

Nominee Statements for 2024 Board of Directors as of this printing

Additional nominees accepted before the January 28 vote.

VP / PRESIDENT ELECT - 1 year 2024:

Allan Patek - In 2022 my family had an opportunity to travel to Poland and even trek to my grandmother Helen's hometown outside Poznan. At every stop and with every interaction, we were reminded of the deep connection between Poland and the United States.



I am very proud of the Polish heritage of all four branches of my family (Piatek,

Demski, Bruski and Recek). My grandparents helped me develop a deep appreciation for being Polish American. My paternal great-grand-father Jan Piatek was a founding member of a small Polish Catholic parish called St Hedwig's in Kewaunee County in 1879. My great uncle Frank Demski, an aged soft spoken farmer when I knew him, volunteered to serve in the General Haller's Polish Blue Army in France and then in Poland defending its reborn freedom. My grandmother Helen gave me an appreciation for cultural traditions in the home, garden and kitchen.

I support the Club because it keeps those connections alive through our events, activities and fellowship. We also build bonds between our two nations. My wife Patricia (Benkert) and I live in Madison and we have two adult sons - Zebulon and Casimir. I have a bachelor's degree in history and political science from the UW-Eau Claire. My day job is the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Insurance Security Fund.

Allan served 2017-19 as VP, President, Past-President.

SECRETARY - odd year-2 years 2024-25:

Janice Zmrazek – I am pleased to be considered for the office of Secretary for the Board of Directors. I have been a club member for several years, serving as a director for the last two. I have volunteered at several of our events and been actively involved in planning during the last year, which has given me a good understanding of the roots and traditions of the organization.



I am retired from the state Department of Public Instruction, where my tasks included policy and budget analysis, developing statutes and rules, and scheduling and leading public hearings. I have also served as a volunteer on several boards, including the Library Foundation and my condominium association, with many years as an officer, newsletter and mailing coordinator, and database manager with several Library Friends groups. This background will help me to support the efficient administration of the organization as we work to carry out the mission of our club to share information about our Polish customs and traditions with each other and the greater community.

Continuing on the Board:

VP-PRES ELECT-2023 becomes **PRESIDENT Beata Wierzba**
PRESIDENT-2023 becomes **PAST PRESIDENT Irena Frączek**
Elected in odd year, serve 2023-24: TREASURER Carl Kopplin
DIRECTORS – Stephanie Karwacki and Julita Zolnik

DIRECTOR - even year-2 years 2024-25:

Sue Janczak – I'm from a Polish neighborhood on the East side of Milwaukee, near St Hedwigs church, learning my Christmas carols there in Polish. My extended family seldom talked about their heritage, hoping to forget it in a world of "Polish jokes". Thus, I don't know what part of Poland we came from, but my cousins and I have tried to keep our heritage alive with stories and recipes.



I have always lived in southern Wisconsin, going to UW-Milwaukee and UW-Whitewater. I first found the Polish Heritage Club attending a holiday bazaar which I loved. Since then I have helped at many festivals, usually selling lunch tickets or wherever we were shorthanded. I've done a few articles for the newsletter and other projects as the need arose. Since I've retired from the Postal Service, you may have seen me at the monthly breakfasts or the annual picnic. Unfortunately, I don't speak Polish and haven't been to Poland, but it's on my bucket list. My most Polish trait is that I played accordion! Meanwhile I read books/see movies on Polish history and culture and try to master my grandmother's pączki recipe.

One of my favorite Club practices is the "interest list" used at the picnic to start conversations with other members so we learn more about each other and what we bring to the organization. Great idea!

DIRECTOR - even year-2 years 2024-25:

Tom Radoszewski - I joined the PHC several years ago as I knew I would be moving to Madison from Milwaukee to be near my daughter and her family after I retired in 2021. As the Vice President of the Polish Heritage Alliance for four years and a board member for several years, I was actively involved in managing the Polish Center and Polish Fest. As Chair of the Polish Center's Cultural Committee, I organized programs featuring Polish history, music, poetry, food, crafts, and travel. I also chaired a committee for three galas.



My dad's parents emigrated to the US in 1912 from west central Poland. He and I visited dozens of relatives on our 2001 trip. Since then I have returned three times and visited most major cities, absorbed lots of history and culture, and fell in love with Poland and its people.

In Milwaukee, I attended Bay View H.S. and Marquette University. I worked at Ladish Co. for thirty-two years both in manufacturing and sales. I then worked for three other companies which manufactured the same products, industrial valves and pipe fittings. My work allowed me to travel extensively in the US, Canada, and several other countries. My hobbies and interests reflect my passions - opera, ballet, theater, cooking, skiing, fishing, and putzing around my cabin in Marinette Co.

I welcome the opportunity to use my knowledge and experiences to assist the PHC in fulfilling its mission to promote Polish history and culture.

Thank you to the Nominees for their willingness to serve, and to the Nominating Committee: Jane Dunn, Doris Graiewski, Irene Swiggum.