



# Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

Volume 30 | #4 | Winter 2022

---

03 | Verify Your Payment—Annual Meeting—Volunteer for 2023

05 | Membership Committee Updates

06 | Annual Missing Branches—Complete List

08 | From Poland To Minnesota—Paula Colwell

10 | Finding My Korcal Family's Village of Zblewo—Kay Freund

16 | Christmas Wigilia and Makowiec—Judith Blanchard

18 | Smok's Corner—Marie Przyński

19 | Mark Your 2023 Calendar





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As 2022 comes to an end, we give thanks for you being part of our genealogical society. The more that we learn about our past, the more we can shape a better future.

\$25 from genealogical researchers like you allows us to reach people from Poland to Minnesota and around the world. We strive to make new connections, and offer new and valuable program meetings to help everyone.

Our Annual Meeting will be January 21 at 10am at the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, MN, as well as via an online meeting link sent before the meeting. (A 'hybrid' meeting.) We hope you join in-person if you can! Fun, food & beverages to celebrate!

For 2023, we will continue our 6 program meetings a year, offering them both online and in-person so everyone can participate. You will also continue to receive our quarterly Newsletter, valuable updates on our Facebook page, and enhancements are coming to our website!

Your member dues help us to continue expanding the genealogy work we want to accomplish for all members, but we also really need your time as a volunteer! You can volunteer from your home. You can do it whenever you have time. You can join us at MGS. Join the team! Email [pgsminnesota@gmail.com](mailto:pgsminnesota@gmail.com) today!

Lastly, we had an issue with our PayPal renewal on our website. Some of you might have paid, but never saw a receipt or deduction from your Credit Card / PayPal. Our button was in 'test' mode, so the transaction did not collect or use any of your personal information. We have now fixed it, so you can join / renew, and of course, you can always mail a check.

We wish you and your family a happy, loving and joyful holiday season. We look forward to sharing time with you in the near future, whether through an electronic screen or an old fashioned gathering! Thank you for being a member. Let's make 2023 the best year yet.—Terry

## BOARD MEMBERS

President | Terry Kita  
Vice-President | Paula Colwell  
Treasurer | Gary Wolf  
Secretary | Rosanne Betley  
Director | Connie Waldherr  
Director | Kay Freund  
Director | Mike Stodolka  
Director | Tom Losinski  
Past President | Peggy Larson

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Library | Bob Kraska  
Membership | Connie Waldherr  
Newsletter | Steve Wasik  
Programs | Terry Kita  
Research | John Rys  
Website | Peggy Larson

## CONTACT US

[pgsminnesota@gmail.com](mailto:pgsminnesota@gmail.com)

—or—

PGS-MN

1385 Mendota Heights Rd #100  
Mendota Heights, MN 55120

## OUR MISSION

To share genealogical, biographical, and historical information, and collaborate with other organizations that promote interest in Polish genealogical research, history, and culture from Poland to Minnesota and surrounding states.

## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

A publication of the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota, a branch of the Minnesota Genealogical Society, and a 501(c)(3) organization per the United States IRS rules.

## COVER IMAGES

Front—The Market, Warsaw (Pixabay)  
Back—Wigilia Potrawy (Wikimedia)



## PGSMN.ORG PAYPAL—PLEASE VERIFY YOUR RENEWAL OR JOIN PAYMENT

Our PayPal Join / Renew page had a PayPal button that was stuck in a 'test' mode, meaning it did not capture any personal information or payment details. You may have also seen a 'Thank You' page, because it was testing the process, but unless you saw the payment on your credit card or PayPal statement, it did not go through at all. We sincerely apologize for the issue, and have taken steps to make sure it won't happen in the future. Life was easier in some respects before the advent of electronic payment systems!

If you paid in October or November using our [www.pgsmn.com](http://www.pgsmn.com) site, please verify on your bank or credit card statement that the payment was successful. If not, the payment options are now in working order. You can also send a check. Email us at [pgsminnesota@gmail.com](mailto:pgsminnesota@gmail.com) if you need help!

## ANNUAL MEETING AND BOARD ELECTIONS—JANUARY 21ST at 10AM

We hope you will join us! Even if you do not wish to volunteer at this time, your vote is extremely important. The following positions require a vote for 2023:

- President—The president's role is to lead the organization in the fulfillment of the Society's mission.
- Vice-President—The vice president serves as a back-up to the president.
- Director I and III—The director position has an active role in the operation of the Society.

## BE A 2023 VOLUNTEER—EMAIL [PGSMINNESOTA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PGSMINNESOTA@GMAIL.COM)

- Membership Committee—We need your skills and ideas! Winter may be near, but there is no need to hunker down and let the world pass by. Consider getting a more active role with your PGS-MN. Volunteer to help improve and expand our membership with new ideas, new approaches to communications, and member outreach at summer festivals and out-state community programs. Help others discover their ancestors' life and where they originated from. Join us!
- Newsletter Committee—Share your stories! Love to write? Always thought of being a journalist at a paper? Have Polish genealogy, culture, family stories or recipes to share? You can volunteer for as much or as little time you desire. Want to help review the paper before it's published? We need you!
- Program Committee—Help find exceptional programs! Share your tech skills and manage the online meeting! Be involved with any part of the program meeting process. Email us!
- Research and Library Committee—Love to research? Library expert? Want to help manage our library items and the Hoffman Library in Mendota Heights, MN? We need you!
- Website Committee—Have ideas for our website? Want to learn how to make a webpage? Want to help test our new site in 2023? Email now!

## ARE YOU ON FACEBOOK? FIND US AT [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PGSMINNESOTA](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PGSMINNESOTA)

We encourage everyone to check us out. Not in Minnesota? We still welcome you to participate and enjoy our posts. We have followers from near and far, including Buffalo NY, Chicago IL, Erie PA, New York NY, Philadelphia PA, Los Angeles CA, Canada, Poland, United Kingdom, Nigeria, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Thailand, France and more! Please join us on a genealogical journey, enjoy learning more about your family tree, and explore your Polish ancestry, culture, language and history with us.



## Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

*A Branch of the Minnesota Genealogical Society*  
 1385 Mendota Heights Road, Suite 100  
 Mendota Heights, MN 55120  
 www.pgsmn.org



### Membership Application

Membership fee is \$25 for one year, ending December 31. Membership includes a subscription to the PGS-MN newsletter and free access to the Minnesota Genealogical Society Hoffman Research Library in Mendota Heights.

***Thank you for helping to preserve and foster interest in Polish heritage!***

<p>_____ New Member \$25</p> <p>_____ Renewing \$25</p> <p>_____ Donation</p>	<p>Make check payable to: <b>Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota</b></p> <p>Mail form and check to: PGS-MN Membership          c/o Gary Wolf, Treasurer          P.O. Box 291          Amery, WI 54001-0291</p>
---	--

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Name Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
 City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (with area code) Email (*Will be used to send program notifications and renewal reminders.*)

PGS-MN endeavors to connect individuals researching their family roots. If information is included in the chart below, it will be published, along with your name and email, so other researchers can contact you. Adding information in the chart below indicates your acceptance of this release of information through both digital and paper formats by the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota.

Polish Surname(s) Currently Being Researched	Location in Poland Where Surname Originated	U.S. Location Where Immigrant Settled



## NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIR—WELCOME TOM! THANK YOU CONNIE!

Hello! I'm Tom Losinski. I was born and raised in St. Cloud, MN. Both my parents are of Polish/Kashubian descent, born and raised in Winona, MN. My dad served in the Navy in WWII and could not find a job in Winona, but he found a job at the VA hospital in St. Cloud.



I served in the Army in Germany and worked in sales for my career. I am retired about 8 years and have been a member of PGS-MN since the 90's. I look forward to paying back to the organization that helped me find my roots. Any membership questions and/ or about my genealogy journey can be sent to [membership@pgsmn.org](mailto:membership@pgsmn.org) and I will send you a reply!—Tom



Hello! I'm Connie Waldherr and it has been a privilege and honor to be the membership chair for the last four years. Now I am passing the torch to long-time member Tom Losinski, who will be our Membership Chair starting January 2023.

Over the many years I've been a member, I've enjoyed attending the programs and sharing family stories and genealogy research with many of you. I'm currently researching the lives of my four grandparents who emigrated from Poland and settled in Northeast Minneapolis' where I grew up. If the surnames Jurek, Janik, Kaliszewski, or Kaminski ring a bell, please let me know! I look forward to seeing you at our program meetings.—Connie

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Brown, Aimee ([brow5142@d.umn.edu](mailto:brow5142@d.umn.edu))
- Dahlheimer, Patty ([pattyd@xtratyme.com](mailto:pattyd@xtratyme.com)) Researching: HUDOBA; GUZIAK
- Kleinschmidt, Amy ([akleinschmidt@comcast.net](mailto:akleinschmidt@comcast.net)) Researching: KLEINSCHMIDT of Wiele (Kashubia) settled in Winona, MN; JASZEWSKI of Brusy (Kashubia) settled in Winona, MN.
- Ossler, Linda ([SmithOssler5@gmail.com](mailto:SmithOssler5@gmail.com)) Researching: LESHINSKI of Gdansk settled in St. Paul, MN.
- Parrow, Janice ([jagplt2803@yahoo.com](mailto:jagplt2803@yahoo.com))
- Schnell, Teresa ([Teresa.schnell@icloud.com](mailto:Teresa.schnell@icloud.com))

## ANNUAL MISSING BRANCHES—COMPLETE LIST

Winter is coming, and it's the perfect time to make some progress on your family tree! Plenty of resources at [pgsmn.org](http://pgsmn.org) for you to discover. Also, SO much to find at the MN Genealogy Center & Library in Mendota Heights, MN, which is free with your membership! Email us at [pgsminnesota@gmail.com](mailto:pgsminnesota@gmail.com) and we'll help you.

We have almost 600 surnames in our member database! You can see them ALL on the following two pages. Recognize a surname you're researching? Go to [pgsmn.org/members/missing-branches](http://pgsmn.org/members/missing-branches) to get the contact information! Email [pgsminnesota@gmail.com](mailto:pgsminnesota@gmail.com) if you need help!





Andrzejek	Bubacz	Dolny	Golaski	Kaliszewski	Kozak
Antus	Bublitz	Domanski	Gorentkiewicz	Kalita	Koziol
Bajor	Bucholtz	Dombovy	Gostowski	Kaminski	Kozlowski
Bak	Buchulz	Domin	Gostomczyk	Kamla	Kramarz
Balut	Budney	Drabik	Grabowski	Kanunik	Kramasz
Bambenek	Budny	Drajus	Gruba	Kapolczynski	Kraska
Bandarek	Bukowska	Dreunick	Gruchala	Karkula	Kreyskie
Baran	Bukowski	Drozdowski	Grzegorz	Karnowski	Kriske
Bardon	Burdziej	Drzazga	Gutowna	Kasprick	Krupa
Bardonski	Buszkiewicz	Duda	Guziak	Kassewica	Kruszewski
Barrutt	Butkiewicz	Dudek	Hagedorn	Kaszubik	Kruzeski
Basara	Butkowski	Duray	Hajek	Kaweczka	Krystosek
Baszniak	Cekalla	Dymerski	Hanke	Kedroske	Kryzsko
Batkiewicz	Cherchowski	Dziabas	Hawrylak	Kiedrowicz	Krzemienski
Bednarek	Chocholek	Dziakowicz	Hawrytak	Kiedrowski	Krzyszewski
Beka	Choromanski	Dziwisz	Hedjuk	Kietlinski	Kubiak
Belinski	Cichon	Ebertowski	Hedwig	Kita	Kubicki
Bemowski	Cieminska	Fabiansi	Helenski	Klara	Kubinski
Betlej	Cieminski	Faltynska	Helewski	Kleczewski	Kudak
Betley	Ciesielska	Farka	Herchowski	Kleinschmidt	Kudasik
Bieganet	Ciesielski	Farkas	Hojnowski	Klodzinski	Kuduk
Bielawa	Ckola	Farkasz	Horst	Kluczanski	Kuharski
Bielawna	Cmiel	Farniok	Hudoba	Knoll	Kujawa
Bielawski	Cybulska	Faron	Hylla	Knopik	Kukielka
Bielinski	Cylka	Fautsch	Ignasiak	Knopp	Kuklinski
Biernat	Czajka	Felcman	Jaczkowska	Kobacwecki	Kuklok
Biskin	Czapiewice	Felzman	Jakubek	Koca	Kukowski
Blacik	Czapla	Filipczak	Jakubonski	Kociemba	Kulas
Blaskowski	Czarnik	Filla	Jambor	Kocikowski	Kulig
Bogacz	Czarnomski	Flis	Janik	Kodlowszcanta	Kunkel
Bojarski	Czerbinski	Florek	Janiszewski	Kolpak	Kurenkiewicz
Bona	Czernik	Franczyk	Jarnot	Kolupailo	Kurkauski
Bonk	Czosnykowski	Fredel	Jarocki	Konieczny	Kurkowski
Borzych	Czysoza	Fridel	Jarozewo	Konkel	Kurt
Borzyszkowski	Czyszczonek	Friske	Jasicki	Konkol	Kusmirek
Borzyszkowy	Czyszezony	Frydel	Jasnoch	Kopec	Kusz
Bougetz	Czyszkiewicz	Gabriecyk	Jaszewski	Kopolczynski	Kutz
Breza	Dabek	Gabrych	Javes	Korcal	Kwasniowski
Brezinka	Dady	Gadacz	Javis	Korkal	Kwaterski
Brodziak	Damazyn	Gawenda	Jelinski	Korkel	Labno
Brosko	Dambowy	Gawlytowa	Johann	Kornek	Lalowski
Bruch	Danielski	Gehrke	Julkowski	Korneski	Lamczyk
Brudnicki	Darzyn	Gendera	Jurek	Koslakiewicz	Laqua
Brufski	Demski	Gerstman	Kabaczynski	Kosmasiak	Laska
Bruski	Derdowski	Gerszewski	Kabat	Kosmon	Lazarsky
Brusy	Dering	Gieron	Kabocsymlir	Kostreba	Lemanczyk
Bryllowski	Dlugolenski	Glagow	Kaczmarczyk	Kostyrok	Leshinski
Bryniarski	Dlugoleski	Glovník	Kakol	Kowalczyk	Lewandowska
Bryniawski	Doering	Gockowski	Kaldunski	Kowalski	Lewandowski
Brzezinski	Dolney	Goergel	Kalinowski	Koza	Liepieza



Lipinski	Moron	Pikula	Schreiber	Swiatek	Wesolek
Losinski	Mosiniak	Pintok	Schultz	Szaweleski	Wieczorek
Lozynski	Mros	Piotrowiak	Schwientek	Szczepaniak	Wieczorkiewi
Lubinski	Mross	Piotrowski	Schwintek	Szczerbinski	cz
Ludwika	Mroz	Pischke	Sedys	Szedis	Wierzba
Lukaczewski	Mrozewski	Piwinski	Segler	Szmet	Wilczek
Mac	Mrozinski	Plath	Sekulski	Szmit	Wizner
Mach	Musolf	Plombon	Serwatkiewicz	Szmyt	Wodniczak
Machajewski	Mutecj	Poczalak	Shadys	Szramski	Wodziak
Macheska	Myslajek	Podolski	Shepherd	Szukalski	Wojciascek
Maciag	Myszka	Pokornowski	Shupin	Szulz	Wojeck
Madaj	Napientek	Polak	Siaweleski	Szymanski	Wojtkiewicz
Maday	Napieralski	Polenik	Siedlecki	Szymczak	Worwa
Madon	Niedbalec	Polniaszek	Siemechow	Szymus	Wos
Majewski	Niedzwiecki	Popielarski	Siemek	Szyperzynski	Wozniak
Majka	Niemezyk	Posterick	Sienko	Tarara	Wrobel
Majkowski	Niepodzianna	Przybycien	Skaja	Tarnowski	Wroblewski
Makoski	Niewinska	Puchalla	Skajewski	Tobola	Wrubel
Malec	Niznik	Pulczynski	Skawiniak	Tomaszewski	Wrycza
Maleska	Nona	Puzdrowski	Skorczewski	Torzewski	Zabinski
Manczewitz	Norlach	Pyka	Skorka	Trader	Zablocka
Maniak	Novack	Rapacz	Skowronska	Tragarz	Zabrocki
Mankiewicz	Novak	Rdzawka	Slavkowski	Trutwin	Zachman
Mansavage	Nowak	Rebelski	Slopek	Trzecinski	Zajac
Marchewka	Okonek	Reczek	Slychocke	Trznadel	Zak
Marcimak	Olszewski	Retka	Smigielski	Tykwinski	Zakrzewski
Markowsky	Orlikowski	Rhoda	Smith	Tyminski	Zalenski
Marsolek	Orzechowski	Roda	Smolenski	Umerski	Zaleska
Marzewski	Osga	Rode	Sobiech	Voss	Zareba
Maschke	Osowski	Rogalla	Sobieski	Wachowiak	Zawislak
Maslowski	Ostrowski	Rolczynski	Sobkowiak	Wachowski	Zelazny
Mastek	Otto	Romanowski	Sobota	Walchowiak	Zielezinski
Matz	Owca	Rucki	Sokolowski	Walczak	Zilka
Mazuk	Owsiak	Ruda	Spochacz	Waldera	Zinda
Meiger	Palaszynski	Rudnick	Spychalla	Waldoch	Zloch
Meka	Palewicz	Rudnik	Stanaszek	Waligorski	Zuchowski
Miarza	Palubicki	Rusin	Stanek	Walkowiak	Zulawski
Micek	Pavela	Rusniak	Stanislawczyk	Warpecha	Zumska
Michaelski	Pavlik	Ryehicki	Staniszewski	Warzecha	Zwolinski
Michalowski	Pawiak	Ryfianka	Stawarz	Wasielewski	Zylka
Michnal	Pawlak	Rymarkiewicz	Stenzel	Wasik	Zywicki
Mierzejewsky	Pawlikowski	Rzeszotka	Stodolka	Wasilk	
Migacz	Pellowski	Sadecki	Stokowski	Wasyk	
Migatz	Perlick	Sadergaski	Stoltman	Waszyk	
Milczarek	Petrowiak	Sadowski	Strzelecki	Waurzyniak	
Miller	Piechowski	Salata	Stwora	Wawrzonek	
Miloch	Pieterek	Schmidt	Suchocke	Weglarz	
Miskowiec	Pietrek	Schmolke	Suchy	Wensierski	
Molenda	Pietrowiak	Schneider	Sukalski	Wenzel	
Morgel	Pietztryk	Schramski	Sweda	Wermus	



## FROM POLAND TO MINNESOTA—PAULA COLWELL

I'd like to share some things I've learned about my family history from the 'Poland to MN' section on our website. Some of it is direct genealogy information, some is more of a snapshot of the everyday life of generations in our family. Most of my family today is more interested in the anecdotes rather than detailed family trees, so I am always looking for information to help shape the stories.

All of my immigrant Polish ancestors came directly to Winona in southeastern Minnesota from Kashubia between 1867 and 1882. I grew up in Winona, so know a lot of the overall history and layout of the city, but was surprised at how little I knew about the Polish history until I got interested in genealogy. I lived in the newer, far west side of town, which had a mix of ethnic backgrounds. Most of the Polish population (including my ancestors) lived in the east end of town.

### Polish Catholic Churches in Winona

I obtained many birth, marriage and death records from the courthouse over the years, but the church records are also valuable. My dad's great-grandparents settled in the west end of Winona, and my mom's great-grandparents first settled across the river from Winona in Pine Creek, WI. Within a few years, they moved to the east end of Winona. Those early immigrants were members of three different Polish churches: St. Stanislaus in the east end, St. Casimir's in the west end, and Sacred Heart in Pine Creek.

Baptism, marriage, and funeral/death records can be found at the Polish Cultural Institute and Museum in Winona for St. Stanislaus and Sacred Heart churches. For St. Casimir Church records, they do not allow anyone to see or obtain copies of the records, but a report of a specific record can be obtained from the church for a fee. Links to the histories of all of the Catholic churches can also be found in the Winona section. It is interesting to read about the locations and timelines when the Polish churches were built, in relation to where the different generations of my family lived.

### Athletic Club in Winona

I found out a lot about the Athletic Club history from the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form in the Winona section. I was well aware of the Club in the east end of Winona, but did not know that it was established by Polish immigrants in 1898 as a social gathering place, with many member amenities.

My parents' wedding reception was held at the Athletic Club. My siblings and I held a surprise 40th wedding anniversary party for our parents there, so we have pictures of both events in our family photo collection. I remember as a child that my dad would take us to the Club in mid-December when Santa gave out large shopping bags of goodies. Santa was on the second floor and the line went all the way down the steps to the first floor and outside! It was very exciting, and I didn't mind standing in line once we got past the front door with the heat on! Thinking back on it now, I am guessing the parents of those happy children were all Polish members of the Club, and the bags of goodies were all paid for through membership dues.

### Hot Fish Shop

As a child, I remember going to the Hot Fish Shop for dinner as a family. We often waited in the lobby to get a table and it was filled with memorabilia to look at while we were waiting. I did not really grasp how Polish it was at the time, and how well it was known across many states.



Our family of seven always needed a large table, which usually was found in the middle of the large dining room that had a nice view of Lake Winona. I remember the relish tray and bread that was always placed on the table as we sat down and, of course, we had some kind of fish as our main course. My parents liked the fresh walleye, but I always ordered batter-fried shrimp! There are several articles about the Polish history of the Hot Fish Shop in the Winona section on our website.

## Petition for Polish Books

In 1906, a hand-signed petition was sent from the Polish residents of the City of Winona to the Board of Directors of the Winona Free Public Library. The petition was a request for the purchase of books published in the Polish language. Seeing several of my ancestors' names on the seven pages of signatures was especially meaningful for me.

## Winona Historic Newspapers

The Winona Newspaper Project is a database that was developed by the Darrell W. Krueger Library at Winona State University. The database provides free access to the general public, and includes many issues of the four primary Winona newspapers between 1855 and 1976. You can spend hours searching family names and coming up obituaries as well as articles about specific family members.

I learned from the Winona Republican Herald newspaper in 1953 that my parents' rehearsal dinner the day before their wedding was held at the Hot Fish Shop! Their wedding article described the details of my mom's flower bouquet and dress, which mom later made into Barbie Doll clothes for me! And the wedding cake was baked by Sisters at the College of St. Teresa. I even learned about the dresses that both of my grandmothers wore!

My dad was the City Engineer in Winona until he started his own Consulting Engineer and Land Surveying business in Winona. I found many articles about him and all the projects he was involved in, including many pictures. I also discovered articles about my siblings from the 1970's, including the honor roll society, plays, sports, cheerleading, and more.


And then there are the stories of heartbreak. An article in 1907 indicated that my 2nd great grandmother was crushed between two box cars after visiting her daughter, and died within a few days from the trauma. Another article was about my dad's 10-year-old brother who died after falling off of a friend's handlebars down a hilly bluff road in Winona. I also found an article about my mom's 16-year-old brother who drowned in Lake Winona when his boat capsized. Both of my parents had shared their emotional memories of the incidents, but it was interesting to read how the media at the time described what happened.

---

These are just a few examples of what I found in the Winona section that I could relate directly to my family, and there is much more. I encourage you to look at the section where your family came from, or where they settled in Minnesota. It can be time-consuming to dig, but it is fun when you come across something that directly relates to your family!

We welcome any information that you have which could be added. Go to [www.pgsmn.org](http://www.pgsmn.org) and click 'Members' then 'From Poland to MN' to begin your journey! Have questions or need some help? Email us at [pgsminnesota@gmail.com](mailto:pgsminnesota@gmail.com) and we will reply.

## HOW I FOUND MY KORCAL FAMILY'S VILLAGE OF ZBLEWO—KAY FREUND



Like many members, I have been doing genealogy research of my Polish ancestors for decades. My interest in genealogy started in the early 70's while visiting with elderly relatives that told stories about their family's ancestors. In the early 80's a Korcal relative documented their family tree. Everyone in that family tree resided in the U.S., but many of the 1st and 2nd generation were from the "Old Country" — that being Poland.

In addition to the Korcal family tree, two relatives wrote brief narratives on the history of the family. These family histories mainly provided insight to the family in the U.S., but there was some reference to family members that stayed in Poland. The narratives had names of people, relationships (parents, siblings, spouses, children), dates (birth, marriage, death, immigration) and some places in the U.S. where the family resided. From this information I was able to create a place/timeline for Johann Korcal, my great-grandfather.

- Posen, Poland – 1844 (birth) to late 1870's (departure for US)
- United States – late 1870's (unknown port of entry into the US)
- Parkersburg, West Virginia – late 1870's (worked in the coal mine)
- Plattsmouth, Nebraska – late 1870's to 1884 (worked for the railroad)
- Wilno/Royal Township, Minnesota 1884 (homesteaded a farm) to 1938 (death)

Written family history and verbal stories about the Korcal family said we were from the 'Old Country', meaning Poland, but no mention of a village. I remember hearing we came from Posen/Poznan. The search for my Korcal family's village in Poland was something I needed to pursue on my own.

### Part 1—Years of Research

My mother and aunts saved Prayer Cards from funerals. The older cards had minimal information (date of birth, date of death, details about the church where the funeral Mass was and the cemetery where the deceased was buried). More recent prayer cards included a short obituary. My next research step was to find the full obituary for the deceased relative with hopes it provided more information to add to the family history.

It was fortunate that the families of all four of my grandparents resided in rural southwest Minnesota (Royal Township in Lincoln County) and that there were local newspapers published in the county. These newspapers printed quite lengthy obituaries for deceased members of the community, providing a wealth of information for a genealogist. The question was, where to find copies of these old newspapers?

The Minnesota History Center Gale Library in St. Paul, MN has a large collection of newspapers (microfilm) from all over Minnesota. The library was a common Saturday outing for me and my daughters in the late 90's. Before going there, we would make a list of dates of death for relatives. Once there, we gleaned through multiple reels of microfilm of the Ivanhoe Times to find obituaries and printed copies for our records. Unfortunately, none of the obituaries provided insight to where the Korcal family was from in Poland. In a recent online search of their website, I found several newspapers that are digitized, so anyone can view them online without making a trip to St. Paul. Go to [www.mnhs.org/library](http://www.mnhs.org/library) and click 'Research' for more.

As mentioned in the Fall 2022 article I wrote, the 1870-1940 census asked where an individual and parents were born. I found references to Hollestine, Poland, GerPolish, and West Prussia.

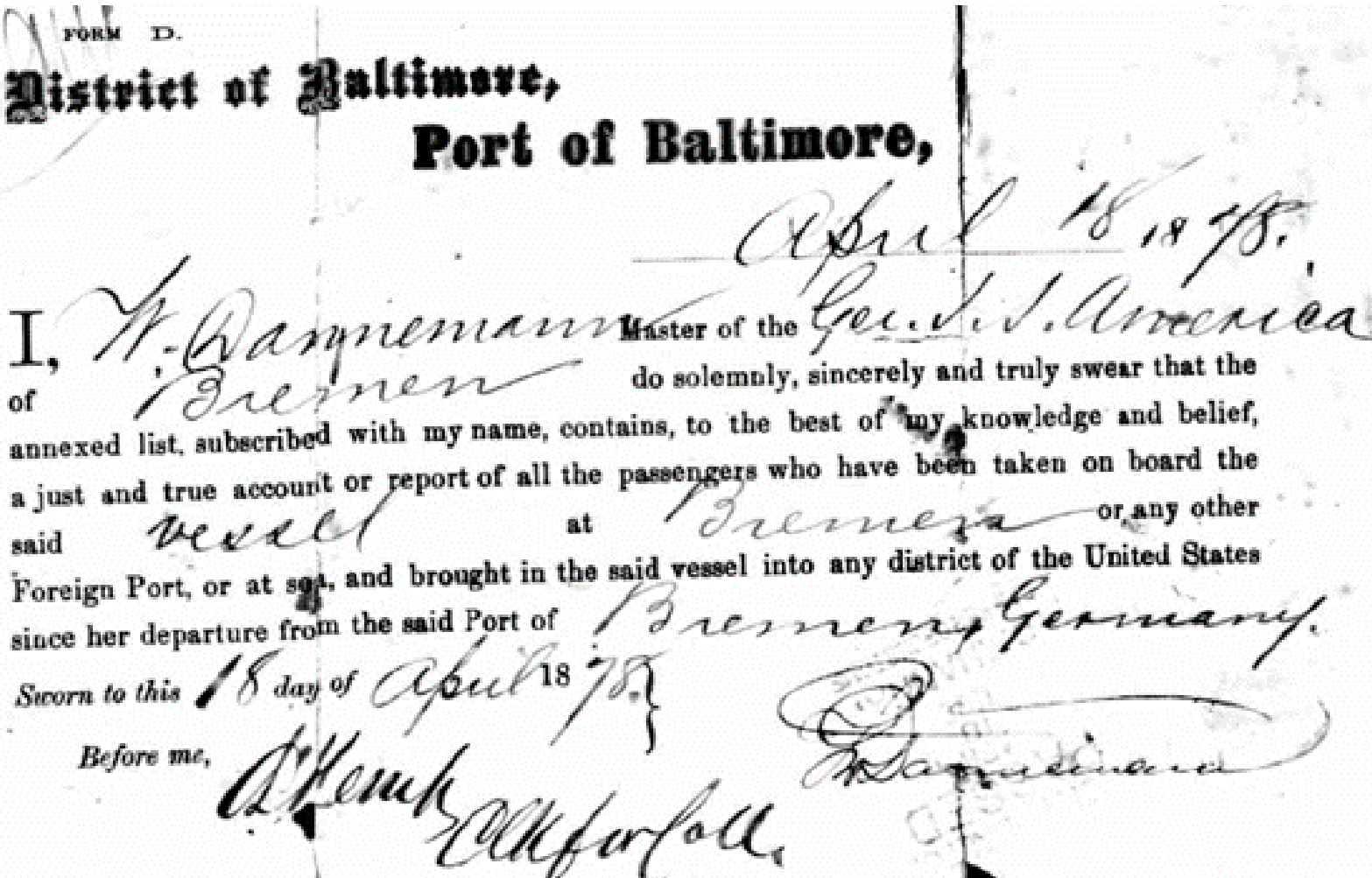




Based on the responses for each of these census years, there were four different years for immigration:

- 1900 census—1878
- 1910 census—1880
- 1920 census—1877
- 1930 census—1879

I knew my great-grandparents 3rd child was born August, 1879 in Nebraska, which eliminated 1880 as the year of immigration and quite possibly 1879, as the family lived in Parkersburg, West Virginia for a time before moving to Nebraska. The year of immigration had to be 1877 or 1878. After entering a few key pieces of information on Ancestry.com, I found the ship record!



Ship record detail reflected the port of debarkation was Bremen, Germany, and the port of arrival was Baltimore, MD with an April 18, 1878 arrival date. You can see in the image below, passengers included the Korzall family members from Prussia as Johann Korzall (31), Rosalie (26), Catherine (3), and Franciska (11 months).

✓ 77	Johann Korzall	✓ 31	m
	Rosalie	✓ 26	f
	Catharina	✓ 3	f
	Franciska	✓ 11	m

8777  
4-16-78

Another source for finding ship records is familysearch.org, but you do not get a copy of the ship record. Instead you get an index card-type record listing the information matching the ship record I found. Unfortunately, the 'last permanent residence' was blank on the ship records, so my search continues.

Being told the Korcal family was from the Posen region of Poland, and knowing my great-grandparents were married in Poland before immigrating to the U.S., the next place to research was on the Poznan Project. It is a database of 19th century marriage records from the historic Greater Poland / Prussian Province of Poznan at the [www.poznan-project.psnc.pl](http://www.poznan-project.psnc.pl) website. Using the 'advanced search' I tried multiple ways of spelling Johann and Rosalie, but was unable to find a match. I hit a brick wall. Not knowing where to look next, my research on the Korcal family came to a halt.

After a research break of several years, this past August I knew I had to try a different angle to find my Korcal family Polish homeland. Pomorskie Towarzystwo Genealogiczne ("PTG" - Pomeranian Genealogical Association) maintains a database of baptism, marriage, and death records for the northern region of Poland at their [www.ptg.gda.pl](http://www.ptg.gda.pl) website.

I had success finding records for other lineages of my Polish ancestry, so why not try the "Korcal" surname? Selecting 'PomGenBase—Search Christenings' from the navigation, I entered a range of years and my great-grandfather's forename and surname.

Much to my surprise I found the birth record of my great-aunt Catherine Korcal. Expanding the years for the search yielded the birth record for my grandmother Francisca Korcal. Everything for these baptism records matched what I already had in my Korcal family tree—father's name was Johann Korcal(s), mother's name was Rosalia Kurek, and years of birth were 1874/1876. The one additional piece of information which was new was the 'Parish' name. Finally, I found the name of the village in Poland where the Korcal family was from! Zblewo!

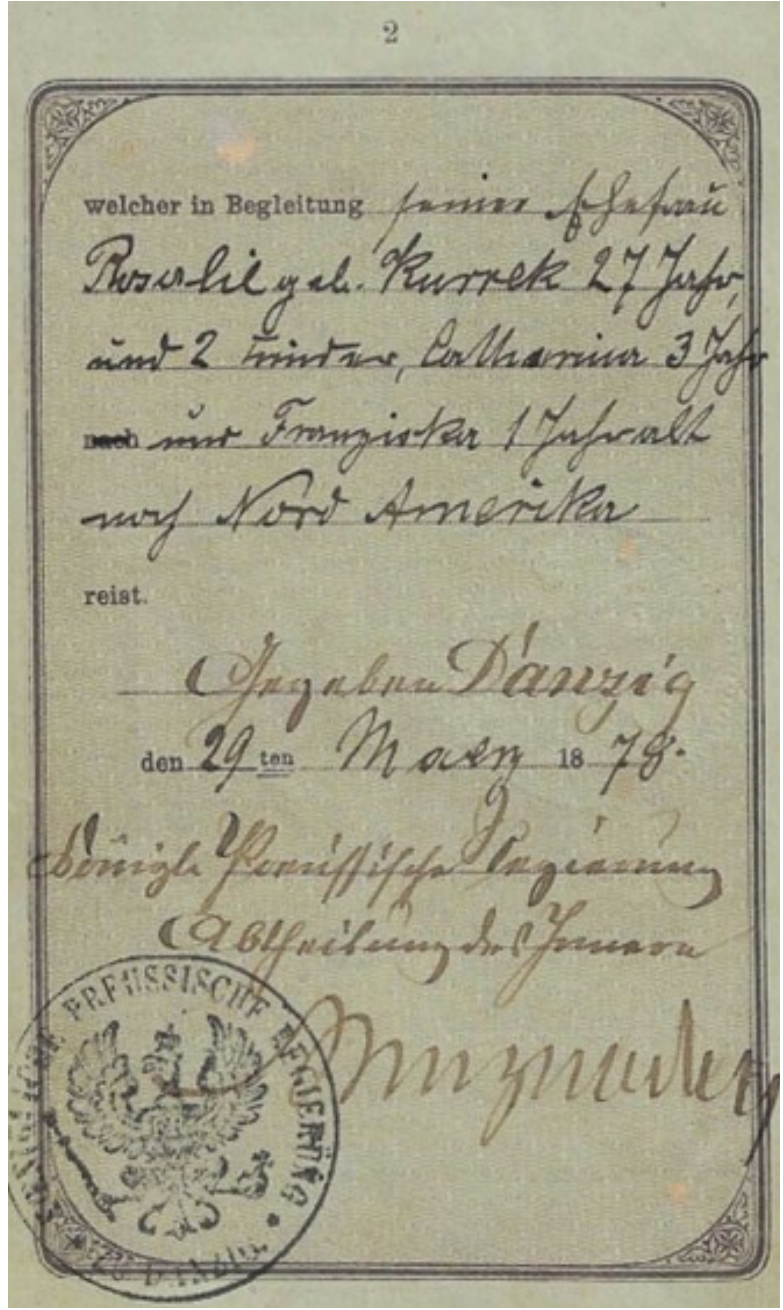
Zblewo is about 30 miles south of Gdansk and 120 miles northeast of Poznan. The Catholic church records were from Parafia Świętego Michała Archanioła (Parish of Saint Michael the Archangel) and are archived at the Pelplin Dioceses. As "PTG" does not provide digital copies of records, my next step was to reach out to the Pelplin Dioceses. A quick search of the dioceses' website found everything in Polish with no option for translation to English. Where do I reach out for help?

## Part II—Discovering Hidden Family Gems

Later in August, I was spending a leisurely Sunday afternoon going through some papers that I had gathered from the old family home of my aunts. I came across a small booklet with the words "DEUSCHES REICH. KONIGREICH PREUSSEN REISE-PASS" on the front cover. The booklet was entirely in German, but I was able to translate enough to know that I found my great-grandfather Johann Korzal's passport that was issued March 29, 1878!

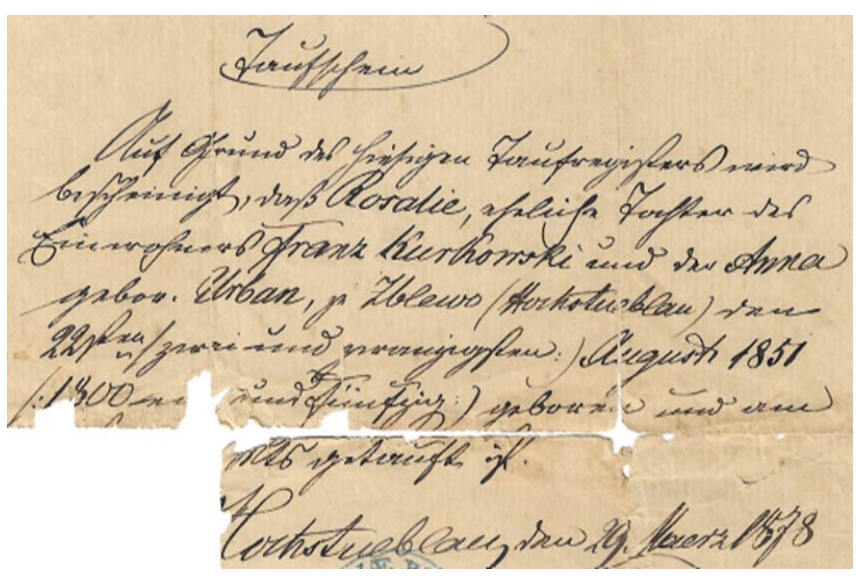
What an amazing hidden family gem I had in my hands. The booklet was in remarkably good condition even though it was over 144 years old. The second page of the passport identified the family members accompanying Johann as wife Rosalie Kurrek and daughters Catharina (age 3) and Franziska (age 1) traveling with him to North America.





Folded up in the passport was a piece of paper in fragile condition, yet good enough to unfold and read. It had details on the marriage certificate for Johann Korzal and Rosalie Kurkowska, and baptismal information for my great-grandmother Rosalie. The writing was in German, but I was able to translate enough of it.

The baptismal document confirmed the names of my great-great grandparents, Franz Kurkowski and Anna Urban. It also said the baptism was at 'Zblewo' in August, 1851. It appeared to be an official document, with a blue stamp dated 29 März 1878, the same date as the passport.

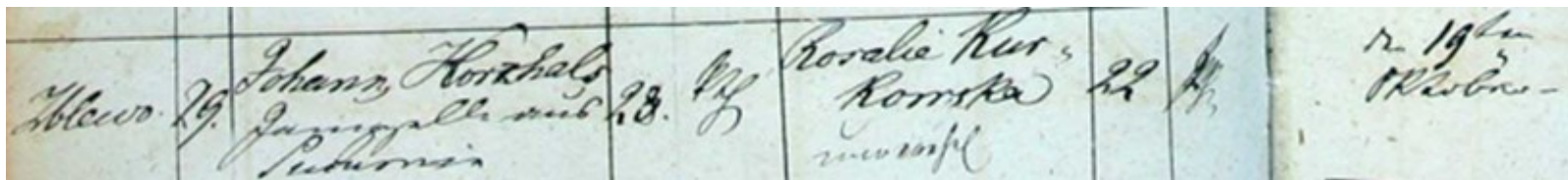




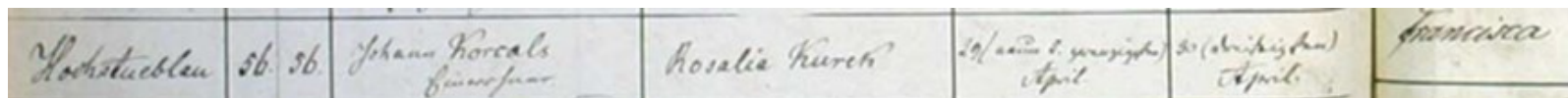
### Part III—Some Help From Friends

With these family heirlooms in my hands that confirmed the Korcal family came from the village of Zblewo, I was even more intent on obtaining copies of the church records identified on the “PTG” database. On the tab “About us” there was information about the organization and an email address (kontakt@ptg.gda.pl) to which questions could be sent, so I drafted an email explaining that I found records from the Zblewo parish in the Pelplin Dioceses Archive, but did not have fluency in the Polish language, and could they offer any guidance as how to obtain copies. I promptly received a response from Michael Wysocki, President of the Pomeranian Genealogical Society. He indicated that Albert Chmielecki (Pomerania.gen2@wp.pl) could provide scanned copies of the records for the archive price of \$5 each payable through PayPal. The day following my request for records and payment, the scanned baptismal and marriage records were in my email.

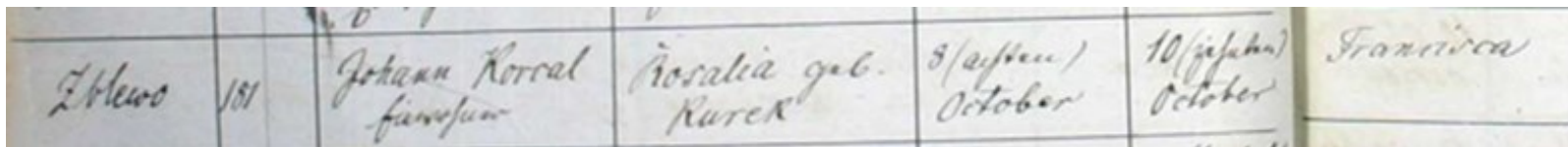
Marriage record: Johann Korzhals & Rosalie Kurkowska (19 October 1873)



Birth record: Francisca (Catharina) Korcals, daughter of Johan Korcals & Rosalie Kurek (29 April 1874)



Birth record: Francisca Korcal, daughter of Johan Korcal & Rosalia Kurek (8 October 1876)



The first column of these records reference the Catholic Parish where the marriage or baptism occurred. Two of the records reflected ‘Zblewo’, but the other one was ‘Hochstueblau’. Where were these villages located? A quick online search confirmed ‘Hochstueblau’ was the German name given to the village of Zblewo after the first partition of Poland to Prussia in 1772! All these records were from the same place in Poland!

### Part IV—Putting the Pieces Together and Next Steps

Finding the German name of Hochstueblau for the village of Zblewo in this 1874 document helped explain what I found in the 1880 U.S. Federal Census for the Korcal family when they lived in Nebraska. A birthplace listed as Hollestine. The enumerator wrote down what he thought he heard. Also, looking closer at the front page of Johann’s passport and the baptismal document for Rosalie, there is reference to ‘Hochstueblau’ so key message? Pay attention to details!

There is still more Korcal family research to do, but at least I know the village of Zblewo, Poland is where records likely will be for my next steps. Albert Chmielecki has offered to continue helping me do more genealogy research. I encourage others looking for Pomeranian records to search the “PTG” database and reach out to Albert for help with obtaining records from the archives in Poland. The search continues.—Kay



## CHRISTMAS WIGILIA AND MAKOWIEC—JUDITH BLANCHARD

The idea of a community Wigilia was introduced to the Minneapolis area by members of the Polanie Club. Polish-Americans loved it. For many, it was the opportunity to re-enact the gathering held at ‘Grandma’s’ house when she was alive. Others just enjoyed the food. However, some Polish-born people were skeptical about turning an intimate celebration into a big production.

It became a tradition that the Polanie would hold its celebration at Jax’s Restaurant in December before Christmas—just close enough for the holidays decorations, yet far enough away so people could relax and enjoy the experience. Jax’s upper floor was a beautiful room, made even more so by the seasonal touches. Tables covered in white cloths and decorated with a doll or two from the organization’s famous Polish doll collection. The service was laid back, so diners could enjoy conversation between courses.

The event became so popular it would sell out. To help alleviate crowding and present the experience to more people, PACIM started offering a Wigilia dinner at the Gasthaus on the alternate Sunday from Polanie’s. It helped some, until people started attending both celebrations! Some would reserve a whole table for their family so they could celebrate the tradition without having to cook or clean. At the urging of Sr. Dorothy Ann, a group from Little Falls started coming. Brother Milton from Grace brought his exchange students. People brought friends who had never experienced Polish food and culture. The room was so full, the Fire Marshall would have closed us down if he had seen it!

Many appreciated the opportunity to share traditions of the first star hanging from the ceiling, the candle in the window, etc. One year, we started the meal with a child running in yelling, “The Star, The Star!” Thanks to Marian Pierzchalski’s discounted price, we were able to add \$5 to the cost of the ticket and donate the proceeds to a different Polish “Orphan Home” each year. He had been a resident of a home when he was young. There was only one drawback. Instead of being serenaded by classical piano music like at Jax’s, the ‘umpapa’ accordionist would keep invading our space!

A priest would bless the food in Polish and English, and guests would sing carols in both languages, but the main draw was always the delicious food. The menu was pretty much set in stone. You could change the soup or vegetable, but don’t mess with anything else. One year, I asked for something different, and Marian suggested that instead of makowiec, we serve kutia, a poppyseed in pasta delicacy from the Southeastern part of Poland. I had an uprising on my hands! What, no poppyseed bread?

So that you don’t suffer the same fate at your gathering, here is how to make makowiec yourself—Buy it! Every November, the Polish Update (my e-newsletter) asks readers for places to buy it. Unfortunately, there are fewer bakeries offering it, and it is expensive. It’s a two-rise process, which takes a long time to make, especially if your house is cool, or your yeast is old. To keep yeast fresh, store it in the freezer. Its a good idea to ‘proof’ it before you add the rest of your expensive ingredients. Proofing means to grow it in warm water with a little sugar to feed the yeast. If it bubbles strongly, you’re OK. If it doesn’t, buy a new package.

Here is what you need for the bread portion. —————>  
\*Eggs are essential for a rich dough, and you can use the whites to make Bezy, a meringue cookie.

2 packages yeast	½ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons warm water	½ cup scalded milk
4 tablespoons butter	½ cup sugar
4 egg yolks*	4 cups flour

Proof the yeast. In the meantime, scald the milk, and when it is cooling, add the butter. Mix everything together, taking care not to use all of the flour at once. How much you use depends on the age of the flour (how dried out it is) and the humidity in the air. The more flour, the tougher the dough will be. The dough really does require kneading for 10 minutes.

Grease the bowl and the dough, cover the bowl with a cloth, put it in a warm place, and wait until the dough has doubled in size. If there is no warm place in your house, you just wait. Don't pre-heat the oven and put the dough in. You could kill the yeast if the oven is too hot. When ovens had pilot lights, it was an ideal location. But, progress has come.

When the dough has doubled, punch it down and divide it in half. Let each half sit under a bowl or in plastic wrap to rest for a few minutes. Roll one out into a rectangle the length of your jelly roll pan and wide enough so it is thin. If it keeps popping back, the gluten has not rested enough. Cover it and wait.

I learned from a bakery to roll the dough out on parchment paper. It helps with the rolling out and, when wrapped around, it controls the second rising. You don't have that hole between the crust and the filling if you use parchment. Rest the formed rolls until double in size. If you used parchment, rest an hour or so depending on your room temperature.

Your pan should not have a dark finish, or your bottoms could burn. Parchment can help protect them. Some people put a second pan under the first one to dissipate the heat. Move up the oven's bottom shelf so it is further away from the heat. (Or, I suppose, the exact opposite if you have an electric oven?)

The recipe recommends you bake for 45 minutes at 350°—Start checking around 30 minutes. For years, I thumped the loaves trying to decide if they were done. Then, I learned rich-dough breads are done at 180–190°F (82–88°C) on your meat/candy thermometer.

Buy the filling! It comes with/without raisins. As a kid, I used Solo filling which is made with sugar. Now, I buy the Polish mixture which is made with honey. Two different tastes. Also, there is the problem of finding ground Poppy seeds. Usually, they are not ground and that is why you see the seeds stuck between people's teeth. If you want to try making the filling, bring  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of milk to boiling, add one pound of ground poppy seeds and stir carefully until milk is absorbed. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar or  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup honey. Beat an egg thoroughly. Mix 1 tablespoon of hot mixture into the egg and then add the remaining hot mixture. Stir until thick and then add 1 teaspoon of vanilla. As the mixture cools, add Sultanas (golden raisins.)

If a large gob of butter is not sufficient, you can top each cooled roll with a 'frosting' made of 3 tablespoons butter, 2  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups sifted powdered sugar, 2 tablespoons of light cream and  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon vanilla. Don't keep adding extra liquid when it seems like it will never cream. If you do, the frosting will become so thin that it will run down the side of the rolls and disappear.

Turning out a beautiful loaf of bread is a skill gained by repetition. Don't be disappointed if your first try didn't look like you expected. It will still taste GOOD!

Judith Blanchard is editor of the Polish Update, a free e-newsletter that shares listings of activities in the Polish and Polish American communities, recipes, and other things of interest. Email her at [judytam@usfamily.net](mailto:judytam@usfamily.net) to be added to her list!







## SMOK'S CORNER—MARIE PRZYNSKI

In the flurry of emails, the PGSMN reminder to renew my membership was there. While writing out the renewal check, I think over the various reasons why membership was important - the various resources that are available – the PGSMN website with MN Church records, etc.; access to the MN Genealogical Society Library, and their various webinars, the webinars that PGSMN hosts on a variety of topics; the PGSMN Facebook page, which lists the above, and connects with

other Genealogy societies and so much more. Learning from other members, about their walls and how they were able to break through, finding those overlooked paths, and sharing our successes. Supporting the organization and making it available to others. If you haven't renewed, now is the time to do it.

In addition to using the great resources of PGSMN, I attended a few different genealogy webinars. The Boston Library recently put on "DNA Resources." The present, Jennifer Zinck, is a very knowledgeable speaker, and discussed all the different DNA tools and techniques currently available. She also pointed out the challenges and how to achieve success in your research.

This worked in nicely with the DNA results that my sister and I obtained when we did our DNA. The results were interesting – my results covered more of the Slavic spectrum of our ancestry, (Poland and East Russia) where hers leaned more towards the end of the Baltic spectrum (Polish, Norwegian, Swedish, Irish, etc.). The results did indicate that we were indeed siblings and provided other "connections." Further info was obtained on why differing test results among siblings (which is very common).

Now the great news. When looking at these connections, I discovered Katrzyna – my great grandfather's aunt. I wandered down that connection and found that she had married in Poland in 1834, and that she, husband and family had immigrated to Stevens Point, WI several years later. For years, I had known that my great grandfather Anton had immigrated in 1868 but couldn't learn why he had gone straight to Stevens Point upon arrival in the US. Further down the ancestry tree that Katrzyna was on, the names of her parents, and grandparents were listed. I then went back to the Polish genealogy sites, and started to plug the names in. It was a banner day with much success, making many connections. Many thanks to Katrzyna great grandson for putting up his "tree." Additionally discovered a few generations for both of us beyond that.

I also learned that my 5x great grandfather Michel owned property, to the east of Czersk in the village of Będzmirowice, Poland. I found confirmation of the land holdings in Prussian land records from 1772. (A copy of these land holdings are located in Bismarck, ND). On US soil, it was learned that Katrzyna and family left Stevens Point and settled in Stearns Co, MN along with my great grandfather. He then settled just inside the Benton County line, northwest of Gilman. The house that he built in 1904 still exists today. The search continues, and I continue to delight in the search.

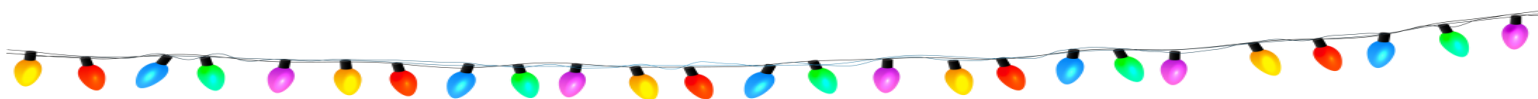
With the colder weather, one thinks of the upcoming holidays, and the great Polish culture and traditions. Looking forward to Święty Mikołaj (St. Nicholas, 12/6). Folklore is that St. Nick during the night will leave small gifts, either under your pillow, or in your shoe. Well-behaved children receive gifts; naughty children receive a lump of coal or a twig, called "rózga". I'm hoping he'll figure out the stocking on the chimney is for that purpose.

While waiting the days to Christmas Eve, it's the time for baking Christmas piernik (gingerbread), other treats, and making decorations. I no longer make Christmas decorations, but I have collected them from all over the world, and delight in remembering where/when I acquired them. A good share of course are Polish.

Wigilia (Christmas Eve) is a 12 course meal, meatless, with an extra place setting, a sprig of hay under the table linen, sharing bits of a Christmas wafer (opłatek) and telling one another wishes, prayers and hopes. Within my family this celebration was followed by Midnight mass. My mother would always want to go early to pick out the seats. We sat near the rear (I think it was my mother's idea to be the first to exit) and we were always on the center aisle. The Knights of Columbus would line up there, with their swashbuckling swords. The pageantry was great, but it was the next day with St. Stephen's (Boxing Day for some) – the opening of presents was the biggie for us kids. A short wait and onto Sylwester/Sylwek (New Year's Eve) with the toasting of good wishes for the coming year. New Year's Eve in Poland is celebrated with parties and social gatherings spanning the transition of the year at midnight. Fireworks (pokaz sztucznych ogni) are also part of the celebration. Although I have gone to a party or two, these days I prefer the solitude of home, snuggled with my canine companions. My family does continue fireworks on this day when we're together.

The festive season continues onto Objawienie Pańskie (Epiphany) on January 6th. In my family this is a signal that the tree comes down. In some regions of Poland, the season extends to Feb. 2nd, and celebrations for święto Matki Boskiej Gromniczej (Candlemas / Feast of Our Lady of Thunder Candles) occur.

Whatever your celebration, have a merry one (Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia) and a great new year (Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku).



MARK YOUR 2023 CALENDAR—Check out [facebook.com/pgsminnesota](https://facebook.com/pgsminnesota) and [pgsmn.org](https://pgsmn.org) for updates and more!

- Dec 31-Jan 1—Sylwester/Sylwek (New Years Eve/Day)
- Jan 6—Objawienie Pańskie (Epiphany)
- Jan 10—Sister Cities Columbia Heights, MN / Lomianki Poland Meeting
- Jan 21—PGS-MN Annual Meeting at MN Genealogy Center, Mendota Heights, MN
- Jan 28, 6pm-Jan 29, 2023, 12—PACIM Bal Karnawałowy, Midland Hills Country Club, Roseville, MN
- Feb 16—In Poland, Fat Thursday is called tłusty czwartek. People purchase favorite pastries from local bakeries. Traditional foods include pączki (doughnuts), which are large deep-fried pieces of yeast dough, traditionally filled with fruit jam or rose petal jam (though others are often used) and topped with powdered sugar, icing or glaze. Angel wings (faworki) are also commonly consumed on this day.
- Feb 21—Fat Tuesday is the day before the start of Lent/Ash Wednesday. Fat Tuesday is also the same day that Mardi Gras is celebrated. In Poland, Paczki Day is more commonly celebrated on Fat Thursday.
- Mar 4—PGS-MN March Program Meeting (Hybrid meeting at MN Genealogy Center and via Zoom.)
- Mar 22—OUR MARCH NEWSLETTER! Send ideas to [pgsminnesota@gmail.com](mailto:pgsminnesota@gmail.com) and we will reply.
- Mar 23—Hungarian-Polish Friendship Day. “Pole and Hungarian brothers be” is a 16th or 18th century coinage by Polish szlachta (nobility) reflecting a long special relationship between Poland and Hungary. It is celebrated regularly in both countries with concerts, festivals, and exhibitions.

