



POLISH
AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION

SERVING POLONIA SINCE 1922

The Link

VOL. XII, NO. 1, APRIL, 1999

Volunteer Tutors Teach Valuable Lessons

April is volunteer month and PAA would like to salute our volunteer tutors, who are the backbone, muscle and energy of PAA's Adult Literacy Program. Thirty-nine volunteer tutors currently give their time and skills to help immigrants learn to speak, read and write in English. Who are these everyday heroes?

There really is no "typical" tutor profile. Tutors vary in age, educational background and experience. The program is flexible to suit tutors' schedules and expectations and no specific time commitment is required. Most tutors meet with their students once a week for 2 or 3 hours. They often work one-on-one and never with more than 3 students at a time.

What and how tutors teach is entirely dependent on the students' needs. For instance, a tutor may concentrate on reading comprehension with a student who is in school or working toward passing a professional certification exam. With another student who works with the English-speaking public, a tutor may work on pronunciation and conversational English. In all cases, students learn grammar and sentence structure. And most likely, they work simultaneously on all of these elements of learning English.

What all tutors do have in common is a desire to help others. Volunteer tutors have their own goals in mind upon signing up with PAA. They may want to achieve personal satisfaction, meet students from Poland, reconnect with their Polish roots or give back to the community.

"Joe" volunteers simply be-

cause he wants to help. He is employed as a social worker at the Cook County Jail. Once a week, on his own time, he takes two buses to get to PAA's north side Learning Center to tutor "Jolanta." Joe is legally blind.

Together, Joe and his student Jolanta are working on conversational English and reading comprehension. Jolanta is a nurse from Poland. Because she has yet to receive her nursing certification in the United States, she currently works as a private duty nurse. She has been in the U.S. for 3 years. For one year she studied English on her own, but hit a wall when she realized she needed someone else's feedback to measure her progress and push her further. Joe is that person.

Their sessions consist of Jolanta reading stories of her own choosing—one recent reading was about the behavior of lions in the wild. When she finishes reading, she summarizes the piece, and Joe asks her questions to engage her in English conversation. She is making tremendous progress and very much enjoys her tutoring sessions with Joe.

If tutors like Joe are the backbone of PAA's literacy program, Urszula Cholewa is its central nervous system. Since the program's inception, Urszula has orchestrated it with skill, energy and sensitivity. She matches the needs of tutors and 100 students. Urszula meets with potential volunteer tutors to inform them about the program, identify their expectations and determine what kind of preparations they need. She provides individualized training, which may include refreshing tutors' knowledge of basic English grammar and familiarizing them with characteristics of Polish language and culture. She keeps in touch with all tutors and students in the program.

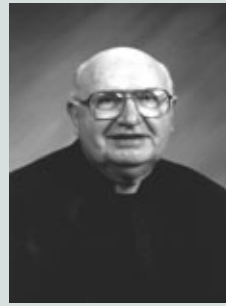
Urszula's organizational responsibilities are shared by Iwona Solomon, who coordinates literacy efforts on the south side, where the program began in 1989 with 20 tutors. When people indicated the need in the early 90s, the north side program was started.

The program is funded by the office of the Secretary of State, from whom it has received numerous commendations.

Joe is just one of a whole group of extraordinary tutors at PAA. If you would like to become one of them, you are very much encouraged to call Urszula Cholewa at (773) 282-8206, extension 408. Volunteering your time and effort to help someone learn to speak, read or write in English, could make all the difference. It could make life in the United States a little bit easier and a little bit friendlier.



Joe and Jolanta discuss a reading assignment at a recent tutoring session at PAA.



From the Chairman

Spring is the time of year when the days grow longer. The quality of light gradually changes the way we see the world around us. Newly formed buds stubbornly burst through the soil to say, "Look at

me, I'm back!" Every year, the surprise and delight of spring brings new energy and optimism. Nature renews itself, and Easter brings the promise of new life. It is an annual miracle of new beginnings.

I am pleased to be serving as this year's Chairman of the Board of the Polish American Association, an organization that fosters positive change and provides new beginnings for people in need. In my 8 years as a PAA board member, I have seen it grow and adapt to the changing needs of the people it serves. Perhaps this ability to adapt is one of the most valuable qualities of PAA and the reason for its growth. PAA adjusts its programs to fluctuating immigration due to changing U.S. policy or political, economic and social changes in Poland and other countries. Immigration Services staff work evenings and weekends to accommodate clients' availability. They diligently learn new, complex policy and procedures and bring that information to clients through media outlets and direct services.

These changes have made PAA's Health Outreach Program more valuable than ever for people who are either unaware of or ineligible for health care. Our program provides clients with information about affordable health care and with services, such as screenings and immunizations. Welfare reform has created a greater demand for Education/Employment services. This quality program effectively trains and places hundreds of people a year in well-paying jobs. PAA's counseling services bring our clients suffering from depression, domestic violence or family communication problems an understanding of their situations and options for fostering positive change. You might say that all of our services provide the optimism of new beginnings that spring promises.

While the comparison between PAA's services and the newness of spring has its poetic merits, there is a difference. The Polish American Association does not hibernate during winter months! During Chicago's coldest winter days, our Turning Point program is a welcome presence in the lives of many homeless men. In our outreach program, they find the help they need to stay warm, clothed and fed, and to begin a path to a stable life. Starting Point, whose very name is evidence of new beginnings, helps our clients to begin the path to substance-free lives.

You can contribute to any of these programs today or refer to page 3 to learn about planned giving for the future. In doing so, you can make the transformation of spring a living reality in the lives of the less fortunate in our community.

Rev. Edmund Siatkowski

Volunteers Are Living Optimism

It has been said that teaching is the greatest act of optimism. In appreciation and acknowledgement of the generous work of the Volunteer Tutors of PAA's Literacy Program, PAA would like to say *Thank You* to: **Ak ring your optimism wi**

Lucy Bucki	Margaret McCughty	Albert Slomkiewicz
Tim Darcy	Agnieszka Makowska	Mitchell Starostka
Sandy Deconcendo	Helen Mazurek	George Stlasko
Janina Goloab	Holly Miller	John Stopka
Lillian Gronkowski	Mary Jo Mostowy	Izabella Sycz
Claudia Hannesey	Josh Nachtman	Josephine Szafraniec
Elizabeth Hlost	Joseph Potoczek	Eleonor Tarzon
John Jacobs	Althea Przybylo	Edith Vosughn
Carla Jalowiec	Theresa Radko	Joe Wilibnowski
Nelly Kipp	Barbara Rapacz	Barbara Witkiewicz
Anna Kostrzewski	Estevan Rodriguez	Lyn Witucki
Jerome Kujawa	Keith Sadelski	Janina Zawadowski
Chris Lazarski	Mary Skierkiewicz	

April is Volunteer Month. If you are a volunteer, thank you. If you know someone who volunteers, thank them.

The Winged Horsemen Are Coming!

Who or what is a "winged horseman"? A mythical creature? A Polish super hero? You can find out for yourself on June 5, 1999.

A suit of hussar armor, complete with feathers and leopard skin, along with 150 other works of art from Poland's Baroque Era will grace Regenstein Hall of The Art Institute of Chicago this summer. In addition to battle armor and battle gear, the exhibition, entitled "The Land of the Winged Horsemen: Art in Poland, 1572-1764," includes historic paintings of Polish royalty, images of the powerful magnate class, liturgical objects, sumptuous textiles, and Polish funerary coffin portraiture.

To mark the opening of this auspicious exhibit, the Polish American Association and the Warsaw Committee of the Chicago Sister Cities International Program will co-host a gala celebration on the evening of June 5, 1999. The evening's events include cocktails, buffet, live music from the era, informative lectures in English and Polish by the exhibit's curators, and an opportunity to view the exhibition.

This exhibition tells the dramatic story of Poland at a momentous and action-packed period in the country's history. Previous to this tour, the pieces in the collection had never been seen in one location; they indicate Poland's position at the crossroads of eastern and western Europe. During this period Poland was the largest land-empire in Europe and claimed a diverse population of Poles, Ruthenians, Jews, Armenians and Tatars, who embraced several different faiths. The Polish culture absorbed Turkish and Persian influences shown in the exhibition by costumes, Oriental rugs, a tent and weaponry. Poland also assumed the role of the "Defender of the Faith" against the neighboring Ottoman empire, as indicated by the magnificent liturgical objects and shrines to Mary. The best known of these is Our Lady of Czestochowa, and a 17th century version of the miraculous icon will be included in all her glory when the "Winged Horsemen" exhibition arrives in Chicago. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of this exhibit is that Chicago's 1 million residents of Polish ancestry will have the opportunity to share a part of their magnificent cultural legacy with the rest of the Chicagoland community.

If you would like to receive an invitation to the gala celebration of Poland's Winged Horsemen, please call (773) 282-8206; dial extension 313 for English, 0 for Polish. Tickets are \$150 per person. The dress is black tie optional.



Coffin Portrait of Barbara Domicella Grudzinska, ca. 1676

Leaving a Legacy



To keep a lamp burning we have to keep putting oil into it. — Mother Teresa

Have you prepared your will? Most of us would rather put off preparing a will. After all, it reminds us of our mortality, and who wants to think about that? But having a will is our opportunity to formally communicate the distribution of our hard-earned assets to those who are most important to us. In fact, if we die without a will, the government plays a major role in deciding who receives those assets and typically gets the biggest share of our estate. A will can be simple or elaborate, depending on each person's situation. And the cost of a lawyer to help prepare the will is minimal, considering the expense, uncertainty and time delay when there is no will.

In this issue of *The Link*, we initiate a series of articles on wills, bequests and other ways to manage our estate. These approaches fit into a broad category of personal financial management known as Planned Giving. Of the many planned giving tools available to us, a will is the most common. In future issues, we will further describe the use of wills and other instruments. We will also make available on your request booklets that describe planned giving approaches in detail.

Planned giving allows individuals who believe in the purpose and mission of an organization to insure their financial support long after they die.

The Board of Directors of PAA is in the process of establishing an Endowment Fund, which will be explained further in the next issue of *The Link*. The Board is also preparing a system of long term recognition and gratitude to individuals who include PAA in their planned giving.

If you plan to include PAA in your will or other planned gift, if you already have done so, or if you wish to receive more information on this subject, please send the enclosed reply card, or call us at 773-282-8206, Extension 313.

First Person with Stanley

Stanislaw Szymoniuk, "Panie Stasiu," is 79. He is retiring from his duties organizing PAA's Clothes Closet, which provides quality second-hand clothing for people in need. People bring in clothes and shoes they no longer need, and Stanley puts them into neat order and helps clients find what they need quickly and efficiently. Stanley also helps with PAA's Food Pantry, which every Wednesday provides food packages to needy families.

I love to work here. I can talk to these people. I've worked here for about 8 years. I was a shopkeeper in Poland, so I know how to organize inventory and help customers. I brought in pipes and tools and constructed what looks like a real closet, a large closet.

Stanley's contribution to PAA has been made possible by Project AYUDA, which employs seniors in nonprofit organizations. Facilitated by the National Association for Hispanic Elderly, AYUDA employs 1750 low-income seniors. It subsidizes their training, part-time employment doing community service, and placement outside the program. PAA has gained several hard-working employees through Project AYUDA, one of its many linkages with other agencies.

Staff & Board News

Homemaker **Zuzanna Swiderska** was chosen as one of five 1999 Homemaker Workers of the Year by the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers ... §Board Chairman **Rev. Edmund Siedlecki** attended a conference in Washington DC on *The Identity of Polonia on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, at which he presented a "Workshop on Pastoral Plan for Polonia" ... §Executive Director **Karen Popowski**, Director of Employment/Education Programs **Joanna Borowicz** and CNA Program Coordinator **Sister Rosalita** presented diplomas to 24 graduates from PAA's Vocational Training Program ... §January 1999, marked the 10th Anniversary of PAA's Education Program, which has made a lasting difference in hundreds of lives and continues to thrive ... §Congratulations and best wishes to Coordinator of Public Information **Diane Zmaczynski**, who recently retired from PAA after completing her 6th consecutive Annual Report ... §Battered Women's Counselor **Anna Zadecki** and Youth Outreach Worker **Kristina Lukawska** began conducting a 10-week Parenting Class for interested clients ... §Director of Clinical Services **Agnieszka Kowalewicz** and Health Outreach Worker **Halina Szarkowski** attended a leadership development training on KID-CARE and Census 2000 conducted by the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights ... §Thanks to the Employment Staff--**Joanna Borowicz**, **Agatha Stochmalski**, **Marzena Szwarc**, and **Krystyna Harla**--for the successful organization and execution of two February job fairs, which were attended by about 100 people ... §Congratulations to Program Coordinators **Urszula Cholewa** and **Iwona Salomon**, and all PAA's volunteer tutors; thanks to their hard work and dedication our ESL/Literacy Program was again recognized with a Performance Award by the Secretary of State's Office ... §Health Outreach Worker **Halina Szarkowski** coordinated an adult health screening in concert with the American Diabetes Association's American Diabetes Alert, which was attended by 80 people ... §**Joanna Tkacz**, **Boguslawa Wazydrag** and **Joanna Borowicz** spoke to the new Case Management Unit at UIC about PAA's Homemakers Services ... §**Barbara Przedziecka** organized a community question-and-answer session with INS District Director Brian Perryman ... §More than 100 teens attended a recent Snowball event focused on substance abuse prevention; it was led by Youth Outreach Workers **Kristina Lukawska** and **Danuta Wisniewska**, with the help of Homeless Outreach Worker **Ewa Darga**, Substance Abuse Counselor **Krzysztof Lewandowski**, and Partner Abuse Intervention Counselor **Marek Prejzner** ... §**Agnieszka Kowalewicz** gave a presentation to PAA's Homemakers on the dynamics of and procedure for reporting elder abuse ... §CNA Instructor **Virginia Guico**'s CNA class passed the state exam and, along with the Office Skills class, graduated in good standing ... §**Joanna Borowicz** and Office Skills Program Graduate **Regina Trela** gave an informative presentation at the meeting of the Private Industry Council of South and West Suburban Cook County ... §**Joanna Borowicz** and **Grazyna Zajackowska** attended the Annual Adult Education Administrators Conference ... §**Agnieszka Kowalewicz** and Youth Counselor **Joanna Milkowska** will be present at the Multi-Ethnic Anti-Violence Conference to translate for Polish Youth and Parents ... §**Agnieszka Kowalewicz** and Senior Counselors **Teresa Stachowicz** and **Helena Torres**, along with 10 clients from PAA's Seniors Program will attend the Coalition for Limited English Speaking Elderly's Multi-Ethnic Senior Conference ... §**Barbara Przedziecka** and **Magdalena Dolas** conducted two Census Focus Groups with Turning Point clients and Homemakers respectively ... §Board Member **Bryanna Wilczynski** and husband Paul announce the birth of Logan James and their angel Galen Steven on March 26. Galen lived long enough to touch their hearts before he died on March 26. Logan remains in critical condition at Lutheran General Hospital. ... §Our condolences to **Diane Zmaczynski**, and her family on the death of her mother ... §Congratulations to Development Director **Tony Volpe**, who became a second-time grandfather.



POLISH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

Commitment for Changing Lives

3834 North Cicero Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60641

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Chicago, Illinois

Permit No. 5789

Thank you ... to those who made this year's Chairman's Brunch so successful, especially **Francis Cardinal George**, **Sister Lucia** and **Rev. Edmund Siedlecki**; **Don & Gloria Moriarty** for photography, **Andrew Przybylo** for providing the bar, **Kasia's Deli** for pierogis; to those who donated at

least \$1,000: **Most Rev. Alfred L. Abromowicz, Alzheimer & Gray, Jack & Judy Althoff, Rev. Andrew Barzyk, Rev. Matthew Bednarz, Leonard & Haline Borkowski, Rev. Martin Borowczyk, Chicago Society, ComEd, Martha Duda, Ernst & Young, Ltd., Judge Francis Gembala, Anna Gil, Nick Gouletas, David & Patricia Hight, Hinshaw & Culbertson, Eric & Jennifer Hubbard, Brenda & Dan Jarke, Stanley & Susan Jozefiak, Anna Kozlowski, Dr. Henry & Michelle Kurzydowski, LaSalle Bank NA, Legion of Young Polish Women, Harold & Gerry Lichterman, John & Bozena McLees, Thaddeus Makarewicz, Tom & Donna Marcet, Mr. & Mrs. Gus Mauro, Dr. Aleksandra Mazurek, Mary Lee Nowak, Mary & Ken Obrzut, Mr. & Mrs. Zbigniew Palulis, Rev. Thomas Paprocki, Chris Pieszko, John & Sandra Pikarski, Polish Roman Catholic Union, Polish Women's Alliance, Alyce Przybylo, Joanna Sawicka, Sister Stella Louise, Jerry & Barbara Smulik, Dr. Mark & Anna Sobor, Jeanne Sowa, Stanley Stann, Phil Tatarowicz, Donald & Sue Versen, Mitch & Fran Wiet, Ernest & Joan Wish, Kathleen Wytmar, Janice Zyck**; and to those who were unable to attend but generously donated to PAA: **Fr. Leszak Balczewski, SJ, Lester Detterbeck, Mr. & Mrs. Ehret, Camille Einoder, Bert Getz, Jr., Thomas Grusecki, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Heuboski, Harriet Irsay, Roger Kieffer, Marie Kochton, Josephine Krzeminski, Most Rev. Robert Kurtz, CR, Thaddeus Machnik, Dr. John Sarwark, R.T. Schwed, Paul & Dorothy Spiewak, Robert Soudan, Sr., Diane Starsiak, Ted Szywala** ...



Francis Cardinal George breaks bread with guests at PAA's Chairman's Brunch, held at his historic residence on March 7, 1999.

...to all those who remembered the children of our clients at Christmas, especially the **Chicago Society**, and the parishioners of **St. Constance Church**...to the organizers and attendees of Walentynka '99, a dinner/dance at **The Mayfield**, and those who generously donated raffle prizes: **LOT Polish Airlines, Wa Jewelers, Andrzej Lukawski, Anna Zadecki, Kane County Cougars, Chicago Brauhaus Restaurant, Thousand Waves Karate, Untouchable Times & Tours, Thousand Waves Spa, Delta Financial Services, Inga Hair Studio, and D&Z Bookstore**...to those who recently made a gift of \$100 or more: **Architechnics Pro Corporation, Casward Tool Works, Inc., John & Marjorie Conway, Robert Dovick, Stanley Dylong, Susan Drymalski Bowey, Alexander Ermakoff, Dolores Figiel, James Fox, Matthew Gacki, Louis & Barbara Goldman, Eugenia Grochowski, Edmund & Mary Gronkiewicz, Joyce Chelberg, The Heritage Foundation, Richard Indyke, Eugene & Lottie Kaminski, Judge & Mrs. Walter J. Kowalski, Elaine & Walt Kurczewski, Hon. George A. Kwak, Mr. Noel & Dr. Krystyna Lindenmuth, Zbigniew T. Lorenc, M.D., Stanley & Margaret Lorencki, Thaddeus Makarewicz, Arthur Malinowski, Robert McKinney, John McKinnon, McMaster-Carr Supply Company, Mary Anne McMorrow Trust, Sophia L. Michna, Mid America Title Company, Zbigniew Palulis, William A. Panek, Gabriel C. Plebanski, Mr. & Mrs. Chester Pletzke, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, Polish Women's Alliance of America, Karen J. Popowski, Jean H. Race, Rev. Gerald Rogula, Jadwiga Roguska-Kyts, M.C., S.C., Frances J. Siwek, Matthew W. Slowik, Anthony & Amy Volpe, Judge John & Patricia Wasilewski, Barbara Witkiewicz, Kathleen Wytmar, M.J. & Frances Wiet, Karen & Inocenty Wodzisz, Sr., Anne M. Wozniak, Frank Zabielski, Andrew & Gail Zych** ...and to everyone who has contributed their dollars or prayers to PAA. *Dziękujemy bardzo!*

The Link is a publication of the Polish American Association

Editor: Maria Mondragón Contributing: Elżbieta Czochara, Anthony Volpe Production/Design: Łukasz Grzesik