

POLISH CULTURAL CLUB OF GREATER HARTFORD, INC.
ANNUAL REPORT
July 2015 – June 2016

September, 2015

The Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc. and the Polish National Home of Hartford, Inc. co-sponsored a lecture and demonstration on Folk Art of the Nativity Scene – “Krakowska Szopka” on September 27, 2015. Marek Czarnecki, a member of the PCCGH, as well as a local community scholar and artist, discussed the history, meaning, and development behind this unique and charming tradition. The lecture and demonstration was meant to prepare and inspire would-be artists to produce a Szopka for the Polish Cultural Club’s 35th Annual Szopka Competition, which was held on Sunday, November 29, 2015 at the Polish National Home in Hartford. The Szopka competition is open to children and adults.

October, 2015 – Polish Heritage Month

On October 22, 2015, the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc. celebrated Polish Heritage Month with a lecture honoring Central Connecticut State University’s “40th Year of Polish Studies Program.” Nicholas Pettinico, Jr., CCSU Foundation Assistant Treasurer, was the guest speaker.

On October 25, 2015, three members of the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc. received the “Distinguished Service Award” from the United Polish Societies of Connecticut in a formal presentation. The individuals were Sophie Bieniek, Mark Bruks, and Marek Czarnecki, all of whom have made exceptional contributions to the benefit of Polonia.

November, 2015

Members gathered for the Club’s Annual Meeting / Food Drive Collection / Turkey Drawing on November 19, 2015 at the Polish National Home. The Historian reported on the past year’s events and programs.

The 35th Annual Szopka Festival was held at the Polish National Home in Hartford on November 29. Edward Farley, Chair, and his committee were responsible for the coordination of this very successful event. Numerous volunteers made this special day possible with their hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm. The Club is

very grateful to the American Council for Polish Culture for receiving their 2015 Affiliate Matching Grant of \$500.00, which helped to defray the cost of the Szopka-Making Competition, Szopka Coloring Page Display, and Community Outreach. Proceeds from the Szopka Festival benefit the Club's Jennie Marconi-Javorski Scholarship Fund.

December, 2015

The annual Wigilia celebration was held at the Polish National Home in Hartford on December 11. Everyone shared in the "opłatek," enjoyed a traditional meatless meal, and sang kolędy.

January, 2016

Co-Presidents Patricia Kaczynski and Frances Pudlo began formulating programs and events for the coming year.

On Saturday, January 16, 2016, member Marek Czarnecki made a presentation at the Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven, CT to a capacity crowd. The topic was "The Polish Nativity: A Beautiful Palace for the King of Kings."

February, 2016

For the second year, the Club sponsored its pre-Lenten "Paczki na Karnawał" on February 7 in the lower church hall of SS. Cyril and Methodius Church in Hartford. It was a very successful event with the paczki being sold out. Handouts on Polish Easter customs were available and Polish Easter items offered for sale.

March, 2016

Dr. Richard Benfield, Professor of Geography at Central CT State University, gave an encore lecture on "Gardens of the World" to an appreciative audience on March 31.

May, 2016

Member, Marek Czarnecki, renowned iconographer and scholar, was one of three individuals recognized on May 3, 2016 at Polish Day at the State Capitol in Hartford.

On May 4, 2016, the “Krakowska Szopka” owned by the Club was officially donated to the Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven, CT to become part of their permanent nativity display. This Szopka was constructed in Poland by a 13 year old boy, and was a prize winner at the annual Szopka Krakowska Festival in Kraków, Poland sometime before 1985. Mrs. Zofia Sklepinska (of the then Polonez Travel Agency) purchased it and brought it to the United States on two seats of a LOT Polish Airlines flight.

May 22, 2016 marked the 25th Anniversary of Priesthood of Rev. Adam Hurbanczuk, Pastor of SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish in Hartford. Members of the PCCGH celebrated with Father Adam on this joyous occasion.

June, 2016

The highlight of our Club year is the awarding of scholarships to deserving students of Polish descent. This year, on June 22, four outstanding scholars received a scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.00 each: Cameron Fedina, who will be attending Fairfield University in CT; Elizabeth Marconi, who will be attending the Centre for Global Health, University of Dublin, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland; Cameron Torres, who will be attending Franklin Pierce University in NH; and Rachel Zlotnick, who will be attending Villanova University in PA.

Plans continue to evolve for the ACPC Fall Board Meeting being held in Glastonbury on October 21 and 22, 2016, hosted by the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc., as well as for the celebration of our Club’s 40th Anniversary Gala Banquet on October 22.

Submitted by Patricia A. Kaczynski, Co-President and Historian
Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc.