

Polanki, Inc.

Polish Women's Cultural Club Newsletter

January [Styczeń] 2016

Happy New Year!!!

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Polanki Meeting January 8

Polanki's first general meeting of 2016 will be held at Villa St. Francis in the dining room on Friday, January 8, at 7:30 p.m.

Volunteers are needed for the following:

End-of-year inventory
Poland Under Glass
Christmas tree take down at Polish Center

SPEAKER: Haven't heard anything.

HOSTESSES:

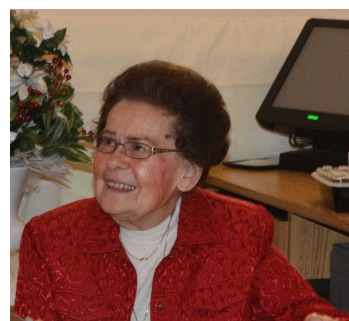
Joanne Barndt
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Wanda Kosmalski
Barbara Rutkowski

The President's Pen *Life Members Announced*

The New Year is frequently a time to reflect on the past in gratitude and to look forward. Both are important and without dedicated service from exceptional members, Polanki's success would not continue as it has. In gratitude for long term service, four Polanki members have been granted life membership. The by-laws indicate that "Life membership may be granted to any active or sustaining member upon a majority vote by the executive board. Qualifications for such membership shall include, but not be limited to, years of service in the organization, chairing events, and/or serving on the executive board. Life members are not required to participate in any club activities or to attend monthly meetings. These members shall have full voting rights. Annual membership dues for life members shall be waived."

The four members who have been granted life membership are the following: Bette Dulka, Edith Malson, Esther Nowicki, and Geraldine Reszel.

Bette Dulka, not only organizes the procession for the Polish Fest Mass, but her inquiries to the Mass Committee resulted in Polanki's participation in the procession. The Polanki members being in the Polish Fest Mass procession warms her heart and Bette hopes that members appreciate the witness that this



is. Bette served for many years on the Polanki board as secretary. She has been chair and co-chair for the Polanki Christmas party. For years Bette is the go-to person for the sales booth at Syrena Dance Group's święcone luncheon. Bette particularly enjoys this event and her participation in the event is a great deal. She also chaired and co-chaired the sales booth for The Soup Festival both setting up and taking down the merchandise. Bette loves her folk outfit and proudly wears it in the sales booths at Polish Fest and Folk Fair. Bette worked in the food booth at Folk Fair when Polanki sponsored a booth. Always a doer, Bette also volunteers for The Art Museum, St Josaphat's and St. Hyacinth's food pantries and as a Eucharistic minister and lector at her parish, St. Josaphat's. Polanki is fortunate to have Bette as a loyal and hardworking member.



Edith Malson has done and continues to do it all. Edith presently volunteers for Polanki as the Sunshine Chairman with tenaciousness and kindness. She follows up on all ill members with cards and sometimes visits and plants. She also represents Polanki making sure that the Polanki ritual of carrying flowers from the rear of the church or funeral parlor to the front is able to be performed. Edith volunteers regularly in the Polanki library at the Polish Center of Wisconsin. She co-chaired the sales booth for 20 years in the past and continues to volunteer at the Polanki sales and cultural booths at Polish Fest, Folk Fair, and Poland under Glass. Edith was one of the very early helpers in making and selling wianki. Edith is a very flexible member and will take over whenever and wherever there is a need. She is always happy to help Geraldine with mailings and lately has been taking over when the membership chairperson snowbirds in Florida. Edith's favorite part of Polanki

is talking about Polish culture with attendees at events and getting to know members who also volunteer. Outside of Polanki Edith also has many interests. She is an avid reader, was a member of the Polish Stamp Club, enjoys music, and has a pen pal and traveling partner from Great Britain. Edith's humble and pleasant demeanor makes her a joy to work with.

Esther Nowicki was a pro at volunteering in the Polanki sales booth at all venues. Her professional approach came from a good source as she worked in the family hardware store with her husband and children. Esther always had only positive things to say about the experience. Esther served on the Polanki board in the past. She also worked on the Debutante Ball Committee when the event was in full swing. Recently, Esther and her family have become generous supporters of the Polanki Scholarship Awards. Esther is such a positive person, that she is always a joy to work with or to converse with. She now enjoys living in San Camillo.



Geraldine Reszel started on the Polanki board in 1982 as corresponding secretary. She has been on the board continually since that time. At present Geraldine is the newsletter editor and describes this job as one of her favorites in Polanki. She has brought the newsletter from a simple flyer announcing the meeting to the level that we enjoy today. She particularly enjoys finding articles on Polish culture for the newsletter, as most members state that they join Polanki to learn about Polish culture. These articles are one way to accomplish this. Geraldine also does a great job of keeping in touch with the membership. She gets calls for address changes, health issues and comments on articles. Besides using her business skills to create and mail the newsletter she frequently takes reservations for our Polanki events

and mails invitations. When the Debutante Balls were in full swing Geraldine was very active on that committee. She started in sales and loved the wooden boxes and plates. It was a joy to unwrap the new merchandise to see what had arrived for sales. After a while Geraldine was active in the Folk Fair food

booth behind the scenes and cooked. A special memory of Geraldine's is the Folk Fair event that honored a specific ethnic group. When the Polish group was honored Geraldine played the mother of the groom in a Polish wedding enactment. Geraldine also has activities outside of Polanki and has volunteered at nursing homes, sings and cantors at her parish, Blessed Sacrament Church and volunteers in the Polanki gift shop at the Polish Center. Geraldine also is a regular volunteer on Fridays at the Polish Center. Besides all this, she is a dedicated caretaker for her two dogs, Sally and Lily. She is also a devoted aunt and sister to her human relatives.

Laski Update

In 2015 252 students began the school year at the Institute. Children and young people benefit from a rich educational offering at Laski; besides school instruction they offer a music center, sensory integration, and canine therapy as well as many other activities tailored for the pupils.

Students can develop their talents in song, dance, drama, and sports: goalball, swimming, roller-skating, and tandem bicycling. Physical exercise is very important for the visually impaired because it allows them to gain confidence in their own abilities and to overcome barriers.

The boys have competed several times in goalball competitions with very good results. Kayaking and sailing are also very popular with the blind pupils. They are excited by preparations for a sailing trip on the well-known yacht *Zawisza Czarny*. Twice they have participated in charity runs.

Funds raised in the "Summer Refurbishment of Dormitories" drive allowed Laski to finance necessary work in the Special School, Girls' Dormitory, and Preschool. As a result our pupils' lives have become safer and more pleasant.

Also in 2015 Laski equipped the Sensory Integration Room in the Deaf-blind Department, Special School, and Preschool. Their professional therapists are able to bring much assistance to children with multiple handicaps, allowing them to function in the world.

Volunteer work in Laski done by employees of supportive companies was a great source of assistance. They helped with cleanups in the spring and fall, painting, maintenance, replacing fencing, looking after the cemetery, and holiday mailings, among other activities.

An important and urgent priority for Laski is the refurbishment of the old girls' dormitory. The Society's Board has decided that after its refurbishment it will house boys. The dormitory is a second home for our school-age pupils. This is where they study, do homework, play, and rest. It is where they feel at home and where they meet their loved ones. The expense of the project is enormous and exceeds their means; hence they sincerely appeal to all people of good faith to support this effort.

Polanki supports Laski's efforts, and at the meeting Jean will tell the members how much we have raised this year.

Three Kings Day

by Karolina Kowalska

On 6 January, Three Kings' processions featuring Caspars, Melchior and Balthazars along with devils, angels and Herods make their way down the streets of over a hundred Polish cities.

During Epiphany a number of Polish cities will see colorful pageants of carol singers and people in fancy dress. The marchers are led by Three Wise Men of the East, who came to Bethlehem to worship newly born Jesus Christ, as the Gospel of Matthew has it.

Epiphany has a long tradition in Poland. The custom of blessing gold and frankincense appeared in Poland at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, with the latter ingredient having often been replaced with burnt resin. In addition, people would protect their households against evil powers with smoke. Today, it is frankincense and myrrh that religious Poles bring to churches for blessing, i.e. gifts that the kings presented to the baby Jesus according to the gospel. Since the 18th century, it has also been common in Poland to bless a piece of chalk on Epiphany day and then use it to inscribe the letters “K + M + B” and the current year number over the door. Contrary to a popular belief, the letters do not stand for the Kings’ names (Caspar is Kacper in Polish) but are derived from the Latin abbreviation “C+M+B,” which means Christus Mansionem Benedicat (“May Christ bless this house”).

Starting in 2011, Polish towns and cities have been host to Three Kings’ processions that combine a family nativity play with a parade of carol singers, Herods, devils and the Three Wise Men of the East. The first such procession took place in Warsaw as early as 2009 and was an expanded version of the nativity play staged at the Żagle school. Following President Bronisław Komorowski’s decision to make Epiphany an official non-working public holiday in 2011, the initiative was endorsed by Poland’s five major cities: Szczecin, Gdansk, Poznan, Krakow and Wrocław. Local authorities and Church officials are patrons of the parades. Over a hundred cities are expected to join the initiative this year.

Towns and cities try to out do each other in making their pageants as elaborate and big as possible. If you happen to visit the Tricity of Gdansk, Sopot and Gdynia on Epiphany day, don’t miss out on the thematic scenes that will be showcased along the procession route. They will include a Dialogue with God’s Angel and Herod’ Court. What is more, the parade in Gdynia will be joined by real soldiers. In Warsaw one of the Three Kings rides on camelback. To make the Krakow procession even more magical, colorful devils encourage participants to stray away from the route, while angels encourage people to visit the crib at the Market Square. The crib features Krakow families with their new-born babies posing as the Holy Family.

Congratulation and Best Wishes to

Accordion playing sustaining member Dorothy Fennig who got remarried on December 5 to Mr. Wayne Zimmermann. She kept her name, but she moved back to the Milwaukee area–New Berlin.



01/02 Barbara Godlewski
01/06 Sybil Grandeck
01/09 Marie Myler
01/11 Denise Polka

01/12 Paula Marek
01/14 Kathleen Wroblewski
01/19 Diane Ufnowski
01/27 Terry Markowski
01/31 Roma Numrych

Coming Events

Jan. 23, ‘16 Poland Under Glass @ Domes
April 10, ‘16 Pierogi Dinner, Polish Center
April 24, ‘16 Awards Tea, Polish Center

Community Corner

Torsk suppers at Norway House: \$13 adults; 4-7 p.m.

1/23/16
2/27/16
3/19/16
4/23/16

On Thursday, **February 11, 2016**, Dr. John Micgiel, President of the Kosciuszko Foundation, will speak at an event at the **Polish Center of Wisconsin at 6:30 p.m.** This event will be co-sponsored by the UWM Polish Studies Committee, The Polish American Congress, The Milwaukee Society PNA Lodge 2159 and Polanki. We are sponsoring the event in more than financial means and encourage Polanki members, family and friends to attend.

To Poland with Ann

by Ann Pienkos

After all the trips I've organized to Poland resulting in happy family and friends afterwards, I am excited to share some news with you about having started a small tours business.

It's appropriately titled 'To Poland with Ann.' I organize customized tours for small groups and travel with them to this beautiful country. I plan to do 1-2 tours per year with groups up to 6 people. Check out the details and photos on my website:

www.ToPolandWithAnn.com

Trip to Polish Museum of America in Chicago

We need to know who and which day would be optimal for going on the proposed trip to the Museum to see two exhibits: a collection of water colors by Nikifor and secondly the exhibit celebrating PMA's 100th anniversary.

A. Saturday, January 16—depart late morning for a tour of the museum followed by late lunch at a local Polish restaurant on our way back. Transportation would either be car pooling or renting a bus depending on the number of participants. Admission \$7 (\$6 seniors) plus lunch cost.

B. Sunday, January 17—last day of exhibit. Museum staff suggests we come and join them for a special closing event. An Evening of Bilingual Caroling Presented by Americans of Polish Descent and the Polish Museum of America. The "Wieczor Koled" is for Americans of Polish descent to celebrate our dual heritage by singing Christmas carols in both Polish and English. There are songbooks, and a pianist

See the tour specifics planned for two clients next October. I would be happy to add you to our group! For those of you who know me well, you know I am fluent in Polish, have many resources there, and I bring enthusiasm and knowledge to anything Polish.

Contact me with any questions you may have and please pass this on to anyone who you think may be interested. Visit Poland.

Polish Book Club

Save the date for the next book club discussion—February 21—at 1 p.m. in the Polanki library. This is followed by a concert at the Polish Center at 2 p.m. So a two for one opportunity!

Book: The Lullaby of Polish Girls by Dagmara Dominczyk, a Polish American film and TV actress who pays homage to her native city of Kielce. It is the coming of age story of three Polish American girls residing in Greenpoint, NY, in a Polish enclave starting during the rise of Solidarity and spanning a dozen years. Warning: a contemporary gritty novel with some swearing and sex but not about WWII.

Available used through Amazon or through Milwaukee Public Library.

provides the melody. There will be oplatek and a big buffet of authentic holiday Polish food. **Sunday, Januaary 17, 2016, from 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (CST)**

Departure from Milwaukee could be between noon and 1 p.m. to give time to tour museum and exhibits prior to the above event. Cost \$30 includes admission, dinner and drinks. Transportation option same as in A. We could go down earlier on Sunday and only do museum tour and find a Polish restaurant for lunch.

Please let Ewa (ewa@uwm.edu or 412-6456) know by Wednesday, January 6, if you are definitely interested in going, which day is preferred and whether you would be able to go either day.

No Texting in Poland?

By Robert Strybel

That is not to suggest that Poles, Polish teenagers in particular, do not text, they just don't call it that. In Polish a text message is called an **SMS**, also spelled **esemes**. The verb to text is **smsować**. It is also spelled **SMSować** and **esemesować**. The term originally came from the English abbreviation SMS (short message service). Incidentally, Germans did a similar thing. The German verb "to text" is "sim sen" (also derived from SMS).

Gone are the days when Poland was a generation or more behind the US in the realm of modern products such as household appliances and power tools. Soviet-era backwardness ended soon after Poland dumped communism in 1989. Like elsewhere in Europe, the e-revolution got under way in the early 1990s and the Information Society soon began taking shape.

The Reuters Warsaw Bureau where I worked was the only news agency with a direct rigid link to London. As a result, when martial law was declared in December 1981 it was able to inform the world of the crackdown on Solidarity for a number of hours until the communist secret police figured out how to disconnect it. The other agencies were still using telex and were easy for the authorities to shut off.

In the early '90s I was still typing articles for the Polish-American press on a manual typewriter and faxing them to America. When I got my first home computer and printer. I would transfer the copy to a floppy disc and take it down to an Internet café to send. Round the turn of the century I hooked up to the Internet.

Computerization, Internet access and the accompanying e-gadgetry spread rather quickly in Poland. More and more people began communicating and exchanging birthday, name day and holiday wishes by email. The simple, early cell phones gradually evolved into today's super-sophisticated smart phones, with "new and improved" models appearing each season. The innovations required suitable new vocabulary to describe them.

Telefon komórkowy (cell phone) got shortened to just **komórka** (cell), and a computer game is a **gra komputerowa**. The unwieldy **poczia elektroniczna** (electronic mail) became just **mejł**, and the verb "to email" is **mejłować**. The names of other e-gadgets were taken directly from English, including **tablet**, **smartfon**, **joystick**, **MP3** and **konsola** (console).

At present, more than 75% of all Poles over 16 can access the Internet at home. Unsurprisingly, the biggest users are those in the 16-24 age group (97%), and 85% of those ages 25-44 regularly go online. But only 14% of Poles over 65 surf the net. That seems likely to change when today's youngsters reach their prime. A full 25% of today's Polish four-year-olds are already familiar with the World Wide Web. The

Government is making the Internet available in areas previously not covered by the web and hopes the entire nation will have broadband access by 2020.

—Reprinted from October/November 2015 Polish Heritage Society Newsletter, pp. 1-2.

Bazaar



Christmas Party





All pictures taken by Joanne Barndt.

Szczesliwego Nowego Roku 2016!

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