



NEWSLETTER

POLISH CULTURAL CLUB OF GREATER HARTFORD, INC.

Established 1976

www.polishculturalclub.org

November 2017

An Affiliate of the American Council for Polish Culture

UPCOMING ANNUAL MEETING AND HOLIDAY EVENTS

ANNUAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2017

6:30 p.m.

Food Drive / Turkey Drawing

**Location: East Hartford (Raymond) Library
840 Main Street, East Hartford**

(Enter parking lot from Central Avenue)

Meeting Room I is on the Lower Level—Rear

On Wednesday, November 15, the PCCGH will hold its Annual Meeting at the East Hartford (Raymond) Library beginning at 6:30 p.m. In addition to general business, including the discussion and vote of the draft By-Laws, there will be the annual Food Drive and Turkey Drawing. Tickets for the turkey raffle will be exchanged for a donation of up to three (3) boxed or canned non-perishable items.

Please review the expiration dates on all products. As is customary, the food that is collected will be delivered to the Brother Albert Society at SS. Cyril & Methodius Church for holiday distribution.

Also, please bring any donations for Club-sponsored Szopka tables (Major Raffle, Unique Boutique, and Vintage Jewelry) to the Annual Meeting. Please see page 4 for suggestions.

Szczęśliwego Dnia Dziękczynienia



SZOPKA FESTIVAL

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017

9:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.

Free Admission / Public Event

Location: Chopin Ball Room

Polish National Home

60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford

The Club's annual major fundraiser, the Szopka Festival and Competition, will be held on Sunday, November 26 in the Ballroom of the Polish National Home. The Country Kitchen will again offer delicious potato/cheese or sauerkraut pierogi, kielbasa, and baked goods. A variety of vendors will be on hand to sell items for Christmas gift giving, and, of course, Sw. Mikołaj will be present.

A Buffet lunch will be available for purchase in the Polish National Home Dining Room. From 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Reservations are suggested for parties of 8 or more. Call: (860) 247-1784.

If you would like to help man tables on Sunday — please call Ed Farley at (860) 225-5204 or Fran Pudlo at (860) 659-0356. It is a wonderful opportunity to interact with people . . . and also a lot of fun.

We always look forward to having our scholarship recipients assist us with setup on Saturday, November 25 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., as well as with clean up on Sunday beginning at 2:30 p.m.

WIGILIA

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2017

6:30 p.m.

(A Detailed Flyer will be Sent)

Location: Dining Room

Polish National Home

60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford

Our holiday season culminates with the beautiful Wigilia (Vigil Supper) event on December 15. Please invite family members and friends to join us in celebrating this very special Polish Christmas tradition when everyone is "family." In keeping with the custom of setting an extra place at the table for a wayward traveler or lonely stranger, why not consider hosting someone who would not ordinarily attend. The sharing of the Oplatek, dining on a traditional meatless meal, and the singing of kolędy will no doubt add immeasurably to their and your own holiday spirit. A separate flyer providing further details and reservation information will be mailed or e-mailed before the end of November.

Please note that the deadline for reservations will be one week before the event — Friday, December 8.



SZOPKA COMPETITION

Heartfelt thanks to **Marek Czarnecki**, Chair of this year's Szopka Competition, who has visited several local schools to educate students about the history of Szopka making and to inspire them to create a Szopka for our competition on November 26. Thanks also to **Carol Oleasz** for her long-time commitment and who continues to encourage students to produce beautiful entries. Both individuals have devoted a great deal of time and energy to these endeavors over many years. Following judging on Saturday, November 25, cash prizes will be awarded on Sunday, the 26th, at 2:30 p.m.

SZOPKA COLORING PAGE

We invite the younger children who wish to participate in the beautiful tradition of szopka-making to color in the Szopka Coloring Page that is included in this newsletter or downloaded from our Club website: www.polishculturalclub.org. Please bring completed entries to the Szopka Festival on Sunday, November 26 at the Polish National Home. Children may also color in the page at a special table that day. This is a great introduction to a unique and meaningful Polish Christmas custom.





CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Dear Friends:

October, Polish Heritage Month, was a busy and memorable one for the Club. First, member Maria Brodowicz, was presented with the *Cavalier Cross Order of Merit Republic of Poland* on October 8, 2017 by Maciej Gołubiewski, the Consul General of Poland, on behalf of the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda. The annual Pulaski-Kosciuszko Celebration also took place at the Pulaski Monument on Main Street in Hartford sponsored by the United Polish Societies.



On October 9, member Krystyna Farley was a participant and guest speaker at the 31st Annual Pulaski Parade in Northampton, MA. She was accompanied by Ed Farley and Fran and Gini Pudlo.

Krystyna Farley with Miss Polonia Massachusetts

Representatives from our Club hosted a Polish Imports table at the Polish Genealogy Conference 2017 held in New Britain on October 14. Thank you Gini Pudlo, Ed Farley, and Lilia KIELTYKA for your assistance. On October 22, member Virginia Pudlo was honored with the Distinguished Service Award by the United Polish Societies.



And, on October 26, member Mark Milewski gave a fascinating and very well-received lecture and slide presentation on his ascent of Mount Everest and the Golden Age of Polish Mountaineering.

We look forward to seeing you at our three signature annual holiday events: Annual Meeting/Food Drive/Turkey Drawing on Wednesday, November 15 at the East Hartford Library, Szopka Festival and Competition on Sunday, November 26, and Wigilia on Friday, December 15.

In preparation for the Annual Meeting, a copy of the Historian's Annual Report for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017, is included with this newsletter.

On behalf of all the members of the Board of Directors, we wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year. **Wszystkiego najlepszego!**

Pattie Kaczynski and Fran Pudlo, Co-Presidents

2017-2018 CLUB OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Co-Presidents: Patricia Kaczynski and Frances Pudlo
- Vice President: John Majdan
- Secretary: Lilia Kieltyka
- Treasurer: Raymond Kowalski
- Historian: Patricia Kaczynski

Board Members: Clifford Archie, Patricia Archie, Ursula Brodowicz, Marek Czarnecki, Edward Farley, Krystyna Farley, Mary Heslin, Florence Langridge, Anna-Mae Maglaty, Louis Maglaty, Carol Bogon Phelan, Virginia Pudlo, Elizabeth Sikorsky, Phyllis Stawierski, Krystyna Wislo, and Nancy O. Yiznitsky.

WE ARE SO PROUD!

Congratulations to **Maria Brodowicz** who received the *Cavalier Cross Order of Merit Republic of Poland* on October 8, 2017 as part of the Pulaski-Kosciuszko commemoration at SS. Cyril & Methodius Church in Hartford. This honor is awarded to Polish residents abroad for merit rendered to the Republic of Poland. Maciej Gołubiewski, the Consul General of Poland, on behalf of the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, pinned the medal on Mrs. Brodowicz in a special ceremony. Aside from her many contributions in promoting Polish culture and traditions, Maria's body of work in service to Poland and the Polish-American community primarily includes her role in establishing the Polish Scouts Organization in the Hartford area. As a high-ranking leader of the Polish Girl Scouts, she has led and mentored countless young Polish-American women and served as president of the Parents group of the Scouts for 13 years. She also spearheaded fundraising efforts for the Polish American Congress for many years. In addition, Maria has been recognized with the following awards for her accomplishments: the Gold Cross Order of Merit from the Republic of Poland in Exile in 1979, the Cross of the Deported to Siberia from the Republic of Poland, and most recently, she was named Immigrant of the Year 2017 representing Poland, awarded by the CT Secretary of State at the State Capitol. Also receiving the Cavalier Cross Order of Merit Republic of Poland were Kamila Herzog and Franciszek Herzog (posthumously).



L to R: Maciej Gołubiewski,— Consul General of Poland, Maria Brodowicz, Ursula Brodowicz (daughter), Milena Brodowicz (granddaughter), and Jacek Brodowicz (son)



Cavalier Cross Order of Merit Republic of Poland



L to R: Gini Pudlo with Gen Bednarz representing the United Polish Societies

Congratulations to **Virginia Pudlo**, one of four recipients of the United Polish Societies' 2017 **Distinguished Service Award** presented on October 22, 2017. As an RN, Gerontologist, crafts artist, and volunteer, Gini has devoted her life to serving others. She initiated and managed a Parish Nurse Program at SS. Cyril & Methodius Church for 10 years, created banners celebrating the 100th Anniversaries of SS. Cyril & Methodius Church and School, and the 75th Anniversary of the SS. Cyril & Methodius Ladies Guild. Her contributions to the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc. for over fifteen years are innumerable, invaluable, and very much appreciated.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

- Editor: Frances Pudlo (francespudlo@att.net)
- Assistant Editor: Anna-Mae Maglaty
- Staff: Carol Bogon Phelan, Nancy Yiznitsky



DO YOU KNOW . . . THE STORY OF “A PILLOW FOR BABY JESUS?”

Long ago in Poland – in ancient Kraków – there lived an old widow named Helena. On the morning of Christmas Eve she went to the Dominican Church to watch the priests put up the Christmas crèche. She saw Father Jacek lay the beautiful statue in the manger and she noticed that the Baby Jesus had no pillow. She told the priest that Baby Jesus should have a pillow because the hay was too scratchy. But Father Jacek said the monastery had no money for a pillow and that the Holy Family was very poor and that is most likely the way Mary placed the little Baby Jesus. All Helena could say was “I don’t think so!”

When Helena went home, all she could think about was Baby Jesus lying on that scratchy and rough hay. The more she thought about it, the angrier she became. “What does Father Jacek know about how a mother would prepare for a baby?” she said to herself. “Of course Mary had a pillow for the Baby Jesus!”

She decided that she had to make supper and got out the fixings to make homemade kluski (noodles) with cabbage. But as she was rolling out the dough, she became angrier and angrier that the poor Baby Jesus had no pillow, and her kluski got bigger and bigger until she realized that she wasn’t really making the delicate noodles she had planned. Then she had an idea: she would make little pillows from the dough and stuff them with cabbage. After she had done that, she decided that maybe if she stuffed the pillows with blueberries they would be softer and have a wonderful fragrance of summer, so she made some little pillows stuffed with blueberries. And then she thought: “If I stuffed the pillows with cheese, they would be ever so soft!” And so she stuffed some of her little pillows with cheese.

After she had boiled all her little pillows, she took them to the Dominican Church for Baby Jesus. Father Jacek was praying at the crèche and when he saw the little pillows he became very excited. “Oh, thank you so much,” said Father Jacek. “Here it is Christmas Eve and the monks have nothing for supper. How kind of you to think of us!”

Well, what could Helena say? She gave the little pillows to Father Jacek, thankful that she could help the poor monks who had given all their own food to the poor, but so sad that the Baby Jesus still had no pillow. She looked at the beautiful little statue and through her tears she was sure that she saw the Baby Jesus smile and give her a little wink. She knew that she had given the Baby Jesus a pillow after all – a soft and beautiful pillow – her heart filled with love and charity.

Nobody remembers Helena today, even though she invented the little pillows that we call *pierogi* that everyone has at their Christmas Eve dinner. Father Jacek, on the other hand, later became the famous Św. Jacek (St. Hyacinth in English), one of the patron saints of Poland and interestingly enough, the patron saint of pierogi makers (as if it were his idea!).

The moral to this story is that all of us are called to prepare the way for Jesus, not with a soft pillow but with a soft heart to comfort those who are lonely or sad, to take the time for someone who just needs to talk, to have compassion and patience for those who just need our time. These are the presents that we can prepare for the Baby Jesus. Like Helena, our charity and kindness will make Him smile!

Source: *Christmas Lore*/Rev. Charles Jan DiMascola, Pastor of Our Lady of Częstochowa Parish in Turners Falls, MA. Printed in the Polish American Journal, December 2016



“Pillows for Baby Jesus” Christmas tree ornaments will be available at the Szopka Festival. These are being created for the Club by Gini Pudlo, with assistance from Carol Bogon Phelan. Please stop by to see these little treasures.

OUR POLISH TRADITIONS — FORETELLING THE FUTURE ON WIGILIA

Old customs connected with Christmas have flourished for years in Polish villages — and some of them have made their way into the cities and into the 21st century. Since Wigilia is such an important day of the year for Poles, many of the things that happened on this day were considered to be portents for the coming year. Here are a few.

- ◆ Decorations for the Christmas tree should include apples for beauty and health, ornaments made out of straw for wealth, nuts for happiness and love.
- ◆ Christmas Eve supper has to have twelve different dishes for each month of the year to ensure a prosperous year. And every Wigilia dish has to be tasted; if not, this would bring bad luck and a bad harvest.
- ◆ You have to have candles on the table. Each person has to see their shadow on the wall; a lack of a shadow means death in the coming year.
- ◆ When sitting down to supper, blow on your chair so you don’t sit on a ghost that has come to join you for Wigilia.
- ◆ After Wigilia, animals were fed leftovers and given a piece of the opłatek wafer to ensure their health and fine offspring.
- ◆ By the end of the supper, you should eat an apple and count the seeds: an even number foretells great love, and more than six seeds means a wedding is guaranteed.
- ◆ Unmarried girls should place a piece of fish on the floor and then let the dog into the room. The girl whose piece is eaten first is the girl who gets married first.
- ◆ Place a piece of iron under the Christmas Eve table for everyone to touch to make sure their legs are strong and healthy.

Source: Głos Polek, November/December 2008

Co? What? Gdzie? Where? Kiedy? When?

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2017 6:30 p.m.

"3rd Annual Jazz Game Dinner"

Polish National Home, 60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford

Price: \$75 for members / \$80 for non-members

Call (860) 247-1784 for tickets and further information

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2017 6:30 p.m.

"PCCGH Annual Meeting/Food Drive/Turkey Drawing"

East Hartford (Raymond) Library, 840 Main Street, East Hartford

We will be accepting Raffle Prizes, Unique Boutique items, and Vintage Jewelry for the Szopka Festival

Information: (860) 659-0356

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2017 6:00 p.m.

"12th Annual Krakus Festival" — Honoring Joseph M. Topor, Jr.

(Elegant Dinner, Raffle, Live Music and Dancing, Entertainment)

Sponsored by the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning

Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel

One Monarch Place, Springfield, MA 01144

Tickets: www.polishcenter.net \$100.00 per person

Please RSVP by November 10.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18 / SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2017

"Holiday Food Fair" — Ladies Guild of SS. Cyril & Methodius Church (Home-made baked goods, pierogi, babki, pączki, kielbasa, gift baskets, vintage jewelry, and attic treasures) — Before and after all Masses.

SS. Cyril & Methodius Church, 55 Charter Oak Ave., Hartford

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

PCCGH — **"Szopka Festival and Competition"** FREE

Polish National Home, 60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford

See page 1 and enclosed Flyer for details.

Note: Reservations for the PNH Buffet are suggested for parties of 8 or more — telephone: (860) 247-1784.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2017 6:30 p.m.

"Annual Christmas Party" — SS. Cyril & Methodius Ladies Guild

Polish National Home, 60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford

Cost: \$35.00 (members) \$37.00 (guests)

Information and Tickets: Cheryl Pietrycha—(860) 523-4878

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2017 6:30 p.m.

PCCGH **"Wigilia Celebration"**

Polish National Home, 60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford

A flyer will be mailed or e-mailed by the end of November with ticket information and cost. Information: (860) 659-0356

NEWSFLASH — CLUB MEMBERS

If you have any "Newsy Tidbits" about family or friends that you would like to share with the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, all you need to do is e-mail or mail a few lines to Anna-Mae Maglaty at either annamae1@comcast.net or 35 Fernridge Road, West Hartford, CT 06107. We look forward to hearing from you.

We are pleased to welcome a future member of the PCCGH, **Klaudyna Harasim**, newborn daughter of member and former scholarship recipient, **Beata Hryniewicz Harasim**. Congratulations also to proud grandmother, **Irene Hryniewicz**. May Klaudyna bring joy and happiness to her parents and grandparents.

SZOPKA FESTIVAL

How Members and Friends Can Help

Our annual Szopka Festival at the Polish National Home is just a few weeks away. This is a large undertaking for the Club, and once again we are requesting that members and friends kindly devote some time to help us prepare during the weekend of November 25 and November 26. Here is a list of volunteer opportunities.

Saturday, November 25 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Help with covering and decorating the tables, transporting materials to the Ballroom, setting up individual Club tables, and general decorating. Please bring scissors and scotch tape.

Sunday, November 26—Early Morning and Late Afternoon

8:00 a.m.—9:30 a.m. Help vendors transport their merchandise.

2:30 p.m.—4:00 p.m. Help with dismantling and clean up.

Sunday, November 26 — Baked Goods Needed for

Country Kitchen and "Kawiarnia" Coffee Bar

Breads, cakes, pies, cookies, and Polish delicacies are requested. Pastries must be delivered before 10:00 a.m. on Sunday. Please indicate on the label whether an item contains nuts or peanut butter; do not use toothpicks. Also, please price your item if possible.

Club Table Donations Requested

Raffle Table: Gifts and Gift Certificates (minimum value of 20.00). Please put your name on the item along with any relevant information.

Unique Boutique: Gifts received but never used

Vintage Jewelry: Jewelry of all varieties

Members who cannot contribute to any of the above are invited to send a monetary donation to: PCCGH, P.O. Box 380699, East Hartford, CT 06138

◆ Remember, all proceeds from this event benefit the Jennie Marconi-Javorski Scholarship Fund.

CONDOLENCES



Heartfelt sympathy is extended to member **Dr. Alex Rudewicz** and family on the loss of his wife, **Regina Rudewicz**, on October 8. Regina was a past president of the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford.

We also bid farewell to former Club member, **Loren "Squire" Bressor**, who passed away on October 28.



Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc.
P.O. Box 380699
East Hartford, CT 06138

We're on the Web!

www.polishculturalclub.org