

THE POLISH AMERICAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA

POLAM

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February 27th**
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A Colorful History**
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The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota is a non-profit organization offering broad ranging programs and events that provide opportunity to grow deeper in understanding and appreciation of Polish and Polish American traditions, culture, and history.

SUPPORT PACIM:
PACIM grows through contributions from our member donors and organizations.

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Michał Wojtak
Maciej Skorupski

Cover:
Thermal bath “Wojciech”
in Łądek Zdrój

Photo left:
Cupola of “Wojciech” thermal bath
Photos purchased at alamy.com

From the President

Dear PACIM Members!
Witam Wszystkich Serdecznie!



Although we are still in the dead of the winter in Minnesota, precursors of more blissful days ahead are visible: the days are getting longer, and the pandemic seems to be receding. I hope we all keep taking measures to stay healthy during this difficult time. As we, here at PACIM, dream of joyful days ahead, we devote this issue of Polam to hot springs in Poland. Our new editor, Mietek Konczyk, writes about hot water terms in Poland, which is considered the third “thermal power” of Europe.

There are multiple sanatoria (health resorts) around the country, where people stay for a long period of time to renew their health. For example, as a six-year-old, I spent two months in the health resort in Kołobrzeg on Baltic Sea, where my asthma was treated. You might not know that Polish citizens, who are recovering from Covid, are eligible for a monthly stay at such SPAs, with the cost covered by the NFZ (Polish National Health Fund). Last summer my mother-in-law recovered from the long Covid after a two-month stay at the sanatorium in Ciechocinek.

In January we moved to our new location at 93 West Little Canada Road (about 10 miles East from Riverplace, using Hwy 36). As with every move, there was a lot of work that needed to be done. But it was also a good time to rethink our organization’s needs and activities. I would like to thank all Board members who spent more than 20 hours packing and unpacking PACIM belongings. By moving to the new location, we cut the rental cost in half,

thus saving PACIM roughly \$10,000 per year. Please mark your calendars for the Open House on Sunday, February 27th, 2022, 1pm-4pm. Come and see our new office and get some sweets for Fat Tuesday!

After thorough consideration we decided not to plan Carnival Bal this year, as the Covid situation is not entirely clear. Instead, we will celebrate 40th Anniversary of Pacim in Spring. The details are being worked out. Also in Spring Mary Welke is planning a Polish folk-art workshop for us. Another activity PACIM is considering for our members is a Cycling Club. Please email office@pacim.org if you are interested in the above activities or if you would like to start another new group. We are open to all your suggestions.

Stay warm!

Edyta Dudek
PACIM President

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PACIM Events



The move - thank you!

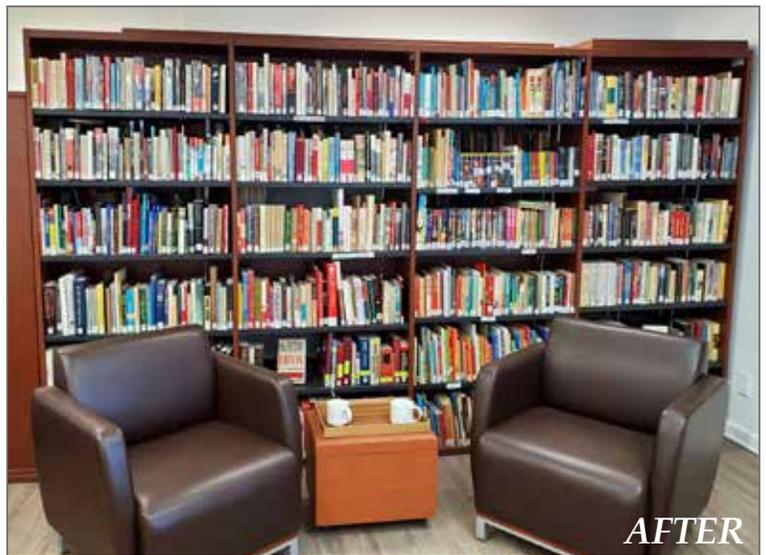
I would like to thank our terrific Board members who organized PACIM's office move to the new location at **93 West Little Canada Rd, Suite 106.**

– **John Bieniek** and his daughter **Michelle** for collecting 200 boxes (for the library collection of more than 5,000 items) and for supervising packing!

– **Adam Ramczyk, Bogdan Kukla, John Bieniek, Michal Wojtak** and **Maciej Skorupski** for taking apart bookshelves and then assembling them back in the new Library location, and for the initial move of basement stuff to our large basement space!

– **Iwona** for her colossal work, that took several weeks, of packing and unpacking 5,000 books!

I also want to thank many other people who helped us in December and January, among them **Donna Sisler, Phyllis Husted,** and **Arek Dudek.**



PACIM Open House

February 27th, 2022 | 1-4 pm

CELEBRATE WITH US
FAT TUESDAY or TŁUSTY CZWARTEK (in Polish).

Please visit the new PACIM LIBRARY,
meet Board members,
and share your ideas for activities
that you might be interested in.

Free pączki, faworki, coffee and wine
will await all our guests!
There will also be bigos available for sale.

Location: 93 West Little Canada Rd, Saint Paul, MN
ALL ARE WELCOME!!!





Hot Springs

By Mietek Konczyk

When the temperatures outside are in single digits, or even worse, when it is “below zero”, when everything around is covered by snow, when you start to have cabin fever, nothing can lift your spirits and warm you up more (short of a jug of hot beer with honey, a popular winter drink in Poland, or a glass of mulled wine with spices, or if you are Irish, a hot toddy) than a hot bath in natural geothermal springs. Imagine, you can enjoy being outdoors in the middle of the winter in the freezing cold and feel hot and relaxed while socializing with others!

People around the world enjoy hot spring baths whether they are natural, centuries old, often primitive in areas of volcanic activity, or modern and luxurious, that use hot water brought to the surface after drilling for several thousand feet. At that depth, water is heated by contact with either liquid magma or the hot rocks from earth’s core. Very often, the water contains large amounts of dissolved minerals. Some of them have levels that could be harmful, but usually they benefit the human body and help alleviate some medical conditions.

There are many famous hot springs around the world: Blue Lagoon in Iceland, Banjar Hot Springs in Indonesia, Pamakkale in Turkey, Pucon in Chile, Chena Hot Springs in Alaska or Glenwood Springs in Colorado. (Of course, the United States has famous thermal springs in Yellowstone National Park, but they are too hot to jump in.) However, it may be a surprise to you that National Geographic Polska named Poland the third “thermal power” of Europe after the neighboring countries of Slovakia and Hungary.



Through the ages, Poles have valued the medical benefits of mineral hot springs and built spas and health resorts around them. One of the most beautiful thermal baths is called “Wojciech”, located in a 17th century building in Łądek Zdrój (which is south of Wrocław, west of Katowice). It is constructed in the neo-baroque architectural style with a cupola to resemble a Turkish bath. Its marble pool is filled with 45°C (113°F) sulphide-fluoride water coming from a natural hot spring. According to the description provided by the resort, a bath there “relaxes, improves skin conditions, soothes joint aches and back pain.” The rich history of the resort includes visits from the rich and famous, among them poet Wolfgang Goethe, a wife of Prussian King Wilhelm III, and a future 6th president of United States, John Quincy Adams (in July 1800).

People who would like to dip in water with the highest concentration of active sulfur compounds in the world could visit another historic health resort — Solec Zdrój. Waters there are said to help with almost all ailments from joint pains to intestinal problems to diabetes. There are also other bathing options in waters containing other naturally occurring chemicals — radon, iodine and bromine. Those are available with a doctor’s prescription and are administered under a medical supervision. Typically, in places like that, one can also complement thermal baths with massages, water aerobics, physiotherapy, cryotherapy in extreme cold chambers, body detox and other treatments.

Besides going to the hot springs for health, it is very popular in Poland, especially in the winter, to visit “termy” as they are called in Polish, for the fun of being outdoors with family and friends. (Let’s leave the icy baths, called “morsing”, from “mors”

being a walrus, to Scandinavians.) A strong demand for hot springs establishments caused a boom in the construction of modern geothermal water parks in all parts of the country. Many of them have all the features present in regular aqua parks — slides, lazy rivers, water playgrounds for kids, wake pools, etc. — both indoors and outdoors, but with warm, hot, or very hot pools of mineral rich water. Some may have separate “play” and “relax” areas, the latter for adults who prefer a quieter, more relaxing atmosphere for having a hot bath while holding a drink in their hands and socializing with other bathers. These kinds of big parks are usually part of developments in attractive tourism areas with hotels, spas, restaurants, bars, and other attractions.



During my recent stay in Poland, I visited two such places, both commonly listed as the best geothermal waterparks in Poland — Terma Bania in Białka Tatrzańska and Termy Bukovina in Bukowina Tatrzańska. As you may have figured out from their names, they are both located near the Tatra Mountains in the southern part of Poland, which means that they also offer a fantastic mountain scenery. Entry tickets are not cheap (\$30-\$40 for an unlimited, all-day ticket) but they offer a ton of attractions and options to play and relax. Terma Bania also has morphed into a ski resort with its own lift and affiliation with Tatry Super Ski – the largest skiing industry project in Poland, combining most of the ski resorts in Podhale, Spisz, Gorce and Pieniny. At the end of a day on the slopes, one can ski directly to the thermal baths, shower, change and jump in the hot water pool.

For me personally, hot springs are the mountain feature that offers a quick and pleasant physical recovery after a day of skiing, snow shoeing, rock climbing, or hiking. Views of snowy mountain peaks from a hot water pool are a bonus. For this reason, I like places that may not offer as many attractions as Bania or Bukovina but have the atmosphere of a spot where local people are joined by skiers or hikers and other hot spring enthusiasts to rest and relax. My favorite place like this is Termy Gorący Potok in the village of Szaflary on the way to Zakopane. I like its wooden, mountain style architecture, its sulfurous waters reaching just the right temperature, around 35°C (95°F), cold Żywiec beer served in the pools and a good crowd. If you are lucky, you may also have the opportunity, as I once did, to listen to a local “kapela góralska” (a highlander folk band), making your time there even more enjoyable.

Whatever your preferences are—for big or small springs, for healing or relaxing waters, for historic or modern places—put a hot spring in Poland on your list of places to visit, especially in the winter.



News from Poland

COVID-19 Status

As of today, the Polish Ministry of Health reported over 4.5 million cases of COVID infections, thus, close to 12% of the entire population got infected during the current pandemic. The mortality rate of 273 deaths per 100,000 puts Poland behind Peru and Brazil in a list of countries with the highest number of deaths in proportion to its population. Only around 57% of people are fully vaccinated.

The Government attempts to navigate a middle course between public health concerns, business and social pressures, anti-vaccination sentiments, and political calculations. Results are questionable to many people. Current restrictions require masks and distancing in public spaces, limits of 30% of capacity in stores, restaurants, bars, museums, movie theaters, etc. However, the limits do not apply to those who have been vaccinated. Schools and daycare facilities function normally.

People traveling to Poland from outside the Schengen area, e.g. from USA are required to show negative results on a COVID test taken no more than 24 hours before crossing the border, regardless of their vaccination status; otherwise they have to subject themselves to a 14-day long quarantine.

One recent victim of COVID infection is the former Solidarity leader and later the president of Poland, Lech Wałęsa. According to reports he was vaccinated and boosted, and he experiences mild symptoms.

Economy

INFLATION

Inflation in Poland crossed 8% and it is highest since 2000. In December 2021 prices that grew the most were for food (8.6% year-to-year and 1% Nov-to-Dec increase), non-alcoholic drinks and energy (11% year-to-year increase), and transportation (22.7% year-to-year). The central bank (NBP) in January raised the base interest rate to 2.25%, the highest level since 2014 and it is expected to raise it even higher. Analytics predict that inflation will eventually slowdown in 2023.

GROWTH

In 2021, Polish domestic product (GDP) is expected, despite the pandemic, to be around 5.4%. For 2022, analytics predict the growth to slow down slightly to 4.3%. The prospect of Poland receiving a portion of the €2.018 trillion stimulus package that is intended to help rebuild a post-COVID-19 Europe is jeopardy due to reluctance on the part of the Polish government to accept EU conditions of "Country Specific Recommendations" related to independence of the court system after changes made to it by the current government.

DOLLAR

The dollar exchange rate has settled around 4 PLN.

A potential war between Polish neighbors, Russia and Ukraine, causes big concerns in Poland. Although Poland sympathizes with Ukraine, it declared that it is not going to send any Polish troops to help. One of Russia's demands is to remove foreign NATO forces from Poland and other eastern European countries. USA and other NATO allies found that demand "unacceptable"; instead it put a number of troops on standby to be deployed to the region and sent more ships and fighter jets there. Currently around 5,000 NATO troops, mostly American, are stationed in Poland.

Several officials, a senator and a former head of the election committee of a political party that lost the last parliamentary elections, a high profile and well political connected attorney, and a prosecutor critical to some government decisions, determined with help of the Citizens Lab of the University of Toronto that their phones were hacked by the highly controversial spy software Pegasus secretly purchased by the Polish government from the Israeli firm NSO Group. By now the firm cancelled the Polish license, but the scandal related to what seems to be unlawful surveillance is growing.

Mark Brzezinski, a son of former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski was sworn in as the United States ambassador to Poland. He is graduate of Dartmouth College, has a J.D. from the University of Virginia Law School, and a Ph.D. in political science from Oxford University. He previously served in the Clinton administration, was foreign policy advisor to the presidential campaign of Barack Obama and ambassador to Sweden.

Following several months of tragic conflicts on the border with Belarus, where refugees from several countries, encouraged by the Belarusian president, tried to cross into Poland, Poland started to build a 160 km long wall at an estimated cost of \$400 million. And no, Belarus is not going to pay for it.

Zalipie, Poland, A Colorful History

A small Polish village located 68 kilometers, east of Krakow has become world famous in recent years both in social media and as a tourist destination.



You could say it has a very colorful and picturesque history. The residents paint bold, vibrant, floral designs on the outside and inside of their homes, sheds, fences, wells, dog houses, and just about anything else that will allow itself to be painted.

The painting tradition started about a hundred years ago when someone decided to cover up imperfections, such as soot that accumulated on the walls from their oven. Neighbors liked this new look and joined in the fun to create and continue the practice of painting on available surfaces in the village, using simple, homemade brushes and paints. This practice has been handed down with the generations and is proudly practiced to this day.

To honor the Zalipie tradition,
we are scheduling a beginning painting workshop
in the spring with artist, Mary Welke.





PACIM Wigilia

THANK YOU for attending PACIM Wigilia 2021. This year we enjoyed company of 180 guests from Minnesota, including the members of Sister Cities Columbia Heights - Łomianki, Polish Saturday School (PSS) and a large group from Little Falls area.

We would like to thank Marian Pierzchalski for cooking a delicious dinner, Bożena Kozłowska and the PSS Girls Scouts troop for decorations, Christmas ornament activity and food serving, Ola Hoffman for leading Kolędy and PACIM Board: Bogdan Kukła, Michał Wojtak, John Bieniek, Iwona Srienc, Adam Ramczyk for making Wigilia 2021 a great success!

We would like to congratulate our Board Member Maciej Skorupski and his wife Aubrey on the birth of their firstborn son Alexander James Skorupski, who was born on December 12th at 14:52 just before Wigilia dinner began.

The proceeds from the dinner will benefit Dom Dziecka in Skorogoszcz, Poland.



PACIM 2021 INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE

	12/31/20	12/31/21	Change in Value	Redemptions
D&C Balanced Unrestricted	68,519.42	81,729.60	13,210.18	0
D&C Rog Endowment	19,541.25	23,308.49	3,767.24	0
M&P Growth	127,524.51	153,015.95	25,491.44	10,000.00
M&P Polanie Balanced	30,921.31	36,578.04	5,656.73	0
M&P Polanie Growth	37,615.78	42,206.76	4,590.98	6,000.00
M&P Walicki Growth	116,369.82	136,194.01	19,824.19	4,000.00
M&P Walicki Balanced	55,602.48	65,774.35	10,171.87	0
Total Portfolio	456,094.57	538,807.20	82,712.63	20,000.00

The table above shows Pacim investment portfolio. It consists of separate accounts invested in balanced and large-cap no-load growth mutual funds managed by Mairs & Powers, an affiliate of US Bancorp., and Dodge & Cox. Some accounts are restricted based on donor intentions. PACIM also has a dedicated Literary Fund savings account to support author presentations, the balance of which was \$1,062 as of January 2022.

Our total investments in 2021 increased from \$456,094 on January 1st to \$538,807 on December 31st (\$82,712 increase).

This year we made two withdrawals from the restricted funds: \$4,000 from Walicki fund, to contribute to the playground at Dom Dziecka in Skorogoszcz, and \$6,000 from Polanie fund, to cover three Scholarships (\$2,000 each). Due to the high rental cost at Riverplace, \$10,000 was withdrawn to cover the cost of rent. Last fall the Board made a decision to cut the rental cost in half, by moving to the new location, thus saving the organization \$10,000 per year.

**2022
BAL KARNAWAŁOWY**

will take place on Saturday, February 26th, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

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Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota
(PACIM) is a membership driven non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

PACIM is grateful for the many gifts, endowments, and donations that make its mission a reality in the programs, events, publications and library collection under its guidance.

Ad Rates:

Business card size ad:

- \$30 [one time]
- \$150 [one year]

One-quarter page display ad:

- \$100 for a single ¼ page display
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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Donor Gold | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> Age if student or senior |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Donor Silver | | |

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PACIM OPEN HOUSE

**Sunday,
February 27th
1pm - 4pm**

93 West Little Canada Rd,
Saint Paul, MN

All are welcome!!!



LIKE PACIM ON FACEBOOK!

Stay connected and learn about upcoming events!

Facebook.com/PACIM.org

Or, use your smartphone camera to scan this QR code and go directly to our Facebook page. ▶

