



NEWSLETTER

POLISH CULTURAL CLUB OF GREATER HARTFORD, INC.

Established 1976

www.polishculturalclub.org

April 2012

An Affiliate of the American Council for Polish Culture

PCCGH PROGRAM

“I SERVED A SAINT”



Swiss Guard Mario Enzler shown with Blessed Pope John Paul II

Photo supplied by Mario Enzler

Guest Speaker: Mario Enzler

Sunday, April 29, 2012

2:00 p.m.

Polish National Home

60 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford, CT

The public is cordially invited to this event.

FREE Admission

Handicapped Accessible

Come early and enjoy a delicious Polish luncheon before the program. Please call the Polish National Home at (860) 247-1784 for reservations. The Dining Room opens at 11:00 a.m. Smacznego!

BACKGROUND ON MARIO ENZLER

Mario Enzler was born in Alstatten, canton San Gallen, Switzerland, the only child of an Italian mother and Swiss father. Mr. Enzler received a classical education and graduated from the University of Milan (Italy) with a Master's in Fine Arts in Music History and a Master's in Business Administration. An accomplished linguist, Mr. Enzler speaks Italian, English, French, German, and Spanish.

After completing his university studies, Mr. Enzler joined the Swiss Guard and served under Blessed John Paul II for three years. Founded in 1506, the Papal Swiss Guard now in the Vatican City State is the only Swiss Guard that still exists. In 2006, he was recalled to serve one month to help with their 500 year anniversary celebration.

Following this service, Mr. Enzler worked in finance as an investment banker, a career that spanned fifteen years.

Presently, Mr. Enzler is the Headmaster of New England Classical Academy, an independent coeducational day school in the Catholic tradition located in Claremont, New Hampshire near the Vermont border. According to its website, this school offers a pre K - 12 grade curriculum. The Lower School curriculum follows the Core Knowledge Sequence which provides a strong foundation of knowledge. In the Upper School, students follow a classical course of study centered on the study of Greek, Latin, mathematics, and courses in formal and informal logic. The college preparation program provides students with the intellectual tools to succeed academically.

Mr. Enzler is married and is the father of five children. For the past year, he has traveled throughout New England giving talks about Blessed John Paul II and the impact he has had on his life. Thus, Mr. Enzler invites members and guests to come to learn what “New Evangelization” is all about because “he served a Saint.”



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends:

I hope you all had a wonderful and blessed Easter. As we enter into the Club's spring season, please keep in mind the numerous activities that have been scheduled. The recent March lecture by Comstock Ferre & Co. was a great evening. My thanks to Pat Archie in setting this up, as well as to Maria Bruks and Phyllis Stawiarski and their committee of bakers for the tasty treats enjoyed by all. Our next event is the lecture by Mario Enzler on Sunday, April 29, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to gain insight into the saintly life of Blessed Pope John Paul II. Don't miss it, and please consider starting the afternoon with a delicious lunch at the Polish National Home.

The May 24 program will feature Krysia Jopek, author of "Maps and Shadows," which covers the deportation of 1.5 million Polish civilians from Eastern Poland during WWII by Russia and the personal impact of this experience on the Jopek and Zasada families. On June 14, the Scholarship Presentation with strawberry shortcake will showcase the accomplishments of our amazing Polish-American youth.

Please participate in "Polish Day at the Capitol" on May 3. It is a wonderful way to interact with fellow Poles and show pride in our heritage. This year's honorees are Edward Kozlowski, past Commissioner of Transportation, Hank Stratton (in memoriam), a former member of the Governor's Footguard, and Patricia Archie, a founding member of our Club, member of the Board, and long-standing volunteer. Lunch can be purchased at the Polish National Home following the official program at the Capitol.

We look forward to seeing you during these and other upcoming events, and please do bring family and friends to introduce them to the Club and our mission to promote Polish culture.

Cliff Archie, President

ACPC 50/50 FUNDRAISER RAFFLE

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 their various ACPC scholarships as well as their youth Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. To save expenses, raffle ticket books enclosed with this newsletter are being sent only to members who have been past participants. 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. Please make your checks payable to: "PCCGH" and send to: Mrs. Patricia Archie, 129 Arnold Drive, East Hartford, CT 06108.

GREAT NEWS!

As of May 1, 2012, your Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford membership card will also provide you with membership in the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, CT. Do take advantage of this new perk by visiting the **Andrew Wyeth Exhibit, Looking Beyond**, which will be on view until July 22, 2012.

Museum hours are: Wed - Fri 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sat - Sun 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Museum is open until 8:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month.

THE PRACTICE OF ICONOGRAPHY



Icons Displayed at Exhibit—photos taken by Gini Pudlo

The work of member, Marek Czarnecki, and his students of ten years was recently on view at the Clare Gallery, the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry, Hartford, CT. This exhibit opened with a reception on Thursday, March 1, 2012 and ran through April 12, 2012. A well detailed discussion on the fundamental meaning of icons, their history and holy traditions, and their historical materials and techniques was aptly done by the students. Guests were able to follow the whole concept of "writing" an icon from the formation of an idea to the completed piece of art.

The students explained that they work from Russian, Greek, Byzantine, Serbian and contemporary prototypes with the intention to practice and preserve an important art form, belonging to the universal church, both east and west. Featured in the exhibit were artists: Beverly Berger, Sister Mary Deborah Blados, Judy Corso, Mary Fischer, Chantal Heinegg, Ofelia Manero, Julie Mullen, Sandra Pons, Barbara Vartenigian, Janet Yuhas Wagner, Grace Zazzaro and their teacher, Marek Czarnecki.

As quoted by Marek Czarnecki, "Icons have to show a vision of eternal peace, a whole world transformed by the Gospel. There can't be any darkness, no disease or sickness. Everything must be clear. Nothing can be abstract. They are not things. They are not artworks. They are windows. You can see through them a perfect, eternal world."

Members will note that Marek is the catalyst for inviting students to create a piece of their art through the making of a "szopka" to be entered in the Annual Szopka Festival, the Sunday following Thanksgiving Day.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

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DO YOU KNOW . . . ABOUT THE TRADITION OF “THE DROWNING OF MARZANNA”

A PART OF “POWITANIE WIOSNY” — THE WELCOMING OF SPRING?

The spring equinox celebration known as the “Drowning of Marzanna” (*Topienie Marzanny*) signals the end of winter. An old pagan custom which predates Christian rites, *Marzanna*, known as the Frost Maiden and Winter Witch, is the Polish incarnation of the old Slavic goddess of winter, plague, starvation, evil and death. According to some sources, *Marzanna* was a goddess who was offered grains after harvest in the hope of ensuring a good crop the following year. The way for superstitious Slavs to protect themselves from her icy grasp, encourage the timely arrival of spring, and ensure a good harvest, was to partake in this old-fashioned witch-burning followed by drowning.



Topienie Marzanny (Drowning of Marzanna) as performed by members of the Polish Cultural Society, University of Connecticut, Storrs on March 31, 2012.

The *Marzanna* is a braided straw or rag figure—simple, grotesque, or quite beautiful. Dressed in white or local folk costume with a green branch of juniper in her hand, she is adorned with coral beads in the southern regions and amber in central and northern Poland. In the southwestern Śląsk region, she is often dressed in a beautiful wedding dress with a wreath on her head.

The rite usually took place on the fourth Sunday of Lent. Young children would play with and “torture” the idol in the afternoon — parading it throughout the village and dunking it in every puddle, trough, and water barrel. At dusk the villagers would gather at the riverbank and set the effigy ablaze, often along with herbs and juniper branches. Then it was tossed to its watery grave, with cheers as the blazing wretch disappeared downstream. It is best to turn your back completely on the submerged effigy in order to complete the farewell to winter.

Excerpted from *Kultura* written by Staś Kmiec, [Polish American Journal](#), March 2012



COLLEGE STUDENTS

The **ACPC Youth Leadership Conference 2012** is a weeklong experience in Washington, DC open to high school graduates (as of June 2012) or college/university students or graduates who are not over 26 years of age. It provides an up close and intensive opportunity for 20 to 25 young Polish Americans to explore the political processes and interact with national and international leaders of Polish background in the realms of foreign policy, business, science, education, journalism, culture, and Polish-American and east-central European affairs. The goal is to assist youth of Polish background who are interested in civic and political activism to realize their full potential and to assume leadership roles in various fields at all levels of society. It is also a great way for Polish youth from all over the U.S. to network and interact with each other.

The YLC will be held from June 17 to June 22, 2012 with a registration fee of \$500.00.

The Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford prides itself on the outstanding young people who have reaped the benefits of belonging to our Club, as well as being the beneficiaries of a number of scholarships. We have not had a young adult at the YLC in a number of years. Now we are reaching out to you. Please give it your careful consideration. For more information, please contact **Florence Langridge**, a Board member of the PCCGH and a Director of the American Council for Polish Culture. She can be reached at (860) 521-4034. More detailed information can be found on the ACPC website: www.polishcultureacpc.org. We can promise you “a week for your Treasury of Great Memories.”

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A warm welcome (*witamy*) to new member:
Michael Gwara of Wethersfield

Michael wrote: “I would be very pleased if you would accept me as a member of your organization. . . . I am still a student, but I hope that upon graduating, I could become more involved.” Michael is a past recipient of our PCCGH scholarship and currently enrolled at the University of Connecticut. We invite all young people to consider membership in the PCCGH. Student dues are \$10.00 per year. No matter what age, it is important to know and understand one’s roots and heritage. We could use your ideas and help as well!

MILESTONES

Member **Maria Brodowicz** celebrates her 80th birthday on April 14.

STO LAT!



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

WEDNESDAY APRIL 18, 2012 7:00 p.m.

"DVD and Lecture on the Crazy Horse Memorial in South Dakota"

Presented by Cliff Archie, President of the PCCGH

for the Ladies Guild of St. Mary's Church, East Hartford

If you would like to attend, please call Cliff: (860) 289-8583

SUNDAY, APRIL 22, 2012

Ladies Guild of SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, Hartford

Mass: SS. Cyril and Methodius Church 10:00 a.m.

Buffet Lunch at Pond House Grille & Banquet, Glastonbury 12:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Sister Susan Marie, CSSF

Members: \$24.00 Guests: \$26.00

Information: Helen Lorenc (860) 568-1199

FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 2012 7:00 p.m.

SS. Cyril and Methodius Ladies Guild *"Monte Carlo Whist"*

Lower Level of the Church, 55 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford

All card players are welcome Admission: \$5.00

SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 2012 2:00 p.m.

PCCGH Program *"I Served A Saint"*

Guest Speaker: Mario Enzler, former Swiss Guard

Polish National Home, Hartford—Main Ballroom FREE

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2012 11:00 a.m.

"Polish Day at the Capitol," State Capitol Hall of Flags, Hartford

(Lunch can be purchased at the Polish National Home following the program at the Capitol)

FRIDAY, MAY 4, 2012 7:00 p.m.

Polish Constitution Day Concert with Monika Krajewska & Guests

Ballroom of the Polish National Home Admission Charge

(Dinner can be obtained in the Dining Room preceding the concert.)

THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2012 6:00 p.m.

"Happy Hour" for Polish-American Businesses — Networking Opportunity

Polish National Home, Hartford — Hors d'oeuvres FREE

MONDAY, MAY 14, 2012 7:00—9:00 p.m.

Polish Reading Group: Book: *"The Clarinet Polka"* by Keith Maillard

Wesoły Sloper House, Grove Street, New Britain

All interested readers are welcome FREE

THURSDAY, MAY 24, 2012 6:30 p.m.

PCCGH Program—Speaker: Krysia Jopek author of

"Maps and Shadows"

Polish National Home, Hartford FREE

MARY MAZUREK HESLIN HONORED BY CCSU



Mary Mazurek Heslin



Members of the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc. in Attendance

On March 8, 2012, which was also designated Polish "Women's Day," i.e., when men express appreciation toward women, Mary Mazurek Heslin received the Medal of Merit at a ceremony which took place in Memorial Hall at Central Connecticut State University. This award, presented by the Stanislaus A. Blejwas Endowed Chair in Polish and Polish-American Studies of the University, recognizes achievement for service in the Polish and Polish-American communities. Mrs. Heslin was honored for her outstanding work in Polish clubs and civic and cultural organizations. Most especially, she serves as a member of the advisory group of the Polish Chair at CCSU.

In 2006, Mrs. Heslin undertook the fundraising to finance the permanent exhibit of the Kosciuszko Squadron housed at the New England Air Museum in Windsor, CT. The idea for this project came about in October, 2006 when M.B. Biskupski, Ph.D. was the invited speaker at the Annual Commemoration of Pulaski/Kosciuszko Day. This holder of the Endowed Chair spoke on the legendary Kosciuszko Squadron, who after World War I, helped fight against the Russians and later reorganized to fight the air war over England against the Luftwaffe during World War II. Their help was welcomed in this struggle for survival. The Polish flyers in the "303" Unit were officially attached to the Royal Air Force, but as Polish aviators, they wore the Polish Air Force insignia as well as the RAF designation. They distinguished themselves through their courage and flying skills, and the Battle of Britain was won due to their help. Their record included the destruction of 126 German planes while losing only 8 of their own. The original organizers adopted the motto, "For your Freedom and Ours" which is tied to the remembrance and gratitude felt toward Thaddeus Kosciuszko and his contributions to gain freedom from England during the American Revolutionary War. Mrs. Heslin headed a committee which in one year helped to raise thousands of dollars to bring the Kosciuszko Squadron Exhibit to fruition. Today visitors to the Museum are introduced to a valiant group, who for so long were unknown, but now are the focus of an inspiring exhibit.

Twenty members of the Polish Cultural Club attended this ceremony, and it is with pride that we acknowledge and laud Mary Mazurek Heslin, the distinguished honoree and a past president of the Club. Of interest is the fact that of the four recipients of the Medal of Merit, three have been part of our Club. In addition to Mrs. Heslin, Dr. Blejwas received the first Medal posthumously in 2005 and two years ago, Dr. Stanislaus Milewski received it prior to his death.

Honored with Mrs. Heslin was Dr. James S. Pula, professor of history at Purdue University and the editor of *Polish Studies*, an interdisciplinary research journal published twice yearly by the Polish American Historical Association (PAHA). Among his other honors, Dr. Pula received the Oscar Halecki prize for editing the Polish American Encyclopedia. This reference book was recently acclaimed by the American Library Association.



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We're on the Web!

www.polishculturalclub.org