



Polanki, Inc.

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<i>Web Master</i>	Dana Michaels

Polanki Meeting March 13, 2020

Polanki's regular membership meeting will be held on Friday March 13 at Villa St. Francis at 7:30 p.m. in the dining room.

PROGRAM: Ewa Barczyk-Pease will speak about the history of Chicago's Polonia Community

HOSTESSES: Maria Adamiec, Veronica Artus, Carol Knudson, Elena Shebelski, Barbara Stankiewicz, and Helen Waliszewski

From the President's Desk

Polanki has a long history of supporting Polish culture and the Polish community in many ways. Over the last 67 years as Polanki has grown and developed, the world has changed and how Polanki has carried out its mission has changed. Long term initiatives include supporting the **Syrena Polish Dancers** in a variety of ways, the **Cultural Village at Polish Fest** and our longstanding **Polanki Academic Achievement Awards**. Recently, Polanki has supported the **Kosciuszko Monument Restoration**, restoration of stained glass windows in **St. Josephat's Basilica**, and we are now considering support for the **Conservancy for Healing and Heritage**.

What I have enjoyed as an active member of Polanki is being part of something bigger than myself. Individually I am not in a position to give a student a scholarship, but as a member who participates in different fundraising efforts, I can do just that. A few months ago, I had just such an experience. Joe and I were co-chairs of his 9th Engineer Battalion reunion with people who had served in Germany during the late 1960's. Since Kosciuszko was an Army Engineer and the inspiration for West Point, one of our events was a ceremony at the monument. Seeing the appreciation of the attendees, I was never so proud of my membership in Polanki.

Which accomplishments mean the most to you? How can you participate in a more meaningful way? It can be so meaningful to be part of Polanki's achievements. As a Polanki member you are responsible for much community support. I hope that as a member you are able to take pride and joy in Polanki's achievements.



March Birthdays

3/09 Kristine Chmielewski
3/19 Joanna Nowakowski
3/28 Marjorie Piechowski
3/31 Edith Malson

Life Member Edith Malson is recovering from a broken hip.

Life Member Geraldine Reszel and Active Member Carol Sobanski Powers are both undergoing rehabilitation after hospital stays.

We wish them all a quick recovery.

Upcoming Events: Polanki

March 28, 2020 – [Planned] trip to Chicago for the Polish Museum of America exhibit

April 10, 2020 – General Membership Meeting

April 19, 2020 – Academic Awards Tea at the Polish Center

May 10, 2020 - Portage County Cultural Festival

June 12-14, 2020 - Polish Fest at the Summerfest Grounds



Our Deepest Sympathy to

Polanki Life Member Elizabeth Wagner, on the loss of her husband

Active Member Adrienne Zuber on the loss of her sister

Annual Membership Dues

Please note that annual active or sustaining membership renewals are due. Please fill out the membership form with payment and give it to Maria Adamiec, Membership Chair, at the March meeting or by mail to the Polanki mailbox. It is important to renew as soon as possible so committee members can have an updated list of activities and events you wish to participate in. This information is entered into the Polanki membership database, used for the membership directory and easily accessible to all committee chairs to identify volunteers for Polanki events. The sooner dues are paid, the sooner the 2020 membership directory can be prepared. Thank you in advance for your prompt renewals.

Slate of Candidates for Polanki Board for 2020-2021

The following candidates for the Polanki board were presented to the Polanki membership at the February 14, 2020 annual business meeting. The nominating committee was Ewa Barczyk-Pease, Edith Malson and Susan Mikoś. All candidates were elected by acclamation and no other candidates were presented from the floor.

PRESIDENT	Camille Shaw
1st VICE PRESIDENT	Anne Wal
2nd VICE PRESIDENT	Laurie Ufnowski
TREASURER	Jean Wroblewski
RECORDING SECRETARY	Tamara Johnston
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY	Kathy Camacho
HISTORIAN	Joanne Barndt
PUBLICITY	Susan Cieslak
MEMBERSHIP	Maria Adamiec
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Marjorie Piechowski
AUDITING COMMITTEE	Judy Chattin Sue Konecny Heddy Moskaluk

In addition to the elected Board of Directors, the president appoints non-voting advisors to the Board. These appointees for 2020 are Ewa Barczyk-Pease and Susan Mikoś. The president also has appointed Judy Chattin and Edith Malson as Sunshine co-chairs and reappointed Dana Michaels as webmaster.

General Polanki News and Information

Polish Fest Exhibits: Can you help?

Polanki is again coordinating the Cultural Village at Polish Fest 2020. We are planning two major exhibits: one on St. John Paul II, in honor of the 100th anniversary of his birth, and another on the Solidarity trade union, commemorating the 40th anniversary of its founding. We are looking for interesting artifacts to supplement the informative text panels, and ask Polanki members to search their storehouses for objects they could loan. Small, fragile, and valuable items will be enclosed in display cases.

Some particular needs are:

- 1) Solidarity (Solidarność):
 - a. Posters
 - b. Photos, flyers
 - c. Pins, buttons
 - d. Other memorabilia
 - e. Worker's hard hat
 - f. Workman's coveralls and shirt (preferably dark blue)

- 2) St. John Paul II
 - a. Memorabilia
 - b. Papal flag

If you can help, please bring items to the March meeting, or contact Ewa Barczyk or Susan Mikoś.

Kosciuszko Monument Clean-up Schedule for 2020

Saturdays, 10 a.m. until noon; in case of rain, we will reschedule for the following week.

Meet at the Monument to help keep the gardens looking beautiful. Bring your own tools or use ours.

April 18 (Earth Day)

May 16 (Bloom & Groom plant sale in Kosciuszko Park)

June 20

July 18

August 15

September 19

October 17 (weather permitting)

Contact Susan Mikoś for more information.

General Polanki News and Information

The Polanki Library Needs You!

The Polanki Library is a valuable resource for the entire Polish community. Polanki originally contributed \$75,000 for the construction of a library in the Polish Center and has been managing it ever since. Today, the library offers a wealth of books in both Polish and English, including classic and contemporary fiction, films, and nonfiction topics relating to history, geography, art, music, folklore, cooking, genealogy, tourism and more.

The Library is open regularly on Tuesdays from 12-2 p.m. and on Wednesday evenings from 6-8 p.m. We are also open during fish fries and other special events at the Polish Center.

We are fortunate to have a cadre of dedicated volunteers, but with several of them recently on Polanki's sick list, we are in need of new helpers. No experience is necessary; we'll show you what to do, whether it be book-processing, record-keeping, or interacting with the public. From now until Good Friday, we need extra volunteers to be in the Library during the Polish Center's Friday Fish Fry events. Some familiarity with Polish genealogy would be especially helpful, but is not a requirement.

For more information, please contact Susan Mikoś, Pat Koronkowski, Edith Malson, or any other library volunteer.

Polanki Gift Shop Opening Soon!

New dates for the Polanki gift shop will coincide with Polanki library hours and major events at the Polish Center, including Wednesday night Bingo and Friday Fish Fries. The grand opening of the refreshed gift shop is the first fish fry night, February 28. Polanki members who are interested in volunteering for the gift shop should contact Bernie Jendrzyczak at bjendrzyczak@sbcglobal.net or at 414-425-2134. Members also can sign up for time slots at the Gift Shop by using the electronic Sign Up Genius. Both the Polanki Library and the Gift Shop are located on the second floor at the Polish Center of Wisconsin.

Polanki College Achievement Awards Update

The awards committee (Chairperson Joanne Barndt, Ewa Barczyk-Pease, Susan Mikoś, Marjorie Piechowski and Carol Sobanski Powers) met on February 1 to review the 23 applicants and select award recipients. The Board of Directors approved the slate and the award winners are being notified and invited to the April 19 tea. Kinga Vnuk, a native of Poland and a trained musician, will present a program of Polish music composed for the movies.

All Polanki members are invited to prepare Polish pastries and canapes and also attend the event to show our support for these high-achieving students. Nadine and Denna Flemming are co-chairing the tea; please contact them if you have any questions about tea contributions.

Polish Genealogy Interest Group

The next meeting of the Polish Genealogy Interest Group will be Saturday, May 9, from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the Tippecanoe Library, located at 3912 South Howell Avenue. For more information, contact Susan Mikoś, Cindy Lepkowski, or Terri Cieslak.

A Note from the Editor

Thank you to Polanki members for giving me the responsibility of editing the monthly Polanki Newsletter, following in the footsteps of Geraldine Reszel and Jessica Ullstrup. Geraldine established a very high standard for content and format for many years and Jessica continued in that tradition more recently. I hope to continue from their excellent examples and add new features along the way.

In that regard, I invite the membership to contribute ideas, content and photos new and old as we celebrate our 67th year of existence. Many new members have joined in the last several years so I intend to provide information about Polanki's history, about some of the many members who have made an impact on the organization we are now, and about our current leadership and members.

If you want to write or contribute but are not an experienced writer, don't worry. I once was a high school English teacher and then a college professor so I've worked with aspiring or reluctant writers over my whole adult life. If you just have an idea that you'd like to discuss with me and have someone else do the writing, that would be wonderful as well.

I also plan a new feature called *Ask Polanki!* You can submit any kind of questions about Polanki, about Polish history and culture, about Poland today or anything else that would make you a more informed member and Polish woman. If I don't know the answer, I will find someone who does.

In order to publish the newsletter on the first of each month, the deadline to submit copy will be the **25th of each month**. You can submit ideas at any time. I also encourage your suggestions for improvements. You can reach me by telephone at 414-963-9055 or by email at marjorie.piechowsk@sbcglobal.net Please note that the last letter of my last name was omitted from the address—some Polish names are just too long for the allotted space.

Marjorie Piechowski

2020 Polanki Newsletter Editor

Membership Meetings

2nd Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m.
Villa St. Francis Dining Room
1910 W Ohio Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53215

Board Meetings

Last Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
Villa St. Francis Dining Room
1910 W Ohio Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53215

Fun Facts about Poland: Poland's Top Baby Names

According to Poland's Digitization Ministry, the most popular names for baby boys these days are Antoni and Jan. Their endearing forms include Antoś and Antek as well as Jasio, Jaś and Janek, respectively. For girls it is Zuzanna (Zuzia) and Julia (Julka and Julcia). Other popular boy's names are: Aleksander (Olek), Szymon (Szymek) and Franciszek (Franek). Favored first names for baby girls include: Zofia (Zosia), Maja (Majka) and Hanna (Hanka, Hania).

Community Corner

Polish Center of Wisconsin:

Friday Fish Fries during Lent

Friday, February 28, 4:30-8:00 p.m. through Friday April 10, at the Polish Center of Wisconsin.

Easter Eggs, Polish Style!

Saturday, March 14 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Skrobanki- Learn to create intricate designs by “scratching” the surface of colored eggs.
Taught by Kasia Drake-Hames

Saturday, March 14, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Nalepianki- use the wycinaki (paper cut-out) technique to decorate blown-out eggs and create ornaments that can be used for Easter, or next December on the Christmas tree.
Taught by Kasia Drake-Hames

Sunday, March 15, 2020 – Maxwell Street Klezmer Band Concert, 1:30 p.m.

Klezmer music is the traditional folk music of the Jews of Eastern Europe. They originally lived in Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Romania and Russia. Originating in the 1600s, klezmer music spread across Eastern Europe where it was essential for weddings. In the 1800s klezmer music came to America’s shores and soon incorporated jazz and swing and had an influence on American pop music. If you have attended a performance of klezmer music or have seen the musical, “Fiddler on the Roof,” you will thoroughly enjoy this concert.

March 16-April 2, 2020 – Genealogy Classes, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

“First Steps in Discovering Your Family History”

Topics to be covered include introduction to best methods and practices for genealogy research; exploring data sources; where to find the records and the valuable information within them; census records; vital records such as birth, marriage, death; passenger information; immigration and naturalization records and more; locating the parish in Poland.

Easter Brunch

Sunday, April 12, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

All You Can Eat Buffet, Adults \$30, Children 12 and under \$12, reservations required

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church:

Swiecone 2020

Sunday, April 5, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Syrena’s “Swiecone” Easter buffet will be held on Palm Sunday, Tickets \$20

The Traditional Polish Easter Celebration

by Ada Dziewanowska

Retrieved from Syrena Web Page on March 1, 2020

Easter traditions in Poland are closely tied with the spring season and with old customs which often originated in pagan times. In some parts of Poland, the departure of winter was sped up by observing the celebration called “Marzanna.” A big straw puppet, named Marzanna, was dressed in rags, placed on a stick and carried with noisy singing by younger villagers to a nearby river or pond. There the puppet was drowned. If there was no water in the vicinity, the puppet was carried into the fields and burned. Marzanna was the symbol of winter hardships, of illness, and death. Destroying her was the magic which was to bring winter to an end and speed up the coming of the long awaited spring. As some of us may remember, the contrast between the mood of Lent and Easter was tremendous, particularly in Poland. Fasting and mortification for the forty days of Lent was strictly observed.

On Good Friday (“Wielki Piątek”), some people limited themselves to bread and water, and sometimes a herring. On that day, sadness and solemnity prevailed. This mood was intensified by the singing in a plaintive way of mournful Lenten songs while performing chores. In one of these songs, Jesus tragically asks: “Oh my people, my people, what have I done to you, in what way have I saddened you, how have I harmed you? I have freed you from Egyptian captivity, and you have prepared a cross for my arms.” The solemnity of Good Friday was further deepened by visiting of the sepulchres. The faithful visited one or several churches where a life-like figure of Jesus was displayed lying in the grave. Soldiers and boy scouts took turns in guarding the sepulchres.

An essential part of getting ready for Easter was a thorough spring cleaning of the entire house and extensive preparation for the Easter feast: roasting of various meats (sometimes even a whole piglet), smoking sausages, decorating colorful eggs called “pisanki,” mixing vegetable salads, and baking the all-important “babkas,” “placeks,” and several varieties of special Easter pastries, the “mazureks.”



Tradition had it that by Holy Saturday (“Wielka Sobota”), everything had to be ready so that for the next few days the women would be free from work. All the dishes were placed on a long table covered with a white linen cloth and decorated with branches of pussy willows and fresh green boxwood. “Wesołego Alleluja” (joyous Alleluia, equivalent to Happy Easter) would appear on various items. For instance, it was “written” on the ham with cloves or lard, and on the “mazureks” with almonds or

raisins. In the center of the table stood an Easter lamb (“baranek wielkanocny”) with a small red banner with the letters IHS. The lamb was made out of sugar or butter.

On Holy Saturday, the food was blessed with holy water by a priest. He would either come to the house, or samplings of dishes would be taken to church in a basket covered with a white linen napkin, where a general ceremony of blessing of the food would take place. The word “to bless” in Polish is “Swiecić,” hence the name of “Swiecone” for the Easter Buffet.

Finally, Easter Sunday (“Niedziela Wielkanocna”) would arrive. One was not allowed to taste the Easter feast before attending mass, which could be as early as 6:00 a.m. During the mass the joyous Easter songs

would burst forth, making one forget about the sacrifices of Lent. When all the family and friends gathered at home, just before the start of the meal, the father or mother would take a plate of quartered blessed Easter eggs and approach everyone in the room, offering a piece and wishing “Wesołego Alleluja.” Then everyone would eat and drink heartily to make up for all the fasting during Lent. The Easter buffet “Swiecone” lasted for at least two days with various guests visiting. It was therefore very practical to have cold dishes to eat.

Easter Monday, “Poniedziałek Wielkanocny,” was also a holiday. It was a very special day, remembered forever by anyone who took part in it. It was called “Dyngus” or “Smigus” and on that day young men sprinkled girls with water. They would take the girls by surprise and in olden times – and even now – pour a whole bucket of water on the poor victims who would run away screaming. Sometimes a girl was even dragged to the village pond and immersed. In town, however, a man just sprayed some perfume from an atomizer on the girl’s neck. It was only the unpopular girl who survived the day without ever being drenched or sprayed. There are many theories on how this custom began. One is that it might have originated in pagan times as a fertility rite. Many of these and other Easter traditions are still observed in Poland and among the many Poles abroad.

Public Television Airing “Flavor of Poland” Series

American public television stations across the United States are presenting a 13-part “Flavor of Poland” series. This charming food and travel series will be hosted by Polish-born, US-raised actress Aleksandra August, who interviews chefs and home cooks and explore the history, culture and culinary heritage of medieval cities such as Kraków and Warsaw, visits an Olsztyn snail farm, learns to bake Toruń gingerbread and tastes the hearty food of Polish highlanders in the mountain city of Zakopane. She then returns to her kitchen to share recreations of new and traditional Polish dishes.

The Polish-US production team has visited over 30 Polish cities and towns. “Flavor of Poland” is produced by the Independent Film Factory, a Polish-American company producing TV shows, series, documentaries and feature films. This series is produced by WTTW Chicago and distributed by American Public Television.

Channel 10.1 (WMVS): 3:30 p.m. Saturday starting January 11; Channel 36.1 (WMVT): 10:00 a.m. Sunday starting January 12. The remaining shows are the following:

March 7-8	"Poznan & Gniezno"
March 14-15	"Torun and Malbork"
March 21-22	"Kielce"
March 28-29	"Lublin"
April 4-5	"Zakopane"

The above dates are only for the Milwaukee PBS channels; check with other Wisconsin PBS stations for their dates and times for this series.

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