



# Alliance News

Toledo-Poznań Alliance quarterly newsletter – Spring 2019

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## NEWS from POLAND

Sources: *The Blade, New York Times, Chicago Tribune and Los Angeles Times*

By Jackie Konwinski

As the Polish people practiced the Lenten abstinence, fasting, prayers and Gorzkie żale; and observed święconka and the joys of Easter, here is a news summary of late winter and spring,

### ENERGY - Swinoujscie, February 2019

Producers in Qatar, Norway, and now, the United States export liquid natural gas to this northern port city on the Baltic Sea in huge tankers. The port facility, which cost about one billion euros, was named in honor of President Lech Kaczynski who died in a suspicious plane crash in Russia in 2010.

More and more, the Poles heat and light their homes with natural gas, and not with coal. Geopolitics is at play in Poland, which is determined to stop relying on Gazprom, the Russian energy company. Diversity of its energy supply and perilous relations with Russia motivated the change. Cheniere Energy, Venture Global LNG and Sempra Energy signed contracts to supply Poland with about half of its gas over decades. Poland will have reliable energy

suppliers and will sell some of the gas to other markets, while these American companies take in revenue in billions of dollars.

**ART - Warsaw,  
March 2019**

Antoine Pesne, the French-born painter of the Prussian court, painted "Girl With a Dove" in 1754. The Wielkopolskie Museum in western Poland, renamed the National Museum in Poznań, purchased it in 1931. During the Nazi occupation, someone stole it from the museum. It is one example of the 63,000 stolen art objects, which the Polish government is earnestly trying to recover.

The government believes that the painting is in the possession of Alexander Khochinsky, a New York City art dealer of Russian ancestry. Khochinsky claims some Soviets had found the painting in a house used by German soldiers and brought it back to Moscow. His father purchased it after World War II. Khochinsky exhibited "Girl With a Dove" at Bogema, his gallery in Moscow.

In 2010, he learned that the Polish government wanted his painting. Polish curator Piotr Michalowski has documented the painting as original. Khochinsky offered a trade: he will return the painting when the Polish government compensates him for the loss of family property in Przemyśl during the Nazi rule. He has sued Poland in United States Federal Court for damaging his art business. Polish authorities said his land claims lack documentation. Meanwhile, the painting is stored in Russia, and it's almost impossible to deal with the Russians.

### EDUCATION - Warsaw, April 2019

Poland's teachers went on strike in early April for more pay. Their average monthly net income is \$570 to \$1,030; they demanded a raise of \$1,000 zloty (\$260) per month. Marching in city streets, their banners proclaimed, "Let the closed schools open people's minds."

The Polish economy continues to be one of the fastest growing European economies with a GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of 5% last year, and GDP per capita of \$12,332. The GDP per capita



in the United States was \$54.225 for 2017, and its GDP grew at a rate of 3.2% in early 2019. GDP is the total value of all the goods and services produced within a country in a year.

Criticism came from Polish society and the government of the Law and Justice Party. Krzysztof Szczerski, chief of staff for President Andrzej Duda, encouraged teachers to have more children and thus receive more money. The government gives each mother 500 zloty (\$130) per month for every child after the first. Teachers were advised to be altruistic and not work for the money.

Deputy Justice Minister Patryk Jaki compared the strike tactics to those of the Nazi armed forces. When Sosnowiec teachers formed a line in the streets to prevent people from going to work, he said they "were just like the Wehrmacht. (Nazi army and navy)"

Law and Justice Party Chief Jaroslaw Kaczynski chose to ignore the teachers and emphasized the government as a defender of Christian cultural and social values. "We are dealing with a direct attack on the family and children – the sexualization of children, that entire L.G.B.T. movement, gender, (from the West)" he explained.

After three weeks, the teachers ended their strike to prepare students for university entrance exams. Slawomir Broniarz, head of the Association of Polish Teachers, declared that they were not giving up, and in September the government "must answer the needs of over half a million teachers and hundreds of thousands of parents and students."

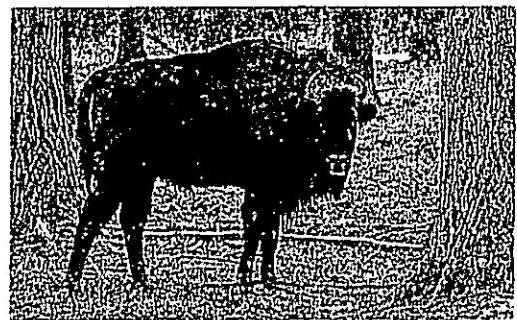
### **ECOLOGY -Bialowieża Forest, April 2019**

The Bialowieża Forest is home to thousands of species of insects, unique fungi, 200 species of birds (including rare wood-peckers and owls) and the largest herd of European bison. Located in northeastern Poland and bordering Belarus, it is one of Europe's last primeval forests and an ecosystem almost untouched since the glaciers receded 10,000 years ago. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared 550 square miles of the forest a World Heritage site.

During the last few years, many, many bark beetles have attacked spruce trees. The beetles increased in number due to warming climate, and damaged large areas of spruce trees, some of which were hundreds of years old. Environment Minister Jan Szyszko ordered a logging campaign to stop the infestation.

Many scientists preferred to leave the problem to nature, and protestors formed lines to block the machinery. The European court threatened the Polish government with fines of \$124,000 per day unless it halted the logging. The government stopped logging in the protected forest, but environmentalist fear it will log outside of the World Heritage site.

European bison



### **Additional News Items from Poland**

*By Tom Sorosiak*

1. Poles are already considering their choices for President of Poland in 2020. The two individuals getting the most attention are current President Andrzej Duda and Donald Tusk, President of the European Council.
2. A "Citizens Bill" has obtained over 100.000 signatures and is headed to the Polish Parliament, Sejm, for consideration by the legislators. The measure would make vaccinations compulsory for all children entering nursery school or pre-school. The issue is being supported by physicians from health organizations that fear an epidemic outbreak in Poland if children begin to have contact while contagious from diseases such as measles.

### **Margaret “Peggy” (Grochowski) Grant (1929-2019)**

Long-time TPA Member, Peggy Grant, passed away at Ebeid Hospice on May 13, 2019. Peggy was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland. After receiving her degree in Fine Art, she moved on to her career.

It was as a commercial designer for Palmer Paint Co. in Detroit that she met Adam Grochowski (later changed to Grant). He was a Polish refugee and Holocaust survivor. They married in 1954 and continued their careers with Craft Master in Toledo, Ohio.

Peggy, an accomplished artist in portraiture, put aside her talents to promote Adam's who was known for his figurative and circus theme works.

In addition to this passion, Peggy was totally involved in many other art venues. You would need to read the Toledo Blade's obituary of her to realize how active she was in the art world for sixty years.

Peggy was an active TPA member for years and attended our Dozynki many times and donated an Adam Grant painting to our Silent Auction.

TPA sponsored a bus trip and luncheon to the Midwest Museum of Art in Elkhart, Indiana to see an exhibit of Adam's work and with Peggy giving a lecture there too.

Peggy was honored by the Polish government with the Order of Merit for promoting Polish culture world-wide especially here in the Midwest, Saudi Arabia, and Poland.

A Memorial Mass was celebrated for Peggy at Gesu Catholic Church on March 24, 2019. She donated her body to science through The University of Toledo Medical College.

Peggy Grant will be missed but is remembered and honored by the Toledo Poznan Alliance. Sto Lat!

The family suggested memorial contributions to the Toledo Poznan Alliance, to further appreciation of Polish culture, or to the Athena Art Society, in support of their 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibit.

### **Richard James Kozbial, 1933-2019, TPA Founder**

Richard James Kozbial was born in Toledo, Ohio to Bernice Durka Kozbial and Philip Kozbial on November 11, 1933. He graduated from Libbey High School and the University of Toledo with a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in elementary education. Kozbial taught at Jones, Macomb Park in Warren, Michigan, Edgewater and McKinley Elementary Schools in Toledo. He said that teaching was a passion, not just a profession. In retirement, he was a visiting professor at UT's College of Education.

Kozbial loved music. He was a boy soprano at Trinity Episcopal Church, and sang at the Greater Toledo War Chest Rallies during World War II. Kozbial sang with the Toledo Choral Society and the Masterworks Chorale.

Kozbial was active in the Toledo's ethnic communities with Toledo Sister Cities International, Toledo-Poznan Alliance and Szeged -Toledo Friendship Association. He was an initiator of TPA before its formal organization, a gracious host at his home dinners and receptions, and a positive speaker on Polish and Polish-American culture. He was also a member of Trinity Episcopal Church, Friends of the Toledo Lucas County Library, Toledo Museum of Art, and the Toledo Symphony Orchestra.

Kozbial died on April 9, 2019 at the age of 85 in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The family will host a celebration of Richard Kozbial's life on June 29 at 2 p.m. at the Fountains at Bronson Place, 1700 Bronson Way in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Tributes are requested to a charity of the donor's choice.

3. Environmental groups throughout Europe are closing monitoring the discussion of whether to pen the Bialowieza Forest to logging operations. The forest is located along the central eastern border of Poland. This forest is known for its thousands of species of insects, over 200 species of birds and more new discoveries come with each new year. The European Union supports keeping this World Heritage site as it is.

### **Update on the PCC (Polish Cultural Center)**

The monthly meeting of the PCC was held in May. Tom Waniewski and Tom Sorosiak met with the surveyor and the architect to finalize a few items. The title for the property being processed by the title company into the name of the PCC and the preliminary setting of the location of the building on the property is being selected. The building might have a few changes to allow for all utilities. Also, some consideration will be given to the many ideas presented from the student presentations of the 125 local architectural students who competed in a competition to design the PCC building to be awarded a scholarship valued at \$50,000 and many other awards. The most important development is that a local individual is willing to donate in a matching contribution of \$50,000 to the PCC for every \$1,000 donation made by an individual to the PCC. The Advisory Board encourages Polish-Americans to reach this goal by having 50 individuals make this donation. Please consider doing this for yourself, or even your donation can be sent to the PCC, P.O. Box 291, Waterville, Ohio 43566 or contacting Tom Sorosiak, 419-832-4333.

A committee of individuals, between the ages of 25 and 50, is being formed to discuss different aspects of the PCC. memory of a family member. A way of recognizing those who make a donation is being discussed. There are 4 members to date that will meet twice during the summer at their convenience. If interested in volunteering contact Sorosiak.

### **March Annual Board Meeting**

Elections were held and the following positions remained the same: Jackie Konwinski, President, Stan Machosky, Secretary, and Tom Sorosiak, Treasurer. The Vice President position remains open. Jane Susdorf was elected to be in charge of Membership until the next annual meeting.

Because of increased printing, supplies, and mailing costs, annual dues for 2020 were changed. There will be no senior dues. Annual adult dues will be \$10 for all individual memberships. The student fee of \$5 will remain the same as well as family membership for \$15. TPA members who have paid beyond 2019 will be given credit for multiple years paid.

Beginning with the next issue of the *Alliance News*, Kathy Grabel will send the newsletter via email to all those with an email address. If you do not have an email address, or do not want to receive the newsletter via email, please contact Kathy at [bokat@buckeye-express.com](mailto:bokat@buckeye-express.com). If you prefer it to be sent by regular US postal service, no problem, just let Kathy know. 419-385-8516

### **Save the Date**

**Polish Picnic** - June 14, 15, Oak Shade Grove, Oregon, Ohio

**Dozynki 2019** – Sunday, October 13, 1:00 pm at the Franciscan Ctr.

**PCC Hall of Fame Dinner** – Saturday, Nov. 16 at Brandywine Country Club.

**Wigilia 2019** - Sunday, Dec. 15, 5:00 pm at the Olivet Lutheran Church

### **Festivals 2019**

At this year's festivals TPA members passed out information and sold placek at the Toledo Sister Cities International Festival on Sunday, April 13 at the Seagate Ctr. They were also a part of the Toledo Area Polish Festival on Sunday, May 19 at Club 16 in Holland, Ohio. Thank you to Jim Konwinski, Arnold Gates, Tom Jesionowski, Stan Machosky, Kathy Grabel and Marja Lasek Martin for volunteering your time.