



News of Polonia

Serving the Polish Community since 1995

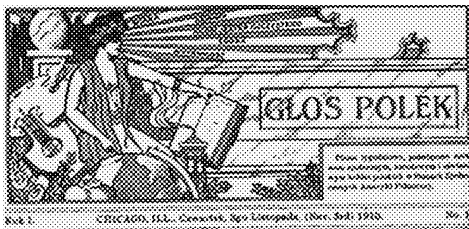
Wiadomości Polonijne

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Free or Home Delivery

It's the 99th Anniversary of *Głos Polek!*



The First Issue Was Published on November 3, 1910

The first issue of the Polish Women's Alliance's (PWA) *Głos Polek* was published 99 years ago! The PWA was still a young organization at the time, but growing rapidly, and this was its second attempt to launch an official publication. The first *Głos Polek* was discontinued after only two years due to a lack of funds, but the second time, the newspaper succeeded and continues to be published until this day.

In 1910, the newspaper was a weekly publication, written completely in Polish. The logo on the first page of the newspaper depicts a classical figure of a woman holding a book, pointing to a globe, and surrounded by symbols of the arts. The words Faith, Education, Love of Mother Tongue, Harmony, and Perseverance appear in the background.

The mission of the publication was to educate members on cultural topics, to expand their world view, to keep them connected to their Polish heritage, and to keep them abreast of the latest organizational news. The *Głos Polek* today is a quarterly publication, published mostly in English and in a color news magazine format. Some things have changed -- but the central mission of the *Głos Polek* is the same: to keep its readers informed about the latest developments in the organization, in their communities, in Poland, and in the world.

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FIRST National Conference of the Polish American Community Held in Chicago

By: *Betsy Cepielik, with contributions by Susanne Lotarski*



Photo - courtesy of www.PoloniaSF.org

L. PAC President Frank Spula, Rafal Baniak - Undersecretary of State, Dr. Carla Knorowski - Northeastern Illinois Univ., Krystyna Bochenek - V.P. Poland's Senate, Mikolaj Korzistka - Translator, Robert Kupiecki - Poland's Ambassador to the U.S., Michal Dworzycyk - President of Poland's Advisor on Polonia matters

On October 15 and 16, 2009, the Polish American Congress was the host of the first National Conference of the Polish American Community in the 21st Century –Challenges and Opportunities. Guests from all over the United States, Poland, and Canada gathered in the Fine Arts Center of Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago for this momentous event.

PAC President Frank Spula welcomed the attendees and informed them that this would be the first meeting for sharing, moving forward for the Polish Community, a time for solidarity, and to "go for the goal." 65 years ago (in May 1944) the Polish American Congress was founded, in Buffalo, New York. The tremendous efforts of the PAC and other people working in the United States contributed to the successful emergence of a free and independent Poland 20 years ago.

President Spula then introduced the officers of the PAC: Vice President—Virginia Sikora (President of the Polish Women's Alliance), Vice President for American Affairs—Dean Anthony Bajdek (PAC President of Eastern Massachusetts), Vice President for Polish Affairs—Bożena Kamińska (President, Polish Slavic Credit Union in New York), Vice President for Public Relations—Susanne Lotarski (PAC President of Washington Metro), Vice President for Cultural Affairs—Deborah Majka (ACPC President -- Philadelphia), and Secretary—Wallace Zieliński (past president - Polish Falcons). Mr. Spula also recognized the Conference Organizing Committee, especially members of the Illinois PAC Division and PNA offices, who worked tirelessly to plan this very spectacular event.

Dr. Carla Knorowski, Vice president for Institutional Advancement, of Northeastern Illinois University then addressed the assemblage. She announced the University's partnership with Polonia and Poland and said that this is the opportunity to go back to school and be an eager student. (Indeed, it did feel like being a student again—even with having lunch in the school cafeteria.)

Introduction of Honored Guests

Illinois Governor Pat Quinn was scheduled to appear, but unfortunately, was attending to important state matters in Springfield. His message was read by Senior Policy Advisor Sam Rincon who informed the audience that there are 1,000,000 Polish Americans and 3,000 Polish organizations in the state of Illinois. A letter of greetings from Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan was delivered by Agnes Ptaśnik. A Resolution congratulating the PAC on its 65th anniversary and conference was received from the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

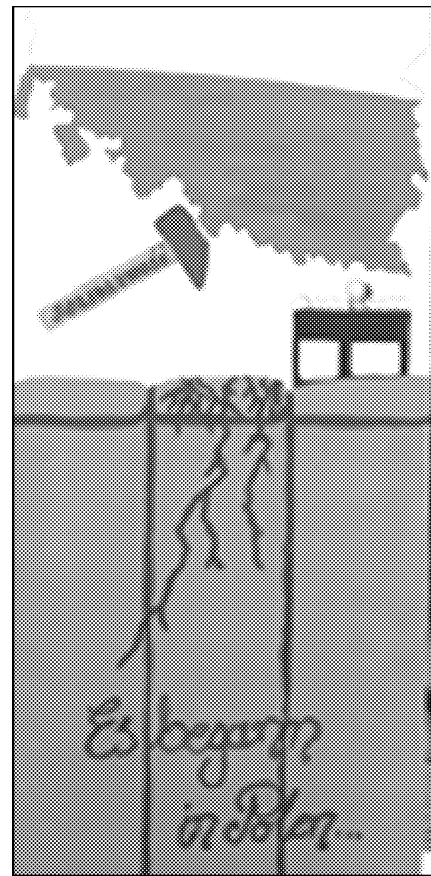
There were numerous distinguished guests from Poland who spoke. Leading off was a letter of greeting from the President of Poland, Lech Kaczyński.

Krystyna Bochenek, Vice President (Wicemarszałek) of the Polish Senate extended greetings from the President of the Senate and noted that President Spula had spoken to the Senate on its 20th anniversary earlier this year. She thanked American Polonia for strengthening Poland's position in the international arena. Today Poland is free and sovereign. For this reason, she said, the Polish Senate desires that Polonia centers around the world play an ever larger role in the political lives and societies of the countries where they have settled, where they live.

Maciej Szymański, Director of the Department of Cooperation with Polonia, delivered a message from Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski and spoke of the new strategies being planned for the promotion of Poland. The Undersecretary of State of the Ministry of Economy, Rafał Baniak, spoke about how they are encouraging American investments in Poland. Poland is the only country in the EU with a positive Gross National Product this year. Many industries are locating service and R&D centers in Poland – such as IBM in Wrocław. He thanked the PAC for their activities of the last 65 years.

Robert Kupiecki, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, expressed hope for open discussions and to think about future challenges and opportunities. The role of the PAC is as critical as it was 65 years ago. This conference offers a platform and the Embassy is giving their commitment. Treasurer Grzegorz Popielarz read a letter from Wspólnota Polska President, Maciej Ptażyński, who joined the conference later in the day. A letter of greeting also was received from PiS party leader Jarosław Kaczyński. All of the distinguished speakers from Poland stressed the importance to Poland of a strong and united Polonia able to influence American society and policy makers on Poland's behalf.

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A giant domino signed by Lech Wałęsa with the words 'It began in Poland'. Wałęsa was invited to knock over the first of 1,000 giant dominoes which have been placed along the path of the wall.

The first wall to fall was in Poland, says Lech Wałęsa

The world is looking to Berlin as the city celebrates 20 years since the fall of the Wall. But in an interview with Spiegel Online, Lech Wałęsa, the man who led Solidarność, says the collapse of communism started in the Polish shipyards.

A 9 November 2009 article in NRCHANDELSBLAD tells of an interview of Lech Wałęsa by Charles Hawley of Spiegel.com

Charles Hawley: Are you looking forward to the 20th anniversary celebration of the fall of the Berlin Wall?

Lech Wałęsa: It's not important whether I'm looking forward to it or not. I am a politician who played an important role in the reunification of Germany and I was invited to take part in the celebration. It's not like a piece of candy handed out to a sweet little boy.

The guest list in Berlin is an impressive one. Chancellor Angela Merkel is expecting numerous world leaders to attend, including French President Nicolas Sarkozy, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, among others. Surely it is an honour to be a part of it.

The first wall to fall was pushed over in 1980 in the Polish shipyards. Later, other symbolic walls came down, and the Germans, of course, tore down the literal wall in Berlin. The fall of the Berlin Wall makes for nice pictures. But it all started in the shipyards.

There were, of course, a number of other attempts to revolt against Soviet rule in Eastern Europe. The Hungarians in 1956. The Czechs in

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