

POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

MICHIGAN DIVISION

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FALL NEWSLETTER

**Polish American Congress Michigan Division Quarterly General Meeting
Monday, September 18, 2023 at 7:00 pm**



October Polish American Heritage Month



Dedication of gravestones for Polish soldiers buried at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

On June 17, 2023, we were honored to witness the formal dedication of a monument and gravestones of WW I volunteer soldiers of General Haller's Blue Army, funded by the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), creating a permanent element at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Southfield, MI.

It was an unprecedented event for Polonia in Michigan, as worthy representation of dignitaries, the army, scouts, and other Polish organizations, veteran groups local and from around the country, as well as the entire Polish community served as testimony to this unique and patriotic event.

We were honored by special guests Archbishop Vigneron, Bishop R. Fisher, Consul General of Poland Dr. Pawel Zyzak, Dr. Adam Siwek, IPN Director and this project manager and the Polish Military Attaché among others.



Col. Chester Szczotka (pictured) delivered a memorable speech recalling the sacrifice and the victory of these men whose ultimate objective was the liberation and defense of a reborn, independent Poland. During the ceremony there were 2 flyovers in honor of these veterans, US Coast Guard and the Macomb Sheriff's helicopters. In addition, a 21 Gun Salute by US Veterans, and the National Anthems of USA, Poland, Canada, and France presented by the 126 Army Band of the Michigan Army National Guard made this event noteworthy.

We congratulate our National Director from Michigan, Mrs. Henrietta Nowakowski, the main and most persistent champion of this event, because she was so rightly recognized by the Polish government, the Institute of National Remembrance with the medal of merit, the Reipublicae Memoriae Meritum. This medal honors those who work for the permanent commemoration of events and figures from the history of the Polish Nation in the years 1917–1990. It was presented to her during the dedication by Dr. Adam Siwek. Also, we express our warm congratulations to the Institute of National Remembrance, the Institute for Polish Culture and Research at Orchard Lake, and all our Polish compatriots who worked so diligently to organize and support this historic event.

PAC MI President's Memo

Dear PAC-MI Members and Friends!

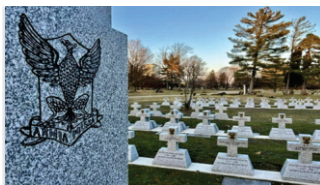
Since our last newsletter, once again in May, we helped to host the annual Polish Constitution Day Observances at Orchard Lake, held a Spring-Fling social event for members and Polonia at the Queen of Apostles Hall in Hamtramck, with tasty food prepared by Polish Village, good music for our enjoyment by the "Na Zdrowie" group, fun raffles, and games to win prizes, and a happy, congenial atmosphere while celebrating Mikołaj Kopernik's 550th Anniversary of his birth. Following the spring membership meeting we got to work to prepare upcoming events.



The summer months continued to be busy for PAC-MI. June was highlighted by the grave monument dedication and blessing of forgotten Blue Army Veterans buried at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Southfield. It was a whirlwind weekend for receiving dignitaries from Poland and Polonian representatives from

across the US and Canada, focusing on General Haller's Army history, and these veteran heroes, who, over 100 years ago, volunteered to leave their homes in America to go fight for Poland's independence. Members of our PAC-MI Division played an important role in preparations to realize this unique event.

We congratulate our member and Division National Director, Henrietta Nowakowski, on her many years effort in accomplishing this grave marker project and we are so proud of the special recognitions it earned her by the Polish government and the Polish American Veterans Association.



Although our office was closed for services during July, once again we helped to organize and participate in the St. Anne Slavic/Polish Novena mass, with Polonia participation in this annual event. Then, at the end of the month, many of our members took part in the 75th anniversary convention of the American Council for Polish Culture held this summer in Michigan, where this national organization was born in 1948.

Sadly, toward the end of July we lost a very dedicated long time PAC-MI member, officer, and very active and well-known member of Michigan Polonia, Ms. Mary Ellen Tyszka. We will not only remember her as a good friend and fellow member, but will cherish her devoted commitment to so many Polonia organizations and causes. We extend deepest condolences to the Tyszka family. Many of our members attended the funeral services for Mary Ellen at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, during which Fr. Walter Ptak gave a beautiful homily and words of farewell.



In August, the Division once again joined the Polish veterans and Polish Institute to host a mass and patriotic

program honoring Polish Armed Forces Day at Orchard Lake. Our organizational members along with the Filarets Choir, the Polish veterans and Polish Scouts, enhanced the beautiful liturgy celebrated by Rev. Bernard Witek.

Following that event, on August 16, PAC-MI held the annual Scholarship Awards Dinner, this time at PAC-MI headquarters.

We were thankful that the building's a/c was repaired in time to host it. We thank our Vice President Barbara Lemecha for preparing the tasty dinner and all the members who helped. We thank Wally and Joann Ozog for their many years of service to the PAC-MI Scholarship Committee, its fundraising, and the awards presentation. As in years past, the Ozog family pitched in to make it a successful event. It was a full house in attendance.

Every year, for over 50 years, PAC-MI has given out scholarships to worthy Polonian students to help them attain their educational goals. This year four students received \$1500 each to cover college tuition expenses. Congratulations to them and a big thank you to all who support our Scholarship Fund. (Please read more about our student winners)



Months before the summer, the PAC-MI Polish Day Parade Committee, comprised by several PAC-MI members and others, and headed by its long-time chairman, Hon. John Chmura, has been working hard to prepare this year's Polish Day Parade, which took place again in Warren, MI on August 26.

It was a much more successful event this year, with a new parade route, more spectators cheering us on, and it featured an original, brand-new float honoring our Polish heritage created by The Parade Company. Many sponsors were recruited to cover the cost of the float, which we hope will serve our parade for years to come.

Earlier in June, the annual Parade Roast fund-raiser was successfully held, honoring this year's Parade Grand Marshal, Vinnie Dombroski, who heads up the popular rock band Sponge, and who is proud of his Polish roots. The Parade Committee is already looking to prepare next year's event. Anyone interested in joining this many-year tradition is welcome to attend Parade meetings and take part in its preparations.

Even though the PAC-MI sponsored Polish Day Parade has now moved to Warren, some of our members took part in Hamtramck's Labor Day Parade representing PAC-MI, to call attention to the fact that our headquarters still operate out of Hamtramck, and that Polonia and Polonian organizations still have a presence there.

The colors of white and red were noticeably featured throughout this parade on Labor Day.

Please note that the Division's September general membership meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 18, at PAC-MI headquarters, at 7:00 pm. Parking is free after 6:00 pm. All members, delegates, chairpersons, and directors are asked to come, to report, and to participate. Such meetings not only inform as to what the



Division is doing but allow for discussion and decision making which help to shape the Division's plans and ventures.

We also invite PAC-MI members, along with all officers, to attend a "brainstorming" meeting at the PAC-MI offices on Monday October 16 at 6:30

pm. The purpose of this get together is for our membership to share and discuss ideas and practical endeavors to consider for our division going forward.

Currently we have 55 paid up 2023 individual members and 18 organizational members with delegates. We gently remind anyone who has not yet paid dues this year, to please do so, allowing you to attend and vote at meetings. Anyone interested in joining PAC-MI is

always warmly encouraged. Individual membership is still only \$55 a year. Opportunities to make a difference in Polonia are priceless!

We are always looking for "a few good men or women" to offer their talents and time, be it in the office, in planning events, or working on projects. We are all dedicated volunteers who believe that Polonia and our Polish heritage are worth promoting, strengthening, and fostering. It should be our mutual mission.

Our PAC radio broadcasts are featured every Saturday morning (usually around 9:30) on Polish Varieties Radio Program, so be sure to listen on WNZK 690 AM.

Looking forward to a busy fall and anticipate seeing you at our meetings and Polonia events!

Sincerely,
Ann Bankowski, President



2023 PAC-Michigan Division Scholarship Dinner



The 51st annual fundraiser of PAC of Michigan Scholarship Fund, Inc. took place on Wednesday, August 16 at the PAC-MI headquarters in Hamtramck. Considering the number of guests attending was limited because of space, it was very successful.

A delicious meal was prepared by Barbara Lemecha and crew. Guests had the opportunity to win various prizes. Mark Ozog, emcee, did a fabulous job running a smooth program. Our Division Chaplain, Rev. Bogdan Milosz, Pastor of St. Faustina Parish in Warren, Michigan, gave the Invocation in Polish and Alec Westphal, Scholarship Recipient, gave it in English. John Swidwinski, President of Polish American Federal Credit Union presented a check for \$500.00. This year Our "Invest in the Future" appeal hit an all-time high since its inception.

Thank you's are extended to all who attended the dinner, who donated their time in various capacities and who supported the "Invest in the Future" appeal. Working together has made a difference for our scholarship recipients. **Introducing our 2023 PAC of Michigan scholarship recipients**



Gabriela Andrzejewska, whose brother accepted the award on her behalf, is in her first year at Central Michigan College of Medicine. Gabriela is determined on receiving her Dr. of Medicine (M.D.), while having a GPA of 3.85. During her undergraduate studies, she was in Honors College where she received a Bachelor of Science Degree and a Bachelor of Arts Degree. Gabriela can integrate her exceptional knowledge and skills with her medical training and interests. Gabriela has received **the Dr. Stanley A. Ozog Grant**.

Alec Westphal is in his last semester at Oakland University and is majoring in Elementary Education with a Minor in Social Studies. His grade point average is 3.56. He tries to help wherever he can and as much as he can because he knows what comes around, goes around and he has been fortunate to receive so much from others. Alec has received the **Dana Witkowski Grant**.

Olivia Westphal is in her third year of college at the University of Detroit Mercy. Her major is nursing, and her GPA is 3.89. Olivia is a former member of PRCUA Zajączek Dance Ensemble and presently, a member of the PRCUA Zakopane Dance Ensemble. During her dancing years, she has proudly shown her Polish heritage through her many performances at various events in Polonia. Olivia has received the **John and Victoria Kushel Grant**.

Abigail Wrzesinski is attending Oakland University. Her major is Sociology, and she has intentions of attending Law School. Abigail is a member of PRCUA and PNA. In her younger years, she became a member of PRCUA Opole Dancers which gave her the opportunity to experience many beautiful Polish customs. She appreciates her Polish heritage and enjoys sharing it with others. She believes that many her age don't know what their heritage is, let alone, even care to celebrate it and be proud of it. Abigail has received the **Frank and Sophia Filipek Grant**.

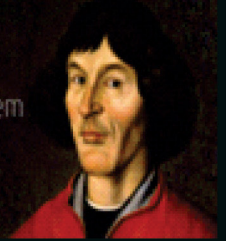
Congratulations and best of luck to our 2023 scholarship recipients.

Joann S. Ozog, Chairman

W sobotę 7 października o 3:00 pp. serdecznie zapraszamy członków, znajomych, przyjaciół oraz polonijne organizacje, do spotkania przed pomnikiem Mikołaja Kopernika przy Detroit Main Library, 5201 Woodward Ave, aby upamiętnić 550-tą rocznicę urodzin naszego wielkiego astronoma, gdzie złożymy wieniec kwiatów. O szczegóły prosimy dzwonić do biura 313-365-9400



Senat ustanowił 2023 Rokiem
Mikołaja Kopernika



In Memoriam...

Polish American Congress of Michigan express sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mary Ellen Tyszka. We will truly miss our friend, a treasured daughter of Polonia.

May She Rest in Peace!



On September 12, 2023, we commemorate the 340th anniversary of the Battle of Vienna, a pivotal moment when the combined forces of the Holy Roman Empire, Poland, and Germany, led by King Jan III Sobieski, defeated the Ottoman Empire. King Sobieski declared, "God Almighty has blessed our nation with victory and glory like no other in history."

12 IX po wygranej bitwie pod Wiedniem Jan III Sobieski napisał listy do papieża Innocentego XI „Przybyliśmy, zobaczyliśmy i Bóg zwyciężył”, i list do żony „Bóg i Pan

nasz na wieki błogostawiony dał zwycięstwo i sławę narodowi naszemu, o jakiej wieki przeszłe nigdy nie słyszały” (copied from Poland daily, R. Bąkiewicz)

Mark Your Calendar...

October 7, 2023, at 3:00 pm, ceremonial wreath laying to commemorate the 550th anniversary of the birth of Mikołaj Kopernik, at the Detroit Main Library, 5201 Woodward Ave, Detroit.

Sunday, September 24, 2023, Dożynki, Polish Dinner, PNA. For inf. call Basia Gronet 313-737-6593

Saturday, October 14, 2023, Memorial Mass for Rik Lapham at 11:00 am at Queen of Apostles Church in Hamtramck.

Sunday, October 15, 2023, at 3:00 pm Chopiniana, an annual musical Tribute to Frederic Chopin, at the

American Polish Cultural Center in Troy. For inf. Call 248-689-3636

Sunday, October 22, 2023, Central Citizens Annual Awards Banquet at the Barrister Gardens, 24225 Harper Ave in St. Clair Shores. For inf. Call Stella Szczesny 313-680-4548

PAC-MI annual radiothon coming up on Polish Varieties Radio (WNZK 690AM) from 8:30-11:00 am on November 11, 2023.