

# ZGODA

Spring  
2023

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

1881-2023 Vol. 175, No. 1

## Spring in Full Bloom *Wiosna w pełni*



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## Wawel Castle in the Spring

Poland's beloved Wawel Castle in Kraków is a beauty year round. In the spring, the gardens bloom and turn the landscape into a scene straight out of a fairy tale.

(USPS 699-120)  
**Published Quarterly**  
**The Official Publication**  
**of the Polish National Alliance**

6100 N. Cicero Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60646-4385  
Phone: (773) 286-0500  
**www.pna-znp.org**

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Periodicals-Postage Paid at Chicago,  
Illinois and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address  
changes to Zgoda, c/o PNA  
6100 N. Cicero Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60646-4385

**Change of address**  
or interruption in subscription  
(800) 621-3723 ext. 366  
**addresschange@pna-znp.org**





## From the President

### February 2023

Dear Members,

With each new year, comes new hope. As we phase out of the COVID-19 pandemic, we take time to remember those who we have lost over the past three years. We also remember our blessings and express gratitude for our loved ones.

This February, the Polish National Alliance celebrated 143 years of existence. Our organization has survived the most unexpected challenges and came out stronger than before. We are grateful that as an organization we have been able to serve more than two million members. Thank you to our loyal members who are committed to the PNA and continue contributing to the strength of the organization.

As we approach the 49th Quadrennial National Convention in Chicago, IL, our organization will continue reflecting and making decisions that will strengthen and elevate it. Times are changing, but PNA's core mission and values to serve and protect families financially will remain unchanged. Information regarding selection of representatives have been forwarded to lodges and councils. We encourage those who are eligible to participate to do so.

Tax season is around the corner, and to remain competitive, PNA's Board of Directors have increased interest rates up to 4.50%. Opening a PNA annuity is a great way to save money for retirement while receiving a competitive

rate on your deposit. Join the thousands of members who have benefitted from a PNA annuity. Now is a better time than ever to take advantage of an annuity as inflation continues to rise in our country. The earlier you make your annuity deposits, the more funds you will have available later to meet your retirement goals. Remember, time is your best retirement ally. Our annuity experts are ready to answer any questions you may have. For additional information, please contact Ms. Mary Wiczorkiewicz or Ms. Alicia Strojewska at (800) 621-3732 ext. 365 or 331.

2023 may be a year of new milestones for you. This may be the year of your wedding, birth of a new child, career change, or dream home purchase. Any new life milestone is certainly a signal to expand your and your loved ones' life insurance coverage, but even if you are not experiencing significant changes, it is still imperative to reevaluate your policy annually. The policy you purchased years ago may not be sufficient to cover costs associated with today's inflation. PNA offers the best plans for your needs with our Single Premium Whole Life and Term Plans. Please contact our Main Office at (773) 286-0500 or your local PNA representative with any questions you may have.

The spring season also brings about communions and graduations. Look no further than gifting something especially meaningful, such as a life insurance policy or annuity. With a deferred annuity account, the amount deposited will grow for years, accumulating deferred interest. Purchasing a life insurance certificate of at least \$10,000 will give your young loved one the opportunity to apply for the PNA Scholarship Program in the future. The best gifts to give are those that continue giving.

Annually, PNA gives out up to \$250,000 in scholarships to eligible students. Don't miss out on our deadline of April 15, 2023, to apply. Our students are exceptional, and I am proud to frequently hear about their accomplishments. PNA has a talented group of young members, and I encourage all of you to continue following your dreams. PNA welcomes you to get involved and make a difference in your community.

It is worth mentioning that this spring we mark the one year anniversary of the Russian attack on Ukraine. Let's continue praying for peace in the world and remembering those who are in need.

In closing, I would like to wish you and your families a Blessed and Happy Easter. I hope that this spring season brings you positivity, joy, and peace.

Most 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	pacbozenak@gmail.com (917) 750-8143
D	David Milcinovic	davidgmilcinovic@yahoo.com (216) 299-1407
E	Stella Szczesny	stellaszcz@gmail.com (313) 680-4548
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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:

**(773) 286-0500 ext. 376**

Download **Change of Beneficiary** form on the PNA website [pna-znp.org](http://pna-znp.org)

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



## From the Editor

Hello All!

My name is Monica Lebensztejn, and I am honored to officially introduce myself as Editor of Zgoda. As the daughter of two Polish immigrants, my Polish heritage is extremely important to me, and I feel fortunate to cultivate it every day through this role at the Polish National Alliance. I first joined the PNA at the age of 11 and am proud to be a member of Lodge 3284!

My primary goal as Editor is to provide each reader with the best glimpse of PNA and how much we have to offer in terms of community, service, culture, and protecting families. Our PNA members across the nation are active and involved in many wonderful initiatives. I believe these stories deserve to be heard, and I hope they can bring a smile to your face. Please know that my mailbox is always open to any questions or suggestions, and I am looking forward to what we can accomplish together!

In this issue, you will notice slight layout and design changes. I hope to continue elevating Zgoda's sleek image and remaining consistent with the latest trends in digital media while also remembering the traditions that are integral to our foundation. Thank you to our amazing graphic designer, Ewa Krutul, whose talents and creative visions were essential to making these changes. Don't miss out on scanning the QR Codes within this issue which will connect you to us right at your fingertips!

A special thank you goes to Ms. Alicja Kuklińska who has been an excellent mentor these past few months as I prepared for the new role of Editor. You are wonderful, and I cannot thank you enough. I additionally extend my deepest gratitude to Mr. Frank Spula and the officers for entrusting me with this privilege – thank you! Wishing everybody a safe and Happy Easter – *Wesołego Alleluja!*

*Monica Lebensztejn,  
Editor*



*Happy Easter 2023!*

*Wishing you joy, love, and  
sunshine for the coming season.*

*Wesołego Alleluja!*

### **Executive Officers:**

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Teresa Jankowski  
Greg Chilecki





## From the Manager of Sales

Dear Members,

Taxes, taxes, and taxes!

It is again the time of year that we think about taxes. Many questions arise during this time:

***Do I have all the proper forms? Do I procrastinate again and mail my tax return on April 15? Do I owe money or I will get a refund? Did my tax bracket increase?***

Where would I allocate my IRA funds? This is a question that we at PNA can help you with.

The PNA can provide you with the following:

- A 5-Year Single Premium Deferred Annuity with a rate of 4.25% for all five years. The current guaranteed rate after 5 years is 2.80%. The minimum to open is only \$5,000.
- An 8-Year Deferred Annuity provides 4.35% interest rate for the first. After the first year, the current guaranteed rate is 2.80%. The minimum to open is \$500.

- A 2-Year Deferred Annuity provides up to 4.50% for both years (Tier 3 minimum deposit \$25,000). The guaranteed rate after 2 years is 2.80%.

Other tier information is provided on the subsequent page of this issue. Additionally, please scan the QR code found below to visit our website. The clock is ticking, and April 15 will be here faster than we know it. Call PNA today to lock in the rates of return!

We cannot forget about the importance of life insurance. That is why I would like to remind you about our optimal and least expensive option, the 10-Year Term Plan. If you are 60 or younger, call PNA for a quote on this affordable life insurance.

The cost of this inexpensive life insurance for \$500k coverage on a 35-year-old female nonsmoker could be as low as \$29.70 per month, depending on underwriting factors. This plan can be converted to a permanent plan without evidence of insurability prior to age 70.

I would also like to congratulate the PNA agents that won our December contest. The winners are as follow:

Jeff M. Twardy (PA)  
Vincent P. Valerio (NY)  
Sean R. Jackson (PA)  
Joseph A. Radosy (PA)



Please remember winter is almost over and when this Zgoda arrives at your door steps the first daffodil might be peeking out the ground. I hope you and your loved ones have a Happy Easter and *Wesołego Alleluja!*

Sincerely,

*Jolanta Walaszek,  
Manager of Sales*



# BUILD your retirement with PNA!



## Your most powerful ally is time

An annuity at PNA can be the source of your retirement income.

The **sooner** you open your annuity account at PNA, the **more time** you'll have to grow your money.

### Choose one of three PNA Annuity accounts:

- **2 Year Term Annuity** with 3-tier options allowing you to enjoy between **3.0% - 4.50%** guaranteed rate of return depending on deposit amount
- **5 Year Term Single Premium Deferred Annuity** with a guaranteed **4.25%** rate of return
- **8 Year Term Annuity** with a **4.35%** rate of return guaranteed for one year only

### Start now!

An annuity will help you build your financial security.

**Call PNA at (800)-621-3723**



Polish National Alliance of the U.S. of N.A.  
[www.pna-znp.org](http://www.pna-znp.org)



# Protecting what matters with PNA

PNA's affordable **10-Year Term** life insurance provides temporary **financial protection** when you need it the most.

You can rest assured you are protecting the ones you love with an organization you can trust.

AGE	Amount of Insurance * \$250,000	
	MALE	FEMALE
35	\$21.15	\$19.13
40	\$28.80	\$24.30
45	\$40.95	\$33.98
50	\$61.20	\$50.63

## 10-Year Term

- Affordable
- Renewable
- Convertible

AGE	Amount of Insurance * \$100,000	
	MALE	FEMALE
51	\$30.15	\$25.47
52	\$32.31	\$27.18
53	\$34.74	\$28.89
54	\$37.53	\$30.78
55	\$40.68	\$32.76
56	\$43.92	\$34.92
57	\$47.52	\$37.35
58	\$51.66	\$39.87
59	\$56.25	\$42.75
60	\$61.38	\$45.81



Polish National Alliance  
6100 N. Cicero Ave Chicago, IL, 60646

Call (800) 621-3723

[pna-znp.org](http://pna-znp.org)

\* Other amounts available. Preferred non-smoker rates. Medical exam may be required. Not available in the state of New York.





**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



# Polish National Alliance 49<sup>th</sup> Quadrennial Convention

**August 29-31, 2023**

Hyatt Regency O'Hare Chicago  
Rosemont, IL

## From the National Secretary

Dear PNA Members,

Spring is known for being a time of organizing and cleaning. It is a ritual well-rooted in many cultural traditions, particularly in Polish culture. Most of us would agree that nothing is more satisfying than completing a good spring cleaning!

As PNA Secretary, I encourage you to organize and update your life insurance and annuity information.

When was the last time you updated your PNA life insurance certificate info? Who is your beneficiary? Do you have designated contingent beneficiaries? Did you recently move or change your contact information? If so, don't hesitate to contact us so one of our team members can assist you. You can also scan the QR code below to access the forms online.

I would also like to address a crucial issue of ownership. If you are a parent or grandparent and owner of your grown child's certificate, please consider contingent ownership or change of ownership, if suitable, to avoid the legal procedures upon your disability or demise.

Make sure your documents are in order, so you can have the satisfying feeling of order in your life, which is just as important as order in your household.



Wishing you a splendid spring and  
a very Happy Easter,

*Z życzeniami radosnych  
Świąt Wielkanocnych,*

*Alicja Kuklińska*

**Please check the PNA website for announcements  
from National Secretary Alicja Kuklińska pertaining  
the upcoming convention.**

**pna-znp.org**

# A Remarkable Member...

*Mr. Steve H. Tokarski – PNA National Treasurer*



*We have so many remarkable PNA members that I decided to bring back this series! In this issue, we feature Mr. Steve Tokarski, the PNA National Treasurer.*

**1** *Mr. Tokarski, how did you become involved with the PNA?*

My father belonged to the Silver Bell Club Lodge 2365. When I was born, the financial secretary of the lodge was present, and she signed me up. I became active in the lodge after law school. After one year of involvement, I became president. My philosophy was that it's not about the office you hold, it's what you want to do with that office. The role was fun and exciting. Most members were steel workers. There was an adjustment period getting to know everybody and determining our envisioned goals and priorities. I was president of Silver Bell Club Lodge for five years. You can do a lot in five years, but then it's

time for someone else to step in and take over.

**2** *What are some accomplishments you are proud of?*

Together with the Silver Bell Club, we organized the Hank Stram-Tony Zale Sports Awards Banquet Honoring High School Polish-Slavic Athletes. Hank Stram was the football coach of the Kansas City Chiefs and led them to their first Super Bowl win, and Tony Zale was the World Middleweight Boxing Champ for seven years. Both were our members. Over 1,000 people would attend this banquet where 20-30 athletes from Lake County, IN, were honored. Lots of prominent athletes would attend. Our lodge also co-sponsored the Senior League World Series. We fully paid expenses for teams from across the world to join us and play. There were teams from Taiwan, Spain, Germany, and Japan. Of course, our PNA district also had their team playing. This was a one week competition filled with lots of excitement.



*L-R: Coach Hank Stram, Steve Tokarski, and Tony Zale*

**3** *How did you become involved with the Polish American Congress (PAC)?*

After being the president of my lodge, I had the opportunity to meet then-President of PNA, Aloysius Mazewski. He suggested I become involved with the PAC. Several years later, I became President of the PAC Indiana Division, which is a position I still hold to this day. I became the By-Laws Chairperson and was Parliamentarian for the organization during national meetings, which I also still do to this day.

**4** *What other positions did you hold at PNA?*

I started on the national level as a director, and I held this position for two full terms. I was also Chairman of the By-Laws Committee and elected the first Parliamentarian for PNA at the National Convention. My first National Convention was at Providence, RI, where I was elected Vice Chair of the Convention. Currently, I am the National Treasurer.

**5** *Tell me a little bit about your education background.*

Professionally, I am an attorney and had practiced for 50 years. I graduated from Purdue University with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and Government. After that, I went to Indiana University and graduated with a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree. Throughout six summers, I worked at the steel mills and was able to fund my education.

**6** *What are some of your interests outside of your profession?*



I have always been fond of music. I played the accordion for 10 years and was a drum major in band where I also played the clarinet. I was also in the Purdue Airforce Marching Band. When I graduated from law school, my aunt convinced me to join the Chopin Chorus. There I met my future wife, Marsha. Marsha and I got married in June 1973. She passed away one year ago. In July 1973, we went together with the Chopin Chorus to Poland where we participated in the International Chorus for Polish Songs competition. We competed against 12 other choruses and received the highest recognition – The President's Trophy (pictured in the first image). We returned four years later and won first place again. To fund these trips, we hosted several fundraisers such as Dożynki (Harvest Festival), and I wrote a script for the Polish Wigilia Madrigal during Christmas, and we performed in costumes from the King Jan Sobieski Era.



*Chopin Chorus*

**7** *Tell me a little bit more about your family.*

I married Marsha who was a science teacher. Together we have two sons. David is a practicing attorney and Vice President of the PNA Silver Bell Club. Christopher is a high school history teacher and is also the cross country coach at Hammond Morton High School.

**8** *What other organizations are you affiliated with?*

Currently, I am still very involved in the Polish-American community. I am President of PNA Council 127, Secretary-Treasurer of National Advocates Society, President of PAC-IN, and am on Purdue University's President's Council and part of the John Purdue Club. I am also Vice President of the PAC Charitable Foundation, which is an organization that helps fund projects in Poland. We have especially been active recently in helping fund initiatives in Poland to help Ukrainian war efforts. Every other summer, we also send 25 teenagers to complete a summer study program at the Jagellonian University so they can better understand their Polish heritage.

**9** *You travel to Poland often. What are some of your favorite places to visit?*

I enjoy traveling to Poland because it truly feels like home. I am a history buff, so I love visiting historical sites. I had the opportunity to visit Malbork Castle in 2010 when the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald was being commemorated. During this time, I was a publisher at *Dziennik Związkowy*, so I had the opportunity to write about my experiences, which was wonderful. I have visited most museums, some multiple times. The northern coast by the Baltic is magnificent. One year, I had the opportunity to travel from Gdansk, Gdynia, to Westerplatte. I also enjoy visiting Warsaw often, where I sometimes catch a soccer game at the National Stadium!

*Thank you for the interview,  
Mr. Tokarski!*

*Monica Lebensztejn*

## POLISH NATIONAL ALLIANCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

**DEADLINE:  
APRIL 15, 2023**



The Polish National Alliance is pleased to announce the PNA Undergraduate Scholarship Program. The program is available to all PNA members who are currently enrolled as full-time college or university students and will be continuing their undergraduate studies in the Fall 2023 semester.

Full-time students who will be sophomores, juniors, or seniors in the Fall 2023 semester qualify for scholarships. Incoming freshmen do not qualify.



Scan for regulations and application.



# The Chicago Society Evening of Elegance



The Chicago Society of PNA Lodge 1450 celebrated its annual induction of officers at the Evening of Elegance on January 28, 2023. For the second consecutive year, the event was held at the Park Ridge Country Club. Inducted officers included President Christopher T. Grzadziel, 1st Vice President Zenon Kurdziel, 2nd Vice President Andrew Hasztrakiewicz, Financial Secretary Jan Plachta, Treasurer Ray Golenia, Senior Director Adam Konopka and Forum Editor Terry Przybylski.



The program included the presentation of the first ever Romuald Ma-

tuszczyk Member of the Year Award to Richard Ciesla. The award is given to the member whose work in support of the Society in the prior year most exemplified the spirit of the late Ro Matuszczyk, who was an active member for 66 years and seven-time president, prior to his passing last year. As a tribute to Mr. Matuszczyk and his family, who were in attendance, a Polonia Song and Dance Ensemble soloist performed two songs.

This year's Member of the Year award recipient, despite not being on the Board, attended all Board meetings and carried out the duties of the financial secretary despite not holding that title. In addition to stepping in to help with that vacant position, he served as a critical member of the golf outing's committee and took active participation in all the clubs events and volunteer opportunities. Although not attending the event in person, Mr. Ciesla was able to receive his award via Zoom with his family accepting it in person from the Matuszczyk family.

The Society then honored the Legion of Young Polish Women for their contributions to Polonia and presented them with a \$2,000 donation. The program for the evening concluded with a wonderful performance by the Lechici Dancers of the Polish Scouting Organization. Following their performance, the Society surprised them with a \$500 donation from the Youth Fund. Afterward, the group led the audience in a Polonez, and the Anthony Kawalkowski orchestra kept the dance floor full into the evening. It was a truly wonderful event!

*Submitted by Adam Konopka*

*Photos by Andrzej Baraniak,  
Dziennik Zwiqzkowy*





# Debutante & Cavalier Ball

On January 28, 2023, 10 beautiful and talented young ladies from Ohio participated in the Debutante & Cavalier Ball in Cleveland, OH. Fraternal Advisor David Milcinovic represented the Polish National Alliance at this event. The PNA was one of the main sponsors and presented over

\$2,000 in scholarships. Congratulations to the debutantes on this spectacular night!

*Submitted by **David Milcinovic**,  
Fraternal Advisor, Region D*



# POLISH ORGANIZATIONS UNITE FOR CELEBRATIONS

On November 13, 2022, the Association of Poles UNITAS, in cooperation with PNA Lodge 525 and the Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts, celebrated their 70th anniversary at Pilsudski Park in Holyoke, MA. 2022 also marked the 104th anniversary of Poland regaining its independence after 123 years of political partitions. Poland regained its independence on November 11, 1918, following the end of World War I.



*L-R: Wieslaw Olszak, Teresa Struziak Sherman, Joseph M. Kos, Irene Grabowy, and Dorothy Wolanski*



*Joseph M. Kos and Mayor Joshua A. Garcia*

Master of Ceremonies Joseph M. Kos, eloquently spoke about the Polish Constitution of 1791 and the partitioning of Poland. There were two countries that developed constitutions around the same time and included very similar basic principles: Poland and the United States of America. The first United States Constitution was ratified on September 17, 1787, and the Polish Constitution was signed into law on May 3, 1791. The Solidarity Movement honored the Polish Constitution and re-established May 3rd as a national holiday on April 6, 1990.

Poland was partitioned into three parts beginning in 1772 and ending in 1795 by Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Poland did not exist on the map for 123 years. Jozef Klemens Pilsudski, for whom this Pilsudski Park is named, is viewed as the father of the Second Polish Republic, which was re-established on November 11, 1918. Today, Poland is a free and independent country, member of NATO, strong ally of the United States, and was the first country to pro-

vide humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine in its war with Russia.

The banquet, which hosted a full house of guests, began with a social hour, dinner and short program, followed by music provided by DJ JW. Honors were presented to UNITAS and President Wieslaw Olszak in honor of the organization's 70th anniversary. Special awards were presented to President of the Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts, Joseph M. Kos. He was presented a Mayoral Proclamation by Holyoke, MA Mayor Joshua A. Garcia. Joseph was also presented a gold pin and a certificate of appreciation for his untiring involvement and dedication to the Polish National Alliance and the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning in Chicopee, MA. Joseph is additionally a long-time treasurer of PNA Lodge 525, manager of Pilsudski Park, and treasurer of the Polish Miss Massachusetts Pageant. Sto lat, Joe Kos!

*Submitted by Teresa Struziak Sherman,  
PNA National Director*



*L-R: Joseph M. Kos receiving the awards; Irena Gadecki, Secretary PNA Lodge 525; and Teresa Struziak Sherman, PNA National Director*



# LODGE ELECTIONS

## LODGE 2093 – NEW BRITAIN, CT

Lodge 2093 of New Britain, CT, recently held an election of officers for 2023. Congratulations to our newly elected officers! Pictured seated L-R: Barbara Zakrzewska, President and Iza Wroblewska, Secretary. Standing L-R: Henry Perucki, Director and Chester Klymczuk, Treasurer. Missing is Director Jack Fahey.



## LODGE 1224 – ROCKFORD, IL

On January 8, 2023, Lodge 1224 held an election and installation of its new officers. Marian Bielawski administered the oath to the newly elected officers and wished everybody a successful year. Pictured L-R: Irene Dyer, Recording Secretary; Stan Wawiorko, President; Ann Wojewodzki, Treasurer; Joe Wojewodzki, Vice President/Financial Secretary.



## LODGE 1684 – COHOES, NY

Lodge 1684 held their elections on December 11, 2022. The new officers chosen are pictured from L-R: Stanislaw Bobek, Marshal; Paul Thouin, Director; Marian Wiercioch, Financial Secretary; Jasmine Wiercioch, Treasurer; Edward Brzozowski, President.



## LODGE 2286 – ALLENTOWN, PA

At the end of last year, the following lodges were consolidated into Lodge 2286: Lodge 430, Lodge 725, Lodge 1108, and Lodge 1715. The newly elected officers are looking forward to working together in 2023. PNA Lodge 2286 meetings are held at the Polish American Citizen Society in Allentown, PA. Please contact [pacssecretary0@gmail.com](mailto:pacssecretary0@gmail.com).



## KOŚCIUSZKO LODGE 165 – HOUSTON, TX

Lodge 165 held its annual meeting and voted for its 2023 officers. The elected officers are Bruce Maciejewski, President; James Paradowali, Vice President; Brian Marshall, Financial Secretary; Mike Kurtin, Recording Secretary; Marilyn Edwards, Treasurer.



# Region H News

Greetings to all in 2023 from Region H! Setting new challenges and resolutions are on the books for this year. We ended last year with many meetings, picnics, lectures, festivals, celebrations, and an expansion of youth involvement.

We have started 2023 with our annual meetings and had time to reflect on the many changes and

challenges this past year has put in our path. Stay tuned for all the excitement Texas Polonia will be bringing this year!

Region H hopes all are safe, in good health, and wishes all a great 2023!

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

## Annual Meeting of Polish Organizations in Texas

Region H was one of the sponsors of the Polish American Council of Texas Annual Meeting and Celebration. We were pleased to have representatives join us from multiple Polonia organizations. President and PNA member Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz led the meeting and awarded Lifetime achievement awards and certificates of appreciation.



## Christmas Gifts for the Polish School Children

Fraternal Advisor Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden stopped by the Nicolaus Copernicus Polish School in Houston to deliver Christmas Gifts to the children and teachers for all their hard work.



## Annual Christmas Party

The Polish Home, Council 182, Kosciuszko Lodge 165, and Progressive Lodge 2336 coordinated a grand Christmas celebration in Houston. There was traditional food, music, folk dancing, gifts, Santa, and a special performance by Iszkierczanie, an authentic Polish village band from Dębica, Poland. Many Poles in Texas trace their roots back to Dębica.



*Mrs. Krozel with traditional bread and salt*





*Fraternal Advisor Dryden and Brian Marshall with Iszkierczanie*



### **Progressive Lodge 2336 Annual Meeting Christmas Luncheon**

Progressive Lodge 2336 elected new officers at its annual meeting and celebrated with a traditional Polish Christmas meal. One success included expanding youth involvement with the creation of the Grand Committee to fund Polish



*Grand Committee: Katie Kubiak, Erica Dryden, Chris Odolski, Lukas Bielecki, Lucas Cupial*

events and initiatives. Youth plays an integral role in this lodge as the active board and Grand Committee consists primarily of individuals under 32. The new board officers are Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden, President and Financial Secretary; Lukas Bielecki, Vice President; Erica Dryden, Secretary; Katie Kubiak, Treasurer; and Christopher Odolski, Door Keeper/Sergeant at Arms.

### **Helping Children in Poland**

Various Polish organizations in Texas, along with the PNA, participated in the 31st Grand Finale of The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity. The organizations hosted events that consisted of singing, dancing, and other fun activities. This charity program is held annually in several cities worldwide. The money raised is later donated to help medical causes in Poland. This year, the Great Orchestra was raising money to battle sepsis.



*Special thanks to Stan Aponiuk and James Smock for many of the photos.*



Stay connected with Region H by scanning the QR code and liking their Facebook!





# Carnival Season

## WICI Song & Dance Theater

WICI Song & Dance Theater's annual Big Carnival Ball was a success! Around 700 guests attended the gala where they enjoyed a night of beautiful folk performances. PNA was pleased to present a donation during the gala to support the group. This year, WICI celebrates its 50th anniversary. WICI has proudly spread the love and joy of Polish folk dancing across multiple festivals in cities and countries worldwide. Most importantly, they have taught many students about Poland's rich culture of dance and music. We are so proud and wish them sto lat!

*Photos by Dariusz Pilka,  
Dziennik Związkowy*





# Karnawał trwa!

## Lajkonik Song & Dance Ensemble

Lajkonik Song & Dance Ensemble hosted a wonderful carnival ball with lots of attractions. There were spectacular folk performances followed by a dinner, raffle, and night of dancing. PNA presented a donation during the gala and sponsored a prize for the raffle. Congratulations to the directors and dancers on a magical night!

*Photos by Artur Partyka, Dziennik Związkowy*





# We are proud of...

## Christopher Grzelecki

Mr. Grzelecki, member of PNA Lodge 700, graduated Cum Laude from Western State College of Law in Irvine, CA, receiving a Juris Doctor degree. He was an outstanding student, consistently on the Honor Roll list, completed the Business Law Certificate Program, participated in many clubs on campus, and served as President of the Student Animal Legal

Defense Fund. Mr. Grzelecki started his career at the Helton Law Firm in Orange County, CA, after passing the California State Bar Exam on the first try. His parents Ursula and Zbigniew Grzelecki from Fountain Valley in Orange County, CA, are longtime members of the PNA.

*Submitted by Zbigniew Grzelecki,  
President of PNA Lodge 700  
in Los Angeles, CA*



## Stephan A. Ziemba



Mr. Ziemba was recently awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash from Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb. The decorated document, pictured between Mr. Ziemba on the left, together with lifelong friend former U.S. Congressman Peter Visclosky, is the highest distinction a Hoosier can receive. This distinction by Governor Holcomb recognizes Ziemba's leadership and steadfast support of charitable endeavors with the Jaycees, Kiwanis, and Rotary groups and service as Indiana State Deputy (President) with the Knights of Columbus. Mr. Ziemba is a member of PNA Silver Bell Club Lodge 2365.

## Teresa Borowski

DOCTOR OF  
PSYCHOLOGY



Dr. Borowski graduated in December 2022 from University of Illinois at Chicago with her PhD in Psychology, specifically Community Psychology and Prevention Research, and a Minor in Statistics, Methods, and Measurements. During her studies, Dr. Borowski earned two certificates, authored 13 practice and policy briefs for a national work group improving education for PreK-12 students, and presented her work at over 10 conferences. She accepted a position at the University of Illinois Chicago as a Visiting Research Specialist at the Institute for Health Research and Policy, managing a research grant to improve oral health in children.

Dr. Borowski is a lifelong member of Lodge 1224 in Rockford, IL.





It was in 2022 that Ms. Wyszomirski and her family had a vision and made a special request. Ms. Wyszomirski commissioned an artist to create a tapestry of Our Lady of Czestochowa, also referred to as the Black Madonna, to be installed in the Christ Cathedral in Garden Grove, CA. This painting represents to Poles a symbol of protection and creates a national identity. Ms. Wyszomirski contacted Monique Lehman, a well-known Polish American artist from Pasadena, CA, to get the project started.

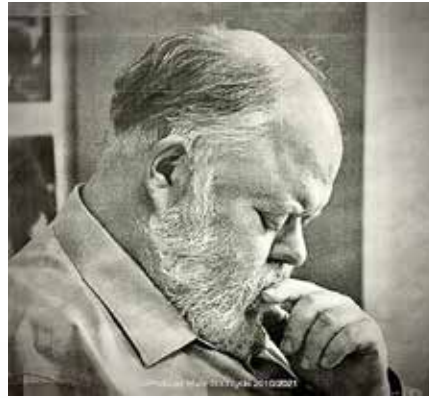
Her vision became reality in January 2023 after the tapestry of Our Lady of Czestochowa was installed on the wall in the hallway connecting the Blessed Sacrament Chapel to the main cathedral.

Ms. Wyszomirski could not describe in words how this made her feel. It was a proud moment for her family and the local Polish Community. The presence of this tapestry will attract more Polish worshippers to the Christ Cathedral.

*Submitted by  
Anthony Nowak,  
PNA National Director*

# In Memoriam

## ALEXANDER Z. FIEDOTJEW (1951-2023)



Mr. Fiedotjew passed away on February 8, 2023, at the age of 71. He was a longtime member of PNA Lodge 2993, a brilliant attorney, and had great passion for helping the Polish-American community. Mr.

Fiedotjew received a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago, M.S. from DePaul University, and a Juris Doctor from the John Marshall Law School. For 30 years, he was employed by the State of Illinois Department of Human Rights, retiring as Director of Contract Compliance Enforcement. Mr. Fiedotjew specialized in elder law, guardianship, estate administration, and general practice. He did extensive pro bono work for Polish immigrants in the Chicago region and was involved with the Advocates Society. He served as President of the National Advocates Society from August 2013 to August 2015 and served as co-chair of PNA's legal clinic, Amicus Poloniae. Mr. Fiedotjew was a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and enjoyed a passion for law and history, particularly Chicago history, the Great Lakes, and maritime life. He will be dearly missed.

*Photo by Mark Dobrzycki*



# Z życia polskich szkół Dystryktu 12

Okres zimowy obfitował w wiele okazji do świętowania oraz spotkań w gronie bliskich. W dwóch polskich szkołach z południowych przedmieść Chicago, działających pod egidą PNA, odbyły się liczne uroczystości, które przyciągnęły tłumy widzów.

## Szkoła im. Adama Mickiewicza z Burbank

zakończyła rok 2022 wystawieniem Jasełek, przygotowanych przez uczniów klasy maturalnej pod okiem wychowawczyni p. Agaty Mścisz. W tym uroczystym przedstawieniu słowno-muzycznym pt. "Niech kołęduje z nami cały świat", zaprezentowały się wszystkie klasy szkoły. Dzieci z dużym zaangażowaniem śpiewały przydzielone im kołеды, kolejno podchodząc do szopki i kłaniając się nowonarodzonemu Dzieciątku.



W styczniu uroczystie świętowano Dzień Babci i Dziadka. Było radośnie, kolorowo i wesoło, gdyż uczniowie klas młodszych zaprosili przybyłych gości "na farmę". Całości dopełniły tańce szkolnego zespołu "Świtezianie" oraz radosny śpiew chóru "Watra".



## Szkoła im. Króla Kazimierza Wielkiego z Orland Hills

również zorganizowała wspaniałą uroczystość dla wszystkich Babć i Dziadków, na której uczniowie pięknie recytowali, tańczyli i śpiewali. Nie mogło na niej zabraknąć występu szkolnego zespołu "Żaki". Pięknie udekorowana sala, kwiaty dla wszystkich babć oraz pyszny poczęstunek przygotowany przez rodziców z trójek klasowych, przyczyniły się do stworzenia wyjątkowej atmosfery, którą wszyscy długo będą pamiętać.







W lutym szkoła zorganizowała Walentynkowy Bal Charytatywny dla rodziców i przyjaciół szkoły. Uczestniczyło w nim prawie 300 osób. Wspaniała atmosfera, pyszna kolacja, doskonała muzyka i tańce do prawie białego rana uświetniły wieczór.

Wydarzenia takiego typu podbudowują relacje międzyludzkie, a także przyczyniają się do podtrzymywania polskich tradycji oraz do szerzenia polskiej kultury. Od lat wiadome jest, iż sens życia i wiara w człowieka nie bierze się z pustki, lecz z pielęgnowania tradycji i ocalania pamięci zbiorowej, która później stanowi o przyszłości pokoleń.

*Agata Mścisz*

## Amicus Poloniae

Klinika Bezpłatnych Porad Prawnych  
Spotkania w roku 2023  
odbędą się w soboty:

**18 marca**  
**15 kwietnia**  
**20 maja**  
**17 czerwca**  
**15 lipca**  
**19 sierpnia**  
**16 września**  
**21 października**  
**18 listopada**  
**16 grudnia**

Miejsce spotkań:  
Polish National Alliance  
6100 N. Cicero Ave.,  
Chicago, IL 60646

Czas spotkań: **10:00 A.M.**  
Możliwość uczestniczenia za pomocą  
platformy Zoom.

Rejestracja jest wymagana:  
**(773) 286-2325**

amicuspoloniaeclinic@gmail.com



# District 2 Scholarship Awards

District 2 in Connecticut held a scholarship awards dinner on December 28, 2022, at Baltic Restaurant in Berlin, CT. Scholarship recipients for 2022 include Kaja Stanecki and Ian Krecigłowa, both from Lodge 441 in Bristol, CT.

Ms. Stanecki is the daughter of Tomasz and Dorota Stanecki of Bristol. She is a senior at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, FL. Ms. Stanecki is majoring in exercise physiology with minors in sports medicine and communications. She has been active in the community including the PNA, attendance at Polish language school, St. Stanislaus Church events in Bristol, and college activities.

Mr. Krecigłowa is the son of Rajmund and Bernadette Krecigłowa of Bristol. He is a senior at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, CT, where he is majoring in biology. Mr. Krecigłowa has been active in the Polish community including the PNA, attendance at Polish lan-

guage school, volunteering at the St. Stanislaus Church Dożynki, as well as university organizations. He was not able to attend the dinner due to family commitments.

District 2 officers in attendance at the awards dinner include: Ed Zavaski, Lodge 513 President; Donald Dube, Lodge 2612 Treasurer and Scholarship Chair; Wiesia Kennedy, Lodge 464 Secretary; Marianna Koziol-Dube, Women's Division President and Lodge 2612 member; and Ela Lechowicz, Women's Division Treasurer and Lodge 513 member. Irene Grabowy of Lodge 441 in Bristol was also present in her capacity as Fraternal Advisor for Region A. Also in attendance were Grazyna Krupa, long-time Chairperson of the Scholarship Committee for District 2 and Lodge 441 member, as well as Leon Grabowy of Lodge 441.

*Submitted by Donald Dube,  
Scholarship Chair, District 2  
Photo courtesy of  
Ela Lechowicz, Lodge 513*

*L-R: Ed Zavaski, Wiesia Kennedy, Don Dube, Irene Grabowy, Kaja Stanecki, Tomasz Stanecki, Marianna Koziol-Dube, and Ela Lechowicz*



# WELCOME TO THE PNA



**Makayla Hanis,**  
born March 9, 2011



**Hailee Hanis,**  
born August 24, 2017



**Matthew Hanis, Jr.,**  
born April 25, 2018

Grandchildren of Robert Hanis of Pittsburgh, PA, are new members of Lodge 1052. Their loving grandfather gifted them their policies. They were signed up by PNA National Director Jeff Twardy.



**Miles Barker,**  
born on January 3, 2022, to Lauren and Jacob Barker of Mansfield, TX, is a new member of Lodge 0615. His certificate is a thoughtful gift from his loving grandparents, Walter and Sheri Reynolds-Becker.



**Lola Pearl Marie Piña,**  
born on June 14, 2021, to Amanda and Robert Piña of Boerne, TX, is a new member of Lodge 7011. Lola's certificate is a thoughtful gift from her loving grandmother, Darlene Dobson.



**Phoebe Margaret Lux,**  
born February 5, 2020

Daughters of Renee and Kyle Lux of Lindenhurst, IL, are new members of Lodge 669. Their certificates are a thoughtful gift from John and Margaret Sas, who is the Financial Secretary of Lodge 669.



**Penelope Mary Lux,**  
born January 14, 2022





**Connor Fossick,** born on May 12, 2022, is the son of Dana and David Fossick of Pittsburgh, PA. Connor is a new member of Lodge 1052. His certificate is a thoughtful gift from his godfather and PNA National Director Jeff Twardy.



**Logan Munhoz,** born on May 12, 2020, is the son of Sara Waldron and Marlon Munhoz of Plymouth, MA. Logan is a new member of Lodge 1887. His certificate is a thoughtful gift from his loving grandmother, Kathleen Los Waldron. Here he is pictured with his cousins who are also PNA members.

**Liam Blenden,**  
born January 19, 2020



**Landyn Blenden,**  
born October 26, 2021

Children of Brittanie and Cameron Blenden of Bremond, TX, are new members of Lodge 128. Their certificates are a thoughtful gift from their loving grandmother, Debbie Greensage. They were signed up by Sales Representative Wanda Kotch Ray.

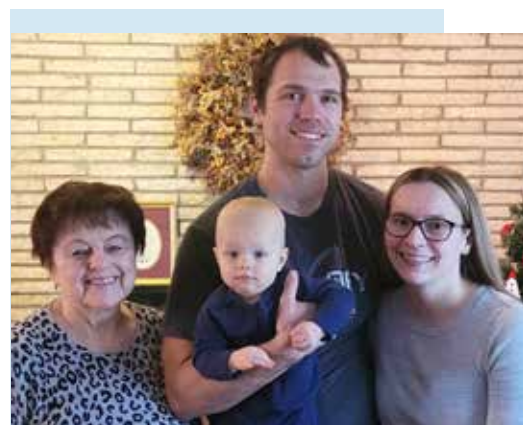


**Ryker Adam Mazewski,** born on December 6, 2021, is the son of Jocelyn and Richard Mazewski of Katy, TX. Ryker is a new member of Progressive Lodge 2336. He is the grandson of Susan and Richard Z. Mazewski, and great-grandson of Adam and Antonina Mazewski. Ryker is a fourth generation PNA member!

**Hanna Wild,** born on December 1, 2022, is the daughter of Elizabeth and Ryan Wild of Queensbury, NY. Hanna is a new member of Lodge 1291, and her certificate is a thoughtful gift from her loving grandparents, Yvonne and Michael Wild.



**Sophie Shrader,** born on May 8, 2021, to Mark and Ellen Shrader of Monmouth, IL, is a new member of Lodge 1919. Her certificate is a thoughtful gift from her loving grandmother, Mary Ann Shrader.



**Theodore F. Surdyka,** born on March 2, 2022 to Will and Maura Surdyka, is the newest member of Lodge 711 in Chiscopee, MA. He is the grandson of Len and Rosemary Surdyka of Wilbraham, MA. He was enrolled by PNA National Director Teresa Struziak Sherman (pictured with the family).



# Christmas Across PNA

## SANTA COMES TO PNA

On December 4, 2022, the Polish National Alliance organized its annual Santa Comes to PNA (Mikołajki) event.



The event was located at the Home Office and was open to the entire community. Celebrating Mikołajki is a fun Polish tradition for children and is based on the story of St. Nicholas.

Scan for our full recap and photo gallery!



## COUNCIL 171 WIGILIA

The children had a wonderful time at the Annual Children's Christmas Party. They enjoyed Christmas caroling, a visit from St. Nicholas, and the wonderful gifts he distributed. As is traditional for Council 171, the Wigilia celebration revolves around an amazing meatless meal shared with family and friends, and of course, lots of homemade desserts. Council 171 shared the proceeds (\$2,450) from the Wigilia celebration with The St. Vincent de Paul Society in Bethlehem, PA. Gift cards to a local grocery store were distributed to pantry guests on Christmas Eve.

*Submitted by Chris Thompson,  
Secretary, PNA Council 171*



## COUNCIL 8 CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Council 8 held its annual Children's Christmas Party on December 11, 2022, at the Polish Center of Wisconsin. Children began the afternoon working on fun crafts. After a light lunch, everyone sang English and Polish kolędy enthusiastically which prompted a visit from Santa. The children could not wait to tell Santa what they wanted for Christmas. Much appreciation to Council 8 President Michele St. Marie-Boelk for organizing such a wonderful event.

*Submitted by Teresa Jankowski,  
Fraternal Advisor, Region I*



## DESERVING CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Chicago Society Deserving Children's Christmas Party, which has been hosted by the Society for the last 65 years, welcomed 68 children, most of them coming from the Polish American Association and Dom Samotnej Matki. The children were welcomed to a hot dog lunch, sang Polish carols, touched and learned about different reptiles, and received a present from Santa. All in all, everyone had a great time! Many thanks to friends and members of the Chicago Society who donated their time, and monetary gifts to make this event possible.

*Submitted by Peter Dykas*





# Mikołajki w Los Angeles

Jak co roku, na początku grudnia 2022, Grupa 700 PNA, zorganizowała tradycyjne Mikołajki dla dzieci należących do organizacji i tych, które, miejmy nadzieję, zostaną jej członkami. Polonijne rodziny zgromadziły się w gościnnej sali parafialnej polskiego kościoła w Los Angeles oczekując na przybycie Św. Mikołaja.

Przed rozpoczęciem części artystycznej, niezastąpiona działaczka związkowa i wieloletni pedagog, pani Elżbieta Rudzińska udzielała informacji na temat programów członkowskich oferowanych przez PNA.

Jako pierwszy wystąpił chór Hejnał, któremu wtórował proboszcz Mirosław Frankowski, z repertuarem tradycyjnych kolęd polskich i amerykańskich. Po koncercie na scenę wbiegli tancerze grupy Krakusy i zaprezentowali kilka przepięknych tańców polskich.



Organizatorzy poczęstowali gości świeżą kawą i ciastem oraz upieczonymi specjalnie na tę okazję i cieszącymi się szczególną popularnością, ogromnymi paczkami, o które zadbał panowie Edward Hoffman, Piotr Dalecki i Zbyszek Grzelecki.

Specjalnie dla dzieci zorganizowano kilka konkursów, z mestrą prowadzonych przez Edwarda Hoffmana. W konkursie wokalnym, za każdą zaśpiewaną kolędę dzieci dostawały specjalne nagrody. Tak dużo było chętnych do śpiewania, że czas oczekiwania minął niespodziewanie szybko. Nagle, wszyscy usłyszeli dzwonek i w towarzystwie prezesa Grupy 700 Zbigniewa Grzeleckiego, pojawił się wyczekiwany Św. Mikołaj! Dzieci aż podskoczyły z radości i oklaskami powitały dostojnego gościa, który zajął przygotowane dla niego miejsce i wraz z towarzyszącymi mu Elfami (Kamil i Krzysiek Grzeleckimi) rozpoczął rozdawanie prezentów. Każde dziecko dostało od Mikołaja kartę świąteczną z życze-

niami i paczkę ze słodyczami. Dodatkowo, wszystkie dzieci należące do PNA otrzymały karty zakupowe do sklepu Target. Mikołaj chętnie pozował również do zdjęć na świątecznym tle, przygotowanym przez panią Ulę Grzelecką.



Organizatorzy bardzo dziękują Mikołajowi (Piotrowi Daleckiemu) za przybycie, pani Elżbiecie Romuzga, prezesce zespołu Krakusy i chóru Hejnał oraz panu Edwardowi Hoffmanowi choreografowi Krakusów za piękny program artystyczny. Ogromne podziękowania należą się członkom Grupy 700 za zorganizowanie tej wesołej imprezy.

Raz jeszcze, dziękuję wszystkim i do zobaczenia na następnej imprezie!

*Zbigniew Grzelecki, Prezes Grupy 700 PNA  
Zdjęcia: Agnieszka Samras*

## LOYALTY AWARD FOR PNA

On December 10, 2022, the Polish National Alliance received the 2022 Chamber Loyalty Award from the Polish American Chamber of Commerce at their annual Christmas Party & Awards Dinner.

For PNA, this award is especially meaningful because we are honored to be active longtime supporters of an organization that helps promote and connect Polish-American businesses. We are grateful to the PACC for recognizing us as a loyal member.



*L-R: Frank Spula, Elizabeth Stolarczuk, Alicja Kuklińska, Magdalena Solarz, Viceconsul Agata Grochowska, Bożena Dudka, and Łukasz Dudka*

*Photo by Andrzej Brach*

## CAMP STANICA PREPARES FOR 2023 CAMPING SEASON

Camp Stanica is preparing for its 2023 camping season! The annual meeting and election of officers was held at the Munich Haus Restaurant in Chicopee, MA, on January 22, 2023.

The newly elected officers for 2023 are Conrad Heede, Treasurer and member of Lodge 2279; Maria Kruzal Kinney, Secretary and member of Lodge 3276; Richard Knurek, President and member of Lodge 711; and Michael Kruzal, Vice President and member of Lodge 3276.

Helena Jalbert, Chairperson of the Camping Committee and member of Lodge 2279, was appointed by President Knurek. Chairperson of elections and installing Officer was Teresa Struziak Sherman, PNA National Director.



The camp is located in Bondsville, MA, on 60 acres of grassy fields and woods with the Swift River and Browns Pond/Crystal Lake providing for fishing, swimming, and hiking. There are facilities for games, gymnastics, dancing, and arts and crafts. The campers sleep in cozy cabins. Camp Stanica is a co-educational overnight camp for children ages 6-15. The camping fee per week is reduced for PNA members. The fee includes the cost for field trips and snacks. The weeks of camping for 2023 are Session I: July 16-22, and Session II: July 23-29. For more information, please contact Richard Knurek at 92 North Street, Three Rivers, MA 01089, by phone (413) 283-9525, or at [campstanica@yahoo.com](mailto:campstanica@yahoo.com). You may also contact Maria Kruzal Kinney at [kruzalmaria@yahoo.com](mailto:kruzalmaria@yahoo.com). Camp Stanica information may additionally be obtained at [www.pna-znp.org](http://www.pna-znp.org).

*Submitted by Teresa Struziak Sherman,  
PNA National Director*

## COUNCIL 62 INSTALLS OFFICERS FOR 2023



Council 62 delegates held their annual meeting and elections on January 22, 2023, at the Munich Haus Restaurant in Chicopee, MA. Election Chairperson and Installing Officer, Joanne Cebula of Lodge 711, administered the oath of office to elected delegates and officers.

Pictured standing L-R: Richard Knurek, Vice President and President of the Polish Alliance Youth Camp, Camp Stanica, in Bondsville, MA; Jeannie Zapala, President; Teresa Struziak Sherman, PNA National Director and Council 62 Financial and Recording Secretary; Brian Gendron, Treasurer; and Joanne Cebula, Election Chairperson.

Council 62 has organized a contest for all its delegates to increase PNA membership. Our goal is to have every delegate enroll or refer at least one new member this year, and sales representatives should enroll at least three new members in 2023.

The Council 62 co-educational overnight camping season at Camp Stanica, the Polish Alliance Youth Camp in Bondsville, MA, was in question due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision to open the camp this year was made at this meeting.

*Sto lat, Council 62!*



# Pozdrowienia ze słonecznej Kalifornii

## Andrzejki w Południowej Kalifornii

Już po raz 32, w Ośrodku Polonijnym im. Św. Jana Pawła II w Yorba Linda, Grupa ZNP 3259 „Piaś” zorganizowała wieczór Andrzejkowy.

W sobotę 19 listopada 2022 roku, ponad 80 osób bawiło się na dorocznej, tradycyjnej imprezie andrzejkowej. Organizatorzy zadbałi o wyborną atmosferę, na którą złożyły się przepiękna dekoracja, dobra muzyka i smakowite jedzenie. Obecni, w licznie 7, Andrzejewie otrzymali po butel-



*Prowadzący Andrzejki: Grzegorz Chilecki oraz Marlena Hulisz*

ce szampana i wiele gorących życzeń od organizatorów i przybyłych gości. Młodzież pomagała przy serwowaniu posiłków.

Członkowie grupy „Piaś” poświęcili wiele godzin pracy, aby wszyscy dobrze się bawili i wynieśli z imprezy miłe wrażenia. Andrzejki są głównym źródłem finansowania działalności Grupy ZNP 3259 i większa część wypracowanych środków przeznaczona jest na organizowanie niedochodowych imprez w ośrodku polonijnym takich jak wystawy, akademie oraz na cele charytatywne.

## Zebranie wyborcze w Grupie ZNP 3259 „Piaś”

W dniu 15 stycznia 2023 roku, w Ośrodku Polonijnym im. Świętego Jana Pawła II, w Yorba Linda, Kalifornia odbyło się zebranie sprawozdawczo-wyborcze Grupy 3259 „Piaś”.

W spotkaniu uczestniczyło około 30

członków grupy oraz paru, mile widzianych, gości. Sekretarz finansowa Barbara Jarosławska przedstawiła zgromadzonym sprawozdanie z ubiegłorocznej działalności. Prezes Grzegorz Chilecki podziękował aktywnym członkom grupy za ich działalność, a sprzedawcom ubezpieczeń za powiększanie organizacji. W swoim wystąpieniu, podkreślił jak ważna jest

współpraca Grupy „Piaś” z Ośrodkiem Polonijnym w Yorba Linda, Szkołą Polską im. Heleny Modrzejewskiej i Grupą Taneczną Polanie. Zachęcił również do promowania Związku Narodowego Polskiego w środowisku polonijnym i wśród Amerykanów.

Następnie odbyły się wybory i zaprzysiężenie nowego zarządu grupy.



*Zarząd Grupy 3259 „Piaś” od lewej: Anna Dolewski, skarbnik; Maria Hulisz, wiceprezes; Jarosław Musiał, sekretarz protokolowy; Dana Chilecki, odźwierny; Martin Kajdas, marszałek; Barbara Jarosławska, sekretarz finansowy; George Menclewicz, wiceprezes; Grzegorz Chilecki, prezes*

## Spotkanie Polam FCU i PNA

11 stycznia 2023, Prezes PNA Frank Spula złożył krótką wizytę w południowej Kalifornii. Spotkał się z doradcą PNA Regionu J Grzegorzem Chileckim, CEO Polam Federal Credit Union Jennifer Audette oraz członkami Rady Dyrektorów Polam FCU, w siedzibie Unii Kredytowej w Los Angeles, CA. Spotkanie dotyczyło możliwości współpracy Związku Narodowego Polskiego i Polam FCU. Obie organizacje, zaspakajając finansowe potrzeby swoich członków, są głęboko zaangażowane w życie społeczne Polonii Amerykańskiej.



*L-R: Frank Spula, Jennifer Audette i Grzegorz Chilecki*

Grzegorz Chilecki zainicjował kontakt z Polamem w ubiegłym roku i przy okazji Sejmiku Dystryktu XVI, w czerwcu 2022 roku, zorganizował spotkanie sekretarza PNA Alicji Kuklińskiej z CEO Jennifer Audette oraz jednym z dyrektorów tej organizacji Darkiem Swiatkowskim. Jesienią

ubiegłego roku Jennifer Audette odwiedziła siedzibę PNA w Chicago, otwierając rozmowy w sprawie współpracy biznesowej.



*L-R: Jennifer Audette, Darek Swiatkowski, Alicja Kuklińska i Grzegorz Chilecki*



Polam FCU, z oddziałami w Los Angeles i Orange, działa na terenie południowej Kalifornii od 1969 roku i pomaga Polonii w zaspakajaniu jej potrzeb finansowych specjalizując się w pożyczkach na domy, auta itd. Jest stabilną finansowo i wysoko notowaną unią kredytową służącą swoim członkom oraz wspierającą kalifornijskie środowisko polonijne. Więcej informacji na temat Polam FCU – [polam.org](http://polam.org) & [facebook.com/polamcreditunion/](https://facebook.com/polamcreditunion/)

*Greg (Grzegorz) Chilecki,*

*prezes Grupy 3259 „Piast”,  
Fraternal Advisor, Region J*

## Szanowni Państwo,

Zapraszamy do udziału w tegorocznej XIV edycji konkursu „Być Polakiem” z prośbą o zainteresowanie.

Moduł A – przeznaczony jest dla uczniów i studentów (od 6 do 22 lat w różnych grupach wiekowych),  
Moduł B – dla nauczycieli szkół polonijnych.

W poprzedniej edycji uczestniczyło w Konkursie ok. 1.300 uczniów z 38 krajów świata.

Prosimy, o ile to możliwe o przekazanie informacji w Stanach Zjednoczonych do szkół i organizacji polonijnych w każdy dostępny Państwu sposób.

Licząc na przychylność i duży udział w Konkursie serdecznie pozdrawiamy.

**INFORMACJE NA  
WWW.BYCPOLAKIEM.PL**

Joanna Fabisiak – Przewodnicząca  
Komitetu Organizacyjnego konkursu  
„Być Polakiem”

Marek Machała – Koordynator  
Generalny Konkursu





## 2022 Person of the Year ...and 115 years of *Dziennik Związkowy*!

On January 18, 2023, *Dziennik Związkowy* presented the Polish Teachers Association in America (*Zrzeszenie Nauczycieli Polskich w Ameryce*) with the 2022 Person of the Year (*Człowiek Roku*) award. *Dziennik Związkowy* annually recognizes an outstanding person or organization within the Polish community. For the second time, *Dziennik Związkowy* awarded the Person of the Year award, not to an individual, but to an organization.

This year, *Dziennik Związkowy* celebrates 115 years of publishing. As the oldest continuing Polish newspaper in the United States, *Dziennik Związkowy* has been loyally serving Polonia since 1908.

The Person of the Year award is one way *Dziennik Związkowy* promotes outstanding leaders within the Polish community. *Dziennik Związkowy* named the Polish Teachers Association in America the 2022 Person of the Year for their pedagogical and patriotic work.

Polish teachers educate young generations of Poles and Americans of Polish descent on knowledge of the Polish language, history, geography, and culture. Thanks to the association's efforts, many young Polish Americans acquire a deeper appreciation and love for their Polish heritage. Additionally, the Polish Teachers Association in America celebrates its 70th anniversary.

The Polish National Alliance believes in the impact of educating young Polish Americans about their roots. We are proud to see an organization recognized that so closely mirrors our mission of instilling a broader and deeper appreciation of Polish heritage in America.

Annually, the PNA proudly sponsors prizes for *Dziennik Związkowy*'s essay contest for Polish school students. Out of many participants, PNA awarded the top three students cash prizes at the Person of the Year gala. Congratulations to the winners: Liliana Kruk (1<sup>st</sup>), Pola Wasilewska (2<sup>nd</sup>), and Mariana Mosh (3<sup>rd</sup>).

Once again, congratulations to the Polish Teachers Association on earning the 2022 Person of the Year title. *Sto lat*, and many, many more years of success to our educators!

*Photos by Peter Serocki,  
Dziennik Związkowy*



**SCAN  
FOR  
MORE**





# 'Tis the Season for Allergies

Are you the one out of every five Americans suffering from some type of allergy?

If your answer is yes, then grab your tissues and read on!

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the number of people of all ages reporting allergies has been increasing since the 1980s. Spring and fall are the common seasons when affected persons experience this malady. There are many types of allergies, but we will discuss the seasonal type of allergy. Common causes of seasonal allergies include pollens from trees, grasses, weeds, and mold spores that thrive in damp areas such as bathrooms, basements, soil, or piles of leaves. Allergic reactions may also result from exposure to dust, food, insect stings, animal dander, and drugs or medications.

What is an allergy? An **allergy** is the body's sensitive or hyperactive response to a substance called an **allergen**. Allergens are small particles that enter the body through inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact. The body's immune system reacts to the allergen as if the substance is harmful. A nasal allergy is also referred

to as allergic rhinitis or hay fever. The nasal passages swell because of inhaled airborne allergens. Most allergies are inherited or passed on from parents to children. It may not necessarily be the same allergy, but the tendency for developing an allergy is 50-75% inherited.

**SYMPTOMS** relating to seasonal allergies include a persistent cough (the most common), sneezing, nasal congestion (runny nose), scratchy throat, and red, watery, or itchy eyes, ears, or skin. Allergies can also trigger asthma symptoms and can lead to a life-threatening situation. People suffering from allergies can relate to the discomfort of these symptoms. They have difficulty sleeping and are bothered during waking hours. The symptoms may linger beyond the seasonal periods, causing additional stress. Since there are no cures for allergies, they must be managed through treatment and prevention.



**GENERAL DIAGNOSIS** is best made by referral to an allergy specialist or immunologist, often called an allergist. An allergist has the advanced training to diagnose your condition and can prescribe an allergy treatment or develop a plan of care to help you manage your condition. This plan will help you feel and live better.

**TREATMENT** by an allergy specialist is recommended by the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology if your cough:

- Lasts more than 3-8 weeks
- Is part of asthma symptoms
- Is long-lasting and exists with nasal symptoms
- Is long-lasting and you use or are often exposed to tobacco/smoke

**SOME SPECIFIC COMMON ALLERGIC CONDITIONS** are the following:

**Eye or ocular allergy** occurs when an allergen irritates the delicate membrane covering the eye, called the conjunctiva, and the inside of the eyelid. The eyes will water, itch, hurt, or become red and swollen. Seasonal allergens such as pollen or mold are common causes. Dust mites and pet dander can also be culprits. Eye allergens can be very bothersome but do not affect eyesight other than temporary blurriness. Unlike pink eye, allergic conjunctivitis is not contagious.

**Hay fever/rhinitis** can be caused by pollen or dust mites. Allergy shots, also called immunotherapy, are a proven treatment for providing long-term symptom relief. Recently approved in the United States is an allergy pill taken daily under the tongue. The doctor may also prescribe medication to reduce symptoms. Most allergy medications for seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever) work best if taken before springtime tree pollen is in the air and before symptoms develop. Specific symptoms of allergic rhinitis may include itching of the nose, sneezing, nose congestion, runny nose, tearing eyes, and dark circles under the eyes. Symptoms tend to worsen in the spring and fall but can last year-long. Skin and blood tests are most commonly ordered to determine allergic rhinitis triggers. Allergic rhinitis can also be triggered by common indoor allergens such as skin flakes, urine, saliva found on pet dander and mold, and dust mite and cockroach particles. This is referred to as perennial allergic rhinitis and most often occurs year-round.

**Sinusitis** symptoms often develop after a cold or during an episode of severe allergic rhinitis symptoms. The most obvious sign is painful pressure in the cheeks and forehead. Other symptoms include thick yellow-green nasal discharge,



postnasal drip, cough, congestion, toothache, and possible fever. Sinusitis may be acute or chronic. For severe cases, consult an allergy specialist for treatment immediately. Sinusitis may be caused by an infection, fungus, a deviated nasal septum, nasal polyps, or immune system deficiency.

**Mold allergies** may develop outdoors when mold spores are in the air or indoors if mold is present in your home, school, or workplace. Molds are tiny fungi whose spores float in the air. They like damp environments and need four conditions to grow: food, air, correct temperature, and water. We all breathe in mold spores, but not everyone has an allergic reaction to mold. Mold can trigger asthma symptoms such as wheezing, chest tightness, or shortness of breath. Other symptoms may include sneezing, watery eyes, runny nose, nasal congestion, and itchy nose, mouth, and lips. An allergist can diagnose whether mold is the cause of your symptoms.

**Skin allergies** can be caused by many factors and there are too many to include in this article. Many factors can cause an allergic reaction to the skin such as an immune system disorder, infection, or medications. A common skin allergic reaction is eczema, a rash caused by scratching. The more the person scratches, the more severe the rash will be. Symptoms include crusting, oozing, and pain. Cotton undergarments and body suits may help protect the skin from irritants and scratching. Do not use soap products that contain sodium laurel sulfate or any triggers that cause an allergic reaction. The eczema rash is not contagious. Other skin allergies include allergic contact dermatitis, hives, angioedema (swelling in the deep layers of the skin), and hereditary angioedema, a rare condition. Skin allergies are one of the most common forms of allergies treated and can be managed by an allergist.



# Polish Easter Traditions

**PREVENTION** of exposure to allergens is critical. Here are some helpful hints.

- Avoid outdoor activities when pollen counts are high.
- Avoid the outdoors on windy days.
- For eye allergies, wear a wide-brimmed hat when outdoors to decrease the amount of allergen that blows into the eyes.
- Wear sunglasses to decrease the amount of allergen that gets into the eyes.
- Apply saline eye drops after being outdoors to wash away allergens from the eye lining.
- Be aware of pollen counts. A Mobile Pollen App is available at [pollen.aaaai.org](http://pollen.aaaai.org).
- Keep doors and windows closed at home and in the car.
- Use the circulate setting on your air conditioner to help filter the air.
- Wash or shower your hair and skin before going to bed.
- Wash pets before allowing them into your home.
- Avoid keeping plants indoors.
- Keep your yard free of leaves and weeds.
- Use a dehumidifier in your home, if possible.
- Clean the bathroom, tub, and shower curtain regularly.
- Repair leaky faucets.
- Avoid damp areas.
- Seek medical attention if symptoms persist or worsen.

You may find additional information on allergies from references used for this article by visiting the websites of the following organizations:

- The Academy of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology
- Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease



Hopefully, you will be able to have fewer allergy problems and enjoy the beautiful change of seasons!

*Author:*  
Teresa Struziak Sherman,  
RN, BSN, MS  
PNA National Director

## **Palm Sunday** *Niedziela Palmowa*

A week before Easter celebrations, people gather for a church procession with palms. Since there are no real palms growing in Poland, they are usually made from branches of native trees, mainly willow, and nicely decorated with flowers and ribbons.

## **Holy Saturday** *Wielka Sobota*

On Holy Saturday, small amounts of the most significant foods like eggs, bread, ham, sausage, cake (babka), horseradish, butter, and salt are put inside beautifully decorated baskets and taken to church to be blessed.

## **Holy Sunday** *Wielkanoc*

Easter begins with participation in the Mass of the Resurrection and sharing of the blessed food at breakfast. After that, the Easter celebration continues with family gatherings and lots of delicious traditional specialties.

## **Wet Monday** *Lany Poniedziałek*

There are two days of Easter in Poland! While celebrations continue, watch out for youngsters with water. It's *Śmigus-Dyngus* Day! People sprinkle and splash each other with water which is believed to bring good luck throughout the year.

## **Easter Eggs** *Pisanki*

In Poland, eggs are not only used as food on the table but are an essential part of Easter tradition. There are various designs and techniques for decorating Easter eggs depending on the region. They are a magnificent part of Polish culture!

AK





## Passion of a Polish Painter

Renata Kordek of Lodge 3241 decorates dresses, corsets and handbags. She also paints portraits and murals, turning almost everything into masterpieces. Several years ago, she presented her works at an exhibition at the Phantom Gallery in Chicago.



Renata started her adventure with painting at the age of 17. She graduated from the Warsaw School of Arts, after which she became a jeweler and engraver by profession. However, she devoted her entire life to creating art in many formats.

26 years ago she moved from Warsaw to Chicago. "At the beginning, I painted murals with flowers, landscapes, highlander huts," says the painter. The artist collaborates with two Polish folk groups, WICI and Lajkonik, for which she decorates costumes. "Ms. Magdalena Solarz, the Artistic Director and Choreographer

of WICI recently asked me to paint floral motifs on the Silesian dresses for the entire dance group. I believe that we should cultivate tradition. However, young people want changes, hence the ideas with painting costumes," explains Renata. The painter is inspired by the paintings of Claude Monet and Tamara Łempicka. The artist created paintings referring to the works of the great impressionist and many portraits inspired by the works of Tamara Łempicka. "There is nothing that I have not painted on," jokes Renata. In the future, the artist plans to create paintings on clothes with Polish folk patterns, as well as on other objects, including suitcases. The painter belongs to the Joseph Conrad Yacht Club, the oldest Polish sailing club in Chicago. Renata's passion and artistic imagination knows no boundaries. The painter is constantly looking for new forms of expression reaching for other materials and objects. Thanks to her inventiveness, objects gain a new artistic form.

*Alicja Jarosz Gunawardhana*



## Studniówka 2023



Many young Polish Americans spend 11 years waking up early on Saturday mornings to attend Polish school. There they learn about the Polish language, history, geography, and culture. One of the events most Chicagoland area Polish school students look forward to is Studniówka (Polish Prom), which is held 100 days before Matura, the final exam.



PNA was pleased to be a scholarship sponsor at this year's Studniówka. The \$1,000 scholarship was given to Bartłomiej Bobak from St. Blase Polish Catholic School in Summit, IL. St. Blase is one of the many Polish schools that PNA subsidizes. Congratulations, Bartłomiej and all soon-to-be Polish school graduates!

*Photos by  
Dariusz Piłka,  
Dziennik Związkowy*

*As we approach spring and Easter, Ms. Margaret Bondyra has prepared some delicious dishes – some savory, some sweet – for you to enjoy!*

***Happy Easter and Wesolego Alleluja!***

## Meatballs in Dill Sauce with Potatoes

*Klopsy w sosie koperkowym*



### Klopsy

**Ingredients** (4-6 Servings):

- 12 oz. ground veal
- 4 oz. ground pork
- 1 egg
- 1 small onion finely diced
- 1 clove of garlic
- 2-3 oz. of white bread finely diced
- ½ teaspoon of marjoram (optional)
- Salt
- Pepper
- 2 cups vegetable stock

### Steps:

Thoroughly mix all of the ingredients together. Form football shaped klopsy. Boil the stock, drop the klopsy into the boiling stock, and simmer for 15 minutes.

\*Boil your choice of potatoes.

### Dill Sauce

**Ingredients:**

- 4 oz. butter
- 4 oz. flour
- 2 cups of the boiled stock from the klopsy
- 2 cups of heavy cream
- 2 tbsp. of sour cream
- ¼ cup finely chopped dill
- Salt
- Pepper

### Directions:

Mix the flour and butter to achieve a light golden color. Add the boiled stock, heavy cream, salt, and pepper. Stir very well. Add dill and sour cream and stir together. Finally, simmer for 10-15 minutes and pour onto klopsy.

## Easter Cake Pops

*Wielkanocne ciastka*



### Ingredients:

- 1 box cake mix (I use red velvet cake)
- Spring/Easter colored chocolate/candy melts
- Sprinkles to decorate
- Candy sticks
- Cake pop maker
- Small cupcake liners (optional)

### Directions:

Prepare the mix according to the directions on the cake mix box. Bake cake pops in a cake pop maker. Melt chocolate in a microwave or chocolate melter. Dip a candy stick in the melted chocolate and place halfway through the cake ball. Then, dip the cake ball in melted chocolate.

Place it on a cake pop board (cake pops will be perfectly round) or on wax paper (the tops will be flat). Decorate with sprinkles while chocolate is still soft. Allow them to cool. Optional: Drizzle cake pops with different colors of chocolate. If you do not wish to use candy sticks, place cake balls in small cupcake liners.



## Artisan Homemade Bread

*Chleb*



### Ingredients:

- 3 cups (approx.) of flour (regular or bread)
- 1.5 cups of lukewarm water
- 1 packet (1/4 oz.) dry yeast or 3/4 oz. fresh yeast
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. oil

### Directions:

Mix yeast, sugar, and salt in water together until all ingredients dissolve. Add flour and oil. Mix well. If the dough is too dry, add water, if too wet, add flour. The dough should be moist but not sticking to your fingers. After forming a nice ball, place the dough in a flour-sprinkled bowl, cover with a clean kitchen towel, and let it rise for 1/2-1 hour in a warm place. Preheat the oven to 450°F. Place your baking dish in the oven to heat up for at least 20 minutes. When the dough doubles its volume, take the dish out of the oven, and sprinkle the bottom with a dash of flour. Take your risen dough out and gently fold it under a few times. Divide the dough into 4 parts. Form nice 4 round loaves and place them in your baking dish. Make a few very shallow cuts on the top of the loaves. Bake covered for 30 minutes, then remove the lid, and bake for 15 more minutes. Take the baking dish out of the oven and carefully remove bread onto a cooling rack. Cut the tops off, take some soft part of bread out to make a serving bowl. Ladle *żurek* inside.

## Polish Rye Sour Soup

*Żurek*

### Ingredients:

- 4 qts. water
- 2 lbs. dark smoked Polish sausage (preferably traditional or *swojska*) - sliced or bigger pieces
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- Żurek/żur soup starter
- Heavy whipping cream or sour cream
- Maggi liquid
- Marjoram
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Several hard boiled eggs (however many you like)

### Directions:

Add water and sausage to a pot, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 20 minutes. Stirring constantly, add sour soup base, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 2 minutes. Then, add garlic, Maggi liquid, salt, and pepper. Add cream, bring to a boil, turn off immediately, and add marjoram. Halve, quarter, or slice two or more hard boiled eggs into a soup bowl or bread. Ladle soup with pieces of sausage over the eggs and serve.

## Angel Wings

*Chruściki*



### Ingredients:

- 3 cups flour
- 5 egg yolks
- 250 ml heavy whipping cream
- 2 tbsp. vinegar or 1 tbsp. vinegar and 1 tbsp. 96% proof grain – spiritus
- 1/2 gal. oil to fry (it depends on the size of pot used to fry)
- Powdered sugar to sprinkle

### Directions:

Combine dough ingredients and knead together. If the dough is too wet, add more flour. Divide the dough and roll out as thin as possible. Cut strips, and then cut to the desired length. Make a cut in the center parallel to the length, and twist the dough through the hole forming a twist tie. Fry in the oil on both sides. Take out, let excess oil drain, and then sprinkle with powdered sugar.

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



*Photos by Michael  
Carnahan, Lodge 339,  
Council 21, MD*



# *The Great Castles of Poland*

## ***Wawel Castle in Kraków***

Welcome to our new series about the greatest castles in Poland! Poland's castles are an exhilarating time capsule into the era of Polish royalty and nobility. Each castle has its spectacular history and legends, which makes "castle-hopping" a must on any tourist's list when visiting Poland. There are about 2,800 palaces in Poland – so multiple trips may be needed to visit them all. Nonetheless, it might be a feat worth attempting!

One of the most iconic and beloved castles in Poland, Wawel Castle, is a must-see for any tourist. Get ready to have your heart stolen because Wawel has magnificent charm with its stunning architecture and captivating history and legends. The best way to reach the Wawel is by taking the Royal Route, which begins at St. Florian Gate in Old Town Kraków, passes by the Main Market Square, and continues down Grodzka Street. Be ready for an uphill trek as the castle is located on Wawel Hill, a limestone hill, overlooking the Vistula River. Entrance to the Wawel is free, but certain exhibits require tickets.



The ruler's seat and royal residence were established at Wawel in the first half of the 11th century during the rule of Boleslav the Brave and Mieszko III. The castle underwent numerous expansions in the following centuries until arriving at its present appearance during the beginning of the 16th century.



*View From the Vistula River*

Architects and artists were commissioned from across Europe to help beautify Wawel and keep it up to date with the latest design trends, which is why traces of Romanesque, Gothic, and Baroque styles are visible in the architecture. Beginning with the coronation of Ladislaus the Short in 1320, all following rulers were crowned at the Wawel Castle, except for two. Wawel remained the royal residence until Warsaw became Poland's capital in 1596.

As a notable landmark, Wawel was invaded numerous times by foreigners from the 16th to the 20th centuries. After the Second World War, Wawel was finally restored to its former glory and stands tall and proud as a cultural and historical symbol of Poland's perseverance.



*Wawel Courtyard*

## WOMAN IN POWER – QUEEN JADWIGA



Wawel was home to many notable rulers. When reflecting on Polish history, many people think of kings. However, Poland had a queen who is noted by historians as one of Poland's greatest rulers. Jadwiga Andegaweńska was born in either 1373 or 1374 as the youngest daughter of Louis the Great, King of Hungary and Poland, and his wife, Elizabeth of Bosnia. She was crowned the first woman monarch (king) of Poland in 1384 at a young age and ruled until she died in 1399. Jadwiga established new hospitals, schools, and churches during her reign. In her will, she designated her precious jewelry to be donated to the University of Kraków (presently known as Jagiellonian University) to fund its restoration. Jagiellonian University is currently the most prestigious university in Poland.

## THE WAWEL CATHEDRAL

Constructed in the 14th century, visitors cannot miss the Wawel Cathedral. The cathedral remains functioning today, and Catholics are welcome to attend Holy Mass. Wawel Cathedral's chapels and crypts are the final resting place of many distinguished rulers, bishops, political figures, and artists.



*Wawel Cathedral Interior*

When he was 19 years old, Karol Wojdyła (Pope St. John Paul II) recalled going to confession in the cathedral on the morning of September 1, 1939. A few hours later, the Second World War broke out when the Nazis bombed Warsaw. Pope St. John Paul II felt deeply drawn to the Wawel Cathedral, as many Poles find themselves similarly. Many rulers donated their significant relics to an altar in the cathedral. Władysław Jagiełło presented a flag he captured from the Teutonic Knights in the Battle of Grunwald (1410). Jan III Sobieski gifted a Turkish banner after his triumph in the Battle of Vienna (1683).





Visitors may also access The Cathedral Bell Tower, which houses the famous Royal Sigismund Bell. The Royal Sigismund Bell was cast in 1520 after being commissioned by Sigismund I the Old, who was also known as “the king of Polish bells and the ruler of Polish hearts.”

### A LEGENDARY BEAST

A royal castle of such stature needs to have an even greater legend accompanying it, and nothing can beat the excitement of a fire-breathing dragon causing turmoil. Beneath Wawel Hill lies a limestone formation about 25 million-



*Creepy Dragon's Den*

years-old. The formation has creepy passages which made it the perfect home for the Wawel Dragon (Smok Wawelski). The Wawel Dragon enjoyed terrorizing the village residents. The king promised his daughter, the princess, to whoever could slay the evil

beast. Many tried but could not beat the powerful dragon. A poor cobbler, Skuba, knew just the right trick. He showed up at the dragon's den and offered him a sheep to eat. Unbeknownst to the dragon, the sheep was filled with sulfur which burned his insides after he ingested it. The dragon rushed to the Vistula and drank so much water that he exploded. The village was finally safe, and the legend ends happily with Skuba marrying the princess and becoming the king. If you are feeling brave, you can visit the Dragon's Den located beneath Wawel Hill where a statue commemorating the dragon breathes fire every so often.

### WAS THE WAWEL DRAGON REAL?

Partly yes and no! In 2005, remains of a large prehistoric reptile were discovered in the area of today's Silesia in



*Source: TVP World*

southern Poland, and scientists named the creature the Wawel Dragon. The archosaur was determined to have lived around 210 million years ago (before the *Tyrannosaurus rex*) and

was a 5 to 6-meter-long carnivore. So while this discovery was not of the legendary Wawel Dragon, we can appreciate the clever scientists who appropriately named this prehistoric beast.

*Monica Lebensztejn*





# My Visit to Poland



On January 22-27, 2023, I had the pleasure of visiting multiple cities in Poland to meet with government representatives of Poland and to learn more about the programs that the PAC supports. Another purpose of the visit was to speak with individuals involved in helping Ukrainian war refugees in Poland so PAC can be better equipped to support such initiatives.

On the first day, I had breakfast with Minister of the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Dera. We discussed the Copernicus Project which is under the honorary patronage of First Lady Agata Kornhauser-Duda and celebrates The Year of Copernicus. The goal of this project is to promote Nicolaus Copernicus's extraordinary legacy and inspire young Poles to follow their intellectual ambitions as Copernicus did.

Over the next few days, I visited various facilities and spoke with many com-

munity leaders. One of the places was a rehabilitation center for Ukrainian refugees where I had the opportunity to meet with parents and children who received services from the center. Many of these are disabled and autistic children who are victims of tragic warfare. It was moving to hear stories from refugees first hand. The PAC is one of the benefactors of this critical project.

A highlight of my visit was meeting with the US Ambassador, Mark Brzeziński. Ambassador Brzeziński provided updates about the situation in Ukraine and Poland's role in helping Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees in Poland. We discussed joint initiatives between PAC and the *Wspólnota Polska* Association. Ambassador Brzeziński expressed great interest, promising to participate. He also accepted an invitation to visit Chicago.

Later in the week, I attended more meetings with key representatives. One of the meetings was with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to discuss Polish-American affairs and initiatives for the Polish-American community. After the meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the next visit was to the Ministry of Education and Science, where I met with Minister Tomasz Rzymowski and other representatives. They discussed Polish education abroad and ideas for future projects between Polish-American organizations and the Government of Poland.

A pleasant surprise of the visit was when the *Wspólnota Polska* Association presented me with a special medal on behalf of the Polish American Congress for which I am extremely grateful. This medal was given in honor of the association's 30th anniversary. I truly feel honored to accept this medal for the Polish American Congress, and it serves as an inspiration to continue our activism.

Overall, my visit to Poland was a success. I extend my gratitude to Dariusz Bonisławski, President of the *Wspólnota Polska* Association, for his help in organizing this visit. I look forward to future joint initiatives between the PAC and *Wspólnota Polska* Association. Seeing firsthand how we can help Ukrainian refugees in Poland was also a touching experience, and I am incredibly grateful that I was able to learn how the PAC can continue supporting such programs.

*Frank Spula  
President of the Polish National Alliance  
and Polish American Congress*

*Photos by Agata Pawlowska,  
Polonijna Agencja Informacyjna*

# The Year of Copernicus

*...and many more reasons to celebrate!*



On February 13, 2023, the Polish National Alliance hosted a delegation from Poland for breakfast to celebrate The Year of Copernicus (*Rok Kopernikowski*). Representatives from the Government of Poland and the *Wspólnota Polska* Association were present.

Last month, President Spula met with the delegates in Poland to discuss joint initiatives between the Polish-American community and the Government of Poland (see pg. 43 for more information). Some of these initiatives are promoting Polish education abroad and a shared Polish cultural identity, which the Copernicus Project (*"Z Kopernikiem przez świat"*) aims to do. The Polish government developed this project in honor of Copernicus's 550th birthday. At the breakfast, PNA also celebrated its 143rd anniversary

and recognized the 70th anniversary of the Polish Teachers Association in America and the 30th anniversary of *Wspólnota Polska* Association.

Further, the PNA was honored to host high-ranking officials from Poland. These individuals included Tomasz Rzymkowski, Deputy Education Minister; Professor Dariusz Dudek, Advisor to the President of Poland and representing First Lady Agata Kornhauser-Duda; Jacek Wisniowski, Mayor of Lidzbark Warminski; Piotr Semeniuk, Deputy Education Minister; Justyna Kralisz, Director of Polish Education Abroad Association; Dariusz Bonislowski, President of the *Wspólnota Polska* Association; and Krzysztof Przemieniecki, International Advisor in the Ministry of Education. Topics of discussion in-

cluded inviting young Poles in the U.S. to consider studying in Poland, the extensive involvement of American Polonia in helping Polish affairs, and building stronger U.S.-Poland ties.

Later, Mayor of Chicago Lori Lightfoot arrived at the PNA to speak about these wonderful accomplishments in the Polish-American community. Mayor Lightfoot stated that Polonia in Chicago is "the most engaged and thoughtful Polish community in the country." She appreciated the dedication of Polish Americans in Chicago in keeping their traditions alive and teaching the Polish language, history, and culture to younger generations.

*Photos by Andrzej Baraniak,  
Dziennik Związkowy*



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