

Looking through the Window...

by Resident Vice President Anna Sokolowski



It is April and spring finally arrived. The climate is still somewhat unstable with an occasional cold spell. After the difficult and cold days of this past winter, it is time to dust off our favorite spring clothes and shoes and toss our winter clothes and boots to the back of our closet. In the next few days, flowers will begin to come up and they should be visible around Easter. In a few weeks the Easter holiday will be upon us, a time for festivities, family gatherings, colored eggs and Easter bunnies. But Easter should mean more to us. Easter is the story of Jesus Christ's last days in Jerusalem before his death. We should remember that Jesus Christ not only died for us, but He arose and ascended to heaven in order to prove His love for us and His desire to have us with Him for all eternity.

As Easter approaches, please think of the less fortunate. With job layoffs, home foreclosures, lack of medical coverage, this year the need for charity is greater. Just making ends meet is a real struggle for many. So, this Easter please give something to those whose Easter basket will be empty. Please contact your local parish, humanitarian services and give donations to those in need. What better time than this Lenten season, a time of reflection, prayer, sacrifice and alms-giving to help those who are less fortunate than us. May all of you have a joyful Easter!

April is also tax time! It is easy to procrastinate on getting your taxes done and you may have forgotten to make your IRA contribution for 2008. But it's not too late! You still have until April 15th to make IRA and IRA ROTH contributions for the previous year. What's the difference between a traditional IRA and a ROTH IRA? Money in a traditional IRA grows tax-deferred so you don't pay interest on your investments, or the money you earn on them, until you withdraw the cash at retirement. Contributing to a traditional IRA also reduces your taxable income. The Roth IRA is similar to a traditional IRA in many respects, but if you're looking for versatility a ROTH IRA is for you. The contribution limits are the same as a traditional IRA and the money grows tax-free. You must have eligible compensation in order to be eligible to contribute to an IRA. For IRA purposes, eligible compensation includes wages, salaries, tips, commissions received as a percentage of sales, taxable alimony and separate maintenance payment you receive under a decree of divorce or separate maintenance. You may contribute up to \$5,000 to your IRA for both 2008 and 2009. If you are at least age 50 by the end of the year to which the contribution applies, you may contribute an additional \$1000. This additional amount is referred to as a catch-up contribution. A person may open both a Roth and a traditional IRA or multiple IRAs of either type; however, the combined contribution per calendar year to all these accounts cannot exceed the IRS limit. Always consult your tax advisor to decide which plan best suits your needs. How about opening an IRA or ROTH IRA with PRCUA or rolling over your present IRA or ROTH IRA to our organization? It is easy, just call your deputy or our Home Office or our satellite offices (see page #4 of Narod Polski for our locations and toll-free phone numbers) and we will be happy to assist you.



(L-r) Honorees Mary Brzezniak, Diane Cortesi, Michaeline Drust, Sue Buras

Let me share with you what has happened in the past few weeks. On Sunday, February 22, PRCUA District #8 held its Annual Luncheon - a Sweetheart Celebration honoring the very lovely, long time PRCUA District #8 ladies who are dedicated and committed to our organization: Michaeline Drust, Sue Buras, Mary Brzezniak and Diane Cortesi. Family, friends and well-wishers helped to salute these deserving honorees. It was a very beautiful and touching affair as the attention-grabbing, interesting biography of each honoree was read. Afterwards each of the lovely ladies was presented with a beautifully framed hand drawn picture of themselves and a bouquet of roses. The climax of this event was an enthusiastic performance by the Wesoly Lud dancers under a watchful eye of a very artistic couple - Misia and Richard Jaminski. Each dance was beautifully choreographed and featured something special for each of the honorees. We congratulate Michaeline Drust, Sue Buras, Mary Brzezniak and Diane Cortesi and embrace them warmly. Our organization is truly blessed to have such dedicated members. Sto Lat to our Sweethearts! A special thank you goes to the hosts and organizers of this event: District #8 National Directors Krysia Lech and James Rustik and I should not forget Misia Jaminski for her organizational skills, input and suggestions that made this event extra special. (Article and more photos will appear in a future Narod Polski.)



Father Jankowski and employee Boguslawa Chranawska

On Tuesday, February 24 in our Home Office we celebrated the traditional Fat Tuesday (Paczki Day) with a delicious supply of paczki. Traditionally, the reason for making paczki was to use all the lard, sugar and eggs in the house, which are forbidden during Lent; so these were the last treats eaten before the start of Lent. At our coffee break, we served many varieties of delicious filled paczki.

That evening, Supervisor Edward Muszalski held a



Agnieszka Migiel, Kasia Budzyn and Julie Prado serving paczki

special educational seminar for deputies in District #8 about the new CSO plans of expanded and affordable life insurance products which the PRCUA is marketing. For more information, call your deputy or our Satellite Offices or Home office. Rates for various programs are also being published in *Narod Polski*. After an extensive and informative training session, everyone was treated to a very delicious dinner with paczki for dessert!

The next day was Ash Wednesday, beginning of the 40-day penitential period of Lent. Our organization held a special prayer service which included the distribution of ashes on our foreheads as a sign of humility by PRCUA's good friend Rev. Stanislaw Jankowski, pastor of St. Hedwig parish. He reminded us that the distribution of ashes reminds us of our own mortality and calls us to repentance. He also stressed the importance of Lent in preparation for the celebration of Easter.

On Friday, Feb. 27th, together with Executive Assistant Jennifer Crissey, we attended a special informational meeting with personnel from Warsaw's Military University of Technology (*Wojskowa Akademia Techniczna*) at the Polish Consulate in Chicago. Representing the University were:



Jenny Crissey, Rector Brig. Gen. Zygmunt Mierczyk and Anna Sokolowski

Commandant - Rector Brig. Gen. Zygmunt Mierczyk, Ph.D., Vice -Dean of the Faculty of Cybernetics - Andrzej Najgebauer, Ph.D., Vice Director of the Institute of Optoelectronic - Lt. Krzysztof Kopczynski, Ph.D. and special guest - Treasurer of Wspolnota Polska - Grzegorz Popielarz. Also present were representatives from Polish American organizations and the media. The Military University of Technology offers programs for undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies, as well as various postgraduate diploma courses for civilian and military students. It provides education in engineering, applied science and management, training highly qualified civilian and military engineers, managers and commanders. For the first time, the Military University of Technology is offering scholarships to students from the U.S. Go to its website for more information www.wat.edu.pl or call the Polish Consulate in Chicago.

On Sat., Feb. 28th, John Paul II Polish Language School in Lemont, IL held its annual "Pasowanie" an official ceremonial welcome of first graders to the school. This was a most important day for first graders as they took a solemn oath and officially became full-fledged students of that school. The new students presented a small play and sang a few songs. The ceremony ended with a photo session and lunch prepared by their parents. Our congratulations to all new students!



First graders - John Paul II Polish Language School

Feb. 28 to March 2 was full of commemorations of Casimir Pulaski. Casimir Pulaski was a Polish immigrant whose efforts earned him a hero's reputation during the American Revolution. Casimir Pulaski Day is a holiday observed in Illinois on the first Monday of every March to commemorate this Revolutionary War cavalry officer's birth on March 4, 1747 in Poland.

On Feb. 28, a celebration hosted by the Pulaski Citizens Club took place in Hammond, IN. It started with Mass at St. Casimir's celebrated by Rev. Lech and ended with a program held in the school gym.

After speeches praising Pulaski's achievements, *Maly Slask*, a children's dance group from Saint Raphael Kalinowski Polish (Cont. on page 7)



Maly Slask

