

The Echo Newsletter

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The Polish Heritage Society meets at the Polish Falcons at 6:00 pm on the 3rd Monday of every month except for December and general meetings in June and October.

This newsletter is published monthly. Submit story ideas or content contributions to Richard Panek or Marilyn Lignell by emailing:

phsgrandrapids@gmail.com

or by mail:

PHS

PO Box 1844

Grand Rapids MI 49501-1844

www.polishheritagesociety.com

PHS Membership Meeting is October 11

Sunday, October 11th is the next General Membership Meeting of the PHS. It will take place at Kosciuszko Hall at 1:00 pm. Celebrating October as Polish Heritage Month, this meeting includes light lunch with a historical presentation, review of the Sister Cities initiative and upcoming PHS events. This year's historical program will highlight Valeria Lipczynski, a leading figure in the Polish settlement of Grand Rapids whose influence spanned the late 19th to early 20th century. Make sure to attend to learn about this fascinating figure in local Polish history.



Dubbed the "Queen of the Poles", Valeria Lipczynski was a dynamic figure in the Grand Rapids immigrant community from the time of her arrival at age 23.



In addition to the historical presentation, there will be information about the Grand Rapids Sister Cities program as well. Past PHS president Jeffrey Portko, working with the GR International Relations Commission, was the one instrumental in making Bielsko-Biala, Poland a Sister City to Grand Rapids starting in 1989.

Bielsko-Biala, Poland, and Grand Rapids, Michigan, became official sister cities in 1991 due to their striking similarities in size, climate, and industrial legacy. Bielsko-Biala covers 48 square miles and has deep roots in automotive and textile production, closely mirroring Grand Rapids' 45-square-mile footprint and historic global prominence in furniture manufacturing.

Managed by Grand Rapids Sister Cities International, the partnership fosters vibrant cultural and educational exchanges. These include artist-in-residence programs, academic collaborations with Grand Valley State University, and a pen pal initiative. The other grand Rapids Sister Cities are Zapopan, Mexico, Perugia, Italy, Bielsko-Biala, Poland, Ga District, Ghana and Omihachiman, Japan

POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY EVENT SCHEDULE

PHS General Membership Meeting, Sunday, October 11th, 1:00 pm at Kosciuszko Hall - 935 Park St SW, Grand Rapids. Light lunch/snacks and soft drinks provided. Open to all members and guests.

Rozmowa Polish Language Club, Tuesday, October 27th 7:00 pm, Kosciuszko Hall

Grand Rapids Public Museum Cultural Heritage Festival, Saturday, Nov 7, 10 am-4 pm

Wigilia Dinner, Saturday, December 5

Collegium Cantorum Advent Choral Program, Saturday, December 19 at St. Isidore Church
Wigilia and Choral Program details in this newsletter. See PHS website and Facebook page for other events.



*Saint Isidore
the Laborer*



PRESENT
**COLLEGIUM CANTORUM
POLONIA CHICAGO**
AN EVENING OF SACRED CHORAL ADVENT MUSIC

St. Isidore Church, 628 Diamond St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI

DECEMBER 19, 2026
SINGING THE 4:30 PM VIGIL MASS WITH THE ST. ISIDORE CHOIR
FOLLOWED BY A FULL RECITAL FROM 5:30-6:45



**THIS IS A FREE EVENT BUT RSVP IS REQUESTED VIA THE ZEFFY TICKETING APP.
FOR MORE INFORMATION, TO RSVP, AND MAKE AN OPTIONAL FREE WILL OFFERING, USE THE QR CODE BELOW:**



*PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP AND
CHARITABLE GRANT PROGRAMS*



SUPPORT UKRAINE

YOU'RE INVITED TO THE

ANNUAL GALA *Evening*

A BENEFIT EVENING
IN SUPPORT OF UKRAINE



DATE:
OCTOBER 24, 2026
(SATURDAY)



TIME:
6:00 PM – 10:30 PM



LOCATION:
The Grand Celebration Center
925 4 Mile Rd NW,
Grand Rapids, MI 49544



TICKETS:
\$75 per person

AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENING INCLUDES:



DELICIOUS
UKRAINIAN
CUISINE



MUSIC



DANCING



AUCTION



COCKTAIL
HOUR



GUEST
SPEAKER

PURCHASE YOUR TICKET

and join us for an unforgettable event
of community, culture and
support for Ukraine.



Last 4 digits 7365

venmo

POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL

Wigilia Dinner & Program

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2026

WESTLEONARD BANQUET FACILITY
1140 MUSKEGON NW
GR 49504

Join us...

SOCIAL HOUR
5:00-6:00 PM

WITH COMPLIMENTARY
PUNCH, COFFEE & CASH BAR

DINNER / PROGRAM
6:00 PM

POLISH KOLEDY

FEATURING

JAREK KOZAL & NICK PALMER

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

FROM THE

MALBORK DANCE ENSEMBLE

AND

POLISH LANGUAGE STUDENTS

Oplatek

*Assorted Homemade Breads
with Butter & Horseradish Butters*

Cream Herring

*Traditional Wigilia Red Beet Soup or
Mushroom Soup Made from Scratch*

Homemade Cheese Pierogi with Sour Cream

*Baked Cod with Sauteed Colored Peppers and
Onions, Served with Red Skinned Potatoes
and Traditional Polish Sauerkraut*

Authentic Polish Desserts

\$45.00 per person-prepaid:
Checks payable to Polish Heritage Society
or scan the QR code.



*****RESERVATION DEADLINE NOVEMBER 21, 2026*****

Send to PHS-c/o Marzanna Butryn Phone: 203-415-0005

1547 Hamilton Ave NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Please designate which soup you prefer: Traditional Red Beet _____ Mushroom _____

Name: _____

Phone # _____

of tickets @\$45.00 ea _____ Amount enclosed _____

I would like to be seated with _____

Email: _____

Polish Heritage Society Membership News and Events

The Polish Heritage Society held a special membership campaign at the Dozynki Festival where new members could join for the remainder of 2026 for a discounted rate of \$10. We had several members join as annual and lifetime members. Members will receive our monthly newsletter, keeping them in the know of Polish local community news and upcoming events. We have some exciting events coming up in the next couple of months so stay tuned and welcome to the Polish Heritage Society!

Bonnie C. Becker
Wayne Bersano
Elizabeth Bouhuis
Ron Dolegowski
Geraldine Farley
Samantha Glueck
Kathleen Guider
Caitlin Hammond
Linda Kowrach
Sara Moore Kerai
Amy Lloyd
Lynda Lloyd
Todd Maksimowski
Joseph Mancewicz
Judge David Murkowski*
James Nikodemski
Adam Piotrowski *
Matthew Piwowar
Haleigh Przybylek
Stephanie Sakowicz
Lynne Switzer
Sarah Thomas
Stephanie Rodrigues-Torres
Angela Truskowski
(Family membership)
Nathan Steffens
Paul Wargolet
Adam Windes
Halina Windes
Patrick Wioskowski
John Woodard
Larry Zwier*

*Lifetime memberships

PHS members Mary Ann and Gary Mancewicz shared the news of the marriage of their Daughter Emily to Matthew Hymel. The Nuptial Mass was at St Mary's Church in Muskegon, celebrated by Mary Ann's brother, and Emily's uncle and Godfather, Fr Robert Miller.



Emily and Michael Hymel

A glorious day of sunshine and a celebratory reception with friends and family was then held on the shore of Muskegon Lake.



They then traveled to Rome to receive the Papal Blessing for Marriage from Pope Leo! This was so exciting as Emily had gone to Rome to witness the Conclave and election of the Pope! When the Pope passed by after the blessing, Emily and Matthew were able to pass him a White Sox baseball cap!

The Annual Wigilia Dinner is taking place on Saturday, December 5th at the West Leonard Banquet Facility. Wigilia is an evening with beautiful traditions worth observing to keep connected with your Polish roots. People tend not to observe Wigilia because they aren't aware of the meal – or they are aware of how much work it can be, especially on Christmas Eve.

That's why the PHS holds a traditional Wigilia in early December so that everyone can spend Christmas Eve at home. And our motto is: Enjoy the tradition of Wigilia – without the work! See the facing page for details.

The Polish Heritage Society provides handmade ornaments for Wigilia guests to take home as a party favor. You are invited to participate in making them! This year's design will be a rooster made from construction paper. The Wigilia Committee will hold a crafting session on Saturday, November 14, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the home of Rich and Mary Panek, 6620 Knockadoon Dr Rockford MI 49341. Brunch will be served. Please reply to Mary at marylpanek@gmail.com or 616.550.4113. Space is limited to 20 guests. Please bring scissors, a glue stick, and decorative items like ribbon or sequins to decorate your rooster.

The Grand Rapids Public Museum is holding it's

annual Cultural Heritage Festival on Saturday, November 7, 2026 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Grand Rapids and the surrounding region have a long-standing history of diverse cultural traditions dating back from early explorers and fur traders to modern day cultural customs of recent immigrants. The Public Museum hosts the annual Cultural Heritage Festival to celebrate this heritage.

The PHS will have a display table at the event to share our rich Polish heritage with the community. This is a great event for the family with displays, live performances by ethnic dance groups and food vendors. If you attend, be sure to stop by the PHS table and say hi!

PHS Board member Marzanna Butryn is continuing her Polish Cooking Classes at Sons and Daughters. Club. For more information on the upcoming classes email butryanmarzanna@gmail.com.

Finally, our local Ukrainian community is hosting a Gala Evening to benefit Ukraine taking place Saturday, October 24. See details on page 3 of this newsletter.



Join the Polish Heritage Society to receive our monthly newsletter and other benefits!

Annual Student Membership for full-time students through college \$5

Annual Adult Membership \$20

Annual Family or Business Membership \$35

Lifetime Membership \$150

Scan the QR code with your phone camera to become a member:



OR BY MAIL:

Fill out this form and send a personal check made out to the Polish Heritage Society to this address:

Polish Heritage Society of Grand Rapids

P.O. Box 1844

Grand Rapids MI 49501-1844

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____