



Chairman's Column

By: Aloys Notzon, PHC Chairman and President

2024 was a wonderful year of accomplishments and yet of sadness in the passing of three of our Board Officers: Betty Kowalik, Treasurer, Sam Kotara, Vice Chairman and Joe Yanta, former Vice President. All were major donors who gave of their time, their treasure and their talents. We were so blessed to have them in our lives. The Polish Heritage Center has set records for attendance and events, including cultural performances, tours, educational presentations, and reunions. It is also a place where families gather to create memories during weddings and funerals. Currently we are enjoying the Veterans Exhibit, curated by our Librarian/Archivist Lauren Robinson, which opened on November 30 and will be available at the PHC through June. See photos inside this newsletter.

Dziękuję, our thank you dinner for PHC major donors, was held on December 7. It began with a Mass at the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, followed by a reception in the PHC lobby and dinner in the Bishop Yanta Room. It was a wonderful opportunity to share a delicious Polish meal, served family style, by Apolonia Catering of Austin. We had an enjoyable time, especially when people at each table introduced themselves and we learned interesting facts about each other. It was a fun event filled with lots of laughter. Our Executive Director, Alice Poore, gave a summary report on activities and progress made by the Polish Heritage Center. We were delighted to hear what great accomplishments were made in 2024.

As always, we greatly appreciate all of your gifts to the Center as we strive to fulfill the vision of Bishop Yanta in honoring our hard-working and faith-filled immigrant ancestors.

Remembering Joe Yanta

By: Aloys Notzon

Joe Yanta, one of the founding Board members of the Polish Heritage Center, passed away on December 11, 2024 in San Antonio. He was the last of the eight children of John Andrew Yanta and Mary Magdalen Pollok, natives of Panna Maria who raised their family on their ranch in Runge. His funeral was held January 3, 2025 at St. Matthew's Catholic Church in San Antonio. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife Joyce, and is survived by children Madelon Yanta Leone (husband Charles Leone), Mark Yanta (wife Marisa Davis Yanta), Matthew Yanta (wife Victoria Pomilla Yanta) and Maurie Yanta Bosl (husband Dustin Bosl) and their families.

I had the privilege of knowing Joe for more than 25 years. He will be remembered for his attention to detail in big picture issues. His grasp of business, having been a business owner, his strategic thinking, his pragmatism, his generosity and willingness to step to the plate for support of individual projects was exemplary. Joe was not only a major donor of the Polish Heritage Center, a member of its Heritage Circle, and a founding Board member, he could be counted on to provide delicious kolaches at any event. When he saw the need for Polish cuisine at PHC events, he found Apolonia Catering in Austin and funded the Polish food for a thank you party for major donors.

Joe was a good friend to his older brother Bishop John Yanta and loved to share his reflection of Bishop Yanta's leave of absence from the seminary to become a successful manager of the family farm and ranch. A few days before Joe died, when he was amid his heroic medical battles, we met, and

he signed resolutions relating to the Polish Heritage Center Board, and discussed PHC business, his beloved Texas A&M Aggies, politics and family. He was always looking outward and seeing ways to help others. Joe was a major contributor to the St. Mary's Basilica at A&M, helping what he considered to be the most Catholic university in the United States. He also supported the Polish clubs at both A&M and the University of Texas at Austin, and he was instrumental in shepherding the Bishop John W. Yanta Scholarship. His mind remained sharp and his questions were always on point. Joe was humble and faith filled. He leaves a beautiful legacy.



Opening of the Veterans Exhibit



Dziękuję



Welcoming Students from Yorktown, Runge, Poth and Karnes City



It's Gala Time!

By: Alice Poore, PHC Executive Director

We are so excited to announce the Polish Heritage Center's 2025 WHITE & RED GALA. The Gala will take place on Saturday, March 1, from 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm, at the Panna Maria Hall. To whet your appetite, we've included photos from our inaugural 2024 event.

The WHITE & RED GALA is our largest fund raiser of the year, so we strive to make it very special for our guests. It's time to celebrate the vision of Bishop Yanta and to spend time with friends. Join us and enjoy wonderful cocktails, a delicious steak dinner, a small live auction, and some fabulous entertainment!

Reserve your table now! There will also be a limited number of individual tickets. For more information, contact Alice Poore at 830-310-8612 or director@polishheritagecentertx.org.



Coming Soon!

By: Alice Poore, PHC Director

The Polish Heritage Center's long-awaited segment on the popular travel show, "The Daytripper," will be featured sometime in February. This exciting show explores all of Texas, from famous landmarks to the little-known hideaways in our Lone Star State, and it encourages people to get out and explore everything within a day's reach. As you will remember, I had the pleasure of meeting Chet Garner, executive producer,

writer, and host of the show. Chet was fascinated with Bishop John Yanta's vision for the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria, and the story behind the ten-year planning of this inspiring national treasure, the beautiful exhibits and the history of the first, permanent Polish settlement in America. I for one, cannot wait to see how Chet Graner will showcase the Polish Heritage Center.

For San Antonio and surrounding areas, you can view the show on KLRN, channel 9, Saturdays at 9:30am. For other cities, check the website for your local listing. We will let you know the broadcast date as soon as we know it.



THE
POLISH HERITAGE CENTER
AT PANNA MARIA

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Panna Maria, Texas 78144



PHC Hours: Wed. – Sat. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
www.polishheritagecentertx.org
(830) 310-8612

The Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria
Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax deductible organization.

TAX ID: #46-0561240

Join us for The Polish Heritage Center's

White & Red Gala

Cocktails, Dinner, and Entertainment.
Reserve your tables and individual tickets now!

Saturday, March 1, 2025

5:30pm - 9:00pm

Panna Maria Hall
13912 N. FM 81, Panna Maria, TX

For more information, contact the Executive Director Alice Poore at
830-310-8612 or director@polishheritagecenter.org