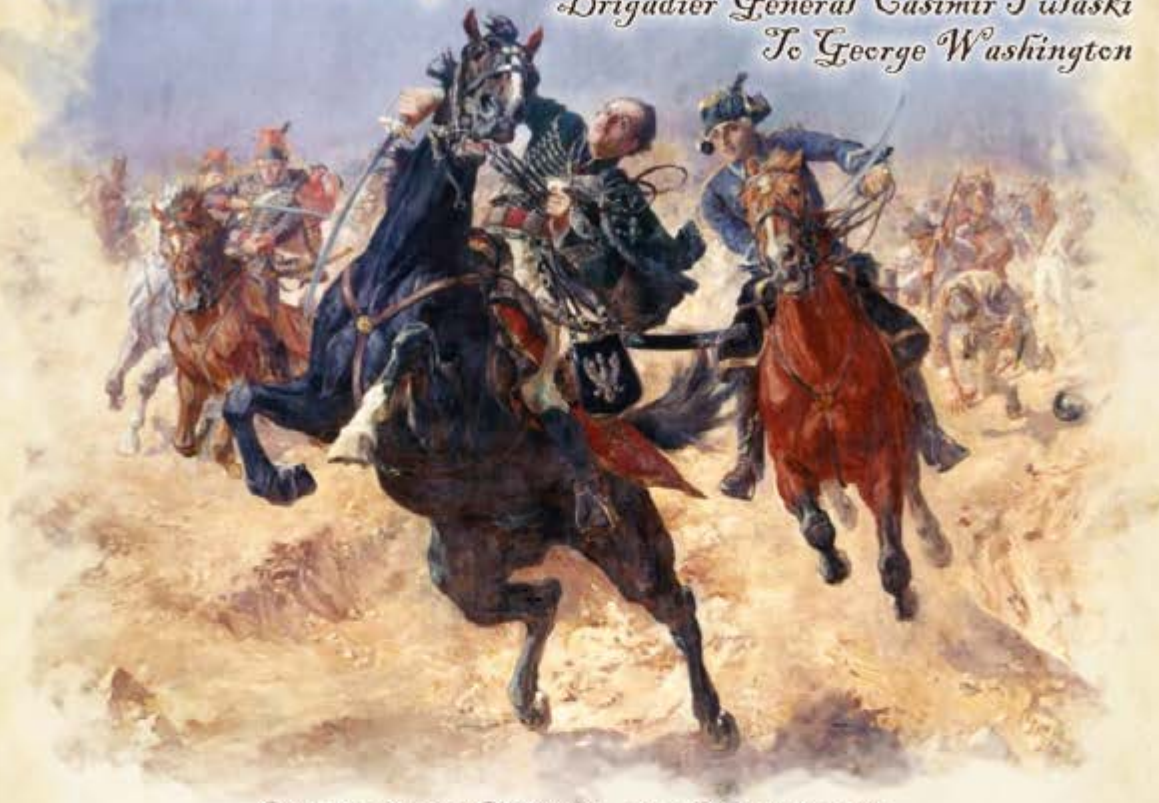


*"I came here where freedom is being defended,  
to serve it and live or die for it"*

*Brigadier General Casimir Pulaski  
To George Washington*



— OFFICIAL STATE OF ILLINOIS —

# *Pulaski Day*

— VIRTUAL CELEBRATION —

Monday, March 1, 2021 at 10 a.m.

*hosted by*

**The Polish Museum of America**

*and the*

**Polish Roman Catholic Union of America**

*Streamed live on*

**[www.PolishMuseumOfAmerica.org](http://www.PolishMuseumOfAmerica.org)**

*from the*

Sabina P. Logisz Great Hall, 984 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60642



*The 2021 Official State of Illinois Pulaski Day Celebration  
is generously sponsored by*



**PNC**



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& SLAVIC<sup>®</sup>**

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## 2021 VIRTUAL PULASKI DAY PROGRAM

### GREETINGS

James J. Robaczewski  
*President, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America;  
Chairman, The Polish Museum of America; PMA Life Member*

Richard Owsiany  
*President, The Polish Museum of America*

### PRESENTATION OF COLORS

Tadeusz Kościuszko Polish Lancers Society

### NATIONAL ANTHEMS

Mirosława Sojka-Topór  
*soprano*  
Bartłomiej Ciężobka  
*pianist*

### WELCOME

Hon. Michael Frerichs  
*Treasurer, State of Illinois*

**THE PULASKI COLLECTION**  
at the Polish Museum of America

### REMARKS

Małgorzata Bąk-Guzik  
*Consul, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago*

### POLONEZ

Composed by Wojciech Kilar, 1999  
Polonia Polish Folk Song & Dance Ensemble

### REMARKS

Frank J. Spula  
*President, Polish American Congress;  
President, Polish National Alliance*



## **FAREWELL ADDRESS TO US CONGRESS**

Written by Gen. Pulaski, August 19, 1779

Mateusz Bomba

*New Business Associate, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America*

## **REMARKS**

Hon. Aurelia Pucinski

*Appellate Judge, IL First District, 2nd Division*

## **4 Mélodies Op. 7, No. 4. CHŁOPCA MEGO MI ZABRALI**

Composed by Ignacy Jan Paderewski, words by Adam Asnyk, 1885

Mirosława Sojka-Topór

## **RECOGNITION OF PSFCU UNDERWRITING**

Bogdan Ogórek

*Director, Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union;  
President, Tatra Mountain Cultural Foundation;  
Director, The Polish Museum of America*

## **THE BATTLE OF SAVANNAH**

A Painting by Stanislaw Kaczor Batowski

## **REMARKS**

Hon. Maria Pappas

*Treasurer, Cook County*

## **RECOGNITION OF PNC UNDERWRITING**

Uzma Kazmi

*Senior Vice President –Business Banking, Chicago & Wisconsin,  
PNC Financial Services Group*

## **PAST PULASKI DAY COMMEMORATIONS AT THE PMA**

## **HIGHLANDER DANCE SUITE**

Tatra Mountain Cultural Foundation Ensemble

## **REMARKS**

Hon. Mike Quigley

*U.S. Representative, 5th Congressional District of IL*

## THE TREASURE OF POLONIA – THE POLISH MUSEUM OF AMERICA

Małgorzata Kot

*Managing Director, The Polish Museum of America*

## HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN NUNS OF BETHLEHEM

*At the Consecration of Pulaski's Banner*

Written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1839

## LAYING OF THE WREATH

*Polskie drogi*

Composed by Andrzej Kurylewicz, 1976

Bartłomiej Ciężobka

## BENEDICTION

Rev. Andrzej Totszke, SChr

*Pastor, Holy Trinity Polish Mission;*

*Chaplain, The Polish Museum of America*

## FINALE

*God Bless America*





**OFFICE OF THE CITY TREASURER**

**MELISSA CONYEARS-ERVIN • TREASURER • CITY OF CHICAGO**

March 1, 2021

Mr. Richard Owsiany  
President  
Polish Museum of America

Dear Mr. Owsiany,

I am reaching out to send my special greeting to you and the Polish community on Casimir Pulaski Day.

Today, we pay tribute to Casimir Pulaski, a Polish-born soldier who made a significant contribution to American independence. We commemorate one of our Nation's earliest embodiments of the belief that no matter who you are or where you come from, those who love this country can change it for the better.

Today, we also celebrate the commitment of Polish Americans to liberty and justice for all in the United States of America, and specifically, in the city of Chicago. The City of Chicago is lucky to have one of the largest Polish communities in the world outside of Poland. Chicago's Polonia has always played a crucial role in the political, religious, educational, institutional, and cultural life of Chicago. Streets named Pulaski and Solidarity Drive are symbolic manifestations of the impact of Polish Americans.

On General Pulaski Day, we celebrate the rights and freedoms Pulaski fought for, and we honor the generations of Polish Americans who have contributed to our society and defended our Nation since its founding.

Sincerely,

Melissa Conyears-Ervin  
Treasurer, City of Chicago



POLISH • HUNGARIAN • WORLD FEDERATION & AFFILIATES  
IS A DESIGNATED TAX EXEMPT PUBLIC CHARITY UNDER IRS (IRC) SECTION 501(C)(3)

Polish Hungarian World Federation and Affiliates(PolHuWF)  
c/o Csaba Zongor  
5333 N. Lincoln Ave, Chicago, IL 60625

03/01/21

Re: Pulaski Day  
Monday, March 1, 2021  
Polish Museum of America

Dear Directors and Officers of The Polish Museum of America,

I am honored to send these greetings on behalf of the Executive Board and Membership of the Polish Hungarian World Federation and Affiliates.

Pulaski Day commemorates a great hero of the American Revolution whose life and service embodies that Revolution and the very Spirit of America itself. A spirit living on, to this day, inside every freedom loving person around the world. It is a fire, yes, a fire which can never be extinguished, a yearning for America; to be American.

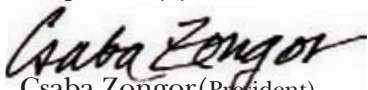
General Casimir Pulaski crossed the Atlantic to join the fight for freedom. He paid the ultimate price, his life! Pulaski and the countless other who came with him gave us the freedom we enjoy today. Without them the Revolution would very likely have failed. We must never forget what they did for us.

Most of them . . . only died !

Here, as we celebrate the memory of Brigadier General Casimir Pulaski, we also pledge to continue nurturing and promoting his great Legacy . . . living free from tyranny and oppression !

With this in mind, we need also remember . . .  
“ Poles and Hungarians are Brother forever . . . ”

Thank you.  
Respectfully yours,

  
Csaba Zongor (President)

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Illinois Governor Daniel Walker signing the Pulaski Day bill  
at the Polish Museum of America, September 9, 1973.  
*From the PMA Photography Archives Collections*

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Dear General

I have taken my quarters about seven miles  
from Savannah, at the widow Gibbons's house, on the  
way to Ogeechee's ferry, it is very essential post, the  
Enemies got an advanced one about two miles from  
the town, that they have posted there since last  
night, being alarmed by the Detachement which was  
on their lines yesterday, it will be necessary that  
my Detachement should be reinforced not only by  
the Cavalry, but with some Infantry to give me  
the facility of attacking their pickets, I shall pursue  
two miles further on the Sunbury's road to keep a  
free Communication with Count D'Arby, the enemies  
send on that Road very ~~often~~ some parties.

I have the honour to be  
with respect Dear General

your most humble  
Obedt. Pulaski

September the 14<sup>th</sup> 1779  
at three o'clock in the morning.

Handwritten letter by Pulaski, reporting to General Benjamin Lincoln on the enemy at Savannah, on September 14, 1779 – less than one month before the assault in which he was mortally wounded.  
From the PMA Archives Gen. Kazimierz Pulaski Collection

## CASIMIR PULASKI

A Biography by Jan M. Lorys



Casimir Pulaski was born in Warsaw, Poland. Named after a Polish saint, his birthday has been established as March 6, 1745. Part of the aristocracy, he was educated on the family estate at Warka, south of Warsaw, and participated in activities befitting his rank and gender. In 1762, he was a page in the court of the Duke of Courland, a vassal of the Polish King. The Duke's court was interned by Russian forces occupying the area. Pulaski was later released and returned to Warka. Based on his experiences of Czarist expansionism, he learned contemporary military tactics. He was also educated in running farming estates, and took part in responsibilities of local and national government, as the aristocracy was the class that defended the State, elected the King, set foreign policy, and oversaw the economy.

### THE BAR CONFEDERATION

In 1764, along with his family, he participated in the election of King Stanisław Augustus Poniatowski. The Polish monarchy was elective, not hereditary, and only the nobility, which made up around 14% of the population, had the right to vote. Unfortunately, the system was open to bribery and intimidation. By 1766, a significant part of

the nobility became convinced that the King was a weak monarch, and that the Russian ambassador was directing Polish decisions.

The Polish nobility invoked a Confederation on February 29, 1768, a feudal move consisting of a general mobilization of the nobility when the country was threatened. Based in the southeastern town of Bar, the Bar Confederation counted the Pulaski family amongst its leaders, and young Casimir became one of its military commanders. With the Royal Army divided on its loyalty, and as the Confederation did not maintain a standing army, its forces were composed of retainers representing various degrees of military training and equipment. Their well trained and equipped opponents, the Russian Army, was one of the largest in Europe. Relying on what would later be known as guerilla tactics, the Confederation forces, knowing the terrain and grouped as small bands, attacked elements of the Russian Army. Sometimes they would form larger bands and try to fight larger numbers of Russians. Sometimes they won, sometimes they lost.

Pulaski was one of the luckier commanders, winning some battles, but losing others. Though of an offensive frame of mind, he became proficient at fighting defensive battles, first at Berdyczów, then at Okopy Świętej Trójcy, or the bastions of the Holy Trinity. The war ebbed and flowed. Bar was captured early on, but the Confederation found a temporary ally in the Austrian monarchy. France, under the old maxim, the enemy of my enemy is my friend, secretly supported the Poles as a counterweight to the Russians. Reinforced, Pulaski captured the shrine at Częstochowa. Pulaski held off the Russians, but this was not a decisive victory to end the war.

Confederation forces found refuge in Austria, which remained neutral. Here, the leaders of the Confederation proposed a plan to kidnap the King and have him become the figurehead of the struggle and rally the country to defeat the invaders of Poland. Pulaski at first opposed the plan, but eventually saw that the nation had to rally around someone. He stipulated that no harm come to the King.



The abduction on November 3, 1771 happened in such an amateurish style, that the king managed to outwit his captors. The Russians quickly declared that the king had been the target of an assassination attempt and named Pulaski as the chief instigator and accused him of attempted regicide. The botched kidnapping turned Austria against the Confederation, and lost support among those European powers that had been secretly supporting the Confederation against Russia. Pulaski, seeing that further struggle was pointless, ordered his troops in Częstochowa and other detachments to disband. He left Poland for good. In 1773, the Polish Royal Tribunal sentenced him to death *in absentia* and stripped him of "all dignity and honors."

Pulaski found himself in exile in the Ottoman Empire, then at war with Czarist Russia. He convinced the Ottoman Turks to organize a force of exiled Poles with him in command, but the Turks surrendered before these troops could be organized and trained. He barely managed to escape to Marseilles. In France, he tried to obtain a commission in the French Army, but was rebuffed. Stripped of his lands and income and with no other prospects of employment, he was placed in debtor's prison until his friends were able to raise funds to pay off his debts.



### THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Fortunately, there were other wars going on in the world. It was 1777, and the American Revolution against King George III had been going on for nearly two years. At first, the Colonists fought to preserve their rights as British subjects, but on July 4, 1776, they declared independence from the British crown. As a fighter against

the Czar of Russia and perceived of regicide, Pulaski had a certain renown among those recruiting European experts to train the Continental forces. The American agents were Silas Dean and Benjamin Franklin. Franklin wrote a letter of introduction to the American Commander in Chief, presenting Pulaski in glowing terms: "Count Pulaski of Poland, an officer famous throughout Europe for his bravery and conduct in defense of the liberties of his country against the three great invading powers of Russia, Austria... may be highly useful to our service."

Pulaski arrived in Marblehead, Massachusetts, near Boston on July 23, 1777, as a volunteer. He wrote ahead to General Washington, famously stating: "I came here, where freedom is being defended, to serve it and to live or die for it." Although Washington did not have the authority to appoint Pulaski to any position or salary, Pulaski appeared at the Continental Army headquarters, near Philadelphia on August 20, 1777. While still without a command or rank, he participated in his first battle at Brandywine. When the tide began to turn against the American forces, Washington gave Pulaski command of his 30-man bodyguard to scout out what the British were attempting. The reconnaissance mission discovered that the British outflanked the Americans and



A. Seyk-pinsk.

George Washington and Casimir Pulaski  
after the battle near the Brandywine river  
Jerzy Washington i Kazimierz Pulaski  
po bitwie nad rzeką Brandywiną.

planned to cut off their line of withdrawal. Washington told Pulaski to hold off the British with his 30 horsemen and any infantry that would fight until the army could retreat. This Pulaski did, allowing the main Army to escape in rather good order, and incidentally, saved the life of Washington. Had Washington been killed or captured, the Revolutionary cause would have died out, because the Americans did not have anyone with his prestige and determination.

On September 15, 1777, Congress issued orders commissioning Count Pulaski a Brigadier General and in charge of the few hundred men in the four regiments of American cavalry. The next day, Brigadier General Pulaski, doing a job normally performed by a lieutenant, spotted British forces moving towards the American lines. Heeding Pulaski's warnings issued in French and Polish, Washington organized for battle. However, severe weather discouraged both sides from engaging.

On October 4, 1777, he fought at Germantown, the last battle before both sides went into winter camps. Pulaski and his cavalry spent the winter of 1777/78 in the Valley Forge area. Pulaski, who had fought the Russians in Poland in the winter months, argued that military operations should continue. However, he was overruled and instead trained his four cavalry regiments. The American cavalry was not considered a decisive arm of battle. Rather than being a screening force, to keep the enemy from finding out your intentions, the regiments were used as escorts for supply columns, dispatch riders and bodyguards for the higher officers. Pulaski rewrote the cavalry regulations based on his experiences. He even tried to get the Americans to adopt the lance.

With winter coming to an end, General Anthony Wayne, one of the better junior generals of the Continental Army, was sent on a foraging mission to gather supplies. He requested support from the cavalry. On February 29, 1778, 50 horsemen led by Pulaski convinced the British that they were being attacked by a much larger force. The British retreated back into Pennsylvania.

Despite his good relations with the senior American officers, Pulaski and other foreigners were resented by some American who thought that they should hold higher ranks. Also, while Pulaski spoke a few languages, English was not one of them; often, his orders were misinterpreted or ignored. Congress was always behind in paying the soldiers and reimbursing the commanders for their expenses. Pulaski's request to arm his cavalry with lances was also denied. Under such conditions, Pulaski resigned his command and left the cavalry under the command of Colonel Michael Kovats, a Hungarian volunteer.

At Yorktown in Virginia, Pulaski met with General Horatio Gates, who recommended that Pulaski organize a new unit that would act independently and according to his desires. This unit, a mixture of cavalry and infantry, would be named Pulaski's Cavalry Legion. The unit was filled with European volunteers and some Americans and headquartered in Baltimore. It numbered about 330, mostly infantry. Due to Congress' chronic financial shortages, Pulaski supported the unit from his personal fortune. The Legion received a standard from the Moravian Sisters, a Christian religious grouping.

The Legion's first mission was to defend Egg Harbor, New Jersey, near present day Atlantic City. Without artillery, this was a mission beyond the capability of the Legion. The British force, made up of American Loyalists, was led by a deserter from the Legion. They launched a surprise attack on the infantry, killing 50 in their sleep and taking few prisoners. Pulaski led the Cavalry in a counter maneuver and drove off



A. Sayk pinta.

Pulaski mortally wounded in the battle of Savannah.  
Pulaski raneky śmiertelnie w bitwie pod Savannah.





the attackers. From here, the Legion was transferred to lower New York in a campaign against American Loyalists and Native Americans supported by the English. He was unhappy that his European trained soldiers were best used against British regulars and that feeding the right fodder to the mounts was a constant problem.

Pulaski and his Legion were rescued by the British decision to hold in the North and take the offensive to the Southern colonies. On February 2, 1779, he was ordered to build up his Legion and to move to South Carolina. Pulaski arrived with his cavalry in Charleston on May 8, 1779. The city was threatened by the British under Brigadier General Prevost. Pulaski launched a series of attacks that stopped the British and also stopped the city officials of Charleston from surrendering to the British.

While Pulaski suffered from malaria in the South, he remained on active duty. The American commander, General Benjamin Lincoln, reinforced by the French Army and Navy, decided to retake Savannah from the English. The plan was to cutoff the city from British naval power by means of the French fleet under the command of Admiral Charles Hector d'Estaing. The American and French armies were to prevent the British from

escaping and stopping any help that might come. Hopefully, the garrison would be starved into surrendering. Pulaski was placed in charge of the American and French cavalry. His missions were to prevent the British from going out into the countryside for food and to scout for any British units coming to the aid of Savannah.

Unfortunately, a large British fleet was reported to be sailing towards the South and Admiral D'Estaing decided for an assault rather than a siege. Plans were made for an all-out assault to take Savannah. Again, treachery was afoot. An American Loyalist, posing as an American soldier, warned the British. During the attack, Admiral D'Estaing was wounded and the French forces wavered. Pulaski led his cavalry to rally the French and was wounded by grapeshot. Taken off the battlefield, he never regained consciousness. He was placed on the brig the *WASP* to be taken to Charleston for better medical treatment. On October 11, 1779, he died aboard the *WASP*. Knowing that Czarist Russia's reward for Pulaski, either dead or alive, might be taken up by the British, they reported the body being buried at sea. In truth, he was buried at the Greenwich plantation, near Savannah, Georgia. His remains were disinterred in 1853, and placed in Casimir Pulaski Monument in Monterrey Square in the historic center of Savannah the following year.

#### *Illustrations:*

Postcard images featuring Pulaski from the 1939 series, *Pictures from the Glorious Days of the Polish-American Fraternity*, by Arthur Szyk. From the PMA Archives Postcard Collections

Color photographs of the Pulaski Monument in Savannah, Georgia, with detail. From the PMA Photography Archives Collections





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