

*Arizona from 4*

This fragmentation and polarization combined with lack of common purpose and middle ground, where all concerned could affiliate, is a severe limitation in gaining prominence and lobbying power, that would correspond to affluence and potential of very diverse, vibrant and often interesting groups of people, that Polonia represents. As mentioned earlier, best disposed to such bridge building, is the Polish Parish of Our Lady of Częstochowa. The upgraded facilities, which materialized through the purchase of a complex with substantial accompanying infrastructure, three times larger than the old chapel they replaced, present considerable potential. Much to the credit of courageous spirit of sacrifice, dedication and determination of so many parishioners and supporting Polonia members, it represents a stunning accomplishment, which not only considerably raised the standing and prestige of the Polish community in the Phoenix diocese, being the only ethnic church, but providing an image and visibility to the wider population, one that Polonia can be truly proud of.

The facility, which was previously used by the "Assembly of God" congregation, required adaptation and modernization. Thousands of man hours and substantial capital that Polonia provided, resulted in a modern, functional and representative center, whose estimated value is some 4 million dollars. It hosts not only a large church (536 seats), a small chapel endowed with elements from the old chapel, a parish hall for roughly 220 people (rented out for various functions), but also a Polish library, with a very comprehensive collection of some 4500 volumes. The complex also holds the Polish School of John Paul II (Saturday classes offered from first grade to matriculation level). It provides housing for the priest and a separate one for the nun. It houses a conference room for informal gatherings. The complex encompasses two large parking facilities. The entire project was financed by the money obtained from the sale of the old chapel (also financed by Polonia) and the generosity of parishioners and Polonia supporters.

That generosity also made possible, three distinct monuments of faith. The Parish of Our Lady of Częstochowa can celebrate a bronze relief of the Black Madonna, the work of a talented local Polish sculptor Mr. Walter Reczek and a monumental bronze sculpture of John Paul the Great, the work of Polish Professor, Czesław Dźwigaj, sponsored by the Polish American Congress. A true gem, is a very inspired and magnificent sculpture of Saint Faustyna Kowalska, which treasures, in a very elaborate reliquary, held by two splendid angels, the relics of Saint Faustyna. Crafted in the best European tradition, it is the work of an extraordinary Polish sculptor, Tomasz of Alwernia. That alone makes a trip to Phoenix worthwhile.

Spiritual service is provided by Father Eugeniusz Bolda, SChr and Sister Weronika E. Ilnicka, MChr., both very efficient administrators, who have been active here for many years. The parish is managed, in financial terms, with great skill and efficiency. Their replacement seems imminent, due to Society of Christ and Missionary Sisters of Christ the King policies, which in their wisdom, require rotation, to bring in new blood and to utilize talent, wherever else it might be needed. A new pastoral staff will face challenges of reaching out to the vast number of Polonia members, who, for whatever reason, shy away from the Polish parish. Consolidating Polonia, fragmented for too long, will require great pastoral skill, enthusiasm and genuine Love for the people that they so often long for. The Polish Parish has a unique and incredible possibility, to be that bridge

*Music News - Zdrojewski from 3*

Minister and his entourage to the library, highlighting the collection of manuscripts by Henry Vars and Zygmunt Stojowski, as well as photographs, personal items, correspondence and concert programs of Ignacy Jan Paderewski. This recent donation of Paderewski memorabilia is known as the Paso Robles Collection, assembled by a long-time resident of Paso Robles and Paderewski fan, Mr. Hy Blythe.

During a wide-ranging discussion with the Minister over tea and coffee, a variety of initiatives and future PMC-related projects were presented. Minister Zdrojewski encouraged the PMC to apply for Ministry grants to fund the Center's book series. Issues related to cataloguing the precious and rare items held in the PMC Library and making them available via the internet to scholars around the world were also discussed in depth. Minister Zdrojewski's suggestions as to who in Poland's National Archives could assist in this long-term project were most helpful and will undoubtedly serve as a strong initial step in developing professional ties with appropriate institutions and archives in Poland.

At the conclusion of his visit, the Minister presented the Center with a 12-CD set of recordings of all of Frederic Chopin's compositions, performed by various Polish artists. In addition, the PMC library received two volumes of limited edition facsimiles of Chopin's manuscripts, including his Etudes Op. 10 and Mazurkas, Op. 33, recently published under the Minister's aegis. Another fascinating gift from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, a book about Krzysztof Penderecki and a recording of his most famous works (*St. Luke's Passion, Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima, String Quartet No. 1, Psalms of David, and Dimensions of Time and Silence*) topped up the large gift bag that Minister Zdrojewski had brought with him from Poland to the USC campus.

Although the Minister had visited the United States on numerous occasions, calling on New York and Chicago among others in the past, this was his first visit in Los Angeles. Having met with representatives of the Polish community at the opening of the 10<sup>th</sup> Polish Film Festival in Los Angeles and after touring the USC campus, the Minister expressed his interest in returning to the West Coast in the future. An avid and accomplished photographer, the Minister delighted in taking photos throughout his visit in the Southern California. He will be warmly welcomed should he decide to visit our campus again. □

builder. Not only the spiritual life of many is at stake, but also a great number of young Polonia members, that if unattended, we as Polonia may lose for good, if no connection is made.

Polonia in Phoenix has some truly great chapters that they can be really proud of. Compared to that of California, in terms of numbers, it is still relatively young and the need to gain prominence and recognition, that it deserves has yet to mature. It will not happen however, without drawing from the treasure chest of our extremely rich and sophisticated culture. The many stereotypes and simplifications that we must combat will not go away, if we take the easy path and strive only to present kielbasy and sauerkraut as our national tokens. There is much potential in human resources, here among Polonia, to call upon and given a chance and recognition, to present their knowledge and skills, they will expose and illuminate what Poland is truly about and boost our image and standing. □

*Paderewski goes home from 1*

support from a majority in Paso. Also there was the issue of the cost of the project. The project would have slipped into obscurity had it not been for Mr. Blythe who commissioned Jessie Corsaut, an artist from Monterey, California to create a magnificent statue of Paderewski at the Monterey Sculpture Center, in Monterey, CA. to grace his own front yard and share with the rest of the world.

Today a statue of Paderewski proudly stands to greet guests arriving at Mr. Blythe's lovely ranch in Paso Robles; a clone of that statue, donated by Mr. Blythe, stands in the garden of the Polish Embassy in Washington D.C., and another statue graces the campus of USC (University of Southern California) Thornton School of Music, where students pass the maestro daily on their way to classes and rehearsals. Soon, another statue will be greeting students at the Jagiellonian University's School of Music in Krakow, Poland.

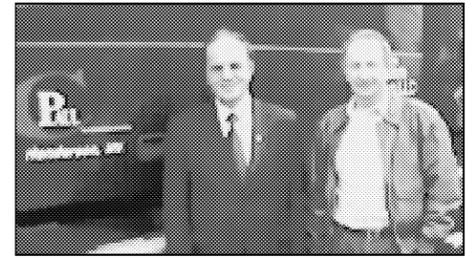
No matter how charming the Paderewski likeness may be - you can't use frequent flyer miles to transport 800 pounds of bronze. So how Pan Paderewski got from Monterey, California to Krakow is a tale of efforts big and small to move this esteemed gentleman across one vast country, an ocean and to the place the late Pope John Paul II called, "a far country". Well, it happened with a little help from a lot of friends.

After Mr. Blythe had the statue cast, he shared his vision for the artwork to be replicated. Hy Blythe suggested he would contribute yet another statue if Polonia would support the costs of sending the statue to the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Rich Wideryński, President of the Polish American Congress of Southern California, took on the task of coordinating the transport. This turned out to be a challenge that may have given pause to our great Statesman - but over time and countless hours on the phone the pieces came together.

Paderewski was picked up at the Monterey Sculpture Center in Monterey California, by Pawel Krowicki of Henderson, Nevada. Mr. Krowicki and his wife own a transportation company that usually carries refrigerated goods - but graciously accepted this assignment. Paderewski relaxed in air conditioned splendor all the way to Linden, New Jersey where he was received and stored by Mr. Ludwik Wnękiewicz, owner of Doma Exports who also arranged his transport to Toronto Canada.

Paderewski was flown from Canada to Warszawa gratis, (as befits an honored statesman), by LOT Polish Airlines, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Marek Kaszek, Director of LOT Polish Airline Cargo Bureau. Now from Warszawa, where he slipped in with little fanfare. (No! He did not stop to dine at the Bristol), Ignacy must get to Krakow and gratefully other guardian angels stepped in at the bequest of Mr. Krzyz Onzell of the Paderewski Foundation located in LA. Teresa and Andrzej Krasowski from VIVAT arranged for transportation by SECAR Spedycja, owned by Mieczysław Haftaniuk from Warszawa to Krakow.

Along the way Rich was counseled, cajoled and alerted to obstacles by an army of Polish advisors, including Mr. Marek Żebrowski of the Polish Music Center at USC, Mr. Marcin Cepielik, Editor of the News of Polonia and others who wanted to make sure Paderewski arrived safely to his destination. We cannot forget the incredible work put forth by the Polish Consulate in Los Angeles under the apt leadership of Ms. Paulina Kapuścińska. Ms. Małgorzata Cup, Polish Cultural Consul in Los Angeles and Mr. Wojciech Bergier, Polish Consul for Legal Affairs in LA provided invaluable aid when it came to filling out, filing and faxing the paperwork necessary to clear Paderewski through customs.



**L. - President of DOMA Export, Ludwik Wnękiewicz and Pawel Krowicki, President of Krowicki Truck Lines**

So on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2009 Ignacy once again arrived in Krakow, Poland. He awaits the debut of his unveiling to his many admirers and adoring public. What a long strange trip it's been. Finally, he's back home!

**The Polish American Congress of Southern California wishes to thank the following individuals and organizations for their assistance in this project.**

**Mr. and Mrs. Harry Blythe** of Paso Robles for their donation of the Paderewski statue and earnest support of Polish culture.

**Mr. and Mrs. Pawel Krowicki** of Henderson, Nevada for the assistance in transporting the statue across country.

**Mr. Charles Fischer** of the Monterey Sculpture Center, Monterey, CA. for his patience in storing the Paderewski statue and having his staff available on a Saturday to load the boxed sculpture into Mr. Krowicki's eighteen wheeler.

**Mr. Marek Kaszek**, of New York who as the director of LOT Polish Airline cargo bureau agreed to transport Paderewski to Warszawa.

**Mr. Jakub Zaborowski**, former Polish cultural consul in Los Angeles, for his assistance in facilitating the transport of Paderewski via LOT Polish Airlines.

**Ms. Małgorzata Cup**, present Polish cultural consul in Los Angeles and Polish consul for legal Affairs in Los Angeles,

**Mr. Wojciech Bergier** for their assistance in completing the paperwork necessary for the transport of Paderewski to Poland.

**Mr. Ludwik Wnękiewicz** of New Jersey who owns and operates DOMA Exports, for his incredible graciousness and generosity in facilitating all the details in receiving, storing and transporting Paderewski to Toronto, Canada.

The **membership** of **Polish National Alliance Lodge 700** (Los Angeles) and its President, **Ms. Kasia Akrami**, for their donation of funds to transport Paderewski from Linden, New Jersey to Toronto, Canada.

**Ms. Małgorzata Perkowska**, director of the music program, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland, for her patience and perseverance in the process of accepting Paderewski "back to Krakow", despite being debilitated by an illness during the process.

**Mr. Krzyz Onzell**, President of the Paderewski Foundation, (Los Angeles) for his assistance in locating people in Warszawa, Poland to transport Paderewski to Krakow.

**Teresa and Andrzej Rostowska**, Coordinators of VIVAT, Warszawa, Poland and **Mieczysław Haftaniuk**, owner of SECAR Spedycja who assisted in the transport of Paderewski from Warszawa to Krakow, Poland.

**Mr. Marek Żebrowski** for his support and guidance in locating individuals and telephone numbers in Poland at a moments notice.

**Mr. Jozef Sowa, Mr. Frank Kosowicz, Mr. Marcin Cepielik and Mr. Marcin Henzel** for their generous donations of seed money that enabled this project to begin rolling.

People sometimes ask what they will get if they join the Polish American Congress. This is an example of the friends they can make, the cultural experience they can share and the pride they can feel when doing a great job that benefits Polonia and Poland. □