

ZGODA

Spring
2022

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE **POLISH NATIONAL ALLIANCE** OF THE U.S. OF N.A.

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Hello Spring
Wiosna, ach to ty!

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Storks on the spring meadow in Podlasie, Poland
Nesting storks signal arrival of spring. The Polish people, consider the bird to be a sign of good luck.
This spring, let's hope for peace!

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of the U.S. of N.A.

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From the President

February 2022

Dear Members,

We have made it through the last two years, despite the challenges they have brought. Though our organization will always evolve with the changing times, our mission to serve our communities as a fraternal organization that provides quality life insurance will always remain the core of who we are. We have always kept our commitment to financially protecting you and your family. This is the true meaning behind life insurance: protecting the ones you love.

Last year, our assets increased by approximately \$10 Million to a total of \$443.000 million. Also during this time, our surplus was enlarged by \$1 Million to a total of almost \$23 Million. Safeguarding the interests of our members is our top priority, and we exceed expectations thanks to our conservative financial management.

We ended 2021 by featuring our Single Premium Whole Life Plan, which was a huge success. Individuals were able to purchase insurance for a single premium, oftentimes purchasing two to three times the amount of coverage in comparison to premiums paid, which provides a tax-free benefit to the beneficiaries. This is a great plan for individuals who wish to leave behind a legacy, or transfer wealth to their loved ones.

Tax season is quickly approaching. One way to reduce your taxes and boost your retirement bottom line is to invest in an IRA or Deferred Annuity. It is important to plan as early as possible because the average life expectancy continues to rise, which means that each new generation will need more retirement funds for a longer time. The earlier you start saving, the more funds you will have to achieve your retirement goals, whether that be to go on your dream vacation, buy a sports car, or take care of your housing and medical needs. Once you've tallied your projected expenses, it's time to calculate your retirement income needs.

For many people, choosing a life insurance plan or figuring out how to make their retirement benefits generate an income stream for the rest of their life can feel overwhelming. Our compassionate and knowledgeable representatives are here to help you understand your options and make the best decisions for you and your family. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call our Main Office at 773-286-0500 or contact your local PNA representative.

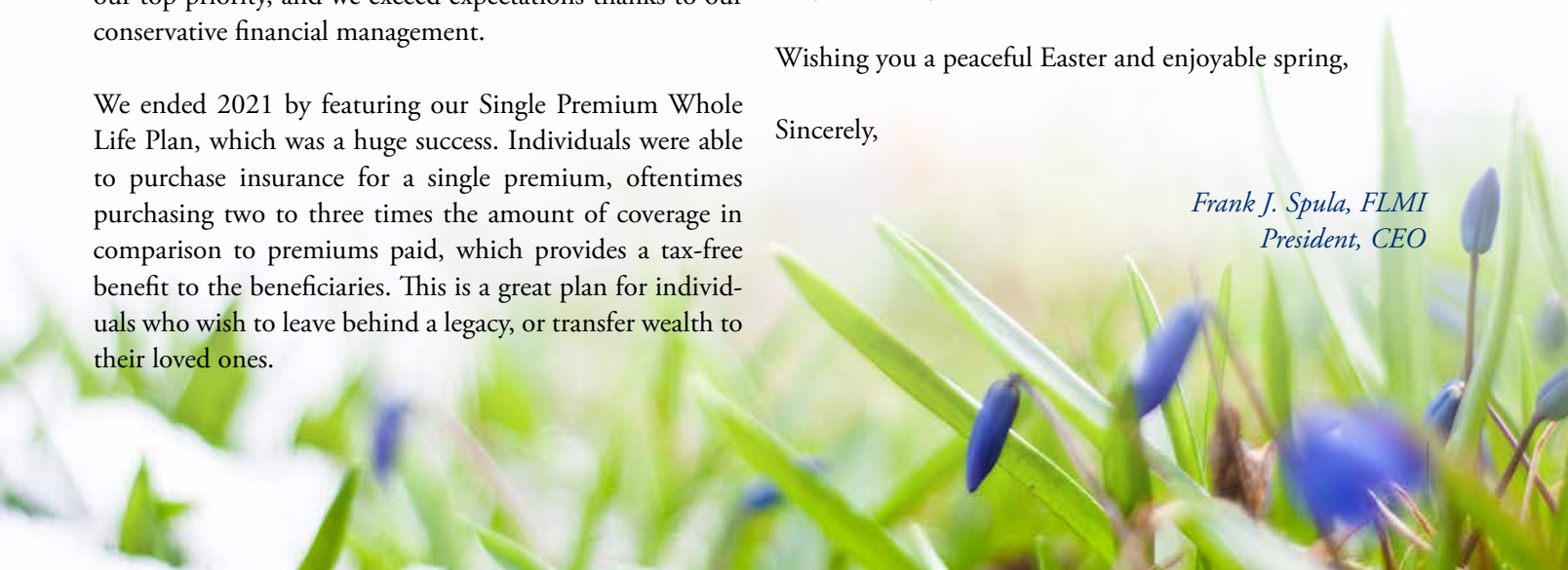
Recently, the Polish National Alliance celebrated 142 years of existence. Since its founding, the PNA has provided a multitude of fraternal benefits to our members, including scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students, support for Polish Schools and sports programs, and so much more. Moving forward, we hope to be even more involved in our local communities, especially through charitable efforts. We encourage all generations to find ways to be involved in your communities and make a positive difference in people's lives.

In closing, I want to thank you for your loyalty and commitment to the Polish National Alliance. I assure you that the Polish National Alliance remains strong and will be here for you when you need it most.

Wishing you a peaceful Easter and enjoyable spring,

Sincerely,

Frank J. Spula, FLMI
President, CEO




Our Official PNA Representatives

We are here for you. Our PNA representatives are just like family and we know that sometimes you need to reach out and talk to someone who understands your concerns. Below is a list of directors and fraternal advisors, the districts and regions they represent, and their email addresses. Feel free to contact them with your comments and questions; after all, we are here for you!

Region	Fraternal Advisor	Contact	
A	Irene Grabowy	pnagrabowy@juno.com	860-589-0592
B	Sean Jackson	sjacksonpna@gmail.com	412- 841-3120
C	Bozena Kaminski	bozenak@polishslaviccenter.com	917-750-8143
D	David Milcinovic	davidgmilcinovic@yahoo.com	216-299-1407
E	Stella Szczesny	stellaszcz@gmail.com	313-680-4548
F	Barbara Wesołowski	Bwesolowski1@yahoo.com	708-460-6657
G	Magdalena Solarz	pna.fraternal.g@gmail.com	773-777-8800
H	Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden	jola@drydeneventproductions.com	713-805-5810
I	Teresa Jankowski	jtjankowski@sbcglobal.net	414-559-9301
J	Greg Chilecki	gchilecki@dslexreme.com	714-744-2775

Region	District	Area	Facebook Page
A	I, II	Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, Connecticut	Polish National Alliance, North -East states
B	VIII	Western Pennsylvania, Western New York	PNA , Region "B" Fraternal Group
C	III, VI, VII	Eastern New York, New Jersey, East and Southwestern Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, DC	Polish National Alliance, Mid Atlantic
D	IX, XVII	Ohio, West Virginia	Polish National Alliance, Ohio and West Virginia
E	X, XV	Michigan, Indiana	Polish National Alliance, Michigan and Indiana
F	XII	South Chicago	Polish National Alliance, South Chicago
G	XIII	North Chicago	Polish National Alliance, North Chicago
H	IV, V, XI	Texas, Nebraska, Missouri, Florida, Colorado	Polish National Alliance, Region H
I	XIV	North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin	PNA, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin
J	XVIII	Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, Arizona	Polish National Alliance, Pacific Coast, Nevada and Arizona



Who gets your money?

Make sure your check ends up in the right hands!

Your beneficiary designation (not your will) dictates who will inherit your life insurance, annuity, or retirement savings. **These life-changing moments should make you check your beneficiaries:**

- ✓ You got married or got divorced
- ✓ You birthed or adopted a child
- ✓ You lost a loved one
- ✓ You decided to leave money to your favorite charity

Make sure the paperwork is up-to-date. Please contact PNA customer service:
1-773-286-0500 ext. 376
Download **Change of Beneficiary** form of the PNA website pna-znp.org

Polish National Alliance | 6100 N. Cicero Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60646



Happy Easter 2022!

*May this joyful season of Easter fill your hearts with
renewed hope, love, and peace.*

Wesołego Alleluja!

Executive Officers

President – Frank J. Spula

Vice-President – Marian Grabowski

National Secretary – Alicja Kuklińska

Treasurer – Steve H. Tokarski

Vice-Chair – Wesley E. Musial

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Jeff Twardy, Pittsburgh PA

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Bozena Kaminski, New York, NY

David Milcinovic, Parma, OH

Stella G. Szczesny, Hamtramck, MI

Barbara J. Wesolowski, Orland Park, IL

Magdalena Solarz, Glenview, IL

Sean Jackson, Glassport, PA

Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden, Seabrook, TX

Teresa A. Jankowski, Saint Francis, WI

Greg G. Chilecki, Orange, CA





From the National Sales Manager

The best time to buy life insurance is when you can get it

The sales manager who hired me as an insurance agent was a person of impeccable integrity with a booming voice, an opinion on everything, and a steadfast belief in the value of owning life insurance. Jack was indeed the type of person anyone would be grateful to have had as a teacher, mentor, and friend.

One of the things Jack “preached” as I was developing my own impressions of my new profession was that the purchase of a life insurance policy is a purchase of love. If a person doesn’t love someone or something, there is no reason to have life insurance. Conversely, if a person loves his or her family there is every reason to own life insurance.

Life insurance allows your spouse and children to remain financially secure. Life insurance benefit payments can be used to cover daily living expenses, outstanding loans, college tuition and other essential expenses. You have worked hard to establish a standard of living for your family. You certainly don’t want that standard to be diminished in the event of your untimely death. Making sure your family can safely stay in their own world even if you can no longer provide for them is a forever way to say “I love you.” Getting life insurance is an expression of love that goes beyond words. It shows your loved ones—with certainty—that you care about protecting their future.

When is the best time to buy life insurance? Jack used to say, “The best time to buy life insurance is when you can get it.” As we go through life, things happen. Not necessarily immediately life-changing or life-threatening, but things beyond our control that have consequences in our daily

lives. Some of these things will change how a life insurance underwriter will look at your health situation. What Jack meant was - you know you need life insurance or you’re going to need it. Get it while you are healthy and while the premium is lower.

I urge you to consider your own situation. Should you be reviewing your current life insurance program? Do you think you might need insurance in the future?



PNA is committed to partnering with you to determine the amount of insurance you need and what kind of insurance will fit into your budget. Contact your PNA representative today. Or call the Home Office Sales Department at (800) 621-3723.

*Tom Adamson
FICF, CLU ChFC
National Sales Manager*



A Lifetime of Coverage IN 20 PAYMENTS

With PNA 20 Pay Life Insurance policy, you provide the financial protection that your family needs and deserves.

YOU GET:



Life insurance protection
for your growing family.
We've got you covered.



Borrowing Power
of Cash Value in your insurance policy when
you need it the most.
We've got you covered.



Tax Advantages
the income-tax-free death benefit that
allows you to avoid probate costs!
We've got you covered.



Cash Value 'Build Up'
Your life insurance policy Cash Value
grows and can be used for emergencies
or retirement years.
We've got you covered.



Age	Annual Premium	Insurance Coverage	Age 65 Cash Value ²
30	\$661.50	\$50,000	\$28,182
35	\$768.50	\$50,000	\$27,488
40	\$905.00	\$50,000	\$26,806
45	\$1,066.50	\$50,000	\$26,131
50	\$1,260.00	\$50,000	\$19,800

²Premiums may be paid monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually.



📞 1-800-621-3723

🌐 pna-znp.org

📘 [Facebook.com/PNAZNP](https://www.facebook.com/PNAZNP)

Polish National Alliance of the U.S. of N.A. 6100 North Cicero Ave Chicago, IL, 60646

¹ Consult legal and/or tax advisor. ² Age 65 Cash value includes non-guaranteed dividend values. Form 20PWL (2022). Not available in all states.

WHAT'S YOUR FINANCIAL GOAL?

- Travel
- Vacation home
- Enjoying your hobby

Whatever your goal, the PNA Annuity can provide stable income when you're no longer getting a paycheck.

Set a goal today! Start your Annuity and enjoy a worry-free lifestyle!

Let's talk and see which PNA Annuity best matches your needs. Call a PNA Agent or the Home Office at **1-800-621-3723**

We offer a strong **2.25%** return with no maintenance fees.

RETIRE HOW YOU WANT. WHEN YOU WANT.





**APPLICATION FOR
INDIVIDUAL LIFE
INSURANCE**

Amounts \$30,000 and below

**POLISH NATIONAL ALLIANCE
of the United States of North America**
A Fraternal Benefit Life Insurance Society since 1880
**6100 N. Cicero Avenue
Chicago, IL 60646-4386
pna-znp.org**

Lodge No. _____

Certificate No. _____
For office use only

1. Name of Proposed Insured:		2. Sex M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Date of Birth	4. Age	5. Email
6. Address				7. Phone	8. Place of Birth
9. Social Security No.	10. Marital Status <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced		12. Occupation		13. Employer
14. Owner: (if other than insured):		Relationship:	Social Security No.	Email	
Address		City:	State	Zip	
15. Primary Beneficiary:		Relationship:	Social Security No.		
Address		City:	State	Zip	
16. Contingent Beneficiary:		Relationship:	Social Security No.		
Address		City:	State	Zip	

17a. Plan of Insurance _____ 17b. Amount of Insurance _____

18. Would you like to add the following riders: Disability waiver of premium ☐ Yes ☐ No; Accidental Death Benefit ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Select a mode of payment: ☐ annual ☐ semi-annual ☐ quarterly ☐ monthly Payment Submitted: _____

20. Select a dividend option: ☐ Left on deposit ☐ Cash ☐ Purchase Paid up additions ☐ Reduce Premiums

21. Would you like the automatic premium loan option? ☐ Yes ☐ No

22. Does the proposed insured have any existing life insurance or annuity contracts now in force? ☐ Yes ☐ No

23. Is this insurance intended to replace or change any insurance now in force? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If "Yes" provide Company and Policy # below

INSURABILITY QUESTIONS

	Yes	No
1. Height _____ 2. Weight _____ 3. Have you smoked or used any form of tobacco within last 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Within the past 10 years has the proposed insured ever been treated for or diagnosed by a medical professional with:		
a. Disease or disorder of heart, kidneys, stomach, liver, lungs, bones or joints?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. High blood pressure, chest pain, diabetes, cancer or tumor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Nervous or mental disease, alcoholism or any drug habit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Currently taking medication? (If yes, indicate type and dosage below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Has the proposed insured been treated by a medical professional for any other physical disease or deformity or consulted or been examined by any physician for other than a symptom-free check-up or had an electrocardiogram, x-rays, blood studies or has been hospitalized during the past five years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Has any application for life insurance been declined, withdrawn, postponed, or modified in any way by any insurance company during the past 5 years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Has the proposed insured had a driver's license suspended or revoked in the past 5 years? If "Yes" provide DL #	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FOR QUESTIONS 3 THRU 8 ABOVE, PROVIDE DETAILS TO "YES" ANSWERS. Attach another sheet if you need more room

Question:	Name and address of physician and hospital	Specific reason consults and results

Fraud warning notice

Any person who knowingly presents a false statement in an application for insurance may be guilty of a criminal offense and subject to penalties under state law.

ICC18 SHORT AP (2018)

Please complete reverse side

Acknowledgement

Please mark the following box, if applicable

☐ I acknowledge that an illustration conforming to the life insurance certificate applied for was not provided. I understand that an illustration will be provided no later than at the time of certificate delivery

To the best of my knowledge and belief the statements and answers in the application are true, complete and correctly recorded. I agree that this application will be the basis for any certificate issued on this application. I further agree that this insurance applied for shall be subject to the conditions and provisions of the contract of insurance and will not take effect until the policy is issued by the Polish National Alliance of the U.S. of N.A. (PNA), the full first year premium has been paid to the PNA and the Proposed Insured's health and other conditions are as described in this application.

THE POLISH NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THE U.S. OF N.A. IS LICENSED TO DO BUSINESS AS A FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETY. AS SUCH, IT IS NOT INCLUDED IN ANY STATE'S LIFE AND HEALTH GUARANTY ASSOCIATION (OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE GUARANTY ASSOCIATION). THIS MEANS THAT FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETIES CANNOT BE ASSESSED FOR THE INSOLVENCY OF OTHER LIFE INSURERS OR OTHER FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETIES. BY LAW, A FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS OWN SOLVENCY. IF THERE IS AN IMPAIRMENT OF RESERVES, A POLICYHOLDER MAY BE ASSESSED A PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE IMPAIRMENT. THIS PROCESS IS DESCRIBED IN THE POLICY ISSUED BY THE SOCIETY.

on

Signed in

City/State

Date

Signature of Proposed Insured

Signature of Agent

Signature of Owner

Authorization for Release of Health-Related Information

This Authorization complies with the HIPAA Privacy Rule

I hereby authorize any licensed physician, medical practitioner, pharmacy benefits manager, hospital, clinic or other medical or medically related facility, insurance company, MIB Inc. or other organization, institution or person, that has any records or knowledge of me or my health to give to the Polish National Alliance of the U.S. of N.A., or its reinsurers, any such information. I authorize the Polish National Alliance of the U.S. of N.A., or its reinsurers, to make a brief report of my personal health information to MIB. A photographic copy of this authorization shall be as valid as the original.

I understand that the information in my health record may include information relating to sexually transmitted diseases, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). It may also include information about behavioral or mental health services and treatment for alcohol and drug abuse.

I also understand that when my medical records are disclosed pursuant to this Authorization, my medical records and the information contained in those records may be subject to re-disclosure by the recipient and may no longer be protected by federal privacy laws.

I understand that I may revoke this Authorization, except to the extent that any healthcare provider or the Polish National Alliance of the United States of North America has acted in reliance upon this Authorization. My revocation of this Authorization must be submitted in writing to:

**Polish National Alliance of the United States of North America
Attn. Privacy Compliance Officer
6100 N. Cicero Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60646**

This Authorization will expire twenty-four (24) months after the date the Authorization is signed or for the time limit, if any, permitted by applicable law in the state where the policy is delivered or issued for delivery.

Signature of Individual Whose Information is to be Disclosed

Date

Print Name of Individual

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Print Name of Parent or Legal Guardian

In Memoriam

JAMES ALLEN HICKER (1933-2022)



James A. Hicker passed away peacefully on December 1, 2021 after a short illness. He was born on May 3, 1933 in Tacoma. He attended Lincoln High School and graduated from the University of Puget Sound in 1955, and was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. He married Jean Marie Sliva on November 12, 1955. James and Jean lived in Kitzingen, Germany during James's military service. Upon returning to Tacoma, James began a 35-year career at Boeing as a purchasing agent. James and Jean moved to Federal Way in 1964, where they raised four children.

James was a loving husband and father. He enjoyed the outdoors and spent many hours fishing, clamming, foraging berries and mushrooms, gardening, and camping with his family. James was active in his parish, St. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church, and the Polish National Alliance. He served as Financial Secretary and President of the PNA Lodge 156, President of PNA Council 57, and a delegate to the PNA National Convention in 1991. James is survived by his wife: Jean; his four children: Robert (Iwona), Anthony (Betty), Michelle (Christoph) Toth, and Anne Marie (former PNA Commissioner), and six grandchildren.

GILBERT J. SHERMAN (1943-2022)



Gilbert J. Sherman of Wilbraham, MA, passed away on Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at the age of 78. The son of the late Judson and Estelle (Couture) Sherman, he was born in Chicopee on June 11, 1943. Upon graduating from Chicopee High School, Gilbert joined the Barron's Weekly Division of Dow Jones, retiring as the Chief Statistician. While working at Barron's, he earned both his B.S. and MBA from AIC. Active in many community organizations, Gilbert served as President of both Council 62 and Lodge 711 of the Polish National Alliance. He was also a delegate to the PNA National Conventions in 2011, 2015 and 2019. He was President and an active, hands-on volunteer at Camp Stanica and taught faith formation at St. Catherine of Siena Parish for many years.

Gilbert is survived by his high school sweetheart and wife of 57 years: PNA National Director and Zgoda contributor, Teresa Struziak Sherman; his children: Gayle Sherman, Rev. Scott Sherman (Bridget) and Greg Sherman (Linda); his siblings: Dennis Sherman (Sandra), Donna Neumann (Barry) and Rochelle Settembre (Gary); his grandchildren: David and Natalie Ricardo, Sarah, Rebekah, Patrick, Matthew and Alexa Sherman; and Sister-In-Law Debbie McKinnon.

Donations in Gilbert's memory may be made to the Polish Center for Discovery and Learning, 33 South St., Chicopee, MA 01020.

PNA District I Annual Joint Convention

Chicopee, MA. PNA District I held its Annual Joint Convention for 2021 on November 20 at the Chicopee Falls Polish Home in Chicopee, MA, hosted by PNA Lodge 711. PNA Fraternal Advisor Irene Grabowy conducted the meeting and election of the president treasurer and the appointment of Joseph Sendrowski as secretary for PNA District I. Elected President of PNA District I was former Commissioner Wanda Milecki, and elected Treasurer of District I was Maria Kruzel, President of PNA Lodge 3276. There were 27 delegates present representing 2 Councils and 9 Lodges. PNA National Director Teresa Struziak Sherman administered the Oath of Delegates. The Convention delegates were honored with the presence of PNA National President Frank J. Spula, and PNA National Director Teresa Struziak Sherman, who spoke of the need of all delegates to seek new members. Director Sherman also answered questions asked by the delegates.

The appointment of committees by Fraternal Advisor Irene Grabowy met during lunch and presented their reports after a delicious lunch, which was catered by Bernat's Polish Food, Deli, and Bakery of Chicopee, MA. Their website is www.bernatspolishdeli.com. The following appointed committees presented reports following lunch: Audit Committee, Membership Committee, Sports and Youth Committee, Resolution Committee, and Raffle Committee. Reports of Lodges and Councils followed the committee reports.

The Convention's keynote speaker was PNA National President Frank J. Spula from Chicago, Illinois. Mr. Spula inspired the delegates with a very elegant speech about the stability of the organization throughout this ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and the need for all members to spread the word regarding the benefits of PNA membership that will contribute to a personal and secure financial future for all ages.

President Spula then surprised past and present PNA District I leaders who held PNA District National offices such as National Director and/or Commissioner with a Legion of Honor Cross and certificate of appreciation. The award recipients were: Teresa Struziak-Sherman, Past Commissioner and current National Director; Commissioners Wanda Milecki, Jeannie Zapala, Walter Tokarz, and John Mailloux.

Also, a delegate to the PNA District I Convention and receiving an award presented by President Spula was Elizabeth (Ella) J. Morawiak-Paczuska, the winner of the "Region A" PNA Frontline Hero Award. Ella is a medical/hospital Polish interpreter/translator helping Polish-speaking patients in various Boston hospitals and health centers to understand what medical personnel is asking or explaining to them about their medical condition, or interpreting what information is being told or asked of them.

Ella was very concerned when the COVID-19 Pandemic arrived in the USA, especially in the Boston, MA area. She knew that older people in her community were at risk for the disease. She convinced her friends to help her sew masks. Ella produced over 10,000 masks in various colors and designs and distributed them, free of charge, to the elderly, mute, children, friends, and family. Ella also delivered food, such as fruit, vegetables, bread, potatoes, and turkeys to Polish families who could not get the items themselves.

A raffle was held to help defray the costs of the Convention. Delegates of PNA District I donated all prizes. At the conclusion, delegates commented about the success and productivity of the Convention.

PNA DISTRICT I CONVENTION LEADERSHIP AWARDEES



Chicopee, MA. Delegates to the PNA District I Convention were happy to spend the day with friends and family at the

Convention held on November 20, 2021 in Chicopee, MA at the Chicopee Falls Polish Home, hosted by PNA Lodge 711. Pictured (l-r): PNA National Director and former Commissioner Teresa Struziak-Sherman; Past Commissioners Walter Tokarz and Jeannie Zapala; PNA National President Frank J. Spula, presenting the awards; Irene Grabowy, Fraternal Advisor Region "A"; Wanda Milecki, and Frank Wolanin.

PNA REGION 1 FRONTLINE HERO AWARD WINNER



Chicopee, MA. The PNA District I Convention delegates were honored to have as one of the delegates the Region A winner of the PNA Frontline Hero Award, Elizabeth (Ella) Morawiak-Paczuska. Ella got together with Polish friends, and they made over 10,000 masks for people in the Weymouth, MA community. Ella delivered the masks, along with food, to people in need. Ella also brought masks for people at the Convention. Pictured with personalized masks are (l-r): Irene Grabowy, Fraternal Advisor, PNA Region A; PNA National President, Frank J. Spula; Frontline Award Winner for Region A Ella Morawiak-Paczuska, and Teresa Struziak-Sherman, former Commissioner and current PNA National Director.

*Submitted by Teresa Struziak-Sherman,
PNA National Director*

PNA District II Convention



Pictured left to right: George Yasensky, Irene Grabowy, Ed Zolkiewicz Jr, Donald Dube, Marianna Koziol-Dube, and President Spula.

The featured guest was Mr. Frank Spula, President of PNA. Mr. Spula discussed the financial state of affairs in the PNA and fraternal activities, strong sponsorship of scholarships to members attending higher education, and challenges with evolving insurance regulations. The delegation was very appreciative of his comments and his enthusiastic support of the district.



District II Officers (l-r): Wiesia Kennedy, Donald Dube, Marianna Koziol-Dube, Ela Lechowicz

Mr. Spula used the opportunity to award the Bronze and Silver Legion of Honor medals and certificates to several district representatives in recognition of distinguished and devoted service. Recipients of the Bronze medal were Marianna Koziol-Dube and Donald Dube of Lodge 2612 in New Britain; George Yesinsky and Ed Zolkiewicz Jr. of Lodge 513 in Wallingford; as well as Janina Chlus of Lodge 464 in Hartford and Grazyna Krupa of Lodge 441 in Bristol (neither in attendance). Irene Grabowy was the recipient of the Silver medal.

At the beginning of the meeting, it was announced that the long-time secretary of past district conventions, Mrs. Helen Knapczyk of Lodge 315 in Bridgeport, was retiring from the position. The members of District II expressed their sincere appreciation for her decades of service. Elected to District II offices by proclamation were Ed Zavaski of Lodge 513, president; Donald Dube, treasurer; Marianna Koziol-Dube, president of Women's Division; and Ela Lechowicz, Lodge 513, treasurer of Women's Division. Wiesia Kennedy of Lodge 464 served as the new secretary of the convention. Additional positions and committee assignments were filled. The financial reports of the district were audited and approved. Individual lodge reports were provided. The district is ready to return to some sense of normalcy after the long period of low activity.

*Submitted by Donald Dube, Treasurer, District II
Photos courtesy of Ela Lechowicz, Lodge 513*

Wigilia in Bethlehem

PNA Council 171 in Bethlehem, PA, is proud to have donated 100% of the proceeds (\$2,450) from our annual Wigilia celebration to Saint Vincent DePaul Society to benefit a local food pantry. Due to space limitations, the food pantry offers only non-perishable food items. Council 171 donation will be used to purchase gift certificates to the Kellyn Foundation produce trucks, enabling patrons of the pantry to have access to fresh produce throughout the year.

It starts with making the pierogi, a multiple-day process with so many donating their time. The majority of the pierogi are sold as a fundraiser that contributes significantly to the donation. The rest becomes part of the meatless meal served at the Council 171 annual Wigilia - community celebration.

*Submitted by Christine Thompson,
Council 171 Secretary*



PNA COUNCIL 62 INSTALLS OFFICERS FOR 2022

Chicopee, MA. Polish National Alliance Council 62 delegates of Chicopee, MA held their 2022 annual meeting and elections on Sunday, January 23, 2022 at the Munich Haus Restaurant in Chicopee, MA. Election Chairperson and Installing Officer, Conrad Heede, PNA Lodge 2279, administered the oath of office to elected delegates and officers.

This year, the PNA Council 62 co-educational overnight camping season at Camp Stanica, the Polish Alliance Youth Camp in Bondsville, MA, is in question due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision as to whether to open the camp this year will be made at the Annual Meeting and Election of Officers in February 2022. Anyone interested in sending a child to camp should contact President Richard Knurek at 413-283-9525 or e-mail: campstanica@yahoo.com for updated information regarding the opening of Camp Stanica.

This year, Council 62's goal is to increase PNA membership, and we have organized a membership contest for our delegates. Our goal is to have every delegate enroll or refer at least one new member in 2022. Sales Representatives should enroll at least three new members. Sto Lat PNA Council 62!



Pictured standing left to right: Brian Gendron, Treasurer; Teresa Struziak Sherman, PNA National Director and Council 62 Financial and Recording Secretary; Jeannie Zapala, former Commissioner PNA District 1 and Council 62 1st Vice President; Richard Knurek, 2nd Vice President and President of the Polish Alliance Youth Camp Camp Stanica in Bondsville, MA; and the late Gilbert J. Sherman, President.

*Submitted by Teresa Struziak Sherman, National Director,
Council 62 Financial and Recording Secretary*



Spring Greetings from Region H

Welcome to 2022! Wishing everyone a great 2022 and a return to normalcy. Winter is still upon us, so we hope you are bundled up and warm. Spring is trying to peak through and so are new activities, like getting together with our friends and our Polish communities. We are always looking for new projects and ways to promote PNA in our society and social media, so send us your ideas and new initiatives!

Please do not forget the opportunities and products PNA has to offer. Be sure to share with your friends and family, and make sure you have protection! You never know when you will need what PNA offers. For more information, go to: <https://pna-znp.org/insurance-plans/permanent-plans/>!

Region H hopes all are safe, in good health, and are getting on with life in our new normal. Prayers to those still suffering. Wishing you and yours a happy and prosperous Spring and Easter - Święta Wielkanocne.

The History of Texas Polonia

On October 4th, Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz, in conjunction with St. Thomas University, presented a lecture on the History of Texas Polonia that featured special guests and presentations. The lecture had contributions from Consul General Robert Rusiecki of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Marek Probosz, who starred in the documentary video "Death of Captain Pilecki", Dr. Hittinger, Dr. Przybylski, and Fraternal Advisor Jolanta Mazewski Dryden. Dr. Mazurkiewicz is a Kosciuszko 165 member, Professor, Regents Fellow TAMU, President Polish American Council of Texas (PACT), and Honorary Doctorate SGGW Warsaw.



2021 Polish Texan Lifetime Achievement Award

Longtime PNA Member Virginia Felechak Hill was honored with the 2021 Polish Texan Lifetime Achievement Award by the Polish American Council of Texas (PACT) on November 13th. PACT President Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz presented the award, along with Consul General Robert Rusiecki, and PACT Vice President Peter Przybylski. Mrs. Hill is a distinguished member of the Polish community and a founder of the Polish Genealogical Society in Texas. She greatly contributes to the historical research of Polish genealogy. She is the distinguished author of, "Polish Emigrants to Texas: The Second Wave" and "Polish Footprints: periodical of the Polish Genealogical Society of Texas". Congratulations and thank you for all your hard work and contributions.



Polish Community Annual Meeting

Texas Polonia has an annual meeting, organized by Polish American Council of Texas and sponsored of PNA Region H, where all of Polonia and the various Texas organizations gather together to meet and celebrate. This year's annual meeting took place on November 13th and was once again wonderfully attended. Special thanks to the Polish community in New Waverly for hosting the event. The event moves year to year between Polish communities with long histories and ties to Poland. This event featured meetings, celebrations, awards and great interactions, along with historical displays and discussions about future projects. Performances by Dance Group Wawel, capped of the celebration. Thank you to Wawel, St. Joseph Catholic Church Parish, and all the friendly people who welcomed us!



Council 182, Progressive 2336 and Kosciuszko 165 Christmas Party

It was great to get together once more for our annual joint Christmas Party. Members were excited to get together and celebrate the holidays. The event was held at Polonia restaurant on December 5th, and it was a full house. The celebration featured food, drinks, Polish and English Christmas carols, and Santa with gifts for children and adults.



Check out Polish National Alliance Region H's New Facebook Page! Please share and like us on Facebook! Keep us updated with your projects, ideas, and innovations! PNA is looking to expand in Region H. If you are interested in being an agent and representing our products, contact us at jola@drydeneventproductions.com or the PNA Home Office at 773-286-0500.

*Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden,
Fraternal Advisor, Region H*

The Chicago Society Deserving Children Christmas Party



Chicago, IL. On December 11th, 2021, The Chicago Society PNA hosted their annual Deserving Children Christmas party for 74 children at the Polish National Alliance.

The children, who came from the Polish American Association and Holy Trinity Polish Mission Church, were treated to a pizza luncheon, choral singing, and a magic show provided by KidzMagic by Andrew, a former member. The highlight of the event was getting a surprise gift from Santa. The event was made possible by generous donations and contributions from the Chicago Society PNA members.

Special THANKS go out to members Ray Golenia, Adam Konopka, Dee Blicharski, Zenon Kurdziel, Jan Plachta, John Wasilewski, and Chris and Kathy Grzadziel. Also, a BIG THANK YOU to the friends of Chicago Society PNA: the Polish Slavic



Federal Credit Union, The Copernicus Foundation, The Polish National Alliance for the room rental, KidzMagic by Andrew for his magic show,

the Polish Scouting Organization for donating refreshments and Lowell's International Foods for their generous gift bag of snacks and chocolates that each child was able to take home. And last but not least, a BIG Thank YOU goes out to the volunteers who came out to help: Zenon Kurdziel, Andy Hasztrakiewicz with his grandkids, Jan Plachta, Peter, and Agnes Dykas with their children, Kathy Grzadziel and Santa (Chris Grzadziel). Job WELL DONE!!

The Chicago Society PNA has been hosting this event for at least the past 65 years, helping all deserving children get a chance to enjoy the holidays.

To check out event photos, see the website at www.chicagosocietypna.org

Submitted by Peter Dykas



Santa Visits Glassport PNA Lodge 750



Santa Claus stopped by the Glassport PNA to visit the children of our lodge. He let them know that Christmas was almost here and that he was checking his list to see who's been naughty or nice. The children all got to tell Santa what was on their Christmas list and that they all have been very good this year. Everyone colored pictures and sang Christmas carols with San-

ta before heading back to the North Pole to make his final preparations for Christmas. The children of Lodge 750 were treated to a day of fun and excitement, and all had a great time. A special thank you to Mrs. Claus and our helper elves who made our Children's Christmas party such a great success!

*Submitted by Sean Jackson,
Fraternal Advisor, Region B*



2022 Officers of the PNA Lodge 2286



Lodge 2286 in Easton, PA held its 2022 election.

Pictured left to right are:
Kathy Sharetzsky - *Sgt. at Arms*
Agnieszka Niemirka - *VP*
(daughter Natalia pictured here)
Joseph Janik - *President*
Mark Janik - *Treasurer*
Chris Thompson - *Secretary*

*Submitted by Chris Thompson,
Secretary PNA Lodge 2286*

District XIII Convention



(l-r) Alicja Kuklińska, Alexandra Brzezinski, Magdalena Solarz, Anna Wierzbicki

On Sunday, February 20, 2022, District XIII PNA held their in-person convention with first term Fraternal Advisor of Region G Magdalena Solarz. Guests in attendance included National Secretary Alicja Kuklińska; Business Director Irene Hercik, Former Directors Anna Wierzbicki, Wanda Penar, and Stasia Rawicka, Former Commissioners Wanda Juda and Joseph Hercik, and Maria Srodon PNA Fraternal Activities Coordinator.

Anna Wierzbicki was appointed as the Recording Secretary. Kasia Pianowska of the WICI ensemble sang Polish and American National Anthems. The invocation was given by National Director Irene Hercik for the sick and recently departed members of District XIII Christina Tarchala, Stella Olender, Zenon Olejniczak, Zofia

Boris, and Mathew Matusiak Sr. The invocation was also for peace between Russia and Ukraine.

There was a total of 29 delegates present representing Lodges and Councils. Business Director Irene Hercik took the oath of the delegates. Treasurer Alexandra Brzezinski read a three-year financial report, which was approved and seconded by all. Sales Manager Jolanta Walaszek gave an update on our latest membership promotions and thanked those who kept selling during this difficult time within the past two years for the good of the organization. She recognized Stasia Rawicka and Elizabeth Stolarczuk as the top sellers in our District. As this was the first time hosting a district/region convention, Magda Solarz thanked everyone for coming and asked everyone for their support

during this time. She promised to work for the good of the District and PNA. President Frank Spula, Treasurer Steve Tokarski, and VP Marian Grabowski were unable to attend the meeting but extended in writing their good wishes for a productive convention.

Our main speaker National Secretary Alicja Kuklińska spoke on behalf of the increasing growth and status of the PNA. She also spoke about the particulars within District XIII. Times are changing. We need to start thinking of doing things differently to attract the younger generation and promote modern fraternalism. There is a percentage of lodges that are inactive throughout the country and it might be useful to merge them with other, active lodges to strengthen the organization and encourage activities.

Anna Wierzbicki Chairwoman of the District XIII Scholars Fund, reported that the District gave out \$6,500 in scholarships to students who had turned in applications. President Reports from Councils 3, 41 and 120 were turned into the secretary. Officers of the District, which were Anna Wierzbicki Rec. Sec., and Alexandra Brzezinski Treasurer, were sworn in by National Secretary Alicja Kuklińska.

Guest speaker Dina Goldberg spoke on behalf of her husband Barry Goldberg, who is running as a judge in the 9th subcircuit of the 50th ward, and asked for support. After the meeting, lunch was provided to all.

*Written by Anna Wierzbicki,
District XIII Recording Secretary*

PNA Golf Fundraiser in Allentown, PA

Allentown, PA. On Saturday, June 12th, the Polish National Alliance Lodge 2286 - West Easton held its First Annual PNA Golf Fundraiser at Shepherd Hills Golf Club in Allentown. All proceeds were being raised for Allentown's Polish American Citizen's Club. This facility has brought the Polish community of the Lehigh Valley and their friends together for traditional events such as Dozynki, Pulaski Day, Polish Constitution Day, and Wigilia, to mention just a few, since 1932. The Polish Club of Allentown was currently experiencing significant financial hardships due to the COVID limitations over the past year, and there were concerns that they may need to close their doors forever if the bills could not get paid.



Newest PNA Lodge 2286 member Regan Janik welcoming attendees to the event.

The event brought 40 golfers and an additional 30 luncheon attendees together to help raise just over \$5,000 for the Polish American Citizen's Club of Allentown. This was possible due to the event's major sponsors, which provided the registration gifts, prizes, beverages, snacks, and music. In addition, the golf hole sponsors and the generous donations of 15 fun baskets that were raffled off during the luncheon assisted in the fundraising efforts. All attendees left with full stomachs, great memories, and many gifts, along with the pride of helping and contributing to keeping the Polish community strong in the Lehigh Valley.

Submitted by Gregory K. Janik



Christine Thompson and Mark Janik set up the registration area for the PNA Lodge 2286 - West Easton Golf Tournament.

PNA District XIII Scholars Fund

Based on the recommendation of the Advisor to the District XIII Scholars Fund, District XIII Scholarship Committee was able to give out a total of \$6,500 to 11 students in the district for the 2021-2022 school year. The recipients of awards were Anna Szaflarski, Anna Tyrawa, Peter Dudek, Simon Grzebien, Jacqueline Scislowski, Jonathan Wierzbicki, Jakub Parzygnat, Anna Bielanski, Mathew Adamski, Michelle Pajak, and Joanna Sobolewski.

The Scholarship Committee consists of Chairwoman Anna Wierzbicki (secretary of the District XIII Scholars Fund), Former Director Wanda Penar (Chairman of the Scholars Fund), Former Commissioner Wanda Juda (Treasurer of the Scholars Fund) and Committee Member Janina Kopacz.

District XIII PNA students, be on the lookout after September for forthcoming details for the 2022/2023 PNA District XIII Scholars Fund awards.

*Written by Anna Wierzbicki,
Secretary PNA District XIII Scholars Fund*



District VIII First Annual Duckpin Bowling Tournament

PNA Members from all over Western Pennsylvania gathered together for the PNA District VIII First Annual Duckpin Bowling Tournament hosted by Glassport PNA Lodge 750. Seventy men and women were treated to the challenging game of Duckpin Bowling as they took to the lanes and aimed the smaller grapefruit-sized ball at the miniature version of a bowling ten-pin. After the bowling, bowlers were treated to a banquet and awards ceremony at the Glassport lodge.

The top game score was turned in by Frank Piekut of Glassport Lodge 750 with a score of 171. Frank Piekut also won the "A" Flight with an average of 146.33. Rhonda Krents of Moxham Lodge 1327 was the top Women's winner with an average of 104.33. Glassport PNA won the Top Lodge Average with a score of 133. Congratulations to all of the winners, and thank you to all the volunteers and to Anthony Molinaro of Glassport Lanes for being a terrific host!



"B" Flight Winners

1	Walt Carpenter (1052)	111.33
2	Mark Stecak (750)	109.67
3	Eric Vermilya (664)	108.67



"A" Flight Winners

1	Frank Piekut (750)	146.33
2	Dean Vickers (750)	136.67
3	Marc Stecak Jr (750)	126.33



"C" Flight Winners

1	Dave Sevacco (1052)	89
2	Jeff Shaw (352)	88.33
3	Mike Breakall (352)	87.67



Women's Flight Winners		
1	Rhonda Krents (1327)	104.33
2	Kristen Crookham (750)	97.67
3	Karen Matlos (750)	83.67

Top Lodge Average		
1	Glassport Lodge 750	133.00
2	West End Lodge 1052	119.00
3	Moxham Lodge 1327	115.58



Submitted by Sean Jackson, Fraternal Advisor, Region B





Zoe S. Moore, born April 23, 2021, is a new member of PNA Lodge 1474. She is the daughter of Elizabeth Wierzbicki and Steve Moore of Indianapolis, IN, and granddaughter of George and Kathleen Wierzbicki of Western Springs, IL. The PNA membership was a gift from her loving great grandmother Stella Wierzbicki of Chicago, IL. She was signed up by her loving Great Aunt, Anna Wierzbicki.



Nicolette Ann Von Arx, born September 18, 2021, daughter of Joseph and Audrey Von Arx, 100% PNA family, is the new member of Lodge 1224, in Rockford, IL. The certificate is a gift from her grandparents Dr. Brian and Sandra Knabe. She was signed up to the PNA by Joe Wojewodzki, Financial Secretary of Lodge 1224.



Benjamin Gabriel Hercik, born June 22, 2021, to Joseph and Maria Hercik as part of their 100% PNA Family of Peoria, IL. He is the newest member of Lodge 694. Benjamin's PNA Membership is a gift from his loving grandparents, Joseph and Irene Hercik, PNA Director. Benjamin joins his six siblings and parents as part of the 100% PNA family.



Judah Henry Ambrose, born March 2, 2021, to Stephen and Sarah Ambrose, Judah is a new member of Lodge 1224, joining his 100% PNA family of Rockford, IL. The certificate is a gift from Judah's grandparents Dr. Brian and Sandra Knabe. He was signed up to PNA by Joe Wojewodzki, Financial Secretary of Lodge 1224.



Claire Ann Van De Loo and Emily Mae Van De Loo. Both born on January 9, 2015, the twin daughters of Melissa Knabe are new members of Lodge 1224, joining their 100% PNA Family of Rockford, IL. The certificates were Christmas gifts from their aunt and uncle Dr. Brian and Sandra Knabe. The girls were signed up to the PNA by Joe Wojewodzki, Financial Secretary of Lodge 1224.



Maximilian Jacob Knabe, born on November 10, 2021 to Jacob and Katherine Knabe, Maximilian is a new member of Lodge 1224, joining his 100% PNA family of Rockford, IL. The certificate is a gift from his grandparents, Dr. Brian and Sandra Knabe. He was signed up to the PNA by Joe Wojewodzki, Financial Secretary of Lodge 1224.

Olivia Siuty,

born May 9, 2018, is a daughter of Melissa Johnson Siuty and Christopher Siuty of Chicago, IL. Olivia's PNA Membership is a thoughtful gift from her loving grandfather, Walter Siuty.



Marli Raya Vincent, born August 12, 2022, daughter of Ross and Michelle Vincent of St. Thomas, USVI is the newest member of Lodge 1919. Her PNA certificate is a thoughtful gift from her grandparents Lawrence and Barbara Gembala of Oak Lawn, IL.

Submitted by Barbara Wesolowski,
Fraternal Advisor Region F.



Polish National Alliance Scholarship Program

Deadline is April 15th, 2022



The Polish National Alliance is pleased to announce the PNA's Annual College Scholarships. The program is available to all PNA members who are currently enrolled as full-time College or University students and who will be continuing their undergraduate studies in the Fall 2022 semesters.

Full-time students who will be Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors in the Fall 2022 semester qualify for scholarships. Incoming freshmen do not qualify.

Please check Community/Scholarship Program tabs for Rules, Regulations, and Application. You may also request the Application by e-mailing:

fraternal@pna-znp.org

or calling: **1-800-621-3723 ext. 312** | **www.pna-znp.org**



The Polish National Alliance is proud of this program. It is not only a substantial demonstration of our organization's dedication to fraternalism but it is also keeping with our historic commitment to support the intellectual and educational aspirations of our members.

Mikołajki w Los Angeles

Mikołajowi nie było łatwo dotrzeć do Los Angeles w południowej Kalifornii, ale postarał się bardzo i 5 grudnia 2021 roku zawitał w polskiej parafii, gdzie był spodziewany przez członków Grupy 700 PNA.

Na salę, gdzie oczekiwały go dzieci, Mikołaj (w którego postać wcielił się doskonale Piotr Dalecki) wkroczył dostojnie w towarzystwie prezesa Grupy 700, Zbyszka Grzeleckiego. Podeszedł do choinki, postawił ogromny worek z prezentami i zajął miejsce w wygodnym fotelu.

Spotkanie rozpoczął ks. proboszcz Mirosław Frankowski, który odmówił krótką modlitwę, pobłogosławił wszystkich obecnych i złożył życzenia bożonarodzeniowe.

Początkowo onieśmiałe obecnością Mikołaja dzieci, szybko się oswoiły, w czym niewątpliwie pomogły zabawy poprowadzone przez naszą związkową duszę towarzystwa Edwarda Hoffmana. Zaczęło się od śpiewania kolęd. Każde dziecko, które potrafiło zaśpiewać kolędę, czy to po polsku czy angielsku, dostawało od Mikołaja

adwentowy kalendarz z czekoladkami. Dzieci były bardzo szczęśliwe. Widzieliśmy wiele roześmianych twarzy i słyszeliśmy dużo znanych i mniej znanych kolęd. Rodzice byli dumni ze swych dzieci i również bardzo zadowoleni, szczególnie, że mogli zrobić zdjęcie swojej pociechy z Mikołajem na tle pięknych dekoracji przygotowanych przez Urszulę Grzelecki.

Po części artystycznej nastąpiła najważniejsza część spotkania, czyli rozdanie prezentów! Każde dziecko dostało od Mikołaja paczkę ze słodyczami i kartkę z życzeniami świątecznymi, a dodatkowo, każdy z członków PNA, otrzymał kartę do sklepu Target ufundowaną przez Grupę 700. Wszystkiego doglądała niezmęczona związkowa działaczka i pedagog, Elżbieta Rudzińska. Nagradzała dzieci za śpiewanie kolęd, utrzymywała ład w prowadzeniu zabaw i udzielała informacji na temat ubezpieczeń na życie i programów członkowskich oferowanych przez PNA. Kilka z zainteresowanych osób dołączyło do związkowej rodziny wkrótce po imprezie. Pełne ręce roboty miały także Leokadia i Kasia Wilczek oraz Zofia Habrat serwując pyszną kawę i ciasto w naszej kawiarence.

Po rozdaniu prezentów, Mikołaj podziękował dzieciom za liczne przyby-



Wspólne zdjęcie z Mikołajem (Piotr Dalecki), Elą Rudzińską, Edward Hoffman, Zbyszek Grzelecki i dzieci.

cie a dzieci głośno podziękowały mu za prezenty i zaprosiły na następny rok.

Członkowie Grupy 700 pragną podziękować Mikołajowi za przyjazd, oraz wszystkim ochotnikom, którzy pomagali w trakcie imprezy oraz w przeddzień, przygotowując paczki dla dzieci i dekoracje. Ogromne dzięki dla Izy Kelly, Agnieszki Samras, Eli Rudzińskiej, Uli Grzeleckiej, Piotra Daleckiego, Zbyszka Grzeleckiego i wszystkich rodziców z polskiej szkoły, którzy przybyli z pomocą. Bez Was ta impreza by się nie odbyła i dzieci nie miałyby okazji na spotkanie z Mikołajem.

Dziękujemy serdecznie!

*Zbigniew Grzelecki,
Prezes Grupy 700
Zdjęcia: Urszula Grzelecki*



Edward Hoffman prowadzący kolędowanie

We are proud of...

Jessica Wierzbicki

AIR FORCE LIEUTENANT

The Officers and Members of Lodge 1474 and Council 41 PNA are proud of Jessica Wierzbicki, who graduated May 26, 2021, from the U. S. Air Force Academy as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Air Force with a B.S. in Economics and Philosophy. She will be going on to Pilot Training School.



Born in London, England, along with her younger brother Jonathan, her family moved back to the United States and settled in Wenatchee, WA, where she graduated as valedictorian of her high school class.

Her loving Grandmother Stella Wierzbicki made sure that her grandchildren were signed up to the PNA. Fly High and Proud Jessica!

Anna Wierzbicki, Aunt, and President Lodge 1474, PNA

Adam Hulisz

Doctor of Optometry

Adam Hulisz, a PNA Lodge 3259 Piast member, graduated from the Illinois College of Optometry and received a Doctor of Optometry degree. He was an outstanding student named to the Dean's List, President of Sports Vision Club, a tutor and teaching assistant, and graduated with clinical honors. Doctor Adam Hulisz started his career as Optometry Resident at Jesse Brown Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Chicago.



His parents, Marlena and Andrzej Hulisz of Costa Mesa in Orange County, CA, and his local PNA family, are proud of his achievements and wish him continued success.

Submitted by Greg Chilecki, Fraternal Advisor Region J

Helena Sołtys

SWIADEK HISTORII

Helena Maria Sołtys, należąca do Grupy 3250, nauczycielka i działaczka społeczna z Chicago otrzymała z rąk prezesa Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej dr Karola Nawrockiego prestiżową nagrodę i tytuł „Świadka Historii” podczas uroczystości w Łazienkach Królewskich w Warszawie.

Nagroda „Świadek Historii” jest przyznawana osobom i organizacjom prowadzącym działalność edukacyjną i naukową, szczególnie zasłużonym dla promowania i pielęgnowania polskiej historii.



Helena Sołtys jest nauczycielką w Polskiej Szkole im. Mikołaja Kopernika w Niles, była wiceprezes Zrzeszenia Nauczycieli Polskich w Ameryce, inicjatorką powstania w Chicago Przystanku Historia IPN, oraz wielu znaczących przedsięwzięć edukacyjnych, patriotycznych i historycznych.

W 2018 roku, w 100. rocznicę odzyskania przez Polskę niepodległości z jej inicjatywy, została uczczona akcją sadzenia Dębów Pamięci. Pierwsze drzewo symbolizujące siłę przetrwania polskiego narodu zostało posadzone podczas uroczystości w ogrodzie Związku Narodowego Polskiego w Chicago. Kolejne dęby posadzone zostały przez inne organizacje, a w Ośrodku Młodzieżowym PNA w Yorkville powstała Dębowa Aleja Niepodległości symbolizująca ważne wydarzenia i postacie, które przyczyniły się do odzyskania przez Polskę niepodległości.

Współpracując z Instytutem Pamięci Narodowej Helena Sołtys jest zaangażowana w wiele projektów edukacyjnych, organizuje uroczystości patriotyczne, współpracuje z wieloma polonijnymi organizacjami oraz wydawanym przez PNA Dziennikiem Związkowym, przyczyniając się do zacieśnienia kontaktów z IPN, których rezultatem jest digitalizacja archiwalnych numerów gazety.

AK

Zebrań Wyborcze Grupy 700

W niedzielę, 30-go stycznia 2022 roku, w Bibliotece Polskiej przy parafii Matki Boskiej Jasnogórskiej odbyło się zebranie sprawozdawczo-wyborcze Grupy 700 ZNP, Towarzystwa Czytelnia Polska. Spotkanie, na które przybyło 14 członków grupy, rozpoczęto odśpiewaniem polskiego hymnu narodowego, przysięgą na flagę USA, oraz wspomnieniem o niedawno zmarłych członkach grupy.



(l-p) Zbigniew Grzelecki, Dorota de Gonzaga i Piotr Dalecki

Prezes Grupy 700 Zbigniew Grzelecki oraz członkowie odchodzącego zarządu złożyli sprawozdanie ze swojej działalności w roku 2021. Grupa, licząca 338 dorosłych osób, przeprowadziła w ubiegłym roku kilka ważnych akcji, przeznaczając dochody na cele społeczne. Zorganizowano sprzedaż mrożonek, wielkanocne zbieranie jajek dla dzieci (Easter Egg Hunt), sprzedaż kawy i ciast by wesprzeć lokalną polską parafię, pomóc polskiej szkole, ufundować stypendia dla studentów, wesprzeć grupę taneczną Krakusy, sponsorować Fo-

rum Nauczycieli Polonijnych oraz zorganizować Mikołajki dla polonijnych dzieci w Los Angeles. Nasi członkowie pomagali również parafii biorąc udział we wszystkich imprezach patriotycznych i kościelnych.

Skarbnik grupy, pani Elżbieta Rudzińska, zapoznała zebranych z obecną sytuacją finansową. Zasłużeni działacze grupy zostali uhonorowani specjalnymi dyplomami z podziękowaniem za pracę społeczną i związkową. Dyplomy sygnowane były oryginalną pieczęcią wyciskową z 1905 roku, cennym zabytkiem przypominającym o roku założenia Grupy 700 ZNP w Los Angeles.

Następnie odbyły się wybory, ukonstytuowano i zaprzysiężono nowy Zarząd Grupy 700 w składzie: prezes – Zbigniew Grzelecki, wiceprezes – Leokadia Wilczek, wiceprezes – Piotr Dalecki, skarbnik – Elżbieta Rudzińska, sekretarz finansowy – Dorota de Gonzaga, marszałek – Jan Borkowski. W skład komisji rewizyjnej weszli: Henryka Łazarz, Izabella Kelly oraz Agnieszka Samras. Członkami Komisji Stypendialnej zostali: Kasia Akrami, Urszula Grzelecka, Anna Borkowska, Piotr Dalecki, Zbigniew Grzelecki, Leokadia Wilczek i Elżbieta Rudzińska.

Po zakończeniu zebrania, jego uczestnicy wzięli udział w uroczystej Mszy Świętej z okazji obchodów 30-lecia Radia Maryja, na którą przybyli księża, przedstawiciele Radia Maryja z Toron-

to w Kanadzie i Chicago, oraz reprezentanci organizacji polonijnych. Następnie wszyscy udali się na tradycyjny opłatek zorganizowany przez lokalne Koło Przyjaciół Radia Maryja i Parafię Matki Boskiej Jasnogórskiej. Atmosfera była wspaniała, obiad jeszcze lepszy. Uroczystość uświetniły występy zespołów, między innymi zespołu Krakusy i parafialnego chóru, który dał wspaniały popis swoich możliwości, otrzymując ogromne brawa i kilkakrotnie bisując. Warto dodać, że do chóru należy wielu członków Grupy 700.

Wszyscy mieliśmy bardzo udany dzień i w doskonałych nastrojach wkroczyliśmy w 117. rok działalności Grupy 700 ZNP w Los Angeles, znanej, jako Towarzystwo Czytelnia Polska.

*Zbigniew Grzelecki, prezes Grupy 700, Towarzystwa Czytelnia Polska
Zdjęcia - Urszula Grzelecka*



(l-p) Piotr Dalecki, Jan Borkowski, Henryka Łazarz, Zbigniew Grzelecki, Izabella Kelly, Elżbieta Rudzińska i Dorota de Gonzaga

10-lecie Grupy Tanecznej Piast

W sobotę 12 lutego 2022 roku odbył się uroczysty bankiet z okazji 10-lecia istnienia Grupy Tanecznej Piast w Las Vegas, w stanie Nevada.



*Ewa Nowinski, Grzegorz Chilecki,
Iwona Pisarek, Piotr Nowinski*

Grupa Taneczna Piast powstała przy Grupie 3281 ZNP w listopadzie 2011 roku. W skład grupy weszło 20 osób, z czasem zespół, którym kieruje od początku jego istnienia Janusz Nowak, powiększał się i zmieniał swój skład. Obecnie choreografem liczącego 26

osób zespołu jest Marzena Kinel. Warto podkreślić, że większość grupy (20 osób), to członkowie ZNP. Kostiumy szyją i przygotowują starannie panie Joanna Nowak i Elżbieta Bętkowski, kronikarzem i fotografem grupy jest Bożena Ruszczak. Próby zespołu odbywają się w salach parafii Our Lady of Las Vegas, gdzie proboszczem jest polski ksiądz Gerald Grupczynski. Piast występuje na lokalnych imprezach polonijnych w Las Vegas oraz w Kalifornii, Arizonie i stanie Washington. W 2019 roku grupa wzięła udział w Światowym Festiwalu Zespołów Polonijnych w Rzeszowie.

Bankiet 10-lecia rozpoczął się polonezem, do którego zaproszono wszystkich gości w liczbie około 130. W przygotowanym programie artystycznym, Grupa Taneczna Piast zaprezentowała gamę pięknych tańców z różnych rejonów Polski, ale również grecką zorbę, francuskiego kankana, i popisowy numer „Viva Las Vegas”. Program taneczny przeplatany był występami lokalnej grupy teatralnej

Sami Swoi, pod kierownictwem Iwo-ny Podzorski.

Grzegorz Chilecki, Doradca ZNP w Regionie J, przekazał życzenia i gratulacje w imieniu Związku Narodowego Polskiego, a na ręce Marzeny Kinel, choreografa zespołu złożył bukiet kwiatów.

Wyśmienita kolacja i przekąski przygotowane przez Jolę Pawłowski przyczyniły się wspaniały nastrój wieczoru.

*Grzegorz Chilecki, Doradca ZNP,
Region J
Zdjęcia: Bożena Ruszczak*



Polka warszawska



Chicopee Mural Honors Father Lucjan Królikowski



Chicopee, MA. A very thoughtful mural honoring brave Fr. Lucjan Krolikowski, as he saved many orphaned children during WWII, was recently dedicated with many guests representing the clergy, civic leaders, and Polish organizations, including members of the PNA. The mural can be seen from a distance,

Chicopee, MA. December 12, 2021, was a special day for Chicopee City. Artist Rafal Pisarczyk, from New Jersey, dedicated his mural honoring the late Fr. Lucjan Krolikowski OFM Conv., a hero who brought 160+ Polish orphan children during WWII from concentration camps in Siberia to East Africa and brought them to freedom in Canada. The children, now grown, never forgot what Fr. Lucjan did to give them a new, safe life. They celebrate the event every year. In 2021, the celebration was in Chicopee, MA, at the 60 foot by 30-foot mural painted on the side of the Chicopee Falls Polish Home in Chicop-

ee, MA. Fr. Lucjan spent his last years in residence at St. Stanislaus Basilica in Chicopee. He passed in 2019 at the age of 100.

The mural shows Fr. Lucjan surrounded by a group of Polish orphans, radiant with hope and promise of a new life, with the ship of their travel behind them, and to the left stands the Angel of Poland watching over the children and Fr. Lucjan. In the lower right section of the mural, Rafal wrote, in Polish, a quote from Fr. Lucjan's book, "The cure for all today's modern diseases and pains is human love, but not crippled, diluted or egocentric, only authentic and pure."

Fr. Lucjan wrote several books and led a fascinating life. For more information on this hero of humanity, I would suggest searching his name on the internet, where you will find many more facts about his life and experiences.

Present at the dedication of the mural were distinguished guests: Rafał Pisarczyk, mural artist; Most Rev. William Byrne, Bishop of Springfield, MA, who blessed the mural; John Vieau, Mayor of the City of Chicopee; the Very Reverend Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv., Minister Provincial of the Franciscan Friars Conventual; Rev. Piotr Calik, Vicar General of the Springfield Diocese; Fr.

Brad Milunski, OFM Conv., Pastor of St. Stanislaus Basilica, Chicopee; Mr. Tomasz Moczerniuk, coordinator of the mural project; Mrs. Ewa Konarzewska, principal patroness of Fr. Lucjan's legacy, and various Polish and civic leaders. The late Gene P. Kirejczyk, Vice President of PNA Lodge 711 and a member of the Chicopee Falls Polish Home Board of Directors, was instrumental in bringing the project to fruition. A reception followed at the Polish Museum, the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning at Elms College, www.polishcenter.org, also located in Chicopee. For more information about the artist, Rafal Pisarczyk, go to <https://www.facebook.com/rafal.frankow.5>.



Chicopee, MA. Pictured at the reception at the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning at Elms College following the dedication of the mural honoring Fr. Lucjan Krolkowski is the painter Rafal Pisarczyk. It is his largest painting to date, measuring 60 feet by 30 feet. It can be seen on the brick wall on the side of the Chicopee Falls Polish Home facing the District Court building.

*Submitted by Teresa Struziak Sherman,
PNA National Director*

Council 8 Christmas Party



On December 4th, 2021, Polish National Alliance Council 8 held their annual Children's Christmas Party! There was great fun and food for both children and adults. The children had a great time, and were so happy to see Santa and all the gifts he brought them.

Submitted by Teresa Jankowski, Fraternal Advisor Region I

New Flags at Pulaski Park in Bethlehem,



*(l-r) Józef Janik, Agnieszka Niemirka
and Wojtek Niemirka*

BETHLEHEM, PA, November 11th, 2021. The Polish National Alliance Lodge 2286 – West Easton replaced the Polish and American flags at the Pulaski Monument to enhance the park's aesthetics. The new flags were donated by Wojtek and Agnieszka Niemirka and hung in honor of Poland's Independence Day and Veteran's Day in the United States of America. Both holidays are recognized on November 11th. PNA Lodge 2286 President Józef Janik along with Vice President Agnieszka Niemirka and her husband Wojtek Niemirka lead the beautification project.

*Submitted by Józef Janik,
PNA Lodge 2286 President*

Polish Consul Adrian Kubicki Visits Chicopee, MA

Chicopee, MA. On November 11, 2021, Chicopee was honored with a visit from the newly appointed Consul General of Poland in New York, Adrian Kubicki. Adrian was officially named in February 2020 by the Poland Parliament Commission. His jurisdiction includes Massachusetts as well as other states. Mr. Kubicki was born in 1987. He has accomplished a lot during his 35 years as a Diplomat, sociologist, public relations/communication expert, former journalist for Poland newspapers, including being a news contributor for one of the largest radio stations in Poland and spokesperson for LOT Polish Airlines.

On November 11, Polish Consul Adrian Kubicki, was scheduled to attend the opening of the Kosciuszko Squadron exhibit at the Bradley Air Museum in nearby Connecticut. The Chairman of the Board at the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning at Elms College, located in Chicopee, Massachusetts, arranged with the Consulate office in New York City to have Adrian meet at the Polish Center, tour the museum with Ron Lech, President of the Polish Center, followed by a reception in Mr. Kubicki's honor. He was greeted by key members of the Polish Community, business leaders, legislators, local government officials, past and present, and educators.

Teresa Struziak Sherman, National Director Polish National Alliance, and Joseph M. Kos, President Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts, represented the Polish Community. Also in attendance

were: Jim Kelly, President Polish National Credit Union; Honorable John Vieau, Mayor of Chicopee; Former Chicopee Mayor, Richard Kos; Paul Kozub, owner of V-One Vodka; Mary Gorecki, owner of PAT Tours; various members of the Polish Center Board of Directors, and Rafal Pisarczyk, artist. The goal is to expand relationships between the Consul General, the Polish Center, and Polish Community in Western Massachusetts.

TOURING THE POLISH CENTER



Chicopee, MA. Polish Consul Adrian Kubicki is shown on his tour of the Polish Center with his assistant. Polish Center President, Ron Lech, led the tour and presented the history and purpose of the Polish Center. Shown in the photo left to right are the Polish Consul, Adrian Kubicki, his assistant, and Ron Lech, who explained the Polish memorabilia from the Polish allied forces of WWII.

ATTENDEES AT THE POLISH CONSUL'S RECEPTION



Chicopee, MA. Many distinguished guests welcomed Polish General Consul Adrian Kubicki at his reception at the Polish Center in Chicopee, Massachusetts. Pictured in the Crystal Room at the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning at Elms College in front of Pope John Paul II's right-hand impression are left to right: Mayor of the City of Chicopee, MA, John Vieau; Joanne Gruzskos, Chairperson of the Polish Center's Board of Directors; Ron Lech, Polish Center President; Teresa Struziak Sherman, National Director Polish National Alliance; Adrian Kubicki, Consul General of Poland in New York, and Joseph M. Kos, President Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts.

*Submitted by
Teresa Struziak Sherman,
PNA National Director*



Polish Diplomats Visit Baltimore and Polonia

BALTIMORE, MD. Polonia of Greater Baltimore was graced with a visit from Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs diplomats on February 6, 2022. The delegation comprised Deputy Directors Maciej Dazuta, Tomasz Orłowski, and Stanisław Peltz, and Undersecretary of State for Security for The Americas, Asia, and Eastern Policy Marcin Przydacz. Second Secretary and Chief of Protocol Monika Kniewska and Mrs. Anna Magierowska were also present.

Earlier in the week, the diplomats were part of a larger delegation, led by Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau that went on a three-day mission to Washington, D.C., primarily to attend a conclave of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - OSCE. Minister Rau is currently the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE. The delegation also met with U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and members of Congress.

Undersecretary Przydacz requested a personal meeting with Baltimore's Polonia. The delegation attended the Polish Mass at Holy Rosary Church. Afterward, the diplomats were treated to a coffee and cake reception in the undercroft hall of the church. Przydacz spoke to over 100 attendees, focusing on the importance of a strong, growing, and pro-Poland Polonia.

A small private luncheon was held for the delegation by the undersecretary. Attending were three invited officers of the Polish National Alliance (PNA) Council 21: Council President Richard P. Poremski, Vice President Malgorzata Bondyra, and Financial Officer/Auditor Michael Carnahan. The conversation centered on the importance of the PNA being the Polish epicenter of the greater-Baltimore area



At the National Katyn Memorial. Posing is a delegation of diplomats visiting from Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accompanied by two escorts. From left to right: Richard P. Poremski, Maryland Honorary Consul of Poland; Undersecretary of State Marcin Przydacz; Deputy Director Stanisław Peltz; Deputy Director Tomasz Orłowski; Ambassador Marek Magierowski; Deputy Director Maciej Dazuta. Photo by Michael Carnahan.

that provides a constant plethora of Polish educational programs and cultural events. It was emphasized that the PNA includes a large meeting hall, language and cooking classes, a children's folklore dance group, an extensive library, the traditional observance and celebration of Polish holidays, etc., and a convivial bar and lounge. It was also proudly noted that the expansive PNA Building now houses the newly established Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Maryland, with Honorary Consul Richard P. Poremski presiding.

The delegation then visited the striking 2-stories-tall General Casimir Pułaski Monument in Patterson Park

and the powerful National Katyn Memorial in Harbor East. Ceremonial decorum, with floral wreaths presented, was observed at both monuments. In a surprise gesture, The National Katyn Memorial Foundation awarded Undersecretary Przydacz with Honorary Membership in the Foundation, which included a framed proclamation and Katyn armband, for which he was very thankful. As they departed for Washington, the diplomats proclaimed their visit to Baltimore a huge success, with much heartfelt appreciation expressed and secure in knowing that the Polonia is alive and well in Baltimore.

*Submitted by Richard Poremski,
Honorary Consul,
PNA Council 21 President*



The diplomats visiting the Pulaski Monument in Patterson Park. (l-r) Malgorzata Bondyra PNA, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Rybczynski PNA, Anna Magierowska, Deputy Director Stanisław Peltz, Ambassador, Marek Magierowski, Undersecretary Marcin Przydacz, Richard Poremski PNA, Deputy Director Thomas Orłowski, Michael Carnahan PNA, Deputy Director Maciej Dazuta. Photo by Monika Kaniewska.

Krakus Festival Embraces Polish Heritage

Holyoke, MA. The Polish Center of Discovery and Learning at Elms College sponsored a very successful fundraiser, the 15th Annual Krakus Festival, held on November 6, 2021, at PNA Lodge 525's Pilsudski Park Holyoke, MA. Over 150 people attended the festival (priced at \$75.00 a plate) and enjoyed the music of the four Rovatti children, all of whom are members of PNA Lodge 711.

Because the Krakus Festival was not held in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Polish Center honored two long-standing Chicopee Businesses for 100 years of serving the Western Massachusetts communities. The companies were presented with the Polish Center's Polish Heritage Award, and both have strong Polish roots.

The first award was presented to Chicopee Provision Company, Inc., which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2020. Chicopee Provision is known in the Northeast for its amazing kielbasa, but sells other products. You may view their products online and place orders there.

The second award was for 2021 and presented to the Polish National Credit Union at its 100 years of service to the Polish community in Chicopee, MA, and the community at large as well. It opened its doors in 1921. By 1989, Polish National Credit Union was recognized as a vital financial services organization meeting the financial needs of diverse populations in the Western Massachusetts area.

The Community Service Awards were presented by Polish Center President Ron Lech and Chairman of the Center's Board of Directors, Joanne Gruszkos. We wish both companies many more decades of success!

The appetizers and dinner were prepared and served by PNA member Bernat's Polish Meat Products – Deli-Bakery of Chicopee, MA. Entertainment was provided by Jeff Rovatti, his sisters, and a sound engineer. They were dressed in authentic Polish costumes and played Polish music to the delight of the guests in attendance.

On May 3, 2005, the Polish Center received the keys of the 18-room, the 130-year old former rectory of the Holy Name of Jesus Parish located at 33 South Street, Chicopee, MA. Many renovations to the old building were required, and more work remains to be done. Once completed, we will have an attractive home in which our Polish history will be preserved for future generations with provisions for expanding programs and exhibits. The Polish Center's collection of historical memorabilia is impressive and continues to grow each day. The building has three floors that have been renovated thanks to the generous donations of individuals, businesses, and organizations throughout the United States. The final phase will be to build an addition to the building that will allow the center to accommodate groups for concerts, lectures, and other cultural and educational programs, plus two classrooms.

The Polish Center has come a long way since 1999 and is considered a valuable national resource for education and entertainment. Embrace your heritage! Become a member of the Polish Center, a tax-deductible 501c (3) non-profit organization, for as little as \$35 a year. For more information, visit the website at: www.polishcenter.net, call 413-592-0001, or e-mail: polishcenter@elms.edu.

GUESTS ENJOY THE KRAKUS FESTIVAL



Holyoke, MA. Many guests were present at the 2021 Krakus Festival honoring Chicopee Provision Company, Inc. and Polish National Credit Union for their services to the surrounding Western Massachusetts communities for the past 100 years. Pictured left to right: Ron Lech, President of the Polish Center of

Discovery and Learning at Elms College; Polish Miss Massachusetts 2022, Paulina Wysocka; Teresa Struziak-Sherman, National Director, Polish National Alliance, and Joseph M. Kos, President Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts.

THE ROVATTI BAND ENTERTAINS GUESTS AT THE KRAKUS FESTIVAL



Holyoke, MA. Pictured in Polish costumes, while entertaining the guests before and after the Krakus Festival dinner and award presentations are the members of the Rovatti Band under the direction of band leader, Jeff Rovatti, Jr. The four young siblings are members of PNA Lodge 711 of Chicopee, MA. The young group has been in the band together as siblings for many years and play for many parties and events. They bring joy to your ears, spirit and mind.

*Submitted by
Teresa Struziak Sherman,
PNA National Director*

Lech, Czech, and Rus

The popular legend of three brothers, Lech, Czech, and Rus, tells of the founding of several Slavic nations. According to legend, the three brothers went on a hunting expedition together with their tribes, during which they split up in different directions. During their separate journeys, the brothers created settlements that were the origins of what is known today as Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia, and other Slavic countries.

Several versions of this legend exist. The first recorded version of the legend was told in the Wielkopolska Chronicle (Kronika Wielkopolska), an anonymous medieval chronicle written somewhere between the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century. According to the Wielkopolska Chronicle, Slavs are descendants of a Pan, a Pannonian Prince, who had three sons: Lech, Czech, and Rus.

In the Polish version, the three brothers went on a hunting trip together, during which they split up as they started following different prey and objectives. Lech and his tribe traveled north. Eventually, he was confronted by a fierce, white eagle guarding its nest. The eagle looked incredibly intense against the red light of the setting sun. Lech took this to be a good sign and settled in the area. He named this settlement Gniezo (after the Polish word for nest: gniazdo), and the image of the White Eagle became his coat-of-arms. That is how Lech founded the Polish nation. The white eagle remains a symbol of Poland, and the colors of the setting sun and the white eagle are depicted in Poland's coat of arms and flag.

Meanwhile, Rus and his tribe traveled eastward. They created the settlements that would eventually become Kievan Rus', a medieval political federation located in modern-day Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia.

There are only two brothers in the Czech version: Czech (Czech: Čech) and Lech. Czech and his tribe traveled westward in search of fertile land. Eventually, they settled in the area of the Říp Mountain located in the central Bohemian flatland. As in the Polish version, Czech is identified as the founder of the Czech nation.

There are three monumental oak trees named after the three brothers in the Rogalin Landscape Park in Poland. The trees have been declared nature monuments and placed under protection. Today, the many variants of this legend remain popular in various Slavic countries.



MB

The Greater Poland

*From the shores of the Baltic Sea to the rocky Carpathians,
Poland offers tourist attractions that should not be missed. Rich History.
Stunning scenery. Hidden treasures.*

The Greater Poland Voivodeship (Województwo Wielkopolskie) is a voivodeship in west-central Poland. It is the second area and third in populations among Poland's sixteen voivodeships.

What areas were considered part of Wielkopolska has varied throughout its history. Often known as the "cradle of Poland," Greater Poland (Wielkopolska) was the core of the early Polish state in the 10th century.

The first Polish capitals, the first Polish kings, the foundations of Polish

royal power, and many of the most significant political decisions in early Polish history took place on this land. Despite being repeatedly ravaged by war and other disasters, Greater Poland managed to rebuild several times while preserving many historical sites and artifacts.

The Baptism of Mieszko I, which many consider the beginning of the Polish state, took place in 966 in Greater Poland.



HISTORY

In the early part of the 10th century, a West Slavic and Lechitic tribe were known as the Western Polans (Polanie) settled in today's Greater Poland. From these tribal roots, the Polish state emerged, ruled by Mieszko I of the Piast Dynasty. Most significant

political events during this time took place in either Poznań or Gniezno, both of which were early capitals of the Polish nation.

Piast Duke Bolesław II Wrymouth created a last will and testament to establish laws of Polish governance after his death. The purpose of this was to ensure that his four sons would not fight each other for power after his death. But unfortunately, conflict arose anyway, and Poland entered a period of fragmentation that lasted around 200 years. The Western Part of Greater Poland (which included Poznań) was granted to Mieszko II the Old. The Eastern Part (which included Kalisz and Gniezno) was given to Władysław II, the Exile. However, the region was generally ruled under a single ruler anyway.

One of the most significant events in recent history in this region is the Greater Poland Uprising of 1918-1919. The Greater Poland Uprising of 1918-1919 (powstanie wielkopolskie 1918–1919 roku) was a military insurrection of Poles against German rule. The uprising broke out in December 1918 in Poznań. It was fought by the Polish Military Organization members and many volunteers and veterans of World War I. Polish forces emerged victoriously and regained many territories lost to the Partitions of Poland. What is known as the Greater Poland Voivodeship today was established on January 1, 1999, as a combination of the former Kalisz, Konin, Piła, Leszno, and Poznań voivodeships. This generally encompasses the area that most people consider part of Wielkopols-



*The baptism of Mieszko I, Cathedral
Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed
Virgin Mary and St. Adalbert*

ka, except for a few regions in nearby voivodeships.

POZNAŃ

Poznań is the capital of the Greater Poland Voivodeship, one of the first capitals of Poland, and the largest city in Greater Poland. As one of the first capitals of Poland, it is full of historical attractions. Poznań is situated roughly equidistantly between Berlin and Warsaw, and the Poznań International Trade Fair grounds host the most important trade fairs and exhibitions in Poland. These factors, along with the fact that it's very easy to get to via public transportation and air travel, make Poznań a very popular tourist and business destination.



Poznań Old Town Square and City Hall

Though evidence of human settlement can be traced back to the Stone Age, what we know as Poznań today began in the 8th or 9th century AD between branches of the Warta and Cybina rivers. This area is now called Cathedral Island (Ostrów Tumski). Poznań served as the political center during the early rule of the Piast dynasty.



Cathedral in Ostrów Tumski, Poznań

Between the beginning of the 17th century and the end of World War II, Poznań was severely affected by war, military occupations by various forces, floods, and even plagues. In the second half of the 20th century, some of the earliest protests against Communist rule took place in Poznań as well. But like the rest of Poland, Poznań rebuilt itself over and over again, no matter what challenges it faced



Coat of Arms of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from times of reign of Stanisław August Poniatowski, the last king of Poland.

There are many exciting things to do and visit in Poznań, including an Old Market Square. Visitors can walk on the Royal-Imperial Route in Poznań (Trakt Królewsko-Cesarski w Poznaniu). This tourist walk runs through the most important parts of the city

and presents the history, culture, and identity of Poznań. There are also several theatres, museums, as well as historical landmarks. One of the oldest zoos in Poland is in Poznań, and the Archcathedral Basilica of St. Peter and St. Paul, the oldest Cathedral in Poland, is also found in Poznań.

KALISZ

Kalisz is the second biggest city in the Wielkopolska region but is perhaps best known for being the oldest city in Poland! Modern-day Kalisz was referred to as "Calisia" in the writings of 2nd century AD Greek geographer Ptolemy.



Kalisz, Old Town Square

Like many Polish towns, Kalisz is full of historical artifacts and ruins and has been rebuilt several times after being ravaged by war, fires, and natural disasters. There are many artifacts from when Kalisz was a stop on the Amber Trail to the Baltic Sea, as many Roman caravans would pass through. Some churches and monasteries are remnants of Franciscan, Jesuit, and other religious influences. St. Nicholas Cathedral (built in 1253), a Franciscan Monastery (founded in 1257), a church formerly belonging to the Jesuits (which was created for the Jesuits in 1587-1595), St. Wojciech Church (built in the XI century), and the Basilica under the invocation of

The Holy Virgin Assumption (built in 1353) with the miraculous picture of The Holy Family are some of the most notable churches.



St. Nicholas Cathedral in Kalisz

GNIEZNO

Gniezno is a city that has always played a significant role in Poland. It was the first historical capital in Poland in the 10th and early 11th centuries.

The Roman Catholic archbishop of Gniezno is the primate of Poland, which makes Gniezno the country's ecclesiastical capital. Five of Poland's earliest kings were crowned here. Many believe that the Baptism of Mieszko I (often called the Baptism of Poland) took place in Gniezno, although historians continue to debate where the event took place.

A popular legend tells the story of three brothers named Lech, Czech, and Rus who went hunting together and then split up after each followed a different prey. Lech traveled north and followed his arrow. Eventually, he was confronted by a fierce, white eagle guarding its nest. The eagle looked incredibly intense against the red of the setting sun. Lech took this as a good sign and settled in the area. He named this settlement Gniezo, after the Polish word for a nest (gni-azdo), and the image of the White Eagle became his coat-of-arms. The place in Gniezno where legend says this event took place is called Lech Hill.

It is believed that Lech Hill was a tribal center of pagan worship, as ev-



Gniezno, King Boleslaw Chrobry statue

idenced by cult artifacts from around the 7th-8th centuries discovered in the basement of the present cathedral and the stone embankment under the church of St. George.

Gniezno is a beautiful town to visit. There is a very charming Old Town to walk through and the Gothic Gniezno Cathedral. The cathedral contains the Gniezno Doors, which were built around 1175. The Museum of the Origins of Polish State is also a must-see!



The White STORK

The White Stork

For the land where it's a great travesty

To harm a stork's nest in a pear tree,

For storks serve us all...

I am homesick, Lord! ...

Cyprian Kamil Norwid, "Moja piosenka"

The White Stork is a distinctive, large wading bird with white feathers, black flight feathers, and black wing coverts. Adult white storks have long pointed red beaks, slender necks, and long red legs with partially webbed feet. They have black skin around their eyes, and their claws are blunt and nail-like. Males and females are identical in appearance, though males are slightly larger. Storks look spectacular while flying, with their long necks and legs stretched out, flapping their enormous wings as little as possible to save energy. The white stork walks at a slow and gracious pace on the ground. White storks produce a noisy bill-clattering sound when rapidly opening and closing their beaks, amplified by the throat pouch acting as a soundbox. Their preferred habitats are riverbanks, marshes, swamps, grasslands, and meadows. The White Stork is an entirely diurnal carnivore that feeds on various animals from the ground and shallow water like amphibians, lizards, snakes, frogs, insects, fish, and small mammals and birds. Famous for building its enormous, stick nests on top of buildings, poles, and other structures, most White Storks are monogamous. They can live more than 30 years, mate for life, and share the incubation and feeding responsibilities.

The White Stork nests in central and eastern Europe, spending the winter in Africa. About one-quarter of the population of white storks live in Poland.

The White Eagle is the symbol of the Polish nation, but it is the White Stork that holds the hearts of Poles. Poles love these magnificent birds perceived as bringing good fortune, and their arrival in March announces spring after the long, dark winter months. The White Storks are important to Polish tradition. Having one's nest in a family's home or barn is meant to bring good luck and children.

According to ancient European legend popularized by Hans Christian Andersen story, the stork is responsible for bringing babies to new parents by giving them to the mothers or dropping them down the chimney. The presence of a stork nest is also believed to protect against fires and being struck by lightning. In ancient Slavic Mythology, storks were thought to carry unborn souls. Early Slavs believed storks brought luck, and that killing one would bring misfortune.



Józef Chełmoński, „Bociany”

There are also some negative stork folk tales. One of the Polish stories relates to God making stork feathers white, while the Devil gave it black wings, instilling good and evil urges. Storks are also associated with disabled or stillborn babies as punishment for past wrongdoing.

From April to August, storks can be encountered all over Poland. There is a small village near the Belarus border called Zywkowo (Podlasie), known as the stork capital of the world. There are many more storks than people in this small village, which has a population of 25. It is an ornithologist's and photographer's paradise. AK

This spring, Ms. Malgorzata Bondyra is presenting us with a couple of recipes from Wielkopolska, a region famous for growing potatoes. We hope you will try the Mazurek and Eggs in Shells recipes this Easter.

Enjoy cooking and sharing delicious Easter foods with your family and friends! Happy Easter!

Wesołego Alleluja!

Potatoes with Farmer's Cheese

Pyry z gzikiem



Ingredients:

- 2 lb. farmer's cheese (twaróg śmietankowy)
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- ½ onion chopped
- A handful of fresh chives chopped
- Few radishes cut into small pieces
- Salt and pepper
- 2 lb. potatoes

Directions:

Boil potatoes in skins until soft. Mix farmer's cheese with heavy whipping cream until smooth. Mix in chopped onion and some chives, reserving some for garnish. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cut unpeeled potatoes into halves (try not to break the halves apart). Place cheese mixture over the potatoes and sprinkle with cut radishes and the remaining chives.

Eggs in Shells

Jajka w skorupkach



Ingredients:

- 10 hard-boiled eggs
- 500 g/18 oz. mushrooms
- 1 onion finely chopped
- 1 bunch of parsley, finely chopped
- 2-3 tbsp. soft butter or mayo
- Salt
- Black pepper
- Bread crumbs

Directions:

Hard boil the eggs and cool them down. Cut in the middle vertically along with the shell, then gently scoop out the egg and chop finely. Shred or chop mushrooms and onion finely. Sauté onion in butter over until it's soft and translucent. Add the mushrooms and cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring often.

Mix all ingredients in a large bowl and season with salt and pepper to taste. Fill eggshell halves with the egg mixture and dip face down in bread crumbs. Sauté eggs face down in a large pan until golden brown. Garnish with parsley and serve hot or cold.

Gray Potato Dumplings

Szare kluchy



Ingredients:

- 4.5 lb. potatoes
- 10 tbsp. flour
- 2 eggs
- Salt
- ¼ lb. smoked bacon - chopped
- 2 onions chopped

Directions:

Boil water and add salt. Peel potatoes and grate. Place them in a colander lined with a cheesecloth over a bowl. Drain until you get a dry pulp (squeeze it). Place drained potatoes in a bowl. Pour the potato juice out, collect the starch from the bottom of the bowl and add it back to the potatoes. Mix in flour, eggs, and some salt. With a spoon, carefully drop little pieces of the potato mix into the pot of boiling water (make sure they don't fall apart – if they do, add more flour to the potato mix). Boil the dumplings for a few minutes. Remove the dumplings with a slotted spoon. Brown the bacon, add onion, and brown it a bit longer until the onion is cooked. Pour the desired amount of bacon and onion mix over the dumplings.

Mazurek Easter Cake



Ingredients:

Layer 1

- 200 gr. flour
- 4 heaping tbsp. powdered sugar
- 100 gr. butter
- 20 gr. lard (I used butter)
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 1 egg

Layer 2

- 100 gr butter
- 1 egg
- 100 gr sugar
- 4 heaping tbsp. semolina (kasza manna)
- ½ l milk

Layer 3

- 100 gr dark chocolate
- 50 gr butter
- Nuts (pecans, walnuts, almonds, etc.) and dried fruits to decorate

Directions:

Layer 1

Place ingredients together and mix until combined well. Line a 9x9 cake pan with parchment paper (a different size pan can be used). Spread the dough in the pan form with your hands, making a higher edge around. Place the pan in the fridge for 20 minutes. Preheat the

oven to 360°F. Bake for about 20 minutes or until golden brown.

Layer 2

Combine milk and semolina and place it on the heat stirring all the time until it boils. Keep stirring and simmer for 3 minutes. Let it cool down. Beat egg and sugar in a bowl over a pot of steaming water (double boiler) until thick. Add butter to the semolina mix and beat it until smooth (1 spoon at a time). Add egg mixture to the above and mix until all combined and smooth (1 spoon at a time). Place layer 2 over layer 1 and spread it evenly.

Layer 3

Place broken pieces of chocolate and butter into a small bowl. Place the bowl over a pot of steaming water (double boiler) and keep mixing until melted and combined. Pour the chocolate over layer 2, and while still soft, decorate your Mazurek with the nuts and dried fruits.

Place your pan in the fridge for a few hours. Take it out of the refrigerator and take the cake out of the pan. Discard the parchment paper. Place the Mazurek on a cake tray and serve.



*Małgorzata Bondyra,
PNA Lodge 238
President,
Council 21,
Baltimore, MD*



*Photos by
Michael Carnahan,
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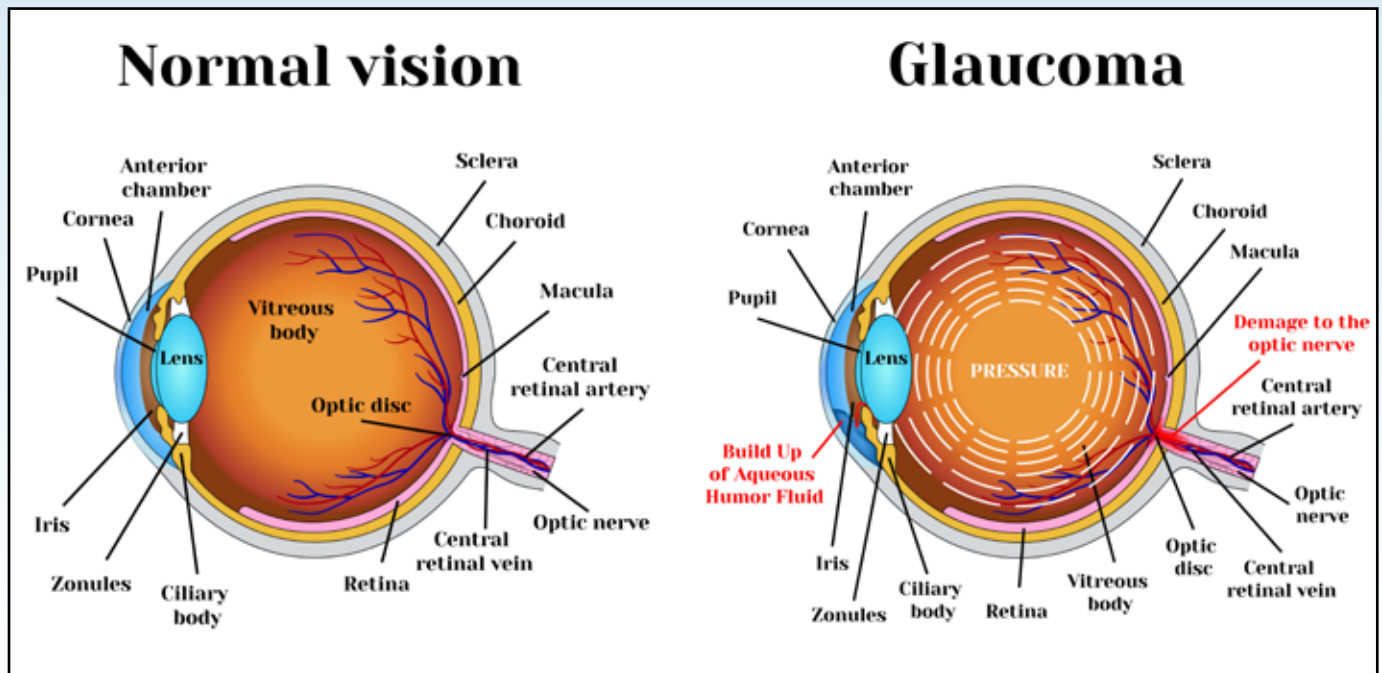
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Glaucoma and You

Glaucoma is a condition of your eyes that can cause loss of side (peripheral) vision and blindness by damaging a nerve in the back of your eye called the optic nerve. The eye needs fluid to keep the eye moist and free of irritation and causes for infection. In some common types of glaucoma, fluid cannot move normally through the eye. The fluid may pass too slowly or become blocked when it cannot normally drain—the pressure in your eye increases, causing pressure on the optic nerve. Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases. Symptoms usually begin so slowly that you may not notice any difference in your vision. The only way to know if you have any evidence of the disease is to have a complete dilated eye exam. There is no cure for glaucoma, but early diagnosis and treatment can often stop the damage to your eye and protect your vision. Glaucoma results from increased eye pressure due to fluid build-up causing the stress to affect the optic nerve, and if untreated, blindness can occur.



Types of Glaucoma

There are many different types of glaucoma. The most common type in the United States is called open-angle glaucoma. When most people speak of glaucoma, they are referring to the open-angle type. Nine out of ten people diagnosed with glaucoma in the United States have the open-angle type. Normal-tension glaucoma is open-angle glaucoma that occurs in people with normal eye pressure. Experts don't know the causes, but researchers believe lower eye pressure treatments can slow the disease and stop vision loss. Angle-closure glaucoma, also called narrow-angle or acute glaucoma, is a medical emergency. If you experience sudden intense eye pain, nausea, red-eye, and blurry vision, go to the nearest

emergency room or your eye doctor. If not treated, angle-closure glaucoma can cause blindness in just a few days.

Congenital glaucoma or pediatric glaucoma occurs in babies. It is very rare in the United States and responds well to surgical treatment. Patients usually will not have any permanent eye damage. Sometimes glaucoma is caused by another medical condition and is referred to as secondary glaucoma. Underlying medical conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure can lead to neovascular glaucoma. There are also a few rare glaucoma types not mentioned here, but the internet is a good resource for more references and information if you are so interested.

Symptoms of Glaucoma

At first, glaucoma does not produce any symptoms, and the person has no idea s/he has the disease. Over time, you may begin to lose peripheral or side vision. As the disease progresses, your side vision disappears. Eventually, blindness occurs.



Glaucoma Risk Factors

Anyone can get glaucoma, but people at higher risk are:

- Over the age of 60, greater risk if Hispanic or Latino
- Over age 40 and African American
- Have a family history of glaucoma
- Have a diagnosis of diabetes or high blood pressure

Speak with your doctor about your risk for glaucoma. Ask how often you need to be checked. If you are at high risk, you should get a comprehensive eye exam at least every 1-2 years, more often if your doctor orders it.

Causes of Glaucoma

To date, scientists are not sure what causes the most common types of glaucoma. Many people with glaucoma have high eye pressure. Treatments that lower eye pressure help to slow the course of the disease. There is no way to prevent glaucoma, and that is why scheduled eye exams are crucial to diagnosing glaucoma early before you have any permanent eye damage. Some health conditions can cause glaucoma, such as cataracts and tumors, but these are not very common. Eye injuries can also cause glaucoma. Wearing safety glasses or goggles can help prevent eye injuries, especially during sports, construction work, or doing home repairs. Safety eye-wear can be purchased from most eye care providers, sporting goods stores, or online.

Diagnostic Procedures

Your doctor should check for glaucoma as part of your comprehensive eye exam. The exam is painless and straightforward. The doctor will give you some eye drops to dilate (widen) your pupil. The doctor will then look into your eye using equipment to measure your eye pressure and search for

other eye problems. You should also have a visual fields test to check your side or peripheral vision. Glaucoma can occur in one eye or both eyes. Some people with high eye pressure do not get glaucoma, and some people with normal eye pressure do get glaucoma. These cases can baffle doctors, but they are not common cases.

Glaucoma and Eye Pressure

How does eye pressure affect glaucoma? Experts believe that when the pressure inside your eye gets too high, it can damage the optic nerve and cause vision loss. If the eye pressure can be lowered and controlled, your vision loss will be stopped from glaucoma. Whether you develop glaucoma or not is determined by how much pressure your optic nerve can handle, and the amount is different for each person. Most people have “normal” eye pressure of 21 or below. Getting dilated eye exams will indicate your “normal” eye pressure. High eye pressure results from normal eye fluid that cannot drain from the front of your eye.

Treatment for Glaucoma

The treatment for glaucoma may consist of medicines, usually eye drops, laser treatments, or surgery. If you have been diagnosed with glaucoma, the sooner you begin treatment, the less eye damage will occur. Treatment will not cure the damage that has already happened, but it will prevent further eye damage. It is critical that you continuously follow your doctor's plan of care and do not discontinue taking the prescribed medication. The treatment is usually very effective.

- Medications: Prescription eye drops are the most common treatment. They lower the pressure in your eyes and prevent damage to your optic nerve.
- Laser treatment: To lower eye pressure, your doctor may use lasers better to help the built-up fluid in your eye drain. It is a simple procedure that can be performed in the doctor's office.
- Surgery: As a last resort, if medicines and laser don't work, there are several different types of surgery that can help the fluid build-up drain out of your eye.
- Discuss your options with your doctor. Keep your doctor informed of any changes that occur while under treatment. Here are some tips if you are diagnosed with glaucoma:
 - If your doctor prescribes medicine, be sure to take it every day
 - Inform your doctor if your treatment causes any side effects
 - Follow-up with your doctor for regular check-ups and comprehensive eye exams with dilation of your eyes
 - If your vision loss affects your ability to perform daily activities, ask your doctor about vision rehabilitation and devices that could be helpful
 - Encourage family members to schedule a comprehensive

eye exam with eye dilation to check for glaucoma since glaucoma can be hereditary

Conclusion

Although there is no definite cause or cure for glaucoma, if diagnosed in the early stage of the disease, it can be successfully treated, most often with prescribed eye drop medication. A comprehensive eye exam with dilated pupils will allow the eye doctor to diagnose the condition. Once the medication is prescribed, and the treatment is begun, the care plan must be followed daily. Although there are many different types of glaucoma, the treatment plans are similar. The most common type of glaucoma in the United States is the open-angle glaucoma type and can be easily treated. The angle-closure type of glaucoma is an acute problem and must be treated immediately by your doctor or hospital emergency staff. Remember to schedule and keep your eye doctor appointments faithfully.



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PNA National Director

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31
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