



August 31, 2007

To the Members of the Polish Folk Dance Association of the Americas, Inc.:

Election of New PFDA Board Members:

PFDA elections were recently held in Chicago at the PFDA festival. Thank you for all the groups that voted and attended the meeting.

I (Tom Skurski, of Wawel Folk Ensemble) am truly honored to once again be elected President of the PFDA. It has been twenty years since I last served in this position. I am excited and energized as I look back on what the Association has accomplished. We just returned from the twelfth Festival sponsored by the PFDA. Our group has attended all of the Festivals and I can say this past one has to be ranked as one of the best. I'd once again like to thank Misia, Richard, Monica and all of the Wesoly Lud members for their hospitality and hard work in organizing a truly successful festival.

The festivals have only been one dimension of the Association. The early vision of the founding members was to have a festival in the years that Poland didn't have one and to create a vehicle for networking and a library of music and dance videos. I believe we exceeded all expectations with the regional concerts in the mid nineties and most recently with the PFDA Performing Tours in Poland.

I would personally like to thank all of the former Presidents, Board members and Festival Chairpersons for keeping the vision of the Association going and perpetuating our beloved Polish heritage. I would also like to thank our newest Board members for accepting their nominations and carrying on the tradition of our organizations.

Your new Board of Directors:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| President | Tom Skurski (Director of Wawel Folk Ensemble) |
| Vice President | Conrad Wiecek (Artistic Director of Lechichi Dancers) |
| Secretary | Daniel Smela (President of Polonia Dance Ensemble of Regina) |
| Treasurer | Monica Pazdziora (Wesoy Lud Polish Folk Dance Ensemble) |
| Sargent-at -Arms | Margaret Pawelkiewicz (Executive Director Polish American Folk Dance Company) |

Looking to the future, as we celebrate twenty five years in 2008, I hope to carry on the vision of the Association and explore new opportunities to offer our members. I am also very excited to report that we have three proposals for future Festivals that the Board and I will be reviewing.

Finally, I would be remised in not thanking each one of you, the members of the Polish Folk Dance Association of the Americas, for your continued support and involvement in the Association. It is because of you that we exist today. I am open to your comments and suggestions, feel free to contact me at dntskur@aol.com

Chicago PFDAA Festival 2007

From July 29th through August 3rd, the Wesoly Lud Polish Folk Dance Ensemble of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA) hosted Chicago Festival 2007. Every three years, a member of the Polish Folk Dance Association of the Americas takes on the task of putting together a Polish folk dance festival, and after 25 years, Wesoly Lud decided it was high time to bring it back to sweet home Chicago!

The festival was multifaceted. Choreographers from Poland came and instructed all dancers participating in the workshops of songs and dances from the various regions of which they are specialists: Wieslawa Hazuka from the region of Krakow; Emma Cieslinska from the Podlasie Region; Maria Wnek from Spisz; and Slawomir Pawlinski from Wielkopolska.

However, it wasn't all work and no play. Every evening, a different activity was planned for the festival participants. The entire festival started off with a barbeque near Lake Michigan, allowing all dancers to mix and mingle. The proper start to every festival is Holy Mass, and we had the honor of being able to celebrate in Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral – the central hub of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The festival attendants were then shown the sites of the city from atop a Double Decker Bus Tour, as well as from the top of the Sears Tower. A fireworks cruise down the Chicago River was also part of the package. And what other activities to offer a group a dancers? Why, "Dancing in the Park," featuring tango and ballroom, as well as a good ol' fashioned *poliska zabawa* (Polish dance), complete with a band! Sound like a jam-packed week? Oh, it was!

No festival would be complete without a show on the Big Stage, and this festival was no exception. Chicago Festival 2007 ended with a fabulous Gala Concert on August 3rd at Arie Crown Theater. Groups from all over the United States performed both regional and national Polish dances on the magnificent stage. They showcased Poland's kaleidoscope of costumes, as well as its diversity among the various regions and their respective songs and dances.

The following ensembles should be proud of their heritage and the beautiful way in which they presented it in a visual form for all to see: Krakowiak Dancers of Boston (Boston, MA); Polish American Folk Dance Company (Brooklyn, NY); Wawel Folk Ensemble (Detroit, MI); Polish Falcons and Syrena Polish Folk Dance Ensemble (both from Milwaukee, WI); and four groups from Chicago, IL: Lajkonik of Polish National Alliance (PNA) and Holy Trinity Mission, Lechici of the Polish Youth Association, Wesoly Lud of PRCUA, and Wici of PNA. Five other groups participated in the festival, though they did not perform in the Gala Concert: Krakowiacy (Denver, CO); Michas (Virginia Beach, VA); Polish Heritage (Buffalo, NY); Polonia (Chicago, IL); and Zajaczek (Sterling Heights, MI).

The finale of the concert portrayed Polonia as we hope it always to be: strong, powerful, unified, and beautiful. All 225 dancers came out on stage in Krakow costumes to a finale choreographed by Mrs. Wiesia Hazuka. A standing ovation resounded in the hall. Yet the applause was about to grow louder. At the Gala Concert, Wesoly Lud received the Gold Medal from Stowarzyszenie Wspolnota Polska from Mariusz Grudzien, our Honored Guest, Director of the International Festivals of Polish Folk Dance Ensembles in Rzeszow, Poland as well as Vice President of the Rzeszow Division of Stowarzyszenie Wspolnota Polska. Wesoly Lud is the first Polish folk dance ensemble in the United States to be given the high honor of receiving a Gold Medal.

Chicago Festival 2007 and the Gala Concert of Polish Folk Dances would not have been possible without the generous donations of many people. Money, time, effort, blood, sweat, tears – our wonderful sponsors gave to Chicago Fest all that they had:

Polish Folk Dance Association of the Americas, Kancelaria Senatu Rzeczypospolitej Polski, Stowarzyszenie Wspólnota Polska, Illinois Arts Council, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, Polish National Alliance, Legion of Young Polish Women, PRCUA Society 1634, Polish Women's Alliance, B&D Loan Services, Inc., Kestler Graphics, Great Steaks & More, Polamer, Wesoly Lud Polish Folk Dance Ensemble, and Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago.

Twenty-five years ago, Micheline Binkowski-Jaminski was the sole Coordinator of the Gala Concert and Chicago Festival 1982. In 2007, she is undoubtedly the brains behind the operation, as well as the inspiration, the voice of wisdom, the fount of knowledge, and the Festival's #1 Proponent. This time, however, Pani Misia was joined by a Committee of dedicated individuals who did everything in their power to make Chicago Fest 2007 the fabulous portrayal of Polish folk dancing that it was. This fabulous committee:

Anna Sokolowska – Vice President of PRCUA and Honorary Festival Chairperson

Misia Jaminski – Festival Director

Richard Jaminski – Festival Co-Director

Monica Pazdziora – Seminar Coordinator

Teresa Pazdziora – Ticket Chairperson

General Committee Members: Virginia Gavaghan, Danielle Lech-Kroplewski, Konrad Habina, Annette Nowakowski, Eva Kowalski, Elizabeth Presz, Anna Kraszewski, Katarzyna Rogala, and all the Parents of the Wesoly Lud Polish Folk Dance Ensemble.

Special thanks also go out to the Festival Guides/ *Piloci*, who helped get everyone where they needed to be in a timely manner and made sure any problems/situations that arose were immediately addressed so as to make Chicago Fest the best experience for everyone involved.

They are: Nicole Bencik, Thomas Frankowicz, Virginia Gavaghan, Eva Kowalski, Anna Kraszewski, Paul Pazdziora, Elizabeth Presz, and Kasia Rogala.

Chicago Festival 2007 was greatly enjoyed by all whom attended, and it gave Polonia all over the United States something to be proud of! Poland has a magnificently rich heritage, and there was no better way to showcase it than Chicago Fest!

Written by

~ Katarzyna (Kasia) Rogala

Chicago Festival DVD's and Video's:

DVD's and CD's of music from the workshop will be made available soon as the PFDA receives copies to distribute at this time prices have not been set.

13th World Polish Folk Dancing Festival Rzeszow Poland:

Tentative Dates July 17th - 24th 2008 more information to follow in the months to come. Please check the following website for more info: <http://www.wspolnota-polska.rzeszow.pl/>

Photo's From Polish Fest:

<http://visualetiquette.com/events/MilwaukeePolishFestival/index.htm>

Save the Date for a Fun, Socialable learning Experience:

Choreographers Workshop in Chicago,

The PFDAA member group Lechici is planning a choreographers' workshop in Chicago on either October 20-21 or October 28-29. The workshops will include dances from the Slask macro area, which will Slask Opolski and perhaps other subregions of the region (Cieszyn, Beskid mountains, Pszczyna, Zagłębie). Classes will go from 9-5 on Saturday and 9-1 on Sunday, with a further option to continue from 2-5 to work on songs and dances targeting specifically for those who teach children. Information will be available once we confirm the dates with the people at the hall. For more information please contact Conrad Wiecek directly @ Lechici@aol.com

Membership News:

The PFDAA Congratulates the following groups on their anniversaries:

Krakowiak Polish Dancers of Boston is Celebrating 70 Years of Cultural Education Through Song and Dance on November 23, 2007. For more information on the event please visit: www.krakowiak.org

The Polish American Folk Dance Company is Celebrating 70 Years of Polish Folk Dancing www.pafdc.org

Krakowiacy Polish Folk Song and Dance Ensemble in Denver, Colorado is Celebrating 5 years of Polish Folk Dancing in October of this year, www.krakowiacy.net

PFDAA Welcomes 2 new groups to the membership: *The Kujawiacy Polish Song & Dance Ensemble and Harmony Polish Folk Dance Ensemble*

The Kujawiacy Polish Song & Dance Ensemble was formed in May of 1992. Since its formation, the Ensemble has worked hard in developing authentic and artistic Polish Cultural Entertainment. Kujawiacy, meaning inhabitants of the Kujawy Region of Poland, was incorporated into Kitchener's multicultural entertainment scene by a small group of youthful and optimistic Canadians of Polish descent eager to learn, cultivate, promote and preserve the folk traditions of their ancestors.

In the near fifteen years of the Ensemble's existence membership has changed many times. Male members were occasionally hard to come by, so to offset the shortage of boys, girls often danced dressed as boys. At the present time the Ensemble consists of three age dance groups. The novice youngest group starting from the age of four, the intermediate group with members beginning at age nine, and the most traveled, the senior group, with most members at high school age

In 1999 Kujawiacy traveled abroad for the first time to attend the International Polish Folk Dance Festival in Rzeszow, Poland. The current group of senior dancers traveled to Zielona Gora, Poland for an International Dance Festival in the summer of 2005, where they danced with

group from all over the world. Kujawiacy also holds Folklorama festivals and an annual Children's Day Festival where groups from Canada attend. Also, Kujawiacy's own participation in various festivals in and out of the province of Ontario, the most being in Winnipeg, Manitoba and in Montreal.

Currently, Kujawiacy is managed by a strong organization of parents under the president, Urszula Kudla. For the past fifteen years Kujawiacy has been under the stellar artistic direction of Jan Mielcarek, who just recently passed on his role. The group's artistic side is now directed by two choreographers: Agnieszka Gabinet, who proudly instructs the Senior and Intermediate groups, and Margaret Sowa who leads the animated novice group. Kujawiacy's repertoire is filled with a dynamic and energetic selection of dances from all over Poland, as well as some Canadian line dancing.

Harmony Polish Folk Dance Ensemble's mission is to promote and sustain Polish heritage within the family, through study and performance of the traditional folk dances of Poland and cultural enrichment sessions.

The Harmony Polish Folk Ensemble is a new Polish cultural and dance ensemble based in Cheektowaga, NY. Our founding members include families from the American-Polish communities in and around Buffalo, NY that have been involved in the promotion of Polish heritage in the area for many years. In an effort to provide their own families with a culturally enriching experience, we have formed this community group, centrally located and open to all ages from pre-school to senior citizen.

We encourage all those interested in the heritage of Poland to join. No dance experience is necessary, and members need not dance to participate. You do not need to be of Polish descent to join! We welcome everyone!

In addition to dance, there will be a culture lesson each night to include folklore, holiday traditions, regional customs, crafts, history and simple language games and songs. The group will take part in public performances throughout the year, dressed in traditional folk wear from various regions of Poland.

Our biggest challenge right now is costumes. If you have any costume pieces from any region, our group would gladly welcome your donation! Open your hearts (and your attics) and please let those costume pieces live!

Janosik Polish Dance Ensemble Seeks Artistic Director

The Janosik Polish Dance Ensemble located in Willow Grove, PA (Philadelphia suburb) was founded in 1972 by Dr. Morley Leyton. Our beloved director passed away in May 2007. At this time, we are actively seeking individuals interested in continuing the tradition of teaching authentic polish song and dance. Individuals interested in assuming the artistic directorship of the Janosik Polish Dance Ensemble may direct their inquiries to Marianne Miserandino, Janosik president, at miserandino@arcadia.edu. For additional information on the Janosik Polish Dance Ensemble, please access our Web page at www.moniqueandmorley.com/janosik

Thank you for your assistance.

Ann Louise Pyzik-Colduvell, Business Manager, Janosik Polish Dance Ensemble

Congrats:

The PFDAA sends out congratulations to Jessica and Ben from Wawel Folk Ensemble on their new born baby boy born on August 21st. Jessica is quite the dedicated dancer. She participated in all of the dance classes and performed in the Gala. What a woman!

New and Used Costumes for Sale:

If you have costumes you want to sell or are looking for a set of costumes let the PFDAA know and we can run your request in our quarterly Newsletter.

New Women's Boots size 34/5 for sale \$125.00 (usd) plus shipping please contact Donna Skurski for more info @ DNTSKUR@aol.com

Newsletter Articles:

If your group is celebrating a special event or would like to get the word out about an event please feel free to submit a newsletter article to: dsmela@sasktel.net and it will be published in our next newsletter. Newsletters are published every 3 months (March, June, Sept, and December)

The Polish Folk Dance Association of the Americas



PFDAA Board of Directors

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Tom Skurski – President (Wawel)</i> DNTSKUR@aol.com | <i>Daniel Smela - Secretary (Polonia)</i> dsmela@sasktel.net |
| <i>Konrad Wiecek - Vice President (Lechici)</i> Lechici@aol.com | <i>Monica Pazdziora- Treasurer (Wesloy Lud)</i> nikapaz@gmail.com |

www.pfdaa.org