

**Justyna Ball from 2**

Child volunteers would help to bring your stuff to the site.

They used to carry it all in a wheelbarrow. Back then there was only one, so if you were late (once we were stuck on the main road, behind a cavalcade of motorcycles!), the wheelbarrow was already being used in...the animal parade.

Still, I was more than happy to become their "Polish liaison." I took over the tent with no floor but full of people constantly tripping over the tree roots. Typical were live chickens picking up the crumbs of my gingerbread cookies and vanilla fudge candy from Poland called "krowka" with a cow logo. On hot days, we served an apple mint drink from Poland or blackcurrant juice, both chilled. Student helpers made cutouts keeping the children busy, while I had a chance to chat with their parents and introduce them to Polish history and culture. A detailed map helped many find ... small villages from where their ancestors took their lifetime voyage. One man spent more than 20 minutes looking for one, and then started reading everything there was on the table until his wife showed up and grinding her teeth, she spat out, "your son is looking for you!" I gave out so much info that many think that I'm a travel agent!

My oversized framed picture of the Black Madonna once broke on the bumpy road, but that is what the duct tape is for. That portrait put a big smile on the faces of some African delegation who remembered John Paul's visit to their native country. I love seeing the great surprised looks on people's faces when they discover our Polish tent there...

Each site gets an animal. I always ask for something cute like a lamb or sheep to attract children. China or Tibet get yaks. Kenya gets goats. One year, when I chatted with a "Kenyan" milking a goat at the next site, I found out that not only he was not Kenyan but Ethiopian, and that he is also one of those runners at the Boston marathon!! I have two marathon runners in my household, so we know who those Ethiopians are, and they are pretty famous in the Boston area. I just never expected seeing one milking goats. He traveled from Washington, D.C to volunteer for that weekend.

At the Global Village, the only time when the traffic slows down is when there is a horse show, and Dale Perkins is the mastermind behind it. His horses can actually jump through fire, but my personal favorite is watching a sheep dog chasing chicks or geese.

The place is an example of a well-organized small community. Everyone knows his place and job assignment. There are volunteers who take care of animals at the site and bring them water. Others make sure we take breaks, and whatever they serve for food is all grown on the farm. Once on a hot day, each of us got a yogurt that came with an environmental friendly spoon that looked like plastic, but was actually made of ...sugar cane, so you could feel free to throw it on the ground afterwards.

I noticed that the female volunteers at my site often asked pregnant visitors about their due date, and this is not as if they like to use such a line to start a conversation ... the practical reason behind it is that they need a baby Jesus for their Live Nativity scene.

And each year they need a new one! Quite intriguing crowd we have up there! (My great source of information, one of the sites teaches how to use goat manure.)

And I have to tell you, from displaying the Polish flag upside down at the entrance, stocking up on Ukrainian (that passed as Polish) items, a potato stamp to... a real log cabin for us and our display ... Heifer came a long way!

And as we learn from them over time (giving examples how to deal with earthy problems, their solutions and future goals), they too are learning something from us as well. Besides introducing the public to Heifer's work in Poland, we teach people about Polish culture, history, customs, and by revealing some interesting facts and contradictions, we are challenging stereotypes.

In my harvest basket, among other products, I display original 100% rye bread,

horseradish, buckwheat, pickles in brine, carrot and blackcurrant juices, plum marmalade, but also unknown in the US, Polish beer or mead.

Poles are often known as meat and potato kind of people, so I have fun talking about fish and the variety of fish served on Polish tables. It makes sense having access to the Baltic sea (a chance to compare to our own ...Cape Cod) and Mazury / The Land of Thousand Lakes (a chance to invite young visitors for kayaking, which is very popular in Poland). Smoked eel also makes a list...

When presenting Christmas, we concentrate on why it is so important to Polish Americans to share the same traditions. We explain it through Poland's tragic history, partitions, invasions, and occupation. How millions of Poles were dislocated all over the world. It is incredibly important for all of us to know that at the same time, all of us sit down and, pretty much, celebrate Christmas the same way – it's a bonding experience.

And here comes a chance to tell people that the fact that we still speak Polish is a miracle, because for previous generations, the language was forbidden and German or Russian was imposed upon us. It was up to the parents to teach their children their native language ... and so on.

Here I can talk about how the Italian Princess Bona married a Polish king and brought cabbage and cauliflower to Poland. Or I can give a whole new meaning to "kielbasa" when talking about its Hebrew origins (Kol Basar).

Stuff like this seems to be very amusing. 99% do not know much, a few know some, but do not know why, and if I could be the link between ... the pleasure is all mine. I call it an "adjustment" to the existing profile of Poles.

An oversized picture of "Lajkonik" (a Turkish horseman entertaining tourists in the Krakow market square) gets attention and gives me a chance to talk about... invasions, King Jan III Sobieski, battle of Vienna, coffee beans, etc..

My approach is working as we are told over and over that our display was again, a huge hit.

Now, here comes the part that I do not understand. I asked several friends to either help or visit us there. For some unknown reason, they all prefer to go to ... some Polish festival rather than help create this site and introduce their heritage to others. This mentality ought to change if we want to survive (as a group) amongst others.

I know that the Pułaski Day Parade is huge. We've been to a couple, and it attracts tens of thousands of Polish Americans, but I would rather cover Heifer because ... nobody else will. The Pułaski Day Parade gets a lot of attention in the Polish-American press, and the crowd grows each year, with or without our help.

I get a kick from the fact that at Heifer, those who visit have no clue that in the middle of the forest there will be a Polish log house, and someone will give them a short tour of Poland. Some come through and leave in a rush, others linger on in amazement.

Heifer turns out to be a place where I can correct misunderstandings, where people can ask, and sometimes get a quite surprising answer.

Once at dinner at a friend's house, a couple of young Polish professionals laughed at me and the idea of a Polish display. I guess they were too cool to ever set foot on a farm. Oh well...you can complain about Poles being misrepresented or you can do something about it and make the existing image look more attractive. There are others who strictly participate only in Polish festivals. And to tell you the truth, those events have very little in common with Polish culture (unless you consider a "Polish platter" of kielbasa, boiled pierogi with a lump of butter and slice of rye bread a "culture.").

What festivals do (besides giving many that warm feeling of belonging to a certain ethnic group) at the same time, they separate Poles from the larger community. I never see Polish groups amongst other ethnic groups at multicultural events. The Pułaski Day Parade is great, but the Columbus Day Parade in Worcester, Mass until now did not have Polish representation. And now we

march with Italian-Americans and Scottish pipers. Twice, we were invited to join the St Patrick's parade (a huge event in Worcester), but many of us won't participate because of ...the cold. Something tells me that if we don't do it next year, the St Patrick's Committee won't bother us again...

Now, it wouldn't be me if I didn't bring out some fact from my childhood that is somehow connected to the Heifer Project. You want to bet that I have one?

Heifer's work in Poland began shortly after WWII when livestock was almost nonexistent due to the fact that either starving people consumed it or occupying armies confiscated it. Before Heifer in Poland, there was the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration). UNRRA was already shipping goods to Europe and supplied boats while Heifer donated horses and paid the men who delivered them.

In the UNRRA files, there is a picture of the "poor Polish children of Oświęcim awaiting distribution of soap."

Now, at my grandma's, my cousin and I often played outside in those huge wooden boxes with the UNRRA logo on them. We collected pine cones in white UNRRA bags that were previously used to distribute flour.

My uncle, who was six when the war ended, told me that his family received UNRRA's aid packages "for the children." Among other goodies, there was: bacon, powdered milk, puddings packed in small green containers as if for the army, orange marmalade (very sweet!), juices in large 2 liter cans, chewy candy, beans in tomato sauce, (very) blood(y) sausage, margarine and chocolate. There was also clothing, army boots, sweaters, underwear, sheepskin pilot jacket that my uncle wore even years later as a student at UW, as well as soap and DDT ... for bedbugs and head lice which was crucial! UNRRA packaged those goodies in cardboard boxes that were shipped in those huge wooden crates that years later we used for our plays.

As he put it: "Maybe it's because of those packages that we all grew up to be healthy despite having a tragic childhood." Heifer picked up where UNRRA left off in 1947.

After two days, my harvest basket was plucked clean and Jacek could finally have his (Polish) beer... He did not know yet that in a week, at the Columbus Day Parade, he would be asked to carry a speaker that played terrible polka music that for some reason intertwined with a La Cucaracha song. □

**Polish Profiles from 2**

Throughout the United States, De Rosen's works adorn Cathedrals and churches. In Prescott, Arizona, in Pittsburg, Memphis, Buffalo, Pasadena, San Marino, Sacramento, San Francisco, and La Jolla. However, the largest mosaic in the world is in the dome of the St. Louis Cathedral. It is Rosen's greatest piece of art, and the largest mosaic in the world.

At the age of 84 De Rosen was still painting. He painted a triptych of St. Genevieve for a church in Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania. It was his last work.

I sometimes visited De Rosen in his modest home where he lived with his two younger sisters. It was a very modest place in the suburbs of Washington. As such a great artist, he should have lived financially comfortable, but he did not. He lived very modestly. There was no money left over for emergencies.

Jan De Rosen was not only a great artist, he was also a great gentleman, and unfortunately very naive. He was taken advantage of by some galleries and art dealers.

He appreciated my visits to his place. A cup of tea was always ready for me. That and a smile. His deeply blue eyes twinkled merrily as we said goodbye. Soon after, Jan De Rosen died. He was 91 years old, and the year was 1982. □

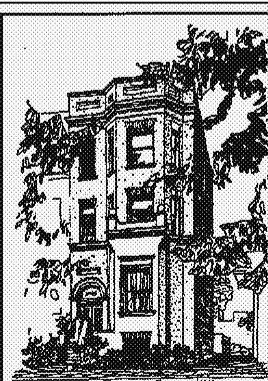
**Janek's Corner from 4**

museum, one is greeted by socialist-designed furniture and elegant stand that each family used to have. After that, the sophisticated exhibition starts. Firstly, one is being taken back to 1956 through the photos and memorabilia from that time. The uniform of Romek Strzałkowski, a young hero of the uprising, is displayed in the centre of the room. On the opposite side, there is an old tram reconstructed nicely to which one can hop in and start his virtual journey. It is a truly emotional journey with feelings of hatred and love at hand. The audio-visual devices fuel the impression of old times and help the visitor to accommodate in his new surroundings. For someone who has never been in Poland during the socialist regime, one of the rooms will be a total surprise – that is an all-red conference hall with actual speeches of Secretary-General of the State who condemned the uprising in Poznań, photos from that period, and posters that were used for propaganda purposes. The museum makes a perfect case and leaves its visitors intrigued with the question, "Did it really happen?"

Creating such places as those two mentioned above is a great idea to cultivate the memory of the times when Poland was under oppression. The involvement of new technologies makes it more approachable and more interesting for people who might already be fed up with ordinary museums. Youngsters, on the other hand, seem to be really intrigued with the fact that they can touch, smell, hear everything in a way that it actually happened. Try it yourself! □

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**Los Angeles****Whats Your Legacy**

Many people talk about leaving their will to worthy causes, but don't have a will, and do not realize it requires a will to do so. The laws of most states make it clear that personal property goes automatically, by law, to your nearest relative, even if they are quite distant ones, unless you have a legal will that says otherwise. If you have no relative, it goes to the state. More than half of all adult Americans die without having made their wills. Most of them undoubtedly planned to do so, but never got around to it. Some had wills but didn't keep them current. When you have a will, you should update it every few years as conditions change. Also, always name an executor who will carry out your wishes. Besides money, non-cash possessions can also be used as contributions and various donation plans can be carried out. Be a philanthropist: leave your stocks, bonds, real estate, art, valuable collection or insurance to continue the Polish - American traditions. Your will is the most important way of giving. When you're gone, it is a legacy that is not forgotten. In your will, you can specify what you would like your donation to be used for. For help in making your will, contact a competent lawyer. **The American Center of Polish Culture, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that needs your help and legacy.**

**The American Center of Polish Culture, Inc.**

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