



POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY OF GRAND RAPIDS

June 2021

Dozynki Polish Festival Coming Up!

August 27-29, 2021

Calder Plaza, Downtown Grand Rapids



Th

By Richard Panek

The PHS Board was pleased to learn that the City of Grand Rapids has approved the use of Calder Plaza for the 2021 Polish Festival. Rosa Parks Circle/The May Lin Ecliptic is unavailable this year due to construction.

As of this writing, attendance limits, spacing restrictions and COVID-19 mitigation requirements are yet to be determined.

Planning is underway for live music all 3 days of the festival as well as food vendors. Past President Greg Rosloniec is recruiting some of the best local/regional bands to provide entertainment.

There are plans for an updated Polish History and Culture Tent as well as an exciting new collaboration with Pulaski Days!

The Pulaski Days Pageant, where the Pulaski Days Queen and Her Court are chosen, will be taking place at the festival August 28th.

More details regarding the pageant will be in the July newsletter.

Help is needed!

The PHS Board is looking for volunteers for the Festival Committee. There is need for volunteers to help with sponsorship recruitment, set-up and take down of the Festival area, Bar servers, and Token booth. Email phsgrandrapids@gmail.com for information.

The best way to get to know the great members of the PHS, is to work a shift at the festival and then enjoy the food and music when your are done.

See you there!

PHS Scholarship Winner Thank You's

Here are some thank you messages that came from the Polish Heritage Society's 2021 scholarship winners.

Dear Polish Heritage Society,

Thank you for choosing me to be a scholarship recipient! I truly appreciate your generosity!

Once again, thank you,

Kayla Fricke

Dear Polish Heritage Society Scholarship Committee,

What an honor to be selected to receive the Polish Heritage Society Scholarship. My family and I are very grateful for this gift.

I am the first in my family to go away to college and pursue a Bachelor's degree. I am also the first collegiate bowler from my home town of Boyne City, Michigan.

Making a big financial commitment and moving away from family and friends was a huge decision for my family. As I wrap up my first year of college, I can honestly say...it was the BEST decision we could have made. I very much look forward to my journey over the next couple years studying Business at Aquinas College and building a solid future!

Thank you for your generosity to help ease the financial pressure for my family.

Sincerely,

Jack Wicker

Good afternoon,

My name is Hailey Deptula and I received a letter of notification about my scholarship from the Polish Heritage Society. To begin, I would like to extend my gratitude and thank the organization for such a generous gift. I feel extremely blessed by your kindness and assistance towards supporting my college education. Again, I am overwhelmed by the warmth and generosity displayed through the aid provided to me from the Society.

Thank you very much,

Hailey Deptula

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**Polish Heritage Society of
Grand Rapids
PO Box 1844
Grand Rapids MI
49501-1844**

<https://polishheritagesociety.com>

Email us at phsgrandrapids@gmail.com.

The Polish Heritage Society of Grand Rapids promotes an appreciation of the Polish and Lithuanian culture in the metro Grand Rapids. The Society publishes this newsletter monthly. We invite story ideas and content contributions. For more information, please contact Richard Panek or Marilyn Lignell by writing to phsgrandrapids@gmail.com.

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Scholarships cont'd from pg.1

To Whom It May Concern,

I really appreciate the generous scholarship that you awarded me. On my application I stated that I was going to be attending MSU, but recently my plans changed and I am now going to be attending the University of Michigan. I already spoke with Mary Ann Bergevin about this change

Again, thank you for this opportunity,

Nathan Sochocki

Good evening,

I would like to say a personal thank you for awarding me with the scholarship from the Polish Heritage Society. I am very honored and very grateful for your generosity.

Have a great rest of your week.

Nick Klak

Good evening,

I would like to say a personal thank you for awarding me with the scholarship from the Polish Heritage Society. I am very honored and very grateful for your generosity.

Have a great rest of your week.

Nick Klak

PHS Board Elections and Annual Members Picnic

The PHS Board has 2 candidates for Board Positions. Angela Zasuwa and Martin Rogalski have been nominated for the Board.

Angela was born and raised on the West side of Grand Rapids. She enjoys running, exploring new places and bike riding and she looks forward to getting more involved with her Polish heritage.

Martin is a past PHS Honoree and worked to rewrite the PHS Bylaws a few years ago. He was instrumental in the PHS satisfying 5013C designation by the IRS.

Both candidates have an interest in upholding the objectives of the Grand Rapids Polish Heritage Society.

Our annual Membership Meeting and Picnic will take place at 1:00 pm on Sunday, June 27, 2021 at Oriole Park in Wyoming. There is a covered pavilion at the site and a nearby playground and splashpad. The meeting will take place rain or shine. Come join the fun and get to know more about the PHS!

PHS Newsletter Story Gets National Exposure.

Matthew Gryczan's January PHS Newsletter article, *Boxing Was Way for Local Polish-Americans to Find Fame and Fortune*, was published in the May/June issue of the Polish-American Journal (PAJ).

The PAJ is the nation's largest, independent English language newspaper dedicated to the promotion, preservation and continuance of Polish American culture. Their editor, Mark Kohan, thought Matt's story (retitled as *Grand Rapids a Heavyweight in Polish American Boxing History*) provided an important historical perspective on early 20th century Grand Rapids boxing champions.

The PAJ, published by Panagraphics, Inc., in Buffalo, New York, has readers throughout the world. It is the most referenced Polish American publication in The Congressional Record. To subscribe to the PAJ go to polamjournal.com for information.

Congratulations Matthew!

PHS Member News

By Marilyn Lignell

Judi Serba joined PHS as a lifetime member. My grandparents immigrated from Poland in the late 1800's. They met here in Grand Rapids, Michigan and had 7 children. My grandparents spoke very little English so the kids were all fluent in Polish. I was young when my grandparents passed away and don't remember many traditions but I still remember my father speaking Polish with his family. I remember when I saw the movie Dr. Zhivago with my parents – my dad could understand the Russian parts because where his parents were from in Poland was close to Russia.

Now that I'm grown with a large family of my own and have visited Poland, I am quite interested in all aspects of Polish life. When I visited Poland in 2017, my heart leapt. Poland and the Polish people are beautiful and strong. It made me love being Polish and I hope to return soon. I've started learning a bit of Polish (the hard part is there is no one to really speak with) and learned to make all my own Polish foods, sharing these with my children and grandchildren. I've also started to dig into my and my husband's Polish Ancestors, which has been quite the struggle. Thru PHS I got to access a Polish Genealogy Webinar which helped with my search.

A few years ago, my husband, Don and I, went to our first Wigilia dinner sponsored by the PHS. It was amazing and so much fun connecting with other 2nd generation Poles from the area. I loved hearing and trying to sing the Polish Christmas Carols. I remember hearing some of them growing up.

Two years ago I took my then 1 year old granddaughter to the Dozynki Festival. We had a fabulous time dancing and eating all the Polish delicacies that were there. One of my favorite

Hello Members! Hopefully you found your membership card in the May Newsletter. If you forgot to pay your dues you may still do so and you will get a card. Simply use the form on this newsletter.

memories is dancing with my dad at Polish weddings as a very young girl.

I decided then to run for the PHS Busia Queen. Well – to my surprise – I was voted 2019 Busia Queen. What an honor that was for me. Although Covid-19 put a cramp in my reign. I was still able to attend the Matka Boska Zielna Mass at St. Isadore's church last August. I never realized what a beautiful tribute that was. I have been asked to continue as the Busia Queen for another year with I happily accepted. I just hope that events will happen this year. In joining

the PHS, I'm hoping to learn more about my Polish heritage and help spread the word to the next generation of Polish descendants. Let's Polka On!!

PHS Busia Queen

Judi Serba

Meeting Minutes — April 19

A meeting of the Polish Heritage Society was held on April 19, 2021 President Adam Porczynski called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Attendance: Mary Ann Bergevin, Adam Porczynski, Dennis Ziolkowski, Greg Rosloniec, Michael Jasperse, Matt Gryczan, Theresa Bonham, John Theisen, Elena Chaidez

Absent: Richard Panek, Anthony Zasuwa

Minutes from the last meeting were approved as printed with no corrections. Minutes were sent via e-mail to the board. Motion was made by John and seconded by Elena to accept. Motion passed.

Treasurer Report: The financial report was given. Bulk mail costs were reviewed by Elena. Motion was made by Greg seconded by Matt to accept the report. Motion passed.

Correspondence: The renewal checks were given to Mary Ann for deposit. Member information is given to Marilyn.

Old Business: Looking into shirt vendors for shirts with new logo. Cost and availability to follow.

A motion by John, seconded by Matt to review the Venmo program usage after the

food fundraiser. Motion passed.

New interested board members will be invited to May's meeting to introduce themselves.

Festival: Polish festival 2021 among other festivals approved by the City subject to Covid guidelines. Many vendors are interested. Greg will look at band availability. Uncertain about capacity limits and the 6 foot rule.

New Business: Discussion about paid advertisers for newsletter. To review with editor at next meeting.

Life membership requirements, need to change? Richard will look into and report to board suggestions and concerns.

Motion by Matt, seconded by John to partner with the sister cities and reestablish Ruth Ann's essay contest. Motion passed. Sister cities will put up a 500.00 scholarship prize. PHS to assist as needed.

Motion by John, seconded by Elena to donate 100.00 to the Polish Falcons golf outing as a hole sponsor. Motion passed.

Motion by Elena, seconded by Matt to partner with Pulaski Days and hold their queen contest at the Polish Festival. Motion passed.

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

ONLINE

You can join the Polish Heritage Society online by going to our website at <https://polishheritagesociety.com/>, filling out the Membership form and paying by using the PayPal Button.

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 _____

Motion by John, seconded by Theresa to review our meeting schedule that was approved in 2019 Motion passed.