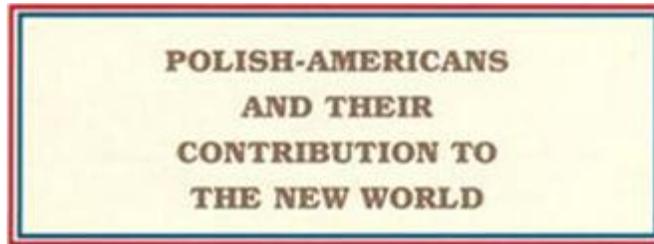


International Polonaise Ball 2000



THE 28TH INTERNATIONAL POLONAISE BALL

Christianity, patriotism and passionate love of freedom are the dominant trends of the 10 centuries of Poland's turbulent history. Few nations have suffered as much, faced so many reverses of fortune and yet retained their ethnic and cultural identity and vigor. Upon reaching the shores of North America, Polish immigrants did not abandon these values or their ethnic traditions. Often forced to leave their beloved country, they came to the New World with the conviction that a beautiful future awaits those who have the tenacity to pursue their dreams. Many, by their dedication and hard work, achieved their goals.

The first Poles landed in Jamestown, Virginia, on October 1, 1608. They came from England on the ship *Mary and Margaret* under the command of Captain John Smith. He said, "There are no better workers than Poles." History shows they truly helped the colony in distress.

Miami with its pastel art deco style, palm trees swaying in the ocean breeze and blue sky is also an oasis of Polish culture embodied by the American Institute of Polish Culture (AIPQ) founded by Lady Blanka Rosenstiel in 1972. This year on February 5th the AIPC held their 28th International Polonaise Ball and paid tribute to Polish-Americans who contributed to the New World. It was an event that emphasized the role of Polish-Americans in the development of the United States starting from the first Poles who came to Jamestown in 1608. It was also a "Thank you America" for opening the borders to Polish immigrants who through their talents, hard work and perseverance were able to build a bright future for themselves.

The Ball took place at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach. A Polish white and red flag was flown on top of the Hotel to mark the presence of Polish community. The Ball started with a lovely cocktail party sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Roman Cooper, Mr. Wildemar Dowiak and Mrs. Harriet Irsay. It was held in the room adjacent to the Grand Ballroom. The guests started arriving; ladies in elegant often elaborate dresses and gentlemen in tuxedos and white tie with decorations, looked distinguished and dignified. There was a receiving line and Mrs. Ande Lippen. A committee greeted all. An ice sculpture of the Polish eagle was the centerpiece on the buffet table. Many guests traveled long distances to be at the Ball; Mr. and Mrs. Oswald Schietse came from Monaco, Mr. and Mrs. Roman Cooper with friends from Chicago, Mrs. Harriet Irsay, from Winnetka, IL, Mr. and Mrs. Chester Partyka, Mr. and Mrs. Thad Cooke with friends from Ohio, Mr. Andrzej Pawfikowski from San Francisco as well as Mr. and Mrs. Ted Mirecki, and Mr. Michael Pawlowski from Washington, DC. There were also many from Florida who frequent the ball every year. Laughter and friendly conversations filled the room as old and new friends were mingling.



Lady Blanka Rosenstiel and Mr. Benedict Markowski. Ms. Stefanie Powers and Mr. Andrzej Pawlikowski

Each year the American Institute of Polish Culture awards Gold Medals for outstanding achievements. This year the recipients were Ms. Stefanie Powers for her achievements in the performing arts and Professor Aleksander Wolszczan for his contribution to astrophysics. They were the stars of the evening and they came to personally receive their awards medals. Many prominent guests also participated in this International event including His Excellency Ambassador of the Republic of Poland and Mrs. Im v KozmInski, former US Ambassador to Poland and Mrs. Nicholas ReN ' Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland bohdan Hryniewicz from Puerto Rico, and Bozena Jarnot from Hawaii, a representative from the Office of Mayor Alex Penelas, and the Office of Mayor Joe Corollo, as well as scientists, artists and businessmen.

When the door to the Grand Ballroom opened members of the Polish-American Folk Dance Company from New York wearing 17th century Polish costumes and some dressed as Native Americans greeted the guests. The Grand Ballroom was beautifully decorated. The goldcrowned white feather eagle proudly hovered over the room, with Polish and American flags on the stage. The ceiling was draped in pink swags, and feather arrangements. The pinkish light and beautiful flowers gave the ballroom a sweet warm atmosphere.

Mr. Edmund Sadowski, the Master of Ceremonies, opened the ball by reading the congratulatory letters from President Bill Clinton and President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski, It is a tradition that the Ball starts with the Polonaise danced by some of the distinguished guests. This year the music was from the movie Pan Tadeusz by Andrzej Wajda, a Polish movie director of international acclaim who was just awarded an Oscar for his life long achievements in directing.

Lady Blanka Rosenstiel, with Mr. Benedict Markowski led the Polonaise. They were followed by Stefanie Powers and Andrzej Pawlikowski, the Honorable and Mrs. Edward Bacinich, his Excellency Ambassador and Mrs. Nicholas Rey, Mr. and Mrs. Walter

Beaman, Mrs. Harriet Irsay and Mr. John Sullivan, Mrs. Barbara Cooper and Dr. Krzysztof Kubik, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Haciski, and Mr. and Mrs. Tully Patrowicz. It was a stately procession of 24 couples who moved gracefully to the beautiful music.



Professor Aleksander Wolszczan , Lady Blanka Rosenstiel , Dr. Tully Patrowicz

Soon after, His Excellency Ambassador Jerzy Kozminski took the floor and thanked Lady Blanka for promoting Polish culture in the USA for almost 30 years. He emphasized the achievements of so many Poles and Polish-Americans in the United States, and reminded all that today Poland can celebrate the Polish-American friendship as a NATO member. Later Lady Blanka and Ambassador Rey delivered heartfelt speeches.

Lady Blanka stressed that despite many odds Polish people who came to the US were determined to share their talents and make their new homeland in America very proud. The speech ended on a patriotic note with American and Polish National Anthems sung by soprano Laura Kafka. Then, his Excellency Bishop Tomasz Wenski gave the invocation. At this point, a delicious dinner was served. Soon the Polish American Folk Dance Company of NY entertained the guests. They began with an interpretation of a Native American Eagle Dance, which was thought to have been performed for the first Polish settlers in Jamestown in 1608. They followed with the Polish dances Krakowiak, Polonaise and Mazurkas whirling gracefully in original Polish costumes. Laura Kafka, also of Polish decent, sang a medley of songs, with Kamifla Sz1darska at the piano. Ms. Kafka an accomplished soprano, came from Washington DC to give a wonderful performance. Her interpretation of I could have danced all night from My Fair Lady, encouraged many to step to the dance floor, where soon many couples were whirling around.

Lady Blanka Rosenstiel received the proclamations from the Mayor of Dade County Alex Penelas, and Mayor of the City of Miami Joe Corollo. Both proclamations announced that February 5th 2000 was a Day of the American Institute of Polish Culture. The Mayors called to join them in saluting the American Institute of Polish Culture for its lasting contribution to the society. There were also acknowledgments of special people. Recognition was given to Dr. Krzysztof Kubik - Chicago's Doctor of the year, Harriet Irsay and Ande Lippen, long-standing board members, for their dedication and support. Professor Kazimierz Braun, writer, playwright and scholar received the Aurum Award for propagating Polish literature and plays in the US. Baron Andrew Willmana von Liedtke founded this award, in memory of his mother Halina Synakowska.

Then the American Institute of Polish Culture Gold Medal recipients were introduced. Ms. Powers, born Stefania Zofia Federkiewicz, said how proud she was of her Polish heritage. She said: "I am an American actress, but my heart is Polish." Ms.

Powers is an internationally recognized celebrity who took time from her busy schedule to participate in the Ball, not only to accept the Gold Medal Award, but to emphasize how important the achievements of Polish-Americans are. Stefanie Powers, known to many all over the world as Jennifer Hart from the long running TV series Hart to Hart, has been nominated for 5 Emmy Awards, 5 Golden Globe Awards, has received People Choice award, Polish Heritage Award, and many honors .

Professor Wolszczan educated at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Poland, at present is an Evan Pugh Professor of Astronomy and Astrophysics at the Pennsylvania State University and the Director of the Center for Astronomy at the University in Torun. Professor Wolszczan's most important achievements are the discoveries of pulsar in globular clusters and supernova remnants, the detection and characterization of binary pulsar that is likely to become the most precise probe of realistic gravity and the discovery of three planets circling a neutron star - the first-planetary system beyond our own. He has also received many awards and said that this Gold Medal presented to him by the American Institute of Polish Culture has a deep meaning for him personally and science in Poland. Professor Wolszczan attended the Ball with his family.

After the Gold Medal ceremony, people filled the dance floor again and danced the night away to the AI Nublar Orchestra Society. The Ball ended with another Polonaise dance in which many guests participated. At this point some people were saying: "Goodbye, see you next year at the ball." They were taking with them an informative and comprehensive program Book especially prepared for this occasion, which contained articles about Polish history and Polonia and showcased many Polish-Americans who contributed their talents, intelligence and hard work in arts, science, politics, military, sports and other fields. The guests also received gift bags with Polish sweets from the Polish Folklore Company, brochures about Poland, and a videotape of a documentary Burning Questions, by Mishael Porembski. They were leaving with a new awareness and appreciation for Polish culture and with unforgettable memories of the elegant and prestigious Ball.