

ZGODA

Winter
2023

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

1881-2023 Vol.178;No.4

Winter Wonders *Zimowe cuda*



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Niedzica Castle

The beautiful Niedzica Castle sits in a snowy wonderland on the Dunajec River surrounded by the Pieniny Mountains

(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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of the U.S. of N.A.

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Send all articles, correspondence
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6100 N. Cicero Avenue
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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

November 2023

It is hard to believe that we are about to say good bye to another year.

As the holiday season approaches, our hearts fill with warmth and joy. Yet, amidst the excitement, there lies a challenge - finding the perfect gift that truly captures the essence of our love for our dear ones. Consider a gift that transcends the material and touches the very heart of your family's future - the gift of life insurance. Life insurance is more than just a policy. It is a legacy, a promise that lasts not just for a lifetime, but well beyond, providing a safety net for those you cherish the most.

Picture this: your child or grandchild, stepping confidently into a future unburdened by the weight of student loans, all because of your thoughtful planning. Imagine the peace of mind knowing that your loved ones can comfortably account for their everyday necessities, even in your absence. This is truly the gift that lasts more than a lifetime.

For your young loved ones, take advantage of our Special Gift for Christmas promotion. With this promotion, every child from birth to age 15 will receive a special gift along with a life insurance certificate that they will appreciate as they will be able to take advantage of all the PNA has to offer.

Purchasing life insurance for yourself is a special gift for your loved ones as you secure your legacy. This holiday season,

take advantage of the PNA's Life Paid Up at 90 whole life insurance plan, which is now offered with a discounted premium of 5%. For more information, please contact your local representative or our office by calling (800) 621-3723.

As we wrap up this year, we also approach the end of the current PNA governance term. I extend my deepest gratitude to our officers and directors who have led the organization through the pandemic's turbulent times. It is because of them that we were able to sail the suddenly rough seas and emerge stronger than before.

We say farewell to Vice President Marian Grabowski, Treasurer Steve Tokarski, and Directors Irene Hercik, Val Pawlos, and Teresa Struziak Sherman. Thank you for your leadership and service to the PNA. As of January 1, 2024, the PNA welcomes its new board. Exciting plans are in place to ensure that the year is off to a strong start!

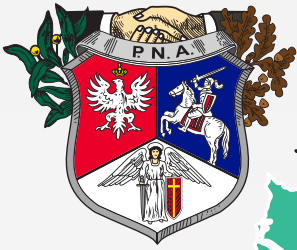
Also, I officially would like to welcome members of the Polish National Union of America into the Polish National Alliance. We are now one family, and together, let's cherish our shared heritage and the values that bind us.

In closing, I would like to extend to you and your family my best wishes for the joyous holiday season beginning with a Happy Thanksgiving! May your hearts be light, your spirits bright, and your celebrations unforgettable. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

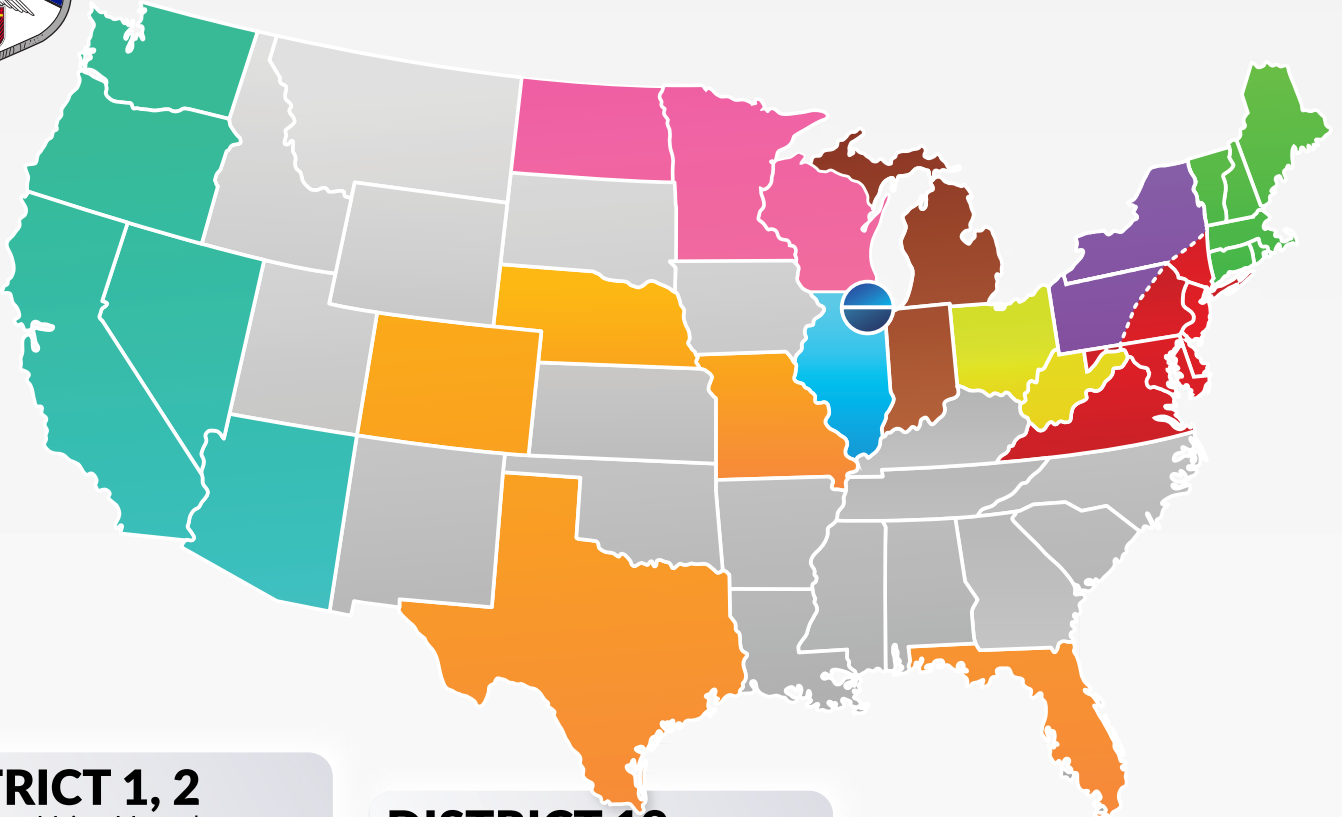
Zdrowych i wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!

With warmest regards,

Frank J. Spula, FLMI
President & CEO



Licensed in 37 states!



REGION A

DISTRICT 1, 2

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

Irene Grabowy

(860) 589-0592
pnagrabowy@juno.com

DISTRICT 19

Formerly Polish National Union of America

Martin Wachna

(847) 989-9534
martin.wachna@pna-znp.org

REGION B

DISTRICT 8

Western New York, Western Pennsylvania

Sean Jackson

(412) 841-3120
sjacksonpna@gmail.com

REGION E

DISTRICT 10, 15

Indiana, Michigan

Stella Szczesny

(313) 680-4548
stellaszcz@gmail.com

REGION H

DISTRICT 4, 5, 11

Colorado, Florida, Missouri, Nebraska, Texas

Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden

(713) 805-5810
jola@drydeneventproductions.com

REGION C

DISTRICT 3, 6, 7

Delaware, DC, Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia Eastern New York, Eastern Pennsylvania

Bozena Kaminski

(917) 750-8143
pacbozenak@gmail.com

REGION F

DISTRICT 12

Illinois, South Chicago

Barbara Wesołowski

(708) 460-6657
bwesolowski1@yahoo.com

REGION I

DISTRICT 14

Minnesota, North Dakota, Wisconsin

Teresa Jankowski

(414) 559-9301
jtjankowski@sbcglobal.net

REGION D

DISTRICT 9, 17

Ohio, West Virginia

David Milcinovic

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davidmilcinovic@yahoo.com

REGION G

DISTRICT 13

Illinois, North Chicago

Magdalena Solarz

(773) 777-8800
pna.fraternal.g@gmail.com

REGION J

DISTRICT 16

Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington

Greg Chilecki

(714) 744-2775
gchilecki@dslextreme.com



From the Editor

As we approach the end of this year, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we've had together. It's hard to believe that almost a year has passed since I took on the role of editor for our publication. It has been an absolute honor and joy to serve you, and I am deeply grateful for your support. I hope you've been enjoying the recent changes and updates made to Zgoda. Exciting new developments are on the horizon in the New Year!

During this time, I have had the privilege of getting to know many of you and witnessing the inspiring initiatives you undertake for the betterment of our organization. Your dedication and passion have truly made our publication a source of inspiration and positivity. I also express my deepest gratitude to Ewa Krutul, our fantastic graphic editor, as well as our regular contributors Teresa Struziak Sherman and Margaret Bondyra.

As Zgoda continues to gain popularity, I would like to remind all contributors to please submit your materials for our upcoming spring edition as early as possible. The deadline for submissions is **January 25, 2024**. Your timely contributions ensure that we can continue to bring meaningful content to our readers from a variety of regions. Please send all submissions to zgoda@pna-znp.org. As always, my mailbox is open to suggestions and questions, so feel free to reach out!

As we enter this holiday season, I extend my warmest wishes to each and every one of you. May your holidays be filled with joy, your winter be peaceful, and your Christmas be Merry! *Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia oraz szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!*

Sincerely,

Monica Lebensztejn, Editor

Merry Christmas!

Wishing you peace, love, and all the magic the holiday season has to offer.

Wesołych Świąt oraz zdrowia i pomyślności w Nowym Roku!

Executive Officers:

Frank J. Spula, President, CEO
Marian Grabowski, Vice President
Alicja Kuklińska, National Secretary
Steve H. Tokarski, Treasurer

Directors:

Wesley E. Musial, Vice Chair
Irene T. Hercik
Anthony Nowak-Przygodzki
Val Pawlos
Jeff Twardy
Teresa Struziak Sherman

Fraternal Advisors:

Irene Grabowy, Sean Jackson,
Bozena Kaminski, David Milcinovic,
Stella Szczesny, Barbara Wesolowski,
Magdalena Solarz, Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden,
Teresa Jankowski, Greg Chilecki





From the Manager of Sales

Dear Members,

It was so great to see some of you as delegates at the 49th PNA National Convention. This was my second PNA Convention. In my opinion, it was a great convention where spirits were high and a cooperative atmosphere was in the air. I would like to congratulate Mr. Noel D. Koss on winning the Pre-Convection Contest. I need to recognize our top sales agents: Mr. Bart Szkutnicki, Mr. Jeff Twardy, Mr. Krzysztof Mscisz, Ms. Lori Daff Siggins, Mrs. Sandra Schuster, Mr. Ronald Martin, and Ms. Elizabeth Stolarczuk. I also thank all the agents that sent in applications during the four year period. I really appreciate your hard work and dedication. Thank you!

Christmas is just around the corner. Start your shopping early with the PNA! Purchase life insurance plans for your loved ones or yourself and receive something that lasts more than a lifetime.

- **For Kids:** The fantastic “Special Gift for Christmas” promotion features our Single Premium Whole Life Insurance Plan with a special gift for children from birth to age 15. This life insurance certificate provides a lifetime of protection for a low one-time payment. The PNA will include a thoughtful gift that will arrive before Christmas morning for your precious one.
- **For Adults:** Our Life Paid Up at 90 whole life insurance plan with the lowest, most affordable premium, is now offered with a discounted premium of 5%. Make sure your family is adequately protected without putting a strain on your current budget. Now is the perfect time to consider purchasing a certificate or expanding on an existing one.

Both plans are only available through December 31, 2023. Contact your local sales representative today!

You can also call the main office before you will get into the Christmas fever at (800) 621-3723 ext. 330 or 344 or info@pna-znp.org.

When shopping this Christmas, don't forget about yourself; maybe additional life insurance coverage is what you need.

Thank you for being our loyal member. Best wishes for a healthy, joyous Christmas, and a prosperous New Year!

Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!

Sincerely,

*Jolanta Walaszek,
Sales Manager*



Top Sales Producers

We owe our gratitude to numerous individuals for the success of our organization, especially our cherished members, who we recognize and thank for their ardent support. A substantial portion of our achievements is also credited to our spectacular sales representatives. Their unwavering dedication to selling certificates, ensuring our members have access to our top-notch life insurance products, has been instrumental to fulfilling our mission and is deeply appreciated.

At the 49th National Convention, the PNA took pride in honoring the outstanding efforts of our top sales producers from 2019 to 2023. Mr. Noel Koss from Washington won the Pre-Convention Agent Contest by selling a \$1,000,000 permanent certificate with an annualized premium of

\$30,000. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all our esteemed sales producers!

Are you interested in becoming a part of our dynamic sales team? PNA sales agents enjoy the opportunity to earn unlimited commissions. What's even better is that no prior experience is necessary to kick-start your journey with us. For further details, please refer to pg. 47 or contact Sales Manager Jolanta Walaszek at jolanta.walaszek@pna-znp.org or (773) 286-0500 ext. 330.



Noel Koss



TOP PRODUCERS 2019 - 2023



Bart Szkutnicki



Jeff Twardy



Krzysztof Mscisz



Lori Daff-Siggins



Sandra Schuster



Ronald Martin



Elizabeth Stolarczuk

Protecting families since 1880

Special Gift for Christmas

There may be many gifts under the Christmas tree that will bring them joy, but there's only one that expresses the love and provides your family's financial security for life.

**Focus on People, Not Things.
Because You Care.**

With our most popular **SINGLE PREMIUM WHOLE LIFE** insurance plan, you can ensure that your loved ones will be protected for years to come.

What could be a better gift than that?

Call PNA today at (800) 621-3723

*Application must be submitted between November 1st - December 31st, 2023, to receive a surprise gift.



www.pna-znp.org

SINGLE PREMIUM WHOLE LIFE				
	BOY		GIRL	
AGE	\$15K	\$25K	\$15K	\$25K
0	\$1,231.95	\$2,033.25	\$1,107.15	\$1,825.25
1	\$1,272.15	\$2,100.25	\$1,143.15	\$1,885.25
2	\$1,314.00	\$2,170.00	\$1,180.95	\$1,948.25
3	\$1,357.50	\$2,242.50	\$1,220.25	\$2,013.75
4	\$1,402.65	\$2,317.75	\$1,260.90	\$2,081.50
5	\$1,449.60	\$2,396.00	\$1,302.90	\$2,151.50
6	\$1,498.05	\$2,476.75	\$1,346.40	\$2,224.00
7	\$1,548.30	\$2,560.50	\$1,391.55	\$2,299.25
8	\$1,600.50	\$2,647.50	\$1,438.20	\$2,377.00
9	\$1,654.35	\$2,737.25	\$1,486.50	\$2,457.50
10	\$1,710.00	\$2,830.00	\$1,536.45	\$2,540.75
11	\$1,767.60	\$2,926.00	\$1,588.05	\$2,626.75
12	\$1,826.70	\$3,024.50	\$1,641.60	\$2,716.00
13	\$1,887.30	\$3,125.50	\$1,696.95	\$2,808.25
14	\$1,948.95	\$3,228.25	\$1,753.50	\$2,902.50
15	\$2,011.35	\$3,332.25	\$1,811.10	\$2,998.50

*Higher amounts available. Subject to underwriting.



**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.

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.

Signed in _____ on _____
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

Protecting families since 1880

5%*
off your monthly
premiums!

Focus on People, Not Things. Because You Care.

Protect the life you love with a Whole Life Insurance Policy LP 90 from PNA!

Make this Christmas a little merrier with a 5%* discount on your life insurance monthly premiums!

It's on us! Merry Christmas!

At PNA we understand that your situation is unique. With our flexible life insurance plan LP 90 you get:

- solid performance with affordable premiums
- maximum death benefits
- cash value for unexpected expenses or opportunities
- multiple riders and five dividend options

What could be a better gift than that?

You're never too old to care for your loved ones and yourself!

Call PNA today at (800) 621-3723

LIFE PAID UP AT 90		
COVERAGE AMOUNT \$30,000		
MONTHLY PREMIUMS **		
AGE	MALE	FEMALE
50	\$51.06	\$46.44
55	\$63.77	\$57.48
60	\$82.03	\$74.47
65	\$108.08	\$98.60
70	\$146.02	\$131.65

** Above are discounted monthly premiums for non-smokers. May be subject to underwriting.

* Application must be submitted between November 1st - December 31st, 2023, to qualify for 5% discount. For more details, call PNA at 800. 621. 3723.

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



District 10 Convention



District 10 held its annual joint convention on September 17, 2023, at the Polish Legion of American Veterans Post 10 in Hamtramck, MI. Fraternal Advisor Stella Szczesny conducted the convention. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the Polish national anthem was sung. A moment of silence was observed for all the recently deceased members and prominent Detroit Polonia individuals. Barbara Gronet was appointed as the convention secretary. The Mandate Committee and the Sergeant-at-Arms were appointed and administered the oath of office. Following were the appointments for the Budget, Nominating, Membership and Resolutions Committees.

Beginning the formal part of the meeting, the district officers and the auditor reports were presented. Councils 15, 54, and 122, as well as Lodges 53, 1264, 1360, 1547, 1758 and 3160 presented their yearly reports. Following the reports, the committees broke into their appointed workgroups to plan for next year. After a delicious Polish buffet catered by the Polish Village

Restaurant, the committees presented their reports.

Advisor Szczesny then presented the District 10 Man & Woman of the Year Awards. Barbara Gronet was recognized as Woman of the Year for all her work and dedication at the lodge, council, and district levels. She has held numerous positions over the years. John Stawasz was recognized as Man of the Year for all his work and dedication at the lodge and council levels. They were both presented with crystal ice buckets engraved with the PNA logo and their award titles.

The following individuals were elected: Stella Szczesny, District Chair; Edward Nizienski, Vice President; Barbara Gronet, Secretary; and Jerome Brzezinski, Treasurer. Women's Division officers are Francine Nizienski and Barbara Gronet, Vice Presidents; Christine Kryszko, Treasurer; and Donna Kutylowski, Secretary. Fraternal Advisor Szczesny administered the oath of office to all elected members.

Following the elections, plans were discussed for the upcoming District Christmas Party, coloring contest and spelling bee. Dates and chairs were established. After the convention was officially closed, many of the delegates continued to meet and visit. The consensus was that this year's convention was one of the best in recent years!

*Submitted by Barbara J. Gronet
Photos by Stella Szczesny*



Barbara Gronet, Woman of the Year



John Stawasz, Man of the Year

Milwaukee Society Pulaski Day Banquet

PNA Undergraduate Scholarship Program

Opens
**January 1,
2024!**

Stay tuned for
more information
on our website
pna-znp.org



CoryAnn holding her award, surrounded by her loving family

CoryAnn served as the Mayor of the City St. Francis, WI, a suburb in Milwaukee County from 2012-2018. She has received many distinctions and awards from various organizations and institutions due to her fervent passion for community service.

The PNA Milwaukee Society Lodge 2159 held its annual Pulaski Day Banquet on October 29, 2023, at the Polish Center of Wisconsin in Franklin, WI. The 2023 event honored Ms. CoryAnn St. Marie-Carls as Polish American of the Year.

In her professional life, CoryAnn has achieved a few firsts for a woman. She was the first woman to be Executive Director for the Kenosha Area Chamber of Commerce and was the first woman Mayor of the City of St. Francis.

CoryAnn is a lifetime member of the PNA and 30-year member of the Milwaukee Society. She takes great pride in her Polish heritage, growing up in Cudahy, WI. CoryAnn belonged to Holy Family, a parish her Polish-born great-grandparents helped found.

CoryAnn was presented her award by Lodge 2159 Vice President Dave Zepecki. Present at the dinner were Council 8 President Michele St. Marie-Boelkow (who is also the recipient's sister) and Fraternal Advisor Teresa Jankowski. CoryAnn was also in the loving company of her family: husband Tom, son Layton, and sister Michele with her husband Randy.

She graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and received her master's degree from Cardinal Stritch University. CoryAnn's community involvement and service have been a part of her life since she started cleaning the convent of the Felician sisters in grade school and being a member of Girl Scouts. As Miss St. Francis 1986, CoryAnn began her volunteering in her adult life and became a member of the PNA Milwaukee Society in 1992.

CoryAnn is very grateful for this award and believes that her Polish heritage and family instilled important values of service and charity in her life.

Submitted by
Michele St. Marie-Boelkow,
President, Council 8

Polish Independence Day Run

Annually, WPNA FM hosts the Polish Independence Day Run/Walk 10K/5K which turns Montrose Harbor in Chicago into a patriotic sea of white and red. This year, around 1,500 participants zoomed across the finish line. The run and walk is open for individuals of all ages - furry friends included! The Polish National Alliance was proud to be a main sponsor of the event. At the end of the run, President Frank Spula along with representatives of WPNA FM presented awards to the fastest runners. Congratulations to the winners! We hope to see everyone again next year at this energetic event.



Team BMORE

Did you know you can also participate in the Polish Independence Day Run/Walk virtually? That is what Team BMORE (Council 21) from Balti-

more does every year! This year, the team participated from Fort McHenry, a place of significance in American history. Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the American national anthem, which included language depicting

our flag's "broad stripes and bright stars" which "were so gallantly streaming" as it flew over Fort McHenry at the conclusion of the Battle of Baltimore during the War of 1812. What a fitting place to honor Poland's regained independence -- the standing tribute to American perseverance and independence!

Photos by Peter Serocki, WPNA FM



A Special Farewell...

As the PNA looks ahead to a bright 2024, we cannot wrap up the year without thanking the individuals who greatly contributed to the successes of not only the past year, but many past years. As a new board takes effect on January 1, 2024, the PNA says farewell to the outgoing officers and directors. Thank you for your service and unwavering commitment to the organization. Best wishes to all!



Vice President,
Marian Grabowski



Treasurer,
Steve Tokarski



National Director,
Irene Hercik



National Director,
Val Pawlos



National Director,
**Teresa Struziak
Sherman**

The PNA also says farewell to a dedicated employee of 45 years – Fraternal Events Coordinator Mary Srodon (pictured in the middle) – who will be continuing her journey with the PNA as a National Director. Thank you for your service, and congratulations on your retirement!



EO Movie Screening

On October 5, 2023, the PNA organized a screening of EO, coordinated by Paulina Kordek, to kick off Polish-American Heritage Month. EO by Jerzy Skolimowski is an award-winning film released in 2022. The film received the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival and was also nominated for an Academy Award for Best Feature Film at the 95th Academy Awards Ceremony. Skolimowski, a talented Polish director and screenwriter, was the winner of the Golden Lion in Venice in 2016.

EO is shown from the perspective of a donkey's eyes, whom the film is named after. EO travels the world experiencing the joys and cruelties of life as he travels through the Polish countryside. One of the objectives of the film is to raise awareness about animal rights as EO was a circus donkey.

Overall, the attendees enjoyed the screening and appreciated the warm October night weather. It was a great time for families and friends to get together and celebrate the incredible work of a Polish artist.



Polish National Union of America

A Brief History

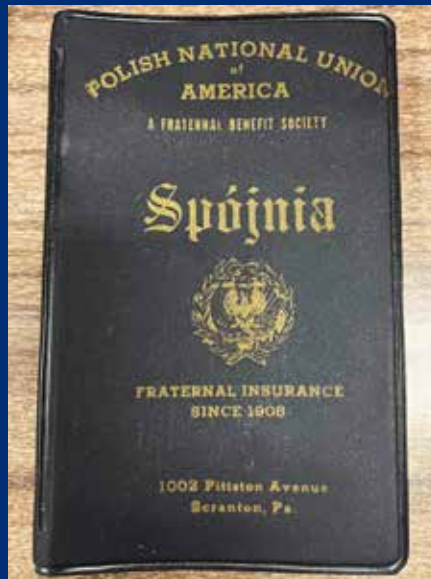
The late Prime Bishop Franciszek Hodur organized the Polish National Union of America in 1908, eleven years after the organization of the Polish National Catholic Church.



Bishop Hodur

Since its inception the Polish National Union has served the people in America as well as in Poland. One of the initial purposes of Spójnia was to help people belonging to the Polish National Catholic Church and others who shared in the organization's goal to achieve financial security. This action brought about an important idea to promote brotherly love and to maintain a sense of identity. Formerly headquartered in Scranton, PA, since 1908, the Polish National Union of America has lived up to Bishop Hodur's high standards by providing material and spiritual security to the members and friends of the Polish National Catholic Church. This spirit of cooperation between Spójnia's leaders and members brought about the means, the force, and the respon-

sibilities of deeds to meet the challenges of today. From the signing of its first member, John Drwal in 1908, the Polish National Union of America has remained true to its principles and has grown in membership over the years.



Merger with PNA

While the PNU was organized by the PNCC, the PNU continued to work closely with the Polish National Alliance in fostering benefits for members of Polonia. In the 1990s, the PNU and the PNA in Chicago became good and close friends again. At that time, PNA President Edward Moskal and the President of the PNU began to discuss the possibility of the PNU and the PNA to merge to solidify both organizations and to continue to promote fraternalism.

In 2022, the PNU reached out to several organizations to discuss the merger of our organization. During these discussions, it was determined that the very best organization to merge with

was the PNA. The two organizations' missions are still closely aligned, as was back in 1897. While the Board of Directors of the PNU did have to look at all possibilities for its members, the PNA was chosen unanimously. At the 49th PNA National Convention, the delegates unanimously voted to approve the PNU-PNA merger.

On September 27, 2023, the PNU Board met for the final time in Scranton, PA. At this meeting, PNA President Frank Spula and National Secretary were present. CEO Martin Wachna and CFO John Andrzejewski ceremonially at New Business turned the meeting over to President Spula and Secretary Kuklińska in anticipation of the approvals from the Insurance Departments from the two states involved. It was a joyous occasion to know that the members of the PNU will have another 115 years to look forward to be a family with the PNA.



The Department of Insurance officially approved the PNU-PNA merger on October 13, 2023. As a result of this merger, approximately 8,000 PNU members are now welcomed warmly into the PNA family. The PNU will operate as District 19 of the PNA.



Welcoming the Newest PNA Councils

Former divisions of the PNU have now become PNA Councils 305 and 306. The Board of Directors of the PNU at their final meeting in Scranton, were presented with gifts of appreciation by President Spula and CEO Wachna. At this meeting, the members of the PNU Internal Audit Committee were not present to receive their gifts.

Former PNU CEO Martin "Marty" Wachna and PNA President Frank Spula

On October 8, 2023, Mr. Wachna presented PNU Internal Audit Committee Chairman, Very Rev. John Kowalczyk with a gift for his many years of service to the PNU Board. Present for this presentation but not pictured was Council 306 President Christine Wachna.



The following week, Mr. Wachna and Mr. Andrzejewski traveled to McKeesport, PA, and presented gifts to Henrietta Kleckner and Marian Sleczkowski for their many years of service to the PNU. Mrs. Kleckner and Mrs. Sleczkowski have served on the Internal Audit Committee for a number of years. Present for this presentation was the President of Council 305 Melissa Snee.



For any questions or communications regarding District 19, please reach out to Mr. Wachna at martin.wachna@pna-znp.org or (847) 989-9534.

Submitted by Martin Wachna, District 19

Bishop Hodur Retreat & Recreation Center



Are you looking for a meeting place in Scranton, PA?

The grounds of Spojnia Farm in Waymart, PA, can host many different events from graduation parties, council meetings, weddings, to spritual retreats.

Contact Stacy Shrive at BHRCC@spojniainc.org or (570) 488-5686

Remembering Charles Rozmarek

Charles Rozmarek led the Polish National Alliance for 24 years as the organization's president. We pay tribute to him on the 50th anniversary of his passing.



Born on July 25, 1897, in Wilkes-Barre, PA, Ignacy Karol Rozmarek, a son of immigrants, went on to earn his degree in law from Harvard University. Active in the Polish National Alliance fraternal from the 1920s, he won the election to be its president in September 1939, just days after

Germany's invasion of Poland and the start of the Second World War.

Already in Fall 1943, Rozmarek was working closely with other leaders of the six million strong Polish community in America to make its voice heard to the heads of the U.S. government. Together they organized a massive Congress in 1944 of over 2,500 elected delegates from across the country. The resolutions approved at this gathering reaffirmed the Polish community's total patriotic commitment to victory over Hitler to President Franklin Roosevelt and reminded him of his support for a postwar free and independent Poland. This was a commitment he and British Prime Minister Churchill had made in their meeting off the coast of Canada early in the War.



President Eisenhower (left) talks to Rozmarek

Tragically, after Roosevelt and Churchill met with Josef Stalin, the despotic ruler of Soviet Russia, at Yalta, it became evident that victory over Nazi Germany would not

include a free and independent Poland. Instead, a war-devastated Poland would fall under Soviet domination.

From this point on, Rozmarek led a concerted, public PAC effort to denounce the Yalta decisions on Poland. Already in May 1945, he headed a delegation to San Francisco to present the case for a free Poland at the founding of the United Nations. Soon after he was in Paris, France, to state Poland's case at the meeting of the foreign ministers of the great powers. In Germany he observed the squalid conditions of Polish displaced persons and called for immediate action to improve things there. Back in the U.S. he championed passage of the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 to enable 200,000 Polish refugees to enter this country. As PAC president he spurred the creation of a special committee to assist the newcomers in beginning their new lives in America.



President John F. Kennedy meets with a delegation from the Polish American Congress in the Oval Office, White House, Washington, D.C. (L-R) Secretary General of the Polish American Congress Reverend Valerian S. Karcz; Director of the Polish American Congress Representative Roman Pucinski from Illinois; President J.F. Kennedy; President of the Polish American Congress Karol (Charles) Rozmarek

Rozmarek and his colleagues backed the U.S. Congressional investigation that in 1952 found the Stalin regime responsible for the infamous Katyń forest massacre (something Russian leaders Gorbachev and Yeltsin only acknowledged in 1990 and 1992). Over the years, as president, Rozmarek gave hundreds of speeches, made countless radio addresses, including on Radio Free Europe, and met with Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson – all in support of free Poland. In 1957, he and the PAC supported U.S. humanitarian assistance to Poland; this aid eventually amounted to nearly 600 million dollars (today - \$5 billion). His and the PAC's unflinching effort to win U.S. recognition of Poland's postwar northern and western borders was at last realized in 1975 at the international meeting in Helsinki, Finland.

Charles Rozmarek was defeated by Aloysius A. Mazewski for the presidency of the Polish National Alliance in 1967 and a year later stepped down as president of the Polish American Congress. He passed away on August 5, 1973.

In his very last remarks as PNA president he had this to say: I never saw Poland, but I fought for the cause of a free Poland. Never did I and never will I waver in this struggle.... Let us love Poland, the land of our fathers. Let us love America, the land of our children.

*Prof. Emeritus
Donald Pienkos, PhD*

Members Awarded in Scranton

President Frank Spula and National Secretary Alicja Kuklińska awarded PNA members who have demonstrated exceptional service to the organization throughout the years. The ceremony was held in Scranton, PA.

Congratulations to the following awardees, and thank you for your commitment to the organization:

- Michael A. Pierzga** – Gold
- Albert Babetski** – Silver
- Bernard M. Dymond, Jr.** – Silver
- Dawne Griffith** – Silver
- Carol Matiko** – Silver
- Michael Matiko** – Silver
- Edward Suchecki** – Silver



We are proud of...

Ed Zavaski Polish Businessman of the Year



Mr. Edward Zavaski of Lodge 513 was named "Man of the Year" for 2023 by the Polish American Business & Professional Association. This prestigious accolade recognizes Mr. Zavaski's unwavering commitment, dedication, and exceptional leadership skills, particularly in his various roles within the Polish National Alliance. Mr. Zavaski has 45 years of experience in management and sales. He has started sales businesses from scratch operations and turned them into successful businesses. As a Nationwide agency principal, he led his teams to achieve the top 1% of the company sales force. He has also served on the Board of Directors for organizations such as Rotary, the Chamber of Commerce, and Economic Development for the Town of Wallingford. Mr. Zavaski was elected to the PNA Board of Directors at the 49th National Convention, where he will continue serving his longstanding commitment to the organization.

Adela Maciejewski Graduate



Ms. Adela Maciejewski of Lodge 700, graduated from the University of California Santa Cruz in March 2023 with a bachelor's degree in business management economics and a concentration in technology information management. Presently, she is pursuing a master's degree in business analytics at the University of Southern California where she is able to combine her business background with her passion for innovative technologies. Her previous internship as a trading and operations analyst for an investment firm has given her a practical skill set for her future career aspirations. She specializes in data-driven decision-making in the finance industry and hopes to leverage this skill set as a fintech analyst in the future. As a member of PNA for 16 years, she's received scholarships from the organization, helping her continue her education and passion for learning beyond her undergraduate studies.

Aleksandra Dudek Graduate



Ms. Aleksandra Dudek of Lodge 700 graduated summa cum laude with her Bachelors of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Los Angeles. At graduation, she also received the Engineering Achievement Award for Student Welfare as a result of the work she did within the engineering community as a student. She is now continuing her education at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor on the PhD track with a focus in controls and robotics. She is grateful for the support of the Polish community in Los Angeles and is excited to get to know the Polish community in Michigan!

Matthew Koziol Graduate



Mr. Matthew Koziol of Lodge 700 graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of California, Los Angeles in June 2023, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics, specializing in computing with a minor in statistics. While earning his undergraduate degree he participated in a research internship at a military contract company and performed research in a lab at UCLA. A member of the Krakusy folk dance group and local scouting chapter, he is an active member of the Polish community in Los Angeles. Mr. Koziol is continuing his education by pursuing a doctoral degree in applied mathematics at UCLA. He plans to focus his research on machine learning and artificial intelligence, with hopes of becoming a research scientist upon receiving his doctorate.

Gavin Shields Scholarship Recipient



Mr. Gavin Shields of Lodge 455 is this year's recipient of the John & Ann Marie Gdula Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to a student who is enrolled in an accredited higher education college or university program in the United States of America and is a member of Lodge 455. John & Ann Marie Gdula worked tirelessly throughout their lifetime to serve Lodge 455. John was president of the lodge for 31 years, and Ann Marie has held many positions including Vice President, Commissioner of District 9, and Financial Secretary. Mr. Shields is a junior at Miami University Farmers School of Business majoring in accounting. He is an active member of Phi Gamm Nu (PGN), a business fraternity on campus, and is a Student Ambassador for the Ohio Society of CPAs. He will be an incoming audit intern at EY in Orlando, FL.

Olivia Bosek Graduate



Ms. Olivia Bosek of Lodge 700 graduated Summa Cum Laude from California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) in May 2023. She received her master's and educational specialist degree in school psychology and pupil personnel services credential. Ms. Bosek began her career working as a school psychologist at an elementary school located within the Alhambra Unified School District, where she serves students from transitional kindergarten through eighth grade and works closely with the special education population. Ms. Bosek has been a member of Lodge 700 since she was seven years old and continues to be greatly involved in the Polish community in Los Angeles, CA.

Alicja Otap President's Award



Congratulations and best wishes to Ms. Alicja Otap, the Editor-in-Chief of *Dziennik Zwiqzkowy* on receiving the President's Award during the 53rd Annual Polish American Heritage Banquet held by the Polish American Congress Illinois Division on October 22, 2023.

Ms. Otap is the Editor-in-Chief for *Dziennik Zwiqzkowy* - Polish Daily News, the oldest Polish-language newspaper in the world and as well as Lodge 127 President. She was recognized for many years of passion, dedication, and perseverance in providing factual, timely, and objective reporting of the latest news and events to the Polish-American community in the United States.

Throughout her career as a reporter and a journalist for *Dziennik Zwiqzkowy*, spanning 38 years, she interviewed many politicians, dignitaries, and interesting people of great importance in the USA and Poland. In her work as a journalist, she strives for honesty, independence, fairness, diligence, and responsibility.

As the Editor-in-Chief, she strives to deliver to the readership of *Dziennik Zwiqzkowy* original content of great interest to the Polish community in the Chicago area and beyond.



Photos by Dariusz Pitka, *Dziennik Zwiqzkowy*



Evan Anthony Nowack,
Born on February 15, 2023, is a new member of Lodge 759. He joins his big brother Eric William Nowack, also a PNA member since birth. His parents are Erica Subkowski-Nowack and Kyle Nowack of Niles, IL. His loving grandparents Czeslawa and Witold Subkowski and god-mother Evita Subkowski welcome him into a 100% PNA family!



Sophia Krystyna Jasinski,
Born on July 18, 2022, daughter of Klaudia and Nicholas Jasinski of Chicago, IL, is a new member of Lodge 3278. Her certificate is a loving gift from her grandmother Elizabeth Stolarczuk, PNA Sales Representative.

John Christopher Wojewodzki,
Born April 16, 2023, son of Bethany and Thomas Wojewodzki, is a new member of Lodge 1224 Rockford, IL. He joins a 100% PNA Family! His certificate is a gift from his grandparents Joe (VP/Financial Sec.) and Ann (Lodge Treasurer) Wojewodzki.



Evelyn Ann Parsons,
Born on June 14, 2023, daughter of James and Andrea Parsons of Litchfield, OH, is a new member of Lodge Q016. Her certificate is a thoughtful gift from her loving grandparents Mark and Barbara Wojtowicz.



Katrina Rose Ambrose,
Born on September 17, 2022, daughter of Sarah and Stephen Ambrose is a new member of Lodge 1224, in Rockford, IL. She joins her big brother Judah into a 100% PNA family! Her certificate is a gift from her grandparents Dr. Brian and Sandra Knabe. She was signed up to PNA by Joe Wojewodzki, Financial Secretary of Lodge 1224.



Cole Pawlos,
Born on August 10, 2022
Emilia Pawlos,
Born on September 24, 2020

Children of Rebecca and Kevin Pawlos of Pittsburgh, PA, are new members of Lodge 1052. Their certificates are a thoughtful gift from their loving grandparents Mark and Gail Pawlos. National Director Jeff Twardy signed them up.



Charles Fulton Gray,
Born on September 16, 2022, son of Teresa and Nicholas Gray, is a new member of Lodge 1224 in Rockford, IL. His certificate is a gift from his grandparents Stan and Mary Gwardys.



Sophie Jean Ziemianski,
Born on May 15, 2020
Samantha Jo Ziemianski,
Born on January 24, 2023

Daughters of Katie and Joseph Ziemianski of Pittsburgh, PA. They are the newest members of Lodge 1052 and were signed up by National Director Jeff Twardy. Their certificates are a loving gift from their grandfather Ken Ziemianski.



Lukas Kulback, Born on October 22, 2022, is the son of Ashlee and Lukas Kulback of Coraopolis, PA.
Henry Pest, Born on July 2, 2022, is the son of Abigail Pest of Pittsburgh, PA.

These adorable cousins are new members of Lodge 1052 and were signed up by National Director Jeff Twardy. Their certificates are a loving gift from their grandparents Steve and Rachelle Kulback.



Maja Nemmers,
Born on August 17, 2020



Ania June Nemmers,
Born on May 23, 2022

Daughters of Kasia Cebula Nemmers of Northbrook, IL, are new members of Lodge 3278. They were signed up by Sales Representative Elizabeth Stolarczuk. Their certificates are a thoughtful gift from their loving grandparents Elzbieta and Zenon Cebula.



Evan Charles Johnson,
Born on May 20, 2023, is the son of Louise L. Beckstrom and Alex J. Johnson of Aurora, OH, is a new member of Lodge 17. His certificate is a thoughtful gift from his loving grandmother Mary L. Jurkiewicz and Jefferey J. Beckstrom. He was signed up by Sales Representative Danuta Panfil.



Emil Lipka Yovetich,
Born on March 3, 2020, son of Magdalena Lipka and Dushan Yovetich of Chicago, IL, is a new member of Lodge 3278.



Emilia Jean Bilek,
Born on December 29, 2022, is the daughter of Elizabeth and Brandon Bilek of Baltimore, MD. She is a new member of Lodge Q016.



Claire Ross,
Born on October 2, 2021, daughter of Justin and Jessica Ann Ross of Canonsburg, PA, is a new member of Lodge 1052. Her certificate is a thoughtful gift from Grandparents Cy and Esther Bombassero. She was signed up by National Director Jeff Twardy.



Avery Kujawa,
Born on August 29, 2020



Ophelia Kujawa,
Born on March 1, 2022

Daughters of Thomas and Stephanie Kujawa of Lake Zurich, IL, are new members of Lodge 1532. Their certificates are a thoughtful gift from their loving grandmother Maria Kujawa.

Dożynki w Południowej Kalifornii

Piękną polską tradycją jest świętowanie dożynek w podziękowanie Bogu za udane plony i za wszelkie łaski. Tak też i od 45 lat dzieje się w Ośrodku Polonijnym im. Św. Jana Pawła II w Yorba Linda, Kalifornia. W tym roku, w dniach 16-17 września, świętowaliśmy dożynki po raz 44-ty.



Lokalne zespoły ludowe sponsorowane przez Związek Narodowy Polski (PNA) zaprezentowały bogaty program artystyczny. Wystąpiły „Kra-kusy” z Los Angeles, „Polonez” z San Diego, oraz „Polanie” z Yorba Linda. Wystąpił też gościnnie „Bulgarian Folklore Dance Group” oraz lokalni artyści polskiego i amerykańskiego pochodzenia, w tym lokalnie znany chór „Totus Tuus”. Nie zabrakło też dzieci z Polskiej Szkoły im. Heleny Modrzejewskiej, które zaprezentowały swoje umiejętności śpiewu i recytowaniu wierszy. Punktem kulminacyjnym



sobotniego programu był koncert słynnego polskiego zespołu rockowego „Lombard”.

Na terenie festiwalu zorganizowano wystawę z okazji 550. rocznicy urodzin polskiego astronoma Mikołaja Kopernika, ekspozycje prac uczniów polskiej szkoły oraz wystawę o cudach eucharystycznych. Kościół i teren festiwalu był bogato przyozdobiony akcentami polskimi i kwiatami. Odwiedzający mogli kupić polskie pamiątki, biżuterię i zapoznać się z ofertą polskich eksponentów oferujących różne usługi.

Stoisko PNA poprowadzili doradca Grzegorz Chilecki i wiceprezes Grupy 3259 Jerzy Menclewicz, którzy udzielali informacji o działalności PNA i rozdawali reklamy. Obecny był też dyrektor PNA Antoni Nowak-Przygodzki. Członkowie lokalnej Grupy 3259 „Piaś” obsługiwali wiele stoisk lub pracowali w pocie czoła w kuchni i udzielając informacji odwiedzającym dożynki.

Głównym punktem obchodów była uroczysta, dziękczynna Msza Św. celebrowana w tym roku przez księdza dyrektora Zbigniewa Frąszczaka i księdza Stanisława Urbańskiego, profesora Uniwersytetu Katolickiego im. Stefana Wyszyńskiego z Warszawy.

W procesji dożynkowej wzięli udział Konsul Generalna Maria Wolańska



z Los Angeles oraz burmistrz miasta Yorba Linda Gene Hernandez. Podczas procesji przedstawieni zostali starostowie tegorocznych dożynek, członkowie Grupy 3259 Krystyna Cichocka i Andrzej Zukowski.

Większość odwiedzających teren festiwalu to Amerykanie nie polskiego pochodzenia zafascynowani polskimi tradycjami, folklorem i pyszną kuchnią.

Dożynki, od czasu pierwszego festiwalu, cieszyły się wielkim zainteresowaniem okolicznej ludności i nadal przyciągają tysiące mieszkańców południowej Kalifornii do ośrodka w Yorba Linda.

*Grzegorz "Greg" Chilecki,
Doradca Regionu J*

Polski Festiwal w Los Angeles

W sobotę i niedzielę 7 i 8 października, na terenie Parafii Matki Boskiej Jasnogórskiej w Los Angeles odbył się coroczny Festiwal Polonijny 2023.

Dzięki wspólnym wysiłkom lokalnych organizacji polonijnych, impreza festiwalowa udała się wspaniale. Wśród zaproszonych gości znaleźli się min. była Konsul Generalna RP w Los Angeles, Marta Wolańska, LA County Assessor Jeffrey Prung z ekipą oraz Los Angeles City Councilwoman Heather Hutt.

Program festiwalu składał się z wielu wydarzeń kulturalnych takich jak przedstawienia staropolskich obrzędów ludowych, wystaw tematycznych oraz nauki poloneza. W niektórych ceremoniach, na przykład powitaniu chlebem i solą uczestniczyli honorowi goście, którym bardzo podobały się polskie obrzędy.



L-P: Małgorzata Schulz, Elżbieta Rudzińska, Graciela Matolepszy i Zbigniew Grzelecki

Uczestniczące w festiwalu organizacje przygotowały kilka wystaw i ekspozycji w sali parafialnej, między innymi wystawę poświęconą Św. Janowi Pawłowi II w 45. rocznicę wyboru na papieża (Fundacja Jana Pawła II), wystawę o Mikołaju Koperniku w 550 rocznicę jego urodzin (Polska Szkoła), wystawę strojów i obrzędów ludowych (zespół Krakusy) oraz ekspozycję obrazów religijnych Jana Majdy. Program artystyczny był również bardzo bogaty. Oprócz lokalnej grupy

tanecznej "Krakusy" z Los Angeles, gościnnie wystąpili: "Polonez" z San Diego (California), "Piaś" z Las Vegas (Nevada), duet muzyczny "White Slope" i młody, ale bardzo obiecujący solista Derek Day. Dwudniowy program festiwalowy poprowadzili: Urszula Grzelecki i Andrzej Gołębiowski, a wtórował im przemily gospodarz, ks. Mirosław Frankowski.



Członkowie Grupy 700 uczestniczyli we wszystkich przygotowaniach i obsługiwali stoiska z biletami, jedzeniem, pićm i pamiątkami. Także w zespole "Krakusy" prowadzonym przez Elżbietę Romuzgę, wielu tancerzy należy do PNA. Stanowisko Grupy 700 reprezentowane było przez prezesa Zbigniewa Grzeleckiego, który wraz z Małgorzatą Schulz, Piotrem Daleckim, Elżbietą Rudzińską, Kamilem Grzeleckim i Gracielą Małolepszą, udzielali informacji na temat programów oferowanych przez PNA. Zainteresowanie finansowymi produktami PNA oraz działalnością organizacji było znaczne i prawdopodobnie szeregi PNA zostaną wzmocnione o kilka nowych osób. Sobotni wieczór zakończyła ciesząca się ogromną popularnością dyskoteka



pod gwiazdami, z energią poprowadzona przez DJ'a Janusza.

Ponieważ na naszym festiwalu pojawiło się także dużo Amerykanów, mieliśmy doskonałą okazję do popisania się polską kulturą, obyczajami i wyśmienitą kuchnią. Wszystkim bardzo smakowały gołąbki, placki ziemniaczane, kiełbasa, kaszanka z kapustką, oraz pierogi z różnymi nadzieniami. Na deser oferowane były ciasta domowego wypieku i wspaniałe pączki. Goście byli zachwyceni tymi potrawami, a po skosztowaniu, kupowali na wynos.

Po sukcesie Festiwalu Polonijnego Los Angeles 2023 spodziewamy się jeszcze większej liczby gości w roku następnym. Zapraszamy!

*Zbigniew Grzelecki, prezes Grupy 700
Zdjęcia: Małgorzata Schulz, Kamil Grzelecki i Zbigniew Grzelecki*



Texas News

CHAPPELL HILL HARVEST FESTIVAL

The annual Chappell Hill Dożynki Polish Harvest Festival was held at St. Stanislaus Catholic Church.



PNA member Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz in the Dożynki procession

60TH HOUSTON SLAVIC HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Fraternal Advisor Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden and other PNA representatives hosted a booth at this year's festival. PNA presented the plaque for this year's Polish Queen elected at the festival.



Fraternal Advisor Dryden with the dancers and 2023 Polish Queen Julia Rogowska

HOUSTON POLISH HARVEST FESTIVAL

PNA was well-represented at this year's Dożynki festival in Houston hand with our cultural display and PNA display. Special thanks to Victoria Odolski, a PNA Scholarship recipient; Jerry Dorcz, of Kosciuszko Lodge 165; and Regina McCorkle, a sales representative, for working the exhibit.



ST. STANISLAUS ANNUAL HOMECOMING

This event was another great opportunity to meet and greet many PNA members living in this community!



Fraternal Advisor Dryden along with members Katie Kubiak and Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz

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



Dożynki Time in District 10

On September 24, 2023, District 10 and the Women's Division held its annual Dożynki Polish Dinner at the Polish Legion of American Veterans Post 16 in Dearborn, MI.

The afternoon began with a welcome from Fraternal Advisor Stella Szczesny. Around 80 guests attended and enjoyed a Polish buffet prepared by Chef Kim and Chef John.

Following the dinner, Christine Kryszko, Women's Division Treasurer, provided an overview of the tradition of Dożynki and the symbolism of its components. Following the presentation, the PNA Polanie Song & Dance Ensemble performed a short program in English and Polish. They presented Fraternal Advisor Szczesny with a traditional loaf of bread which she blessed. Baskets of bread were given to each table so the guests could share the bounty of the harvest. Polanie then took to the floor and performed a selection of traditional Polish dances that had the guests cheering and applauding. As they sang some of the traditional Polish songs, many of the guests joined in.

After the beautiful performance, raffles were held. Lodges, councils, and individuals donated baskets containing Polish pottery, linens, spirits, candies,

and lottery tickets. The winners went home with smiling faces.

The success of the event was due to the combined efforts of officers and guests. Fraternal Advisor Szczesny acknowledged and thanked Christine Kryszko, Barbara Gronet, Edward Nizienski, Jerome Brzezinski, Aurelia Czeski, Donna Kutylowski, and Thomas Schemanski for all their help in planning, organizing, publicizing, and working at the event.

*Submitted by Barbara J. Gronet,
Secretary, District 10 &
Vice President, Women's Division*



Polish Miss Massachusetts 2024

The Polish Miss Massachusetts Pageant 2024 was held at Pilsudski Park in Holyoke, MA on August 12, 2023. PNA Lodge 525 and the Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts organized the 20th annual pageant, currently under the new name of Polish Miss Massachusetts.

Judges for the pageant were Dr. Spencer R. Burling of River Valley Chiropractic; Tim Drost, owner of Window World of Western Massachusetts; Zaneta S. Graskis, Miss Polonia World 2008 and Branch Manager of the Polish National Credit Union in Wilbraham; Pawel Marcinowski, Sales Executive at IT Cosmetics; Karolina Podolska, Realtor with ROVI Homes; and Paulina Wysocka, Polish Miss MA 2022. DJ John Band provided live music that entertained the audience of more than 150 people. Ms. Edyta Halastra and Mr. Andrzej Jamroga served as Masters of Ceremony for the adult competition and introduced the contestants in both English and Polish. Oliwia Bragiel coordinated the Little and Junior Polish Miss MA contests.

During breaks in the competition, the 9th annual Junior Polish Miss MA 2024 pageant was held for girls ages 10-14. There were six girls in this category. This year there was a Little Polish Miss MA 2024 for girls ages 7-9. Three girls competed in this category. They all were escorted on stage in casual and fancy dress wear. Joslyn Sexton, age 11, from Holyoke, MA, won the Junior Polish Miss MA 2024 title. She loves to dance and play sports. Emilia Baran, age 8, from Ludlow, MA, won the Little Polish Miss MA 2024 title. She also likes to dance and read.

Of the five Polish Miss Massachusetts 2024 contestants, all of whom were very beautiful and intelligent young women, Oktawia Gielarowiec, age 24, of Webster, MA,

won the main title of the night. Ms. Katelyn Walas, Miss Polonia MA 2023, presented Oktawia her crown.

Ms. Gielarowiec is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire where she majored in medical microbiology and health management/policy. She will begin graduate school this year at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health. She is currently employed at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA. Oktawia and the first runner-up will compete for the 2024 title of Miss Polish America.



First runner-up was Sara Wolanski, age 22, of Chicopee, MA. Sara is a graduate of Worcester State University in Worcester, MA, and holds a BS in Public Health. She is also a member of Lodge 525. Sophie Stetson, age 19, of Granby, MA, won Miss Personality. Sophie is a sophomore at Merrimack College, studying early childhood education with a minor in religious and theological studies. Anna Ludkiewicz, age 22, of Granby, MA, won the People's Choice and Active Wear awards. She graduated from Sacred Heart University and is applying to graduate school to become a physician assistant. Julia Makusiewicz, age 19, of Springfield, MA, received the Glamour award. Julia is a freshman at the University of Arkansas majoring in nursing.



Escorts for the event were Aleksander Wojcik and Krystian Wojcik, members of Lodge 525. Committee members included Irena and Richard Gadecki, Frank and Mary Wolanin, John and Dorothy Wolanski, Joseph M. Kos, Ewa Pierzchalski, Margareta and Pawel Misniakiewicz, and Renata Janiszewski. Special guests attending the event were PNA National Director Teresa Struziak Sherman, Jeannie Zapala, many former and current PNA council and lodge officers, and members who offered congratulations to the pageant winners.



L-R: Jeannie Zapala, former PNA Commissioner District 1 and President of PNA Council 62; Irena Gadecki, Lodge 525 Secretary and pageant organizer; Teresa Struziak Sherman, PNA National Director; standing in front is Annika Gadecki, winner of the Casual Award in the Little/Junior Polish Massachusetts 2024 contest; Joslyn Sexton, Junior Polish Miss Massachusetts 2024; Dorothy Wolanski, Lodge 525 President; and Sara Wolanski, First Runner-Up of the Polish Miss MA 2024 pageant.



Junior Polish Miss MA 2024 Joslyn Sexton, Little Polish Miss MA 2024 Emilia Baran, Polish Miss MA 2024 Oktawia Gielarowicz

Submitted by Teresa Struziak Sherman,
National Director

Photos by Jan Wojcik

Polish Flag Raising in Chicopee

A Polish flag raising ceremony was held in Chicopee, MA, on October 19, 2023. Students of St. Stanislaus School attended the event. Many public dignitaries and Polish representatives of several Polish organizations, including the PNA, Polish Center of Discovery and Learning at Elms College, and the Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts, and guests were present to hear the inspiring words of the Honorable John Vieau, Mayor of Chicopee. He spoke about the



many contributions of the past Polish mayors of the City of Chicopee. The mayor expressed that he is of Polish heritage and is proud to be a part of this Polish flag raising ceremony. Mayor Vieau's inspiring words to the

students present, and to all individuals at the event were, "Take pride in your heritage. Always be proud of who you are and where you come from. Your heritage is something that's very special, and don't let anyone ever make you feel anything different." A reception following the Polish flag raising was held at Chicopee City Hall for all attendees.

Submitted by
Teresa Struziak Sherman,
National Director

Polish Heritage Events in MA



Several events marking October's Polish-American Heritage Month in the Western Massachusetts section of District 1 took place in October 2023. There was a Polish flag raising ceremony on October 6 at City Hall in Holyoke, MA. Many PNA members were in attendance as the audience was addressed by the Honorable Mayor Joshua A. Garcia. Holyoke Mayor Garcia and Joseph M. Kos, President of the Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts spoke to the audience about the contributions that Polish Americans have made to the com-

munity and the world as well. The Polish flag was on display for the month of October at Holyoke, MA City Hall. It was the 37th annual observance of Polish Heritage Month in Holyoke.

In Northampton, MA, the Pulaski wreath was placed at Pulaski Park on October 9 by Lodge 1168

members Christine A. Mazewski and Carol Landry. This event takes place every October in honor of General Casimir Pulaski, Father of the American Cavalry. The 34th Annual Celebration began with a Memorial Mass at St. Valentine Polish National Catholic Church. The Mass was followed by a marching parade to Pulaski Park in downtown Northampton where a program was held. The Master of Ceremonies was Attorney Thomas M. Growhoski. Mayor of Northampton, the Honorable Gina-Louise Sciarra, presented a proclamation designating

October 9, 2023, as General Casimir Pulaski Day. Bob Gibowicz, President of the Polish Heritage Committee, presented a plaque to the Parade Marshall, Joseph M. Kos, President of the Polish American Congress of Western Massachusetts and Treasurer of PNA Lodge 525. A moment of silence was observed in memory of past officers and members of the Polish Heritage Committee



and for members of the United States Military. After the benediction and closing remarks, the ceremony was completed.

*Submitted by
Teresa Struziak Sherman,
National Director*



L-R: Polish Miss MA 2024 Oktawia Gielarowicz, Christine A. Mazewski, Carol Landry, Jr. Polish Miss MA 2024 Joslyn Sexton



Pulaski Day in Baltimore

In annual tradition, members of Baltimore's Polish community gathered in Patterson Park at the Pulaski Monument on October 15, 2023, to honor General Kazimierz Pulaski and to commemorate his courageous efforts in the American War for Independence. The president of the Polish Heritage Association of Maryland (PHAM), the organization responsible for this event, led the commemoration which included a biography of Pulaski, presented by PNA Council 21 librarian and Lodge 918 President Adam Mazurek. Additionally, the Daughters of the American Revolution presented a historical perspective. PHAM and PNA member Edith Pula offered a history of the monument itself.

poignant commentary on the history depicted by the monument. The scene is that of Pulaski leading the cavalry charge at the Battle of Savannah against British forces, during which he was mortally wounded on October 9, 1779. He would die a few days later, making the ultimate sacrifice in the battle for freedom and becoming a hero of the American Revolution.

Members of Casimir Pulaski Post 209 of the Polish Legion of American Veterans attended, adding military dignity to the commemoration, and representatives of Baltimore's Polish organizations respectfully processed and laid wreaths at the foot of the monument. At the end of the ceremony, Council 21 Vice Presidents Malgorzata Bondyra and Michael Carnahan and Doorkeeper Agnieszka Krajewski, also representing Ojczyzna Polish Dancers in Krakowski national dress, led everyone in the singing of the Polish and American national anthems.

While such commemorations are often simply ceremonious in nature, in Baltimore the Pulaski Monument and Pulaski Day Commemoration serve as constant reminders of not only the bold and fearless actions of one Pole in America, but of the commitment and dedication of Poles everywhere to be the first to fight for freedom.

*Submitted by Michael Carnahan
Vice President, Council 21*



L-R: Michael Carnahan, Malgorzata Bondyra, Agnieszka Krajewski

Council 21 President and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland for the State of Maryland Richard Porem-ski offered greetings from Ambassador Marek Magierowski while also adding



150 Years of the PRCUA

On October 1, 2023, the Polish National Alliance officers were pleased to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA) by attending the organization's celebratory mass and jubilee brunch.

At the jubilee brunch, President Frank Spula presented the PRCUA Executive Committee with a symbolic commemorative anniversary goblet. The PNA treasures the bond it shares with PRCUA and deeply values its special friendship. In fact, the PNA often refers to the PRCUA as its "older fraternal sister!"

The PRCUA was founded 150 years ago, on October 3, 1873, in Detroit, MI, by Fr. Teodor Gierzyk and Jan Barzyński. Based on the wave of immigrants coming from the partitioned Poland to America, a fraternal aid organization was created, with the aim of facilitating assimilation into American society, and at the same time ensuring the preservation of the Polish language and honoring the Catholic faith.

Once again, the PNA extends its most heartfelt congratulations to the PRCUA. Here's to many, many more years of prosperity and friendship!



L-R: PNA President Frank Spula, PNA National Secretary Alicja Kuklińska, PRCUA Secretary-Treasurer Agnieszka Bastrzyk, PRCUA Vice President Micheline Jaminski, PRCUA President James Robaczewski



Photos by Andrzej Baraniak, Dziennik Związkowy



Festivities at the Polish Museum of America



The weekend of the Polish Roman Catholic Union in America's (PRCUA) 150th anniversary celebrations first kicked off with the official opening of an exhibition at the Polish Museum of America (PMA) in Chicago. The newly opened exhibition at the PMA allows visitors to stop time and retrace the incredible journey of Polish immigrants and their legacy. Representatives from *Dziennik Związkowy* were present as a symbol of the longstanding partnership between the newspaper and both the PRCUA and PMA. *Dziennik Związkowy* takes immense pride in this longstanding

partnership, consistently being among the first to report on the latest events within Polonia organizations.

*Photos by Artur Partyka,
Dziennik Związkowy*



Celebrating a Legacy

The Polish National Alliance is proud to have worked closely with many organizations over the years of its existence to promote Polish heritage and raise awareness to our community in the United States. One of these organizations the PNA has built a close friendship with is the Alliance of Polish Clubs in the USA (ZKP). The ZKP cel-

ebrated its 95th anniversary this year. In honor of the celebration, PNA representatives presented ZKP President Dr. Łucja Mirowska-Kopeć with a special commemorative plaque. Congratulations, and we wish the ZKP *sto lat!*

*Photos by Andrzej Baraniak,
Dziennik Związkowy*



Polish American Congress Elections

The Polish American Congress Council of National Directors meeting was held at the Polish National Alliance on October 23-24, 2023. The Council of Directors discussed important matters affecting Polish Americans and concluded the meeting with an election for the PAC National Executive Committee.



Vice-President for the American Agenda Timothy Kuzma, Vice-President for the Polish Agenda Bozena Kaminski, Vice-President for Public Relations Malgorzata Margo Schulz, Vice-President for Membership Development Michael Niedzinski, Vice-President for Education Mary Anselmo, Vice-President for Cultural Affairs Debbie Majka, Vice-President

For the next two years, the following officers will serve: President Frank J. Spula, First Vice-President Mark Pienkos, Secretary Steve Flor,

for Financial Development Andrzej Niemyjski, and Treasurer Micheline Jaminski.

NEXT Conference

Supporting our youth and building a better future are core values of the Polish National Alliance. That is why the

PNA was a proud sponsor of the NEXT – Talks for the Future Generation conference, along with Dziennik Związkowy as a main sponsor. The annual NEXT conference, organized by the Polish American Youth Council, aims to inspire, motivate, and encourage youth to follow their dreams by inviting Polish American speakers to share their success stories.



PNA member Pauline Kulka

This year's speakers on October 28, 2023, in Palos Hills, IL, featured Ag-



nieszka Baumert, Ewa Bomba-Warczak, Aleksandra Gmurczyk, Kinga Korpacz, and James Robaczewski. PNA member Pauline Kulka was also one of the six speakers, who is a Northwestern MBA graduate and Client Manager at Google. Recently, she added CEO and Founder to her resume after launching her first company.



At the conference, PNA representatives were present to chat with youth and encourage them to become involved in the Polish-American community.

Photos by Artur Partyka, Dziennik Związkowy



Góralmania



The PNA was thrilled to be one of the sponsors of the Góralmania Festival held on September 23-24, 2023, in Orland Park, IL. Thank you to everyone who stopped by our booth to say hello and learn more about our organization! It was a wonderful weekend celebrating the beauty of Polish Highlander culture.

*Photos by Andrzej Baraniak,
Dziennik Związkowy*



70th Physicians' Ball



Congratulations to the Polish-American Medical Society on a magnificent and elegant 70th Physicians' Charitable Ball - Platinum Jubilee Gala! The Polish National Alliance was pleased to be a Platinum Sponsor of the gala. PNA President Frank Spula presented PAMS President Dr. Peter Brukasz with a special commemorative crystal goblet during the evening's program. During his remarks, President Spula mentioned, "Tonight is a thank you to doctors and the organization for all of their hard work in our community!" Sending our best wishes to PAMS for continued success and even more achievements in the future!

Photos by Artur Partyka, Dziennik Związkowy





The Great Castles of Poland
NIEDZICA CASTLE

Welcome back to the final installment of our series, "The Great Castles of Poland!" In this concluding chapter, we invite you to explore a more well-known gem, nestled in a magical landscape — Niedzica Castle. Set against the backdrop of the enchanting Pieniny Mountains and the Dunajec River, Niedzica Castle stands as a testament to Poland's rich medieval heritage. Niedzica Castle certainly has it all, from beautiful architecture to captivating legends, you will not want to overlook it on your next trip to Poland.

Niedzica Castle, also known as Dunajec Castle, is a medieval fortress located in the southern part of Poland, near the town of Nowy Targ in the Lesser Poland Voivodeship. Situated on the Czorsztyn Lake, an artificial reservoir constructed in 1992, it is one of the most picturesque castles in the country and is a popular tourist destination. Across from Niedzica Castle sits Czorstyn Castle.

The castle was built by a Hungarian noble known as Kokos of Brezovica with construction dating back to 1325. The castle's strategic location near the border between Poland and Hungary played a significant role in its history.

Niedzica Castle changed owners multiple times during its early years. In the 15th century, it was taken over by the szlachta (Polish nobility) and subsequently became part of the Kingdom of Poland. Throughout the centuries, the castle witnessed various conflicts and wars, including the Polish-Ottoman War in the 17th century. In the following centuries, the castle underwent significant restoration efforts by its different owners, which preserved the castle and its historical significance.

During World War II, the castle was used as a headquarters by the Slovak and German authorities. After the war, during the communist era, it was nationalized by the Polish government. In the subsequent years, the castle underwent further restoration and conservation work.

ARCHITECTURE

The most prominent feature of Niedzica Castle is its cylindrical main tower, which rises high above the surrounding landscape. This tower served as a defensive structure, providing strategic advantages for the castle's occupants. The castle is surrounded by defensive walls, which were built to protect the inhabitants from external threats.



As the castle underwent numerous renovations, it displays both Gothic and Renaissance architectural elements. These include pointed arches, ribbed vaults, and decorative motifs typical of these styles.

Although mainly ruins remain of the castle, there are still intriguing aspects for tourists to see. Inside the castle, visitors can explore various rooms, including living quarters, halls, and a dungeon. The interiors have been partially restored to give visitors a glimpse into the castle's historical ambiance.



Photos by
Walrom, WikiCommons



One of the castle's main attractions is its museum, where visitors can find exhibits related to the history of the castle and the surrounding region. The museum displays artifacts, documents, and historical items that offer insights into the castle's past.

While not a part of the architectural design, the castle's location on a hill overlooking the Dunajec River and the surrounding Pieniny Mountains adds to its allure. The picturesque setting enhances the overall experience for visitors, making Niedzica Castle a visually stunning destination during any season.



Worth visiting during every season!

LEGENDS

Did you ever think that you may possibly find a map that points to the lost Incan treasure inside Niedzica Castle? According to a legend, you possibly can!

In the late 18th century, one of the castle's owners, a Hungarian nobleman named Sebastian Berzeviczy, ventured to South America, where he met a beautiful Inca princess. He married the princess and they had a daughter named Umina. Umina married the nephew of Túpac Amaru II, an Inca leader who rebelled against the Spanish colonial government. During a revolution, the Spanish government executed Túpac and Umina fled South America as she feared for her safety. She fled with her husband, son, and Sebastian to Europe. When her husband was suspiciously

killed, Umina with her son and Sebastian found their way to Niedzica Castle to seek refuge.

However, Umina did not arrive empty-handed at Niedzica Castle. She brought sacred scrolls which provided clues to the hidden Inca treasures. After her passing, a leaden box with a quipu, an ancient Inca device for recording information made of colorful threads, was found. Unfortunately, it was lost somewhere in Kraków and never recovered again. Rumors spread and treasure hunters believed that the quipu hinted that the treasure may have been hidden in Lake Titicaca in Peru. No evidence was found to corroborate this legend, but treasure hunters still believe that the secrets to the Inca wealth are within the magical walls of Niedzica Castle. Perhaps, you may discover the scrolls and find the treasure!



And with that, we come to the end of our castle exploration in Poland! It's truly remarkable to think that we've only scratched the surface, for there are over 2,800 castles and palaces in Poland, each with its own unique tale to tell. Be sure to delve deeper, uncover the lesser-known treasures, and embark on your own adventures to witness the grandeur of Poland's castles firsthand. Starting in 2024, we'll be embarking on a new series, filled with fascinating discoveries and intriguing narratives. Until then, happy exploring, and may your curiosity continue to guide you on many more adventures to come!

Monica Lebensztejn



103rd Anniversary of Polish Armed Forces Day

On the occasion of the Polish Armed Forces Day (Święto Wojska Polskiego), MC Counselor Katarzyna Rybka-Iwańska, Head of Public and Cultural Diplomacy, welcomed 200 guests here on September 5, 2023, at the Polish ambassador's residence. They included U.S. Undersecretaries of Defense and the Army, four U.S. generals, the Washington diplomatic corps, foreign military attachés, many U.S. and NATO military officers, distinguished guests, and Polish Army veterans.

Counselor Rybka-Iwańska commented that Polish Armed Forces Day (August 15th) is celebrated annually to commemorate the miraculous Polish victory over the invading Bolshevik Red Army during the Polish/Soviet War.

Ambassador Marek Magierowski, Embassy of the Republic of Poland, charmed the audience with some witty and insightful comments about certain unique Polish characteristics and how they defined the will of the Poles to defend and fight for freedom. The ambassador also mentioned that Poland is a steadfast ally of the U.S., now with 10,000 American troops on Polish soil. In conclusion, Magierowski emphati-

cally stated, "Rest assured when push comes to shove the Poles will fight against any aggression as in the past."

Brigadier General Krzysztof Nolbert, the commandant Defense Attaché at the Embassy of Poland, also referenced the 1920 "Miracle on the Vistula" victory over the Bolsheviks at the very gates of Warsaw. "It was a major turning point in the Polish-Soviet War," he continued, "For the first time in history the Polish people saw that no Soviet-era military equipment was present in the recent August 15th vast military parade in Warsaw. The final vestiges of the Warsaw Pact are dead. Now all of our military equipment is first class, of modern design and manufacture."

Regarding Ukraine, General Nolbert stated, "In the context of the Polish victory at the Battle of Warsaw, it is now equally vital in the same way to Ukraine in the face of unprovoked Russian aggression. A free and sovereign Ukraine is vital for peace and security in the entire Europe. NATO support is vital and continuing in support of a free and prosperous Ukraine. I ask for a moment of silence for all the Ukrainian fallen."



Ambassador Marek Magierowski

William A. LaPlante, U.S. Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, was the guest speaker. He thanked Poland for its military partnership and sustainment, dating back to the U.S. Revolutionary War times. Highlighted were the 24,000 Polish-American "Blue Army" volunteers, and U.S. financial assistance, which played crucial parts in defeating the Red Army during the Polish-Bolshevik War (1919-1920). He stated, "The partnership between NATO allies is a win for global security, with Poland being one of the strongest ones." Referencing the 1920 Battle of Warsaw, he said that "Russian aggression today is all too similar to that in Poland 100 years ago."

Secretary LaPlante concluded, "We will do all that is necessary, for as long as necessary, for Ukraine to prevail. On behalf of the Department of Defense, I join the Polish nation in honoring all who served, fought, and sacrificed to defend Poland. I thank you for your vital contributions defending Europe from aggression and invasion."

*Richard P. Poremski,
Polish American Journal*





WINTER WELLNESS

Shielding Against the Flu, Common Cold, & COVID-19

Winter weather, changes in temperature, and people of all ages are out and about not always taking care of their needs to remain healthy and free from illnesses, such as the flu, COVID-19, and colds. Colds and flu (influenza virus) are most common in the seasons when there are the highest fluctuations in outdoor temperatures. When our body becomes chilled, its resistance to viruses and bacteria decreases, making the body more susceptible to illnesses. What is and isn't the flu, one might ask? There are some similarities and differences between the flu, COVID-19, and a cold.

FLU (INFLUENZA)

- Always caused by an influenza virus that infects the respiratory tract (nose, throat, bronchial tubes, and lungs). Antibiotics will not help unless a secondary infection occurs caused by bacteria.
- The onset of symptoms is very abrupt. Feelings of muscle aches, especially the back and leg muscles, fever up to 104° F, lasting for 2-3 days, chills, headache, cough (usually dry and may be severe), runny nose, sore throat, and chest discomfort. Cough, shortness of breath, vomiting, diarrhea, body weakness, and fatigue may last for several days or even

weeks. The severe symptoms usually last 2-3 days.

- There may be a change in loss of taste or smell, but this occurs more frequently with COVID-19.
- People with flu virus infections are potentially contagious about one day before symptoms appear through 3-4 days (or longer) after the symptoms appear, although it is believed to be spread mostly by people who have symptoms of the flu. Most will recover on their own in a few days to two weeks.
- One can be infected with the flu or COVID-19 virus without experiencing any symptoms but can be a carrier of the viruses and spread them to others.
- Treatment includes bed rest, drinking plenty of fluids, and taking pain relievers such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, cough medicines, throat lozenges, and decongestants to relieve symptoms. Chicken soup may even help. Antiviral drugs can help to shorten the duration of the flu by a few days if taken within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms.



COVID-19

- Caused by a contagious respiratory virus caused by an infection of the coronavirus that was first identified in 2019.
- It spreads more easily than the flu. Vaccines are critical to reducing the risk of severe COVID-19 illness and death.
- It can take longer for symptoms to appear and may be contagious for a longer period.
- Specific testing will help to show the difference between the flu and COVID-19.
- Can be spread 2-3 days before symptoms appear.
- People are considered contagious 5-8 days after their COVID-19 symptoms appear.
- Those people at risk for complications from having the flu or COVID-19 include older adults, pregnant women, and individuals with certain underlying medical

conditions (including infants and children). However, these severe symptoms can cause hospitalizations and death in even healthy persons.

COMMON COLD

- Caused by a virus. Antibiotics will not help unless a secondary bacterial infection occurs.
- Symptoms usually begin in 2-3 days after exposure/infection by the virus, and last 2-14 days.
- Symptoms include sneezing, nasal congestion, cough, sore throat, possible mild headache, mild general aches and pains, mild fatigue and weakness, and fever is rare or very slight.
- Treatment includes bed rest, plenty of fluids (chicken soup may help), warm salt water gargles to soothe the throat, and symptom control with fever and pain relievers, cough suppressants, throat lozenges, and decongestants.

COMPLICATIONS FROM FLU & COVID-19

- Pneumonia
- Respiratory failure
- Fluid collecting in the lungs
- Sepsis (a life-threatening illness from the body's extreme response to the infection)
- Heart attack or stroke
- Multiple organ failures
- Worsening of pre-existing medical conditions of the heart, lungs, nervous system, or diabetes
- Inflammation of the heart, brain, or muscle tissue
- Secondary bacterial or fungal infections



Sometimes people with the flu, COVID-19, or a cold, develop secondary bacterial infections that can be serious, but easily treated with medicines prescribed by a medical

professional. Call the doctor if you experience any of the following:

- A fever of 101.5° F or higher or lasts more than 3 days
- Severe sore throat with swollen glands
- Any changes in your level of consciousness
- Persistent cough, especially if you cough up colored sputum or phlegm
- Shortness of breath
- Persistent chest pain
- Persistent vomiting, nausea, diarrhea (more common in children)
- Body rashes

PREVENTIVE MEASURES



Getting the flu and COVID-19 shots are the best protection against the diseases. Despite many rumors to the contrary, the flu or COVID-19 shots do not give you either disease. Your arm may ache for a couple of days, but that is the only reported side effect. Colds, COVID-19, and the flu are highly contagious, meaning that they are easily spread by contact with unclean hands, oral secretions of infected persons, or droplets that move in the air by coughs or sneezes. The following preventative measures are our best defenses against colds, COVID-19, and the flu:

- Wash your hands often! Wash hands for 15-20 seconds rubbing all surfaces vigorously. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner. Germs can live for two or more hours on surfaces, such as desks and doorknobs.
- Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing with a tissue or your upper sleeve, not your hand.
- Dispose of used tissues carefully in a waste container.
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes, or mouth.

- Maintain healthy habits, such as getting enough sleep, staying physically active, avoiding stress, drinking enough fluids (6-8 glasses of water), and eating a healthy balanced diet.
- Avoid contact with others who may be sick.
- According to the CDC, immunizations against the flu and COVID-19 are available and can help protect people against severe illness during the fall and winter seasons when these diseases are more common.

TREATMENT

Prescription antiviral drugs for the flu are FDA-approved. They are only approved for the flu and are ordered by your health care provider. The National Institute of Health (NIH) has developed guidelines on treatment of COVID-19 which is updated regularly as new options emerge. This includes antiviral treatment for non-hospitalized people who are at risk for severe illness, and those hospitalized with severe COVID-19. Treatment should be sought once symptoms become apparent.

Do not let the flu or cold germs get you down this winter! Children, in particular, need constant reminders about the prevention of transmission of infections. We can all begin with proper handwashing. It will prevent many infectious illnesses from spreading to family members and friends! Check with your medical provider to determine if and what vaccines are right for you. Stay healthy, and enjoy the season.



Author:
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PNA National Director

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Polish Christmas Traditions

Polish Christmas traditions are rich and diverse, reflecting the country's deep cultural and religious heritage.



Wigilia (Christmas Eve Supper): Wigilia is the most important Christmas celebration in Poland. The meal begins when the first star appears in the sky on December 24 and typically consists of twelve traditional meatless dishes, representing the twelve apostles. Dishes often include *pierogi* (dumplings), *barszcz* (beet soup), various fish dishes, and delicious desserts, such as *kutia*. On this day, families exchange gifts.

Opłatek: Before the Wigilia meal, families gather to share the *opłatek*, a thin, unleavened wafer. Each person breaks off a piece and wishes others health, happiness, and prosperity for the upcoming year.



Empty Seat: Leaving an empty seat at the Christmas dinner table in Poland, is a symbolic tradition to honor and remember deceased family members and loved ones. This gesture is a way of including them in the festivities and acknowledging their continued spiritual presence within the family.

Mikołajki: On December 6, St. Nicholas Day, known as Mikołajki in Poland, is celebrated, and children receive small gifts and sweets from St. Nicholas (Święty Mikołaj) if they've been good throughout the year.



Midnight Mass: Attending Midnight Mass, or *pasterka*, on Christmas Eve is a widespread tradition in Poland. The Mass is a significant religious observance, and churches are beautifully decorated for the occasion.

Christmas Carols: Singing Christmas carols, known as *kolędy*, is an essential part of Polish Christmas celebrations. Groups of carolers, often dressed in traditional attire, visit homes and sing to spread the festive spirit.



Candlemas: Did you know Christmas in Poland is celebrated until February? Candlemas, also known as *Święto Matki Bożej Gromnicznej*, is a Christian feast on February 2 commemorating the presentation of Jesus at the Temple. After Candlemas, it is generally considered the end of the Christmas season, and most decorations are put away.



1

Cream of Mushroom *Zupa grzybowa krem*

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. white mushrooms
- 2-20 gr (about 1½ oz.) packages wild dried mushrooms
- 4-5 medium potatoes
- 1 onion
- 4 cups of vegetable broth or water
- 2 cups of milk
- Salt and pepper
- Parsley, mini croutons, and sour cream to garnish

Directions:

Soak the wild mushrooms overnight. Clean from all debris and rinse them well. Peel and cut potatoes and onions into smaller pieces. Clean the white mushrooms, and cut them into smaller pieces. Place all vegetables into a pot and pour in milk and vegetable broth or water. Bring it to a boil, reduce heat and cook for one hour. Cool it down. Take out a few mushroom pieces, and rinse, dry, and chop them to use as soup garnish. Transfer to a blender and blend until silky smooth. Bring it to a boil again, and add salt and pepper to taste. Serve garnished with chopped mushrooms, parsley, mini croutons, and a splash of sour cream.

2

Gingerbread Cake *Piernik świąteczny*



Ingredients:

Cake:

- 350 gr flour
- 50 gr sugar
- 130 gr butter
- 1 glass milk (250 ml)
- 3 small eggs
- 6 tbsp. honey
- A handful prunes (about 100 gr) cut into thin strips
- 2 tbsp. baking soda
- 4 tsp. gingerbread spices

Layers and decorations:

- 200 gr plum or black currant jam (powidła or konfitura)
- 150 gr white marzipan
- 1 tsp. cocoa powder
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. powdered sugar

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350F. Place butter, sugar, honey, gingerbread spices, and prunes in a small pot. Heat on low heat for 5 minutes, mixing occasionally. Remove the pot from the heat, and slowly add the milk and mix well (the mix should be slightly warm). Add the eggs and mix well. In a bowl, mix flour and baking soda. Pour the mixture from the pot into the flour and baking soda, and mix with a spoon or mixer until well-combined. Grease a baking pan with butter and lightly sprinkle the inside with flour. Transfer the batter

into the baking pan, and bake on the middle shelf for 50 minutes or until a testing stick inserted comes out dry. Turn off the oven and slightly open the door, leaving the cake in for another 10 minutes. Take the cake out, and let it cool down completely.

To begin decorating, cut off the raised top of the cake. Slice the cake into two even, thin layers. Spread the fruit filling on the bottom layer and put the top layer back on. Roll out half of the marzipan into a thin layer (remember to sprinkle it with powder sugar). Transfer the marzipan layer on the top of the cake. Cut off any excess of marzipan. Cut the cake vertically in half. Place one half on the top of the other and sprinkle the top with cocoa and cinnamon mix. Roll out remaining marzipan and cut out stars. Sprinkle stars with powdered sugar and arrange them on the top of the cake.

3 Salmon en Croute | Łosoś pieczony w cieście francuskim w kształcie ryby



Ingredients:

- 1½ pack (3 sheets) defrosted puff pastry (recommended: Pepperidge Farm)
- 1 bunch leek, chopped
- 2 tbsp. oil

- Salt and pepper
- Lemon juice
- 1 egg, beaten
- Lemon slices/wedges and choice of greens to decorate

Directions:

Preheat oven to 380°F. Line a large baking tray with parchment paper. Add oil and chopped leek to a frying pan. Season with salt and pepper and cook for 5 minutes over medium heat. Cut one of the pastry sheets in half and join with a full pastry sheet on a baking tray using a bit of beaten egg. Place the leek on the top of the pastry sheet forming an oval shape. Season the salmon with salt, pepper, and lemon juice and place it on top of the leek, forming a fish body

shape. Towards the end of the pastry sheet, leave some room for the tail. Brush the pastry around the salmon with a beaten egg. Join remaining 1½ pastry sheets together and lay over the top of the fish. Use a knife to cut out a fish shape, including head, fins and tail, allowing about ¼ of an inch border around the body and head. Remove and save the cut pieces of pastry. Press a fork into the pastry around the fish to seal the edges and then do the same to make fin and tail patterns. Mark the scales by gently pressing teaspoon or tablespoon into the pastry. Brush with egg. Use cut pieces of pastry to make an eye, mouth and gills. Brush with egg again. Bake in preheated oven for about 30 minutes or until the pastry is golden brown and crisp.

4 Baked Pork Loin Roulade | Nadziewana rolada schabowa



Ingredients:

- 1 whole pork loin
- Salt, pepper, and granulated garlic
- Oil for frying

Filling:

- 1 lb. mushrooms, sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 lb. grated cheese (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp. oil

Directions:

Fry mushrooms, red bell pepper, and onion. Add salt and pepper to taste. Allow mushroom mixture to cool. Add grated cheese and mix it well. Wash and pat dry the pork with a paper towel. Cut the pork loin in half so there are two shorter pork loins. Cut each piece of pork loin lengthwise using a “roll cut” such that it unrolls to a flat piece of meat. Pound with a meat pounder to make the meat 1-1½ cm thick. Rub both sides of the meat in pepper, granulated garlic, and salt. Spread the filling evenly on the meat. Roll each piece tightly and use cooking string to tie the rolls to prevent unrolling. Preheat oven to 390F. In a frying pan, brown each side of the rolls until golden brown. Take the rolls

out, wrap them in aluminum foil sheets, and place them on a cooking tray. Bake for one hour. After 40 minutes, open the foil wrap and baste (coat) the meat with juices in the foil. Finish baking unwrapped. Take out of the oven, allow to cool, then slice. Serve hot or cold. Perfect to use on sandwiches.

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*Photos by Michael
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1. Publication Title ZGODA	2. Publication Number 6 9 9 - 1 2 0	3. Filing Date 10/30/2023
4. Issue Frequency QUARTERLY	5. Number of Issues Published Annually 4	6. Annual Subscription Price 0

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®)
**6100 N. CICERO AVE.
CHICAGO, IL 60646**

Contact Person
Alicja Kuklinska
Telephone (include area code)
773-286-0500

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer)
**6100 N. CICERO AVE.
CHICAGO, IL 60646**

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank)
Publisher (Name and complete mailing address)
**POLISH NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THE U.S. OF N.A.
6100 N. CICERO AVE. CHICAGO, IL 60646**

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Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address)
**MONICA LEBENSZTEJN
6100 N. CICERO AVE. CHICAGO, IL 60646**

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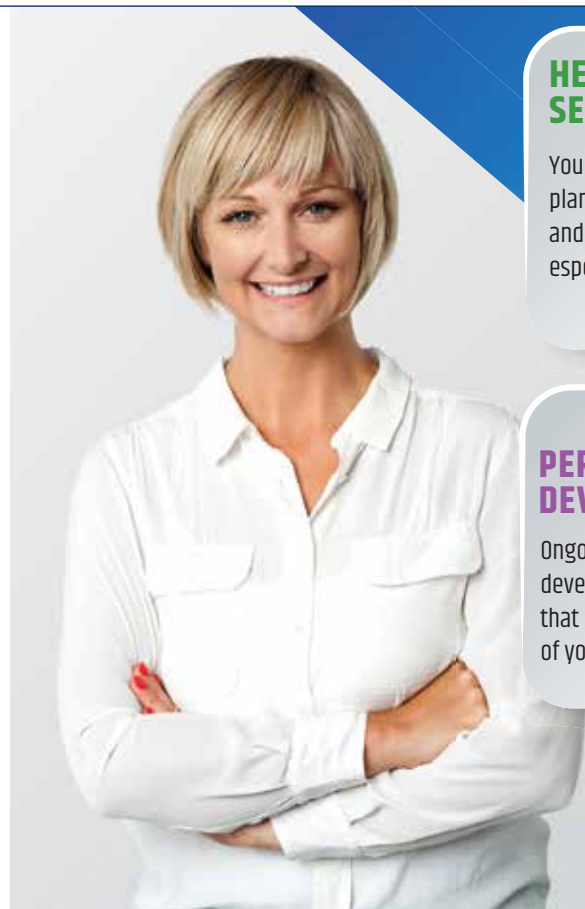
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 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
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ZGODA		NOVEMBER	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
FRATERNAL NEWS			
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		40,000	40,000
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	38,500	38,500
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	0	0
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	0	0
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	250	250
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		38,750	38,750
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	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	0	0
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		0	0
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		38,750	38,750
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		1250	1250
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		40,000	40,000
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		100%	100%

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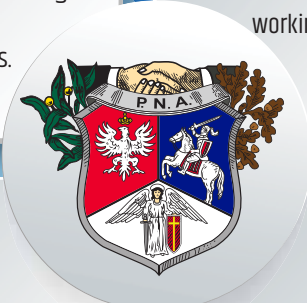
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