



NEWSLETTER

POLISH CULTURAL CLUB OF GREATER HARTFORD, INC.

Established 1976

www.polishculturalclub.org

April/May 2011

An Affiliate of the American Council for Polish Culture

Celebrating our 35th Anniversary Year

PCCGH Program SPECIAL DVD PRESENTATION

Award Winning

“No. 4 Street of Our Lady”



Franciszka Halamajowa, a Polish Catholic woman who saved the lives of 16 Jews in Sokal, Poland by hiding and caring for them in her home during the German occupation in World War II

Wednesday, May 18, 2011

7:00 p.m.

East Hartford Community Cultural Center

50 Chapman Place, East Hartford

(easy parking, handicapped accessible)

Special Guests:

Grazyna Kucharczyk and Jolanta Staron

local residents and granddaughters

of Franciszka Halamajowa

FREE —Members and Guests Welcome

We are especially honored to have with us that evening her two granddaughters, Grazyna Kucharczyk from Rocky Hill and Jolanta Staron from Wethersfield, who will be available to answer questions. In a joint statement about their grandmother, they say:

“As children growing up, we became educated about what had happened during World War II, like everyone else. However, we were never aware of the role our own family played in the war. It wasn’t until years later that we learned that our mother, Helena Liniewska, and grandmother, Franciszka Halamajowa, helped to shelter Jewish families from the Nazis. Not once was their heroic act ever mentioned.

“Every year growing up we would receive packages filled with candy and various goodies around Christmas time from people who we thought were just distant friends. We later learned that these gifts were actually from the Jewish survivors and their families that our family sheltered during the war.

“We learned that the reason it was never brought up was because the last thing our grandmother wanted was praise for extraordinary acts that she regarded as ordinary. This was reaffirmed after speaking with the survivors’ families. She was simply a genuinely good person just doing something she felt needed to be done.”



Granddaughters Grazyna Kucharczyk and Jolanta Staron



Franciszka Halamajowa, on the right, shown with her daughter Helena Liniewska, in 1960

If your neighbors were being hunted down and came to your door begging for help, would you risk your life and family to save theirs?

This film tells the remarkable story of Franciszka Halamajowa who did just that. On the eve of World War II, more than 6,000 Jews lived in Sokal, a small town in Eastern Poland, now part of Ukraine. By the end of the war, only about 30 had survived, half of them rescued by Mrs. Halamajowa. For close to two years, she hid her Jewish neighbors in her tiny home and cooked and cared for them, right under the noses of German troops camped on her property, as well as hostile neighbors. Two families were hidden in the hayloft of her pigsty, and one family in a hole dug under her kitchen floor. In the final months of the war, she also provided shelter to a German soldier who had defected—an act that nearly led to her execution.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

April has finally come upon us and we can think of spring, warmer weather, flowers, and Easter. Last month's presentation by Kevin Wilcox of the Farmington Valley Nursery was well received and very informative. He certainly gave us great advice on caring for and preparing bushes and shrubs for this time of the year. As promised, the number for the UCONN Home & Garden Center is (860) 486-6271. I thank Pat Archie for setting up this splendid program. I also thank Maria Bruks for hosting the delicious refreshment table, Phyllis Stawiariski for her assistance, and the many members who brought in the goodies.

In lieu of an April program, members of the Club visited the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning in Chicopee, MA on April 9 to view the remarkable International Exhibit: **KATYŃ: MASSACRE, POLITICS, AND MORALITY**. Let us also remember the one year anniversary of the tragic plane crash in Smolensk on April 10, 2010, which took the lives of Poland's President, First Lady, the producer of the current exhibit Andrzej Przewozniak, as well as many government officials, military leaders, prominent personalities in business and the Church, as they were on their way to a ceremony to commemorate the Katyń victims.

Continuing with our mission to promote Polish culture, our program chairs are working hard to provide you with other superb events, e.g., May 3 "Polish Day at the Capitol," May 18 viewing of the multiple award winning film, "No. 4 Street of Our Lady," and September 18 "The Club's 35th Anniversary Celebration" at the Polish National Home. Mark these dates on your calendar and look for further details in this and upcoming newsletter issues.

I mentioned Easter in the beginning of this message, and yes, this is the time to follow other Polish traditions — the sharing of the blessed Easter egg, "pisanki" (egg decorating), and also the delicious babki, ham, kielbasa, and traditional Polish delicacies. So, I end by saying come to our programs, bring a friend, and enjoy.

Happy Blessed Easter to you all. "Wesołego Alleluja!"

Cliff Archie, President

HELP SUPPORT THE FRANCISCAN MISSIONS

The Franciscan Friars are appealing for cancelled postage stamps. The income from these stamps is used to support their mission work. Please help by saving all your cancelled postage stamps and sending them to:

Franciscan Mission Aid Department
143 East Pulaski Street
P. O. Box 100
Pulaski WI 54162-0100



NEWSLETTER STAFF

Editor: Frances Pudlo
Assistant Editor : Anna-Mae Maglaty
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POLISH DAY AT THE STATE CAPITOL

Tuesday, May 3, 2011

at 11:00 a.m.

State Capitol Hall of Flags and North Lobby

FREE Admission

Followed by a Luncheon — Polish National Home

Cost: \$12.00

Luncheon Tickets: Gen Bednarz (860) 593-3494

Irene Dylag (860) 521-2432

Nancy Yiznitsky (860) 568-2044



Committee: Mary Heslin, Patricia Kaczynski, Nancy Yiznitsky

Our Club has been honored once again by having two members selected for recognition:

Anna-Mae Maglaty, recent President of the Club, a long-standing Director of the American Council for Polish Culture, renowned educator, and unwavering promoter of Polish heritage, culture, and spirit throughout the Greater Hartford area.

Edward Pawlowski (posthumously) former Hartford City Councilman, World War II Veteran and recipient of the Purple Heart, long-time President of the Polish National Home, and advocate for Polish immigrants. He is the brother of member, Helen Gerron.

Hartford resident, Andrew Bogaski, is also being recognized. His involvement with, and commitment to, SS. Cyril and Methodius Church and the Polish National Home is of long duration and highly regarded.

History of the Polish Constitution of 1791

Two hundred and twenty years ago the independent, free, and sovereign Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth was threatened with partition and extinction by the absolute governments of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Acting for the general welfare, the establishment of liberty, and the preservation of the country and its borders, Poland adopted the modern world's second Constitution after the Constitution of United States.

The Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791 was a political revolution brought about by non-violent means for the rights of man and for the authority of the nation to govern itself. While the Constitution was very short-lived, it took on great importance over the years, symbolizing the country's once great liberal tradition and the desire of Poles to be free and self-determining. Indeed, after the Communist takeover at the conclusion of the World War II, May 3rd was always one of the most decidedly anti-government days.

Today, Poland is once again free from the shackles of tyranny and oppression because of its people's undying devotion to freedom and peace, as embodied in the 1791 Constitution. Even now, the Polish Constitution symbolizes the rights of man and continues to be a visible example of the world's need to be vigilant in the face of tyranny and oppression.



POPE JOHN PAUL II IS BEATIFIED



No one could have predicted the auspicious impact that would evolve on October 16, 1978 when a true Son of Poland, Karol Jozef Wojtyła, was elected as the 263rd successor to the Chair of St. Peter—the history of the world changed forever. Karol Wojtyła born in Wadowice, Poland on May 18, 1920, came from humble beginnings. Originally slated to study drama at Kraków's prestigious Jagiellonian University, he instead was forced to become a manual laborer when the school was closed in 1939 due to Nazi Occupation. It was a call to the priesthood in 1942, however, that found him studying secretly at a monastery in Kraków. In time, and with the end of World War II, Karol was ordained a priest. Beginning as a parish priest, he went on to study Theology, became a professor at the University of Lublin, and eventually was appointed Bishop and then Cardinal of Kraków.

Cardinal Wojtyła's love for his homeland permeated his life. The years of Soviet domination weighed heavily on him. A story is told of his determination to build a church in Nowa Huta, a steel town, only to have many obstacles placed in his path. His dream was realized in 1977 when thousands stood in the pouring rain as this church was finally consecrated.

Upon his ascendancy to the Papal Chair, it has been said that as Edward Gierek, the leader of communist Poland, was giving a political speech, an aide approached and whispered the news that Wojtyła had just been elected Pope. Gierek, absolutely shocked, is quoted as saying, "Jesus, Mary, . . . we're done."

Throughout his almost twenty-seven years as Pope, John Paul II did much to advance the missionary spirit. He had more meetings with ordinary people and with leaders of Nations than any of his predecessors, and encouraged an exchange with Jewish people and with representatives of other religions. His private writings as well as Documents, Encyclicals, Apostolic Exhortations, and Letters are numerous and of great import.

Because young people were a particular favorite of his, he established World Youth Day in 1985, both nationally and internationally. World Youth Day offered opportunities for young people to become the bearers of hope for the future. In turn, he himself represented an outstanding model of holiness and humanity. During his Pontificate, John Paul II canonized 482 Saints and proclaimed 1,338 Blessed. It is most appropriate that the future Blessed John Paul II has been selected as the spiritual patron of World Youth Day 2011, which will be held on August 16-21 in Madrid, Spain.

The death of this beloved pope on April 2, 2005 initiated a period of great sorrow throughout the world at large. His Papacy changed the world in ways unprecedented. His support and mentoring of the Solidarity Movement in Poland resulted in the fall of Communism in Poland and eventually in Eastern Europe. It seems that Edward Gierek's apprehension rang true.

When Pope Benedict XVI signed the Beatification decree, plans for one of the great media events were put into place. The actual beatification is scheduled for Sunday, May 1, 2011 with Mass at 10:00 a.m. in St. Peter's Square. Following the Mass, the closed coffin, holding the mortal remains of the newly beatified John Paul II, will be displayed for public veneration inside St. Peter's Basilica. On May 5, the coffin will repose in the Basilica's Chapel of St. Sebastian.

To add further devotion to the beatification, the Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven is presenting a new exhibition in the late Pope's honor called "A Tribute to John Paul II." It opened on the sixth anniversary of his death and will continue through June 30, 2011. The Museum is located at 1 State Street, New Haven, CT. The hours are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. daily, and admission and parking are free. For further information, call (203) 865-0400 or visit their website: kocmuseum.org



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A warm welcome (witamy) to new member:

Helen Olejarz of Vernon

Membership cards are included in this Newsletter mailing for those who paid their dues for 2011. Please share a Club membership form, which can be found on our website, with anyone who is interested in celebrating Polish culture and heritage.

ACPC 50/50 FUNDRAISER RAFFLE

YOU COULD BE A WINNER!

Once a year the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) appeals for support to supplement annual dues. This national raffle was designed to help benefit various ACPC scholarships as well as the Youth Leadership Conference. Raffle books are enclosed with this newsletter. Please do what you can to help. There have been many winners from CT! Tickets are 1 for \$5.00, 3 for \$10.00 or 6 for \$20.00. Checks should be made out to: **(PCCGH) and mailed to Mrs. Patricia Archie, 219 Arnold Drive, East Hartford, CT 06108.**

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

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2011 11:00 a.m.

“Polish Day at the Capitol”

State Capitol—Hall of the Flags and North Lobby **FREE**

Followed by Luncheon at Polish National Home **\$12.00 p.p.**

THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2011 7:00 p.m.

S.A. Blejwas Endowed Chair of Polish and Polish American Studies and Godlewski Evening of Polish Culture Present:

“History and Myth of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa”

Speaker: **Marek Czarnecki, Iconographer**

CCSU, Torp Theatre, Davidson Building **FREE**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2011 7:00 p.m.

PCCGH Program: Film: *“No. 4 Street of Our Lady”*

East Hartford Community Cultural Center, 50 Chapman Place

Convenient parking, handicapped accessible. **FREE**

MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2011 7:00—9:00 p.m.

Polish Reading Group Meets — All interested readers welcome.

Wesoły Sloper House, 27 Grove Hill, New Britain

Book: *“To Begin Where I Am: Selected Essays”* by

Czesław Miłosz. 2001. Published by: Farrar, Straus,

and Giroux, N.Y.

FREE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2011 6:30 p.m.

PCCGH Program at the Polish National Home

“Scholarship Presentation and Strawberry Social” **FREE**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2011 1:00 p.m.

PCCGH Program: *“35th Anniversary Celebration”*

Polish National Home—Ballroom

Luncheon and Program: **Gary Sredzienski, Accordionist**

(More information on ticket availability to follow).

MEMBERS — NEWS OF NOTE

Virginia M. Pudlo, MA, BSN, RN, has been invited to become a member of the Advisory Committee of Partners in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), a unique program co-sponsored by The Mercy Community and Saint Francis Hospital & Medical Center. The mission, core values, and vision of Partners in CPE institutions emphasize the spiritual well-being of patients, their loved ones, and staff. CPE is an interfaith professional education program for ministry. It brings theology students, clergy of all faiths, and qualified lay people into supervised encounters with persons in crisis.



**Polish Cultural Club of
Greater Hartford, Inc.
P.O. Box 380699**

We're on the Web!

www.polishculturalclub.org

Mark Your Calendars . . .

PCCGH 35th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, September 18, 2011

Ball Room—Polish National Home

Luncheon and Program

Special Guest: Gary Sredzienski

(Details to be Announced)



The Club invites you to join us on September 18 for what will be a glorious celebration of our 35th Anniversary. A delicious luncheon will be followed by a program of exceptional accordion virtuosity by Gary Sredzienski, who is traveling from Maine to be with us. Gary's performance will highlight the long forgotten graceful folk music of Poland, which is filled with spirit and heart. His repertoire marries the traditional music of the Polish village with rural New England musical traditions. It will be phenomenal.

We also need your help. As part of our celebration, we plan to put together an Anniversary Memory Program Book in which we invite ALL MEMBERS to contribute. Take a moment to think of anything that had special meaning for you over the past 35 years—whether it was a special program, a particular person, something inspiring, sad, funny—and send in a brief account. It can be hand written, typed, or e-mailed. Photos and artwork are welcome as well. We want this compilation of material to reflect the many faces and accomplishments of the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc. since its inception. Submissions may be sent to:

Fran Pudlo, 33 Worthington Road, Glastonbury, CT 06033

E-mail: fpudlo@pdipaint.com Fax: (860) 224-6606

Anna-Mae Maglaty, 35 Fernridge Road, West Hartford, CT 06107

E-mail: annamae11@comcast.net

*** * * Don't Miss this Lecture * * ***

**“THE HISTORY AND MYTHS OF THE ICON
OF THE BLACK MADONNA OF CZĘSTOCHOWA”**

Presented by Member Marek Czarnecki

Thursday, May 12, 2011

**Central CT State University
Torp Theatre, Davidson Building**

7:00 p.m.

FREE



Marek Czarnecki is a Polish-American liturgical artist, painting Byzantine icons using historical prototypes and traditional techniques. Mr. Czarnecki will explain the puzzling features of Our Lady of Częstochowa by replacing the legends and apocrypha which surround the icon with historical information uncovered in the 1924 restoration, contemporary conservators' reports, and the shrine's own archives. For example, why is the icon so dark? Under what circumstances was the image desecrated? Who scratched the face of the icon? Where did this icon originally come from?