



Polanki, Inc.

The Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee Newsletter

December (grudzień) 2021

2021 Polanki Christmas Party
December 19, 2021
Polish Center of Wisconsin
11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.



[Photo courtesy of Susan Mikoś]

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From the President's Desk



[Photo courtesy of Joanne Barndt]

The Best Presents

As I age, my idea of a great Christmas present has changed. In my childhood family the one predictable gift was pajamas for the Stroinski girls. My older sister Romaine's were blue, mine were pink and my younger sister Celine's were yellow or green. Of course there were other presents that we looked forward to, toys or other clothes that were not pajamas to be placed in our dresser drawers in case of sickness and a need for the doctor to make a house call.

Having reached the wise old age of 78, my favorite gifts have become ***time and people***. Both are very precious, and I feel bountifully and generously blessed with both. The support of all the Polanki board members has been like a warm hug. There are hours of volunteer time behind each Polanki event.

For instance, behind a Polanki membership meeting, there are hours and sometimes days of preparation. As president, I definitely have the easy part. Minutes have been prepared, financial statements are in order, the newsletter has been sent, committee reports are in order, the program is arranged and hostesses are prepared to dazzle us with their delicious treats. And I can't forget the members with technology skills! What a blessing during this pandemic time.

Thank you to all the board members, committee chairs and members. Appreciated is every member who attends in person or on Zoom. Each of you is an integral part of Polanki's longevity and success. Thank you for being such precious gifts.

Camille Shaw, 2021 President





December Birthdays

12/03 Janet Protasiewicz
12/05 Elaine Posard
12/07 Shirley Sternig
12/14 Denna Flemming
12/16 Jane Dunn
Jean Wroblewski
12/20 Maria Adamiec
12/21 Carol Knudson
12/26 Halina Sosnowski

Deadline Reminder:

College Achievement Awards

Each year Polanki recognizes students who have demonstrated high academic achievement and who are committed to understanding, preserving, or disseminating Polish culture and/or language. Awards range in amounts from \$1000 to \$2000.

Application Deadline: January 10, 2022

To download an application form, go to www.polanki.org.

Please share this information with friends and relatives who might be eligible to receive one of these academic achievement awards.

The Awards Tea is planned for March 27, 2022 at the Polish Center of Wisconsin.



Polanki sends best wishes for a speedy recovery to:

Active Member Cynthia Lepkowski, who is having cataract surgery.

We also encourage all Polanki members to keep in touch with those who are confined in their homes. Please remember them with a card, an email or a phone call, especially during this holiday season.

If you know of any other Polanki members who are sick or in need of sunshine greetings, please contact Judy Chattin, who is serving as Sunshine Co-Chair this year with Edith Malson.

Their contact information is:

Edith Malson
(414) 744-9412

Judy Chattin
(414) 425-7965-home
(414) 429-2196-cell
j.chattin@sbcglobal.net

Polanki Members Volunteering at Holiday Sales Events



Jane Dunn, Susan Mikoś, Jean Wroblewski, Lynn Adams
Victorian Holiday Craft Fair, Stoughton, WI 12/4/2021
[Photos courtesy of Susan Mikoś]



Operation Christmas Cheer Craft and Vendor Show
Brookfield, WI 11/27/2021
Jane Dunn, Camille Shaw, Jean Wroblewski

A Few Christmas Party Reminders

By Nadine and Denna Flemming

1. Please wear a mask at all times unless actively eating or drinking. With COVID cases on the rise again, let's try to keep each other as safe as possible!
2. We will be having the Oplatek sharing before the meal. Without this traditional Polish ceremony, our party would just be another holiday party.
3. Please bring raffle items to donate to benefit Laski and your cash or checkbook.
4. Remember to bring two dozen Christmas cookies, two per cupcake liner, for sharing on the dessert table.
5. The party starts promptly at 11:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. A Polish buffet will be served at noon.
6. The cash bar will be open, bartender sponsored by Diane Holytz, featuring a special Polanki holiday drink created by the Polish Center.
7. Deacon Matthew Ferch will make a presentation on Our Lady of Częstochowa following the buffet.
8. See you there, in your festive holiday attire!



The Polanki Library Doors



Anyone who enters the Polanki Library on the second floor of the Polish Center of Wisconsin passes through the impressive doors but few people know the story behind the doors. A recent obituary of Evelyn Simarski, who passed away on November 16, 2021, at the age of 99, reminded us of the doors' history.

According to Evelyn's obituary, she and her late husband, Edward, were very proud of their Polish heritage and helped found the Polish Center of Wisconsin, including donating the Polish Eagle doors that grace the Library's entrance. Apparently Ed salvaged the doors and stored them with the hope that they could be used somewhere in the planned Polish Center. A plaque in the Library honors their donation.

Thanks to their generosity and foresight, the doors now welcome visitors to the Polanki Library as a fitting memorial to the Simarski family.

Upcoming Polanki Events

December 19, 2021: Polanki Christmas Party, Polish Center of Wisconsin

January 17, 2022: Membership Meeting, Polish Center of Wisconsin

February 21, 2022: Annual Business Meeting and Election, Polish Center of Wisconsin

March 6, 2022: "Songs of the Polish Soul," Kinga Vnuk and the Modern Minstrels, All Saints Lutheran Church, sponsored by Edith Malson, Polanki Life Member, with reception to follow

March 21, 2022: Membership Meeting, Polish Center of Wisconsin

March 27, 2022: College Achievement Awards Tea, Polish Center of Wisconsin

April 18, 2022: Membership Meeting, Polish Center of Wisconsin

May 16, 2022: Membership Meeting, Polish Center of Wisconsin

June 20, 2022: Membership Meeting, Polish Center of Wisconsin

Upcoming Community Events

February 5, 2022: Wisconsin Bakers Association Pączki Day, Polish Center of Wisconsin

March 1, 2022: Pączki Day, Polish Center of Wisconsin

June 10-12, 2022: Polish Fest, Henry Maier Festival Park

Polanki and Laski: A Beautiful Partnership

By Camille Shaw and Marjorie Piechowski

For many years, our Christmas party raffle, along with donations from individuals, a Polish rummage sale at the September meeting and Coins for Laski at all of the meetings, have added up to a very generous donation to Laski through Polanki. The beginnings of this “heart project” between Polanki and Laski were recounted by long-time Polanki members Heddy Moskaluk and Angela Pienkos. The most significant person in this association between Polanki and Laski was Heddy’s aunt and one of Polanki’s founding members, Harriet Gostomski. Mrs. Gostomski’s name is proudly etched in a brick in the Laski chapel honoring her support to Laski. She would take private donations from Polanki members to the sisters to support the school’s mission. On tours to Poland she also introduced Laski to the travelers on the tour.

In the early days due to the hardships in Poland there was a great need for basics. Since approximately 1980 Polanki members donated warm winter knitwear that was shipped to Laski to be distributed to students for Christmas. Heddy Moskaluk, with the same generous heart as her aunt, would ship and pay for the knitted items to be sent to Poland. As goods became more readily available in Poland and shipping expenses skyrocketed, Polanki’s donations became monetary rather than goods. Heddy Moskaluk, until her retirement from Polamer, also took upon herself the exchange fees for this process. In gratitude for all of the Polanki members’ generosity there is a plaque honoring Polanki for their generosity to Laski. It can be found attached to the outside of a building on the Laski campus.

According to the Laski website, <https://www.laski.edu.pl/en>, “the Educational Centre in Laski was created by Elżbieta Roża Czacka, who considered her loss of sight as a vocation. In 1911 she founded The Society for the Care of the Blind and a few years later the Franciscan Sisters Servants of the Cross. She was aware of the need for the proper education of the blind to enable them to live independently and responsibly. This is why The Centre in Laski educates blind children from their first months of life until the Baccalaureate and Professional Exams in an atmosphere of self-respect and openness to others with the goal of enabling the blind to live independently among their family, work environment, and in a society of sighted people.”



Laski today is a thriving community that provides education from early childhood through secondary school to more than 300 students from ages 4 to 24, while teaching academic and practical subjects that will lead to future employment or higher education. Sites now include the Róża Czacka School and Educational Centre for Blind Children in Laski near Warsaw, the St. Teresa Special School and Educational Centre for Blind and Visually Impaired Children in Rabka, and the Centre for Early Support for the Development of Blind and Visually Impaired Children in Gdańsk-Sobieszewo. Students live on the premises, with a variety of modern classroom and other buildings that include a printing press, a music studio, workshops, swimming pools and a wide array of outdoor amenities.

Thank you for your past generosity and your continuing generosity to Laski and the children they serve.

[Photo courtesy of Laski]

New Garden of Senses to be Built at Laski

An enchanting new ‘Garden of Senses’ will be built to benefit blind children at Laski School for the Blind, just outside Warsaw. The first of its kind in Poland, the ‘magic’ garden will combine smell, touch and sounds to help stimulate the children and give them a better understanding of the world around them. The textures, tastes and smells of the orchards, fruit bushes, flowers, herbs, hedges, cereals, turf with many species of grass, actually a tactile map, will include a special avenue to walk barefoot to stimulate the nerve endings on the sole of the foot, giving a full body experience.

Expected to be ready in the first few months of next year, the garden will be built in the grounds of the Centre for the Care of the Blind in Laski, at an estimated cost of around 700,000 PLN. The garden, which will cover an area of nearly 4,000 m², will have a variety of zones, including spatial orientation, an educational zone, a resting and relaxation zone, a place for tasting the edible things growing in the garden and a horticultural therapy zone. All the elements that will be used in the garden have been selected based on the way the children can interact with them.

Despite many attractions, such as a horse farm or a swimming pool, children at Laski lacked a place where they could safely commune with nature and discover it by touch, smell and taste. Elżbieta Szczepkowska, Director of the School and Education Centre for Blind Children in Laski, said: “Contact with nature, learning about various shapes and textures teaches concentration, and also improves sensorimotor and visual-auditory coordination. The

garden will bring our pupils a lot of joy and will contribute to their development on many levels.”



The Centre for Blind Children in Laski was established in 1922 when a Polish nun, who went blind at 22 years old, received a donation of land from Antoni Daszewski. Mother Elżbieta Czacka dedicated the remaining years of her life to helping those who were blind and partially sighted. Officially recognized by the Catholic Church as a Venerable Servant of God, she was beatified on September 12, 2021.



[Article and photos extracted from The First News, November 29, 2021]

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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<i>Web Master</i>	Dana Michaels (414) 418-5414

A Note from the Editor

Thank you to all Polanki members who provided ideas, pictures and stories during this last year.

If you have ideas for future stories or potential meeting programs, please submit these to me at marjorie.piechowsk@sbcglobal.net or 414-963-9055.

Marjorie Piechowski
2021 Polanki Newsletter Editor



[Photo courtesy of Marjorie Piechowski]

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