

"Keep Alive This Heritage"
Pope John Paul II

A Newsletter About Polish Culture
And Current Events
Established In 1979

POLAM



The Holidays in Poland

By Steven Ukasick

I went to the shopping mall on the afternoon of Halloween this year and was dismayed to find it all decked out with Christmas decorations — not with Halloween decorations or even Thanksgiving decorations but Christmas decorations of all things. Now you may call me a traditionalist, but Christmas arrives at Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve and then we celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas. Christmas carols are to be sung during the Christmas Season and not before. And who, mind you, still puts out an Advent Wreath on the table for the season of Advent with its purple and pink candles? American commercialism has all but obliterated any sense of the true spirit and tradition of Christmas and morphed it into a never ending, never quenching thirst for the latest fad or toy.

Back in Poland this commercialization of Christmas and its traditions has not yet progressed as markedly as it has here. The Polish traditions of this time of year run deep and resonate within the consciousness of the nation and may not fall victim to the "modern" world or at least not to the extent as they have here in America. Granted they are not followed so closely in the large cities as they are in the villages these days.

Advent, Advent, is an important season of the year in Poland. During the four weeks of Advent there is Mass each morning at dawn across Poland called *roraty*. The service begins in the



dark, and as the service progresses more candles and torches are lit until by the end the sun itself rises above the horizon. In addition, as a reminder that Christmas is approaching, a special candle or *Swieca Roratnia* is lit on the altar. The lighting of this candle is a very old custom, begun during the reign of Boleslaw the Chaste (1226-1279). Advent is not a time of celebration or parties but of preparation, but Poles do make an exception for one very important Feast Day.

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Irena Sendler Suggested for Nobel Prize

During his September visit to Israel, Polish President Kaczyński, suggested that both Poland and Israel jointly ask



that 96 year old Irena Sendler be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her work as a member of Żegota. Sendler saved nearly 2500 children from the Warsaw Ghetto

before she was arrested by the Nazis.

Irena was born in Otwock about 15 miles southeast of Warsaw where her father was a doctor; most of his patients were poor Jews. When the Germans arrived and even before the Warsaw Ghetto was created, Irena set up soup kitchens for the poor, orphans and homeless Jews whose property and bank accounts were confiscated by the Nazis. There was only one punishment in occupied Poland for those who helped Jews — death.

Irena Sendler continued on page 3

PACIM's Orphan Benefit Wigilia
on page 6

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Check your label and see page
2 for Details!

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Pol-Am

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Pol-Am Renewals

Many *Pol-Am* Subscriptions expire in January. Please check your address label for your expiration date and use the form on the left to make any changes to your address and to renew. Your early renewal saves us the extra costs of billing and reminders. By becoming a member of the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota you will enable us to maintain one of the best Polish/English libraries in the country, to bring Polish artists and writers to Minnesota, to help enrich American society with the best of Polish culture, to be a source of information on Polish and Polish American resources and to organize events that showcase Polish culture to all Minnesotans.

All the costs associated with putting out this newsletter have continued to increase over the years and we have not increased the subscription price for seven years now because of all the many generous subscribers (almost half) who subscribe at higher levels. Please consider doing your part in ensuring that Polish culture and heritage remains a part of the Minnesota ethnic landscape. Dziękuję!

May They Rest in Peace:

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Stanley Muskala. Not only was Stanley a long time *Pol-Am* Newsletter subscriber, he was a great supporter of the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota and its library; many volumes on our library shelves carry a bookplate with his name. He will be dearly missed and our heartfelt sympathies to his family and friends.

In Memory of Jean B. Borkowski Darling. Jean was born Nov 13, 2004 in Evanston, Illinois. In 1937 she was crowned "Miss Poland" at a beauty contest in Chicago. Her parents were early organizers of the PNA and she was involved with the PNA since childhood, having served as Secretary of the Women's Division for 35 years and received their "Woman of the Year" award in 1993. She was also active in the Polish Arts Club and Liga Morska. Both Rudy Perpich and Don Frazier recognized her for her work in the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program. She is missed by family and friends both here and in the Chicago area.

My Thoughts Managing Editor

I can't begin to tell you how excited Chester was a month or two ago when he called to tell me that *Esquire* magazine had named



Nye's Polonaise Bar in Minneapolis as the Best Bar in America and ran a five page article about it. He all but begged me to reprint the article so everyone could

read it and I was more than pleased to do so. But I cringed to think of hassle it would be to get permission to run it since we can't reprint copyrighted articles without such permission. But I am happy to say, after a letter, a fax or two and more than a few phone calls to New York City the permission was granted. (I should really run the permission letter as well since it so convoluted with legalese only a copyright lawyer would love it.)

All of us here at *Pol-Am*, Chester, Bruce, myself and everyone else wish all of you who pick up this newsletter up each month a very happy and safe Advent and Christmas Season!
— Steven Ukasick, Editor

Beginning Polish Classes to Begin in January

The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota (PACIM) will be offering a Beginning Polish Class at its center at 2514 Central Ave NE in Minneapolis. Classes will be on Mondays starting on January 8th from 7-9 pm through the end of March. Since Instructor Londa Beachem is donating her time, the registration fee will be only \$25 with a \$5 discount for PACIM members. (You may join PACIM at the first class and get the discount). Membership is \$25 for individuals and \$40 for households and includes a year subscription to *Pol-Am* Newsletter and full access to our library. Pre-registration by January 3 is required. Please mail your check for \$25 or \$20 made payable to: PACIM, 5317 Bryant Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55419 Please include phone number and email with your registration. For more information, pacim2006@yahoo.com

Holidays continued

St. Nicholas Day, Sw. *Mikołaj*, on December 6th is the day that St. Nicholas comes around to the children and passes out presents in Poland. As a reminder to them to be good there is a twig or switch attached to the present with the subtle reminder that if they are not good, next year that is all they will get from him — the Polish equivalent of our lump of coal.

The remaining days of Advent are spent preparing for Christmas. Homes are thoroughly cleaned and windows polished. *Pierniki*, the traditional holiday honey cakes, are baked in their many different shapes and *pajaki*, traditional decorations, are made. *Gwiazdorze* or star carriers make their way through town singing, putting on *shopi* and *herody* performances of Christ's birth and King Herod's slaying of the innocents.

Just before **Christmas Eve** the tree, *choinka*, is set up and decorated and final hurried preparations and cooking for that greatest of all Polish family celebrations, *Wigilia*, are made. At the sighting of the first star the family

gathers together and begins the night's festivities. The great feast of 12 courses begins, featuring fish but no other meat. The *opłatek* is shared with all present as a sign of forgiveness for the past year's slights and wishes for future happiness in the next. The singing of *kolędy*, Polish Christmas carols, begins in earnest, gifts are exchanged and everyone celebrates as Poles are wont to do. Finally, the family finishes the evening by going to *Pasterka*, Midnight Mass, to bring in Christmas Day at church.

On **Christmas Day, *Boże Narodzenia***, the family usually spends a quiet time together at home. After such a long fast from meat, bigos, the traditional hunter's stew with its meat heavy ingredients is a popular Christmas Day meal. **St. Stephen's Day** on December 26th is the day many people go out to visit relatives and friends.

In many Catholic countries the **Feast of the Three Kings or Epiphany** is the end of the Christmas Season (Twelve Days of Christmas) but this is not true in Poland, this is not to say it is not celebrated. It is the custom of the parish priest on this day to make the rounds,

blessing people's homes and marking them with the initials of the three kings, Kaspar, Melchior and Balthazar, thusly: K+M+B with chalk to spare the dwelling from misfortune in the coming year.

It isn't until February 2nd on the **Feast of the Purification of Our Lady, *Matka Boża Gromniczna*** that Christmas comes to end in Poland. The faithful bring to church candles to be blessed for use in their homes in times of sickness, death and storms. The candle needs to be brought home lit to symbolize that the blessing is brought home as well. This is the last day that *kolędy* are sung until the following *Wigilia*.

It is not difficult to see the richness of this interwoven tapestry of Polish traditions at this time of year. For me at least, it leaves me desiring more than "shop 'til you drop" mentality that starts the day after Thanksgiving and ends with the mad dash to open all your presents under the tree at Christmas and ends there. Perhaps we Americans can learn a thing or two about how to celebrate from the Poles.

Irena Sendler continued

In the early days of the occupation of Warsaw, Irena worked in the social welfare department of the city of Warsaw, which she used to gain access to the Warsaw Ghetto to combat contagious disease. She wore the Star of David on her sleeve as a gesture of solidarity with the Jews. In the summer of 1942 she was asked to join the newly created Żegota organization and became a valuable asset since she brought with her a large group already involved in her charity work for the Jews. Irena's specialty was smuggling Jewish children out of the Ghetto and placing them in non-Jewish homes in the Warsaw region. She kept the real names of the children buried in jars in her neighbors' gardens. "Can you guarantee they will live?" Irena later recalled the distraught parents asking. But she could only guarantee they would die if they stayed. "In my dreams," she said, "I still hear the cries when they left their parents." She accomplished her incredible deeds with the active assistance of the church. "I sent most of the children to religious establishments," she recalled.

"I knew I could count on the Sisters."

The Gestapo arrested her in October of 1943. She was brutally tortured (her legs were broken and she has since then needed crutches) to force her to reveal her contacts and the names of the children but she held fast and was sentenced to death. She escaped on the day of her execution after the



Underground bribed the Gestapo to free her. She was officially listed as executed so she had to remain undercover for the remainder of the war. After the war she dug up the jars and used the notes to track down the children to reunite them with their parents, but most had lost their families in the Holocaust. In 1965, Yad Vashem recognized her as a "Righteous Among the Nations" and in 1991 she was awarded honorary Israeli citizenship. She is currently wheel-chair bound and living in a Warsaw old-age home.

When asked why she risked her life to save others she said, "I was taught by my father that when someone is drowning, you don't ask if they can swim, you just jump in and help. During the war, everyone was drowning, but mostly the Jewish children. In an interview she gave in 1995 to Jewish-French writer and filmmaker Marek Halter, she said she regretted only one thing: "I could have done more," she said tearfully. "This feeling of regret will accompany me until my dying day."

Polish Orphans

Bring joy to the Polish children in Poland's orphanages, children's homes and School and Home for the Blind in Laski/Warsaw. The Men's Club of the Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul has prepared twenty four packages filled with clothing, candy school supplies and toilet articles packed by our Polish native Alina Kraszkiwicz. Funds are needed to ship these holiday packages to Poland. Please send your contribution to: St. Agnes Men's Club, c/o Bernard Koalska, 96 W Rose, St. Paul, MN, 55117 651-489-1438

The best bar in America isn't Irish. It isn't in a strip mall. It isn't the sort of place that charges an outrageous cover for people to stand around in black light pushing back shooters out of test tubes. It isn't a fight club or a meat market. There is no snobbery, and there is no tonic-water drinking. There are gimlets and manhattans, bottles of Zywiec, and a first-rate pissoir.

The best bar in America occupies a corner where the path to righteousness and the road to perdition run parallel, east to west, perpendicular to the muddy river that cuts this country in two, north to south. The best bar in America has occupied this physical and spiritual intersection since 1950. The best bar in America lies across the Mississippi from downtown Minneapolis over a bridge named for Father Louis Hennepin, and it has a sign on its yellow-brick exterior that points the way to Our Lady of Lourdes, cast in the red-neon glow of another that reads LIQUORS. The best bar in America also saw one of its doormen murdered last summer.

The best bar in America is Nye's Polonaise.

More accurately, it is the two best bars in America—Nye's Bar, known as the "Old Side" to its ancient staff and unshifting regulars, and the upscale bordello kitsch of the Polonaise Room—connected through their shared fire wall by a pair of swinging doors. When it comes right down to it, you're either Nye's or you're Polonaise, making this place a kind of crossroads inside and out.

On this summer night, it feels as if all that ties the two halves together is their shared floral carpet and their nearly pitch-blackness. Nye's has the only window in the entire complex, but it has turned opaque with time and pierogi smoke. Apart from a few stained-glass lanterns and a small TV with the Twins game on, the only light that penetrates this joint's darkest corners comes from the accordion display over those swinging doors.



Nye's Polonaise

The Best Bar in America: Following a four-month search, this is the one.

By Chris Jones

Esquire, October 2006, Volume 146, Issue 4

Everybody says that stepping into Nye's Polonaise is like stepping back in time, and, for once, it's true—to a time before even electricity.



Minneapolis is a city built on its institutions—the falls at Minnehaha, the Institute of Arts, Kirby Puckett, and Fran Tarkenton—but the best and sturdiest of them hang out here, wrapped in

the darkness and surroundings that have remained perfectly preserved since the 1960s. The walls are paneled, the tables are Formica, and there are people who have worked at Nye's for forty years. Their stories are each the same: One otherwise unexceptional day, they ducked in from the street, waited for their eyes to adjust, and never found reason to head back out into the sun.

Sweet Lou Snider was thirty-one years old when she first sat behind the piano in the Polonaise Room; she's seventy-one today. Every Friday and Saturday night, as regular as rain, pint-size Lou boosts herself up onto her bench, a smoke-stained oil portrait of Chopin staring over her shoulder, and begins banging out songs precisely at the stroke of nine. Lou will take requests. She will also sing for you, but if you would like to sing, that would be just fine, too. It doesn't take long for a chorus to surround her—including warbling, bickering twin brothers Dan and Dean Oberpriller, one singing high, one singing low-passing around the microphone and rounds of drinks, belting out "When I Fall in Love." Although she is too modest to announce the truth herself, Lou is believed to have thousands of songs ready to

dance from her fingers, and she smiles warmly at just about every request, as though she hasn't already played "Unforgettable" eight million times, and wouldn't that be nice? (You might want to reconsider asking for "These Boots Are Made for Walkin'," however. It's kind of a long story.)

Watching Lou from her little booth set back from the door, Evie Radke, seventy-seven, has put on her makeup for another evening of playing host. She's been here twenty-eight years, since her old job-at Harry's downtown-went up in smoke along with the bar and a particular Polonaise fixture named Uncle Irving asked tough nut Al Nye to bring her across the river. Nye obliged, but he was sterner than Harry, and he told Evie that he wanted her to stand throughout her shift. Evie said nuts to

that and dragged a barstool over to her booth. She's sitting on that very same barstool tonight.

And, as usual, Fran Raymer is smiling from out behind Evie, waiting on her four booths, hauling out heaping



plates of cabbage rolls and Polish sausage and hunter's stew. Her white hair has a shock of black in the forelock, and she is dressed more like a teenager

(a teenager from a different era, but a teenager nonetheless) than a woman her age, which is also seventy-freaking-seven. She wears bobby socks and a short, pleated skirt, her black bowling shirt rolled up at the sleeves, long earrings shining, her eyes bright behind oversize glasses. Although she struggles to shoulder the Nye's cut of prime rib, a thirty-two-ounce heart stopper, she remains one hell of a waitress, making sure your onion bread is warm and the relish tray is so fresh, the pickles remember when they were cucumbers.

Memories are a living part of this place. "We're a big family," Fran says. "We know one another so well." Like everybody else who works here, when asked when she plans on retiring, Fran says, "When I'm dead."

Nye's is a union shop, by the way. Dying on the job is not out of the question.

Big Billy was gunned down last summer on the sidewalk out front, four bullets in his back, put there by some random freak show who didn't like being asked to leave. Against the wishes of the crowd, the police fished Billy's assailant out of the Mississippi, which he tried to swim across to make good his escape. It was an awful, terrible night. Nye's working-class immigrant neighborhood, called Nordeast by locals—where there are three bars for every church, all of them houses of the holy—felt on the edge of collapsing inside of itself. It was the sort of night that looked as though it might put down more than Big Billy.

With blood still on the sidewalk, the staff were called together by their stricken manager, Joe Stouffer, a young guy with a head for business who came



in four years ago, after the bar was bought up by a couple of brothers who left everything down to the cigarette displays unchanged, even after the city went nonsmoking. Joe asked the bartenders and waitresses what they wanted to do the next day. They told him that they wanted to work.

And so Nye's kept its doors open, and later a benefit concert was held in the parking lot for Big Billy's family, and the life of the place stayed put along with Sweet Lou and Evie and Fran and Dan and Dean. But for the first time in forever, things felt different. It felt as though everything that before had been left unspoken should now be said out loud.



"Norman Rockwell could have gotten fifty paintings out of this place," says Chicago Mike, a longtime "Old Side" bartender with a slick black pompadour and the record holder for the most booze poured in a single shift, \$3,670 worth on New Year's Eve six years ago. ("I had to clean my own glasses. After, I slept for a week.") Nye's is his home. He lives upstairs, in the fancier of the two short stacks of apartments jokingly called Clap Towers, because they are set aside only for men, and some of those men are in need of a shower. But for Chicago Mike, there is a comfort in being able to get to work by falling down a set of stairs, as well as a

comfort in knowing that everything will always be as he left it the night before: that he will tend bar with Phil, Dan, and Corky; that he will serve cocktails to customers he knows by name and drink; that around eleven o'clock, the place will fill up with college kids and skinny-tie hipsters who somehow mix easily with the old-timers and barflys; and that the World's Most Dangerous Polka Band will be crammed onto the tiny stage in front of him, soon enough bouncing into yet another edition of "In Heaven There Is No Beer."

"That's why we drink it here," sings sixty-four-year-old Joe Hayden, holding a horn by his side. Although the heart and soul of the band is Ruth Adams—a large, toothless matron who has played accordion here for more than thirty years—Joe is the brains and the deep voice of the operation. He took up the trumpet late in life, at fifty, and made his first public performance at Nye's just a year later. "I played 'Sentimental Journey' and 'Release Me,' and then I staggered over to the bar for a couple of stiff drinks," he says.

Three years later, he joined the World's Most Dangerous Polka Band, along with Ruth ("She's ugly, but you won't find a better accordion player in the city") and a rotation of drummers Spinal Tap couldn't rival, most of whom failed to abide by Joe's three simple rules: no booze, no broads, no blue jeans. An excitable man named Ollie Manley, wearing a pitch-perfect Hawaiian shirt, presently rocks away.

They took the stage a little before nine o'clock, Sweet Lou on one side of the swinging doors and the three of them on the other, one more choice for folks to make. Chicago Mike looked as

Nyes continued on page 6

PACIM NEWS

News from the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota

The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible to the extent limited by law. Please consider including us in your tax and estate planning. We appreciate your generous support.

Polskie Przysłowia

Mroźny grudzień, wiele śniegu, żyzny roczek będzie w biegu.

A cold December lots of snow, a fruitful year is in tow.

Kalendarz

- Dec 3 Orphan Benefit Wigilia
- Feb 17 Bal Karnawałowy
- Feb 18 Urban Experience: Poland! (Landmark Center)
- May 3-6 Festival of Nations

From the Library

The library will be closed for the holidays on December 24th and 31st.

We added 55 books to the library this month!

On my recent trip to Poland, and thanks to a monetary donation from Steven Ukasick, I was able to purchase new books by Maria Nurowska, Joanna Chmielewska, Katarzyna Grochola, Olga Tokarczuk, Dan Brown and Ryszard Kapuscinski. I also found three additional audio books and a beautifully illustrated book of children's songs with words and notes. Phyllis Husted discovered and donated to the library a Polish translation of *Pride & Prejudice*. Marie Przynski generously brought back a bagful of new books as well from her trip. After lugging a box of books all across Poland, I have a new found admiration for her because this was not the first time she has brought back books for the library.

We'd like to thank Ed Sikorski, Marek Kornowicz, Greg Tomczyk, Marta Lubach Everson, and Jon Ciesiak for their book donations. Jon Ciesiak brought in 13 boxes of books and artwork from members of his family. Our library and the newly-formed library in

Little Falls will really benefit from this family being so well-read! Thanks to Polish Saturday School and Holy Cross Church for the books they donated to the library as well.

We welcome Kathryn Lavine as a new library volunteer.

Thanks to Sean McLaughlin for the captivating presentation on purchasing Polish amber. Those attending the class not only learned how to identify good amber; they also received a 15% discount card for the amber in his shop.

—Judith Blanchard, Librarian

PACIM Welcomes New Members:

Janet & Gene Retka
Generous Members:
Thad & Kit Radzilowski, Sponsors

Silent Auction Items

PACIM is looking for donations for its Silent Auction for the Bal Karnawałowy in February. Please consider donating an item for this event; all donations are tax deductible. In addition to items, tickets to sports and cultural events, gift certificates for stores or for other types of services are welcome as well. If you have an item you wish to donate, please contact Aneta at 612-644-0745 or andzius@hotmail.com Thank you.

Orphan Benefit Wigilia Dinner

Sunday, December 3, 6:00 pm at Gasthof zur Gemutlichkeit, 2300 University Ave N, Mpls.
Cost: \$33 Checks payable to PACIM and sent to Judith Blanchard 6220 Baker Ave, Fridley, MN 55432

Please list the names of your party and indicate if you would prefer to sit at a booth or at one of the long tables. Include your phone number if you would like confirmation of our receipt of your check. For more information, call 763-571-9602.

\$5 of each ticket goes to the orphans and is tax-deductible. Additional donations for the orphans are appreciated — 100% of what we raise for this Orphan Benefit goes directly to the orphans.

Nyes continued

if he might die when the band ripped into "Barking Dog Polka," which includes Ruth's best impersonation of an angry chihuahua, but the fogies and the cool kids ate it up, hitting the small dance floor in front of the stage for a jump around. For those ladies without a partner, the bar gives a once-debonair man named Roger free coffee in exchange for taking the lead with a night's worth of partners. It's the sort of easy arrangement that makes everybody happy. There are moments when every single person in the room is smiling.

Now, having finished slagging heaven as a pale imitation of Nyeś and taking a short break at the bar, Joe says the smiles are why he shows up and plays his horn till well after one o'clock and why he, too, will work here until he dies.

"I never wanted to play a polka until I played my first one and I saw the look on everybody's face," he says. "It's real music, and this is a real place."

It's time for Joe, Ruth, and Ollie to take their stage once again. A-one and a-two and it's into another number, "Too Fat Polka" or maybe "Sheik of Araby" — they all sound the same — and the dance floor fills up as though assembly's been called, and it will remain full till last call. The day has built toward this moment, through the sedate lunch hour, the afternoon lull, the dinner armies, the evening booze pounders and bar crawlers, and, finally, now, when they have all come together at once, summoned by Joe Hayden's trumpet.

Sometimes he will be playing his horn with one hand and pointing to the nearby crapper door with his other, guiding some lost and desperate soul to paradise. Inside, there is only a rust-stained sink, a toilet behind a door that doesn't quite lock, and a twin-size trough. Contained in that double-wide slab of porcelain, apart from a urinal puck, is everything you need to know about Nyeś: This is a shoulder-to-shoulder sort of bar, mostly utilitarian, entirely something short of glamorous, but it gets each of its jobs done, with no tolerance for shyness and no mercy for stage fright.

Apart from the dancers, there are still more clusters of carousers, young and old and in between, along the bar and tucked away in their booths. The

Nyes continued on page 8

Co, Gdzie, Kiedy What, Where, When

Events

Many events are given to us well in advance of the actual date. Please call the contact information to verify particulars. To list your event, contact Judith at judytam@usfamily.net

If you would like more timely and last minute updates to local events, email us at polamnewsletter@yahoo.com and put "Polish Update" on the Subject line. We'll add you to our Polish Events e-mail list.

December 1 **Polka Dance**

Get ready for the holidays with the MN Polka Assn. (MPA) on Friday, December 1st from 7-11 pm at the North Air Event Center (Knights of Columbus), 6831 Central Ave (Hwy 65), Fridley. Music by Dave Novak's Polka Choice. Admission \$7 per person (\$6 MPA member). For more information, call Barb at 763-757-5458.

December 2 **Dolina Performance**

The Dolina Polish Folk Dancers will appear at the Galaxie Library in Apple Valley at 2 pm.

December 3 **Wigilia Benefit**

Wigilia dinner to benefit Polish Orphans at 6 pm at Gasthof zur Gemutlichkeit, 2300 NE University Ave, Minneapolis. Send your \$33 check made out to PACIM to Judith Blanchard, 6220 Baker Avenue, Fridley, MN 55432. Please list the names of your party and indicate if you would prefer to sit at a booth or at one of the long tables. Include your phone number if you would like confirmation of our receipt of your check. For more information, call 763-571-9602.

December 9 **Craft and Bake Sale**

The ladies of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 5th St and 22nd Ave NE will hold a craft and bake sale from 9 am until 12 noon on December 9 in the church hall. Pierogi will also be available for purchase.

December 9 **Candlelight Service**

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 5th St and 22nd Ave NE will hold a candlelight service at 5 pm on December 9, Sw. Mikołaj will appear after Mass.

December 10 **Wigilia**

Polanie Club Wigilia Supper at Jax Cafe. Social Hour 5 pm, Dinner at 6pm. Traditional Wigilia menu will be served. The Dolina Polish Folk Dancers will perform and later a sing-a-long of Polish and American Carols. Tickets are \$35. Price includes tax and gratuity. For tickets, please call Marie Tromiczak 763-566-2132, Frances Chorzempa 651-639-1464 or Roma Kehne 651-698-8733. You may also mail your check, payable to the Polanie Club, to Frances Chorzempa, 10 Windsor Court, #115, New Brighton, MN 55112.

Christmas Schedules: **Holy Cross Church Catholic Church**

17th and University Ave NE, Minneapolis
December 24 - Sunday Masses at 8:00, 10:00 & 11:30 am.
Children's Christmas Eve Mass at 4:00 pm and 12:00 Midnight (Polish & English) with carols one-half hour prior.
December 25 - Masses at 8:00, 10:00 & 11:30 am (Polish).

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church Polish National Catholic Church

5th St at 22nd Ave NE, Minneapolis
December 24 - Midnight Mass to be held at 10:00 pm with caroling one-half hour prior.
December 25 - Mass at 10:00 am.

December 30 **Pre-New Years Eve Blast**

Pre-New Years Eve Blast with the MPA on Friday December 30th at the North Air Event Center (Knights of Columbus), 6831 Central Ave (Hwy 65), Fridley. Music by Twin City Soundz. Admission \$10 per person with champagne toast. For more information, call Barb at 763-757-5458.

December 31 **Sylwester Dinner/Dance**

New Year's Eve Dinner/Dance sponsored by the Polish Committee at Holy Cross Church. Event will be held in the gym of John Paul II School, 17th and

Fourth St NE, Minneapolis (across from Holy Cross Church). 7:00 Social/9:00 Dinner. Band is Bago Bago. For tickets or more information call: Andrzej 763-862-3184, Jan 763-788-5471, Jadwiga 612-789-5081, or Wanda 763-413-1839

January 7, 2007 **Caroling in Polish**

Join us in singing kolędy at Catholic Eldercare, 817 Main St NE, Minneapolis. We gather in the atrium at 1 pm to practice before we go through the floors singing our favorite Polish Christmas carols. The group has also been invited to sing at River Village about a mile to the north. Bob Gacek accompanies us on his accordion. For more information, call Judith at 763-571-9602.

January 14 **Oplatek Dinner**

Dinner with the sharing of the oplatek will take place after 10:30 am Mass at Sacred Heart of Jesus Pulaski Hall, 5th St and 22nd Ave NE, Minneapolis. Everyone is invited to attend Mass prior. For more information, call 612-781-9328.

Bal Karnawałowy **February 17**

The PACIM board of directors invites everyone to their pre-Lenten celebration of good food, entertainment and dance on Saturday, February 17 at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel with ample free parking. The entrees will be Roast Loin of Pork with Prunes and fresh mushroom sauce or Wild Mushroom Stroganoff with Noodles (vegetarian). Dolina Polish Folk Dancers will perform their Warsaw Suite. Everyone will be invited to dance the Polonez then dance the night away to the Classics who play modern dance music. Watch for Ticket information in the January *Pol-Am* or call 612-378-9291.

February 18 **Urban Expedition: Poland!**

1-3 pm, Landmark Center, St. Paul. Polish culture and arts for families and adults. Hands on activities for kids, food and bazaar. Free Admission. Dolina Polish Folk Dancers will perform.

Figures Of Poland's Culture And History



Zegota
1942-1945

The Council for Aid to Jews in Poland, Żegota, (Rada Pomocy Żydom) was set up by the Polish Government in Exile and the

Polish Underground during World War II to aid Jews in Poland. Its main contribution was in providing, free of charge, "Aryan" documents to thousands of Jews under its patronage. Żegota also arranged hideouts for Jews, thus exposing its activists to the death penalty. It is credited with saving 75,000 Jews.

Members of Żegota were memorialized in Israel in 1963 with a planting of a tree along the Avenue of the Righteous at Yad Yeshem.

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Nyes continued

front door opens to reveal a few more late to the party, feeling as though they need to stamp their boots despite it being the height of summer, as though they have trekked through a storm and finally arrived someplace safe and warm. The new ones are not sized up, and they are not patted down. Here they are free, and they ask Chicago Mike for a drink, and they join one of the existing gangs or they start one of their own. Or they take their drinks over to the Polonaise to hear some piano and eat a plate of fattening food that will make them feel at home. They will stay here, content and unbothered, till the lights are finally flicked on, till Mike wipes down the bar and heads back to his room upstairs and Joe packs his horn away and puts Ruth in the car and Fran sits down and puts up her throbbing feet and they sing along with Sweet Lou for the night's last song.

These are the rhythms of the best bar in America. Everybody says that stepping into Nye's Polonaise is like stepping back in time, and, for once, it's

true-to a time before even electricity, and, what's more important, to a time before bars and neighborhoods and cities became things they were never meant to be. Somewhere along the way, instead of remaining places for people to come together, to share the familiar courses of their everyday lives, they became places where people stopped smiling and locked every door, where people lived in fear and anger, where people wanted not to celebrate but to be left alone, to live out their days behind shutters.

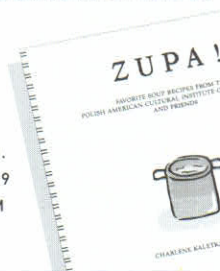
So easily, this place could have become such a shadow. It risked losing itself in its own darkness. But it did not, if only because it kept the Grain Belt and Grey Goose coming-whatever's your pleasure-and because it remained a union shop and because it still points the way to Our Lady of Lourdes, a short stumble up the hill from a corner of America bathed in red neon, a kind of crossroads inside and out.

ZUPA!

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