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December 2019

POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 6

Your Voice
in America!



President's Message



Frank J. Spula,
President

Dear Directors and Members of the Polish American Congress,

As the end of another year approaches us, we can be grateful for all the good that we've encountered. This certainly was a busy and interesting year for the Polish American Congress.

Back in November, we held our annual Council of National Directors meeting in Chicago coupled with the 75th Anniversary of the organization. To celebrate the anniversary, a banquet was held recognizing the achievements and recognizing individuals who contributed many years to the organization. Three individuals were recognized; namely, Mr. Frank Milewski of New York, Mr. Ted Mirecki of Washington D.C., and lastly, Mr. Steve Tokarski of Indiana. Also, thank you to everyone who contributed to the program book as well as attending the banquet.

Prior to the celebration, a meeting was held with the Council of National Directors. During the course of the meeting, presentations were made by Professor James Pula who reflected on the original settlers in Jamestown and the first strike by Polish workers. Professor Donald Pienkos highlighted the accomplishments of the Polish American Congress during its seventy-five years of existence. During the course of the meeting, many topics were presented and discussed, which will be addressed over the upcoming months.

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DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

Future PAC Newsletters will be sent out:

| Deadline for submission | Publication date |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Friday, February 7, 2020 | Friday, February 14, 2020 |
| Friday, April 3, 2020 | Friday, April 10, 2020 |
| Friday, June 5, 2020 | Friday, June 12, 2020 |

"Your Voice in America" is a bimonthly newsletter published by the Polish American Congress. The purpose of the newsletter is to offer PAC National Directors and PAC Executive Committee members the opportunity to share news and information about their state divisions and offices. The newsletter does not receive funds from any external source. The editor is Dr. Mark Pienkos.

Articles should be between 100 and 400 words. Some editing will be done to match our style guidelines and spatial constraints, as well as correcting grammatical errors. We do not send proofs for approval. When sending photos, please include captions with names, official titles. All submitted materials become the property of the Polish American Congress and may be used to promote the mission of the PAC. Materials will not be returned unless requested.

Articles are due according to this schedule. Send your submissions to PAC National VP for Public Relations, Mark Pienkos at markpienkos2012@gmail.com.

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www.facebook.com/pages/Polish-American-Congress



The evening jubilee was a success, with guest speakers from Poland and Canada. Minister Adam Kwiatkowski delivered remarks on behalf of the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda.

In addition, there were other speakers, namely; the Consul General of Poland, Piotr Janicki, Vice President of the Wspolnota Polska, Hanna Galazka, the President of the World Polonia Council, Teresa Berezowski. Representing the Illinois National Guard was Major General Michael Zerbonia, Assistant Adjutant as the main speaker.

A note of appreciation is given to Ms. Mary Anselmo, Ms. Misia Jaminski, Ms. Bozena Kaminski, Mr. Mark Pienkos and the Washington Office for their time and effort in helping in preparation for the celebration. The generosity of the Polish Roman Catholic Union in printing the book is greatly appreciated. To assist in the evening celebration, Mr. Jacek Niemczyk was the Master of Ceremony.

Being that 2020 is a Presidential election year, the next meeting of the Council of National Directors will take place in Washington, D.C., the week of May 11th through the 13th. This will provide National Directors the opportunity to visit with their state legislators.

All in all, a sincere thank you for your involvement with the Polish American Congress in helping to bring about a difference within the Polish American community.

I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, a prosperous New Year, and a safe Holiday Season!

Sincerely,

Frank J. Spula

Frank J. Spula



MESSAGE FROM MARY SENDRA ANSELMO



*Written by Mary Sendra Anselmo
PAC Vice President for Financial Development*

The 75th Jubilee was a sellout; we needed to turn away numerous guests. The Program was concise. We are grateful to our keynote speakers: Minister Adam Kwiatkowski, Secretary of State in the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland; the Honorable Piotr Janicki, Consul General of the Republic of Poland; Teresa Berezowski, President, World Polonia Council; Hana Galazka, Vice President, "Wspolnota Polska" Council; Major General Michael Zerbonia, Assistant Adjutant General-Army, Illinois National Guard.

This success was due to volunteers who share a passion for the Polish American Congress. They did not have the time; they just have the heart to help: President Frank Spula, Micheline Jaminski, and the Staff of the Polish Roman Catholic Union, Jacek Niemczyk, Bozena Kaminski, Mark Pienkos, and the Washington Staff.

Wishing you a world of Peace and Happiness this holiday season.

PAC Celebrates Its Golden Jubilee!

*Submitted by Dr. Mark Pienkos
PAC National Vice President for Public Relations*

The Polish American Congress celebrated its 75th anniversary during the annual PAC Council of National Directors Meeting held in Chicago, November 14-15, 2019.

Founded in May 1944 in Buffalo, New York, the Polish American Congress has been the leading umbrella organization for Polish Americans. Throughout its successful history, the PAC has advocated and fought for a free Poland.

Presiding over this historic meeting and welcoming National Directors was Frank Spula, PAC President.

Besides general organizational business on Thursday, several speakers gave presentations. John Cebrowski reviewed the progress being made at the Polish Heritage Center USA in Panna Maria, Texas. Cebrowski explained that the \$14M project is nearly 70% completed with the interior now being finished. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Professor Emeritus Donald Pienkos gave a spirited speech on the important involvement of the Polish American Congress in securing Poland's admission into NATO in 1999. Pienkos cited this event as the Polish American Congress most signature accomplishment in its 75 years. Purdue University North Central Professor James Pula provided important historical facts of Poles in 1608 Jamestown, Virginia. Effectively using PowerPoint, Pula cited research highlighting factual information on contributions of Poles in this early settlement in the New World. Finally, Dr. Joanna Wojdon, Associate Professor of History at the University of Wroclaw, Poland, gave insights from her book entitled, *"White and Red Umbrella: The Polish American Congress in the Cold War Era, 1944-1988."* Wojdon discussed the internal and external factors that influenced the Congress during this important 20th century period.

Over 180 guests gathered to attend the Thursday evening banquet. The Master of Ceremonies was Jacek Niemczyk, General Manager of the WPNA 103.1 FM & 1490 AM Radio Stations. Special greetings were given by several dignitaries including The Honorable Piotr Janicki, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago; Teresa Berezowski, President, World Polonia Council; and Hanna Galazka, Vice Chairman, "Wspolnota Polska" National Council. The keynote address was provided by Major General Michael Zerbonia, the Assistant Adjutant General-Army, Illinois National Guard.

Special thanks go to Mary Anselmo, PAC Vice President for Financial Development; Micheline Jaminski, PAC Treasurer; and Klara Wisniewska, PAC National Office Administrator, for their outstanding work in planning this special event. Also, the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America deserves recognition for the printing of the beautiful souvenir banquet program book.

Friday's session included an extensive review of a recent electronic survey sent to PAC members. Facilitating the discussion were Tim Kuzma, PAC Secretary, and Mark Pienkos, PAC Vice President for Public Relations. Conclusions from the survey's results were: 1) Revise the PAC Mission Statement; 2) Improve communications; and 3) Engage all State Divisions and PAC members, which is necessary to move the organization forward. Committees will be created to tackle these issues. Rick Pierchalski, PAC Vice President, reported on the subcommittee's work he chaired regarding the PAC National Office in Washington, D.C. The Council of National Directors voted to maintain an office in our nation's Capital. Orchard Lake Schools Chancellor, Very Reverend Mirosław Krol, gave a spirited report on the progress being made at the seminary. Chancellor Krol spoke optimistically about the future of Orchard Lake Schools regarding vocations to the priesthood and facilities improvements. His remarks were warmly and enthusiastically received.

Finally, the next meeting of the Polish American Congress will be held in Washington, D.C. in May 2020.

(Throughout its 75 years, the PAC provided much humanitarian aid, particularly during the communist era. Following the historic visit of Pope St. John Paul II in 1979, and the advent of the Solidarity Movement in 1980, the PAC accelerated its efforts to support a free Poland. Free elections were first held in 1989. The PAC was at the forefront to include Poland's admission into NATO in 1999. Long-sought admission into the Visa Waiver Program by Poland was achieved in 2019. These are just a few of the highlights celebrated during the 75th anniversary meeting.)



PAC – WISCONSIN DIVISION CELEBRATES POLISH INDEPENDENCE DAY & VETERANS DAY

Poland in a Year of Anniversaries of Enormous Consequence:
1979, 1989, 1999

Text and photos courtesy of Irena Frączek

“Since 1998, the Wisconsin Division of the Polish American Congress has observed Polish Independence Day, and honored members of Wisconsin’s Polonia for extraordinary contributions made on behalf of Polish cultural and charitable causes, along with Wisconsin civic causes.”

“Today, one hundred and one years after Poland was reborn, Poland is free and independent, and because of NATO, it’s security is guaranteed by the other 28 NATO member countries... With this freedom, independence and level of security and self-determination, Poland has created one of the most dynamic economies in Europe.”

In these words—filled with pride and appreciation for Poland’s achievements—current President of the Polish American Congress Wisconsin Division, David Rydzewski, set the exceptionally upbeat tone for the 2019 celebration of Polish Independence Day (Narodowe Święto Niepodległości) and the American Veterans Day held in Milwaukee area annually since 1997.

Mr. Rydzewski’s commendation for the Polish economy (the fastest rate of growth in Europe that was uninterrupted by the recent recession, unemployment at a 28 year low, well-educated labor force and over 300 R&D centers established to facilitate cutting edge innovation) were music to the ears of over 200 guests gathered in the banquet hall of the beautiful Polish Center in Franklin, Wisconsin. In a short welcome address, Steven Chybowski, the President of the Polish Heritage Alliance managing the center, noted that in 2020, it will be 20 years since the center opened its doors after 13 years of hard work that went into erecting it. And this was just the first of many anniversaries recognized on that day.



Over 200 guests attended the annual PAC-Wisconsin Division’s Independence Day/Veterans Day Luncheon.

More words in praise of Poland’s economy experiencing 28 years of growth uninterrupted even by the latest recession came from Piotr Janicki, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago. He applauded also the news about Poland joining the Visa Waiver Program on November 11, 2019 and substantial increase of direct flights from Poland to Midwest in 2020. Among anniversaries of great importance to contemporary Poland, Consul Janicki made special mention of:

- 100 years since the re-establishment of the USA-Poland diplomatic relations (1919);
- 20 years since Poland joined the NATO alliance (1999);
- 15 years since Poland became a European Union Member (2004).

In the main speech of the day, David Rydzewski extolled a few other memorable events that helped Poland on its quest for freedom and prosperity:

- 75 years since the Polish American Congress was founded (1944 in Buffalo, NY);
- 40 years since Pope John Paul II took his very first historic trip to his homeland (1979);
- 30 years since the great election victory of Solidarity movement over the Communist regime and the formation of the Solidarity-led government;
- 20 years since the Polish American Congress, nationally and in Wisconsin, played a vital role in helping Poland’s entry into the NATO alliance (1999).

After the elegant luncheon following the invocation given by Deacon Theodore Gurzynski, focus shifted to the commemoration of our veterans. In her short remarks, Nellie De Baker, the Wisconsin State Commander of the Polish Legion of American Veterans, and National Vice Commander, made a heartfelt appeal to reflect on the sacrifices made to win Poland’s independence, and to never forget the heroic fighters for freedom, their families, and all those who continue to serve in the USA and in Poland. The event’s MC, Mark Pienkos (Past President of PAC WI Division, Presently Polish American Congress National Vice President for Public Relations) introduced one of those fighters “For Our Freedom and Yours” (Za naszą i waszą wolność) in person.

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Ted (Tadeusz) Cisek recognized. Cisek participated in the Operation Market Garden as part of the 1st Polish Parachute Brigade under the command of Major General Stanisław Sosabowski. In September 2019, Ted returned to Arnhem and Driel at the invitation of the Dutch government to participate in ceremonies held to pay tribute to the Polish paratroopers on the 75th Anniversary of the operation. In recognition of his selfless war service and later activity in the Polish Army Veterans Association, Ted Cisek was a 2001 recipient of the Congressman Clement Zablocki Award traditionally presented during the Independence Day/Veterans Day Luncheon.

In 2019, another four deserving individuals joined the group of nearly 100 past recipients of this distinction:

- CoryAnn St. Marie-Carls, a longtime member of the PNA Milwaukee Society and past Board Member & supporter of the Polish Heritage Alliance crediting her Polish heritage for the accomplishments during her tenure as the Mayor of St. Francis, WI (2012-2018);
- Dominican Sisters of Immaculate Conception Province operating the St. Ann Rest Home, a skilled nursing facility provides quality care to the elderly people of Polish background;
- Bolesław Kochanowski, a member of the Polish American Congress, past president of Polish Heritage Awareness Society, and a third generation blacksmith who has taken that craft to the realm of fine art exhibited in various locations Wisconsin;
- Alan Patek, a member and past president of the Polish Heritage Club in Madison-WI, former member of the Polish Heritage Society of Northeastern Wisconsin and former Board Chair and then President in the inaugural year of Green Bay Area Catholic Education (GRACE), the largest parochial/private school system in Wisconsin.

Additional information about the recipients and photos are available at <http://pacwisconsin.com/>.

Photo Captions:

1. Piotr Janicki – Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago.
2. L-R: Ted Cisek, Mark Pienkos (Polish American Congress National Vice President for Public Relations), Ed Cisek.
3. David Rydzewski – The Polish American Congress – Wisconsin Division President Presenting Awards.
4. The 2019 Recipients of the Congressman Clement Zablocki Civic Achievement Award: (L-R): CoryAnn St. Marie-Carls, Sister Andrea Andrzejewska (on the behalf of the Dominican Sisters of Immaculate Conception Province) Bolesław Kochanowski, and Alan Patek.
5. Anniversary posters displayed at Banquet.





Q & A with PAC National Vice President for Public Relations Dr. Mark Pienkos

Following Mark's announcement at the Council of National Directors (CoND) Meeting held on November 14 & 15 in Chicago that he would not seek re-election for a fourth term as V.P. for Public Relations, David Rydzewski, President of the Wisconsin Division sat down with Dr. Pienkos to discuss his decision and his work as Vice President.

David: You were first elected as Vice President for Public Relations in 2014. Why have you decided not to run for a fourth term in 2020?

Mark: Thanks, David, for sitting down with me to discuss my decision. I believe in term limits – always have. Although the CoND amended the By-Laws in 2018 to limit to 8 years (4 two-year terms) the time a person could be elected to a position on the Executive Committee (E.C.), I personally believe six years is enough for an individual to serve in a particular position on the E.C.

David: Next year, 2020, is an election year. Might you decide to run for a different position on the E.C.?

Mark: I definitely may. But I still have several months remaining in my present term, and I plan to continue to work hard to complete my responsibilities.

David: Why did you run in the first place?

Mark: God has blessed me with a lot of energy and enthusiasm, and along the way I've developed some strong writing skills. I enjoy writing and sharing people's ideas and information with others. The newsletter I created provides a wonderful vehicle for PAC members to share what they personally are doing, or their State Division is doing, to promote our Polish history, heritage, and culture.

David: Was there a specific reason why you ran in 2014?

Mark: Yes, but it actually goes back to 2012. I was Vice President for the PAC-Wisconsin Division then. At the CoND Meeting in Chicago, our Wisconsin National Directors representatives made a motion to create an electronic newsletter to "get the word out" regarding what the PAC was doing. The motion was passed unanimously. For whatever reason, the electronic newsletter never materialized. Later, I became President of our State Division. As a National Director, I began attending the CoND Meetings. (At that time, there were two meetings held per year.) By observing and listening, I immediately saw how valuable an electronic newsletter could be.

David: So, you decided to run for Vice President for Public Relations?

Mark: That's right, David. At the second meeting held in 2014, I got my name on the ballot and won.

David: How did you get the newsletter started?

Mark: At that same meeting, following my election, I asked some National Directors to serve on a newsletter committee. We discussed several ideas – one being that the newsletter would be published

every two months. A God-send at that meeting was Tim Kuzma who offered the Polish Falcons assistance in helping to design a template so it could be electronically sent out to interested readers. That help has been unbelievable. Thanks, Tim!

David: How did the name of the newsletter come about? It's catchy!

Mark: At that same election meeting in 2014, we had break-out sessions where we discussed various topics. My group – obviously – focused on communications. One person in the group suggested the name for the newsletter that gained almost instant approval: PAC "Your Voice in America" Newsletter. The rest is history!

David: I'm not sure how the newsletter gets put together – the nuts and bolts. Please share, Mark.

Mark: First, I'd like to give a big shout-out to Holland Brown, Andy Darragh, and Tiarra McGinnis at the Polish Falcons. I've worked with all three of these pros over the past 5+ years. They have been great! Also, working behind the scenes is Courtney Caughey-Stambul who supervises the folks I mentioned. We put out a "Call for Submissions" for articles according to a published schedule. I review the various articles, photos, captions. It takes a lot of time to accurately edit articles that are sent to me. I want the author to always look good and the newsletter to be professional in every way because it represents the Polish American Congress. Once the articles are edited, I forward them to the pros at the Falcons mentioned earlier. Drafts are prepared and we go back-and-forth to make sure everything looks as perfect as possible. I always think about recipients of the newsletter—readers who take time to read it. That's very important to me.

David: Seems like a lot of work. How many hours do you estimate is spent on each edition?

Mark: I'd estimate a good 20 hours for each edition. That's my work. The person I work with at the Falcons probably spends a similar amount of time. Probably most people don't realize what it takes to produce a quality newsletter. That's okay. I want all our readers to enjoy a professionally looking, interesting newsletter, and if they do in the end, that's very satisfying.

David: 40 hours total for each newsletter?

Mark: I'd say that's about right, David.

David: Since 2014, how many newsletters have been published?

Mark: I am very proud that 31 newsletters have been published during the past five years. I'm also proud that the newsletter has never missed a publication month. In other words, if the newsletter is supposed to be out in December, it is! It's a goal I set from the get-go and with the behind the scenes help of the Falcons, that goal has been achieved.

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David: That comes to over 1,200 hours of work during the past 5+ years! Wow! What dedication!

David: Besides the newsletter, what else have you done as Vice President for Public Relations?

Mark: I take this office very seriously, David. Besides the newsletter, I've participated in every E.C. Meeting (except for one when I was on a flight when the conference call was held). I've also written various press releases, and a series of press releases during the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining its independence in 2018. The press releases were made into a monograph and is posted on our website. Press releases are an important responsibility of this position.

David: Do you get "out and about" in your role?

Mark: Yes, I do! Before Ann and I moved permanently to Sarasota, Florida in 2018, we always attended PAC-Wisconsin Division meetings. Now, we are also members of the PAC-Western Florida Division. It's been fun meeting new people on the Gulf Coast of Florida where there are many, many Polish Americans. To illustrate this, Ann and I helped organize the first annual "General Casimir Pulaski Day" event sponsored by the Polish-American Association of Sarasota last month on October 13th. It was a very successful outdoor event in downtown Sarasota with 200 people in attendance!

David: Any other visits to State Divisions or elsewhere?

Mark: Just as you did, David, Ann and I participated in the 2016 Forum Polonii Amerykanskiej (Forum of American Polonia) held July 25-30 in Rzeszow, Podkarpacie Region. That was a fantastic experience! Made even more special because my grandparents come from this area and one grandparent – my grandfather, Walenty – was actually born in Rzeszow. What a beautiful city! We also traveled to Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada to pay our respects in honor of the soldiers buried there who died while training for the Polish Army to fight in WW I. Very memorable. Very moving. In June 2019, I also traveled to Buffalo to attend the PAC-Western New York Division's event celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Polish American Congress. I wanted to attend on behalf of the E.C. because that's where the roots of the PAC are – in Buffalo. It was a beautiful celebration! That St. Stanislaus Church is magnificent!

Plus, just prior to the Council of National Directors Meeting in Chicago, I flew in early from Sarasota, where Ann and I now permanently live, to attend the PAC-Wisconsin Division's annual Independence Day/Veterans Day luncheon at the beautiful Polish Center of Wisconsin in Franklin, a suburb of Milwaukee. As a past officer of the Wisconsin Division, I like to attend this event. It's special. I'd like to do more PAC traveling, but since this is an elected, yet unpaid volunteer position, any expenses such as travel, lodging, and meals are the responsibility of the officeholder. However, I'm always open to invitations to give greetings on behalf of the PAC. I'm sure others on the Executive Committee feel the same way. Folks should just contact us.

David: Is there any one special highlight of your six years on the PAC Executive Committee?

Mark: As I mentioned earlier, the visit to Poland was huge. But I also distinctly remember the meeting with candidate Donald Trump held in the PNA Office in Chicago in September 2016. We had a great

meeting and I was able to ask Mr. Trump directly about his support for NATO and the security of Poland. I also was able to read a prepared statement as to the important, long-standing relationship Poland has with the United States. That statement, and Mr. Trump's response, can be found in the October 2016 PAC Newsletter. Two weeks later, we had a similar meeting with Madeleine Albright who represented candidate Hilary Clinton. I asked the same question and read the statement previously mentioned.

David: You sound like a busy guy. Are there any other activities that you are involved in?

Mark: Besides family, grandkids, and community involvement, I also wrote a book about the Chicago White Sox—my favorite baseball team. I've been quite busy speaking to groups about the book. For example, my wife and I were in Cooperstown this past July during HOF Induction Weekend where we sponsored an Authors' Table. In October, I was the featured speaker at the annual Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum event in Greenville, South Carolina. Last month, I gave a one hour lecture on the 1919 World Series in Tampa. We also sponsor a sports discussion group in our community and in January I will be teaching a sports class for adults for the Sarasota Suncoast Technical College. Plus, Ann and I are proud Spring Training Event Staff members for the Baltimore Orioles at the beautiful Ed Smith Stadium in Sarasota. Please visit my website for more information regarding my book: markpienkos.com.

David: Wow! You are a busy guy! Any advice to someone interested in succeeding you as Vice President for Public Relations?

Mark: Seriously consider running! I don't expect anyone to do exactly what I've tried to do. Use your talents. Use your own ideas. Be passionate. A new person will put his or her signature on the position as a member of the Executive Committee. I think that's healthy for the organization. Change is good! I also will be happy to assist the new Vice President for Public Relations in the transition after he or she is elected in 2020. Plus, if someone wants to talk with me about the position, please do so. Call me at 262-325-8039 or email me at markpienkos2012@gmail.com.

David: Thanks, Mark!

Mark: You are very welcome, David. And keep up the fine work you are doing as President of the PAC-Wisconsin Division!



David Rydzewski, PAC-Wisconsin Division President, interviews Dr. Mark Pienkos.



New National Directors-At-Large Appointed

*Written by John Czop
PAC Director of Policy Planning*

Polish American Congress (PAC) President Frank J. Spula receives advice and support from the ten National Directors-At-Large whom he appoints with the approval of the Executive Committee. At the 14-15 November 2019 PAC Council of National Directors Meeting in Chicago, two new National Directors-At-Large joined our team.

Miss Malgorzata Schulz, a member of the PAC Southern California Division, is the United States correspondent for Telewizja Republika, the television service of Gazeta Polska. She recently has done publicity work for the Panna Maria Heritage Center in San Antonio, Texas. After she earned a Master of Arts Degree in theology and journalism from Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Malgorzata held several positions in journalism, publicity, and lobbying.

Over the past twenty years, Malgorzata has been living in California, where she worked in the Public Relations Department of Warner Brothers' Film Studios in Hollywood. Malgorzata also was a member of a successful lobbying team that worked on prison reform in California's State Capital, Sacramento. She participated with this writer in several Washington, DC "think tank" events on Poland, NATO, and the Three Seas Initiative. Malgorzata did first-rate work in publicizing in Polish to outlets the successful 23 May 2019 PAC Congressional Briefing on Capitol Hill, "Poland's Painful Past and Promising Future," which featured Mr. Ian Brzezinski's remarks on the THREE SEAS INITIATIVE. She will help the PAC to publicize our message in the Polish language.

President Spula, in his speech outside the White House on 12 June 2019, at the rally to welcome Poland's President Andrzej Duda and to reaffirm the commitment of Polish Americans for a strong NATO, announced that the new project of the Polish American Congress is to move the THREE SEAS INITIATIVE (3SI) from rhetoric to action. Mindful of this goal, President Spula appointed

as National Director-At-Large, Mr. Joseph Mikolaj Rej, Jr., the scion of a distinguished historic Polish family and successful international businessman, who is a long serving leader of Polonia in Buffalo and Western New York State. Mr. Rej has an outstanding personality and a wide circle of acquaintances with influential government officials and business leaders in Poland and America. Moreover, Buffalo is the Sister City of Rzeszow, the hub of Poland's aerospace and high tech industry, which is playing a key role in 3SI. Joe, as key organizer of the 60 Million Congress event in Buffalo last July, put forward Rzeszow's importance for Poland's promising future as a driving force to make 3SI succeed.

Joe also will bring new members into the PAC. His enthusiasm for developing stronger connections between Poland and America is palpable and contagious. He is effective in spreading the message of the PAC at Polish Happy Hour in Buffalo, as he is doing so at the International Polonaise Ball in Miami Beach.



Newly appointed National Directors-At-Large:
L-R: Joseph Mikolaj Rej, and Malgorzata Schulz
join PAC President, Frank Spula.

POLISH AMERICAN COUNCIL OF TEXAS HOLDS 2019 ANNUAL MEETING IN BANDERA, TEXAS

The Cowboy Capital of the World!

Written by Elaine Mazurek Stephens and John Cebrowski

"On November 16th, the Polish American Council of Texas (PACT) had a successful annual meeting and Polonia celebration in Bandera, Texas "The Cowboy Capital of the World" and home to the second oldest Polish parish in the United States, St. Stanislaus Catholic Church. Our mission to further knowledge of Polish culture, traditions, history, language arts, current affairs and statewide events in Texas was accomplished as we highlighted over thirty Polish communities and parishes in Texas," said Dr Jim Mazurkiewicz, President of the PACT. (photo right)

Bandera is located in the hill country 45 miles west of San Antonio. Each year the event is held in a different community in Texas. This year, the all-day activities were hosted by St. Stanislaus which was founded by Polish settlers in 1855. The celebrations at the Bandera County Courthouse, the colorful parade, Holy Mass, and a festive gala attracted a lively crowd of over 250 people.

The PACT, founded by Bishop Emeritus John W. Yanta, is comprised of 28 organization members, 13 corporate members, 11 family members, and 27 individual members all across Texas. Included in that PACT organization membership is the Polish Heritage Center USA in Panna Maria, the site of the first and oldest permanent Polish settlement in America.

The day began with the PACT Directors meeting in the St. Joseph parish hall at St. Stanislaus, decorated in a cowboy theme, where the parish graciously provided a delicious breakfast. Following the business meetings, local dignitaries extended an official welcome to PACT at the historic Bandera County Courthouse.



The National Anthem was sung in Polish and English. The Mayor then presented a beautiful "cowboy" commemorative plaque to the Polish Consul General in Houston, Robert Rusiecki and his wife Monika. Dr. Mazurkiewicz shared historical and cultural information about the Polish settlements in Texas, their contributions to the heritage of Texas (especially music), and the rich Polish-Texan culture shared by hundreds of thousands of Texans.

The crowd was entertained by performances on the Courthouse lawn by the Mini-Wawel Dancers from Houston and several Wild West performers including the Bandera Cowgirls, the Bandera Cattle Company Gunfighters, and a World Champion Trick Roper.

Following the Courthouse activities, the procession of Polish-Texans and cowboys walked a few blocks to the historic St. Stanislaus Catholic Church, led by a violin fiddler playing Polish and Texan melodies as the colorful group, dressed in traditional Polish and Cowboy attire, carried U.S., Texas, Poland and Papal flags, along with banners representing the regions all over Texas where communities of Polonia still thrive today.

At the church, Mass was celebrated by Monsignor Franciszek Kurzaj president of the Father Leopold Moczygemba Foundation. Father Frank said, "A group from Upper Silesia came to this hill country from San Antonio and started a new life in Texas.

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The first thing they did was to build a church named in honor of bishop and martyr St. Stanislaus. It was great to see people with Polish roots from all over Texas visiting Bandera today and participating in the Holy Eucharist while singing Polish songs and wearing traditional costumes, such as worn in the Góral region, all of them giving thanks for the grace of now being citizens of the United States.”

The crowd grew larger as a traditional cowboy barbecue lunch was served, following a blessing by Bishop Yanta. A talented team of volunteers had painted 300 “Polish-Texan” eggs for the table decorations. “They did an outstanding job,” said Bishop Yanta. The silent and live auctions raised more than \$4,000 for the PACT scholarship program. Performances by the stunningly beautiful Dance Group Wawel fascinated the crowd and everyone in attendance joined in to dance the Polish Polonaise. Numerous attendees were dressed in old Texas attire. *(photo right)*

A highlight of the gala was the PACT 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award presented posthumously to the late Rev. Stanisław Oleksy S.D.S., who as a former pastor of St. Stanislaus, was in charge of restoring the church and renovating its beautifully painted interior. Rev. Kazimierz Oleksy accepted the award on behalf of his late brother.

To learn more the PACT, visit PolishAmericanCouncilofTexas.org.



PAC World War One Centennial Committee

Submitted by Stephen Flor

It is with great pleasure, that during the past 3 years, the Polish American Congress has been a “Commemorative Partner” of the United States World War One Centennial Commission, and has enjoyed a web site sponsored by the federal government for all Polish Americans to utilize and commemorate our Polish American ancestors’ contributions during the Great War, eventually leading to Poland’s Independence.

EFFECTIVE MIDNIGHT, JULY 31, 2019, THIS SITE WILL BE AVAILABLE UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2019 FOR VIEWING ONLY.

All our stories will be stored in the Library of Congress—where we can view them at any time.

I would like to personally thank each and every person who contributed to the success of this memorial.

The PAC WW1 Committee proposes to remain active through 2021 which marks the end of hostilities in Poland and the return of Haller’s Veterans to America. We will explore new avenues for the continuation of our website’s activities.

All questions and concerns should be addressed and emailed to Steve Flor at stephenflor.polonia@gmail.com.





A Glimpse into the Polish American Congress Office in Washington, D.C.

Written by Halina and Zbyszek Koralewski
Members of the PAC-Long Island Division

Back in October 2019, we both attended an important conference in DC "Poland First To Fight." After the conference, we visited our congressman Tom Suozzi's office located in the Capitol. We also took time to visit the national office of the Polish American Congress. It is located in a very elegant part of town and in a famous building. It is a prestigious location in the heart of Washington, D.C. in the proximity of the White House on K street, where numerous other advocacy and lobbying organizations have their offices.

There are three rooms in 1612 K St. NW, 1200 suite with two office spaces and one conference room for up to 20 people. The Administrator is Klara Wiśniewska, who has a desk there. John Czop also has a desk there; however, John is mostly at the Capitol busy advocating for the interests of Polish Americans.

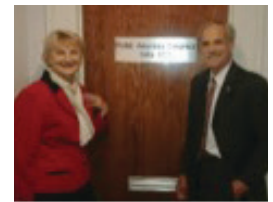


Both the National Director dues and Division dues are used to maintain operations of the office and pay for employees' salaries.

We all should be proud that there is a Polish American advocacy/lobbying organization in DC, and it is run and maintained by the Polish American Congress. No other Central or Eastern European ethnic organization has a similar office – only the PAC! Klara Wiśniewska is responsible for

internal and external communications, and the internship program among other tasks. She answers many inquiries that come from the Capitol and other government and private agencies.

If you are visiting our Nation's Capital, please arrange with Klara a visit to our organization's office. You will be impressed!



Welcome Halina and
Zbyszek Koralewski

HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO TO ENJOY GREAT POLISH FOOD?

To answer that question, Ann and Mark Pienkos traveled to the southernmost part of the United States – Key West, Florida. Their trip was in October 2019.

Key West is a community that has over 300 residents of Polish descent. Among them are Dariusz and Aleksandra Kornacki, who along with their son, Adam, own and operate the Pierogi Polish Market & Café in Key West.

Their store is stocked with various Polish non-perishables. Plus, they have a great assortment of delicious items in their deli. But the real story is the menu. One can order either a sit-down meal or take-out. Mark and Ann ordered a polish sausage sandwich that came with a sumptuous amount of hunter stew – or bigos. The sandwich was huge and the bigos was unbelievably tasty.

Planning a visit to historic Key West? You must make a stop at the Pierogi Polish Market & Café located at 1008 White Street. You'll love it! Remember to tell them Ann & Mark Pienkos sent you!



Son, Adam, along with Dariusz and Aleksandra Kornacki, owners and operators of the Pierogi Polish Market & Café in Key West, proudly wave American and Polish flags presented to them by Ann and Mark Pienkos in October 2019.



Poland's Forgotten Treasures

Written by Debbie Majka
PAC Vice-President for Cultural Activities

Often, but perhaps not often enough, we learn of lost or looted artwork returning to Poland. Much of the collection exhibited at the 1939 World's Fair in Flushing Meadows, New York, remains scattered around the United States. The pavilion opened on May 3, 1939. During September, Poland was invaded by both the German and Russian armies.

Chief among the historically themed exhibits in the Hall of Honor within the pavilion were seven paintings that portrayed pivotal scenes from Polish history. These were 120 by 200 cm tempera paintings on wood, executed in a pre-Raphaelite style that is reminiscent of medieval painting. This was a group project commissioned by the Polish government from the Brotherhood of St. Luke, a group of artists assembled by Tadeusz Pruszkowski in Kazimierz on the Vistula.

The World's Fair closed in 1940 and the pavilion was demolished. Finding himself unemployed, Stefan K. de Ropp, Commissioner of the Polish Pavilion, accepted a position as lecturer at Le Moyne

College, a Jesuit institution located in Syracuse, NY. He would later place the seven paintings at the college, where in 1981, then college president Fr. Frank Haig SJ, placed them on display in the newly completed library. They remain there to this day and are available for public viewing.

In Poland, there's a lot of interest in the society and cultural scene of the Second Republic. Polish Television made a documentary about the Brotherhood of St. Luke painters. A well-illustrated, bi-lingual, award-winning book about Poland's participation in the 1939 World's Fair *Pawilon Polski na nowojorskiej wystawie światowej (1939-1940) i jego dalsze dzieje* [The Polish pavilion at the New York World's Fair (1939-1940) and its subsequent fate] by Krystyna Nowakowska (Ted Mirecki produced the English language text) has been published.

Fortunately, the new administration at Le Moyne College has started a review of its policy, seeking to expand exposure given to the seven Polish historical paintings. A traveling exhibit has been suggested. This would bring welcome publicity not only to the paintings and Polish history but also to LeMoyne College which has faithfully stewarded them for over 50 years. And Poland's Ministry of Culture is working with LeMoyne to secure the return to Poland of these paintings, a shining example of Poland's cultural heritage.

(Additional information and photographs of all the paintings may be found at www.poles.org/Art)





THE HISTORY OF THE POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

1944-2019



Part I: 1944-1980

- **May 28-June 1, 1944:** The Polish American Congress is founded at a massive rally in Buffalo, New York. Some 2,600 delegates from Polish American communities around the country take part in this significant event of World War II.
- **1945:** Following President Franklin Roosevelt's return from his conference at Yalta with British Prime Minister Churchill and Soviet leader Stalin, Charles Rozmarek, President of the PAC, and the other members are among the first in America to publicly denounce the Great Power agreements on Poland and Eastern Europe as a betrayal of the US reasons for participating in the World War.
- **1946:** Rozmarek angrily denounces the handling of thousands of Polish displaced persons throughout western and central Europe by UN authorities and calls for immediate changes after observing the conditions in Germany and France. While in Paris, Rozmarek calls for free elections in Poland to determine the country's future.
- **1948:** The PAC lobbies successfully for special Congressional legislation signed by President Harry Truman that leads to the admission of 140,000 Polish displaced persons, war victims and veterans of the Polish armed forces in Western Europe to settle permanently in the US.
- **1949:** The PAC backs the creation of Radio Free Europe as a voice of truth to the peoples of communist-enslaved Eastern Europe.
- **1952:** A special Committee of the U.S. Congress strongly endorsed by the PAC investigates the murder of more than 14,000 Polish Army officers at the beginning of World War II in the Soviet Union.
- **1957:** Following the collapse of the Stalinist regime in Poland in 1956 and its replacement by a new, seemingly reform-minded Communist regime headed by Wladyslaw Gomulka, the PAC backs a U.S. government foreign aid initiative aimed at weaning Gomulka away from Moscow's authority. Immigration to the U.S. is renewed, enabling thousands of Polish families to be reunited in this country.
- **1960:** Eisenhower is the first U.S. President to speak at a meeting of the Polish American Congress when he addresses the fifth PAC convention in Chicago. Senator John Kennedy, the Democratic Party's presidential nominee, also speaks to the assembly. In later years, Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush and Clinton will all address the Polish American Congress or its leaders on issues pertaining to PAC concerns.
- **1964:** The PAC endorses President Lyndon Johnson's policy of "Building Bridges" to "peacefully engage" the peoples of Eastern Europe and to encourage the democratization and independence of the entire region, from Soviet domination.

- **1969:** The first formal dialogues between the PAC and leaders of the American Jewish community begin in an effort to create new understanding and communication between two peoples who lived together in Poland for seven centuries until the Nazi occupation and devastation of Poland and their ruthless annihilation of the Jewish people.
- **1975:** The PAC endorses President Gerald Ford's signing of the international treaty on security and cooperation in Europe in Helsinki, Finland. Among other things, the "Helsinki Accords" legitimize a set of human rights for the people living under Communist rule in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe.
- **1980:** The forming of the Solidarity Trade Union Movement in Gdansk in August in a time of extreme economic and political crisis brings an immediate PAC endorsement for the union's cause under the leadership of President Mazewski and Vice President Kazimierz Lukomski, a veteran observer of the Polish scene and a member of the World War II era Polish Combatants' Association. The PAC, working in cooperation with Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's National Security Advisor, urges the United States to pressure the Soviet Union against intervening in the crisis and calls on the Polish government to negotiate responsibly with Solidarity. The initial confrontation subsides.

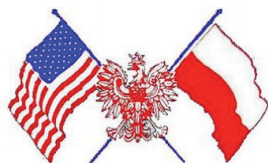
Part II: 1981- 1994

- **1981:** PAC sponsored efforts begin to raise money and materials to meet the needs of Poles suffering in an economy near collapse. The PAC Charitable Foundation initiates its work for Poland by delivering medical goods in short supply to Poland. In December, after Poland's military suppresses Solidarity and proclaims martial law, the PAC backs American sanctions against the U.S.S.R. and the Polish state.
- **1982:** The PAC in cooperation with Mr. Witold Plonski of Brooklyn wins substantial funding from the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities for its proposal to create a national "Consortium for Humanities and Arts Programming". Over the next five years, Plonski's Polish American Committee in the Humanities sponsors several hundred lectures, conferences and cultural exhibitions around the US dealing with the Polish and Polish American experience. This is the most successful effort in history to enlighten the American public and Polish Americans about Poland's past, its culture and political experience.
- **1984:** President Reagan meets with PAC leaders at the White House on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising. There he reaffirms his administration's support for the policy known as the National Endowment for Democracy and endorses the creation of a Polish agricultural foundation proposed by the Catholic Church.

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- **1987:** The PAC wins Reagan administration termination of economic sanctions against Poland, a position in accord with the thinking of Pope John Paul II and Solidarity leader Lech Walesa.
- **1989:** In November, the PAC greets Lech Walesa in Chicago where he receives a hero's welcome. The PAC goes on record in lobbying for economic assistance proposals to Poland advanced by President Bush and the U.S. Congress. The first result of these efforts is passage of the "Support East European Democracy Act of 1989" which commits more than \$800 million to help Poland in its transformation into a democratically governed society with a free market based economy.
- **1990:** PAC successfully lobbies President Bush for full U.S. support to international confirmation of the permanence of Poland's western border with the reunited Germany, something that is crucial to the future stability of central Europe.
- **1991:** The disintegration of the Soviet Union follows upon a failed last-ditch attempt in August by old guard Communist leaders to reverse Gorbachev's reforms, although Gorbachev himself is soon swept aside by Russia's elected President, Boris Yeltsin. Poland, the vast Solidarity movement, and the Roman Catholic Church all played major roles in helping bring about this incredible international development.
- **1992:** The PAC plays a leading role in the activities of an historic congress of Poles from more than fifty countries (including the states of the former Soviet Union) that takes place in Krakow, Poland under the auspices of the Wspolnota Polska association. The congress is among other things, a great family reunion occurring in a Poland at last free and independent. President Lech Walesa, Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka and Cardinal Jozef Glemp are among the Polish dignitaries who address the congress. An "American Agenda" is unanimously approved by the delegates to the eleventh national PAC convention in Washington in October. Accordingly, the Congress commits itself to giving renewed and vigorous attention to building broad knowledge and respect for Poland's history and culture in this country and the advancement of worthy Polish American nominees to every level of government responsibility in America. The task before the PAC is to put this agenda into effect.
- **1994:** President Moskal, Vice President Wojcik, Treasurer Dykla and a delegation of Polish American Congress leaders play key roles in two meetings of Americans of Polish, Czech, Hungarian and Slovak heritage that are held with the top leaders of the United States government including President Bill Clinton and Vice President Albert Gore. The meetings held in Milwaukee and in Washington, D.C. are themselves the direct result of a massive and unprecedented PAC campaign aimed at mobilizing Polish Americans and their friends to pressure the Administration to back NATO membership for Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia. More than 100,000 letters and postcards and countless thousands of telephone calls and telegrams deluge the White House in an unprecedented display of PAC strength and resolve.



Part III: 1995-2018

- **1995:** The PAC backs voter registration efforts in the Polish American community and responds to a tragic fire in Gdansk, Poland by sending special supplies to the many burn victims.
- **1996:** During the presidential campaign, the PAC strongly urged the candidates to support Poland's entry into NATO and immigration reform and affirming America's commitment to the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. A major ally is Congressman William Lipinski of Illinois.
- **1997:** President Clinton moves forward Poland's admission into NATO; the PAC acts effectively on behalf of Polish flood victims and on immigration reform.
- **1998:** The national ancestry question is retained for the 2000 census through PAC efforts.
- **1999:** The admission of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO is approved by all sixteen members of the Alliance. PAC members take part in the celebrations in Washington, D.C. A U.S. Congressional Caucus on Central and Eastern Europe is created through PAC efforts.
- **2000:** The PAC effectively fights for justice against the policemen involved in shakedowns of Polish immigrants in Chicago.
- **2001:** The PAC Charitable Foundation raises \$125,000 on behalf of the victims of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. on September 11.
- **2002:** The PAC defends thousands of Polish students who are victims of errors in the management of the J-1 visa work/travel program to the US. The PAC is invited by the Speaker of the Polish Senate to participate in the Polonia Advisory Council and also takes a lead role in the Council of World Polonia under National Executive Director Les Kuczynski. Barbara Borzuchowska Andersen of the Washington, DC office introduces an internship in the Nation's Capital for Polish American university students.
- **2003:** The City of Chicago settles a lawsuit brought on by the PAC regarding the unfair gerrymandering of the city's Polish American community.
- **2005:** Frank J. Spula becomes the president of the PNA and the PAC following the death of President Moskal. He is still President of PAC today.
- **2006:** The PAC's Washington, D.C. office begins offering a number of programs in the capital to present the Polish American contribution to the U.S.
- **2007:** The PAC inaugurates its Medal of Freedom and honors Casimir Lenard as its first recipient. Senators Barbara Mikulski of Maryland in 2008 and George Voinovich of Ohio in 2009 are recipients of the PAC's highest recognition.
- **2008:** The PAC passes an amendment to its by-laws prohibiting collaborators with communist regimes from holding office in the organization. This action reaffirms the PAC's historic position as stated in its by-laws. Annual "Polish American Congress Days" begin to be held in Washington DC and state capitals across the country. President Spula travels to Poland to reaffirm the PAC's close ties with the Polish government.

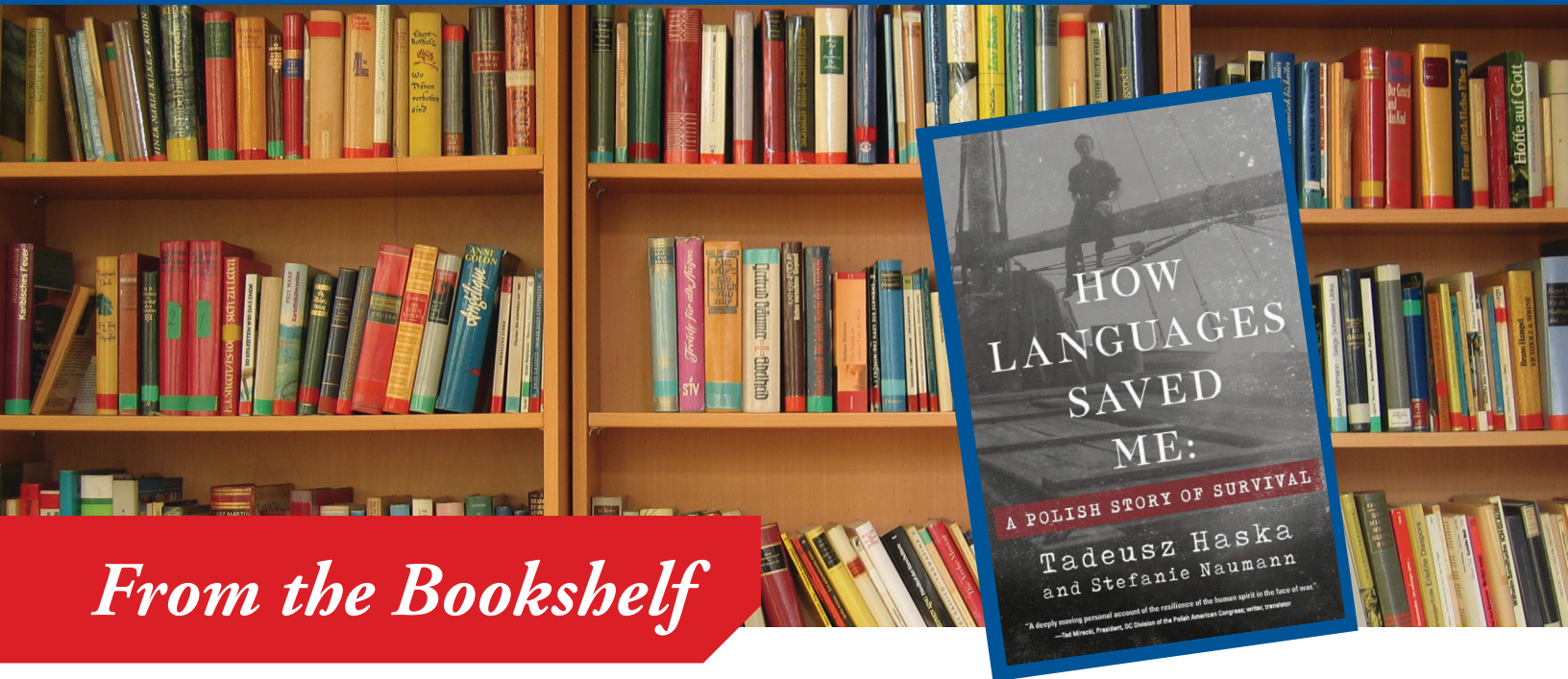
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- **2009:** PAC remains active in working closely with the US Administration and legislators on several legislative initiatives, to include resolutions celebrating 90 years of US-Poland diplomatic relations; commemorating 20 years since the round table talks and first free elections in Poland; urging the Postal Service to issue a stamp honoring Matt Urban; recognizing 6,135 Poles recognized by Yad Vashem as “Righteous Among the Nations” for helping their Jewish neighbors during WWII; recognizing 70th anniversary of the beginning of WWII as well as Soviet invasion on Poland; proclaiming Casimir Pulaski to be an honorary citizen of the United States posthumously, to name a few. PAC holds in Chicago its first National Conference, entitled “The Polish American Community in the 21st Century: Challenges and Opportunities” designed to bring together representatives of the Polish American Community nationwide and to initiate a discussion about the future of the Community.
- **2014:** An electronic newsletter – “Your Voice in America” begins to be published.
- **2016:** The PAC holds its first-ever national meeting outside of the United States in Rzeszów, Poland attending the prestigious “2016 Forum Polonii Amerykańskiej” (Forum of American Polonia) held July 25-30, in Rzeszów, Podkarpacie Region – this meeting helped Polish Americans who traveled to Poland the opportunity to hear firsthand all that Poland is doing to continue its efforts to be a strong business and tourist center in Europe.
- **2017:** PAC develops a robust internship program giving Polish American students an opportunity to advance their knowledge about issues concerning Polonia, Poland and the region of Central and Eastern Europe, helping to advocate for the interests of Polish Americans on Capitol Hill, as well as honing their professional skills related to policy and communications work among other fields – the internship attracts undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students from all across the United States, and it is also popular among Polish Americans studying in Poland.
- **2018:**
 - PAC launches new website at the old domain www.PAC1944.org, and additional social media pages, such as Instagram and LinkedIn; the PAC National Office began implementing new digital communication strategies.
 - PAC leads in organizing a coalition of groups opposed to moving Andrzej Pitynski's Katyń Monument from Exchange Place in Jersey City. The National PAC Office continues to work together with this coalition to make Exchange Place a public pedestrian pathway, FREEDOM PLAZA NORTH, to prevent any further efforts by real estate development companies to try to move the Katyn Monument.
 - PAC is a major partner with the United States sponsored World War I Centennial Commission.
 - Press releases are being routinely sent to media outlets to inform American and Polish American citizens of matters of importance to the Polish American community (i.e. in 2018, to help celebrate and commemorate the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining its independence, releases were prepared to inform media outlets and their subscribers as to the importance of November 11, 1918 in Poland's history).
- **2019:**
 - PAC National Office persuades the other member organizations of the Central and East European Coalition to organize in-Congressional District visits by CEEC delegations of constituents to show members of Congress that the CEEC is not just an inside the Beltway talking shop; we have political power, the votes of our numerous constituents, in the country.
 - PAC National Office builds a more effective and efficient communication effort with staffers on the Capitol Hill on both the Democrat and Republican side for advocacy purposes.



**Merry Christmas and a Happy,
Healthy and Prosperous New Year!
Wesołych Świąt!**



From the Bookshelf

How Languages Saved Me: A Polish Story of Survival

By Tadeusz Haska and Stefanie Naumann

"When I was arrested my whole world crumbled. I knew that leaders of political parties had been arrested, and never heard from again. My only chance at survival was to find a way to escape from the jail."

— Excerpt, Tadeusz "Tad" Haska

Orphaned in Poland at the age of thirteen, Tadeusz "Tad" Haska survived World War II on the run, narrowly evading the Nazis every step of the way. After the war, he daringly escaped jail by the Soviet Secret Police, fled to Sweden and launched an elaborate plan to smuggle his wife in a coffin on an all-male naval ship. Discover how Tad's knowledge of nine languages helped him survive in the face of unspeakable adversity.

Stefanie Naumann, granddaughter of the book's co-author, is a Professor of Management in the Eberhardt School of Business at University of the Pacific, where she has taught for 20 years. She earned her Ph.D. from Louisiana State University and has published over 30



Stefanie Naumann,
Author

journal articles. Also, she is a 20+ year member of the Academy of Management, a lifetime member of the Polish American Genealogical Society of America, and has earned her awards for her research, teaching, and service.

Note: Naumann's book recently earned First Place in the 2019 Royal Dragonfly Book Awards in two categories: historical nonfiction and biography/memoir/autobiography.

Tadeusz Haska was born in 1919 in Mikołajki, Poland, and died in Monterey, California, in 2012. Orphaned at the age of 13, he used his knowledge of nine languages to survive World War II. He later immigrated to the U.S. during 1949, where he earned his Ph.D. at University of California, Berkeley in Linguistics in his ninth language—English. He taught, and served as chairman, in the Polish Department at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA for 35 years. His work was featured on the TV program *The Big Picture*.



Tadeusz Haska, Author

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POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

Founded in May, 1944, the Polish American Congress is a National Umbrella Organization, representing at least 10 million Americans of Polish descent and origin. Its membership is comprised of fraternal, educational, veteran, religious, cultural, social, business, political organizations and individual membership. The Polish American community prides itself on its deeply rooted commitment to the values of family, faith, democracy, hard work and fulfillment of the American dream. We are present in every state and virtually every community in America, on various social, business and economic levels.

The Polish American Congress, an “umbrella” organization, is a federation of over 3000 Polish American organizations and clubs, ranging from national fraternal benefit societies, such as the Polish National Alliance, Polish Women’s Alliance, Polish Roman Catholic Union, Polish Falcons and others, including veteran, cultural, professional, religious and social associations, with aggregate membership of over one million. The PAC by-laws also provide for individual membership, as well as associate membership.

The PAC promotes civic, educational and cultural programs designed to further not only the knowledge of Polish history, language and culture, but to stimulate Polish American involvement and accomplishments.

The governing body of the PAC is the Council of National Directors, consisting of directors elected by their respective State Divisions or National Organizations and up to 10 at-large directors elected by the Council. Day-to-day operations are conducted by the Executive Committee elected by the Council of National Directors for a two year term.

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