



Polanki, Inc.

The Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee Newsletter

November (listopad) 2023

NOVEMBER 15, 2023

MEMBERSHIP MEETING 6:30 P.M.

POLISH CENTER OF WISCONSIN

6941 South 68th Street, Franklin, WI 53132

Hostesses: Ewa Barczyk, Louise Cieslak, Susan Cieslak, Teresa Frankowski, Sue Holcomb, Joy Kuharske

Program: Professor Bożena Tieszyn from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee will speak about Polish dog breeds and possibly bring a special guest

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 November... I cannot believe that October is already done but it was a very busy and successful month for Polanki. We had many events that spread our mission and gained awareness about Polanki throughout the community, with pictures of these events appearing later in the newsletter.

Fungi Fair was a wonderful event that helped our treasury with Polish merchandise sales to help continue our mission. Now we are beginning the very busy holiday season.

Polanki will be involved in the International Holiday Folk Fair, the Christmas Bazaar, and a docent-led tour of the European Village at the Milwaukee Public Museum for Polanki members on November 11. November will be a busy month and December will come all too soon.

I want to thank all the members who have volunteered and supported Polanki throughout the year. You all are amazing, and we would not be the strong, vibrant organization we are without all of you.

I want to encourage all members when they get that call to volunteer to please help as much as you can. I totally understand we are ALL very busy but that is why if we have many volunteers, it makes the tasks much easier.

I also want to make sure to let everyone know Nadine Flemming and her daughters are planning a beautiful Christmas party to be held at the Polish Center of Wisconsin on Sunday December 10. I encourage everyone to attend. Flyers are included with this newsletter to make your reservations. I know it will be a beautiful event and I am so looking forward to it. These gatherings always make me feel so good and so proud to be a member of Polanki.

Finally, I want to wish everyone a happy blessed Thanksgiving. I hope you and your family have time to make wonderful memories together. It is one of my favorite holidays. I always feel so fortunate to be able to celebrate it with my family. We have many special memories.

Since my Mom turned 95 on October 31st this year will be extra special. We as a family treasure these times with her and she so loves seeing her family. My sister-in-law is a fabulous cook, so the meal and the company make it so enjoyable. I can still see my Dad's smiling face and the love and the laughter that permeated the room. I always hold that in my heart.

Wishing everyone many blessings as we enter the holiday season.

Warm regards,

Laurie Ufnowski
2023 Polanki President



If you know of any Polanki members who are sick, please contact Judy Chattin, who is serving as Co-Chair this year with Edith Malson.

Edith Malson (414) 744-9412
Judy Chattin (414) 425-7965

Sunshine best wishes to Sustaining Member Virginia Hirsch, who had knee replacement surgery and is recovering at home. Polanki also sends wishes for a quick recovery to the husbands of two Active Members, Jane Dunn and Jean Wroblewski. Jerry Dunn had a mild heart attack and Ron Wroblewski is recovering from acute angina.

2023 Polanki Christmas Party on December 10

By Nadine Flemming

Due to the elegant festivities to celebrate Polanki's 70th Anniversary, the Christmas party will be a more casual event this year. New items this year will be a buffet of all Polish foods and a Koledy sing-a-long of both Polish and English carols. Our yearly favorite, the raffle to benefit Laski, the school for blind Polish children, will again be part of our celebration.

Don't forget to submit your reservation before November 27th. The price this year for members is \$37. Details about the party are on the invitation included with this newsletter. Hope to see everyone there!



November Birthdays

11/04 Margaret Cieslak-Etlicher
11/07 Amy Konecny
11/08 Susan Konecny
11/15 Bette Dulka
Anne Wal
11/18 Dorothy Fennig
11/21 Helen Miller
11/22 Kathy Murkowski
11/29 Camille Shaw
11/30 Joan Shrout
Alena Wadzinske

And apologies to new member
Grace Slapczynski, whose birthday was October 23.

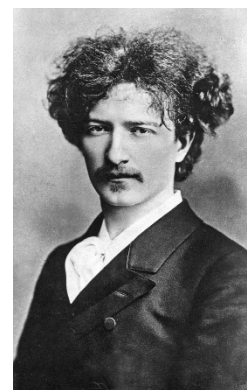
December Birthdays

12/03 Janet Protasiewicz
12/05 Elaine Posard
12/07 Shirley Sternig
12/08 Susan Browne
12/13 Diane Laus
12/14 Denna Flemming
12/16 Jane Dunn
Jean Wroblewski
12/20 Maria Adamiec
12/21 Carol Knudson
12/26 Halina Sosnowski
12/30 Therese Kurszewski

Happy November 6 birthday to Ignacy Jan Paderewski

Born on November 6, 1860 in Kuryłówka, Podolia province in Russian Poland, Ignacy Jan Paderewski died on June 29, 1941 in New York City. He was a world-famous Polish pianist, composer, and statesman, who served as prime minister of Poland in 1919. The son of a steward of a Polish landowner, he studied music from 1872 at the Warsaw Conservatory and from 1878 taught piano there. In 1880 he married one of his pupils, Antonina Korsak, who died in childbirth the following year. Encouraged and financed by the actress Helena Modrzejewska (Modjeska), he studied in Vienna from 1884 to 1887. Between 1887 and 1891 he made his first public appearances as a pianist, in Vienna, Paris, London, and New York City. His success with the public was overwhelming; his personality on the concert platform, like that of Liszt, his predecessor among piano virtuosos, generated a mystical devotion.

Throughout his life Paderewski was a staunch patriot. In 1910 he presented to the city of Kraków a monument commemorating the 500th anniversary of the victory of the Poles over the Teutonic Order. During World War I he became a member of the Polish National Committee and was appointed its representative to the United States, where he urged President Woodrow Wilson to support the cause of Polish independence. Wilson included Poland's cause as the 13th of his Fourteen Points of January 8, 1918. After the war the provisional head of state, Józef Piłsudski, asked Paderewski to form in Warsaw a government of experts free from party tendencies. This was formed on January 17, 1919. Paderewski reserved the portfolio of foreign affairs for himself, but his premiership was not a success. In 1921 he resumed his musical career, giving concerts in Europe and the United States, mainly for war victims. *Written by Melissa Albert; fact-checked by The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica; Last Updated: November 8, 2023*



A Busy Fall for Polanki



Polanki Hosts Reception for Czechoslovak Genealogical Society

Submitted by Susan Mikoś

Polanki hosted a reception on October 17 at the Polish Center for members of the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, who were in town for their convention. It was enjoyable to mix with like-minded individuals belonging to neighboring ethnic groups.



Fun at Fungi Fair

Photos by Susan Mikoś



Polanki members represented Polish culture at the Polish Center's Fungi Fair on October 15 with merchandise sales and library exhibits of books featuring Polish mushrooms.



Another event where Polanki represented Polish culture was the International Heritage Festival in New Berlin on October 14.

2023 Recognition for Years of Polanki Membership

Each year Polanki recognizes members for their loyalty and commitment to Polanki by presenting them with flowers at a membership meeting to commemorate their years of service. Active Members are noted with A, Life Members with L, and Sustaining Members with S. This year we will honor the following at the November membership meeting:

5 years

Juliane Gaseor-S
Beth Gavin-S
Kathy Murkowski-A
Nancy Purtell-S
Elena Shebelski-A
Joan Shrout-S
Jane Sorenson-S
Mary Wasielewski-S
Jeanne Ziebka-S
Marilyn Zuehlke-S

15 Years

Sybil Grandeck-S
Tamara Johnston-A
Roma Numrych-A

25 Years

Ewa Barczyk-A

30 Years

Jane Dunn-A
Jean Wroblewski-A

45 Years

Dorothy Fennig-S
Heddy Moskaluk-L



Poland's Culture of Clothing – Discovering Regional Traditions

This year the International Holiday Folk Fair is featuring traditional dress. This article, retrieved from LonelyPoland.com on November 7, 2023 <https://www.lonelypoland.com/author/admin/> gives some history and background about traditional Polish costumes.

Traditional folk costumes are a fascinating aspect of Poland's village culture. They used to signify one's social group and express their status, while also highlighting the importance of various celebrations, both personal and community-related. In some cases, these costumes even served as symbols of national affiliation. Polish folk costumes experienced their greatest development in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. This was partly due to the enfranchisement of peasants and the shift from a self-sufficient economy to a commodity-based one, as well as the rapid growth of industry.

The costume's appearance depended on the region, climate, economy, and socio-economic factors. Inspiration often came from the clothing of nobility, bourgeoisie, and military uniforms. European fashion from the Baroque and Renaissance periods also played a role. The intricacy of each costume's decoration was influenced by the wealth of the ethnographic group and the individual owner. In Poland, there is an incredible variety of folk costumes. At their peak, there were nearly fifty main types, each with about ten variations.

The Transformation of Folk Culture Costumes

In the years between World War I and World War II, and then after the Second World War, the role of folk costumes changed significantly. They were no longer everyday attire but became more of a representative costume. The appearance of these outfits depended on numerous factors, such as the region, its history, and prevailing socio-economic relationships. Borrowing elements from noble, bourgeois, or military uniforms was quite common, and European Baroque and Renaissance fashions also influenced their design and decorations.

Today, folk costumes are mainly worn during significant church or state ceremonies. The most valuable designs have been preserved in museum collections. Sometimes, modern clothing incorporates elements of these traditional outfits, like Podhale trousers or shoulder aprons from the Opoczno.

The Iconic Krakow Costume



One of the most recognizable costumes in Poland is the Krakow costume. It is divided into two types – Western and Eastern Krakowiaks, with the former considered the national costume. Girls in Krakow costumes wear a wreath of artificial flowers on their heads, adorned with colorful ribbons. The vests they wear are intricately embroidered, with so many details that they're practically works of art! These vests are further embellished with ribbons, beads, and sequins. The skirts worn by the Krakowiaczki feature a distinctive floral pattern, and a white, slightly transparent apron is worn on top. For men, the Krakow cap is a crucial element of their outfit. Decorated with a peacock feather and colorful ribbons, it complements the caftan – a long vest – quite well. Tassels, or fringes, are sewn onto the caftan. Gentlemen also wear breeches in a delicate red color or with small stripes.

Kosciuszko Monument Gardening Wraps Up for the Season

Submitted by Susan Mikoś

The Kosciuszko Monument is ready for winter. Thanks to Polanki members Kathy Camacho, Heddy Moskaluk, Sue Holcomb, and Camille Shaw for their hard work. Special thanks to Polanki family members Juan Camacho, Mary Moskaluk, and Debbie Moskaluk for their help and devotion. Because of Polanki and neighborhood volunteers Judy Ramazzini, Dan Jankowski, Don Rambadt, Mark Sindilar and others, the area around the monument is lovingly cared for and remains a credit to the Polish community. Milwaukee County Supervisor Caroline Gomez-Tom paid us a visit on our last day.



The Season for Giving Thanks

Submitted by Lynn Adams

Lynn Adams recently shared the following message of thanks from Dorota Wierzbicka, Director of International Operations and Poland Country Manager for Global Volunteers:

“Thanks for being such an incredible advocate for us with Polanki, the Polish Women’s Cultural Club of Milwaukee. I believe this year was the 6th year that Polanki provided scholarships for students to attend summer camp. We have students each year awaiting the announcement that the Polanki scholarship is now available!



The kids who received scholarships this year are: Lilia Zhodek and Alina Hladun. Lilia attends the school in Grala and Alina in Iganie. Both schools are in Siedlce county, and Global Volunteers partners with these schools. Both of the scholarship recipients are 12 years old, and they are Ukrainian, as there is still a great need to assist the people of Ukraine in our community.

Lilia and Alina were thrilled to receive the Polanki Scholarship for camp, where they could learn English, make friends with Polish students, and have fun as kids without worrying about the stress of what was happening at their home in Ukraine. The camp tuition includes lodging and full board for two weeks (it is an overnight camp), theatre, dance, art, and sports classes, and four hours of English per day. The kids also went on a field trip to Warsaw. Some photos of the two girls are attached. It is a wonderful opportunity for them and they are learning a lot! *Bardzo dziękuję!*

Please let me know if I can send you or Polanki any additional information. We appreciate all you do to enhance the life of these young people.”

Besides the financial support provided by Polanki, several Polanki members have volunteered as teachers at these summer camps. In addition to Lynn Adams, who has volunteered for many years, Jessica Ullstrup Condit and Laurie Ufnowski have offered their services as teachers and mentors. Not only do the volunteers contribute their time and talent but they also provide their own transportation to Poland. In return for their volunteering they are provided with room and board for the two weeks of camp.

At this time of giving thanks, Polanki is pleased that it can support the efforts of Global Volunteers. According to its webpage, “Global Volunteers is a worldwide network of local people, community leaders, volunteers, staff and board members committed to genuine human and economic development. Most of our international volunteer service programs are led by country managers who were born and raised in the host country. Together, Global Volunteers partners, board, staff and volunteers work to wage peace, promote justice and catalyze life-enhancing international volunteer service.”



Why Are Poles So Obsessed With Mushroom Picking?

Author: Natalia Mętrak-Ruda, Last updated: Oct 16 2023; derived from Culture.pl

When summer comes to its inevitable end, Poles start foraging for fungi. But what exactly is it that has Poles so mushroom mad? And how can one get started? September, October and November in Poland are filled with porcini, milk caps, chanterelles and more that are then either dried or frozen at home, given to family members or sold at markets and even by the roadside. You don't need permission to go picking nor do you have to pay for it as in many Western countries: just respect nature in all its autumn glory, and you can take part in the mushroom madness too.

Writing about the tradition of mushroom picking in Poland, one simply must start with our national epic, Adam Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*, where we find a beautiful description of this activity:



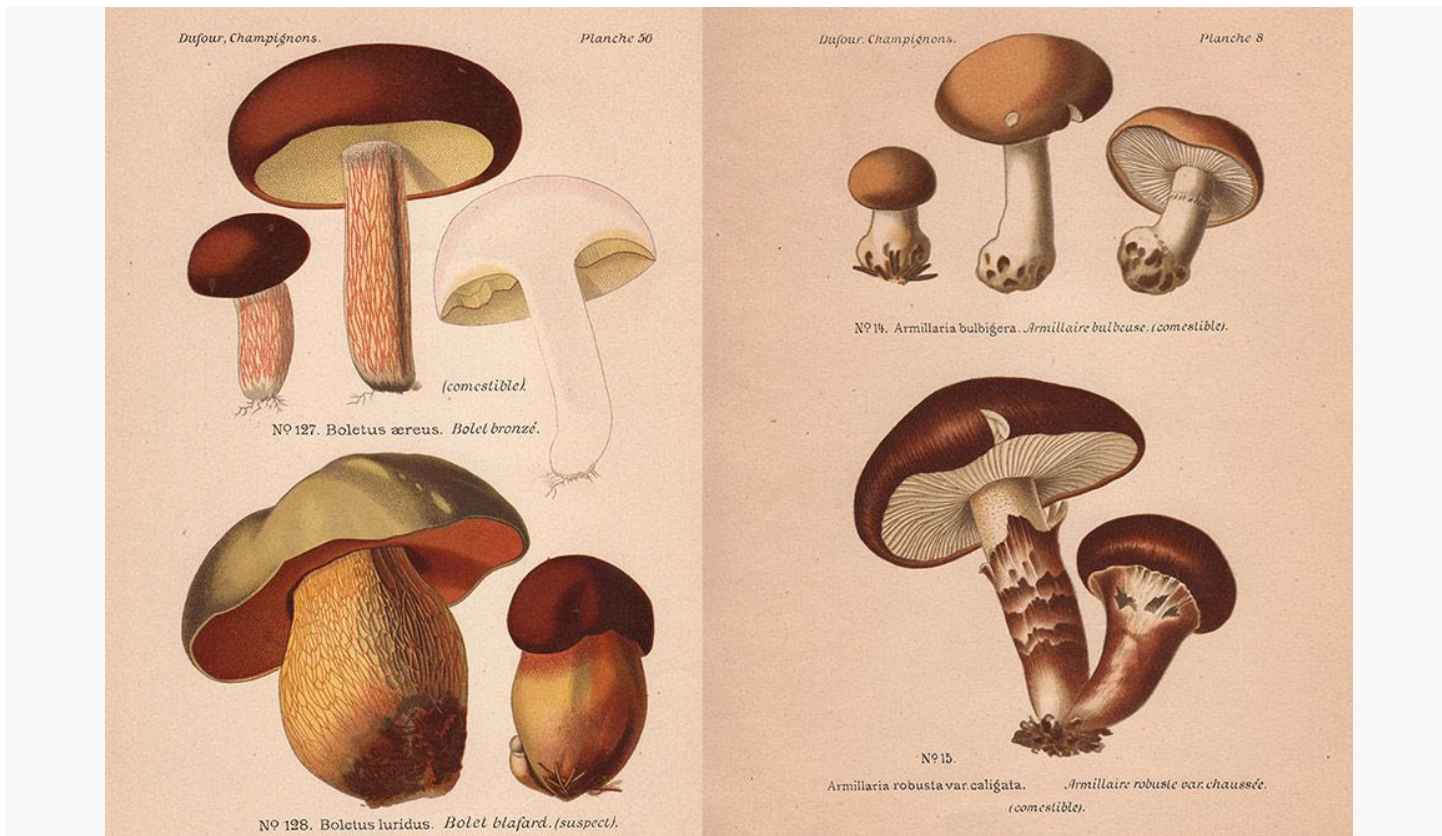
Franciszek Kostrzewski's illustration for *Pan Tadeusz*, 1860, photo: wikimedia.org

Of mushrooms there were plenty: the lads gathered
the fair-cheeked fox-mushrooms, so famous in the
Lithuanian songs as the emblem of maidenhood, for the
worms do not eat them, and, marvelous to say, no
insect alights on them; the young ladies hunted for the
slender pine-lover, which the song calls the colonel of the
mushrooms, All were eager for the orange-agaric;
this, though of more modest stature and less famous in
song, is still the most delicious, whether fresh or salted,
whether in autumn or in winter. But the Seneschal
gathered the toadstool fly-bane.

Excerpt from *Pan Tadeusz* by Adam Mickiewicz, 1834, translated by George Rapall Noyes

As Mickiewicz's masterpiece indicates, mushroom picking has been a part of Polish tradition for ages: we share it with Lithuania and with other Slavic countries, which were proclaimed 'mycophillic' by researchers R. Gordon Wasson and Valentina Pavlovna Wasson in **Mushrooms, Russia and History** (1957).

This dual view of mushrooms as both a delicacy and a mystery is visible also in modern Polish culture. On the one hand, mushroom picking is a national hobby practiced by the old and the young, and the knowledge about particular species is often passed from generation to generation. On the other, they remain something to be wary of; there's an element of risk in consuming them – every Pole must have heard the joke, "Let's hope we don't get food poisoning," after being invited to eat an intense-smelling boletus sauce made by a mushroom-picking family member.



Chromolithograph from Leon Dufour's *Atlas des Champignons Comestibles et Veneneux*, 1891,
Photo by Florilegius/SSPL/Getty Images

Marcin Kotowski, an ethnobiologist and mycologist from the University of Rzeszów, underlines that Poles throughout every region generally have a positive attitude towards mushroom collection and consumption. As research shows, mushrooms are mostly collected for personal use, and the deeply-rooted foraging tradition results in quite a diversified composition of gathered species. Kotowski adds that picking mushrooms has become more popular in recent years, since it's transcended class borders: now, not only the rural population does it, but also city folk, scholars and even modern hipsters. But what is it that draws them to this 'primal,' utterly non-modern and even potentially dangerous activity?

"It's all about nature, fresh air, and it's all about walking and looking around," says Bolesław Kurciński who's been foraging mushrooms mostly in the Mazovia and Mazury regions for more than half a century, taught by his neighbor in the 1950s.

Theatre producer and food guide Agata Balcerzak has also been foraging all her life, which – in her case – means from the early 1990s. She cannot imagine her life without mushroom picking: “I come from Piła which is surrounded by forests and ever since I can remember, autumn looked the same: I came home from school, left my bag, and went mushroom picking with my parents. We had our favourite places – birch coppices for rough-stemmed bolete and parasol mushroom, mixed woods for penny buns, the ‘path winding next to the mill’ for xerocomus and so forth. Even though I now live 400km from my parents’ home, I try to plan a mushroom-picking trip every year.”

Both agree it’s not necessarily about eating what they find – one could say that the journey counts more than the destination. Kurciński claims if he didn’t have to work, he could spend all his free time in the forest, but then he’d give most of the mushrooms away – after all, there’s only so many one can eat. Meanwhile, even though Balcerzak has learned how to pickle mushrooms for her partner and adores drying and adding them to soups and sauces, she agrees it’s the thrill of looking for them that’s most important.

Obviously, these wild mushrooms we end up collecting play an important part in Polish cuisine – we stew them, turn into soups, pickle them in vinegar, even ferment them as we do cabbage and cucumbers. Mushroom soup is a traditional Christmas Eve soup, right next to beetroot borscht served with uszka – little dumplings filled with mushrooms. And of course, one of the most traditional pierogi fillings is sauerkraut and mushrooms. This amazing combination is also the foundation of bigos – our amazing hunter’s stew.



Boletus edilis, cep or porcino, photo: Xerocomus, photo: Jan Morek /Forum

Once upon a time, mushroom picking was simply an economic necessity for individuals from rural communities who sold them (along with other forest treasures such as berries) to people from bigger cities who had no time nor inclination to visit the woods. But no longer. Now, picking mushrooms is a real business for some – there are usually tons of ceps and chanterelles at farmers’ markets every year – but also a hobby for the others, young and old alike, who want to escape the city jungle and seek silence, fresh air and contact with nature.

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<i>Advisor</i>	Camille Shaw

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<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

Thanks to all Polanki members who have submitted stories and ideas for stories and meeting programs. If you have ideas for future stories or potential meeting programs, please contact me to submit them at marjpiechowski@gmail.com or 414-963-9055.

Marjorie Piechowski
2023 Polanki Newsletter Editor



(Photo courtesy of Marjorie Piechowski)

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