



TRUMPETER

VOLUME 30 - NUMBER 3

POLISH HERITAGE ASSOCIATION OF MARYLAND

SUMMER 2005

THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS PROGRAM



photo by Ewa Krasel

left to right: Ashley Symenski, Erin Hagner, Filip Osowski, Lauren Boston, and Michal Krasel

On May 15, 2005 the recipients of the Thirty-first Annual Scholarship Awards were presented to the members of the Polish Heritage Association. This years scholarship winners are - Ashley Symenski who received the Robert P. Pula Memorial Scholarship; Erin Hagner who received the Polish Heritage Scholarship; Filip Osowski who again received the Dr. Kenneth & Nancy Williams Scholarship; Lauren Boston who received the Dr. Josephine Wtulich Memorial Scholarship; and Michal Krasel who received the Mary Nowak Pokrywka Memorial Scholarship.

Ashley Symenski graduated this year from Fallston High School and will be attending Lebanon Valley College majoring in pre-med and music. She was ranked 12th in a class of 400 and had a combined SAT score of 1300. She is a member of the National Honor Society, German National Honor Society, and Future Business Leaders of America. Ashley has received three letters in Chorus and studied one year at Peabody Conservatory of Music.

Erin Hagner graduated from Patapsco High School where she ranked 12 out of 350 students. She has a 4.0 GPA and scored 1240 on her SAT exam. Erin will be attending Loyola College of Maryland and major in Biology. She hopes to become a biological researcher after pursuing both Masters and Doctoral degrees.

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THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS
(continued)

Filip Osowski, the recipient of the Dr. Kenneth & Nancy Williams Scholarship is in his freshman year at Essex Community College. He is studying computer science and hopes to become a computer programmer. Filip was the recipient of this award last year. He is very proud of his Polish Heritage and is an active member of the Polish Heritage Association of Maryland along with his mother Krystyna and sister Angelika.

Lauren Boston was a semi-finalist last year and attends Mary Washington College where she is majoring in Journalism. She credits her Polish Heritage with instilling in her the core values of family, spirituality and a strong work ethic. Lauren is a 2004 graduate of Bel Air High School and due to her advance placement credits she was able to enter her freshman year with fifteen credits. During the first semester she made the Dean's List with a 3.6 GPA. She writes a weekly sports article in addition to working part-time in the school library and was recently named Assistant Sports Editor.

Michal Krasel was the recipient of the special PHA 30th Anniversary Scholarship last year. He is a freshman at the University of Maryland, College Park majoring in Aerospace Engineering and plans to become an Aircraft designer. Michal is an active member of the Polish Heritage Association Youth Group and wrote an article for the *Trumpeter* on his summer in Poland. He has spent every other summer in the rural Polish village where his mother grew up.

The five recipients were selected from ten semi-finalists by the Scholarship Committee. Once again the Association chose to give the semi-finalists who did not receive a scholarship a membership in the PHA. Those receiving this special membership are: Lindsay Denmark, Michelle Kulbicki, Patrick Tacka, and Brendan Wilk.

The presentation began with the signing of the Polish and American national anthems sung by Pat Bruchalski, and then President Leshinskie gave a welcome followed by the Invocation by Father Okroy. The scholars were presented with a certificate by Victoria T. Leshinskie and Tom Hollowak. Following the presentation of the scholarship awards the students, their families, and members were treated to a lavish buffet provided by the Hospitality Committee.

This year's Scholarship Committee were - Stacia Solinsky, Bozena Rylka, John Mealey, Gordon Creamer, Tom Hollowak, Chair and Victoria Leshinskie, *ex officio*. Gordon and Tom are both past recipients of PHA Scholarships. Among those in attendance were two former Scholarship Committee Chairs - Ben Pokrywka, who honored his late wife with a memorial scholarship and Paul Plevyak.

Scholarship Fund

Beginning Balance	\$35, 585.00
Less Scholarships for 2005	\$ 7, 000.00
Ending Balance	\$28, 585.00

Breakdown of Special Funds:

Dr. Josephine Wtulich Fund	\$10, 106.00
Polish Heritage Association Fund	\$18, 209.00
Laura Goralski Fund	\$ 270.00

These figures are for the period ending July 31, 2005

TOOTING OUR HORN!



Cecylia Barczyk, her husband Karol Borowsky and their children - Elizabeth, Emmanuel, and Frances Grace participated in the "Music for Peace: A concert of Instrumental Music" on July 19, 2005, at Saint Dominic Church.

Lucy Carey has spent the summer teaching Polish I at Catonsville

Community College. This is the first time it has been offered and has been very successful with eighteen students registered for the course. One of the student's lives in Prince George's County and works in Montgomery County and he has not missed a single

class. There is also a couple who live in Howard County attending the classes. Polish I and II will be offered in the Fall and Lucy will also continue with Intermediate Polish.



Theresa Violanti, State President District XII, Treasurer Group 658, Council 34, Maryland and Washington, D.C. - Polish Women's Alliance of America won sixth place in the May Queen contest for

introducing ten new members. Sixty-four family members belong to the PWA.

Henry and Mary Jane Wentz are seen here enjoying Baltimore's Annual Flower Mart that takes place every year in May around the Washington Monument in Mount Vernon Place. Generous contributors to the Baltimore Opera Company, they also help staff the BOC's booth at the Flower Mart.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, September 18 - Piano Concert - Chopin/Mozart
John Gardecki

Washington International Piano Arts Council
Co-Founder, Fairfax, VA

Sunday, October 16 - Polish Heritage Month
Men & Women of Polish Heritage
Presented by the Youth Group

Sunday, November 20 - Baltimore's Polonia:
An Illustrated History
Thomas L. Hollowak

Sunday, December 11- Polish Christmas Celebration
(please note this is the 2nd sunday of the month)

All Events are Free and begin at 4:00 p.m.
(following the Business Meeting)

Holy Rosary Church
(undercroft)
408 S. Chester Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Elizabeth Borowsky graduated *Summa Cum Laude* from Towson University with a Bachelor's degree in Music (piano performance). She will be attending Indiana University in the fall to begin work on her Masters Degree. Elizabeth will also be competing in the International Federic Chopin Competition which takes place every five years in Warsaw, Poland. Prior to her departure she will be giving a series of concerts in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The two Maryland concerts are September 4, 2005 at Central Presbyterian Church in Towson at 4:00 p.m. and September 11, 2005 at *An Die Musik*, 409 North Charles Street at 3:00 p.m. The concerts are free and open to the public; donations will be accepted to help defray her expenses for the Chopin Competition.

John Paul Gustin, who received a special four-year scholarship from PHA, is currently a Ph. D. candidate in Johns Hopkins University's chemical and bimolecular engineering program. Having completed his first year and passing his oral exams he will focus on breast cancer research in the Park Lab at Hopkins Hospital. His goal is to obtain a doctoral degree then conduct biochemical and engineering research related to pharmaceuticals to benefit society.

POLISH-AMERICAN TEENAGER

by

Halszka Graczyk

I always find myself in an interesting and contemplative state of mind when someone asks me about my nationality. “Why, I’m both,” I say, “American and Polish.” But they insist, “Well how do you really feel, like an American or a Pole?”

This question never intrigued me until I became a teenager and truly understood the true notion and logic behind the situation. Who was I really?

I understood that I was born in Warsaw, spoke Polish with my parents, celebrated Wigilia, and ate golambki. I loved my Babcia and Dziadek and the sound of pure Polish being spoken around me.

But on the other hand, I understood that I lived in Baltimore, that I spoke English in school, played with American friends, and celebrated Thanksgiving.

The question echoed in my brain and only escalated as I faced the struggles of maturity; suddenly everything I did, how I acted, and who I was became socially challenged and questioned.

At first I became threatened by my dual nationality- I was, in essence, different from all of my friends. I have different traditions, different customs, and spoke an entirely different language at home.

A trip to Europe at the prime age of 14 altered my perspective and shifted my point of view. Walking down the streets of Warsaw, speaking my native tongue, and spending time with Polish teenagers and family awakened my deep love and a true sense of belonging.

Upon my return to Baltimore, I experienced a new feeling; I was homesick for Poland. Homesick, for what I realized, was my real home. Though I loved living in America and was grateful for my wonderful lifestyle, I felt a new connection with Poland, a connection I knew would not fade away.

My growing understanding and appreciation of a global community made me realize the growing ignorance of others my own age. I felt lucky to have a connection in Europe; to be conscious of another culture and appreciate the need for worldly awareness. Many teenagers my age do not even realize a world outside of America exists, they have no desire to learn about the history, people, and culture of another nation.

Many times I find myself sad and dreaming of my friends and family in Poland, but I have come to understand the incredible advantage I hold over others my age. In joining the Polish youth group at Holy Rosary, I have found other teenagers who share my love of Poland while enjoying life in the U.S. My parents also support my desire, and together we attend the Polish Church, celebrate holidays just like in Poland, and take numerous trips back to Europe. I further am excited to become a part of The Polish Heritage Association of Maryland youth group where I have a guarantee of meeting teenagers with the same view points and ideals as myself.

It hurts me to imagine the young people who fear admittance of their true cultural heritage for fear of ridicule or desire to be purely “American”. America was created as a melting pot; the beauty of our nation lies in the conglomeration of culture and traditions from all over the world. I have, in my youthful age, already come to the conclusion: A person can only truly be happy with themselves when they accept who they really are.

ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

On July 16, 2005 Krystyna Osowska, Mary Ann Chorabik, Angela Szybor, Martha Szyjka, and Vickie Leshinskie attended the ordination to the priesthood of Andrew J. Stahmer at the Cathedral of St. Patrick in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. PHA Chaplin, Fr. Franciszek Okroy participated as one of the vesting priests and Radomira Sawaryn was one of the readers.

Father Stahmer, who is a former member of PHA, heard God's call to the priesthood after teaching twenty years in the Baltimore City Public Schools. In 1991 he was accepted by the Archdiocese of Baltimore to attend Blessed John XXIII National Seminary. Sadly his mother developed Alzheimer's and he decided not to enter the seminary so that he along with his sisters could take care of their mother.

After his mother's death in 2000 he reapplied to the Baltimore Archdiocese, but was not accepted due to his age. However, the Archdiocese of Harrisburg did not see his age as an impediment and accepted him as a candidate for the priesthood.

On Sunday, July 17, 2005 the newly ordained Rev. Andrew John Stahmer celebrated his first Mass at Holy Rosary Church.

Father Stahmer the members of PHA share in the joy of your answering God's Call and wish you *Sto Lat!*



photo by Martha Szyjka

left to right: Krystyna Osowska, Mary Ann Chorabik, Father Andrew Stahmer, and Vickie Leshinskie

WALTER KIJOWSKI CELEBRATION

Our former President, Walter Kijowski, turned 90 in June.



To celebrate the occasion Walter was treated to a cake and the signing of *Sto Lat* by those present at the May 15th meeting.

On June 26, 2005 his wife Marie and children gave him a surprise party.

Polish Heritage was

well represented with Victoria Leshinskie, Father Okroy, Stella Spies, Krystyna Osowska, Stacia and Ed Solinsky, Catherine Benicewicz, Lillian Rogowski, Mr. & Mrs. Ray Dombrowski, Anna and John Flatley, Jean Pula, and Carolyn Krysiak attending. Representative Krysiak also presented Walter with a proclamation.

AN EVENING AT THE EMBASSY

On June 22, 2005 author Francis C. Kajencki was honored at the Polish Embassy in Washington, D.C. Among those invited were several members of PHA: Richard Poremski, Ed and Stacia Solinsky, Edward Rowny, Dr. Robin Majeski, and Vickie Leshinskie.

Mr. Kajencki entertained the audience with a recounting of his six publications. He has written about Casimir Pulaski, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, Poles in the 19th Century and discrimination by American Historians. Following his talk everyone enjoyed a sumptuous reception.

left to right: Stacia and Ed Solinsky, Edward Rowny, and Vickie Leshinskie



photo by Richard Poremski

SCHOLARSHIP FUND CONTRIBUTORS

In Honor of Walter Kijowski's 90th Birthday

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Victoria T. Leshinskie
Mr. & Mrs. Edmund Solinsky

In Memory of Laura Goralski

Catherine Benicewicz
Thomas L. Hollowak
Victoria T. Leshinskie
Mr. & Mrs. Edmund Solinsky

In Memory of Josephine Puppa

Catherine Benicewicz
Victoria T. Leshinskie
Mrs. & Mrs. Edmund Solinsky

In Memory of Mrs. Frank (Helen) Wesolowski

Catherine Benicewicz
Victoria T. Leshinskie
Mrs. & Mrs. Edmund Solinsky
Thomas L. Hollowak

Dziękuję Bardzo!

NEW MEMBERS - WITAMY!

John Paul Gustin
Andrea Hagner
Stella Hazard
Ewa Krasel
Krzystof J. Krasel
Anthony Monczewski

IN MEMORIUM

Josephine Majka Puppa

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The *Trumpeter* is published quarterly. News and articles are welcomed and should be submitted to the editor - 7 Dendron Court, Baltimore, MD 21234 or by email - historyk@comcast.net. Deadlines are January 15, April 15, August 15, and November 15.