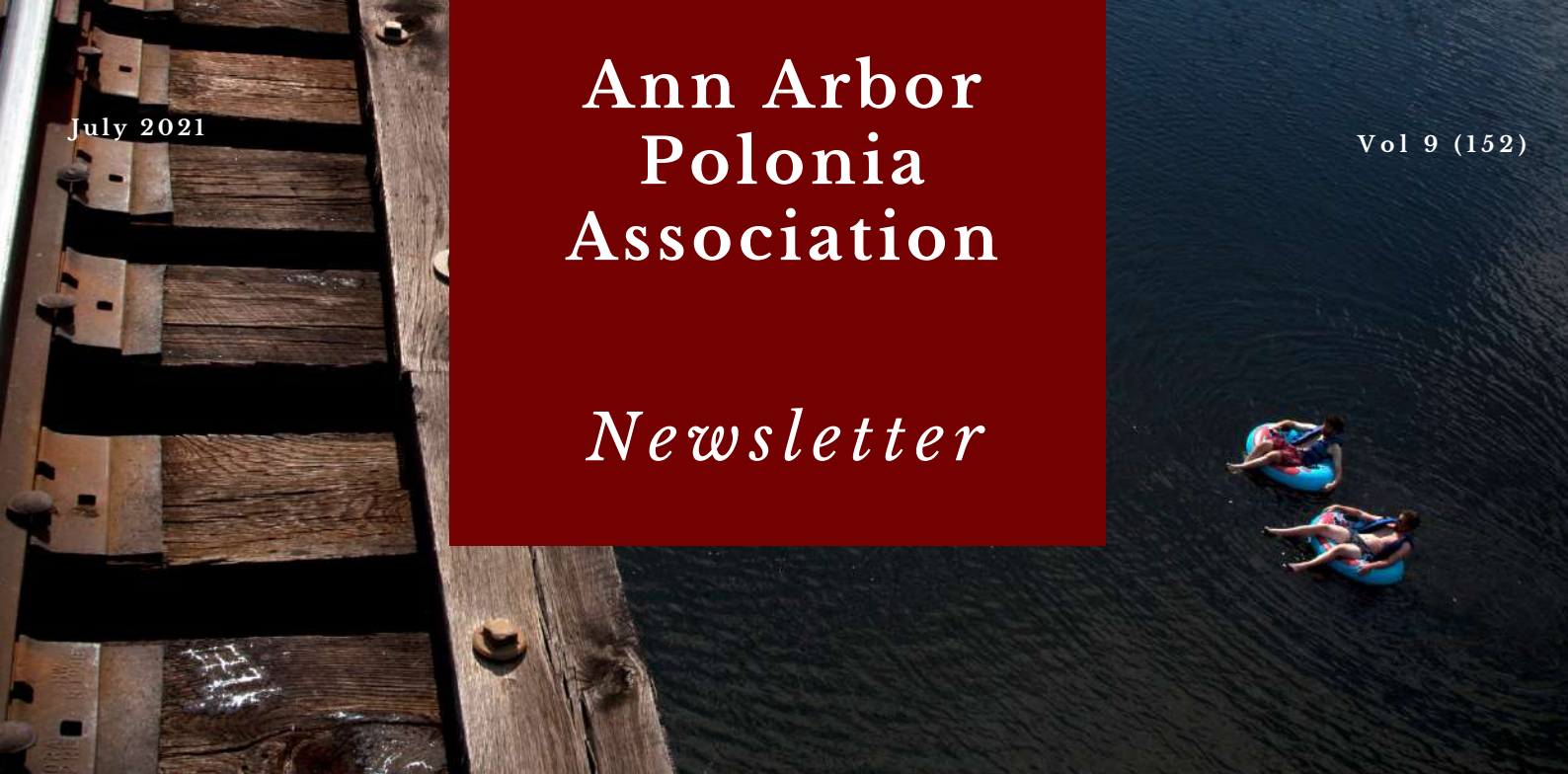


July 2021

Ann Arbor Polonia Association

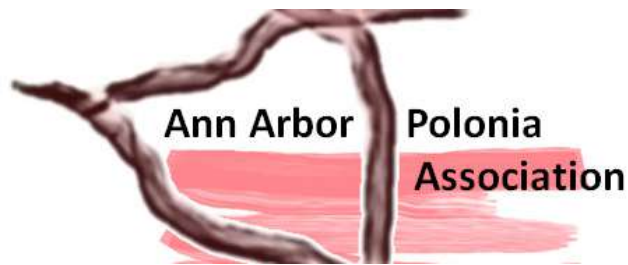
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Newsletter



Summer Picnic!

We are excited to announce that our annual summer picnic is on again this year and scheduled to take place at 2pm on Saturday, August 21st, at our usual location, the Dexter-Huron Metropark's Central Shed. The event is free and open to everyone in the Michigan Polish community and interested friends (Please note that the Metropark has an entrance fee of \$10 per vehicle, if you don't have an annual pass). This year, we will also conduct a **Polish book exchange!** More info about the picnic at the bottom of the newsletter.



New Board Election

The AAPA elected a new board at our May 22nd member meeting. The newly elected AAPA Executive Board includes:

Anna Bielińska -- President
Alicja Bator-Naguib -- Vice President
Jakub Czyz -- Vice President
Marcin Szczepański -- Secretary
Pawel Branski -- Treasurer



AAPA Advisors: Wanda Walasek, Inka Kryczek, Amy Olszewski, Anna Uchmanowicz, Dorota Poznańska, and Piotr Krzystek.

We welcome our new board and look forward to working with them and the entire AAPA membership on making the 2021-2023 term successful and beneficial to our Ann Arbor Polish community and friends!

2021 AAPA Annual Membership Meeting - Photo essay -



Fall Bonfire - Ognisko!

Mark your calendars! The popular annual AAPA Bonfire/Ognisko is back and takes place on **Saturday, October 2nd** at the **Brighton Recreation Area's Migizi Cabin**. We will be posting details in the future as plans are settled. Bring your guitar, Polish beer, and any Polish dish you'd like to share! (Oh, and if it's warm, bring swimsuits for the kids, as they have had lots of fun at the beach in years past!)



2021 Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival

The Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival (AAPFF) is back again this year for the 28th time! Organized by the Polish Cultural Fund (PCF), the festival will take place **November 5th through 7th** at the **Michigan Theater**. We will be hosting a bake sale to help raise funding for the festival, and we sincerely invite all AAPA members and friends to come attend movie screenings at the festival! More details will be posted in the early Fall.



The President's Report - May 22, 2021

By: Anna Bielinska

Dear Members and Friends,

Because of pandemic restriction and cancelation of the 2020 Annual Membership Meeting, today is my first opportunity to meet you all and to present the President's Report from two years of activities of Ann Arbor Polonia Association.

In spring of 2018, the members of our organization overwhelmingly voted on the name change, and after over 45 years as the independent Ann Arbor Chapter of Polish American Congress, we have become the Ann Arbor Polonia Association.

The AAPA is legally registered in the state of Michigan as a non-profit non-partisan membership organization LARA ID # 800942545, EIN 83-2410199]. Initially we have opened a new non-profit bank account at the Ann Arbor State Bank, which last year was acquired by the Level One Bank of Ann Arbor. The new Executive Board (Zarząd) has also worked on the updates and actualization of the AAPA By-laws which were presented and discussed and amended at the meeting in 2019.

In general, the AAPA serves the Polish-American community in Ann Arbor and vicinity, as well as plays an important role in contacts with other Polish groups and tries to bring information about relevant events, activities and culture taking place around Ann Arbor and generally Metro Detroit and south-eastern Michigan.

As a current AAPA President, it is my privilege to present this bi-annual report on the activities of the Board and the entire organization in 2019 through 2020 until now, May 2021.

- For the first time in the long history of the Polonia organization in Ann Arbor, the yearly event – the Annual Membership Election Meeting, planned on April 26th, 2020 has been canceled because of Covid-19 restrictions.
- Annual events – in 2019 we've enjoyed all our annual events. Our Summer Picnic, in August 2019 as usual at the Dexter-Huron MetroPark, gathered over 70 participants, including children and guests from Polish community of Ann Arbor and vicinity. Another event, The Bonfire, "Ognisko", took place at the end of September at the Brighton Recreation Area. Both the Picnic and Ognisko were very successful and attended by many participants, members, guests, and a variety of people from Polish community of Ann Arbor and vicinity. We welcomed all guests, many who have found us via our Facebook and Ann Arbor Polonia Website. Unfortunately, in the 2020 both events have been cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

- **The 26th and 27th Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival – Bake Sales and “Kawka with the Festival Bakers”.** For over a quarter of a century, many members of the Ann Arbor Polonia Association, were actively involved in the organization of the Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival. The Polish Cultural Fund, the principal organizer of Festivals, relies on the partnership, previously with PAC Ann Arbor Chapter, and currently on Ann Arbor Polonia Association, Polish Students at U of M and other institutions. It brings this important cultural event every November to Ann Arbor. The 3-day festival program included feature films, documentaries, a children’s program and meeting and discussion with the guests of the festival.. Continuing the long tradition, the members of our community – particularly the ladies of Ann Arbor Polonia Association - supply the home-baked refreshments -The Bake Goods Sale during Ann Arbor Polish Film Festivals. Our last, the 2019 bake sale was very successful, and brought over \$800 income. However, in 2020, the 27th AAPFF was conducted entirely online and we were not able to offer these sweet refreshments to festival audiences. Although, similarly like in previous years, we have organized “ Kawka with the Festival Bakers” at the Haab's restaurant in Ypsilanti, to appreciate all the women (and men) who bake and work on cake sales during the festival fundraiser. The sweet memories - it was our last entertaining event before pandemic - February 2020.
- **The Anniversary of the Solidarity Movement.** On the occasion, of the 40th anniversary of the August 1980 Agreements and the establishment of the Solidarność Movement, the Ann Arbor Polonia Association organized an event on August 30th, 2020 at the Hudson Mills Metropark. The speakers - our members who participated in Solidarity: Kasia Kietlinska, Andrzej Myc, Andrzej Dolata, as well as honorary consul Richard Walawender, shared their reflections on this important anniversary for Poland. In the afternoon the Field Mass commemorating Solidarity was celebrated outdoors at the private residence of Ms and Mr Olszewski.
- **Support for the Polish initiatives.** We strongly support PCF and the U of M Polish Students’ Association as well as enjoy the success of Polish Language Center of Ann Arbor. We have recently granted the Polish Language Center the \$300 financial aid for the support of their activities and education of Polish children.
- **Mrs. Irena Thiel Scholarship –** Ann Arbor Polonia offers the yearly college scholarship funded by Mrs. Irena Thiel over 12 years ago. There were no applications in 2020 and so far this year – but there is still time to the deadline (August 31st).
- **Support Polish language religious life in Ann Arbor.** Ann Arbor Polonia Association continues support for Polish community in the over 45-year tradition of Polish Language Mass. In 2020, most religious events were closed or moved online and all Polish Masses were cancelled. However, we made it possible to keep our community informed about privately organized masses in the open spaces, or more recently in 2021, about the monthly Polish Mass at St. Patrick church. Sadly, in 2020 we have lost two of dedicated pastors - Fr. Stanislaw Czarnota and Fr. Louis Madey. Many of our friends contributed to the flowers and attended their final farewells.

- **Our media and communications.** During 2020-2021 Covid restriction and isolation, our Board tried to keep Polish community connected and informed about mostly online events, concerts, lectures etc. Having the limited ability, we wanted to at least “keep the lights on”. We have active FB and Web sites, which are periodically updated, as well as a PayPal account as an additional way to easier pay membership association fees or other payments.

Finally, as a President I would like to thank all Board Members for their dedication, patience, and work, sometimes inconvenient and taking their time!

- Inka Kryczek is finishing her long term (7th year) as our Treasurer! Thank you - for her work keeping an eye on our finances, and for taking responsibility for the Facebook page and PayPal account. All this in addition to so many other things happening in the life of her and her growing family 😊.
- Thanks to Alicja Bator-Naguib and Marcin Szczepanski, who for 2 years served, respectively, as our Vice-president (for everything), and Secretary, and who graciously agreed to be candidates for the next board term.

Thank you to all who attended our 2021 Annual Membership Meeting. Big thank you to Ms and Mr. Olszewski for hosting us.

Additional Summer Picnic Information

The AAPA will provide kielbasa, bread, kaszanka, condiments, etc., as well as tablecloths and charcoal. Please bring dishes to share, salads/sides, condiments, and/or beverages (BYOB). We are still in search of someone to be in charge of grilling -- reach out if you'd like to help!

Kids' activities may be loosely organized (we'll have a soccer ball and posts), and in the past kids have had lots of fun wading near the shore of the river that flows near the picnic area (parents' supervision recommended for small children). As in previous years we will conduct a raffle - A Mystery Basket - with tickets to be purchased during the picnic.

This year, we will also conduct a Polish book exchange! Bring any Polish-language books in good shape that you'd like to donate and see if you find any for yourself or kids at the swap. (We are still gauging interest in the book swap; so, please email us at poloniaannarbor@gmail.com to let us know if you think you may be interested.)

See you soon at the Picnic!

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Joining the Ann Arbor Polonia Association has never been so easy! Take advantage of our new electronic PayPal account and invest in supporting Ann Arbor Polonia events for this year. Annual dues are \$35/member.

Electronic payments:

<https://paypal.me/aapolonia> Click on the link or type this into your search bar. You'll be linked directly to our PayPal account.

NEWSLETTER PHOTOS AND EVENTS

Please don't forget to send us information and photos from your events so we can highlight them in our Newsletter.

Just send ideas, information and photos to poloniaannarbor@gmail.com to be part of our next communication. Thank you!

CONTACT US

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poloniaannarbor@gmail.com
Check us out on Facebook!

AAPA Board Members

President: Anna Bielińska
Vice-President: Alicja Bator-Naguib
Vice President - Jakub Czyz
Treasurer: Pawel Branski
Secretary: Marcin Szczepanski

AAPA Community advisors

Wanda Walasek
Inka Kryczek
Amy Olszewski
Anna Uchmanowicz
Dorota Poznańska
Piotr Krzystek.