



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

BY EDWARD J. RAJTAR

Witam!



I was recently elected president of the PACIM board. This is the second time I am honored to be PACIM's president. I served as secretary and president in the late 1980's and early 1990's.

When this issue reaches you, the Christmas holiday season will still be in full swing in Poland, traditionally beginning on December 25th and culminating on January 6th. The custom of caroling in Poland, or *chodzenie po kolędzie*, would begin on St. Stephen's and last until February 2.

If you attended the December 11 Wigilia Benefit Dinner, I would like to thank you for supporting this wonderful cause.

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Pierniczki: An eight century tradition and a new Torun museum

Ever wonder how Christmas gingerbread cookies and cakes (*pierniczki*) got their start? It was in Torun, Poland in 1380 after traders from India brought ginger to Europe. Many bakeries sprang up over the following decades producing *piernik* (cakes) and *pierniczki* (cookies). Competition grew, and to settle a baking rivalry, the cities of Torun and Nuremburg, Germany in 1556 agreed to share recipes and popularize trade in the honey and spice treats throughout the continent.

Last year the Muzeum Piernika (The Living Museum of Gingerbread) opened in Stary Miasto in Torun at the former Gustaw Weese Gingerbread Factory. Visitors can bake cookies on site and are treated to holographic presentations on the history of gingerbread. There's also a Torun Gingerbread Festival in early September.

For Christmas, *pierniczki* are traditionally cut into the shape of St. Nicholas or hearts. Chocolate glazed heart shaped *pierniczki* are given as gifts on *Święty Mikołaj* (St. Nicholas Day, Dec. 6)



Try the Cookie Recipe on pg. 4

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Mark Your Calendars

Feb. 19 8am-5pm Carpathian Festival Landmark Center, St. Paul

Celebrate the diverse music, song and dance heritage of Europe's most beautiful mountain range — the Carpathians of Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Ukraine and Hungary. See the award-winning Ethnic Dance Theatre build on their initial 2015 success at showcasing 1000 years of cultural tradition in Central Europe.



Feb. 25 6pm-midnight Bal Karnawalowy The Saint Paul Hotel, 350 Market St., St. Paul

This carnival ball honors a pre-Lenten celebration dating back several centuries in Poland. Highlighting the Bal is an award ceremony recognizing strong contributors to the work of PACIM and the Twin Cities Polish Communities. The formal event also includes a multi-course dinner, dancing to live music, and a silent auction.

Each year, PACIM honors an individual or organization who excels in promoting and supporting efforts to preserve Polish culture and heritage, thereby enriching society with the best of Polish traditions and ideals. Check www.pacim.org for more details.

May 4 to 7 Festival of Nations RiverCentre, St. Paul



A unique American venue that inspires people to discover more about our one world's rich cultural diversity, to learn what we share in common. It is the longest running multicultural festival in the Midwest. PACIM is a vital part of this celebration of global arts, traditions, music, dance and food, and it includes our Polish Café, where thousands of festival goers to taste our delicious Polish food, and experience of warm hospitality, gracious service and generous spirit.

Help us showcase the best that we Polish Americans have to offer— volunteer in the kitchen, serve at the counter, help setup or cleanup or perform other vital tasks. Contact Marie Przynski at Przynski@comcast.net today to be part of a great team, meet new people and showcase our culinary heritage with Minnesota.

The 1667 Treaty of Andrusovo

An end to one conflict and the seeds of others

Andrusovo is today a small village in Belarus, but 350 years ago this month a diplomatic event occurred that had long-lasting effects on Central Europe, including serving as a catalyst for Russian ambitions for centuries.

On Jan. 30, 1667, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth ceded Smolensk and a large portion of Ukraine, including Kiev. The treaty came after 13 years of war and talks and followed The Deluge, Sweden's invasion of Poland. While Poland's military prevailed, its treasury and economy were severely drained. Amid internal conflicts and civil war, Poland's negotiating position with Russia was weak.

In his book *Heart of Europe - A Short history of Poland* historian Norman Davies says "the depredations of six invading hordes – Cossacks, Swedes, Moscovites, Transylvanians, Tartars and Brandenburgers – caused destruction of life and property comparable to the Thirty Years War in Germany. One quarter of the population was lost; the economy broken almost beyond recovery."

The peace treaty called for Kiev to be returned to Poland after two years and for joint Polish-Russian administration of a large area called the Zaporozhian Sich in central Ukraine. However, Russia reneged on its part of the deal, keeping Kiev for the most part until the city became the capital of an independent Ukraine in 1991. A second treaty -- "The Eternal Peace of 1686" -- legitimized Russia's possession of the city, and was debated in Poland's Parliament until 1710.

From a Ukrainian perspective, the 1667 treaty split their ancestral homeland along the banks of the Dnieper River. From Poland's perspective, it was a major permanent loss of Commonwealth territory, in effect the first Russian partition, occurring more than a century before the infamous 1792 partition that saw Warsaw come under Russian control.

In addition to the territorial changes from this 17th century war, the conflict sparked major changes in the Russian military. While the Russian army was still a "semi-standing, mobilized seasonally", the 13 years war moved it along the path toward a standing army, laying the groundwork for Russian military gains under Peter the Great and Catherine the Great.

The 1667 treaty also terminated a war that had effects on North America, including Sweden's 1655 loss of its New Sweden colony --what is today Delaware. The colony was conquered by the Dutch, Poland's ally at the time, in a raid that was in part led by Polish-American Daniel Liczko from Koszalin.

In fact, what is today New Castle, Delaware was for a time was called Fort Casimier in honor of the reigning Polish king, John Casimier Vasa. The same area was conquered by the British a few years later, who renamed the city and persuaded the Dutch to sell off rights to all holdings in North America, including New Amsterdam, now New York.



The dark green shaded area to the east is what the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth ceded to Russia in 1667. It included Smolensk and Kiev.

Sources, links and further reading

Muscovy and the Ukraine from the Pereiaslav Agreement to the Treaty of Andrusovo 1654-1667 C.B. O'Brien, Berkeley Press, 1963

Truce of Andrusovo, article by J. Rickard at www.historyofwar.org dated 7.26.2007

Heart of Europe by Norman Davies. Oxford Press, 1988

Wikipedia articles on New Sweden; the Polish Lithuanian-Commonwealth and the Second Northern War

How to Make Polish Gingerbread Cookies (Pierniczki)

By [Barbara Rolek](#), About Food, [Eastern European Food Expert](#)

Prep Time – 20 minutes :Cook Time – 10 minutes

Yield 3 dozen cookies

INGREDIENTS

2 large eggs
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon ginger
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1 teaspoon baking soda dissolved in 3 tablespoons water
1 cup honey
3 cups all-purpose flour

Chocolate Glaze (optional):

4 ounces chopped semisweet chocolate
4 ounces butter
1 tablespoon water

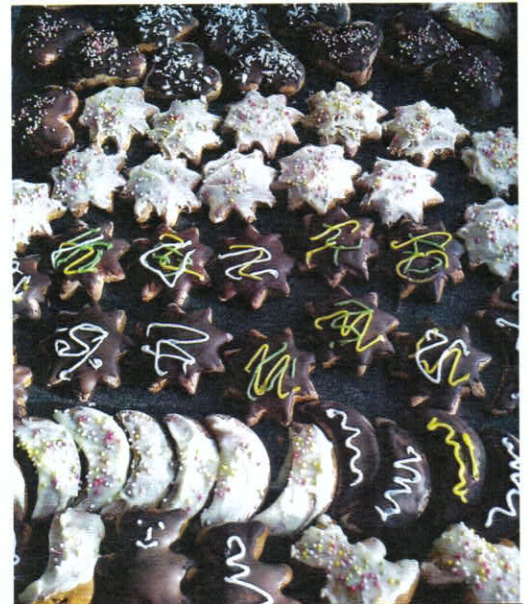
Preparation

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 1/4-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 microwavable bowl and nuke for 20 seconds at a time until almost completely melted. Stir until smooth. Use immediately.



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A taste of heaven

Torun was the birthplace of Nicholas Copernicus and at last year's Gingerbread Festival bakers displayed this mosaic made from 15,000 gingerbread cookies.

Christmas Traditions

Kołodowanie

Kołodowanie (Caroling) is a folk tradition in Poland. Typically, a group of carolers visits each village household to bring glad tidings for prosperity for the New Year. Included is an exchange of wishes, and homeowners may give food and coins to the carolers.

Caroling forms across Poland have varied through the ages. Here's a few:



Maszkarami— -Dressing as a comic animal, and performing pranks. This included acting as a horned beast, goat, bear, horse, rooster, stork, ram, or other animal symbolizing strength, health, life energy and fertility.

Kolednik - Carol singing with a star made of colored paper, highlighted from the center and attached to a movable shaft (see above right illustration). The holder of the star is Kolednik while the star itself is a gwiazdzcichem. An omission of a house by the caroling group is considered a bad sign.

Herody — This is the name for groups that reenact the biblical story of the birth of Jesus, often embellished with humor. Participants dress as shepherds, the three kings and other characters, accompanied by singers. This tradition is still practiced throughout Poland and is often supported by schools and community groups.

Szczepan (St. Stephen's Day)

While Christmas Day marks a joyous birth, the two days after Christmas in much of Europe are days dedicated to Christendom's first martyr—St. Stephen, who was stoned to death for his faith in the 1st Century. In fact, St. Stephen's Day is a national holiday in 20 countries.

In Poland, Roman Catholics observe Dec. 26 as the Feast of St. Stephen as a special day for visiting family. Children sometimes reenact the Nativity with a play and express Christmas greetings with caroling. The date's significance is nearly as important as Christmas Eve (Wigilia) and Christmas Day. Eastern Rite (Greek) Catholics, meanwhile observe Dec. 27 as St. Stephen's Day and Eastern Orthodox observe the holiday on Jan. 9 (based on the old Gregorian calendar).

St. Stephen is also the patron saint of Hungary, and was appointed by the Apostles to distribute food and assistance to the poor. However, he was tried in Jerusalem for blasphemy. Today, Vienna's Catholic Cathedral bears his name, as do historic red brick Catholic churches in both Katowice, Poland (see photo above) and on Clinton Avenue, Minneapolis.



Wigilia 2016, December 11
Murzyn Hall, Columbia Heights

A celebration of tradition to benefit Polish Orphans



More than 90 people attended PACIM's Wigilia last month. PACIM wishes to thank all event organizers and volunteers for making the atmosphere festive and memorable. We also thank the Polish American Club of Saint Paul and Club President Jim Mueller for a generous donation to the Orphan's Home (Dom Dziecka) in Poland fund. By helping Polish orphans, we remember those who are less fortunate in the land of our ancestors. Bog zaplac. Photos by Ela Brodziak and Mark Dillon

Did you know?

Although most Polish children do not speak English as their first language, some 30% of Poles speak English as a second language. A study by Prof. Sandra McNally of the Center for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics found that Polish-speaking children placed into English classes tend to catch up to their classmates very fast. That same study found that their presence in the classroom had a positive effect on native English speakers.



Reading With Santa

On Sunday, Dec. 4, Św Mikołaj took a break from supervising the elves' holiday work to read Christmas stories to children in both Polish and English at the PACIM Library. Families enjoyed hot cider, treats and cheerful fellowship. Santa's reindeer, meanwhile, were reportedly seen over Flying Cloud Airport in Eden Prairie. The North Pole team rested near there and met with relatives while Santa was in Minneapolis.

Photo by Krystyna Borgen

A message from our new PACIM President...

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We dedicate the profits from this benefit to support Polish orphans and other various children's causes. In 2016, we made a donation to the orphanage: Rodzinny Dom Dziecka run by the Siostry Wynagrodzicielki NSJ in Lublin.

February 25th is the annual Bal Karnawałowy. If you haven't made your reservations, I encourage you to do so. It is always a wonderful event, with a silent auction, wall of wine raffle, as well as honoring someone in the community.

Our goals this year are to increase our programming and events, grow our membership, and strengthen our position in the community.

Our lease is soon up at Riverplace. Although it is a nice venue, cost increases are forcing us to look at alternative locations. If we move, I hope I can count on our membership to volunteer with relocation. As we evaluate potential prospects for a new home, we welcome your input and referrals on location and space. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

We celebrate the 35th Anniversary of PACIM in 2017. As one of the founding members of this organization, I look back at all the accomplishments the organization has been able to achieve. Our goals this year are to increase our programming and events, grow our membership, and strengthen our position in the community.

Please contact us if you have any ideas or thoughts that you would like to suggest.



Spoczywaj w Pokoju - Leonard Cohen 1934-2016

Leonard Cohen wore many hats —singer, songwriter, musician, writer and painter. A poet and novelist in the 1950s and 1960s, he launched his music career in 1967. Born in Quebec, his mother, Masha Klinitsky, was Lithuanian while his fraternal grandfather, Lyon Cohen, emigrated to Canada from Budwitcher, Poland. His grandfather was founder of the Canadian Jewish Congress and co-publisher of the first English language Jewish newspaper in Canada. Cohen was a member of Canadian Music Hall of Fame and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Best known for his 1984 work *Hallelujah*, he released his last album just weeks before his death on Nov. 7.



PACIM holds many events and activities throughout the year that are made extra wonderful by great volunteers. We appreciate you and we cannot thank you enough for your continuing service to PACIM. We need more of you, so ask your friends to join our team. We look forward to your assistance this year at many events or helping at the PACIM Library. To sign up, go to www.pacim.org, leave a voice mail at 612.378.9291 or e-mail office@pacim.org. We'll get back to you promptly.

A very special thanks to Marcin Rembisz for taking on the role of St. Nicholas at our PACIM Library Reading with Santa on Sunday, Dec. 4 .

Your 2016- 2017 PACIM Board of Directors

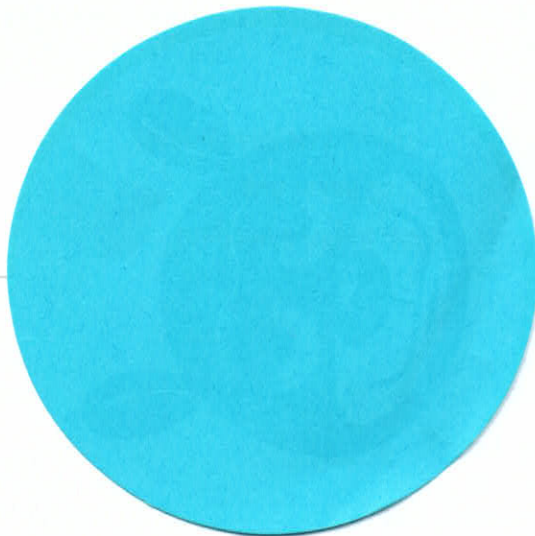
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