



Friends of Polish Art
 Founded 1937 Non-Profit Organization



FPA Honors Marcia Lewandowski at the 2024 Świąconka held on March 24

For many decades Ms. Marcia Lewandowski has been one of the most inspirational, energetic and effective teachers and ambassadors of Polish culture, both in Polonia and in the broader metropolitan Detroit area. She continues to inspire us all, and FPA feels deeply honored and grateful for her presence at this year's "Świąconka".

Numerous people attended the event just for a chance to express their gratitude to Marcia, whose tireless efforts to promote Polish culture, her pride in the Polish heritage, her exceptional knowledge and love of folklore are legendary.

Among the attendees was a large group of Marcia Lewandowski's former dance students and protégés. Ms. Lewandowski, who co-founded the Wawel Folk Ensemble in 1965 (a year earlier she joined FPA!), was Wawel's director and choreographer for 25 years.

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Submissions from FPA members are highly encouraged. Please send them as an e-mail to the editor.

The opinions and editorial views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Friends of Polish Arts.

FPA does not assume any responsibility for statements advanced by contributors to this newsletter. The editor reserve the right to edit any submission.



Marcia Lewandowski with dancers and dance instructors during the FPA Świąconka

FPA is Reviving its Literary Competitions

Friends of Polish Art believes that there is a writer in each of us and therefore encourages students and adults to submit their work in this year's two FPA literary competitions!

FPA is proud to announce that the two literary competitions, **Suzanne Marie Margaret Sloat Youth Literary Competition**, and **Estelle Wachtel-Torres, MD Literary Competition**, are back after a few years hiatus.

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Friends of Polish Art
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Dear FPA Members & Friends,
Hard to believe we are already into May of 2024!

First of all let me welcome to FPA our new members, Danuta Szymczakowski and Elizabeth Grace. We hope that you will enjoy the events and join us in promoting Polish culture!

It's already been a busy year for FPA. Our first General Membership meeting of the year was held in late January where we had our annual elections. We followed this with official announcements that FPA was offering the Frank Filipek and Lillian & Chester Mitchell Scholarships, the Donald Samull Polish Folk Dance Grant, and also started work on the return of our two literary competitions, the Suzanne Marie Sloat Youth Literary Competition and the Estelle Wachtel Torres, MD Literary Competition.

In late March we brought back our Świąconka celebration, our first since 2019. We honored FPA Lifetime Member, Marcia Lewandowski – Polish artist and activist, in recognition of her many contributions to FPA and numerous other Polonia organizations in promoting Polish culture and traditions. What a wonderful event it was featuring a traditional Easter meal, pisanki display, music concert, and basket raffle.

In April a group of eight energetic FPA souls travelled to Saginaw Valley State University campus to participate in their Polish Organization Festival which was part of their Slavic Heritage Month. While on campus we set up a few displays promoting our local Polonia organizations (FPA, PNA, PRCUA and PAC-MI) and distributed scholarship, grant and literary competition material, historical brochures, homemade pierniki cookies made by Iwona Jędrzejczak and Polish candies. Our festival committee chair, Donna Bielecki created a Polish Trivia questionnaire which was a fun and engaging activity for the students. Overall, it was a great opportunity to meet and chat with the students and let them know of our presence in the community.

Next on the schedule will be the presentation of the annual Scholarships and Dance Grants at our General Membership meeting to be held on Friday, May 31. We hope many of you will attend this meeting. As you know we need to spend a little time taking care of organization business at the meeting but do plan to allot time for members to mingle, socialize and chit chat.

Looking further out we have some very exciting news about other events which are in the planning stages. If all goes well, we hope to announce them in the next couple of months. We also want to get our Szopka Competition back on track, but we need someone to step up, and organize a workshop, ideally, a member with some experience in building Szopki. Please let me know if you, or someone you know could do it!

Sadly, we remember the passing of two members who were active and significant contributors to FPA. They are Henry Pawlowski and Gerald Graczyk. Henry, a professional graphic artist/designer, created many signs and flyers for our events. Gerald was always a generous supporter of FPA events. Both will be dearly missed.

Before I close my letter, I would like to draw your attention to a survey (included in this newsletter, pp.5 - 6) which was completed by members who attended our General Membership meeting at the end of 2023. If you have not completed the survey, please take a few minutes to complete it and drop it in the mail. Share your thoughts with us so we can continue to be an exciting, fun, and creative organization.

Brian J. Malski

DATE/TIME	EVENT	PLACE
Friday, May 24	53rd Annual Polish Heritage Baseball Game	Comerica Park, Detroit
Thursday, May 30, 6 pm	Celebrity Roast of Doug Podell – Polish Day Parade Fundraiser	American Polish Century Club, 33204 Maple Ln Dr, Sterling Heights, MI 48312
Friday, May 31 Doors open 6 pm Meeting begins 6:30 pm	FPA General Membership Meeting, Scholarships and Grants Presentation	American Polish Cultural Center, 2975 E. Maple Road, Troy
Sunday, July 9, 5pm	Concert: Evening With Polish Classics (Kosciuszko Foundation, MI Chapter)	Galeria at Orchard Lake Schools
Monday, July 1	Deadline to submit the entries for the FPA Literary Competitions	panijessica33@outlook.com
August 7 - 10	76th ACPC Convention	Chicago
Saturday, August 24	Polish Day Parade	Warren
Friday, September 27, 2024 Doors open 6 pm Meeting begins 6:30 pm	FPA General Membership Meeting	TBA
Saturday and Sunday, September 28 & 29 10 am - 4 pm	Art on the Lake	Orchard Lake Schools Campus
November, TBA	Annual Szopka Competition, szopki intake	Polish Art Center, Hamtramck
Saturday, December 14	The Annual FPA Wigilia	American Polish Cultural Center

Have you started working on your szopka yet?

Announcing: 2024 Friends of Polish Art Annual Szopka Competition

Hosted by the Polish Art Center - Hamtramck, MI



Adult, Youth & Children Prize categories



All entries displayed at the Polish Art Center



Fun project for families, friends, and organizations

Submission Date: Nov. 2024

Construction, tips, templates and rules found on the website:

www.friendsofpolishart.org under "Competitions" - Szopka Competition

(continuation from page 1)

Father Bogdan Miłosz blessed the foods, a young violinist Maja Nagy, gave a beautiful performance which included Polish Easter hymns, while John Zaporski led the Świąconka guests in a sing-along.

Many efforts of the organizing committee helped to create the cordial and festive atmosphere and contributed to the success of this year's Świąconka. They were: Donna Bielecki, Barbara Hantz, Iwona Jędrzejczak, Alina Klin, Barbara Lemecha, Brian and Patty Malski, Michael Ostrowski, Stella Szczesny, Tom Schemanski, and Anne Tyszka.

A short video about the celebration is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yfi87yJpN5k>



Marcia Lewandowski with Aimee Porzondek and Jennie Chambers during the FPA Świąconka



Marcia Lewandowski with dancers and dance instructors during the FPA Świąconka

FPA is Reviving its Literary Competitions

(continuation from page 1)

The Suzanne Marie Margaret Sloat Youth Literary Competition is open to all Michigan students, grades 4-12. Students entering the Youth Competition may write either in Polish or in English. The 2024 essay theme is: "My adventures with a famous Polish person or Polish Legend or Mythological Creature". There are three age groups in this competition and the awards vary from \$50.00 to \$300.00.

The Estelle Wachtel-Torres, MD Literary Competition is open to Michigan residents at least 18 years old. The theme of the 2024 competition is "A historical fiction based on Polish history or historical figure". The awards are 1st place - \$400.00, 2nd place - \$300.00 and 3rd place - \$200.00.

The deadline to submit the entries for both competitions is July 1, 2024. The winners will be notified by the end of August.

Detailed information about the 2024 Literary Competitions are available on the FPA website: <https://www.friendsofpolishart.org/competitions/>

If you have any questions, please contact Jessica Urban, the FPA Literary Competitions Committee Chair at: panijessica33@outlook.com

FPA Membership Survey. Please tear/ cut off this page and complete the survey ONLY if you did not complete it during a membership meeting last year. Use the enclosed envelope to mail it back to us. Thank you for this important feedback!

1. **Which of the following events would you like FPA to organize?**
 - a. Pewabic tile workshop
 - b. Day trip to Meijer Garden
 - c. Visit to the DIA
 - d. Bus trips to Toledo, Chicago, Cleveland, or Interlochen
 - e. Interactive art class with an artist at Galeria
 - f. Movie night
 - g. A sport event
 - h. River cruise
 - i. River walk

2. **Will you be willing to pay for an art class or a workshop?**
 - a. yes
 - b. no
 - c. maybe

3. **How do you like the idea of FPA creating a calendar with photos provided by the members?**
 - a. very much
 - b. I like it
 - c. I am neutral
 - d. so-so
 - e. not at all

4. **If FPA organized a photo contest to identify photos for the calendar, how likely would you participate in such contest?**
 - a. very likely
 - b. likely
 - c. not likely
 - d. I don't know

5. **Which interactive events/ workshops would you like FPA to organize?**
 - a. wreath making (for St. John's)
 - b. pisanki making
 - c. Christmas decorations
 - d. szopka
 - e. other: please suggest
 - f. none

6. **At the present, FPA general meetings are usually scheduled on Friday evenings. What is your opinion about this?**
 - a. I am happy with the day and time
 - b. Friday is good, but meetings start too late in the evening
 - c. I would rather we met on Saturday afternoon
 - d. I would rather we met on Saturday evening
 - e. I would rather we met on Sunday afternoon
 - f. I would rather we met (please suggest a day and time)

- 7. **Recently most of the FPA general meetings are held on the East Side (at APCC in Troy). Where in your opinion the FPA general meetings should be held?**
 - a. I like the present arrangement
 - b. I would prefer that the meetings were held on the West Side as well
 - c. I don't have an opinion

- 8. **Currently FPA holds four general membership meeting per year. What is your opinion about the number of meetings?**
 - a. I would like to keep four general meetings the way we hold them now,
 - b. two meetings per year would be enough,
 - c. I would like to have two traditional "business" membership meetings, while two could be social meetings (focused on other activities than "business")

- 9. **What is the value of the printed newsletter to you?**
 - a. I like getting a printed copy of the newsletter
 - b. I like getting a printed copy, but because of the cost, I will be OK with just an electronic version of the newsletter
 - c. I don't see much value in the newsletter

- 10. **Which place is more convenient for you for the meetings?**
 - a. APCC in Troy
 - b. Orchard Lake Galeria
 - c. West Side Detroit

- 11. **Please share with us any other suggestions you may have and thank you for completing the survey.**



Friends of Polish Art attend Slavic Heritage Month at the SVSU

Once upon a time, this past April as a matter of fact, a group consisting of Friends of Polish Art, Polish American Congress-Michigan Division, Polish National Alliance, and Polish Roman Catholic Union ventured to Saginaw, a city about an hour and a half north of metro Detroit. Our destination was Saginaw Valley State University and its Polish Organization Festival, which was one of the events of Slavic Heritage Month. This visit was initiated and overseen by the Slavic Heritage Month organizer, Camden Hugo, an eighteen-year-old student who attends the university, speaks Polish fluently and plans to return to Poland this summer. As a group, we agreed this was a “diversity” project we should not pass up.

Friends of Polish Art members planned, printed, organized and assembled inventory and traveled to Saginaw to present information, applications, posters, cultural artifacts, items of sweet delights to sample, a mini survey and, of course, invited students to conversation involving our heritage.

Our committee included Brian and Patty Malski, Barbara Lemecha, Stella Szczesny, Iwona Jędrzejczak, Barbara Hantz, Frank and Zosia Dmuchowski, Alina Klin, David Rhine, and me. Everyone brought goodwill, their sense of humor, and many great ideas. The students brought their interest and curiosity, and we shared our years of experience and love of Polish culture.

We thank Camden for his excellent idea and follow through on the festival. It turned out that in addition to us, there was only one more organization represented (the local Tri-City Polish Heritage Society), but we did not complain.

Thank you also to our chef Iwona for the delicious, decorated and individually wrapped pierniki which were such a big hit with the young people! Thank you to all who donated their time on a Tuesday in April to reach out to the next generation of Polish Americans.

Finally, a special thank you to Stella Szczesny and Frank Dmuchowski for the excellent entertainment they provided all of us who attended the afterglow at Krzysiak's Restaurant in Bay City.

Watch a short interview with Camdon Hugo, Slavic Heritage Month organizer:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epRc8QB_mgg

By Donna Bielecki



Brian Malski, FPA President with Camden Hugo, a freshman at Saginaw Valley State University and the organizer of the Slavic Heritage Month at the SVSU. The Polish Organization Festival was one of the events of the Slavic Heritage Month.



Stella Szczesny, Zosia Duniec-Dmuchowski, Patty Malski and Donna Bielecki at the Polish Organization Festival at the SVSU



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Barbara Lemecha (left) and Camden Hugo (right) with two SVSU students at the Polish Organizations Festival at the university.

Check out the FPA website:
<https://friendsofpolishart.org>

Like us on our Facebook page:
<https://facebook.com/friendsofpolishart/>



Please join us for our General Membership Meeting on Friday, May 31, 6:30 pm – 9 pm at APCC in Troy. Doors open at 6 pm.

Program: Award ceremony for the recipients of the 2024 scholarships and grants (Frank Filipek Scholarships, Lillian & Chester Mitchell Scholarships, and Donald Samull Polish Folk Dance Grants.) Refreshments will be provided.



At the Krzysiak's Restaurant in Bay City

AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR POLISH CULTURE 2024 CONVENTION – CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The 76th Annual Convention for ACPC will be held from August 7 – 10, 2024 and hosted by the Chicago Chopin Society. This year's theme is The Achievements of Post-Solidarity Emigrants. As an affiliate, FPA members can attend the convention as a delegate on behalf of our organization. The convention is a very worthwhile event offering opportunities to meet with members of other Polish organizations, take part in educational and cultural events and visit Polish sites in the host city.

For more information as to the cost and deadline to obtain a room, please see the ACPC website at: <https://polishcultureacpc.org/conventions/2024-convention/>. If you would like to attend as a delegate, please send an email to Brian Malski at bjmalski@gmail.com.