



Chairman's Column

By: Aloys Notzon, PHC Chairman and President

Happy May, Everyone. As always, we thank you for your interest in and support of the Polish Heritage Center. Though the school year is winding down, school activity at the Center keeps everyone hopping. We thank Board member Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz who brought a delightful group of Polish high school students from X Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. prof. Stefana Banacha w Toruniu to the Center in late March. We were delighted to be a stop in their Texas tour.



Bishop Yanta's vision of the Polish Heritage Center being a magnet for Polish cultural events was exemplified by the recent performance of the Duo Klavitarre. Many thanks to Executive Director Alice Poore and Asia Gonczar, owner and Executive Chef of Apolonia Catering, for arranging this virtuoso performance by the Ziemska family: Pianist Jolanta Ziemska, Classical guitarist Maciej Ziemski and their son Marcel. Seventy people, including major donors Elizabeth Burda, Sam and Susie Kotara, George Kowalik, Martha Respondek and Joyce Rives, attended the performance in the Bishop John W. Yanta Room, enjoying the food, family atmosphere and the classical musical entertainment. I want to thank Larry Hass for filming the performance and making his film available for the Center's website.



Awesome Student Art at the PHC

By: Alice Poore, PHC Executive Director

Spring has brought abundant excitement to the Polish Heritage Center through artistic design and creativity during our first Polish Heritage Art Contest for school age children. Students from the three county school districts were invited to submit their creations. Art students from Karnes City High, grades 9 – 12, Runge Elementary, grades K-5, and Falls City Elementary, Middle School and High School, grades K-10, competed in our contest. We were so excited when district representatives delivered 100 entries to the Center on April 6! These beautiful, unique, and creative paintings and illustrations were displayed by grade level for all to enjoy. The official judges looked for creativity, use of color, and subject matter as they picked a first, second, and third place winner in each grade level. And with so much talent, the decision was not an easy one!



Since the student entries were on display for almost two weeks, we incorporated a People's Choice Award for visitors to give their opinion as to which entry caught their eye in each grade level. We had quite a few visitors from Poland, Minnesota, Michigan, and Florida who loved being a part of this special event.

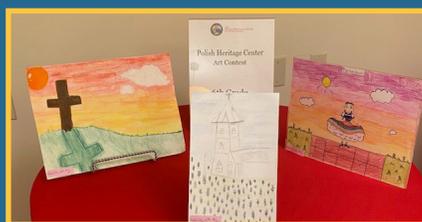
An Open House was held on Saturday, April 20 to provide an opportunity for parents and more of the public to view the student's artwork on display. Each student who participated received a certificate, thanking them for their entry.

First place winners in each grade level received a certificate, a rosette ribbon, along with a \$50.00 Amazon gift card. Second place winners received a certificate, a rosette ribbon, along with a \$35.00 Amazon gift card. Third place winners received a certificate, a rosette ribbon, along with a \$30.00 Amazon gift card. The People's Choice Award winner in each grade level received a certificate and a \$25.00 Amazon gift card.

The award ceremony and reception were well attended, and everyone especially enjoyed the students' reactions as the winners were announced. What a wonderful way to experience the creativity of our youth in Karnes County!!



Art Contest Winners



Majówka, a Trifecta of Polish Celebrations

By John Cebrowski, PHC Board Member



Majówka (Mai-oof-ka) is an annual celebration in Poland commemorating three important dates...which are the first three days of May.

May 1st in Poland is Labor Day (Święto Pracy), and was established as a public holiday in 1950 and has been a day off from work since then. Historically, rallies and demonstrations for labor began as a leftist movement in Paris in 1889. The appeal of the worldwide labor movement found fertile ground throughout Poland, in all three partitions. This day had important symbolism for the communists. In almost all cities throughout Poland, May Day parades were obligatory, in which students, employees of factories, offices, and other institutions had to participate. Today, like in America, it appropriately recognizes the labor contributions of all citizens and is mainly used for relaxation and recreation during a long, extended weekend.

May 2nd is Flag Day (Święto Flagi Narodowej). It is not a national holiday but was established in 2004 as an opportunity for Poles worldwide to reflect on heritage and history and is intended to popularize knowledge and respect for Polish national symbols, including the flag, the coat of arms, colors, and the national anthem.

The Polish coat of arms is an image of a white eagle with its wings spread out, with a crown, and golden beak and claws on a red field. The national colors are white and red. White represents peace and hope for all the people of Poland, and red represents the struggle for freedom over the centuries. The national anthem is "Poland is Not Yet Lost", also known as Dąbrowski's Mazurka.



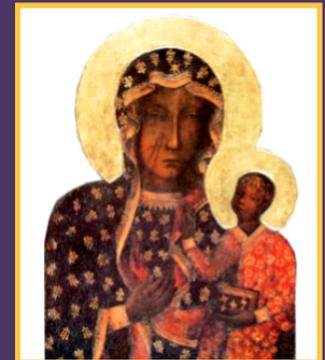
May 2nd is increasingly cherished. Flags fly on houses and apartment blocks, and various festivities and artistic performances take place. Although May 2nd is not an official "day off" like May 1 and May 3, it is treated as such by the Poles.

May 2nd also marks a celebration for the Day of Polish Diaspora, established in 2002, which recognizes the achievements and contributions of the approximate 20 million Poles, or people of Polish descent, living abroad.

On May 3rd, (Święto Konstytucji 3 Maja), Poland's Constitution of May 3, 1791, a national holiday, is celebrated. Poland's Constitution was the second-oldest written constitution in the world, following the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution extended full citizenship rights to townspeople and full protection of the law for peasants. The belief was that the constitution would strengthen and rejuvenate the struggling and threatened nation.

The Constitution was in effect for only 19 months because it was threatening to Poland's autocratic neighbors. However, it would have a lasting effect, becoming the light of hope that flamed in the hearts of Poles during and after Poland's three partitions and its eventual reemergence as a sovereign nation in 1918.

In many ways, the Constitution of May 3 resembles the Constitution of the United States with a series of protections and views that would acknowledge and confirm religious liberties, protect its citizens, detail a separation of the three branches of government, and provide for the defense of the country, among other provisions.



Since 1920, May 3rd has also officially become a nationwide religious holiday, because on this day the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Poland.

Sweden had launched an invasion of Poland in 1655. Warsaw and Kraków had fallen. The Swedes had laid siege to the Pauline Monastery at Jasna Góra in Częstochowa where the famed painting was preserved, but it was there that the monks, nobility, and citizens posed a 40-day resistance that eventually defeated the Swedes. Poland would not be Protestantized. That turning point was recognized as providential, leading to King John II Casimir's vow proclaiming Mary as Queen of Poland in 1656.



**THE
POLISH HERITAGE CENTER
AT PANNA MARIA**

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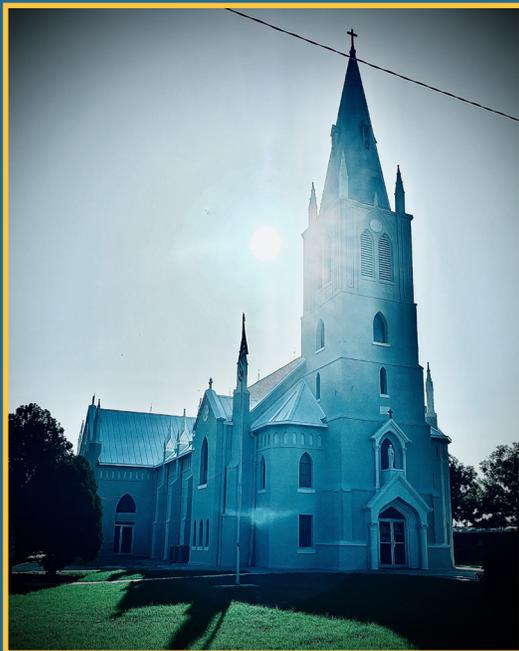


PHC Hours: Wed. – Sat. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
www.polishheritagecentertx.org
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The Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax deductible organization.

TAX ID: #46-0561240

News from the Heritage Communities



**Spring Picnic
May 5
Cestohowa**



**Blessing of Our Lady Statue
May 19
Panna Maria**