

FAITH • FAMILY
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POLISH
HERITAGE
CENTER

PANNA MARIA, TEXAS

Visitor Experience #52

Our Sporting Heritage

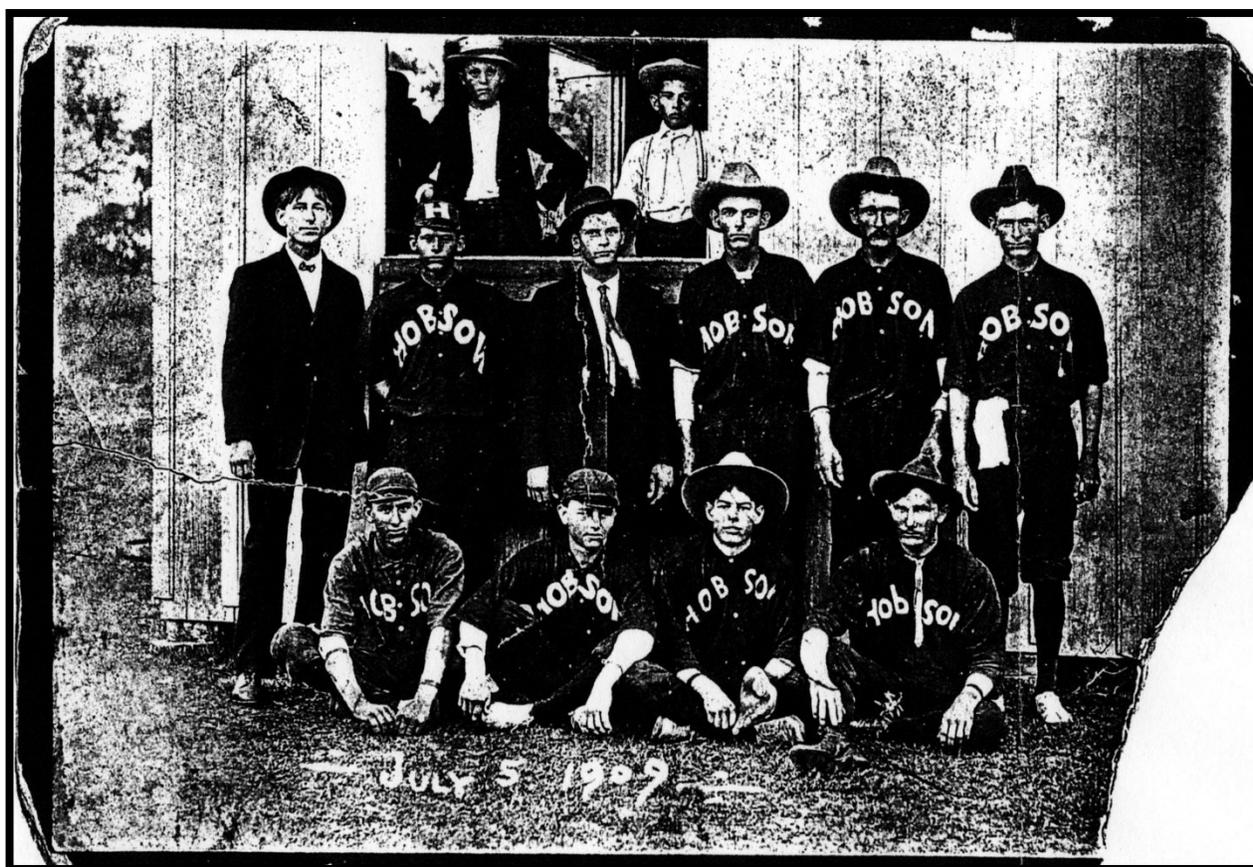


*Young seminarian, John Yanta (circled in red),
on the Saint John Seminary football team in 1948*

Our Sporting Heritage

By Janet Dawson Ebrom

On Sunday afternoons in small South Texas towns, residents enjoyed playing or watching local baseball games. Boys and young men from our ancestral families would often join teams and develop a long-lasting camaraderie among players. Friendly rivalry between towns added an element of pride and support as fans cheered the players. Vintage photographs from the early and mid-1900s captured a memorable time in each town's history thanks to those of you who generously had these scanned for the Polish Heritage Center.



Hobson Baseball Team
July 5, 1909

Photograph courtesy of: Falls City Library, Falls City, Texas

Do you see your ancestor in either of these pictures?

The baseball players in the 1909 *Hobson Baseball Team* photograph on the preceding page are currently unidentified. Fortunately, in the Falls City photograph below, **Ben P. Bronder** was identified by his granddaughter, **Theresa A. Sczepanik**, and the other team members may be recognized by our readers.



Falls City, Texas – circa 1910

Ben P. Bronder (1890 – 1955) is centered in back row, holding a catcher's mitt and face guard. The meaning of the letter "M" on their uniforms is yet unknown.

Photograph courtesy of: Theresa A. Sczepanik, Stockdale, Texas



Kosciusko Red Sox – 1951

Front row: **Bert Laskowski** and **Virgil Niemietz**

Back row: **Conrad Pruski**, **Abel Ramirez**, **Vincent Kotara Jr.**, and **R. Helms**

Photograph courtesy of: Regina Lyssy, Stockdale, Texas

This iconic photograph of the *Kosciusko Red Sox* pitchers was also included in St. Ann's parish archives with the pitchers' names labeled directly on the photograph.



Panna Maria Wildcats – 1969

Coaches of the *Panna Maria Wildcats* were **Frank Kruciak** and **Felix Snoga**, and their manager was **Aloys Pawelek** as noted above with all the athletes' names. The players' uniforms designated sponsorship by Polish National Alliance Group 3128.

*Photograph courtesy of: **Ruth Dupnik Krawietz**, Falls City, Texas*



Inspiration in the Theater



A panoramic view of the front of the Theater from the rear

What is 33 feet by 32 feet, features a 7.88 feet by 14 feet screen, can seat 65 individuals with ease, has a comfortable climate control system, state of the art sound system, and a professional video package? The theater of your Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria!

Your experience here at the Heritage Center is, by design, to begin with a video presentation introducing you to your continued encounter of the Center. But the theater is more than a one-trick pony! From the beginning, there has been excitement for this space and the many other functions that can be accomplished.



A row of chairs showcasing the pull-up writing surface

The first concern was making this segment of the experience a comfortable one. The professionally styled, fold-up seats (viewed to the left) were studied, researched, and debated to maximize leg room, your ability to recline, and yet maintain your line of sight with only minimal intrusion. The red fabric of the seats was chosen to represent the red color of the Polish flag, showing our ties with the heritage of our ancestors. Each seat has a side pull-up writing surface for those programs and events when you may desire to take notes. And rest assured, for our left-handed visitors, there are seats with the pull-up writing surface that accommodate you too! On each end of the front row, there is a total of five movable chairs. This flexibility allows the chairs to be moved for those in wheelchairs, like **Bishop**



A panoramic view from the front of the Theater

John Yanta, to sit up front and enjoy the program. These chairs can be arranged in whatever configuration is needed within the Theater as shown in the image on bottom right.

Mike Mecum, LD Systems Director of Systems Integration, offered an excellent description of the Theater System: “This system features a full-range digital surround audio system that will provide professional grade audio playback in the theater. Two front channels, one center channel, two rear channels and a subwoofer fill the space with audio from any of the A/V sources: A computer input located in the theater (under the screen), a Blu-ray player located in the equipment rack in an adjacent room, A Digital Signage player (loaded with the same videos featured in the museum space), or a rack-mounted computer. Audio and video from each source can also be previewed in the equipment rack. A wireless microphone combo kit allows the use of either a lapel microphone or a hand-held microphone for presentation style events. A 7,200 Lumen laser-based video projector projects onto a frameless, surface-mounted projection screen. The screen is 193" diagonal (94.5" H x 168" W). The projector generates a 1920x1080 resolution image and features a laser projection source which is quiet and lampless – good for 20,000 hours of use with no lamp replacement ever needed.

In addition to the fixed chairs, there are portable chairs on wheels that can be added as needed.





The area in front of the screen can also be used by presenters, programs, and displays.

The theater system (power, volume, source selection, starting / stopping of presentations, lighting presets) is controlled from a 7” touch panel mounted in the equipment rack. The control system allows presets to offer simple configuration of the system for theater use or for multi-purpose presentations.”

Not only will we be able to watch the orientation video, but with the connected computer and internet access, we will be able to view presentations prepared by the Center, presentations accessible via the internet, and perhaps even movies and documentaries of interest on demand. A concept that is also being explored is the possibility of families putting together their own presentation that can be shared with the attendees! And with all of the creative software available today, the exciting possibilities are nearly endless!

Some additional uses of the Theater involve the large, open area in front. It is ideal for any number of events ranging from lectures to multi-persons events like dance groups, musical concerts, art construction classes, and even much discussed language classes both for Silesian-Polish and standard Polish!

Recall the mission statement of the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria:

The Mission of the Polish Heritage Center is to “keep vibrant and relevant the history, values, beliefs, customs and traditions of the Polish settlers and their descendants...and to inspire, engage, and educate our visitors.”

The Theater of this Center is a key in achieving and remaining true to the Mission Statement. Keeping



A view of the complete sixty-five (sixty fixed and five portable seats) seating capacity of the Theater

the history of our immigrant ancestors vibrant is one of the founding goals of **Bishop Emeritus John W. Yanta** (image below) as seen in the orientation video speaking of finding a home in present-day Poland of one of his ancestors. Shown above and to the right of **Bishop Yanta**, is his cousin, **Loretta R Dzuik Niestroy†**. Here she spoke of one of the early homes of Panna Maria that had been on her family's homestead for a number of generations. This home creates a bond and ties her ancestors to the present. It also reminds us that there



Loretta R Dzuik Niestroy† *Past president of the Panna Maria Historical Society*

are structures still existing that help to tie us to our history!



Bishop John Yanta
Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Amarillo
Founder, Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria

Bishop Emeritus John W. Yanta,
visionary and founder of the *Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria*

Please Join us & Save the Date for our Polish Heritage Center's Virtual (Zoom) Program

"Traditional Polish Parish Picnics in South Texas"

Wed., July 14, 2021, 3-4:30pm



Learn highlights and fun history of traditional food, activities, committees and upcoming event dates from several organizers & representatives of the traditional Parish picnics in South Texas. Participants will be invited to share their own stories of their traditional Parish picnics.

Please share with your friends, family, & community organizations!

To join the day of on July 14th open the Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/91270219860?pwd=anZiMnBoRm9tMIUvb0JpNXF2Y1BMdz09>

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

These are very exciting times as we are finally seeing the culmination of years of hard work come to an end with the completion of the impressive, state of the art, and beautiful Polish Heritage Center! We thank the donors, volunteers, architects, builders, designers, and staff and we are finally preparing for the grand opening. We be fully operational in the fall and will be welcoming visitors to the center. No doubt they will be in awe since there is not a heritage center or museum as advanced as this anywhere in the State of Texas.

As you know, due to COVID and other factors, the building and exhibits were not completed for the planned opening in the fall of 2020. Illnesses, shutdowns, and other factors negatively impacted our fundraising causing us to fall short by \$1.1 million dollars of our capital campaign goal which was planned for, and is needed to operate for the first two years.

However, there is a silver lining in every cloud and with the addition of time, we can now extend the deadline for those who want to be displayed as Founding Donors with gifts received on or before December 31, 2021. This gives new and existing donors one final opportunity to join the Heritage Circle or to enter or move up within the societies. Once the capital campaign ends, the Heritage Circle and societies will close permanently in recognition of our Founding Donors. To move up in a society, your aggregate donations are considered. Due to space constraints, we cannot offer the opportunity to enter Peter Kiolbassa Society (\$1,000 to \$4,999), however, donors may move up to a higher society with aggregate donations totaling \$5,000 or more. Listed below are the current societies:

Saint John Paul II Society *

\$1,000,000 and above

Father Leopold Moczygemba Society *

\$750,000 to \$999,999

Families of Original Settlers Society *

\$500,000 to \$749,999

Saint Faustina Kowalska Society *

\$250,000 to \$499,999

King Jan III Sobieski Society *

\$100,000 to \$249,999

Saint Hedwig Society

\$75,000 to \$99,999

Marie Skłodowska Curie Society

\$50,000 to \$74,999

Nicolaus Copernicus Society

\$25,000 to \$49,999

Tadeusz Kościuszko Society

\$10,000 to \$24,999

Frédéric Chopin Society

\$5,000 to \$9,999

* ***Indicates Heritage Circle***

For information concerning recognitions in the Heritage Circle or in the societies, please don't hesitate to contact Betty Kowalik at kowalibetty@gmail.com or by calling 830-583-6236.

Heartfelt thanks to our supporters from May 22 to June 21, 2021!

Amy Augustyniak, San Antonio, Texas
Marvin & Janet M Boroski, San Antonio, Texas
Betty Opiela Chrisman, Converse, Texas
George & Sharon Dziuk, Jr., Elmendorf, Texas
Wayne & Betty W Ferrill, Pleasanton, Texas
Elsie Snoga Fluitt, San Antonio, Texas
Pat & Barbara Moczygemba Hoffmann,
San Antonio, Texas
John & Mary Pollok Yanta Memorial Trust,
San Antonio, Texas
Larry & Leona Rapstine Kopecki, Jourdanton, Texas
Theresa Kotara, Falls City, Texas
Stanley & Grazyna Kozaczka, Cazenovia, New York
Helen Lempa, Cuero, Texas
Margaret Little, Corinth, Texas
Lawrence Martignoni, Victoria, Texas
Raymond & Debbie Moczygemba, Edinburg, Texas

Richard & Denise Moczygemba, Killeen, Texas
Carlos & Guadalupe M Ontiveros, San Antonio, Texas
Jay Orbik, Dekalb, Illinois
John & Patricia Picacio, San Antonio, Texas
Margaret Ranalli, San Antonio, Texas
Jerzy Rozalski, Harper Woods, Michigan
Raymond Szczepanik, San Antonio, Texas
Carolyn Skloss, San Antonio, Texas
Richard Sowa, San Antonio, Texas
Thomas & Deanne R Swierc, College Station, Texas
Donald & Catherine Varella, San Antonio, Texas
Ruthie Wagener, Gillett, Texas
John & Christie Schroeder Wojtasczyk,
Karnes City, Texas
Edwin Yanta, Devine, Texas
Bishop John W. Yanta, San Antonio, Texas
William & Judy Yanta, Silver Spring, Maryland

Calendar of Events

*As many of our communities are still examining moving forward with their celebrations,
many of the listed events **ARE PLANNED BUT NOT FINALIZED!***

July 14: PHC Virtual Event, 3-4:30pm
August 1: Annual Picnic, St. Ann,
Kosciusko, Texas
September: Annual Homecoming
Bazaar, St. Mary, Plantersville,
Texas
September: St. Joseph Annual Bazaar,
New Waverly, Texas
September 5: Dożynki Mass &
Homecoming, Chappell Hill, Texas
September 5: Holy Trinity Picnic,
Falls City, Texas (\$12 for 3 meat
plate [brisket/chicken/sausage] and

trimmings beginning at 10:30am
thru 1:30pm)
September 6: Labor Day
September 24—26: Polish Harvest
Festival, Houston, Texas
October: Polish Heritage Month
*October 10: Turkey Dinner &
Homecoming, Panna Maria, Texas*
October 10: Homecoming Bazaar,
St. Stanislaus, Anderson, Texas
*November 13: PACT ANNUAL
MEETING, St. Joseph Church,
New Waverly, Texas*

Litany of the Most Precious Blood

Lord, have mercy	Lord, have mercy	Blood of Christ, comfort of the weary
Christ, have mercy	Christ, have mercy	be our salvation
Lord, have mercy	Lord, have mercy	Blood of Christ, solace of the mourner
God our Father in heaven		be our salvation
	have mercy on us	Blood of Christ, hope of the repentant
God the Son, Redeemer of the world		be our salvation
	have mercy on us	Blood of Christ, consolation of the dying
God the Holy Spirit	have mercy on us	be our salvation
Holy Trinity, one God		Blood of Christ, our peace and
	have mercy on us	refreshment be our salvation
Blood of Christ, only Son of the Father		Blood of Christ, our pledge of life
be our salvation		be our salvation
Blood of Christ, incarnate Word		Blood of Christ, by which we pass to
be our salvation		glory be our salvation
Blood of Christ, of the new and eternal		Blood of Christ, most worthy of honor
covenant be our salvation		be our salvation
Blood of Christ, that spilled to the		Lamb of God, you take away the sins of
ground be our salvation		the world have mercy on us
Blood of Christ, that flowed at the		Lamb of God, you take away the sins of
scourging be our salvation		the world have mercy on us
Blood of Christ, dripping from the		Lamb of God, you take away the sins of
thorns be our salvation		the world have mercy on us
Blood of Christ, shed on the cross		Lord, you redeemed us by your blood.
be our salvation		And you have made us a
Blood of Christ, the price of our		kingdom to serve our God.
redemption be our salvation		
Blood of Christ, our only claim to		Let us pray.
pardon be our salvation		O God, who by the Precious
Blood of Christ, our blessing cup		Blood of your Only Begotten
be our salvation		Son have redeemed the
Blood of Christ, in which we are washed		whole world, preserve in us
be our salvation		the work of your mercy, so
Blood of Christ, torrent of mercy		that, ever honoring the
be our salvation		mystery of our salvation,
Blood of Christ, that overcomes evil		we may merit to obtain
be our salvation		its fruits.
Blood of Christ, strength of the martyrs		Through Christ our Lord.
be our salvation		R/. Amen.
Blood of Christ, endurance of the saints		<i>May Jesus bless you</i>
be our salvation		<i>in His most Precious Blood,</i>
Blood of Christ, that makes the barren		
fruitful be our salvation		<i>† John W. Yanta</i>
Blood of Christ, protection of the		
threatened be our salvation		†Bishop John W. Yanta

