



The Forum

of the Chicago Society, Lodge 1450 PNA
Our Second Century of Brotherhood and Service

VOLUME 64

DECEMBER 2013

NUMBER 12

CHRISTMAS DINNER AND PARTY

WEDNESDAY

December 18, 2013

6:00 P.M.

Przybylo's White Eagle Banquets
Niles, Illinois

RESERVATIONS

by December 13 to

meeting@chicagosocietypna.org

or 847-823-8747

NEXT BOARD MEETING AND FORUM DEADLINE

Monday, December 30, 7:00 P.M.
PNA Building

COMING EVENTS

Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2013—
Christmas Dinner and Party
Przybylo's White Eagle Banquets

Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2013
Dinner Networking Meeting
Przybylo's White Eagle Banquets

Saturday, Jan. 18, 2013—
Inaugural Ball
Rosewood Banquets, Rosemont

COME TO OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Chicago Society Board of Directors cordially invites all members and members' widows to our annual Christmas Dinner and Meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, December 18, starting at 6:00 p.m. at Przybylo's White Eagle Banquets, located in Niles. An open bar will be available one hour before the dinner and one hour after. Guests will enjoy a plated dinner consisting of a traditional soup, a gourmet salad, Przybylo's specially prepared pork cutlet, shrimp kabob, oven roasted potatoes, green beans and carrots Polonaise, a special dessert, coffee/tea/milk. KBE Entertainment will provide the music for listening and dancing for this event and, as at the past Christmas parties, the *Polonia* Dance Ensemble will perform.



There will be a \$25 charge per member or widow for the party, and a \$25 charge for a member's or widow's one guest. The charge for additional each guest will be \$35. Prompt reservations for the dinner are a must! Please make your reservations no later than Sunday, December 15 by contacting **Chuck Cwiakala**: email (preferred) meeting@chicagosocietypna.org or tel. 847-826-8747. Payment and reservations can also be made via PayPal at our website. The annual Christmas Party raffle will take place following our dinner. Our tradition is that members, their guests, and our generous friends donate prizes for the raffle. Any item of merit will be appreciated and will be acknowledged in *The Forum*.

CELEBRATE AT THE CHICAGO SOCIETY'S 2014 INAUGURAL BALL

January 18, 2014, is quickly coming upon us! That evening we will hold our highly anticipated Inaugural Ball. During the evening we will witness the installation of our newly elected president and board of directors, who will guide the Society over the next twelve months. On this evening we will also honor our 2014 Man of the Year, Brother **Romuald "Ro" Matuszczak**, an individual highly deserving of this award.

Chicago Society balls have long been well known throughout Chicago's *Polonia*. Indeed, over the years we have established our own set of high standards for this occasion and our January event will showcase this legacy. We have made every effort to ensure that the menu meets our guests' expectations, that the orchestra and its music selections reflect the tastes of both dancers and onlookers, and that the atmosphere created by the elegance of your company will encourage everyone to leave their worries behind and celebrate the evening.



The ball will take place at Rosewood Banquets in Rosemont, a highly-renowned steak house ideally suited to our event. Arriving guests will be greeted with champagne and hors d'oeuvres especially selected and prepared by the executive chef. An open bar serving fine spirits, wines, and beers will be available throughout the evening. Dinner will begin with an egg lemon soup and a mesclun mix salad. Guests will have a choice of one of three entrées prepared by a team of professional chefs: filet mignon with bordelaise sauce, chicken francaise with lemon basil sauce, salmon with cabernet sauce, or a vegetarian meal, accompanied by mushroom potato and broccoli provencale "polonaise." Dessert will be a white chocolate mousse cake. Red and white wine will be

— Continued on page 3 —



CHICAGO
SOCIETY
Forum

A monthly news bulletin for the
Chicago Society PNA membership

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Ted Wiecek

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Visit Our Website At

www.chicagosocietypna.org

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DID YOU MAKE YOUR
MEETING RESERVATION?

Dear Brothers,

First of all I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I also hope everyone enjoyed their Thanksgiving with their family or friends.

I would like to thank all of the officers and directors of the Chicago Society, P.N.A. for their work and dedication in 2013 and look forward to making 2014 a greater success to our organization. I would like to also thank all the members who have supported our events throughout the year to make them successful as we continue into the next 100 years of the Chicago Society, PNA.

Thank you to Brothers Chuck and Ro for organizing the Thanksgiving dinner meeting and turkey raffle.

In addition, I would like to congratulate Brother Ro on his 50th year chairing and coordinating the Deserving Children's Christmas Party to be held on Dec. 14th at the PNA cafeteria located at 6100 N. Cicero. If you have any donations for this event please contact Brother Ro. Thank you Brother Ro.

As the year winds down we will celebrate at our annual Christmas meeting on Dec. 18 at Przybylo's White Eagle Banquets. Reservations are a must and can be made by contact Brother Chuck Cwiakala for more info by email at meeting@chicagosocietypna.org or at 847-823-8747.

Fraternally Yours,
Mark Orwat



It's hard to believe that 24 issues have passed since I began my position as Editor of *The Forum*. This has certainly been a rewarding experience for me with the awareness that in some small way what I presented to you the readers gave you some new knowledge and put a smile on your face. Over the past two years, I have attempted to include items that you would find interesting, would expand your knowledge, and, at times, entertain you. Since the Chicago

Society celebrated its 100th Anniversary last year, I presented some excerpts from our history so that the members would learn of the beginnings of the Society, what the social and economic conditions were at that time and how the Society attempted to improve those conditions for Chicago's Polonia.

Part of the oath that each one of us took upon becoming a member of the Society is "I promise to serve and cherish the traditions and customs of Poland." In order to permit members to uphold their oath, I presented a monthly series of the traditions and folklore of Poland, together with a tour of the regions of Poland. I trust that this gave you the readers a greater appreciation and a broader familiarity of the diversity and beauty of our shared Polish heritage.

I hope you the readers are pleased with *The Forum* of the past two years, because, after all, it is your newsletter. As I stated in my first column, a "forum" is a place for people to exchange ideas. I would like to thank all the members and friends who shared their ideas, their experiences, and their life-happenings with their fellow members via *The Forum*. I would especially like to thank Brother **T. Ron Jasinski-Herbert** for his assistance and patience in developing a new look for *The Forum*. I trust it met with your approval. As I pass the pen on to my successor, I'm sure that you will afford him the same assistance and support as you did me, which I greatly appreciate.

Życzę wszystkim członkom, wdowom, i ich rodzinom *Wesołych i Błogich Świąt Bożego Narodzenia, oraz aby Nowy 2014 Rok przyniósł zdrowia i pomyślności.* Best wishes to all our members, widows, and their families for a Happy and Blessed Christmas, and may the new 2104 year bring health and success to all!



Inaugural Ball (Continued from page 1)

served throughout the meal.

The popular violin virtuoso Brother **Anthony Kawalkowski** and his strolling violinists will accompany this gourmet dinner. Following dinner and after the installation ceremony of the newly-elected president and board, this highly respected and popular orchestra, one of the best in the Midwest, will get everyone on their feet for a night of revelry. But before we hit the dance floor, members of the *Polonia* dance ensemble will open the ball with a traditional Polonaise.

Each of us on the committee, as a member of the Society, is striving to create a beautiful, festive, light-hearted atmosphere at this black tie optional event. Each of us should consider ourselves a co-chair of the ball—fully vested in its success. So let's all attend this gala event, with our significant others and in the company of our closest friends. We encourage you to select a Table Captain from among your party and reserve your table of up to 10 guests in advance.

We are pleased to announce that the ticket price for the 2014 Ball will remain at \$120 per person, the same as with the 2013 event. Kindly submit your reservations and payment by Monday, January 6, 2014. If you have not yet received your invitation, need extras for your guests, or have any questions at all, please contact our ball chairman, brother **Frank Czaja**, at 312-520-6144 (e-mail: frankcz@usa.net) or visit our web page at www.chicagosocietypn.org.

We look forward to your company and a spectacular evening at our Ball! *Do miłego zobaczenia!*

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

The Chicago Society would like to extend to the following brother members, who are celebrating their birthday in December, a warm wish of *Sto Lat!*

- 9 Frank Czaja
- 12 Jack Rohner
- 14 Charles Cwiakala
- 21 Thaddeus Dabrowski
- Dean Niedospial
- Ronald Olech
- 23 Thomas Laskowski
- 27 Ronald Wolosiewicz

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARY

The Chicago Society would like to congratulate Brother **Anthony Kawalkowski**, who is celebrating the 30th anniversary of his induction in December.

COME EXPERIENCE THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

With Christmas just around the corner, it's time to get in to the Christmas spirit. Brother **Anthony Kawalkowski**



and his orchestra will present a concert of Christmas favorites, "The Love and Peace of Christmas," on Sunday, Dec. 15, 2013, at 2:00 p.m. at the Copernicus Center.

This promises to be a spectacular Christmas concert. featuring Christmas favorites. a children's drum corps, the Inspired Youth Choir, and a visit from Santa Claus, with a special appearance by Chicago's own Wayne Messmer.

Tickets are still available for this memorable afternoon. For ticket information, go to <http://www.copernicuscenter.org> or call 773-777-8898.

GET WELL WISHES

Brother **Ted Dabrowski** suffered a stroke in October and is slowly recovering at home. Take care, Ted. Get well.

PRZY WIGILIJNYM STOLE

JAN KASPROWICZ

(Editor's note: in the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season and all its preparations, we often forget why we're celebrating this Holiday. Perhaps the words of Jan Kasprowicz will help us remember the true meaning of Christmas.)

*Przy wigilijnym stole,
Łamiąc opłatek święty,
Pomnijcie, że dzień ten radosny
W miłości jest poczęty;*



*Że, jako mówi wam
wszystkim
Dawne, prastare
orędzie,
Z pierwszą na niebie
gwiazdą
Bóg w waszym domu
zasiądzie.*

*Sercem Go przyjąć gorącym,
Na ścieżaj otworzyć wrota—
Oto co czynić wam każe
Miłość—największa cnota.*

At the Christmas table,
As you break the holy wafer,
Remember that this joyful day
Was in love conceived;

That, as says to you all
The old, ancient message,
With the first star in the sky
God will come to your home.

Receive Him with a warm heart,
Open the gates for Him—
Do as He commands:
Love—the greatest virtue.

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ROMUALD "RO" MATUSZCZAK TO BE HONORED AT THE INAUGURAL BALL

The Chicago Society of the Polish National Alliance will honor Brother **Romuald Ro Matuszczak**, popularly known as "Mr. Chicago Society," as the Man of the Year at its Inaugural Ball, which will be held on Saturday, January 18, 2014, at Rosewood



Banquets in Rosemont, Illinois.

Brother Ro has been a member of the Chicago Society for over fifty-seven years. He was a seven-time President of the Chicago Society and has served on many committees and chaired many events. During World War II, he served in the United States Marine Corps. Ro has received the Award of Merit from the Advocates Society, the Civilian Man of the Year from the Polish American Police Association as well as a Certificate of Appreciation from Mayor Richard M. Daley for his lifelong contributions to Chicago. For fifty years Ro has chaired the Chicago Society Deserving Children's Christmas Party, and for thirty-six years chaired and has been involved with the Annual Pre-Parade Polish Constitution Day Brunch. He has also served on the Constitution Day parade Committee for many years.



Ro in 1945

Brother Ro has been president and vice president of numerous organizations. He is active with the Des Plaines VFW Post 2992 as Advisory Board President and Chaplain. Ro is also a member of the

Polish National Alliance, Polish Legion of American Veterans, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, the Elks, American Legion and Associate Member of PAPA (Polish American Polish Association).

Please join us at the Inaugural Ball to honor Romuald "Ro" Matuszczak. This is an honor well-deserved for his many years of service to Chicago's Polonia and the community.

HELP SAVE THE POLISH MUSEUM AT RAPPERSWIL

The Polish Museum—Rapperswil was founded in Rapperswil, Switzerland, in 1870 by Polish Count Władysław Broel-Plater as "a refuge for Poland's historic memorabilia dishonored and plundered in the occupied Polish homeland and for the promotion of Polish interests."

The Museum, after many changes, exists today as an outpost of Polish culture in Switzerland, a country which, over the past two centuries, has given refuge to generations of Poles. The Museum now features permanent exhibits on:

- The Swiss in Poland, and Poles in Switzerland
- History of 19th- and 20th-century Polish emigrations to the West
- History of the Polish struggle for national independence
- Distinguished Polish scientists, artists and Nobel laureates
- Paintings by 19th- and 20th-century Polish artists
- Jewish culture in Poland
- Polish folk art

In addition, the Museum organizes periodic special exhibits on Polish history and art. The Polish Museum also features a library, which holds some 20,000 volumes on Polish history and culture, including works in western-European languages.

Now, the Museum is threatened to be

closed by the Town Council of Rapperswil. The President (Mayor) of Rapperswil stated, in response to a proposal to modernize the castle, "In the future there will not exist a museum in the Castle of Rapperswil" The Polish Museum is a cultural institution which Polish and Swiss people have created and which has made the name of Rapperswil known not only in Poland, but in the whole world.? Please sign a petition supporting the museum by visiting <http://www.muzeum-polskie.org/mpr/english/vote-to-support-us.html>.

POLISH TRIVIA

This beautiful and most popular *koleda* was written probably in the 15th Century. Many composers have used variations of its melody in their compositions. The most noteworthy is Chopin, who used this melody as a motif in his Scherzo No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20. What is this melody? Send your response to editor@chicagosocietypna.org.

Answer to November's question: One of the two satellites is named "Lem" after the science fiction author Stanisław Lem. The other is named "Heweliusz" after Jan (Johannes) Heweliusz, known as "the founder of lunar topography" who defined ten new constellations, seven of which are still recognized by astronomers. He also served as mayor of Gdańsk. These are the first two Polish scientific satellites.



HUBERT J. CIOROMSKI
President

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CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS IN THE REGIONS OF POLAND

Christmas in Poland is a holiday full of traditions, which I wrote about in last year's issue. Many of these traditions—*Wigilia*, *opłatek*, *Pasterka*—are observed by all Poles, wherever they may live. However, thanks to the influx of foreign and regional influences, the regions of Poland have a number of customs and traditions unique to that region. Here are some examples.

In Kaszuby, two weeks before Christmas, the young adults celebrate with loud and boisterous traditional games in the gardens and the fields. To insure a good harvest for the following year, they crack a whip, play the bagpipes and shepherds' horns, ring bells and repeat ancient sayings such as *Jędrzne jabłka, jędrzne kreszki na ten nowy rok*. "Crisp apples, crisp pears for the new year. A Whistler would visit each house announcing the coming of the Christmas Star with bells and whistling and formally ask the head of the household to play hosts to the carolers with these words, "Do you want to see the show"? The Kaszuby region is also known throughout the country for its *kulig*, sleigh rides, which are loads of fun in the snowy forests of Kaszuby.



In Kraków, the most unique and singular Christmas tradition is the popular creation of *szopki*, Christmas cribs. Something of a strange cross between a nativity scene, gingerbread house and dollhouse, *szopki* are the result of a slowly evolving folk tradition that dates back to the Middle Ages. Originally used as mini puppet theatres where morality plays were performed during the holiday season, *szopki* gradually became more whimsical, secular and satirical in nature. In time, they became a powerful political tool used in the cafes and cabarets of the Old Town to criticize the occupying powers. Upon Poland's return to the world map after World War I, the tradition of *szopki* returned, becoming the celebrated custom it is today. *Szopki* look like castles or cathedrals with the general rule that they incorporate characteristics of Kraków's historic architectural styles. Most *szopki* are loosely-based on the design of St. Mary's Basilica with its landmark spires; however miniatures of other unique buildings such as Wawel Castle, Sukiennice (the Cloth Hall) and Barbican have also been made. Generally, baby Jesus can be found amongst the glittering surfaces of the second floor, while the ground floor is occupied by figures from Kraków history and legend such as Pan Twardowski, Tadeusz Kościuszko or the Wawel dragon. As a side note, Lutnia restaurant on Belmont has its annual display of *szopki*. I encourage all to see it; truly amazing!



In Podhale Christmas eve is an exceptional day, abundant in a number of magic practices. According to the saying *Jako Wilijo taki cały rok* (the whole year will be as Christmas Eve was), everybody tries to live this day in the best possible way, avoiding argument, crying, anger and cursing. In the evening the whole family in festive attire gathers at the Christmas table. Before dinner, everyone prays during which they remember and even invite the deceased to joint dinner. After dinner, girls begin fortune-telling

about marriage. They draw blades of grass from the hay placed on the table, count prune stones, listen from which side a dog would bark to find out where the future husband would come from. Many customs originating from ancient Podhale customs



related to Christmas have been preserved until modern times. For instance, in many households participants of the *Wigilia* put a few spoons of each dish away on a separate plate. After the dinner, the host takes this food to the stable to give it to the animals.

In the area of Rzeszów *Wigilia* is also full of customs and fortune-telling, which were believed to influence the success of the coming year. The people wash in water into which a silver coin or sometimes garlic was thrown, which was meant to secure good health. Farmers go to an orchard in the morning to check if the trees were covered in-frost, which predicts next year's harvest. The room in which *Wigilia* is eaten is carefully prepared for this special evening. At the ceiling a top of a fir or pine called *pitka* is hung. It is decorated with apples, sweets, nuts and chains made of paper. Rye straw is put around the table. Oats are sprinkled on the table along with garlic and hay, which are covered by a white tablecloth. Under the table an axe or a plough knife are placed. The dishes are prepared from the harvest gathered in the field, garden, orchard or forest.

Many of the regional differences involve the dishes served at *Wigilia*. In Śląsk, *siemienotka*, prepared from boiled hemp seeds, and buckwheat and millet grouts. and *moczka*, a thick sauce made of brown flour and butter, mixed together with several different ingredients such as garlic, pears, mushrooms, gingerbread, parsnip, and others, were commonly served. The most anticipated Christmas Eve dish are *makówki*, which are rolls dipped in sweet milk and stuffed with honey, poppies, nuts, raisins, and almonds. Compote with dried plums and other cakes round out the Christmas Eve dinner.

The culinary specificity of Małopolska is most visible at the Christmas table. Traditional dishes include cooked peas, dried plums and pears, dumplings with poppy seeds and honey, and sour zur soup with mushrooms – served in that order. One historical recipe states: "Take two large handfuls of pickled cabbage from the barrel and place in a large pot, cover with water and bring to boil. Strain after the first two bubbles emerge. Cover with boiling water again and continue boiling, remembering to mix with a wooden spoon, which gives the cabbage a specific taste."



In Rzeszów, on the *Wigilia* table are: *żurek*, (white borscht) with potatoes or mushrooms, peas cooked with cabbage, pierogi filled with cabbage, potatoes, mushrooms, cereals and prunes.

Also buckwheat, pearl barley, millet with prunes or apples, noodles greased with oil, fingers with poppy and honey, stewed dried fruit, apples and nuts.

Dessert is different in different regions. Eastern areas of the

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CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS (Continued from page 5)

Podlasie, Podkarpacie and Lublin regions serve *kutia* – an ancient dish of poppy-seed mass served with wheat or barley, honey, dried fruit and nuts. The dish found its way into Lower Śląsk and Western. In Mazowsze, there can be various numbers of dishes,

but the number must be odd; while in Podlasie there are to be twelve dishes—one representing each Apostle.

Despite all these regional variations, the true spirit and meaning of Christmas remains the same: to welcome the love that the new born Christ child brings to the world.

CHICAGO SOCIETY FORUM

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