

Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota **NEWSLETTER**

VOLUME 23

WINTER 2015

No. 4

PGS-MN cordially invites you to the

Annual Members & Election Meeting

**Saturday, January 16, 2016
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

Gasthof Zur Gemutlichkeit
2300 University Ave NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

**\$25.00 Payable at the door -
Cash or check only!**

Please RSVP by January 10 to

Rick Theisen at 651-739-1490 or
rftheisen@comcast.net

Nominations for office:

President: Peggy Larson? (Jay Biedny resigning mid-term, Peggy will complete the term, 1 yr)
Vice President: Open (Dan Schyma resigning mid-term, need someone to complete the ballot and the term, 1 yr)
Treasurer: Michael Eckman (incumbent)
Secretary: Vicki Myslajek?
Director II: Dori Marszalek (incumbent)
Director IV: Marie Przynski (incumbent)

Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting, Saturday, January 16. Please consider serving to complete the term for the vice president position.

No formal business other than elections and outstanding achievement award announcements will be conducted at this meeting. There will be a lot of time for socializing and eating and drinking. Also, Marie Przynski will have on display many items from her outstanding Polish memorabilia collection.

More info on page 3

***Your
input is
important
and
appreciated!***

Please join us!

Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

A Branch of the Minnesota Genealogical Society

1185 No. Concord St., Suite 218

So. St. Paul, MN 55075-1150

www.pgsmn.org

Officers/Board of Directors:

President..... Jerome Biedny (952-944-5905)
 jaybiedny@juno.com
 Vice President Dan Schyma (612-819-3479)
 danschyma@msn.com
 Secretary..... Jason Waldowski (763-323-0639)
 waldo20@aol.com
 Treasurer Michael Eckman (952-944-4008)
 mceckman@q.com
 Past President Terry Kita (612-927-0719)
 terrykita@earthlink.net
 Director I..... Mary Johnson (763-323-4655)
 kmmmkjohnson@msn.com
 Director II..... Dori Marszalek (763-535-2296)
 doripgs@comcast.net
 Director III..... Richard Theissen (651-739-1490)
 rftheissen@comcast.net
 Director IV Marie Przyski (612-501-2799)
 przyski@comcast.net

Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs

Library..... Bob Kraska
 Membership..... Dori Marszalek, Mary Johnson
 Newsletter Peggy Larson
 Program/Publicity..... Dan Schyma
 Research Greg Kishel, John Rys
 Website..... Marie Przyski

Polish Genealogical Society of MN Newsletter

Editorial Contact..... editorPGSMN@gmail.com
 Associate Editor Greg Kishel
 Mailing Labels Dori Marszalek

The *Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Newsletter* is published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. *Newsletter* subscription is included with membership.

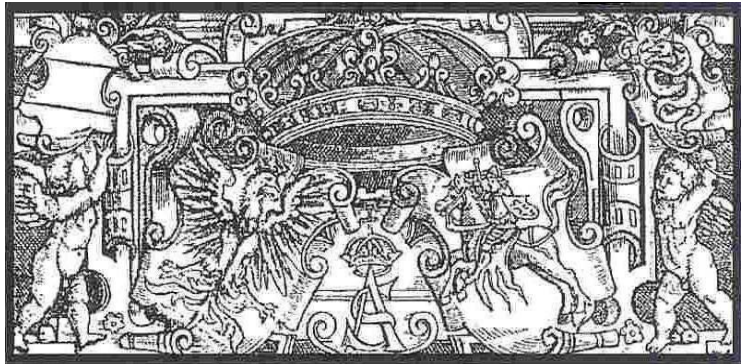
Submitting items for publication is welcome and highly encouraged. We require feature-length articles to be submitted exclusively to PGS-MN. Mail articles, letters, book reviews, news items, queries, etc. to: Peggy Larson, Editor *PGS-MN Newsletter*, 557 98th Lane NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55433 or e-mail to: editorpgsmn@gmail.com.

To apply for membership
Please use application form on insert page
 Dues are \$20 annually

Address/e-mail changes or membership questions?

Contact: Dori Marszalek, Membership Chair
 3901 - 61st Ave. N., Brooklyn Center MN 55429-2403
 or e-mail: doripgs@comcast.net

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President's Letter

The New Year is a good time to look back and take stock. This is my last letter to you members as I leave office in 2016. As I go, I thank all those that I've had the pleasure to work with on Society matters over the years.

I realize this is an all volunteer organization and yet, there always seemed to be an energetic and effective person stepping up to accomplish tasks great and small. The current and past members of the Board of Directors certainly have their specific parts to play: keeping track of members & money, executing meetings & events, editing & distributing the newsletters, running the web site, and planning for the future. But there are others not specifically on the Board that staff the library, help with research, and man the tables at the Polish Festival. Whether you spend a few hours at one event, or a score of hours throughout the year, let me assure you that your contribution is greatly appreciated and has made my work as president easier.

Truly I have had fun for years working with all of you to deliver to our members the very best benefits we could afford.

I would also like to thank you readers that are members- so many of you for decades. In a time when the Internet seems to be taking over the hobby, it is nice to know that hundreds of you still find value in a regional, ethnic genealogical society. Think of asking one person to join with you when you send your dues in 2016 or, act yourself by giving a gift membership. It is for you, our members, that all of us work. As I make room for someone else to lead this Society, I'm confident that the goals of the members will be upheld and advanced.

It was a pleasure serving on your behalf in so many capacities for so many years.

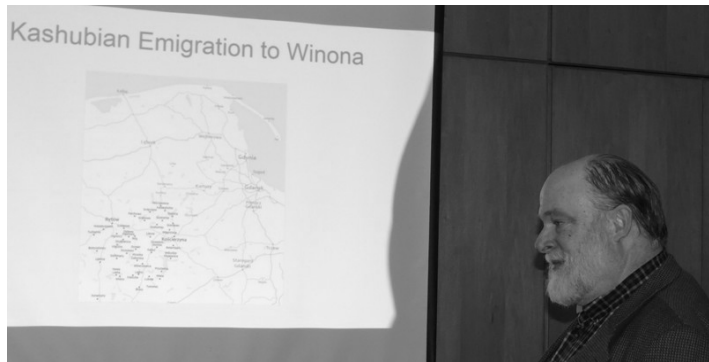
Jerome Biedny



Recently at PGS-MN Meetings

On Saturday, October 10, 2015, Edziu Rajtar returned to complete his presentation on Cultural Roots of Your Polish Ancestors.

On Saturday, November 7, 2015, Dr. Jozef Hughes visited us once again. This time with a presentation entitled, "The Battle of Saint Stanislaus: Winona's Polish Catholics in the 1890s." Everyone knows that the beautiful Basilica of Saint Stanislaus Kostka was built through the hard work and financial sacrifice of Winona's Polish community. But building St. Stan's also involved a roughed-up priest, a besieged convent, numerous fights in the streets, and an attempted raid on the County jail stopped by firemen with axes. It was an interesting and entertaining story!



Dr. Hughes and Kashubian Emigration

Kashubia 2016 Tour

with Dr. Joe Hughes

A 10-day tour of the Kashubian region of Poland is being planned for June 27 – July 8, 2016.

Departure from the United States is scheduled for June 27, 2016. This tour is being designed especially for descendants of Kashubians who

emigrated to Winona, MN – including those Kashubians who later moved from Winona to other locations in Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, and Wisconsin. That said, this tour is open to one and all – whether one is Kashubian by descent, by marriage, or by choice!

Check it out! Details available at
<http://kashubia2016.blogspot.com/>

PGS-MN Meetings Calendar

January 16, 2016 – Annual Members and Election Meeting

March 5, 2016 - TBD

April 2, 2016 - TBD

May 7, 2016 – TBD

See details below....

PGSMN Annual Member Meeting

Saturday, January 16, 2016

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Gasthof Zur Gemutlichkeit, 2300 University Ave NE

\$25 pay at the door; cash or check only.

Please RSVP to Rick Theisen at 651-739-1490.

In Regard to the Elections:

The positions of PGS-MN secretary, treasurer, and directors II and IV are elected at the Annual Meeting in January of even-numbered years.

Currently these positions are held by **Jason Waldowski** (secretary), **Michael Eckman** (treasurer), **Dori Marszalek** (director II), and **Marie Przynski** (director IV). Jason said he can no longer serve on the board, while Michael, Dori, and Marie are willing to continue in their positions for another term (2 years).

Because you read this newsletter, you know that in the Summer 2015 edition, **Jay Biedny** announced resignation of his post as president of PGS-MN. Thank you, Jay, for your many years of leadership!

What you may not know is that **Dan Schyma** has also resigned his post as vice president. Dan also

resigned from working the speaker's program for the Saturday morning meetings. We will certainly miss his energy and commitment to finding the interesting variety of speakers we've all enjoyed the last few years. Thank you, Dan, for your service!

So, therefore, at the Annual Members Meeting on Saturday, January 16th, the membership will vote on the following board of directors' positions:

(Interim) President:
(Interim) Vice President:
Secretary:
Treasurer: (Mike Eckman)
Director II: (Dori Marszalek)
Director IV: (Marie Przynski)

Your input is important! Attend the Meeting to vote! RSVP to **Rick Theisen** to attend the Annual Meeting January 16 and **VOTE** for your new Board of Directors! And enjoy the good food and good company too, of course!

If you are interested in being nominated for election to the PGS-MN board of directors, contact **Terry Kita** at terrykita@earthlink.net or 612-927-0719.

Save the Date!

MGS 2016 Spring Conference

Saturday, April 16, 2016

Bunker Hills Activity Center

Featured speaker: Dave McDonald. With nearly 40 years' research experience, Dave McDonald's genealogical work includes service as the forensic genealogist for the city of Chicago as it expanded O'Hare Airport and moved an historic 160-year-old cemetery from a new runway's path. Board-certified since 2004, he is a past president and current trustee of BCG.

Dave served six years on the board of the National Genealogical Society, and has lectured throughout the US and UK. His personal research includes work in England, the Mid-Atlantic, colonial-era New York and Virginia, Kentucky, the Midwest and the Great Plains. He has also done extensive work in the UK and on Germanic lines from the sixteenth century onward. **PGS-MN**



Saturday, February 6, 2016

The Historic Saint Paul Hotel
350 Market Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota

The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota invites you to its *Bal Karnawatowy* (carnival ball), which honors a pre-Lenten celebration that dates back several centuries in Poland.

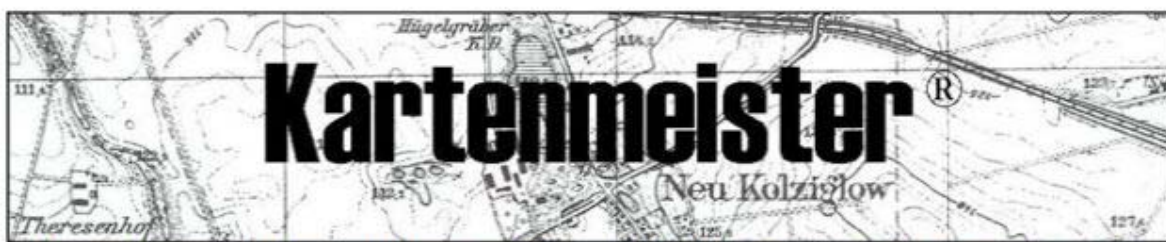
The formal event includes dinner, cultural dance performances, a live band, social dancing, and a silent auction of Polish and non-Polish items.

The event will open at 5:30pm with a social. Dinner will begin at 7:00pm.

Tickets: \$65 Members, \$75 Non-Members, \$520 for a Table of Eight.

For more information or tickets, call **612-378-9291** or visit **www.PACIM.org**.





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By Janet Savelkoul Mitchell

Basic Information on the Website:

One of my favorite sites for looking up locations east of the Oder and Neisse rivers (borders of present day Germany and Poland) is www.kartenmeister.com. This site contains 97,422 locations with over 45,115 name changes that occurred once, and 5,500 name changes that occurred twice or more. The locations are based on the borders of the eastern provinces of Prussia as of Spring 1918. Included in the database are the provinces of East Prussia, West Prussia, Brandenburg, Posen, Pomerania, and Silesia. The database is updated as more information comes available, so if you don't find what you are initially looking for, check back in a few months. The database was developed and is kept current by Uwe-Karsten Krickhahn, residing in Alberta, Canada.

The ways or criteria to search on are:

1. German name of location
2. Older German name
3. Kreis/County name
4. Next larger town (a proximity search)
5. Today's Polish, Russian, or Lithuanian name
6. Family name

The search criteria do not give any consideration to Polish language accents, so you don't need to know how to type those in.

The site is very easy to use – just follow the directions on the homepage for ways to search, letters to substitute, and the use of “wild cards” for search criteria.

Below is an example of a search:

In the search box on the Home Page, I entered the name of a German town where my paternal grandmother's family lived. The town name was Slawianowo, located in Kreis Flatow in West Prussia (currently Kreis Zlotow, Poland).

Dauersuche, permanent search für/for... KRICKHAHN, Westpreußen, Ostpreußen, DETLEVS, DETLEFS, DOOSE, Heide, Stellingen, Rellingen, Schleswig-Holstein and Iowa, USA

German City Name/Ortsname:	Slawianowd x
Polish City Name/Ortsname:	
County/Kreis:	
German Province/Provinz:	
Polish Province/Provinz:	
Closest German City/Ort:	
Closest Polish City/Ort:	
Family Name:	
How Many Results Per Page?:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 10 <input type="radio"/> 20 <input type="radio"/> 50 <input type="radio"/> 100
<input type="button" value="Submit"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/>	

When I hit the Submit button, the search results appeared:

There are 1 records that match your search criteria.

German Name	County/Kreis
<u>Slawianowo</u>	Flatow

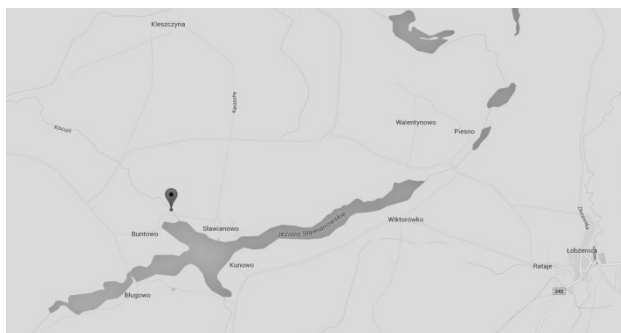
I now clicked on the underlined link for the town name to see specific information on it:

German Name	Slawianowo
Alternate Name 1:	Slowianowo
Alternate Name 2:	Steinmark
Polish/Russian Name	Slawianowo
Kreis/County	Flatow
German Province	Westpreussen
Today's Province	Wielkopolskie
Location	East 17°08' North 53°16'
Google Map	Google Maps (Slawianowo)
Map Number	40
Location Description	This village/town is located 4.4 km and 166 degrees from Kleschin, which is known today as Kleszczyniec
Lutheran Parish	Flatow 1905
Catholic Parish	Slawionowo 1905
Standesamt/Civil Registry	Buntowo 1905
Gemeindelexikon/Town Index	II-11-94
Population By Year/Einwohner	1820: 177 1905: 146
Remarks	Shows in 1789 37 Feuerstellen and is classified as: Adeliges Dorf und Vorwerk nebst einer katholischen Kirche. In 1820 23 Feuerstellen.

This gives you other name options to use for searching for films in the Family History Library, i.e. Steinmark as shown as Alternate Name 2. Or you can use the new Polish town name or province to help you find records.

The “Remarks” on the bottom of the page tell you where the information was found, and sometimes gives you church information (i.e. katholischen Kirche in 1820-23).

I then clicked on the underlined link to Google Maps to find the physical location:



If the town name does not appear from your search, you may also search by a Kreis name in the initial search box, and it will bring up ALL the locations in that Kreis. You can then scroll through the results page by page to see if you can find what you are looking for.

Along with the search page, you may want to check out the other pages to link to with Kartenmeister's page headings underneath the banner. They are:

- English: An English language explanation of the website contents.
- Deutsch: A German language explanation of the website contents.
- Polska: A Polish language explanation of the website contents.
- Dictionary: This gives a general overview of the terms and words used in the database. It gives an explanation of the plural of words, and potential pitfalls and synonyms in the German language.
- Latin – German – English: This is a listing of Latin words and their German and English equivalents. It is not restricted to words in the database, but covers many others.
- Lithuanian – German – English: A large part of northeastern East Prussia was basically of Lithuanian origin. This section lists the provinces that this affects, and a dictionary of Lithuanian words and their German and English equivalents.
- Settlements: After a lengthy discourse in German (without translation) on settlements, there is a description of different sizes of settlements, ranging from the smallest to the largest. Some words and/or descriptions are archaic and not in use in current times. This is a historic look back into the evolution of the modern city.
- Historic Background: Due to the nature of the eastern provinces, different types of villages and small towns developed. The names of

these locations were based on the original name of the settlement. This page gives an explanation of some of the origins of the names. It also explains the term “Wüstendörfer” meaning “abandoned” or “deserted.”

- **Kolonist:** The pages gives a brief overview of the term “Kolonist,” a campaign initiated by Friedrich I to attract Lutheran settlers to East Prussia, and possible locations of settlement based on the sound of the surname.
- **Measurements:** This section provides measurements commonly used in Germany before the introduction of the metric system. It covers lengths, area, volumes, weights, and measurement comparisons. It includes a brief section on coinage.
- **Border Changes:** We are – or should be – familiar with all the border changes that occurred in Germany and Central Europe based on World War I. If not, please pay attention to this section, specifically the reminder that the locations in the database are prior to the 1919 plebiscites (prior to the Treaty of Versailles effective date of January 10, 1920).
- **Laws:** For the database area, three different legal systems such as “Preussisches Gesetz” applied. See the page for the three different laws, although there currently is no attachment or information as to the differences in these.
- **The Social Fabric:** This section covers a brief description of guilds and occupations, which is part of the social structure of the country.
- **Miscellanea:** These pages cover various miscellaneous topics of interest for determining the location of a town by the suffix of the town name; kreises/counties found in various areas and possible name changes; and how to type various letter characters on your keyboard. It also lists many other websites to use for more information.

- **Database:** This is the same as the homepage.
- **Entfernungsberechner – Distance Calculator:** A calculator for finding the distance between two points. You will need either the name/longitude and latitude points of the two locations, or you may choose between major locations by using the “Pick a Location” drop-down box.
- **Umgebungssuche – Proximity Search:** A location finder for finding towns close to a longitudinal/latitudinal coordinate.
- **Maps:** Various larger maps of the areas are included. These include West Prussia (Bromberg, Elbing, Hela), East Prussia (Augustowo, Deutsch Eylau, Gumbinnen, Königsberg, Kowno, Lötzen, Neidenburg, Suwalki, Tilsit), 2 city maps (Breslau and Danzig), and 34 maps of Schlesien.
- **J G Knie:** A link to a German lexicon on the GenWiki site.

Please try the Kartenmeister website if this is your first exposure to the contents. **PGS-MN**



Missing Branches (cont'd from page 24)

Oase, Barbara, 4345 Tarnowski Rd, Duluth, MN 55803, *barboase@yahoo.com*, Researching: **TARNOWSKI** of Werblinia Starzyno Parish, Pomerania Area; Settling in Gnesen Township, Minnesota; **MOSINIAK** of Radzewo, Srem., Poznan Area; Settling in Gnesen Township, Minnesota; **BRYLLOWSKI/BRYLOWSKI** of Warzno, Chmielno Parish, Pomerania Area, Settling in Gnesen Township, Minnesota, **TOBOLA** of Konarskie, Srem., Poznan Area, Settling in Gnesen Township, Minnesota; Also currently working on Gnesen History. (Editor's note: Gnesen Township is an area of Polish Settlers north of Duluth, Minnesota.)

Missing Branches... (Continued on page 17)

Proving how we're all connected: Jan Bias and her destiny of genealogy

By Jillian Kurashima
Staff Writer

Where did your family stories come from? When they were passed along from mouth to mouth

in the great human tradition of oral storytelling, did we lose parts of them to faults of memory? Had they been exaggerated long ago, or misplaced, or ignored and eventually lost? Jan Bias sat down with the Wells Mirror to share how her work in genealogy deals with those very questions. "Some family stories can either be proved or disproved with a lot of research," Bias said, "so I like to set the record straight." And straight she has set it for the last nineteen years.

Bias started researching in 1996 when she first collected pictures of the family after her father passed away. "I wanted to know the brothers and sisters of my grandmother, Martha Staloch Bias, as I only knew about three or four siblings of the 10 children in the family," she stated, "and it snowballed from there." In the nineteen years that Bias has been working on genealogy she has compiled a

family tree on ancestry.com with over 21,000 people recorded, published five books that describe histories, using maps, pictures of birthplaces, family group sheets, marriage and family photos, as well as obituaries, medical records, and immigration information. And, Bias has traveled to Poland several times and to Salt Lake City to study microfilm records. "It's challenging," Bias said, when asked what she loves most about doing genealogy work,



Jan Bias started doing genealogy work in 1996 and has published five books on family histories between the years 2003 and 2009.

and it certainly seems like a large undertaking, but that's why she does it.

There are, of course, instances where research and information start to disprove some of the familiar tales that families have shared over the years. Yet, though there may be repercussions, seeking the truth is a lofty goal. In one instance it was disproving a story of two sides of a family that immigrated together on the same ship through New York, when, in fact, they immigrated eight years apart and came in through a port in Baltimore. In another story, two men with the same surname, who immigrated together and came from the same town, were long assumed to be brothers when in fact they didn't even share the same grandparents. "With information on microfilm you can prove that," Bias said, even if some descendants don't want to believe it. "I think that with my information on ancestry.com, people will eventually see the connections and the stories that are true," Bias explained that she hopes her information will provide clarity for families looking to flesh out their histories.

With detailed research and focus, figuring out the truth can be rewarding in itself, but the real reward is finding the ways in which history brings us together. "A lot of people just aren't aware of how much we're all connected," Bias intimates. In fact, Bias has closely studied much of the Catholic population of Wells. Many hundreds of individuals emigrated from Poland, or what was then Silesia in Prussia, to Wells, Easton, Minnesota Lake, and Mapleton and Bias has researched all of those families. "It was a chain migration," she says, "We are all connected." The families which include: Bias, Staloch, Wanzek, Dulas, Pietrok, Stenzel, Glowik, Kozita, Sobota, Bushlack, Chirpich, Cegla, Cichos/Chicos, Dusza, Dylla, Evan, Gohla, Herman, Hildebrand, Kalis, Kensok, Kortz, Koziolk, Krowiorz, Kullot, Kulla, Kuropka, Langer, Lautsek, Lenort, Mikolai, Nowak, Osdoba, Poziemba, Pietrus, Pustz, Rathai, Schultz, Smolka, Sonnek, Stencel, Tatarek, Troska, Utzka, Veloske, Wiorek, Wirth, Woitas, Yokiell, Yainske, and Zimny/Zimney

**"A lot of people
just aren't aware of
how much we're all
connected."**

mainly immigrated from 1854-1895. Names that might have been completely misspelled or omitted from ship manifests were difficult to collect or lost completely. And what's more, Bias herself is continually surprised to find connections. "I was surprised to find that the Chirpich family was also from Neudorf, where my ancestors are from," she explains.

Bias encourages others to utilize her family tree on ancestry.com and to explore their own connections. "You start with yourself," she says, "then your parents and grandparents, and just work backwards." Bias said that working with genealogy has forced her to meet new people, to talk to families, to listen, and that she's been able to connect in the now just as much as she's been able to connect the past. "It has been a great benefit to me," Bias concludes, "I have had to talk to many people, which becomes easier, and I find that people are really thankful."

Finding that much of our population is connected to the same roots might not seem so strange, but as we grow further away from our past, from where we come from, the people and the work that keeps us connected are somewhat fundamental to our lives. "Genealogy is my destiny," Bias jokes. But what started only as a few family photos has proliferated into the detailed recording of the origins and truths of all of those family stories we've all been telling, and that makes for a pretty great (albeit a small town, Minnesota) destiny.

(Reprinted here with permission, this article appeared in the October 27, 2015 edition of the *Wells Mirror* newspaper.)
PGS-MN

IAJGS Records Access Alert Open to ALL

Editor—Jan Meisels Allen sent me this note on October 31, just a few minutes after I'd sent out the October issue of *Gen Dobry!* I wanted to be sure to include it this month because I think the alerts sent out are important. They don't overwhelm you, filling your inbox. They just give you a chance to keep up

with developments that can end up making a big difference to genealogists.

In February 2013, the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) started a new announcement list, the IAJGS Records Access Alert. At that time it was decided to open the Alert only to subscribers that were members of IAJGS member societies and any person subscribed to the JewishGen Discussion Group or Special Interest Group (SIG) hosted by or owned by JewishGen. At the IAJGS 2015 October Board meeting it was decided to open the registration to the Alert to anyone who is interested in records access. Registration and a listing of your organization affiliation (genealogy society, etc.) may now go to this page:

<http://lists.iajgs.org/mailman/listinfo/records-access-alerts>
You will receive an e-mail response that you have to reply to or the subscription will not be finalized.

For those who may wish to access the archives of the IAJGS Records Access Alerts, go here:

<http://lists.iajgs.org/mailman/private/records-access-alerts/>
You must be registered to access the archives.

As this is an announcement list, you may not post comments as you may on a discussion list. However, we do want to hear from the list subscribers worldwide if they know of public records access issues or have something relevant to add about the postings. Please send notices and comments to the following e-mail address: [**RecordsAccess@iajgs.org**](mailto:RecordsAccess@iajgs.org). Where appropriate, the list owner will issue a posting. Alerts posted to this new service will be made only when there is something of an important nature regarding public records access; therefore, do not expect this alert on a routinely daily or weekly basis.

We look forward to having you subscribe.

Jan Meisels Allen
Chairperson, IAJGS Public Records Access
Monitoring Committee

Previously published by *Gen Dobry!*, Vol. XVI, No. 11, 30 November 2015, PolishRoots@: [<http://www.PolishRoots.org/>](http://www.PolishRoots.org/).
PGS-MN

Stephanie Niciszewska Mucha: Renowned philanthropist and investor to be subject of book



Her story is one of perseverance and inspiration. This 98-year-old Buffalo resident, whose pep and enthusiasm are evident as ever, has received a plethora of awards for her achievements including an extremely rare-in-circumstance Purple Heart Award

in 1975. She's a renowned investor and philanthropist who has even given advice to current Wealth Management students at the University at Buffalo. And, she was recognized for her more than 40 years of service in nursing at the Buffalo Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

As Stephanie T. Mucha (nee Niciszewska) reflects upon her near-century of life, she is grateful to have been given a chance to experience more than the average person while bettering the lives of other people.

Mucha's memory remains as sharp as a tack, recalling exact dates and times of outstanding events in her life. She vividly remembers the Stock Market Crash of 1929, and the chain of events that led her to where she is today.

"There's been a lot of challenges, but I never gave up," Mucha said of her life. She is also working with the Polish Mission, based in Orchard Lake, Michigan, on a book that will be published, titled, "The Oracle of Buffalo: The Remarkable Life of Stephanie Mucha."

Mucha, whose late husband, Joseph, originally emigrated at the age of 18 from Poland with his stepsister, has donated \$4 million to various UB programs, including a million apiece from her invested shares to the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, School of Arts and Sciences, because it has a Polish studies program; School of Engineering; and Medical School.

She said she also plans on donating \$1 million worth of shares to the UB School of Dentistry. Mucha has become well-known in the UB community and has been invited to dozens of award luncheons, dinners and social events. In 2011, she received the Philanthropist Award from the UB College of Arts and Sciences. Mucha also donated \$1 million in trust to the Polish Kosciuszko Foundation.

Joseph Mucha was a machinist who was self-educated in several areas including investing. Stephanie said it was Joseph's wish to give back to the Polish children, as he himself had been an orphan. Additionally, the couple held a special place in their heart for students of Polish ethnicity, providing scholarships to 30 students. Mucha's personal donations are the largest given by any single widow.

Working at the VA

She was born on Oliver St., North Tonawanda in 1917. Her mother, Mary Strank, was the first female born in what was then the village of North Tonawanda. Early childhood challenges for Stephanie included being forced to write right-handed, as the concept of her being a lefty was dismissed by nuns at her school as being backward. She said she learned to become ambidextrous. She also endured teasing from other students.

However, her curiosity and desire to learn remained a lynchpin for her career. She went to work at the age of 15 to assist her parents to keep their home, working

Niciszewska..... (Continued on page 22)

Baptismal Practices for Polish Children in Poland and in the U.S.

(Includes an analysis of day intervals between birth and baptism)

By
John L. Rys
(john@john.rys.name)

Introduction

Poland is predominantly a Catholic nation and early Polish immigrants to America practiced the Catholic faith. In Poland a baptism occurred very shortly after the child's birth, many times within one or two days. In comparatively recent history, Polish Catholic baptisms in the U.S. usually occurred on early Sunday afternoon "after" the Sunday Mass schedule. Today, if you attend a Catholic church on Sunday, you may even witness a baptism "during" the celebration of Mass.

This article contains a discussion of baptismal practices and church recordkeeping in Poland's western Galicia, during the partition years. The certificates included with this article are examples of baptismal certificates as they were prepared and issued in Polish parish offices over the past 100+ years.

This article analyzes day intervals, between the birth of a child and their baptism, for Polish children born in the U.S. The intervals tabulated are for children born to parents of Polish descent who emigrated mainly from western Galicia, part of the Austro-Hungarian partition. This data set of 2,274 baptismal records is from Holy Cross Church in northeast Minneapolis and is for the time period 1895 to 1909.

Baptism

The word "baptism" comes from the Greek language and the general translation is that it means "to

immerse." Other definitions of this Greek word include "to dip," "to plunge," or "to wash." Baptism is the universal rite or sacrament of initiation into the Christian church performed with water. It involves either a ritual of immersion or water poured over the infant's head.

The Christian rite of baptism has similarities to Tevilah, a Jewish purification ritual of immersing in water. The Christian ritual of baptism traces back to the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist at the river Jordan. Baptism is also called "christening" which basically means "to make Christian" and includes giving a "christening" name.

Baptism may take three different forms: sprinkling of water, pouring of water, or immersion (complete or partial) in water. The Christian Research Institute renders more technical term definitions, "*Baptism among Christians is performed by **aspersion** (sprinkling water over the head), **affusion** (pouring water over the head) or **immersion** (lowering the body, completely or partially, into a pool of water).*"

Infant Baptism

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that baptism removes original sin from the soul and therefore infant baptism is an important practice. If not baptized, an infant will die while still in the state of original sin. The Roman Catholic Church teaching includes the concept of "limbo" (Latin *limbus*, meaning edge or boundary), which refers to the afterlife condition of those who die in the state of original sin.

Other Christian denominations baptize individuals who on their own have accepted Christianity and have made a confession of faith. Catholics generally baptize by pouring water, however, newer Catholic churches are built with baptisteries capable of handling baptisms by immersion, or partial immersion.

Church Record Keeping in Poland

During a period of time in Galicia, the Austrian partition, church parishes were also responsible for civil records of births. Jonathan Shea explains this in an article on vital recordkeeping in Galicia.

He states: *“Basic changes in the form and content of vital statistics registers in Galicia were outlined in an imperial decree issued by Emperor Joseph II on February 20, 1784. At this time (pre-1784) the old format of keeping vital statistics registers which had predominated in pre-partitioned Poland, was suspended. The old method of recording births, deaths and marriages had been established by the church in Rome in 1714. The 1784 regulations had decreed that ‘each pastor is to keep three separate registers, that is, for marriages, births and deaths.’ These registers were to be written in Latin and the events for each village were to be recorded separately by village. This was a fundamental change from the old method of keeping all the records from all the villages of the entire parish together. Additionally, the title of the baptismal registers (libri baptisatorum) was to be changed to birth registers (libri natorum). This may seem to be a minor adjustment but it was in fact significant. It reflected the fact that Catholic priests were to function as civil registrars of vital statistics for all non-Catholic Christian denominations, as well as for Jews.”*⁵

He states further *“The Austrian civil officials, interested in the registers for tax and military obligation purposes, required that duplicate copies of registers be sent to the Imperial Chancery by the end of February each year. In the case of Galicia this was modified and two copies of such records were to be sent to the dean of each deanery.”*⁵

Matthew Bielawa adds *“Catholic priests kept the official vital records for other religious groups, such as Jews, Lutherans, and Orthodox. These other faiths sometimes kept their own records, but the records were not state documents. Over time,*

*each of these religious groups was granted official record keeper status by the Austrian government.”*¹

It is a normal practice on the parish baptismal certificate to include the child's birth date in addition to the baptismal date. And, the normal intent of a parish baptismal certificate is to certify only a baptism. This 1784 decree gave the priest authority to certify a birth as a civil record.

This basic civil registrar change for Catholic priests from “libri baptisatorum” to “libris natorum” might well explain the differences in wording used on the titles of the baptismal records of my four (4) grandparents shown below. Certificates from Poland may contain wording certifying only the baptism (Testimonium Baptismi) or wording certifying both birth and baptism (Testimonium Ortus et Baptismi). On my grandparent's baptismal certificates the title in two of the four also includes a certification of birth.

Certificate (1) in Latin - ***Testimonium Baptismi*** (Certificate of ***Baptism***) is the title for only his baptism (not the birth) occurring in 1865 with the certificate **issued on April 11, 1893** for Laurentius Maciaszek.

Certificate (2) in Latin - ***Testimonium Ortus et Baptismi*** (Certificate of ***Birth and Baptism***) is the title for both her birth and baptism occurring in 1897 with the certificate **issued on June 9, 1905** for Rosalia Jarosz.

Certificate (3) in Latin - ***Testimonium Ortus et Baptismi*** (Certificate of ***Birth and Baptism***) is the title for both her birth and baptism occurring in 1872 with the certificate **issued on September 28, 1936** for Ludovica Glowczak.

Certificate (4) in Polish - ***Swiadectwo chrztu*** (Certificate of ***Christening***) is the title for only his baptism occurring in 1857 with the certificate **issued on September 25, 2000** for Jan (John) Rys.

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATES ISSUED IN POLAND

Nro. <i>111</i>	Diocesis <i>Cracoviensis</i>
Regnum Galicæ.	Decanatus <i>Małogosin</i>
Capitaneatus distr. <i>Myslenicensis</i>	Parochia <i>Jordanow</i>

Testimonium Baptismi.

In Libro Natorum parochialis Ecclesie *Jordanowensis* pro pago *Wygoka*
 destinato, Tom *III* Pag. *24* Nro ser *18* sequentia continentur:
 Anno Domini: Millesimo *octingentesimo sexagesimo quinto*
 hoc est *1865* die *24* *vigesima quarta* mensis *Aprilis* natus
 sub Nro domus *8* et die *25* *Aprilis* ab Adm. Rndo Dno *Joanne*
Nowak Curatores secundum ritum Romano-Catholicum baptizatus est:

Nomen Baptizati	Religio	Sexus	Horti	PARENTES		Patrini
				PATER	MATER	
<i>Laurentius</i>	<i>rom-cathol.</i>	<i>masculini</i>	<i>legitimi</i>	<i>Stanislaus</i> <i>Maciaszek</i> <i>fil. Valenti</i> <i>in et Susan</i> <i>na n. Sarna</i>	<i>Sophia fil.</i> <i>Thomas</i> <i>Graca et</i> <i>Agneta</i> <i>nata</i> <i>Macdon</i>	<i>Joannes</i> <i>Maciaszek</i> <i>et</i> <i>Elisabeth</i> <i>Valentini</i> <i>Tomczyk</i>

Quod testimonium qua Libro Matricali supra citato conforme, ob majorem fidem propria manu subscribo, et Sigillo Officii parochialis munio.


Signatum *Jordanow* die *11. Aprilis* 1893.
Jacobus Komarowski

Certificate (1) bearing an official Austrian stamp issued on April 11, 1893 making it 122 years old. Certificate of Baptism (Testimonium Baptismi) record for Laurentius Maciaszek born in the small village of Wygoka, Poland (marked on the stamp) which did not have a church at that time. He was baptized in the nearby larger village parish of Jordanow, Poland. Certificate shows a one day birth-baptism interval, Monday April 24th and Tuesday April 25th, 1865.

Please return to...

Nro 189 Diocesis Cracoviensis
 Regnum Galicie. Decanatus Matorniensis
 Capitaneatus distr. Myslenice Parochia Jordanów

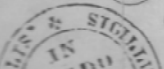
Testimonium Ortus et Baptismi.



In libro Natorum parochialis Ecclesiae in Jordanów pro pago Jordanów
 destinato, Tom IV Pag 127 Nro ser. 21 sequentia continentur:
 Anno Domini Millesimo Octingentesimo septuagesimo nono
 hoc est 1879 die vigesima quinta Mensis Augusti nata
 sub Nro domus 282 et die 27 secundum ritum Romano-Catholicum baptizata est:
Bedna Corp.

Nomen Baptizati	Religio	Sexus	Thori	PARENTES		Patrini
				PATER	MATER	
<u>Rosalia</u>	<u>Rom.-catholica</u>	<u>Femina</u>	<u>Legitima</u>	<u>Stanislaus Jarosz</u> <u>filius Josephi</u> <u>et Josephine</u> <u>Erhardovich</u> <u>oppidenas</u>	<u>Rosalie Gabronski</u> <u>filia Stanislei</u> <u>et Barbarae</u> <u>natae</u> <u>Arendarogin</u>	<u>Josephus</u> <u>Lazarek</u> <u>Andonia</u> <u>imor</u> <u>Charlini</u> <u>Spyscowski</u>

Quod testimonium qua Libro Matricali supra citato conforme, ab majorem fidem propria manu subscribo, et Sigillo Officii parochialis munio.

Signatum in Jordanów die 9^a Junii 1905 quintus

Alfred Sienicki

Certificate (2) bearing an official Austrian stamp issued on June 9, 1905 making it 110 years old. Certificate of Birth-Baptism (Testimonium Ortus et Baptismi) record for Rosalia Jarosz from Jordanow, Poland. Certificate shows a two day birth-baptism interval, Monday August 25th and Wednesday 27th, 1879.

Nr. 82
 Respublica: POLONIA.
 Palatinatus: Cracoviensis
 Districtus: Myslenice

Archid. Dioecesis: Cracoviensis
 Decanatus: Makowensis
 Parochia: Spytkowice

TESTIMONIUM ORTUS ET BAPTISMI.

In libro natorum et baptisatorum Ecclae par. in Spytkowice et Jaskowa
 destinato pro Spytkowice tom VIII pag. 39 Nr. ser. 18
 reperiri sequentia: Anno Domini millesimo octingentesimo septua-
 gesimo secundo
 mense Martii die secunda
 sub N-ro domus 166 nata et die sequenti baptisata est

An 1872	Nomen BAPTISATI	Religio	Sexus	Thori	PATER	MATER	PATRINORUM Nomen, Cognomen et Conditio
2 3	Ludovica	cath.	♀		Andreas Głowczak agricola filius Stanisli et Annae natus Jagódka	Catharina Jolia Adalberti Lajac et Rosaliae natus Repella	Stanislaus Kowalsky Anna uxor Gaspari Trybata Agr.

Baptisavit R. D. Josephus Francik
 Obstetrix Anna Kasaniak

Extractum hoc cum Originali concordari, sigillo ecclesiae parochialis et propriae manus subscriptione corroboratur.

Certificate (3) bearing an official Polish stamp issued on September 28, 1936 making it 79 years old.
 Birth-Baptism (Testimonium Ortus et Baptismi) record for Ludovica Glowczak from Spytkowice, Poland
 showing one day birth-baptism interval, Saturday March 2nd and Sunday 3rd, 1872.

PARAFIA RZYMSKO-KATOLICKA
p.w. N.M.P. Matki Kościoła
w Toporzysku
34-785 JORDANÓW
tel. 018/ 28-73-303

Parafia: _____ Diecezja krakowska

L.p. 29/2000

Numer i rok księgi Chrzętów Tom III s. 22 nr

ŚWIADECTWO CHRZTU

1. Imię i nazwisko ochrzczonego: Jan Ryś

2. Ojciec: Stanisław syn Walentego i Maryanny
z d. Picula wyznanie rzymskokatolickie

3. Matka: Anna Maciecka córka Jakuba i Zofii
z d. Grobarz wyznanie rzymskokatolickie


4. Miejsce i data urodzenia: 3 lipca 1857 Toporzysko

5. Miejsce, parafia i data Chrztu: Jordanów 3 lipca 1857 (dla Toporzyska)

6. Uwagi w księdze Chrzętów (kan. 535. § 2, 1122, 1685 KPK) ochrzcił ks. Jan
Nowak, proboszcz

Toporzysko dnia 25-09-2000

PZG Kraków 2991/87 — 30.000


 Został wpisany w księgę ochrzczonych potwierdza:
Marian Juras
Probosc

Certificate (4) issued on September 25, 2000 making it 15 years old. Świadectwo chrztu (Certificate of Christening) record for Jan Ryś from Toporzysko, Poland showing a one day birth-baptism interval, Thursday July 2nd and Friday July 3rd, 1857. This is the baptismal certificate the parish priest wrote up for us when we visited the Toporzysko church in southern Poland in September, 2000. This certificate uses the Polish language whereas the older three certificates are written in Latin, i.e., Lipca for July and Jan instead of Joannes.

Birth-Baptismal Intervals for Children in Poland

My grandparents' baptismal certificates from Poland all indicate the interval between their birth and baptism. The certificates reveal that three of the four grandparents were baptized **one day after their birth**.

1) See Baptismal Certificate (#1) from Jordanów, Poland for my maternal grandfather, Lawrence Maciaszek citing a one day interval of **Monday April 24th to Tuesday April 25th, 1865**.

2) See Birth/Baptismal Certificate (#2) from Jordanów, Poland for my maternal grandmother, Rosalia Jarosz, citing a two day interval of **Monday August 25th to Tuesday August 27th 1879**.

3) See Birth/Baptismal Certificate (#3) from Spyt-kowice, Poland for my paternal grandmother, Lud-wika Glowczak citing a one day interval of **Satur-day, March 2nd to Sunday March 3rd, 1872**.

4) See Baptismal Certificate (#4) from Toporzysko, Poland for my paternal grandfather, Jan Ryś citing a one day interval of **Thursday July 2nd to Friday July 3rd, 1857**.

From looking at the other Galician-Polish baptismal records I have access to, this one or two day interval seems to be a commonly held practice, at least in the western part of Galicia, Austria's partition of Poland. At that time the concern over infant mortality would also come into play. In writing this article I looked at some pages of baptismal records on photographs from a fellow genealogist and I examined video tape from the year 2000 which I took of church records in parish offices in Poland.

Birth-Baptismal Intervals for Polish Children in the U.S.

The U.S. baptism and birth data used for this analysis is from a Minnesota (Archdiocese of Minneapolis-St. Paul) Polish church records database project. The data is from Holy Cross Church, the oldest Polish church in Minneapolis, MN, founded in 1886 and the data covers the time period 1895 – 1909.

Most of the early residents of Holy Cross Church were from the Carpathian Mountains in southern Poland (at that time geographically in the Austrian partition called Galicia). Their villages were located in the Beskid Mountains (a sub-range of the Carpathians) and are the lower Carpathian Mountains as distinct from the high Tatra Mountains which are the southern-most Carpathian Mountains in Poland. Many of them were from the Rabka, Poland village area which is directly south of Krakow, Poland.

The overall summary of the data being analyzed in this article is as follows. There were 2,274 baptismal records entered for the fifteen (15) year period from January 1, 1895 through December 31, 1909. The newer tradition of Sunday baptisms as seemingly practiced in the United States would definitely have an effect on the number of days tallied between birth date and date of baptism.

Other Baptismal Interval Practices

Other countries had birth-baptism interval practices. Famous playwright, William Shakespeare, according to his church's register, was baptized on April 26, 1564. There is no documentation of his actual birth date. The traditional birthday for Shakespeare is celebrated on April 23. According to some sources, because of high infant mortality rates, the practice in England in the 1500's was to baptize children three days after their birth. This is how they arrived at April 23, 1564 as Shakespeare's birthday. As an interesting aside, he died on April 23, 1616, his 52nd birthday, giving him a rather symmetric or well proportioned life

Baptisms..... (Continued on page 18)



Missing Branches (cont'd from page 7)

Wisconsin and Stutsman County, North Dakota;
KLIMEK, WOZNEY, LUKOSCYK, JOCHEM, RINK, LYGA, WARZECHA, NOGOSEK, and KAMPA.

Klechefski, Michelle, 404 Durango DR, Roberts, WI 54023-8536, mklechef@hotmail.com, Researching: **KLECHEFSKI/KLECZEWSKI** of Witebsk, Poland, Settling in Chicago, Illinois; Madison, Wisconsin, and Michigan; **MAJEWSKI** settling in Chicago, Illinois; **SABATKE/ SABADKE** of Netze district, Prussia; Settling in Wisconsin; **ZAREMBA** of Witebsk, Poland; Settling in Chicago, Illinois; **MACIAG** settling in Madison, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

Mathison, Linda, 905 Knollwood Ct, Eagen, MN 55123, lrmathison@comcast.net, Researching: **KOLUPAILO** of Grodno, Poland, Settling in Vermont and St. Paul, Minnesota; **SZYMANOWSKI** of Vitno, Poland, Settling in Vermont and St. Paul, MN.

Missing Branches (Continued on page 20)

Baptisms (cont'd from pg 17)**NUMBER OF DAYS BETWEEN BIRTH AND BAPTISM**
For Polish Children in Minneapolis**How to Read the table**

The table is straightforward. The line "Same Day" indicates that 89 children were baptized on the date of their birth. In percentages, this amounts to 3.91% of the 2,274 children. In many of these cases, it may be speculated that there was an immediate health concern, warranting the same day baptism. The second line "1 day" indicates that 94 children (4.3%) were baptized on the day immediately following their birth. Some of these "1 day" baptisms may also be attributed to a health concern. Again, the newer tradition of Sunday baptisms as seemingly practiced in the United States would definitely have an effect on the interval between birth date and date of baptism between 1895 and 1909.

Columns on the right give a running total and running percentage. Using these columns we see a total of 51% (1,157 children) had been baptized within the first week following their birth. Looking at the running total column for 2 weeks we see that 83.47% (1,898 children) were baptized within two weeks of birth. At thirty-one days we see that the running total is 95.87% (2,180 children) who had been baptized.

Running Percent	Running Total	Percent of Total	Number of Baptisms	Time Interval From Birth
3.91%	89	3.91%	89	Same Day
8.05%	183	4.13%	94	1 day
14.25%	324	6.20%	141	2 days
21.20%	482	6.95%	158	3 days
27.40%	623	6.20%	141	4 days
34.21%	778	6.82%	155	5 days
41.64%	947	7.43%	169	6 days
50.88%	1,157	9.23%	210	7 days (1 week)
57.83%	1,315	6.95%	158	8 days
63.81%	1,451	5.98%	136	9 days
68.56%	1,559	4.75%	108	10 days
73.18%	1,664	4.62%	105	11 days
76.78%	1,746	3.61%	82	12 days
80.39%	1,828	3.61%	82	13 days
83.47%	1,898	3.08%	70	14 days (2 weeks)
86.24%	1,961	2.77%	63	15 days
87.82%	1,997	1.58%	36	16 days
89.09%	2,026	1.28%	29	17 days
90.11%	2,049	1.01%	23	18 days
90.81%	2,065	0.70%	16	19 days
91.60%	2,083	0.79%	18	20 days
92.39%	2,101	0.79%	18	21 days (3 weeks)
92.88%	2,112	0.48%	11	22 days
93.40%	2,124	0.53%	12	23 days
93.89%	2,135	0.48%	11	24 days
94.24%	2,143	0.35%	8	25 days
94.42%	2,147	0.18%	4	26 days
94.68%	2,153	0.26%	6	27 days
94.90%	2,158	0.22%	5	28 days (4 weeks)
95.16%	2,164	0.26%	6	29 days
95.69%	2,176	0.53%	12	30 days
95.87%	2,180	0.18%	4	31 days (1 month)
99.08%	2,253	3.21%	73	32 -365 days (1 year)
99.43%	2,261	0.35%	8	1 yr - 10 years
99.78%	2,269	0.35%	8	Adult Converts
100.00%	2,274	0.22%	5	Birth Date Not Available
		100.00%	2,274	Total Baptisms

Confusion between Birth and Baptismal Dates

The baptism of a child in Poland was viewed as a very important event and a few of our grandparents may have cited their baptismal date as their birth date. Rosemary Chorzempa, devotes a section of her book, Polish Roots, to customs for naming children and covers the importance of baptisms in Poland.

Quoting her book as follows *“The Poles have long been staunch followers of the Roman Catholic religion and have placed much importance on the saints...Considering how important the saints and their feast days were to the Poles, it is not surprising that many Polish parents consulted their pastor or the Proper of the Saints (Roman calendar) to select a name for their child. They searched for an agreeable saint whose feast day was near their child’s birth or baptismal date. The feast day was most often on or just after the child’s birth or baptismal date, usually no more than three weeks after the event.”*³

She further states: *“Poles did not celebrate their birthdays, but most often celebrated their namesake’s feast day (imieniny), or even the anniversary of their baptismal day. Many families in Poland today still observe this tradition.”*³

In the only U.S. record I found indicating a birth date for my grandfather, Jan Ryś, it cites his baptismal date, July 3, 1857 as his date of birth. It was not until the year 2000 when wife, Judy, and I searched the actual church register in his village of Toporzysko, Poland where we found his birth date was 2nd of July one day prior to that cited by him. (See baptismal Certificate #4 for Jan Ryś)

A similar situation exists with my other grandfather, Lawrence Maciaszek (Macosek) where the family cited his baptismal date Aug. 25, 1879 on his death certificate as his birth date when his actual birth

date was Aug. 24, 1879. It would appear that the Maciaszek (Macosek) family must have been celebrating his baptismal date of Aug. 25 as his birth date when he was alive. (See baptismal Certificate #1 for Lawrence Maciaszek)

Finally, my grandmother, Ludvika Glowczak’s baptismal date of March 3, 1872 was given on her death certificate as her birth date when her actual date of birth was March 2, 1872. It would appear that our family was celebrating her baptismal date of March 3 as her birth date when she was alive. (See baptismal Certificate #3 for Ludovika Glowczak)

Summary

Poland is predominantly a Catholic nation and early Polish immigrants to America practiced the Catholic faith. In Poland a baptism occurred very shortly after the child’s birth, many times within one or two days. Early infant baptism, to a lesser extent, was still the practice for Polish Catholic children born in America at the turn of the twentieth century. The concern over the Catholic Church’s teachings on “limbo” impacts the importance of an early baptism.

In the United States, time intervals expanded from the “one-two day” time interval seemingly practiced in their western Galician Polish villages of origin. The newer tradition of Sunday baptisms practiced in the U.S. certainly was a large factor in the selection of a day for baptisms and affects this analysis. Over fifty percent (50%) of the U.S. baptisms were in the first week and over eighty-three (83%) of the U.S. baptisms were in first two weeks of birth.

The baptism (removal of original sin) of a child, for Roman Catholics in Poland, was viewed as a very important occasion. Because of this importance, some of our ancestors who were born and baptized in Poland may have cited their baptismal date or their namesake’s feast day as their birth date. Genealogists should be aware of this possibility.

While citing the baptismal data as the birth date makes it an inaccurate date, it may not be too significant for a genealogist's concern.

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 2. Blodgett, Steven W., "*A Beginners Guide to Austrian Research: Using gazetteers, church records, military records and population registers to find your ancestors*" FEEFHS Journal, Vol X, pgs. 49-55, 2002.
 3. Chorzempa, Rosemary, *Polish Roots*, 2nd edition, 2014, In Chapter 12, she devotes a section to "*Polish Customs in Naming Children*" (pages 169-170).
 4. Ortell, Gerald A. "*Polish Parish Records of the Roman Catholic Church*" Polish Genealogical Society of America, 1979.
 5. Shea, Jonathan D., "*The Keeping of Vital Records in the Austrian Partition*", Pathways and Passages, vol. 9, no.1, pgs. Winter, 1992.
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~~~~~ *Missing Branches* (cont'd from page 17)

Woitaszewski, Allan and Nancy, 38410 Harder Ave, North Branch, MN 55056, woitalla44@gmail.com, Researching: **WOITASZEWSKI** of Mgowo, Poland/Germany, Settling in Ashton, Nebraska; **LEWANDOWSKI** of Hansfelde, Po-

land/Germany, Settling in Aston, Nebraska; **ROY** of Poland, Settling in Tarnov-Loup City, Nebraska; **KOZIOL** of Jodlowka, Poland, Settling in Tarnov-Loup City, Nebraska.

RENEWING MEMBERS:

Chamberlain, Vivian, 34675 Fountain Blvd., Westland, MI 48185, vivdonchamberl@ameritech.net, Researching: **JARNOT** of Brzeszcze, Poland, Settling in Minnesota; **MORON** of Katowice, Poland, Settling in Minnesota, and Toronto, Canada; **WODNICZAK/WADNIZAK** of Gorzyczki, Odolanow, Poland, Settling in Minnesota and North Dakota; **WIZNER** of Fabianow, Poland, Settling in Duluth, Minnesota and North Dakota.

Czech, Dennis, 4875 Popple Trail, Pequot Lakes, MN 56472, Researching: **CZECH** of Falkowitz, Poland, Settling in Stearns County, Minnesota, **WARZECKA** of Falkowitz, Poland, Settling in Morrison County, Minnesota; **KLEMETS** of Prussian Poland, Settling in Morrison and Douglas Counties, Minnesota; **LOEFFLER** of Prussian Poland, Settling in Douglas County, Minnesota.

Gilbert, Anne, 8511 Jeffrey Ave. S., Cottage Grove, MN 55016, adgilbert72@comcast.net, Researching: **KUROWSKI, ROZEWICZ** settling in Hastings and Little Falls, Minnesota; **HUDZINSKY/HUGHES** settling in Northeast Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Kasella, Eleanor, 7637 Ojibway Park Rd, Woodbury, MN 55125, ellieok@msn.com, Researching: **Kasella/Kassella, Kiesel** of Opole, Poland, Settling in St. Paul, Delano, Wright county and Carver County, Minnesota; **KOSIK, PFEIFER, GOLLES** of Krupp, Poland, Settling in Fargo, North Dakota, Moorhead and Vermillion, Minnesota, and Grand Teton, Montana.

Marshall, Ray, 4052 Minnehaha Ave., Apt. 22, Minneapolis, MN 55406, ray.marshall@gmail.com, Researching: **MARSZALKIEWICZ** of Rosozno,

Poznan, Settling in Duluth, Minnesota;
LUDWIKOWSKI settling in Chicago, Illinois, and Duluth, Minnesota, **BOROWIAK and CHORZEWSKI** of Smogulec, Wagrowiec, Settling in Duluth, Minnesota.

McBride, Marijo, 911 Hall Ave, West St. Paul, MN 55118, *mebri001@umn.edu*, Researching: **WERMUS** of Galicia, Sepro Warsaw, Poland, Settling in St. Paul, Minnesota; **GAWLICK** of Galicia, Poland, Settling in St. Paul, Minnesota; **WALDERA** of Upper Silesia, Poland, Settling in St. Paul, Minnesota; **KURTZ and/or JUREK**.

Nilsen, Stephanie, 615 – 4th St NE, Little Falls, MN 56345, *stephnilsen@yahoo.com*, Researching: **RINGWELSKI and CIEMINSKI** settling in Little Falls, Minnesota.

Odette, Barbara, 8219 S. Kilbourn, Chicago, IL 60652, *barbarod@comcast.net*, Researching: **CZUBERNA and BATKIEWICZ** of Nowy Targ, Poland, Settling in Chicago, Illinois; **CZOP and GRANICNA** of Radzow, Poland, Settling in Chicago, Illinois.

Paris, Dona, 420 Lake Aires RD, Fairmont, MN 56031, *jdparis@midco.net*, Researching: **PIOTROWIAK/PIETROWIAK/PETROWIAK** of Turostowo, Poland, Settling in Illinois and Minnesota; **MADAJ/MADAY** of Szubin, Poland, Settling in Illinois and Minnesota; **SZUKALSKI/SUKALSKI** of Poland, Settling in Minnesota; **FELCMAN/FELZMAN** of Ujazd, Poland, Settling in Minnesota; **LUBINSKI** of Trembatschau, Nassadel, Poland, Settling in Minnesota.

Pietrick, Carol, 19205 Lake Ave., Wayzata, MN 55391-3041, *cpietrick@gmail.com*, Researching: **KULIG and PIETEREK** of Silesia, Poland, Settling in Independence, Wisconsin; **BONK and SKORKA/SKROKA** of Galicia, Poland, Settling in Chicago, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

Thomson, Sue, PO Box 285, Janesville, MN 56048, Researching: **LAZARZ, SZUBART, KOWAL** settling in Illinois and Pennsylvania.

Trembley, Lisa, *lctrembley@comcast.net*, Researching: **RAHNSKI, ZIWICKI, BEDNARSKA/BEDNARSKI** of Kazuba, Poland, Settling in Sherburne and Benton Counties, Minnesota.

Walczak, Charles, 2314 West 6th ST, Duluth, MN 55806-1516, *flinger_9@yahoo.com*, Researching: **WALCZAK** of Sobotka, Poland, Settling in St. Louis County, Minnesota. . PGS-MN



**** AND GOD CREATED TO POLAND... ****

Editor—Rob Strybel posted this to the Polish Culture, Food and Traditions group on Facebook. I thought it was hilarious, and wanted to pass it along.

When God was creating the world He said: “Ah yes, the Poles -- I will give them a land of flowing with milk and honey, rich fields of grain, lush forests teeming with game, lakes and rivers full of fish, natural resources such as coal, copper, silver, and sulphur, scenic mountains, an impressive seacoast, rolling green meadows, beautiful flaxen-haired maidens and strong, hard-working lads for them to marry...”

A little angel witnessing this thought process suddenly piped up: “But aren’t the Poles getting too much of a good thing?”

To which God replies: “Not really. Just wait till you see who I give them for neighbors.”

 Previously published by *Gen Dobry!*, Vol. XVI, No. 11, 30 November 2015, PolishRoots®:
<http://www.PolishRoots.org/>.

Niciszewska *(cont'd from page 10)*

as a maid in a doctor's office. She enrolled in Trott Vocational School of Nursing as the first such class group there in 1948, then was hired at the just-opened VA Medical Center in January 1950.

She worked the next 43 years as a licensed practical nurse at the site, retiring in 1993, but not before she was recognized in 1987 with a Sustained Superior Performance Award for the "completion of 40 years of faithful and honorable service."

During her time at the VA, Stephanie met doctors from all over the world, picking up valuable tips and information from people of many backgrounds. She was previously introduced to Joseph Mucha, who in 1936 was recognized in New York City by the Polish Embassy for articles he had published in Polish publications. The two were married in June 1946.

Mucha witnessed the advent and first usage of the pacemaker while at the VA, as the once-dismissed instrument was experimentally tried on a dog, which was revived and wagged its tail in response to the stimulus and then, gathering its senses, began walking.

"I went home and told my husband I saw a miracle," Mucha said of her witnessing the animal resuscitation.

Starting out in stocks

Wilson Greatbatch, creator of the pacemaker, sold his new invention for \$50 million, and the Muchas purchased 50 stock shares of this product at \$5.11 per in Medtronic - the company licensed to manufacture the device in 1961. Their profit eventually grew to \$459,000 by 2007.

Stephanie said they realized that stock would boom in the area of life essentials and the couple went on to buy shares in Pfizer pharmaceuticals, Merck & Company, and Johnson & Johnson medical devices, among others.

Over time, Stephanie has picked up tips from what she says are invaluable sources - The Economist, New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Barron's and Forbes Magazine; to go along with watching Bloomberg and various CNBC programming.

She also credits Jeremy Siegel's book "Stocks for the Long Run" for providing valuable investing tips. Other invaluable stock sources she's invested in include medicines, water and oil. She's invested in Philip Morris Company, noting that the Economist points out population trends and that China is the biggest consumer of cigarettes.

Mucha said a valuable stock question to ask when investing is: "What do we need that we can't live without?"

Another big dividend came from investing in Aqua America, Inc., a water and wastewater utility company. The reason for this investment, Mucha said, came from the knowledge that every home in the nation has a water meter that is constantly used. Her initial 20 shares in this company grew to a whopping 900.

The Muchas' financial portfolio had grown from modest beginnings to about \$300,000 in 1985, the year Joseph Mucha passed away.

The couple had additionally created three apartments in their house, one to live in and two to rent out. Stephanie also rented a room in her apartment for \$15 per night to women visiting their sick husbands at the VA Hospital. She invested the roughly \$25,000 she earned over two decades from that rental in the stock market.

Stephanie, who doesn't own a computer, said she has an Ameritrade account that allows her free trades over the phone and they reinvest her dividends. The account also sends her five research reports per month. In recent years, Mucha has also bought stock in Precision Castparts Corp. and Illinois Tool Works.

She says donating her investments comes naturally to her.

"You can't take money with you when you pass on," said Mucha, who since 1966 has resided in Buffalo.

She is one of just 100 civilians to receive the Purple Heart, garnering the award in 1975 for her "outstanding work as a nurse for veterans." She noted that she moved around to different areas of the VA every four years to become more diverse in her knowledge. She also received the first-ever Hands and Hearing Award. She said her perceptivity helped her in the VA environment.

"You always look for body mechanics (when determining) if someone is telling the truth. You look in their eyes," said Mucha. "And the medical boys loved me there."

Keys to good health

And she still doesn't look a day over 70. Stephanie listed a number of items as keys for staying healthy: daily exercise (she plays tennis too), reading often, avoiding red meat, and soaking any food she eats for an hour beforehand to rinse out the salt. She also eats a steady dose of vegetables, including parsley.

Mucha has 23 nieces and nephews, with nine nieces entering the field of nursing. She added that she encouraged them to "go the full way" and obtain a nursing degree, something that she herself did not do despite her many eventual successes.

Mucha recently received from UB the Walter P. Cooke Award, which recognizes notable and meritorious contributions to the university by non-alumni. A medical center at the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus that's going to be built by April 2017 will honor Mucha as "Stephanie Niciszewski Mucha" as her name will be inscribed at the site.

"I'd love to still be around for that," Mucha said.

The Polish Mission has also recognized Mucha's many cutting-edge investment endeavors as well as her generosity. She donated to the Mission her wedding dress and late husband's naturalization papers from Poland, among other items. JJ Przewozniak serves as curator of Collections for The Polish Mission and praised Mucha for her creative intuition.

"She's an absolute wizard," Przewozniak said. "Not having the internet, just a phone, and she (thrives in investing)."

Stephanie's story has appeared, along with the two aforementioned publications (Barrons and The Polish Mission), in a German publication that is Munich-based.

(Source: <http://ampoleagle.com>)



New Book



A Guide to Chicago and Midwestern Polish-American Genealogy

By Jason Kruski
Clearfield, 2012

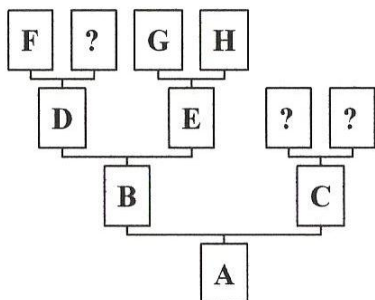
This new guidebook is the first comprehensive introduction to Polish genealogy in years. Since Polish-Americans (including the author) proliferate in Chicago and the U.S. Midwest, they are the focus; however, much of the advice set forth here will apply to the majority of U.S. residents of Polish Catholic origin, as well as to records in Poland themselves. (Persons of Polish Jewish/Lithuanian/ Ruthenian ancestry are not covered in Mr. Kruski's book.) Since Polish immigration to the United States began in earnest following the American Civil War, and was heaviest during the last quarter of the nineteenth and first quarter of the twentieth century, this era is the chronological focal point of the work.----Publisher

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Caskey, Dennis and Mary, 4350 Brookside CT, Apt. 321, Edina, MN 55436, dtcaskey@comcast.net, Researching: **KOSTRZEWSKI** of Poznan, Poland, Settling in Duluth, Minnesota; **CHNIELARZ** of Poznan, Poland, Settling in Moose Lake, Kettle River, and Duluth, Minnesota; **KLEJESKI** of Poznan,

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Dobosenski, Stanley J. Sr., 1968 Sunset Trail, Brainerd, MN 56401, ironfire@uslink.net, Researching: **DOBOSENSKI and PASEK**.

Ellenwood, Ruth, 8182 Lori LN, Woodbury, MN 55125-7608, ruth@ellenwoods.net, Researching: **JUREK** of Wielkopolskie, Poland, Settling in Kettle River, Minnesota; **ZAZOSKI** of Gliwice, Slaski; Settling in Kettle River, Minnesota; **PRZYBYL**.

Hank, Mark, 12209 Parkwood PL, Burnsville, MN 55337-6861, jestem_marek@comcast.net, Researching: **MIELCZAREK, KANTOWICZ/ CANTOWICZ** settling in Chicago, Illinois.

Kiser, Charleen, 22250 Beaumont Way, Farmington, MN 55024-9795, cdkiser10@gmail.com, Researching: **SKROCH, KLINK, KASSELLA** of Poppelau, Poland, Settling in Independence,

Missing Branches..... Continued on page 7)