



# Alliance News

Toledo-Poznań Alliance quarterly newsletter - Spring 2013

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## Lucy C. (Knapik) Szafarowicz

May 20, 1920 – February 10, 2013

The Toledo-Poznan Alliance lost one of its founding members with the passing of Lucy C. (Knapik) Szafarowicz, 92, on Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup>. Through her friendship with Richard Kozbial and Ursula Zulka-Cauffiel, she was already involved in welcoming visitors from Poznan even before there was a formal agreement between Toledo and our Polish Sister City, and Lucy and Ursula together built our membership by bringing in many of their friends and followers from the Bedford, Michigan Polish Culture Club which they had co-founded. As documented in the photograph included in the 2009 book, *Images of America: Toledo's Polonia*, by Rev. Richard Philiposki with the Toledo Polish Genealogical Society, she and her late husband Joe were among the group of original TPA trustees representing our local Polish community when Toledo's City Council resolved to adopt Poznan on February 19, 1991, as our sister city. Lucy and Joe served on the board for several years, hosting meetings in their home and continuing to attend meetings held at Lourdes College, now Lourdes University. It was Lucy who first suggested our annual Fall dinner held in the Polish season of celebration of harvest and thanksgiving known as *Dozynki*, and she inspired much of our tradition around that theme.

Her family can take great pride in her active involvement in promoting our Polish heritage so long and so faithfully, even when it was difficult for her to be with us in person. We treasure our memories of her, some of which

are thankfully preserved in the WGTE-TV program *Cornerstones: The Polish in Toledo*, or on our own archival videos recording her serenading (naturally, in Polish) the visiting docent of Poznan's Adam Mickiewicz University, Dr. Ewa (Borkowska) Bagienska in her home, or playing the role of *Babcia* (Grandma) in the re-enactment of a Polish children's story with the visiting agricultural delegation at a picnic at the home of Edward and Barbara Zoltanski. Luckily Lucy also will be featured in an interview by Bill Samiec in another forthcoming book on Toledo Polonia to be published by UT Press.

*Droga Pani Lonia, we miss you already!*

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## Welcome New Board Members:

At the annual March Membership Meeting, two new board members were added to the Board, Mr. Ed Zoltanski, a longtime member and counselor to the Toledo-Poznan Alliance. Also Mr. Walter Kosydar. Walt is a graduate of Notre Dame University, he is a member of St. Pius X parish where he serves as a lector, he is an attorney and serves as a legal advisor to the Toledo Road Runner's Club, of which he is a member and has been an active runner. He is a family man, a husband and a father. Welcome!

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## Joining Forces With Another Polish Group

We are cooperating with PACT, Polish American Community of Toledo to better serve the Polish community, and we feel the strength is in the numbers. We are very interested in co-sponsoring certain events with PACT. And we do want to encourage TPA members to get involved in PACT activities and also we encourage PACT members to attend TPA events. Last October PACT members attended our **Dozynki**, and TPA members attended **Wigilia** organized by PACT. The **Wigilia** was very well organized and well attended event, with an *opłatek*, a 10 course meatless Polish dinner, *kolędy* and lots of socializing. Great job, PACT organizers!

### List of Events Planned by PACT for 2013:

- Kielbasa Cook-Off - April 13 at Blessed Sacrament Church, a competition among local amateur kielbasa makers to determine who makes the best tasting kielbasa in Toledo.
- Polish Night at the Ball Game – May 24, a busload of Tigers fans will be taken to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Polish American Night at the ball game: Detroit Tigers vs. Minnesota Twins.
- 2013 PACT Scholarship (June), PACT to award two scholarships for High School/College students based on essays submitted about what having a Polish-American heritage means to me.
- National Polish American Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony – June; Toledo sports fans can attend the induction ceremony to honor and recognize outstanding American athletes, both amateur and professional, of Polish descent.
- PACT / Harborview Polish Wedding (TBA). A re-enactment of a traditional Polish wedding, including customs like the Money Dance, the Grand March, songs, music, food and drink.
- The Kielbasa Klassic – August 4 – annual 4-person golf scramble held at Giant Oak Golf Course in Temperance, MI. Co-sponsored with Stanley's Market.
- 2013 Dożynki Celebration – a harvest festival dinner celebration – October 27 – members to support and participate in the Toledo Poznan Alliance annual event, fund raiser for **Dom Dziecka** (Orphanage in Poznan, our sister city).
- 2013 Holiday Parade – November – create a float that recognizes the Polish American heritage and customs in Toledo, and ride in the annual Holiday Parade.
- **Wigilia** Celebration 2013 – December- Celebrate a traditional meatless meal and customs associated with the Vigil of Christmas: breaking *opłatek*, food, prayer and *kolędy*.

### Kielbasa Cook-off winners:

The winner of the Kielbasa Cook-off is Shawn Zaborski and his team Polish Village Kielbasa, they took 1<sup>st</sup> place.

2<sup>nd</sup> place winner is Domanski Klassic Kielbasa team led by Mark Domanski.

3<sup>rd</sup> place winner is Team Kazlo led by Phil Majewski. **Congratulations!**

## **From the Orphanage**

Here is an email from the director of **Dom Dziecka** in **Poznan, Poland**, thanking us for our monetary gift we sent them for Christmas. As you can see, she writes in English.

*Thank you for email from you and for Easter Wishes.*

*This email address is correct, so you can send your messages to this address.*

*We have received the donation, however it was after Christmas., but the money was intended according to intention for children. We purchased sweets and the joy of our children was great.*

*We want to ensure you, that of each month we are praying in our chapel for all our benefactors during the Holy Mass.*

*Let the Risen Lord bless you and all members of your organization in this holy time of His Resurrection.*

*With Easter greetings,*

*Sr. Dyrektor Czeslawa Morkowska*

### ***TPA Committees:***

#### ***Publication Committee – (Alliance News)***

Kathy Grabel, Editor            419 - 385-8516

David Chelminski, contributing writer  
Walter Palicki, contributing writer  
Denny Kutylowski, contributing writer  
Stan Machosky, contributing writer  
Pat Konwinski, contributing writer

#### ***Membership Committee –***

***Dozynki 2012 Committee –***  
Sr. Ann Francis, Chair

## **Toledo Poznan Alliance**

### **Annual Meeting**

**Sunday, March 17, 2013**

The Annual Meeting was held at Lourdes University in the Board Room.

The usual business was discussed, treasurer's report, and past fund raisers such as last year's Dozynki.

Sister Ann Francis asked that we take a few minutes to remember some of our past members who recently passed away, such as Lucy Szafarowicz, who was instrumental in the founding of Toledo Poznan Alliance, Irene Szydowski, membership chair for TPA, who had given years of service to our organization and Mrs. Zoltanski, wife of Edward Zoltanski, who has been an active member for many years.

Dozynki next year will be held at Lourdes University, Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. Sister has asked for anyone interested to please contact her regarding volunteering for this great yearly event.

Two of our newly elected Board Members Jackie Konwinski, President of the Toledo Polish Genealogy Society and Stan Machosky, of the Polish American Community of Toledo (PACT) gave presentations.

Jackie spoke of the new location for TPGA which has moved from St. Hedwig's to St. Michael's. The location is wonderful, much space for the committee to house all their equipment and books. There are many events planned throughout the year such as:

Annual Picnic

Christmas Party

Various trips

They are planning an Open House after the 8:45 a.m. mass at St. Michaels on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is welcome. This is not only for members, but for anyone interested in learning anything about genealogy.

Stan Machosky from PACT spoke on what PACT is all about and what they are trying to accomplish, mostly get the Polish community interested in the various Polish activities in Toledo. They are planning many events throughout the year (those are listed in a separate article in the newsletter).

Election was held for voting Board Members and the results will be announced at the next called Board Meeting.

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## **Poles Where You Least Expect Them**

by Denny Kutylowski

Polonia is the name for Poland in Latin. In modern Polish language it refers to the Polish diaspora, and to people of Polish origin who live outside Poland. You'll find local congregations of Polish people across the globe and in some Polonian locales where many folks might least expect them.

We're most familiar with American and Canadian enclaves. In both countries the population is comprised of roughly 3 percent claiming Polish ethnicity. Ten million in the States and close to a million in the Great White North. In Europe you can find significant numbers of Poles in Germany (3 million), France (1 million), United Kingdom (600,000) and another million in places formerly part of the Soviet Union.

You wouldn't necessarily think of Polonians living in Iceland, Turkey, Spain, Norway, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa or even the tiny Faroe Islands located a couple

hundred miles north of Scotland where the frigid North Atlantic meets the Norwegian Sea. But, they're there from a few hundred to several thousands.

But, the least of the least known places is in the Caribbean. Unfortunately, it's not some tropical paradise, but rather the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. Wrapping your mind around the concept of a Haitian Polonia takes a good measure of perceptual adjustment.

Every culture has a predisposed way of looking at things. In Poland there is a saying, *Każdy sądzi według siebie* - Everyone judges according to themselves, and another, *Co kraj to obyczaj* - Each country has its own tradition.

Americans and other people living on great continents view the sea as what separates hundreds of islands, but if you were actually living in the Caribbean you'd realize like the native populations do that the vast expanses of water actually connect the islands. It's their version of a super highway, but instead of cars the vehicles are ships and boats.

In the States people of mixed race are classified as black (*exempli gratia* President Obama). In the islands, particularly Spanish speaking islands, people of mixed race are often considered white depending on locale and social status. On the French-speaking islands and particularly in Haiti, a rich black is a Mulatto, and a poor Mulatto is black. So, with a slight adjustment to our frame of reference as acculturated Americans let's take a look at the Haitian version of Polonia.

During the early period of partitions when Poland was wiped off the map of the world by neighboring countries who feared the Polish Constitution of 3 Maj 1791 would inflame peasants from nearby Kingdoms to revolt for

Democracy against their despots, many Polish soldiers hooked up with Napoleon's brigades hoping the campaigns waged by the French across Europe would free Poland from occupation.

In 1804, a year after our Louisiana Purchase bolstered Napoleon's war chest; Haiti declared its independence from France. At the time it was an important colony rich with exports to both Europe and America. Not wanting to lose the resources coming from what was then known as Saint Domingue, brigades of French and Polish soldiers were sent to put an end to former slave Jean-Jacques Dessaline's revolution.

Of the 5,200 Poles deployed more than 4,000 died of yellow fever, some returned to France while others were impressed into service under the British Crown. Many of the surviving Poles with the same spirit as Generals Pułaski and Kosciuszko during their service in the American Revolution were sons of liberty and had natural sympathy for people fighting for their own independence.

So enamored by their Polish brothers-in-arms they are included in the Haitian Constitution of 1805 that stated no white man may hold land on Haiti apart from the Germans (who had a small community there) and the Polanders (Poles).

The Haitians were impressed by the Poles' great love of their *Matka Boska Częstochowska* (Our Lady of Częstochowa – the Black Madonna). Seeing how greatly the legionnaires venerated their icon, through a process of assimilation and transformation, the Polish Catholic Blessed Virgin became the Haitian Voodoo Erzulie Dantor, a warrior spirit, the protector of women and children. Erzulie Dantor like the Polish Black Madonna also has scars on the right side of her face. Legend implies she got scratched in a fight with her sister when she stole her husband

from her. A rather different persona from Matka Boska to be certain.

Poles settled in a remote mountainous village called Casales about 50 miles north of the present day capital Port-au-Prince. 200 years ago the area was heavily forested and the elevation provided a temperate climate. Similar to some African countries the countryside in most of Haiti is now deforested since charcoal is the main energy source for cooking and other things.

The route leading to Casales, which has no running water, electricity, telephone, school, motor vehicles or other modern conveniences is a dusty unimproved, rutted dirt road with streams running over it including a 30-foot wide river. Most travel is on foot or by pack animal. Straw huts with banana leaf roofs are common living accommodations. The bricks of St. Michael's church have since crumbled and a tin hut now houses the Madonna and Child.

Ties between the countries don't stop with the veneration of the Black Madonna. The community is referred to as Blanc Pologne (White Poland). For all intents and purposes the inhabitants are Haitian, but due to the fact Polish legionnaires settled there, the community has forever been referred to as Polish. If you are from Casales, you are Polish whether your eyes are blue or brown, your hair sandy colored or black, or if your skin pigment is light, medium or dark. It's as simple as that.

Genealogically, the trail from Casales is quite cold since the original soldiers left no books, memoirs, or heirlooms behind, except for a few headstones in the old cemetery with Polish inscriptions. More recent graves are mostly unmarked.

According to one source I came across:

*"In 1986, Pope John Paul II visited Haiti and the villagers of Casales thought that perhaps he*

would be their salvation. The Pope listened to their story and promised aid, but none came. Perhaps this money did not reach them because someone else received it, no one knows.

Many people wonder why European officers from a sophisticated culture had not formed a more advanced rural society. The only answer can be that they kept to themselves for fear of repercussions from the French government. However, the people of Casales still remember their "Mother Country." They feel that they have been forgotten by their people.

Today, the survivors of the old Polish Half-Brigades wonder if their blue-eyed, blond-haired, racially mixed children will ever have a good education or the conveniences that most of the world takes for granted."

I'm not so sure reports of blue eyed, blond haired children are entirely accurate. While I have seen photographs of people from Casales from different sources, out of the bunch there was only few who had pronounced European features. Another source reported the major thing they remember about the Polish culture is the Polka, which is definitely incorrect since the Polka was invented in Bohemia in 1835, years after the Haitian revolution.

Even though oral histories are not as accurate as highly documented records, if you dismiss the claims as completely false, you just might be denying a tiny little part of the magnificently rich heritage we as Poles have tenaciously clung to through the glorious triumphs and heartbreaking struggles of our ancestral past.

*Jeszcze Blanc Pologne nie zginela.\**

The Polish National Anthem written during the partitions begins, "*Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła*", meaning: Poland has not succumbed as long as her people live on.

## International Festival

The International Festival took place Saturday, April 13, on the Campus of the University of Toledo. This annual event celebrates the international diversity of the people who live in the Toledo area. It was a representation by most of the sister cities associated with Toledo. Poland was well represented having the Polish American Concert Band performing, the Echoes of Poland dance group danced the Krakowiak as well as other dances, Busia's Norozny sold all our favorite Polish food items, a table with various Polish items along with Polish books and cookbooks were for sale, and a lesson in the Polish language was taught to those who wanted to learn the Polish alphabet and a few popular phrases. Other sister cities had similar cultural activities for all to enjoy and learn.

The international foods at the festival were served by local ethnic restaurants:

Busia's Narozny – Polish cuisine

Hong Kong Buffet – Chinese food

Kotobuki – Japanese food

Phoenicia Cuisine – Greek food

Shorty's BBQ – American favorites

Star of India – Indian Cuisine

This event was attended by hundreds of people who wanted to experience the cross-cultural interaction and enrich their personal experience.