

# PolAm

A Publication of the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota [www.pacim.org](http://www.pacim.org)

June 2012

Gumming Scholarship Awarded . . .	3
Allotment Gardens in Poland . . .	4
News & Events . . . . .	6

Vol. 34, Num. 6

## Polish Saturday School 20th Anniversary

Grandma insisted we eat vegetables so we could be strong. Our parents insisted we study hard so we could do well in school. While they were both right, many of them missed a key to our growth, development and success that was right under their noses—speaking Polish.

With the rush of Central-European immigrants to America in the early 20th century, new citizens were eager to assimilate. Many shortened their names, sent their children to English-speaking schools, and made English the language at home. They viewed their native tongue as a hindrance to their children's success in the new world. They were wrong.

For decades, studies have shown that children with a second language statistically score higher on standardized tests such as the SAT, ACT, MCAT and LSAT—all needed for admission to colleges and universities. A second language is also linked to higher mathematical scores, increased creativity and problem solving skills. In Northeast Minneapolis a committed group of immigrant parents teach children and young adults the Polish language and foster in them an understanding of the history, traditions and culture of Poland.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Adam Mieckiewicz Polish Saturday School in Minneapolis. In late April they celebrated, with students performing poetry and songs in Polish, and dances by the young *Stoneczeki* dancers and the teenaged *Chabry* dance troupe,



many of whom studied at PSS. The celebratory event also included visiting dignitaries from Chicago, PSS alumni and former teachers.

The organizers of PSS offer classes for children as young as three years old, and bid farewell to them after high school graduation. In addition to language classes, students write and perform poetry and plays in Polish. PSS also participates in the international Math Kangaroo program, which encourages students to master math knowledge and skills. It is no coincidence that language and math skills occupy similar locations in the human brain.

Polish Saturday School continues on page 3

## Poland's Wild Bison to be Slaughtered

A herd of 25 wild European bison living near the village of Stuposiany, Poland, are infected with tuberculosis. The disease



likely spread to bison sharing pastures with infected cattle in the Bieszczady Mountains. In April, a panel of 18 veterinary and breeding experts in Krosno asked permission to kill the rare wild animals. Mirosław Welz, a member of the veterinary panel, said, "Although it is a painful decision, it is the only way to protect remaining herds." The panel also suggested anti-TB vaccinations for all existing bison.

TB first appeared in the region's bison in 1997, which led veterinarians to kill a herd of 18 near Solina, just north of Stuposiany. The latest case was registered in early 2010 and two more from that herd died this year. The infected herd has been culled, but no reports have yet emerged about the elimination of the 25 bison.

Today's Polish bison are descendants of the Białowieża bison that were hunted

Wild Bison continues on page 3



Membership Form For  
Polish American  
Cultural Institute of Minnesota  
612-378-9291

www.pacim.org

— Patron . . . . . \$150  
— Donor . . . . . 100  
— Sponsor . . . . . 75  
— Household/Friends . . . . . 40  
— Member (includes newsletter) . . . . . 25  
— 1st Class Postage (optional) . . . . . 6  
— ACPC Membership (optional) . . . . . 5

Total:

Please add \$5 to the above membership levels if you wish to join the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) through PACIM (a 50% discount).

**Subscription Note:** Due to postal rate increases and since non-profit mail is NOT forwarded but returned postage due please add \$6 to your membership if you travel south each winter. This ensures that you will receive your *Pol-Am* Newsletter by first class mail all year long wherever you may be. Anyone else who wishes to receive their *Pol-Am* by first class mail all year long should add \$6 to their renewals.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

E-mail

Make checks payable to PACIM and send this form with your check to:

PACIM  
43 Main St SE, Ste 228  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

## PolAm

*PolAm* (Permit #31798) is the official publication of the Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota and is published monthly with July/August and January/February issues. Non-profit bulk permit paid at Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota is located at 43 Main St SE, Ste 228, Minneapolis, MN 55414. Please direct all inquiries to our mailing address, or email us at info@pacim.org, or call 612-378-9291.

Founder: Czesław Róg  
Managing Editor: Jane Mrazek Flanders  
Associate Editor: Steven Ukasick  
Design: Bruce Rubin, Rubin Cordaro Design  
Contributing Writers, Reporters and Staff:  
Mietek Konczyk, Writer  
Patricia Beben, Proofreader

We appreciate your continued support. Dziękujemy!

## Thoughts

Gardening season is well under way here in Minnesota. We are blessed with bountiful space for gardens, and many of us



lay claim to "cabins" where we spend relaxing summer days. This month's centerspread on Poland's allotment gardens gives a peek at how many urban Poles escape the

concrete jungle of the cities and indulge their green thumbs without going too far from home.

Along with the gardening season comes the end of basketball season. The boys in my house are glued to the TV these evenings, watching the NBA final games. Be sure to check out our "People" section on page 8 and learn about the first Polish-born NBA player. I finally wrote about something that interests my ten-year old son!

Finally, thanks to everyone who went on the PACIM trip to Polish Chicago last month. We were one of 97 entries in the Polish Constitution Day parade and got coverage from a local TV station. Special thanks to Ursula Peterson, Phyllis Husted and John Bieniek for coordinating another successful trip.

*Do zobaczenia,*  
Jane Mrazek Flanders, *Editor*

### New & Generous Members

*Welcome New Members*  
Kathy Waldron  
Cynthia & William Roll  
Stephanie Mirocha Ellison

*Thank You Generous Members*  
*Patrons*  
Stanisław Skrowaczewski  
Steven Stroncek

*Donors*  
Josephine Zak  
Martyna Werner  
Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Zydowicz  
Dr. Mirosław Mazurczak  
Jacki Padula

## News From Poland

by Mietek Konczyk

A bill **raising the retirement age to 67** was passed by the lower house of parliament. Poland's major labor union, Solidarity, staged several demonstrations in Warsaw protesting the bill. After the bill was passed, they blocked exits from the parliament and heckled parliament members who voted for the bill. The main opposition party, Law and Justice (PiS), announced that it will demand review of the bill by the Constitutional Tribunal.

After **public outcry over the design of jerseys for the Polish national soccer team**, President Bronisław Komorowski signed into law an amendment to the Bill on Emblems, Colors and the National Anthem under which the Polish eagle emblem will be obligatory on the national team's shirts.

### Sponsors

Br. Milton Barker  
Rev. Michael Joncas  
John Lełwica  
Leokadia Obresky  
Robert Fox

### Friends

Terry Kita  
Zygmunt Osada  
Cynthia & William Roll  
Dorothy Breza  
Liz & Juris Curiskis  
Deloris Heintz  
Barbara & Vincent Kuznia  
John & Jola Schrandt  
John Bell  
Gloria Bergström  
Sandra Niewinski  
Dolly Roman  
Andrey Sroka  
Prof. Leonard Polakiewicz  
John Marszałek  
Gilbert & Janet Mros  
Julianne Smendzuik-O'Brien  
Ralph & Judith Brown  
Jane & Todd Flanders  
Frank Rog  
Celeste Mazure

*Polish Children's Fund*  
Robert Fox \$34



## Polish Saturday School continues



Graduates of PSS continue to prove the scientists and their studies right, gaining admission to institutions of higher learning such as Harvard and Notre Dame to name a few. The recipient of this year's Angeline Guminga Scholarship, Julia Banasikowski (see article on this page), attends Notre Dame University and is proud of her 13 years in PSS. "Getting into and attending a school that is ranked among the top 20 universities in the nation is probably a culmination of what I learned academically as well as what I learned through my heritage and at PSS."

All of the PSS teachers are volunteers and many have committed 5–20 years serving at PSS. One of the older students' most inspirational teacher is Hanna Stankiewicz, or "Pani Hania" as she is fondly known. An engineer by profession, Pani Hania knows what students are capable of and motivates them to participate in presentations, projects and competitions. Julia greatly admires Pani Hania for the faith she has in her students' abilities, and her weaving of learning with fun. A project that tightened the bond between the two of them surrounded Julia's research of her grandmother's experience in concentrations camps and her grandfather's importance in Poland's Home Army.

Polish Saturday School runs from September to May. Classes are held from 9-noon at John Paul II school on University Avenue. Scheduled social events provide opportunities for parents to meet and mingle, often producing a strong professional and personal network of friends. For more information on the program, contact the PSS Director, Bogdan Kukla, [boku@peoplepc.com](mailto:boku@peoplepc.com).

## Wild Bison continues

to extinction, especially by German troops during World War I. Efforts to restore the species to the wild began in 1929 with the establishment of the Bison Restitution Center in Białowieża. By 1951, European bison were reintroduced into the wild in

Poland and Belarus. Because of their limited gene pool, European bison are highly vulnerable to illness and the sizes of herds continue to decline. Today an estimated 800 roam Central and Eastern Europe's forests.

## Guminga Scholarship Awarded

PACIM awarded Julia Banasikowski with the Angeline Guminga Scholarship for 2012. Julia is the daughter of Ewa



(Pietrykowska) and Richard Banasikowski of Savage, MN. She attends the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, where she is organizing the arrival and grand opening of the "Phenomenon of Solidarity" exhibit.

Among her accomplishments while in high school, Julia participated in the Model U.N. Assembly in Canada for two years, was a member of the National Honor Society, served as captain of her school's Swim and Dive Team and attended classes at the University of Minnesota during her senior year.

Julia also attended Polish Saturday School for 13 years and feels those studies shaped and educated her in a special way. Through academic presentations about monumental historical events, she participated in international competitions about Polish history, such as the one sponsored by Warsaw's Institute of National Remembrance, which awarded her group first place for a project last year. She dances with the Dolina Polish Folk Dancers and served as a lector at Holy Cross Church's Polish Masses.

As a university student, Julia is an officer of the Polish Club of Notre Dame. She helps plan ethnic events around campus and works to strengthen ties with the local Polish community of South Bend. Her most recent extra-curricular work is organizing a traveling exhibit on the Solidarity Movement through the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw. In April the exhibit debuted at her university, where Julia represented the Polish students at Notre Dame. She spoke alongside the director of Notre Dame's Institute of European Studies, the Consulate General of Chicago and the Vice President of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America.

Julia plans to use the scholarship to fund her studies at Notre Dame, where she participates in the International Scholar Program, investigating governments in post-communist Eastern Europe.

## Email Announcements

PACIM invites all members to provide their current email address for future event announcements at: [info@pacim.org](mailto:info@pacim.org).



Remember packing up the car for summer vacation? Remember the worried feeling that the hose didn't get turned off, the mail held, the dog kenneled or appointments canceled? Remember wondering if your house was still standing after a summer storm passed through while you were away?

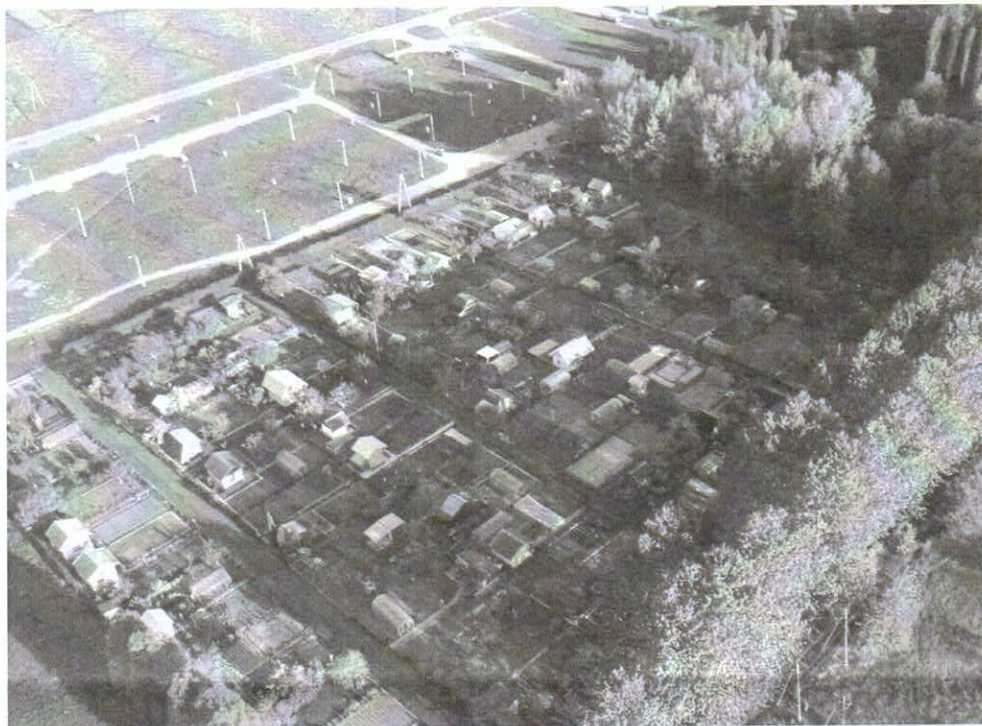
Imagine escaping the bustle of daily life in the city by just walking a few blocks from home. With a key you unlock a gate that surrounds flowers, fruit trees, vegetable gardens and a summer home. Deep breaths revive you as you settle in for some much needed rest and relaxation. Welcome to Poland's *Ogródki Działkowe*. Located in the suburbs and deep in big cities, these allotment gardens provide Poles with a slice of paradise without the hassle or expense of travel.

Allotment gardens in Poland have been part of the urban landscape for more than a century. They are not community gardens in which an entire area is tended collectively. Rather they are parcels of land, usually from 300–500 square meters in size, which are rented and cared for by one individual or family. They came on the scene in earnest in the mid-19th century in Warsaw out of concern for the city's poor population. Local authorities, private landowners, charities and private companies provided the land for these allotment gardens. "City farming" allowed hungry citizens to grow their own produce and raise small farm animals. After feeding themselves and their families, many also sold their produce, creating added income.

In the 1930s and 40s, demand for allotment gardens grew in Poland's cities. At a time when many urban families' only source of food was from their *Ogródki Działkowe*, possession of these plots of land became competitive and a source of status. During the Communist era, *Działki* were allocated to professional groups such as teachers, railway workers or miners. Although war was over, a regular supply of food in stores remained uncertain. Again, these gardens provided food and income. And during a time when travel was severely limited by the Communist government, Poles escaped to their *Działki* for vacations, family reunions, hobby farming,

# Allotment Gardens: The Lungs

by Jane Mrazek Flanders





# of Urban Poland



and maybe, on occasion, from a nagging wife or abusive husband.

Today, allotment gardens are used more for recreation than food provision. Green lawns and decorative flower beds are replacing solidly planted vegetable gardens and small livestock. The wooden houses and sheds that once dotted many *Działki* are now small brick homes with electricity, running water, sewer hook ups, and even basements. It may be as comfortable as home, but Polish authorities prohibit individuals from establishing a permanent home in their allotment garden. However, Polish ingenuity finds that money can be made by renting these homes short-term. Immigrants from Ukraine, Belarus and other neighboring countries, wanting to get a foot hold in Poland, find these garden homes perfect for their transition.

*Ogródki Działkowe* add to Poland's interest in the green movement and care for the environment. The concrete maze that constitutes Polish cities seems to leech oxygen from her people; but her one million allotment gardens serve as lungs for the urbanites, allowing everyone to breathe easier. However, the continual push to develop land and make money threatens these green havens. In 1990, the number of *Ogródki Działkowe* steeply declined as gardens were requisitioned back to their owners, demolished by developers and replaced with new houses. In 2005, a governmental act tightened regulations on the gardens and provided them with an infrastructure for proper function. Managed by the Polish Union of Allotment Gardens, *Ogródki Działkowe* "...are considered public utilities, designed to meet leisure, recreational and other social needs of the members of the local communities...facilitating horticultural cultivation for one's own use as well as to enhance ecological standards of the surroundings." As a result, by law they are provided environmental protection as a rural or forest area.

The next time you are in the middle of a Polish city and find some juicy berries for sale at a makeshift corner stand, or your nose guides you to fresh flowers for sale outside a church, it is a good guess that these are products of *Ogródki Działkowe*.



# News

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.

The Board of Directors of PACIM holds their monthly meeting on the first Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Institute: 43 Main St SE, Ste 228, Minneapolis, MN. All are invited. 612-378-9291

## PACIM Library

43 Main St SE, Ste 228  
Minneapolis, MN 55414  
Hours: Sundays from 1 to 4 PM  
or by appointment

The Institute is still searching for a new Head Librarian. This is a volunteer position and includes purchasing and cataloging new materials, acknowledging donations, recruiting and scheduling new volunteers, and maintaining the new computer-based library catalog. Interested candidates should contact PACIM by phone 612-378-9291 or email [info@pacim.org](mailto:info@pacim.org).

## Thanks to Festival of Nations Volunteers!

A big thanks goes out to all the volunteers who helped with PACIM's Polish Café at this year's Festival of Nations. A record number of customers stopped by on Sunday, but workers tried hard to keep up with the demand for food and drink all weekend. The effort raised good money for future PACIM programs.

PACIM especially thanks Marie Przynski, who coordinated the Polish Café. She ordered all the provisions and serving utensils, coordinated all the volunteers, and ensured that the Polish Café met or exceeded the Festival's stringent health and safety codes.

## Echos from the North

News from Little Falls, Minnesota

The Polish Echos met this past week to make plans for the summer. In July we will hold our annual picnic on the grounds of Our Lady of Lourdes. The food will be catered so it will just be fun, with no work!

Traditionally we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Chestochowa on the last Saturday in July. We will be having a special mass at which the local Knights of Columbus will join us. A potluck dinner immediately follows mass.

In August we will have our annual Brat Sale where we will raise money for the annual scholarship we award to a graduating senior from a Morrison County school. This year our scholarship went to Andy Henga from the Little Falls School.

The last two years we have taken a bus trip to the Twin Cities Polish Festival, we hope to do it again this August.

I wish all of you a safe and wonderful summer. Remember if you are ever in Little Falls, stop at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish House. I'd love to meet you and show you the beautiful church that was built by the Polish people of the area.

— Phinee Zak, *Polish Echos*  
320-632-2652

## PACIM Open House



Visit PACIM's new location for a festive open house from 1–4 pm. Celebration includes light refreshments and possibly live music. If weather is good, plan to stroll along the Mississippi River after the mingling and fun. Riverplace, 43 Main St, Suite 228, Minneapolis, MN. For more information visit [www.PACIM.org](http://www.PACIM.org) or call 612-378-9291.

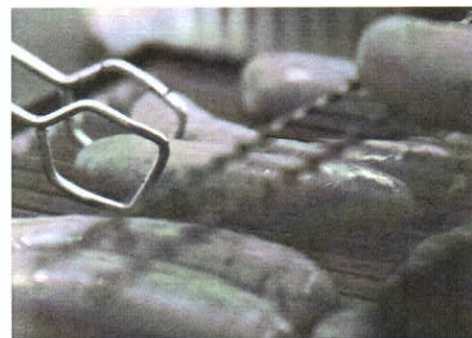
## Twin Cities Polish Festival August 11–12, 2012

Saturday 10–10, Sunday 11–6  
Along the Mississippi River on Old Main Street,  
Across from Riverplace & St. Anthony Main,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Experience "All Things Polish" at the 4th Annual Twin Cities Polish Festival. Celebrate and explore the Polish heritage and culture that is a vibrant part of Minnesota.



AKORD Quintet from Poland



Polish food, beer, polka bands, exhibits

**Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota**  
*Affiliate Member of the American Council for Polish Culture*

### PACIM Officers and Board of Directors:

President: Ania Scanlan, Vice President: Paul Rog, Treasurer: Steven Ukasick, Directors: John Bieniek, Charlene Delaney, Greg Gramza, Jane Mrazek Flanders, Terry Kita, Ursula Peterson, Paul Rog, Bruce Rubin, Dan Schyma and Magdalena Zborowski.



# Events

Many dates and times for events are given to us well in advance of the actual date and are subject to change. Please call to verify the particulars.

## June 22-23

### **Mankato Genealogical Program**

"South Central Minnesota in the 1860s," presented by the Minnesota Genealogical Society, Blue Earth Country Historical Society and Minnesota State University Mankato. Featured speaker is retired senior historian Stephen Osman. For more information and to register visit [www.mnngs.org](http://www.mnngs.org).

## June 23

### **Midwest Polka Association Summer Dance**

The Polka Family Band from Pennsylvania is back and will play from 7-11 pm at the Maplewood Moose Lodge, 1946 English St. Admission is \$12. For more information email Jim Carlson at: [k.carlson55110@yahoo.com](mailto:k.carlson55110@yahoo.com) or call 651-426-1079.

## June 24

### **PACIM Open House**

1-4, Riverplace, 43 Main St, Suite 228, Minneapolis, MN. For more information visit [www.PACIM.org](http://www.PACIM.org) or call 612-378-9291. (see page 6)

## July 15

### **Midwest Polka Association Boat Cruise and Buffet**

Cruise along the St. Croix River in Stillwater, MN, from 11 am-2 pm. Cruise features food, cash bar, great polka music and stunning scenery. Andy Zurbey and Friends will perform. Advance ticket sales only, \$32. Send check, payable to MPA, to Julie Partyka, 2823 Grand St NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418. For more information, email Jim Carlson at [k.carlson55110@yahoo.com](mailto:k.carlson55110@yahoo.com) or call 651-426-1079.

## July 21

### **Sacred Heart of Jesus Polish Festival**

22nd Ave NE & Fourth St, 11 am-6 pm. Free. Games, raffles, gift basket booth

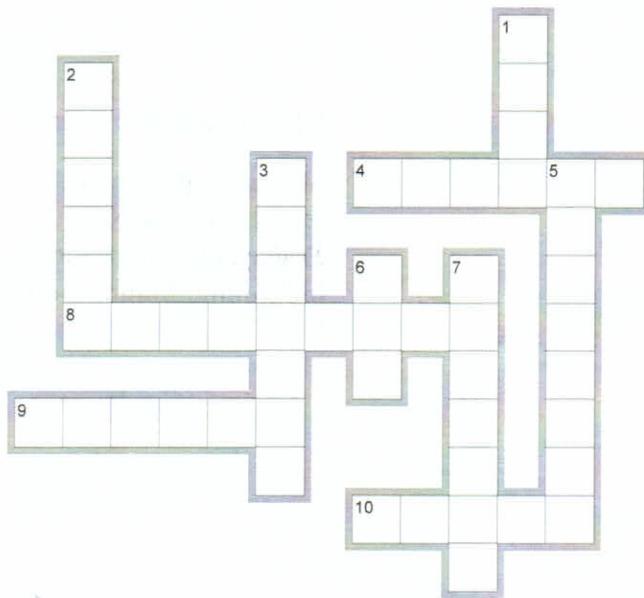
# June Crossword Puzzle

## Across

4. Polish for "please"
8. First Polish-born NBA player
9. "News from Poland" writer
10. First name of Guminga Scholarship Recipient

## Down

1. Minnesota Genealogical Society
2. Month of Twin Cities Polish Festival
3. Polish allotment gardens
5. Vodka flavored with "bison grass"
6. Polish Saturday School
7. Poland's famous river (English)



June Answers on [www.pacim.org](http://www.pacim.org); May Crossword Puzzle Answers

Across: 3. Warsaw, 6. Wojtyła, 7. Dziękuję, 9. Bar Mleczne, 10. PACIM

Down: 1. Sienkiewicz, 2. Tatra, 4. May, 5. Dolina, 8. Sunday

and silent auction. Delicious food and a Polish beer tent.

## August 11-12

### **Twin Cities Polish Festival**

(see page 6)

## August 25

### **Genealogical Book Sale**

Hundreds of genealogy related books. MGS Auditorium, 1185 Concord Street N, Suite 218, South St. Paul. Visit [www.mnngs.org](http://www.mnngs.org) for more details.

## August 25

### **MNGS Potluck Picnic, Silent Auction and Raffle**

Thompson Park picnic shelter, 4 pm. 360 Butler Ave, West St. Paul. Bring a dish to share, grilled meats provided. suggested donation of \$10 includes beer and wine. Contact Robin at [rppanlener@gmail.com](mailto:rppanlener@gmail.com).

## October 5-6

### **5th Annual North Star Genealogy Conference**

"New Approaches and Old Sources," sponsored by the Minnesota Genealogical Society, features D. Joshua Taylor as



keynote speaker. Known to many genealogists from his appearances with Sarah Jessica Parker and Ashley Judd on NBC's popular *Who Do You Think You*

*Are?* series, Josh is a nationally known researcher, speaker and author who promotes and explores the convergence of history and genealogy. Conference also plans more than a dozen breakout sessions with the Upper Midwest's leading genealogy educators. Event held at Colonial Church, Edina, MN. Visit [www.mnngs.org](http://www.mnngs.org) to register mid-July.

# People



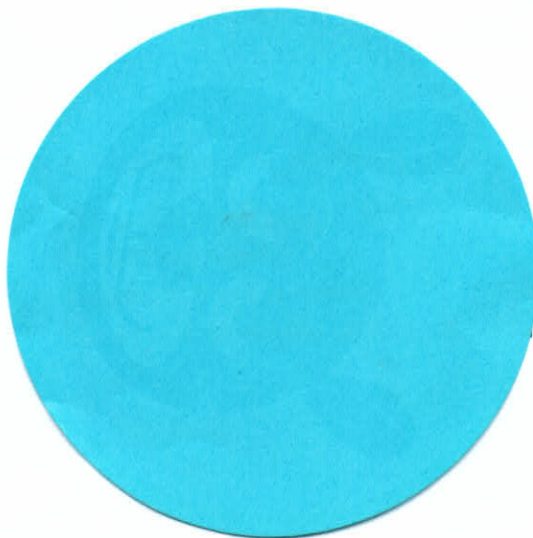
**Cezary Trybański**  
1979-

Born in Warsaw, Trybański is the first Polish-born athlete to play professional basketball in the U.S. In 2002, he began a career in the NBA with the Memphis Grizzlies, and later played with the Phoenix Suns, New York Knicks and Chicago Bulls. The 7'2" 235 lb. center now plays for the NH Ostrava of the Czech Republic League. He is the brother of Polish triple jumper Małgorzata Trybańska.



POLISH AMERICAN  
CULTURAL INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA  
43 MAIN ST SE, STE 228  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55414

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT 30308  
TWIN CITIES MN  
4 298



lull



August 11 & 12, 2012

[www.tcpolishfestival.org](http://www.tcpolishfestival.org)



## Volunteer at the Festival

The Twin Cities Polish Festival has been successful due to the generosity of the many volunteers that donate their time to make it run smoothly.

The Twin Cities Polish Festival hopes we can count on you to help make our 4th annual Festival another success.

Please consider donating some time during the 2 days of the event. There are a variety of options. Go to [www.tcpolishfestival.org](http://www.tcpolishfestival.org) and click on the Volunteer link.