

# Kopernik Memorial Association Newsletter

Member of Polish American Congress  
American Council for Polish Culture  
Kosciuszko Foundation  
Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute

Website: [cnykopernik.com](http://cnykopernik.com)  
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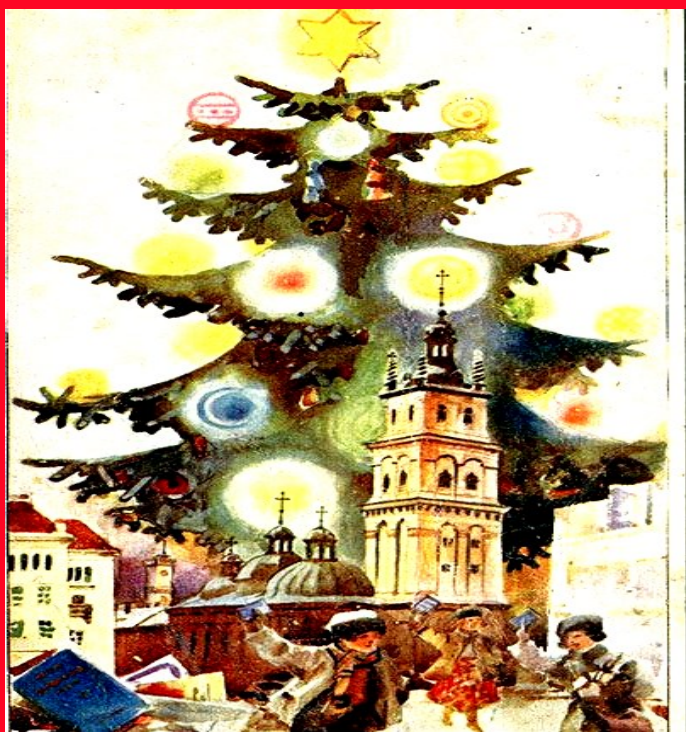
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Winter Newsletter January 2020

Issue 25

## Bożego Narodzenia i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku



## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

### “Flavor of Poland” to Air on PBS

CHICAGO — “Flavor of Poland” is a new, culinary-travel series. Each of the 13-episodes will highlight the beauty, traditions, monuments, history as well as the current modernity of Poland along with a full range of its unique flavors, both old and new. Host Aleksandra August will visit total of 13 regions and over 30 cities and towns featuring the local history and heritage, showing them the area’s iconic monuments, and

## TIME TO RENEW

You can find  
a 2020  
membership  
form in this  
newsletter



### BULLETIN BOARD

Send in your dues by Feb. 29th!!

Mon. Feb. 10, 6:00 KMA Meeting PCC

Sun Feb. 23 Following 10:00 mass  
Paczki Sunday, Holy Trinity Church, Free

Mon. March 9, 6:00 KMA Meeting PCC

Sat. March 14 12:00 Straw Applique Easter  
Eggs Workshop Holy Trinity (adults)

Sun. March 29 Following the 10:00 mass  
Holy Trinity Kids Naliepianki For Children  
(paper cut outs on eggs) Free

Sun. April 5, after 10:00 Mass  
Paim Sunday Easter Traditions Workshop,  
Free

Mon. April 13, 6:00 KMA Meeting PCC

cultural singularity. The first two episodes feature Krakow on the week of January 13 and Warszawa the week of Jan 20, 2020. Check your local PBS (WCNY) for times.

# ! SZOPKA 2019 !

The annual Szopka Festival and Competition usually held at the Utica Public Library was substituted this year with a Szopka blessing, dedication and Jaselka (Nativity Play) performed at Holy Trinity Church's St. Nicholas Party on December 6, 2019.

Part of the festivities featured the unveiling of a nine foot tall puppet theater szopka. This hand made Christmas crèche was fashioned by Valerie Kosuda Elacqua with the talents of many others. Special thanks to Joe Elacqua for building the structure and designing the special lighting effects, Vincent Parella for the towers, Vincent DeStefano and Gary Coufal for work on the cathedral windows, Janet Kosuda Dwyer for puppet theater drapery and Joanne Kosuda Warner for painting the puppet



stage backdrop. We are grateful to Denise Tan, member and Notre Dame Art teacher for artistic guidance and directing the construction and design of the nativity puppets with students Evangelina Stoyen, Molly Roefaro and Tanaya Robinson. Thank you Beth Evans for preparing Notre Dame flutists Lina Romero and Sarah Raja and to member



John Ossowski for providing beautiful Koledy on his accordion and to Dan Jadowski, Joseph Kosuda, Mary Currie, Elizabeth McGarry for all of their efforts.

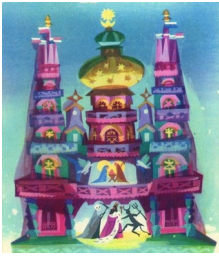
After the blessing of this unique szopka by Fr. Canon John Mikalajunas, President Richard Noga dedicated the szopka effort to Jane Kosuda, who had passed away on October 20. Her support of this project was unwavering.



## Memorial Dedication

**Jane Krauzza Kosuda 1930 - 2019 was a lifelong member of Holy Trinity Parish, and longtime officer and active member of the Kopernik Memorial Association. In recognition of her fidelity to the Catholic faith and a respect and love for her Polish heritage; this Szopka Puppet Theater is donated in her name by her family.**

**The Szopka is one example of the intersection between her faith and culture and thus a fitting way to honor her memory.**



**Jaselka** is the Polish word for a Nativity play or Christmas pageant which recounts the story of the Nativity of Jesus.

In the jaselka presented, the good shepherd leads a would-be robber to the newborn baby Jesus and has a change of heart by seeing the shepherd sacrifice for others.



Cast included: (Good) Shepherd: Peter Stokes, Robber: Robert Stokes, Narrator: Matthew Franco, Voice of St. Joseph: Anthony Rabbia, Old Man: Matthew Gazek, Young Girl: Regina Rabbia, Angel :Emmy Medeiros, Kings: Steven Lewosco, Caleb Stewart, John Lewosco,



Shepherds: Matthew Gazek, Max Pawlowski, Sara Aung, Michael Olejarnik

The event also featured a display of szopki created by students of Michelle Ekross Art Teacher from St. Mary's Academy and Most Holy Rosary Catholic School in Syracuse, NY . Some students created drawings of szopki as well. The displays were surrounded by original Wycinanki cuts created by Notre Dame students of Denise Tan.

We are grateful to our dependable volunteers Phyllis Gowarek, Janice Lyszczarz, Carol Dinger, Betty Matusiewski and Joanne Szczygiel for their assistance with all aspects of the event.



# What is a Szopka?

*Szopka* (Shup kah) is the Polish word for a Christmas crib



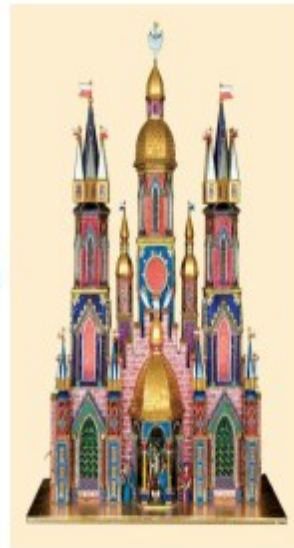
## Historical Highlights

- Developed by Krakow bricklayers during the mid-1800's
- Fantasy constructions that combine elements from Krakow's historic medieval, renaissance, and baroque architecture, featuring decorative facades, spires, and domes
- Traditionally carried by Christmas carolers
- Sometimes used as a puppet stage for nativity play performances
- First crib-building contest held in Krakow in 1937; continues annually



## Construction Highlights

- Made from found materials, especially those with brilliant colors and shiny surfaces, ribbons, metallic cords, beads and sequins
- May be several inches to nine feet tall
- Minimum of two structural levels, multiple towers, Polish eagle and the red and white flag of Poland
- Features a nativity scene as a central focus



Szopka signage created by Kopernik Memorial Association with a matching grant from The American Council for Polish Culture

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**Sharing the Oplatek**

## **Come to the PYSANKY USA Retreat 2020**

The PYSANKY USA Retreat promotes Egg Artistry. Whether you are struggling with a creative block or don't even know where to begin, this retreat will work for you. Classes are designed to exercise, stimulate and expand your expression, especially for any "beginner". Work is done on natural eggs, as an art or folk medium. Classes teach several forms of the art working on small to large eggs, as well as white or brown eggs, to learn techniques. (pysanky-Ukrainian spelling; pisanki- Polish spelling)



Held in Wilkes-Barre, PA, this year the retreat will be held July 14<sup>th</sup>- July 18<sup>th</sup>. There is a limit of 125 attendees. Early registration is encouraged and information will be posted on the website beginning January 14<sup>th</sup>. Classes fill quickly. For further information regarding the retreat check the website: [www.pysankyusaretreat2020.com](http://www.pysankyusaretreat2020.com) or contact Mary Currie or Valerie Elacqua [www.cnykopernik.org](http://www.cnykopernik.org)

Both Mary and Valerie went in 2019. Join us in 2020!! We plan to attend in July.

# Kopernik Scholarship Luncheon



The Kopernik Scholarship luncheon honoring our 2019 winners took place on Oct. 19 at 1PM at the Polish Community Center. Each scholarship recipient, Sylvia Kryszczuk from Yale University and David Opozda from Hamilton College was presented with a \$1,000. scholarship award. The luncheon was catered by Kopernik members Brian and Karen Karwowski and assisted by members Sharon and Stacy Scotti. The exceptional Polish menu is listed. Those in attendance celebrated the afternoon honoring the students accomplishments. Pictured below are (l to R) Carol Dinger, Presenter, Sylvia Kryszczuk, Recipient, Richard Noga, Kopernik President, Valerie Elacqua, Scholarship chairperson, David Opozda, Recipient, Mary Currie, Presenter.

2020 Kopernik Scholarship information is available at our website [www.cnykopernik.com](http://www.cnykopernik.com)



## Kopernik Scholarship Luncheon Menu October 19, 2019 1 PM

Mushroom Barley Soup – Krupnik

Hunters Stew Served with Rye Bread  
Bigos Serwowany z Chlebem Żytnim

Pork Cutlets with Wild Mushroom Sauce  
Kotlet Schabowy z Sosem z Grzybów Leśnych

Potato Dumplings with Fried Onions  
Kopytka ze Smażonym Cebulą

Krakow Style Cheesecake with Vanilla Ice Cream  
served with Sour Cherry Vodka Sauce  
Sernik Krakowski z Lodami Waniliowymi  
Podawane z Sosem z wódki wWśniowej

Coffee - Kawa

## **Polish Biochemist Dr. Kazimierz Funk qualifying scholarship essay by David Opozda**

The field of biochemistry has brought countless advancements that have extended and promoted the life and well being of humanity. Among the most important discoveries was that of vitamins. Kazimierz Funk was a Polish born biochemist that is credited with being one of the pioneers of vitamin theory. He theorized that many diseases like scurvy and rickets were caused by the absence of chemical molecules, leading him to discover multiple vital amine molecules. Amines are a specific group of bioactive molecules. Vitamins get their name from the idea that they are vital amines (vital plus amine give vitamin).

Funk determined that there were specific molecules vital to health by looking at other experiments. Other scientists had found that other animals could develop health problems as a result of diets, but that these problems could be reversed by adding certain foods to the diets. Chickens became sick if they ate just polished rice, but became healthy if fed rice hulls. Mice that were fed carbs, fats, proteins, and salts did not grow properly unless given milk. Funk figured that rice hulls and milk had beneficial substances. He eventually extracted a substance from rice hulls and decided to test it. He first fed some pigeons polished rice and they soon developed health complications. Then, he fed them the extract, along with some yeast, and the birds began to recover. He had proven that even small quantities of these substances could have significant impacts. This substance would eventually be known as thiamine, or vitamin B1. He would later go on to also isolate and discover vitamins B2 (riboflavin), C (ascorbic acid), and D (cholecalciferol).



After publishing “The Vitamin”, Funk became publicly recognized and was able to obtain a fellowship from the University of London. This would help him jump into many projects at many labs and centers, including helping make the first cod liver oil concentrate. He also performed extensive research on animal hormones, cancer, diabetes, and ulcers. Furthermore, he improved the methods of commercially producing drugs.

Kazimierz Funk had helped accelerate a new age of biomedicine. His extensive research and dedication transformed the standard practices and knowledge of human biochemistry. Without him, diseases like scurvy, anemia, and rickets would have debilitated millions. He was a man that achieved what many of us could only dream of.



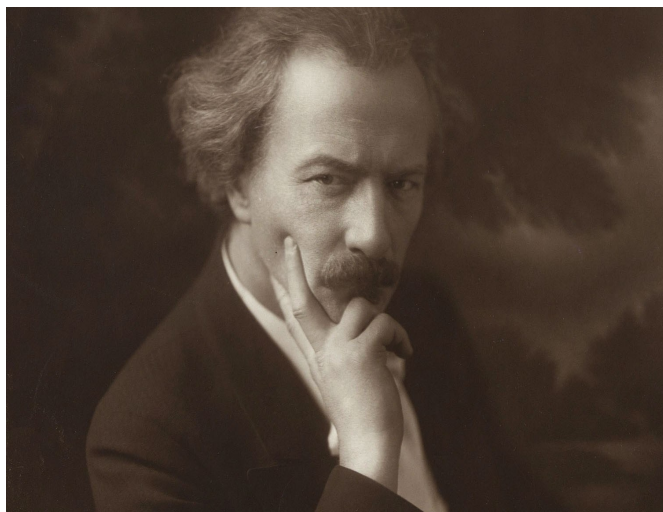
### **Polish Proverb**

Kiedy w styczniu lato , w lecie zimno za to.  
Kiedy styczén mokry trzyma, zwykle bywa długa zima.

When it's summer in January, then the summer is chilly.  
When January stays wet, a long winter's what you get.

## **Polish Patriot, Acclaimed Pianist and Diplomat Ignacy Paderewski** **qualifying scholarship essay by Sylvia Kryszczuk**

As a pianist and student who is intrigued by philosophy and law, one Polish patriot stands out to me as excelling in each of these areas, and whom I view with great admiration for doing so. That person is Ignacy Paderewski. Hearing of Paderewski first through his compositions for the piano, I was astounded to discover an individual abounding in accomplishments, talents, sacrifices, and devotion to both Poland and the United States. It is not commonplace that one should find both a passionate musician, gifted politician, and avid diplomat in the same individual. Though his achievements in these areas are undoubtedly praiseworthy, they do not constitute that which is



most admirable about him: Paderewski possessed a zeal for assisting others that was unbounded, freely giving of himself to promote the greater good, support the disadvantaged, cultivate the arts, and pursue historical preservation.

Paderewski first devoted himself to musical study, and his talent swiftly won him acclaim in the theaters of Paris and London. Soon thereafter he launched an international tour, even reaching Australia, and he became the first soloist ever to perform in Carnegie Hall in New York. Paderewski's compositional masterpieces range from an opera to symphonies and polonaises-

a repertoire of over 70 works remains his cherished musical legacy. Although he could have comfortably finished his active career, Paderewski was later drawn into politics through deep concern towards Poland. With the fate of Poland endangered due to World War I, Paderewski, already made famous through music, engaged in speaking openly in defense of Poland, both at home and abroad, establishing the Polish Relief Fund in London as well. Paderewski is credited with bringing the plight of Poland to the attention of President Woodrow Wilson, consequently causing the United States to declare its defense of the establishment of an independent New Poland. For doing so, Paderewski was honored by Chief of State Pilsudski and was thus appointed Prime Minister of Poland in 1919. It was thanks to the relentless diplomatic efforts of Ignacy Paderewski (who was fluent in seven languages) that Poland was able to achieve reconciliation in arduous international border disputes. After peacefully returning to a career as a pianist, the outbreak of World War II prompted Paderewski to again return to political life and to actively denounce Nazism during international tours, especially in the United States, until his death at the age of 80 during one such tour. Paderewski's character is most admirable: he was a compassionate philanthropist, establishing funds for student musicians in several countries, supporting musicians in financial straits, funding orphanages and maternity centers, and erecting countless concert halls and historical monuments in Poland and in other nations, such as the Kosciuszko Monument in Chicago.

In the person of Ignacy Paderewski, one finds not only an endless list of accomplishments, but a host of virtues cultivated by his persistence, fidelity, and patriotism. It was Paderewski's selfless spirit which caused him to alter the course of history and touch an untold number of lives.





January 2020

Dear friends,

The Kopernik Memorial Association has been in existence for over four decades. Our organization continues to contribute to our members, associates and to the greater community. It is important that we teach our young people to carry on these traditions, for in preserving our past we cultivate our future.

Throughout 2019 we offered a variety of programs and activities, which are listed on the back of this letter. These accomplishments resulted from the creativity and dedication of a small group of volunteers, who work tirelessly toward achieving our mission.

In order for us to achieve our aims we also rely on individuals and businesses for financial support. Without the assistance of community minded individuals like you we would not be able to continue to provide these opportunities.

We ask that you support our annual appeal by making a financial donation. Your generosity will be an investment in our community and will allow us to continue our work.

Every donation is tax deductible and every donation makes a difference regardless of size. Please consider joining us for a meeting and volunteering your time, share your wisdom, as we work together into this new decade.

If you received this newsletter and are not currently a member, I urge you to consider becoming one. If you are a member please be sure to submit your dues payment by the end of February. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year to you and yours. Thank you for your support.  
Sincerely,

Richard J Noga

## **Our 2019 ambitious schedule of successful activities and events included:**

- o Held reception for Utica College visiting professor from Poland's Jagellonian University  
Dr. Rafal Kus
- o Paczki Sunday (Holy Trinity) Pre-Lenten celebration
- o Easter Egg Decorating Workshop
- o 2nd annual Copernicus award presented at Utica College Regional Science Fair
- o Palm Sunday Easter Traditions Workshop with egg decorating, palm weaving, butter lamb carving and Slavic embroidery
- o Author Sophie Hodorowicz Knab Presentation "Wearing the Letter P" a story about Polish women as forced laborers in Nazi Germany 1939-1945.
- o Participated in Multi-cultural Festival with Oneida (NY) Library.
- o Kopernik Cultural Center Open House: Talks about styles of dress from various regions in Poland and about Polish artist : Zofia Stryjenska
- o Kopernik Scholarship Awards presented to two recipients at Awards Luncheon
- o Unveiling of Szopka Puppet Theatre and Nativity Play (jaselka)
- o Display of original Wycinanki (paper cutting) and elementary szopka projects
- o Re-organization of Kopernik Polish Cultural Center and Library
- o Completed ACPC matching grant project: Display boards depicting Kopernik's accomplishments, "Who Was Kopernik?", "Member Benefits" and "Szopka Highlights"
- o KMA members trained at Pysanky USA retreat with advanced techniques in egg decorating

The next visiting scholar from Jagellonian University in Poland  
through the Joseph P. Furgal Endowment  
will be welcomed by the Utica College Community  
at a reception on Tuesday February 4, 2020 at 4:00  
in the Rocco Deperno Hall. Join us!

