

*"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 7, 2022 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)**

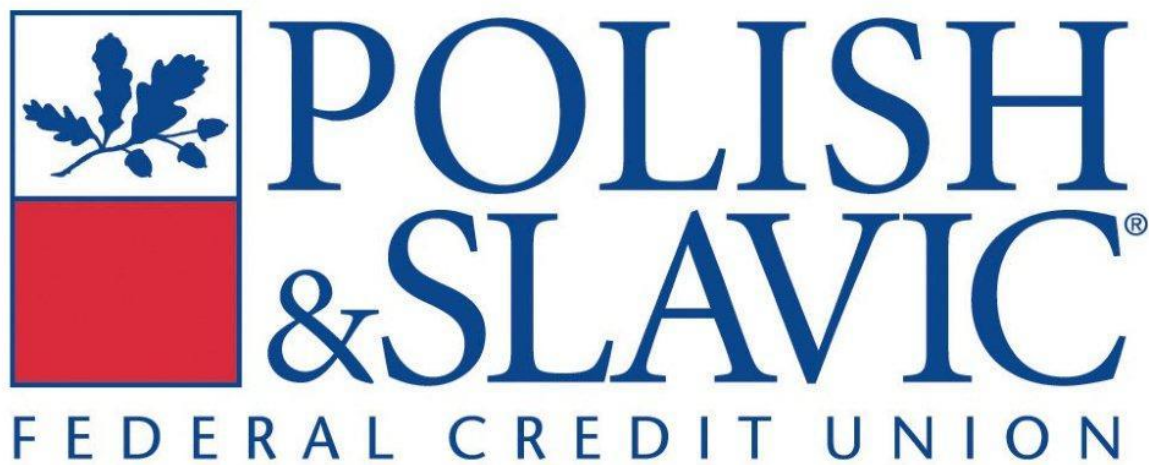
*from the*

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





*The 2022 Official State of Illinois Pulaski Day Celebration  
is generously sponsored by*



## 2022 PULASKI DAY COMMITTEE

Richard Owsiany, Chair

Halina Bieniewska	Halina Misterka
Iwona Bozek	Czesław Mogiliński
Beata Czerkawski	Katarzyna Ogórek
Carlos Escobar	Małgorzata Palka
Krystyna Grell	Andrzej Pawłowski
Zbigniew Habina	James Robaczewski
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Eugeniusz Jarząbek	Julita Siegel
Małgorzata Kot	Teresa Sromek
Barbara Kozuchowska	Lisa Terlecki
Dariusz Lachowski	Ewa Uszpolewicz-Figurski
Jan Lorys	

## SPECIAL THANKS TO



Mirosława Sojka-Topór

Kamil Bundyra

Academy of Music of the Paderewski Symphony Orchestra

Tatra Mountain Cultural Foundation Ensemble

Tadeusz Kościuszko Polish Lancers Society



## 2022 VIRTUAL PULASKI DAY PROGRAM

### GREETINGS

Richard Owsiany  
*President, The Polish Museum of America*

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

### PRESENTATION OF COLORS

Tadeusz Kościuszko Polish Lancers Society

### NATIONAL ANTHEMS

Mirosława Sojka-Topór  
*soprano*  
Kamil Bundyra  
*pianist*

### WELCOME

Hon. Michael Frerichs  
*Treasurer, State of Illinois*

### REMARKS

His Excellency Marek Magierowski  
*Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States of America*

### POLONAISE

Composed by Carl Bohm

### LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH

Written by Jill Jackson-Miller and Sy Miller, 1955  
Academy of Music of the Paderewski Symphony Orchestra

### REMARKS

Hon. Lori Lightfoot  
*Mayor, City of Chicago*

### VIDEO REMARKS

Hon. Richard Durbin  
*U.S. Senator, State of Illinois*



## REMARKS

Serhiy Koledov  
*Consul, Consulate General of Ukraine in Chicago*

Hon. Delia Ramirez  
*IL State Representative, 4th District*

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

## THE PULASKI COLLECTION at the Polish Museum of America

Jan M. Lorys  
*Historian & Director Emeritus, The Polish Museum of America;  
PMA Life Member*

**6 Songs Op. 18, No. 4. NAD WODA WIELKA I CZYSTA**  
Composed by Ignacy Jan Paderewski, words by Adam Mickiewicz, 1894  
Mirosława Sojka-Topór

## RECOGNITION OF PSFCU UNDERWRITING

Bogdan Chmielewski  
*President/ CEO, Polish & Slavic Federal Credit Union*

## 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

## REMARKS

Hon. Aurelia Pucinski  
*Appellate Judge, IL First District, 2nd Division*

## HIGHLANDER DANCE SUITE

Tatra Mountain Cultural Foundation Ensemble

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

Małgorzata Kot  
*Managing Director, The Polish Museum of America*

## MAZUR

Composed by Emil Mynarski

## POLONAISE FAREWELL TO MY HOMELAND

Composed by Michał Kleofas Ogiński, 1794  
Academy of Music of the Paderewski Symphony Orchestra

## 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  
Kamil Bundyra

## BENEDICTION

Rev. Andrzej Totzke, SChr  
*Pastor, Holy Trinity Polish Mission;  
Chaplain, The Polish Museum of America*

## FINALE

*God Bless America*  
Miroslawa Sojka-Topór





PREZYDENT RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ

Andrzej Duda

Warszawa, 7 marca 2022 roku

Uczestnicy i Organizatorzy  
uroczystości z okazji Dnia Kazimierza Pułaskiego  
w chicagowskim Muzeum Polskim w Ameryce

Szanowni Państwo!

Drodzy Rodacy oraz amerykańscy Przyjaciele Polski!

Dzień Kazimierza Pułaskiego, święto stanowe obchodzone w Illinois bardzo uroczyście, jest szczególną okazją, aby przypomnieć, czym jest polski duch wolności i solidarności; czym jest polski etos męskiej, nieugiętej walki o poszanowanie przyrodzonych praw człowieka i całych narodów.

Etos ten głęboko przenikał życie i dokonania generała Pułaskiego, marszałka konfederacji barskiej, znakomitego oficera wojsk polskich dających odpór rosyjskiemu imperializmowi u schyłku XVIII wieku. Kazimierz Pułaski zasłynął też jako jeden z wybitnych dowódców w wojnie o niepodległość Stanów Zjednoczonych. Nazywany ojcem amerykańskiej kawalerii, ocalił życie Jerzego Waszyngtona w bitwie nad Brandywine. Zginął od ran odniesionych w szturmie na miasto Savannah w roku 1779. Polacy i Amerykanie do dzisiaj otaczają go czcią, ponieważ poniósł najwyższą ofiarę w imię ideału, który streszcza hasło widniejące na sztandarach polskich powstańców: *za naszą i waszą wolność*. To wspólna myśl przewodnia Polaków i innych narodów walczących z tyranią carskiej Rosji, z zaborczymi, absolutystycznymi monarchiami Prus i Austrii, a później z nazistowską niemiecką III Rzeszą i komunistycznym Związkiem Sowieckim. To zawołanie jest aktualne także dzisiaj, w sytuacji, gdy bezprawna agresja Federacji Rosyjskiej na niepodległą Ukrainę naruszyła pokojowy ład od dziesięcioleci utwierdzany przez narody Europy – tak po II wojnie światowej, jak i po upadku imperium sowieckiego.

Jednak warto pamiętać, że wyzwania współczesności nigdy nie przytłaczają tych, którzy potrafią czerpać wiedzę i inspirację z doświadczeń historycznych oraz mają oparcie w silnej wspólnotce. Wiedzieli o tym założyciele Muzeum Polskiego w Ameryce, jednej z najstarszych placówek tego typu w Stanach Zjednoczonych, mającej wielkie zasługi na polu utrwalania i przekazywania wiadomości o kulturze, historii oraz wspaniałych osiągnięciach Polaków i Amerykanów polskiego pochodzenia. Rozumieli to twórcy sponsorującego Muzeum Zjednoczenia Polskiego Rzymsko-Katolickiego w Ameryce, czyli jednego z najważniejszych gremiów w historii tutejszej Polonii, troszczącego się nie tylko o byt materialny rodaków-imigrantów – ale też o to, aby tworzyli oni zwarte, dynamiczne środowiska, spajane przywiązaniem do języka, wiary i narodowych tradycji ich ojców ze *Starego Kraju*.

Członkom obu tych organizacji przekazuję wyrazy szacunku i uznania za wieloletnią, owocną pracę społeczną oraz za przygotowanie dzisiejszej uroczystości. Wszystkim Państwu dziękuję za uczestnictwo w niej oraz za wszelkie starania, aby przyjaźń i współpraca między narodami polskim i amerykańskim przynosiła jak najwięcej dobra zarówno im samym, jak i całemu wolnemu światu.

Panie i Panowie, życzę udanych obchodów Dnia Kazimierza Pułaskiego oraz wielu nowych sukcesów w utrwalaniu dziedzictwa polskości na ziemi amerykańskiej. Najserdeczniej Państwa pozdrawiam.

Z wyrazami szacunku





Chicago, dnia 7 marca 2022 r.

Konsulat Generalny  
Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej  
w Chicago

**Pan Ryszard Owsiany**  
Prezes Muzeum Polskiego w Ameryce

**Pani Małgorzata Kot**  
Dyrektor Wykonawcza  
Muzeum Polskiego w Ameryce

*Szanowny Panie Prezencie,  
Szanowna Pani Dyrektor,  
Drogi Przyjaciele Muzeum Polskiego w Ameryce,*

Serdecznie dziękuję za możliwość świętowania Dnia Pułaskiego w tak znamienitym gronie liderów Polonii Amerykańskiej i przedstawicieli władz stanu Illinois oraz miasta Chicago. Zawsze z radością wracam do Muzeum Polskiego w Ameryce, gdyż jest ono matecznikiem polskości na amerykańskiej ziemi, a także miejscem, w którym od lat utrwała się i promuje pamięć o historii Polski. To tutaj możemy oddać hołd wybitnemu Polakowi, generałowi Kazimierzowi Pułaskiemu.

Kazimierz Pułaski, wyjątkowy bohater polskiej i amerykańskiej historii, zasłużony uczestnik walki o wolność i niepodległość obu naszych narodów, zawsze był na tej ziemi traktowany z wielkim i należnym mu szacunkiem. Spotykając się z okazji kolejnych rocznic jego urodzin, wyrażamy podziw nie tylko dla męstwa znakomitego kawalerzysty, ale też składamy wyrazy uznania dla społeczności polskiej i wzmacniamy więzy braterstwa łączące od dwóch stuleci Polskę i Amerykę.

Muzeum Polskie w Ameryce pielęgnuje pamięć o dokonaniach Polaków w Stanach Zjednoczonych, nie tylko militarynych, ale również naukowych, literackich oraz politycznych. Jako kustosz narodowej dumy, uczy kolejne pokolenia Polonii patriotyzmu i szacunku dla przodków, którzy pomagali od podstaw budować ten kraj. Właśnie takich jak generał Kazimierz Pułaski, który w swoim niezwykłym życiu wykazał się odwagą, determinacją, uczciwością i pracowitością to jest cechami wyróżniającymi polską diasporę w USA.

Jeszcze raz dziękuję Muzeum Polskiemu w Ameryce za zaproszenie i życzę Państwu dalszych sukcesów w wypełnianiu powierzonej misji.

*Z szacunkiem i sercem,*

Małgorzata Bąk-Guzik  
Konsul Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej

1530 North Lake Shore Drive  
Chicago, IL 60610

RICHARD J. DURBIN

ILLINOIS

MAJORITY WHIP

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1304

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,  
NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

March 7, 2022

Dear Friends:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the Polish Museum of America's virtual celebration of Pulaski Day. This gathering is a special opportunity to recognize the work of Polish Museum of America and celebrate the Polish-American community.

Since 1937, the Polish Museum of America has been at the forefront of chronicling and teaching Polish history and culture. Each year, the celebration of Pulaski Day is a shining example of the museum's efforts to remember Polish-American history. I applaud your commitment to preserving Polish history and culture through your exhibits, programming, and services.

Pulaski Day honors General Kazimerz Pulaski who offered his services to the American Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War. Today we celebrate his heroic actions and the overall contributions of the Polish-American community. As conflict continues in Eastern Europe we must also hold on to the sentiments of resilience and unity. I just returned from Poland, which is standing firmly in solidarity with Ukraine. I salute Poland for accepting hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians fleeing from Russia's brutal invasion.

Again, I would like to extend my warmest wishes to today's attendees and I wish you all a Happy Pulaski Day.

Very truly yours,



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

11 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1304  
(202) 224-2152

230 S. DEARBORN STREET  
SUITE 3892  
CHICAGO, IL 60604  
(312) 353-4952

525 SOUTH EIGHTH STREET  
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ROCK ISLAND, IL 61201  
(309) 786-5173

250 W. CHERRY STREET  
SUITE 115-D  
CARBONDALE, IL 62901  
(618) 351-1122

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8TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

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SCHAUMBURG, IL 60173

TELEPHONE: (847) 413-1959  
FAX: (847) 413-1965

[www.krishnamoorthi.house.gov](http://www.krishnamoorthi.house.gov)

*Congress of the United States*  
*House of Representatives*  
*Washington, DC 20515*

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READINESS

March 7, 2022

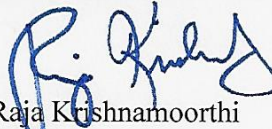
James J. Robaczewski  
Chairman of the Board  
Polish Museum of America  
984 North Milwaukee Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60642

Dear Friends,

It brings me great pleasure to extend my congratulations and best wishes to the Polish Museum of America (PMA) and the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA) on hosting the official State of Illinois observance of Casimir Pulaski Day once again. This event offers a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the civic, linguistic, and cultural history of the Polish-American community.

Over the years, the PRCUA and PMA have worked to serve the Polish-American community and preserve its rich history. Thank you for all that you do, and I hope that today's virtual event is a great success!

Warmest regards,

  
Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress

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OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER  
**MICHAEL W. FRERICHS**

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Polish Museum of America  
984 N. Milwaukee Avenue  
Chicago IL 60642

*Szanowni Państwo! Przyjaciele Polacy!*

The contributions of Poles can be seen all over Illinois. We have local place names such as Warsaw, Radom, and Posen which trace back to the land of the White Eagle. Chicago is home to noted monuments of Tadeusz Kościuszko and Nicholas Copernicus, who remind us of the international impact Poles have had throughout modern history.

Coming into Chicago as I travel north along the Interstate from my home in Champaign-Urbana, I'll pass Pulaski Road, which honors the hero we have come together to pay tribute to today. Known as the Father of the American Cavalry, Casimir Pulaski not only saved the life of George Washington, the father of our country, he died fighting for American Independence at the Battle of Savannah. Although General Pulaski may have been the first, he was one of many Polish-American patriots who gave their life defending the United States. I greatly admire the love of country that is so deeply engrained in the culture of my Polish friends and neighbors.

Here in Illinois, the connections to Poland are all around us. Let us celebrate those links today as we honor the example set forth by this hero of two continents, Casimir Pulaski.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Frerichs".

Michael Frerichs  
Illinois State Treasurer

State Capitol  
Room 219  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Phone: (866) 458-7327  
Fax: (217) 785-2777  
TTY: (866) 877-6013

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1 East Old State Capitol Plaza  
Springfield, IL 62701  
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TTY: (866) 877-6013



**James J. Robaczewski**, ALMI, FIC, ACS  
**NATIONAL PRESIDENT**

March 2022

Dear Friends of The Polish Museum of America,

The state of Illinois has been celebrating General Casimir Pulaski Day since 1977. We celebrate the man who, through his untraditional tactics, saved the life of George Washington at the battle of Brandywine. We mourn the loss of his life in Savannah, while he was fighting for the freedom of his adopted country. We celebrate his life as a patriot both in Poland and in the United States.

On Pulaski Day, we, Poles, have a chance to reflect on the achievements of our ancestors, some famous like Pulaski and Kosciuszko or others who are our close relatives who came to the United States to escape oppression. Those people had great internal fortitude to withstand the challenges they were facing in a new world, as they forged futures and secured their families. They, too, should be considered great patriots for what they did to help create this great country of ours.

With this in mind, let us look to places where we, as Americans, can assist the oppressed and help them achieve the freedoms that we enjoy in our nation.

Fraternally yours,

James J Robaczewski, ALMI, FIC, ACS  
President



**Polish Roman Catholic Union of America | PRCUALife™**

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984 North Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60642-4101 | [PRCUA.org](http://PRCUA.org) | [f](#) [p](#) [i](#) [v](#)

**James J. Robaczewski, NATIONAL PRESIDENT** | (773) 782-2602 | fax (773) 782-2741 | [james-robaczewski@prcu.org](mailto:james-robaczewski@prcu.org)



## ILLINOIS OFFICE OF COMPTROLLER

**SUSANA A. MENDOZA**  
COMPTROLLER

March 7, 2022

Richard Owsiany  
President  
Polish Museum of America  
984 North Milwaukee Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60642

Dear Richard,

On behalf of myself and the entire office of Illinois Comptroller, I would like to honor the contributions to American independence made by Casimir Pulaski.

Known as the "Father of American Cavalry", General Pulaski possessed incredible military skills and leadership qualities that earned the respect of his troops. Pulaski gave his life fighting alongside his troops at the Siege of Savannah in 1779. To this day, his legacy is celebrated by Polish Americans throughout the United States. It is only fitting that in 2009, President Barack Obama signed a joint resolution passed by the United States Congress conferring honorary U.S. citizenship on him.

All Americans owe General Pulaski a debt of gratitude. His dedicated service is another example of the contributions made by immigrants to the growth and success of our Country. May his heroism continue to inspire future generations.

Sincerely,

Susana A. Mendoza  
Illinois State Comptroller

100 West Randolph Street, Suite 15-500  
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(312) 814-2451

201 State Capitol  
Springfield, Illinois 62706-0001  
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325 West Adams Street  
Springfield, Illinois 62704-1871  
(800) 877-8078







## OFFICE OF THE CITY TREASURER

MELISSA CONYEARS-ERVIN • TREASURER • CITY OF CHICAGO

March 7, 2022

Mr. Richard Owsiany  
President  
Polish Museum of America

Dear President 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

## HONORARY GUESTS

Marek Adamczyk  
*Director, Jan Karski Polish School*

Laura Adams  
*Vice President, Branch Manager, Parkway Bank*

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*Commissioner, Cook County Board of Commissioners  
16th District*

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*Pastor, Ss. James and John Bosco*

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*Mayor, Niles*

Peter Alter  
*Gary T. Johnson Chief Historian & Director,  
Studs Terkel Center for Oral History,  
Chicago History Museum*

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*Commissioner, Cook County Board of Commissioners  
7th District*

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*IL State Representative, 40th District*

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*Director, Fryderyk Chopin Polish School*

Tadeusz Antoniak  
*First Vice Commander, Polish Army Veterans  
Association of America*

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*IL State Senator, 2nd District*

Hon. Luis Arroyo, Jr.  
*Commissioner, Cook County Board of Commissioners  
8th District*

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*Principal, Thaddeus Kosciuszko  
7th Air Escadrille Polish School*

Teresita Aviles Bailey  
*Associate Director, Chicago Cultural Alliance*

Eugene Bak  
*PMA Life Member*

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

Sigita Balzekas  
*Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture*

Joann Skvarek Banvich  
*Director, First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association*

Maria Baran  
*Director, Holy Trinity Polish School*

Kazimierz Baranek  
*Polish Army Veterans Association of America, Post 90*

Chester Barbasiewicz  
*PMA Life Heritage Member*

Tom Barnes  
*United Polish Club of Elyria*

Hon. Ronald F. Bartkowicz  
*Circuit Judge, Circuit Court of Cook County*

Rev. Andrzej Bartos  
*Pastor, Ss. Bruno and Richard*

Agnieszka Bastrzyk  
*Secretary Treasurer, PRCUA; Vice President – Internal  
Affairs, Polish American Chamber of Commerce*

Hon. Gerald Bennett  
*Mayor, Palos Hills*

Teresa Berezowski  
*Chair, World Polonia Council*

Pamela & Harlan Berk  
*PMA Life Members*

Stella Bezdziecki  
*Director, Mikolaj Kopernik Polish Language School*

Hon. Joseph Biden  
*President, United States of America*

Louis & Charlene Bielakowski  
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*PMA Life Members*

Mitchell J. Bienia  
*Director, PRCUA District 5*

Zofia Biernadska  
*Polish Army Veterans Association of America, Post 90*

Barbara Bilszta  
*General Director, Paderewski Symphony Orchestra*

Malgorzata Blaszcuk  
*President, Polish Journalists Association in America*

Dee Blicharski  
*PMA Life Member*

Rev. Michal Blicharski, OCIS  
*Mission Director, Our Lady Mother  
of the Church/ Polish Mission*

Dr. George Bobinski  
*PMA Life Member*

Walter Bochenek  
*Vice President, Polish American Congress  
- Illinois Division*

Colleen K. Bonkowski  
*Director, PRCUA District 10*

Carlos Bossard  
*Executive Director, Haitian American  
Museum of Chicago*

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*U.S. Representative, 12th Congressional District of IL*

Hon. Scott Britton  
*Commissioner, Cook County Board of Commissioners  
14th District*

Brenda Bruce & Dr. Alvin M. Fountain II

Dr. Peter Brukasz  
*President, Polish American Medical Society*

Valerie Brumm  
*Director, PRCUA District 10*

Marta Bryszewska  
*Director, Ignacy Domeyko Polish Library,  
Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Piotr Brzek  
*President, Chicago Union of Upper Silesians*

Anna Buchmann  
*Director, Polish Museum in Rapperswil, Switzerland*

Hon. Elizabeth M. Budzinski  
*Associate Judge, Circuit Court of Cook County*

Hon. Anne M. Burke  
*Chief Justice, Illinois Supreme Court*

Hon. Michael Burke  
*Justice - Second District, Illinois Supreme Court*

Hon. Walter Burnett, Jr.  
*Alderman, City of Chicago 27th Ward*

Thomas & Ann Burzycki  
*PMA Life Members*

Rev. Anthony Bus, CR  
*Pastor, St. Stanislaus Kostka*

Marcella Bush  
*President, Polish Educational and Cultural Foundation*

Hon. Cheri Bustos  
*U.S. Representative, 17th Congressional District of IL*

Hon. Michael M. Cabonargi  
*Commissioner, Cook County Board of Review  
2nd District*

Hon. Nick Caiafa  
*Mayor, Schiller Park*

Hon. Felix Cardona  
*Alderman, City of Chicago 31st Ward*

Hon. Robert Carter  
*Justice - Third District, Illinois Supreme Court*

Hon. Sean Casten  
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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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General Casimir Pulaski  
(1745-1779)



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 port, the enemies got an advanced one about two miles from the town, that they have posted there since last night, being alarmed by the detachment which was on their lines yesterday, it will be necessary that my detachment 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'Arting, the enemies send on that road very often some parties.

I have the honour to be  
with respect Dear General

your most humble  
De<sup>d</sup> & De<sup>d</sup> 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.

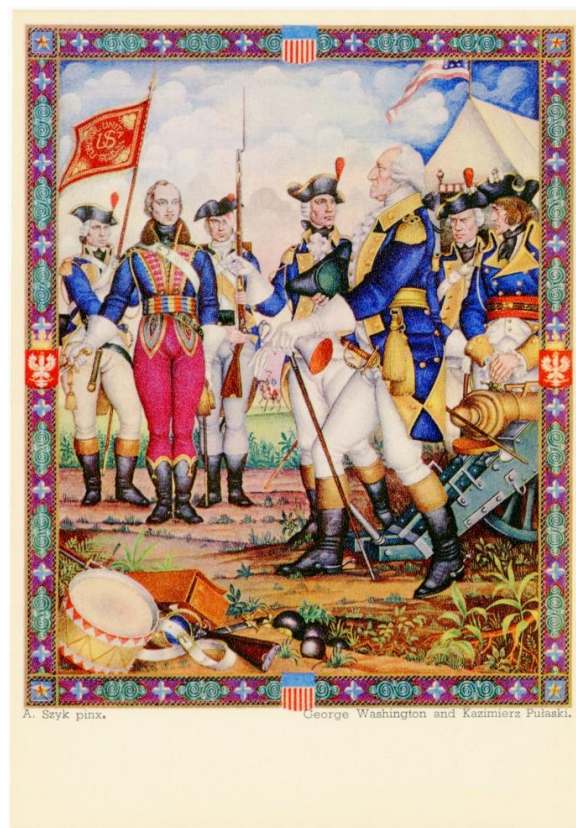
The Polish nobility invoked a Confederation on February 29, 1768, a feudal move consisting of a general mobilization of the nobility when the country was threatened. Based in the southeastern town of Bar, the Bar Confederation counted the Pulaski family amongst its leaders, and young Casimir became one 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



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





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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