



St John's Eve

fot. Wikimedia Commons

Long before Valentine's Day reached Poland there was: Love and marriage – Old Polish style

BY ROBERT STRYBEL

Unlike the Anglo-Saxon Valentine's Day, which as a commercial promotion has also spread to Poland in recent years, our Polish heritage includes a whole series of events celebrating boy-girl fascination, love, and marriage. Once very popular were various fortune-telling games centered mainly on the romantic and marital prospects

of the eligible girls of the family.

ANDRZEJKI or St Andrew's Eve (November 29th) was a major occasion of that kind, and pouring molten wax through the eye of a large old-fashion key into a basin of cold water was the event's best-known activity. Either the shape the hardened wax assumed or

the shadow it cast when held up to a strong light was said to predict her romantic prospects by revealing something associated with her future beau.

Romantically linked predictions were also part of Christmas Eve lore. Girls would draw strands of hay from under the table-cloth of the Wigilia supper table. A green

strand meant marriage before the end of **ZAPUSTY** (Mardi Gras), while a yellow one signified that the girl was still in for a wait before someone popped the question.

Love and marriage permeated the festivities of the high-powered pre-Lenten revelry preceding the start of Lent. In cities, masquerade balls and tea dances were held. Families with girls of marriageable age made a special effort (often going into debt) to attract eligible bachelors. Handsome, though not well-to-do young men, often in borrowed, ill-fitting suits eagerly attended such events, knowing they would get loads of free food and drink, not to mention the dancing and socializing thrown into the bargain.

Singlehood as a lifestyle choice had not yet been invented back then, in fact, there was a great stigma attached to any eligible young man or woman who failed to find a mate before the carnival period ended. Such people could expect to have egg shells, chicken feet, turkey necks, herring bones or other such nasty things pinned to their clothes. But it was all in fun and they could buy themselves off by standing drinks for everyone at the village inn,

Lent, known in Polish as the Great Fast (**WIELKI POST**), was too solemn a period for boy-girl frivolity, but young people managed to exchange an occasional affectionate glance at one another at

such weekly Lenten services. Church-goers would tap each other with pussy-willow bouquets that served as palms on Palm Sunday, wishing one another good health and prosperity. There was something of a love tap in gesture when young men and women did so to each other.

On Easter Monday the custom known as **ŚMIGUS-DYNGUS** was mainly practiced by eligible young lads who would rise early and go on the prowl for unsuspecting maidens. Although the girls pursued by bucket-wielding youths squealed and shrieked in protest, secretly they welcomed such attention. Any maiden that did not get drenched felt neglected and unpopular.

A true love feast was St John's Eve or **NOC ŚWIĘTOJAŃSKA** (June 23). Bonfires would be built and boys would take turns jumping over the roaring blaze in another display of virility and brava-do. Girls would weave wreaths from herbs and wildflowers, attach candles and after night-fall float them down a river or stream. Boys would push off in boats or simply wade in after them. The wreath a lad fished out was said to be that of the girl he would eventually marry.

Couples would often wander off into the forest in search of a "magic fern" that was believed to bloom only on St John's Eve. Priests condemned

continued on p. 4



UPCOMING EVENTS

January 27, 11-12:30 PM, 1-2:30 PM – Polanki's Pierogi Dinner
Polish Center of Wisconsin, 6941 S 68th St, Franklin, WI. Reservation form: <https://polanki.org>

February 3, 3:00 PM – Polish Mass
St Cecilia, 603 Oak St, Wisconsin Dells, Polish ministry: Fr. Bronislaw Slodowski.

February 14, 6:00 PM – PHS Board Meeting
Perkins, 2800 S Oneida, Green Bay, WI 54115. You are invited!

March 3, 3:00 PM – Polish Mass
St Cecilia, 603 Oak St, Wisconsin Dells, Polish ministry: Fr. Bronislaw Slodowski.

March 3-10 – Casimir Pulaski Days
Pulaski, WI. See schedule of events and times on page 3.

March 5, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM – Paczki Day
Polish Center of Wisconsin, 6941 S 68th St, Franklin, WI
www.polishcenterofwisconsin.org

March 8– April 19 – Friday Lenten Fish Fries
Polish Center of Wisconsin, 6941 S 68th St, Franklin, WI
www.polishcenterofwisconsin.org

March 14, 6:00 PM – PHS Board Meeting
Perkins, 2800 S Oneida, Green Bay, WI 54115. You are invited!

March 15 – Newspaper article deadline
Submit articles to Malgosia at malgosiaaugherty@yahoo.com

March 25, 6:30 PM – Newspaper distribution meeting
255 Terraview Dr, Green Bay, WI.

April 3, 7:00 PM – "Republic of Poland. Reloaded" (Poland, 2018, dir. Anna Ferens)
Neville Museum, 210 Museum Place, Green Bay, WI. Co-sponsor: Polish Heritage Society. (See below)

You're invited to the movie

Polish Heritage Society presents a documentary by Anna Ferens "Republic of Poland. Reloaded." Polish title: "Rzeczpospolita. Reaktywacja." The screening of the movie will take place at the Neville Museum, 210 Museum Pl in Green Bay on April 3rd at 7:00 P.M.

About the movie (2018, 59 min): This highly informative documentary tells the fascinating story of the reconstruction of the Polish state after Poland regained independence in 1918. The film aptly conveys the spirit of high energy, industriousness, and inventiveness of the Polish people allowing them to quickly rebuild country ravaged during World War I and the defensive war against the Bolshevik invasion fought in 1920-1921. The new Polish state faced these challenges head on and, against the odds, overcame

them with spectacular results. In this vein, the film presents the greatest achievements of politicians, economists, constructors and inventors, whose original ideas, discoveries and creations contributed to the flourishing of Polish economy, science, and culture during the

interwar period. As expressively documented in the movie, these contributions gained also gained the international recognition and played an important role in the development of science, and engineering fields around the world.

The movie won the PFFA Award for the Masterful Directing at the 2018 Polish Film Festival in Chicago.

About the director: Anna Ferens is a director, screenwriter, producer, and journalist – well-known to Polish and U.S. audiences for award-winning documentaries as well as television series and short features. She graduated with a master's degree in Journalism and Political Science from the University of Warsaw, but studied also Serbo-Croatian at the University of Warsaw and Advertising for Business at the French Institute of Government in Warsaw. She currently heads the Documentary Programming Division for TVP1 & TVP2 in Poland.

Polish-American scholars interviewed in the film include prof. Dominic Pacyga of Chicago, prof. Donald Pienkos of Milwaukee, and prof. Wacław Szybalski of Madison.

Irena Frączek



POLISH NEWSBYTES

COMPILED BY ROBERT STRYBEL

Abducted Polish seamen free after 3 months in captivity

The crew of the German-owned container ship Pomerania Sky, hijacked by pirates last October have been set free, Polish Radio reported recently. It said the Polish foreign ministry had thanked the ship owners for their handling of the case, and the Nigerian authorities for their assistance. No mention was made of the amount of ransom paid to secure their release. Eight Poles had been among the 11 kidnap victims seized by pirates in motorboats who took control of the ship some 60 nautical miles off the Nigerian coast. Such pirate attacks are not uncommon in that region of the world.

17 suspected tax fraudsters nabbed in nationwide sweep

Polish Police have detained 17 members of a suspected organized-crime group which investigators believe used fraudulent invoices to claim value-added tax (VAT) refunds of more than 70 million zlotys (\$18.4 million). A spokesman for the Central Police Bureau of Investigation, Poland's equivalent of the FBI, said the detentions followed a probe conducted

in several cities together with prosecutors and tax inspectors. Property belonging to the suspects, including money, jewelry, and luxury cars, has been seized. Poland's present conservative government has cracked down on VAT fraud which was widespread and went largely undetected under the previous liberal administration.

Polish anti-terror law praised

The Hybrid Center of Excellence, a consortium of experts promoting international cooperation in countering hybrid threats, has praised Poland's anti-terrorist laws. Jukka Savolainen, the director of its vulnerabilities and resilience group, highlighted Polish anti-terror laws at an international meeting and singled it out as "an example of best practices." Stanisław Żaryn, a spokesperson for Poland's security services chief, said, "While working on the provisions of the anti-terrorism law, we were aware that we were creating modern legal solutions for the active combating of terrorist threats in Poland. We are pleased that the Polish regulations have been rated so highly by the center. It is Poland that is today setting the pace in terms of anti-terrorism regulations in Europe."

Church attendance and sacraments growing in Poland

Some half a million more Poles regularly attended Sunday Mass in 2017 than a year earlier and 300,000 more received Holy Communion, Poland's Catholic Statistical Institute has reported. Percentage-wise, in 2016 16% percent received the Eucharist as opposed to 17% the following year. But religious practices are quite diversified regionally, The highest Mass attendance is noted in SE Poland's Podkarpackie (Subcarpathian) voivodeship led by the Diocese of Tarnów (71.7%), followed by Rzeszów (64.1%) and Przemyśl (59.8%). The fewest regular churchgoers are found in the once strongly communist-influenced Łódź region (24.6%), the Szczecin-Kamień Diocese (24.6%) and the Koszalin-Kołobrzeg Diocese (25.6%). The latter two are part of former German lands ceded to Poland after the war and resettled by repatriates from the Soviet-annexed east as well as Western Europe and assorted rootless drifters.

50-year-old frost victim brought back to life in Wejherowo

A bearded man of about 50 was believed to have frozen to death in the northern coastal town of Wejherowo. When medical rescuers, alerted by passersby, arrived on the scene, the man

had no pulse, was not breathing and his body temperature had dropped to a deadly 71.6°F. He would have qualified for a body bag if a rescuer hadn't noticed his suddenly quivering eyelid. He was rushed to the local hospital which fortunately was equipped with a state of the art blood-warming apparatus. After a night hooked up to that device the man regained consciousness and was being treated for pneumonia. Since the start of the cold season, 50 Poles have frozen to death, mainly homeless and/or inebriated.

Documentary focuses on Poland's prehistoric tombs

"We know more about the Egyptian Pyramids than about our own history," said Krzysztof Paluszynski, explaining why he made a documentary on Poland's huge prehistoric stone tombs. His new, partially dramatized, and animated documentary explains how the megalithic tombs were created and tells the story of the people who constructed them and were laid to rest therein. The 5,500-year-old monuments, of which the longest reaches a length of 450 feet, can be found at various Polish locations. In the dramatized sequences of the hour-long film, re-enactors played the people of the Funnel-beaker culture who were buried in the tombs, bring those prehistoric times to life. 3-D animations were

included to visualize the structures as they appeared when constructed.

Clairvoyant foresees Polish conservative victory, turmoil in Europe

Krzysztof Jackowski, Poland's best-known clairvoyant, predicts that the ruling conservative Law and Justice party will win this year's autumn general elections but less decisively than in 2015 and will therefore need coalition partners to form a stable government. His dire predictions focus not on Poland but on the Old Continent. "This will be the end of Europe as we know it," he told an interviewer. "2019 will deprive Europe of all normality. Unlike the individual terror attacks to date we can expect organized terrorism. Europe will become a dangerous mine field. And the European Union will be helpless to stop it. Citizens will rise up against their governments." Over the years, Jackowski's predictions have proved accurate. The police have frequently enlisted his services when seeking missing persons including murder and accident victims.

Thank You New members, RENEWING MEMBERS, and Donors!

The Polish Heritage Society of Northeastern Wisconsin is pleased to welcome new members **Tom Ristau** of Green Bay, the **David & Melissa Tatar Family** of Sobieski, a Christmas gift membership to **Richard Swiatnicki** of Athelstane from members **Julie & Rick Stoeger**, a Christmas gift membership to the **Ela & Robert Allen Family** of Fond du Lac from member **Malgosia Daugherty, Gregory Suchyta, Sr.** of Kaukauna, and Christmas gift memberships to **Gregory Suchyta, Jr** of Neenah, **Kathryn Wozniak** of Novi, Michigan and **Patricia Lueck** of Linden, Michigan all by new member **Gregory Suchyta, Sr.** Congratulations and witamy!

Renewing since our previous issue's deadline are society members the **Ula Julien Family** of Whitefish Bay, the **Michael & Harriet Wichowski Family** of Green Bay, the **Ed & Denise Plonka Family** of San Jose, California, the **Ray & Donna Mae Mroczynski Family** of Pulaski, the **Quintin and Nadine Adamski Family** of Green Bay, the **Delphine Richardson-Wach and Ron Wach Family** of De Pere, **Rod Kowalczyk** of De Pere, the **Rosa & Eugene Nelson Family** of San Diego, California, **Robert Palzewicz** of Crivitz, **Alvina Buss** of Eland, the **Evelyn & Leonard Hodkiewicz Family** of Green Bay, **Linda Urbaniak** of Peshtigo, the **Terry & Ann Hegeman Family** of Green Bay, the **Cheryl & Lenny Passel Family** of De Pere, the **Maynard & Jeanette Charniak Family** of Green Bay, **Robert Jakubowski** of Oshkosh, and **Ken Skowronski** of Franklin, Wisconsin. Dobrze jest mieć Was z nami!

Thank you to **Ed & Denise Plonka** of San Jose who included a thoughtful donation with their membership renewal. And another special thanks to Lifetime Member **Vern Shukoski** of Ocala, Florida who sent a generous Christmas donation.

I appreciate the special notes you include with your memberships. Thank you all for your support and interest in our Polish heritage! If you have any membership status or financial inquiries, please feel free to contact me. Also, your board officers' contact information is listed in this newspaper and on the phsofnew.org website.

Paul M. Zwicker, Treasurer
(zwickerp@aol.com), phsofnew@gmail.com

Hello:

For over 40 years, **WIESCO – Wisconsin Educational Scientific Cultural Organization (a 501c3)** – has provided summer immersion-English language program in Poland and other countries. Instructors, who need not be professional teachers, experience the people, surroundings, food and culture of another country while also bringing the good will of Americans to the youth of those nations while exposing them to active conversation in American English. These informal programs greatly augment their formal studies, providing them with the opportunity to employ the English they are learning in a more natural environment.

We have 7 programs ranging from Poland and the Baltic States to Armenia plus the inclusion of Russia after several years absence. Furthermore, a short description for each program is being added to our website: www.wiesco.org
All the best from us at WIESCO.

Robert M. Pine (rmpine@wiesco.org)
President



POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

OFFICERS 2017-2018

PRESIDENT

Malgosia Daugherty
malgosiaaugherty@yahoo.com

1st VICE-PRESIDENT

John Laka
john.laka@cummins.com

SECRETARY

open position

TREASURER

Paul Zwicker
zwickerp@aol.com

BOARD MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Frank Czarnecki, Mike Brzezinski,
Paul Kaminecki, Mike Wichowski,
Mark Riemer

ART EDITOR

submit articles, photos,
and advertising to:

Monika Pawlak
PO BOX 286
Stevens Point, WI 54481-6452
Email: mdpawlak@yahoo.com

MEMBERSHIP FORM

POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

PAUL ZWICKER, 255 TERRAVIEW DRIVE, GREEN BAY, WI 54301

Name: _____ Phone No.: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email*: _____

MEMBERSHIP: Individual per year \$20 Couple/Family per year \$25 Lifetime Member \$200

PAYMENT: Cash Check No.: _____ New Exp. Date: _____ Donations to the organization: \$ _____

Your date of birth Where in Poland are you from: City _____ Area _____ I don't know _____

What articles do you like to read the most: Polish News Events in WI Recipes Traditions/History

Famous Poles Language info News from the Board Polish stories Other _____

For any address changes please contact:

PAUL ZWICKER
255 TERRAVIEW DRIVE
GREEN BAY, WI 54301

Please indicate the types of activities in which you might enjoy volunteering:

- Arti Gras (Feb) Art Street (Aug)
 Paczki Day Party (Feb) Input to Newsletter
 Easter Party Polish Mass (Oct)
 Public Relations Christmas Party
 Board Membership Other talents to share:
 Polish Music event
 Website Design

* for PHS use only to send event reminders

GROWING UP POLISH AMERICAN

My ancestry

As with many Americans my ancestry is a wide and varied mix – German, Scotch, French, English, Belgian, Hungarian, Austrian, Irish, and, of course, Polish! My paternal grandparents were from small villages near Żywiec in southern Poland (part of Austria at the time) arriving in America between 1911 and 1913. The story told is that my grandfather worked his way here as a cook on the ship. So, I am second generation on that side of my family and was raised in a strongly Polish community.

On my mother's side, all of

my Second Great Grandparents were born in the northern part of Poland, near Poznan (under German rule) arriving here in the 1860s and 70s. So, I am 4th generation down that line.

All were peasants (farmers) with one paternal Great Grandfather also being a member of the mounted police in his area. These wonderful peasants are the ones who (according to Keely Stauter-Halsted in her book, "The Nation in the Village") maintained the national identity of Poland and helped foster the movement that finally resulted in Poland once

again becoming an independent country in November of 1918.

My Polish ancestors were also all Roman Catholic, which is the Faith that I inherited. Thus we will visit the importance of their faith in the next article.

In the meantime, here are two genealogical resource sites that might help in your search for ancestors: The Poznan Project (<http://poznan-project.psn.pl/>) and Polish Origins (<https://polishorigins.com/>)

Helen Scieszka, Ph.D. is a former ad executive, psychologist, professor, Catholic church pastoral associate, Diocesan marriage and family life director; published author of four novels and stories in "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books. She loves reading, travel, music, photography, art, sports, and family genealogy. Please visit her website drhelenscieszka.com

Tears in my eyes

Recently I was organizing materials of my father and my mother such as his US Army discharge documents from service in World War II and her Certificate of Naturalization for her citizenship in the USA. In my dad's military file I discovered a black and white 3 x 5 inch photo of my Grandmother Mary Gierczak Nelson which he had received while stationed in Italy from his family who live in the Polish neighborhood and the Polish Catholic parish of St. Mary of the Angels in the East Side of Green Bay, WI. I knew "immediately and exactly" the circumstances and the purpose of this photo in my dad's materials. On the reverse side of the photo there is information in my dad's pencil handwriting in Italian regarding my grandmother's physical features, the color of her dress and its flowers which she wore when this photo was taken in Green Bay, WI. Also, there are the dimen-

sions of the requested portrait in centimeters. I began to cry as I visualized my dad with this photo talking in Italian with the artist about the desired portrait.



My father, Edmund E. Nelson, was a US Army MP officer stationed in Rome, Italy where he learned Italian, met my native Italian mother, Michelina Vincenzi and they were married in 1946 in a church in Rome.

Their wedding was blessed personally by Pope Pius XII, Eugenio Pacelli, who is my namesake. After the war, prior to being assigned to Ft. Dix in New Jersey, my dad had this portrait painted in oil on canvas of his mother from a black and white 3 x 5 inch photo by an artist in Rome. There is a date on the reverse side which is August 2. My dad was reassigned to the USA as of August 8, 1946 as this date is written in his military papers.

My father and mother had told me the story about this portrait many times. The portrait painting has been a significant part of our lives in our homes in Green Bay, WI where I was born and raised. The painting is now in our home in San Diego, CA. This

portrait is an important part of my life and my Polish, Norwegian and Italian heritage.

Sincerely,

Eugenio Salvatore
Edmund Nelson

2019 Casimir Pulaski Days Schedule of Events and Times

Sunday, March 3, 2019

- 10:30 Polka Mass with The New Generation @ ABVM Catholic Church, Followed by "The Largest Pie Auction in US History" at the ABVM School.
- Largest Pie Auction in US History. Join us for music, pies and a social at Assumption BVM School.
- Polish Heritage Society merchandise sale – please stop to see us!
- Maria Deau – Polish Costume Display.

Friday, March 8, 2019

- Lunch with Casimir / \$10 per person @ Cocktales
- 11:30 AM – 1:30 AM WIN PRIZES & LISTEN TO THE STORY of CASIMIR PULASKI.
- Polka Jam Session / FREE admission @ Wicka's Bar.
- 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM ALL MUSICIANS WELCOME. Starting off Polka Dynamics!
- Snacks provided – A fun time!

- Aaron Socha's Live Wire – POLKA DANCE @ Cocktales.
- Admission \$6 per person (Under 16 FREE) – Dance to the music of Aaron Socha's Live Wire at Cocktales in Pulaski. Refreshments, fun and prizes await polka music lovers!

Saturday, March 9, 2019

- Historic Bus Tour – Must register on-line for bus!
- A Woody's Wheel's Coach Bus will leave the Pulaski Museum on Saturday for a narrated history tour of Pulaski, Wisconsin in the afternoon tentatively around 1:30 PM until 3:30/4:00 PM Limited seating – Cost is \$5 for a historic tour around Pulaski and surrounding communities. Limited Seating Available! Let's fill the bus.
- Big Casimir Dance – Zielinski's Ballroom
- Music by two great bands – IPA Benefit Band (Chicago) & The

Maroszek Bros. 6:00 PM – 11:00 PM

- Special Historic Video Presentation of the Maroszek Bros. Story – 47 years of playing polka music.
- Polish Sausage, Pączkis, & Polkas – Food, Dancing, Prizes & Fun.
- Best Dressed Costume Couple Received \$100 CASH PRIZE!

Sunday, March 10, 2019

- Mass Celebration & Casimir Hearty Brunch @ St. Casimir Church, Krakow @ 9:00 AM (Mass) Brunch to Follow.
- A delicious hearty brunch will consist of egg bakes, Polish Sausage, bread, coffee, milk, juice, French toast sticks for the kids, and a sweet dessert/pastry.
- Maria Deau Display, along with Polka Music after Mass.
- There will be a monetary donation per person for the brunch.

Some Polish-themed projects to consider

BY ROBERT STRYBEL

Oktoberfest, St Paddy's Day events, French-themed Mardi Gras dances, Mexican Nights and spaghetti dinners are all great, but when deciding to hold them, one thing should be kept in mind. If we do not promote our own Polish heritage, Americans of German, Italian, Mexican, French and other ancestry are not going to do it for us!

When your parish, Polish Heritage Society, or other group begins discussing the year's activities, the following may help enrich their program. Some events apply to individual families. Suggestions to consider include:

POLISH CULTURAL, SOCIAL EVENTS: Suggest holding a Polish-themed event your group has never sponsored before and volunteer to help organize it, sell tickets, etc. If not feasible, then at least be sure to attend yourself and bring others with you.

READ UP ON YOUR HERITAGE: Not being fluent in Polish is no longer an excuse, because a great many Polish-themed books are now available in English. They include works of fiction, atlases, language-learning books, dictionaries, cookbooks, children's stories, books on history, culture, geography, genealogy, etc. Check out what's available at www.amazon.com

PĄCZKI REIGN SUPREME: The huge popularity of the pączek (Polish hole-less donut) makes it a natural for heritage promotion and fund-raising alike. Events may include: pączki sales, pączki parties, pączki balls, cooking demonstrations, a contest for the best pączki and even pączki-eating competitions.

LEARN ABOUT YOUR FELLOW-POLAMS: Find out all about your some 10 million fellow-Polish Americans – who their ancestors were, how and why they came to America, where they now reside, what they do for a living and what makes them tick at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_Americans

POLISH GIFTS: Surprise someone with a Polish-flavored gift such as a book, recording, folkcraft, art work, poster, souvenir, pottery, amber, crystal, leatherware of a bottle of "Made in Poland" spirits. Check what's available at: www.polishartcenter.com

VISIT POLAND: If you have never visited, go with an organized tour group. If you've been there before, you may prefer to strike out on your own, rent a car and crisscross the country to your heart's content. If possible take along your teenager or young adult. They will come home impressed, changed and more interested in their heritage than ever before.

POLISH CRAFT PROJECTS: Typical Polish folkcrafts include wycinanki (paper cut-outs; <https://pl.pinterest.com/explore/polish-folk-art/>), pająki (paper mobiles), pisanki (Easter eggs), malowanie na szkle (reverse painting on glass) and folk-style embroidery. Woodcarving is the menfolk's speciality which creates wooden figures, decorations, birdhouses, shrines and exterior houses trim. For detailed images see: <https://www.google.pl/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=polish+folk+art+wood+carving> Anyone interested in folkcrafts would do well to read: <http://culture.pl/en/article/a-foreigners-guide-to-polish-folk-art>

COOK POLISH: Surprise your gang with a new Polish dish on the family dinner table. Bring a Polish dish to a family or club potluck. There are many good Polish cookbooks on the market. Check them out at www.polartcenter.com There are also many step-by-step videos on how to cook Polish on YouTube. Just type the name of the dish into the Google box and add YouTube.

LEARN ABOUT YOUR SURNAME: Find out what your Polish last name means, how it emerged, how many people share it, where they live and whether it is accompanied by a coat of arms. A custom-researched surname analysis also makes a nice gift for a loved one. For information check out: research60@gmail.com

PROMOTE OR INTRODUCE FOOD BLESSING: If your parish observes the Holy Saturday blessing of Easter baskets, spread the good word. If not, ask your pastor to introduce the custom. This quaint, old, family-friendly tradition also appeals to Catholics of other ancestries who have been exposed to it.

A POLISH NAME FOR YOUR BABY?: You go with the flow and name your baby boy Ethan, Liam or Mason and your baby girl Ava, Harper or Mia, but before you do, check out the Polish alternatives available. You'll find an extensive list of Polish first names including the dates of their namedays (imieniny): <http://www.rootsweb.com/~polwgw/namelist.html>

LEARN ABOUT YOUR HERITAGE IN ENGLISH: There are Polish societies in many major American cities devoted to promoting our Polish heritage by sponsoring a variety of cultural events. They are affiliated with the American Council for Polish Culture. You can read up on it and find the affiliate in your area at: <http://www.polishcultureacpc.org/>

BE SURE TO SING "STO LAT": If your family or circle of friends still do not do so, be sure to introduce the custom of singing "Sto lat" at birthday, nameday, anniversary, graduation, and other parties as well as weddings.

THE POLISH CHEF



Polish gingerbread cookies (pierniczki)

prep time: 20 minutes
cook time: 10 minutes
yield 3 dozen cookies

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ginger

- ½ teaspoon cloves
- 1 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon baking soda dissolved in 3 tablespoons water

Chocolate Glaze (optional):

- 4 ounces chopped semisweet chocolate
- 4 ounces butter
- 1 tablespoon water

In a large bowl, beat eggs with sugar until light and lemon-colored. Add the spices, baking soda-water mixture and honey. Mix well. Add flour gradually and mix until a stiff dough forms. Shape into a ball, wrap in plastic and let it rest for 30 minutes.

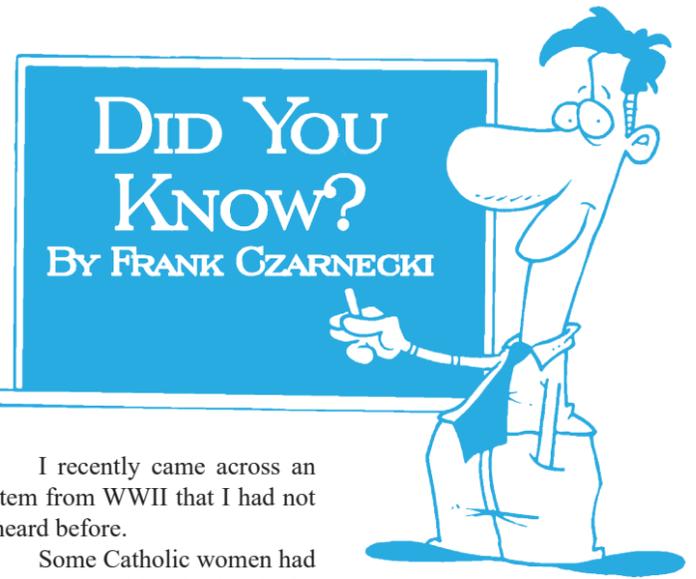
Heat oven to 400 degrees. On parchment paper cut to fit your baking pans, roll the dough to ¼-inch thickness. Cut into your desired shape. Lift the parchment paper by opposite corners and place on the baking pans. See these steps for rolling and cutting gingerbread.

Bake for 10 minutes or until lightly brown around the edges. Let cool completely before storing in an airtight container. It's best to ice or glaze these cookies right before serving.

To make the glaze, combine all the ingredients in a microwaveable bowl and nuke for 20 seconds at a time until almost completely melted. Stir until smooth. Use immediately.

Barbara Rolek

Polish American Cultural
Institute of Minnesota



I recently came across an item from WWII that I had not heard before.

Some Catholic women had been arrested by the Nazis for their involvement in the Polish resistance. They were called rabbits because Nazi doctors turned them into laboratory animals, operating on their legs to insert glass, dirt, and tetanus bacteria, or to remove bone or muscle tissue. Some of the 74 young Polish women subjected to these experiments died of infection or disease; others were executed when their usefulness ended. Sixty-three of them survived the war, and 35 of them were brought to the U.S. for rehabilitation.

Ravensbruck (Germany), the concentration camp where the experiments took place, still stands as a memorial. It's hard to understand how doctors, who had been trained to heal, could participate in this work. One doctor was a female, Herta. She had helped perform

many of the experiments – and administered lethal injections. She was an accomplished but impoverished young doctor living in a culture of one-sided, hate-filled rhetoric, so loyal that she didn't think to question what she was told.

The author of the article met two of the former prisoners at the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the camp's liberation in 2015. Stasia, who died in 2017 at age 92, sat in her wheelchair. She was wearing thick stockings, but it was hard not to notice her legs, shrunken and missing whole muscles and bones. The author asked her about Herta. Stasia shook her head. "A monster. We were just girls. But you have to forgive."

(from AARP, the *Magazine*
by Martha Hall Kelly, O/N 2018)

Christ Speaks out From His Cross

Queen Jadwiga, though made a saint in June, 1997, by Pope John Paul II, has been continuously and deeply venerated by the Polish people for almost 600 years. At the age of ten, on the 16th of October, 1384, she was crowned Queen of Poland. Two years later she married Jagiello, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, and together with him she undertook the task of spreading Christianity in his country. Jadwiga's death in 1399 left the whole Polish nation mourning for their beloved queen.

Already during her life the Queen was known for her unearthly goodness and many a legend about her was told and circulated. One of them tells the story of the sacrifice Queen Jadwiga made when told to do so by Jesus Christ.

According to an old custom, at the age of four, little Jadwiga was betrothed to Wilhelm, an archduke of the Hapsburg family. When she grew to adulthood, she came to love him dearly. Polish noblemen, however, did not like the idea of this marriage and they put pressure on the Queen to give it up for the good of the country

and to marry the Grand Duke of Lithuania.

Jadwiga was very unhappy and sorrowful. Even though she understood the interests of Poland well and she loved her country, she still wanted to follow her heart. The noblemen and the high-ranking clergy, however, kept imploring her to



Saint Jadwiga,
Queen of Poland

change her mind. They were so persistent that eventually Jadwiga promised to consider the whole matter again.

Sick at heart, the pious Queen would frequently go

to pray in Wawel Cathedral in front of her favorite crucifix with the figure of Christ blackened by the candle smoke. There she made her pleas to God and complained of her sorry fate. Looking into the Savior's face and shedding hot tears, she begged Christ to help her make the right decision.

Once, during such a prayerful moment, the Queen experienced a miraculous vision. As usual, she was kneeling in front of the crucifix and whispering her prayers, when she lifted her eyes and saw a luminous and radiant halo around Christ's head. His lips were moving and soon the awe-stricken woman heard His voice. The Lord told her to help carry His cross to the country of Lithuania.

Obedient to the divine command, the pious Queen agreed to become Jagiello's wife. Together, the Royal Couple christened the Lithuanian people thus accomplishing the task Christ had set out for her.

(from *Legendary Cracow*
by Ewa Basiura)

Love and marriage – Old Polish style

continued from p. 1

such implicitly erotic goings-on, but realized it would most likely eventually lead to the altar. Even the usually pious and puritanical older folk would turn a blind eye to the hanky-panky in the conviction that any child conceived on that night would enjoy the special protection of St John the Baptist.

But only a girl that had preserved her wreath (virgin-

ity) could look forward to a normal home life. A maiden that had lost her innocence could only hope that the young man responsible would do the honorable thing and propose. Other eligible males normally shunned "used merchandise".

Well into the 20th century, match-making was an important part of Polish courtship rituals. The **SWATKA** (pronounced: SFAHT-kah), was a profes-

sional match-maker who would negotiate a girl's availability and dowry with her father. Most marriages back when were concluded in this manner, and girls generally deferred to their parents' wishes. They first got married and fell in love later as their mutual trust and affection grew. At any rate, those arranged marriages were far more durable than those of our present fly-by-night and throw-away world.

Consider a gift of Polish heritage!

A several-page custom-researched analysis of a Polish surname will make an unusual and memorable Polish-themed gift for a loved one (or yourself).

It will explain the name's meaning, how it originated, how many people share it, where they are from and whether a noble coat of arms accompanies it. If one is found, you will receive its illustration and learn the story behind it.

To order, kindly airmail a \$19 personal or bank (cashier's) check or money order (adding \$14 for each additional surname you wish to have researched) to Polonia's long-standing Warsaw correspondent and onomastician (name researcher):

ROBERT STRYBEL

UL. KANIOWSKA 24 • 01-529 WARSAW, POLAND

Included is a helpful genealogical contact sheet to help check your family records in Poland, track down ancestral homesteads and possibly even turn up long-lost relatives. For more information please contact: research60@gmail.com



CZARNUSZKA SOUP BAR



YOU WORK HARD. EAT SOUP.

9922 Water Stree #7F, Ephraim, WI (*Behind Leroy's*)

OPEN YEAR AROUND

Mówimy po polsku