

# Looking through the Window...

by Resident Vice President Anna Sokolowski



Dear Readers,

It's hard to believe that another year is upon us. As I am writing this article (second week of January), my husband Mark finally is taking our Christmas tree down and putting all the holiday decorations away. I do not know about you, but I feel kind of sad; I just love the Christmas season, the magical twinkling lights draped over a Christmas tree, a warm kitchen and the smell of Christmas delicacies, meaningful and loving conversations with family and friends and our happy children, and grandchildren running around. Christmas is a truly magical time. The good news is that in 11 months we can celebrate Christmas season again! So now - Welcome to 2012!

Each New Year brings changes and new beginnings. Such is the case for PRCUA. Let us begin 2012 by promoting PRCUA and bringing it into our lives. Be involved in your societies, districts: promote our activities, like sport tournaments, language and dance schools, scholarships and loans. Let others know about our affordable insurance plans and high interest retirement plans (Annuities, IRA's ROTH IRA). Encourage your friends, acquaintances and family to join and be active in our PRCUA family. I do hope that you will consider making a special gift to yourself by updating your own insurance. Let's make 2012 the most productive year in PRCUA history! Visit our web-site, call our deputies, the Philadelphia Satellite Office or our Home Office and keep our organization and its programs that you love, going strong.

Christmas has passed but we are still left with a lot of beautiful memories of the Christmas pageants and recitals which officially ended the 2011 year.

On Sunday, Dec. 11, St. Rafal Kalinowski Polish Language School in Munster, IN, upholding a school tradition, presented a Christmas program: "Yes, He is the King." It involved students from all school grades. Every year the play changes slightly, but it is always a great show. The scenery and the Christmas story and the song choices were beautifully done. They truly captured the spirit of Christmas. This show made us smile and feel all warm inside about the upcoming Christmas season.

Unfortunately President Drobot and I could not stay for the refreshments because we rushed to the north side of Chicago to attend another Christmas Show "The Magic of Christmas." It was held at the Copernicus Foundation Theater, which was filled to capacity. The show was orchestrated by our own Anna Krysinski - PRCUA National Director and Director of the Song and Dance Ensemble POLONIA; Agata Paleczny, Director of Little Stars Children's Theater; and Barbara Bilszta, the founder and executive director of the Paderewski Symphony Orchestra (PASO). The play combined Polish Christmas traditions using talented local actors, singing of Christmas carols from around the world, folk and ballroom dancing performed by Polonia, as well as beautiful violin music. The show captured the true spirit of Christmas and a holiday feeling as well. It was a wonderful Christmas show for the whole family to enjoy together.

On Sunday, Dec. 18th the Annual OPLATEK organized by the John Paul II Polish language School under the direction of Jolanta Tatara, PhD, dance group POLANIE under the direction of Misia Jaminski, Renee Bober, and Kalina Dziadkowiec, and the Polish Club of Lemont Illinois (Basia Foran, President) took place. The stage was transformed with colorful artwork depicting Christmas scenes. Every year the school students put on a beautiful Christmas pageant with singing and dancing. Everyone who participated did an extraordinary job and their beautiful performance brought a festive holiday spirit to all of us. After the show we all shared an OPLATEK and were invited to a Christmas luncheon.

After a delicious lunch, we rushed to another Christmas Show by the Southwest Center of Polish Dancing (Ania Kraszewski, School Director) with a special appearance of Wesoly Lud which was held in a nearby suburb. What a spectacular Christmas show it was! Just imagine over 200 dancers on the stage! It was amazing to watch children as young as 3 years old with smiles on their faces, trying so hard to impress us! And they DID! It was their time to shine and they were just wonderful! We also admired the dancing of all age groups and an excellent performance by Wesoly Lud. We loved the colorful costumes and their choreography was absolutely great! Between dances, the dancers sang a variety of Polish and English Christmas Carols. After the performances there was a visit from St. Nicholas, coffee and cake. The best part was really the performers, who felt so good about their accomplishments and their proud parents, with tears of joy in their eyes, as they watched them perform.

Thank you to our school directors, teachers and choreographers, who held extra practices throughout November and December for these shows. We salute our teachers, choreographers and students for taking great pride in showcasing their hard work.

Congratulations to all the PRCUA students who performed so well in the Christmas plays and recitals also in Michigan and Ohio. If you never attended a Christmas recital by PRCUA students, please go next year and see for yourself how incredibly talented our children are. Thank you to Vice President Robert Bielenda and National Directors from Michigan and Ohio who attended local recitals as I could not make it, but I was there in spirit!

**GET WELL WISHES** to employee Patricia Tropp, Admin. Asst. to the Secretary-Treasurer, and PRCUA members - Lucjan Rozwadowski, Michaeline Drust, Sally Klamerus, and Krystyna Bienia. We are praying that all feel better soon!

**THANK YOU** - for all your Christmas cards, e-mails with your Christmas and New Year wishes for our family. Thank you to the PRCUA schools and dance groups for their cards, some of them with the student's signatures; I appreciate your thoughtfulness very much. Also thanks to the PRCUA employees who once again spoiled me with another generous gift and flowers. Thanks to all of you who made sure I had a good supply of my favorite chocolates and thanks for thinking about my addiction to chocolates and my health!

**HAPPY BELATED BIRTHDAY** to PRCUA dance schools directors Paulina Ortyl ( Echoes of Poland), Colleen Bonkowski ( Zajaczek and Zakopane), and Elizabeth Thacker ( Opole); and to dance teacher - Cathy Sielicki ( Syrena)

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to all who are celebrating birthdays in February, especially employees: Boguslawa Chrzanoska (Treasurer Office), Frances Surowiec (Gen. Office), Sharon Quinn (Phila. Office) and Jan Lorys (PMA Dir.), his Mother Maria Lorys; Maria Ciesla (PMA Pres.); Krystyna Grell (PMA Library); Monika Nowak (PMA Art Curator); Basia Frankowicz (Fin. Secy. Soc. #1622); Rita Cerankowski (Halka Dir.); Melissa Stepaniak (Rogalin Teacher Asst.; Rev. Anthony Iwuc (PRCUA Vice Chaplain); Edward Muszalski, (Insurance Supervisor); Hania Kwasniewski and her daughter, Kasia, and Lottie Myslinski.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to all readers celebrating their birthdays in March, especially: Gen. Office IT Asst. Madia Robles; Admin. Asst. to the Secy.-Tres. Patricia Tropp; Anna Krysinski (D7 Nat'l Director & POLONIA Dir.); Greg Olma (D2 Nat'l Dir.), past PRCUA Secy-Tres. Joyce Szarowicz; Past Nat'l Directors Sharon Haberski (D6); Joseph Boruta (D7); Barbara Sergeant-Rustik (D8); Polskie Maki School Dir. Maria Jalkiewicz; talented choreographers Tomasz Kielar of Mala Polska; Kalina Dziadkowiec of Polanie, Barbara Grabas of Gwiazda; Ron Toboy, husband of past D10 Nat'l Dir. Barbara Toboy; and Paul Odrobina (PNA V.P.). May your Birthday be the happy beginning of a wonderful year!

**CONGRATULATIONS** are in order to Maria Ciesla PMA President, Sharon Zago past PWA Vice President and Paul Odrobina, PNA Vice President who received the Annual Polish American Historical Association Award. Please accept our heartiest congratulations for this great achievement and relentless and selfless service to Polonia!

**HAPPY RETIREMENT** to my friend Wanda Penar, longtime PNA employee, who retired on Dec. 16, 2011. *Dear Wanda, please accept our warmest congratulations upon your retirement. Your productive career and your many contributions to Polonia are widely appreciated. We truly hope that you'll be blessed to be able to accomplish the things you have planned as a newly elected PNA National Director. Best Wishes in your future endeavors!*

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!** February is a month of hearts, flowers, chocolates and other lovely gifts of LOVE. But do not wait till Valentine Day to get all kissy and to show your love. Practice this wonderful feeling all year around. Remember, there are three things that last: faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love. Therefore a Happy and Romantic Valentine's Day to all!

Have a great month, thank you for your comments, ideas and news. Keep in touch - fraternal.department@prcu.org or call 1-800-772-8632 ext. 2643. Until next time, take care.

See more photos at [www.prcua.org](http://www.prcua.org) go to Member Benefits



John Paul II School and Polanie Dancers



SWCPD



Dir. Krystyna Lech and husband, Ted, with granddaughter



St. Rafal Kalinowski

Photos from events mentioned on page 7...

