



The Forum

of the Chicago Society, Lodge 1450 PNA

Now in Our Second Century of Service

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NUMBER 3

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

General Meeting

Sawa's Old Warsaw
9200 W. Cermak Rd.
Broadview, IL

Call to Order: 7 p.m.
(Happy Hour: 6 p.m.)

(Featuring a dinner of
corned beef & cabbage!)

Reservations:

Andy Haszlakiewicz
andyh9946@gmail.com
or call (847) 341-1068

SATURDAY, MAY 2

Pre-Parade Brunch and
Polish Constitution Day
Parade

HAPPY
EASTER!

WESOLEGO
ALLELUIA!

Dear Chicago Society Members and Friends:

We are now in the middle of March—which means that the worst of the winter is now behind us (though we did get snow on Monday!), and we are all looking forward to spring.

As you know, Tuesday, March 17 is St. Patrick's Day. Yes, I know it's not a Polish holiday, but I also know that we get caught up in the festivities and celebrate it with our Irish friends. Speaking of St. Patrick's Day, I want to remind everyone that the Chicago Society PNA's general meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, March 18 at Sawa's Old Warsaw, will feature corned beef, cabbage and potatoes—please make sure to show up!

St. Joseph's Day (Dzien Swietego Jozefa) is also celebrated this week, on Thursday, March 19, and it is a significant, traditional name-day in Poland. It is often considered a "breaking" of the Lenten fast, featuring special meatless feasts, traditions and welcoming back of stories. St. Joseph is a patron saint of Poland, and the day is also popularly linked with the arrival of spring and the end of winter.

I would like to remind you that Chicago Society dues must be paid by March, and there are a number of members that have not yet paid! If you are one of them, please bring a check to the meeting.

We are currently in the process of sending out invites to our major event, the Pre-Parade Brunch, which will be held on Saturday, May 2 at the Congress Plaza Hotel. At last count, the Chicago Society has 99 members. We are hoping to swear in at least one new member within the next two meetings to get back up to 100! New applications are not coming in as I had hoped. I am asking all current members to reach out to friends, business associates and family members and encourage them to join. Please remember that we host a potential new member dinner for those who would like to find out more about our organization before signing up.

I would like to wish you and your family a heartfelt "Wesolych Swiat Wielkanocnych!" for Easter, which is on April 5th this year.

Respectfully,

Zenon Kurdziel

President,
Chicago Society PNA



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March Forum Highlights

- ◆ Frank Spula Honored as Person of the Year
- ◆ Two Queens Chosen at Local Pageants!
- ◆ Time to Apply for Kulze Scholarships
- ◆ Calendar of Events for Polish Constitution Day

Remember the Chicago Society's address:

**Chicago Society PNA, Lodge #1450
333 Busse Highway, #973
Park Ridge, IL 60068-3285**

Upcoming Events

Saturday, May 2—Our annual Pre-Parade Brunch will be held at the Congress Plaza Hotel (Gold Ballroom), 520 S. Michigan Ave. in Chicago's Loop, starting at 8 a.m., followed by the Polish Constitution Day Parade at 11:30 a.m. (See page 5 for a more complete listing of May 3rd events.)

Friday, July 31—Our annual Golf Outing will be held at The Bridges of Poplar Creek course in Hoffman Estates once again. More information on this will be available shortly!

Demolition of the White Eagle Has Begun

The White Eagle Banquet Hall and Restaurant in Niles, a centerpiece of Chicago's Polish American community for over half a century, has finally met the wrecking ball. Demolition of the White Eagle, which officially closed in December, began recently and is soon to be completed. Niles village officials approved the demolition last year; a new condominium and apartment development will soon rise there.

White Eagle, which originated in Chicago in the 1940's, moved to Niles in 1967; under the ownership of Ted Przybylo, and later his children, it became not only a popular banquet site for the entire community, but also served as a regular meeting place for many Polish American organizations, including the Chicago Society PNA. The Przybylo family sold the business in 2015 to Victoria Venues.

Frank Spula Honored As Person of the Year in Special Gathering at Polish Consulate

The Chicago Consulate of the Republic of Poland was recently the site of a well-deserved award, as Frank Spula, the president of the Polish National Alliance and also the past president of the Polish American Congress (and a Chicago Society PNA member too!), was recognized as Person of the Year by the Polish Daily News (Dziennik Zwiazkowy) at its Annual Gala. Numerous political figures and other dignitaries joined over 100 other guests at the Gala, held February 26, to honor Mr. Spula for his years of work and service as president of the PAC.

President Spula's decades of service to the Polish diaspora, his advocacy for Polish American interests and his steadfast commitment to strengthening relations between the United States and Poland made the recognition particularly meaningful. This year's Gala also carried special weight by being held at the Polish Consulate, reflecting a powerful and symbolic reminder of the enduring bond between Poland and its diaspora.

Among those attending the Gala were Illinois U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas, Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias, Illinois Comptroller Susana Mendoza, Chicago 39th Ward Alderman Samantha Nugent, former mayoral candidate Dr. Willie Wilson, representatives of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, and of course, Consul General Regina Jurkowska. Current PAC President Hubert Cioromski spoke at the event, and was joined by Treasurer Agnieszka Bastrzyk, and Vice Presidents Bozena Kaminska, Joseph Mikolaj Rej, Alicja Kuklinska and Lukasz Dudka. Several Chicago Society PNA members and members of other Polish American organizations also attended this event.

All in all, it was a remarkable evening of recognition, unity and Polish American pride. Once again, our congratulations to Frank Spula, and to the entire community, for a memorable celebration!

—*Contributing: Peter Dykas*

Local Notables Come to Pulaski Day Ceremony

The Polish Museum of America once again hosted a special ceremony in honor of Casimir Pulaski Day, which was attended by several notable political figures as well as representatives of Polish American organizations, on Monday, March 2. The day commemorates the Polish general who died in battle while serving under George Washington in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, and has been an official Illinois state holiday since the 1980s.

In attendance at the gathering were Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson, Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas, Congressman Mike Quigley (5th District), Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs, Illinois Comptroller Susana Mendoza, Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi, Appellate Court Justice Aurelia Pucinski and State Senator Robert Martwick. Treasurer Pappas also organized a special initiative, raising \$10,000 in support of the Polish Museum of America, with \$1,000 each coming from herself, Mendoza, Quigley, Frerichs, Martwick, Kaegi, Judge Diann Marsalek, Joe Holberg, Ja'Mal Green and Holly Kim.

Representatives of Polish American organizations attending included Polish American Congress President Hubert Cioromski, former PAC President Frank Spula, Treasurer Agnieszka Bastrzyk, and Vice Presidents Alicja Kuklinska and Lukasz Dudka; PMA President Richard Owsiany; and PMA Vice Chairwoman Micheline Jaminski. The Polish Consul General in Chicago, Regina Jurkowska, also attended.

Two Queens Chosen at Local Pageants!

Two young ladies from the local Polish American community became “royalty” in the past two weeks, as they were chosen as Queens of their respective courts at pageants attended by hundreds of friends and family members—including several members of the Chicago Society PNA.

On February 28, Paula Kowalczyk was chosen as Queen of the 86th annual White and Red Ball, held by the Legion of Young Polish Women at the Chicago Hilton. Emilia Wrona was chosen as the 1st runner-up, and Lea Wilhelmsen as the 2nd runner-up. Paula is a 17-year-old high honors student from New Trier High School, where she has served as president of the Polish Club for the past two years. She is also a member of the school’s varsity sailing team, and is also involved in many charitable activities, including youth ministries; as an Outreach Chairperson of the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab junior board; and an organizer of the first local Walk for Alopecia, for which she raised over \$30,000. She hopes to become a Child Life Specialist.

On March 14, Justyna Szkaradek was selected as winner of the 27th Gala of the Queen of the May 3 Parade Contest, held at Allegra Banquets in Schiller Park. She was also chosen as Miss Talent in the contest. Amelia Wiski was 1st runner-up, and Izabela Kardasz was 2nd runner-up; Kaia Karkut was chosen as Miss Audience and Miss Photo. The three titleholders will complete year-long internships with the Alliance of Polish Clubs in the USA, and the May 3 Parade Committee. This year’s total awards surpassed \$20,000, which includes scholarships for higher education, and various gifts.

Finally, both Queens and their courts will appear on floats in the Polish Constitution Day Parade on May 2. Congratulations to the winners, and to all the contestants!

Deadline to Apply for Kulze Scholarships is May 8

It’s time once again for interested college students and their families to apply for the Kulze Scholarships provided through the Chicago Society Foundation. This year, the Foundation plans to fund up to six scholarships—one for \$10,000, and five others of \$5,000 each. An additional scholarship for law school students, funded by Chartwell Law, may also be available to students who do not receive Kulze Scholarships.

The deadline for applications and supporting materials is May 8—except for spring semester 2026 official transcripts, which must be promptly submitted when they become available. Notifications will go out in writing by mid-July, and the scholarships will be awarded at a special ceremony in early August, for the academic year of September 2026—May 2027. All those applying for Kulze Scholarships must be undergraduate or graduate school students at an accredited college or university in the United States; high school students are not eligible. The selection of Kulze Scholarship winners will be made on a competitive basis by the Foundation. More information is available at the website: www.chicagosocietyfoundation.org.

Lira Ensemble to Appear at Polish Consulate on March 26

The Lira Ensemble will hold a performance, “An Evening with Lira,” at the Polish Consulate in Chicago on Thursday, March 26. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with the concert at 6:30 p.m. and a Polish buffet supper at 7:15 p.m. On the

schedule are cellist Patrycja Likos-Nadybal and pianist Daniel Szefer of the Lira Chamber Players, and resident conductor Mina Zikri. Tickets are \$165 and must be reserved in advance by calling (773) 505-8731.

Here's a Schedule of Upcoming Events Connected to Polish Constitution Day

The 135th Polish Constitution Day Parade in Chicago will be held on Saturday, May 2, with the parade kickoff planned for 11:30 a.m. on Columbus Drive (at the corner of Balbo) in downtown Chicago. All Polish and Polish American organizations, clubs, businesses, media and other individuals are invited to participate. Following is a schedule of upcoming events and other information connected to the Polish Constitution Day celebration:

GRAND MARSHAL—Krzysztof Matyszczyk, Chairman of the Board, Polish and Slavic Federal Credit Union.

HONORARY MARSHAL—Wladyslaw Ortyl, Marshal of the Podkarpacie Voivodeship

FRIEND OF POLONIA—Arlene Jezierny, Mayor, Harwood Heights, IL

PARADE THEME—Happy Birthday USA! One Spirit, Two Nations (marking the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Declaration of Independence).

Make any submissions to the Parade Committee by April 1; contact Iwona Wolska, (773) 992-0857.

Friday, May 1—Wreath-Laying Ceremony at the Tadeusz Kosciuszko monument, on Solidarity Drive in Chicago, at 9:30 a.m., organized by the Polish National Alliance; and the Polish Flag-Raising Ceremony, in Daley Plaza, Chicago, at 12 noon. Contact Iwona Wolska at (773) 992-0857, or: info@polishparade.org

Friday, May 1—Pre-Parade Awards Banquet, 6:30 p.m., Allegra Banquets, 5035 N. River Rd., Schiller Park, hosted by Polish American Police Association. Contact Mark Pawelic at: mark.pawelic@polampolice.org (details to come).

Saturday, May 2—Pre-Parade Brunch starts at 8 a.m, Congress Plaza Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave., downtown Chicago, sponsored by Chicago Society PNA. Polish Constitution Day Parade starts at 11:30 a.m., intersection of Columbus and Balbo Drives.

Saturday, May 2—Constitutional Concert at Chopin Garden, Grant Park, 2 p.m. Polish American Chambers of Commerce Party, Millennium Hall Restaurant, 11 N. Michigan Avenue, 2 p.m.

Saturday, May 2—Constitutional Banquet, 6:30 p.m., Jolly Inn, 6501 W. Irving Park Rd., Chicago, hosted by May 3rd Parade Committee. Parade prize winners to be awarded during banquet. For more information, contact Eva Ruminski, (773) 742-1477, or: 3maj@usa.com.

Sunday, May 3—Special Masses for Poland: 9 a.m. at Divine Mercy Parish, 21W411 Sunset Ave., Lombard; and 11 a.m. at Holy Trinity Polish Mission, 1118 N. Noble St., Chicago (near Division Street and the Kennedy Expressway).

Parade applications are available at the website: www.polishparade.org; or the Alliance of Polish Clubs, 5835 W. Diversey Ave., Chicago, IL 60639; telephone 773-992-0857; or fax 773-745-7278; or email: info@polishparade.org. Or contact Dr. Lucja Mirowska-Kopec, president of the Alliance of Polish Clubs, at 773-396-9242; or email: zkppresident@gmail.com.



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