



Friends of Polish Art
Founded 1937 Non-Profit Organization

Newsletter March 2025

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*An Affiliate of the
American Council
for Polish Culture*



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**The FPA Newsletter
is published
4 times per year.**

Submissions from FPA members are highly encouraged. Please send them as an e-mail to the editor.

The opinions and editorial views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Friends of Polish Arts.

FPA does not assume any responsibility for statements advanced by contributors to this newsletter. The editor reserve the right to edit any submission.

APPLY FOR FPA SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

This year again FPA proudly offers **(1) Frank Filipek Scholarships** (five scholarships, each in the amount of \$2,000), **(2) Mitchell Fine Arts Scholarships** (two scholarships, each in the amount of \$2,000) and **(3) Donald Samull Polish Folk Dance Grants** (up to four grants in amounts up to \$2,500 each).

1. Frank Filipek Scholarships are available to students for academic studies in areas including law, medicine, architecture, engineering, sciences and the liberal arts, with the exception of the fine arts. For details and the application form go to:

<https://www.friendsofpolishart.org/scholarships/frank-filipek-scholarship/>

2. Mitchell Fine Arts Scholarships are available to students pursuing studies in painting, sculpture, music, drama, theater, dance and other forms of creative expression as well as history, literature, religion, philosophy and Polish Studies. For details and the application form go to:

<https://www.friendsofpolishart.org/scholarships/mitchel-fine-arts-scholarship/>

3. Donald Samull Polish Folk Dance Grants are available to Michigan-based Polish folk-dance groups to support their regular activities. For details and the application form go to:

<https://www.friendsofpolishart.org/scholarships/donald-samull-dance-grant/>

Please help us spread the news about these great opportunities.

FPA 2024 WIGILIA HIGHLIGHTS LOCAL ARTS (continued page 3)

Like every traditional Polish Wigilia, the Friends of Polish Art 2024 Wigilia brought together joyful families and friends who on Saturday, December 14 at the APCC in Troy learned about Wigilia traditions, broke opłatki and exchanged good wishes. Guests sampled such Wigilia staples as marinated herring, red barszcz with uszka, fried fish, pierogi, poppyseed rolls and home-made cheesecake. There was also the thrill of possibly winning the “share the wealth” and basket raffles, as well as enjoying caroling in Polish and English.

Other highlights of the evening were a large display of beautiful szopkas (or nativity scenes), Polish kolędy sung by “Siostry Folklorystyczne” (Julia La Rocca and Rachel Parker) with Curtis Posuniak on the piano, and a dance performance by the young dancers of the PRCUA Opole Dance Ensemble.

Prior to the dinner Wigilia guests could admire four award-winning szopki from this year's very successful Szopka Competition (nine nativity scenes were entered), organized by FPA together with the Polish Art Center in Hamtramck, as well as eight original szopki from Kraków, from the collection of Charles Pelshaw. Mr. Pelshaw also led a szopka-making workshop earlier in the fall which was attended by 30 people.





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NEWSLETTER

EDITORS

Alina Klin

Brian Malski

Carol J. Surma



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Dear FPA Members,

Happy Spring! Although the outside temperature remains chilly and the clouds gray and overcast, it won't be long before we experience warmer days, blue skies and increasing sunshine.

First, I'd like to welcome our new members, Agnieszka & John Gajewski and Karen Papierniak. Thank you for joining FPA, we are thrilled to have you in our organization!

Secondly, you might have heard that the Piast Institute announced their "Top 25 Polish American Leaders in 2025". We congratulate the seven FPA members - Ann Bankowski, Jacqueline Kolowski, Barbara Lemecha, Henrietta Nowakowski, Charles (Chuck) Pelshaw, Richard Walawender and Jessica Urban - who are on the list. As President of FPA I humbly acknowledge also being included in this list.

Hopefully most of you have been receiving emails and checking our website and Facebook to keep up with the organization's activities and events. Our final two events of 2024 were the annual Wigilia and a beading workshop led by board member Chuck Pelshaw. You can read more about them in this newsletter.

During the first two months of 2025 we held two board meetings, a general membership meeting and annual elections. We also issued announcements for our scholarships and grants and created an operations policy document. This document, which identifies tasks and captures past motions, will serve as a guide for the board.

At the beginning of March, we participated as a sponsor at the Slavic Dance Festival held at the American Polish Cultural Center and started preparations for our Święconka. At this year's Święconka we will be honoring long time members of The Club Filarets.

We also have been working on this year's Literary Competitions. Pamela Saunders has graciously agreed to be chairperson of the competitions. Another event we are very excited about is the FPA Fine Arts Competition. The Fine Arts Competition (previously known as the Kubinski Art Competition), last held in 2013, is scheduled to take place in October at the Galeria located on the Orchard Lake Schools campus. More information, including how to help with this event and enter the competition, will be available very soon.

There are several other cultural and social activities we want to host this year but until we can determine which are possible, we look forward to seeing you at upcoming FPA events, especially at "Święconka" on April 26 and at our next General Membership Meeting on May 30. Check the "Upcoming Events" listed here on Page 4 and posted on the website for dates and times for these and some additional local events and activities FPA supports, like the Polish Day Parade.



Members of FPA promoting the organization at the Slavic Dance Festival on March 1 at the APCC in Troy

Finally, we are also looking to fill the open recording and corresponding secretary board positions and open slots on our standing (membership, affairs, fundraising & public relations) or events committees. Please call or email me and let me know if you can volunteer for any of these.

Wishing you Happy Easter /Wesołego Alleluja, and warmest regards,
Brian Malski

FPA ELECTS OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

At the General Meeting held on January 24, 2025, elections were held for the officers and board of directors. President, Brian Malski, still has one year remaining in his term of office. The following people were elected: First Vice President: Alina Klin; Second Vice President: Michael Ostrowski; Treasurer: Iwona Jedrzejczak; and Financial Secretary: Carol J. Surma. The new board of directors are: Stella Szczesny, Patricia Malski, Charles Pelshaw, Barbara Hantz and Thomas Schemanski. Congratulations!



Among the Wigilia guests were two young szopka-makers, the winners of the first and second prize, Esther Van Steenkiste (age 6) and her brother, Ezikiel Van Steenkiste (age 9), accompanied by their grandparents. Their father, Matthew Van Steenkiste, won the first prize in the adult section of the competition, which this year brought in a record number of entries. The Van Steenkiste family, who like arts and crafts but aren't Polish, learned about the competition from a flyer dropped at the local church by Brian Malski, FPA president and a promoter of the competition. There is already a tentative plan to hold a szopka making workshop at the church sometime this year.

The performance of “Siostry Folklorystyczne” at the Wigilia, a new vocal trio (the third “siostra” was unable to participate) which is just getting started, is another example of how FPA thrives to support and promote Polish artists and arts. The audience liked the Sisters' performance very much.

The PRCUA Opolo Dance Ensemble presented dances from the Przeworsk and the Beskidy regions, as well as a lively Polish American polka. Earlier this year the group received an FPA Donald Samull Folk Dance Group Grant. This relatively new grant program offered by FPA is aimed at helping local dance groups by providing some monetary support (up to \$2,500 per group) which could be used – for instance - toward purchasing new costumes or traveling to Poland to a dance festival. FPA is now accepting applications for 2025.



FPA CONDUCTS ITS FIRST EVER BEADING WORKSHOP

The arcane knowledge of beading became much less intimidating during the beading workshop led by Charles Pelshaw and organized by Friends of Polish Art on Saturday, December 21, at the Metropolitan Museum of Design Detroit (MM-O-DD). The beading workshop was held at the MM-O-DD on the final day of the International Design Exhibition where FPA partnered with MM-O-DD on the Poland Art exhibit.

Throughout the workshop, Chuck, an expert at beading who has beaded many Polish folk vests, provided excellent, hands-on instructions, so at the end of the two-hour-long workshop each of the eleven “newbies” ended up with an almost finished flower beaded on a piece of black velvet.

Stay tuned, there will be another beading workshop this year.





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Check out the FPA website:
<https://friendsofpolishart.org>

Like us on our Facebook page:
<https://facebook.com/friendsofpolishart/>

REMINDER
TO SEND IN YOUR RESERVATIONS
to FPA Święconka
to be held on
Saturday, April 26 at 4:00 pm
at the American Polish Cultural Center



RSVP by April 19, 2025

Tickets: Members - \$40.00, Non-Members-
\$45.00, Children - \$20.00, Sponsor - \$75.00,
Patron - \$125.00

Make checks payable to Friends of Polish Art

and mail to: Brian Malski, 1421 Ottawa St.,

Royal Oak, MI. 48073-2038

For information contact Stella Szczesny (313) 680-4548

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, April 5, 10AM, 2PM and 5PM: Pisanki Workshop with Iwona Jędrzejczak, organized by the PICROL, at OLS Dinning Hall. RSVP required.

Sunday, April 6, 1 PM: Pisanki Workshop with Iwona Jędrzejczak, organized by the Polish American Congress MI Division at the PAC-MI Office. RSVP required.

Saturday, April 26, 4 PM: FPA Annual Święconka. FPA will be honoring distinguished members of the Club Filarets at the APCC in Troy. RSVP required.

Saturday, May 3, 9 AM: 2nd Annual 5 K Run/Walk Vivat 3 Maja. For detailed information and to sign-up go to:
<https://polishweekly.com/vivat/>

Saturday, May 3, 7 PM: Classical concert featuring Tomoko Mack & Kazimierz Brzozowski at the Galeria in Orchard Lake. RSVP required.

Thursday, May 29: The Polish Day Parade Roast. Details TBA.

Friday, May 30, 6:30 PM: FPA General Membership Meeting. Grants and scholarships will be awarded during the meeting at the APCC in Troy.

Sunday, June 1, 1 PM: Piast Institute recognizes "Top 25 Polish American Leaders in 2025". Details TBA.