



News of Polonia

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Poland's Olympic medal wins on the increase

Poland.pl reports... As of August 19, Poland's team continues to improve their medal haul in Beijing with two gold, two silver and a bronze in rowing and weightlifting. Poland is fifteenth in the medal table.

Crowds of faithful fans gathered at Warsaw's Okęcie to welcome the first group of Polish athletes returning from Beijing, including gold medalists in quadruple rowing, but the competitions are far from over. Polish gymnast Leszek Blanik has won the Olympic gold medal in the men's vault competition, the first men's gymnastics event not won by the Chinese team at the Beijing Games. Blanik, the reigning world champion on the apparatus, took gold ahead of France's Thomas Bouhail and Anton Galotskov of Russia. Blanik's is the first gold Poland has ever won in Olympic gymnastics.

Meanwhile, Kamila Skolimowska and Anita Włodarczyk qualified to the hammer throw finals in the Bird's Nest stadium in the athletics championship. The Polish men's volleyball team is continuing their streak of success - they defeated Russia 3:2 after a nail-biting match, the last in the elimination phase. The team qualified to the quarter finals from third place in group B after four wins (over Germany, Egypt, Serbia and Russia) and a 0:3 loss to Brazil. Next, they are facing the winner of group A - most probably Bulgaria or Italy tomorrow.

In other news, the 2006 world champion Marcin Dolega who also lifted 420kg, missed out on a medal due to a higher pre-competition weigh-in. World champion Andrei Aramnau of Belarus broke Dolega's world record in the snatch,

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400th Anniversary

The First Polish Settlers in America

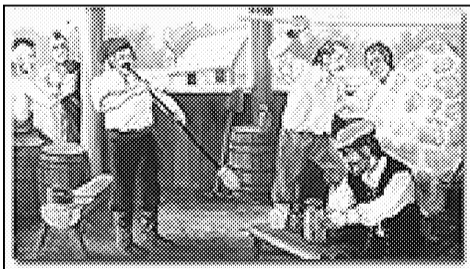


Twelve years before the much heralded Puritans landed in 1620 on the Mayflower at Plymouth, Massachusetts, a group of Polish artisans had been hard at work in Jamestown, Virginia.

On October 1, 1608, the English ship Mary and Margaret arrived at Jamestown, Virginia. Aboard the ship were several persons of Polish descent who had been hired by the Virginia Company of London, at the request of Captain John Smith, the colony's leader. Captain Smith saw early on that in order to survive, Jamestown had to do more than just feed itself. It needed to produce goods that could be exported and sold at a profit.

Captain Smith had first learned of the Polish craftsmen's work while traveling in Eastern Europe. He had spent some time in Poland and was familiar with the flourishing industries there. So it was to Poland that he sent his request for artisans to join him in Jamestown.

Upon their arrival, the Poles made an immediate impact with a vital contribution to the survival of the colony by digging a well to provide seriously lacking fresh drinking water.



Another accomplishment was the building of a furnace to produce glass products, which became the first factory in America. In addition to producing glass products, the Polish settlers also produced pitch and tar, vital building materials for expanding the new colony. Despite many hardships due to the climate and living conditions, the Poles and their fellow settlers persevered and eventually were able to produce enough glass, pitch and tar for export to England. These products became the first commercial items to be exported from America to Europe.

The first Polish workers who arrived in 1608 were probably indentured servants. In return for their passage to America the men probably had agreed to work for the colony for a certain number of years. Smith praised the Poles as hard workers and took note of the fact that two of them had saved his life when he was attacked by Indians.

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Poland defends Georgia, clinches missile deal

By: Robert Strybel,

Our Warsaw Correspondent

Poland recently found itself in the midst of a big-power stand-off between Russia and NATO, ostensibly over the territorial integrity of Georgia, a small, mountainous ex-Soviet Republic. Unexpectedly, the brief military conflict helped finalize protracted 18-month-long Polish-US negotiations on installing an American anti-missile base on Polish soil.

The confrontation was triggered by the Georgians' attempt to re-assert their control over the break-away area of South Ossetia. Russia, which considers itself the region's "peacekeeper", retaliated by launching a military attack against Georgia. Poland was the first to react, and President Lech Kaczyński got the leaders of the three Baltic States to join him in issuing a harshly worded memorandum condemning Russia's aggression and calling on the European Union to forcefully oppose it. When Russian hackers silenced Georgia's Internet portals, Kaczyński offered that country the use of his presidential Web site, enabling Georgians to get their side of the story across. Warsaw also lost no time in dispatching plane-loads of humanitarian aid to the mountain republic and the return flights were used to evacuate Polish citizens and other stranded nationals from the war-torn country.

Kaczyński also mounted a five-nation solidarity mission to Tbilisi (Tiflis), the Georgian capital, to lend moral support to the beleaguered Georgian people and call the world's attention to their plight. Poland and the Baltics were joined by Ukraine which is also wary of the Kremlin's imperial ambitions.

At a massive rally outside the parliament building, some 150,000 Georgians gratefully chanted "Poland, Poland, friendship, Georgia", when the Polish head of state addressed the crowd. He condemned Moscow's armed incursion into Georgian territory, said that Russia had again shown its true face and called on NATO, the UN and other international bodies to mount a united front in defense of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Since the 18th century, both Poland and Georgia have been repeatedly subjected to Russian aggression and domination.

Russia's armed intervention in the Caucasus spurred the Polish government to agree to host elements of a US global anti-missile system after Washington consented to throw a battery of Patriot missiles into the bargain. The anti-missile shield, designed to prevent attacks by rogue states such as Iran and North Korea or groups such as al-Qaeda, is to include ten interceptor missiles installed in northern Poland and linked to radar installation in the neighboring Czech Republic.

Moscow angrily reiterated its allegations that the anti-missile shield was aimed against its national security and threatened to take retaliatory steps. The Russian foreign minister cancelled a planned visit to Warsaw, and one Russian general actually warned that his country would aim nuclear warheads at Poland. Nobody took the threats seriously,

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Warsaw Uprising Event in Los Angeles

By: Betsy Cepielik



Wanda Kościa Rostowska

On July 27, the Polish American Congress (PAC) - S. Cal, Polish American Historical Association (PAHA), and the Polish Consulate presented a program to commemorate the Warsaw Uprising. The program was held in the very spacious Ahmanson Auditorium at Loyola Marymount University, and the feature of the program was the showing of the film "The Warsaw Uprising", produced and directed by Wanda Kościa Rostowska, who was present at the program.

The auditorium was filled close to capacity when John Gartska (Treasurer of PAHA) welcomed the guests. He then introduced Paulina Kapuścińska, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Los Angeles. The Consul General said she was very pleased with the attendance, and expressed her gratitude to PAHA and the PAC - especially President Richard Wideryński for sponsoring the program. (Richard Wideryński was the driving force, having contacted and secured transportation for Mrs. Rostowska, who was a presenter at Poland in the Rockies in Calgary, Canada. She is from Great Britain.) Ms. Kapuścińska also thanked the LMU History Department and Dr. Grever for the wonderful facilities.

Mrs. Rostowska gave a brief introduction to the film. She was originally commissioned by Discovery Europe to complete this project. It was shown across Europe, the Middle East, and in Poland. Another version was made for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). When the film was shown on the BBC in 2006, there were 1.8 million viewers. This was the version shown at LMU.

The Warsaw Uprising began on August 1, 1944 and lasted 63 days. The Poles fought relentlessly against the Germans. Poland's supposed Russian allies were sending radio messages to Poland's Underground Army assuring them that it was time to fight the German aggressors and free their capital. They were given every indication that the Russians would help in the overthrow of the Germans. After the fierce fighting for 62 days, more than 200,000 Poles had died and most of the city of Warsaw was in ruins.

The film consisted of live footage, some reenactments, and interviews with survivors - all skillfully blended together.

After the film, Warsaw Uprising survivors Andrzej Niżyński and Jadwiga Narębska took the stage. At the time of

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