The Public Relations Society of America defines public relations as:

“Public Relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.”

What does this mean to the Polish American Congress at the national level and the state divisions of the PAC?

• We are in the media age - In the past, we could rely solely on written communications to our members and hope this communication was passed along to others. Today, we need to have an effective communication program that includes up-to-date websites, as well as other social media devices such as Facebook. These are more timely. Plus, they provide our members, prospective members, and the general public with items they can access on their own time schedule.

• We must reach out to our publics - In the past, people would seek us out for information, membership, etc. Today, we can’t wait for people to come to us - we must reach out to gain people’s attention and hopefully their support. This is a major change. We must develop professional relationships with the media, governmental officials, and other organizations in order to explain our purpose and mission.

At the next Council of National Directors Meeting scheduled for Washington, D.C. later this year, I will provide attendees with a toolkit containing information to help support our PAC state divisions efforts to publicize their activities. I also welcome your ideas in strengthening this effort.

Mark Pienkos
PAC National Vice President for Public Relations

Deadlines for Submissions

Our PAC Newsletter will be sent out six times this year. The deadlines for submission of articles and photos, as well as the publication dates are as follows:

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<th>PUBLICATION DATES</th>
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Be thinking about ways to share your division’s activities and events with your fellow national directors. This is a great way to network! Plus, you may be able to pick up on a successful idea being done in a neighboring state division. Also, your own state division members – and prospective members – will enjoy seeing your work in the national PAC Newsletter.
President’s Message

FRANK SPULA, PRESIDENT OF POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

Dear Members,

The first Monday of March in Illinois is Pulaski Day, a holiday which was enacted into law in 1987. Each year the celebration is hosted at the Polish Museum of America by the Polish Roman Catholic Union. Several hundred guests were in attendance including state, county and city officials. The newly elected Governor of Illinois, Bruce Rauner, was in attendance, Senator Mark Kirk as well and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. I had the privilege of addressing the audience on behalf of the Polish American Congress. That evening, the Illinois Division of the Polish American Congress hosted a dinner in honor of Pulaski Day. Both programs were very well attended by local officials and candidates seeking support from the Polish community.

Primary elections were held during February and I had the opportunity to meet with several candidates running for office, including the Mayoral candidates and aldermanic candidates. I attended several fundraisers for candidates, which is vital to get acquainted and learn their platforms. Most importantly, it’s encouraging that individuals aspiring for office recognize the value and importance of the Polish American Congress.

As Americans citizens living here we have an obligation to participate in the election process of voting for individuals we have feel would serve our communities in the best possible manner.

In May of this year, Poland will have its elections as well. Campaigning is in full swing. I have been asked whether the Polish American Congress as an organization will be taking a stand in favor of any particular standard bearer or group. And, of course, it is flattering to be asked as it is in recognition of the PAC’s important public interest role here in the United States. However, I need to point out that the Polish American Congress is and for several decades now has been non-partisan in its orientation, whether we are focused on elections here or in Poland.

We encourage all those Poles residing in our country who hold valid Polish passports to take advantage of their constitutional right, by casting their vote for a candidate of his or her choosing and hence making their voice count. It is especially important for those contemplating returning to their country.

Whether you live in Poland or the United States, it is most important to vote; a privilege we sometimes take for granted. Our forefathers fought for free elections and the right to vote so it’s unpatriotic not to vote.

Frank J. Spula
President

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Layout and Design by Polish Falcons of America:
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WHEREAS, the illegal annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine became the most serious threat to peace and security in Europe since World War II.

WHEREAS, recent threats against Poland through simulations of a nuclear attack on Warsaw, militarization of the Kaliningrad region, the increased frequency of Russian incursions into NATO airspace, threats, provocations and subversive operations against Poland as well as Moscow war-like rhetoric directed towards Poland constitute tangible evidence that Russia poses existential threat to Poland that endangers the security of Poland, stability of Europe and world peace.

WHEREAS, the hybrid warfare conducted by Russia in Europe blends conventional methods with guerrilla warfare, secret support to separatist groups, cyber-attacks, information and psychological warfare, including aggressive propaganda, economic pressure and activities contrary to international law.

WHEREAS, Russia has waged a war of aggression on Ukraine without declaring a war or even admitting it, in a grim reminder of the September 17, 1939 aggression on Poland that started World War II.

WHEREAS, the quality and sophistication of the Russian equipment transferred to Ukraine, including some of the most advanced air-defense and jamming electronic warfare systems, indicates that Russia deploys military capabilities above and beyond what is required for the low-intensity rebel conflict.

WHEREAS, Russia has achieved an advantage in the information warfare, steadily winning propaganda battles in the cyberspace. Such warfare measures are also directed at the Polish population in order to destroy the morale of the Polish people and deprive them of the will to fight the Russian aggression.

WHEREAS, according to the Ukrainian sources, the pro-Russian terrorists are preparing a mass attack of a hybrid character towards the Baltic Republics.

WHEREAS, according to the NATO leadership, Russian aggression in Ukraine could escalate into all-out war. In February, 2015, NATO warned the public to a real possibility that Russia might use large-scale conventional forces in order to seize NATO territory in a Blitzkrieg-like style. After such aggression, the threat of escalation might be used to prevent re-establishment of territorial integrity of the victim state.

WHEREAS, Europe faces many serious geopolitical threats and NATO members are no longer united. Accordingly, the enforcement of NATO’s guarantee of security towards Poland remains uncertain. At the same time, the European anti-missile defense shield implemented by the United Sates as the NATO protective umbrella is not intended to protect Poland from mid-range missiles from Moscow.

WHEREAS, it shall be noted that for the past 25 years, the focus of the Polish armed forces was on military expeditionary missions, rather than on strengthening its own defense capabilities. Poland served as the most loyal ally of the United States in the most difficult war theaters of the last decade, including deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

THEREFORE, the Polish American Congress expresses its deepest concern over the security of Poland and calls upon the United States to stand in unwavering support of the independence and territorial integrity of its most loyal ally - the Republic of Poland.

THEREFORE, the Polish American Congress calls upon the Government of the United States to remain fully committed in every way to the obligations to the NATO eastern members under Article 5 of the NATO Treaty. The unfolding crisis in Europe represents a test of America’s
resolve with respect to our historic commitment to the NATO allies. America must pass this test for the sake of peace, stability, and progress in Europe.

THEREFORE, the Polish American Congress stands in support of a statement by Lt. Gen. Frederick Hodges, Commander of the U.S. Army Europe, that the U.S. military presence in Europe is vital in order to deter a resurgent Russia that has set out to “redraw the boundaries of Europe.”

THEREFORE, the Polish American Congress calls on the NATO leadership to assure the immediate and effective implementation of the NATO resolution adopted at the Wales Summit to establish a “spearhead” rapid reaction force capable of deployment to the eastern borders of NATO within 48 hours.

THEREFORE, the Polish American Congress calls upon the Government of the United States to transfer permanent bases of the US Armed Forces stationed in Germany into the NATO eastern frontier and to establish permanent presence of NATO troops in Eastern Europe.

THEREFORE, the Polish American Congress calls upon the American leaders and the American media not to disseminate to the American public Russian war propaganda and not to promote the policy of appeasement towards Russia. Such policies only embolden Russia, invite more Russian aggression, and ultimately increase the risk of a nuclear confrontation and conflict.

On behalf of the Polish American Congress:
Frank Spula, President
Delphine Huneycutt, First Vice President
Maria Szonert Binienda, Vice President for Polish Affairs
Dean Anthony Bajdek, Vice President for American Affairs
Mark Pienkos, Vice President for Public Relations
Deborah Majka, Vice President for Cultural Affairs
Hubert Cioromski, Vice President for Financial Affairs
Richard Mazella, Vice President for Development
Timothy Kuzma, Secretary
Robert Maycan, Treasurer

“The Polish American Congress (PAC) wishes to salute the living legacy and the tremendous impact of Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), who, in serving in the U.S. Congress longer than any woman in American history, has also during her five terms in office made a truly historic difference in U.S. relations with Poland and the rights and opportunities of those of us in Polonia.

Even before coming to Congress, in the 1970s Barbara Mikulski was a leader of the “New Pluralism” Movement and a spokesperson for what were called “unmeltable ethnics.” Just as Lech Walesa emerged to give the word “Solidarity” a distinct Polish accent, she made sure that Polonia was a major player on this side of the Atlantic.

As the first woman to chair the powerful Appropriations Committee, Senator Mikulski was a Capitol Hill role model of bi-partisan contributions in politics, working tirelessly, and where necessary, closely with Republicans to guide our country through difficult challenges.

In a time of great debate over the issue of immigration, Senator Mikulski’s own instance is a gold-star example of possibilities enjoyed by so many in our community, as her parents operated a neighborhood grocery store in Baltimore, the city where her immigrant grandmother arrived from her Polish homeland. Senator Mikulski’s unceasing efforts to assure Polish participation in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program, for example, have kept that hope alive for tens of thousands of our relatives, friends and business associates.

Z głębi naszych serc, Senator Mikulski, dziękujemy!

In response to the developments in Ukraine in recent years, naturally, the attention of the Coalition as well as the Polish American Congress has shifted to that part of the region. As a part of this coordinated effort, the PAC has been strongly supporting the Ukrainian American community, on both national and local levels, in its efforts in support of Ukraine’s fight for territorial integrity and against Vladimir Putin’s Soviet-style aggression. PAC representatives have been actively participating in Ukraine-related events, such as demonstrations, meetings, conferences, etc. and have been vocal in support of Ukraine’s fight for peace and freedom. PAC president Frank J. Spula also issued numerous letters, solely or as a co-signer with other CEEC member organizations, addressed to the highest levels of Administration in support of Ukraine’s causes, while Dr. Barbara B. Andersen of Washington D.C. office arranged for meetings with representatives of the White House’s National Security Council to discuss these important matters.

The Coalition feels it is of key importance to both CEE communities in the U.S. as well as to their corresponding home countries that that the group remains active and visible in Washington D.C. This approach dates back to the original reason for the group’s formation – to bring together national ethnic organizations that represent American voters who trace their heritage to Central and Eastern Europe to work together for the causes of common interest, as well as to act together and support each other in times of need. The group succeeded, and as a result, today the Coalition represents more than 20 million Americans of Armenian, Belarusian, Czech, Estonian, Georgian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Slovak, and Ukrainian descent.

As its first task, the group decided to tackle the inclusion of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO). After that goal was accomplished, the group actively supported membership in the Alliance of other countries of the region.

Other issues of interest have emerged over time, depending on events taking place in Central and Eastern Europe, but invariably revolving around matters such as security (military, energy), democracy, human rights, education, bi-lateral cooperation between CEE countries and the United States. In order to outline the matters of key concern, the group issues periodic Policy Statements (available at www.ceecoalition.us.

Please note – since it is still very early in Congressional session, the group is currently in the process of revising the document.)

As Washington eagerly awaits its annual Cherry Blossom festival, heralding the arrival of Spring, the group remains active, meeting on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to discuss issues and decide on best courses of action.

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But Coalition activities do not end on discussing issues. The Coalition takes action through:

1. Publishing of a semi-annual Policy Statement that outlines the topics of main focus and interest.
2. Organizing Policy Symposia on the Capitol Hill – periodic events (once or twice a year) addressed to congressional staffers that bring key issues of Central and Eastern Europe to the doorstep of U.S. legislators. Representatives of the Polish American Congress (for example, Dr. Susanne Lotarski, president of local PAC division and a long-time officer of the organization) have been frequent panelists during the symposiums.
3. Co-sponsoring with other D.C.-based think tanks of events that address key issues.
4. Holding regular face-to-face meetings with members of U.S. Congress and the Administration.
5. Organizing CEE Advocacy Days – a 1-2-day event filled with meetings on Capitol Hill where the group, often supported by local communities, visits congressional offices to deliver a unified message.

The CEEC is also very proud of the company it keeps – the other recipient of the “Friend of Ukraine” award was Mr. Žygimantas Pavilionis, the Ambassador of Lithuania to the United States.

CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN COALITION HONORED WITH “FRIEND OF UKRAINE” AWARD
CONTINUED FROM PG. 5...

SAVED FROM A NEAR LOST CAUSE

BY ANTHONY BAJDEK
PAC NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT FOR AMERICAN AFFAIRS

After having viewed the visually-stunning and memorable “From War to Victory, 1939-1945” exhibit of Poland’s Institute of National Remembrance that had been displayed in Buffalo, NY on the occasion of our Council of National Directors meeting in May 2014, my initial thought had been whether I could manage to bring it to New Hampshire, the “Live Free or Die” state, with a population of only 1,326,813, a capital city, Concord, with a population of 42,695, and its largest city, Manchester, with a population of 110,378. Moreover, the State only has some 32,000 Polish Americans, the vast majority of whom are inconveniently scattered about. The fact that I heard that the exhibit was scheduled to appear only in metropolitan areas with large American and Canadian populations such as New York City, Washington, DC, Toronto, and Ottawa caused me to conclude that bringing it to New Hampshire would be an impossible task.

Therefore, with the approach of summer and its attendant welcome distractions, I gave up the idea, but not for long. After being informed by Susanne Lotarski, President of our Washington Metropolitan Area Division, that the Division was scheduled to host the exhibit in Washington, DC’s Wilson Center, my interest grew once again. She recommended that I contact Justyna Swica, her Division’s Recording Secretary, who had arranged to bring it to the Wilson Center.

In turn, Justyna Swica provided me telephone and email contact information for Sergiusz Kazimierczuk of the Institute’s Office of Public Education in Warsaw, Poland. I reached him in November 2014 and found him very receptive to the idea of bringing the exhibit to New Hampshire in February 2015. He explained that the exhibit had already been scheduled to be in Ottawa, Canada from January through the middle of February, after which it was scheduled to be displayed at Georgetown University in Washington, DC beginning on or about March 17, all of which provided me a very small window of opportunity (ironically appropriate to a small state such as New Hampshire, as it turned out) for bringing it to New Hampshire.

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Your Voice in America ■ Polish American Congress

Sergiusz Kazimierczuk also informed me that the Institute would ship the exhibit free of charge to New Hampshire from Ottawa so that I could schedule it, without financial concern, to be displayed at two sites, the first being at Saint Hedwig Roman Catholic Parish in Manchester for the period, February 21-25, and the second being at the New Hampshire State Library in Concord for the periods March 3-6 and 9-10. The fact that the exhibit came free of charge was a powerful and welcome consideration, as well as an opportunity not to pass up.

Given that the Roman Catholic Bishop of Manchester, Peter Anthony Libasci, had agreed in the fall, in response to appeals of Saint Hedwig’s parishioners and the Polish American Congress, to keep the once-thriving Parish open rather than closing it as speculative rumors had suggested in recent years, I hoped that holding the exhibit there for five days would serve to further impress its parishioners that the Polish American Congress supported the Bishop’s commitment. As a matter of fact, within two weeks after the passing in the summer of Monsignor Alfred Daniszewski, the 95 year old Pastor of the Parish, Bishop Libasci himself sent a most compelling signal to substantiate his commitment to keep the parish open, that being, by approving the installation of a new roof for the Church and Rectory.

The exhibit’s final six days in New Hampshire were scheduled for the State Library in Concord, for a very compelling reason. The Library was located across the street from the State House in which all Constitutional officials and the members of the State Legislature conducted their daily business. All of them were invited by our Division’s Vice President, Linda Radulski Gould, a recently elected member of the state’s House of Representatives, to view the exhibit at their leisure whenever their schedules permitted, starting on March 4.

With our plan for the exhibit in place, all that was necessary was to implement it effectively.

But here’s where the often-heard expression -- one that begins with the words “best laid plans” -- came into play. I was informed by Mike Gaglewski, the Chicago-based coordinator of the exhibit’s North American tour that the exhibit would not leave Ottawa in time for its opening in Manchester, and as a matter of fact, would not arrive until a week later. Weather, customs duty checks at the U.S. - Canada border, and the idiosyncrasies of truckers all contributed to the problem.

The exhibit finally arrived on March 26, the day on which, according to the original plan, we had planned to dismantle it for shipment from Saint Hedwig Parish to the State Library. Needless to say, the prospect for displaying the exhibit began to appear being a lost cause. One individual actually advised me to cancel its appearance in New Hampshire altogether, and to inform the Institute to re-ship it directly to Georgetown University.

Its appearance wasn’t cancelled. As it turned out, however, we could only exhibit it at Saint Hedwig Parish on February 28-March 1, preceding the 4:00 p.m. Saturday Mass and following the 10:00 a.m. Sunday Mass respectively. We then took the exhibit down late Sunday afternoon, and prepared it for shipment to the State Library on Monday, March 2. We next set it up in the State Library on Tuesday, in time for its official opening and reception at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4 where it was scheduled to remain until Thursday, March 12 when it was to be dismantled and prepared for shipment on Friday, March 13 to Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

We probably set the record for setting the exhibit up and taking it down twice in a fifteen day period.

As a wonderful surprise that lifted our spirits throughout the experience, it is worth mentioning that the Institute of National Remembrance sent me 75 copies of the official catalog that was designed to complement the exhibit. Since the supply would

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not suffice to satisfy the needs of many parishioners and an estimated 500 to 700 visitors to the exhibit in the State Library, after providing complimentary copies to the Parish Pastor, Monsignor Anthony Frontiero, the Associate Pastor Eric Delisle, two copies for the affiliated Saint Casimir Elementary School Library, New Hampshire Commissioner of Cultural Resources Van McLeod, and State Librarian Michael York, for example, we placed the rest up for sale at $10 per copy, all funds collected being turned over to the parish for the purchase of a 10 x 10 foot screen for the showing of Polish films and power-point presentations in the parish hall.

As a point of information, in January Monsignor Frontiero asked me to serve on the Parish Council, and Associate Pastor Delisle appointed me to chair the Polish Cultural Committee. This likely would not have happened without the exhibit.

It is no exaggeration to say that this visually-stunning and memorable exhibit was very well-received at both New Hampshire sites. Just over 200 parishioners viewed the exhibit in Saint Hedwig Parish Hall. No surprise here, insofar as an average of 100 parishioners attend each of the two weekend Masses. There are no Masses during the week, except for funerals and weddings. However, the church itself was built to seat 700 worshippers comfortably.

The only problem that occurred for us subsequent to the initial week’s delay was on opening day in the State Library. Both the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House called their members away from lunch into a special session to discuss and vote on the same bill being considered by both houses, starting at 1:25 p.m., five minutes before our scheduled official opening of the exhibit.

In this story, finally, you may have noted that coincidentally three persons with the given name Anthony played a variety of roles, and in effect gave witness to the truth about the saint similarly named being the patron of things lost that are eventually found and by extension in the case of the exhibit in New Hampshire, the patron of seemingly lost causes that are eventually successful.

Needless to say, it had been an interesting fifteen days.

*Because of its length, Vice President Anthony J. Bajdek’s article, “An American Affairs Perspective and Action Plan Dependent on the 114th U. S. Congress and the Parallel Closing Years of the Obama Administration” dated March 11, 2015, will not be included in this Newsletter, but will be sent to the Council of National Directors via our PAC_ND system, as had been the case for the vast majority of his reports throughout 2013-2014 and the 113th Congress.*
In 2015, we begin meeting once annually as a Council of National Directors. Plans are being laid for this gathering to take place in Washington, D.C. The exact dates and times are still in the works as a hotel venue needs to be secured. As soon as this information is finalized, you will be notified.

Why meet in Washington, D.C.?
In order for our organization to have visibility on a national level, we decided at our October meeting in Chicago to plan for a trip to our nation's Capital. There, we will maximize our time with visits to Congressional offices, as well as meet to conduct our organization's business.

This will be a great opportunity for the PAC. In order for this meeting to be a success, we will need everyone present. Start planning for the Washington, D.C. meeting and as soon as specific information becomes available, you will be notified. Then, start making your plans to attend!
To all of our PAC National Directors, Members and Friends:

From your Polish American Congress Executive Committee . . .

Wesołego Alleluja!
Founded in May, 1944, the Polish American Congress is a National Umbrella Organization, representing at least 10 million Americans of Polish descent and origin. Its membership is comprised of fraternal, educational, veteran, religious, cultural, social, business, political organizations and individual membership. The Polish American community prides itself on its deeply rooted commitment to the values of family, faith, democracy, hard work and fulfillment of the American dream. We are present in every state and virtually every community in America, on various social, business and economic levels.

The Polish American Congress, an “umbrella” organization, is a federation of over 3000 Polish American organizations and clubs, ranging from national fraternal benefit societies, such as the Polish National Alliance, Polish Women’s Alliance, Polish Roman Catholic Union, Polish Falcons and others, including veteran, cultural, professional, religious and social associations, with aggregate membership of over one million. The PAC by-laws also provide for individual membership, as well as associate membership.

The PAC promotes civic, educational and cultural programs designed to further not only the knowledge of Polish history, language and culture, but to stimulate Polish American involvement and accomplishments.

The governing body of the PAC is the Council of National Directors, consisting of directors elected by their respective State Divisions or National Organizations and up to 10 at-large directors elected by the Council. Day-to-day operations are conducted by the Executive Committee elected by the Council of National Directors for a two year term.

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