



# Polish Heritage

Published Triannually by the American Council for Polish Culture

Winter 2014

Vol. 65 No. 1



## 2014 Convention Site Announced

Dear ACPC Board Members -

Happy New Year--albeit a frigid one! 'Hope you're staying warm and cozy as we weather these arctic blasts.

We're happy to advise that our 66th annual convention will take place at the Hyatt Regency-Buffalo Hotel, Two Fountain Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14202, from July 30 - thru August 2.

We will be signing a contract with the hotel sometime today at a sleeping room rate of \$139/night.

Our plan will be similar to that of last year's convention in Baltimore and will, of course, include a Sembrich recital. Should you wish to see the hotel, go to: buffalo.hyatt.com.

At this early date, we are unable to provide you with any additional specifics, but urge you to put the dates in your calendar and plan to attend what promises to be a delightful and rewarding convention.

Any ideas for speakers or any other events to take place at the convention, please advise. We welcome your input.

Regards,

Debbie Majka and Tom Payne,  
Convention Co-chairs  
(215) 627-1391

### REMINDER:

To all Supporting Organizations and Affiliates Just a friendly reminder regarding recruiting applicants for the annual \$2,000 scholarship award for summer study at a University in Poland. Please send all documents to Alice Laning no later than April 1, 2014. Thank You!



Promoting Polish Culture at the NCSS St. Louis Conference...

## "A GREAT HIT"

For the 15th year, the American Council for Polish Culture introduced Poland and Polish culture at the National Council for Social Studies National Conference (NCSS). The conference attracted over 3,400 educators at this year's gathering in St. Louis, Missouri November 22 - 23, 2013. As these photos indicate, many visitors to the "Polish Perspective" booth was enthusiastic about the ACPC's exhibit, as well as the presentation by noted investigative reporter and best selling author Rita Cosby, which was also sponsored by the ACPC.

The *Polish Perspectives* presentation was co-chaired by Cecilia and Raymond Glembocki with assistance by Honorary Consul of Philadelphia, Deborah Majka and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Brzezinski of the ACPC St. Louis chapter affiliate.

According to project co-chair, Cecilia Glembocki, Rita Cosby was the "buzz" of many educators as they awaited her presentation. There a high level of excitement from the Board of Directors of the NCSS conference who were "absolutely delighted" to have ACPC's help in sponsoring such a celebrity at the NCSS Conference.

The ACPC's corner booth featured many items, including Polish posters, the Polish Perspective CD and material on such Polish customs as Świąconka and Wigilia. There



Photos from top: Conference attendees show enthusiastic interest in Polish studies; Project co-chairs Cecilia and Raymond Glembocki; Second photo above: Author Rita Cosby (right in photo) with conference attendees; Bottom photo: Ms. Coby and her book, "Quiet Hero" created a tremendous "buzz" at the conference.

Article continued on page 10



## From the President



Camille Kapielski

With the arrival of spring 2014, we put snow, frigid temperatures, difficult ventures behind and relish in our accomplishments. The fall Board meeting in St. Louis, Missouri brought fond memories, renewal of friendships, new acquaintances, serious work, suggestions, ideas which will add to our "repertoire" and new programs which have yet to be implemented.

A most successful National Council for Social Studies Conference was held in late November in St. Louis, Missouri, chaired by Cecilia and Raymond Glembocki. Their "Polish Perspective" Booth enlightened and excited some of the 3,500 educators and the best selling author Rita Cosby with her father's story "Quiet Hero" elicited a "buzz" amongst educators as they attended her presentation. Congratulations for a job well done and looking forward to Boston.

I eagerly await spring, new challenges and opportunities that lay before us. Spring is a time for ACPC to renew, grow, offer creative ideas and begin an exciting journey.

The ACPC preamble states we are to develop and foster pride in our heritage and spread knowledge among Americans of all backgrounds. We are fulfilling our task as our Spring Board Meeting will be held on February 28th through March 1 in Savannah, Georgia, and we will celebrate the "Father of the American Calvary - Hero of Two Continents" and the 267th Birthday of Casimir Pulaski. The Pulaski Committee of Savannah is hosting a birthday luncheon in his honor. The Revolutionary hero was and is revered amongst Georgians. ACPC is connected to historic Savannah as it played a prominent role in the restoration of the Pulaski Monument and the scientific study and reinterment of Pulaski's remains.

Continuing with our mission, the 66th -2014 ACPC Convention will take place in historic Buffalo, New York from July 30 to August 2, at the Hyatt Regency Buffalo Hotel. Plan on attending a hard working, enjoyable, entertaining convention in a city with Polish and Polish American ties.

ACPC is focusing on creating a stimulating, creative environment for professional and student development. We are requesting topics, ideas, suggestions that can be utilized at proposed group discussions, mini conferences at future conventions.

A "Do You Know" column will appear in the *Polish Heritage* and ACPC will be involved in the Student National History Day project and are working on a Comix. I need your assistance and participation to keep moving forward.

Directors possess unique perspectives and we can provide a platform, but your attendance and input are

critical for success.

Affiliate presidents are automatic Board members, and I urge you to attend ACPC meetings and conventions and share your expertise, your activities and successes. Committee chairs submit information to Webmaster, Peter Obst [pjo@aol.com](mailto:pjo@aol.com) and to the new Public Relations person, Aundrea Herschmeyer - [aheschmeyer@yahoo.com](mailto:aheschmeyer@yahoo.com). Scholarship information availability, criteria is available via E-mail. The ACPC archives are located at Central Connecticut State University and they will also store affiliate records. The archive Contact is Clifford Archie at [zarchie@comcastnet](mailto:zarchie@comcastnet)

Commemorating anniversaries make sense when we draw lessons from them, learn from them and attempt to build a better future. 2014 has many notable Polish Anniversaries and here are a few:

- 650th- anniversary of the establishment of the Jagellonian University,
- 500th-Nicolas Copernicus in his Letter Commentary brought forth a revolutionary notion that the earth orbits the sun
- 395th-Poles in Jamestown stage 1st strike for right to vote
- 220th-Kościuszko's Uprising
- 165th-Frederick Chopin death
- 100th-Beginning of World War I
- 95th-Pilsudski -1st premier of newly created Republic of Poland
- 75th-Invasion of Poland-Beginning of World War II
- 70th-Battle of Monte Cassino, Battle of Falaise, Warsaw Uprising, etc.
- 66th-NATO established
- 30th-Murder of Father Jerzy Popieluszko
- 25th Fall of Communism -1st free Polish Parliamentary Elections. Influenced Pres. George Bush to return Paderewski's remains to Poland
- 15th-Poland's entry in NATO
- 19th-Poland's entry into European Union.

Although the future will be challenging yet hopefully rewarding, I again appeal for your strong participation and cooperation and am looking forward to seeing and working with you in Savannah, Buffalo, and thereafter.

Kindest regards,

*Camille Kapielski*



## Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia POLONAISE BALL

by Jean Joka, Communications Director  
Photographs: Andrew Pustelniak



On Saturday, November 16, 2013, the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia held its annual Polonaise Ball and Awards Presentations at the Torresdale-Frankford Country Club in Northeast Philadelphia.

Marie Hejnosz, President of the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia, greeted everyone as they arrived. Cocktails and *hors d'oeuvres* were served in the President's Room, while violinist Alice Marie Quirk entertained during the cocktail hour.

Brother Michael McGinniss, President of LaSalle University, offered the invocation. After dinner was served, this year's honoree Edward Turzanski, Vice President and Professor at LaSalle University and a well respected leader in the Polonia community was presented the Achievement Award.

Deborah M. Majka, Honorary Consul of Poland, Southeastern Pennsylvania introduced Mateusz Stasiek, Deputy Consul General, Polish Consulate, New York, who in turn bestowed upon Mr. & Mrs. Bonifacy Obst the *Medal for Long Marital Life*, and the *Officers Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland* to the Honorable Joseph Zazyczny. A truly memorable evening, which was cherished by all in attendance and particularly family and friends of the honorees.

We were entertained by the PKM Dancers, including a special dance with audience participation in the *polonaise*. Dance music was provided by the Dennis Ostopowicz Band. The evening concluded with our Chinese Auction.

This event was one of the best ever. Over 100 guests attended. Thanks are due for the effort and time expended by the Polonaise Ball Committee (Irene Musman, Jim Malinowski and Jean Joka), Executive Board and members of the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia. All proceeds from the Polonaise Ball benefit the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia Scholarship Fund.



### Photo Captions:

Photo 1: The PKM Dancers perform the Krakowiak during the entertainment portion of the program;

Photo 2: The Hon. Mateusz Stasiek, Deputy Consul General of the Polish Consulate, New York with Deborah M. Majka, Honorary Consul of Poland, Southeastern Pennsylvania,

Photo 3: Mr. & Mrs. Bonifacy Obst, Peter Obst, Deputy Consul Mateusz Stasiek, Polish Consulate New York;  
Photo 4: Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Zazyczny;  
Photo 5: Marie Hejnosz, President of the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia with honoree Edward Turzanski.



*Dave Motak with his award winning szopka and the newly published szopka scholarly work.*

## PCC Member Honored for Promoting Polish Culture Through the Arts

David Motak, member of the board of directors of the Polish Cultural Council, has been appointed to a prestigious Polish commission to promote Polish culture internationally among Polonian youth. *Być Polakiem* ("To Be a Pole") is a world-wide initiative of the Polish government that serves to stimulate pride in Polish heritage through a variety of projects that encourage young Polonians to experience their Polish ancestry through the arts. This is accomplished through the sponsorship of a variety of programs in Polish communities around the world as well as through an annual international competition in which young persons of Polish ancestry express their heritage through poetry, prose and art.

The Pittsburgh-based graphic designer and noted szopka artist was appointed to serve as a member of the organization's honorary committee due to his continued efforts to promote Polish culture internationally as well as his programs for children and youth.

Regarded as an noted expert on the szopka art form, Motak has exhibited his work internationally and was the first artist to promote the szopka art form in Asia with a major exhibition of his work in Hong Kong, China in 2011. His work has also been commissioned by various American galleries, including the noted Gagosian Gallery in New York and the Frederik Meijer Gallery in Grand Rapids, MI. His work has also been commissioned for numerous

*continued on page 6*

## PCC Welcomes Ambassador



*Rick Pierchalski, President, Polish Cultural Council (left) with Ambassador Ryszard Schnepf.*

Pittsburgh Polonia welcomed the Hon. Ryszard Schnepf, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States on May 10, 2013. The visit was co-hosted by the Polish Cultural Council of Pittsburgh (PCC) and the Polish Falcons of America. During his visit, the Polish Cultural Council arranged for Ambassador Schnepf to meet Pittsburgh area students at Hampton High School and join with them via Skype in a live discussion with students at the Liceum Ogólnokształcące, a private high school in Warsaw. The Ambassador also delivered a special address on U.S.-Poland relations at the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh. Afterwards, Ambassador Schnepf was hosted at a special reception at the residence of Polish Cultural Council President Rick Pierchalski which provided the Polish diplomat with the opportunity to informally interact with representatives of area Polonia.

## Library Event Celebrates Polish Heritage



Once again, this past October, the Polish Arts League was invited back to Celebrate Polish Heritage Month to the Shaler Library in the northern Pittsburgh. Librarian Marie Jackson greeted attendees to the event which consisted of a slide show on the cities of Gniezno, Cracow, Warsaw and Lublin. At one point in time, each of these cities was the capital of Poland. Refreshments consisting of several types of Polish cookies and beverage were served. The program also featured two display cases decorated by Jane Pelczarski that featured dolls in folklore costumes native to many regions of Poland. As time limited our program presentation, a folder containing printed information about each of the cities was given to those attending the show. A question and answer period ended the show.



## Polish Arts Club of Youngstown

submitted by Sandra Cika

*“Wigilia 2013 - A Polish Christmas Celebration” brought to a close another great year of the Polish Arts Club of Youngstown promoting our proud Polish culture in Ohio’s Mahoning Valley and beyond!*

*Photo at right: Mary Ann Mlynarski President, Polish Arts Club of Youngstown (left) and Treasurer Alice Morrow.*



*Top Photo: Guests enjoying “Wigilia 2013”.*

*Bottom Photo: Kolędy sing-along in the Cultural Center*

As part of our annual programming and ongoing efforts to educate the community on our rich heritage, the Polish Arts Club of Youngstown (PAC) proudly hosted “Wigilia 2013 - A Polish Christmas Celebration” on December 8th, 2013. Founded in 1935, our Club has always treasured the annual gathering amongst our members to honor this sacred tradition and toast the holidays, as well as another successful year of promoting Polish culture in our community and beyond. However, we made the decision a few years back to open the event to the public to better educate and share these traditions with other Polish Americans who might be interested in learning more about their culture, as well as our friends in general, and this decision has added something very dynamic to the occasion!

This year’s event was truly special as it was held at the very new Brier Hill Cultural Center of Youngstown (BHCC) that just opened its’ doors a month previously in November, 2013. The Brier Hill Cultural Center is the former St. Casimir’s Polish Catholic Church of Youngstown, whose doors were closed by the Youngstown Diocese in February, 2012. Though not officially affiliated with the Polish Arts Club, over the last three years our PAC Vice President Sandra Cika, led a committee to purchase and repurpose the church as a cultural center and she now serves as its’ President and Executive Director. PAC President Mary Ann Mlynarski is also a member of this team. Both of these women were lifelong parishioners of St. Casimir, and their families’ stories and roots are strongly tied to this sacred place.

As President Mary Ann Mlynarski emotionally stated in her opening remarks, “this is truly a homecoming for our organization as our founding members, led by my Aunt Florence Turowski, were all members of this parish and many a Wigilia and other events were held here.” Vice President Sandra Cika, speaking a bit on behalf of both the PAC and the BHCC added, “we are quite moved to be gathered here today as the Polish Arts Club at the Brier Hill Cultural Center as we feel that our founding members, leaders in the Polish community, would be pleased at our success in saving, not only this beautiful building, but also

commemorating the Polish immigrants who built it. We will continue to celebrate our proud Polish culture and history here, as well as the other vibrant and diverse ethnic groups that made the Brier Hill neighborhood, which sits right above our city’s famous steel district, the great and historic melting pot it was known to be!”

The gathering took place in the undercroft of the former church which was decorated with trees adorned with handmade traditional pointed Polish star ornaments and even included the known Wigilia “extra plate.” The agenda consisted of a social hour of cocktails and appetizers and basket raffle to include many beautiful authentic Polish products. The celebration continued with an opening prayer by honorary PAC member and son of St. Casimir’s parish, Father Joseph Rudjak, a staunch supporter of ethnic culture who added his own sentimental and unique memories of the former church. After a brief explanation of it’s meaning, the *optatek* was broken and shared by all the guests. A traditional meatless Wigilia meal was followed by coffee and trays of *kolaczki* and *chrusczyki*.

The joyous conclusion of the event was the gathering of our guests to the former church space above which was also beautifully decorated for the Christmas season. The St. Casimir choir director, Damian Tarantino and PAC Vice President, Sandra Cika led the singing of *kolędy* while St. Casimir organist, Karen Kolenich accompanied. The highlight to our beautiful day together and in keeping with that “mystique” of Wigilia tradition, was the arrival of our own “unexpected guest”...the newly elected Mayor of Youngstown, Mayor John McNally. He stopped in to congratulate both the BHCC and the PAC for it’s ongoing efforts to keep our traditions alive and well, both now and for future generations. We were honored to welcome him and receive his good wishes.



## The Polish Cultural Foundation of Boston

Elzbieta Welz, Vice President of the Polish Cultural Foundation (PCF) of Boston and Dr. Andzej Pronczuk, President, (photo right) present an exhibition of various Polish cinema posters as part of the PCF's 15th Anniversary Celebrations. The event was held on October 12, 2013, at the John Paul II Hall at Our Lady of Częstochowa Parish Center in South Boston, MA. At the event the various activities of the PCF for the last 15 years were presented in the form of an exhibit and in writing. All of the PCF Board Directors and friends/volunteers received special recognition. Later in the evening, a Charitable Ball honoring the PCF 15th anniversary took place which was very well attended with 150 participants. The Ball raised over \$3,200 for the blind children in Laski, Poland.

The Polish Cultural Foundation was established in 1998 in Boston, as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. It was formed in the footsteps of a previously existing organization, the Polish Relief Fund, which had been active since 1981 in charitable fundraising for the poor and needy in Poland. PCF activities are based solely on the work of volunteers and in accordance with state-approved bylaws which state that the goals of the Foundation are the promotion of Polish culture, language, history, tradition, and the provision of humanitarian aid and charitable fundraising activities.



*Photos above: members of the PCF Board of Directors, friends and volunteers attend the special 15th anniversary presentation.*



## Promoting Polish Culture

*continued from page 4*

private collections.

Dave was also the first foreigner and first American to enter a szopka in the annual Szopka Competition in Kraków, Poland, for which he received a prestigious Special Award for Artistic Merit in 2010. Since launching his szopka art project in 2003, nearly 800 individuals, children and families have studied szopka making at Dave's workshops, which he has conducted locally and around the United States including workshops for inner city school children which he has taught for the Polish Embassy in Washington, D. C. As many workshop attendees are not of Polish background, this helps to promote Poland and Polish culture in a unique and colorful way.

Dave was asked to participate in the annual Award Ceremony for the 2013 *Być Polakiem* Competition at the Royal Castle in Warsaw in July, 2013. During the ceremony, he was called upon to present certificates to several young awardees.

In addition to serving on the *Być Polakiem* initiative, Dave has also been featured recently in a newly produced schol-

arly study of the szopka art form published by the City of Kraków History Museum. The work, *Szopka Krakowska Jako Zjawisko Folkloru Krakowskiego na tle Szopki Europejskiej* ("The phenomenon of the Folklore of the Kraków Szopka within the Context of the European Nativity Tradition.") was written by Dr. Anna Szałapak, the leading European expert on this unique Polish art.

The extensively illustrated Polish language publication - literally an "encyclopedic study" of szopka art - details the szopka's transition from being a humble, rustic theatrical tradition into the modern ornate constructions that are produced in present-day Kraków. The 500-page publication includes detailed information on all the leading szopka makers, in which Dave has been prominently included with three pages of photos of his work and accompanying descriptive text that notes his contributions to the "international" szopka art scene. Samples of Dave's work can be viewed at his artist's web site: [www.davidmotak.com](http://www.davidmotak.com).

*Reprinted in part from the "Polish Journey" the official newsletter of the Polish Cultural Council.*



## Kościuszko's Oath

In 1794 Tadeusz Kościuszko took an oath in the Cracow marketplace to liberate his country or perish in the attempt.

### Przysięga

Maria Konopnicka

*Na krakowskim rynku  
Wszystkie dzwony biją.  
Cisną się mieszczański  
Z wyciągniętą szyją.*

*Odkrył jasne czoło,  
Kłęknął na kolana,  
Ślubuje ci życie,  
Ojczyzno kochana!*

*Zagrzmiały okrzyki  
Jak tysięczne działa...  
Swego bohatera  
Polska wita cała!*

*Ślubuje ci życie,  
Ślubuje ci duszę,  
Za Bożą pomocą  
Wolność wrócić muszę!*

*Wyszedł pan Kościuszko  
W krakowskiej sukmanie  
Odkrył jasne czoło  
Na to powitanie.*

*Na krakowskim rynku  
Tam ludzi gromada.  
Tadeusz Kościuszko  
Dziś przysięgę składa.*

## Kościuszko's Pledge

by Maria Konopnicka

English Translation by P. Obst

All the bells are pealing  
in the market square  
citizens of Krakow  
are gathering there

He uncovered his head,  
he dropped to one knee  
"My life now I pledge  
to make our homeland free!"

A joyous shout rings out,  
like a cannon blast ...  
the people's commander  
is greeted at last!

"I pledge you my life,  
I pledge you my soul  
With God's holy help,  
we will regain control!"

A Krakovian cloak  
Kościuszko dons here,  
and uncovers his head  
to answer the cheer

A silent crowd now stands  
on the market square,  
Tadeusz Kościuszko  
made a solemn pledge there.



The year 2014 marks many monumental anniversaries for Poland and Polish history, yet there are just as many historically significant anniversaries from centuries and decades ago not widely talked about. Here on the pages of "Do You Know" we shall list the facts and share them to spark and foster readers' interest to further investigate these fundamental historical dates, events as well as the contributions of Poles and Polish Americans to Western Civilization. Important is the year 1608, the first arrival of Polish craftsmen in Jamestown who made vast contributions toward the colony's survival and these craftsmen were barred from participating in elections, but after their refusal to work and staging a protest they were given voice in the name of equality of rights in America. Equally important is the fact that this is the first strike for civil rights in American history.

The list of triumphs is long, hence the concept of "Do You Know".

- Mieczysław Bekker – a Polish born scientist who established US Army's first locomotion lab in 1954. University of Michigan professor and a consultant to the U.S. Army Tank-Automotive Command's Land Locomotion Laboratory, Dr. Bekker will probably be best known as the "Father of Terramechanics" in the prestigious International Society for Terrain Vehicle Systems. The astronauts on Apollo 15, 16 and 17 missions, used Dr. Bekker's moon rover to conduct cosmic studies.

- The Polonaise dance started at the coronation ceremony of King Henryk III Walezy in 1574. In a slow stately procession, the richly clad aristocratic couples bowed deeply to the king when passing his throne. The ladies and gentleman would exchange courtly bows to each other while moving gracefully across the grand royal ballroom, to the accompaniment of dignified music. "La Polonaise" dance was and still is the most elegant and majestic of all Polish national dances. "La Polonaise" ruled supreme at court functions of nearly all European nations. It has been a favorite form of composition for some of the world's greatest composers, including Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Liszt and Tchaikovsky. To the world however, "La Polonaise" is Frederic Chopin. (*American Institute of Polish Culture of Miami*)

- The Jagiellonian University founded in 1364 by Casimir III the Great in Kraków, is the oldest university in Poland, the second oldest university in Central Europe and one of the oldest universities in the world.

- The first complete Polish language dictionary was published in six volumes in 1807-1814 by Samuel Bogumil Linde a lexicographer who worked at the Zaluski Library, the first public library in Europe. (*A Brief History of the Polish Language by Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski*)



## The Spy Who Loved:

*The Secrets and Life of Christine Skarbek Granville*

Author: Clare Mulley

St. Martin's Press - Hardcover \$26.99, 448 Pages

The title of the book is intriguing. At first glance one may think it is the usual romantic love story and indeed, there are some of those but basically it is the story of Christine Granville nee Skarbek's great patriotism and love for her homeland, Poland. Her many exploits as a special agent for the British during WWII were primarily to help her beleaguered Poland.

Her early upbringing as a member of the aristocracy provided her with language, horseback riding and skiing skills which proved invaluable in many secret missions she made to rescue and save many allies. Not only her skills but her personal bravery, fearlessness, quick wit and intelligence made her successful as a significant intelligence gatherer. She was awarded the Croix de Guerre, OBE and George medals.

Unfortunately, had she been a man, she would have received higher honors.

The author, Clare Mulley has done a fantastic amount of research and has presented

Christine in a diplomatic way with all her faults as well as the admirable attributes. The book is not the first to be written about Christine Skarbek Granville.

Earlier books were edited or written by her close friends who presented her as a person without flaws. Only after their demise was Mulley able to uncover the flaws and she presents them with all honesty. This in no way detracts from our heroine as it only makes her more human and, therefore, her accomplishments more impressive.

There are generations growing up who know little about World War II. They read their history books but don't really get the enormity of the evils perpetrated by the Nazis and the extraordinary bravery and suffering so many Europeans endured. It is a must read to understand and appreciate what went on during the second World War and to recognize injustices that should never be repeated.

by Mary Lubienski Flanagan

## PULASKI SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ADVANCED STUDIES – 2014 \$5,000 Awards

The Pulaski Scholarships for Advanced Studies program, which was initially endowed by the Conrad R. Walas family, is administered solely by the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC).

**Qualifications:** Applicant must be a citizen of the United States of America and of Polish ancestry. Applicant must be a classified graduate student enrolled at an accredited university in the United States and must have completed at least one year of studies at the graduate level. Prior winners of an ACPC Pulaski Scholarship are ineligible.

Qualified applicants must send all of the materials described in the Council's website [www.polishcultureacpc.org](http://www.polishcultureacpc.org) so that they are all received on or before March 15, 2014.

Original copies of all materials must be mailed to the Chairman and duplicate copies to the other four ACPC Pulaski Scholarship Committee members:

Mr. Marion V. Winters,  
51 Camile Rd.  
Webster, MA 01570

Ms. Deborah Majka  
812 Lombard St. #12  
Philadelphia, PA 19147-1308

Mr. Peter J. Obst  
67 Lower Orchard Dr.  
Levittown, PA 19056-2722

Mrs. Alicia Dutka,  
1991 Selkirk Court  
Inverness, IL 60010

Mrs. Carolyn L. Meleski  
10020 Reese Rd.  
Clarkston, MI 48348-1856

Five \$5,000 scholarship grants are available for the 2014 competition. Questions concerning the requirements should be directed to Mr. Winters, 508-949-0160, [mvwinters@charter.net](mailto:mvwinters@charter.net). All materials submitted by applicants will become part of the records of the American Council for Polish Culture and will not be returned. Late, incomplete or unsigned applications and documents will not be accepted or returned for correction. The decisions of the ACPC Pulaski Scholarship Committee are final and not subject to review.

*Photo of Casimir Pulaski Monument in Warka, Poland by Mr. Peter Obst.*





# My Journey as a Polish American Artist

by Carla Hazard Tomaszewski

My life as a professional artist has been basically divided in two parts – one is my regular paying day job as a graphic designer, and the other, my avocation of creating artwork revolving around my Polish heritage. The inspiration for my Polish work stemmed initially from my maternal grandfather's own hobby of creating woodcarvings. As children we watched *dziadzio* carve figurines of saints, birds, animals, crucifixes, *kapliczki* and nativity sets in his tiny basement workshop. Later, as a trained, college-educated artist, I looked down on his work as amateurishly crude and rough. It was only later, when I started to learn about the folk art of Poland, that I understood that his work was true folk art rooted in the Polish tradition. Learning more, especially as a graphic designer, I also realized that my own natural style and talent for graphics was also rooted in Polish tradition. It wasn't something I was taught, but a part of my genetic makeup!

As Polish Americans, we religiously practiced our holiday traditions, especially for Easter and Christmas. Luckily, since we were artists, we also loved creating Polish folk art associated with these holidays, so we made *pisanki*, *wycinanki*, *gwiazdy*, *dzbanki*, etc. We shared our enthusiasm by putting on exhibits and giving workshops and demonstrations all around the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland region. For several years we were the featured Polish folk crafters at the Smithsonian's Holiday Celebrations at the Museum of History and Technology in DC.

Through the years I watched many of our local Polish folk artists fade away and die off. It distressed me that it became increasingly difficult to stage festivals and events because our local traditional artists were no more and there was nobody stepping in to fill the void. Pondering this dilemma, I saw an internet article about a Polish folk artist in Minnesota who was awarded a grant to promote and revitalize his art. Thinking this to be a wonderful idea, maybe Maryland's Arts Council might have something like it. Sure enough, it does, in their "Traditions Master/Apprentice" grant program. I drafted an apprentice, college student Alyssa Younger, one of our Polish American Heritage Association scholarship winners who demonstrated her loyal enthusiasm for her own Polish background. We were awarded a grant in 2010-11 to further and preserve the folk art of Polish-styled *pisanki*.

This began my journey of rediscovery of the art of *pisanki*; specifically, in my case, the technique of *skrobanie* or scratching out a design on an eggshell with a sharp pointed knife. I learned this technique back in the '70s in Poland from Pan Jerzy Lipka, the foremost expert on folk art in the Opole region. Interestingly, since the grant program included Americans from numerous ethnic backgrounds, our Polish art was given exposure beyond the confines of the Polish community – opening up to a huge new audience. From this new appreciative audience came a folk curator from the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art at Salisbury State University on Maryland's eastern shore. She was captivated by my goose egg *pisanki*, especially the designs featuring birds, geese and swans, and encouraged me to enter waterfowl art shows.

I've always loved nature, especially birds, and was able to do illustrations in my work for the National Wildlife Federation. This skill transferred over to my *pisanki* work, and now I have an entirely new audience apart from the Polish community – the wildlife art, decoy carving collectors who have their own art shows around the U.S. For the benefit of this non-Polish group, I call my craft "eggshell scrimshaw". I am promoting knowledge and appreciation of Polish style *pisanki* by elevating it to an art form. The eggs I create are unique, even though there are hundreds of fantastic egg artists out there producing. The combination of my drawing skills using the scratching technique, together with the subject matter of wildfowl and florals, is not duplicated by anyone.



Top photo: Carla with Thomas Payne.  
Bottom photo: Examples of some of Carla's beautiful goose egg *pisanki*.

Reprinted from the PAAA Newsletter.  
Photos by Celia Larkin

continued from page 1

was also an emphasis on the contributions of the Poles at Jamestown.

As Blessed John Paul II will be canonized on April 27, 2014, many educators who were involved in Roman Catholic education welcomed the DVD *Nine Days That Changed the World*. The Friends of the John Paul II Foundation made 40 of these DVDs available to those who were genuinely interested. A poster was distributed commemorating the upcoming canonization event.

Several books on Polish subjects were also featured. Peter Obst generously provided copies of *A Man Who Spanned Two Eras* about noted Polish American engineer and bridge designer Ralph Modjeski whose work included the McKinley Bridge that spans the Mississippi River at St. Louis. As many conference attendees recognized the bridge, it was of interest to them to discover that it was designed by a noted Polish American engineer.

The highlight of this conference was the ACPC's sponsorship of Rita Cosby. Debbie Majka introduced the guest speaker but first stressed the *Polish Perspectives* exhibit and what were the ACPC's major objectives in participating in the conference. She also informed the attending teachers of materials that were available at our *Polish Perspectives* booth.

Debbie Majka went on to introduce Ms. Cosby as a renowned Emmy winning TV host, veteran correspondent and bestselling author who anchored highly rated primetime shows on MSNBC, CNN and the Fox News Channel. She is currently a special correspondent for the top-rated CBS *Cosby Show*. She has been interviewed or profiled by hundreds of media outlets across America and overseas.

Her recent New York Times bestseller, *Quiet Hero: Secrets from My Father's Past* details her fascinating discovery about her Polish father, who was a Nazi prisoner of war saved by American troops. He was part of the historic Warsaw Uprising, and, in 2012, was awarded one of Poland's highest honors, the *Order of Polonia Restituta*. Ms. Cosby kindly arranged for more than a thousand books to be donated by the Joey Lowenstein Foundation for the ACPC to distribute at the conference.

More than 400 educators attended the presentation which was extremely moving and very well received. Afterwards, Ms. Cosby signed books for more than 75 people who waited in line for over one and a half hours.



Top left: Photo: At the Polish Perspectives Booth (left to right) Cecilia Glembocki; Mr. and Mrs. Edward Brzezinski of the ACPC St. Louis chapter affiliate; Rita Cosby; Debbie Majka; and Raymond Glembocki. Top right Photo: Conference attendees examine some of the many materials available at the ACPC booth. Bottom left and right photos: Ms. Cosby signs books for attendees

Even after the formal book signing, she continued to sign additional books at the ACPC's booth.

Funds for the ACPC's participation in the conference were solicited from various organizations and individuals who contributed to this educational project including a \$1,800 grant from the Foreign Ministry Division of the Polish Embassy in Washington, D. C. The NCSS program guide featured our renowned speaker in four different places within the printed program as well as through an i-phone app especially designed for conference attendees.

According to Cecilia Glembocki, "this was our fourth exhibit experience and we learned a great deal from our visitors. By engaging them in their needs as educators we are better able to present topics of interest to them and to their students, including various areas of history, the Holocaust, Polish heroes, traditions, folklore, and customs."

For the complete 2013 *Polish Perspectives* project report, please visit the ACPC website at: [http://www.polishcultureacpc.org/NCSS\\_2013/index.html](http://www.polishcultureacpc.org/NCSS_2013/index.html).

## Fall Board Meeting in St. Louis

During the weekend of Nov. 8-9 the ACPC Board met in suburban St. Louis at the Hilton Frontenac Hotel.

Several important decisions were announced. The Spring Board meeting is scheduled to take place in Savannah, GA Feb. 28-Mar. 1, and the ACPC convention will take place in Buffalo, NY (see page one of this issue). The board viewed a presentation about the National History Day Competition for grammar and high school students narrated by Debbie Majka with a view to have the ACPC encourage the participants to use events from Polish and Polish-American history. This is already happening to some extent as last year's student projects included the Solidarity Movement and Polish immigrant participation in early US Labor Union activity.



*Deborah Majka, The Consul of the Republic of Poland from Chicago Paulina Kapuscinska and President Camille Kapielski at the St. Louis Polonez Ball.*

Another presentation referenced the work of Barbara Myszynska who is proceeding with her documentary about bridge builder Ralph Modjeski. A contribution was approved in support of this important film project. Incidentally Ms. Myszynska and her film crew were in Washington DC

on January 27th doing research and gathering audio visual materials at the Smithsonian Museum of American history which has an extensive Modjeski archive.

Final preparations were concluded for the National Conference for the Social Studies (NCSS) that took place in St. Louis on Nov. 22-23. Cecilia and Raymond Glembocki were assisted by Honorary Consul of Philadelphia, Debbie Majka and the Honorable Edward and Mrs. Brzezinski of the St. Louis chapter affiliate of ACPC.

Grants of \$500 were awarded to the American Institute of Polish Culture of Tampa Bay, FL for The Wall Speaks project and to the Polish Heritage Club of Syracuse, NY to organize an archive of historical documents at the local Polish Home.

On Saturday evening, our hosts, the Polish American Cultural Society of Metro St. Louis, held their annual Polonez Ball at the Sunset Hills Country Club. Present at the ball was the Consul of the Republic of Poland from Chicago Paulina Kapuscinska with her husband. Two groups performed, the Alexander Ballet with an excerpt from Coppelia and the Lajkonik Folk Dancers with a repertory of traditional Polish dance.

Our thanks to The Polish American Cultural Society of St. Louis and Robert J. Szydlowski, president, for hosting the Board Meeting.

## AFFILIATE GRANTS AWARDED AT 2013 FALL BOARD MEETING



*At the presentation of the 2013 Affiliate Grants Awards were, (left to right) 1st Vice President Mary Ellen Tyszka; Thomas Payne; Robert Synakowski; Recording Secretary Marcia Lewandowski; President Camille Kapielski; and Affiliate Grants Committee member Deborah Majka.*

The ACPC Affiliate Grants Committee is pleased to announce that two Affiliates have made successful application for 2013 matching grant funds to develop exciting projects. Grants of \$500 each were awarded at the 2013 fall St. Louis Board Meeting to: Polish Heritage Club of Syracuse, NY, Robert Synakowski, President. The project, "Preserve Syracuse's Polish History," will include an extensive photo exhibit of Polonia organizations and persons (many of whom are unidentified). Attendees will be asked to identify as many individuals as possible and to share memories, stories and historical details that will be captured on oral history recording equipment. In addition to covering partial costs of this event, a portion of the grant money will be invested in acid-free, archival-quality storage containers to guarantee a long life for this precious local cultural history in Syracuse's Polish Home. Countless volunteer hours have and continue to be devoted to seeing this project to fruition.

American Institute of Polish Culture, Tampa Bay, FL; Krystyna Markut, President. "The Wall Speaks" is a project about Polish children and teenagers affected by the subhuman cataclysm of World War II. Modern interactive multimedia exhibits featuring short artistic documentary films, photo exhibits, concerts, workshops and seminars are being presented at American universities, museums and schools. Author and director of the project is Wojtek Sawa -- film maker and visual artist residing in Florida. "The Wall Speaks" has been presented at the Polish Film Festival of America, Art Center Sarasota, Gainesville Cultural Affairs Department, University of Florida Center for European Studies, John Paul II Center in Clearwater and a month long exhibit at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. It is expected to be an ongoing project.

The above mentioned awards add to the variety and scope of endeavors the Grants Committee has funded since its inception in 2010. Congratulations to our Affiliates on their outstanding efforts in propagating and preserving our Polish Heritage!

Affiliates interested in more information about the ACPC Matching Grants Program may find the information and application form on our website: [www.polishcultureacpc.org](http://www.polishcultureacpc.org).

