

Skalny Scholarships from 4

responsible for its Census Information Center. His 51-page research paper "Polonia Report: Report on the Polish Population in the U.S." received national attention from the Polonia media and was featured by the U.S. Census Bureau at its annual national meeting of data centers last fall in Washington, D.C. The Institute reports that Stecula "...has produced studies that are helping Polonia institutions all over the U.S." Since the University does not offer Polish Studies degrees, he overcame that obstacle by setting up an independent study course with Dr. Thaddeus Radzilowski on the History of Polish Americans. Dominik has also been serving as a research assistant to Prof. A. Trevor Thrall and is helping him with an article on "Missile Shield". Personal primary goals for Dominik are obtaining a PhD in political science and becoming a college professor where he could continue his research concerning Poland and help to overcome misconceptions and false images in America of Poland and its people. The Piast Institute recently held a fundraiser to help cover some of the costs for Dominik as he is one of the few chosen out of hundreds of applicants to attend the summer program of the Inter-University Consortium for Political & Social Research on Quantitative Methods of Social Research to be held at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor.

Zach Mazur (no photo available) is a sophomore at the University of Rochester, NY. He has been studying the Polish language through regular courses as well as Independent Study and also completed a course on the History of Poland. A visiting professor from Poland who conducted the latter course praises Zach's keen interest in Polish history and rated his final exam paper on the relations between state and the Roman Catholic church in Poland very highly. Zach is credited with resurrecting the Polish club on the University's campus. With the help of a few other students, he reorganized the club during his first year at the school and was elected its president. The new group successfully sought to expand the organization by including all students of Slavic origin, and named the new group "Slavic Club." They quickly attracted some 15 students, and organized an outdoor event, featuring movie screenings, dances and Polish music, in which about 50 students participated. Zach has also been involved with the Skalny Center for Polish & Central European Studies at the University by attending the Center's frequent concerts, lectures and Polish language luncheons. In addition to Polish, Zach has also been studying Spanish, French, Italian, Latin and Russian. He will be spending the next six months in Poland attending the Jagiellonian University to strengthen his Polish language skills.

For information about the Skalny Scholarships for Polish Studies and other scholarships and cultural programs of the American Council for Polish Culture, please visit www.polishcultureacpc.org. □

Polish News Bytes from 14

The exhumation of the remains of General Wladyslaw Sikorski and an autopsy may help unravel the mystery surrounding his 1943 death. Poland's wartime prime minister in exile and commander-in-chief, is said to have been killed in a plane crash off Gibraltar, but rumors that he was assassinated have circulated ever since. Historian Dariusz Baliszewski claims to have proof his murder was ordered by the British to help promote their war-time alliance with Stalin. Permission for an exhumation must be granted by Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz who is in charge of Wawel Cathedral, Sikorski's final resting place.

14 former members of the ZOMO riot police have received prison terms of from 3.5 to six years for gunning down nine coal miners in 1981. They were carrying out the communist regime's martial-law crackdown on Solidarity when they opened fire on the miners defending their colliery. Janina Stawinska, the mother of one of the slain miners, said she felt relieved that justice had been done 27 years after the fact. Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski and his security boss Czeslaw Kiszczak, who had masterminded the crackdown, have used political ruses and health excuses to evade prosecution.

Poland and Ukraine will not lose the right to co-host the 2012 European Soccer Championships if stadiums under construction in Warsaw and Kyiv are completed a year before the event, UEFA President Michel Platini said recently. Both countries are experiencing difficulties in the construction of roads and stadiums, and Italy is hoping they fail so it can take host the event. Platini will lead a delegation of the European soccer authority (UEFA) to the two countries to survey the state of preparations.

Prime Minister Donald Tusk, often accused of being under the thumb of the European Union's big powers, surprised everyone at the latest Brussels summit by standing up to French President Nicolas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. They claimed the Irish referendum rejecting a treaty to reform the EU would mean no new countries could be accepted to the bloc until it was ratified by all the member countries. Tusk opposed that view, saying the two issues were not connected. He also succeeded in winning EU support for Poland's and Sweden's joint Eastern Partnership initiative designed to draw former Soviet republics closer to the European community.

Poland's first nuclear powerplant may be in the offing, but is not likely to go into service earlier than 2021, according to deputy economy Minister Eugeniusz Postolski. Northeast Poland's forested, lake-studded Mazury region would be the most likely venue. Poland is now one of the last remaining European countries without a nuclear power source. The construction of an atomic power station at Żarnowiec on the Baltic was halted in the face of public protests following the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster in neighboring Ukraine.

Polish and Russian historians met in Warsaw recently to thrash out some of the controversies that divide the two nations. Among the most extreme is the Russian

claim that Poland committed war crimes against Soviet POWs following the 1920 Polish-Bolshevik. Another is the contention that Poland contributed to the outbreak of World War II by not joining Stalin's crusade against Germany in the 1930s and then let the war drag on for six years by not backing the USSR's anti-Nazi offensive. Despite conclusive evidence to the contrary, some Russian circles even continue to blame the Germans for the 1940 Katyń massacre of 22,000 Polish officers. (See next entry.)

An anti-Polish propaganda film, aired on Belarussian state television recently, claimed that "the Belarussian nation suffered the most under Polish occupation." Entitled "1939 - Unification", it portrays Stalin's September 1939 invasion and annexation of one-half of Poland's territory in collusion with Hitler as "an act of liberation" and "stroke of historical justice". The documentary is yet another attack on the Polish minority in Belarus which Belarussian TV chief Alexander Zimouski compares to Hitler's Volksdeutsch fifth column. Polish community leaders in that country are regularly harassed with detentions, searches, fines and legal actions.

Poles prefer Blair to Bush, a recent opinion poll has shown. When asked by Poland's PBS on what foreign head of state they would vote for, 25 percent mentioned former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, 14 percent opted for German Chancellor Angela Merkel and only 12 percent chose US President George W. Bush. A mere five percent (presumably ex-communists) said they would cast their vote for Russia's former president and current Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. Asked whom they would never vote for, 48 percent indicated Putin and six percent - Bush.

The last of Poland's 900 troops stationed in Iraq are due to leave by mid-October of this year, barring new unforeseen developments. Poland, which once had a 2,500 soldiers in Iraq and commanded a 10,000-strong multinational stabilization force, will turn control of the region over to the Iraqi authorities. Warsaw earned the title of "America's most loyal ally" by supporting the US-led invasion of Iraq, although surveys showed that most Poles opposed their country's military presence there. Many of those who supported it resented the fact that Poles were still required to apply for US visas to visit their families in America.

Protests are mounting against Edward Zwick's forthcoming movie "Defiance" which depicts a band of Pole-killing Jewish thugs as war heroes. It tells the story of the Jewish Bielski brothers who built a clandestine village for some 1,200 Jews into the forests of Nazi-occupied Poland's Nowogrodzkie region. There together with Soviet guerrillas they launched brutal raids which included the massacre of 128 Poles in the village of Naliboki. Poland's Institute of National Remembrance, which investigates communist crimes, is probing the massacre. "It is a scandal that anyone would make a film casting the murderers who massacred Polish villagers as heroes. They were murderers and bandits," remarked historian Jerzy Robert Nowak.

The Feast of the Three Kings (Epiphany) will be re-established as a public holiday in Poland, if Catholic organizations get their way. More than 300,000 signatures have been collected to reinstate the January 6th occasion as a public holiday like it was before World War II. It remains a free day in six European countries which have far fewer practicing Catholics than Poland. □

Krakow from 7

decades of communism. She points out that millions of young people have left Poland for better jobs in places like England or Ireland. Life is not so great here, she says.

I have a hard time believing her, even though I do believe her. I try to tell her, look around you. Look at this place. This place has something better than money.

But she has seen it all her life, living in the shadow of Wawel Castle, walking these streets with their carriages and their 15th-Century architecture and the intellectual atmosphere. Maybe it's better somewhere else, she muses.

Much to do

My hotel, Senacki, is on a main street in the old town, which thankfully allows no cars. My room has white lace curtains at the enormous windows. They open up to the cobblestone street below. At night, I hear people strolling past and slips of music. By day, I see three weddings at the church across the street. Below is a lady with a cart, selling big flat bagels and pretzels for 1.20 zlotys each -- about 57 cents.

Three nights in a row, I go to a chamber music concert, each at a different hall nearby -- Vivaldi, Chopin, Mozart.

Several times a day, I stop and listen for the trumpet and am reassured.

I eat pierogi. Sit at sidewalk cafes. Wander bookstores. Visit lots of churches, including a must-see stop at St. Francis Basilica, with its Art Nouveau stained glass window depicting God, done by local artist Stanislaw Wyśpiański in about 1900.

History is piled upon history here. Walk to the Kazimierz district, and you can see the Piłsudski Bridge, where Polish Jews were forced by the Nazis to cross to a ghetto in 1941. (The movie "Schindler's List" was filmed in Krakow in 1994, so anyone who has seen that movie will recognize spots in Krakow, even the still-standing factory of Oskar Schindler.)

High on a hill above downtown is the kindly looking Wawel Castle, which was home to centuries of Polish kings and queens and is now a museum full of ancient huge tapestries, furniture, royal apartments, a chapel and a famous bell tower.

An hour west is Auschwitz, a must-see

About a half-hour south is the Wieliczka salt mine, which has been active for 700 years. Popular with tourists since the 1800s, visitors climb down 350 stairs and visit about 20 "rooms" -- really caverns -- including a cathedral in which the floors, walls, chandeliers and even a relief of "The Last Supper" were created out of salt by artistic miners.

But in Krakow, you really don't need to rush around.

Stroll. Take a million pictures. Linger at a café. Absorb. Enjoy. □

Joseph L. Drociak,
Attorney**Over 44 years experience**

*Personal Injury, Wrongful Death,
Workers Compensation, Medical
Malpractice, Wrongful Termination,
Sexual Harassment, Nursing Home abuse*
7627 S. Western Ave. (323) 971-3981
12400 Wilshire Blvd. (213) 384-7900

Los Angeles**Jan Gruen - Gruszecki**

*Home improvement construction
Specializing in concrete and masonry*

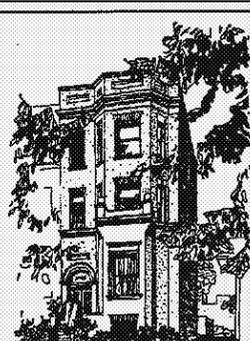
Custom Driveways
(concrete or paved)

Retaining walls, Block walls
brick or stone

Remodel swimming pools
Waterfalls, Pool decks

No job too small
Contractor License # 501466
(818) 896-5087 or 378-6121

**Distribution of the
News of Polonia
in the San Diego area is
through the generosity
of
Joanna Moran
Financial Advisor**



Whats Your Legacy

Many people talk about leaving their will to worthy causes, but don't have a will, and do not realize it requires a will to do so. The laws of most states make it clear that personal property goes automatically, by law, to your nearest relative, even if they are quite distant ones, unless you have a legal will that says otherwise. If you have no relative, it goes to the state. More than half of all adult Americans die without having made their wills. Most of them undoubtedly planned to do so, but never got around to it. Some had wills but didn't keep them current. When you have a will, you should update it every few years as conditions change. Also, always name an executor who will carry out your wishes. Besides money, non-cash possessions can also be used in contributions and various donation plans can be carried out. Be a philanthropist: leave your stocks, bonds, real estate, art, valuable collection or insurance to continue the Polish - American traditions. Your will is the most important way of giving. When you're gone, it is a legacy that is not forgotten. In your will, you can specify what you would like your donation to be used for. For help in making your will, contact a competent lawyer. **The American Center of Polish Culture, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that needs your help and legacy.**

The American Center of Polish Culture, Inc.
2025 "O" Street, NW • Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202-785-2320 • Fax: 202-785-2159 • www.polishcenterdc.org