



Polanki, Inc.

The Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee Newsletter

January (styczeń) 2023

**JANUARY 18, 2023
MEMBERSHIP MEETING 6:30 P.M.
POLISH CENTER OF WISCONSIN
6941 South 68th Street, Franklin, WI 53132**

**Program: Bryan Marshall, MPC Advisers:
Polanki's Investment Portfolio and Planning for
the Future**

**Hostesses: Judy Chattin, Sue Holcomb, Pat
Koronkowski, Wanda Kosmalski, Barbara
Stankiewicz, Diane Ufnowski**

To join the meeting by Zoom:
<https://wisconsin-edu.zoom.us/j96403758692>

To join the meeting by telephone:

**312 626 6799
Meeting ID: 964 0375 8692 Passcode: 165776**

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From the President's Desk



[Photo courtesy of Laurie Ufnowski]

Happy New Year! I hope all of you had a beautiful holiday season and that the new year brings much good health and happiness to everyone. As we start out the new year "Thank You" to all of you for making 2022 a wonderful year for Polanki.

We also had fun along the way with great socialization and a spectacular Christmas party, thanks to Nadine Flemming and her committee. A special "Thank You" to Helen Miller for organizing the raffle for Laski and Pat Koronkowski for the lovely centerpieces. Thank you so much to Jean Wroblewski for always making sure our sales booths are top notch.

I really appreciate all the hard work and dedication all of our members have shown for Polanki. It makes our organization very special and unique. I want to encourage everyone to attend the January meeting where we have many new things to discuss. We need everyone's input. It really does matter. Our goal is to keep Polanki the vibrant wonderful organization it is so we all can be proud to be a member in the years to come.

Warm regards!



January Birthdays

01/01 Beth Gavin
01/06 Sybil Grandeck
01/09 Sandy Je T'aime
01/10 Rose Meinholz
01/11 Virginia Hirsch
01/19 Diane Ufnowski
01/21 Rebecca Kiefer
01/21 Paul Cieslak
01/27 Theresa Markowski
01/31 Roma Numrych

February Birthdays

02/01 Iwona Nowak
02/09 Veronica Artus
Cynthia Lepkowski
02/13 Ewa Barczyk-Pease
02/13 Sharon Kearns
02/16 Kathleen Johnston
02/20 Diane Holytz
Jerry Moskaluk
02/23 Rachel Hooten
02/26 Anna Rogalski



This month we are happy that we have no new reports of illness from Polanki members.

Please continue to remember Polanki members who are confined to their homes and greet them with a visit, a card, an email or a phone call.

Contact Judy Chattin, who is serving as Sunshine Co-Chair this year with Edith Malson, with any news to share.

Edith Malson (414) 744-9412
Judy Chattin (414) 425-7965-home
(414) 429-296-cell
j.chattin@sbcglobal.net



Polanki sends deepest condolences to Sustaining Member Janet Protasiewicz, whose mother, Dorothy Ann Helmenstine, passed away on December 26, 2022. Her funeral will be held on Saturday January 21, 2023, 11:00 a.m., at the Basilica of St. Josaphat.



Carol Bialek

December 5, 1934-January 1, 2023

Polanki Sustaining Member

Carol Louise Bialek (nee Wisynski) found peace January 1, 2023 at the age of 88. Lovingly survived by her husband of 60 years, John. Beloved mom of Jackie Bialek. Dear sister of Doris (Fred) Reichert and sister in-law (and cousin) of Marlene Bialek and grand-dog Kooper. Carol was loved and will be remembered by other relatives and friends.

Carol was the valedictorian of the January 1953 class of South Division High School in Milwaukee. She then went on to attend Marquette University where she graduated with honors in 3 ½ years in 1956 with a degree in Medical Technology. After graduation she began her life-long love of travel and was able to visit many states as well as Mexico before finding the love of her life and getting married in May of 1963. Carol worked in the lab of the city of Milwaukee until she was blessed with her only child, a daughter, in 1966. She then devoted the next 10+ years of her life being a stay at home mom which included becoming involved with girl scouts, PTA and volunteering at many school activities. When she did go back to work, she settled in at the labs for the Milwaukee County Medical Complex where she stayed until her retirement. Along the way she was able to fulfill a lifelong dream of visiting Hawaii and continued to see the US on many family car trips.

Carol was very proud of her Polish ancestry and was a member of Polanki, the Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee, for many years where she held the title of historian for several of those years. That role was perfect for her since she was able to incorporate her love of photography. Her retirement years gave her an opportunity to travel to Poland twice and use the Polish language that she had studied over her whole life.

Carol also had a passion for gardening and maintained a large vegetable garden at each of the 3 homes her and John shared through the years. Nothing ever went to waste, the bounty of the harvest was shared with family and friends or preserved by freezing and canning. Carol endured multiple health issues over the last 20 years of her life. She was a survivor of both breast cancer and leukemia.



Visitation was held on Monday, January 9 at CHURCH AND CHAPEL FUNERAL HOME, 15250 W. National Ave, New Berlin from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Funeral Service Celebrated 12:00 PM. Private burial.

January: Beginnings and Endings

By Marjorie Piechowski

The month of January got its name from the Roman god Janus, whose face looked both backward and forward. In ancient Roman religion and myth, Janus presided over doorways, gates, passages, and journeys, symbolizing the connection between the past and the future, the old and the new, the inside and the outside, transitions, beginnings and endings.



For Polanki January really is the month of beginnings and endings, beginning a new calendar year while ending our fiscal and business year. Let us all celebrate the many successes and memories of Polanki's 2022 while anticipating a new and even better 2023.

During 2022 Polanki members participated in and volunteered for an amazing array of community and Polanki activities after the forced inactivity during the two years of covid restrictions. With generous support from Edith Malson, Polanki's major cultural event was organizing and sponsoring a concert by Kinga Vnuk and the Modern Minstrels, "Songs of the Polish Soul," that highlighted Polish folk songs and poetry, including music composed by Kinga, followed by an elegant Polish reception.

Other events where Polanki members volunteered their time and talent to share Polish culture included the Polanki library, maintaining the landscaping at the Kościuszko monument, Syrena's Święcone, Polonia Sport Club Festivals, Polish Fest, Holiday Folk Fair International, Polish Center fish fries, St. John's Eve celebration, Fungi Fest, Polish Christmas at the Dousman Stagecoach Inn, Spring and Christmas Bazaars at the Polish Center of Wisconsin, Women's Club of Wisconsin Christmas party, and decorating the Christmas tree at the Polish Center.

The new year will bring challenges as well as opportunities. In September Polanki will celebrate its 70th anniversary, a remarkable milestone and a tribute to the visionary founders and to the loyal members who have maintained Polanki as a vibrant and resilient group ever since. During those years Polanki has supported many artistic and cultural initiatives, including concerts, exhibits, art works and contributions to Polish culture in many forms and formats. For more than fifty years Polanki has provided academic achievement awards to hundreds of outstanding college students. To thrive for another seventy years we will need to evaluate the kinds of programs and activities that will best promote Polish culture while keeping in mind the demographics of our membership, busy lives, and a society that has changed in many ways since Polanki's founding. With your help and input, we look forward to transitions and new beginnings!

2022 Christmas Party

By Nadine Flemming

Polanki's 2022 Christmas Party took place at the Polish Center of Wisconsin on Sunday, December 18. I believe everyone had a wonderful time (but I am slightly biased). A cash bar was available for everyone to start celebrating while listening to prelude music provided through the generosity of Camille Shaw. Once we heard a beautiful peace prayer read by President Laurie Ufnowski and provided by Maria Adamiec, and shared Oplatek, (brought by Jean Wroblewski) with each other, we began to enjoy a sit down dinner (Ladies, isn't it nice to have someone else do the serving for a change?). Our menu consisted of:

Beef Vegetable Soup

Roast Pork Loin with Mushroom Sauce

Potato Cheese Pierogi

Salad with Mixed Greens, Cranberries, Feta Cheese, Pecans, Raspberry Vinaigrette

Green Beans Almondine

Tomatoes Florentine

Hot French Bread with Chive Butter

Coffee and Tea

Home baked and Hand decorated Polish themed cookies (mushrooms, ornaments that said *Wesołych Świąt*, and pierogi) for dessert (I especially thought the smiling pierogi were cute).



After our bellies were practically bursting, we listened to a short talk (by a cute kid-my son, Creston Flemming) on how the Poles actually were the ones who cracked the Enigma Code of WWII. Following the presentation we got to sing *Kolędy* led by Adrienne Zuber and her impromptu choir. (Such Fun!) Afterwards, Helen Miller and Laurie Ufnowski conducted the Laski raffle with approximately \$1200 dollars being raised.(Thanks ladies for your never-ending generosity to this well deserving organization). Many people went home with some gorgeous items donated by our Polanki membership, including the amazing centerpieces provided by Pat Koronkowski.

Our party couldn't have been a success without the help of our members. In addition to the people mentioned above, I would like to offer my thanks to the following ladies for their time and efforts as well:

All the board members for their support of the event

Diane Holytz for designing the invitation and name tags

Denna Flemming for handling the reservations

Marjorie Piechowski for distributing the invitations and sending out numerous reminders regarding the deadline

Joanne Barndt and Susan Mikos for their photographic skills (can't wait to see the pictures)

Darla Flemming for acting as our MC at the event (public speaking isn't my forte)

Martha, Chef Mike and the Polish Center staff for their expertise and attentiveness during the event

Please accept my apologies if there is anyone I forgot to thank. It definitely wasn't intentional. If you weren't able to make it to this party, please mark your calendar for next year's event--December 10, 2023 at the Polish Center of Wisconsin! Hoping to see you then (if not before!)



Norman Knox, Helen Miller, Ewa Barczyk, Camille Shaw, Laurie Ufnowski at PCW wigilia



Laurie Ufnowski and her mother, Virginia Ockwood



Kathy Camacho, Adrienne Zuber, Paul and Louise Cieslak, Maria Adamiec, Teresa Frankowski, Judy Chattin, Lynn Adams, Ewa Barczyk: the Polanki Choir at the Christmas Party

Photos contributed by Polanki Members



Rachel Hooten, Jean Wroblewski, Jane Dunn



Flemming Family: Denna, Nadine, Darla, Creston





Polanki Tear-down crew for the Christmas tree at the Polish Center:
Camille Shaw, Patrick Shaw, Teresa Frankowski, Kathy Wieczorek, Jean Wroblewski
Photo courtesy of Jean Wroblewski

Our Family Christmas Party at the Polish Center

By Gloria Skwierawski

Every year for at least the past fifty years, my extended family – brothers, sister, in-laws, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and, now, great nieces and nephews - about 65 of us - have gathered on a December Sunday before Christmas. We outgrew our houses so now, for at least the past ten years, we come to the Polish Center. We use nine tables in the Veterans' Room for eating our brunch and omelets, for singing traditional Christmas Carols (always ending with our mother's favorite, "Dzisiaj Betlejem." Then someone dons a red hat to play Santa and passes out one gift to all the youngsters.

But because of covid, we have been unable to have our party for the last 2 years, so we actually haven't been together for almost 3 full years. We all were worried that it might have to be postponed again this year with rampant flu, RSV and covid rearing their ugly heads. But it happened! In all our years, we all have become



accustomed to walking into the big hall for the buffet. The omelet station is set up right in front of the tree and seeing the large Polanki decorated Christmas tree and the szopka on the table in front of the big windows is a highlight. In not seeing them for several years, they took on a new, warm meaning for us this year. They made us feel at “home.”

But also, there was something new this year because we had five new babies added to the mix, ranging from 4 years old to 1 month old. They added a new dimension to the party, but in particular, when they saw the tree their eyes widened and were filled with that glowing childish awe. When they moved to the szopka they were just as fascinated. Its doors are right in front of them at eye level. Every mom had to be on guard to stop the little fingers from reaching up to touch everything. Watching them as they saw everything for the first time made me appreciate our Polish decorated tree, our customs and Polanki's work even more.

Global Volunteers

Photos and Story Courtesy of Lynn Adams

Global Volunteers is an organization based in St. Paul Minnesota. It uses volunteers for service projects around the world. Although teaching conversational English was not an original project, Poland had a labor force that had a need for the Poles to learn English and thus this project began more than 35 years ago.



View from Lynn's balcony in Zakopane

The Polish main location is in Siedlce county at an estate named Reymontówka. In the summer, camps are held at Reymontówka and have also been held in Zakopane. The camps run through the summer in two-week increments. However, the camps were put on hold for the last two years because of covid. During the school year volunteers work in the local rural schools. Students are evaluated for their English abilities and then put into small groups accordingly. At camp, the morning activities consist of games, puzzles, walks, etc. The main idea is to get students to speak with native English speakers. Afternoons are for fun.

I have served at 10 camps throughout the years. Laurie Ufnowski and Jessica Ullstrup each joined me for a summer camp and both reported that their experience was wonderful. Through the generous donations from Polanki, we have sponsored two scholarships each year for over 5 years. It is money well spent and much appreciated by the students.



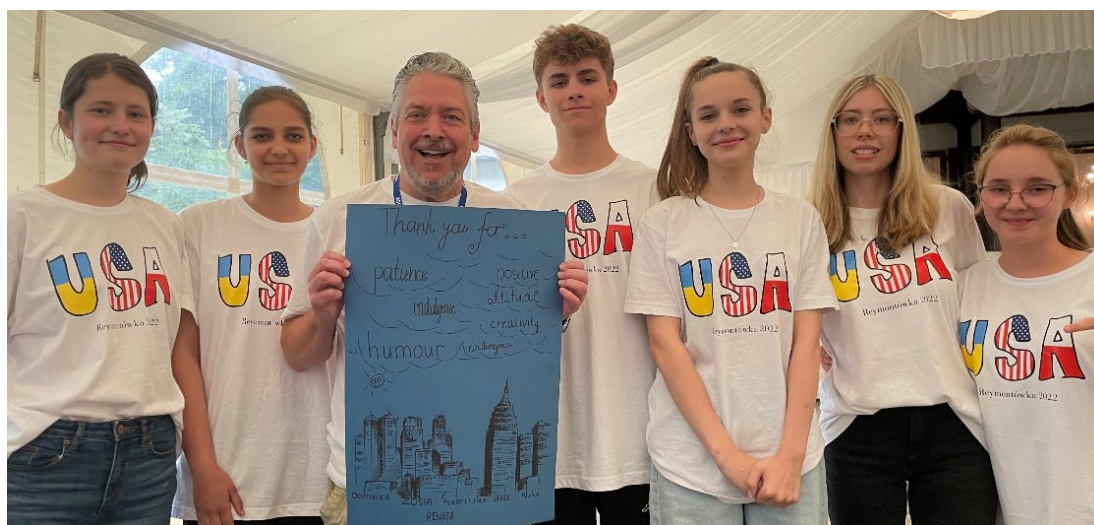
(Left to right, Jessica Ullstrup Condit, student, Lynn Adams)



Lynn with students

We recently received the following message from Dorota Wierzbicka, Director of International Operations and Poland Country Manager, notifying us that the last two students sponsored by Polanki were young Ukrainians who were thrilled to have the opportunity to learn English and receive our financial support.

The photos of the scholarship recipients are attached. This year they were awarded to the two Ukrainian girls who joined the local community/school in Iganie, Poland after fleeing from the war in Ukraine into Poland. They are Veronica Bazko (second from the left) and Renata Protsak (the last one on the right). They are pictured here with their teacher from New York (Leo Pyzynski), who is also of the Polish descent. Bardzo dziękuję!



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OTHER POSITIONS

<i>Sunshine Co-Chairs</i>	Edith Malson Judy Chattin
<i>Financial Review Committee</i>	Judy Chattin Sue Konecny Heddy Moskaluk
<i>Web Master</i>	To be named



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.piechowski@sbcglobal.net or at 414-963-9055.

Marjorie Piechowski

2022 Polanki Newsletter Editor



[Photo courtesy of Marjorie Piechowski]

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