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A Fraternal Benefit Society Safeguarding Your Future with Life Insurance & Annuities

September | **Wrzesień 2026** No 9 – Vol. CXLI

E-NARÓD POLSKI Polish Nation

PRCUA'S HISTORIC VIRTUAL CONVENTION SETS THE STAGE FOR FUTURE GROWTH

A new chapter has begun for the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America following the successful conclusion of its 64th National Convention, held virtually on Saturday, August 8, 2026.

The convention marked a significant milestone in the organization's history as the first National Convention ever conducted entirely online, demonstrating the Union's ability to embrace innovation while continuing its longstanding tradition of member participation and governance.



Leading ladies of the PRCUA President Agnieszka Bastrzyk and Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado

The new administration of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America was elected during the convention and consists of National President Agnieszka Bastrzyk, National Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado, National Chaplain Rev. Canon Walter Ptak and Directors-At-Large: Myron Cislo, Elizabeth Dynowski, Michael Dykla, Kristi Mihalic, Christopher Ozog, Stanley Pasko, Jr., and Barbara Toboy.

The convention began with an opening Holy Mass, celebrated virtually at 8 a.m. on Saturday by PRCUA National Chaplain Rev. Canon Walter Ptak at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Parish in Farmington, Michigan.

In his homily, Fr. Ptak spoke of the PRCUA's illustrious past and its leaders—whose knowledge, dedication, and concern for the organization's well-being have enabled the PRCUA to serve the Polish-American community for over 150 years. He entrusted the 64th Quadrennial PRCUA Convention and the delegates participating in its proceedings to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The Mass was also celebrated in memory of the deceased officers: past President Wallace Ozog and past Vice President Lorie Rose Gorny; directors: Shirley L. Dudzinski, Gregory Olma, James Rustik, Lillian Stempinski, Diane A. Synakowski, and Sharon Quinn; and deceased members of the PRCUA who passed away during the past four years.

The first session began at 9 a.m., with PRCUA President Agnieszka Bastrzyk welcoming everyone from the Home Office and declaring the 64th National Quadrennial PRCUA Convention officially open. She stated that the virtual convention remained an official proceeding of the Union.

Mrs. Bastrzyk stressed that the role of each delegate is critically important and encouraged delegates to approach the proceedings with open minds, recognizing the responsibilities they carry and the meaningful difference they can make. She urged everyone to serve as active ambassadors for the PRCUA by bringing in new members, sharing the Union's mission, and supporting the PRCUA administration as it moves into the future.

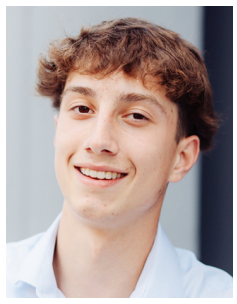
Mrs. Bastrzyk then invited Fr. Ptak to deliver the opening prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Joining Mrs. Bastrzyk at the presidium at the Home Office were Vice President Micheline Jaminski, Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado, and PRCUA Legal Counsel John Chitkowski.

The opening remarks were followed by the Credentials Committee consisting of Marge Grzeszczuk, Roberta Brewster, and Mateusz Bomba reporting that 161 delegates were accredited. A minimum of 54 delegates was required to establish (*Continued on pg. 6*)

CELEBRATING OUR 2026 PRCUA SCHOLARS

Top Award



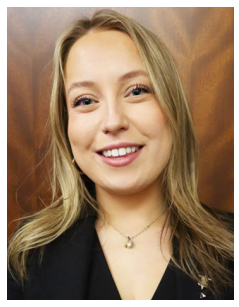
Dennis Barth



Emilia Kroplewski



Maximilian Miniewicz



Patrycja Szot

Twenty-one outstanding undergraduate and graduate students were awarded scholarships by the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA) for the 2026/2027 academic year.

Four students were selected to receive the organization's top scholarship awards in recognition of their outstanding academic achievements, leadership, and commitment to their communities.

- Dennis Barth, a member of PRCUA Society 1618, is a junior at Macomb Community College, where he is majoring in business management.
- Emilia Kroplewski, a member of Society 1634, is a sophomore at the University of Alabama, majoring in aerospace engineering and mechanics.
- Maximilian Miniewicz is pursuing a master's degree in economics at New York University.
- Patrycja Szot, a member of Society 1624, is a junior at Loyola University Chicago, where she is majoring in biochemistry.

(*Continued on pg. 5*)

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Polish Nation

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SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER IS LIFE INSURANCE AWARENESS MONTH

7 **LABOR DAY – PRCUA OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED**

13 **CHIGAGO, IL – PRCUA INAUGURATION,** 1:30 p.m. Holy Mass at Holy Trinity Church, 1118 N. Noble St., Chicago. See pg. 4 for details.

20 **LEMONT, IL – 54th CINDERELLA AND PRINCE CHARMING BALL ORIENTATION.** See pg. 17 for details.

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- ☑ Ease of payment collections via credit card and Electronic Fund Transfers (EFT)

Agent Benefits

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- ☑ Structured support system
- ☑ Competitive commission rates
- ☑ Unlimited earning potential
- ☑ Frequent commission pay schedule
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Contact our Sales Department
Marge Grzeszczuk, *Sales Coordinator*
(773) 782-2644 | marge-grzeszczuk@prcua.org

OCTOBER

3 **PRCUA 153RD ANNIVERSARY**

12 **COLUMBUS DAY – PRCUA OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED**

25 **WYANDOTTE, MI – PRCUA SOC. #162 TRUNK OR TREAT.** See pg. 17 for details.

Polish Roman Catholic Union of America Operating Results For the Quarter Ending June 30, 2026

	June 2026	June 2025
INCOME:		
Life and Annuity Sales	11,404,165	9,944,041
Investment Income	5,484,740	5,604,768
Other Income	(11,743)	(14,847)
Total Income	**16,877,162**	**15,533,962**
EXPENSES:		
Life and Annuity	14,987,130	12,520,712
General Expenses	2,273,614	2,486,099
Insurance Fees	128,875	134,113
Total Expenses:	**17,389,619**	**15,140,924**
Net Operating Income	(512,457)	393,038
Dividends to Members (deduct)	(2,707)	(78,074)
Net Capital Gain	(760,000)	(40,419)
Net Income	**(1,275,164)**	**274,545**
SURPLUS ACCOUNT:		
Beginning Bal-Dec.31, prior year	4,656,959	7,340,682
Net Income	(1,275,164)	274,545
Change in Reserves	488,270	(180,836)
Ending Balance as of Statement Date	**3,870,065**	**7,434,391**

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Earn a $25 Gift Card
for every Life Insurance certificate issued at $25,000 and up

Earn a $10 Gift Card
for every Life Insurance certificate issued at $10,000-$24,999

Visit PRCUA.org/referral-program to download and submit the referral form

Restrictions apply. Program subject to change without notice. PRCUA employees, directors and sales agents are not eligible to participate in the member referral program.



MULTI-YEAR GUARANTEED ANNUITIES

3 YEAR ANNUITY	5 YEAR ANNUITY
4.80% APY	5.00% APY
3 YEAR GUARANTEED	5 YEAR GUARANTEED

$10,000 MINIMUM DEPOSIT

- 10% annual free withdrawal
- Single Premium Deferred (SPDA)
  - Not available in CA & NY
  - Issue ages 0-95
  - Automatic renewal after 45 days
  - Market Value Adjustment (MVA)
- Flexible Premium Deferred (FPDA)
  - Available in CA & NY only
  - Issue ages 0-90
  - 2.40% minimum guaranteed APY

7 YEAR ANNUITY

DEPOSIT	GUAR. APY YEARS 1-2	GUAR. APY YEARS 3-4
TIER 1 $100K+	5.50%	4.50%
TIER 2 $50K-$99K	5.25%	4.25%
TIER 3 $5K-$49K	5.00%	4.00%

- Flexible Premium Deferred (FPDA)
- $5,000 minimum deposit
- Issue ages 0-90
- 10% annual free withdrawal
- 4-year guaranteed APYs
- 2.40% minimum guaranteed APY

MEMBERSHIP ANNUITY

8 YEAR ANNUITY 2.50% APY
8 YEAR GUARANTEED

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- Minimum guaranteed 2.40%
- Issue ages 0-90
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You are cordially invited to attend the

Inaugural Mass

of the
Polish Roman Catholic Union of America

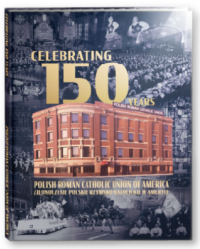
Sunday, September 13, 2026
at 1:30 p.m.

Holy Trinity Polish Mission
1118 North Noble Street, Chicago

Light refreshments will be served immediately afterwards in the Great Hall of the Polish Museum of America 984 N Milwaukee Ave, Chicago

PRCUA PRODUCT ORDER FORM

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Pay online at PRCUA.org/payonline or complete the form below and mail **(with your check payable to PRCUA)** to:
PRCUA Marketing Department, 984 N Milwaukee Ave, Chicago, IL 60642

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

	ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
1.	PRCUA 150TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE BOOK	×	$20.00	= $_____
2.	SHARING OUR BEST - 130TH ANNIVERSARY COOK BOOK	×	$17.00	= $_____
3.	COATS OF ARMS OF POLAND COLORING BOOK - VOL. I	×	$2.00	= $_____
4.	COATS OF ARMS OF POLAND COLORING BOOK - VOL. II	×	$2.00	= $_____
5.	OUR POLISH ANCESTORS COLORING BOOK	×	$2.00	= $_____
6.	PROMOTING POLISH CULTURE - A HISTORY OF PRCUA SCHOOLS & GROUPS	*LIMIT 1*	FREE	$ 0.00
NAME			TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED	$_____

ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
PHONE	EMAIL		

CELEBRATING OUR 2026 PRCUA SCHOLARS *(Cont. from pg. 1)*

PRCUA scholarship recipients were selected based on a variety of criteria, including their personal backgrounds, academic achievements, recommendations, and other qualifications. All applications were carefully reviewed by an independent selection committee. Scholarships were awarded to both PRCUA members and non-members.

Through its continued investment in the education and future of these talented students, the PRCUA helps provide them with the opportunity to focus on their studies and professional development at colleges, universities, and trade or technical schools. The other distinguished recipients of the PRCUA scholarships are:



Karolina Bajda
Junior
McGill University
Major: Sustainability, Science & Society



Krzysztof Branka
Graduate
University of Illinois Chicago
Major: Law (Juris Doctor)



Eva Frenchowicz
Junior
University of Washington Seattle
Major: Architerctural Studies



Claudia Godowski
Sophomore
Illinois State University
Major: Engineering



Daniel Jesion
Junior
University of Illinois Chicago
Major: Finance



Wiktor Kuzmiuk
Senior
University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Major: Aerospace Engineering
Society: 1634



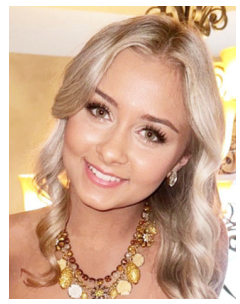
Alexandra Little
Senior
University of Arizona
Major: Retail and Consumer Science
Society: 1622



Marianna Mosz
Junior
Loyola University Chicago
Major: Finance and Marketing
Society: 1624



Barbara Panko
Sophomore
Georgetown University
Major: International Economics



Julia Skowyra
Junior
University of Iowa
Major: Health Promotions
Society: 1622



Joshua Skrzypczak
Sophomore
University of California Los Angeles
Major: Public Affairs and History



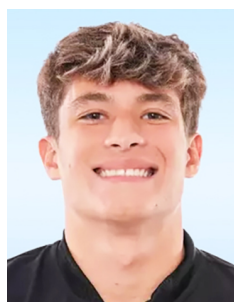
Matthew Swiatek
Senior
University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Major: Systems Engineering & Design



Mark Szafran
Senior
Rowan University
Major: Inclusive Education - Elementary



Monika Toltzman
Sophomore
Central College
Major: Psychology
Society: 1622



Dawid Turos
Junior
Rider University
Major: Marketing, International Business, Sports Management
Society: 1624



Veronica Wilgocki
Sophomore
University of Evansville
Major: Psychology and Exercise Science
Society: 693



Kamila Wojdyla
Senior
Northern Arizona Univversity
Major: History

Congratulations to all of our scholarship recipients!
We wish each of you tremendous success in your academic pursuits, continued achievement in your chosen fields, and a bright, fulfilling, and prosperous future.

PRCUA'S HISTORIC VIRTUAL CONVENTION *(Cont. from pg. 1)*

a quorum and with 97 delegates signing in to the first session the quorum was achieved to start the convention proceedings.

The official count reported by the Credential Committee was followed by the oath of the delegates administered by Fr. Ptak. Counts of delegates were presented after every recess and the newly registered delegates were sworn in throughout the proceedings of the Convention.

Next, the convention agenda was read and approved. It was anticipated that the convention would succesfully conclude within a single day.

The first order of business was the appointments of the Sergeant-at-Arms: Carlos Escobar, Madia Robles, Stan Pasko, Brian Brumm and Election Committee: Kevin Ryba, Michael Dykla, Thomas Lisiecki, Joan Smuda, Michael Dziadkowiec followed by the acceptance of the Minutes of the 63rd PRCUA Quadrennial Convention.

Budget and Grievance Committee Chair Jerome Lubiarz presented a recommendation regarding compensation for the convention officers. The recommendation was moved and accepted.

President Bastrzyk asked the floor for nominations for the positions of convention chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. Barbara Toboy nominated Valerie Brumm, and Colleen Bonkowski nominated Joann Smuda for the position of chairman; Joann Smuda declined the nomination. Richard Jaminski nominated Andrew Lech for vice chairman, and Małgorzata Kot nominated Mary Jane Robles for secretary. All nominations were accepted.

Subsequent to the nominations, Rev. Ptak administered the oath of office to the convention presidium, followed by a recess that allowed the transition.

After the reassembly, Chairman Brumm presented the appointments to the Rules and Order, Standing and Youth committees, which were accepted by the majority.

The session continued with a presentation by our guest speaker, Allison Koppel, CAE, Chief Executive Officer of the American Fraternal Alliance. She delivered a highly informative presentation highlighting recent updates and developments in the fraternal industry.

She commended the PRCUA for continuing to provide financial security to members and their families through life insurance, investment products, and other benefits, while also fostering community service, charitable, educational, and social initiatives. She remarked that the number of fraternal organizations is steadily declining, with approximately 50 still operating, and membership continues to decline as well.

She also mentioned that Mrs. Bastrzyk was named one of the Young Rising Stars by the American Fraternal Alliance. The Alliance supports these selected individuals in advancing their careers and professional development, helping to ensure that the next generation of leaders is well educated, well prepared, and well connected.

The presentation was received with very positive comments from the delegates.

Before the session recessed for lunch, the report of the PRCUA actuary was presented. First, a prerecorded message from Chris Conklin, FSA, MAAA, MBA, Co-President of Miller and Newberg Consulting Actuaries, was played. In his message, he explained the current financial situation of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America. He discussed the role of the consulting firm in helping societies achieve profitability and explained how the primary measures are used to assess a company's financial strength. Mr. Conklin projected positive results for the future based on the actions recently taken by the PRCUA, supported by its competitive annuity and insurance products, excellent service, and wide variety of fraternal activities.

His presentation was followed by remarks from Trevor Huseman, FSA, MAAA, Co-President.

The report was accepted after some clarification and explanation were provided to the delegates.

A lunch recess was announced after the actuary's presentation. After break, Rules and Order Committee declared no changes to the agenda had been made.

Next, the report was presented by the Budget and Grievance Committee. Chairman Lubiarz walked everyone through the main points of his report, which laid the groundwork for changes aimed at ensuring future success. The four-year budget for the PRCUA includes major reductions and changes. One of the most significant changes presented was a reduction in the responsibilities of the vice president, which would be redistributed between the president and secretary-treasurer. Furthermore, the role of vice president would become primarily ceremonial.

The report was motioned and accepted by 87% of delegates.

After a short recess and reassembly, the Constitution and By-Laws Committee presented its report. Twenty-five amendments to the PRCUA Constitution and By-Laws that were submitted to the Committee were addressed.

A brief discussion followed the presentation of the amendments, which were administrative and clerical in nature. The amendments were subsequently approved as presented.

One proposal was withdrawn by the submitter following discussion. Two proposed changes were accepted conceptually, pending further clarification of the wording. The report was moved and accepted.

Next, the report of the Candidate Qualification Committee was presented by Chairman Conrad Wiecek. One application was submitted for each of the positions of president, secretary-treasurer, and chaplain, and two applications were submitted for the position of vice president. All candidates were approved. Nine applications were submitted for the position of director; one candidate withdrew, and one application was rejected.

Before the report was accepted, both vice presidential candidates withdrew from the running.

Following the report of the Candidate Qualification Committee, Secretary Mary Jane Robles read the names of the candidates who ran unopposed for the positions of officers and directors. All newly elected members of the PRCUA administration were asked to stand and raise their right hands, and Rev. Canon Walter Ptak administered the Oath of Office.

President Bastrzyk delivered her closing remarks, thanking the presidium, convention committees, and all the delegates for making the first-ever virtual convention efficient, productive, and successful. She expressed her appreciation to all the outgoing directors for their commitment to the PRCUA and offered special words of gratitude to Vice President Micheline Jaminski, who will conclude her 12-year tenure in office on September 13.

Vice President Jaminski reciprocated with an emotional farewell. She thanked all the directors, employees, and members with whom she had worked or whom she had met during her years in office for placing their trust in her and supporting her in all her endeavors. She congratulated President Bastrzyk, Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado, and the newly elected members of the Board. She also addressed all PRCUA members, asking for their continued support of the newly elected administration as it works to shape the future and ensure the vitality of the PRCUA.

Convention Chairman Valerie Brumm moved to adjourn the 64th PRCUA National Convention. The motion was seconded and approved by the delegates.

The one-day convention was made possible by a well-structured process and efficient flow of proceed-



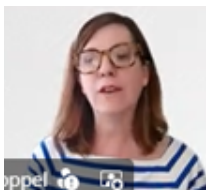
National Chaplain Rev. Canon Walter Ptak celebrating the Mass

ings, the engaging and productive participation of the delegates, and the well-planned and expertly executed technical setup prepared by the PRCUA IT Department.

Beyond its successful execution, the convention also set the stage for the future growth and continued development of the PRCUA. The productive exchange of ideas, thoughtful discussions, and collective participation demonstrated the organization's capacity to move forward with a clear sense of purpose and renewed energy. The Convention provided an important foundation for strengthening the PRCUA, embracing new opportunities, engaging future generations, and building upon its achievements as it prepares to meet the needs and challenges of the years ahead.



L-r: Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado, President Agnieszka Bastrzyk, Legal Counsel John Chitkowski, Vice President Micheline Jaminski



Guest speaker Allison Koppel



Actuary Chris Conklin



President Agnieszka Bastrzyk and Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado taking Oath of Office



Vice President Micheline Jaminski and IT support Claudia Grzeszczuk



Credentials Committee (l-r): Roberta Brewster, Marge Grzeszczuk, Mateusz Bomba



Candidate Qualification Committee: Lidia Kowalewicz, Anna Grabowski, Conrad Wiecek

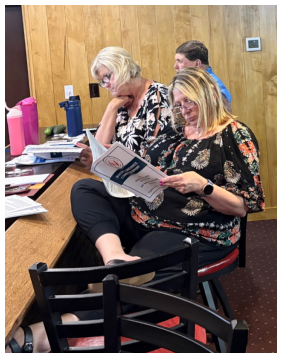




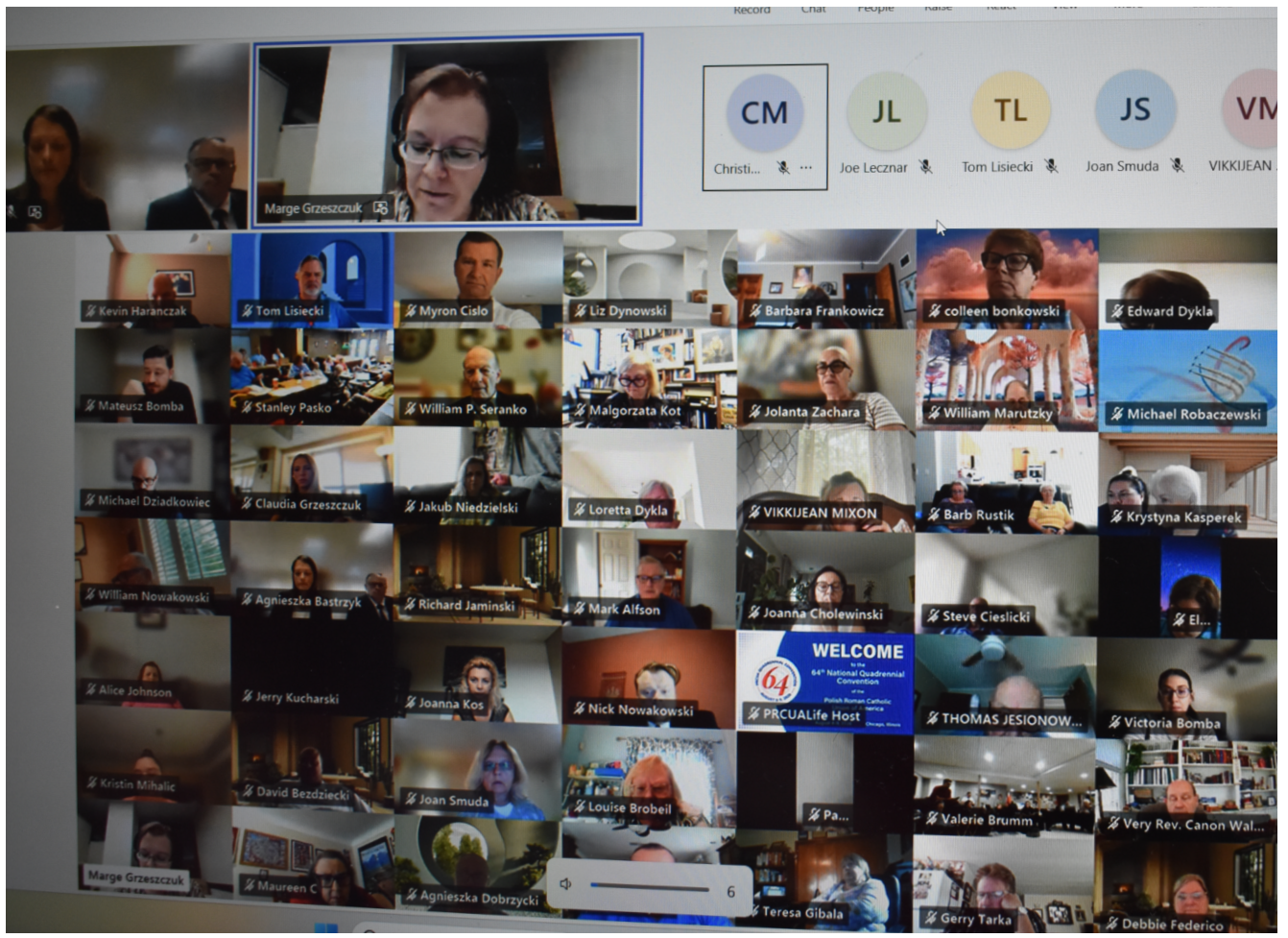








Delegates from Michigan gathered together in two locations



Virtual convention proceedings

73rd PRCUA National Golf Tournament

178 golfers descended upon Wyandotte to enjoy the 73rd Annual PRCUA National Golf Tournament. The event started with hospitality night at the Society 162 lounge in Wyandotte, MI! Many a soul has bravely entered the lounge, come in as friends and left as family. Society 162's crew was ready for the golfers at Willow Metropark Golf Course in New Boston for two flights on Saturday July 25, starting at 7:30 a.m. The course was set, hole sponsor signs were out, carts were lined up, the registration table ready to go, and this year even the sun was ready for the day! Bob Bielenda oversaw the weather and he did a great job!

Golfers and their guests then embarked on the PRCU 162 banquet hall to enjoy a great Polish dinner prepared by PRCUA member Mary Ann Rogowski and her entire crew. As usual, they did a great job. Our President Agnieszka Bastrzyk led the crowd in prayer before dinner. She also welcomed everyone after dinner before we started the award presentations. Also with us that day was our Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado, Director Colleen Bonkowski, Director Valerie Brumm, Past President Joseph Drobot Jr., Past Vice President Robert Bielenda, and past director Christopher Ozog. And of course, we know our Vice President Micheline Jaminski was with us in spirit from Poland.

The tournament winners are as follows:

Men's Division: Marcus Dobek, Michael Dobek, Joseph Stortz, Joshua Stortz

Women's Division: Susan Kazmierczak, Jennifer Nowacki, Sherry Okorowski, Sandra Tyburski

Senior Men: Robert Bielenda, Bernard Gauvin, Gregory Kendziorek, Joe Paja

Mixed Division: Kristin Dehnke-Mihalic, Marjorie Dehnke-Mihalic, Joseph Mihalic, Kristi Mihalic

Senior Mixed: Mary Jane Favot, Allen Salatowski, Carol Souva, Eugene Souva

Longest Drive Men: Michael Dobek
Closest to the pin Men: Zachary Carter

Closest to the pin Senior Men: Kevin Dale

Closest to the pin Women: Sherry Okorowski

The event turned out to be a great success, and everyone enjoyed the remainder of the evening at the awards ceremony and banquet, followed by some Karaoke in the lounge. President Stan Pasko would like to thank all the volunteers, Natalie Wienclaw, Delphine Kuhar, Geralyn Carter, Marilyn Gilliland, Jenny Piotrowski, David Bezdziecki, Yvonne Bzura and anyone else who helped in any way. You can't run a great tournament without great help. We also need to thank our Fraternal Coordinator Conrad Wiecek. His tireless efforts bring it all together for everyone to enjoy. Thank you to everyone who came out and enjoyed the tournament.

Stan Pasko, President Society 162





















Detroit























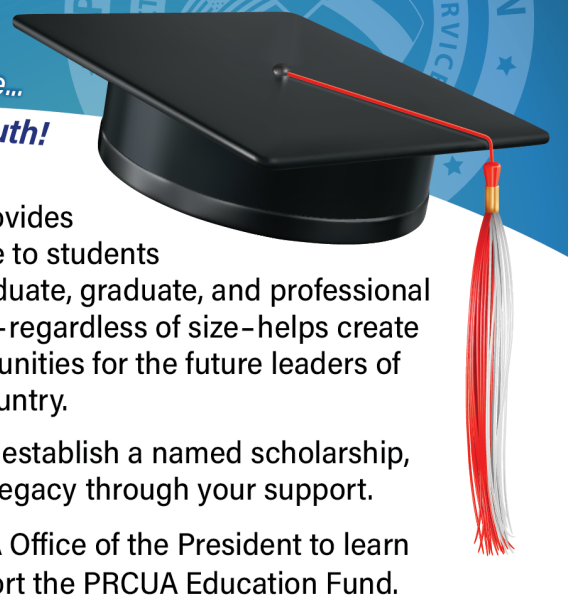




Thanks to the overwhelming response from our members and readers, *Naród Polski* will transition to an online-only publication beginning with the October 2026 issue. This change will allow us to continue sharing news, updates, and stories from our fraternal community in a more accessible and timely format.

Support the PRCUA Education Fund

Invest in our future...
Invest in our youth!



Your generosity provides financial assistance to students pursuing undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees. Every gift–regardless of size–helps create educational opportunities for the future leaders of Polonia and our country.

Honor a loved one, establish a named scholarship, or create a lasting legacy through your support.

Contact the PRCUA Office of the President to learn how you can support the PRCUA Education Fund.

Agnes Bastrzyk
(773)-782-2602 president@prcua.org

Kids Activity Page!

1. Color the picture.

BACK TO SCHOOL



2. Find all the words related to Labor Day.

O	F	E	K	N	O	I	T	A	R	B	E	L	E	C
L	R	Y	Y	R	T	S	U	D	N	I	R	A	B	L
U	E	A	B	R	E	D	N	E	K	E	E	W	O	L
N	E	D	E	K	E	T	R	S	E	G	A	W	E	T
I	D	K	X	S	E	Q	U	A	L	I	T	Y	C	R
O	O	R	A	S	K	L	H	E	R	U	D	S	Y	S
N	M	O	L	E	I	L	D	O	I	I	R	N	R	D
U	I	W	E	Y	S	A	I	O	L	E	G	I	Q	B
E	R	P	R	T	R	B	E	R	K	I	Y	H	A	T
W	S	W	R	A	E	O	E	R	C	B	D	R	T	D
N	P	K	P	O	G	R	O	S	I	E	B	A	D	S
A	O	Y	L	R	T	W	C	L	N	E	O	S	Y	D
E	F	F	O	R	T	E	Y	E	C	B	R	R	U	E
L	A	B	O	R	E	R	S	U	I	A	S	Y	L	U
Y	T	E	F	A	S	T	E	T	P	S	O	U	E	M

Workers
Union
Parade
Barbecue
Holiday

Protest
Rights
Picnic
Labor
Weekend

Celebration
Freedom
Equality
Wages
Laborers

Safety
Workday
Relax
Industry
Effort

Direction
→ ← ↙ ↘ ↑ ↓ ↗ ↖

GRANDPARENTS' DAY - SEPTEMBER 13

3. Find 10 differences.



Answers on pg. 16

HALKA DANCERS KEEPING THE BEAT IN 2026

By Laura Hejza

It's been another busy year for the PRCUA Halka Dancers of Warren Michigan!

In January, our traditional Square Dance fundraiser was once again a super fun night supporting the Halka families and dancers.

In February our graduate, Bailey Sayle was honored at the Shirley Ann Galanty Michigan State Ball and many fellow and past Halka dancers were there to support her on this wonderful night.

We held our "free to attend" recital in March celebrating the hard work of the dancers as well as our teacher Tom Lisiecki on his 35th year as Halka's teacher and choreographer. Halka's 10-year trophy recipients were: Ben Dingeldey, Delainey Halatsis, and Sophia Halatsis and 5-year trophy went to: Otto Sikula. Graduate Bailey Sayle also received a 10-year trophy for being a Halka dancer (15 total within PRCU dance schools) as well as a Rita Cerankowski Memorial Scholarship for her involvement in Halka.

It was a perfect night for the Polish American Night with the Detroit Tigers held May 1st and Halka graduate Bailey Sayle was one of the scholarship recipients that evening. Halka continues to be involved in the yearly Join Hands Day at St. Albertus in Detroit and the PRCUA St John Paul II Society Youth Bowling event.



Only Halka's teacher, Mr. Tom can comfort a crying dancer and still run a dress rehearsal

In June, Halka was honored to have a front row seat at the final Mass of Our Lady Queen of Heaven parish in Detroit where Halka originated in 1969. Many current dancers as well as alumni attended in costume to represent the Polish influences the church has had over the years. The dancers led the procession to the song *Serdeczna Matko* and Halka Director Laura Hejza was invited to give an account about Halka's history during the final remarks of the Mass.

Our summer performances included Polish Night at the UWM Field in Utica, Michigan, the American Polish Century Club Festival in Sterling Hts., Michigan and the Pierogi Festival in Detroit, Michigan.

The Halka Dancers will be starting their 58th school year in September and are welcoming new students aged 2.5 thru high school.

Go to our Facebook page—P.R.C.U.A. Halka Dancers for more pictures from this year's events and how to join this wonderful and thriving group!



Halka Dancers at final Mass at Our Lady Queen of Heaven church



Halka Dancers and alumni at Shirley Ann Galanty Michigan State Ball



MICHIGAN

Gwiazda Dancers

Classes held: PLAV Post 10 Hall, 11824 Jos. Campau, Hamtramck
Registration: Open through the first week in October
First class: September 9
Class Times: Monday evenings; times are based on age group (call for details)
Ages: 2,5 (must be potty trained) and older
Contact: Jessica Urban, 313-682-3031, panijessica33@outlook.com
Mailing address: 5130 Kenicott Trl., Brighton, MI 48114

Rogalin Dance Troupe

Classes held: PRCUA #162 Hall, 1430 Oak St., Wyandotte, MI
Registration: Ongoing
First class: September 12, 5 p.m.
Class Times: Tuesdays, 5-10 p.m.
Ages: 3-18 yeas old
Contact: Lisa Brandt, 734-775-7987, rogalindancetroupe@gmail.com
Mailing address: PRCUA Hall, 1430 Oak St., Wyandotte, MI 48192-5526
Lisa Brandt, 848 Superior Blvd., Wyandotte, MI 48192



The Open Door

Otwarte Drzwi

Micheline "Misia" Jaminski
Vice President I wiceprezes
micheline-jaminski@prcua.org

WELCOME SEPTEMBER! Bridging summer warmth and autumn's crisp air, September brings a season of renewal. It invites us to reflect, reset intentions, and embrace beautiful transitions. You could say that about each month or season, but by September, students are definitely back in school, and the leisurely lifestyle of summer is over. We wish all our PRCUA dance and language schools as well as all students a wonderful new school year! Make this a September to remember… I know I will.

This summer was a whirlwind of motion, music, and heritage for three of our Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA) adult ensembles. Leaving their daily routines behind, Wesoły Lud, Echoes of Poland, and Polonia crossed the Atlantic to take the stage at the prestigious XX International Festival of Polonian Ensembles in Rzeszów, Poland. For these dancers, the journey was less of a first-time visit and more of a homecoming. Each group carried a deep legacy back to the Rzeszów stage, led by Wesoły Lud with an incredible 14th appearance, making them the most seasoned ensemble at the entire 2026 festival. The gravity of this milestone was felt deeply on Sunday, July 19, during a solemn Holy Mass at the Rzeszów Cathedral, where alum and PRCUA National Director Andrew Lech, alongside dancer Karolina Kroplewski, stepped forward to accept a special honor on behalf of the ensemble. Keeping the tradition of excellence alive, Paulina Tul-Ortyl led Echoes of Poland back for their 12th festival, while Jaclyn Krysinski's Polonia marked their 6th chapter of bringing their signature energy to Polish soil. The grand celebration officially began on Friday, July 17, as the streets of Rzeszów came alive with color, rhythm, and pride. A massive parade wound its way through the city, culminating in a spectacular opening at the historic Market Square. With the festival underway, the weekend became a beautiful blur of travel and performance. The groups balanced their time between the grand stages of Rzeszów's Market Square and regional towns eager to welcome them. Under the direction of Richard Jaminski, Wesoły Lud traveled to Nowa Dęba to share their craft, while Polonia brought its choreography to Albigowa, and Echoes of Poland took the stage to a warm reception in Mielec. It was a historic summer of connection, proving once again that the roots of Polish folk dance run



The Jaminskis with granddaughters Mila and Ariana



Wesoły Lud - Eiffel Tower



Wesoły Lud at Versailles



Wesoły Lud visiting Disneyland Paris



Wesoły Lud in Rzeszów



Wesoły Lud in Kościół Mariacki

(*Continued on pg. 14*)

THE OPEN DOOR (*Continued from page 13*)

deep across generations and borders.

The Gala Concert served as a magnificent showcase of short dance performances, vocal recitals, and dramatic presentations delivered by 27 participating ensembles and three guest groups. The segments were seamlessly connected by historical facts and group introductions displayed on overhead teleprompters. The spectacular finale of the five-hour event concluded with a performance of the song, "I Love Rzeszów!" To fully appreciate the profound enthusiasm, energy, and spirit of the Rzeszów Festival, viewing the event is highly recommended. (The broadcast can be found via Koncert Galowy "Przez świat do Rzeszowa" zakończył Festiwal Polonijny on Czytaj Rzeszów or the TVP3 Rzeszów coverage on YouTube).

Prior to the Rzeszów Festival, members of Wesoły Lud traveled to Paris. The delegation included Richard, District 8 Director Elizabeth Dy-



Echoes of Poland in Rzeszów



Echoes of Poland in Rzeszów



Echoes performing at the festival



Polonia on the stage in Rzeszów



Polonia performing in town of Albigowa



Polonia Ensemble dancing at the Nestiya Black Sea Pearls Festival in Bulgaria

nowski, granddaughters Ariana and Mila, and myself. Despite dry heat and temperatures reaching the 90s, the group completed an intensive four-day sightseeing itinerary. Key excursions included a tour of Versailles, a river cruise, and visits to such iconic landmarks as the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, and Notre Dame Cathedral by bus and on foot. The itinerary concluded with a visit to both parks at Disneyland Paris, fulfilling the goal of creating an exceptional and memorable experience for all participants. "A dream is a wish your heart makes…" And my wish came true.

Between the visits to Paris and Rzeszów, the group made a brief stop in Kraków. Mr. Marek Patecki of the Centrum Macierz Polonii graciously hosted Wesoły Lud and the Akademia Białego Orła from Montreal. Festival Ambassador Anna Sokołowski was also in attendance. The two ensembles delivered a joint performance on the first day, followed by a dedicated photo session and sightseeing tour of Kraków on the second day. Sincere appreciation is extended to our host for organizing a deeply memorable engagement.

Following the conclusion of the Rzeszów Festival, the Polonia Ensemble journeyed to Bulgaria to par-





Left: Past Director District 8 with family and friends in Rzeszów; top: Kroplewski and Lech children



Chester Konopacki and family



Skurskis, Wiesława Hazuka, Micheline Jaminski and Director Andrew Lech in Rzeszów

ticipate in the Nestiya Black Sea Pearls Festival. During the tour, the group visited the cities of Sveti Vlas, Pomorie, and Nessebar, sampled local cuisine, and spent some well-earned time relaxing at the beach.

Upon returning from Europe, I was delighted by the success of the PRCUA National Golf Tournament, hosted by Stan Pasko (President of PRCUA Society 162). Check out pages 8-10 to read the recap and see highlights from our golfers, hosts, and officers. Thank you to Stan, his team, and Fraternal Coordinator Conrad Wiecek for a job well done. I missed connecting with you at this final tournament of my term, but I knew you were in great hands.

Meanwhile, the Home Office successfully launched our first-ever virtual PRCUA Quadrennial Convention on August 8. Full details are featured in this issue of *Naród Polski*. I want to recognize our staff and committees for their heroic preparation, and congratulate Agnes, Julie, and the incoming board of directors: Michael Dykla, Kristi Mihalic, Chris Ozog, Stan Pasko, Basia Toboy, and returning third-term members Elizabeth Dynowski and Myron Cislo.



PRCUA President Agnieszka Bastrzyk and Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado

Baby News: We are thrilled to welcome two new bundles of joy to our PRCUA family! Drs. Katarzyna (Rogala) and Bart Jacher are the proud parents of their second son, Daniel Philip, who made a grand entrance on August 7—sharing a birthday with his Babcia, Teresa Rogala! Daniel arrived weighing a healthy 9 lbs. 3 oz. and measuring 21 inches long. Just two days later, on August 9, Everly Patrese arrived at 8:37 p.m. to her very excited parents, Monica and Jeff Reiser. Everly weighed 6 lbs. 14 oz. and was 18-1/2 inches long. First-time grandparents Babcia Teresa and Dziadzia Wacek Pazdziora are absolutely over the moon! Congratulations to both beautiful families. Welcome to the world, Everly and Daniel! We look forward to welcoming you into the PRCUA as soon as possible—your parents are already predicting you will be partners at the Southwest Center of Polish Song and Dance and someday, Wesoły Lud where your mommies danced.



Daniel Philip Jacher with Babcia Teresa Rogala and big brother Dominic



Everly Patrese Reiser

Our hearts and prayers are with members of our PRCUA community who have recently lost loved ones.

Richard and I extend our heartfelt condolences to Paulina Ortyl (Artistic Director of Echoes of Poland) on the sudden passing of her beloved husband, Raymond (86), on July 4. Paulina and Raymond shared a beautiful marriage of 58 years and were blessed with two children, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. (Raymond's obituary was featured in the August issue of *Naród Polski*). May he rest in eternal peace.

We also send our deepest sympathies to past District 5 Director Mitchell Bienia on the passing of his beloved wife, Krystyna (82), and to Stella Konopacki on the passing of her beloved husband, Chester (97). In a poignant coincidence, both Krystyna and Chester passed away on August 18. Mitchell and Krystyna Bienia have been deeply involved in the PRCUA, the Polish American Congress (PAC), and the broader Cleveland Polish community for many years. Married for 50 golden years, the Bienias have two daughters and three grandsons. Chester and Stella Konopacki, married for 55 years, belong to PRCUA Society 880 and are the pillars of a 100% PRCUA family. They have been familiar, welcoming faces at Chicagoland PRCUA events, especially watching three of their sons (Stanley, Ted, and Peter) dance with the Southwest Center of Polish Song & Dance and Wesoły Lud, and watching their granddaughter, Cinderella 2026 Ruby Konopacki, participate as a Candidate in the Cinderella-Prince Charming Ball. Chester leaves behind a beautiful legacy including 8 children (two of whom preceded him in death), 14 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren.

Memorials for both Krystyna and Chester are included in this issue of *Naród Polski*. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

August came to a lovely close with the weddings of three Wesoły Lud members all on the same day, August 22nd. Two, you will no doubt remember as our Bowlers of the Year from the PRCUA Bowling Tournament this year. Weronika Niedzielski is now Mrs. Mitchell Gajda. They and the other beautiful bride, Anna Cieplucha (now Mrs. David Waligora) have been PRCUA members since very young, attending either the Southwest Center of Polish Song & Dance or Polanie Dancers of the St. John Paul II Polish School, and later, Wesoły Lud. Best wishes to all the happy couples and their families!

While on the subject of marriage, we send warm August anniversary wishes to everyone celebrating their special days. This includes our current and former PRCUA First Families: Agnieszka and Daniel Bastrzyk, Ed and Loretta Dykla, and Joe and Judy Drobot. We also congratulate Danielle and Rob Kroplewski on an incredible 20 years together, alongside the Lech, Pazdziora, Bomba, and Jaminski couples. In a special way, we also honor the beautiful, lasting August marriages (*Continued on pg. 16*)

THE OPEN DOOR (*Continued from page 15*)

of Joann Ozog and Barbara Rustik. Though their beloved soulmates, former President Wally Ozog and former District Director Jim Rustik, have passed away, we celebrate the enduring love and legacy they built together.

The PRCUA looks forward to its upcoming Inaugural Mass which will be celebrated at Holy Trinity Parish in Chicago on September 13, with light refreshments to follow in the PMA Great Hall at the PRCUA Headquarters. All are warmly welcome to attend and join us in fellowship.

Closing the Door, Opening the Heart: A Twelve-Year Journey

Twelve years ago, I entered the Home Office of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America guided by a profound sense of responsibility, a lifelong love for our heritage, and a clear vision: to keep our doors wide open. My goal was to welcome new ideas, embrace emerging generations, and foster a vibrant spirit of fraternal camaraderie. Together, we have done more than just preserve our history over these twelve years—we have actively secured its future.

My connection to you through these pages began in October 2014 with my very first *Naród Polski* column. I wrote then about "opening my door" just as my predecessor "closed her window". This column became a living embodiment of that open door, ensuring every member remained connected to the heart of our organization. Documenting your milestones, celebrations, and successes has been an absolute honor; collectively, these articles form a cherished diary permanently woven into my memory. Thank you for welcoming me into your local celebrations, listening to my ideas, and sharing your stories with me.

In our beloved fraternal benefit society, time is measured not by the calendar, but by shared joy, community milestones, and preserved traditions. My own PRCUA journey began fifty years ago when I first taught Polish folk dance to the Adult Culture Group. That spark led to founding the Wesoły Lud Polish Folk Dance Company (1977) and the Southwest Center of Polish Song and Dance (1985).

I am forever grateful to early mentors like Regina Ocwieja (later Vice President) and Martha Kwiatt (then District Director), alongside many champions in District 8. My affinity for detail and historical accuracy naturally led me to serve as District 8 Treasurer and Archivist. Ultimately, encouraged by my predecessor Anna Sokolowski and my greatest supporter, Richard Jaminski, I transitioned into the role of PRCUA Vice President in 2014. This position perfectly leveraged my existing skills while challenging me to develop them even further in order to give back to the organization that opened the door to opportunity.

When I first took office, we set out with a bold vision: to modernize the PRCUA by bridging our rich traditions with a contemporary approach to growth. Together, we transformed our historic society. Despite facing shifting market competition, we remained fiercely loyal to our mission, securing financial peace of mind and deepening member engagement to ensure our continued relevance in a changing world.

We brought that vision to life by establishing a professional marketing department. This effort was anchored early on by Agnieszka Bastrzyk as Marketing Director. As she advanced to Executive Officer, we welcomed Elżbieta Sawczuk, and today, Anne Moschopoulos carries that torch. Over the years, my own role evolved far beyond traditional fraternal outreach. By integrating business strategy with artistic creativity, we built a unified powerhouse combining sales, strategic marketing, and professional publications. We achieved this by placing highly qualified individuals in key leadership roles. In addition to the aforementioned, Conrad Wiecek as Fraternal Coordinator, Marge Grzeszczuk as Sales Coordinator (Michael Dziadkowiec 2020-22), and Lidia Kowalewicz continuing as *Naród Polski* Editor.



Mr. and Mrs. Edward and Loretta Dykla

Together, we celebrated our 150th anniversary in great style. We revolutionized how we continue to share this history. We ensured that our financial products, cultural heritage, and member benefits resonate across generations—a feat made possible in large part by the exceptional graphic designs of Lisa Terlecki and, for the last four years, Elizabeth Dziadulewicz.

True leadership is never achieved alone; every success we celebrate today is a shared victory for our entire fraternal family. My deepest gratitude goes to my fellow Executive Officers, our devoted Board of Directors, and the exceptional home office staff who keep our operations strong behind the scenes. Special thanks to Kevin Ryba, our IT Director extraordinaire. I am also elated to watch our next generation of leaders—including our very first woman President, Agnieszka Bastrzyk, and Secretary-Treasurer Julie Prado—build upon this modern foundation and lead us to even greater heights. Thank you for your unwavering trust, your partnership, and for giving me the greatest honor of my career.


Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell and Weronika Gajda


Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell Gajda with bridal party


Mr. and Mrs. David and Anna Waligora


Wesoly Lud with Mr. & Mrs. Waligoras

Above all, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our members. For generations, PRCUA members have been the heart, soul, and driving force of our organization. Your local entities form the very bedrock of the PRCUA. We are more than a financial institution; we are a community built on tradition, trust, and shared values. We stay together in good and challenging times. Your faith, your hospitality, and your unwavering commitment to our mission have been my constant inspiration when challenges arose. May we continue to be loyal to our PRCUA and its mission for another 150 years!

To my loving husband Richard, my dedicated family, and my closest friends, thank you for being my pillars of strength. I love you all so much. [Happy 8th birthday, Cooper (8/26)! Happy 18th birthday, Cole (8/30)! Happy 60th Michael (9/16)!)

I was also filled with immense pride to have been able to proudly represent the PRCUA for 9 years, while serving as the treasurer of the Polish American Congress.

As I close this beautiful chapter of my life, my love for the PRCUA family remains as strong as ever. As the last in a distinguished line of Vice Presidents, I am filled with immense pride and hope for the future. The PRCUA stands on the threshold of a brilliant tomorrow, propelled by a renewed forward momentum, expert leadership, and true passion. Moving forward, I will continue to be your most passionate cheerleader, an active participant, and a steadfast sister in faith and heritage. Thank you for the extraordinary privilege of serving as your Vice President for twelve unforgettable years.

May God's choicest blessings rest upon you, your families, and our cherished Polish Roman Catholic Union of America.

CLOSED DOOR



She blows out the candle,
passes through the doorway
and closes the door behind her.
What was, is finished.
What is, is yet to be.
Another candle is lit;
a fresh light for a new day
and another journey begins.

Carolyn Brunelle

The Adult Culture Group
of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America
cordially invites high school students to participate in the

54th Cinderella Prince Charming Ball

Eligible Cinderella and Prince Charming candidates must be a PRCUA member and a high school student. This experience gives young adults an opportunity to receive scholarship funds while actively promoting Polish Culture in America. All are invited.

Orientation

Sunday, September 20, 2026
Crystal Grand Banquets
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
12416 S. Archer Ave, Lemont, IL 60439

If you are intrested please RSVP by 9/13/26 and contact
Gabriela Zuk (708) 989-2408 or Danuta Stypula (708) 257-9019



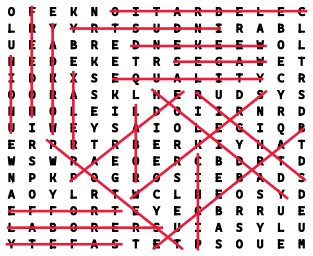




- The first Labor Day parade took place in New York City on September 5, 1882, organized by the Central Labor Union. Thousands marched, many giving up a day's pay to attend.
- The idea for Labor Day is credited to either Peter J. McGuire, co-founder of the American Federation of Labor, or Matthew Maguire, a machinist.
- Oregon was the first state to make Labor Day a public holiday in 1887, followed by 30 states by 1894.
- By 1894, 30 states officially celebrated Labor Day.
- President Grover Cleveland signed a law making Labor Day a national holiday on June 28, 1894.
- Labor Day weekend is one of the busiest travel periods in the United States.
- By 1894, 30 states officially celebrated Labor Day.
- The holiday is often associated with the start of the school year, with many schools beginning classes the day after Labor Day.

ANSWERS TO THE PUZZLES ON PG. 11:

2. Find all the words related to Labor Day:



3. Find 10 differences:



CHESTER KONOPACKI DIED



Chester Konopacki, a longtime resident of the Garfield Ridg, Illinois, passed away peacefully late on August 18, 2026, at the age of 97.

Chester was born on May 25, 1929 in Wyszka, Poland. He was the oldest of six sons born to Antoinette (Sawicki) and Felix Konopacki. After the family was forced from their farming home during WWII, he spent about 5 years in a German labor camp, until eventually the family was allowed to immigrate to the United States in 1949. After a short stay in Statesboro, Georgia, the whole family soon took up permanent residence on the South Side of Chicago.

In Chicago, Chester worked many jobs to help support the family. He ultimately found his calling as a union wood finisher. He became a foreman and worked beside his younger brother, Dominic. He was a very proud member of the Chicago Painters and Decorators Local Union 830 (formerly Wood Finishers Local Union 611) for 72 years.

Chester was a devout Catholic, a long time parishioner and extraordinary minister of St. Daniel the Prophet Church. He valued the church's message and lived his life accordingly. He was a member of the Holy Name Society, and PRCUA Society #880. He enjoyed picnics at the PNA club, and any chance to get out on a dance floor.

Chester worked hard, loved learning, and highly valued higher education, which he didn't have the opportunity to pursue. He enjoyed working with his hands and could repair almost anything. He kept busy as a seasoned advisor for his children's various projects.

Family was Chester's top priority, and he successfully brought them all closer together. He was devoted to his kids & grandkids and always interested in their lives. His dedication to his family and his work ethic have inspired his eight children and numerous grandchildren. His greatest joy was being with the family on vacations and holidays.

Chester will be remembered for his wit, determination, persistence and strength, as well as for the love he showed to his family.

Chester is survived by his wife Stella (Banaś) Konopacki and children Anthony Konopacki, Theresa (Tom) Short, Stanley (Laurel) Konopacki, Joseph (Eileen) Konopacki, Ted (Alexandra) Konopacki, and Peter (Selena) Konopacki, along with his brothers Walter Konopacki, Michael (Victoria) Konopacki and Mitchell (Christine) Konopacki, and many grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his daughter Christine (Joseph) Gratzke, his son Paul (Joan) Konopacki, his brother Dominic (Jeannine) Konopacki, his brother John Konopacki, and his first wife Lucy (Jablonski) Konopacki.

Mass of Christian burial was held on August 27, at St. Daniel the Prophet Church in Chicago, Illinois followed by a committal service at Resurrection Catholic Cemetery & Mausoleums in Justice, Illinois.

Chester was a member of PRCUA Society Society #880. He and his wife Stella signed up their seven children and numerous grandchildren to the PRCUA. Chester and Stella were great supporters of PRCUA activities, investing in the PRCUA mission and to the grandchildren's future. Cinderella 2026, Ruby Konopacki, is one Chester and Stella's granddaughters.

May he rest in eternal peace. Please remember Mr. Konopacki and his family in your prayers.

KRYSTYNA BIENIA PASSED AWAY



Krystyna Bienia, 82, from Cleveland, Ohio, wife of past PRCUA National Director (D-5) Mitchell Bienia, passed away on Tuesday, August 18, 2026. She was born on May 23, 1944.

Krystyna was the dearly beloved wife of 50 years to Dr. Mitchell Bienia; loving and devoted mother of Dr. Krystyna (Eliezer Morales Santiago) Bienia and Mrs. Michelle (Joseph) Boyd; cherished grandmother of Jackson Boyd, Christopher Boyd, and Marcos Morales Vedenskiy; sister to Ryszard Prelewicz (deceased) and Wanda (Jan - deceased) Weichbrodt of Poland; and dearest aunt, cousin, and friend of many.

Krystyna was born on May 23, 1944 in Szrensk, Poland. After graduating from high school, Krystyna attended college in Poland to become an elementary school teacher. On July 4, 1964, Krystyna immigrated to the United States and arrived in Cleveland. She met Mitchell in 1971 while she was teaching Polish classes; they married on September 16, 1977. She earned a degree in respiratory therapy and worked in the field for 40 years. With her husband, she also owned a travel agency, Kniola Travel Bureau, for 25 years, through which they enjoyed traveling the world. Krystyna enjoyed shopping, especially for a good deal.

Krystyna's life was punctuated by her pride in her family, her career, and living the American dream. She was also an active member in the Polish American community in Cleveland, OH.

A Mass of a christian burial was held at the historic St. Casimir Church, in Cleveland, Ohio on August 25, followed by intermenty at Holy Cross Cemetery. Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord.

Krystyna was a member of PRCUA Societies 2220 and 2144 and supporter of many local and national PRCUA events.

PRCUA extends the deepest condolences to past Director Mitchell Bienia and his family. Please remember Krystyna Bienia and her family in your prayers.

DEARLY DEPARTED PRCUA BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Member	Society	State	Member	Society	State
Bobak, Robert D.	1575	IL	Nawrocki, Pelagia	2274	MI
Duszynski, Jeffrey	527	MD	Ochrem, Benedykta	1493	MI
Falls, Audry	213	WV	Pisczek, Stella	2039	PA
Genopolos, Anthony	1641	NC	Ploski, Edward	540	NY
Glowacki, Adeline M.	2320	AZ	Ragoza, Stasia	549	MA
Hoyne, Helena	308	IL	Rudnik, Leon	119	PA
Huber, Terence E.	2315	WI	Sanner, Ann J.	413	IN
Jacks, Bernard	1118	MI	Schneider, Rudy	239	IL
Jarkiewicz, Eileen A.	527	MD	Sobczak, Casimer	718	MI
Jasinski, Walter	139	IL	Viazanko, Irene	2319	PA
Kowalski, Theresa J.	2001	PA	Wroblewski, Christine	2109	OH
Liestman, Frederick	1404	MI	Wrzesniewski, Liam	1219	IL

PRCUA extends deepest condolences to the families of our members who departed recently. May eternal light shine upon them. Please remember our deceased members and their families in your prayers.

SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH US!

Did you become proud parents or grandparents? Did someone in your family graduate, get engaged or married, receive an award or accomplish something significant? Share your story with our PRCUA family.

Submit your news and photos to: **lidia-kowalewicz@prcua.org** and we will publish them in the *Naród Polski*.



MYGA: WIELOLETNIE KONTO EMERYTALNE Z GWARANTOWANYM OPROCENTOWANIEM

3 LETNIA MYGA
4.80% APY
3 LATA GWARANTOWANE

5 LETNIA MYGA
5.00% APY
5 LAT GWARANTOWANE

$10,000 MINIMUM WPŁATY

- 10% bezpłatna wypłata roczna
- SPDA: Jednorazowa wpłata z odroczonym opodatkowaniem
  - Niedostępne w CA i NY
  - Plany przeznaczone dla wieku 0-95 lat
  - Automatyczne odnowienie po 45 dniach
  - Dostosowanie do wartości rynkowej (MVA)
- FPDA: Elastyczna składka z odroczonym opodatkowaniem
  - Dostępne tylko w CA i NY
  - Plany przeznaczone dla wieku 0-90 lat
  - Minimum gwarantowane 2.40%

SERIA 7 LETNIA

WPŁATY	GWAR. APY LATA 1-2	GWAR. APY LATA 3-4
WARIANT CENOWY 1 $100K+	5.50%	4.50%
WARIANT CENOWY 2 $50K-$99K	5.25%	4.25%
WARIANT CENOWY 3 $5K-$49K	5.00%	4.00%

- FPDA: Elastyczna składka z odroczonym opodatkowaniem
- $5,000 minimum wpłaty
- Plany przeznaczone dla wieku 0-90 lat
- 10% bezpłatna wypłata roczna
- Gwarantowane oprocentowanie na okres 4 lat
- Minimum gwarantowane 2.40%

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8 LAT GWARANTOWANE

- Elastyczna składka z odroczonym opodatkowaniem
- $500 minimum wpłaty
- Plan przeznaczony dla wieku 0-90 lat
- Minimum gwarantowane 2.40%

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UBEZPIECZENIA BEZ TAJEMNIC

Robert Sobczak
Specjalista ds. ubezpieczeń

Zaplanuj Medicare

Każdego dnia ponad 11 000 osób zbliża się do wieku, w którym zaczyna mu przysługiwa Medicare. Badania rynku pokazują, że aż 67% seniorów chciałoby lepiej zrozumieć zasady jego działania. W dzisiejszym artykule poruszę 6 kluczowych rzeczy, o których powinna wiedzieć każda osoba wchodząca lub będąca na Medicare

1. Medicare składa się z różnych części

Jednym z mylących aspektów Medicare jest fakt, że składa się on z kilku odrębnych części. Każda z nich wiąże się z różnymi zasadami i kosztami.

W wielkim skrócie:
- **Część A** - obejmuje wizyty w szpitalu i wykwalifikowaną opiekę pielęgniarską;
- **Część B** - obejmuje opiekę zapobiegawczą, wizyty lekarskie i diagnostykę;
- **Część D** - jest planem zniżkowym na leki na receptę.

Istnieje również coś takiego jak **Część C**, zwana inaczej Medicare Advantage.

2. Medicare nie jest za darmo

Wiele osób uważa, że posiadanie Medicare nic nie kosztuje. Niestety nie jest to prawda. Część A jest bezpłatna dla przeważającej większości zarejestrowanych. Części B i D, a także niektóre plany związane z częścią C zazwyczaj pobierają składki miesięczne.

3. Medicare nie obejmuje wszystkiego

O ile niektóre plany typu Medicare Advantage mogą pokryć koszty części usług dentystycznych, serwisów związanych z badaniem lub leczeniem wzroku oraz słuchu, o tyle Oryginalne Medicare oferuje bardzo ograniczony zakres pokrycia kosztów w powyższych kategoriach. Na przykład opłata za pracę dentystyczną jest generalnie dokonywana tylko wtedy, gdy wiąże się one z innym leczonym schorzeniem pokrywanym przez Medicare lub jeśli przed operacją objętą ubezpieczeniem konieczny jest egzamin stomatologiczny.

I chociaż oryginalny Medicare zapłaci za badanie i leczenie niektórych chorób oczu, takich jak jaskra, nie pokryje on kosztów corocznego badania wzroku ani okularów na receptę.

Ponadto Medicare nie zapłaci za opiekę długoterminową, taką jak pomoc domowa, domy spokojnej starości lub domy opieki, jeśli opieka ta ma charakter opiekuńczy - co oznacza konieczność codziennego życia, w przeciwieństwie do zaspokojenia czysto medycznej potrzeby.

4. Ubezpieczenie dodatkowe jest często koniecznością

Jeśli zarejestrujesz się na oryginalne Medicare, przygotuj extra budżet na koszty związane z pokryciem Medigap lub uzupełnieniami do Medicare. Pamiętaj, że suplementy do oryginalnego Medicare nie zapłacą za usługi niezatwierdzone przez Medicare. Mogą za to pokryć koszty wydatków, takich jak deductible, copays, coinsurance w usługach objętych przez część A i B Medicare.

5. Masz wybór

W ramach Medicare masz możliwość wyboru planu części D, który najlepiej odpowiada Twoim potrzebom. Jeśli natomiast zdecydujesz się na część C, czyli Medicare Advantage, możesz porównać opcje planów tak, aby zobaczyć, który z nich jest najbardziej odpowiada w Twojej indywidualnej sytuacji.

Co więcej, nie wybierasz planu do końca życia. Jeśli nie jesteś zadowolony ze swojego ubezpieczenia, możesz zmienić plan co najmniej raz do roku, podczas corocznego otwartego okresu zapisowego na Medicare, który trwa od 15 października, do 7 grudnia każdego roku.

6. Nie jesteś sam

Nie musisz dobierać planu do swoich potrzeb sam. Na rynku są agenci specjalizujący się w pomocy osobom takim jak Ty.

Jak wybrać dobrego agenta spośród wielu na rynku?

Przede wszystkim agent musi znać się na rzeczy, mieć licencje ubezpieczeniową, egzamin **AHIP** i najlepiej by specjalizował się w planach do Medicare. Ogromnym atutem będzie fakt posiadania kontraktów z wieloma firmami ubezpieczeniowymi oferującymi podobne produkty do Medicare. Oznacza to nic innego niż to, że będzie on przeszkolony, i PRZEEGZAMINOWANY z produktów jakie oferuje rynek. Zasadza jest prosta: im więcej dużych firm rozpoznawalnych na rynku w portfolio Twojego agenta, tym większy jego obiektywizm. Musi on posiadać również zdolność tłumaczenia planów w sposób dla Ciebie zrozumiały.

Na marginesie chciałbym tylko dodać, że żaden szanujący się agent nie będzie pobierał dodatkowych opłat za swoje usługi. Tę sprawę podkreślam w każdym wywiadzie, artykule prasowym jak również w mediach społecznościowych.

Naucz się w Medicare

Koszty związane z Medicare będą musiały zostać uwzględnione w Twoim budżecie emerytalnym, więc opłaca się o nich wiedzieć na długo przed opuszczeniem na stałe miejsca pracy i przejściem na emeryturę. W ten sposób będziesz lepiej przygotowany do oceny Twoich oszczędności i dokonywania wyborów finansowych, które nie pozostawiają Cię bez środków pieniężnych w latach późniejszych.

Pamiętaj, że opieka zdrowotna jest jednym z największych wydatków, z jakimi borykają się seniorzy, a dobre zrozumienie Medicare pomoże Ci uniknąć podstawowych błędów.

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HISTORYCZNY 64. SEJM KRAJOWY WYZNACZYŁ KIERUNKI DALSZEGO ROZWOJU ZPRKA

W dniu 8 sierpnia odbył się 64. Krajowy Sejm Zjednoczenia Polskiego Rzymsko-Katolickiego w Ameryce (ZPRKA).

Sejmy ZPRKA odbywają się co cztery lata. Tegoroczny sejm był wydarzeniem historycznym, będąc pierwszym w dziejach organizacji sejmem krajowym przeprowadzonym w całości w trybie online. Wydarzenie to dowiodło zdolności ZPRKA do wdrażania innowacji przy jednoczesnym podtrzymywaniu wieloletniej tradycji udziału członków w procesie decyzyjnym i zarządzaniu organizacją.

Jednodniowe obrady rozpoczęły się Mszą Świętą, odprawioną wirtualnie przez krajowego kapelana ZPRKA, ks. kanonika Władysława Ptaka, w parafii Matki Bożej Bolesnej w Farmington w stanie Michigan.

Obrady oficjalnie otworzyła prezes ZPRKA, Agnieszka Bastrzyk. W czasie obrad wybrano prezydium Sejmu, wysłuchano wystąpienia Allison Koppel (CAE), dyrektor generalnej American Fraternal Alliance, oraz raportu współpracującego z ZPRKA aktuariusza. Odczytane zostały również raporty komitetów sejmowych, które następnie poddano pod rozpatrzenie i głosowanie.

Ostatnim punktem obrad był wybór nowego zarządu krajowego i dyrekcji na lata 2026–2030. W ich skład weszli: prezes Agnieszka Bastrzyk, sekretarz-skarbnik Julie Prado, kapelan ks. kanonik Władysław Ptak oraz dyrektorzy krajowi: Myron Cislo, Elizabeth Dynowski, Michael Dykla, Kristi Mihalic, Christopher Ozog, Stanley Pasko Jr. i Barbara Toboy.

Gratulujemy nowo wybranemu zarządowi i dyrekcji ZPRKA. Życzymy Państwu wielu sukcesów, trafnych decyzji, owocnej współpracy oraz realizacji ambitnych celów. Niech nowa kadencja będzie czasem rozwoju, stabilności i wielu wspólnych osiągnięć.

Szczegółowe sprawozdanie - w angielskiej sekcji „Narodu Polskiego”



Zamykając drzwi, otwierając serce: Dwunastoletnia podróż

Dwanaście lat temu wkroczyłam do biura głównego Zjednoczenia Polskiego Rzymsko-Katolickiego w Ameryce (PRCUA), kierowana głębokim poczuciem odpowiedzialności, trwającą całe życie miłością do naszego dziedzictwa oraz jasną wizją: aby nasze drzwi pozostały szeroko otwarte. Moim celem było witanie nowych pomysłów, otwieranie się na wchodzące pokolenia i pielęgnowanie żywego ducha braterskiej koleżeńskości. W ciągu tych dwunastu lat wspólnie zrobiliśmy coś więcej niż tylko ocalenie naszej historii od zapomnienia – aktywnie zabezpieczyliśmy jej przyszłość.

Moja więź z Wami na łamach tego pisma rozpoczęła się w październiku 2014 roku wraz z moim pierwszym artykułem w „Narodzie Polskim". Pisałam wówczas o „otwieraniu moich drzwi", dokładnie w tym samym momencie, w którym moja poprzedniczka „zamykała swoje okno". Rubryka ta stała się żywym ucieleśnieniem tych otwartych drzwi, dbając o to, aby każdy członek pozostał połączony z sercem naszej organizacji. Dokumentowanie Waszych kamieni milowych, uroczystości i sukcesów było dla mnie absolutnym zaszczytem; zebrane razem, artykuły te tworzą cenne wspomnienia na stałe wpisane w mojej pamięci. Dziękuję Wam za zapraszanie mnie na Wasze lokalne uroczystości, wysłuchiwanie moich pomysłów i dzielenie się ze mną Waszymi historiami.

W naszej ukochanej organizacji bratniej pomocy czas mierzy się nie kalendarzem, lecz wspólną radością, ważnymi wydarzeniami społecznościowymi i ocalonymi od zapomnienia tradycjami. Moja własna podróż w PRCUA rozpoczęła się pięćdziesiąt lat temu, kiedy po raz pierwszy uczyłam polskiego tańca ludowego w Grupie Kulturalnej Dorosłych (Adult Culture Group). Ta iskra doprowadziła do założenia Zespołu Polskich Tańców Ludowych „Wesoły Lud" (1977) oraz Południowo-Zachodniego Centrum Polskiego Śpiewu i Tańca (1985).

Jestem dozgonnie wdzięczna moim pierwszym mentorkom, takim jak Regina Ocwieja (późniejsza wiceprezes) i Martha Kwiatt (ówczesna dyrektor Dystryktu 8), a także wielu działaczom z Dystryktu 8. Moje zamiłowanie do szczegółów i dokładności historycznej w naturalny sposób doprowadziło mnie do pełnienia funkcji skarbnika i archiwisty Dystryktu 8. Ostatecznie, zachęcona przez mojego największego powiernika i orędownika, Ryszarda Jamińskiego oraz moją poprzedniczkę Annę Sokołowską, w 2014 roku objęłam stanowisko wiceprezesa PRCUA. Rola ta pozwoliła mi idealnie wykorzystać moje dotychczasowe umiejętności, jednocześnie stawiając przede mną wyzwania do dalszego rozwoju, by móc odwdzięczyć się organizacji, która otworzyła przede mną drzwi do tylu możliwości.

Gdy po raz pierwszy objęłam urząd, wyruszyliśmy z odważną wizją: unowocześnienia PRCUA poprzez połączenie naszych bogatych tradycji ze współczesnym podejściem do rozwoju. Razem przekształciliśmy naszą historyczną organizację. Pomimo zmieniającej się konkurencji rynkowej, pozostaliśmy zaciekle wierni naszej misji, zabezpieczając finansowy spokój ducha i pogłębiając zaangażowanie członków, aby zapewnić naszą stałą pozycję w zmieniającym się świecie.

Tę wizję wcieliliśmy w życie, powołując do życia profesjonalny dział marketingu. Działania te na wczesnym etapie ugruntowała Agnieszka Bastrzyk jako dyrektor ds. marketingu. Gdy awansowała na stanowisko sekretarza-skarbnika powitaliśmy Elżbietę Sawczuk, a dziś tę pałeczkę niesie Anusia Moschopoulos. Przez lata moja własna rola ewoluowała daleko poza tradycyjną działalność bratnią. Integrując strategię biznesową z kreatywnością artystyczną, zbudowaliśmy zjednoczoną potęgę łączącą sprzedaż, marketing strategiczny i profesjonalne publikacje. Osiągnęliśmy to, powierzając kluczowe role kierownicze wysoko wykwalifikowanym osobom. Oprócz wyżej wymienionych, byli to: Conrad Więcek jako koordynator ds. działalności bratniej, Marge Grzeszczuk jako koordynator ds. sprzedaży (Michael Dziadkowiec - 2020-22 r.) oraz Lidia Kowalewicz, kontynuująca pracę jako redaktor „Narodu Polskiego".

Razem w wielkim stylu świętowaliśmy nasz 150. jubileusz. Rewolucyjnie zmieniliśmy sposób, w jaki dzielimy się tą historią. Zadbaliśmy o to, aby nasze produkty finansowe, dziedzictwo kulturowe i świadczenia członkowskie trafiały do kolejnych pokoleń – co było możliwe w dużej mierze dzięki wyjątkowym projektom graficznym Lisy Terlecki oraz, przez ostatnie cztery lata, Elizabeth Dziadulewicz.

Prawdziwego przywództwa nigdy nie buduje się w pojedynkę; każdy sukces, który dziś świętujemy, jest wspólnym zwycięstwem całej naszej bratniej rodziny. Moje najgłębsze podziękowania kieruję do moich kolegów z grona dyrektorów krajowych, naszej oddanej Rady Dyrektorów oraz wyjątkowego personelu biura głównego, który za kulisami dba o sprawne funkcjonowanie naszych działań. Specjalne podziękowania należą się Kevinowi Rybie, naszemu nadzwyczajnemu dyrektorowi ds. IT. Jestem również niezmiernie dumna, mogąc obserwować, jak nasze kolejne pokolenie liderów – w tym nasza pierwsz w historii kobieta na stanowisku prezesa, Agnieszka Bastrzyk, oraz sekretarz- skarbnik Julie Prado – budują na tych nowoczesnych fundamentach i prowadzą nas ku jeszcze większym sukcesom. Dziękuję za Wasze niezachwiane zaufanie, partnerstwo i za obdarzenie mnie największym zaszczytem w mojej karierze zawodowej.

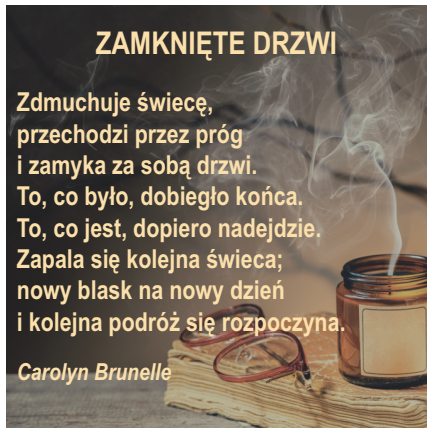
Przede wszystkim kieruję moje najserdeczniejsze podziękowania do naszych członków. Od pokoleń członkowie ZPRKA (PRCUA) są sercem, duszą i siłą napędową naszej organizacji. Wasze lokalne placówki stanowią fundament ZPRKA. Jesteśmy czymś więcej niż instytucją finansową – jesteśmy społecznością zbudowaną na tradycji, zaufaniu i wspólnych wartościach. Trwamy razem w czasach dobrych i pełnych wyzwań. Wasza wiara, Wasza gościnność i Wasze niezłomne zaangażowanie w naszą misję były dla mnie stałą inspiracją, gdy pojawiały się trudności. Obyśmy nadal pozostali lojalni wobec naszego ZPRKA i jego misji przez kolejne 150 lat!

Mojemu kochanemu mężowi Ryszardowi, mojej oddanej rodzinie i najbliższym przyjaciołom dziękuję za to, że jesteście moją opoką. Tak bardzo Was wszystkich kocham.

Ogromną dumą napełniała mnie również fakt, że przez 9 lat mogłam z dumą reprezentować ZPRKA, angażując się jako skarbnik Kongresu Polonii Amerykańskiej.

Zamykając ten piękny rozdział mojego życia, moja miłość do rodziny ZPRKA pozostaje silna jak zawsze. Jako ostatnia w znamienitym gronie wiceprezesów, jestem przepełniona ogromną dumą i nadzieją na przyszłość. ZPRKA stoi na progu świetlanego jutra, napędzane nową energią do działania, fachowym przywództwem i prawdziwą pasją. Idąc naprzód, nadal będę Waszą najbardziej żarliwą orędowniczką, aktywną uczestniczką i niezłomną siostrą w wierze oraz dziedzictwie. Dziękuję za ten niezwykły przywilej służenia jako Wasza wiceprezes przez dwanaście niezapomnianych lat.

Niech obfite Boże błogosławieństwo spocznie na Was, Waszych rodzinach i naszym ukochanym Zjednoczeniu Polskim Rzymsko-Katolickim w Ameryce.



Składam serdeczne podziękowania odchodzącej wiceprezes, Micheline Jaminski, za 12 lat zaangażowania i wsparcia w nadzorowaniu procesu wydawania publikacji ZPRKA „Narod Polski". Jej wiedza, cenne wskazówki i gotowość do niesienia pomocy stanowiły źródło inspiracji i motywacji do działania i pozostawiły trwały ślad w historii naszego wydawnictwa.

Życzę Pani Jaminski wiele szczęścia, satysfakcji i spełnienia w kolejnym, w pełni zasłużonym rozdziale życia.

— Lidia Kowalewicz, Redaktor

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