical students, 8 UR resident physicians and 4 UR faculty members have traveled to Krakow to teach neurology to Jagiellonian medical students.

Several KRSCC members are working closely with the PHSR and the Rochester Museum and Science Center to organize the six-event series on Rochester's Polish-American traditions. Michael Leach is organizing its kickoff event, a Sunday afternoon dance and presentation of Polish and Polish-American music and dance traditions at the RMSC's Eisenhart Auditorium on April 17<sup>th</sup>. It will feature the acclaimed Steel City Brass of Buffalo and its leader Mark Kohan, a recognized authority on polka dance and music history in Western New York.

## One More Polish Anniversary in August of 2004



*It seems that we have all forgotten of a minor fact, which happened in August of 1914, and which later had a profound influence on the history of Poland. On August 6, 1914 the 1st Cadre Company (1 Kompania Kadrowa) marched out of "Oleandry" Park in Krakow and crossed the border between Galicia (Austro-Hungarian partition) and the Kingdom of Poland (Russian partition). This relatively unimportant fact, as compared to the outbreak World War I, had major repercussions for the future of Poland. This small group of true patriots, lead by a lone man with a great vision - Józef Piłsudski, started the struggle for independence, which after four years bore fruit of regaining sovereignty to Poland. Piłsudski's actions were supported by some in Galicia, but not by the citizens of the Kingdom of Poland. He was viewed by society as a socialist and revolutionary, and by socialist activists as hothead. His base of support was among the patriotic youth, students and hard revolutionaries.*

Polish society of all partitions at the beginning of XX century, re-

membered failed attempts to regain independence by a string of four uprisings. Hence, it was inert, lacked fighting spirit and prone to cooperation with governments. There was no underground organization covering all three provinces of partitioned Poland. Most Poles of draft age did not avoid recruitment and joined armies of Russia, Prussia and Austro-Hungary. Only in Galicia, a province of Austro-Hungary, a small group of young men, members of the Rifle Association (Związek Strzelecki) or Polish Rifle Teams (Polskie Drużyny Strzeleckie), responded to the call of arms issued on July 30, 1914 by socialist and revolutionary Józef Piłsudski and gathered in "Oleandry". During the first seven days 3000 volunteers began training for the war.

On August 3, 1914 Piłsudski addressed the joined units of the Rifle Association and the Polish Rifle Teams uniting them into one organization. That day Piłsudski delivered his famous words: "Soldiers. You have that enormous honor to be the first to enter the Kingdom of Poland and cross the border of the Russian parti-

tion." He also exchanged his Rifle Association badge with the commander of Polish Rifle Teams, Stanisław Bukacki. It was an attempt to unite two separate organizations and remove any differences between them. From that point on they were just "Polish soldiers".

On August 5 the 1st Company was raised early in the morning and marched out of the camp under the personal supervision of Józef Piłsudski. The soldiers believed that they were going to war, but instead they marched for yet another exercise. The disappointment was visible among rank and file. The next day at 2AM soldiers were awoken, food and ammunition was distributed, and the 1st Company was given marching orders. August 6, 1914 at 4 AM the 1st Cadre Company under the command of Tadeusz Kasprzycki marched out of "Oleandry" beginning the legend of Polish Legions.

The 1st Company column marched towards the border, and at the intersection with the highway from Kraków to Michałowice, Kasprzycki, who was leading, started turning towards Krakow. Some unknown soldier, thinking that it was another exercise, shouted "No. We want war!" Kasprzycki smiled and turned towards the border. The entire column started singing old song from the days of the 1863 uprising "Hej. Strzelcy wraz". Such was the morale of these young men. This same afternoon 1st Company crossed the border.

The 1st Cadre Company existed, as an independent unit, for only six days, August 6 to August 9, 1914, but their legend is still alive today. If we were to consider the odds against them it seemed impossible to succeed, but they prevailed. We owe them this small token of gratitude.

Witold J. Ławrynowicz



Pluton 1. Kompanii Kadrowej w „Oleandrach” w Krakowie, sierpień 1914.

## What the Polish Heritage Society Means to Me

Jerry Rachfal

At this time of year, I get a little nostalgic as I recall the wonderful Christmas Kolendy that I remember growing up with in Niagara Falls. "Dzisiaj w Betlejem" and "Wśród Nocnej Cisy" were a couple of my favorites and my Mom just told me that the ending hymn during the recent installation of the new Bishop in Buffalo was what has become the unofficial national anthem of Poland - "Serdeczna Matko".

My wife Janice and I recently attended the Skalny Center Lecture on "Collective Memory" by Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland. Agnieszka really hit a note with me in her discussion of "Collective Memory" as I left thinking about **Dziadziu's** Last Christmas. I had a lot of "Last Christmas's" with Dziadziu Rachfal and it started when I came home from college my Freshman Year. I can't recall whether or not fish was still the entrée of the day for Wigilia, but Christmas Eve Day followed a specific pattern. **Dziadziu** would announce that we had to stop at Wuja's for a little holiday cheer and

then make the rounds. In those days, the rounds started at Wuja's (he was the brother of my Babcia) and it was important to start at a "family" tavern. It was then onto to Jankowski and a final stop at Pasek's. Johnnie Pasek was a good friend of my Dad's and was the bullpen catcher for the Detroit Tigers in the late 40s so the Christmas conversation at Pasek's always centered on baseball and **Dziadziu's** favorite teams. As the day went on, Dziadziu would begin to retell a story I had heard many times, but one which was still very fascinating, particularly in light of the "Collective Memory" Lecture. Dziadziu was in the Army of Emperor Franz Joseph in the Polish Cavalry and came from the "horse country area" of Poland around Rzeszow. He was fascinating in his tales of the Cavalry and today I wonder, was it as wonderful as he made it sound? One will never know, but I can really relate to Collective Memory and I am sure each of you readers can too.

**Dziadziu** and I had a lot of Last Christmas's. He saw me graduate from college and lived to enjoy our

wedding and play with his great grandson. At this time of year, I think of him often; he walked me to Niagara Street, a busy street on the way to Holy Trinity Grade School, and made sure that I crossed the street safely. He lived well into his 80's and was always available to help an undertaker as a pall bearer, and I often think that those endeavors kept him going.

We have six grandchildren and my mother has often asked if any of them call me **Dziadziu**. I have told her that it would be easier for them to call me "Stary" but that kind of appalls her. Wonders never cease, however, as my youngest grandchild, Natalie from Cleveland, is just about two and she has begun to call me Dziadziu and frankly, that is simply wonderful!

Wesolych Swiat to you all, and plan on attending a Skalny Lecture in 2005; it might have the kind of impact Agnieszka and "Collective Memory" had on me.



### TOUR SPAIN, PORTUGAL, FRANCE, ITALY

Tour Europe under the spiritual leadership of Father Adam Ogorzaly from May 2 – 16, 2005 (15 days). The tour includes: Rome, Florence, San Remo, Monte Carlo, Avignon, Lourdes, Zaragossa, Madrid, Toledo, Salamanca, Fatima, Lisbon. Tour cost \$2,690.00. For more information call Fr. Adam at St. Stanislaus Church (585) 467 – 3068.

## POLISH MUSIC & DANCE IN ROCHESTER CULTURE

*April – December 2005*

A group of Polish Heritage Society members are working with the Krakow Rochester Sister Cities Committee and the Rochester Museum & Science Center to create a series of programs that capture the essences of Polish music and dance as experienced in the Rochester Polish community. These programs will be offered at the museum from April – December 2005. All programs are open to the general public and are geared to be family oriented. The planning committee members are James Bulmahn, Stasia Callan, Roy Czernikowski, Tom Kiseleski, Michael Leach, Joseph Mroszczak, Ed Przybylowicz, Jerry Rachfal, Frederic Skalny, Dorothy Styk, Bart Roselli and Kathy Urbanic

### **PROGRAM 1: THE POLISH AMERICANS – THEIR MUSIC AND DANCE**

will be the opening event. This event includes live performances and commentary that show the historical changes of Polish American music and dance with a focus on various styles of the polka, oberek, waltz, etc. A popular Polish American Polka Band will perform. There will be lively presentations of the music, language, song content, instruments and dance styles. Dance forms will be demonstrated and audience participation will be encouraged. This will be a two-hour program in the Eisenhart Auditorium at the Rochester Museum & Science Center.

**PROGRAM 2: ACCORDION TAKE-APART** will be a family focused, hands-on series of weekly programs where participants join in the Take-Apart Club already established at RM&SC. The event explores the physics and technology of the accordion where children and parents actually dismantle accordions and learn, through science activities, to discover what makes them work. This event will run for approximately two months at the museum.

**PROGRAM 3: THE ACCORDION JAM SESSION** will be an informal gathering of accordion teachers, performers, students and others who enjoy playing the accordion and making Polish music together. This will be a four hour program on the museum grounds.

**PROGRAM: ROCHESTER POLISH AMERICAN COMMUNITY DAY** is an interactive series of events that depict the history of Rochester's Polish community and includes musical performances, lectures on select aspects of Rochester's Polish history, the sharing of experiences and stories, food demonstrations, Polish decorative art classes, children's activities and dance lessons. This will be a four hour event at the museum.

*Of special significance is that the Rochester Polish American Community Day event opens a two month exhibit of the Polish American experience in the Rochester community through displays of photos, artifacts, memorabilia, costumes, etc.*

**PROGRAM 5: A POLISH AMERICAN POLKA PARTY AND DINNER** is an informal gathering designed to enjoy a select menu of Polish foods and an evening of dancing the Polish American way. Music will be provided by a local polka band. This will be a five hour program in the Eisenhart Auditorium at the museum

**PROGRAM 6: WIGILIA – THE ANNUAL TRADITIONAL POLISH CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION** is a program of Polish Christmas customs, the traditional Polish Christmas Eve dinner, and a program of Polish Christmas Carols and holiday music featuring the accordion. This will be a four hour event in the Eisenhart Auditorium at the museum.

## Speaking Out for Poland and Her People

Mary Witulski

*Author's Preface: Recently I had an experience with a training supplier and an online tool, "GlobeSmart." This is an online resource that is used to help corporate American workers understand different cultures and consequently, improve working relationships with the people of these nations. I was delighted to see that Poland was recently added to their list of countries. However, as I read through the online information for Poland, I found some statements that they made about Poland and her people that were, in my opinion, incorrect and even disturbing. As a result, I felt compelled to write to the vendor and I am very pleased to report that they took immediate corrective action!! The letter that outlined my concerns follows.*

I recently accessed the information on Poland in *GlobeSmart*. As I read through the various sections, I was comparing and contrasting the information provided with my own personal experiences and perspective as a first generation American.

After WWII, my parents immigrated to the U.S. after being displaced from their homeland. I grew up in a Polish ethnic community in central New York State, have traveled to Poland and am very familiar with the Polish language, culture, tradition and its history. Currently, I subscribe to the "Am-Pol Eagle" and "The Polish American Journal", both weekly Polish-American Newspapers that publish articles on Polish history, customs and current events.

I was pleased to find that much of the *GlobeSmart* information that was provided about Poland and her people to be quite accurate and consistent with my own personal experiences. However, I found several statements under the topic of Religion to be disturbingly misleading or completely false, unsubstantiated, and downright insulting to all the Poles who suffered extreme hardships during the war and to those who lost their lives during World War II.

A statement was made that Poland had a large Jewish Population prior to World War II and that "This group was constantly under persecution and threat, even before the Nazi invasion of 1939". On the contrary, Poland was a country where the Jewish people could in fact live, worship and thrive in their own Jewish communities with fewer government interference compared to other European countries at that time. There was a large Jewish population in Poland due to the fact that they were able to live and prosper in Poland where they were shown greater tolerance and freedom than in many of the other surrounding countries of the day. Historically, the Poles promoted independence and individualism and tolerance for others. Of the European countries, Poland had the earliest democratic constitution put in place in 1791 only a few years after the United States own. This was a country that early in its political history had a democratic constitution while its surrounding neighbors, Prussia, Russia and Austria were very militaristic and/or autocratic!! It is no wonder that Poland was partitioned by these three powers. It is misleading to state that in Poland "anti-Semitism was among the most virulent in Europe" when you compare the situation in Poland to the prevailing attitudes of the time in the surrounding European countries such as Germany. This statement should be removed!

I was appalled and outright offended by the blatant lie and stereotyping that was made with the following statement, "While many Poles **collaborated** with the Nazis and assisted in the creation of some of the worst concentration camps of the Holocaust". The **Poles did NOT collaborate** or cooperate with the Nazis to build the concentration camps!! The Nazis themselves erected the concentration camps on occupied Polish soil. It was the Nazis who forcibly demanded their construction. They overtook the town of Oswiecim and built the concentration camp Auschwitz on its place. They confiscated the Polish army barracks and turned them into the first prison cells. Among the earliest prisoners were the Catholic Poles including many of the priests. One of the concentration inmates was the saint and martyr, Father Maximilian Maria Kolbe, who offered his life to spare the life of another Pole. Two years ago I visited Auschwitz and saw the tiny cell where Father Kolbe was interned. It was a very emotional experience! Again drawing from more of my own personal anecdotal experiences, the father of a classmate of mine, a Polish Catholic, is a survivor of the concentration camp. He donated his prison uniform to the Holocaust museum in Washington, DC. where it has been on display.

To reiterate, the Poles did not "collaborate" with the Nazis in the creation of the concentration camps. Rather, they were one of the many intended victims. This grossly inaccurate statement must be deleted! Poland was overrun by the Nazis and suffered immensely as an occupied country. Any Pole who was caught showing any kind of compassion or assistance to a Jew, no matter how small was punished by death **ALONG WITH THE ENTIRE FAMILY!!** Under these extremely threatening conditions, Poles were forced into a survival mode. Yet despite the constant threat of death, many Poles did risk their own lives and those of their family members to come to the aid of the Jews. There are countless such stories. The article thankfully did acknowledge that a "significant number risked and lost their lives..."

In addition, to state that the Catholic Church "maintained its hold on the nation" is misleading and implies a negative impression of the Catholic Church. The Catholic faith of the Poles is what sustained them through the many hardships they endured over the years when they were besieged by foreign powers. It would be more accurately to state that the Catholic Church, the dominant religion in Poland, was a source of inspiration to the Polish people in their quest for religious and political freedom under foreign oppression. Lastly, please correct the spelling of the city of Torun, the birthplace of Copernicus. It is misspelled as "Thorun" on the map of Poland in *GlobeSmart*.

In summary, I was delighted to see Poland added to your list of countries in *GlobeSmart* but I urge you to take into consideration my comments and to delete the offensive remarks that add no real value in developing good working relationships with the Polish people.

I thank you for your time and attention to this request.

*Mary is the Education Coordinator in the Worldwide Learning and Development Unit at Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, NY*



## Polonia Serves Pancake Breakfast

*Eugene Golomb*

Well over 250 people savored traditional potato pancakes (placzke kartoflane), sauerkraut and Polish sausage offered as a breakfast fund raising event by the Polonia Civic Centre. The breakfast was on Sunday, October 31, in the St. Stanislaus Auditorium. The pancakes were prepared under the guidance of Mrs. Ludwika Kardela and at times eight fry pans were not sufficient to keep up with the crowd. Fifteen volunteers struggled to stay ahead of the demands, especially since many people came back for "take out."

PCC officers and members sincerely thank the many member organizations, along with Wegman's, the Great Lakes Sauerkraut Co., and the St. Stanislaus Festival Committee who so generously contributed to the success of the breakfast. A special note of thanks to the 18 officers and members who peeled and grated 200 pounds of potatoes, prepared 20 gallons of sauerkraut and 50 pounds of fresh Polish sausage.

Based on the good quality of the various breakfast item options, including the Polish kuchens baked by Mrs. Arlene Bialaszewski, the Polonia Civic Centre realized a profit. The funds will be used to maintain PCC's charitable donations for the next year.

## Johnson Family in Chile

*Peter Johnson*

Polish Heritage Society members Alexander, Virginia and Peter Johnson recently taught lessons on Polish language and culture to English language students of Chile Idiomias and English First in Santiago, Chile.

Peter currently is teaching English there and explained the reason for the Polish lessons saying "I want my students to fully understand US culture. Polish immigrants played such an integral part in shaping US culture, how could I not include a lesson related to the Polish language or our traditions? Especially with my parents in town to visit, it was a perfect chance to have them join me as guest professors."

On Monday, October 18, the elementary and high school age students of Chile Idiomias were taught Polish numbers and greetings followed by a discussion of Polish traditions. The following Wednesday, students at English First were engaged in a discussion of Wigilia and the comparisons between that holiday and holiday traditions here in Chile. Said Miguel Silva, executive director of Chile Idiomias, "Peter always comes up with great lessons to really make sure our students understand US culture. Incorporating his parents' visit into the academic program with this Polish lesson really brings our students a unique and powerful learning experience."

### SAVE THE DATE

THE POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY OF  
ROCHESTER PRESENTS

THE TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS WIGILIA  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2004  
AT THE  
ROCHESTER MUSEUM & SCIENCE CENTER

## Rochester Polonia Calendar January - March—2004

JAN 1 SUN Polish Falcons Open House, Details 227-8808  
 JAN 5 WED PHSR Board of Directors Meeting, 7 PM, St. Stanislaus, 467-7405  
 JAN 29 SUN Polish Falcons Installations and Awards, Details 621-3467

FEB 1 TUE Deadline for PHSR Scholarship Applications, 323-2106  
 FEB 2 WED PHSR Board of Directors Meeting, 7 PM, St. Stanislaus, 467-7405  
 FEB 26 SAT PAC Club Spaghetti Dinner, Pac Club, Sponsored by the Ladies Aux., 266-7215

MAR 2 WED PHSR Board of Directors Meeting, 7 PM, St. Stanislaus, 467-7405

### ST. STANISLAUS SCHEDULE: JANUARY – MARCH - 2005

JAN 15 – Saturday – "Oplatek" – Dinner Dance  
 JAN 23 – Sunday – Breakfast sponsored by Holy Name of Jesus Society

FEB 9 – Ash Wednesday / (Eroda Popielcowa: Masses: 8:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. (English);  
 12:00 noon (Latin); 6:30 p.m. (Polish)

FEB12 – Valentines Card Party sponsored by Ladies Society – Details 467 – 3068

### HOLY WEEK / WIELKI TYDZIEŃ

MAR 19/20 – **Palm Sunday:** Masses – Saturday - 4:00 p.m., Sunday - 9:00 a.m.; 11:00 a.m.

### PASCHAL TRIDUUM / TRIDUUM PASCHALNE

MAR 24 - **Holy Thursday:** 7:00 p.m. Mass of the Lord's Supper (Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & private Prayer till 10:30 p.m.)

MAR 25 - **Good Friday**  
 9:00 a.m. – Morning Prayer Service  
 3:00 p.m. – Solemn Celebration of our Lord's Passion & Death  
 (English), & Confession  
 6:00 p.m. – Solemn Celebration of our Lord's Passion & Death  
 (Polish), & Confession

MAR 26 - **Holy Saturday**  
 9:00 a.m. – Morning Prayer  
 2:00 p.m. & 4:00 p.m. Blessing of the Food Baskets

### EASTER / WIELKANOC

MAR 26 - Saturday – 7:00 p.m. Easter Vigil Liturgy  
 MAR 27 - Easter Sunday:  
 6:00 a.m. Solemn Resurrection Mass (Polish)

# PHSR Web Site

Gary Gocek

Welcome to a new column in the newsletter devoted to interesting bits of Polonia found on the internet. It is amazing what you can find after a couple hours of fairly random web surfing. Please share with me your favorite Polish or Polish American web sites and they will appear in this column – just send them to me - Gary Gocek, [gary@gocek.org](mailto:gary@gocek.org).

PHSR has its own web site: <http://www.geocities.com/phsroch/> The Geocities service is free. The PHSR web pages provide basic information about our organization, the Rochester Polonia event calendar, the scholarship application, links to related web sites, and more. We welcome your suggestions and submissions. Text, photos and other images can be posted - even audio and video files can be used.

So, a-surfing we go. We start with a search engine, such as [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) or [www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com), and we punch in our interests for the day, such as "Polonia" and "folk customs". One of the tens of thousands of resulting links catches our eye and we find ourselves at [www.bellaonline.com](http://www.bellaonline.com), an extensive site "created by women for women." By clicking on the "Society & Culture" link, we find that the site has a Polish culture editor, Jagoda Urban-Klaehn. On the October day I visited, the Polish culture page presented a wide range of links on history, food, lan-

guage, and much more. The article about All Saint's Day in Poland was very timely in October, so it would seem that the site is updated regularly.

We click around a bit, through "Culture" and "Polish Culture Articles from BellaOnline", i.e., original articles by Jagoda, not just links to other sites. Here we see articles about Christmas and Easter and more, not all of which are the usual fluff. But the usual fluff is there, too, so if you want a good reference for your teen to read about Wigilia basics, this is the place.

But there's a real treasure here, a whole section related to Polish paganism. This may not initially seem to be much of a treasure, but remember that Polish history predates our Judeo-Christian Polonia by centuries, and Moses and our Savior didn't quite make it up to Krakow. The articles point out pagan practices that are not so foreign to us. For example, we can imagine a relationship between the church's timing of the celebration of Christ's birth and the pagan celebration of the winter solstice, which occur just a few days apart.

Jagoda reviews a web site called "Okana's Web", [www.okana.org](http://www.okana.org), which is registered to Denice Szafron of Edwards, NY. The site's pages refer to the author, though, as Okana. This site focuses on early Polish history, folklore, and other traditional

issues. It seems well researched and provides a bibliography, but there is a relationship with the Cherry Hill pagan seminary ([www.cherryhillseminary.org](http://www.cherryhillseminary.org)), so the author is well served by tracing customs or behavior back to some sort of pagan root. Some of the claims are probably right, some may be questioned, and the arguments might even sometimes be meaningful.

I won't advocate or denigrate paganism here, but Okana's Web is certainly entertaining. It's mainly in English, but uses Polish frequently, and is very readable by a non-Polish speaker. We find dozens of Polish proverbs, such as "Nie pchaj rzeki, sama plynie," or, "Don't push a river, it flows by itself." How about a recipe for dried mushroom soup with barley, or the meaning of the name suffix "-ski"? We find an extensive explanation of the origins of that crazy Western New York tradition - Dyngus Day. Several "faery" tales are presented.

There is extensive information on pisanki (decorated eggs) on Okana's Web, and links to other pisanki sites. The use of the egg as a pagan fertility symbol is well known, so it's a logical topic for Okana, and Okana's pagan slant provides a different perspective.

We finish our surfing by clicking the Back button a few times to get back to BellaOnline. Jagoda reports on a poll that tells us, "78% of Poles decorate



*"The Glory of the Lord endures forever, The Lord shall rejoice in His works . . .  
I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live, I will sing Praise to my God while I have my being"*  
*Psalm 104: 31, 33*



Dawn Marie Chmiel is originally from Manchester, NY. She currently lives in Webster with her husband, Gene, and sons, Brian and Andrew. Dawn has been involved in music ministry in the Church since the age of 11 starting as a parish organist. She has worked with many different parishes including St. Stanislaus Kostka and is currently Music Coordinator for the Chapel at St. Ann's Community. Dawn also travels through-out the Northeast United States singing for charity benefits, weddings, and concerts.

God has greatly blessed Dawn with an angelic, ethereal voice that touches the soul. She has been likened to Charlotte Church and Sarah Brightman. Her singing reaches out and evokes emotions that are in the listener's heart. In response to Dawn's CD, "For His Glory", a listener wrote "I played your CD about 5 times, and it became the voice for the prayers trapped in my heart". Dawn gives all the credit to God – "My voice is a gift from God that I want to always be able to give back to Him. I feel His presence so strongly when I just let myself go with the music and focus on the words – speaking directly to Him." Dawn's focus is to reach out to people with this gift and to bring them closer to Jesus.

Dawn's first CD, "For His Glory" was released in 2002. Since then, she has been privileged to be invited to sing for concerts throughout the area, and can now be heard on radio stations worldwide, including EWTN Global Radio and Sacred Heart Radio. "For His Glory" has been voted into the Top Ten Chart on Sacred Heart Radio, coming in as #1 for 3 weeks in 2003 as well as being in the Top 20 Best Selling CDs on Catholic Music Network. "Chapel Hymns" is Dawn's second CD – a "mini" recording of 6 classic hymns. Both recordings are available through her website at [www.dawnchmiel.com](http://www.dawnchmiel.com). In 2005, her Christmas CD will be released, including an

**Polish Heritage  
Society of Rochester**

*Membership applications are available  
by writing to :*

**PHSR - P.O.Box 17368  
Rochester, NY 14617**

*Please consider joining and becoming  
involved in building a dynamic Polish  
Heritage Community in Rochester*

## The Polish Tennis League of Rochester

*Slawka Wojdak*

A Polish Tennis League has been started in Rochester. The league ended with a tournament during which eight players vied for first place. Darek Boczek was this year's top contender by winning all 7 of his matches. Second place went to Waldek Wojdak (7/6), and third place to Piotr Bajorski (7/5). The other players were Mietek Zarowny, Janek Skrzypek, Tadek Bandurowski, Ryszard Mieszczanski and Rafal Szalowski.

The most important point of this tournament was to let our Polish tennis players get to know and play with each other. Plans are to include our younger players and promote tennis among them as well. Our league is open for new members. Anyone who would like to join should contact me by e-mail at [s\\_wojdak@hotmail.com](mailto:s_wojdak@hotmail.com) or by phone: Slawka Wojdak 585-368-9266



Score Board 2004:	
Final results:	
Name	(matches played/matches won)
Darek Boczek	7/7
Waldek Wojdak	7/6
Piotr Bajorski	7/5
Mietek Zarowny	7/3
Janek Skrzypek	7/2
Tadek Bandurowski	6/2
Ryszard Mieszczanski	6/2
Rafal Szalowski	7/0

## A Short Interview with Darek Boczek – The First Place Winner

*Slawka Wojdak*

**Darek, congratulation, first place is something to be proud of.**

Thank you.

**When did you start playing tennis?**

My first contact with tennis was in Poland when I was 15 years old. That was the time of the great popularity of Wojciech Fibak, the Polish tennis player. All the tennis courts in Poland require a high fee, so my friend and I played on the volleyball courts - we just lowered the net down.

**What other sports did you play in the past?**

Since I was 11 years old I played soccer in Poland with Pogon-Szczecin. Then I moved to another soccer team - Flota Swinoujscie and later on when I was in the Polish Army I played in the 3rd league of Legia Warszawa. After I came to Rochester in 1988, I wanted to continue playing professional soccer. I joined the White Eagles but shortly after I had a leg injury and couldn't play soccer any more. That's when I rediscovered tennis.

**Who was your toughest opponent in this tournament?**

Every person was a challenge because they all represent different styles of playing and they all are excellent players. I played with Waldek Wojdak before but I never won with him prior to the tournament. Playing with Piotr Bajorski was tiring due to a long ball exchange series.

**Tell us about your personal life.**

I came to Rochester in 1988 as a 35 year old bachelor. 17 months later my fiancée Jola joined me from Poland. In 2000 our daughter Darla was born. Tennis became my new passion and I am planning on participating in next year's tournament.

## Polonia Civic Centre Receives Citation

*Eugene Golomb*

At the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet of the Polish American Congress of Western New York, the Polonia Civic Centre of Rochester was presented a Citation for its work for the good of Polonia. On behalf of President Eugene Golomb, Secretary Irene Peters was present to accept the award and to briefly summarize PCC's activities and donations.

WNYPAC President Richard Solecki recognized the close association President Golomb had with Past President Joseph Macielag (1994-2003) in contributing to the aspirations set forth by the Polish American Congress. PAC was formed in 1944 in reaction to learning that Poland indeed would not be a free country following WWII. It worked to consolidate support to continue the struggle for a free and independent Poland. At that time PAC adopted an "American Agenda" aimed at assuring its members become better informed American citizens; at the same time adopting a "Polish Agenda" to assist Poland in its hour of need by keeping the American public and U.S. Administration informed on what was occurring to the enslaved Polish people and how this affected the security of the U.S.

The CITATION was presented by Bishop Edward Grosz and President Solecki at the banquet held in Buffalo on October 29, 2004. The Polonia Civic Centre is seen by PAC as an active organization like itself, which in the words of Gov. G. Pataki "...continues to advocate concern for human rights shared by the Polish community and Americans of all backgrounds."

## Dr. Ewa Hauser Speaks at Pulaski Day Ceremonies

*Eugene Golomb*

On October 10, 2004, the Polonia Civic Centre sponsored the annual celebration of Pulaski Day with the 11 AM Polish Mass at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church. Veteran and civic units processed into church where Father Adam Ogorzaly gave a fine homily reminding the congregation of the supreme sacrifice made by General Casimir Pulaski at Savannah, GA during the Revolutionary War.

Following mass, the festivities continued in the auditorium where Father Ogorzaly gave a short opening prayer and President Golomb introduced our reigning Miss Polonia, Ms. Christine Walker.

Our speaker, Dr. Hauser, was born in Sandomierz, Poland and graduated from the University of Warsaw before immigrating to the United States in 1970. She attended Yale University and received her doctorate at Johns Hopkins University in cultural anthropology. Dr. Hauser taught at Hollins College in Virginia and worked for human rights organizations in Washington, DC. She has been associated with the University of Rochester for over 12 years and is a Fulbright Scholar. She is now director of the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies at the UR.

Dr. Hauser's talk centered on the academic offerings of the Skalny Center and the benefits for studying both historical and contemporary issues in Poland and Central Europe. She also mentioned formal academic program agreements between the Skalny Center/UR and the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and now, the University of Warsaw. These connections benefit not only the universities but also the Rochester community.

The audience of over 100 people appreciated Dr. Hauser's informative talk which was later followed by a light reception.