



Polish Heritage

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UP-NORTH -- THE ACPC 2017 CONVENTION

by Peter Obst



Those arriving on August 9 were pleasantly surprised to find that the destination hotel "The Old Mill" resembled a movie version of an old English Tudor manor. Inside however, the arrangements were thoroughly modern. The first night reception took place in Tom Payne's room which, fortunately, had a large balcony to accommodate the overflow of guests. On Thursday the convention commenced in the Balmoral Room with the singing of national anthems (Polish, Canadian and US) by Kinga Mitrowska, voice coach of Anna Wojcik our Marcella Sembrich Competition winner. The invocation was delivered by Fr. Philip Majka. Debbie Majka introduced the Vice Consul of Poland in Toronto Natalia Iwaszko and Mayor of Mississauga Bonnie Crombie. Her Honor spoke about the diverse community she serves and how her own Polish roots positively affect her life. ACPC president Tom Payne then welcomed all who came to participate in this year's convention.

During the business sessions a number of items were taken up. Carol Surma presented the modified ACPC Constitution as amended and

approved at the Chicago Convention on Aug. 8, 2015. This document is posted on the ACPC website. Cecilia and Ray Glembocki reported on plans for the 2017 National Conference for the Social Studies in San Francisco NCSS (Nov. 17-18). They showcased two books: "A Guide to the History of Poland" and "Why I am Proud to be Polish" which they will try to distribute to interested parties. They also gave out a 4-page booklet "Polish Heritage in the Washington, D. C. Area."

Peter Obst mentioned the Oct. 7-9 Board Meeting which will take place in Savannah, GA. During morning ceremonies on Oct. 9, three

stone tablets will be dedicated. Two are sponsored by Raymond Okonski of Detroit (Pulaski, Kościuszko) and one (for Capt. Jan Zielinski) by the Savannah Gen. Casimir Pulaski Committee which is helping to organize the event together with the Georgia Coastal Heritage Society.

Debbie Majka reported that the Texas based Austin Polish Society has joined the ACPC as a Supporting Member. We welcome them heartily. Jaroslaw Golembiowski encouraged participation in the "Polonika" Polish Art website project initiated by the Polish Ministry of Culture. This is an attempt to create a world-wide data base of monuments that commemorate Polish achievement and projects built by Polish artists and engineers located outside Polish borders. Interested parties will find more information on the website and are invited to contribute information and photographs.

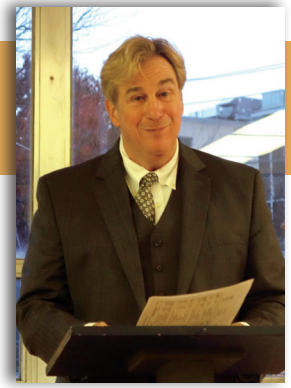
continued on page 10

ACPC 2017 Convention Delegates gather at the Katyn Memorial in Toronto.





From the President



Thomas Payne

Greetings to all!

Time flies and now the things that have happened since our last issue already seem like old news. But all who attended our August Convention agree that it was a special time, with very productive meetings, a very special Sembrich performance by a young Canadian at the lovely Polish Consulate, and a warmly charming hotel for our accommodations. It was also a great Board meeting in Savannah – the city has a great charm, we effectively reviewed our financial and organizational processes, and it was exciting to relive the early morning Battle of Savannah in which our great patriot General Casimir Pulaski valiantly gave his life for our freedom. One final note to file: Ed Krolkowski from the Savannah Committee cuts a dashing Pulaski figure.

In my last letter to membership in *Polish Heritage*, I put out a call for our affiliates to support ACPC by hosting either a Board Meeting or a Convention. I am happy to report that a positive response was received! Rochester has offered to host our Spring 2018 Board Meeting at a date to be determined in April. Minnesota has also agreed to host our Summer Convention at a date to be determined. Thanks to David Bryniarski of Polish Heritage Society of Rochester and Ed Rajtar of Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota for their leadership in proposing to their respective Boards and providing the information necessary to decide in the affirmative. We look forward to meeting with local members in those locations and exercising social and informational interchange. The spirit of service to Polish culture lives on in our ACPC affiliates!

We are also welcoming back our Minnesota organization to full-fledged affiliate status. This is a win-win for all of us and makes next year's convention much more special, as Polish Minnesotans have always been noteworthy for

their rich cultural achievements and support. Let's remember that when we focus on serving the greater good, we will reap commensurate rewards directly and indirectly. Transition from supporting organization to affiliate may result in slightly higher membership dues, but your organization stands to receive national support and you may be assured by reviewing our activities that dues are used to benefit our Polish culture in the United States. We treat all funds received very judiciously and we carefully strive to optimize the application of our resources.

Many of us have observed that it is crucial for our organizations to bring in new blood as our leaders get on in years. At the same time, new blood may have different perspectives that can conflict with the "way things have always been done." While some conflict can be healthy and lead to positive results, if it is not bounded by reason and unselfishness, it can be destructive. This is not happening at ACPC, but we must be prepared to accept newer members with possibly different perspectives and willing to implement change. Therefore, we want to make it clear that we are very open to newer members from younger generations. All that we ask is that newer members acquaint themselves with the constitution which has successfully guided us for 69 years so that limits are understood.

I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. *Wesołych Swiat!*

Thomas Payne



As the end of the year draws near, please remember the American Council for Polish Culture as you consider supporting your favorite non-profit organizations and charities.

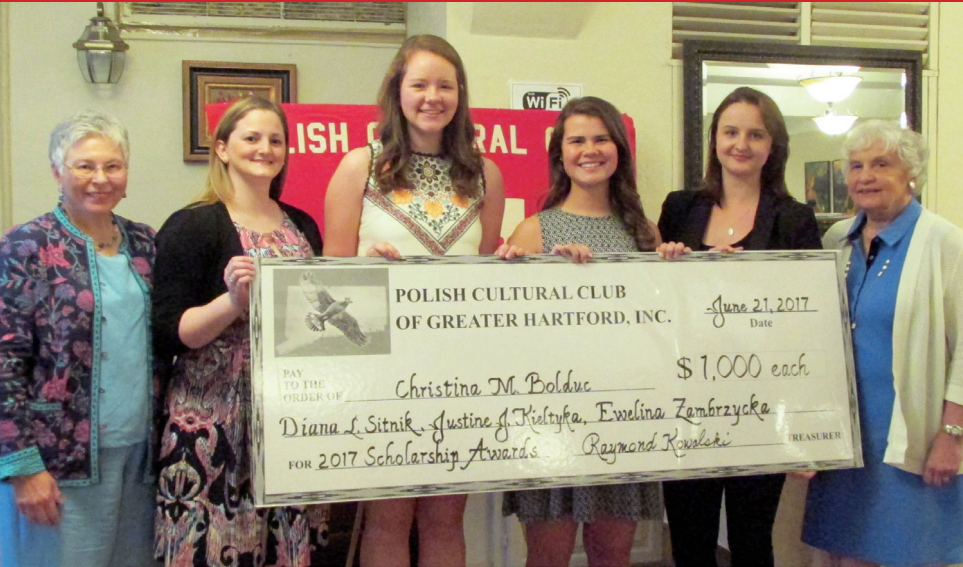
The ACPC is a 501c organization and all donations to ACPC and its projects are tax deductible.



On behalf of the Editor,
Officers and
Board of Directors
please accept our
heartfelt Best Wishes
for a Happy, Blessed
and Safe
Holiday Season!



AFFILIATE & SUPPORTING MEMBER NEWS



Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc.

At left: Gini Pudlo, Scholarship Co-Chair, Christina Bolduc, Diana Sitnik, Justine Kieltyka, Ewalina Zambrzycka, and Florence Langridge, Scholarship Co-Chair



Above: Gini Pudlo selling hand-made pierogi Christmas tree ornaments (Polish Night)

On June 11, 2017, members of the Club participated in celebrating Father Andrzej Pogorzelski's 40th Anniversary of Ordination at a mass at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church and a reception at the Polish National Home in Hartford. Father Andrzej serves as Parochial Vicar of the Parish.

The 31st annual Jennie Marconi-Javorski Scholarship Presentation and Reception were held on June 21 at the Polish National Home in Hartford. Four outstanding recipients of Polish heritage were each awarded a check for \$1,000. They were: Christina Bolduc, a graduate student at Saint Joseph University in West Hartford, CT working toward an MS degree in Nursing - Family Nurse Practitioner Concentration; Justine Kieltyka, a sophomore at Union College in Schenectady, NY, with a Neuroscience major; Diana Sitnik, a sophomore at Salve Regina University in Newport, RI with a major in Marketing and a minor in Sports Management and Business Administration; and Ewalina Zambrzycka, who will be a senior at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT, majoring in Biology. Congratulations to all.

"Polish Night at the Cora J. Belden Library in Rocky Hill" co-chaired by Patricia and Clifford Archie with the assistance of many Club members, was held on July 21. To everyone's delight, the meeting room was filled to capacity. About 125 guests enjoyed an exhibit of Polish artifacts, costumes, books, and related material, as well as a travel film on Kraków. Member Carol Oleasz, gave a well-received presentation on visiting Poland and also spoke about some of the costumes that were on display. Many of the attendees were happy to share some of their warm memories of growing up in a Polish family.

The Club is both grateful and honored to have had its former President and active member, Florence Langridge, receive the Founders Award at the ACPC's recent convention in Toronto. Kudos to Florence and the work she has done on behalf of Polonia, both locally and nationally.

Warm and hearty congratulations are expressed to Marion and Jo-Louise Winters who celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary this summer. Both are an inspiration to all who know them. Sto Lat!

Submitted by Frances T. Pudlo and Patricia A. Kaczynski, Co-Presidents, PCCGH



Above: Carol Oleasz and Cameron Torres, Club volunteers during Polish Night.

On right: Pat and Cliff Archie, Co-Chairs of Polish Night at the Library.





Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia

39th Annual Adam Styka Art Exhibit and Sale

by Jean Joka and Marie Hejnosz

The Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia, an affiliate of the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC), and in cooperation with the Pauline Fathers of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, PA officially opened the Adam Styka Art Exhibit and Sale with a preview reception on Sunday, August 27, 2017. A beautiful array of diverse works was presented and over 30 artists from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Poland exhibited this year.

Jean Joka, President of the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia, opened the program and turned the podium over to Marie Hejnosz, Director for the Adam Styka Art Exhibit and Sale.

The first prize of \$500, the Polish Heritage of Philadelphia Award, went to Michał Halisz. The 2nd prize of \$300 and 3rd prize of \$200 were funded by ACPC and were presented by ACPC past president Debbie Majka to Marek Wojtowicz and Robert Nowak. The 4th prize, the Emilia Piesecka Award, was won by Steve Zarenski, and was accepted by his wife. In addition, the following artists received Honorable Mentions: Anna Bis, Mary Beth Hucker, Justin Jdrzejczyk, Brian Oliver and Fred Place.

During the reception many people admired the beautiful art work on display and purchased chances for the great prizes that were raffled off on the last day of the Exhibit. Everyone enjoyed the delicious pastries together with wine and cheese.

The winners of the drawing were: Polish Basket of Cheer – T. Dybach, Painting – V. Chase, Boleslawiec Dish – Wolski, Wycinanki – D. Majka. As an added incentive, "The People's Choice Award," voted on by the general public, was re-established. This year there was a split vote and the winners were Nina Hons and Christopher Jodlowski.

We wish to thank everyone who contributed their time to the exhibit, especially our Judges, Jas Szygiel, Jan Zaleski, and to Father Edward Volz Director at the Shrine. Without these special people, our Exhibit would not be possible.



Photographs by Peter J. Obst



Photo captions: Top right - Beautiful program designed by Walter Piesecki. Second on right - Entry by J. Krzanowska. Third photo - one of the landscapes entered in the exhibition. Fourth on right - portrait by Maria Natoli. Above left - The ACPC 3rd prize was presented by Debbie Majka to R. Nowak with Marie Hejnosz, Styka Exhibit Chairperson. Above right - Art entries by Mr. and Mrs. Zygmunt Sawosko. Bottom right - Marie Hejnosz with Father Edward Volz (l) and Jas Szygiel.



Polish American Arts Association
of Washington, D.C.

Wianki on the National Mall

The Polish American Arts Association held its annual Festival of Wreaths, *Wianki*, on June 24, 2017, at the Reflecting Pool by the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in the nation's capital. This annual celebration of the St. John's Night customs and traditions includes live Polish music, dancing and making of *wianki*.

The audience included not only members and guests of our organization but a multitude of tourists and visitors, some from distant states and foreign countries. As they gathered near the reflecting pool, bunches of flowers and greenery were set out and young girls and ladies were invited to weave them into wreaths. At the evening's end the girls, clad in white, carried their flowery creations to the edge of the water.

Live music was provided by the "Brothers in Law Band" with Olek Skrypczuk, violin, Richie Popso, Sr., accordion, Richie Popso, Jr., acoustic guitar, and Stasia Skrypczuk, vocals. The Polish and American national anthems were sung by the PAAA scholarship recipient, tenor David Cook. Two dance groups from Baltimore performed throughout the evening. The *Ojczyzna* group, under the direction of Dennis Klima, magnificent in authentic Polish costumes, rich with brilliant colors, intricate embroidery and sparkling beadwork, started with the stately *polonez*, followed by folk dances from various regions of Poland. The youthful *Krakowiaki* group, directed by Melissa Kalinowski, no less colorful and just as spirited, alternated with dances from other regions so that all parts of Poland were represented.

At the end, as the lighted *wianki* were laid on the water, members of the audience joined the performers in singing and dancing until late in the evening.

A good portion of the evening was captured on film by the Polish Station RMF FM, as well as by Mr Polonia Music and can be seen on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/Ex6MRq2YGe0> or *Wianki w stolicy USA. Polonia promuje polską kulturę*
and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CI2ksjXSuIQ>
or *Wianki DC Main - YouTube*

Other Projects:

The PAAA provided support to the project conducted by Dr. Laura Kafka-Price, who is in the process of translating a series of songs called *Rymy Dziecięce* or *Children's Rhymes* composed by Karol Szymanowski to the poems by Kazimiera Iłakowiczówna, and assembling a book and a CD which will be used by non-Polish speaking singers to learn Polish pronunciation in singing.

In July, the *Ojczyzna* Dancers traveled to Poland to participate in the 17th International Polish Folk Dance Festival



Top Photo: *Ojczyzna* Dancers

Bottom Photo: Dancers from the *Krakowiaki* group with tenor David Cook who sang national anthem (his Polish great-grandparents were named *Klucewicz*)

in Rzeszów. The PAAA contributed financially to this trip which gave *Ojczyzna* an opportunity to acquire new ideas, refresh their repertoire and add new frills to their authentic Polish costumes.

In our Children's Book Project, we have produced an expanded 2nd edition of *POLAND: a Portrait of the Country Through its Festivals and Traditions*. Please see a separate announcement on how to order this popular book for Christmas. (page 8)

On December 10, the PAAA will celebrate Polish Christmas traditions with its annual *Wigilia* at the Monroe House, the beautiful historic mansion which is the home of the Arts Club of Washington. Information can be found on our website: www.paaa.us/ Everyone is invited!

Autumn Board Meeting & Ceremonies in Savannah

by Peter Obst

A number of ACPC Board members and committee heads made the long trip to Savannah Georgia for the autumn meeting Oct. 7-8. Among the items covered on the agenda were the annual ACPC Affiliate Project Grants. The Polish American Arts Association of Washington DC (PAAA) received a \$750 grant to match funds for a Spring 2018 Chopin Concert. Procedures for financing projects were discussed, accompanied by an excellent presentation by Richard Larkin on the designated and undesignated funds the ACPC has at its disposal.

An important part of the meeting was a review of the job descriptions for officers and committee chairs. There was also time for a bit of partying. On the evening of Oct. 8 the Savannah General Pulaski Committee of the ACPC hosted a dinner for Poland's Ambassador Piotr Wilczek at "Billy's Place," an iconic Savannah restaurant which opened that evening exclusively for the event and its invited guests.

Before the sun rose over Savannah on October 9, re-enactors of Revolutionary War military history affiliated with the Georgia based Coastal Heritage Society (CHS), gathered in the parking lot of the Savannah History Museum. Joining them were friends and interested persons, both local and from out of town. The parade, led by a color guard, followed the trail up to the battlefield, retracing the steps of colonial soldiers who marched that way on the same morning in 1779.

The atmosphere was tense as the column approached the redoubt where a bloody encounter of the Revolutionary War took place. For effect, cannon fired blank rounds, setting the atmosphere. On reaching the place of battle the soldiers formed ranks and the civilian guests took their seats. Two of the uniformed re-enactors explained the course of the battle. Emily Beck welcomed those assembled to the event in the name of the CHS.

In addition to observing the 238th anniversary of the battle, three stone tablets were dedicated for Polish-born heroes of the American Revolution: General Tadeusz Kościuszko, Gen. Casimir Pulaski and Capt. Jan Zielinski. Poland's Ambassador Piotr Wilczek explained the significance of these three persons in Polish and American history. Kościuszko was a military engineer who planned defensive fortifications at Ft. Mercer, West Point and the victorious battle at Saratoga. He later returned to Poland and led an insurrection (albeit unsuccessful) to wrest the country from the clutches of the occupying powers of Austria, Prussia and Russia. Casimir Pulaski fought for Polish independence as a cavalry commander in the Bar Confederation. Later he came to America and organized Washington's Continental Cavalry. Ultimately, he laid down his life for the cause of American freedom at the Battle of Savannah. Capt. Jan Zielinski was Pulaski's



Ray Okonski, Poland's Ambassador Piotr Wilczek, Hon. Consul Debbie Majka, Edward Krolikowski in dragoon's uniform.

cousin who led a cavalry unit during the battle of Charleston and eventually died from the wounds he received. The next speaker was Ray Okonski, of Detroit, who sponsored two of the tablets. The third (for Zielinski) was funded by the Savannah Gen. Pulaski Committee of the ACPC. Additional speakers were: Andrew Boguszewski of the Gen. Pulaski Committee and Mrs. Halina Bieniecka, an actual descendant from the Pulaski family. She ended her brief comment with a quote from Donald Trump's speech given in Poland: "The nation which forgets its defenders will be itself forgotten."

This is not about to happen, as long as there are organizations like the CHS and the ACPC. Edward Krolikowski, (Chairman of the Gen. Pulaski Committee) in a uniform of a dragoon from the Pulaski Legion, underscored the importance of the role Pulaski played in creating the American Cavalry. Daniel Fils-Aimé, Chairman of the Haitian American Historical Society, mentioned the presence of Haitian troops (in French uniform) on the field and the unique Polish-Haitian connection. During the Napoleonic Period, Polish Legionnaires in Napoleon's army were sent to quell a slave rebellion on the island. Most of the Poles deserted and joined the rebels. After the Haitian victory, these courageous Poles were granted citizenship and settled on the island.

A number of wreaths were placed on the redoubt by various organizations: the Embassy of the Republic of Poland (Amb. Piotr Wilczek), the ACPC (President Tom Payne and Hon. Consul Deborah M. Majka), the Family of Casimir Pulaski, the Sons of the American Revolution and other patriotic organizations. Representing Edward Pinkowski, the Polish-American historian, who could not be present at the ceremony, was his son Jack with wife Monica who placed

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Polish Arts Club of Trenton

PACT 2017 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS AND HONOREE LUNCHEON

The Polish Arts Club of Trenton (PACT) was proud to honor Peter J. Obst and to present \$1500 scholarships to each of 11 high school seniors of Polish descent at its 71st Annual Scholarship Awards and Honoree luncheon held on April 9, 2017 at the Trenton Country Club.

Peter Obst was born in Poznan, Poland and came to the United States in 1963. Peter is a modern Renaissance man and a staunch promoter of Polish heritage, history and culture both here and in Poland. He is a graduate of Drexel University (B.S. Commerce and Engineering) and LaSalle University (M.A. Central and Eastern European Studies). He is a licensed pilot, prolific writer and lecturer who makes many presentations on Polish topics in both English and Polish. He has also translated many books from Polish into English. Peter has been employed by the Poles in American Foundation Since 1996. The Foundation was established in Philadelphia by the well-respected Polish-American Edward Pinkowski.

Peter's efforts have resulted in the placement of many historical markers in honor of Poles in America (i.e. General Casimir Pulaski, Bridge Engineer, Ralph Modjeski, WWII Pilot Col. Francis Gabreski, etc.). Recently, he has completed an on-line tool to locate markers in the New Jersey and Pennsylvania including the area around Philadelphia. He is an active member/officer of the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia, the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC), the Kościuszko Foundation and PACT.

Peter is the recipient of numerous awards and honors including the Cavalier's Cross of the order of Merit by decree of the President of Poland and the Pulaski-O'Neill medal from the Savannah Pulaski Jubilee Committee.

Scholarships were awarded to Renata Stankowski (Ewing H.S.), Paulina Wojtera (Hopewell Valley Central H.S.), Adrian Semeniuk (Lawrenceville H.S.), Andrew Eugene Figlarz (Hopewell Valley H.S.), Filip Tomasz Gaworek (Bucks County Technical H.S.), Jakub Gocal (Pennsbury H.S.), Wiktoria Kamińska (Pennsbury H.S.), Nicole Lynn Kostrzewa (Steinert H.S.), Caroline Segan (Hamilton H. S. East), Matthew Slaza (Hopewell Valley H.S.) and Nicole Anna Zarzycka (Pennsbury H.S.). The scholarships assist the students in their pursuit of higher education and careers.

The Invocation was given by Rev. Canon Dr. Jacek W. Labinski, Pastor of St. Hedwig R.C. Parish, Trenton, NJ. PACT members, representatives from the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia and the ACPC, as well as friends and guests danced to the music of DJ Tomasz Halat. Attendees were also entertained by the Philadelphia PKM dancers who gave a special performance in honor of Peter Obst and led the attendees in the *polonaise*.

For more information about PACT and to view additional photos of the Luncheon and PACT activities please visit our web site at: www.trentonpolisharts.org.



Top Photo: Honoree Presentation to Peter Obst (left) by Vice President Henryk J. Nalepa (right) Bottom Photo: Scholarship students with Committee Co-Chairs Christine Muszynski (right) & Linda Everett (left).



One of the PKM Dancers who entertained guests and honored Mr. Obst with a colorful Polish folk dance presentation.

TRENTON



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Members of the ACPC Board of Directors with the Honorable Piotr Wilczek, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland (second from right) at the wreath laying ceremony honoring General Pulaski. Photo courtesy Cecilia Larkin.

a wreath on the redoubt. Jack Pinkowski is president of the Poles in America Foundation started by his father, which is continuing the work of research in Polish-American history. A musket salute was fired in honor of those who fell in battle on the field. White roses were placed on the three new tablets.

After the ceremonies concluded, the participants were invited to a delicious breakfast set out in one of the buildings belonging to the Savannah State Railroad Museum. There Joan Wilson and Mel Gordon were signing their new

historical novel *Pulaski: The Forgotten Hero of Two Worlds*.

Thanks to Ray Okonski and the Savannah General Pulaski Committee of the ACPC proper tribute was given to three Polish heroes of the American Revolution. Keeping their memory alive is a duty we owe them for sacrificing so much to win the liberties which we enjoy today. More photographs from this impressive event can be seen on the ACPC website under Reports - Board Meeting - Autumn 2017 (www.polishcultureacpc.org)

POLAND

A Portrait of the Country Through its Festivals and Traditions

POLAND - A Portrait of the Country Through its Festivals and Traditions, is a children's book project sponsored by the Polish American Arts Association of Washington, D. C. The first edition, published in 2015, met with a very positive response and is now sold out. Thanks to continued support from the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Poland, as well as generous donations from the Kościuszko Foundation, other organizations, and individual donors, we have now published the second, expanded edition of the book.

The purpose of the book remains the same - to provide a resource for children, their teachers and parents to help them learn about the customs and traditions of Poland. The new edition, available in hard and soft cover, has a larger page format, upgraded binding, and additional 20 pages with more stories, crafts, recipes and songs - all reflecting the essential character of Poland.

Our goal is to get the books distributed to various libraries, Polish schools and organizations across the country. If your group is interested in acquiring copies of the book for your own use or to donate to a school or library, please let us know and we will arrange to send them. Your tax-deductible contributions will enable us to distribute more copies.

The book is available for \$24 for hard cover and \$15 for soft cover. Volume discounts are available. Please send your order with a check made out to *The Polish American Arts Association*, noting it's for the *POLAND* book project - to: **Mrs. Cecilia Glembocki, 911 Saddleback Ct., McLean, Va 22102.**

Cecilia's email is polandchildrensbook@gmail.com. This beautiful book is ideal for Christmas giving! To enjoy more of the book, visit our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolandChildrensBook/> Many thanks for your support!





A Call for Support to Honor Jan de Rosen

Jan de Rosen is one of the great mural artists of his century. He brought his work in the tradition of Europe's greatest artists to this country just before the Second World War. He was commissioned to paint murals for the 1939 New York World's Fair. When World War II began with the invasion of Poland by the Nazis, he was unable to return to his homeland.

He was a founding member of the Pittsburgh Polish Arts League and, when he moved to the Washington area he was made an Honorary Member of the Polish American Arts Club.

In 2005 a cenotaph (a marker with no interred body) was dedicated by the ACPC by ceremonies at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Częstochowa in Doylestown, PA. The monument was placed between that of Ignacy Jan Paderewski and General Anders.

Now, in 2017 we are going to erect a smaller marker sculpted by our member Gordon Kray at de Rosen's actual grave site in Colombia Gardens, Arlington, VA. We urgently need funds to complete this project and fervently ask for your donations in order to honor this deserving artist, patriot and fellow member.



Above: Detail of de Rosen mural in the Armenian Cathedral in Lvów. Photo courtesy David Motak.



Above right: "Christ in Majesty" mosaic by Jan Henryk de Rosen in dome of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C..

Please send donations to:

PAAA (Polish American Arts Association of Washington D.C.)
c/o Cecelia Larkin, Pres.
9029 Timberwolf Ct.
Vienna, VA 22182

On the Memo line, please write *for de Rosen Fund*

submitted by Mary Flanagan, Committee Chair

Wachtel Literary Awards

The Polish Heritage Society of Rochester has once again held its yearly Literary Competition for high school students in grades nine through twelve. This year, students were asked to submit an essay discussing an influential Polish-American.

Gabriel Gelke, a junior at McQuaid Jesuit High School, Rochester NY, was the recipient of a first place matching award of \$500 for his essay on Coach K from Duke University entitled "Mike Krzyzewski: A Proud Polish-American."

Gabriel is very involved in extra-curricular activities and maintains a 4.0 GPA. Not surprisingly, he is co-editor of the yearbook, a member of his High School Chorus and Music Ministry. He recently sang in the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra's Gala Holiday Pops Show as a member of the High School Chorus. Gabe is an altar server at his local parish and participates in many community service opportunities through his high school. Upon graduation, he plans to

study international relations and hopes to work for the State Department.

At this year's ACPC Spring Board Meeting in Philadelphia, it was decided to change the name of the Wachtel Literary Competition to the Wachtel Literary Awards. There had been some confusion that ACPC held its own Literary Competition when it merely matches a first place award to an affiliate or supporting organization. With this change, hopefully, more organizations will apply for a matching Literary Award.

To read the essays of this year's awardees or for further information regarding the Wachtel Literary Awards, its purpose and/or history, please go to: www.polishcultureacpc.org and then "click" on to "Competitions and Awards" and then on to "Literary Awards."

*submitted by Carolyn L. Meleski
Chair, Wachtel Literary Awards*



Gabriel Gelke



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(see: www.polonika.gov.pl) Unfortunately, this project is just getting started and the English language version of the site is not yet operational.

At noon, the lunchtime speaker was Beata Golembiowska (not related to Jaroslaw) who gave an interesting presentation on her two books: *In One Suitcase* - on Polish aristocrats living in Canada and *Theater Without Borders* about Polish theater in Toronto. To say the least, this was an unexpected exposure to two unexplored facets of the Polonian diaspora. Later, we met the team of Maria Nowotarska and Agata Pilitowska, Torontonians who are carrying on the tradition of performing in Polish. Their specialty is two-person performances on various famous and less-well-known Polish personalities in the arts. Later this year they will perform their "Monsieur Chopin" at the Polish Home in Philadelphia (Dec. 9).

Late afternoon on Thursday, convention participants hastened to the Polish Consulate General on the Ontario lakefront for the Marcella Kochanska Sembrich concert. The competition winner was 17 year-old Anna Wojcik of Toronto, a student at the Cawthra Park Secondary School. She has been studying voice with Kinga Mitrowska since she was nine. A winner of many competitions, Anna has taken part in the International Festival of Religious Song, the Festival of Polish Song, the Annual Carol Competition and the Talent Nation Rising Star Showcase. She has appeared as a soloist with the Toronto Sinfonetta, the Celebrity Symphony, and the Camerata Chamber Orchestra. She has performed to much acclaim in Brampton, Buffalo, Chicago and Warsaw. In 2015 she won the American Protege Competition and appeared in Carnegie Hall for the winners' recital. She is the 2016 recipient of the Emerging Music Artist MARTY Award.

Vice Consul Natalia Iwazsko, acting in place of RP Consul General Grzegorz Morawski, welcomed a large crowd of over 130 people to the Consulate, including many members of Toronto Polonia. Our soloist was superb and expressive, drawing much applause. Alex Wang, her accompanist on the piano, was absolutely outstanding. He is also a student in the music program of the Cawthra Park Secondary School. It was a pleasure to see such talented young people perform at a level equal to that of seasoned professionals.

On Friday morning, the group boarded a bus and toured the city of Toronto. The ride included a visit to the Roncesvalles Avenue area which is the traditional Polish neighborhood of Toronto. We visited the Katyn Memorial in nearby Beaty Boulevard Parklette, and which also features two smaller tablets, one commemorating the Smolensk Tragedy, the other, Polish citizens who were forcibly exiled into labor camps after 1940 and were often worked to death. There was barely time to visit the Chinese Market on Spadina Ave., look over Casa Loma, pause at the Distillery

Photo captions this page:

- 1) Florence Langridge (l) receives the Founders Award from 2nd VP Alicia Dutka.
- 2) Jaroslaw Golembiowski (l) receives the Cultural Achievement Award from 1st VP Robert Synakowski.
- 3) Debbie Majka presents the Distinguished Service Award to Anthony Bajdek.
- 4) Ray Okonski (l) receives the Distinguished Service Award from ACPC President Tom Payne.



District on the Lakeshore and do a quick bit of shopping at the LCB Store before going back to the Hotel.

That day the lunchtime speaker was Tomek Kniat, Publisher of the *Dziennik Polonii w Kanadzie*, who informed the delegates about "POLcast" an audio magazine available through the internet on computers, tablets and smart-phones.

The convention concluded on Saturday. Elections resulted in the re-election of Tom Payne as president and Robert Synakowski as 1st VP. Ray Glembocki took over as the new 2nd VP. Judi Tompkins continues as Treasurer, so does Marcia Lewandowski as Recording Secretary. A total of 20 resolutions were passed, including one that honored Polish-American historian Edward Pinkowski on Aug. 12, his 101st birthday (all are posted under News on the ACPC website).

The awards banquet took place in the elegant Humber Room of the Old Mill Hotel. The Founders Award was presented to Florence Langridge; the Cultural Achievement Award to Jaroslaw Golembiowski; and Distinguished Service Awards to Anthony Bajdek and Ray Okonski. Each awardee left the audience a few words to ponder, but most eloquent was the 92 year-old Ray. During his tongue-

in-cheek presentation he spoke about how he "made" his money the old fashioned way (by printing it) and underscored his "cash to burn" finish by spontaneously igniting a fake fifty-dollar bill. His listeners received samples of genuine two-dollar banknotes as souvenirs. It was an enjoyable evening that was toasted later in Tom Payne's "hospitality suite." Thus concluded the ACPC's visit with our friends "up-north" and the hope that we will meet once again at the next convention after another year's passage.

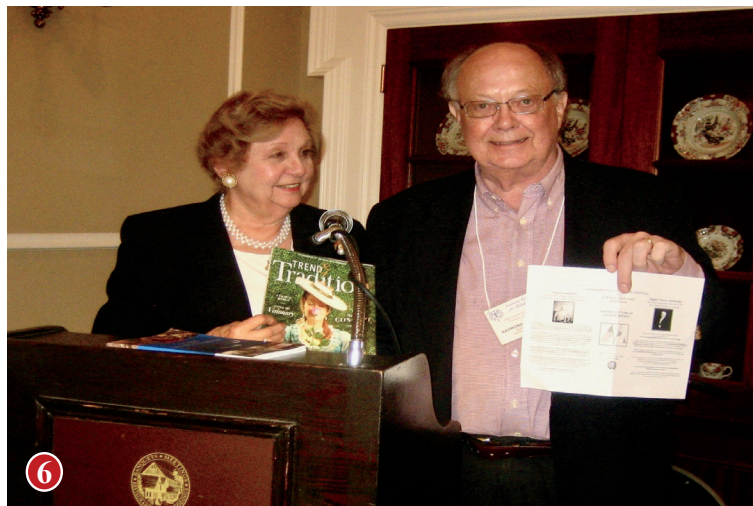


Photo captions this page:

- 5) (l to r) Robert Dutka, Tom Payne, Mary Ellen Tyszka, Peter Obst, and Christina Topolosky.
- 6) Cecilia and Ray Glembocki present on the NCSS.
- 7) (l to r) Debbie Majka, Richard Larkin, ACPC President Tom Payne, Accompanist Alex Wang, Singer Anna Wojcik, Music Committee Chair Jaroslaw Golembiowski, Alicia Dudka.

Photos courtesy Jackie Kolowski



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